

# Finger positions

## Legend

**R** : right hand

**L** : left hand

**Th** : Thumb

**R<sub>1</sub>** : index

**R<sub>2</sub>** : Middle

**R<sub>3</sub>** : Ring

**R<sub>4</sub>** : Little

(the same indications are used for the left hand – L)

## Special strokes

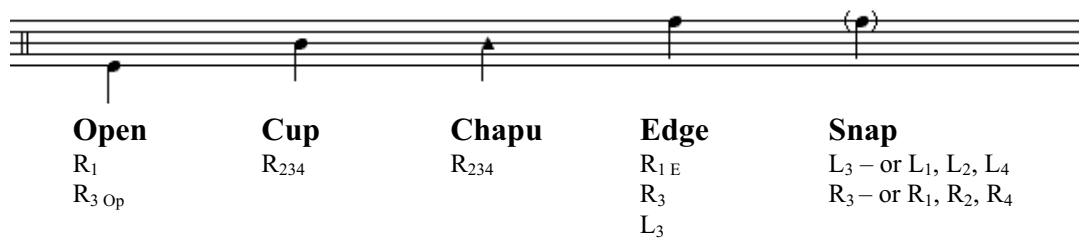
**R<sub>1</sub> , R<sub>3</sub> op**: Open stroke with index finger on sweet spot (the position of the striking finger is half your hand length from the edge of drum)

**L<sub>3</sub>, R<sub>3</sub>, R<sub>1 E</sub>** : Stroke on the Edge of drum with index finger (refer to R<sub>3</sub> or L<sub>3</sub> for sound)

**Sn** : Snapping finger on the edge

**Cup** : Middle, ring and little fingers of right hand slightly cupped together (R<sub>234</sub>). The stroke is a slightly muffled one. Sometimes, this stroke is done with the index finger in different combinations, like when rapidly alternating R<sub>1</sub> and R<sub>234</sub> strokes, as in Tha - ki ta ki ta tha ka.

**Chapu** : Same finger position as the cup but the palm is straightend out to get a rebounding slap done by the sides and extremity of the cupped fingers. The idea here is to bring out the harmonics and overtones with the slap.



## Basic Strokes

In the following chapters we are dealing with Adhi tala, which is a time cycle of 8 beats or 8 quarter notes sub divided into 4+2+2. In the notation each silence written as “■” and has is a sixteenth note value. Between each beat is a line noted as “|” that separates each beat to clearly show the type of phrasings used therein.

Each notated line or beat in the time cycle is indicated by a circled number above it « ① to ④ » (in this case Adhi tala).

Note : When playing with a metronome, every ‘click’ should correspond with a circled numbered beat. This will also help you figure out how to play with different speeds in a given tala.

Lets start with 4 basic strokes:

### THA, DHI, THOM, NUM

L <sub>3</sub>	cup	sn/L	R <sub>1E</sub>
Tha	Dhi	Thom	Num

Here are examples of the **four speeds** that are used:

**1<sup>st</sup> speed** - Each syllable including its silence (noted as “■”) is equal to a quarter note value (see the numbers above the quarter note beats).

L <sub>3</sub>	cup	sn/L	R <sub>1</sub>
①	②	③	④
Tha ■ ■ ■	Dhi ■ ■ ■	Thom ■ ■ ■	Num ■ ■ ■

**2<sup>nd</sup> speed** - Each syllable and its silence marks noted as “■” is equal to an eighth note value.

L <sub>3</sub>	cup	sn/L	R <sub>1</sub>
①	②	③	④
Tha ■ Dhi ■	Thom ■ Num ■	Tha ■ Dhi ■	Thom ■ Num ■

**3<sup>rd</sup> speed** - Each syllable is equal to a sixteenth note value.

L <sub>3</sub>	cup	sn/L	R <sub>1</sub>
①	②	③	④
Tha Dhi Thom Num	Tha Dhi Thom Num	Tha Dhi Thom Num	Tha Dhi Thom Num

**4<sup>th</sup> speed** - Each syllable is equal to a thirty second note value.

L <sub>3</sub>	cup	sn/L	R <sub>1</sub>
①	②	③	④
Tha dhi thom num	Tha dhi thom num	Tha dhi thom num	Tha dhi thom num

# Solkattu

Solkattu (sometimes referred to as ‘solkat’ or ‘solu’) are south Indian rhythmic phrases constructed with a variety of syllables or onomatopae. Each of the phrases has a unique fingering technique and an inherent melodic quality that are interpreted on traditional percussion instruments like the mrdangam, ghatam, tavil and the south Indian tambourine called kanjera.

In this book, solkattu and other south Indian rhythmic concepts have been adapted and applied to frame drums. A finger snapping stroke is also used in combination with the karnatak drumming technique. This added feature has extended the overall playing palette, adding character, timbre and colour.

## The first solkattu

L<sub>3</sub>          cup    R<sub>1</sub>    cup    R<sub>1</sub>    L<sub>3</sub>    cup

|| **Tha** • **ki** **ta** | **ki** **ta** **tha** **ka** ||

The basic 4 strokes given above are used as the first syllables of the following solkattu giving rise to 4 variations.

They are written in 1<sup>st</sup> speed : 1 syllable = 1 beat of a quarter note value.

It is recommended that all the phrases be practiced in 3 or 4 speeds, starting with the slowest and doubling as you go along.

(Note : the quarter note beats are marked above the phrases in circled numbers « ① to ⑧ »).

L<sub>3</sub>          cup    R<sub>1</sub>    cup    R<sub>1</sub>    L<sub>3</sub>    cup    cup          cup    R<sub>1</sub>    cup    R<sub>1</sub>    L<sub>3</sub>    cup

① || **Tha** • **ki** **ta** | **ki** **ta** **tha** **ka** | **Dhi** • **ki** **ta** | **ki** **ta** **tha** **ka** |

Sn/L          cup    R<sub>1</sub>    cup    R<sub>1</sub>    L<sub>3</sub>    cup    R<sub>1</sub>          cup    R<sub>1</sub>    cup    R<sub>1</sub>    L<sub>3</sub>    cup

⑤ | **Thom** • **ki** **ta** | **ki** **ta** **tha** **ka** | **Num** • **ki** **ta** | **ki** **ta** **tha** **ka** ||

## The second solkattu

$R_1$   $L_3$  *cup*  $L_3$  | *cup*  $R_1$   $L_3$  *cup*  
**Dhi gu tha ri** | **ki ta tha ka** ||

When you are ready, join the 2 phrases using the 4 basic strokes Tha, Dhi, Thom, Num as follows

$L_3$  *cup*  $R_1$  *cup*  $R_1$   $L_3$  *cup*  $R_1$   $L_3$  *cup*  $L_3$  *cup*  $R_1$   $L_3$  *cup*  
 ① **Tha** • ki ta | ② ki ta tha ka | ③ **Dhi gu tha ri** | ④ ki ta tha ka |

*cup* *cup*  $R_1$  *cup*  $R_1$   $L_3$  *cup*  
 ⑤ **Dhi** • ki ta | ⑥ ki ta tha ka | ⑦ **Dhi gu tha ri** | ⑧ ki ta tha ka ||

$S_n/L$  *cup*  $R_1$  *cup*  $R_1$   $L_3$  *cup*  
 ① **Thom** • ki ta | ② ki ta tha ka | ③ **Dhi gu tha ri** | ④ ki ta tha ka |

$R_1$  *cup*  $R_1$  *cup*  $R_1$   $L_3$  *cup*  
 ⑤ **Num** • ki ta | ⑥ ki ta tha ka | ⑦ **Dhi gu tha ri** | ⑧ ki ta tha ka ||

Note : The above example is written in third speed but it is recommended to be practiced in all 4 speeds. If needed, refer to the staff notations of each solkattu in previous examples.