

Common Questions for 6th Grade Band

Q: How often does band meet?

A: Band meets every day for 50 minutes. Classes are broken into small sections, such as a Woodwind Class, and a Brass/Percussion class.

Q: If I don't have an instrument, what should I do?

A: There are several options here. 1. You can Rent To Own through Herter Music Center or Marshall Music and they will set you up with an instrument you will rent through them. 2. You can purchase a new or used instrument, just be careful about purchasing an instrument. Cheaper doesn't always mean high quality. Have it checked over by a knowledgeable music person before you purchase it. 3. If you are not financially able to purchase or rent an instrument, you may be able to use a school owned instrument as long as you are responsible for the instrument and use it the way it is intended to be used.

Q: What should my child bring to class?

A: Their instrument, their music book, a pencil, and a good attitude. It is very difficult to learn an instrument if they don't have the necessary materials. Band is a participation class, so sitting there doing nothing is not going to help them learn.

Q: How much should my child practice?

A: A minimum of 2 hours a week (17 minutes a day for 7 days), but the more you practice, the better you become, so there is no cap on how much you can practice. Generally, students who do minimal practice will struggle as the year goes on and it becomes frustrating to them. Please encourage your child to practice. Playing an instrument takes time and practice to develop. It is something that you will not learn overnight.

Q: Does my child need to practice every day?

A: Ideally yes for building up endurance and muscle strength for their mouth. Also, the more they can practice and make it "routine" the easier it gets. There are some times when other activities get in the way which makes practicing difficult, but please do not wait until Sunday to cram in all your practice time.

Q: Are there any costs associated with band?

A: Once you have your instrument, the only costs associated with band are for supplies, such as a new reed, valve oil, cork or slide grease, and/or any other instrument/music supplies you may need. Woodwind instruments are responsible for the maintenance of their reed. Students will be shown what good and bad reeds look like. Generally, a new reed is needed about every 2-3 weeks, depending on how much playing is done.

Q: Are there any performances for 6th grade band?

A: There are 2 performances during the year for 6th grade students. The first concert is in December, the second concert is in May. These concerts are required unless there is an extenuating circumstance that is outlined in the handbook.

Q: What should my child wear to the concert?

A: Students need to look nice and professional. No jeans, no tennis shoes, no sandals, no shorts. If there is an issue, please contact Mr. Lull ASAP. Don't wait until the day of the concert to inform Mr. Lull about a wardrobe issue.

Q: Can my child keep their instrument at school if they can't practice that night?

A: Yes. Please make sure your child has their name on their instrument case. A lot of cases look familiar and it is important to have your child's instrument labelled with their name. Names should be on a tag that is usually provided. Also, please have their names in their method book too. If the student doesn't take their instrument home, they can keep it in their locker or in the band room, which is locked every night at 3pm. Do not leave the instrument in the hallway during the night. Please keep tabs on your instrument. It is a very expensive item to lose.

Q: Is learning an instrument hard?

A: It all depends on how much you want to learn to play an instrument. There will be students that will do very well from the beginning and some that will struggle from the beginning. Practice is important to build that "routine" up quickly so it is easy. Every instrument has its challenges, but how much you practice will determine how quickly you overcome those challenges. There are lots of useful resources to help you learn your instrument. Mr. Lull is generally available for help in the morning or after school. Please don't be afraid to ask for help. The internet has tons of resources to help you become a better musician. If you are not sure where to look, just ask.

Q: Will I have fun playing an instrument?

A: You should have fun because you are learning to do something that not everyone can do. Sure, it will take some time and energy to learn how to play it, but playing music is something you can do for the rest of your life. You could potentially get paid to play your instrument. Understand this, learning to play an instrument is not something that will get you instant gratification. It takes practice to get better. How much you practice will determine your success on your instrument.