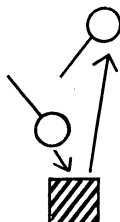


The Various Strokes

UP-STROKES

It is necessary to learn the different types of attacks used to strike these instruments. Probably the most important one is the up-stroke. The up-stroke is started from a position approximately two inches above the note. The note is struck by "snapping" the wrist. As soon as the note is struck the mallet must be lifted quickly to achieve clear articulation. Moreover, this type of stroke allows the maximum amount of tone to be drawn out of the instrument.




The Up-Stroke

STACCATO STROKES

When a passage calls for staccato strokes, a firmer than normal grip must be employed. This, in addition to extremely quick wrist snap, will produce a staccato stroke.

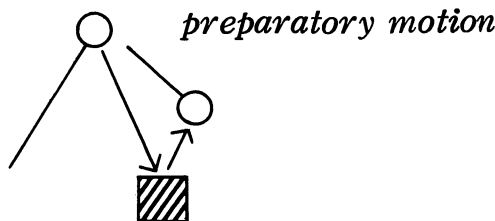
Staccato strokes may be divided into two categories: (1) the full staccato stroke and (2) the half staccato stroke. Full staccato strokes are performed by using the firmest possible grip coupled with a great amount of wrist snap. To perform half staccato strokes, use a firm grip with quicker than normal wrist snap. Use only the appropriate type of staccato stroke; the style of music will determine this.

LEGATO STROKES

Passages covered by slur markings  indicate legato strokes should be used. This type of phrasing should be performed with the mallets close to the keyboard. The grip is very relaxed, almost as if the sticks were feather-light. Smooth, graceful movement from note to note is important.

These three strokes must be developed if a player is to become a fine performer.

One word of caution: *do not use an over amount of preparatory (downward) motion when striking the notes.*



This stroke is similar to a hammer striking a nail and can in no way be considered a musical approach to playing percussion instruments.

Striking the Notes

The best place to strike the bars is in the center. However, when playing fast passages, it will be necessary to strike the "black keys" near the end. The "white keys" will always be struck in the center.

The Roll




Single alternating strokes are used to roll. The double stroke roll is never employed on these instruments.

Changing Notes While Rolling

It is necessary to move extremely fast from one note to another when rolling legato passages. To facilitate smooth movement, a general rule is to have the mallet that is nearest the next note start the roll. The student should try to eliminate any separation in rolling. Convey the impression that there is one continuous roll.

Ranges

There has been no standardization in regard to the ranges of these instruments. The xylophone may extend anywhere from two to four octaves; the marimba, two and one-half to four and one-half octaves; the bells, one to two and one-half octaves; and the vibraphone, three to four octaves.

The xylophone and bells are transposing instruments. In the case of the xylophone, this note  when played, actually sounds . In other words, there is a one octave transposition. On the bells there is a two octave transposition. *e.g.* 

Reading Music

The student should realize it is important when reading to keep his eyes on the music. The teacher should be very careful to have the student avoid looking first at the music, then at the keyboard before finally striking the note.

It is possible to see the keyboard out of the "corners" of the eyes while looking at the music. Concentrate on perceiving the *black keys*; the *white keys* can be located in relation to these.

A Practice Suggestion

It is highly recommended that the student practice a few minutes every day away from the instrument. Go through the usual practice procedure; holding the sticks, reading the music and making appropriate movements to strike the notes. This method of practice has been found to greatly improve the accuracy and speed of reading, as well as aiding in memorization.

All of the compositions found in this volume are based upon the original literature and have been arranged and adapted solely for use on percussion keyboard instruments.