

Breathing Basics (B²)

Unlike breathing while at rest, marching band requires us to use our air to sustain physical activity and to produce a characteristic tone on an instrument. **This extreme use of our airflow is a skill that must be practiced!**

To Put it Simply

Air → Vibration → Sound

Or, more specifically:

More Air → More Vibration → More Sound

Less Air → Less Vibration → Less Sound

Breathing Form

- Breathing begins with exhalation
- The shape of the mouth should be “Oh” or “Woah”
- Effort should be made to breathe evenly over the entire count
- Air should be moving at all times (in or out – never holding)
- Change of direction should be as smooth as possible (from in to out (articulations) and from out to in (releases))

Key Definitions

Therapies: Resistance training activities that encourage the abdominal muscles to work harder, resulting in better use of these muscles during normal breathing. Therapies work by building your awareness of specific muscles and physical processes.

Super Therapies: Training activities meant to stretch and develop specific muscles involved in the breathing process. Super Therapies work by building and strengthening muscles.

Air Play: Performing a musical segment by blowing air through your instrument and moving your fingers and tongue as directed by the music. The resulting sound should be air patterns moving through your instrument instead of tone.

Wind Patterns: Performing a musical segment using only your breath and tongue. (No instrument sound is created)