



**Texas Bandmasters Association  
Convention/Clinic July 26-28, 2018**

**The Complete Marching Season  
Part 4: The Cleaning Process:  
Excellence is in the Details**

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## PART 4 – THE CLEANING PROCESS

### Visual Cleaning

- Drill cleaning
  - Foot timing is a HUGE priority
    - Visual bopping (1's)
  - Yardline crossing counts
  - Facing the direction of travel
  - -1/+1
  - Subsets
  - Using the grid
  - "Do the math"
- Drill changes
  - Putting sets on the grid
  - Work to eliminate direction changes in the middle of sets
  - Work to eliminate 90 degree slides
  - Adjust step sizes and form size to make step sizes easier without changing intent of the form
- Choreography
  - Functional is ok!
  - Does it make sense?
  - Is it cleanable?
  - Randomness is easy to clean too!
  - "If you're going to dance, you're going to be evaluated as a dancer"
- Outside & Inside
  - Try to get outside in classes as often as possible
  - If you don't have a field because it's a parking lot, then tracking
  - Focus on the skill of moving and playing
  - Don't give up when it sounds bad...it's going to take time.....a lot of time.
- Always mark time
  - Step-outs
- Prioritization

### Music Cleaning

- Music cleaning
  - Pick the "Hits"
    - There should only be a few times in the show when you really play "loud"
    - This is a skill that must be taught from the beginning
    - Review daily on air
  - Always focus on tone
  - Write your music so that EVERYONE can participate both musically and visually
    - Many of us are guilty of telling students to just not play
    - The music is too hard for 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> band students
- Section/Mixed arcs
  - Section arcs develop confidence and it's easy to work on "section sounds"
  - Mixed arcs develop individual accountability & more efficient for the teacher
- Cleaning from actual drill pages
  - Put students in realistic situations that are directly applicable
  - Warmup in challenging playing environments
- Music changes
  - Make decisions with the end in mind
    - Will it ever actually be clean?
    - Is the payoff worth the work?
    - Will the staging allow this to sound good?

- Is the music written so that all appropriate parts will be heard?
  - Is there an easier way to achieve the intent with less work?
- Rewriting/Revoicing
  - Power chords! (i.e. just a perfect 5<sup>th</sup>)
  - Create clarity by eliminating unnecessary lines (SATB is ok)
  - Ensure students are in ranges that project clearly
  - Clarinets & "the break"
  - Keep arrival chords the same as often as possible
- Stylistic details (legato, staccato, accent, slur)
  - As long as you can do these four, you're GREAT!
  - Try to be sure that every note in your show is clearly marked as one of these 4 styles
- Stagger breathing
  - Write parts with all stagger breathing already written in
    - Divide each part in to 3 parts (A, B & C)
  - Primarily used for brass
  - Leave notes out to breathe in rhythmic sections
  - Write in sneak out, rest, and sneak in for longer note values
- Adjust music fundamentals by adding dynamics and/or visual changes
  - As the students get comfortable with playing fundamentals, add more responsibilities
    - Crescendo/Decrescendo
    - Change stepout direction or change to slides
    - Do choreography instead