

From the Podium: Get the Percussion Sound You Want and the Sound You Need!

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The area of percussion is a HUGE expanse of a variety of instruments and sound possibilities. Percussion is so varied it can often be difficult to know exactly what sound we want or need, even for trained percussionists. The goal of this session is to give you some tools to know what sounds you want to achieve, combined with some language on how to instruct your students to produce those sounds. To achieve the best sounds you have to listen a lot and develop opinions. Just like with anything else. It's a very deep rabbit hole.

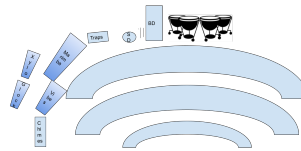
Percussionists live in a world where timbre is a wide and varied ideal. It is important to train your percussionists to understand the differences and subtleties in this world. It is also important to ingrain in them the idea that they are essentially all soloists within an ensemble, so everything they play must be approached in that way. There are never inconsequential percussion notes, and there is no hiding in the percussion section. There will only be 1 person playing the triangle, and if they don't do it, it's not there!

By the same token, their sounds must be heard. In order to color the ensemble with the sounds that are unique to percussion, those sounds have to be present as a part of the ensemble sound. Many times percussion is only seen in a “too loud/too soft” image. What we need to do is reimagine it into “blends/does not blend.” Then we can start to get to the root of how we need to address the percussion sound.

1) Set-up

- a) Scheduling is sometimes an overlooked aspect of this. Have a plan for your rehearsals and communicate that with your percussionists so they always know what they will actually need for each rehearsal. The ability for them to organize is key as they are dealing with a large amount of equipment and most likely each person plays something different on each piece. Oftentimes in a rehearsal, something not planned for will get called up, or a piece of equipment will not be where they expected because of a previous piece. The student is then called out for missing the equipment or entrance, leading to frustration for both conductor and student. It is also a moment of respect. Percussion students spend a lot of their time moving and setting up equipment. Nothing is more frustrating than moving a large amount of equipment to create a setup that is not utilized.

- b) Have parts assigned for every piece (preferably with a rotation between instruments), and assign students specific responsibilities for set up as well.
- c) Be sure that your setup allows for sounds to reach the audience most effectively. Take pictures of your setup regularly to remind students where all equipment should be placed.
- d) Bass drum and timpani should be as centered as possible. Softer mallet instruments like marimbas, vibraphones, and chimes should be downstage of the concert arc. Bells and xylophones are designed to project so they can be further upstage behind the concert arc. Cymbals should generally (when possible) be as close to the bass drum as they can, as historically their parts are often linked. You can also angle mallet instruments towards the audience so the sound travels to the audience as opposed to across the ensemble.



- e) Use carpets and rugs under the drums if needed to lessen some of the sound reflecting off of the stage.
- f) Be sure percussion students have all of the chairs and stands they need. Many times percussionists are less likely to have these when equipment is needed in other parts of the ensemble. Percussionists need stands for their music as well as stands (with towels on them!) on which to place equipment. Stands also need to be placed where they can accurately play their music. Mallet stands will naturally be lower so that they have some view of the instruments to hit their notes. Percussionists will need chairs (or many orchestras use stools right behind their stations - this is a great balance between having them standing and sitting a lot) as they will spend a lot of time not playing.
- g) Make all decisions on placement and selections from as far back in the hall as you can. What you hear on the podium will be VERY different than what the audience hears, especially from the percussion section.

2) It Takes Two (or More) To Make the Band Go Around

- a) A key issue when thinking about working with the percussion is building trust with them. If they only hear from you when they make a mistake, it will be harder to get them to truly buy-in when you are working with them. Note the good, and not just the bad. Sometimes it is very easy to narrow percussion down to “too loud,” “too soft,” “missed entrance,” etc. And yes, those things need to be addressed. But they also need to hear when they play a great crash or a beautiful roll! Aim for equity in feedback (positive and developmental/constructive) between percussion and other sections of the ensemble. Please remember that, unlike other instrument sections, every percussionist is a soloist. When you address an error on a part for wind instruments it is usually to a group or section of students; however, for a percussionist, it will be directed at one student most of the time. This is a key dynamic to be sure to navigate carefully. It’s challenging to prevent that comment or correction from being inferred as personal.
- b) The timpani and the bass drum are the aural reflections of your gestures as the conductor. Place people there who you believe can accurately put their sound where you intend it to be in time. Work with them to be sure that the beat from them is where you imagine it should be. Train the ensemble to key into those sounds (as we do outdoors - sound still travels forward, even when inside).

- c) Help students navigate long rests. Percussionists spend a LOT of time counting rests. Help guide them by giving them notes to write into their music about where other instruments might be used as a cue. Professionals do this all the time. Students need guidance on how to do this. Also, help them mark points in multi-measure rests that you might regularly start. Starting “6 before J” might be easy to locate for a wind player, but there are times for a percussionist that it is measure 57 of an 80-bar rest.
- d) Practice having the percussionists breathe with the rest of the band before entrances so they can time their attacks more accurately.
- e) Keep in mind that the natural tone of many percussion instruments is to be resonant. Too often performers are far too quick to dampen the sound as they adjust for what sounds good to them rather than what sounds good in the hall. This is seen especially on bass drums, timpani, vibraphone, and bells. They should listen to the ensemble to match articulations. Listen from the hall to hear how notes might need to be made shorter or longer. There are times that instruments which are resonant onstage get mellowed out by the time their sounds reach the hall. If these instruments are adjusted too much to sound good “on-stage” they may be overly dry, or deadened, by the time their sound reaches the audience. So it takes a team of the player and conductor/section members to ensure the sounds are reaching the audience as intended.
- f) Understand percussion parts, notation, and any unusual effects or sounds that the players may be asked for. You cannot clearly tell the percussion what sounds you are desiring if you are not certain what is called for in the score. This also gives you the chance to research beforehand any unusual instruments or techniques with which you are not familiar. Additionally, many times what is notated is not what is



intended. For example in Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony is actually a long crash in performance, but notated as above. This type of discrepancy notationally is VERY common in percussion music. So the musical decisions have to be made based on the sound of everything occurring in the ensemble. Professionals often need help with this, and students definitely will need guidance.

- g) Be sure the students have quality equipment. Yes, it is expensive. But the percussionists cannot be given the equivalent of ISOs (instrument-shaped objects) for instruments and have great sounds expected from them.
- h) Ideally percussion students could be working on percussion ensembles and techniques separately during warm-up in another room. “Five” and “Nine Minute Drills” from Tapspace are great for a percussion-only warmup. They can also be adapted for winds to warm up to as well (they have play-along recordings in different keys). For most schools, this is not an option. It is therefore important to incorporate them into the warmup. Have them play mallets. Use practice pads if the drums will be too loud. Have timpanists learn scale patterns. Utilize various stroke types (Full, Down, Tap, Up) in the warmups. Come up with full percussion parts to accompany your various warmups. <https://bit.ly/dailydrills> contains exercises designed by Michael Huestis that can be adapted for various standard warmups. The key point is to *keep them involved!*

3) Instrument Selection

a) Choose the timbre you want based on the sounds you hear from the ensemble

If your snare is playing with the flutes, does it blend and complement? Does their phrasing match? Do the sounds complement each other? (An example - brighter sounds on the xylophone and glockenspiel can provide articulation and character to a sound when combined with other instruments). Ask them to listen to the instruments they are playing with and try to match their sound.

Smaller Instruments - lighter, more articulate sound

Larger Instruments - Darker sound, often with slightly less clarity, especially at the low end

If you want a different sound please try to be able to describe what you want to be different. (brighter, darker, higher, lower, drier, more resonant, etc.) The more descriptive you are of the sound you want, the better the odds that we can find it for you.

b) Stick selection

Hardness is not a dynamic. Often a large soft mallet is what you actually need for bigger musical moments. At the same time you often need a very hard mallet played softly for rhythmic moments.

As a general rule, I start with harder mallets and work my way down. The key is a GOOD quality mallet. There are many hard mallets that sound terrible. Be sure you have one that still produces a good tone with more articulation. The reasoning is that often in a hall, especially when people are added, softer mallets lose their clarity, and then the sounds disappear from the ensemble. It is also easier to hear quickly if a sound is too hard rather than too soft.

Heavier mallets project more and have fuller sounds than light mallets, while harder mallets have more articulate attacks than soft mallets

Some Examples:

Big Legato Section - Heavy Soft Mallet

Soft Rhythmic Section - Lighter More Articulate Mallet

Larger Rhythmic Section - Heavy Articulate Mallet

c) Head selection/ Tuning/Muffling/Accessories

Often the biggest difference between a good and a terrible-sounding drum is related to the heads being used and the tuning of the instrument!

Note: purchasing a used drumset can possibly expand your instrument collection several times over - snare drum; toms; multi-percussion bass; cymbals

Snare drums - I prefer the M5 Diplomat (Top head A or Bb; bottom a 5th above); we use the Freer or Black Swamp mutes on them to dry the sound out slightly. You can also use a binder clip and a handkerchief to accomplish this goal. To convert a drumset snare to a concert snare consider changing the heads and buying cable or cable/wire snares to replace the coiled wire that comes on drumset drums.



or



Bass Drums - Remo Fiberskyn, Renaissance, or nuSkyn (C# or D; resonant head slightly higher) - other accessories: a footstool; Muffler (we use the Freer bass drum muffler, but a hand wash mitt can also work well). A towel is also popular, but needs to be used correctly (not just laying on the drum) and attached with a clip.



Timpani - Remo Renaissance (Low to High D/F/A (or Bb)/D/F) - other accessories: tuning gauges (pictured is the Planet Percussion Gauge available from Steve Weiss Music); drum dial; stool



Toms - Remo Ambassador/Fiberskyn/Renaissance (tune in minor thirds) - we do generally dampen our toms slightly to give them a more clear articulation

Cymbals - Leather cymbal straps for hand cymbals if possible. For suspended cymbals be sure the stand ALWAYS has a felt and a sleeve. No metal-to-metal contact!

Triangle - The clip is vital! Do not use anything thicker than fishing line if possible. Double loop so if 1 string breaks the other catches the triangle. Do NOT make the line too loose. That is what causes it to spin around. The first picture is one you can buy. The second you can make with a clamp from a hardware store and a drill. The drill is important as you need to add a second hole in front of the first hole so the line runs through two spots. This will help keep the triangle in place.



Tambourine - It is VERY important that the jingles be an actual metal (most commonly bronze, silver, copper, or combinations) to get a quality sound. Most inexpensive tambourines use nickel which is too small to get the full and characteristic sound needed from this instrument. Beeswax! The key to finger rolls. Also, a piece of gaff tape or moleskin on the inside of the head can help dry out the sound and help the sound focus more on the jingles (which is what we want).



A guitar footrest is a great tool for not having to put a foot on a chair all the time (this also works for Bass Drum).



A heating pad or hair dryer is vital here in the south! You can keep the tambourine on the heating pad during a performance to keep the head tight. Another option is to use a synthetic tambourine head.

Bongos and congas - these REALLY need a stand. Playing bongos on a trap table affects their sound (and probably puts them in an awkward position to play). If you don't have a bongo stand you can tighten up a drum set snare stand and use a bungee cord to secure it. Also, be sure the drums are tuned correctly ($\frac{1}{2}$ " or 13mm is standard). Example pitches: Conga - 11" Quinto: C5-G5; 11.75" Conga: A4-E5; 12.5" Tumba: C4-Bb4; Bongos - Macho (the small drum) G; Hembra (low drum) C or D

5) Basic Technical Considerations

- a) Snare drum: play slightly off-center. Don't overuse the edge as it is more of a timbre change than a dynamic one. Keep the snare strainer in front of the player both for ease turning it on and off AND so that as they go to the edge they are still over the snares. Flams will be wider and drags tighter than one may think of them. Rolls will be more open.
- b) Timpani: The 3" rule is a good starting point but as drums get smaller the best spot may be closer to the edge than that. Play from the edge to the center and listen for when the drum drops to the fundamental. Use that as the playing spot. Roll slower than you think you need to. Use a stool. Feet need to be near the pedals at all times (otherwise you are playing toms, and not timpani). Train the students to hear what other instruments in the ensemble have their notes to match. Grace notes played more even to main notes. All single stroke rolls!
- c) Bonus note: Timpani Gauges are a GOOD thing. Think of them like a key on a wind instrument: it helps you get in the ballpark of the note, but the ear has to still rule. We do not need to make playing the timpani harder than other instruments!
- d) Bass drum: Find the sweet spot of the drum (usually just slightly off center). Use the knee on a stool to have maximum control over the resonance. The bass drum is the one drum that can most accurately render note values due to its resonance, so do not always play super short. Experiment with how to play the rhythmic pyramid on this drum.

- e) Crash Cymbals: Use a pencil to mark an arrow at the lightest spots so you can line the cymbals up consistently. Gravity is key. A 45-degree angle is standard to start. Let the top cymbal fall into the bottom one by holding the top arm parallel to the ground and allowing the hand to drop from the wrist. Don't think about a flam, as this usually leads students to make two distinct sounds. Minimize how much of the hand touches the cymbals. Push the bottom cymbal up as the top one goes down. For soft crashes, it is important to be sure they are still actual crashes and not a different sound like a tap. Do not over-dampen the cymbals. Too often these are played too short (even using hi-hat chokes).
- f) Suspended Cymbal: Roll on the outer edges. Do not roll fast or super loud. Let the cymbal sound swell by itself. Using a stick, use the barrel of the stick against the more bowed edge of the cymbal for articulation. If playing something fast and rhythmic dampen slightly with the body. For single notes warm up the cymbal. The main reason to warm it up is the response. The metal needs to be vibrating in advance to respond more accurately to the time in which it is struck (rather than swelling up after).
- g) Tambourine: Basic technique - use finger triangle. Don't play right in the center. The key is jingle sound vs. head sound. A 45-degree angle is standard. Use vertical for soft and resonant jingles. Use horizontal for a super dry sound (i.e.; playing soft and rhythmic). Loud and Fast - play between knee and fist or thigh and fist. Soft and Fast - use fingers either lying on the leg or holding in hand. Finger/Thumb - most often issues here are pressing too hard. Be sure there is plenty of beeswax on the head.; Shake - try to get a mix of rotation and pivot; Special sauce.
- h) Triangle: Multitudes of sounds available in one instrument. Find the spot with the most overtones and mark it with a pencil. Give the students the chance to hit it multiple times in a row. The roll between the lower edges will be darker. The roll at the top will be lighter. Play through the triangle, not off of it (again, gravity).
- i) Tam-Tam (or Gong): These are used interchangeably in scores, but a vast majority of the time in large ensembles they are writing for a tam-tam. A gong is actually a pitched instrument. The main reason to warm it up is the response. The metal needs to be vibrating in advance to respond more accurately to the time in which it is struck (rather than swelling up after). Do not hit dead center, even if there is a giant circle there. Hit slightly off the center. Try not to put it behind the player but to the side so they can play it while still seeing the conductor, and using proper technique. For rolls consider rolling on both sides for ease.
- j) Chimes: Put the music stand in front of the chimes so that the line of sight is stand-chimes-conductor. This way the student can see the music, the instrument, and the conductor. Too often we try to have multiple lines of sight for this instrument. Play on the rounded edge of the bars. Be sure they are rattle-free. Depress the pedal and push the button down on the dampener box and hold it while you release the pedal. This will release the dampening and allow the chimes to ring freely. If the player can play with 1 hand this is a great way to allow the other hand to do dampening as one could do with mallet dampening on vibes, allowing longer and more sustained lines (and way less pedaling).
- k) Hand Drums: Congas, Bongos, etc. are typically intended to be played with the hands. Unless the music specifically calls for sticks or mallets try the hands first. These instruments will often project better than you think they will, especially if mounted correctly. Basic hand drum technique can also be a great intro to basic percussion technique!

6) Common Elements (coined by Cort McClaren)

Posture: The physical relationship between the performer and instrument. This will include instrument height angle, distance to the performer, playing area, stance, where the body is positioned for particular passages, and more. You should ALWAYS adjust the instrument to the performer!

Grip: How you hold the sticks. I recommend matched grip for all performing at the scholastic level.

Striking Motion: How the stick approaches the instrument. The goal will always be relaxation and rebound. Full Stroke = Legato; Down stroke = Staccato are basic articulation examples.

Volume/Dynamics: Determined by the height of the stick and the velocity (speed) that the stick moves to the surface.

Sticking: The sequence of right and left-hand movements used when playing.

Rolls: this is how percussionists sustain sound and should be addressed from a sustained approach. The three types of rolls we use are single stroke (keyboards, timpani, bass drum, suspended cymbal); concert roll (only on snare drum); open roll (generally most often used in marching, but can also be applied on concert snare and even occasionally keyboards)

Breathing: Focus needs to be given to initiating sound with the breath for percussion as it does winds, as this is how they will learn to attack with the ensemble, as well as helping to feel phrasing.

Percussion	to	Winds/Strings
Posture	↔	Posture
Grip	↔	Embouchure Bow Grip/ Hand Position
Striking Motion/Stroke Types	↔	Articulation/Bowing Techniques
Dynamics/Volume	↔	Dynamics/Volume
Sticking	↔	Fingering/Articulation Bowing
Rolls/Sustained Sounds	↔	Breath Control/Sustain
Breathing	↔	Breathing

Try to not fall into the “math” version of dynamics with your percussionists. Yes, it can be a shorthand that we all use, but as much as possible try to use actual musical terms with them! Too often they carry those “heights” forward to everything they do and do not use their ears or think about their touch.

7) How to Listen

The ability to listen is key for any developing musician. There are several modes of listening that percussionist will engage in:

- a) [Playlist of Characteristic Sound Examples for Major Percussion Instruments](#)
- b) [Playlist of Fundamental Hand Drum and World Percussion Sounds and Techniques](#)
- c) Instrument selection: Percussionists have a multitude of cymbals, drums, triangles, etc. from which to choose. But one of the most fascinating things is they ALL sound different. It is important to learn to listen to these instruments, and their sounds, in each context and decide what is the right one for each thing. Very rarely will 1 cymbal, 1 triangle, etc. cover all of the musical needs.
- d) Listening in an ensemble: this is about knowing how what you play fits with everything else going on around you. This is listening to pitch, time, rhythm, articulation, dynamics, and more, and being sure what you are doing blends with everyone else.
- e) Exploring: this can come in improvisation, but can also be learning how different instruments work. As an example, take a cymbal. Try and get EVERY possible sound, using every way of making it sound (implements, preparations, etc.), and see how many sounds you can get from it. This will help REALLY open up your ears even more for number 1 above, but can also open you up for composition and improvisation ideas.
- f) To teach: not just others, but maybe most importantly, yourself. This is where recording can become vital. If you record yourself or your students, go back with a pencil and score and mark where you hear things that are not as they appear in the music. This is where you can improve accuracy, find interpretations that might not have come across as clearly as you thought they were, discover rhythm and time issues, and more. A “fun” exercise _ try and clap time to your recorded playing. Doing this physical act can very often make it far more apparent to us when we have inconsistency issues with time and rhythm.
- g) Listen to Enjoy: it is perfectly ok to listen to others' performances just to learn from them. And to also listen to your own performance just to enjoy what you have learned.
- h) Listen to Learn: seek out new pieces, performers, styles of music, and more. Broaden your listening. Try to hear something new regularly. Too many listen only to the narrow styles they think they enjoy, missing out on a lot of what is out there. And the more different styles you listen to, the more you will hear things that can strike creativity within you. Attend as many live performances as possible, on your instrument AND by other instruments. We can learn A LOT from how other musicians phrase music! This includes masterclasses!

8) Resources

[Steve Weiss Music](#) - the place for ALL of the things from instruments to music

[Percussion Source](#) - like Weiss, but carries a few other brands

[MalletShop](#) - a GREAT source for used equipment!

[Third Floor Bazaar](#) - Another GREAT source for used (and rental) gear

[The Warmup Book](#) - The Warmup Book includes technical exercises for all major percussion instruments

[Percussion Solutions for Band Directors FB Group](#) - Percussion Solutions for Band Directors Facebook Group and

[Percussion Solutions for Band Directors - YouTube](#) - for their YouTube Channel

Some Basic Instrument recommendations

Note: Buy cases for everything!!!

Snare Drum - Yamaha, Black Swamp, Pearl

6.5x 14" will do most all of the jobs

5x14" will do the rest

4x14" the standard audition circuit drum

3x13" piccolo for extended soft playing

12x14" field drum

set of 8 concert toms - Start with at least 4 (10,12, 13, 14")

Yamaha or Black Swamp

Crash Cymbals - Have a few different sizes - ie 16" (great size for marches), 17", 18"/19"

Come in different weights - French are light; Viennese are more General; Germanic are heavy

18"-19" Viennese (or medium) cymbal is the workhorse

I prefer hand Hammered Cymbals as they are darker.

These would be HH in Sabian or K in Zildjian.

The Sabian SR2 line is an excellent alternative if cost is an issue for building out your inventory. These are top-line cymbals that are factory refurbished and sold at a major discount!

Sabian - Artisan or HH (or SR2 for budget)

16" - 20" crash cymbals (My favorites are 17" and 19")

Suspended Cymbals

Can also Substitute drumset crash cymbals

Use more than 1 at a time to provide more color

Medium yarn mallet on rattan; Metal brush (i.e.; a dreadlock)

16"-20" and have at least a few sizes

1-2 octaves of Crotales Sabian or Dream

Triangles - Black Swamp/Sabian

6-7" is the standard size

9" for heavier music

4" for lighter (though I generally rarely use this size)

My go to is a 7" Sabian Artisan

Look for lots of overtones

I prefer 2-step type beaters for the more weight in the head (the thinner part is the handle)

Tambourines - Black Swamp or Harlan

Black Swamp, Grover, Harlan

Silver, Copper, Bronze (light to dark)

Concert Bass drum and Stand (36-40")

Wuhan Tam Tam and Stand (I prefer bigger so 28-36")

Mallet Instruments

I prefer and recommend Yamaha

Chimes

3.5 octave rosewood xylophone

3 octave vibraphone

4.3, 4.5, or 5 octave marimba (for many schools synthetic bars would be preferred)

Falls Creek/Mallettech Glockenspiel with Glock Cart
Or Yamaha Glock

Extra Hardware - 7 - SD Stands; 7 - Cymbal Stands;

Black Swamp and Liberty One Mounts as needed

Storage cabinets - Including one specific to cymbal storage - Columbus Percussion or Lowes

Drum Set - 4 piece (Yamaha Stage Custom is Perfect)

Sabian Cymbal Pack for Drumset - HH

Hand Percussion - Gon Bops, LP or Remo

Set of bongos; set of congas (at least 2 but even better is 3); set of timbales; Remo Frame drums (at least 14")

Trap Tables - these can be sheets of plywood with carpet glue.

My Suggested Sticks and Mallets

Sd: IP CL2L

Timpani: Innovative BT series (less expensive) or JMG series (more expensive) - Need to have at least soft/medium/hard to choose from

Bells: OS4/ OS5

Xylophone: CL-X2/Cl-X3

Marimba: IP Artisan Series (my preference for Large Ensembles)

Vibraphone: IP AA30; Balter 22 and 21 Get used a Lot by people I perform with

Vibe/Marimba: INN-DM-CV are great for two mallet playing on both instruments!

Bass Drum: CL-BD2/CL-BD9/ CL-BD7 (yes it's wood, and it sounds AMAZING on the right heads!)/CL-BD8

Triangle: STO-2.5 (\$7!); BLA-SPEC4; BLA-SPSET1 (for a set)

Gong: ENC-EKG1

Great Tools for Programs to Have

A Set of Triangle Beaters

Beeswax (for tambourines)

A Good Practice Pad

A Marimba Practice Pad (great for at home or traveling)

Drum Key (get a good T key - it will save you a ton of time down the line)

Multiple Black Towels

Audio and Video Recording Gear (can start with your phone or computer, but eventually look to build you gear through mics, interfaces, a stand for the camera)

A Couple of Triangle Clips (can be used for triangles, to hang other things, clip a towel to a bass drum, etc.)

Fishing Line (to hang all the things)

A Dictionary of Percussion Terms (small enough to keep in mallet case)

Gear for Students to Own

A Notebook (for writing down memories from lessons, app on a phone)

Tuner (or tuning app)

Tuning Fork (A is perfect. You can also get sets with multiple pitches)

Good and Sufficiently Large Mallet Case or Bag

Concert Snare Drum Sticks

Hard, Medium, Soft marimba mallets

Medium cord Vibe Mallets (set of 4)

Hard, Medium, Soft Timpani Mallets

A Pair of Wooden Timpani Mallets (these are excellent for toms and multi-percussion)

Medium Hard Xylophone Mallets

Hard Xylo/Bell Mallets

Drumset Sticks

PENCILS (MANY pencils. Have them everywhere.

ALWAYS have it on you or on your stand in rehearsals)

Black Hand Towels

Common Substitutions for Percussion

A Malletstation of MalletKat can solve a lot of issues, especially for keyboard

Wind Chimes/Mark Tree - String up a bunch of old keys, or triangle beater on bells

Crotales - use finger cymbals to play bells (you can even buy a special mallet for this)

Bell Tree - Triangle beater on bells

Chimes - bells or vibes with hard mallets

Concert Toms - Drumset toms

Conga - low muffled tom played with hands

Bongos - small toms or small drums from tenors

Timbales - two snare drums with snares off

Xylophone - upper end of marimba with a hard mallet

Marimba - lower end of the xylophone with a yarn mallet

Triangle - Cymbal bell

Agogo Bells - two sizes of cowbell, OR two different cymbal bells

Taiko Drums - Marching Bass Drums, toms (muffled)

Castanets - woodblock

Finger Cymbals - triangle

Log Drums - different pitched slats of wood on foam

Temple Blocks - different sized woodblocks

Sleigh Bells - Tambourine

Tracy Wiggins is assistant director of bands and coordinator of the percussion program at **The University of North Alabama**. He has a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the HARTT School, University of Hartford. Dr. Wiggins holds a master's Degree in Percussion Performance from the University of New Mexico and a bachelor's Degree in Music Education from Oklahoma State University.

He has performed with The Huntsville Symphony, Tuscaloosa Symphony, The Fayetteville Symphony Orchestra, Florence Symphony Orchestra, Carolina Philharmonic, and the Santa Fe Symphony. Tracy performed as a marching percussionist with the Freelancers and Black Gold Drum and Bugle Corps, as well as instructing the DCI Division III World Championship finalist Delta Brigade and the Northern Aurora Drum and Bugle Corps, and DCA Finalist Carolina Gold. He has made solo appearances at universities throughout the United States and Jordan. Tracy has appeared 3 times on Focus Day at PASIC, presented clinics at PASIC and the Midwest Clinic, and co-hosted the 2018 PASIC Focus Day. He has served as Vice-president and Treasurer of the Alabama PAS Chapter, and President and Vice-President of the North Carolina Chapter of PAS. He is currently on the PAS Percussion Ensemble Committee, has served on the University Pedagogy and New Music/Research Committees, and was a member of the PAS Board of Advisors. He is also an active adjudicator and arranger for marching percussion throughout the southeast.

His teachers have included Johnny Almendra, Tricia Bovenschen, Wayne Bovenschen, Michael Bump, Joe Galeota, Ralph Hardimon, Gregg Koyle, Alexander Lepak, Christopher Shultis, Ben Toth, Glen Velez, and Nancy Zeltsman.

He is an artist/endorser for **Yamaha Percussion**, **Black Swamp Percussion**, **Innovative Percussion**, **Remo Drum Heads and Percussion**, **Beetle Percussion**, and **Sabian Cymbals**.

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