

Preface

Welcome to my **Snare Book!**

This book is exclusively about *snare exercises* that will improve your technique and your general understanding of rhythm at the same time.

I usually don't enjoy exercises where I have to play the same thing over and over again. My mind wanders off, and I find it a lot harder to keep practicing because of the lack of variation.

As much as I agree that practice is repetition, I also never want to get bored when I practice. On the contrary, I want to feel excited about my practice so that I really WANT to practice instead of feeling OBLIGED to practice (It's a well-known fact that you learn anything better when you enjoy the process).

I am confident that the exercises in this book are enjoyable and useful because they offer variations on different levels that will keep you engaged. That makes it easier to play the many repetitions you need to get better.

How do I stay focused?

- I am always fascinated when I combine a sticking I can easily play with an accentuation that is also familiar, BUT somehow the combination of the two makes it hard to sort out my hands.
- Breaking habits can also be very exciting: Instead of accenting every third you play.
- Or it might be interesting to play a middle exercise using eighth-note triplets instead of sixteenth notes. Or having your hands play exactly the same hearing an exercise in a different subdivision is a great way to add a useful challenge and thus stay focused.

The *rhythmic challenge* that comes with the *technical challenge* keeps me engaged and makes practice more enjoyable.

The more fun that I excited, absorbed you are the easier you will grow as a musician because it's more enjoyable and less work. *It's passion!*

My *Snare Book* is **definitely NOT** your *typical rudiments book* ... actually, I never think in terms of rudiments when I play.

When I use a *drum pad* when I work on my hand technique, for several different reasons:

- It's quieter.
- I can practice *anywhere* with a pad. That might be simply working on my technique *at home* or *warming up* before gigs or I can bring a pad when I go on location (just bringing the pad isn't enough though).
- When I use a pad, I find it *easier to focus* on my hand technique as opposed to working on my hand technique while I am sitting behind my kit.

I tried to keep the text passages to a minimum because we all like to start playing the notes rather than reading the words—right? But that said, I ask you to read the explanations carefully, I know they will be helpful.

I am confident that the exercises in this book will keep you engaged and make your practicing more enjoyable.

Jost Nickel

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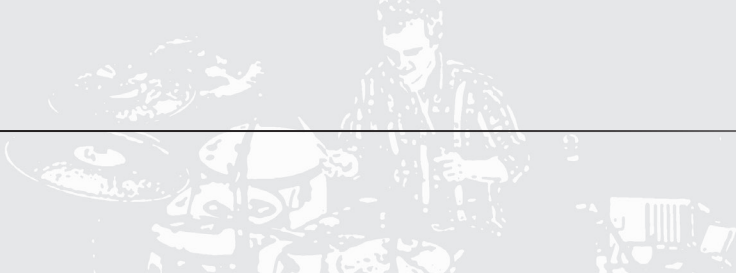
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Insert Reading Texts

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Preliminary Notes:

Reading Texts | How to Practice | Metronome | Snare Notation

The Reading Texts in this book

I decided to make the notation on the *insert (Reading Texts)* as easy to read as possible in order to make working with this book easier for drummers who still need to improve their reading skills. I have written all reading texts without any rests and you always see the sixteenth note grid (or an eighth-note triplet grid). Whenever you see a *note head* you should treat this as an *accent*. Here's one bar of *reading text* as an example:

Pre-Practice 1



In order to show exactly why it is easier to read notation this way, I have compared my *easy rhythm notation* with the *regular (and correct)* one.

Line 1 shows how the reading texts in this book are notated. In *line 2* you see the regular way of notating rhythm.

Pre-Practice 2



If you prefer "normal" reading texts (incl. rests - as shown in *line 2* of the example above), please send an email to snarebook@jostnickel.com and I'll send you a PDF.

The *Reading Texts 1 to 5* examples are based on *sixteenth notes* and *Reading Texts 6 to 11* examples on *eighth-note triplets*. In the course of the book I will point out when it is time to start using the *reading texts*.

Get accustomed to the rhythms in the reading texts

When you start working with the reading texts and you're unsure how the rhythms in the readings texts sound, it is a good idea to just play *singles* using sixteenth notes (R L R L) and add accents according to the reading text. This way you'll get accustomed to the rhythmic phrase, which will then make it easier to apply to the various exercises in the book.

Pre-Practice 2 does shows exactly how it works. *Play singles and add the respective accents.*

Pre-Practice 3



Ostinato Exercise 4

Right Hand = Ostinato

Musical notation for the right hand ostinato exercise. It consists of two staves of music in 3/4 time. The first staff contains six measures of music, and the second staff contains six measures. The notation features eighth and sixteenth notes with accents, and rests, creating a rhythmic pattern.

Left Hand = Ostinato

Musical notation for the left hand ostinato exercise. It consists of two staves of music in 3/4 time. The first staff contains six measures of music, and the second staff contains six measures. The notation features eighth and sixteenth notes with accents, and rests, creating a rhythmic pattern.



photo © drumeo

Ruffs

The following exercises are inspired by *3-stroke ruffs* (a rudiment with two initial and one main stroke played as singles).

Traditionally when playing ruffs, the accent is on the third stroke. However, in my daily life as a drummer, I also play accents on the first stroke (and sometimes even on the second).

3-Stroke Ruff

Before you start applying ruffs to some of the reading texts, here are four preliminary exercises.

In exercise **Ruffs 1**, play a *Double-Stroke Roll* in *line 1*. In *line 2*, continue playing that same *Double-Stroke Roll*, plus add the *left hand* as written.

Ruffs 1

Ruffs 2 is very similar but now the *right hand* gets to play the 3rd note in *line 2*.

Ruffs 2

In exercise **Ruffs 3**, both hands add 32nd notes in *line 2*.

Ruffs 3

Doubles

The following exercises are the same as the previous ones, except that you now play *Doubles* instead of Singles when playing the 32nd note part of the exercises.

Doubles 1



The next exercise is the same as *Doubles 1* but *displaced* by an eighth note.

Doubles 2



Now, *combine* the fast section (R R L L using eighth notes, that is two sixteenth notes long with two groups of three notes (R L L using sixteenth notes).

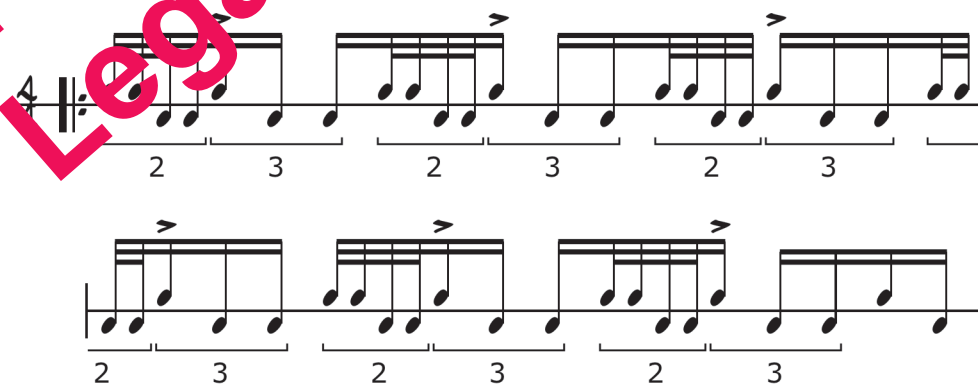
Reminder: The numbers underneath the notation show the length of the motifs in sixteenth notes. They don't show the number of strokes you play.

Doubles 3



In the next two-bar exercise you *alternate* between groups of 2 and 3.

Doubles 4



Now, combine *Singles 4 – Triplets* where the fast part is two eighth-note triplets long with *Singles 9 – Triplets* where the fast part is four eighth-note triplets long in one exercise.

The following four exercises show four different combinations. The technical skill you need for these exercises is principally the same as before, but the advanced rhythmic structure makes practicing them worthwhile.

Singles Combination 1 – Triplets

Singles Combination 2 – Triplets

Singles Combination 3 – Triplets

Singles Combination 4 – Triplets

Tip:

Whenever you played these exercises using 32nd notes and sixteenth notes I wrote down all of the above exercises with *Doubles* instead of *Singles* when playing the fast part (see page 93). You can absolutely do the same when using triplets. Let me show you how the exercise *Singles Combination 4 – Triplets* looks like with *Doubles* instead of *Singles* when playing sixteenth-note triplets.

Doubles Combination 4 – Triplets

Since it is the exact same concept I have just written down one of the above exercises with *Doubles* instead of *Singles*. But you can absolutely replace the *Singles* with *Doubles* whenever you see sixteenth-note triplets in all of the previous exercises in this chapter.