

Rudiments are Related

“Tweak and Ye Shall Find”

by John Kerr

In this article, I'd like to discuss how some rudiments are only a "tweak" different from one another. The method of tweaking is by "compressing" the particular sticking of a rudiment pattern. If we "compress" any even single alternation (a RL or LR) we can create a *flam*. Likewise, an even double (RR or LL) can be compressed to become the "ruff" in a *drag*. In the following examples, the resulting compression will change the rudiment into another one. The idea of being able to do this allows one to develop a unique vocabulary or at least stretch the capacity of what you know.

First, let's take a set of Paradiddles (PAS #16) as in **Ex. 1a** where the doubles are compressed turning the phrase into a variant of a Single Drag (PAS #32).

Ex. 1a

Drum notation for Ex. 1a. It shows a sequence of paradiddle patterns (RL R R L R L L) with compression. The first two paradiddles are compressed into a single drag (RL R R L R L L). The subsequent paradiddles are also compressed into single drags. The notation includes stickings (R, L) and note heads. The text "paradiddle" is written under each compressed section.

Ex. 1b shows how we might use it in a fill scenario:

Ex. 1b

Drum notation for Ex. 1b. It shows a fill scenario using the compressed paradiddle patterns from Ex. 1a. The fill consists of a sequence of compressed paradiddles (RL RRL R LRL R RRL R LRL R RRL) followed by a single drag (RL RRL R LRL R RRL R LRL R RRL).

In this next example **Ex. 2a**, we'll take a Paradiddle riff in 3/8 and compress the alternate singles and accent the second note to create a *flam* and voila – a repeated *Flam Drag*! (PAS #30).

Ex. 2a

Drum notation for Ex. 2a. It shows a Paradiddle riff in 3/8. The pattern consists of RL RRL R LRL R RRL R LRL R RRL. The notation includes stickings (R, L) and note heads. The text "RL RRL R LRL R RRL R LRL R RRL" is written below the notes.

Ex. 2b shows a fill application of this infamous "blidgzhda" with a Chicago Shuffle:

Ex. 2b

Drum notation for Ex. 2b. It shows a fill application of the "blidgzhda" pattern with a Chicago Shuffle. The fill consists of RL RRL R LRL R RRL R LRL R RRL. The notation includes stickings (R, L) and note heads. The text "RL RRL R LRL R RRL R LRL R RRL" is written below the notes.

Similar compression in a Paradiddle-diddle (PAS #19) with the single alternations renders a 5-note grouping – a sort of "flam roll" [Ex. 3a], while compressing the double alternations instead creates a variation of a 6-stroke roll (PAS #8) [Ex. 3b]:

Ex. 3a

Drum notation for Ex. 3a. It shows a Paradiddle-diddle pattern (RLRRLLRLRRLL) with compression. The pattern is compressed into a 5-note grouping (RLRRLLRLRRLL) with stickings (R, L) and note heads. The text "RLRRLLRLRRLL" is written below the notes.

Ex. 3b

2/4

RLRRLL RLRRLL RL RRLL RL RRLL

LRLLRR LRLLRR LR LLRRRL RL LLRR

Both of these, especially combined, make for a very interesting fill:

Finally, let's look at yet another approach to morphing rudiments - **overlapping** singles to create a flam. In **Ex 4a**, a double stroke roll (PAS #6) transitions to a Swiss Army Triplet (PAS #28) by overlapping the last note of the roll into the next note grouping forming a flam (to transition back, just add an extra note at the end of the Swiss Army Triplet!).

...And for a tricky fill using this transition [Ex. 4b]:

Alas, nothing here is new info. For me, more modern players I love to listen: Toss Panos, Gregg Bissonette, Dave DiCenso and Frank Briggs always remind me this kind creativity is available to all of us with a little enthusiastic curiosity and experimentation. Have at it!