



**Program Rules:  
Middle School, High School, Youth, Community, and  
Adult Concert Bands**

1. You will be able to reserve up to six (6) pieces on Wednesday, May 6 and up to twelve (12) additional pieces on Wednesday, May 20. You can have up to eighteen (18) pieces reserved at any time after that. All pieces you are considering for your concert program must be reserved. There will be two (2) confirmation periods where you will need to log into the music reservation system and confirm pieces you are still considering. If you fail to confirm your selections, they will be deleted from your reservation and available for other ensembles to select. Your program draft is due to your liaison by August 28. Your final program is due to The Midwest Clinic Office by September 11.

2. Although your group will be onstage more than the actual playing time, time must be allowed for announcements, introductions, and changes of conductors. The titles you select **MUST** total your specific playing time. Our schedule does not allow for intermissions or encores.

When adding up the total music timing of your repertoire, please be aware of the time needed for set changes or changes of conductors. If you have multiple conductors or set changes, you may need to program less music to complete your concert on time. If your concert ending time arrives prior to the downbeat of the final piece on your program, you will not be allowed to play that work. Set/chair changes, should be practiced. This is especially important for the percussion section. It is also helpful to assign a backstage assistant for the purpose of directing entrance of guest conductors, thus eliminating an awkward silence and fomenting a smooth transition between selections.

Immediately following the end of your concert, it is imperative your percussion section remove all school instruments from the stage as quickly as possible so that the next ensemble may begin set-up on schedule.

3. Only selections from the catalogs of exhibiting publishers may be performed. If a publisher's works are not available in North America through the publisher, then that selection can be performed only if the publisher's authorized "exclusive distributor" for North America exhibits. (Works that can be purchased directly from the composer or publisher cannot be made eligible through an exhibiting distributor.) The following exceptions apply: ensembles may program one work from a non-exhibiting publisher and one manuscript, OR two works from non-exhibiting publishers, provided in either case that those publishers are represented by a sponsorship in the Midwest Clinic Digital Program Book. Sponsoring publishers are eligible to have no more than two works programmed that year, whichever are the first two that are reserved. For an unlimited number of pieces eligible to be programmed, sponsoring publishers are encouraged to buy a booth, which also entitles the

publisher to exhibitor badges, on-floor interaction with attendees, participation in new music reading sessions, and more. However, if purchasing a booth is not possible, unlimited additional pieces may be eligible at an additional cost of \$150 per piece. If you want to program a piece from a publisher that is not on the exhibitor list, you may contact the publisher and ask if they would like to exhibit or purchase a sponsorship so that you may program it.

4. Bands may select no more than one manuscript for performance on the Midwest program (Pieces purchased directly from the composer do not qualify as manuscripts). A manuscript is defined as any work that is not commercially available by the final program deadline in September. Manuscript compositions or special arrangements may be programmed only if all copyrights have been cleared. Manuscripts are not counted when determining the percentage of new and old music. A composer can have only one manuscript programmed at The Midwest Clinic per year. The first of a composer's manuscripts that is reserved will be the one that is allowed, unless it is released by the director who reserved it. If you choose to play two works by non-exhibiting publishers, a manuscript cannot be programmed.

5. Only two publishers may be represented twice on your program. All other publishers may only be represented once.

6. A composer or arranger may not be represented more than twice on your program.

7. Diversity in programming and performance is a key objective for the Midwest Clinic. We require your program to include at least two compositions by a composer from a historically marginalized group such as but not limited to women, Indigenous/Native, Black/African-American, Hispanic/Latinx, Asian American, and/or Pacific Islander. One of these compositions is exempt from publisher eligibility requirements (see section 3) Your assigned liaison will provide guidance in your selection.

8. A living composer may not have more than six compositions featured during a Midwest Clinic. The first six compositions reserved will be allowed, unless a work is released by the director who reserved it.

9. At least 50% of your concert program must be published the preceding two years through September 11 of the current year. Any music (score and parts) not in print by the final program submission deadline cannot be programmed except as your manuscript. If you select a title that might not be ready by September 11, please have a back-up prepared. The percentage of new music is determined by the number of selections, not timing.

10. The music you select must be published, printed, and currently available – both score and parts. You may perform one out-of-print selection but we request that you notify the publisher of your intent to play this selection on a Midwest concert. It is our hope that this will encourage publishers to re-issue some of the fine literature that is no longer available.

11. A reprint or new edition of an older publication may also be programmed and should be considered new music, using the new issue date for classification purposes.

12. Rental music is categorized the same as published music. Rental music is classified in the old music category.

13. Music performed at the Midwest in 2024 or 2025 cannot be played in 2026. This includes separate movements of the same piece, if they are only available in a single edition.

14. Parts and score should be published by the same publisher in the same edition.

15. This rule only applies to middle school, high school, and youth concert bands. For each grade (4, 5, or 6) music selection, equal numbers of (1, 2, or 3) grade music must be played. More medium and easy grade music is encouraged, and you may devote more time to grades 1, 2, and 3 than to grades 4, 5, and 6. If you have an odd number of titles, you are required to program more selections of grade 1-3 repertoire, rather than 4-6. For example, if your program has 9 titles in total, 5 must be graded 1-3, and the remaining 4 can be chosen from grades 4-6. All middle school and high school groups must include at least one grade 1 and one grade 2 selection. Concert bands may perform one selection from the [Dennis Zeisler Memorial Masterworks List](#) and this composition will not affect the grade of difficulty balance in the list of program selections. Additionally, if a director chooses a Masterworks selection, it will not impact the publishing house rules and limitations. The TOTAL length of programming must remain the same. In grading music, please use the following as a guideline:

Grade 1 — For beginners in their first year

Grade 2 — Easy music for second and third year players

Grade 3 — For intermediate level students and junior high or high school

Grade 4 — For advanced high school musicians

Grade 5 — Difficult - Generally for college musicians

Grade 6 — Very difficult

16. For adult and community bands, a grade 3 or 4 piece must be programmed for every grade 5 or 6.

16. Your program must be confined to selections no longer than (10) ten minutes including solos with the following exception: you may program one piece that is up to (15) fifteen minutes as long as your program features more grade 1-3 pieces than 4-6 pieces. (If you have an even number of selections on your program and you wish to play a piece that is longer than ten minutes, you will need to play two more grade 1-3 pieces than 4-6 pieces.)

17. All high school, youth, community, and adult bands are **required** to include a march (non-arranged) on their concert. Middle school bands are encouraged to perform a march as well. For a list of recommended march composers, [CLICK HERE](#).

18. The selection of guest conductors is your decision. Organizations can have no more than five conductors, including the primary conductor, on their programs. In other words, you may have a total of four other conductors besides the regular conductor. We recommend that no conductor appear on more than two programs during the same year. We ask that you

request Midwest approval of conductors and soloists so that the same conductor will not appear on several programs, nor will the same instrument be featured several times. The music selected by and for the guest conductors and soloists follows the same policies as the rest of your program.

19. You may include your own student instrumental or vocal soloist or small ensemble. To include any larger ensembles, please apply immediately to The Midwest Clinic Office for permission.

20. Students not regularly enrolled in a school group may not perform with that group except as features.

21. A member of the Board of Directors has been assigned as your liaison. He or she will assist you as you plan your program and select your music. You can find your board liaison assignment by logging into your account on The Midwest Clinic website and clicking on the Performer Homepage.

22. Each director, in conjunction with the liaison, makes his or her own selection of music governed by the preceding policies. The Performance Coordinating Committee will examine all the programs and reserves the right to suggest possible additions or deletions, if necessary, to help balance and/or strengthen the clinic program.

### **Special Information About Planning Your Program**

1. Most of our exhibiting publishers will send you complimentary reference scores for your selection of music. We urge you not to request complimentary full sets as this may obligate you to play their works even if you change your mind before your final program is due. The publishers are eager for you to perform their music and will be happy to send you complimentary scores. If you want to see a full set before selecting a number, ask for a “loan” or “on approval” set from your music dealer or the publisher. When you have submitted your final program and it has been approved and the publisher notified, most publishers will cancel the loan or approval charge and give you the set at no cost.

2. You will be approached by composers, arrangers, publishers, soloists, and conductors to program their potential releases with the promise they will be off the press by the September 11 deadline. Please do not promise to program a title that is not in print unless it is with the mutual understanding that if the score and parts are not finished on time by the deadline, a substitution will be made.

3. Music, guest conductors, and soloists cannot be added or changed after your final program has been approved.

4. Because of numerous requests and time constraints, it is not possible for any organization to make award presentations or announcements during your performance. With the exception of the official Midwest Clinic performance plaque, no other awards presentation may be made during your concert.

