

CYMBAL ARTISTRY

Foundational Concepts
and Playing Techniques

CYMBAL BASICS

1. Suspended Cymbal

- thicker than a drum set's crash cymbal
- used for rolls and single crashes
- desirable sizes: (1) 18", (2) 19", (3) 17"
- suspended on a goose-neck stand (preferred) or a standard cymbal stand

2. Hand Crash Cymbals

- desirable sizes: 18"
 - this depends in the physical size of your students: consider 16" and 17"
- thicknesses: "French" (thin), "Viennese" (medium), "German" (thick)
- qualities: aim for a full, even-balanced spectrum of partials
- placed on a table, chairs, or a cymbal cradle (least preferred)

CYMBAL CRASHES, PART I

- **THE CONCEPT:** Bi-cymbal motion
 - both hands in motion
 - for almost all crashes *mp* and above
- **THE GRIP**
 - non-dominant hand grips the strap and cups the cymbal
 - dominant hand grips the strap between index finger and thumb, “points” at the bell of the cymbal
- **THE PREP**
 - cymbals at centre of body, below sternum
 - held at an angle

CYMBAL CRASHES, PART 2

- THE STROKE: Non-dominant hand pushes up, Dominant hand drops down
- THE FOLLOW-THROUGH
 - both hands move upward, cymbals face the audience

CYMBAL CRASHES, PART 3

- **THE CONCEPT:** Quiet crashes
- **THE PREP**
 - cymbals almost vertical, start with non-dominant hand against body
 - dominant hand moves towards body, aligns with other cymbal
 - both cymbals pull away from body
 - dominant hand pulls away, remains 1" apart
- **THE STROKE and the FOLLOW-THROUGH**
 - both hands move; dominant leads the stroke, returns to rest about 1" away

THE SUSPENDED CYMBAL

1. STROKES

- produced at the outer edge of the cymbal
- context determines appropriate mallets
 - **MOST APPLICATIONS:** use a medium or medium-soft mallet

2. ROLLS

- roll at the outer edges of the cymbal with hands across from one another
- *crescendo* by pushing through the cymbal, but only increasing speed slightly
- *diminuendo* by reducing pressure, decreasing roll speed

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