

## Blue Knights Front Ensemble Audition FAQ

### **Do I have to play a solo?**

If this is your first time you would be in the ensemble a solo is not required but it is extremely helpful for you to play something other than the audition material to give us an example of how you play. We ask that you do not prepare anything longer than 5 minutes just so the audition process isn't too long. This can be a section of a longer solo.

All vets of the ensemble will need to play a solo regardless of what year you were in the ensemble.

### **How does the audition process work?**

Our audition dates will include Nov. 7, 8, 14, and 15. The first weekend we will talk about technique and begin to look at the warm-ups and a separate percussion ensemble piece. The second weekend will consist of group and individual auditions.

### **Do I have to be at everyday of auditions?**

Obviously for the staff to get the most out of their observations of you we need to see you as much as possible. This added to the fact that each day we will be learning and covering new material and it becomes clear that someone who is at auditions everyday versus someone who is not will have the advantage.

### **What do I need to learn before auditions?**

The warm-up packet will be posted on the Blue Knights website, [www.bknights.org](http://www.bknights.org), and you are encouraged to learn as much of the packet as possible.

### **What 4 mallet grips will be used?**

We will be using both Burton and Stevens grips for 4 mallets. Burton will be used on the Vibes and Xylophones while the Marimbas will use Stevens. There will be a Burton technique packet put up on the website if you are not familiar with it. In terms of help for Stevens the best resource is Leigh Howard Stevens "Method of Movement." Sometimes I will also use Giff Howarth's "Simply Four" for a more concise breakdown of Stevens grip. Also, feel free to contact me with any questions.

It is not necessary for you to know both grips. You just need to know one or the other that way you can learn the 4 mallet warm-ups.

### **What is the 2 mallet technique like?**

Yet again there will be a packet put up on the website to provide information about this.

### **What if I don't think I'm good enough to make it?**

As I have told many people, it is great to approach Blue Knights' auditions with the mindset of learning as much as you can. The main thing that we are looking for is a good attitude and a good work ethic. These traits mean a lot more to the Blue Knights than just playing ability.

So the bottom line is just come. At the bare minimum you will learn a lot.

### **Do I need to bring anything?**

You do not have to bring anything other than yourself and a copy of the warm-ups to audition for keyboards. If you are auditioning for drumset or percussion just bring your own sticks. If you are auditioning for guitar or bass you can bring just your instrument since we have amps but it might not be a bad idea to bring an amp to just in case there are a lot of people auditioning for those instruments. If you are auditioning for synth you will not need to bring an instrument.

### **What will the instrumentation be like?**

We would like to have 4 marimbas with one person on each, 4 Vibraphones, 1-2 Xylophones, 1 Bells/Chimes, 2-3 Synths, 1-2 Bass Guitars, 1 Guitar, 1-3 Rack Percussionists, 1 timpani player, and 1 Drumset player. There will only be one ensemble again.

### **What if I am still in high school?**

Yet again the biggest thing Blue Knights is looking for is someone with a good attitude and someone who is willing to work hard. If you have these traits then we will definitely consider you for the ensemble regardless of whether you are in high school or not. One policy we have is that if your high school has a winter percussion ensemble of its own then you must participate in that ensemble. Blue Knights is not a replacement for your high school ensemble. If you feel there is a special circumstance with this then feel free to talk to us.

### **Other Questions?**

Feel free to contact me.

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