

READING 3

By Stewart Jean

Edited by Joe Bergamini

Digital book design and cover by Mike Hoff

Layout by Rick Gratton

Music Engraving by Donny Gruendler and Stewart Jean

MI Curriculum Series

Series Sponsor: Jon Clayden, Vice President of Academic Affairs

Creative Director & Executive Editor: Donny Gruendler, Vice President of Instruction and Curricular Development

Managing Editor: Joe Bergamini

Published for MI by WBH MusicWorks LLC

Executive Producers: Rob Wallis, Joe Bergamini, Mike Hoff

Copyright © 2014 Musicians Institute, Inc.

All Rights Reserved





DRUM READING 3

Unit 1

1. The General Rules 4
2. Exercises: One-Bar Eighth-Note Ensemble Figures
w/Set-Up Fills 13
3. On Your Own Exercises 17

Unit 2

1. Phrase Interpretation (Phrasing) 19
2. Examples of Various Drum Charts 21
3. Exercises 26
4. On Your Own Exercises 30

Unit 3

1. Articulations 32
2. Articulation Exercises 35

Unit 4

1. Basic Concepts 43
2. Exercises: One-Bar Swung Eighth-Note Ensemble Figures
w/Set-Up Fills 46
3. On Your Own Exercises 50

Unit 5

1. Basic Concepts 52
2. Exercises: Two-Bar Swung Eighth-Note Ensemble Figures
w/Set-Up Fills 58
3. On Your Own Exercises 60

Unit 6

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------|----|
| 1. | Timekeeping Figures | 61 |
| 2. | Shorthand Indicators | 63 |
| 3. | On Your Own Exercises | 64 |

Unit 7

- | | | |
|----|----------------|----|
| 1. | Basic Concepts | 69 |
| 2. | Exercises | 84 |

Unit 8

- | | | |
|----|----------------|----|
| 1. | Basic Concepts | 85 |
| 2. | Sticking | 91 |
| 3. | Exercises | 94 |

Unit 9

- | | | |
|----|---------------------------------------|----|
| 1. | Combined Subdivision Ensemble Figures | 95 |
| 2. | Exercises | 99 |

Unit 10

- | | | |
|----|------------------|-----|
| 1. | Full Charts | 100 |
| | About the Author | 112 |

Chapter 1: The General Rules

In this unit, straight-eighth ensemble figures (paired with larger subdivisions: quarter notes, half notes and whole notes) will be presented. These exercises are designed to help you develop the ability to interpret ensemble figures as they are used in the modern music world. It is essential for all drummers to have the ability to read basic, common figures in order to expand their marketability. Understanding basic figures (and knowing how to set them up) should be second nature to any drummer seeking professional work (live or studio).

Why do ensemble figures need “setting up”?

It is important to understand why ensemble figures need to be accompanied by set-up fills. While being able to read music is an essential skill needed by working musicians, it is also important that all band members keep their ears open, thus maintaining their interpretation and listening skills. Notated music can convey a lot of information, but in the end it is the human interpretation of the chart that ultimately creates the piece of music.

A drummer’s role within an ensemble comes with many responsibilities. One of the most important responsibilities is to set up ensemble figures. Ensemble figures need set-up fills in order to assist the rest of the band with their interpretation of how an ensemble figure is played. A set-up fill projects that a rhythmic figure is approaching, hence the term “set up.” In addition, these fills add musicality to recurring ensemble figures, making the figures “pop out” of the music as highlights. Musicians that are great sight-readers will work more than non-reading musicians because of their ability to process notated music on the fly. This saves time, stress and money for the producers and writers of a particular project.

“Target” Beats

A set-up fill must be present prior to executing an ensemble figure. Therefore, this fill begins on a “target” beat, which is the exact location of your set-up. There are countless fill possibilities that can be created, but the target beat must be met (regardless of the complexity of your set-up fill). The two main focal points are downbeats and upbeats.

Ex. 1.1

Simple fill setting up the “&” of beat 4

A musical score for a drum set in 4/4 time. The top staff shows a simple fill: a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note on the snare, and a quarter note on the snare with an accent (>). The bottom staff shows a straight-eighth ensemble figure: a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note on the snare, and a quarter note on the snare with an accent (>). A blue box highlights the fill in the top staff and the ensemble figure in the bottom staff, both starting on the eighth note of beat 4.

Complex fill setting up the “&” of beat 4

A musical score for a drum set in 4/4 time. The top staff shows a complex fill: a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note on the snare, and a quarter note on the snare with an accent (>). The bottom staff shows a complex fill: a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note on the snare, and a quarter note on the snare with an accent (>). A blue box highlights the fill in the top staff and the ensemble figure in the bottom staff, both starting on the eighth note of beat 4.

Ensemble Figures Occurring on Downbeats

Quarter Note on the Downbeat of Beat 1

A full beat of set up is typically needed for quarter-note ensemble figures that occur on downbeats. In the example below, the ensemble figure is on the downbeat of beat 1. Once the set-up fill and ensemble figure are executed, you must continue to play time thereafter (indicated by time slashes). Playing a fill that occupies all of beat 4 (the downbeat before the ensemble figure) is one solid way to set up this figure. For the ensemble figure itself, a crash cymbal (with bass drum support) should be played like this (with a common groove added):

Ex 1.2

Downbeat of beat 1

Target beat: beat 4

Ensemble figure

What is notated

What is played

Set-up fill

Executed ensemble figure

Quarter Note on the Downbeat of Beat 2

A quarter-note ensemble figure on the downbeat of beat 2 will typically retain the snare drum backbeat on beat 2 paired with a crash cymbal. The target beat for the set-up fill is beat 1. This example fill provides a bass drum on the "e" of beat 1, which launches into the ensemble figure.

Ex. 1.3

Downbeat of beat 2

Target beat: beat 1

Ensemble figure

What is notated

What is played

Set-up fill

Executed ensemble figure

Quarter Note on the Downbeat of Beat 3

A quarter-note ensemble figure on the downbeat of beat 3 has a target of beat 2. The bass drum will support the cymbal crash on the downbeat of beat 3. This method allows for an uninterrupted groove.

Ex. 1.4

Downbeat of beat 3

The diagram shows two staves: 'What is notated' and 'What is played'. The 'What is notated' staff shows a quarter note on the downbeat of beat 3, with a blue arrow pointing to it labeled 'Ensemble figure'. A blue arrow points to the downbeat of beat 2, labeled 'Target beat: beat 2'. The 'What is played' staff shows a sequence of quarter notes with 'x' marks above them, representing a cymbal crash. A bracket under the notes from beat 3 to beat 4 is labeled 'Set-up fill'. A blue arrow points to the downbeat of beat 3, labeled 'Executed ensemble figure'.

Quarter Note on the Downbeat of Beat 4

A quarter-note ensemble figure on the downbeat of 4 is treated similarly to the downbeat of 2. The snare drum is paired with the cymbal on beat 4 following the set-up fill on beat 3 (the target beat).

Ex. 1.5

Downbeat of beat 4

The diagram shows two staves: 'What is notated' and 'What is played'. The 'What is notated' staff shows a quarter note on the downbeat of beat 4, with a blue arrow pointing to it labeled 'Ensemble figure'. A blue arrow points to the downbeat of beat 2, labeled 'Target beat: beat 2'. The 'What is played' staff shows a sequence of quarter notes with 'x' marks above them, representing a cymbal crash. A bracket under the notes from beat 3 to beat 4 is labeled 'Set-up fill'. A blue arrow points to the downbeat of beat 4, labeled 'Executed ensemble figure'.

Whole Notes and Half Notes

Whole note and half notes should be treated in a similar manner as quarter notes (with the target beat being the full downbeat before the figure). However, in this case the set-up fill should also *match the length* of the ensemble figure. Thus, a half note (worth two beats), should be preceded by a two-beat fill

Half Note on the Downbeat of Beat 1

When setting up a half note on the downbeat of beat 1, the target beats are beats 3 and 4 as follows:
Ex. 1.6

The diagram shows two staves. The top staff, labeled 'What is notated', shows a half note on the downbeat of beat 1. The bottom staff, labeled 'What is played', shows a two-beat set-up fill (beats 3 and 4) followed by the half note on the downbeat of beat 1. A blue arrow points from the text 'Target beats: beats 3 and 4' to the set-up fill. Another blue arrow points from 'Ensemble figure' to the half note. A third blue arrow points from 'Executed ensemble figure' to the half note. A box labeled 'Downbeat of beat 1' is positioned above the first staff.

Half Note on the Downbeat of Beat 2

When setting up a half note on the downbeat of beat 2, the target beats are beats 4 and 1. The snare drum is paired with the cymbal crash on beat 2.

Note: the half note on beat 2 is notated as two tied quarter notes so as to adhere to the 2/3 imaginary bar line rule.
Ex. 1.7

The diagram shows two staves. The top staff, labeled 'What is notated', shows a half note on the downbeat of beat 2, represented as two tied quarter notes. The bottom staff, labeled 'What is played', shows a two-beat set-up fill (beats 4 and 1) followed by the half note on the downbeat of beat 2. A blue arrow points from the text 'Target beats: beats 4 and 1' to the set-up fill. Another blue arrow points from 'Ensemble figure' to the half note. A third blue arrow points from 'Executed ensemble figure' to the half note. A box labeled 'Downbeat of beat 2' is positioned above the first staff.

Half Note on the Downbeat of Beat 3

When setting up a half note on the downbeat of beat 3, the target beats are beats 1 and 2 as follows:
Ex. 1.8

The diagram shows two staves: 'What is notated' and 'What is played'. The 'What is notated' staff shows a half note on the downbeat of beat 3. The 'What is played' staff shows a drum set-up fill consisting of two beats (beats 1 and 2) followed by an ensemble figure on the downbeat of beat 3. Labels include 'Downbeat of beat 3', 'Target beats: beats 1 and 2', 'Ensemble figure', and 'Two beat set-up fill'.

Half Note (Tied Quarter Note) on the Downbeat of Beat 4

When setting up an ensemble figure on the downbeat of beat 4 (tied over the bar line), the target beats are beats 2 and 3. The snare drum is paired with the cymbal crash on beat 4.

Note: an ensemble figure on beat 4 tied over the bar line can be tied to any number of note lengths.
Ex. 1.9

The diagram shows two staves: 'What is notated' and 'What is played'. The 'What is notated' staff shows a half note (tied quarter note) on the downbeat of beat 4. The 'What is played' staff shows a drum set-up fill consisting of two beats (beats 2 and 3) followed by an ensemble figure on the downbeat of beat 4. Labels include 'Downbeat of beat 4', 'Target beats: beats 2 and 3', 'Ensemble figure', and 'Two beat set-up fill'.

Whole Note on Beat 1

Using this method, a whole note (worth four beats) should be preceded by a big four-beat fill. For example:
Ex. 1.10

The diagram shows two staves: 'What is notated' and 'What is played'. The 'What is notated' staff shows a whole note on beat 1. The 'What is played' staff shows a drum set-up fill consisting of four beats (beats 1, 2, 3, and 4) followed by an ensemble figure on beat 1. Labels include 'Target beats: beats 1, 2, 3, 4', 'Ensemble figure', and 'Four-beat set-up fill'.

Ensemble Figures Occurring on Upbeats

When upbeats are played, the musical momentum naturally increases and most musicians tend to push the tempo ahead of the beat. Therefore, a *strong downbeat should be provided* (by the drummer) prior to executing an upbeat ensemble figure. When the band “feels” where the drummer places the downbeat, they will react together as a unified group, tightly executing the figure.

The “&” of Beat 1

When setting up the “&” of beat 1, the target beat is the downbeat of beat 1. The length of the set-up fill may be determined by a number of factors. (What is the length of the figure? What is the musical setting?) Therefore, for instructional purposes, we will use an eighth note tied to a quarter note (or a sole dotted quarter note) to explain common set-up methods. An important item to remember is that the snare drum backbeat (on beat 2) will immediately follow the figure on the “&” of beat 1.

Ex. 1.11

"&" of beat 1

Target beat: downbeat of beat 1

Ensemble figure

What is notated

What is played

Set-up fill

Executed ensemble figure

Detailed description: This musical example illustrates the setup for an ensemble figure on the "&" of beat 1. It consists of two staves: "What is notated" and "What is played". The "What is notated" staff shows a series of eighth notes with stems pointing up, followed by a dotted quarter note on the downbeat of beat 1, which is the ensemble figure. A blue arrow points from the text "Target beat: downbeat of beat 1" to the downbeat. Another blue arrow points from "Ensemble figure" to the dotted quarter note. The "What is played" staff shows the actual performance: a set-up fill of eighth notes with stems pointing down, followed by the ensemble figure on the downbeat. A bracket under the eighth notes is labeled "Set-up fill", and a blue arrow points from "Executed ensemble figure" to the downbeat.

The “&” of Beat 2

Here we are presented with an eighth note tied to a quarter note starting on the “&” of beat 2. The target beat is the downbeat of beat 2, thus a strong sound must be produced on the downbeat of beat 2 setting up the “&” of beat 2. For example:

Ex. 1.12

"&" of beat 2

Target beat: downbeat of beat 2

Ensemble figure

What is notated

What is played

Set-up fill

Executed ensemble figure

Detailed description: This musical example illustrates the setup for an ensemble figure on the "&" of beat 2. It consists of two staves: "What is notated" and "What is played". The "What is notated" staff shows a series of eighth notes with stems pointing up, followed by a dotted quarter note on the downbeat of beat 2, which is the ensemble figure. A blue arrow points from the text "Target beat: downbeat of beat 2" to the downbeat. Another blue arrow points from "Ensemble figure" to the dotted quarter note. The "What is played" staff shows the actual performance: a set-up fill of eighth notes with stems pointing down, followed by the ensemble figure on the downbeat. A bracket under the eighth notes is labeled "Set-up fill", and a blue arrow points from "Executed ensemble figure" to the downbeat.

The "&" of Beat 3

To set up an ensemble figure on the "&" of beat 3, the target beat is the downbeat of beat 3. Thus, a strong sound must be produced on the downbeat of beat 3 setting up the "&" of beat 3. For example:

Ex. 1.13

"&" of beat 3

Target beat: downbeat of beat 3

Ensemble figure

What is notated

What is played

Set-up fill

Executed ensemble figure

The "&" of Beat 4

To set up an ensemble figure on the "&" of beat 4, the target beat is the downbeat of beat 4. Thus, a strong sound must be produced on the downbeat of beat 4 setting up the "&" of beat 4. For example:

Ex. 1.14

"&" of beat 4

Target beat: downbeat of beat 4

Ensemble figure

What is notated

What is played

Set-up fill

Executed ensemble figure