

How to survive band camp

<http://www.banddirector.com/article/pg-marching-band/how-to-survive-band-camp?productguide=311>

<https://www.theodysseyonline.com/tips-on-how-to-survive-band-camp-for-rookies>

<http://www.wikihow.com/Survive-Band-Camp>

<https://www.musicprofessor.com/blogs/news/116756932-surviving-band-camp-almost-everything-you-need-to-know>

1. Dress comfortably and appropriately. Correct shoes. Athletic wear. Change of clothes?
2. Be on time.
3. Drink plenty of water. Water jug
4. Practice. If you attended summer sectionals, check this off your list
5. Make friends. Make an effort! This is a perfect time to try this!
6. Learn the show. Have a goal and achieve it!
7. Take care of yourself. **PREPARE!**
 - A. Get lots of Rest
 - B. **Stretch.**
 - C. **Wear sunscreen** and a hat . Wear chapstick.
 - D. **Drink plenty of water.**
 - E. **Eat healthy** foods! Eat Breakfast
 - F. don't forget a jacket and gloves if it will get cold. Keep in locker
8. Learn how to wear your uniform and try it on. August 15 , Picture Day is the day we do this!
9. Care for your instrument. In good working order? Avoid getting a woodwind wet, the **pads**
10. Be respectful and courteous towards band directors and assistants.
11. This goes hand in hand with working hard, but put in effort.

12. Be aware of your place on the totem pole. If you're an underclassman, don't try to boss others around as if you're the section leader. On the flip side, if you're an upperclassman, don't alienate and harass those younger than you.

13. Be considerate of chaperones, adults, helpers

14 No Gossip, No Drama. Don't bad-mouth or try to correct the other sections.

How to Survive at Band Camp

Band camp is a place to have fun while learning to play your instrument. While you are there to work and learn, it doesn't have to be torture.

Steps

1. Remember what to bring for rehearsal- i.e. lunch, water, instrument, etc. Make a checklist so you don't end up in a predicament.
2. Be on time. Timely arrivals show you want to make a commitment to the program and will save your section from having to run laps, or being otherwise reprimanded by your director/drum major.
3. Warm up before rehearsal. Chances are you haven't played or done a long rehearsal for a while.
4. Learn rehearsal and performance etiquette. Ask your section leader or band director if you're not sure about something. Good etiquette helps things flow smoothly and look professional.
5. Try your hardest. You will probably make faster friends and be respected more if you make a decent effort at marching and playing your instrument.
6. Be optimistic. Complaining or bellyaching is extremely annoying and unhelpful.
7. Make friends. Get to know your classmate, your section, whoever is sitting or standing next to you in formation, and
8. anybody else that seems interesting. You have band and music in common already. but do not talk when you're are setting up formations or going over your music.
9. Learn the show. Now is the time to practice. Practice as you would like to perform- learn you formations, work, music, rhythms, etc.
10. Take care of yourself. You'll perform better and feel better if you take care of your body. Marching band is a sport!
 - o Stretch. Marching band can be demanding during the summer. You don't want to pull a muscle or injure yourself.
 - o Wear sunscreen and a hat if you will be marching in the sun. That sunburn won't feel good tomorrow, and it'll spare you sock tans, glove tans, and drum harness tans (somewhat). Remember to reapply every 2 hours or so. Wear chapstick that protects against the sun. Sunburned lips are not fun to play an instrument with, especially for brass players. Also be sure to wear shoes that don't come off in the mud if you know your school's fields are muddy during the summer.
 - o Drink plenty of water. This means water or Gatorade/Powerade (see Warnings). Soda and juice will dehydrate you. Avoid drinking milk or eating dairy products. The heat will cause it to curdle in your stomach and make you nauseous. Get an insulated jug for water. Don't forget to clean and dry it after each day's practice, so it doesn't gunk up inside.
 - o Eat healthy foods! Don't just eat a pop-tart for breakfast on your way out the door; marching a lot is a very physical activity, especially if it's for the entire day. Also remember to eat a healthy lunch. Fried foods aren't good for you anyway, but if you eat unhealthy fast food, you will regret it after marching.
 - o Wear movable clothing and comfortable, athletic shoes. Dress appropriately for the weather and don't forget a jacket and gloves if it will get cold.
11. Learn how to wear your uniform and try it on. This way you can avoid disasters before an actual show at a competition. Minutes before your first show is not the

time to learn the intricacies of tying your citation cord, discover that your pants are too short or too long, or learn that nobody ever issued you a plume.

12. Care for your instrument.

- Insert the brass mouthpiece or woodwind part firmly enough that it doesn't fly out when snapped up and down. Tape them during the show.
- Avoid getting a woodwind wet, especially the pads- they will fall off. If you are forced to march in the rain close all holes/keys. Use your cleaning cloth to dry the instrument after each practice. If you ever have to get pads replaced on your marching instrument ask for plastic pads.
- Oil your valves or slide before practice. It's much harder from mid-field.
- For percussion, take the opportunity to learn from your drum instructor how to tie cymbals properly and how to replace and tune a drumhead.
- Learn the proper way to set your instrument down: not on its keys or delicate valves. If you must set your instrument on the ground, set it with the others from your section in a formation. It's a nice flourish and shows off sectional spirit, and it might help save them from a careless foot.
- Consider marching a second-string instrument, particularly during rehearsals. You can buy one on EBay or even at a garage sale.

13. Get some rest. Band camp can be strenuous, and it's easier if you're well rested.

14. Be respectful and courteous towards band directors and assistants. Often they are busy or stressed, so be understanding.

Tips

- Smell good. No one likes a smelly band nerd. Deodorant helps, and should travel with you somewhere that you can get to it when getting out of a sweaty uniform, later. Remember to take showers after rehearsals!
- Keep a pencil in your instrument case to mark sheet music during practice. Guard people, sometimes a change will occur in your drill book- stick your pencil into your ponytail to hold it.
- Remember that everyone is at band camp to learn. If you're a newcomer, don't take it personally when an instructor gives advice. Remember, they're trying to help you look better in performance. If you're a returning member, help out newcomers and be patient with them. You learned once, too.
- If your water bottle is transparent, sometimes keeping it in a bag will keep it cool on a hot day; this keeps the sun from heating it up.
- Don't complain. I'm a section leader for flagline and we will make you run if you whine!

Warnings

- Woodwinds and brass should not play their instrument after eating or drinking sugary stuff (like gatorade and powerade). It's fine to have a snack during breaks, just make sure to wash it down with water.
- Never handle or play somebody else's instrument without permission. You will be held accountable if it breaks.
- Many people can overheat during band camp if it's hot outside. If you start to feel fatigued, dizzy, nausea, you may be suffering from heat exhaustion. Tell a section leader, drum major, or staff member immediately. Get to some shade and get some water if you think this is happening to you.
- Don't talk when the band director, staff, drum majors, or section leaders are talking. Not only will this make them mad, but it will distract people around you from what

they're saying, which could be very important. If you need help finding your drill spot, quietly raise your hand and someone will gladly help you. Respect upperclassmen- chances are they're right and you're wrong.

- If you are given a drill sheet with your formations on it or music do not lose it, because you will probably get in trouble. Your whole section might have to run laps!
- After rain, woodwinds will have their pads shot. Rain does happen during marching band and it is a magical thing, but remember to use filter paper to get all the moisture out of the pads after being in the rain. Otherwise you will have to pay hundreds of dollars just to replace the pads.
- If you have a smaller instrument consider getting another instrument at the local pawn shop as your "marching instrument" that way your good concert one will not be ruined on the field. Trust me, I have dropped my flute enough times to know this is worthwhile.
- Discipline. Marching Band is very military-esque. When the director is speaking, you do not. When you need to snap to attention, you snap. Take it seriously, many skills that you learn in this activity can be applied to every day life!

Things You'll Need

Your instrument

Water

Sunscreen and chapstick

Music (preferably in a binder/plastic protectors to keep clean

Ear plugs (mostly used for indoor drum line practices)

1. Dress comfortably and appropriately.

Since band camp takes place over the summer, you'll want to wear shorts and a light colored t-shirt or tank top with tennis shoes, unless otherwise specified by the band director. Also be aware of the dress codes followed by the band and the school and if there is any difference between the two.

2. Be on time.

Timely arrivals show that you want to make a commitment to the program and saves yourself from having to run laps or reprimanded by your director, drum major, or section leader. Remember: In band, early is on time, on time is late, and late means running laps or getting a punishment from one of the leaders. Also, being on time or early gets rehearsal to start (and end) on time. You don't want to be the person that makes rehearsal end later.

3. Drink plenty of water.

For the time that you'll be having rehearsals, water will be your best friend. Other drinks like soda or juice will dehydrate you. Be sure to drink water 20-30 minutes before you go out in the heat. Avoid drinking milk or eating dairy products before band camp. When you are in the heat it will not cause it to curdle and your stomach will stay at a constant temperature unless you get a heat stroke and the acid in your stomach curdles. Dairy will take a while to fully digest and you could become nauseous. Get an insulated jug for water. Don't forget to clean and dry it after each day's practice so that it doesn't gunk up inside.

4. Practice.

Make sure to take your instrument home as often as you can. Full band rehearsals are to pull together everyone's individual parts and to balance all the parts equally. You have to know your part to be able to balance it with the other instruments within the band. Don't rely on full band rehearsals to learn your parts.

5. Put in effort.

The more effort you put in at band camp, the easier it will be at football games or band competitions. You don't want to spend all your time later in the season playing catch-up.

6. Make friends.

Get to know the people in your section, whoever is sitting or standing next to you in formation, and anybody else that seems interesting to you. You have **band** and **music** in common already. However, do not talk when you're setting up formations, at attention, or listening to the director talk. You have just joined a family joining this band. It may not seem like it now, but you'll learn to love them.

7. Learn the show.

Now that you know most of your first show, it is time to practice. Practice as you would like to perform. Practice any troubled spots in your music that you cannot seem to get. Learn your formations and get them as perfect as you possibly can. Practice on your marching techniques and get better at them. If you cannot seem to get any better, ask for help from your section leader, one of your band directors, or one of the drum majors. They will be more than glad to assist you!

1. **Take care of yourself.** You'll perform better and feel better if you take care of your body. While marching band is technically considered an art, it is more rigorous than many sports.
 - **Stretch.** Marching band can be demanding during the summer. You don't want to pull a muscle or injure yourself. Also, take it easy when you have off time- Even though it's summer, staying outside and running around is sure to wear you out, leaving you with little energy or focus when it's time to get back to work.
 - **Wear sunscreen** and a hat if you will be marching in the sun. That **sunburn** won't feel good tomorrow, and it'll spare you sock tans, glove tans, and drum harness tans (somewhat). Remember to reapply every 2 hours or so. Wear chapstick that protects against the sun. Sunburned lips are **not** fun to play an instrument with, especially for brass players. Also be sure to wear shoes that don't come off in the mud if you know your school's fields are muddy during the summer.
 - **Drink plenty of water.** This means water or Gatorade/Powerade (see **Warnings**). Soda and juice will dehydrate you. Be sure to drink a full glass of water 20-30 min before you go out into the heat. Avoid drinking milk or eating dairy products just before camp. The heat will not cause it to curdle, your stomach will stay at a constant temperature unless you get heat stroke and the acid in your stomach always curdles milk anyway. Dairy will take a while to fully digest and you could become nauseous. Get an insulated jug for water. Don't forget to clean and dry it after each day's practice, so it doesn't gunk up inside.
 - **Eat healthy** foods! Eating food that wouldn't benefit your body in the first place will be even worse after such a strenuous activity such as marching. People seem to discredit how tiring it is- Heavy clothing and walking around in the sun all day is hard enough, but doing that with any instrument- from a lightweight piccolo to a fifty-pound bass drum- will surely exhaust you. Eat what you would before a workout, and plan to drink throughout the day.
 - Wear movable clothing and comfortable, athletic shoes. Dress appropriately for the weather and don't forget a jacket and gloves if it will get cold.

2.

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Learn how to wear your uniform and try it on. Take extra care if you're a freshman; make sure you get fitted for one. This way you can avoid disasters before an actual show at a competition. Minutes before your first show is not the time to learn the intricacies of tying your citation cord, discover that your pants are too short or too long, or learn that nobody ever issued you a plume.

3.

12

Care for your instrument.

- Insert the brass mouthpiece or woodwind part firmly enough that it doesn't fly out when snapped up and down. Tape them during the show. Remove tape as soon as possible to avoid getting the mouthpiece sticky or ruining it
- Avoid getting a woodwind wet, especially the **pads** - they will fall off. If you are forced to march in the rain close all holes/keys. Use your cleaning cloth to dry the instrument after each practice. If you ever have to get pads replaced on your marching instrument, ask for plastic pads.
- Oil your valves or slide before practice. It's much harder from mid-field.
- For percussion, take the opportunity to learn from your drum instructor how to tie cymbals properly and how to replace and tune a drumhead. If you don't already know those instruments as well as you know the instruments you spend the most time at, be it at a lesson or in the school auditorium, you need to take the initiative to ask someone how they work in full detail. Trust the words of every percussionist ever- not only will it keep the instruments in good condition for this session of camp, but it will also further your musical education and may come in handy in other performances, auditions and ensembles.
- Learn the proper way to set your instrument down: not on its keys or delicate valves. If you must set your instrument on the ground, set it with the others from your section in a formation. It's a nice flourish and shows off sectional spirit, and it might help save them from a careless foot. However, remember that your protective case or a stand made for the instrument is the most secure place to keep it.
- Consider marching a second-string instrument, particularly during rehearsals. You can buy one on Ebay or even at a garage sale.

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Get some rest. Band camp can be strenuous, and it's easier if you're well rested.

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Be respectful and courteous towards band directors and assistants. Often they are busy or stressed, so be understanding.

6.

15

This goes hand in hand with working hard, but put in effort. The more effort you put in at band camp, the easier it will be at competitions. You don't want to spend all your time later in the season playing catch-up. (This is especially for brass players. Holding up the horn requires a lot of endurance!)

7.

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Be aware of your place on the totem pole. If you're an underclassman, don't try to boss others around as if you're the section leader. On the flip side, if you're an upperclassman, don't alienate and harass those younger than you. If you treat the new people poorly, they won't return the next season. Everyone should keep in mind that while they may not like the band captains or drum major(s), they are the highest in student leadership. The same goes for section leaders: you don't have to like them, but you should listen to them, after all they are there to help you and they were chosen for a reason!

8.

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Be considerate of chaperones. Many bands have parents as chaperones. They are there on their own time, often using vacation time. Chaperones assist the band director. They are not there to pick up after you.

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Don't bad-mouth or try to correct the other sections. For example, saying things like "Wow, the flags were really off today," or "The trumpets are way too loud," is a BAD idea, especially if you're an underclassmen. It's not your place to judge the other sections, and it's a great way to make enemies, which is something you don't want to do. If there is a correction to be made, the BD will make it. As a camp community, remember, you have to work as a team. If something goes wrong in one section and you talk badly of it, not only does it reflect badly on you, but will also reflect badly on the community as a whole. If you work together as a team with a positive mindset, you're sure to thrive together- and you'll learn something great along the way!

This one time at band camp...we all got really bad sunburns. Band camp is a period of intense sunlight, heat, training, and bonding. Band camp is a whirlwind of experiences, but most importantly, it's a time to immerse yourself into your band family culture. In order for you to focus on this, here are the top tips on how to survive the dreaded heat and exhaustion that can be potential side effects of band camp.



1. PROTECT YOURSELF - Apply sunblock, preferably with an SPF of at least 30, at least 15 minutes before you'll be outside. Don't be afraid to apply more than you think you'll need. Get a friend to help you cover the hard areas like your shoulders and the back of your neck. Keep in mind that sunblocks are sweat-resistant, not sweat-proof, so remember to reapply the sunscreen once or twice during your outdoor block. Not only will this help to protect your skin from sun damage, but hopefully you can also minimize the dreaded sock tan and shorts tan that are the telling signs of a band kid.

2. DRESS FOR SUCCESS - There is no reason that you should ever show up to band camp in skinny jeans. Wear athletic clothing that will allow you to stretch, jog, march, and sweat. Leave your flip flops at home and

instead reach for your tennis shoes (usually flat shoes like Converse and Vans are discouraged by band directors). Opt for lighter colored clothing, rather than an all black ensemble which will absorb more heat from the sun.



3. DRINK - Investing in a Camelbak (a backpack filled with water) might be the smartest decision you'll ever make, and you'll thank yourself when you can sneak a sip while your band director or section leader is going over a couple of instructions. Another smart drinking purchase is a cooler jug, like the one above. You can fill this with water and ice, and it'll stay icy cold and refreshing throughout practice, unlike the Camelbak which has limited insulation power. Finally, consider having a supply of water and a supply of Gatorade (or Smart Water if you prefer something without flavor). These drinks have electrolytes, which you'll need if you're working outside for a couple of hours. Keep in mind that it's important to pace yourself; don't chug a ton of water before a hard rep, your body won't let that go down easily.

4. EAT - Take advantage of your lunch and dinner breaks to rest in an air-conditioned place. While some might take advantage of this time to get some extra practicing in, listen to your body and rest up if you need to. It's better to recharge and continue the following practice block with full energy levels, than to exhaust yourself for the rest of the day. Some good energy-boosting foods for lunchtime are fruits, especially bananas and blueberries; carbs, preferably in the form of whole grains; a small amount of fat, like peanut butter, paired

with a sandwich or celery; almonds and walnuts; raw veggies; and sandwiches with protein like turkey, ham, or egg. Try to avoid eating foods that are high in sugar so you won't crash after a rush of energy.



5. LISTEN TO YOUR BODY - Try to pace yourself throughout practice. Band camp can have a reputation for injuries, fainting, etc. This *ONLY* happens when you don't listen to your body. Plus, these things are usually due to the heat from being outside, not the physical demands of learning to march. Remember that the number one concern is your health, and if you're feeling unwell don't be afraid to tell a member of the band staff. There's a flip side to this coin, and that's *don't give up too easily*. After the slightest amount of exhaustion or pain, it's easy to say, "Ok, I'm done now". But it's important to power through so you can build up your stamina and prepare for the 7+ minute shows you'll be marching in a month's time. Any seasoned band member will tell you that a positive attitude on the field makes a world of a difference in your band camp experience.

6. PREPARE - It's almost impossible to stress how important it is to adequately prepare yourself for band camp. If you've been sitting around all summer and expect to shift effortlessly into band camp mode, you're wrong. Take a walk outside, play with your younger siblings, or do some push-ups before you go to bed. Drink at least 8 cups of water a day during the week leading up to band camp. And then during band camp you can...

7. TREAT YOURSELF - By going to bed early! Your body will need as much rest as possible after a long day of hard work. While it's tempting to relax by watching TV or talk with friends late at night, remember that for the time of band camp, your health should be your number one priority.



8. DON'T WORRY, BE HAPPY - Enjoy yourself as much as you can during band camp. While all these tips might sound intimidating, as mentioned earlier, the most common reason people have bad experiences with band camp is that they didn't listen to their bodies or adequately prepare. Be smart and take these tips (and the extra ones below) into serious consideration.

9. TEAM EFFORT - Remember, you're not the only one who has gone through band camp and you certainly won't be the last! If you have any questions, talk to your fellow band members. Band camp is not just a time to learn the technique of marching and which places you always miss when you apply sunblock; it's a time to get to know your fellow band members and bond with them over your awkward tan lines (and other, more important things). Everyone is in it together to succeed, a goal which can be easily lost in all these other potential issues. Be in the now, and focus on learning and enjoying the time you have with your fellow band family. It might be hard to believe, but a couple of short years from now you'll miss it.

Extra Tips for Surviving Band Camp

- Consider buying a knee brace or ankle brace if you have a known weakness in those areas
- Wear a hat and sunglasses to protect your face and eyes. Don't be embarrassed to wear a large hat that covers everything, it's okay to be known as the sombrero kid.
- Plan on bringing your own water, not mooching off of your friends'. Ask your friends to expect the same for themselves. Not only does this guarantee enough water for you, but it'll help stop the spread of sickness (which can spread like wildfire when so many people are close together).

- If you know that you're sensitive to heat, consider investing in a cooling towel to wear around the back of your neck. That's the first place you want to cool down if you're worried about overheating.
- If you have a serious sunburn from an earlier day of band camp, cover that burn up with clothing, even if that means wearing a long sleeved shirt or long pants. Look for athletic clothing that's long, white, and breathable, which should do the trick. This will help the sunburn from spreading and getting worse (and from appearing in the first place)