

Sanford Double Beat

Beginner Variation

Andrew Werst
for SnareScience.com

The image shows four staves of musical notation for a drum exercise. The first staff is labeled 'TenorLine' and contains four measures of music with 'R...' and 'L...' markings below. The second staff is labeled 'Tenors' and starts with a measure number '5', containing four measures with 'L...' and 'R...' markings. The third staff is labeled 'Tenors' and starts with a measure number '9', containing four measures with 'R...' and 'L...' markings. The fourth staff is labeled 'Tenors' and starts with a measure number '13', containing four measures with 'L...' and 'R...' markings. The notation consists of eighth notes and sixteenth notes on a five-line staff, with a double bar line at the end of the fourth measure of each staff.

PURPOSE: This exercise focuses on the basic velocity double and triple stroke. This is one of the most important exercises for rudimental quad drumming.

1) STICK MOTION:

- Do your sticks move exactly the same way for each double and triple stroke?
- The neutral stick position (in between each set of double or triple strokes) should be at the top of the stroke. Never freeze the stick at the bottom of the stroke; after all, double and triple strokes are nothing more than fast legato strokes!

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:
 - Playing the second note of each double and the second and third note of each triple quieter than the first note.
 - Pounding the eighth notes at the end of each hand phrase.
 - 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 are your 16th note rhythms? Be sure to place every note!
- Some common areas where mistakes occur:
 - Rushing the last two eighth notes of each hand phrase. The eighth notes require less energy to play than the double and triple strokes so a common tendency is to rush them.
 - Warping the rhythm/timing of the first two notes. 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 are 'perfect' 16th notes.
 - Closing down the double and triple strokes, especially at fast tempos. In order to "keep up," a common tendency is to close down the double and triple strokes. Be sure to give every 16th its full value.
 - 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.