

Front Ensemble Packet

Rhythm, Timing, & Technique

Bryant Bernal

The purpose of these exercises is to give students a logical and applicable approach to learning the basics of rhythm, timing, and technique on keyboard percussion instruments. Each exercise develops an understanding of a singular skill and focuses on refining a particular technique.

The exercises written on the following pages are meant to be played at all different dynamic levels and keys. Most of them are written in the key of C, but should be practiced in as many different keys as the student can handle. In addition to the changing dynamics, adding in different phrasing (crescendos / decrescendos) and accents is strongly encouraged.

Before starting this packet it is important to first know basic keyboard percussion concepts such as scales, key signatures, intervals, and arpeggios. If you do not feel confident with these concepts then it is recommended that you review such information at www.musictheory.net.

Remember, practicing these exercises with a metronome is crucial! The metronome is not just a source of consistent tempo; it is an accuracy-checker. If you cannot successfully play an exercise at a given tempo, set the metronome to a slower tempo that you can handle, and then gradually set the metronome higher. Increments of 2-5 beats per minute usually work best. Practicing without a metronome is the common cause of poor technique and execution. Be sure to always use correct body posture, grip, and mallet placement when practicing.

Remember to work out these exercises at all dynamic levels and varying tempos to fully develop a specific technique. You can also practice this packet with one or more individuals to develop listening skills. Using these tools will develop the necessary abilities needed to make any ensemble and will lead any serious percussionist to excellence.

LEGATOS



16TH NOTE SEQUENCING

Four staves of musical notation in treble clef, showing 16th note patterns. The first staff includes the text "R L ..." below the notes. The patterns consist of continuous runs of 16th notes, some ascending and some descending, across four measures per staff.

METRIC MODULATIONS

A

Staff A: Treble clef, 16th notes. Rhythmic pattern: L R L R L R L R L R L R ...

B

Staff B: Treble clef, 16th notes. Includes triplet markings (3) above and below the notes. Rhythmic pattern: L R L R L R L R L R ...

C

Staff C: Treble clef, 16th notes. Includes triplet markings (3) above and below the notes. Rhythmic pattern: L R L R L R L R L R L R ...

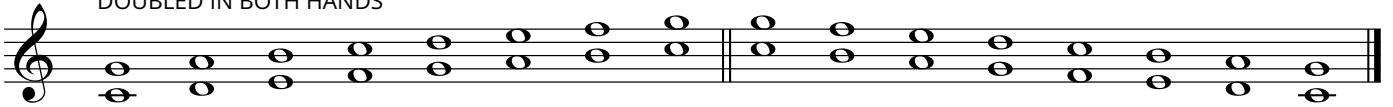
D

Staff D: Treble clef, 16th notes. Includes triplet markings (3) above and below the notes. Rhythmic pattern: L R L R L R L R L R L R ...

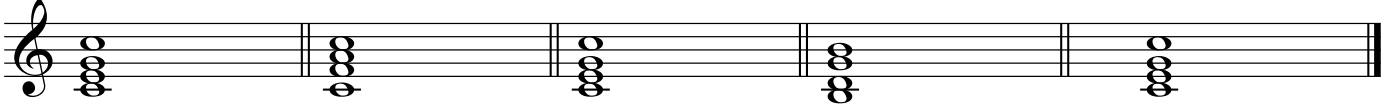
PROGRESSIONS

The following chord progressions are meant to serve as a foundation in order to isolate and work on specific skill sets such as Block Chords, Wrist Rotation, Permutations, Rolls, and more. Begin by learning each progression as whole notes (Block Chord Rhythm A) and once comfortable, start to combine different rhythms, rotations, and permutations from the next page.

1) **DOUBLED IN BOTH HANDS**

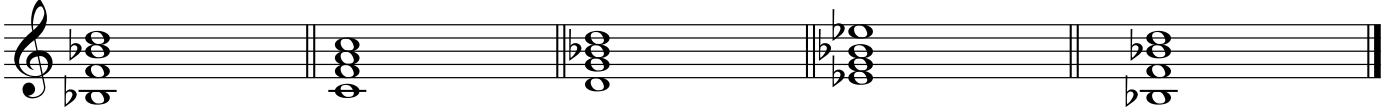


2)



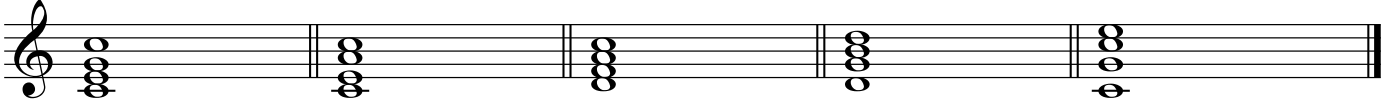
I IV I V I

3)




I V vi IV I

4)



I vi ii V I

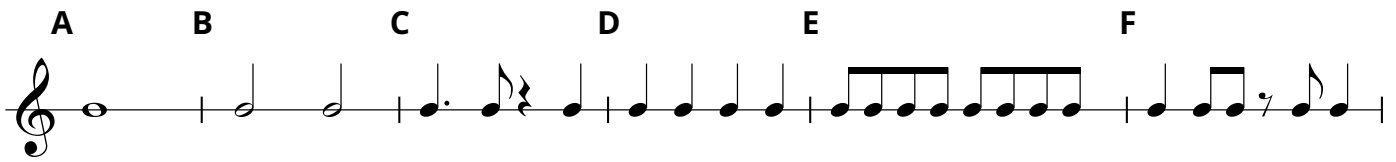
5)



I V I vi IV V I

BLOCK CHORD RHYTHMS

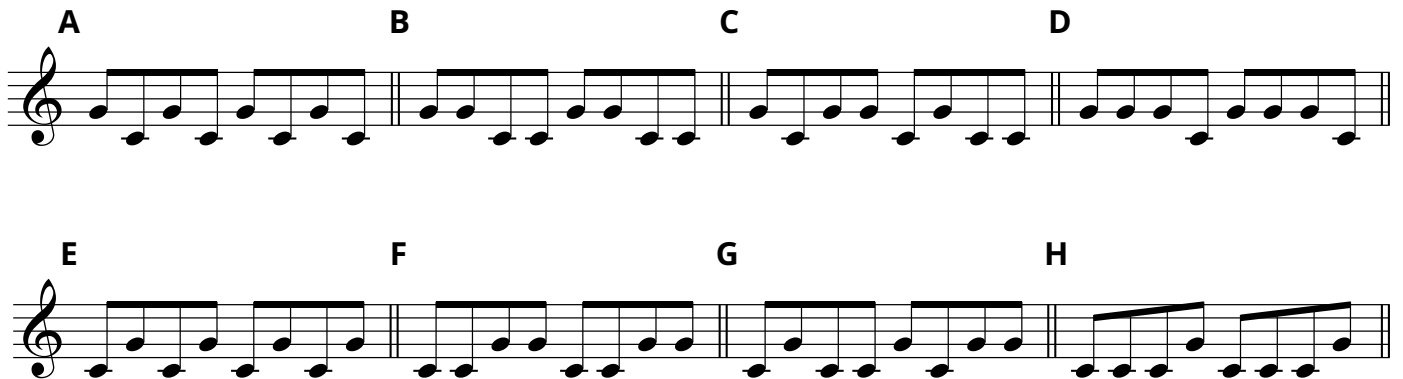
Apply these rhythms to any of the progressions in order to work on timing, body position, mallet placement, as well as the vertical stroke motion.



WRIST ROTATIONS

Rotations should be combined with the progressions and can be approached in one of two ways:

- 1: Play the same letter with in both the right and left hands.
- 2: Play a letter from the top row in one hand, while the other hand plays the letter below it.



PERMUTATIONS

Permutations can be played as eighth notes, sixteenth notes, or in a check-sixteenth note pattern. The permutations below represent a small number of the possible combinations, once these have been mastered try to add different accent patterns and continue to come up with more permutations.

