

# Even Numbered Rolls

6-Stroke, 8-Stroke, 10-Stroke

On the PAS Rudiment Sheet, there are only 2 even numbered rolls – the 6-stroke roll and the 10-stroke roll. We’re going to add the 8-stroke roll in between them. While the 8 is not recognized as a “real” rudiment, it’s been gaining traction in the drumming community and is important for us to learn. We’ll discuss these 3 rolls individually, relate them to one another, then combine them in fun odd-meter exercises.

Let’s begin with the 6-stroke roll. ① [a] looks a little funny and difficult, but that’s how it appears on the Rudiment Sheet. [b] & [c] are alternate ways of writing the same thing that I think are clearer, so I included those.

Please note the accents on the first and last notes – when accents fall in this position, I call them ‘bookend accents’. It’s very important that both accents are of equal volume, so pay careful attention to that. It’s common to not play the Left accent as loud as the Right, resulting in an uneven sound.

In the [b] example, I wrote out the full sets of 16th notes, so you can see all the subdivisions. This version is my personal preference.

In the [c] example, I wrote out every single note that is played, so you can see the 32nd notes and full sets of doubles.

② and ③ simply move around the accents and are written like ① [c].

② puts the two accents at the end. If you look at the sticking below, you might confuse this with the Paradiddle-diddle. It is indeed the same sticking, but the rhythm is different. A paradiddle-diddle keeps steady 16th notes throughout, whereas this variation of the 6-stroke roll begins with the two singles as 16th notes, then the two sets of doubles as 32nd notes.

③ simply places the two single accented notes at the end, after the roll portion. Make sure to begin your doubles with the sticks close to the drums. You’ll be playing down and up strokes, as well as utilizing rebound, to play these rolls properly.

The 6-stroke roll has 6 notes in it. When I think of 6-note groupings, my initial thought would be triplets. So, let’s play 6-stroke rolls in Sixteenth Note Triplets, which are called Sextuplets. I like to shorten that and call them ‘Sixlets’. To me, playing 6-stroke rolls in triplets places them in their natural state. It’s essentially the same as ①, but with an even rhythm and relaxed feel. They can be played really fast and adapt to the drum kit in many fantastic ways.

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① **a**  **b**  **c** 

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

Bookend accents are very important  
Make sure both accents are of equal volume

② 

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

Accents up front, rolls at the end

③ 

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

Rolls up front, accents at the end

④ 

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

Like ① with relaxed feel and even rhythm  
Practice ① directly into ④ to gain a greater understanding of the difference in feel.

The 8-stroke roll can be thought of as a Paradiddle-Diddle-Diddle. It has a lot in common with the Triple Paradiddle, but also works well to be thought of as a double stroke roll variation. Essentially, the 6-stroke roll has two singles and two sets of doubles. The 10-stroke roll, which is indeed a ‘real’ rudiment, has two singles and four sets of doubles. So, why not include an 8-stroke roll which has two singles and three sets of doubles. It fits beautifully in between. It also has the added benefit on switching hands, which is a good workout for your chops.

Since what we’re calling an 8-stroke roll is based on paradiddles – and is not on the rudiment sheet – I’ve gone ahead and written them out as 16th notes. Of course, when played at a fast roll tempo, they can be thought of as 32nd notes.

- ⑤ has one accent up front
- ⑥ has two accents up front
- ⑦ has two accents at the end
- ⑧ has bookend accents

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⑤  $\text{R L R R L L R R L R L L R R L L}$

⑥  $\text{R L R R L L R R L R L L R R L L}$

⑦  $\text{R R L L R R L R L L R R L L R L}$

⑧  $\text{R L L R R L L R L R R L L R R L}$

On the Rudiment Sheet, the 10-stroke roll is nearly identical to the 11-stroke roll. The only difference is that, with the 10, the downbeat of 2 is played as a single accent, as opposed to being a quiet set of doubles. So, it's essentially just a longer version of the ③ variation of the 6-stroke roll. ⑨ [a](#) is how it appears on the rudiment sheet in shorthand, and [b](#) is the full example written out. Actually, the rudiment sheet beams the two single accented 16th notes and adds an 8th rest; here, I abbreviated that by writing the two single accented notes as a 16th note beamed to a dotted 8th, alleviating the need for the rest. This version is in 4/4, with the hands switching lead.

For the number ⑩ examples, we're not going to switch hands or leave any space between the rolls. We're going to play them fast and in succession. This puts us in the time signature of 3/8. [a](#) has the accents at the end, [b](#) places the accents up front, and [c](#) has 'bookend' accents.

⑨ [a](#)  $\text{R R L L L R}$  [b](#)  $\text{R R L L R R L L R L L L R R L L R R L R}$

⑩ [a](#)  $\text{R R L L R R L L R L}$  [b](#)  $\text{R L R R L L R R L L}$  [c](#)  $\text{R L L R R L L R R L}$

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Finally, let's combine these rolls to make fun exercises in different time signatures.

⑪ combines the 6 and 10 stroke rolls. The 6-stroke roll takes up 2 beats and the 10-stroke roll takes up 3 beats, so we end up in 5/8. The **a** example has the accents after the rolls and the **b** example has bookend accents.

⑫ is a 2-bar phrase that begins with an 8-stroke roll and ends with a 6-stroke roll. Both accents are up front for both sets of rolls and the hands switch lead from bar to bar. The **a** example is in 3/4 and combines 16th notes and 32nd notes, which means the first two beats will sound and feel slower. The **b** example is comprised of all 16th notes. Because of this, the 6-stroke roll portion has now morphed into a paradiddle-diddle. It still begins with the 8-stroke roll, even though the number is not written above. You can think of it as a paradiddle-diddle-diddle. This exercise can be treated as if they were all 32nd notes and played at a fast 'roll' tempo.

⑪ **a**

**b**

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

⑫ **a**

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

**b**

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