

Basic Beats

by Steve Houghton

The following is a collection of basic drumset beats that cover the three main areas of popular music, jazz, rock, and Latin. There are several things to remember when practicing these or any grooves for that matter.

Before you set out to learn a new pattern or groove you must start to build a concept for the music, this will help you understand all of the elements of the style, not just the drum part. I can't stress enough how important listening is. I like to say that drumming is 50% technique and 50% concept and that concept comes primarily from listening to players live or on recordings. Remember, you play like what you listen to.

Here are a few more things to consider.....

1. Keep solid time

- This simply means to pay attention to your time keeping.
- Practice with a drum machine or metronome
- Counting out loud while learning the new beats will help a lot.

2. Make it feel good

- This is really a matter of listening to what is going on around you and fitting in musically. Especially listen to the bass player.
- Balance..... the balance between limbs can really affect the feel, for example, if the hi-hat is too loud in a rock groove or the bass drum too loud in a Latin groove, it can sound (feel) very uncomfortable, even if the time is steady. Feel has to be realized, mostly through listening to the masters of all the different styles.

3. Play with energy and purpose

- It is very common when learning a groove or beat to play it kind of timidly. This, of course, won't work because the drummer is the backbone of any group, so play with some spirit and enthusiasm.

4. Have Fun

- This is actually the most important element of music. If you aren't having fun, forget it because the music will always suffer.

Ride Cym (HH w/rod)
Snare Tom
S. D.
B. D.
HH w/foot

Crossstick

Jazz

Jazz Ride Beat

R. C.

Basic Jazz Beat

R. C.

Jazz Beat / SD Improv.

R. C.

Simile