

Flam Accent Break Down

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Snare $\text{H} \text{ } \frac{12}{8}$

R r r r R r r r... R r L r R r L r...

R l r L r l... R l L l l l L l l l L...

R l L l R l L l... R l r L r l... R

- Purpose:** This exercise breaks down the left and right hands of the flam accent rudiment. This is an excellent exercise for developing flam quality and consistency.
- 1) Stick motion:** This exercise should be very legato. Make sure there you use three distinct heights - one height for accents, one for eight note flam grace notes, and a tap height for all other notes. The grace notes for the eight note flams can be played at a true grace note height (1"). 16th note flams should be played with a 3" grace notes. If you think about it, playing a true grace note height for every flam would simply not work at any appreciable tempo. This would require you to play a fast triple stroke with 3", 1", 3" heights. Not worth it!
- 2) Sound Quality:** The main area where mistakes are made is in the three taps following the accent. This is basically a tap height triple stroke. Make sure that the third note of the triple stroke is just as loud as the first note. This is the job of the fingers in the right hand and the thumb of the left hand.
- 3) Rhythm and Timing:** The main issue here is going to be flam consistency. Placing a very consistent space between the grace note and the main note is one of the greatest challenges in snare drumming. Some say the 'perfect flam' is unattainable. :) So, when you play this exercise, really tune your ear in to the quality of your flams. It helps to play this exercise on a very hard surface, such as a piece of wood. The short duration of the sound will allow you to hear and identify any variation in your flam quality.
- 4) Variations to this exercise:**
- Play one hand on drum and one hand on rim to check for stroke and quality of sound consistency on each individual hand. Make sure the hand on the drum doesn't change when you add in the other hand!
 - Try playing the exercise with different definitions of a perfect 'flam'. Try to play really loose grace notes consistently. Try to 'pop' your flams (play grace note exactly on top of main note) consistently. Try to play malfs (grace note after main note) consistently. When you can do all these things, you have full conscious control over where the grace note is placed.
 - Add ornaments. Make the exercise cheese accent break down, flam drag break down, and flam five break down.
 - Grid it. Play the exercise with the accent on the 2nd or 3rd partial of the triplets.