

WALKING VS RUNNING

WATCH THE FULL LESSON ▶

Two hand techniques for stick control — one for low & slow, one for fast & loud.

THE CORE IDEA

Most hand-technique struggles aren't a lack of technique — they're the right technique at the wrong tempo. You need one grip-and-motion for low-energy playing and a different one for high-energy playing, with a seamless switch between them.

WALKING

• LOW & SLOW

- The stick's butt resettles on the heel of the hand every stroke — your natural, day-one grip.
- Best for slow quarter notes, basic beats, and doubles below your personal speed threshold.
- Gives maximum control when there's time to reset between strokes.
- Force it at high speed and you get "power walking" — tense, wrist-driven, and quick to tire.

RUNNING

• FAST & LOUD

- The stick bounces freely and never resettles on the heel of the hand between strokes.
- Best for fast singles, doubles, and anything that needs speed or volume.
- Needs a firm fulcrum plus fingers that stay in contact without smothering the bounce.
- Force it at low speed and it turns "mushy," or you fake a bounce that isn't really there.

THE ANALOGY

Walking: one foot always touches the ground. Running: you're briefly airborne between strides — efficient at speed, silly (hopscotch) if you try it too slow. On the drum, the "ground" is the heel of your hand.

• BUILD THE RUNNING TECHNIQUE

A 3-STEP DRILL

1

BUILD THE FULCRUM

Make a "V" between index finger and thumb. Seat the stick on the meaty part of the thumb, below the first knuckle, and curl the index finger over it. Hinge at the elbow — the fulcrum should hold the stick while your hand moves.

2

TEST THE BOUNCE

With your other hand, pull the stick tip to vertical and release. It should free-bounce like a basketball — small bounces, getting faster. A "buzz" instead of a clean bounce means you're not letting it bounce.

3

ADD THE MIDDLE FINGER

From a walking grip, raise the tip, make a downstroke, and let it rebound to vertical. Use only the middle finger to start the next stroke and let it rebound fully back. Success = full rebound and continuous finger contact.

• QUICK DIAGNOSIS

TROUBLESHOOTING

- Feels "mushy" or won't rebound**
Your fulcrum is too loose, or your fingers are smothering the bounce instead of guiding it.
- Tense or tired fast at a slow tempo**
You're running when you should be walking — let the stick rest on the heel of your hand.
- Sloppy or out of control at a fast tempo**
You're walking when you should be running — work the fulcrum drill until it's automatic.
- "Fish flopping" back fingers / pinky lifts off**
You're forcing a walking grip at running speed — let the stick float instead of pinching harder.