7TH REGIMENT

FRONT ENSEMBLE AUDITION BOOK
Welcome!

Thank you for expressing interest and taking the first step in becoming a member of the 7th Regiment Drum and Bugle Corps! This packet is your primary resource in regards to the front ensemble program, with the following information and music being designed to give you an understanding of our technique program and how we perform. Read through everything carefully and prepare the materials to the best of your ability prior to the symposiums.

**Audition Process Overview:**
The goal of the audition process is to provide you with an educational experience while evaluating your musical performance. Your time spent with 7th Regiment will consist of a group audition and an individual audition. The evaluation will take place over the course of the symposium. You will receive feedback after the symposium that will have you in one of three categories:

1. Contract: You have earned yourself a spot in the 7th Regiment Front Ensemble due to your preparation and playing abilities.

2. Callback: We would like to see you again before making a final decision. We are looking for growth from you as a player between camps.

3. No contract or callback: While we would love to offer everybody a contract, there are only so many spots we can have on the field. At this time we feel that you still have room to improve before we offer you a contract or callback with 7th Regiment. We encourage you to keep practicing and come back next year.
Technique Overview:

7th Regiment Height System will be based on inches from the keyboard:

- pp - 1 ½” (Just barely hovering, slight downward angle)
- p - 3” (Slight upward angle in the wrist)
- mp - 6”
- mf - 9”
- f - 12” (Full extension of just the wrist)
- ff - 15” (Adding in the arm)

Body Posture:
The key to playing all percussion is rooted in relaxation. The first area where this is established is in our posture. To begin, our feet should be shoulder-width apart, with knees slightly bent to avoid cutting off circulation to the feet. Your torso should be upright with your shoulders back, standing with a strong presence, with our chins up, looking down the nose to see the instrument. We do not wish for you to be hunched over in any way, but rather to be standing tall with an aura of confidence!

Bar Placement:
Unless otherwise indicated, the desired location to hit the keys is in the center of the bar on both the naturals and accidentals. There may be times where you are asked to play on the edge of a note, for instance, when the letter “E” is written in music or when we reach a certain tempo where playing on the edge of the accidentals is necessary.

Set Position/Up Position:
Throughout our technique program, two positions we often utilize to maintain uniformity is the set position and the up position, or playing position.

Set Position prepares us for the material we are about to play. When we’re “set”, your mallets should be placed at a hover over the first note/chord that you are about to play. This position should be set up with mallet heads directly above the center of the resonator for all notes (again, unless instructed otherwise).

Playing Position gives us a stationary reference of where our mallets should be positioned while in the context of playing, and usually is extended fully above the instrument.
Two Mallet Technique:

Grip:
The 7th Regiment Front Ensemble employs a “front fulcrum” approach to all two mallet playing. When we build our grip, there’s a few things we need to keep in mind in order to set ourselves up for success:

1. Divide our mallet shaft/stick into thirds. At the bottom third, closest to the end of the shaft, place your hand around the mallet, so that approximately two inches come out at the back of your hand.
2. The mallet should rest on the first knuckle of the index finger and the pad of the thumb, forming a “T-grip” between the two fingers.
3. Wrap the back three fingers around the mallet/stick naturally. All fingers should be firm on the mallet/stick, but never tight!
4. The thumbnail should not face directly vertical nor horizontal, but rather should split the difference at around a 45 degree angle, with the back of our hand facing the ceiling.

Note: The stick/mallet should act as a natural extension of your forearms. Again, this approach is rooted in relaxation!

Stroke:
The 7th Regiment Front Ensemble utilizes the “Piston Stroke” as our method in striking the instrument. The piston stroke is a stroke that has full rebound, and is primarily initiated from the wrist. The mallets begin in playing position, travel down to the bar, and return to the playing position to complete the stroke.

A few guidelines in our stroke:

1. Initiate the stroke from the wrist, as if you are dribbling a basketball.
2. Watch that the path of direction is straight up and down.
3. Ensure you maintain an uninterrupted motion from the point of attack back to the desired height (use superior rebound).
Four Mallet Technique:
The 7th Regiment uses the “Stevens Method” for four mallet playing.

Building Our Stevens Grip:

1. Begin by opening the palm of your hand and placing the end of a mallet in the center of your palm, starting to build the inside mallet.
2. Let the mallet rest on the first knuckle of your index finger, then place your thumb on top of that knuckle, again forming a “T-grip” between the two fingers. Your pointer finger, informally known as your perch, should be relaxed and pointed towards your other hand, not curled into the thumb.
3. Place your middle finger at the base of the mallet to secure the mallet within your hand.
4. Take the other mallet, place it on the first knuckle of your ring finger and second knuckle of your pinky finger, and wrap those fingers around the mallet. This mallet should rest in between your middle finger and ring finger, splitting the difference between the second knuckle and the webbing of your middle finger. Approximately 1/4-1/2 inches of the mallet shaft in the outside mallet should be visible behind the pinky finger.
5. With the mallets in our hands, we want to ensure that our thumbnails are facing up towards the sky, our index fingers are pointing towards each other, and that all four mallets are set within the same “plane”, or at the same height.

Stroke: Keeping the same principles as our two mallet approach, we will initiate the stroke from the wrist and strive for a full rebound, however there are certain distinctions in our strokes when utilizing four mallets.

Double Vertical Strokes: When both mallets in one hand travel together to play two notes at the same time. Similar to a piston stroke, we want the direction of the mallet to travel straight up and down, with an uninterrupted motion between the point of attack back to the desired height. Because our thumbs are in a different position than when holding two mallets (set facing up instead of a 45 degree angle), our stroke is going to model more of a “Karate Chop” motion, initiated from the tendon where our thumb meets our wrists, as opposed to the “dribbling” motion from two mallets.
**Single Independent Strokes:** When one mallet moves independently from the other mallet in the same hand. This is done by creating several different planes between your wrist (low height, close to the keyboard), the tacet mallet (middle height), and the playing mallet (highest height), and rotating the playing mallet down and around the other stationary mallet to strike the keyboard and then return to the playing position. During the stroke, the other mallet in your hand should remain in the same place. The goal is to have as little motion in the tacet mallet as possible.

**Single Alternating Strokes:** Closely related with the Single Independent stroke, but with less concern for the motion in the other mallet. As one mallet strikes the bar, the other will raise slightly. Be sure not to simply rotate the wrist, in which your rotation would resemble a “see-saw”, but rather think of the pivot point as bouncing from one mallet to the next.
Full Score
Play with 2 and 4 mallets

In All 12 Major and Minor Keys \( \frac{=}{80-152+} \)

Mallets

Piano

Stick Control - 8/8/16

Rack Percussion

5

Mils.

Pno.

Rack
Boogie

7th Regiment Front Ensemble '23

"Boogie" is a simple double-stop exercise that we utilize to work basic two-mallet technique.

1) Play this exercise with as full a stroke as possible from the wrist.
2) As the tempo increases, play lower and utilize more fingers.
3) There should be NO "false accents" in this piece – every note should have the same weight and sound quality.
4) This exercise CAN be transposed to different keys, but should be mastered in C major first.
Full Score
Play with 2 and 4 mallets.
Play in all 12 Major and Minor Keys

\( \text{Salsa Verde} \)
7th Regiment Front Ensemble ‘23

\[ \text{Check} \]

\[ \text{Timpani} \]

\[ \text{Piano} \]

\[ \text{Drum Set} \]

\[ \text{Rack Percussion} \]

\[ \text{Mls.} \]

\[ \text{Timp.} \]

\[ \text{Pno.} \]

\[ \text{Dr. Set} \]

\[ \text{Rack} \]
This exercise can be played with different permutations:

Single Alternating: “Out-In”, “In-Out”, [1+3/2+4], [2+4/1+3],

Lateral: [1234], [1243], OR
[1234, 2341, 3412, 4123] AKA Broccoli