

## Bodhran Dynamics

Dynamics on a bodhran are controlled largely by the distance between the head and tipper. If the tipper begins a stroke far away from the head, the resulting strike will be loud. If the tipper begins a stroke close to the head, the resulting strike will be quiet.

Loud requires long strokes. Soft requires short strokes.

**For Maximum Volume:** *start and end with the tipper far from the drum head*

Move your forearm and wrist as you would in any stroke, but begin and end with the tipper several inches from the drum head. This will create an accented beat and set up your hands to follow with a second accented beat.

**For Minimum Volume:** *start and end with the tipper close to the drum head*

Move your forearm and wrist as you would in any stroke, but keep the arc of the movement short. Begin and end with the tipper very close to the drum head. The sound is something like a tap rather than a full-throated whack on the drum. When playing for minimum volume you'll feel compressed and constrained. It takes just as much energy to do this because there is some much more concentration required than that used in a maximum volume stroke. This stroke creates a quiet sound and prepares the wrist to produce another quiet sound.

**Transitional Stop:** *Start with the tipper far away but end with the tipper close to the drum head*

Begin this stroke as you would for maximum volume, but stop the arch of the wrist right after contact with the drum head. This stroke produces an accent and sets up your wrist to follow with a quiet beat. This style of stroke is very similar to the "double down" or "flat stroke".

**Pick Up Stroke:** Start with the tipper close to the drum head and end with the tipper far away

Begin this stroke as you would for minimum volume, but allow the tipper to end as though you were playing for maximum volume. This stroke produces a quiet sound and sets up your hand to play an accented beat.