

MTSU Drumline Audition Info

2021

Thank you for your interest in the MTSU Band of Blue Drum line! We take great pride in the Band of Blue and are really looking forward to a terrific year with the 2021 Drum line.

MTSU Drumline has a rich tradition of excellence and the percussion section values hard work and community. We are confident that this experience will be inclusive, a place where you develop lifelong friendships, and will truly cultivate some of your fondest life memories.

All participants should be prepared with solid fundamental technique on the instrument or instruments they plan to audition for. Prepare all of the basic fundamental exercises and the cadence, (included in the audition materials), for camp. Additionally, it is highly recommended that the auditionee adhere to the following guidelines listed below and prepare the exercises (memorized is best) for auditions. Remember that auditions are much like a job interview. Applicants that demonstrate qualities of preparedness, focus, diligence towards technique, rhythmic accuracy, solid tempo control, & a positive attitude, will have the strongest advantage. The audition process will include an individual assessment as well as group evaluation. In the individual portion of the audition, applicants might be asked to play with a metronome and/or mark time while performing any or all the audition material. Come to the audition prepared and ready to learn. Auditions can be very busy, but we will do our best to personally help you adapt.

We know that everyone has strengths and weaknesses. Show us your strengths and we will help with your weaknesses. Try to stay relaxed, learn, and have fun. Don't hesitate to ask questions.

We play traditional grip in the snare line at MTSU. Students should not try out for snare if they have not played and studied traditional grip prior to the audition. However, they are welcome to audition for many of the other positions in the MTSU drum line, and encouraged to develop traditional grip through lessons during the year.

Students should know and be able to skillfully manipulate the four stroke types: Full, Down, Tap, Up. The following is a brief description.

- Full Stroke: Starts up, Ends up. Used for forte dynamics and repetitive accents. The beads return to the top of the stroke.

- Down stroke: Starts up, Ends down. This is the transition stroke from an accented note, to an unaccented note, or loud to soft.

- Taps: Repetitive soft or unaccented notes. Soft spectrum of dynamics, approximately 3" off the drum.

- Upstroke: Starts at 3", plays from the 3" tap height, and then ends up. The Upstroke is a transition stroke from soft to loud. Upstrokes are critical to execute and play with efficiency and improved flow.

General Audition recommendations:

- Prepare thoroughly. Know the music well, memorized if possible. We will help you with minor technique adjustments, but do your best in preparing the music.

- Practice with a metronome and marking time. The feet hand connection, particularly with the grid exercises are fundamental to being a great player individually, and a strong member of the ensemble collectively.

- Make adjustments quickly, be coachable. 100 % most important.
- Promptness is crucial. Arrive to rehearsal no later than 15 minutes before downbeat.
- Encourage and support all members!

The front Ensemble is a crucial part of the success of the MTSU Percussion Section. While we know that many members do not have access to equipment over the summer, do your best to look over the basic exercises and prepare to the best of your ability. Familiarizing yourself with the exercises on a piano or synth is a good alternative to not having equipment at home. Additionally, for four mallet playing, working on technique and chops using floor exercises is an awesome way to get your hands in shape for the season. We will be passing out more music throughout camp, so do your best to understand the basic exercises in the packet. Watch videos of great players or great front ensembles from DCI or WGI. We sometimes have spots available for Synth, Drumset and Bass Guitar, so once you arrive at camp, please let us know if you have any experience or interest in those positions.

We look forward to meeting you in the fall, and have a terrific summer!

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