

UNT Marching Arts Forum: Marching Styles

Who	Forwards Technique	Backwards Technique	Jazz Run/Direction Changes	Notes
Max Cavaliers Bent Leg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate on and of 8 to ball of foot only, weight remains on back leg • Knees are bent as a result of the coupe on the upbeat • Use second half of beat to go from coupe to articulation with heel • Roll through and restart process • One fluid motion: the coupe is just a checkpoint (can be useful to teach it by breaking it down—roll through for 4 counts, 2 counts, etc.) • Arches on dot (put a greater percentage of body on yard line) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start with coupe and move foot backwards • Not a falling motion: push off of the front foot • Roll through (heels will touch the ground) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No tendu for direction changes • Left foot will always pass through coupe position • Direction change occurs on count 1, not 8 (no prep) • Backwards to forwards: “lockup” (only roll halfway) • Jazz run: gain distance by dropping down <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Still do coupe ○ Turn foot out on first count ○ Pop back up on 1 of next move 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very physical (especially for small steps) • Visual appeal, smoother playing • Common mistakes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Weight transfer on beat 1 ○ Leaving the coupe too soon ○ Lockup technique ○ Prepping for a direction change ○ Not rolling down all the way on backwards • Percussion crabbing: normal crab for straight horizontal marching, roll left and toe right for marching at angles • Pure dot system: veteran marchers/techs step off dots • Pyware inconsistencies fixed by visual heads
Tim Blue Devils Long Leg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “long leg” as opposed to “straight leg” to avoid tension in glutes • Dancelike approach • Begin with just walking , then refine details for uniformity • Focus on upper body to let the lower body relax • Toe comes up as a result of the heel being pushed forward • Technique is not overthought: keep it simple • Across-the-floor exercises to discover how muscles are connected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low heels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jazz run: a ballet jazz run <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Start with coupe walk and bring up tempo ○ “gazelle run”: toe down, 5 to 5, no air ○ Accept weight smoothly, should be in air for a moment if done correctly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasis is not on form or dots, but clean drill • Organic drill: the show and drill are created on the field and the show is constantly changing (requires consistency and accuracy by marchers) • Motion on the field as opposed to creating a form • Dance/choreography/movement until technique begins in April or May (pre-season is mostly visual) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Silly exercises to engage all muscles and begin performing (personalities

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How you stand becomes the way you move—use upper and lower body together to travel • Weight in arches of foot, focus on going straight up to stay lifted • Emphasis on basics and moving like an athletic dancer 			<p>come out)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Side Back Side Front: heel to opposite toe (helps stay low to ground, translates to backwards march) ○ Chasse: on toes in the air, accept weight in a plié • High school: the same approach, but simplified (not everyone has the experience as corps marchers)
Pat Cadets Straight Leg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High hips, low heels • Push heels down as low as possible (especially on the foot that is behind you/your back foot) 	•	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shin splints: a problem in all of the marching styles, the shin muscle is relatively small • Injuries can result from inactive to very active lifestyles
Rudy Bluecoats Toe down	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Also dance oriented • Start with tendu exercises • Articulate with toes (but not pushing off of toes, keeping the momentum going forwards) • Roll through (exact opposite of rolling through with heel) • Very similar to toes up, but with foot turned in (rotate from hip) • Focus on performing to box rather than marching • Small steps: feet parallel on platforms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as other straight leg approaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direction changes: even if they are awkward, you just do it • Slides: back foot parallel, front foot turned out • Backwards to forwards: tendu rearticulation • Large step sizes: bend leg only to push forward, a moment where marcher is in air 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looks uniform across the field because the guard also does toes down • Relatively new approach to marching—many of the details are still being defined (ie which part of foot is on the ground on the downbeat) • Could be difficult to teach to high schoolers • UIL judges theoretically can't dock points for toes down • Can be healthier (especially for girls) than toes up because of the hip rotation

General pedagogy comments and Dr. Williams wisdom:

- When selecting a style, consider the diversity of talent
 - The ensemble is only as strong as the weakest link
 - How do we as teachers help the weakest marchers be successful?

- Nothing is impossible... just teach them well enough ☺
- May be difficult to be “vague” with beginning marchers (i.e. “Just Be Better” works for us, but not for high school freshmen)
 - Make sure you hire a staff that believes whatever approach you will take
- Tell students what they need to hear for them to do what you want them to do
 - This can be different for everyone
- As teachers, question or think about how each style works
 - Know why you are doing something, don't be blind to other possibilities just because you already have what you know