

Drumline Exercise Packet

by Josh Gottry

This collection features eight full ensemble exercises with parts for snare, quints, 5 bass drums, cymbals, marimba (treble & bass clef), and timpani.

Exercises included in this collection are:

Eights
Stick Control
Timing
Double Beat
Samba Accent (single hand)
6/8 Accent (alternating)
Diddles
Flams, Drags, & Such

In my mind, there are three simple keys to successful performance and technical development when using these exercises:

- 1) **Relax** - no tension
- 2) **Rebound** - allow the drum to work with you
- 3) **Groove** - everything needs to fit vertically and horizontally to create clarity

The first four exercises focus primarily on the **legato** stroke. This stroke should utilize the wrist only, until the speed of the exercise demands incorporation of fingers.

The stick/mallet should be in constant motion, utilizing the rebound of the stick in the up-stroke motion.

On the two accent exercises, the focus should be on creating a clear contrast in accent and non-accent (tap) by differentiating stick height. There should be no difference in quality of stroke or grip in executing this contrast. Do not over squeeze to choke off the rebound following an accent stroke. The accent stroke should include a slight "Mohler" stroke motion in the wrist and forearm to generate the extra stick height within the preparation stroke. The effect will be similar to pulsing the beat within eighth notes on a drumset high-hat. The bass drum line should focus on quality unison attack - remember to subdivide between attacks to create clear unisons.

Diddles is intended to be performed with a strict, double stroke, rhythmic interpretation of all diddles - that is, each 16th note diddle should be performed as two, equally spaced 32nd notes. Also, strive to ensure that the height of all non-accented notes in each measures, diddles or not, are played with the same stick height. Use the fingers to control and maintain strength in the second stroke of each diddle.

Flams, Drags, & Such is an opportunity to ensure consistent interpretation and execution of grace notes. All drags in this exercise (other than in the timpani part) are indicated as diddles, which should be executed as mentioned above. Flam grace notes should always be played with low stick heights (1/2 to 1 inch) and immediately prior to the primary note. Consider the word "Flam" when determining proper spacing of a flam grace note to primary note (remember, it isn't "Fallam").

Cymbal parts are designated with the following note heads:



fusion crash

(sizzle crash that closes into a "chick" on the next rest)



high-hat "chick"



traditional crash

(if marked staccato, play short)

Marimba parts should be performed in several major and minor keys. They can also be played on xylophone or vibraphone, but range considerations were made based on a 4 1/3 octave marimba. Timpani should be tuned as appropriate to match the key of the keyboard ensemble. The parts for Timing and Samba Accent can also be used as 4-mallet double vertical stroke exercises. Flams, Drags, & Such can also be performed as a 4-mallet single alternating and single independent stroke exercise.

Eights

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Musical score for the first system, featuring seven staves. The top four staves are for Snare, Tenors, Basses, and Cymbals, all in 4/4 time. The bottom three staves are for Marimba 1 (treble clef), Marimba 2 (bass clef), and Timpani (bass clef). The score is divided into four measures. Snare and Tenors play a steady eighth-note pattern. Basses play a pattern of eighth-note chords. Cymbals play a pattern of eighth notes. Marimba 1 and 2 play eighth-note patterns. Timpani plays a pattern of eighth notes.

Musical score for the second system, featuring seven staves. The top four staves are for SD, TN, BD, and Cyms., all in 4/4 time. The bottom three staves are for Mar. 1 (treble clef), Mar. 2 (bass clef), and Timp. (bass clef). The score is divided into five measures. SD and TN play eighth-note patterns. BD plays eighth-note chords. Cyms. play eighth notes. Mar. 1 and 2 play eighth-note patterns. Timp. plays eighth notes.

Timing

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The first system of the musical score consists of seven staves. From top to bottom, they are: SD (Snare Drum), TN (Tom Tom), BD (Bass Drum), Cyms. (Cymbals), Mar. 1 (Maracas 1), Mar. 2 (Maracas 2), and Timp. (Timpani). The music is in 4/4 time. The SD, TN, and Timp. parts feature a consistent rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The BD part has a more complex pattern, including some triplets. The Cyms. part has sparse accents. The Mar. 1 and Mar. 2 parts play a steady accompaniment of eighth notes. Below each staff, there are rhythmic notation symbols (r and l) indicating the timing of the notes.

The second system of the musical score continues the piece with the same seven staves as the first system. The SD, TN, and Timp. parts maintain their rhythmic patterns. The BD part features a prominent triplet pattern. The Cyms. part has a few more notes. The Mar. 1 and Mar. 2 parts continue their accompaniment. Below each staff, there are rhythmic notation symbols (r and l) indicating the timing of the notes.

6/8 Accent

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The first system of the musical score consists of seven staves. From top to bottom, they are: SD (Snare Drum), TN (Tom Tom), BD (Bass Drum), Cyms. (Cymbals), Mar. 1 (Maracas 1), Mar. 2 (Maracas 2), and Timp. (Timpani). The music is in 6/8 time and features a consistent rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents. The SD and TN parts play a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The BD part plays a pattern of eighth notes with accents, often grouped in pairs. The Cyms. part has a sparse pattern of eighth notes. The Mar. 1 part plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The Mar. 2 part plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The Timp. part plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment.

The second system of the musical score consists of seven staves, identical in layout to the first system. From top to bottom, they are: SD (Snare Drum), TN (Tom Tom), BD (Bass Drum), Cyms. (Cymbals), Mar. 1 (Maracas 1), Mar. 2 (Maracas 2), and Timp. (Timpani). The music continues with the same rhythmic patterns as the first system, maintaining the 6/8 time signature and the accented eighth-note accompaniment.