

# AUDIENCE ETIQUETTE

Marching shows have become more complex and even more competitive throughout the years. One thing that hasn't evolved, though, is how people behave at contests. Some may have been guilty of being inconsiderate to the performing bands and other spectators. Most of the time this occurs only because people are not aware of the etiquette of marching competitions or concerts. It is always best to know before you go!

## DO

**Support ALL bands & students.** The students, staff, and directors on the field have worked incredibly hard to perform for you – just as our students, staff, and directors.

**Observe the whole show or concert.** By this we mean watch different elements. Your interest may be percussion, but you might be surprised with the rifle work the guard is doing, too. Often several things are going on at once in a given performance and you may watch the same show several times and see something new on each occasion.

**Respect others.** Please be courteous and applaud at the end of solos, major drill moves and at the end of musical selections. Also, don't be afraid to tell a band member or band parent from another band that they did a nice job, even if you don't know them. You would be surprised how good it makes someone feel if they are told that you liked their show.

**Show up early.** The best seat in the stadium for a band contest is on or near the 50 yard line and as high up as you can get. Parents from the same band are encouraged to sit together to better rally support.

## DON'T

**Talk.** It is important to realize that although it is fun to socialize with friends and family during a contest, it is rather rude to make a lot of noise during any performance including marching band performances. To put this in perspective, you wouldn't normally openly discuss what kind of week you had with a friend at a theater during a movie. Marching band contests are no different. Granted, the venues are generally outside, but the sound of voices tends to travel pretty far in the fall air and it is disruptive to someone who may want to hear a particular performance. You might be surprised what you are missing if you paid attention to the performance on the field.

**Move around.** NEVER get up and leave or enter the stadium during a band's performance. Something else you should avoid is any unnecessary movement during performances. This includes, getting up to run to the refreshment stand or the restroom during a performance. There is time for that in between every performance and each show is only about 8 minutes long.

**Get wrapped up in the term "competition."** For what it is worth, most band members call contests "shows," because that is what they are. Scores are pretty arbitrary and can vary quite a bit from show to show. The bottom line is that everyone in every band is literally trying to perform to the best of their ability and each ensemble has something to offer the spectator. Everyone loves to win, but if the main purpose of a band becomes winning every show, they are missing the point.

**Make negative comments about other bands.** For instance, if you don't like a particular band's uniform, be happy in the fact that you don't have to wear it and move on. We all may have sat in the audience at many shows and listened to people make derogatory comments about other bands, band personnel, or students. If you have nothing nice to say, please be quiet. You never know who could be sitting close by listening.

**Obstruct the view of others.** Please avoid standing in front of people trying to watch the show. If you have a banner you wish to display, please do so from the top of the stands or in some other fashion that doesn't block the field of vision of the other spectators. You may hold up banners and signs while we are entering the field, before the drum major salute, and after the show.

**Boo other bands or the judges.** We all have been at shows where you did not agree with the results, but unfortunately, those things happen from time to time.

We hope these tips will help make the experience of watching your favorite band (and all others for that matter) a more enjoyable experience.