

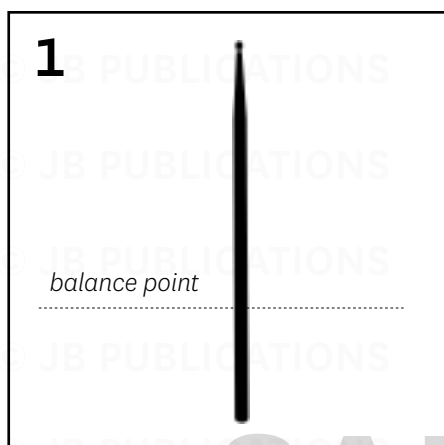
THE STICK

The most common tool or implement to play a drum is a **DRUM STICK**. Here is a breakdown of the various parts.

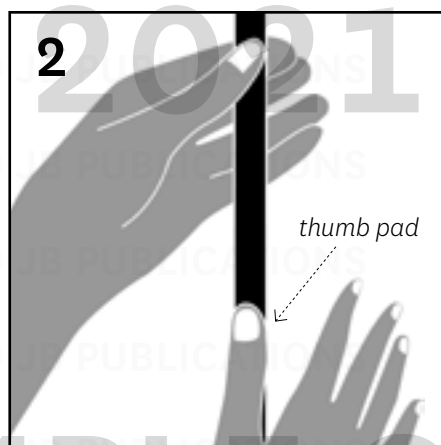


HOLDING THE STICK

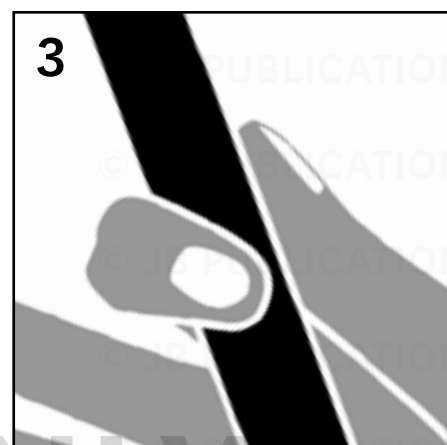
Holding the sticks correctly is the first step to physically playing. We will start with **MATCHED GRIP**, meaning both hands are the same or “matched.” Follow these steps to do so:



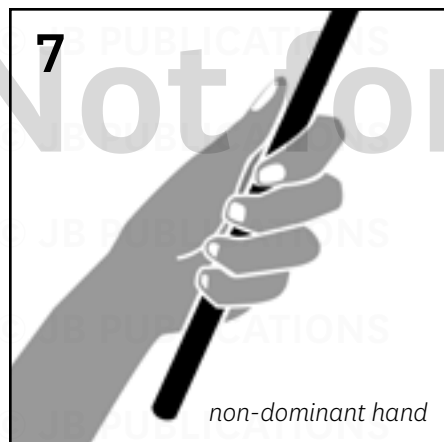
Begin with the stick standing upright and then split the stick into thirds with your hands. The bottom hand or bottom third is the **BALANCE POINT**. This is where the stick has maximum response.



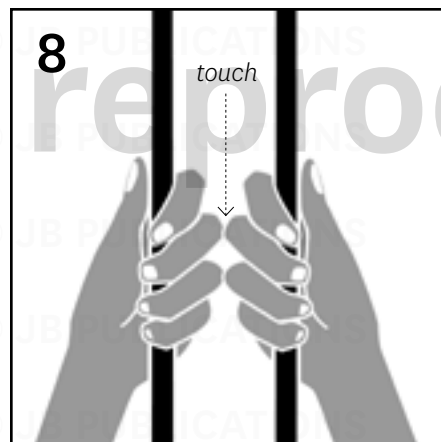
Use your non-dominant hand to hold the stick as you place the thumb pad of your dominant hand on the balance point of the stick.



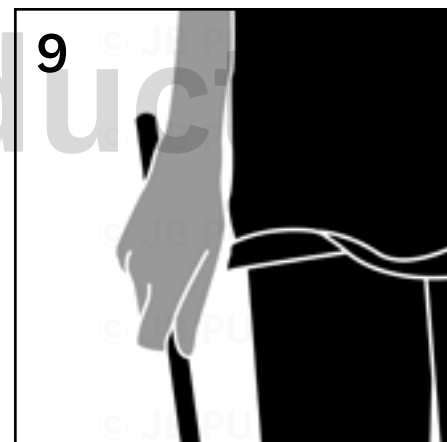
Wrap the index finger around to make the **FULCRUM**. The fulcrum is where a lever rests and pivots, and it is essential to your grip. This is where you *hold* the stick.



Repeat every step thus far with the other stick in your non-dominant hand.



Place your knuckles together to look for symmetry between the hands. There should be the same amount of stick showing below the grip.



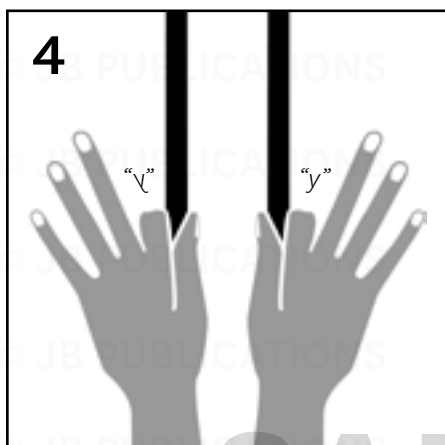
Drop your hands at your sides and take a deep breath to remove tension from your shoulders, neck, and arms.

balance point

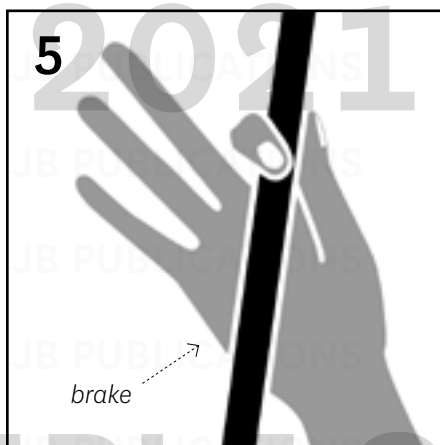
butt

shaft

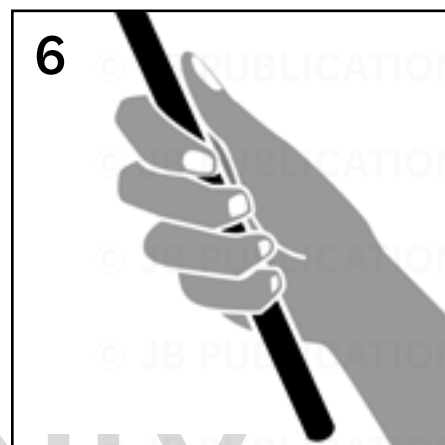
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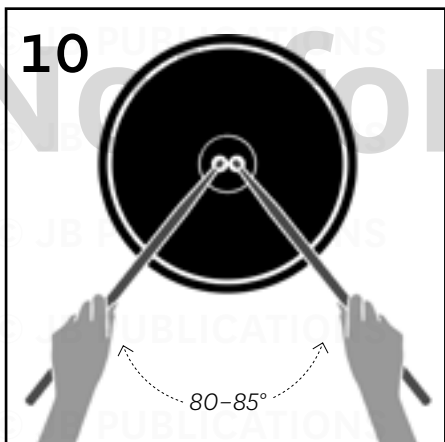
4 Make sure your thumb and index finger align. The thumb can be a little bit higher depending on your hands but not much. The right hand makes a “y” and the left hand makes a reverse “y.”



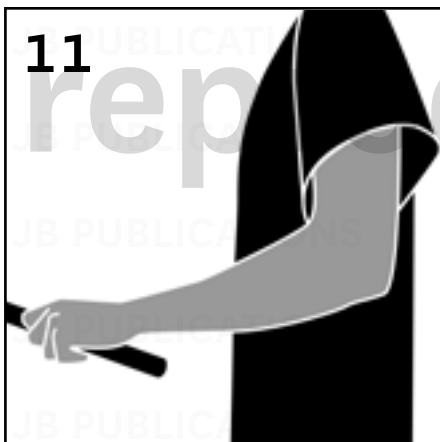
5 Turn the stick over to identify the angle. The bottom $\frac{1}{3}$ of the stick should be resting over the **BRAKE**. This is the soft part on the edge of your hand opposite from your thumb.



6 Place your fingers (middle, ring, and pinkie) over the stick one at a time. This is where you *touch* the stick.



10 Raise your arms up to the pad creating an 80-85 degree angle by positioning the beads of the stick over the playing zone dots.

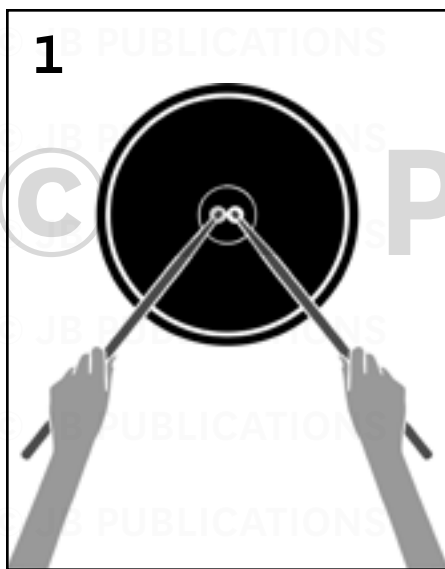


11 Align your elbows with your body. If the elbows are behind your body, you are too close and if in front, you are too far away. Take a step forward or backward while leaving the beads over the playing zones to set your alignment.

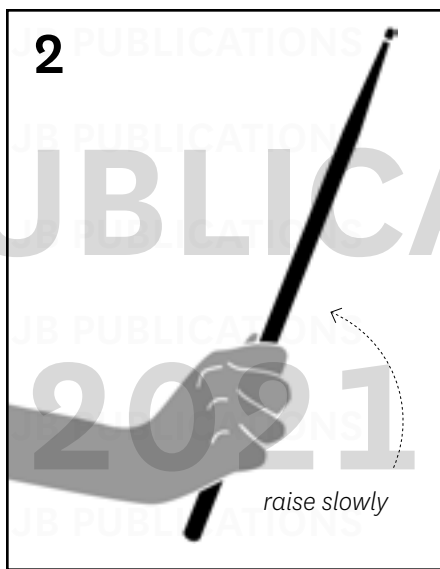
You have now established the proper holding of the stick along with correct posture. The position of the beads hovering just above the playing zones will be referred to as the **DOT POSITION**.

THE PATH

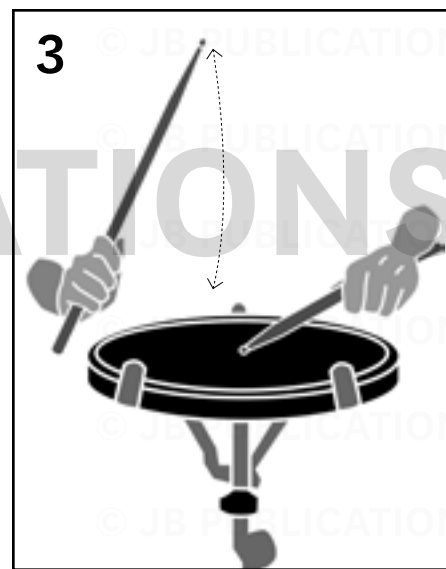
When playing, the stick follows a specific path between the dots or playing zones and the height at which you are playing. To develop this path, you must trace it slowly in the air with the sticks. Follow these steps to do so:



Start in the dot position.



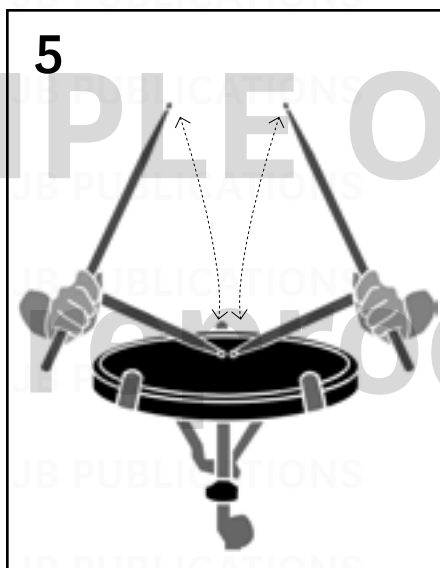
Start with your dominant hand. While only using your wrist or door knock hinge, raise the stick upward and away from the center of the pad/drum.



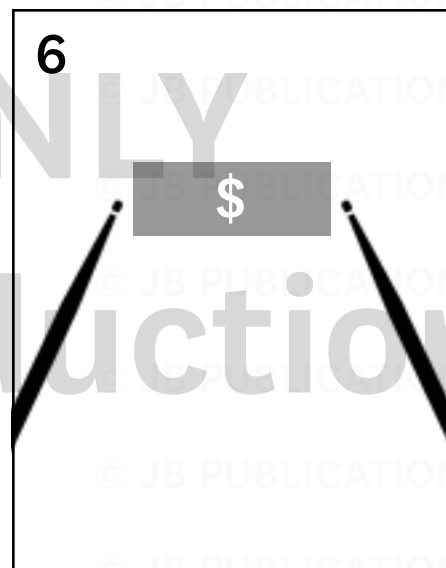
Carefully trace the path that the stick follows through full motion. Keep your other stick in the dot position.



Continue tracing the path of the stick slowly while carefully maintaining a consistent path, grip, posture, and playing zone. Switch to your non-dominant hand and carefully trace the path with that hand as well. Increase the speed of the tracing.



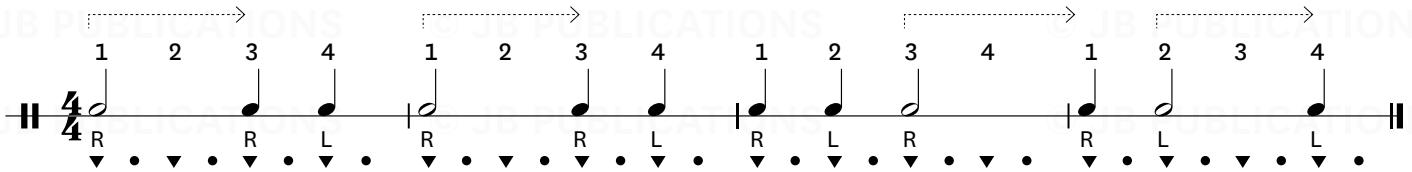
After you are comfortable tracing your path with each hand, trace the path with both hands simultaneously to look for symmetry.



Raise the sticks to a height of about 15" above the pad. The distance between the beads should be approximately the length of a dollar bill. This position will be known as the **UP POSITION**. Make sure you are still and relaxed in this position.

HALF NOTE EXAMPLE LINE ♩ = 66-72 ♩ = ____

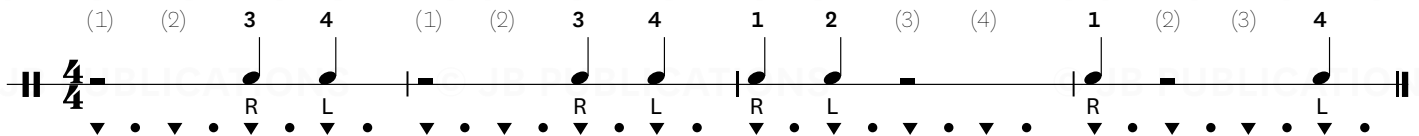
Try this example line using some half notes.

**HALF RESTS**

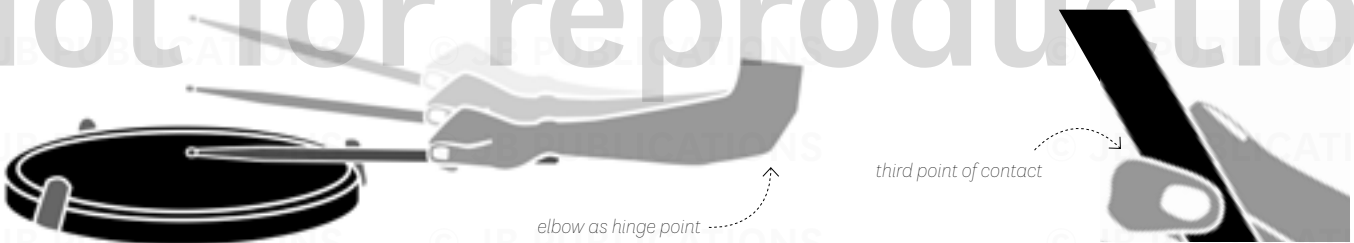
For every note, there is an equal rest. The **HALF REST** is no different, as it is worth two beats of silence. Two quarter rests fit into one half rest or more simply put, 1 rest + 1 rest = 2 rests.

**HALF REST EXAMPLE LINE** ♩ = 66-72 ♩ = ____

Try this example line using some half rests.

**BUZZ STROKES**

So far, you have been developing the rebound stroke using the *Door Knock Hinge*. It's time to learn something new called a **BUZZ STROKE**. This new, interesting stroke uses the elbow as the hinge point instead of the wrist. The elbow moves downward and when the stick impacts the head, the stick reacts to a fulcrum pressure. The third point of contact acts as a spring with the stick creating rapid multiple bounces on the head. The resulting sound is a buzz.



Buzzes are commonly notated with a "z" through the note. Follow the steps above to play your buzzes. Don't press hard into the head, but let the stick meet the head naturally. When you lift from the elbow, keep the stick parallel with the ground. Try some buzzes now.



LEDGER LINES

The range of notes can be greatly extended in either direction by traveling above or below the staff. This would not be possible without the use of **LEDGER LINES**. These short versions of staff lines act as rungs on a ladder, creating more lines and spaces in between. Continue to follow the musical alphabet to “climb” up or “dig” down the staff.



F G A B C



E D C B A

Now, the range of the musical alphabet stretches much farther:



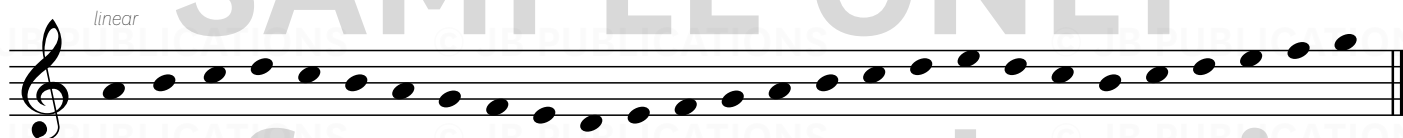
A B C D E F G A B C D E F G A



A G F E D C B A G F E D C B A

PRACTICE LINES 1-5

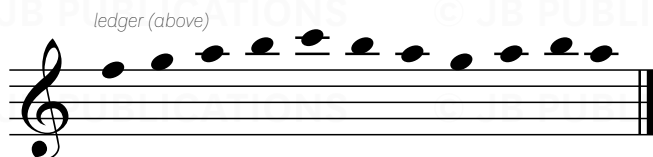
Fill in the blanks below with the note names of the notes displayed on the staff. Pay close attention to the patterns on the staff while identifying the notes. It is beneficial to practice reading the notes out loud as quickly as you can.



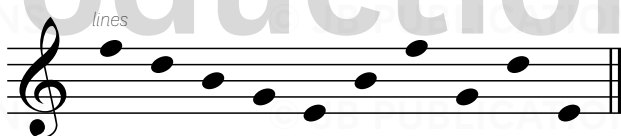
1. _____



2. _____



4. _____



3. _____



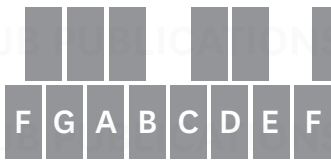
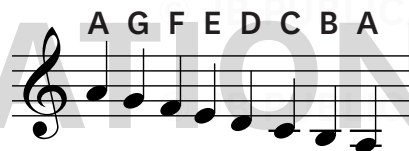
5. _____

MUSICAL ALPHABET ON THE INSTRUMENT

In this section, you'll see how the musical alphabet and staff relates to the instrument. When viewing the instrument, the uninterrupted notes are known as the **NATURALS** or **WHITE KEYS**. These are all of the notes in the musical alphabet. The notes grouped in twos and threes will be referred to as **BLACK KEYS**. This terminology relates to the piano as the notes are literally white and black. The instrument is pitched low to high from left to right.

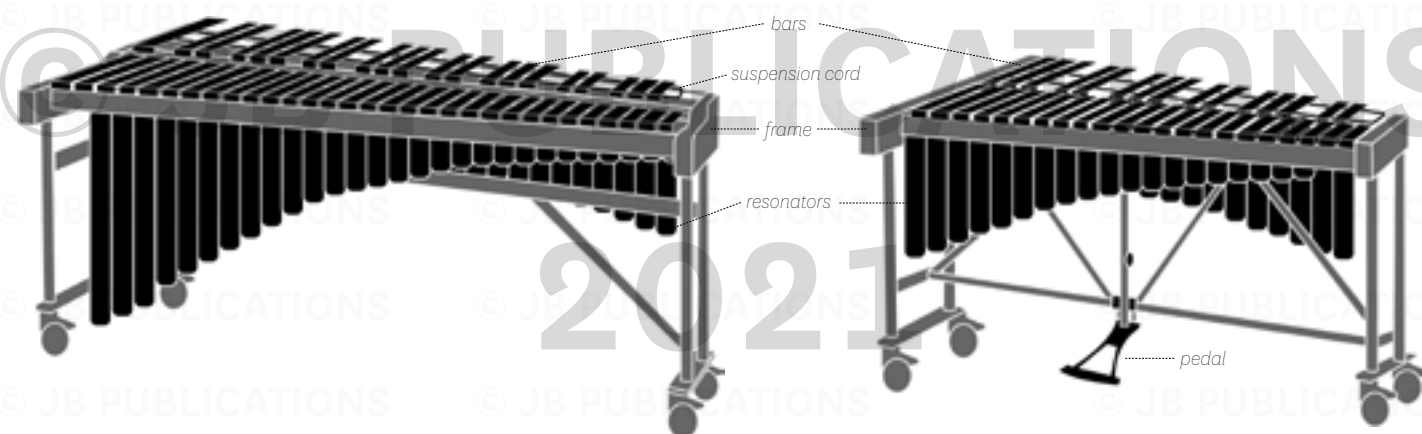
A B C D E F G A = ascending the staff = moving right on the instrument

A G F E D C B A = descending the staff = moving left on the instrument



THE MALLET INSTRUMENTS

Up to this point, you have gained valuable knowledge including the musical alphabet, the staff, clefs, notes, and the layout of mallet instruments. Now, it's time to examine this area further. These instruments have pitched bars suspended by cord. **RESONATORS** hang beneath the bars to amplify the sound when the bars are struck. Drum sticks are not used to strike the bars of these instruments but rather specific mallets that can be made of rubber, plastic, yarn, cord, wood or even metal. Here are the most commonly used instruments in this category:



marimba

wooden or synthetic bars
struck with yarn, cord, rubber, or latex mallets

vibraphone

metal bars
struck with cord, yarn, or rubber mallets

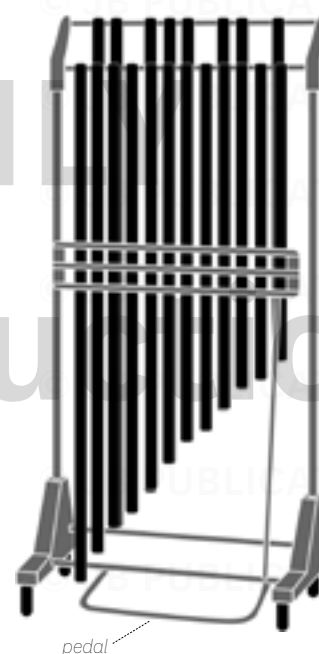


xylophone

wooden or synthetic bars
struck with plastic, rubber, or wood mallets

glockenspiel or bells

metal bars
struck with plastic, acrylic, or metal mallets



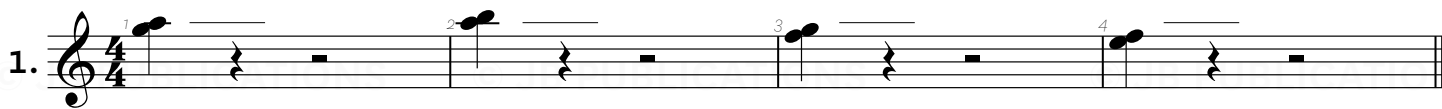
chimes or tubular bells

metal tubes
struck with synthetic or rawhide hammers

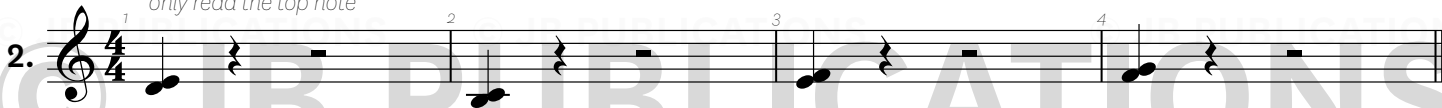
DOUBLE STOP READING ♩ = 80-100 ♩ =

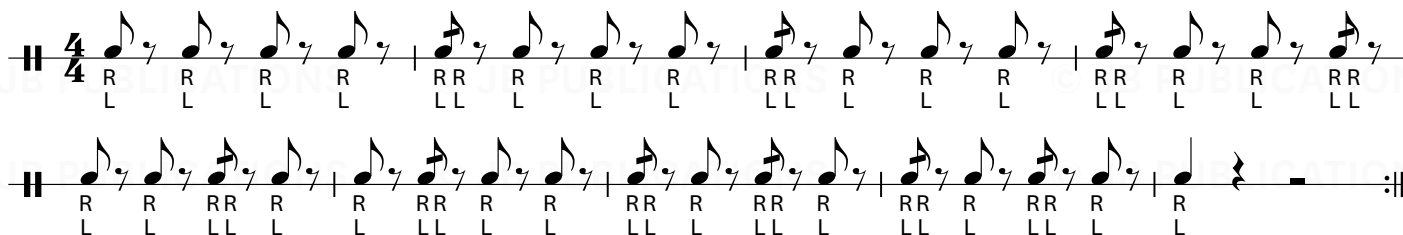
This time it's your turn to identify the seconds. Remember, write $\bar{m}2$ for a minor second or M2 for a major second.

only read the bottom note

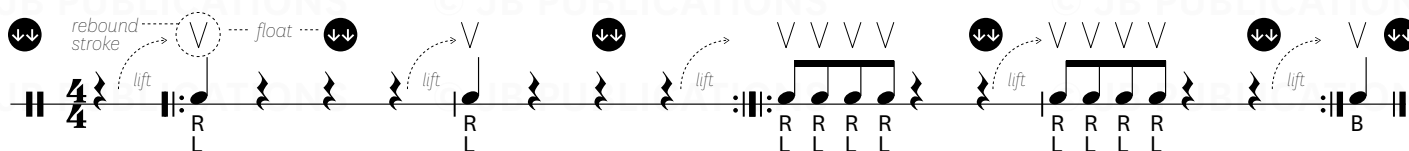


only read the top note

**READING ACCIDENTALS LEVEL 2** ♩ = 80-104 ♩ = **ONE STEP READING LEDGER LINES** ♩ = 80-112 ♩ = **ONE STEP READING** ♩ = 80-112 ♩ = 

DIDDLE PROGRESSION STEP TWO ♩ = 128 ♩ = ____**DIDDLE PROGRESSION STEP THREE** ♩ = 128 ♩ = ____**LIFT EXERCISE STEP ONE** ♩ = 100-104 ♩ = ____

This new exercise starts from a down position and lifts or preps to play a higher note. Use the entire beat for the prep, but the stroke itself should move much faster. There should be no stopping of motion until the end of the stroke. Rebound strokes are notated below. After each rebound stroke, naturally float to the down position as notated.

**DOWN STROKE EXERCISE STEP ONE** ♩ = 100-104 ♩ = ____

This exercise introduces the **DOWN STROKE**. The down stroke is played exactly like a rebound stroke only it stays after it plays. This is accomplished with the back fingers holding the stick against the brake immediately after contact. The goal is to make the down stroke sound exactly like the rebound strokes before it.

**DYNAMICS**

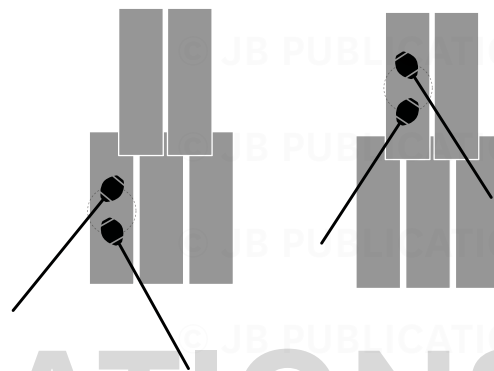
Musicians must achieve many volumes to function in different roles. These different volume levels referred to as **DYNAMICS** are notated by dynamic markings. Percussionists achieve different volumes mostly by the use of different heights. There are six dynamics on the chart and you know six heights from *Height/Volume!* These heights correspond directly to the dynamics. *These are just starting points for the dynamic markings and should always be adjusted according to your performance situation.*

ff fortissimo	f forte	mf mezzo forte	mp mezzo piano	p piano	pp pianissimo
15" very loud	12" loud	8" medium loud	4" medium soft	2" soft	1" very soft

In some settings, the 8" or even 4" height could be considered forte or a higher height could be considered for a lower dynamic. A height in between one of the heights listed could be the perfect volume for your setting.

FREE STROKES

Play previous *Free Strokes* steps. Then explore playing zone two by placing one hand over zone one and one over zone two. Play constant motion strokes in one zone and then the other without changing position. Either hand can play each zone and you should be comfortable with either way.



4, 3, 2, 1, 1 ♩ = 96-100 ♩ =

