

Snare Drum Practice Tools

Fulcrum – tape. Graphic arts tape, electrical tape, or masking tape can be placed just beyond the desired fulcrum point on your sticks to help develop a visual and kinesthetic awareness of your fulcrum so it does not move unintentionally and to assure that both hands maintain the same distance grip from the end of the stick.

Playing Area – permanent marker. Draw a pair of boxes around the desired beating spots on any practice surface to dramatically improve beating area consistency. Each box is no more than 1” square.



Practice surfaces:

- **Practice pads** There are myriad practice pads and each offers different possibilities. Choose designs based on your goals. Typically, pads are used to minimize volume or for the sake of convenience. Unfortunately, bad sound production habits can develop if you are not careful. Pads are useful to isolate aspects of your playing that may not be as obvious on the drum itself.
 - **Hard surface pad:** The pitch and resonance of the sticks is more obvious on a hard surface such as hard rubber, wood, or a table top. Monitor the resonance of the sticks to adjust your grip to allow maximum stick resonance - thus assuring a more relaxed technique.
 - **Remo tunable practice pad.** These are available in several diameters and consist of a white-coated tunable drumhead over a hard surface. Excellent overall feel at all dynamics, but louder than rubber pads.
 - **Sabian Quiet One** – drumhead mounted over a padded hard surface mounted in a tunable triple flange hoop. It has a relatively realistic feel and may be set atop a snare drum to achieve snare or snare-off drum resonance.
 - **Gum rubber surface pad:** These are beneficial for learning to fully utilize momentum and rebound. They are also the best surface for developing the open/close and Moeller techniques. Reel Feel 12”gum rubber model.
 - **Towel.** A towel can be placed over the entire drumhead and literally be played on or folded and placed on the non-playing half of the head. When the towel covers the entire head the contact sound is reduced and you must exaggerate the lift portion of your stroke to compensate for the reduced rebound. When the towel covers only half the head, the contact sound predominates and the drum resonance is reduced allowing you to clearly hear stickings. This is especially useful when working on triple bounce or multiple bounce rolls and softer dynamics.
 - **Pillow.** Several famous drummers, such as Buddy Rich and Dennis Chambers, have used pillows to develop their stick rebound and forearm muscles.
 - **Do-It-Yourself dampened drum.** Drape a thin layer of soft cloth over the entire top bearing edge before mounting the batter head. If the cloth is thin enough, this provides a realistic drumhead feel with minimal resonance.
 - **Loose tension batter head.** Practicing on relatively loose tensioned heads such as a field drums or floor tom tom is beneficial for your rudimental technique.
 - **High-tension batter head.** A small bongo drum tuned to a relatively high tension, marching snare drum, or marching tenor produce excellent rebound and are good surfaces for learning to hear intricate bounce rolls.