

What a great accent



An accent is a louder note and when loud and quiet notes are mixed together we create much more texture, interest and musicality in our playing. An accented note is indicated by an arrow above it.

Checklist

By the end of this chapter, you should be able to achieve the following:

- Play accents within groups of sixteenth notes
- Apply accents to all paradiddle variations
- Play fills using accents

Use this page as an end-of-chapter test. When you have completed Chapter Two, come back to this page and see if you can complete the list above.

CHAPTER TWO

Loud and quiet notes

Although there are many techniques and approaches to playing accents, we will look at a very simplified version to get things moving without being overcomplicated. Other, more advanced techniques utilise full arm and finger movements to move and control the stick, whereas we are going to work at a much more basic level for now and use just our wrists while keeping our arms still and fingers closed around the stick.

An accented note is a loud note, but it only stands out if the other notes around it are quiet. Therefore to play convincing accents, the quiet notes are just as important. To develop this difference in volume we need to work on just two levels: loud and quiet.

Below are two pictures, which demonstrate where your drum stick should start from to achieve these two different volume levels:

1. Loud - Stick up:

By flexing your wrist, point the drum stick up to the ceiling. As you strike the drum from this position, you have a lot of movement to increase the velocity and play an accented note.



2. Quiet - Stick down:

Hold the stick parallel to the drum, with the tip approximately an inch away from the head. To strike the drum from this position, simply relax your wrist slightly to let the stick drop. As this stroke starts from so close to the drum, it is very difficult to play loud.











Down, tap, up and full

To apply these two volumes, we need to learn just four basic strokes which will enable us to play any combination of accents. The end position of each stroke prepares us for the next stroke.

These are the four strokes:

1. **Down stroke**
2. **Tap stroke**
3. **Up stroke**
4. **Full stroke**

Practice these four strokes individually before attempting to join them together:

Stroke	Start position	End position
<p style="text-align: center;">Down stroke: Start with the stick in the up position. After striking the drum, the stick should be controlled in the down position.</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">Tap stroke: Start with the stick in the down position. After tapping the drum, the stick should remain in the down position.</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">Up stroke: Start with the stick in the down position. After tapping the drum, the stick should instantly be moved to the up position.</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">Full stroke: Start with the stick in the up position. After striking the drum, the stick should instantly return to the up position.</p>		

Signing off and moving on

Play each stroke individually demonstrating good stick control

Single handed exercises

To get used to these four strokes, here are a few accent exercises that put them together. The accent is signified by an arrow above the note that needs to be played louder.

Play each exercise slowly with a click, first with your right hand and then again with your left hand. The order of down, tap up and full strokes are written below the sticking simply as D, T, U and F.

- D - Down stroke**
- T - Tap stroke**
- U - Up stroke**
- F - Full stroke**

1 | **4/4** | 1 > | 2 | 3 | 4 |

2 | **4/4** | 1 > | 2 | 3 > | 4 |

3 | **4/4** | 1 > | 2 | 3 | 4 > |

Signing off and moving on

Play each exercise with a click track and loop for one minute
Targets are in BPM

60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100	105	110	115	120
Bronze						Silver						Gold

Single stroke rolls with accents

Written below are the same strokes as the previous page, but now with the opposite hand playing tap strokes between each stroke.

Play the following exercises with both right hand and left hand lead (RLRL and LRLR).

1

4/4

1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

D T T T T T U T

2

4/4

1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

D T U T D T U T

3

4/4

1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

D T T T U T F T

This last exercise has the opposite hand playing up, down and tap strokes between the original sequence. This creates an interesting pattern and allows both hands to play accents, whichever hand is leading.

4

4/4

1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

D U T D U T F T

Signing off and moving on

Play each exercise with a click track and loop for one minute
Targets are in BPM

60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100	105	110	115	120
Bronze						Silver			Gold			

Reading exercises for the snare drum

The following accent exercises are now played over sixteenth notes and incorporate all strokes to create some interesting rhythms. They should be approached in the following ways:

- Loop each line slowly until you really hear the rhythm.
- As each rhythm becomes more obvious, play without reading or thinking about the order of strokes. Each rhythm has a specific sound that you should eventually be able to play from memory.
- When you are confident in each pattern, play each of them as a snare drum fill in four bar phrases.

1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a

R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L
D T U T D T T T U T F T D T U T

1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a

R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L
D U T D U T D T U T F T D T U T

1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a

R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L
D T U T D U T F T D U T D T U T

1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a

R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L
F T F T D U T F T F T D T T U T

Signing off and moving on

Play each exercise with a click track and loop for one minute
Targets are in BPM

60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100	105	110	115	120
Bronze		Silver		Gold								

Fills with accents

Having played our accent patterns as snare drum fills, we can start to experiment moving the accents around the drums. By placing the accented notes on toms and the non-accented notes on the snare drum, we can create some great ideas for fills.

Initially, we will put the accents that fall on your lead hand on the floor tom and accents that fall on your following hand on the first tom. Later on, you can experiment different combinations.

1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a

R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L
D T U T D T T T U T F T D T U T

1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a

R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L
D U T D U T D T U T F T D T U T

1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a

R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L
D T U T D U T F T D U T D T U T

1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a

R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L
F T F T D U T F T F T D T T U T

Signing off and moving on

Play each fill with a groove of your choice in four bar phrases with suitable backing tracks
Targets are in BPM

60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100	105	110	115	120
Bronze		Silver		Gold								

Rudiments with accents

Most rudiments we have looked at should have accents in them. This is how they should be played now:

Paradiddle

1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a

R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L
D U T T D U T T D U T T D U T T

Inverted paradiddle

1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a

R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L
D T U T D T U T D T U T D T U T

Reversed paradiddle

1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a

R R L R L L R L R R L R R R L R
D T U T D T U T D T U T D T U T

Triplet

1 i n 2 i n 3 i n 4 i n

R L L R L L R L L R L L
F T T F T T F T T F T T

Reversed triplet

1 i n 2 i n 3 i n 4 i n

R R L R R L R R L R R L
T T F T T F T T F T T F

Signing off and moving on

Play each rudiment with a click track and loop for one minute
Targets are in BPM

60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100	105	110	115	120
Bronze		Silver		Gold								