

Valentino Vitali

Drag

DRAG OR RUFF?

This might be one of the most debated theme among the drumming community. Many books and videos just added more confusion to the matter, which is pretty simple: they are not the same and - as for every rudiment - the sticking makes the difference. the Drag is performed with a double stroke on the grace notes, the Ruff is a fast single stroke roll, that can have three or four notes.

Grace notes are meant to be played filling the gap between primary notes without sticking to any specific rhythmic subdivision. It's up to the player taste to decide the expression of these notes that best serves the music. Tempo changes will naturally lead to different expressions, try and experiment them!

Note: for the purpose of clarity, the sticking of the grace note will be omitted, just refer to the sticking below.



Exercise 1

Repeat each line twice and loop the exercise. On second repetition, try executing the drag adding an accent on the primary quarter note.

Start at ♩ = 45

Three lines of musical notation for Exercise 1 in 4/4 time. Each line consists of two measures. The first measure has four quarter notes, and the second measure has four quarter notes. The sticking for each note is written below. Line 1: R R R R | L L L L. Line 2: R R L L | R R L L. Line 3: R L R L | R L R L. Each line is repeated twice.

Exercise 2.1 (one hand)

Two lines of musical notation for Exercise 2.1 in 4/4 time. Each line consists of two measures. The first measure has four quarter notes, and the second measure has eight eighth notes. The sticking for each note is written below. Line 1: R R R R | R R R R R R R R. Line 2: L L L L | L L L L L L L L. Each line is repeated twice.

Exercise 2.2 (alternate hands)

Exercise 2.2 (alternate hands) consists of two staves in 4/4 time. The first staff has a treble clef and contains two measures of eighth-note pairs: R L R L and R L R L R L R L. The second staff has a bass clef and contains two measures of eighth-note pairs: L R L R and L R L R L R L R.

Exercise 2.3 (add triplets)

Exercise 2.3 (add triplets) consists of three staves in 4/4 time. The first staff has a treble clef and contains two measures of eighth-note pairs: R L R L and R L R L R L R L. The second staff has a bass clef and contains two measures of eighth-note pairs: R L R L R L R L and L R L R. The third staff has a bass clef and contains two measures of eighth-note pairs: L R L R L R L R and L R L R L R L R L R, with the second measure containing four triplet markings over the eighth notes.

Exercise 3.1 (shift)

Exercise 3.1 (shift) consists of four staves in 4/4 time. The first staff has a treble clef and contains two measures of eighth-note pairs: R L R L and R L R L. The second staff has a bass clef and contains two measures of eighth-note pairs: R L R L and R L R L, with a fermata over the first note of each pair. The third staff has a bass clef and contains two measures of eighth-note pairs: R L R L R L R L and R L R L R L R L. The fourth staff has a bass clef and contains two measures of eighth-note pairs: R L R L R L R L and R L R L R L R L, with a fermata over the first note of each pair.

Exercise 3.2 (shift on triplets)

R R

R R R R R R R R R R R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L

R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L

L L

L L L L L L L L L L L R L R L R L R L R L R L R

L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R

Exercise 4 (Single Drag Tap)

R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R

R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R