

Hands and Feet

All four limbs are responsible for operating the drum set, and it is important to know how to correctly hold the drum sticks and use the pedals if you are going to be able to successfully and tastefully keep time for the band.

Gripping the Drum Sticks

There are two widely accepted stick grips used today: matched grip and traditional grip. It is important for you to be familiar with both so that you can produce a wider variety of styles and tone colors on the drum set

Matched Grip

Matched grip gets its name from the fact that both hands look the same when holding the sticks- like a mirror image of each other. This grip feels and looks very similar to the grip you would use when holding a thin-handled hammer. Follow these steps to create a correct matched grip:

1. Hold your hand out open with the palm up and the fingers together. Place the drum stick across the palm diagonally.



Figure 13: Matched grip step 1

2. Wrap the index finger around the stick and hold the stick so that it is between the first joint of the index finger and the pad of the thumb. Check that you are gripping the proper fulcrum point on the stick (one third of the length up from the butt end of the stick).



Figure 14: Matched grip step 2

3. The other three fingers then wrap loosely around the stick. Use these fingers to guide the stick, not to grip it.



Figure 15: Matched grip step 3

4. Repeat these steps with the other hand. Hold the drum sticks so that your palms face down. You have now created a correct matched grip.

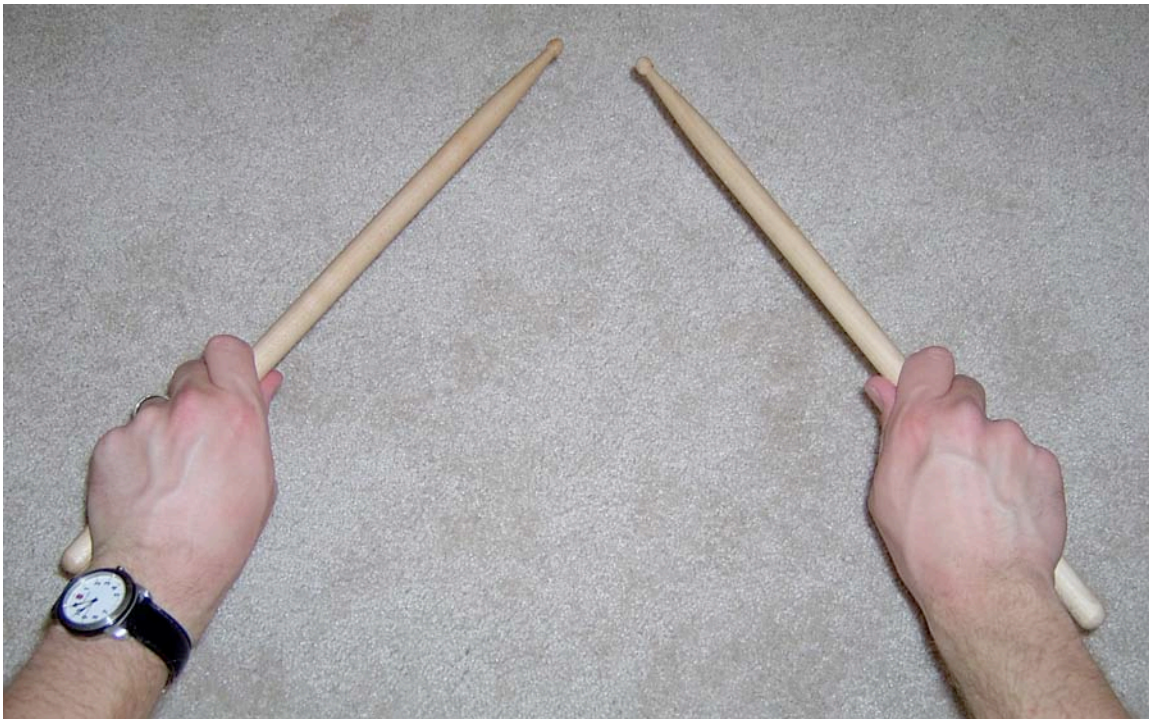


Figure 16: Complete matched grip

***See Chapter 3 of the video for a demonstration of this technique**

Traditional Grip

The traditional grip was developed by players who had to play drums that were held by slings across the shoulder, making matched grip not practical. In traditional grip, the right hand uses the same grip and motion as in the matched grip, while the left hand is inverted and uses a rotation of the forearm to strike the drum, rather than bending of the wrist. Follow these steps to construct the correct left hand grip for traditional grip:

1. Hold out the left hand as if you are going to shake someone else's hand. Place the fulcrum of the drum stick (one third up the length of the stick from the butt) at the base of the thumb between your thumb and palm.



Figure 17: Traditional grip step 1

2. Close the ring finger and little finger against the palm, underneath the drum stick.



Figure 18: Traditional grip step 2

3. Gently wrap the index and middle fingers around the drum stick. These fingers do not grip the stick; they only guide it and keep it from flying out of control.



Figure 19: Traditional grip step 3

4. Both hands of traditional grip.



Figure 20: Traditional grip

***See Chapter 3 of the video for a demonstration of this technique**

Swing Style Explained

Swing style is also referred to as jazz style and is the starting point for many other styles within the Jazz genre. This rhythm is slightly more complicated than the rock rhythm you have already worked on. All four limbs are now working together, and the standard swing ostinato rhythm is found in the right hand. Here is the limb-by-limb breakdown of the style:

- The right foot plays straight quarter notes on the bass drum. This must be done very quietly! This supports the bass player, but the softer the bass drum is, the better. Playing the bass drum extremely softly is a technique known as feathering.
- The left foot operates the hi-hat pedal, closing the hi-hat on beats 2 and 4.
- The right hand plays the standard swing ostinato pattern on the ride cymbal.
- The left hand plays the snare drum on beats 2 and 4. Play this part as it is written when getting started, but as you become more comfortable with the style, you should not feel obligated to hit the drum on every second and fourth beat of every measure. As you gain experience you will learn how to use the snare drum more subtly in swing style.

***The Swing Exercises are demonstrated in Chapter 5 of the video**



SWING EXERCISES

S1 Right Foot (Bass Drum)

S2 Left Foot (Hi-hat)

S3 Right Hand (Ride Cymbal)

S4 Left Hand (Snare Drum)

S5 Left Foot (Hi-hat) & Right Hand (Ride Cymbal)

S6 Left Hand (Snare Drum) & Right Foot (Bass Drum)

S7 Swing Style Time