



The BIG RED MARCHING BAND

# PRESEASON PRESS

# 2025





## 2025 WKU BAND STAFF

### DIRECTOR OF BANDS

Dr. Gary Schallert

### ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF BANDS

### DIRECTOR OF ATHLETIC BANDS

Dr. Matthew McCurry

### ASST. DIRECTOR OF ATHLETIC BANDS

### PERCUSSION / DRUMLINE

Dr. Scott Harris

### GRADUATE ASSISTANT

Mr. David Holt

Ms. Megan Withers

Mr. Noah Woody

### ENSEMBLE OFFICE COORDINATOR

Ms. Emily Lindsey

### COLORGUARD STAFF

Mrs. Jessie Price

Ms. Hayley Leming

Ms. Megan Healey

### TOPPERETTES STAFF

Mrs. Nicole Patton

TBA

### BAND PHOTOGRAPHER/MEDIA

Ms. Tessa Hillman

### THE 'VOICE' OF THE PRIDE

Mr. Byron Lee

### STUDENT BAND STAFF

Shaylee Baxter

Michael Cecil

Patrick Johnson

Cailee Tucker

\*Vacant Positions-Apply Today\*

## WELCOME TO THE 2025 SEASON

### Tentative Performance Calendar

*This calendar is TENTATIVE at this point in the season. The official calendar with dates and times will be included in the 2025 Band Handbook / Syllabus.*

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>
Saturday, August 16	Band Camp Performance	TBA
Saturday, August 23	WKU vs Sam Houston	WKU Stadium
Saturday, August 30	WKU vs. North Alabama	WKU Stadium
Saturday, September 20	WKU vs. Nevada	WKU Stadium
<u>Tuesday</u> , October 14	WKU vs. FIU	WKU Stadium
Saturday, October 18	KMEA Quarterfinals Exhibition	CCHS/FSHS
Saturday, October 25	KMEA Marching Band Champ.	WKU Stadium
Friday, October 31	Homecoming Parade	Downtown
Saturday, November 1	WKU vs. New Mexico St. [HC]	WKU Stadium
Saturday, November 15	WKU vs. MTSU [Alumni Event]	WKU Stadium
Saturday, November 22	WKU vs. LSU [Travel Possible]	LSU Stadium
Friday, December 5	C-USA Championship Game	TBA
December - TBA	Bowl Game <i>This is typically a 2-3 day trip.</i>	TBA

*Mark these performance dates on your calendar! All performances are required events for all band members. Make appropriate travel plans now. Should the football team be invited to play in a bowl game or two, the full band may be expected to attend. This could require adjustments to your holiday travel plans. We will not know a date for the bowl game until early December.*



# ♪ DIRECTOR'S NOTE ♪

July 3, 2025

Dear BRMB Members,

Welcome to the 2025 season of the *Pride of the Hilltoppers* - **The Big Red Marching Band!** This year will mark the 100<sup>th</sup> edition of the WKU Marching Band since its beginning in 1925 with twenty students who wanted to play music and make a difference at their school. I hope you are looking forward to this upcoming season as much as I am! In becoming a member of the BRMB, you are now a part of the past, present, and the future of this amazing ensemble. That is quite a responsibility as we carry on the purpose and charge of the Big Red Marching Band. Since 1925, the marching band has provided a sense of community and has continued to be a source of pride for the University. Those who have come before worked hard to build the reputation and stature that we as current members and staff still enjoy. What an honor to carry on the traditions and to follow in the footsteps of so many who have loved and continue to love this band!

**There is no better experience than being in a collegiate marching band.**

I can't wait to see the **'W'** move down the field and cheer GO TOPS! as we play the team out of the tunnel. In addition to pregame, we have a legendary progressive halftime show that will reach out to any crowd to whom we perform. This could be the crowd in our stadium or one of the many students that we will see while playing in exhibition at one of the area competitions! We began this year by introducing the Big Red Marching Band to millions of viewers worldwide as we Big Red took on Big Ben in London, England on January 1! This season, we welcome our alumni back to help us celebrate!

If you are new to the collegiate band experience - **Welcome!** You are about to embark on a journey that is unlike anything else you have ever experienced. No matter what type of band program you come from, you can be assured that you are surrounded by like-minded people who are driven to seek excellence in music and performance. Enjoy being a part of this community where you can build lifelong friendships, find your place to belong at WKU, and enjoy the fruits of our labors.

Returning members, I look forward to welcoming you back to campus and sharing your love and dedication for the BRMB as we start a new season. You are the leaders, you have the institutional knowledge, and I will count on your guidance as we take the field once more with vigor and excitement. With your help, and the help of our outstanding and talented staff, we will continue to earn the name, *'The Pride of the Hilltoppers'*.

*I hope you enjoy the rest of your summer. If you need anything, please reach out!*  
Band Camp starts soon!

Go BRMB! Go Tops!



Dr. Matthew J. McCurry  
Associate Director of Bands  
Director of Athletic Bands  
Western Kentucky University  
Department of Music



**Dr. Matthew McCurry**  
Associate Director of Bands  
Director of Athletic Bands

**2019**  
*Doctor of Musical Arts*  
West Virginia University

**2009**  
*Master of Education*  
Carson-Newman College

**2000**  
*Bachelor of Music Education*  
*Instrumental / Vocal*  
Carson-Newman College



## BRMB TRIVIA

Who was the first director of the WKU Bands?



**Answer:**  
Joyce Felts, a student at WKU at what was then, the Teachers College, Western Kentucky members in the first band. The next year, Franz Strahm was employed by the university.

# First Things First ...

## Have you registered for Marching Band?

All students wishing to participate in the Big Red Marching Band must be a registered student at Western Kentucky University or SKYCTC\*.

In addition, each student must be registered for the course **MUS 347.500 - Marching Band**. If you have a problem with registration, please contact the Music Office immediately.

Marching Band meets Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 3:15 - 5:15 p.m. If you have a class that conflicts with more than 1/3 of this time, it will be necessary to change your schedule. Should a change not be possible, you must speak with the director in advance to determine if there is another option.

*There is often more flexibility in your schedule than you think!* Please talk to your academic advisor and explore the best options now during the summer months. Don't wait!

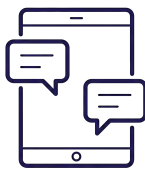
\*Interested SKYCTC students, please contact the band office for more info.

## Sign up for the **BAND** app!

The directors and staff of the Big Red Marching Band will use the **BAND app** notification system. Take a moment right now and sign up for this information service using the instructions below. This will not be a means of providing updates and information for the general public, but instructions and information relevant only to current band members. These could include weather alerts, location changes and/or cancellations. Because of space limitations, non-members, family, and friends should **NOT** register for this service.

The band directors and staff will make every effort not to overuse this system, but it is very important that you are able to get all updates and information in a timely manner.

**SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW AND JOIN OUR BAND!**



**WKU-BRMB25**



## Staying Healthy

The health of each band member is very important. Since most band camp activities take place outdoors, the following guidelines are suggested to insure everyone's well-being.

- 1) **Stay hydrated. Drink water and sports drinks.**
- 2) **Wear light-colored clothing.**
- 3) **Use sunscreen often.**
- 4) **Wear tennis shoes during rehearsals. Wearing inappropriate footwear or going barefoot can lead to injuries.**
- 5) **Be sure to eat. Skipping meals, especially breakfast, can lead to passing out in hot conditions.**
- 6) **Get enough sleep. Marching band requires mental acuity as well as physical stamina.**
- 7) **Let someone know if you feel ill, dizzy, or faint.**





# BAND CAMP

## Attendance

All band camp rehearsals and activities are required. Make the necessary adjustments to your schedule (work, vacation, etc.) to ensure that you will be in attendance. Big Red Marching Band Scholarships are directly related to band camp attendance at each segment.

## MASTERPlan

We have been working hard to prepare a schedule that will let first-year students attend band camp and the most important segments of the MASTERPlan program. The final band camp schedule will have both schedules in detail. A BIG thank you to the MASTERPlan staff who understand how important it is for you to also attend band camp.

## Parking

Band members should acquire needed parking permits before band camp starts. Members who are living on campus should have already registered for a permit. If you are living off-campus, make sure you have a valid pass before camp begins if you plan on parking in a campus lot. Visit the WKU Parking Services website to learn more about campus parking.

## Facilities

The band makes use of many different facilities while we are at band camp. Campus administration and housekeeping are working hard to ready the buildings and spaces for the school year. Take great care to make sure that you are cleaning up after yourself and leaving spaces better than you found them. We want to be complimented on the way we clean up after ourselves. Only make use of the rooms that are assigned to us. Be where you are supposed to be, nowhere else.

## Band Camp Schedule

You will receive a full camp schedule as we get closer to band camp. Right now, it is our plan to begin camp with a Saturday afternoon picnic & meeting in the Colonnade and music rehearsal on Saturday, August 9. Band camp will run from approximately 8:00am to 9:30pm each day with a break for lunch and dinner in between rehearsal times. Some days will require some schedule modifications based on University events such as TOPS Traditions Night and the President's Welcome. These adjustments will be included in the final camp schedule that you will receive before camp begins. Camp will end with a post-camp performance (location TBA) on the evening of Saturday, August 16.

## Band Camp Meals

Meal plans for students will begin on Friday, August 15. For all meals up to this point, you will be provided with a ticket to Fresh Foods for lunch and a \$10 per diem for dinner. You will receive each of these during registration and it is your responsibility to keep up with them. We purchase each ticket from food services, so there are no extras. Students who are attending MASTERPlan have purchased their meals beginning on Tuesday. Once meal plans begin on Friday, members may choose where they would like to dine.

## Band Camp Housing

For those members living in campus housing, early move-in is available. Colorguard, Percussion, and Leadership will be moving in on Wednesday, August 6. All other band members will be allowed to move into their campus housing on August 8 and the morning of August 9.

Alternate days are NOT POSSIBLE as Housing staff will only be available during our assigned times. All members must move-in during our assigned times. If there are extenuating circumstances, please contact the housing office.

Students living off-campus should plan to arrive and move-in to their residence before camp begins. There should be no appointments made that interfere with band camp (water, electric, etc.).

## Camp Theme Days

Enjoy the camaraderie and competition throughout the week with the Camp Theme Days. See if you can be creative and come up with an outfit for each day.

Saturday	High School Pride	<i>Where ya from?</i>
Sunday	Game Night	<i>Fav Sports/Board/Video Game</i>
Monday	Supers!	<i>Heroes? Stores? Stars?</i>
Tuesday	Color Wars 2025	<i>What's your section color?</i>
Wednesday	Blast from the Past	<i>Let's get old school!</i>
Thursday	Holi(day)	<i>Which holiday is the best?</i>
Friday	Last Day Luau	<i>Hawaiian Party Day!</i>
Saturday	WKU TOPS! Day	<i>Show Your Topper Pride!</i>

**THERE'S ALWAYS FINE PRINT:** In order to participate in Camp Theme Days, your outfit **MUST** be acceptable in public (we do have visitors), tasteful (no obscenities or unwelcome slogans), and you must be able to effectively play and march in it. Poor footwear (or no footwear) will not be allowed at camp.

# UNIFORM INFORMATION

## Uniforms

Uniforms will be issued to each band member during band camp registration. Each instrumentalist will be issued the following:

- ☒ Uniform Jacket and Bibbers
- ☒ Marching Band Shako (if applicable)
- ☒ Marching Band Uniform Bag (if traveling)
- ☒ Marching Band T-Shirt
- ☒ Marching Band Shorts
- ☒ Marching Band Ball Cap
- ☒ 1 Pair of Black Gloves

Specialized uniforms for Colorguard, Topperettes, and Twirlers will be assigned during band camp or clinics.

Band members should refer to the Big Red Marching Band Handbook for instructions on check-in/check-out procedures and the proper wearing of the band uniform.

## We will have for you ...

**MARCHING BAND T-SHIRT** - This shirt will be required under your uniform in order to take jackets off in the stands or elsewhere. Your course fee covers the cost of the marching band t-shirt.

**MARCHING SHORTS** - These shorts will be required under your uniform as weather permits as well as during pregame rehearsals. We will also use these shorts any time we are in "summer uniform". Your course fee covers the cost of the marching shorts.

**GLOVES** - You will initially be provided with one pair of black gloves to begin the season, but you will be responsible for purchasing new gloves as needed. Gloves that are no longer black or are torn/tattered are not considered uniform. You may purchase gloves in the uniform room before each performance as needed.

**BALL CAP** - In the stands, in other outdoor performances, in "summer uniform" and at other times throughout the season, all instrumentalists will be required to wear the official band baseball-style cap. If you lose your hat, extras will be available for purchase at a price of \$15.00 throughout the season. These ball caps are for **BAND MEMBERS ONLY**. No other hats are permitted.

## What you are responsible for ...

**MARCHING SHOES** - Every instrumentalist will need a pair of solid black **BAND** shoes. (*A traditional band shoe such as Dinkle, DrillMasters, or DSI.*) **I highly recommend the DrillMaster System Blue (or Super-DrillMaster) as an exceptional shoe for marching band.** There can be no other color present on performance shoes. If you do not already have black marching shoes, they can be purchased at most music stores that sell marching band supplies. No worn shoes or shoes that seem to be in poor condition should be on the performance field. If you have any questions, see a section leader or graduate assistant.

**MARCHING SOCKS** - Each band member will be responsible for providing a pair of **LONG** black socks. Socks must be **MID-CALF OR HIGHER**. Low cut socks are not considered uniform.

**MARCHING BAND GEAR** - You may be given the opportunity to purchase other **OPTIONAL** band gear throughout the season on the band web store (under construction). More information will be coming about this.

**AUXILIARY MEMBERS** - Because some items are custom and will be used solely by you, there will be some items that you will need to purchase. If you have any questions, please ask the band staff.

**We will provide** your summer uniform to include:

- Summer Uniform Tennis Skirt
- Summer Uniform Tank Top
- Hair Bow
- Earrings

**What you may need to purchase** at the beginning of or throughout the season:

- |                      |         |
|----------------------|---------|
| • Rubies Gear Jacket | \$82.00 |
| • Rubies Backpack    | \$85.00 |
| • Uniform Boots      | \$60.00 |
| • Rehearsal Uniform  | \$49.00 |
| • Uniform Sneakers   | \$35.00 |
| • Makeup             | \$35.00 |
| • Tights             | \$10.00 |

*Many of these items are one time purchases that you can use for multiple years. Once purchased, you can use them for upcoming seasons!*



# MUSIC & DRILL

## Part Assignments

Part assignments are initially made according to the needs of the band and the faculty and staff's best judgement. Auditions for part assignments are held during registration day at band camp and are optional. You have been preassigned a part, if you are happy with that part assignment, no audition is necessary. If you wish to move to another part, a part audition is required. Please keep in mind that all parts are equally important and strong players are required on every part to ensure the best possible band sound. You will receive more information on part assignment when section rosters have been finalized.

## Memorizing Music

It is our expectation that all music that is performed on the field be memorized. Don't worry, you will have plenty of reps during rehearsal to help you memorize the music without extra time outside of class. However, if you find yourself having difficulty, a little extra practice will go a long way toward memorization. Please know that the staff and section leaders are all here to help, so please do not hesitate to reach out for any assistance you might need. **All members should come to band camp with pregame having practiced and spent time with the Pregame music.** Pregame music will be available on BlackBoard by the first of August.

## Drill Charts / UDB

This year, the Big Red Marching Band will once again use Ultimate Drill Book for delivery of new drill and for the learning of drill on the field. Each band member will be responsible for downloading Ultimate Drill Book (free app) on your own device and creating an account. You will be provided with the information to access this material once available. If you do not have access to an electronic device, you will be able to download and print charts and music from an online source.

## At Rehearsal

Every member should have their music and drill charts at every rehearsal. Even if you feel that it is memorized, there are times that you will need to reference your music and drill. *You may know your part well, but you might not know what happens in m.37, count 4.* Stepping out of formation to look at your neighbor's music or drill is distracting. If you come to rehearsal without the proper materials, you may be counted absent from rehearsal.

## 2025 Show Plans

This season's progressive show has been designed to create excellent entertainment value to the audience and to prepare the band for exciting exhibitions throughout the season as we celebrate 100 years of great music!



## 100 Years of Iconic Marching Band Hits

### SWING

As the BRMB was beginning in 1925, the band would have opened with big hits from the 20s & 30s including Gershwin and Glenn Miller!

### THE KING

Elvis Aaron Presley, the "King of Rock 'n' Roll" would have definitely been included in the repertoire of the BRMB in the 1950s. And now he is again!

### DISCO



Get that pointer finger ready as we groove to some great disco hits that surely would have been played by the BRMB. Disco Fever, I Will Survive ... Dancing Queen?!

### MORE QUEEN

How could you have an eras show without the music of Queen? You know this will get the crowd fired up!

### CLASSIC ROCK

The late 1970s & 80s were golden eras for rock music from glam rock to heavy metal and beyond to progressive. Can you picture it now? Screaming guitars, drums, Van Halen?

### GRUNGE & POP

The end of the millennium began to change the sound from Grunge, Alternative, R&B, Pop and more. Nirvana and Madonna definitely earned a place here! What's that smell?

Photo by Tessa Hillman





# INSTRUMENTS & EQUIPMENT

## Lyres & Flip Folders

**\*\*READ THIS SECTION CAREFULLY\*\***

Professional quality lyres and flip folders are required for every brass and woodwind player. Lyres for your instrument are available from your preferred music vendor and should be acquired before the beginning of camp. **Using your arm to hold a flip folder leads to poor posture and bad performance habits - this cannot be allowed.** The band does not stock lyres, please make sure you come to camp with all needed accessories.

A school-owned flip folder may be checked out during band camp for your use during the season, however, many find that having their own flip folder (or two) is preferred. You will need many pages to accommodate the amount of music used during the season. If you need assistance with your flip folder, please contact a graduate assistant or the music librarian.

## Instrument Repair

Please check your personal instrument to ensure it is in top condition. If there is a need for any repair, please have it serviced before the start of band camp. Clarinet and saxophone players should come to camp with six or more reeds that are in new condition. All instrumentalists should have all of the necessary items for keeping instruments clean and well-maintained. Supplies like valve oil, polishing cloths, and the like are not supplied. If you need instrument repair during the season, please see a Graduate Assistant who will help point you in the right direction. Please know that you are responsible for repairs to personally-owned instruments.

## School-Owned Equipment

The WKU Bands have a limited amount of instruments available for rental during the marching season. Piccolos, mellophones, tenor saxophones, baritones, sousaphones, percussion, and colorguard equipment are available in the instrument check-out room. If you have a rental instrument needing repairs, please see a Graduate Assistant. There may be a loaner that you can use while your instrument is in the shop. You may be responsible for repairs on a school-owned instrument if the damage is beyond normal wear and tear.

## Equipment Return

Instruments and equipment will be returned immediately following the last game of the season, usually the bowl game. At this time, the condition of the instrument will be evaluated and compared to the notes at the time of issue. It is expected that equipment be returned in the same condition that it was issued with consideration for reasonable wear and tear. Any damage beyond wear and tear will be noted at turn-in, as well as any missing parts (mouthpiece, adapters, valve buttons, toppers, etc.) and you may be financially responsible for any repairs to return the instrument to its original condition.

Equipment that is not returned will be charged to the student's Topper account and may place a hold on your registration or graduation until returned or paid in full. Equipment owned by the school is property of the State of Kentucky and theft of this property will be handled by the appropriate authorities.





# OTHER INFORMATION

## Fall Rehearsals

Once the semester begins, the BRMB rehearses on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 3:15 - 5:15 pm. Marching band is a class for credit, so all rehearsals are required. Attendance policies will be outlined in the 2025 Big Red Marching Band Handbook.

## Report Dates

You will receive a full band camp schedule as we get closer to camp. For now, plan on the following report dates:

### Leadership, Colorguard, & Drumline

Move-in.....	Wednesday, Aug. 6
Percussion Meeting (6pm) .....	Wednesday, Aug. 6
Percussion First Rehearsal.....	Thursday, Aug. 7
Colorguard First Rehearsal.....	Thursday, Aug. 7

### All Other Members

Move-In.....	August 8 or 9
Registration & Rehearsal.....	Saturday, August 9

## Leadership Training

Leaders will be in training on Friday morning. Following the training sessions, you will want to be on hand to welcome new and returning members to camp. Leadership will be key to an easy registration and welcome process. Please plan to arrive early on Friday to get started.

## Important Deadlines

Please review the following form titles and dates listed below. It is important that we receive the requested materials, which you will receive via email, on or before the deadline. Check your TopperMail often!

Band Member Information Form .....	July 27
Uniform Sizing Form.....	July 27
Medical Information Form.....	August 3
Handbook Acknowledgement Form.....	August 9

## HOW TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN COLLEGE BAND

*Joining a collegiate marching band is one of the most exciting things you can do. Yes, it does take time, but it is rewarding at a level that can't be found in any other activity. Here are some tips to help you manage the transition to collegiate marching band:*

- 1) Be prepared** - have your music, drill, equipment, and anything else you need at every rehearsal. Plan ahead! Practice!
- 2) Be on time** - this is something you should be used to. Being early is one time, being on time is late. Beat the whistle to block!
- 3) Come to every rehearsal** - the best ability is availability! We work hard and fast. It's amazing what you can miss in one rehearsal. Don't get behind. You will feel better for coming to class, rehearsing, and being around your BRMB family.
- 4) Manage your time** - make time for classes, to do homework, socialize, and 'me' time. Time management will be your best strategy for success in college!
- 5) Keep your body healthy** - keep your body fed, hydrated, and in good physical shape. Sleep is important, too!
- 6) Communicate** - let us know what is happening! Ask questions!
- 7) Have fun!** - This is what it's really about! We work hard to march and perform well, but enjoy every second of it!



# MORE BAND OPPORTUNITIES

## Fall Symphonic Band

The WKU Symphonic Band is a group of 60-100 student musicians that meet during the fall semester to perform traditional as well as contemporary wind band literature. They Symphonic Band rehearses on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:45 to 5:15pm and performs two on-campus concerts during the fall semester. Membership in the Symphonic Band is based on competitive audition. For more information about the Symphonic Band, contact Dr. Gary Schallert, WKU Director of Bands.

## Spring Wind Ensemble

The Western Kentucky Wind Ensemble is the premier concert ensemble on the WKU campus. The Wind Ensemble has performed at the Kentucky Music Educators Convention and the prestigious College Band Directors National Association Southern Division Convention on numerous occasions. The Wind Ensemble rehearses on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 3:45-5:15p during the Spring Semester and performs two on-campus concerts as well as select tour and conference performances. Membership in the Wind Ensemble is determined by competitive audition. For more information about the Wind Ensemble, contact Dr. Gary Schallert, WKU Director of Bands.

## WKU *Spirit!* Pep Band

The *Spirit!* Pep Band performs at all Hilltopper and Lady Hilltopper home basketball games and travels with the basketball teams to the Conference USA tournament and NCAA tournament. Students may receive one course hour credit by enrolling in pep band during the spring semester. The *Spirit!* Pep Band rehearses from 5:30 - 7:30pm on Thursday evenings as needed for the duration of basketball season. Members of the *Spirit!* Pep Band are selected by audition and receive stipends for each game in which they perform. For more information on the *Spirit!* Pep Band, contact Dr. Matthew McCurry, WKU Director of Athletic Bands.

## Campus Community Band

The Campus Community Band is a group of students and community members that meet during the spring semester to perform traditional as well as contemporary band literature. The ensemble rehearses on Monday evenings from 6:30 - 8:30pm and performs and end of the semester concert for the campus community. Membership is open to anyone interested in performing in a concert ensemble including students, alumni, and local community members. Auditions are not required to join the ensemble, but rather for part and chair placements. For more information about the Campus Community Band, contact Dr. Gary Schallert, WKU director of Bands.





# BIG RED MARCHING BAND

*The Pride of the Hilltoppers*

