

Schenectady Pipe Band

Standard for Drummers Attending Band Practices

When a prospective drummer begins to attend band practices, the drummer should already be a competent player. The purpose of band practice is to refine and rehearse the band repertoire and drill, rather than to instruct our members in how to play the music and manage the instrument. Thus the prospective player must possess a set of fundamental skills that will enable her or him to participate effectively in rehearsals. These skills include:

Music Theory:

- a. Understanding of time signatures.
- b. Understanding of simple and compound rhythms (use of monotone exercises).
- c. Understanding of the note values and how dotted and cut notes affect the note duration.
- d. Recognition of all rudiments and ability to sight read drum scores.

Practical:

Candidates must demonstrate competence in the following, using sticks and practice pad:

- a. Counting in Irregular Groups in Simple and Compound Times.
- b. Single Stroke Work
- c. The Long Roll, both 'open' and 'closed'
- d. The Five-Stroke Roll, both 'open' and 'closed'
- e. The Paradiddle
- f. Continued development of Flam Movements
- g. Continued development of Drag Movements

Instrument:

- a. Introductory knowledge of the tuning and timbre of a snare drum.

A player who demonstrates the above skills will be well-equipped to participate in band rehearsals. Having solidified the fundamentals, the player is free to focus on developing the skills of playing in a pipe band. When a drummer begins to attend band practice, he or she is appointed by the Drum Sergeant as an Aspirant player. This is the first step toward band membership. Aspirants will receive instruction in band drill and how to wear and maintain the band uniform. Aspirant drummers will gain experience in performing with other players, focusing on the skills of playing in unison and marching. Aspirants should attend rehearsals regularly, continue to improve in playing ability, and continue to master the rest of the performance repertoire. They will prepare to perform with the band on the street. Aspirant status may be withdrawn if the drummer fails to reasonably progress or meet those expectations.

