



**2014**

# ***Revere Marching Minutemen***

## ***Brass Development Program***

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This book will be your guide to the Revere Marching Minutemen Season. It includes all warm-ups, exercises, and explanations you will need to improve your personal playing, marching, and performance quality, as well as, succeed in the fall Marching Band Season. Please read through this book carefully in its entirety. The majority of this will become memorized through daily routine and your initiative to become a better player and performer. You should read through this book entirely and begin working on memorizing the exercises provided in it before band camp begins.

## Section 1 – Playing Development and Warm-up

\*Disclaimer- You may be tested on the content of this book or in the actual performance of its examples and exercises

### *Playing Development and warm-up*

#### **Posture –**

To begin improving your playing quality it is necessary to practice perfect posture. To do so you must :

- stand tall
- weight distributed evenly between your feet on your platforms
- upper body weight lifted from the waist and slightly forward
- Shoulders relaxed and back
- head up
- horn held 10 degrees above parallel
- wrists straight
- hands strong but relaxed for optimal finger dexterity
- spine completely aligned with a string running from the crown of the head to the center between the ankles

#### **Timing & Marking Time**

Next it is important to practice good timing. To do this we will practice almost all of our exercises or warm ups while marking time.

To mark time lift the left foot slightly off the ground and then place it back down on the correct downbeat while lifting the opposite foot slightly off the ground in a left-right-left-right pattern. To use the mark time in an exercise we will do as follows.

- At the beginning of an exercise you will receive 8 counts either from the metronome or the conductor/instructor.
- for the first 4 counts you will stand still in open first position
- on count five move your left foot into parallel first position
- on count six move your right foot into parallel first position
- on count 7 rearticulate your left foot while maintaining parallel first position
- on count 8 rearticulate your right foot while maintaining parallel first position

Maintain marking time in parallel first position until the last two counts of the exercise at which time turn your right foot out to open first position followed by turning your left foot out to open first position. This will be defined better during band camp.

CAUTION: Your upper body should not sway or bounce while marking time. Keep your upper body very still for optimal playing.

## Stepouts

The most problematic steps of a drill move are the first two steps. To remedy this we will use a step out to mark the beginning of each rep during warm-up for extra practice. When we begin drill, stepouts will show where the beginning of each drill move, phrase, or rep begins. A stepout is executed as follows:

- count 1 – take an 8 to 5 step in any direction with your left foot
- count 2 – bring your right foot to your left
- count 3 – step back to your original placement with your left foot
- count 4 – bring the right foot to meet the left foot again in parallel first position

## Breathing & AIR

First things first, we are all wind instrument players which means that to produce sound we must use AIR! The key to any outstanding wind ensemble is breath support. We will spend a large amount of time exercising and expanding our lung capacity. The average person only uses 20-25% of their lungs. We must strive to use close to 90%.

To succeed in air support and breathe control we must abide by several key factors

- Breathe deeply into the lungs expanding them outward away from the center of each individual lung
- Fill completely up, when exercising the lungs, it is important to expand and stretch the lungs as much as possible to allow for more air
- Maintain relaxation, keep the throat as open as possible, avoid resistance and audible friction (strive for a silent breath)
- Inhales and exhales will be done on the hOe syllable and should never be tense
- Air NEVER stops when playing. Air is either entering or exiting the lungs to avoid stale air and capping.

### Exercise B1

- To release the air a short breath in will be used (a breath release) strive to make the note ring
- during exercises we will practice continuous air movement by breathing in a pattern as follows where “in” represents an inhale and out represents an exhale:  
in-out-in
- Before an entrance we will take a two count breath whenever possible, this will help remedy timing and attack problems
- To avoid the buildup of carbon dioxide in the lungs you must exhale as completely as possible before taking a two count breath

Example in out in in

## Exercise B2

Stagger Breathing helps to create a seamless sound over a long duration of playing especially during long notes and impact moments. Some rules when stagger breathing:

- Never breathe on a barline
- Never breathe between phrases
- Never breathe when the person next to you is breathing
- Sneak in and out, never come back in or cut out at the full dynamic volume (this creates holes in the sound)
- Start soft when you come back in and crescendo to the ensembles dynamic level

## **Buzzing**

Buzzing will be utilized to strengthen your embouchure, pitch control, and flexibility. As well this will improve ensemble tone quality and intonation. Key concepts when buzzing

- Keep the corners of the mouth firm
- Hold the mouth piece at the end of the shank in your left hand
- Use your thumb, index and middle fingers to grip the shank
- Hold the mouth piece as close to perpendicular to the lips as possible
- Apply LITTLE TO NO pressure on the mouthpiece with your lips
- Separate the teeth and open the jaw and maintain an open throat just as we practiced with breathing
- Strive to produce a dark resonant sound while buzzing

NOTE: Free buzzing (buzzing the lips without the mouthpiece) It becomes important to practice free buzzing on your own, like a singer with a microphone and speaker, your lips are much like the singers voice, it produces all of the sound and quality and your mouthpiece is like the microphone that attaches to the speaker, in your case, the instrument itself. If you take the microphone and speaker away you should still hear the voice of the singer just like if we take away your instrument and mouthpiece you could still produce a buzz. The mouthpiece and instrument are only a means to amplify the buzz of your lips

SLOTTING – When buzzing you should move from pitch to pitch with precision. If you move from pitch to pitch by sliding, much like a gliss on a trombone, tuning and timing problems are created because everyone arrives at the pitch at different times. Strive to move note to note and without all the notes in between. THIS DOES NOT MEAN STOP YOUR AIR OR BREAK THE AIRSTREAM BETWEEN NOTES.

## **Singing**

Singing allows you as an ensemble to improve intonation, tone quality, and understanding your responsibility with reference to the musical line. Many of the qualities needed to play a wind instrument well are used in singing, such as:

- Keeping your throat open
- Using excellent air support
- Listening to match pitch and intervals
- Understanding where you fit in the musical line
- We will hum to internalize the pitch
- We will sing warm-ups, chorales, show excerpts, and the Alma Mater
- Sing on the dAAh syllable

Exercise Buzzing/Singing

## **Long Tones**

The use of long tones allows you to concentrate solely on tone quality, breath support, and intonation. As well, long tones are useful to understand balance and blend within the ensemble. Be sure to practice with excellent breath support and marking time.

Exercise: Remington F

Exercise: Remington B flat

Pedal Tones

## **Lip Slurs and Flexibility**

This is the basis of wind playing improvement. You will learn to love lip slurs because they:

- Increase your flexibility
- Improve your embouchure control
- Help maintain fluidity

Each exercise is a musical phrase and should be treated as such with slight dynamic contour and arrival at a destination. Many times we will sing, buzz, and play each exercise

Exercise L1

Exercise L2

Exercise L3

Exercise L4

## Articulation & Finger Dexterity

To maintain excellent timing we must be able to play the same way and use our tongues alike. These exercises will help unify note length, tonguing, articulation style, and finger speed

Exercise A1

Exercise A2

Exercise FD

## Volume and Intonation

To create a better understanding of dynamic levels as they change and expand through the season we will assign numbers to different dynamics and levels of air support. This will be a scale from 1-16 and will be said as “10 air” meaning forte or “use 16 air”

1 ppp	5 mp	9 f-	13 ff+
2 pp-	6 mp+	10 f	14 fff
3 pp	7 mf-	11 f+	15 fff+
4 p	8 mf	12 ff	16 ffff

As the season continues the maximum and minimum volume will change, as this happen the staff will reassign numbers as much as possible. When we are defining our dynamic capabilities you must understand where your personal maximum and minimum are. (max-the loudest you can play without spreading your tone, min- the softest you can play while maintaining air support and intonation). On your own you should explore your upper dynamic levels and practice just past where your tone spreads so you may begin to learn to control the new dynamic level. To do so make sure you keep the corners of your mouth firm and use the appropriate amount of air support. Make sure NOT to squeeze the aperture of your lips shut (the space where air exits through your lips). Using proper air support is also key to maintaining perfect intonation at various dynamic levels.

Glass Chords

Chord Progressions

The use of these chord progressions will allow us to improve our intonation in a performance like situation as well as understanding the balance of the chord.

## **Balance and Blend**

We will use different chorales and excerpts from the show to improve your understanding of the balance and blend of the ensemble. Which instrument has the important line? Who has the Melody, Harmony, or Textural part.

Listening Level 1 – Self-awareness – What am I doing? Am I playing the correct note/dynamic/style?

Listening Level 2 – Section-awareness – What is my section doing? Am I matching the sections pitch/dynamic/style?

Listening Level 3 – Ensemble-awareness – Where does my section or musical line fit within what the ensemble is playing? Am I matching the ensemble's dynamic/style? Listen to all the other instruments and musical lines

Sure on this Shining Night  
Also Sprach Zarathustra  
Salvation is Created  
Exercise Show Excerpts

## **Tools**

### **Bopping**

To improve vertical timing alignment we will utilize the method of bopping. This means reducing every note to a single staccato eighth note. However several rules apply:

- Slurred passages are played full length
- Tied notes are not rearticulated
- Use an open throat and proper air support
- Play using a dAAh syllable NO DITS!
- Play at the given dynamic level

### **Half Valving & Foghorn**

As we continue to improve our breath support, volume control, and tone quality, we will use two methods to create extra resistance (much like lifting weights for your face)

The first method that we will use is called the foghorn. This involves removing the tuning slide of the instrument and proceeding to play as if the tuning slide was in. This works much like buzzing does however it has added resistance and creates breaks in the note range. Try to remove all of the air from your sound; this will help you play with a bigger, bolder, rounder, and fuller sound.

NOTE: For this to work your tuning slide must be able to move, be taken out, and put back in.

The second method we will use is called half valving and will be used much more often. This involves playing your instrument with the valves pressed halfway. You must continue to buzz tongue and play like you normally would just without pressing any of the keys. This adds a great deal of resistance allowing you to strengthen your tone quality, lung support, and intonation

Final NOTE: We will be using many different signs & symbols to mean different things especially when warming up to improve communication

ie. You may be told to play lip slur 1 by the instructor and he/she will represent that by extending the index finger and thumb of the right hand and the index finger of the left hand, which seen from your perspective would look like L1

Different chords will be different hand symbols much like sign language, we will create our own to improve communication.