

INTRODUCTION

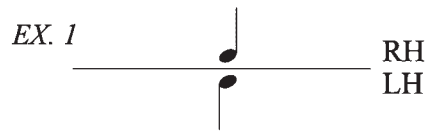
And now for something different. **AMBIDEXTERITY** is just that - a book unlike any you've ever seen or played before. It's replete with a tightly knit and highly organized set of unusual exercises designed specifically to help you achieve the Holy Grail for any drummer - total independence of your four limbs at the drum set.

In order to play drums at a very basic level you don't need great technical skill - you don't even need more than a rudimentary knowledge of reading rhythm. What you do need, however, is a certain coordinative ability with your four limbs in order to play the cymbal, snare, hi-hat and bass at the same time. And to that end there are many books designed to develop skill for playing rock and jazz ride beats with one hand, while coordinating patterns of rhythm with your other hand as well as your feet. What those books do not do is develop the exact same skill with each limb. This study moves in a different direction, delving deeper into developing a type of "pure" coordination in order to achieve a degree of ambidexterity that can be applied to any style of music.

Total ambidexterity for a drummer has obvious advantages - it's the ability to play equally well with the left or right hand, as well as the left or right foot. And for those born with it, it's a rare gift. I believe that given the appropriate material, together with enough practice time, any serious drummer can attain a certain degree of ambidexterity even though it may not be inborn. The exercises in this book provide just such appropriate material.

While this study was written for drummers, any musician or anyone who is able to read rhythm can use it as a kind of game book. There's no need for drum sticks or any other equipment - simply tap the right hand rhythm on your right thigh, and the left hand rhythm on your left thigh. It's fun!

All exercises are written on just one staff line - notes above the line with their stem facing up denote the right hand (RH); notes below the line with their stem facing down denote the left hand (LH).



Most exercises are two bars, and each exercise will show two different rhythmic patterns being played at the same time, one with the right hand, the other with the left hand. The rhythms are then reversed allowing each hand a chance to play the same coordinated pattern. For example, the rhythm for the right hand in the first bar might be:



A separate rhythm for the left hand might be:



Played together, the rhythm in the first bar would look like this:



Notice in the second bar the two rhythmic patterns are reversed, giving each hand the opportunity to play the same patterns. In a sense the two patterns echo each other in reverse as seen in the next example:





While each individual bar of rhythm may not be difficult, a smooth movement from the first bar directly into the second bar without hesitation could prove problematic, especially when you try increasing the speed of the overall exercise. Obviously you'll find some exercises easy, some moderately difficult, and others quite challenging. However, taken together, the exercises in the book should prove extremely helpful in putting you on the right road to developing a certain degree of ambidexterity.


There are 11 possible ways to play the exercises - each way is referred to as a "system". The exercises throughout are indicated only for the first system using just the right and left hand. The other 10 systems are highlighted on this page, but before showing them you should understand the following ways to play each limb:


RH = Right Hand plays any drum or cymbal
 LH = Left Hand plays any drum or cymbal
 RF = Right Foot plays the bass drum
 LF = Left Foot plays the hi-hat or second bass


THE 11 SYSTEMS ARE:


1)  RH
LH


2)  RH
RF


3)  RH
LF


4)  RF
LF


5)  LH
RF


6)  LH
LF

7)  RH, LH (Together)
RF

8)  RH, LH
LF

9)  RH
RF, LF (Together)

10)  LH
RF, LF

11)  RH, LH
RF, LF

As mentioned, the exercises throughout the book only indicate the first system, playing with just the right and left hand. In order to hear the two separate rhythms distinctly it's important that you play on two separate surfaces. If you're practicing at the drum set play the rhythm for your right hand on one of the tom toms or cymbal, and the rhythm for your left hand on the snare. If you're using practice pads play the rhythm for the right hand on one pad and the rhythm for the left hand on a different pad.

Although the exercises are intended simply to develop a degree of ambidexterity, and not intentionally directed to any particular style of music, many of them just by chance fall into the realm of rock or jazz and can be creatively adapted to each of those musical styles.

This book is virtually a lifelong study, one you can return to time and time again to develop each of the 11 individual systems.

LET'S WARM UP

This special warm-up page is designed to get you used to coordinating two different rhythmic patterns between your hands, then reversing the patterns. The exercises are easy because the two rhythms are always played with both hands together.

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SECTION ONE

AMBIDEXTERITY IN QUARTER TIME

The exercises in this section are all in 2/4, 3/4 and 4/4 time.

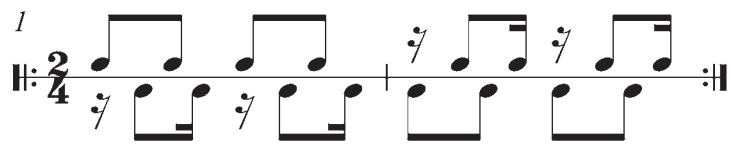
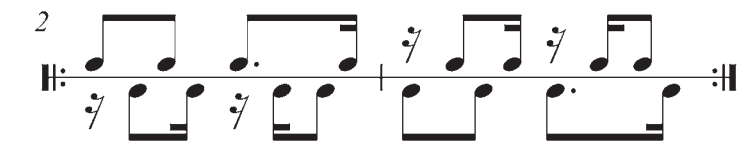
In reality the total number of exercises in this entire book represent just a taste of the possible number of exercises that can be devised to develop ambidexterity. There are literally tens of thousands of others, and after completing this study I urge you to come up with your own exercises. In the meantime, as you play through the notated exercises feel free to add or omit notes as you see fit - in other words, make the exercises your own.

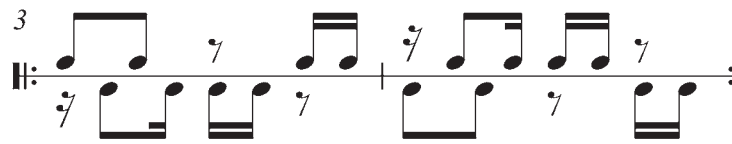

Because the notation is so simple, allowing the exercises to be easily read and understood, it belies their difficulty, especially as you try to increase the speed at which they're played.


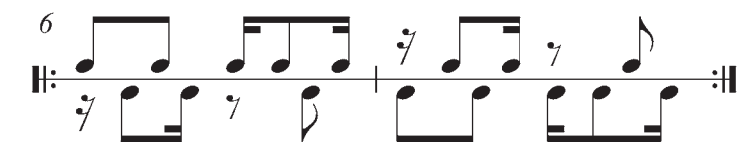
Initially you have to familiarize yourself with the contrasting rhythmic patterns in each exercise by first reading them slowly. However, once you gain complete accuracy and control, aim for developing as much speed as possible within your own capability. And to that end it's necessary to memorize the exercises as you play them.

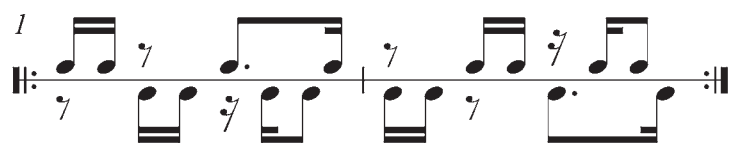

EXERCISES WITH EIGHTH & SIXTEENTH NOTES


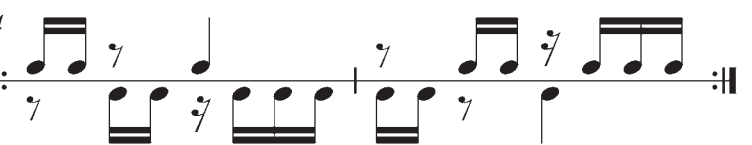
On these two pages your two hands never play together.



1  RH
 2  LH



3  RH
 4  LH



5  RH
 6  LH

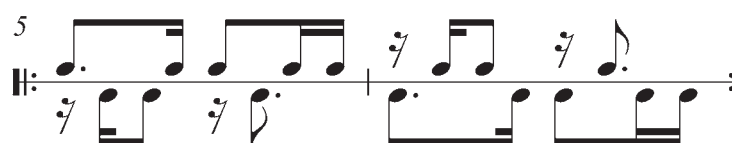

1  RH
 2  LH

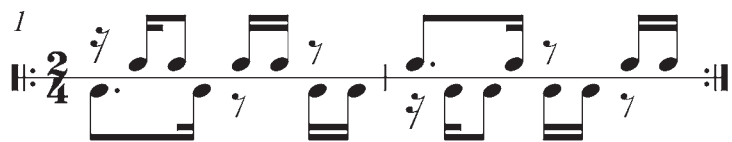
3  RH
 4  LH

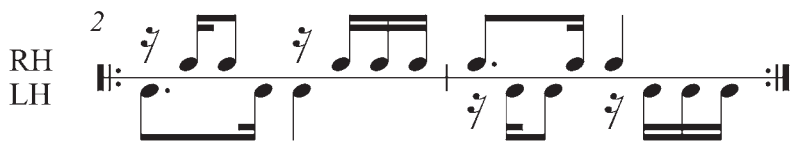
5  RH
 6  LH

1  RH
 2  LH

3  RH
 4  LH

5  RH
 6  LH

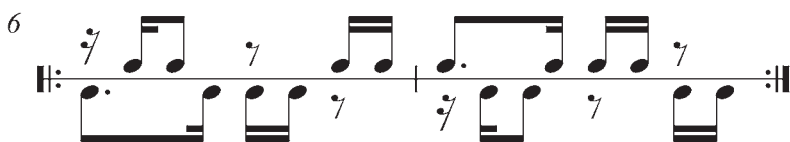
1 

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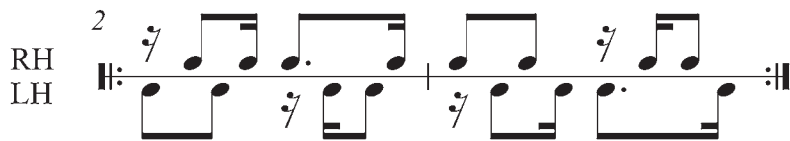
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4 


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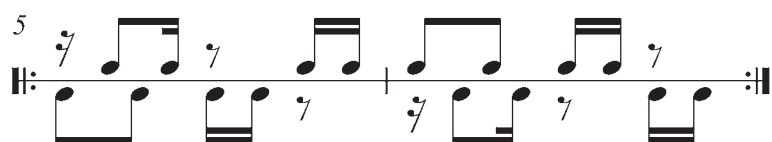
6 

1 

2 

3 

4 

5 

6 

1 

2 

3 

4 

5 

6 

From now on both hands will only play together once in a while.

1 2 RH
LH

3 4

1 2 RH
LH

3 4

1 2 RH
LH

3 4

1 2 RH
LH

3 4

1

2

3

4

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6

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12

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