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US Scholastic Band Association

# 2009 RULEBOOK TEXAS

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*Revised: September 2, 2009*

## INTRODUCTION TO THE US SCHOLASTIC BAND ASSOCIATION

Welcome to the 2009 US Scholastic Band Association (USSBA) marching band season. Since its first event in 1988, the USSBA has supported the development of marching bands through exceptional service, adjudication and venues in which to showcase their music programs. The basic principle of the USSBA has been to provide bands, regardless of style, size and experience, an opportunity to be successful and allow students to benefit from their involvement with scholastic music.

The rules that govern USSBA events are by limited by design. We pride ourselves on having very few rules, and only in the most egregious of circumstances would there ever be a penalty imposed.

As you read this rule book, you will notice that the rules are segregated into two separate areas; administrative and competitive. The administrative rules deal with definitions of membership, band size and classification and participation requirements. The competitive rules deal specifically with the adjudication and performance guidelines.

As the director and staff of a participating band, please review the material found in this book and let us know of any questions you might have.

Thank you for being a part of the USSBA experience and best wishes for a great year.



Sean King  
Director, US Scholastic Band Association

The mission of YEA! is to support the development of young people into magnificent human beings through participation in the performing arts.

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## HISTORY

The organization known today as the US Scholastic Band Association was formed in the Fall of 1988 by THE CADETS Drum & Bugle Corps. There was one competition and it was held in Giants Stadium. Now in this 20th Anniversary Season, there will be over 130 local, state and regional events across the country, concluding with the USSBA National Championship in November. With over 725 bands participating in events, USSBA has become the largest independent scholastic music organization in the Nation.

USSBA and THE CADETS are under the Youth Education in the Arts banner. In addition to the marching band events and serving as a resource to music programs across the country, USSBA programs include student leadership workshops, judge training seminars, and presentations to band boosters and school administrations. Other music related youth activities are coordinated through USSBA personnel. The commitment to excellence in each of these programs is based on a model that has been the foundation for success of THE CADETS through the years.

The mission of YEA! is to support the development of young people into magnificent human beings through participation in the performing arts.

## PHILOSOPHY

The USSBA's focus is on the educational development of today's music student through hands-on, interactive learning opportunities, raising awareness to the importance of music programs in the schools, and providing opportunities for students to experience high quality events. The goal of the rules outlined in the following pages is not to restrict but rather enhance the programs that participate.

In the marching band arena, the USSBA adjudication system rewards achievement through evaluation of performance and effect. The forms or methods a band chooses to communicate their ideas are wide open to all styles.

## GOALS OF THE USSBA

- To supporting band directors to remain engaged with the reason they originally became music educators – the students.
- To create an atmosphere whereby music educators can use marching band to teach life lessons such a discipline, perseverance and commitment to excellence
- To provide educational, quality and positive performance opportunities for high school band students

- To provide experienced instructional support for band directors and staff
- To provide constructive and consistent evaluation and adjudication
- To support music education by generating popular interest in band performances and competition
- To promote innovation, creativity, and growth for bands around the nation

## BAND STUDENT PARTICIPATION

The USSBA encourages participation by any student within their music program, as long as the student is in good standing as determined by each school's extracurricular activity policy. Therefore, we maintain a very liberal approach to band student participation.

USSBA bands must be full time students, enrolled in the school district of the participating school. Exceptions to this policy require a written request per school district Principal or Director of Music to the USSBA in advance of the fall marching band season.

## USSBA BAND PARTICIPATION

USSBA Member Bands are entitled to a variety of benefits in order to make participation within the USSBA simple and beneficial for the band director, staff and students.

USSBA Member Bands pay an annual school year membership fee of \$375 which provides them with performance opportunities, product discounts and access to special events at no additional charge. The list of USSBA Member Band Benefits are published annually on the USSBA website at [usbands.org](http://usbands.org)

USSBA Member Bands are able to participate in an unlimited number of Local and Regional events at no additional fee. Select Regional and Championship level events have an additional Registration Fee and/or Ticket Requirement as a requirement to participate.

Bands participating in any two or more events each fall are automatically enrolled as USSBA Member Bands and will be eligible for all benefits of membership for that school year. These bands will receive an invoice for their annual school year membership fee prior to the first event of the year.

Band Directors must complete the official USSBA Registration Form prior to their first appearance in a USSBA event. The USSBA Registration Form can be found online at [usbands.org](http://usbands.org)

## USSBA CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

The classification of bands is used to make sure bands of like size, style and experience are grouped together to compete. Competitive and non-competitive bands are classified separate from one another.

The USSBA uses a classification system by Group and Class to allow for individual bands to succeed alongside bands similar in nature. Groups are based on the number of performers (I-VI). Classes are based on the level of experience of the band (Class A and Open).

### CLASSIFICATION: GROUPS

USSBA classification for participating bands is based on the total number of performers, not the size of the student population at their school. This count includes playing members, auxiliary (color guard, majorettes, etc.), and command personnel (drum majors, guard captains, etc.).

This does not include members of an American Flag Section (or Honor Guard) when these members do not move or otherwise add to the effect of the program during the band's performance.

Group I:	1 to 43 members
Group II:	44 to 69 members
Group III:	70 to 99 members
Group IV:	100 to 139 members
Group V:	140 to 189 members
Group VI:	190 or more members

Members of bands are counted by a USSBA official at select events. Bands exceeding the numbers in their assigned group will be re-classified accordingly. The USSBA will confirm the number discrepancy with the band director within 72 hours of the event. The Group assignment for the remainder of the season will come from the USSBA office.

At any event after October 15, bands appearing with more performers than their registered Group size, are subject to a penalty of one half point per person for every member beyond their registered size.

### CLASSIFICATION: CLASSES

A band's classification of "Open" or "A" is delineated in Regional, State, National Championship and other select competitions. There is no delineation of "Open" or "A" Class at local events during the season.

"Open" Class is generally more seasoned or experienced bands with access to greater resources.

"A" Class is generally for bands in the process of building a program, new to the competitive setting, limited resources or other circumstances impacting the program.

"Festival" Class allows bands to perform in a non-competitive setting at any of the USSBA-sanctioned shows, including the Regional and Championship events. Festival Class bands will receive judges' tapes, score sheets and will be awarded ratings of Superior (90-100), Excellent (80-89), Good (70-79), or Fair (69 & below). Only the rating is announced and will appear on recaps. A participation plaque will be presented to each Festival Band.

Bands may choose to perform in non-judged exhibition. Exhibition bands will NOT receive critique tapes or judges' sheets and will not be included in the critique schedule unless requested. A participation plaque will be presented to these bands.

A listing of bands by classification is available from the USSBA office. A director wishing to appeal the assigned classification must submit a written request, signed by that director and the school principal. The reason(s) for the appeal must be stated in the request. Appeals for review must be received in the USSBA Office by August 1 and a ruling will be made prior to the band's first competition.

*Criteria for classification will include, but not be limited to*

- Scoring
- History through the years
- Band Director Status
- Direct observation
- Comparison to other bands in the Group
- Potential

New bands to the USSBA will be classified in collaboration with the band director's selection on the Registration form. The USSBA may review and make changes to a new band's classification after their first performance in a USSBA event.

No changes in classification can be made after the next to last weekend in October.

## RULES OF PERFORMANCE

### PERFORMANCE AREA

The basic performance will be a regulation size football field, 160 feet wide by 300 feet long, marked in 5 yard intervals from goal line to goal line. The band may start or conclude its performance anywhere on or off the competition field. There are no boundary penalties.

### HASH MARKS

The USSBA will only guarantee hash marks measured at 53'4" from each sideline and marked every 5 yards. In most regions of the country these are considered to be "high school hash marks".

### REPORTING TIME

Bands must report to the gate fifteen (15) minutes prior to their performance time. Reporting later than that time may result in a 0.50 point penalty for every minute late. Any band reporting more than ten (10) minutes late may be disqualified from the competition. The band may be permitted to perform in judged exhibition at a later point in the show. This decision will be made by the USSBA show coordinator.

Any emergency circumstances must be made known to the designated USSBA show staff person directly via telephone or in person as soon as is reasonable.

### PERFORMANCE AND JUDGING TIMES

Each band will have an interval of time on the field established by the USSBA during which they will set up, warm up, perform, and exit the field. This time begins once the USSBA Show Official prompts the band to enter the performance area. The interval time will be no less than thirteen (13) minutes and no more than fifteen (15) minutes. This will be determined on a show by show basis.

A penalty of up to five tenths (0.50) of a point may be assessed for each sixty (60) seconds over the designated maximum time for the show. This penalty must be approved by the Show Coordinator and a USSBA administrator.

The Show Coordinator may start time on a band if they fail to enter the primary performance area when instructed to do so.

Warm-ups may flow directly into the program and may be played in any direction. Any special circumstances related to your performance **MUST** be communicated directly to the USSBA Show Coordinator on site.

## EQUIPMENT USE

Motorized vehicles moving equipment on and off the field must be in top condition and equipped with a diaper (a covering to assure there is no leakage) if gas powered. Any pit or prop equipment pushed or pulled onto the field surface must have large inflatable tires or tires with a minimum of 8 inch wheels (pneumatic wheels/casters). Any equipment with smaller wheels must be lifted and placed into position.

The use of mechanized vehicles during the performance is prohibited. Mechanized vehicles may not drive onto the performance field. The penalty for violation of this rule is disqualification.

The use of fire extinguishers, water as a prop that comes in contact with the field surface, live animals, or pyrotechnics (including fire batons) are prohibited at all USSBA shows. This also includes the release or use of any and all materials that may result in debris on the field. The penalty for violation of this rule ranges from one (1) point to disqualification at the discretion of the Show Coordinator and a USSBA administrator.

Any damage to the field or damaging material left on the field after a band's performance will result in a penalty ranging from one (1) point up to disqualification, depending on the severity of the damage. The amount of the penalty given is at the discretion of the Show Coordinator and a USSBA Administrator. Any and all costs incurred to clean, replace or repair the impacted area will be borne by the offending band.

There are no restrictions on the number or types of electronic music, instruments or amplification systems that may be used.

### EQUIPMENT PLACEMENT AND RETRIEVAL

Anyone (adult, student, non-student) may place, move, or remove equipment any time during a band's performance. Individuals who are used only to move equipment, hold props, etc., and who do not appear in uniform will not be counted in the total number of performing members of the band.

### USE OF THE NATIONAL FLAG

The use of the national flag is optional. If a band does choose to display the American Flag, all the respect, etiquette and dignity traditionally afforded our national emblem must be shown.

Failure to display the flag properly will result in a one point (1.00) penalty.

### CRITIQUES

Each band’s staff will be assigned fifteen (15) minutes to meet with judges at the conclusion of all shows (excluding designated regional championship contests). The order in critique will be based on performance order. Three bands’ staff will be admitted into the critique room at a time. The three groups will rotate through three stations of judges: music, visual and effect at five minute intervals. When a special Guard and/or Percussion judge is on the panel, they will be included in the critique as follows: The Guard judge will team with the Overall Effect judge the Percussion judge will team with the Music Individual and Music Ensemble judge.

If a band’s staff is not present when called into the critique room, their critique time may be forfeited. The critique format may be changed by the USSBA Show Coordinator with notice to participating bands.

### WITHDRAWAL FROM USSBA SHOWS

Any band may withdraw from a USSBA-sanctioned show up to three (3) weeks prior to the event without penalty. After that point, a withdrawal will result in a monetary fine and a possible suspension from further USSBA events for bands that habitually abuse the system.

EVENT DATE	WITHDRAWAL DEADLINE
September 12	August 21
September 19	August 28
September 26	September 4
October 3	September 11
October 10-11	September 18
October 17-18	September 25
October 24-25	October 2
October 31-November 1	October 9
November 6-8	October 16
November 14-15	October 23

If the USSBA Event has a Registration Fee the entire amount of the fee will be forfeited, or in the case the band has not yet submitted payment, they will be invoiced for the amount of the fee.

### PASSES - STAFF, CHAPERONES, CREW ACCESS

Passes will be issued for each member band for a given season based on group size assigned. The passes may be used for access to any USSBA show prior to Championships. Special passes or wristbands will be issued to bands participating in shows designated as Championship Shows. Once these passes are distributed, no other passes will be made available. These passes must be displayed at all times at events.

The Pass allocations are as follows:

Group I: 10 passes	Group II: 15 passes
Group III: 20 passes	Group IV: 20 passes
Group V: 25 passes	Group VI: 25 passes

### ADJUDICATION

The USSBA uses a 5-box Criteria Reference System on all adjudication sheets. Each box includes a range of numbers that move upward during the season. Sample sheets are available online: [www.usbands.org](http://www.usbands.org)

The basis of the adjudication system is a four member panel:

Music Performance	40 points
Music Ensemble	40 points
Visual Performance	40 points
Overall Effect	40 points

In order to preserve the consistency of the criteria between the captions, a multiplier is used when calculating the final score.

			<i>Example</i>
Music Performance	400 x .500 = 200.000		375 x .500 = 187.5
	200 x .100 = 20.000		187.5 x .100 = 18.75
Music Ensemble	400 x .500 = 200.000		380 x .500 = 190.0
	200 x .100 = 20.000		190 x .100 = 19.00
Visual Performance	400 x .750 = 300.000		360 x .750 = 270.0
	300 x .100 = 30.000		270 x .100 = 27.00
Overall Effect	400 x .750 = 300.000		364 x .750 = 273.0
	300 x .100 = 30.000		273 x .100 = 27.30
<hr/> Total Score	100.00		<hr/> Total Score 92.05

In all USSBA Texas Events, two additional judges determine Percussion and Color Guard scores

Percussion	40 points
Color guard	40 points

In either case, the Percussion and Color guard judge scores are not included in the determination of ranking and rating.

### MISSING ADJUDICATOR POLICY

In the event a judge does not arrive at the event, the remaining three judges are to be reassigned using the following policy.

- If one music judge is missing, the remaining judge will be assigned to Music Performance Ensemble. If a percussion judge has been assigned to the show, the percussion judge should be moved to either Music Ensemble or Music Individual. The chief judge will make this assignment.
- If the Visual Performance judge is missing, the remaining judge will should be assigned to Visual Performance. If a Color guard judge has been assigned, the Color guard judge should be moved to either Visual Performance or Overall Effect. The chief judge will make this assignment.

Each adjudicator will assign scores, using the specified point sheet. The scoring guidelines for the week will remain the same. The tabulator will add the three raw scores and divide by three (3).

This average will be used as the “placeholder” for the missing 4th score. Then add all four scores to arrive at a final score/percentage.

Basically the performance is being judged with 4 judges. There is an assumption the score for the missing caption would be near the average for the other 3.

**NOTE: If a judge appears late to the show, he should begin judging immediately, but his score should not be counted in the total until the beginning of a new group or class.**

*An example of scoring for a missing judge in a 4 person panel:*

- Judge 1 = 20 points (Music Individual)
- Judge 2 = 20 points (Music Ensemble)
- Judge 3 = 30 points (Visual Performance)

The missing Judge 4 = (Overall Effect) would ordinarily have 30 points available

- Judge 1 = gives 15 out of 20 (75%)
- Judge 2 = gives 18 out of 20 (90%)
- Judge 3 = gives 26 out of 30 (87%)

Totals for the 3 judges present 59/70 = 84%

The total percentage of each judge present is divided by 3 and that percentage of the missing judges available points is added to the scores of the other 3 judges, becoming the total score for the evening.

### CAPTION AWARDS

In addition to placement awards, Special Awards for Percussion and Colorguard will be presented at all USSBA Texas competitions. The following Special Awards may be given:

- |                     |                  |
|---------------------|------------------|
| Best Music          | Best Visual      |
| Best Overall Effect | Best Color guard |
| Best Percussion     |                  |

Best Visual, Music and Overall Effect: Awarded to the band with the highest average score in those respective captions. The Visual Performance score relates to Best Visual

Best Color guard: Awarded to the band with the highest combined score awarded by the Colorguard judge. In the event the Colorguard judge is absent from a Gold Star or Regional and Championship event, the Overall Effect Judge and the Visual Performance Judge will provide scores.

Best Percussion: Awarded to the band with the highest combined score awarded by the Percussion judge. In the event the Percussion judge is absent from a Gold Star or Regional and Championship event, the Music Individuals and the Visual Music Ensemble Judge will provide scores.

## INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

In the event of inclement weather, the following procedures should be followed.

Band directors should report to the USSBA Show Coordinator at the 50 yard line upon their arrival to the event

A determination will be made between the USSBA event staff, Event Host and participating bands as to whether the event will proceed as a competition, judged standstill, postponement or cancellation.

In the event a standstill indoors or outdoors is determined to be the only or best plan, only music will be evaluated. Thus, the scores of only three judges will be counted in determining the final score.

Individual Music Performance will be judged from the same level of the performers.

If a Visual, Percussion and/or a Color guard judge are/is present, they may judge all units as they normally would, however in THIS clinic setting, a score is not assigned.

The show sponsor will determine whether to allow the Colorguard to perform indoors.

Ensemble Music Performance and Effect will be judged from the stands.

Each adjudicator will assign scores as they would normally do. The scoring criteria for the week will remain the same.

Scoring will be handled per the Missing Judge Policy outlined earlier in this rulebook.

## INCLEMENT WEATHER ADJUDICATION POLICY

At some events due to inclement weather or inadequate or dangerous field conditions, the decision is made to move the event to a standstill performance outside or an indoor concert venue. In those cases, the Music (2) and Effect captions will be adjudicated. The Music Individual caption will be judged from the floor or field, while the Music Ensemble and Effect captions, along with the Percussion caption will be judged from the audience level.

The Individual and Ensemble Music captions will be judged utilizing the same 40 point scale and the scores will not be averaged. The Effect caption will also use the 40 point scale, but the score will be divided by two to give the caption less weight based on the lack of visual performance.

Individual Music	40 points
Ensemble Music	40 points
Overall Effect	20 points (40 points divided by 2)
Total	100 points

## HOST BANDS PERFORMING IN SHOWS

The USSBA encourages Host Bands to participate in their event. Bands hosting a show have the following options of performance:

Compete - If a host band decides to compete, it will compete at the same time as other bands in its class. The host band will have the option of performing last in its class. The score will be included on the recap sheet and will be included as a possible "high score".

Perform in judged exhibition - Numerical scores of bands performing in judged exhibition will not appear on the recap, and will not count towards high scores for championship seeding.

Perform in a non-judged exhibition – no sheets, no tapes.

If a host band decides to perform in either type of exhibition, time of performance will be determined by the show host.

The host band will decide which option it will take no later than two weeks before the show date. This information must be communicated to the USSBA office and will be included on the official show sheet. There is no cost for the host band to perform. They are not counted in determining the cost for the show.

## USSBA STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

The USSBA State Championship series of events was established in 2002 after the events of September, 2001 when many schools seriously reconsidered their extracurricular activities and associated travel. The USSBA determined with input from many band directors and administrators that a series of USSBA State Championships would allow for bands to complete their season against top competition, in excellent venues before a high quality panel of adjudicators. And thus, the State Championships were born.

### PARTICIPATION

All bands are eligible to participate in the USSBA Texas State Championships.

The Texas State Championship has a \$550 Registration fee associated with the event.

Bands will be provided with Optional Tickets prior to the event for sale to band parents and supporters. The ticket prices for the USSBA Texas State Championships are invoiced at a \$3 discount from the face value. These optional tickets are sent as a convenience to you and your parents and it is your choice whether you would like to sell them or not. We encourage you to sell as many as you can as the additional

\$3 per ticket can be used as a fundraiser for your program.

Upon registration at the event, you will be asked to return all unsold tickets and reconcile payment for those tickets that have not been returned.

If you are in need of additional tickets, please let the USSBA office know as soon as possible and more tickets will be sent to you as soon as we receive the request.

#### OUT OF STATE COMPETITORS

If space allows and for special circumstances, bands from other states will be allowed to compete in a USSBA State Championship different from the state of their origin. These bands will receive a score and the score will be announced prior to the State Championship results, with the Out-of-state competitors not having the opportunity to place in the State event, but receive achievement acknowledgement based on their participation in the event.

#### STATE CHAMPIONSHIP PERFORMANCE ORDER:

A blind draw will be conducted three weeks prior to the State Championship competition to determine the performance order.

#### USSBA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

The USSBA National Championship was established in 2006 in order to provide a season-ending showcase for the more advanced competitive units, bringing together top bands from across the United States that normally end their season in their regional circuit or state competitions. The USSBA National Championships have grown to a full three days of competition and feature the best of the best in Group I-VI. The National Championships do not have a Open Class or A Class designation.

The 2009 USSBA National Championships will be held November 6-8 at the Navy & Marine Corps Stadium on the campus of the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, MD.

Due note, the City of Annapolis has strict noise ordinances in place barring excessive sound creation from 9PM until 8AM. These rules are factored into the schedule each year and limits the number of participating bands, as well as rules preventing bands from warming-up too early in the morning and performances in the parking lot and stadium after the event.

#### PARTICIPATION

All bands, whether members or non-members of the USSBA are eligible to participate in the USSBA National Championships.

The USSBA National Championship has a \$775 Registration Fee associated with

the event. Payment of this fee by October 16, 2009 is required. The USSBA National Championships do not have a ticket requirement.

Registered bands can withdraw from the event with no penalty before October 16, 2009. Bands withdrawing from the event after October 17, 2009 will forfeit their Registration Fee in full.

#### NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP TICKET INFORMATION

Optional tickets will be shipped to each school at least six weeks prior to the event. Each participating band will receive Optional tickets to the event which can be sold for the face value of \$20, or for the discounted band price of \$17. The band is able to keep the \$3 commission as a fundraiser. Any unsold tickets, along with all required monies are due at registration for the National Championships.

Tickets will be sent to the attention of the band director at the school address. In addition, an e-mail, fax, or standard mail will announce their mailing. It is the responsibility of the band director to claim these tickets. A signature, acknowledging the receipt of tickets, will for the purpose of the USSBA, act as confirmation of delivery.

#### USSBA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP PERFORMANCE ORDER

A blind draw will be conducted on or about September 15, 2009 to determine the performance order of the participating bands. Bands who register for the event after September 15 will have their performance time selected by random draw of the number of bands in their corresponding Group. The number drawn will determine their performance time.

#### SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

USSBA reserves the right to act in accordance with the principles of the organization as deemed necessary. Accidents, crisis and other "special" circumstances could create the unexpected. USSBA and the assigned "event manager" for a specific contest, reserve the right to act in accordance with the values of the USSBA including, but not limited to: fairness, kindness, and inclusion.

NOTES