

TOUR GUIDE: A Member's Perspective by Valerie Glasscock

I have been involved in drum corps as a member for 5 seasons (starting in 2002) with Dimensions and Blue Stars. Last summer, I toured with Legends and will be aging out this season with Legends Drum and Bugle Corps as a brass player; I can't be more proud to be a part of this experience. I know that preparing for a short or long tour can be tough, so I've put together some insight about how to plan accordingly. Some of the tips on here are merely recommendations, but I have found that most, if not all, of these have come in handy at one point in time in my own career, and will also prove to help provide a safe, healthy, and rewarding experience.

What every member should bring on tour:

TRAVEL GEAR and TOILETRIES

Suitcase	Contact solution (for contact lenses)
Sleeping Bag	Unscented lotion
Blanket	Razors for shaving
Pillows	Gold bond
Shampoo, Conditioner, Bodywash (or soap bar), Loofa	Face wash
Toothbrush, Toothpaste	Any other items NECESSARY for cleanliness
Deodorant	Flip flops (for shower)

CLOTHING

- Shorts, Shirts, Underwear
- Socks - pack enough for two pairs a day in case of rain!
- Bras (for girls of course) - packing enough for at least 8-12 days is best, that way if something happens you have enough for a rainy day or something extra
- Nicer clothes for free days (something comfortable that looks nice) – one set or two is recommended
- Sweatpants and sweatshirts for cool days and nights (not any more than two sweatshirts is good)
- Two pairs of tennis shoes and a pair of shower sandals
- Rain coat or jacket (your member jacket works well for this)

MISCELLANEOUS

- Proper footwear is REQUIRED at all times (tennis shoes)
- Sunblock and DCT (Daily Conditioning Treatment) comes in a small peach-ish round container, usually costs \$1.67) is also very good for brass players during the summer because it has sunblock in it
- Hat – required for all rehearsals
- Plastic bags for wet clothes or a large Ziploc
- Laundry bag, quarters for laundry, and POWDERED laundry detergent
- Your own section things (I.E. brass- mouthpiece, guard-equipment, drums-sticks and mallets)
- Backpack for rehearsals – bug spray, sunscreen, music binders, dot books, pencils, and other necessary items for your section
- 1 gallon water jug for YOUR OWN USE!!!! Don't spread sickness, bring your own water, and don't share with your friends. It MUST be at least one gallon at the least!
- Money for souvenirs - I've seen members go through \$20 in a tour; I've also seen members go through \$1000 in a tour. I feel that \$100-\$120 is just right for the amount of time we're on tour. Also, it's good to have a debit card or a refillable credit card. Losing cash can be a devastating thing, and it happens all the time because it's usually misplaced.
- Phone cards or cell phones? - This is always a debate. I did my first tour without my cell phone and I've done tours with my cell phone. Either way works. There are usually enough people that if you don't want your child carrying one, they can use another member's phone. I feel the best way to go is to have a pre-paid phone that parents at home can put minutes on. Also, don't forget a phone charger if you're bringing a phone. Cell phones ARE NOT allowed on the field for rehearsal or performances.



Packing tips:

Packing in one suitcase and trying to fit bedding into a small duffel is usually the best way to go. The less amount of things to take into the school at night, the better. When packing clothing to use all the room in your suitcase, roll your t-shirts and shorts. This will give you more space and you'll also be able to pack more. Another space saving tip, when packing socks, underwear, and bras, it helps to place them in a Ziploc bag so they can be labeled and you won't leave with the one infamous "missing sock". Before you pack them in your luggage, release all the air, and that will help with space as well. Labeling your clothing, socks, underwear, bottles, anything that's important to you will help you to not lose things. Also if someone finds it, we'll know who to return it to.

What to bring on the bus:

These are merely suggestions and are not requirements but these help to pass the time on the bus. Also remember that unless you carry it at all times and you're worried about losing it, **DON'T BRING IT!**

- Bus Box - a shoe box sized box for under your seat or above your seat to put things in that will stay on the bus
 - A bus box is a great thing to have for all of these things. Having one solitary location for your book, pictures, cell phone, and/or things you will not use through your day is nice. You won't have to carry it everywhere, but if we're staying in a housing site for more than one day, this box will help you to transfer things with more ease as well.
- Cd player/Cds or MP3 Player
- Y jack (so you can share with your seat partner)
- Good book
- Fun travel game
- Pictures for your window (pictures of friends, family, etc)
- Window basket for your things (make sure you don't put small things in it unless you line the bottom. I lost a ring that way once!)
- Bed sheet for your seat (you can spray it with Febreze and wash it on laundry days, plus it feels better than an itchy seat)
- Small blanket – it can get chilly on the bus sometimes
- Bungee cords to strap things up above your seat
- Paper, pens, stamps, and envelopes to write home or friends

What to expect on the bus and other tips:

When we get on the bus, the seat you pick is your home for the tour and the person you choose to sit with you is your seat partner. When we leave a show site or rehearsal site to go to the next housing site, it may take a few hours. Sleeping is usually the best option as there is usually a "lights out" period shortly after we leave. Before lights out on the bus, it's good to make phone calls to friends and family, listen to music, talk to friends, and just relax.

As consideration to everyone on the bus, do NOT bring aerosol sprays on the bus, as well as scented sprays. Febreze or no scent spray is good, but because of allergies and fragrances that may not appeal to everyone, it's better to just not spray anything on the bus. The bathroom on the bus is typically off limits unless it's an absolute emergency. Ask the driver about a stop, but using the bathroom in the back isn't usually tolerated.

After shows, there's usually a set amount of time that members can visit with friends and family or see souvenirs along souvie row and get food. This is the best time to come find members and visit others from other corps as well.

When we arrive at housing sites at night, we will have a loading/unloading crew that will unload the bus. In the event of rain, everyone will help and just grab luggage until it's all inside. Getting to sleep once we get to the housing site is key. If you gather your luggage as quickly as possible and set up your "zone", you'll get to sleep quicker. If we're sharing a housing site with another corps, come into the sleeping area as quickly as possible. Our sleeping zone is usually the gym of the school, so don't drag your luggage down stairs or across the floor, pick it up. If you have an air mattress, make sure you blow that up before you do anything else. Once you set up your zone, do everything you need to do quickly, and make your way back to your bed.

A few more things to remember, ALWAYS thank the volunteers. You're giving up your summer to march, but they're giving up time at work and in some cases away from their families to serve you. Be kind to them! Along those same lines, be respectful of the staff. They're here to help you, and they deserve all the respect in the world. Anything less will not be tolerated.

