



MARCHING BASICS

for
New Inmates (and Slow Learners)



1. **RANK:** a *row* of Inmates across the band. We usually march with 4 Inmates in a rank (but sometimes we have 5-wide ranks). Sometimes we are much more rank than that.
2. **FILE:** a *column* of Inmates from the front to the back of the band. Or what you get in the mail to break out of your cell with. Files are numbered, starting with #1, from the *right* side of the Band.
3. **4-Step Interval:** when lined up in “Block Formation” (Ranks and Files), each inmate should be exactly 4 Steps from the Inmate in front, back and to either side. A Step is exactly 22 ½ inches (8 steps = 5 yards), unless there is a pretty girl in another direction.
4. **Guiding:** when we are marching, each Inmate has an important task (besides drinking beer): to **GUIDE** off the other Inmates. This means constantly checking alignment to the left, right, and front (don’t worry; someone behind you is covering your back. Or maybe you *should* worry...). Generally we “Guide Right”, meaning we look to the right to line up. This seems to have started because historically the pretty women seemed to be on the right side of the parade route.
5. **Step Off:** LEFT foot first. The Dum Major’s signal to Step Off is one long whistle followed by four short whistles. If he remembers.
6. **To The Rear:** Pivot on RIGHT FOOT, turning to the LEFT. The band rarely does a To-The-Rear as a whole (unless there is a Bar or a pretty girl back there), but we use this maneuver at lot in various drills.
7. **Backstep:** LEFT foot first, march backwards (that is, facing the same direction you were before, but moving backwards instead of forwards). Useful when the audience is in front of you but your beer is behind you.
8. **Pivots:** turn on **RIGHT** foot – regardless of the direction of the turn (Left or Right). Most pivots are 90-degrees, either left or right. (Or should be...)
9. **Block 4’s:** A maneuver where each Inmate marches four steps (again, 22.5 inches) in one direction, turns 90 degrees (left or right, depending on what is called for), marches four more steps, turns again in the same direction (left or right), and so forth, until he has marched in a complete circle (OK, square), back to where he started. We do this frequently in drills, and to confuse people.
10. **Rufus Signals:**
 - **Roll Off (Start Playing):** Plunger pointed upward, waved in a circular motion. (Do not confuse with Rufus himself teetering in a circle.)
 - **Halt:** Plunger held horizontally, waved up and down. Much like a flushing motion. (Note that the Band continues “Marking Time” (marching in place) until the Halt Cadence is sounded. Halt Cadences ALWAYS end with the words “UP YOURS!”).