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Stick Control: For The Snare Drummer



Synopsis

George Lawrence Stone's *Stick Control* is the original classic, often called the bible of drumming. In 1993, *Modern Drummer* magazine named it first in the top 25 drumming books of all-time. In the words of the author, this is the ideal book for improving "control, speed, flexibility, touch, rhythm, lightness, delicacy, power, endurance, preciseness of execution, and muscular coordination," with extra attention given to the development of the weak hand. This indispensable book for drummers of all types includes hundreds of basic to advanced rhythms and moves through categories of single-beat combinations, triplets, short roll combinations, flam beats, flam triplets and dotted notes, and short roll progressions. "It truly is a timeless classic and an essential requirement for every drummer's library." *Drummer Magazine*

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Customer Reviews

I had been playing about 15 years before I discovered this book and its companion book "Accents and Rebounds". I had been gigging heavily, practicing hours and hours a day (mainly rock/fusion/funk), owned 20+ books, 15 or so videos, but somehow never owned a copy of these two books. These books are full of simple exercises I truly think anyone can do. After practicing just the few first pages of both books at different tempos and at different volume levels for a few weeks I noticed a drastic improvement in my playing skills. I mean it when I say drastic. I could play much faster than ever before, but more importantly I could play cleanly and effortlessly. By this I mean, that when I later improvised on the drum kit I could certainly play many things I couldn't just a month

prior. This is after playing and practicing hard for 15 years! Studying these two books took me up a whole "notch" in just a month! Also things that gave me trouble before or were just played sloppily were now clean, tight, precise, with a much broader range of dynamics and accents and I could play them much faster if I wanted or needed to. While on paper these are basically exercises for just your hands, you can certainly do these patterns as written but with your feet. Or do the exercises as written with your hands but make up simple foot patterns to play at the same time (i.e. qtr note kicks with hat on 2 and 4, or play the hat on the "and's", etc. your imagination is the only limit). These two books are essential and I recommend them to any drummer at any level. They won't teach you how or what to play, but they will take your technique to higher and higher levels. It has allowed me to play what I hear in my mind on the spot, just the way I want it. This was roughly 5 years ago and I'm still incredibly thankful for Mr. Stone and these two books. Every drummer I meet I try to spread the word. Best of luck, relax, and have fun!

This book reads as though it has hardly been changed from its original publication (I think in the 1930s); nonetheless it remains an invaluable tool for the drummer of any style and skill level. The exercises are isolated into short (four or eight measure) patterns so that each may be repeated to perfection. There are no ungainly "etudes", no corny written solos, and the exercises focus solely on control and sticking, not on style; therefore they may be applied to anything from orchestral percussion to jazz to rock. Furthermore, the introduction is a dryly wonderful piece of writing; pragmatic, no-nonsense, economical prose imparting essential advice on practice. This book makes an ideal "workout" (emphasizing that "control" is the gateway to strength, endurance, coordination, and all else that drummers crave). Practice Stick Control daily, and meditate on the craft of drumming.

The first page alone keeps me humble. It doesn't matter what style of music you play--classical percussion, hip hop, jazz, whatever--your hands will need this training for as long as you play drums. In a weird way, this book embodies everything great about playing drums: who would have thought R's and L's would be this tough or this fun.

Stick Control is one of the must have fundamental texts for the acquisition of superior drumming technique. All of the exercises are simple in concept, but very challenging in terms of speed and control. No drummer with aspirations to superior control and excellence of musical expression should be without Stone's Stick Control.

I am a professional player, and have taught. Murray Speveck; who was Louise Bellson's teacher is the one who turned me on to this book. What a difference in my playing after studying this book. After working your hands on the exercises, try using your feet. Try it you will notice a difference, trust me. Bill Marcus

I am a beginning drummer and this text was suggested to me by several professional musicians. I borrowed a snare drum & stand from a drummer friend of mine, bought a couple of sticks and this book. After just a few practice sessions, I am already benefiting from the repetitive exercises, and building stamina for playing the snare. Using a metronome as the author suggests is very helpful in building coordination and learning the timing of the rhythms. The author also suggests that each exercise should be repeated 20 times before moving on. The exercises increase in complexity and give an equal workout to both hands (which builds skill in your weaker hand). Note to beginners - this book is not an overview of how to begin playing the snare drum. There are no diagrams, or detailed information about the snare or drumming style. It is mainly an exercise book reminiscent of those used by school bands to increase skill and technique. To get the most benefit, a basic understanding of how to read music (rhythmically) is needed. But it truly is geared toward students as well as the professional drummer. The theme of this book is practice makes perfect.

This is one of two most important books for any drummer's library, the other being Syncopation by Ted Reed. Stick Control is a great book to develop ideal technique for orchestral style or any style of music on the drum set. I will admit, first glance this book looks very boring; the first few pages are plane 8th notes with different right and left stickings. As you read on and play through the book you will quickly see the depth behind the practice exercises. I highly recommend Stick Control to anyone from advanced players looking to tighten up on speed and technique, to beginners who are looking to develop the basics to build on. However, it is important to note that this book does not explain music and the proper technique of holding the sticks or playing the instrument. A beginner's book providing that information would be beneficial to start with first.

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