

Billy Gladstone System (it's "all in the wrists")

Seven Key Points

There are seven principles that determine the Gladstone System.

1. Find the optimum balance point of your drumsticks.
2. Grip your drumsticks as loose as possible without loosing the "fulcrum-grip" or altering the form of a "correct" stick-hold, (avoiding squeezing and opening your fingers to make the strokes.) Apply only enough pressure to prevent them from flying out of your hands.
3. "Think" of the ALL strokes as down strokes, rather than, as two distinct up and down movements. The natural rebound-force from the instrument will be enough to propel your hands back up to the original starting-position (stick height is determined by hand-wrist angles). The most challenging part of the technique is to accustom your hands to being loose enough to allow the sticks to rebound. As though, the sticks "follow the hands" on the down-strokes and the "hands follow the sticks", after producing the note.
4. Stopping your wrists at the top will create a "wiggle" of the sticks at the top. If the stick doesn't move but stops immediately, you're squeezing to stop the stick. This is NOT what you want to do. It creates unnecessary tension that will slow you down later, when you're working for speed.
5. For optimum execution of the system, you'll need to develop maximum flexibility of fingers, hands, wrists, and arms, along with quick reflex-muscles. (Through correct repetitions)
6. The quicker you play, the more muscularly relaxed you'll need to be. When using the Gladstone technique properly, you won't feel any tension in your fingers, hands, wrists, or arms. This is the entire principle the technique is based on... thus, allowing the speed and endurance afforded by the Gladstone technique.
7. When you practice the previous strokes, throw the sticks down as quickly as you can. This will give the stick the rebound force necessary to bring your wrist back up to the original starting position.