



**PACIFIC  
CREST**

# 2021 AUDITION PACKET



# BASSES

Pacific Crest Youth Arts Organization  
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Welcome to Pacific Crest!

We've assembled a group of excellent instructors, and I'm really looking forward to producing the best percussion section that this corps has ever had. Of course, that's easy to say... now it's time to get to work.

This will be a first draft of the technique program. We will adjust, add, and subtract to what is here throughout the entire year. Some exercises are new, and some are things I've used in the past. The technique description is written by Murray Gusseck. It gives an in depth look into the way we will be playing.

For snare players, we will be playing on tilted drums. How much will be determined at a later date. A slight tilt will do when you practice.

Overall, what we will be working to achieve, is to give you the best experience possible. This means creating the best musicians, and humans. We want you to understand what it takes to be successful in all endeavors, through music. Developing life skills will be as important as developing chops, and musicianship.

One of the first steps in our journey will be to create a culture of honesty and accountability. All of us will be reinforcing those concepts all year. The ONLY way we move forward is to always have an honest dialogue about where we're at , and where we want to go, and for everyone (staff included) to be accountable for the work we do.

We will communicate with you more as we get closer to auditions.

Now, get to work!!

Glen Crosby  
Program Coordinator & Percussion Director

# Pacific Crest Technique Program

by Murray Gusseck

(Used with Permission)

## Grip

### The American grip

The standard grip that will be used at Pacific Crest will be the American grip (tenors and basses) and the American-Traditional grip (snare). This is the most common grip used in rudimental drumming and should be the most familiar. We will work at defining the grip to the point that you should be able to teach its various concepts to someone else easily.

The American grip (or the right hand of the American-Traditional grip) is a grip that allows for the use of both the wrists and the fingers easily while maintaining the same form in the hand. It allows for the stick to be a more-or-less straight extension of the forearm, as the hand is at a 45° degree angle. When both hands are in the set position, they also approximate a 45° angle.

The primary fulcrum of this grip is the thumb-index finger connection. Occasionally, the middle finger can alternatively be used for the fulcrum or in conjunction with the standard index finger fulcrum. When and how the middle finger is used will be understood over time.

### The American-Traditional grip

The “American-Traditional grip” nomenclature merely signifies that the right hand uses the American grip while the left hand uses the conventional grip for snare drummers. (see *Fig. 1*)

#### *What it should be*

The most important thing for you to increase your understanding of is the fulcrum. The fulcrum for the left hand in the traditional grip is your only means of controlling a large, heavy, wooden implement when the hand is essentially underneath the stick, rather than on top of the stick



*Fig. 1*

as in the right hand grip. So the strength of that muscle group in your left hand is what basically defines your abilities as a rudimental snare player.



*Fig. 2*

The fulcrum in this grip lies at the base of the thumb and index finger valley. This is your point of contact for the stick as well as your sense of feel for what the tip is doing. Every stroke that you make with your left hand should be felt to some degree in that one spot. (see *Fig. 2*)

Although depending on what you are playing, you also can connect with your ring finger (as a means of support from underneath and to lift the stick), your middle finger, and your index finger, the focus needs to remain on the fulcrum for almost every application. This cannot be stressed enough.

*What it shouldn't be*

In terms of the position of the left hand to the playing surface, that does not need much explanation. However, it is important to be on the lookout for **three** flavors of bad form that are all counterproductive to good sound and ergonomic playing. They are the *upside-down turtle*, the *kraw*, and the *ante-fulcrum*.

The upside-down turtle is what we'll call the hand whose resting position allows the back of the hand to face downwards. This is a lazy grip that provides no leverage for power or control. It can work fine if you're a drummer playing light jazz in a coffee shop, but not for wielding huge wooden dowels against Kevlar. Be on the lookout for the upside-down turtle! (see *Fig. 3*)



*Fig. 3*

The *kraw* is similar to the upside-down turtle, but adds a twist. The index and middle fingers wrap too far round the stick, warping its natural rebound motion



*Fig. 4*

and eliminating height range from your playing. Also the ring finger will oftentimes be too far underneath the stick so that the stick rests further down on the finger from the 1<sup>st</sup> joint. Players with unusually long fingers have the most tendency for this variation, and for understandable reasons. As far as bad playing goes, the *kraw* works quite well with the upside-down turtle to make your left hand totally useless! (see *Fig. 4*)

Lastly in the realm of bad form, the *ante-fulcrum* (pseudo Italian for *no fulcrum*) is the one where the index finger is extended too far up the stick so that the thumb's connection with it is more toward the tip of the index finger, rather than the usual spot at the first joint. This finger positioning makes it impossible to squeeze the stick at the base of the thumb/index finger valley, and thus it nullifies your fulcrum. (see *Fig. 5*)



*Fig. 5*

All three flavors of bad left hand form contribute to a loss of control and power, add the “wet noodle” motion to your stick from the inherent floppiness that come with the package, and are to be watched for often. Maintain form, get your left hand more on TOP of the stick so you have leverage, and play strong. (See *Fig. 2 above*)

### Learning the American grip by way of studying the French and German grips

It can be beneficial (and even fun!) to spend a little time with the other two commonly used grips that normally find their place in other types of playing—namely concert percussion and drumset playing—in order to gain a better understanding of what the American grip should be, and why it is the best grip for us to be using for rudimental applications.

#### *French grip*

This is a grip common to many timpanists and also many drumset players. It is the grip where the hand is turned completely to the side with the thumb directly on top of the stick. The fulcrum for the French grip is between the thumb and index finger. This grip promotes rebound and the use of the fingers and finesse. Since the hands are turned to the side, the wrist motion, when playing large strokes, is more of a doorknob turning motion than a straight up-and-down motion. The angle between the sticks is narrow—closer to 20–30° rather than 45°. (see *Fig. 6, 7*)



*Fig. 6*



*Fig. 7*

## *German grip*

The German grip is a grip that promotes a relaxed wrist, allowing it to move with weight and power. Cultivating a relaxed motion in German grip also gives you more ability to move your wrist very quickly at low heights. The hand is flat to the ground in this grip—the opposite of the French grip approach. The fulcrum is between the thumb and *middle* finger, with the index finger being completely relaxed and even hanging off the stick a little. The motion of the wrist in the German grip is very close to straight up and down, though the angle of the stick to the forearm is not completely straight. (see *Fig. 8, 9*)



*Fig. 8*



*Fig. 9*

## *Why these grips can help solidify the American grip*

By spending a little time with each of these grips, it becomes easier to gain an understanding of the exact position of the hands in the American grip, as well as elevating your knowledge of the various strengths of the two alternate grips and how those strengths are inherently accessible from within the American grip.

The best way to practice the French and German grip would be to take any of the rebound stroke exercises and play them with each of these grips. Practicing with rebound will help your hands understand what the stick wants to do *naturally* so you can harness that power. The best advice is to play the exercises slowly while focusing on the form of the grip (according to the above descriptions) and on the smooth rebound quality of the playing surface. Study the way each grip promotes air in the wrist, flexibility, stretch, and the general loosening of the wrist through exploring a different axis of rotation.

## **“Smooth, but articulate”**

Say that phrase in your head as much as possible, for it will define the approach to almost everything we play. The concept of smooth should be clear enough, but what does “articulate” mean? It actually has two inherent meanings. The first is in terms of *annunciation*.

You can usually spot an actor with Shakespearean training, because they don't cut corners when they speak consonant sounds. Rather, they annunciate those consonant sounds, so their speech is generally crystal clear.

Consider the phrase “An historic gathering of artists convened on huge tracts of land.” Someone not used to annunciating might say the phrase so it comes out more like, “A historic gathering of artiss convened on huge tracks of land.” With a Shakespearean actor, you're going to hear the second “t” in “tracts” and “artists”, and the “n” in “An historic”.

This same concept can be applied to drumming. By articulating what your sticks *say*, you are increasing the clarity of your rhythmic message. How is this done? It's done through the muscle groups in the fulcrum. The term *articulation* is basically synonymous with the amount of fulcrum pressure applied to the sticks. The more you squeeze, the more articulate will be your sound.

Since this concept is arguably the most confused and misapplied in the activity, some further explanation will be helpful. In terms of mechanics, here are some facts about the way your hands are designed. The more you squeeze with your fulcrum, the less freedom your wrist has to move, and the tighter and more focused the sound. A big, round, resonant sound comes from a grip that is *not* tight and from wrist motions that are fluid and full of air. This is the biggest and fullest sound you will get. Much of what you play will depend on this type of smooth approach. Conversely, if you are playing dense passages with a lot of two-height demands, not squeezing or applying enough fulcrum pressure—not enough *articulation*—will muddy your message and make it far less clear.

The second way in which the concept of articulation is important is with regard to timing. Since the drumline provides the subdivisions of whatever music it is accompanying, and since the arrangers and composers choose particular subdivisions with the intent of creating a certain energy that is paramount to achieving a musical effect, your individual control of all things timing-related is absolutely essential to achieving a clear, musical phrase.

So again, the phrase is “smooth, but articulate”. Smooth motions are always sought after, and the amount of articulation is dependent on the application. Much of the program will be dedicated to further codifying this concept. Just remember, the more demanding and intricate the musical passage, the more articulate you need to be in order to clearly execute it.

## More Details About Bass Drum Technique

### **Stance behind the drum:**

Stand squarely behind the drum (hooks should be approximately mid-chest height). Head is turned at a 45 degree angle.

Arms are relaxed at your sides, with stick in hand (relaxed matched grip), simply bring the forearm parallel to the ground, while keeping the wrist in line with the forearm, parallel to the drumhead.

The mallet should not exceed a 45 degree angle from the wrist, and should not drop parallel to the ground. Adjust the height of the drum to suit your natural mallet angle, achieved from following the step above.

The wrist should be 2-5 inches from the rim of, depending on the size of the rim. Next bring the bead to the set position, by slightly angling the wrist towards the head, like that of the natural set position for matched grip on a flat surface.

### **Wrist Motion:**

All motions are initiated by the wrist and supported by the fingers, palms and arms. The wrist moves on one plane, acting as a hinge, while the fingers, palm and forearm provide support for consistency in velocity, articulation and general sound production/quality.

The wrist motion is a "break", that resembles the motion of knocking on a door, in comparison to a "rotation", that resembles the motion of turning a doorknob. This allows the wrist full range of motion through heights ranging from piano (bead is parallel to the drum), mezzo piano (~45 degree wrist angle), mezzo forte (~66 degree wrist angle) and forte (90 degree wrist angle) on the same break axis. Slight inward angle at set

### **Height System**

piano = parallel to the drum

    Bead is parallel to the head

    You should not see the donut in this position

Mp = You should start to see the donut

mf = You can see the entire shaft of the mallet

F = Mallet is perpendicular to the head



Bass (5 drums)

# SINGLE-DOUBLE-TRIPLE

Murray Gusseck

**A** ♩ = 60-120

**Bass-A** (unison)  
**Bass (5)-B** (split)

**Bs-A**  
**Bs-B**

**Bs-A**  
**Bs-B**

**B**

**Bs-A**  
**Bs-B**

**Bs-A**  
**Bs-B**

SINGLE-DOUBLE-TRIPLE • Bass (5 drums) • Pg. 2

17 *Optional repeat*

Bs-A  
L ...

Bs-B

19 **C**

Bs-A  
R ... L ... R ...

Bs-B

22

Bs-A  
L ... R ...

Bs-B

25 *Optional repeat*

Bs-A  
L ... R

Bs-B

# Milkbone

**A** ♩ = 90 - 100

*All single-hand*

*All double-stop*

*All alternating*

r | R L r | R L r | R L r | R L

*sh*

*ds*

*alt*

r | r | R L r | r | R L r | r | R L r | r | R L

*sh*

*ds*

*alt*

r | R L r | R L r | R L r | R L

10

sh

ds

alt

l l l l l l l l r R r R r R r R l l l l l l l l

13

sh

ds

alt

r r r R r r r R r r r R r r r R l l l l l l l l l l l l l l

r l r l r l R l r l r l r l R l r l r l r l R l r l r l r l R l

15

sh

ds

alt

r r r R r r r R r r r R r r r R l l l l l l l l l l l l l l R

R

**B** ♩ = 100 - 112

sh

r R | L r R | L

r r R | L L r r R | L L

alt

r | R | L r | L r | R | L

r | L r | R L r | L r | L r | R L r | L

7

sh

r R | L L r R | L L

alt

r | R | L r | L r | R | L

13

sh

r r r R | L L L L r r r R | L L L L

R

alt

r | L r | L r | R L r | L r | L r | R L r | L

R

# Triplet Grid

4/4

A musical staff in 4/4 time signature. It contains 16 eighth notes grouped into four sets of four. Each set of four is a triplet, indicated by a '3' above the notes and a bracket. The first note of each triplet has an accent (>). The notes are: 1. triplet (accented), 2. triplet, 3. triplet, 4. triplet, 5. triplet (accented), 6. triplet, 7. triplet, 8. triplet, 9. triplet (accented), 10. triplet, 11. triplet, 12. triplet, 13. triplet (accented), 14. triplet, 15. triplet, 16. triplet.

Snare 4

A musical staff labeled 'Snare 4' in 4/4 time signature. It contains 16 eighth notes grouped into four sets of four. Each set of four is a triplet, indicated by a '3' above the notes and a bracket. The first note of each triplet has an accent (>). The notes are: 1. triplet (accented), 2. triplet, 3. triplet, 4. triplet, 5. triplet (accented), 6. triplet, 7. triplet, 8. triplet, 9. triplet (accented), 10. triplet, 11. triplet, 12. triplet, 13. triplet (accented), 14. triplet, 15. triplet, 16. triplet.

Snare 7

A musical staff labeled 'Snare 7' in 4/4 time signature. It contains 16 eighth notes grouped into four sets of four. Each set of four is a triplet, indicated by a '3' above the notes and a bracket. The first note of each triplet has an accent (>). The notes are: 1. triplet (accented), 2. triplet, 3. triplet, 4. triplet, 5. triplet (accented), 6. triplet, 7. triplet, 8. triplet, 9. triplet (accented), 10. triplet, 11. triplet, 12. triplet, 13. triplet (accented), 14. triplet, 15. triplet, 16. triplet.

# Cold Rolls

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

*p*

5

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

L

9

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

R

L

L

13

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

R

R

R

*f*

17

> 3 3 3 3 > 3 > 3 > 3 > 3 > 3 3 3 3 > 3 > 3 > 3 > 3

21

3 3 > 3 > 3 > 3 > 3 3 3 > 3 > 3 > 3 3 > 3 > 3 > 3 3

25

> 3 > 3 > 3 > 3 > 3 > 3 > 3 > 3 > 3 > 3 > 3 > 3 > 3 > 3

28

> 3 > 3 > 3 > 3 > 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 >





# Meterz

N. Casino

1

*f* R L R L R L R L R l r l l R l r r l l R l r r l l R l r r l l

3

R l r L r l R l r L r l R l r L r l R l r L r l

5

R l r r L r l l R l r r l l R l r r l l R l r r l l

8

R l r r L r l l R l r r l l R L L R L L R l r r L R L R L R L R

11

L R L R L r l R l r L r l l R L R L R L R L R L

14

R L R L R L r l l R L r l r L R L R L R

17

L r l l R L R l r l R l r r l l R l r r l l R L R l r r L r l l R L

20

R L R L R L R L L R L R L R L R

