

Hello band directors!

I know you're in the throw of marching band season and I wanted to help you with an easy task to improve the overall sound of your ENTIRE ENSEMBLE!

I've seen a few groups this year and wanted to share some information about tuning the marching percussion section.

**First:** consider the size of your ensemble.

If your group is smaller, choose smaller bass drum sizes. The bigger drums will drown out your wind section and affect the balance of your group.

**Second:** Tune the drums on a regular basis! I know you tune your wind section every day. Same should go for the percussion section.

**Third:** Tips and tricks

-I've included a link to the Evans Drumheads tuning guide which has great information!

**[http://www.evansdrumheads.com/upload/  
EVBR\\_MPSG07\\_Marching\\_Percussion\\_Survival\\_Guide\\_12562.pdf](http://www.evansdrumheads.com/upload/EVBR_MPSG07_Marching_Percussion_Survival_Guide_12562.pdf)**

-A few things to add to the link

-I tune bass drums to a major triad

ex. 28" C, 24" G, 22" C, 20" E and 18" G

-This might differ slightly depending on your drum sizes, head combination etc.

-Tuning a major triad makes split playing more melodic and unison stronger

-Most groups I've seen this year had bass drums with TOO LOW of a tuning scheme. This creates a low rumble which lacks clarity and over balances the wind section.

-Also make sure your bass drums have proper dampening. Too much "boom" will again over balance the winds and create a lack of clarity. The Evans MX series heads are a great start!

**Fourth:** Front Ensemble

-Tune for articulation, balance and sound quality

-I tune concert bass drums to the same root pitch as the triad in the marching basses

-Keep timpani in tune DAILY! Weather changes will affect the tuning drastically

-give your student/staff time in the lot on show days to "clear" timpani heads

Happy tuning and good luck with your season!

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**[www.percussionloft.com](http://www.percussionloft.com)**