

OREGON CRUSADERS PERCUSSION AUDITION PACKET

2017 CYMBALS



OREGON CRUSADERS[®]
PERFORMANCE. ART.



WRITTEN AND COMPILED BY THE 2017
OREGON CRUSADERS AND OC INDOOR PERCUSSION STAFF

Introduction

Welcome to the Oregon Crusaders Cymbal Program. The Drum and Bugle Corps Cymbal Line is known as the “Cymbals of Oregon Crusaders”, or COC. The Oregon Crusaders Indoor Cymbal Line is known as the “Cymbals of Oregon Crusaders Indoor”, or COCI. This handbook has been provided as a resource to use throughout the duration of your time in either ensemble. Review the information provided during your practice sessions outside of rehearsal. It will answer any potential questions you may have. Please feel free to share this educational tool with anyone that would like a useful resource in their quest for cymbal knowledge.

As a member of the either ensemble, you will be required to know the contents of this packet in their entirety. You will also be held accountable for having the ability to perform any of the skills outlined at a high level of proficiency.

We are a part of a World Class organization. As such, the membership is held to the highest standard possible.

Our goal is simple: to be among the elite World Class Cymbal Lines, and display a high degree of innovation and performance excellence.

This goal can only be realized through hard work, sacrifice, dedication, passion, and commitment. Commitment to yourself, your team, your teachers, and to those that came before you.

Again, welcome to the Oregon Crusaders Cymbal Program.

Mission Statement

Our mission, our goal, our job, both singularly and as an ensemble, is to excel at being truly exceptional performers. We always strive for perfection. We will become exemplary humans through unyielding dedication and our unquenchable desire to master the art.

Code of Conduct

- **Always show up mentally, physically, and spiritually prepared for the task at hand.**
- **Respect yourself. Respect your teammates. Respect your instructors. Respect the community. Respect the process. Respect the art. Always.**
- **Be kind. Be honest. Be strong. At all times. Both on and off the floor.**
- **Always strive for perfection in the art of well defined precision with grace, aggression, discipline, and thoughtfulness.**
- **Know no limits. Boundaries are to be pushed. Fear mediocrity.**
- **Practice with passion. Perform with passion. Passion will lead the way.**
- **Embrace the pain. Embrace the art. Embrace the journey.**
- **Earn your cymbals every single day. They are a gift.**

Technique Overview

Often it is considered that there are two types of techniques in the marching cymbal world. There is the 'Lock' or 'West Coast' Technique which is often more rigid and aggressive, and then there is the 'Flow' or 'East Coast' Technique which in turn is more fluid and relaxed. Both have their appropriate applications when considering dynamics, performance demands, tempo, and the intended visual presence of the line. Here at the Oregon Crusaders we will utilize both methods in order to create our musical and visual identity. Not only that, but in the spirit of innovation, we will be using both the Right and the Left hand as lead hands on all crashes and effects.

Approach

In the world of cymbals, there are two things you must master: your mind and your body. One cannot work efficiently without the other. They will both be pushed to exhaustive lengths every time you put on your cymbals thus they must both be trained to endure.

Let us first talk about our mindset and the correct mental approach needed to succeed. Our persona is strong and aggressive. Our minds are clear and focused. You must be able to push yourself mentally to approach every count, every time, all of the time, with clarity and confidence. You will own your cymbals like they are an extension of your body.

As for the body, it cannot be stressed enough the importance of being fit and partaking in a consistent strength training regime. Of added importance will be your overall flexibility. Weight training, yoga, and jogging/running should all be a daily/weekly routine.

Expectations

As a member of the COC or COCI, there will be much expected of you in order to fulfill our goals. Failure to meet these expectations is not an option.

- Be at all rehearsals and performances at least 30-15 minutes early.
 - There are many times when you will need to take care of equipment before being fully ready to excel during rehearsal/performance times. Being early will help aid in your preparedness for the task at hand.
 - Regardless of the circumstances, you must give notice to a staff member when you are going to be late. This is common practice in the working world, make it a habit now.
 - Take care of any transportation issues to/from rehearsals or performances well in advance of the weekend commitments. Waiting until the last minute to create a solution typically yields bad results.
- Always have proper rehearsal/performance attire, music/cymbal packet in a binder, snacks, hydration, and whatever else is required to help you achieve greatness at all times during rehearsals and performances.
- Once at a rehearsal/performance, your highest priority is that of which the organization asks of you.
 - Rehearsal times, especially weekend camps, yield the most opportunity for us to get better. Take this into consideration at all times and maximize the time you have with the organization and your teammates.
 - Performance times require 100% of your entire being for the entire day. Please ask family and friends to give you space until scheduled meal breaks so that the entire team can be focused and prepared for the event.

- As a COC or COCI member, you will do anything that is above and beyond the call of duty for your organization.
 - COC and COCI always gives the most in this ensemble. Be the example. Set the standard. Always.
- There will be extra costs for cymbal specific items outside of the Member Dues that are outlined in your member contracts. If there are any hardships from this extra financial burden, you must speak with your staff immediately.
 - All members of the COC and COCI will participate in the annual Kymbos Cymbal Scholarship regardless of ability to pay.
- Fun. We will have it. A lot of it. You must have the ability to quickly shift gears between down time and “go time”.
 - Seriously, we have a good time. Work hard, play hard. That is our way.

Etymology

(Taken from ‘The Cymbal Book’ by Hugo Pinksterboer)

The origin of the word cymbal has much to do with these old habits. It is derived from the Greek word *Kymbos* and the Latin word *Cymbalum*, meaning ‘cistern’ or ‘beaker’. The Dutch word for cymbal is *Bekken*, and the German word *Becken* also stand for a “round, spherical, wide (drinking) bowl.” These words are derived from the Latin word *Baccinum*, meaning “basin” or “tray.” The Italian word for cymbal is *Piatto*, meaning “plate” or “tray.” To distinguish them from the more domestic object, in Italian cymbals are indicated by the term *Piatto Musicali*.

History

“Don’t forget your history nor your destiny.” - Bob Marley

Before one can truly move forward, it is of common knowledge that one must first look to the past in order to find the right path in which to move ahead.

The instrument in your hands was born some 5,000 years ago through the work of alchemists when they first invented alloy bronze metal which is copper mixed with a little tin. The exact origins of the first cymbal is still up for debate with Tibet, India, Turkey, and China all having bids for the birthplace of the cymbal. The original look was of a cup, or bowl shaped object with an even smaller cup in the middle to be used as the handle, much like the look of modern China Cymbals.

In the grand scheme of things, the cymbal as we know it had a fairly slow growth cycle. In fact, a majority of the change in sizes, applications, manufacturer growth, style variation, etc., have all come about in the last 70 years. Some of the earliest known applications of a “cymbal” were for purposes of war. Soldiers from various regions around the globe would use early adaptations of a cymbal to either signal their allies with the high pitched sounds that would easily cut through the noise of battle, or by means of making a cacophony of sounds in order to scare the enemy.

Much later, as music stylings evolved, the cymbal moved off the battlefields and out of the churches and palaces where they were used for ritualistic purposes to finally find their first place in an actual musical score. In 1680, German composer Nicholaus Adam Strungk wrote an opera entitled ‘*Esther*’ that utilized cymbals for color and timbre. After that, it would be another century before the musical application of cymbals would be found again when Haydn, in 1794, utilized cymbals for his “*Military Symphony*’. They gained greater exposure as an instrument in the latter half of the nineteenth century thanks to composers such as Berlioz, Wagner, Verdi, and Rossini.

In regards to our usage and lineage of the marching cymbal, one really only needs to look at that later boom in manufacturing to see when marching cymbals became not only popular, but practical by means of the evolution in design.

The early years would be sometime during the 1950’s back in the local drum corps heyday. Most often, groups would only have 2-3 kids on cymbals. They were typically situated between the bass drummers as opposed to being a stand-alone section. Jump ahead to the 1960’s and suddenly you saw members from groups like the St. Rita’s Brassmen out of Brooklyn or the St. Kevin’s Emerald Knights out of New Jersey begin stepping out into the limelight and adding flashes and flips between their notes. At this time another evolutionary step was happening to get us closer to the modern look of cymbal lines -- the introduction and usage of leather straps as opposed to the wooden T-handles that were the fashion of that era. This evolution also allowed groups to utilize a more contemporary Orchestral or Concert style grip. It is also believed that around this time, the Pistol Grip was invented which is a spinoff of the Concert Grip.

Things progressed quickly from there. In the 70’s the composition of cymbal line parts became more sophisticated and melodic as groups like the Santa Clara Vanguard and their instructor, Fred Sanford, began exploring more size and weight options now that more and more manufacturers were putting them out there. It was common in those days to have each player using a different size of cymbal. Sizes in those days ranged

from 14" plates, all the way up to 26" plates! Pretty incredible. Thanks largely to Fred and his interest in making the marching percussion idiom more symphonic, the process of broadening the scope and range of cymbal sounds and effects began to occur.

Overall though, the technique used by cymbal lines needed some more development. The perspective towards lines in those days was that they were more of a visual application than a musical one, thus there wasn't a huge emphasis on sound quality in a general sense. That's when our story moves back to the East Coast.

In the early 1980's, as the cymbal line was gaining more credibility as a stand alone section and as a legitimate voice within the percussion section, one man and one ensemble came along and made everything move forward a lot faster. That man was Thom Hannum, the ensemble was the Garfield Cadets. After writing his historic Cymbal Thesis in college, Thom motivated the growth of marching cymbal lines by helping to solidify a new technique, a grip, and a no nonsense approach to sound production and quality that still resonates today. The Garfield Grip as it is now known came into play, the usage of A/V crashes became more common, and the approach to the instrument matured. The work Thom and his staff did created a style and approach that still defines the East Coast approach to this day.

Meanwhile, on the West Coast, a man named Robert "Chief" Chavira was just getting started. The most common name you will hear when talking about the marching cymbal line will always be the Santa Clara Vanguard Cymbal Line, and that is largely due to the modern work of Chief. He was a marching member SCV in the much of the time during the 80's with his age-out being 1988. It was that 88 line, with Chief as section leader, that would create the "West Coast" approach. Taking the reigns as the technician in 1989, Chief would spend the next decade refining the Lock Technique as well as setting a new standard in terms of mental approach to the art. He can also be credited for defining the Flat Crash and Orchestral Crash techniques. His effort in the art helped bring about a certain notoriety and respect that was new for marching cymbal lines. Their approach and technique are still being heavily borrowed in all aspects of marching percussion to this day.

The early 90's would prove in later years to be the 'Golden Age' of Marching Cymbals in terms of active lines, technical precision, and overall evolution with the instrument itself. Sadly, after that long period of innovation and growth, the beginning of the slow decline in active cymbal lines in the Drum Corps activity started to occur. Even though the numbers were shrinking, there were still groups from all across the country that

were doing incredible things to move the art forward. New sounds, new techniques, new visual applications all lead to the cymbal line becoming the most unique instrument on the field.

During the mid-90's, we saw the introduction of Percussion Ensembles in WGI competition. While things remained quite similar to those happening outside on the football field for a little over a decade, soon after, things began evolving rather quickly for indoor cymbal lines. Guys like Eddie Capps, who spent a considerable amount of time setting new standards on the field with his lines at Spirit of Atlanta, brought a fresh new perspective when he landed at Music City Mystique in the early 2000's. With his influence, the members of this ensemble pushed the boundaries of the art and changed the approach so completely. In terms of the visual side of things, the early 2000's saw the biggest growth and evolution with the introduction of the Release & Reloads, as well Bishops and Sones flips. The majority of this push was coming from those fellas at Music City Mystique.

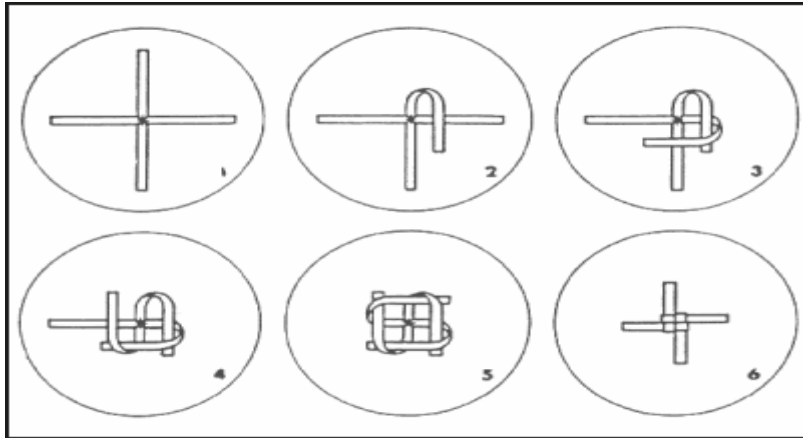
Another thing that came from the new Indoor Percussion boom was the resurgence of the Marching Cymbal Line. With more lines wanting to max out total membership numbers, we now entered into the Renaissance period. It was and continues to be great. Now more than any time in the past two decades, performers from across the Nation could strap up and become a part of the Cymbal Community!

Groups today are now maxing out both sides of the marching cymbal spectrum. The techniques used to create a huge array of colors and sounds are now common place in the industry, while the visual aspect is currently seeing huge growth as we move into the next era. Techniques and ideas have merged into a more homogenous approach and the old lines of West Coast vs. East Coast have blurred. Our community is stronger than it has ever been with technicians from all classes and circuits reaching out to help one another. There is even a newly founded Cymbal Scholarship that was created by cymbal players and is exclusively for cymbal players. All of this is done for the sake of preservation and the evolution of the art.

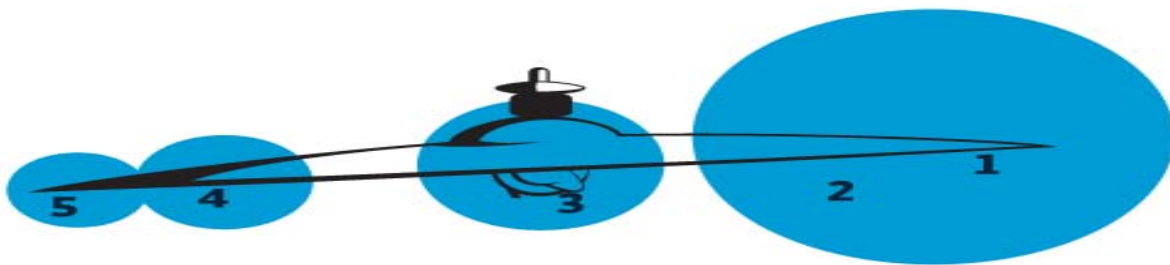
***Where this journey goes is now up to you. How can you contribute?
What can you do to help evolve this community?***

The Basics

Tying Cymbal Strap Knots



Anatomy of a Cymbal



- 1. Profile** - Degree of curvature from the cup of the cymbal to the edge. The profile or "bow" of a cymbal affects its pitch and overtones. Higher profile cymbals will be higher in pitch and have fewer overtones. Flatter profile cymbals will be lower in pitch and have more overtones.
- 2. Taper** - Degree to which the cymbal changes in thickness from the cup to the edge. The design of the taper will contribute to the amount of Crash-like or Ride-like qualities in the cymbal.
- 3. Bell** - All other factors being equal, the bell, or cup size, determines the amount of overtones or ring projected by a cymbal. A larger bell produces more overtones and a longer full-bodied sound. A smaller bell reduces ring and sustain and provides a more defined stick sound for Riding.
- 4. Ride Area** - The center portion of the cymbal. This area doesn't open up immediately when struck, making it effective for pronounced stick tones and patterns
- 5. Crash Area** - The outer edge where a cymbal responds immediately and where most players strike to produce an instant Crash response.

Garfield Grip

Step 1 - Hold the cymbal in a vertical position and put the entire hand through the strap up to the wrists.

Step 2 - Turn the hand so the palm is facing away from the pad of the cymbal.

Step 3 - Rotate the entire hand downwards until the palm touches the pad of the cymbal.

Step 4 - Keep fingers and thumb open at all times. (Open Hand)

Posture

We utilize a 60/40 split in terms of body weight distribution. 60% of your weight should be placed towards the front of the foot. The other 40% is in the center of the foot. This will cause a slightly natural lean forward. This is a good thing. Having the weight forward means the body is always prepared to “attack” whatever is required of the performer. It also adds an aggressive visual presence to the line. Pulse of the downbeat shall be felt in the ball of the foot. Heels rarely touch the ground.

Set Position

You can tell a lot about a line just by looking at their set position. Are the members actively engaged and looking strong while “resting” or do they look disinterested and passive? Coming to Set Position is like a Call to Arms -- it is a brief moment of time you can utilize to prepare for attack. When you hear the word “SET” you will move as quickly to this position.

- Start with good posture, arms by your side with the knots of the cymbals in line with the side seam of your pants.
- Slowly bringing the cymbals up to resting a few inches below your hip without letting the elbows stick out.
- Cymbals should be close to vertical and resting just off the body, hands should be open, knots should be in line with side seam, elbows should be back, and the shoulders should be relaxed.

Ups and Downs

In order to travel from Set Position to any Playing Position, there is a very precise and aggressive movement/count structure to do so. This can also be used in a reverse situation to get the cymbals back down into Set Position.

- Count 1 - From Set Position: Move the cymbals straight down the leg causing the arms to be perfectly straight.
- Count 2 - Keeping the arms fully extended, move the arms up, rotating from the shoulder, to a position straight out from the sternum and perpendicular to the ground. For Flat Crashes and Orchestral Crashes, rotate the wrist so the cymbals are at the 45 degree angle.
- Count 3 - Bring the arms straight into the appropriate Playing Position.

Playing Positions

There are 3 basic playing positions: Port, Flat, and Orchestral. Often times you will be asked to play a phrase that ties one variation into another. Mastering these in their basic elements is crucial as well as learning to flow smoothly between them throughout a written musical phrase.

- Port Position - To get into this position, begin by holding your arms straight in front of you with the cymbals in a vertical position. Your shoulders should always remain relaxed with your blades being kept open. Keeping the upper arm area from your shoulder to elbow parallel with the floor, bend your elbows until the knots are even with our eyes - this is usually about a 45 degree angle. Elbows should be kept out creating a nice strong frame. Cymbals should be held about 2" apart.
- Flat Position - To get into this position, once again begin by holding your arms straight in front of you with the cymbals in a vertical position. Your shoulders should always remain relaxed with your blades being kept open. From here, turn the cymbals into 45 degree angle. The hand on top will be determined by which hand will be your lead hand. Once in a proper angle, bend your elbows and bring the cymbals slightly towards your body. The knots should be in line with your sternum and remain about 1/2'-1' away from your body. Both elbows should be held out. Cymbals are held about 2" apart.

- **Orchestral Position** - To get into this position, start in Flat Position. From there, lower the cymbals until they are in front of your waist. The cymbals will naturally move closer in towards your body in this position - that is okay. The angle of your cymbals will be more around a 30 degree angle. Shoulders should remain relaxed with the blades being kept open. Elbows are held out but are more relaxed in this position.

Glossary of Sounds

The following is an outline of the various crashes and effects used throughout the musical score. The abbreviations in parenthesis next to the name is how that particular sound will be noted in the musical score.

Crashes:

- **Port Crash (*PC*) & Port Crash Choke (*PCC*)**
 - Lock & Flow Techniques
- **Flat Crash (*Flat*) & Flat Crash Choke (*FCC*)**
 - Lock & Flow Techniques
 - Right (*R Flat*) & Left Handed (*L Flat*) leads
- **Orchestral Crash (*Orch*)**
 - Lock & Flow Techniques
 - Right & Left Handed leads
 - Full
- **Drop Crash (*Drop*)**
 - Right & Left Handed leads

Effect Sounds:

- Taps (*tap*)
- Ding (*D*)
- Zing (*zing*)
- Slams (*slam*)
- Sucks (*suck*)
- Tap Choke (*T/C*)

- Hi Hats (*HH*)
- Sizzles (*sizz*) & Sizzle Sucks (*S/S*)
- Buzz Rolls (*buzz*)
- Whale Calls (*whale*)
- Rolls - Open & Figure 8's

The Flam & Proper Sound Quality

The proper way of getting good vibration and a good sound out of your cymbals, while simple conceptually, requires a mindful approach. With that in mind, let us talk about the flam technique. This is one of the more widely accepted techniques to achieving a consistent high quality of sound.

First off, at the point of contact, the cymbals connect while being offset by about 1 ½"-2" causing the initial strike to be between the Crash and Ride Areas of the cymbal. While following through, there is a secondary strike at the opposite end of the cymbals. The reason behind the cymbals making contact in two separate areas is so that you will generate an even vibration around the cymbal that creates a fuller sound that can be seen and heard when done correctly. It should flow together in such a way that you do not hear two separate attacks. Think of it less as an attack and more as an approach that allows you to draw out the sound. The two strikes should happen in a rapid fashion, with the plates being nearly parallel, followed by a quick release that pulls into the crash technique release method being utilized. The entirety of this process should be considered as one motion creating one sound.

If you approach the flam with too much force or velocity, or if you strike the cymbals with poor placement, you're most likely going to get an Air Pocket. An air pocket happens when you trap air between the two cymbals during the crash and instead of getting vibration and sustain you get a loud "pop" sound. Also, if you strike too hard you may only get an attack sound similar to an effect sound, or worse yet, two attack sounds from over playing the flam or playing it too slow.

The flam is only one part of the overall approach. When executed properly with the addition of touch and correct velocity, the vibration will create a full, rich sound that grows and flourishes sonically as you finish out the crash.

Crash Techniques

The following pages will breakdown the various crash techniques we use. The most common prep/release method used is the A/V Crash Technique.

Port Crashes

Lock Technique - (To practice, utilize a 2 count prep and 3 count release in order to perfect angles and pathways.) Begin in Port Position. Assuming the crash is on count 1 of a standard 4/4 measure, begin your prep on count 3 of the previous measure by opening the bottoms of the cymbals to form an "A". Your elbows should open up and the wrists will bend, forming a straight line from fingertip to elbow, while doing this. On count 4, turn the wrists so that your cymbals now form a "V". The elbows will *slightly* collapse back in while doing this. On Count 1, make contact and perform the Flam Crash Technique discussed on Pg. 15. After the crash, slowly *stretch* the cymbals back to an "A" position on count 2. Count 3 will be a snap back to the "V" position, and count 3 after the crash will be a hard snap back to Port Position. Be sure the hands stay within the same vertical plane throughout the prep/crash/release. Each count of the prep/release should be approached aggressively with snap hits throughout the movement.

Flow Technique - Same as above except a flowing motion is used. This technique is best suited for faster tempos when snapping each count of the prep/release becomes more difficult. Typically the prep is only 1 count, utilizing the 8th note subdivisions, and the release is 2 counts.

Port Crash Chokes - You can use either of the above techniques. After the prep and crash, the cymbals are quickly drawn into your body (speed is dependant on length of crash sound desired) between your chest and arms, tucking underneath the armpits. They return in an aggressive snap to Port Position 2 counts after the choke.

V Crashes - Only utilize the V as the prep 1 count before the crash.

Flat Crashes

The Flat Crash is easily the most often used crash technique when playing indoors. The ability to more easily control the dynamic range with a simple technique makes this crash quite versatile.

There are two separate roles of the hands depending on which is the side you are playing on. The hand resting on top is the Primary or Attacking Hand, while the hand resting on bottom is the Secondary or Stationary Hand. The majority of motion comes from the Primary Hand while the Secondary Hand provides the stability for the crash process.

Lock Technique - This crash utilizes a 1 count prep and a 2 count release. Begin in Flat Crash Position. One count before the crash, the Primary Hand moves back at a slight upward angle towards the armpit** while the wrist of the Secondary Hand slightly breaks inward creating a type of "A" between the two hands. Be sure to note the arm motion of the Primary Hand - the upper arm of the Attacking Hand should be almost parallel with the ground, causing an almost 90 degree angle between the arm and the body. Do not allow the elbow/upper arm to hyperextend back past the body. The forearm of the attacking hand will be tilted at a slight downward angle causing the cymbal to point towards the Stationary Hand.

For the crash, bring the Attacking Hand into the Stationary Hand. Be sure that the back end of the cymbals aren't too far apart as you bring them together and utilize the Flam Technique to produce the desired sound. There should be little motion with the Stationary Hand during the crash and there will be a slight pause of motion with both hands after the crash.

The count after the crash, slowly stretch the Attacking Hand forward past the Stationary Hand until the arm is fully extended. Be sure that the angles of the cymbals are still parallel during this. On the last count of the release, snap the Attacking Hand arm back into Flat Crash Position.

** - The range of motion will be dictated by the dynamic marking.

Flat Crash Choke Technique - Follow the same Flat Crash motion as mentioned before. After making contact and hitting the crash, pull the cymbals back into your body, with each cymbal tucking between the side of your body and your arms. The knots of the cymbals will be directly to the side of your body. The backs of the cymbals will be mostly muffled by your bi and triceps, while the your body will muffle the rest. The fronts of your cymbals should be turned in towards each other slightly causing you to look like a plow from the front.

Orchestral Crashes

The Orchestral Crash is the purest technique as it relates in comparison to the technique one would use off the field in concert halls and orchestra pits.

Lock Technique - This crash is also referred to as a *Full Orchestral*. To begin, setup in Orchestral Position. The first count of the 2 count prep locks the cymbals in a flat line at a 40 degree angle with the the Attacking Hand on top and the Stationary hand on bottom. One count before the crash you lock the cymbals into a “V” position with the Stationary Hand just lower than where it is at Orchestral Set Position and the Attacking Hand will be nearly Vertical at around an 80 degree angle. After crashing, the cymbals slowly stretch and hit back into the 40 degree angle two counts after the crash. Next, rotate back and hit the “V” position again 3 counts after the crash. 4 counts later you should snap back into Orchestral Position.

Flow Technique - This crash is also referred to as *Concert/Ballet Technique*. Typically this technique is utilized for the softer dynamic range. To begin, set up in Orchestral Position. The prep is one count before the crash. Without moving the Stationary Hand, lift the Primary Hand beginning with the outside (pinky finger) edge, then flow through an arched motion and make contact for the crash. The release is similar to the prep except that it takes two counts to flow through back into Orchestral Position.

Drop Crashes

This is a specialty crash. The setup has the Stationary Hand resting in Orchestral Set position while the Attacking Hand is an extended version of the ‘V’ Position that is used during a Full Orchestral Crash. The arm is stretched fully above the head at a slight angle forward. Be sure not to hyperextend the Attacking shoulders back too far. When the Attacking Hand drops, think of the motion more as an Orchestral Crash as you bring the Attacking Hand to the Stationary Hand. The two techniques are quite similar in this regard. Be careful not to let the downward velocity or the speed of the falling Attack Hand create a bad sound.

Inverted Cymbals

Occasionally bad crashes happen. While it is not ideal, and the life of the cymbal will decrease, it is a natural phenomena that occurs when growing as a cymbal player. When they do, you may end up inverting one of you cymbals. This means that the Tapered

area gets pushed backwards with enough force to literally invert the natural shape of the cymbal. While there is no easy solution for this, there are certainly some ways to NOT go about converting the cymbal back to its original shape.

- DO NOT set the cymbal on the ground and then apply pressure to bend the cymbal back into shape.
- DO NOT hit the cymbal against a wall or any other hard surface to bend the cymbal back in shape.

While the inconvenient truth is painful, the tried & true method yields the safest (for the cymbal) and fastest way to convert the cymbal back into shape.

- Take the cymbal off, grab on either side with both hands, take a deep breath, and strike the cymbal against the part of your thigh just above the knee. You may also strike it against the side of your hip as well. It'll hurt. But it's best for the cymbal.

Sound Effects

One of the best ways to add color and timbre to any marching musical ensemble is by utilizing the wide array of Effect Sounds that can be created with a pair of hand cymbals. By no means is this an exhaustive list; rather, it is a representation of the sounds this ensemble commonly utilizes.

Taps - This sound is often the sonic equivalent to a drumstick striking the cymbal in the Ride Area. To begin, set up in 'A' position of a Port Crash. The edge of the Attacking Hand cymbal will be 2" higher than the Stationary Hand which will be set up slightly lower than what is typical of Port Position. There is no prep as the motion is similar to an upstroke. The contact point will be about 1" in from the edge and the sound should be on the brighter side of the spectrum.

Dings - This sound is somewhat similar to the sound of the Bell being struck with the shoulder of a stick. It's a darker sound, yet it can still resonate over the ensemble. While there are 2 main ways of performing this, we'll discuss the more common approach. To begin, set up in Orchestral Position. Keeping the Secondary Hand where it is, take the Attacking Hand and put it at a 90 degree angle with the Bell of the Secondary Hand. The cymbals should be 3" apart from edge to Bell. The sound is created by striking the edge of the Attacking Hand cymbal into the Bell of the Secondary Hand.

Zings - This sound is similar to doing a scrape with a stick or other object on a suspended cymbal. The sound is created by quickly running something against the tonal grooves of the cymbal. To begin, set up in Port Position. From there, the Attacking Hand drops to 1" above the Bell of the Stationary Hand and should be at roughly an 80 degree angle while the Stationary Hand moves to roughly a 60 degree angle. The Attacking Hand then scrapes the edge of the cymbal along the interior of the Stationary Hand from 1" above the Bell to all the way off the cymbal. Be sure to keep contact the entire time or the sound quality of the Zing will suffer. The Attacking Hand motion should be a push that moves straight up from Playing Position. The wrists should not break throughout the motion. Be sure to use enough velocity to generate proper vibration.

Slams - This is the easiest of all the effect sounds. To begin, set up in Port Position. Depending on the dynamic marking, simply press, or "slam", the cymbals together with a significant amount of force. Be sure to press them together in a slightly offset position, typically an inch while suffice, so as to avoid an air pocket.

Sucks - The only time that getting air trapped between the cymbals is a good thing would be when executing this sound effect. You can set-up for this sound a couple of different ways, but we'll only discuss the more common approach here. To begin, set-up in Port Position. Drop the Stationary Hand slightly while raising the Attacking Hand so that the edge of the cymbal is even with the upper most portion of the inner bell of the Stationary Hand while being at an 80 degree angle. While simultaneously sliding the cymbal downwards with the edges touching, slightly raise the Stationary Hand to bring the two cymbals together. This motion must be quite rapid and also quite powerful. The goal is to trap air inside between the two cymbals so that you get a nice "thuck" or "suck" type sound.

Tap Choke - To begin, set up in a lower adjusted Flat Crash Choke Position. From here, bring the cymbals off the body by 4" inches. Now you are in Playing Position.

The Prep is 1 count before the attack. The Attacking Hand bends at the wrist creating a "hinge motion" with the cymbal. The Attacking Hand elbow will also slightly bend. The actual sound is created by bringing the cymbals together much like you would for a normal Tap. The exceptions being you are working on a horizontal plane as well as typically using more velocity. Be sure to make contact 2" inside the edges of the cymbal. Immediately after contact, bring the cymbals into the body the choke off sound much like you would for a Flat Crash Choke.

Hi-Hat – Easily the most universal sound created by Marching cymbal Lines. Set-up is starting in Orchestral Position then bringing the cymbals into contact with your body just above the belly button. Simply raise the hand on top and press against the lower cymbal to get a hi-Hat sound. Be sure the cymbals are offset slightly to avoid air pockets.

Sizzle - Representative of the sound you get from an actual Sizzle Cymbal. As with several other Sound Effects there are numerous positions you can set-up in to achieve this sound. We will once again be discussing the most common. To begin, set-up in Flat Position. Depending on the dynamic marking there may be a slight prep one count before the attack by simply raising the Attacking Hand up 1". The sound comes from dropping the top cymbal onto the bottom cymbal with enough velocity to generate vibration, but soft enough to allow for sustain in the sound. To cut off the sound, simply lift the top cymbal off.

Sizzle Suck - Almost exactly like the Sizzle except for the cut off . As you approach the last subdivision of the sizzle, slide the Attacking Hand cymbal slightly downwards while maintaining the Sizzle sound. To cut off the sound, slide the Attacking Cymbal back up to replicate the motion of the Suck Sound Effect. To release, simply lift the top cymbal off.

Buzz Roll - This is one of the rarer sounds used by a cymbal line. It is used to help create white noise for the ensemble. To begin, set-up in Ding Position. Then place the edge of the Attacking Hand cymbal into the bell of the Stationary Hand. Then utilizing your smaller muscle groups, or rather, a 'twitch' motion, rapidly vibrate the edge of the cymbal in the bell creating the "buzz" sound.

Whale Call – Another rarely used sound also for creating white noise. Unlike the Buzz Roll, this sound can help create an 'eerie', 'dark', or 'sinister' sound palette. To begin, set-up in Orchestral Position. Place the edge of the Attacking Hand cymbal inside the bell of the Stationary Hand. Utilizing a good touch of elbow grease, rotate both wrists in counter motions while pressing the edge into the bell. The sound will be similar to "nails on a chalkboard".

Rolls - There are two variations of the cymbal roll. Both are in Port Position. The first type is the Open Roll where the cymbals rotate while the outside edges stay connected. The Second type a Figure-8 Roll where you keep the inside of the cymbals connected and is similar to a sizzle.