

Saratoga High School Instrumental Music  
Band Programs



Marching Band  
Symphonic Band  
Wind Ensemble  
Jazz Bands  
Color Guard  
Percussion



# Welcome to the SHS Band Family!

Thanks for your interest in the band program! We are proud of our tradition at Saratoga High School. Our program involves a diverse population of students with varying backgrounds. Whether a student has many years of experience or is completely new to band, we welcome all to create a “home” with us on campus. The band program at Saratoga High School is a melting pot of students involved in virtually every sport, activity, and co-curricular on campus. Our program is designed to meet the needs of all students interested in the discipline of music as part of their academic life.

We are already making plans for the upcoming school year! The largest part of this preparation focuses on our new members who are completing their 8th grade year. Therefore, we want to begin an early communication with you, the students and parents, to ensure all those involved in the band program will have a superb transition to our high school program.

NOW is the time when musical investment begins to pay measurable dividends. The seeds of success are about to produce a harvest of exciting opportunities for you as you take that all-important first step forward as a member of our organization. Making the band program a part of your SHS life is one of the most significant and beneficial decisions you can make!

Students are often ambivalent and a bit fearful about entering high school. Much of this first-year stress can be avoided when you are an integral and valued member of a meaningful and important group, and also the largest organization on campus – the SHS Bands. Being in the band program helps to make this process positive and serves as a springboard for high school life and beyond. In addition, it affords every student the opportunity to enter an advanced level of instruction with a host of talented friends who share a similar interest and a familiar language. Our upperclassmen serve as a safe, fun, and supportive social family in the introduction to this new learning climate. We pride ourselves on our musical accomplishments, but even more on the supportive network our program provides.

This handout is meant to provide answers to frequently asked questions about the SHS Bands and just a bit of information that will be of use to you in the next several weeks. Each family will receive an official Band Handbook in June as part of the Band Kick-Off, which presents all information in further detail and a schedule for the upcoming school year. We would be happy to meet with you to discuss our program in detail and share our professional thoughts about the positive implications associated with our band program.

We are anxiously looking forward to working with you! In discussing the future of our program, we all feel next year’s entering class, the Class of 2025, will bring a new level of excellence and camaraderie to our program!

Musically Yours,

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## Important Dates to Remember!

Marching Band Kick-Off: TBD

2021 Band Camp: August 2<sup>nd</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> (tentative)

All students in the SHS Band Program are members of the Marching Band. Marching Band is considered a unit of our curriculum. Band Camp is a required and vital part of this experience!



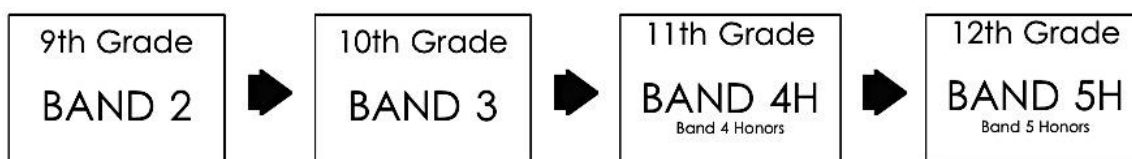
## FAQ's:

### Is High School Band difficult?

Just like anything worth your time, being in the SHS band takes effort. However, we have a spot for ALL students, regardless of your current musical level. Our biggest wish is for all students to achieve consistently and enjoy the learning process. Every aspect of our program is designed to foster and encourage musical and personal maturity.

### I've heard the SHS Band Students earn Honors credit?

Yes! Almost all of our 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders earn UC, Private College, Out-of-State, and State College Honors Credit in their 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade year. Students must be enrolled in 9<sup>th</sup> Grade (Band II) and 10<sup>th</sup> Grade (Band III) to follow the sequence outlined by the UC system to earn this credit, or pick up the credit in sequence if added after 9<sup>th</sup> grade year:



As you can see, participating in the SHS Band program for all four years of high school will allow students to earn two years of honors credit recognized by four-year universities.

### Is it possible if I'm in Orchestra and Band to earn Honors Credit as outlined my Junior Year for both?

Yes, if selecting the second Semester II option above, this is possible. There are at least 6-12 students doing this annually. They are happy to share their experience!

### Does Band take up all of my time?

No! This is perhaps the greatest misconception to incoming students and parents. Band is a commitment, just like anything of worth, but does not prevent you from participation in other SHS classes, activities, and co-curricular activities. The SHS Bell Schedule allows for even greater flexibility for students and significantly less time-commitment compared to past years outside of the school day. The first quarter of the year encompasses the greatest amount of time outside of school, which is considered the "homework" for the class since no other work exists other than this rehearsal and learning time. After this, time commitment is limited to class, home practice, and performances. Further, no other organization on campus has a greater success rate of everything from GPA to college placement than instrumental music. Structure and discipline work!

## What classes should I take Freshman Year?

Parents and students often ask about the demand of band on the academic schedule at Saratoga High School. You will find that some of the brightest and best SHS students are dedicated band members. To the right is a sample Freshmen schedule.

(This is only a sample – subjects/periods may be different).

\*PE Credit is earned by participation in marching band. No PE credit is needed 2nd semester of Sophomore year as the credit can be earned by marching band participation during Junior and Senior year.

### SAMPLE BAND SCHEDULE: FRESHMAN FALL

Example "A" Day	Example "B" Day
Period 1 <b>Band Level II</b> <i>(or Orch. II) (or Choir II)</i>	Period 2 <b>Science</b>
Period 3 <b>Math</b>	Period 4 <b>Foreign Language</b>
Period 5 <b>Health/ Driver's Ed/ World Geo</b>	Period 6 <b>Band PE</b>
Period 7 <b>English</b>	Period 8 <b>Marching Band/ Color Guard</b> <i>(No 8th Period rehearsal on TH)</i>

### SAMPLE BAND SCHEDULE: FRESHMAN SPRING

Example "A" Day	Example "B" Day
Period 1 <b>Band Level II</b> <i>(or Orch. II) (or Choir II)</i>	Period 2 <b>Science</b>
Period 3 <b>Math</b>	Period 4 <b>Foreign Language</b>
Period 5 <b>Health/ Driver's Ed/ World Geo</b>	Period 6 <b>PE</b> <i>(Free period if participating in WG, WP or Spr. Sport)</i>
Period 7 <b>English</b>	<b>Period 0</b> Jazz Band I Symph Orchestra. <b>Period 8</b> Winter Guard Winter Perc

## Sophomore Year

Parents and students often ask about the demand of band on the academic schedule at Saratoga High School. You will find that some of the brightest and best SHS students are dedicated band members. To the right is a sample Sophomore schedule. (This is only a sample – subjects/periods may be different).

\*PE Credit is earned by participation in marching band. No PE credit is needed 2nd semester of Sophomore year as the credit can be earned by marching band participation during Junior and Senior year.

### SAMPLE BAND SCHEDULE: SOPHOMORE FALL

Example "A" Day	Example "B" Day
Period 1 <b>English</b>	Period 2 <b>Science</b>
Period 3 <b>Band Level III</b> <i>(or Orch. III) (or Choir III)</i>	Period 4 <b>Foreign Language</b>
Period 5 <b>World History</b>	Period 6 <b>Math</b>
Period 7 <b>Additional Elective or Fall Sport</b>	Period 8 <b>Marching Band PE/ Color Guard</b>

### SAMPLE BAND SCHEDULE: SOPHOMORE SPRING

Example "A" Day	Example "B" Day
Period 1 <b>English</b>	Period 2 <b>Science</b>
Period 3 <b>Band Level III</b> <i>(or Orch. III) (or Choir III)</i>	Period 4 <b>Foreign Language</b>
Period 5 <b>World History</b>	Period 6 <b>Math</b>
Period 7 <b>Additional Elective or Spr. Sport</b>	<b>Period 0</b> Jazz Band I Symph Orchestra. <b>Period 8</b> Winter Guard Winter Perc

### What is the time commitment outside of the school day?

During the fall marching band season (August – First week of November), we have most of our out-of-the-regular-school-day events. These events are built into the curriculum, and are considered the “homework”, similar to any other class. We are a competitive marching band, and operate under the same basic structure as most high schools in California. However, we do spend significantly LESS time outside of the school day than our competitor schools. Therefore, we expect maximum effort and commitment to our schedule, with conflicts to be worked out as specified.

### An Overview of the Fall Season:

The Band program begins with Band Camp (August 2<sup>nd</sup>), which is considered class time toward the Marching Band PE credit. Generally, camp is held two weeks prior to the first week of school, with short rehearsals occurring prior to or after band camp as the schedule allows. During band camp, we try to learn a large portion of the skills required for our competitive show. We work hard during this time, and have as much fun as we dare! It is also a great social time for the band. Band Camp is a mandatory part of the class curriculum.

Following Band Camp, a typical weekly rehearsal schedule would consist of:

#### Thursday Evening Full Ensemble – 6:00pm-9:00pm (August 12<sup>th</sup> – November 4<sup>th</sup>)

The SHS Bell Schedule (rotating block schedule) allows us to shrink the time commitment outside of the school day for all students. Winds no longer have an early morning sectional, and Percussion no longer has an extra afternoon sectional. This effectively reduces the amount of outside rehearsal time for band students *without* sacrificing the integrity of our organization.

Saturdays - The marching band rehearses most Saturdays throughout the fall. Scheduling is dependent on many factors. We typically do not schedule rehearsal during SAT/ACT times or PSAT times, *if at all possible*.

Performances – Home Football Game Performances occur on Friday evenings and Competitions occur on Saturdays. On average there are 4 of each per season.

Time management is one of the most essential skills to help prepare students for the future! During the marching band season we work with students to sift through conflicts so students can develop meaningful time-management skills that will be invaluable years after their high school experience.

### What Does the Competitive Performance Schedule look like?

Our tentative schedule for the Fall will mostly fit our performances into October, with a possible extension into first week of November dependent on the competition/football schedule.

- SHS Homecoming Game, Date TBD based on Football Schedule
- October 9<sup>th</sup> – Cupertino Tournament of Bands
- October 16<sup>th</sup> – Competition, TBD
- October 23<sup>rd</sup> – Foothill Band Review
- November 6<sup>th</sup> – Competition, TBD
- Senior Night, Date TBD based on Football Schedule

### Do I need to be in Band both semesters?

Yes, unless you are opting for PE Band combined with another elective, other than a language. An example would be for students concurrently enrolled in Orchestra or Choir. In this instance you would participate in first semester marching band only. Please contact Mr. Shiuan for more information.

Can I play sports/other co-curricular activities?

YES! In fact, most of our students are involved in sports or other co-curricular activities. We encourage you to participate in a variety of co-curricular activities. The SHS Bell Schedule opens up this opportunity more than ever before! No matter what activities you pursue, you must keep an accurate schedule and iron out any conflicts that may arise. We have a systematic approach to help you with this, but it is up to you to keep your schedule straight, for the good of the band and for the good of your other activities. With a little give and take, most things work out just fine. **Communication is key.** We have students involved in every sport on campus. Additionally, any college or university in the country will attest to the fact that the most active students are the most successful students. Again, structure and discipline work!

Can I be in Band while involved in an intensive Fall Sport or Traveling Sport?

Our Bell Schedule at SHS makes the combination of Band and a Fall Sport or Traveling Sport (traveling soccer, figure skating, etc.) reasonable. However, in some cases we will need to make special arrangements with more limited participation for students involved in an intensive Fall Sport or Traveling Sport. While everyone in the Band Program will be involved in the Marching Band in some capacity, it may not be possible that all members will be a part of the competitive Field Band, but rather perform in limited capacity during the Fall quarter.

\*Please speak with Mr. Shiuan & Mr. Boitz regarding these arrangements.

\*\*No matter what the circumstance, we want all students to be able to participate in Band at SHS! Please contact Mr. Shiuan & Mr. Boitz to help navigate this if you plan to be in another intensive activity during the Fall quarter.



Saratoga Marching Band and Color Guard performing at Levi's Stadium during halftime for the 2018 Homecoming Game!

**SAMPLE BAND SCHEDULE:**  
*FALL with Sport*

<b>Example "A" Day</b>	<b>Example "B" Day</b>
<i>Period 1</i>  <b>Math</b>	<i>Period 2</i>  <b>Science</b>
<i>Period 3</i>  <b>Band Level II</b> (or Orch. II) (or Choir II)	<i>Period 4</i>  <b>Foreign Language</b>
<i>Period 5</i>  <b>Health/ Driver's Ed/ World Geo</b>	<i>Period 6</i>  <b>English</b>
<i>Period 7</i>  <b>Fall Sport</b>	<i>Period 8</i>  <b>Open</b> (Fall Sport Scheduling)

### Band and Other Electives - Clearing Up the Information “Flood” for Students:

This information is important to Band students, as it does impact the band sequence and Honors Credit earned. While earning Honors Credit is certainly not a reason to join any elective class (in this case band), in reality the credit does have an impact on many, as well as demonstrates on paper and in practical application a student’s ability to commit and progress in a disciplined and engaging art form. Here is some information to help clear things up:

#### Band and Journalism

Most Band students elect to position themselves in Band II during their 9<sup>th</sup> grade year, then add another elective 10<sup>th</sup> grade year and beyond, so sequentially they will be earning Honors Credit by 11<sup>th</sup> grade year. Such is the case for Journalism. Journalism spaces do not fill up for 10<sup>th</sup> graders as they do for 9<sup>th</sup> graders (limited space exists for 9<sup>th</sup> graders), so there is no problem in adding Journalism as a 10<sup>th</sup> grader.

#### Band and the “Project lead-the-way” Elective:

Students can enroll in these classes at any grade level; there is no official sequence, regardless of course title (the course titles are a bit confusing/deceiving).

1. Intro to Engineering: This is NOT a prerequisite to the other classes, and students can take this class at any grade level
2. Applied Engineering: 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders can take this class, and there is no prerequisite. It is not necessary to take Intro before Applied.

#### Band and Rhetoric, Drama

Most students in Band participate in athletics, clubs, and many other activities, including Rhetoric and Drama. Students need not be enrolled in an actual Rhetoric class or Drama class to participate in the Speech and Debate Team, or Schools Plays and Musicals.



*Saratoga HS Students participating in the 2020 Santa Clara County Honor Band!*

### Is Symphonic Band/Marching Band synonymous?

Yes. Marching Band is a “unit” in our curriculum, just as all other classes have curriculum dividing the year into units (i.e. studying Shakespeare in English). Marching Band is part of our music curriculum and total music experience at SHS. ALL band students are in marching band in some capacity during first quarter. It is a tool we use to stress the fundamentals of music skill and discipline. It also teaches teamwork, collaborative responsibility, long and short term goal setting, personal management skills, self-confidence, leadership, and many other invaluable lessons and skills. It is an essential part of the spirit of our school. These are all skills that are highly sought after in college applications and job applications. Being a part of this caliber group makes a significant statement toward your future. Students who play a double-reed instrument will be encouraged to be part of the Marching Band on another instrument, part of the front ensemble percussion, or color guard. You should speak to Mr. Shiuan SOON about your options!

### Can anyone audition for the Symphonic Wind Ensemble (SWE)?

No. Freshman will be automatically enrolled in the Freshman Band class for the first year, unless an instrumentation need exists. The Symphonic Wind Ensemble is comprised of upper class students or any student with a successful audition following freshman year. Oboe, French Horns, Bassoons, Tubas, and Trombones are all instruments of higher demand and are more likely to make it into the Symphonic Wind Ensemble as sophomores.

### Is it possible to take Concert Band with Orchestra/Choir?

Yes, however it really only works during first semester during the freshman year. Email Mr. Shiuan directly if you would like to work this out for freshman year. Sophomore year, however, band students have an advantage and are able to take an additional elective, as the first semester can be used for PE credit, easily opening up the possibility of an additional elective, if students choose to do so.

### Does the Band Program Travel/Tour?

Yes! The band program takes a significant tour every 3-4 years, with a “mini-tour” on the off years. The Marching Band travels on day trips and one overnight to competitions 4 Saturdays during the Fall, which gives us a great opportunity to bond with each other and meet students from high schools throughout California.

- In Fall 2012, the Marching Band and Color Guard traveled to New York City for the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade!
- The band and orchestra traveled to Spain in 2014 in conjuncture with the World Languages Department!
- The marching band traveled to Pasadena for the 2016 Tournament of Roses Parade, an event watched by millions worldwide!
- In 2017, the whole music department travelled to Germany, Netherlands, and Belgium as part of WASBE and World Music Contest!
- In 2022, we hope to resume musical travel to abroad if it is safe enough to do so!

### What about Jazz Band?

SHS offers two jazz bands. For 2021-2022, Jazz Band I will meet during 8<sup>th</sup> Period starting **Spring Semester**. No audition is required for Jazz Band I, and semester credit is given to students for the year of participation. Jazz Band II (Advanced Jazz Ensemble) explores the science behind sound engineering, recording, and production. Jazz Band II meets during 7<sup>th</sup> Period is Performance-Based, and also satisfies the Applied Arts credit at SHS. Both Jazz Bands perform at the annual Jazz Cabaret, a night of music, swing dance, and food!



The Saratoga High School Advanced Jazz Band II at the Annual SMB Jazz Cabaret



Does band look good on college applications?  
**ABSOLUTELY! BAND STUDENTS CLEARLY STAND OUT!** In fact, most college admissions departments seek out music students, as they recognize all that is involved in our academic discipline. Our graduates are attending some of the top universities and colleges in the country. Every year, the music office phone rings with questions from college admissions departments regarding our students. Most of our students stand out when compared to non-music students, and every year we have graduates earning scholarships based on their music participation and academic merit. No other organization on campus at SHS stands out in the way the Instrumental Music Program (Bands, Orchestras, Percussion, and Color Guard) does



Featured Sax Quartet and Guard Members of the Saratoga High School 2019 Marching Band Production, *Timeless*



The combined MEGA Band from Redwood Middle School and Saratoga High School at the 2018 Pancake Breakfast!

Saratoga HS Music alums from the Class of 2020 are currently attending great colleges and universities all over the United States and Canada:

- Boston College
- Boston University
- Brigham Young University
- Cal Poly San Luis Obispo
- California Northstate University
- Carnegie Mellon University
- Chapman University
- College of William and Mary
- Columbia University
- Cornell University
- De Anza College
- Drexel University in Philadelphia
- Duke University
- Eastman School of Music
- Emory University
- Harvard University
- Harvey Mudd College
- Hofstra University
- Johns Hopkins University
- The Julliard School
- Lehigh University
- Loyola University, Chicago
- Macalester College
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
- New York University
- Northeastern University
- Northwestern University
- Pitzer College
- Pomona College
- Princeton University
- Seattle University
- Spokane Community College
- Stony Brook University
- Tufts University
- University of California, Berkeley
- University of California, Davis
- University of California, Irvine
- University of California, Los Angeles
- University of California, Riverside
- University of California, San Diego
- University of California, Santa Barbara
- University of Colorado, Boulder
- University of Connecticut
- University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
- University of Michigan
- University of Minnesota
- University of Puget Sound
- University of Redlands
- University of Southern California
- University of the Pacific
- University of Toronto
- University of Washington
- Vanderbilt University
- Washington University in St. Louis
- Wesleyan University
- West Valley College
- Yale University

### What about Tests and Homework?

Performances! Practice! Band is a group performance class. Performance situations can't be recreated around each individual student. These growth experiences occur infrequently and are very important to the development of the student. Since we depend on each other so much, it is a great loss to miss anyone, and therefore all performances are required. The contribution of each student is critical and irreplaceable. You will receive a performance schedule well in advance. If changes occur in the schedule, you will be notified immediately.

### Do I have to take private lessons?

We highly recommend students to take private lessons, or group lessons. Students who truly excel academically are usually involved with private lessons. Successful music programs typically have a large percentage of their students studying privately. The percentage of students in our Symphonic Wind Ensemble who study privately is over 90%. The frequency of lessons varies greatly. Some students take an hour private lesson weekly, some half-hour, some every other week, etc. It is not necessary to study with the most expensive private lesson teacher in the area! We have a great number of advanced college students teaching our students and doing a superb job. Please email Mr. Shiuan or Mr. Boitz if you need a recommendation or list of potential private teachers in the area. Students who do not study privately are highly encouraged to seek extra help as often as needed.

### Does the school provide instruments?

The school helps with larger, more expensive instruments. Tubas (marching and concert), Euphoniums (Baritones), percussion, etc. are some. We do encourage students to purchase a good quality instrument for concert performances. Often students will play these instruments for the rest of their lives in one capacity or another: community groups, churches, synagogues, etc.! It is worth owning a good instrument.

### Does the school provide Marching Band Uniforms?

Yes, just about everything uniform related is provided for students. As part of the band contributions, students will defray the cost of cleaning and upkeep of their individual uniform.

### When do the Concert Bands and Jazz Bands perform?

All ensembles have several concert performances per year, as well as 1-2 community performances. The calendar of performances is typically ready the first week of March, and is also published on the Saratoga Music Boosters (SMB) website, which can be found at:

<http://www.saratogamusicboosters.org>

### If I want to switch to a different instrument, what do you recommend?

French Horns, Low brass (Tuba, Trombone, Euphonium/Baritone), and Double Reeds (Oboe/Bassoon) are typically our biggest area of need. Please see Mr. Boitz or Mr. Shiuan prior to making this decision for an embouchure test to make sure it will be a positive change.

**\*\*We highly recommend students who switch instruments to take private lessons or group lessons.\*\***

### I want to play an instrument that will contribute to the ensemble. What should I choose?

Please see above ☺. The most important item is to choose an instrument you love, but choosing a "rarer" instrument will increase chances of auditioning for All-State, County Honor Band, etc.

Celebrating the senior members of the Marching Band (Class of 2020) at Senior Night!



# Parents!

The success of our program largely depends on the dedicated parents who make everything happen! Not only is the SHS Band Program a great way for students to get involved in the SHS Community, but it is also a great opportunity for parents to become involved as well.

We are always looking for volunteers to serve food, chaperone events, help with uniforms, drive our vehicles, and most importantly... to cheer on the amazing band students! [www.saratogamusicboosters.org](http://www.saratogamusicboosters.org)



## What are ways parents can get involved with the band?

The most important thing parents can do to fully support students is providing the ingredients for success in all academic endeavors. In music, some of these are: private lessons, good instruments, praise and encouragement, patient ears, and most importantly, attend all events and performances. The band program relies heavily on parent volunteers for many things. Becoming a member of the music boosters and volunteering when available is greatly appreciated. In general, band students are fun and inspirational group of young people, fun to be around. Our volunteer parents have a wonderful time volunteering with our students, and oftentimes become great friends!

Whom should I contact for more information?

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