

Texas State University

Bobcat Marching Band

Cymbal Technique

This cymbal technique is used (with permission) from TXST percussion alumni Jordan Garza, director at McNeil High School and Ensemble Director for Rhythmic Force Indoor.

Technique

Technical Principles

There are several principles that the cymbal line will always fall back on. These principles are the foundation of our technique program. By understanding these principles, performers will have an idea of how we approach playing cymbals, even before putting them on your hands.

Musicality & Accuracy: Performers must always have a sense of tempo and dynamics. Performers must also have rhythmic accuracy. At Rhythmic Force, we take a musical approach, trying to achieve the best sound quality, while keeping considerations such as dynamics and touch in mind to add to our role in the ensemble.

Control & Body Awareness: When maneuvering the cymbals, it is important that the performer controls the cymbals; they don't let the cymbals take control of themselves. Body awareness is how well the performer understands their body. Performers need body awareness so they are able to determine whether their cymbals are in the correct positions. The cymbals are an extension of the forearm and must be controlled as such.

Calm Aggression & Performance: The performers must ensure that all movements are done quickly and with a purpose. Movements need to be aggressive to create the explosiveness that is desired. However, the performer must remain calm. Motions should not look difficult or forced. The performer's face should not show any signs of difficulty, but rather kept relaxed and composed. Whether in uniform or in rehearsal, facial expressions and body posture must be controlled. The performer needs to be expressive and engaged at all times. The performer is constantly performing, so every rep must be treated with the same mindset regardless of practice or performance.

Set: The basic set position is where performers will be most of the time when not playing. Arms will be at the side, with elbows slightly turned out and should keep a natural bend. The core is engaged with body weight pushed forward. The shoulders are relaxed and the chest should be kept wide. The cymbals will sit at the sides and kept

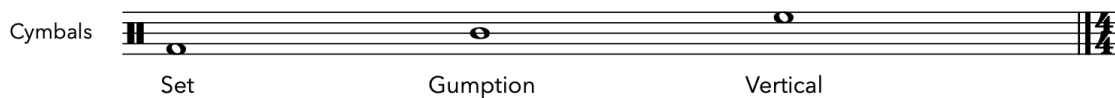
straight up and down; the edges of the cymbals will be the only thing seen. The cymbals will sit farther back, with the performer's thumbs centered on their thighs.

Gumption: Gumption is our main playing position. The cymbals should rest at sternum level and at a “seat-belt” angle. The right cymbal is on top of the left, and the fingers should be spread out. The cymbals will be 2” apart from each other and they should be parallel. The performer’s chest should be open and wide, with elbows kept slightly out so that they are taking up space. The cymbal should not dip nor be pulled up from the audience.

Vertical: At vertical, the thumbs and knots will be just above eye level. Shoulders will be relaxed and the neck will be long. Triceps will be parallel to the ground, and the fingers will be spread. The cymbals should be roughly 2” apart from each other.

Cymbal Exercises

Flip Exercise



Gumpton Crash Exercise

Cymbals



Gumpton Prep Contact Crash

The notation shows a sequence of four measures on a single staff. The first measure is labeled 'Gumpton' and contains a half note on the first line. The second measure is labeled 'Prep' and contains a half note on the second line. The third measure is labeled 'Contact' and contains a half note on the third line. The fourth measure is labeled 'Crash' and contains a half note on the fourth line. The staff ends with a double bar line and a 4/4 time signature.



The first line of the exercise consists of four measures. Each measure contains a half note on the first line, followed by a quarter rest, and then a half note on the second line. The staff ends with a double bar line and a 4/4 time signature.



The second line of the exercise consists of four measures. Each measure contains a half note on the first line, followed by a quarter rest, and then a half note on the second line. The staff ends with a double bar line and a 4/4 time signature.



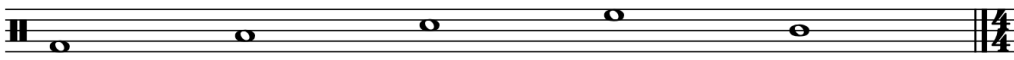
The third line of the exercise consists of four measures. Each measure contains a half note on the first line, followed by a quarter rest, and then a half note on the second line. The staff ends with a double bar line and a 4/4 time signature.



The fourth line of the exercise consists of four measures. Each measure contains a half note on the first line, followed by a quarter rest, and then a half note on the second line. The staff ends with a double bar line and a 4/4 time signature.

Vertical Crash Exercise

Cymbals



Vertical A V Contact Crash

This block shows a single staff of music for Cymbals. It contains five notes, each with a label below it: 'Vertical', 'A', 'V', 'Contact', and 'Crash'. The notes are positioned on a five-line staff, with the first note on the first line and the others on subsequent lines.

Crash to A



The first staff of the 'Crash to A' exercise. It begins with a double bar line and a 4/4 time signature. The staff contains six measures, each with a single note on the first line of the staff, followed by a quarter rest.



The second staff of the 'Crash to A' exercise. It begins with a double bar line and a 4/4 time signature. The staff contains six measures, each with a single note on the first line of the staff, followed by a quarter rest.



The third staff of the 'Crash to A' exercise. It begins with a double bar line and a 4/4 time signature. The staff contains six measures, each with a single note on the first line of the staff, followed by a quarter rest.



The fourth staff of the 'Crash to A' exercise. It begins with a double bar line and a 4/4 time signature. The staff contains six measures, each with a single note on the first line of the staff, followed by a quarter rest.