



Member Information

Welcome to the Rockville Brass Band! You may be wondering what a brass band is all about. To get yourself we recommend watching this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ycjnKTJIA.Y>.

Rockville Brass Band, formed on March 6, 1976, is a band in the British tradition. Brass bands formed in the North of England and in the U.S. in the middle of the 19th century spurred on by two factors, the invention of the piston valve for brass instruments and an influx of amateur musicians returning home after the Napoleonic War.

In the U.S. the movement went in to steep decline and all but disappeared by the First World War. At the same time in England, toward the end of the century, these bands, often sponsored by a local factory or colliery, started to compete against each other. These contests were fiercely fought and became the bedrock of banding. As banding spread across Britain, and then across the world, so contesting was taken with it – bands continue to compete in contests. To ensure that there was a “level playing field,” the competition organizers needed to standardize the orchestration of the bands taking part. This standard is still in use today; all brass bands have the same instrumentation.

People unfamiliar with brass bands are surprised to see that we have no woodwinds, only brass instruments and percussion. And, we don't have trumpets or French horns either! All brass bands have:

- 1 cornet in Eb (known as a soprano cornet);
- 9 cornets in Bb (playing 4 separate parts: 4 solo cornets, one repiano, two seconds and two thirds);
- 1 flugel horn;
- 3 tenor horns (known as alto horns in the U.S., playing 3 separate parts: solo, 1st and 2nd);
- 2 baritones (known as tenor horns in the U.S., playing separate parts);
- 2 euphoniums (known as baritones in the U.S., and tenor tubas in orchestral writing);
- 2 tenor trombones (playing separate parts);
- 1 bass trombone;
- 2 basses in Eb (known as tubas in orchestral writing);
- 2 basses in Bb (known as contrabass tubas in orchestral writing);
- 2 or 3 percussionists playing a variety of instruments, including drum kit, timpani and glockenspiel (known as bells in the U.S.).

The newcomer to the genre is often surprised to find that, with the exception of the bass trombone and percussion parts, all parts are written in the treble clef, even the Bb bass (they sound two octaves and a tone lower than written). This helps group teaching, often an aspect of brass bands especially in the native Britain, and permits players to switch instruments when a vacancy appears in the band's line-up.

For further background reading see *The Complete Bandmaster*, Dr. Denis Wright OBE, *How to Write for Brass Bands* (<http://www.bandsman.co.uk/writing.htm>) and *The Past and Future of Brass Bands* (<http://www.bandsman.co.uk/downloads/history.pdf>).

You may also like to visit the website of some brass bands: Black Dyke Mills Band (<http://www.blackdykeband.co.uk/>), Grimethorpe Colliery Band (<http://www.grimethorpeband.com/>) – that is the band that provided the music for the movie *Brassed Off*, the Fairey Band (<http://www.faireyband.com/>) and Fodens Brass Band (<http://www.fodensband.co.uk/>).

The Rockville Brass Band was formed by some members of the Rockville Concert Band. Some members of the band also play in the Rockville Concert Band, though there are no formal links between the bands.

Rehearsal Schedule

The Rockville Brass Band rehearses throughout the year, with a week off in late December. We rehearse Wednesdays from 7:30pm to 9:30pm, at Newport Mill Middle School, 11311 Newport Mill Rd., Kensington, MD, 20895. Our concert season usually consists of approximately 3 concerts in November and December, one or two out of state festivals in February or March, and approximately 5 concerts in May and June. When the school is unavailable we rehearse at the Lutheran Calvary Church on Georgia Ave. in Silver Spring.

Concert Dress

Concert Dress at **formal concerts** consists of black shoes and socks, slacks and dress shirt. The shirt should be broadcloth (not sateen or shiny), long sleeve, point (not button-down) collar and with black buttons. Men's Wearhouse sells a black shirt <http://www.menswearhouse.com/mens-clothes/dress-shirts/classic-fit-regular-shirts/modena-black-dress-shirt-5284528508>, or use Amazon

http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B004TI5FAE/ref=oh_details_o00_s00_i00?ie=UTF8&psc=1. Suitable pants can be purchased from Amazon:

http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B000N3Q7HO/ref=oh_details_o05_s00_i00?ie=UTF8&psc=1.

At **informal concerts**, we wear black shoes and socks, slacks and a black Rockville Brass Band polo shirt. Polo shirts can be bought from the President.

Dues

There are no formal dues required to join the band, however charitable donations are accepted to help pay for the band's expenses, for example the hire of the rehearsal facilities, insurance and the purchase of new music. The band is a registered charitable organization under 501(c)(3), and as such, all donations are tax deductible. Please see Mark Kaprelian, the band's treasurer.

Mutes

All brass players will need to provide at least a straight mute. In addition, trombones will need at least a cup mute, and cornet players will need at least a cup and an extending mute.

The preferred mutes for cornet are:

<http://www.deniswick.com/all-products/mutes/item/bb-cornet-mutes/fibre-mute>

<http://www.deniswick.com/all-products/mutes/item/bb-cornet-mutes/bb-cornet-cup-mute>

<http://www.deniswick.com/all-products/mutes/item/bb-cornet-mutes/bb-cornet-extending-tube>

Other brass musicians should choose the same style for their use. Please discuss with your section leader.

Music Stands

Most venues do not provide a music stand, so you will need to have one. A Manhasset style is preferred. Solo, 2nd and 3rd cornet players share stands (two to a stand), rather like violinists in an orchestra.

Website

The band has a website (<http://www.rockvillebrassband.org>) where information can be found about the band's activities. Members are added to two email lists: one for members (rbb-members@rockvillebrassband.org) and one for the public and previous members who have an interest in the band's activities (rbb-community@rockvillebrassband.org). Extra information, including the latest version of this document, can be found in the members' only area at <http://www.rockvillebrassband.org/members/members-only>.

Concert/Rehearsal Cancellation Procedure

If a concert needs to be cancelled for any reason we send an email to all band members and at the same time enact our phone-tree (if the notice is very small). To avoid any confusion, unless you hear otherwise, the band event is always on. Each member on the phone-tree is responsible for calling the next member of the band on the tree. The full procedure for using the tree is included on the tree itself that you should receive once you have given us your contact information.

From time-to time weather alerts (mostly for snow) cause us to have to cancel a rehearsal. There is an excellent, free service at <http://www.schoolsout.com> that sends notices of school closures to its subscribers via email. We recommend that you subscribe to it: you can monitor the alerts for Montgomery County, MD even if you don't live there.

Attendance

Members are expected to attend all rehearsals and concerts. You are expected to give the band high priority and to make every effort to attend. However, from time-to-time unavoidable family and work commitments will prevent you from attending. When you know you're going to be unable to make a concert please give at least one month's notice to your section and the musical director - one week for rehearsals. You are responsible for organizing a suitable substitute player for a concert. The band has a directory of possible substitutes for your use in addition to your own contacts. If an emergency or illness occurs at less notice please inform your section leader and the musical director as soon as you can.

We also maintain a spreadsheet at docs.rockvillebrassband.org, please keep your entry up-to-date by letting the IT administrator know of any changes of circumstance.

Your Contact Information

Please fill out the following information for the band to keep on file. We do not share any personal information with anyone outside of the band. Your phone numbers will be distributed to the band members for use in a phone tree, which will be used in case of last minute changes to rehearsals or concerts. The phone-tree will be distributed by email and during rehearsal, and will also be available on the members' only section of the website. A members' list will also be distributed to the band members containing your information as provided below.

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Rockville Brass Band New Member Form

Date: _____

Name: _____

Instrument(s): _____

Email address: _____

Home address: _____

Home Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____

Preferred contact number(s) for phone tree (in order): _____