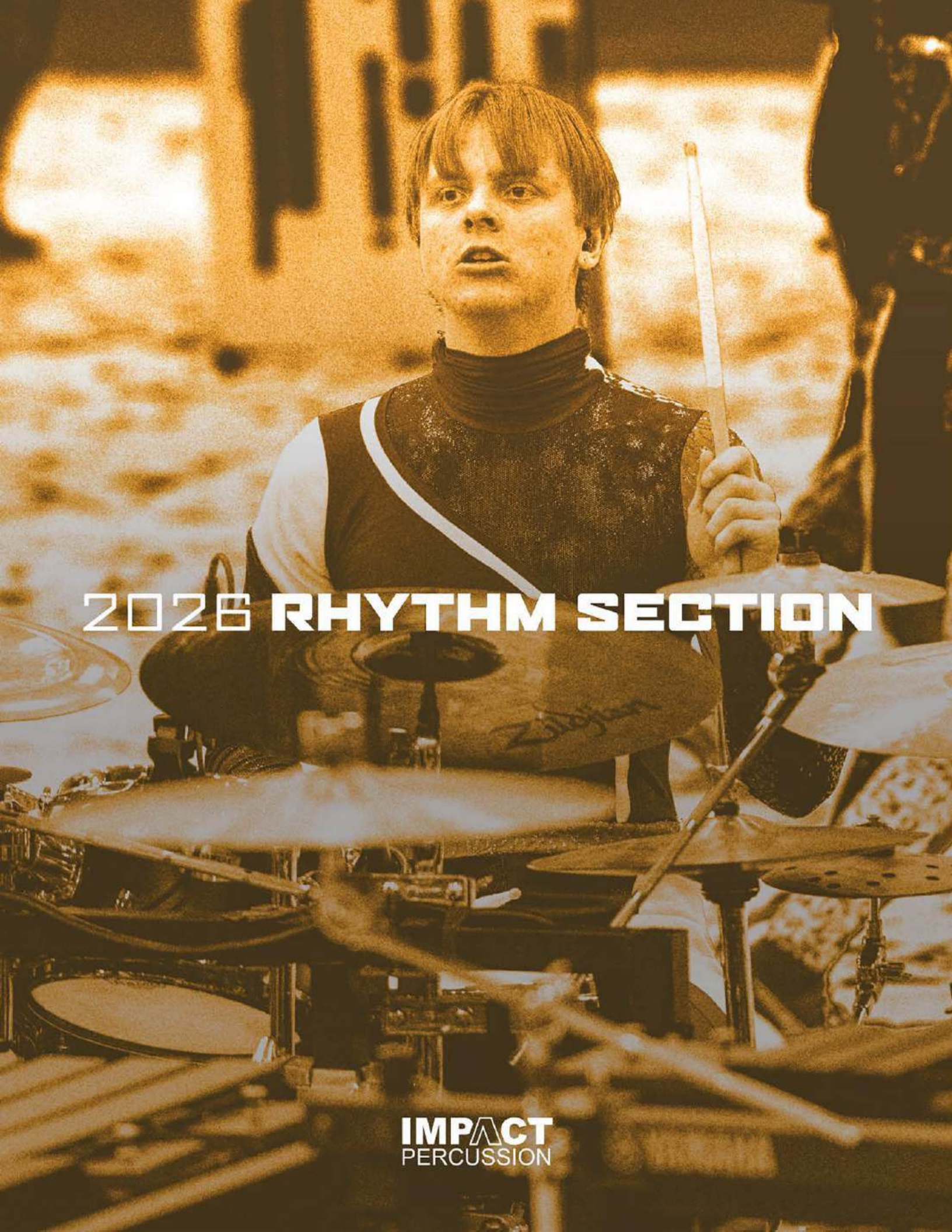


2026 RHYTHM SECTION

IMPACT
PERCUSSION

Welcome to IMPACT Percussion!

On behalf of our administrative, design, and educational teams, we would like to sincerely thank you for your interest in participating in IMPACT Percussion's 2026 season. Our entire team is looking forward to another remarkable year full of meaningful moments, personal growth, and inspiring experiences. We are also looking forward to 2026 being our first full season in **Percussion Independent World**! We can't wait to kick off this historic season with **YOU!**

At IMPACT Percussion, our mission is to **empower youth to reach their full potential through achieving excellence in the performing arts**. We carry out our mission by creating an inspiring environment that fosters performance, artistry, and excellence at the highest level.

To get the most out of your **2026 audition experience**, we encourage you to bring a **positive attitude, an open mind, and a strong desire to grow**. As part of the audition process, we'll focus on a wide range of musical and performance skill sets to help you understand our approach and assess your abilities. While we'll dig deeper into our technique and approach during rehearsal camps, the following core concepts are the essential building blocks for the IMPACT Percussion Front Ensemble. Please carefully review this packet and get ready for the season. We can't wait to see you and begin this exciting new chapter together!

- *IMPACT Percussion 2026 Front Ensemble Education Team*

Audition Preparation

In addition to being prepared to play all the musical material in this packet, auditionees should also be prepared for an individual audition to show off their skills. Specifically, auditionees should prepare a solo (on the instrument they're auditioning for) that demonstrates their skill sets beyond what is in this packet. **This is your opportunity to show us what you've got!** Auditionees may also be asked to sight-read a short excerpt during their individual audition. Auditionees should also have a basic understanding of music theory and be able to learn variations by rote.

Audition Process

Auditionees will be evaluated in both a group setting and an individual setting. **During the group assessment**, we will go over full ensemble technique, exercises, variations, and we will learn a group excerpt. The **individual audition** will be roughly five minutes. This will include time for sight-reading, the prepared excerpt, and an opportunity to demonstrate mastery of the exercises in this packet.

After each audition day, auditionees will receive **individual feedback** via email. This year, we use a numerical rating system to evaluate each auditionee's skill set:

- **5 - Consistently.** Demonstrates proficiency with the material and applies directly.
- **4 - Frequently.** Understands material, aware of needed improvements.
- **3 - Sometimes.** Knows what needs to be done, execution requires motivation.
- **2 - Rarely.** The individual discovers the threshold of their competence.

- **1 - Never.** More experience is required for consideration.

Any questions regarding the received feedback can be sent to the Front Ensemble staff via email between auditions.

Be Prepared For More Than Music

In addition to being musically prepared for each audition, each auditionee should also set themselves up for success by bringing:

- A notebook and pencils to track comments in real-time
- Comfortable and appropriate attire
- A positive attitude and a growth mindset!

Our Approach

Preparing to Play

- “Set” for the IMPACT Percussion Front Ensemble means implements in your hands (Rack and Set), hands at your sides, standing with good posture, and looking into the center.
- Bring your hands/sticks up together. Watch the center and match their movements to bring hands/sticks up to a playing position. Sticks will always be set flat to the drum.
- Before playing, “breathe - relax - lift” the starting stick to full height to initiate the first attack. Look in through the end of the attack for timing, returning attention to your own instrument only after the attack has occurred.
- After playing, return to the initial playing position, and return your attention to the center. Center will break to bring their mallets down, at which time everyone will follow.

Posture

Feet

- Feet should be shoulder-width apart. The player should distribute their weight in a way that they are able to comfortably shift side to side, avoiding stepping unless it is needed for the passage. Your body center should always be centered in the area of the instrument you are playing. Avoid reaching far off to the side.

Knees

- All players will need to remember to keep their knees relaxed, and not locked. Players need to be able to maintain comfort while standing for long periods of time.

Hips

- Hips should remain parallel to the instrument/. The hips may angle towards the instrument to allow comfortable access to cymbals or other instruments for Rack.

Upper Body

- The position of the upper body will change with pulsing, breathing, and performance. The default position will be standing up straight, with relaxed shoulders. The default position of the head will be with the chin held high, switching between center and your own instrument. Avoid pulling the chin too far into the chest or hunching forward.

Shoulders/Arms/Wrists

- The shoulders, arms, and wrists should be as relaxed as possible while playing. Avoid pulling the shoulders up towards the ears or hunching them forward. Arms should be relaxed, but held slightly away from the body to where the elbow can move freely. The forearms should slope down slightly towards the instrument, with the hands and wrists just high enough to not hit the drum/keyboard. Keyboard/drum height should accommodate where this point naturally sits for each player.
- Bass Guitar - Stand tall**:** Maintain good posture with a straight back and relaxed shoulders. Adjust your strap so the bass rests comfortably on your body, typically around your waist or slightly lower.

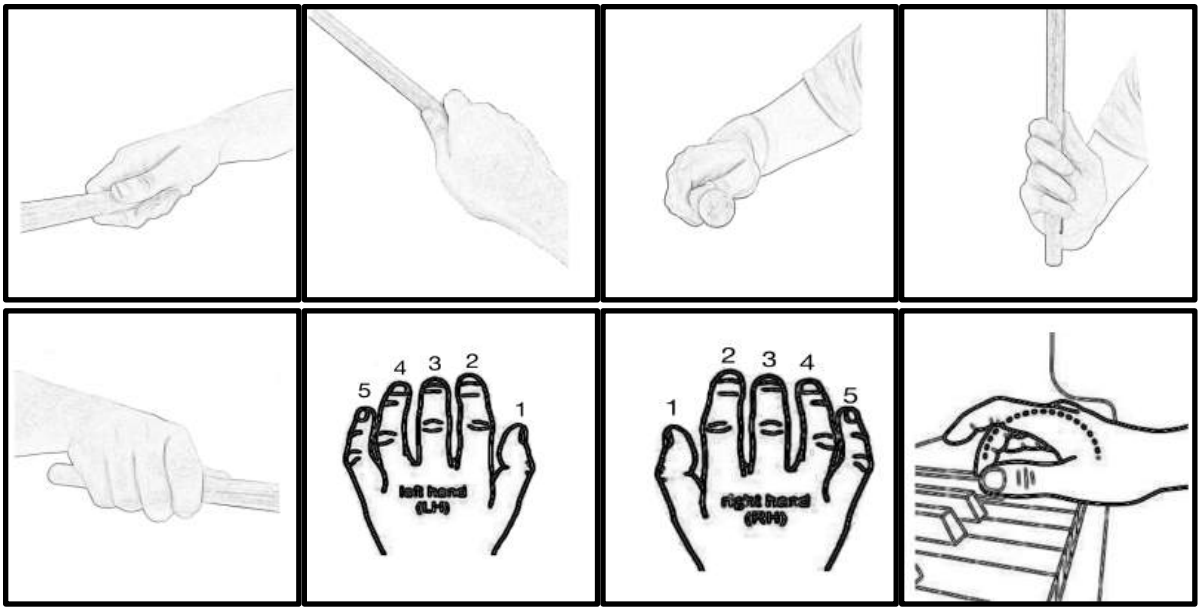
Grip

Sticks

- At IMPACT Percussion, we use American Grip for general playing. The thumbs should not face the ceiling, and the palm of the hand should not be flat to the ground like seen in French and German grips. Start with your hands in German grip, then lower the outsides of the hands down, and the thumbs slightly up. Think of the first knuckle at the base of the pointer finger as the top of the hand.
- The fulcrum is located between the thumb and index finger. It isn't a rigid point where the stick is completely fixed. It allows the stick to rotate slightly as you move your wrist and fingers. This rotation helps you generate power and helps to control different aspects of the stroke
- After setting the fulcrum, wrap your remaining three fingers (middle, ring, and pinky) comfortably around the stick. Remember, the goal is to keep the fingers relaxed. Contact the stick, without applying pressure.

Synths

- Fingers are numbered 1-5 with one being the thumb, and we implement traditional scale finger positions. Fingers should be naturally curved, not flat, as if holding a light ball. Keep your thumbs curved and positioned comfortably under your fingers, not sticking out.
- Avoid tensing your wrists. They should be kept relatively flat and move naturally with your fingers.
- Each finger should move independently, striking the keys with the pads at the fingertips.
- Avoid tensing your arms. Engage your larger arm and shoulder muscles to generate power for louder passages, but keep them relaxed for softer playing
- Focus on using efficient arm and wrist movements without excess motion, especially for larger intervals, instead of relying solely on finger stretches.



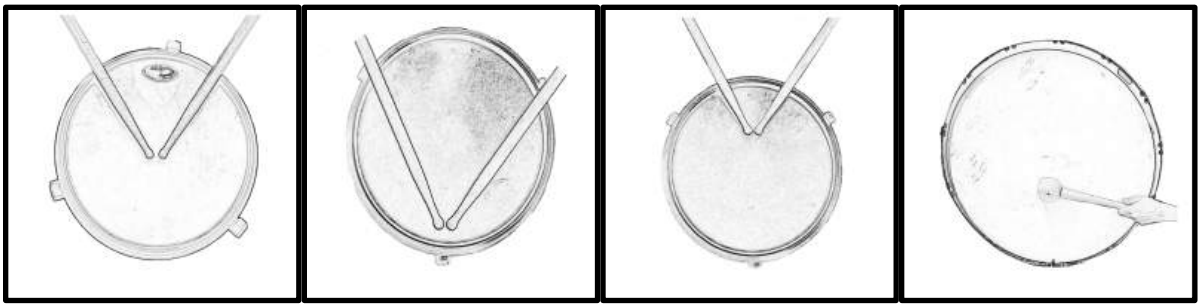
Stroke Types

Rack/Set

- For general playing, the default will be the “Full” stroke, though all stroke types will be utilized at specified times, as indicated by music notation. The sticks will set at the drum head, lift with a “prep” to the top of the stroke, with the height being dependent on dynamics. The stick will travel to the drum, then return to its original starting position. Strive to produce a warm and full sound out of the instrument. To achieve this, the sticks should feel relaxed in the hands.
- Velocity should be consistent throughout different dynamics, and members should play through the drumhead. This is to keep the sound full and warm, even at the piano dynamic. Aim for around 80% of full capacity for general playing. This will vary at times based on the demands of the music. Use a consistent hand speed throughout the down and up motion of the stroke.

Beating Zones

- Correct beating zones are essential to producing good sound quality. For snare drum, aim for the center of the head for general playing. For softer playing, move the beads closer to the edge of the drum while remaining on top of the snares. For Toms, aim roughly 2-3 inches in from the rim of the drum. The center may be used at times to create a “punchy” sound. For concert bass drum and gong, the beating zone will be 3-4 inches below the center of the instrument. The center of the bass drum may be used at times to create a “punchy” sound.



Bass Guitar

Fretting Hand

- Position your fingers directly over the frets, not behind them. Use the pads of your fingertips for optimal control and sound clarity. Maintain a natural curve in your fingers, as if holding a light ball. Avoid pressing your fingers flat on the fretboard. Keep your wrist straight and relaxed, avoiding excessive bending. Let your arm hang naturally from your shoulder.
- Each finger should move independently, pressing down on the strings with firm but relaxed pressure.

Picking Hand

- Rest your picking hand on the body of the bass near the bridge pickup for a brighter attack or near the neck pickup for a warmer tone. Use a relaxed wrist movement to pick the strings.
- **Muting -** Use your fretting hand to lightly rest on the strings above the fret you're pressing.
- **Fingerpicking:** Using individual fingers to pluck the strings instead of a pick.
- **Slapping and Popping:** A percussive technique using the thumb to "slap" the E string and pull off (pop) with other fingers.
- **Palm Muting:** Rest the heel of your palm lightly on the bridge while picking.
- **Ghost Notes:** Play very light, percussive notes with your picking hand that don't fully sound the strings.
- **Hammer-Ons and Pull-Offs:** Hammering a finger onto a fret to produce a note without picking. Pull-offs are pulling a finger off a fret to produce a lower note without picking.
- **Slides:** Slide your finger along a string between frets to create a smooth pitch bend.

Electronics Program

- At IMPACT Percussion, we use Mac computers and the program MainStage to trigger sounds, effects, and create our overall audio landscape. Members auditioning for synth should be familiar with this program.

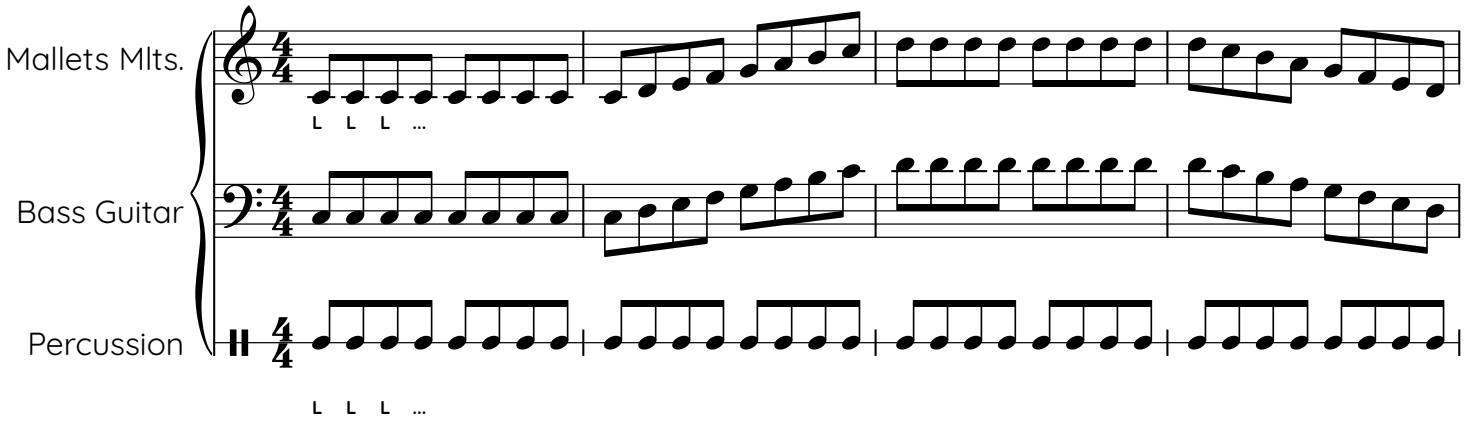
Performance

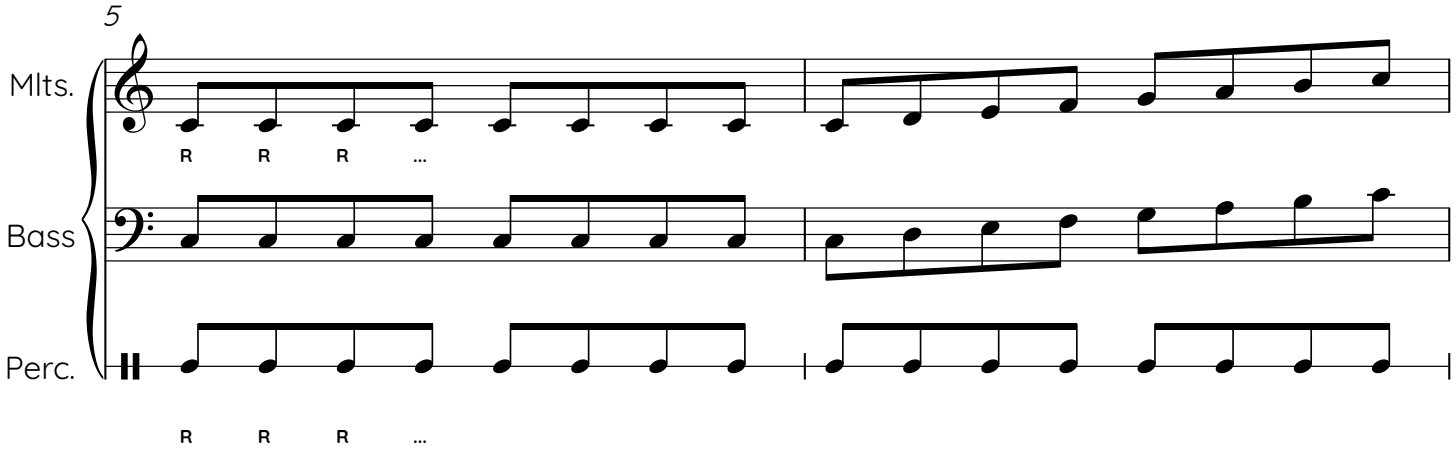
At IMPACT Percussion, each member has a responsibility that aids in the success of the ensemble. That responsibility covers not only music but also visual artistry. You are tasked with bringing the music to life and making a memorable connection with the audience. You may be asked to step outside of your comfort zone, and that is okay. Effort, engagement, and positive energy is expected for every rep. **Together, we'll make some magic happen in 2026!**

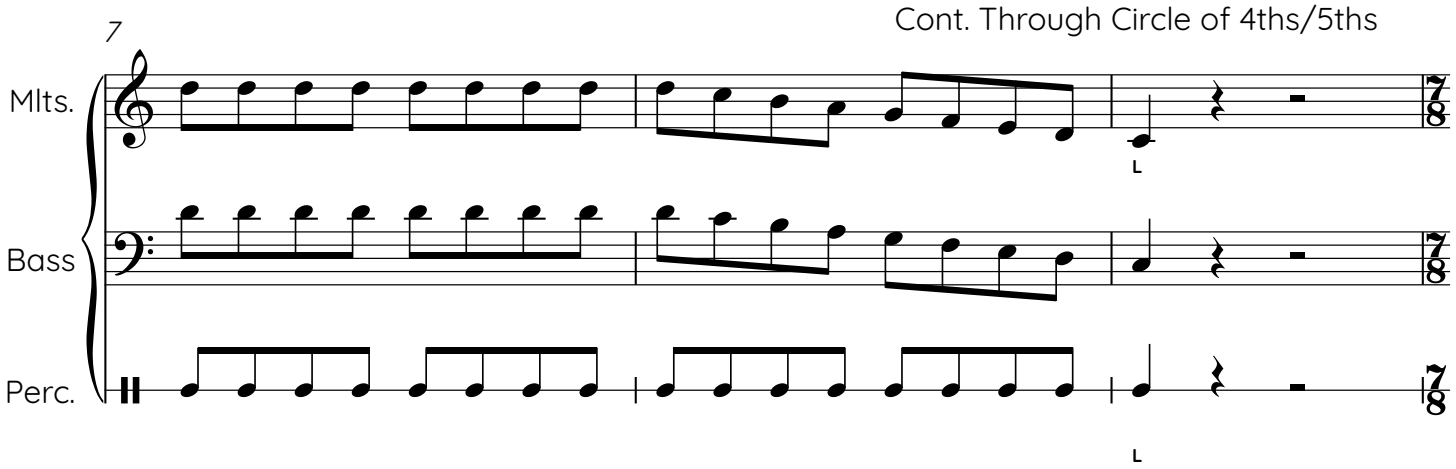
Scan this QR code for Practice Tracks to help you prepare for auditions!

Singles

IMPACT Percussion 2026







7/8 Octaves

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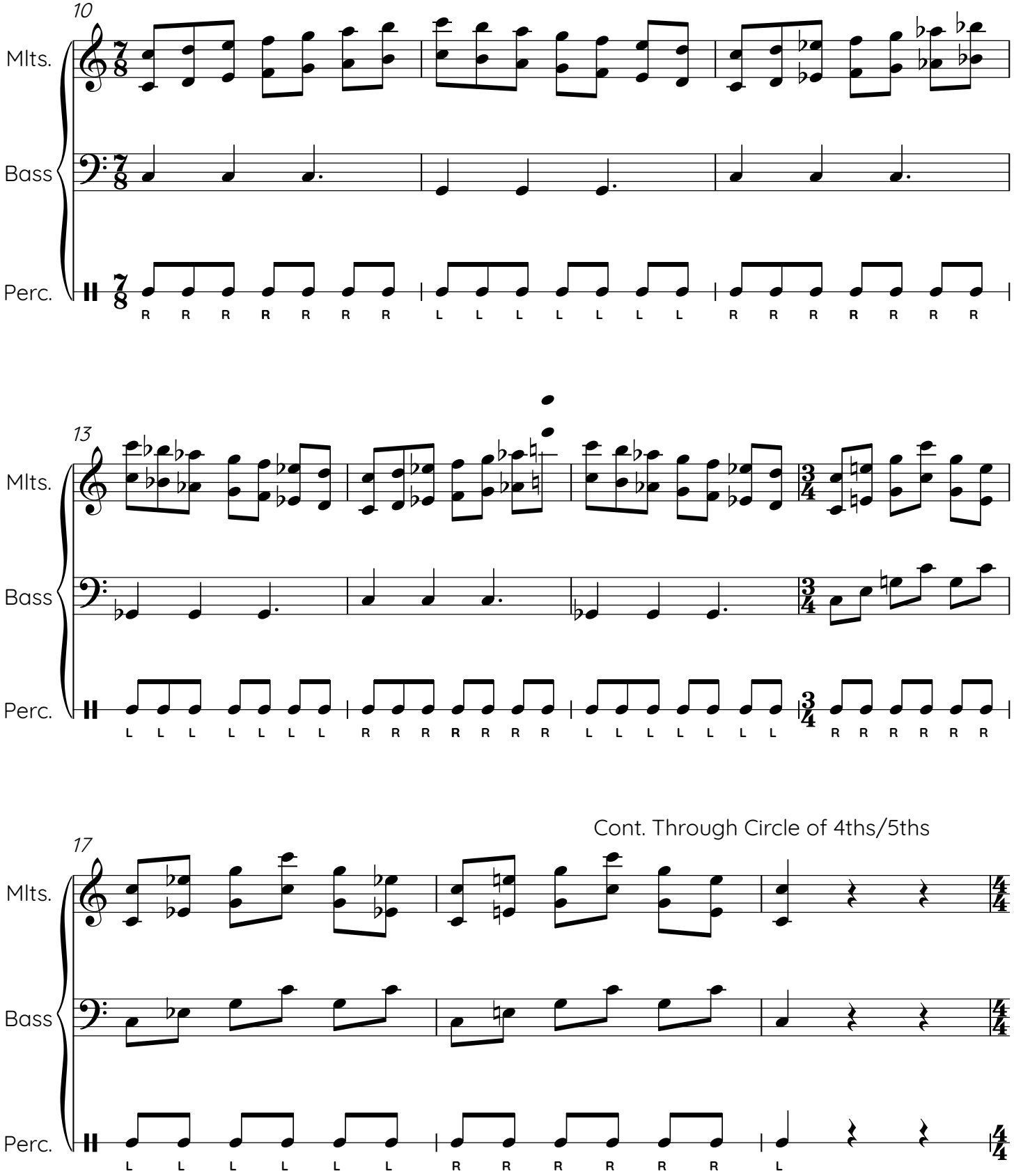

Chromatic Octaves

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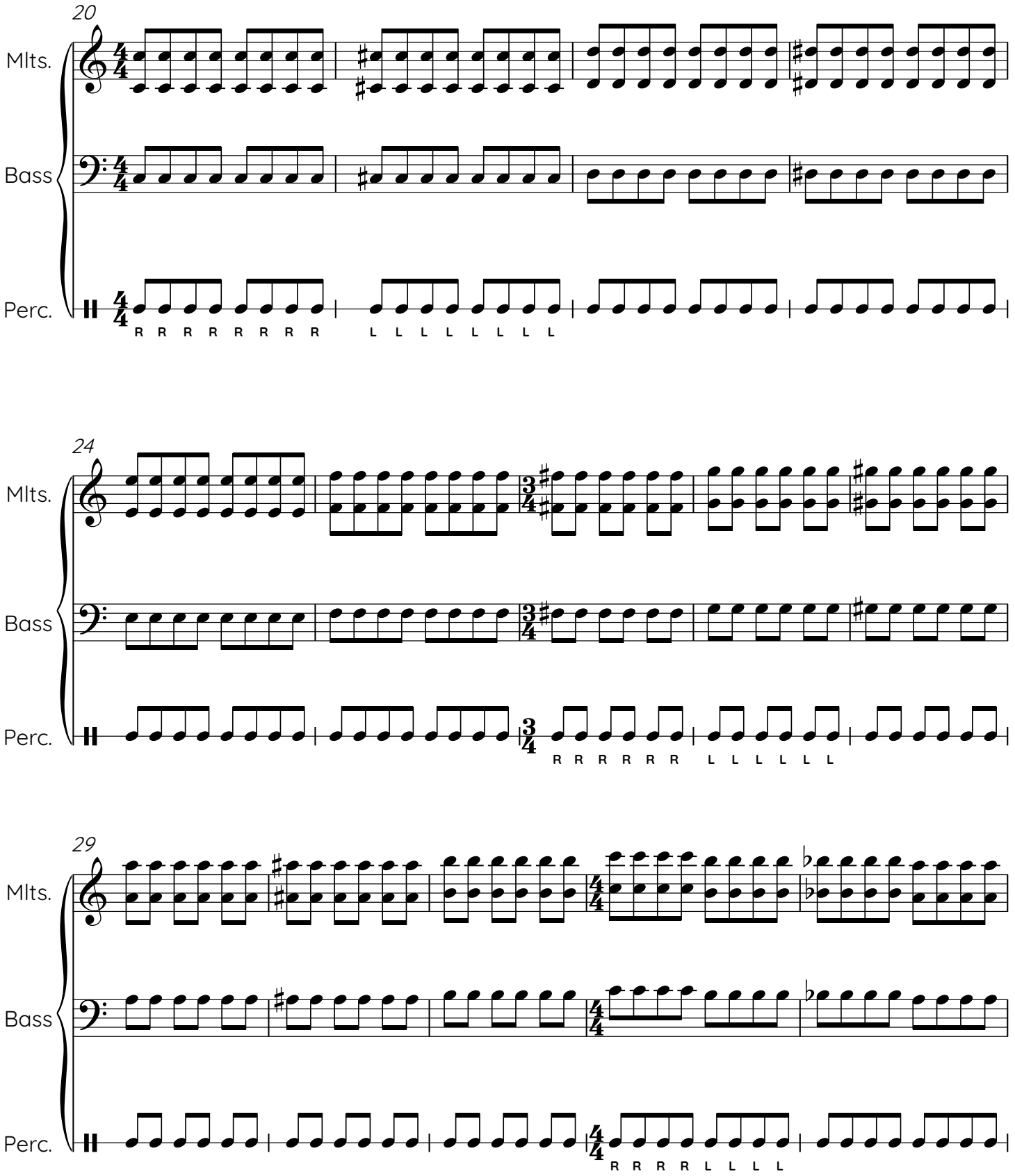
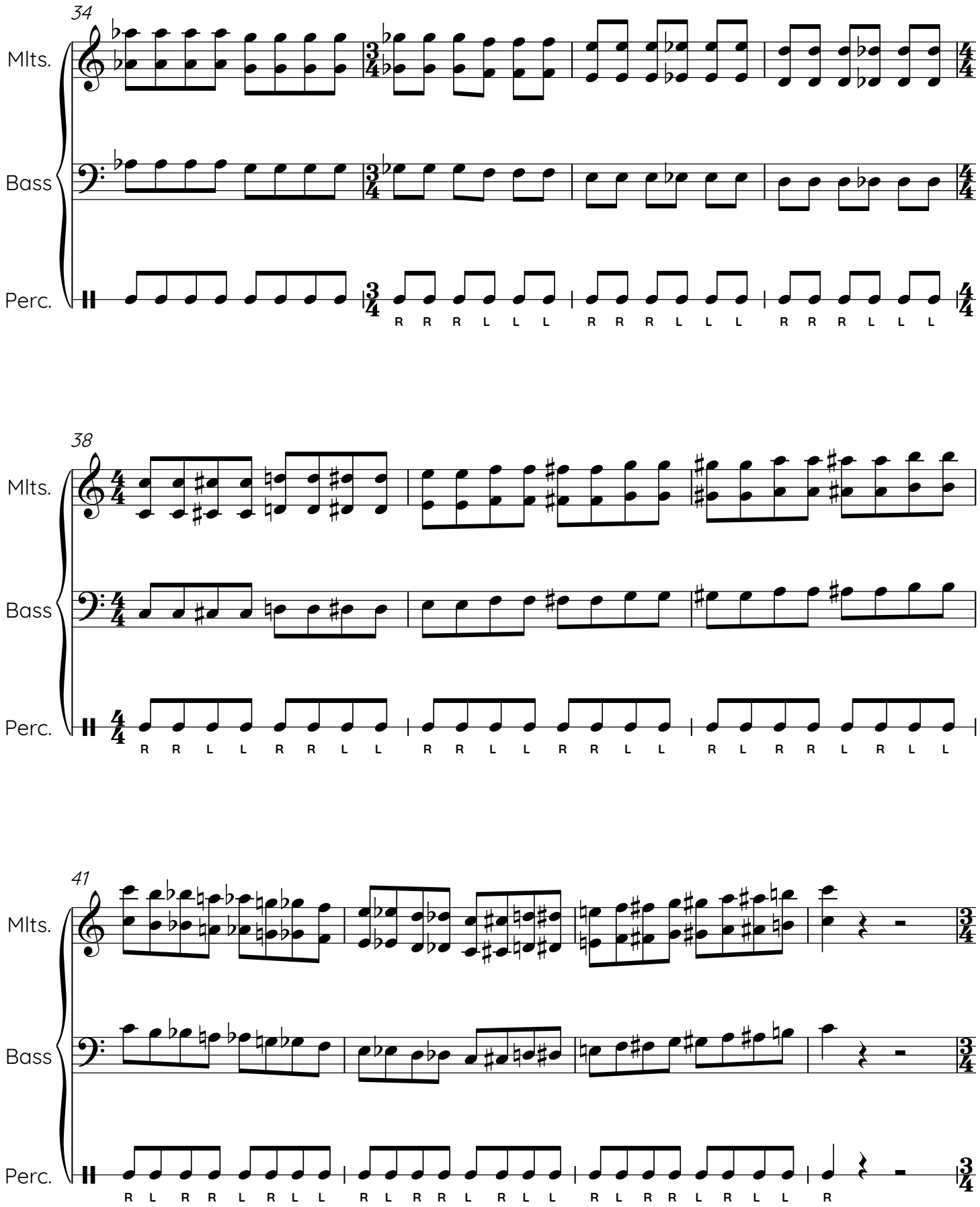
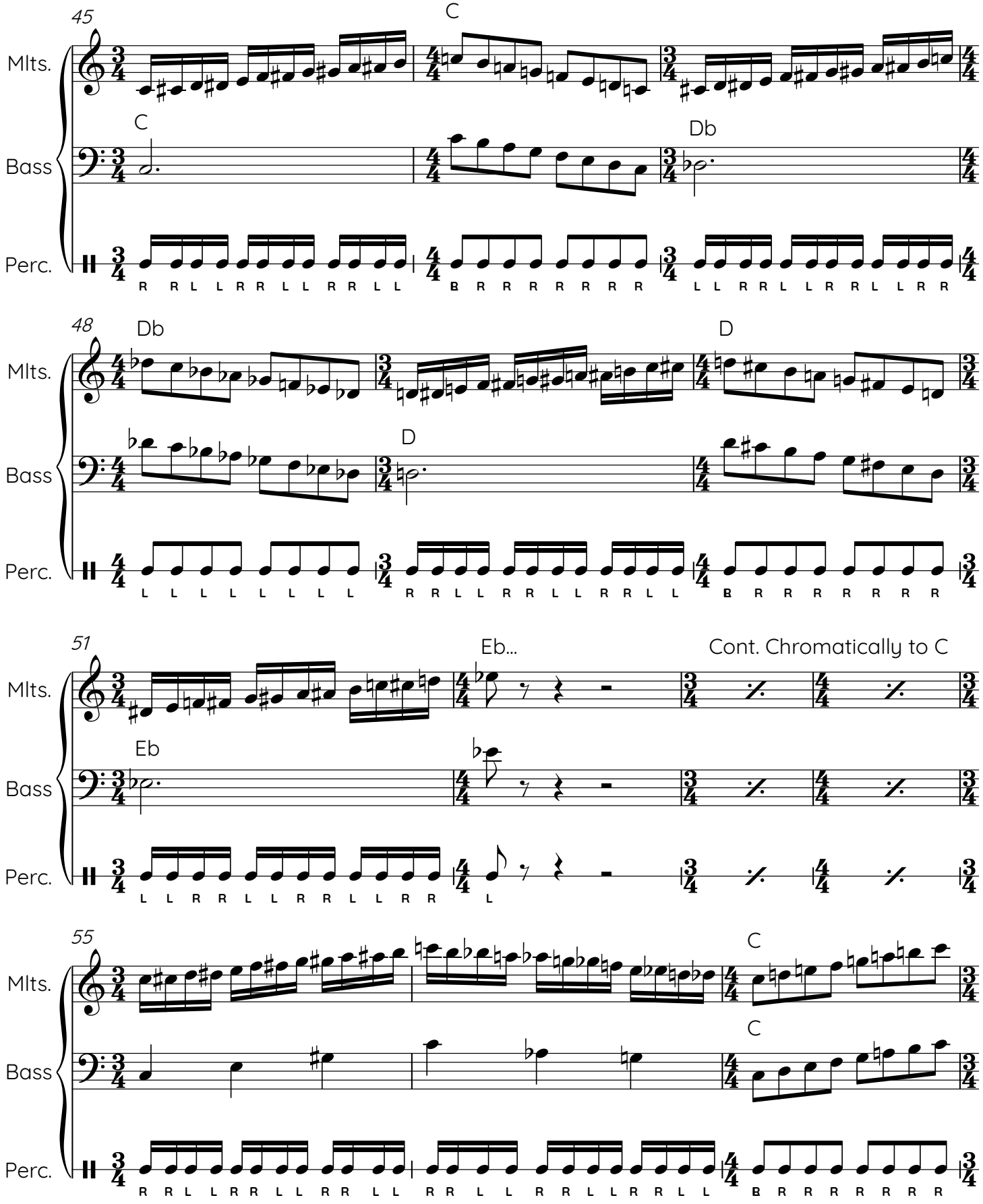
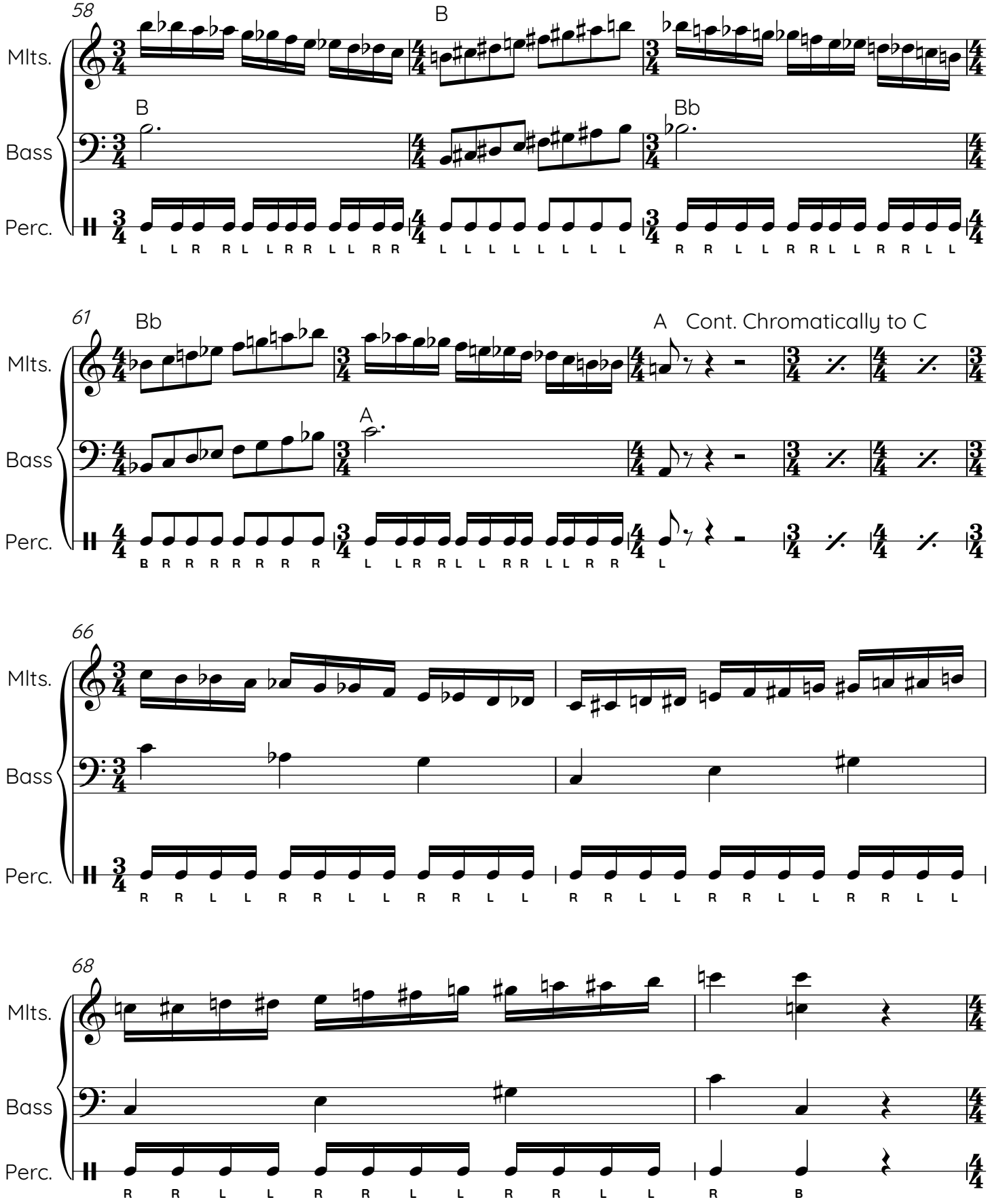



34
Mlts.
Bass
Perc.
R R R L L L
R R R L L L
R R R L L L
38
Mlts.
Bass
Perc.
R R L L R R L L
R R L L R R L L
R L R R L R L L
41
Mlts.
Bass
Perc.
R L R R L R L L
R L R R L R L L
R L R R L R L L
R

Chromatic Attack

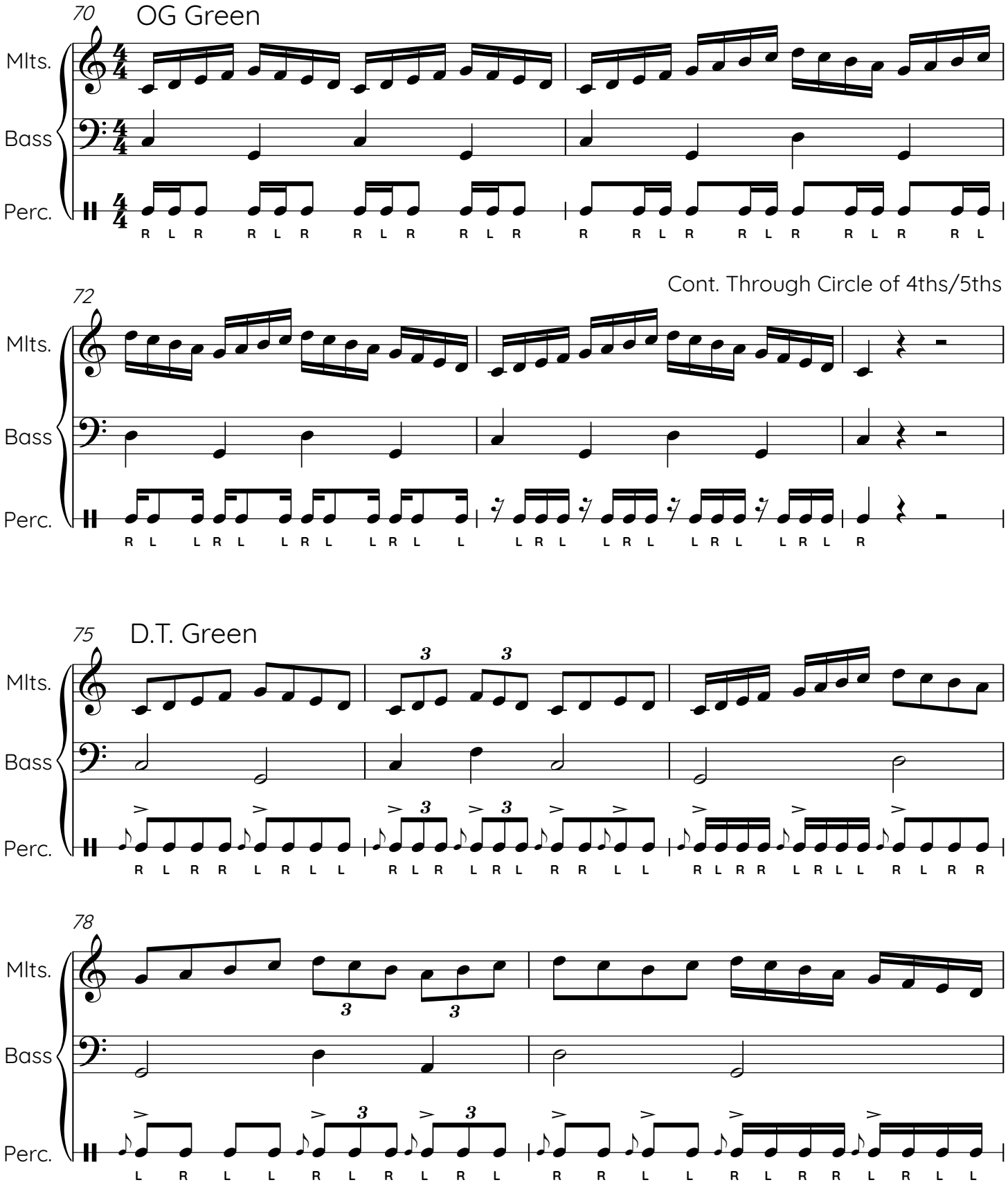
IMPACT Percussion 2026

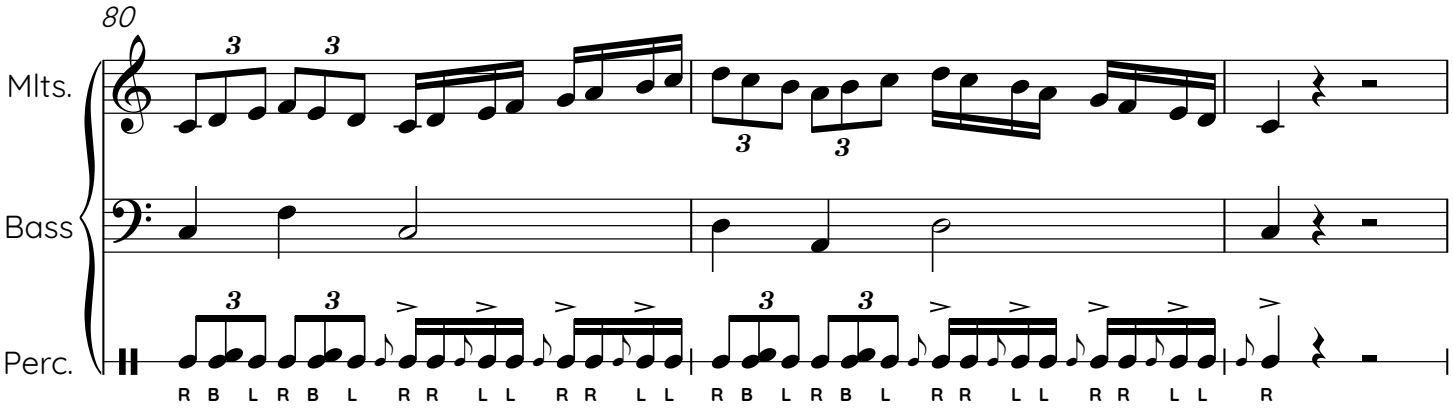



58
B
Mlts.
B
Bass
Bb
Perc.
L L R R L L R R L L R R L L L L L L L L R R L L R R L L R R L L
61
Bb
A Cont. Chromatically to C
Mlts.
A
Bass
Perc.
R R R R R R R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L
66
Mlts.
Bass
Perc.
R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L
68
Mlts.
Bass
Perc.
R R L L R R L L R R L L R B

Green

IMPACT Percussion 2026

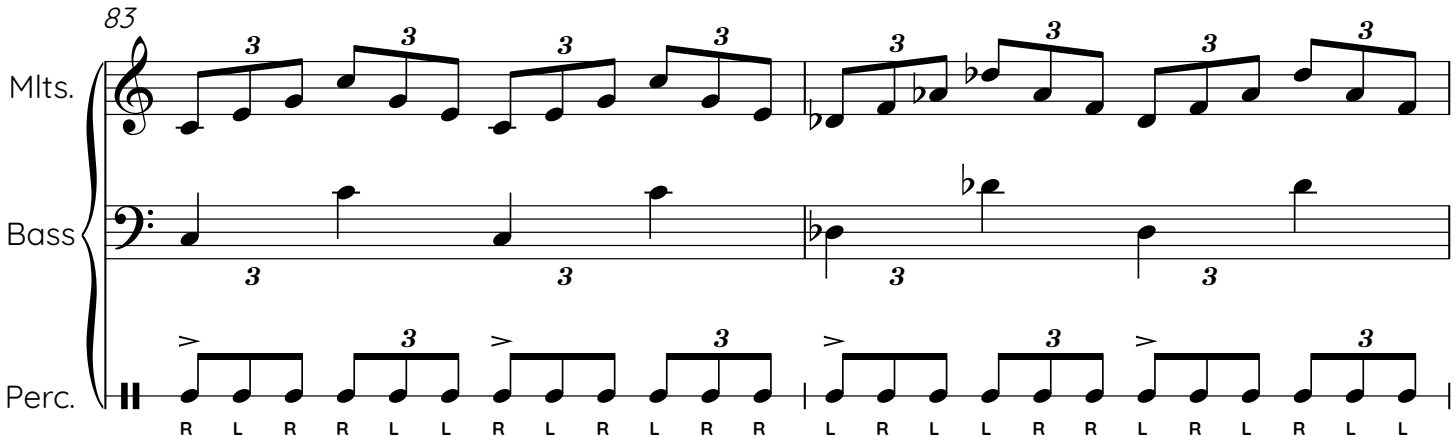


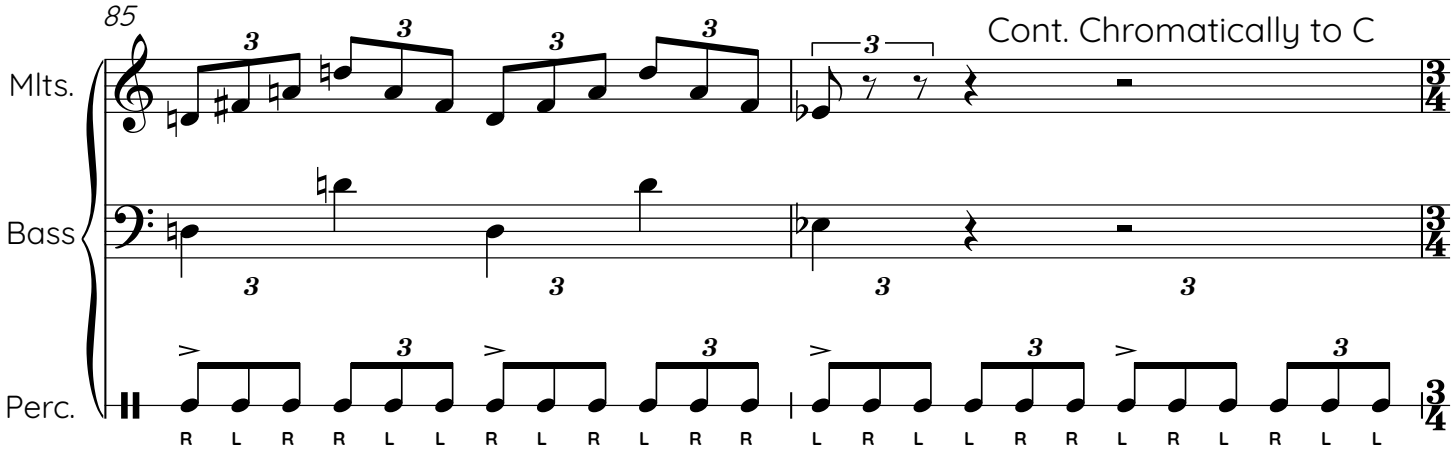

80
Mlts.
Bass
Perc.
R B L R B L R R L L R R L L R B L R B L R R L L R R L L R

Arpeggios

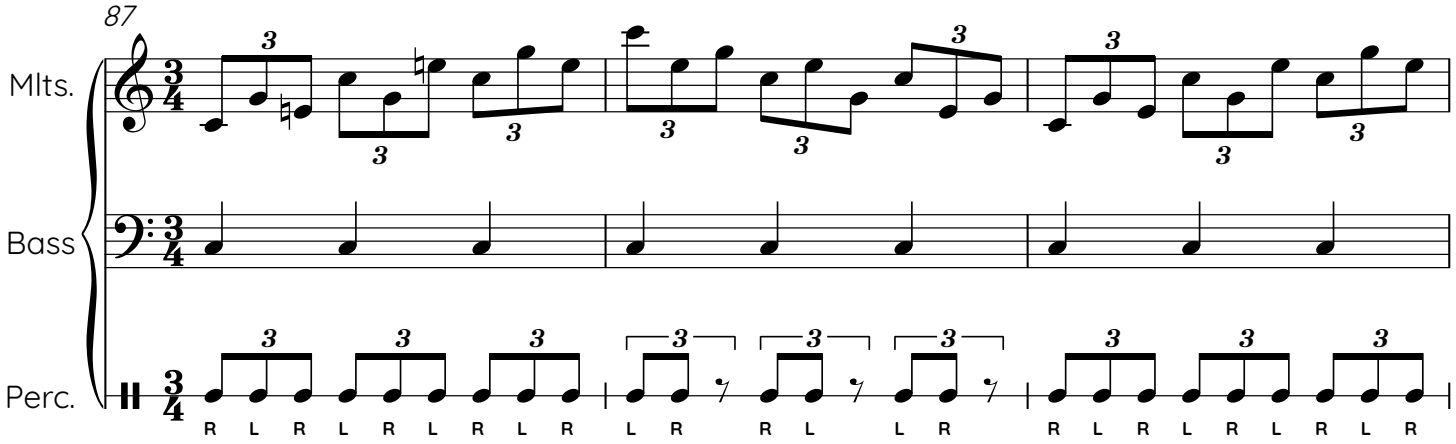
IMPACT Percussion 2026

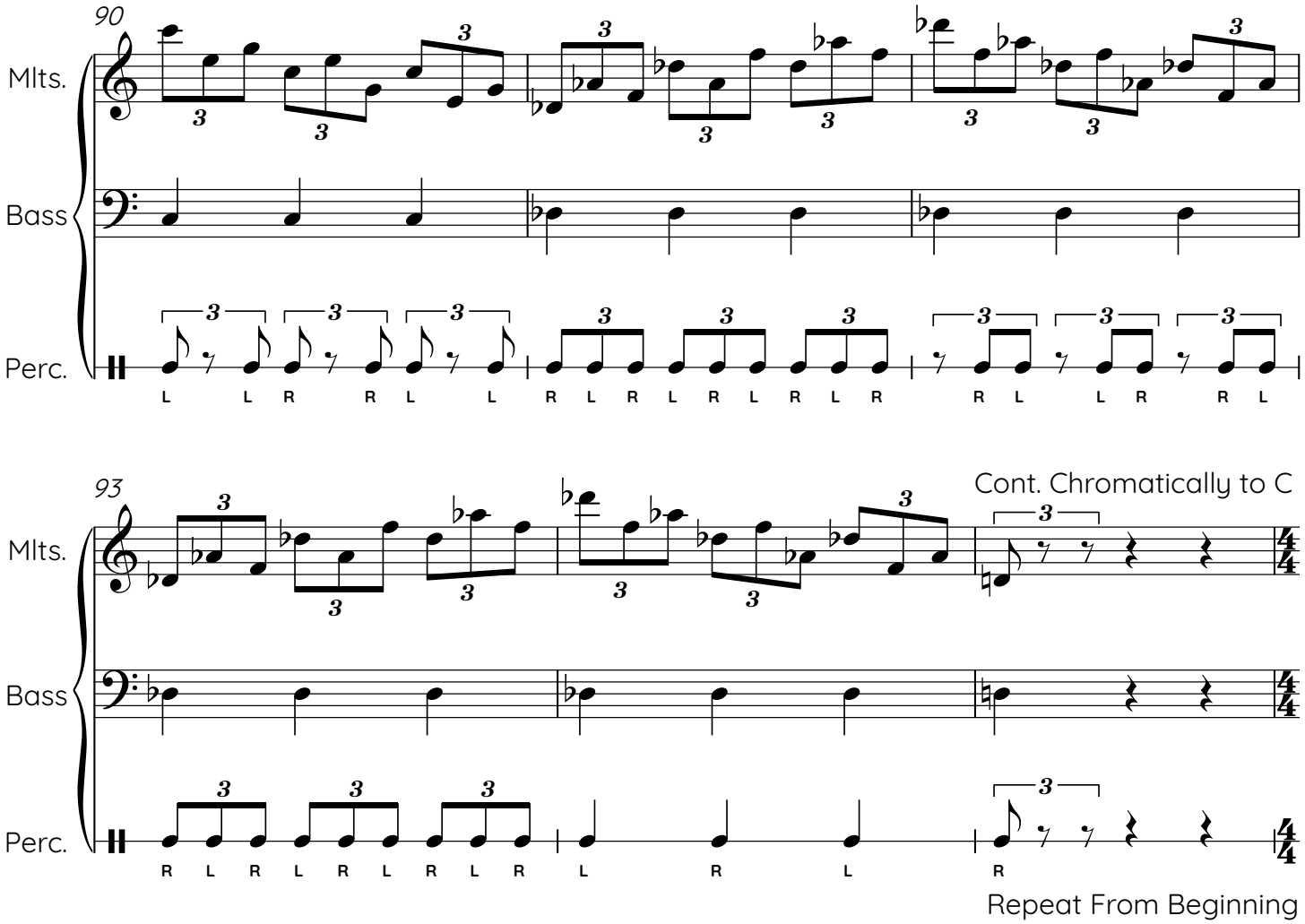
Variation 1 - Note we will apply Major, minor, and seventh chords





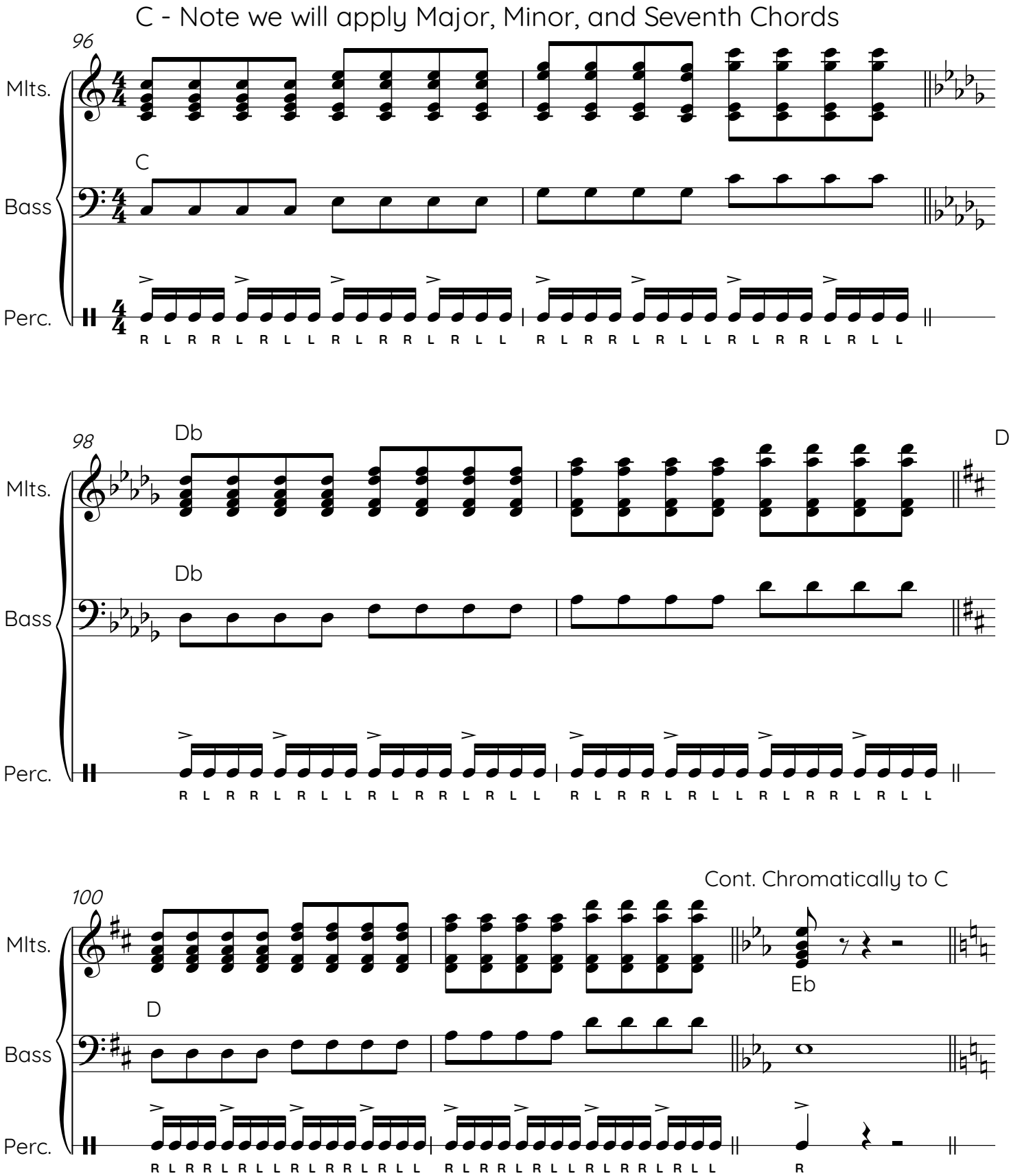
Variation 2 -Note we will apply Major, minor, and seventh chords




90
Mlts.
Bass
Perc.
L L R R L L R L R L R L R L R L R L
93
Mlts.
Bass
Perc.
R L R L R L R L R L R L
Cont. Chromatically to C
Repeat From Beginning

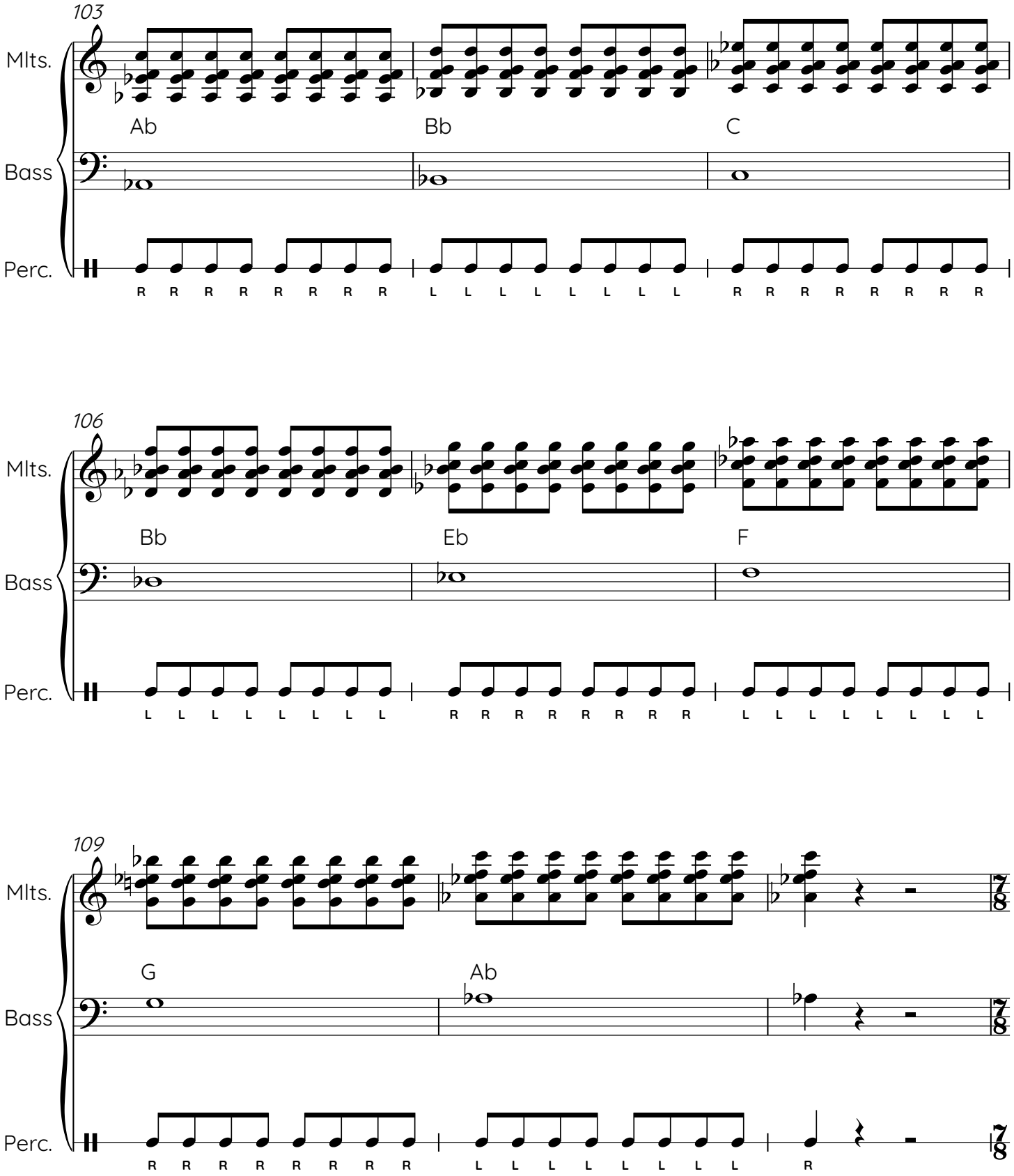
Vertical Strokes

IMPACT Percussion 2026



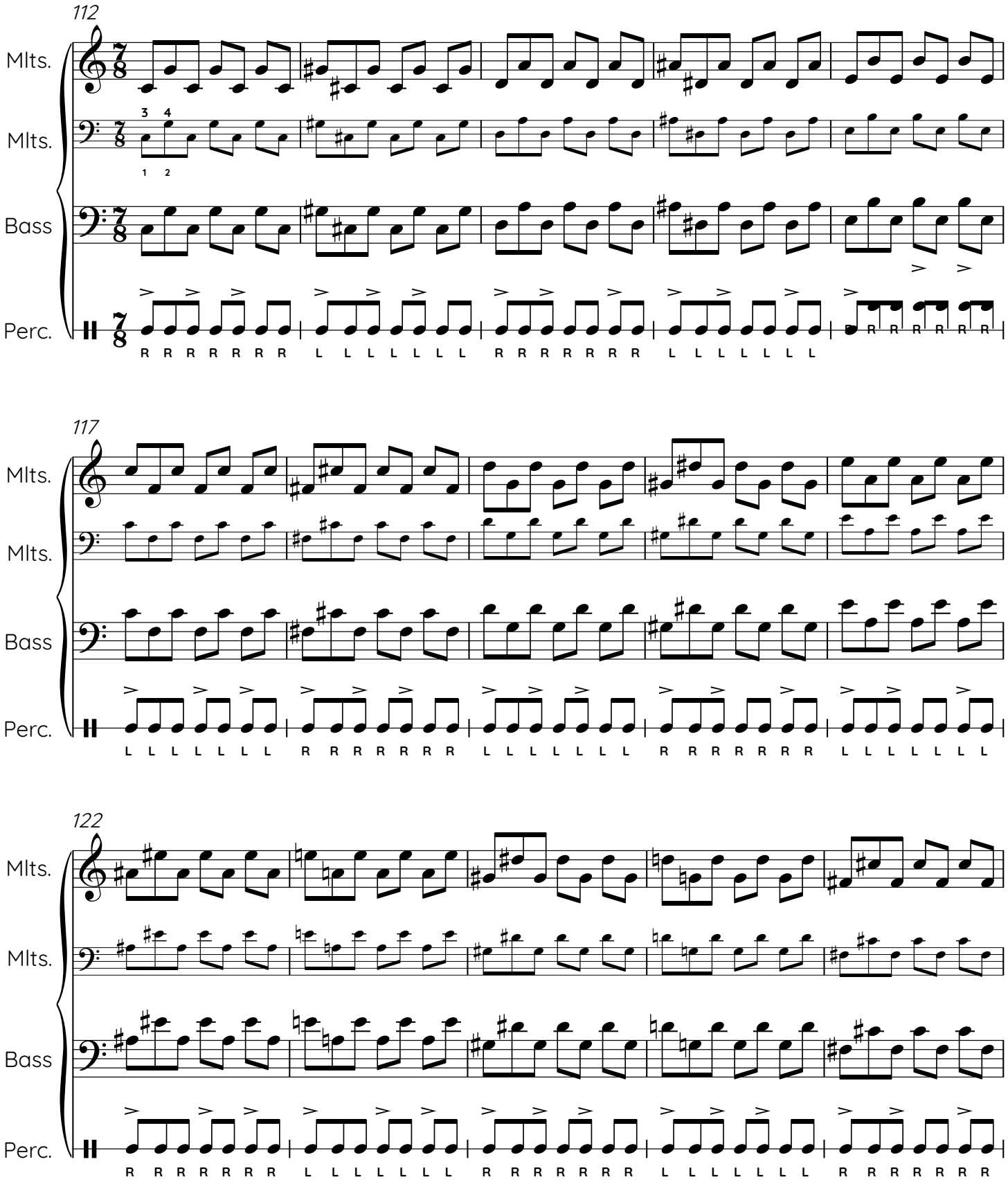
Sket

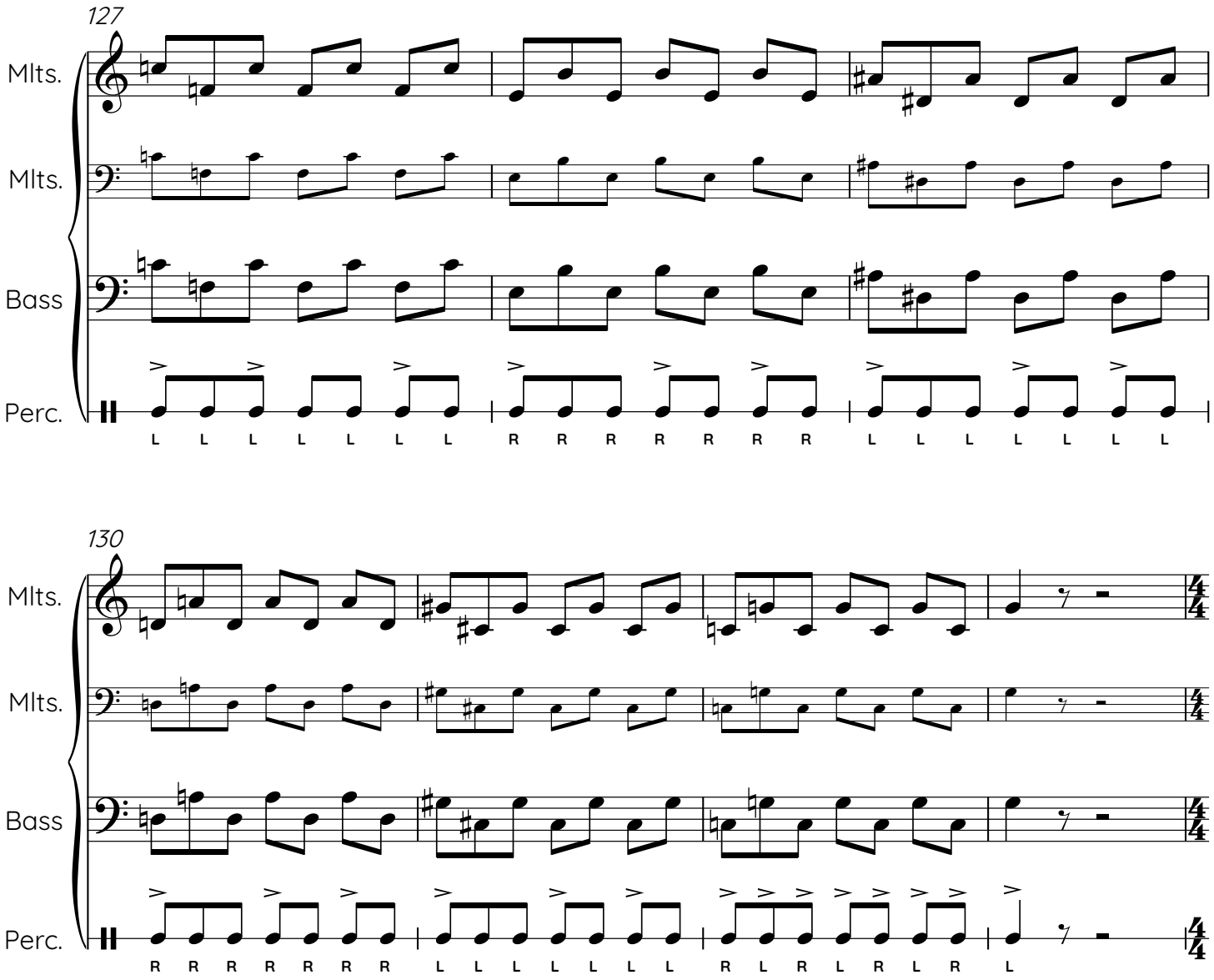
IMPACT Percussion 2026



7/8 Alternating

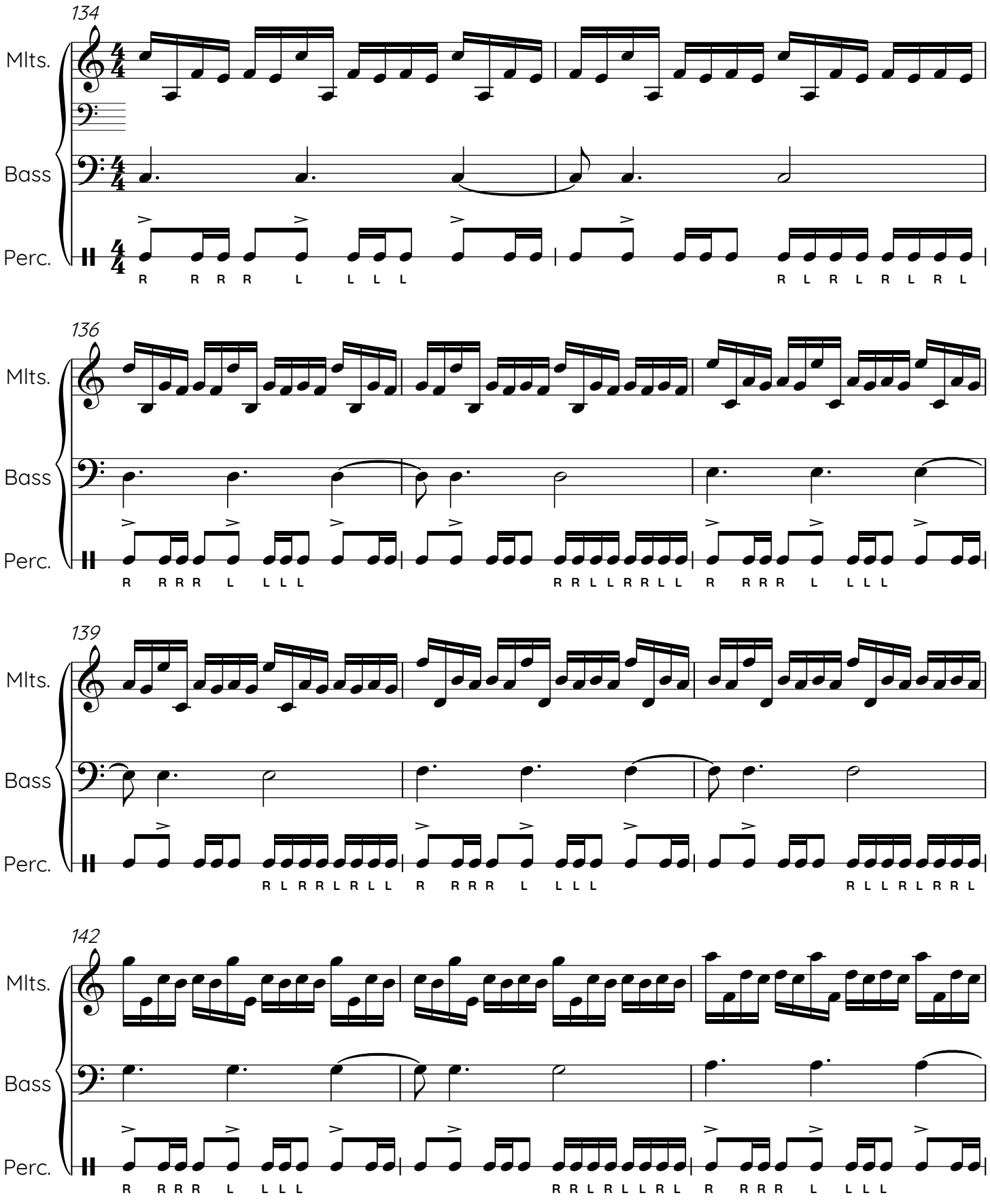
IMPACT Percussion 2026

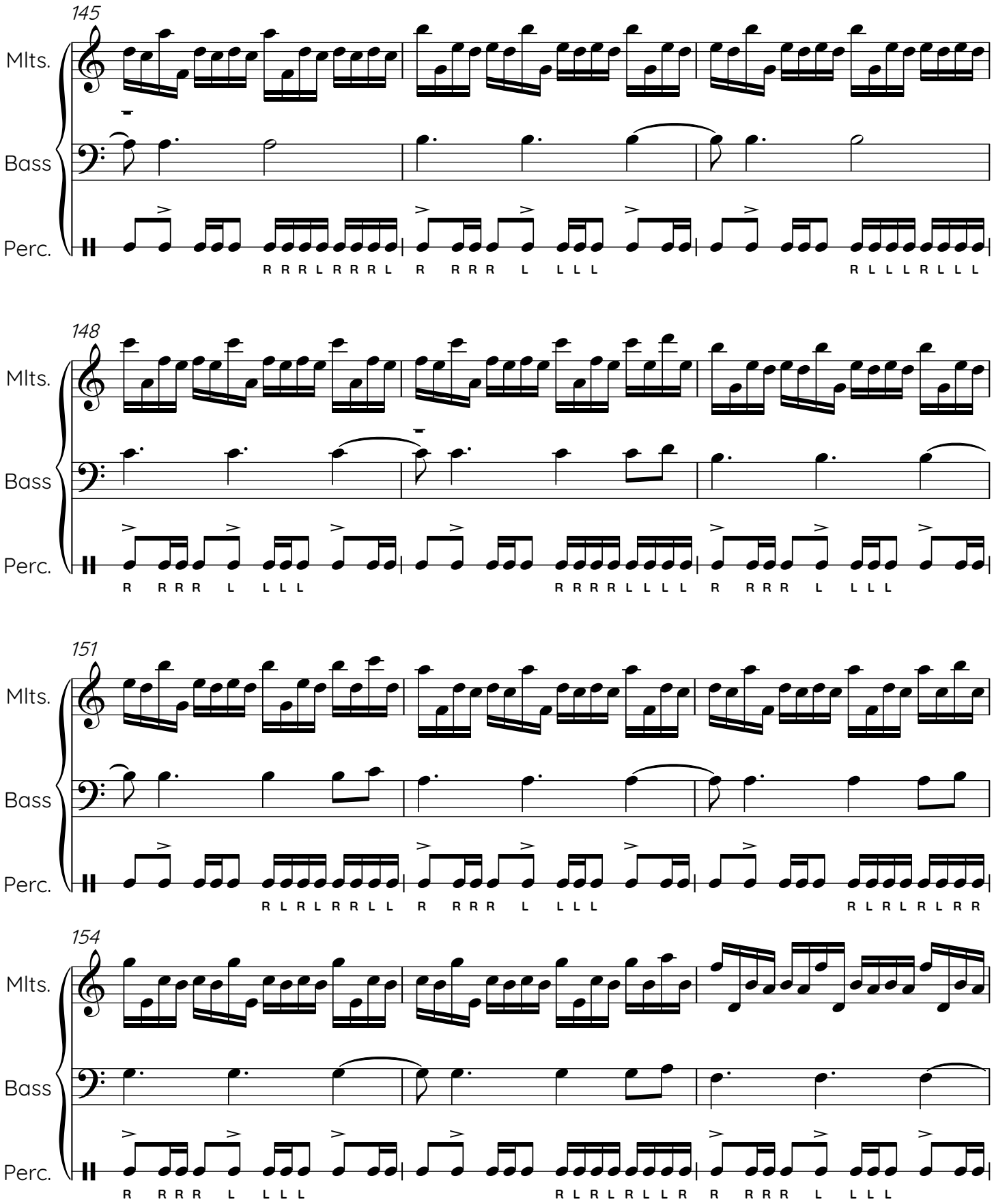


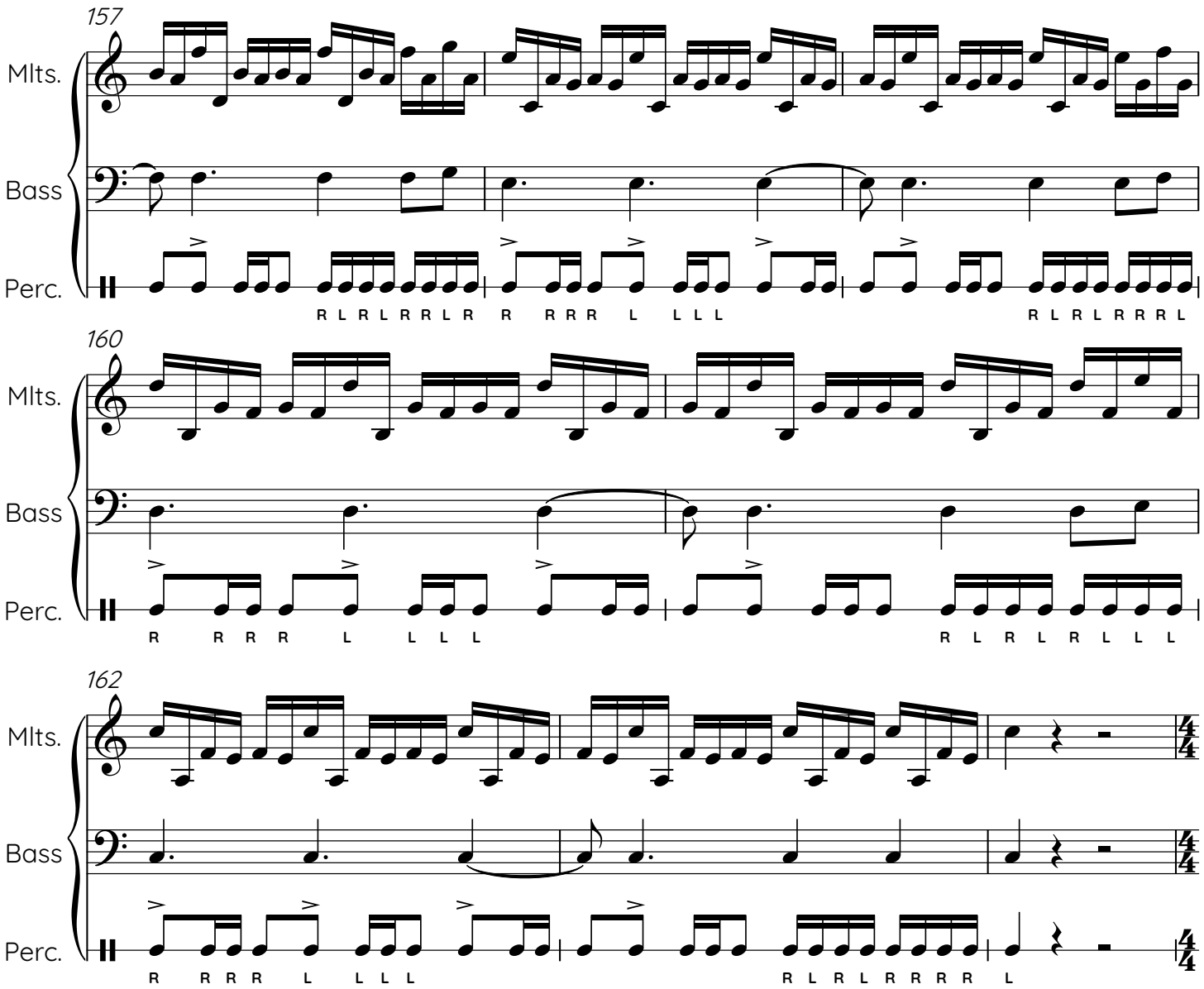

127
Mlts.
Mlts.
Bass
Perc.
L L L L L L L R R R R R R R L L L L L L L
130
Mlts.
Mlts.
Bass
Perc.
R R R R R R R L L L L L L L R L R L R L R L

Alternating Strokes

IMPACT Percussion 2026

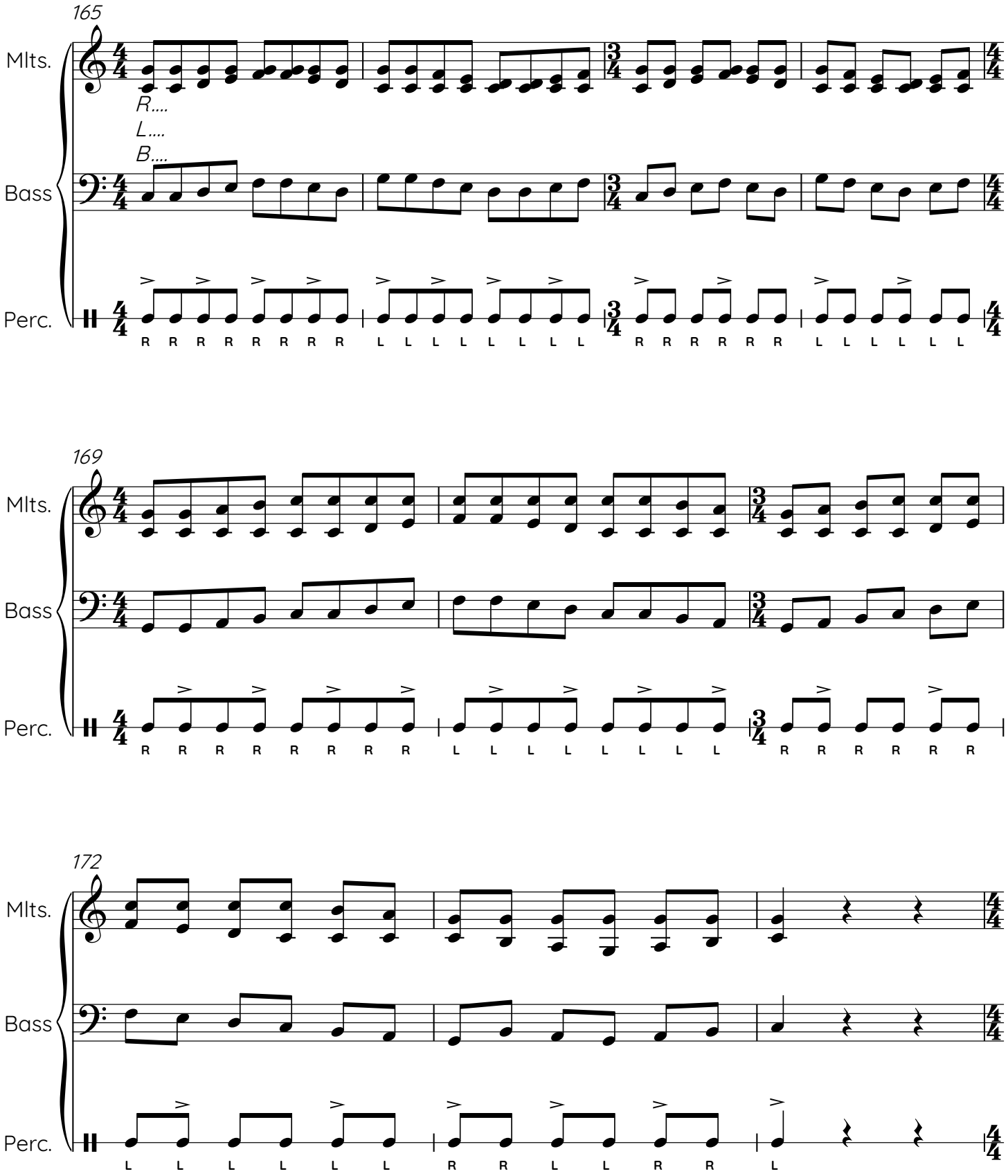



145
Mlts.
Bass
Perc.
R R R L R R R L R R R L L L L R L L L R L L L
148
Mlts.
Bass
Perc.
R R R R L L L L R R R R L L L L R R R R L L L L
151
Mlts.
Bass
Perc.
R L R L R R L L R R R R L L L L R L R L R L R R
154
Mlts.
Bass
Perc.
R R R R L L L L R L R L R L L R R R R R L L L L


157
Mlts.
Bass
Perc.
R L R L R R L R R R R R L L L L R L R L R R R L
160
Mlts.
Bass
Perc.
R R R R L L L L R L R L R L L L
162
Mlts.
Bass
Perc.
R R R R L L L L R L R L R R R R L

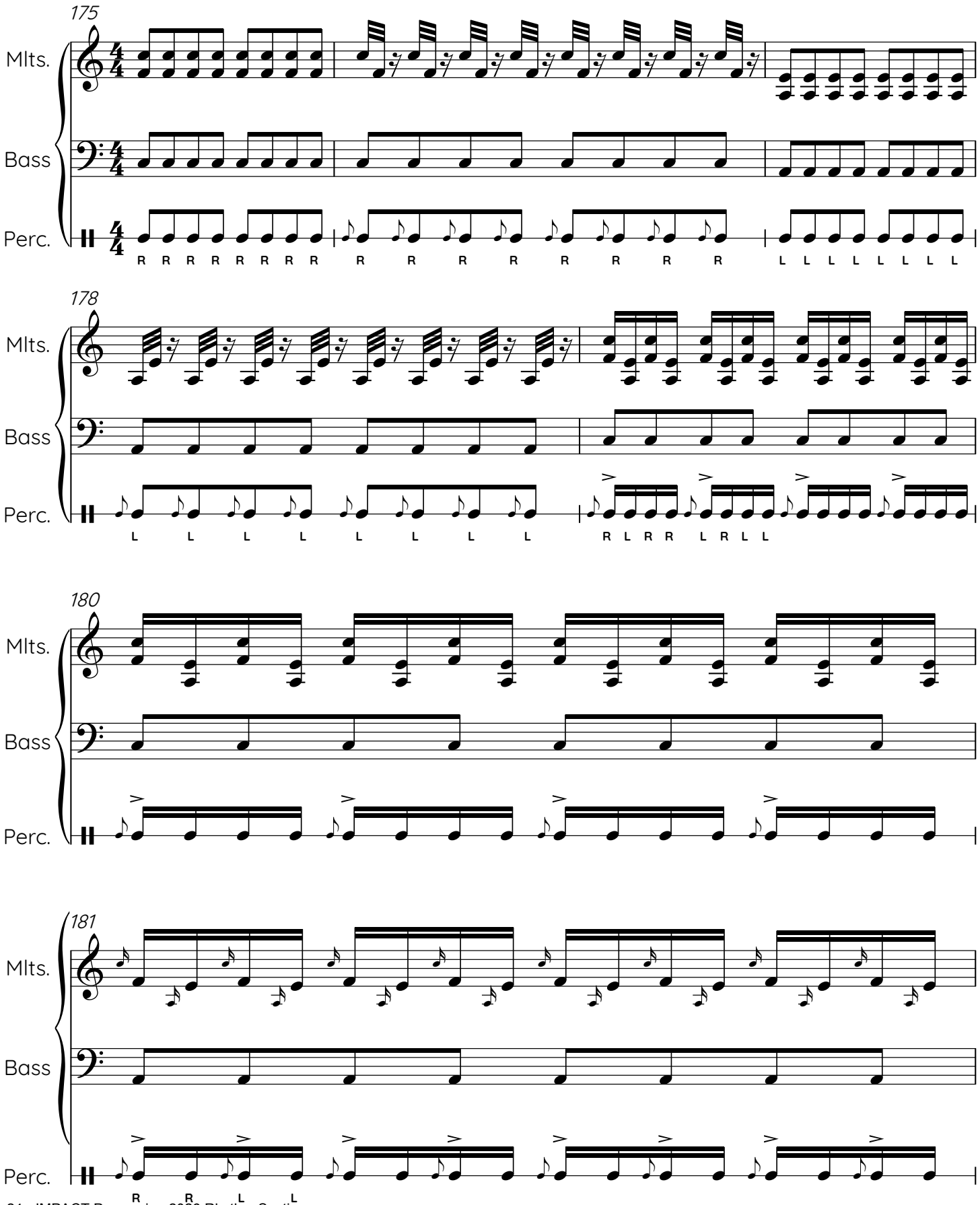
D.V.I.S.

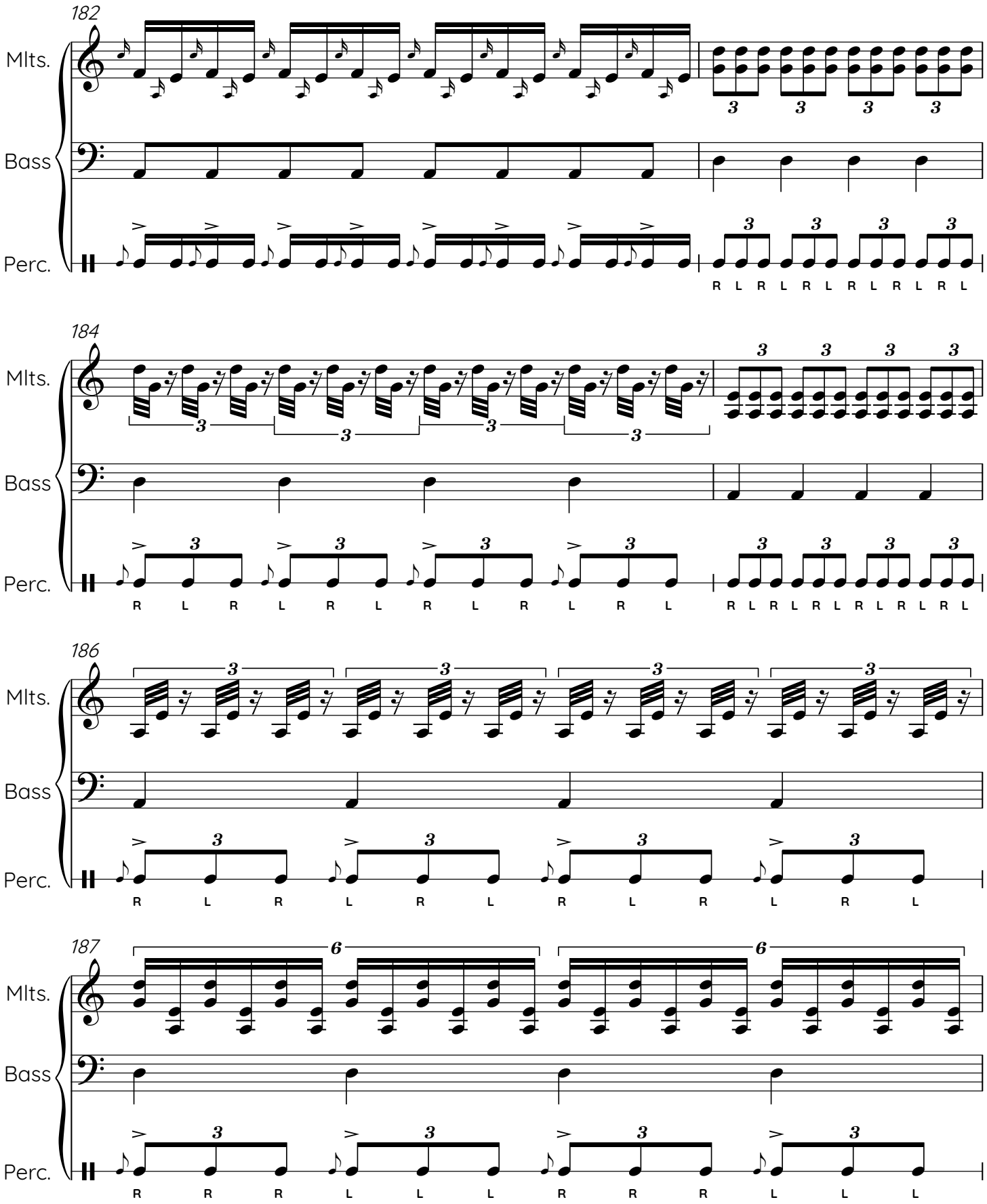
IMPACT Percussion 2026

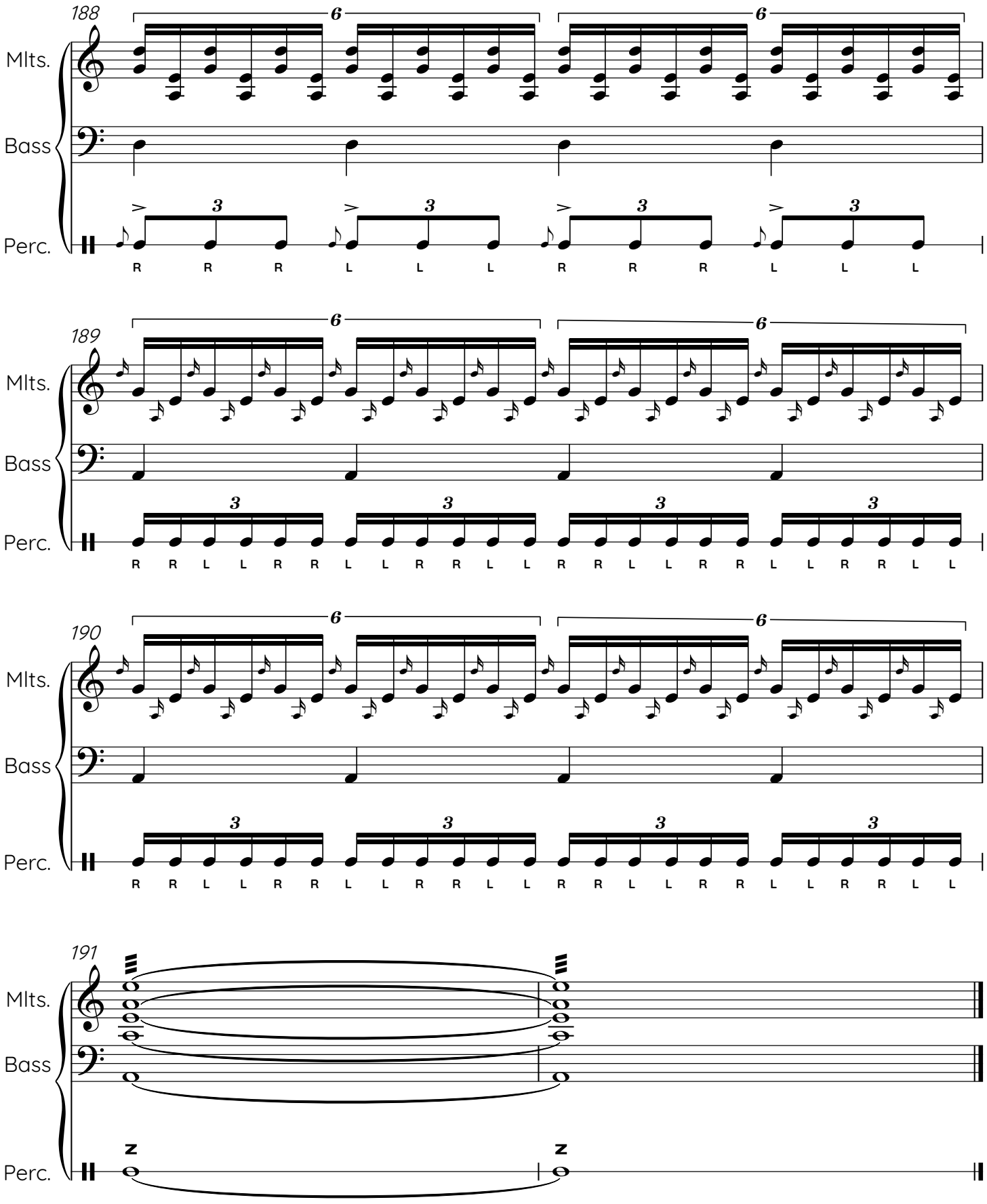


Laterals

IMPACT Percussion 2026



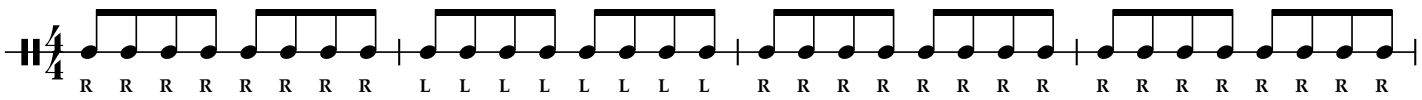

182
Mlts.
Bass
Perc.
R L R L R L R L R L R L
184
Mlts.
Bass
Perc.
R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L
186
Mlts.
Bass
Perc.
R L R L R L R L R L R L
187
Mlts.
Bass
Perc.
R R R L L L R R R L L L


188
Mlts.
Bass
Perc.
6
3
R R R L L L R R R L L L
189
Mlts.
Bass
Perc.
6
3
R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L
190
Mlts.
Bass
Perc.
6
3
R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L
191
Mlts.
Bass
Perc.
z

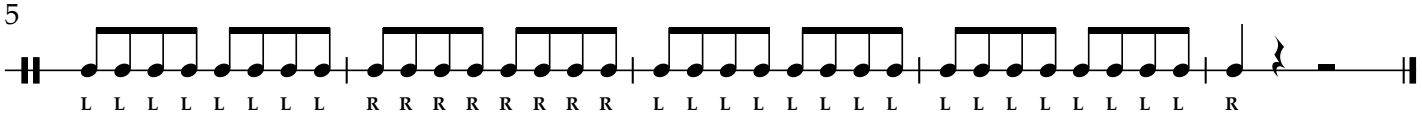
Rack Percussion Variations

Players will be given rudiments to apply to exercises with matching time signatures.

8 8 16

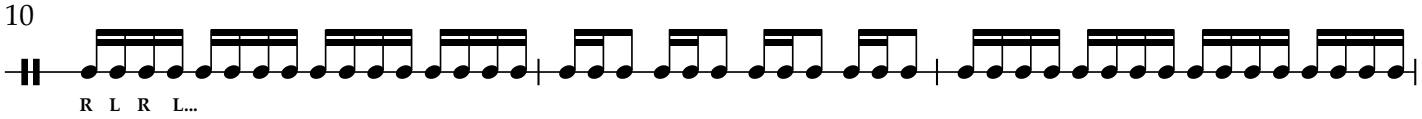


5



16th Note Timing

10



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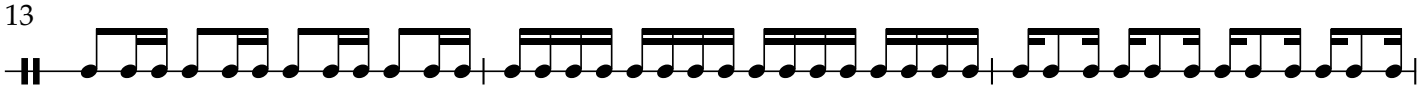

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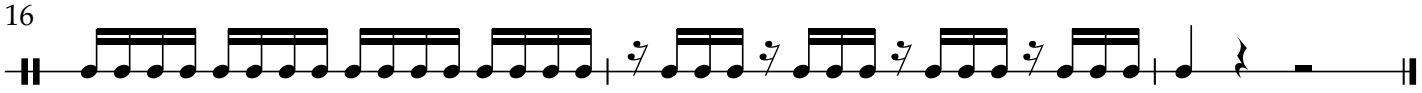

Accent Tap

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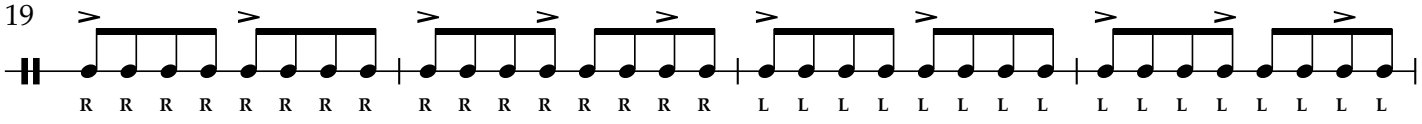

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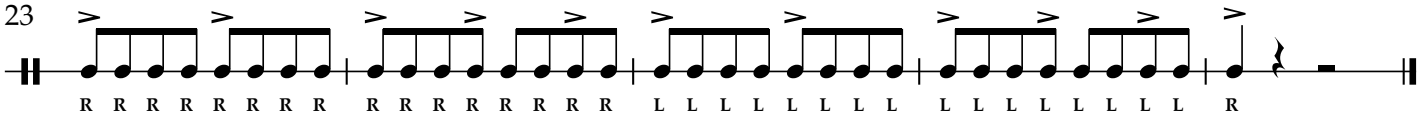


Double Beat

28

R L R L

32

R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L

35

R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R

Chicken and a Roll

39

R L R L...

42

16th Note Grid

45

48

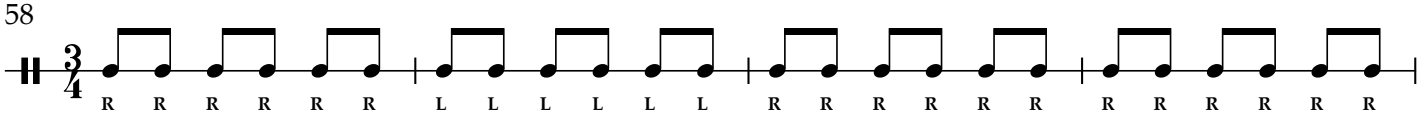
51

54

56

6 6 12

58



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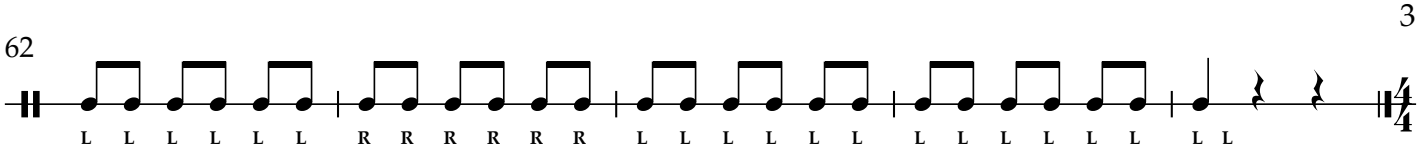

Triplet Timing

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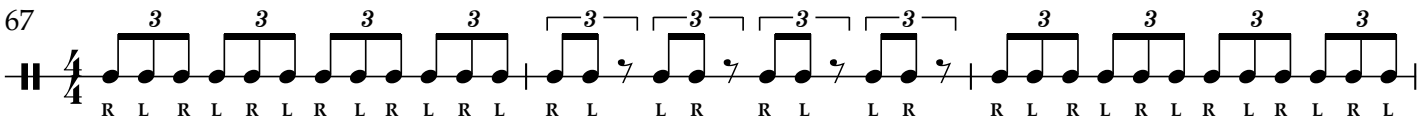

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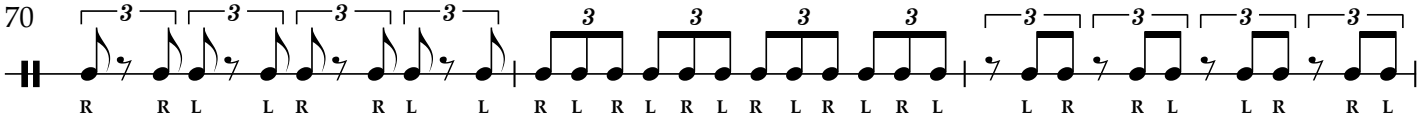

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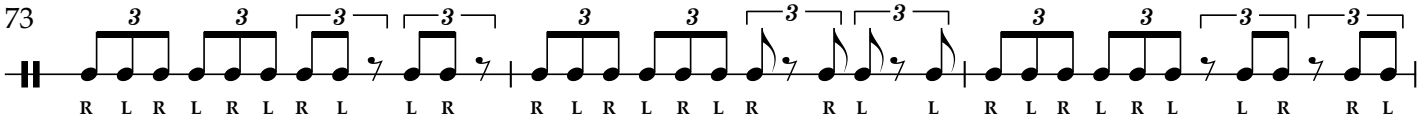

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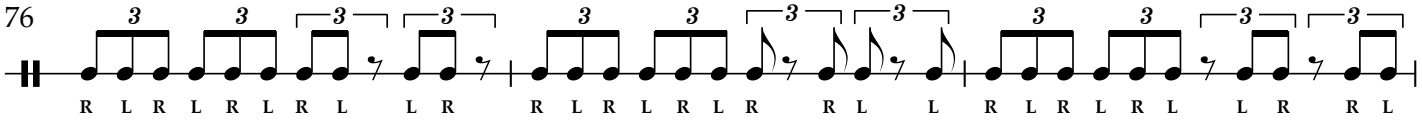

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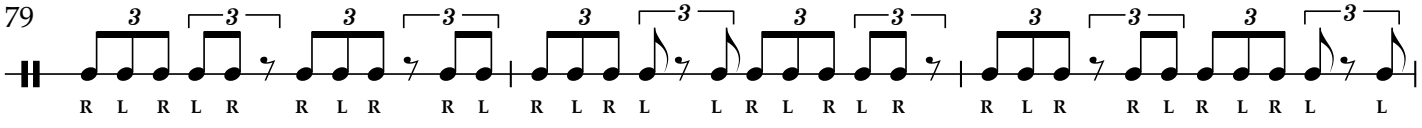

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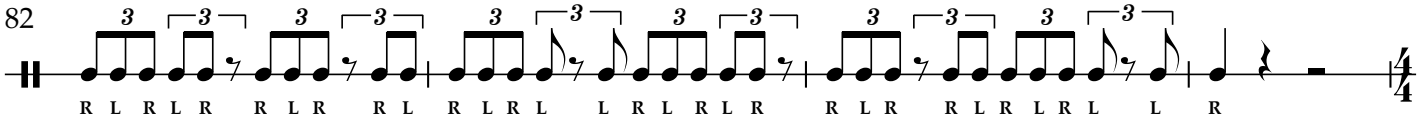
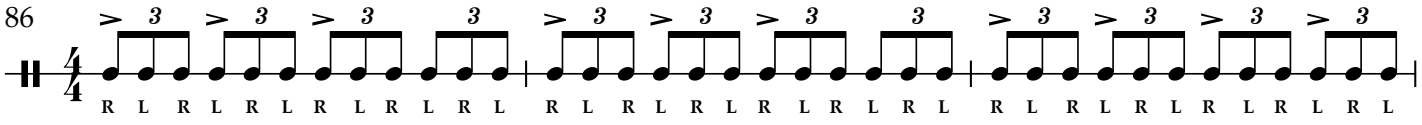


Three Camps

Camp 1

86



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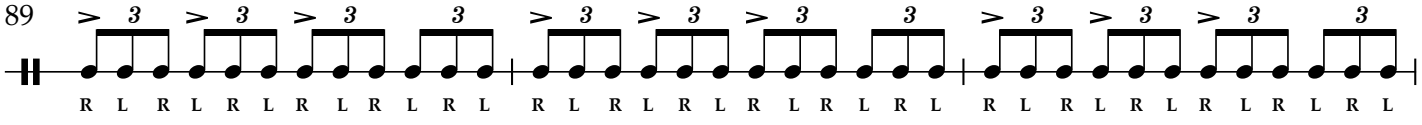

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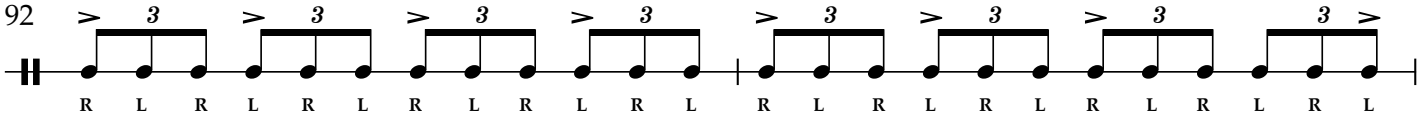
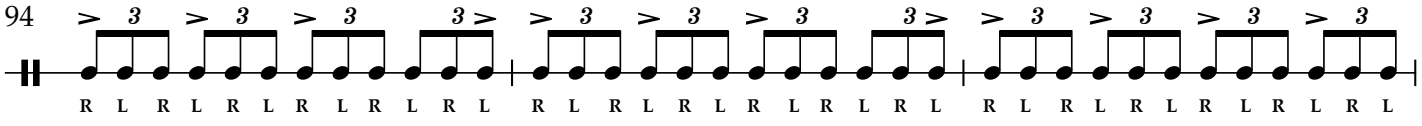


Camp 2

94



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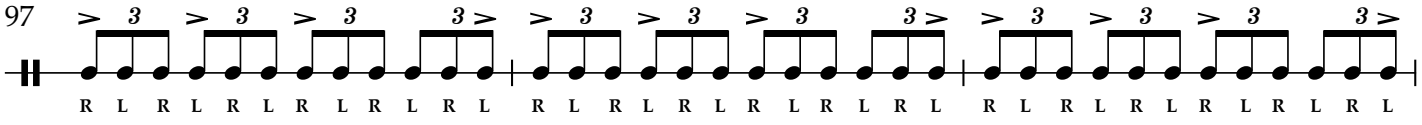

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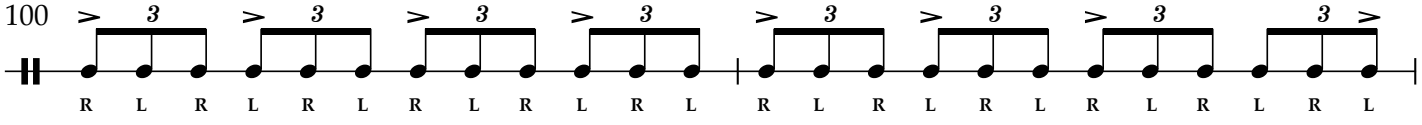
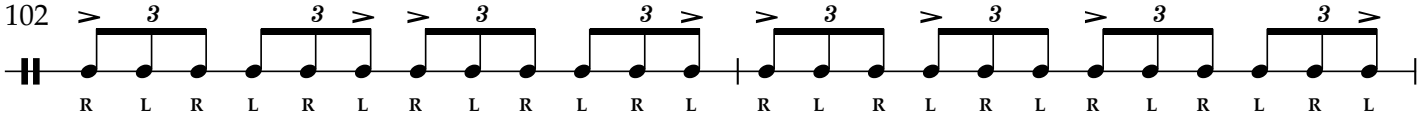


Camp 3

102



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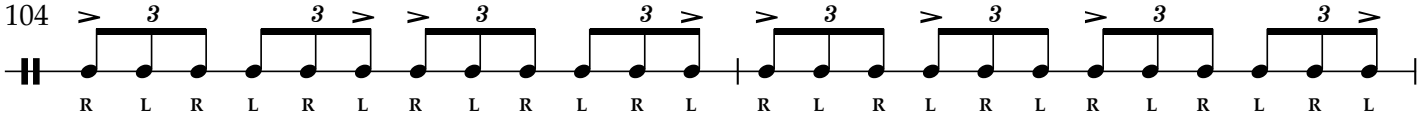

Camp 2

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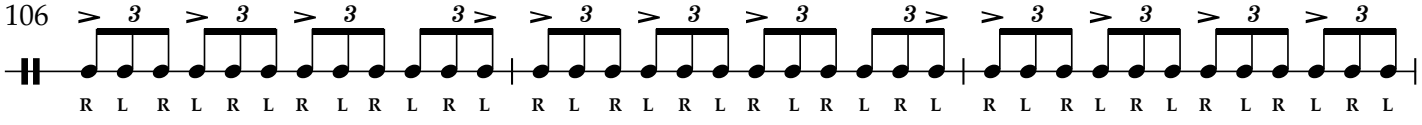

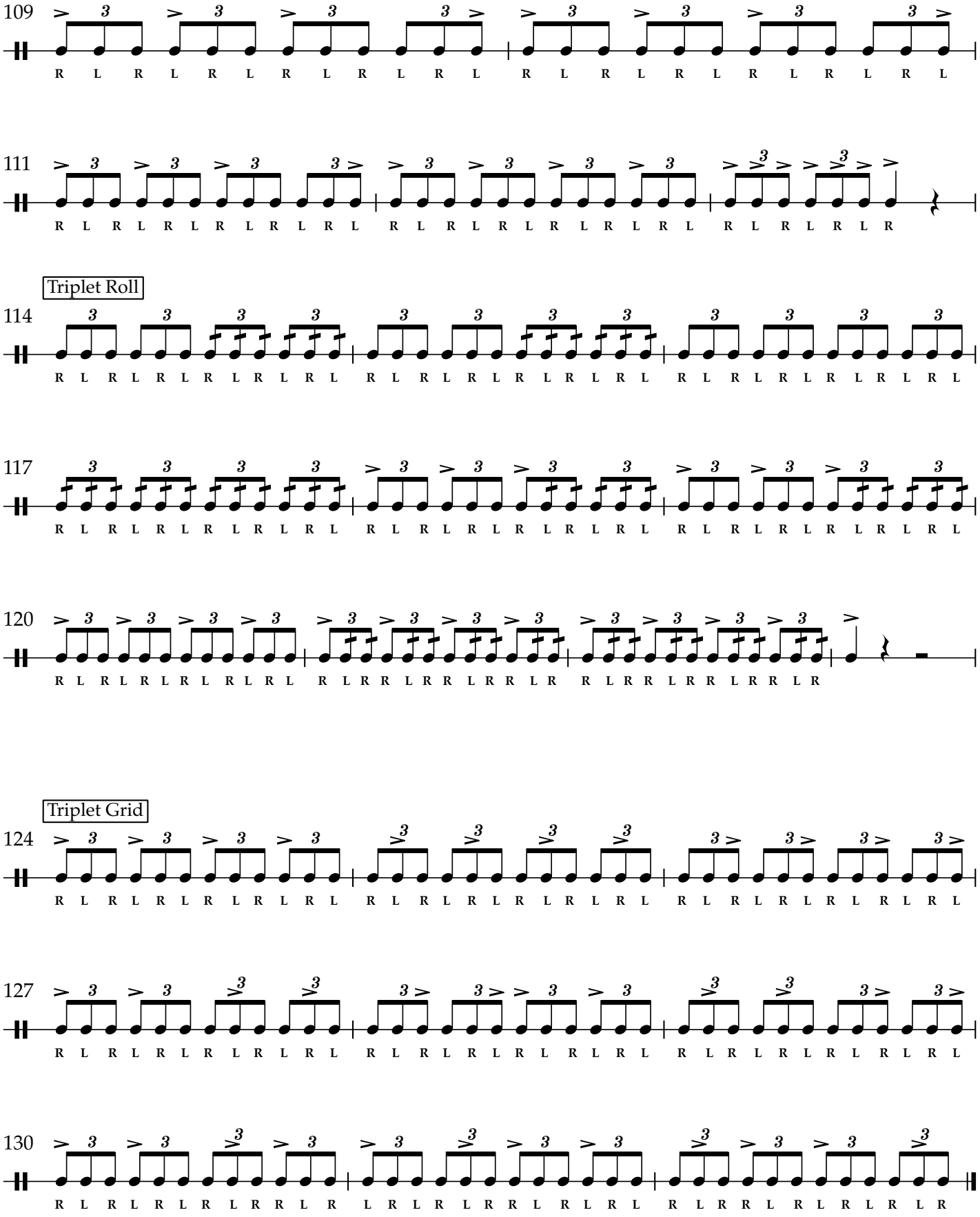
109
111
Triplet Roll
114
117
120
Triplet Grid
124
127
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