Snare Drum Technique: Some Basics
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I. GRIP
A. Both hands are held with the palms down.
B. The stick is held between the pad of the thumb and the first and second joints of the index finger; this forms the fulcrum. Remaining fingers curl naturally around the stick with the pads of the fingers lightly touching the stick.
C. The butt end of the stick should cross the outer half of the palm, not directly in the center of the palm or at the base of the fingers. The angle at which the stick crosses the palm is determined by the natural alignment of the hand and forearm; keep your wrist straight.
D. The fulcrum functions as a pivot point, much like the center-support of a teeter-totter. The three back fingers remain touching the butt end of the stick during each stroke.
E. The wrist is used to initiate stick movement, the forearm does not move up and down for most playing.
F. The tightness in the fulcrum (i.e., the amount of pressure between the thumb and index finger) affects the speed at which the stick bounces off of the head. The tighter the fulcrum the quicker the bounce; this is a crucial consideration when rolling.
G. The amount of pressure placed on the stick by the three back fingers greatly affects the way in which the sticks bounce off of the head. These three fingers play an important role in developing control and advanced drumming technique. Too much pressure applied by these fingers impairs the stick movement in general playing.

II. STANCE
A. Feet are spread about shoulder width apart.
B. Play from the body's center. Your stance must provide a stable base to ensure controlled playing.
C. The focal point for energy flow is the stick's head.
D. Shoulders and arms should be relaxed; arm weight should center at the elbow.

III. STROKES
A. There are four basic strokes used in snare drumming. In general, strokes are described according to the relative distance between stick and instrument
   1. FULL STROKE: Stick begins and ends in an up or high position. The sticks should move in a continuous motion with no emphasis--change of velocity--up or down.
   2. DOWN STROKE: Stick begins up and ends down (low), within an inch or two of the head. The back fingers must squeeze or snap the stick against the palm at the moment the stick strikes the head in order to keep the stick close to the head.
   3. TAP STROKE: Stick begins and ends in a down position; this is a very short/small stroke.
   4. UP STROKE: Stick begins down and ends up.
B. The type of stroke used to play any given note is determined by what type of stroke precedes and follows it. Preparation and follow-through must be considered with every stroke.
C. The vast majority of strokes used in general snare drumming are full strokes. Full strokes can be thought of as strokes which begin and end in the same position. Consequently, the tap stroke can be thought of as a small/short full stroke. The size of the full stroke used is directly related to the dynamic one is trying to achieve.
D. Dynamics are directly related to stroke types. In general, down strokes are loud, and tap and up strokes are quiet. Full strokes of varying lengths can be used to achieve different dynamic levels; use the proper stroke to achieve the desired dynamic. For example, rudimental flams consist of an up stroke (the grace note) and a down stroke (the main note). This puts each stick in the proper position to play the next flam.
E. Learning to manipulate the stick through varying fulcrum pressure and control of the back fingers is an important part of snare drum technique.

IV. Rolls: Four general types of rolls are used in snare drumming.
A. Single stroke: fast alternating full strokes; one contact between stick and drum head for each wrist movement.
B. Double stroke, also known as rudimental: a stroke and a rebound in one motion; two contacts between stick and drum head for each wrist movement.
C. Triple stroke, also used in rudimental drumming: a stroke and two rebounds for each wrist movement.
D. Multiple bounce (buzz, orchestral): as many bounces as possible for each wrist movement.
E. In all rolling it is important to remember that the speed at which the stick rebounds from the head is controlled by the tightness in the fulcrum. Rebounds which must be close together require a tighter fulcrum.