

Eight on a Hand

Beginner Variation

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TenorLine 11

Tenors 5

PURPOSE: This exercise focuses on the basic velocity stroke and simple movement around the drums.
This exercise seems simple but there are many things to think about.

1) STICK MOTION:

- Do your sticks move exactly the same way for every stroke?
- Be sure that the sticks always move in a vertical path, no matter what drum is being played.
- Wrist/hand angle should be maintained throughout; **DO NOT** rotate the hand/wrist to strike the outer drums.

2) SOUND QUALITY:

- Does every stroke sound the same? How about from left to right hand? Make sure you play every note with the exact same approach. Some common mistakes:
 - Pounding the last note of each hand when stopping the stick from rebounding.
 - At higher tempos, playing the first note higher than the rest of the notes; always maintain dynamic integrity.
 - Pounding the very last note of the exercise.
 - Playing one hand louder/softer than the other.
 - Playing outside of the playing zones; use the simple split pattern to not only focus on the velocity stroke, but playing and maintaining proper playing zones as well.

3) RHYTHM AND TIMING:

- How perfect is your eighth note rhythm? Be sure to place every note!
- Some common areas where mistakes occur:
 - First two notes of the exercise: The first note defines the exercise starting point and the second note defines the tempo. You **MUST** internalize the tempo before you start so that these two notes are the 'perfect' distance apart.
 - Hand-to-hand transfers: It's very common for players to warp the rhythm when switching hands. The key here is to think of the exercise as a steady stream of eight notes while "ignoring" the fact that you are switching hands.
 - Switching drums: Often times, tempo (and volume) will/can fluctuate when playing a split pattern.
****Be sure to practice the exercise on one drum first, then play the split pattern, changing nothing but the drum you're hitting.****

4) VARIATIONS

- Play exercise at all different heights: 1", 3", 6", 9", 12", 15"

Apply and think about all the concepts discussed here as you progress to the intermediate and advanced variations.