

SAMBA COORDINATION BUILDER

12 Independence Exercises Based on Chick Corea's "Sicily"

by Daniel Bédard

MUSIC KEY

H.H. 
S.D. 
B.D. 

I remember first hearing Chick Corea's 1978 recording *Friends* at my music teacher's house. This was when my ears got hooked on jazz. I was coming from a background in rock and punk, and I was amazed by the high energy and great technique displayed by the musicians on this album. It completely changed my thoughts about drumming and about music in general.

I listened to *Friends* a lot, mostly trying to figure out what Steve Gadd was doing on the drums. He plays a few fun sambas on the recording, and in this article I'll share some of the exercises I came up with while trying to master the beat to the tune "Sicily."

THE BASIC GROOVE

The "Sicily" drumbeat is based on an inverted paradiddle played over a samba foot ostinato. You'll execute the part open-handed, which means you'll play the hi-hat with the left hand and the snare with the right (or vice versa if you're left-handed).

Here's the main groove. It's important to play the accents as written so that the pattern has a nice flow to it.



After practicing Gadd's beat for a while, I came up with a routine of playing various rudiments in the open-handed position. This proved to be a great coordination challenge. Begin with singles leading with the right hand, and then try leading with the left hand. Make sure the hands and the bass drum are aligned.



Now play all four possible variations of double strokes.



Gadd's original pattern consists of a displaced paradiddle in the hands. Here are the other three paradiddle variations over the samba bass drum pattern.

