

# Stick Control Unleashed Part V: “Graduate Studies”

If you’ve stuck with us thus far, you’ll have gained a lot of control over both your limbs and your time sense. *Stick Control* can help push things still further, co-ordination wise. We can also call the lines into service to play rhythmic displacements, ‘linear’ rhythms and solos.

## 1. Moving Bass Drum, Hands in 16ths

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This one is a lot of fun and will yield all sorts of useful rhythms. Play the lines slowly as 16th notes between the hi-hat and snare with the hands, and begin by playing the bass drum on the beat. Then move the bass drum to the next 16th note: 1e, 2e, 3e, 4e. Next, play the bass drum on the ‘&’ of each beat. Finally, play the bass drum on ‘a’ or ‘uh’. (This one is based on an idea from Gary Chaffee.)

R = Cym or HH

L = SN

BD = Moving through 16<sup>th</sup> notes

### Line 1

The musical notation for Line 1 consists of four staves, each representing a different bass drum placement. The top staff shows the hi-hat and snare lines with 'x' marks above the notes. The bass drum line is indicated by 'x' marks on the staff. The first staff has notes on beats 1, 2, 3, and 4. The second staff has notes on the 'e' of each beat. The third staff has notes on the '&' of each beat. The fourth staff has notes on the 'a' of each beat.

**Line 6**

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

e e e e e e e e

& & & & & & &

a a a a a a a a a

**Advanced**

1. Play two 16th notes on the bass drum starting with 1e, 2e, 3e, etc. Move the bass drum to the next pair: -e&-, -e&-, then --&a, --&a. Finally, play the bass drum on -e-a, -e-a, -e-a, -e-a. (We covered 1---a in the Latin section.)
2. Play the lead hand (R) on the cymbal and add the hi-hat on 2 & 4.
3. Add the hi-hat on all 4 beats.

Two Bass Drum Strokes

1 e 2 e 3 e 4 e 1 e 2 e 3 e 4 e

e & e & e & e & e & e & e &

& a & a & a & a & a & a & a & a

e a e a e a e a e a e a e a e a

## 2. Linear Hands and Feet

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The term linear refers to a drumming style where no two limbs strike at the same time. (Most drum patterns are layered, with two or more instruments playing ostinatos.) In this exercise, you will split the stickings between the hands and further split them between the feet.

When the sticking indicates R, play alternating strokes with the hands. For L, play alternating feet. So R R R would be RH LH RH (or Cym SN Cym) and L L L would be played RF LF RF (i.e. BD HH BD).

In some cases deviating from strict alternating sticking can yield some interesting and useful rhythms.

R = alternate hands            (R R R R = R L R L)  
 L = alternate feet            (L L L L = BD HH BD HH)

Thus R L R R / L R R L        would yield    RH BD LH RH / HH LH RH BD.

This is rather tricky, requiring 4-way co-ordination and independence, so take it slowly.

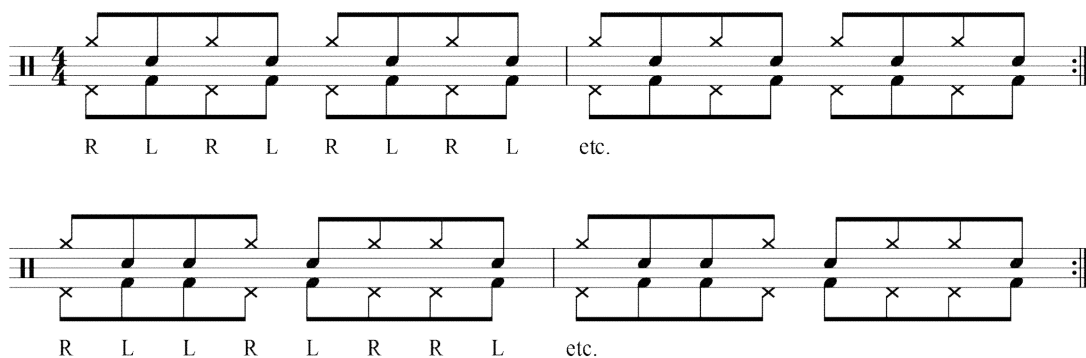
The image contains four musical staves, each with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. Each staff shows a sequence of eighth notes with stickings indicated below them. The first staff has stickings R L R L R L R L etc. The second staff has stickings R L L R L R R L etc. The third staff has stickings R L R L R L R L R L R L R L etc. The fourth staff has stickings R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L etc.

## 3. "Warped"

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For the very brave, play the R strokes simultaneously with the right hand and the left foot, the L strokes with the left hand and right foot. This one may not deliver many useful patterns, but it will force your hands, feet and brain to work hard.

R = RH+LF (Cym & HH)  
 L = LH+RF (SN & BD)  
 So, R L L R            would be played    Cym+HH / SN+BD / SN+BD / Cym+HH



#### 4. Voice Substitution (Soloing Studies)

Our next goal is to use the patterns as improvisational and soloing ideas. With feet playing in basic 4, play the figures on one drum as 8th notes, perhaps on the snare or maybe the floor tom. Move one stick to another drum. Move it back. Move the other hand to a different drum. Move it back. Move both hands to different drums. Split the hands between drums and cymbals. Move around the set, making sure you adhere to the sticking pattern. What works? What sounds good? What feels comfortable? Explore — the more experimentation you do, the better.

R = RH

L = LH

BD = 4-to-the-bar, Cut time, or silent

HH = 2 & 4

Think in terms of creating a rhythmic composition on the entire drum set. A ‘theme and variation’ approach works well, e.g. for a 4-bar solo, play the first bar on the snare, add a bit of tom on the second bar, add more tom on the third bar, and mix in some cymbals to close.

| Theme | Variation 1 | Variation 2 | Variation 3 |

You can also do a ‘call and response’: play one bar on the snare (the call), play the next bar on a small tom (the response), then back to the snare for the third bar, and finish on a large tom. Mix it up.

| Call | Response 1 | Call | Response 2 |

1. Play figures as 8ths.
2. Play figures as 16ths.
3. Play as 8ths with a swing/shuffle feel.

## **Advanced**

1. Play '4s': 4 bars of rhythm, 4 bars of solo, in both a rock feel and a swing feel.
  2. Play 8s: 8 bars of rhythm, 8 bars of solo, rock and swing style.
  3. Instead of four-to-the-bar, try playing a simple bass drum pattern while soloing.
  4. Vary the tonality by accenting a few of the strokes. Add bass drum 'shots' to your accented strokes.
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