

Lesson 28

The Five Stroke Roll

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Hello and welcome. In this month's issue we are going to take a look at the 5 stroke roll - a rudiment that can be used to enhance any groove or fill. In exercises 1 to 3 we will work on the sticking and building up the speed of the roll. Then in exercises 4 and 5 we will see how the roll is written and learn how to count it across the bar. In exercises 6, 7 and 8 we introduce the roll into a basic groove and fill.

Ex 1

We begin by practising the sticking; we are using a double stroke technique i.e. RRLL to play the 5 stroke roll. At first we need to play this slowly to develop good control, I have used 1/8th notes to begin with, as this makes it easy to count so you can concentrate on your technique. Start at 80bpm, gradually making your way up to 140 bpm.

Ex 2

Here we have the 5 stroke roll played in 1/16th notes - this exercise is about building up your speed. As you are now playing 1/16th notes you should start at 70bpm and work your way up to 140 bpm.

Ex 3

In exercise 3 we stay with 1/16th notes but rather than start the roll on beat 1 we start on beat 2. This needs to be practised thoroughly so that when you play the 5 stroke roll in 32nd note form you will have the ability to start the roll on or off the beat. Once again start at 70bpm working your way up to 140bpm.

Ex 4

We now see the 5 stroke roll written in its true form played as 32nd notes. You will notice that the roll starts on beat 1 and finishes on the "&". Because we have moved up to 32nd notes you should start your metronome at 70bpm and work your way up slowly.

Ex 5

This was the reason for practising exercise 3! Here we have the 5 stroke roll played as 32nd notes but this time the roll starts on the "&" finishing on the beat. Again start at 70bpm.

Ex 6

This is an example of how we can use the 5 stroke roll within a groove. Here we have a basic 1/8th note groove played with right hand on the hi-hats and left hand on the snare. The roll starts on the "&" of beat "2" and finishes on beat 3 so you have to get used to moving the left hand up to the hi-hats to play the roll. Left handed players should reverse the sticking.

Ex 7

Here is another example - this time the roll starts on beat "1" and finishes on the "&".

Ex 8

In this exercise we are using the 5 stroke roll to enhance a simple 1/16th note fill. We begin the bar with an 1/8th note groove played up to beat "2". The 5 stroke roll starts on the "&" of beat "2" and finishes on beat 3, so the last note of the 5 stroke roll is also the first beat of the fill.

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