

Core Instrumentation of the “Typical” American Community Concert Band: An Approach to Scoring Guidelines for Composers and Arrangers

Findings based on a 2012 Online survey
by Composer/Conductor
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1 Approach

In early 2012, after extensive observation of online email threads around the practical challenges of presenting concerts with community bands, the author decided to create and run an open online survey with the goal of gathering a sampling of reasonably reliable statistical information about the “typical” core instrumentation of a community concert band in the US.

The definition of community concert band used here begins by distinguishing it from a full-instrumentation concert band or symphonic wind ensemble having all the “outlier/outsize” instruments and generally carrying only one (or perhaps at most two) players per part except for Bb clarinets. In the US these full bands are almost exclusively conservatory, university, college, community college, or advanced/large high school ensembles. Few professional concert bands exist in the US. The definition of community concert band here also excludes marching bands—school, municipal, or private—as these too have a separate and distinct instrumentation profile.

Although there are some community concert bands that have fairly full instrumentation, initial observations from the survey results confirm that most, if not all, have what could be characterized as significant gaps by comparison with the “full” symphonic wind ensemble. They also often have much heavier doublings in certain common sections such as flutes and clarinets.

GOAL: The intention of the survey was to draw a rough line around a “safe” core scoring, and additionally to define tentative guidelines for the inclusion of instruments outside that line, for composers and arrangers who wish to serve the community concert band population with music targeted to such groups’ strengths, not their weaknesses. For leavening and to put things in context, a small number of additional questions targeted such things as typical overall group size, average player attendance at rehearsals and concerts, average audience size, general skill levels, and general audience and player tolerance of—and aptitude for—more modern styles of music and their special challenges.

2 Survey Population

Participants were invited through online postings, through the Yahoo Community-Music list (c-m@yahoogroups.com), the Yahoo Orchestralist (Orchestralist@yahoogroups.com, since some people there follow both) and CBDNA postings. These postings requested that only conductors of community

bands complete it, but nothing in the nature of the survey technology could prevent inappropriate use by other types of responders. Those who participated were self-selecting and self-policing. However, the results give statistical support for the conclusion that generally only the appropriate people's/groups' inputs were gathered. 151 people completed the survey fully.

3 Survey Instrument

The survey instrument was crafted in collaboration with conductor David Bailey, a regular poster to both c-m list and orchestralist. I drafted the questions and he then provided helpful edits, revisions, refinements, and a few additions. (In retrospect it can be reported that a number of responders also provided suggestions for improvement and clarification, but due to the technical data structure on the survey site the author could not incorporate these once the survey was deployed, as this would have required jettisoning all previous answers to a question before changing it. This makes sense if one thinks about it—consider the abuse that would be possible in a political survey if one could change the question after recording the answers.) The survey consisted of 91 questions. It was designed to take no more than about 10 minutes to fill out, plus any added time for providing extensive free-text optional comments on certain selected topics.

The survey included the following sections:

- Band Size/Attendance
- Audience
- Styles of Music
- Winds
- Brass
- Percussion
- Outliers
- Cross-cues
- Opinions

For outsize instruments and those that are less common (per the author's prior understanding), questions were provided to gather opinions on whether to include them, include them but make them doubling-only parts and/or cross-cue them in other instruments' parts, and if cross-cued, what instruments to consider using for the cue.

The survey was designed and structured to be anonymous. Responders were given the option to provide group name and contact information, to facilitate sharing of results, but were not required to. None of that information will be made public.

The survey was built and posted on the eSurveyspro.com free survey website, which provides per-question statistical summary functionality, but offers no way to share the results online directly with responders. Therefore the author will share .pdfs of screenshots of the raw results by email upon request to dayshalomov@earthlink.net.

4 Assumptions

- Responders are assumed to be conductors of community concert bands in the US as defined above.

- Responses are assumed to be candid and accurate.
- It is assumed that there were no duplicate responses for the same band.
- The sample is assumed to be roughly representative of the population of community concert bands across the US.
- Responding bands are assumed to be reasonably well distributed geographically, both across the US and between larger and smaller urban areas.
- The population to which the survey was addressed is assumed to be groups that are largely community-based (or college-community based) and avocational, rather than purely and formally educational in purpose, and whose budget is typically based on general community and member support rather than in-house institutional support.

5 Caveats and Limitations

- The population of responders is likely to be skewed slightly towards those with a little extra time on their hands to fill out a survey.
- The population of responders is also likely to be slightly skewed towards those with strong opinions about the topic at hand, who would thus be more motivated to respond.
- Given that there are several thousands of community concert bands in the US alone, the sample might not, strictly speaking, be considered statistically significant. But it is at least non-trivial.
- No geographic or demographic weighting of the response population was performed, that is, the survey did not determine where most responders were located nor whether they were in larger or smaller urban centers. Thus even geographic distribution of the sample cannot be proven.

6 Empirical Results by Section

- Where responders entered numerical ranges (audience size, rehearsal attendance), the mean of their range was used for calculating rough averages.
- For audience size, outlier numbers for special concerts (e.g., small ones at rest homes, huge ones at patriotic/fireworks events) were discarded, and only numbers for “normal/average size” concerts were used.
- In summarizing the results, rather than give the full breakdown of percentages for every listed answer, which can be viewed in the actual results screens/graphics (available from the author on request), in the interests of simplicity and ease of understanding, the author has chosen to list only what he considers significant percentages here.
- Percentages are rounded up or down to the nearest integer. Percentages near or below 1% were generally ignored/discarded
- Percentages given are based on the number of people responding to that question; not all respondents responded to all questions, as some were optional. Where only a very small proportion of the overall survey population responded, certain answers were discarded, assuming the sample for that question to be nonsignificant and thus not to have elicited meaningful results.
- Where there is an obvious trend or dominant response results may be characterized using these general terms: Most, Many, Some, Few, (None).

Band Size/Attendance	
Players typically at a rehearsal	46 av., range 30-85, outlier 100
Players at a typical concert	50 av., range 35-90, outlier 110
Audience	
Audience members at a typical concert	No typical #, 245 average, Outliers at 1100, special outdoor events in the thousands, rest home type concerts av. 20
Quality/competence of your band players	Many (41%) Good or Very Good
Styles of Music	
Band handles music in a single quick uneven meter	Most: Decently (25%), Well (37%), Extra Rehearsal (30%)
Band handles music in quickly changing uneven meters	Most: Extra Rehearsal (35%), Decently (32%), Well (21%)
Band handles music in distant key signatures	Most: Decently (45%), Extra Rehearsal (28%)
Band handles music in odd scales and modes	Most: Decently (38%), Extra Rehearsal (28%)
Band handles dissonant, "modern-sounding" music	Many: Decently (38%), but spread from Reluctantly to Well
Band handles music with exposed individual parts	Most: Decently (42%), Well (33%), Extra Rehearsal (22%)
Receptivity of audience to dissonant or "modern-sounding" pieces	Even distribution across Resistant, Neutral, Somewhat Receptive
Winds	
Separate Piccolo players	Most: 1 or 0
Flute players	fairly even distribution from 2 to 10+; more have 6
Solo flutist?	Most: Yes
Flutists doubling piccolo	Most: 1 to 3
Flutists own/play Alto Flute	No 66% , Yes 33%
Oboe players	2 - 40%, 1 - 25% 1, 0 -16%
Solo oboist	Yes 65%

English Horn players	0 - 83%, 1 - 17%
Oboists own/play English Horn	0 - 50%, 1 - 42%
<i>Ab</i> Sopranino Clarinet players	All: 0 (a few exceptions)
Separate <i>Eb</i> Clarinet players	0 - 63%, 1 - 35%
<i>Bb</i> Clarinet players	Many (33%) more than 10; the rest an even distribution from 4 to 10
Solo <i>Bb</i> Clarinet	Yes 91%
<i>Bb</i> Clarinet player doubles on <i>Eb</i> Clarinet	Yes 60%, No 40%
<i>Bb</i> Clarinets, handle <i>divisi</i>	Well 51%, Decently 35%
<i>Eb</i> Alto Clarinet players	0 - 75%, 1 - 22%
<i>Bb</i> Bass Clarinet players	1 - 50%, 2 - 31%
Band has Bass Clarinet (instrument)	Player's 50%, Band's 41%
Bass Clarinet has low concert C	Yes 58%
Bass Clarinet has low concert <i>Bb</i>	No 65%
Separate <i>Eb</i> Contra-Alto Clarinet players	0 - 86%, 1 - 14%
Band has Contra-Alto Clarinet (instrument)	Player's 12%, Band's 24%
Separate <i>BBb</i> Contra-Bass Clarinet players	0 - 87%, 1 - 13%
Band has Contra-Bass Clarinet (instrument)	Player's 11%, Band's 22%
Bassoon players	1 - 34%, 2 - 30%, 0 - 23%
Separate Contrabassoon players	0 - 93%
Separate <i>Bb</i> Soprano Saxophone players	0 - 78%, 1 - 19%
<i>Eb</i> Alto Saxophone players	Even distribution across 2 (27%), 3 (24%), 4 (22%); few have 5 or 6
Solo <i>Eb</i> Alto Saxophone	Yes 78%
Alto Saxophonist doubles on Soprano Sax	Yes 81%
<i>Bb</i> Tenor Saxophone players	Even distribution across 1 (40%), 2 (39%); 14% have 3
<i>Eb</i> Baritone Saxophone players	1 - 75%, 2 - 17%

Bass Saxophone players	0 - 93%
French Horn in F players	Nice distribution curve from 1 (5%) up to 4 (19%) and back down to 8 (5%)
Solo French Horn player	Yes 76%
E _b Alto Horn players	0 - 90%
E _b Mellophone players	0 - 97%
Brass	
Distinguish between Cornet and Trumpet parts	No 71%
[IF NOT] How many B _b Cornet/Trumpet players?	Most: between 5 and 8, 15% more than 10
[IF SO] How many B _b Cornet players?	Many (42%) 0; the rest spread from 2 to 6
[IF SO] How many B _b Trumpet players?	0 - 32%, 2 - 24%; the rest spread from 2 to more than 6
Tenor Trombone players	Nice curve from 2 (16%) up to 4 (26%) back down to 6 (14%)
Bass Trombone players	0 - 24%, 1 - 47%, 2 - 24%
Bass Trombone players having E _b extension	Yes 46%, No 54%
Euphonium players	Skewed curve from 0 (19%) up to 2 (32%) back down to 4 (12%)
Baritone players	Most: 0 (44%), 1 - 26%, 2 - 22%
Tuba players	Spiking curve from 1 (16%) up to 2 (33%) gradually back down to 6 (4%)
Keys/sizes of tuba played	Most: BB _b Contrabass (57%); CC Contrabass 19%. E _b bass 19%, F bass 5%
Sousaphone players	Most: 0 (88%)
Band <i>has</i> a Tuba	BB _b Contrabass 22%, Sousaphone 12%, No 12%, scattering of others. ADDITIONAL: Player owns 39%
Percussion	
Separate timpanist	Yes 50%, No 50%
Number of pedal timpani	0 - 12%, the rest a lopsided curve from 2 (12%) up to 4 (45%) back down to 5 (8%)
Number of hand-tuned timpani	Most: 0 (86%)

Number of percussionists	Nice curve from 1 (2%) up to 5 (26%) back down to 8 (3%)
Number of percussionists who play (pitched) mallets	Nice curve from 0 (8%) up to 2 (28%) back down to 5 (5%)
Number of percussionists who play timpani	Nice curve from 0 (8%) up to 2 (35%) back down to 5 (5%)
Number of percussionists who play drum set	Nice curve from 0 (4%) up to 2 (39%) back down to 4 (7%)
Percentage of 136 respondents whose band has or has access to each specific percussion instrument	Could be used as the odds that you will find this in a community concert band. Boldfaced instruments are generally 50% or above.
Bell Lyra (A to a)	38%
Orchestra Bells/ Glockenspiel (G to c)	69%
Xylophone	73%
Vibraphone	49%
Marimba	52%
--- 4 octave?	29%
--- 5 octave?	21%
Tubular Chimes	75%
Antique Cymbals (pitched)	11%
Celeste	9%
High (thin) Snare Drum	32%
Snare Drum	95%
Field Drum (snares)	57%
Tenor Drum	49%
Small Marching Bass Drum	40%
Concert Bass Drum (large)	82%
Tom Toms	70%
Roto-Toms	18%
Timbales	40%
Bongos	71%
Conga drums	46%
Drum Set (jazz or rock)	88%
Tambourine	88%
Temple Blocks	82%
Wood block	92%
Claves	87%
Wood slit drums	7%
Suspended cymbal	90%
Hi-hat (sock) cymbal	85%
Sizzle Cymbal	29%
Small tam tam (flat gong)	27%
Large tam tam (flat gong)	49%
Triangle	96%
Finger Cymbals	69%
Cowbell	90%

Sleighbells	93%
Castanets	84%
Guiro (reco-reco)	66%
Maracas	87%
Casaba/shaker	69%
Mark Tree (Metal tube wind chime rack, horizontal row)	57%
Bell Tree	27%
Metal tube wind chime (simple, vertical/clustered)	13%
Bamboo wind chime tree (simple)	1%
Glass wind chime tree (simple)	2%
Bull-Roarer	3%
Rain stick	39%
Brake drum(s)	49%
Police/referee's whistle	74%
Sandpaper	63%
Ratchet	73%
Slapstick	79%
Cork-pop	13%
Vibra-Slap	53%
Klaxon horn	20%
Lion Roar	4%
Wind Machine	8%
Anvil	34%
Limbic Creel (This was a test for candid responses. It is a Bajoran instrument from Star Trek)	0%
Sampler/synth keyboard player	Yes 72%, No 28%
Band has a sampler/synth keyboard	Yes 61%, No 39%
Consider using a sampler/synth keyboard to substitute for mallet/keyboard percussion	Yes 26%, No 32%, Maybe 42%,
String bass players	Most (65%) 0, 1 - 32%
String Bass has low C extension	Most No (85%)
Harpist	Most No (85%)
OPINION: Instruments to omit when scoring for typical amateur community band	Most mentioned: Alto Flute, <i>Eb</i> Clarinet, <i>Ab</i> Sopranino Clarinet, <i>Eb</i> Alto Clarinet, <i>Eb</i> Contra-Alto Clarinet, <i>BBb</i> Contrabass Clarinet, Contrabassoon, <i>Bb</i> Soprano Saxophone, Bass Saxophone, Harp Less mentioned: Oboe, Second oboe, Bassoon, second Bassoon, <i>Eb</i> Horn, Marimba, Vibraphone, Exotic Percussion, Horn 3 and 4, Piccolo Trumpet, Fluegelhorn, Mellophone, Alto Horn, String Bass, large percussion section,
OPINION: Instruments that should always have	Most checked: Oboe, English Horn, <i>Eb</i> Clarinet,

exposed lines cross-cued	Alto Clarinet, Contra-Alto Clarinet, Contrabass Clarinet, Bassoon
OPINION: Nonstandard instruments to consider including	Most votes (7 of 15) went to flugelhorn
OPINION: Best cue substitute for solo Oboe	Most: Muted trumpet (41%); Bb Clarinet (29%) [Not among question choices but mentioned in Comments: Flute, Bb Soprano Sax, Alto Sax]
OPINION: Best cue substitute for solo English Horn	Most: Alto Saxophone (79%) [Not among question choices but mentioned in Comments: Oboe, Bb Soprano Sax]
OPINION: Best cue substitute for solo Bassoon	Most: Bass Clarinet (54%), Muted Trombone 25%, Baritone Saxophone 20% [Not among question choices but mentioned in Comments: Tenor Saxophone, Eb Contra-alto clarinet, Euphonium]
OPINION: Best full-range cue substitute for solo Eb Alto Clarinet	Most: Tenor Saxophone (65%), Bass Clarinet 32% [Not among question choices but mentioned in Comments: 3rd Bb Clarinet]
OPINION: Best cue substitute for solo Eb Contra-Alto Clarinet	Most: Tuba (88%)
OPINION: Best cue substitute for solo BBb Contra-Bass Clarinet	Most: Tuba (88%)
OPINION: Best cue substitute for solo F French Horn	Most: Euphonium/Baritone (73%), Tenor Saxophone 17% [Not among question choices but mentioned in Comments: Alto saxophone, Trombone for Horn 3 and 4]

7 General Conclusions

The following recommendations are the opinions of the author, based on his interpretation of the survey results as tempered by his own experience and bias. These may be open to challenge, but are offered as an initial tentative *practical* guide.

EXCEPTION: It should hardly need noting that if you are engaged to write music for a specific group to perform, naturally you should write for exactly the complement that the group can reliably field at both rehearsals and concerts. You should also attend some rehearsals and concerts in advance to gauge the strengths and weaknesses of the group and of the individual players, and then write to their strengths. *However*, if you want what you write to be useful across the spectrum of community bands, you may want to consider the guidelines provided here as well, particularly where they would *reduce* the scope of your instrumentation.

The conclusions are summarized in three formats.

- A walkthrough of all the types of instruments mentioned in the survey, with generalized results and guidelines.
- A conservative listing of a “safe” core instrumentation, with minimal or no cross-cues or optional instruments.
- A more inclusive listing of a “reasonably safe” core instrumentation that is augmented by the inclusion of other optional and/or doubling/cued instruments.

7.1 Rough Scoring Guidelines

The composer or arranger who wants to provide scores with “safe/reliable” scoring for the typical US community concert band should be fairly confident following these guidelines regarding the various instruments, both typical and special.

Instrument	Guidelines
Piccolo	Expect at least one dedicated player
Flutes 1, 2	Expect from 2 to 5 players on each part. Do not divide either part much. Expect at least one strong solo flute 1.
Alto Flute	Do not use
Oboe	Include 1 part Write a lyrical solo for it if you can, but cross-cue any non-doubled parts based on the register and context.
English Horn	Generally do not use. If you do, expect the group's oboist also to play this part and leave out oboe at that point, providing plenty of time for change of reed and instrument. Or make it a doubling part and/or cross-cue anything exposed.
E _b Clarinet	Generally do not use.
B _b Clarinet 1, 2, 3	Expect from 2 to 4 players on each part. Do not divide any part much. Expect at least one strong solo clarinet 1.
E _b Alto Clarinet	Generally do not use. If you do, make it a doubling part; cross-cue anything exposed.
B _b Bass Clarinet	Expect at least one dedicated player. Do not write below the low written E (or write lower notes down to D only as optional and cross-cue them).
E _b Contra-Alto Clarinet	Generally do not use. If you do, make it a doubling part; cross-cue anything exposed.
B _B Contra-Bass Clarinet	Do not use.
Bassoon	Include 1 part.

	Cross-cue any non-doubled parts.
Contrabassoon	Do not use.
Bb Soprano Saxophone	Generally do not use. If you do, make it a doubling part, and cross-cue anything exposed.
Eb Alto Saxophone 1, 2	Expect from 1 to 2 players on each part. Do not divide either part. Expect at least one strong solo Alto Sax 1.
Bb Tenor Saxophone	Expect from 1 to 2 players. Do not divide.
Eb Baritone Saxophone	Expect 1 dedicated player.
F Horn 1, 2, 3, 4	Expect 1 player per part. <i>For extreme prudence, write only 2 required parts; include 2 others as optional and cross-cue any non-doubled parts.</i> Expect at least one strong solo Horn 1.
Mellophone	Do not use.
Alto Horn	Do not use.
Trumpet, Cornet	Expect trumpets in general. (The distinction is largely lost today except in Period Bands.) Write from 3 to 5 parts, but only count on 3. Assume one player per part.
Fluegelhorn	Include only as optional parts if you like.
Trombones 1, 2, 3	Expect from 3 to 5 players. Write 3 parts. Assume a 50% chance that you have at least one Bass Trombone with the full range extension between the first low E below the bass staff and the low Bb a tritone below.
Euphonium (Baritone)	Expect 1 or 2 players. Write one part. Include a treble clef version of the part as well as bass clef. Neither clef nor number of valves is a reliable distinguisher between Euphonium and Baritone in the US. Generally call it Euphonium.
Tuba	Expect at least one player. Do not assume key, just write in C for the normal range.
Timpani	Expect only one player. Write for no more than 4 pedal drums, with no fancy pedaling.

Percussion	<p>Expect at least 2 regular percussionists and no more than one mallet player. Include more mallets parts only as optional.</p> <p>Consider providing a baseline percussion part for 2-3 players, and an alternate part (optional) for a larger number (4-6) with extra instruments.</p>																									
Fairly available Percussion	<p>Generally count on the following (70% chance or better):</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="467 424 836 1327"> <tr><td>Orchestra Bells/ Glockenspiel (G to c)</td></tr> <tr><td>Xylophone</td></tr> <tr><td>Tubular Chimes</td></tr> <tr><td>Snare Drum</td></tr> <tr><td>Concert Bass Drum (large)</td></tr> <tr><td>Tom Toms</td></tr> <tr><td>Roto-Toms</td></tr> <tr><td>Bongos</td></tr> <tr><td>Drum Set (jazz or rock)</td></tr> <tr><td>Tambourine</td></tr> <tr><td>Temple Blocks</td></tr> <tr><td>Wood block</td></tr> <tr><td>Claves</td></tr> <tr><td>Suspended cymbal</td></tr> <tr><td>Hi-hat (sock) cymbal</td></tr> <tr><td>Finger Cymbals</td></tr> <tr><td>Cowbell</td></tr> <tr><td>Sleighbells</td></tr> <tr><td>Castanets</td></tr> <tr><td>Guiro (reco-reco)</td></tr> <tr><td>Maracas</td></tr> <tr><td>Police/referee's whistle</td></tr> <tr><td>Sandpaper</td></tr> <tr><td>Ratchet</td></tr> <tr><td>Slapstick</td></tr> </table>	Orchestra Bells/ Glockenspiel (G to c)	Xylophone	Tubular Chimes	Snare Drum	Concert Bass Drum (large)	Tom Toms	Roto-Toms	Bongos	Drum Set (jazz or rock)	Tambourine	Temple Blocks	Wood block	Claves	Suspended cymbal	Hi-hat (sock) cymbal	Finger Cymbals	Cowbell	Sleighbells	Castanets	Guiro (reco-reco)	Maracas	Police/referee's whistle	Sandpaper	Ratchet	Slapstick
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Optional Percussion	<p>Use the following if you choose, but make them optional parts and/or mark substitutes (40-69% chance)</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="467 1432 836 1925"> <tr><td>Bell Lyra (A to a)</td></tr> <tr><td>Vibraphone</td></tr> <tr><td>Marimba (4 octave)</td></tr> <tr><td>Field Drum (snare)</td></tr> <tr><td>Tenor Drum</td></tr> <tr><td>Small Marching Bass Drum</td></tr> <tr><td>Timbales</td></tr> <tr><td>Conga drums</td></tr> <tr><td>Wood block</td></tr> <tr><td>Large tam tam (flat gong)</td></tr> <tr><td>Triangle</td></tr> <tr><td>Casaba/shaker</td></tr> <tr><td>Mark Tree (Metal tube wind chime rack, horizontal row)</td></tr> </table>	Bell Lyra (A to a)	Vibraphone	Marimba (4 octave)	Field Drum (snare)	Tenor Drum	Small Marching Bass Drum	Timbales	Conga drums	Wood block	Large tam tam (flat gong)	Triangle	Casaba/shaker	Mark Tree (Metal tube wind chime rack, horizontal row)												
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Rare Percussion	<p>Use the following only if you are <i>certain</i> the group will have them:</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>Antique Cymbals (pitched)</td></tr> <tr><td>Celeste</td></tr> <tr><td>High (thin) Snare Drum</td></tr> <tr><td>Roto-Toms</td></tr> <tr><td>Wood slit drums</td></tr> <tr><td>Sizzle Cymbal</td></tr> <tr><td>Small tam tam (flat gong)</td></tr> <tr><td>Bell Tree</td></tr> <tr><td>Metal tube wind chime</td></tr> <tr><td>Bamboo wind chime tree</td></tr> <tr><td>Glass wind chime tree</td></tr> <tr><td>Bull-Roarer</td></tr> <tr><td>Cork-pop</td></tr> <tr><td>Klaxon horn</td></tr> <tr><td>Lion Roar</td></tr> <tr><td>Wind Machine</td></tr> <tr><td>Anvil</td></tr> <tr><td>Limbic Creel</td></tr> </table>	Antique Cymbals (pitched)	Celeste	High (thin) Snare Drum	Roto-Toms	Wood slit drums	Sizzle Cymbal	Small tam tam (flat gong)	Bell Tree	Metal tube wind chime	Bamboo wind chime tree	Glass wind chime tree	Bull-Roarer	Cork-pop	Klaxon horn	Lion Roar	Wind Machine	Anvil	Limbic Creel
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Harp	Do not use.																		
String Bass	<p>Include as optional (32%); then expect only one player.</p> <p>Provide softer-dynamic tuba cues to cover any exposed parts.</p>																		
Electric Bass	Do not use.																		
DOUBLING ONLY	A number of questions addressed which instruments to include only as doubling and/or cross-cued instruments. These results were inconclusive and the category itself was disputed, so they were discarded in this summary. They are available in the Raw Results.																		
BEST SUBSTITUTES	A number of questions gave respondents a choice of substitute instruments for various instruments, asking for opinions of the best choice. These sets of choices turned out to be incomplete, and the consensus was that the choice of best substitute instrument depends on the scoring context and the nature of the musical passage being cued. If the composer knows the sounds of all the instruments well, they will be able to decide what works at that musical moment.																		

7.2 Basic Core Instrumentation

Here is a tabular summary of the simplest “safe” recommended core instrumentation. This is also the least work to score for, since the composer/arranger is not adding duplicates/doublings for non-core instruments.

Instrument	Separate Parts	Number of players
Piccolo	1	1
Flutes	1, 2	4-10 total
Oboe	1 (cued)	1
Bb Clarinet	1, 2, 3	6-12 total
Bb Bass Clarinet	1	1-2
Bassoon	1 (cued)	1
Eb Alto Saxophone	1, 2	2-4 total
Bb Tenor Saxophone	1	1-2
Eb Baritone Saxophone	1	1
F Horn	1, 2 required 3, 4 optional/cued	2-4 total
Trumpet, Cornet	1, 2, 3	3-5 total
Trombones	1, 2, 3 (= Bass)	3-5 total
Euphonium	1 (provide both treble/bass clef version of part)	1-2 total
Tuba	1	1
Timpani	1 (4 pedal drums max)	1
Mallet Percussion	1	1
Other Percussion	2-3	2-3
Percussion Instruments	See list above, Fairly available percussion	

7.3 Inclusive/Optional Expanded Instrumentation

Instrument	Separate Parts	Number of players
Piccolo	1	1
Flutes	1, 2	4-10 total
Oboe	1 (cued)	1
E♭ Clarinet	1 optional/doubling	1
B♭ Clarinet	1, 2, 3	6-12 total
B♭ Bass Clarinet	1	1-2
Bassoon	1 (solos cued), 2 optional/doubling	1-2
B♭ Soprano Saxophone	1 optional/doubling	1
E♭ Alto Saxophone	1, 2	2-4 total
B♭ Tenor Saxophone	1	1-2
E♭ Baritone Saxophone	1	1-2
F Horn	1, 2, 3, 4	4 total
Trumpet, Cornet	1, 2, 3	4-6 total
Trombones	1, 2, 3 (= Bass with extension)	3-5
Euphonium	1 (provide both treble/bass clef version of part)	1-2 total
Tuba	1	1-2
String Bass	1 optional/cued	1
Timpani	1 (4 pedal drums max)	1
Mallet Percussion	1	1
Other Percussion	2-3	2-3
(Sampler/synth keyboard)	(1 optional, can cue mallet percussion)	1

keyboard)	mallet percussion, harp)	
Percussion Instruments	See lists above, Fairly Available and Optional Percussion	

7.3.1 Instrumentation Lists from Participants

Several contributors provided their own lists of recommended core instrumentation. Some specified just the total number of players per instrument, others specified the number of parts. These range from bare bones to more inclusive, and make an interesting comparison with the author's sample-based conclusions and recommendations, which might be termed centrist/conservative.

INSTRUMENT	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Piccolo		1		2	1		Y	
Flute	Y	Y	4	8	2	1 & 2	1 & 2	Y
Oboe				2	1 (cued)		1 & 2	Y
Bassoon				2	1 (cued)		1 & 2	
Eb Clarinet				1	1			
Bb Clarinet	Y	Y	9	12	6	1, 2, 3	1, 2, 3	1, 2, 3
Bass Clarinet			1	2	1		Y	Y
Soprano Sax					1			
Alto sax	Y	Y	2	4	2	1 & 2	1 & 2	Y
Tenor sax	Y	Y	1	2	1	Y	Y	Y
Bari sax	Y		1	1	1	Y	Y	Y
French horn	Y	Y	4	6	2 parts, some divisi	1 & 2	1,2,3,4	1, 2
Trumpet/cornet	Y	Y	7	10	3 parts	1, 2, 3	1, 2, 3	1, 2, 3
Trombone	Y	Y	5	6	3 parts (3rd opt bass)	1, 2, 3 (Bass)	1, 2, 3	Y (+Bass)
Euphonium	Y	Y Treble & bass	1	4	1 or 2	TC & BC	Y	Y +Bari TC
Tuba	Y	Y	2	3	1	1 & 2	Y	Y
Timpani	Opt.				1			
Mallets	Xylo Bells (opt.)				1	Bells		Y
Other Percussion		simple perc.	3	5	2 or 3		6	1 to 2

Individual Percussion Instruments	Bass Drum					Snare, Bass Drum		
	Snare Drum, Cyms (susp/crash)							

8 Selected Respondent Opinions

A number of responders took the time to offer thoughtful individual comments on several topics in the survey. The author has selected some as relevant to share here, without attribution.

8.1 Scoring, General

Avoid extended sparse scoring (we are an outdoor ensemble and the wind makes these passages almost unplayable).

Please write for the wind band medium with the same approach one would use in writing for orchestral winds. We have more of a chance of getting a work of substance if composers use that approach rather than thinking marching band/pop band/schmaltz band. :-) Excellent arrangements of popular American art songs such as those by Cole Porter, Gershwin, etc., are welcome.

While it may not be "core", please please do not be afraid to write some pieces with good oboe parts. Oboists who do come out to community bands are hungry for decent literature, and they won't stay if all they get is doubled parts

Percussion parts should be flexible to accommodate different numbers of players. Providing 5-6 parts is great if you have the players but can be awkward and nonsensical if you don't. i.e., there should be a "Percussion for 2 players" part and a "Percussion for five players" part, etc.

Most community bands cannot afford the more expensive percussion instruments (such as marimba, vibraphone).

Write only 2 horn parts. Use 4 horn parts only when it is section soli and you need all 4 notes (but then double 3rd and 4th in trombone or alto sax).

Always include treble clef parts for euphoniums / baritones.

COMMENT TO PUBLISHERS: *Most arrangements we buy don't have enough parts to cover all our players. e.g. 4 flute parts provided, when a typical band would have 6 or more. Most loudly say "no photocopying", but do they seriously expect bands to buy multiple sets if they have an oversupply of players on any one instrument It would be good if your survey results could nudge the industry towards providing more parts in each set.*

The wide range of different ensembles around the country probably makes defining a standard community band instrumentation impossible. It is very difficult to say what is the 'best scoring' because it truly depends upon many factors that cannot be answered in a survey.

8.2 Instruments to Omit or Cross-cue:

I don't think I would recommend omitting instruments - but putting cues in other parts for the more rare instruments: oboe, bassoon, baritone horn, etc.

No need to omit any. Just cross-cue or double the part in another instrument for important lines. (I'd rather make the musical decision to use or substitute, not have the music watered down. Amateur doesn't always equate to ill-equipped.)

The approach should never be taken to always include something, but only as doubling parts. Why include a special color instrument as a standard member of the ensemble?

The answer to the [best substitute] question greatly depends upon the passage. The composer should know what would work in a given situation.

The alto clarinet is best used as a lamp.

The instrument selected to be cued is subjective (will depend on the style of music, range, texture of scoring, etc).

The "best" depends on the surrounding orchestration.

All of these (cross-cue) responses are "depends" based on key, scoring, and available players.

8.3 Final Notes

To those composers accustomed to a full complement, the suggested core instrumentation list may seem sobering: How are we to create a nice variety of colors and choirs, and full harmonies, with this reduced set of instruments—flutes, mostly treble single reeds, brass, and a few percussion? Perhaps we can take a tip from Stravinsky, who said he was best stimulated when strict resource limits were imposed on him. (Consider *l'Histoire du Soldat*—though written for virtuoso players.)

It is likely that publishing houses which publish band compositions and arrangements—and specify standard difficulty levels—may also have internal standard scoring guidelines for their arrangers. It could be instructive to compare these with the current study's conclusions, and might serve as a starting point for a productive dialog with publishers. (Perhaps one could begin by addressing such issues as providing the option to purchase inexpensive extra copies of parts for doubled instruments, and routinely adding treble clef Euphonium parts, e.g.). This is a promising topic for a separate study.