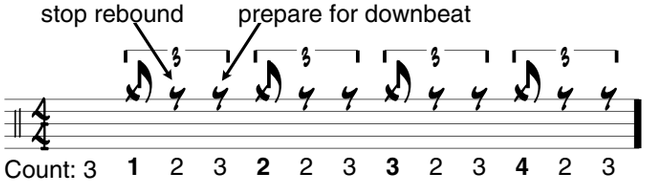
# SECTION 4:
## Preliminary Quarter-note Exercises

## Playing Quarter Notes on the Ride Cymbal

Strokes consist of two parts: a downstroke and an upstroke. Often we pay most attention to the downstroke, because that is the part of the stroke that produces the sound. However, awareness of the upstroke is crucial when we play an ostinato, i.e., a repetitive rhythmic pattern. To be consistent dynamically and rhythmically, the ostinato, whether a back beat on the snare drum or quarters on the ride cymbal, must have the same upstrokes to guarantee the same downstrokes. The space/motion between the notes must be the same if the notes/sounds themselves are to be consistent. *Consistent silence (upstrokes) produces consistent sound (downstrokes).*

*The quickest way to learn a new technique is to practice it slowly. That gives you more time to think about and to listen to what you are playing. The more thought and focus the quicker the assimilation of the new motion.*

Starting at ♩=50 and then up to ♩=80, count repetitive quarters in eighth-note triplet subdivisions, starting your count with a pick-up on "3" before the downbeat of 1: "3- 1-2-3 2-2-3 3-2-3 4-2-3." Play the downbeat and stop the rebound (upstroke) of the stick in the area of count "2." Prepare for the next quarter's downstroke by raising the stick (with the rotary motion of the Hinger Technique discussed earlier, not with a vertical arm stroke) on count "3" just as you did to start the exercise. *The stick starts low and finishes low.*



# Playing with Hands Together: Unison Quarter Notes

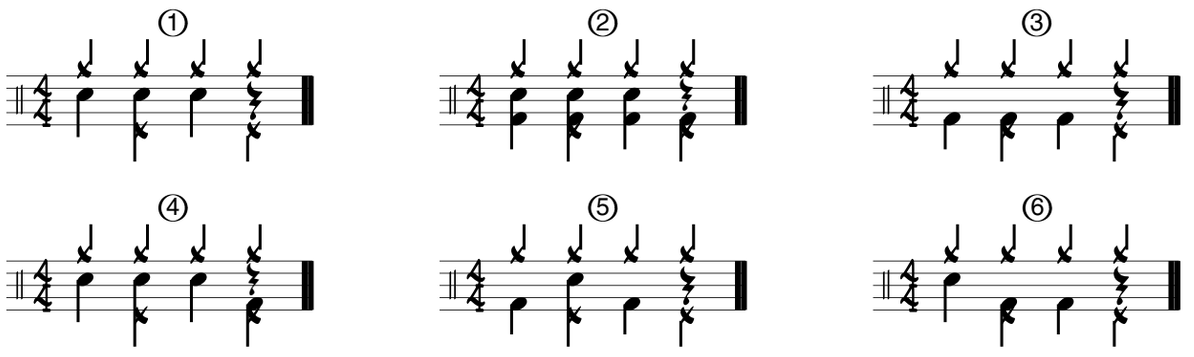
Play repetitive quarter notes on the ride and snare together, concentrating on the same downstrokes and upstrokes in both hands. Use a metronome and count the quarter notes in eighth-note triplet subdivisions. Both hands should "feel" the same. You can experiment with finding "balanced" stick grips by deliberately tightening one hand's grip to contrast it with the looser, natural grip of the other hand. Then, loosen the tight grip until that hand moves as freely and as comfortably as the other hand. Or tighten both hands/grips and gradually relax until you find the balance point. Listen to yourself and dynamically balance the snare and ride. This will occur if both hands have the same downstrokes and upstrokes; i.e., the same degree of tension/looseness in their respective stick grips.

Once these strokes become "automatic"—when you no longer need to watch the beads of your sticks and count the subdivisions of the quarter notes, and they "feel" and sound good—play the exercises on pages 16-19. Now your eyes will be on the page, so use your listening and kinesthetic senses to balance and subdivide.

**Always practice with a metronome. If you are really serious about learning you will start at ♩= 40!**

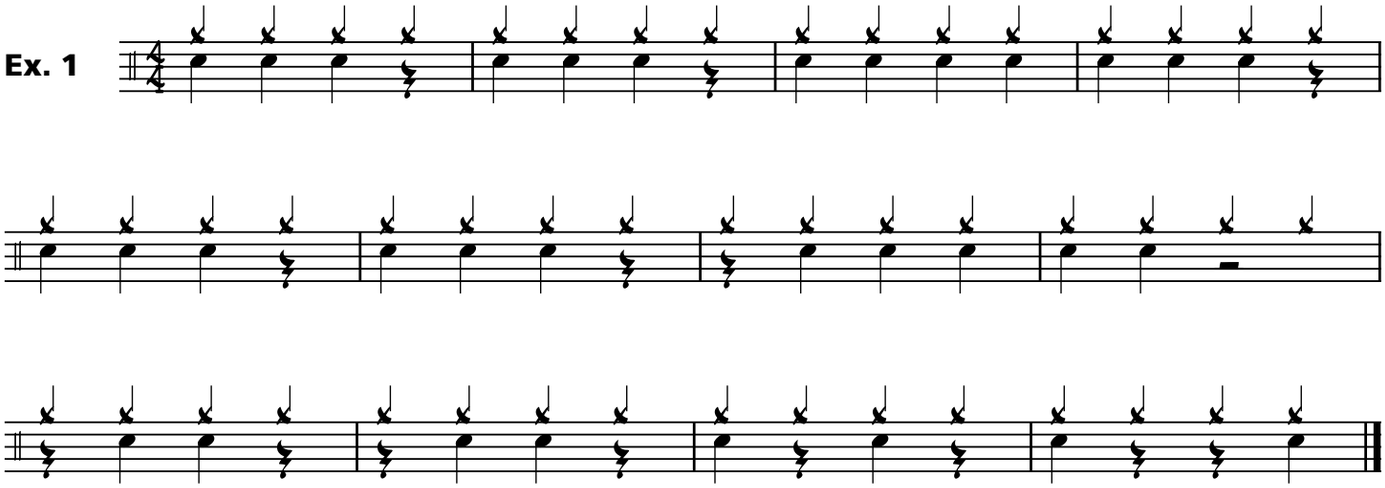
# Quarter-note Exercises on the Snare and Bass Drums

1. Play the exercises with Tracks 1 and 2.
2. Begin at ♩ = 60. Concentrate on unison downstrokes and upstrokes. If necessary, count the subdivisions as was done with the preparatory quarter-note exercises to make sure that all upstrokes are in time. Final tempo goal: ♩ = 120.
3. Play all exercises as written and accompany with the hi-hat played on beats 2 and 4 using the rocking heel-toe technique. (1)
4. Play with and without the bass drum softly playing four beats to the measure. Practice playing soft quarter notes with a very small stroke using heel-down position on the pedal. (2)
5. Play the snare exercises on the bass drum too, with the hi-hat on beats 2 and 4 and with the quarter-note ride rhythm. (3)
6. Play the quarter notes on the snare drum, quarter-note rests on the bass drum, and the hi-hat on beats 2 and 4. (4)
7. Play some of the quarters on the snare drum and some on the bass drum, accompanied by the hi-hat on beats 2 and 4, and continuous quarter notes as written on the ride cymbal (5) and (6).
8. **Listen** and make sure that all parts are balanced dynamically. Is the hi-hat too soft? Is the bass drum too loud? **For now, the natural, unforced dynamic level of the ride pattern should serve as the dynamic level of the rest of the parts. None of the other parts should be louder than the ride pattern.**
9. Improvise your own dynamically balanced quarter-note exercises using the snare, and bass with Tracks 1 and 2.



# 1 Twelve-measure Quarter-note Exercises

**Ex. 1**



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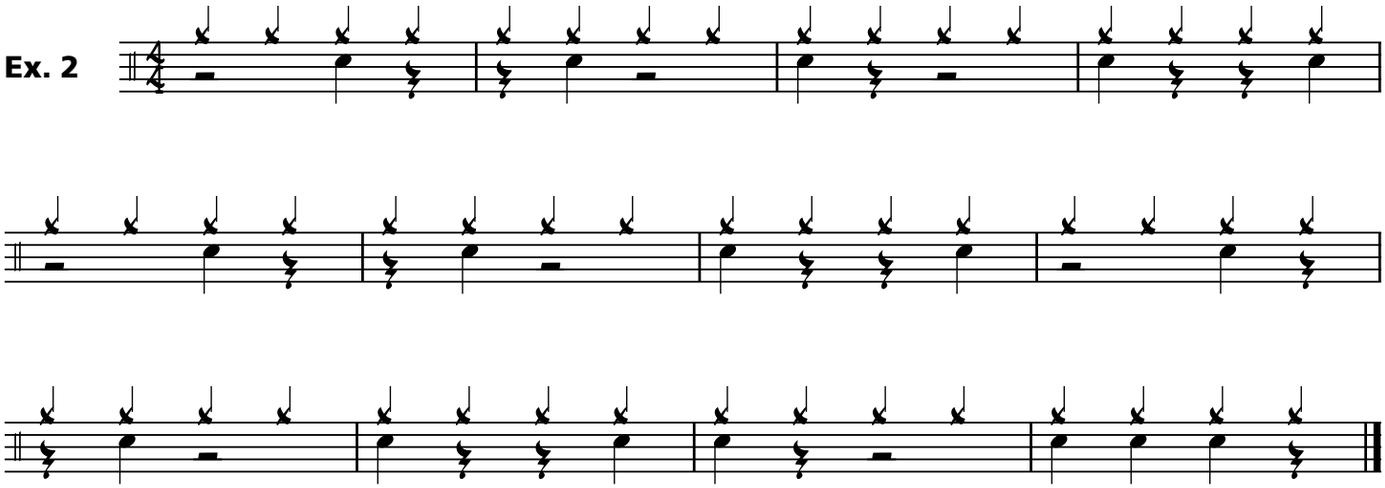

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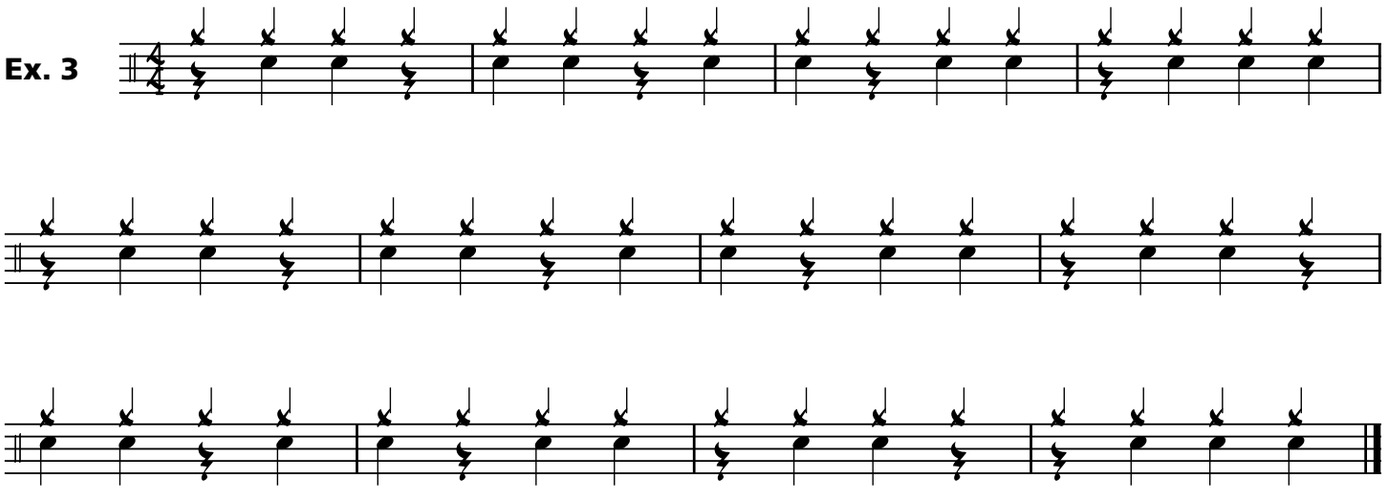

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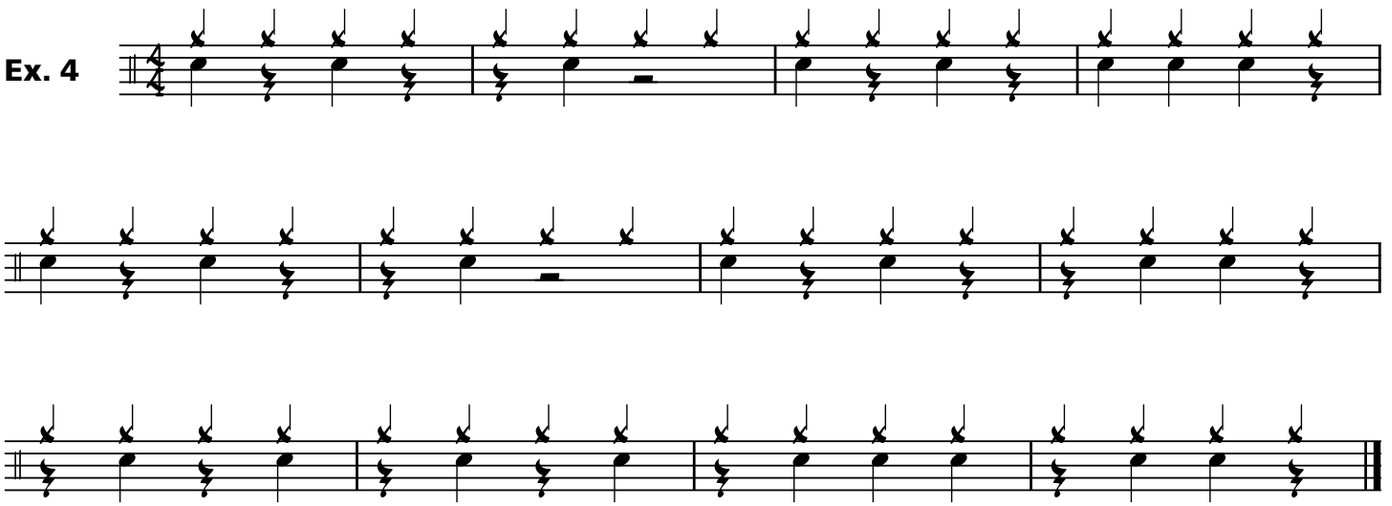

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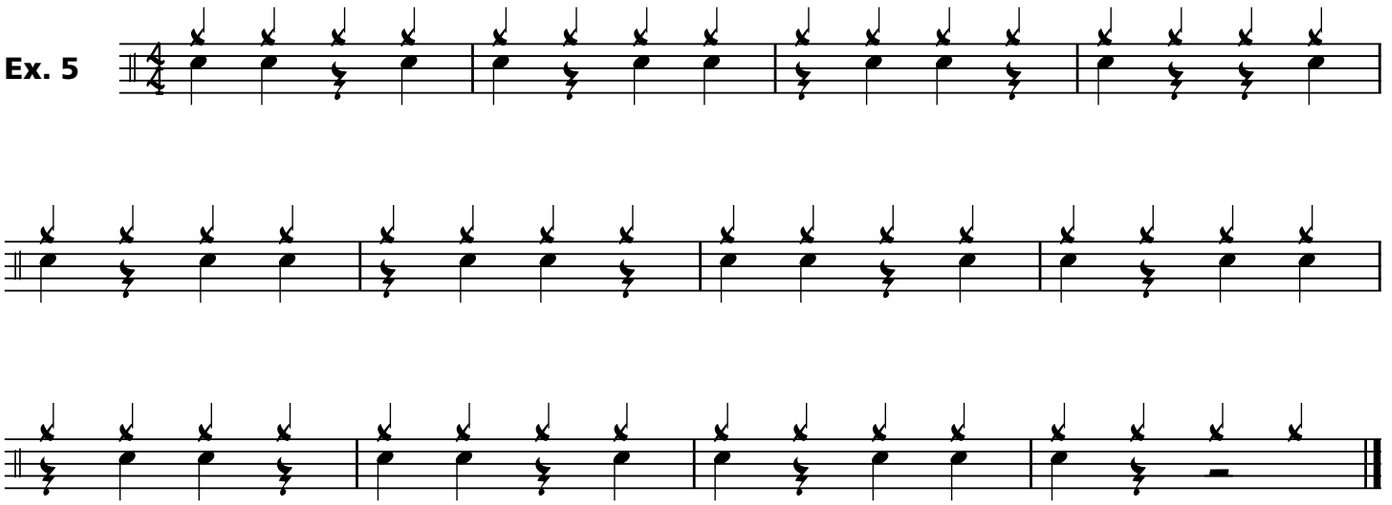

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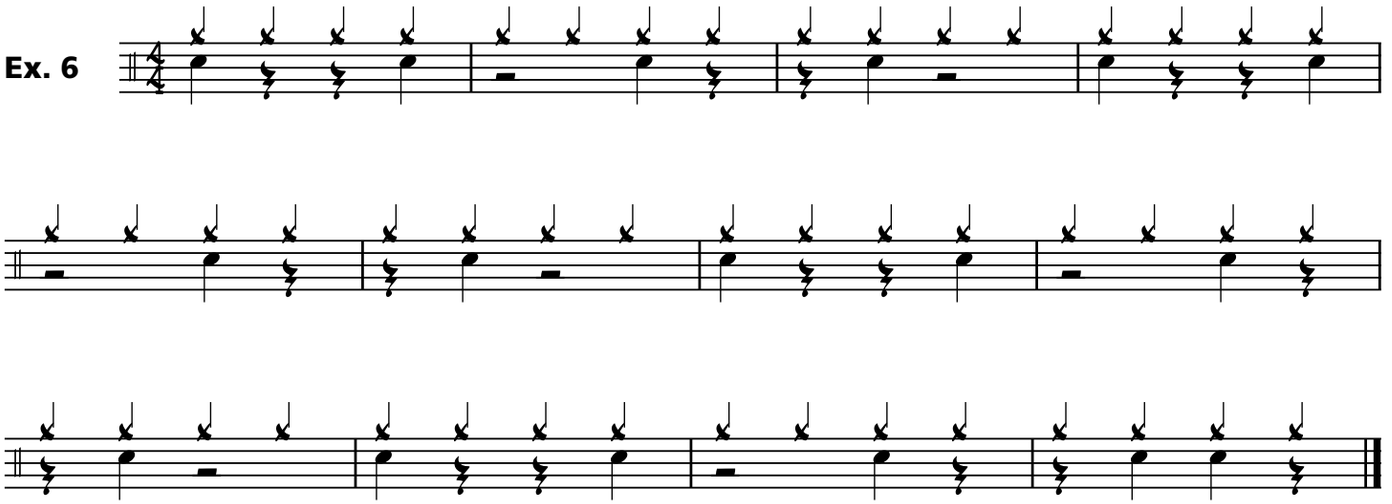
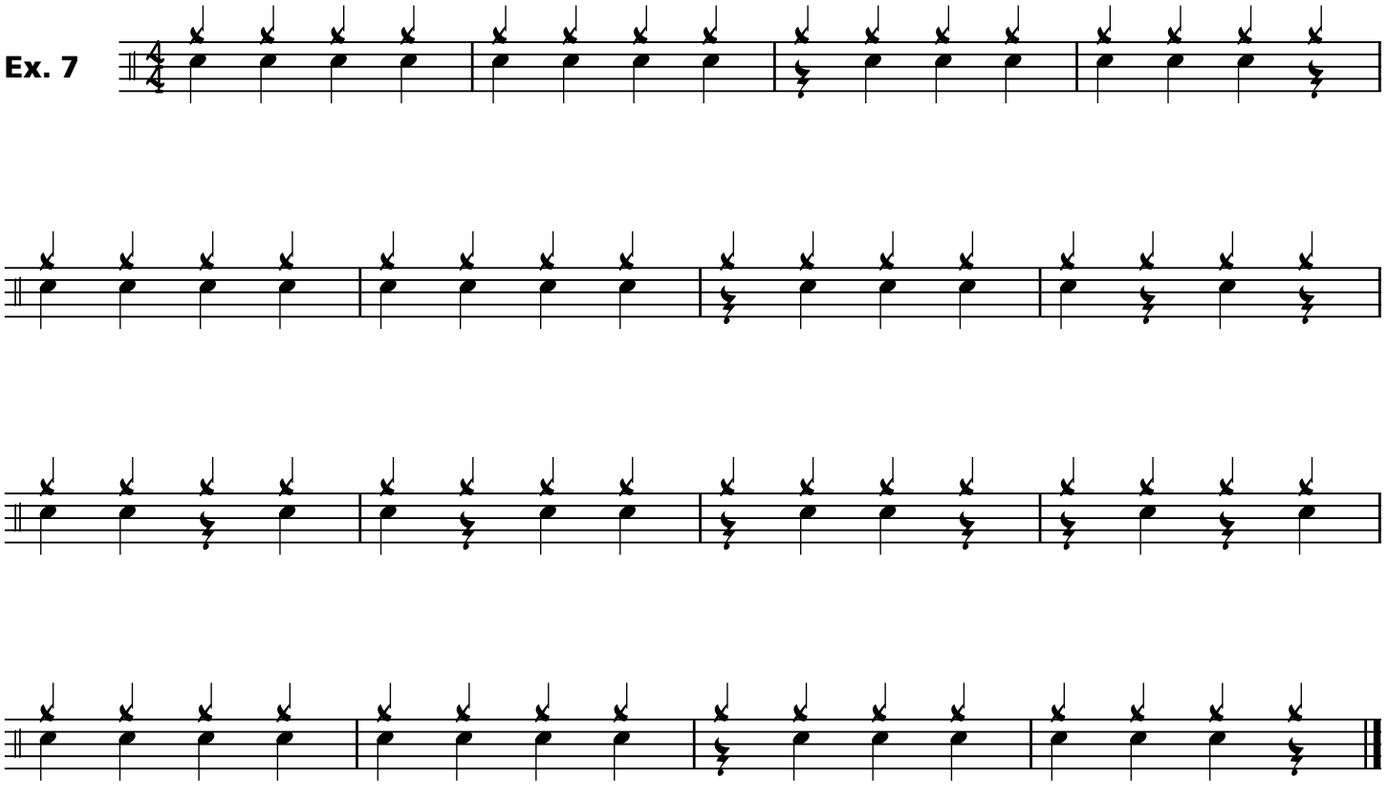


# 2 Sixteen-measure Quarter-note Exercises

**Ex. 7**



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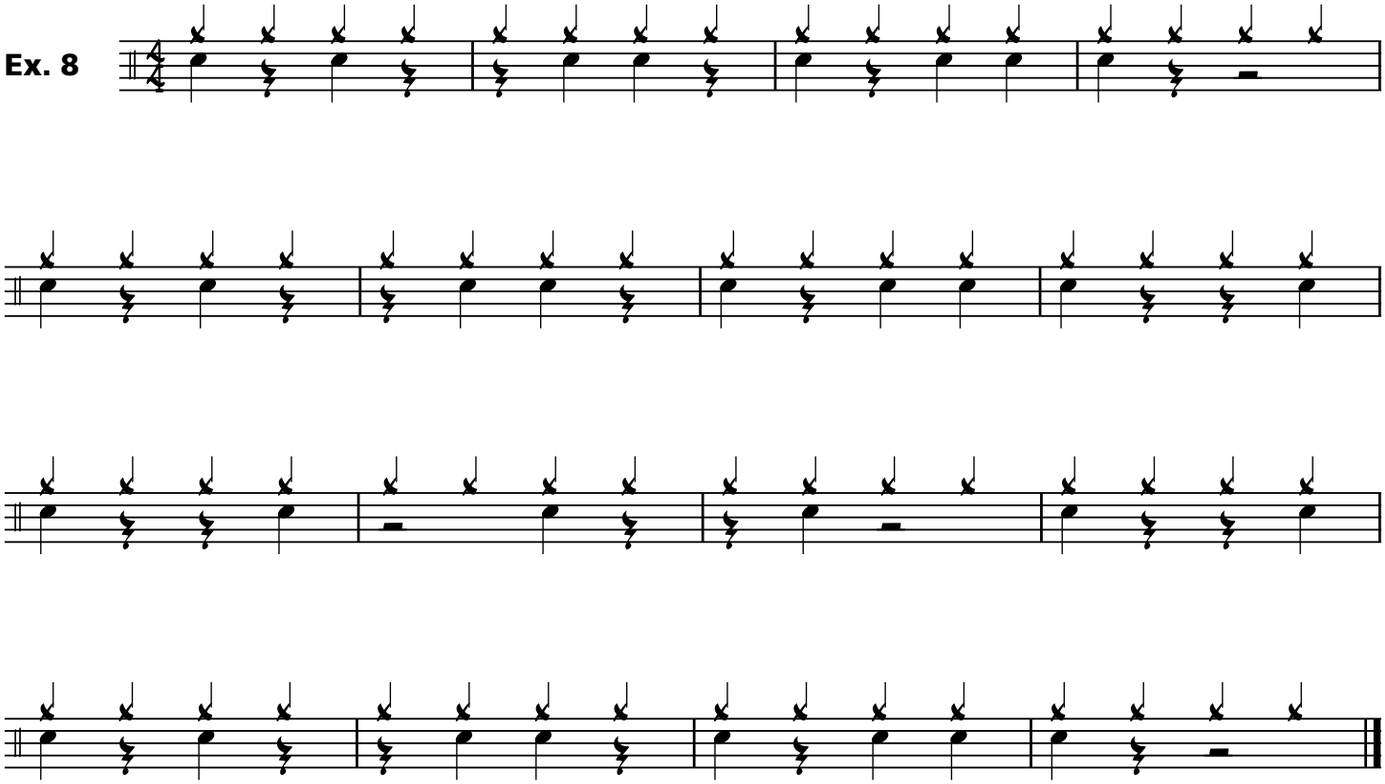

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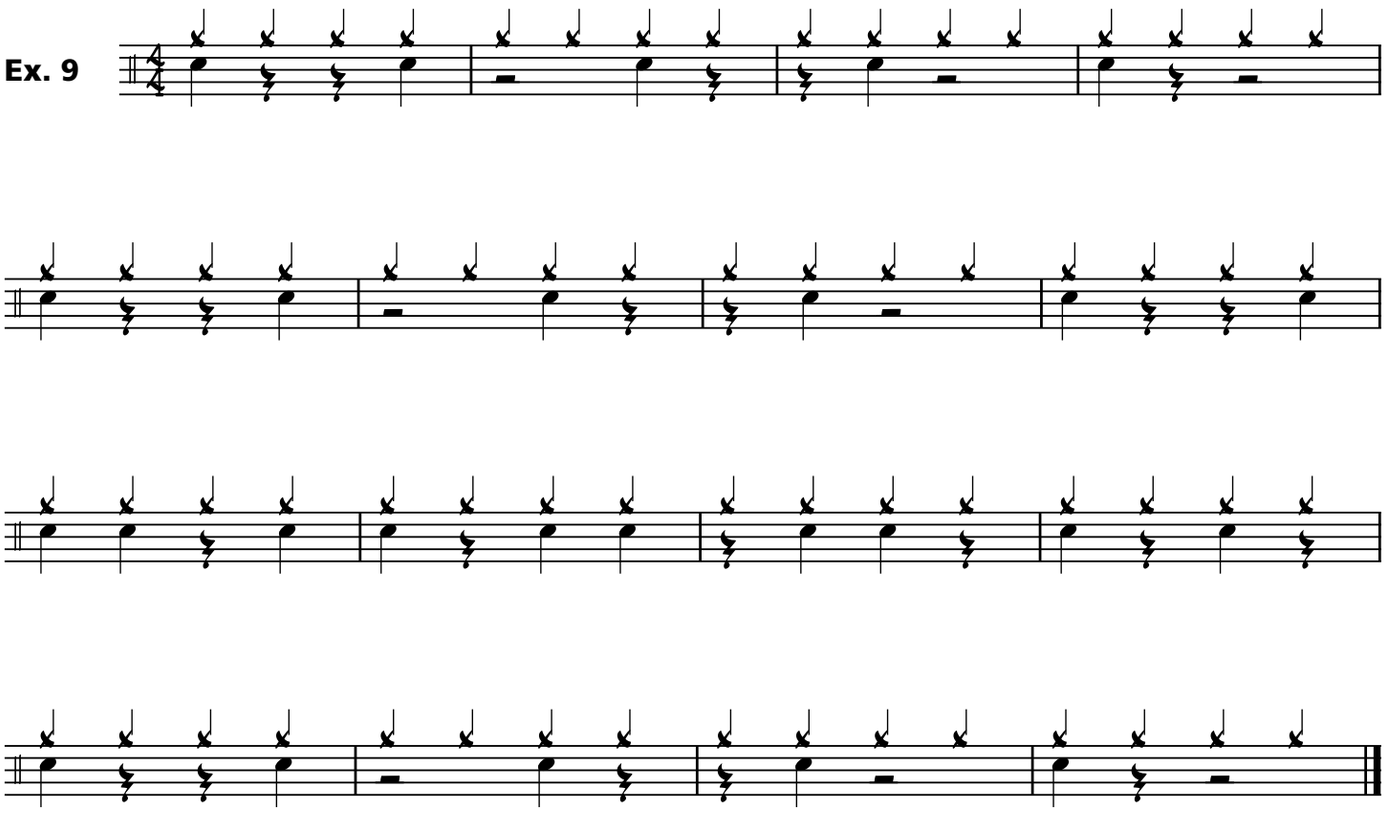
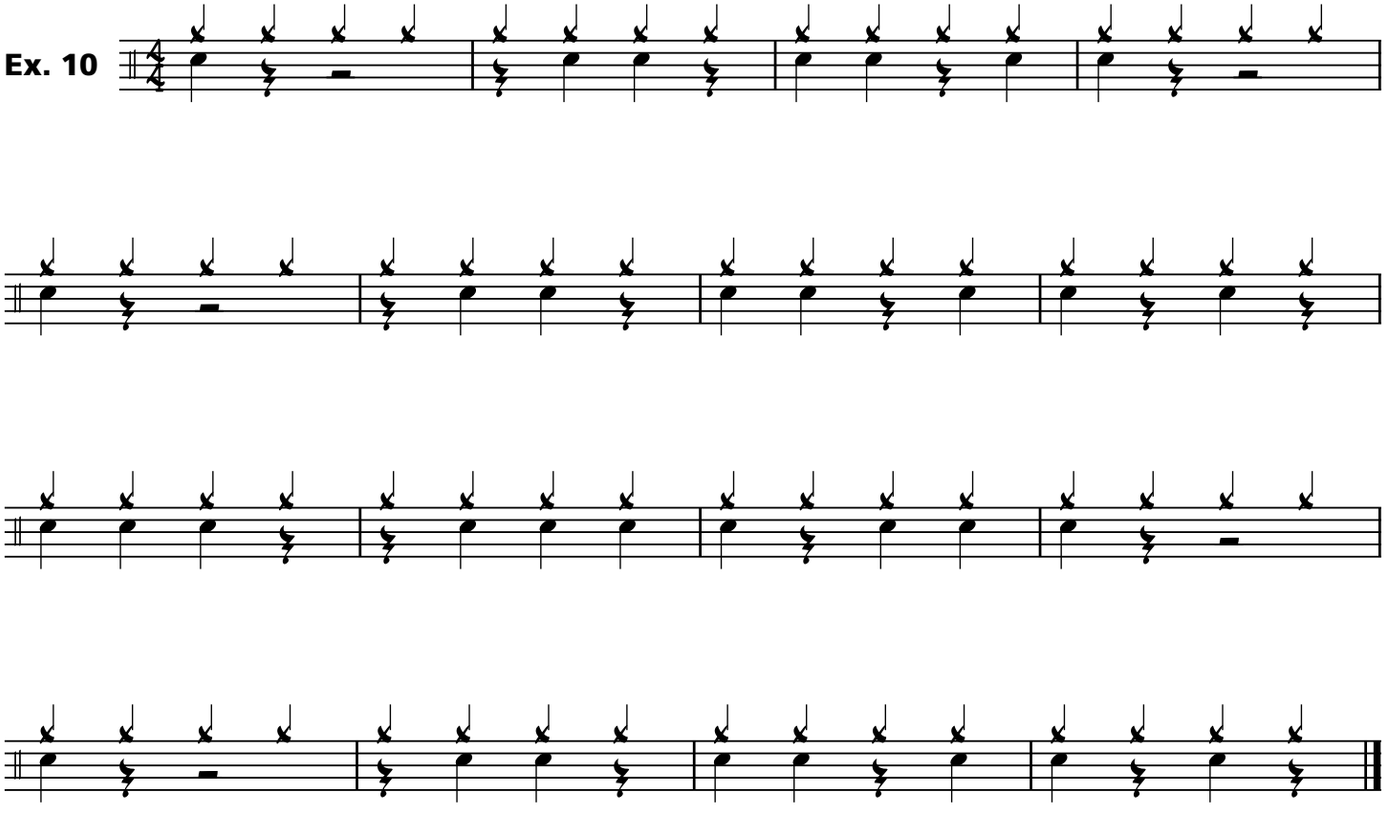
**Ex. 10**