



# 2015 Season Drum Line Handbook



**YAMAHA**

**vic FIRTH**



# **2015 DRUM LINE HANDBOOK**

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## How to use this handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to provide materials for adequate preparation for membership in the USF Herd of Thunder Marching Band Drum Line. This handbook covers a wide range of techniques and skills that are required of members of the HOT Drum Line.

There will be one audition camp for the HOT Drum Line that lasts two days. The dates are **August 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup>**. During these camps the instructors and section leaders will lead you through the materials in the handbook and fill you in on our approaches and expectations.

There will also be three informal camps on **May 23<sup>rd</sup>, June 20<sup>th</sup>, and July 25<sup>th</sup>**. Attendance is recommended however, these three camps are optional and not required for the audition.

Everybody who is auditioning is expected to have learned the materials in this packet prior to the first camp. Memorization is highly recommended, and will be a great aid during the audition process.

Section leaders are the only people who are guaranteed positions. Everybody else will be required to follow the same audition procedure. This is the only way to ensure the best possible line every year.

All students are encouraged to prepare to audition on more than one instrument. There is a capped amount of positions available and many talented individuals audition for each spot, so your chances of making the drum line will be increased greatly if you are prepared to audition on multiple instruments.

The maximum instrumentation of the HOT Drum Line will be:

- 10 Snare Drummers
- 6 Tenor Drummers
- 6 Bass Drummers
- 10 Cymbal Players

# **Snare Drum**

## **Grip**

The snare drum section plays with traditional grip in the left hand, and matched grip in the right.

### **Matched Grip (Right Hand for Snare Drum)**

1. Let arm hang loosely from the shoulder
2. Raise arm from the elbow, keeping the shoulder relaxed
3. Place thumb flat on the side of the stick, running parallel with the stick approximately 1/3 of the way from the bottom
4. Wrap the index finger around the stick loosely so that it lies on the opposite side of the stick from the thumb
5. Wrap the three remaining fingers loosely around the stick so that they are supporting the stick from the bottom (these fingers should stay in contact with the stick at all times)
6. The butt of the stick should be resting against the fleshy part (the heel) of the hand

### **Traditional Grip (Left Hand)**

1. Let arm hang loosely from the shoulder
2. Raise arm from the elbow, keeping the shoulder relaxed
3. Rotate arm so that the thumb is facing the ceiling
4. Place stick in the crook of the thumb approximately 1/3 of the way from the bottom
5. Curl the index finger lightly around the stick and rest the thumb on the joint closest to the end of the index finger (this connection should never come undone)
6. Curl the ring finger so that it has a similar curvature to the index finger and rest the stick on the cuticle of the ring finger (strive to keep this connection at all times)
7. Rest the middle finger lightly on the top of the drumstick (keeping connection at all times)
8. Relax the pinky with a curvature similar to the ring finger.
9. Avoid straightening fingers
10. The stroke is made by rotating the forearm: similar to the twisting of a doorknob.



## The Stroke

We will always strive to use the most natural technique possible. You will often hear analogies made to bouncing a basketball, or throwing a baseball. Notice that if you imitate the motion of both of those actions, there is no isolation of the wrist or arm; you're just doing what is natural to your body. You will not be asked to play using only your wrist. The arm has so many muscles that it would be foolish not to utilize them. However, different techniques call for different types of strokes. For this reason we think of the arm to wrist ratio as a spectrum. Big strokes at slower tempos and loud dynamics will utilize full wrist and arm movement. Fast, intricate passages at low heights will utilize almost entirely wrist.

Do not get carried away worrying about the movement of the arm. The focus of the stroke is still mostly wrist; just keep your arm in motion. When in doubt, do what feels natural.

There are four types of strokes: legato, down, up, and a tap.

For a legato stroke, strike the drum and let the stick rebound naturally to the starting height.

For a down stroke, strike the drum, but instead of accepting the rebound, keep the stick down. Do this not by squeezing the stick, but by keeping the arm and wrist down following the stroke.

For an up stroke, start the stick at a low position, strike from that height, and then aid in the rebound so that the stick returns higher than where it began.

A tap stroke starts at a low height, strikes the drum, and rebounds to the same low height.

### Snare Notation Key

A musical staff with ten positions labeled above and below the staff. The labels are: Right Hand, Left Hand, Both Hands, Accent, Rim Shot, Rim, Stick Click, Cowbell, Back Stick, Cross Knock, Stick Shot, Diddle, and Buzz. Below the staff, under the first three positions, are the letters R, L, and B respectively.

# Tenor Drums

Tenor drums utilize matched grip, meaning both hands use the same grip.

The drums should be struck one or two inches in from the rims. This spot produces characteristic overtones and aids in projection.

Even though the drums are in curved shape, movement around them should be in a straight line. The curve actually aids in playing on this straight line. To play drums one and two (see notation key below) at the 6 o'clock position, the straight line movement makes it possible to play at the 10 o'clock position on drum three, and the two o'clock position on drum four. The only time it is necessary to move your arms backwards is to strike the spock and bongo drums. The hands should never turn over to move from drum to drum.

## Tenors Notation Key



When crossing the hands on the tenor drums, do not “lift” over top. Instead follow these rules:

1. When doing a cross over between neighboring drums, cross at the fulcrum
2. When doing a cross over between non-neighboring drums, cross at the wrists.



## Bass Drum

The grips and techniques for bass drum are similar to that of matched grip, with a few modifications.

1. Let the arm hang loosely from the shoulder
2. Raise the arm from the elbow, keeping the shoulder relaxed
3. Rotate the arm so that the thumb is facing upwards
4. Grip the stick in the exact same fashion as matched grip with the only exception being that the pinky is wrapped around the end of the stick.

The stroke for bass drum is the exact same as matched grip, but since the hand is turned sideways, it will go back at a 45-degree angle towards the floor.



The bass drums are a unique section because a group of six people must act as one single instrument. Bass drummers must not only master their own part, but also know the everybody else's so that the music is performed seamlessly.

### Bass Drum Notation Key

Unison Hits      Unison Rims      Muffling

# Cymbals

Like the bass drums, cymbal players often play split parts. Because of this, great timing is imperative for everybody in the section. Cymbals also provide a visual aspect to the drum line and the band, both when they are and are not playing the instruments.

The techniques required for performance will be notated with different articulation markings.

## Cymbal Notation Key



# Grip

Since cymbals are handled differently in marching and concert bands, the methods for holding the instruments are different too.

1. Place the cymbals down on the ground so that the straps face upwards.
2. Put the entire hand through the strap of the cymbal.
3. Point the thumb down so that the palm is facing away from the bell of the cymbal.
4. Rotate the hand downward pointing the thumb towards your body and your palm until it touches the cymbal. The strap should be resting between the thumb and index finger.

## Basic Set Position



## Vertical



## Horizontal



## The Basic Crash

The pictures show the basic techniques needed to produce good crashes. There are many other techniques, but this is a solid place to start.

1. Start with the plates at the vertical position.



2. Open the cymbals to a “V” shape, where they will make contact.



3. Even though it seems as though the bottom of the cymbal will strike first, but all sides will actually strike at about the same time.

4. From here start the follow through motion. After the cymbals make contact the elbows move outward and the cymbals make an “A” shape.



5. The cymbals will then flow into another “V”



6. Then back to the starting position.

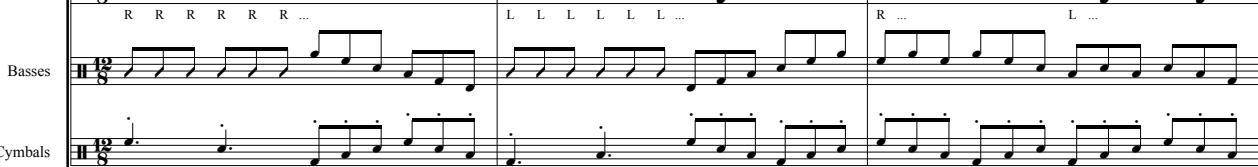


The following exercise reinforces basic strokes and sound quality. While these may not be as exciting to practice as some of the “choppy” exercises, it is a base on which we will build. Students are encouraged to spend time creating other variations of these exercises including different heights and dynamics. Students should be able to mark time to the quarter note as well as the dotted quarter.

## Legatos

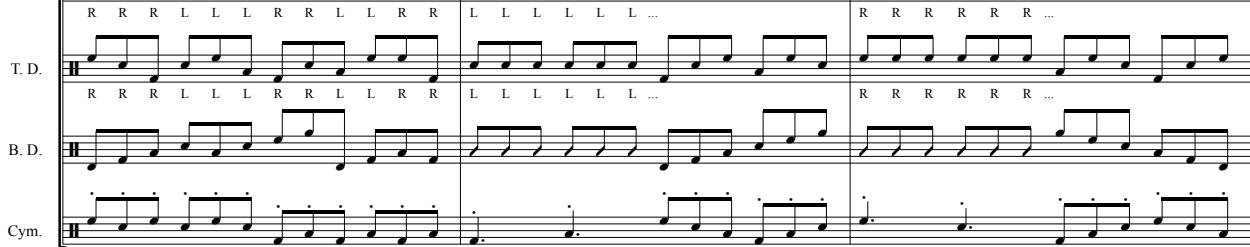
Snares      

Tenors      

Basses      

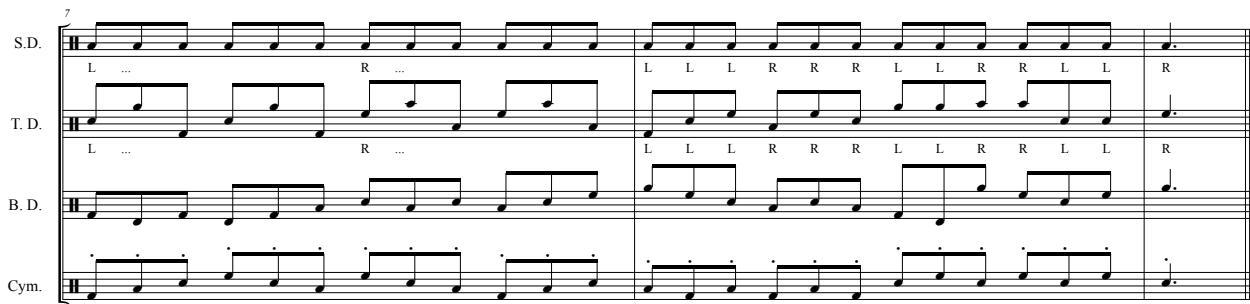
Cymbals      

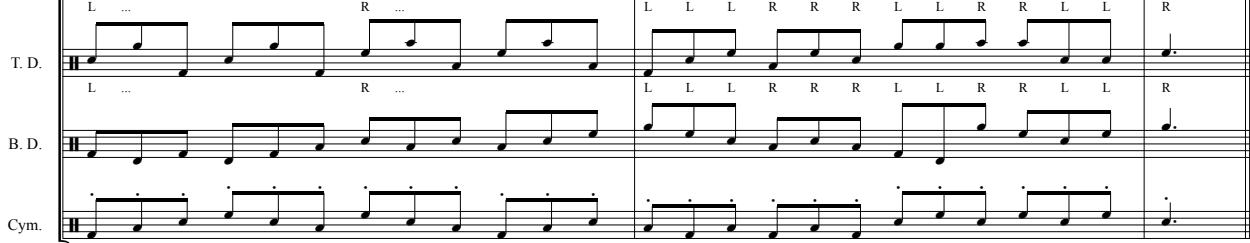
S.D.      

T. D.      

B. D.      

Cym.      

S.D.      

T. D.      

B. D.      

Cym.      

The next exercises focus on the relationships between accents and taps. Strive to make the changes in height immediate and precise. Practice these exercises slowly for rhythmic accuracy. **Accuracy is more important than speed.**

## 8-7-6

### Accent Tap

**Snares**

R L R R L L R R      R L L L R > >  
> R L R R L L R R > > > > > >  
L R > > > > > >  
> L > > > > > >  
L R > > > > > >  
R

**Tenors**

R R R R L L L L      R R R L L L R >  
L R L R L > > > > > >  
R L R > > > > > >  
L R > > > > > >

**Basses**

R R R R R R R R > > > > > > >  
L L L L L L L L > > > > > > >  
R > > > > > > >  
L > > > > > > >  
R > > > > > > >  
L > > > > > > >

**Cymbal Line**

7 > > > > > > > >  
> > > > > > > >  
> > > > > > > >  
> > > > > > > >  
> > > > > > > >

**S.D.**

L R L R L R L R > > > > > > >  
R L R L R L R L > > > > > > >  
L R L R L R L R > > > > > > >  
R L R L R L R L > > > > > > >

**T. D.**

(R) (L) R L R L R L > > > > > > >  
L R L R L R L R > > > > > > >  
R L R L R L R L > > > > > > >

**B. D.**

R L R L R L R L > > > > > > >  
L R L R L R L R > > > > > > >  
R L R L R L R L > > > > > > >

**Cym.**

7 > > > > > > > >  
> > > > > > > >  
> > > > > > > >  
> > > > > > > >

**S.D.**

R L R L R L R L > > > > > > >  
L R L R L R L R > > > > > > >  
R L R L R L R L > > > > > > >  
L R L R L R L R > > > > > > >

**T. D.**

L R L R L R L R > > > > > > >  
R L R L R L R L > > > > > > >  
L R L R L R L R > > > > > > >  
R L R L R L R L > > > > > > >

**B. D.**

R L R L R L R L > > > > > > >  
L R L R L R L R > > > > > > >  
R L R L R L R L > > > > > > >  
L R L R L R L R > > > > > > >

**Cym.**

13 > > > > > > > >  
> > > > > > > >  
> > > > > > > >

# Accent Grid Exercises

## 16th Note 4-2-1

The image shows three staves of musical notation for a single player. Each staff consists of four measures of 16th notes. Above each measure, there is a single accent mark (>) positioned above the first note of each measure. The first staff starts with a common time signature (4/4). The second staff starts with a common time signature (4/4) and ends with a key change to G major (3/4). The third staff starts with a common time signature (4/4) and ends with a key change to A major (3/4). Below the first staff, the pattern 'R L R L R L etc...' is written, indicating the hand movement for the exercise.

## Triplet 4-2-1

The image shows two staves of musical notation for a single player. Each staff consists of four measures of triplets. Above each measure, there is a single accent mark (>) positioned above the first note of each measure. The first staff starts with a common time signature (4/4). The second staff starts with a common time signature (4/4) and ends with a key change to G major (3/4). Below the first staff, the pattern 'R L R L R L etc...' is written, indicating the hand movement for the exercise.

Practice different variations on these exercises:

- Beginning with the left hand
- Backwards
- Invert each measure
- Diddle all inner beats
- Diddle the accent
- Flam the accent

Play the next exercises at one height. Focus on consistency, sound quality, and making the diddles accurate as 16<sup>th</sup> notes.

## Roll Builder

Snares

Tenors

Basses

Cymbals

S.D.

T. D.

B. D.

Cym.

S.D.

T. D.

B. D.

Cym.

## Triplet Diddle

R L R L R L etc...

Practice very slowly, placing every note. This point of this exercise is to develop consistency - not speed. Tenor players should pay particular attention to staying low on the crossovers.

### Paradiddles 1

The sheet music consists of five sections of musical notation for various percussion instruments. Each section begins with a dynamic symbol (> or <) above the staff. The instruments are:

- Snares:** R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L etc...
- Tenors:** R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L etc... (R)
- Basses:** R R L
- Cymbals:** . . o + . . . . o + . . . .
- S.D. (Snare Drum):** R R R R R R R R R R R R R R R R
- T. D. (Tom Drum):** R R R R R R R R R R R R R R R R
- B. D. (Bass Drum):** R > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > >
- Cym. (Cymbal):** . . . . o + . . . . o + . . . .

Section 2:

- S.D.:** > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > >
- T. D.:** > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > >
- B. D.:** > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > >
- Cym.:** R L L R R L R L R L R L R L R L R L

Section 3:

- S.D.:** > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > >
- T. D.:** > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > >
- B. D.:** > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > >
- Cym.:** (L) R

Section 4:

- S.D.:** > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > >
- T. D.:** > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > >
- B. D.:** > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > >
- Cym.:** R R R R R R R R R R R R R R R R

Section 5:

- S.D.:** > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > >
- T. D.:** (L) > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > >
- B. D.:** > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > >
- Cym.:** R R R R R R R R R R R R R R R R

Section 6:

- S.D.:** > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > >
- T. D.:** (L) > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > >
- B. D.:** > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > >
- Cym.:** R R R R R R R R R R R R R R R R

Many people spend a lot of time practicing rudiments starting with the right hand, but not the left. This exercise is designed to combat that. As with all other exercises, start slow and play accurately. Pay particular attention to playing accurate accent-to-tap heights.

## Paradiddles 2

Snares

Tenors

Basses

Cymbals

S.D.

T. D.

B. D.

Cym.

S.D.

T. D.

B. D.

Cym.

## Flams

Snares      Tenors      Basses      Cymbals

S.D.      T. D.      B. D.      Cym.

S.D.      T. D.      B. D.      Cym.

S.D.      T. D.      B. D.      Cym.

*17*

S.D.      T. D.      B. D.      Cym.