

FIFTEENTH



ANNIVERSARY

ATLANTA QUEST

AUDITION MATERIALS

2017



BASS

ATLANTA QUEST 2017

BASS TECHNIQUE GUIDE

I. Introduction

Welcome to the bass room! Your staff is exceedingly happy that you are here and have chosen to spend your time with us. We do not take your being here for granted. This packet is designed to outline our expectations and get all of our heads pointed in the right direction. If we all are striving for the same thing, we stand a much better chance at achieving it.

First things first, what does your bass staff expect from you. We expect every candidate for bass drum to be prepared. One of the worst things you can do is to make an excuse as to why something is not prepared. If you are unprepared in one area, own up to it and take the consequences. This is a general rule for being a professional, and that is who we will be accepting and nurturing, professionals. While time on a bass drum in between camps can be very helpful, we definitely expect everyone to bust their “flat chops” as well.

Your etiquette at all rehearsals is very important. You should not speak when a staff member is speaking. If you have problems we are more than happy to help, but please address these in a respectful manner and at the appropriate time. In sectionals our atmosphere may allow for a little more looseness, but in ensemble rehearsals there should be minimal speaking. There will be an order about these rehearsals that will be detailed at a later date, and it will be imperative that you follow that etiquette. We should strive for the basses at Atlanta Quest to earn the reputation for being consummately professional. At the same time, “Be more concerned with your character than your reputation, because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are.”

In between camps, you are expected to put in practice daily. This practice should be goal oriented and focused on improving your technical and musical ability and the assignments that we give you. You will be required to post regular videos to our Facebook page detailing your progress during the week. We will not accept members who neglect their preparation between weekends. A great attitude and solid work ethic will do as much for you as great hands and superior marching. The ideal candidates will possess both.

II. Audition Tips

- The success of your performance at the audition will be directly related to the level of preparation of the audition material
- Drum in a mirror when you practice and record yourself with some type of electronic device. Listen critically to the recording and work to perfect your performance
- Always use a metronome, or music with a steady tempo when practicing. Be able to mark time to all material.
- Keep in mind that you are auditioning at all times. Be professional!
- Be sure to ask questions if you are confused about anything you are being asked
- Prepare yourself to be involved in a tedious and competitive process. Your ability to stay mentally engaged in the process throughout the weekend will be crucial.
- Strive to give off a sense of confidence in your audition. Everything is a performance, from 8 on a hand to WGI finals. Convince us you are comfortable with what you're doing.

III. Description of Technique

We will be looking for individuals to carry themselves with the tallest and broadest image they can possibly project. One single line will cross through the entire body. Head, Shoulders, Hips, Knees and Ankles will be completely aligned. This will be referred to as the 'Body Line.' Take in a deep breath and inflate the upper body without breaking the body line. Keep the shape that your upper body creates when inflated. Pull your shoulder blades together slightly to achieve an even larger look. Keep the shoulders and neck muscles as relaxed as possible. Your chin will be up and projected.

Approach to the drum begins with relaxed arms by your side. From there, you will hinge from the elbow until the forearm is parallel to the ground. You will be able to increase or decrease the angle of the wrist until it is a 45 degree angle. How we hold the stick is extremely important to producing a great sound. The grip we used is very similar to that of snare drum match grip, except the hands are rotated so that the wrists are vertical instead of horizontal. The stick should rest on the pads of your palms opposite from your knuckles. This is the point from which the stick pivots in your hand. The position of the index finger is an important aspect as well, and it should rest on the opposite side of the thumb. The fingers should stay in contact with the stick at all times without introducing tension. It is important that we keep this relaxed feel at all times so we do not hinder our energy efficiency by inhibiting the natural rebound of the stick after it strikes the head. Many drummers who are told they don't have the "chops" to play are most often simply being inefficient with the muscles they have. Drumming well is largely the product of knowing how to manipulate the stick by applying the appropriate amount of energy at the right moment. Tension wastes energy and limits your ability to play efficiently.

Relaxation is the key to wrist turn on bass drum, and it is slightly different than snares and tenors, which is more "hinge-like". The entire forearm rotates on an imaginary axis that begins at the elbow, traveling through the center of the arms, and ending in the space between your middle and ring fingers. Turning a doorknob uses similar muscles, but the wrist is the primary muscle involved here just like on a flat surface. The mallet needs to follow one arching path from point A to point B and back remaining in the angle set by the tacet position. Players should focus on letting the head do the work to rebound the mallet back to the desired height on continuous legato strokes and should not restrict this rebound motion, as it will inhibit the resonance, thus decreasing the sound and require you to expend more energy.

PREP STROKE: When we strike the drum, we want to use enough velocity to produce a robust strong sound without being harsh or tense. This requires a combination of relaxation and appropriate manipulation of the stick while it rebounds out of the drum. The preparation of a stroke should begin approximately half of a beat prior to the moment the mallet strikes the drum. This all happens in a fluid motion. In the majority of circumstances while playing, the stick will never stop. The motion should be like a bouncing basketball ball, fluid and not stopping between direction changes. The time we act on the stick is when we are throwing it back towards the drum. After the final stroke in a series, the mallet will stop in the resting position, but not until after it has briefly and naturally rebounded off the drum. There will be certain circumstances where the extremes of tempo, dynamics, or visual effect that will require modifications to the prep stroke. We will discuss this when appropriate.

FINGER USE: The use of finger is one aspect of drumming that is sometimes overstated. We should never release the stick from our fingers. Instead, the fingers move fluidly with the stick and the wrist and can sometimes be used to add extra volume or speed. The fingers will almost always be used in addition to and never in the place of the wrist motion. They act as a way of keeping the stick in the pocket created by your

hand, allowing us to more easily manipulate the motion of the stick as it rebounds off of the drum. Many times, the conscious effort of students using their fingers causes tension and increases the amount of energy we have to expend. This should not be the case. Instead, the fingers only add to our ability to efficiently and effectively manipulate the stick through difficult passages, a way of letting the stick breathe in our hand. This concept will be detailed during the audition events.

When a short or muted sound is desired, Atlanta Quest will use a three-point muffling system. Hold the mallet with only your middle and ring fingers. Place the pads of your lower palm, joints of your fingers, thumb, index, and pinky finger directly on the head in the center of the drum, forming a flat plane. Apply an even amount of pressure. This muffling technique is unique, and we use it so that we can muffle effectively and not compromise our grip or hand placement on the mallet. Placing your hand in this way will be detailed rhythmically and will be uniform between players.



IV. Musicality

The purpose of good technique is to service producing good sounds. Tone quality is an essential consideration for every musician. In percussion playing tone quality is a factor of several factors, the most important of these factors being velocity of stroke and playing zone. While these are not the only factors, they will help us to begin our discussion of what constitutes a good sound. The bass drummer should strive to move the stick as quickly as possible without tension. Tension kills sound, and that is true of most musicianship. Our primary playing zone will be in the center of the drum. This produces the fundamental pitch and gives our sound a firmer attack. Great care should be taken to play in the exact center. Practice in front of a mirror can help you solidify your muscle memory of this zone, but listening to your sound can be very helpful as well. As you move out from the center the attack becomes less pronounced, we excite more overtones from the head, and the sustain of the drum lengthens. Always listen to your sound.

Two of the most important ensemble sound concepts are those of balance and blend. Balance is essentially playing the same volume as the people you are playing with. An unbalanced sound is an immature sound. When your staff is making corrections to your volume, take care to remember the correction as this affects the overall sound of the ensemble. Blend comes from everyone in a section playing with the same tone quality at the same dynamic level. Always listen to your sound.

The concept of phrasing in an ensemble activity is quite different than phrasing in solo playing, although one informs the other. If the student does not have a solid concept of musicality, it will be very difficult to match this phrasing to other players and maintain a balanced sound. As a member of the Atlanta Quest bassline you should focus on developing a confident and consistent sound at each dynamic level, and be able to perform crescendos and decrescendos of varying lengths. Once you are able to do that consistently as an individual, you should have the control to apply the levels of listening. The other challenge for the bass drummer is knowing where your particular volume will fit into the overall shape of a phrase. Playing musically as an individual will inform your choices in the ensemble setting. Always listen to your sound.

As a performer you will be called upon to elicit different emotions through your sound. These different emotions will be conveyed through the style and interpretation of the music. In the drum corps world style is much more narrow than in other areas of performance, but it is no less important. If you try to play the ballad with the same approach as the closer it will lack authenticity, and it will fail to connect to your audience. The use of touch in your playing will facilitate the communication of intent to your audience. Keeping in mind that tension kills sound, we may ask you to firm up or lighten up your grip/touch to achieve a desired effect. Solo playing can help you to understand these concepts. Always listen to your sound.

V. Exercises

The following exercises are specific for your instrument. We may not use these everyday, but instead these will allow us to focus on certain concepts. In order to be the most effective, they should be prepared when we ask to play them. The longer it takes for you to get familiar with an exercise, the less we will actually get to focus on the concept being taught. Be prepared!

- A. Velocity Build-up
- B. 8th Note Timing
- C. Tap Timing
- D. Tap Build- Up
- E. Shups
- F. 16th Timing
- G. Parrot w/ 2's 3's & 4's
- H. Gubbadahs
- I. Splitting 6's & 8's

16th Note Check Patterns

Bassque 2015

Check

1)

R L R sim.

4) 3)

R L L sim. R R L sim.

7) 4)

L R L sim.

10) 5) 6)

R R R R sim. L L L L sim.

14) 7) 8)

R L sim. R L sim.

18) 9) 10)

R L sim. L R sim.

21) 11) 12)

R R R R R R R R

25) 13)

R R R R

27) 14) repeat off the left

R R R R L

PREP 4-2-1

JPW

R 1st time
L on repeat

PREP Reset mallet to tacet on 2 Reset mallet to tacet on 2 Reset mallet to tacet on 2

BassLine

R
L

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for the BassLine. It consists of a single staff with a treble clef and a common time signature. The notation begins with a whole rest, followed by a series of eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. This sequence is repeated three times, with a double bar line and repeat sign after each repetition. Above the staff, there are three annotations: 'R 1st time / L on repeat' above the first measure, and 'PREP Reset mallet to tacet on 2' above the first measure of each of the three repeated sequences. Below the staff, there are two annotations: 'R' above the first measure and 'L' below the first measure.

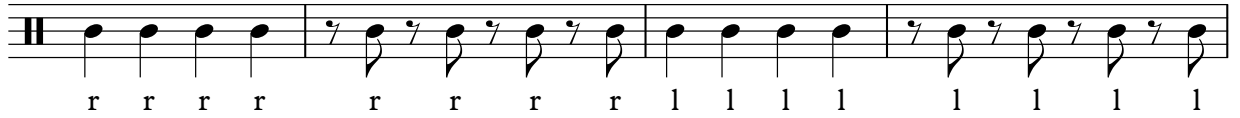
8

Bass Dr

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for the Bass Drum part. It consists of a single staff with a treble clef and a common time signature. The notation begins with a whole rest, followed by a series of eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. This sequence is repeated three times, with a double bar line and repeat sign after each repetition. Above the staff, there is an annotation '8' above the first measure.

8NT

Marching
Bass Drum



Musical notation for Marching Bass Drum, consisting of four measures. The first measure has four quarter notes (r r r r). The second measure has four eighth notes (r r r r). The third measure has four quarter notes (l l l l). The fourth measure has four eighth notes (l l l l).

5


B. D.



Musical notation for B. D., consisting of four measures. The first measure has four quarter notes (r r r r). The second measure has four eighth notes (l l l l). The third measure has four quarter notes (r r r r). The fourth measure has four eighth notes (l l l l).

9

B. D.



Musical notation for B. D., consisting of five measures. The first measure has four quarter notes (r r l l). The second measure has four quarter notes (r r l l). The third measure has four quarter notes (r r l l). The fourth measure has four quarter notes (r r l l). The fifth measure has a quarter note (r) followed by a whole rest.

Tap Timing

70bpm - 160bpm

With 2's

Bass

Musical notation for Bass, 70bpm - 160bpm, With 2's. The staff shows a sequence of eighth notes in pairs, with a final quarter rest.

65bpm - 125bpm

With 3's

B. D.

6

Musical notation for B. D., 65bpm - 125bpm, With 3's. The staff shows a sequence of eighth notes in groups of three, with a final quarter rest. Includes a rhythmic pattern "L r l r L..." below the staff.

60bpm - 120bpm

With 4's

B. D.

11

Musical notation for B. D., 60bpm - 120bpm, With 4's. The staff shows a sequence of eighth notes in groups of four, with a final quarter rest.

B. D.

13

Musical notation for B. D., 60bpm - 120bpm, With 4's. The staff shows a sequence of eighth notes in groups of four, with a final quarter rest.

Be able to play this at all heights, as well as a 2 height version (3 inch 2's, 3's and 4's with a 12 inch release) and a crescendoed version (3-12).

Check Patterns

Traditional

Snare 

3
S 

Other stickings include:

RRLL R L RRLL R L
 RLRR L R LLLL R L
 RRRL R L RRRL R L
 RLLL R L RLLL R L


Be able to play with accents on all of the variations, as well as with sextuplets and fivelets instead of 16th's.

Natural sticking throughout the variations.

5 Variation 1 Variation 2 Variation 3 Variation 4
 S 

9 Variation 5 Variation 6 Variation 7 Variation 8
 S 

13 Variation 9 Variation 10
 S 

15 Variation 11 Variation 12 Variation 13
 S 

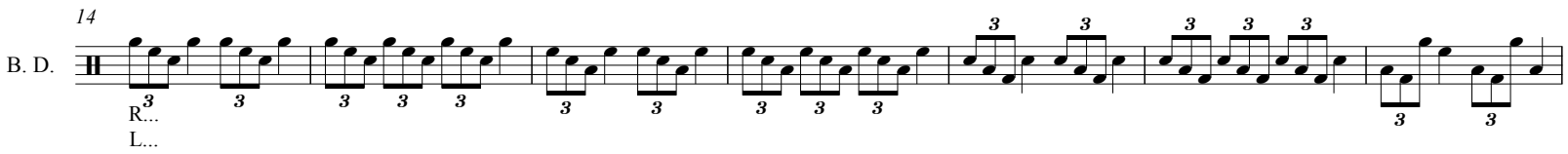
Parrot

Work these at all heights, as well as with a crescendo or decrescendo. When comfortable, add the 32nd note 2's and sextuplet 2's. Be able to play both 16th and triplet going "up" as well as the down variation that is written.

Bass 
R...
L...

7 

11 

14 
R...
L...

21 

Gubadas

Bass

Madaio

1

4

7

9

11

13

Splitting 6's and 8's

Madaio

Splitting sextuplets

#1 - Adding on partials

Bass

3 3 3 3 6 6 6 6

R.....
L.....

5 #2 - Check, first partial, full

B. D.

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 6 6 6 6

R.....
L.....

11 #3 - Moving partials

B. D.

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

R.....
L.....

B. D.

3 3 6 6 6 6 6 6

19 #4 - Shifting around the beat!

B. D.

3 3 6 3 3 6 3 3 3 3

R.....
L.....

B. D.

3 3 3 3 6 3 3 6

Splitting 32nd Notes

#1 - Adding on partials

25

B. D. 

28 R.....
L.....

B. D. 

#2 - Check, first partial, full

30

B. D. 

33 R.....
L.....


B. D. 

#3 - Moving partials

36

B. D. 

41 R.....
L.....

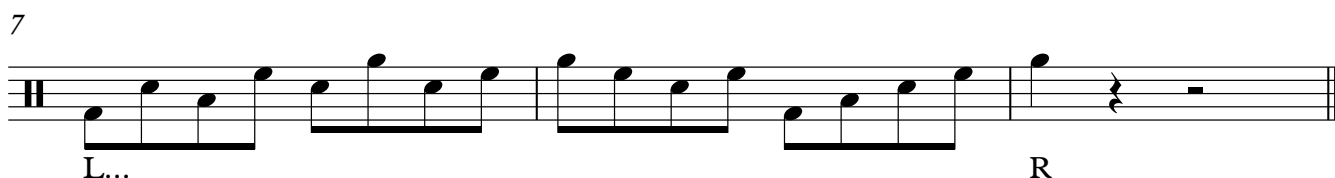
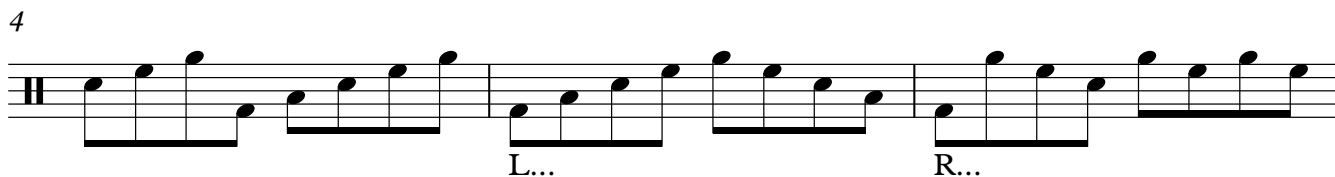
B. D. 

45

B. D. 

Bass

AQ Legatos



Be able to play this at a variety of tempos ranging from 75-210bpm as well as at all heights.

The cycle will be as follows:

Unison - Stickings written

1's (eighth notes) - Stickings written

2's (16th notes)

3's (sextuplets)

Same hand 2's - Stickings written

4's (32nd notes)

With an optional super-secret variation:

All 8 bars in double time, as 16th notes, with the 2nd half of it being 32nd 2's.

If we play this with dynamics, Var. 1 will be 1 bar crescendo, 1 decrescendo, 2 crescendo, and Var. 2 the opposite.

Bread and Butter

♩ = 116

Someone

Snare

R R R R R R R R R L R L L L L L L L L L R L

3

R R R R R L R L L L L L L R L R R R R R R L R L L L L L L R L

7

R R R L R L L L L R L R R R R L R L L L L R L

11

R L R L L L R L R R R L R L R R R L R L R L R

17

R R R R R L L L L L

19

R R R L L L R R R L L L

23

R R L L R R L L R L

28

L R R L L R R L R

Dable-Singles

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AQ Staff

♩ = 108-120

Musical staff 1: 4/4 time signature. Measures 1-4. Rhythmic notation: R L R R. Dynamic: *ff*.

Musical staff 2: Measures 5-8. Rhythmic notation: R r R r R R R R l R l R. Dynamic: *ff*.

Musical staff 3: Measures 9-12. Rhythmic notation: L R L l l l L R L R L R L R R R r R r R. Dynamic: *ff*.

Musical staff 4: Measures 13-16. Rhythmic notation: R R r L r L R r r r r R R r r r r R r. Dynamic: *ff*.

Musical staff 5: Measures 17-20. Rhythmic notation: r . . . r L r r l R L l l l l L L l l l l L l. Dynamic: *ff*.

Musical staff 6: Measures 21-24. Rhythmic notation: r . . . l R l l r L R R R R L R L. Dynamic: *ff*.

Musical staff 7: Measures 25-28. Rhythmic notation: R R R R r l l r r L L R. Dynamic: *ff*.

Musical staff 8: Measures 29-32. Rhythmic notation: R l l. Dynamic: *ff*.

Musical staff 9: Measures 33-36. Rhythmic notation: R R l r r L. Dynamic: *ff*. Section marker **A** is present at the start.

Musical staff 10: Measures 37-40. Rhythmic notation: R R l r r L. Dynamic: *ff*.

V.S.

21

R r R R R

23

R R R L R L R R L r l r l R L r l r l

B 25

R R R L R L R

27

R R L R L R R R L R L R

29

R R R R

30

R R L R L R

31

R R L R L R

32

R R L R L R R l R R l R R l R R l r l r l

C 34

R R R R R p r r r R R

36

f R L L L R L R L R L R L R R

NDA

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AQ Staff

Bass

♩ = 160-192

Musical staff 1: Bass line with triplets and slurs.

Musical staff 2: Bass line with triplets and slurs.

Musical staff 3: Bass line with triplets and slurs.

Musical staff 4: Bass line with triplets and slurs.

Musical staff 5: Bass line with triplets and slurs.

Musical staff 6: Bass line with triplets and slurs.

Musical staff 7: Bass line with triplets and slurs.

Musical staff 8: Bass line with triplets and slurs.

Musical staff 9: Bass line with triplets and slurs.

Musical staff 10: Bass line with triplets and slurs.

Musical staff 11: Bass line with triplets and slurs.

Musical staff 12: Bass line with triplets and slurs.

Musical staff 13: Bass line with triplets and slurs.

mf *p*

Paradabs

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AQ Staff

♩ = 172-200

4 *R R R R R R R ff p*

7 *R I R R R L A R R R R*

10 *R I R R R I R R R L*

13 *R R R R R I R R*

16 *R I I R R I I*

19 *B L R*

21 *R L R L R L R R L R*

23 *R L R R L R L R L R L R L*

24 *R L R L R L*

26

29 *p 9 3 9 9*

31 *f 9 9 9 9 r L r r l l r L r*

r l l r r R l r r l l R l l R l l R l l R l l f R

weadababeetsaboy

L. Summerlin

♩ = 115

f

p \longleftarrow *f* RL RRL R

RRRL LR RR LRL RLR L R LR

RL

RL R^p R

f R R *p* cresc.

f RLLR RRL LRR RLL L LRL L L L R