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The Army Ceremonial Conductor

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Preface

TC 1-19.51, *The Army Ceremonial Conductor*, describes actions and prescribes training for Soldiers serving as ceremonial conductors in Army music performance units (MPUs). It provides information to standardize ceremonial conductor practices and train Soldiers to function as conductors.

The principle audience for TC 1-19.51 is all Soldiers that are led by, train as, or perform as ceremonial conductors. MPU commanders should also consult local policies and regulations concerning ceremonial performance.

Commanders, staffs, and subordinates ensure that their decisions and actions comply with applicable United States, international, and in some cases host-nation laws and regulations. Commanders at all levels ensure that their Soldiers operate in accordance with the law of war and the rules of engagement (see FM 27-10).

This publication is not the proponent publication for any Army terms.

TC 3-21.5, *Drill and Ceremonies*, prescribes marching standards for Soldiers with or without weapons. TC 1-19.10, *Army Ceremonial Music Performance*, adapts selected movements and training techniques from TC 3-21.5 to accommodate Army Music Soldiers in ceremonial formations. TC 1-19.51 also provides specific guidance to conductors when TC 3-21.5 and TC 1-19.10 are not sufficiently descriptive. The techniques and procedures within this publication conform to the best or most common ceremonial practices found in the Army Music program and in the Army ceremonial units that support the Military District of Washington. Marching techniques described in this publication are to be used only by Army conductors, including Soldiers engaged in on-the-job training, when conducting a ceremonial music performance or training for such a performance. Army conductors will conform to the standards described in TC 3-21.5 in all other formations.

Information specific to ceremonial music performance and drum major functions can be found in TC 1-19.10, *Army Ceremonial Music Performance*, and TC 1-19.50, *The Army Drum Major*, respectively. Training videos for ceremonial conductors are located in the “Resources” section of the Army Music Intranet (see URL listed in “references”).

As this publication is a guide, and as all possible situations and eventualities cannot be foreseen or covered by the manual, great reliance must be placed upon the application of sound judgment and common sense by all members of an MPU. In situations not covered by this manual and where doubt arises as to the proper action to be taken, the individual must consider their mission and apply sound judgment in making the required decision(s).

This publication contains copyrighted material.

TC 1-19.51 applies to the Active Army, the Army National Guard, the Army National Guard of the United States, and the United States Army Reserve unless otherwise stated.

The proponent of TC 1-19.51 is the United States Army School of Music. The preparing agency is the Directorate of Training and Doctrine, the United States Army School of Music. Send comments and recommendations on DA Form 2028 (Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms) to Commandant, U.S. Army School of Music, ATTN: ATSG-SMZ, 1420 Gator Boulevard, Virginia Beach, VA 23459-2617.
Introduction

TC 1-19.51, *The Army Ceremonial Conductor*, is designed to be a practical guide for Army Musicians who have little to no conducting experience. It provides those Soldiers with materials to help them develop the fundamental skills required to succeed as a conductor in a ceremonial setting. It should be used in conjunction with TC 1-19.10, *Army Ceremonial Music Performance*, as a reference for Soldiers seeking knowledge of ceremonial conductor responsibilities, stationary movements, and actions. This document is not intended for use in teaching advanced techniques for concert band, orchestral, or choral conducting or for developing score study techniques.

TC 1-19.51 is the primary ceremonial conductor training publication of the Army Music program. It reintroduces and updates material previously published in TC 12-45, *The Marching Band*, and incorporates various United States Army School of Music (USASOM) course materials. This document also references material from *The Modern Conductor, 6th edition*, by Elizabeth A. Green and *Conducting: A Hands on Approach*, by Anthony Maiello.

TC 1-19.51 makes numerous changes from TC 12-45. The most significant changes are: usage of the term “conductor” in place of “bandmaster” throughout; a discussion of ceremonial conductor responsibilities, attributes, and characteristics; a description of the baton and its use; change of nomenclature from the “Cutoff Cadence” to the “Seven Count Cutoff”; additions of the “Three Count Cutoff”; ceremonial conductor techniques, exercises for conductor training; and instructions for conductor-specific actions not covered in TC 1-19.10. The term “Music Performance Unit (MPU)” is used throughout this document and is synonymous with “Army band”.

*Text conventions:* This publication uses unique text conventions to facilitate understanding: preparatory commands are *Italicized in Bold*, commands of execution and directives are **CAPITALIZED IN BOLD**, references to positions and movements are *italicized*, and names of music or bugle calls are placed in “*italicized quotations.*”

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TC 1-19.51 contains five chapters:

**Chapter 1** discusses the role of the Army ceremonial conductor and the history, responsibilities, and selection criteria thereof.

**Chapter 2** describes the baton and its usage as well as describing the conductor’s stationary ceremonial movements.

**Chapter 3** describes fundamental techniques for the ceremonial conductor.

**Chapter 4** provides a series of exercises to aid in the development of conducting fundamentals.

**Chapter 5** describes conductor actions not covered in TC 1-19.10, *Army Ceremonial Music Performance*. 
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Chapter 1

The Ceremonial Conductor

This chapter describes the history, responsibilities, and selection criteria for ceremonial conductors in the Army Music field. Conducting a ceremonial ensemble is a great responsibility as the conductor represents the band and, by extension, the dignity and reputation of the Army itself. Great care should be taken to select Soldiers of high caliber and demonstrated ability to be ceremonial conductors.

HISTORY

1-1. Soldiers have led bands since the earliest days of Army Music, when enlisted drum and fife majors marched Washington’s Continental Army to victory during the American Revolution. From General Pershing’s warrant officer bandmasters of the 1920’s to the current cohorts of Noncommissioned Officers (NCO), warrant officers, and commissioned officers leading Soldiers in joint operations all across the globe, the Army’s musicians have always produced highly trained and qualified conductors.

1-2. Today, the skills needed by Army ceremonial conductors are trained at the US Army School of Music’s NCO Academy and Officer training courses as well as in the field through the mentorship of new conductors by experienced leaders. By combining the knowledge of expert civilian conductors and educators with the lessons learned by generations of Army bandmasters, the ceremonial conductors of today’s Army are provided with the training and education needed to successfully accomplish their ceremonial mission and honorably represent the Nation through music.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1-3. As Army Regulation (AR) 220-90, Army Music states: “Army MPUs are highly visible, effective at building esprit de corps and cohesion, and serve to enhance the Army's public image. Members of Army MPU must demonstrate the highest levels of professional musical performance, conduct, and appearance standards to best represent the Army and the Nation.” Accordingly, the responsibilities of an Army ceremonial conductor are to do the following:

- Ensure that the musical element is fully prepared to accomplish its mission to the highest standard possible.
- Rehearse the Music Performance Team (MPT).
- Know the sequence of events for the ceremony.
- Communicate with the operations NCO and POC for the ceremony in order to stay abreast of any changes to the sequence of events.
- Demonstrate clear conducting technique and knowledge of the music.
- Represent the band, the Army, and the Nation.

SELECTION CRITERIA

1-4. Enlisted ceremonial conductors in any unit should be chosen from among those leaders who have a firm grasp of conducting fundamentals, strong impulse of will, and experience as an Army ceremonial musician. Situational awareness is a requirement for any ceremonial conductor, and they should have a working knowledge of Army ceremonial procedures before conducting their first ceremony. The primary function of ceremonial music is to trigger the next event in the sequence of a ceremony or operation. So while the ceremonial conductor needs to ensure that the MPT is performing to a high musical standard, they also need to be aware of their place in the sequence of events and what action will be coming next.
1-5. Commissioned officers and warrant officers are the primary ceremonial conductors for their MPUs and are selected for their positions based on a combination of leadership and musical competencies. Soldiers interested in pursuing these positions should reference AR 220-90, Army Music, Ch. 3 and the application documents on the Army Music Intranet listed under the “Resources” tab (see URL in “resources”).
Chapter 2

Manual of the Baton

This chapter describes the baton, its parts, and its usage. Additionally, it demonstrates the various stationary movements required by the conductor during a field or indoor ceremony. The term “conductor” refers to any Soldier filling that role when leading a marching band, ceremonial band, or small ceremonial MPT.

SECTION I- THE BATON

PARTS OF THE BATON

2-1. The conductor uses the baton to communicate fundamental musical ideas to the ensemble. The main parts of the baton are the handle or heel, typically made of plastic, cork, or wood; the shaft, usually made of a lightweight wood, fiberglass, or carbon fiber; and the tip, which is the pointed end of the baton opposite the handle. Batons are fashioned with a tapered shape starting with a larger circumference near the handle and progressing to the smaller tip. Although baton lengths vary widely, most batons used for military ceremonies are 12 to 16 inches long. Batons of this length are preferred for ceremonial conducting as they are easier to see outdoors and when the conductor doesn’t have the option of standing on a podium. Seasoned conductors prefer balanced batons, meaning that the balance point is located close to the hand, usually near where the handle meets the shaft. Balanced batons allow for the greatest control and nuance, while tip-heavy batons are more forgiving in the hands of a novice conductor.

HOLDING THE BATON

2-2. Refer to figure 2-1 for a suggested basic baton grip. In the right hand, hold the baton lightly between the thumb and index finger with the thumb crooked out. The heel of the baton should rest in the hollow near the base of the thumb and the tip of the ring finger should rest lightly on the handle. This three point grip (tip of thumb, side of index finger, ball of ring finger) provides security and flexibility. Ensure your grip on the baton is just firm enough to avoid dropping it, but not so tight as to create unnecessary tension.

2-3. Avoid placing your index finger on top of the baton, letting the heel of the baton slide around the palm, letting the handle protrude from the bottom of the hand, or letting the baton point to the left (it should be a relatively straight extension of the arm).
CONDUCTING REGION

2-4. The conducting region varies depending upon the situation. For outdoor ceremonies with a marching band arranged in a block formation, the conducting region is above the shoulders and ensures that Soldiers in the rear of the formation can see the conductor’s movements. For seated ceremonies indoors or outdoors, the conducting region may be lowered to the chest level or a position deemed comfortable and appropriate by the conductor (see figure 2-2).
Signals are performed at a tempo between 114 and 120 beats per minute with 116 the preferred tempo for most occasions. Conductors perform the stationary movements as described in TC 3-21.5, chapter 3, with necessary modifications. When carrying a baton, conductors execute attention and parade rest as illustrated in figure 2-3 and figure 2-5 (see page 2-6).

Note. The movements illustrated in this section are intended for use in outdoor ceremonies or large scale ceremonies conducted indoors. These movements should be learned first and serve as the baseline for all ceremonial conducting movements. At the discretion of the conductor, however, these movements may be scaled down to an appropriate size if the context of the ceremony or size of the band calls for it. For instance, the stationary movements executed on the parade field for a battalion change of command with a full ceremonial band may be too large and disruptive for a small cut down band performing a seated ceremony in the base chapel. The bottom line for conductors is this: **be clear and look professional.**

**ATTENTION**

2-5. For the position of *attention*—

- Stand at the position of *attention* as described in TC 3-21.5, para 4-1.
- Hold your right arm along your side.
In your left hand, hold the baton between thumb and forefinger where the handle meets the shaft. The baton tip should be pointed upward and parallel to the inside of the forearm. Curl your remaining three fingers (see figure 2-3).

March with the baton in the left hand.

**HAND SALUTE**

2-6. The hand salute is executed from the position of attention or while marching at the quick time (see figure 2-4). Execute the hand salute in the same manner as prescribed in TC 3-21.5 para.4-4. The baton should remain in the left hand as prescribed above in para. 2-5.
PARADE REST

2-7. For the position of parade rest—

- Cross the hands in front of your body with the right hand over the left.
- Hold the baton with your left hand (see figure 2-5).
- From this position, you may assume the positions of *stand at ease*, *at ease*, and *rest*, though the hands should remain clasped in front of the body while in formation with the band.
Note. This position mirrors the appearance of the drum major and instrumentalists. If the conductor is in a formation but not performing as a conductor, he or she will assume the position of parade rest as described in TC 3-21.5, para. 4-2 on page 4-2.

INSTRUMENTS UP

2-8. “Instruments up” is a three-count movement used to bring the instruments to the prepare to play position. It is always executed from the position of attention (see figure 2-6).

- Initiate the movement by giving the preparatory command of Instruments. This prepares the band to move to ready instruments.
- **Count 1**: Raise both hands to chin level, closing the right hand into a fist around the handle of the baton. The palms should be facing down with index fingers touching, elbows raised to shoulder height. The baton is parallel to the ground. Band members will come to ready instruments.
- **Count 2**: Silent count.
- **Count 3**: Extend your arms out from your body into a field conducting position- arms extended, elbows slightly bent, hands at eye level or slightly above, baton in the right hand. Band members will come to prepare to play. Your arms should be in the proper conducting region ready to give a preparatory beat.
FERMATA CUT OFF

2-9. Use a fermata cutoff (see figure 3-4, The Cutoff Gesture on page 3-4) when the last note of the music is a fermata, tenuto, or does not provide a rhythmic three-count ending. Make a counterclockwise and upward loop with your right hand. The left hand will simultaneously make a clockwise loop. At the point of the cutoff close your left hand into a fist. Your hands should stop in a position that is identical to the third count of Instruments UP. This places your arms in a position ready to execute count 1 of Instruments DOWN (see figure 2-9 on page 2-10).

THREE COUNT CUT OFF

2-10. The three count cutoff (see figure 2-7) is used when the music ends rhythmically, but a full seven count cutoff is unnecessary or inappropriate. For example, when the band is performing pre-music but there are no marching elements on the field and a full seven count cutoff is not required to end the piece. Likewise, if the band has stopped playing but the percussion section is continuing to play a cadence, use the three count cutoff to signal them to stop on the desired downbeat. To perform the three count cutoff:

- Ensure that the band or section is watching - MAKE EYE CONTACT!
- Beat 1 - Conduct an exaggerated downbeat using both hands with little to no rebound.
- Beat 2 - Circle your hands in time using the cutoff gesture - right hand counter clockwise, left hand clockwise.
- Beat 3 - End the motion in time with your arms fully extended in the instruments up position. Your left hand should close into a fist at the end of the motion.
Note. This movement may be altered by the conductor to suit the needs of the situation. Examples include performing the movement with only the baton, empty handed (for the drum major), or ending in an appropriate position other than instruments up. As always, be clear with your intent.

SEVEN COUNT CUTOFF

2-11. Use the seven count cutoff to signal the end of a march or when the last note of the music provides a rhythmic three-count ending (see figure 2-8).

2-12. READY POSITION. Approximately four bars before signaling the seven count cutoff, stop conducting and briefly lower your hands to your sides. This serves as a warning to the band that the cutoff is coming. Next, fully extend both of your arms into the ready position.

2-13. PREPARATORY SIGNAL. One beat before signaling the cutoff cadence, bend your left hand at the elbow, bringing your left fist to your head. The preparatory signal must be given in cadence with the signal of execution.

2-14. SIGNAL OF EXECUTION-

- **Count 1**: On the first beat of the cutoff cadence, return your left arm to the ready position. This signals the percussion section to begin playing the seven count cutoff.
- **Count 2**: Bend your right arm at the elbow, bringing your right fist to your head.
- **Count 3**: Return your right arm to the ready position.
- **Count 4**: Bend both elbows slightly so that your forearms are oriented straight up and down, parallel to each other.
- **Count 5**: Straighten your elbows, returning to the ready position.
- **Count 6**: Move your arms to a position centered over your head with your hands crossed, right hand in front of your left hand. The hand with the baton will be the closest to the band.
- **Count 7**: Return to the ready position. After one silent beat, go to Count 1 of Instruments DOWN.
Figure 2-8. The Seven Count Cutoff
INSTRUMENTS DOWN

2-15. Instruments down is a three-count movement used to bring band members from the prepare to play position to the carry (see figure 2-9).

- Start in the ready position.
- **Count 1**: Lower both hands to a point at chin level, closing the right hand into a fist around the handle of the baton. The palms should be facing down with index fingers touching, elbows raised to shoulder height. The baton is parallel to the ground. Band members will come to the ready position.
- **Count 2**: Silent count.
- **Count 3**: Lower your arms back to your sides (position of attention), switching baton back to left hand. Band members will come to the carry position.

Figure 2-9. Instruments Down
Chapter 3
Conducting

This chapter covers many of the “nuts and bolts” aspects of ceremonial conducting. There are a number of fundamental principles that all conductors need to become proficient in before leading an ensemble. Understanding and implementing these principles will give the ceremonial conductor a strong foundation for technical proficiency, increase the confidence of both conductor and MPT, and result in a better musical product.

IMPULSE OF WILL

“When the impulse of will is strong and the technique is secure, the ensemble truly has a leader who can unify the musicianship of all into one secure interpretation.”

The Modern Conductor

3-1. Impulse of will is the conductor's ability to confidently convey their musical direction to the ensemble using body language, gestures of the baton and left hand, and facial expressions. Impulse of will is closely related to the Army leader attribute of presence, as described in Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 6-22, Army Leadership. Keep the following in mind as you develop your impulse of will and confidence in front of an ensemble:

“Self-confidence grows from professional competence. The confidence of an effective leader is contagious and permeates the entire organization. Confident leaders help Soldiers control doubt while reducing team anxiety.”

ADRP 6-22, Army Leadership

3-2. Being technically and musically prepared to conduct will increase your self-confidence, which will in turn help you develop your impulse of will.

ICTUS

3-3. The ictus is a small flicking of the wrist at the precise point of each beat in a conducting pattern. When conducting, it is vitally important that the ictus be clearly recognizable, as this translates the tempo to the players in the ensemble. The ictus should be small, precise, and result in a small rebound of the baton's tip off the beat-point. This rebound should lead naturally to the next beat point in the pattern.

BEAT PATTERNS

3-4. A beat pattern is the path followed by the baton or hands which indicates the specific counts in a time signature. The basic beat patterns for meters in two, three, and four are shown in figure 3-1 and figure 3-2. These diagrams indicate the path of the right hand or baton from the perspective of the conductor. In all patterns, ensure that beat points fall in distinct locations (see para 3-3, ictus) and that the paths from beat to beat are clearly distinguishable to the musicians in your group. In all diagrams, the solid lines represent the approach to the beat while the dashed lines represent the follow through after the beat. The dotted lines illustrate the path of the preparatory beat (see para 3-5).
THE PREPARATORY BEAT

3-5.  The preparatory beat precedes the first playing beat and indicates tempo, dynamics and style. The preparatory beats for each of the illustrated patterns are shown in figure 3-1 above and indicated by the word “Start” followed by a dotted line.

3-6.  The preparatory beat must be in the tempo of the music. The conductor must have the desired tempo in mind in order to give a rhythmically accurate preparatory beat and achieve that desired tempo from the ensemble. The conductor should avoid giving more than one preparatory beat (“prep to the prep” or “double prep”) as this can confuse the players and create false starts around the ensemble.

3-7.  The dynamic of the music is generally indicated by the size of the preparatory beat. Normally, a large preparatory beat will result in a louder dynamic from the band. Likewise, a smaller preparatory beat will result in a quieter dynamic.
3-8. **The preparatory beat communicates the style of the music to be played.** Through the use of expressive gestures (para. 3-14), the preparatory beat indicates the initial style (legato, staccato, spritely, maestoso, etc.) and encourages the ensemble to use a corresponding musical approach.

3-9. **As a general rule, the baton moves in the direction opposite the initial beat of the music and with an upward slant,** as indicated in figure 3-1. Angling the baton downward on the preparatory beat can be misinterpreted as a downbeat by players and should be avoided. For example, the preparatory beat for the Department of Defense version of “The Star Spangled Banner” (which begins on count three) should be shown as beat two of a three pattern by moving the baton from left to right and slightly upward (see figure 3-3). For a cut-time march starting on beat one, the preparatory gesture would indicate beat two in the conducting pattern.

![Figure 3-3. National Anthem Preparatory Beat](image)

**CUTOFFS IN CONDUCTING**

3-10. The cutoff has the opposite responsibility of the preparatory beat—instead of beginning the sound, the cutoff is the signal to stop it. While the cutoff gesture is most often employed at the end of a piece, it can also be used effectively during the music. Since the cutoff gesture is used to stop sound, use it to:

- Ensure musicians end notes and phrases together.
- Mark the end of a phrase.
- Prepare the ensemble for a breath.
- Emphasize a prominent rest.
- End a fermata.

3-11. To perform the cutoff gesture, outline the shape of the letter “C” using the right hand. Start at the top of the letter, moving inward, down, and back outward to complete the motion. If the left hand is incorporated into the cutoff, it simply mirrors the right hand by outlining a reverse letter “C”. Depending on the point of origin, this motion may also outline the letter “O”. Stop the motion when you want the sound to cease (see figure 3-4).
3-12. Much like the characteristics of the preparatory beat, the cutoff gesture should reflect
- Tempo.
- Dynamics.
- Style.
- On which beat the music/sound ends.
- Who/what should stop playing.

3-13. Always ensure that the cutoff gesture is clear and distinct from the conducting pattern.

**EXPRESSIVE GESTURES (STYLES)**

3-14. Expressive gestures communicate the mood or style to the ensemble and are characterized by the line of connection from ictus to ictus (what your baton does in the space between the beats). A smooth, flowing beat pattern with a gentle tap for the ictus demonstrates a legato feel to the ensemble; a heavy line in which the wrist leads and the hand pulls the tip of the baton from beat to beat shows a tenuto character; a light, percussive bounce in the ictus and beat pattern expresses a staccato style. See chapter 5 of *The Modern Conductor* for a complete description of the expressive gestures (see figure 3-5).
3-15. Given the march-like nature of most ceremonial music, ceremonial conducting is most often executed using staccato gestures. Exceptions occur, however, such as during the second strain of the National Anthem (DOD version) or when conducting chorales at a funeral. The ability to easily move between staccato, legato, and tenuto styles should be the eventual goal.

3-16. Regardless of the musical styles and gestures employed, ensure that the ictus is always clearly defined and recognizable.

DYNAMICS

3-17. **Dynamics refers to the overall volume of the ensemble and to the volume of the various sections or individuals within it.** Generally speaking, there are two methods at the disposal of the ceremonial conductor for indicating dynamics to the group: pattern size and left hand gestures. Using the left hand to control dynamics will be discussed in paragraph 3-24, "The Left Hand".

3-18. **Pattern Size:** A simple method for controlling the overall dynamic of the ensemble and for changing from one dynamic to another (crescendo, decrescendo) is through varying the size of the conducting pattern. Put very simply- the larger the pattern, the louder the music. The smaller the pattern, the softer the music. When conducting with both hands simultaneously (mirroring), the pattern size should be the same in each hand.

3-19. It should be noted that **dynamics, style, and tempo are independent musical elements**, so adjusting the size of the pattern (and thus the desired dynamic) should not create an accidental change in style. Just because the music requires a quick change from forte to piano does not necessarily mean that the conductor should also switch from a staccato style to a legato one or slow down tremendously if the music does not indicate that change.

3-20. **Left Hand Gestures:** The left hand is an extremely effective tool for indicating dynamics. See paragraph 3-25 for more information.
CUES

3-21. **Cues are unique gestures that indicate special instructions to musicians and can be given with the baton, hands, eyes, a nod of the head, facial expressions, or similar body language.** In general, cues should be given with consideration to the style, tempo, and dynamics of the music. Cues can provide a sense of security to musically exposed players. Some typical circumstances where a cue is beneficial for the ceremonial MPT are:

- Major entrances.
- Solo passages.
- When an entire section takes over the main theme.
- Difficult entrances.
- Major dynamic changes.
- Cymbal crashes.

3-22. When the musician or group being cued is on the conductor’s right, the baton should be used for the cue. When the musician is on the left, the left hand should be used (see para. 3-24). The hands should not cross over each other when cuing. Incorporate eye contact with the hand gesture to reinforce your intent.

3-23. Cues are most effective when preceded by a rhythmic preparatory movement one beat before the cue. This better prepares the recipient to respond to the cue on the desired beat.

THE LEFT HAND

3-24. **Training the left hand to be independent of the right is an essential skill for all conductors.** While mirroring the patterns of the right hand can be an effective practice, it is more important to train the left hand to indicate dynamics, phrasing, and cues. For the purposes of ceremonial conducting, keep the left hand generally relaxed with the fingers together when it is in use. Avoid tensing the hand and let the fingers curve naturally. When not in use for conducting or independent motion, let the left hand rest naturally near the stomach, where it is readily available for efficient employment as needed.

LEFT HAND DYNAMICS

3-25. The left hand can be employed to show dynamics in multiple simple ways. For instance, holding the left hand out with the palm facing the players indicates that they need to play more quietly. Conversely, facing the palm up or towards yourself is an indicator that the ensemble should play louder. Crescendos and decrescendos can be indicated by the smooth raising or lowering of the left hand in conjunction with the desired dynamic change. Combining this technique with an adjustment in the pattern size in the right hand gives the ensemble a very clear indication of the conductor’s dynamic intent. See Chapter 4 for suggested methods for training this skill.

LEFT HAND CUES

3-26. The left hand can function independently of the right for the purpose of cuing individuals and groups within the ensemble. To cue, make eye contact with the recipient then make a definitive motion toward them with the left hand on the beat where action is required. The cuing motion should be distinctly different than the time beating gesture and should (often) include a preparatory gesture on the beat prior. Examples of different cuing motions include

- "The Invitation": invite the player to enter with the palm facing slightly upward on the entrance beat.
- "Throwing the Dart": pantomime throwing an imaginary dart at the player as they enter to indicate a pointed attack.
- Point at the recipient on the entrance beat (direct, forceful).
- Gesture to the recipient with a cupped hand (less direct, more inviting).
- Outline a backwards letter “C”, moving inward to outward (clockwise), which indicates a harder attack.
- Outline the letter “C”, moving outward to inward, used for a softer, more inviting gesture (not to be confused with the cutoff gesture).
- "The Explosion": raise the closed left hand slightly above eye level and open the fingers on the beat of entry. This somewhat theatrical cue is well suited for isolated cymbal crashes (as long as the conductor and cymbal player have eye contact with each other).
- A straight downward motion on the beat.
- A straight upward “lifting” motion on the beat.

**FACIAL EXPRESSIONS**

3-27. Using facial expressions can be an extremely effective means of communicating with the ensemble. Even simple gestures of the eyes and eyebrows can impart split second instructions to the musicians, while using the whole face to demonstrate an emotion can completely change the ensemble's approach to the music. This may not feel natural for all conductors and requires dedicated practice. Try expressing various emotions while conducting in a mirror in order to become more comfortable doing this on cue. Anthony Maiello describes this practice:

> If the music is happy, display "joy", if it is sad exhibit "sorrow" or emote "sadness", if it is slow appear to have "slower movements and less motion", and if it is fast look "brisk, bright, and quick". Above all be sincere, be yourself, and be the music!

Conducting- A Hands on Approach

3-28. The Army ceremonial conductor, however, also needs to consider the balance between emoting for the sake of the music and maintaining an appropriate degree of military bearing. Unlike conducting in a concert band or orchestral setting, expressing too much emotion with the body may detract from the overall ceremonial context or be misinterpreted as disrespectful by some military professionals. **Always uphold the professional standard of the environment in which you are working and save the interpretive body movements for the concert podium.**

*Note*. The ensemble can't read the conductor's face if it is stuck in a score or generally avoiding eye contact with the musicians. So…eyes up! You need to be paying attention not only to the music being played, but also to the sequence of events as the ceremony happens around you.
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Chapter 4

Training Exercises

This chapter discusses training methods for developing conducting fundamentals. These exercises are designed to help lay the foundation of the new conductor’s technique and to help the seasoned conductor refine theirs. They should be practiced as needed to develop proficiency and independence of the hands. Primary emphasis should be placed on those techniques most frequently used during the conduct of a ceremony.

SECTION I- RANGE OF MOTION AND CONTROL EXERCISES

4-1. Use these first two exercises to develop basic mobility, relaxed control of the arms and wrists, and develop an understanding of the plane across which the hands should travel when conducting. These exercises may also form the foundation of a practical conducting warm up routine and should be practiced without a baton.

Note. Perform the first three exercises in a fluid, relaxed, and controlled manner. Imagine your arms moving through water and the natural inclination that your wrists and hands would have as they are pulled behind your arms.

THE HORIZONTAL STRAIGHT LINE

4-2. This exercise will help you develop the straight line horizontal (left/right) movement and wrist flexibility. Ensure that your shoulders are relaxed, your arms hang freely throughout, and that your elbows are not resting on your ribcage. Your hands will move in a straight line across the front of your body.

4-3. Place your crossed hands on your diaphragm, palms facing the body, right fingertips to left wrist, creating a straight horizontal line from elbow to elbow. Your upper arms should be hanging freely. Move your hands horizontally outward on a straight line until they reach a point about two-thirds as far as your limit of reach (any further and your shoulders will begin to shrug). Your fingertips should continue facing in towards each other throughout the motion and create a right angle with the arms as the wrists bend. At the end of the outward motion, stop.

4-4. Turn your hands so that the palms face front with your fingertips pointing away from each other. Keep your hands and wrists in this position as nearly as possible while returning them to the starting point. When your wrists touch again at the diaphragm, flip your hands so that they once again face inward in the starting position. Repeat the entire motion.

THE VERTICAL LINE

4-5. This exercise will help you develop wrist flexibility and a sense of motion across the vertical-plane. Again, ensure that your shoulders remain relaxed throughout and that your arms are hanging freely.

4-6. Let your arms hang full length by your sides with your palms facing backwards. Gradually raise your arms to a point just above the top of your head. As your arms raise keep your fingers pointing toward the ground.
4-7. At the top of the motion flip your hands so that the palms are facing forward with your fingertips up. Gradually lower your arms, keeping your wrists and fingers in the same position as much as possible. At the bottom of the motion, reset the hands and repeat.

SECTION II- INDEPENDENCE EXERCISES

THE OPPOSITE VERTICAL LINE

4-8. This exercise uses the same motion as “The Vertical Line” already practiced, but incorporates independent motion by having the two hands moving in opposite directions at the same time.

4-9. Start with the right arm hanging by your side, fingers pointing down, and the left arm held up at eye level, palm out and fingers pointing straight up. Begin the motion by simultaneously raising your right arm and lowering your left. Your wrists and fingers should maintain the same positions during these movements as in the previous exercise.

4-10. At the end of the motion your right arm will be raised at eye level and your left arm will be down by your side. Once you’ve achieved this position, flip your hands (right now points up and left now points down). Repeat the motion with the left arm moving up and the right moving down until you are back in the starting position.

Note. Your hands should reach their stopping points at the same time despite moving in different directions. Strive to synchronize this motion as it will aid you in further developing coordination between the hands.

COMBINED HORIZONTAL AND VERTICAL MOTION

4-11. Perform the vertical gesture (para. 4-5) with the right arm while performing the horizontal gesture (para. 4-2) with the left arm.

4-12. Reverse the arms. Left arm performs the vertical gesture while the right performs the horizontal.

Note. Ensure that you are guarding the straight lines in this exercise. The tendency will be for the vertical hand to drift to the side or for the horizontal hand to rise or fall slightly. Don’t let them. As you perform this exercise, reflect on how the vertical line can be used to intensify the sustain of the tenuto beat and how the horizontal motion can used in moving from count two to count three in a tenuto four pattern.

CRESCENDO/DIMINUENDO

4-13. Conduct eight measures in two with the right hand. During the first four measures, indicate a crescendo by gradually raising the left arm from its position at your side, palm facing up. At the top of the motion (forehead level), reverse the left hand position so that your palm is facing out. During the last four measures, indicate a decrescendo by gradually lowering the left arm, palm down, to its starting position. Strive for accurate timing of the left hand- four measures crescendo, four measures decrescendo.

4-14. Focus on maintaining smooth motion with the left hand and not letting the conducting in the right hand cause the left to bounce. Simultaneously, keep the conducting pattern of the right hand steady and recognizable.

4-15. Once this skill is mastered, adjust the size of your right hand pattern to coincide with the dynamic indication of the left- as the dynamic gets louder, the size of your pattern should increase. The inverse will be true when the dynamic gets softer. Try this exercise using multiple time signatures and durations for the crescendo/decrescendo.
CUES

4-16. Let your left arm hang completely relaxed by your side. Begin conducting in four with the right hand. Bring your left hand up in a fist gesture on count three of the measure and then let it drop back to the relaxed position by your side. Repeat this gesture every other measure. Ensure that the rhythm and pattern of the right hand are not interrupted by the motion of the left. Proceed to the next step once you’ve mastered this skill.

- Now bring the left hand up on the first beat of the measure. This will be more difficult because the motions of the right and left hands will be contrary to each other.
- Continue this process by cuing on beats 4, 3, 2, and 1 in consecutive measures.
- Repeat the exercise with the left hand resting near the diaphragm between cues.
- Once this is comfortable, try using different cuing gestures and expressive gestures.

4-17. Lastly, come up with your own permutations of the exercise by changing the time signature, cued beat, and style. For instance:

- Conducting in three using a legato style, cue on the downbeat of the first measure and count two of the second measure. Conduct one measure of time in-between and repeat.
- Conducting in two using a marcato style, cue on count two of the second measure and count one of the fourth measure.

SECTION III - CONDUCTING EXERCISES

SPEED OF MOTION

4-18. This exercise will help you develop control over the speed of motion during the line of connection between beats. Using only the baton, conduct a four pattern with a metronome. Keep the beat pattern within a quarter inch square. Keeping the tempo and style the same, gradually increase the size of the square to a half inch, one inch, two inches, all the way to a ten inch square. After that, move to twelve inches and increase by three inch intervals all the way up to 24 inches. Return downward, interval by interval, to the quarter inch square.

4-19. Try this exercise using both legato and marcato styles.

CUTOFFS

4-20. Most often, cutoffs will be used at the logical end of a musical phrase or at the end of a piece of music. Occasionally, though, you may want to indicate a cutoff to an individual or section while the rest of the band continues playing. In order to do this, you must be able to easily show the cutoff gesture and then seamlessly continue conducting. This exercise will help you develop the skill of indicating a cutoff on each beat of a four pattern without a cessation of time beating. These same techniques can be applied to other time signatures than four. It is also effective to mirror the cutoff motion with the left hand. Reference diagrams are included after each exercise. The point of cutoff (where the sound stops) is indicated with a solid line bisecting the baton’s line of travel.

4-21. To cut off on beat one, conduct beats one and two as normal. On beat three, strike the ictus as normal, but rebound back to the left and perform the cutoff gesture (letter “C” or “O”) on count four, starting the motion at the ictus point of count three and ending the gesture at the ictus point of count one. Continue on to count two as normal (see figure 4-1).
4-22. **To cut off on beat two**, initiate the cutoff gesture on count one. Outlining a letter “O” and end on count two at the same ictus point as count one. At the end of the gesture (on count two), rebound to the left (or straight up) and then continue into counts three and four as normal (see figure 4-2).

4-23. **To cut off on beat three**, begin by rebounding to the left after count one. Initiate the cutoff gesture on count two and stop at nearly the same ictus point as count one. The cutoff gesture will end on count three and end the desired sound. Follow through to the right after count three and continue to count four as normal (see figure 4-3).
4-24. **To cut off on beat four,** conduct beats one and two as normal. On count three, initiate the cutoff gesture and continue through the motion to its natural end on the ictus of count four. Rebound off of count four as normal and continue to count one (see figure 4-4).

**THE EXTENDED PLANE**

4-25. While most ceremonial conducting happens in the vertical (up/down) and horizontal (left/right) planes, conductors can use the extended plane to create musical intensity. The extended plane (also known as the “sagittal plane”) refers to the space between the conductor and the ensemble. The conductor can extend into this space to increase intensity and retract out of it to reduce intensity.
4-26. Practice moving in and out of the extended plane by conducting a four pattern at about 60 beats per minute. Start in the ready position with your right hand about eight inches from your body. Keep your pattern relatively small, with only about a six inch distance between beats two and three. Conduct the first measure as normal. On the second measure, begin gradually extending your arm toward the ensemble, moving your right hand forward about four inches over the course of the measure. Do the same for measures three and four, extending forward four more inches during each measure, ending with your arm completely extended.

4-27. Ensure that as you extend forward you are also careful to maintain the same pattern size. This highlights that an increase in intensity does not necessarily mean an increase in volume.

4-28. Once this motion of extension is comfortable, practice the reverse process. Beginning from a fully extended position, gradually retract the arm while maintaining your pattern size.
Chapter 5

Conductor Actions

Most of the actions required by the conductor during a ceremony are explained and illustrated in TC 1-19.10, Army Ceremonial Music Performance, ch.5 “Ceremonies”, and TC 3-21.5, Drill and Ceremonies. The following chapter provides specific guidance for the conductor not covered in TC 1-19.10.

CHANGE POST

5-1. When the drum major and conductor must change posts, the drum major marches the outside “square” path and the conductor marches the inside “oblique” path shown in figure 5-1. The drum major and conductor execute appropriate marching movements to change posts in a military manner. The conductor either verbally commands Change post MARCH, or uses a predetermined signal (head nod, for instance) to initiate the movement.

![Diagram of Change Posts]

Figure 5-1. Change Posts

SIGNALING THE SALUTE

5-2. There are instances when the conductor and drum major are required to salute in unison, but no audible preparatory command may be given (such as during the inspection and march in review). In these instances, whichever Soldier is in front of the other should give a three-count visual signal before the execution of present arms/eyes right and order arms/ready front.

- **Eyes Right** (used during March in Review).
  - **Count 1** - When the drum major's right foot strikes the ground, he/she slaps their right thigh with the saluting hand. This is the preparatory command for the conductor.
  - **Count 2** - The left foot strikes the ground; no additional movement.
  - **Count 3** - On the right foot, the drum major and conductor salute simultaneously. The drum major will perform eyes right while the conductor continues marching with head and eyes forward.

- **Ready Front** (used during March in Review).
  - **Count 1** - On the left foot, the drum major closes his/her saluting hand into a fist. This is the preparatory command for the conductor.
- **Count 2** - The right foot strikes the ground; no additional movement.
- **Count 3** - On the left foot, the drum major and conductor simultaneously drop their salutes. The drum major returns their head and eyes forward.
- **Present Arms** (used during inspection).
  - **Count 1** - The conductor slaps his/her right thigh with the saluting hand. This is the preparatory command for the drum major.
  - **Count 2** - Silent count; no movement.
  - **Count 3** - The conductor and drum major simultaneously render the hand salute and execute *eyes right*. The conductor and drum major’s heads and eyes follow the inspecting party until they are looking straight ahead.
- **Order Arms** (used during inspection).
  - **Count 1** - The conductor closes his/her saluting hand into a fist. This is the preparatory command for the drum major.
  - **Count 2** - Silent count; no movement.
  - **Count 3** - The conductor and drum major simultaneously drop their salutes.

**RECEIVING THE BAND**

5-3. The conductor receives the band when he or she initially assumes control over it from the drum major. This happens at the beginning of a field ceremony once the dressing and alignment of the band is complete and before conducting any preceremonial music. If pre-music is not taking place, the conductor receives the band at an appropriate time after the band is set, but prior to the ceremony.

5-4. To receive the band, the conductor waits until the band is aligned and at the position of attention then approaches the drum major from any direction (usually from the front, but field conditions and unit placement may prevent this), stopping two paces in front of the drum major and assuming the position of attention. The drum major salutes and reports "Sir/Ma’am/SGM/SGT, the band is formed". The conductor returns the salute, responds saying "Take your post", and drops the salute. The drum major then proceeds to their prescribed position aligned with the front rank of the band while the conductor steps forward into the position previously occupied by the drum major. This distance, measured in steps, should be equivalent to the number of files in the band minus one. For instance, in a band with five files the position of the conductor/drum major should be centered four steps in front of the first rank.

**FACE ABOUT AND SALUTE**

5-5. Employ *face about and salute* when you are conducting the band and must quickly and smartly perform *about face* and render the hand salute. Executing this movement fluidly helps to prevent “misfires” where the band should remain at instruments up but some musicians misinterpret the conductor’s move to salute as the command for *instruments down*. Instances include:

- At the conclusion of Honors or “The General’s March.”
- At the conclusion of the National Anthem.

5-6. *Face about and salute* is a fluid motion executed with the arms starting in the conducting position. If conducting, stop. Begin *about face* by placing your right toe into the ground behind and across your left foot. As your body begins turning to the right, smoothly pass the baton from your right hand to your left, dropping your left hand as your right hand moves directly to render the hand salute. At the completion of *about face*, you should be rendering the hand salute with the baton in your left hand. Following the salute, execute *about face* with the hands moving in the opposite sequence as before. As you turn, smoothly transfer the baton from the left hand back to the right, and end in the conducting position as *about face* is completed.

5-7. *Face about and salute* may also be executed in a more defined sequence as described below

- Stop conducting, keeping the hands in the conducting position.
- Transfer the baton between hands as prescribed in the movements for *Instruments DOWN*.
- Execute *about face*. 
• Render the hand salute.
• Drop the salute.
• Execute about face.
• Transfer the baton between hands as prescribed in the movements for Instruments UP.
• Resume conducting.
## Source Notes

| 3-1 | “Self-confidence grows from…”: ADRP 6-22. *Army Leadership*. 10 September 2012 |
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## Glossary

### SECTION I – ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AR</td>
<td>Army regulation</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADRP</td>
<td>Army doctrine reference publication</td>
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<tr>
<td>DA</td>
<td>Department of the Army</td>
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<tr>
<td>MPT</td>
<td>music performance team</td>
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<tr>
<td>MPUNCO</td>
<td>music performance unit/noncommissioned officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>TC</td>
<td>training circular</td>
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<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>USASOM</td>
<td>United States Army School of Music</td>
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### SECTION II – TERMS

None
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