

Band Camp FAQs for New Marching Students

Herndon High School Marching Band Members FAQ (Frequently asked Questions)

What is Rookie Camp? Rookie camp is a week to get to know your fellow band classmates as you will be with them for the next four years. It is also a great time to get to know the leadership (upperclassman). They will be the ones who teach you the ins and outs of band. If you need anything, they are the ones you should go to.



What are the leaders' goals for us at Rookie Camp? This will be your introduction to the music we will be playing during marching band season. You will learn basic marching fundamentals and commands. You begin to learn what the leaders will expect of us, such as: Arrive early each day, be prepared (make sure you have all items needed for the whole day), Have a good attitude (do what is asked of you - no one gets special treatment.) Be prepared to work hard and impress the leaders, and more importantly yourself.

What is the difference between Rookie Camp and Band Camp? Rookie Camp is more relaxed where as Band Camp is more structured. At Rookie Camp, you do activities to get to know each other, learn about band and get an introduction to what Band Camp will be like. At Band Camp, you will meet many more faces that you've never seen before. The number of people can be a little overwhelming at first then you will get to know the people in your section and squad. At Band Camp, each day has a schedule of activities.

What should I bring to Rookie Camp/Marching Band Camp? A Large refillable water bottle or several water bottles. It is recommended you bring a larger bottle. Some kids like to bring camel backs (water bottle in a backpack). Bring a backpack to carry music, water bottles, lunch, and snacks. It's recommended you bring sunscreen and apply it regularly, especially if you have fair skin, as we will be in the sun most of the day. Sunglasses recommended but not required. Good sneakers with support are required. Converse or skater shoes are not recommended due to lack of support. Hats are encouraged, especially if not wearing sunglasses. Girls (or guys with long hair) will want to wear their hair up due to heat.

What is the band folder used for? These are plastic folders that you will wear around their shoulders (like a messenger bag) during all marching rehearsals. You will receive your folder the first day of band camp. Each folder has a barcode on it that is scanned for attendance. The folders contain your handbook, music, squad assignment, and drill coordinate chart to tell you exactly where to stand for different sets. You can keep your folder in your band locker or instrument case if large enough. Do not lose this, as you will not receive a replacement.

How will I know my marching assignments? Assignments are determined by the section leaders, drum majors, and teachers. Your assignment can also be determined by your attendance. Most of the assignments are fairly equal. However, the harder assignments will be assigned to upper classman.

What if I am an alternate? If you are an alternate, you will need to take your part seriously. You will need to learn all of the drill for your assigned part. The only difference between being a regular marcher versus an alternate is that you may not march in every show. Alternates are very important, as they sometimes must learn another marcher's drill in a short period of time.



What is the bar code used for? Each morning the attendance officers will scan the bar code on the front of your folder. The bar code scanner records who is at camp each day. If you do not have your bar code, the officers will not be able to record your attendance. During the school year, your attendance becomes a grade in band class.

Do we need to bring lunch or snacks? The Band Parents Association provides snacks (free); but you can bring your own. Lunch should be brought from home. Snacks might include fruit, cookies, chips, applesauce, granola bars, etc. Sports drinks and water are provided during snack time.

Should I dress nicely or be concerned about wearing makeup? No, by the end of the day you will be hot and exhausted. It is best to dress cool and comfortably.

What happens if it rains? It is recommended to have a rain jacket or poncho in our backpack just in case it rains. We may do alternative activities such as musical sectionals or practice in the gym if available, but if it isn't lightning, we'll stay outside and get wet.

What is a day like during Band Camp? A typical day at band camp goes like:

- Line up in squads, stretch, and warm up.
- Marching fundamentals.
- Snack time.
- Play music with instrument families (brass, woodwind, percussion, and guard).
- Lunch - inside the school. At the beginning of camp, sections or squads may eat together; however, other days you will be encouraged to eat with your friends.
- Sectionals - You will learn the music with everyone else in your section inside. You will learn correct articulations, notes, and rhythms.
- Full band (excluding drumline) will all play together on the auditorium stage. We will also learn the warm-ups that will be played before each game and competition. Also, on stage we will combine everything we learned in sectionals and families that day.
- Go back outside and do marching fundamentals again

Why do we stretch? Stretching is a great way to get your body warmed up and ready to march. Stretching can either be the worst thing in the world, or it can be fun, it just depends what you put into it.

What should I expect of the physically of Marching Band? Expect sore muscles and to be very tired at the end of each day. It is not recommended to plan to attend another rigorous sport practice after a long hot day on your feet.

What is so hard about marching? Using muscles that you have not used previously. You will be on your toes a good portion of the day, marching backwards, side to side, staying in formation, staying on the beat. This comes more natural to some more than others. Being athletic does not necessarily mean this will be easy.

Is marching band really considered a team sport? It is an intellectually challenging sport. You will need to think constantly - am I on the right spot, am I on beat, and am I in step, where am I going next. We all work together as a team. Each member is significant. We must all be in line, on the same beat, etc. If one person is out of place it may affect the whole team.

What if I have a hard time memorizing the drill (formation) and music? We will learn the music together in sectionals. Your section leader will work with your section to learn your music. We will learn the drill formations together as a whole. We will learn our drill by muscle memory. We will repeat the steps until we get it right. All of the drill is initially learned without music and instruments. We will gradually add music and instruments to the drill.

What if I can't play and march at the same time? Drill comes first. It is more important to look like we know what you are doing rather than worrying about the sound. The audience hears with their eyes rather than their ears. The audience can easily tell when someone is off step or out of place but won't notice if you as an individual aren't playing your instrument. The upperclassmen, who are experienced in marching and playing at the same time, will cover your part.

What's a section? A section is a group of individuals who all play the same instrument or similar types of instruments. For example, Clarinets, trumpets, battery, pit, and low reeds, are each sections.

What is a squad? Each squad contains musicians from many different sections. Squad size varies with the number of students in the band. Squad members are randomly selected. However, there are usually an equal number of freshmen, sophomores, etc in each squad. Squads will compete in friendly competitions, icebreaker games, etc. Example: build the tallest structure out of string, tape, straws, etc. Squads encourage students to get to know others outside of your sections.

What are families? Drumline (battery and pit), Brass instruments, or woodwind instruments each make up a family.

Advice:

- Band kids are very close. Use this opportunity to make great friends.
- Please do not be reckless or put yourself in situations where you can be injured. We need everyone on the field. If you break a leg or arm, you may not be able to march.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions. All of the upperclassmen are glad to help all rookies. Their goal is to have the best band and want you to be your best.

What is the biggest change from middle school to high school? More homework. You will need to manage your time well. The intensity and maturity level is stepped up in high school. By high school, the kids who only do band for the easy "A" probably aren't in band anymore. Be prepared if upperclassmen expect you to act more mature but don't be afraid to have fun and get to know them better.

Is marching band time consuming? Yes, it will take up the majority of your time in the fall, but it won't take over your life. Band is on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, with games on Fridays and Saturdays. Time management is important when in marching band. Use Stinger wisely; don't just goof off just because your teacher is giving you free time.

Who can I contact if I have any questions? Most questions can be answered by your section leaders. If that doesn't work, email Mrs. Jacoby at KGJacoby@fcps.edu who checks her email on and off throughout the summer.