



YAMAHA

Educator Series

PERCUSSION



James Campbell

James Campbell has received worldwide recognition as a performer, teacher, author, and is a respected figure in the development of the contemporary percussion ensemble. He has toured extensively throughout the United States, Canada, Sweden, Japan, and Singapore. Currently, professor of music and director of percussion studies at the University of Kentucky in Lexington, he also holds the position of principal percussionist with the Lexington Philharmonic Orchestra. James has served in several positions with the Percussive Arts Society including president, and now serves on the board of directors. James Campbell is a Yamaha performing artist and clinician.

Marching Percussion Instrumentation

By James Campbell

Selecting the appropriate size percussion section for your marching band is often a difficult process. The director must balance the varied instrumentation of the percussion section to the size of the wind section. One must consider the talent level of the students and the scoring of the musical arrangements to provide a full ensemble sound in the percussion section.

Although the exact instrumentation of the percussion section serves to personalize the sound of each band, care should be taken to balance the instrumentation to avoid having one segment of the percussion section overpowering the rest of the band. Your percussion section should be balanced just as the choir director balances the sopranos, altos, tenors and basses. The following instrumentation is recommended to provide a balanced ensemble sound.

Woodwind & Brasswind	Percussion	Snare Drums	Marching Toms	Bass Drums	Cymbals	Pit
35	11	2 or 3	1 or 2	2	2	2
50	15	3 or 4	2	3	2 or 3	2 or 3
65	20	5 or 6	2 or 3	4	3	3 or 4
80	22	6	3	4	4	4 or 5
100	27	8	4	5	4	5 or 6
150	32	10+	5+	6	5+	6+

A significant development in contemporary marching percussion sections has been the use of tuned bass drums. By tuning the bass drums in minor thirds, walking bass lines and other melodic and harmonic passages can be reinforced by the bass drums. Today's bass drummers must have a good sense of time, as the parts are very isolated, yet together they become very contrapuntal.

Marching toms should also be tuned in minor thirds and should be the tenor/alto extension of the basses. In addition, when purchasing equipment always remember that sticking patterns are easier when written over four drums as opposed to three. Therefore, I encourage the purchase of at least one set of quads.



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Utilize at least one cymbal player for every two snare drummers so that ride cymbal passages will sound most effective. Cymbals are the most visual segment of the percussion section and the use of an extra player may serve to make an effective visual contribution to a field show. Cymbal sizes and timbres should be selected by keeping the music in mind. Always enhance the music as much as possible.

It is common practice to utilize concert percussion instruments in modern field shows by placing them in the front area of the field, which is referred to as the "pit" (as in orchestra pit). The pit is the staging area for mallet instruments, timpani, and accessories. These grounded instruments make it possible for performers to play several instruments during the course of a production and expand the range of musical possibilities in percussion scoring.

The contemporary marching percussion ensemble has successfully integrated concert percussion instruments into the field show. The following percussion instruments are recommended in the pit section to meet the demands of the contemporary field show.

MARCHING PERCUSSION PIT SECTION

Players	MXL-32AF Acoustalon-Lite™ Xylophone	MBL-832AU Marching Bells	*YX-335 Acoustalon™ Xylophone	*YM-2400 Acoustalon Marimba	YG-1200A Orchestra Bells	*YV-2700 Silver Vibes	DC-9190A Chimes	TP 4104A TP 6204A Timpani	CB-636 Bass Drum	CTS-6802 CTS-3456 Concert Toms
2	X	X								
3	X	X	**	**	X					
4			X	X	X	X				
5			X	X	X	X		X		
6			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

** The YX-335 and YG-1200A are optional in place of the MXL-32AF and MBL-832AU.

* The YX-335, YM-2400 and YV-2700 are available in a Muti-Frame design that incorporates an extra-stable frame and rack pipes for mounting percussion accessories

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