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# Bad Ass Drumming Series

Volume 1

Oct. 2007 [www.badassdrumming.com](http://www.badassdrumming.com)

By Kenneth Ray Sword, Jr.

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## Introduction

Hello, I am Kenneth 'Ray' Sword, Jr. and I want to thank you for becoming a [www.badassdrumming.com](http://www.badassdrumming.com) member. You will get the best possible training techniques, resources, materials and help available for being a member. You are wanting to be a 'BadAssDrummer' so we are here to help you with that.

Before I go into lessons and techniques I need to cover a couple of things with you. You'll need to understand that drumming is a physical activity that requires much practice and endurance. As with anything you do, what you put into it you'll get rewarded the same. More work, more results. Less work, less results.

No matter what kind of drumming you plan to do, whether it's drumset, hand percussion, concert, symphony, orchestra, marching, drum circles or just to have an outlet with family and friends, good technique will give you much more joy and will be much more musical.

## Warming Up

I always start every student with a required warm up of stretches to get the muscles ready for what they are about to go through. This will be for both arms and legs.

Each stretch exercise should be done to a count of 10 and done 10 times. I suggest to alternate the exercise to each limb so to give the last exercised limb a moment of relaxation. A good technique would be to start with the left hand, then the right hand, then the right leg followed by the left leg. Now repeat the circle nine more times.

## Arm Stretch

Arm stretching will consist of two different steps.

The first step, with your left arm extended and palm down, reach for your fingertips with your right hand and pull the left hand fingers up until your left palm is facing forward. You may feel some tension in the lower muscles of your left forearm. This is ok. That means we are stretching the muscles. If you feel pain or discomfort in your wrist - STOP. DO NOT pull until the point of pain. We are just trying to stretch the muscles.

After a ten count let's now release and flex the left hand in the opposite direction. Using the right hand fingers place them on the back side of your left hand and your right thumb under the left wrist right behind the bend. Now start pushing the left hand down so the palm is starting to face you. You may start to feel pull in the upper forearm muscles. This is ok. That means we are stretching the muscles. If you feel pain or discomfort in your wrist - STOP. DO NOT pull until the point of pain. We are just trying to stretch the muscles.

## Leg Stretch

Next are the legs. Even if you only plan on sitting or standing for now get into the habit. Drumming is a habit. So beginning with good habits will be better than undoing bad habits first and then relearning good ones.

We will do three stretches for the legs. The thigh, the ham string and the calf.

Starting with yourself facing a wall for bracing, at arms length,

place one hand on the wall and with the other hand grab and pull back your other leg trying to touch the heel of the foot to your butt cheek. Stretch for a count of ten and then reverse legs. Repeat this ten times.

Next is the calf stretch. Place one foot with the toes touching the wall roughly one half up the distance of the length of your foot. If your foot is 12” then place the toes about 6” up from the floor on the wall, then resting the heel on the floor. Now, with the other leg push your body towards the wall till you feel stretching in the calf. Hold to a count of ten. Release and switch feet. Repeat. Do this ten times to each foot alternately.

Last is the ham string. Sit on the floor and place the legs in a “V” shape. Now reach for your toes and stretch for a count of ten. Release. Repeat nine more times.

Ok, we are done for stretching. A warmed up body is less likely to be injured or fatigued.

## Drumming Warm Up

Now we need to get our body in sync ... rhythm; timing; pocket ... whatever you wish to call it. But it all needs to work the same.

Before I present the warm up understand that each limb will get equal workouts. A weak limb is the weak link to sounding great. If you have a slow left hand you cannot expect to play fills that sound even and clean. The same applies to the feet. If they are slower than the hands complex hand/feet rhythms will be out of sync and sound sloppy or worse you lose the time.

For you beginning BadAssDrummers you will need to refer to the back of this ebook and then come back to complete this warm up.

For you veteran BadAssDrummers assume the grip.

## First warm up is the Single Limb Taps.

All stick heights are 3" to 4 " off drum head. Non playing limb should rest no more than 1" away from surface. This is known as a ready position for the non-used limb. I suggest to place a quarter or 50 cent piece in the middle of the playing surface and trace a pencil around it to give you a center target.

Counting out loud is required for this. Reason? We are developing multitasking and a number system to base our rhythms on. Each note in this exercise will get a number - 1, 2, 3 and 4. Count out loud and evenly. 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 ...

Based on 120 beats per minute execute this exercise with each limb and counting out loud.



Free Metronome → [http://www.mymusictools.com/free\\_download/crystal\\_metronome\\_19984.htm](http://www.mymusictools.com/free_download/crystal_metronome_19984.htm).

After you have done this with one limb go to the next limb until you have exercised all limbs. Then repeat at 160 and then 200 beats per minute. And remember to COUNT OUT LOUD.

## The next warm up is the Alternate Limb Taps.

This exercise will be a challenge even for those that have had some experience. But, do not get discouraged.

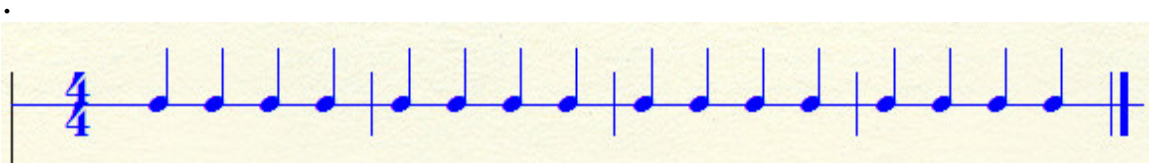
We will start with the hands only.

Starting with the right hand and alternating with the left you will play a pattern of R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L.

All stick heights are 3” to 4 “ off drum head. Non playing limb should rest no more than 1” away from surface. This is known as a ready position for the non-used limb.

Each note in this exercise will get a number - 1, 2, 3 and 4. Count out loud and evenly. 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 ...

Based on 120 beats per minute execute this exercise and counting out loud.



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After this has been done with the hands let's move to the feet and do the same thing. Then repeat at 160 and then 200 beats per minute. And remember to COUNT OUT LOUD.

Now let's alternate the hands and feet.

## Continuing Alternate Limb Taps.

Using the right hand and right foot you will alternate the beat. Start with Hand=H and follow with the Foot=F like this:

H F H F H F H F H F H F H F H F

All stick heights are 3" to 4 " off drum head. Non playing limb should rest no more than 1" away from surface. This is known as a ready position for the non-used limb.

Each note in this exercise will get a number - 1, 2, 3 and 4. Count out loud and evenly. 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 ...

Based on 120 beats per minute execute this exercise and counting out loud.



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After this has been done with the Right limbs let's move to the Left limbs and do the same thing. Then repeat at 160 and then 200 beats per minute. And remember to COUNT OUT LOUD.

Need a break? That's ok. Take one. Then come back because we have more.

## Continuing Alternate Limb Taps.

Using the right foot and right hand you will alternate the beat. Start with Foot=F and follow with the Hand=H like this:

F H F H F H F H F H F H F H F H

All stick heights are 3” to 4 “ off drum head. Non playing limb should rest no more than 1” away from surface. This is known as a ready position for the non-used limb.

Each note in this exercise will get a number - 1, 2, 3 and 4. Count out loud and evenly. 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 ...

Based on 120 beats per minute execute this exercise and counting out loud.



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After this has been done with the Right limbs let's move to the Left limbs and do the same thing. Then repeat at 160 and then 200 beats per minute. And remember to COUNT OUT LOUD.

**Tip:** Have you noticed there is a pattern? A pattern to the exercises itself and the way I present them? There is a reason. Repetition is not only good to build BadAssDrumming chops but it also happens in the songs we hear. It will be something for you to get used to.

Ok, you're not done yet. You have more to do BadAssDrummer.

## Continuing Alternate Limb Taps.

Using the right hand and left foot you will alternate the beat. Start with Hand=H and follow with the Foot=F like this:

H F H F H F H F H F H F H F H F

All stick heights are 3" to 4" off drum head. Non playing limb should rest no more than 1" away from surface. This is known as a ready position for the non-used limb.

Each note in this exercise will get a number - 1, 2, 3 and 4. Count out loud and evenly. 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 ...

Based on 120 beats per minute execute this exercise and counting out loud.



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After this has been done with the Right hand Left foot let's move to the Left hand Right foot and do the same thing. Then repeat at 160 and then 200 beats per minute. And remember to COUNT OUT LOUD.

Need a break? That's ok. Take one. Then come back because we have more.

## Continuing Alternate Limb Taps.

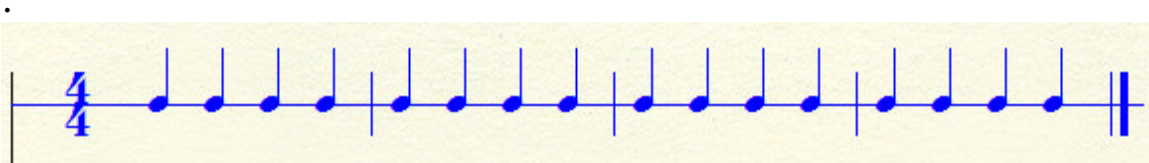
Using the right foot and left hand you will alternate the beat. Start with Foot=F and follow with the Hand=H like this:

F H F H F H F H F H F H F H F H

All stick heights are 3” to 4 “ off drum head. Non playing limb should rest no more than 1” away from surface. This is known as a ready position for the non-used limb.

Each note in this exercise will get a number - 1, 2, 3 and 4. Count out loud and evenly. 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 ...

Based on 120 beats per minute execute this exercise and counting out loud.



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After this has been done with the Right foot Left hand let's move to the Left foot Right hand and do the same thing. Then repeat at 160 and then 200 beats per minute. And remember to COUNT OUT LOUD.

**Tip:** Get use to playing with a click track/metronome. It will help you stay on time, get used to different tempos required by different songs and some bands/studios play with click tracks because of sequenced music.

## Conclusion

In throughout the lessons you read the words COUNT OUT LOUD. There are a few reasons to do this.

1. It helps you know what count you are on.
2. The count out load also adds a fifth element to develop the brain in multi-tasking.
3. Some of you may have heard this. Many of my personal students have on a daily basis. “If you can say it you can play it.” Ask any pro you ever come across about this. Most ‘sing’ their rhythms and solos. So if it works for them it will work for you.

This concludes Volume 1. This volume should be a daily warm up for you as you go into your other lessons. If you are a beginning [www.BadAssDrumming.com](http://www.BadAssDrumming.com) member this is where you start to build coordination and muscle memory. You are training for all limbs to be equal and these exercises are here to do just that.

## Recourses (things you’ll need later)

### Rudiments

<http://pas.org/Resources/rudiments/rudiments.html>

<http://pas.org/Resources/rudiments/rudiments2.html>

<http://www.pas.org/>

[www.badassdrumming.com](http://www.badassdrumming.com)

[Lessons@badassdrumming.com](mailto:Lessons@badassdrumming.com)

To you being a BadAssDrummer  
Sword

## The Grip

Welcome to the learning section for beginners. Lets start with the basis of drumming: the grip exercises.

Without the sticks, start with your right arm at your side, then lift your hand, palm side down. Keep your shoulder and elbow relaxed and close to your body. Think of your arm as being in an "L" - with the forearm perpendicular to the upper arm. The hands should be an extension of the forearm.

Now find a point on the stick that is about one third of the way between the butt and the tip. Grasp the stick between the 1st and 2nd knuckle of the index finger and the "soft" part of the thumb. That's the fulcrum, the point where the stick PIVOTS. Usually this fulcrum point is located where the name of the stick manufacturer starts. Watch that you don't let the stick roll down to the tip of the index finger - this will not provide a strong enough fulcrum!



The shaft of the stick should fit in the heel of the hand, with about an inch sticking out from the edge of the hand. Make sure that the stick doesn't gravitate to the center of the palm (along the "lifeline"). Usually some teachers put a strip of black electric tape on the stick in the correct fulcrum position to keep students from choking up too high.

Wrap the fingers loosely around the stick. All of the back three fingers should touch the stick, but don't squeeze it. Squeezing the stick only produces tension that will make it difficult to play drum rolls or really fast single stroke rolls later.



## Left Hand

Simply grip the left stick the same as the right (this is called "matched" grip). The matched grip is highly recommended for beginners!

Now, put the bead of the sticks in the center of the head at a 90 degree angle (playing off center produces a thin sound). Usually, when students don't have a 90 degree angle, it points to bigger problems with the grip or arm position.

One great idea is to take a 50 cent piece and trace a circle with a pencil or pen in the center of the drum. This will serve as a reminder to keep both sticks in the proper position. Many students get into the bad habit of playing with the sticks spread apart - usually producing different sounds from each hand.