



THE SNARE LINE



SNARE LINE PHILOSOPHY

Snare drummers play on one drum and typically use one of two grips (Matched or Traditional). Since there is one head to play on, snare drum is a great place for beginning performers to start learning. Snare drummers are highly technical performers and use a unified approach from player to player. The goal is to balance so well together that the full line sounds like one powerful unit. There is a high level of discipline, but everyone also understands how to get along, be leaders in the ensemble, and knows how to have a great time while upholding a high standard of excellence.

The snare drum was the first marching percussion instrument. Made to be loud, staccato instruments, snare drums helped military units communicate on the battle field over long distances as far back as the 1300s.

Snare drums have evolved rapidly over the years and, in the corps style activities, are now considered “High Tension” drums. Snare drums attach to the body using a harness.

The heads for marching snare drums have also evolved. High

tension drums use Mylar or Kevlar drum heads which allow them to be tuned to very high pitches.

Snare drums sizes will vary but typical *Corps Style* drums are generally 13” or 14” in diameter.

In this section you will learn about instrument basics, playing zones, implement details, muscle groups, matched and traditional grips, positions, heights, dynamics, and hand motions. The snare drum is a very sensitive, monotone instrument that requires years of dedicated practice to master.

INSTRUMENT BASICS

The snare drum is an instrument with a top and bottom head. The heads are stretched over a shell and can be tuned to very high pitches. There are a variety of heads with different purposes and you should do your best to match the head to the music you are playing. For example, if your show music is dark and ominous, you might want a head with a darker sound. If your show is happy and uplifting you might want to use heads with a brighter sound. The tuning of the drum will also change the sound significantly.

RIM - A metal hoop that rests over the drum head to tighten it around the outer edge of the drum shell. This also acts as a playing surface to get unique sounds from the instrument including rim clicks, rim knocks, and rim shots.

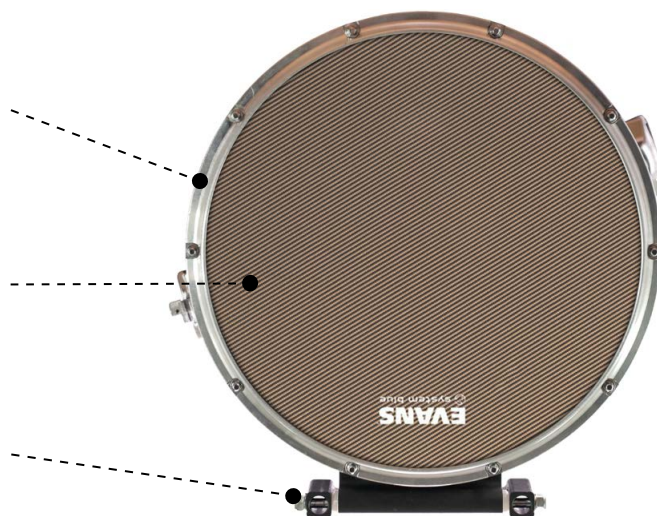
TOP HEAD - An interchangeable playing surface that can be tuned to change the pitch of the drum. The top head is thicker than the bottom head and has more durability.

HARNES CONNECTOR - All brands will be slightly different, but this piece connects the drum to a harness or drum stand. Attach this in a way that won't interfere with a stick bag and ensure the snare strainer is easily accessible.

BOTTOM HEAD - An interchangeable drum head that can be tuned to change the pitch of the drum. The bottom head is thinner than the top head and has less durability.

SNARE GUTS - A set of synthetic wires that run along the bottom of the head. By making contact with the head the wires vibrate creating the "snare sound" you hear. Activating the snares will minimize the vibration of the bottom head creating a staccato sound.

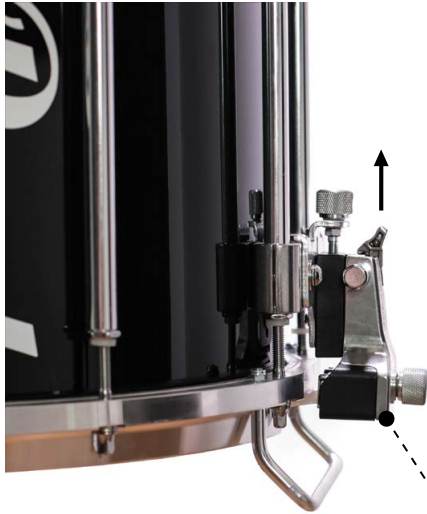
HOOP GUARD - A detachable "foot" that connects to the bottom rim. This allows you to set the drum on the ground without scratching the rim or puncturing the head.



TOP



BOTTOM



UP (SNARES ON)



DOWN (SNARES OFF)

STRAINER/RELEASE - This mechanism (Also known as a "Throw Off") is connected to the snare guts on the bottom of the drum and moves them up and down. This takes the guts on and off the drum head. You can change the pitch and resonance of the guts by tightening and loosening them using the snare strainer. While the tension of the guts will vary based on your tuning scheme, a good rule is to have the snares make full contact with the bottom head. If you tighten the guts too tight the vibration will be so quick that you will no longer hear the "snare sound". Use a tension that gives you the snare response you desire and allows a full body of sound from the instrument.

** NOTE: You can remove snare guts to dry out the sound of the instrument.*

TUBE LUG - This is a hollow bar that the tension rod screws into. This houses the tension rods from both the top and bottom of the drum.

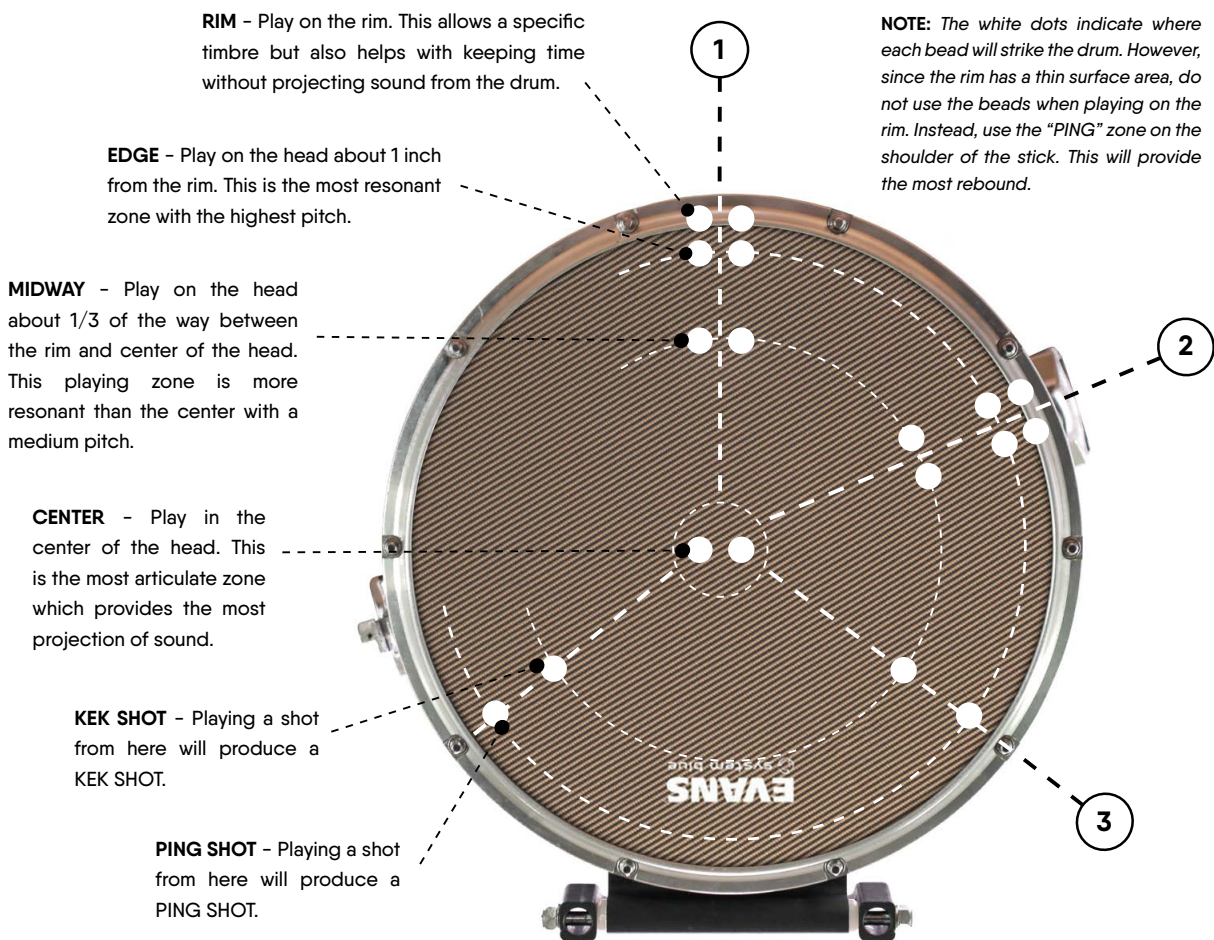
TENSION ROD - A screw that raises and lowers the rim to change the tension of the drum head. The more you tighten the screw the higher the pitch of the instrument.

SHELL - A circular, hollow shell (Often wooden or carbon fiber) that sits inside of the drum hardware. When you strike the drum, air moves through the shell and helps create the sound you hear from the instrument.



PLAYING ZONES

A “PLAYING ZONE” is where you physically play on the instrument. Different parts of the drum will create different sounds/timbres and change the resonance of the instrument. We use these zones to help us be more expressive as musicians. Zones include the CENTER, MIDWAY, EDGE, RIM, and SNARE BED.



HOME ZONES - Starting in the center of the head, all zones directly in front of you is part of the HOME ZONE.

SNARE BED - Since the snare guts run diagonally along the bottom of the drum, you can use the same zones from the HOME ZONE, but play towards the rim in the direction of the snare guts.

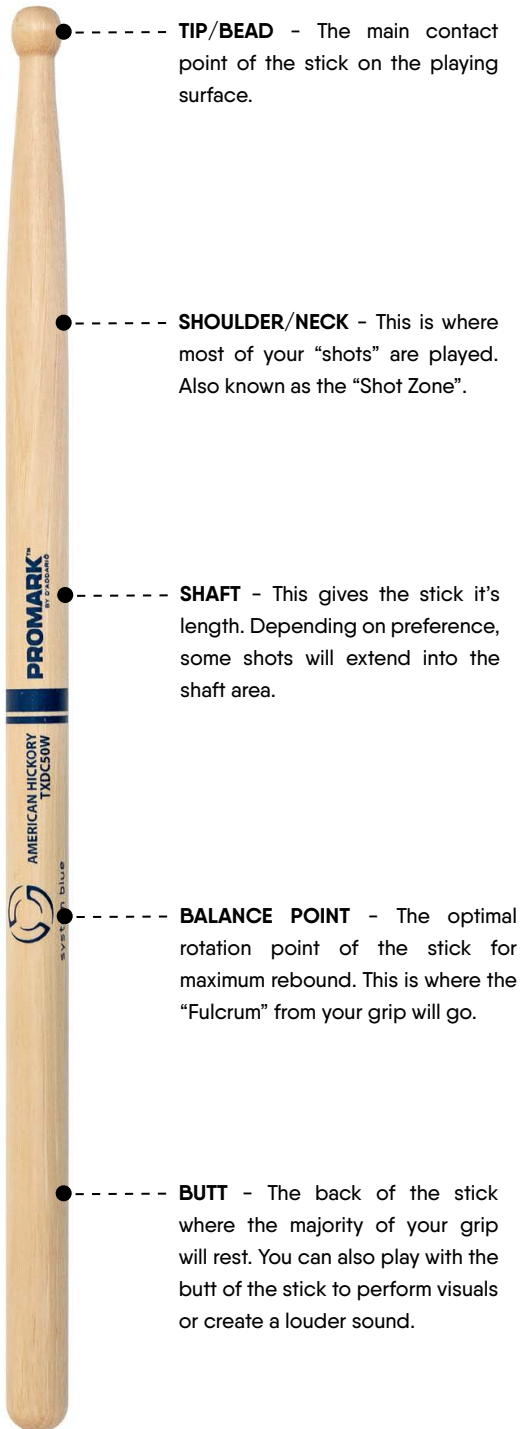
SHOT ZONE - Starting in the center of the head, playing a shot in the direction of the stick angle is part of the SHOT ZONE.

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IMPLEMENT DETAILS



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SHOT ZONES - A “SHOT” occurs when you strike the drum head and rim at the same time. This creates a variety of timbres. You can achieve a range of shot pitches by playing on different parts of the stick. Use the shot zones below to experiment with different shot sounds.

PING SHOT (High Pitched) - Play a shot about 1 inch from the bottom of the bead.

KEK SHOT (Medium Pitched) - Play a shot about 3 inches from the bottom of the bead.

GOK SHOT (Low Pitched) - Play a shot from playing position.

