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By Stephane Chamberland

Applying Rudiments to Open-Handed Groove Concepts
Part 1

Rudiments are at the core of our language as drummers. We often call them the ABCs of drumming. They are the "what" we play while technique is the "how."

To be comfortable playing the following exercises, I would recommend that you also get more information about the three levels of technique, which are finger techniques (Billy Gladstone), arm techniques (Sanford A. Moeller), and wrist techniques (George Lawrence Stone). Make sure to understand the primary strokes: upstrokes and downstrokes played in both the formal version and informal version as well. These are the secrets for playing at any tempo and any dynamic.

Check out Dom Famularo's book *It's Your Move*, Jojo Mayer's DVD *Secret Weapons for the Modern Drummer, Volume 1*, and Claus Hessler's DVD *Drumming Kairo*. Also, get the Percussive Art Society Rudiments sheet that you can find online and get a teacher to help you learn everything properly to start the best way possible.

In Practice

I have come up with many different exercises that combine rudiments to create amazing phrases that we can then bring directly onto the drumset. Let's break this down into steps to follow so you can then create your own grooves using this concept.

I will be using the open handed position, which means I will not be crossing my arms. My left hand will lead on the hi-hat and my right hand will be playing the snare drum. I put my hi-hat just one to two inches above my snare to keep a very relaxed position. I will start the patterns with my left side. This open-handed position allows us to start moving the right hand around the drums and create amazing melodic patterns.

Step One

Let's create with a combination of four half paradiddles, two half double paradiddles, and one more half single paradiddle in 16th notes. The full paradiddle rudiment is RLRR LRLL, so I will only use half of it and start with the left hand LRLL. For this one, we will be using two-bar phrasing to create more space for possibilities. I will also put accents where I think they sound best but you can find many more options. For now, let's put a bass drum note every time we play a hi-hat note. Ex. 1 is the first combination.

EX. 1

Step Two

In Ex. 2, I'm moving the ghost notes around the toms. I am using a single rack tom and a floor tom only, but it's up to you if you'd like to use more.

EX. 2

Step Three

Ex. 3 adds the final touches. Let's remove some bass drum notes and use the bass drum as another independent voice.

EX. 3

In part two next issue, we'll look at transitional phrases and improvisation.