

2008 AHS Marching Band Visual Approach

Purpose of the Visual Approach:

- To help produce a Consistent Sound while on the move
- Provide a uniform and refined style that enhances visual effect
- To generate audience interest

Important Tips:

- Form Check
- Interval Control
- Alignment (Heels in line with the back of the yard line)
- Shoulder Facing
- Consistent Step Size

Stationary Commands

- **To the Ready** is a relaxed position with feet in second while the right foot is on the dot. Arms are relaxed and crossed with the horn directly in front of your lower torso. Verbal Command - "**Detail to the Ready**"
- **Attention, Set** is a two count command, squeezing on count one snapping the left foot into the right foot ending in first position parallel on count two. Simultaneously, snap your instrument to a defined front set position. Verbal Command - "**Detail A-ten-hut**"
- **Parade Rest** is a two count command, squeezing on count one snapping the left foot out to second position on count two. Simultaneously, the arms snap in a crossed position at chest level. Verbal Command - "**Parade Rest**"
- **Dress (to the Center, Right, Left, Set and Peg)** is identical to the attention command with the head snapping to look at the designated dress point. Verbal Commands - "**Dress-Set-Dress**" "**Dress-Left-Dress**" "**Dress-Right-Dress**" "**Dress-Center-Dress**" "**Dress-Peg-Dress**"
- **Ready Front** is a two count command, squeezing on count one snapping back to attention on count two. Verbal Command- "**Ready Front**"
- **Horns Up** is a two count command, squeezing on count one and snapping the instrument to playing position on count two. The instrument is placed at 15 degrees above parallel. Verbal Command - "**Band Horns Up**"
- **Fake Horns Up** (Without Instruments) is identical to horns up, but the right hand is in a fist and the left hand is in a blade position over the fist

Points of Perfect Posture

- Stand with toes and heels together in parallel first position
- Distribute the weight on the balls of your feet
- Lengthen neck and spine standing as tall as possible
- Pull hips back in an alignment with the ankle bone
- Do not arch your back, keep a flat back
- Squeeze from your center lifting with your abs
- Stand with shoulders relaxed and slightly pulled back
- Head (chin) should be up 15 degrees with eyes focused forward

2008 AHS Marching Band Visual Approach

Moving Commands

Please maintain perfect posture through all moving commands.

Hi Mark Time starts in first position parallel lifting the left heel, pointing the foot and raising the foot to where the big toe meets the inside of the right knee. This results in a flat position with the upper leg. We call this parallel *passee'*. Return the left foot to first position parallel by sliding down the inside of the right leg with the toe pointed, touching first with the toe, then the ball, and then the heel. Repeat this on the right leg. This can be done in four, two or one count increments.

Low Mark Time starts in first position parallel lifting the left heel on the "a" of the beat, moving it one inch off the ground. Then, replace the heel on count one. Repeat this on the right leg. Remember to keep both legs straight on the beat. This should result in a very articulated and refined look.

Forward March starts in first position parallel lifting the left heel on the "and" of the beat and lifting your foot until it's pointed. Push your leg forward, flex your foot, flair your toes, and place your heel on the ground on count one. The right heel is elevated on count one, distributing your weight evenly over both legs. While taking your second step, push your right leg off the ground and pull it through the "pointed pass" position. Then repeat the "hinge" process with the foot, placing the heel on the ground on count two. Both legs are straight on the beat. As the tempo increases the bend of the knee gets less. Halting is created by placing the back foot into the placed foot and returning back to first position parallel. Please roll the last step into the halt, do not stab your foot. Forward break down should be done in four, two and one count increments.

Backward March (Drag Step March) starts in first position parallel lifting the entire body up to releve' on the "and" of the beat. Push the left leg back distributing the weight onto both legs touching the foot on count one. While taking the second step push off a pointed right foot passing the legs on the "and" count and place the right foot to the back touching on count two. Repeat the process keeping the legs straight at all times. Halting is created by placing the front foot into the placed back foot returning back to first position parallel. The backward breakdown should be done in two and one count increments.

Slides (Right and Left) Slides are created when the upper body is facing a different direction than the lower body. Using the forward or backward march, rotate your hips 45 degrees and your shoulders 90 degrees away from the direction that your feet are pointed. The majority of the time we are using slides to keep our upper body flat to the front. Use a forward slide when moving forward field relative to your starting position. Use a backward slide when moving backwards relative to your starting position. When moving directly across from your starting position a front slide or back slide can be used. This will be defined for you.

2008 AHS Marching Band Visual Approach

Other Terminology

Consistent size step - When given a set number of counts to do an exercise or to move from page to page in the drill, it is important that you take an even sized step allowing the band to move in a uniform and seamless manner.

- For example when you are given a 16 count move be aware of where you need to be. Count 4 you would be 1/4 of the way. Count 8 you would be 1/2 way. Count 12 you would be 3/4 of the way.

Yard-line Relationship - This is crucial to the overall effectiveness of the drill. You are asked to know your distance to the yard line for each set of the drill.

Direction Changes involving slides - Please approach by snapping the hips and the lower body in one count in the new direction of movement. These should be approached in an accented fashion that can be softened to fit the style of the music.

Direction Changes in the same plane - These should be approached, without a switch of the hips, but using a tendu.

tendu - tendu ["stretched point (of the foot)"]. A position in which the working leg is stretched straight out in any direction with only the tip of the foot touching the floor.

plié - ["bent"]. Knee bends, done with the legs turned out. Normally the first exercise in a ballet class. Demi-plié ["half-bent"] is a shallow bend (in all positions but second, as far down as you can go without lifting the heels off the floor); grand plié ["big plié"] is a deep bend, down to where the thighs are almost horizontal. In all positions except second, the heels release from the floor in a grand plié.

relevé - ["raised"]. A movement in which the heels are raised off the floor. The rise may be smooth or aided by a slight spring, depending on the school. A dancer in such a position is said to be "in relevé."

passé - ["passed"]. A movement in which the pointed foot of the working leg is made to pass the knee of the supporting leg.

feet, positions of - There are five basic positions of the feet in ballet. 1: feet in line with heels together; 2: feet in line, heels apart (separated by about the length of one's foot); 3: feet touching, one foot in front of the other and overlapping by about half the length of the foot; 4: feet apart, separated about the length of a foot, one foot in front of the other; 5: feet touching, one foot in front, heel to toe and toe to heel. In a Cecchetti fifth, the feet do not overlap completely; in a Russian fifth, they do. Fourth position is sometimes qualified as an open fourth (like first position except for the separation of the feet) and a closed fourth (like fifth position except for the separation of the feet).