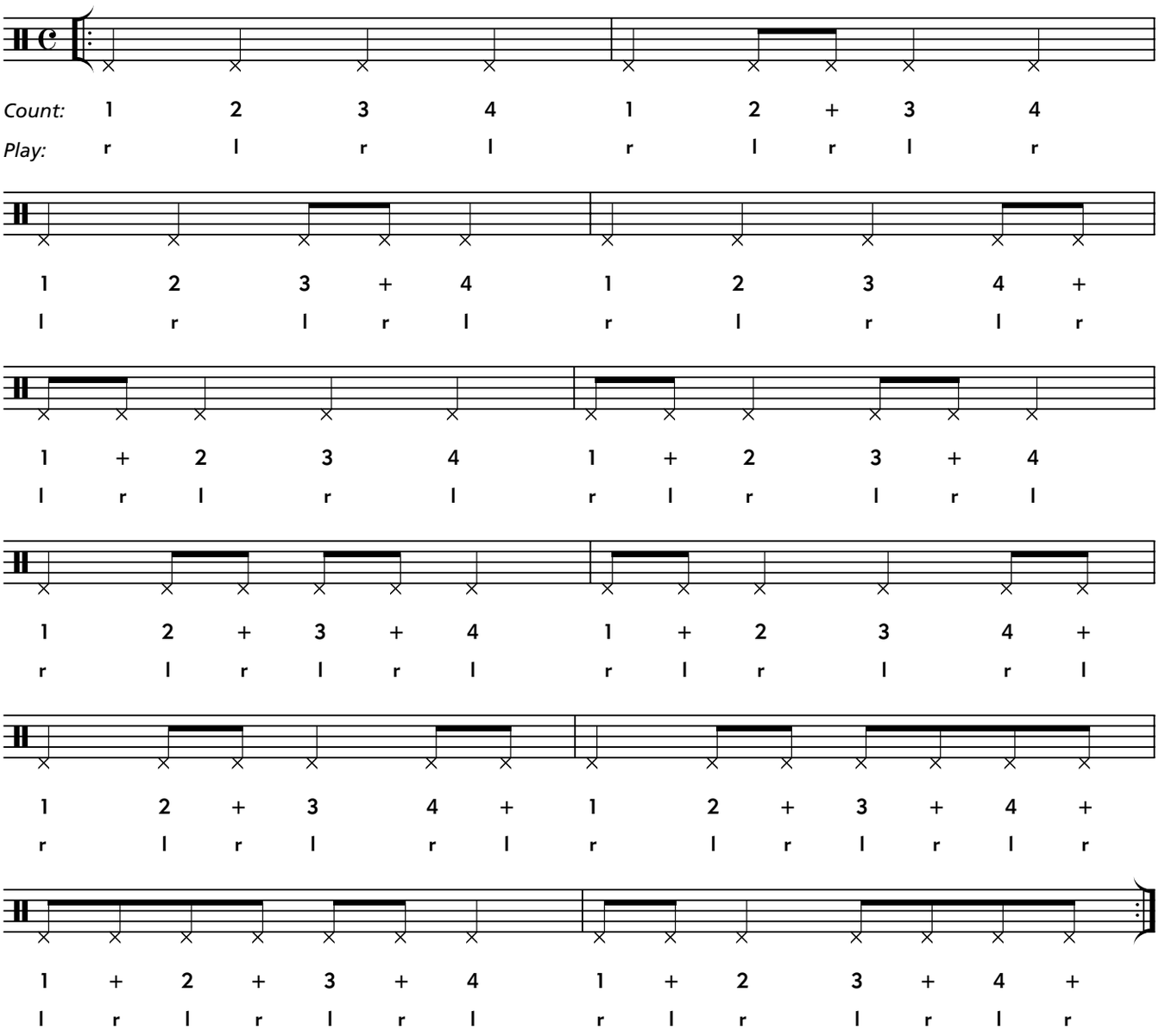
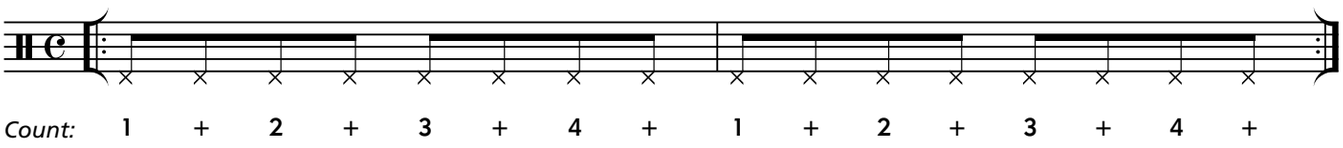
Exercise 1 · Tap the stomach lightly with alternate right and left strokes as written. This exercise uses quarter and 8th note rhythms only. Use beat subdivision numbers to help you count the rhythms in 4/4 time.

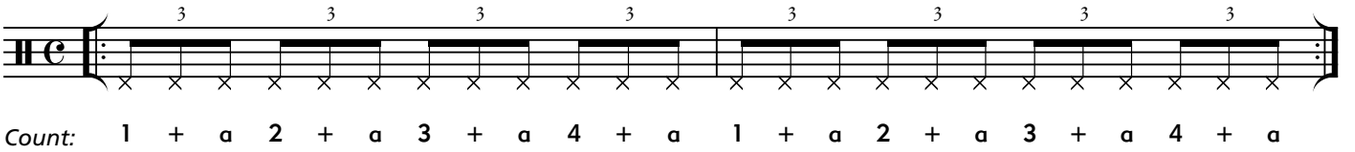
Quarter/8th single taps



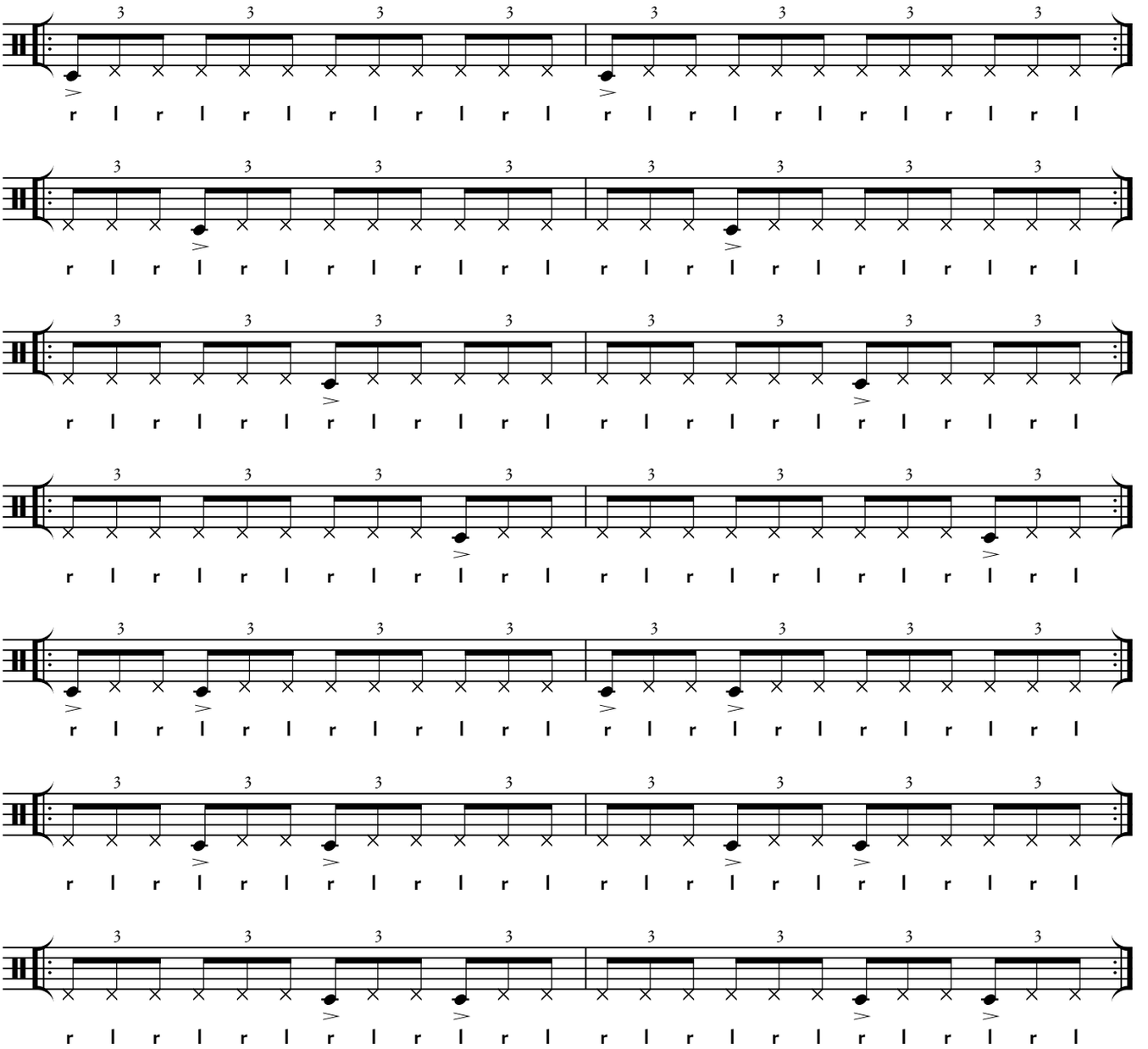
Exercise 2 · Follow right and left hand patterns as written. This exercise uses 8th note rhythms only. Repeat each line as necessary.



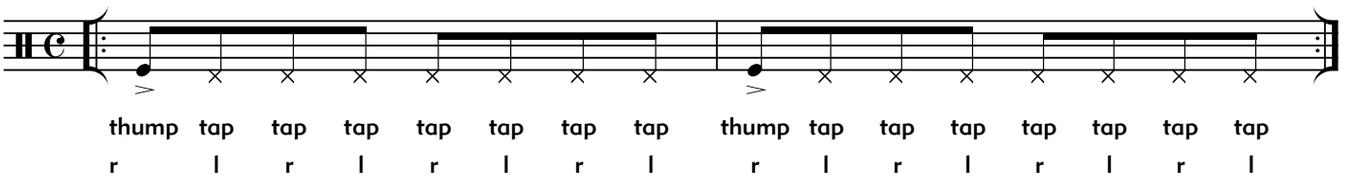
Exercise 6 · Triplets may also be configured with many combinations of right and left hand strokes. This exercise is designed to practice down-beat slaps using consecutive triplet rhythms only.



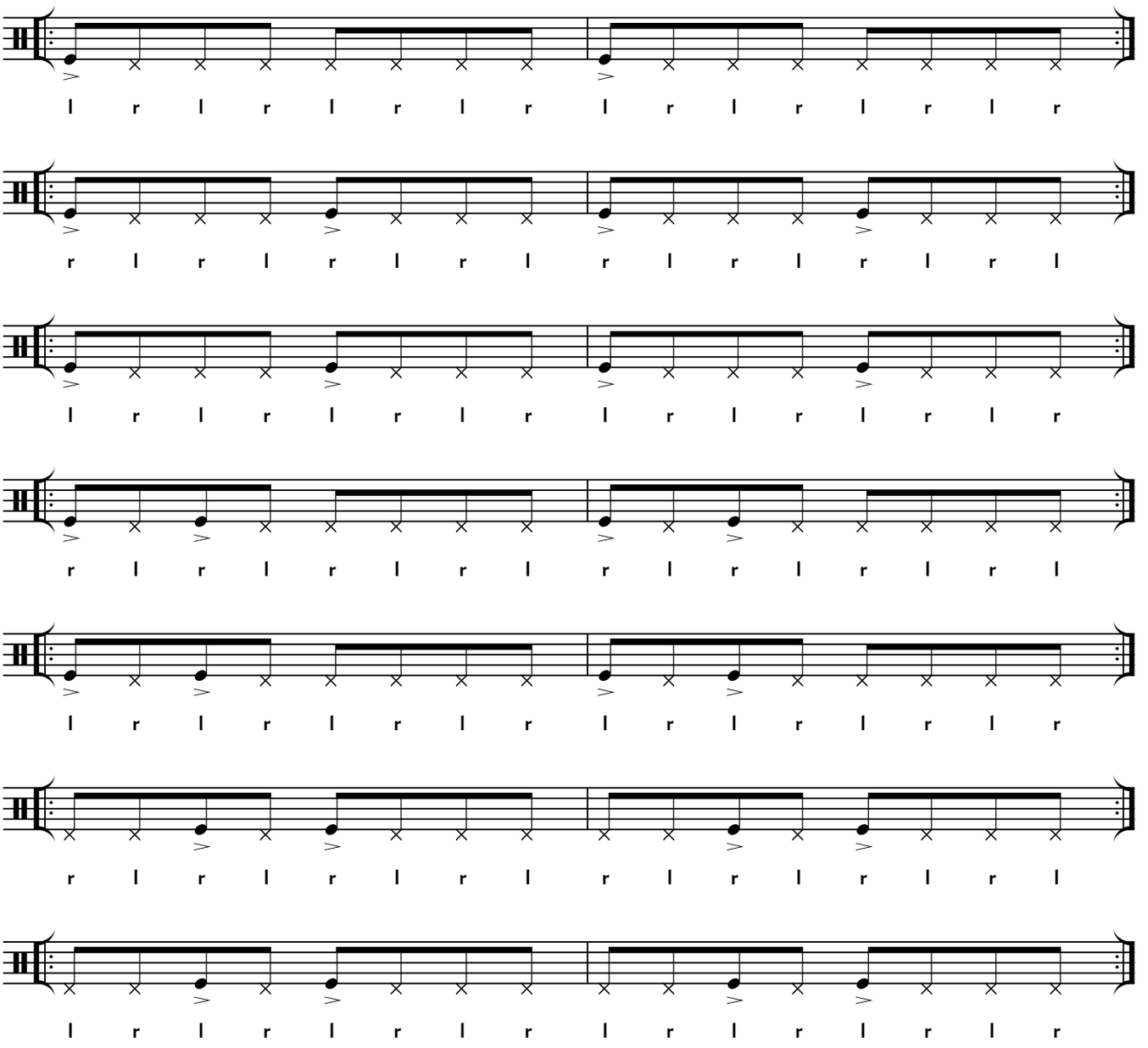
Triplet taps with down-beat slaps in first position



Exercise 1 · Follow right and left hand patterns as written. This exercise uses 8th note rhythms only. The note "E" in treble clef designates all thumps while the rhythmically notated X-notes on the treble "D" space always indicate taps. Repeat each line as necessary.

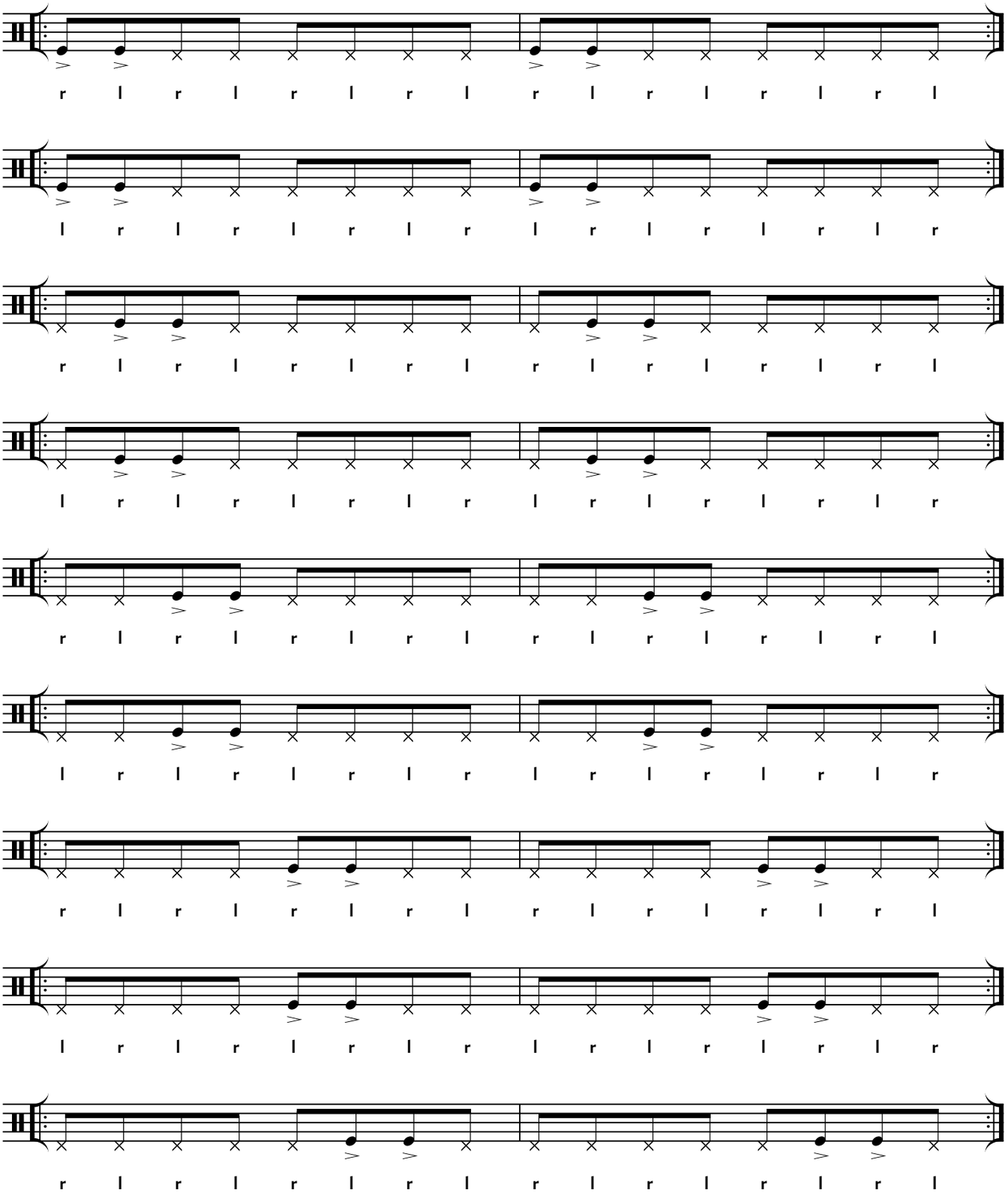


Single taps with down-beat thumps



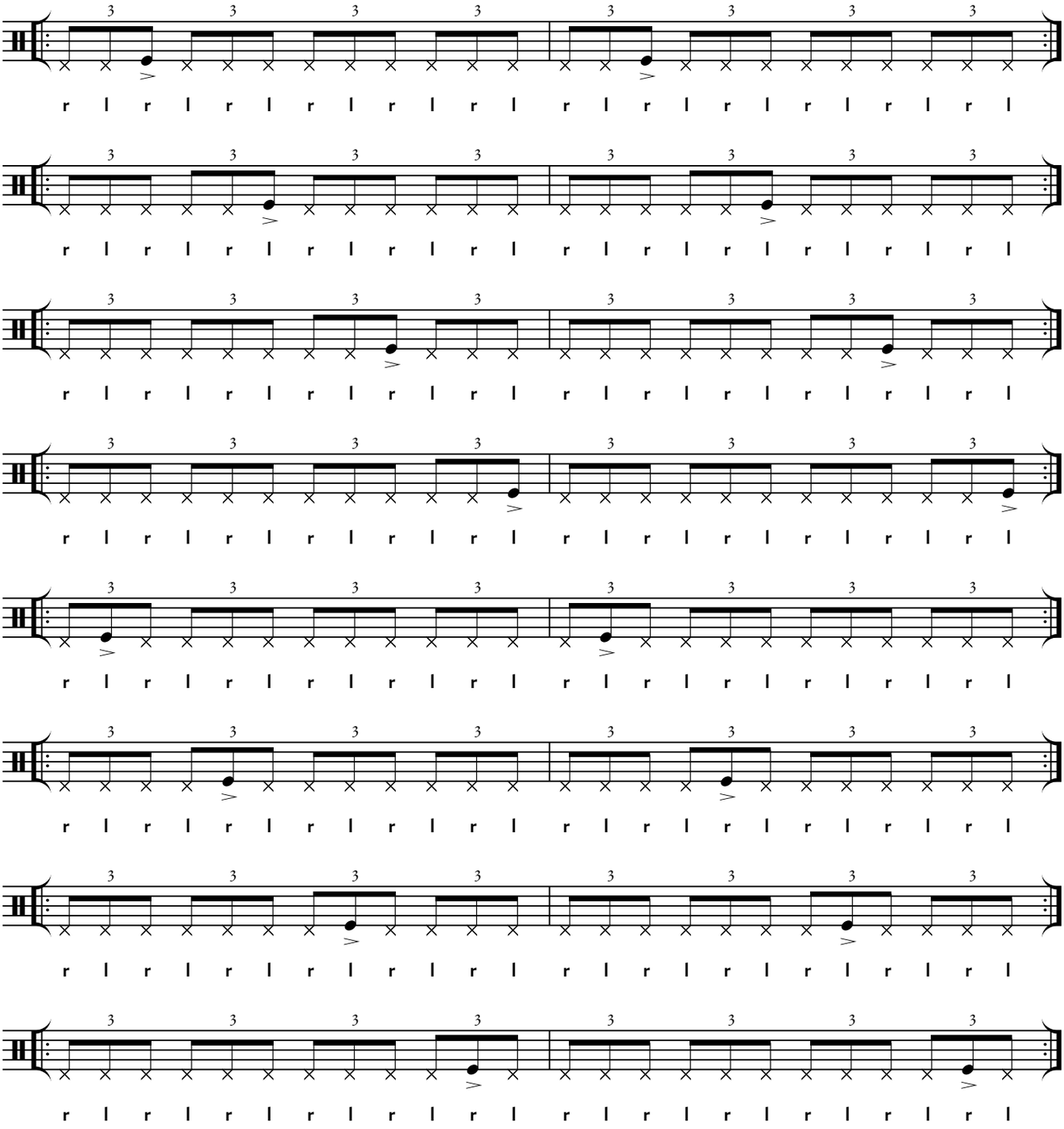
Exercise 3 · This exercise uses alternate right and left fisted strokes to produce two consecutive thumps on both down- and up-beats.

Double thumps in second position



Exercise 5 · Here's an exercise with consecutive 8th triplets but all thumps occur on up-beats only. These patterns are a bit tricky to get used to but are essential to playing the body beat configurations described in *Units 3* and *4*.

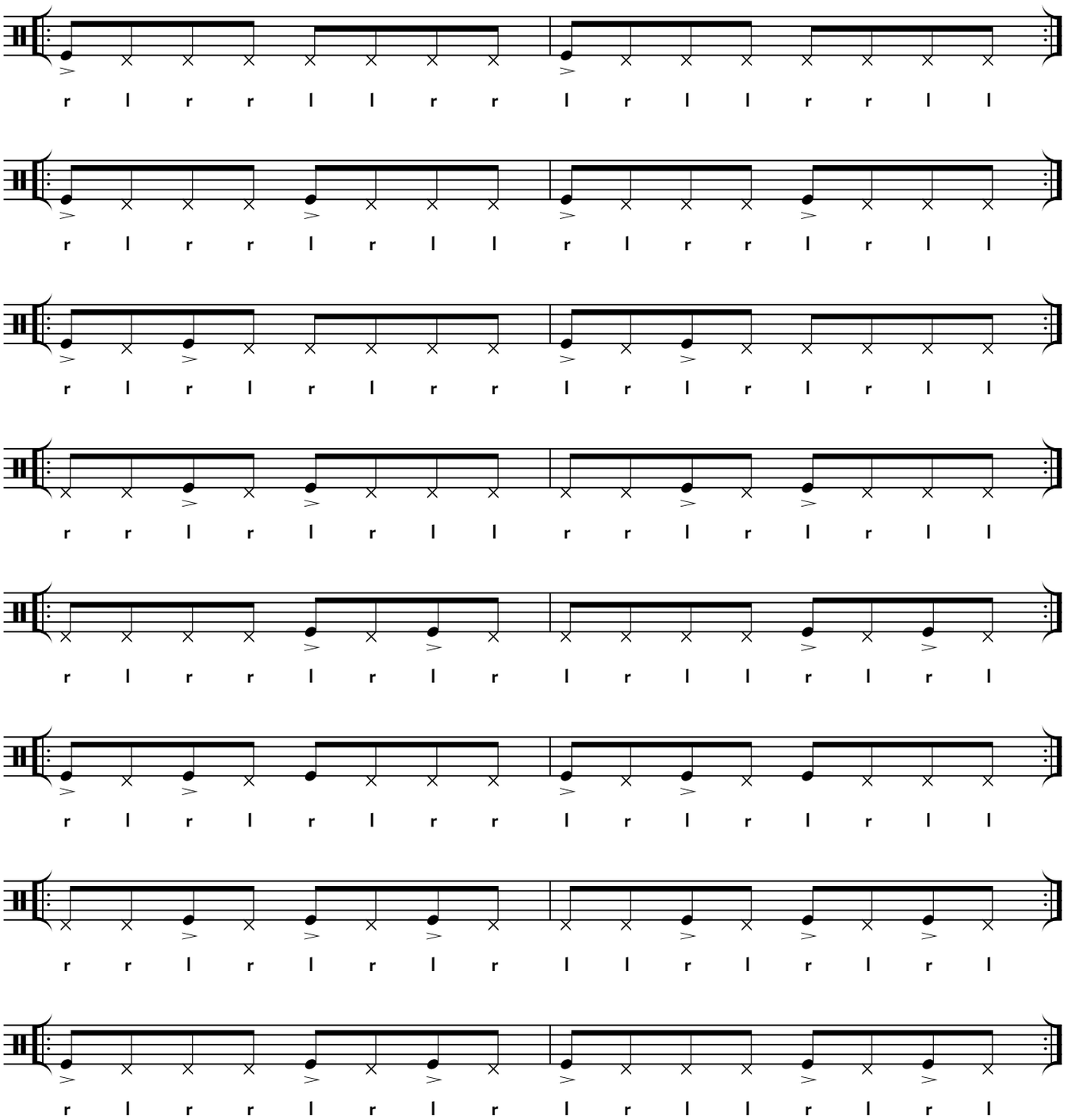
Up-beat thumps in second position



2. Right and Left Stroke Variations

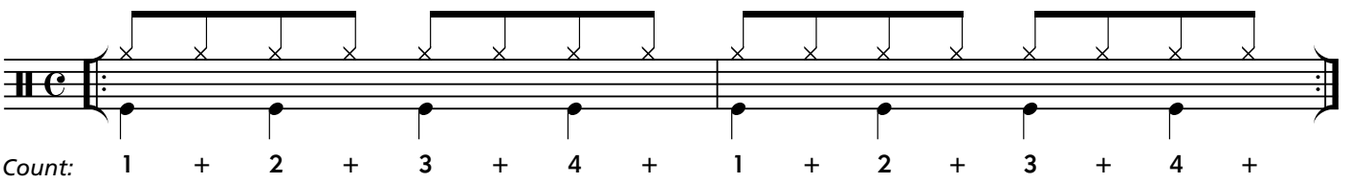
Exercise 1 · Using only consecutive 8th notes as in previous exercises, this one uses various patterns of right and left hand strokes. Thumps occur on down-beats only.

8th taps with down-beat thumps

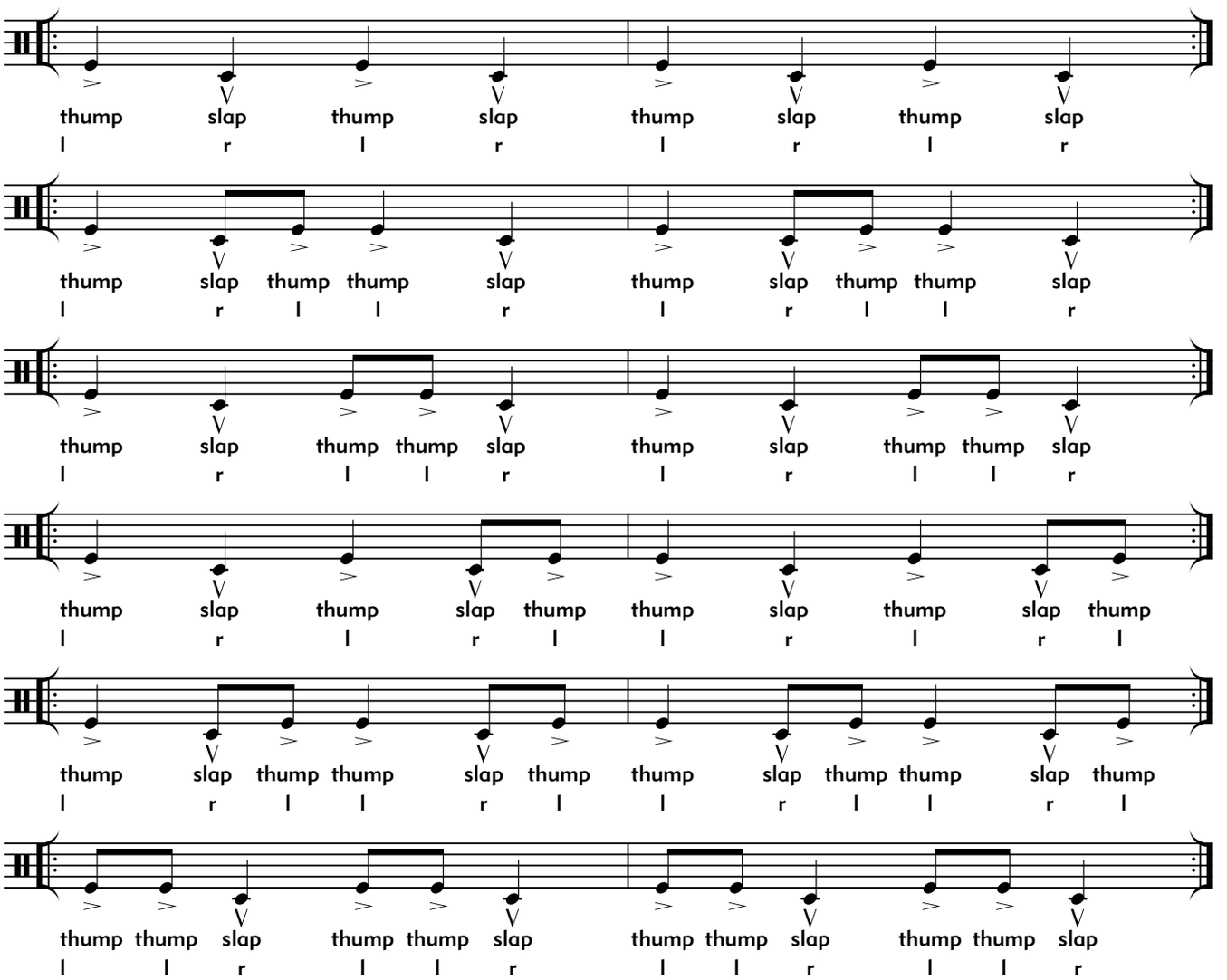


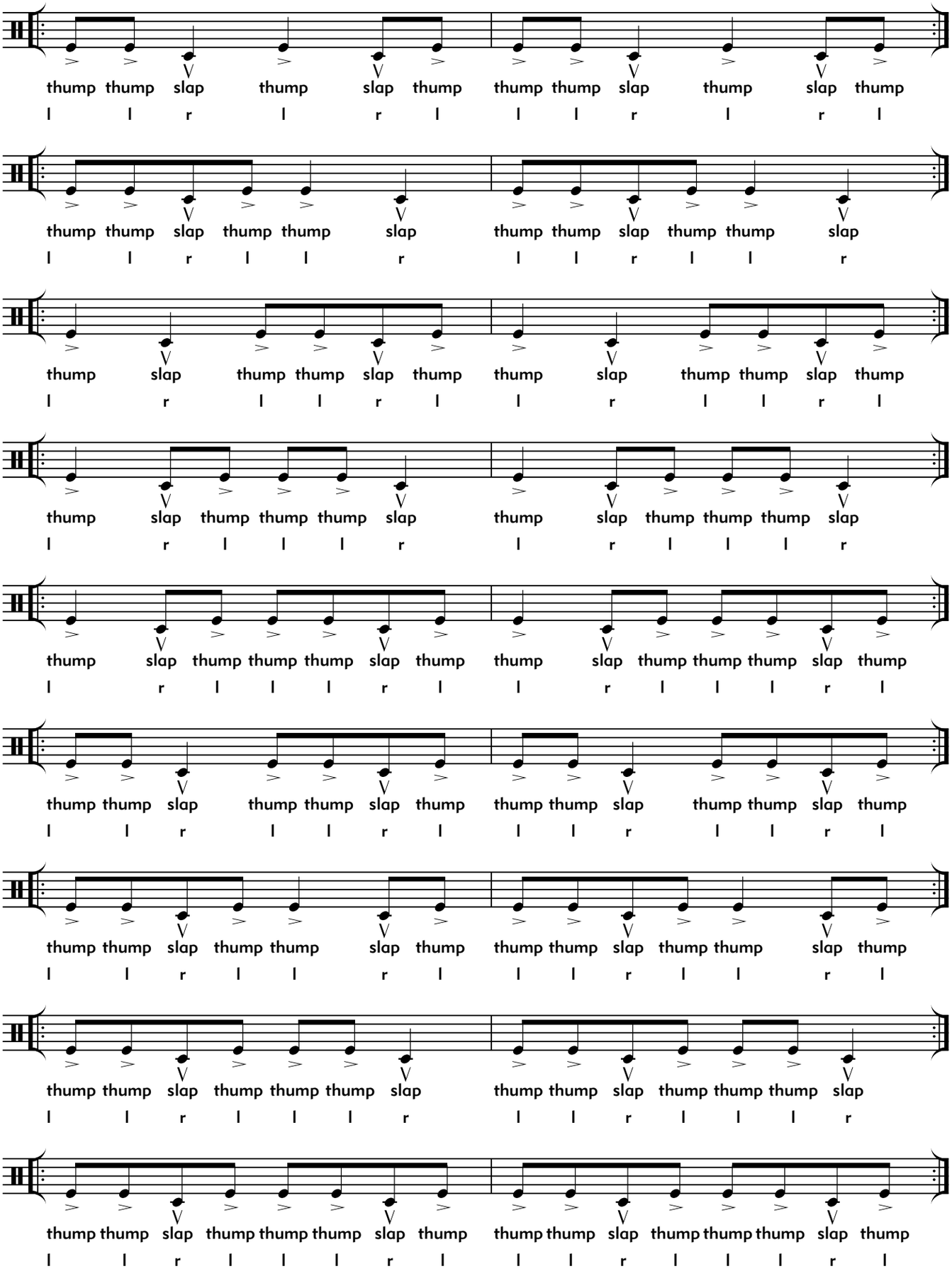
3. Contemporary Pop/Rock Beats with Straight (even) 8th Feel

Exercise 1 · Here are some classic 8th feel body beats which simulate the interaction of kick and snare used in conventional "trap set" drumming. Note that all "back beats" (beats 2 and 4) in this exercise are articulated with slaps. A nice mix of quarter and 8th thumps provide the down-beat kicks which make these pop/rock grooves sound solid. Normally the hi-hat or ride cymbal would play an even (or "straight") 8th note pattern along with the kick and snare. Body drummers can achieve this effect by vocalizing 8th notes using VP (vocal percussion) syllable "T" which simulates "stick on closed hi-hat."



Straight 8th feel, second position




thump thump slap thump slap thump thump thump slap thump slap thump
l l r l r l l l r l r l
thump thump slap thump thump slap thump thump slap thump thump slap
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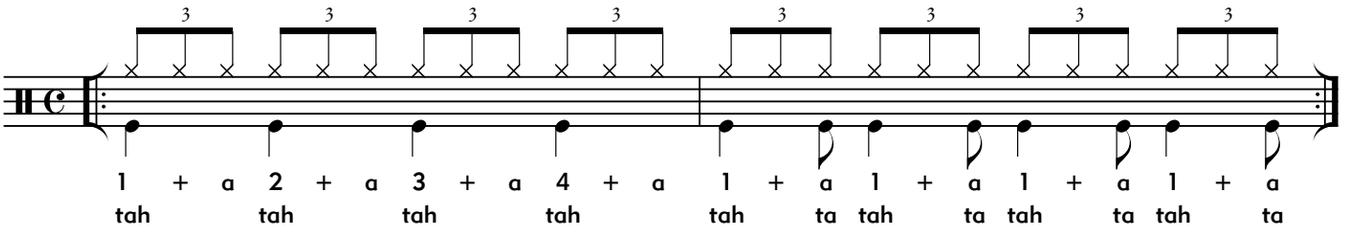
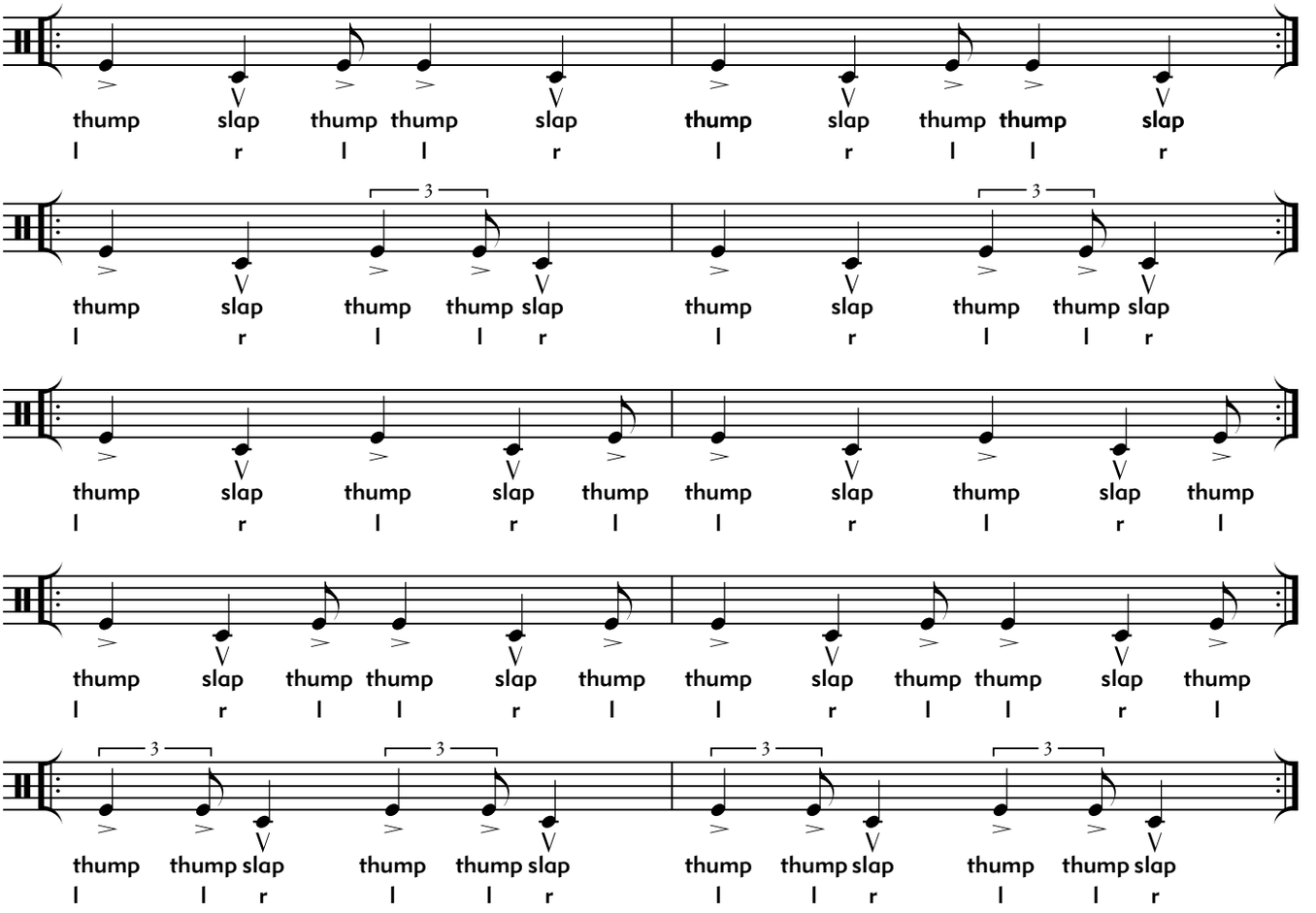
l l r l l l r l l r l l l r
thump thump slap thump thump thump slap thump thump thump slap thump
l l r l l l r l l l r l l l r l

4. Contemporary Pop/Rock Beats with Swing 8th Feel Introducing the "Shuffle" in 4/4 Time

Exercise 1 · These contemporary shuffle beats are played with a triplet 8th or "swing" feel. Note that each quarter is attacked once and held for a duration of three 8th note pulses but unlike the straight or even dotted quarter, these 8th notes are counted in groups of 3 with the numerals "1+a" for beat 1, "2+a for beat 2" and so on. So we say in 4/4 time the quarter note beat equals 3 triplet pulses that can be articulated individually or held for the pulse duration. It is essential to count these pulses silently when using ties to keep a steady beat. Or, if you want, you can use vocal percussion syllable "t" and say the triplets as you play the down- and up-beats.



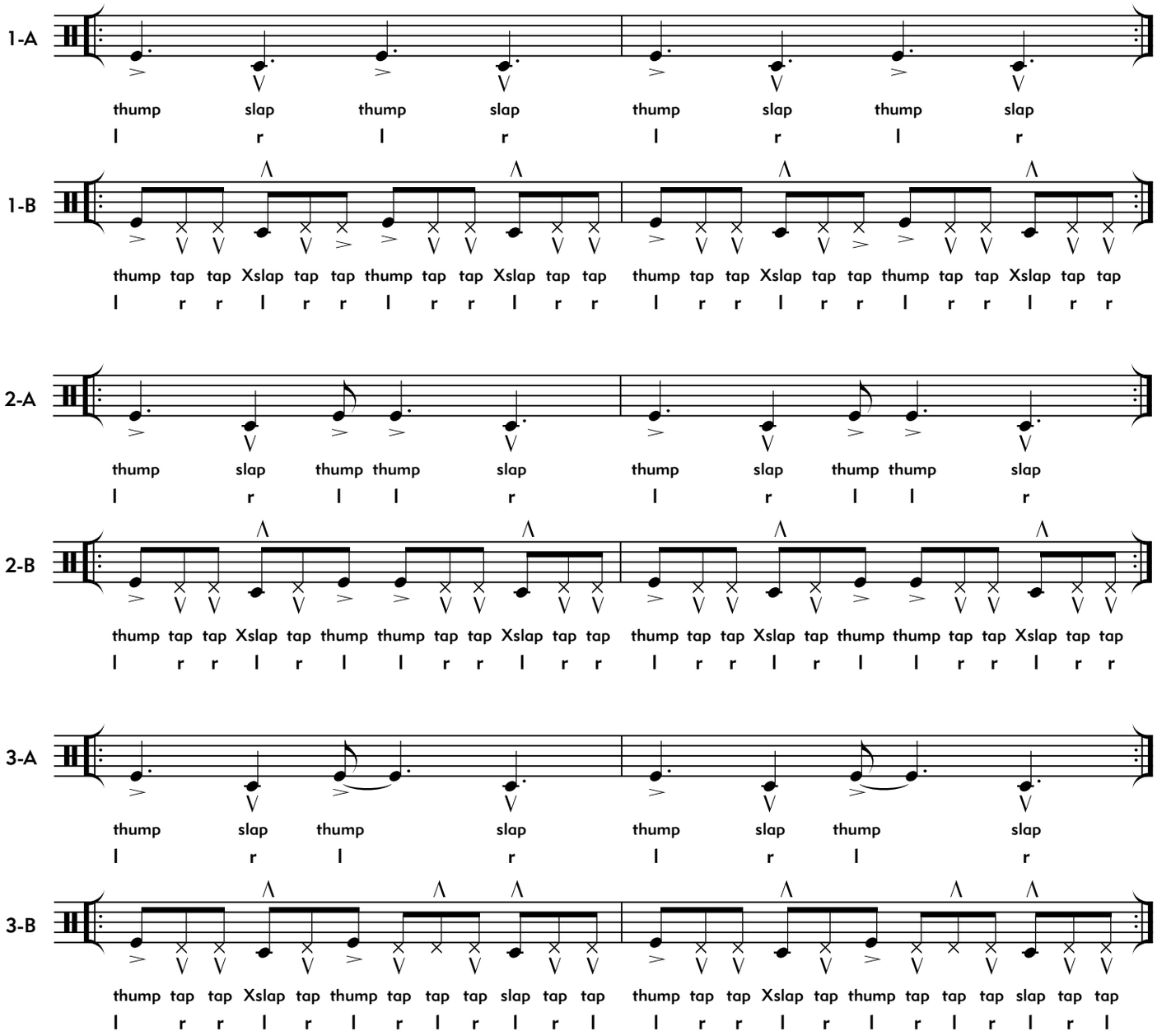
Triplet swing or "shuffle" feel, second position



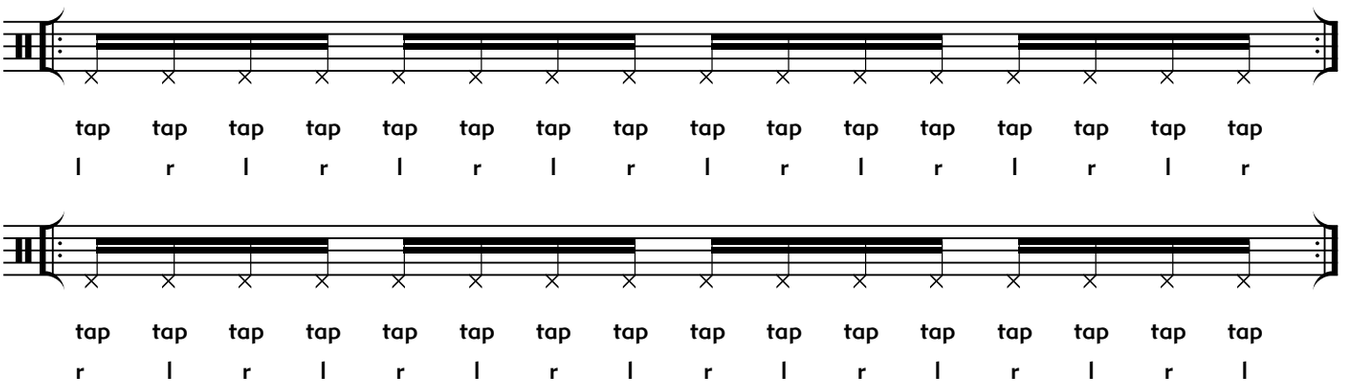
6. The Groove: An Integration of Beats and Pulses

Experienced drummers hear the kick and snare beats as the main beats or "heartbeat" of the groove and will usually synchronize with the bassline. Beat subdivisions, whether 8ths or triplets, are considered the pulse of the groove and drummers learn pulse patterns which fill-in and around the up- and down-beats. When training, drummers and bass players learn hundreds of these patterns to represent all styles and eras of music. Keyboard and guitar players concentrate more on comping variations, the rhythmic interpretation of chords.

Each of these 12/8 shuffle examples has a thump-tap body beat designated by the letter "A" which represents the kick-snare heartbeat that drummers play. Letter "B" demonstrates the complete groove or integration of beats and pulses utilizing the cross-slap.

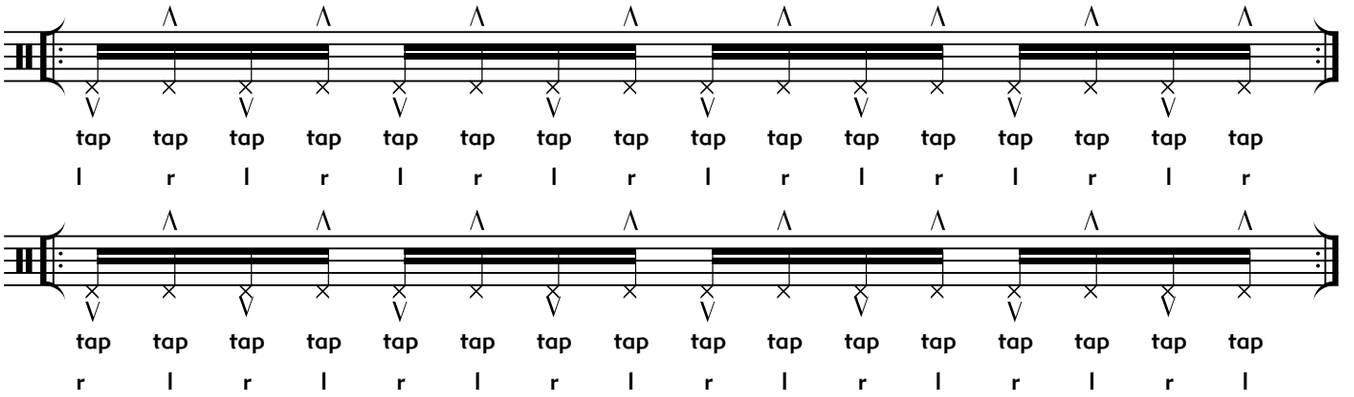


First position lower taps



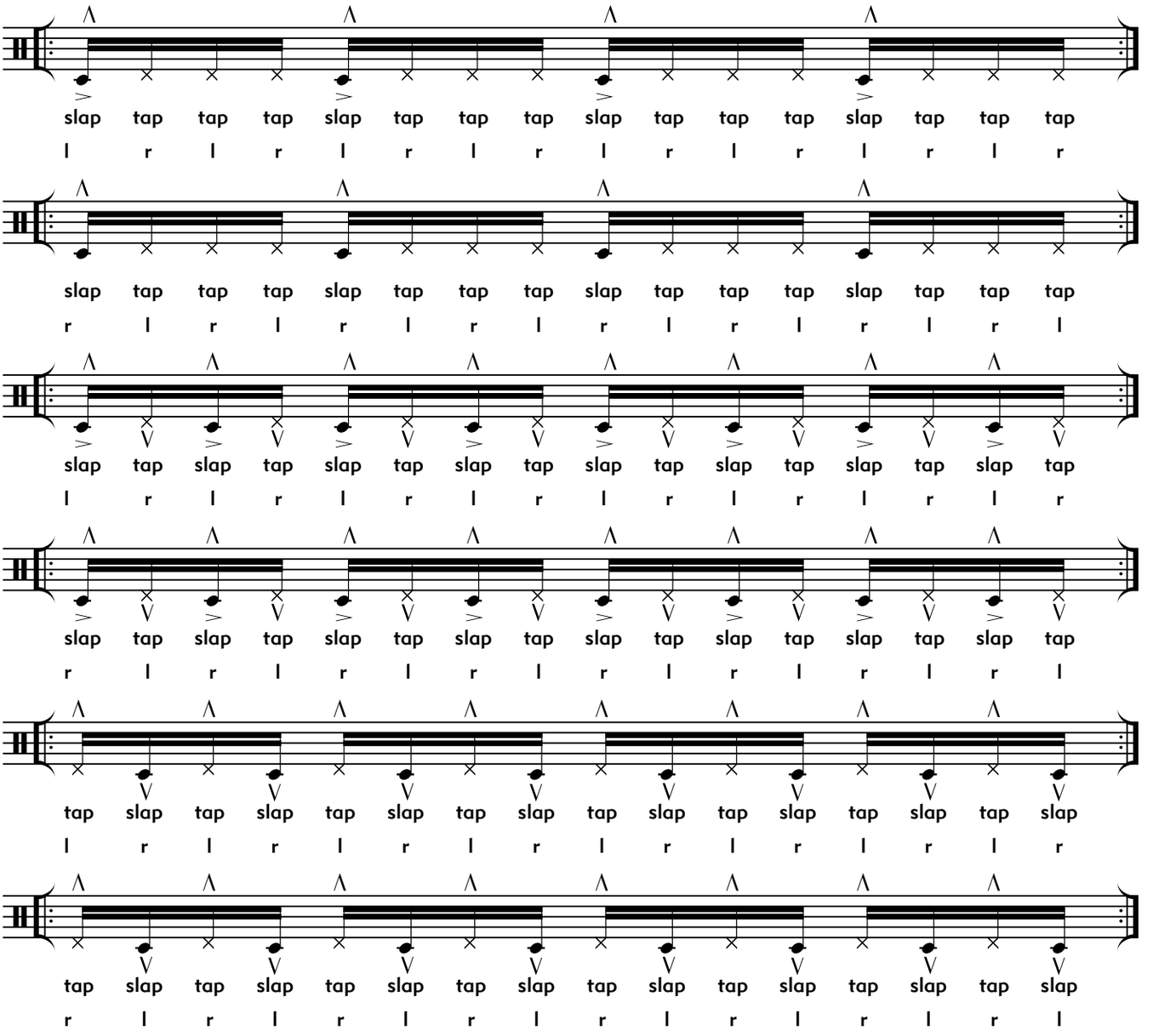
Exercise 2 · When using upper and lower taps, one hand is on the stomach while the other is below the collar-bone. It doesn't really matter which hand is above and which is below-both configurations are in second position. The important thing is that in second position body beat drummers can articulate both taps and slaps by using accents. Note that the timbres will be slightly different between upper and lower taps and slaps since you're striking parts of the body that have different natural resonances. The "V" articulation below the note means a lower tap (or slap) while inverted version written above the note indicates an upper tap (or slap).

Second position upper and lower taps

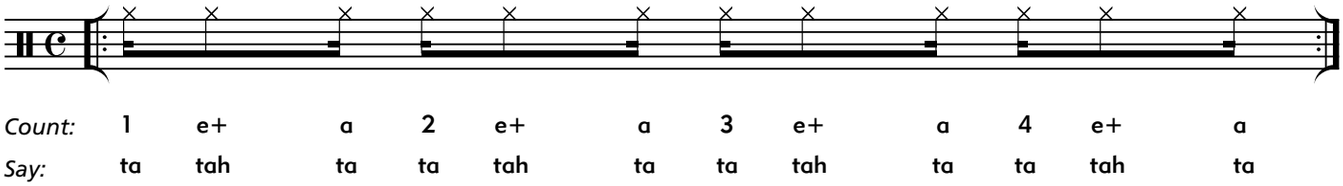


Exercise 3 · This exercise reviews slaps and taps in second position.

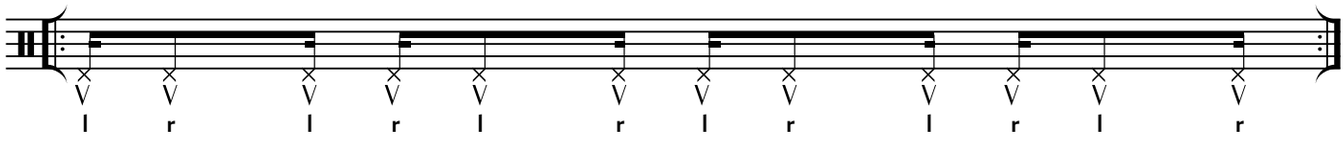
Second position slap and tap



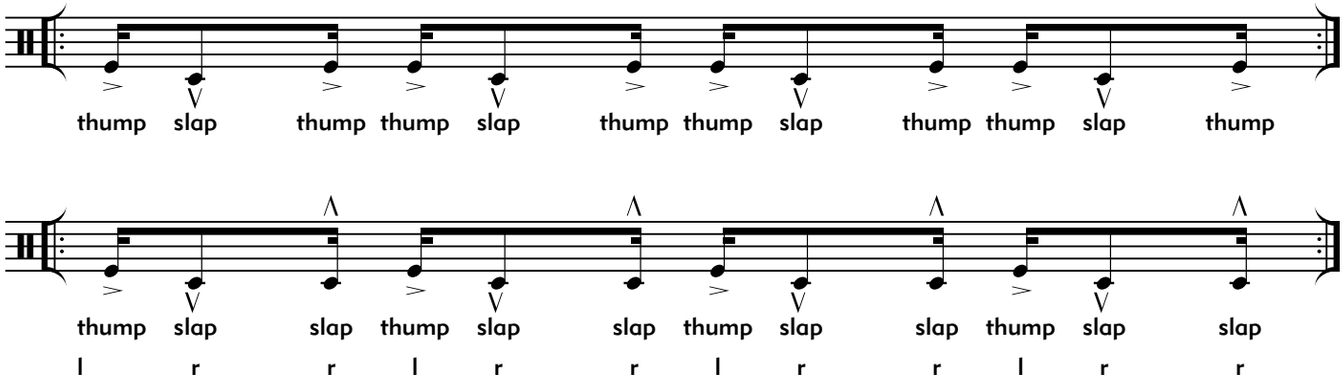
Exercise 10 · Another commonly used 8th/16th figure puts the 8th note between two 16ths in the next configuration. The pulse count is the same but distributed differently.



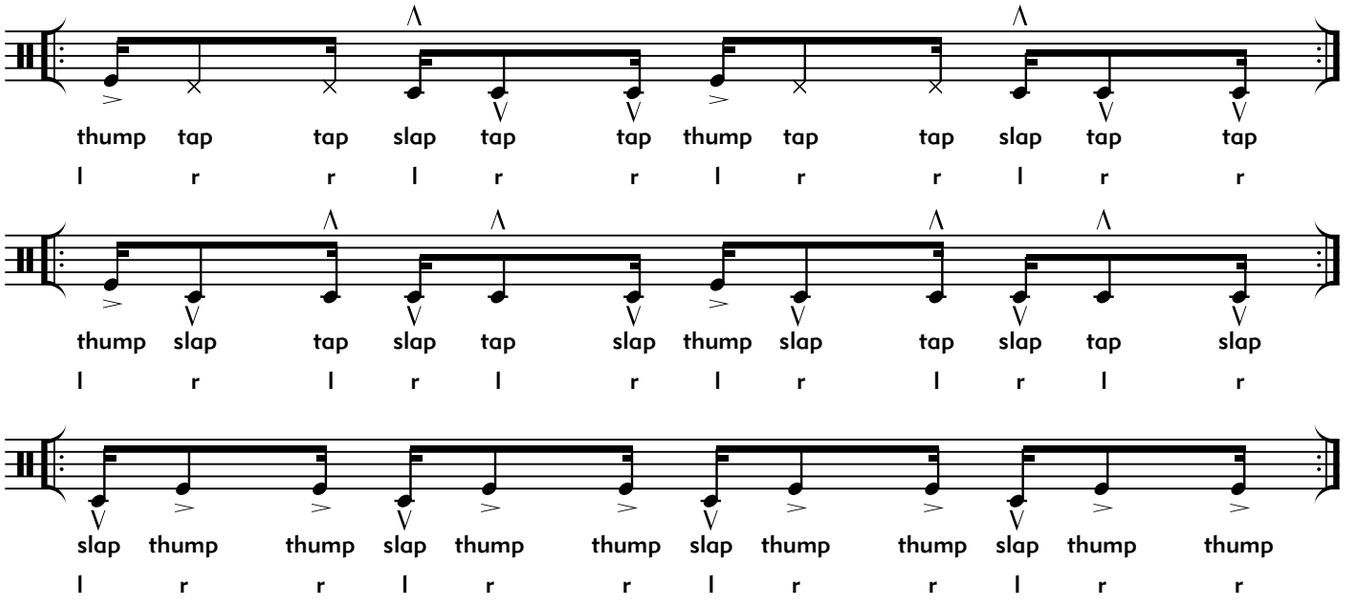
Lower taps



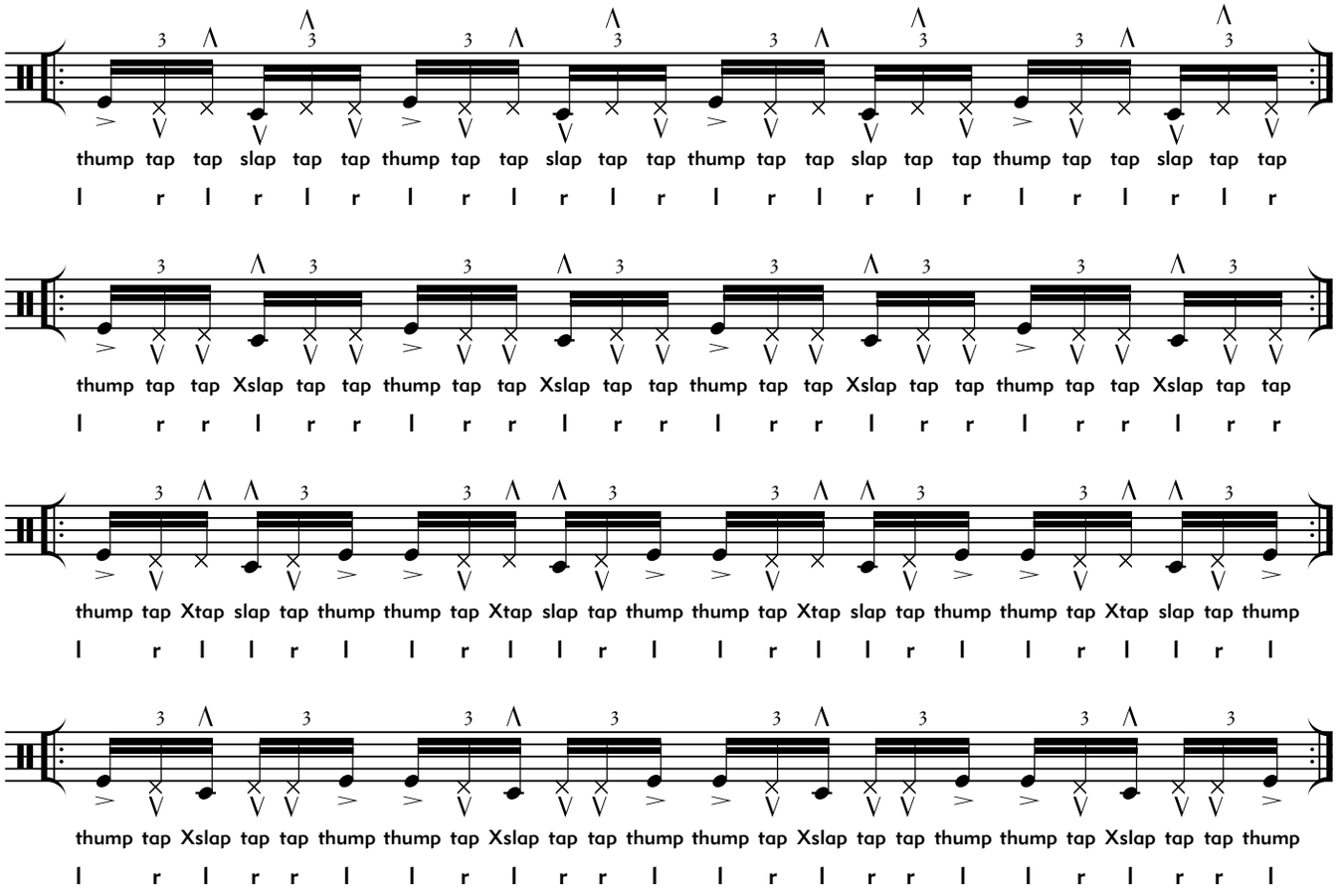
Thumps and slaps



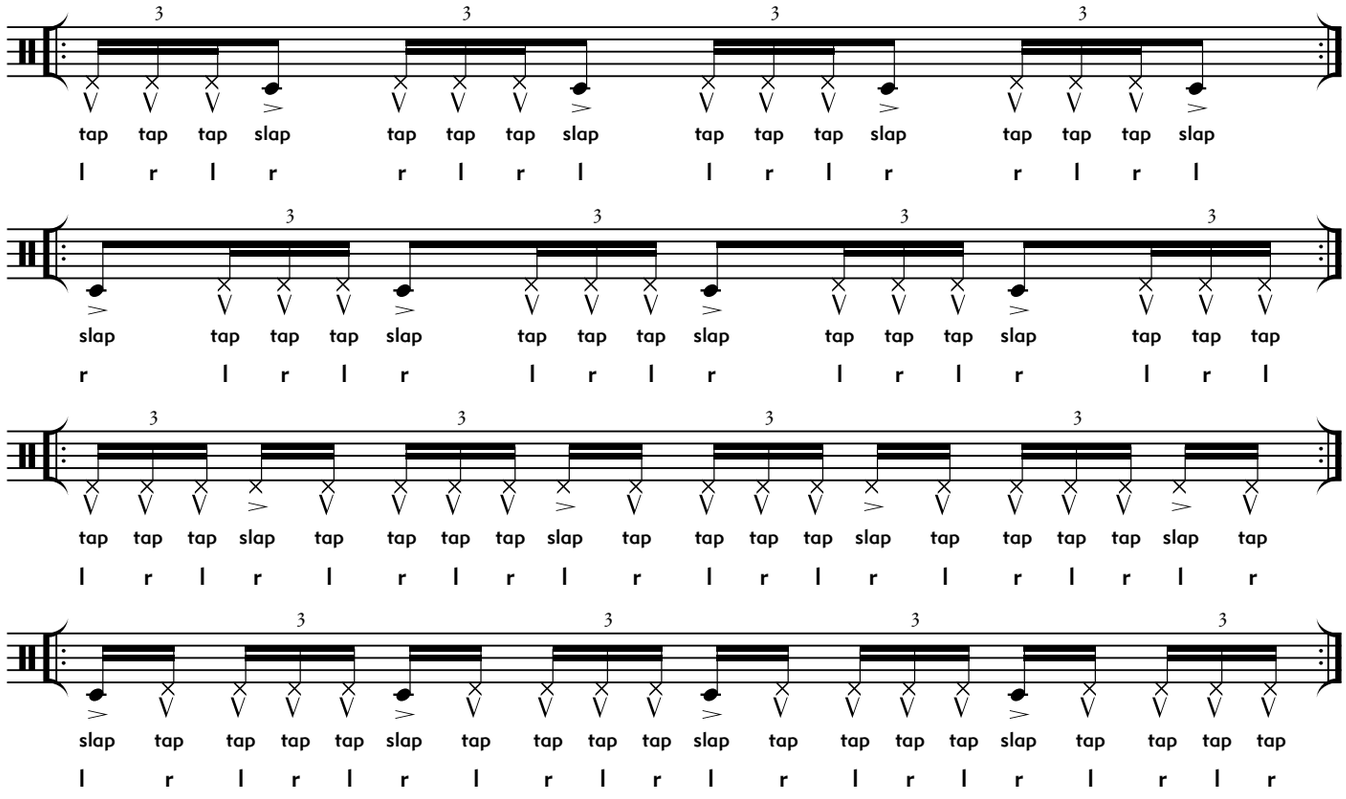
Lower taps



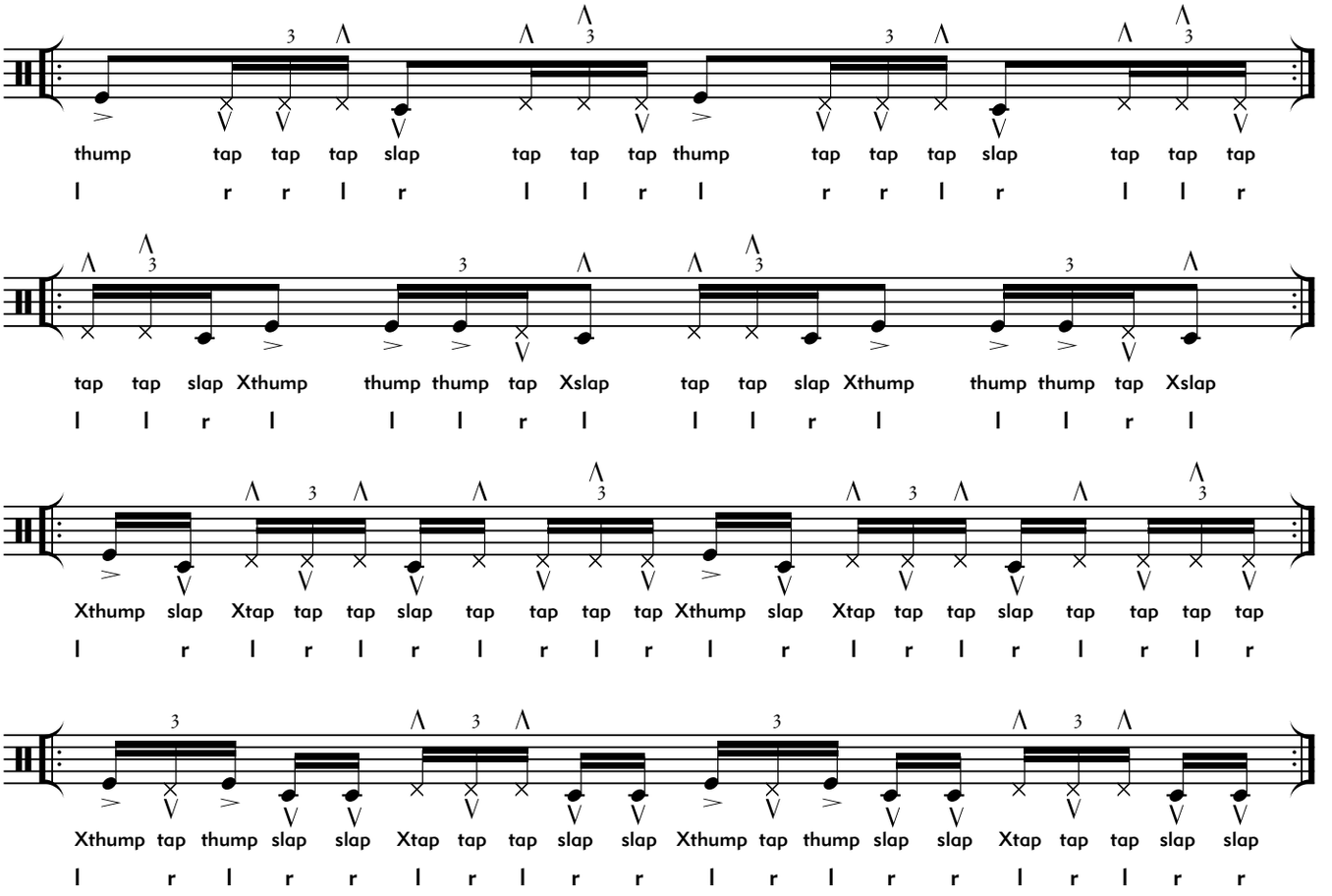
16th Triplet Figures in Third Position



Mixed 16th Triplet Figures in First Position



Mixed 16th Triplet Figures in Third Position

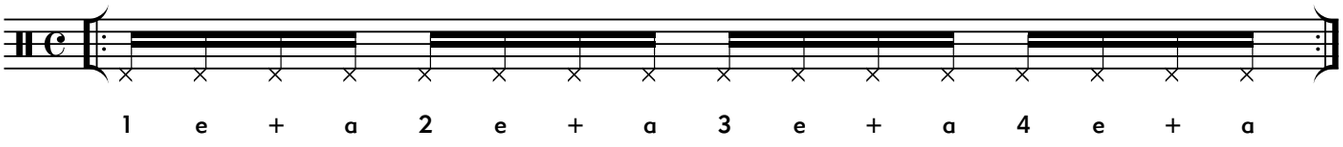


UNIT 4 Stylistic Considerations

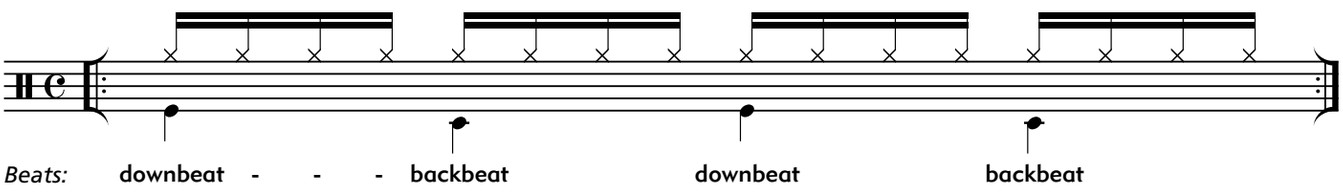
This last unit offers a sample of common grooves that can be translated to body beats using taps, slaps and thumps in both straight (even) and swing feels! Watch out for those cross-taps, cross-slaps and even occasional cross-thumps!

1. 16th Grooves

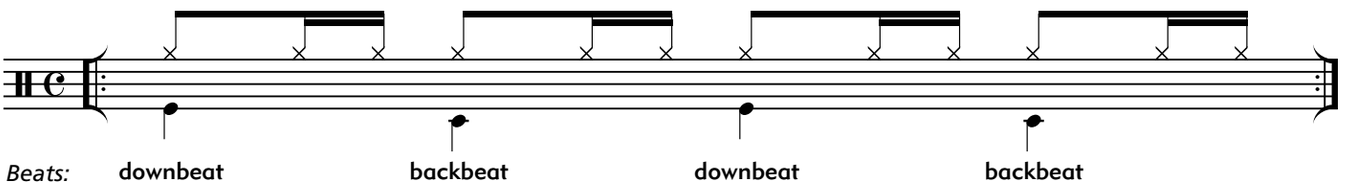
Exercise 1 · These exercises exemplify 8th/16th patterns that may be interpreted with a swing or even feel. Swing 16th patterns have what we call a "triplety" feel. This groove is also called "funk shuffle" or my favorite nick-name, "swunk." (swing-funk hybrid). The "funk" part is the heavy 2 and 4 back-beat.



Feel 1



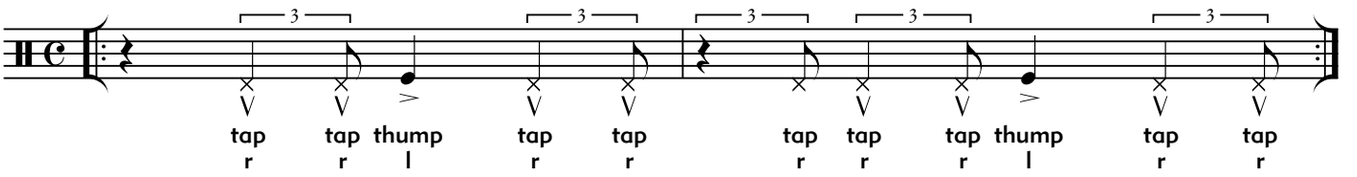
Feel 2



3. Other Body Beat Grooves

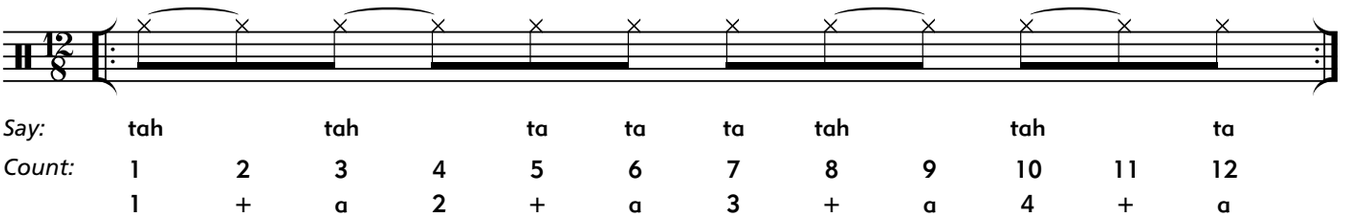
Exercise 1 · This particular Reggae is in half-time feel because the backbeat accents (thump) fall on beat 3 of each measure instead of the usual 2 and 4.

Reggae

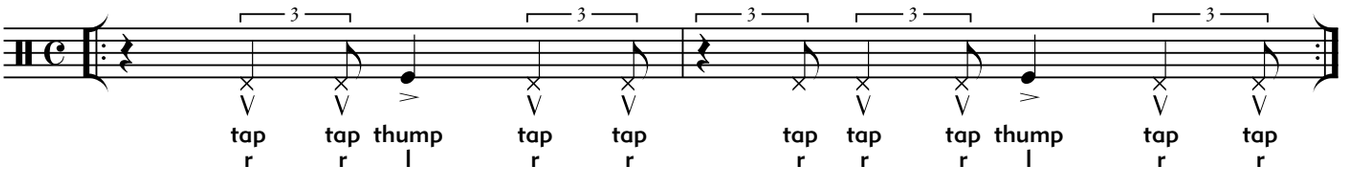


Exercise 2 · Afro-Cuban is usually notated in 12/8 time and may be played in first, second or third positions.

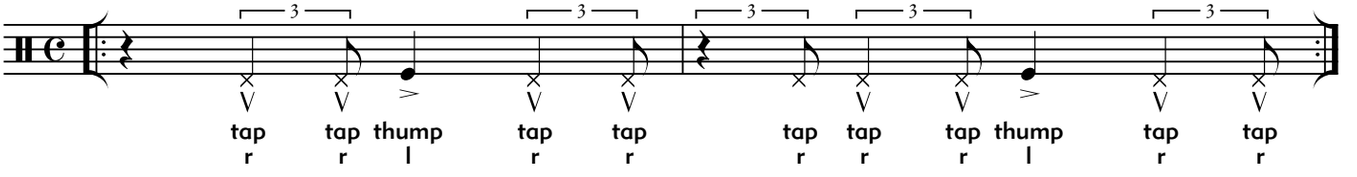
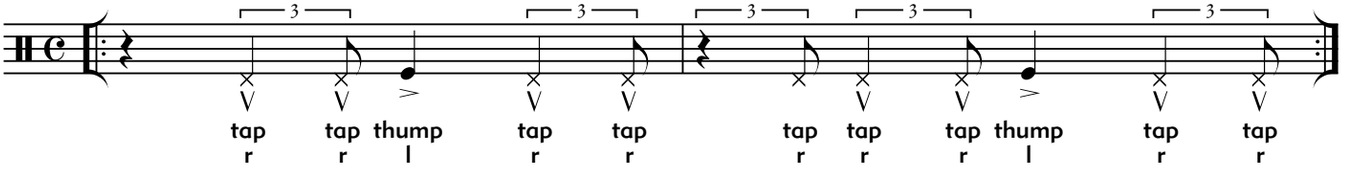
Afro-Cuban



First position



Second position



Third position