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Brush Sounds and Rhythmic Feels

There is no standard notation or sign for a specific brush sound. When brushes are desired in an arrangement, the word "brushes" or initials "Br." or "W.B." are generally written in at the beginning of the section of the arrangement in which their use is desired. In most cases, it is up to the drummer to decide when the brushes will provide the best effect.

As a guide, I suggest you will be safe in using brushes whenever the music calls for very soft playing: *piano*, *pianissimo*, and so on. There are times, however, when brushes can be very effective in a *forte* (loud) dynamic range. The sound and special feeling the brushes generate is quite noticeable, particularly when they are being used to play a strong basic swing ride rhythm.

Six basic sounds will be applied when practicing the strokes and patterns illustrated in *The Sound of Brushes* book and on the accompanying recording: the "tick" sound, the "tap" sound, the "slap" or "flat" sound, and the "shhhhh," "brushhh," or "tchh" sounds.

I suggest you speak or sing each of these sounds vocally first and then try to duplicate your vocal sound with the brush on the drum or whatever surface on which you're playing. Good dynamic reference points to use for each of the sounds could be the following:

"tick" = soft, "tap" = medium-loud or "accented" (listen to these sounds on Track 1)

Next, speak and/or sing "shhhhh," "swishh," and "brushhh," vocally demonstrated on Track 1.

Rhythmic Feels

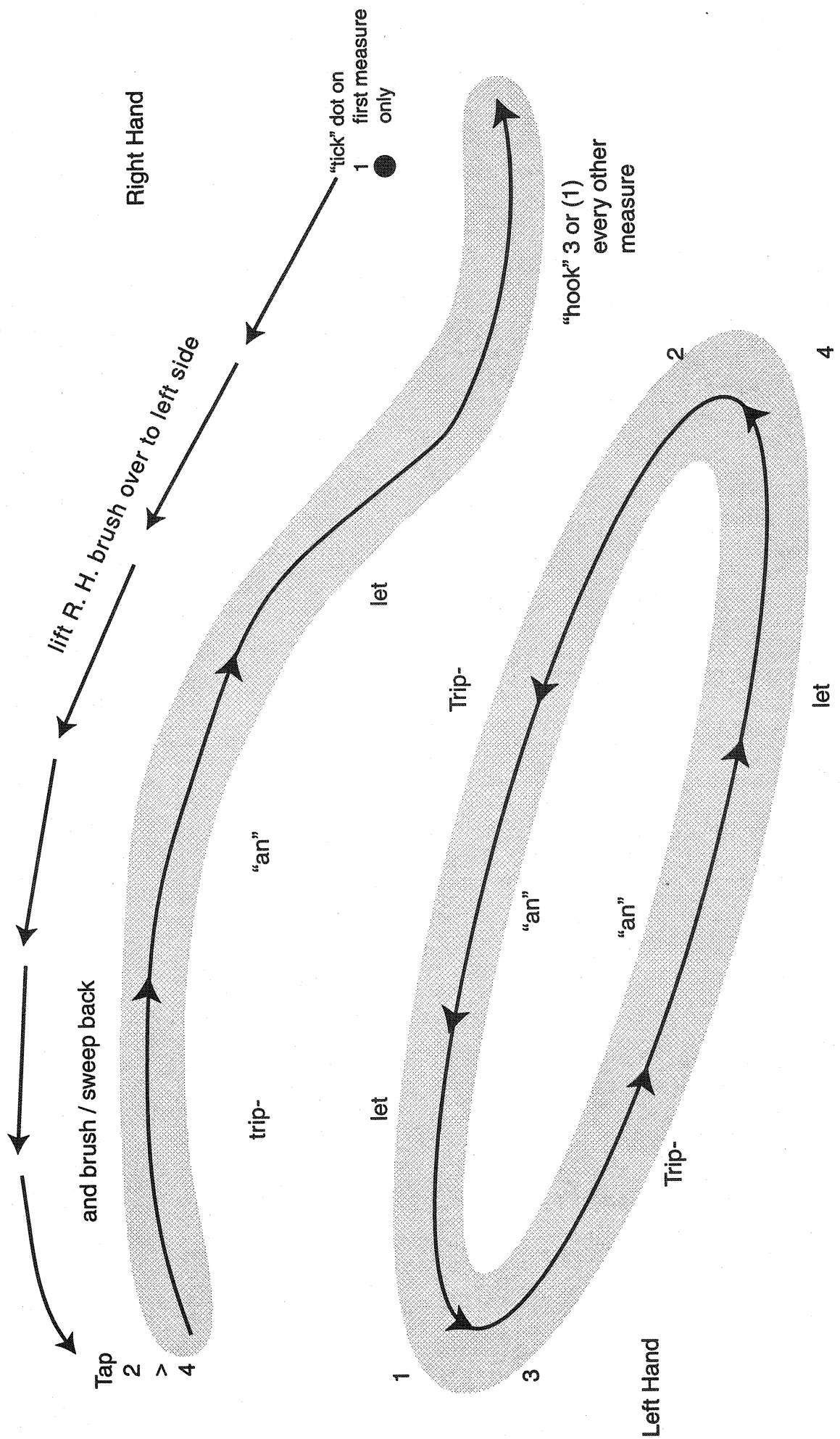
The style and rhythmic feel of music when played in tempo can be determined and executed by the use of two fundamental pulse beats: We will call these two basic pulse beats the *ground pulse* and its *dominant mini-pulse*.

The ground pulse is designated by the lower number in the time signature, for example:
 /4 = quarter note G.P. /8 = eighth note G.P.

The dominant mini-pulse can be any note or rest sign of a shorter duration than the G.P., for example:

The image shows musical notation for rhythmic feels. The first row is in 4/4 time and shows four measures of a 'ground pulse' (quarter note) and four measures of a 'dominant mini-pulse' (triplet eighth notes). The second row is in 4/4 time and shows four measures of a 'ground pulse' (quarter note) and four measures of a 'dominant mini-pulse' (eighth notes). The third row is in 6/8 time and shows two measures of a 'ground pulse' (half note) and two measures of a 'dominant mini-pulse' (quarter note).

Right-Hand Hook Stroke (With Left-Hand Half Circle)



Key

Single-Stroke Exercises

□ R.H.

● L.H.