

# from hand to drum

## HAND DRUM TECHNIQUES FROM AROUND THE WORLD



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We'll round off our look at the Egyptian Tabla this month by covering a few embellishments and finger trilling techniques. One characteristic element of Egyptian technique is the finger rolls created by using the individual fingers of each hand. It is different from Turkish technique in as much as the Turkish use a lot of finger flicks while the Egyptians do not. Because the Egyptian Tabla is so highly tensioned, the sound created is sharp enough to cut through to the same degree as the finger flicking method.

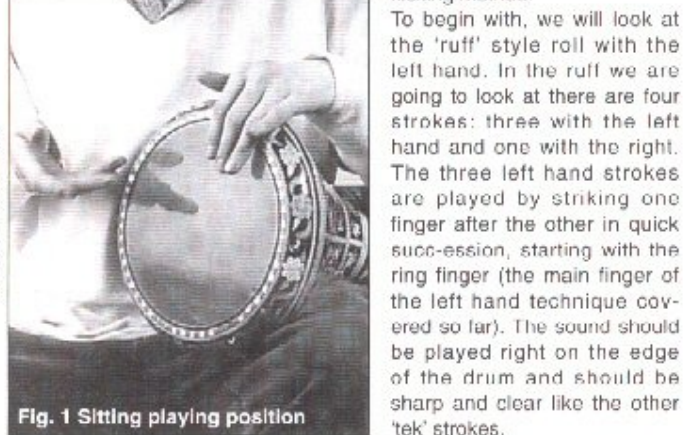


Fig. 1 Sitting playing position

To begin with, we will look at the 'ruff' style roll with the left hand. In the ruff we are going to look at there are four strokes: three with the left hand and one with the right. The three left hand strokes are played by striking one finger after the other in quick succession, starting with the ring finger (the main finger of the left hand technique covered so far). The sound should be played right on the edge of the drum and should be sharp and clear like the other 'tek' strokes.

Look at Figs. 2-5 and see how the fingers strike one after the other. In Ex. 1 we can see the rhythm of our first exercise. Notice how it ends with a right hand 'tek' stroke on the rim. (See the last two issues of *Rhythm* if there is any confusion over this.)

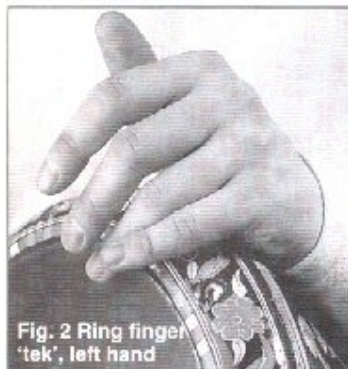


Fig. 2 Ring finger 'tek', left hand

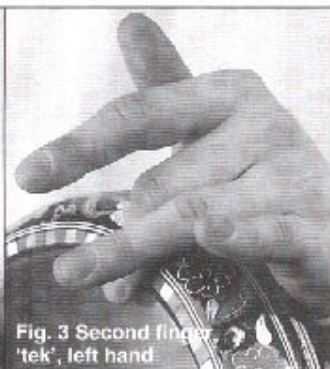


Fig. 3 Second finger 'tek', left hand



Fig. 4 First finger 'tek', left hand



Fig. 5 Relaxed starting place for left hand

KEY

(1)	(2)	(3)			
R	R	R	L	L	L
DUM	TEK	SLAP	TEK	TEK	TEK
			Finger 1	Finger 2	Finger
					R
					MUFFLE
					L
					Ring
					Finger
					(with III)
					muffs

Ex 1

Ex 2

As you can see, Ex. 2 is using the same technique, but we are now adding a little more to the rhythm. Work hard at getting these rolls sharp and tight before going on to the next examples.

Ex 3

Ex 4

Ex 5

Riff Ending With Dums

Ex 6

Ex 7

Ex 8

The next two examples are based on a popular Middle Eastern rhythm called *Samai*. If you look at Ex. 10, the basic form and subdivisions of the rhythm become more apparent. It has a nice form to it, the divisions being 3-2-2-3 and the bars being punctuated with one bass at the head



of the first bar and two at the head of the second.

**SAMAI**

Ex 9

**SAMAI (Skeletal form)**

Ex 10

In Ex. 11 and 11a the technique involves more of a continuous roll and less of a decorative quality. Build the speed of this up, maintaining the sharpness of the 'tek' strokes.

Ex 11

Ex 11a

Ex. 12-14 combine some of the elements learned so far.

Ex 12

Ex 12.5

Ex 14

We have covered the nine-beat *karsillamas* rhythm before in *Beats Working*, but here it is again, this time with a few ruffs.

**KARSILAMAS**

Ex 15

Ex 15a

The basic structure of this rhythm is three quarter notes and three eighth notes. By moving the position of the three eighth notes we get a completely different flavour to the rhythm. The result makes the rhythm feel like 5/8 + 2/4. (see Ex. 16 and 17).

Ex 16

Ex 17

To finish off, we'll briefly look at a right hand muffling technique which makes a closed, wood block type sound when the drum is hit on the rim with the left hand. Look at Fig. 6 for the position of the right hand. Notice how it is slightly cupped with only the edge of the hand on the head. Try hitting with the left hand ring finger ('tek') on the edge and hear the result. Try moving the right hand around gently on the head and see how the tone changes.

Here are a couple of rhythms integrating this technique. Good luck and I'll see you next month for some North Indian folk drumming on the dholak.



Ex 18

Ex 19

Please note that I will be looking at some turkish techniques using the ring finger and first finger of both hands for some amazing rolls in a future article.

