INTRODUCTION

The inspiration behind exploring the left foot comes from an observation that the feet, the left foot in particular, are still unchartered territory and at a 'primitive' level in terms of rhythmic development. We often use the feet as a crutch for certain things but not in a conceptual manner, for example, to establish the ostinato and different phrases.

In this book I will demonstrate how to use the left foot creatively using using a left-foot snare or your hi-hat foot. I will provide simple and step-by-step coordination exercises that use the feet as the foundation for the groove. In this approach, using the left foot with the foot snare or a hi-hat foot and creating a backbeat with the bass drum allows the drummer to play different polyrhythms with the hands. This opens up new possibilities for rich and multi-layered compositions and for recreating different styles such as Maksum (Middle East) or Bikutsi (West Africa).

I truly believe that the future of drumming will rely on our feet playing polyrhythmic phrases on multi-pedal set ups. This book can help you achieve this new multidimensional way of playing drums by focusing and exploring the possibilities of the left foot using the foot snare or the hi-hat foot. It will strengthen your improvisational skills (of all four limbs), coordination and dexterity and most importantly it will help you create richer and multi-layered compositions.

The foot snare and the hi-hat foot in conjunction are both left-foot pedal-activated instruments and require similar foot technique as the leading foot on the kick drum, but the challenge is to master the coordination and independence necessary to play all limbs with four-way coordination.

In summary, the book reflects all my years of practice, observations, and trial and error in mastering a way of using all my limbs to improvise, groove, and solo in a way that is beyond using independence exercises that serve no musical purpose.

CHAPTER 1

Limb Challenge with Unison Stroke, Exploring Rudiments

This chapter is the first step or the first building block to master independence and coordination. I created the following exercises around alternated single strokes merging into unison strokes with the limbs and ending with singles strokes again.This chapter will jump start your ability to play with your non-leading side, especially the left foot, which is underused in modern groove playing.

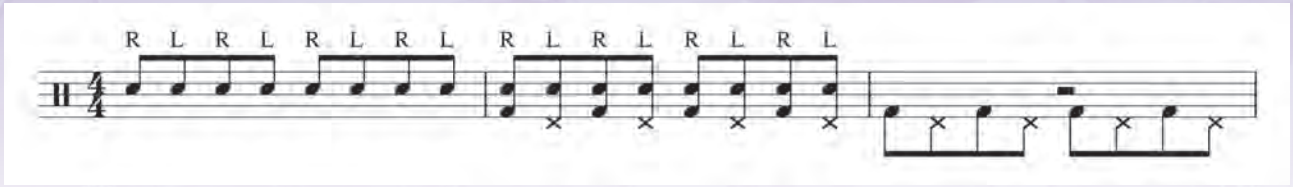
Daily practice routine:

If you are new to rudimental rhythms, get comfortable with the sticking of the rudiments by spending a lot of time with the hands (unless specified with the exercise), then apply the rudiments in unison stroke. Finally, end with the application of the rudiments onto your feet only.

CHAPTER 1

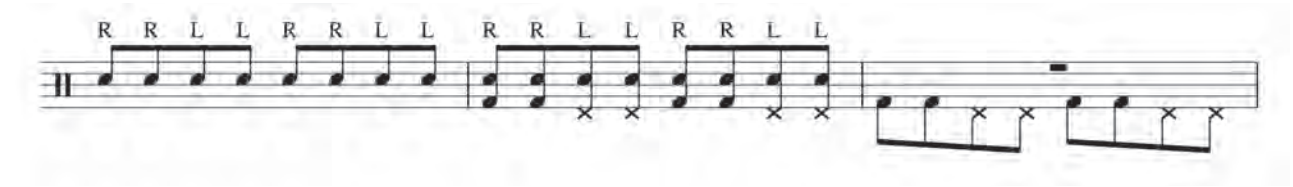
Exercise 1
SINGLE STROKE ROLL

The exercise is fairly simple to execute, therefore don't race ahead; play it slowly without flaming your hands combined with the feet.



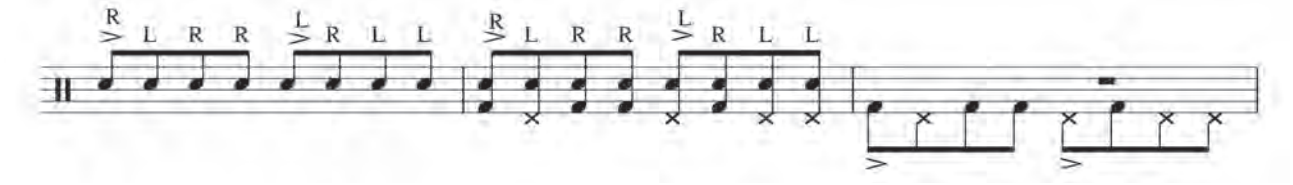
Exercise 2
DOUBLE STROKE ROLL

The double stroke is a challenge for the weaker foot due to the diddles (2 notes). During your practice I strongly advise you to apply the heel up and the heel down technique and play the 2 notes slowly and clearly, especially the second stroke.



Exercise 3
SINGLE PARADIDDLE

The paradiddle is an incredible rudiment incorporating 3 major strokes (accented and non-accented notes and a diddle). In order to master the exercise quickly and efficiently my advice is to play everything without playing the accents first and then with the accents and finally playing with extreme dynamics, such as the non-accented notes are pianissimo (soft) and the accented notes are forte (loud).



CHAPTER 4

The Transfer

The transfer is a continuation of the mirror image incorporating a unison stroke.

For me, solo drum music is usually based on a 4-way coordination mode with 1 or 2 limbs holding an ostinato and the remaining limbs having a solo, which is a conversation partially created around a call and response or passage in unison. The transfer is the first step to achieve this highly advanced drumming technique.

Daily practice routine:

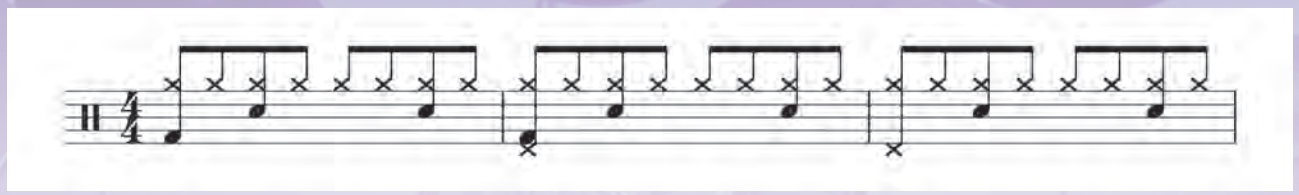
If you really want to nail the exercises quickly (without a metronome), spend some time on the feet by playing the phrases from the right foot to the unison stroke and the left foot. Pay attention to the sticking and the motion of the feet on the pedals. The transition between the single note of the foot to the unison strokes has to be smooth. Then, with a metronome, play the backbeat "ostinato " with the hands and the feet as written on the score.

Play at a slow tempo.

The second part of each exercise, starting at bar 4, all notes are accented on a downbeat on a right hi-hat or the ride cymbal.

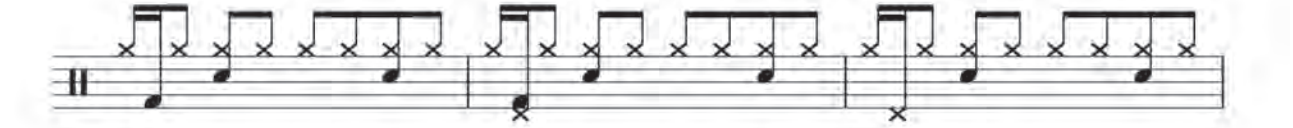
CHAPTER 4

Exercise 1



Exercise 2

Exercise 3



CHAPTER 6

4-Way Coordincation with the Feet Ostinato

This chapter presents a 4-way coordination concept with a groove held by the feet as an ostinato. The right foot plays the kick drum, and the role of the snare drum is held by left foot performing on the Hi Hat pedal or the foot snare. Finally, the hands create themes and variations on various components of the kit. The hands variations are (for example): quarter note cross-stick, a backbeat on the main snare drum, or basic melodies around the tom toms.

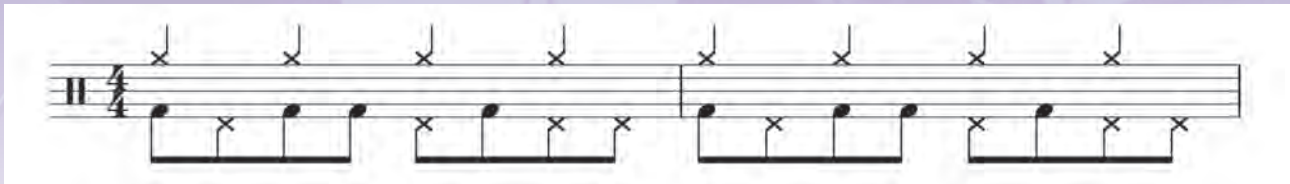
This chapter opens a new way to interpret "cliche" grooves that we have heard millions of times but now we can orchestrate them in a polyrhythmic or polyphonic way.

Daily practice routine:
To speed the process of mastery, you don't have to start as written on the sheet music. I always advise my students to start with the feet ostinato and the right hand playing a quarter note on the right-hand hat or the ride cymbal, then eighth notes on the ride, and, finally, play the first bar of the exercise at a slow tempo. I recommend spending 20 minutes on each bar before moving on to the next bar.

CHAPTER 6

Exercise 1

Level 1



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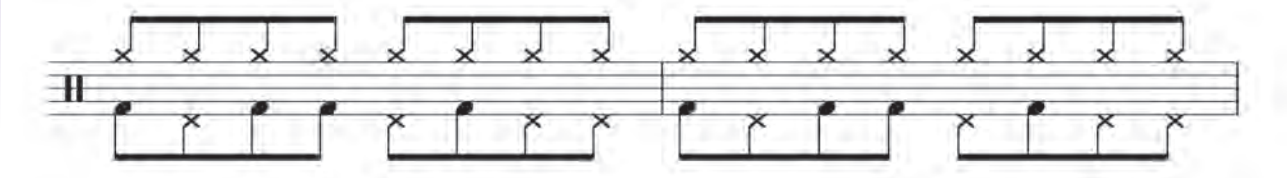

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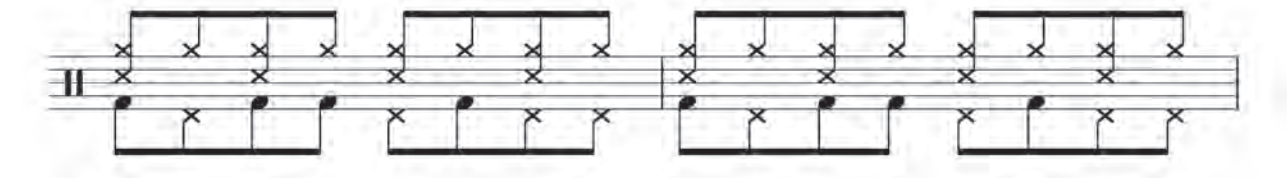

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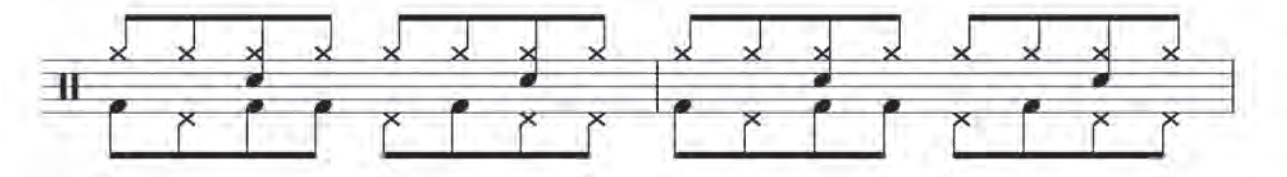

Level 5

Level 6