

Fixed Stick Control

An Innovative Approach to Rudimental Mastery for the Drumset

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The “What”

What Is The Fixed Sticking Concept?

The fixed sticking concept is a mind bending, vocabulary expanding, stick control treasure chest. I use the treasure chest analogy because if you are like me, whenever you buy a new drum book the figurative booty you seek is drumming concepts that push the boundaries of your technique, musicality, and your imagination. I believe you will find that Fixed Stick Control contains such concepts, especially once you start seeing how it opens your mind and ears to ideas that you may never have discovered otherwise. To quote the great treasure providing Genie from Aladdin, “I don’t think you quite realize what you got here. So why don’t you just ruminate while I illuminate the possibilities.”

In its simplest form, the fixed sticking concept uses an unchanging sticking pattern (2 to 10 notes in length) over a basic rhythmic idea. For example, first familiarize yourself with the following 3 note triplet sticking pattern that is commonly referred to as a “Pugada”, or sometimes a “Pudada” (RLL). I will refer to this sticking throughout this book as “Pugadas”, because it is how I first learned it, and I also find it easier to pronounce onomatopoeically (pronounced PUH-guh-duh). Play the pattern on 2 different sound sources - if you are at the drumset, place your right hand on the floor tom, and your left hand on the snare.



PUGADA'S
♩ = 100
4/4

Now familiarize yourself with the following 9 note rhythmic idea:



♩ = 100
9 NOTE RHYTHMIC IDEA
4/4
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Since the number 9 is evenly divisible by 3 ($9 \div 3 = 3$), you will play three Pugada's in a 9 note idea, and then the pattern will start over when you repeat (don't worry - you won't have to do any math when practicing exercises in this book - I included some basic math here for illustration only). Try applying the Pugada

sticking (RLL) as a “fixed” sticking to the 9 note rhythmic idea as shown below (don’t forget to swing the 8th notes for this example).

PUGADA STICKING APPLIED TO 9 NOTE RHYTHMIC IDEA

Drum notation for a 9-note rhythmic idea using Pugada sticking. The pattern is: > L L < 3 > L L L < 3 > L L. The measure is in 4/4 time.

The previous example is fairly simple to play because a 3 note fixed sticking fits evenly over a 9 note rhythmic idea, and therefore the pattern repeats every measure. Lets mix it up a little now, and apply the same fixed sticking pattern to the following 10 note rhythmic idea shown below:

10 NOTE RHYTHMIC IDEA

Drum notation for a 10-note rhythmic idea. The pattern is: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10. The measure is in 4/4 time.

Since the number 10 is NOT easily divisible by 3, applying the Pugada pattern to the 10 note idea will end up “permutating” the Pugada, and it will actually take 3 measures to complete all variations of the 10 note rhythmic idea with the Pugada fixed sticking. Give it a try as shown below. If you have another drummer with you when you try this, it can be easier (and more fun) to have them accompany you with the 10 note rhythmic idea with singles played on only the snare drum.

PUGADA STICKING APPLIED TO 10 NOTE RHYTHMIC IDEA

Drum notation for a 10-note rhythmic idea using Pugada sticking. The pattern is: > L L < 3 > L L L < 3 > L L. This pattern is repeated three times to cover 10 notes.

If you were able to successfully combine the Pugada fixed sticking with the 10 note rhythmic idea, then hopefully it opened your eyes (and mind) to the

potential of the Fixed Sticking concepts when applied to other stickings/rudiments (i.e. double strokes, paradiddles, flam taps etc.), especially if you consider they can be combined with an infinite number of rhythmic ideas and drumset orchestrations. While this may seem daunting at first, I have done my best to organize the Fixed Stick Control applications in order of difficulty to make the concepts more accessible. Some orchestrations may be familiar to experienced drummers, but you will most likely learn some new drumset orchestrations/licks along the way, all the while learning concepts that train you to “own” your favorite stickings, rudiments and licks so that you can use them in new and creative ways.