

Basic 4/8-Stroke Stickings

The image displays 15 numbered staves, each containing rhythmic notation for a 4/8 time signature. The notation is organized into four measures per staff. The first two measures of each staff consist of eighth notes, and the last two measures consist of sixteenth notes. The notes are placed on various lines and spaces of the staff to illustrate different sticking patterns. A common time signature 'C' is shown at the beginning of the first staff. Each staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

* Also practice this page playing two measures of 8ths followed by two measures of 16ths.

Instructions for playing Basic 4/8 Stickings

Play each exercise using both “A” and “B” variations described below

A. Simple Variations

1. upper note = RH lower note = LH
2. upper note = LH lower note = RH
3. upper note = RH lower note = RF
4. upper note = RH lower note = LF
5. upper note = LH lower note = RF
6. upper note = LH lower note = LF
7. upper note = RF lower note = LF

B. Compound Variations

1. upper note = alternating hands lower note = RF (or LF)
2. upper note = RH (or LH) lower note = alternating feet
3. upper note = alternating hands lower note = alternating feet
4. upper note = both hands lower note = RF (or LF)
5. upper note = RH (or LH) lower note = both feet
6. upper note = both hands lower note = alternating feet
7. upper note = alternating hands lower note = both feet
8. upper note = random hands lower note = random feet

* Remember:

- play each exercise numerous times, moving smoothly through the rhythms while developing strokes that are even in rhythm, volume, and tone
- play each exercise at three different volumes or stroke-height levels. This will help to develop greater strength and control in all playing situations.
 - a) 8 inch (“mf” or normal playing volume)
 - b) 2 inch (“p” or very soft playing volume)
 - c) 16 inch (“ff” or very loud playing volume)
- play a tempo at which you can play the fastest rhythm in the exercise comfortably and accurately
- play each exercise with no accents

* Try to create your own additional ways to play the exercises. For example, try playing a measure of 8ths using one hand/foot variation at one volume, and play the measure of 16ths using a different variation at a different volume, or try inserting 2 measures of 8th note triplets between the measures of straight eighths and 16ths.

* Have fun!