

Two-Handed Scales

This exercise was born from the modular four mallet exercises. It is extremely difficult and should be played very slowly. The hand that is playing the scale passage should use a legato stroke and use natural phrasing to shape the line. The “comping” hand uses a piston stroke and must focus on shifting, shaping and balance. There’s a lot to think about! Stick to one key until you get the technical concepts down. Then you can try other major or minor keys (the comping notes stay the same for major and minor).

Right Handed

♩ = 65 - 120

Keyboard

Left Handed

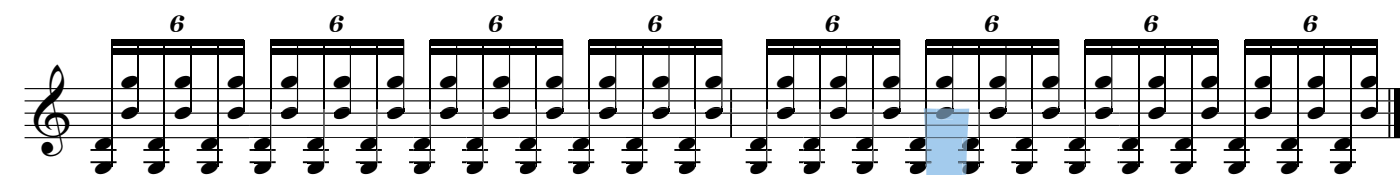
Four Mallet Roll Concepts and Exercises

There is quite a variety of rolling styles for the keyboard performer to choose from; below are a few of the most common. Achieving a mature sound with these different roll styles will take years to accomplish. Be patient! The end result will be a wonderful array of textures that can be applied to the music. This kind of variety of texture and attention to detail is what separates the good ensembles from the truly excellent ones.

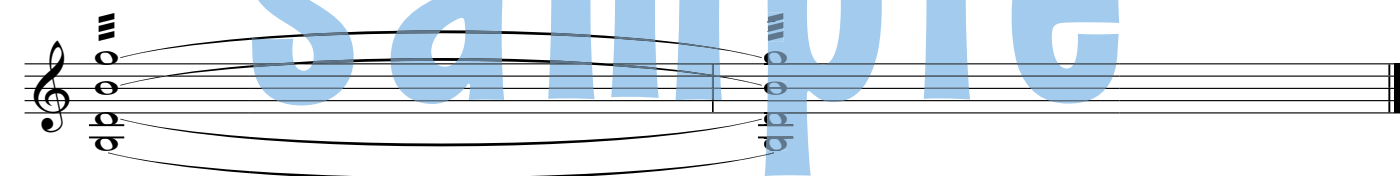
Traditional Rolls

This is the most common and perhaps most versatile of all rolls. It can be used in almost every musical situation. It involves vertical strokes, alternated between the hands.

Sounds like:



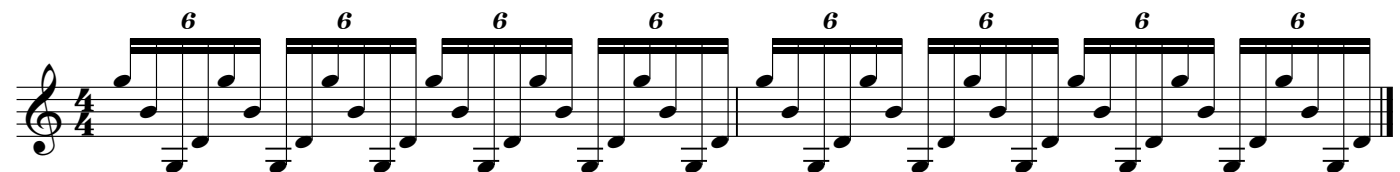
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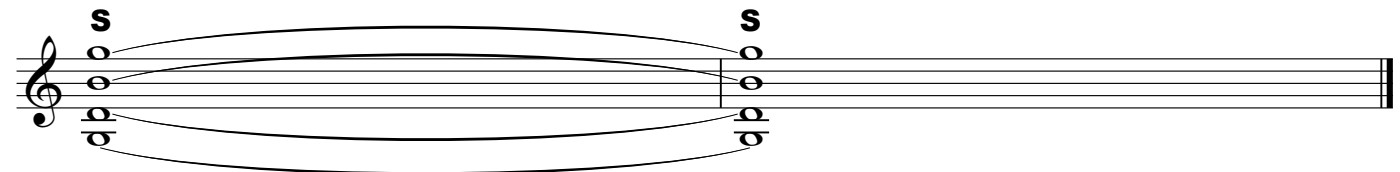
Lateral Roll (Ripple Rolls)

This roll involves lateral strokes, alternated between the hands. The effect is a fast arpeggiated sound. This is a versatile roll as well, though some chord voicings may make them physically difficult to execute. Many performers prefer to use *outside* lateral strokes in both hands as this emphasizes the soprano and bass voices of the chord.

Sounds like:



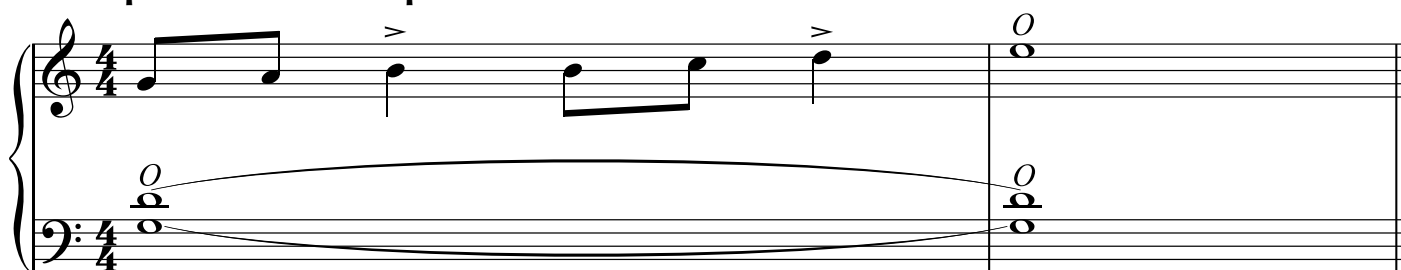
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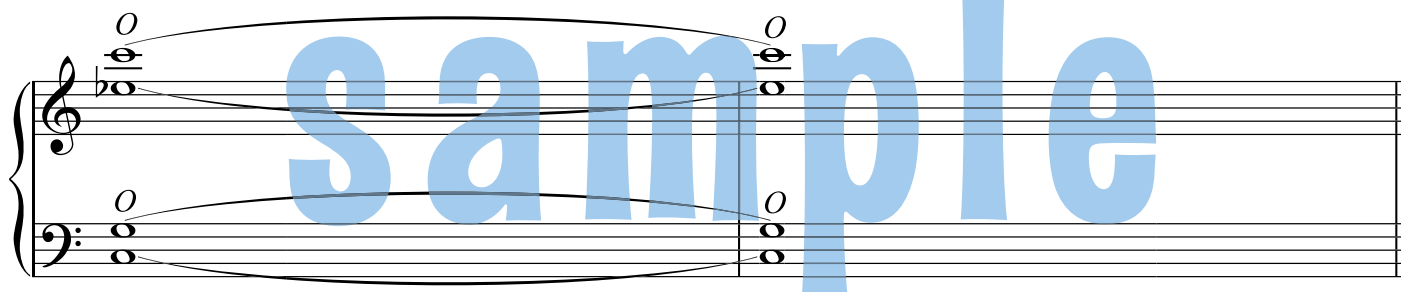
Independent Rolls (One-Handed Rolls)

The independent roll uses a specialized alternating stroke which enables the performer to sustain one or two pitches in one hand. This can be extremely helpful for executing musical passages which involve independent lines (see Examples A) . Independent rolls can also be played in both hands. This will “smooth out” the sound of widely voiced chords (see Example B).

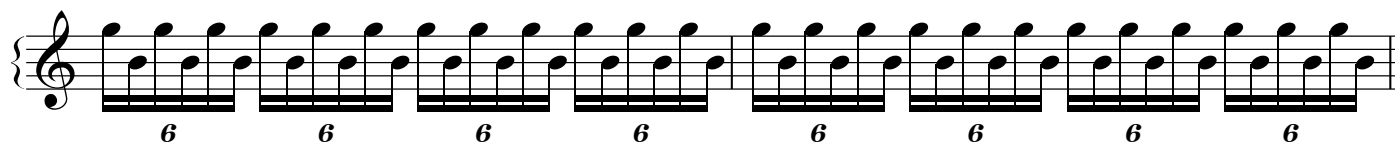
Example A - Hands are independent



Example B - Chord with a lot of space



Sounds like:



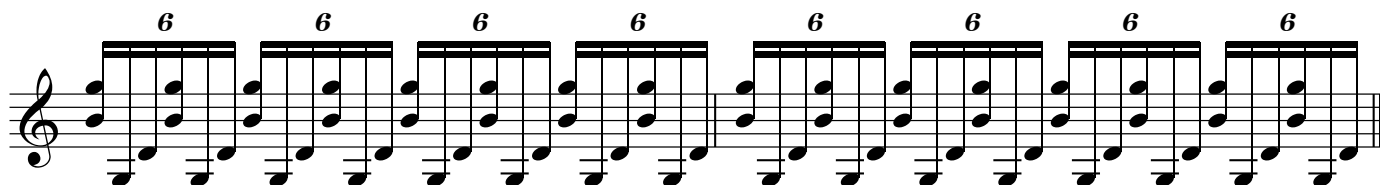
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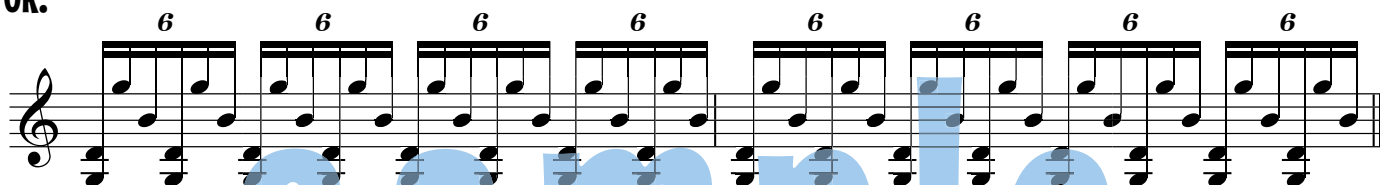
Combination Rolls

This roll is achieved by combining a lateral stroke in one hand and a vertical in the other. Combination rolls sound best when one hand is playing a pedal tone (sustaining the same pitch throughout the entire passage). In this situation, play the pedal tone with the lateral stroke and the moving line with the vertical stroke.

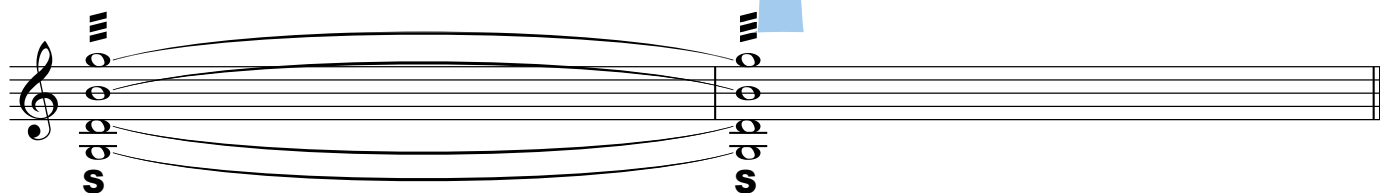
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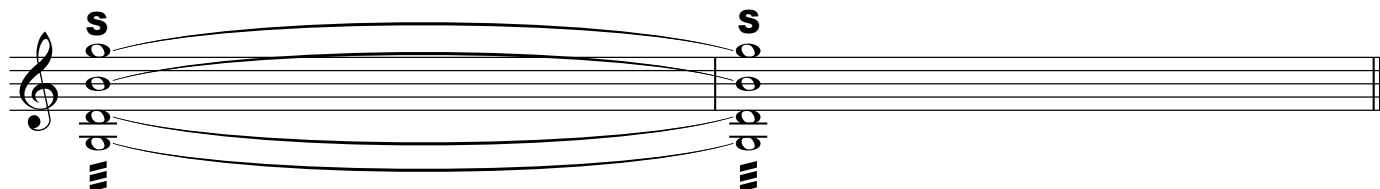
OR:



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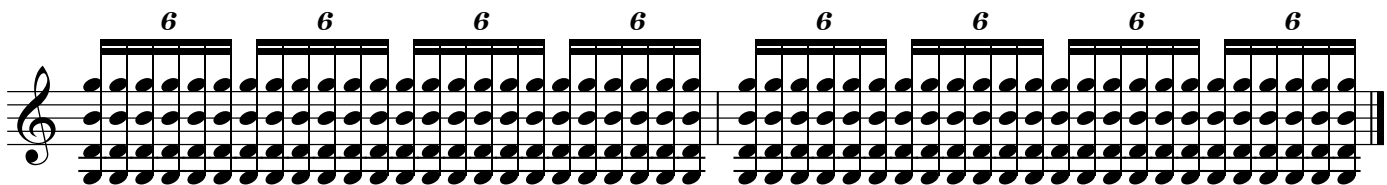
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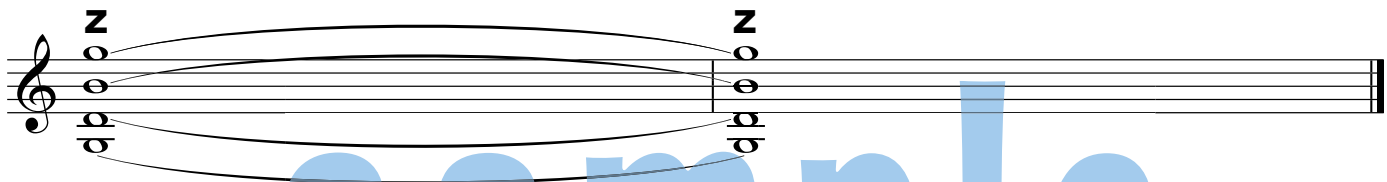
Guatemalan Rolls

This is the traditional roll style of Guatemala, a country with a very proud marimba tradition. Rather than alternating the vertical strokes between the hands, the vertical strokes are played simultaneously. The result is a “full,” block-chord sound. This roll also has the most “articulate” sound. For this reason, it is not the most versatile of the roll styles, but it can be a great textural effect.

Sounds like:



Written like:



Roll Speed Rules	
Rule #1:	The louder the dynamic, the faster the roll speed. The softer the dynamic, the slower the roll speed.
Rule #2:	The higher the register on the instrument, the faster the roll speed. The lower the register on the instrument, the slower the roll speed.

Roll Speed Exercises

These exercises are based on another common chord progression, I – IV – ii7 – V7 – I. Perform these exercises in different registers of the keyboard and with different dynamic shapes (remembering the two roll speed rules). The performer is encouraged to create his or her own chord progressions.

Here are a few to get you started: I – vi – IV – V7 – I or I – vi – ii7 – V7 – I.

Remember to practice with a metronome. Maintaining tempo during rolled passages can be very difficult.

For the best results with the following exercises, work on the Modular Concepts first. You must perfect each stroke before you can speed it up and apply it to a roll. Also, stick to the recommended tempos; rolls don't have to be fast. You don't want to overplay the bar!