

Launching Rudimental Ideas on the Drum Set

A Method For Inspiration and Development

By Brad Frank

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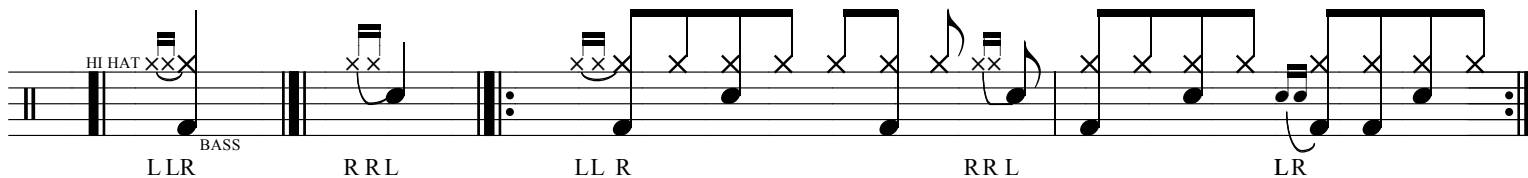
Lesson One: Messin' with The Drag

Part 1: The Traditional Drag with 3 stickings



1. LLR LLR LLR LLR LLR LLR LLR LLR LLR LLR LLR LLR LLR LLR LLR LLR
2. RRL RRL RRL RRL RRL RRL RRL RRL RRL RRL RRL RRL RRL RRL RRL RRL
3. LLR RRL LLR RRL LLR RRL LLR RRL LLR RRL LLR RRL LLR RRL LLR RRL

Suggestions for applying the Drag



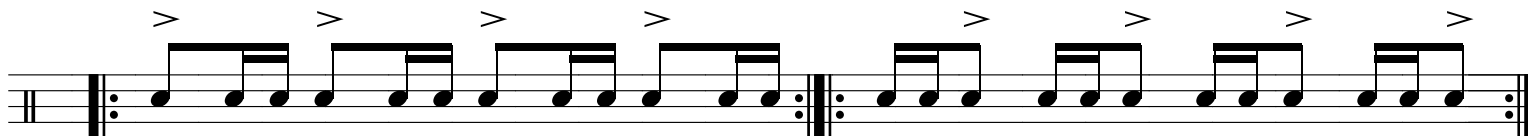
Also try incorporating the Drag on various toms, cymbals, cowbells, rims, etc. When playing on surfaces that do not have rebound you will need to use your wrists. Try practicing on your leg or a pillow to help develop this technique.

Part 2: One way to launch new ideas is by slightly altering the rhythmic values of the rudiment.

Play the following exercises on the snare drum first then experiment with each variation as a fill around the kit. Try different tom tom/snare/hi hat/cymbal variations. Remember that you don't always have to play the entire phrase. Experiment with combining your own improvisations with snippets of the new interpretation.

Drag Variation 1 - Slow

Drag Variation 2 - Slow



1. R L L R L L R L L R L L R L L R R R L R R L R R L R R L R R L
2. L R R L R R L R R L R R L R R L L L R L L R L L R L L R
3. R R R L L L R R R L L L R R L L L R R R L L L R R R L L L R

Here's a groove suggestion for slow Drag variations. Be sure to create your own variations!

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

Part 3: Fast Drag Variations

1. R L L R L L R L L R L L R L L R L L R L L R L L
2. L R R L R R L R R L R R L R R L R R L R R L R R
3. R R R L L L R R R L L L R R R L L L R R R L L L

1. R R L R R L R R L R R L R R L R R L R R L R L L
2. L L R L L R L L R L L R L L R L L R L L R L L R
3. R R L L L R R R L L L R R R L L L R R R L L L R

Groove Suggestion for Fast Drag Variations

OPEN H.H.
0

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

H.H W/ FOOT

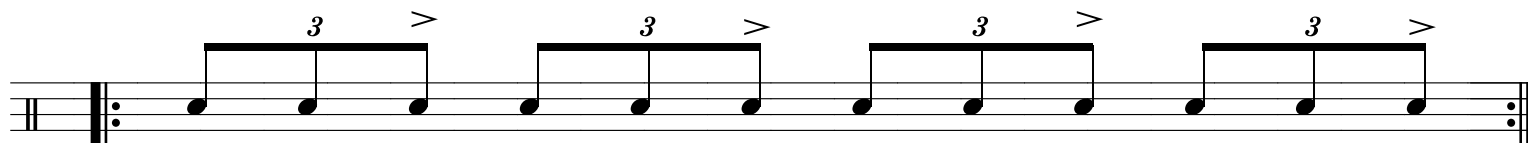
Combining the previous two patterns produces the 6 Stroke Roll. I'll expand on the 6 Stroke Roll later. For now see if you can use these two combinations as a compliment to your grooves and fills. Be sure to mix in your own improvisations with these patterns. Also play in cut-time.

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

Part 3: Triplet Variations



- | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | R | L | L | R | L | L | R | L | L | R | L | L |
| 2. | L | R | R | L | R | R | L | R | R | L | R | R |

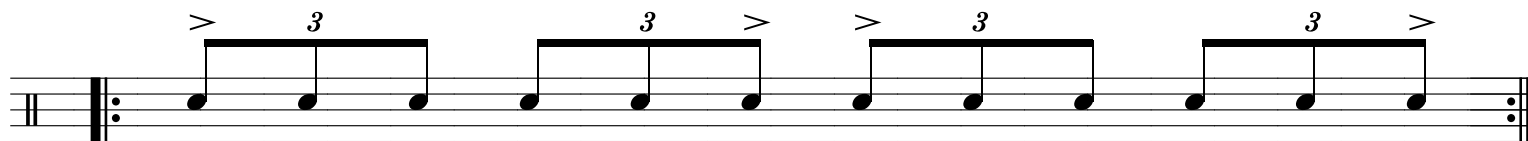


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|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | R | R | L | R | R | L | R | R | L | R | R | L |
| 2. | L | L | R | L | L | R | L | L | R | L | L | R |

Combining the Variations

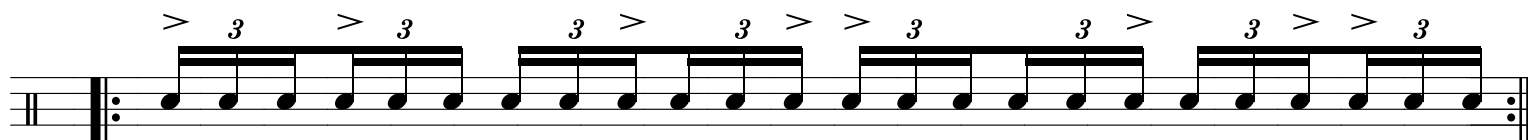


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|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | R | L | L | R | L | L | R | R | L | R | R | L |
| 2. | L | R | R | L | R | R | L | L | R | L | L | R |



- | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | R | L | L | R | R | L | R | L | L | R | R | L |
| 2. | L | R | R | L | L | R | L | R | R | L | L | R |

There are tons of combinations. Try the following and create your own:



- R L L R L L R R L R R L R L L R R L R R L R L L

Try playing accented notes with a cymbal/bass drum combination instead of the snare.
Also try different hi hat/tom/snare combinations.

Part 4: Each sticking variation is followed by a fill suggestion. Be sure to explore your own orchestrations.

1.

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

Fill

R L L R L L R L L R L L R L L R
FLOOR TOM

2.

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

Fill

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

3.

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

Fill

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

4.

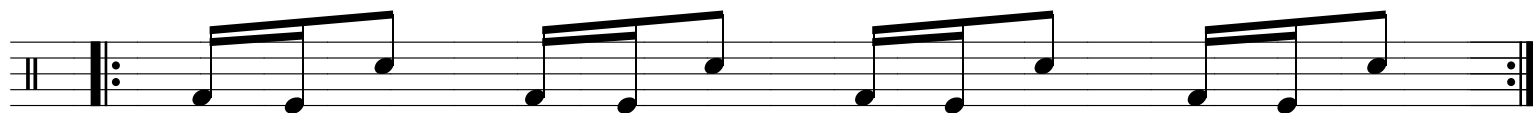
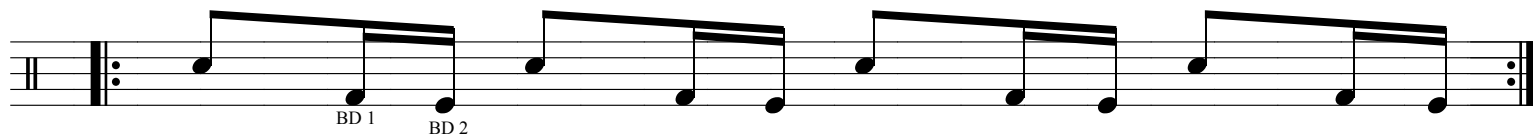
L L R L L R L L R L L R L L R L

Fill

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

Part 5: Double Bass Drum Applications

Play the snare drum with various stickings including unisons. Experiment with cymbal/snare and cymbal /tom combinations.



Part 7: Advanced Triplet Applications

Ted Reed's *Syncopation* sample interpreted in a triplet feel. Each dotted quarter equals one beat.

1(ta) ta (2 ta) ta 3 (tata) 4 (tata)

Previous triplet interpretation of the Drag

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

Orchestrated

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

Combined with bass line

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

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

I strongly advise picking Ted Reed's *Progressive Steps to Syncopation for the Modern Drummer* and playing through all 8 "Syncopation" exercises with a triplet interpretation. Try warming up by using my Triplet Rhythm Tree as the bass drum part.

Part 8: Adding the Bass Drum

Previously the bass drum was *substituted* for a hand when playing Drag variations. These new interpretations of the Drag *add* a bass to the Drag sticking to create entirely new possibilities. As always, be sure to explore this idea using your own slant. The more personal you make it, the more likely you'll be to use the idea in real world applications. Memorize your ideas and try playing along with your favorite music and add these ideas.

Drag sticking plus one bass drum

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

Groove/Fill

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

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

Triplet interpretations

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

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

Groove/Fill

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



A Final Note

I've presented complex ideas, some containing many notes. I wanted to take a minute to emphasize that the main role of the drummer in popular music (rock, funk, R&B, gospel, country, alternative, emo, rap, jazz, salsa, reggae, drum n' bass, techno, punk, metal, soul, big band, blues, second line, soul, hip hop, disco, etc) is that of a time keeper. The drummer creates the time feel, outlines the structure of the song by marking phrases with fills and dynamics and supports the overall focus of the song: either the singer or lead instrumentalist.

I believe it's important to have a broad vocabulary on the drum set but not at the expense of the groove. In other words, try to play with the listener in mind and use your bag of tricks only when there is room. Make sure to leave space for the other players. Some styles of music call for many notes and licks and some styles call for fewer notes.

Compare the drumming on Michael Jackson's *Thriller* to Dave Matthews Band's *Under the Table and Dreaming*. Does Carter Beauford overplay? Does Jeff Porco underplay? Neither; they are just two very different approaches to popular music but both players support the song and groove masterfully.

Steve Gadd is my personal favorite at blending groove and song support with exciting drum ideas. In fact, it was his interpretation of the Ratamacue presented in his video *Up Close* that inspired me to explore the rudiments in a whole new way.

I cannot emphasize enough the importance of listening to as much music as possible. Try to include many styles of music in your listening and take notice how the drummer supports the song.

The concepts presented here offer a launching point for new ideas; a new way to draw inspiration from familiar rudimental territory. Hopefully you have been left with a new way to approach time keeping and new licks for your fills and solos when the music calls for percussive excitement.

Please leave any comments on my website www.bradfrankdrums.com or drop me an email at bradfrankdrums@gmail.com if you have any questions or suggestions.

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Chicago, Illinois