

Confident Drummer

Free Resources

How to Practice the 9 Stroke Roll Part 2 - Orchestrations and Agility

Confident Drummer Series

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How to Practice the 9 Stroke Roll

Part 2 - Orchestrations and Agility

In Part 1 of 'How to Practice the 9 Stroke Roll' we focused mainly on the Snare and the parameters that can be applied to studying any roll and rudiment in depth.

Nonetheless, some of the biggest challenges we have to overcome in order to play drums with great technique, are those related to orchestrating ideas around the Drum Set.

We could have perfect Snare Drum technique and yet be unable to maintain but a fraction of that when we move around the kit.

This is something we need to carefully take into account, since the Drum Set is actually kind of an orchestra.

It's not a single piece, like most instruments, but a collection of many parts: cymbals, drums, percussions, and whatever else we want to include in our kit.

That's what makes our instrument so interesting, because such feature allows us to customize it and define our sound, style and artistic vision in ways that are impossible to achieve for other musicians.

Let's take a piano for example. It's all fixed and unchangeable: the number of keys, their size, their weight and their arrangement.

Not on the drums. We could create a kit with four Snare Drums, with nothing but cymbals, with three Bass Drums, with whatever piece of gear we have in mind, in all imaginable positions and sizes.

However this freedom comes at a price, because it entails being able to move swiftly around such an abundance and variety of sound sources.

Two kinds of challenges come up:

- On the one hand we need to be able to split phrases, rolls or whatever else we know how to play, smoothly moving around the set without letting the fact that we keep changing position affect our sound, accuracy and timing.
- On the other hand we need to maintain a consistent level of control in spite of the fact that the surfaces on which we play offer quite different rebounds.

If we execute the Free Stroke on a tight Snare Drum and then we do the same on a loose Floor Tom or on the edge of the Hi-Hat, it's clear that the stick bounces back a lot less.

The thing is that we can't afford to all of a sudden be unable to play an idea just because a certain orchestration or change in rebound compromises our technical ability to handle the whole thing.

The basic rule is that we should never let a technical limitation determine what we can or can't play.

The reason for developing lots of technique is exactly that: making sure we are able to express any idea at any moment, without having to think about the technical components involved.

And one of the ways to reach such a level is precisely to study the materials presented in this blog and Confident Drummer methods.

More specifically in this lesson we are going to spend time developing the ideas seen in Part 1 by orchestrating the 9 stroke roll on the whole Drum Set, in progressive studies which explore numerous examples and will turn us into agile drummers who aren't affected by rebound changes, thus neutralizing both of the difficulties described above.

Here is the link to the [YouTube video](#) in which I play the examples shown in the booklet.

We have actually already started this process in Part 1, when we played on Toms and Crashes the accents placed at the beginning or at the end of the roll.

Here we are going to go a lot deeper and work on many more variations, with technical development in mind but, as usual, without neglecting musicality, given that many of these solutions are in fact drum fills.

We are going to orchestrate the 9 stroke roll in examples that involve both binary and ternary subdivisions and also doublings and halvings.

While the demonstrations focus on solutions that start always with the right hand and have no accents, different accents and stickings may and should be applied.

While going through these studies it's important to keep in mind that what we are developing with the repetition of these motions is our muscle memory, by building layers upon layers of the automatic movements that are going to allow us to move around smoothly and effortlessly even during the most advanced passages.

The approach while practicing should once again aim to put relaxation and accuracy before speed.

To wrap this up, if we want to make the most of these methods our long term goal should be to apply them to other rolls and rudiments of our choice, and make them an integral part of our practice routine.

Lastly let's keep in mind that the more refined the automatic motions, the more the Drum Set on which we have developed them must be kept arranged in exactly the same positions.

Indeed any small setup change would necessarily require some kind of adjustment in our technique to make it possible to perform with the same level of control, which is something we want to avoid.

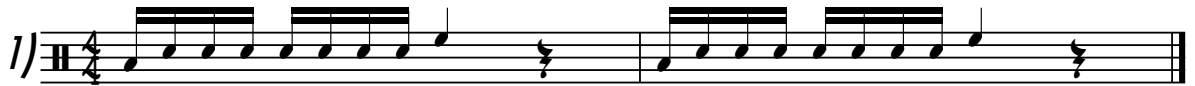
Related resources:

[How to Practice the 9 Stroke Roll - Part 1 - Parameters](#)
['Hands & Mechanics' - Altitude Drumming - Volume 2](#)
['Drum Technique Booster - The Masters' Approach'](#)
['Drum Chops Mastery - Gospel Chops & Beyond'](#)

9 Stroke Roll - Binary

Single Strokes: RLRLRLRLR

♩ = 60-200 bpm



9 Stroke Roll - Ternary

Single Strokes: RLRLRLRLR

♩ = 60-200 bpm

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

6)

7)

8)

9 Stroke Roll - Binary

Double Strokes: RLLRLLL

♩ = 60-200 bpm

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

6)

7)

8)

9 Stroke Roll - Ternary

Double Strokes: RLLRLLR

♩ = 60-200 bpm

1) 2) 3) 4) 5) 6) 7) 8)

The image contains eight numbered musical exercises (1-8) for a 9-stroke roll. Each exercise is written on a single staff with a 4/4 time signature. The notation consists of two measures per exercise. Each measure contains a sequence of nine eighth notes, grouped into three sets of three. Above each group of three notes is a bracket with a '3' indicating a triplet. The double strokes are represented by pairs of eighth notes. The exercises vary in the placement of the double strokes within the triplet groups. Exercises 1-3 have double strokes on the first and second notes of each triplet. Exercises 4-6 have double strokes on the first and third notes. Exercises 7-8 have double strokes on the second and third notes. Each exercise ends with a fermata over the final note.

9 Stroke Roll - Doublings

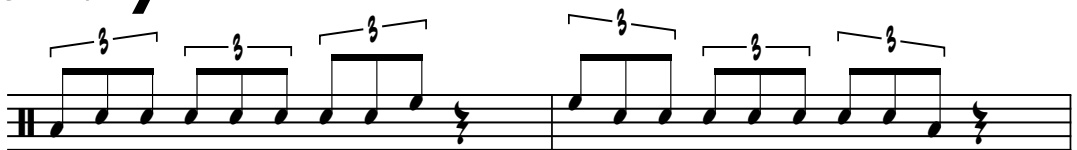
Single Strokes: RLRLRLRLR

♩ = 50-130 bpm **Binary**

Also Apply this
Method to all
Previous Exercises



Ternary



9 Stroke Roll - Doublings

Double Strokes: RLLRLLR

♩ = 50-130 bpm **Binary**

*Also Apply this
Method to all
Previous Exercises*



Ternary

