

THE BAND ROOM

STUDENT INSTRUMENT CARE CHECKLIST



MARCHING DRUMS + PERCUSSION

1. Drums

- Inspect all drumheads — top and bottom — and replace them as needed. Beat marks (from drumsticks) are acceptable, but dents, tears and holes will negatively affect the drum's tone. Heads that are stretched or worn should also be replaced.
- Make sure all tension rods are present on each drum. (Tension rods are the screws that hold the drumheads in place.) If any become rusted, bent or damaged, they should be replaced. Otherwise, the drum cannot be tuned properly.
- Check the snare mechanisms to ensure they properly engage and release — or “throw” — the wires. Also, look for rust or missing strands on the wires and confirm that the cord or tape is in good condition.
- Wipe down the drums with a soft, dry cloth or with wood polish, if necessary. Ammonia-based cleaners and glass cleaners are not recommended for metal or wood surfaces.
- Chrome can be polished with car detailing products; use oil-based lube for moving parts like tension rods.
- Yamaha recommends that you remove temporary drum wraps after use. Moisture can get trapped between the shell and wrap material, potentially affecting the drum's tone.

2. Hardware

- Inspect all carriers and mounting hardware for rust and/or corrosion. Each should have all its padding and adjustment bolts.
- Ensure that any stands and/or clamps are functioning correctly and are free from rust.
- Use a soft cloth and a little glass cleaner to refresh the look of all your chrome hardware parts.
- Some parts tend to shift due to the heavy vibration of drums. To keep marching hardware — like the single level bolt adjustment — in place during performances, use a thick grease. This allows the part to move when needed but prevents unwanted shifting.
- Wash Field Corps marching carrier pads as needed and air dry.
- Routinely check and wipe down parts on the player side of the carrier.

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3. Cymbals

- Inspect all cymbals for small cracks and imperfections that could negatively affect their sound. Remove the top wing nut and felt washer so you can inspect the cymbal's center hole.
- Remove all dust and dirt from cymbals with a soft cloth. Use a small amount of glass cleaner if desired.

4. Mallet Percussion

- Play each key of your mallet percussion instruments, ensuring every note rings true. Scratched or dented bars can alter the tone and/or pitch. Often, these bars can be individually replaced, saving you money versus getting a whole new instrument.
- Inspect all resonators for dents, dust, rust and anything else that may affect the sound of the instrument.
- Check the pedal mechanism of any vibraphones. Vibes should have a short, dampened sound when struck and a long, full sound when the pedal is depressed. If this does not happen, small adjustments to the pedal, rod or dampening bar can be made.
- Marimbas, xylophones and vibraphones have cords that run through the bars to hold them in place. These can fray and tear over time and will need to be replaced. This is an easy project and a good one for involving your players — it gives them some “ownership” in their instrument.
- Inspect all additional percussion instruments. For optimum performance, they should all be free from cracks and excessive dirt/dust.
- Check the wheels and ensure that the brakes and caster/wheel rotation operate correctly.
- Inspect the frame for missing parts and secure any loose items.