**Legato**

These strokes should be smooth and connected. It is a very relaxed stroke and the hand should be a little open. The sticks should still touch all of the fingers.

**Eight on a Hand**

![Musical notation for eight on a hand exercise]

Begin by playing this exercise at a comfortable volume; then, play it very loud and very soft. When played softly, these legato strokes will become “inner-beats”.

Legato strokes can also be played hands together.

![Musical notation for legato strokes played together]

In these exercises, it is important to keep the motion the same from eighth-notes to sixteenth-notes. Do not allow anything to change with the addition of the other hand.

Play this exercise starting with the right hand; and then, starting with the left hand.
Staccato

This stroke is used to create an accent that is followed by an unaccented note. It starts with the stick low to the drum (about one inch above the head) and ends with the stick low to the drum.

To keep the stick from bouncing up after impact, the player must apply some pressure and control the stick. It is important not to become stiff. You should think of your hand as a pillow and allow your flesh to absorb the energy of the stick.

Play this exercise from 60mm to 100mm, but no faster.

Also, try this same exercise with flams. The staccato note is the primary (loud) note of the flam. The grace note should not be lifted. It should just drop to the head immediately prior to the staccato note.
Staccato with Inner Beats

Also, try adding un-accented eighth-notes between each staccato note (do not do this with #7). The quality of the staccato note should not change. The unaccented notes should be relaxed and consistent.
Staccato with Flams and Inner Beats

Here, the object is the same: play the accented note with the staccato style and keep the inner beats low and relaxed. Note that I have changed the sticking. This allows you to work on alternating strokes after the flam (most of the flam rudiments require this technique.)

RH Flam on One

LH Flam on One

RH Flam on One & Three

LH Flam on One & Three

RH Flam on Down Beats

LH Flam on Down Beats

Inverted Flam Taps
Beans

This one handed exercise also mixes the staccato and legato strokes. Here, the accented notes are the staccato notes and the unaccented notes are legato. It is important to get a consistent sound from each note.

ReDrum

Another one handed exercise that mixes Staccato and Legato strokes.
Three Camps

This exercise employs the staccato technique throughout. Be careful to remain relaxed. And, keep the inner-beats low and the accents even.

Also play Three Camps with various rudiments: tap rolls; drags; flams; flam drags; etc.

Double/Triple

This exercise is a “hands separate” approach to diddles. The second half of the exercise focuses on three stroke—a technique needed for French rolls, Shirley Murphys and many asymmetrical rudiments.
Roll Isolation

This exercise allows you to focus on what each individual hand is doing in the roll. It is often helpful to repeat the first 2 measures, or measures 5 & 6, and focus on one hand individually.

All thirty-second-notes are diddles.
All sixteenth-notes alternate.

Chicken-n-a-Roll

All sixteenth-notes alternate.
All thirty-second-notes are diddles.
Roll Timing

This represents all sixteen possibilities of diddles and sixteenth-notes in one beat.

All sixteenth-notes alternate.
All thirtysecond-notes are diddles.
Triplet Rolls

1

R L R L R L R L RRLLRR ETC.

3

5

7

9

11

13

15
Reading Pages

The next three pages offer the same exercise ("Tap Timing") in three different settings. Each one shows every possibility of four-notes and four rests for the note values used.
Stickings can become a problem when you are reading eighth notes. Therefore, a system has been devised that allows for a consistent approach to reading these figures. It places all down beats on the right hand and all of the upbeats (marked “&”) on the left hand. Using this system, the first three measures below have the following sticking:

RLRLRLRL/ *LRL*LRL/ R*RLR*RL/ Etc.
A measure of sixteenth-notes is counted 1 e & a 2 e & a 3 e & a 4 e & a. As you can see, each beat contains four parts: the down beat, which is assigned a number based on where it falls in the measure; the second 16th=e; the third=& (remember this from 8th notes); and the last 16th=a.

Sixteenth-notes also call for a sticking system. Again, it is the right hand lead system. This works the same for sixteenth-notes as it did for eighth-notes, but, now everything is divided in half. So, all of the downbeats and the “&’s” are played on the right hand; and, all of the “e’s” and “a’s” are played on the left hand. Therefore, the sticking for first three measures below reads:

RLRLRLRLRLRLRL/ *LRL*RL*LRL*LRL/ R*RLR*RLR*RLR*RL/ Etc.
Grids

The following exercise work on two-height control. They are called “grids” because they are really just the beginning. You can play them with different stickings and you can super-impose other rudiments on top of the grid. For example: play the 16th note grid with a paradiddle sticking; or, play the triplet grid with flam accents (always leave the flam on the down beat—just move the accent!)

16th Note Grid

```
1  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >
```

```
5  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >
```

```
9  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >
```

Triplet Grid

```
1  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >
```

```
4  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >
```

```
7  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >  >
```

Rudimental SD Exercises