

Hand Positions

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Well, you've found the secret to success, or fountain of life for drumming!! If you could go around to all the major players of past and present, you can be pretty sure that you would find a phenomenal set of meat hooks on all of them.

The concept of a proper grip is the most fundamental, and basic thing to learn but unfortunately, it's the toughest to master. The grip is composed solely of positioning of the hands on the sticks. There should be absolutely **no pressure** of any kind in your grip and you should be able to play everything with relative ease. That brings up another point, however, of the motions of drumming and how different strokes are performed.

Oh sure, I can sit here and talk away at how things should be but the key point that I hope you will get, is that all this will take time and practice. I've been playing for roughly 14 years and I'm just now rediscovering the importance of the "no pressure" methods

The photos below will hopefully give you an **idea** as to how to hold the sticks. They are not necessarily right and there are definitely more ways to hold the stick than this, but so far have been good for me. There are very fine details of "muscle memory" that are learned through having a great teacher and practising the **right way** a lot!

The Standard Position



So this hand grip is known as the "Traditional" style of drumming, and my apologies to those who play Match Grip because I'm yet to have anything for you here.

Concept 1:

Drumsticks are levers and move around a point on the stick called a balance point. This means that there is one fundamental point of contact with the drumstick (no death grips!).

Concept 2:

You must allow the stick to float free inside your hand. Think of it as a little sparrow in your hand, you can't grip it tight or you'll squish it's head. So, the key is to be gentle with the stick and let it move while you play.

Concept 3:

The thumb should just be there... The purpose of having the thumb on the stick is for control. Your main source of power is from the wrists. The meaty part of your thumb (the pad), should be resting on the stick and should be used to control the height of the stick (finger control comes later).

Concept 4:

Have good line. The sticks should soon be a part of your body (it's a Zen-thing), or they should at least feel like a comfortable extension of your hands. If you can't achieve this, you might want to think about a new set of sticks. This may solve your problem.



Warning 1:

One thing to be wary of is, what's commonly known as 'Witch Fingers.' This is what happens when you try to hold the left stick like a pencil, and this is bad. DON'T DO IT! This will cause you nothing but grief in your future, and past for that matter, lives.



Concept 5:

It's very important to have nice floors (esp. on the left hand). If you start working with nice floors, then it makes playing a lot simpler. What do I mean by floors you ask? Well, the angle the stick is at should be close to parallel with the drumming surface, and your fingers should be holding the stick that way.



Concept 6:

Using the right number of fingers (right hand), for your particular balance point. Some people tend to use the front finger (and thumb) as the point of pivoting, and therefor would use the 2nd and 3rd for control. Some people tend to use the 2nd finger (and thumb) as the pivot point, and would therefor use the 3rd and 4th fingers for control and the 1st finger would be more of a guide (pointing to the ground). But of course this all depends on the particular hand angle that you are using. (see how important a good teacher is??)



Concept 7:

USE THE WRIST! Your wrists are the keys to successful drumming. The elbows come into play after you start working on motions (for dynamics and more complex techniques), but the wrists are still the motors that get the stick moving. Otherwise, you'll end up with a bad case of drummers elbow (and a little case of tendonitis, carpal tunnel syndrome, and some other not so fun problems). Plus, you'll just look silly. ;-)



Question 1:

Where do you put the pinky? Well, you can really put it anywhere you like. You may feel that it's useful and want to put it on the stick. You may find that it's a pain, and tuck it away (that's what I do). Or you may decide to flail it around like your having tea while you play! It's up to you.



Concept 8:

Relax, relax, I think you get the idea.

Source: <http://www.canadianstandard.ca/wtsi/hands.html>
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