

# Teaching Philosophy

## As Pertaining to Drum Lessons

by Sam Snyder

In teaching someone to play the drums, I aim for a balance between technique, creativity, and the role of drums in music. Technique includes rudiments and practice habits. Creativity emphasizes imagination, feeling, and passion. The role of drums emphasizes the purpose and possibilities of drums in music.



Let's start with technique. Flams, rolls, paradiddles, flamadiddles... "What are you talking about?" you ask. These are some of the drumming rudiments, the drumming basics, the ways a drummer moves his hands and uses his sticks to make music. Rudiments are used as exercises to develop coordination and endurance. Also, rudiments are an integral part of drumming, lending variety and style to a drummer's playing.

A word about practice habits: "Repetition!" That is THE word when it comes to practice. Allow me to repeat that. "Repetition" is THE word when it comes to practice. Frequent practice develops any musician's skills. Practice will help a drummer to develop a sense of timing. Practice will produce endurance. Drumming is often physically demanding. Endurance is a necessity. "Practice makes perfect." And practice makes a drummer stronger, faster, and more accurate.

However, technique without creativity is only half of the picture. A drummer needs imagination and feeling, sensitivity and passion. There is no limit to the imagination. A drummer can make music by banging on nearly anything: drums, buckets, pots and pans, the cat. (Well, maybe you shouldn't bang on the cat.) The key is learning "what" to bang on, and "when" to bang it, and "how" hard to bang it.

This is where role enters the equation. What is the purpose of drums in music? What are the possible ways in which a drummer can add drums to the larger musical picture? When do the drums take center stage and when are they the foundation and backbone of music?

As you can see, there is more to drumming than simply making noise. There are techniques to develop drumming skills. There is creativity to add excitement and variety to drumming. And there is the larger musical world in which drums play important parts. These are the concepts I seek to impart to those who wish to learn to play the drums.