

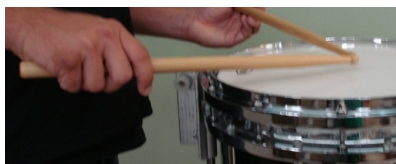
General Implement Grip

Matched Grip (Also RH for Snares):

- Thumb/Index finger connect approx. 1/3 from the bottom of the stick
- Thumb is parallel with the stick (runs along the stick)
- Middle, ring, and pinky fingers are all wrapped naturally around the stick, while never completely leaving the stick when in motion



- Allow the TIP of the index finger to relax, as it is generally not needed to completely wrap around the stick...on this same note, avoid pointing this finger, let it relax naturally. Keep it close, as we will need it sometimes for pressure and speed!



- The butt of the stick should be slightly visible out the back of the hand.
 - This enables your back fingers to have access and control over the stick as well



NO



YES

General Implement Grip

Left Hand (Snares):

- Back of the stick should rest naturally in the “webby” connection between the thumb and index fingers
- Stick rests on the cuticle of the relaxed ring finger
- Pinky rides relaxed underneath the ring finger, while avoiding unnecessary space between ring/pinky
- Pad of the thumb should connect just to the left of the first knuckle on the index finger (connect roughly 1/3 up the stick)
- Avoid tension in both the first knuckle and the tip of the thumb
- Middle finger naturally curves along the stick---AVOID straightening the finger or creating space between the middle and index fingers
- Allow for a natural curvature of the fingers (Hand creates a “C” position from a top angle), but do not condense your hand!



- Avoid straightening or opening any spaces between fingers

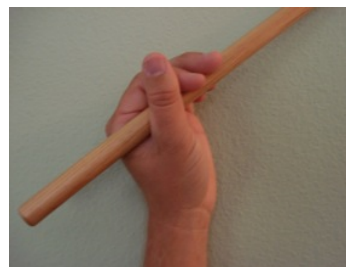


NO

- If it were to rain on the hand, water should be able to land in the palm and roll off, rather than A) collecting in the palm, or B) not being able to land in your palm at all
- The back of the hand should create an outward slope leading to the formation of a straight line from the forearm to the tip of the thumb---AVOID the back of hand being flush with the forearm



NO

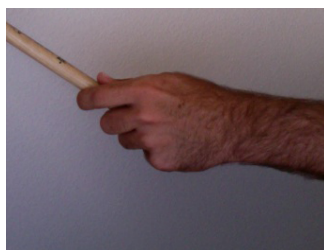


YES

General Implement Grip

Bass Drum

- Roughly 1/2" of the mallet shaft is exposed beneath the pinkie. This number may vary depending on hand size, but know that the bottom of the mallet should not be visible from the audience's perspective



No lower mallet visible. (Yes)



Undesired mallet exposure. (No)

- Fulcrum: The first knuckle of the thumb should line up with the second knuckle of the middle finger. These joints should line up perpendicularly to the mallet, and will serve as the primary balance point on the mallet



- First finger: The first knuckle of the index finger should line up with the thumbnail. These two points will align perpendicular to the mallet as well, and will serve a larger role in the fulcrum as hand speed increases (faster double strokes)
- Hand to mallet alignment: The back fingers hold the mallet against the "meat" under the pinkie, resulting in a mallet angle of 45° from the ground



Too far outside the hand...



Too far from the fingers...



Just right!

Playing Position

Snares

Key Points:

- In order to achieve an ideal positioning over the drum, work reverse from the beads up to your shoulders
- Generally, drum height is determined by the left forearm being SLIGHTLY angled downward, but will be adjusted on a case-by-case basis---this will affect your positioning on both right and left arms
- The shoulders should be very relaxed to avoid translating tension while still maintaining correct posture (“soft shoulders”)
- From the shoulders to the bead should be “downhill” at all times
- The drum angle will be slightly tilted (NOTE: If you have never played on a tilt, don’t over think it, just relax your right arm)

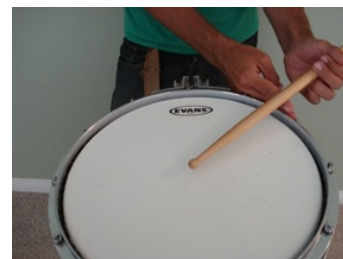
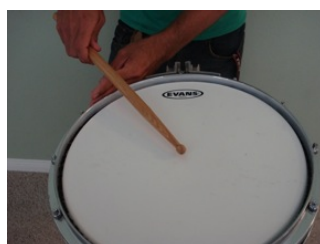


Stick Positions:

- Beads are 1/2” apart, splitting the center of the drumhead
- Beads are 1/2” above the center of the drumhead
- Sticks should create a “^” with an approximate 90-degree angle between them
- Due to the slight tilt of the drum, the right stick should be approx ¼ outside the “5 o’ clock” tension rod, while the left stick should be approx. ¼ inside the “8 o’ clock” tension rod (Note: this is based on a Yamaha snare drum...Pearl and Dynasty snare drums have an offset tension rod reference)



- The bottom of the sticks should be angled approx. two fingers above the outside portion of the top rim)



Right Hand Position:

- The right hand should be rotated *slightly* outward in relation to the drum, (The hand should not be completely flat to the drum [German grip], nor rotated completely vertical [French Grip], as these tend to hinder use of finger motion and wrist motion respectively). Aim for more flat wrist than turned over, however
- Right arm should be naturally draped down, but definitely not resting against the body--
-avoid pushing the elbow up creating unnecessary tension in the upper body



Left Hand Position:

- Drop the left hand completely at the side of the body, relaxing the entire upper left arm--from this position bend at the elbow and place the stick over the defined position on the drum
- Avoid pulling the elbow into the body, or pushing it outward
- Left forearm should be roughly parallel with the drum



Playing Position

Quads

- Drum height is determined by the height of your elbows. Carriers will be adjusted to allow for the correct playing position to be achieved
- Relax your arms and let them hang straight down from your shoulders
- From your elbows, lift your forearms up so there is a slight downward angle from your elbows to the head of your stick. This should give you clearance above the rim AND allow you to make contact with the sweet spot of the implement you are playing with



- Your hands should be rotated slightly outwards in relation to the drum. (The hand should not be completely flat to the drum [German Grip], nor rotated completely vertical [French Grip], as these tend to hinder use of finger motion and wrist motion respectively). We will call our grip American Grip
- When looking straight into a mirror the rotation of your hands should make the stick point straight into the mirror AND the stick should be an extension of your arm (there should be a straight line from your elbow to the head of the stick). DO NOT CHANGE IMPLEMENT GRIP WHEN DOING THIS!!!



- The shoulders should be very relaxed to avoid translating tension while still maintaining correct posture (“soft shoulders”)
- Avoid pushing the elbows up creating unnecessary tension in the upper body

Playing Zones:

- Our “set” or “home” position is RH on drum 1, LH on drum 2
- As a rule of thumb, play about 2.5” from the bearing edge of the drum. Each drum will have it’s “sweet spot” that will be found by ear so minor adjustment may be made to produce the best sound possible



- Play just slightly above the center of your 6" drums
- Repositioning elbows might be needed...
- While playing on drums 1,2, and spocks, the beads of the sticks should be 1/2" apart. The closer the beads are to each other the more similar your hands will sound



- While playing on drums 3 and 4 your sticks will create a "y" shape and your beads will not be able to be as close together as they are on the other drums. When split on 3 and 4 your wrists will NOT turn out



- Move around from drum to drum using the X (horizontal) and Y (vertical) axis. Pivoting side to side from the elbows controls X-axis while turning the wrist and lifting the forearm up and down controls the Y-axis. Doing this correctly will create smooth arcs while moving around the drums and conserve energy



while playing

- When playing scrapes, shoot for the closest playing zones between two drums to conserve energy and minimize the distance of the scrape you are playing
- When playing crossovers keep the sticks as level as possible. Avoid bending the wrist and poking at the drumhead. Crossovers can either be stick on stick, hand on hand, or wrist on wrist depending on how many drums the crossover covers

Playing Position

Bass



- The head of the mallet is set 1" away from the center of the playing zone, meaning that the mallet will be slightly turned in toward the head
- The hand/wrist/arm (depending on drum size) should be held as close to the rim as possible without making contact
- To achieve the appropriate wrist/hand angle, extend one's hand straight from the forearm as if to shake hands
- There should be no strain or added tension to the wrist to create any sort of unnatural angle



Wrist too high.



Wrist too low.

- The forearm should be parallel to the ground as a default setup. Exceptions may involve a slight (VERY slight) upward angle from the elbow through wrist
- The elbow's relation to the side of the body will vary depending on body and drum size. Forward/backwards adjustments will be made to allow for the mallet to sit in the center of the head while applying the desired technique
- The arm should have a slight angle from the elbow through the head of the mallet towards the drumhead (think "playing on a pad")
- The upper arm should hang as naturally as possible. No tension should be present from the large shoulder muscles down through the small finger muscles
- Carriers and harnesses will be adjusted accordingly to allow players to meet these criteria