



❖ Technique

Take your time when you teach technique; too much too fast will put some students in their head and out of the flow of their rhythm. Once students are able to say the rhythm and play the correct notes you can slowly add suggestions about their technique. Teaching technique in improv builds confidence and adds depth to their musicality. It isn't about being perfect. Based on djembe technique, here is a list of tendencies to look out for when students play drums.

Not bouncing or keeping their hands on the drums	Djembe notes require your hand to come off the drum to allow the vibration to travel off the top and through the bottom.
Playing the tone with the finger tips	The amount of surface area you use with your hand will determine the pitch of the note. For the djembe tone using the entire surface area of your fingers will give you a rich "wood" sound.
Swiping the drum	Swiping can be a great texture for improv but when learning hand drum technique it can take away from the richness of the note.
Stiff hands	When our hands are too stiff our fingers point up and take away from the hand surface area.
Stiff body	As rhythm complexities and speed increase our muscles tend to tighten and shorten the breath. Keep it loose!

The Notes

Mallets (Bass)	When we play our bass note, our thumbs are tucked into our hands and our hands are straight and flat like a mallet. Hands should be firm, but not rigid.	
Mittens (Tone)	When we play our tone, our hands are firm like the mallet, but our thumb comes out to form a "mitten." We should use all of the surface area of our fingers for a rich and full sound.	
Gloves (Slap)	When we play the slap, our hands are in the same position as the tone, but our fingers are relaxed. When we relax our fingers they naturally come apart to look like gloves. This will allow our fingertips to produce a higher pitched sound.	