




**Texas Bandmasters Association
Convention/Clinic July 20-22, 2023**

**Simple and Sustainable Methods
for Clearer Style**

**CLINICIAN:
Dr. Andrew Hunter**

**Demo Group: U. S. Air Force
Band of the West**

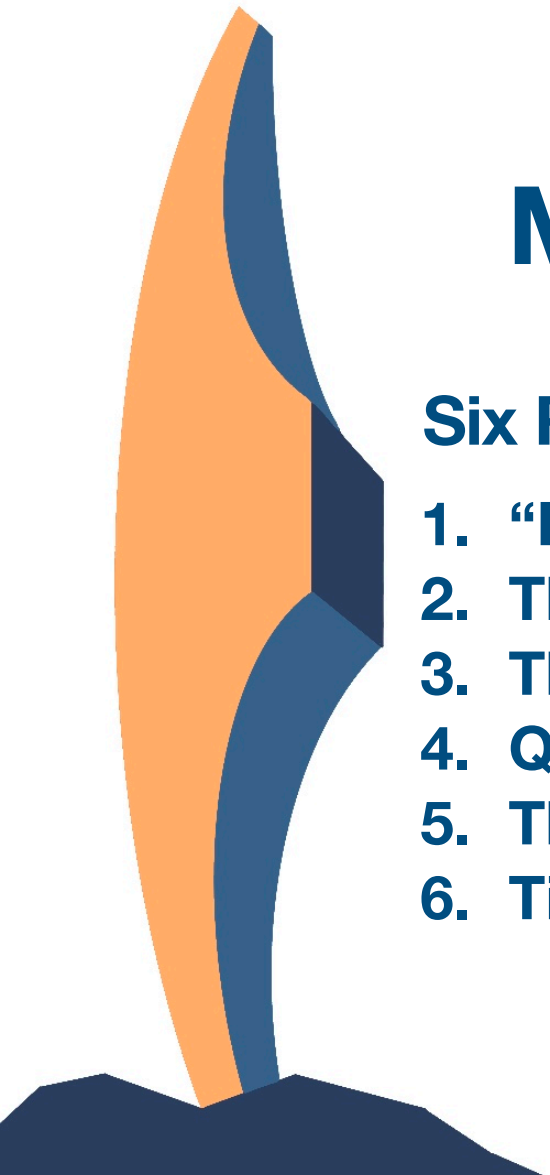


Simple and Sustainable Methods for Clearer Style

**Texas Bandmasters Association
2023 Convention**

**Dr. Andrew Hunter
Director of Bands
The University of Texas at El Paso**






Simple and Sustainable Methods for Clearer Style

Six Rules for Style:

1. “Dots and ties are rests in disguise”
2. The 80/20 Crescendo
3. The “Last Slurred Lift”
4. Quarter Note Triplets: the “Momentum” Rhythm
5. The Rule of Dots in Compound Marches
6. Ties over a barline: Release or Crescendo






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RULE 1: Dots and ties are rests in disguise!

- Bands sound “muddy” because of lack of space
- Strategic space creates *clarity*
 - Think of the Star-Spangled Banner rhythm - we instinctively teach this with lift on the dotted-eighth
- Composer shorthand - long note tied to short note equals release on the short note






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RULE 2: The 80/20 Crescendo

- Most bands get too loud, too soon.
- Save 80% of the crescendo's *magnitude* (the “get loud”) for the last 20% of its duration (length of crescendo)
- This gives the crescendo energy and impact!





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RULE 3: The “Last Slurred Lift”

- Slurred passages are usually *over-slurred*.
- I joke about starting “Overslurrers Anonymous” because **IT IS A PROBLEM!**
- At first, have students add a staccato dot to the last note of slurred passages.
- Soon, they learn to “lift” the last note to hear the next articulated note more clearly.






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RULE 4: The “Momentum Rhythm”

- One of the most prevalent rhythmic issues is the quarter note triplet.
 - It turns into the “dance rhythm” because the second note is late.
- Triplets are the composer squeezing three notes into the space of two.
 - Most of the time, musicians should “lean into” the rhythm to place it accurately.






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RULE 5: The Rule of Dots in Compound Marches

- Most bands play march style too *long*.
- It is music for moving people briskly and with precision.
- This is even more common in 6/8 marches.
- **EVERY** note has a dot! Either:
 - Next to it (dotted quarter/half) giving it length
 - OR**
 - Above it (quarter, eighth, etc) making it short





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RULE 6: Ties across barlines: Release or Crescendo

- Ties across a barline generally lose intensity
 - Young musicians observe measures as independent units, not as organizational tools.
- Tied notes across barlines either indicate a release point, or are suspensions (NCT) that need to be emphasized, then resolved.





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BONUS RULES/PRINCIPLES:

- 1. Time tends to shift in Silence, Sustain, Sudden Change, and Soft/Smooth.**
- 2. Half steps are small; whole steps are large.**
- 3. Stop tuning – start targeting.**
- 4. Percussion color is solved by asking: What? With What? Where? How?**

