



THE
UNIVERSITY
OF UTAH

DRUMLINE

www.uofubands.org

AUDITIONS TO
BE HELD ONLINE
ONLY

FOR VIDEO
SUBMISSION
GUIDELINES, SEE
AUDITION
PACKETS



VIDEOS DUE:
May 15, 2024 @ 5p (MST)

EMAIL VIDEOS TO:
Mike.Sammons@utah.edu

[AUDITION PACKETS LINK](#)



[@uofuperc](#)



THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

CHOPS CLASS

Free and OPEN to ALL High School and University students.
Develop drumming skills. Meet and drum alongside Utah
Percussionists.

TOPICS: 2024 Utah Drumline Audition Packet
Rudiment Breakdowns, Grid Series and more...

DATES: (All days Thursdays / All Times 8-9p MST)

3/14, 3/21, 3/28, 4/4, 4/11, 4/18

COME AS YOU WANT - You don't have to make every class

TO BRING: STICKS, PADS, **AUDITION PACKET**([click here](#))

Instagram Live @uofuperc

University of Utah, School of Music
David Gardner Hall, room 272



Contact:
Dr. Michael Sammons
mike.sammons@utah.edu



2024 UTAH DRUMLINE AUDITION INFORMATION

JOIN THE *LEGACY*

You have taken the first step in joining the Utah Drumline! We pride ourselves in being one of the finest college drumlines in the country combining a performance based and entertaining environment. The Utah Drumline is focused on the development of tomorrow's leaders through hands-on interactive learning and achievement in the pursuit of excellence. In the Utah Drumline, you will perform with your best friends, creating life-long memories and become a part of the Utah Drumline family: past, present and future.

The Marching Utes are the soundtrack to the University and perform for over 500,000 people annually. Appearances include national TV broadcasts on ESPN, College Game-Day, FOX Sports, ABC, CBS and NBC. The Marching Utes have performed at the Inauguration of President Barack Obama. Recent bowl appearances include the 2022 and 2023 Rose Bowl, BCS Sugar Bowl and Fiesta Bowl, as well as bowl trips to San Diego, Las Vegas, San Antonio and San Francisco. The Marching Utes provided much of the pageantry and entertainment for the 2002 Winter Olympic Games in Salt Lake City.

Auditions will be held through pre-recorded video submissions. See below for schedule and additional information. Do not hesitate to contact us with any questions regarding audition materials, process or the general Utah Drumline Experience.

Dr. Michael Sammons: mike.sammons@utah.edu

Includes:

- About the Utah Drumline
- Membership
- Scholarships
- Audition Video Submissions
- Audition Tips / Philosophy
- Summer Drummin' @the U
- Final Auditions
- DCI and the U
- Fall Rehearsal Schedule



ABOUT THE UTAH DRUMLINE

WWW.UOFUBANDS.ORG

WWW.MIKESAMMONS.COM

[VIC FIRTH SPOTLIGHT - #1](#)

[VIC FIRTH SPOTLIGHT - #2](#)



[@UOFUPERC](https://www.instagram.com/uofuperc)

MEMBERSHIP

The Utah Drumline is open to all university students. Members come from across all degree programs at the university including engineers, biology, math, business, pre-law and pre-med. You do not have to be a music major to participate in the marching band or earn a scholarship. **Students attending other higher education institutions (Salt Lake Community College, etc.) CAN and DO participate in the drumline.**

SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

Scholarships are merit based upon final audition placement in August. See [LINK HERE](#) for more information and to apply.



AUDITION VIDEO SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

AUDITIONS HELD ONLINE THROUGH VIDEO SUBMISSION ONLY

1. DUE DATE: May 15 @ 5pm Mountain Standard Time
2. LATE VIDEOS will not be considered
3. Any audition video that does not follow the guidelines will not be considered.
4. Videos should be of the highest quality in audio and video.
5. Videos should be live, no edits and showing full body (feet for mark time when appropriate and hands). No special angles or production. Bass drum videos should show the right side of the instrument / drumhead.
6. Mark time during performance of cadences only.
7. Feel free to make individual videos for individual exercises and cadences within the audition packet. However, individual exercises / cadences should be live and unedited within each exercises / cadence / video.
8. Audition material should consist of ENTIRE audition packet for instrument auditioning for.
9. If possible, audition material should be performed on an actual instrument (snare, tenor, bass drum, cymbals). Drum pads are acceptable if instrument is not accessible. Cymbal auditions can be performed without cymbals by either clicking sticks or playing on drum pad with sticks.
10. Material should be performed at designated tempos.
11. Audition material submitted through YouTube links
12. Youtube links should be made public in settings
13. Email youtube links to: Mike.Sammons@utah.edu

ADDITIONAL AUDITION INFORMATION

- Students are placed according to their personal strengths and needs of the drumline.
- The cymbal line performs various techniques including crashes, chokes, hi-hats, sizzles, crunches, slides and taps. If you are unfamiliar with these, pick a technique that you are familiar with, play the etude focusing on rhythm and timing
 - If you do not have access to cymbals, feel free to perform on a drum pad with sticks or clapping.
 - [CYMBAL LINE TECHNIQUE - CLICK HERE](#)





WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR

CONFIDENCE / PREPARATION: Preparation refers to how much and how well you practice. Your preparation will determine how CONFIDENT you are when you perform.

TEAMWORK / COLLEGIALITY: A team player is someone who is not only willing, but eager to do what is best for the group. Team players embrace their role, regardless of what section they make, and they put their interests of the marching band and drumline ahead of their own.

MUSICALITY: Attention to style, dynamics and articulations are key to a quality performance and the icing on the cake!

TECHNIQUE: We utilize a natural RELAXED / VELOCITY philosophy of technique which produces a quality sound at all levels, speed,

endurance and playing philosophies that transcend the activity of marching percussion (TRANSFER VALUE).

TIMING: Tempo and rhythmic integrity is a critical aspect of what we do. Practice at tempos your hands can manage. Gradually increase tempos. ***There are no hard licks, just hard tempos.***

CHOPS: Technical strength and proficiency are the basic building blocks of your contribution to the ensemble. Chops are not created within a day or a week; it takes time to build up your hands.

MEMORIZATION: Memorization demonstrates a positive attitude and confidence. It shows that a person is dedicated to being a part of the drumline and has thoroughly prepared.

WAYS TO PRACTICE... "THE TOOLBOX"

We can define practicing correctly as:

1. Practicing with a plan/setting goals
 - a. Having a plan allows you to be methodical and smart about your approach. This approach leads to efficiency. The more efficient you are at practicing, the quicker you will become a rudimental Jedi.
 - b. Keep a practice journal or wall chart. Writing things down will keep you organized. Seeing your progress in writing will help your crystallize your improvement.
 - c. Playing slow is important ... slow things down. You'll be amazed at how much better your control will be and how much of a better overall player you will become.
 - d. Here is an example of having a solid practice plan or goal:
 - i. Week 1 through Week 2: Goal: Tap fives
 - Monday: One hour tap fives (triplet-base) mm=60-84 (up four beats every 10 min.)
 - Tuesday: One hour tap fives mm=84-108
 - Wednesday: @ mm=108-132
 - Thursday:@mm=132-156
 - Friday:@ mm=156-180



- Saturday:@mm=180-204

- Practicing material that needs attention. NOT the material you can already perform at a high level
 - It is very easy to play things that feel good and sound good. At your level, you should be disciplined enough to play things you can't play perfectly. Make everything you play sound perfect and feel good!
 - Your job is to be a master of all motions at all tempos, so practicing things you don't feel completely comfortable with is key. Play things slow ... off the left ... whatever you can do to expand your repertoire
- Practicing on a drum
 - A practice pad does not give you the same feel as a drum. There is no substitute for the chops you will gain practicing on a drum versus a practice pad ... no exceptions, period.
- Practicing with a metronome
 - There is simply no substitute for practicing with a metronome. Keep it fresh by practicing to a half-time feel. Try putting the metronome on the upbeat and keep a constant, steady pulse. Experiment. TEMPO CONTROL IS EVERYTHING.
- Practicing in front of a mirror
 - When practicing in front of a mirror, continually ask yourself the following questions:
 - Are my heights correct?
 - Are stick paths (R and L) straight up and down?
 - Are there any extra motions? (shoulder ticks, elbow motion, etc.)
 - Is my body symmetrical? (right and left shoulders parallel and even)
 - Do I look relaxed and do I make it "look easy?"
- Constant evaluation of your quality of sound/efficiency/tempo control
 - continually ask yourself the following questions:
 - Does it sound good? Does it flow? Are the sticks resonating at all times? Does it sound relaxed? Am I breathing calmly and evenly when I play? Is there tension in my back? Shoulders? Arms? Wrists?
- Marking time while you practice
 - For added fun - practice at a drumset with your feet on the bass drum and hi-hat.
- Tenor Players - make sure to learn music on 1 drum first, then with the tenor round. Even after you have learned the part, going back and forth between 1 drum and round is a healthy way to practice tenors.



PHILOSOPHY

APPROACH

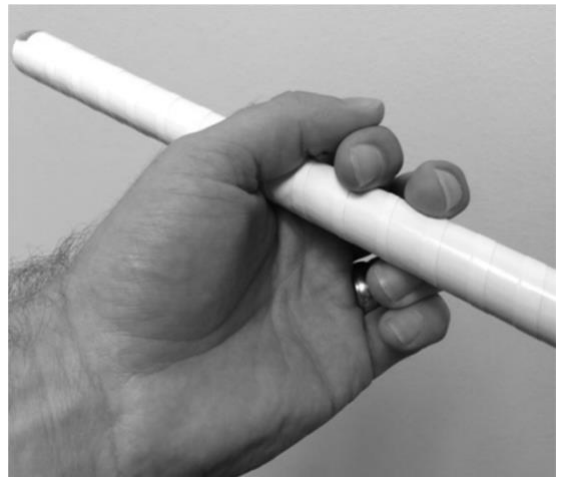
- Relaxed Velocity - sound quality at all dynamic levels, speed, endurance
- Dexterity - Where strength meets flexibility
- Touch - Flow, Articulation (Tap/Accent control), Musicality, Feel
- Independence or Interdependence - knowing individual hands responsibility in rudiments, musical passages breakdowns and quality between hands

GRIP

- Snareline plays with traditional grip. Bassline and Tenorline matched grip.
- Stable, consistent and focused grip that is not too tight or too loose.
 - A good way to test this is to take two sticks and hit them together while squeezing them as hard as you can. Do you hear a thin choked off sound? Now start hitting the sticks together and gradually start to loosen your grip. Did you hear the sticks start to produce a more open tone? If you hold the stick too tightly, you dampen the stick's natural vibrations and "choke off" much of the sound, leaving you with a very thin quality. Also, the brunt of the impact from the stick striking the drum will be transferred directly into your hand, which can lead to unnecessary injury.



- All your fingers will be in constant contact with the stick, but will never squeeze or choke off the resonance of the stick.
- Snareline Traditional Grip Left Hand
 - The fulcrum point is located between the thumb and index finger, with the thumb sitting on top of the index finger and touching the first knuckle. The connection must always be maintained. When resting the thumb on the index finger make sure the thumb is not creating any tension by pushing forward and pointing upwards. The stick will rest on the fourth finger between the first knuckle and your nail. The most important fingers in the left hand are the thumb, pointer, and ring fingers. Your pinky finger should simply mirror the natural curve of your ring finger. The middle finger shares a similar role and simply mirrors the natural curve of the pointer finger. A straightened middle or pinky finger will cause unwanted tension.



All fingers remain in a curved position at all times. Think about your hand being in the shape of a "C." The palm should be turned at a slight angle. Here is a good analogy: your palm should be turned enough that if it were raining, water would hit your palm and drain off. If your palm is turned up too much, the water would collect - not being able to drain off. If your palm is not turned up enough, your thumb would block the water from access to your palm.

STROKE TYPES

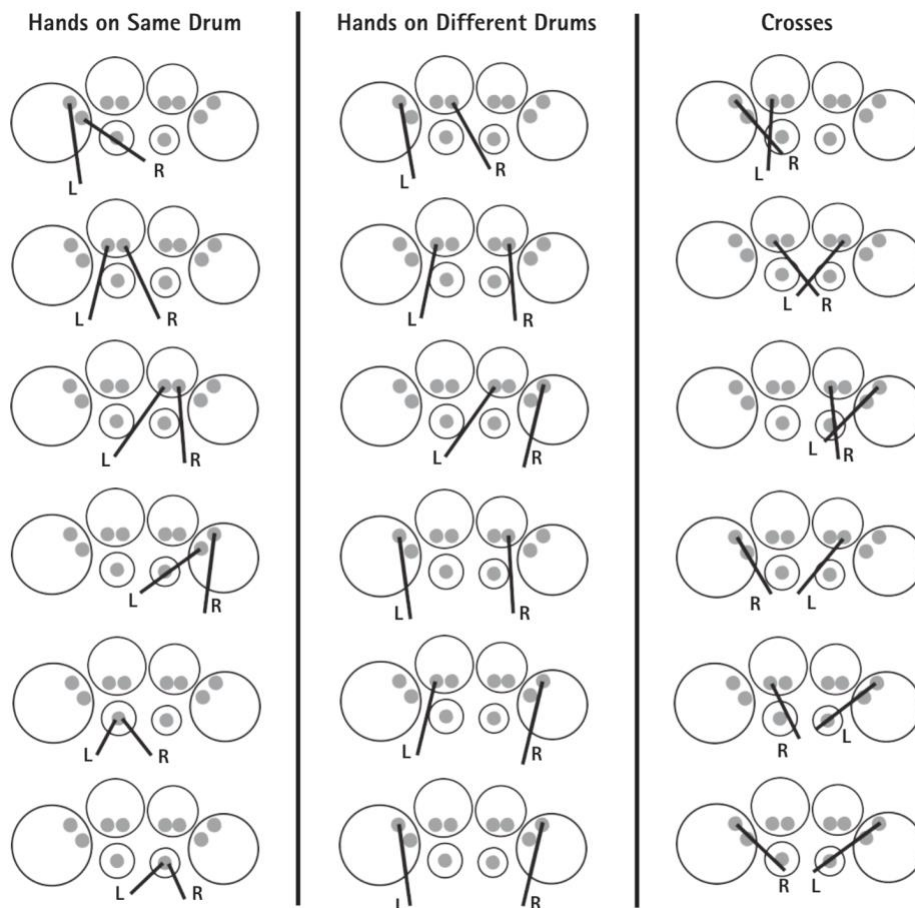
- It is imperative to know your stroke types and how they apply to the exercises and music performed.
- Practice rudiments, exercises and passages slowly while naming out loud the different stroke types. Ute Bucks is a great place to start out!
- Key Points:
 - Every stroke will initiate from a wrist turn with the head of the stick moving first. Even when playing 18-inches, a wrist turn will lift the head before the arm rises. This wrist turn is essential to every stroke played. However, do not restrict your arms by trying to use only wrist. As your wrist turns, your arm should naturally move. Use any combination of muscle groups (arms, wrist, and fingers) to your advantage to produce any stroke. Also, there should be relaxed / rebounded weight to your stroke in order to produce a big, full sound.
- Full-stroke
 - Practice bouncing first a basketball and then a tennis ball
 - The ball is always moving and never stops
- Down-stroke - but don't "down-stroke" the down-stroke (i.e. rebound, flow - the "ball never stops bouncing")
 - No extra tension is required. The beginnings of the stroke are the exact same as the full-stroke. The only difference is after the stick strikes the head, your fingers act as a relaxed barrier, preventing the stick from rebounding past your destination height. It is important not to over-squeeze the stick when stopping it close to the head. If properly relaxed the skin on your forearm should have a natural jiggle. It is also important not to add extra velocity to the down stroke. The tone produced by the downstroke should be the same as the tone produced on a full-stroke. A great exercise to test this is to play a measure of legato eighth notes immediately followed by a measure accenting the downbeat only ("bucks"). Did the sound change? If so, you are probably adding extra velocity to your downstroke or squeezing the stick before it makes contact with the head.
- Up-Stroke

- Anticipating transitions is key for timing and making sure that you are using the correct muscle groups / technique for given musical passage.

STICK HEIGHTS

Height	Related Dynamic	Angle from the Drum	Notes
1/2"	ppp	Tacet Angle	Grace Note Height
1"	pp	<0	Softest playing dynamic
3"	P	0	Default tap height. Mainly wrist, arms and fingers aid certain material
6"	mp	22.5	Default tenuto height. Mainly wrist, again arms and fingers support naturally when needed.
9"	mf	45	Arm starts to get more involved at this height. Same principles of wrist initiation apply.
12"	f	67.5	More arm, fingers open up more to aid flexibility.
15"	ff	90	Maxed wrist motion combined with open fingers (only about 1" from palm) and natural arm support.
18"	fff	112.5	Avoid "slamming"! Snares and quads will maintain 90° angle and add more arm for a more "visual volume" effect. Bases utilize more angle change for added distance from the head.

TENORLINE PLAYING ZONES REFERENCE CHART



TENORLINE CROSSOVERS

- It is important to note that to achieve the best sound on a crossover, one should change as little as possible about

his technique from the feeling of performing a passage on one drum.

- The thumb crossover is performed directly at the thumbs or fulcrum. This is used for smaller crossovers.
- The wrist crossover is performed directly where the wrist turns to execute a stroke. This is used for larger crossovers.

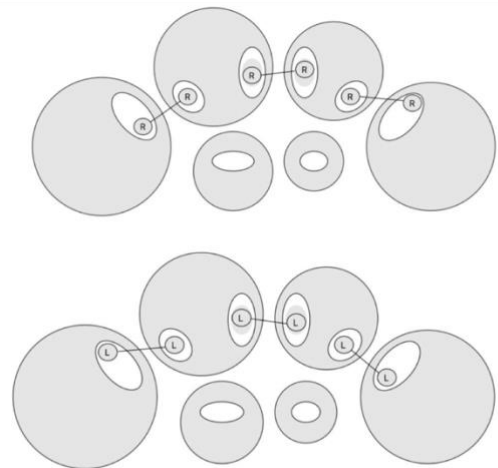
TENORLINE LATERAL/VERTICAL MOVEMENT

In order to play around the tenor drums, two types of movements are necessary:

- Vertical movement is provided by the up-and-down motion of the wrist, finger, arm, etc. (The Y-axis)
- Lateral movement is provided by the side-to-side motion of the forearm (The X-axis)
- The vertical movement is the first priority when learning any passage on the tenors. In other words, material should first be learned on one drum and then moved around the drums. This is done to ensure sound quality, technique and timing. Once this is strongly established, the lateral movement is added to complete the tenor drumming experience. It is important that the lateral movement (X-axis) affects the vertical movement (Y-axis) as little as possible.

TENORLINE DOUBLE STROKE SCRAPE ZONES

Scrapes, or sweeps, are multiple one-handed notes moving from drum to drum. To help with ease around the drums, alternate zones may be utilized. It is important to note that to achieve the best sound on a scrape, or sweep, one should change as little as possible about his technique from the feeling of performing a passage on one drum. These zones are based on efficiency, minimizing the space between each double. These zones are primarily used at high speeds, and the ultimate goal is to get a great sound while avoiding rims.



BASSLINE GRIP



Too far outside



Too far inside



CORRECT

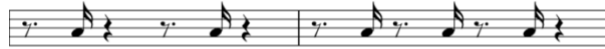
BASSLINE TIMING

Members of the Utah Bassline are, simply put, expected to have perfect or near-perfect rhythmic abilities. Our first rhythmic priority is individual accuracy. Because each bass drummer only plays a fraction of the written part, one is often asked to play difficult and isolated rhythmic partials. To achieve this with consistency, we frequently reference the “composite rhythm,” which is the combination of an individual part and the player’s tempo source (feet, metronome, other musician’s part used as reference.)

Here is the written part:



And here is bass 4's part in isolation:



On its own, the above rhythm is challenging and is likely to be inconsistent. However, if the player imagines their mark time as "part of their rhythm", the resulting composite rhythm is much more achievable:

Bass 4's composite rhythm: (feet marked with x noteheads)



Imagining and using one's composite rhythm can make even the most challenging individual parts considerably more manageable

BASSLINE APPROACH TO 2s, 3s and 4s

We want every note we play to have a strong and clear quality of sound and to be heard clearly by the audience. In order to do this, one must sometimes compensate for the natural resonance of the drum. When playing rhythmically dense figures, the resonance of the first note can often cover up the rest. Therefore, it is imperative to play without any decay in volume, and on some figures, one must add a slight crescendo to maintain the perception of evenness. If one is playing "4" (four notes in a row), the attack of the second, third, and fourth notes will be slightly covered up by the resonance of the prior note played. So when all four notes are played at exactly the same volume, the quality will sound less clear when a listener gets farther away.

We play 2s, 3s, and 4s with a slight crescendo through each figure. In order to do this, one must avoid "over-prepping" for these figures. If one initiates a 3 or a 4 higher than 12", it is almost impossible to play the figure without decay. Volume is produced by supporting the later notes in the figure, rather than attacking the first note aggressively. Using this technique allows each note to be clearly heard over the constant resonating head, and it helps smooth out a musical phrase. Mastering this concept is absolutely crucial and is fundamental to the Utah Bassline BRAND.

[CYMBAL LINE TECHNIQUE - CLICK HERE](#)

SUMMER DRUMMIN' @ the U

1. Monday Sectionals
 - a. 6:30-8:30p @ Spence Eccles Fieldhouse
 - b. Attendance expected if in town
2. Utah Drumline Leadership Meeting - **Required**
 - a. Aug. 4 from 3-5p - Spence Eccles Fieldhouse Bandroom
3. Utah Drumline Orientation Meeting - **Required**
 - a. Aug. 4 from 6-9p: Spence Eccles Fieldhouse Bandroom
4. Utah Drumline Camp - **Required**
 - a. Aug. 5-10
 - i. 9a-9p (Schedule: 9a-2p with lunch break / 5-9p)
 - b. Out of Town / State students are housed by US until dorm move-in date starting on Sunday night, Aug. 4



5. Utah Band Camp - **Required**

- a. Aug 12-16 (Final Schedule TBD - Summer Marching Band Letter - June/July)

STUDENTS INVOLVED IN DCI

- We have a long history of students successfully participating in DCI at the highest levels. The Utah Drumline has a very strong relationship and support of drum corps in the development of players and collaboration throughout the years.
- Students participating in DCI are excused from camp while at DCI.
- Students are expected to return to camp as soon as their commitment to their specific drum corps is complete.
 - Travel consideration is extended
 - Attendance expected no later than the Monday of the second week of drum / band camp if not before.
 - Faculty and staff along with students together will determine this arrival date.
- Students involved in DCI this summer should contact Dr. Michael Sammons (mike.sammons@utah.edu) immediately.

SUMMER DRUMMIN' @ the U

May 20	Monday Drumline (6:30-8:30p)
June 3	Monday Drumline (6:30-8:30p)
June 10	Monday Drumline (6:30-8:30p)
June 17	Monday Drumline (6:30-8:30p)
June 24	Monday Drumline (6:30-8:30p)
July 1	Monday Drumline (6:30-8:30p)
July 8	Monday Drumline (6:30-8:30p)
July 15	Monday Drumline (6:30-8:30p)
July 22	Monday Drumline (6:30-8:30p)
July 29	Monday Drumline (6:30-8:30p)
Aug. 4 from 3-5p - Spence Eccles Fieldhouse Bandroom	Utah Drumline Leadership Meeting - Required
Aug. 4 from 6-9p - Spence Eccles Fieldhouse Bandroom	Utah Drumline Orientation Meeting - Required
Aug. 5-10	Utah Drumline Camp - Required
Aug 12-16	Utah Band Camp - Required

FINAL AUDITIONS

Final auditions will be based on preparation of summer music and material (including memorization) as well as overall performance quality (rolls, flams, sound quality, height control, etc...) Final auditions will be held on the first day of summer drum camp in August. Members determined not to be adequately prepared may be considered for other opportunities including continued participation in other sections of the drumline or in a supportive role

FALL REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

1. Class / Rehearsal officially meets Monday - Friday from 11:50a - 1:45pm
 - a. Talk to counselors early and schedule classes accordingly
2. We rehearse 4 times per week on a NORMAL week
3. Our OFF-DAY depends on the football schedule
 - a. Example A - Typical Game day Week
 - i. Tuesday Off
 - b. Example B - No game or away game week
 - i. Friday off
4. Depending on football schedule as season progress, rehearsals may be adjusted / reduced.
 - a. EXAMPLE, as we get to November, we often cut rehearsals to 1-2 per week.



