

# **C O N T E N T S**

<b>The Evolution of the Flam on Drumset</b> . . . . .	<b>.6</b>
<b>The Flam's Extended List of Variations</b> . . . . .	<b>.10</b>
<b>Grace Note Guidelines</b> . . . . .	<b>.12</b>
<b>Grace Note Spacing Rules</b> . . . . .	<b>.13</b>
<b>Flam Exercises for Grace Note Placements</b> . . . . .	<b>.15</b>
<b>Important Information about the Remaining Flam Exercises</b> . . . . .	<b>.31</b>
<b>Flam Exercises for Basic Pulse Divisions</b> . . . . .	<b>.32</b>
<b>Drumset Exercises for Rock and Jazz Fills</b> . . . . .	<b>.44</b>
<b>Rudimental Applications</b> . . . . .	<b>.46</b>
<b>Rock Applications</b> . . . . .	<b>.54</b>
<b>Jazz Applications</b> . . . . .	<b>.61</b>
<b>Funk Applications</b> . . . . .	<b>.66</b>
<b>Afro-Cuban Applications</b> . . . . .	<b>.76</b>

# Drumset Key

Bass Drums    Snare Drum    Tom 1    Tom 2    Floor Tom    Ride or Hi-Hat as indicated    Hi-Hat w/foot    Both hands on the same Hi-Hat

R    L

## New Classifications for the Flam

### The Seven Common Flams

1.) The Traditional Flam

2.) The Power Flam

3.) The Broken Flam

4.) The Reverse Flam

5.) The Open Flam

A.) Forward Open

and

B.) Reverse Open

6.) The Double Flam


L R L

# The Evolution of the Flam on the Drumset

Today at least 50 percent of the drummers playing the drumset are playing the traditional flam differently from the original agreed upon version of its execution. These differences fall into two categories: (1) Dynamics of the grace note and (2) the exact mathematical spacing of the grace note in relation to the principal note.

The main styles of drumming that have contributed to this evolution of the flam are rock, Latin (Afro-Cuban), and fusion. But before we look at these new observations of the flam, let's first review the traditional flam. To my knowledge, the standard traditional flam has not been truly analyzed in any mathematical way because of the flam's own inherent gray areas.

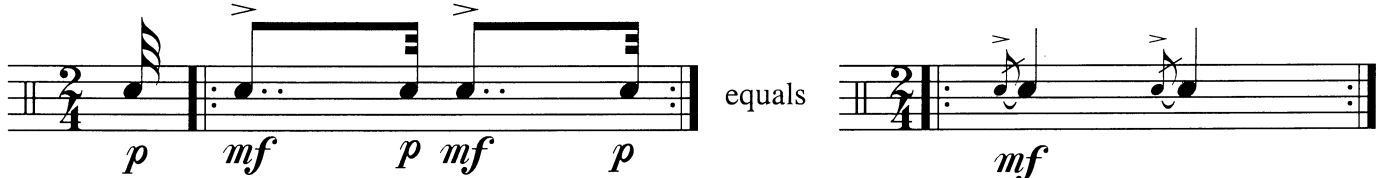
After reading this more exact description of the traditional flam, I hope you will understand its gray area and that its grayness should remain so. But as you will see later, any time there is a gray area, there exists the likelihood for alterations.

The definition of the traditional flam at mezzo forte  is a soft tap (grace note) played quickly before a principal note (usually a downstroke).

When trying to establish by way of counting syllables to represent a mathematical division for the placement of the grace note, the result is very impractical. Here is why. A safe mathematical description for counting flams where a quarter note equals 150 beats per minute is as follows:

$\text{♩} = 150 \text{ BPM}$

A  $\text{1 e+A+e+A}$   $\text{2 e+A+e+A}$



*p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* equals *mf*

Since the grace note belongs to the previous pulse, this means you would be counting 32nd notes at the rate where one quarter note equals 150 BPM and only hit the last 32nd note out of eight per pulse, plus the principals. This in itself is truly a feat for one mouth to verbalize!

Now for the gray area. For a lot of tempos (depending upon which part of the tempo spectrum you are in), you will have to use a different type of note to represent the grace note. For example, if one quarter note equals 75 BPM, then the grace note becomes a 64th note.

$\text{♩} = 75$

The image shows two musical staves in 2/4 time. The left staff starts with a quarter note 'A' (p), followed by a sequence of eighth notes with grace notes (mf), and then another sequence of eighth notes with grace notes (p). Above the first sequence is the label '1e+A+e+A+e+A+e+A', and above the second is '2e+A+e+A+e+A+e+A'. The right staff shows a simplified version of the same pattern with a single grace note and dynamic marking (mf). The word 'equals' is written between the two staves.

So to count 64th notes (16 per pulse) would be absurd.

I hope we will now appreciate this gray area. Therefore, we learn the flam by sound and feel. With this method of sound and feel, the flam has changed over the years. Yes, right in front of our noses! Drummers have created new versions of the flam plus added the Afro-Cuban flam (reverse flam). I think these observations are important because the flam is no longer just traditional.

## New Classifications and Notation for the Flam

### 1.) The Power Flam



Its creation originated in rock drumming. The traditional flam sounded too weak for rock and roll. In the rock idiom, it is best to play the grace note just as loudly as the principal note. Following is an example of the power flam:

$\text{♩} = 100$

The image shows a musical staff in 4/4 time with a tempo of 100 BPM. It contains a sequence of quarter notes with grace notes, each marked with an accent (>).

The accented grace note is the notational marking for the power flam.