

Dynamic Duets for Snare Drum

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Foreword

Dynamics are one of the greatest resources we have to help us convey expression in music. As soon as students understand that the most basic musical ideas can be transformed by their use, dynamics become an inherent part of their playing, much like reading simple rhythms and keeping a steady beat.

Dynamic Duets for Snare Drum contains a progressive variety of performance pieces, all designed to help enforce the recognition of dynamics, as well as attention to detail.

Here are some basic tips to help maximize results while using this text:

- Keep a steady beat at all times, and practice with a metronome.
- Soft does not mean slow, so maintain your intensity when playing softly.
- Loud (or accented) does not mean fast, so stay relaxed when playing loudly.
- Establish a sense of meter by counting a silent measure before you play.
- Always look ahead while playing, and keep your mind ahead of your hands.
- Don't stop when you make a mistake. Keep your count and place in the music.
- For continuity, practice the entire piece at a slower tempo before playing it up to speed.
- Always listen to each other and strive for a unified performance.
- Exaggerate your dynamics as this will help to make your playing more expressive.

Accomplished percussionists have a great sense of beat placement and are sensitive to balance and blend. When the enclosed solos are practiced with proper consideration, students will be able to understand that dynamics can elevate an everyday drummer or percussionist into a world-class musician!

Explanation of Terms

***fff* (fortississimo):** very, very loud

***ff* (fortissimo):** very loud

***f* (forte):** loud

***mf* (mezzo forte):** moderately loud

***mp* (mezzo piano):** moderately soft

***p* (piano):** soft

***pp* (pianissimo):** very soft

***ppp* (pianississimo):** very, very soft

***fp* (forte piano):** loud, then suddenly soft

> (accent): play the note a little louder

^ (marcato): very loud accent

< (crescendo): gradually get louder

> (decrescendo): gradually get softer

Dynamic Duo

Dynamics are a powerful vehicle for expression in music. Once a specified dynamic level is established, be sure to maintain it until a change is noted. In measures 19–22, both players should think uniformly in order to create a smooth, seamless phrase. Also, note the use of accents in the last four measures of the piece.

$\text{♩} = 110$

SD 1 $\frac{4}{4}$ *f*

SD 2 $\frac{4}{4}$ *p*

SD 1 $\frac{4}{4}$

SD 2 $\frac{4}{4}$

SD 1 $\frac{4}{4}$ *p*

SD 2 $\frac{4}{4}$ *f*

SD 1 $\frac{4}{4}$ *p* *f*

SD 2 $\frac{4}{4}$ *p* *f*

SD 1 $\frac{4}{4}$ *p* *mf* *p* *f*

SD 2 $\frac{4}{4}$ *mf* *p* *f*

More in Four

The time signature $\frac{4}{4}$, also referred to as “common” time, is the most popular meter in Western music, as is the case below. Long rests, such as those found in measures 2 and 4, need not be problematic. Play the quarter notes in bar 1 and 3, and continue to “hear” them through the subsequent silent measures. Body language and eye contact between players can be of additional help. Also, watch for sudden changes in dynamics.

$\text{♩} = 104$

SD 1 C p

SD 2 C p

SD 1 mf

SD 2 mf

SD 1 p

SD 2 p

SD 1 $> > > >$

SD 2 $> > > >$

SD 1 mf p mf $> > > >$

SD 2 p mf p mf f $> > > >$

SD 1 p mf p mf p mf f

SD 2 p mf p mf p mf f