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MARCHING PERCUSSION 101

**ESSENTIAL DRUMLINE
WARMUPS**

Fundamental techniques for the contemporary
marching percussion ensemble

INCLUDING VIDEO DEMONSTRATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS
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For over 40 years, Vic Firth has produced the finest drumsticks and mallets available. Our marching percussion products were developed throughout years of collaboration with the world's finest drum and bugle corps and marching percussion experts. From sticks and mallets to bags and practice pads, Vic Firth's products have remained the most popular choice among the top high school bands, indoor percussion ensembles and DCI Championship corps.

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INTRODUCTION

This warmup packet contains seven fundamental exercises for the marching percussion section. Covering basic strokes, timing, two height control and rolls, these exercises were specifically designed to provide the beginning to intermediate drumline with a solid foundation for building individual and ensemble technique.

Demonstration videos of each of these exercises are available online at **VICFIRTH.COM**. Featuring Brian S. Mason and the Morehead State University Drumline, you and your percussion section can watch each exercise demonstrated at slow, medium and fast tempi. Instructional videos provide detail on many of the techniques included in each exercise. These videos are a great resource to demonstrate to your students how attention to detail and high performance levels go hand in hand to becoming a top marching ensemble!

The Marching Percussion 101 feature on vicfirth.com also includes a comprehensive instructional video library, covering all the fundamental drumline topics, such as:

- **BASIC CARE & MAINTENANCE**

Implementing a regular maintenance program, strategies for dealing with rain and suggestions for transporting the front ensemble.

- **TUNING**

Getting a characteristic sound from each instrument, plus other topics such as adjusting snare strainers and bass drum muffling techniques.

- **STICK & MALLET SELECTION**

Recommendations for the best implement to use on each instrument as well as a demonstration of optional products which can produce a wide range of tonal colors.

- **INSTRUMENTATION**

Choosing an instrumentation that will provide a balanced sound and how to set individual players on each instrument for the best chance of success.

- **REHEARSAL STRATEGIES**

Covering a wide range of issues such as: working with a metronome, strategies for cleaning a drumline, tracking, dutting, ensemble timing principles, plus a lot more!

- **MARCHING FUNDAMENTALS**

From preconditioning recommendations to forward, backward and crab-step marching fundamentals. Each marching technique is discussed and demonstrated.

Remember that video reference libraries are available for the concert percussion instruments and drumset as well. And to help you find quick answers to your percussion questions, check out Vic Firth's **BAND DIRECTOR'S PERCUSSION SURVIVAL GUIDE**, located at

www.vicfirth.com/education/bdpsg

We hope you enjoy using MARCHING PERCUSSION 101 and will consider making Vic Firth your #1 choice for sticks and mallets!

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

POSTURE AND CARRIER ADJUSTMENT

Maintaining a good posture while rehearsing is not only important to the visual look of the ensemble, but it is also an important factor in avoiding injury. Any misalignment of the spinal cord when carrying a piece of heavy equipment may result in muscle strain or spinal injury.

For detailed instruction on correct posture, drum height, body & feet positioning, please watch the marching technique videos on the Marching Percussion 101 feature on vicfirth.com.

STICKS OUT / STICKS IN

The importance of a good sticks out/in technique should not be underestimated – it not only provides a uniform visual appearance of the battery, but it also helps the players to internalize tempo prior to a musical entrance. Before each exercise (or during longer rest patterns in show music), the sticks should be carried in a uniform “sticks in” position. The sticks should come out in a staccato/fast motion 2 counts before the first note - and back in one count after the final release note.

A sticks out/sticks in regimen for the front ensemble is not recommended. Because these instruments are approached in a concert fashion, simply bringing the mallets up to playing position 4 counts in a uniform manner before an entrance is sufficient.

GRIP AND STROKE

Without the proper grip and relaxed stroke style, achieving a high performance level is impossible. Take the time necessary for each student to understand the checkpoints for a proper grip and how to produce a fluid, relaxed stroke (detailed videos are provided at vicfirth.com).

We recommend that younger snare lines play with matched grip rather than traditional grip. While players often want to emulate college or drum corp drumlines, the traditional grip adds a level of complexity to achievement that could be pursued after the basic skill levels are achieved.

USING THE HEIGHT SYSTEM FOR DYNAMICS

Because the visual consistency from player to player is a vital part of the marching activity, it is often helpful to define a system of heights when applying dynamics to exercises or show music. In this way, each player can match volume and stick heights on any given musical passage.

pp – 1" *p* – 3" *mp* – 6" *mf* – 9" *f* – 12" *ff* – 15"

A FEW FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS BEHIND EFFECTIVE DRUMLINE REHEARSALS:

1. Students need regular, dedicated rehearsal time devoted to working on the fundamentals included in this packet. Ideally, this time should be spent away from the wind players so that they may rehearse at the tempi most effective for each technique. If time during the regular band rehearsal does not allow for the drumline to warmup as a section, consider having them arrive 15-30 minutes early for rehearsal.
2. Always work with a metronome. Much of percussion performance is related to **MUSCLE MEMORY**. Working with a metronome will develop consistency for each technique covered in these exercises.
3. Repetition is necessary. In order to develop the proper muscle memory necessary for a high performance level, each exercise should be practiced (correctly) a minimum of 8-12 times at a given tempo.
4. Tenors should always play each exercise on one drum before applying the written exercise to all the drums. Bass drummers should also play the full exercise on their drum before splitting parts. This will help develop solid fundamental skills for each individual player.
5. It is helpful to rehearse at a variety of tempi and dynamic levels. Each variable affects how the muscles respond, and therefore must be a part of the regular rehearsal routine.
6. Also practice these exercises "on the move." Tracking (as explained in the Marching Percussion 101 Resource) is a vital means of layering the multiple responsibilities of playing and moving at the same time.
7. Accessory players should play snare parts on a pad in the front ensemble whenever possible. If necessary, these parts should be adapted to fit the student's ability level.
8. Adapting the exercises to reflect the demands of your show music will enhance the student's performance level. For example, if the students are having difficulty playing a soft passage in the show music, consider playing one or more of the exercises each day at a soft dynamic level at the same tempo as the music.

ABOUT THE EXERCISES:

Each exercise includes a full score and suggestions to help you and your students understand the basic techniques that are included with each exercise. In addition, we have provided several options that may be used if students either find the exercise too difficult, or are looking for a challenge to enhance their skills. Remember though, that difficulty of the exercise is not the primary consideration. Only through effective rehearsal on basic skills will your drumline be able to master the techniques to become a musical ensemble.

8 ON A HAND

Brian S. Mason

[illegible]

The image displays a musical score for the song "The Sound of Silence" by Simon & Garfunkel. The score is arranged for a percussion ensemble and keyboard. The percussion parts include snare (sn), tom (tn), bass drum (5 bd), and cymbal (cy). The keyboard part is divided into right hand (key R) and left hand (key L). The timpani part (Timp) is also shown. The score is in 4/4 time and begins with a measure number of 6. The percussion parts feature a consistent rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, while the keyboard and timpani parts provide harmonic support. The cymbal part includes a series of eighth notes with a cross symbol, indicating a cymbal effect. The keyboard part features a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The timpani part consists of a series of eighth notes. The score is presented in a clean, professional layout with clear notation and labels for each instrument.

Rehearsal Notes

This exercise works on full rebound strokes, making it a perfect way to begin each practice session. Here are a few things to look for during your daily rehearsal:

- Work for a full, relaxed stroke (stick height = 12").
- Start at a slow tempo, working with a metronome or play-along track (mm=90), then move to medium (120) and fast tempi (140+) for 2-3 minutes per tempo.
- There should be no "stopping points" in the path of the stick as it travels up and down. The motion of the stick should be smooth on each stroke.
- Stick heights should match player to player.
- Keep the hand that's not playing (the free hand) in the proper playing position.
- On the battery percussion instruments, allow the rebound of the stick off the head to push it back to the up position. Keyboards and timpani will direct the stroke with the wrist, keeping the hand as relaxed as possible.
- Also rehearse at a piano dynamic level (3"). At this height, the wrist will direct the stroke because of the decrease in the stick's natural rebound. Strive for a full sound even at a low height, always keeping the wrist relaxed.
- Another option is to rehearse with a crescendo or diminuendo on each measure. Watch stick heights carefully. The height of the stick should consistently reflect the change in dynamics. Strive for an even, gradual change from low to high (or high to low).

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8 ON A HAND – EXERCISE OPTIONS

OPTION 1

The musical score for Option 1 of the 8 On A Hand exercise is written in 4/4 time and consists of five measures. The instruments and their parts are as follows:

- Snare:** Plays eighth notes in a continuous pattern, alternating between right (R) and left (L) hands every two measures.
- Tenors:** Plays eighth notes in a continuous pattern, alternating between right (R) and left (L) hands every two measures.
- 5 BD:** Plays eighth notes in a continuous pattern, alternating between right (R) and left (L) hands every two measures.
- 4 BD:** Plays eighth notes in a continuous pattern, alternating between right (R) and left (L) hands every two measures.
- Cymbals:** Silent throughout the exercise.
- Mallets:** Plays eighth notes in a continuous pattern, alternating between right (R) and left (L) hands every two measures.
- Timpani:** Plays eighth notes in a continuous pattern, alternating between right (R) and left (L) hands every two measures.

This option provides variations for all instruments except snares.

- **Tenors:** This option includes a different “around the drums” part. Watch for proper beating area on each drum. In measures 3 & 4, the free hand should be at rest outside the path of the opposite mallet.
- **Bass Drums:** Includes split parts (often helpful when tempo gets fast). At a slow tempo, play every 8th on the right hand. At a fast tempo, alternate the two 8ths (R L).
- **Cymbals:** As an option, the cymbal players can work on exercises to build strength. This will help them to build stamina necessary for long practices and performances. Hold the cymbals above head, horizontally in front or horizontally out to side – or do pushups.
- **Mallets:** This is an easier option than the normal exercise. For inexperienced players, 8th notes can be alternated at faster tempi. In addition, you may add other scales (in circle of 4ths, 5ths, diatonically or chromatically). Always focus on playing in the proper beating area on the accidentals – in the center at a slow tempo, close to the edge at faster tempi.
- **Timpani:** Play 8 on a hand instead of alternating. You may choose to use a double sticking on the last two eighth notes of each measure for a relaxed transition to the opposite drum.

OPTION 2

The musical score for Option 2 is written for seven percussion parts: Snare, Tenors, 5 BD (Bass Drum), 4 BD (Bass Drum), Cymbals, Mallets, and Timpani. The music is in 4/4 time and spans five measures. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns such as eighth notes, sixteenth notes, and rests, with specific sticking patterns indicated below the notes.

Snare: Measure 1: R. Measure 2: R L R L R L R L -. Measure 3: R L L L -. Measure 4: L R L R L R L R -. Measure 5: L.

Tenors: Measure 1: R. Measure 2: R L R L R L R L -. Measure 3: R L L L -. Measure 4: L R L R L R L R -. Measure 5: L.

5 BD: Measure 1: R. Measure 2: R L R L R L R L -. Measure 3: R. Measure 4: R L R L R L R L -. Measure 5: R.

4 BD: Measure 1: R. Measure 2: R L R L R L R L -. Measure 3: R. Measure 4: R L R L R L R L -. Measure 5: R.

Cymbals: Measure 1: X. Measure 2: X. Measure 3: X. Measure 4: X. Measure 5: X.

Mallets: Measure 1: R. Measure 2: R L R L R L R L -. Measure 3: R L L L -. Measure 4: L R L R L R L R -. Measure 5: L.

Timpani: Measure 1: R. Measure 2: R L R L R L R L -. Measure 3: R L L L -. Measure 4: L R L R L R L R -. Measure 5: L.

This option provides a variation to work on alternating single strokes.

- ***Snares/Tenors:*** The rebound stroke from measure 1 to 2 (and 3 to 4) should remain consistent. Listen & watch for consistency of stick heights from hand to hand.
- ***Tenors:*** Practice first on one drum, then play the exercise as written around the drums. Work to minimize the motion of the forearms by relaxing the wrists.
- ***Bass Drums:*** Practice this exercise in unison before splitting the parts (applying the same sticking as the snares). On the split part, play both 8ths with right hand and alternate the four 16th notes.
- ***Cymbals:*** Split parts with a hi-hat technique. If only 2 players are present, split quarters and eights 2 ways instead of 4.
- ***Mallets:*** This is a great option for developing even alternating stroke required to play smooth rolls. Play the exercise first on one note, then as written. Work to keep all strokes even with no pulsations as you move from note to note.
- ***Timpani:*** This works on “passing rolls.” Keep the 16th note strokes consistent as you move from drum to drum. Watch (and listen) to make sure you’re striking the drums in the correct beating area on each stroke.

16th NOTE TIMING

Brian S. Mason

The musical score is for a 4/4 time exercise titled "16th NOTE TIMING". It consists of five measures. The parts are as follows:

- Snare:** Measures 1-4 contain eighth-note patterns with R L R, R L L, R R L, and L R L stroke patterns respectively. Measure 5 is a whole rest.
- Tenors:** Similar to Snare, with eighth-note patterns and the same stroke patterns (R L R, R L L, R R L, L R L) in measures 1-4, and a whole rest in measure 5.
- 5 BD:** Continuous 16th-note pattern throughout all five measures.
- 4 BD:** Continuous 16th-note pattern throughout all five measures.
- Cymbals:** Measure 1: (zing); Measure 2: (tap); Measure 3: (crunch); Measure 4: (sizzle); Measure 5: (suck).
- Mallets:** Measures 1-4 contain eighth-note patterns with R L R, R L L, R R L, and L R L stroke patterns respectively. Measure 5 is a whole rest.
- Timpani:** Simple eighth-note pattern throughout all five measures.

Rehearsal Notes

This exercise works on the accuracy of playing the four 16th/8th rhythm permutations. Here are a few things you should work towards when rehearsing this exercise:

- Start at a slow tempo, working with a metronome or play-along track. The bass drums provide the 16th base on which all other instruments should line up the rhythmic figures.
- Marking time while playing the syncopated rhythms in measure 2 & 4 are occasionally problematic. If this is the case, first isolate one beat of the rhythm (plus a downbeat following) at a very slow tempo, then two, three, and finally all four. It's often helpful for students to think of "playing their feet" on the 16th rest in the 4th measure.
- **Snares/Tenors:** There should be a constant motion on repeated strokes (right hand strokes in measure 1&3, left hand strokes in measures 2&4) – similar to the "8 on a hand" exercise. The hand playing one stroke per measure should freeze immediately after the stroke (LH meas. 1&3, RH meas. 2&4).
- **Cymbals:** This exercise works on five different techniques to create new sounds. Watch the section video for this exercise to see a demonstration of each technique.

16th NOTE TIMING – EXERCISE OPTIONS

OPTION 1

This option provides the bass drums with the full unison rhythmic pattern (same as snare part). The mallets can fill in all the notes in each rhythm pattern to play a full scalar exercise (the keyboards may also transpose this exercise to other keys).

OPTION 2

This option inserts a measure of “check pattern” between the measures of the timing pattern.

- **Bass Drums:** The rhythmic permutation is included in the opposite measure as the snares and tenors. Use their 16th note check to line up your rhythm.
- **Snares/Tenors:** Either section may flip the measure of check and rhythm (play measure 2 then 1, 4 then 3, etc) to provide a rhythmic base on which to line up the other section’s rhythms. Or, you may choose to do this with every other player within a single section.
- **Other Sections:** Repeat the first four measures to equal the snare/tenor/bass option.

DIRECTOR

ACCENT TAP

Brian S. Mason

The image displays a musical score for a drum kit and keyboard, arranged in two systems. Each system contains five measures of music. The drum kit parts include Snare, Tenors, BD (Bongos), Cymbals, Mallets, and Timpani. The keyboard parts include a key (likely piano) and a Timpani part. The score is in 4/4 time and features a variety of rhythmic patterns and dynamics.

System 1:

- Snare:** Four measures of eighth-note patterns, followed by a half note in the fifth measure.
- Tenors:** Four measures of eighth-note patterns, followed by a half note in the fifth measure.
- BD:** Four measures of eighth-note patterns, followed by a half note in the fifth measure.
- Cymbals:** Four measures of eighth-note patterns, followed by a half note in the fifth measure.
- Mallets:** Four measures of eighth-note patterns, followed by a half note in the fifth measure.
- Timpani:** Four measures of eighth-note patterns, followed by a half note in the fifth measure.

System 2:

- sn:** Four measures of eighth-note patterns, followed by a half note in the fifth measure.
- tn:** Four measures of eighth-note patterns, followed by a half note in the fifth measure.
- bd:** Four measures of eighth-note patterns, followed by a half note in the fifth measure.
- cy:** Four measures of eighth-note patterns, followed by a half note in the fifth measure.
- key:** Four measures of eighth-note patterns, followed by a half note in the fifth measure.
- Timp:** Four measures of eighth-note patterns, followed by a half note in the fifth measure.

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Rehearsal Notes

This exercise works on two height control. Here are a few things to look for during your daily rehearsal:

- Each accent stroke should be played at a full height (12"). While the velocity - or stroke speed - will increase, there should be no extra tension in the hand, wrist or forearm. Avoid trying to "hit the drum harder" on accented strokes.
- After the accent stroke hits the drum, "freeze" the stick in the down position (3") by using a slight squeeze of the fingers and fulcrum. Only use as much squeeze as necessary to stop the stick from rebounding up.
- Play the unaccented notes at 3" with a wrist directed stroke into the drum. Strive to relax the hand, wrist and fingers on the soft taps. The taps, while soft, should be played with a full sound (play "into the drum" at a 3" height).
- Keep the hand that's not playing (the free hand) in the proper playing position.
- **Tenors:** Play first time on one drum, then apply the written exercise the 2nd time through. Try to limit the amount of forearm motion when playing accents out on a different drum by allowing a slight side-to-side movement of the wrist.
- **Cymbals:** The timing of the even numbered measures is more difficult than you might think. Because of the accent placement on the "and" of count 2 in the drum parts, the quarter note hi-hat on beat 3 needs to be hit exactly in time with the left foot. It may be helpful to listen to the keyboard and timpani part to time the downbeats correctly.
- **Keyboards:** Strive for a full accent (12") and soft tap (3"). Listen for a good quality sound on the accents (do not try to hit the accents harder – simply play at a higher height). Watch for correct beating area on the bars.

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ACCENT TAP – EXERCISE OPTIONS

OPTION 1

Play the exercise in a “round.” This gives the ensemble a timing challenge because the accents are displaced between the voices (including keyboards/timpani/cymbals as the 4th voice).

- Start with one voice, add a 2nd voice two counts later, etc. until all voices are in. Repeat with three silent counts for each instrument. Listen to the other sections (or “dut”) for the entrance.

OPTION 2

This option adds a slightly more difficult accent/tap option in the 4th measure (1 accent/1 tap). Play all 4 bars on the right and repeat off the left (tenors will use drum 2 & 4 on the left).

WANT VARIETY?



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OPTION 3

The musical score for Option 3 is written for Mallets, Timpani, and Keyboard. It is in 4/4 time and B-flat major. The Mallets part consists of a continuous eighth-note pattern with accents on every other note. The Timpani part features a pattern of eighth notes with muffs (marked with an 'x') on the right hand in measures 1, 3, 5, and 7, and on the left hand in measures 2, 4, 6, and 8. The Keyboard part plays a melody of eighth notes, starting one octave higher than the left hand and moving down the scale on accented notes. The score is divided into two systems, each containing staves for Mallets, Timpani, and Keyboard.

This option provides a variation for the keyboards and timpani.

- **Keyboards:** Start one octave higher off the left hand. The left will then move down the scale on the accented notes.
- **Timpani:** This option works on MUFFLING. In the first line, the right hand will muffle the right hand strokes on the top drum, the left will muffle the left hand strokes on the bottom drum (each muffle is notated with an (x) on the appropriate drum).

In measure 5 & 6, muffle the opposite hand from the drum playing (the left muffles the bottom at the same time the right plays half note on the top drum). This technique is similar to playing a “flam” between the hands – with the grace note being the muffle.

In measures 7 & 8, both hands will muffle both drums on the rest.

OPTION 4

The musical score for Option 4 is written for Cymbals and Mallets. It is in 4/4 time and B-flat major. The Cymbals part plays a pattern of eighth notes with accents on every other note. The Mallets part consists of a continuous eighth-note pattern with accents on every other note. The score is divided into two systems, each containing staves for Cymbals and Mallets.

This option provides a variation for the cymbals and keyboards.

- **Cymbals:** Play the same rhythm in measures 2 & 4 as the snare accents.
- **Keyboards:** Play the same accent pattern as the snares, with alternating strokes. Left hand moves to low A in measure 2 and low F in measure 4 (use low A if low F is not available).

ACCENTED 16ths

Brian S. Mason

Snare

Tenors

BD

Cymbals

Mallets

Timpani

Divisi (A/B)
(sizzle/suck)

sn

tn

bd

cy

key

Temp

(HI-HAT)

Rehearsal Notes

This exercise works on two height control within alternated 16th note accent patterns. Here are a few things to look for during your daily rehearsal:

- Each accent stroke should be played at a full height (12"), unaccented notes at 3". All control issues are the same as in the Accent Tap exercise. Do not put extra force behind the accent strokes – simply play the stick at a higher height. The taps should be played with a full sound (with a relaxed wrist stroke played "into the drum").
- Start slow and work one measure at a time (or accent to accent if you need to break it down even further). Concentrate on listening to the taps rather than the accents. For younger players, marking time in a consistent tempo may be as much of an issue as playing the exercise. "Place the feet" in unison with the downbeats in the hands.
- Listen for evenness of the low volume taps - both in sound and note spacing.
- **Tenors:** Play first time on one drum, then play the written exercise on the 2nd time through. The notes marked with a "+" in the 4th measure are cross-overs (left hand over right). Try to keep the forearms low to the drum to minimize the angle of the mallet head on the drum. A flat angle of the mallet results in the best sound.
- **Cymbals:** This exercise incorporates a "sizzle/suck" sound that emulates a drumset hi-hat. Watch the section video for a demonstration of this technique.
- **Keyboards:** Strive for a full height stroke on the accents (12") and soft taps (3-4").
- **Timpani:** The syncopated rhythms should line up exactly with the battery accents. Listen to the 16th note subdivision in the soft taps rather than the accents.

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ACCENTED 16ths – EXERCISE OPTIONS

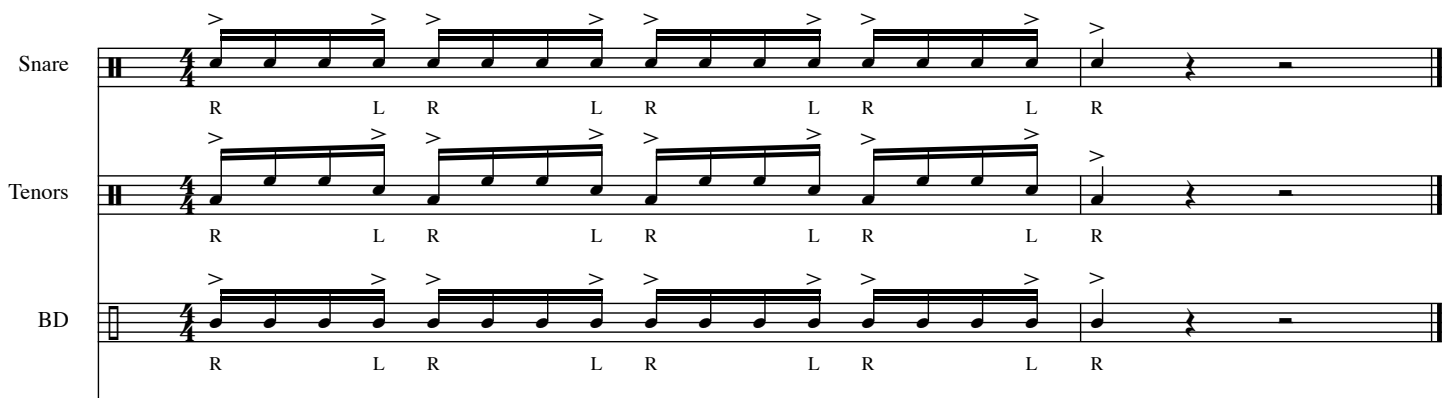
OPTION 1



Play a forte-piano crescendo in the 4th measure, necessitating a higher level of accent/tap control.

- The first 3 notes of the measure is played exactly as you would without a forte-piano – the accent is played at 12" (with the same sound as all the other accents through the exercise), the two taps following are played at 3".
- The 2nd accent (on the last 16th on beat 1) should be played at 5" – only slightly louder than the tap height.
- Each accent thereafter should gradually increase in height and volume. The taps however, should maintain at a consistent 3" height throughout the crescendo.

OPTION 2



This option provides a different accent pattern for the final measure. The Accented 16th Exercise is open to any number of accent patterns, so feel free to experiment with other variations (you may choose to insert an accent pattern that appears in the show music).

WANT VARIETY?



OPTION 3

This option provides a variation for the bass drums to work on syncopated unison rhythms.

- The rhythms notated line up with the accents of the snare and tenor part. Listen carefully to the taps between the accents for better rhythmic accuracy.
- “Play the feet” on each rest – sometimes playing syncopated rhythms test the player’s coordination ability as they do timing accuracy.

OPTION 4

This option provides a split part for the bass drums. These 8th and 16th note patterns are quite common for show and stand music in bass drum parts. Another option would be to substitute a 4 measure pattern directly from the show music to get more repetitions at a variety of tempi.

OPTION 5

This option provides a simplified variation for the keyboards (only changing 1 note per measure).

OPTION 6

This option provides another simplified variation for the keyboards to work alternating 16ths while moving to progressively larger intervals.

- Listen for evenness of the 16th notes – especially when the interval distance between the notes increase.

DIRECTOR

DOUBLE BEAT

Brian S. Mason

This musical score is for the song "The Sound of Silence" by Simon & Garfunkel. It is a 4/4 piece in the key of B-flat major. The score is divided into two systems, each containing staves for various percussion instruments and mallets.

System 1:

- Snare:** Features a continuous eighth-note pattern with a forte (*f*) dynamic. It includes right (*R*) and left (*L*) hand markings.
- Tenors:** Similar to the snare, with a continuous eighth-note pattern and *f* dynamic.
- 5 BD (5th Bongos):** Continuous eighth-note pattern, *f* dynamic.
- 4 BD (4th Bongos):** Continuous eighth-note pattern, *f* dynamic.
- Cymbals:** Features a "sizzle/suck" effect with a continuous eighth-note pattern, *f* dynamic.
- Mallets:** Plays a complex, syncopated melody in the right hand, *f* dynamic.
- Timpani:** Plays a steady eighth-note pattern in the left hand, *f* dynamic.

System 2:

- sn (snare):** Continues the eighth-note pattern, *f* dynamic. Includes right (*RR*) and left (*L*) hand markings.
- tn (tenors):** Continues the eighth-note pattern, *f* dynamic. Includes right (*RR*) and left (*L*) hand markings.
- 5 bd (5th Bongos):** Continues the eighth-note pattern, *f* dynamic.
- 4 bd (4th Bongos):** Continues the eighth-note pattern, *f* dynamic.
- cy (cymbals):** Features a "HI-HAT" effect with a continuous eighth-note pattern, *f* dynamic.
- key (mallets):** Continues the complex melody in the right hand, *f* dynamic.
- Timp (timpani):** Continues the steady eighth-note pattern in the left hand, *f* dynamic.

9

sn (RR) (LL) R

tn (RR) (LL) R

5 bd

4 bd

cy

key

Timp

Rehearsal Notes

This exercise works on developing a quality double stroke – necessary for great sounding rolls. Here are a few things to look for during your daily rehearsal:

- The wrist directs each stroke with a relaxed rebound motion. Listen for evenness of sound. A wrist that is too tight will result in a choppy sounding double stroke. A “bounced” double stroke will result in the first stroke being louder than the second. Think of this as you do the “8 on a hand” exercise – but “2 on a hand” instead.
- In the first half of the exercise, isolate the motion to the wrists as much as possible (no large forearm motions for the beginning of each double stroke). In the second half, there will be a slight forearm motion as the check pattern flows from hand to hand.
- Practice also with your hands on your leg (or sticks on a pillow).
- **Tenors:** Practice on one drum first, then play the exercise as written.
- **Bass Drums:** Play the exercise in unison first, then as written. In measures 5-8, the 16th notes should be alternated (R L), single 8th notes are played on the right hand. Listen to snares and tenors to line up split 8ths and 16ths in m5-10.
- **Cymbals:** This exercise incorporates the same sizzle/suck technique as Alternated 16ths, but with a more complex split part. Play measures 1-4 in unison. Measures 5-11 are split.
- **Keyboards:** This exercise incorporates octave strokes on a chromatic scale. At a slow tempo, play the accidentals in the center of the bar – at faster tempi, at the edge. Inexperienced players may choose to play the exercise in one octave with alternating strokes.

DOUBLE BEAT – EXERCISE OPTIONS

OPTION 1

5 BD

4 BD

7

5 bd

4 bd

This option provides the bass drums with remedial work on running 8th and 16th patterns.

- The first 4 measures give each player the opportunity to place his or her 8th note on the downbeat or upbeat. If the line is very inexperienced, you can have them play quarter notes instead of 8ths (use the 1st four 8ths of each bar only).
- In measure 5, the unison 16ths on the downbeats should be played with alternating strokes (R L). Listen to the snare and tenor part to match spacing of the 16ths. Measure 6 is similar, but with upbeat 16ths.
- Again, listen to the snares and tenors in measures 9-10 to match timing of the split 16ths.

OPTION 2

Cymbals

(sizzle/suck)

f

7


This option provides the cymbal line with a simplified sizzle/suck exercise. In the first 4 measures, play the sizzle on the downbeat (the same as the original exercise). In measures 5-8, the sizzle is on the upbeat. This will help with timing and coordination issues between the hands and feet.

OPTION 3

The musical score is divided into two systems. The first system includes parts for Mallets and Timpani. The Mallets part is in 4/4 time, starting with a right-hand (R) pattern, followed by a left-hand (L) pattern, and then a sequence of R R L - and R L R L R L R L. The Timpani part follows a similar pattern, starting with R, then L, and then R R L -. The second system includes parts for Key and Timpani. The Key part is in 4/4 time, starting with a sequence of R L L R L L R L L R L L, followed by R L -, R R L L -, and then a sequence of L L R R - and R. The Timpani part follows a similar pattern, starting with R L L -, then R R L L -, then L L R R -, and finally R.


This option provides a double stroke variation for the keyboards and timpani.

- Inexperienced mallet players may wish to play the double strokes on one note instead of two (Bb in meas. 1, A in meas. 2, etc).
- Work for the same relaxed double wrist stroke technique as the snares and tenors.



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CHICKEN AND A ROLL

Brian S. Mason

6"

Snare

mf

6"

Tenors

mf

5 BD

mf

4 BD

mf

(taps)
Divisi (A/B)

Cymbals

mf

Mallets

mf

Timpani

mf

3

> 9"/3"

sn

R L R L

f > 9"/3"

tn

R L R L

5 bd

4 bd

(zing)

cy

key

3

Timp

Rehearsal Notes

This exercise works on 16th note roll patterns. Here are a few things to look for during your daily rehearsal:

- ***Snares/Tenors:*** Play the first 2 measures at a consistent 6" height. The 16th check and the roll should maintain a consistent motion and height from one to the other – and a consistent feel in the hands (don't overly relax for the 16ths or squeeze for the roll).

Measures 3-4 should be played at 9" for the accent, 3" for the taps and rolls. This presents the same control issues as the Accented 16th exercise. Work to keep the roll at the 3" height, but with a full sound (by playing "into the drum").

The crescendo at the end of measure 4 should start at 3" and finish at 9". Keep the tempo and hand speed consistent throughout. Avoid "ripping the roll" (by speeding up) or "hanging the roll" (by slowing down).

- ***Bass Drums:*** All 8th note strokes should be played with the right hand, 16th notes should be alternated. Listen to the snare and tenors to line up the 16ths.
- ***Cymbals:*** This exercise incorporates tap and zing techniques. Watch the section video for a demonstration of these two techniques.
- ***Timpani:*** This exercise can be played on 3 drums (G-C-D) or, if the player is capable, on two (G-C). If playing on two drums, the player will tune the higher drum from C to D (and D to C) as necessary. It is helpful for the player to be seated when performing multiple tuning changes.



JEFF LEE

CORPSMASTER® SIGNATURE KEYBOARD MALLETs



BRIAN MASON



VIC FIRTH
WHEN IT MATTERS, ASK FOR VIC

CHICKEN AND A ROLL – EXERCISE OPTIONS

OPTION 1

5 BD

4 BD

Cymbals

Mallets

Timpani

5 bd

4 bd

cy

key

Timp

The musical score is written for a percussion ensemble. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system includes staves for 5 BD, 4 BD, Cymbals, Mallets, and Timpani. The second system includes staves for 5 bd, 4 bd, cy, key, and Timp. The music is in 4/4 time. The 5 BD and 4 BD parts feature continuous eighth-note patterns. The Cymbals part has a pattern of eighth notes with accents. The Mallets part has a pattern of eighth notes with accents. The Timpani part has a pattern of eighth notes with accents. The 5 bd and 4 bd parts feature a pattern of eighth notes with accents. The cy part has a pattern of eighth notes with accents. The key part has a pattern of eighth notes with accents. The Timp part has a pattern of eighth notes with accents.

Option 1 provides a more difficult variation for basses, cymbals, mallets and timpani.

- **Bass Drums:** In measure 3, the top two drums have the opportunity to play the same roll pattern as the snares and tenors (beats 1 & 2 on drum 1; beats 3 & 4 on drum 2). Play the accents at 9", taps and rolls at 3". Listen and match the 16ths and rolls with the snares. The other drums play syncopated accents that line up with snare/tenor accents.

In measure 4, make sure that the unison is timed correctly. Start the 16th note run on beat 3 at 3" (soft) and crescendo to the final unison.

- **Cymbals:** This exercise works on full crashes. Listen and subdivide carefully to play each crash in time with the rest of the ensemble. The final note is played as a full crash and quick muffle.

It is important to note that the full cymbal crash may interfere with the snare's and tenor's ability to "listen-in" to the roll. For inexperienced lines, you may consider moving the cymbals away from the snares and tenors (to a distance of at least 8-12 steps). As the players become more confident, keeping the cymbals in a usual warmup or performance arc is recommended because these are the same type of listening environments that snares and tenors often experience on the field. The battery players must get used to "focusing their ear" past the clutter of cymbal crashes or wind parts.

- **Mallets:** Play this exercise with 2 mallets in one hand, then repeat with the opposite hand (or play with 4 mallets). Work for a full, relaxed wrist stroke, minimizing forearm motion. At a slow tempo, play in the center of the accidental bars – or on the edge at a fast tempo. If instruction on how to hold four mallets is necessary, check out our free video lessons at www.vicfirth.com/education (scroll down to "concert/keyboard").
- **Timpani:** Play the entire exercise on one drum, moving the pitch up or down a half step every two counts. Try to make the pedal motion as quick as possible just before striking the new pitch. Listen carefully to the keyboard part to match pitch.

VIDEO PODCASTS

Inspiration to go

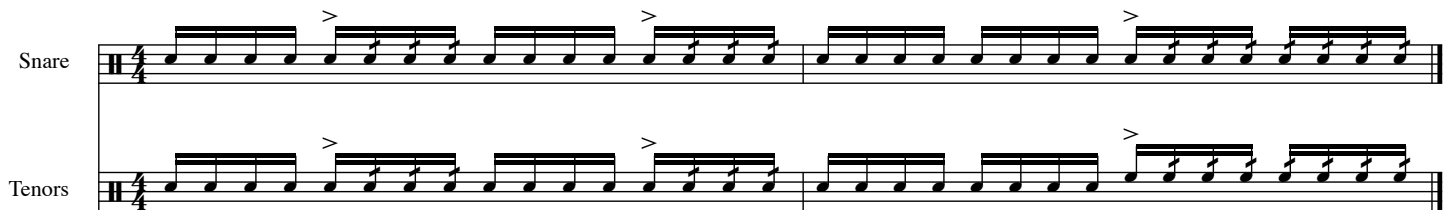
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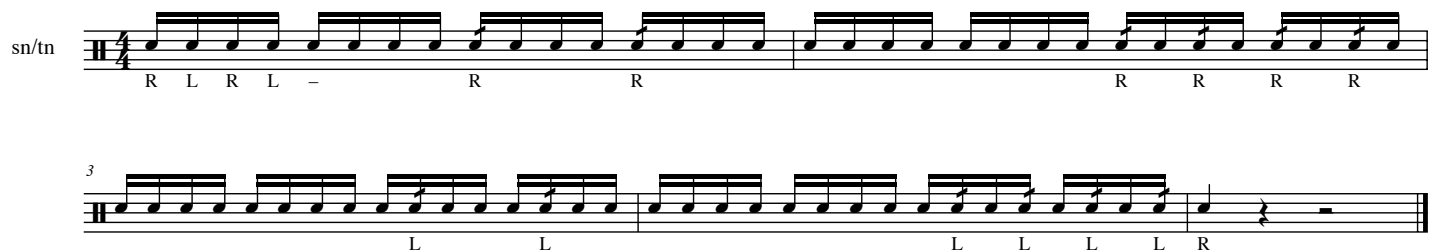
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OPTION 2

(etc.)



This option provides the snares and tenors with a downbeat tap roll in the first 2 measures. Play all accents at 9" – taps and rolls at 3". Measure 4 & 5 should be played as written.

OPTION 3

This option provides the snares and tenors with a "diddle exercise" – isolating the most common types of bounced strokes within a 16th note grouping.

- Work each measure separately at first, making sure that the diddles are exact doubles of the 16th note check. Keep the hand motion from the check to the diddle pattern consistent and avoid pulsating the diddles (or the downbeats in measures 3 & 4).
- You can play this as a separate exercise (with all other sections playing the original "Chicken and a Roll" parts), or you can tag it on to the beginning of the original exercise to create an 8 bar phrase (with all other sections repeating measures 1-4).
- **Tenors:** Play this exercise on drum one first (as written), then move the diddles to the outside drums (drum 3 for right hand diddles, drum 2 for left hand diddles).



BRIAN MASON



THOM HANNUM



RALPH HARDIMON



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TRIPLET ROLLS

Brian S. Mason

Snare

Tenors

5 BD

4 BD

Cymbals

Mallets

Timpani

This musical score system is for the first four measures of the piece. It features seven staves: Snare, Tenors, 5 BD, 4 BD, Cymbals, Mallets, and Timpani. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The Snare, Tenors, 5 BD, and 4 BD staves all play continuous triplet rolls, indicated by a '3' above groups of three eighth notes. The Cymbals part has a single eighth note with an accent (>) in each of the first three measures, followed by a rest in the fourth. The Mallets part plays a melodic line with triplet eighth notes in the first three measures and a triplet quarter note in the fourth. The Timpani part plays a simple bass line with a triplet eighth note in the fourth measure.

sn

tn

5 bd

4 bd

cy

key

Timp

This musical score system continues the piece for measures five through eight. It features seven staves: sn, tn, 5 bd, 4 bd, cy, key, and Timp. The sn and tn staves play continuous triplet rolls with accents (>) above each group. The 5 bd and 4 bd staves continue with triplet rolls. The cy staff has a 'Divisi' marking above the first four measures, with an accent (>) on the eighth note in each measure, and a '(choke)' marking above the eighth note in the eighth measure. The key staff plays a melodic line with triplet eighth notes in measures five and six, and triplet quarter notes in measures seven and eight. The Timp staff continues with a simple bass line, including a triplet eighth note in the sixth measure.

Rehearsal Notes

This exercise works on triplet roll patterns. Here are a few things to look for during your daily rehearsal:

- **Snares/Tenors:** This exercise uses all the same techniques as the Chicken and a Roll exercise, except with a triplet base. Measures 1-4 should be played at a consistent 6" height, measures 5-9 at 9"/3". Even though the pattern moves from "hand to hand" on each beat, strive for a consistent sound without pulsing each downbeat.
- **Tenors:** Practice on one drum before playing the written exercise. In measure 8, you will cross the left over right on beat 2 and beat 4. Strive to minimize the angle of the forearms on the cross-overs and work for a consistent triplet motion of the wrists. Be careful to not crush the diddles under the cross-over.
- **Bass Drums:** All notes should be alternated (RLR). Listen to the snares and tenors to match note spacing.
- **Cymbals:** This exercise incorporates full crashes with follow-through. Watch the section video to see a demonstration. Measures 5-6 is A/B divisi with follow through. Meas. 7-8 is a 4-way split. If only 2 players are available, repeat measures 5-6.

The final measure is in unison – a full crash with fast muffle (not a hi-hat technique).

- **Mallets:** Play this exercise with alternating strokes (starting on the right hand). The only double sticking necessary is notated in measure 7 & 8.
- **Timpani:** This exercise is for 3 drums (G-C-F). If 3 drums are not available, play all the G's on C (meas. 1, 2, 5, 6 & 7 would be played on C). All triplets should be alternated, starting on the left hand.

EDUCATION RESOURCES



CONDUCTOR

TRIPLET ROLLS – EXERCISE OPTIONS

OPTION 1

Mallets

Key

This option provides the keyboards with a simplified version of the original exercise. You may have the full section play this option – or just individuals as necessary.

OPTION 2

[illegible]

This option provides the snares and tenors with a more advanced “diddle” exercise – isolating the most common types of bounced strokes within a triplet pattern.

- Work each measure separately at first, making sure that the diddles are exact doubles of the 8th note check. Keep the hand motion from the check to the diddle pattern consistent, and avoid pulsating the diddles or the downbeats.
- Measures 5-8 combine the techniques found in the original exercise: triplet rolls and tap rolls.

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We've come up with a list of implements that will produce a great characteristic sound on each instrument, plus a small list of options that you may consider to produce optional tonal colors. These products are field tested and field proven – specifically designed stand up to the rigors of rehearsing and performing outdoors in extreme weather conditions.

Snare Drum


MS1



The MS1 features a full oval tip for dark sounds on drums and cymbals and short taper which offers a great balance between speed and control.
L = 16 1/2" | Dia. = .695"

Tenors

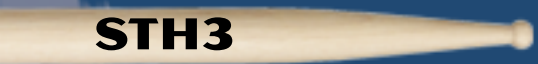
MT1A



The MT1-A features a nylon head with a curved playing surface for ultra-staccato sounds. Aluminum shaft with "anti-buzz" rubber grips.
Head = 1 1/4 x 1/2" | L = 14 1/2"


OTHER GREAT OPTIONS:

STH3




The Thom Hannum Piccolo Tip features a full sized marching shaft with an exceptionally short taper and a very small tip. For clearly defined highs and unique timbre possibilities.
L = 16 5/8" | Dia. = .690"

MT2A




A super hard round felt head gives the MT2-A excellent rebound and articulation.
Head = 1 1/8 x 1" | L = 14 1/2"

SSJ3



The Scott Johnson Practice Stick combines a rubber tip design and a special taper to simulate the authentic feel of the Scott Johnson Marching Snare stick. Great For practice, or for creating unique sound color possibilities on the drum. In hickory.
L = 17 1/8" | Dia. = .705"

MT3A



The MT3-A is a mallet with a soft felt core covered with fleece for lush sounds.
Head = 1 3/8" | L = 14 3/4"

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CORPSMASTER® BASS

The Corpsmaster® marching bass mallets feature tapered hickory shafts, which shift the weight of the mallet towards the hand for improved balance and control. Spherical heads provide a consistent striking surface. With super hard felt heads (H) or with soft felt cores covered with fleece (S).

14"-18" drums
MB0

18"-22" drums
MB1

22"-26" drums
MB2

26"-28" drums
MB3

28"-30" drums
MB4

30"-32" drums
MB5

MB0H

MB1H

MB1S

MB2H

MB2S

MB4H

MB4S

MB5H

MB3S

MB3H

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KEYBOARD MALLET

Mallet choice is about personal taste and choosing your sound. What to choose for any given piece or segment of a piece is usually a matter of prioritizing how you want specific musical voices to shine on through and with what sound color you hope to represent.

Bells



M134

DARKER



M140

GENERAL



M144

BRIGHTER

Orchestral Series M134

Medium hard urethane. Dark and bold for xylophone and bells.

Head = 1 1/4" | L = 14 3/8"

Orchestral Series M140

Medium nylon makes this a full sounding general bell mallet.

Head = 1 1/8" | L = 14 1/4"

Orchestral Series M144

Round brass head creates a bright sound.

Head = 5/8" | L = 14 1/8"

Xylophone



M137

DARKER



M134

GENERAL



M135

BRIGHTER

Orchestral Series M137

Medium hard Teflon® produces a bold and dark sound. A very unique choice for xylophone and bells

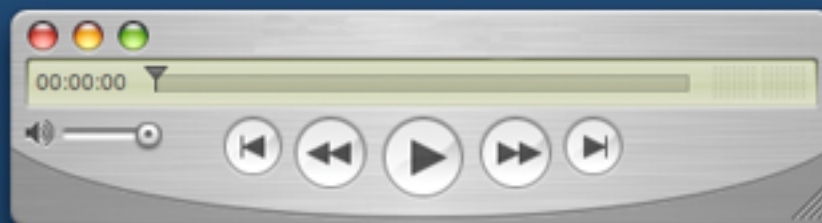
Head = 1 1/4" | L = 14 1/4"

Orchestral Series M135

Hard PVC. Bright and cutting for xylophone and bells.

Head = 1 1/8" | L = 14 1/4"

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Check out audio samples at:

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KEYBOARD MALLETs

Marimba



M202

DARKER



M183

GENERAL



M172

BRIGHTER

Pesante Series M202

Medium soft. Great for all around playing in the lower two-thirds of the instrument.

L = 16 3/8"

Multi-Application Series M183

Medium hard yarn mallet with full tone and excellent clarity throughout the entire range of the instrument.

L = 17"

Multi-Application Series M172

Very hard yarn mallet that provides excellent clarity in the middle to top register.

L = 17"

Vibraphone



M207

DARKER



M188

GENERAL



M189

BRIGHTER

Pesante Series M207

Medium hard. Projects a very clear, broad presence within the ensemble.

L = 16 1/8"

Multi-Application Series M188

Hard cord mallet providing maximum projection and clarity.

L = 16"

Multi-Application Series M189

Very hard cord mallet that provides the utmost in articulation.

L = 16"

TIMPANI MALLETs



CT3

DARKER



CT1

GENERAL



CT4

BRIGHTER

Corpsmaster® Timpani CT3 Staccato

Medium hard for rhythmic articulation.

Synthetic felt head = 1 3/8 L = 15"

Corpsmaster® Timpani CT1 General

For all around playing.

Synthetic felt head = 1 1/2 L = 15"

Corpsmaster® Timpani CT4 Ultra Staccato

Produces exceptional rhythmic clarity.

Hard spun felt head = 1 3/8 L = 15"

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BD8

Soundpower® BD8 Grandioso

Covered with synthetic felt for durability and weather resistance. With increased weight to fully activate the fundamental of the bass drum, the BD8 creates a round, warm sound when played at lower dynamics and when needed, produces the ultimate fortissimo!

Head = 3 3/8" | L = 17"

OTHER GREAT OPTIONS:

BD1

Soundpower® BD1 General

For those with a bass drum that is smaller (less than 36") this mallet may be a better choice for general playing.

Head = 3 1/4" | L = 17"

BD7

Soundpower® BD7 Rollers

Same hardness as the BD1, for two-fisted rolls. Sold in pairs.

Head = 2 3/4" | L = 16"

GONGS and TAM-TAMS

GB4

Soundpower® GB4

Medium heavy for all around playing. Synthetic yarn for outdoor durability. Designed for smaller gongs (26"-30").

Head = 3 11/32" | L = 17 1/4"

GB3

Soundpower® GB3

For a full sound at all dynamic levels. Synthetic yarn for outdoor durability. Designed for larger gongs (30"-40").

Head = 3 1/2" | L = 17"

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SUSPENDED CYMBAL

BCS1

Becken Cymbal Mallets

Named after the German word for "cymbal", these mallets are uniquely designed for playing suspended cymbals. Crafted in maple and featuring soft, large yarn wound heads for rolls and long crescendi. For big cymbals where dark, low partials are desired.

L=15 1/2"

SD12

American Custom® SD12 Swizzle G

An SD1 General with a hard, spun felt ball attached to the butt end. Ideal for fast changes on cymbals.

L=16 5/8" | Dia.=.635"

Felt ball = 1 1/4" x 1"

SD6

American Custom® SD6 Swizzle B

An SD2 Bolero with a hard, spun felt ball attached to the butt end. Ideal for fast changes on cymbals.

L=16 1/4" | Dia.=.635"

Felt ball = 1 1/4" x 1"

TOMS and CONCERT SNARE DRUM

SD1

American Custom® SD1 General

Round tip. Ideal for concert snare drum in the front ensemble.

L=16 3/8" | Dia.=.635"

SD2

American Custom® SD2 Bolero

Round tip. Great for situations where a lighter touch is desired.

L=15 3/4" | Dia.=.635"

SD12

American Custom® SD12 Swizzle G

An SD1 General with a hard, spun felt ball attached to the butt end. Ideal for fast changes to a rounder sound on the concert toms.

L=16 5/8" | Dia.=.635"

SD6

American Custom® SD6 Swizzle B

An SD2 Bolero with a hard, spun felt ball attached to the butt end. Ideal for fast changes to a rounder sound on the concert toms.

L=16 1/4" | Dia.=.635"

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BRIAN S. MASON

Brian S. Mason is a highly respected innovator of the contemporary marching percussion ensemble. In high demand as a clinician, designer, and adjudicator, he has traveled extensively throughout the United States, Japan, Canada, Korea, and Mexico. Brian gained worldwide recognition for his percussion writing and teaching with the Cavaliers and the Phantom Regiment Drum & Bugle Corps, claiming numerous awards and honors with both organizations during his tenure, and is currently a member of the design team with the Santa Clara Vanguard.

Currently, Brian is a member of the percussion faculty at Morehead State University in Morehead, KY, and is the director of the award-winning Marching Percussion Ensemble. At MSU, Mr. Mason is a member of the Faculty Jazz Ensemble, the Faculty Chamber Ensemble, and performs regularly with the Faculty Brass Quintet. Off-campus, he is a member of the Lexington Philharmonic Orchestra, and appears as a guest artist with many high school percussion ensembles across the country, in addition to performing with Dr. Steven Snyder in their jazz vibraphone/piano duo.

Brian received his M.M. at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and is pursuing his D.M.A. at the University of Kentucky, where he received his B.M. He is a member of the Vic Firth Education Committee, the Percussive Arts Society Health and Wellness Committee, and the Percussive Arts Society Marching Percussion Committee. He has published articles in Percussive Notes, has been interviewed in Modern Drummer and Band and Orchestra Magazine, and was a contributing editor for Stick It magazine. Brian co-authored the 2000 Modern Drummer Readers Poll's "No. 1 Drum Set Method Book," The Commandments of R&B Drumming (Warner Brothers), and his original works are published through Row-Loff Productions and Tap Space Publications.



MOREHEAD STATE UNIVERSITY DRUMLINE

The Morehead State University Marching Percussion Ensemble is recognized as one of the preeminent collegiate marching percussion ensembles in the United States. Having performed numerous times at events across the nation, the ensemble earned its reputation of excellence through innovation in design, and high standards of musicianship and performance quality. The MSU Marching Percussion Ensemble has captured the College Division championship four of the five times they have competed at PASIC, most recently in 2003 when they also received the Fred Sanford Award for Outstanding Achievement in Marching Percussion. The ensemble is under the direction of Mr. Brian S. Mason.