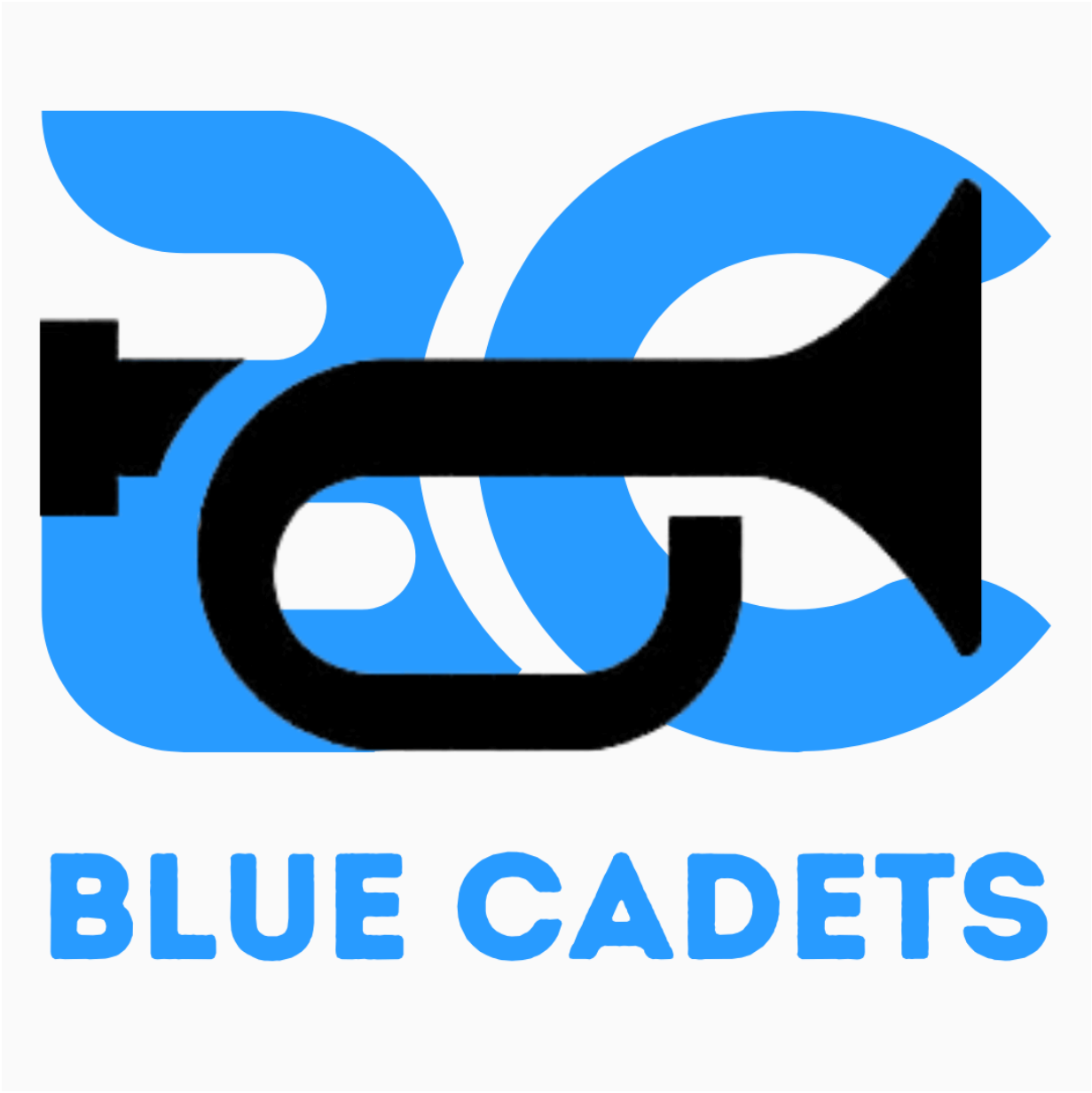

2024 Battery Packet

Percussion Arranger: Nathan Picard

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Battery Arranger: Zachary Hallam

Battery Approach

The approach we will be taking here at the Blue Cadets heavily emphasizes musicality. We are looking to achieve a sound that will give us the most possibilities with phrasing and dynamics, while also having the most ergonomic output to create our sound. In other words, we want to sound great while feeling great in our hands, too.

- **Presence**
    - A confident presence is inherent in everything we do. We stand up with good posture, activated core, full chest, and relaxed arms. Our chins will be up, full of confidence.
    - We will (mostly) mark time starting four counts before we play to prepare us for performing. Our feet should be staccato with energy driving into the ground. Imagine that the audience is always there, watching. We will adapt our mark time to fit the style of music, but this is the general guideline.
    - We will start in a strong first position with our heels together and toes apart, making a 90-degree angle. We will change to having our feet parallel as soon as we start moving and return to first position when we stop. There may be exceptions in the show music.
    - Awareness of your contribution to the whole is imperative. This extremely high level of awareness is the only way to create a cohesive ensemble approach.
    - **Everyone** should be always giving 100% effort, 100% of the time.

- **Velocity**
    - Velocity - the direction and speed we throw the implement at the playing surface.
    - The direction of the stroke should always be perpendicular to the head. Any other angle, called “chopping,” will result in reduced sound quality.
    - The speed of the stroke will remain largely consistent, with slightly more velocity at high heights and slightly less at low heights. **Energy from the wrist will remain the same at all heights.** Gravity will take car of the rest.
- **Tension**
    - Tension / Pressure - the amount of “squeezing” of the body
    - We want soft and relaxed, yet heavy, hands.
    - Technically, tension is required to hold a stick. However, think of **contact, not pressure.** The friction between your hand and the stick should do 95% of the work for you. It is very rare to see players use too little tension, so focus on reducing tension to approach that nearly imperceptible 5%.
        - One way of observing good tension is to grip the stick just enough to stop it from slipping out of your hand but not enough for there to be any difficulty in pulling it out of your hand. Try this on yourself and your other corps members!
    - Pressure should be consistent with all strokes. Increased pressure will diminish the sound quality by cutting off vibrations of the stick.
    - Pressure changes can be caused by changes in hand shape. Hand shape must remain consistent as described in your instrument-specific section.
    - We want a legato look, meaning we want the stick to mostly be in constant motion. Let the drum rebound and the stick rise to the necessary height.

Stroke Types

There are four stroke types: Rebound, Down, Up, and Buzz / Dead. These stroke types make up everything we play. Understanding the different types is the first step to mastering them. Technique varies little between the strokes, but keep in mind the few differences as you are playing.

- **Rebound**
  - Rebound - starts and ends at the same height.
  - Has a smooth, pendulum-like motion, without any interference.
  - Can be performed at any height.
  - Is allowed to rebound fluidly.
  - Constant motion throughout the stroke.
- **Down**
  - Down - ends lower than its starting position.
  - Allow a natural stroke to occur until the implement strikes the playing surface, including subtle pinky engagement.
  - Use the wrist and the weight of the hand to stop the stick at a lower height.
  - **The grip must remain relaxed!**
- **Up**
  - Up - ends higher than its starting position.
  - Same quality of sound as the rebound and down strokes.
  - Allow natural rebound to occur.
  - The fingers are relaxed but remain on the stick.
- **Buzz**
  - Buzz - pressing the implement into the playing surface to cause multiple bounces of the implement.
  - Utilize the natural weight of the arm to force the implement into the playing surface, allowing for some vibration (legato) or little vibration (staccato).
  - Maintain the same tension in the hands, but angle the implement slightly lower down by rotating your wrists about 5%. This will allow more of the arm weight into the stroke, allowing more sound quality in the buzz. You will notice your fulcrum shift from the back of the grip to the front.

Grip

Snare and Tenor

The hands are always relaxed — no tension!

The fingers are always in contact with the stick – SOFT but HEAVY

The sticks should not be parallel to the forearm. There should roughly be a 135-degree angle with the forearm and the stick

The sticks are held with a downward angle to the playing surface.

The sticks travel in a straight-line path away from the playing surface.

The beads are confined to the correct zone of the drumhead.

Bass

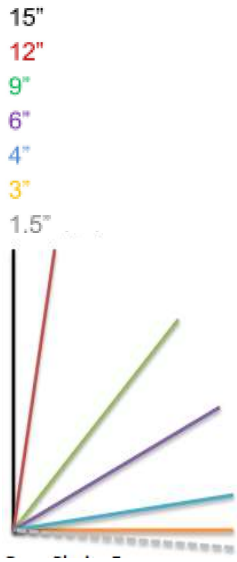
The bass drums use the same grip in both hands. This is similar (but not completely identical) to “Matched Grip.”

Thumb is parallel with the stick (runs along the side of the mallet).

Middle, ring, and pinky fingers are all wrapped naturally around the mallet, while never completely leaving the stick when in motion.

Dynamic Definitions

Snare & Tenor



pp **1.5”** simply drop the sticks down from the set position. **(Grace Notes)**

p **3”** A fully-rebounded, Sticks will be parallel to the drumhead.

4 **4”** Fuller taps

mp **6”** Beginning to be angled up. Produces a very subtle accent. Opposing angle to set position.

mf **9”** Sticks are at a 45 degree angle away from the drum.

f **12”** Wrist turn with some arm support. **Slightly below vertical.**

ff **15”** Vertical. Natural arm movement is included.

Bass

pp **1.5”** From the playing position, with a light touch.

p **3”** Parallel to the drum head, engage back fingers to achieve a full sound.

4 **4”** Fuller taps

mp **6”** Slightly less than a 45 degree angle

mf **9”** 45 degree angle, you should be able to see your mallet head

f **12”** Parallel to the ground with a little arm.

ff **15”** 2” past parallel to the ground, your arm will naturally be involved

Snare Positions

Right Hand
With the right hand, the apex of the hand should be the index finger's last knuckle. Focus on having the hand shape be almost an American grip type shape. If the index finger does not curl around the stick, that is acceptable.

Left Hand
The left hand should be as relaxed as possible. A main goal is to strive for the same, consistent, handshape throughout all of your playing; without bending the wrist. The back palm of the left hand should be in line with the forearm. The index and middle finger be as relaxed as possible, letting a natural curve occur.

Shots
Pings: should be an inch from the bead
Shoulder: 3.5 inches from the bead.
Gock: an inch from the fulcrum.

Front Edge: Simply take the set position and move it to 12 o'clock.

***Gut Edge*:** The left stick should overlap the right stick at 2 o'clock. This gives the sticks the same sound. The left arm will have to push out just a bit. The right arm will need to come back slightly.

Tenor Positions and Zones

Set Position:
-Sticks should rest over drums 1 & 2
-The **crease between your thumb and index should be at a 45-degree angle** (Pointing towards the center of your chest)
-Sticks slightly angled in and down
-Beads are placed right outside the center of the drum

Outside Drums:
-Beads move in a straight line path outwards
-**WRIST DOENT BREAK FROM FOREARM!**
-Stick are angled slightly to the outside
-Move from the elbow leaving the wrist and forearm unaltered

Spike (6”) and Spook (8”) Zones:
-Elbows pull backward towards the player

Outside drums:
-Inside hand should be lower on the head than the outside hand

Stick Cross:
-Sticks cross just in front of the fulcrum
-Happens when playing on two drums that are touching one another.

Wrist Cross:
-Forearms cross just past the wrist
-Leave enough room for the butt of the stick to pass your other hand
-Happens anytime you are crossing on drums that are not connected

Motion (Flow):
-**X Axis** (Left to Right) Move in a straight line from point A to B. This is primarily a Forearm motion allowing the from the wrist down to stay engaged
-Y Axis (Up and Down) What the hands are playing.
-**Flow** is a mature and consistent balance between X and Y axis, and is vital to quality tenor drumming

Scrape Zones:
-smallest distance from drum to drum
-1.5 inches from the rim nearest the neighboring drum
-used to play scrapes with tighter/faster diddles

Bass

Playing Position

Start with your arms relaxed down at your side; be sure your mallets are parallel to your legs and not angled in toward your toes. Next, raise your arms up from the elbow ensuring your shoulders, chest, and arms remain fully relaxed. The forearms will remain parallel to the ground at all times. We won't always use a true 45-degree angle for the mallets, but we also will not play flat. There is some leeway with the angle to account for anatomical differences in the player to an extent. The goal is to achieve a natural product by attaining more physical comfort and reduced restriction by eliminating indirect tension.

Stroke

The bass drum stroke is exactly the same concept as matched grip on snare drum. The stroke, like snare and quad drumming, is initiated by breaking the wrist. Breaking at the wrist is more ergonomic and gives the player greater range of motion and more opportunity for velocity.

The head of the mallet moves first by engaging at the fulcrum and moving the wrist. The mallet head moves on a straight pathway with no circular motion. If the mallet at set position were a diagonal plane, the mallet should never leave that plane. There is slight lateral movement of the the forearm away from the drum that pivots at the elbow (i.e. The elbow moves little in relation to the body). This movement occurs naturally as the stroke is executed and helps to create velocity.

The stroke is described as "fast" and "through the drum." The goal is not to have the loudest sound, but the fullest sound. The mallet should resonate as well as the entire shell of the drum, not just the drum head. This sound is achieved through a fast, relaxed stroke.

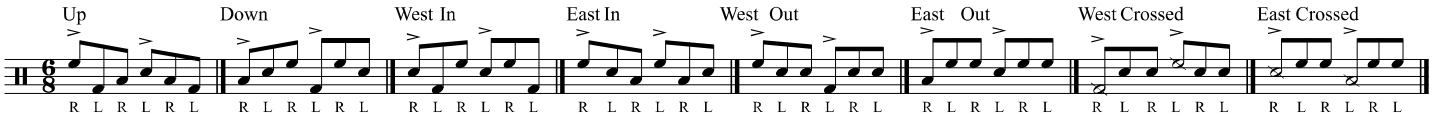
In the marching bass ensemble, relaxation is key. Relaxed approach to the drum by all members creates a uniform sound and increases the ability to flow as a bassline

Rim Clicks

The purpose of rim clicks is only to aid in timing, not to be heard as a color. We will approach all rim clicks at 6" unless otherwise stated.

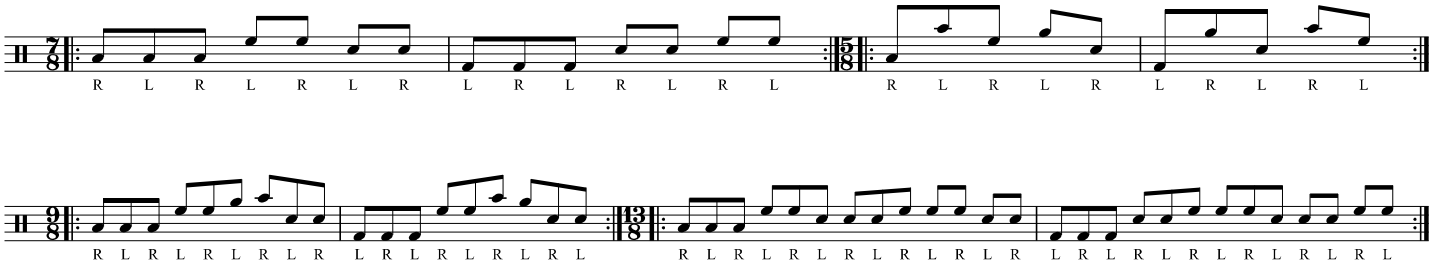
Quad Knowledge

Apply these to any accented exercise



Slow Fast Patterns

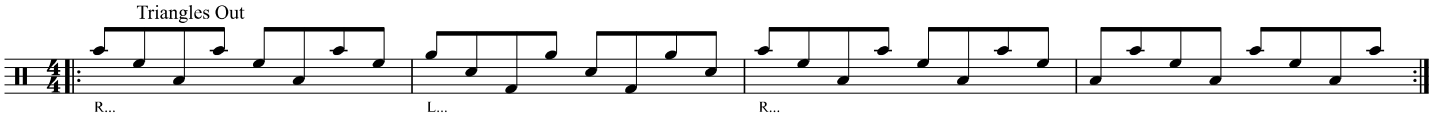
Use these around over exercise to seperates X & Y axis (X= quad motion, Y = exercise)



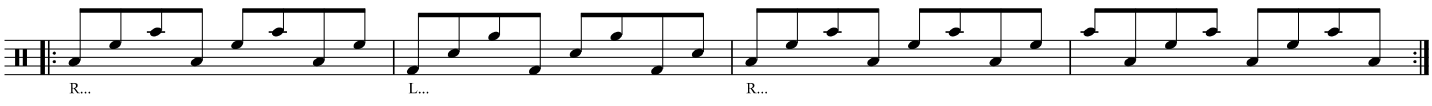
8's Arounds

Mirror arounds on the left hand

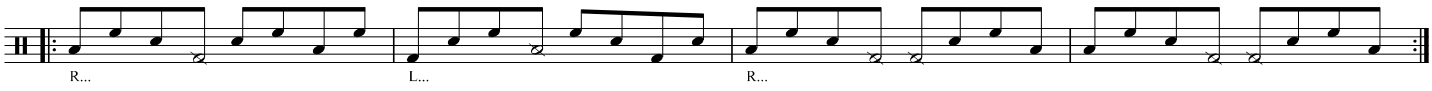
Triangles Out



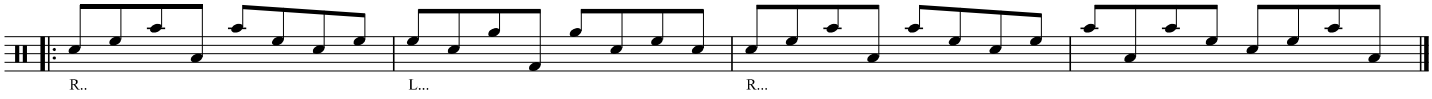
Triangle In



Across the Drums

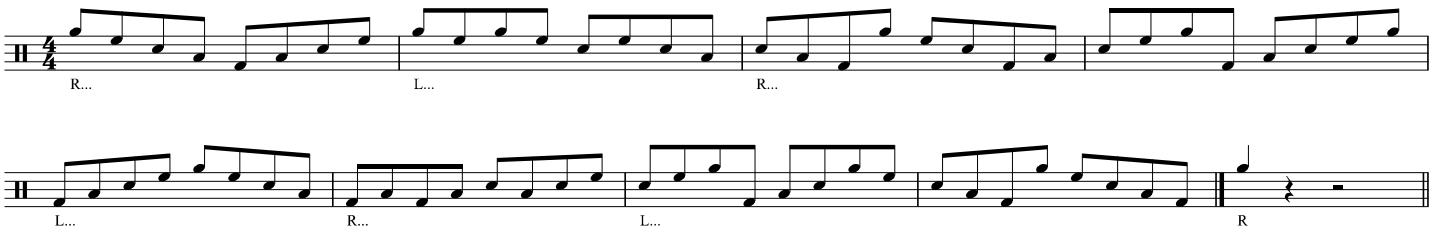


Z's



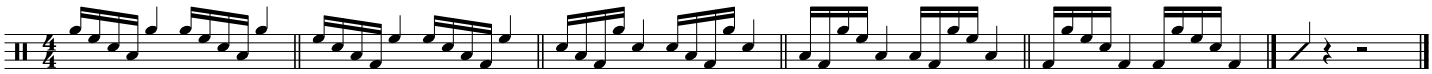
Bass Knowledge

Legatos



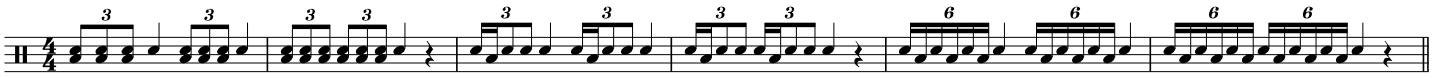
Be able to play as:
8ths - 1's
16th - 2's
Sextuplet - 3's
32nds - 4's

Parrot

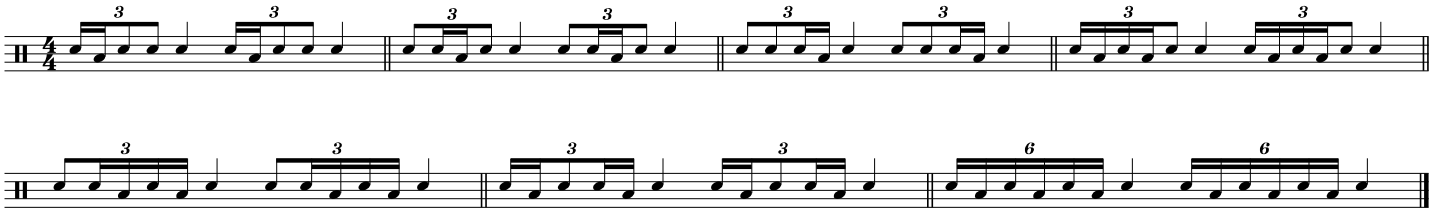


Be able to play as:
-RH or LH
-Bottom to Top

Splitting Sextuplets



Be able to play as:
-RH, LH, Or Alternating
-Apply any variation blow



BC Battery Fundamentals

Preface

These fundamental exercises should be studied thoroughly. This is a vital building block for our musical success. Each exercise isolates basic skill sets that will be needed for playing both our warm up packet and show music. These exercises will be manipulated and varied by the staff to push our members both mentally and musically. It is very likely that these exercises will be used in marching basics and tracking blocks, so be prepared. The staff is keen on making musical changes "by rote," so we heavily emphasize the ability to adapt quickly and learn things "on the fly." All exercises have a final downbeat on the right hand.

8th Note Timing

Variation: Reverse the order, accent any given partial, play with alternating sticking, or any combination of these.

16th Note Timing

Variation: Reverse the order, accent any given partial, play with alternating sticking, or any combination of these.

Triplet Timing

Variation: Reverse the order, accent any given partial, play with alternating sticking, or any combination of these.

16th Note Grid

Variation: Reverse the order.

Triplet Grid

Variation: Reverse the order.

PD

Variation: Remove all e’s and a’s, giving you eighth notes. Try doing that and adding the diddles back or adding the second partial back. Play these versions both with and without the optional accents.

Irish Spring

Variation: Add a downstroke on every hand exchange (first note is accented and the rest are taps), fill in the rests with tacet hand (full-height or taps), or both versions together.

Chicken-in-a-Roll

Variation: Replace diddles with buzzes, include the optional accent, or both version together.

Triplet Diddle

Variation: Reverse the order, replace diddles with buzzes, accent the downbeats, flam the downbeats, or any combination of these.

Metric Mod

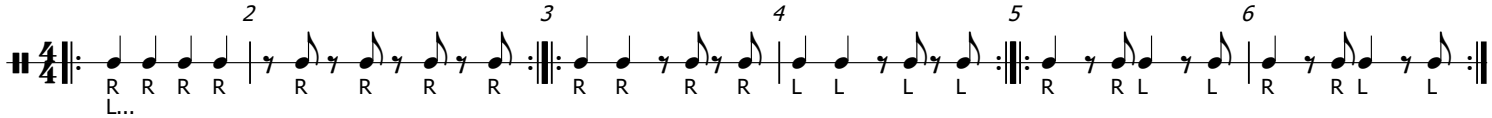
Variation: Reverse the order, crescendo each 2-measure phrase, or any combination of these.

Fundamentals

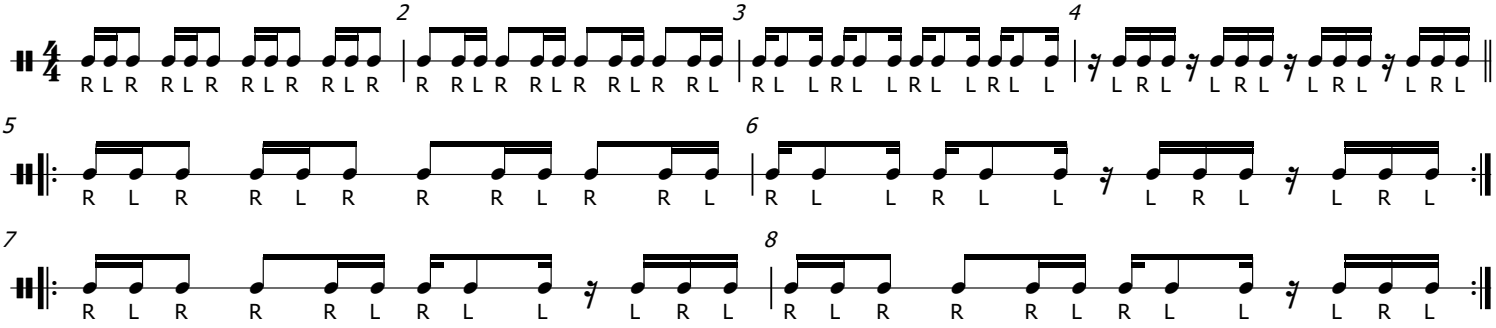
BC Battery 2024

Nathan Picard

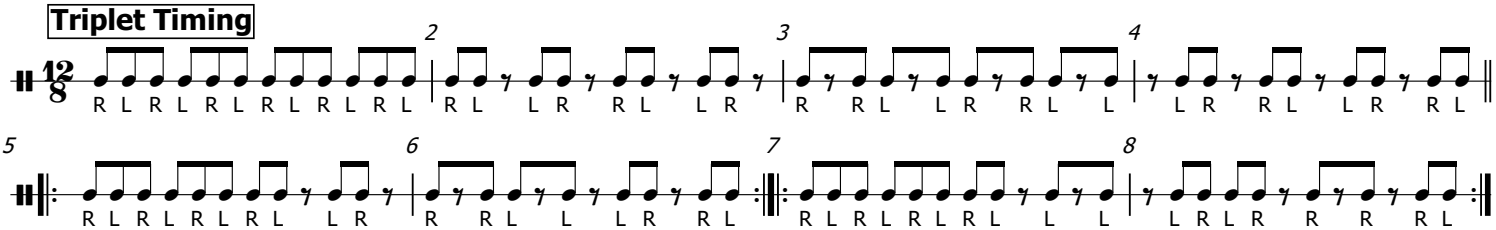
8th Note Timing



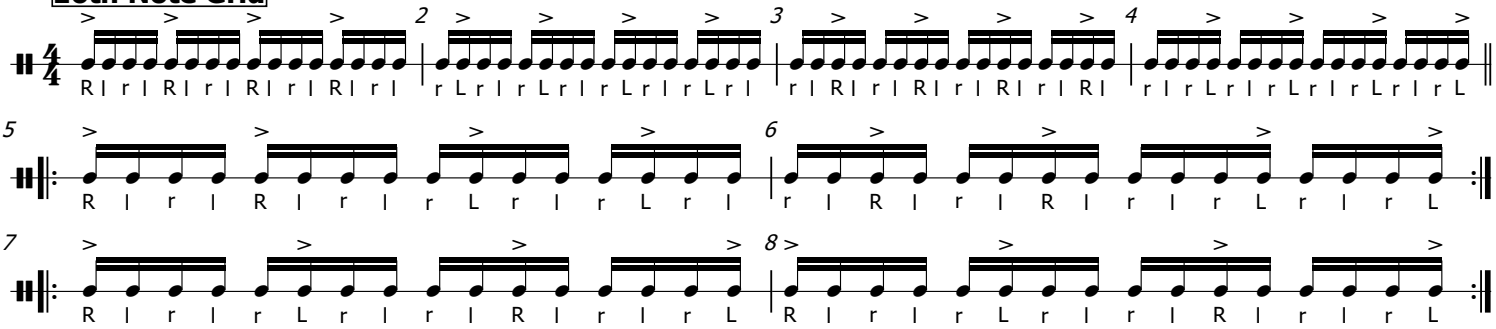
16th Note Timing



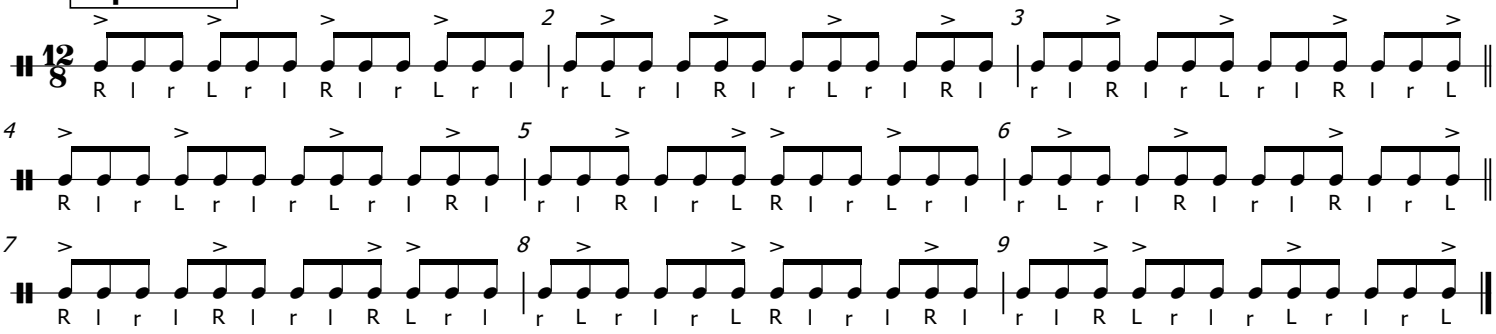
Triplet Timing



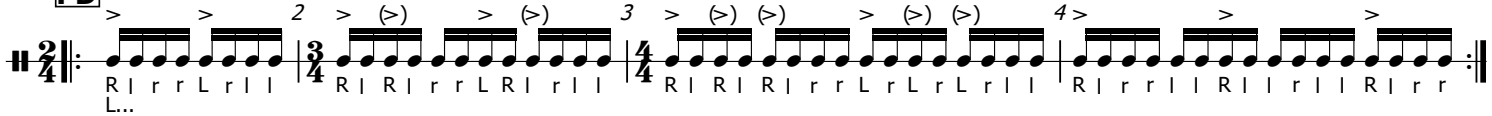
16th Note Grid



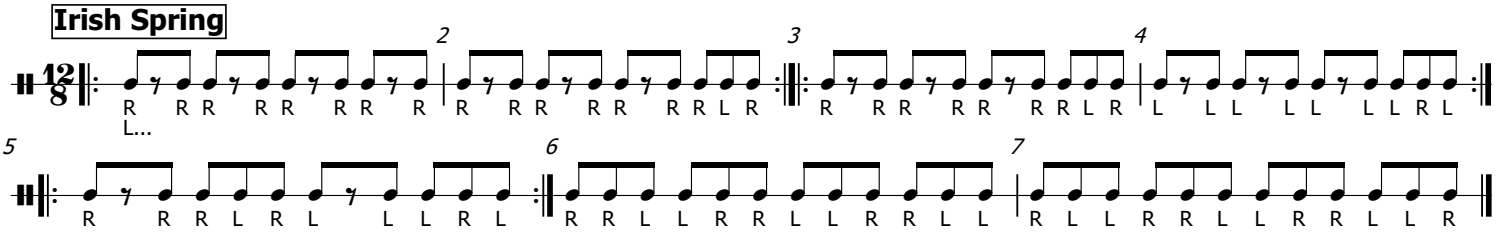
Triplet Grid



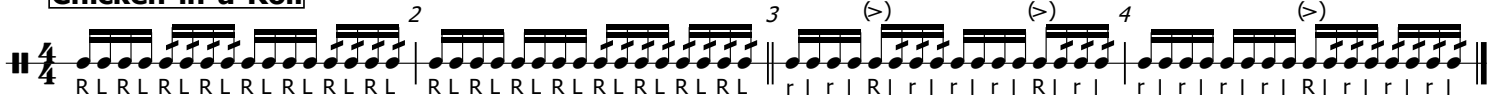
2 **PD**



Irish Spring



Chicken-in-a-Roll



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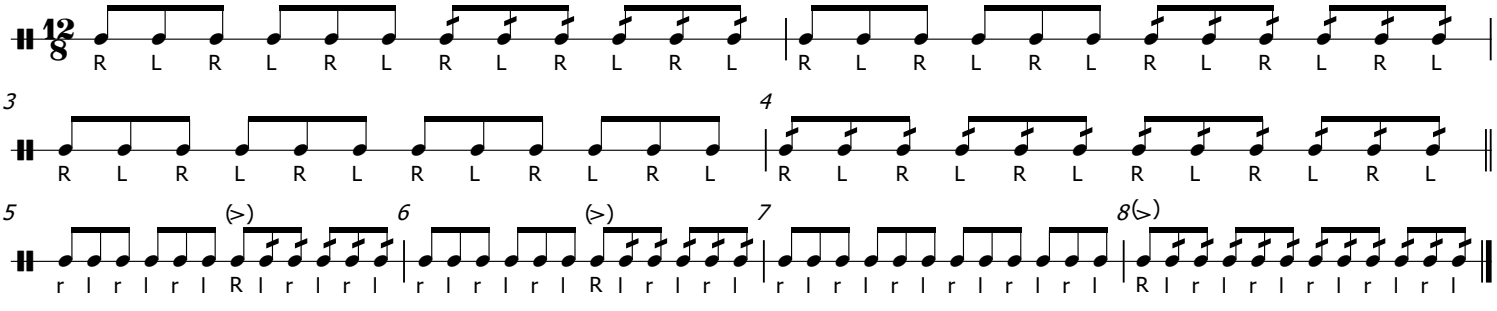
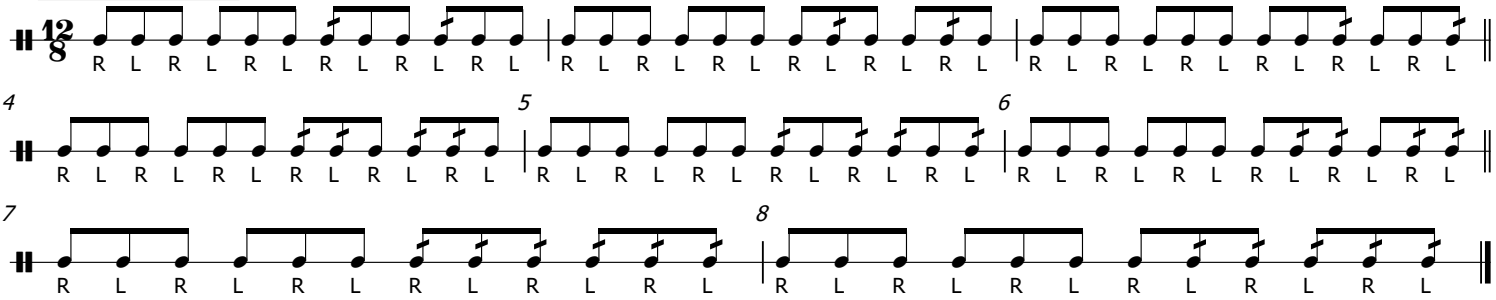


Triplet Diddle



Metric Mod