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presents

MARCHING PERCUSSION 101

**ESSENTIAL DRUMLINE
WARMUPS**

Fundamental techniques for the contemporary
marching percussion ensemble

INCLUDING VIDEO DEMONSTRATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS
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INTRODUCTION

This warmup packet contains seven fundamental exercises for the marching percussion section. Covering basic strokes, timing, two height control and rolls, these exercises were specifically designed to provide the beginning to intermediate drumline with a solid foundation for building individual and ensemble technique.

Demonstration videos of each of these exercises are available online at **VICFIRTH.COM**. Featuring Brian S. Mason and the Morehead State University Drumline, you and your percussion section can watch each exercise demonstrated at slow, medium and fast tempi. Instructional videos provide detail on many of the techniques included in each exercise. These videos are a great resource to demonstrate to your students how attention to detail and high performance levels go hand in hand to becoming a top marching ensemble!

The Marching Percussion 101 feature on vicfirth.com also includes a comprehensive instructional video library, covering all the fundamental drumline topics, such as:

- **BASIC CARE & MAINTENANCE**

Implementing a regular maintenance program, strategies for dealing with rain and suggestions for transporting the front ensemble.

- **TUNING**

Getting a characteristic sound from each instrument, plus other topics such as adjusting snare strainers and bass drum muffling techniques.

- **STICK & Mallet SELECTION**

Recommendations for the best implement to use on each instrument as well as a demonstration of optional products which can produce a wide range of tonal colors.

- **INSTRUMENTATION**

Choosing an instrumentation that will provide a balanced sound and how to set individual players on each instrument for the best chance of success.

- **REHEARSAL STRATEGIES**

Covering a wide range of issues such as: working with a metronome, strategies for cleaning a drumline, tracking, dutting, ensemble timing principles, plus a lot more!

- **MARCHING FUNDAMENTALS**

From preconditioning recommendations to forward, backward and crab-step marching fundamentals. Each marching technique is discussed and demonstrated.

We hope you enjoy using MARCHING PERCUSSION 101 and will consider making Vic Firth your #1 choice for sticks and mallets!

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

POSTURE AND CARRIER ADJUSTMENT

Maintaining a good posture while rehearsing is not only important to the visual look of the ensemble, but it is also an important factor in avoiding injury. Any misalignment of the spinal cord when carrying a piece of heavy equipment may result in muscle strain or spinal injury.

For detailed instruction on correct posture, drum height, body & feet positioning, please watch the marching technique videos on the Marching Percussion 101 feature on vicfirth.com.

STICKS OUT / STICKS IN

The importance of a good sticks out/in technique should not be underestimated – it not only provides a uniform visual appearance of the battery, but it also helps the players to internalize tempo prior to a musical entrance. Before each exercise (or during longer rest patterns in show music), the sticks should be carried in a uniform “sticks in” position. The sticks should come out in a staccato/fast motion 2 counts before the first note - and back in one count after the final release note.

A sticks out/sticks in regimen for the front ensemble is not recommended. Because these instruments are approached in a concert fashion, simply bringing the mallets up to playing position 4 counts in a uniform manner before an entrance is sufficient.

GRIP AND STROKE

Without the proper grip and relaxed stroke style, achieving a high performance level is impossible. Take the time necessary for each student to understand the checkpoints for a proper grip and how to produce a fluid, relaxed stroke (detailed videos are provided at vicfirth.com).

We recommend that younger snare lines play with matched grip rather than traditional grip. While players often want to emulate college or drum corp drumlines, the traditional grip adds a level of complexity to achievement that could be pursued after the basic skill levels are achieved.

USING THE HEIGHT SYSTEM FOR DYNAMICS

Because the visual consistency from player to player is a vital part of the marching activity, it is often helpful to define a system of heights when applying dynamics to exercises or show music. In this way, each player can match volume and stick heights on any given musical passage.

pp – 1" *p* – 3" *mp* – 6" *mf* – 9" *f* – 12" *ff* – 15"

A FEW FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS BEHIND EFFECTIVE DRUMLINE REHEARSALS:

1. Students need regular, dedicated rehearsal time devoted to working on the fundamentals included in this packet. Ideally, this time should be spent away from the wind players so that they may rehearse at the tempi most effective for each technique. If time during the regular band rehearsal does not allow for the drumline to warmup as a section, consider having them arrive 15-30 minutes early for rehearsal.
2. Always work with a metronome. Much of percussion performance is related to **MUSCLE MEMORY**. Working with a metronome will develop consistency for each technique covered in these exercises.
3. Repetition is necessary. In order to develop the proper muscle memory necessary for a high performance level, each exercise should be practiced (correctly) a minimum of 8-12 times at a given tempo.
4. Tenors should always play each exercise on one drum before applying the written exercise to all the drums. Bass drummers should also play the full exercise on their drum before splitting parts. This will help develop solid fundamental skills for each individual player.
5. It is helpful to rehearse at a variety of tempi and dynamic levels. Each variable affects how the muscles respond, and therefore must be a part of the regular rehearsal routine.
6. Also practice these exercises "on the move." Tracking (as explained in the Marching Percussion 101 Resource) is a vital means of layering the multiple responsibilities of playing and moving at the same time.
7. Accessory players should play snare parts on a pad in the front ensemble whenever possible. If necessary, these parts should be adapted to fit the student's ability level.
8. Adapting the exercises to reflect the demands of your show music will enhance the student's performance level. For example, if the students are having difficulty playing a soft passage in the show music, consider playing one or more of the exercises each day at a soft dynamic level at the same tempo as the music.

ABOUT THE EXERCISES:

Each exercise includes a full score and suggestions to help you and your students understand the basic techniques that are included with each exercise. In addition, we have provided several options that may be used if students either find the exercise too difficult, or are looking for a challenge to enhance their skills. Remember though, that difficulty of the exercise is not the primary consideration. Only through effective rehearsal on basic skills will your drumline be able to master the techniques to become a musical ensemble.

8 ON A HAND

Brian S. Mason

Musical score for Snare, Tenors, 5 BD, Cymbals, Mallets, and Timpani. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of five measures. The Snare, Tenors, and 5 BD parts feature a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, alternating between right (R) and left (L) hands. The Cymbals part features a pattern of eighth notes, alternating between right (R) and left (L) hands, with the instruction "(hi-hat)" below. The Mallets part features a melodic line, alternating between right (R) and left (L) hands. The Timpani part features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, alternating between right (R) and left (L) hands. The score ends with a final measure containing a whole note rest.

Musical score for sn, tn, 5 bd, cy, key, and Timp. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of five measures. The sn, tn, and 5 bd parts feature a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, alternating between right (R) and left (L) hands. The cy part features a pattern of eighth notes, alternating between right (R) and left (L) hands, with the instruction "(hi-hat)" below. The key part features a melodic line, alternating between right (R) and left (L) hands. The Timp part features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, alternating between right (R) and left (L) hands. The score ends with a final measure containing a whole note rest.

Rehearsal Notes

This exercise works on full rebound strokes, making it a perfect way to begin each practice session. Here are a few things to look for during your daily rehearsal:

- Work for a full, relaxed stroke (stick height = 12").
- Start at a slow tempo, working with a metronome or play-along track (mm=90), then move to medium (120) and fast tempi (140+) for 2-3 minutes per tempo.
- There should be no "stopping points" in the path of the stick as it travels up and down. The motion of the stick should be smooth on each stroke.
- Stick heights should match player to player.
- Keep the hand that's not playing (the free hand) in the proper playing position.
- On the battery percussion instruments, allow the rebound of the stick off the head to push it back to the up position. Keyboards and timpani will direct the stroke with the wrist, keeping the hand as relaxed as possible.
- Also rehearse at a piano dynamic level (3"). At this height, the wrist will direct the stroke because of the decrease in the stick's natural rebound. Strive for a full sound even at a low height, always keeping the wrist relaxed.
- Another option is to rehearse with a crescendo or diminuendo on each measure. Watch stick heights carefully. The height of the stick should consistently reflect the change in dynamics. Strive for an even, gradual change from low to high (or high to low).

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8 ON A HAND – EXERCISE OPTIONS

OPTION 1

The musical score for Option 1 is written in 4/4 time and consists of five measures. The instruments and their parts are as follows:

- Snare:** A simple eighth-note pattern: R, L, R, L, R.
- Tenors:** A more complex eighth-note pattern: R, L, R, L, R.
- 5 BD:** A simple eighth-note pattern: R, L, R, L, R.
- 4 BD:** A simple eighth-note pattern: R, L, R, L, R.
- Cymbals:** A simple eighth-note pattern: R, L, R, L, R.
- Mallets:** A simple eighth-note pattern: R, L, R, L, R.
- Timpani:** A simple eighth-note pattern: R, L, R, L, R.

This option provides variations for all instruments except snares.

- **Tenors:** This option includes a different “around the drums” part. Watch for proper beating area on each drum. In measures 3 & 4, the free hand should be at rest outside the path of the opposite mallet.
- **Bass Drums:** Includes split parts (often helpful when tempo gets fast). At a slow tempo, play every 8th on the right hand. At a fast tempo, alternate the two 8ths (R L).
- **Cymbals:** As an option, the cymbal players can work on exercises to build strength. This will help them to build stamina necessary for long practices and performances. Hold the cymbals above head, horizontally in front or horizontally out to side – or do pushups.
- **Mallets:** This is an easier option than the normal exercise. For inexperienced players, 8th notes can be alternated at faster tempi. In addition, you may add other scales (in circle of 4ths, 5ths, diatonically or chromatically). Always focus on playing in the proper beating area on the accidentals – in the center at a slow tempo, close to the edge at faster tempi.
- **Timpani:** Play 8 on a hand instead of alternating. You may choose to use a double sticking on the last two eighth notes of each measure for a relaxed transition to the opposite drum.

OPTION 2

The musical score for Option 2 is presented in a multi-staff format. It includes parts for Snare, Tenors, 5 BD (Bass Drum), 4 BD (Bass Drum), Cymbals, Mallets, and Timpani. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of five measures. Each part includes a musical staff with notes and a corresponding sticking pattern below it. The sticking patterns are: Snare: R, R L R L R L R L -, R L L L -, L R L R L R L R -, L; Tenors: R, R L R L R L R L -, R L L L -, L R L R L R L R -, L; 5 BD: R, R L R L R L R L -, R, R L R L R L R L -, R; 4 BD: R, R L R L R L R L -, R, R L R L R L R L -, R; Cymbals: X, X; Mallets: R, R L R L R L R L -, R L L L -, L R L R L R L R -, L; Timpani: R, R L R L R L R L -, R L L L -, L R L R L R L R -, L.

This option provides a variation to work on alternating single strokes.

- **Snares/Tenors:** The rebound stroke from measure 1 to 2 (and 3 to 4) should remain consistent. Listen & watch for consistency of stick heights from hand to hand.
- **Tenors:** Practice first on one drum, then play the exercise as written around the drums. Work to minimize the motion of the forearms by relaxing the wrists.
- **Bass Drums:** Practice this exercise in unison before splitting the parts (applying the same sticking as the snares). On the split part, play both 8ths with right hand and alternate the four 16th notes.
- **Cymbals:** Split parts with a hi-hat technique. If only 2 players are present, split quarters and eights 2 ways instead of 4.
- **Mallets:** This is a great option for developing even alternating stroke required to play smooth rolls. Play the exercise first on one note, then as written. Work to keep all strokes even with no pulsations as you move from note to note.
- **Timpani:** This works on "passing rolls." Keep the 16th note strokes consistent as you move from drum to drum. Watch (and listen) to make sure you're striking the drums in the correct beating area on each stroke.

16th NOTE TIMING

Brian S. Mason

The musical score is for a 4/4 time exercise. It consists of five measures. The instruments and their parts are:

- Snare:** Rhythmic notation with patterns R L R, R L L, R R L, L R L.
- Tenors:** Rhythmic notation with patterns R L R, R L L, R R L, L R L.
- 5 BD:** Continuous 16th-note patterns.
- 4 BD:** Continuous 16th-note patterns.
- Cymbals:** Techniques: (zing), (tap), (crunch), (sizzle), (suck).
- Mallets:** Rhythmic notation with patterns R L R, R L L, R R L, L R L.
- Timpani:** Simple bass line.

Rehearsal Notes

This exercise works on the accuracy of playing the four 16th/8th rhythm permutations. Here are a few things you should work towards when rehearsing this exercise:

- **Statta** slow tempo, working with a metronome or play-along track. The bass drums provide the 16th base on which all other instruments should line up the rhythmic figures.
- **Markit** while playing the syncopated rhythms in measure 2 & 4 are occasionally problematic. If this is the case, first isolate one beat of the rhythm (plus a downbeat following) at a very slow tempo, then two, three, and finally all four. It's often helpful for students to think of "playing their feet" on the 16th rest in the 4th measure.
- **Snares/Tenors:** There should be a constant motion on repeated strokes (right hand strokes in measure 1&3, left hand strokes in measures 2&4) – similar to the "8 on a hand" exercise. The hand playing one stroke per measure should freeze immediately after the stroke (LH meas. 1&3, RH meas. 2&4).
- **Cymbals:** This exercise works on five different techniques to create new sounds. Watch the section video for this exercise to see a demonstration of each technique.

16th NOTE TIMING – EXERCISE OPTIONS

OPTION 1

BD

R L R R L L R R L L R L

Mallets

This option provides the bass drums with the full unison rhythmic pattern (same as snare part). The mallets can fill in all the notes in each rhythm pattern to play a full scalular exercise (the keyboards may also transpose this exercise to other keys).

OPTION 2

Snare

R L R L R L R R L R L R L L

Tenors

R L R L R L R R L R L R L L

5 BD

R L R R L L

5

sn

R L R L R R L R L R L L R L

tn

R L R L R R L R L R L L R L

5 bd

R R L L R L

This option inserts a measure of “check pattern” between the measures of the timing pattern.

- **Bass Drums:** The rhythmic permutation is included in the opposite measure as the snares and tenors. Use their 16th note check to line up your rhythm.
- **Snares/Tenors:** Either section may flip the measure of check and rhythm (play measure 2 then 1, 4 then 3, etc) to provide a rhythmic base on which to line up the other section’s rhythms. Or, you may choose to do this with every other player within a single section.
- **Other Sections:** Repeat the first four measures to equal the snare/tenor/bass option.

ACCENT TAP

Brian S. Mason

The musical score is for a percussion ensemble and is written in 4/4 time. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system includes Snare, Tenors, BD (Bass Drum), Cymbals, Mallets, and Timpani. The second system includes sn, tn, bd, cy, key, and Timp. The score features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, with many notes marked with an accent (>). The Mallets part is written in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb), while the other parts are in bass clef. The Timpani part includes specific mallet assignments: R, L, R, L, R, L, R, L, R, L. The Cymbals part includes assignments for (unison) and (hi-hat). The sn, tn, and bd parts also include mallet assignments: R, L, R. The key part is written in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The Timp part is written in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb).

Rehearsal Notes

This exercise works on two height control. Here are a few things to look for during your daily rehearsal:

- Each accent stroke should be played at a full height (12"). While the velocity - or stroke speed - will increase, there should be no extra tension in the hand, wrist or forearm. Avoid trying to "hit the drum harder" on accented strokes.
- After the accent stroke hits the drum, "freeze" the stick in the down position (3") by using a slight squeeze of the fingers and fulcrum. Only use as much squeeze as necessary to stop the stick from rebounding up.
- Play the unaccented notes at 3" with a wrist directed stroke into the drum. Strive to relax the hand, wrist and fingers on the soft taps. The taps, while soft, should be played with a full sound (play "into the drum" at a 3" height).
- Keep the hand that's not playing (the free hand) in the proper playing position.
- **Tenors:** Play first time on one drum, then apply the written exercise the 2nd time through. Try to limit the amount of forearm motion when playing accents out on a different drum by allowing a slight side-to-side movement of the wrist.
- **Cymbals:** The timing of the even numbered measures is more difficult than you might think. Because of the accent placement on the "and" of count 2 in the drum parts, the quarter note hi-hat on beat 3 needs to be hit exactly in time with the left foot. It may be helpful to listen to the keyboard and timpani part to time the downbeats correctly.
- **Keyboards:** Strive for a full accent (12") and soft tap (3"). Listen for a good quality sound on the accents (do not try to hit the accents harder – simply play at a higher height). Watch for correct beating area on the bars.

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ACCENT TAP – EXERCISE OPTIONS

OPTION 1

Play the exercise in a “round.” This gives the ensemble a timing challenge because the accents are displaced between the voices (including keyboards/timpani/cymbals as the 4th voice).

- Start with one voice, add a 2nd voice two counts later, etc. until all voices are in. Repeat with three silent counts for each instrument. Listen to the other sections (or “dut”) for the entrance.

OPTION 2

This option adds a slightly more difficult accent/tap option in the 4th measure (1 accent/1 tap). Play all 4 bars on the right and repeat off the left (tenors will use drum 2 & 4 on the left).

WANT VARIETY?



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OPTION 3

The musical score for Option 3 is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It consists of three systems of staves:

- System 1:**
 - Mallets:** Treble clef, playing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents. The pattern is: L R L R - (measure 1), R L R L R L (measure 2), R L R L R L (measure 3), R L R L R L (measure 4).
 - Timpani:** Bass clef, playing a pattern of eighth notes with muffs. The pattern is: R (x) L (x) R L R L (measure 1), R L R L R L (measure 2), R L R L R L (measure 3), R L R L R L (measure 4).
- System 2:**
 - key:** Treble clef, playing a pattern of eighth notes with accents. The pattern is: R L R L R L R L (measure 5), R L R L R L R L (measure 6), R L R L R L R L (measure 7), R L R L R L R L (measure 8).
 - Timp:** Bass clef, playing a pattern of eighth notes with muffs. The pattern is: R (x) L (x) R R L R R L (measure 5), R L R L R L R L (measure 6), R L R L R L R L (measure 7), R L R L R L R L (measure 8).

This option provides a variation for the keyboards and timpani.

- **Keyboards:** Start one octave higher off the left hand. The left will then move down the scale on the accented notes.
- **Timpani:** This option works on MUFFLING. In the first line, the right hand will muffle the right hand strokes on the top drum, the left will muffle the left hand strokes on the bottom drum (each muffle is notated with an (x) on the appropriate drum).

In measure 5 & 6, muffle the opposite hand from the drum playing (the left muffles the bottom at the same time the right plays half note on the top drum). This technique is similar to playing a “flam” between the hands – with the grace note being the muffle.

In measures 7 & 8, both hands will muffle both drums on the rest.

OPTION 4

The musical score for Option 4 is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It consists of two systems of staves:

- System 1:**
 - Cymbals:** Treble clef, playing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents. The pattern is: R L R L R L R L (measure 1), R L R L R L R L (measure 2), R L R L R L R L (measure 3), R L R L R L R L (measure 4).
 - Mallets:** Treble clef, playing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents. The pattern is: R L R L R L R L (measure 1), R L R L R L R L (measure 2), R L R L R L R L (measure 3), R L R L R L R L (measure 4).

This option provides a variation for the cymbals and keyboards.

- **Cymbals:** Play the same rhythm in measures 2 & 4 as the snare accents.
- **Keyboards:** Play the same accent pattern as the snares, with alternating strokes. Left hand moves to low A in measure 2 and low F in measure 4 (use low A if low F is not available).

ACCENTED 16ths

Brian S. Mason

Musical score for Snare, Tenors, BD, Cymbals, Mallets, and Timpani. The score is in 4/4 time and features accented 16th notes. The Snare, Tenors, and BD parts play a continuous 16th-note pattern with accents. The Cymbals part includes a 'Divisi (A/B) (sizzle/suck)' effect. The Mallets part plays a similar 16th-note pattern with accents. The Timpani part plays a rhythmic pattern with accents.

Musical score for sn, tn, bd, cy, key, and Timp. The score is in 4/4 time and features accented 16th notes. The sn, tn, and bd parts play a continuous 16th-note pattern with accents. The cy part includes a '(HI-HAT)' effect. The key part plays a melodic line with accents. The Timp part plays a rhythmic pattern with accents.

Rehearsal Notes

This exercise works on two height control within alternated 16th note accent patterns. Here are a few things to look for during your daily rehearsal:

- Each accent stroke should be played at a full height (12"), unaccented notes at 3". All control issues are the same as in the Accent Tap exercise. Do not put extra force behind the accent strokes – simply play the stick at a higher height. The taps should be played with a full sound (with a relaxed wrist stroke played "into the drum").
- Start slow and work one measure at a time (or accent to accent if you need to break it down even further). Concentrate on listening to the taps rather than the accents. For younger players, marking time in a consistent tempo may be as much of an issue as playing the exercise. "Place the feet" in unison with the downbeats in the hands.
- Listen for evenness of the low volume taps - both in sound and note spacing.
- **Tenors:** Play first time on one drum, then play the written exercise on the 2nd time through. The notes marked with a "+" in the 4th measure are cross-overs (left hand over right). Try to keep the forearms low to the drum to minimize the angle of the mallet head on the drum. A flat angle of the mallet results in the best sound.
- **Cymbals:** This exercise incorporates a "sizzle/suck" sound that emulates a drumset hi-hat. Watch the section video for a demonstration of this technique.
- **Keyboards:** Strive for a full height stroke on the accents (12") and soft taps (3-4").
- **Timpani:** The syncopated rhythms should line up exactly with the battery accents. Listen to the 16th note subdivision in the soft taps rather than the accents.

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ACCENTED 16ths – EXERCISE OPTIONS

OPTION 1

Play a forte-piano crescendo in the 4th measure, necessitating a higher level of accent/tap control.

- The first 3 notes of the measure is played exactly as you would without a forte-piano – the accent is played at 12" (with the same sound as all the other accents through the exercise), the two taps following are played at 3".
- The 2nd accent (on the last 16th on beat 1) should be played at 5" – only slightly louder than the tap height.
- Each accent thereafter should gradually increase in height and volume. The taps however, should maintain at a consistent 3" height throughout the crescendo.

OPTION 2

This option provides a different accent pattern for the final measure. The Accented 16th Exercise is open to any number of accent patterns, so feel free to experiment with other variations (you may choose to insert an accent pattern that appears in the show music).

WANT VARIETY?



Vic Firth has options for tenors too!

OPTION 3

This option provides a variation for the bass drums to work on syncopated unison rhythms.

- The rhythms notated line up with the accents of the snare and tenor part. Listen carefully to the taps between the accents for better rhythmic accuracy.
- “Play the feet” on each rest – sometimes playing syncopated rhythms test the player’s coordination ability as they do timing accuracy.

OPTION 4

This option provides a split part for the bass drums. These 8th and 16th note patterns are quite common for show and stand music in bass drum parts. Another option would be to substitute a 4 measure pattern directly from the show music to get more repetitions at a variety of tempi.

OPTION 5

This option provides a simplified variation for the keyboards (only changing 1 note per measure).

OPTION 6

This option provides another simplified variation for the keyboards to work alternating 16ths while moving to progressively larger intervals.

- Listen for evenness of the 16th notes – especially when the interval distance between the notes increase.

DOUBLE BEAT

Brian S. Mason

This musical score is for the piece "DOUBLE BEAT" by Brian S. Mason, intended for a director. The score is written in 4/4 time and consists of two systems of staves. The first system includes parts for Snare, Tenors, 5 BD, 4 BD, Cymbals, Mallets, and Timpani. The second system includes parts for sn, tn, 5 bd, 4 bd, cy, key, and Timp. The score features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. Dynamics such as *f* (forte) are indicated throughout. Specific performance instructions like "(sizzle/suck)" and "(HI-HAT)" are provided for the Cymbals and Hi-Hat parts. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor), and the time signature is 4/4. The score is divided into measures by vertical bar lines, with some measures containing repeat signs.

The musical score is divided into three measures. Measure 9 starts with a rehearsal mark (9) and contains rhythmic patterns for snare, tenor, bass drums, cymbals, keyboard, and timpani. Snare and tenor parts are marked with (RR) and (LL) for the first two notes. Measure 10 contains a double bar line with a slash, indicating a repeat or continuation. Measure 11 concludes the exercise with a final note and a double bar line.

Rehearsal Notes

This exercise works on developing a quality double stroke – necessary for great sounding rolls. Here are a few things to look for during your daily rehearsal:

- The wrist directs each stroke with a relaxed rebound motion. Listen for evenness of sound. A wrist that is too tight will result in a choppy sounding double stroke. A “bounced” double stroke will result in the first stroke being louder than the second. Think of this as you do the “8 on a hand” exercise – but “2 on a hand” instead.
- In the first half of the exercise, isolate the motion to the wrists as much as possible (no large forearm motions for the beginning of each double stroke). In the second half, there will be a slight forearm motion as the check pattern flows from hand to hand.
- Practice also with your hands on your leg (or sticks on a pillow).
- **Tenors:** Practice on one drum first, then play the exercise as written.
- **Bass Drums:** Play the exercise in unison first, then as written. In measures 5-8, the 16th notes should be alternated (R L), single 8th notes are played on the right hand. Listen to snares and tenors to line up split 8ths and 16ths in m5-10.
- **Cymbals:** This exercise incorporates the same sizzle/suck technique as Alternated 16ths, but with a more complex split part. Play measures 1-4 in unison. Measures 5-11 are split.
- **Keyboards:** This exercise incorporates octave strokes on a chromatic scale. At a slow tempo, play the accidentals in the center of the bar – at faster tempi, at the edge. Inexperienced players may choose to play the exercise in one octave with alternating strokes.

DOUBLE BEAT – EXERCISE OPTIONS

OPTION 1

This option provides the bass drums with remedial work on running 8th and 16th patterns.

- The first 4 measures give each player the opportunity to place his or her 8th note on the downbeat or upbeat. If the line is very inexperienced, you can have them play quarter notes instead of 8ths (use the 1st four 8ths of each bar only).
- In measure 5, the unison 16ths on the downbeats should be played with alternating strokes (R L). Listen to the snare and tenor part to match spacing of the 16ths. Measure 6 is similar, but with upbeat 16ths.
- Again, listen to the snares and tenors in measures 9-10 to match timing of the split 16ths.

OPTION 2

This option provides the cymbal line with a simplified sizzle/suck exercise. In the first 4 measures, play the sizzle on the downbeat (the same as the original exercise). In measures 5-8, the sizzle is on the upbeat. This will help with timing and coordination issues between the hands and feet.

OPTION 3

The musical score for Option 3 is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It consists of three systems of staves:

- System 1:** Mallets (treble clef) and Timpani (bass clef). Both parts start with a double stroke on the first note (Bb) in measure 1, followed by a single stroke on the second note (A) in measure 2. A double bar line with a '2' above it indicates a second ending starting in measure 3. The Mallets part has a rhythmic pattern of quarter notes, while the Timpani part has a pattern of eighth notes.
- System 2:** Key (treble clef) and Timpani (bass clef). The Key part starts with a double stroke on the first note (Bb) in measure 1, followed by a single stroke on the second note (A) in measure 2. The Timpani part has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes.

Handwritten annotations below the staves indicate the stroke order for each note:

- Mallets:** R (meas. 1), L (meas. 2), R R L - (meas. 3), R L R L R L R L (meas. 4)
- Timpani:** R (meas. 1), L (meas. 2), R R L - (meas. 3), R R L L - (meas. 4)
- Key:** R L L R L L R L L R L L (meas. 1), R L - (meas. 2), R R L L - (meas. 3), L L R R - (meas. 4)
- Timpani (System 2):** R L L - (meas. 1), R R L L - (meas. 2), L L R R - (meas. 3), R (meas. 4)

This option provides a double stroke variation for the keyboards and timpani.

- Inexperienced mallet players may wish to play the double strokes on one note instead of two (Bb in meas. 1, A in meas. 2, etc).
- Work for the same relaxed double wrist stroke technique as the snares and tenors.

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CHICKEN AND A ROLL

Brian S. Mason

6"
mf

6"
mf

5 BD
mf

4 BD
mf

Cymbals
(taps)
Divisi (A/B)
mf

Mallets
mf

Timpani
mf

sn
3 $> 9^{\text{th}}/3^{\text{rd}}$

tn
f $> 9^{\text{th}}/3^{\text{rd}}$

5 bd

4 bd

cy
(zing)

key
3

Timp
3

Detailed description: This is a musical score for a percussion ensemble. The top section (measures 1-4) includes parts for Snare, Tenors, 5 BD, 4 BD, Cymbals, Mallets, and Timpani. The Snare and Tenors parts are marked with a 6" size and *mf* dynamic. The Cymbals part is marked with *mf* and includes the instruction '(taps) Divisi (A/B)'. The Mallets part is marked with *mf*. The Timpani part is marked with *mf*. The bottom section (measures 5-8) includes parts for sn, tn, 5 bd, 4 bd, cy, key, and Timp. The sn and tn parts are marked with a 9th/3rd size and *f* dynamic. The sn part includes the instruction 'R L R L' and the tn part includes 'R R L'. The cy part is marked with '(zing)'. The key and Timp parts are marked with a 3. The score is written in 4/4 time and consists of two systems of staves.

Rehearsal Notes

This exercise works on 16th note roll patterns. Here are a few things to look for during your daily rehearsal:

- ***Snares/Tenors:*** Play the first 2 measures at a consistent 6" height. The 16th check and the roll should maintain a consistent motion and height from one to the other – and a consistent feel in the hands (don't overly relax for the 16ths or squeeze for the roll).

Measures 3-4 should be played at 9" for the accent, 3" for the taps and rolls. This presents the same control issues as the Accented 16th exercise. Work to keep the roll at the 3" height, but with a full sound (by playing "into the drum").

The crescendo at the end of measure 4 should start at 3" and finish at 9". Keep the tempo and hand speed consistent throughout. Avoid "ripping the roll" (by speeding up) or "hanging the roll" (by slowing down).

- ***Bass Drums:*** All 8th note strokes should be played with the right hand, 16th notes should be alternated. Listen to the snare and tenors to line up the 16ths.
- ***Cymbals:*** This exercise incorporates tap and zing techniques. Watch the section video for a demonstration of these two techniques.
- ***Timpani:*** This exercise can be played on 3 drums (G-C-D) or, if the player is capable, on two (G-C). If playing on two drums, the player will tune the higher drum from C to D (and D to C) as necessary. It is helpful for the player to be seated when performing multiple tuning changes.

DIRECTOR

CHICKEN AND A ROLL – EXERCISE OPTIONS

OPTION 1

The musical score is arranged in two systems. The first system includes staves for 5 BD, 4 BD, Cymbals, Mallets, and Timpani. The second system includes staves for 5 bd, 4 bd, cy, key, and Timp. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of 8 measures. The percussion parts feature complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth-note runs. The keyboard part provides harmonic support with chords and melodic lines. The timpani part features a simple bass line with some chromatic movement.

5 BD

4 BD

Cymbals

Mallets

Timpani

5 bd

4 bd

cy

key

Timp

Option 1 provides a more difficult variation for basses, cymbals, mallets and timpani.

- **Bass Drums:** In measure 3, the top two drums have the opportunity to play the same roll pattern as the snares and tenors (beats 1 & 2 on drum 1; beats 3 & 4 on drum 2). Play the accents at 9", taps and rolls at 3". Listen and match the 16ths and rolls with the snares. The other drums play syncopated accents that line up with snare/tenor accents.

In measure 4, make sure that the unison is timed correctly. Start the 16th note run on beat 3 at 3" (soft) and crescendo to the final unison.

- **Cymbals:** This exercise works on full crashes. Listen and subdivide carefully to play each crash in time with the rest of the ensemble. The final note is played as a full crash and quick muffle.

It is important to note that the full cymbal crash may interfere with the snare's and tenor's ability to "listen-in" to the roll. For inexperienced lines, you may consider moving the cymbals away from the snares and tenors (to a distance of at least 8-12 steps). As the players become more confident, keeping the cymbals in a usual warmup or performance arc is recommended because these are the same type of listening environments that snares and tenors often experience on the field. The battery players must get used to "focusing their ear" past the clutter of cymbal crashes or wind parts.

- **Mallets:** Play this exercise with 2 mallets in one hand, then repeat with the opposite hand (or play with 4 mallets). Work for a full, relaxed wrist stroke, minimizing forearm motion. At a slow tempo, play in the center of the accidental bars – or on the edge at a fast tempo. If instruction on how to hold four mallets is necessary, check out our free video lessons at www.vicfirth.com/education (scroll down to "concert/keyboard").
- **Timpani:** Play the entire exercise on one drum, moving the pitch up or down a half step every two counts. Try to make the pedal motion as quick as possible just before striking the new pitch. Listen carefully to the keyboard part to match pitch.

TRIPLET ROLLS

Brian S. Mason

This musical score is for a percussion ensemble piece titled "Triplet Rolls" by Brian S. Mason. It is written for a Director and includes parts for Snare, Tenors, 5 BD (Bass Drum), 4 BD (Bass Drum), Cymbals, Mallets, and Timpani. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of two systems of music.

The first system (measures 1-4) features a complex rhythmic pattern of triplet rolls across all instruments. The Snare, Tenors, 5 BD, and 4 BD parts play continuous eighth-note triplet rolls. The Cymbals part has a single eighth note with an accent (>) in each measure. The Mallets part plays a melodic line with triplet rolls, and the Timpani part plays a bass line with triplet rolls.

The second system (measures 5-9) continues the triplet roll pattern. It includes specific performance instructions for the Snare and Tenors, such as "R" (Right) and "L" (Left) for alternating hands. The 5 BD and 4 BD parts continue with triplet rolls. The Cymbals part has a "Divisi" instruction and a "choke" instruction at the end. The Mallets part continues with triplet rolls, and the Timpani part continues with triplet rolls.

Key performance instructions include:

- Snare: R, L, R, L (alternating hands)
- Tenors: R, L, R, L (alternating hands)
- 5 bd: R, L, R, L (alternating hands)
- 4 bd: R, L, R, L (alternating hands)
- Cymbals: Divisi, choke
- Mallets: L R R sim. (simultaneous)

Rehearsal Notes

This exercise works on triplet roll patterns. Here are a few things to look for during your daily rehearsal:

- **Snares/Tenors:** This exercise uses all the same techniques as the Chicken and a Roll exercise, except with a triplet base. Measures 1-4 should be played at a consistent 6" height, measures 5-9 at 9"/3". Even though the pattern moves from "hand to hand" on each beat, strive for a consistent sound without pulsing each downbeat.
- **Tenors:** Practice on one drum before playing the written exercise. In measure 8, you will cross the left over right on beat 2 and beat 4. Strive to minimize the angle of the forearms on the cross-overs and work for a consistent triplet motion of the wrists. Be careful to not crush the diddles under the cross-over.
- **Bass Drums:** All notes should be alternated (RLR). Listen to the snares and tenors to match note spacing.
- **Cymbals:** This exercise incorporates full crashes with follow-through. Watch the section video to see a demonstration. Measures 5-6 is A/B divisi with follow through. Meas. 7-8 is a 4-way split. If only 2 players are available, repeat measures 5-6.

The final measure is in unison – a full crash with fast muffle (not a hi-hat technique).

- **Mallets:** Play this exercise with alternating strokes (starting on the right hand). The only double sticking necessary is notated in measure 7 & 8.
- **Timpani:** This exercise is for 3 drums (G-C-F). If 3 drums are not available, play all the G's on C (meas. 1, 2, 5, 6 & 7 would be played on C). All triplets should be alternated, starting on the left hand.

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BRIAN S. MASON

Brian S. Mason is a highly respected innovator of the contemporary marching percussion ensemble. In high demand as a clinician, designer, and adjudicator, he has traveled extensively throughout the United States, Japan, Canada, Korea, and Mexico. Brian gained worldwide recognition for his percussion writing and teaching with the Cavaliers and the Phantom Regiment Drum & Bugle Corps, claiming numerous awards and honors with both organizations during his tenure, and is currently a member of the design team with the Santa Clara Vanguard.

Currently, Brian is a member of the percussion faculty at Morehead State University in Morehead, KY, and is the director of the award-winning Marching Percussion Ensemble. At MSU, Mr. Mason is a member of the Faculty Jazz Ensemble, the Faculty Chamber Ensemble, and performs regularly with the Faculty Brass Quintet. Off-campus, he is a member of the Lexington Philharmonic Orchestra, and appears as a guest artist with many high school percussion ensembles across the country, in addition to performing with Dr. Steven Snyder in their jazz vibraphone/piano duo.

Brian received his M.M. at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and is pursuing his D.M.A. at the University of Kentucky, where he received his B.M. He is a member of the Vic Firth Education Committee, the Percussive Arts Society Health and Wellness Committee, and the Percussive Arts Society Marching Percussion Committee. He has published articles in Percussive Notes, has been interviewed in Modern Drummer and Band and Orchestra Magazine, and was a contributing editor for Stick It magazine. Brian co-authored the 2000 Modern Drummer Readers Poll's "No. 1 Drum Set Method Book," The Commandments of R&B Drumming (Warner Brothers), and his original works are published through Row-Loff Productions and Tap Space Publications.



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