

# Marching Snare Technique Guide And Exercise Packet

## IMPLEMENT GRIP

A great quality of sound and approach to the drum begins with the grip of the stick. In order to produce a full, resonant tone from the drum, it is important that your hands maintain a relaxed grip around the stick at all times and allow the stick to resonate in your hand. If you hold the stick too tightly, you dampen the stick's natural vibration and "choke off" much of the sound which results in a very thin quality of sound. Also, the brunt of the impact from the stick striking the drum will be transferred directly into your hands which can lead to unnecessary injury. Always let the stick "breathe" in your hands.

### **Right Hand**

The fulcrum point is located between the thumb and the index finger. This is the point from which the stick pivots in your hand. This pivot point should be located at the optimal balance point of the stick, which is usually found around 1/3 of the length of the stick. The rest of the fingers should be wrapped naturally around the stick. They should be loose and relaxed, but can never leave the stick.

### **Left Hand (traditional grip)**

The fulcrum point is again located between the thumb and index finger, with the thumb sitting on top of the index finger between the first and second knuckle. This connection must always be maintained while the thumb and index finger stay relaxed. The stick will rest on the fourth finger just past the first knuckle near the cuticle. The pinky should stay attached to the fourth finger in a relaxed position and the middle finger will rest beside the stick with the fingertip being slightly on top of the stick. Please be aware that the middle finger should simply be "along for the ride" and not used to generate a stroke by applying pressure in any way. All fingers must remain relaxed in a curved position at all times. Any unnatural straightening or flexing of the fingers simply causes unwanted tension that will ultimately inhibit your performance.

## **PLAYING POSITION**

A proper playing position begins with finding an appropriate drum height. This can be done using the left hand as a starting point. With your arms relaxed by your sides, raise your left hand from the elbow until your forearm is parallel to the ground. Next, simply raise your right hand to the drum, matching the fulcrum point of the right hand to the fulcrum point of the left hand and making sure the stick angles are the same. The beads will always remain in the center of the head, resting a ½ inch apart and a ½ inch off of the head. It is absolutely essential for the beads to remain in the exact center of the drum at all times. If your sticks are not striking in the same location of the drum they will not produce the same sound hand to hand.

## **STROKE**

There are two common stroke types that we will employ when playing the snare drum: legato and marcato strokes. Before we define each of these more specifically, there are some key points that apply to both of these stroke types.

Every stroke will initiate from a wrist turn with the bead of the stick moving first. This wrist turn is essential in every stroke played. However, do not restrict your arms and try to use only wrist. As your wrist turns, your arm should naturally move. Use all three muscle groups – arms, wrists, and fingers – for your advantage to produce every stroke. The arm, wrist, and finger muscles must all be present to allow you to execute any type of stroke at any time with ease.

### **Legato Strokes**

The legato stroke is often referred to as the rebound stroke because when using this stroke the player should allow the stick to “rebound” (bounce) off of the drumhead. The player makes the initial effort to throw the stick toward the head, with the drum naturally rebounding the stick back to the upstroke position. The key to playing legato is not restricting the rebound of the stick. The motion of the stick should never stop -- it is always moving either toward or away from the drumhead. All fingers should remain on the stick at all times, but they should not hold the stick against the palm inhibiting the rebound. The arms, hands, and fingers remain relaxed, naturally moving with the motion of the stick.

### **Marcato Strokes**

We define the marcato stroke as a “controlled rebound” stroke. When playing marcato, you restrict the rebound of the stick by using the muscles in your fingers to stop the stick after the stick has come in contact with the playing surface. The fingers, instead of traveling with the natural rebound motion of the stick, provide resistance against the stick motion to keep it from rebounding. Your grip should be relaxed and make sure to maximize efficiency by only using enough energy to get the job done.

## **HOW YOU FEEL WHEN YOU DRUM**

As you play, you should always strive for a relaxed physical sensation. The stronger a player you are the more chops you possess, the more efficient you become, hence the more relaxed you are. Physical relaxation also pertains to your brain and state of mind. No matter what the musical or physical responsibility at any given time, and through practicing GOOD habits you are setting yourself up for success by having peace of mind and a strong mental approach to your playing which sets you up to be more consistent. When you play, you should also be breathing comfortably. Learning to breathe naturally while playing anything regardless of difficulty will result in a more relaxed, healthy sound and approach.

## **EQUIPMENT AND IMPLEMENTS**

When rehearsing at stand-still (no drill) the line will utilize Stadium Hardware stands for their instruments. It will be each musician's individual responsibility to transport their own stand to and from the rehearsal area. Additionally, when the group travels each musician will load and unload his/her own equipment which will include drum(s), carrier(s), and stand(s).

Snare line members will utilize Vic Firth "Ralph Hardimon" (model SRH) sticks only. All sticks must be taped with white electrical tape in the following manner: apx. 2 ½ inches of tape at the butt-end of the stick; apx. 5 inches of bare stick; remainder of stick taped in a spiral pattern with apx. 1/4 width overlap to end of taper, just below the bead. These exacting standards will ensure a uniform look and sound throughout the line.

*All snare line members must have the following basic items for every rehearsal/class/performance:*

- 1 roll white electrical tape  
(available anywhere)
- 2 pair Vic Firth "Ralph Hardiman" sticks – WOOD TIP  
(available anywhere)
- "Gummed" type practice pad  
(available anywhere)
- 1 flip folio (for stand/pep-band music)  
(available through band office)
- 1 BLACK 3-ring binder with apx. 25 sheet protectors  
(available anywhere)
- Travel stick bag (zipper type recommended)
- Marching stick bag item number VMSBAG2XX-P  
([www.samash.com](http://www.samash.com) - \$14.50)

Please note that additional items may be required for camps and more information will be forthcoming.

## EXERCISES

1. **8 On A Hand**

*This is the primary “loosen up” exercise for the line. The KEY is to maintain a steady tempo and stroke velocity throughout.*

*MM=80 up to MM=160.*

2. **Double Beat**

*This is a variation on the standard double beat exercise. Pay particular attention to making all 16<sup>th</sup> notes/patterns evenly spaced out.*

*MM=80 up to MM=160*

3. **Unison Warmups**

*These exercises are varied but there are NO split parts for tenor or bass lines. Concentrate on nice, even strokes and tempos.*

*MM=80 up to MM=160*

4. **Green**

*This exercise is our standard full percussion ensemble exercise and will incorporate the front ensemble.*

*MM= 80 up to MM=130*

## CADENCES

1. **Street Beat 2011**

*This is the standard street cadence for the 2011 EPCHS Drum Line. This cadence is divided into 6 distinct sections, with each section capable of running in a stand-alone role.*

*MM=120*

2. **EP Backbeat**

*This is a secondary cadence that will primarily be used when entering the football stadium for games. This may also be used for homecoming “through the halls” as well as in the stands and at pep-rallies.*

*MM=120*

3. **2011 Field Cadence *\*\*not included in this packet – bass line only\*\****

*This is the cadence that will be played every time the band exits the football field after completing the competition field show.*

*MM=120*

4. **Roll-off 2011**

*Forget what you’ve heard in the past, this is the new and improved EPCHS roll-off. Only 20 counts long from start to finish, it must be played strong and with confidence.*

*MM=120*

# 8 ON A HAND

Snare Drum

B Gregory

A



R \_\_\_\_\_ L \_\_\_\_\_ R \_\_\_\_\_ L \_\_\_\_\_



R \_\_\_\_\_ L \_\_\_\_\_ R \_\_\_\_\_ L \_\_\_\_\_ R

B



R \_\_\_\_\_ L \_\_\_\_\_ R \_\_\_\_\_ L \_\_\_\_\_



R \_\_\_\_\_ L \_\_\_\_\_ R \_\_\_\_\_ L \_\_\_\_\_ R

# Double Beat

Snares

B Gregory



R ..... L ..... R ..... L .....



RR L ..... R L ..... R LL ..... R L .....



RR LL ..... R L ..... RR LL ..... R

# Unison Warmups

Score

B Gregory

**A**

Snare Drum

R R R R R R L R L L ...

**B**

R L ...

**C**

> > > > > > > > > > > > > >

**D**

R R R R ...  
L L L L ...

R ... L ...

**E**

*mf*

R L R ... R R L ... R L L ...

L R L ... R L ... R L ...

*ff*

# Green

Snare

B Gregory





# EP Street Beat '11

Snare Drum

B Gregory

## INTRO

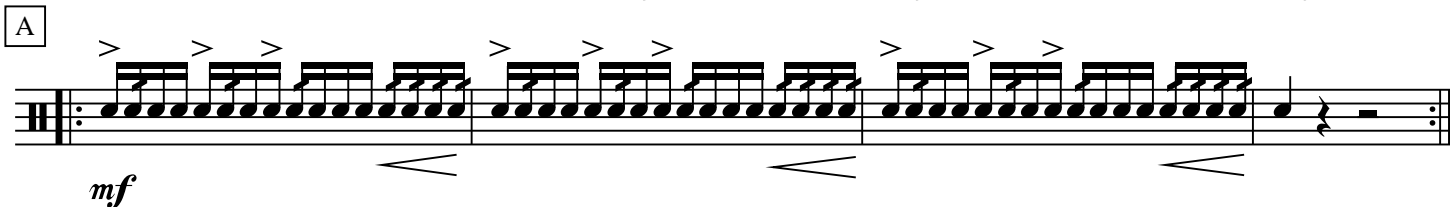


INTRO

4/4

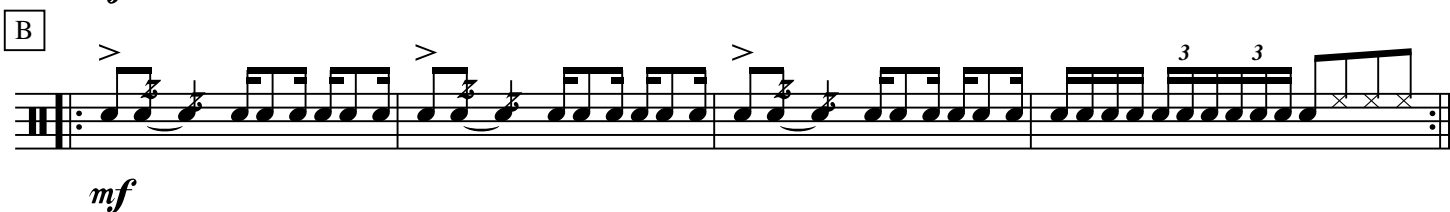
mp ————— f mp ————— f mp ————— f

A



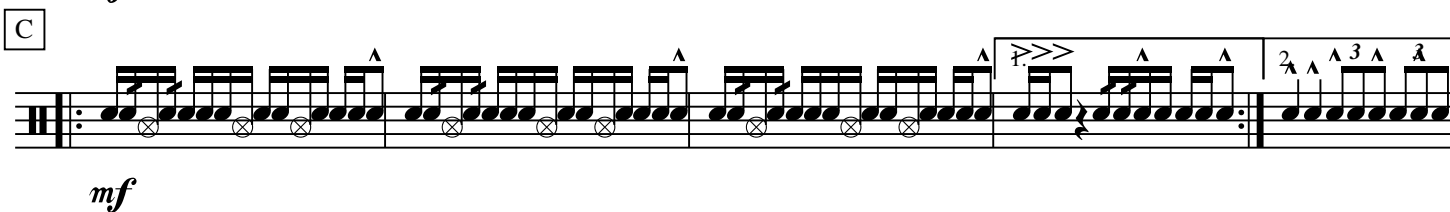
mf

B



mf

C



mf

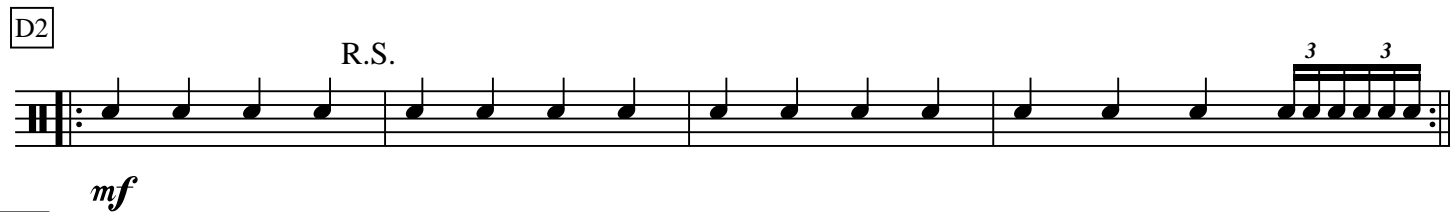
D



mp

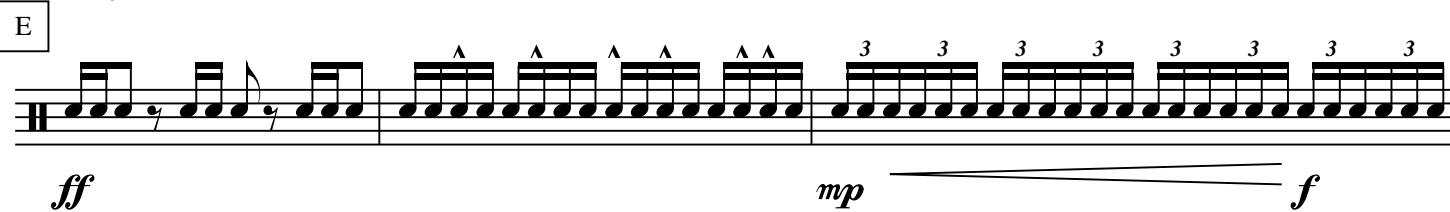
D2

R.S.




mf

E



ff

mp ————— f



# EP Backbeat

Snares

B Gregory

R R

6

10

14

3 3

3 3

3 3

3 3

# 2011 EPCHS Roll-Off

Snares

B Gregory

The musical notation is for a snare drum in 4/4 time. It consists of a single staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature of 4/4. The piece begins with a dynamic marking of *mp* (mezzo-piano) and a crescendo leading to *f* (forte). The first measure contains four eighth notes with accents (>). The second measure contains two groups of eighth notes, each marked with a triplet (3). The third measure contains two groups of eighth notes, each marked with a triplet (3), followed by a quarter note with an accent (^). The fourth measure contains two groups of eighth notes, each marked with a triplet (3), followed by a quarter note with an accent (^). The fifth measure is a 'Solo Snare' section, indicated by a triangle (^) and a bracket over a series of eighth notes, with some notes marked with an 'x'. The sixth measure contains four quarter notes, each with an accent (^). The piece ends with a double bar line.