

The Boys' Brigade – Bugle Bands & Drum Corps

THE DUMMY'S GUIDE TO TEACHING DRUMMING

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FOREWORD

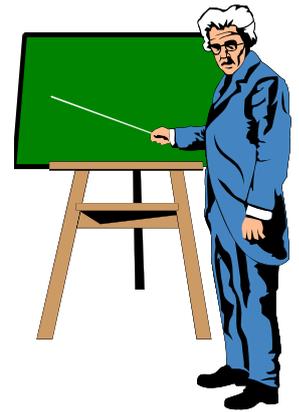
This Guide has been written for the use of those who lack experience in playing or teaching percussion for bugle bands and drum corps, but have a desperate need to do so. If followed, the basic principles and methods explained will enable the reader to teach average students to play a snare drum to an acceptable level and above average students to a high level. Students who are gifted should of course be taught by professionally qualified teachers.

It may seem presumptive to imagine that you can teach students a skill when you know little more about it than they do. However, I can assure you that it is perfectly possible. I started teaching drumming because of a promise I made to an 11 year old boy who was desperate to be a drummer in the company bugle band. Having come along to band practice eager to join, he was turned away by the drumming instructor who didn't want to teach another drummer because he was satisfied with the three he already had. The lad ran home in tears and was immediately brought back to the church by his mother. She was angry and he was sobbing, and by chance they arrived at the same time as me. I was shocked to learn what had happened and assured them that he could and would be taught to play a drum. However the drumming instructor was not to be persuaded to change his mind. I was faced with a dilemma. Either I would have to break the promise I had rashly made to a distraught little boy or else, despite my ignorance of the subject, would have to try to teach him myself. My conscience dictated the latter course. So, when I gave him his first lesson I was only four days more experienced at playing a drum than he was. All my scant knowledge was gained from reading The Boys' Brigade Bugle Band Hand Book. And so we began - slowly and hesitantly at first, but we persevered week by week. And to cut a long story short, exactly 5 months later he won 3rd place in the BB London District Drumming Championship. The tears had turned to joy and laughter!

That achievement speaks more about my first student's latent ability, enthusiasm, determination to practice and youthful self-confidence than it does about my ability to teach. I was after all just a dummy then. Now, after more than 30 years of teaching boys to play drums, I know far more than I did then. However, what I learnt from that first rather amazing result has been confirmed over the years by the achievements of numerous other students who I have taught. Put simply, if you explain clearly the basic techniques and rudiments and motivate them to practice regularly, even students of average ability will do well and the most able ones will just fly away.

THE DRUMMERS SCHOOL CONCEPT

Over the years I have taught many students with a wide range of natural abilities. All of them have started learning with some enthusiasm and many have persevered making progress slowly and steadily. Others have gone off like a rocket. However, there have been a significant percentage who either through a lack of ability or a lack of practice or sometimes both, have failed to progress to any reasonable degree of competence. They could manage the basics, but then became stuck. Continuing to teach students who make no progress is a waste of everyone's time. It is for this reason that I have found it advantageous to use a formal method of teaching called "The Drummers School".



The Drummers School starts with a six week Induction Course and continues with an Improver's Course lasting some months depending on the ability and progress of the students. Only those students who pass the exam at the end of the Induction Course are allowed to continue on into the Improver's Course. This first part of the system works extremely well and since its introduction none of my students have failed the exam. The penalty for failure is to stop and hand in your equipment. Therefore, in my experience students who drop out do so in the Improver's Course. Some do so of their own accord having lost interest or not wanting to practice. However, there comes a time when one has to deal with those who clearly won't make the grade, but don't want to stop. Therefore, all students are set some short term goals that must be achieved or else they have to take up another instrument. Hence, there are former Drummers School students playing Bells, Bass Drum, Tenor Drum and Cymbals in our Drum Corps - and some to an excellent standard.

Examples of short term goals include learning to play the easier drum solos or beatings to Graded Sequences #2, #3 and #4 or the beatings to simple bugle or bells marches. The duration of the Improver's Course is variable, but successful students should be able to pass the Grade One Drummers Badge Exam within 12 months and most do so even quicker. Graduation from the Drummers School by passing this test should be rewarded with a Certificate of Merit, points towards their Brigade badge work and the presentation of a badge such as the drum lapel badge supplied by Corporatestix. I thoroughly recommend that the Drummers School concept be used rather than teaching in an ad hoc manner. Further progress by students and the gaining of all the practical skills required of drummers will be attained by ongoing attendance at band practices, further tuition by the instructor, lots and lots of practice and growing taller and stronger. Although graduate students should still be set goals and rewarded for further progress by the award of additional certificates, this does not lend itself to a rigid syllabus-based teaching system. Examples of Drumming Grades 1, 2 and 3 examination papers are provided in the Annex to this Guide. Award of these grades is best done annually or when students attain the standard recommended. The Brigade no longer has national drummers badge tests, nor indeed a drummers badge at all, so you're not obligated to use these. However, passing a formal test and meeting the other requirements suggested is a proven aid to keeping students interested and giving them a sense of achievement.

SOME INITIAL THOUGHTS AND ADVICE

Students Lower Age Limit Not-with-standing Brigade Regulations, I strongly advise that students should be at least 9 years of age before you start teaching them. My first student was a very small 11 year old Company Section boy - smaller even than all of my current Junior Section boys and some of my Anchor Boys! Even if there had been a spare drum available he could not possibly have managed to march and play with the heavy, 12" deep Premier snare drums we used then. A 10" deep, light-weight drum had to be bought for him. Since then, a number of 8" deep x 12" diameter Premier Junior Parade drums have been purchased for the use of my beginner drummers, but even 9 year olds struggle with these drums at first. Physical size is not the only drawback. Young children whilst they may have some aptitude, generally have short attention spans and find routine daily practice a challenge. Better to wait a year or two than have them lose interest due to immaturity.

Guides, Manuals, Audio Visual and Internet Before starting your first drumming class, it will be wise to read through this Guide and the associated teaching notes as well as any other publications that you can find, such as The Boys' Brigade Bugle Band Hand Book. The 2007 reprint/upgrade of the original BB Band Book contains the beatings for simple exercises, graded sequences and drum solos as well as new material such as additional basic and advanced bugle marches. It also has some information on playing techniques and drumming rudiments, but is somewhat lacking in the "nitty-gritty" detail of teaching and playing methods. There are some other good UK publications such as "The Side Drum Tutor & Text Book" written and published by David Cherry and the "Premier Drum Corps Guide". I doubt that the latter publication is still in print, but it has a sub-section entitled "How to form a Drum Corps in Six Weeks" and is very informative. There are also many modern US published guides to drum corps and marching band percussion as well as some very advanced publications and audio visual material. Also consider using the internet to find sites with free video drumming lessons. Search for the education pages of the drum head makers, Evans. Vic Firth, the US drum stick manufacturer also has an excellent education section on their website. Look for basic lessons by Mark Wessels, Dr Wooton and Jeff Queen. A word of caution however, these sticksmen (apparently a new cool name for drummers!) are among the best in the world. They are demonstrating many advanced rudiments and methods of performing drum rolls that will not be possible for you or your students to emulate in the short term, and possibly not in the long term either. However, there is a lot of good stuff on various website and it is well worth doing a search and watching it. The 40 internationally recognised drum rudiments can be found on the website of the Percussive Arts Society of America.

Sticks and Practice Pads Most teaching and virtually all student's home practice should be done on a practice pad. Playing a drum at home is usually too noisy to be tolerated by student's family and neighbours. You will need to obtain a pair of drum sticks and a practice pad for your own use and others for your students. There are a bewildering variety of sticks and practice pads on the market, but it is best to use relatively cheap sticks to start with. Drum sticks should be treated as disposable items in the medium term. In due course, your best students will inevitably want better ones and will either buy their own or can be rewarded for progress by swapping the cheap ones for more expensive models. Some younger students may mislay them, have them

broken by siblings, chewed by the dog or will wear out the beads by playing on rough surfaces. Also, it is best to start with basic, low cost practice pads, preferably with a larger, say 10" diameter, playing surface. You will find that drums, cymbals and drumming accessories are generally still sized in Imperial dimensions due to their pre-metric UK origins and the continuing use of the inch in the USA. Smaller diameter pads are less suitable for young students and elaborate versions including those with built-in metronomes are quite expensive. Up-to-date information concerning drumming accessory suppliers is contained in the attached Equipment Advice Sheet in the Annex at the end of this Guide. You are strongly advised to charge your students' parents a deposit equal to the value of the sticks, practice pad and ring binder file of notes and music that you issue to them at their first lesson. If the student drops out, a full refund can be made on return of these items in good condition. If you never get them back, then at least you will have money in the bank to finance the next purchases. Over the years, and prior to introducing this system, dozens of such items that I loaned to students have disappeared, never to be seen again. It is also worth insisting that lost or broken drum sticks are replaced at the student's own expense. Hopefully, this will encourage them to take better care of their equipment.

Students Notes Obtain a ring binder file for each student. Copy, punch and insert into these files sets of the Drum Notes for Beginners, associated music and other hand out sheets supplied with this Guide. Issue these files to students at their first lesson and insist that they bring them to every subsequent lesson. You will need to make constant reference to the notes and music as teaching proceeds. You may wish to provide a supermarket "bag for life" to put their notes, sticks and practice pad in and do remember to get the deposit from their parents before they go off with it all at the end of the first lesson!

Preparing Yourself Your first and vital objective should be to gain a grasp of the simple basics yourself. Stick grips, wrist action and the method of executing single strokes, double strokes and double bounce strokes. The expectation is that your students will gain enough knowledge and skills in the first 6 weeks of tuition to enable them to play the basic rudiments well enough to pass the Induction Course exam. Not one single student that I have taught has failed this first exam. That should be your aim too and if they can manage it, so can you. This does not mean you have to become a proficient drummer all at once. Children and young people tend to learn far faster than adults. However, it is expected that students will practice on a daily basis so that they constantly improve. If they practice regularly and for a sufficient time, they will inevitably make progress, and so can you. But remember, no practice equals no progress and that holds true even for the students of world champions! Remember, your main role is that of a facilitator and encourager. It is only by repeated execution of the simple basic strokes, at first very slowly and then at increasing speed that your students will build up muscle memory and the dexterity to play a drum well. Progression from the basic to the more advanced rudiments in a likewise manner will build up their skills to ever increasing levels. Becoming a competent drummer is predominantly a result of what they do for themselves, not what you do for them. If you are a novice, your most able students will exceed your ability in just a few short weeks. Let that spur you on to practice longer and harder.

Recruiting your Students, Class Sizes, Room Layout, etc If you intend to start teaching several students together it is best to plan the course and advertise the dates and times of the lessons and the exam well beforehand. Ideally, the lessons should be held weekly without a break and followed on the 7th week by the exam. Lessons should last no more than 45 minutes. I have taught a group of 6 students on one occasion which was very challenging, but mostly it has been between one and four students at a time. Individual teaching is the ideal, but obviously if there are several to be taught, individual teaching takes much more time. It is best to start with a couple of students until you have gained experience. Set up the room with one or more tables and a chair each for the students. If you have small students try to ensure that the tables are of a suitable height. I have had to use a small dais for some of the shortest of my students to stand on. It is best to have a means of displaying music, posters, etc. Get a copy of Graded Sequence #1 enlarged to A3 and laminated for use as a teaching aid. This will enable you to point at the bars as your students play them and they can follow without having to look down. Later, you can do likewise with Graded Sequence #2 and other music and posters if you wish.

THE INDUCTION COURSE SYLLABUS

Lesson Content The following syllabus summarizes the material to be covered during the Induction Course. The procedure for each lesson is also described in some detail.

Lesson #1	Care of Equipment Stick Grips Single Strokes Double Bounce Stroke	Practice Regime and Promises Wrist Actions Double Strokes Wrist Loosening Exercise
Lesson #2	Assessment of Student's Progress The Single Paradiddle Graded Sequence #1 – first line	Mamma Dadda Counting System for 2/4 time
Lesson #3	Assessment of Student's Progress 5-stroke Roll Single Stroke Roll	Long Roll Graded Sequence #1 – second line Drum Drill
Lesson#4	Assessment of Student's Progress Playing on the Drum	9-stroke Roll
Lesson #5	Assessment of Student's Progress Revision	17-stroke Roll
Lesson #6	Assessment of Student's Progress	Revision
Exam	Drum Drill – Demonstrate correctly Play Graded Sequence #1 with repeats from memory or following the score Play to an acceptable standard the Rudiments Paradiddle Long Roll Presentation of Certificate of Merit, etc	At Ease Attention Sticks Ready 5-stroke Roll 9-stroke Roll

Lesson #1 Start with the students sitting down behind the tables. Welcome them to the Drumming School and issue their equipment. Tell your students about the need to practice and why, and get them to make a promise that they will spend a minimum of 15 minutes practising every day. You need to keep on driving that need into them week after week for the rest of their days in your Drum Corps. They will eventually break their promises, but hopefully not your heart! Quickly explain what they will need to do to become competent drummers as detailed on page #1 of Drum Notes for Beginners. Then get on with practical things including the method of holding the drum sticks and the wrist actions. Show them how to make the basic single rebound (full) stroke and let them practice the technique with both right and left hands for a short time. Tell them briefly about the various other strokes and rudiments that they have to learn and then quickly go on to explain and demonstrate the different types of single and double strokes. Then show them how to make the double bounce stroke. All this information is on pages #2 - #5 of "Drum Notes for Beginners". If you have already mastered the double bounce stroke yourself you can help them by holding their wrists and bouncing the stick under your control. Spend a reasonable time on this as their first vital short term goal is to come to the next lesson having mastered this technique. You should then have covered the method of playing hand to hand single strokes including rebound (full), down, tap and up strokes, the double stroke variants including the double rebound, the double buck and the diddle and the double bounce stroke. Finally, show them how to perform the wrist loosening exercise. This is done by crossing the drum sticks so the bead ends overlap well and then grasping them tightly in the right fist. With the arm outstretched they must make slow twisting rotations of the wrist and arm, gradually increasing speed. After about 30 seconds change to the left hand and repeat. This helps to strengthen and loosen up their wrists, warming the muscles prior to practising. When they get good at this action, the sticks will make the air swoosh. This should be enough for Lesson #1. You may want to set the scene for Lesson #2 by telling them about Graded Sequence #1 and the rudiments they will be taught next time including the Mamma Dadda and Single Paradiddle. Point out the 1st Week Practice Instruction Sheet and send them off with a chocolate biscuit.

Lesson #2 Follow the same basic procedure each week with tables and chairs set out ready. Sit them down to start with and interrogate them about their daily practising. Then get them to stand and do the wrist loosening exercise (take care they don't hit each other while doing this). Always start the lessons with the wrist loosening exercise on both hands and followed this by a warm up session of repetitive single strokes such as 8 on a hand or hand to hand, starting slowly and increasing speed. Do this by getting them to copy you with a series of single strokes, one hand at a time, then hand to hand at increasing speed and then the same for double strokes. Stop and sit them down. Make an assessment of each student's ability to perform the double bounce stroke correctly. Get them to stand one at a time while doing this. Demonstrate how to play the Mamma Dadda rudiment by slowly making open double bounce strokes alternately with the right and left hands. Let them practice this and check to see the sticks come to the same height. Remember, always start teaching the rudiments and drum beatings at the slowest speed possible. Always give students lots of praise when they make progress or master a rudiment or manage to play a phrase correctly. Also, always praise students who stop when they make an error. You will soon get the hang of spotting when they do this and the praise is for them knowing they are wrong, not for

being wrong. Students can only correct their own errors when they know they have made a mistake. Watch your students stick grips and immediately these slip from the optimum position, tell them to correct the grip, or physically do it for them. Get your students to sit down again. Now is the time to introduce playing a piece of music. Graded Sequence #1 is ideal as it consists solely of single strokes. You will need to master playing this simple sequence yourself. Teach it to your students a bar at a time, pointing to the bars and notes displayed on your enlarged poster. Don't insert the counting on the poster or on their file copy. Part of this exercise is aimed at getting them to read the musical score as it is written. However, while going through this get them to count every note by the system set out in the 2/4 time bar examples issued with Drum Notes for Beginners. The old adage is "if you can say it, you can play it". Get your students to count each bar out loud first and then say it and play it at the same time. This is a great aid to learning and playing the basic rhythms. The objective is that they learn by heart the first line of this sequence by the following week's lesson. Finally, introduce the Paradiddle rudiment and demonstrate the hand sequence they must learn. Do it very slowly and let each student try it out. Page #8 of Drum Notes for Beginners explains exactly how to do it. Concentrate on hand sequence at this stage not the stroke type variations or accents. Leave that till later. That concludes Lesson #2. Point out the 2nd Week Practice Instruction Sheet and send them off with a chocolate biscuit.

Lesson #3 Start this lesson in a similar way to Lesson #2. When all students have warmed up, get them to sit down. Take one student at a time and check their progress by getting them to stand and play the rudiments or music that they have learnt for just a couple of minutes. The others must sit still until it's their turn. Check any tendency to join in, taping along or talking. Try to give equal time to each student and do not spend too long with the slower ones. In this lesson you will introduce the build up for the 5-stroke roll. The method is set out on page #6 of Drum Notes for Beginners. Before you do this, introduce the subject of rolls in general and deal briefly with the single stroke roll. This is just a series of single strokes played hand to hand starting slowly and getting faster. It is an essential development stage to playing accurate semi-quaver patterns. Explain that this hand to hand method is one way of doing it and that the Paradiddle is a different way of sticking the same thing. Let them practice the 5-stroke roll build up using double bounce strokes. Stop and get them to sit down. Teach the second line of Graded Sequence #1. Now is the time to get the drums out. If possible you should have a drum and carriage (sling) for each student. Put a carriage on each student and adjust the length to suit their height. Put the drum on the carriage and let them practice simple drum drill. Either teach the technique used in your own band or the Royal Marines' system described on page #13 of Drum Notes for Beginners. Small children find playing big drums very tiring and painful at the right shoulder and left thigh. Use a soft pad under the drum carriage at the shoulder if necessary. Your students will also want to try playing the music and rudiments they have learnt on the drum. Only do short periods on the drum at first - say 5 minutes and then go back to playing on a practice pad or table top. Otherwise put the drum on a stand. That concludes Lesson #3. Point out the 3rd Week Practice Instruction Sheet and send them off with a chocolate biscuit.

Lesson #4 Start this lesson in a similar way to Lesson #3. When all students have warmed up, get them to sit down. Take one student at a time and check their progress by getting them to stand and play the rudiments or music that they have learnt for just a couple of minutes. Alternate the students through each rudiment. Practice Graded Sequence #1 with repeats and volume changes both one student at a time and then all playing together. Now for another new rudiment. In this lesson you will introduce the build up for the 9-stroke roll. The method is similar to the build up for the 5-stroke roll and is set out on page #7 of Drum Notes for Beginners. Practice this rudiment for a while and then get the drums out for a short time allowing the students to play any of the rudiments and music they can. That concludes Lesson #4. Point out the 4th Week Practice Instruction Sheet and send them off with a chocolate biscuit.

Lesson #5 Follow the procedure used in lesson #4. Now for the last rudiment in the Induction Course. In this lesson you will introduce the build up for the 17-stroke roll (3-pace roll). Again, the method is similar to the 5-stroke and 9-stroke roll build ups and is set out on page #7 of Drum Notes for Beginners. By this stage all students should be able to play to a basic standard an open, double bounce roll in the format for the long roll, the 5-stroke roll, the 9-stroke roll and should soon master the 17-stroke roll. They should also be able to play a Paradiddle for at least 3 bars at an acceptable tempo – that is somewhere between slow time and quick time tempo (60 – 120 beats per minute). Get the drums out again for a short time allowing the students to play the rudiments and music they have learnt. Also, get them to practice the “at ease”, “attention” and “ready” drum drill positions. That concludes Lesson #5. Point out the 5th Week Practice Instruction Sheet and send them off with a chocolate biscuit.

Lesson #6 This lesson has no new material, but should be devoted to revision and practice with the objective of improving the standard of everything that has already been taught. You may at this stage want to introduce a short rhythm copy session. Play a simple short phrase which each student must repeat correctly after you. Praise those who get it right and move on to the next student. Say - ANo, listen@ and repeat the phrase if they get it wrong. Start with single stroke phrases and move on to those containing other rudiments as soon as your students can play them. Phrases of more than 2 bars should be repetitive. This is something that you should do almost every week when students move on to the Improver's Course. That concludes Lesson #6. Point out the 6th Week Practice Instruction Sheet and the Assessments Sheet and stress that the Exam is to be held the following week so extra practice is an essential. Send them off with one last chocolate biscuit.

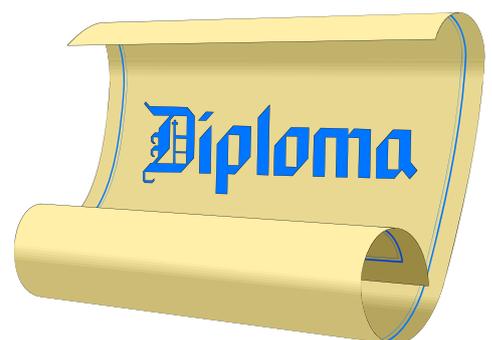
Conducting the Exam As the exam will not occupy much time during the evening, it is wise to begin with, say 20 minutes of practice and revision before starting the tests. Passing the Exam after 6 weeks of the Induction Course must be treated seriously. If possible get someone other than you to test your students. A sample test paper is provided in the Annex to this Guide and a copy should be made for the assessment of each student. Those who pass the exam should be awarded a Certificate of Merit. You can copy the example provided onto card and punch it ready for inserting into their ring binder files or make your own certificate. It is also good to give them a small prize such as chocolate bar or packet of sweets. Success allows them to continue into the Improver's Course, which should if possible start the following week.

Failure Those students who fail should be given a chance to take the test again after 2 weeks of further home practice. You are strongly advised to stop teaching students who fail the test a second time. Failure to pass the test will be due either to a complete lack of ability or a lack of practice or possibly both. As I have already said, every student who has gone through the Induction Course with me has passed at their first try. Some only just and others with flying colours - but they have all managed it. Students who drop out usually do so in the Improver's Course because they don't practice and get bored. Encourage them to try other instruments - bass drum, tenor drum, cymbals, bells or bugle.

THE IMPROVER'S COURSE

Format of the Improver's Course Lessons should now last approximately one hour. It is not possible to describe in detail the content of each lesson in this stage of the Drummers School, nor is the duration of the course fixed. These matters will be dependent on how many students you have in the group, their ability and their willingness to practice. Inevitably some students progress faster than others. If there is a large difference in ability between them, you could consider doing individual coaching, but as I have already pointed out, this takes a lot more of your time. At this stage of the Drummers School, students should have a grasp of the basic strokes and rudiments and the objective is now for them to improve their ability to use these to play more advanced exercises, solos and marches. Build on what has already been learnt. Keep on practising Graded Sequence #1 and use it as a simple drum solo for the band so that any new students can quickly join in with the more advanced ones. Teach Graded Sequence #2 as soon as students can play a 9-stroke roll properly. This should also be used as a simple solo that all the drummers can join in with. Then teach the 2/4 time drum solos in the Bugle Band Hand Book starting with Grenadiers and Drum Solo #1. At this stage you should introduce the 6/8 time signature and teach drum solo Grampian Hills. Leave Drum Solos #2 and #3 to last as these are the most difficult to play. Use the instruction sheets supplied with this guide to understand how to break down the drum solos into short easy to learn sections. After this you can start teaching the beatings to other simple bugle or bells marches. Try to set students some realistic short term targets. For instance, learning a solo or graded sequence, or mastering a new rudiment such as the Flam and Drag, by a given time.

Try to make your lessons fun! Introduce a number of quizzes into each lesson - naming parts of the drum, recognising notes and rests, knowing the meaning of musical terms, etc. Simple stick tricks and stick tossing challenges can be used later on. You will also need to progress your drummers marching and playing skills. Introduce very short periods of marching with the drum, say 3 to 5 minutes maximum to start with. Progress from straightforward marching with the drum to marching and playing a tap or a simple beating such as Graded Sequence #1. Marching in step whilst playing a drum to an acceptable standard only comes with a lot of practice. Start to make progress on their playing skills and repertoire. Graduation from the Drummers School by passing the Grade One Drummers Badge Test should be a major medium range target at say 6 to 12 months from beginning the Induction Course.



TEACHING MUSIC READING AND STICKING TECHNIQUES

Reading Drum Music Fluent sight reading of music is desirable, but in my experience most students will not reach a very high standard. However, that should not deter you from pursuing this aim during the Improver's Course and thereafter. Always teach drum beatings with the score in front of the students so they gradually learn to associate the rhythm patterns with the bar shapes. Avoid teaching "by ear" as this may perpetuate errors. In the Annex to this Guide some examples of simple 2/4 time beatings are provided for your assistance. These are not intended to be learnt by heart, but are for sight reading practice. If you use them, you will need to gain a basic ability to sight read yourself. Split all drum beatings into a number of simple parts. When the student can play all the separate parts correctly, start to put them together - it's like stringing words into a sentence.

Sticking Techniques Many of your students will be right handed so teach all the rudiments leading with their right hand first. Encourage them to practice leading with their left hand as well. However, most students will not become truly ambidextrous drummers. Left handed drummers should be allowed to lead with their left hand. Work from their strengths to progress faster. With lots of practice, most students will be able to play simple rudiments such as 5-stroke rolls leading with either hand. The sticking techniques for playing 2/4 time and 6/8 time music will be explained in detail later.

UNDERSTANDING 2/4 TIME SIGNATURE BEATINGS

Basic Single Stroke 2/4 Time Rhythm Patterns The basic 2/4 time bar contains only two on-beat crotchets and because of its simplicity, it should always be taught first. In this basic format the bars are counted One, Two and so on - usually at a tempo of 120 beats per minute. On the march, the left foot comes to the ground on One and the right foot on Two.

More complex rhythm patterns in 2/4 time are achieved by replacing the crotchets with two quavers or four semi-quavers. Four quavers to the bar are counted 1 – N – 2 – N and so forth. Eight semi-quavers to the bar are counted 1 – A – N – D – 2 – A – N – D and so forth. You may find other Guides that use 1 - & - 2 - & for counting quavers, but I would strongly advise you to use the counting format suggested in this Guide. Students should be encouraged to count out loud the 2/4 time rhythm patterns starting at a slow tempo first and then increasing to full speed. All the other 2/4 time rhythms are achieved by leaving out one or more of the semi-quavers in the bar. It will be easier to understand this if the bars are split into two parts 1 – A – N – D and 2 – A – N – D. Variations of the first part bar will be identical to the second part bar. The first note of each bar is always counted One unless it is a rest, in which case it is counted Rest. Similarly, the second on-beat note is always counted Two. Only on-beat rests are counted. In Table 1 on page 11, all the possible variations of 2/4 time single stroke part bars are shown together with the counting. You will note that there are 16 of these part bars which can be joined in any combination of pairs to form a total of 256 variants of countable full 2/4 time bars. This may seem frightening at first glance, but the vast majority of drum beatings use only a small selection of the simpler combinations. It will also be found that in some cases, bars that contain fewer, and especially off-beat, notes are more difficult to count and play than those containing more notes. I told you it was simple!

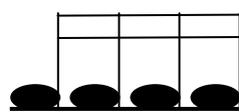
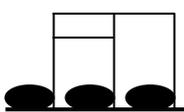
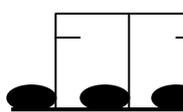
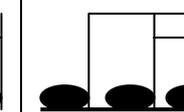
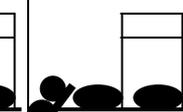
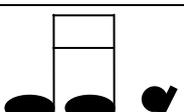
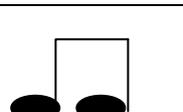
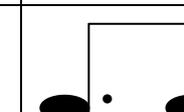
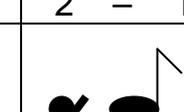
Notation and counting resulting from deleting 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4 semi-quavers from the standard 2/4 time part bar						
- 0	 1 - A - N - D 2 - A - N - D					
- 1	 1 - A - N 2 - A - N	 1 - A - D 2 - A - D	 1 - N - D 2 - N - D	 R - A - N - D		
- 2	 1 - A 2 - A	 1 - N 2 - N	 1 - D 2 - D	 R - A - N	 R - A - D	 R N - D
- 3	 1 2	 R - A	 R - N	 R - D		
- 4	 R					

Table 1: Countable 2/4 time part bars

The Importance of Teaching Paradiddles There have been times in the past when the teaching of Paradiddles has been neglected in most Boys' Brigade bugle bands. Some instructors may have thought this rudiment not worth bothering with. Others will have found that students dislike doing the intensive practice necessary to perform the "Diddle" rudiments properly. However, mastering the basic Single Paradiddle is very important for any good drummer and the ability to play alternating single and double strokes will allow the student to perform many of the other rudiments to a high standard. This is why it is taught starting in Lesson #2 of the Drummers School Induction Course. And it can pay dividends. In the 1987 London District Drumming Championship the main test piece was taken from the bugle march "Larbert" which contains semi-quaver groups marked specifically to be played as Paradiddles. The Army judge commenting before the results were announced said "There is only one boy here tonight who can play a Paradiddle". The boy was 12 years old and by no means the best all round drummer in that competition, but he could play beautiful, classical Paradiddles, and that won him the trophy. That's what lots of practice can do!

UNDERSTANDING 6/8 TIME SIGNATURE BEATINGS

Basic Single Stroke 6/8 Time Rhythm Patterns As illustrated in Table 1 on page 11, the basic 2/4 time bar contains only two on-beat crotchets, The more complex single stroke rhythm patterns are achieved by adding more notes to start with – doubling up to 4 quavers and 8 semi-quavers – and then removing one or more of these notes. By contrast, the basic 6/8 time bar contains six quavers written as two 3-note groups. The first note of each group falls on the beat and is counted 1 – N – D – 2 – N – D. In 6/8 time, there is limited scope to insert extra notes apart from say, converting the first 3 quavers into 6 semi-quavers and adding a finishing note to form a single-stroke Seven. Even this is challenging for less experienced or less able students to play. The single-stroke Seven is effectively a short single-stroke roll which is rarely seen in 6/8 time bugle or bells marches. However, it is used in the 2/4 time bugle march “Larbert” written as triplets. See Page 48 of The Boys’ Brigade Bugle Band Hand Book.

Hence, the principal means of varying the basic 6/8 time bar rhythm is to remove one or more of the six quavers. Most commonly, the change is achieved by removing the second quaver of each group of three to form a crotchet, quaver, crotchet, quaver pattern which resembles the rhythm found in the nursery rhyme “Humpty Dumpty”. When this rhythm is repeated bar after bar it forms the basis of the Royal Marines’ style 6/8 time stick drill. Whilst other rhythm patterns can be achieved by leaving out the first and/or third quavers of the groups of three, this is much less common and such rhythms are far more difficult to play. These more complex 6/8 time patterns are only occasionally found in drum beatings for bugle and bells marches and need not be taught to students until it is absolutely necessary and/or when they are very experienced players. Another rhythm which occurs in 6/8 time is achieved by moving the second quaver up towards the third quaver. This displacement is indicated in the music by adding a dot after the first quaver (increasing its value by a half) and adding an extra backward projecting tail to the second quaver so turning it into a semi-quaver. This has the affect of converting the evenly spaced “triplet” sound into a “jerky” rhythm that resembles the word “Amsterdam”. The notation for this can be seen in Graded Sequence #6 on page 42 of The Boys’ Brigade Bugle Band Handbook.

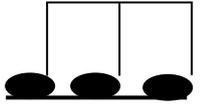
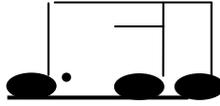
The basic 6/8 time part bar	These two part bars sound the same, but the notation is different		Count the T very short as in T ooth
 <p>1 – N – D 2 – N – D</p>	 <p>1 – D 2 – D Humpty Dumpty</p>	 <p>1 – D 2 – D Humpty Dumpty</p>	 <p>1 - T - D 2 - T - D Amsterdam</p>

Table 2: Basic 6/8 time part bars.

Sticking Techniques for 6/8 Time Single Stroke Patterns Always begin teaching students to play 6/8 time single stroke patterns hand to hand, leading with their dominant hand. This will normally be the right hand, but reverse this for left handed students. The right hand should be used for the first beat of the bar when playing the basic 6 quaver pattern and for the first and second beats of the bar when playing the “Humpty Dumpty” rhythm. When this technique has been mastered, you can introduce some alternative methods of sticking. With the basic 6 quaver bars, the alternative sticking is generally referred to as “Swiss”. If you look at the PAS International Drumming Rudiments chart, you will find Rudiment #28 called the “Swiss Army Triplet”. This is an advanced rudiment inserting grace notes before triplet semi-quavers and should only be taught in this strict format to very able or advanced students. However, it will be seen that the triplets are written to be played as repeated R – R – L – R – R – L patterns using twice as many strokes on the right hand as on the left. This can be swapped round for left handed students or for advanced students. However, in general, any repeated triplet rhythm pattern played using twice as many strokes on one hand as on the other can be referred to as “Swiss” sticking. Hence, another variant technique is to play R – L – R – R – L – R repeated groups. This needs to be taught starting very slowly indeed and building up the speed. When mastered, it will add a stylish appearance and sound to the performance and most students eventually find the technique easier to execute than the basic hand to hand version. With practice, it will also be possible for even average students to insert “Flam” or “Drag” grace notes into the triplets using the left stick.

Technique for Playing 6/8 Time Royal Marine’s Stick Drill In order to play the crotchet, quaver, crotchet, quaver (Humpty Dumpty) rhythm whilst performing stick drill, it is necessary for students to learn an alternative to the hand to hand beating technique first taught. This new technique substitutes double strokes played hand to hand for the single hand to hand strokes. This takes the form of the double “Buck” stroke referred to in Lesson #1 of the Induction Course. Leading always with the RIGHT hand (it must be done this way irrespective of the student’s dominant hand), a double stroke is played using a “Down Stroke” followed by an “Up Stroke” counting 1 – D and then another “Buck” stroke using the left stick counting 2 – D. Start teaching this with the sticks held low and at a very slow speed. The wrists and forearms should use a moderate whipping action which is akin to the “Moeller” motion referred to in Lesson #1 of the Induction Course. This is not the full “Moeller” technique, but in order to bring the sticks up to the “Ready” position when the stick drill is performed correctly, there must be a degree of whipping of the wrists and forearms. The technique should be developed by practising from low and slow to faster and higher until the disengaged stick can be brought into the horizontal position lightly striking the student’s upper lip. With lots of practice this can be done smartly at the halt and then further developed to be performed to a high standard on the march. See the Royal Marines’ Stick Drill chart for the musical notation both with, and without rolls, for 8 bar and 16 bar sequences. Students should learn these simple Royal Marines’ stick drill routines by heart.

Playing 6/8 Time Stroke Rolls The stroke rolls found in 6/8 time are written as quaver, crotchet, dotted crotchet or dotted minim notes tied to a finishing note. If these are compared to the stroke rolls found in 2/4 time beatings, it will be seen that the dotted crotchet roll in 6/8 time is identical in sound and execution to the crotchet roll (9-stroke roll) in 2/4 time. Similarly, the dotted minim roll in 6/8 time is identical to the minim roll (17-stroke roll or 3 pace roll) in 2/4 time. Usually written on the beat these rolls are counted 1 – 2 or 2 – 1 or 1 – 2 – 1. The quaver roll in 2/4 time is the 5-stroke roll and in 6/8 time this short roll has to be played using the same basic 5-stroke format. However, it will be noted that a 6/8 time quaver (6 to a bar) is actually significantly shorter than a 2/4 time quaver (4 to a bar) and hence this roll needs to be compressed by being played a little quicker when it is used in 6/8 time. The other common roll used in 6/8 time is the crotchet roll which is normally tied to a quaver. These are written as rolled variants of the “Humpty Dumpty” note pattern counting 1 – D – 2 – D. This roll is strictly to be played as a 7-stroke roll executed right to left or left to right and leading each time with the weaker hand and finishing with the dominant hand. However, playing 7-stroke rolls correctly is very challenging to less experienced or less able students and hence it may be necessary to employ a different approach for them. In the same way that you will need to teach students to compress the 5-stroke roll to play the 6/8 time quaver roll, you can teach them to elongate the 5-stroke roll to sound like a 6/8 time crotchet roll by playing it a little slower. This will enable students to lead and finish the rolls on their dominant hand, which is much easier. The musical notation for crotchet rolls can be seen in Graded Sequence #6 on page 42 of The Boys’ Brigade Bugle Band Hand Book.

Correcting Sticking Faults There are a number of frequently observed errors that occur in 6/8 time beatings. The most common is that of students playing a group of 3 quavers plus a final stroke as a 2/4 time rhythm. This typically sounds like the counting 1 – A – N – 2 in 2/4 time instead of the evenly spaced and rounded 1 – N – D – 2 in 6/8 time. To help correct this tendency, encourage students to slow down very slightly and push the sticks up somewhat more (and to an equal height) which will help to round out the triplet-like sound. This needs watching in both Grampian Hills and Drum Solo #3 on page 41 of The Boys’ Brigade Bugle Band Handbook. Check the playing of these two solos as another fault is that the quaver roll at the end of the first line of DS Grampian Hills is sometimes substituted for two strokes whilst the two strokes at the end of the last line of DS #3 are sometimes substituted for a quaver roll.

ROLL FORMATS

Some information on roll formats will be found in Drum Notes for Beginners and writing a long explanation of this subject is far too complex a task for this Guide. Suffice it to say that in most BB bands, rolls have almost always been taught by use of the bouncing stick which is built up through the Mamma Dadda rudiment to a closed roll. This I have termed the “Double Bounce Roll” to distinguish it from the Double Stroke Roll which is the roll format described in PAS charts. This is a question of the difference between using two wrist actions to make the two strokes rather than one wrist action with a double bounce to make the two strokes. Some purists deprecate the use of the bouncing stick for building up rolls, but in my experience this has been the one and only method recommended by those who have taught drumming in the BB. What seems certain is that the Double Bounce Roll is much easier for students to master and play to an acceptable standard and for the purposes of your teaching I would commend this to you.

DEFINITIONS

Although it is not intended to be exhaustive, the following list of definitions may be found useful and informative. Common musical terms and the remainder of the names of the parts of the drum may be found elsewhere in this Guide and in Drum Notes for Beginners. Other information can be found in the Boys' Brigade Bugle Band Book and other manuals and publications.

- Back Sticking** Using the back of the drum sticks to play single or double strokes. There are various versions referred to by Jeff Queen as Old School Back Sticking, Three Way Back Sticking and 360⁰ Back Sticking.
- Bar** A bar is an equal time period in the musical score. Quick time marches have bars of 1 second duration when played at 120 beats per minute. The physical length of the bar in the written score will vary depending on how many notes have to be inserted into it. They all last the same time irrespective of their physical length.
- Bar Line** A vertical line which divides the written score into Bars. Double Bar Lines are commonly written at the beginning and end of phrases.
- Batter Head** The upper membrane or playing surface of the drum. Also see Skin.
- Bis** In the written score at the end of a phrase this means Repeat or play twice. From the Italian and French as in "biscuit" – twice cooked.
- Busking** When drummers use an improvised beating instead of playing the correct written music.
- Buzz Roll** A smooth, long roll produced by multiple bounces of the sticks. This is also known as the Multiple Bounce Roll, the Pressed Roll or the Orchestral Roll.
- Chop Sticks** Striking the drum sticks together.
- Close Up** A command used when a band has to pass through a narrower gap than the full spaced file width of the band. The width is reduced as the players squeeze tightly together to transit through the restriction. They should automatically revert to the original file spacing once the manoeuvre is completed.
- Counter Hoop** The metal or wooden hoop that applies tension to the drum heads.
- Counter March** Where the individual files of a marching band or drum corps wheel tightly through 180⁰ so as to pass between themselves. This manoeuvre is used to reverse direction in restricted areas such as a hall or to move back across a parade ground. It may be performed to the left or to the right.

- Crushed Roll** A roll that has no distinct finishing stroke. Traditionally written as a rolled note without a tie. The assumed intention is that the roll will be ended by pushing both sticks firmly onto the batter head so crushing-off the sound. There should be a distinct, audible gap between the crush and the next note.
- Divisi-drumming** Where the members of the snare drumline play different beatings, on purpose, that combine to produce a more complex and enhanced sound. Also called Division Drumming.
- Drag Ropes** Plaited cords hung from the lower counter hoop of snare drums or tenor drums. Traditionally made from white cotton cord these are generally used in pairs to impart a smart appearance. However, traditionally these ropes were also used by military drummers much like the straps of a rucksack, as a means of carrying the drum on the back when it is not being played. Some drummers still do this. Black and other coloured Drag Ropes are also available from suppliers.
- Dress Cords** Incorrect term for Drag Ropes. A Dress Cord is a plaited and often tasselled embellishment to the dress uniform tunics of officers or bandsmen. Dress Cords may be made of coloured silk, cotton or man-made fibre.
- Drum Carriage** A plastic or leather adjustable strap slung from the right shoulder to support the drum. The drum hangs at an angle from left to right.
- Drum Carrier** A plastic or metal vest-like device worn over the shoulders to support the drum in a horizontal position. Carriers may also be used for bass drums and marching bells.
- Drum Drill** The style of holding the drum sticks and the positions of the feet while standing at ease, attention and sticks ready. This includes the method of changing between these positions both at the halt and on the march.
- Drum Head** The top and bottom membrane of the drum. When used in connection with worship, a "Drum Head Service" refers to the placing of the drums one upon another to form an altar-like construction around which soldiers form up for a religious service. Often used outdoors, this tradition is also used at camp by some uniformed youth organisations.
- Drum Sling** A commonly used, but less correct, alternative term for a drum carriage.
- Hand to Hand** Where in a close series of strokes or rudiments, the subsequent stroke or rudiment is played by or led with the opposite hand to the previous one.

- Keeble** Verb - to accidentally drop a drum stick. Of early 21st Century origin.
- Moeller Stroke** Style of playing a snare drum where the arms and wrists are used in an exaggerated, whipping motion. Named for US stickman, Sanford (Gus) Moeller after the style used in 19th Century US Drums Corps.
- Onomatopoeic** Form of word that resembles the sound being described. For instance, hiss, splash, meow, etc. In drumming the names of some rudiments and other rhythm patterns are of onomatopoeic form. These include Mamma Dadda, Paradiddle, Flam, Drag, etc. Also the words Humpty Dumpty and Amsterdam that are used to indicate the sounds of bars in 6/8 time - crotchet, quaver, crotchet, quaver and dot and cut quavers.
- Part Bar** A division of a full bar used to simplify the understanding of the rhythms. Combining Part Bars produces the full range of countable beatings from a relatively few elements. See Tables 1 and 2 of this Guide.
- Rim Shot** Striking the upper counter hoop with the drum stick.
- Rim** An incorrect term for the upper counter hoop of the drum.
- Roll** A series of rapid strokes played on a drum so as to produce a simulation of sustain.
- Rudiment** An elementary combination of stroke types forming a recognised rhythm pattern. These are combined in the playing of snare drum beatings and some are used for playing other forms of drums, cymbals and tuned percussion. There are 40 internationally recognised snare drum rudiments as shown in the Percussive Arts Society charts. Other hybrid rudiments exist and are constantly being invented.
- Side Drum** Another name for a marching snare drum.
- Skin** A less correct term for a drum head. Before the development of modern plastics, animal skins were used to form drum heads and some modern versions of ethnic or vintage drums still use these. Modern plastic drum heads were invented by the US manufacturer, Evans and are formed from Mylar™ for general use and close woven Kevlar™ for the high tension batter heads used on pipe band or marching band snare drums.
- Snare Drumline** The snare drum players in a Drum Corps or Marching Band.

Snare	A series of tensioned strings or fine wire coils pressed against the underside of the snare head or against the underside of the batter head. Vintage snare drums used so-called catgut, resembling tennis racquet strings, which were pressed against the underside of the snare head only. Modern snare drums use fine wire coils instead and some also have complex internal mechanisms to press wire snares against the underside of the batter head. Snares are intended to voice the drum with a high-pitched, crackle-like sound.
Stick Drill	The technique used while playing Royal Marines' style or other standard visual display sticking.
Stick Grip	Method of holding the drum sticks. This includes orthodox and matched grips. Matched grips with the thumbs held upwards is known as the French grip.
Stick Quill	A quiver-like container fastened to the side of the drum to hold spare or alternative pairs of drum sticks. This is a useful aid for drum corps performances where stick tossing is included and/or where dropping a drum stick during a parade is most detrimental. See Keeble.
Stick Tricks	Any non-essential use of the drum and sticks for fun or flashy display work. This includes juggling with the sticks or throwing the sticks to other members of the Snare Drumline.
Swiss	A sticking method where one hand plays twice as many strokes as the other in a fast sequence. Specifically from the Swiss Army Triplet rudiment, but also a term used generally for playing 6/8 time quavers or 2/4 time quaver triplets using a double stroke followed by a single stroke in a fast repeated hand to hand pattern.
Snare Head	The lower membrane of the drum against which the bottom external snare is pressed. Also known as the Snare Side Head. Also see Skin.
Tie	A curved line in the written score from the rolled note to the finishing stroke. Also known as a Bind.
Traces	Alternative term for Drag Ropes.
Triplet	Three notes played in the time of two notes. Most commonly used for playing 6/8 time quaver rhythms in 2/4 time.
Velocity Stroke	Style of playing frequently adopted by drum corps players where a fast motion is imparted to the sticks by pushing from the top of trajectory. These are fast full or rebound strokes.

ANNEX

This Annex contains notes for the Drummers School students and other useful teaching aids including music, posters and handouts.

- **Drum Notes for Beginners**
 - Cover**
 - Pages 1 –17**
 - Induction Course Practice Instructions - 7 pages**
 - (In pairs on A4 sheets for copying and cutting to A5 size)**

- **Other sheets to be issued with Drum Notes for Beginners**
 - Musical Terms**
 - Graded Sequence #1**
 - Graded Sequence #2**
 - Grenadiers & Grampian Hills Drum Solos**
 - Grenadiers, Grampian Hills & #1 Drum Solos**
 - Drum Solos #2 & #3**
 - Royal Marines 2/4 time Stick Drill Routines**
 - Royal Marines 6/8 time Stick Drill Routines**
 - Notation for 2/4 time Common Bars**
 - Notation for 6/8 time Common Bars**

- **Sample Examination Papers**
 - Drummers School Induction Course Assessment**
 - Grade One Drummers Badge Exam – Pages 1 – 3**
 - Grade Two Drummers Badge Exam**
 - Grade Two Drummers Badge Exam**
 - Induction Course Certificate of Merit**

- **Poster sets – A4 size for enlargement to A3 and lamination**
 - Pages 1 – 8 for teaching 2/4 time and 6/8 time bars**
 - Notation and Counting**

- **Other useful sheets**
 - 140 Beatings in 2/4 time – Beatings 1 – 8**
 - 140 Beatings in 2/4 time – Beatings 9 – 17**
 - Method of teaching BB Drum Solos – 5 pages**
 - Equipment Advice Sheet**