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 stacatto, 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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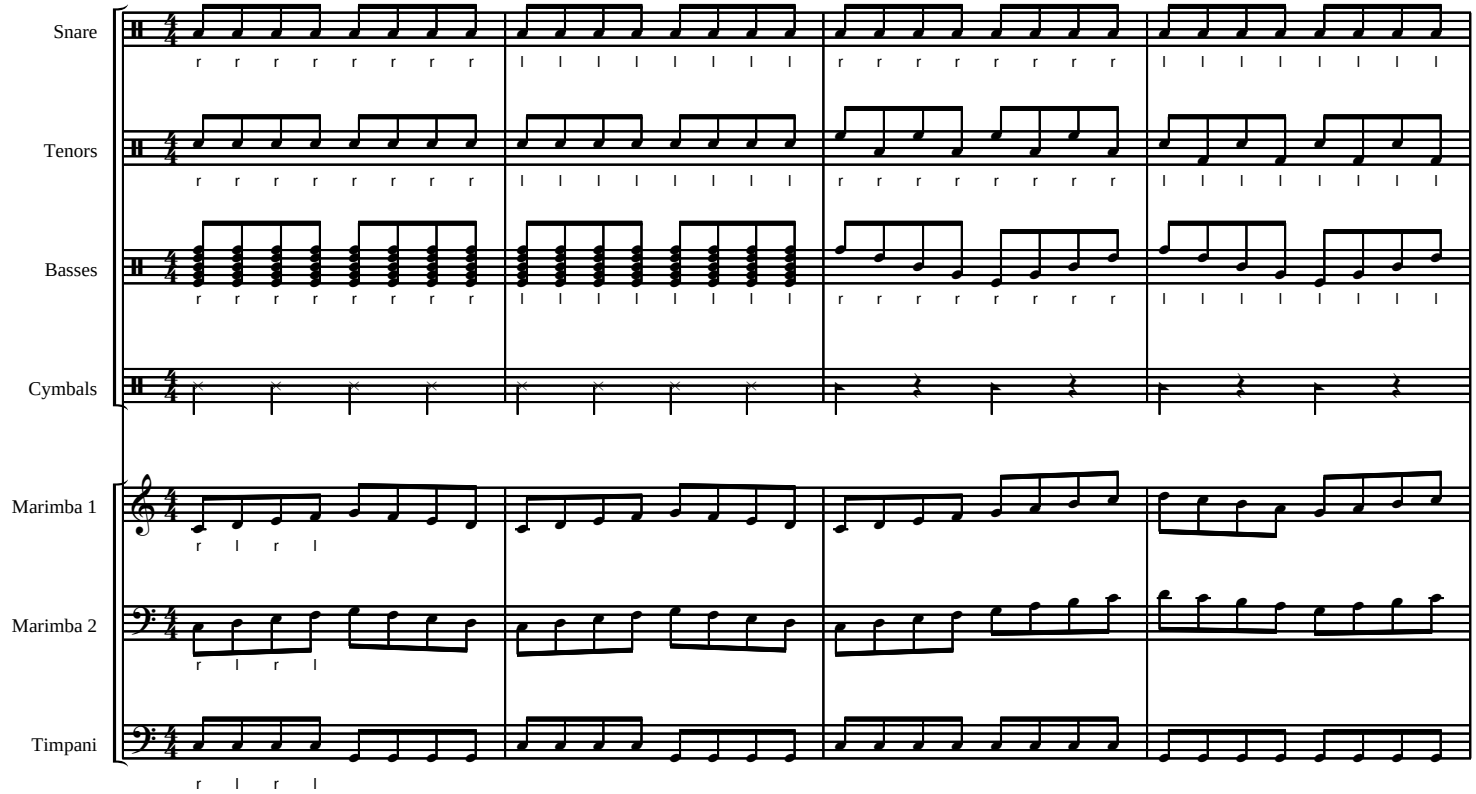

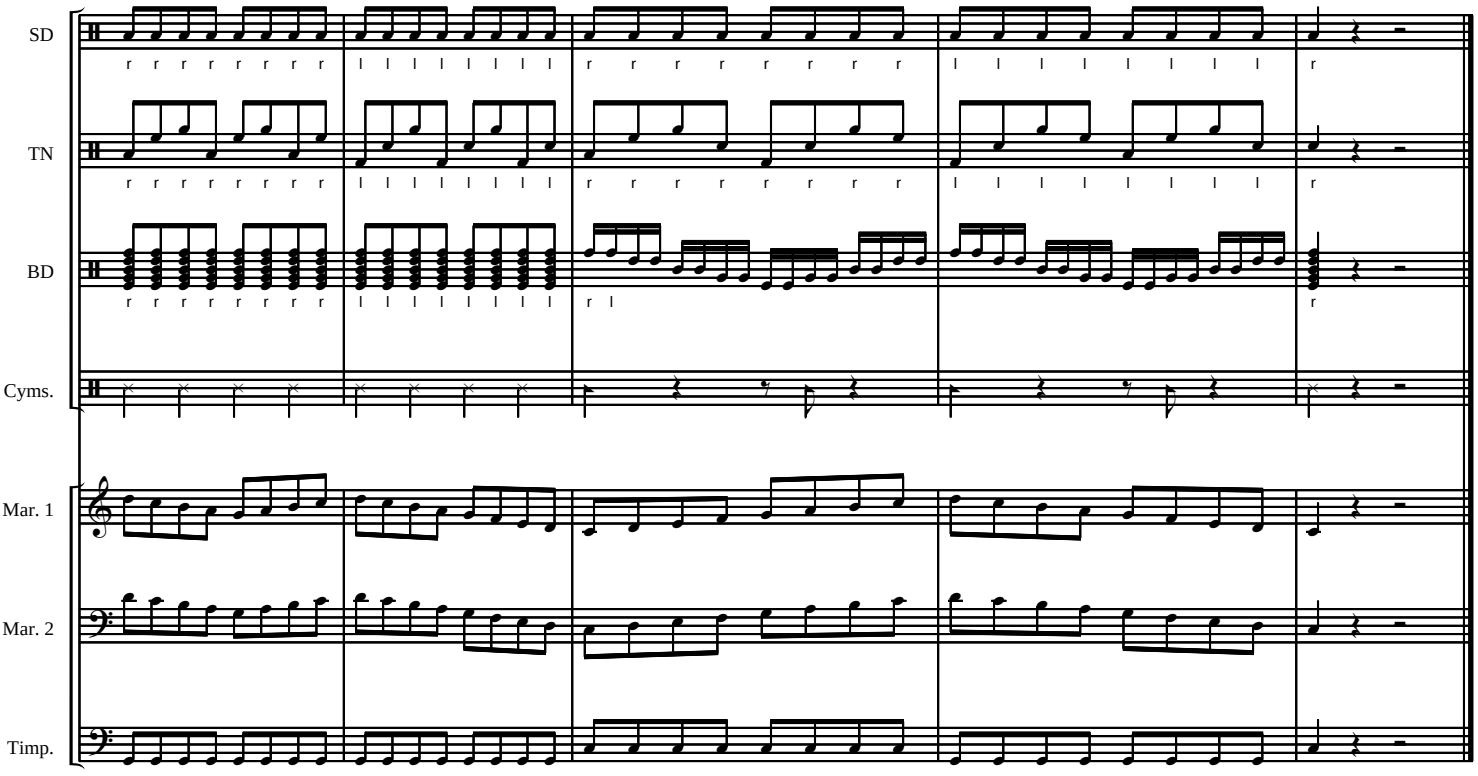

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Timing

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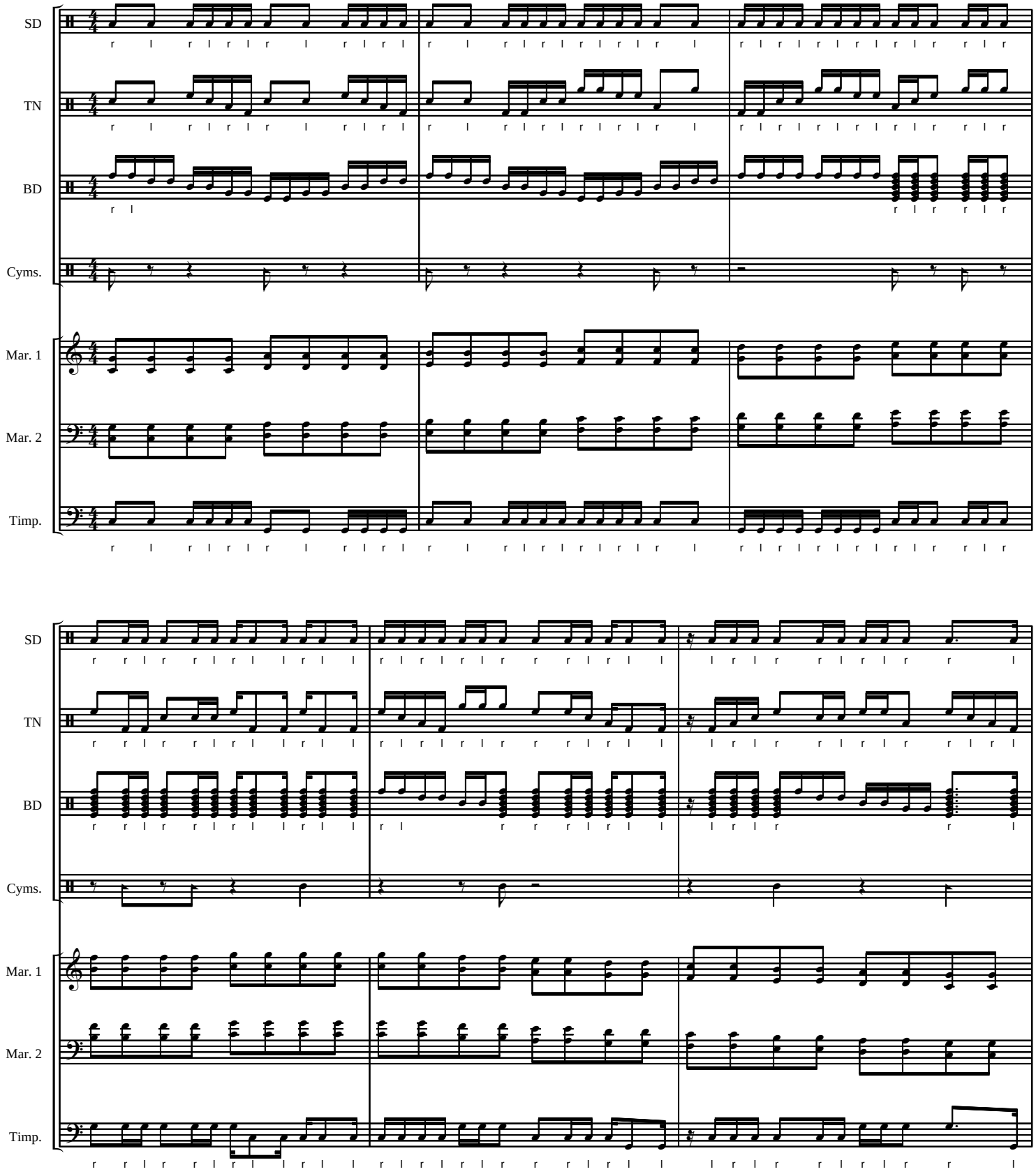
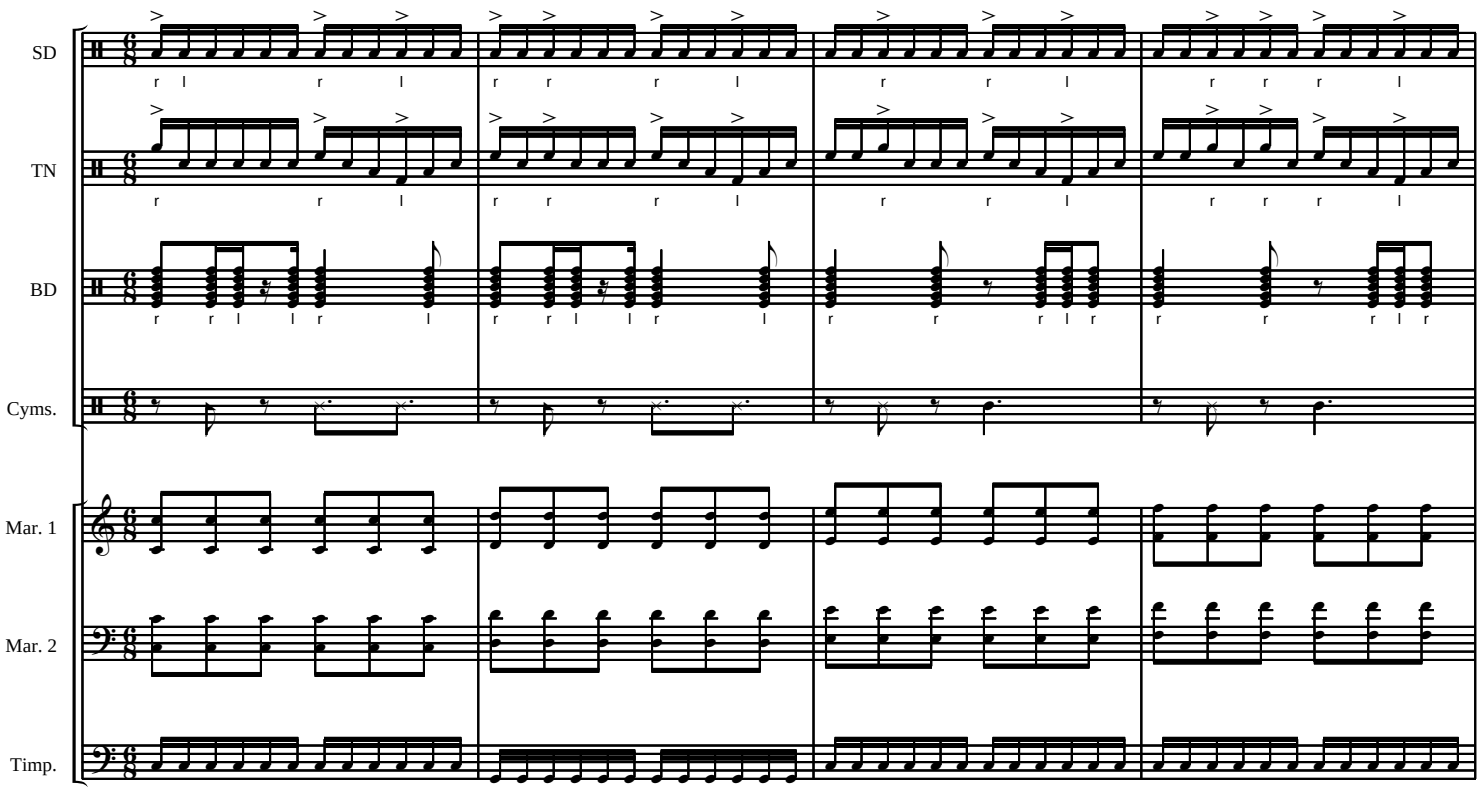
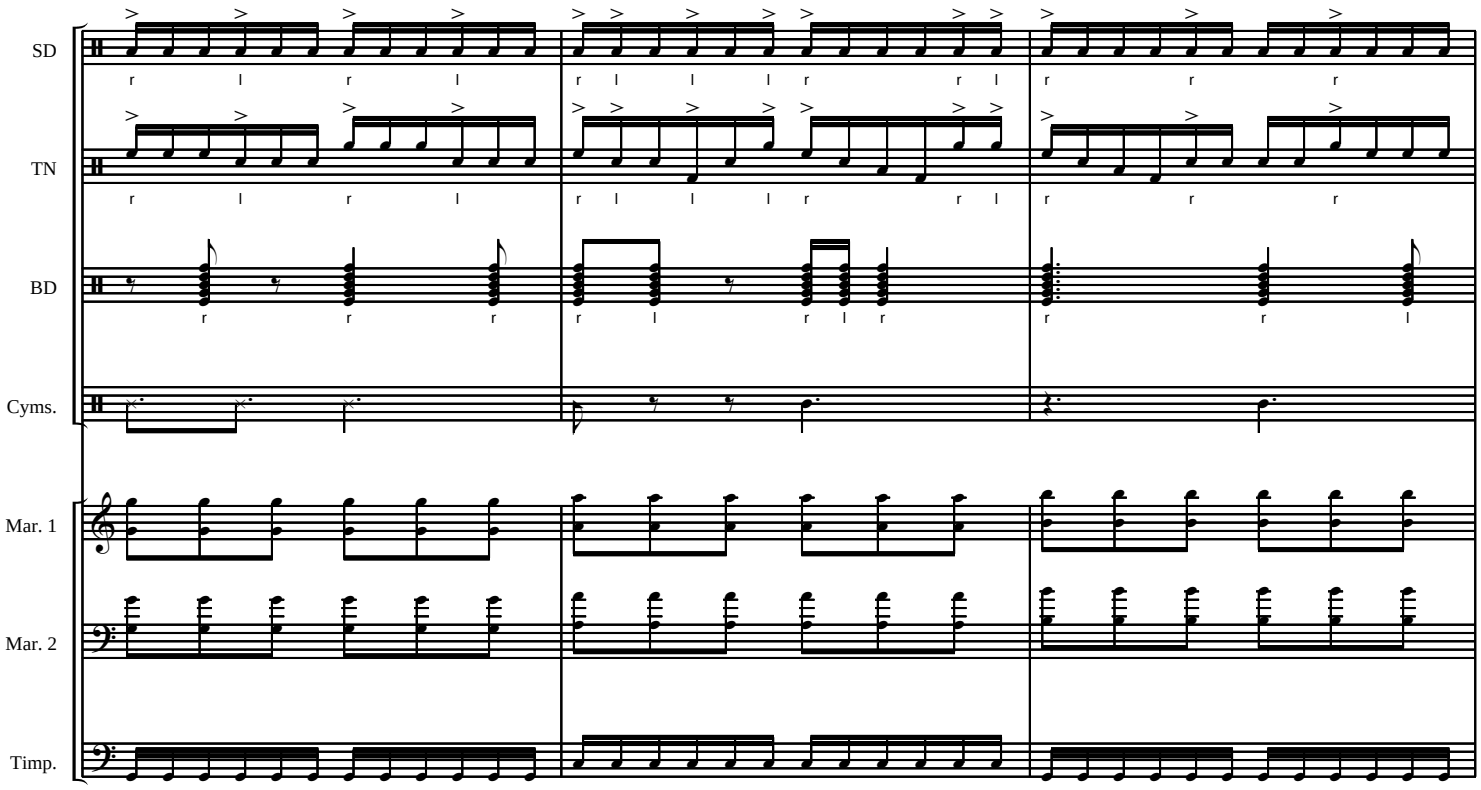


6/8 Accent

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