

"Drop" Exercise: This can be used with one hand or both simultaneously, two or four mallets, any stroke type.

Feel the "Lift" (up arrows) as the source of energy for the stroke. The action that actually produces the sound (the drop, the down arrow) should be felt as a *release* of this energy. An "x" indicates a total release and drop into the bars, a dead stroke without any pressure whatsoever - a flop (be sure the mallets land on the correct / desired notes).

A normal notehead indicates a drop with a "catch" after the mallet has rebounded, so that the bar will resonate. The first half of a piston stroke. The up arrow is a simple lifting of the mallet back to the starting position - the second half of a piston stroke, and the place where energy is applied to the mallet(s). A toss indicates a legato connection between the lift and the drop, with a focus on the upward part of the stroke. The "drop" in this case is simply a byproduct of relaxation. This produces a series of strokes with truly minimal energy / force from the player: the player produces the lift, and gravity produces the drop.

NOTE: It is important to spend a lot of time making sure you are executing #1 and #2 correctly before moving on to the other exercises. You need to learn what it feels like to just let the mallets "drop" by themselves (while still retaining note accuracy) before incorporating the catch. Remember, the drop is a release of energy, not a source. Obviously this technique limits dynamic range and speed - once the "drop" has been mastered, acceleration can be added to produce a faster / more articulate stroke.

♩ = 160

1 ↓ Drop      ↑ Up      2 ↓ Drop      ↑ Up      3 ↓ Catch      ↑ Up      4 ↓ Catch      ↑ Up

5 ↓ ↑ Catch      6 ↓ ↑ "Drup"      7 ↓ ↑ "Drup"      8 ↓ ↑ "Drup"      9 ↓ ↑ Toss

10 ↓ ↑ "Drup"      11 ↓ ↑ "Drup"      12 ↓ ↑ "Drup"      13 ↓ ↑ Up Catch      14 ↓ ↑ Up Catch      15 ↓ ↑ Catch Up

16 ↓ Catch      ↑ Toss      17 ↓ Catch      ↑ Toss      18 ↓ Catch      ↑ Toss      19 ↓ ↑ Toss