



RIVER CITY RHYTHM

DRUM & BUGLE CORPS

2024 AUDITION PACKET
AUXILLIARY PERCUSSION



Hello, and welcome to River City Rhythm's 2024 auditions!

As the summer season approaches, we are thrilled to extend a warm invitation to all aspiring drum corps talents of every experience level.


Our auditions are not only a gateway to exceptional musical experiences, but also an opportunity to join a close-knit family of passionate performers and instructors. RCR takes pride in the community and culture we have been building together and would love for YOU to come join us!

This packet contains the necessary audition materials and music exercises RCR will be playing throughout the season. Please prepare this material to the best of your ability to receive the best possible experience at our auditions!

Most importantly, please bring a positive attitude and be willing to learn new things!

We eagerly await your audition, and we are ready to witness the energy and enthusiasm you'll bring to River City Rhythm.

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Technique & Fundamentals

AUXILIARY PERCUSSION

At all times, stay as relaxed as possible. The rule is **NO TENSION!**

Posture

Playing in the front ensemble is not only about controlling your hands, but is a full-body exercise. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, spine straight upright, shoulders relaxed back, & elbows dropped naturally at your sides. Stand back from the keyboard so that your elbow is at your side or slightly back when holding mallets over the lower manual.

All parts of your body should stay loose and relaxed at all times. This will require continual awareness while you play as your body will automatically react to physical challenges by tensing up and trying to power through. Any amount of tension that you allow to regularly appear as you play will not only affect your ability to play but can also lead to serious injury.

Presence & Vibe

Performance is not something you put on with your uniform for shows; you must practice as you perform with every rep to perfect your craft.

We want to exude confidence, professionalism, & class at all times. Behind the board, you will appear confident & in control. Once away from your instrument, you should be humble, inviting, kind, & genuine to all people you come into contact with. You not only represent River City Rhythm, but you represent yourself as an emerging artist in the percussive arts.

While there are some moments where we will define visual performance, in general, we encourage you to tell your own story behind your instrument. The most important part of your visual performance is that it is a genuine expression of what you are feeling as you play.

Ensemble Timing

In any ensemble setting, each performer is responsible to discern pulse & align their playing with other performers. Our primary tool is our ears, both to listen for cues giving an overall pulse & to align micro-level rhythms to your immediate neighbor. Eyes are also a great tool, but will mainly be used as a mechanism to focus our ears. We will only rely solely on our eyes in moments where no audible cue is possible.

While there is a hierarchy of time leading towards the center of the ensemble, every performer has an individual responsibility to listen back to a source of time in addition to listening inward within the section. Each member of the ensemble must have an awareness of all performers around them & behind them to make calculated decisions and seamless adjustments to time.

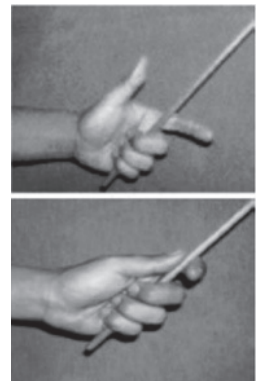
Technique & Fundamentals

Mallets

Grip

Goal: most closely match your natural relaxed hand shape.

Each finger, from pinky to pointer, should be less tightly wrapped around the mallet and more spaced apart than the last. Wrap your pinky fully around with the tip touching your palm. Your ring finger will almost fully wrap, lightly grazing your palm. Your middle finger will partly wrap, hanging in the air over your palm. Your pointer finger will slightly curve at each knuckle, extending to rest under your thumb. Rest the pad of your thumb gently on top. Move the mallet shaft so that your thumb and pointer finger meet at one-third of the way up the shaft, not including the head.



Stroke

Each stroke is initiated with the mallets at their highest position. Allow the weight of the mallet to fall towards the instrument, and use your wrist muscles to increase the downward velocity. Let the mallet naturally spring back up to the top of the stroke in a comfortable amount of time. At all tempos, keep a well-defined point at the top of the stroke where mallets return to, but have the mallets in constant motion while playing with no point in space where they pause.

Think of feeling the weight of the mallet in the back of your hand (in/below your pinky). Allow your arm to move naturally at the elbow, but do not actively engage arm muscles as part of the stroke.

Sticks

Grip

Similar to mallet grip, but with the fulcrum point between the thumb and pointer finger rather than the back of the hand. The pinky will be less tightly wrapped, allowing the end of the implement to run through the fleshy part of your palm that is opposite the base of your thumb. The pinky, ring, and middle finger will stay loose and allow the stick to breathe as you play. We will use a 45-degree rotation angle commonly used on most marching membrane instruments.

Stroke

Similar to mallet stroke, but with the motion initiating from the thumb/pointer finger fulcrum. Use your wrist muscles to produce a vertical motion perpendicular to the surface of the instrument, ensuring a uniform sound.

Technique & Fundamentals

Concert Bass Mallets

Grip

Similar to stick grip, but with the mallet staying more static in your hand- especially in the pinky, ring, and middle fingers. Feel the mallet as an extension of your forearm and hand.

Stroke

Similar to stick stroke, but relying more on larger muscle groups to handle the heavier weight of the mallets. Do not use fingers as part of the stroke; use only wrist and arm muscles to avoid injury. Think of initiating the stroke from your forearm and allowing the wrist to whip downward for extra velocity. When using lighter/more articulate bass mallets, a more wrist-based stroke is appropriate to play faster rhythms.

Tension

Tension can occur at any of the joints involved with playing keyboards- from the first knuckle of the index finger & thumb, through the wrist, up the elbow, & even into the shoulders & shoulder blades. Tension is the result of one group of muscles relying on another set to accomplish the job that is required. For instance: when an uncomfortable tempo is demanded, wrist muscles lock up & rely on the muscles in the arm if they haven't been properly trained to rotate at such speed and velocity. We want to avoid this reaction- using larger muscles will lead to more energy expended than necessary while playing.

This can cause a multitude of complications later on including arthritis, carpal tunnel syndrome, ganglion cysts, tendonitis.



AVOID tension by not arching your thumb or curling your index finger.

Please have the patience to break down your technique and build your strength gradually.

Do not put yourself at risk of injury.



Exercises and Etudes

Practice Tips

USE A METRONOME and USE IT WISELY

While you should spend some time practicing without a metronome, 90% of your practice should be with one. A metronome is our only common ground, so please use it to perfect your individual playing.

Using a metronome correctly will heighten your sensitivity to time. Practice at a variety of tempos. Begin by changing the metronome by 10 clicks each time, then by 8, then 5, and so on until you are sensitive enough to feel the difference between 100 bpm and 102 bpm. When you gain consistency at a certain tempo, change the metronome to only click the half note (or even the whole note!). This tests your ability to maintain bigger spaces of time on your own.

Break it down...

As your accuracy increases and you begin to increase your tempos- Remember that at slower speeds, motions must be exaggerated for dynamics. If you want to play forte 16th notes at 180 bpm, you should practice those 16th notes at 120 bpm but approach it with the same motion as if you're playing triple forte. This allows you to increase your speed without restricting your rotation.

...and build it back up

As your accuracy increases and you begin to increase your tempos- Remember that at slower speeds, motions must be exaggerated for dynamics. If you want to play forte 16th notes at 180 bpm, you should practice those 16th notes at 120 bpm but approach it with the same motion as if you're playing triple forte. This allows you to increase your speed without restricting your rotation.

Floor & Pad Exercises

The principal reason behind these is to develop technique by reducing the variables involved with playing the right notes. This also helps to develop more solid timing by eliminating the resonance of the instruments, forcing us to focus on the striking sound of the instrument rather than the tones produced. Please bring a drum pad to rehearsals.

BRING A PRACTICE DRUM PAD ALWAYS!

We will always use Drum Pads to work on technique and timing. Even when we are not playing.

Octaves

♩ = 70-140

Play in all 12 major keys

Musical notation for Octaves exercise, featuring a series of eighth-note runs on a single staff. The piece starts in 7/8 time and ends in 2/4 time. The notation includes a treble clef and a double bar line at the end.

R R R R L R L R L L L L L L R L R L R R R R R L R L R L L L L L L R L R L R R R R R L R L R L L L L L L R L R L R R

R R L L R R L L R R L L R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R L R L L

Green Scales

♩ = 90-180

Play in all 12 major keys

Musical notation for Green Scales exercise, featuring a series of eighth-note runs on a single staff. The piece starts in 2/4 time and ends in 2/4 time. The notation includes a treble clef and a double bar line at the end.

r r r r r r r r r | r | r | r | r r | | | | | | | |

6

l r | r | r | | r r r r r r | r | r | ...

Green Beans

♩ = 80-180

Play in all 12 major keys

Musical notation for Green Beans exercise, featuring a series of eighth-note runs on a single staff. The piece starts in 4/4 time and ends in 3/4 time. The notation includes a treble clef and a double bar line at the end.

R | r r L r | | R | r r | | R | r r L r | | R | r r

4

L r | | R | r r L r | | r r L r | | R | r r L r | |

7

R | r r L r | | R | | R | | R | r r | | r r L r | | R | r r

11

L r r L r r L r | | r r | | R L R L ...

Sweet Sixteen

♩ = 90-140

Natural sticking throughout

Musical notation for the first staff of 'Sweet Sixteen'. It consists of a single staff in 4/4 time with a treble clef. The notation shows a continuous stream of eighth notes. The first measure is marked with a '1' above it. The sticking pattern below the staff is 'R' for the first measure and 'R L R R L R R L R R L R' for the subsequent measures.

4

Musical notation for the second staff of 'Sweet Sixteen'. It consists of a single staff in 4/4 time with a treble clef. The notation shows a continuous stream of eighth notes. The first measure is marked with a '4' above it. The sticking pattern below the staff is 'R' for the first measure and 'R R L R R L R R L R R L R' for the subsequent measures.

7

Musical notation for the third staff of 'Sweet Sixteen'. It consists of a single staff in 4/4 time with a treble clef. The notation shows a continuous stream of eighth notes. The first measure is marked with a '7' above it. The sticking pattern below the staff is 'R L L R L L R L L R L L R' for the first three measures and 'L R L L R L L R L L R L L R L L R' for the last three measures.

10

Musical notation for the fourth staff of 'Sweet Sixteen'. It consists of a single staff in 4/4 time with a treble clef. The notation shows a continuous stream of eighth notes. The first measure is marked with a '10' above it. The sticking pattern below the staff is 'R' for the first measure and 'R L R R R L R L L L R L R L R' for the subsequent measures.

Space & Timing

♩ = 60-100

Musical notation for the first staff of 'Space & Timing'. It consists of a single staff in 4/4 time with a treble clef. The notation shows a sequence of chords and eighth notes. The first measure is marked with a '1' above it. The time signature changes to 5/4 in the third measure and back to 4/4 in the fourth measure.

5

Repeat x4

Musical notation for the second staff of 'Space & Timing'. It consists of a single staff in 4/4 time with a treble clef. The notation shows a sequence of chords and eighth notes. The first measure is marked with a '5' above it. The time signature changes to 5/4 in the second measure and back to 4/4 in the third measure. The notation includes repeat signs and a double bar line at the end.

Up Dog

♩ = 80-120

Improvise grooves with drumset



5



9

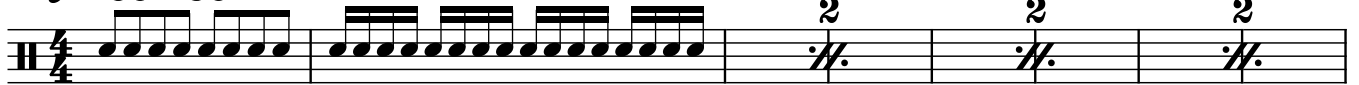


13



Alternating Breakdown

♩ = 80-160



R R R R R R R R R R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L

9



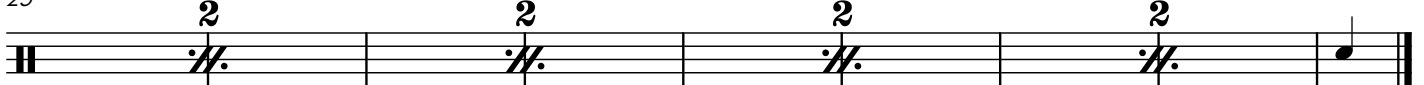
R R R R R R R R R R L R L R L R L R L R L R

17



L L L L L L L L L L L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R

25



Lateral Breakdown

♩ = 120-180

L R L R L R L R L L R L L R L L R L L R

9

L R L R L R L R L L R L L R L L R L

17

R L R L R L R L R R L R R L R R L R R L

25

R L R L R L R L R R L R R L R R L R

33

L R L R L R L R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R R

41

L R L R L R L R L L R R L L R R L L R R L

49

R L R L R L R L R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L

57

R L R L R L R L R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R