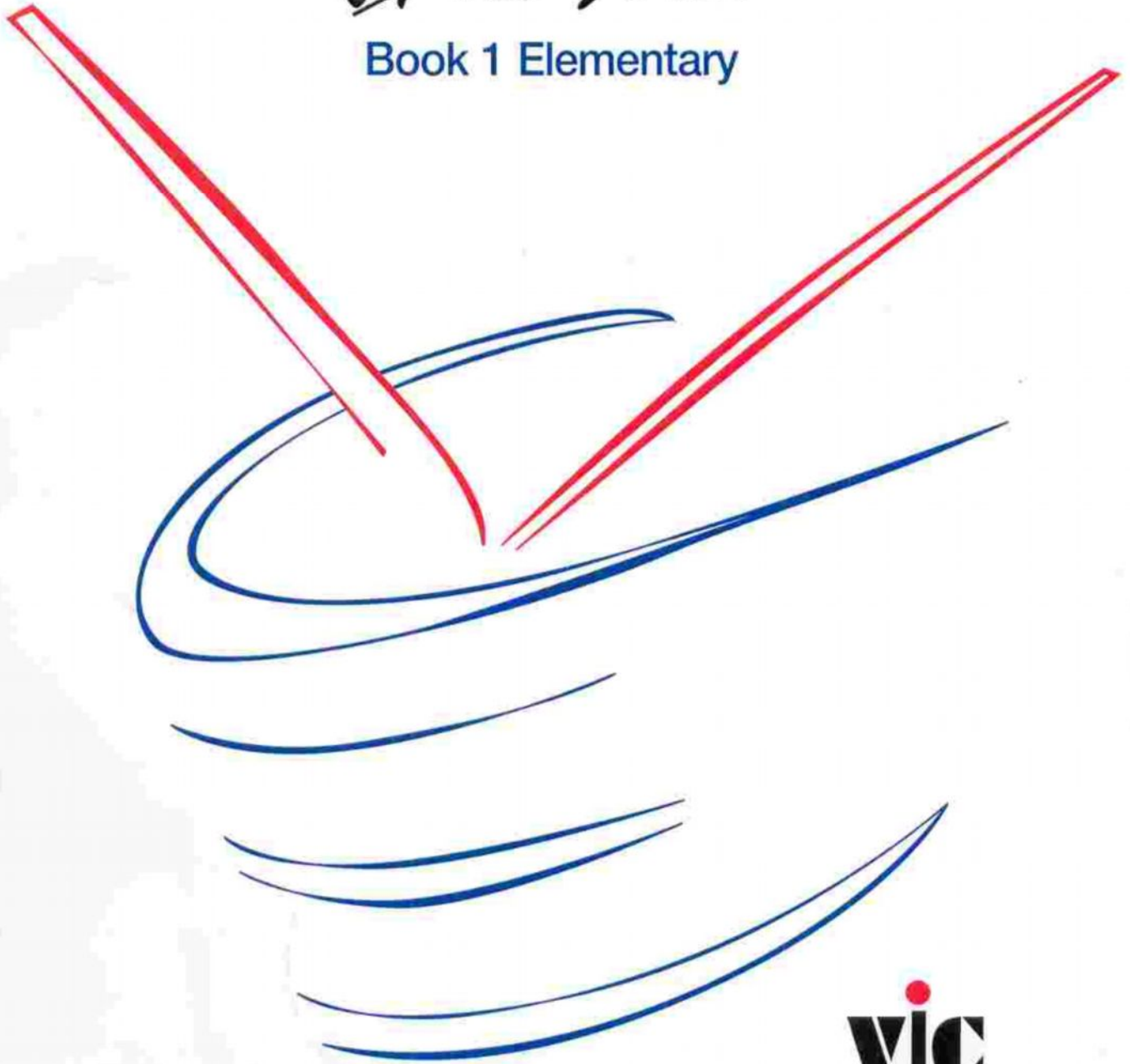


SNARE DRUM METHOD

by Vic Firth

Book 1 Elementary



**VIC
FIRTH®**

*Written by Vic Firth, Solo Timpanist and Head of the Percussion
Section of The Boston Symphony Orchestra*

CARL FISCHER®

VIC FIRTH SNARE DRUM METHOD

BOOK I - Elementary

by
VIC FIRTH

Solo Timpanist
and Head of the Percussion Section
The Boston Symphony Orchestra



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FOREWORD

This book has been conceived and written with the following goal in mind: to develop a "musical" snare drummer in the classical and traditional sense of the word. My years of performing and teaching have repeatedly made clear the problems and solutions of the snare drummer as a percussion artist. As well as control and fast articulate hands, the snare drummer must develop a sense of rhythmic phrasing, interpretation, and concept of sound. He must understand tone production and sound projection as related to sticking and technical execution. He must not treat the instrument as a noisy rhythm maker, but as a musical instrument capable of countless musical subtleties. I present this book as the first step toward the development of this calibre of player.

Included in the book is an explanation of the basic stroke and playing position. Examples of simple reading begin in 4/4 time and progress through 2/4, 6/8, and 3/4. Also discussed are flams, syncopation, the 5, 9, 13, and 17 stroke rolls as well as the long roll.

One comment to the student: regardless of the teacher's ability and the quality of the instruction book used, the key to success lies with the student and his desire to work hard and diligently. The finest teacher and the most comprehensive book are only two-thirds of the basic necessities. The most important third is the student who must patiently practice many long hours. Then, and only then, will the combination produce musical results that are of the highest musical standards.



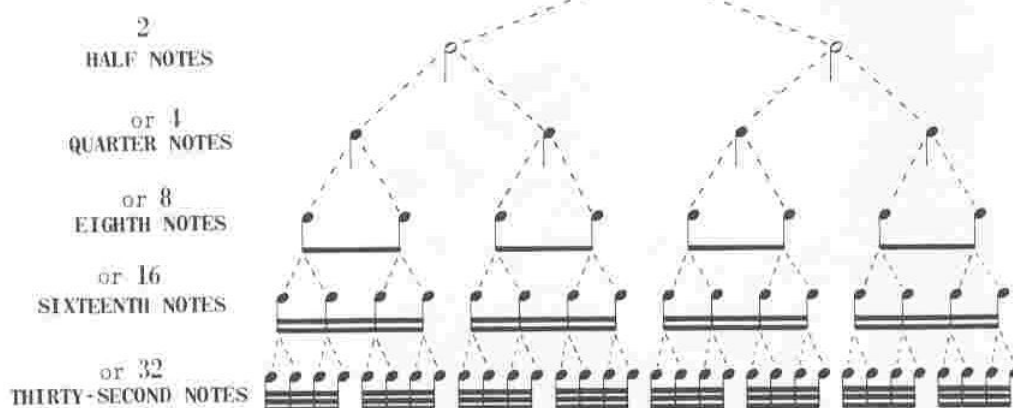
BASIC PRINCIPLES OF MUSIC

Music is the art and science of combining sounds or tones in varying melody, harmony, rhythm, and timbre.

To indicate the pitch and duration of these tones, symbols called **Notes** are used. These notes are all related to each other as indicated by their names, (whole, half, quarter, etc.)

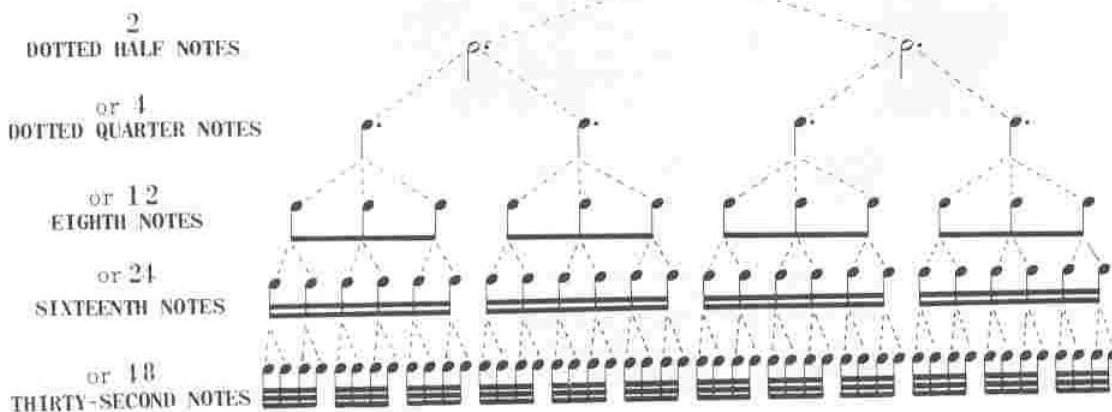
Below is a chart of note values in **Binary** time. (Units of two)

A WHOLE NOTE IS EQUAL TO



Below is a chart of note values in **Ternary** time. (Units of three)

A DOTTED WHOLE NOTE
IS EQUAL TO



To indicate silence in music, symbols called **RESTS** are used. These too are related to each other as are note values. Below is a chart of rests with their related note values.

BINARY

	WHOLE	HALF	QUARTER	EIGHTH	SIXTEENTH	THIRTY-SECOND
NOTE						
REST						

TERNARY

	DOTTED WHOLE	DOTTED HALF	DOTTED QUARTER	EIGHTH	SIXTEENTH	THIRTY-SECOND
NOTE						
REST						

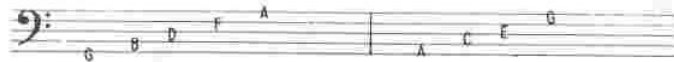
A **DOT** after a note or rest (d. ♩) makes the note or rest half as long again as the original value. For example:

= two beats = three beats = two eighth rests = three eighth rests

NOTES and **RESTS** are written on a **STAFF**. The staff is made up of five lines and four spaces.



We concern ourselves with only two **CLEFS**. The **TREBLE** clef as in the diagram above, and the **BASS** clef as in the diagram below.



As you will observe, the lines and spaces have different names according to the clef employed. Degrees of loudness and softness are determined by symbols known as **DYNAMICS**.

Below is a table of **DYNAMICS**

<i>ppp</i> Pianississimo	as soft as possible	<i>sf</i> or <i>Sforzando</i> or <i>sfz</i> <i>Sforzato</i>	with sudden force or emphasis
<i>pp</i> Pianissimo	very soft	<i>rf</i> or <i>rfz</i> <i>Rinforzando</i>	
<i>p</i> Piano	soft	<i>fp</i> <i>Forte piano</i>	loud then suddenly soft
<i>mp</i> Mezzo piano	moderately soft	<i>Crescendo</i> (<i>Crsc.</i>) or	increasing in loudness.
<i>mf</i> Mezzo forte	moderately loud	<i>Diminuendo</i> (<i>Dim.</i>) or	<i>Decrescendo</i> (<i>Decre.</i>) decreasing in loudness.
<i>f</i> Forte	loud		
<i>ff</i> Fortissimo	very loud		
<i>fff</i> Fortississimo	as loud as possible		

Other important terms are:

<i>Accelerando</i> (<i>Acc.</i>)	faster and faster	<i>Molto</i>	much or very
<i>Adagio</i>	slow	<i>Poco a poco</i>	little by little
<i>Molto adagio</i>	very slow	<i>Presto</i>	quick
<i>Allegro</i>	quick	<i>Prestissimo</i>	very quick
<i>Da Capo</i> (<i>D.C.</i>)	back to the beginning	<i>Staccato</i>	short or detached
<i>Fine</i>	the end	<i>Tacet</i>	silent
<i>Legato</i>	smooth and connected in style	<i>Tenuto</i> (<i>Ten.</i>)	hold

TIME or **METER** is the grouping of the various rhythmic progressions into **MEASURES**. The measure is a subdivision of a piece of music.



TIME is indicated by figures at the beginning of a piece. The upper figure denotes the number of beats in a measure. The lower figure denotes the note value that gets one beat. For example:

$\frac{2}{4}$ = 2 beats to a measure
 $\frac{4}{4}$ = a quarter note gets one beat

$\frac{3}{8}$ = 3 beats in a measure
 $\frac{8}{8}$ = an eighth note gets one beat

THE PARTS AND CARE OF THE SNARE DRUM



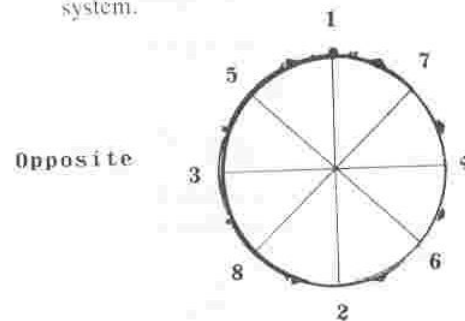
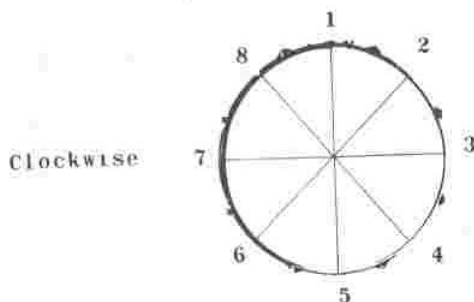
Keep the tuning rods and strainer parts well lubricated. Wood shell drums can be cleaned and polished with a good wax or furniture polish. Metal shells, lugs, and

counter-hoops should be cleaned occasionally with a good grade of metal polish. To clean a pearl surface, simply wipe with a damp cloth.

CARE OF THE HEADS

Calf skin heads are very susceptible to atmospheric conditions and require much care. When "tuning" (or

tightening) a drum, be sure that the same tension is applied to each rod. Tune in clockwise system or opposite system.



Once new heads have set and sound crisp and clear, they should require little alteration except for changes in atmospheric (humidity) conditions. If the weather becomes extremely damp, it may be necessary to tighten the heads slightly. However, when finished playing, turn the rods back the same number of turns that was required to get the drum in playing condition. In extreme dry weather the heads may become too tight and the tension will have to be loosened in order to get the drum in good playing condition. When finished playing under dry conditions, re-tighten the head slightly; otherwise, all the slack or collar in the head will be absorbed by the dry weather.

Plastic heads, once set, are completely unaffected by climatic changes. This is particularly advantageous on drums used outdoors.

SNARES

The snares on the drum should be adjusted so as to produce a brilliant, crisp, staccato sound. If the snares are too tight, the drum will sound choked. If the snares are too loose, they will vibrate too freely and the crisp sound that is most desirable will be lost.

The three types of snares are "James" or wire snares, gut snares, and wire-wound silk snares. The wire snares are used in concert only, while the gut may be used indoors or out. The wire and gut are the most popular.

THE STICK

Below is a picture of a drum stick with its descriptive terms.



STICK POSITION OF LEFT AND RIGHT HAND

Traditional Grip. Correct stick and hand position is absolutely essential to the art of fine playing. Observe the notes and pictures carefully as good habits formed in the early stages of development are the key to fine musical playing.

The Right Hand Position. Grasp the stick as you would any tubular object that was lying on a table. (figure 1)

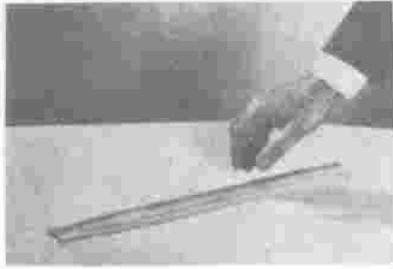


Figure 1.

Close the fingers loosely around the stick as in figure 2.

Figure 2.

When the hand is turned over, the stick should appear as in figure 3.



Figure 3.

The Left Hand Position. Grasp the stick as shown in figure 4.



Figure 4.

Curl the first and second fingers over the stick as in figure 5.

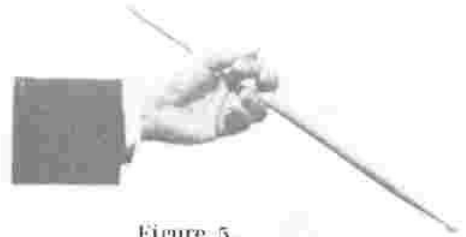


Figure 5.

Now we can observe the playing position of both hands on a drum as in figure 6.



Figure 6.

Remember, both hands must remain relaxed and flexible at all times. If the fingers become rigid, or the hands or wrists stiffen, then the muscles will tense and tighten and the result will be improper and uneven execution.

Matched Grip. The "Matched Grip" stick and hand position is exactly what the term implies. Both the left and right hands hold the stick the same as the right hand position of the "Traditional Grip"; (see figure 7) The drum is not tilted but is placed parallel to the floor. The matched grip is particularly advantageous when performing Chamber Music or in Percussion Ensembles where the player has a multi-drum set-up. The facility and ease of moving from one drum to another becomes very similar to the techniques employed in timpani playing. Aside from this particular medium, I feel that the accomplished player should be proficient with both the "Traditional" and "Matched" grip and should practice accordingly.

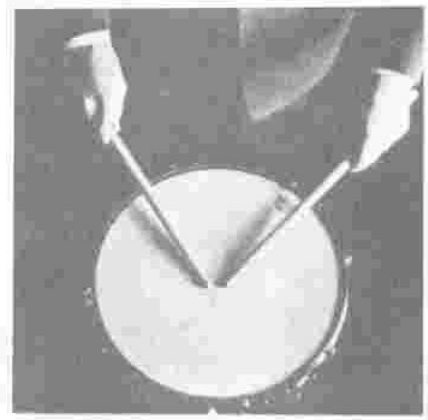


Figure 7.

THE PLAYING POSITION

Below are three examples of playing position. **Figure 1** illustrates the proper marching position. **Figure 2** illustrates the proper concert position. **Figure 3** illustrates the Matched Grip concert position.

I recommend a standing concert position for all of the percussion players. Sitting hampers the physical freedom necessary for good percussion playing, regardless of which percussion instrument is being played.



Figure 1.



Figure 2.



Figure 3.

SINGLE STROKE

The single stroke is the basic stroke for all snare drum technique. As a drum is comprised of two vibrating heads, the drum must be struck in such a way as to allow maximum vibration from both heads. When striking the drum,

the tip of the stick should travel in a semi-circular arc as below. Both the right and the left stick travel the same arc. The stroke is a combined arm and wrist motion.



LESSON 1

The first lesson is in 4/4 time. This means that there are four beats in a measure, and that a quarter note (♩) gets one beat. The lesson utilizes the quarter rest (♩) which also has the value of one beat. Count out loud and tap your foot on each beat. Be sure to keep a steady tempo. Check for proper stick position as well as arm and wrist action. R = a right hand stroke and L = a left hand stroke. Observe the repeat signs (||: :||) where indicated.

1. 
 R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R

2. 
 R L R R L R R L R L R L R

3. 
 L R L L R L L R L L R

4. 
 R R L R R L R R L R L R

5. 
 R L L R L L R L L R

6. 
 R L R L R L L R

7. 
 R L R L R L R L R

8. 
 L R L R L R L R

LESSON 2

In Lesson 2 half notes and half rests, as well as whole notes and whole rests are combined with the quarter notes and quarter rests already studied in Lesson 1. Observe the following: ♩ and ♪ = 1 beat, ♪ and ♪ = 2 beats, ♩ and ♩ = 4 beats. The time signature is 4/4. Continue to count aloud, being careful not to rush the longer note values and rests.

1. 
R L R L R R L R

2. 
R R L R L R R R L R

3. 
R L R R L R R R L L R

4. 
R R L R L R R L R

5. 
R L L R L L L R L R L R



6. 
R L R L R L L R L R

7. 
R L R L R R L L R

8. 
R L R L R L R R L R L

LESSON 3

Here are two pieces covering the material studied thus far. You will observe that they are written in common time (C). This means exactly the same as 4/4 time.

A general rule for sticking in binary time is that all stick patterns are taken from the smallest denomination of four notes, be they quarters, eighths, or sixteenths: . The one exception to this is the "even groupings" which is rest, note, rest, note . Here the sticking reverses itself. More will be said about this in lesson 14.






1.



2.



LESSON 4

In this lesson we begin the study of eighth notes (). There are two eighth notes to each quarter note, making an eighth note twice as fast as a quarter note ( = ). When a single eighth note is written, it appears like this . When successive eighth notes are written, they are tied together and appear like this . Whether written singly or in a group, an eighth note has one flag. In counting successive eighth notes, count 1+2+3+4+. Maintain a steady tempo and re-check playing position.

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

5. 

6. 

7. 

8. 

LESSON 5

Here are two pieces utilizing all the material thus far. The counting is now left to the student. Dynamics (*f* - *p* etc.) are introduced in this lesson so be sure to observe them. In the second part of this lesson, accents (>) are used. This means give a little extra stress or "accent" on notes so marked (>). Accents are relative to the dynamic marking. An accent written in a "forte" passage will obviously be louder than an accent in a "piano" section.

1.

f L R R L R L R L L R R R L R

p R L R R L R R R L R *f* R L R R L

p *f* R L R R L R L

R R L R R R R L L

p R L R L R *cresc.* *ff*

2.

f R L R L R R R R

R L R R L R L R R L


R L R R R L R L R L L R *mf* R L R R L R

pp R L L R L L R

R L L R L L R R L

LESSON 6

We now begin the study of the eighth rest (♩). It has the same time value as the eighth note. Two eighth rests (♩ ♩) equal one quarter rest (♩), and two eighth notes (♩ ♩) equal a quarter note (♩). The time signature is common time (C). Count 1 2 3 4 and where there are eighth notes or eighth rests count 1+2+3+4+.

1. 


2. 

3. 

4. 

5. 

6. 

7. 

8. 

LESSON 7

This lesson continues with the study of eighth notes and eighth rests.

1.

R L R L

2.

R L L R L

3.

R L R L R L

4.

L R L R L L

5.

R L L L R L

6.

R L R L R

7.

R L R L R L L R

8.

R L L R L R

9.

R R L R L R

10.

R L L R R L

LESSON 8

Here are two pieces employing all the previous material. The counting and sticking have purposely been omitted. You should now be familiar with the correct sticking for the various rhythmic patterns. The new material is the one and two bar repeat sign. This symbol $\%$ means to repeat the preceding measure. This symbol $\% \text{ |}$ means to repeat the preceding two measures. Be sure to observe all the dynamics.

1.

2.

LESSON 9

Lesson 9 is a short piece for percussion ensemble. Snare drum I should play with snares on, while snare drum II plays with snares off. Bass drum and cymbals each require one player. For class work, the snare drummers may be evenly divided between the two drum parts (I and II). However still use only one player for bass drum and one player for cymbals.

The musical score for Lesson 9 is written in 4/4 time and consists of six systems of staves. The parts are labeled I, II, Cym., and B.D. The score includes various dynamics such as *f*, *ff*, *p*, *mf*, and *cresc.*, as well as performance instructions like "1st time", "2nd time", and "Soli".

- System 1:** Snare drum I (I) and Snare drum II (II) play a rhythmic pattern. Cymbals (Cym.) and Bass Drum (B.D.) play a pattern starting with a forte (*f*) dynamic. A "Soli" instruction is present at the end of the system.
- System 2:** Snare drum I (I) and Snare drum II (II) play a rhythmic pattern. Cymbals (Cym.) and Bass Drum (B.D.) play a pattern starting with a forte (*f*) dynamic for the "1st time" and a piano (*p*) dynamic for the "2nd time".
- System 3:** Snare drum I (I) and Snare drum II (II) play a rhythmic pattern. Cymbals (Cym.) and Bass Drum (B.D.) play a pattern starting with a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic.
- System 4:** Snare drum I (I) and Snare drum II (II) play a rhythmic pattern. Cymbals (Cym.) and Bass Drum (B.D.) play a pattern starting with a forte (*f*) dynamic and ending with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a crescendo (*cresc.*) marking.
- System 5:** Snare drum I (I) and Snare drum II (II) play a rhythmic pattern. Cymbals (Cym.) and Bass Drum (B.D.) play a pattern starting with a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic.
- System 6:** Snare drum I (I) and Snare drum II (II) play a rhythmic pattern. Cymbals (Cym.) and Bass Drum (B.D.) play a pattern starting with a piano (*p*) dynamic, moving through mezzo-forte (*mf*), forte (*f*), and fortissimo (*ff*) dynamics.

LESSON 10

This lesson introduces 2/4 time. This means that there are two beats in a measure and a quarter note gets one beat. There are just half as many beats in 2/4 time as there are in 4/4 time. Of course all note and rest values remain the same.

1. 
R L

2. 
R L R L

3. 
R R L

4. 
R L R

5. 
R L

6. 
R L L R

7. 
L R L

8. 
R L R

9. 
R L R

10. 
L R

LESSON 11

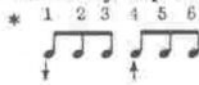
This lesson continues with the study of 2/4 meter. We now introduce repeat signs with first and second endings. This means that the first time the passage is played, play the first ending. When playing it the second time through, omit the first ending and go directly to the second ending. The tie (—) is when two notes (other than a roll and its tied note $\text{F} \text{—} \text{G}$) are connected with a curved line ($\text{D} \text{—} \text{E}$). The value of the tied note is simply added to the value of the first note. Here is a simple march in 2/4. Observe all repeats and dynamic markings.

1.

The musical score is written in bass clef with a 2/4 time signature. It begins with a *ff* dynamic marking. The first staff contains a sequence of eighth notes and quarter notes, followed by a repeat sign. The second staff continues the melody with a *mf* dynamic marking. The third staff shows further melodic development. The fourth staff introduces a first ending (boxed) and a second ending (boxed), with a *f* dynamic marking. The fifth staff features a *p* dynamic marking and a repeat sign. The sixth staff continues the piece. The seventh staff includes fingerings: 1, 2, 1+, 2+, 1+, 2+, 1+, 2+. The eighth staff continues the melody. The ninth staff concludes with a first ending and a second ending, with a *f* dynamic marking.

LESSON 12

We now begin the study of 6/8 time. This is known as ternary time, as opposed to the binary meters previously studied. There are six beats in a measure, and an eighth note gets one beat. However a march in 6/8 time only has two beats in a measure. This may be accounted for in the following manner: There is a natural accent on the first and fourth eighth notes of each bar (*), thus breaking down the six beats to two strong beats. Start the lesson counting six beats to each measure, but only tap the foot twice to each bar - on the first and fourth eighth notes.



1.

R L R L R L R

2.

R L R L R L, L R L, R R L

3.

R L R L R, R R L L R

4.

R L R L L R

5.

R L R L, R L R L

6.

R L R L, R L

7.

R L R L

8.

R L R L

9.

R L R L

10.

L R L R, R L R L

LESSON 13

This study is a march in 6/8 time. Observe the different dynamics on the repeats, and be sure to take the correct endings.

1.

ff

p 1st time
mf 2nd time


R R L R L R

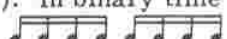
ff

mf

1st end. 2nd end.

LESSON 14

This lesson introduces sixteenth notes. They are notated with two flags (e.g. ) which means that they are twice as fast as eighth notes. In time value, two sixteenth notes equal one eighth ($\frac{1}{16} + \frac{1}{16} = \frac{1}{8}$) and four sixteenth notes equal one quarter ($\frac{1}{16} + \frac{1}{16} + \frac{1}{16} + \frac{1}{16} = \frac{1}{4}$). In binary time (2/4, 3/4, 4/4) there are four sixteenth notes to each beat and they are counted as follows:


1 ta + ta 2 ta + ta

The basic patterns for sticking can now be discussed more extensively. As a good string section uses identical bowing, then a good percussion section must use identical sticking. I am absolutely against "free" or "hand to hand" sticking. This type of sticking does not produce uniformity of sound or consistency of attack. For example all five, nine, and thirteen-stroke rolls should be attacked and terminated with the right hand. This does not imply that rolls beginning and ending with the left hand shouldn't be perfected as well as right hand rolls. It simply means that the final production of snare-drum sound must be consistent within itself. Regardless of how well matched the hands are, if the same rhythmic figure is played with various stickings it will sound differently each time. Below are some basic patterns with sticking: no matter how many times the figure is repeated, the same sticking is used each time.


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

All the patterns are based on the first group of four sixteenth notes. (The one exception to this rule is the "even grouping" discussed in Lesson 3.) This sticking will apply 99% of the time. The remaining 1% will be problems created by complex rhythmic figures or extremely fast or slow tempos. It will then be up to the player to find a sticking best suited for smooth execution.

1. 
1 ta + ta 2
R L R L R R R R

2. 
1 2 ta + ta
R R L R L R R

3. 
1 + ta 2
R R L R R R L R


4. 
1 2 ta +
R R L R R R L R

5. 
1 + ta 2
R L R R L R

6. 
1 ta + 2
R L R R L R

7. 
1 ta + ta 2 + ta 1 ta + 2
R L R L R R L R L R L

LESSON 15

This lesson combines sixteenth notes and eighth notes as well as sixteenth rests. Sixteenth rests have the same time value as a sixteenth note. They have two flags and appear as follows: . Two sixteenth rests equal one eighth rest ($\frac{\text{two sixteenth rests}}{\text{one eighth rest}} = \frac{1}{2}$). Four sixteenth rests equal a quarter rest ($\frac{\text{four sixteenth rests}}{\text{one quarter rest}} = 1$).


1. 
 1 + 2 ta + ta
 R L R L R L R L R L R L

2. 
 1 ta + ta 2 +
 R L R L R L R L R L R L

3. 
 1 + ta 2 +
 R R L R L R R L R L R L

4. 
 1 + 2 ta +
 R L R L R L R L R L R L

5. 
 1 + ta 2 +
 R L R L R L R L R L R L

6. 
 1 ta + 2 +
 R L R L R L R L R L R L

7. 
 1 ta + ta 2 +
 L R L R L L R L R L L

8. 
 1 ta + ta 2 +
 R L R L R L R L R L R L

9. 
 1 ta + ta 2 +
 R L L R L L R L L R L

10. 
 1 + 2 ta + ta
 R L R L R L R L R L R L

LESSON 16

This lesson is composed of two studies in 2/4 time. Observe the sticking, tap your foot on one and two, and keep a steady tempo.

1.

f R R L R L R L L R L R

R L R R L

R R L R R L

R L R R R L

2.

f R L L R

L R L L R L

R L L R R L

This lesson introduces the flam. The term flam describes the combination of a grace note and a main note. The main note can be of any duration. e.g. $\text{♪} \text{♪} \text{♪}$, but the grace note precedes the main note by a mere fraction of a second. There are right hand (LR) and left hand (RL) flams.

When playing a right hand flam, raise the right hand high but do not allow the left hand (or grace note) to be more than two inches above the drum.



In executing the right flam, the main note (R.H.) will start toward the drum before the grace note (L.H.) because of the greater distance to travel. Nevertheless the grace note (L.H.) will strike the drum slightly before the main note (R.H.) and will be slightly softer than the main note. The reverse applies to the left hand flam.



Practice the study very slowly at first. Observe that the grace note stroke is never allowed to rise more than two inches above the drum. Watch your own hand and arm position, and then make the necessary adjustments to execute good flams.

Right Hand Flam

1. LR LR LR LR LR LR LR LR LR LR LR LR

Left Hand Flam

2. RL RL RL RL RL RL RL RL RL RL RL RL

Alternate Flams

3. LR RL LR RL LR RL LR RL LR RL LR RL

Flam Tap in 2/4

4. LR R RL L LR R RL L LR R RL L LR R RL L

Flamacue

5. LR L R L LR LR L R L LR

6. LR RL LR RL LR RL LR RL LR RL LR RL

Flam Tap in 6/8

7. LR RRL L LR RRL L LR RRL L LR RRL L

8. LR L RRL R L LR L RRL R L LR L RRL R L LR L RRL R L

LESSON 18

This lesson deals with flams and rhythmic patterns.

1. LR RL LR RL LR LR

2. LR LR LLR LR L LR RL LR RL

3. LR RL R L LR RL RL LR

4. LR L R LR L LR RL

5. LR LR L LR RL R L LR LR LR RL LR

6. LR RL LR RL R RL LR RL RL RL LR LR LR

7.

8.

9. LR RL LR LR

10. LR L R L R L

LESSON 19

This lesson introduces 3/4 time and the dotted note. In 3/4 time there are three beats in a measure and a quarter note gets one beat.

A dot added to a note ($\dot{\cdot}$) increases the value of the note by one half of its original time value $\dot{\cdot} = \text{quarter} + \text{eighth}$, $\dot{\cdot} = \text{half} + \text{quarter}$. Be aware of the different ways of notating the same rhythm. For example in previous lessons this notation was used $\text{quarter} \text{ eighth} \text{ eighth}$. Now with the use of the dot, the same rhythm is written this way $\text{quarter} \text{ dotted quarter}$. Listed below are a few other duplications.

1. $\text{quarter} \text{ quarter} \text{ eighth} = \text{quarter} \text{ quarter}$

2. $\text{quarter} \text{ dotted quarter} = \text{quarter} \text{ quarter}$

3. $\text{quarter} \text{ quarter} \text{ eighth} \text{ eighth} = \text{quarter} \text{ quarter}$

4. $\text{quarter} \text{ quarter} \text{ eighth} \text{ eighth} = \text{quarter} \text{ dotted quarter}$

1.

2.



3.

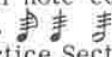
4.

5.

6.



LESSON 20

We now begin the study of the roll. The roll is the means of producing a sustained sound on the snare drum. A great deal of time and effort will be required to develop and perfect a smooth roll. There are two types of rolls described as the open and closed roll. The open roll is executed with exactly two strokes from each hand. The closed roll is a multiple-bounce roll with a minimum of three strokes to each hand. To develop the correct speed of the roll, we will commence with a metronomic marking of ♩ = 120. Once the player has developed a smooth roll, he will not change the speed of the roll because of changes in tempo. We will begin work on the closed five stroke roll. Strike the first beat and let the natural rebound or vibration of the head provide the subsequent beats. Use the same wrist and stick motion as used in basic single strokes. (In an open five stroke roll there are five strokes from the initial stroke to the concluding stroke e.g. ) As we are developing a "closed" or multiple-bounce-five-stroke roll, theoretically the sticking should appear as follows: 

However, in the interest of conserving space, I have designated two strokes to each hand for the closed roll. At this tempo ♩ = 120, the eighth note equals a five-stroke roll. All rolls are notated with their proper time value plus three extra flags, e.g. . Play Section A several times to get the hands coordinated to the sixteenth-note pickup. Then practice Section B, "thinking" the sixteenth-note pickup, but allowing the sticks to bounce freely.


♩ = 120

1.

A  **B** 


RL R R R L R RLL R R R L R RLL

2.

A  **B** 


RL R RL R RL R L R RLL R

1.




R R L R L R R L R L R RLLR L R RLLR L
L L R L R L L R L R L LLRRL R L LLRRL R

2.




R L R R L R L R R L R RLLR R L R RLLR R L
L R L L R L R L L R LLRRL L R LLRRL L R

3.



R R L R RL R R RLLR RLL R
L L R L L R L LLRRL LLRR L

4.



R L R R L R R RLLR RLLR R
L R L L R L L LLRRL LLRRL L

5.



R R L R RLL R
L L R L LLRR L

6.




R L R RLLR R
L R L LLRRL L

LESSON 21


This lesson is a continuation of the five-stroke roll. Keep the hands relaxed at all times. Maintain an even balance between the right and left hands. When playing the five-stroke roll the interpretation of accent or stress is very important.

The section of the roll that falls on a strong beat gets the stress. In Study 1, the ending falls on a strong beat, consequently the ending of the roll gets the additional stress. In Study 3, the attack falls on a strong beat, consequently the attack of the roll gets the additional stress. This added stress, either on the attack or ending, gives unique musical variation to the five-stroke roll.


1. 
R R L R L

2. 
R L R R L R

3. 

4. 

5. 

6. 

7. 

8. 

9. 

10. 

LESSON 22

Here are two solos utilizing the five stroke roll plus all the other material studied thus far.

Also we introduce some additional repeat signs. *Dal Segno* or *D.S.* means to return to the sign (§), play to *The Fine* and stop. Pause - designated by a \frown . This sign placed over a note or rest means that it is to be held longer than the designated time value. It is also called a "hold" or "fermata."

$\text{♩} = 120$

1.

ff *mf* *f* *Fine p* *cresc.* *f D.S. al Fine*

$\text{♩} = 108$

2.

f *p cresc.* *rit.*

LESSON 23

This lesson deals with the nine-stroke roll. I have omitted the seven-stroke roll temporarily because I want to deal first with rolls that begin and end with the same hands. Practice this study with the metronome set at ♩ = 120. Balance the hands so that they both produce the same number of bounces at the same dynamic level.

1. R R L R L R R L R L R RRLRRLR R RRLRRLR

2. R L R L R R L R L R RRLRRLR RRLRRLR

3. R L R L R L R R L RRLRRLR R

4. R L R L R L R R RRLRRLR R

5. R R L R L R L R RRLRRLR R

6. R L L R L R L R R L L RRLRRLR R

7. R R L R L R R R RRLRRLR R

8. R L R L R L RRLRRLR L R

9. R RRLRRLR R R

10. RRLRRLR R

LESSON 24

This study includes both five and nine-stroke rolls. Observe the dynamics and maintain a steady tempo.

1.

f 1st Time
p 2nd Time

LR RRL L

1. 2.

f

ff

RL LRL L

Fine

D.S. al Fine

We now study the seven-stroke, the thirteen-stroke, and the seventeen-stroke roll. The seven-stroke roll begins with the left hand and ends with the right hand. The other two rolls begin and end with the same hand. Observe the chart comparing the time value and sticking for the various rolls.

♩ = 120

Chart

RL R LRL R RLRL R RLRLRL R R R

RL R LRL R RLRL R RLRLRL R RLRLRLRL R

7 Stroke Roll

1.

LRL R LLRLLR

RLRLR RLLRLLR

RLRLR LLRLL R

LLRLLR LRL LLRLL R

13 Stroke Roll

2.

R RLRLRL R RLLRLLRLL R

RLRLRLR RLLRLLRLL R

17 Stroke Roll

3.

RLRLRLRL RLLRLLRLLRLL R

LESSON 26

This lesson employs all the rolls studied thus far. Strive for an even well-balanced roll. Do not let one hand "stick out" above the other. Begin each roll with a firm attack, and end it with a clean single stroke equally as firm as the attack. Add as well the whole note roll $\left| \begin{array}{c} \text{---} \\ \text{---} \end{array} \right|$ which is the equivalent of a 33-stroke roll. We have now gotten to the long roll. There is no limit to the possible length of this roll. Practice it for as long as the hands can maintain a smooth even sound. Practice it "forte" as well as "piano."

$\text{♩} = 126$

1.

ff *f*

17 9

5 7 7

5 5

9 5 5 17

13 9

5 17

13 13 9

5 7

33 17

p *cresc.* *mf* *cresc.*

f *cresc.* *ff*

33 5