GOLDEN EMPIRE

DRUM & BUGLE CORPS

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2017 Front Ensemble Audition Packet

Photo © Charles Frey

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Dear Applicant,

Congratulations on taking your first step towards being a part of the **Golden Empire Drum & Bugle Corps** for 2017! I'm **very excited** that you want to join the corps, and I hope your audition experience is one that is informative, challenging, and ultimately positive!

What this packet IS:

The following audition packet will provide you with some **preliminary info** and/or **exercises** that will help you prepare for the workshop/auditions that will take place soon. Some of these exercises will be used all season, and others may only be used as supplemental material. You should **become familiar with the material** but be ready for additional info at the workshop.

What this packet is NOT:

This packet is **not a comprehensive collection** of the technique program you will be learning this season. We will supplement this with more **advanced exercises** and of course a wealth of practical **hands-on training** throughout the season. We don't expect you to be able to perform this material perfectly at auditions. Drum corps is all about **working hard** to be the best we can be…and that is an ongoing process.

Next steps:

- Fill out the interest form at geperformingarts.org/join if you haven't already.
- Download & review the audition packet below for your section and start to prepare for auditions.
- Register for camp at geperformingarts.org/register
- Check geperformingarts.org for additional info, FAQs, and any updates.
- Prepare to bring your $40 audition fee to camp.
- Attend camp ready to learn, work hard, and have fun!

Thanks again for taking the first step towards a **challenging** and **rewarding** experience! I look forward to meeting you in person at auditions. If you have any questions at all please contact me personally at theasley@geperformingarts.org or call 661-900-0989.

Sincerely,

Tim Heasley – Director, Golden Empire Drum & Bugle Corps

Thank you for your interest in the Golden Empire Drum & Bugle Corps! This audition packet will contain a unified technique breakdown and basic warm-ups that you will need to be successful for your audition. Once again, thanks for your interest and BEST OF LUCK!

–GE Percussion Staff

Things to have ready/bring for auditions:

- Audition Packet
- Water Jug
- OPEN MIND

Recommended materials:

- Sticks/mallets
- Drum pads
- Three ring binder w/ sheet protectors
- Pencil

What we are looking for in a prospective member of Golden Empire:

- Sound Quality
- Timing
- Technique
- Musicianship
- Attitude
- Responsibility
- Eagerness to Learn
- Good Team Player

Not only do we look for amazing percussionists, but most importantly we look for great people to be around who are ready to learn, work hard, and have an open mind to what the activity may entail.

Your position in this ensemble will be evaluated by how well you are prepared with the material in this packet in addition to your ability to pick up new material in a timely fashion.

If you have questions about any of the content in this packet, or if there is anything that you need to make the staff aware of before auditions, please do not hesitate to contact:

Dave Ellis – daviddrums@aol.com

The Process

The audition will be broken down into two parts:

1. Ensemble performance
    - In the ensemble environment, we will be looking for your ability to blend, balance, and adapt.
2. Individual evaluation
    - **Have 90-180 seconds of solo material prepared to play!** This can be a solo piece or show music that display technical training and musicality. You will be evaluated individually on basic skill sets that are expected from a Golden Empire member on your particular instrument.

<u>Suggestions:</u>

Preparation

- Work until you are familiar and comfortable with all of the audition material.
- Use a metronome.
- Record yourself to better evaluate your own playing.

Audition

- Keep in mind that you are auditioning at all times. Be professional.
- Be sure to ask questions if you are confused about anything you are being asked to play.
- Stay mentally engaged throughout the ENTIRE process.

Dynamics:

This will be the dynamic specifications and height system that we as a staff have established and will be implementing this season at GE:

pp **= 1”**

p **= 2”**

mp **= 4”**

mf **= 6”**

f **= 9”**

ff **= 12”**

fff **= 15” (vertical)**

NOTE:

After 12’’, start incorporating arm with the vertical motion. Arm should be in addition to a full wrist turn, not replacing the wrist turn.

TECHNIQUE

Our default feet position is shoulder width apart, with knees slightly bent. Stand up straight, no slouching and keep your chin up. For the most part, our bodies are parallel to our instruments.

Set position: Mallets are over the correct note/s and at the correct height. Everyone will follow the section leader so that we all move to "set" at the same time.

Relax: Mallets are at your side or in the mallet bags, not making noise.

Prep: This is how we "tap ourselves off." One person will give two preps followed by the entire group giving two preps before an entrance.

Piston stroke: the type of vertical motion where the starting and stopping position are the same, no wasted or extra motion. The mallet starts in Set position, moves straight down into the bar, and then rebounds straight up to the next set position. This occurs all in one motion. The downward and upward VELOCITY should be quick. If done correctly, there should be a "wait" at the top of the stroke where the mallet head doesn't move until the next stroke.

Legato stroke: another type of vertical motion. The difference between legato and piston is the legato stroke has a relaxed velocity and the mallet takes the full duration of the note to rebound. The mallet never stops moving. Downward velocity should still be quick.

Shift: the horizontal motion from one note to another. To be efficient, shifting should occur during the upstroke.

Pulsing: As a means of communicating tempo between members, we will "groove" to the beat, either on the quarter note or the half note.

Vibraphones: your right toes will be on the pedal. This is to ensure that your right foot (heel) will provide you balance as you move behind your keyboard with your left foot.

RHYTHM SECTION (Synthesizers/Rack/Drumset/bass guitar)

Same posture as mallet players, chin up. Have warm ups memorized and be able to maintain tempo. Each instrument should have a consistent sound. Always use utmost care with our equipment.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR MALLETS

In order to maximize efficiency in our technique, we will assign different muscle groups specific responsibilities suited for their natures. Larger muscles are geared toward large, slow motions. Smaller muscle groupings are for small, fast motions.

Here is a general outline. The muscle groupings are listed in order from largest to smallest.

1. Your legs and feet control the left and right motion.
2. The arms move the hands horizontally: forward and backwards, left and right. When moving forward and backwards, your arms may move vertically slightly to make up for the height difference between accidentals and naturals.
3. The wrist controls the up and down acceleration of the mallet. Try to keep the wrist in the same angle to achieve a consistent sound and stroke.
4. The fingers sometimes help the wrist by making slight adjustments to the mallet acceleration. Mallet players should practice first without fingers.

   The main responsibility of grouping 1 and 2 is horizontal motion.
   The main responsibility of grouping 3 and 4 is vertical motion.

Sometimes smaller muscles can help out with the tasks of larger muscles. Larger muscles should NOT help with the tasks of smaller muscles. For example, you shouldn't take small steps to the left or to the right if you can easily just shift your arms.

TWO MALLET GRIP AND FOUR MALLET GRIP

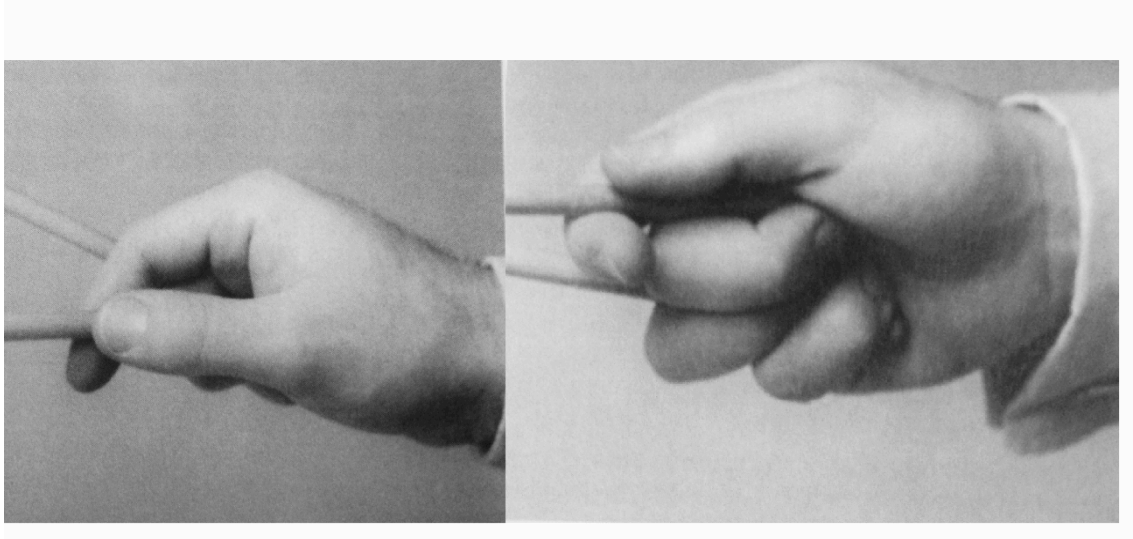
The two-mallet grip

Wrap your pinky, ring, and middle finger around the mallet so roughly an inch of the shaft sticks out from the bottom of your hand. The tips of your pinky and ring finger should maintain contact with the center of your palm. The mallet should make contact with the index finger on the joint closest to your finger tip. The thumb holds the mallet in place against the index finger. This is also known as the “t-grip” for the t shape that is formed between the thumb and index finger. Make sure your index finger is curved and relaxed; your thumb is flat on the mallet and fully extended.

Stevens Grip

The outer mallet is held with the pinky and ring finger. Snuggly wrap these fingers around the base of the mallet. Less than an inch of the shaft should stick out from the pinky and should not extend past the bottom of your hand. When this is done correctly, the outer mallet will be angled up slightly. For the inner mallet: start by sticking the shaft directly into the center of your palm, at the edge of your thumb fat. Bend your middle finger under the inner mallet and place the tip of your finger above the tip of the mallet. The index finger gently curves in so that the inner mallet can rest on the first joint. The section between the tip of the thumb and the first joint, or the **pad** of the thumb should be flat on the mallet. When held correctly, the thumb and index finger should be in a capital “D” shape.

Your forearm should line up in between your mallets for most situations.

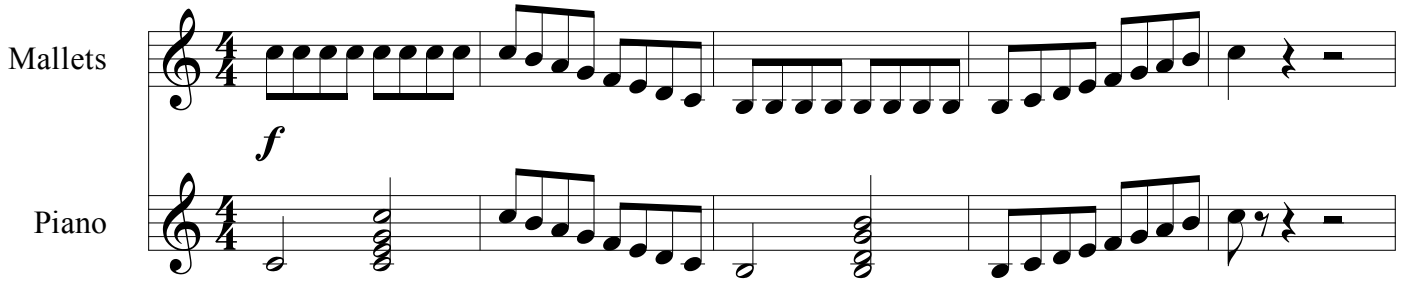


Score

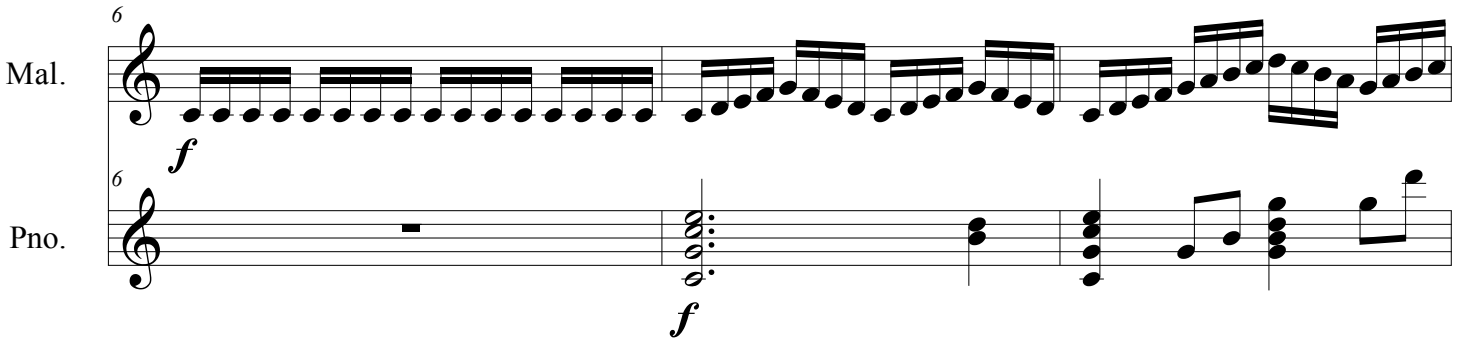
Singles and Scales

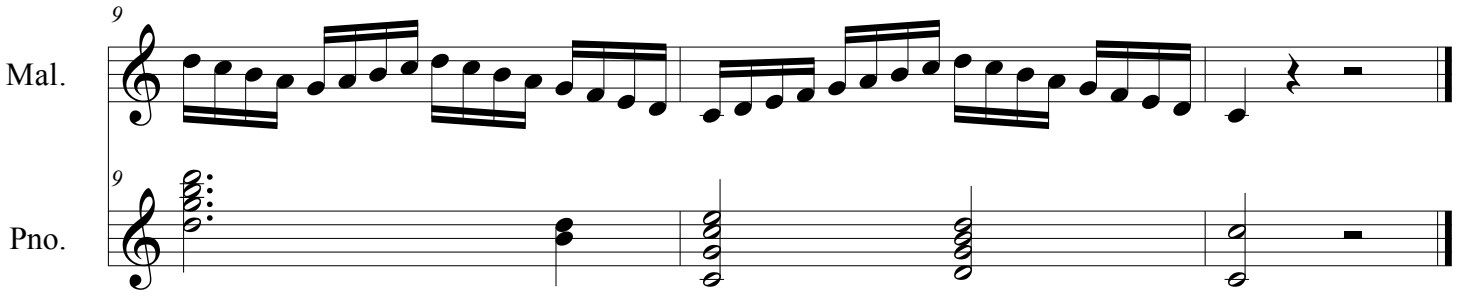
Play thru all major keys

Singles



Green Scales





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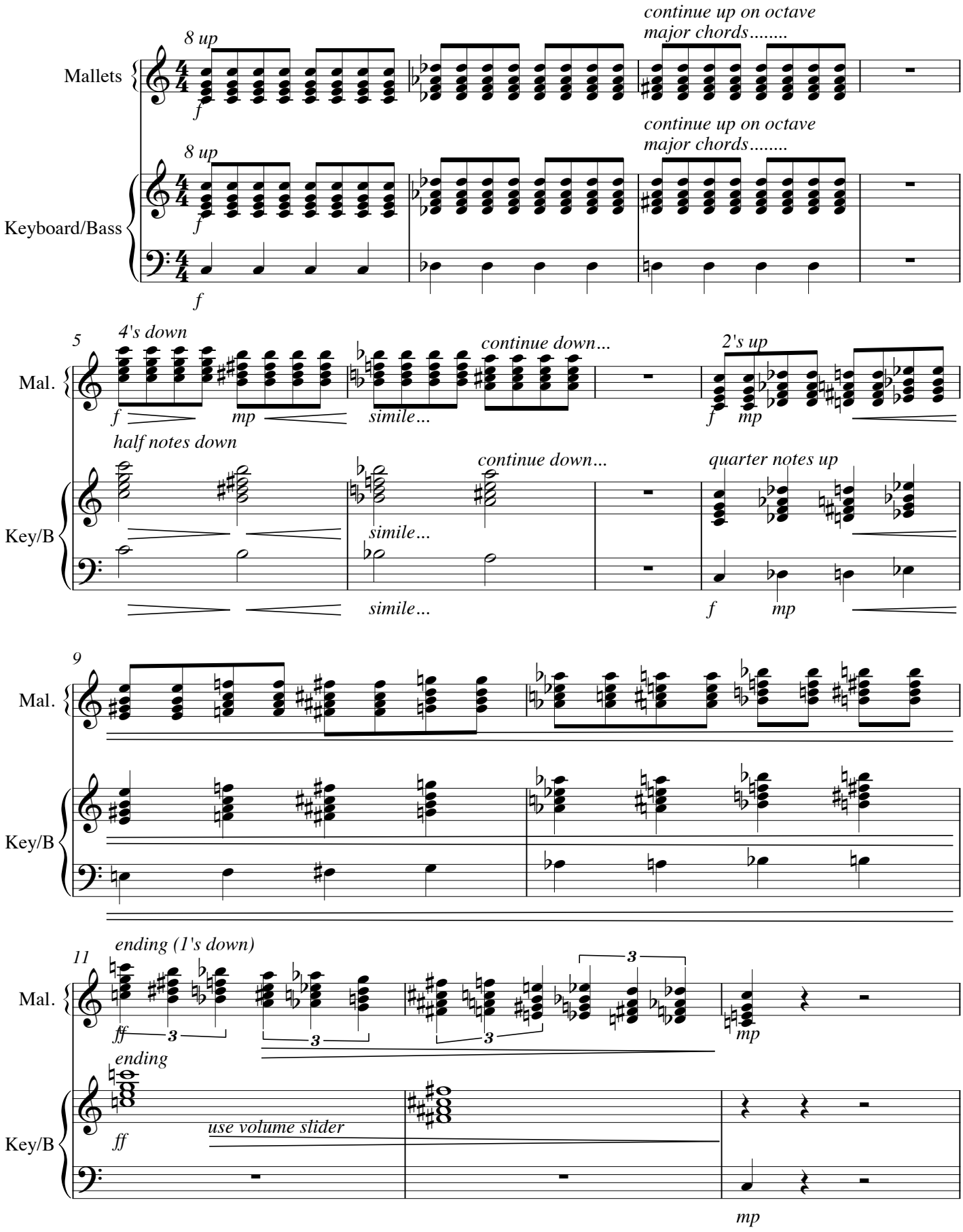
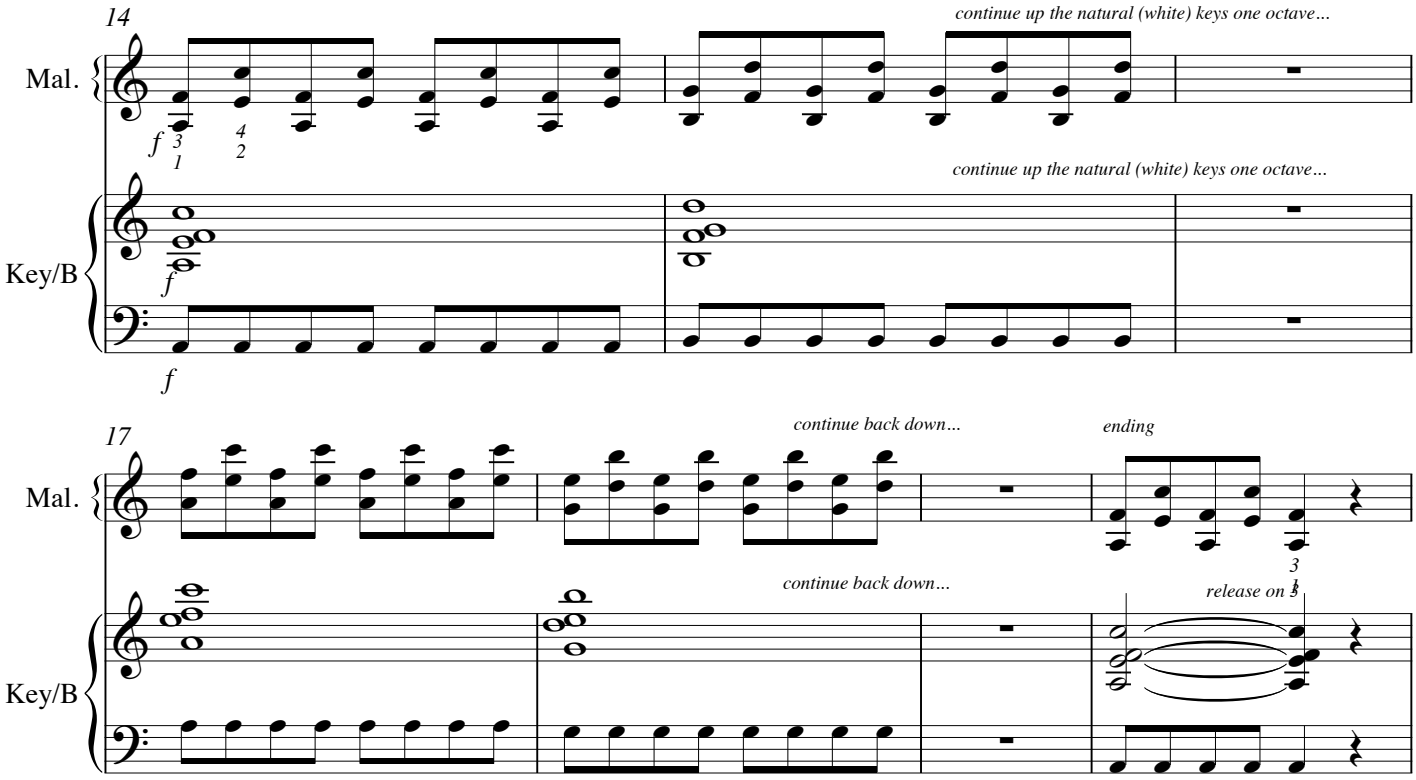
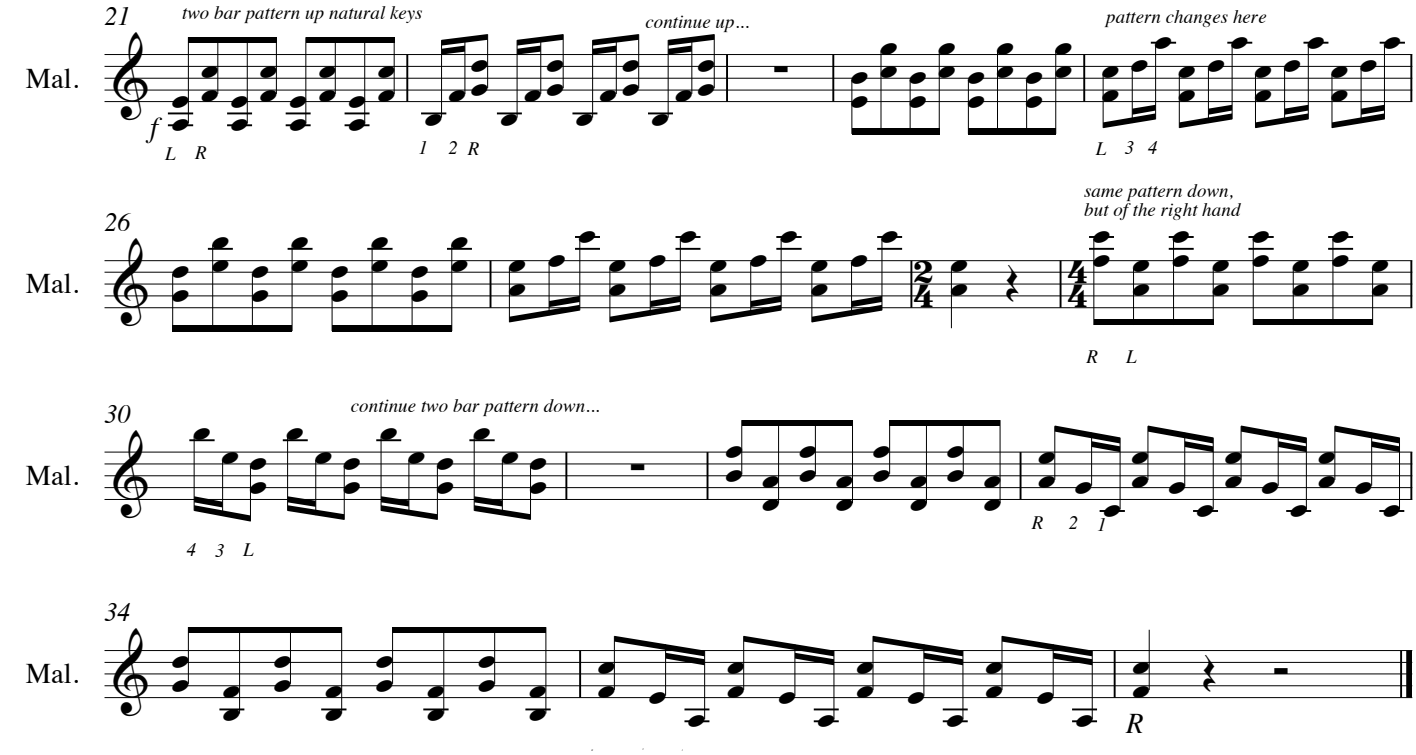
Block Chords- Major Chords

(8-4-2-1)



Alternating Strokes

Be Prepared to play this version as written (13-24) or 14-23



Laterals