

**Tips for a Successful Keyboard Percussion UNT Audition:**  
**Marimba, Vibraphone, Xylophone, Glockenspiel**  
**By Mark Ford**

1. Read everything that is written on the UNT Percussion audition page that pertains to your audition:  
<https://percussion.music.unt.edu/percussion-auditions>
2. In order to become a great musician, you need to become a great Listener. Listen to yourself practicing in order to craft your sound. Record yourself often performing a short section of your audition music. Listen carefully while you study the score. Write down on your music areas to practice and refine. Practice these sections and then re-record and evaluate. Repeat as necessary.
3. Prepare a Four-Mallet Marimba (or Vibraphone) solo and also a short Two-Mallet Etude or Orchestral Excerpt. Develop a consistent practice routine that incorporates daily and weekly goals for your musical selections. Keep a log of your practice and write down your goals and progress. Your audition is not dependent on which solo you play, but rather how you perform it.
4. Work on sight reading daily for marimba (and snare drum). Utilize a metronome. Your ability to sight read and interpret music effectively is dependent on being able to recognize pitch and sticking patterns as you gradually develop the skills to hear the music in your head. Sing/count often as you sight read. Sight reading every day for 5-10 minutes can bring huge benefits over time. Dedicated, consistent practice will help you reach your goals.
5. Scales: Know and practice all of the major and minor scales. Follow the website instructions above concerning your audition video and scales.

6. Focus on the tone and expression of your music. Every phrase should have musical direction, and every note should have a role in shaping that phrase or motive. Incorporate all instructions on the music to create artistic integrity within the composer's intentions. Listen to professional recordings and strive to emulate these artists' tone and musical expression.
7. Dress professionally for your audition.
8. Here are links to marimba instructional videos that may be helpful as you develop your Keyboard Percussion Skills:

The Secret to Playing the Marimba

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sM8Rwbg3dvo>

Listen with Your Eyes?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5YkK-cHnw8k>

Marimba: One -Handed Roll Exercises

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5M3SwDjhhzU&t=31s>

Holding on to the Marimba Mallets!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kxeC5JGGV74&t=132s>

Single Independent Strokes - Marimba Floor Exercises

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i6k-06bqUXU&t=7s>

Marimba Technique

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DX\\_AO9YNc8c](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DX_AO9YNc8c)

To Ripple or Flop? Rolling on the Marimba

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=swetW\\_vCkh0&t=70s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=swetW_vCkh0&t=70s)

Mark Ford Discusses the Musser-Stevens Marimba Grip

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z2sdbaf9IOA&t=156s>

We look forward to meeting you and hearing your audition!