

THE BEESTON & DISTRICT PIPE BAND DRUMMING TUTOR

1. Introduction

This drumming tutor has been assembled to aid your practice at home and is to be used in conjunction with the lessons provided on the practise night. There is no shortcut to proficiency in the art of pipe band snare drumming; hard work and unlimited patience are keynotes to success. Diligent practice, coupled with a high degree of concentration is essential if one's efforts are to be rewarded. Careless manipulation and faulty timing should never be tolerated, for bad habits, once formed, are extremely difficult to eradicate.

Make full use of the tutors available at the band practice by asking them for help. Try to do some practice at least once a day, even if it is only 5 or 10 minutes. A good way to make yourself practice is to find a table top or shelf that is of a convenient height to practice on and always have your pad and sticks there so that every time you walk past them you can have a quick 5 minute practice without having to plan it into your day.

GOOD LUCK!!!

2. Holding the sticks

To acquire good technique, learning to hold the drum sticks correctly in an accepted manner is essential.

The Left Stick : The left stick should be held about three inches from the butt end, between the thumb and forefinger and resting between the first and second joints of the third finger, palm upwards. You may find this a little awkward at first but persevere with it as it will eventually show just rewards.



The Right Stick : The right stick is grasped at the point of balance between the thumb and forefinger, palm downwards; the remaining fingers grouped loosely around it.

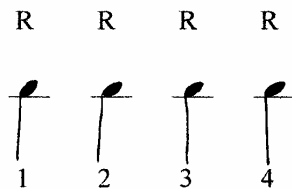


3. Taps

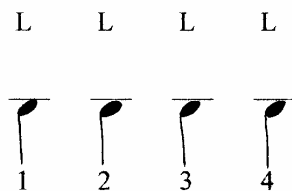
It was once mentioned that there are only two rudiments on the drum, those being a tap and a roll. This is not as silly as it may at first seem, for if both these rudiments are mastered before commencing with any other exercises then you should find subsequent exercises a lot easier.

Try striking the pad with your right stick and aim to make a sharp single tapping noise. Now try the same with your left stick.

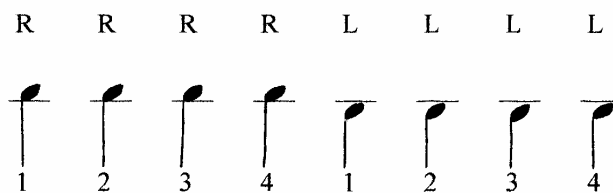
Now try tapping your right stick 4 times, trying to keep them all the same length and uniform;



Now try tapping your left stick 4 times trying to keep them all the same length and uniform;



Now join these two exercises together;



Play this exercise for about 2 - 3 minutes without stopping and try to increase the speed whilst you are playing.

As a general warm-up exercise, taps are often played in groups. These groups are played in sequences eg;

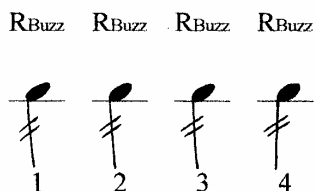
(Simple time)
Fours - RRRR_LLLL_RRRR_LLLL_RRRR_LLLL_RRRR_LLLL
Eights - RRRR_RRRR_LLLL_LLLL_RRRR_RRRR_LLLL_LLLL
Sixteens - RRRR_RRRR_RRRR_RRRR_LLLL_LLLL_LLLL_LLLL

and also; (Compound time [triple time])
Threes - RRR_LLL_RRR_LLL_RRR_LLL_RRR_LLL
Sixes - RRR_RRR_LLL_LLL_RRR_RRR_LLL_LLL
Twelves - RRR_RRR_RRR_RRR_LLL_LLL_LLL_LLL

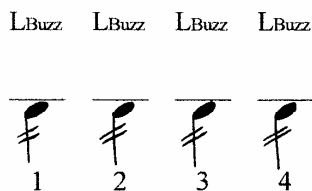
4. Buzz's

To play a buzz you should try and play a single tap but force the stick into the pad to make a "BUZZ" sound. Try this with first the right stick and then the left stick.

Now try this exercise with the right stick;

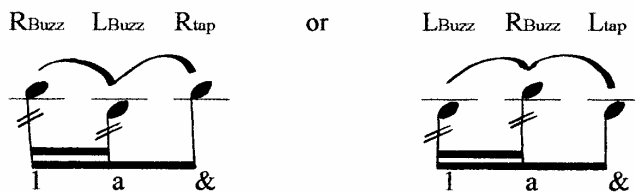


Now with the left;



5. The Five Stroke Roll

Using the above buzz's we can now try a "5 stroke roll". This consists of a RBuzz and a LBuzz followed by a single right tap (or LBuzz_RBuzz_Tap). When counting a roll movement, the Buzz's are counted as two and the taps are counted as one, hence a 5 stroke roll consists of 2 buzz's ($2 \times 2 = 4$) and a single tap (1) which equals 5 ($2 \times 2 + 1 = 5$). Usually these movements are practised "hand-to-hand" but for now just practise them on the hand that you feel most comfortable with.

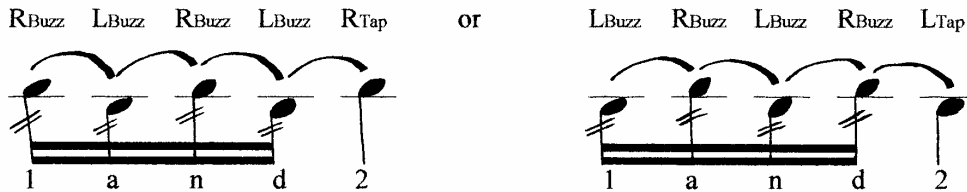


When musically written, the five stroke roll is abbreviated as;

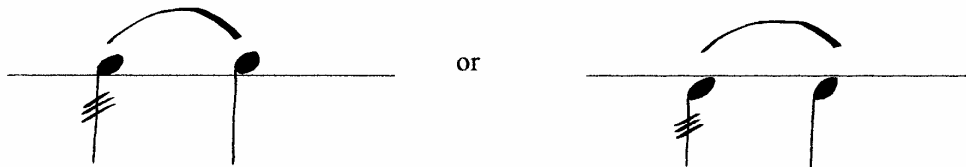


6. The Nine Stroke Roll

A 9 stroke roll is played using the same technique as with the 5 stroke roll. This time however, the 9 stroke roll consists of 4 hand-to-hand buzz's followed by a tap, eg.



When musically written, the nine stroke roll is abbreviated as;

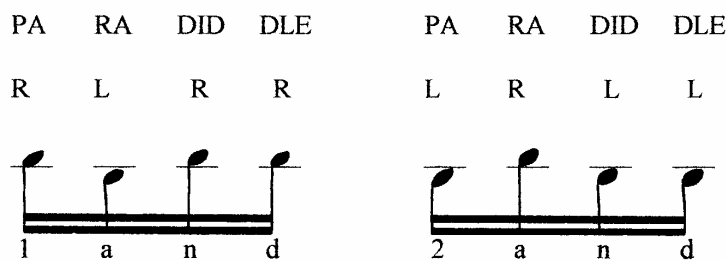


Again, as with the 5 stroke roll, find the roll movement that suits you best (left handed or right handed) and try to perfect that one.

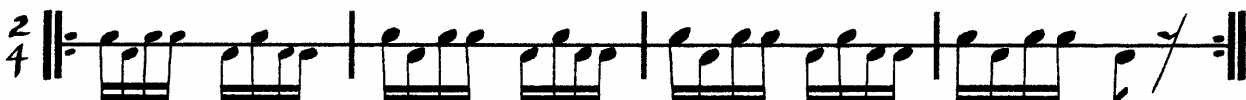
7. Paradiddles

Paradiddles are exercises that improve hand coordination. This is because the immediate pattern of a paradiddle is very inconsistent and forces the mind to concentrate on what the hands are doing.

The paradiddle comprises of a group of four notes played in the sequence, Right_Left_Right_Right followed by another sequence of, Left_Right_Left_Left. Note, all these beats are played evenly. The paradiddle gets its name from the sound made by the rudiment;



The following exercise should be practised hand-to-hand until an even rhythmic pattern is obtained.



8. Phrase 1 - The Roll-a-diddle

This phrase is a combination of the five stroke roll and paradiddles. Note that the tap on the end of the five stroke roll is also the first beat of the paradiddle.

2/4

R L R R L 5 roll R R L R R L 5 roll R R L R R L R L L L R L R R L

In pipe band drumming most phrases are repeated. The first time through the phrase is termed “the piano part (p)” and is usually played by the leading drummer only. The second time through, also known as “the repeat”, is termed “the double forte (ff)” and is played by the whole of the drum corps. This kind of playing is often called “the call and answer technique”. Note that in music the p symbol means to be played softly and quietly and the ff symbol means to be played heavy and loud.

Usually with pipe band drumming, while the leading drummer is playing the piano part, the corps drummers play small sections of the piece and these small sections are usually called “cut-ins or chip-ins”. These cut-ins are usually marked onto the music by putting a bracketed line above the notes to be played as cut-ins. Here are a set of cut-ins for the above roll-a-diddle phrase;

2/4

R L R R 5 roll L R R L R R L R L L L R L R R L

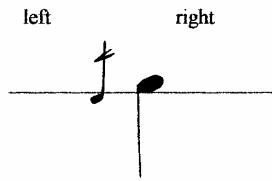
9. Flams

The flam is a rudiment that gives an accented sound without really having to physically play the beat any harder. The flam is played by beating both sticks at virtually the same time but with a slight gap separating them. Also, the second beat is played slightly harder than the first. This results in a “PLUP or FaLAM” sound. The easiest way to attempt a flam is to position one stick higher than the other and bring them both down at the same time so that the lower of the two sticks hits the pad first.

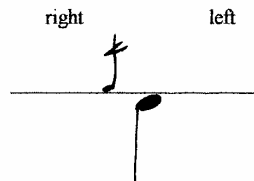
If the stick that is raised the highest and makes the loudest sound, when performing a flam, is the right stick, then this is termed a “right flam”.

If the stick that is raised the highest and makes the loudest sound, when performing a flam, is the left stick, then this is termed a “left flam”.

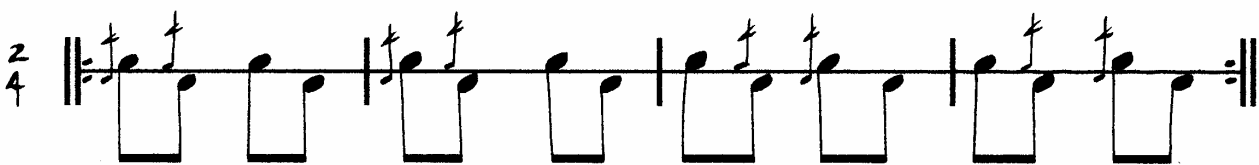
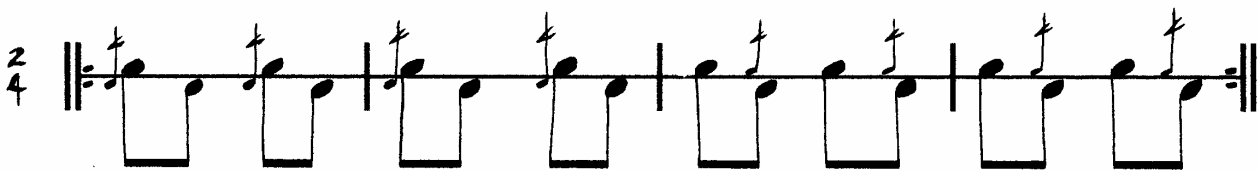
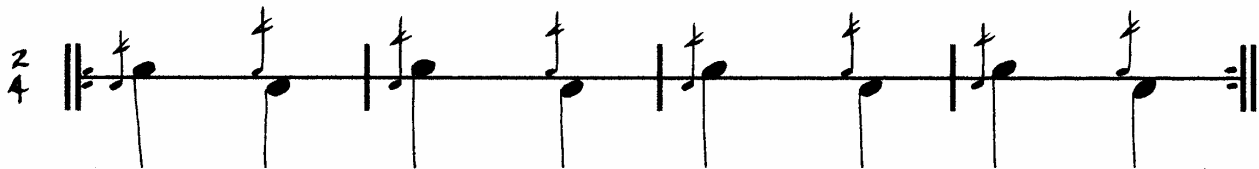
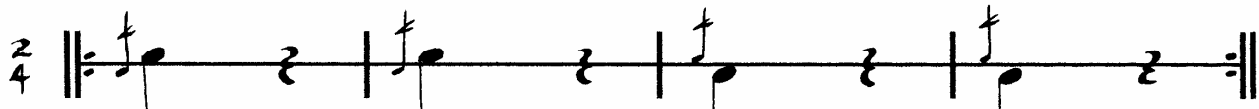
A right flam is written thus;



and a left flam;

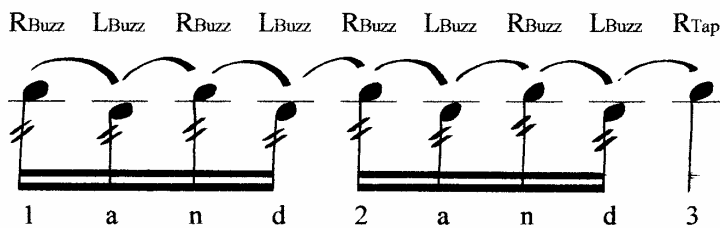


Flams are often used to replace single taps as you can give a beat more emphasis by playing a flam. Here are a few exercises to help you to develop your flams.

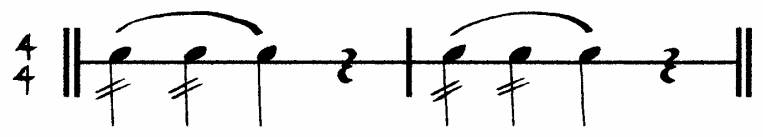


10. The Three Pace Roll

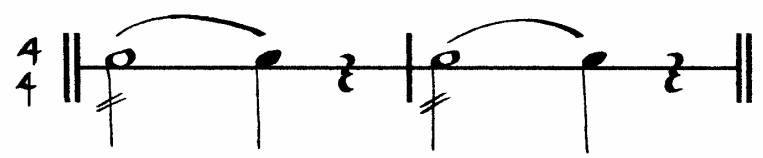
The three pace roll, also known as the 17 stroke roll, is a commonly used roll movement with pipe bands. Virtually all pipe band tunes start with a drumming introduction of two, three pace rolls and because of this they are often referred to as introductory rolls. As the name suggests, they are comprised of 17 strokes with a duration of three beats, eg.



As mentioned earlier, these rolls are played twice and are written thus;




or



1.8.3
LESSON 8

TABLE OF RELATIVE NOTE VALUES

THE SEMIBREVE 
(Whole Note)

is equal to

Two Minims 
($\frac{1}{2}$ Note)

or

Four Crotchets 
($\frac{1}{4}$ Note)

or

Eight Quavers 
($\frac{1}{8}$ Note)

or

Sixteen
Semiquavers 
($\frac{1}{16}$ Note)

or

Thirty-Two
Demisemiquavers 
($\frac{1}{32}$ Note)

All basic notes are referred to as SIMPLE NOTES.