

Marimba Performance Standards (MPS)

# NATIONAL STANDARDS

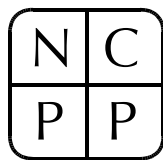
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Beginning through High School  
**LIST OF STANDARDS**

Beginning through High School  
**REPRESENTATIVE LITERATURE**

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Established by the  
NATIONAL CONFERENCE on PERCUSSION PEDAGOGY



2014

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# MARIMBA PERFORMANCE STANDARDS (MPS)

2014

by

**National Conference on Percussion Pedagogy**

May 2014

## FOREWORD

The intent of this document is to guide learners, with the aid of an accomplished professional teacher, through a series of compositions, etudes, and exercises for marimba that will increase the probability of graduating from high school with lifetime skills to participate in music as an adult. This document is written to offer advice and guidance to teachers working with percussionists in school settings, private studios, and community-based programs.

Performance on keyboard percussion is an integral part of comprehensive training of young percussionists. MPS are intended to provide incremental measurement of student progress from beginning through high school. MPS are recommended for students participating in school bands, school orchestras, school percussion ensembles and/or students involved in a full-service private setting.

We understand that some learners and/or teachers may elect to exclude keyboard percussion skills in favor of a more specialized approach to instruction. The following guidelines are recommended for teachers/students electing a comprehensive approach that 1) enhances life-long music skills, 2) develops skills necessary for participating in community or private venues during and after high school, and 3) increases the likelihood of meeting minimum college audition requirements.

MPS are suggested for learners who seek a well-rounded approach to percussion performance. Achieving minimum standards will assist in developing musicianship, pitch-reading skills, and will enable percussionists to have more choices regarding their role in music throughout life.

In order to achieve minimum skill levels, two pedagogical earmarks are suggested. 1) Teachers must establish developmentally effective means of teaching music reading through a consistent program of reading treble and bass clef from beginning through high school. 2) Teachers must establish developmentally effective means of teaching “technique” (efficient motion of a performer’s body) and maintain a consistent approach that holds learners accountable.

The levels are designed to guide a progression of learning. However, they do not necessarily correlate to a specific grade level or even a number of years of study. Further, there is no expectation your best students are currently attaining Level 6 (If your top students are performing at Level 3, then the goal becomes your top students reaching Level 4). In addition, we recognize programs will vary depending upon whether students are studying privately (and with whom), when they begin playing keyboard, in general, and marimba, specifically, and the availability of instruments for practice. Because of these variables, you should use the standards as a framework for evaluating the current level of the program and curricular planning.

## AVAILABILITY OF INSTRUMENTS

The development of keyboard percussion skills requires the availability of an instrument for practice at the student's home, with a 4.3 or 5.0 octave instrument being the most desired option. If the student is learning in a school environment, the school must have sufficient instruments that all percussionists in a class can have access to a keyboard percussion instrument at every class meeting.

## TECHNIQUE DEVELOPMENT

### 2-mallet

The development of a warm-up and technical development routine aimed at a relaxed, fluid two-mallet technique is encouraged. The practice of scale and arpeggio patterns, and experience transposing those patterns, is a time-honored and effective means to achieving automatic facility at any keyboard instrument. Among many known books designed to develop 2-mallet technique, a commonly-mentioned technique is the George Hamilton Green *Instruction Method for Xylophone* (Meredith Music), and it would be appropriate to earmark certain of these 50 exercises to correspond to the 6 levels.

### 4-mallet

Similarly, the development of a warm-up and technical development routine aimed at a relaxed, fluid four-mallet technique is encouraged. The Stevens Technique model for stroke description (double vertical, single independent, single alternating, double lateral), regardless of the chosen grip, has entered the lexicon of mallet playing sufficiently to be considered ubiquitous, and the exercises in the Stevens *Method of Movement* (KPP) are the seminal examples of that paradigm of four-mallet technique (again, irrespective of grip). Page 102 of *Method of Movement* offers a 6-stage implementation of all four techniques, and some variation of that approach would prove useful for most students.

### Roll Technique

The technique of expressing a sustained sound on the marimba, whether two-mallet or four-mallet, presents a unique set of challenges that should be addressed in a structured manner in a multi-level keyboard percussion program.

### Sight-Reading

Development of fluent sight-reading skills at any of the keyboard instruments is a desired outcome. The challenges are well known. The solution is the development of a structured set of sight-reading standards for each of the 6 levels.

## ADDITIONAL AREAS

### Composition & Improvisation

The standard on composition and improvisation is designed to encourage teachers to provide their students opportunities to explore music (and the marimba) through creative acts such as composition and improvisation. These experiences need not be complex and may reflect a wide range of musical

styles. There is no expectation that compositions/improvisations are at the same level of the works being performed. It is likely the initial efforts are likely very simple and may increase in complexity as students proceed through the levels.

### **Developing Musical Independence**

Efforts to foster musical independence are valued. To this end, teachers are encouraged to provide opportunities for students to make informed interpretive musical decisions. Students should also be engaged in self-evaluation of their performance. There are a variety of teaching approaches that may be used to develop musical independence.

## **REPRESENTATIVE LITERATURE**

Representative Literature is selected from published and readily available sources. Representative Literature serves as a guideline for private teachers, school band and orchestra directors, and others involved in hands-on preparation of young percussionists. Where appropriate, teachers may substitute pieces that are similar to pieces on the list. While Representative Literature features works for marimba, teachers and performers may wish to substitute pieces of equal level and quality written for vibraphone or xylophone.

Literature at each stage of development should be developmentally appropriate. MPS are in flux – that is, pedagogical approaches, literature and suggested outcomes will continue to evolve over time. As the area evolves, levels of expectation will change, most likely resulting in gradual improvements in performance skills.

## **LEVELS**

The **Marimba Performance Standards (MPS)** appear in six sequential levels. The intent is to guide learners, with the aid of an accomplished professional teacher, through a series of compositions, etudes, and exercises that will increase the probability of graduating from high school with lifetime skills to participate in music as an adult. At each level, teachers are encouraged to go beyond “the notes” by encouraging learners to participate in musical experiences through singing, improvising, composing, and evaluating.

## LEVEL 1

### Standards

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1. Develop a two-mallet “automatic facility” warm-up routine using a variety of scale patterns.
2. Perform 4-5 pieces from Representative Literature.\*
3. Demonstrate the ability to match pitch and sing in tune.
4. Demonstrate working knowledge of all interpretative markings on literature performed.
5. Recognize and reproduce ascending and descending pitches.
6. Perform scales/arpeggios derived from Representative Literature.
7. Identify and dissect rhythms (count out loud) inherent in Representative Literature performed.
8. Execute double vertical strokes.\*\*
9. Perform often in an appropriate environment.

\*Where representative literature is performed from a collection of pieces, student is expected to complete 60% of compositions within the collection.

\*\*At the time MPS were established, introducing **4-mallet technique** via double vertical strokes was accepted. Given the nature of the literature in LEVEL 1, an alternative method may be considered. That is, introduce **4-mallet technique** via single independent inside and outside motion. Once the motion is secure, have student play familiar two-mallet pieces using single independent inside and outside motion. Use a variety of sticking permutations.

### Representative Literature – LEVEL 1

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<i>Mallet Percussion for Young Beginners</i>	2 mallet	Randy Eyles	Meredith Music
<i>My First Book</i>	2-mallet	Nebojs Zivkovic	Gretel Verlag
<i>Bar Percussion Notebook Volume I</i>	2-3-4 mallet	Linda Pimentel	Permus
<i>“Marimba Minuet” from Seq. Studies for 4 Mallet Mar.</i>	4 mallet	Julia Gaines	Gaines

## LEVEL 2

### Standards

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1. Continue the development of a two-mallet “automatic facility” warm-up routine adding arpeggios and a variety of scale patterns.
2. Perform two to three 2-mallet pieces from Representative Literature.
3. Perform two to three 4-mallet pieces from Representative Literature.
4. Demonstrate the ability to sing the melody of any given piece performed.
5. Demonstrate working knowledge of all interpretative markings on literature performed.
6. Perform scales and arpeggios (full range of instrument) derived from Representative Literature.
7. Identify and dissect (count out loud) rhythms inherent in Representative Literature performed.
8. Execute single independent inside and outside motion holding 4 mallets.\*\*
9. Using single independent inside and outside motion holding 4 mallets, perform scales and arpeggios derived from Representative Literature.
10. Introduce additional 4-mallet stroke motions as they appear in Representative Literature. Use stroke motions in scales, arpeggios and other exercises as determined by qualified teacher.
11. Compose and improvise using marimba.
12. Perform often in an appropriate environment.

### Representative Literature – LEVEL 2

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<i>The Musical Marimbist</i>	2-mallet	Tom Morgan	CAP
<i>Funny Xylophone Bk 1</i>	2-mallet	Nebojsa Zivkovic	Gretel Verlag
<i>Childsplay</i>	4-mallet	Cherissa Legende-Vitter**	KPP
<i>Memory's Glimpse/Z'rondo</i>	4-mallet	Ginger Zyskowski**	CAP
<i>Barcelona</i>	4-mallet	Mitchell Peters	TRY Pub.
<i>Jonathan's Light</i>	4-mallet	Julie Davila	Row-loff
<i>Sea Refractions</i>	4-mallet	Mitchell Peters	TRY Pub.

\*\*Continue introduction of **4-mallet technique** via single independent inside and outside motion and/or double vertical strokes. Once the motion is secure, have student play familiar two-mallet pieces using single independent inside and outside motion. Use a variety of sticking permutations.

## LEVEL 3

### Standards

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1. Perform two to three 2-mallet pieces from Representative Literature.
2. Perform two to three 4-mallet pieces from Representative Literature.
3. Introduce additional 4-mallet stroke motions as they appear in Representative Literature. Use stroke motions in scales, arpeggios and other exercises as determined by qualified teacher.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of phrasing via acceptable and unacceptable interpretation of Representative Literature.
5. Perform scales and arpeggios (full range of instrument) derived from Representative Literature.
6. Identify and dissect (count out loud) rhythms inherent in Representative Literature performed.
7. Compose and improvise using marimba.
8. Perform often in an appropriate environment.

### Representative Literature - LEVEL 3

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<i>Furioso and Valse in Dm</i>	2-mallet	Earl Hatch – 2-mallet	Studio 4/KPP
<i>Etude 1955</i>	2-mallet	Earl Hatch 2-mallet	Studio 4/KPP
<i>Jumping Beans</i>	2-mallet	Cory Yardley	CAP
<i>Extra Spices, Please</i>	2-mallet	Josh Gottry	CAP
<i>Two Archaic Dances</i>	2-mallet	Armand Russell	Bourne
<i>Winter's End</i>	2-mallet	Tom Morgan	CAP
<i>Classic Suite for Marimba</i>	4-mallet	Ginger Zyskowski	CAP
<i>Dog Beach</i>	4-mallet	Mitchell Peters	TRY Pub.
<i>Four Central American Folk Tunes</i>	4-mallet	arr. Chenoweth	Honeyrock
<i>Impressions on Wood</i>	4-mallet	Julie Davila	Row-Loff
<i>Mexican Variations</i>	4-mallet	George Frock	Southern
<i>Of Thoughts and Thinking</i>	4-mallet	Anthony Lymon	CAP
<i>Rain Dance</i>	4-mallet	Alice Gomez	Southern
<i>Suite Mexicana</i>	4-mallet	Keith Larson	Southern
<i>Ten Short Songs for Solo Marimba</i>	4-mallet	Keith Larson	CAP
<i>Etude Op. 6, No. 10</i>	4-mallet	Clair Omar Musser	KPP
<i>Rotation #4</i>	4-mallet	Eric Sammut	KPP
<i>"Mazurka" from Album for the Young</i>	4-mallet	Tchaikovsky/Stevens	KPP
<i>Yellow After the Rain</i>	4-mallet	Mitchell Peters	TRY Pub.

## LEVEL 4

### Standards

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1. Perform two to three 2-mallet pieces from Representative Literature.
2. Perform three to four 4-mallet pieces from Representative Literature.
3. Introduce additional 4-mallet stroke motions as they appear in Representative Literature. Use stroke motions in scales, arpeggios and other exercises as determined by qualified teacher.
4. Describe and chart the form of each Representative Literature performed.
5. Perform scales and arpeggios (full range of instrument) derived from Representative Literature. 2-mallet & 4-mallet
6. Make every effort to play regularly in a percussion ensemble.
7. Demonstrate and describe knowledge of phrasing in literature performed.
8. Identify and dissect (count out loud) rhythms inherent in Representative Literature performed.
9. Compose and improvise using marimba.
10. Perform often in an appropriate environment.

### Representative Literature - LEVEL 4

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<i>A Rewarding Journey</i>	2-mallet	Kit Mills	CAP
<i>Double East</i>	2-mallet	Jon Metzger	CAP
<i>Three Moods</i>	2-mallet	Ney Rosauero	ProPercusa
<i>Anasazi</i>	2-mallet	Alice Gomez	Southern
<i>Mountain Paths (opt piano)</i>	2-mallet	Nathan Daughtrey	CAP
<i>Prelude Op. 11, #3 (G Major)</i>	2-mallet	Clair O. Musser	Studio 4/KPP
<i>Marimba Vignettes</i>	4-mallet	Keith Larson	CAP
<i>Irrelevant</i>	4-mallet	Josh Gottry	CAP
<i>Uma Para Ela</i>	4-mallet	Matthew Moore	CAP
<i>Michi</i>	4-mallet	Keiko Abe	Colla Voce
<i>Three Preludes</i>	4-mallet	Ney Rosauero	ProPercussa
<i>Hymn for an Angelic Child</i>	4-mallet	Gus Burghdorf	CAP
<i>Dance of the Witches</i>	4-mallet	Eckhard Kopetzki	conTakt Musikverlag
<i>Rotation #2</i>	4-mallet	Eric Sammut	KPP
<i>Restless</i>	4-mallet	Rich O'Meara	KPP
<i>True Lover's Farewell</i>	4-mallet	Steven Gwin	Southern



## LEVEL 5

### Standards

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1. Perform one to two 2-mallet pieces from Representative Literature.
2. Perform three to four 4-mallet pieces from Representative Literature.
3. Present a demonstration of marimba technique to a group of at least 6 people.
4. Perform scales and arpeggios (full range of instrument) derived from Representative Literature.
5. Make every effort to play regularly in a percussion ensemble.
6. Compose and improvise using marimba.
7. Perform often in an appropriate environment.

### Representative Literature - LEVEL 5

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<i>Etude Op. 6, #2 (A-Flat Major)</i>	2-mallet	Clair O. Musser	Studio 4/KPP
<i>In Motion</i>	2-mallet	Brian Schober	Honeyrock
<i>Step-To-Step</i>	2-mallet	Jon Metzger	CAP
<i>Frogs</i>	4-mallet	K. Abe	Studio 4/KPP
<i>Parody</i>	4-mallet	Jesse Maonkman	Tapspace
<i>Minotaurus</i>	4-mallet	Leander Kaiser	CAP
<i>Una Limosnita por Amor de Dios</i>	4-mallet	Barrios/Daughtrey	CAP
<i>"Prelude" from Suite #1 for Cello</i> (in Four-Mallet Marimba Playing)	4-mallet	Bach/Zeltsman	Hal Leonard
<i>Mexican Dance #2</i>	4-mallet	Gordon Stout	Studio 4/KPP

## LEVEL 6

### Standards

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1. Perform one to two 2-mallet pieces from Representative Literature.
2. Perform two to three 4-mallet pieces from Representative Literature.
3. Make every effort to play regularly in a percussion ensemble.
4. Compose and improvise using marimba.
5. Perform often in an appropriate environment, including recital settings. Literature can be taken from student's complete repertoire if performing a solo recital.

### Representative Literature - LEVEL 6

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<i>Zarabanda(w/piano or band)</i>	2-mallet	Joseph Turrin	CAP
<i>Prism</i>	2-mallet	Keiko Abe	Xebec
<i>White Knuckle Stroll</i>	2-mallet	Casey Cangelosi	Casey Cangelosi
<i>Black Sphinx</i>	4-mallet	Leander Kaiser	Studio 4/KPP
<i>Land</i>	4-mallet	Takatsugu Muramatsu	Beurskens Muziekuitgeverij
<i>Rumble Strips</i>	4-mallet	Gordon Stout	KPP
<i>Dream of the Cherry Blossoms</i>	4-mallet	Keiko Abe	Zimmermann
<i>Apocalyptic Etude</i>	4-mallet	David Hall	CAP
<i>Virginia Tate</i>	4-mallet	Paul Smadbeck	KPP
<i>Astral Dance</i>	4-mallet	Gordon Stout	KPP
<i>My Lady White*</i>	4-mallet	David Maslanka	KPP

\*Performing *Mvts. I & III* only would be at Level 4

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