

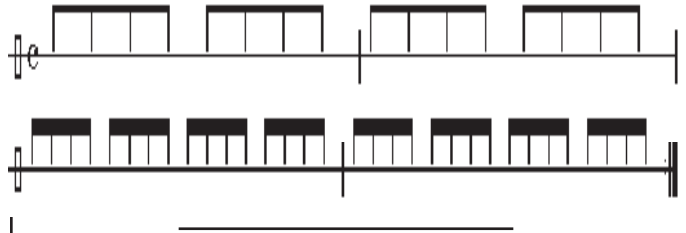
Strength, Flexibility, Coordination, and Control Through Stickings

© 2004 Marc Dicciani <mdicciani@uarts.edu>, The University of the Arts, Philadelphia, PA

The ability to play a rhythm using many different stickings is an important one to develop, especially for the drumset. Command of the basic sticking patterns will increase your hand strength, hand-to-hand and hand-to-foot coordination, and your skill in playing time, grooves, fills, and solos.

There are 15 simple sticking patterns of 4 strokes, which can then be combined to create hundreds of compound variations. The following are the basic 15 patterns. At first, play the upper note with the right hand, and the lower note with the left hand. Practice slowly with no accents, stressing smooth and even rhythm. As you become more proficient and comfort-

A great way to develop these skills is to practice all of the sticking patterns using the following rhythmic exercise - 2 measures of 8ths followed by 2 measures of 16th notes.



In order to acquire great dexterity and excellent hands/feet coordination, try playing the sticking exercises in all of the following ways:

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

This block contains 15 numbered musical staves, each showing a different sticking pattern for a 4-stroke rhythm. The patterns are numbered #1 through #15. Each staff starts with a common time signature 'C' and a quarter rest. The notes are arranged in two groups of two strokes each, with a bar line between the groups. The patterns represent various combinations of hands and feet for the upper and lower notes.

Here is a challenging exercise where you play the 15 basic stickings alternating between 8th notes and 8th note triplets. The 8ths can be played straight or with a jazz feel. For an advanced version, add 2 measures of 16ths and 2 measures of 16th triplets onto the end of each exercise. Play these exercises using some of the hands/feet variations on the previous page.

Here are just the first 8 stickings written out as examples - make sure to play through all 15 stickings

There are hundreds of ways to apply these exercises to the drumset. For example -

1) Play the upper note alternating between right and left hands around the drums, and play the lower note on the bass drum (sticking #1).

2) Play the upper note with the left hand on the snare or toms, and the lower note on the bass drum and high hat in a jazz 8th feel, while playing jazz time with the right hand on the ride cymbal (sticking #3).

Practice reminders:

- * Play each exercise many times, moving smoothly through the stickings while developing strokes which are even in rhythm and volume.
- * Play each exercise at three different volumes or stroke-height levels. This will help build 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)
- * Choose a tempo at which you can play the entire exercise comfortably and accurately
- * Play each exercise with no accents (accents studies are added later).
- * Create your own ways to play the exercises. For example, try playing the measures of 8ths using one hand/foot variation loudly, and play the measures of 16ths using a different hand/foot variation softly.
- * Be creative; take risks; have fun!