Louisiana State University

The Golden Band from Tigerland

Drumline Audition Handbook 2024

BASS LINE

Audition Handbook Contents:

- 1st Round Video Audition Assignments
- Preparation Strategies
- Technique Guidelines
- Notation Key
- Fundamental Studies
- Exercises

1st Round Video Audition Assignments:

Submission Requirements:

All 1st round video submissions must include an audible metronome, marking time, and a view of the performers entire body. The feet must be visible to ensure precision while marking time. Additionally, the submissions should be performed on real instruments. If this is impossible, performers auditioning for the snare line, tenor line, and/ or bass line may use a practice pad. If auditioning for tenors without an actual instrument, please use a tenor pad. If auditioning for cymbals without actual instruments, clapping the rhythm while marking time is acceptable.

1st Round Video Audition Assignments (Bass):

16th Note Timing @ 120 BPM

Triplet Timing @ 120 BPM

Duple Bucks Variations @ 120 BPM

3's & 4's @ 120 BPM

Preparation Strategies:

Timing:

As the percussion section our timing is an incredibly important aspect of what we do. Timing is important for our role within the musical ensemble and for maintaining the integrity of the rhythms we play. Pay attention to how certain sticking patterns affect your rhythmic tendencies. Don't practice difficult parts at tempos that are faster than your hands can play, or you'll end up practicing bad habits.

Practice with a metronome to focus on good timing and rhythmic accuracy. To make it more enjoyable and realistic, play your various exercises along with music you like to listen to. It's generally the same thing as using a metronome, but it gives you a musical context on which to base your playing. This is the foundation of ensemble playing. Groove along with it and enjoy it!

Chops:

This is a college drumline. You must have chops to get by. Your chops (technical strength and proficiency) are one of the basic building blocks of your contribution to the ensemble. This doesn't mean showing up to auditions with every hybrid rudiment and stick trick ever invented ready to whip out at the first chance. That stuff is a lot of fun and we don't mind seeing it, but it's not the basis for making music.

We're more interested in making sure you have a strong foundation of all the standard rudiments at a variety of tempos. This includes very slow tempos! As mentioned above, practice physically demanding parts correctly and do so for extended periods of time. Chops aren't something you're going to build in a week. It's a progressive and continual process.

Confidence:

Performance must be authentic. At the levels we strive for, you can't fake it. It is important that you play with a high degree of confidence and authority so you can be in charge of what you are doing. This doesn't mean putting on the "mean face" and acting tough. In fact, it's just the opposite. Confident players play with a level of calmness and relaxation that should "feel good" to both the player and the listener. True confidence is a powerful thing and will help you fit into the line.

Practice:

Correct practice is crucial to your development. We can define practicing correctly as:

- Practicing with a plan and setting goals
- Practicing those things you can't play perfectly
- Practicing on a drum
- Practicing with a metronome
- Practicing in front of a mirror
- Constant self-evaluation of your quality of sound/efficiency/tempo control
- Marking time while you practice

Practicing with a Plan/Setting Goals:

Practicing with a plan or goal is crucial to your development as a rudimental percussionist. Having a plan allows you to be methodical and smart about your approach. This approach leads to efficiency. The more efficient you are at practicing, the quicker you will become a more consistent player.

Additionally, keep a practice journal. Writing things down will keep you organized. Seeing your progress in writing will help you crystalize your improvement. Playing rudiments slow is important . . . slow things down. You'll be amazed at how much better your control will be and how much of a better overall player you will become.

Practicing those things you can't play perfectly:

It is very easy to play things that feel good and sound good. However, you should be disciplined enough to play things you can't play perfectly. Make everything you play sound perfect and feel good! Your job is to be a master of all motions at all tempos, so practicing things you don't feel completely comfortable with is key. Play things slow, off the left, or whatever you can do to expand your repertoire.

Practicing on a Drum:

A practice pad does not give you the same feel as a drum. There is no substitute for the chops you will gain practicing on a drum versus a practice pad . . . no exceptions, period.

Practicing with a Metronome:

Tempo control is crucial as a rudimental percussionist and is probably the single most important trait you, as an individual performer, can bring to the table. There is simply no substitute for practicing with a metronome. Keep it fresh by practicing to a half-time feel. Try putting the metronome on the upbeat and keep a constant, steady pulse. Experiment. TEMPO CONTROL IS EVERYTHING.

Practicing in Front of a Mirror:

Practicing with correct height control is crucial to your development. Practicing in front of a mirror allows the performer to observe any height discrepancies, X & Y-axis motion, weird facial tweaks, etc., and to fix any of the above. Take a dry erase marker and draw lines for heights on the mirror. While practicing, keep your beads touching these lines consistently. Draw a vertical line to observe the vertical rise and fall of the stick. (It should be exactly straight up and down.)

When practicing in front of a mirror, continually ask yourself the following questions:

- Are my heights correct?
- Are stick paths (R and L) straight up and down?
- Are there any extra motions? (shoulder ticks, elbow motion, etc.)
- Is my body symmetrical? (right and left shoulders parallel and even)
- Do I look relaxed?
- Do I make it "look easy"?

Constant Self-Evaluation:

When you practice, you should constantly evaluate how you feel and look. You should critique how you sound. Does it sound good? Does it flow? Are the sticks resonating at all times? Does it sound relaxed? Am I breathing calmly and evenly when I play? Is there tension in my back? Shoulders? Arms? Wrists? Do I sound like I am "owning" the music? Constant self-evaluation is important in your development as a rudimental percussionist. If something isn't right, you have the tools to diagnose the problem, find a solution (practice tip), and fix it.

Marking Time while you Practice:

Marking time is important, as this is a movement-based activity. If your feet are not in time, you will not play in time. Your heel should be impacting EXACTLY on the beat. Your feet must be in time. If you follow the above practice guidelines, you will be amazed at your progress!

Other tips:

Have all the audition material in a binder with sheet protectors as we will be rehearsing outside. In the case we are rehearsing with music outdoors and it is windy, bring a handful of binder clips to keep your music in place. Other items to bring to the clinics, band camp, and throughout the season include ear plugs, stick tape, sunscreen, and water.

Technique Guidelines:

Preface:

This section serves as an outline to the fundamentals of our technique. In order to achieve our goal of being the absolute best in the activity, we must simultaneously achieve exact uniformity in technique, touch, sound quality, rhythmic clarity, and dynamic clarity. Each individual in the line must be accountable for their individual performance and be aware of the accompanying responsibilities with regard to the percussion ensemble and full ensemble. This information, combined with the exercises, helps you achieve the highest degree of performance possible.

Implement Grip:

A great quality of sound and approach to the drum starts with the grip of the stick. In order to produce a full, resonant tone from the drum, it is important that your hands maintain a relaxed grip around the stick at all times, allowing the stick to resonate in your hand. If you hold the stick too tightly, you dampen the stick's natural vibrations and "choke off" much of the sound, which produces a very thin quality of sound. Also, the brunt of the impact from the stick striking the drum will be transferred directly into your hand, leading to unnecessary injury. Always let the sticks "breathe" in your hands.

Bass Drum Matched Grip:

The grip used is very similar to that of a snare drum matched grip, except the hands are rotated so that the wrists are vertical instead of horizontal. The thumb and index finger form a "fulcrum" on the mallet. There should not be a gap between the thumb and the third knuckle of the index. The rest of the fingers should be wrapped around the mallet very naturally. It's very important to not introduce tension in the hand. This grip should be approached with relaxation in mind.

The fulcrum is located between the thumb and the index finger. This is the point from which the stick pivots in your hand. This pivot point should be located at the optimal balance point of the stick and is generally located about 1/3 up the length of the stick from the butt end.

The remaining fingers should be wrapped naturally around the stick. They should be loose and relaxed but can never leave the stick. In order to employ the fingers properly, the stick should lay through the fleshy part of your palm opposite your thumb.

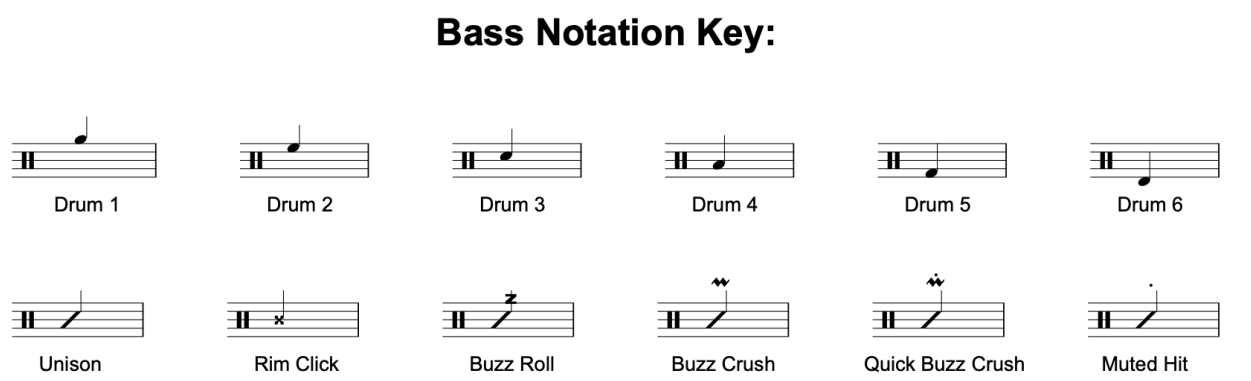
The palm of your hand should not be flat to the drum (German grip) nor should the thumb be completely on top of the stick (French grip). The crease created between the thumb and the index finger should be turned to an approximate 45-degree angle. This offers the best benefits from both the German grip (full wrist turn) and French grip (easy engagement of the fingers).

The Roll of the Bass Line:

The role of the bass drummer is one that requires extreme personal accountability. The bass line must consist of six individuals with the exact same interpretation of rhythm, space, volume, touch, sound quality, and flow. These combined elements create a seamless bass line with the qualities desired for perfect blend, balance, and articulation. Ensemble cohesion depends on exact clarity in all fundamental aspects of the bass line.

Additionally, the bass line, within the full battery, serves as a foundation for all of the sounds around it. It is the “bass voice” of the battery “choir”. While intensifying impacts, adding volume, and doubling other voices in the ensemble, it can also serve as a soloistic voice. Providing rhythmic and spatial reference points along with volume, impact, and motion are just some of the main responsibilities of an effective bass line.

Bass Drum Notation Key:



Heights:

Accurate stick heights promote musical and visual uniformity within the percussion section. Each stick height refers to the distance between the bead and the playing surface.

pp (pianissimo) = 1 inch

p (piano) = 3 inches (common tap height)

mp (mezzo-piano) = 6 inches

mf (mezzo-forte) = 9 inches

f (forte) = 12 inches

ff (fortissimo) = 15 inches, approx. (vertical/arm added)

Fundamental Studies:

Preface:

The following portion of the technique packet consists of standard exercises that are considered customary practice within the contemporary marching percussion setting. These will primarily be used behind the scenes to develop sound production and to facilitate proper technique. These exercises will play an integral part of the development of the LSU Drumline and will set a foundation for our sound approach and ensemble playing.

Contents:

Legato Studies:
- -8-8-16
- -Countdown
- -16th Note Legatos
- -16th Note Timing
- -16th Note Singles
- -Triplet Legatos
- -Triplet Timings
- -Triplet Singles

Accent Studies:
- -Duple Accents
- -Duple Bucks Variations
- -Triple Accents
- -Triple Bucks Variations

Fulcrum Studies:
- -Double/ Triple Beat
- -Duple Pressure Study
- -Duple Chicken and a Roll
- -Triple Pressure Study
- -Triple Chicken and a Roll
- -Fulcrum Pressure

Flam Studies:
- -Flam Accent Builder
- -Flam Tap Builder
- -Invert Builder

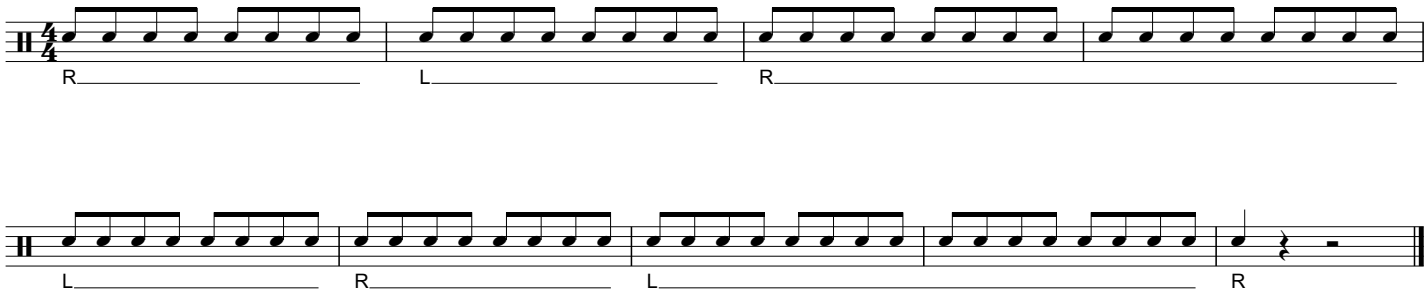
Additional Studies:
- -Rhythmic Spacings
- -16th Note Grid
- -Triplet Grid
- - 3's & 4's

8-8-16

LSU Drumline 2024

Steven Wimberley

♩ = 100-240

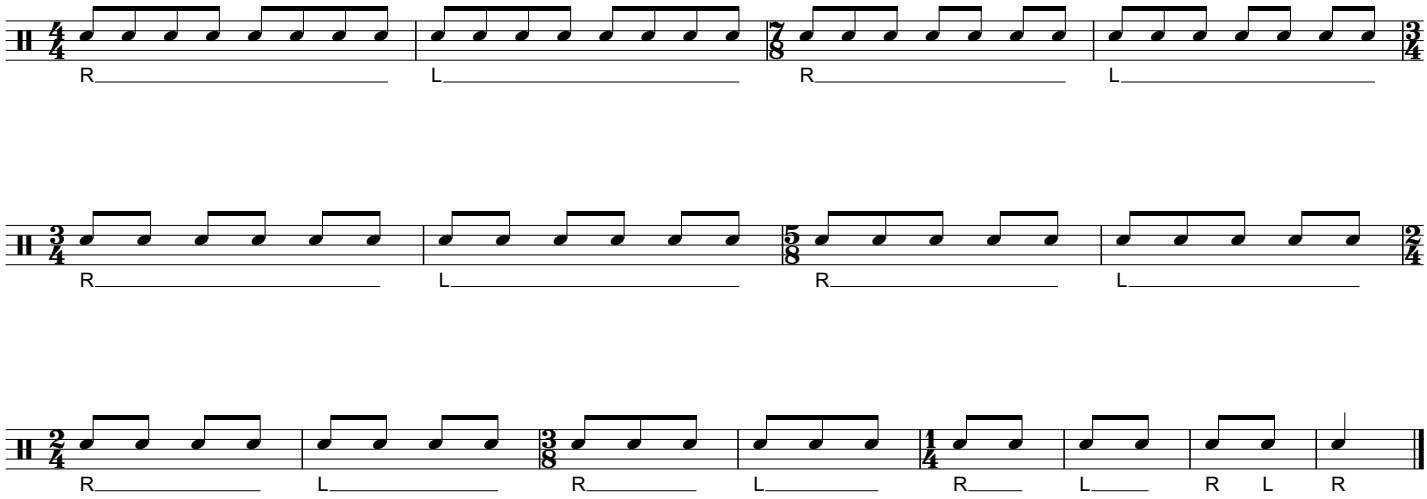


Countdown

LSU Drumline 2024

Steven Wimberley

♩ = 100-240



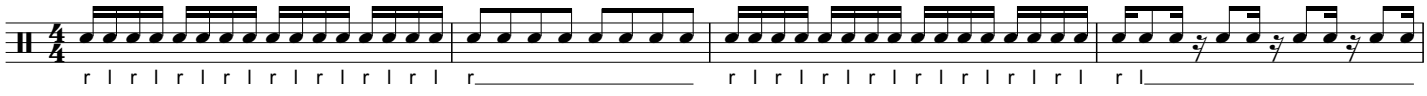
16th Note Legatos

LSU Drumline 2024

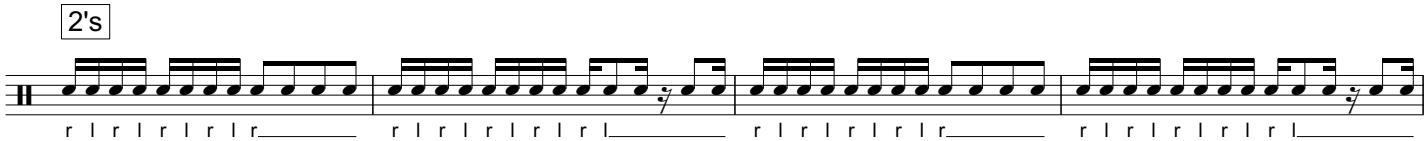
Steven Wimberley

4's

♩ = 80-200



2's



1's

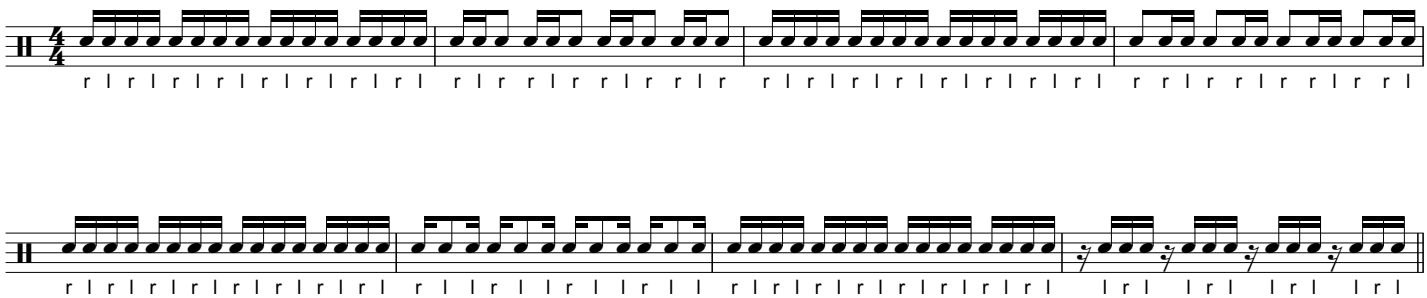
16th Note Timing

LSU Drumline 2024

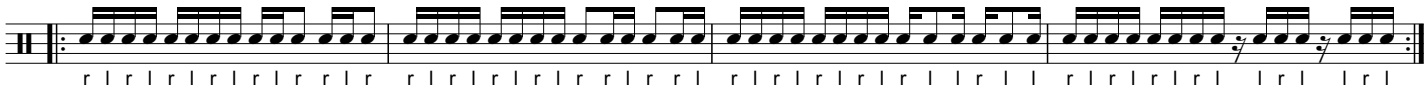
Steven Wimberley

4's

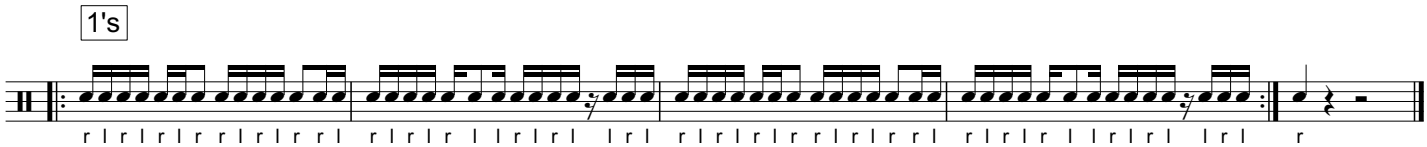
♩ = 100-200



2's



1's

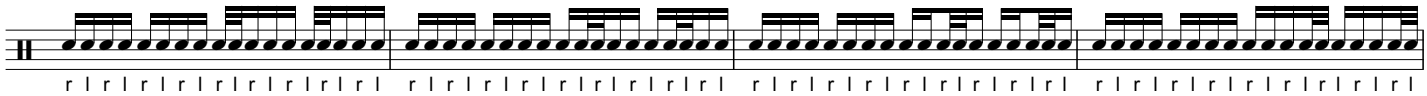


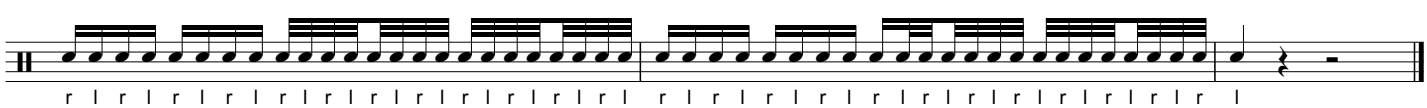
16th Note Singles

LSU Drumline 2024

Steven Wimberley

♩ = 80-120





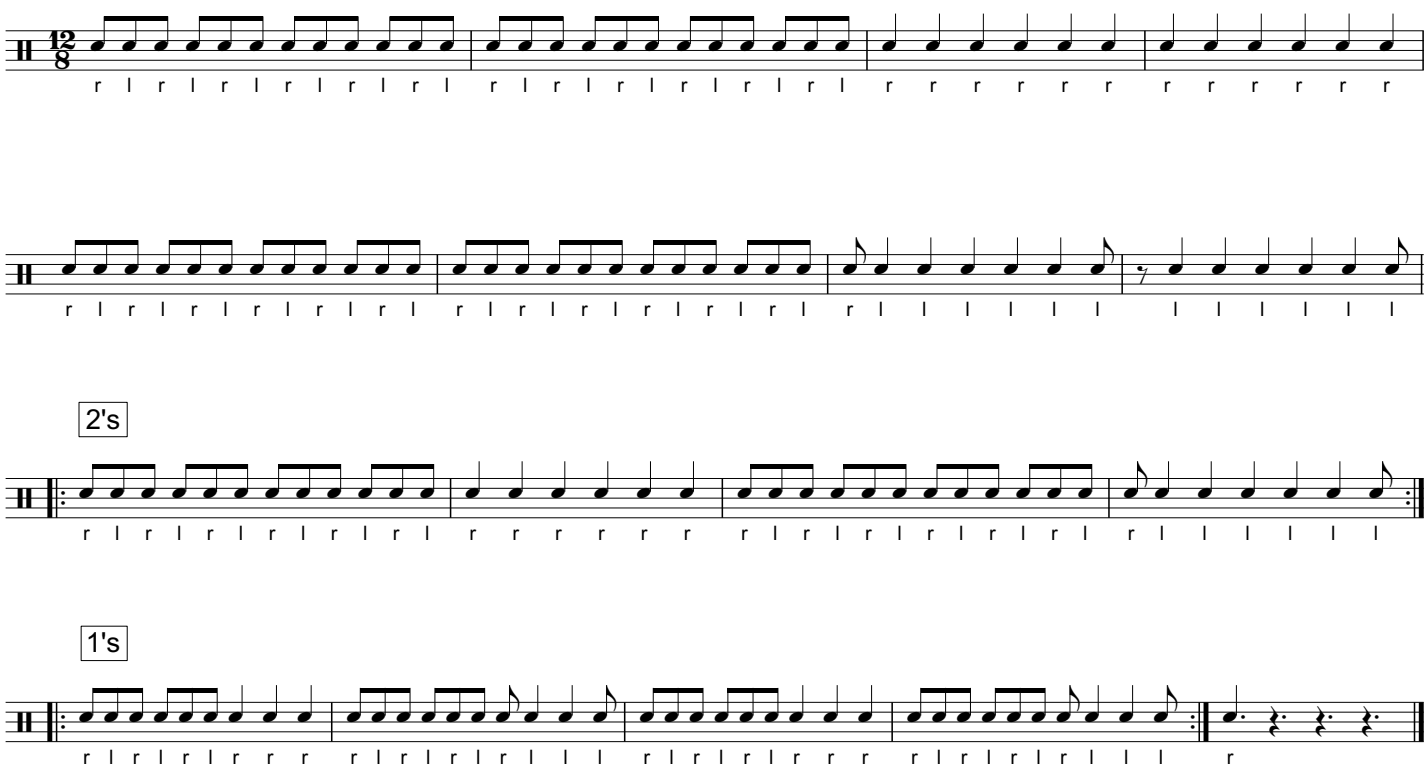
Triplet Legatos

LSU Drumline 2024

Steven Wimberley

4's

♩. = 80-200



2's

1's

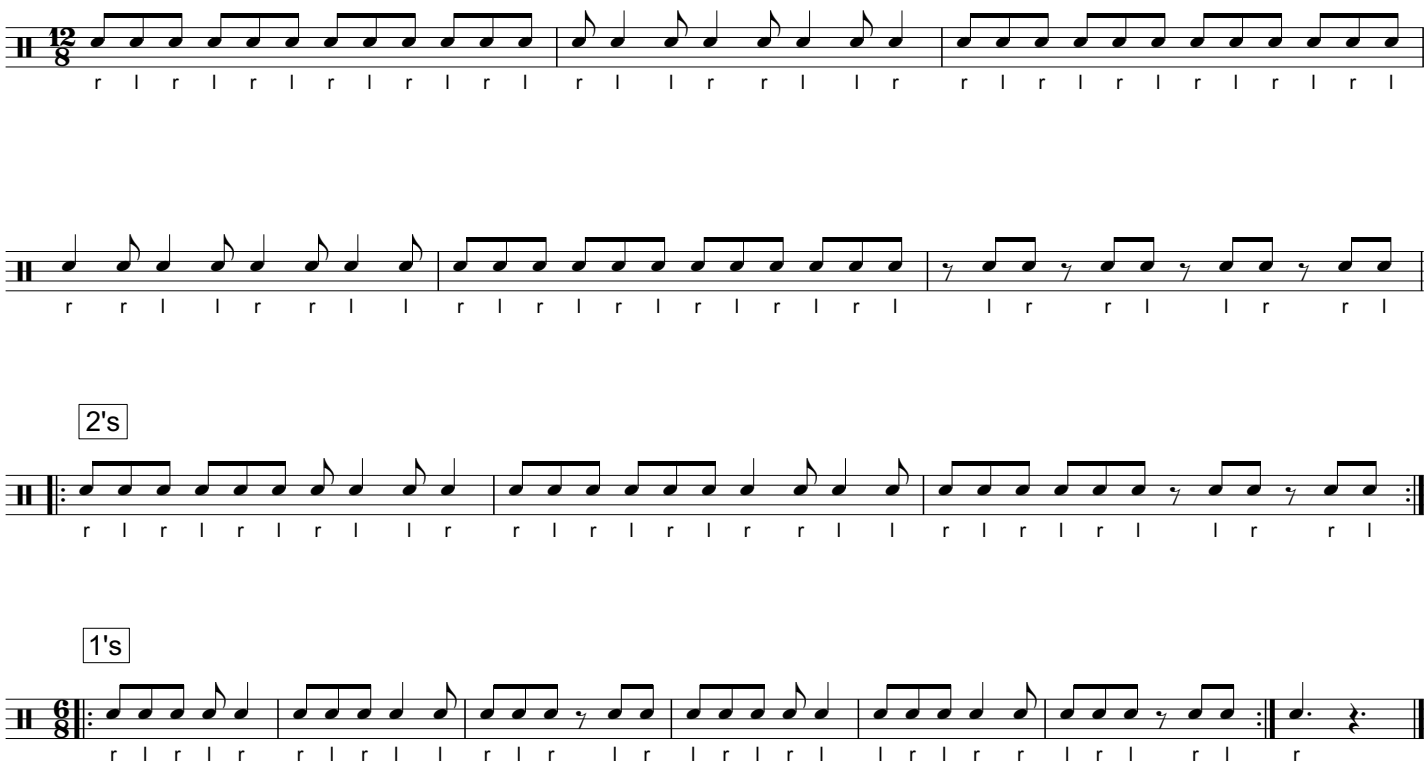
Triplet Timing

LSU Drumline 2024

Steven Wimberley

4's

♩. = 80-200



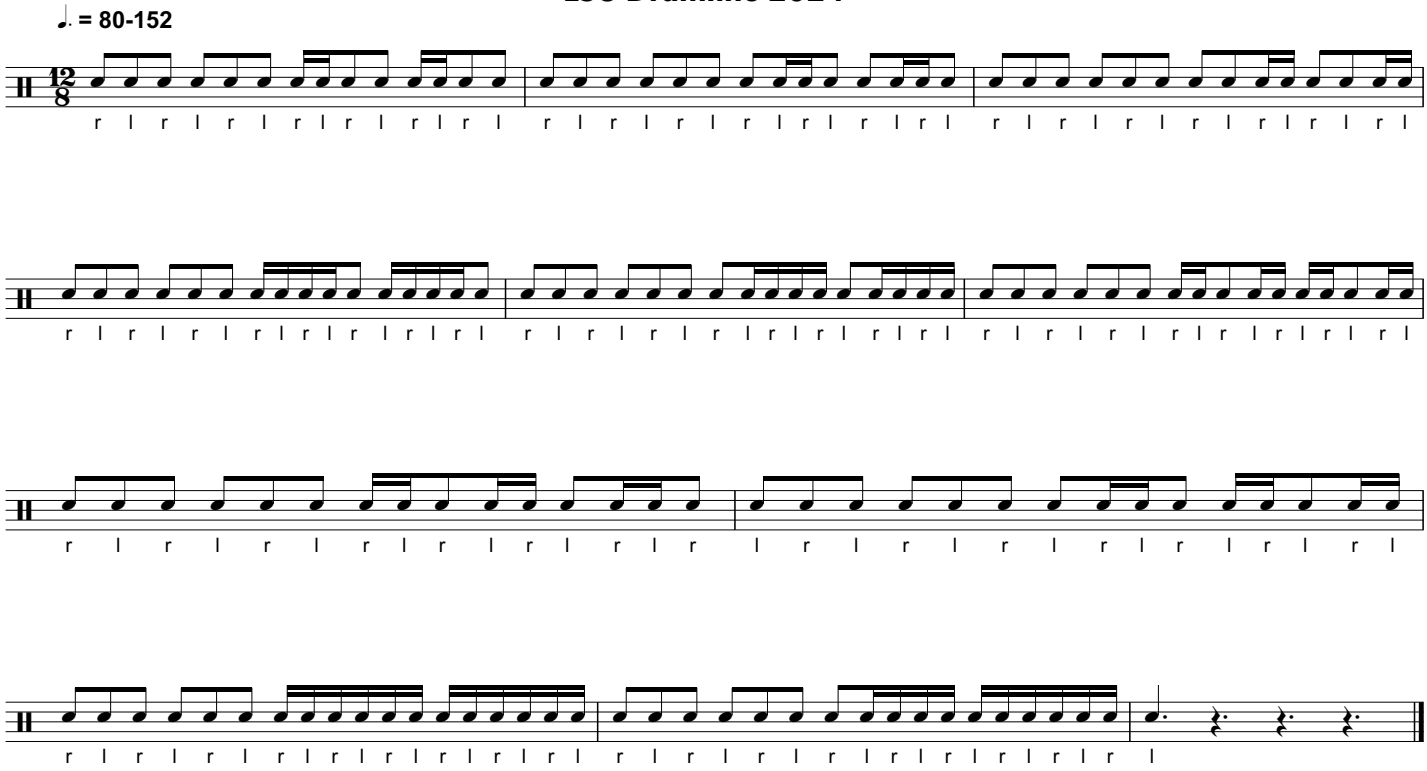
2's

1's

Triplet Singles

LSU Drumline 2024

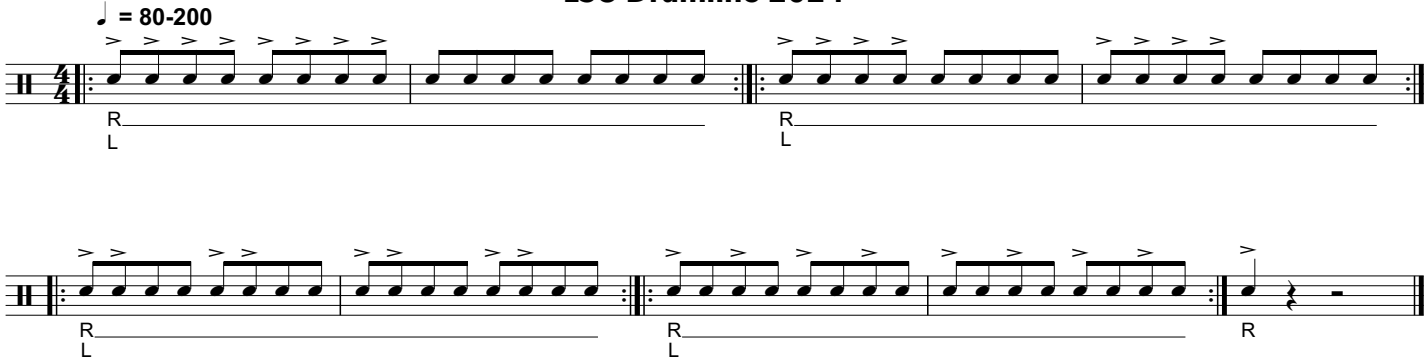
Steven Wimberley



Duple Accents

LSU Drumline 2024

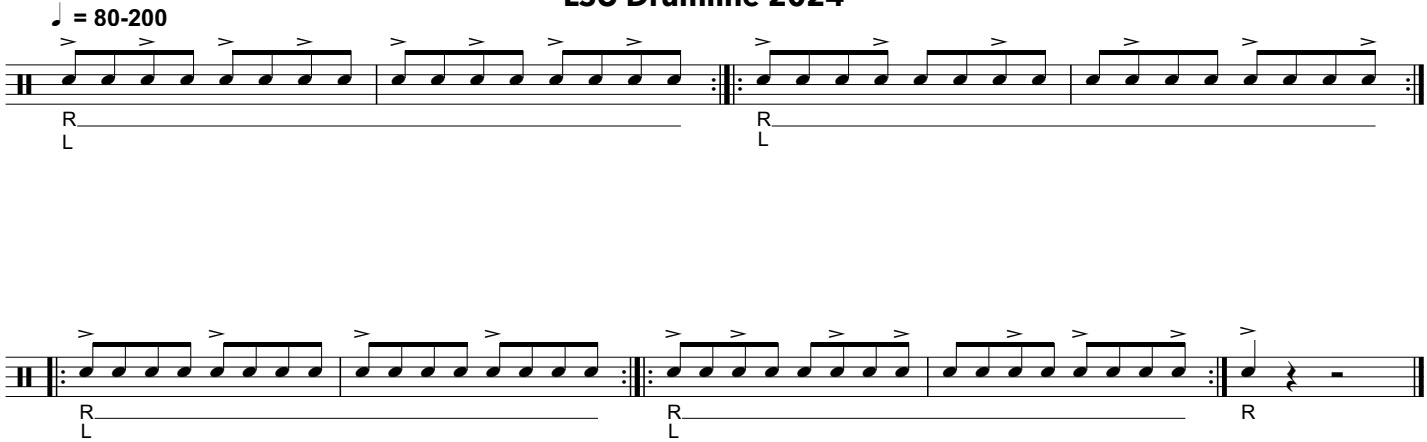
Steven Wimberley



Duple Bucks Variations

LSU Drumline 2024

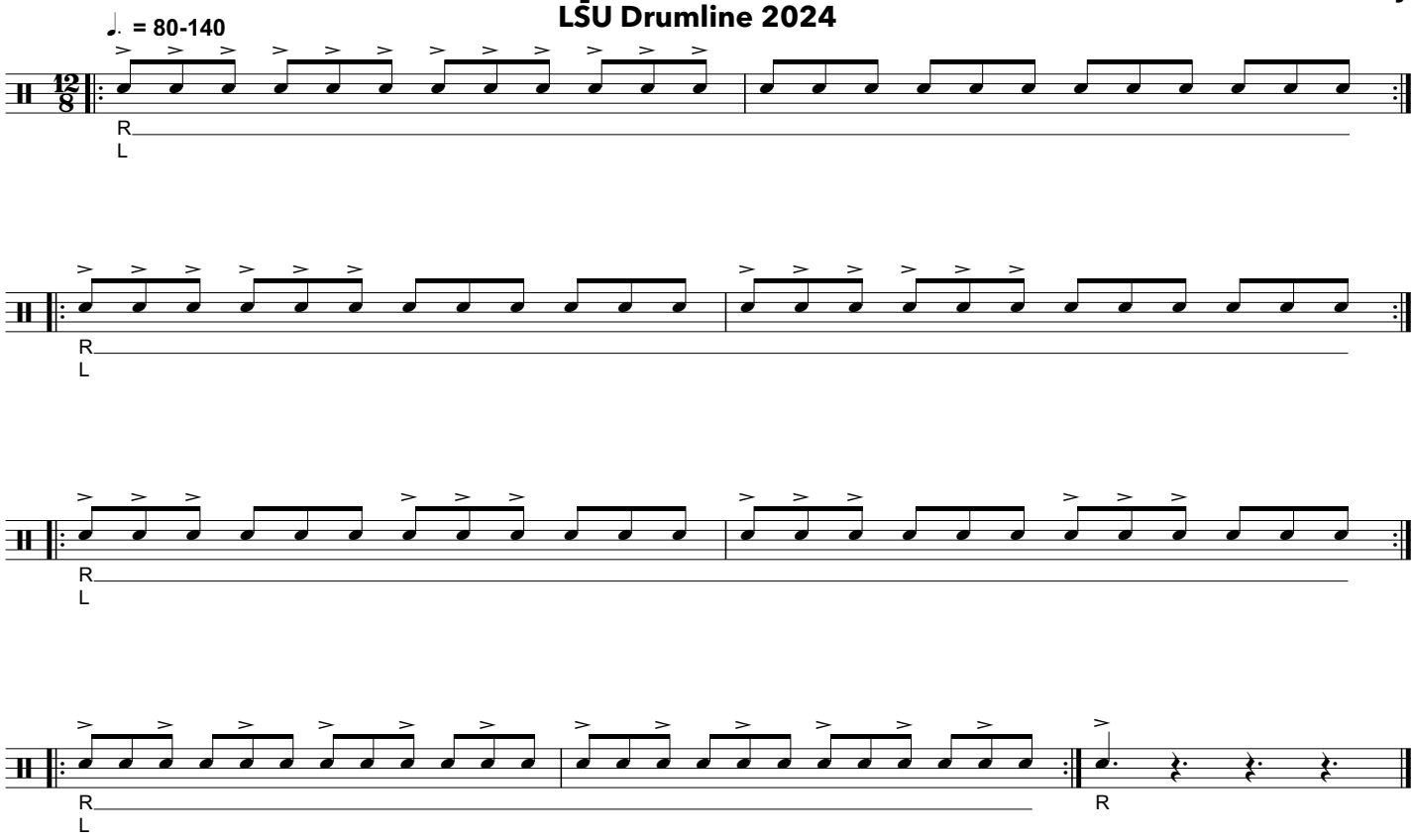
Steven Wimberley



Triple Accents

LSU Drumline 2024

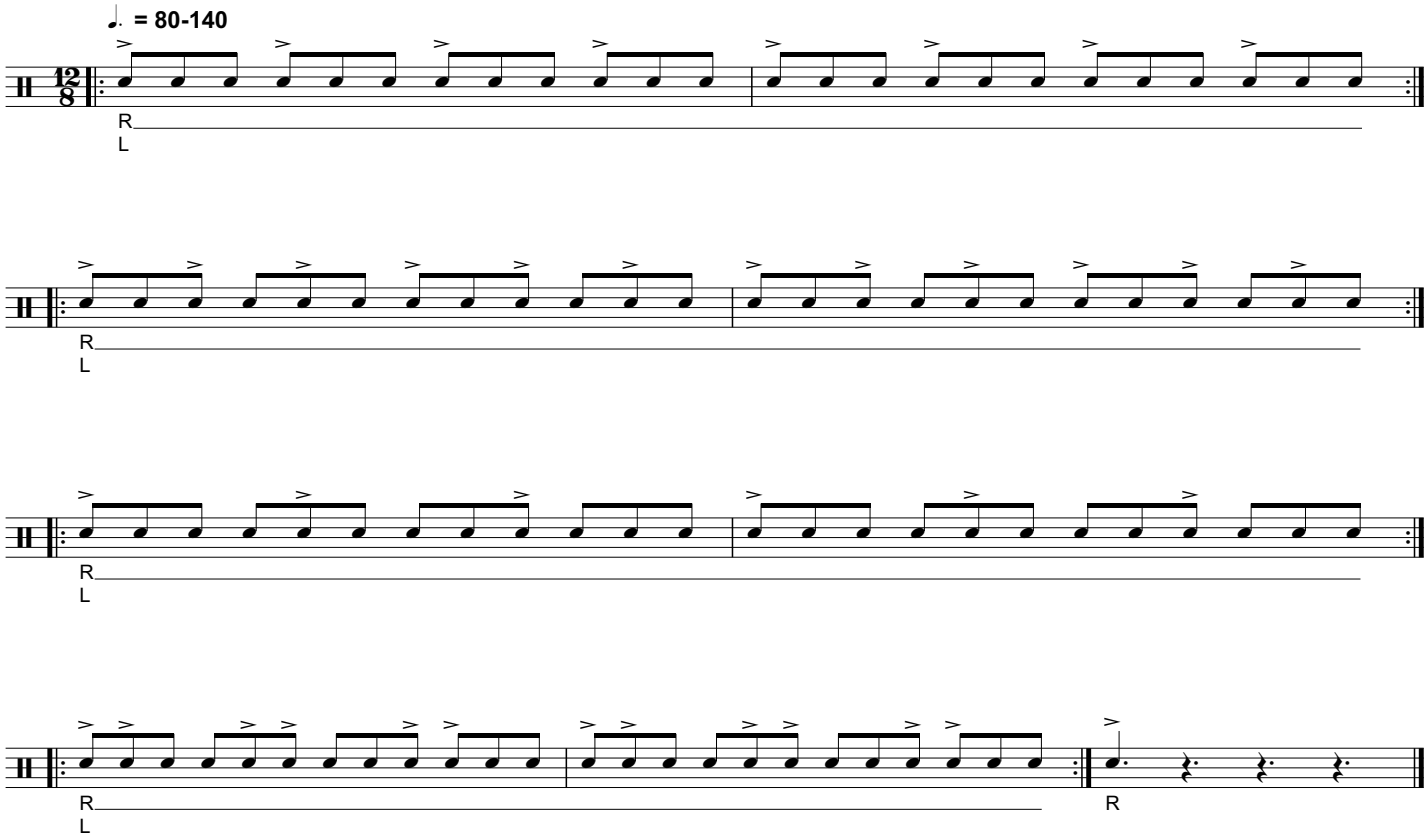
Steven Wimberley



Triple Bucks Variations

LSU Drumline 2024

Steven Wimberley

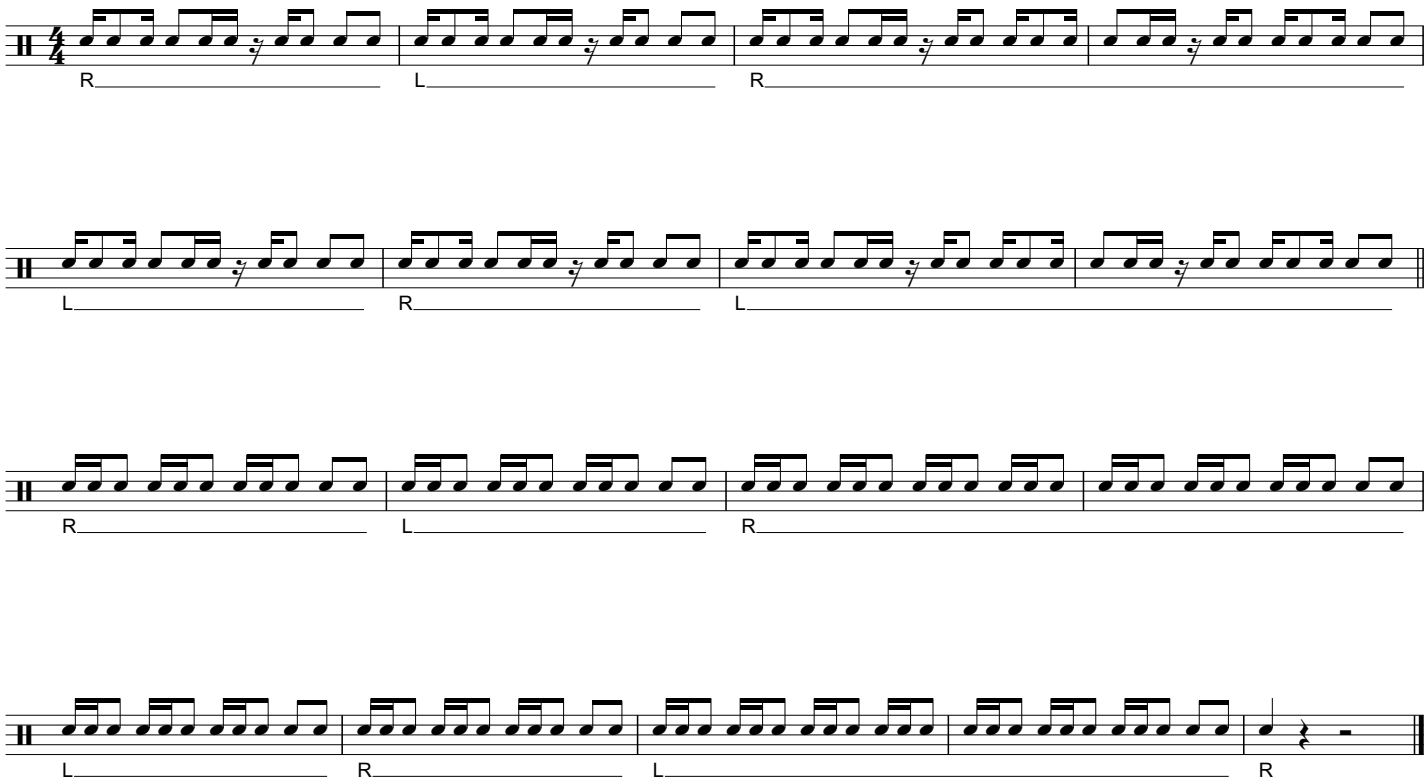


Double/Triple-Beat

LSU Drumline 2024

Steven Wimberley

♩ = 100-160



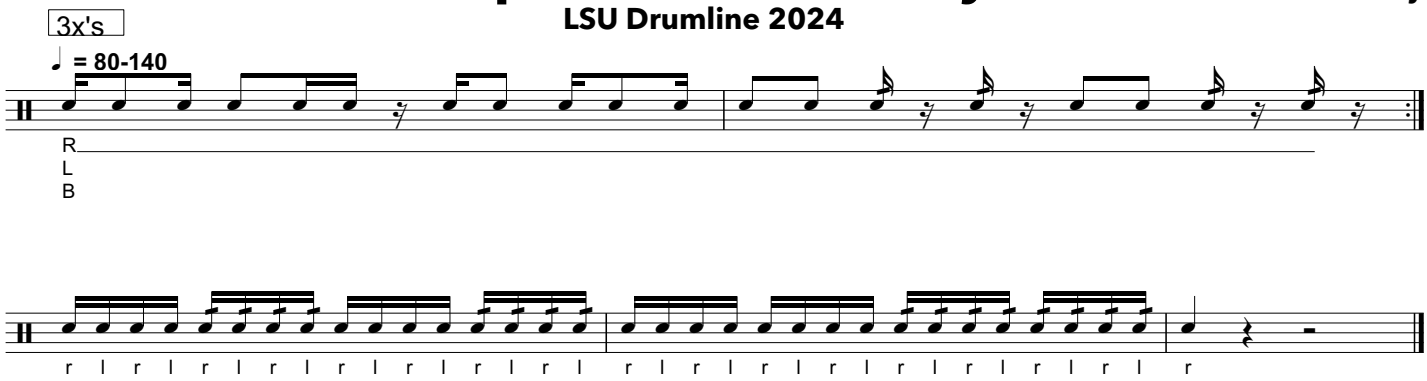
Duple Pressure Study

LSU Drumline 2024

Steven Wimberley

3x's

♩ = 80-140

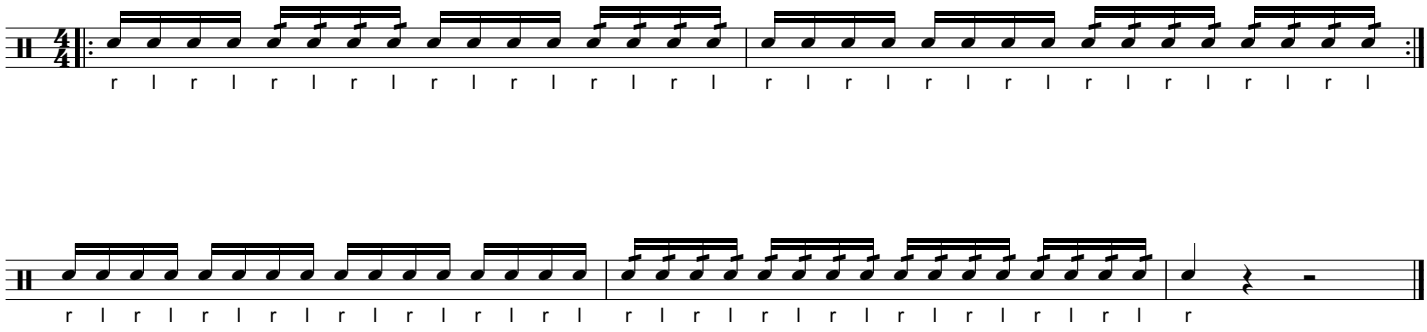


Duple Chicken and a Roll

LSU Drumline 2024

Steven Wimberley

♩ = 80-140



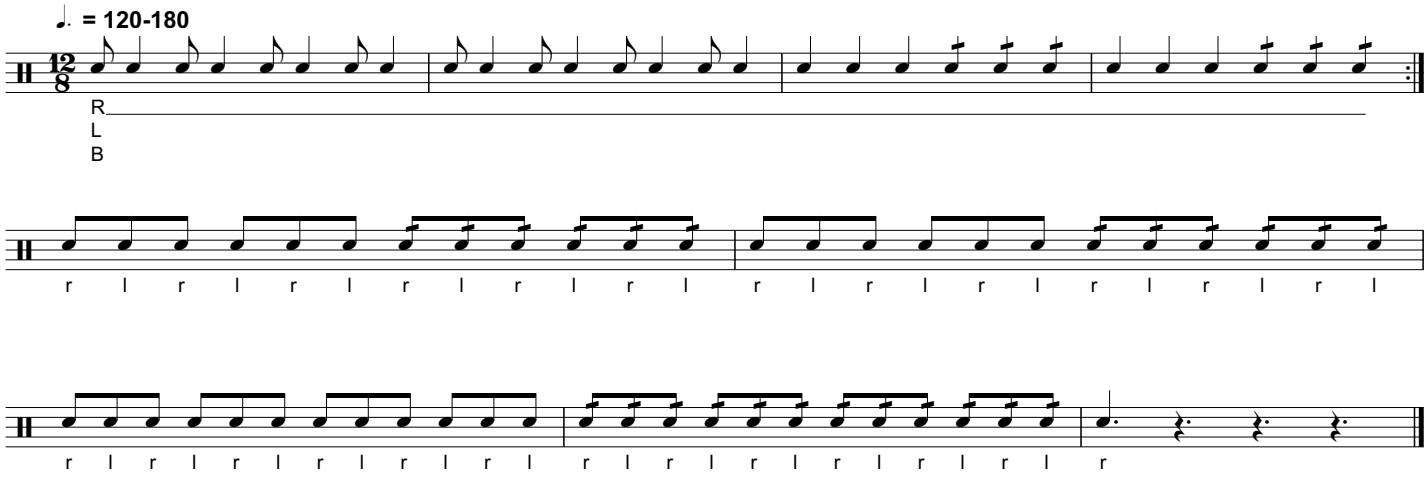
Triple Pressure Study

LSU Drumline 2024

Steven Wimberley

3x's

♩. = 120-180

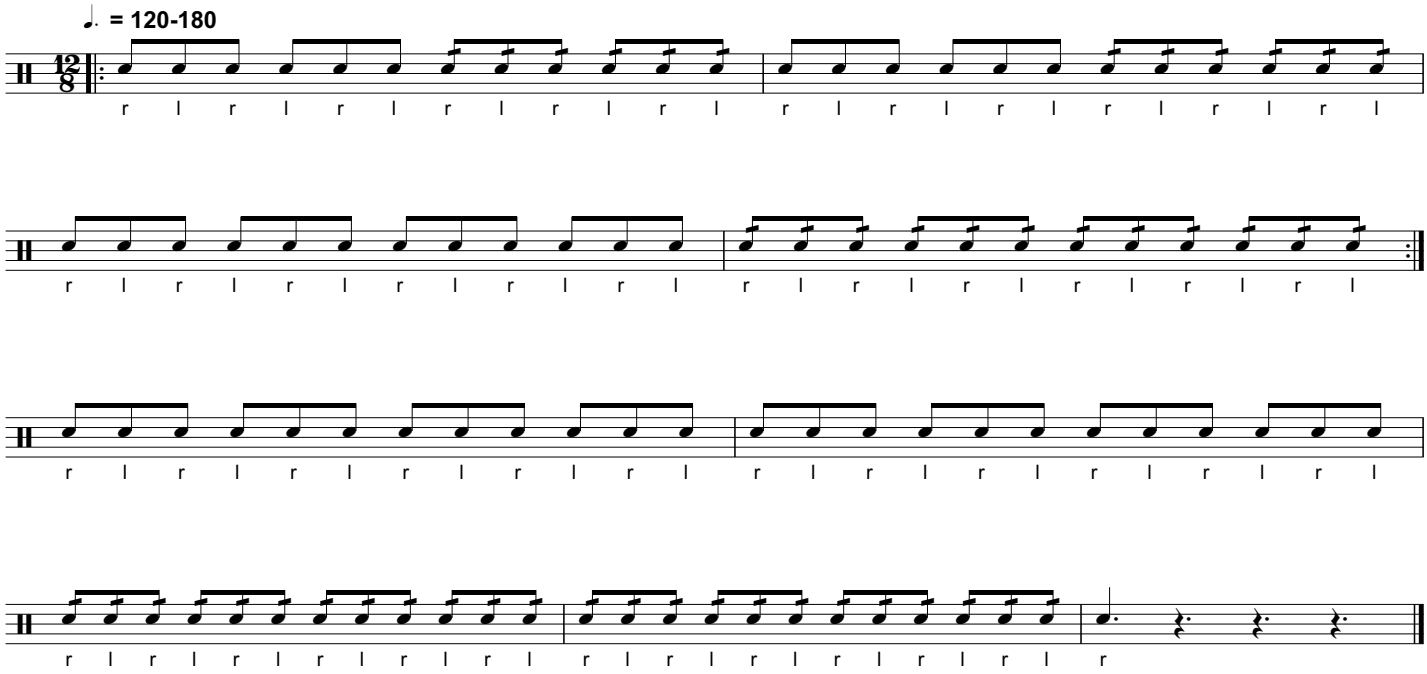


Triple Chicken and a Roll

LSU Drumline 2024

Steven Wimberley

♩. = 120-180

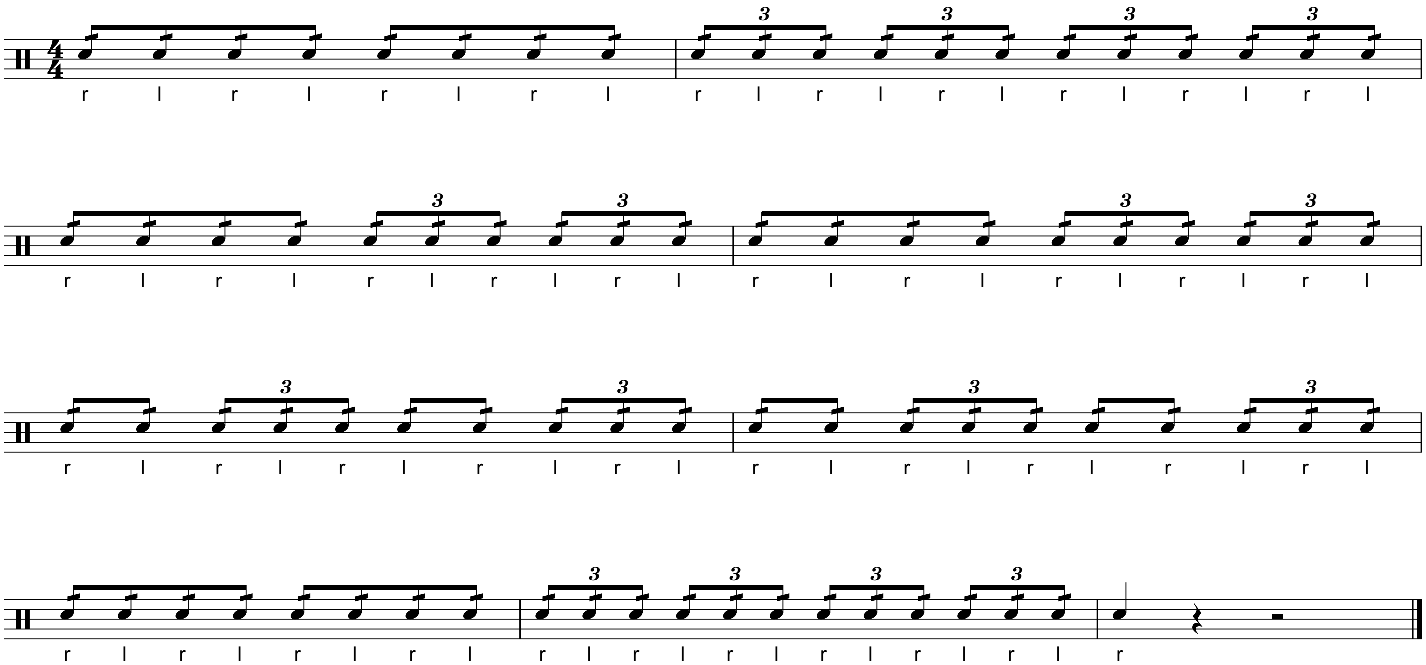


Fulcrum Pressure

LSU Drumline 2024

Steven Wimberley

♩ = 120-180

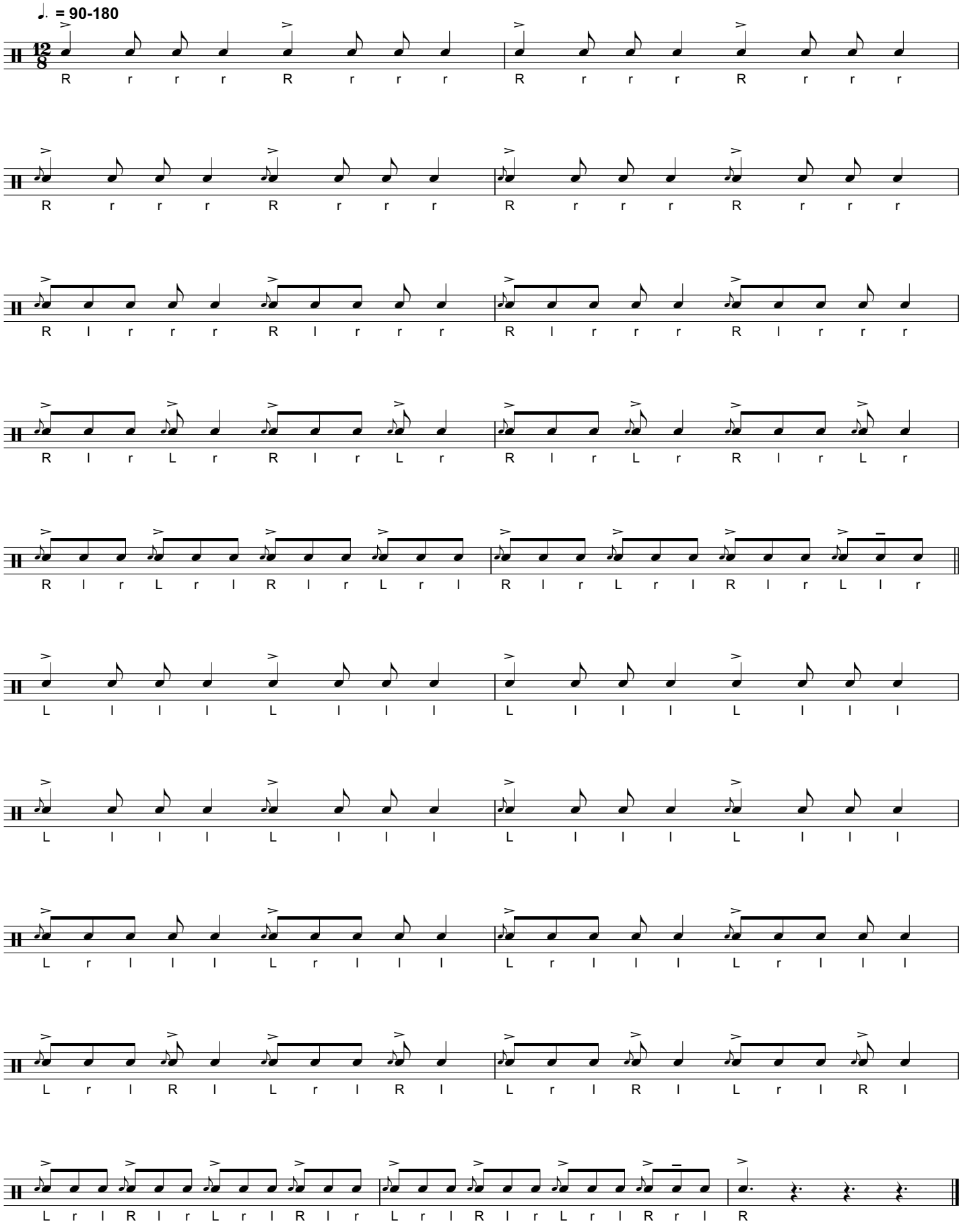


Flam Accent Builder

LSU Drumline 2024

Steven Wimberley

♩. = 90-180

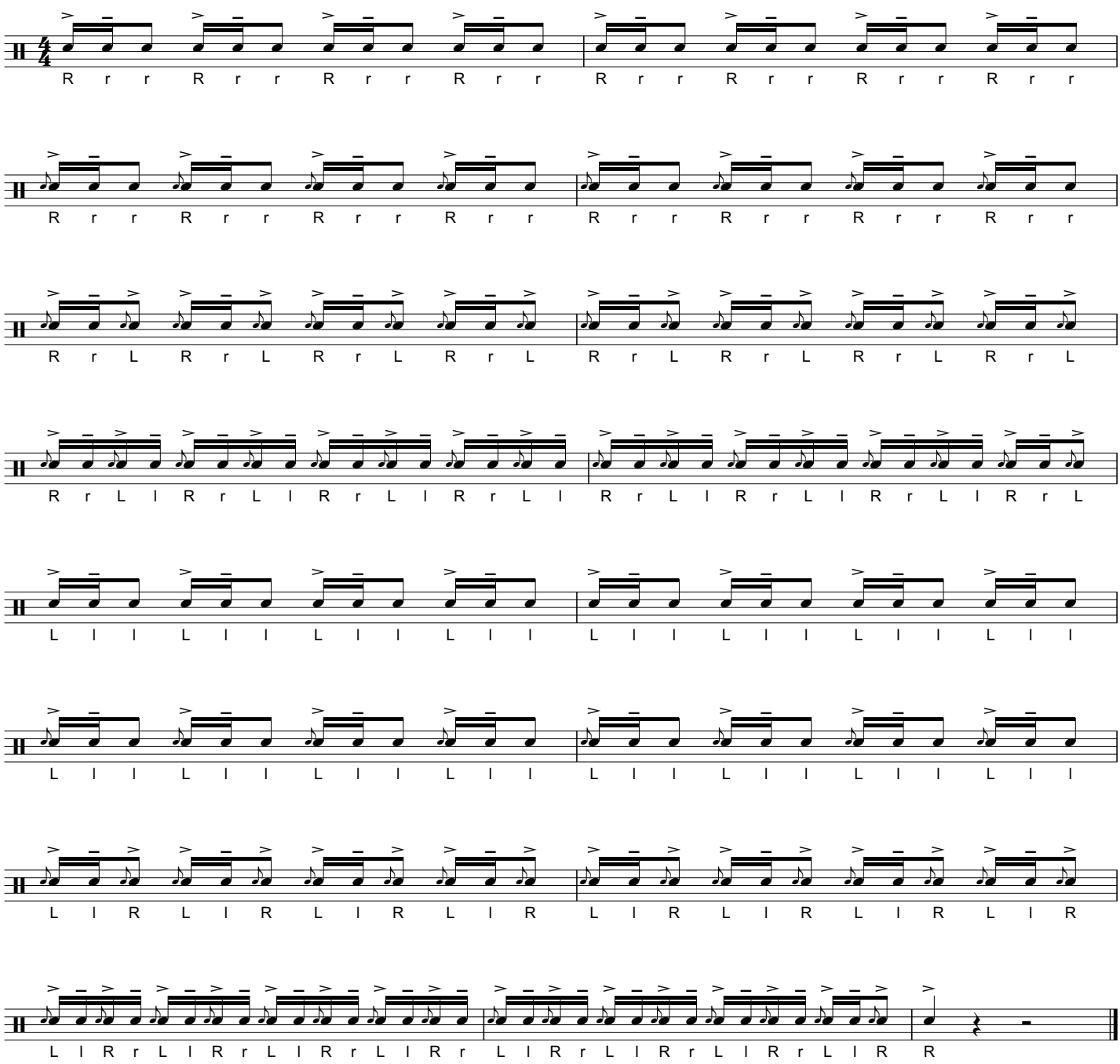


Flam Tap Builder

LSU Drumline 2024

Steven Wimberley

♩ = 80-140

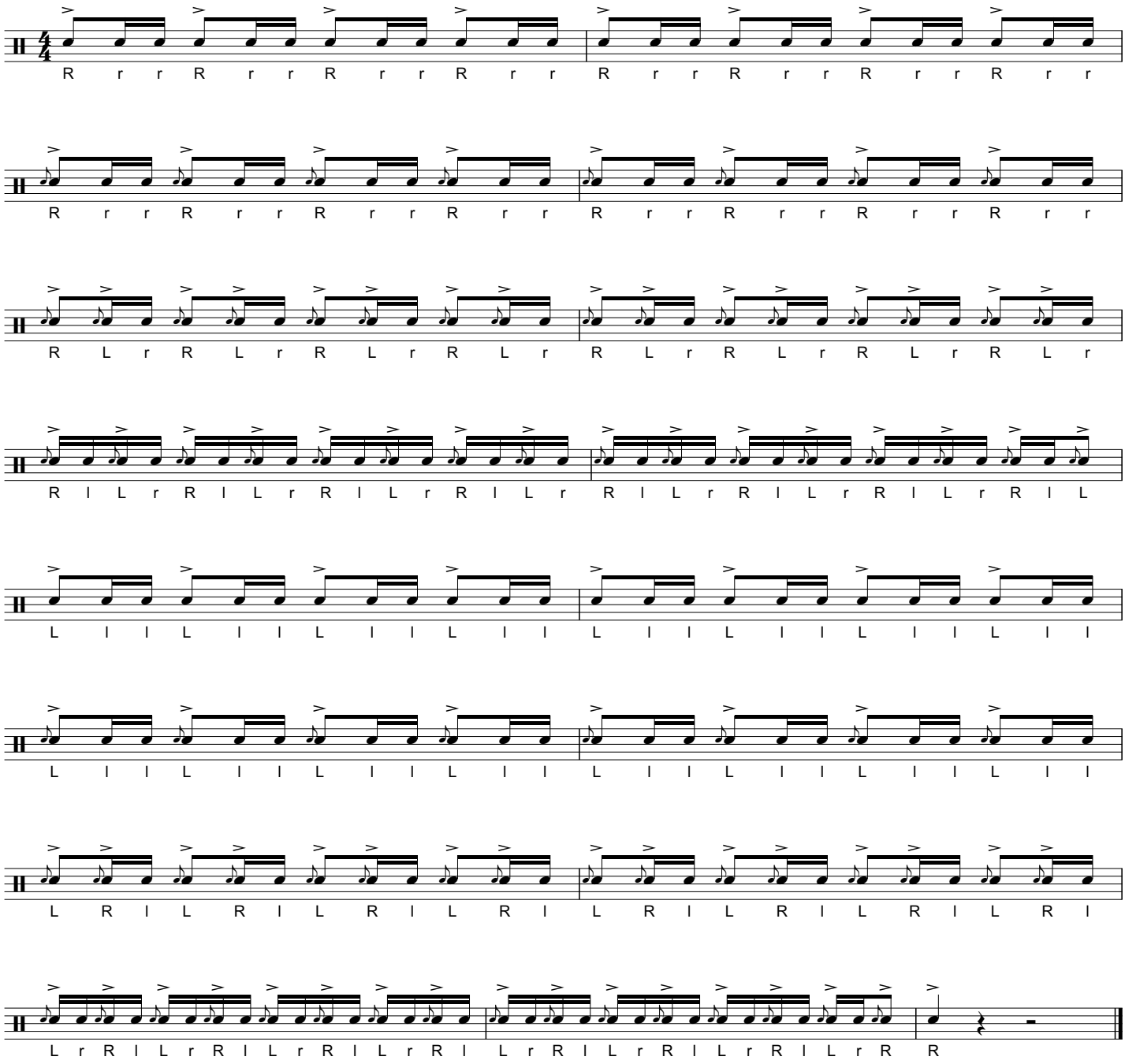


Invert Builder

LSU Drumline 2024

Steven Wimberley

♩ = 80-132



Rhythmic Spacings

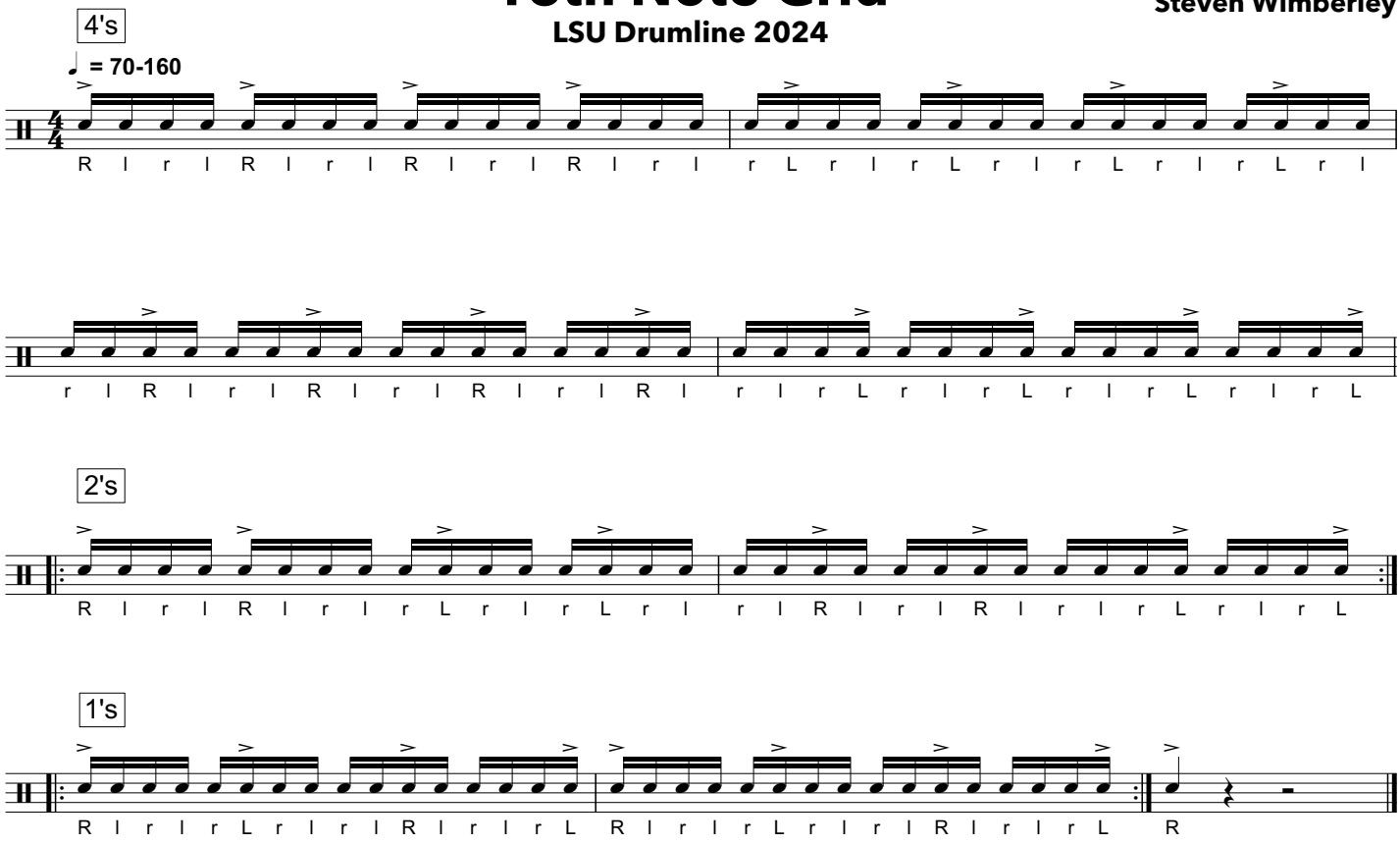
LSU Drumline 2024

Steven Wimberley

16th Note Grid

LSU Drumline 2024

Steven Wimberley



Triplet Grid

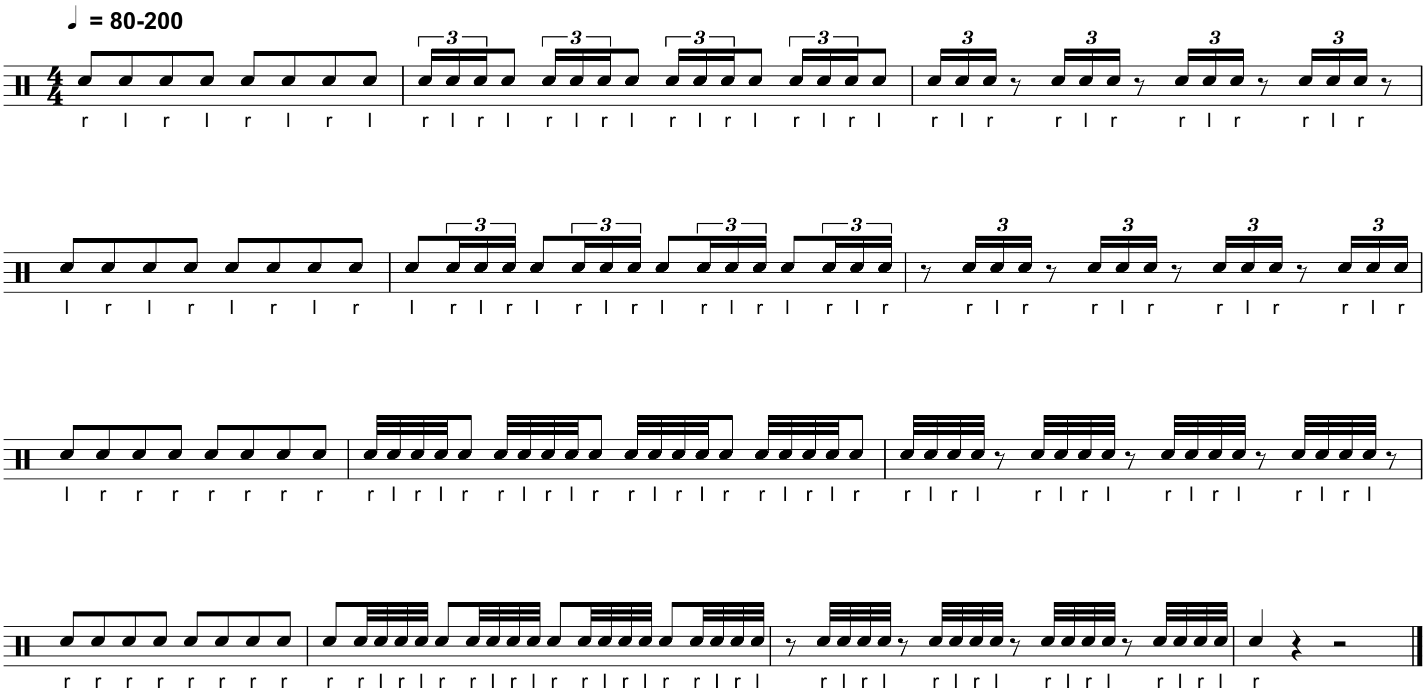
Steven Wimberley

LSU Drumline 2024

3's & 4's

Steven Wimberley

LSU Drumline 2024



Exercises:

Preface:

These supplementary exercises are a culmination of our foundational studies. These exercises maintain the same fundamental aspects of sound production, technique, and ensemble skills but also incorporate a particular performance characteristic that we are attempting to achieve on a daily basis.

These exercises will primarily be used during the regular season when there is not a great deal of time to run multiple exercises before a rehearsal or game.

Contents:

- 8-8-16*
- Scud Flood*
- Old Mojo
- New Mojo
- Cameron-Flameron (Cam-Flams) *

*= variation-based exercise that will cover a wide variety of techniques, dynamics, etc.

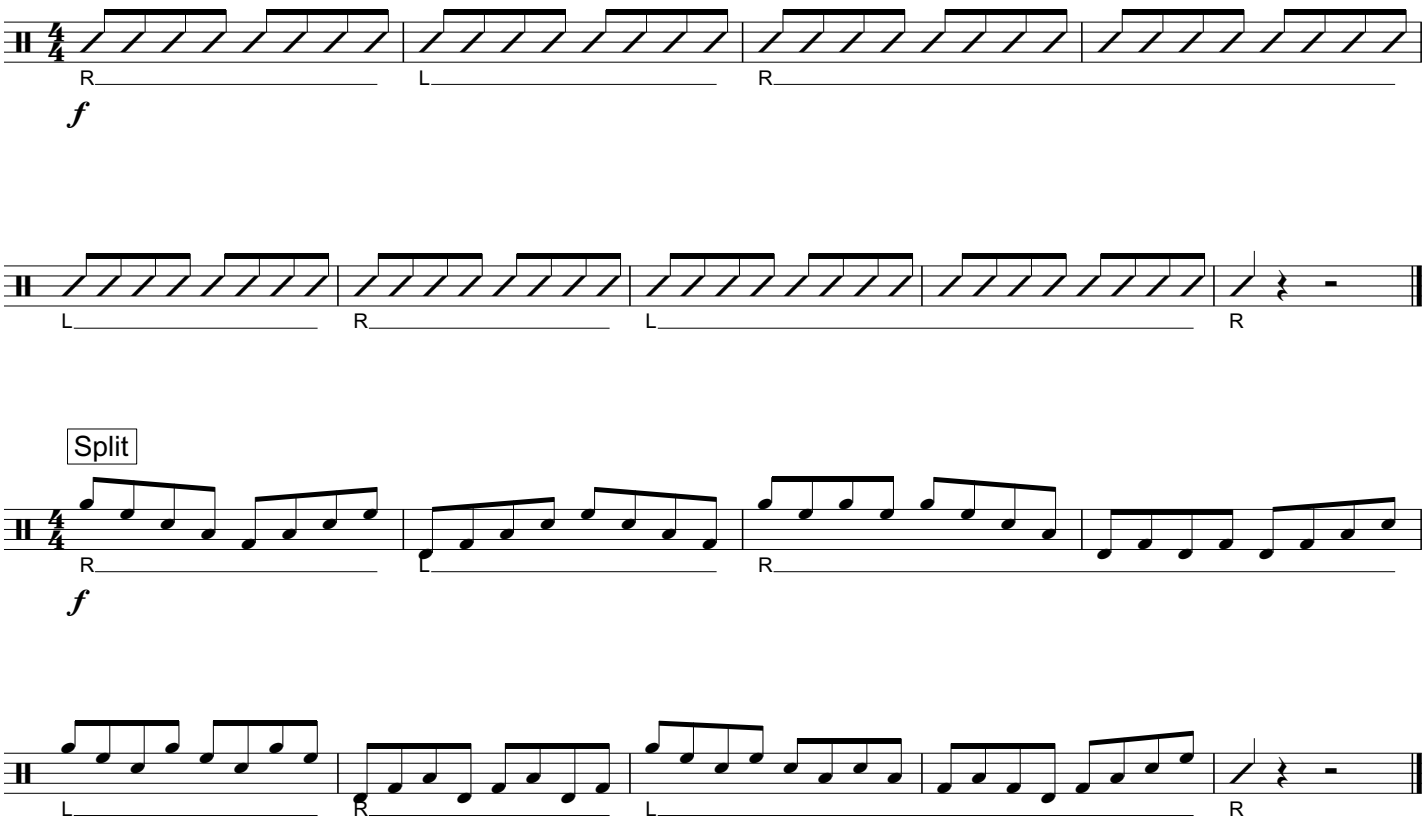
8-8-16 (Bass Splits)

LSU Drumline 2024

Steven Wimberley

♩ = 100-240

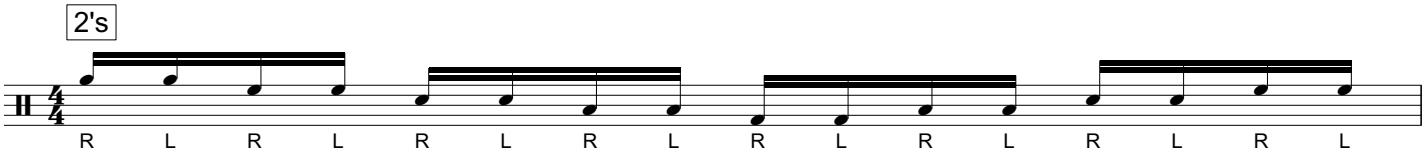
Unisons



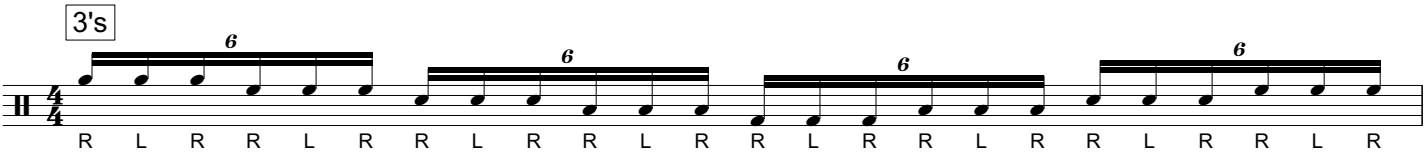
Split

Split Variation Examples:

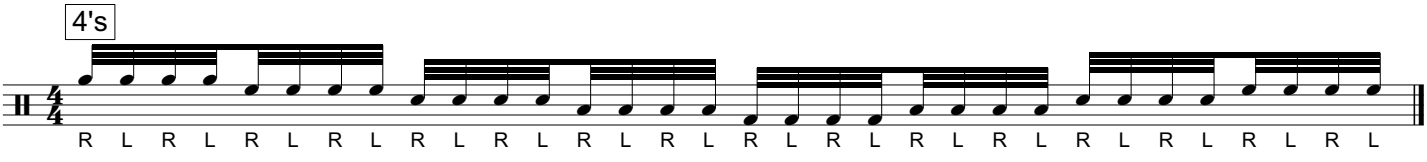
2's



3's



4's

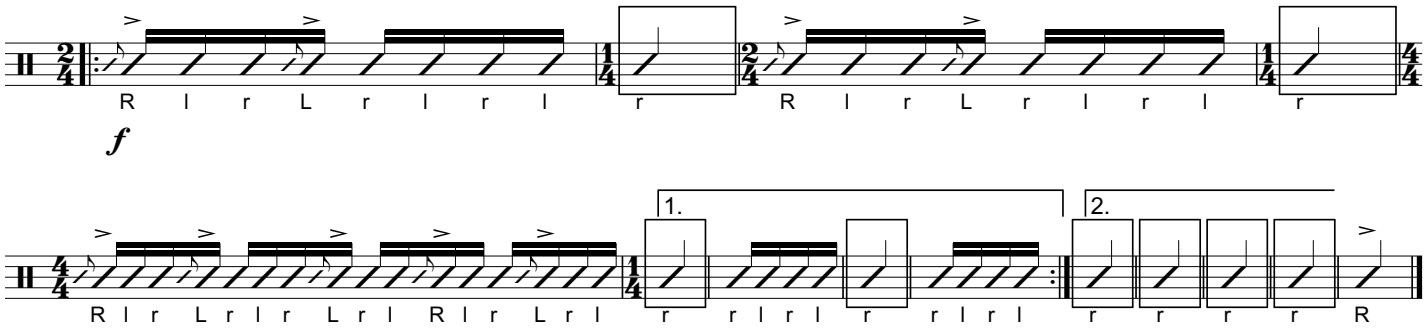


Scud Flood

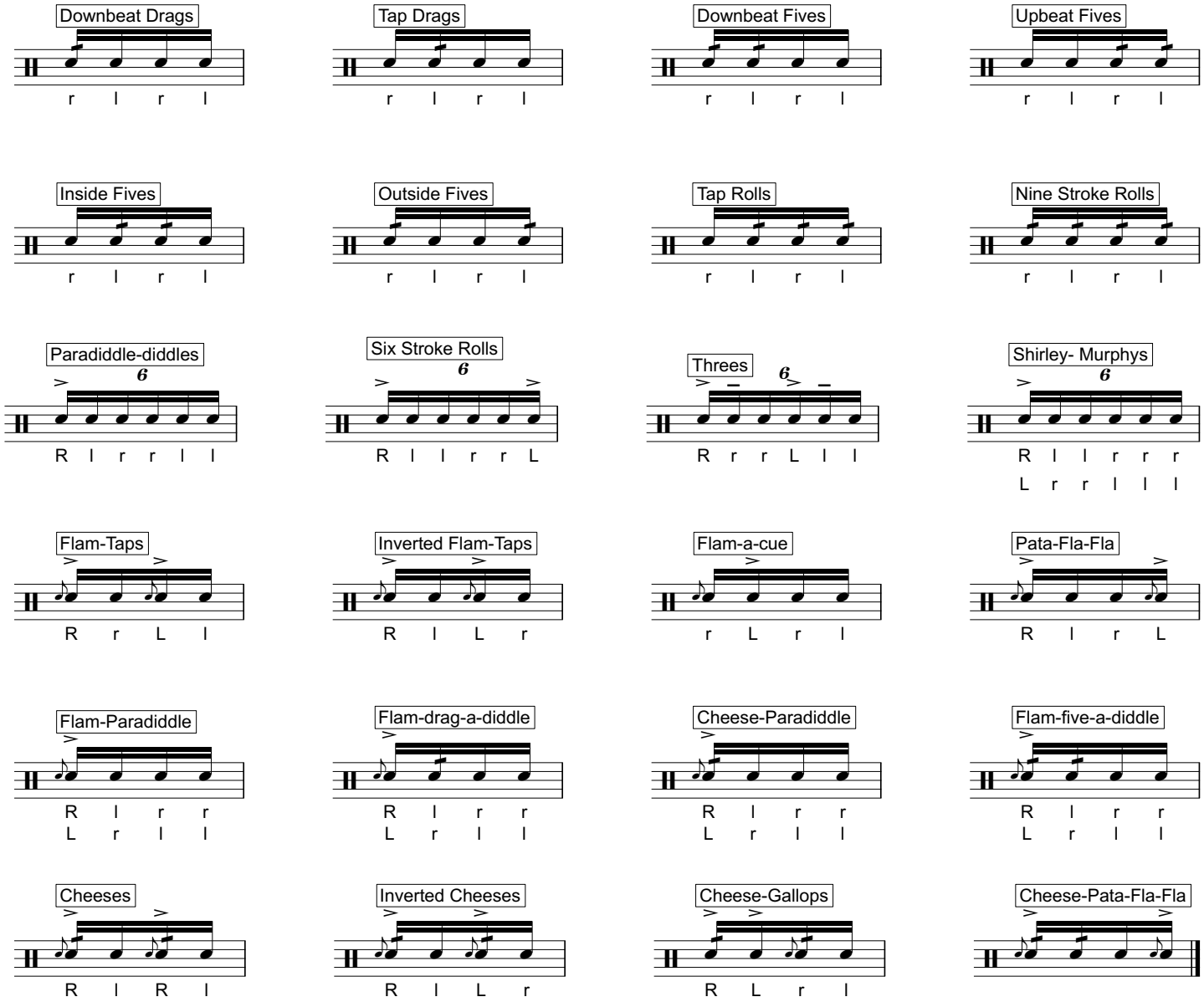
LSU Drumline 2024

Steven Wimberley

♩ = 90-120

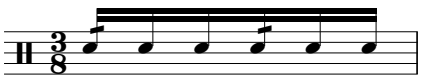


Quarter Note Variation Examples:

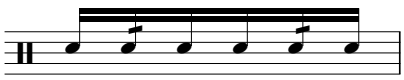


Dotted Quarter Note Variation Examples:

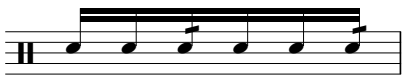
3/8 Downbeat Drags



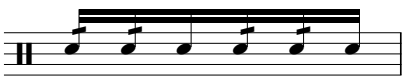
3/8 Tap Drags



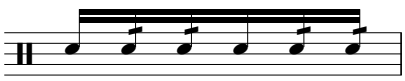
3/8 Outside Drags



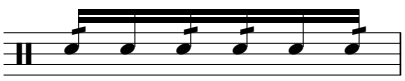
3/8 Downbeat Fives



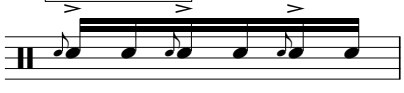
3/8 Tap Fives



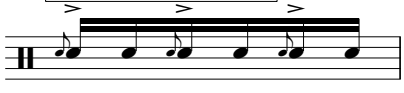
3/8 Outside Fives



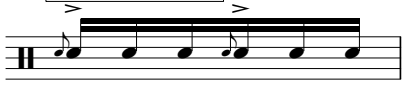
3/8 Flam-Taps



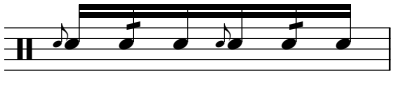
3/8 Inverted-Flam-Taps



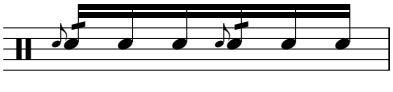
3/8 Flam-Accents



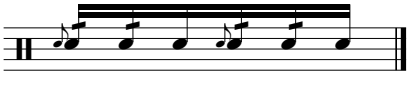
3/8 Flam-Drags



3/8 Cheeses



3/8 Flam-Fives

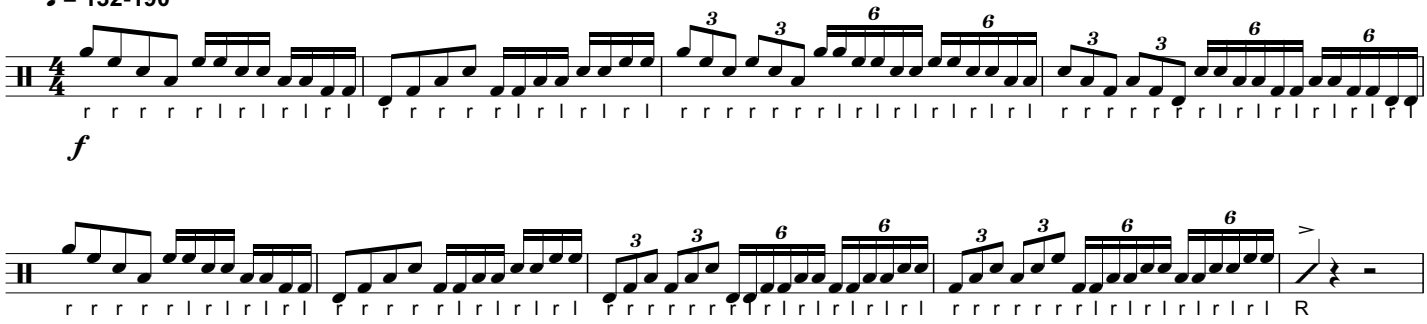


Old Mojo

Steven Wimberley

LSU Drumline 2024

♩ = 132-190

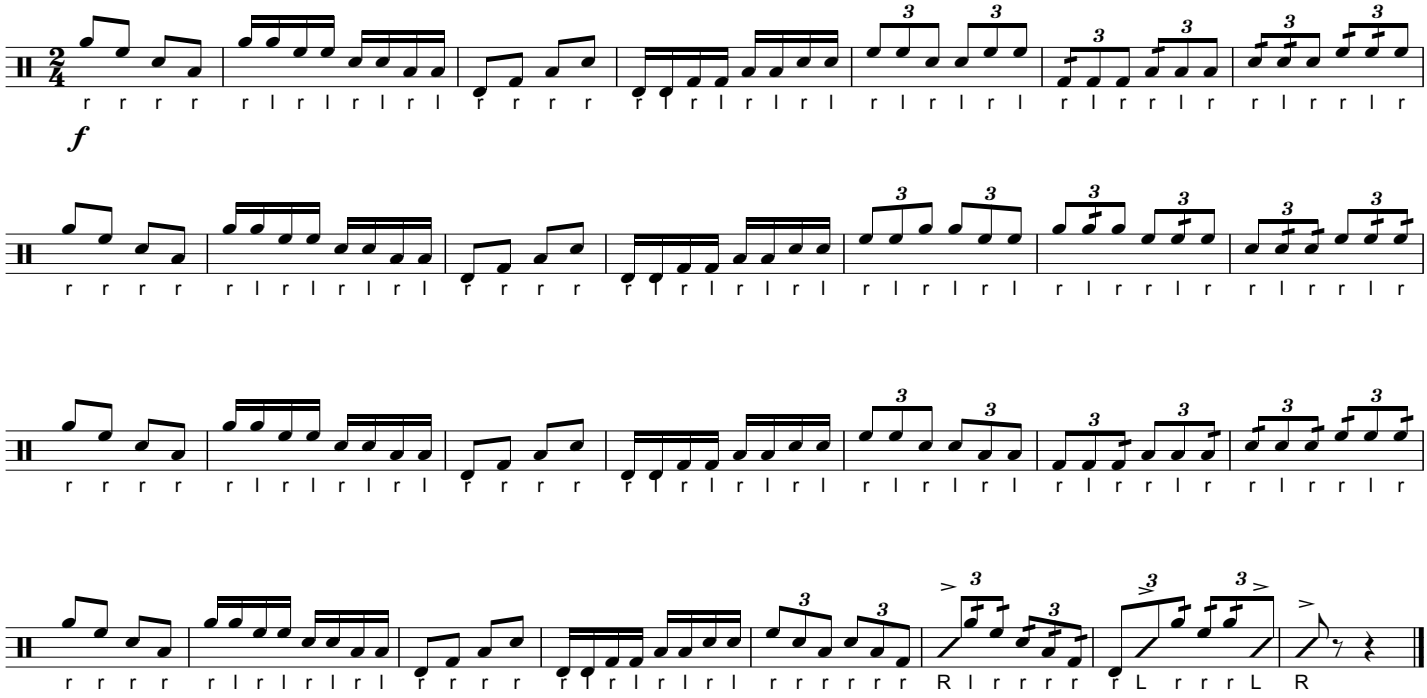


New Mojo

Steven Wimberley

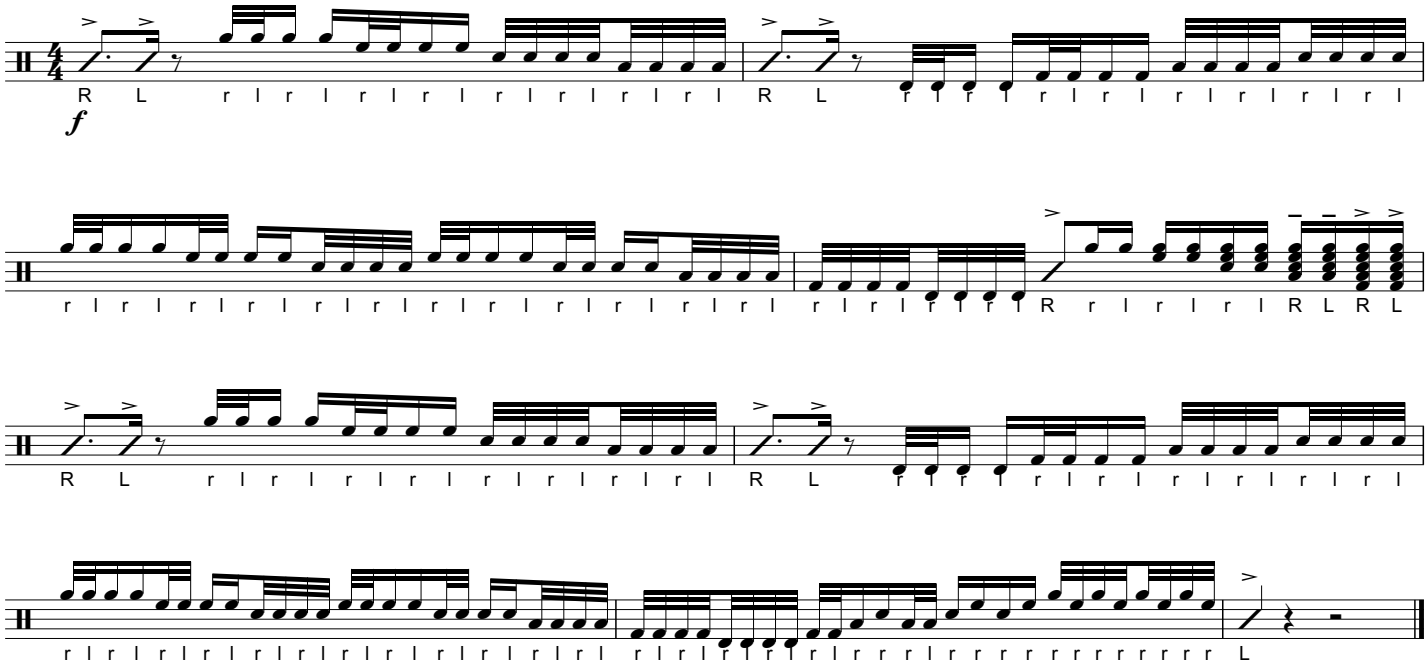
LSU Drumline 2024

♩ = 132-190



Cameron-Flameron

LSU Drumline 2024

Cameron Schreiber
Steven Wimberley

♩ = 80-120