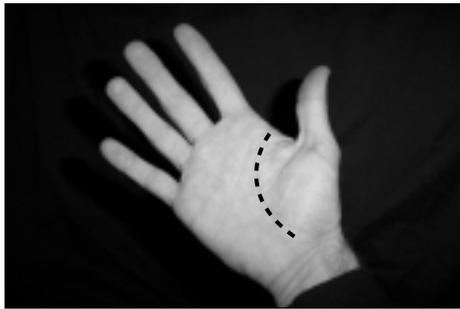


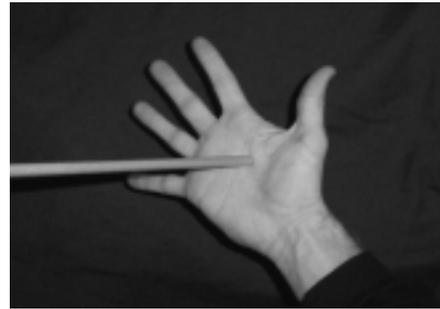
Inside Mallet

This section will take you step-by-step on how to correctly hold the mallets with the Stevens grip. If you are right handed, start with your right hand. If you are left handed, start with your left.

1. Palm Reading



Look at your palm. Your lifeline is the line that does a “dog-leg” around the base of your thumb.



Place the tip of the mallet on this lifeline close to the center of your palm.

2. Hand shake position



Keep the mallet tip in place, but turn your wrist position as if you were going to shake someone’s hand.



3. Fonzi



For you “Happy Days” fans, lets act like the Fonzi. Bend all four fingers so they point across your body.



Do not point into your body!

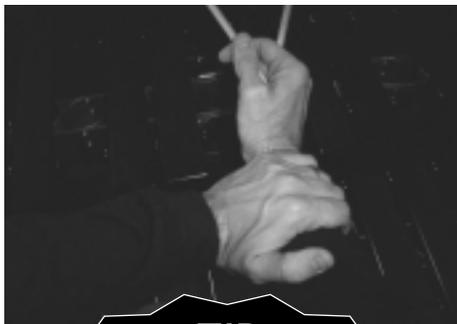
Double-Stop Stroke

A good stroke to start with is the double-stop stroke (also known as the “double vertical” stroke) where both mallets in one hand play at the same time. Let’s first focus on the wrist motion.

Hand shaking motion

This is probably a new feeling for your wrist. It’s not the most natural motion the wrist is designed for. While the amount of flexibility is going to vary from person to person, you should be able to get at least a little vertical motion out of your wrist. This is a very important motion.

Take the mallets out of your hands and go to the hand shaking position. Imagine you want to shake hands with someone but your forearm is frozen. You need to shake their hand by bending your wrist vertically.



TIP:

A trick to solidify this concept is to place your hand on the opposite forearm above your wrist to limit the forearm from moving. Be sure to work both wrists.

Now place the mallets back in your hand, make sure they are level, and feel comfortable. Go through the hand shaking motion and play a series of quarter notes (with both mallets simultaneously) at an interval of a 5th. Keep the downstroke and upstroke very fluid and continuous from one to the other – like bouncing a basketball. During normal playing, it’s OK to use some vertical motion from the forearm as long as it isn’t excessive. It is a common bad habit for players to lock their wrist, hinging the stroke from the elbow, which is NOT what we’re going for.



CHECKLIST FOR PRACTICING DOUBLE-STOP STROKES:

- Notice your wrist motion.
- Notice the position of your thumb.
- Check your index finger.
- Your wrist position, thumb, and index finger should not change at all.

Practice these concepts on page:

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Inside Interval Changing

The inside mallet is changing position, and the outside is staying on the G.



RH only!

Here, the inside mallet is changing position, and the outside is staying on the C.



LH only!

Practice
these concepts
on pages:
46-47

Outside Interval Changing

The outside mallet is changing position, and the inside is staying on the C.



RH only!

Here, the outside mallet is changing position, and the inside is staying on the G.



LH only!

Practice
these concepts
on pages:
46-47

REMEMBER:

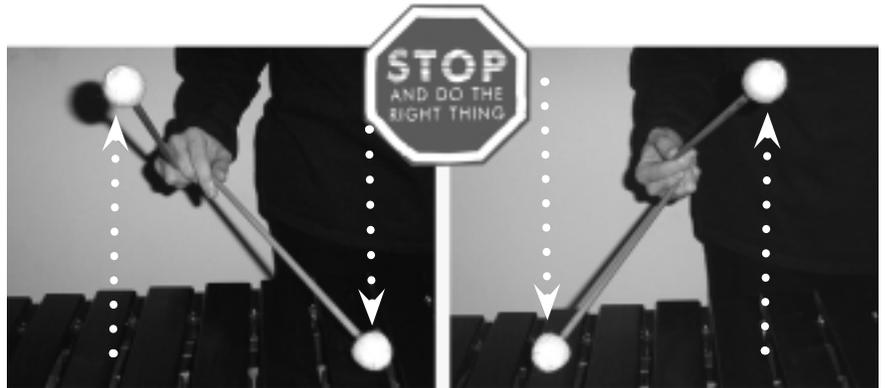
- Main pivot is from the wrist.
- Fluid down and up stroke.
- Don't change the wrist motion when you start changing intervals.
- Flex the index finger but keep it pointed across your body.
- Move the forearm horizontally to change notes for the outside mallet.



Common Bad Rotation Habits

Teeter-Totter Syndrome

During the rotation, when one mallet is coming down, the other mallet pops up. When this happens, the “axis point” has shifted from the mallet shaft to the center of your hand. Don’t let this happen! Focus on the control of the non-playing mallet.



Don't “teeter-totter” on rotation strokes!

Mallet Bounce

Instead of rotating the wrist, players have a tendency to lift from the elbow or turn the wrist over and play the independent strokes as if they were playing with two mallets. When this occurs, the outside mallets will bounce like crazy and blisters will happen very quickly!



Here, the inner mallet is playing. Notice how much undesired motion occurs in the outer mallet. Try to avoid this!

Forceful Thumb

When looking at the rotation taking place, it is very common to think that the thumb is the power source for the stroke. In doing so, players add a lot of unnecessary tension on the thumb by squeezing the mallet shaft between the thumb and index finger. Don’t forget, the only job of the thumb is to keep the mallet from sliding off the index finger.



The power of the stroke does not come from the thumb, but from the WRIST.