

Technique

The purpose of this “Technique” is to provide the performer with the most efficient and tension-free means in order to produce the best possible quality of sound.

The Three Technique Keys

1. **Hold the Stick/Mallet with your fingers and thumb at all times**
2. **Play from the wrist** (while adhering to #1)
3. **Use the rebound** (while adhering to #1 and #2)

The Five Grip Guidelines

1. **Natural Curve of the Hands** - All fingers and thumb should assume their natural position as if the arm was hanging down by the side. Relaxation of the hand and fingers is of utmost importance for grip maintenance.
2. **Starting Position** - The beginning position as defined for any given instrument.
3. **Sticks/Mallets are an Extension of the Forearm** - Implements should not assume adjacent angles from the forearm in their approach to the instrument.
4. **Relaxed Elbows** - Elbows should rest comfortably in a direct line downward from the shoulder. Avoid body contact or extending away from the body since this will cause tension.
5. **Bead Placement** - For Snare and Tenors, as close together as possible without touching the head. For Bass Drums, as close to the head as possible without touching the head. All other instruments, over the defined location/playing zone. Bead placement is critical in order to produce an even sound from hand to hand.

The Five Stroke Guidelines

1. **Grip Maintenance** - Constantly reinforce all guidelines for proper grip maintenance as outlined above.
2. **Path of the Stick/Mallet** - Straight up and down. Eliminate any circular or slicing motions.
3. **Bead Moves First** - All stick motion is initiated from the bead. The arm should move naturally as result of turning the wrist.
4. **Height of Rise Consistency** - Duplicating the exact height of every stroke.
5. **Control of the Opposite Stick/Mallet** - If the right hand is playing, the left must remain in the starting position. If the left hand is playing, the right must remain in the starting position.

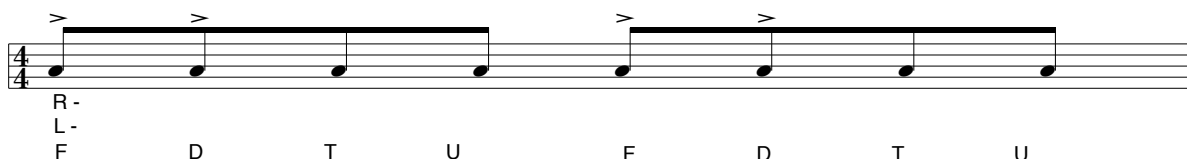
Basic Strokes

Full Stroke - The Stick/Mallet starts and ends in the “Up” position

Down Stroke - The Stick/Mallet ends in a position that is lower than the up position

Tap - A low (often 3”) stroke that can essentially be a small Full Stroke, or Down Stroke

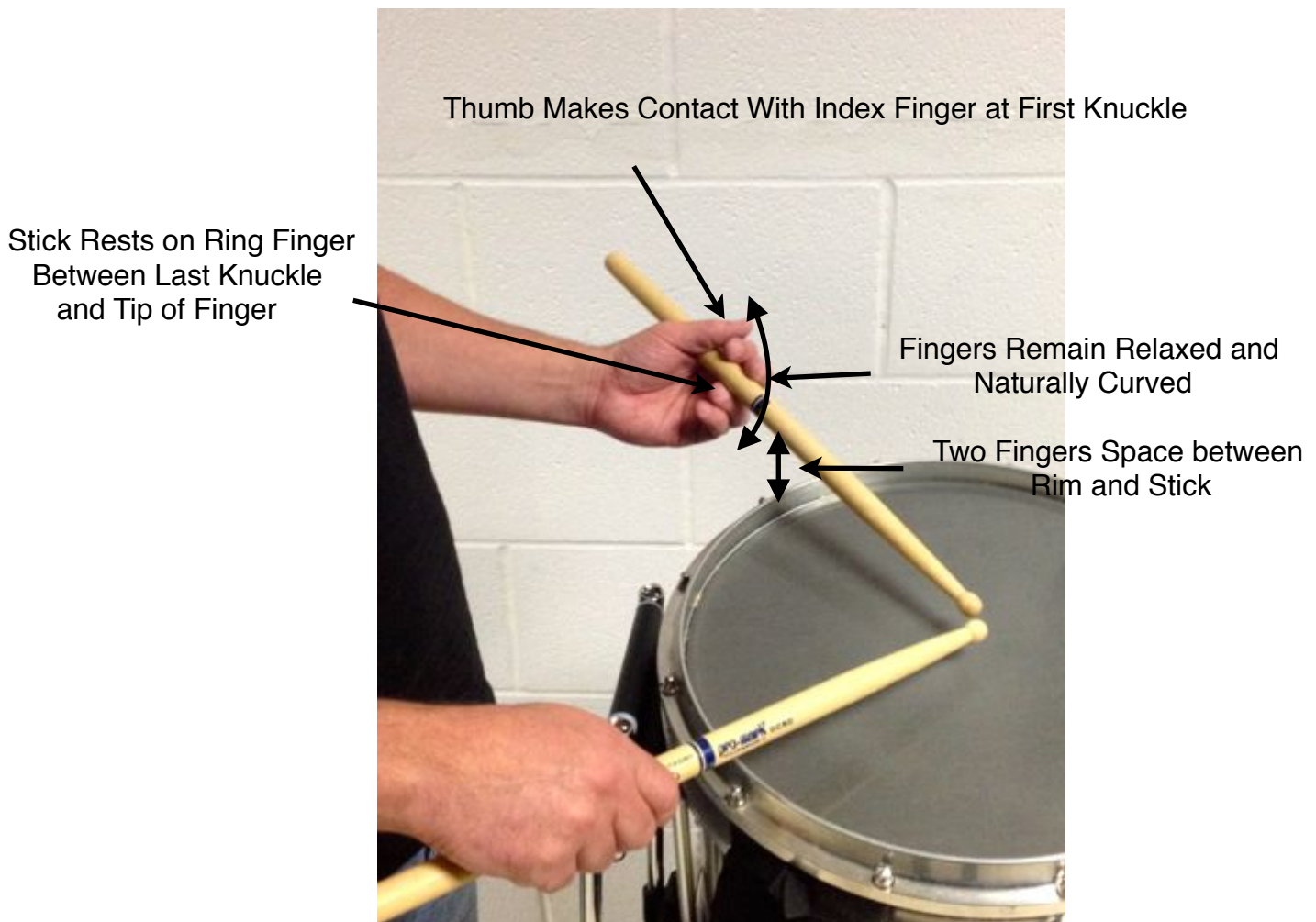
Up Stroke - A stroke that returns the stick to a position higher than previously played.



Traditional Grip/Snare Drum



Correct Playing Position for Marching Snare Drum





Picture Showing Neutral Position of Left Wrist

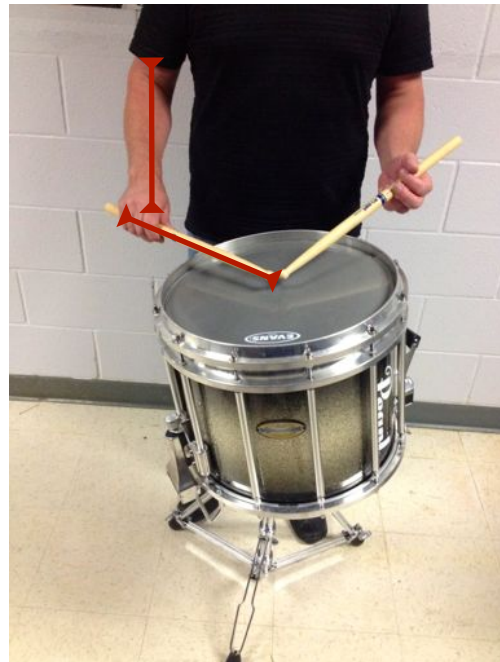


Right Stick as an Extension of the Forearm

Common Technique Problems



Left Hand/Arm Extended Forward



Right Arm Forming Adjacent Angle with Stick

Matched Grip/Tenors



Correct Playing Position for Marching Tenors

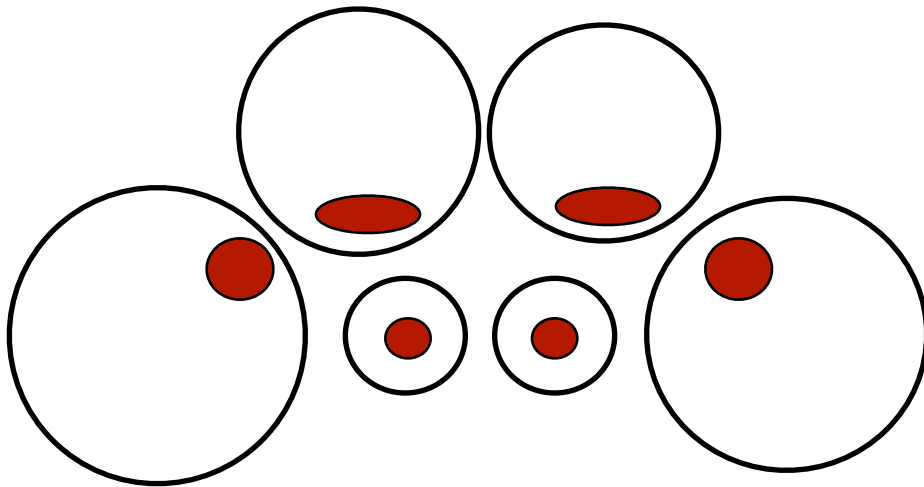


Stick/Mallet Position on One
Interior Drum

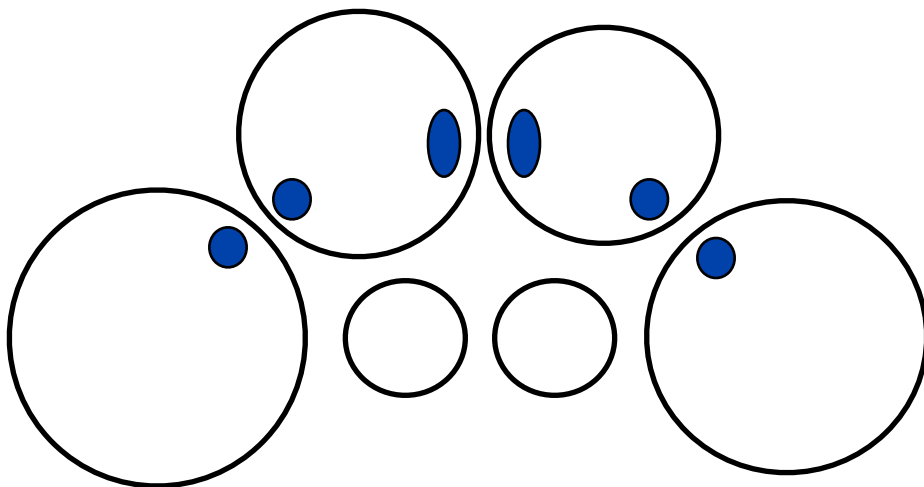


Stick/Mallet Position on One
Exterior Drum

Playing Zones



General Playing Zones



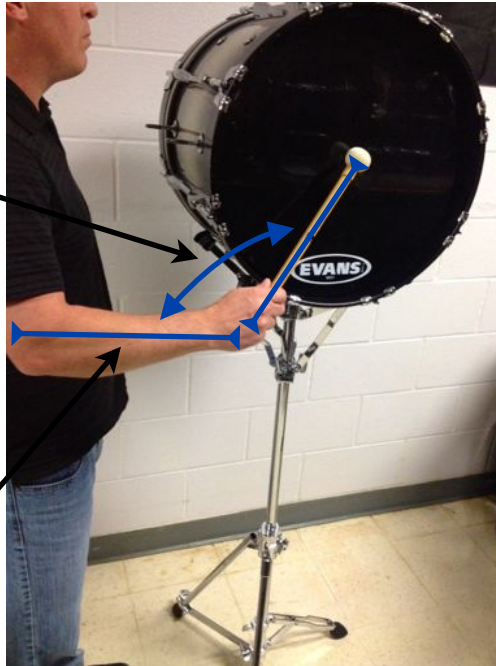
Secondary Playing Zones

(Secondary Zones may be used for intricate patterns and/or "Sweeps", or when otherwise defined)

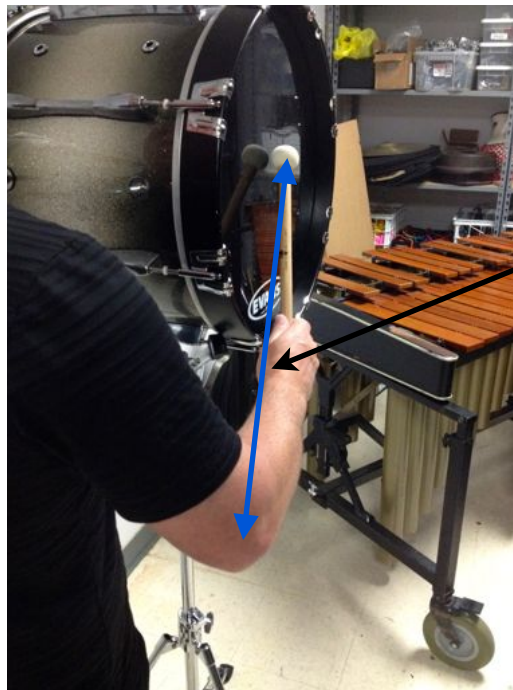
Marching Bass Drum

Mallet Forms a 45 Degree Angle with Forearm

Forearm is Parallel to the Ground



Mallet and Forearm Form a Straight Line with Mallet Pointed Slightly Towards the Drum Head.



*The Width of the Performer's Shoulders and the Depth of the Bass Drum May Require the Elbows to be Slightly Extended Outwards.

Dynamics

In order to ensure consistent volumes and heights of rise within the ensemble, dynamics will be defined as follows:

p - 1 1/2"
mp - 3"
mf - 6"
f - 9"
ff - 12"
fff - 15"

How to Interpret Music Using Defined Heights

Dynamics will be indicated as in the excerpt below. You will notice that there are two dynamics given in measure one, “ff” and “mp”. The first dynamic will be the level of the accents and the taps are to be played at the level of the second dynamic. In this instance, the accents should be played at 12” while the non-accented notes should be played at 3”

Scheherazade
Stephen F. Austin High School 2013

1
N. Rimsky-Korsakov
Arr. by Chreste/Clark Gardner

The musical score is for three drum parts: Snare, Tenor, and Bass. The time signature is 12/8. The score consists of six measures. Measure 1 has two dynamics: *ff* (forte) and *mp* (mezzo-piano). Measure 2 includes a drum pattern: R L R R L R L R L L R L. Measure 3 has a drum pattern: R R L R R L L R R L. Measure 4 has a drum pattern: R R L R R L L R R L. Measure 5 has dynamics *f* (forte) and *p* (piano). Measure 6 has dynamic *p* (piano). The score includes various rhythmic notations, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. There are also accents and a drum pattern for measure 2.