

# Overview of Sousa Performance Practices

- **Introduction and first strain are usually played as written.**
  - **Second strain: first time, dynamic – piano. Cornets and trombones tacet; piccolo and upper clarinets (including E-flat) dropped an octave. On the repeat all instruments back in as written, dynamic is fortissimo. Use cymbals only when cornets and trombones play (usually 2<sup>nd</sup> time).**
  - **Trio: cornets and trombones tacet; piccolo and upper clarinets down and octave; snare drum, bass drum, and cymbals most often eliminated; bells double the melody; dynamic – piano. If trio is repeated, second time dynamic is pianissimo.**
  - **Dog-fight/break strains played as written.**
  - **Last strain usually played twice, separated by the break strain. First time, piccolo, E-flat clarinet, cornets and trombones tacet; upper clarinets down an octave; dynamic – piano. On repeat, all instruments back in at break strain playing fortissimo and as written to the end. Climactic accents are commonly added here.**
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