

Section 1

At the Practice Pad

The exercises in this section best exemplify the sort of thing I do to warm up for a show. Things start off simply, almost mundanely, to get the blood flowing. Slowly, muscles are loosened, as constant attention is paid to maintaining evenness between the hands. Variations in sticking patterns evolve as the exercises progress in both difficulty and intensity, eventually culminating in lengthier routines. Once these routines are nailed smoothly at a faster BPM, the warm up is complete and the only thing standing between that moment and a confident performance is just a few minutes. The following exercises could be played on a practice pad, snare drum, or any conceivable surface that'll get the job done; whatever works! This section will prepare us for moving things to the drums and expanding on ideas around the kit. Let's begin!

Chapter 1: One Hand at a Time

These exercises are all about starting slowly and staying as relaxed as possible. While at slow tempos, everything can be executed from the wrist, and the forearm should become more engaged when tempo and dynamics pick up. Make sure there is no tension whatsoever, especially when hitting the accents. Tension could be felt anywhere from the elbow, through the forearm, to the wrist and fingers; slow down a bit, focus on the problem points and envision yourself in a relaxed state. If you feel loose with your dominant hand but feel tense when leading with your weaker hand, that's okay and completely the point of such exercises. When practicing in front of a mirror, we can often spot the differences in our technique from one hand to the other. In fact, this is a good way to diagnose potential issues when alternating stickings throughout this book. (If there's no mirror handy, consider filming yourself.) Repeat the exercises over and over again with the sticking on the top line. Stop and start again with the sticking on the bottom line. And if you lead with your left hand, feel free to do the opposite.

1

RRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR LLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL RRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR LLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL
LLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL LLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL RRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR RRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR

2

RRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR LLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL RRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR LLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL
LLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL LLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL RRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR RRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR

Section 1, Chapter 1 (continued)

3

RRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR RRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR LLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL LLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL
 LLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL LLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL RRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR RRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR

4

RRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR RRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR LLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL LLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL
 LLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL LLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL RRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR RRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR

5

RRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR RRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR LLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL LLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL
 LLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL LLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL RRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR RRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR

6

RRRRRRRRRRRRRRR RRRRRRRRRRRRRR LLLLLLLLLLLLL LLLLLLLLLLLLL
 LLLLLLLLLLLLL LLLLLLLLLLLLL RRRRRRRRRRRRRR RRRRRRRRRRRRRR

7

RRRRRRRRRRRRRRR RRRRRRRRRRRRRR LLLLLLLLLLLLL LLLLLLLLLLLLL
 LLLLLLLLLLLLL LLLLLLLLLLLLL RRRRRRRRRRRRRR RRRRRRRRRRRRRR

8

RRRRRRRRRRRRRRR RRRRRRRRRRRRRR LLLLLLLLLLLLL LLLLLLLLLLLLL
 LLLLLLLLLLLLL LLLLLLLLLLLLL RRRRRRRRRRRRRR RRRRRRRRRRRRRR

9

RRRRRRRRRRRRRRR RRRRRRRRRRRRRR LLLLLLLLLLLLL LLLLLLLLLLLLL
 LLLLLLLLLLLLL LLLLLLLLLLLLL RRRRRRRRRRRRRR RRRRRRRRRRRRRR

10

RRRRRRRRRRRRRRR RRRRRRRRRRRRRR LLLLLLLLLLLLL LLLLLLLLLLLLL
 LLLLLLLLLLLLL LLLLLLLLLLLLL RRRRRRRRRRRRRR RRRRRRRRRRRRRR

Chapter 2: Singles, Doubles, Single-Stroke Four & Variations

Singles and doubles are the next logical steps to making things more interesting and picking up speed. The first two exercises alternate between 16th notes and 8th notes within the bar to amp up intensity ever so slightly. Alternate back and forth from top-line sticking to bottom-line sticking without stopping, over and over again. If you lead lefty, alternate from bottom-line sticking to top-line sticking.

1

RLRLRLRLRRR LRLRLRLRLLL RLRLRLRLRRR LRLRLRLRLRLR
LRLRLRLRLLL RLRLRLRLRRR LRLRLRLRLLL RLRLRLRLRLRL

2

RLLRLLRRR LLRLLRLLL RLLRLLRRR LLRLLRRLRLR
LLRLLRLLL RLLRLLRRR LLRLLRLLL RLLRLLRLRL

Your ability to focus on transitioning from singles to doubles, and vice versa, is the key to mastering the exercises below. You don't want to give the impression that you're switching sticking; what gives this away is the slightest lag or "break" when making the switch. Be aware, and truly listen for it. If you hear it, slow down to whatever tempo allows for an inconspicuous transition and steadily pick up speed as you become more comfortable.

3

RLLRLLRLRLRL RRRRLRLR LLRLLRRLRLRLR LLLRLRR
LLRLLRRLRLRLRLR LLLRLRL RLLRLLRLRLRLRL RRRRLRL

4

RLRLRLRLRLLRLL RLRLRLRLRLLRLL RLRLRLRLRLLRLL RLRLRLRLRRLR
LRLRLRLRLLRLLR LRLRLRLRLLRLLR LRLRLRLRLLRLLR LRLRLRLRRL

5

RLLRLLRLRLRLR RLLRLLRLRLRLR RLLRLLRLRLRLR RLLRLLRRLRRLR
LLRLLRRLRLRLRLR LLRLLRRLRLRLRLR LLRLLRRLRLRLRLR LLRLLRRLRL

What begins here, with a rudiment known as the single-stroke four, will evolve into variations, which include double strokes, reverse paradiddles, and inverted paradiddles. The point is to strive for the same tightly packed "singles sound" of the original rudiment.

6

RLRLRLRLRLRLRL LRLRLRLRLRLRLR RLRLRLRLRLRLRL RLRLRLRLRLRLRL
LRLRLRLRLRLRLR RLRLRLRLRLRLRL LRLRLRLRLRLRLR LRLRLRLRLRLRLR

Chapter 15: "Open" Ratamacues

Whether we realize it or not, so many great moments have been built upon the sticking patterns we're calling "open" ratamacues. The double strokes peppered throughout these phrases gives us the ability to articulate in a way that is simply more nuanced and efficient than straight-forward single strokes. As for soloing, they afford us the potential for greater speed and dynamic variety with less physical exertion.

1
R R L R L R L L L R L R L R L L R L R L R R R L R L R L

2
R R L R L R L L L R L R L R L L R L R L R R R L R L R L

3
R R L R L R L L R L R L L L R L R L R R L R L R

4
R R L R L R L L R L R L L L R L R L R R L R L R

From this exercise on, there will be moments where you have to play two strokes from one drum to another with the same hand. It is crucial to remain relaxed and rely on your wrist to do a lot of the heavy lifting. Depending on the speed and volume you're playing at, you can have a sort of "top down" approach, wherein you hit the drums with more of your forearm, or you can have more of a "circular" approach, wherein the first hit involves more of your forearm, but the second relies almost entirely on the wrist. One can also think of this as a "sweeping technique," since your hand sweeps from one drum to the other when it repeats. Playing the following examples with these two approaches in mind will help demonstrate what I mean and allow you to decide which technique works best for you.

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3
RRLRRLRRLRRL RRLRRLRRLRRL RRLRRLRRLRRL RRLRRLRRLRRL

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3
LLRLLRLLRLLR LLRLLRLLRLLR LLRLLRLLRLLR LLRLLRLLRLLR

When it comes to going from the snare to the tom tom, you're likely better off taking the "top down" approach to sticking to avoid getting caught beneath the rim.

Section 2, Chapter 15 (continued)

5

R R L R L R L L R L R L L L R L R L R R L R L R

6

R R L R L R L L R L R L L L R L R L R R L R L R

7

R R L R L R R R L R L R R L R L L R L R L L L R L R L L R L

8

R R L R L R R R L R L R R L R L L R L R L L L R L R L L R L

9

R R L R L R L R R R L R L R L R R R L R L L R L R L R L L L R L R L R L L L R L

10

R R L R L R L R R R L R L R L R R R L R L L R L R L R L L L R L R L R L L L R L

11

R R L R R L R L R L L R L L R L R L R L L L R L L R L R L R R R L R R L R L R L

12

R R L R R L R L L L R L L R L R L L L R L L R L R L R R L R R L R L R



13


R R L R R L R L L L R L L R L R L L L R L L R L R L R R L R R L R L R


14


R R L R R L R L L L R L L R L R L L L R L L R L R L R R L R R L R L R


Section 2, Chapter 15 (continued)


15  
 RRLRRLRLRLLRLLRRLRRLRLR LLRLLRLRLRRLRRLRRLRLLRRL


16 
 RRLRRLRLRLLRLLRRLRRLRLR LLRLLRLRLRRLRRLRRLRLLRRL


17 
 RRLRRLRLRLLRLLRRLRRLRLR LLRLLRLRLRRLRRLRRLRLLRRL


18 
 RRLRRLRLRLLRLLRRLRRLRLR LLRLLRLRLRRLRRLRRLRLLRRL


19 
 RRLRRLRLRLLRLLRRLRRLRLR LLRLLRLRLRRLRRLRRLRLLRRL


20 
 RRLRRLRLRLLRLLRRLRRLRLR LLRLLRLRLRRLRRLRRLRLLRRL

21 
 RRLRRLRRLRLRLLRLLRLLRLR LLRLLRLLRRLRLRRLRRLRRL

22 
 RRLRRLRRLRLRLLRLLRLLRLR LLRLLRLLRRLRLRRLRRLRRL

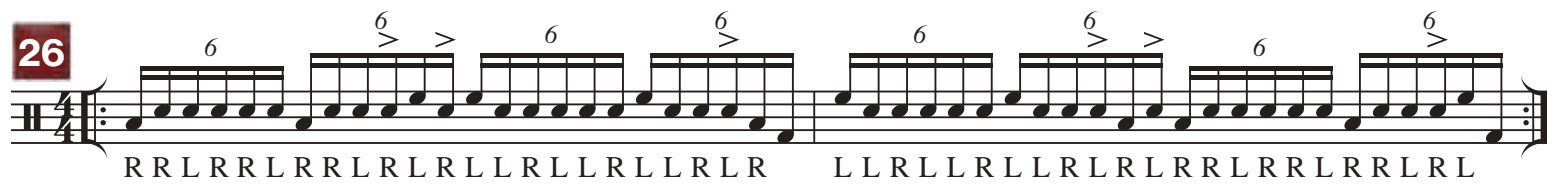
23 
 RRLRRLRRLRLRLLRLLRLLRLR LLRLLRLLRRLRLRRLRRLRRL

24 
 RRLRRLRRLRLRLLRLLRLLRLR LLRLLRLLRRLRLRRLRRLRRL

25 
 RRLRRLRRLRLRLLRLLRLLRLR LLRLLRLLRRLRLRRLRRLRRL

Section 2, Chapter 15 (continued)

26



RRLRRLRRLRLRLLRLLRLLRLR LLRLLRLLRRLRLRRLRRLRRL

Exercise 26 is a rhythmic pattern in 4/4 time, consisting of two measures. The first measure contains a sequence of eighth notes: R, R, L, R, R, L, R, R, L, R, L, R, L, L, R, L, L, R, L, L, R, L, R. The second measure contains: L, L, R, L, L, R, L, L, R, L, R, L, R, R, L, R, R, L, R, L, L. Above the notes are sixteenth-note groupings with a '6' and an accent (>) above each group.

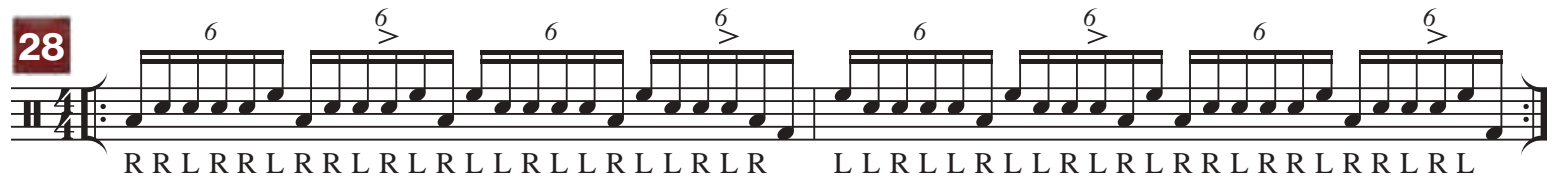
27



RRLRRLRRLRLRLLRLLRLLRLR LLRLLRLLRRLRLRRLRRLRRL

Exercise 27 is a rhythmic pattern in 4/4 time, consisting of two measures. The first measure contains a sequence of eighth notes: R, R, L, R, R, L, R, R, L, R, L, R, L, L, R, L, L, R, L, L, R, L, R. The second measure contains: L, L, R, L, L, R, L, L, R, L, R, L, R, R, L, R, R, L, R, L, L. Above the notes are sixteenth-note groupings with a '6' and an accent (>) above each group.

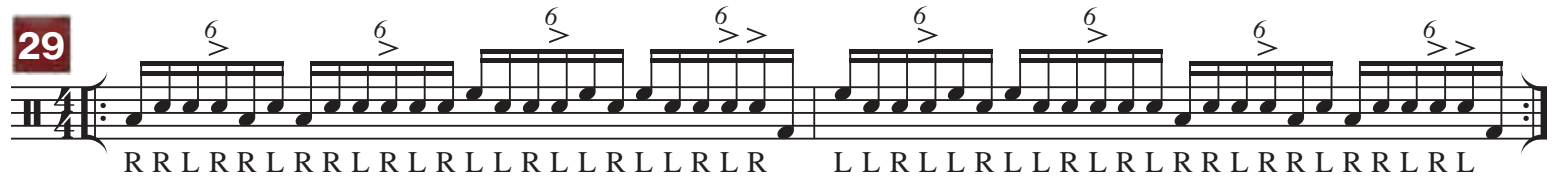
28



RRLRRLRRLRLRLLRLLRLLRLR LLRLLRLLRRLRLRRLRRLRRL

Exercise 28 is a rhythmic pattern in 4/4 time, consisting of two measures. The first measure contains a sequence of eighth notes: R, R, L, R, R, L, R, R, L, R, L, R, L, L, R, L, L, R, L, L, R, L, R. The second measure contains: L, L, R, L, L, R, L, L, R, L, R, L, R, R, L, R, R, L, R, L, L. Above the notes are sixteenth-note groupings with a '6' and an accent (>) above each group.

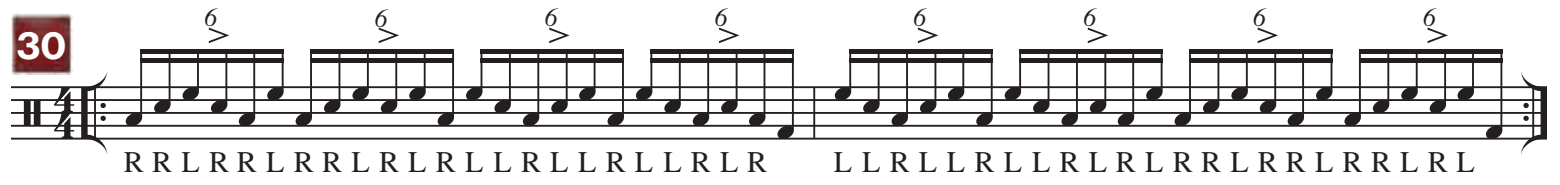
29



RRLRRLRRLRLRLLRLLRLLRLR LLRLLRLLRRLRLRRLRRLRRL

Exercise 29 is a rhythmic pattern in 4/4 time, consisting of two measures. The first measure contains a sequence of eighth notes: R, R, L, R, R, L, R, R, L, R, L, R, L, L, R, L, L, R, L, L, R, L, R. The second measure contains: L, L, R, L, L, R, L, L, R, L, R, L, R, R, L, R, R, L, R, L, L. Above the notes are sixteenth-note groupings with a '6' and an accent (>) above each group.

30



RRLRRLRRLRLRLLRLLRLLRLR LLRLLRLLRRLRLRRLRRLRRL

Exercise 30 is a rhythmic pattern in 4/4 time, consisting of two measures. The first measure contains a sequence of eighth notes: R, R, L, R, R, L, R, R, L, R, L, R, L, L, R, L, L, R, L, L, R, L, R. The second measure contains: L, L, R, L, L, R, L, L, R, L, R, L, R, R, L, R, R, L, R, L, L. Above the notes are sixteenth-note groupings with a '6' and an accent (>) above each group.



Chapter 25: Inverted Paradiddles

In my opinion, the inverted paradiddle is the diddle rudiment that best lends itself to power. The diddle being bookended by single strokes gives you the ability to start and end with a bang, while dynamically racking up speed if desired. It segues well into single strokes, which makes it right at home in up-tempo and energetic music.

Building Block A

R L L R L R R L

Building Block B

L R R L R L L R

1

R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R L R

L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L R L R L

2

R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R L R

L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L R L R L

3

R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R L R

L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L R L R L

Section 3, Chapter 25 (continued)

4

R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R L R

L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R L

5

R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R L R L R

L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R L

6

R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R L R L R

L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R L

7

R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R L R L R

L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R L

8

R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R L R L R

L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R L

Section 3, Chapter 25 (continued)

9

R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R L R

L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L R L R L

10

R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R L R L R

L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L R L R L



Photo by Carlos Gonzalez