



Portsmouth High School

Music Department

What Courses Are Available as a Freshman?

- Piano I
- Guitar I
- Introduction to Music
- AP Music Theory
- Music Production & Engineering (*Music Technology*)
- Jazz Ensemble
- Concert Band
- Symphonic Band (10-12)
- Marching Band
- Vocal Ensemble
- Concert Chorus
- String Ensemble

Piano 1

- This course explores music through the discipline of piano playing and reading music notation.
- Basic music composition will be introduced through the use of Finale music software.
- The student will gain a basic knowledge of keyboard structure, playing songs in a successive progression of difficulty.
- Emphasis is on reading notation and playing simple melodies with basic chord progressions.
- No previous knowledge of music is necessary. This course may be used toward fulfillment of the Rhode Island GSEs in music.

Guitar 1

- This course explores music through the discipline of guitar playing.
- The students gain basic knowledge of proper playing habits, basic chord progressions and note reading.
- Students also participate in small ensemble playing.
- No previous knowledge of the guitar is necessary.
- May be used toward fulfillment of Rhode Island GSEs in Music.

Introduction to Music

- This is a new course that was formerly run as MUSIC THEORY 1
- This class will cover selected topics that cover:
 - Music Theory/Composition
 - Music History
 - Music Technology
- Students will learn how the combination of melody, harmony and rhythm develop into music.
- This course will cover Classical, Jazz, Broadway, Rock, and pop music.

AP Music Theory

- This course is designed to develop musical skills that will lead to a thorough understanding of music composition and music theory.
- Students are prepared to take the AP Music Theory Exam when they have completed the course.
- Students will be engaged in a variety of musical exercises including, rhythm & melody dictations, playing piano, composing, analyzing, and sight singing.
- This is a full year class
- Students should be interested in musicianship, elementary theory, harmony and dictation, structure of music, etc.

Music Production & Engineering

- This course will explore the fundamentals of creating and organizing music with computers.
- This course will cover basic skills in music notation, digital recording, MIDI, live audio sequencing, and electronic hardware.
- Students will be using software applications to create and arrange music.
- Students will also focus on how to create multimedia files which may be integrated for use in the Internet, multimedia projects and computer programs.
- Fundamentals on how to transfer music with mp3 players will be covered.
- Enrollment is open to all students, grades 9-12. (May be used to fulfill technology graduation requirement)

Concert Band

- This class is offered to all incoming freshman.
- Band literature at a **Medium** level will be studied and performed.
- Emphasis is placed on musicianship and the development of music fundamentals.
- Performances include football games, parades, school concerts, festivals, and any other functions at which the band is asked to perform.
- THE CONCERT BAND IS COMBINED WITH THE SYMPHONIC BAND FOR THE **PATRIOTS MARCHING BAND**

Symphonic Band

- This class is offered to all incoming freshman.
- Band literature at a **Medium-Advanced** level will be studied and performed.
- Emphasis is placed on musicianship and the development of music fundamentals.
- Performances include football games, parades, school concerts, festivals, and any other functions at which the band is asked to perform.
- THE SYMPHONIC BAND IS COMBINED WITH THE CONCERT BAND FOR THE **PATRIOTS MARCHING BAND**

Vocal Ensemble

- This is a select group of singers interested in performing challenging SSA literature from all periods and styles.
- Emphasis is placed on music literacy and performance.
- Members of the Vocal Ensemble join the concert chorus for all major concerts.
- In addition, they perform several times a year in the community and at festivals.

Concert Chorus

- This course is open to singers of any ability.
- Emphasis is placed on the improvement of vocal skills, music literacy, and performance through the use of part-singing.
- The chorus presents several concerts each year that include classical, popular, and contemporary literature.

String Ensemble

- This class is open to all students with or without previous string playing experience.
- Beginning students will learn to care for, tune and proficiently play one of the four orchestral instruments: violin, viola, cello or double bass.
- Students with previous playing experience will have the opportunity to play more challenging repertoire.
- STEAM elements and literacy strands are incorporated into the daily music curriculum fostering students' creativity and innovation in the classroom. A wide variety of music repertoire is explored for school and community performance events throughout the school year.

How Does Marching Band Work?

The Marching Band is made up of the combined groups of the Concert Band AND Symphonic Band.



All Members Attend Band Camp At The End Of August.



Where Has The Band Traveled To?

- New York City
- Boston
- Florida - *Disneyworld*
- California - *Disneyland*
- Bahamas
- Bermuda
- Hershey Park, Pennsylvania
- Washington D.C.
- Toronto
- Virginia
- **St. Patrick's Day Parade - *New York City***
- **Electric Light Parade - *Disneyworld***
- **Cherry Blossom Parade - *Washington DC***
- **Azalea Festival Parade - *Virginia***

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. Am I able to participate in sports (especially Fall sports) AND to take band at the same time? What are the conflicts?

Yes. We have several students that participate in many sports. Just about a third of the band is involved in an athletic activity throughout the school year. We keep an open dialogue between the coaches and students so that they may balance rehearsal/practice time with their activities. Some conflicts occur when there is a game that coincides with a marching band performance or concert. These are handled on an individual basis and are generally resolved in a fair way. "Game vs Concert" conflicts happen rarely.

Frequently Asked Questions:

2. How much time after school does band take?

Band rehearsals are Wednesday evenings from 5:00–7:00pm. These practices start in September and end by mid-October. I have kept these rehearsals in the early evenings so that students can participate in after-school activities AND continue with their sports' practices without conflicts.

Frequently Asked Questions:

3. Is Band Camp Mandatory?

Band camp is part of the curriculum in band. All students in Concert & Symphonic band participate in Marching Band. Band camp allows students to meet each other and work with each other before the start of school. We learn the concepts and musical skills that we will need to accomplish for the fall season. I will tell you that students who have doubts about camp, quickly realize that we do have fun and learn things that make band a great experience.

Frequently Asked Questions:

4. Can I play in band AND participate in COLOR GUARD or DANCE TEAM?

Yes. Most of our color guard and dance members are in band. During concert or symphonic band, students will play their instruments. When we work as a marching band, those color guard members work with the color guard. Our color guard members consist of band, chorus, and non-music students.

Frequently Asked Questions:

5. Do I have to take band for a full year? Can I only join band for a half of year.

The only students that take band for a half of year are students who have a schedule problem and need credit for a graduation requirement. Symphonic & Concert band are considered FULL-YEAR classes.

Frequently Asked Questions:

6. Can I do band without marching band?

The only students who don't take marching band are the band members who are on the Varsity football team. Those students do not perform the half-time show, but they do join us for parades, when possible. Students soon discover that it is the marching band that does the majority of traveling to places such as the "BIG E", "McCOY STADIUM, NEW YORK CITY, and DISNEY!

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