

## **Surviving Freshman Band Camp: A New Member's Guide to Physical Preparation**

As training week approaches, it is important for any member of the Ohio University Marching 110 to prepare. This band is a physical one, and requires a level of physical fitness one might not expect. This guide is here to help you prepare for freshman camp, offering a number of tips from those of us who have been through it.

### **Activity:**

First off, it is important to get some sort of physical exercise everyday. Training week is strenuous, as is the entire season, so it is beneficial to be in shape upon arrival. Get outside as often as possible, if only to adjust to the heat and humidity that will be around when it's the end of August and we are all marching outside from dawn until dusk. Also, don't forget to wear sunscreen!

It is recommended to run or walk at least 3 times a week early in the summer for at least half an hour at a time. As training week gets closer, try to run more often in preparation. It may not sound fun now, but you'll thank yourself (and us!) later.

### **Diet:**

Water, water, water! It's a good idea to avoid carbonated beverages in the summer heat, and it's an even better idea to do so when exercising.

When exercising, it is best to eat carbohydrates prior to exercise. Protein is recommended afterwards to rebuild any muscles that may be fatigued.

### **Stretching:**

At band camp you will discover muscles you haven't worked in years, and some you didn't know existed. It is important to stretch before and after exercising to reduce muscle tension and stiffness. Below is a list of stretches as executed by the band.

- "right over left...": This is basically obvious; while standing, cross the right leg over the left at the ankle, then bend at the waist and reach for your toes. Hold for 10 seconds, then switch which leg is on top.
- "down on the right...": Another obvious stretch; stand with your legs apart and lean down towards first the right leg, then alternate to left and down the middle between the legs, reaching for the ground. Hold for 10 seconds.
- "quads": While standing, bend one leg at the knee and grab your ankle behind you. Switch after 10 seconds.
- "butterfly": Sit down on the ground and bend legs at knees, bringing feet together. Pull feet in towards your body until you feel a stretch in your inner thighs. DO NOT BOUNCE. Hold for 10 seconds.
- "right over left and twist": While sitting, stretch both legs in front of you. Take the right leg and cross it over the left, with your ankle near the knee. First, hold leg with your arms, stretching it. Hold for 10 seconds, then repeat with the left leg over the right.
- "arms and arches": While standing, stretch first right leg back behind you, balancing on the toe. Focus on stretching the arch. While doing this, cross right arm in front of your body, using the left arm to stretch it. Stretch both simultaneously and hold for 10. Switch to left arm and leg.

- “calves”: While standing, stretch right leg behind you and bend at the left knee. The focus should be on the back part of your lower right leg, or your calf muscle. Or, get in the push-up position and put one leg hook one foot over your ankle, keeping one leg straight with the toe support you on the ground. Hold for 10 and switch.
- “hamstrings”: One way to stretch your hamstrings is by extending one leg with the heel on the ground and the toe pointing up. Put your weight on the other leg that is slightly bent. Feel the stretch in your hamstring. Hold for 10 and switch.
- “arms”: Put your arms behind you, linking your hands. Lift your arms up, like somebody was pushing your hands. This stretch is felt in the shoulders. Hold for 10. Also, stretch the arms by grabbing one elbow, reaching that hand to touch below your back. Pull on the elbow to stretch. Hold for 10.

Be sure to stretch all muscle groups. These stretches are guidelines, but it is encouraged to stretch however you feel comfortable. Also, do not stretch cold muscles. Before stretching, do some light movement to make sure blood is flowing.

### **Strength:**

It would be helpful for some instrumentalists to work on specific muscle groups. All instrumentalists need strong legs for our high chair step, but below is a list of target muscle areas to focus on before band camp.

- Altos and tenors: During parades, the sax is held in the right hand. It may be beneficial to work on building upper-body strength, particularly in the arms.
- Trumpets: It would be a good idea for you to work on back and shoulder strength, as the trumpets are held up at an angle many may not be used to. Arms are also important.
- Mellophones: Mellophones are heavy, so it is encouraged to work on upper body strength, particularly arms and shoulders.
- Trombones: Arms and shoulders are also important for trombone players. Push-ups are recommended.
- Euphoniums: It is very important to build upper body strength, as the instrument is held primarily with the right hand and arm. Arms and shoulders would be best to target.
- Tubas: The weight of the metal sousaphones is rested primarily on the shoulders. Maintain core strength, as well as shoulders and back.
- Percussion: Core, back, shoulders and arms all deserve focus.

Take a few seconds and just stand, holding your instruments. Imagine holding your instrument for a long time, and note what muscles would be sore. Everybody in this band marches the same way, so it is important to keep the legs in shape.

### **Music:**

It is suggested to practice playing after a workout, so you can get used to playing when tired. It's important to practice over the summer, no matter when you do.

Most importantly, enjoy the summer! We look forward to greeting you in August for training week.