

C.P.E. Bach: *Versuch über die wahre Art das Clavier zu spielen*
(Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments)

Study Guide: Summary and Examples
Chapter Two, Embellishments: The Snap

THE SNAP (a.k.a. inverted mordent in English texts)

1) C.P.E. shows the notation of the ornament and suggest it be called “Der Schneller”, translated as “The Snap”. He notes that it is an inverted mordent (although he does not use this as its term), and notes its tones are the same as the short trill.

[Tab. VI.] Fig. XCIV.



Tab. VI Fig. XCIV

Figure 162



The snap (inverted mordent) is used before
 quick staccato notes

2) The snap:

- Is always played rapidly
- It only appears before quick detached notes
- It adds brilliance to these notes and fills them out

3) What distinguishes the snap:

- Snap vs. the Unsuffixed trill (the snap is basically a miniature unsuffixed trill)
 - The snap is best followed by a descent, the unsuffixed trill best followed by an ascent
- Snap vs. all other trills
 - Snap is never enclosed (*first note is always struck/sounded*)
 - Snap never appears under a slur

4) Use the strongest fingers to play the ornament, and make sure the staccato character of the notes are preserved by using appropriate fingering, as shown in Figure 163 (a).



Tab. VI Fig. XCV (a)
Figure 163 (a)



Note the fingering used to ensure
the staccato character

It is often used at caesurae (Figure 163 (b)):

Tab. VI Fig. XCV (b)
Figure 163 (b)



The snap is often used before caesurae

SOURCES

Bach, C.P.E. *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments*. Translated and edited by William J. Mitchell, W.W. Norton & Company, 1949, pp. 142-143.

Bach, Karl Philipp Emanuel. *Versuch über die wahre Art das Klavier zu spielen*. Edited by Walter Niemann, C.P. Khant, Leipzig, 1925, pp. 77-78.