

The Grip Kerry Style

Over time, you will evolve your own style of gripping the tipper. You may change the grip depending upon the style of the music. You may change the grip while a single tune. Grip is a fluid thing.

The two keys to a successful grip are control and comfort. You must be able to make the tipper do what you want it to do. You cannot adopt a grip that fatigues you after a few tunes.

Grip the tipper as though it was a pencil. Put your thumb in the middle of the tipper and wrap your index finger over the tipper.

- The thumb rests on the tipper NOT on the index finger
- Strike the drum with the side of the tipper
- The motion of the strike should be relaxed. Watch the right hand of a good rhythm guitar player. That's the fluid sort of motion required to play the bodhran. Move your wrist as though you were trying to shake off water or stir batter for brownies!
- Position the tipper so that it rests on the index finger between the knuckle and the first joint. Three general positions are available: close by the knuckle, in the fleshy part and at the first joint. Try not to hold the tipper so that it rests directly on a joint or knuckle. It will be hard to control and will make the joint sore.
- Beware of excessive curve in your fingers. Too much curve will make playing triplets more difficult. Let the finger relax and elongated rather than curved. Do not exaggerate the fingers and try to straighten them. Get used to a relaxed grip.
- If the bone in your index finger gets sore, RELAX the death grip on your tipper! You are gripping too tightly.
- Worried about the tipper slipping? Place a rubber band on the tipper at the mid-point. That will keep it from slipping and make you aware of where you are gripping the tipper.