The following exercises are intended to facilitate a basic understanding of stick control and manipulation in the marching percussion idiom. If you have some marching percussion performance experience, some of these exercises (or variations of these exercises) should already be familiar to you. Please do, however, pay close attention to the “Points to focus on....” section after each musically notated exercise, as these bullet points will cover important information needed for you to properly perform each exercise. Be sure to start at a slow tempo, focusing on proper technique, stroke type, and rhythmic accuracy. Once you feel you have comfortably achieved these technical and musical aspects, then incrementally increase your performance tempo. Technique is of utmost importance!! Chop building will be something we will work on all season long.

8 On a Hand

Repeat 4x’s

Points to focus on...
• All notes are full-strokes except for the last eighth-note, which is a down-stroke.
• This exercise should be practiced at varying dynamics (stick heights).
• Always start warm-ups with this exercise, using a slow tempo, and incrementally increasing tempo between reps.

Accent/Tap

Repeat 4x’s

Points to focus on...
• All accents are down-strokes starting with a high stick height.
• All non-accent notes are up-strokes except for the last eighth-note, which is a tap.
• Although this exercise looks very similar to 8 On a Hand, a rhythmic tendency to rush the non-accented note is always present. Be sure to play very even eighth-notes despite dynamic change or variation in stick height.
Accent/Tap-tap

Points to focus on...
• The accented notes are obviously played as a down stroke, but the following two notes afterwards are performed at a low stick height. Do this by capturing the natural tendency of the stick to rebound off the head with your fingers, carefully placing these notes in their proper rhythmic place.
• Pay careful attention to the first note in measure #2, it is a non-accented note....don’t play this with an accent!

5-7-10

Points to focus on...
• All accents are down-strokes starting with a high stick height.
• All non-accented notes found in a grouping of 2 eighth-notes are up-strokes.
• All non-accented notes found in a grouping of 3 eighth-notes consist of a tap and an up-stroke respectively. The exception is when performing a grouping of three eighth-notes before a hand change. In this case, both non-accented notes are taps.

5-7-10 Split:  snare 7-10-5
tenors 10-5-7
basses 5-7-10
Paradiddle-diddle Exercise

Points to focus on...
• All accents are down-strokes starting with a high stick height, usually 9 inches.
• All non-accented notes are taps, usually performed at 2 inches.
• The rhythm played in measure #1 is a “check pattern” for a right-handed paradiddle-diddle. This means that the right hand is playing the same rhythm during a paradiddle-diddle as it is in the check pattern. Be sure to make your right hand feel exactly the same during both measures, placing the remaining notes required to perform a paradiddle-diddle very carefully in their proper rhythmic spot.

Sixteenth-note Timing

Points to focus on...
• Notice in measures #1, #2, #5, and the first two beats of #7, the right hand is playing eighth-notes. The remaining measures (and last two beats of measure #7), the left-hand is playing eighth-notes displaced a sixteenth-note from the beat. Use this information to your advantage when working on rhythmic timing. (hint: the hand that is NOT playing straight eighth-notes should be playing downstrokes!)
• All notes should be the same stick height despite what type of stroke you are performing.
• Practice this exercise first with a metronome. Once you feel comfortable, try marking time.
Triplet Timing

Points to focus on...
• This exercise is quite a bit different than Sixteenth-note Timing, as one hand is not playing a consistently repetitive rhythm in any given measure. Be sure to stay diligent with your rhythmic accuracy.
• As with most exercises that are a little more challenging, learn sections of Triplet Timing at a slow tempo first with a metronome. Once you have mastered a given performance tempo, try marking time, then incrementally increase your performance tempo.

Sixteenth-note Roll Exercise

Points to focus on...
• This is an “oldie but a goodie!” You may have played this exact exercise, or some variation of it, in high school. Be sure to keep your hand rhythm even sixteenth-notes throughout, simply using relaxed finger control to execute the diddles.
• The slashes are an exact doubling of the sixteenth-note. If we were to musically notate this, we would write 2 thirty-second-notes in its place. Be sure to practice with this in mind.
• Practicing this exercise at a slow tempo is great to focus on rhythmic timing and technique, and definitely do this using a high stick height. Ultimately, this exercise is to be played at a quick tempo. As you increase tempo, lower your stick height accordingly.
**Triplet Roll Exercise**

Four 1 and 1’s

Two 2 and 2’s

One 4 and 4

Points to focus on...
- Very similar exercise to *Sixteenth-note Roll* except in a triplet feel. Same rules apply for hand rhythm, except now you are playing a hand rhythm of eighth-notes in $\frac{12}{8}$.
- The slashes are an exact doubling of the eighth-note. If we were to musically notate this, we would write 2 sixteenth-notes in its place. Be sure to practice with this in mind.
- Practicing this exercise at a slow tempo is great to focus on rhythmic timing and technique, and definitely do this using a high stick height. Decrease stick height as tempo increases. All notes performed at the same stick height. No accents!!

**Triplet Diddle**
Points to focus on...

• This exercise is focused to practice isolating each eighth-note in a grouping of three eighth-notes, in this case, in $12/8$. What is extremely important is to rhythmically perform these diddles as sixteenth-notes just like in Triplet Roll.
• All notes should be at the same stick height. Absolutely no accents!!
• What is cool about this exercise is that part of it, the first six measures to be exact, are the building blocks or rhythmic structure of The Grid, except that instead of playing diddles we substitute them for accents. I have included The Grid below so you can see this. The Grid is a bit more challenging than Triplet Diddle, so try the diddle exercise first, then give The Grid a go!!

Triplet Accent Shift/The Grid

![Triplet Accent Shift/The Grid]

Repeat 4x’s

1st/3rd X R R R R
2nd/4th X L L L L

Points to focus on...

• Perform the accented notes at 12 inches, and the non-accented notes at 2 inches.
• As always, practice with a metronome. Feeling how the accents fall within the beat will help you to mark time while playing this exercise later.
• Once you are comfortable with The Grid, try inserting flams where the accents are. Also, adding diddles at varying eighth-notes within a beat can be quite a challenge. This is an advanced exercise and should only be attempted once you have mastered the other exercises in this packet.

Flams Taps

![Flams Taps]
Points to focus on...

• Notice that the first and third measures are identical to the exercise Accent Tap-tap. Perform these in the exact same fashion.
• The first measure is a check pattern for measure #2, and the third is a check pattern for measure #4. Be sure to allow the appropriate hand to play the flam taps with the same check pattern as the previous measure.

As with any new musical figure, be diligent in practicing at a slow tempo, always focussing on proper technique and stroke type. If some stroke types (full-stroke, down-stroke, up-stroke, and tap) are unfamiliar to you, this will be covered in the audition/camp meetings.

Your success in becoming a better drummer is rooted in consistency and repetition. You will be assessed not solely on your innate musical abilities, but more so on your ability to improve over a period of time. Please do not hesitate to contact me with ANY questions you may have. I would rather be bothered with a simple question than for you to be practicing something incorrectly for several days or weeks.

Good luck!! I look forward to working with all of you this marching season!!

Sincerely,

Dr. Michael Haldeman
ph: 336.707.8378
e-mail: michaelhaldeman@mac.com
mhaledeman@csuniv.edu