

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT BEGINNING SNARE DRUM**

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### **Where do I start?**

Start by deciding where you want your program to go three to five years down the line. The curriculum that is chosen for this class will set the tone for the student's high school percussion career. If it based solely on concert playing, it will be difficult for them to succeed in modern marching percussion techniques. If the curriculum is based solely on rudimental playing, the students will find it difficult to play with finesse needed in concert percussion. There must be a good blend of the two.

### **What is more important, technique or rudiments?**

It is impossible to have one without the other. A percussionist cannot play rudiments without proper technique and it is impossible to be a technical player without knowledge of rudiments. Rudiments are the building blocks of the percussion genre. They are vital to the success of the student. If the student does not have this knowledge, it will haunt him when it comes to even the most basic of snare drum solos. Although, when teachers rush too quickly into rudimental training with beginning classes, it leads to a lack of knowledge in the area of technique. This causes very bad habits to form. Later, the students will have to go back and fix these problems and this set back can severely hinder the success of the student.

In my opinion, build a large base of technical skill through rhythm studies and sticking exercises. After the student is proficient in reading and technique, move into the rudimental curriculum. This will allow the students to learn the grip and stroke so that bad habits do not form. Also, by teaching reading and counting before rudiments, the students will understand the "feel" of the rudiments correctly. Many students do not play rudiments incorrectly, but they do not play them in the correct rhythmic feel that they are intended. This is due to a lack of rhythmic understanding before they learn the rudiment.

### **Matched or Traditional Grip?**

In the world of percussion education, this is question that is argued daily. Many educators feel that if rudimental snare drum can be played proficiently, the player must play traditional grip. Others feel that there is absolutely no reason to play traditional grip unless there is a tilted drum. Truthfully, I feel that traditional grip is very important for a snare player on a marching snare with a Kevlar head. It is not as important for beginning snare drummers. In my experience, most sixth and seventh graders do not have large enough hands to form the traditional grip correctly. This leads to a modified grip. This bad habit makes the grip less effective for the player and causes some discomfort in faster playing. My curriculum does not begin traditional grip until eighth grade. This is the point when drumline is first introduced. At this point, the students have grown some and are stronger physically and as players.

### **What books do you suggest?**

In my program, I use several books. I feel that there are so many great books out there, I need to integrate several different ideas. I use a book for counting/reading, a book for stickings and stroke, and a book for rudimental training. I start the year by using Stick Control by George Stone and Guide to Syncopation by Ted Reed. These books are great for any level percussionist. The Stone text covers basic to advanced stickings. I am able to work basic stroke technique and teach the millions of sticking combinations by using this book. The Reed teaches reading and counting skills. While at Smithson Valley HS, I used the rhythm charts from this book with my wind ensemble. This book starts simple and increases difficulty at a very reasonable rate. By the time this book is completed, the students are very capable readers. This system works well due to the concentration on technique and counting. These two things are the root of playing any instrument. They are the most important aspect of beginning snare drum. In the second semester,

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I have begun to use the Keenan Wylie text, Simple Steps to Successful Snare Drumming. I found this book to be a bit complex rhythmically for absolute beginners, so I have adjusted my curriculum to fit this book. The students truly enjoy working from this book. After spending a semester learning to read and count, this book puts that knowledge to excellent use. The book includes several solos that are excellent for beginner solo & ensemble contests. By the end of the first year of percussion, these students are very proficient in snare drum.

## Use the following list of books to fit your curriculum.

Britton, Mervin	Creative Approach to Snare Drum ( <i>bk.1</i> )
Buggert, Robert	Buggert Method for Snare Drum (bk. 1)
Burns, Roy	Elementary Drum Method
Chauviere, Joel	Studies for the Beginner (snare drum)
Cirone, Anthony	Simple Steps to Snare Drum
Davila, Lalo	Contemporary Rudimental Studies and Solos
DeCaro	21 Steps to Beginning Snare Drum
Faulkner, Steve	Snare Drum Basics
Feldstein, Sandy	Alfred's Beginning Drum Pack
Feldstein, Sandy	New Band Method/Snare Drum (bk.1)
Feldstein, Sandy	Snare Drum Rudiment Dictionary
Feldstein, Sandy	Alfred's Beginning Snare Drum Solos
Feldstein, Sandy	Basic Band Methods (bk. 1)
Feldstein, Sandy	Alfred's Drum Method (bk.1)
Fink, Siegfried	Rhythm Studies (vol. 1&2)
Fink, Siegfried	Studies for Snare Drum Vol. 1 Elementary Exer.
Fink, Siegfried	Studies for Snare Drum Vol. 2 Shifts of accent
Fink, Siegfried	Studies for Snare Drum Vol. 3 Prog. Studies
Fink, Siegfried	Studies for Snare Drum Vol. 4 Flams
Fink, Siegfried	Studies for Snare Drum Vol. 5 Rolls
Fink, Siegfried	Studies for Snare Drum Vol. 6 2-3-4 Snare Drums
Firth, Vic	Launch Pad
Firth, Vic	Snare Drum Method (Bk. 1&2)
Gilbert/Feldstien	Learn to Play the Snare Drum and Bass Drum
Golden berg, Morris	Snare Drum for Beginners
Harr, Haskell	Drum
Hughlett, David	Understanding Techniques
Keown, Alan	Mastering the Rudiments
Keown, Alan	The Musical Snare Drummer
Kinyon, John	Basic Training Course for Drums (bk.1&2)
Kinyon, John	Breeze Easy Method for Drums (bk.1&2)
Kvistad, Rick	Accent Studies and Etudes for Percussion
Lang, Morris	Beginning Snare Drummer
Leslie, Nat	Elementary Method of Drumming
Maroni, Joe	Fundamental Principles of Drumming
Morgan, Tom	Sequential Approach to Fundamental Snare Drum
Ostling, Acton	Three R's of Snare Drumming
Payson, Al	Beginning Snare Drum

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Perkins, Phil	Logical Approach to Snare Drum
Peters, Mitchell	Elementary Snare Drum Studies
Peters, Mitchell	Intermediate Snare Drum Studies
Price, Paul	Beginning Snare Drum
Reed, Ted	Guide to Syncopation
Schinstine/Hoey	Basic Drum Book
Schinstine/Hoey	Drum Method (Vol. 1&2)
Sholle, Emil	Here's the Drum
Steinquest, David	Life's Little Rudiment Book
Stone, George	Accents and Rebounds
Stone, George	Stick Control
Wessells, Mark	Fresh Approach to Snare Drum
Whaley, Garwood	Basics in Rhythm
Whaley, Garwood	Fundamental Studies for Snare
Whaley, Garwood	Primary Handbook for Snare
Whaley, Garwood	Snare Solos for the Advanced Beginner
Wilcoxon, Charlie	Drum Method
Wylie, Keenan	Simple Steps to Successful Snare Drumming