

Marching Rebels Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is Band Camp? Is it required?

Band Camp begins in August before school starts. This is when basic marching skills are taught, perfected and practiced. It is also when the "drill" part of the show is learned and practiced. Band Camp is required because the August preparation is the foundation for our entire marching season. Generally, students should already know the musical part of the show before Band Camp begins. The days are long, but we have a lot of fun. Believe it or not, most students look forward to band camp each year!

2. How can I prepare for Band Camp?

Other than memorizing your music, you can prepare for the physical challenges of Band Camp by keeping yourself moving and in shape over the summer. Physical training and conditioning are essential parts of marching band, so you need to be prepared for those elements. Every year, we have students in difficulty because they do not eat breakfast before camp and because they do not hydrate effectively. Make sure to eat something for breakfast, and if you are not a big breakfast eater, bring along a cereal or yogurt bar to eat if you need it at break. You also need to bring plenty of water to stay hydrated. Finally, make sure you dress appropriately for practice. Athletic shoes are necessary for marching practice, and you need to have a pair "dedicated" to band. Your shoes will take a beating, get dirty and wet, so you should also plan to bring an extra pair of socks or two per day! Loose, cool fitting shorts and t-shirts are the best bet for marching attire. You must wear WHITE t-shirts for marching practice (logos or letters in color are fine as long as the shirt is white). The uniform whiteness enables the Director to better see the lines and movements of the band as the drill is rehearsed.

3. What is "Orkney"?

Veteran Marching Rebels and their parents frequently refer to the band's trip to the Shrine Mont camp in Orkney Springs, VA, at the end of August as "Orkney." This is, by all reports, a fabulous time of:

- Team Building
- Marching Drills
- FUN!
- Marching Drills
- Not Much Sleep
- Marching Drills
- HEAT!
- FUN!
- More Marching Drills

This intense time at Orkney Springs really helps the students pull the show together, and provides Mr. Johnson and his staff time and specialized facilities to help the students focus on perfecting their marching skills and advance the show.

4. Where do the Marching Rebels perform?

The Marching Rebels perform at every home football game (Friday nights), and occasionally

travel as a pep band to away football games to support our team. In addition to our football responsibilities, the Marching Rebels compete at three to five regional marching competitions building to our biggest performance of the year - the VBODA regional marching band competition. These competitions are on the weekend and students are REQUIRED to attend. The Marching Rebels also perform in several Fairfax City parades, including the Mosby Woods Halloween Parade, the Fairfax Memorial Day Ride of the Patriots Parade, and the Fairfax City 4th of July Parade. All performances are listed on the calendar on the Band website: www.fhsbands.org.

5. In how many parades do the Marching Rebels participate and what are they?

The Marching Rebels participate in 4 parades each year. The 4th of July Parade in Fairfax City is the first. Our students also march in the Homecoming Parade and, on the Sunday afternoon closest to Halloween, the Mosby Woods costume/Halloween parade. Mosby Woods is a source of many generous donations to the Marching Rebels, and the neighborhood kids love parading with our band. The final parade of the year is on Memorial Day, when the Rebels march down Fairfax Boulevard from Captain Pell's Restaurant to the Patriot Harley Davidson dealership as part of the "Ride of the Patriots/Rolling Thunder" manifestation. Patriot Harley Davidson is a major sponsor of the Marching Rebels' truck and of various other band activities. There are also occasional "march arounds" in the halls before school starts on days of home football games. This spirit booster is a favorite of Fairfax students and teachers alike.

6. What is "Student Leadership"?

Drum Majors and Section Leaders are selected by Mr. Johnson to help him and his staff lead Marching Band. The Drum Majors are responsible for the band while they are on the field during a performance; the Drum Majors command the band and conduct the show from the front podiums. Section Leaders are marching members who are responsible for the playing and marching of their individual sections. The student leadership team provides feedback, guidance, and support to all student marchers. Students apply and audition for these positions, and Mr. Johnson will depend on those students selected to teach newcomers marching basics and to help their sections hone their marching skills.

7. What is TAG Day?

TAG day is the FHS Bands' biggest fund raiser of the year. It is generally the first or second Saturday after school begins in September. ALL band students participate (not just Marching Rebels) as we canvas the entire geographic district of FHS for financial support. Parent volunteers drive groups of 3-4 students to predetermined areas for door-to-door canvassing. Marching Rebels must wear their marching band uniforms and non-marching band students must wear their concert attire. Students either receive donations on the day or leave a TAG with the Marching Rebels' request for financial support with residents. This is one of the only donations to a school group that can be claimed as a tax deduction by donors. We are very fortunate at FHS to receive massive support from our community through TAG Day. Each of our students receive credit in their incentive account for their TAG Day participation.

8. Why are our uniforms so important and why is it necessary to take good care of them?

Marching Band uniforms play an important visual role in the "show" and one pair of WHITE socks (rather than the requisite black) can cause point deductions during Marching Band

competitions. Similarly, a student who does not have on gloves, can be a source of deductions. These details count because, again, visual uniformity is an element of the drill as designed by Mr. Johnson. You MUST take good care of your uniform, not only because they are VERY expensive, but also as a matter of Rebel Pride. Accidents and wear and tear happen, but carelessness is inexcusable and you will have to PAY to repair or replace any part of your

9. Can I be in band and play sports?

YES! We have many student athletes in the band program, and some even do both marching band and a fall sport! Combining Marching Band and a fall sport is the most challenging combination, but with good organization and communication skills, it is possible to participate in both. Year round, it is important to remember that in making a commitment to participate in either band or a sport, you must also make the commitment to yourself to keep a responsible calendar. Students must work out any conflicts between band and their sport in advance between the Band Director and their coach. Conflicts are often not the issue - the calendar and the communication (or lack of) on the part of the student can be an issue. As long as you plan ahead, keep your calendar current, and do your best, you should be fine. Remember, communication is a TWO WAY street.

10. Can I be in band and join othe clubs?

ABSOLUTELY! Even during Marching Band, it is possible to participate in other school activities. After school practice is held Tuesday through Thursday, so students can plan other activities on non-band days. Once marching band is over, there are very few band commitments after school. You will have plenty of time after school to join the variety of clubs and organizations that FHS has to offer!

11. I've heard that I have to be in Marching Band if I participate in high school band. Is this true?

No. Not all high school band students are required to march. Only students enrolled in Wind Ensemble, Symphonic Band, and Percussion Ensemble I (Advanced Bands) must participate in the Marching Rebels. Students enrolled in Concert Band are highly encouraged to march, and most of them choose to do so! Those Concert Band students who do participate in marching band will receive advanced credit for the course.

12. Why is Marching Band required for Advanced Band students?

Marching Band is a requirement of Advanced Band students as listed in the FCPS course description catalog. This practice is used by all FCPS high schools.

13. How am I assigned to a high school band?

After festival competitions are over in March, our Director of Bands goes to Lanier Middle School to hear students play. This is an audition of sorts, and the Director will assign students to the high school group that will be the best fit for them and the band. All students need to audition for the Director so that they can be placed in the most appropriate ensemble. Your

14. Marching Band seems to take up a lot of time. How can I keep up my grades?

Band students are typically very strong academically, and generally know how to budget

their time well. Participation in marching band forces students to use their time wisely and helps teach them efficient study skills. In addition, freshmen have a support network of upperclassmen and other freshmen, who provide tips for successfully integrating High School while participating in Marching Band.

15. What are Band Boosters?

If you are a parent with a student in the band, then YOU are a Band Booster. The Band Boosters are an organization of parents whose job is to help the Director of Bands so that he can teach and lead our students. The more we can facilitate his work, the more he can concentrate on leading our students along the path of excellence. The Band Boosters meet once a month during the school year and need all the volunteers and parental input they can get! The critical mass of volunteer needs is during Marching Band season, but the Boosters continue to need your help all year long. The Booster Board for the 2012-13 academic year was elected at our May 2 Booster Meeting. The board members are listed below. All of them will depend on volunteers and on assistance from YOU!! Please take a moment to think about what you have to offer our students. If you have gifts, talents, interest, or energy to devote in any of the areas listed, please contact the board member in that area to let them know you can help.

2012-2013 Band Booster Board

- **President: Katy O'Grady**
- **VP Operations: Jon Burks**
- **VP Volunteers: Ginny Cate**
- **VPs Fund Raising: Cynthia Cate and Marybeth Turner**
- **Secretary: Donna Guernsey**
- **Treasurer: Lisa Doyle**
- **Communications Chair: Cathy Crawford**
- **Hospitality Chair: Donna Voeller**
- **Uniforms Co-chairs: Vicki Nashwinter and Celeste Kacedan**

- **Marching Rebels Coordinators: Chuck McClimans & Phil Geris**
- **Band Truck Manager: Phil Geris**
- **Webmaster: Steve Lister**