

AGHS Drumline 2020-2021 Audition Packet

Please read through ALL notes for each exercise for tips on best practices!

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A Note from Me! ☺

Hi everyone! I hope you all been staying safe, happy, and healthy during these (I'm sorry, I have to say it)...unprecedented times. Things have obviously been super weird, and it saddens me to know that right now, we'd normally be ramping up for a super awesome summer full of rehearsals and playing and marching. Just know I am missing each and every one you dearly, and I can't wait until we can all get together and make some music!

In this packet, I've created 5 exercises that I think highlight some of the most important skills I want to focus on this season. Please take the time to read through the (hopefully brief—I haven't written them yet at the time of me typing this note) explanations/instructions/tips I've included. I hope that they will provide some insight to what I'll be looking for once we finally are able to audition and set the line. Take these tips as a prediction of what I imagined I'd be saying to you in person if we had gotten the chance to have clinics!

If you have any questions, please, please, please let me know! You can reach out to me by text or email which I will leave below. I know it may be tough to stay motivated right now and sit down and practice but try your best! I look forward to seeing what each of you are able to achieve with these exercises and I am extra excited for our first rehearsal together, whenever that may be!

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Legatos (or Lego-toes, if you will)

You may notice on all of these exercises that I have not listed a tempo—that was on purpose! I want you to take these exercises at whatever tempo you can do it the most comfortable and most accurate.

Tip #1: Play at full height when you first begin working on this!

We know the point of legatos is to focus on the evenness of our hand-to-hand strokes, so I recommend playing this exercise at full height while you master the feeling of even notes and rhythm. Once you feel comfortable at this at a variety of tempi (slow and fast!), then feel free to start playing it at different dynamics.

Tip #2: PLAY WITH A METRONOME

Just because there's not a tempo marking doesn't excuse you from playing out of time. Pick a tempo that feels comfy, and please, please, please, please, PLEASE play this exercise with a metronome, literally 99% of the time.

Tip #3: Listen to yourself play!

You want to make sure you're achieving the main goal: even sound between your hands. If you find yourself struggling to listen and play at the same time, record yourself and troubleshoot from there!

Tap Accent

Tip #1: Start with accents at full height and taps at 3 inches (aka stick parallel to playing surface).

Tap-accent exercises have one big, obvious goal: playing even and consistent tap to accent patterns. This means you want all of your accents to sound exactly the same, and all of your taps to sound exactly the same as one another.

Variations of this exercise do include playing the accents and taps at closer heights (for ex. Accents at 9" and taps at 6") to make it more challenging. If you get there eventually, great! If not, also great! Prioritize consistency with your notes, first, before trying to make it more difficult.

Tip #2: Play only the accented rhythms by themselves on each hand.

This will help you to understand what the composite (or big picture) rhythm is. It can be super annoying to try and read exactly where the accents fall when the music is just straight 8th notes (at least to me), so having an idea of what accent pattern you're trying to play may help you get your head out of the page and make it easier to focus on making the difference between your taps and accents super, super clear!

Timing Exercise

Tip #1: Play this with a metronome. I'm begging you.

If you're going to listen to any piece of advice in this packet, please make it this one. If you couldn't guess from the title, this exercise is built to work on your timing! If you aren't playing alongside a consistent time, you won't know if you're timing is as super accurate as it can be.

Tip #2: Double every 2 beats of the exercise.

I didn't feel like writing a super long exercise, but if you want to, feel free to make every 2 beats into 4 (i.e. from the beginning, you would play 4 beats of 16ths, then 4 beats of the 1e+ rhythm, etc.). This just lengthens the exercise and may make it more interesting to play rather than repeating the shorter version over and over.

Tip #3: Play off of both hands.

This exercise is notated right-hand lead. I did this for a number of reasons, one being that we are going to most often be playing music with right-hand notes on the downbeats, because that's just how marching band music works most of the time. However, nothing is stopping you from starting this exercise off the left hand! In fact, doing so will strengthen your LH and improve the evenness of your sound, especially if you are right-handed and see your LH as a weakness.

Stick Control

Tip #1: PLAY THIS SLOWLY AT FIRST.

This exercise has a very similar agenda to legatos, and that is to improve the sound of each hand-to-hand stroke, no matter what sticking pattern you are playing. This can be super tricky, so don't feel pressured to play this exercise super-fast in the beginning. I personally don't play this exercise any quicker than 110bpm, and when I first wrote it, could barely play it at 80. If you have to start it at 30bpm, that's perfectly fine! Again, just make sure you're focusing on the real goal, which is making sure each note you play sounds exactly like the one before and after it!

Tip #2: Feel free to switch up the sticking of the 8th notes.

For funsies, try playing 4 right- and 4 left-hand notes before the 16ths, rather than alternating. This is actually how I typically play the exercise but felt like alternating might be a better starting point! If you like that, then try doubling the length of each grouping! That means playing 2 measures of 8th notes (one whole measure RH, one LH), and 2 measures of the 16th note sticking. Doing so is only going to increase your hand strength and make you better!

Triplet Rolls

Tip #1: Play at a large variety of tempi—start slow and work your way up to faster.

This exercise's main goal is to work on your double-stroke roll. Try taking this exercise slow enough to the point that you have to stroke in each double bounce so that you can work on getting an even sound from both notes of the bounce (not just the first note is louder than the second). Next, play it a little faster, where you can rely on the bounce of the stick to create even sounds. Then, slow it down again, until you get to the awkward tempo where you can't quite rely on only rebound to create even bounces, but it's a little too quick to stroke each note in separately. Stay at this point for a little while, and experiment with how you can best create even strokes throughout the roll patterns. If any of that didn't make sense, please shoot me a text or email, I'd be happy to try to explain it a little differently. This is a weird concept to put into writing, in my opinion.


If you've made it this far, at some point in your audition, work the phrase "Cool beans", and I'll know you've read the entire packet. Then, you'll get imaginary brownie points from me 😊

Happy practicing!

Legatos

Liz Rockwell

Snare Drum 
R R R R R R R R | L L L L L L L L | R R R R R R R R | B B B B B B B B

5 
S. D. L L L L L L L L | R R R R R R R R | L L L L L L L L | B B B B B B B B

9 
S. D. R L R L R L R L R L | R L R L R L R L R L | R R R R R R R R | B B B B B B B B

13 
S. D. L R L R L R L R L R | L R L R L R L R L R | L L L L L L L L | B B B B B B B B | R

Tap Accent

Liz Rockwell

*Repeat each section beginning on opposite hand

Musical staff 1: Tap accent exercise starting on the right hand. The staff contains four measures of eighth-note patterns. The first measure is labeled "R R R R..." below it. Each note has an accent mark (>) above it.

5

Musical staff 2: Tap accent exercise starting on the left hand. The staff contains four measures of eighth-note patterns. Each note has an accent mark (>) above it.

9

Musical staff 3: Tap accent exercise starting on the right hand. The staff contains four measures of eighth-note patterns. The first measure is labeled "R R R R..." below it. Each note has an accent mark (>) above it.

13

Musical staff 4: Tap accent exercise starting on the left hand. The staff contains four measures of eighth-note patterns. Each note has an accent mark (>) above it.

15

Musical staff 5: Tap accent exercise starting on the right hand. The staff contains four measures of eighth-note patterns. Each note has an accent mark (>) above it. The final measure ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Timing Exercise

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

3

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

5

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

7

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



9



R



Stick Control



Liz Rockwell


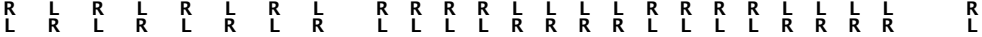
Repeat each line 4x

Snare Drum  

3  

5  

7  

9  

Triplet Rolls

Liz Rockwell

Snare Drum  $\frac{12}{8}$

R L R L R L...
L R L R L R...

3 

5 

7 

9 

11 

13 

15 