



USBANDS
PRESENTED BY THE CADETS

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USBANDS
PRESENTED BY THE CADETS

FALL 2017
PARTICIPANT GUIDE

*The mission of Youth
Education in the Arts
is to support the development
of young people into
magnificent human beings
through participation in
the performing arts.*

INTRODUCTION TO USBANDS

Welcome to the USBands 2017 Fall Marching Band season! USBands operates alongside The Cadets and Cadets² Drum Corps and the Urban Arts Center under the banner of the Youth Education in the Arts (YEA!) non-profit organization. Since its first event in 1988, USBands has supported the development of scholastic performing ensembles through exceptional service, adjudication and venues.

Our guiding principle is to provide ensembles, regardless of style, size and experience, an opportunity to be successful, allowing students to benefit from their involvement with scholastic music. The rules that govern USBands' events are minimal by design. USBands prides itself on a user-friendly approach to support and service, in which directors and performers can fully enjoy the performance process without the concern of rules and penalties.

We have simplified and streamlined our offerings for participants in 2017, with an eye towards providing the best possible value and experience for you and your students. As a director, instructor, or supporter of a participating ensemble, please be sure to familiarize yourself with the material in this Guide and take full advantage of everything USBands has to offer.

Thank you for joining USBands to celebrate our 29th year of service in support of music programs across the nation. Best wishes for a great year!

Steve Petzinger
Director, USBands

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ABOUT USBANDS

The organization now known as USBands was founded in the fall of 1988 by The Cadets Drum & Bugle Corps, with a single competition held in the former Giants Stadium. Now in our 29th season, the USBands calendar includes more than 150 local, state and regional events across the country, concluding with two National Championship events in November. With over 700 ensembles participating in fall events across 20 states, USBands has grown to become the largest independent scholastic music organization in the nation.

In addition to marching events in the Fall, USBands offers year-round performance opportunities for students, including a vibrant Indoor Color Guard and Percussion circuit in the winter as well as a prestigious Concert Series each Spring. Other programs include student leadership workshops, adjudicator training seminars, other educational opportunities for music programs, and presentations to boosters and school administrations.

PHILOSOPHY

Our focus is centered on the educational development of today's students into tomorrow's leaders, using the performing arts to provide opportunities for hands-on, interactive learning and achievement. By providing high profile performance opportunities for students, we support your educational mission and help raise awareness to the importance of scholastic performing arts' programs.

GOALS

- To keep music educators engaged with the reason they originally became educators – the students.
- To create an atmosphere whereby music educators can use music to teach life lessons such as discipline, perseverance and commitment to excellence.
- To provide high-quality, educational and positive performance opportunities for students.
- To provide instructional support for ensemble directors and staff.
- To provide constructive and consistent evaluation and adjudication.
- To support music education by generating popular interest in scholastic performing arts performance and competition.
- To promote innovation, creativity, and growth for ensembles around the nation.

Any regulations outlined in the following pages are designed not to restrict, but rather to enhance the overall experience for our participating students. The USBands Adjudication system places strong emphasis on rewarding performance and musical repertoire in lieu of design and visual components to ensure that the performers are rewarded for their achievement.

IMPORTANT DATES FOR 2017

March 3	EVENT HOSTS ONLY – “Early Access” Registration opens for all USBands Events
March 4	Registration opens for all USBands Events
March 17	EVENT HOSTS ONLY – Full Payment Due for “Early Bird” Pricing
March 31	EVENT HOSTS ONLY – Deposit Payment Due for those hosts not taking advantage of “Early Bird” Pricing
May 15	Ticket Options Due (Required or Optional)
May 15	Payment Due for Yamaha Cup: Northeast, A Class Nationals, & Open Class Nationals
June 15	Registered Ensembles published on USBands website Unrestricted Drop period ends ¹
July 1	Payment due for 2017-2018 Membership Fees
August 15	Payment due for all 2017 Registration Fees Premium Event scheduling and withdrawal deadline ²
31 Days prior	Showcase Event scheduling and withdrawal deadline ³
24 Days prior	Preliminary schedule for each event released at usbands.org
10 Days prior	Final schedule for each non-seeded event released at usbands.org Adjudicator panels released ⁴
5 Days prior	Final event packet is released via email Final schedule for each seeded event released at usbands.org

*Ensemble Directors should note dates for examinations, such as the SAT’s, ACT’s, PSAT’s, and any state examinations that are offered on the same dates as USBands events and encourage students to make necessary arrangements. In fairness to all, USBands does not modify its schedules based on these exams as all participating units are affected and are aware of them well ahead of the examinations’ registration deadlines.

¹ Self-Add remains in place, but ensembles must contact the USBands office to withdraw from events.

² See page 7 for more details.

³ See page 6 for more details.

⁴ Adjudicators subject to change at any time, without notice.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES FOR 2017

USBands has implemented several policy changes for 2017 in a number of areas in order to better assist Ensembles, Hosts, Parents, and other groups that support and work with USBands.

When reading this guide, be sure to note modifications to pre-existing policies in the following areas:

PARTICIPATION WITH USBANDS

- A participating ensemble will be automatically considered a USBands Member after registration in their second event.
- The penalty fee structure and timelines for withdrawing from both Showcase and Premium events have been adjusted to better serve both the Event Host and its Participants.

TYPES OF EVENTS

- Preference for Optional vs Required Tickets must be declared by May 1 for all USBands Premium Events.
- Ensembles will receive Optional tickets for each Premium Regional Event in the following amounts:

Group III	fifty	(50)
Group IV-VI	one hundred	(100)

- State and National Championship Seeding will be determined by Score Points and Participation points. A maximum of 4 participation points will be awarded in one weekend.

REGULATIONS

The use of prohibited equipment will incur a monetary fine: two (2) times the offending ensemble’s registration fee for a Premium Event or three hundred dollars (\$300) for a Showcase Event.

PARTICIPATION WITH USBANDS

MEMBERSHIP AND REGISTRATION

Membership and Registration fees are assessed to offset the costs associated with providing every participant the highest levels of service, top adjudicators in the field, access to professional and collegiate stadiums, and other requirements to deliver the largest competitive circuit in the nation.

A participating ensemble will be automatically considered a USBands Member after registration in their second event.

We strongly encourage ensembles who participate in a USBands-sanctioned event to consider taking advantage of our 2017-18 Membership, which includes (but is not limited to) the following benefits:

- Free Registration for ALL 2017-2018 Showcase Events (Gold/Silver/Clinic/Indoor)
- Discounted Registration for MANY 2017-2018 Premium Events (Regional/State/National Championship)
- Discounted Registration for 2018 Indoor Championships
- Discounted Registration for 2018 Concert Series Events
- Discounts on commemorative and custom merchandise
- Discounts on instrument purchases
- Discounted Clinic opportunities, and other Cadets-related opportunities throughout the year through the USBands University educational program
- Access to Summer Drum Corps Hosting

Any non-member may register for a USBands Event by agreeing to pay the full Registration Fee for that specific event. Premium Events may have a mandatory ticket requirement in addition to the Registration Fee.

Please contact the USBands office for a full list of entry fees, ticket requirements, and ticket prices for the 2017 season, and to learn more about Membership in 2017-18.

WITHDRAWAL FROM USBANDS EVENTS

WITHDRAWAL FROM SHOWCASE EVENTS

Any ensemble may withdraw from a Showcase event up to **thirty-one (31) days** prior to the event, without penalty. If withdrawal occurs within the 31-day window for any reason, a monetary penalty will be imposed, according to the schedule below. **This penalty is collected on behalf of the Event Host, to be applied toward expenses and lost income and effort resulting from the late withdrawal. These funds do not go to USBands.**

Days Prior to Event	Group I & II	Group III & IV	Group V & VI
31 days	\$150	\$250	\$350
24 days	\$200	\$300	\$400
17 days	\$250	\$350	\$450
10 days	\$350	\$450	\$550
3 days	\$450	\$550	\$650

Any ensemble with an outstanding penalty fee may be required to fulfill the payment obligations before taking the field at future USBands events.

WITHDRAWAL FROM PREMIUM EVENTS

If an ensemble withdraws from a Premium Event after August 15th for any reason, the withdrawal schedule below will be used to determine the penalty fee.

Days Prior to Event	Penalty Fee
Until August 15	No penalty
August 16 until day prior to Event	Registration Fee
No show	2 x Registration Fee

Any ensemble with an outstanding penalty fee may be required to fulfill the payment obligations before taking the field at future USBands events.

TYPES OF EVENTS

USBANDS SHOWCASE EVENTS

Showcase Events are designed to exceed your expectations from an educational and an experiential standpoint. USBands standards are in place to ensure a fair, impartial, and fun experience for all participating ensembles, and events are identified as Silver or Gold, based on the Adjudication Panel assigned.

A participating ensemble will be automatically considered a USBands Member after registration in their second event.

ADJUDICATION AT SHOWCASE EVENTS

Silver Showcase	Gold Showcase
Music Individual	Music Individual
Music Ensemble	Music Ensemble
Visual Performance	Visual Performance
Overall Effect	Overall Effect
	<i>Color Guard (caption award only)</i>
	<i>Percussion (caption award only)</i>

A Clinic Event will be adjudicated in alignment with the showcases listed above, with TWO additional clinicians assigned to rotate throughout the Event. Clinicians will meet with the entire ensemble and provide immediate feedback on the performance. Clinicians will not submit scores, sheets, nor recordings.

In order to preserve the consistency of the criteria between the captions, a multiplier is used when calculating the final score.

	MAXIMUM POSSIBLE	EXAMPLE
Music Individual	400 x .050 = 20.00	375.0 x .050 = 18.75
Music Ensemble	400 x .050 = 20.00	380.0 x .050 = 19.00
Visual Performance	400 x .075 = 30.00	360.0 x .075 = 27.00
Overall Effect	400 x .075 = 30.00	364.0 x .075 = 27.30
Total Score	100.00	92.05

USBANDS PREMIUM EVENTS

Premium Events were established to provide higher profile competitive events with more robust Adjudication Panels at larger high school, municipal, collegiate and professional venues. All ensembles, regardless of membership status, are eligible to participate in Premium Events. Premium Events may be designated as Regional, State, or Championship Events. Sponsored Events such as the Yamaha Cup and Remo Series, are considered Regional Events.

Premium Events often carry an additional fee for participation, separate from the USBands Membership Fee. However, pricing will reward USBands Members with a reduced pricing structure.

A participating ensemble will be automatically considered a USBands Member after registration in their second event.

ADJUDICATION AT PREMIUM EVENTS

At select USBands Regional, State and Championship level competitions, the adjudication system may consist of a five-member panel (double effect) and additional adjudicators in the Percussion and Color Guard caption areas.

In order to preserve the consistency of the criteria between the captions, a multiplier is used when calculating the final score.

	MAXIMUM POSSIBLE	EXAMPLE
Music Individual	400 x .050 = 20.00	375.0 x .050 = 18.75
Music Ensemble	400 x .050 = 20.00	380.0 x .050 = 19.00
Visual Performance	400 x .075 = 30.00	360.0 x .075 = 27.00
Overall Effect 1	400 x .0375 = 15.00	364.0 x .0375 = 13.65
Overall Effect 2	400 x .0375 = 15.00	368.0 x .0375 = 13.80
Total Score	100.00	92.20

PREMIUM EVENT – OPTIONAL TICKETS

Ensembles will receive Optional tickets for each Premium event.

Group III	fifty	(50)
Group IV-VI	one hundred	(100)

The price charged to the ensemble for Optional tickets will be lower than face value (specific to each event), but may be sold to spectators at any price up to face value. Any unsold tickets, paperwork, and required monies are due at Event Registration.

Example: If the USBands Hawaii Regional has a printed ticket price of \$15, a participating ensemble will be charged a discounted ticket price of \$12 per ticket for each Optional ticket not returned at registration. The ensemble may elect to sell those tickets at face value, and retain \$3 per ticket sold as a fundraiser for the program, or pass the savings along to their supporters.

Tickets will be sent to the attention of the Director at the school address at least 30 days in advance of the date of event. In addition, an e-mail will announce their mailing. It is the responsibility of the Director to claim these tickets. A signature acknowledging the receipt of tickets will act as confirmation of delivery. You will receive tickets for each USBands Regional Event for which your ensemble is registered.

All unreturned tickets will be considered SOLD as of the day of the Event.

The day immediately following the Event, the value of all unaccounted-for tickets will be invoiced, with full payment expected within 30 days of the creation of the invoice.

If an ensemble receives tickets prior to withdrawing from an Event, it is the responsibility of the Director to return the tickets to USBands prior to the event, in order to avoid an invoice for the outstanding amount.

PREMIUM EVENT – PERFORMANCE ORDER

Performance Order for Premium Regional Events will be determined by the date of registration in the online database. Ensembles will perform in the reverse order of registration, within Group Size and Class.

PREMIUM EVENT – REGISTRATION DEADLINE / RELEASE OF SCHEDULE

Every effort will be made to release a 'preliminary' schedule 24 DAYS PRIOR TO THE EVENT and a 'final' schedule 10 DAYS PRIOR TO THE EVENT, along with an information packet specific to that Event.

Please notify USBands of any specific scheduling challenges and considerations at least 31 days prior to a specific event, so that we may try to accommodate your request without disrupting the schedule for the Event Host and other participating ensembles.

Preliminary/Block schedules for Events with seeding (including State and National Championships) will be released 24 days prior, with the actual performance order to be released 5 days prior to the Event.

Schedules can be found by clicking the Scores/Schedules tab at usbands.org. Please contact USBands as soon as possible for special scheduling considerations.

USBANDS STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENTS

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT – Registration Fees / Ticket Preferences

Each State Championship Event allows the participating ensemble to choose a Registration Fee and Ticket Preference that best suits the needs of their program:

- Registration fee with an OPTIONAL ticket preference
- *Reduced* registration fee with a REQUIRED ticket preference

It is assumed by the USBands office that each participating ensemble, upon registering for the event, will default to the Required ticket preference. If an ensemble would like to choose the **Optional ticket preference**, this request must be made by **May 15** to ensure correct invoicing.

REQUIRED TICKET PREFERENCE

The registration fee and number of Required tickets are tiered by Group Size. Ticket prices vary from one event to another. All Required tickets have a monetary value that is discounted from face value and must be paid for in full.

If you do not request otherwise, the **Required ticket preference will be assumed** upon registration and your ensemble will be invoiced for a reduced registration fee, in addition to an appropriate number of tickets based on your group size.

OPTIONAL TICKET PREFERENCE

Ensembles that choose the Optional ticket preference for their USBands State Championship will receive an allotment of tickets based on your group size in bundles of 50 and be required to pay a higher registration fee. The ensemble is only responsible for paying for tickets sold or unreturned. **You must return any unsold tickets on the day of the Event.** You must declare the **Optional ticket preference** by **May 15** or your fee preference will default to Required tickets as described above.

NOTE: The Optional tickets are sent as a courtesy to directors at a Reduced Price. The price charged to the ensemble for Optional tickets will be lower than face value (specific to each event), but may be sold to spectators at any price up to face value. Any unsold tickets, paperwork, and required monies are due at Event Registration.

For more information on ticket preferences and pricing, please contact your Ensemble Relations Representative.

MULTIPLE-STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

In some cases, ensembles from different states, but similar geographic regions, will compete at the same event for multiple State Championships (such as the USBands New England State Championships). Top finishers in each state will have a separate announcement, banner, and State Champion title awarded.

OUT-OF-STATE COMPETITORS

If space allows, ensembles from other states will be allowed to compete in a USBands State Championship different from the state of their origin. These ensembles will receive a score that will be announced prior to the State Championship results for that particular competitive class. Out-of-State competitors will not have the opportunity to place in a State Championship.

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT – PERFORMANCE ORDER

A seeding process for States and Nationals exists in order to facilitate events with integrity, to acknowledge involvement in the USBands community and to provide a fair process by which new ensembles can participate in USBands Premium Events.

The seeding process will determine a performance order, within competitive class, based on two factors: SCORE (50%) and PARTICIPATION (50%). In the event of a seeding tie, the REGISTRATION DATE will serve as a tie-breaker.

SCORE

The SCORE component will be determined by averaging the two highest USBands scores at least five (5) days prior to the event, within competitive class (appearing on the recap), within the current competitive season. If an ensemble does NOT have two scores to determine an average, they will be placed in a random draw. In fairness to engaged USBands participants, the random draw will be weighted to increase the likelihood of earlier performance times, rather than later performance times, within a particular competitive class.

PARTICIPATION

The PARTICIPATION component will be determined by a points system, acknowledging the number of USBands events in which the ensemble participated, up to five (5) days prior to the event date.

- Earn 1 participation point for each Premium or Showcase (Gold/Silver) USBands event in which they participated up to five (5) days prior to the event.
- Earn 1 participation point for hosting a USBands Events, regardless of competition/exhibition status at the event.
- Ensembles who are scheduled to participate in a USBands Event which is cancelled for inclement weather will still receive 1 participation point for the event in question.

****Maximum of 4 participation points will be awarded in a weekend.****

TIMELINE

For seeded events, participating ensembles will be notified of their Group/Block Time at least 24 DAYS prior to the Event. This is an approximate window of time (varies depending on the number of registered ensembles), to assist in basic planning for the Event (buses, etc.).

The SCORE and PARTICIPATION numbers will be calculated no later than the MONDAY of the Event week. Directors will be notified via email and usbands.org of EXACT performance line-ups no later than MONDAY of the Event week.

****The Director of USBands may alter the performance order for any event, if deemed necessary.****

USBANDS NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENTS

USBands provides separate National Championship events for both "A" and "Open" classifications. A Class ensembles may still compete at the Open Class National Championships but will compete as an Open Class ensemble in their respective group. Festival Ensembles are eligible to participate at any of the Championship Events.

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT – ELIGIBILITY

All ensembles, whether Members or Non-Members of USBands, are eligible to participate in the USBands National Championships.

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT – PERFORMANCE ORDER

A seeding process for States and Nationals exists in order to facilitate events with integrity, to acknowledge involvement in the USBands community, and to provide a fair process by which new ensembles can participate in USBands Premium Events.

The seeding process will determine a performance order, within competitive class, based on two factors: SCORE (50%) and PARTICIPATION (50%). In the event of a seeding tie, the REGISTRATION DATE will serve as a tie-breaker.

SCORE

The SCORE component will be determined by averaging the two highest USBands scores at least five (5) days prior to the event, within competitive class (appearing on the recap), within the current competitive season. If an ensemble does NOT have two scores to determine an average, they will be placed in a random draw. In fairness to engaged USBands participants, the random draw will be significantly weighted to increase the likelihood of earlier performance times, rather than later performance times, within a particular competitive class.

PARTICIPATION

The PARTICIPATION component will be determined by a points system, acknowledging the number of USBands events in which the ensemble participated, up to five (5) days prior to the event date.

- Earn 1 participation point for each Premium or Showcase (Gold/Silver) USBands Event in which they participated up to five (5) days prior to the event.
- Earn 1 participation point for hosting a USBands Events, regardless of competition/exhibition status at the event.
- Ensembles who are scheduled to participate in a USBands Event which is cancelled for inclement weather will still receive 1 participation point for the event in question.

****Maximum of 4 participation points will be awarded in a weekend.****

NOTE: A scale to take into account participation vs. opportunities available in their region will be utilized for Nationals seeding.

TIMELINE

For seeded events, participating ensembles will be notified of their Group/Block Time at least 24 DAYS prior to the Event. This is an approximate window of time (varies depending on the number of registered ensembles), to assist in basic planning for the Event (buses, etc.)

The SCORE and PARTICIPATION numbers will be calculated no later than the MONDAY of the Event week. Directors will be notified via email and usbands.org of EXACT performance line-ups no later than MONDAY of the Event week.

****The Director of USBands may alter the performance order for any event, if deemed necessary.****

REGULATIONS

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

USBands encourages participation by any student within their music program, as long as the student is in good standing as determined by each school's extracurricular activity policy. Therefore, we maintain a very liberal approach to ensemble student participation. Participants must be full time students, enrolled in the school district of the participating school. Exceptions to this policy require a written request from the school district Principal or Director of Music to the Director of USBands, in advance of the start of the season.

CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

USBands uses a classification system that is designed to ensure ensembles of like size, style, and experiences are grouped together. A criteria-based adjudication

system is utilized, in which each competitive class is adjusted on a separate scale that reflects its skill set and its anticipated level of proficiency.

CLASSIFICATION – GROUP SIZE

USBands classification for participating ensembles is based on the total number of performers, not the size of the student population at their school. **This count includes playing members, auxiliary (color guard, majorettes, etc.), and command personnel (drum majors, guard captains, etc.).** This does not include members of an American Flag Section or Honor Guard when these members do not move or otherwise add to the effect of the program. Ensemble sizes are grouped as follows:

National		Texas	
		For all groups participating in Texas events	
Group I	1 - 38	Group I	1 - 45
Group II	39 - 53	Group II	46 - 80
Group III	54 - 70	Group III	81 - 115
Group IV	71 - 95	Group IV	116 - 160
Group V	96 - 130	Group V	161 - 200
Group VI	131+	Group VI	201+

A USBands official will conduct an independent count at each event to confirm the number of performers in each ensemble is correct. If this number conflicts with the unit's registered classification, the ensemble director will be consulted at the event to resolve the issue and USBands representatives will make every effort to resolve the situation onsite. If a classification issue needs to be resolved after the conclusion of an event, USBands reserves the right to appropriately re-assign awards and placements for the entirety of the current season, at the discretion of the Director of USBands. If an ensemble performs with too many members for their group size, USBands *may* assign a penalty of up to 5.0 points per ineligible member.

USBands reserves the right to reclassify ensembles based on the data collected at our events. If it is determined that reclassification is needed, a written notice will be generated by the USBands office.

CLASSIFICATION – PROFICIENCY

USBands provides three (3) proficiency classifications to ensure that ensembles are competing with other ensembles at or about the same relative skill level, thus providing a progressive educational experience at any level of performance.

Open Class: Seasoned ensembles that demonstrate expanded skill sets and are adjudicated on a scale supporting intermediate to advanced skills.

A Class: Ensembles who demonstrate a basic to intermediate skill set (may be building/rebuilding their program) and are adjudicated on a scale representing fundamental to intermediate skills.

Festival Class: Ensembles who prefer a non-competitive experience at any USBands-sanctioned event. Ensembles in this classification may receive commentary by adjudicators, score sheets, and will be awarded ratings of Superior, Excellent, Good, or Fair. The rating will be announced and will appear on recaps.

USBands reserves the right to “split” a competitive class at particularly large events, when there are more than 16 ensembles in direct competition with each other. The exact line of separation will be determined by the Director of USBands, with the intent of creating a fair and equitable competition for all ensembles.

Criteria for classification will include, but not be limited to:

- Competitive Results
- Program History
- Direct Observation
- Ensemble-To-Ensemble Comparison
- Other Circumstances (Ensemble Director Status, Etc.)

New ensembles will be classified in collaboration with USBands and the Ensemble Director's selection in the online database. USBands may review and make changes to a new ensemble's classification after their first performance in a USBands event.

Top finishers in the A Class will be evaluated and may be promoted to the Open class, if appropriate, as a reward for excellence and high achievement.

RULES OF PERFORMANCE

PERFORMANCE AREA

The basic performance area will be a regulation size football field, 300 feet wide by 160 feet deep, marked in 5-yard intervals from goal line to goal line. The ensemble may start or conclude its performance anywhere on or off the competition field.

There are no boundary penalties.

HASH MARKS

USBands will only guarantee “High School” hash marks, to be marked every 5 yards. In some regions, such as Texas and New England, these markings are set at 60' from each sideline. In all other states these markings will appear at 53'4" from each sideline. Other hash marks may appear depending on the existing stadium configuration. Information regarding which hash marks will appear will be included in the event information packet, for each specific event.

REPORTING TIME

It is the director's responsibility to ensure that the ensemble reports at their assigned gate time. Any ensemble reporting more than ten (10) minutes late to the gate may forfeit their performance time. If circumstances allow, an ensemble who missed its gate time due to extenuating circumstances may be permitted to perform in adjudicated exhibition at a later point in the event. A penalty or disqualification will only be assessed in extreme cases after consultation between the USBands Coordinator, USBands administrator, and the ensemble's representatives. Any emergency circumstances must be made known to the USBands Event Staff directly, via telephone or in person as soon as is reasonable.

PERFORMANCE LENGTH

Each ensemble will have an interval of time on the field during which they will set up, warm up, perform, and exit the field. This time begins once the USBands Coordinator prompts the ensemble to enter the performance area. The interval time will be determined on an event-by-event basis, but will usually last 13-15 minutes.

A penalty will only be assessed in extreme cases after consultation between the USBands Coordinator, a USBands administrator and the ensemble's representatives. USBands will help in any way to accommodate issues relating to technical difficulties, electronics use, etc. and will not penalize groups because of such issues.

Warm-ups may flow directly into the program. Any special circumstances related to your performance **MUST** be communicated directly to the USBands Coordinator on site prior to the beginning of the performance, and USBands will make every attempt (without guarantee) to fulfill unique requests (i.e. unusual tunnel entrances, etc.)

On-field warm-ups may take place; however, the warm-up time is included in the ensemble's allotted field time. If warm-ups are deemed excessive, causing a delay in the program, USBands Event Staff reserve the right to issue an appropriate penalty. Directors are asked to be courteous of the next performing ensemble and to support the efforts to run events on-time.

EQUIPMENT – USE

There are no restrictions on the number or types of electronic music, instruments or amplification systems that may be used. This includes any use of voicing/singing, sampling, or other uses related to the performance of pre-recorded digital media. If there is a concern regarding the integrity of live performance, the USBands office will communicate the concern to the director.

Motorized vehicles moving equipment on and off the field must be in top condition and equipped with a diaper (a covering to assure there is no leakage of fluids.) Any front ensemble or prop equipment pushed or pulled onto the field surface must have large inflatable tires or wheels with a minimum of 6 inch in diameter

(pneumatic wheels/casters.) Any equipment with smaller wheels must be lifted and placed into position.

EQUIPMENT - PROHIBITED

The use of motorized vehicles during the performance is prohibited. Motorized vehicles may not drive onto the performance field. The use of drones in and around the performance area and venue is prohibited.

The use of fire extinguishers, water that comes in contact with the field surface when used as a prop, animals, and/or pyrotechnics (including fire batons) are prohibited at all USBands events. This also includes the release or use of any and all materials that may result in debris on the field. Any damage to the field or damaging material left on the field after a performance will result in a penalty, ranging from one (1) point to disqualification, at the discretion of USBands.

A monetary penalty for violation of this rule will also be assessed: two (2) times the offending ensemble's registration fee for a Premium Event or three hundred dollars (\$300.00) for a Showcase Event. Additionally, any and all costs incurred to clean, replace or repair the impacted area will be the responsibility of the offending ensemble.

EQUIPMENT – PLACEMENT AND RETRIEVAL

Anyone (adult, student, and non-student) may place, move, or remove equipment at any time during a performance. Individuals, who are used only to move equipment, hold props, etc., and who do not appear in uniform, will not be counted in the total number of performing members.

The spirit of this policy is to keep students safe at all times. If USBands determines that a "non-member" is generating "Effect" through the movement/manipulation of props, the ensemble will be notified in order to make corrections and avoid the issuance of a penalty. If the issue occurs at a Championship Event, USBands reserves the right to issue a penalty ranging from one (1) point to disqualification.

EQUIPMENT – USE OF THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

If an ensemble chooses to display the American Flag, all the respect, etiquette and dignity traditionally afforded our national emblem must be shown. Failure to meet this request may result in a penalty ranging from one (1) point to disqualification, at the discretion of USBands.

CRITIQUE

Each ensemble's staff will have the opportunity to meet with adjudicators at the conclusion of all events (excluding designated Regional and Championship Events). The order of critique will be based on performance order.

Staff members of three participating ensembles at a time will be admitted into the critique room. The three groups will rotate through three stations of adjudicators (Music, Visual and Effect) at five (5) minute intervals.

When a Color Guard Adjudicator is on the panel, they will sit with the Visual Adjudicator. When a Percussion Adjudicator is on the panel, they will sit with the Music Individual and Music Ensemble Adjudicators.

If an ensemble's staff is not present when called into the critique room, their critique time may be forfeited. The critique format may be changed by the USBands representatives, with notice to participating staff members. Directors are asked to limit their critique attendance to no more than six (6) instructors at any given time.

CREDENTIALS

Credentials for Directors, staff, chaperones, and other crew members will be issued for relevant shows in a given season, based on group size. The credentials may only be used for access to USBands events prior to National Championships. Once these credentials are distributed, no others will be made available and USBands reserves the right to modify credential requirements as deemed necessary through the course of the season.

USBands tries to accommodate those who give their time and effort to its member ensembles while also attempting to not harm the revenue generated by ticket sales for Event Hosts. These credentials must be displayed at all times, around the neck. Each ensemble will receive one (1) Director's credential, and additional credentials according to the following allocations.

Group I	10 credentials
Group II	15 credentials
Group III	20 credentials
Group IV	20 credentials
Group V	25 credentials
Group VI	25 credentials

ADJUDICATION

The USBands adjudication system places emphasis on music and performance over design and visual components. While every aspect of performance is taken into consideration, this emphasis ensures that the performers are rewarded for their own achievement on the field.

USBands uses a 5-Box criteria system on all adjudication sheets. Each box includes a range of numbers that move upward during the season. Sample sheets are available

online at usbands.org. The 'standard captions' that make up the judging systems are as follows:

Music Individual	400 points
Music Ensemble	400 points
Visual Performance	400 points
Overall Effect	400 points

A Class ensembles have a scoring system that awards the **ACHIEVEMENT** of technique and musicianship with respect to the demonstration of **APPROPRIATE** skills as they relate to the maturity and performance level of the performers. In other words, A Class ensembles focus on fundamental through intermediate skills of *technique and musicianship*.

Open Class ensembles have a scoring system that awards both the **MATERIAL** being presented as well as the **ACHIEVEMENT** of technique and musicianship by the individual performers with respect to the active demonstration of skills in all facets of their musical presentation. In other words, Open Class ensembles focus on intermediate through advanced skills of *technique and musicianship* as well as overall design.

USBands Events are classified as either Showcase or Premium based on the specific adjudication panel assigned to the event. More details on Adjudication at Showcase and Premium Events are found in the Event Descriptions earlier in this guide.

ADJUDICATION – MISSING / LATE ADJUDICATOR POLICY

In the rare occasion that an adjudicator does not arrive at an event, the remaining three individuals will adjudicate at the direction of the Chief Adjudicator and USBands administrative staff. The scoring guidelines for the event will remain the same. The missing fourth score will be an average of the three present raw scores. Then, all four numbers will be added to arrive at a final number.

If an adjudicator appears late to the event, he or she will begin evaluating immediately, but the score will not be counted in the total until the beginning of the next group or class.

CAPTION AWARDS

ONLY THESE AWARDS ARE TO BE PRESENTED AT A USBANDS SANCTIONED EVENT:

The following awards will be presented within each group and each class:

Best Music: Awarded to the ensemble with the highest average score in the two Music captions.

Best Visual: Awarded to the ensemble with the highest score in the Visual caption.

Best Overall Effect: Awarded to the ensemble with the highest score in the Overall Effect caption.

Best Percussion (not included in a Silver Showcase Event): Awarded to the ensemble with the highest score awarded by the Percussion adjudicator.

Best Color Guard (not included in a Silver Showcase Event): Awarded to the ensemble with the highest score awarded by the Color Guard adjudicator.

Only the awards mentioned above should be presented and no other awards may be presented without prior written approval from the Director of USBands.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of inclement weather, Directors should refer to the USBands website, social media, and email correspondence. **Directors should ensure that USBands has a correct cell phone number for each director.** This can be updated in the online database, BandData (www.trigonroad.com/yea/). In the event that a Director cannot be reached, he or she can call the USBands contact listed at the top of the Event Information Sheet for each specific event.

A determination will be made between the USBands Event Staff, Event Host and the Chief Adjudicator as to whether the event will be conducted as a standard competition, an adjudicated standstill performance, an indoor event, a postponement or a cancellation.

In the case of an adjudicated standstill event, the Music and Effect captions will be the only numbers used to determine ranking and placement.

Each adjudicator will assign scores as they would for any USBands event. The scoring criteria for the week will remain the same.

If the Visual, Percussion and/or a Color Guard captions are represented, they may adjudicate all units as they normally would, however in this setting, a score is not assigned.

The Music Individual and Music Ensemble captions will be adjudicated utilizing the same 400-point scale and the scores will not be averaged. The Effect caption will also use the 400-point scale, but the score will be divided in half to give the caption less weight based on the absence of visual performance.

EVENT HOST PARTICIPATION

Host ensembles are encouraged to participate in their own event. Hosts have the following performance options:

Competitive: If a host ensemble decides to compete, it will compete at the same time

as other ensembles in its class. The host will have the option of performing last in its class. The score will be included on the recap sheet and will be included in the awards ceremony. The score will be eligible for seeding in States and Nationals events.

Adjudicated Exhibition: The ensemble may perform “out of class” in the event. The ensemble will receive recordings and scores. The score will not appear on the recap, and will NOT be included in the awards ceremony. **The score will NOT be eligible for seeding in States and Nationals events.**

Non-Adjudicated Exhibition: The ensemble will not receive scores, sheets, or adjudicator commentary.

USBands assumes that each Event Host will perform in an **Adjudicated Exhibition**. Any desires by the Event Host in conflict with this assumption must be communicated to the USBands office, in writing, no later than **31 days** prior to the Event.