

Freshmen Trombone Guide

Reg week

- You can get approval for early move-in if you are trying out for the band. There will be more information about this on the band web site. Find another freshman in your dorm trying out for the band. Become friends. Look at the schedule for the week. It is VERY important to make all the rehearsals. Don't skip out because you have to go to training for your job at Ed's or Frank's. Explain to the manager that you have to go to band practice. They'll understand.
- Come to drum major try-outs if you can. This might be your first look at our marching style and give you a taste of what to expect in the first week of practice. The drum major will be one of your motivational speakers at practice and give you a 'slogan for the day'. Even though they don't play their instrument, they are looked at as a leader of the band, a bridge between the members and Mike.
- Come to the first upper-class rehearsal. Even though you won't line up and march with us, you can start to learn how to obey whistle commands and all the little details that could set you apart from your fellow freshman.
- List of stuff to have for reg week practices:
 1. Water, water, water. You'll probably go through almost a gallon per practice. Add some sort of gatorade mix to keep you going.
 2. Sun block. Waterproof.
 3. Fanfare On Wisconsin Music. This is the first thing we play when we get on the field before a game. On Wisconsin is the second half of this music, and it is what you play when we say "Play your favorite song!". MEMORIZE IT. Be able to play On Wisconsin in your sleep with a mouth full of rocks, without music, and backwards.
 4. Head bandana or sweat band. Sweat and sun block in the eyes hurts!
 5. Athletic shorts and a crappy old shirt that you will most likely take off after 10 minutes. Don't be the freshman that shows up in jeans or khakis.
 6. Shoes. So here's the deal with shoes. Any athletic shoes will work OK. Keep in mind that they will get very dirty and probably start falling apart after a season of marching. The field will get muddy if it rains. Most of the band has a pair of black Adidas Samba shoes. These are an unofficial shoe of the Wisconsin marching band. Before we were given cleats for game day, we marched shows with these. Most of us wear these for concerts and any other performance. It'd be a good idea to get a pair, and you'll look like you know what you're doing if you show up to practice wearing them.

7. Your instrument, duh! Just try to avoid bringing a trombone with an F attachment (trigger). Its heavy and you might get picked on for having it. After reg week, if you make the band, you will be issued a nice silver Getzen trombone from the instrument god, Dan Brice.

- Come to practice at least a little bit in shape. These are comparable to high school football practices in terms of the physical activity. Start running and maybe lifting weights a few weeks before it all starts.
- Don't worry about the music try-out. Mike will have you play scales and sight read something for part placement. Not a big deal. He usually gives the best players first part, then second, then third, even though he says he needs good players on all three parts. There are some that have to learn the instrument over the summer, so you'll be fine. Just sign up and get it over with.
- The upper class will sometimes do push-ups if they feel they made a mistake in practice. As a freshman, don't keep doing push-ups over and over. Obviously you will mess up a lot. The upper class will let you know when you need to do push-ups, trust them.
- Be vocal. Count out loud with the steps. Show intensity. Do exactly what the upper class does and what they tell you. (most of the time) Example: "One, two, three, four, five, six, prepare to turn!" (left foot first, all turns on right foot)
- Sectionals. Most practices each section will go off to their own little part of the field and take attendance and complain a lot about how hot it is and how their feet hurt. This is your time to shine. This is where the upper class gets to see you up close and from this make recommendations to Mike. You will get tired of doing the same crap over and over again. Deal with it. At some point Mike will come over and watch you march and play On Wisconsin in groups.
- Only your first day or so will be without instruments. Once we put a horn in your hands, your marching will probably go to shit. One of the hardest things for me personally as a freshman was holding my trombone the RIGHT way. The right hand is the same, but we hold our bell at around 10:00 with our left hand. This lets us do maneuvers without our horn flopping all over and hold our music flip-folder up there. Practice playing this way before you come to practice. Get a good feel for pressing the upper tube into your shoulder/neck area so it doesn't bounce around when you march.
- Your lips will probably get torn up. With our marching style, the impact will take its toll on your lips. Just be careful not to press your mouthpiece too much to your mouth.

Did I make it?

- There are a few possibilities after you actually make it through reg week:

- Full Spot - only a few freshmen from each section get a full spot. This depends on class size and how many spots are on the field. This means you will march a pre-game AND halftime spot.
- Half Spot - most freshmen get this. You will march either a pre-game OR halftime spot, to be determined by Mike. You will essentially share a spot with another freshman.
- Alternate - you will get a uniform, but you won't have a spot on the field. You may get to march a show if someone gets hurt or has to miss a game and Mike decides you are ready.
- Sweater - you made the band, but you won't get a uniformed spot on the field. You will purchase a red wisconsin band sweater and wear that to all the games and play everything with us but the shows on the field. Janice Stone will work with you on the sidelines during practice to help you possibly get a half spot for a game. You will also carry stuff like plumes and backpacks to the stadium, and maybe hold a ladder or two. If we go to a bowl game, sweaters usually get a uniform to wear.
- Cut - you didn't make it. Don't show up to any more practices. If your name isn't on the list on the window of the humanities building, you are cut. You can still go in and talk to Mike about why you didn't make it and try out next year.
- If your name is on the list, go in at the specified time to get your instrument and uniform. Show up to the next practice and look for a piece of paper referred to as "the block". This will have your name on it and show you your spot in a rank. As a trombone, you will be in either rank 3, 6, 9, 19, 21, 23, or A.

Practice

- Once class starts, we will practice Tuesday - Friday at the practice field from 3:30-5:30. Show up early. Sometimes Mike will ask people to do a music rehearsal on Monday at the same time to go over the music for the shows. This is highly recommended but not required.
- Learn how to read the charts.
- You'll need a flip folder with at least ten pages in it. Put your pre-game music on one side and your half time music on the other side. Go to the bookstore and buy a "China Marker" grease pencil or two, or three. Tie it to a shoelace and hang it around your neck. We use these to mark our moves on our flip folders. Then we write our moves in pencil on our music for the game, and we can easily wipe the pages clean for the next show.
- On game Saturday, we will have an early morning practice in the stadium, usually around 7 am, depending on game time. This is your last chance to march your show before the actual performance. We usually go through it once playing, then again

without playing to work on alignment. The stadium is different from the practice field in that you won't have a visible spot on the ground to march to unless you are on the hash mark or on the crossbar of the 4 in the 40 yard line number.

- DO NOT sleep in on Saturday morning. You will more than likely lose your spot for the show. Your rank leader should ask you if you need a wake-up call, and rank 3 usually comes early and has breakfast on the field.
- If you need to miss a practice during the week for any reason, talk to your rank leader and have a good reason like "I have to take a test."

Game Day

- If you don't have a pre-game spot, bring a backpack. This is commonly called the 'shit bag' and you get to carry around your rank's cameras, water bottles, money, keys, sunglasses, and hats and gloves when it gets cold. If you HAVE a pre-game spot, DON'T bring a backpack. Just come to Union South wearing your uniform, carrying your horn and hat. Put your flip-folder in your hat, your gloves over your left shoulder in your uniform, and your spats in your back pocket. Once you get there, put on your spats with spat tape and get _good_ plumes for your rank.
- If you have a pre-game spot, memorize the music. You'll be so amped up from the crowd and your first show that you won't play much. You'll be too worried about staying in line and in step and pointing your toe and not missing your badger turn.
- Memorize the following for pre-game: (the show will probably be in this order)
 - Fanfare / On Wis
 - Opposing team's school song
 - Wisconsin Forward Forever
 - Some 'park and blow' - you'll be standing there playing it - memorization optional
 - Songs to Thee Wisconsin segue into America the Beautiful
 - Star Spangled Banner
 - If You Want to Be a Badger
- Have songs like Louie Louie, Old Time Rock and Roll, Swingtown, and Beer Barrel and anything else Mike says ready to play during the game.
- Halftime: we don't usually memorize these unless we are doing a road show. Don't screw it up, or we'll all laugh at you when we watch the tape of the show on Tuesday after practice.
- 5th Quarter: after we win, we put our hats on backward and march out on the field for a little fun with the crowd. Have the following songs for 5th Quarter. You will eventually memorize these, since no upper class uses music for these anymore (hopefully).
 - Opposing school song

- You've Said it All (commonly referred to as 'Bud')
 - Badger
 - Tequila (play through each other's slides)
 - Swingtown
 - Hey Baby (walk around and sing to the crowd)
 - Beer Barrel Polka
 - Rock and Roll #2 (The Hey! Song)
 - Chicken Dance (walk around the field in an endless line of bones)
 - Space Badger (trombones make a big circle in the end zone)
 - Varsity (line up and sway)
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- We then exit the stadium and play a few tunes out by the parking ramp. We also sing "Hard to be Humble", so make sure you know that. Then we march back to Humanities along University Ave and do dismissal.