

MICHIGAN STATE SPARTAN MARCHING BAND

2021 Audition Information

Updated – February 2021

The Spartan Marching Band (SMB) will have both virtual and in-person audition processes for summer 2021. All applicants should review the audition requirements below before submitting an audition. Any potential changes to the audition process due to the pandemic will be communicated via email and social media platforms.

Further questions about the specific audition requirements should be directed to the following staff members:

- Hornline & Big Ten Flag - Dr. Thornton: dt@msu.edu / Dr. Golden: goldenar@msu.edu
- Drumline - Dr. Weber: drumline@msu.edu
- Color Guard - Emily Rogers: michiganstatecolorguards@gmail.com

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Summer audition timeline:

- All applicants (regardless of section) should **register for an audition** using the following form – [Registration Form](#)
- All drumline applicants should complete this form ASAP for complete access to audition materials: <https://drumline.music.msu.edu/auditions/index.html>. To submit your first round video audition, no later than Wednesday May 5th, please use the following **audition submission** form – [Audition Form](#)

Once your audition is submitted, you will receive a confirmation email that your audition materials have been received.

A note for the 2021 fall season:

At this time, we are planning to move forward as usual for the start of our 2021 season. The fall 2021 season information mailing, including all audition results, will be sent no later than Friday, July 2nd. This mailing will answer all of your questions regarding the upcoming year. **Please note:** All students who audition successfully for the Spartan Marching Band (SMB) will be expected to report to campus on Monday, August 23rd. All new drumline members will be expected to report to campus on Saturday, August 21st. **Any changes to our season, reporting dates, etc., will be communicated via email and D2L.**

Other important information for prospective SMB members:

- Students cannot be accepted into the SMB if you have not been fully admitted to Michigan State University (MSU).
- All students must enroll for credit in MUS 114 - Spartan Marching Band. When scheduling your classes for the fall semester, you should communicate to your advisor that you are planning to participate in the SMB (even if you have not heard about results). Rehearsals are every day from 4:30-6pm, with sectionals from 4:00-4:25pm on Wednesday/Friday, and an additional Monday night rehearsal from 7-9pm. Drumline has *additional* rehearsals Monday / Wednesday / Friday from 3:30 - 4:30 pm. **Class conflicts are not permitted for first year members.** You should plan the rest of your schedule around these times.
- You will be contacted by our section leaders once results are posted. They will be a great resource for you. Please utilize them and communicate all your questions!

A large, light green watermark of the MSU Marching Band logo is centered on the page. The logo is circular with 'MARCHING' at the top and 'BAND' at the bottom. In the center is a shield with 'MSU' and a 'TM' trademark symbol. There are four stars around the inner circle.

Good luck and Go Green!
#answerthecall

Spartan Marching Band Audition Requirements

Hornline Audition Information (Saxophone and Brass Instruments)

The instrumental audition should consist of one prepared solo piece or etude involving contrasting styles (3 to 5 minutes in length). A piece that you might perform at a “Solo and Ensemble Festival” would be appropriate. This piece does not need to be memorized. The piece should demonstrate the best of your musical ability - think of this as an opportunity to “wow” the adjudicator.

Please also prepare the following major scales: C, F, B flat, E flat, A flat, G, D, A, E. (Note these are not listed in concert pitch. C major scale should be started on “C” for every instrument) All of these scales should be performed by memory. Candidates are encouraged to play as many octaves as possible. The pattern can be of your choosing, again, with the goal to demonstrate the best of your musical ability.

The music video audition should contain the following:

- Introduction of yourself (first name, last name, where you are from, and potential section)
- Solo piece/etude from beginning to end
- All scales listed above from memory

Your music audition will be evaluated using the following criteria: tone, intonation, rhythm, articulation, technique, expression, and overall musicality. Please make sure that your face and hands are visible in your video while you are performing the required elements.

The visual video audition must contain:

- Display of marching technique on a football field – 10 yards of forward march “8 to 5” and 5 yards of backwards march “8 to 5” at tempos of quarter = 120 and quarter = 156 (If you do not have access to a field, please find the next best solution)

Students should utilize their schools’ marching technique when submitting videos. **Your visual audition will be evaluated using the following criteria:** posture, body control, timing, technique, overall visual performance. Please make sure that your entire body is visible for the whole performance, so that the viewer can best see all of the required elements.

All virtual auditions will be reviewed by Dr. Thornton, Dr. Golden, and graduate teaching assistants.

A note for brass and saxophone music majors:

If you have been admitted as a music major (on an instrument in the SMB), your MSU College of Music audition will satisfy for automatic membership in the Spartan Marching Band. All new music majors will receive an invitation letter from the Band Office in early May. If you would like to participate in the SMB as a music major, simply fill out the form in the early May mailing and return it to the MSU Band Office. You will then be included in our July mailing for all new SMB members. Questions about this process should be directed to Dr. Thornton (dt@msu.edu).

Drumline Audition Information

Please read ALL the information below if you are considering an audition for the MSU Drumline. **Video audition information is at the bottom of this document.** Any updates to the 2021 MSU Drumline Auditions will be posted on the MSU Drumline website at <https://drumline.music.msu.edu/auditions/index.html>.

There are two rounds of auditions for the MSU Drumline. The **first round** will be a video audition; all applicants must submit a video. Videos for the first round must be submitted by **Wednesday, May 5th (11:59pm)**.

All incoming students auditioning for the drumline must send in a video link. Returning drumline members will only be taking part in the second round of the audition.

All of the videos will be reviewed by Dr. Weber and your instrument's section leaders. You will receive feedback on audition standing (placement), what you need to work on, and if you have made it to the second round of the audition on that instrument. If you are not chosen for your first instrument, you may have the option to play the second audition on another instrument. (For example, if you audition for snare and are not selected after the first round, you may have the opportunity to audition for cymbals at the second audition.)

The **second round** of the audition will be in-person if allowed by university and government protocols for the pandemic. If you cannot attend this audition in-person, you should contact Dr. Weber at drumline@msu.edu. All students, including returning members (except squad leaders) are required to attend or submit videos for this audition. Music for the second audition will be announced after the first audition; most of the music will be the same as the first audition. Results of the audition will be announced at the end of the second audition date (May 22). Any updates to the audition process (music or pandemic policy) will be posted on the drumline website and communicated by email to all who submit the pre-registration form.

You may audition for any instrument you wish. Each instrument is auditioned separate from the others.

Some pieces are not online due to copyright protection. To obtain these pieces, please fill out the form linked on the drumline website - <https://drumline.music.msu.edu/auditions/index.html>. It is important to observe this copyright; do not share these works.

Help sessions are available! These will help you prepare for auditions. These are free and online for the spring semester. Details are on the drumline website at the link above.

If you are auditioning for bass drum, please choose the drum you would most like to play and learn that part (with unisons). Based on need and results, we may move you to a different drum for the second audition.

Recording Instructions / Tips:

- Please introduce yourself on the first video.
- Please make sure that we can see your sticks / mallets / cymbals completely. Ideally, we should be able to see your feet, head, and complete motions (i.e. cymbals, please don't have the cymbals go out of frame).
- For Double Triple, Stick Control, Triplet Grid, Sixteenth Timing, Chuggeda, and Rolls, please mark time and make sure that we can see you marking time in the video.
- When recording with a track / mp3, please play with headphones (and a speaker if possible).
 - If you can also have the mp3 play in your recording so we can hear both your playing and the mp3, please do. This would involve a speaker, a second audio line going to the camera, etc.
 - If you don't have an easy way to do this, just play with the headphones on, and we will add the mp3 on our end. We can then hear you playing with the ensemble!
 - For that reason, it is very important to play with the specific mp3s that we list / provide.
- Please make every attempt to secure an instrument to record your audition.
 - Contact your local HS band director / percussion instructor to borrow an instrument
 - If you cannot find an instrument to use in your area:
 - Snare – use a practice pad
 - Tenor – use a tenor pad (for example: <https://www.steveweissmusic.com/product/vic-firth-quadropad-hhpql/marching-practice-pads>)
 - Bases and cymbals need to use instruments.
 - Please try to obtain an instrument on your own. It is important to use the instruments / pads listed. We cannot fairly evaluate all auditioning if some people are not using appropriate equipment. If you cannot locate anything to use, please contact Dr. Weber at drumline@msu.edu and we will do our best to help you!

If you have questions, please contact Dr. Weber at drumline@msu.edu.

Requirements of the 2020 Video Audition First Round

(All tempos listed are guidelines and can vary slightly)

Snare / Tenor:

(please play with recordings; these can be found here: <https://drumline.music.msu.edu/exercises/index.html>)

1. **8s** - all variations, tempo 152
2. **Accent Tap 1** – 124
 - a. **Accent Tap 2** – 124
 - b. **Accent Tap 3** – 140
3. **Double Triple** – 120
4. **Stick Control** – 116
5. **Triplet Grid** – 156 (with metronome)
 - a. **With flams** – 140 (with metronome)
 - b. **With flams on downbeat (snares only)** – 140 (with metronome)
6. **Paradiddles** – 140 (with metronome)
7. **Chuggeda**
 - a. **Flams** - 120
 - b. **Flam taps** – 120
 - c. **Pataflafls** – 120
 - d. **Threes** – 120
 - e. **Rolls** – 120

- f. **Chudechas** – 116
8. **Cheese** – 148
9. **Diddles** – 136 and 156
10. **Martian Mambo** – (with metronome / click track)
11. **Ditty** – with recording
12. **X** – with recording

Bass:

(please play with recordings; these can be found here: <https://drumline.music.msu.edu/exercises/index.html>)

1. **8s** – all variations, tempo 152 (mark time for split!)
2. **Accent Tap 1** – 124 (with metronome)
 - a. **Accent Tap 2** – 124 (with metronome)
 - b. **Accent Tap 3** – 140 (with metronome)
3. **Double Triple** – 120
4. **Stick Control** – 120 Unison (with metronome) and split (with recording)
5. **Triplet Grid** – 144 (with metronome)
6. **Paradiddles** – with recording, 140
7. **Chuggeda** – all below variations with recording:
 - a. **Flams** - 120
 - b. **Flam taps** – 120
 - c. **Threes** – 120
 - d. **Rolls** – 120
 - e. **Chudechas** – 116
9. **Diddles** – with recording – 136 and 156
10. **Martian** – with recording
11. **Ditty** – with recording
12. **X** – with recording

Cymbals:

(please play with recordings; these can be found here: <https://drumline.music.msu.edu/exercises/index.html>)

1. **Double Triple** - 120
2. **Accent Tap 1** – 124
 - a. **Accent Tap 2** – 124
 - b. **Accent Tap 3** – 140
3. **Stick Control** – 120
4. **Sixteenth Timing** – 120
5. **Paradiddles** – 140
6. **Chuggeda - flams, flam taps, threes, rolls** – 120. **Chudechas** – 116
7. **Martian**
8. **Ditty**
9. **X**

Color Guard Audition Information

This year the Spartan Marching Band Color Guard (SMBCG) will be offering two audition options, an in-person option and virtual option. You only need to choose one of the two audition options, and all participants will be evaluated equally regardless of which option is chosen.

In-Person Option

The in-person option for the color guard audition will take place on **Saturday, June 26th**. It will be set-up in a clinic format where participants will learn parts of the SMBCG technique book, as well as a routine. We strive to have a welcoming, open, and honest approach to teaching and learning, trying our best to look at both current ability and future potential. We will be evaluating the following for all potential members:

- Work Ethic
- Response to Constructive Feedback
- Posture & Performance
- Hand Placement/Free Arms
- Technique & Execution
- Awareness of Flag Angles/Relationship Between Flag and Body
- Lower Body Placement/Awareness
- Timing & Fulfillment of Technique and Choreography

The audition will culminate in performance opportunities that allow each potential member to showcase their growth throughout the day.

Virtual Option

The virtual option for the color guard audition will consist of a video-recorded response to interview questions, a demonstration of color guard fundamentals, and a performance of a short routine that is choreographed by the SMB Color Guard Director. Anyone auditioning will submit **THREE VIDEOS**. A breakdown of what each video should include is located below.

Video 1 (Interview):

- Introduction of yourself (First name, last name, and where you are from)
- Responses to the following questions:
 - How did you hear about/discover the SMB?
 - What is one strength and one weakness of yours?
 - How do you react to critical/constructive feedback?
 - How do you handle conflict?
 - What do you do when you disagree with someone?
 - If accepted, what would you like to gain from your SMB experience?

Video 2 (Technique):

- 50 drop spins on the right and 50 drop spins on the left
 - 90-100 BPM
 - Feet in an open second position
- 25 pole hits
 - 90-110 BPM
 - Pole straight up and down with feet in an open second position

Video 3 (Routine):

- Perform routine that is choreographed by the SMB Color Guard Director

Links to two instructional videos will be emailed to those interested in auditioning. One video will be a technique video containing a short demonstration of drop spins and pole hits. The other video will contain a detailed breakdown of the choreographed routine. **The link to the technique instructional video will be sent out on Saturday, May 1st. The link to the routine instructional video will be sent out on Saturday, June 12th.**

Your color guard audition will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- Posture & Performance
- Hand Placement/Free Arms
- Technique & Execution
- Awareness of Flag Angles/Relationship Between Flag and Body
- Lower Body Placement/Awareness
- Timing & Fulfillment of Technique and Choreography

Any specific questions about the SMBCG audition process should be communicated to Emily Rogers at: michiganstatecolorguards@gmail.com

Big Ten Flag Audition Information

Individuals who wish to audition for the Big Ten Flag section will record themselves executing a set of skills that would have been taught at the live audition. Our leadership team has recorded a set of videos that will teach each of these skills. Videos will be available Monday May 3rd, and you can view them using this link: [Big Ten Flag Example Videos](#)

Our Big Ten Flag section leaders, Claire McPherson (mcphe139@msu.edu) and Maddy Niblock (niblock5@msu.edu), are available for questions and feedback during your learning/practicing process. They want to help you do your best! Please reach out to them via email, and they will help set up time for a virtual feedback session.

For your audition, you will submit 4 videos, one for each of the following skills:

- 30 yard sprint, 2 times
- Toe-Knee-Toe-Heel, Breakdown Drill (2 times for each leg, 16 counts total, quarter note = 124)
- 16 counts of Mark Time (quarter note = 124)
- 8 counts Forward March (8 to 5) into 16 counts Prance (quarter note = 156)

These are all skills that will be reviewed again in preseason. You should do your very best to perfect them as well as you can. **Your audition will be evaluated using the following criteria:** posture, body control, timing, foot/leg technique, physical fitness, overall visual performance.