THE ART OF MODERN JAZZ DRUMMING

JACK DE JOHNETTE

CHARLIE PERRY

D.C. PUBLICATION

The special edition of **The Art of Modern Jazz Drumming** is a composite of three books:

BOOK I:

The concepts, principles, elements, and techniques of modern jazz and allied forms of drumming (jazz-rock, fusion) some of which are applicable to rock.

BOOK II:

The triplet-eighth rhythmic-tonal patterns used in jazz, played between the two hands and two feet, in a moderate through moderate-fast tempo.

BOOK III:

The four-way independent coordination in playing the rhythmic-tonal punctuatoins and figures in jazz in moderate, moderate-fast, and fast tempos.

JACK DE JOHNETTE

Much has already been said in this book about Jack De Johnette's masterful drumming. Let it suffice, therefore, to say that he is a member of that select few whose artistry gives direction to the many.

Jack has performed both as a sideman and as a leader, on records and live, with many of the very best jazz and fusion musicians. Here are but some of the names: Herbie Hancock, John Coltrane, Chick Corea, George Benson, Stan Getz, John Abercrombie, Joe Farrell, Charles Lloyd, McCoy Tyner, Bill Evans, Dave Holland, Freddie Hubbard, Jackie McLean, and Miles Davis.

Jack has always rated high in the various music polls. But in 1980 he won the Down Beat Readers Poll as the #1 drummer, and his album *Jack De Johnette Special Edition* (ECM records) was choosen as the best jazz album of the year.

CHARLIE PERRY

Charlie Perry is an internationally noted author and teacher of modern-drumming methodology. Several of his books, in fact, have become classics among method books.

His articles have appeared in prestigious trade publications, such as *Percussion Discussion* (a publication of the Percussive Arts Society) and the *International Musician* (the official journal of the AF of M) in which he wrote a column entitled Modern Drumming. Presently, he writes for *Modern Drummer*—the #1 drummers' magazine—and is a member of its advisory board.

Many students and professional drummers who have studied with or consulted Charlie in a professional capacity have performed with the leading names in music, such as Dizzy Gillispie, Thelonious Monk, Grateful Dead, Henry Mancini, and Peter Nero, to name a few, in addition to making major recordings as studio musicians.

Charlie has performed with some of the finest jazz musicians and groups: Benny Goodman, Stan Kenton, Stan Getz, Bud Powell, Billy Mitchel, Bud Johnson, John LaPorta, and Oliver Nelson, among others.

Charlie has conducted seminars at some of the major universities throughout the United States. He is presently on the faculty of Five Towns College on Long Island, New York.

HOW THIS BOOK CAME AB

Our friendship began some years ago when we met during an interview for *Percussion Discussion* (a publication of the M. Hohner Company then distributor for Sonor Drums). Since that time we have worked together intermittently, doing seminars and team teaching and have benefited from our continual exchange of ideas and concepts.

A book was inevitable because the material we put together for instructional purposes served our needs better than anything already on the market. Moreover, it was diversified and voluminous enough to serve as the basis for several books. (This book, in fact, consists of three segments, each of which can stand on its own as an independent work.)

In our opinion, most essential to the jazz form of drumming, besides timing, is the interplay between the drummer and the other musicians. Yet instructional literature does not name specifically the what, when, where, why, and how of such interplay, nor does it standardize the terminology, which would make it more informative and instructional.

It is an acknowledged fact, however, that in the learning process, precise descriptive language has positive reinforcement value and can conjure up the most useful imagery. As stated in *Psychology*, "As our mental image becomes more precise, we are better able to select muscle movements which will achieve our goals quickly, efficiently, and accurately." It is imperative, therefore, that the teacher, whether on a one-to-one basis, or in front of a class, use the most specific, precise language and terminology when explaining and demonstrating the principles and techniques of improvisation and predetermined interaction! We hope that this book, to some extent serves our intended purpose.

Charlie Perry and Jack De Johnette.

*Psychology (third edition), by Wilbert James Mc Keachie (Professor of Psychology, University of Michigan), Charlotte Lackner Doyle (Professor of Psychology, Sarah Lawrence College), and Mary Margaret Moffett (Teaching Fellow, University of Michigan). Addision-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc. Reading, Mass., page 284.

BOOK I
ABOUT THIS BOOK

This book deals with the principles, techniques, rhythms, and concepts of progressive jazz and allied forms of drumming,* the way the individual parts function as a unit, and the way this collective unit relates to and interacts with the musical contributions of the other instrumentalists.

Though these elements of progressive jazz drumming, etc., may be viewed separately from one another for the purpose of analysis, eventually they must be synthesized and applied as a whole—the interrelated parts and the way in which they form the whole. And, most important, the parts and the whole must be permeated with *that* element which is at the core of jazz—"time."

No one book of moderate length, of course, can deal in depth with every aspect of any one subject. There are simply too many variables involved. Moreover, the printed word in itself cannot do justice to musical performance. The written word, therefore, must be correlated with the sound, feeling, spirit, and principles of the music itself. Both recorded and live performance must be studied and assimilated.

*(Some of the rhythmic patterns, the 3+3+2's and like material, are not only applicable to other forms of music (fusion, rock, etc.) but, in fact, are central to them—for instance, John Abercrombie's *Timeless,* ECM 1047, and *Gateway,* ECM 1061. Also, in *The Allman Brothers Band, Brothers and Sisters,* CPN 0111, tune "Jessica," listen to the rhythmic phrasing on the keyboard, and to the guitar solos. The same rhythmic mode can be heard in the music of The Grateful Dead.)

Some of the material in this book is similar to or the same as material in other books and articles. This is inevitable when many people write on the same subject and draw from the same sources, such as recorded performances, live performances, and interviews. Some such books are listed here:

The Compleat Jazz Drummer, by Joel Rothman, JR Publications. This excellent book is a compilation of material from other method books by Rothman. It deals extensively with coordinated independence, the interplay between hands and feet, and meter-within-meter figures and phrases.

Poly-Cymbal Time, by Peter Magadini, Briko Publishers, deals with meter-within-meter cymbal rhythms, etc.

4-Way Coordination, by Marvin Dahlgren and Elliot Fine, Belwin-Mills publisher. "Studies for playing three-beat ideas in four-four time," see pages 48, 49, and 50.

Professional Drum Studies for Dance, Radio and Stage, by George Wettling and Brad Spinney, published by Capitol Songs, Inc. Although this book was copyrighted in 1946, it was the first, to our knowledge, to deal with three-beat rhythmic patterns in four-four time. See pages 24 through 27.

The Book of Jazz, by Leonard Feather, published in 1957 by Horizon. See page 123, Chapter 15, entitled "The Drums." Some of the items discussed in this section are as follows: polyrhythms, brushes, the hi-hat, tuning, top-cymbal beat, rhythmic effects, and "transferring the essence of the rhythmic beat from the bass drum to the top cymbal, in an effort to escape from the heavy pounding of an obviously stated four-to-the bar rhythm." See page 119, Chapter 14, "The Bass." Here, the bass player and the drummer in the rhythm section are discussed. Also see chapter 22 for the "The Anatomy of Improvisation."

Jazz, It's Evolution and Essence, by Andre Hodier, Grove Press, copyright 1956. See page 219 classical vs. modern rhythm section, polyrhythms; page 220, using the cymbal to express the four beats (the time and pulse), rhythmic counterpoint, listening to the soloist and interacting; page 218, cymbal rhythms by which the regular beat is maintained; page 210, concept of one pulse stated within the framework of another and different pulse; and page 217, rhythmic counterpoint on the big cymbal.

The Art of Jazz (Essays on the Nature and Development of Jazz), edited by Martin T. Williams, Grove Press, Inc., Copyright 1950 by Oxford University Press, Inc.). The essays range from the 1930s through the '50s and offer an examination of the evolution of jazz music, jazz musicians, jazz styles, and the experimentation that took place over the years. The essays are of particular interest to aspiring jazz drummers because of the analysis of jazz rhythm sections and jazz drumming styles, for instance, the period in which the emphasis on generating time evolved from the bass drum to the top cymbals ("Bebop," by Ross Russell, published in 1948-49 in *The Record Changers* magazine), jazz rhythm sections, and more.

The New Rhythm Book, by Don Ellis, published by Ellis Music Enterprises, 5436 Auckland Ave., North Hollywood, California 91601. Also, the album *Don Ellis, New Rhythms*, EME records, ES—1 stereo.

In Defense of BeBop, (16 page pamphlet) by Frank Foster, published by Frank Foster Music, Inc., 1235 Post Road, Scarsdale, N.Y. 10583. Foster, a major-league jazz tenor saxophonist, composer-arranger, offers a personal, inside view of BeBop. His pamphlet is a valuable and welcomed contribution to contemporary jazz literature.

The Art of Modern Jazz Drumming is geared to the advanced student, not the beginner. It can, however, be used by the teacher with intermediate students. And parts of it can even be used with elementary students. Where, how, and with whom it is used depends largely upon the skill and working knowledge of the instructor in teaching the jazz form of drumming.

—The Importance of Listening—

As can be gathered from the written examples taken from recordings, progressive jazz drumming does not offer an easily discernible audio-picture of the essential elements and principles to the uninitated ear and mind. Yet to develop a working model of this drumming style, it is absolutely necessary for the student to comprehend the essential parts in a rational order of connection and dependence, and to recognize the inherent principles at work.

Since the written part by itself is insufficient for this purpose, the principles, techniques, rhythmic-tonal patterns and sequences, etc., must be correlated with recorded or live performances, preferably both, of progressive jazz. The student *must* learn to listen totally and acutely, to hear clearly and specifically *what* the progressive jazz drummer does in performance. Then, by correlating the performance with the instructional material he will begin to learn what the "what" consists of, the "why" of it all, and the "how" of application—that is, the way the recorded or live drummer relates to and interacts with the musical contributions of the other musicians; the way he applies the principles and techniques of drums-band interaction and improvisation.

Publisher's Note:
Charlie Perry's writings on jazz drumming are drawn from his experience of many years with jazz bands large and small, listening to every kind of jazz, studying the work of the major jazz drummers (on recordings and live), in-depth discussions about jazz and jazz drumming with many of the finest jazz musicians, years of teaching the jazz form of drumming, and reading books and essays on jazz and jazz drumming. What he uses in his teaching and writing, however, he first confirms through personal experience.

Jack De Johnette's musical knowledge and writing contributions are drawn from his years of extensive experience as a major performer, composer, and bandleader with the elite musicians and groups of this era.

ABOUT THE "TERMS."

About the terms modern, progressive, and avant-garde jazz and jazz drumming, which are often used interchangeably in this book:

When referring to modern, progressive, and avant-garde jazz or jazz drumming, we mean the most recent period of development in jazz as contrasted with earlier periods.

When we speak of progressive or avant-garde jazz drummers, we mean those drummer-musicians whose work embodies ideas, treatment, or principles which deviate strikingly from the traditions of past periods and who are regarded as preeminent in the invention and application of new and appropriate techniques, approaches, and principles in jazz drumming.

ELEMENTS OF CONTEMPORARY JAZZ DRUMMING

TIME: The "time" generated and established by the drummer through the cymbal rhythm and other rhythms. The timing involved in the playing of rhythmic punctuations, figures and phrases around the drums.

IMPROVISATION—DRUMS-BAND INTERACTION: Principles and techniques. The interrelated action of drums, rhythm section, soloist and ensemble; the musical interaction between members of the group.

INTERACTION OF THE PARTS: The collective action of the hands and feet as applied to the drum set; the way these individual parts relate to and interact with each other both in preconceived and improvised segments of the music.

COORDINATION: Independent and interdependent coordination of the hands and feet as applied to the drum set.

INTENSITY (tension & relaxation): The degrees of tension in the playing of time, rhythmic punctuations, figures and phrases. Muscular tension control; the degrees of tension in playing soft, light, loud, heavy. Intensity of touch.

DYNAMICS & TONE: Volume control. Accent variations. Properties of tone (duration-pitch-intensity-timbre) of the various playing areas of the drums and cymbals.

TECHNIQUE (the mechanical skill which is the foundation of the mastery of a musical instrument): Sticking technique and drum-set technique. Physical motions—manipulating the sticks and brushes and foot pedals. Personal technique, the effect on sound, feeling and interpretation.

SUPERIMPOSITION OF RHYTHMS (METER WITHIN METER): The rhythmic devices of jazz—the groupings of three-four, two-four, five-four within the framework of four-four; groupings of two within three, etc.; 3+3+2, 3+3+3+3+4, 5+3 and other time divisions.

TIME SIGNATURES (METERS): Three, four, five, six, seven, nine, ten, eleven, etc.

INTERPRETATION & EXPRESSION: The personal and creative element in music that is not completely indicated by notation; the nuances of tempo, dynamics, phrasing, touch, feeling.

SOLO DEVELOPMENT: Development of solo patterns and themes—short and extended solos; the chorus form and the free-form solo.

PROGRESSIVE JAZZ DRUMMING: AN OVERVIEW
by
Charlie Perry

Progressive jazz drumming, like progressive jazz itself, is complex. In fact, it may strike the uninitiated ear as a jumble of unrelated parts moving madly to and fro without apparent rhyme or reason.

This complexity doesn't mean, however, that progressive jazz is formless, nor that its form cannot be analyzed. On the contrary, there is, in most cases, a definite format, and underlying plan. What clouds this fact is the very nature of progressive jazz, the spontaneity, the freedom to explore, to elaborate, to extend, to reshape, often obscures the basic framework in a maze of superstructure. Nevertheless, the form is there for those who wish to study both the obvious and the subtle elements of which it consists.

It would be enlightening to discuss briefly some of the individual styles that preceded and contributed to it before we study today's progressive jazz drumming. These styles in themselves are still valid and far from outdated, and the names of many of our present-day players will be found somewhere in these catagories.

Updated Swing Style

In the updated swing style, the drummer plays the conventional cymbal ride rhythm and its variations, the four-four of the bass drum, the two and four of the hi-hat and the rhythmic punctuations of the snare drum, and sometimes the toms. He often elaborated on this basic form with some punctuations, figures and "fills" (open spots in the music in which the drummer solos briefly with rhythmic and tonal patterns of his choice), and ensemble figures (figures which the drummer plays simultaneously with the ensemble.)

Among other things, and perhaps most importantly, the swing-oriented drummer functions as a "timekeeper." He controls the tempo of the band, thereby preventing it from rushing or dragging while at the same time he is driving and *swinging* the band with his beat.

In the early days of swing, the four-four of the bass drum emphasized the four feeling. Later, the top cymbal shared the function of establishing the four pulse and eventually, in some drumming styles, became the central means of establishing and maintaining the basic time. It became the dominant means of generating time. Of course this varies with individual drummers. Some drummers, in fact, still rely on the bass drum in emphasizing the basic pulse. The difference in approach also depends on the style of the band and the preference of the bandleader. For instance, the major drummers of Count Basie's various bands stressed the four-four of the bass drum. On the other hand, Mel Lewis of the Mel Lewis Big Band, plays the four on the bass drum softly, if at all. On fast tempos, he plays a light two on the bass drum elaborated with punctuations and some short figures. Also, he uses his bass drum to reinforce section and ensemble figures as well as those of the soloist. Generally, he uses his bass drum much in the manner of the left hand. His style might be termed "hip" big-band drumming, the wedding of updated swing and progressive drumming.

[For examples of early swing, listen to the drumming of Jo Jones and Shadow Wilson, a Jones contemporary, on *Basie's Best,* Columbia records HL 7229. Both drummers played ride rhythm variations on an opening and closing hi-hat. (Jo's hi-hat playing was a feature of his style. And Shadow shows off his hi-hat work on the tune "Taps Miller." They both played so musically and interacted so beautifully with the band. Also listen to *Lester Leaps In,* Epic records LG 3107, and *The Old Count and the New Count,* Epic records LG 1021. They're classics. Gus Johnson, another of the first-class big band drummers, is one of the drummers on this last album.]

Bebop Drumming

The best-known exponents of the bop style were Max Roach, Kenny Clarke, Art Blakey, and later, Roy Haynes.

Art was a hard, sometimes a bit ferocious, groover. Kenny was a smooth swinger, a great "time" player. Max was always the intellectual, experimenting with and developing new rhythmic concepts, various cross rhythms and tonal sequences. Roy, who came several years after these "founding fathers" of bop, was a driving, highly tasteful, as well as inventive drummer. (I've nicknamed Roy "the composer" because what he plays is organized around two-, four-, and eight-bar phrases, and like a writer's, his phrases grow into complete sentences, which in turn develop into paragraphs.)

[Roy Haynes and Max Roach share the drumming on *The Best of Newport in New York '72,* Kory KK 2000. Roy Haynes handles the brilliant drumming on *Now He Sings, Now He Sobs,* Chick Corea, Solid State SS 18039.]

Following these drummers was Philly Joe Jones, who by incorporating elements of what came before him, developed a highly sophisticated, and much admired, swinging style. He, along with the entire Miles Davis group, produced a music that was perhaps the finest manifestation of structured post-bop jazz. The Davis rhythm section of Red Garland on piano, Paul Chambers on bass, and Philly Joe on drums was the most popular of its day and became known as *the* rhythm section.

[You can hear Philly Joe Jones and *the* rhythm section on the following Miles Davis albums: *Cookin' with the Miles Davis Quintet,* Prestige records 7094; *Relaxin' with the Miles Davis Quintet,* Prestige records 7129; *Miles,* Prestige records 7014.]

In the bop style, the cymbal ride rhythm and its variations became the mainstay of generating and maintaining time. The bass drum was played, if at all, relatively softly in four, but the innovation was the emphasis on the bass drum punctuations or "bombs" which dotted the musical landscape. Max Roach, one of the fountainheads of that era, played numerous accents and a fair amount of figures on the bass drum in conjunction with the snare drums and toms. He also played four on the bass drum, but it occurred in the spaces between the punctuations and figures. And when he was particularly "busy," there was little space for the bass drum in four. He did not rely on the four of the bass drum to establish a driving sensation. He generated time and excitement through the combination of punctuations, figures, and phrases among the parts of the drum set. In fact, he was one of the first to stress broken-rhythms and polyrhythms in creating a time sense and driving force.

Kenny Clarke was one of the first, if not the first, to omit the four-four on the bass drum in very fast tempos, except for punctuations, and rely instead on the cymbal ride rhythm and its variations as the central source of time.

Although Art Blakey, Max Roach, and Kenny Clarke played bebop, each sounded different from the other. Each had an identifiable style. Blakey, more than the others, however, emphasized a heavy two and four after-beat. The strongly pronounced two and four of the hi-hat, a major influence on other drummers, was in fact an integral part of his style.

The Cool Era

The period that followed the initial bebop explosion was known as the cool era. Bop, in fact, led into the cool period. The suave, understated grace of earlier tenor sax star Lester Young and the spare, melodious lines of the young Miles Davis influenced many young, primarily white musicians to produce a lyrical jazz that was bebop influenced, but less frenetic. Such divisions, however, are not absolute. In some ways, one overlapped the other. Therefore, it isn't always easy or desirable to attempt to define styles. Moreover, definitive labels often imply limitation, something that is "fixed." And music is anything but changeless or static. Rather, it is a dynamic process.

In the cool era, some drummers played the hi-hat lightly or, at times, not at all. Instead, they often used the hi-hat for occasional rhythmic and tonal effects. And the four-four of the bass drum was used sparingly or simply omitted. The top cymbal became the central means of generating and maintaining time. It was about then that drummers really began to use cymbal rhythms extensively, altering the sound and effect of cymbal rhythms, often using meter within meter in the form of cymbal rhythms.

Bebop was considered "hotter" than "cool", but was not as hot as swing or the so-called hot jazz that preceded swing. Sound confusing? It can be. That's the problem when trying to label jazz eras with exactness. Remember that these labels are often generalizations and do not deal with the many specifics of the music of those eras, or for that matter, with today's styles. For example, in the swing era Count Basie's band came under the heading of swing, but the band was cooler than most. The rhythm section of Basie (piano), Freddie Green (guitar), Walter Page (bass), and Jo Jones (drums) Papa Jo, not Philly Joe was decidedly different from, say, the rhythm section of the Benny Goodman band of that period. The Goodman rhythm section consisted of Jess Stacy (piano), Alan Reuss (guitar), Harry Goodman (bass), and Gene Krupa (drums).

Let's not forget that from the latter part of the bop era, Elvin Jones was continually experimenting while on his way to forming his own exceptional style of drumming, eventually becoming one of the great creative jazz stylists. Elvin

took a basic swing style and developed it into an outstanding form of hard-driving swing and polyrhythms, extending the interaction of the parts, especially the snare drum and bass drum, to a more complex level than anyone else. His cymbal rhythm has a different feeling to it, a different sort of pulse. One often feels the accentuation of the "a" of the two and the four to such a degree that it seems that the quarter-note after the "a" is omitted. And sometimes it is omitted! Also, he gives the impression of pulsing some of the rhythms in three. Much of what he plays is a matter of superimposing pulse over pulse.

[Some albums on which Elvin Jones plays are: *A Love Supreme/John Coltrane,* Impulse AS 77; *Coltrane "Live," at the Village Vanguard,* Impulse AS 10; *Elvin Jones Live at the Lighthouse,* Blue Note BN LAO 15-G2; *Selflessness Featuring My Favorite Things,* John Coltrane, Impulse AS-9161 (on this album, both Jones and Roy Haynes play drums); *The Ultimate Elvin Jones,* Blue Note BST 84305.]

The next innovator to gain prominence was Tony Williams, a dynamic young drummer who captured the attention of jazzmen and jazz critics alike while still in his teens. (He recorded with trumpeter Kenny Durham when only seventeen years old! *Una Mas,* Blue Note BST 84127.)

Tony's drumming was different—a kaleidoscope of rhythm, tone, emotion, and intellect. He generated a sustained, at times fierce, driving intensity. His highly skilled interplay with the group served as an excellent example of drums-band interaction and improvisation in progressive jazz. (Listen to Tony on the *Miles Davis Four & More album,* Columbia CS 9253.)

Tony didn't use his bass drum and hi-hat in the conventional way (bass drum in four, hi-hat on two and four) to state time. (He did, however, sometimes play the hi-hat in four: "Freedom Dance," *Miles Smiles,* Columbia CS 9401 is a good example.) Nor did he rely on the standard cymbal ride rhythm for his cymbal pulse. Rather he played a succession of quarter-notes interspersed with two- and three-beat figures which he generally wove into the overall rhythmic and tonal composition consisting of drums and cymbals. With this collective unit he stated time and pulse: Jazz drumming had moved decidedly toward jazz percussion (*Miles Davis in Europe,* Columbia PC 8983, recorded live in 1963.)

Following Tony we have Jack De Johnette, a musician of the triple-threat variety (composer, leader, instrumentalist) who synthesized much of what came before him into a fresh, individualized style.

Jack's playing is high-velocity stuff, both intensely emotional and cerebral. And though he is free-wheeling and uninhibited, his soaring spirit expresses itself within an exceptionally well structured, yet flexible, form.

Like Roy Haynes and Tony Williams, Jack is a first-rate drum-set composer. Rather than use his two bass drums (each of different size and different pitch) and hi-hat for time-keeping of the usual kind, he incorporates them expertly with the remainder of the drum set in playing patterns and sequences that coincide, echo, answer, and play independent of the contributions of the other musicians.

Whereas some of the noted jazz drummers have settled into well-defined grooves, Jack's playing continues to evolve. He is, in fact, a principal shaper of contemporary jazz drumming, bordering on tomorrow.

[Listen to Jack on the following records: Joe Farrell, *Moon Germs,* CTI 6023; *Jack De Johnette, Live Performance,* ECM records, special edition; *Jack De Johnette's Directions, Untitled,* ECM 1074; *Gateway,* ECM 1061; John Abercrombie, *Timeless,* ECM 1047; McCoy Tyner, *Super Trios,* Milestone M-55003 two-record set (both Jack De Johnette and Tony Williams play on this double album); *The De Johnette Complex,* Milestone MSP 9022 (on this album, both De Johnette and Roy Haynes play drums).]

There are excellent—even great drummers who are not discussed here, *not* because they aren't among the best drummers—for example, the great Buddy Rich, Louie Bellson, Joe Morello, Eddie Shaughnessy (of the Tonight Show), and of course Alan Dawson; so many names come to mind—but rather because this segment is devoted to the innovators who, in relatively recent times, brought about the truly significant changes in drumming styles that led into the progressive—avant-garde, if you will—styles of today. Nevertheless, listening to the other top "pros"—live or on recordings—can only enhance the musical understanding and artistic development of today's drum student, so I encourage exposure to many drummers not specifically discussed here. For instance, Steve Gadd, Billy Cobham, Charlie Persip, Mickey Roker, Lenny White, Ben Riley, among others. There are other deserving drummers, too numerous to include here. Please forgive me for not including everyone I admire.

ABOUT IMPROVISATION

In jazz, the drummer's favorite musical ideas and devices form part of his style. These ideas and devices are sometimes reproduced exactly; at other times they are altered or extended.

When the drummer responds suddenly to a given musical stimulus—provided by the other performers, or, at times, by himself—he responds with either preconceived or spontaneous rhythmic and tonal punctuations, figures and phrases.

What the drummer plays is not always brand new and may have been played in one form or another, either by himself or another drummer, at some time or other. It is often a matter of the familiar being shaped differently, occurring in different places or in a different sequence. But even familiar ideas, when used in improvisation, occur spontaneously as a response to a given musical stimulus or as counter rhythms played independently of what the other musicians might play.

Although the jazz drummer might play a given piece or arrangement numerous times, he will never play it exactly the same way twice. For instance, when playing an arranged piece, a set line or predetermined beginnings and endings, he may play such sections, or parts of such sections, the same, or nearly the same, each time. But this occurs only in highly structured, fixed arrangements. Even then, however, he will almost invariably make some changes in what he plays. And during the improvised sections, when he is involved in spontaneous musical exchanges between himself and the other musicians, he will never play the same punctuations, figures and phrases in the same order twice because neither the drummer nor the other performers know what will be played during the improvised segements of the music. True, the entire group will adhere to a basic form, such as a chorus form, but they are free to improvise within that form. In true free-form music—without a chorus form or set structure—anything can happen at any time: tempo changes, key changes, meter changes and so forth, all taking place spontaneously. Such improvisation is entirely unpredictable since it has no guidelines to give it a predetermined direction.

Underlying the drummer's improvisation is a fundamental concept, a specific approach—the elements of style. And from this base he explores seeking new directions and formats.

Drums-Band Interaction & Improvisation: Principles

What the drummer plays relates to what the other members of the group play. Specifically, in addition to generating and establishing time, the drummer interacts with soloists, sections (rhythm, brass, reeds) and ensemble (hereafter referred to as the band or group).

At various points throughout the music the drummer's punctuations, figures and phrases *coincide* with, *echo*, or *answer* the punctuations, figures and phrases of the soloist, sections or ensemble. At other times, however, the drummer's rhythms *do not* interact in these ways with the soloist or band. Rather, they take place *independent* of the other musicians' musical contributions. These independent rhythms take the form of polyrhythms—counter rhythms played against harmonic and rhythmic contributions of the other members of the group.

When the interaction between the drummer and the soloist is expertly done, the contributions of the drummer can become so conjoined with those of the soloist that there emerges a solo partnership: a single solo which is the work of two musicians. The drums then are more than merely supporting or complementary. Rather, the drummer is in conversation with the soloist, in part providing responses in musical conversation, in part leading the conversation. Usually, but not always, the soloist remains the dominant member of the solo partnership.

The extent to which the drummer interacts (coincides—echos—answers or is independent) depends on his style, the style of the band and the music itself. There is less complex interaction in swing oriented bands—Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Harry James, for example—than there is in avant-garde jazz groups. In avant-garde jazz, such complex drums-band interaction is heaviest (and the drummer is busiest)—Miles Davis, Chick Corea, McCoy Tyner, Joe Farrell, Herbie Hancock, Elvin Jones, Roy Haynes Hip Ensemble, etc.

Simple Examples of Drums-Band Interaction

The drum rhythms *coincide* with the rhythms of the band—the drummer plays the same rhythm as played by the band or the soloist at the same time:

Soloist (or band):

Drums:

The drum rhythms *echo* the rhythms of the soloist or band—they are played shortly afterward in the form of an echo.

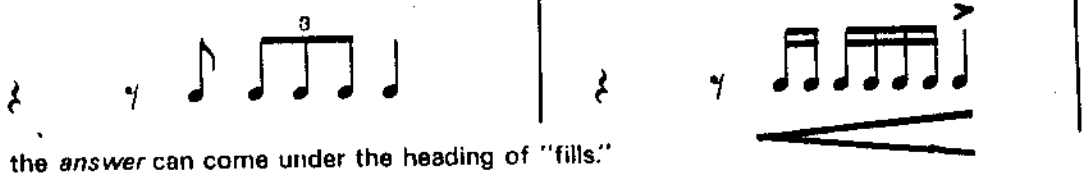
Soloist (band):

Drums:

The drum rhythms *answer* the rhythms of the soloist or band, as in conversation, with a different rhythm:

Soloist (band):

Drums:



Note: The *echo* and the *answer* can come under the heading of "fills."

The drum rhythms are *independent* of the rhythms of the soloist or band; what the drummer plays does not coincide, echo or answer. Rather they are played independent of rhythms of the soloist or band, creating a counter rhythm effect:

Soloist (band):

Drums:

CYM.

SD
BD

In performance, one often runs into the other. For example, an answer will lead directly into coinciding, or from coinciding into an answer into coinciding again:

Soloist (band):

Drums:

CYMBAL RHYTHMS

The ride rhythm, ride variations and other cymbal rhythms that are used to generate and establish time are a cornerstone of jazz drumming. They will remain so as long as cymbal rhythms are used for this purpose.

No one format of cymbal playing, however, will suffice for everyone in every situation. There are similarities in usage, but each drummer has his own cymbal rhythm sequences and his own style of playing them.

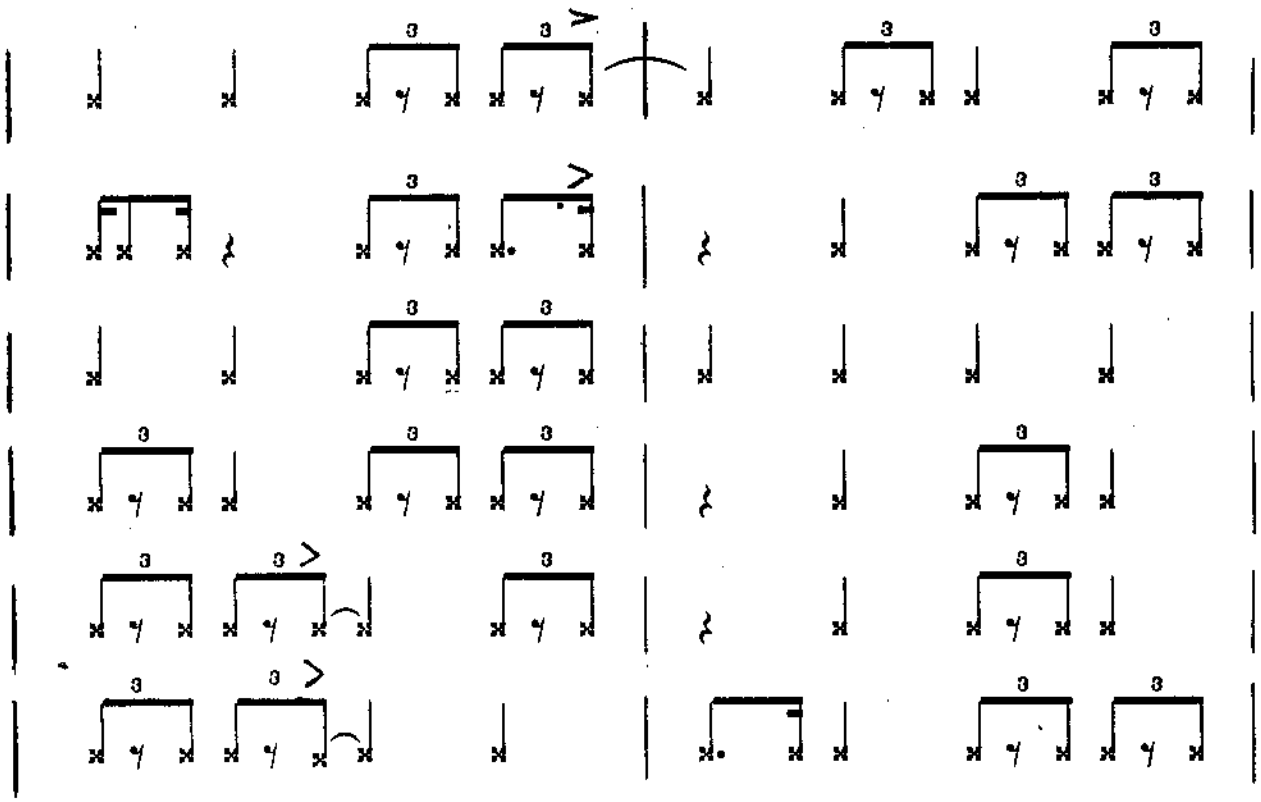
The Cymbal Line

The overall effect is one of a steady cymbal rhythm line supplemented continually with assorted punctuations, figures and phrases of the left hand, bass drum and hi-hat. Upon listening closely, however, one learns that the cymbal line is not made up of one particular rhythm, but that instead it consists of perhaps several individual rhythms (punctuations and figures). Therefore, it is not a matter of the conventional ride rhythm being played in conjunction with the rhythms of the snare, bass drum and hi-hat, but rather that the cymbal rhythms are often played as part of the rhythms that are divided between the cymbal, snare, bass drum and hi-hat. To what degree this occurs depends on the style of the individual drummer.*

It is possible for a drummer to get by mainly with the cymbal rhythm in some situations—for example, in a swing oriented trio. He could swing the trio and establish the time mainly with cymbal rhythms. But, of course, the timing of the punctuations, figures and phrases of the snare, bass drum and hi-hat *are* of major importance.

A basically good sense of cymbal time can be diminished by the poor collective timing of the snare, bass drum and hi-hat. The coordination and timing of every part, therefore, is all important.

*The following cymbal rhythms are taken from the beginning of the piano solo of the piece "Moon Germs" (drummer, De Johnette):



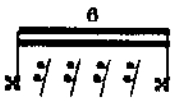
Interpretation

The mathematical division of the cymbal rhythm, and other rhythms, depends on the interpretation of the individual drummer and the tempo in which the rhythms are played. In moderate tempos, the cymbal rhythm can be played as, or more likely nearly as, a broken-eighth triplet, dotted-eighth and sixteenth, or broken-sixteenth triplet figure. In slower tempos, the cymbal rhythm is closer to the dotted-eighth and sixteenth or broken-sixteenth triplet figure; or it may be played as, or nearly as, a double-dotted eighth and thirty-second figure. Also, within the course of several measures or less, it may lean closer to one interpretation than another. This holds true for other tempos, too. In fast tempos, the rhythm is interpreted as, or nearly as, regular eighths, depending on the speed of the fast tempo and the drummer's interpretation.

It is sufficient to understand what is taking place in the course of playing cymbal or other rhythms to broaden one's knowledge of the jazz form of drumming. And experimentation with such rhythmic divisions in one's practice is fine if one desires it or feels it is necessary. But an attempt to subdivide rhythms consciously while playing would not only drive the drummer to distraction but would also wreck his performance. Furthermore, if the drummer already has a really good sense of time when playing cymbal rhythms and his playing swings, he should be extremely cautious about experimenting with or changing his sense of time and interpretation. Some student drummers have a tendency to go to extremes when trying new or different concepts. There is a limit to how far one may go in adapting another drummer's concepts and techniques, etc., without endangering one's own concepts and techniques. Outright imitation is to be guarded against if one hopes to retain one's individuality.

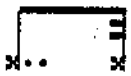
Listen to the cymbal rhythms of different drummers—for instance, Roy Haynes, Elvin Jones, Tony Williams, Philly Joe Jones, among others. Slow down their records to sixteen rpm or slower. You can, for example, tape the record while it is at sixteen rpm and then slow down the playback of the tape recorder.

On a Music Minus One album (Volume Two), one can hear clearly Kenny Clarke's ride rhythm interpretation (played mainly with brushes on the snare drum) by turning up the treble all the way. It will be noticed that even in moderate tempos, the notes of the ride rhythm that fall between the quarter-notes are placed slightly after the "let," the last note of the broken-eighth triplet figure. It is more often in the vicinity of the "let" (the last note) of the broken-sixteenth triplet figure or a dotted-eighth and sixteenth figure. It results in a mathematically tighter (more intense)



effect, and a more emphasized and exact placement of the numbers, than would a strict broken-eighth triplet interpretation.

In the slow tempos, his interpretation is close to a broken-sixteenth triplet or a double-dotted eighth and thirty-second figure



In the fast tempos, his interpretation is close to regular eighths.

One can split hairs over the exact mathematical placement of the notes of the ride rhythm and the rhythms of the snare, bass drum and hi-hat. Our purpose, however, is to amplify the subtle nuances of interpretation and how these vary from drummer to drummer.

The feeling with which one plays has to do with more than just the mathematical division of notes. Ultimately, swinging and playing with considerable feeling is inner-directed, not outer-directed. It has to do with one's mental and emotional functions, muscular coordination, the nervous system, the way one perceives rhythm and sound, and one's life experiences. Perhaps someday science will be able to deal with exactitude with the neuropsychological and psychophysical processes that intervene in and are relevant to music.

For those interested in delving into the subject from a scientific viewpoint, we recommend the book *Introduction to the Physics and Psychophysics of Music,* by Juan G. Roederer, published by The English Universities Press Ltd., London; Springer-Verlag, New York, Heidelberg, Berlin.

INTERACTION OF THE PARTS

By the interaction of the parts we mean the collective action of the hands and feet as applied to the drum set in contemporary jazz drumming: the way the individual parts (cymbals, snare, bass drum and hi-hat) relate to and interact with each other.

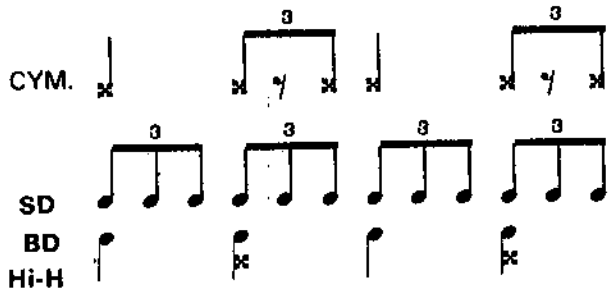
The timing of rhythms played with this collective unit of hands and feet is as important to a drummer's "time" as the cymbal rhythms which are used to generate and establish time. And proficient coordination of the hands and feet is imperative to good "time." Poorly developed coordination will have an adverse effect on the timing of the interaction of the hands and feet.

The interaction of the hands and feet is similar to the drums-band interaction in that the different parts of the drum set may coincide with, echo, answer, or play independent of each other.

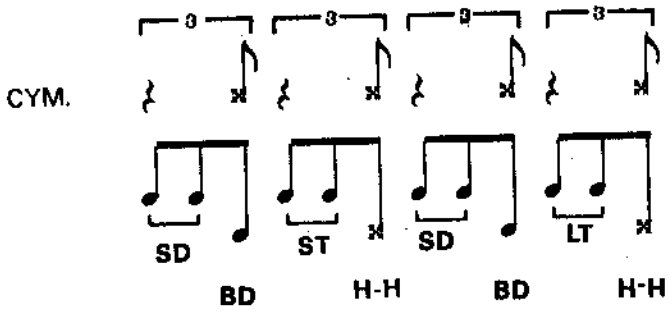
Think of your feet as you do your hands. Don't relegate your feet to lesser roles than your hands in expressing your ideas.

Rhythmic and tonal punctuations, figures and phrases are divided among the cymbals, snare drum, toms, hi-hat and bass drum. Such divisions of rhythms among the parts of the drum set abound in avant-garde drumming.

For example, here is a rhythm pattern that is common to mainstream drumming:

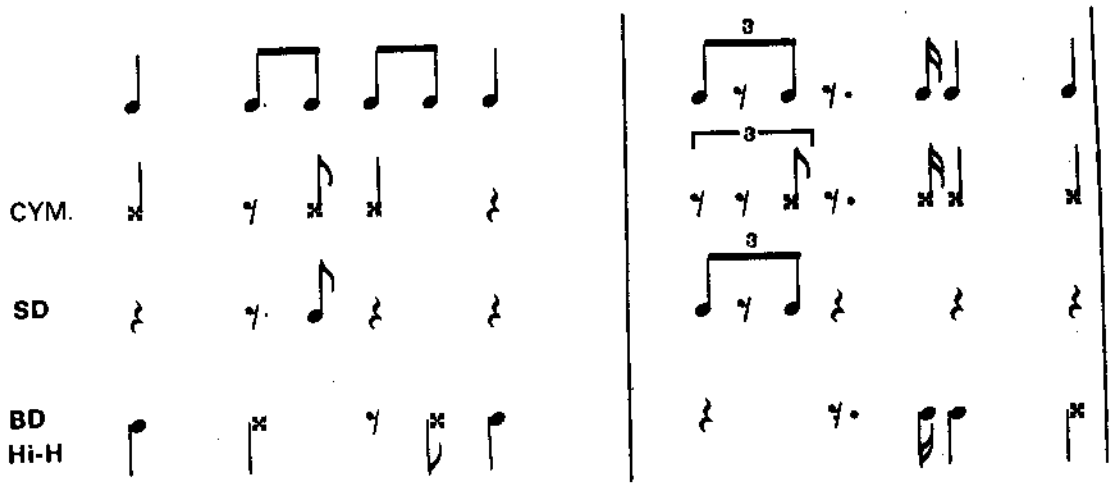


The avant-garde drummer, however, will invariably do something like this with this rhythm pattern:

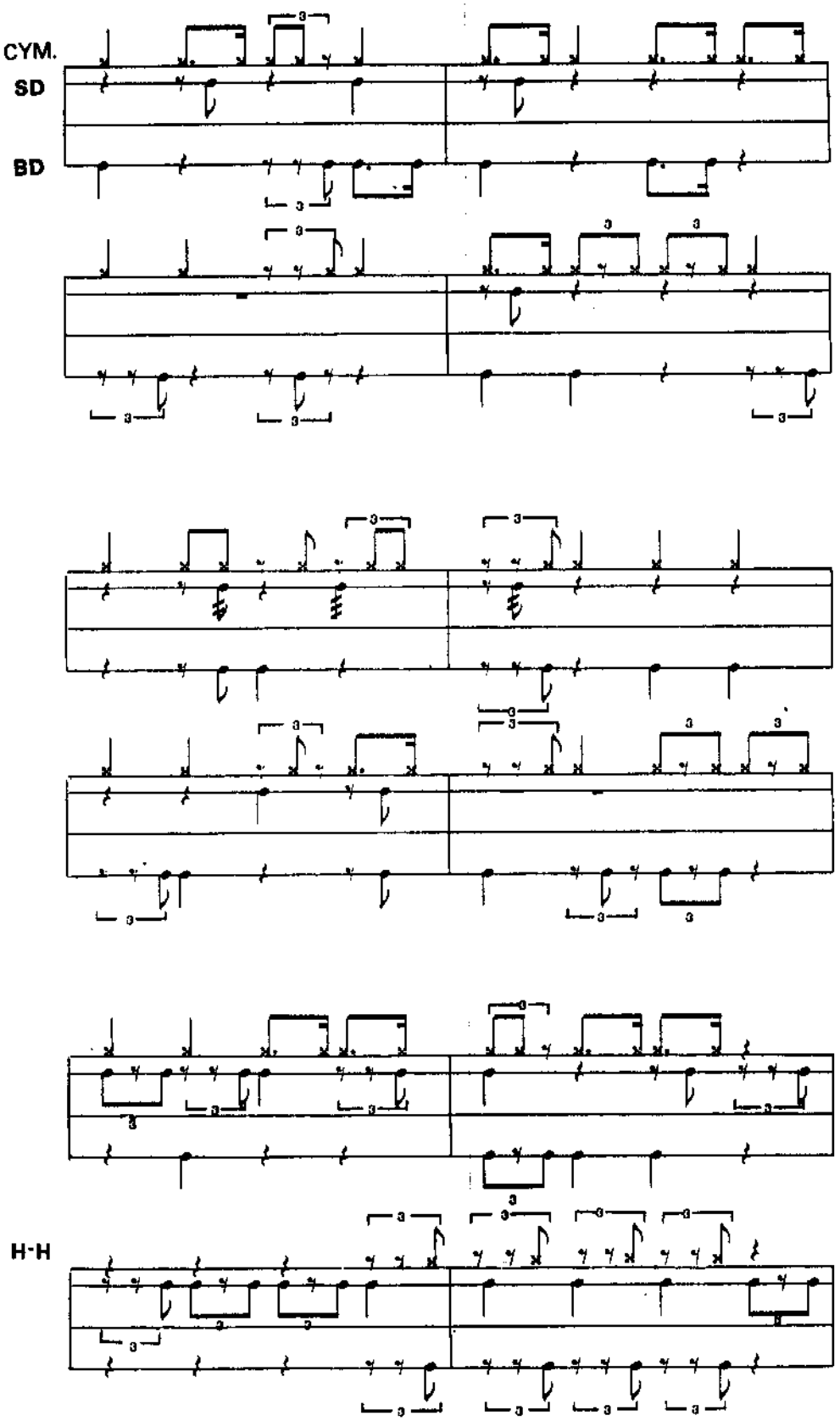


Another example:
Basic Rhythm:

Divided among drums: set parts



The following example is apropos of the drumming on the first twelve bars of the piece Moon Germs (Joe Farrell's album, *Moon Germs,* CTI 6023. De Johnette on drums):



METER WITHIN METER

In contemporary jazz, it is common practice to use rhythmic groupings of notes of one meter within the framework of another meter. This rhythmic device, however, is not new to jazz or pop music. It has been used for many years by composers, arrangers and instrumentalists.

Don Ellis, in *The New Rhythm Book,* mentions the fact that this type of phrasing was popular in early jazz and was one of the main rhythmic devices of ragtime. And Dave Brubeck, in the liner notes of his album *Time Further Out,* points out that in classical music, dating from the baroque period, composers arranged the rhythmic groupings of notes to give the effect of two within the context of pieces written in three. (In the *Harvard Dictionary of Music* this effect is defined as "hemiola.")

In the early forms of jazz, such as ragtime, musicians and songwriters also used this rhythmic device, but in reverse. They grouped notes to create the effect of three within the context of four-four. (The *Harvard Dictionary* calls this "secondary rag.") The effect of three against four was used in some pop tunes of the twenties—for example, "Fascinating Rhythm," "Stumblin'," and parts of "Rhapsody in Blue."

Brubeck believes that composers such as Haydn and Mozart used two over three in order to add variety to the "strictly measured dance music" of their day and that for the same reason early jazz musicians, such as ragtime piano players, used three over four.

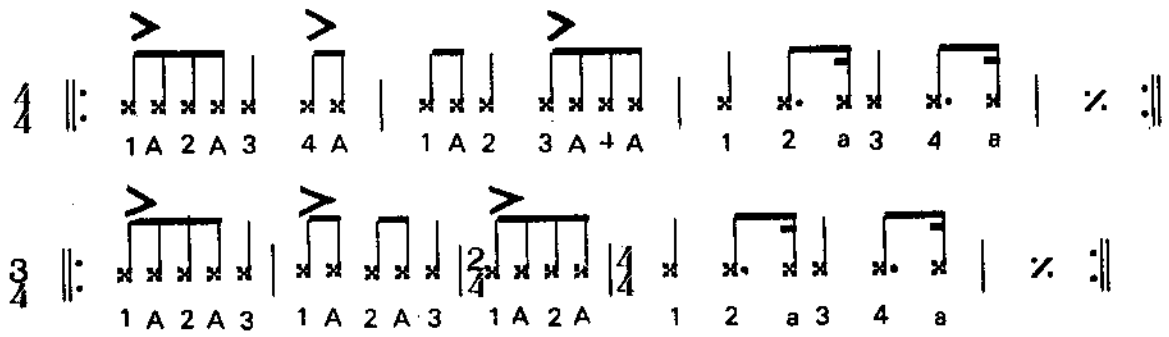
One of the earliest drum method books to deal with the superimposition of three over four is the *Professional Drum Studies, for Dance, Radio and Stage,* by George Wettling and Brad Spiney, copyrighted in 1946. This book gives several pages to three-beat rhythmic patterns played inside of four bars of four-four. Since this book was published, a number of other method books have either touched on, or been devoted entirely to, such rhythmic devices—for instance, three, five, and seven played within the context of four-four.

In the music of India, tabla players are masters of such rhythmic subdivisions. They will, for example, divide seven beats into groups of 3+2+2; ten beats into groups of 2+3+2+3, 3+3+4, 3+4+3, and so on.

In jazz drumming, it was the early drummers who discovered and applied these rhythm groupings in their playing. It is safe to say that it came about naturally as part of the evolution of jazz, as most of these drummers were certainly not acquainted with classical music or the music of cultures (e.g., Indian) in which such subdivisions were common.

Among the black musicians, however, roots extended to the rhythms, chants, etc., of Africa, were polyrhythms were everyday stuff. Educator Phil Fani, in an article entitled "African Drumming," which appeared in the publication *Ludwig Drummer,* discussed in detail African polyrhythms (two against three; four against three, etc.) and gives examples of such hemiola rhythms—the groupings of six eighth notes into three groups of two against six, and so forth.

Looking to the United States, here is an example of a pop tune of the twenties, "Stumblin'," in which two measures of four-four are emphasized as 123 412 34, thereby dividing the measures into patterns of 3+3+2. (The tune was appropriately named "Stumblin' " for the stumbling effect of the rhythmic phrasing of the first two measures.)

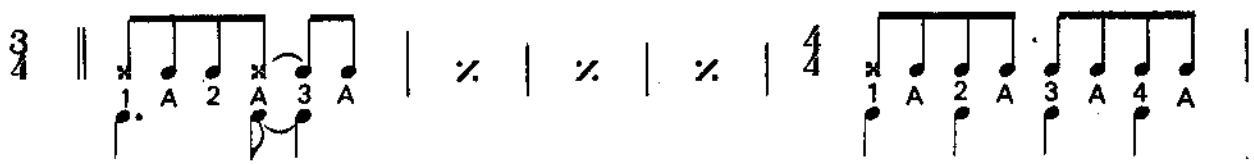


Given a jazz interpretation, the straight eighths would be played as, or nearly as, broken-eighth triplets:

In either case, we have eight beats. The first example consists of two measures of four-four, whereas the second example is grouped as two measures of three and one measure of two. The *Harvard Dictionary* notes that polymetric passages can be written in such a way that specific accented groupings of notes will attain the effect of a different meter without actually changing time signatures. They go on to say, "This manner of writing is frequently preferred for the sake of easier reading, but it actually obscures the true rhythmic life, in modern editions of early music as well as in jazz." Such is the case with "Stumblin' " and other pop or jazz pieces, including the sample that follows. Three or five beat patterns, etc., are actually easier to read when written as such rather than when written in four.

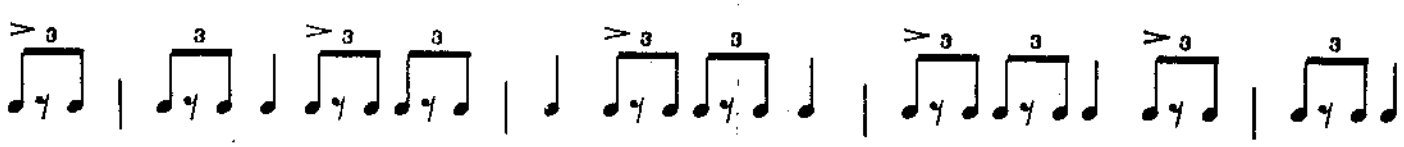
The following example is from a Terry Gibbs big band arrangement, "The Big Cat" (recorded on the Mercury album *Explosion* about fifteen years ago). Here we have four measures of four-four, totaling sixteen beats:

It might be difficult at first glance to recognize the actual phrasing from the way the rhythms are written. But notice how simple it appears and how easy it is to grasp the phrasing when the rhythm patterns are conceived—as the following notation shows—as four measures of three and one measure of four:



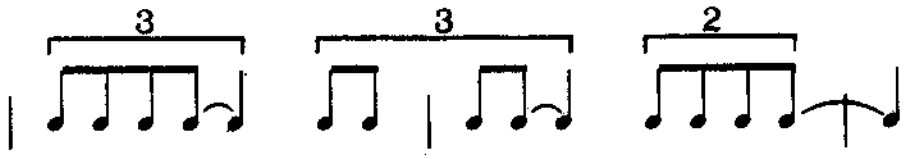
In either case, it totals sixteen beats: 4+4+4+4 = sixteen beats; 3+3+3+3+4 = sixteen beats.

On "Lady Be Good," a four-four piece (Music Minus One Album, vol. 2), pianist Don Abney plays five groups of three's, beginning on the fourth beat of the fourth measure of the last eight measures of a thirty-two bar solo, crossing bar lines and ending on the second beat of the last (the eighth) measure:



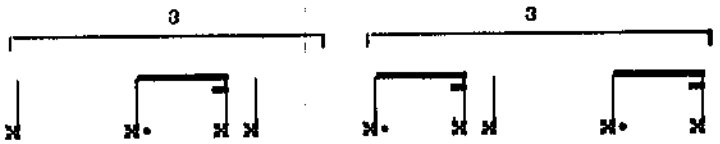
What we have here is fifteen beats grouped in the meter of three, occurring in the last five measures of a four-four piece.

Pianist Mal Waldron uses three within four in his piece, "The Twister" (Music Minus One album, *The Blues and You*). This occurs in the fifth and sixth measures of the melody. Although the time signature is four-four, these measures (including the first beat of the following measure) are grouped so that the rhythmic articulation is that of 3+3+2:



Here, you will notice, the third note of each three-beat grouping is tied to the preceding note. This omits the rhythmic articulation of the third note and results in a different effect from the 3+3+2 pattern of the tune "Stumblin'," and the groups of threes played by Don Abney in his improvised piano solo.

In Brubeck's "Blue Rondo a la Turk," the nine-eight section is grouped as 2+2+2+3 instead of the usual 3+3+3. In his "Kathy's Waltz," the pulse of the quarter-note triplet serves as a ride rhythm which is played intermittenly by drummer Joe Morello against the four-four of the group. Eventually, the "six" becomes the dominant pulse. Then Brubeck reverses things by playing part of his piano solo in "four" against the "six." The bass player plays mainly on the one and three of each measure of four-four, which, when the band goes into "six," places his bass rhythm on the one and four of the six-four measures. Here is an example of the quarter-note triplet rhythm serving as the pulse of the six-four ride rhythm:



The eternal Roy Haynes frequently uses the pulse of the quarter-note triplet as the pulse of a six-four ride rhythm superimposed over four.

On the piano chorus of "Seven Steps to Heaven," (Miles Davis album on Columbia), drummer Tony Williams superimposes phrases of three over four for different numbers of beats. Tony uses this device often in his playing—as does pianist Herbie Hancock—and can be heard doing it on many records. On the album *Miles Davis in Europe,* Tony creates the effect of groups of fives being played across the bar lines.

In the bop era we find innovators such as Kenny Clarke, Max Roach, Art Blakely, Roy Haynes, and of a later era, the so-called cool style, Philly Joe Jones, and still later, Elvin Jones and Tony Williams among others [editor's note: Jack De Johnette included], who incorporated such rhythmic devices as meter against meter in their playing and advanced them to the point of sophistication where they are today. (As with all musical eras, the bop and cool eras overlapped. And today, in fact, we will find a group playing bop, cool, rock, etc., in the course of an evening's performance.)

As you see, in avant-garde jazz, the drummer is free to play rhythmic figures and phrases that don't always conform to a strict four-four division and bar lines. Instead, he improvises as he sees fit, playing rhythms that are produced by ideas and feelings of the moment. He doesn't sit at a desk and work out specific divisions of beats that he will use in performance. The ideas for the varied rhythmic groupings of notes occur in a musical context, either during performance or when practicing. They are conceived as units of rhythm and sound rather than mathematical divisions.

This is not to say that the drummer cannot, or should not, work out and practice specific 2, 3, 4, 5, etc., beat groupings that can be applied in performance. On the contrary, he is free to experiment during practice to his heart's content. But he should not, for instance, use such rhythmic devices indiscriminately, merely because he is technically capable of playing three or five against four, or four against three. What he plays must be relevant to the musical performance of which he is a part. [See segment on improvisation, drums-band interaction.]

PRACTICE ROUTINES

The first two examples given below employ the common rhythmic device of "3" within "4." Each line consists of twelve beats (time value) including the cymbal rhythm (four beats). When considered as 4/4 the twelve beats make up three bars, ex.1. Ex.1A shows the same rhythm considered as 3+3+2+4. Ex.1B consists of eight beats, 3+3+2 (no cymbal rhythm).

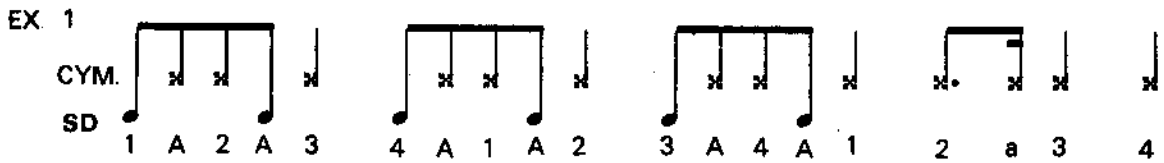
The cymbal rhythms do not have to be the same as those used here. The drummer is free to use cymbal rhythms of his choice. Also, he may follow the 3+3+2 patterns with as many bars of cymbal rhythm as he desires. It is important to note, however, that in avant-garde drumming, such rhythmic groupings of 3+3+2, etc., are not usually followed by bars of strict cymbal rhythm. Rather, such rhythmic groupings of notes are generally followed by like note groupings (meter within meter) or various broken rhythm patterns (patterns divided between cymbals and drums).

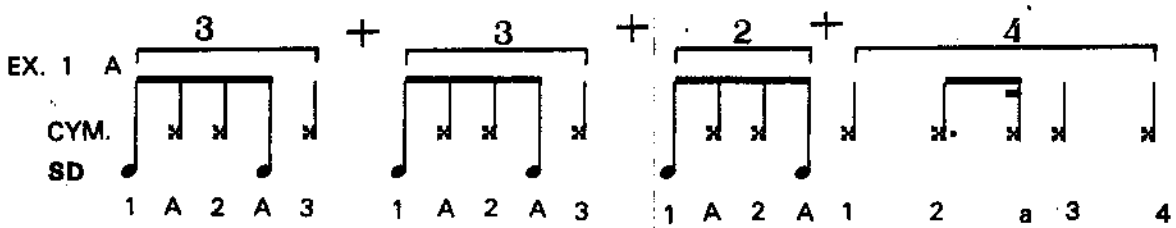
The basic ride rhythm is used here for the convenience of those drummers who are not familiar with the avant-garde type of cymbal rhythms. However, when the drummer becomes familiar with meter-within-meter note groupings, he should then use the broken cymbal patterns of avant-garde drumming in place of the conventional ride rhythm and its variations. He can either improvise the cymbal rhythms or write them in above the printed cymbal rhythm.

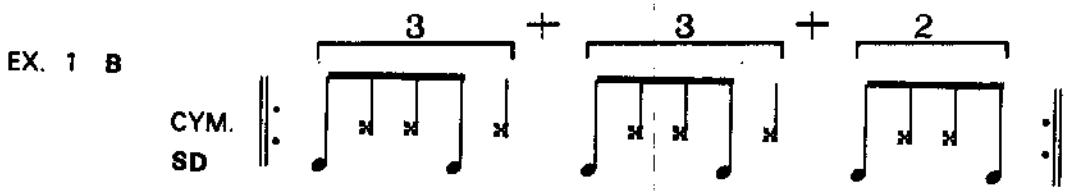
In avant-garde jazz drumming, the cymbal rhythms are often used to fill the spaces between the various note groupings which are divided among the drums and cymbals. In such instances, the rhythms played on the cymbal are not thought of in terms of the conventional ride rhythm and its variations. Rather they are often conceived as rhythmic figures or phrases played on the cymbal rather than on the drums or divided between drums and cymbals. Also, the notes played on the cymbals are frequently part of rhythmic punctuations and figures. (See page 12, 14,15)

In the examples used here bar lines are omitted intentionally. The idea is to feel various note groupings free of established bar lines of metric demarcation.

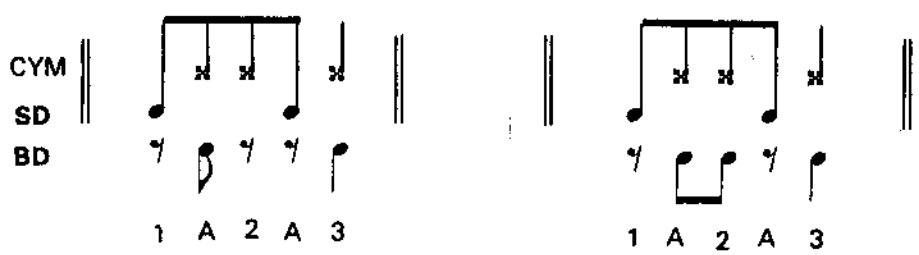
Notice the permutations: In ex.1 the rhythmic pattern begins on the first beat (the "1"). In ex.2 page 20, it begins on the second beat. In ex.3 it begins on the third beat. In ex.4 it begins on the forth beat.



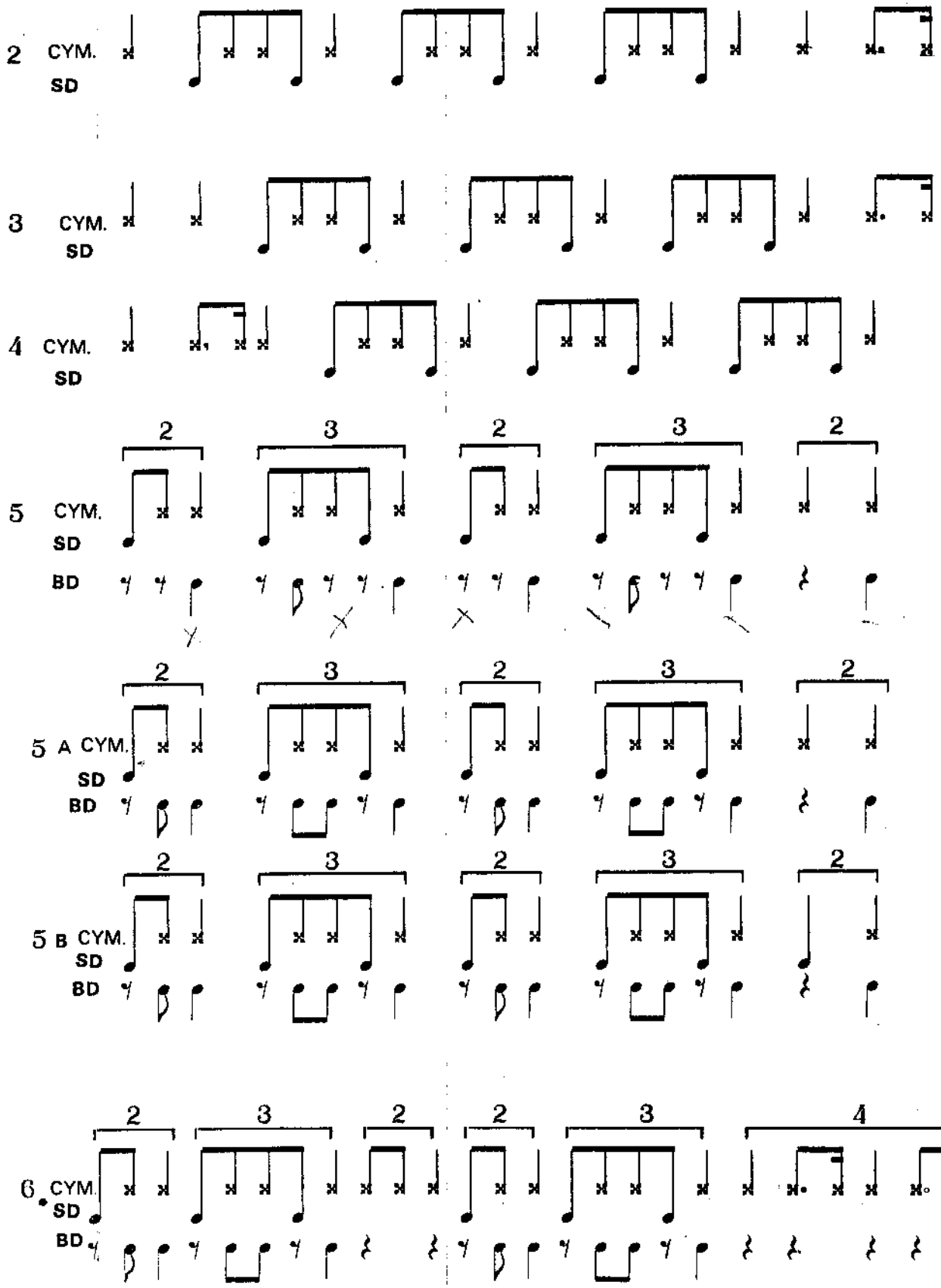


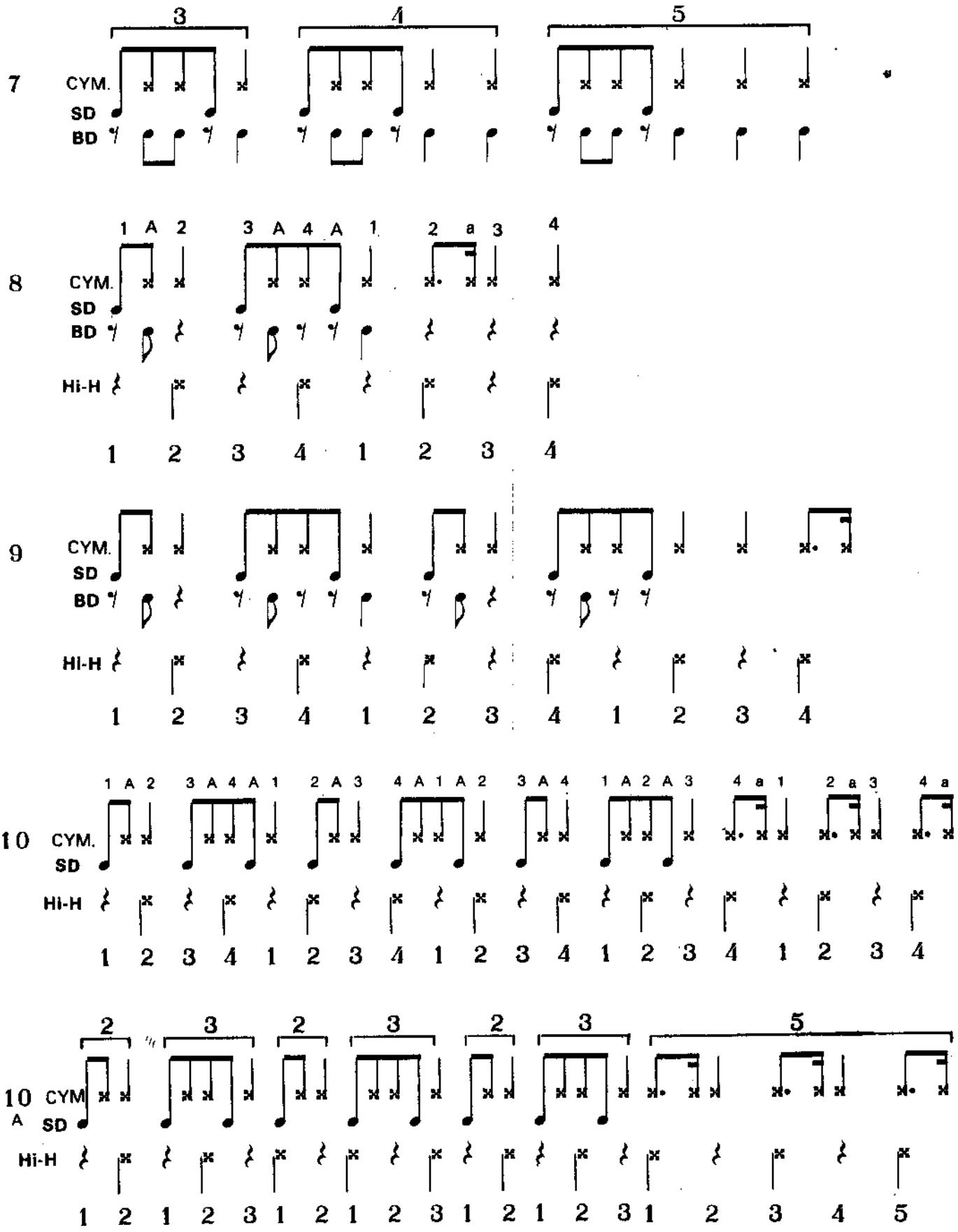


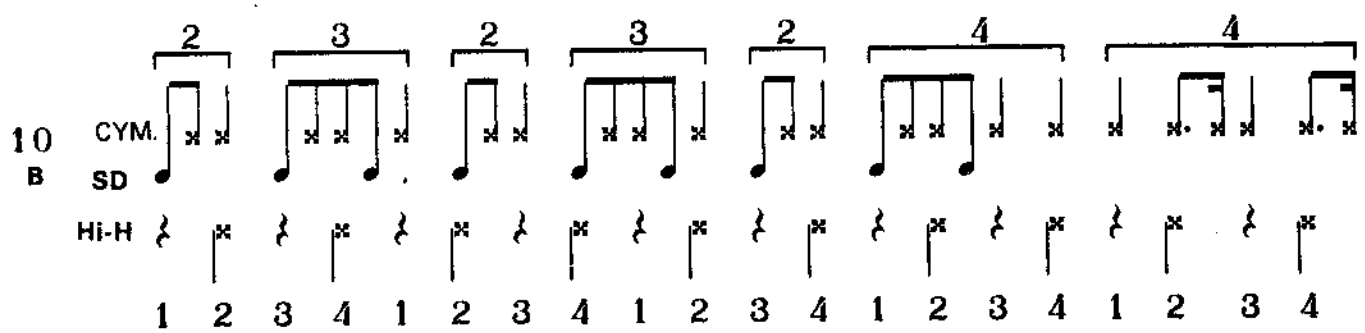
Either of these two bass rhythms may be used with the hand patterns:

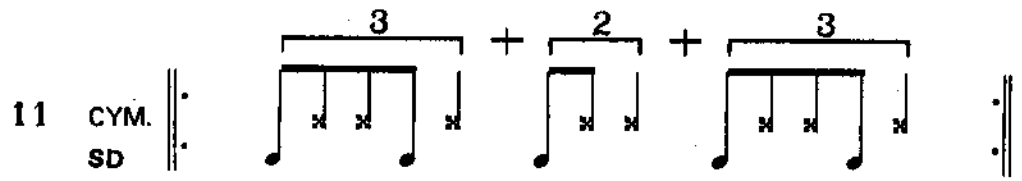


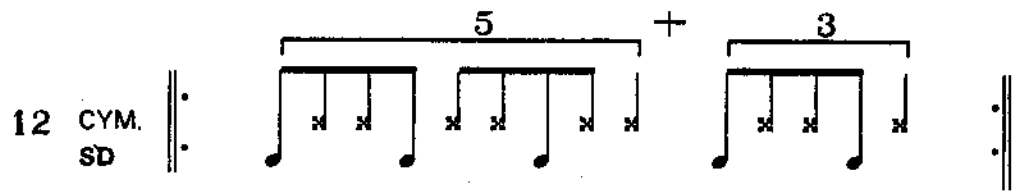
Remember, in fast tempos the rhythms are interpreted as regular eighths. In moderate and moderate-fast tempos, they are interpreted as jazz eighths.

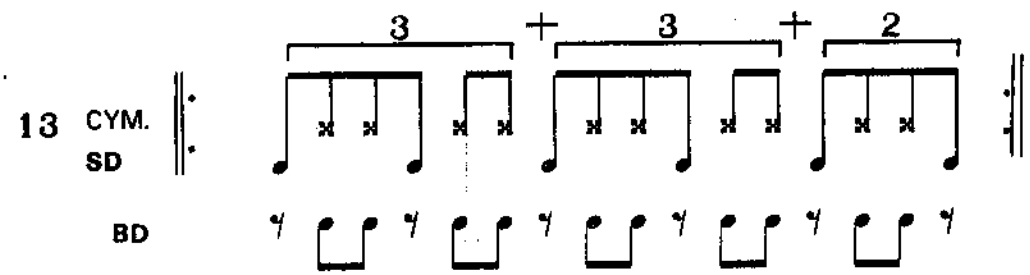


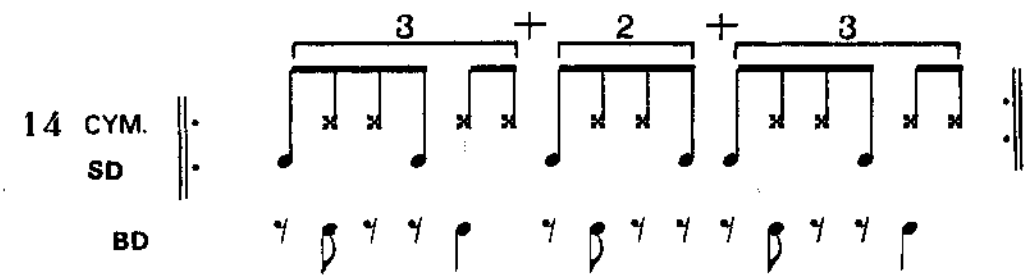






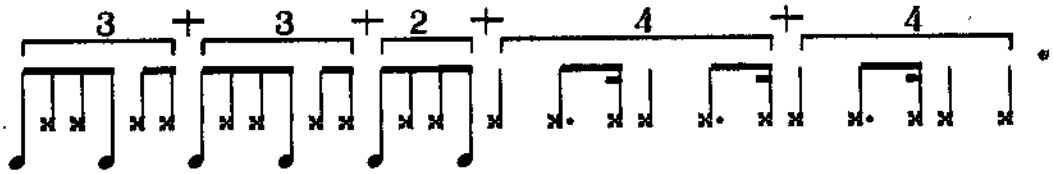




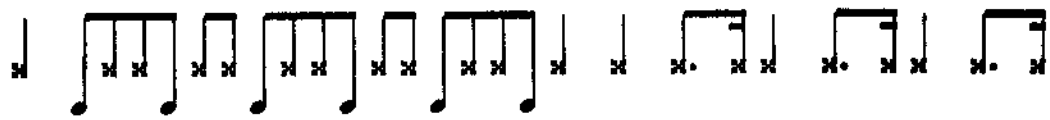


For the following examples, use BD rhythm of your choice

15 CYM. SD

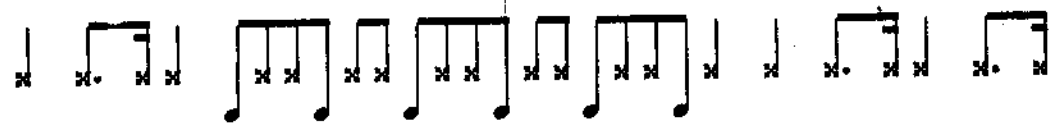


16 CYM. SD



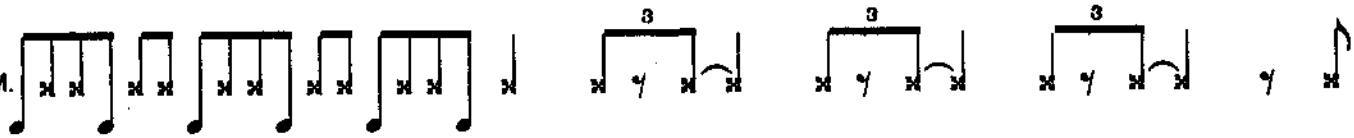
17 CYM. SD

18 CYM. SD

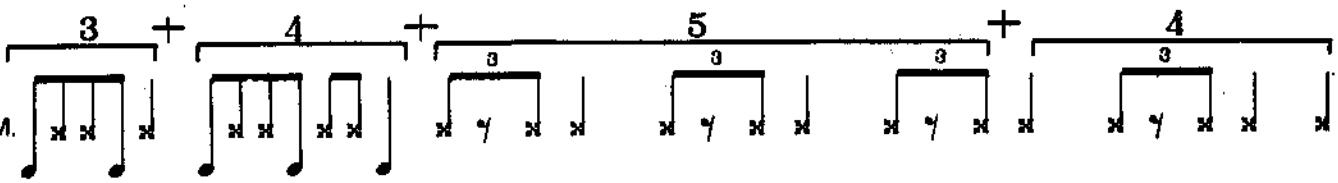


Here, the avant-garde cymbal rhythms are used in place of the conventional ride rhythm:

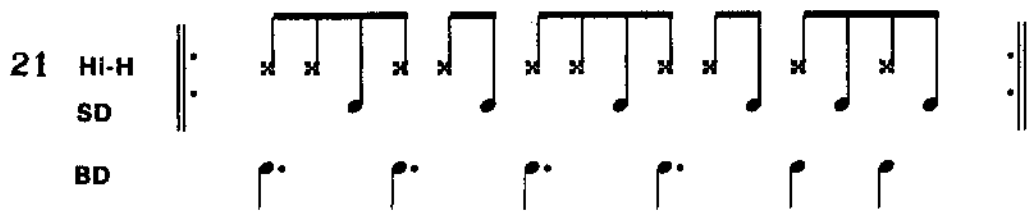
19 CYM. SD

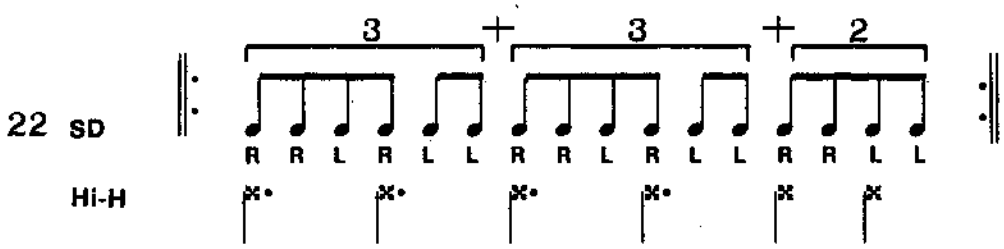


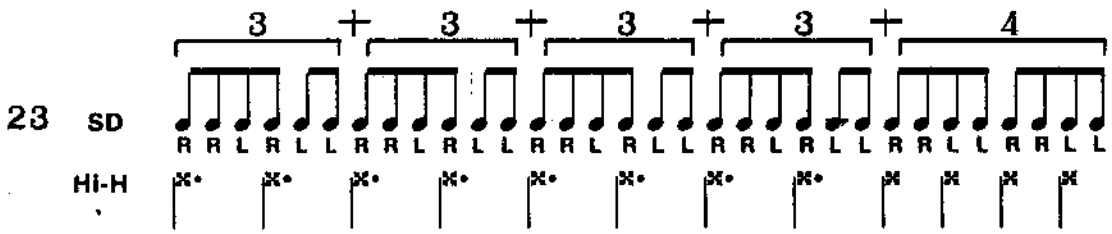
20 CYM. SD



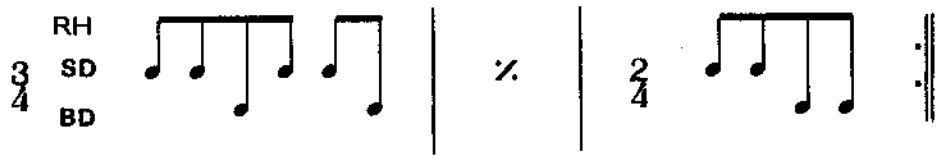
Right hand on hi-hat closed, or opening and closing. Left hand on snare drum.



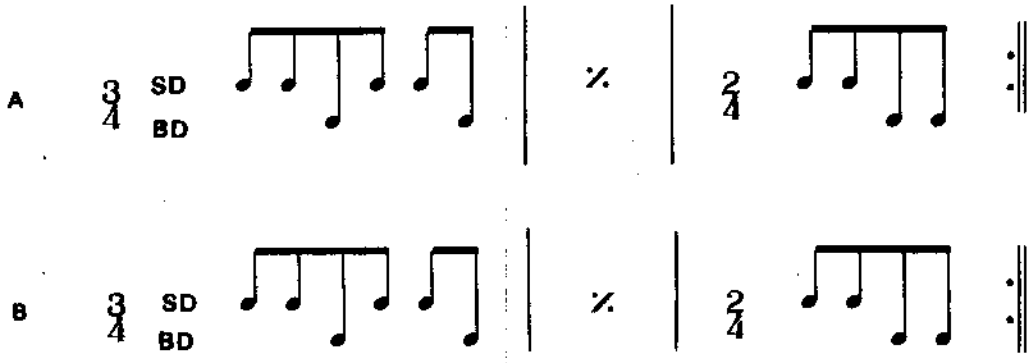


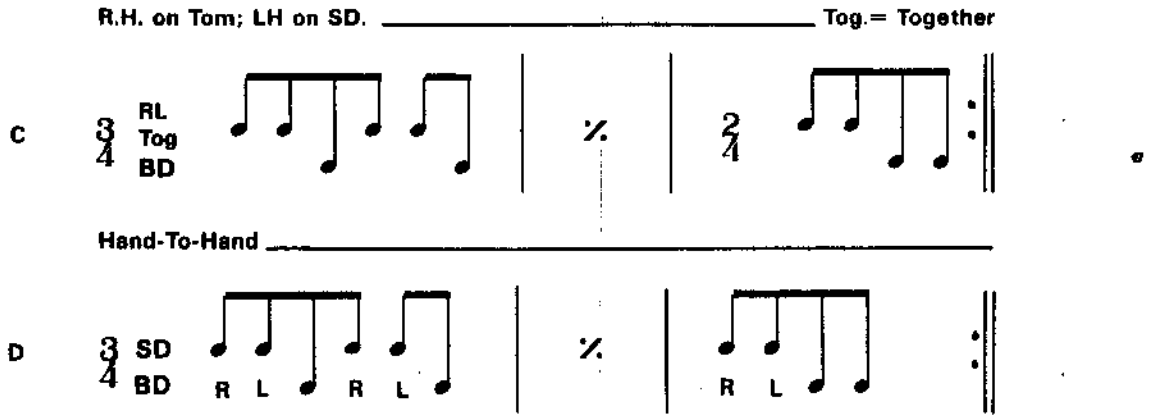


Basic Rhythm

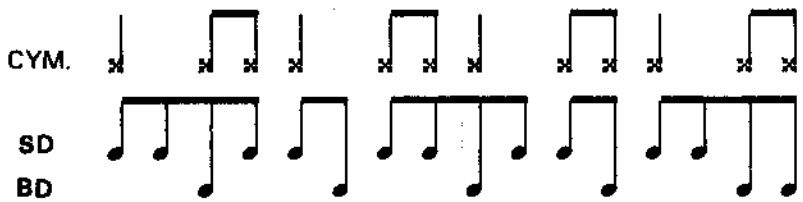


This rhythm and tonal pattern should be practiced as shown here:

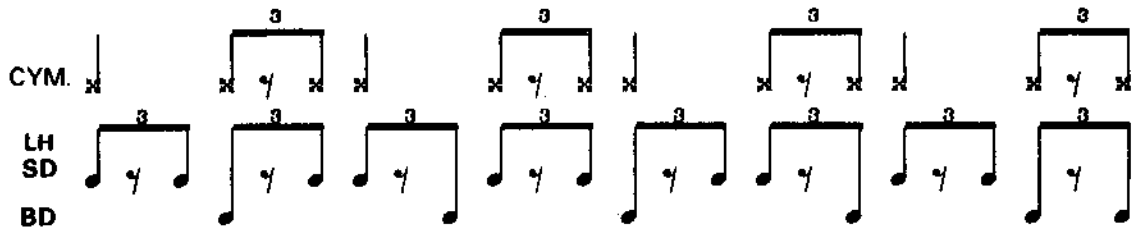




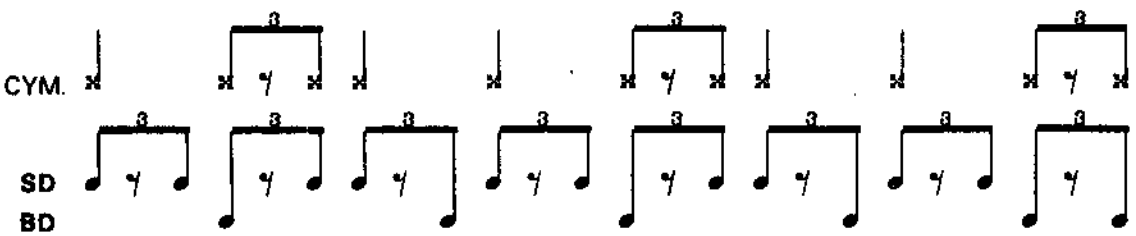
Here, the cymbal rhythm is written as quarters and regular eighths in order to show the connection between the cymbal, snare drum, and bass drum rhythms. In fast tempos, in fact, the cymbal rhythm may be played as, or nearly as, quarters and regular eighths.



In moderate and moderate-fast tempos, the eighths are played as, or nearly as, broken-triplet eighths (jazz eighths), as shown here:

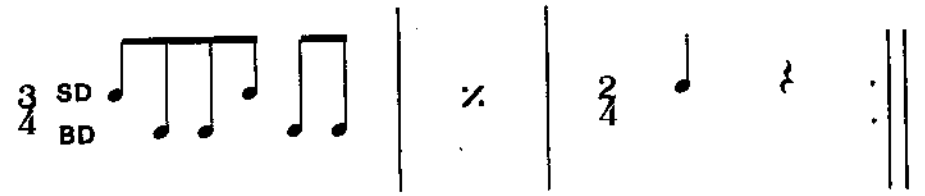


Cymbal rhythm variation:

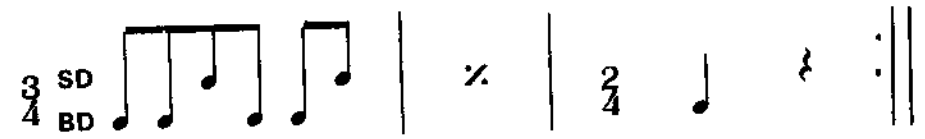


Additional patterns: Use sticking of your choice, include toms.

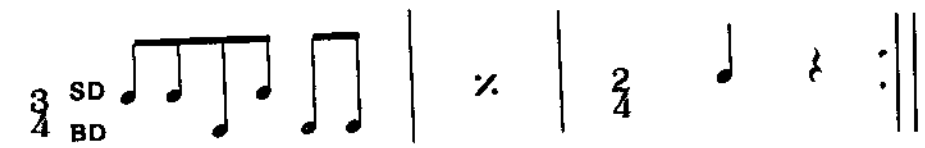
A



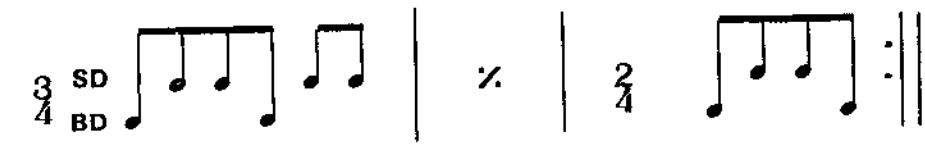
B



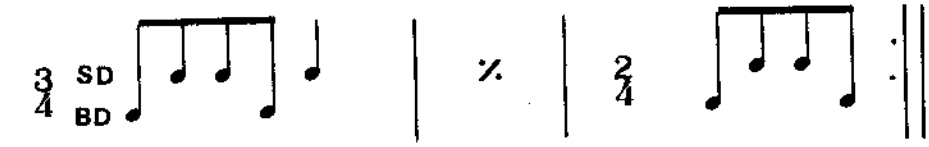
C



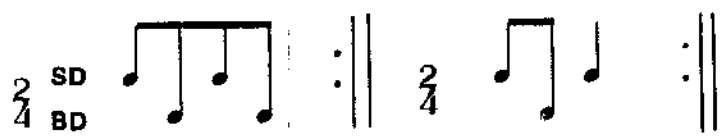
D

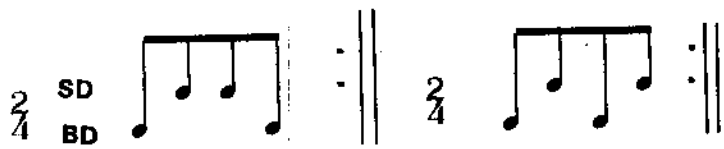


E

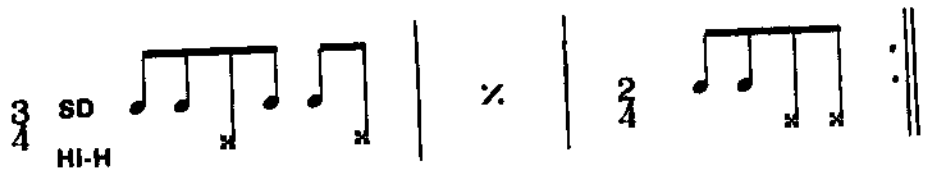


All of the two-four measures are interchangeable. Therefore, each of them should be practiced with the three-four rhythms:



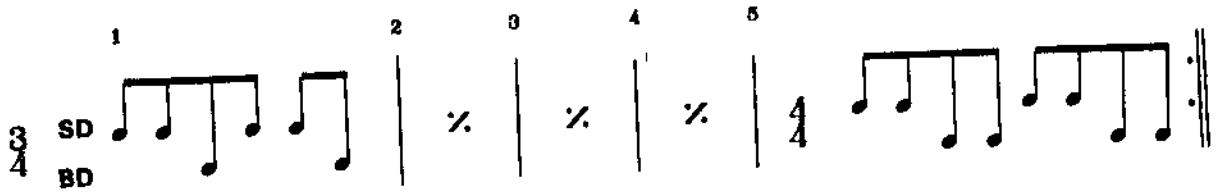


Now, replay all the 3+3+2 patterns, but this time play the foot rhythms on the hi-hat instead of the bass drum. Example:

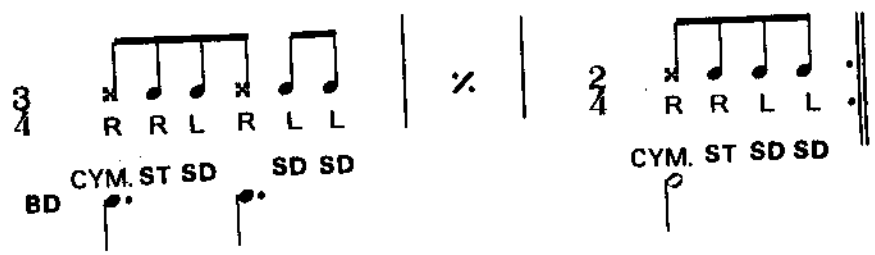


Now, replay all the 3+3+2 patterns again, this time, however, divide the foot rhythms between the bass drum and the hi-hat. Example:

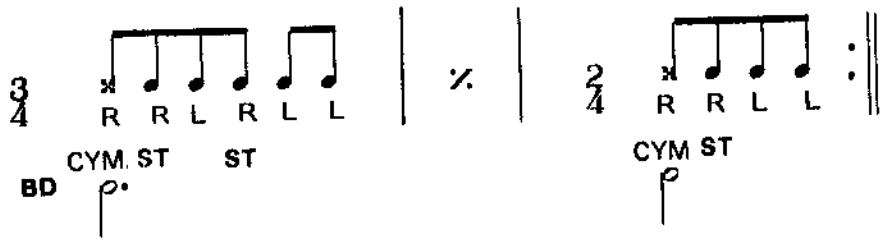
Convert the 3+3+2 patterns into 3+3+3+3+4 patterns. Example:

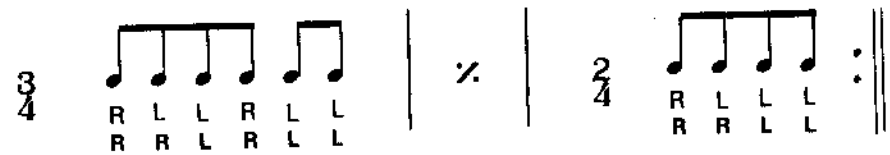


The bass drum may be played each time the cymbal is struck.



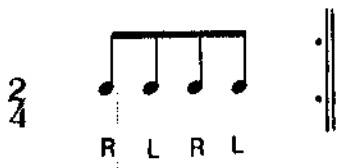
Notes not designated for other parts of the drum set are played on the snare drum.





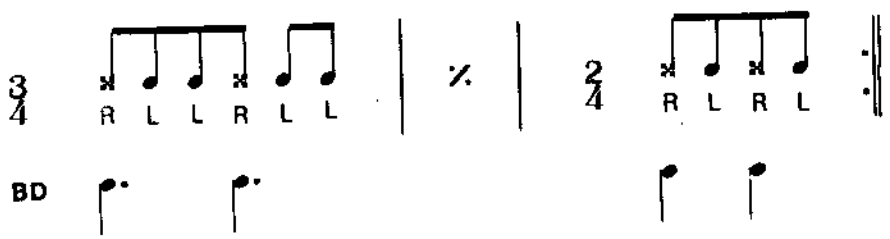
Right hand moves clockwise, then counter-clockwise around the toms. The bass drum may be omitted, or it may play on the numbers 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2.

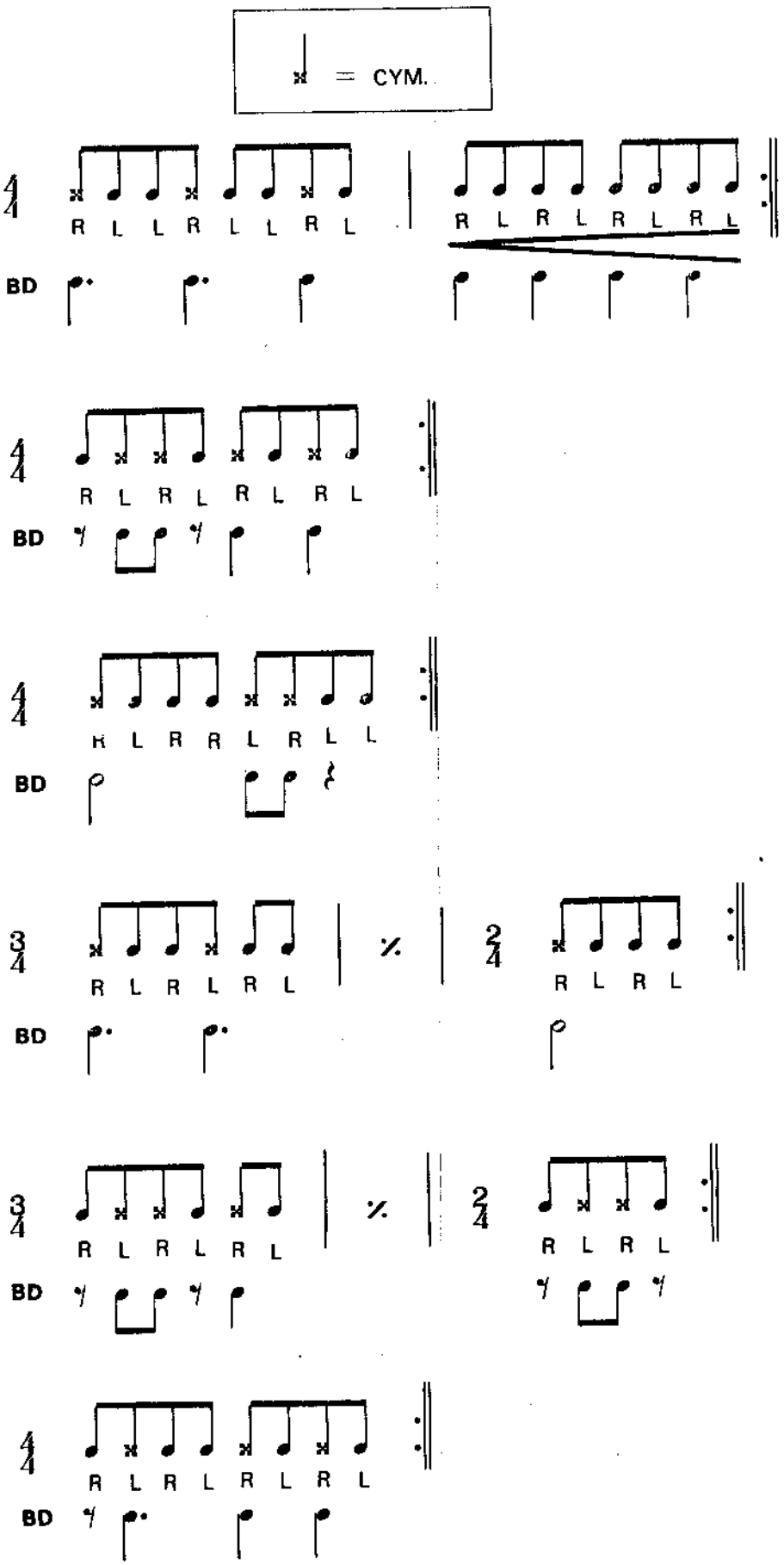
The following two-four bar may be used interchangeably with the original two-four bar:

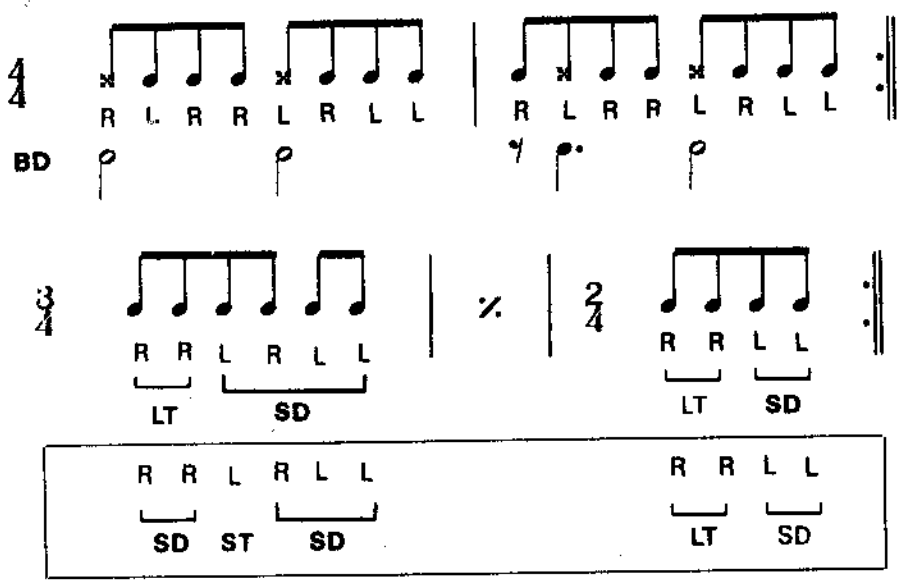


Practice variation: hi-hat is played (manipulated with the foot) each time the right hand strikes a tom. The hi-hat sound may be closed ("chick" sound made by snapping the hi-hat shut tightly with the foot), or it may be open (snap the hi-hat pedal with a sudden motion of the foot, releasing it instantly so that it pops open, allowing it to ring.

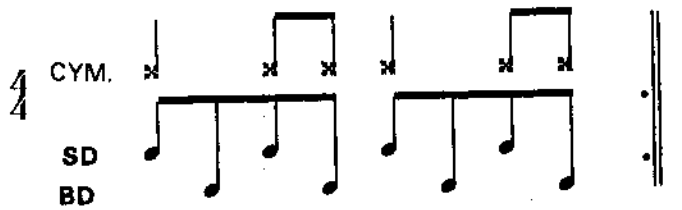
Here, use top cymbals in place of the toms:

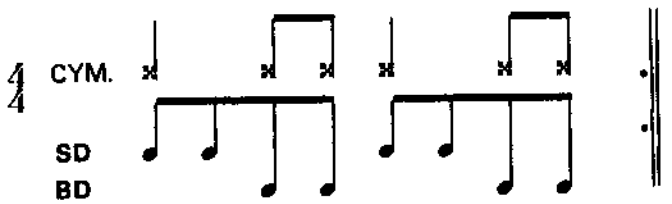


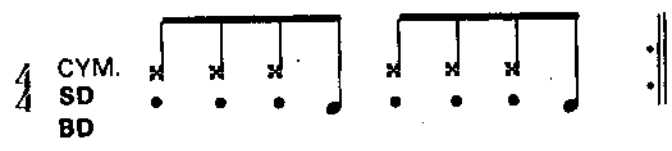




The right hand moves back and forth between two, or more, large toms. The bass drum may play on the numbers 1 2 3, 1 2 3, 1 2. Or, the bass drum may play on the first beat of each bar only.





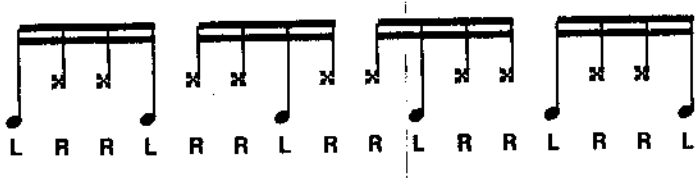


Practice Approach

Rather than constantly seeking out the one of each measure, experiment by thinking in terms of ¼ time, hearing the pulse as 1-1-1-1-, etc., or as a sound such as da-da-da-da-, similar to a bass line. In this way, you are not tied down to, say, the 1 2 3 4 of the measure; you are free to improvise various figures and phrases in succession without the constriction of bar lines. You will be able to stay in tempo while moving freely throughout the piece. Of course, when practicing with records, or jamming with other musicians, you must *listen* to what is going on around you and *relate* your drumming to the music and to the ideas of the other musicians. (See section on drums-band interaction.)

Ways of Practice

- Practice each line separately from the others.
- Play consecutively, going from one line directly into the next line.
- Add the bass drum where not written in the music.
- Substitute the hi-hat for the bass drum.
- Divide the bass drum rhythm between the hi-hat and the bass drum.
- Play the left-hand rhythms on the toms instead of the snare drum.
- Divide the left-hand rhythms between the snare drum and the toms.
- Play the snare drum rhythms on the cymbal with the left hand, while playing the cymbal rhythm with the right hand on the snare drum. The bass drum plays only when the cymbal plays.
- Play the snare drum part with the left hand, while playing the cymbal part with the right hand, going back and forth between the small tom and the large tom. Follow the same procedure, except that this time the right hand will go from snare drum to small tom to large tom to snare drum, etc., clockwise around the drums.
- Play the snare drum part with the hi-hat (left foot), while playing the cymbal part with the bass drum (right foot). Then reverse the procedure. The hands are not used here.
- Experiment with the numerous combinations possible in the playing of these rhythms.
- The rhythms should be used for solos as well as drums-band interaction.
- Depending upon the tempo in which they are played, these rhythms should also be practiced as sixteenths and eighths, as well as the way they are written—quarters and eighths.



- The practice routine rhythms are applicable to jazz-rock, some soul, fusion, and rock, as well as jazz.
- All of the rhythms may be either repeated or followed by playing a form of time on the cymbal or by going on to other patterns of your choice, as one would in performance.
- The rhythm patterns should be applied to music: twelve beats within three measures of four-four or four measures of three-four; sixteen beats within four measures of four-four; eight beats within two measures of four-four. By altering the note groupings one can and should, use them in other time signatures, too.
- The rhythm patterns should not be thought of only in such groupings as 3+3+2 or 3+3+3+3+4, etc. Rather they may be extended, say, for as many groups of 3's, 2's or 5's as the drummer feels will best suit the music.
- These rhythms are presented here in their simplest form merely to illustrate as clearly as possible the rhythmic device of using one meter within the framework of another meter. When used in the course of musical exchanges between drummer and band they may become as complex as the occasion warrants or permits.
- You don't have to think in terms of predetermined exact groupings of notes as shown in the practice routines. When thoroughly familiar with the rhythms, you may play as few or as many two-beat, three-beat, five-beat units, etc., or combinations of such units and return to cymbal rhythms or other punctuations, figures and phrases when ready. When returning, listen to the chord changes and the bass line to determine where you are in the music. However, when the piano and bass are playing modally there are not any changes to listen for. Usually, at such times, one member of the group may gradually introduce segments of the theme, to which the other musicians respond, and he is eventually joined (possibly on a predetermined riff) by other members of the group in returning to the theme.

THE SONG FORM AND THE JAZZ DRUMMER

From the beginning, or nearly from the beginning, the talented self-taught drummer is able to keep time, stay in meter, and adhere to the chorus (song) form. How he does so without formal training is a question that even science with all its accumulated knowledge and theories cannot answer with certainty. Evidently, these abilities are inherent to him. He can assimilate what he sees and hears and computerize relevant data in his brain—mainly, perhaps, at a subconscious level—and reproduce it at will. Of course, this is an oversimplification of what is probably a biochemical, neuropsychological process of some complexity. Nevertheless, naturally gifted or otherwise, the student who studies jazz drumming *must* be able to stay in tempo, stay in meter, and adhere to the song form. These imperatives, therefore, cannot be disregarded by either the student or the teacher.

Here, we will outline the drummer's relation to the chorus form. Let's begin by defining briefly what we mean by the song (chorus) form.

By form we mean the structural design (mold, framework) in musical composition, the art of combining musical ideas into a unified whole.

The chorus form and jazz drumming go together. What the drummer plays relates to the structure of the musical composition. Therefore, the rhythmic-tonal phrases, sequences and climaxes played by the drummer are interrelated with the musical contributions of the other players within the framework of the phrases, periods, and choruses of the song form.

An excellent example of the progressive drummer's adherence to the chorus form is given by Tony Williams on the tune "Straight Ahead" (Kenny Durham album *Una Mas*, Blue Note BST—84127.) The climatic ascending rhythms of the group at the end of eight bars, sixteen bars, and thirty-two bars are easily discernible. But for the elementary drum student, or for that matter even an intermediate student, progressive jazz may be too difficult to comprehend for use as a starting point. For such students it would be best to select simpler examples, such as Philly Joe Jones on the piece "Squeeze Me," Miles Davis album, *Cookin' with Miles Davis*, Prestige 7094, or similar music.

It is best for the teacher to demonstrate with a relatively simple jazz recording such as some of the older Three Sounds trio jazz albums (Blue Note), or one of the Music Minus One record albums, such as the *All Star Rhythm Section, Sing or Play Along*, MMO Volume 2. This rhythm section has Don Abney on piano, Jimmy Raney on guitar, Kenny Clarke on drums, and Oscar Pettiford on bass. The rhythm section plays exceptionally good, steady, mellow time and is ideal for the student to play along with. Another album for this purpose, although a bit more complex, is *Blue Drums*, MMO 4005, with Mal Waldron on piano and Wendel Marshal on bass (no drummer on this one). The album deals with the chorus form and also contains the most basic drum charts (sometimes referred to as "skeleton charts").

When the student drummer understands the chorus form, all material dealing with jazz form drumming must be practiced with jazz records. Why? Because there is a world of difference between practicing such material with and without the music for which it was intended. The principles and techniques of modern jazz drumming must be applied to the music of which they are an essential part. Repeated listening and playing with such records offers the novice drummer the opportunity to familiarize himself thoroughly with the work of good professional jazz musicians. In the process, with skillful guidance and coaching, the student will develop the invaluable habit of *listening* to the musical ideas and techniques of the other instrumentalists—that is, tuning in to their timing, ideas, and phrasing. And hopefully the feeling and the interpretive qualities of the recorded musicians will be absorbed by the student drummer and tucked away in his mind as reference points for eventual use in his own playing.

Because this is not a beginner's book, it is assumed that the students who will use this book are already well-versed in the chorus form. Moreover, we believe that the majority of drumming instructors who will use this book in their teaching are experienced in chorus form usage. But for those drummers who are not, we offer the following:

This is an analysis of the 32 measure chorus, in this case, the A-A-B-A form. (Each letter consists of eight measures.)

The first letter A states the theme (melody). The second letter A repeats the theme. The letter B consists of a contrasting theme which is inserted for the purpose of variety. The B section is known as the bridge, middle, channel, or release. The final letter A is the original A repeated in its exact form, or in a modified form in order to complete the song.

A	A	B	A
theme	theme	contrasting	theme
• (melody)	(melody)	theme	(melody)

Note: The melody is not stated on the MMO Volume 2 album. Rather, the pianist plays (comps) the chords of the song. On the *Blue Drums* album the melody is stated on the first and last choruses.

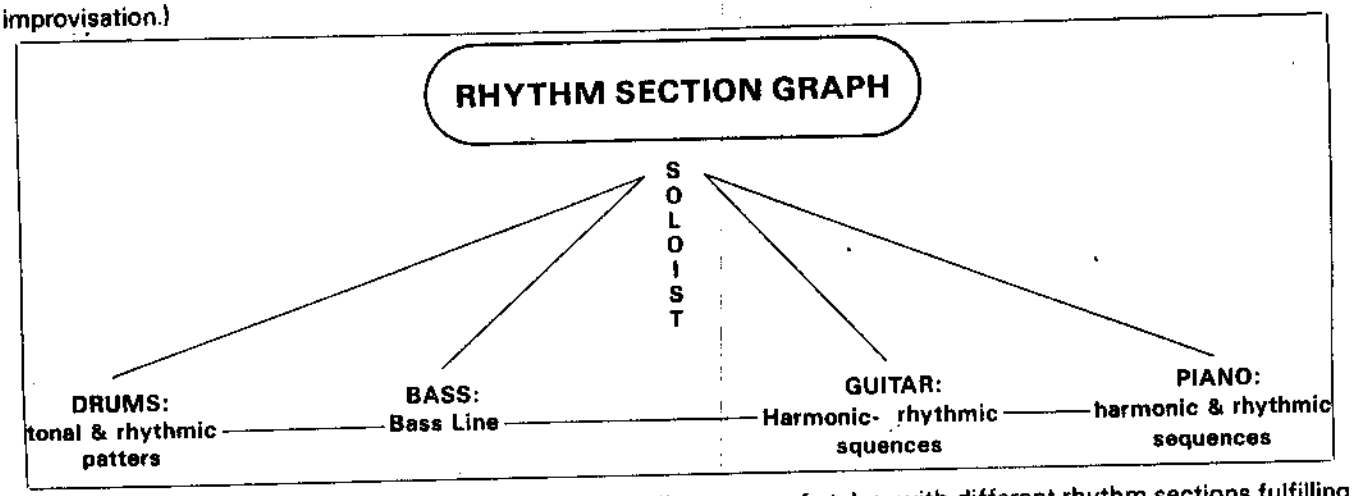
Examples of A-A-B-A songs: "I May Be Wrong," "Poor Butterfly," "Lady Be Good," "The Twister," "Too Marvelous for Words," "Red Cross," "Chasin' the Bird," "Anthropology," "Lover Man," "Scrapple from the Apple," "Hot House," "Perdio," "Constellation," "Marmaduke," "Steeplechase," "52nd St. Theme," "Straight Ahead." Examples of 12 bar blues: "Billie's Bounce," "Now's the Time," "Symphony Sid." Examples of A (16 bars) B (16 bars) tunes: "How High the Moon," "Donna Lee," "I Remember April," "Out of Nowhere," "Ornithology," "Grovin' High." The song "Indiana" is an A-B-A-C form: Original melody, contrasting melody, original melody, still another contrasting melody.

THE RHYTHM SECTION

The overall rhythm line is composed of one or more different rhythms occurring simultaneously (polyrhythmically)—that is, the rhythms of the bass, piano (and/or keyboards), guitar, and drums (possibly other percussion too). In improvisation the varied rhythms occur spontaneously. They comprise punctuations, figures, and phrases. Where the piano (keyboards), bass, and guitar are concerned, the rhythm line is harmonic and rhythmic. In the case of the drums (percussion), the contributions are tonal and rhythmic.

The rhythm section, therefore, "feeds" the soloist a series of melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic sequences in the form of a "rhythm line." Basically, the soloist builds on this line, which is based on a song form (except in free-form music, which has no predetermined form), for instance, a 32-bar tune, a 12-bar blues.

The members of the rhythm section listen to, relate to, and interact with one another both individually and collectively. They play off one another's ideas as well as their own. They also, individually and collectively, listen to, relate to, and interact with the soloist. At the same time, the soloist listens to, relates to, and interacts with the members of the rhythm section individually and collectively. (See section on drums-band interaction and improvisation.)



Within the framework of contemporary jazz, there is a divergence of styles, with different rhythm sections fulfilling their roles in very different ways. First, let's look briefly at a typical format for what may be considered mainstream—updated swing or bop-oriented—jazz.

The bass fiddle plays what is known as a "walking" bass line—a basic quarter-note pattern (1,2,3,4) with some variations. Rhythmic inflections may be added by the bassist. That is, the bass line is ornamented by punctuations and some figures, such as triplet-eighths or "skip" figures. Moreover, the bassist links harmony and rhythm together.

Sometimes the bass player will play the first chorus (the theme) in "two," (on the 1 and the 3) then go into "four" (on 1,2,3,4) on the "blowin" choruses (the improvisation).

The drummer will play the cymbal ride rhythm and its variations across the four of the bass fiddle line, with occasional snare and bass drum punctuations and figures. He does not necessarily play the bass drum in four. If he does, it may be done softly with the punctuations played more strongly. Or he may omit the four of the bass drum and use it instead for punctuations and figures in the manner of the left hand on the snare drum. (Buddy Rich is a good example of the drummer who plays the bass drum in four, mixed with some bass drum punctuations and occasional figures. In Buddy's case, both the bass drum and the top cymbal state the four along with the bassist.) The hi-hat is played on two and four of the bar, either heavily or lightly depending on the drummer's style.

Even though the bass fiddle and the drums both state the four-to-the-bar pulse, the bassist usually stays close to the four pulse, whereas the drummer may become more rhythmically complex, playing intermittently off and around the four-four of the bass line.

If a guitarist is used, he may play "time" in the form of chords four to the bar, or he may comp in the manner of the piano. (Freddie Green of the Count Basie band is an example of the rhythm guitarist supreme.) When both piano and guitar comp there is a danger of one getting in the way of the other. A conflict of this sort can wreak havoc in a rhythm section.

For examples of big-band rhythm sections, listen to the bands of Count Basie (mainstream), Buddy Rich (his charts are more complex than Basie's), Mel Lewis (a "hip" mixture of styles), Woody Herman (jazz and fusion oriented), and Maynard Ferguson (of the fusion variety).

For small groups, study the Miles Davis rhythm section of Red Garland on piano, Paul Chambers on bass, and Philly Joe Jones on drums. It was the most popular of its day and was known as *the* rhythm section. You can hear them on *Cookin' with the Miles Davis Quintet,* Prestige records, 7094; *Relaxin' with the Miles Davis Quintet,* Prestige records, 7192; *Miles,* Prestige records, 7014. This section was relaxed, flowing, and swinging and in its day was considered progressive. Today it would be considered the best of "hip," more or less—straight-ahead playing of the highest quality!

Most certainly, study the Miles Davis rhythm section of Herbie Hancock on piano, Ron Carter on bass, and Tony Williams on drums: *Miles Davis Four & More,* Columbia CS 9253; *Miles Smiles,* Columbia CS 9401. In fact, listen to all records on which this section plays.

There was much more musical interplay (coinciding, echoing, answering, etc.) between members of the section itself, as well as between the rhythm section and the horns, in the latter rhythm section (Williams, Carter, Hancock) than in the former (Jones, Garland, Chambers). This is not to say that one section was better than the other. Each, in fact, was first-class in its particular style.

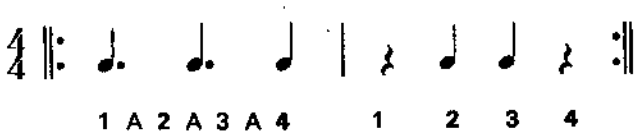
In the more avant-garde rhythm sections, such as heard on Joe Farrell's album *Moon Germs* (Stanley Clarke, bass; Herbie Hancock, keyboard; Jack De Johnette, drums), the interaction is more complex than the previously named rhythm sections. This is especially true of guitarist John Abercrombie's rhythm section on the albums *Timeless* EMC 1074 (De Johnette, drums; Jan Hammer, Keyboards), and *Gateway,* ECM 1061 (Dave Holland, bass; De Johnette, drums).

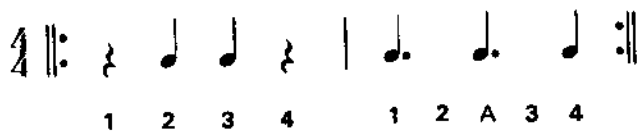
Editor's note: Listen to all records on which Jack De Johnette plays.

THE CLAVE RHYTHM: UNIVERSAL RHYTHM

The clave rhythm has been called a universal rhythm because it often serves as an underlying pattern in more than one form of music, for instance, jazz, rock, fusion, as well as Latin, with which it is commonly associated.

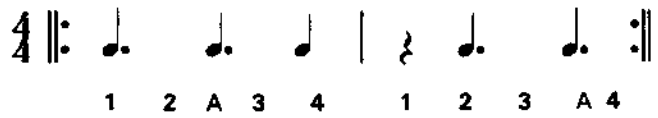
Basic clave:



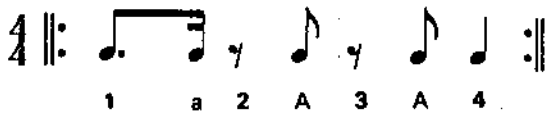


On some tunes it is reversed (remember the old standard, "Peanut Vendor"?):

There is a difference of only a half-beat (which occurs in the second bar) between the clave rhythm and the bossa-nova rhythm:

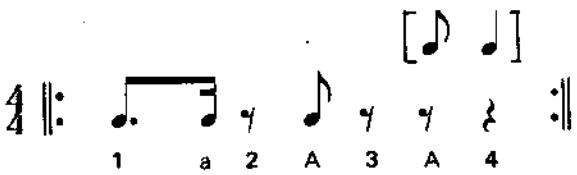


In rock, the clave rhythm takes place in the space of one measure:



Listen to the bassist play off the clave rhythm on the Stealy Dan album, *Aja*, ABC Records Inc. AB-1006 on the tunes "Black Cow," and "I've Got the News." Even when the entire rhythm isn't spelled out, it is nevertheless implied and felt.

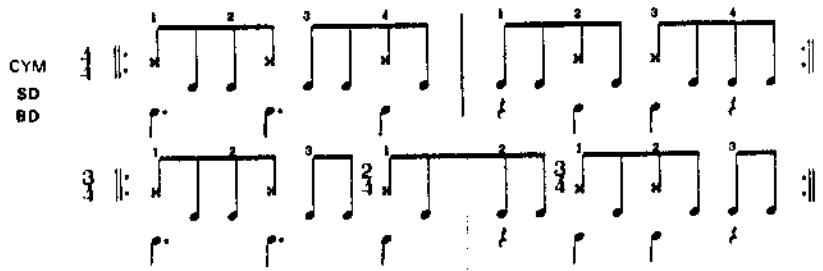
For example, on "Black Cow"—the second half of the bar—the two consecutive notes are felt (implied) rather than stated:



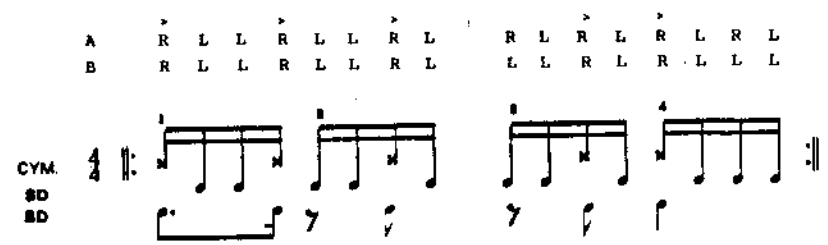
An additional example is found on the Herbie Hancock album, *Thrust*, tune "Actual Proof," Columbia PC 32965. And listen to the rhythmic patterns, which are part of the chart (arrangement) as well as Buddy's fills, on the tunes "Ya Gotta Try," and the "Tales of Rhoda Rat," from the album *Buddy Rich Plays and Plays and Plays*, RCA CPL 1-2273.

This type of rhythmic pulse is characteristic of the music of the Grateful Dead, and prompted a writer in a *Modern Recording & Music* magazine article to say that "The Dead drummers rarely rely on a traditional 4/4 rock and roll backbeat . . ."

The 3+3+2 and allied patterns are rooted in the clave rhythm. Here, we have the same rhythm written in different time signatures. Notice the clave rhythm on the bass drum:



Practice playing around the clave rhythm in rock as follows:

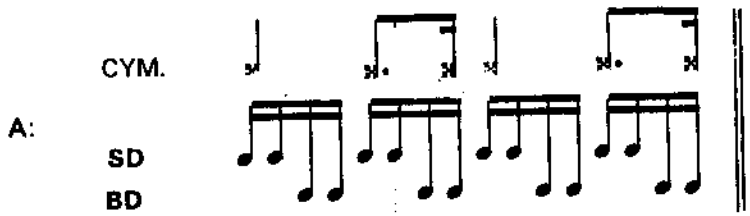


PHRASING: THINK LIKE A HORN

Phrasing is the manner in which a phrase is rendered or interpreted.

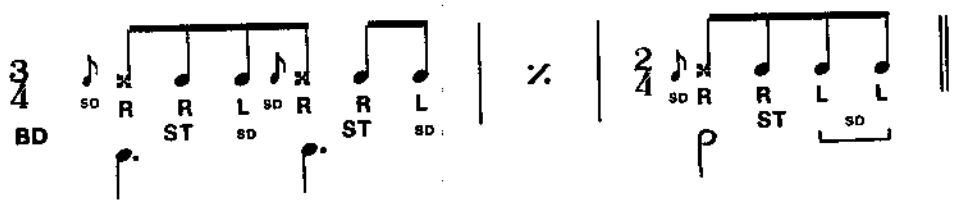
Phrasing with a jazz interpretation is one of the essential ingredients of musical jazz drumming. *Don't* ignore it! And *don't* think and phrase drumistically or rudimentally. Rudimental phrasing is right for rudimental drumming, but not for jazz.

Yes, jazz drummers, whether they are aware of it or not, do use some rudiments—flams, drags, ruffs, stroke rolls, etc., but they are phrased and applied differently in jazz than they are in rudimental drumming. Doubles, for instance, are sometimes applied as shown in example A:



Stroke rolls may be applied this way, ex. B:

Flams can be *very* effective in jazz as can drags too and so on. Try this rhythm divided among top cymbal, small tom, and snare drum, ex. C:



About Rudiments

Rudiments are merely names for various rhythmic patterns. Charles L. White, in his very interesting and informative book, *Drums Through the Ages*, tells us that rudimental drumming dates back to 1758, when King Charles I of England put it to the English drummers that they play "marching beats exactly alike." The various beats used at that time for marching were eventually standardized and developed into the twenty-six rudiments of drumming. (*Drums Through the Ages*, by Charles L. White, 1960, The Sterling Press, Los Angeles, California.)

Jazz phrasing on the drum set can be developed by emulating the figures and phrases of a horn, piano, or guitar. For example, when practicing with a record, select some of the phrases played by the soloist and echo them immediately on the drum set. Then emulate the figures and phrases simultaneously (coinciding) with the soloist. Do the same with ensemble phrases and the comping of the pianist.

You will find that the rhythmic ideas of the horns and other soloists are similar to, or even the same as, those played by some of the best jazz drummers. This is not a coincidence. Rather, it shows that the particularly musical jazz drummers are considerably more "in tune" with the musical ideas and interpretations of the horns than is commonly believed by drummers and drum instructors alike.

Pianist Herbie Hancock's playing is an excellent source of ideas. The way he comps behind the soloist, extending phrases across bar lines, etc., is ideal for drummers to work with.

When playing a phrase, don't always play all the notes exactly the same, unless that is the desired interpretation. Think of the notes as individuals, each with different, distinct characteristics: One short and fat, another tall and thin, still another of medium build, and so on. (Such imagery is one of the ways noted musician and teacher John La Porta deals with interpretation.)

EXPERIMENT WITH MUSCULAR TENSION

In the course of practicing, experiment with muscular tension. Loosen your muscles allowing them to "let go," to become as limp as possible while retaining only that degree of tension needed to grip and manipulate the drumsticks, bass drum, and hi-hat pedals. Then, while playing, gradually increase the muscular tension to its maximum. Notice at *which* degree of tension your drumming feels and sounds best. Listen to the difference in tone and be aware of the difference in the "feel" and musical expression at *each level* of muscular tension. Thoroughly familiarize yourself with varying degrees of muscular tension and the ensuing bodily sensations. Eventually, if not immediately, depending on how well you are in touch with your body, you will notice that too much muscular tension results in excessive tightness and possibly rigidity, and that overly tight muscles can result in muscle fatigue, which considerably lessens endurance and control. Invariably, timing also suffers.

Find the degree of muscular intensity that serves your needs best. And remember that, in the course of performing, muscular intensity, as well as mental and emotional intensity, varies, sometimes considerably.

When listening to and observing another drummer, focus your attention on the cymbal, snare, bass drum, and hi-hat rhythms as played at each level of intensity and volume.

BODY MOTION

In a sense, playing the drum set is like dancing. A dancer moves around the stage with his legs serving as the means of locomotion, while the remainder of his body moves in harmony with his legs. The whole body is involved in the dance.

A drummer plays the drum set with his hands and feet, and this involves the arms and legs also. But there is no reason for the remainder of his body to remain immobile. Arms and shoulders do not have to remain in fixed positions. Expression can be channeled through body motion, a shoulder, arm, or torso—sort of body English.

This is not to say that the drummer must use maximum body motion, if he can attain the desired results with a minimum of motion. The point is that he should do what enables him to be the most expressive musically. He should not, therefore, be afraid to experiment with body motion. But neither should he waste valuable energy on motions that do not contribute to his musical performance merely for the sake of showmanship.

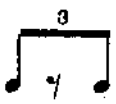
BOOK II:
INTRODUCTION

Because they lend themselves so well to jazz played in moderate to moderate-fast tempos, eighth-note triplets (jazz-eighths too, of course*) serve as a base upon which the jazz drummer builds his rhythmic structure and from which he draws rhythmic punctuations, figures, phrases, fills, solos, and time-generating and time-keeping patterns.

This section, therefore, consists of rhythmic and tonal patterns and variations that are used by such outstanding drummer-musicians as Elvin Jones, Roy Haynes, Tony Williams, among others. (Publishers note: Jack De Johnette included.)

Where, when, and *how* these triplet patterns are played, of course, makes the difference between a mediocre and an excellent rendition. Here is where having a working knowledge of the principles and techniques of drums/band interaction and improvisation, as well as the nuances of interpretation, come into play. The subtile differences in timing (spacing of notes), intensity (tension and relaxation) tone (hi, low, short, and long sounds)—these are the elements that separate the distinctive from the ordinary.

But *first* the drummer must have at his fingertips a repertoire of such rhythmic and tonal material upon which to draw, plus the technical skill necessary to apply it to the drums.



*Jazz-eighths: Regular eighth-notes played as, or nearly as, broken-eighth triplets:

When listening to the recorded examples, you will notice that a particular rhythm, or a similar one, may be applied to different drums each time it is played. Therefore, the same rhythm may sound different each time it is played. In this book, each rhythm is applied to the drum set in at least fifteen different ways.

Some Recorded Examples

Jack De Johnette's Directions, Untitled ECM 1074, tune "Flying Spirits." *The Ultimate Elvin Jones,* Blue Note BST 84305, tunes "Sometimes Joie," "What is this?" *Selflessness featuring My Favorite Things* (John Coltrane), Impulse records AS-9161, tune "My Favorite Things" (Roy Haynes on drums). Buddy Rich, *Keep the Customers Happy,* Liberty records LST 11006, tune "Keep the Customers Happy" (accompaniment to the trombone solo). *Chefry* (Stanley Turrentine), CTI 6017, tunes "The Revs," "Introspective" (Billy Cobham on drums). Dave Brubeck trio, *All the Things We Are,* Atlantic records SD 1684 (Alan Dawson plays drums on one side of the record, Roy Haynes on the reverse side). *Dave Brubeck Trio & Gerry Mulligan, Live at the Berlin Philharmonic,* Columbia 32143 (Alan Dawson on drums plays an excellent, exciting solo on "Indian Song." Instead of a pair of drumsticks, he uses one maraca and one drum stick.)

Ways Of Practice

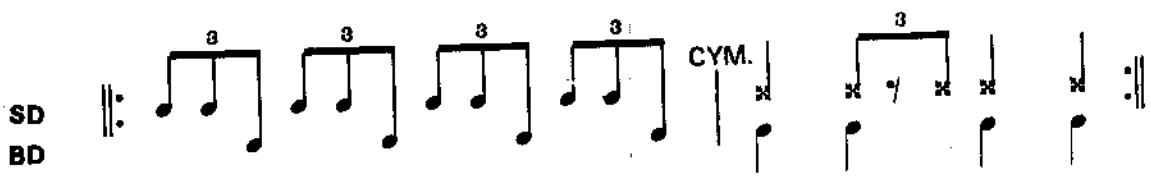
Repeat each one-bar pattern several times or more. However, endless repetitions are not necessary. Instead, play in a slow or very slow tempo while photographing and recording mentally what you see and hear, correlating what you see with what you hear. If you encounter particular difficulty try this: Play the rhythm once only, stop. Play it again, once only, stop. Repeat this procedure a few or more times until you feel the rhythm is fixed securely in your mind and body.

This approach often works far better than numerous repetitions. Educator Ernest Bayles put it this way: "It is not how many times a thing is done that counts. It is the grasp the learner has of it that makes the difference."

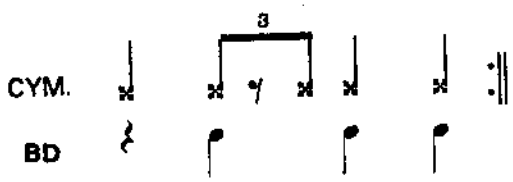
The mind must focus entirely on what the learner is learning, as he learns! If his mind wanders away from that in which his hands and feet are engaged, learning is impaired considerably!

Often it is better to spend a couple of minutes on one pattern several or more times throughout the day, than it is to spend a lot of time on it at one sitting. Moreover, if after a week or so of practicing a particular rhythm, you still experience difficulty, get away from it for a few days or more.

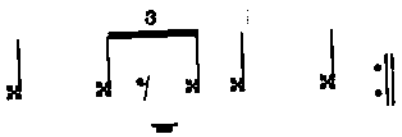
Follow each one-bar pattern with a bar of cymbal rhythm:



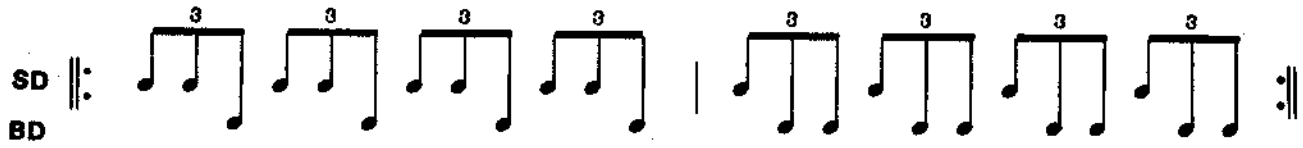
Note: The last note of the cymbal rhythm is omitted to allow you extra time in returning to the triplet rhythm pattern. Also, if you like, you may omit the first note of the bass drum rhythm in the cymbal rhythm bar, as shown here:



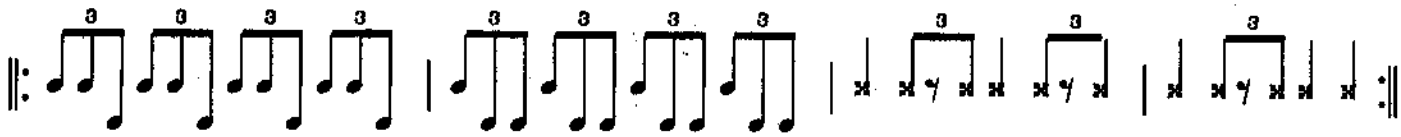
Or you may omit the bass drum when playing the cymbal rhythm:



Combine different one-bar patterns to form two-bar patterns:

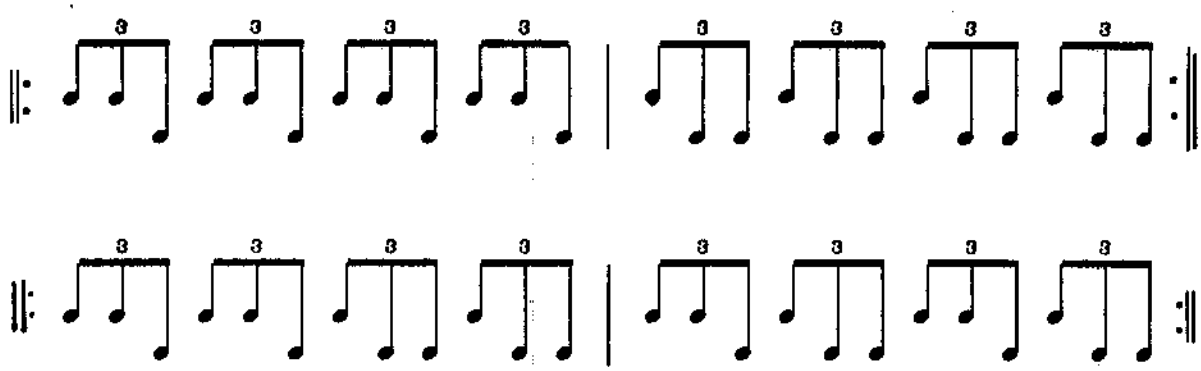


Practice repeating the two-bar pattern several or more times. Then follow the two-bar pattern with two bars of cymbal rhythm:



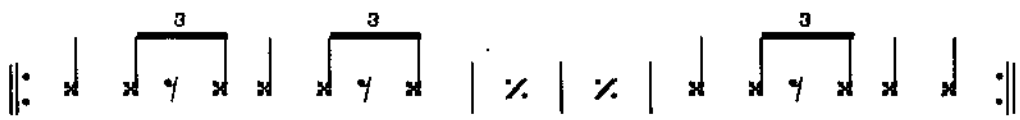
Repeat this four-bar sequence several or more times.

Combine individual patterns to form four-bar patterns:



Repeat the four-bar pattern several times; stop. Go on to the next four-bar pattern.

Follow the four-bar pattern with four bars of cymbal rhythm:



Using the procedure given here, form six-bar, eight-bar, twelve-bar, sixteen-bar, and thirty-two bar solos.

Another way of practicing is to play each page from top to bottom, going consecutively from one bar into the next bar.

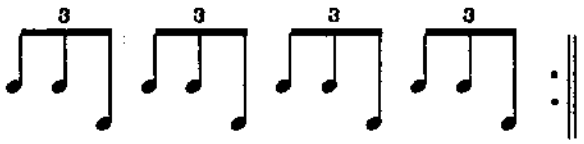
For easier reading, the notes designated for the hands (either one or two hands) are placed on one line (SD line). When you have reached the point where you can play the rhythms with ease, then, for the greatest musical effect, divide them among the snare drum and toms, or merely among the toms.

For example, the following rhythm, ex. A, for SD and BD, can be divided among the snare, small tom, and large tom (floor tom), ex. B. Use sticking of your choice:

Ex. A

SD

BD



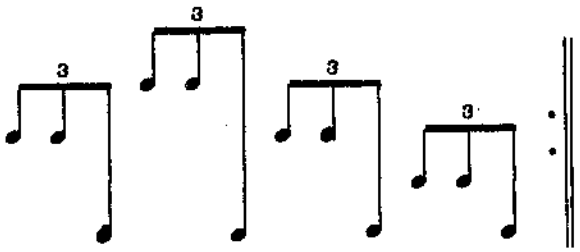
Ex. B.

ST

SD

LT

BD



If your set includes two small toms, try ex. C:

Ex. C

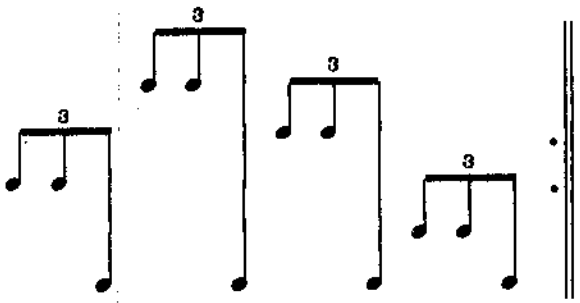
ST (1)

ST (2)

SD

LT

BD



For two small toms and two large toms, use ex. D:

Ex. D

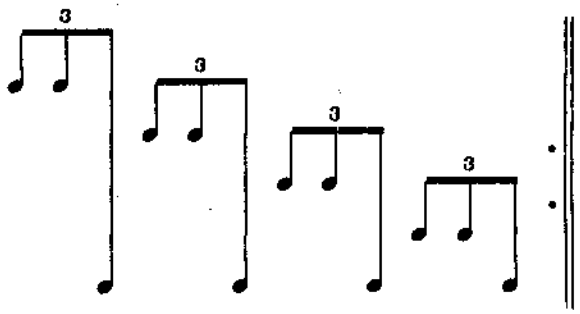
ST (1)

ST (2)

LT (1)

LT (2)

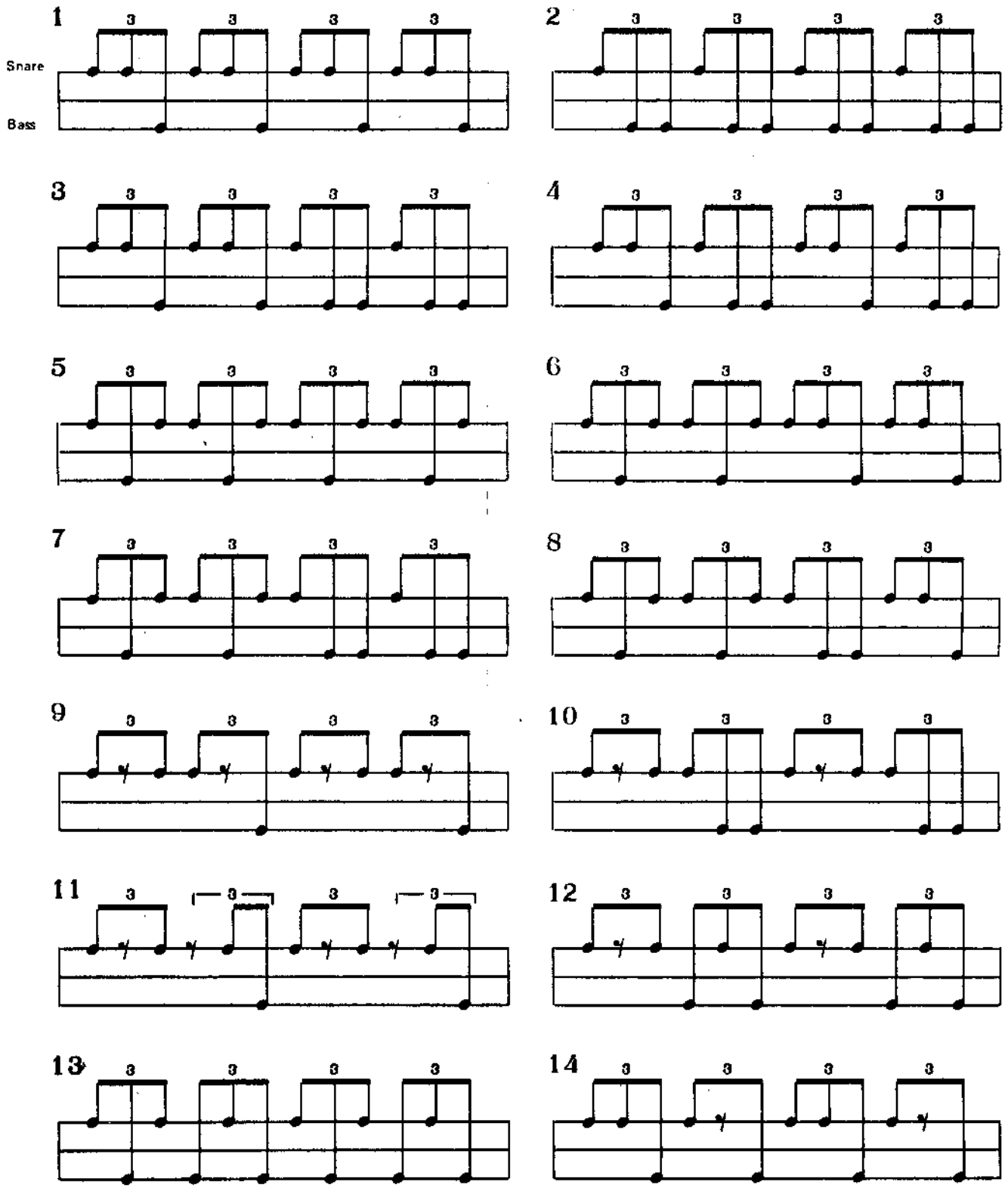
BD



PERFORMANCE PATTERNS

Play each exercise three ways:

1. *Play SD with RH.*
2. *Play SD with LH.*
3. *Play SD with alternating hands (r,l,r,l, etc.).*



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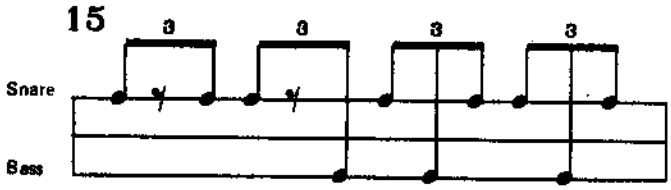

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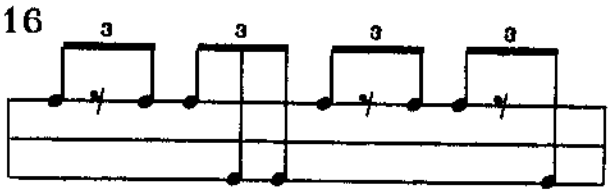

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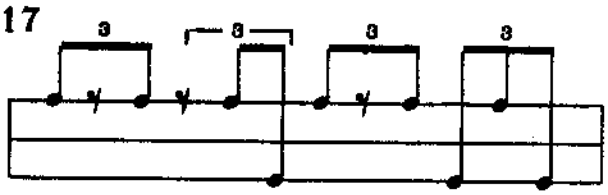

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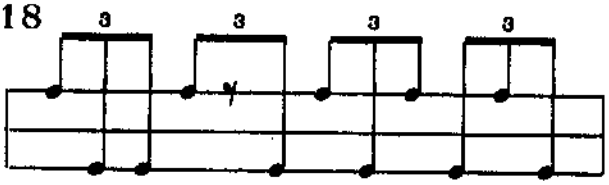

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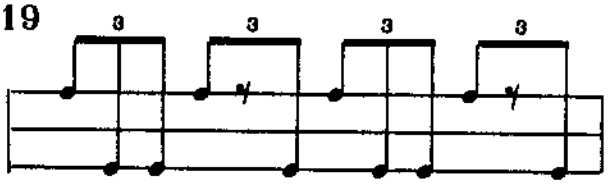

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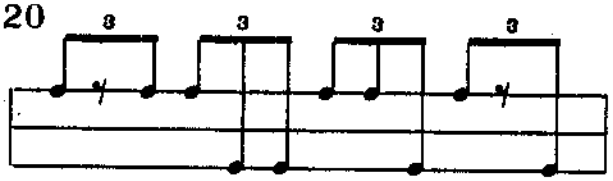

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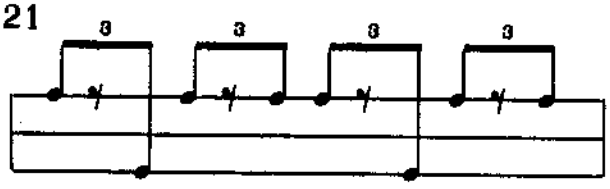

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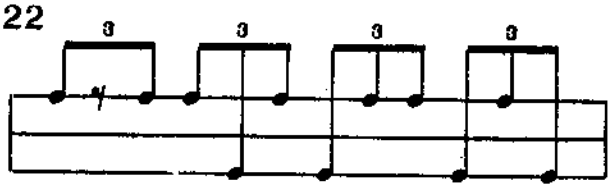

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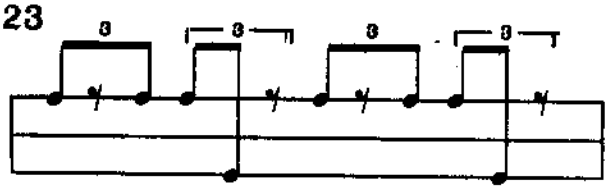

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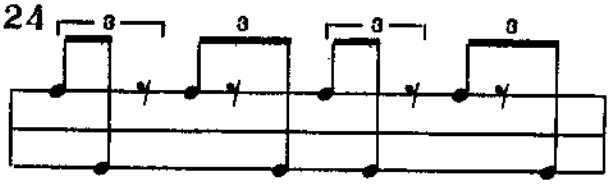

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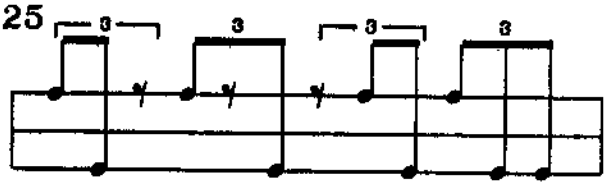

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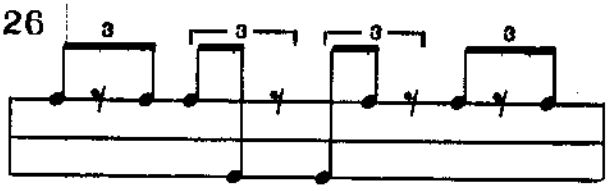

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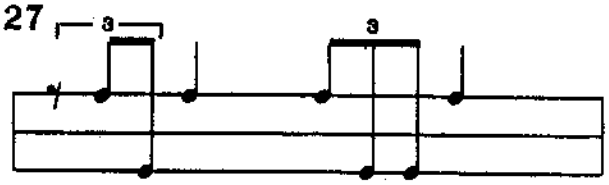

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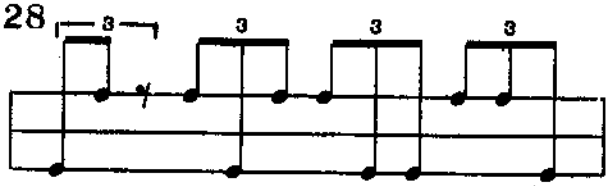

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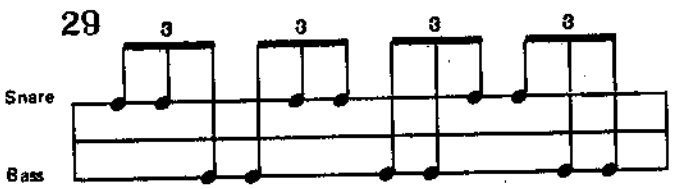

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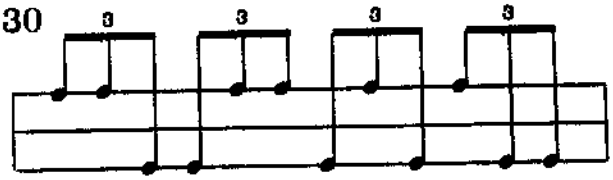

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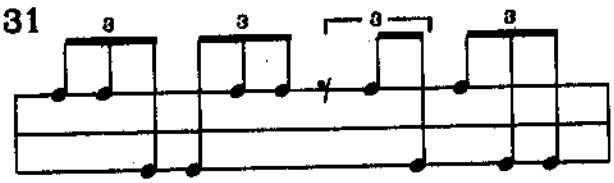

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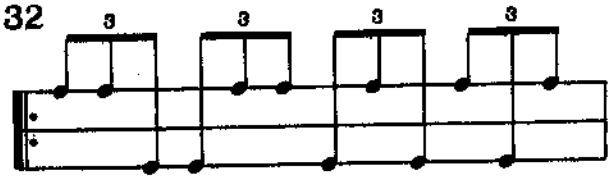
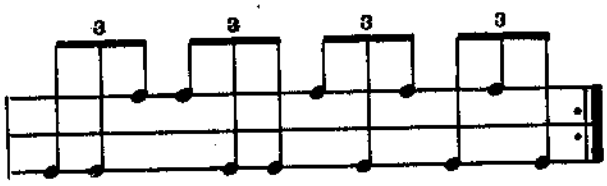
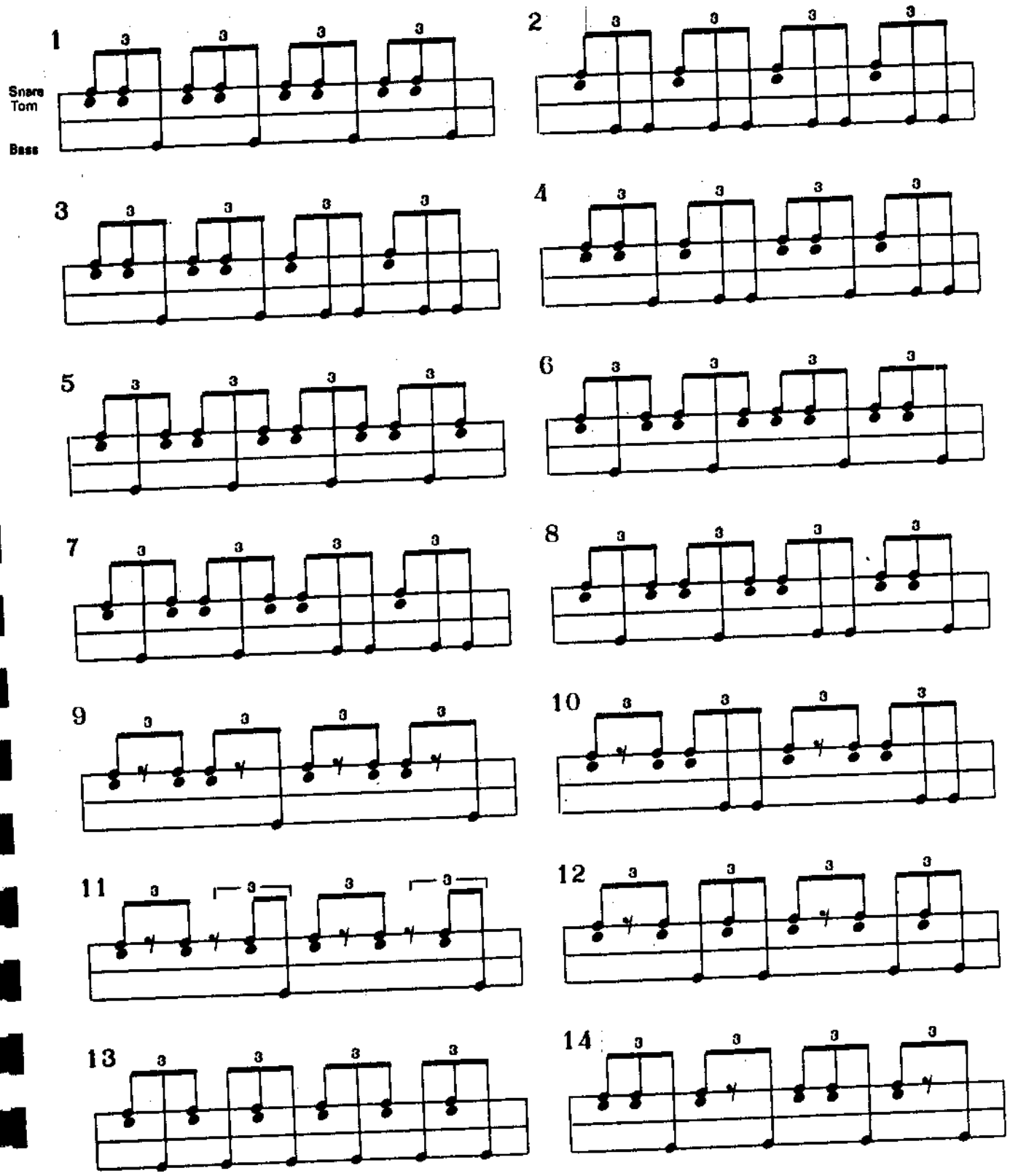
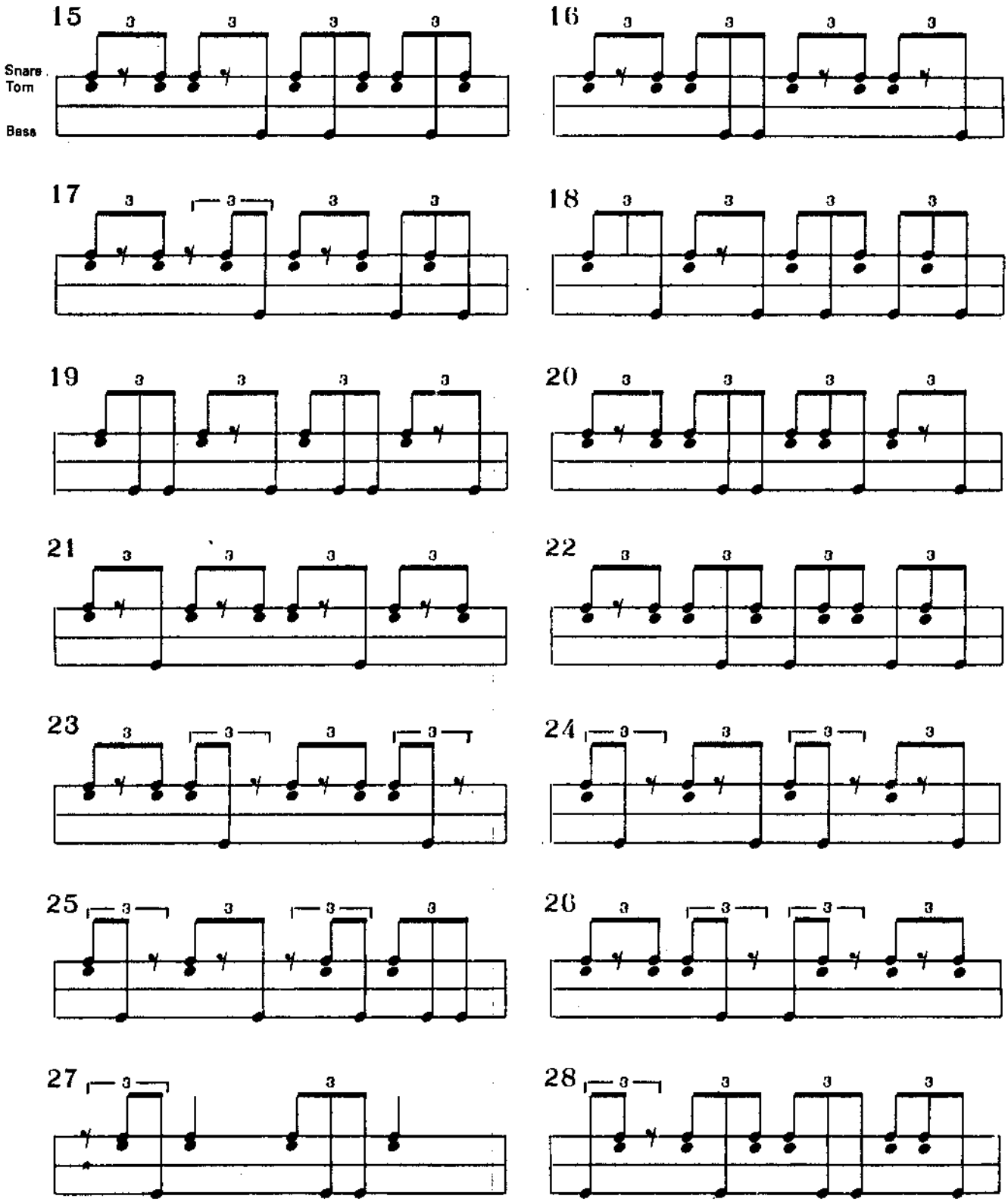
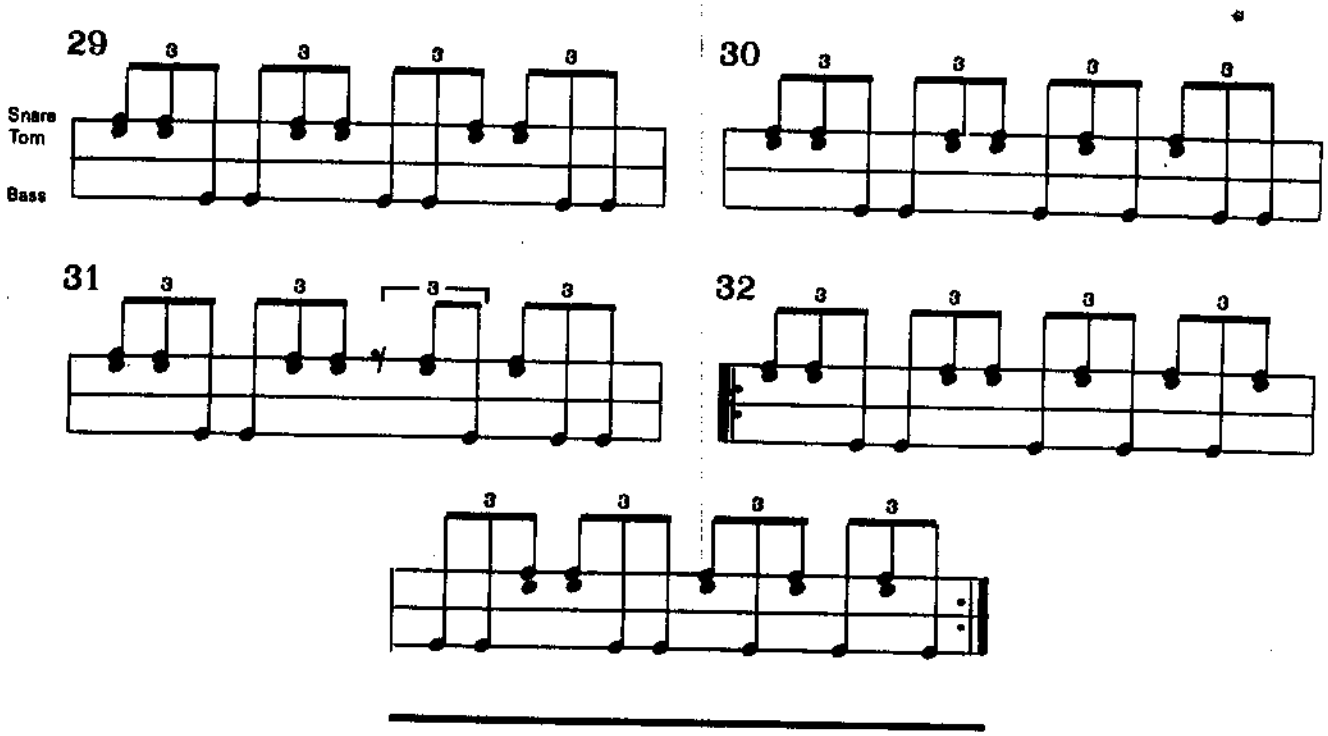




Play right and left together: one hand on snare drum, one hand on tom tom of your choice.







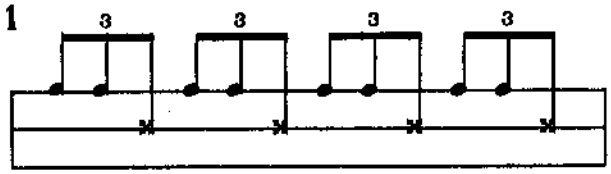
Play each exercise three ways:

1. *Play SD with RH.*
2. *Play SD with LH.*
3. *Play SD with alternating hands (r,l,r,l, etc.).*

NOTE: Sticking patterns may be divided among snare drum and tom toms.

1

Snare
Hi-Hat



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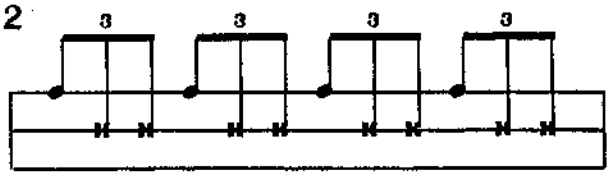

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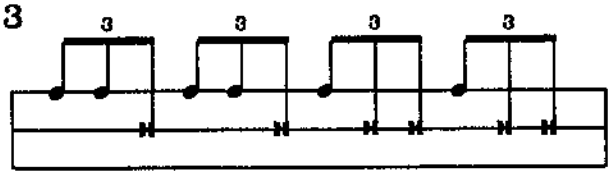

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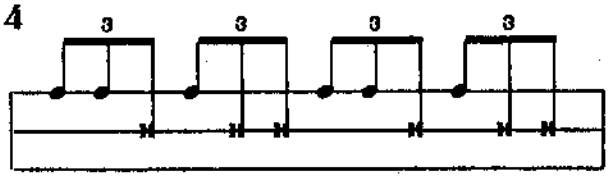

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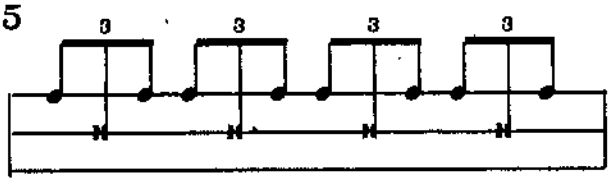

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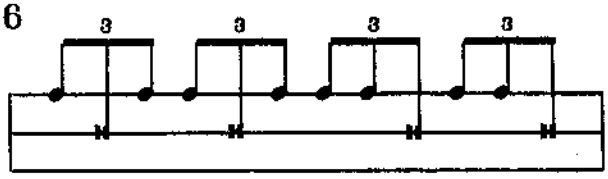

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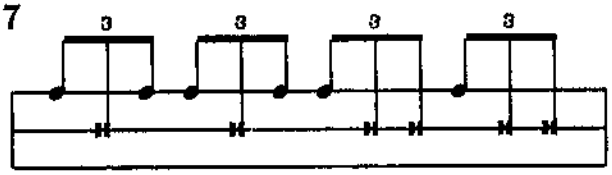

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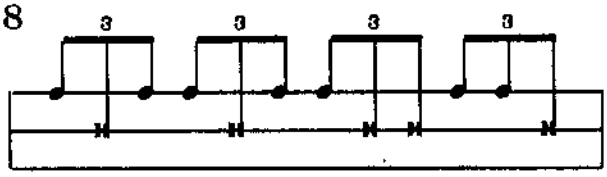

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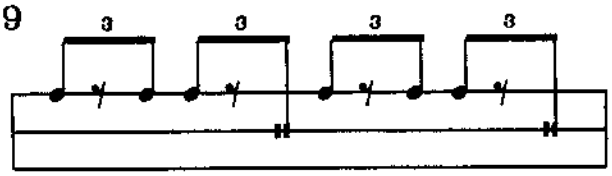

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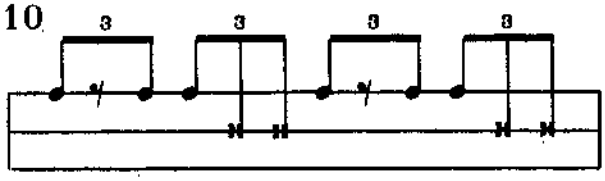

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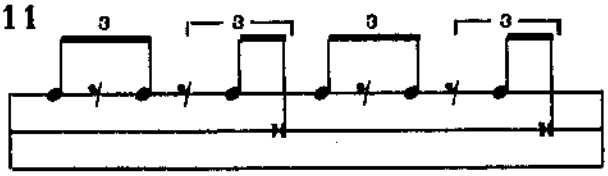

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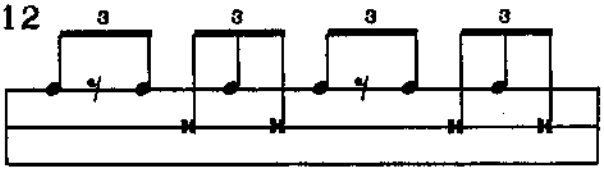

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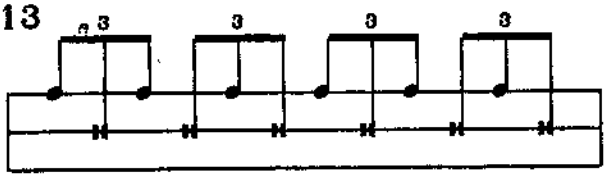

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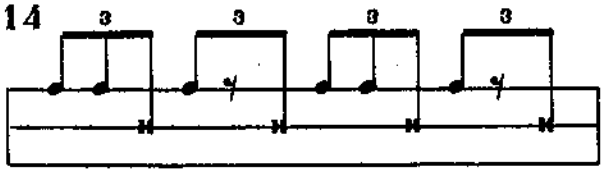

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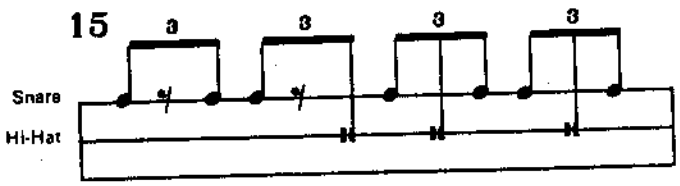

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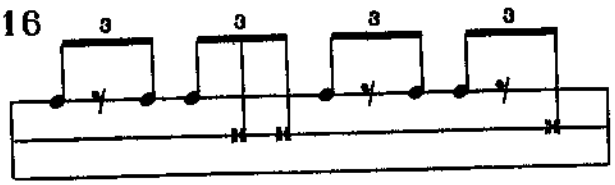

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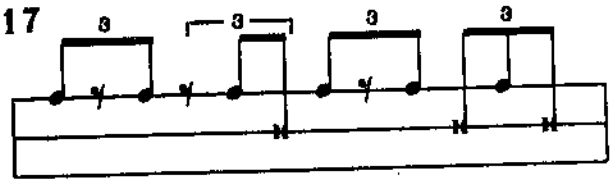

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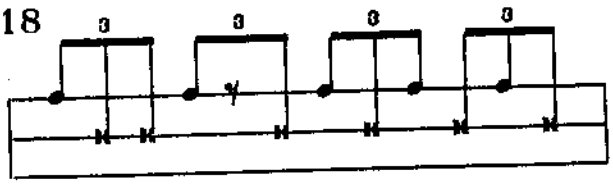

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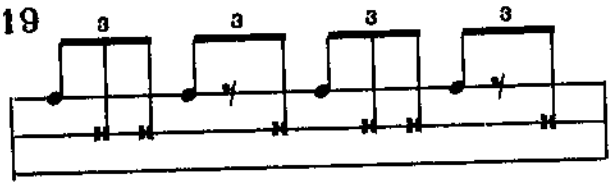

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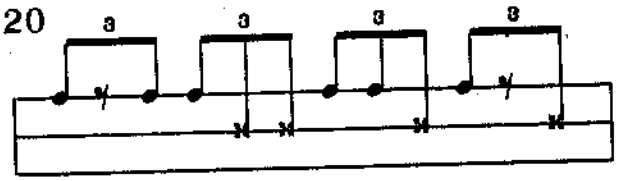

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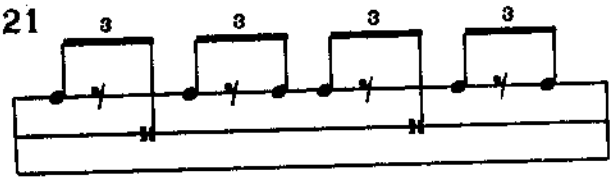

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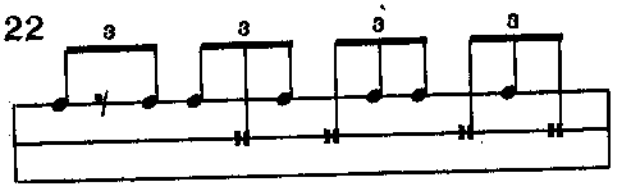

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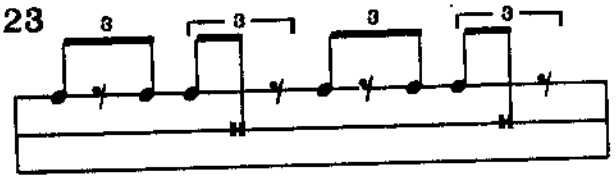

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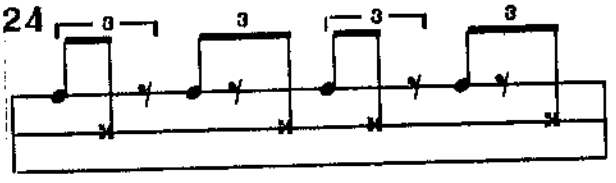

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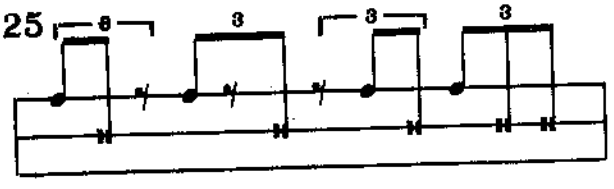

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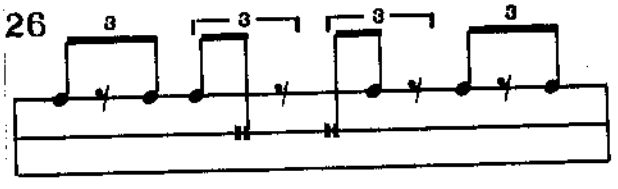

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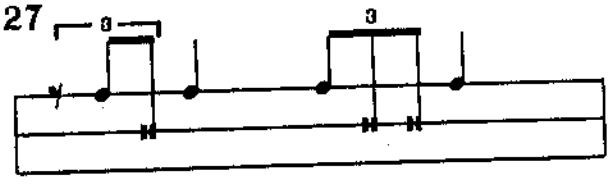

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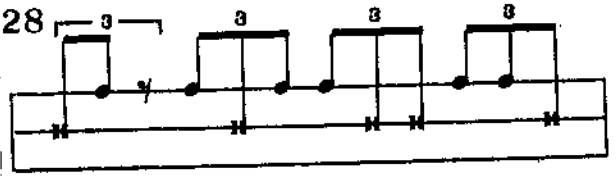
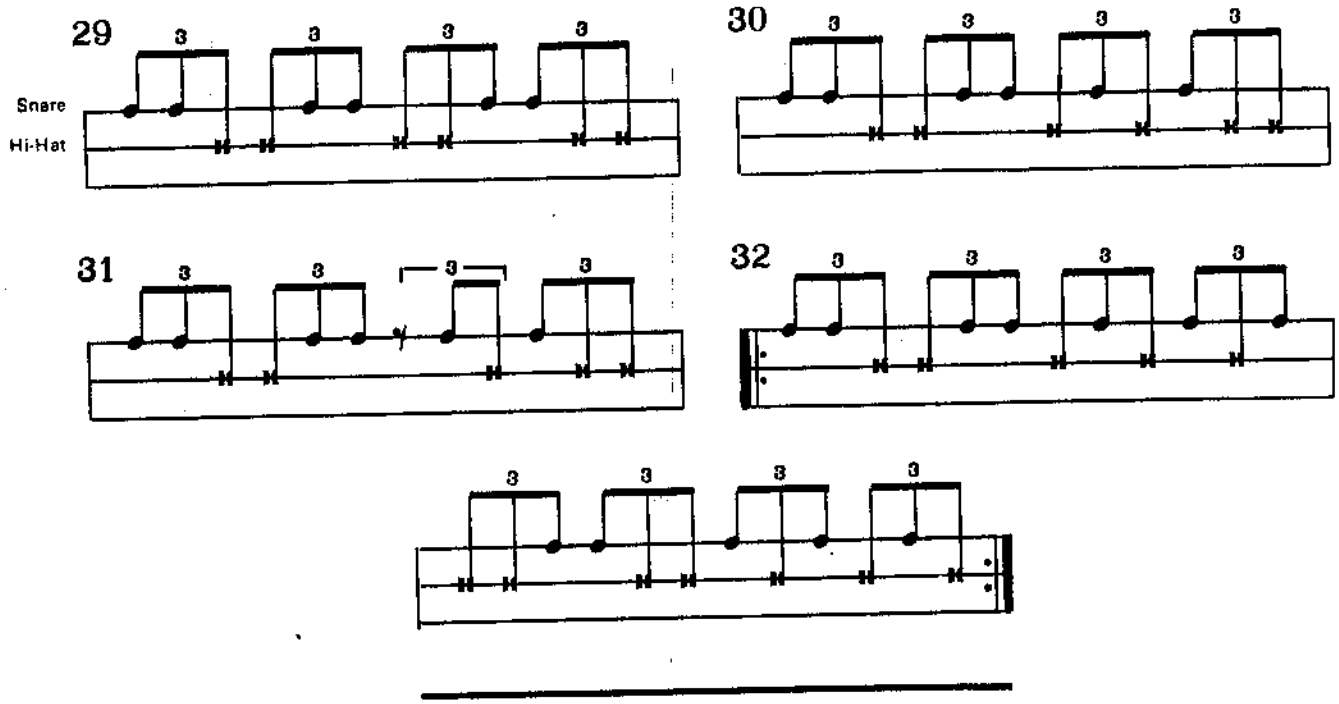


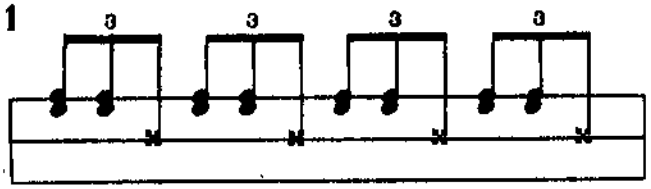


Play right and left together: one hand on snare drum, one hand on tom tom of your choice.

1

Snare

Hi-Hat



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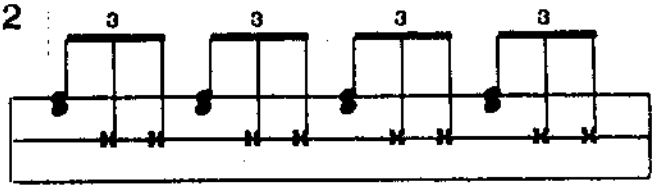

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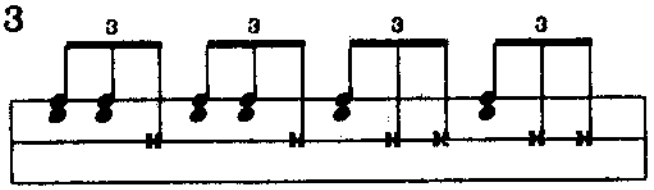

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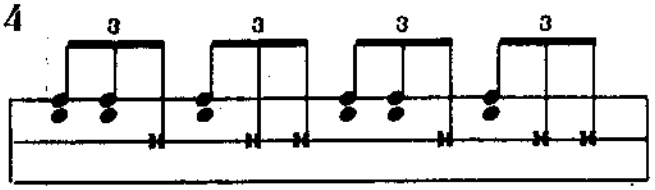

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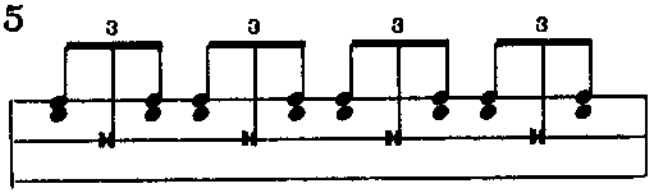

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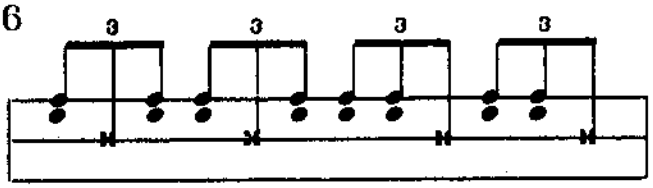

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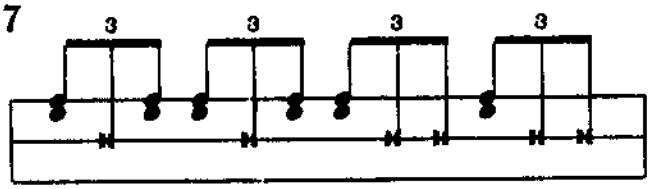

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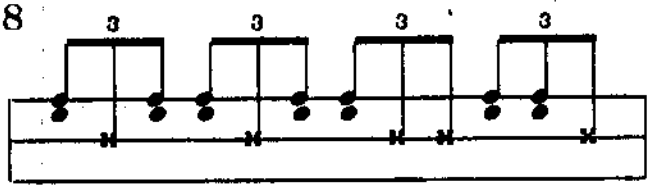

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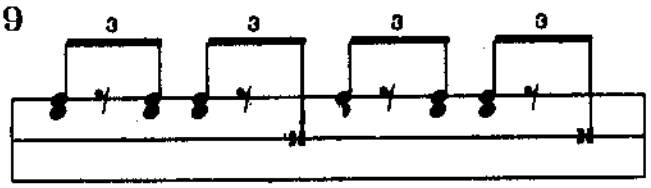

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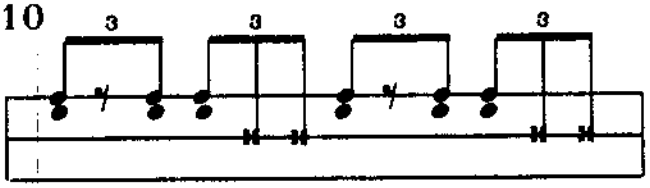

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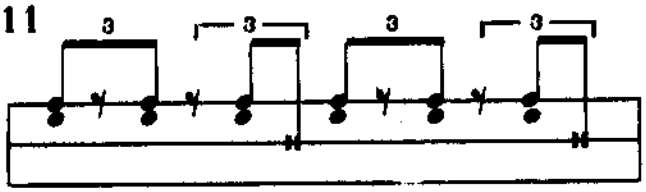

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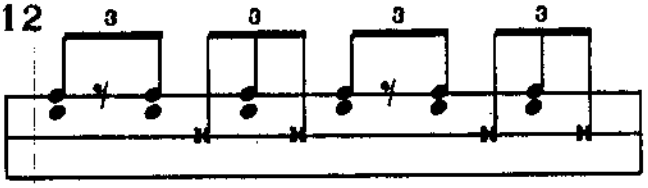

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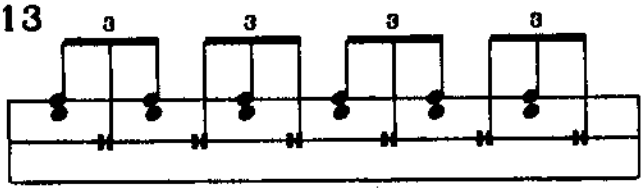

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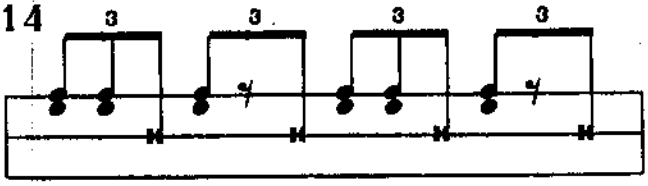

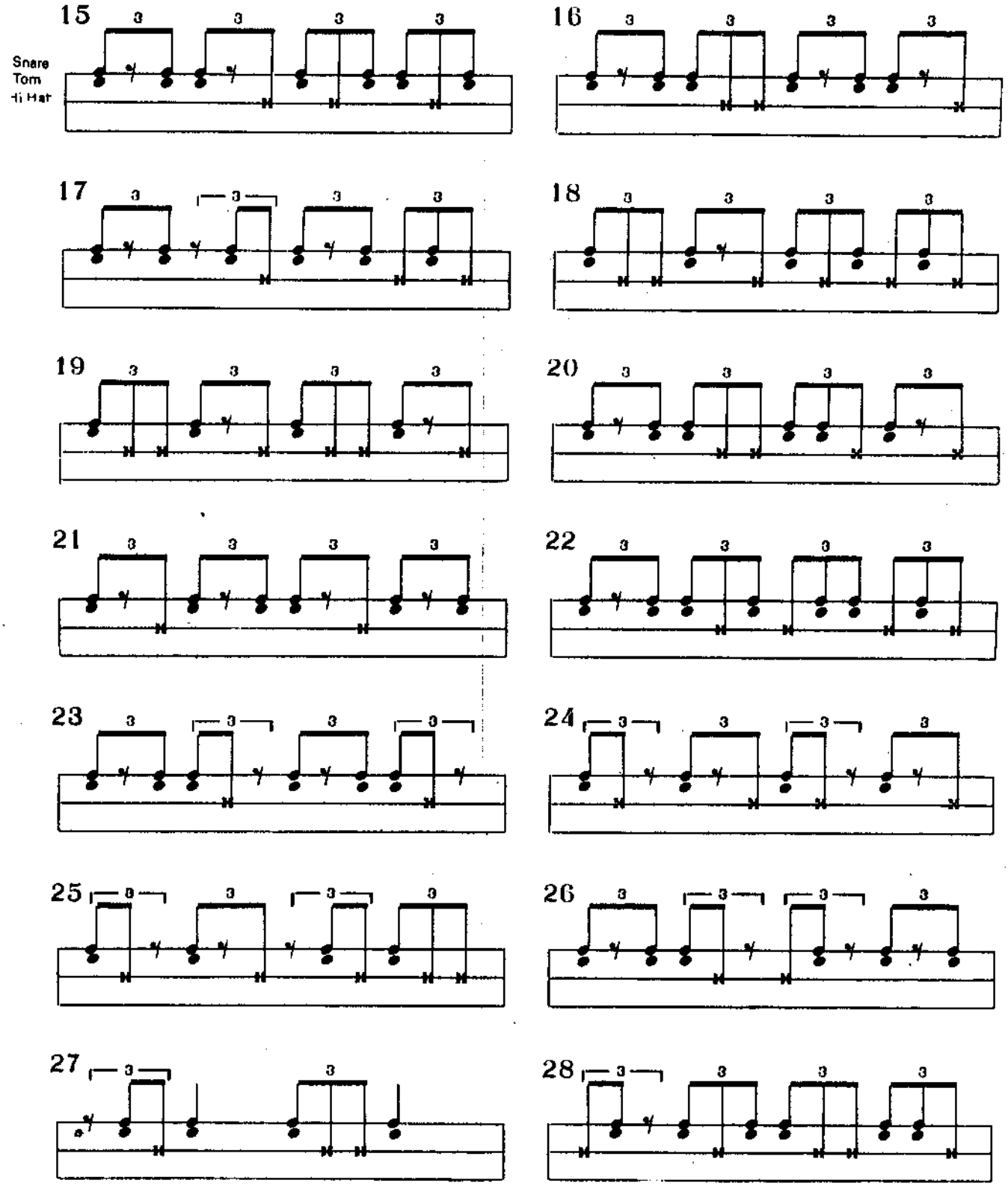

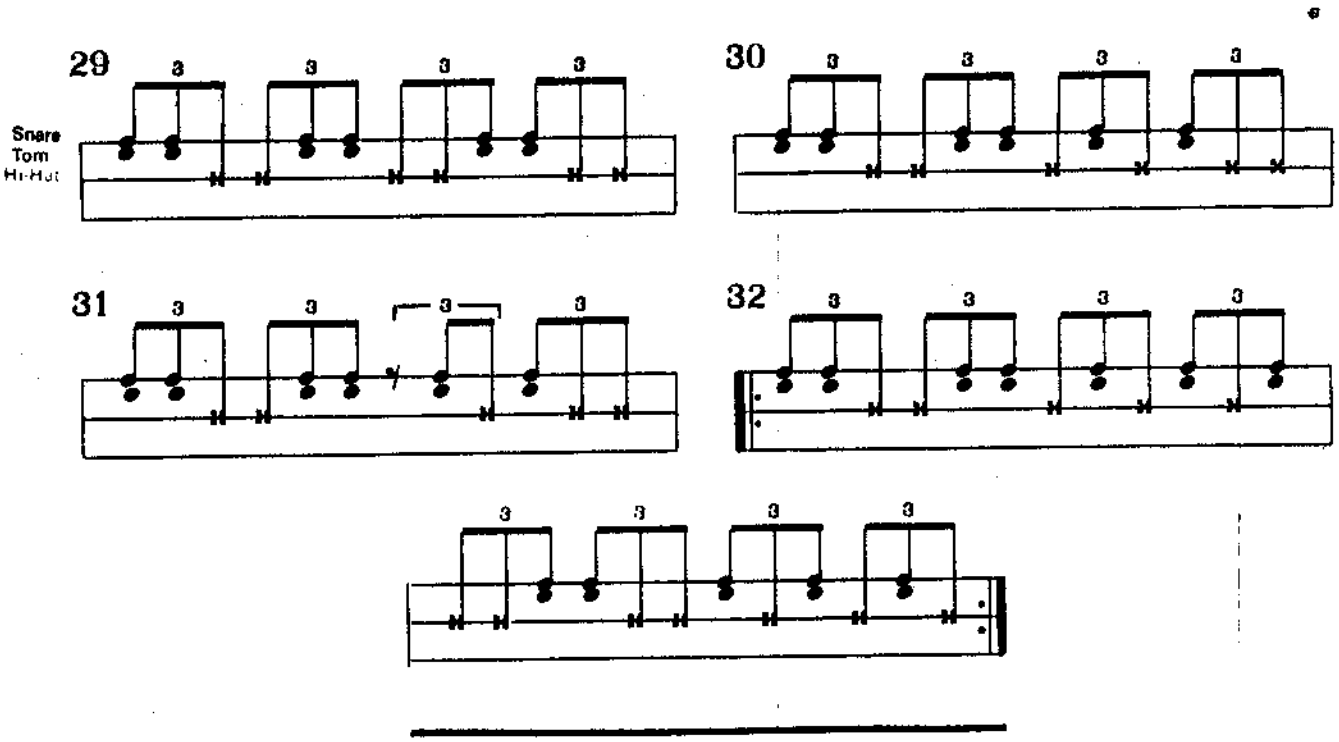

Play each exercise three ways:

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2. *Play SD with LH.*
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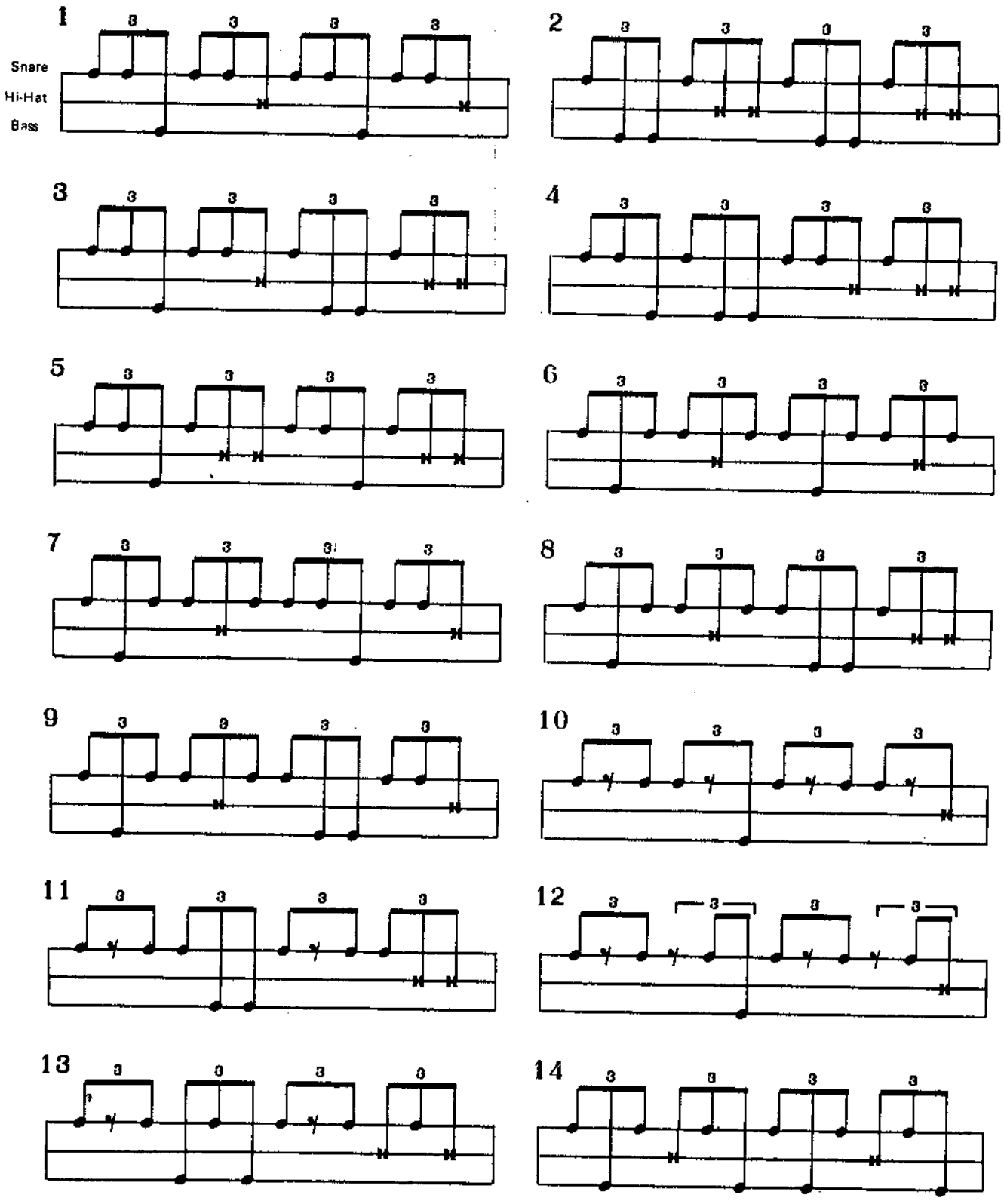
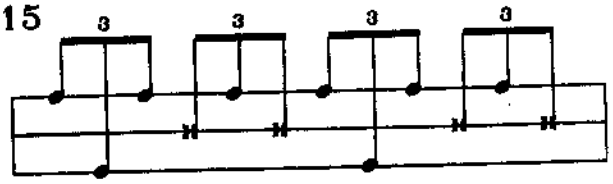
NOTE: Sticking patterns may be divided among snare drum and tom toms.



15

Snare
Hi-Hat
Bass



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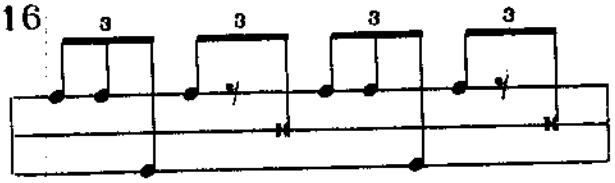

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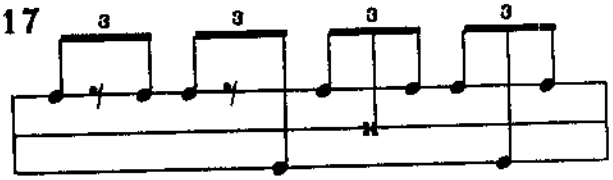

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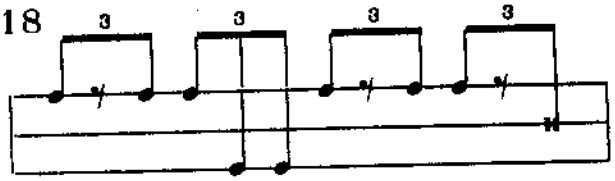

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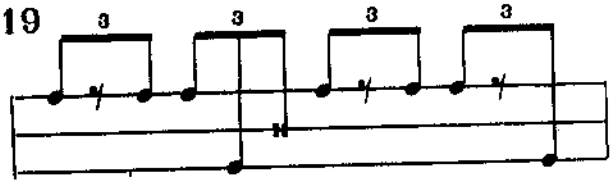

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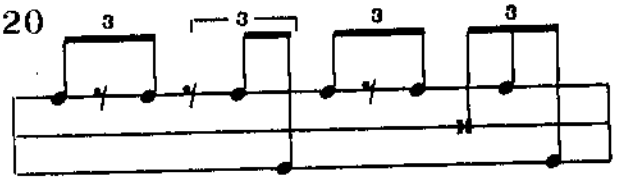

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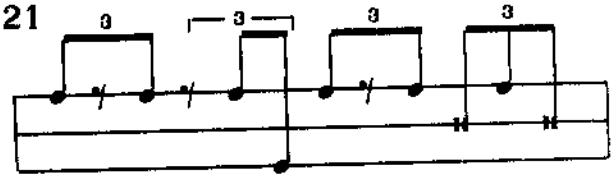

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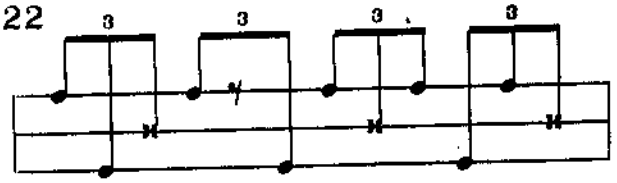

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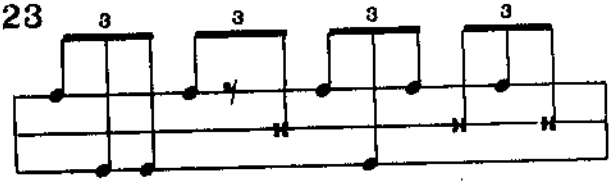

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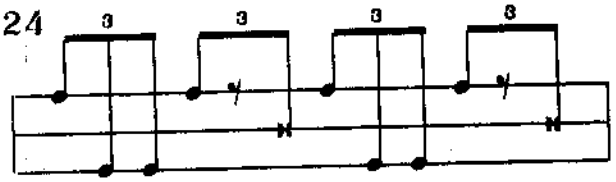

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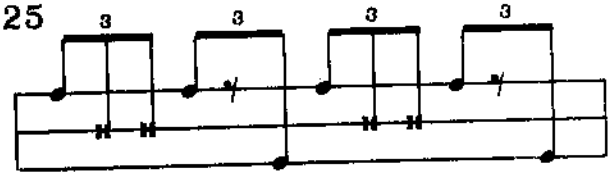

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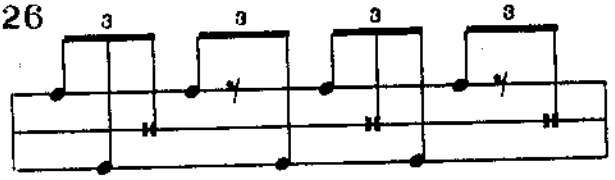

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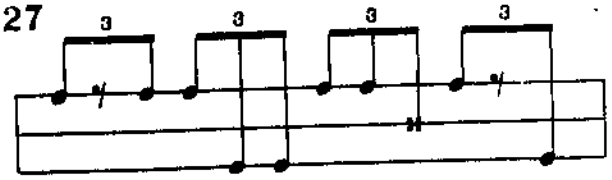

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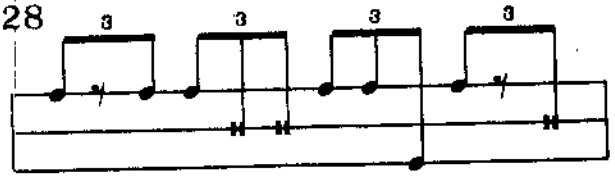

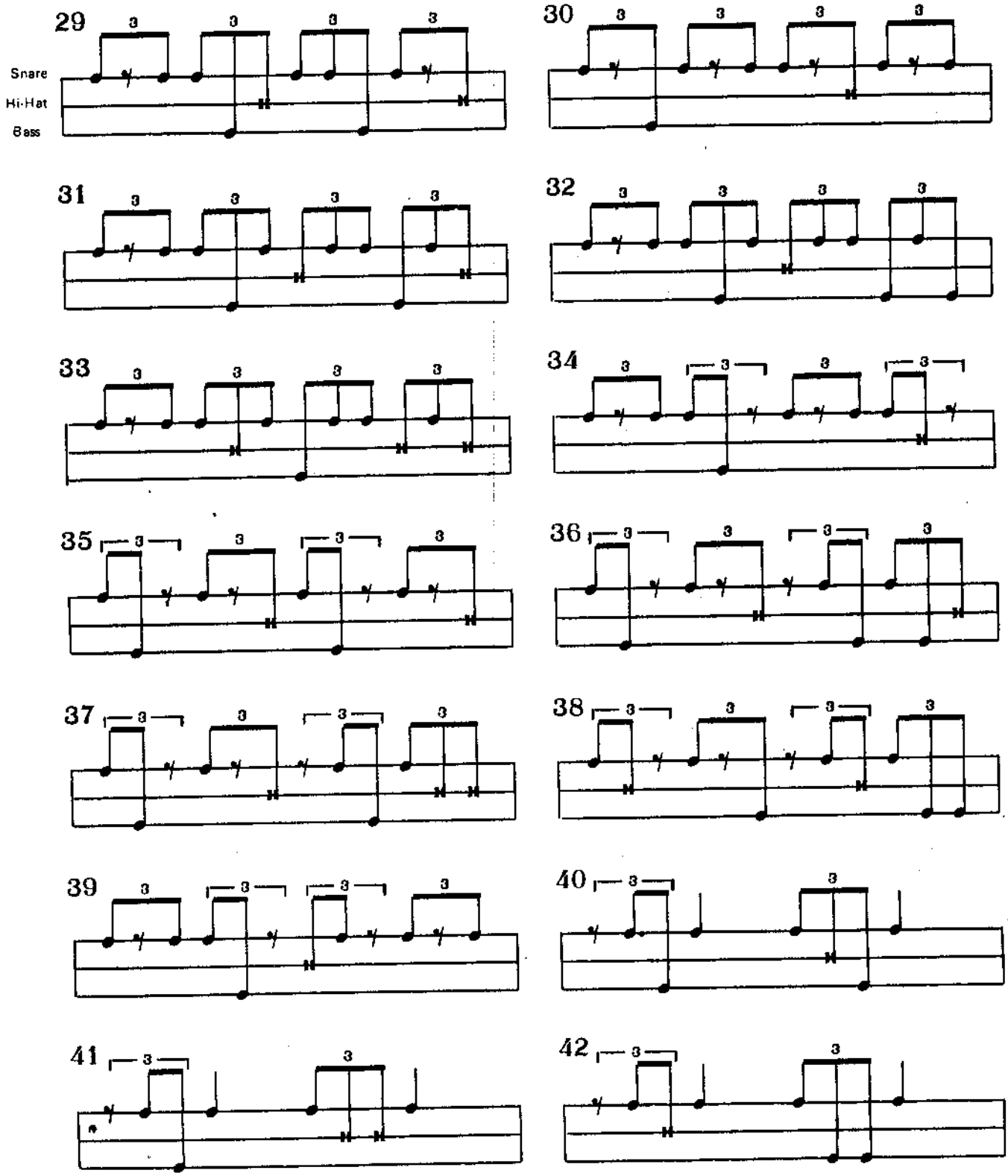

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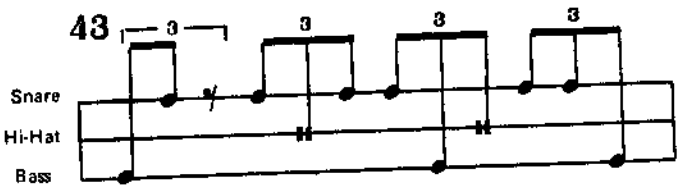

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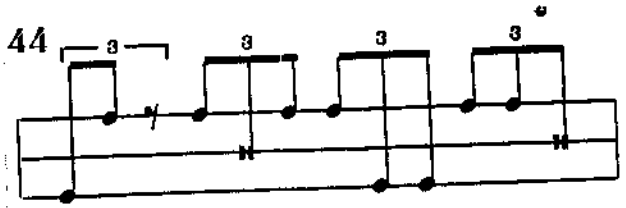

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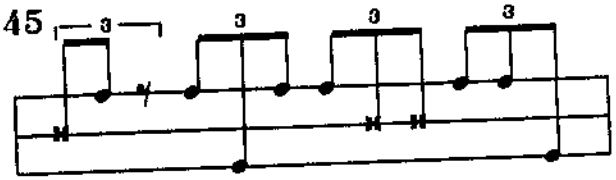

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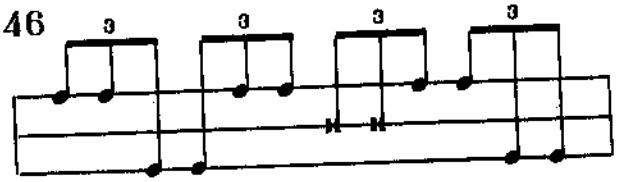

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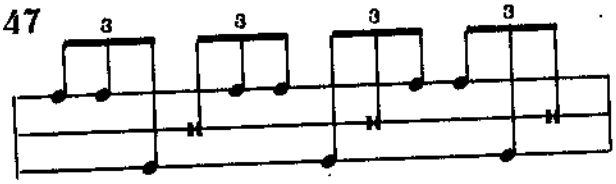

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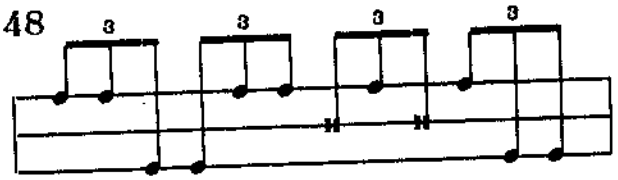

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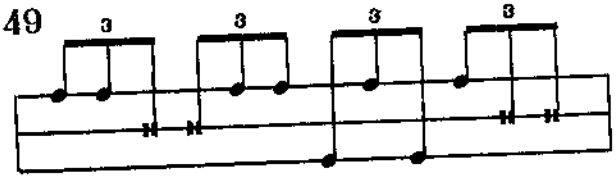

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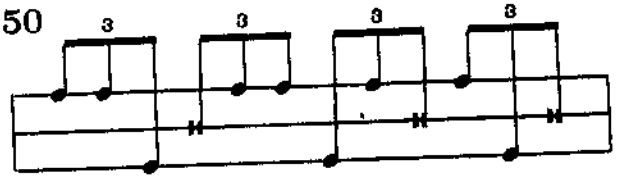

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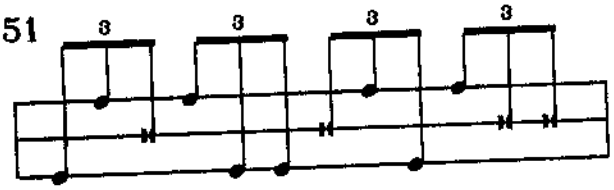

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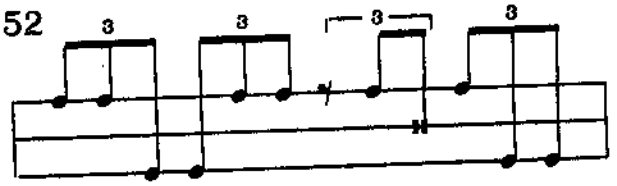

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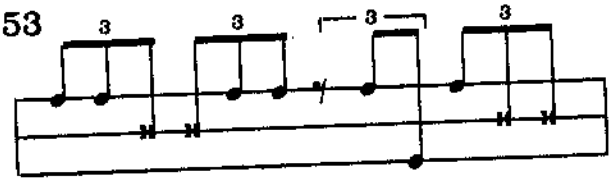

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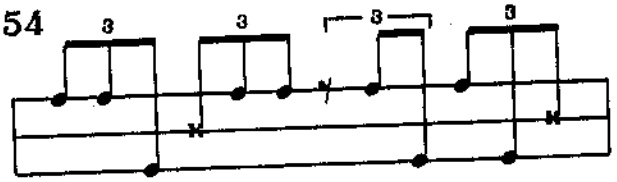

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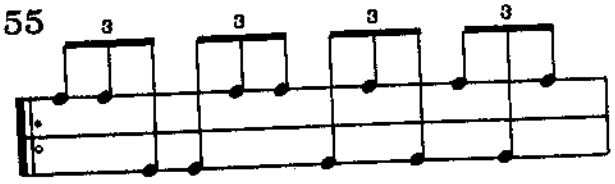

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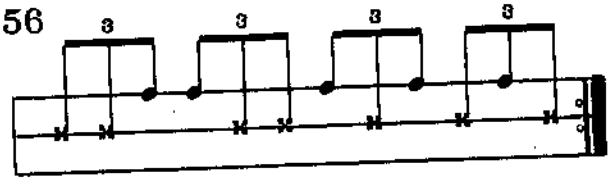
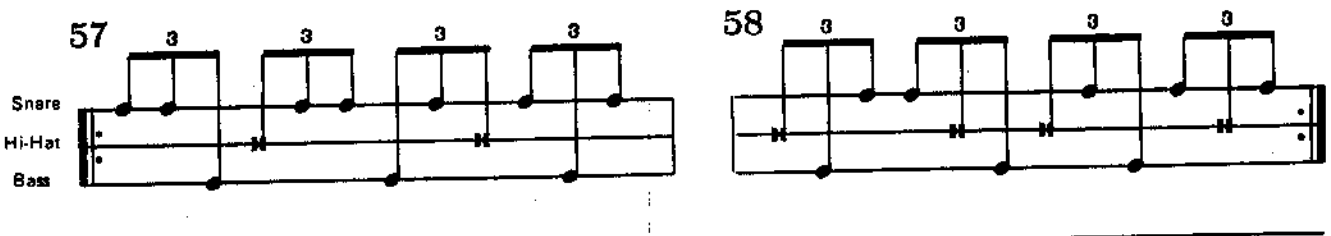
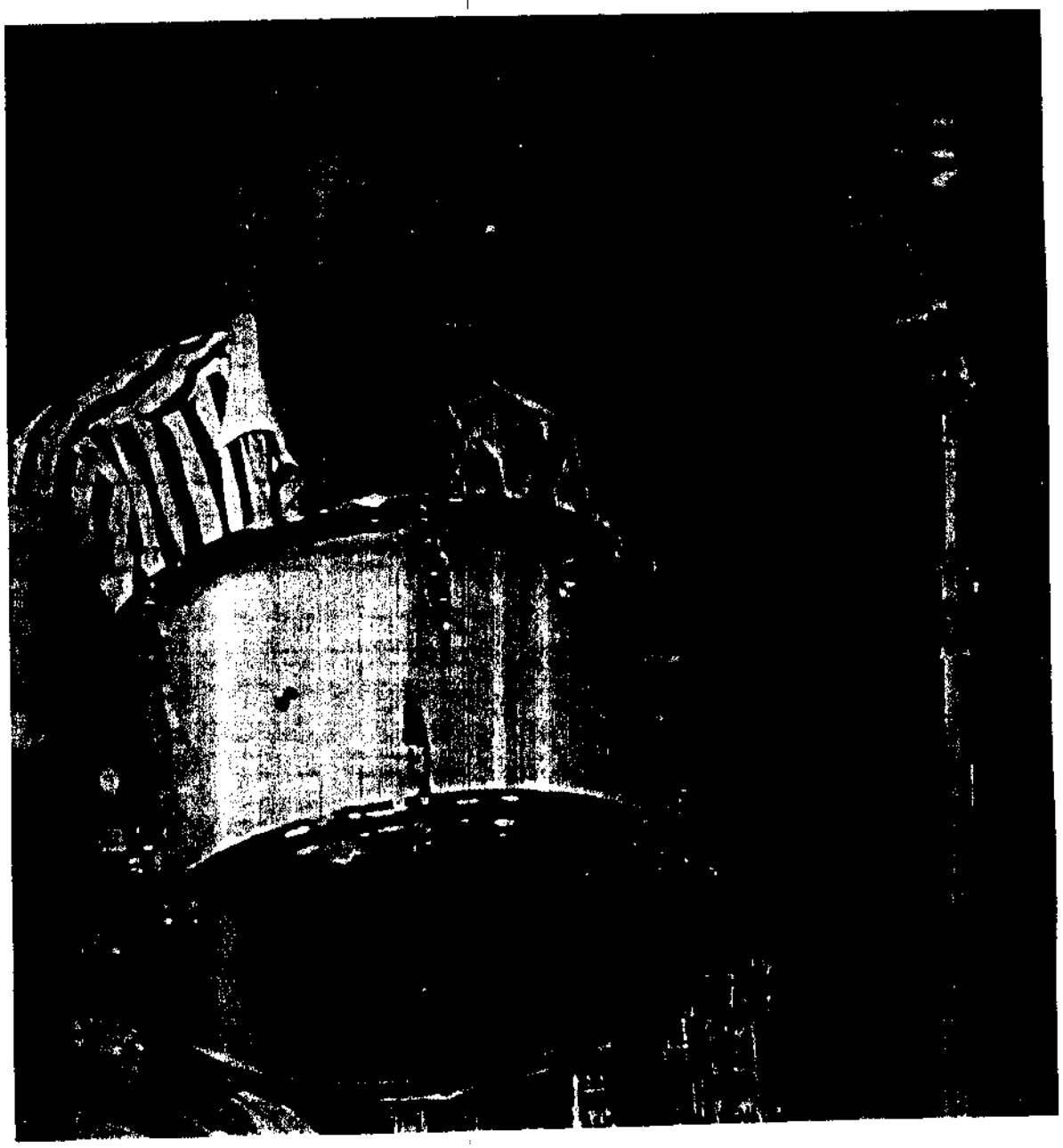
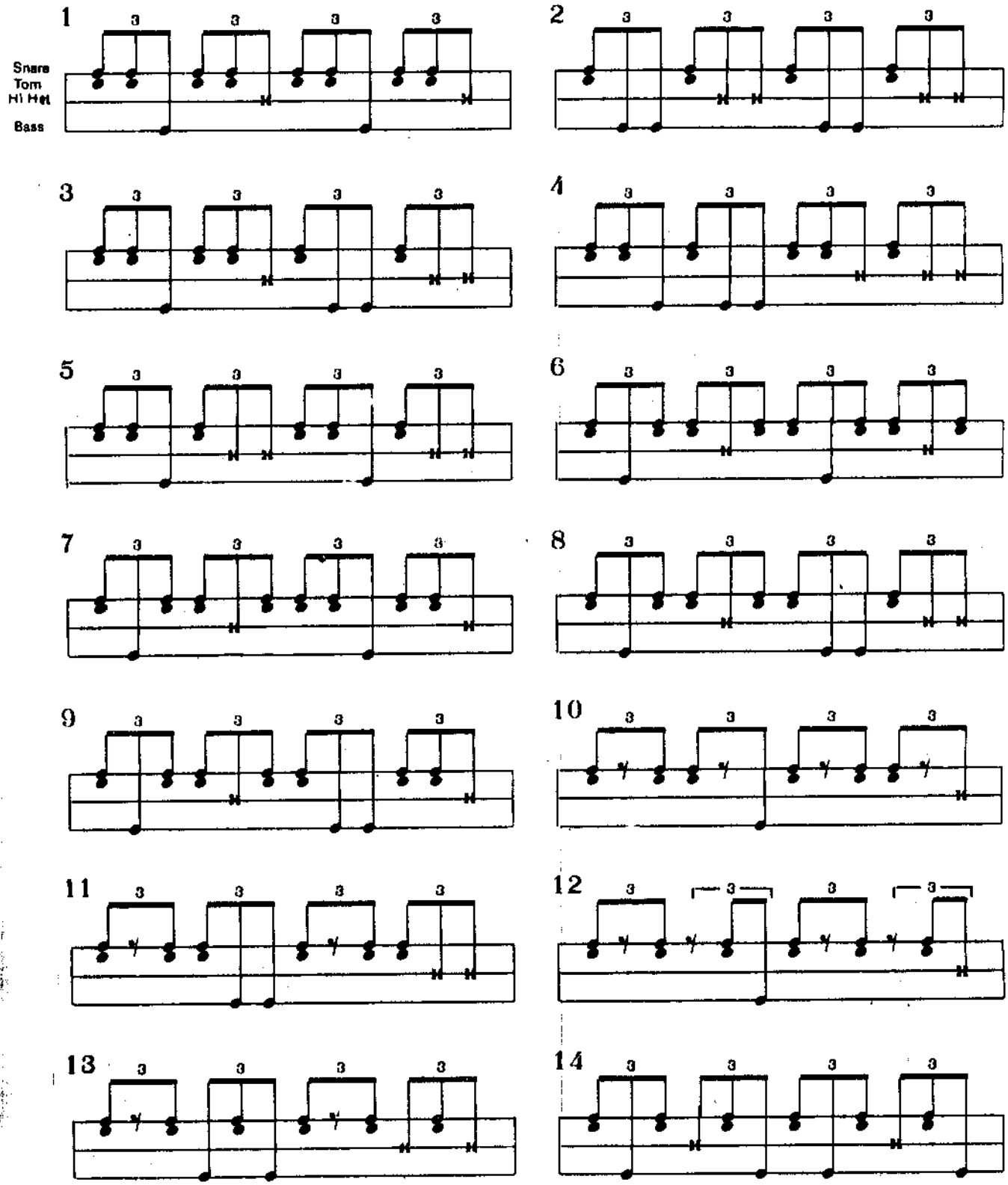






Play right and left together: one hand on snare drum, one hand on tom tom of your choice.



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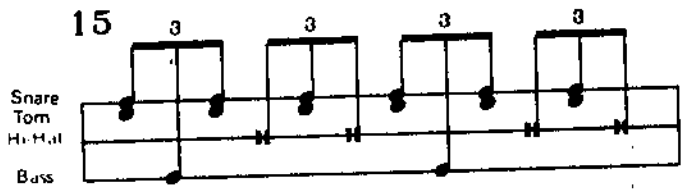

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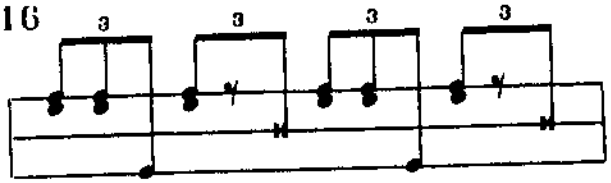

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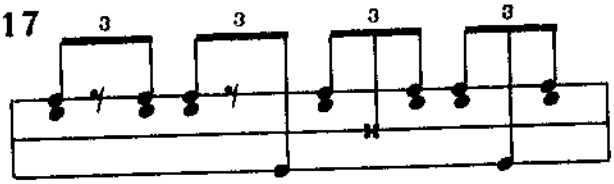

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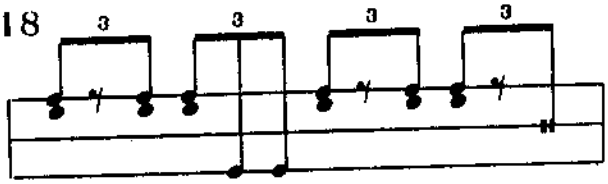

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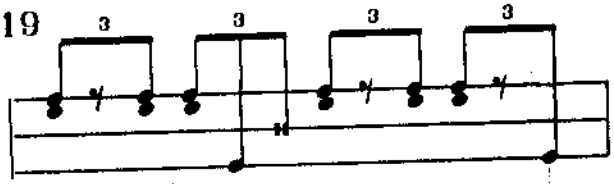

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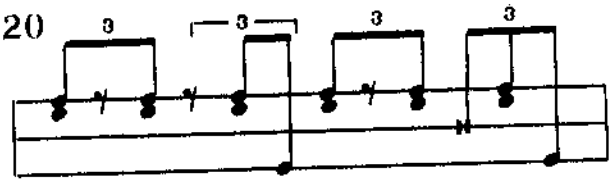

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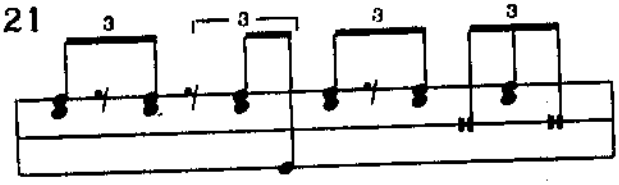

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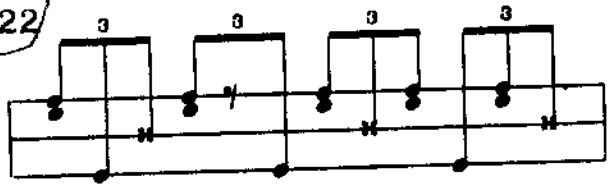

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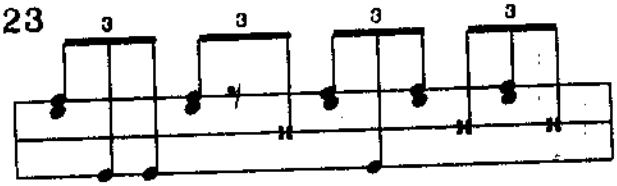

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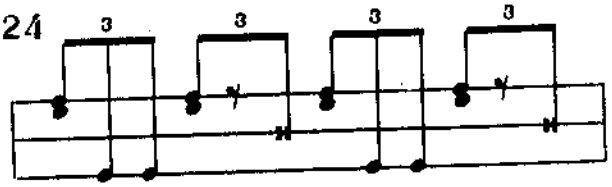

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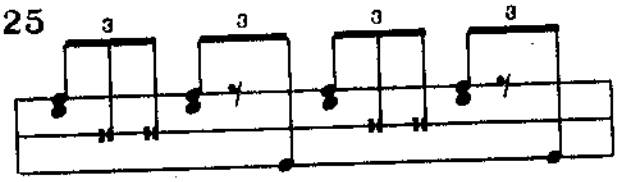

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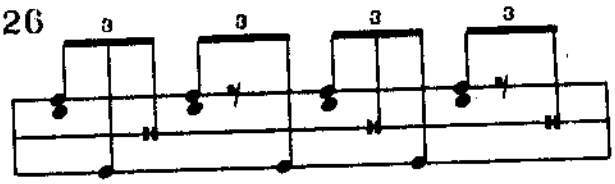

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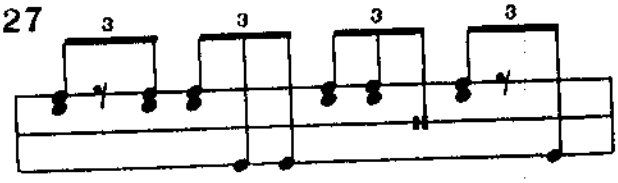

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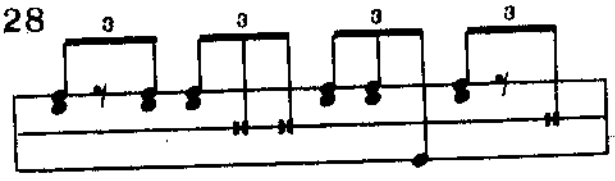
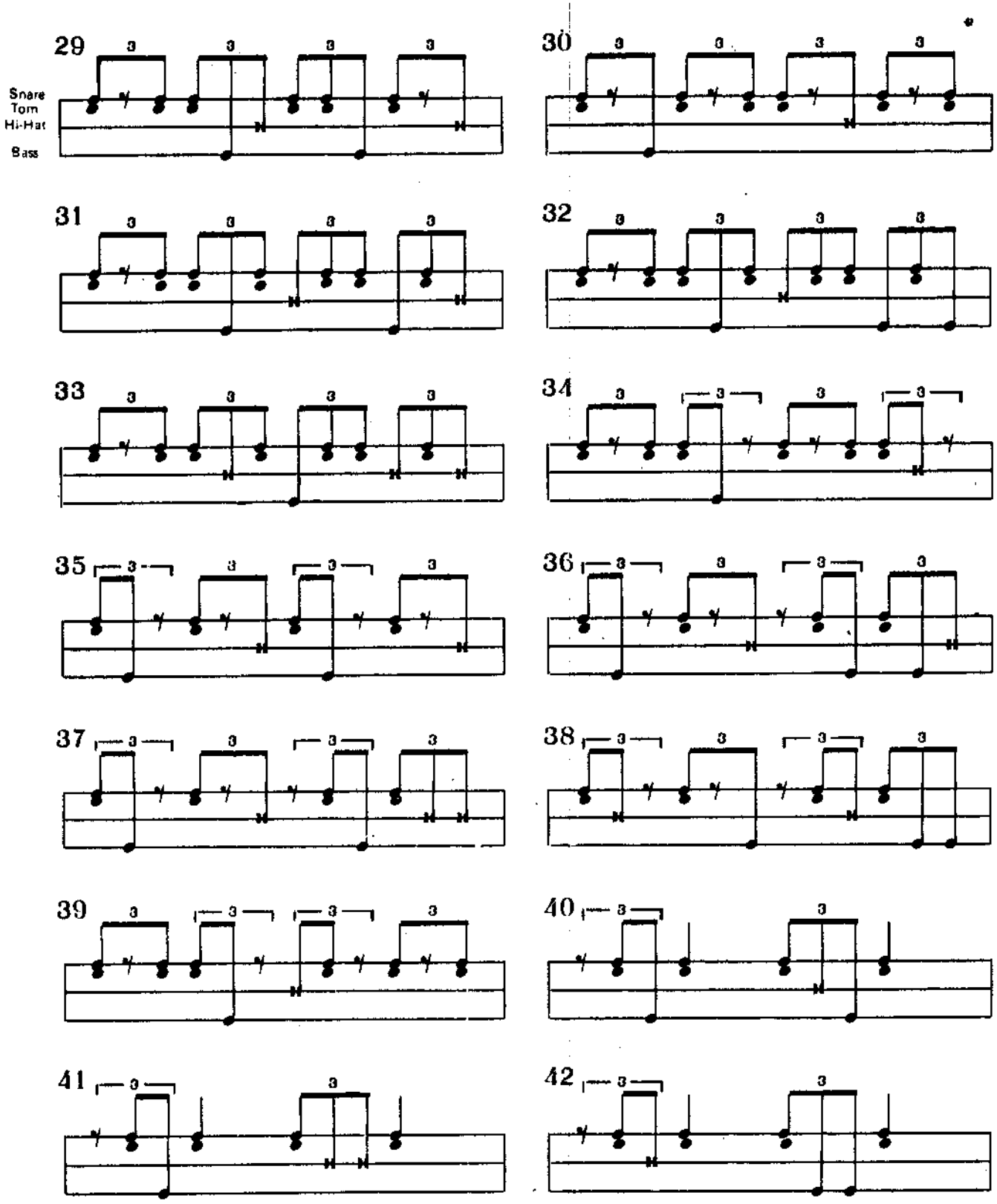
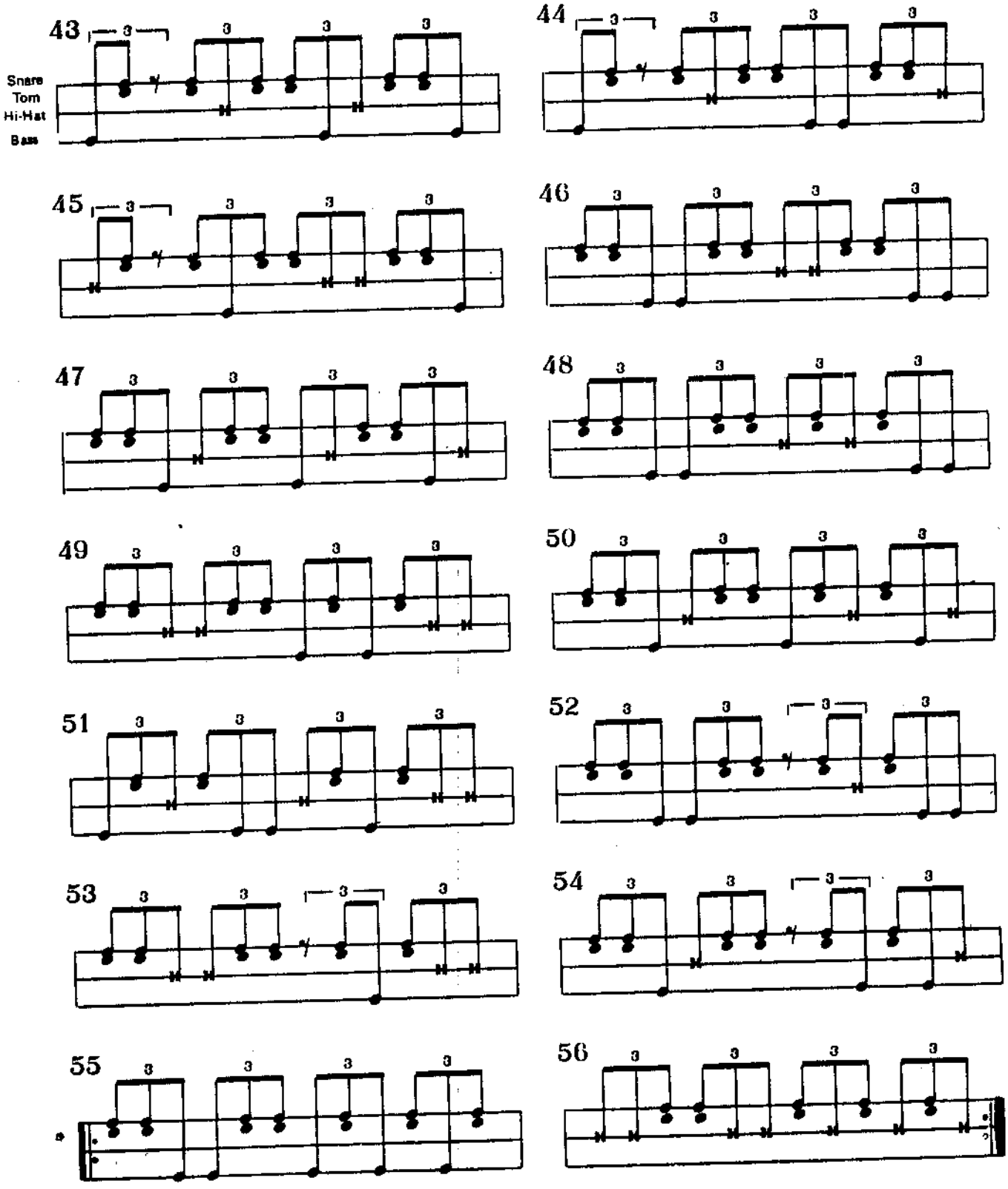
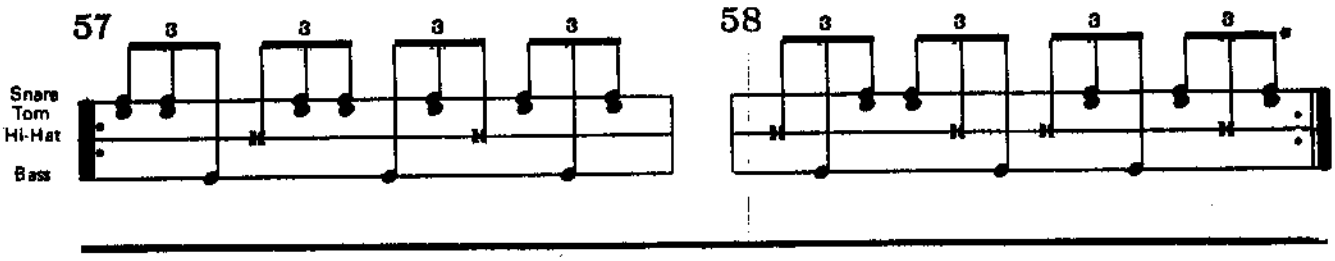


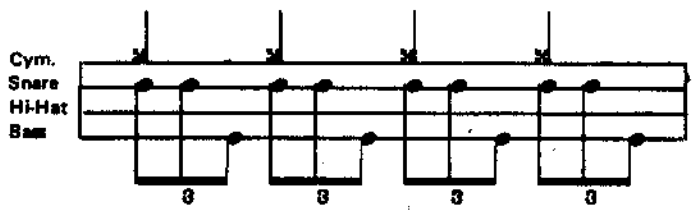






Play LH on SD or Toms.
You may play the Straight — Four Cymbal
Rhythm — Quarter Notes As Written — Or The Cymbal
Rhythm Of Your Choice.

1



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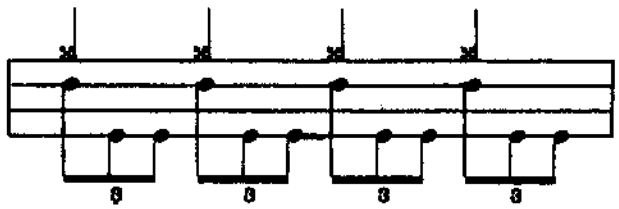

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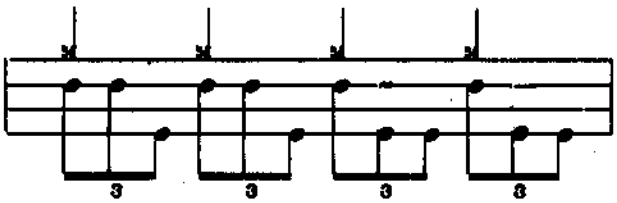

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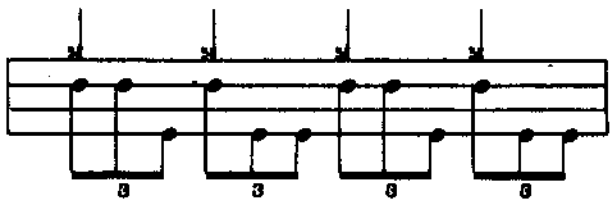

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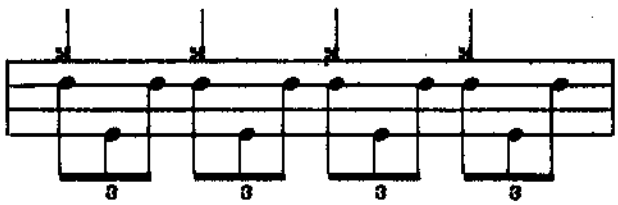

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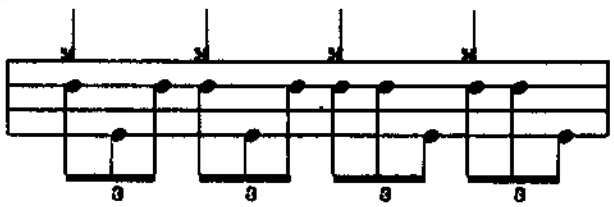

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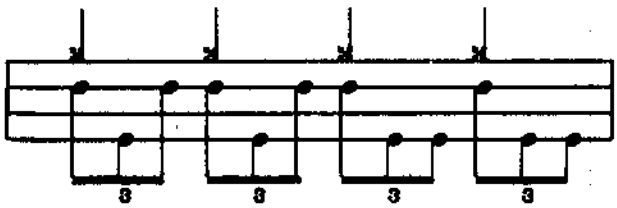

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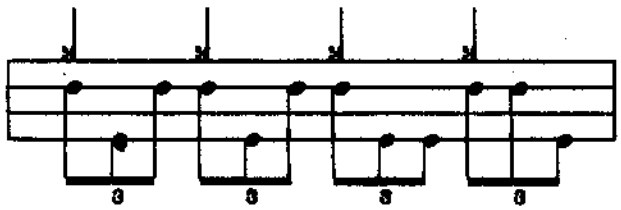

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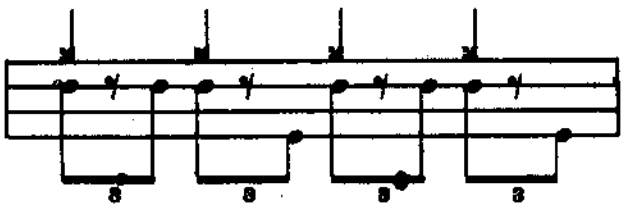

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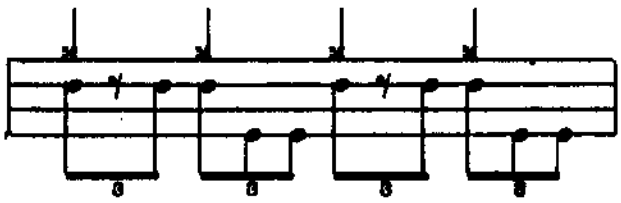

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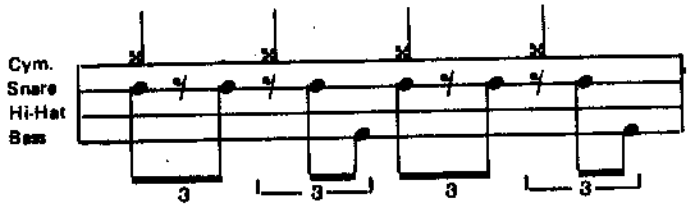

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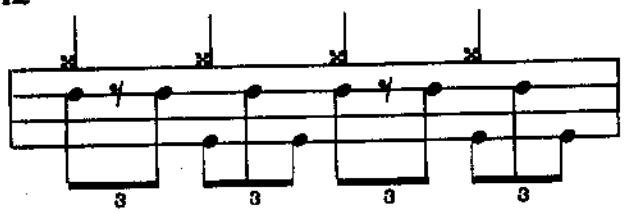

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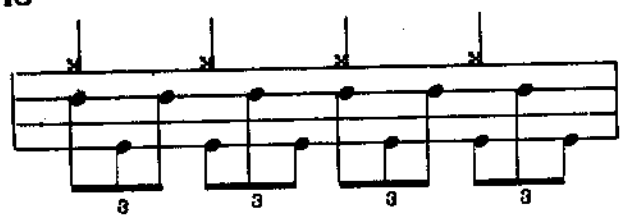

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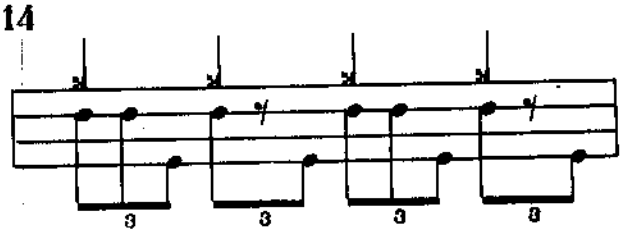

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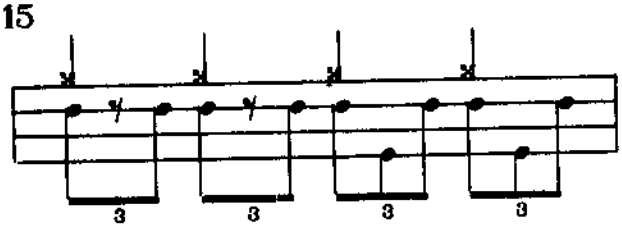

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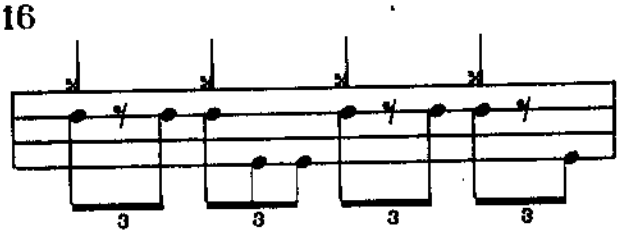

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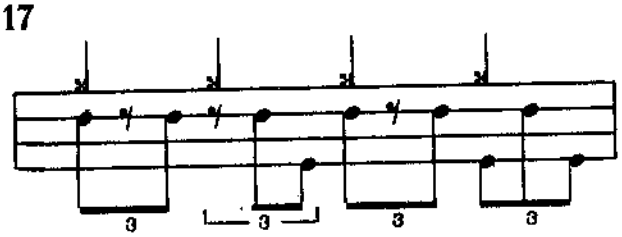

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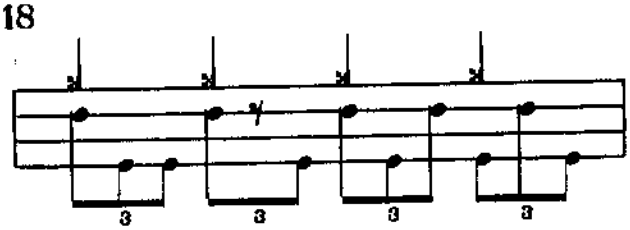

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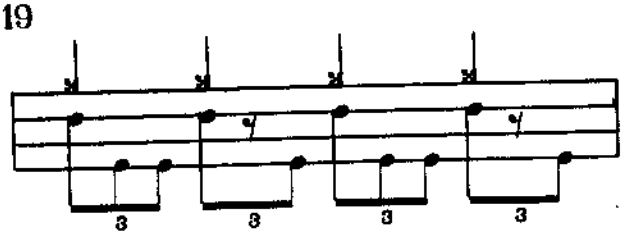

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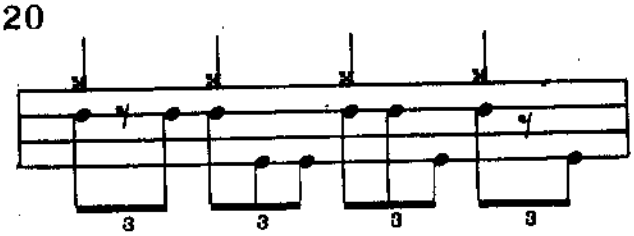

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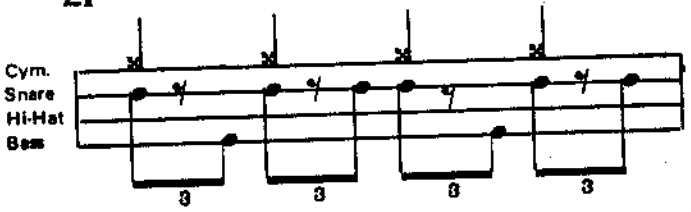

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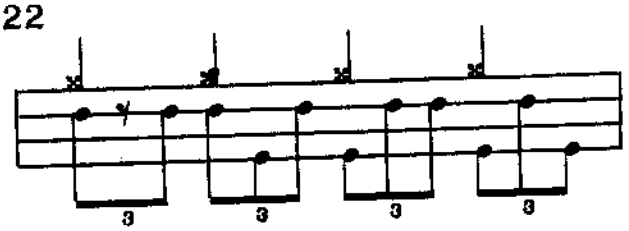

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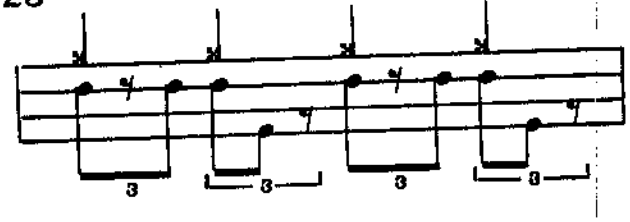

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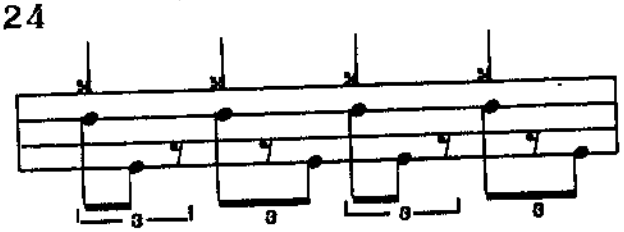

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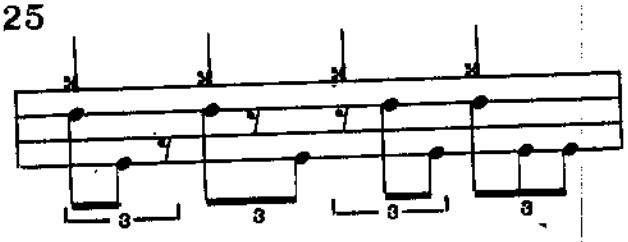

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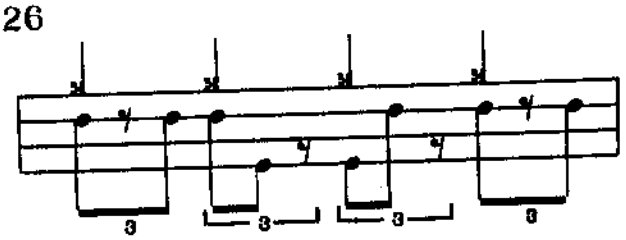

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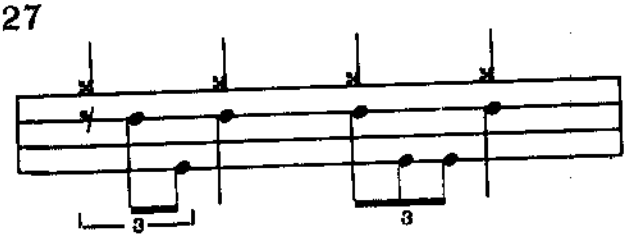

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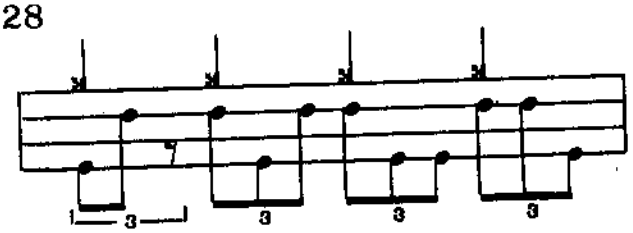

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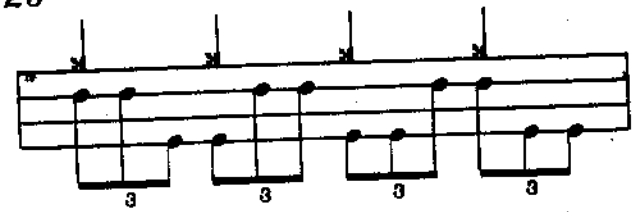

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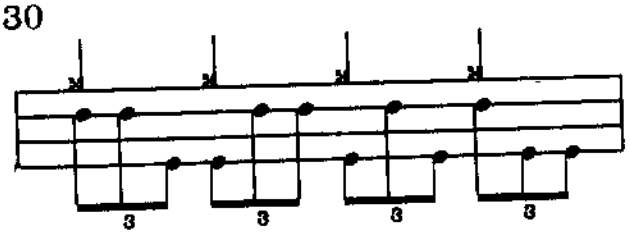

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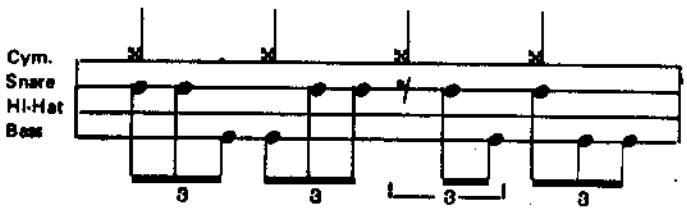

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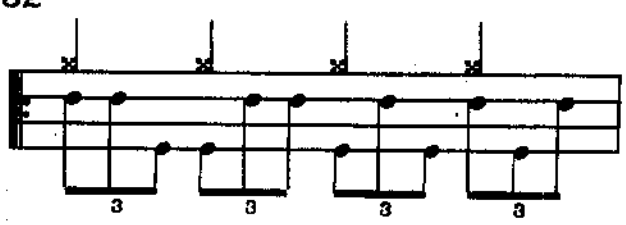

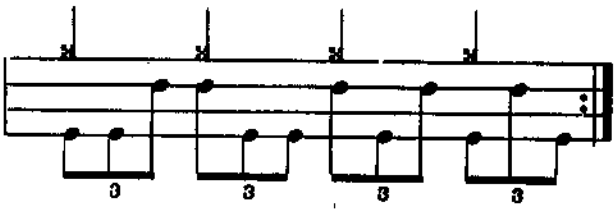

Play TC with RH.

Play SD with LH.

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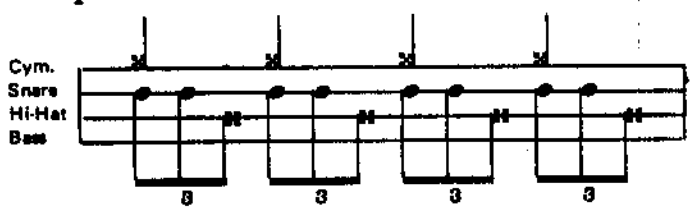

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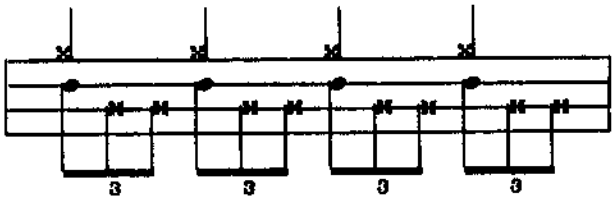

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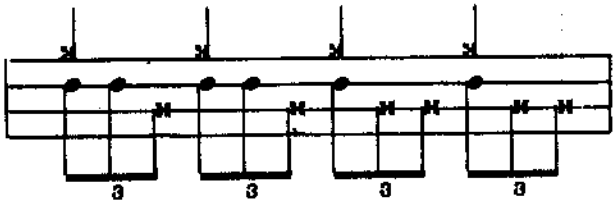

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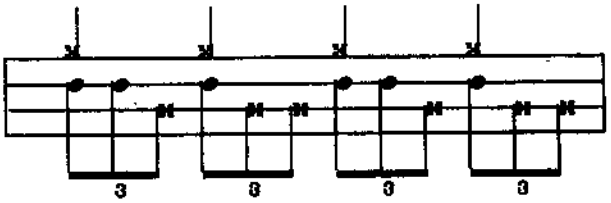

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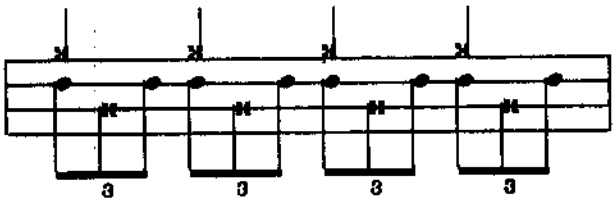

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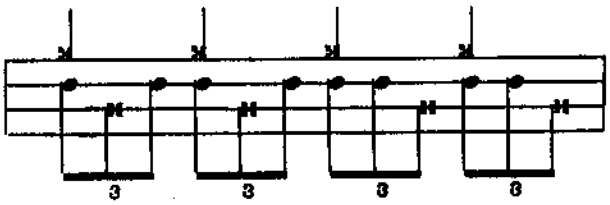

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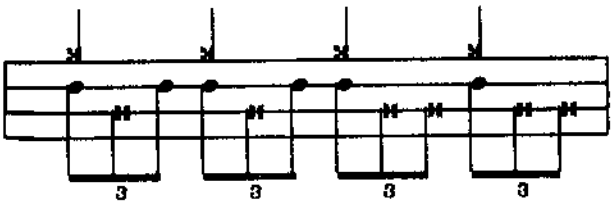

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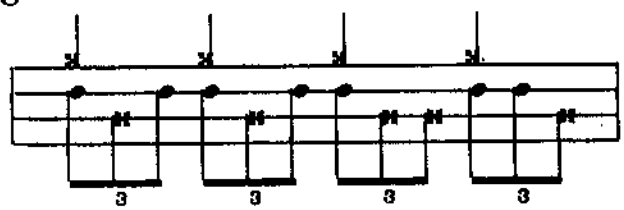

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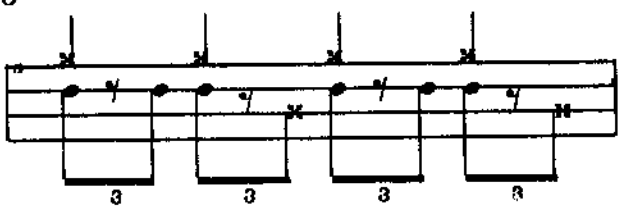

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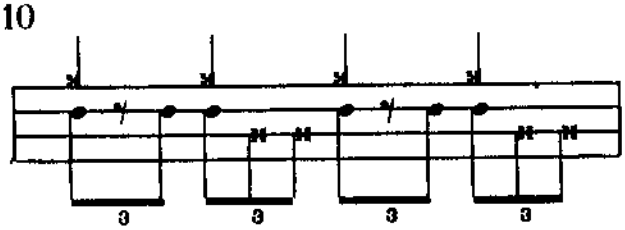

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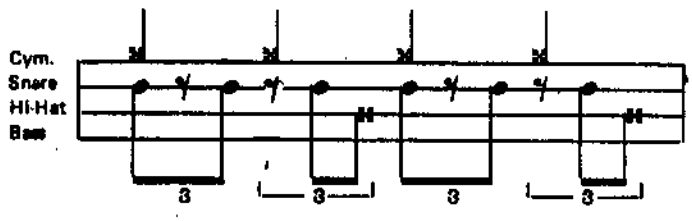

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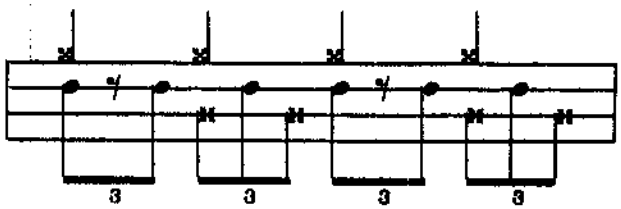

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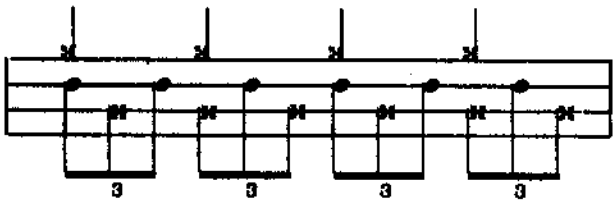

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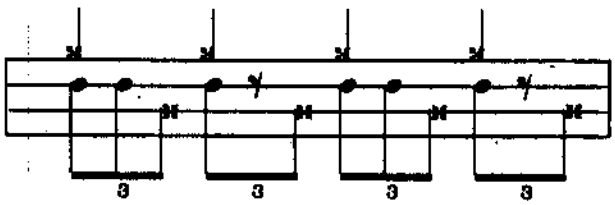

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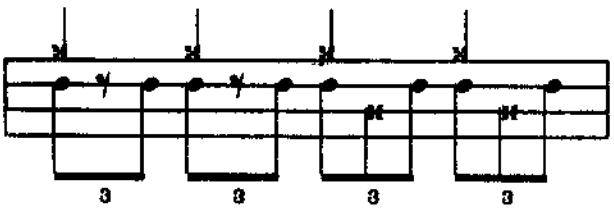

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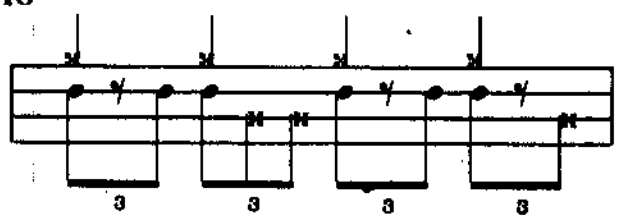

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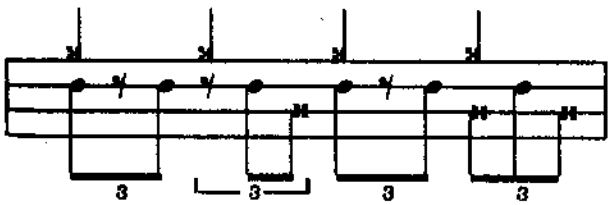

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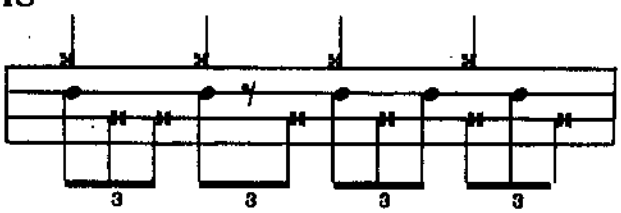

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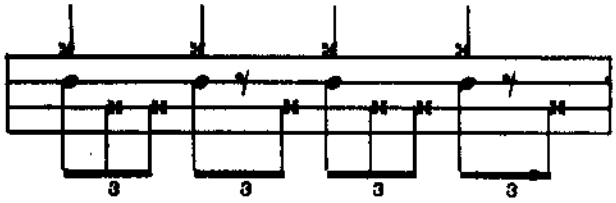

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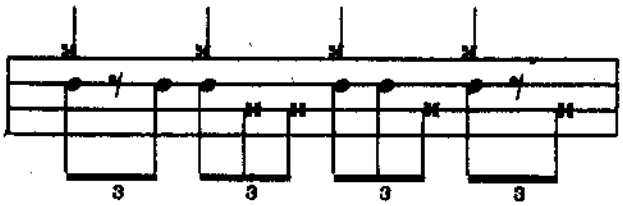

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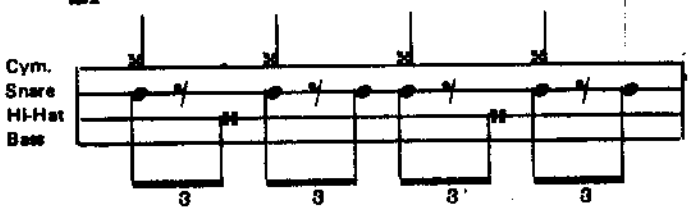

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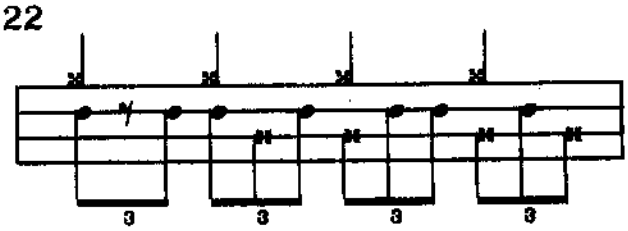

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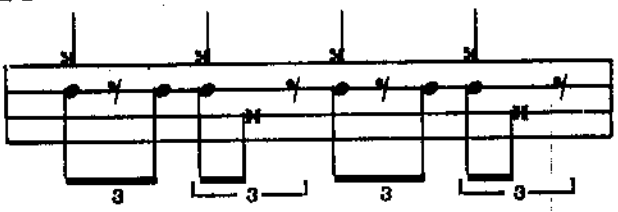

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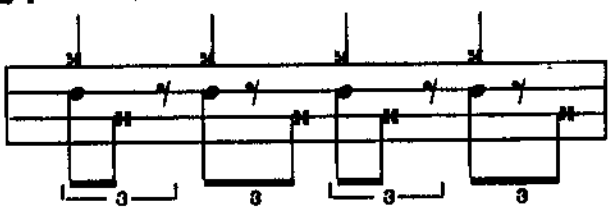

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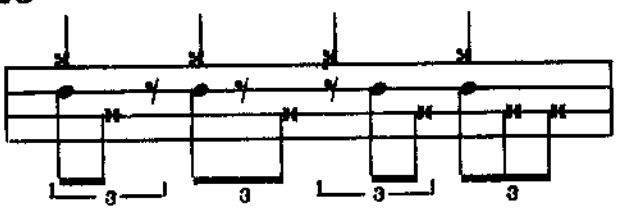

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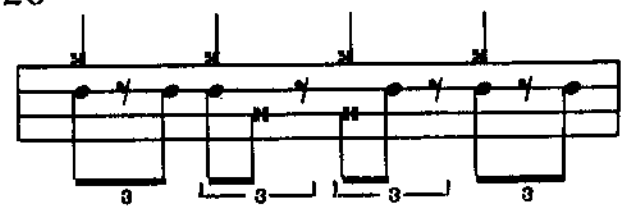

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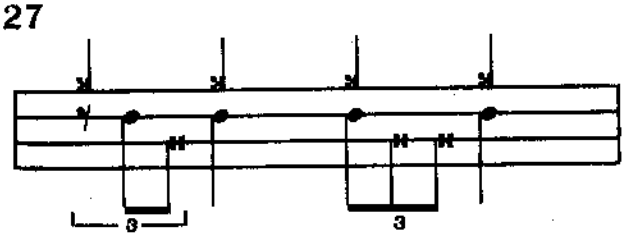

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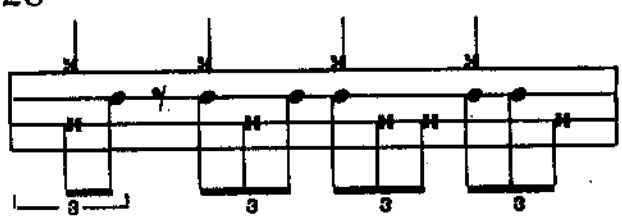

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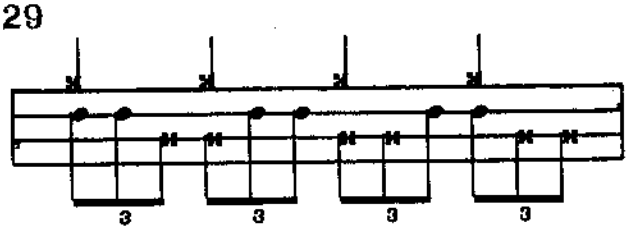

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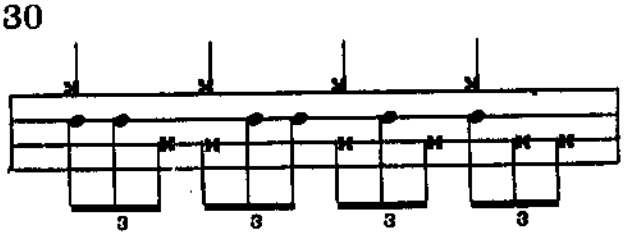

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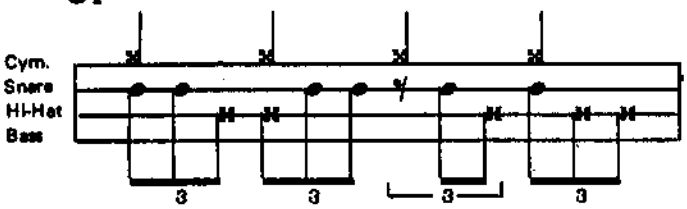

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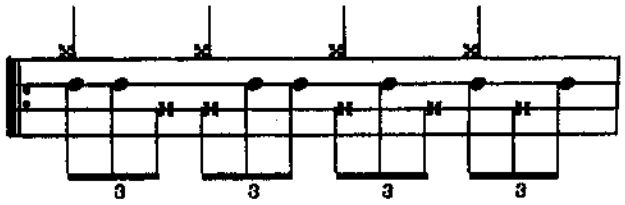

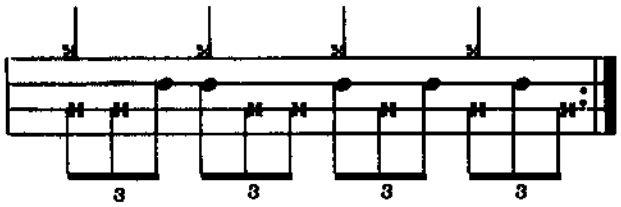

Play TC with RH.

Play SD with LH.

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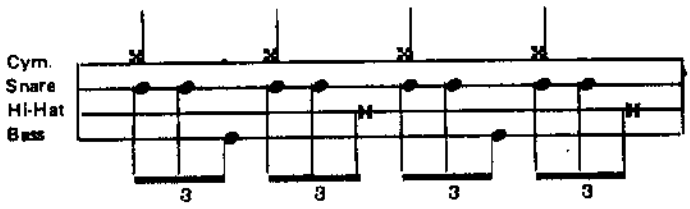

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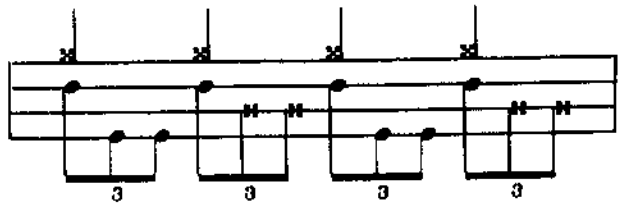

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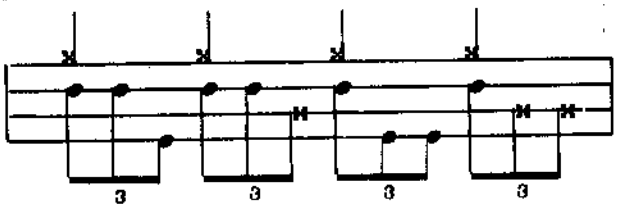

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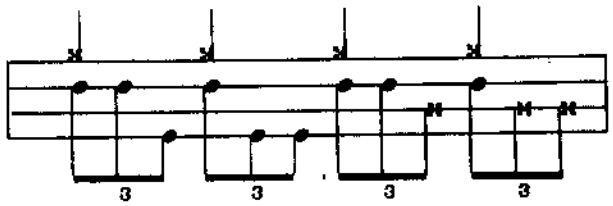

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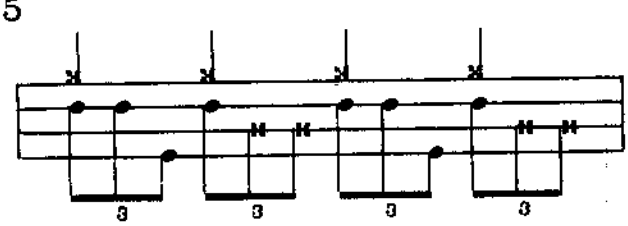

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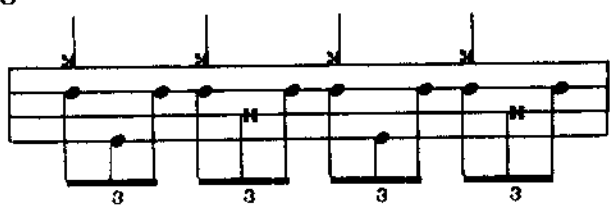

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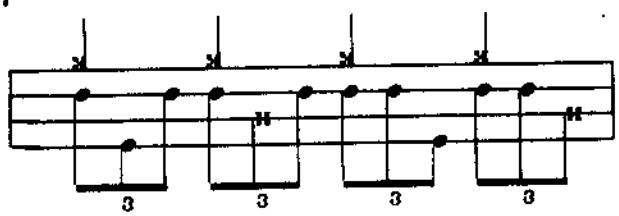

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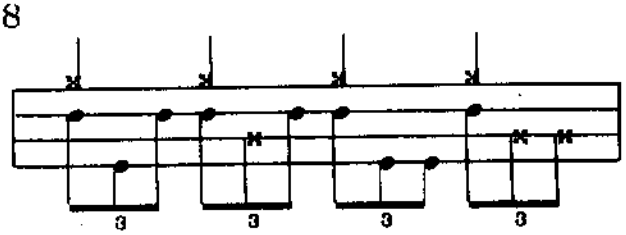

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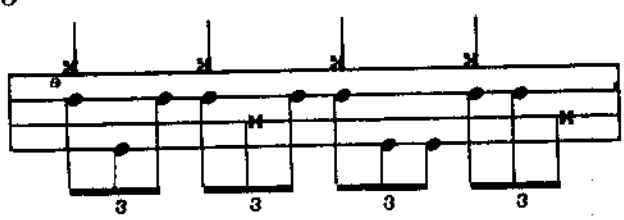

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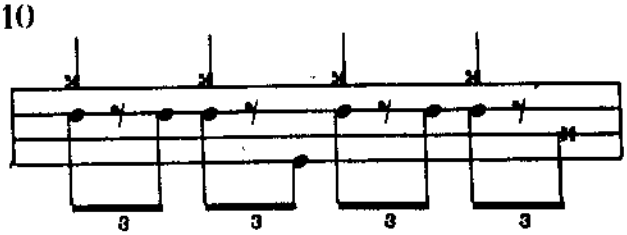

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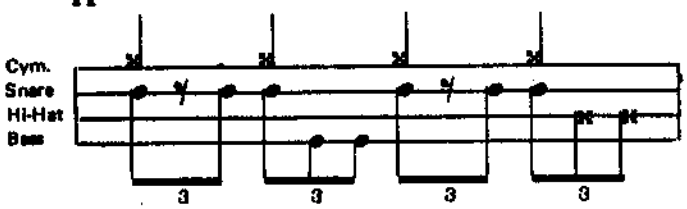

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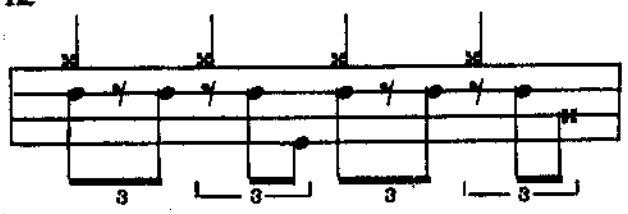

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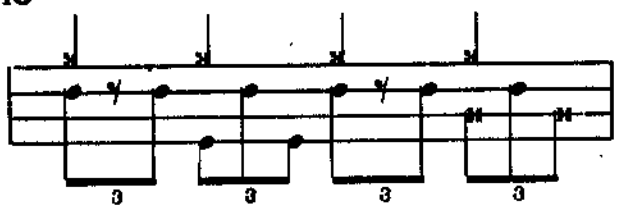

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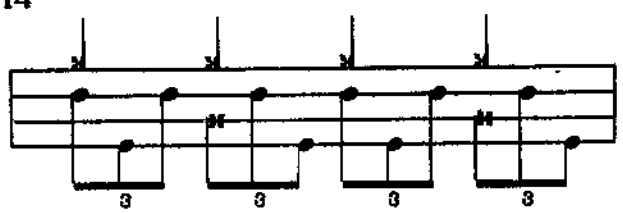

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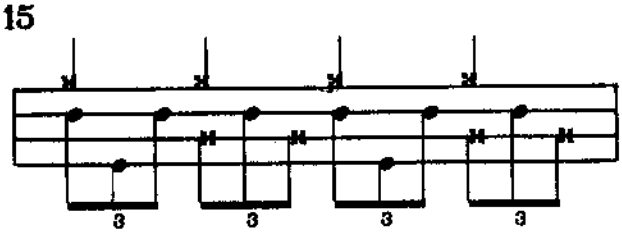

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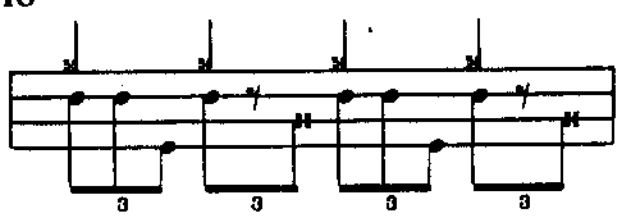

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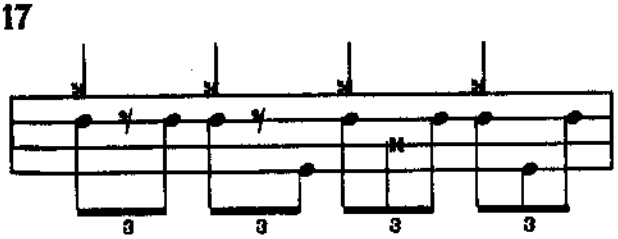

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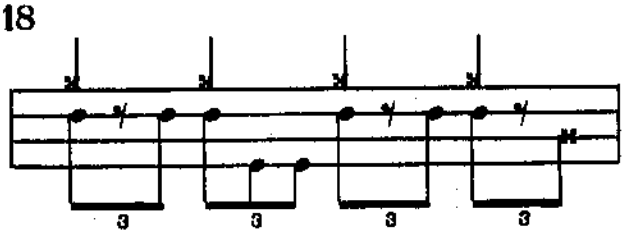

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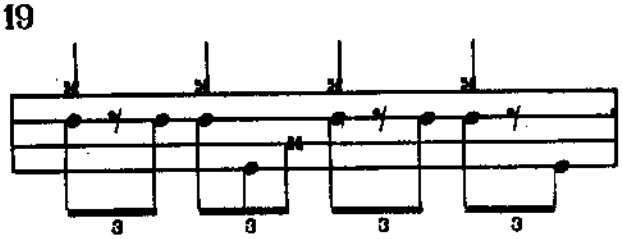

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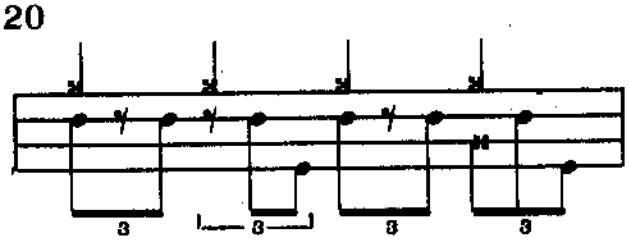

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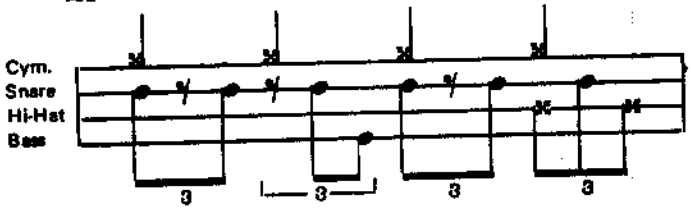

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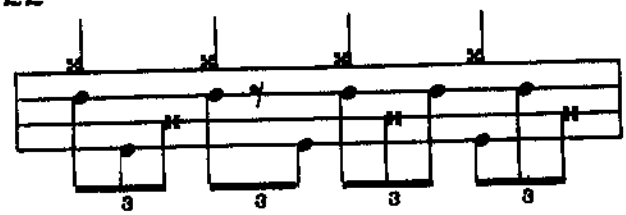

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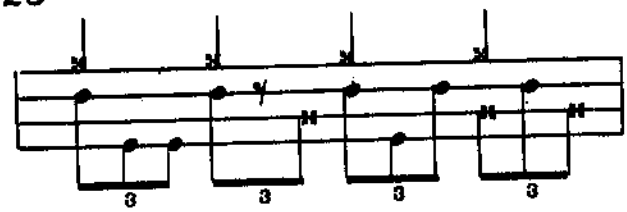

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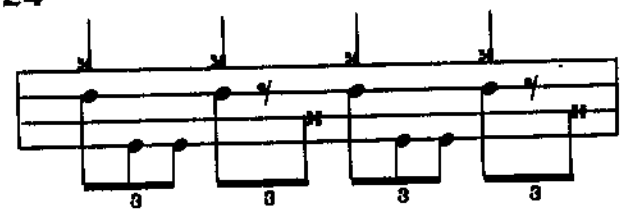

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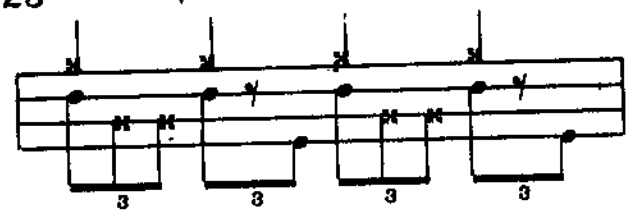

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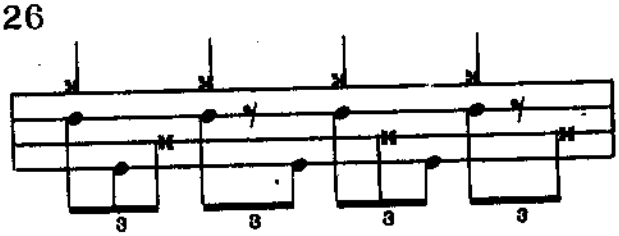

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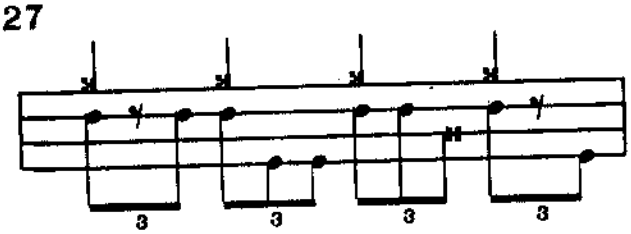

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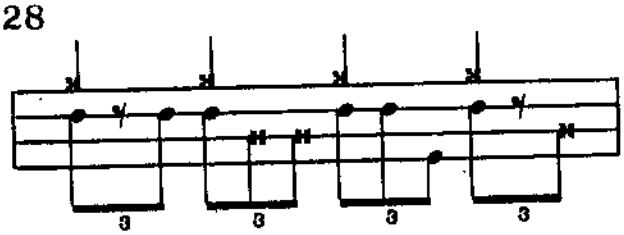

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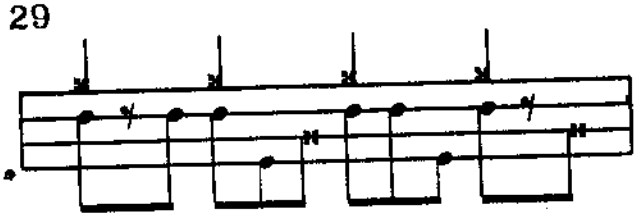

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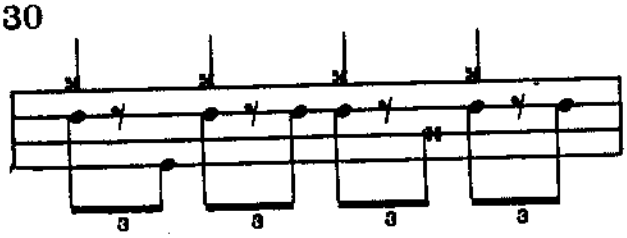

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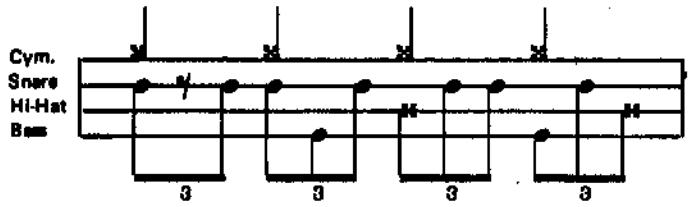

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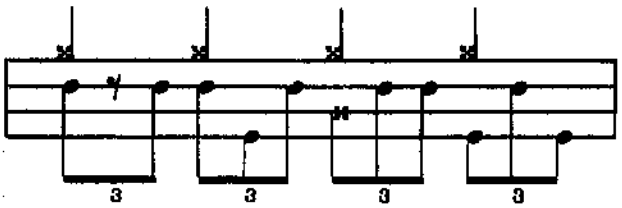

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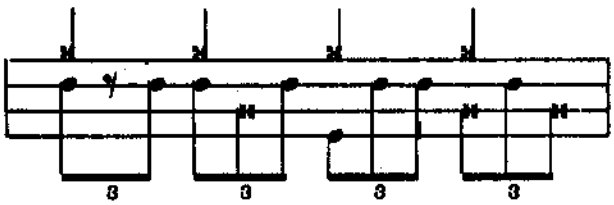

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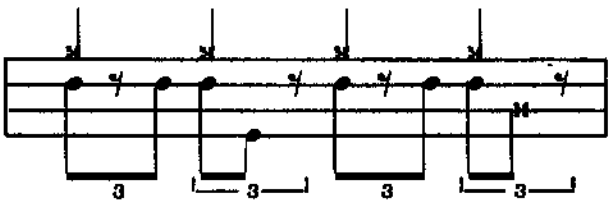

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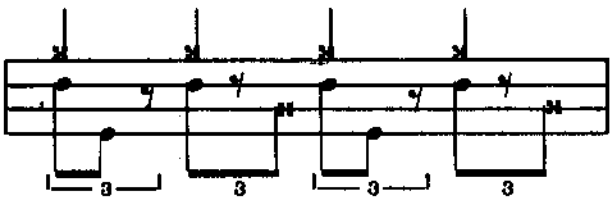

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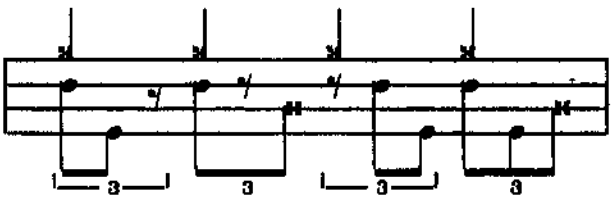

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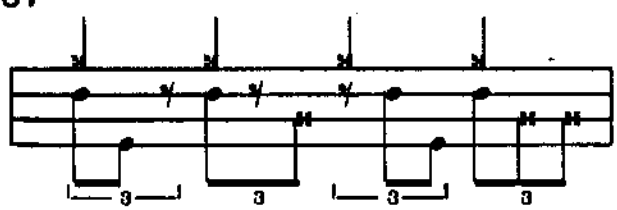

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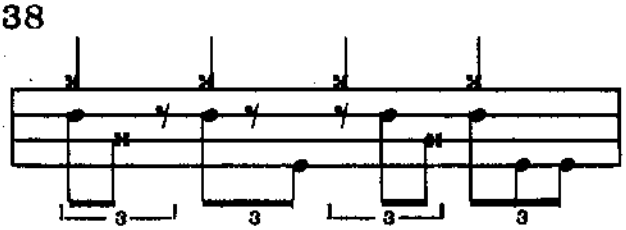

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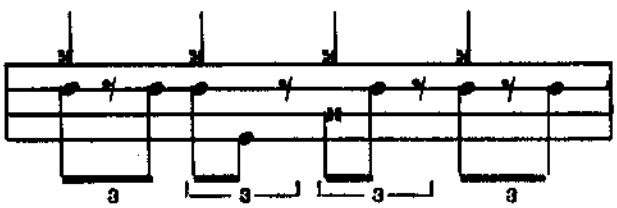

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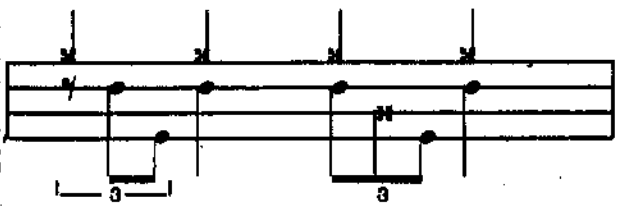

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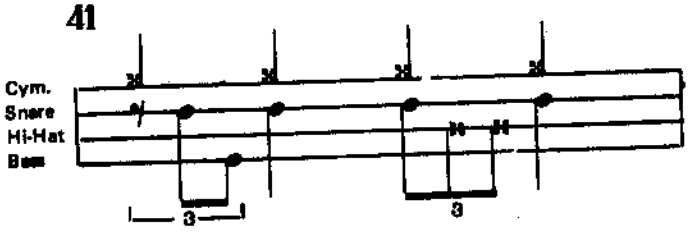

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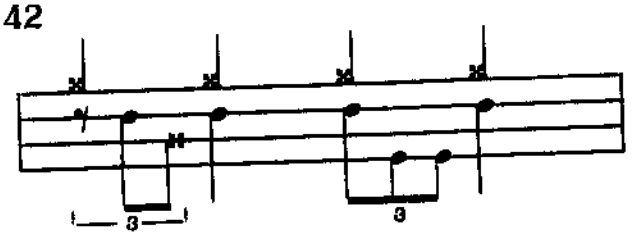

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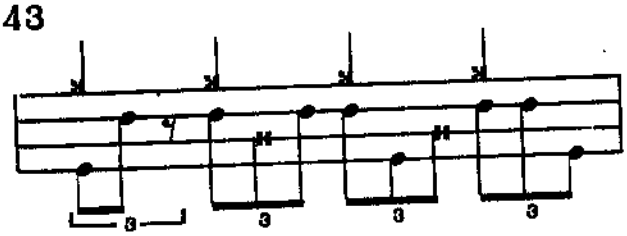

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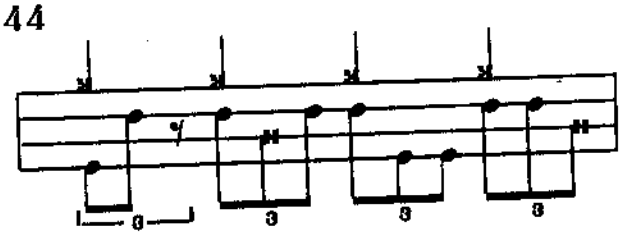

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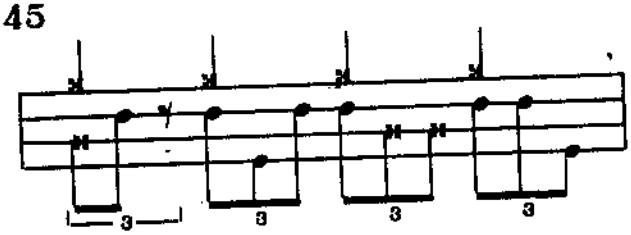

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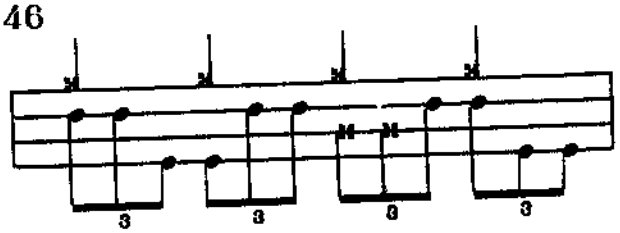

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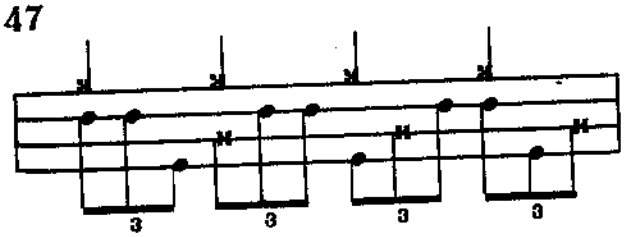

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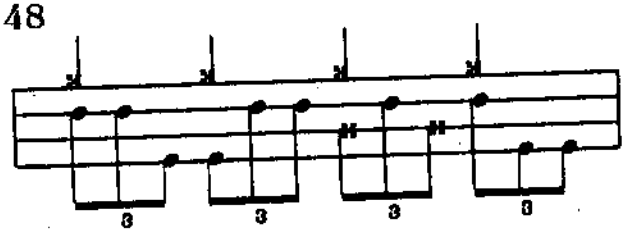

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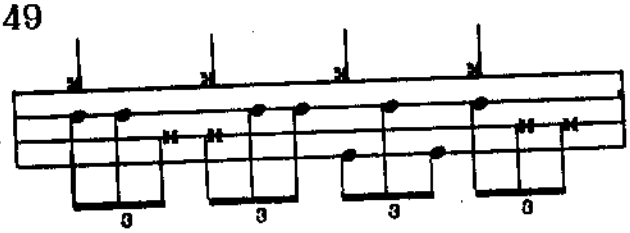

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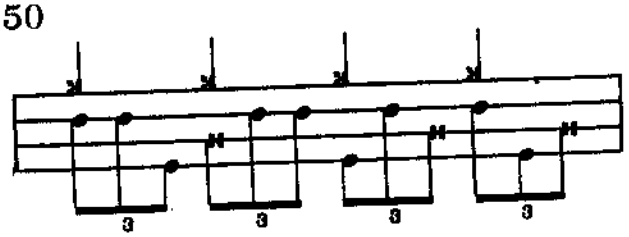

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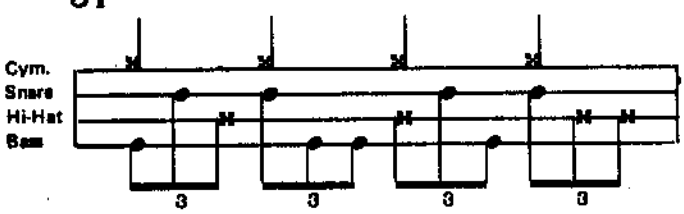

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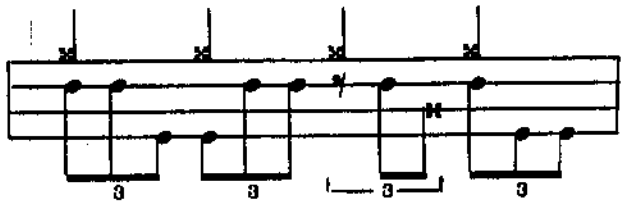

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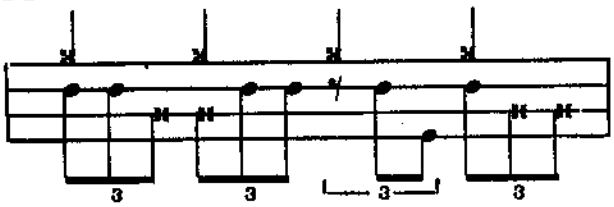

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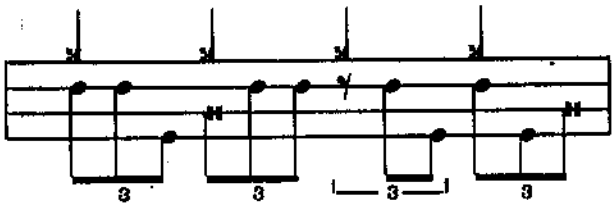

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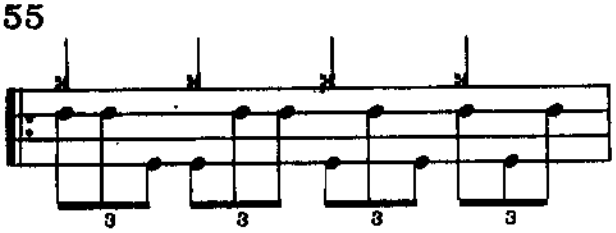

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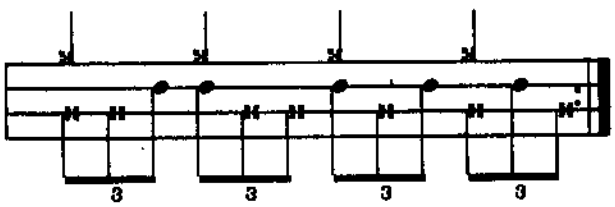

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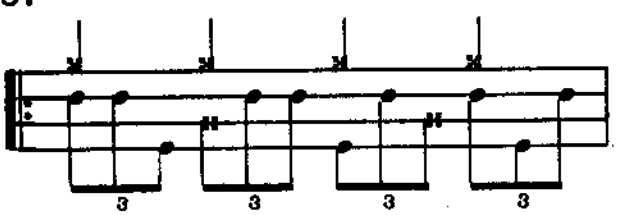

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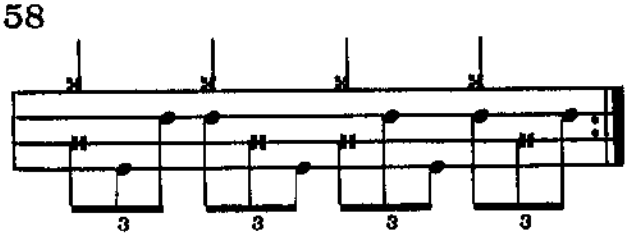
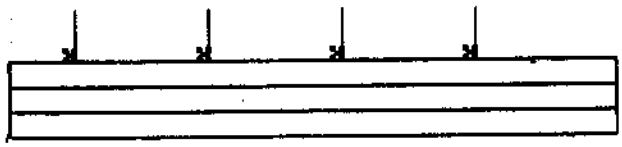




BOOK III
WAYS OF PRACTICE

About the cymbal ride rhythms:

The straight-four cymbal rhythm (quarter-notes) may be used here in place of the conventional cymbal ride rhythm. Eventually, however, cymbal rhythm variations of your choice should be played in conjunction with the left-hand, bass-drum, and hi-hat rhythms.

In performance, left-hand, bass-drum, and hi-hat rhythmic punctuations and figures are not played repetitiously—occupying the same positions in the measure bar after bar, and played on the same parts of the drum set. Nor should they be practiced that way. When performed, such rhythms are continually moved around the different parts of the drum set as well as having their positions in the framework of the measure or the phrase changed.

Here, the punctuations and figures are moved around within the framework of six-measure groupings. They may, however, be practiced as you choose as well as the way they are written.

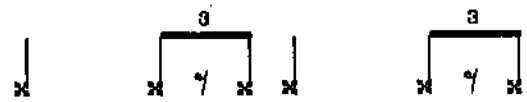
The left-hand rhythms should eventually be divided among the snare drum and the toms. Or they may be divided among the toms only.

The hi-hat rhythms should be practiced using a "chick" sound (snapping shut the hi-hat suddenly and keeping it closed until the next time it is played). When it's feasible, they should be practiced making an open, clanging sound (snap shut and instantly release the pedal, as if in one sudden, emphatic motion, allowing the sound to sustain).

This section is not designed specifically for coordinated independence; at least not in the usual way. Rather, the emphasis is on the progressive drumming style—the way the drummer compliments and interacts with the soloist and the members of the rhythm section.

Remember, in moderate and moderate-fast tempos the rhythms are played as, or nearly as, broken-eighth triplets (as written). In faster tempos, they are interpreted as, or nearly as, regular eighths.

The ride-rhythm variations may be used in place of the conventional ride rhythm:

1. 

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3. 

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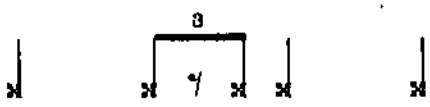
5. 

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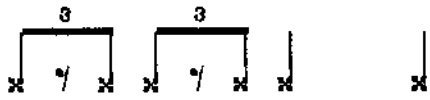
9. 

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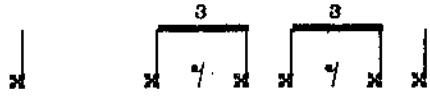
11. 

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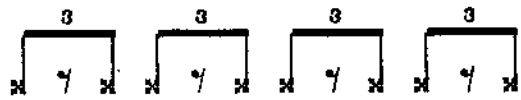
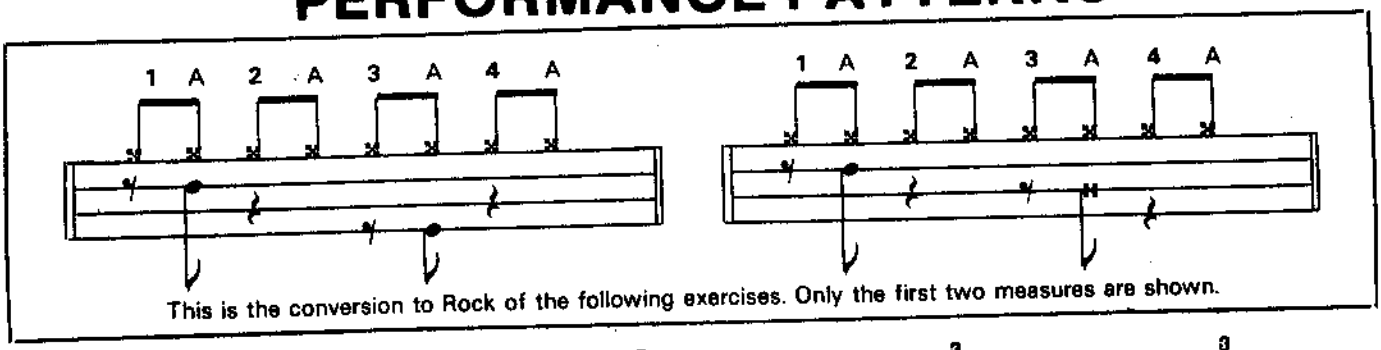
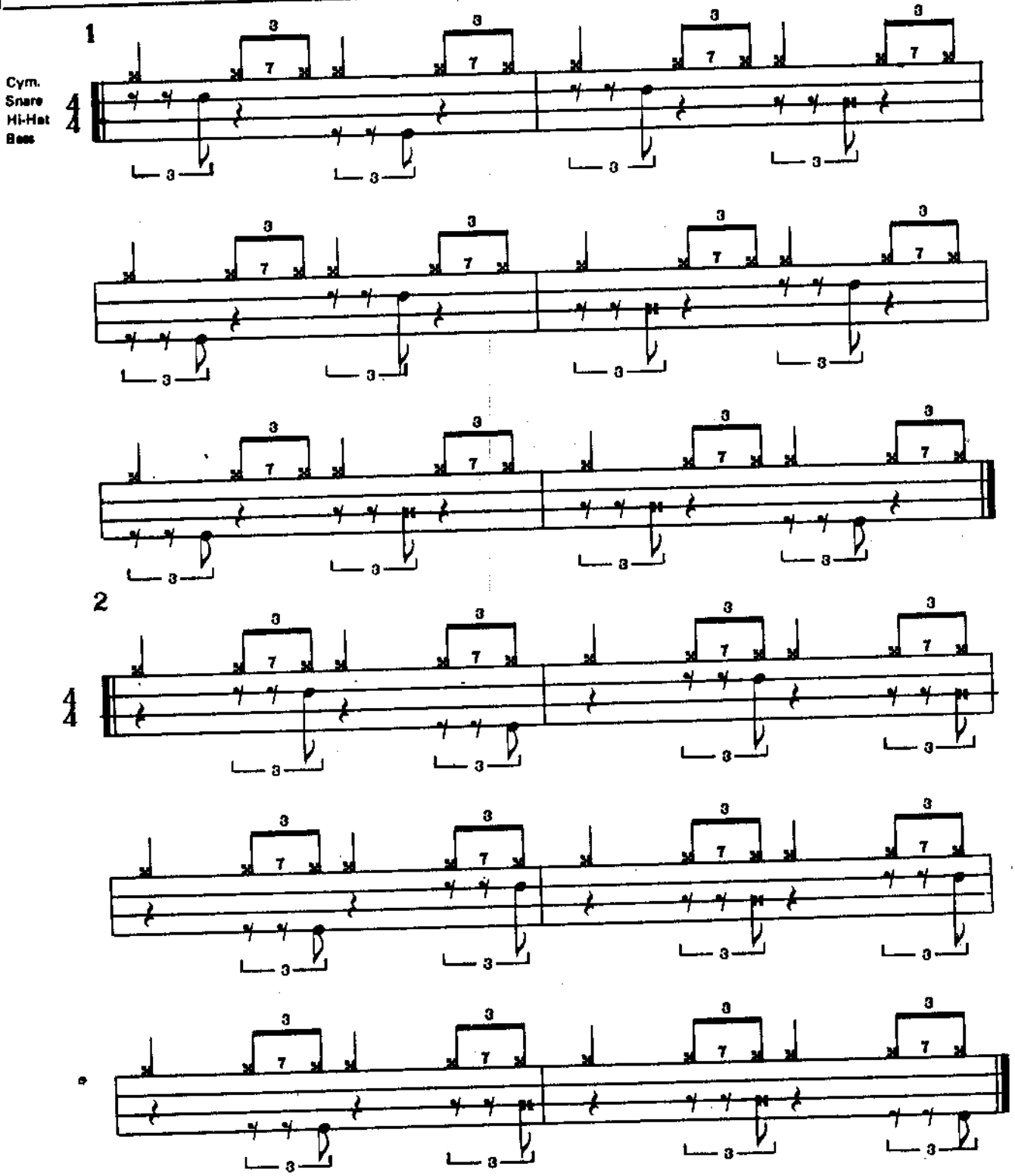
13. 

For the purpose of practicing rock, interpret the broken-eight triplets (jazz eighths) as regular eighths (rock eighths). Then, use the rock cymbal rhythm or the straight-four cymbal rhythm (quarter-notes).

PERFORMANCE PATTERNS



This is the conversion to Rock of the following exercises. Only the first two measures are shown.



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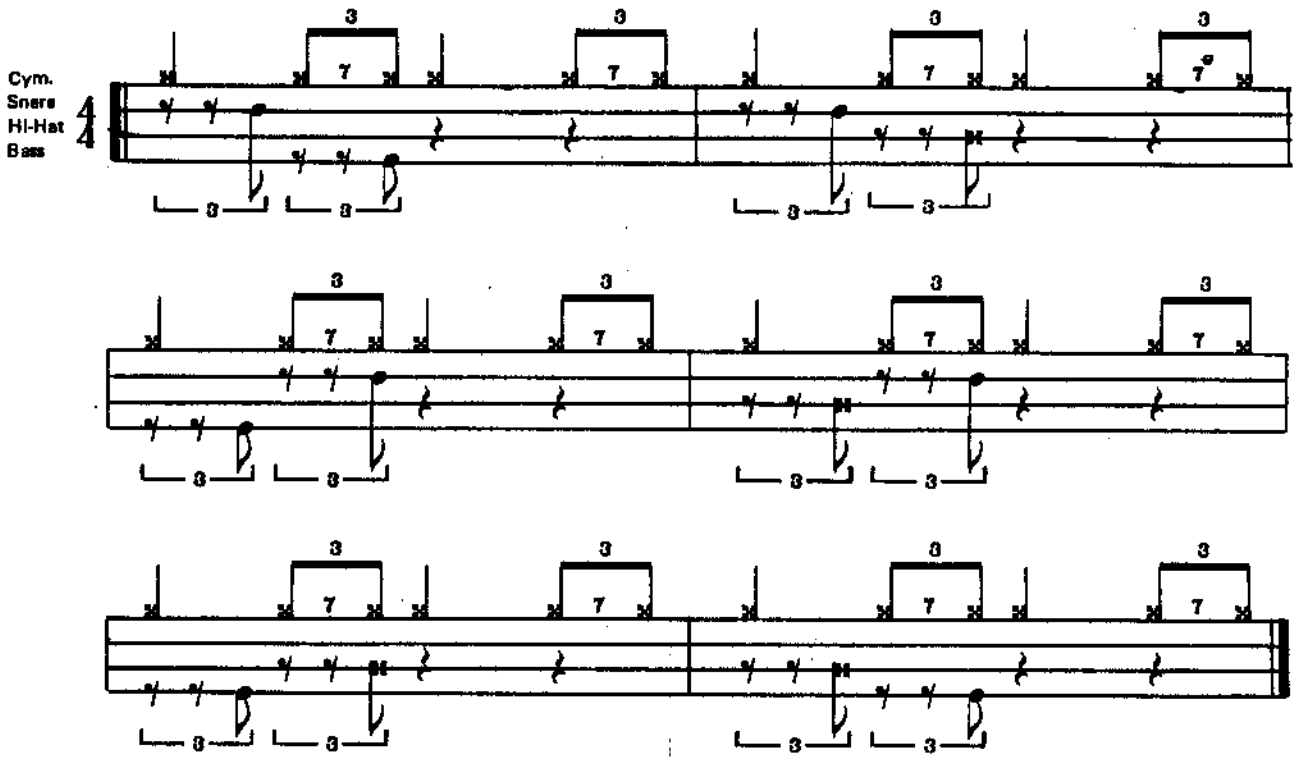

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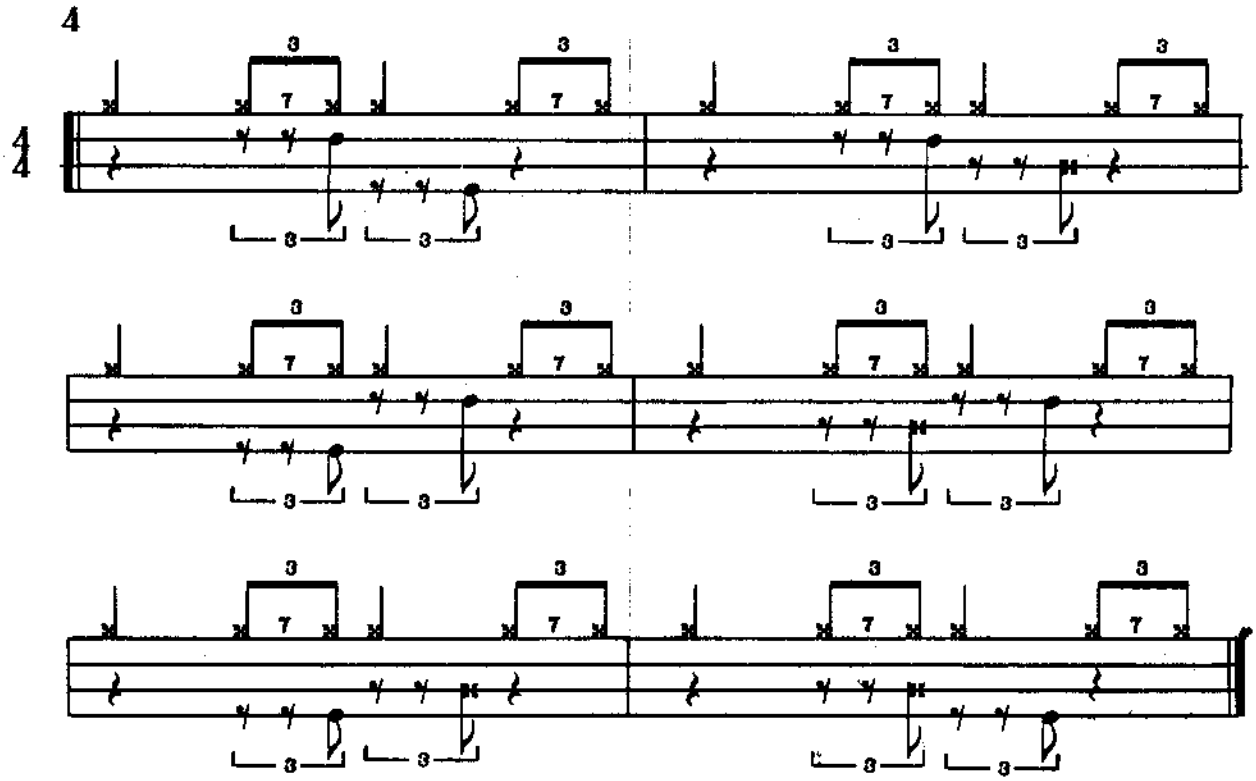
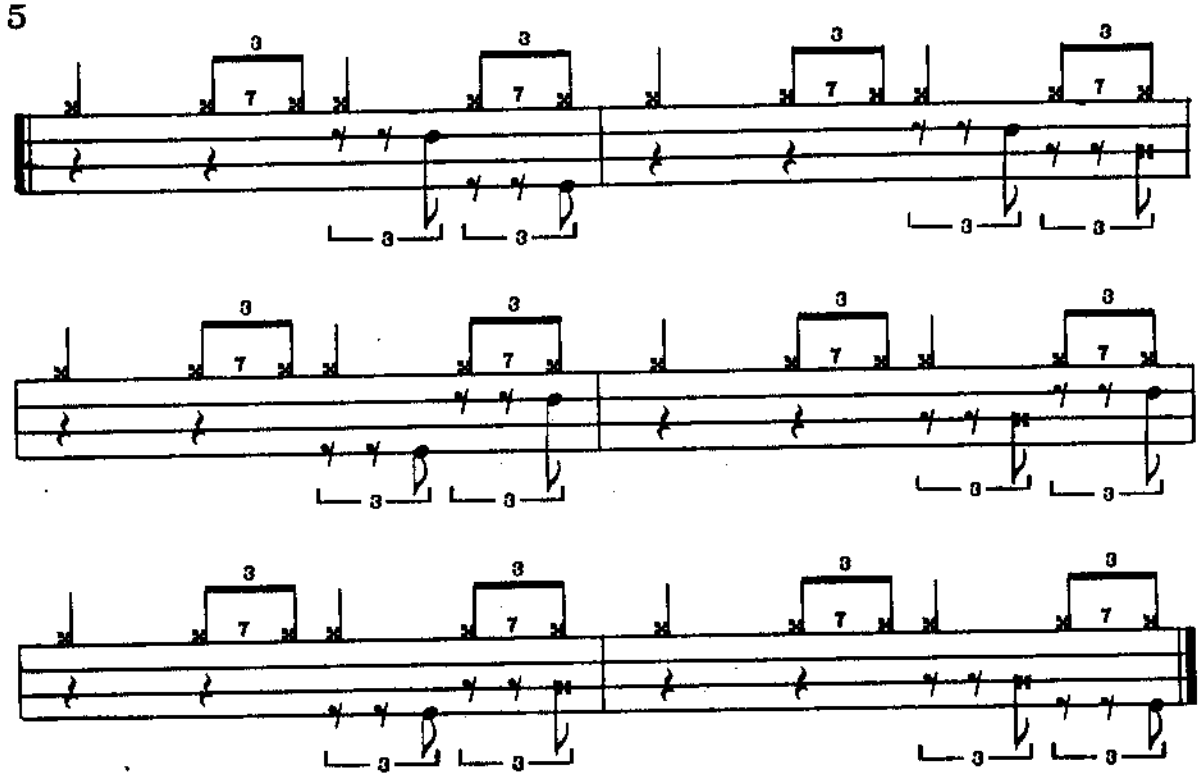


5

Cym.
Snare
Hi-Hat
Bass



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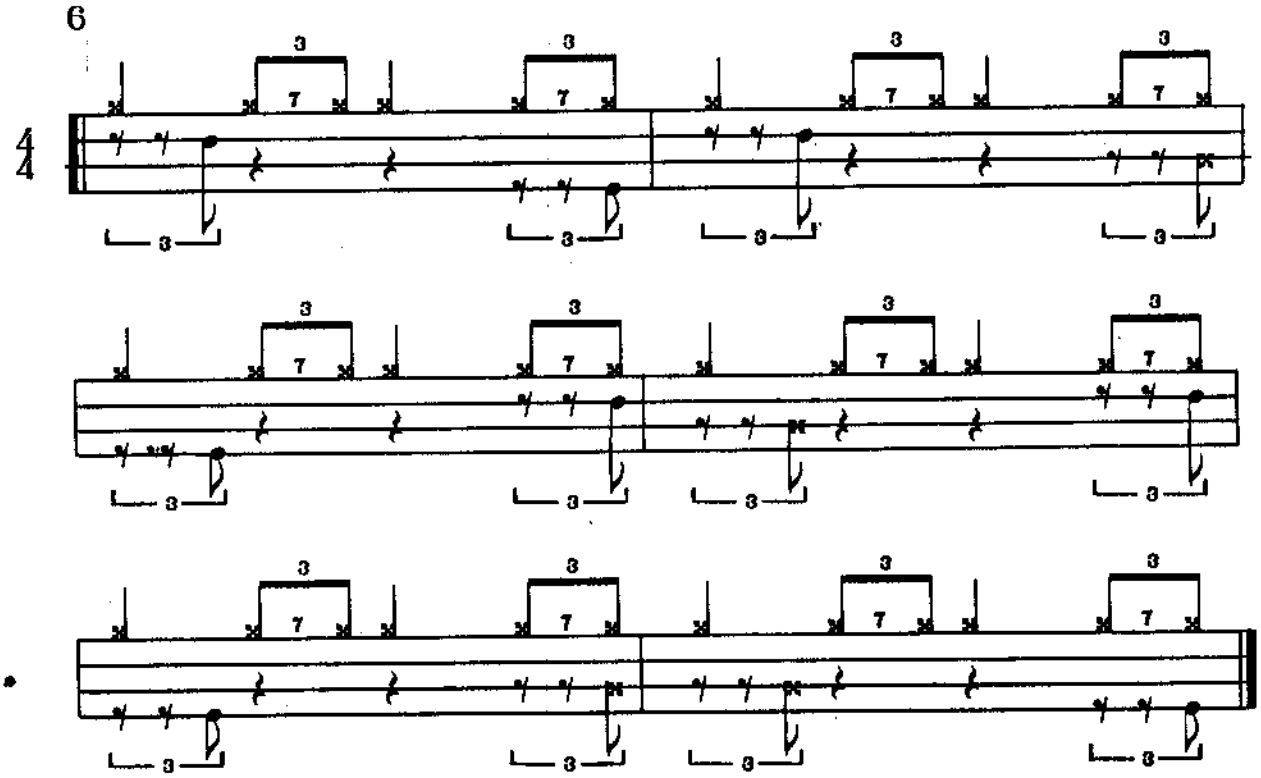

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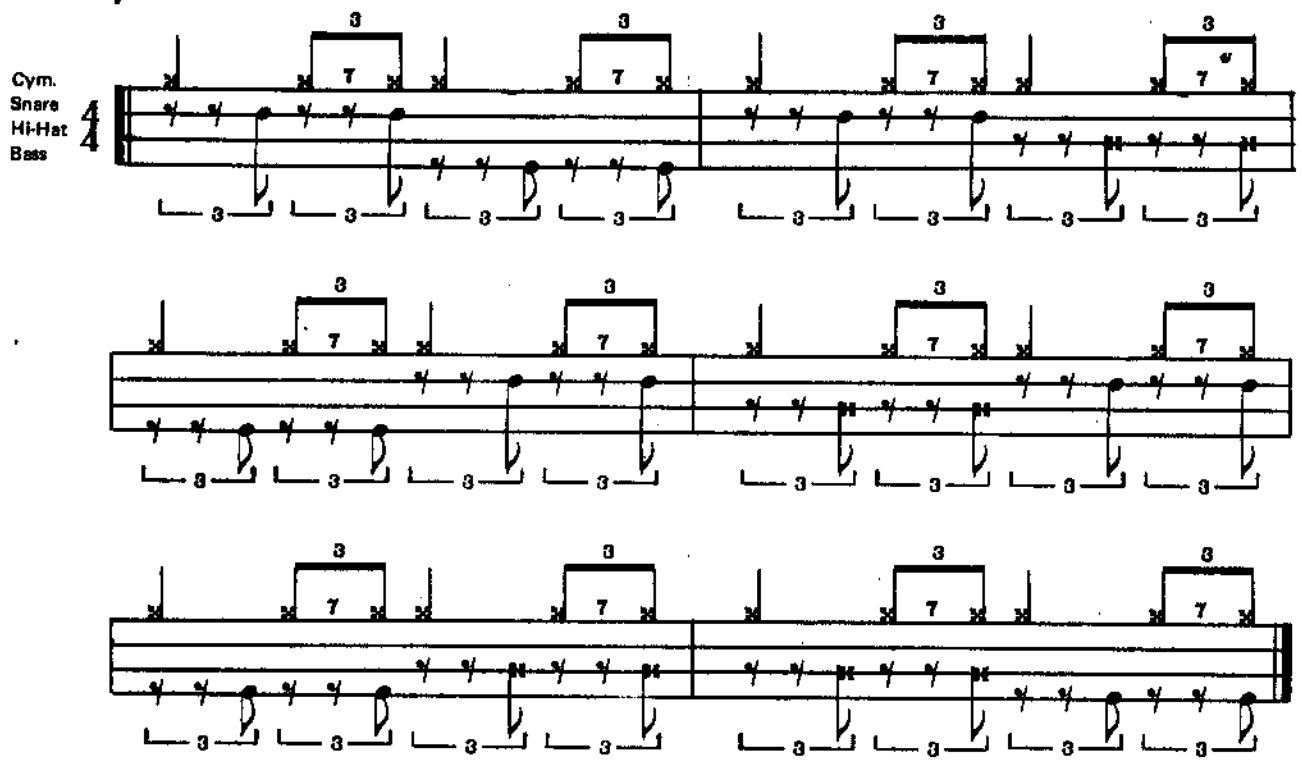

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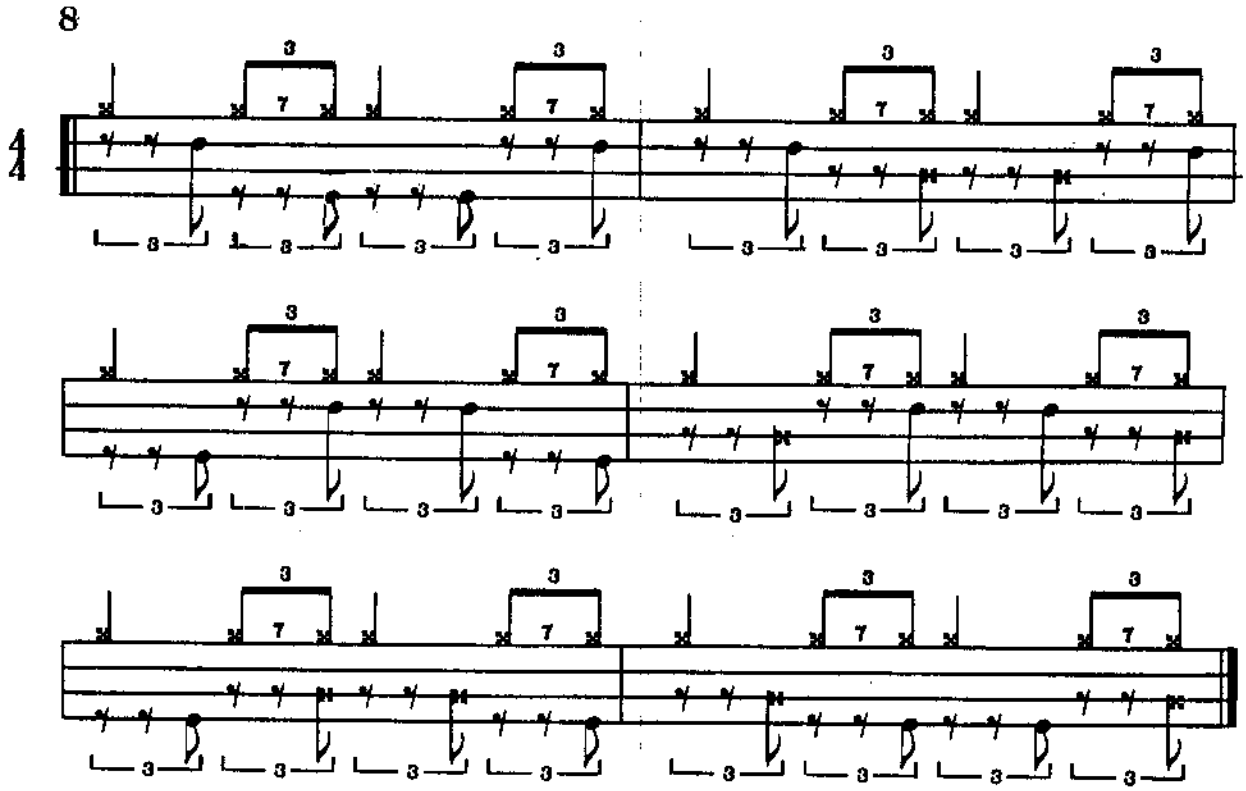
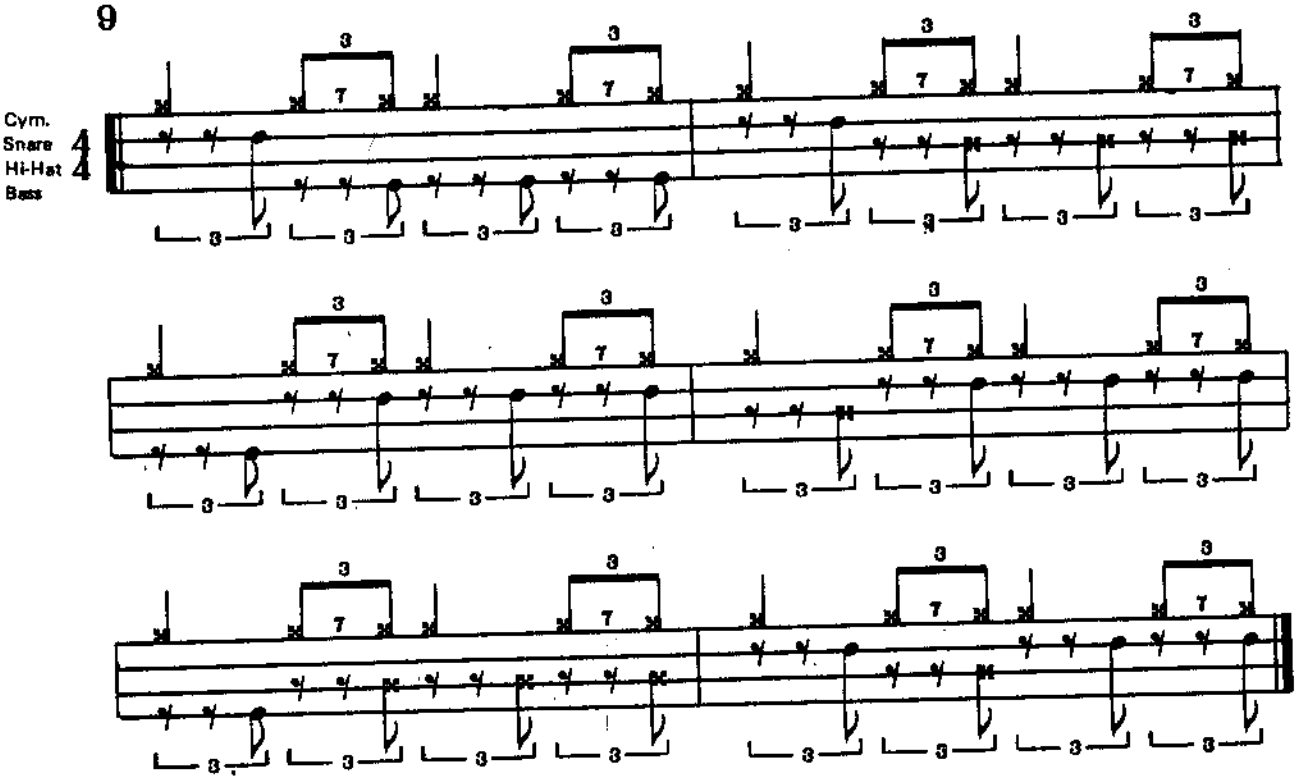


9

Cym.
Snare
Hi-Hat
Bass



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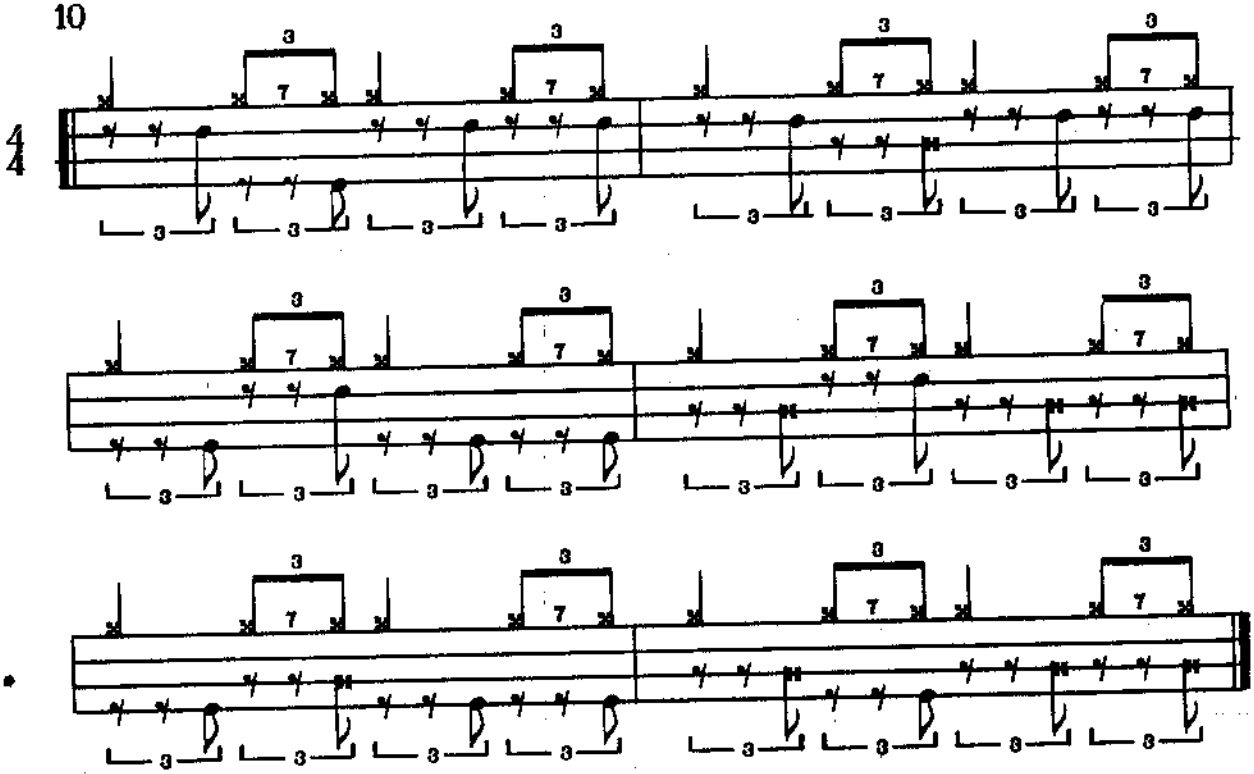
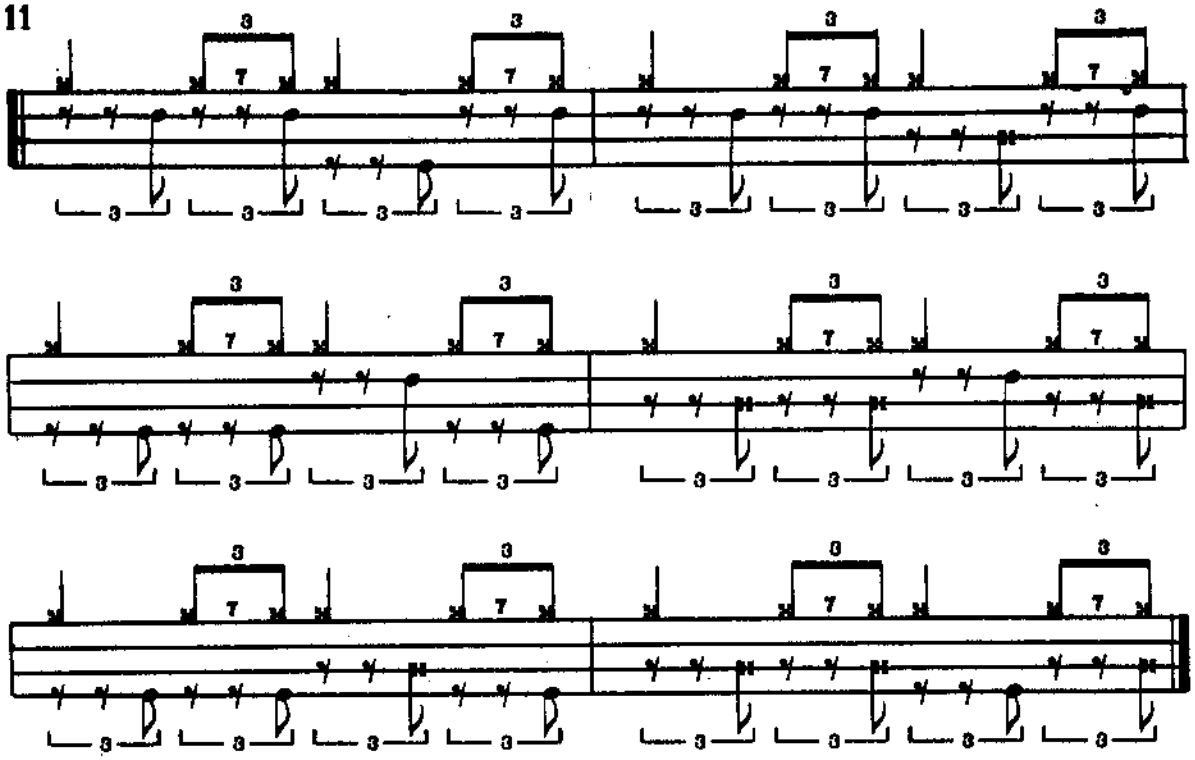
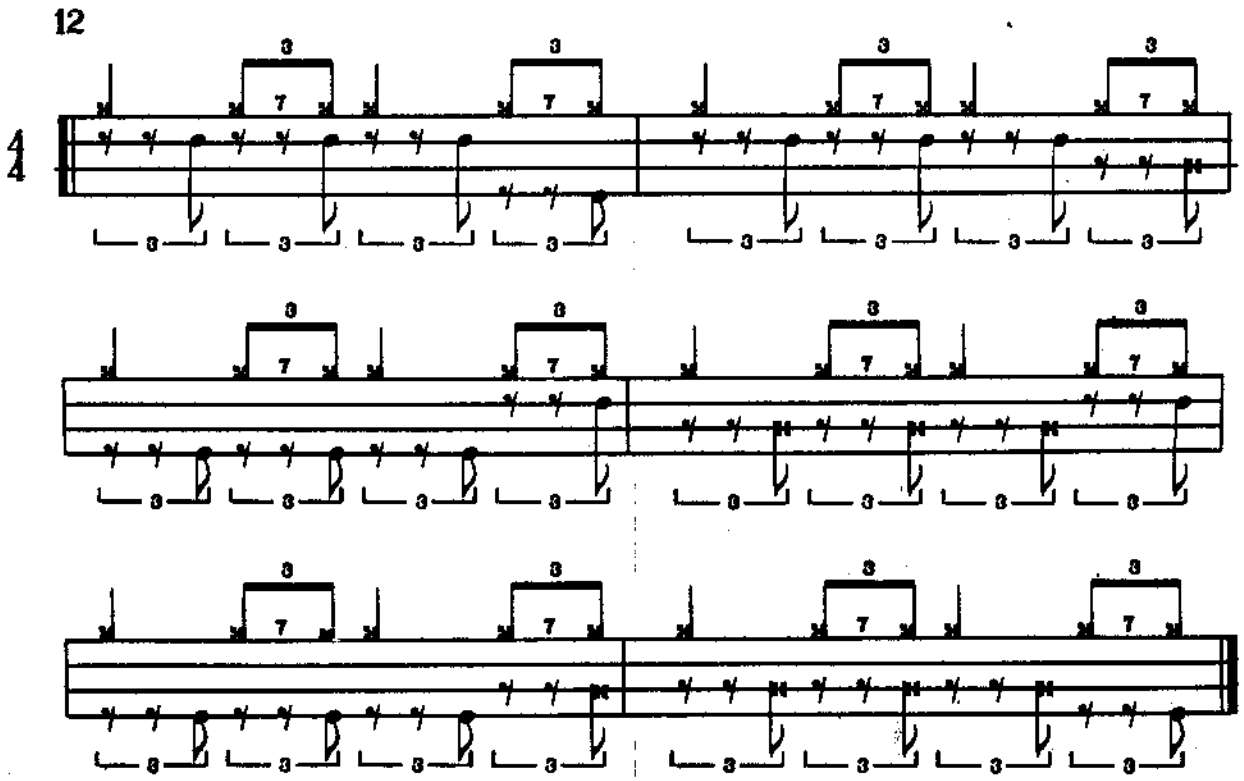


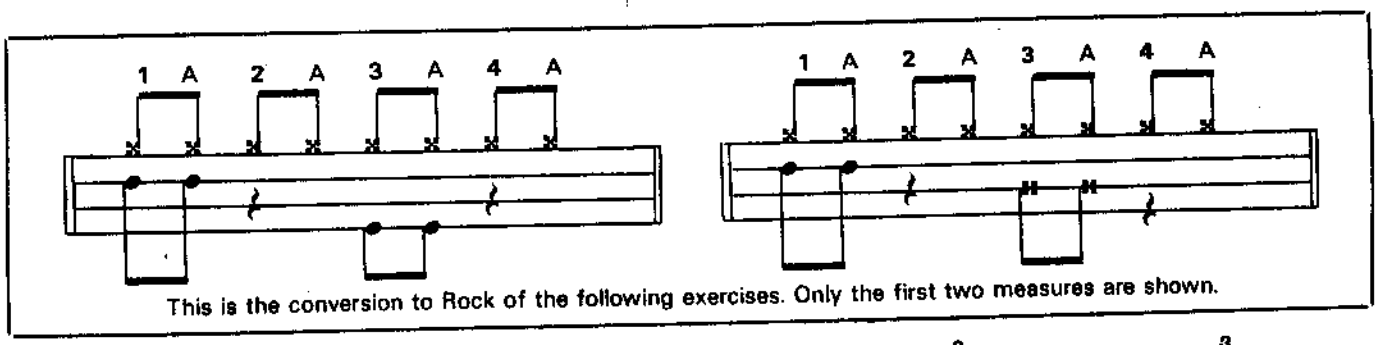
11

Cym.
Snare
Hi-Hat
Bass



12

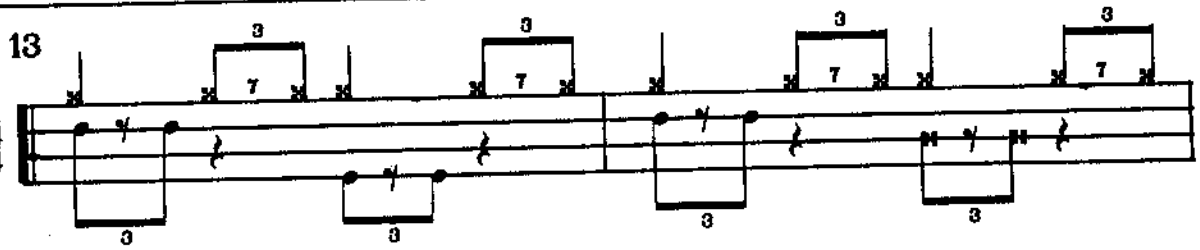


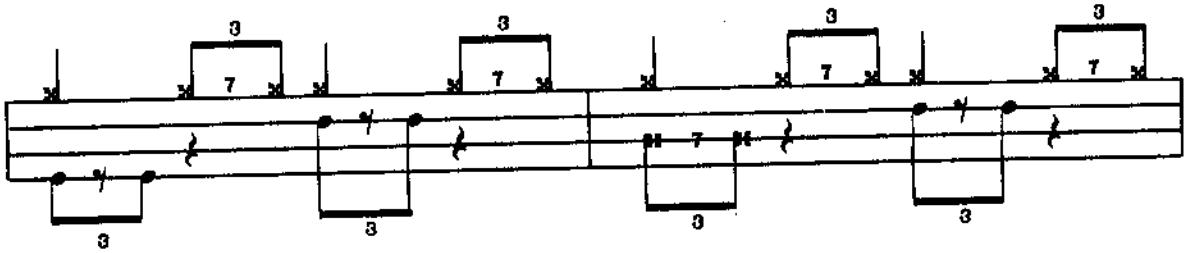


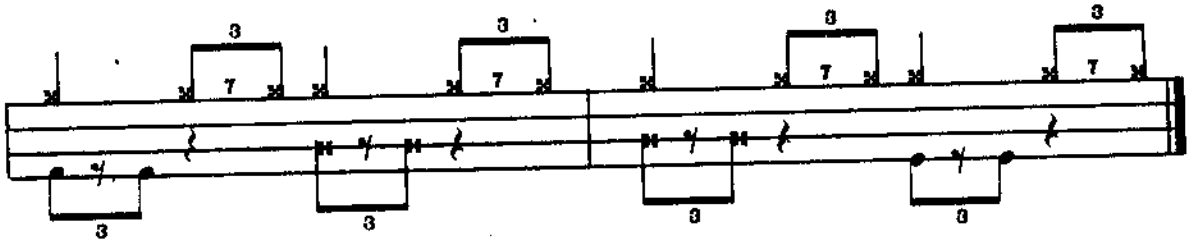
This is the conversion to Rock of the following exercises. Only the first two measures are shown.

13

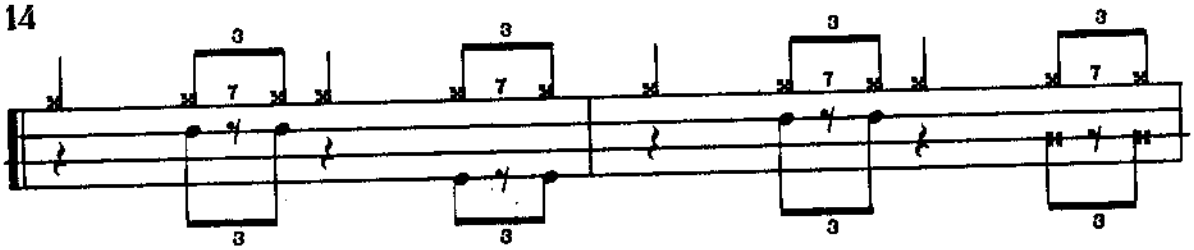
Cym.
Snare
Hi-Hat
Bass

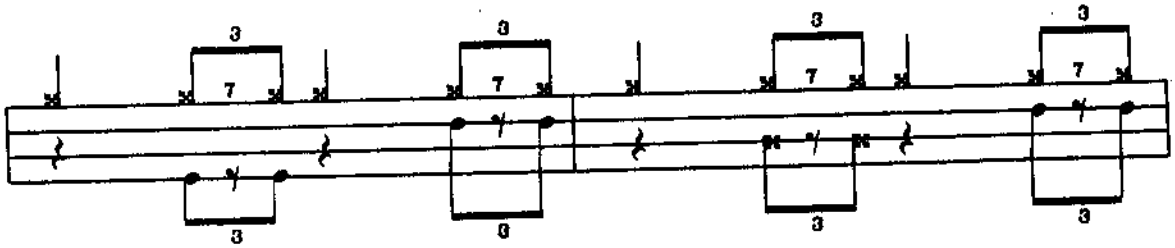


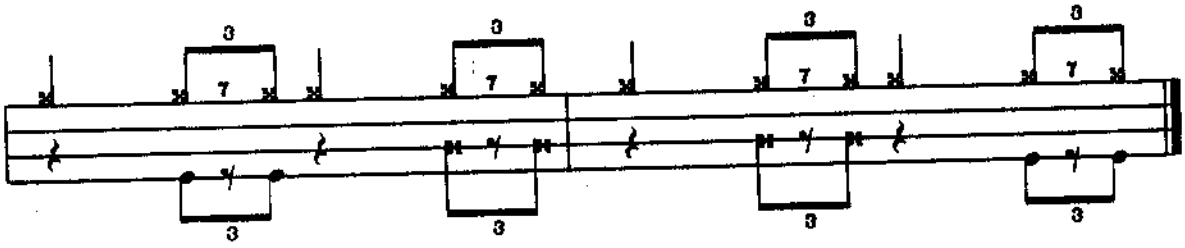




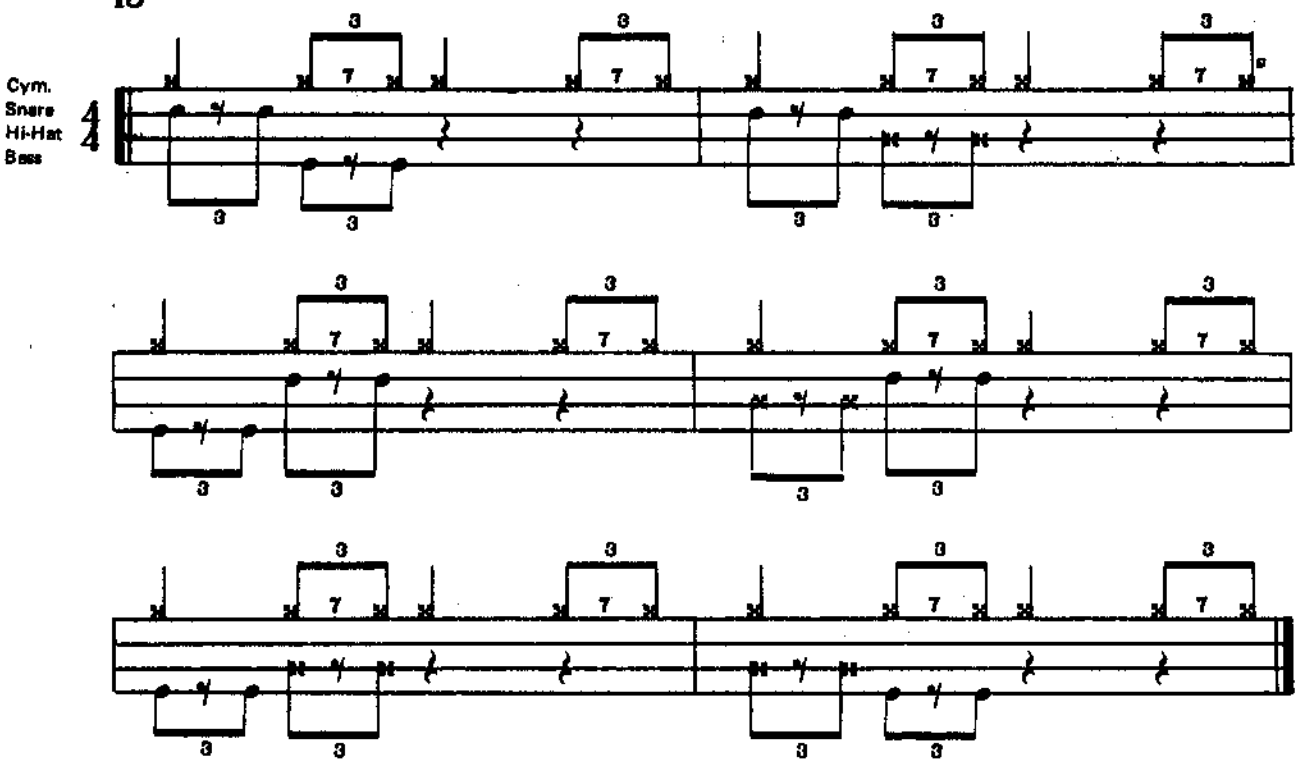
14



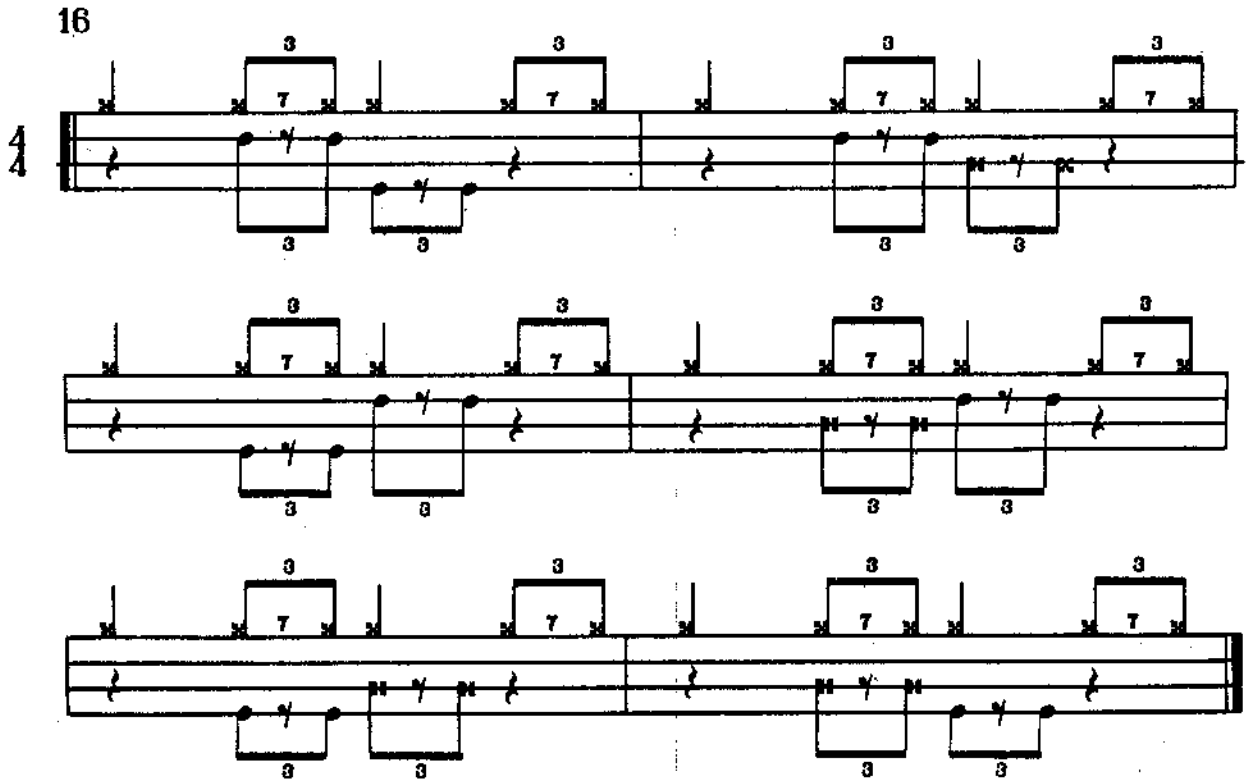




15

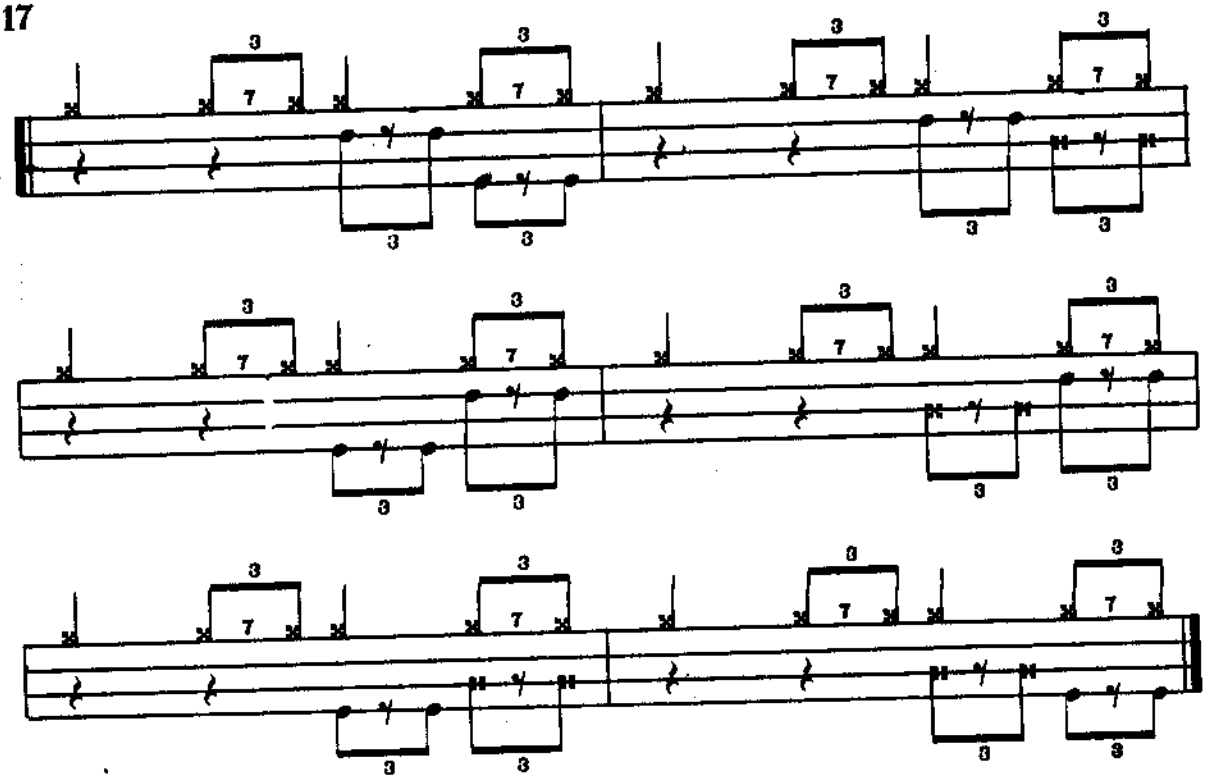


16

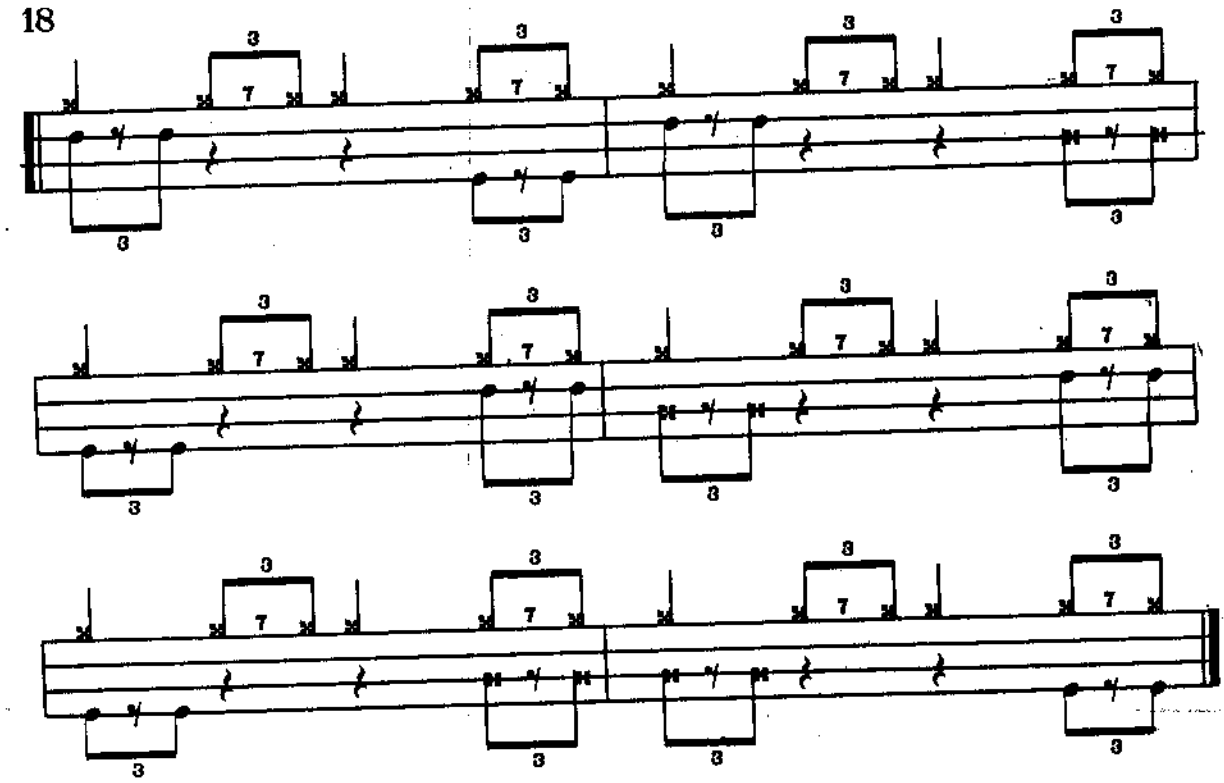


17

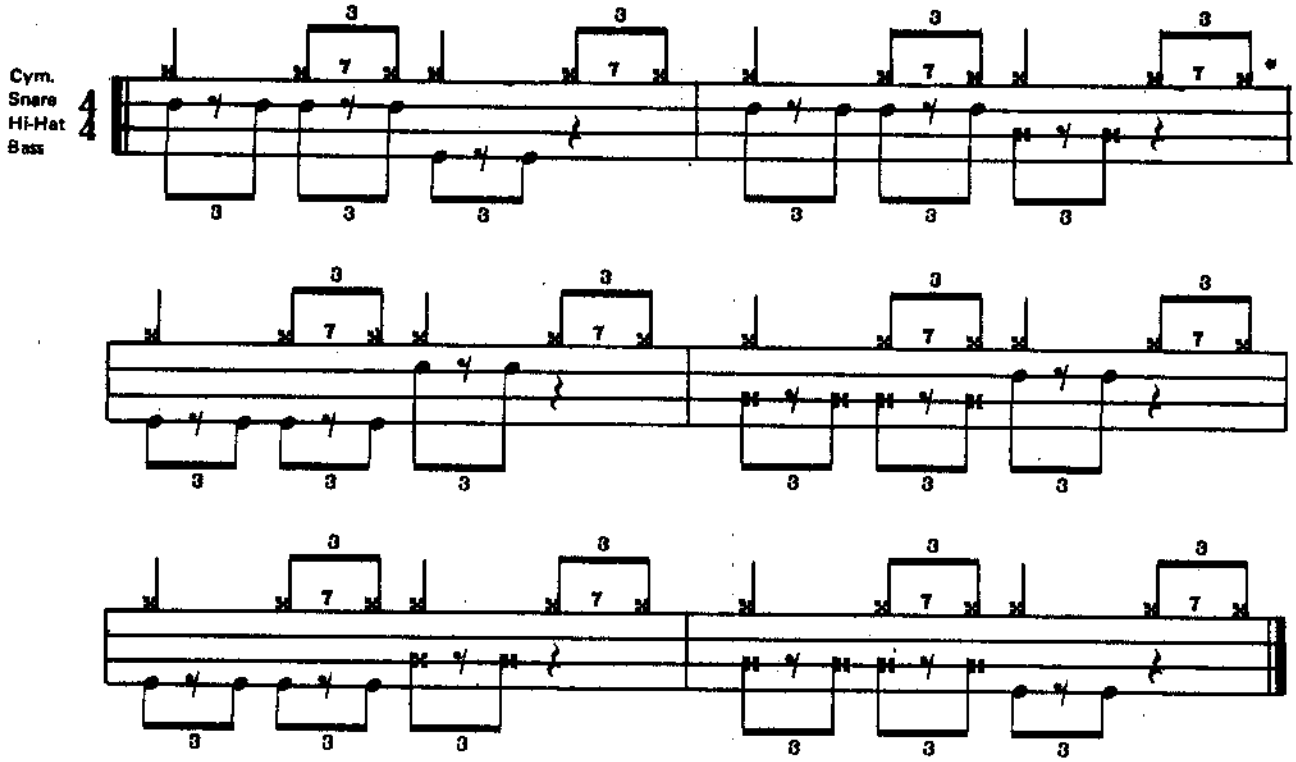
Cym.
Snare
Hi-Hat
Bass



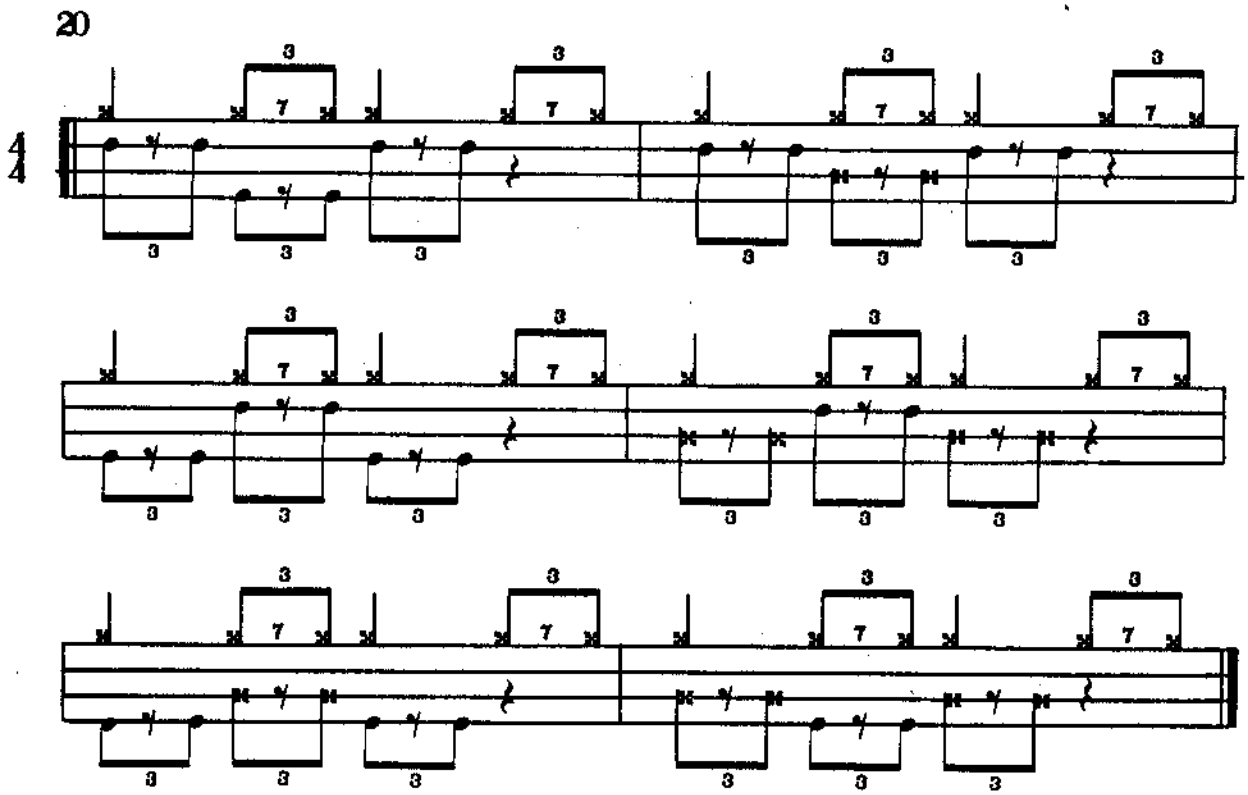
18



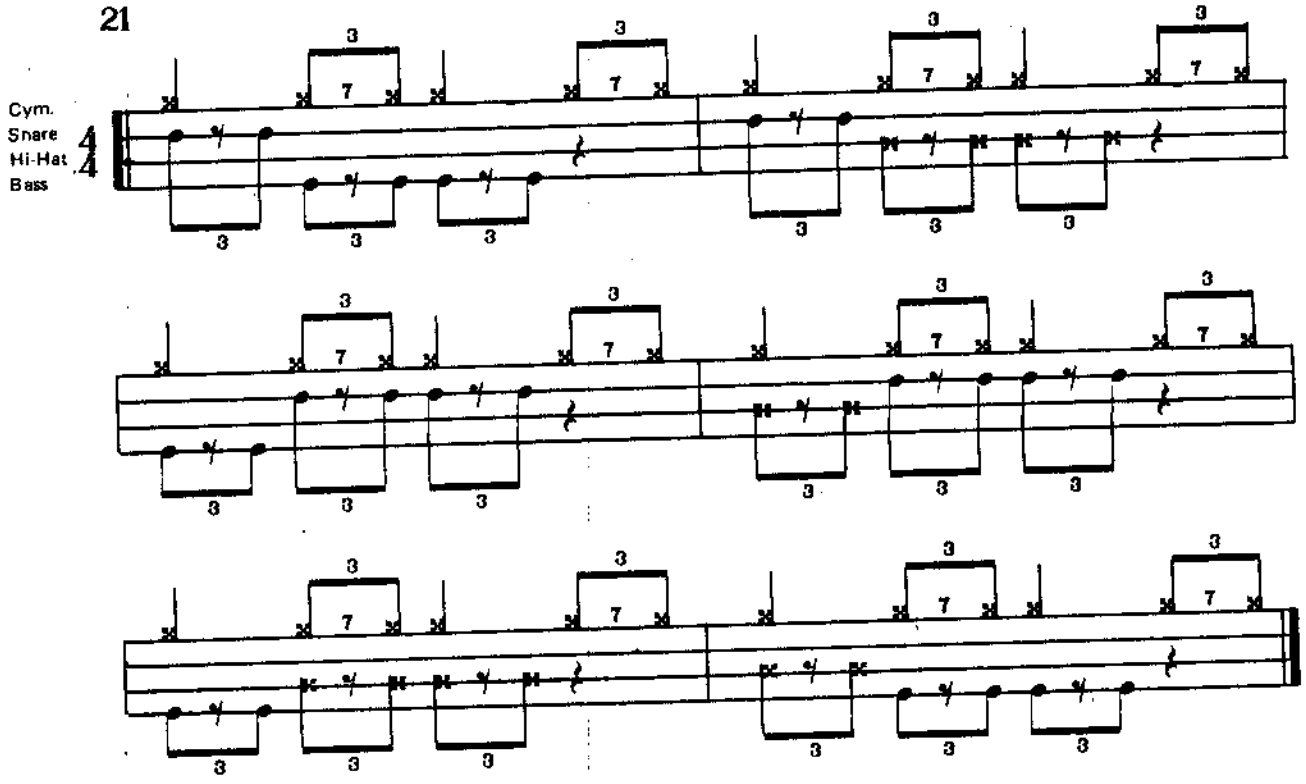
19



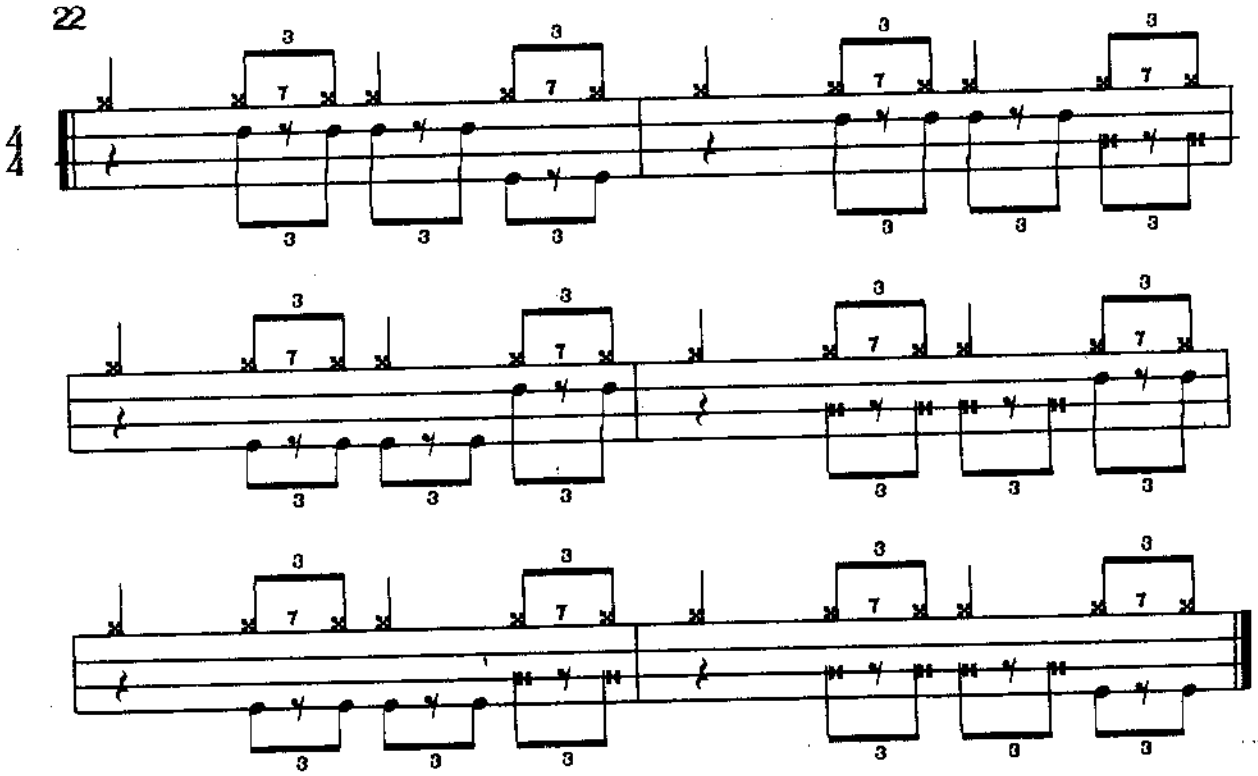
20



21

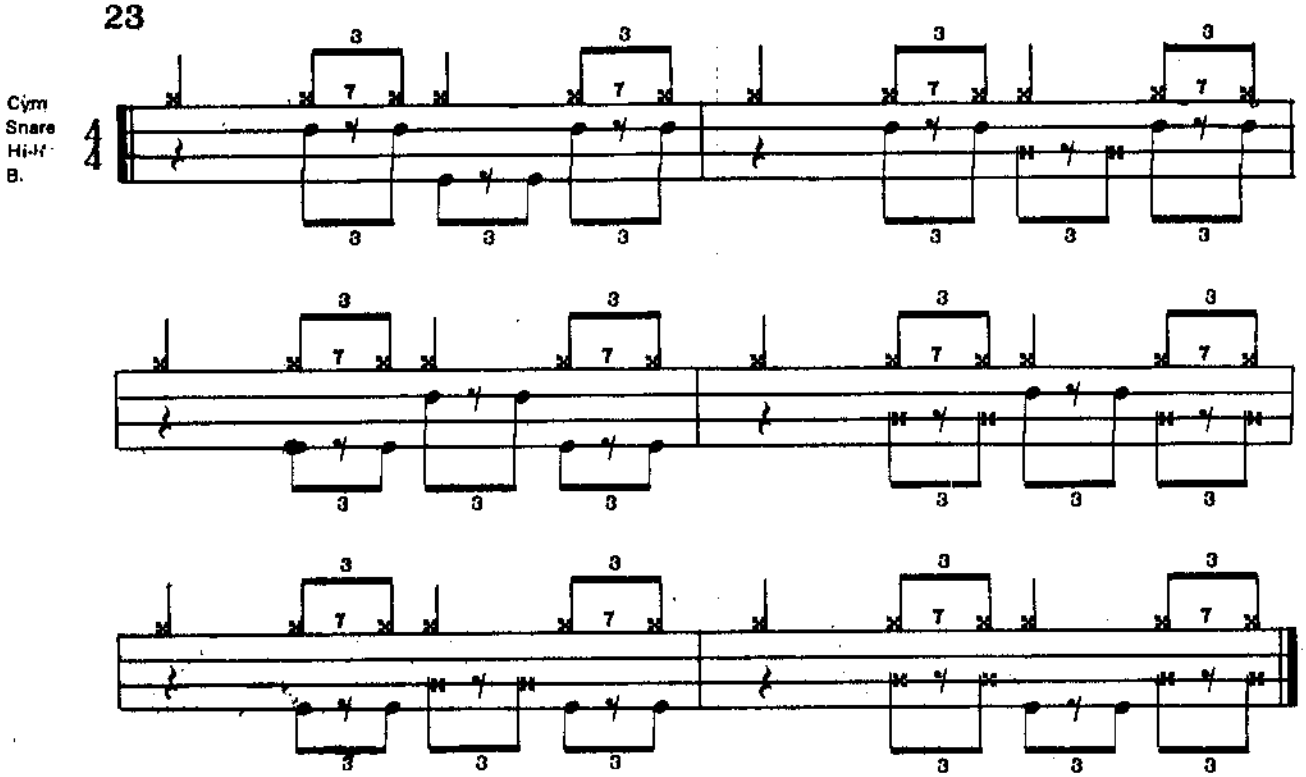


22

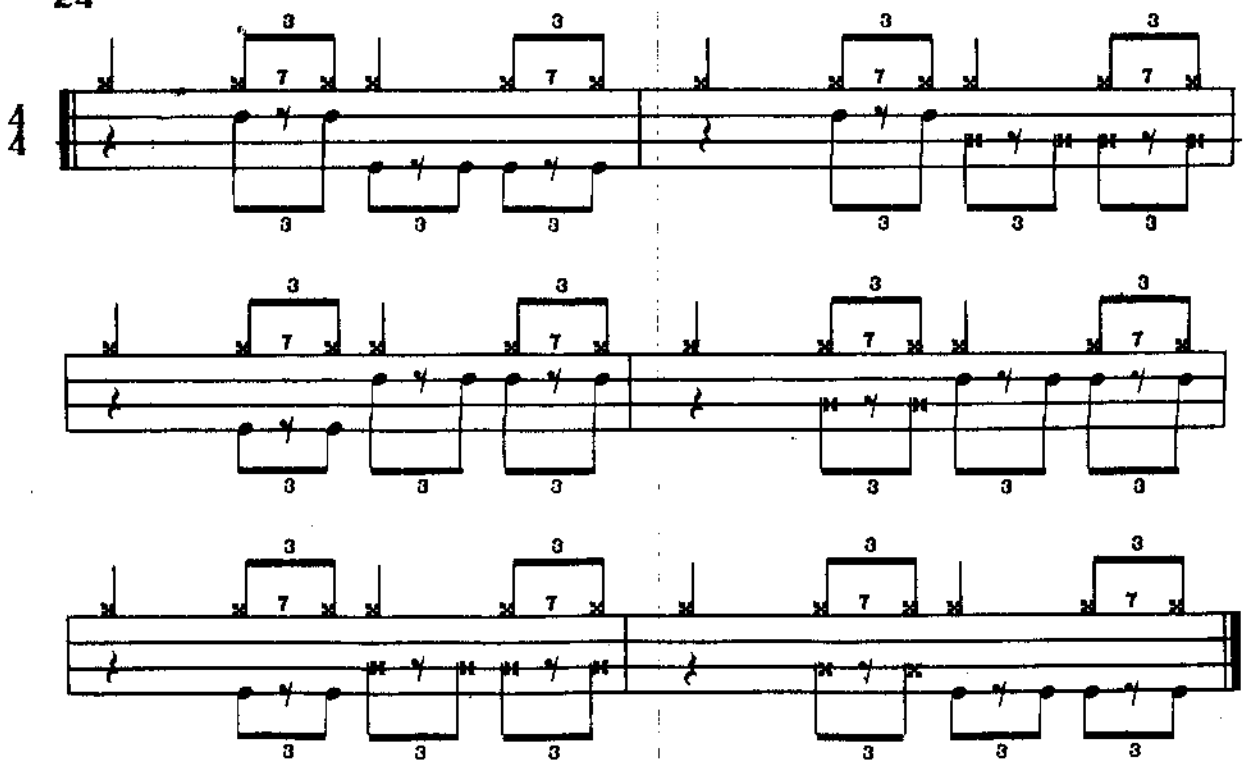


23

Cym
Snare
Hi-H
B.

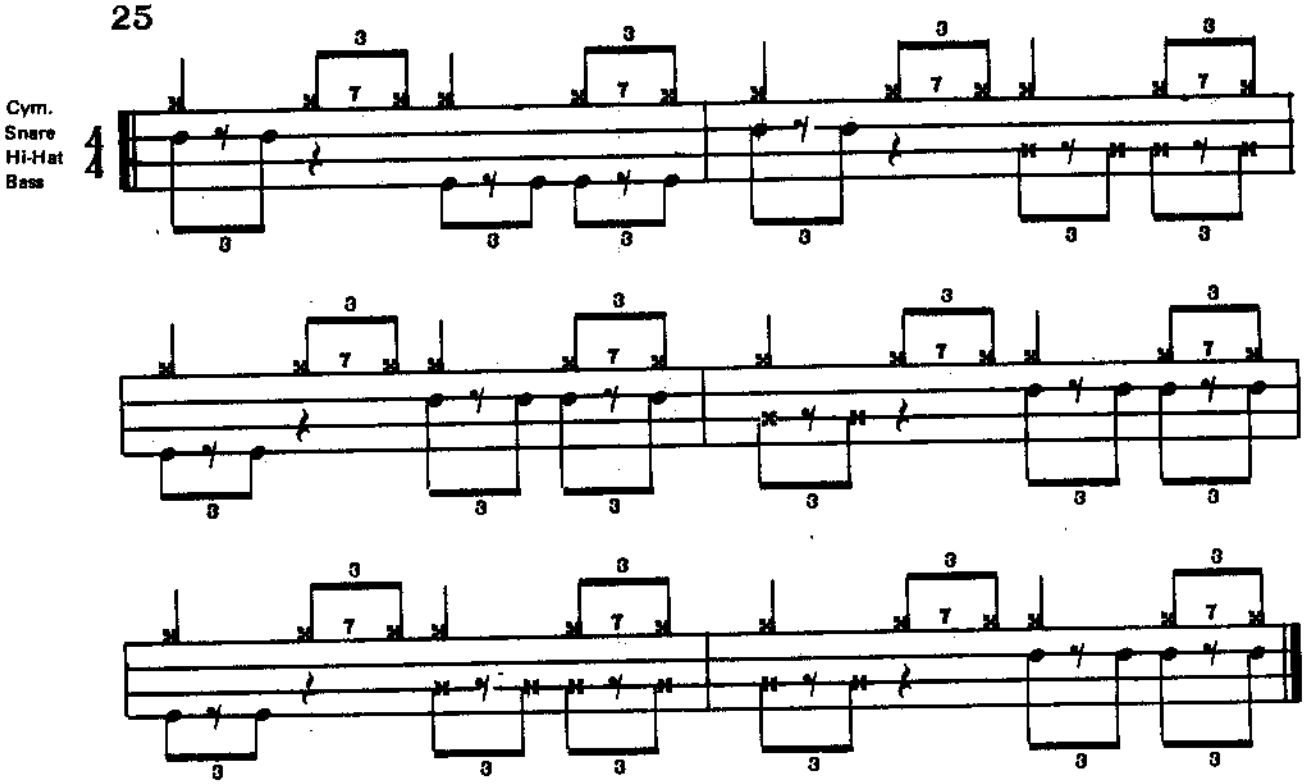


24

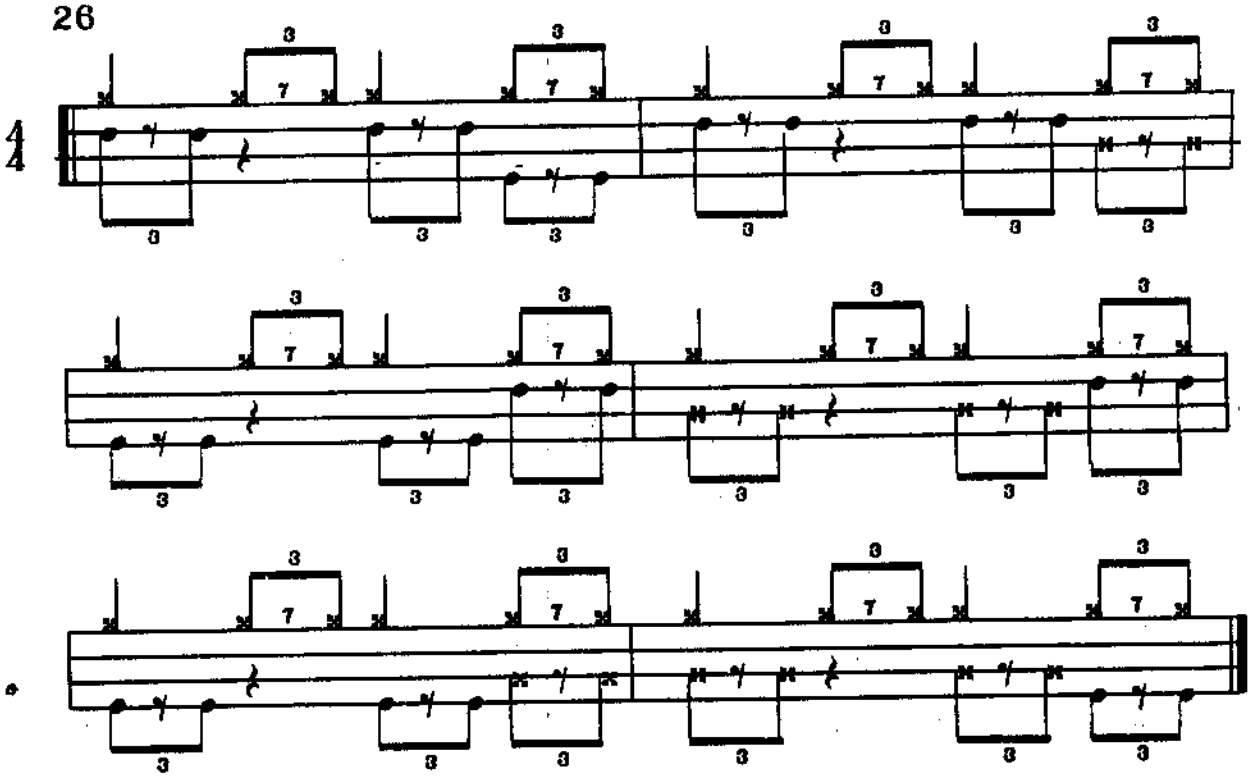


25

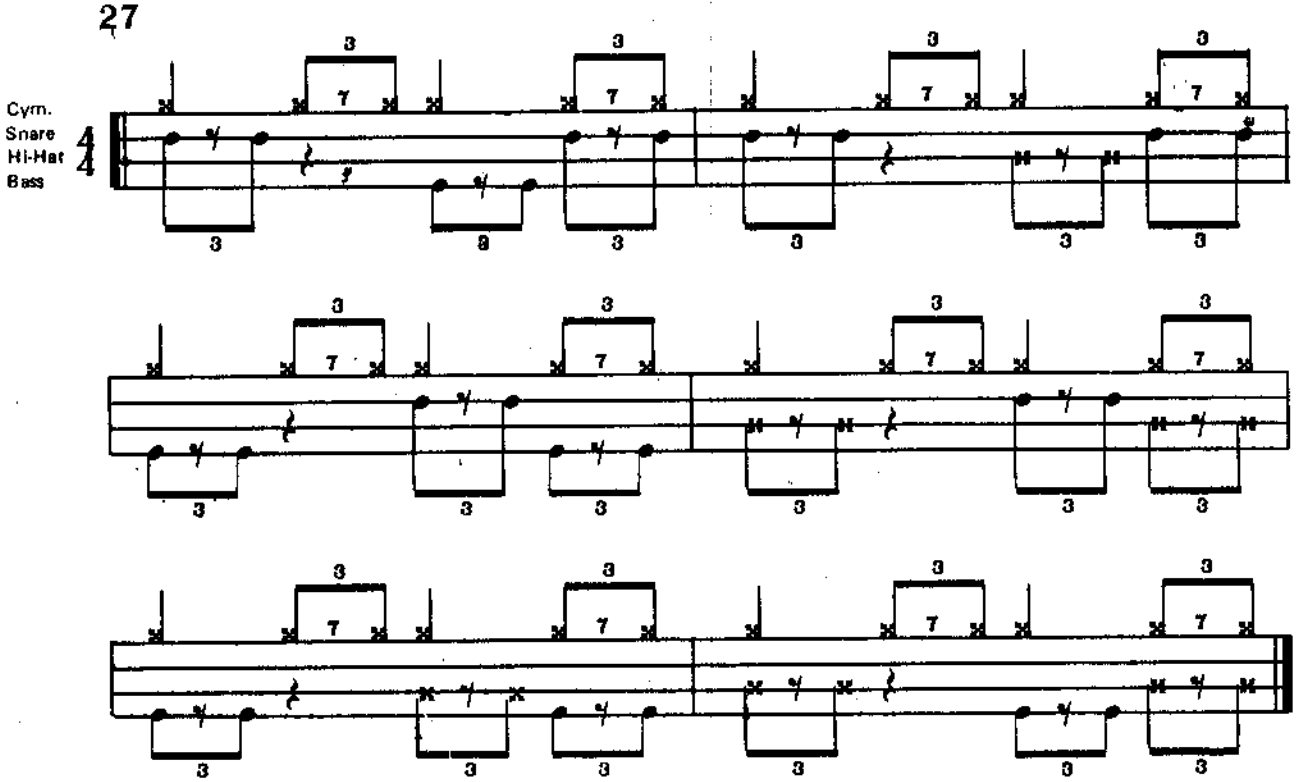
Cym.
Snare
Hi-Hat
Bass



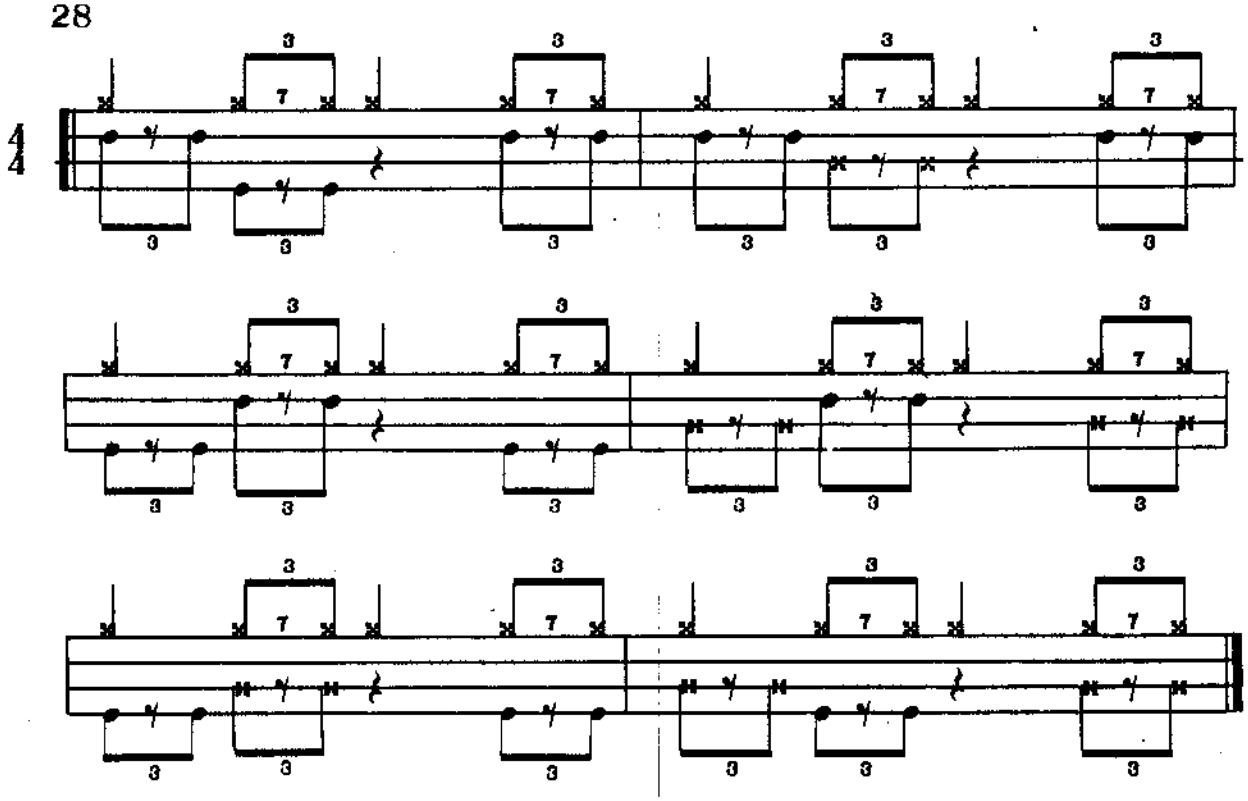
26



27

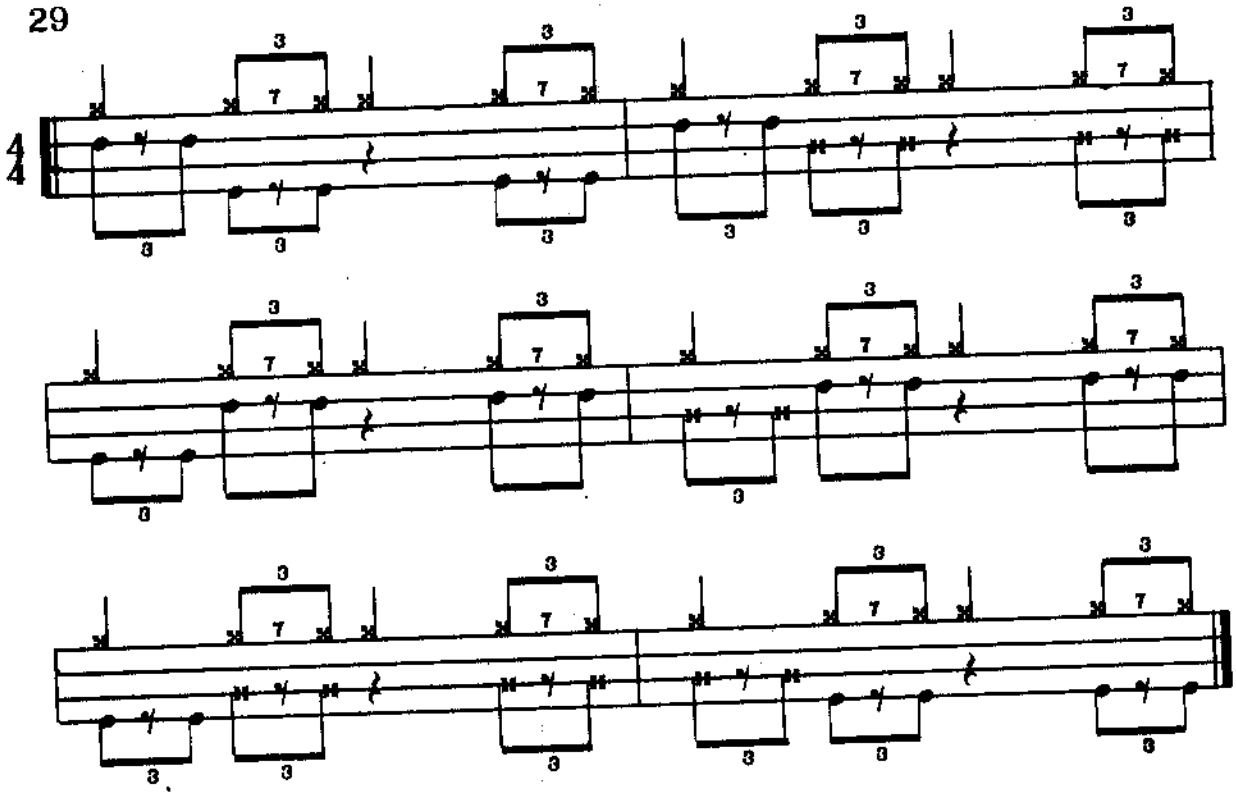


28

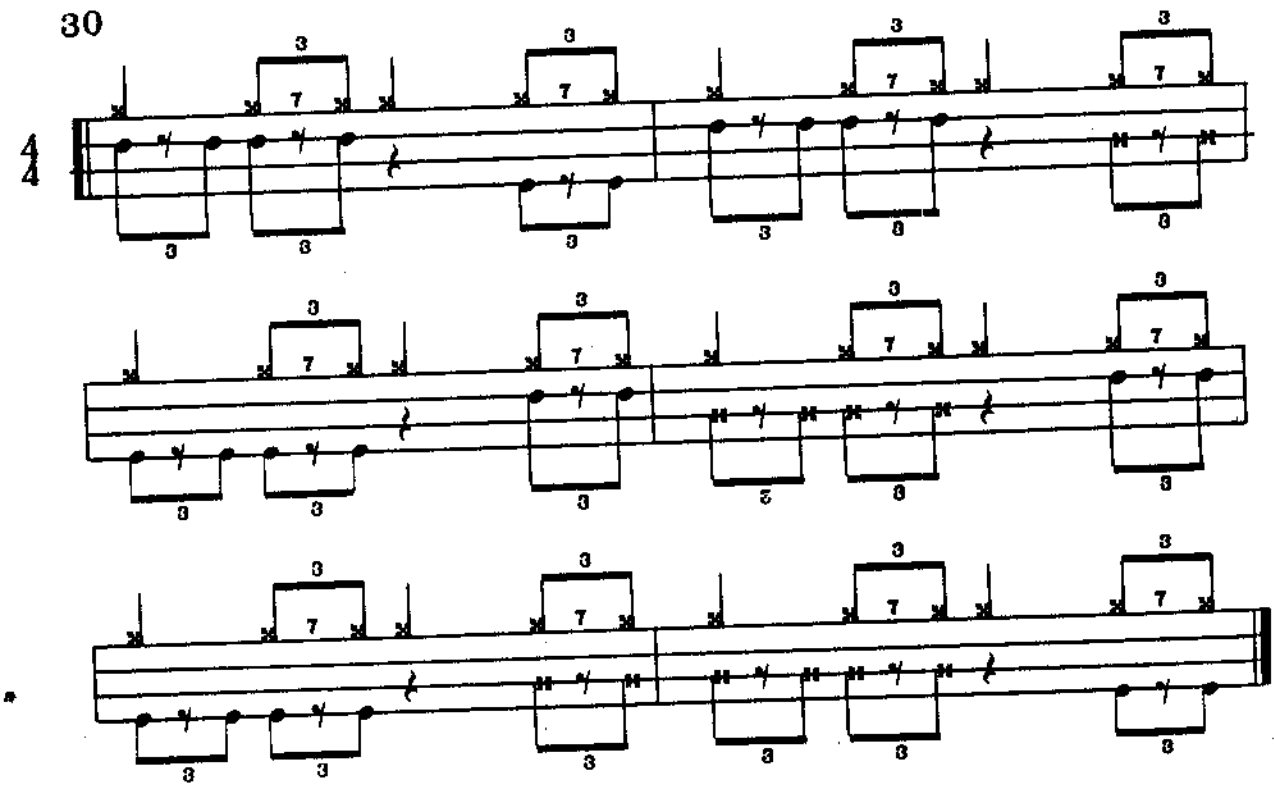


29

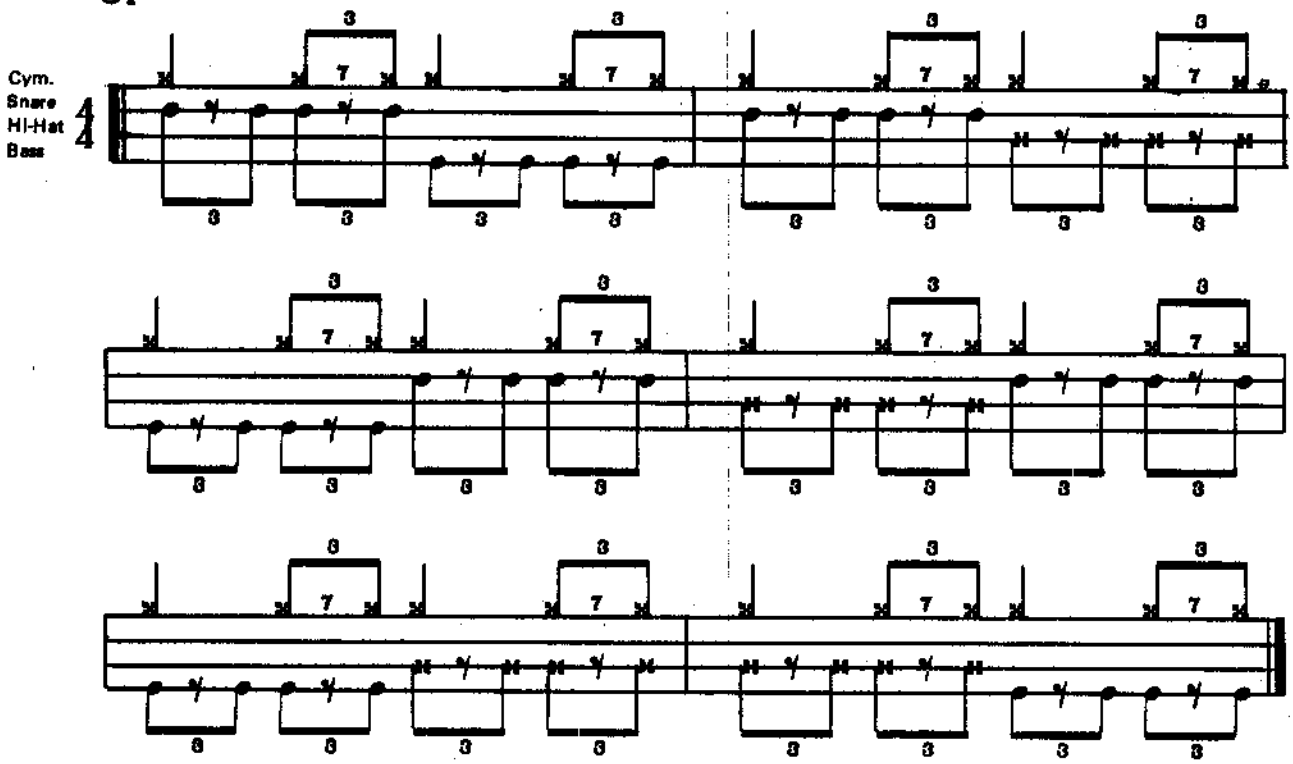
Cym.
Snare
Hi-Hat
Bass



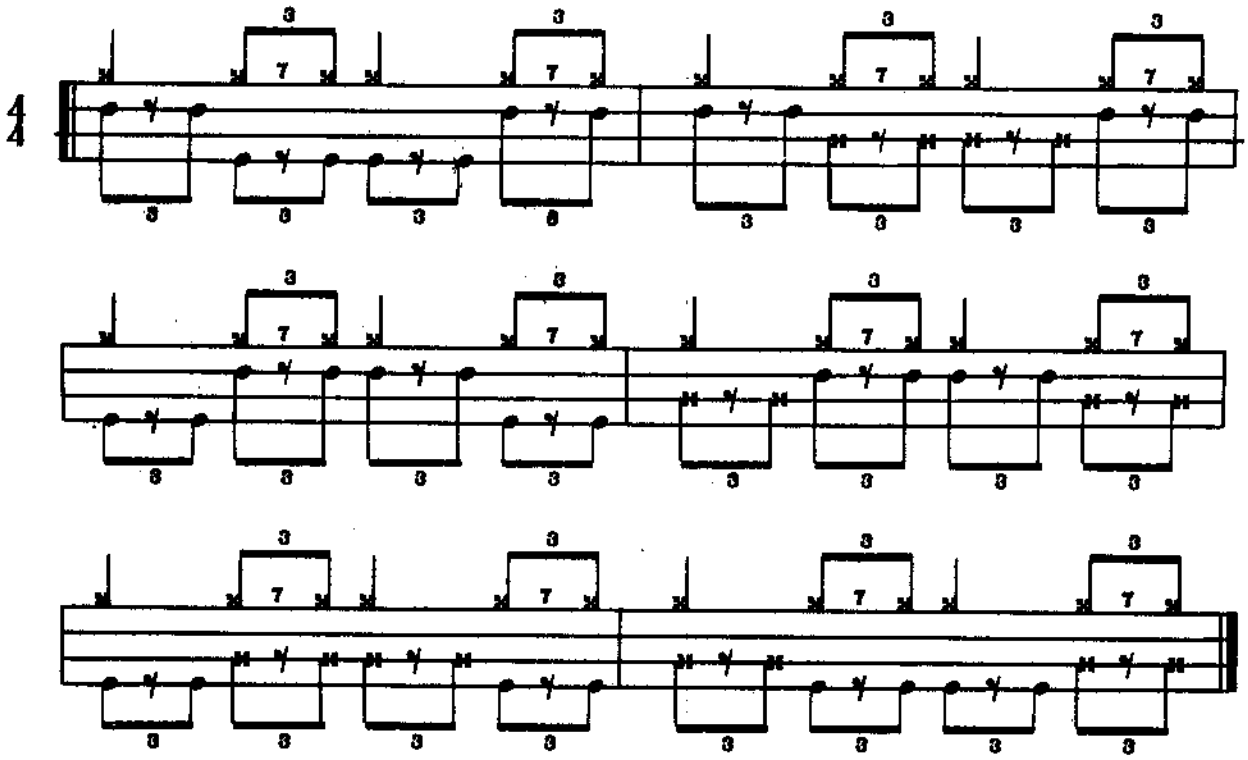
30



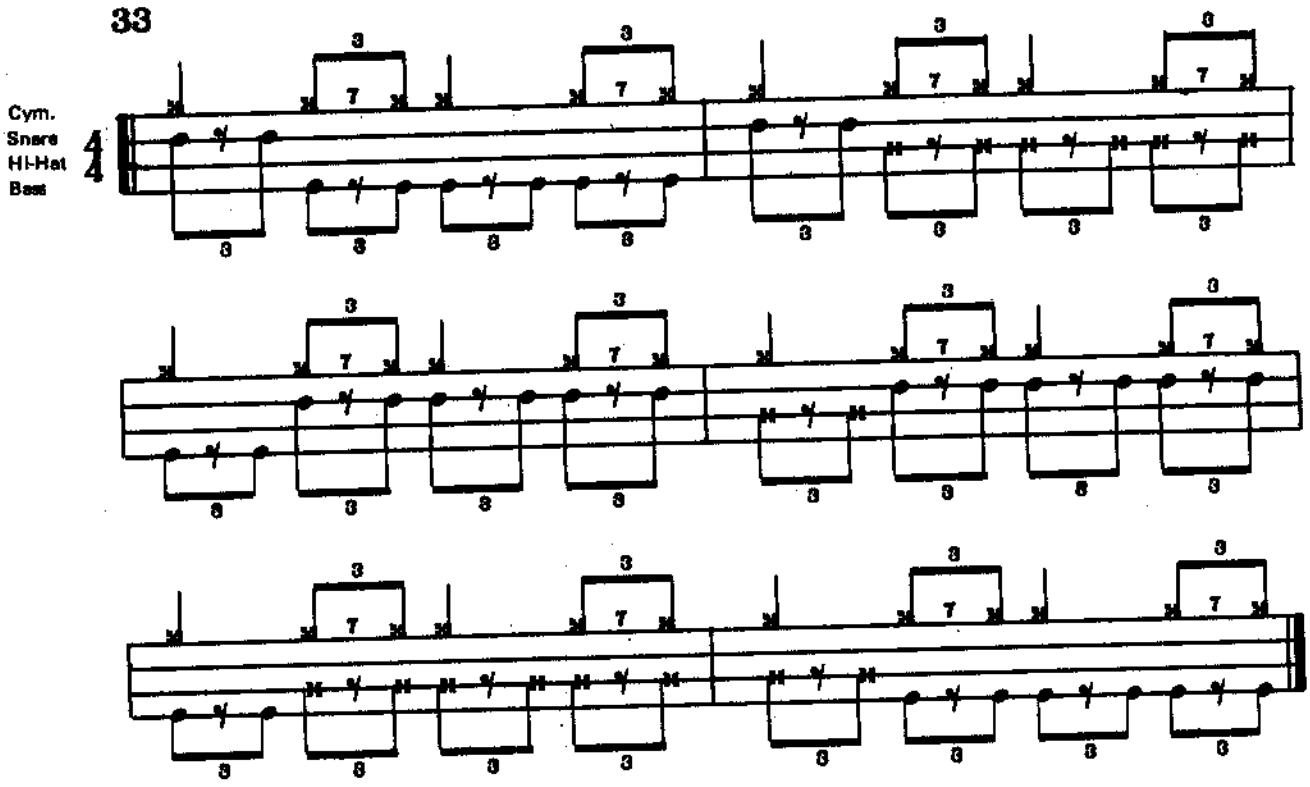
31



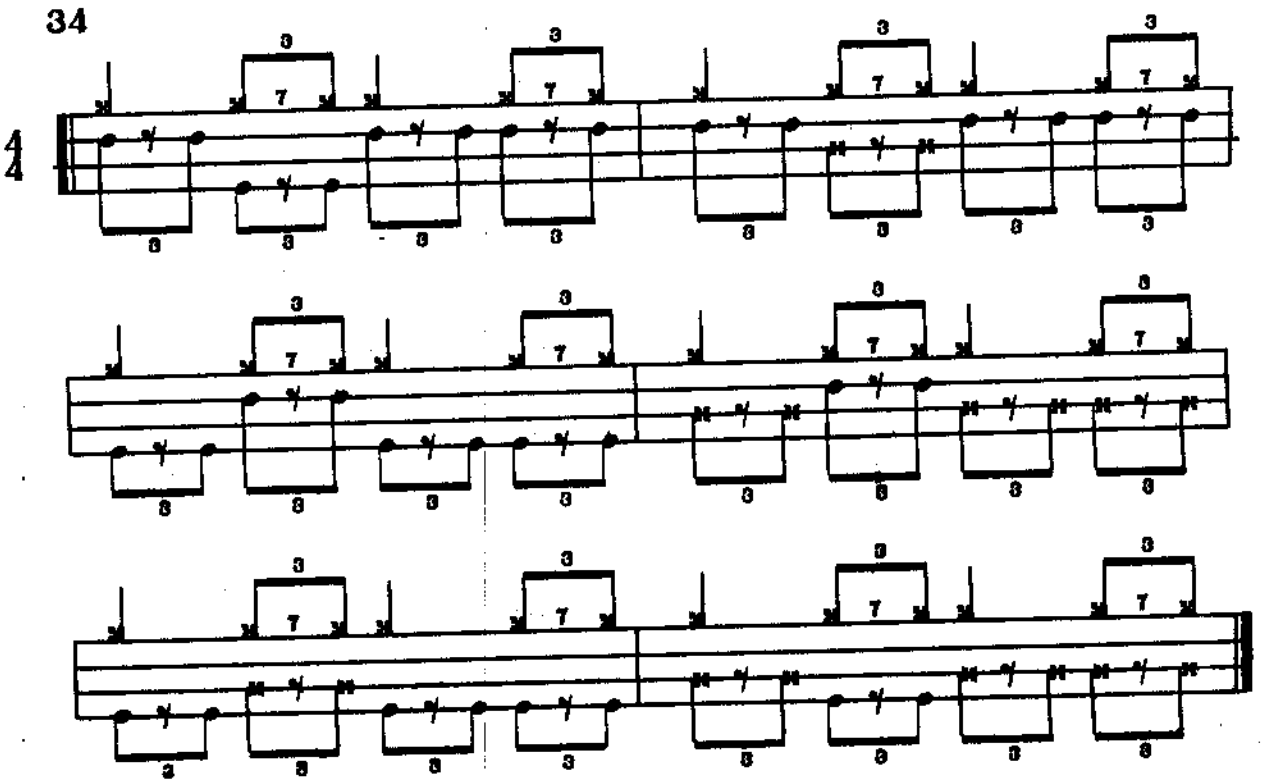
32



33

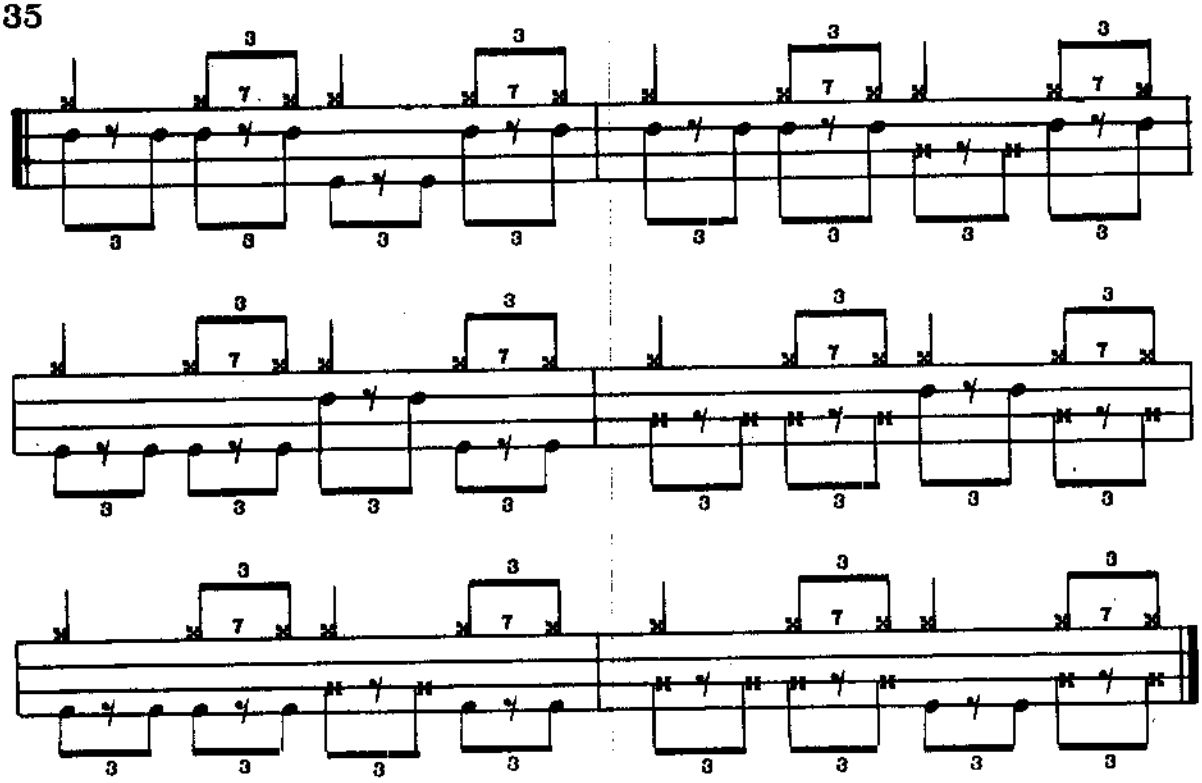


34

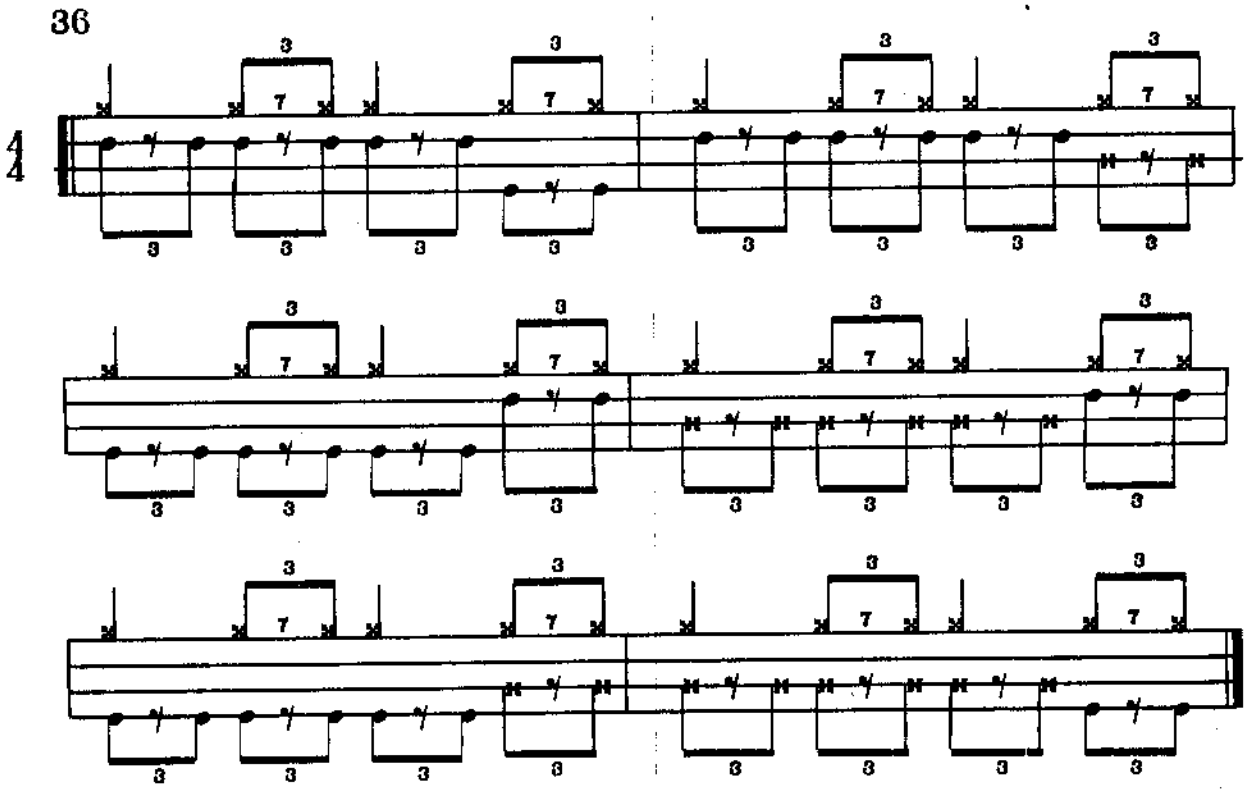


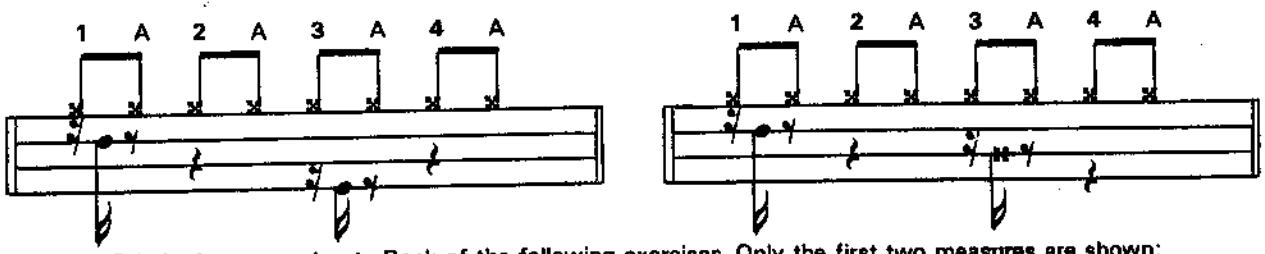
35

Cym.
Snare
Hi-Hat
Bass



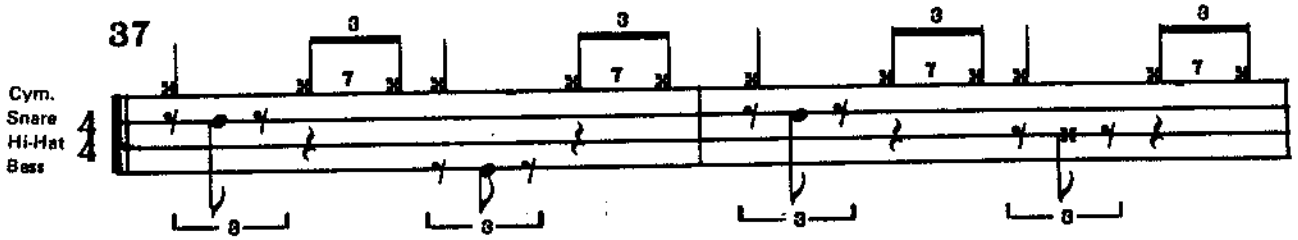
36

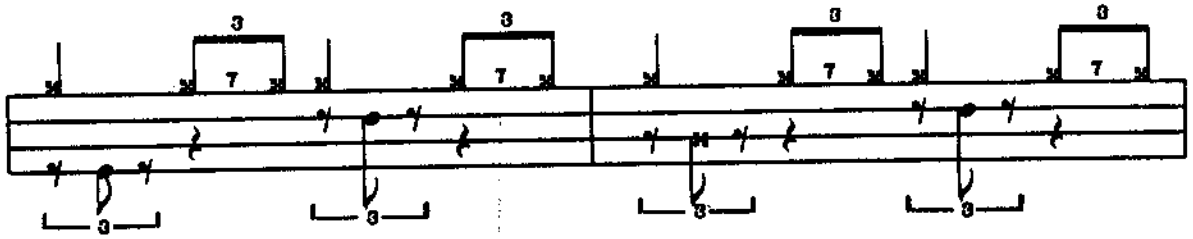


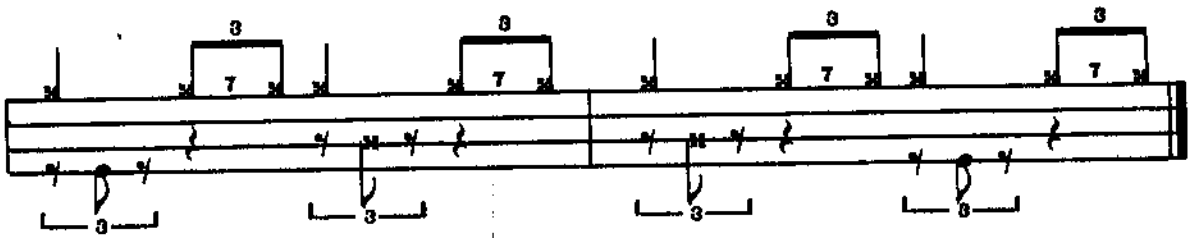


This is the conversion to Rock of the following exercises. Only the first two measures are shown:

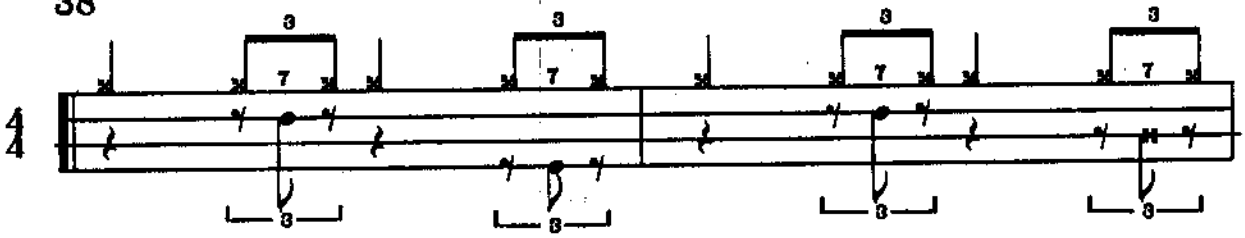
37

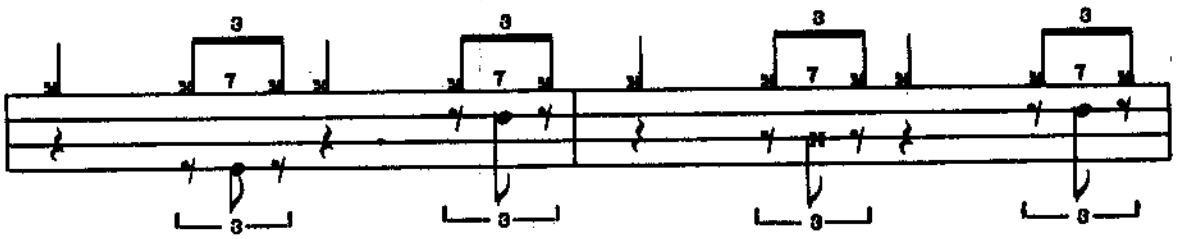


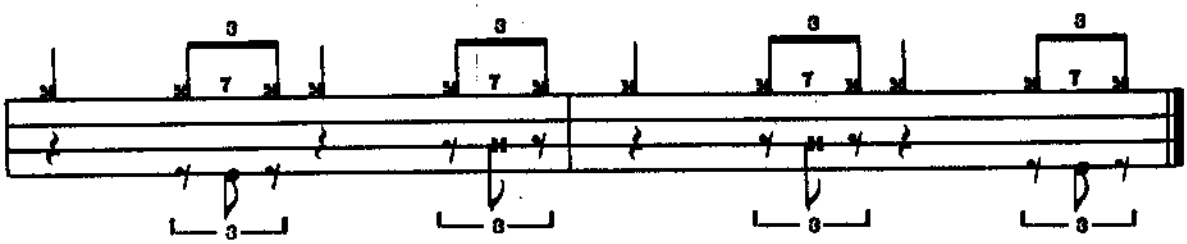




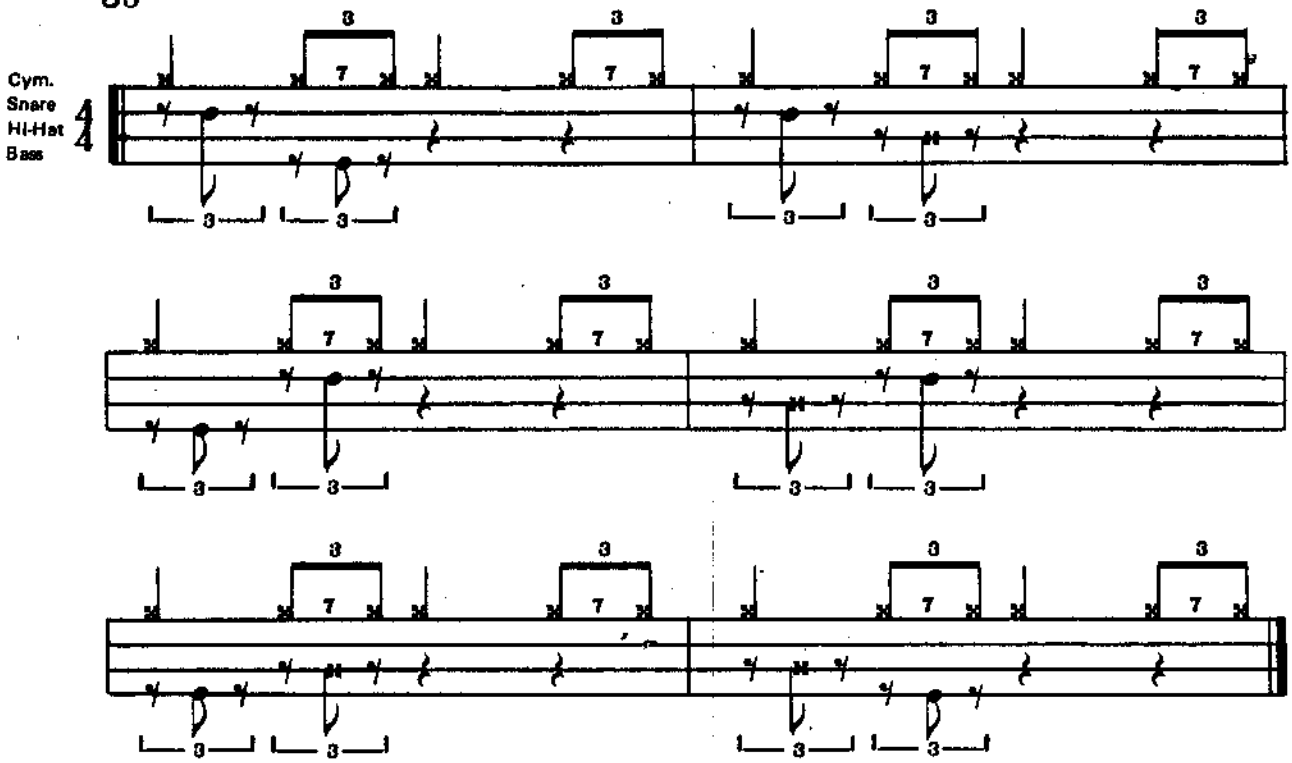
38



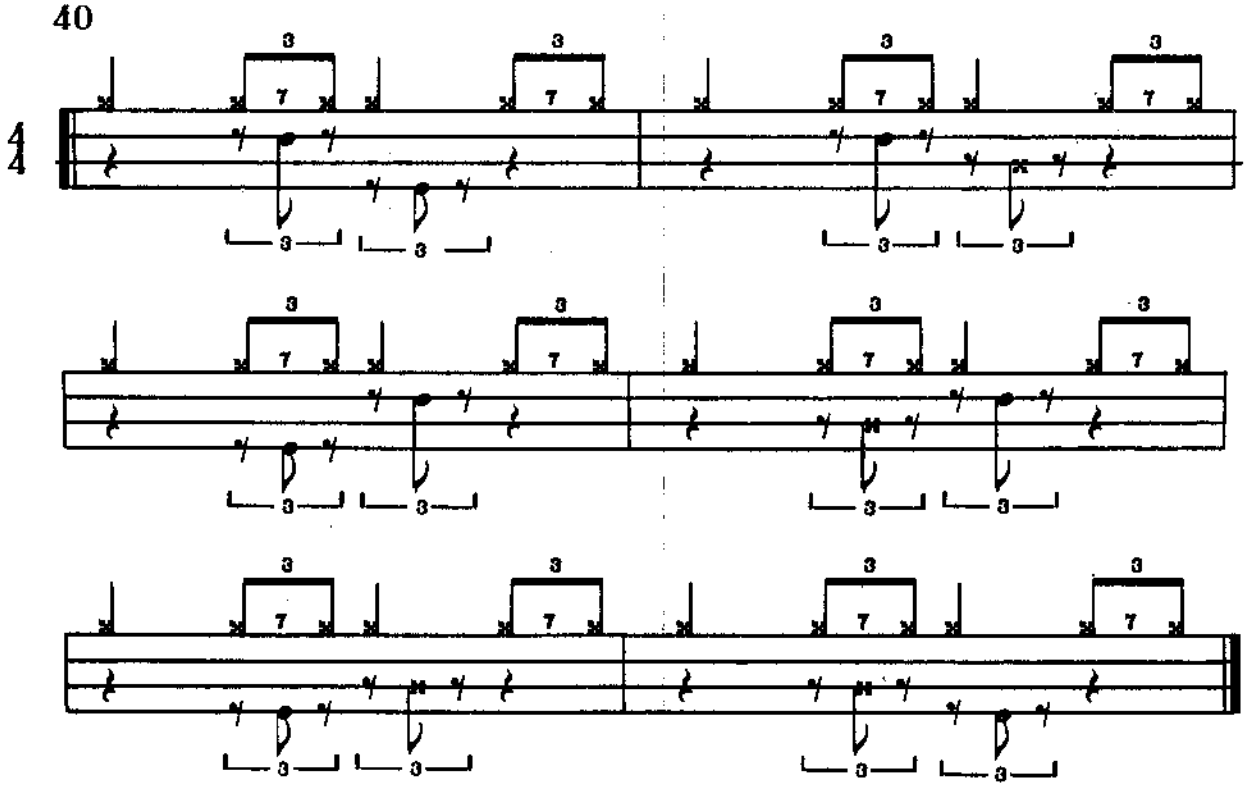




39

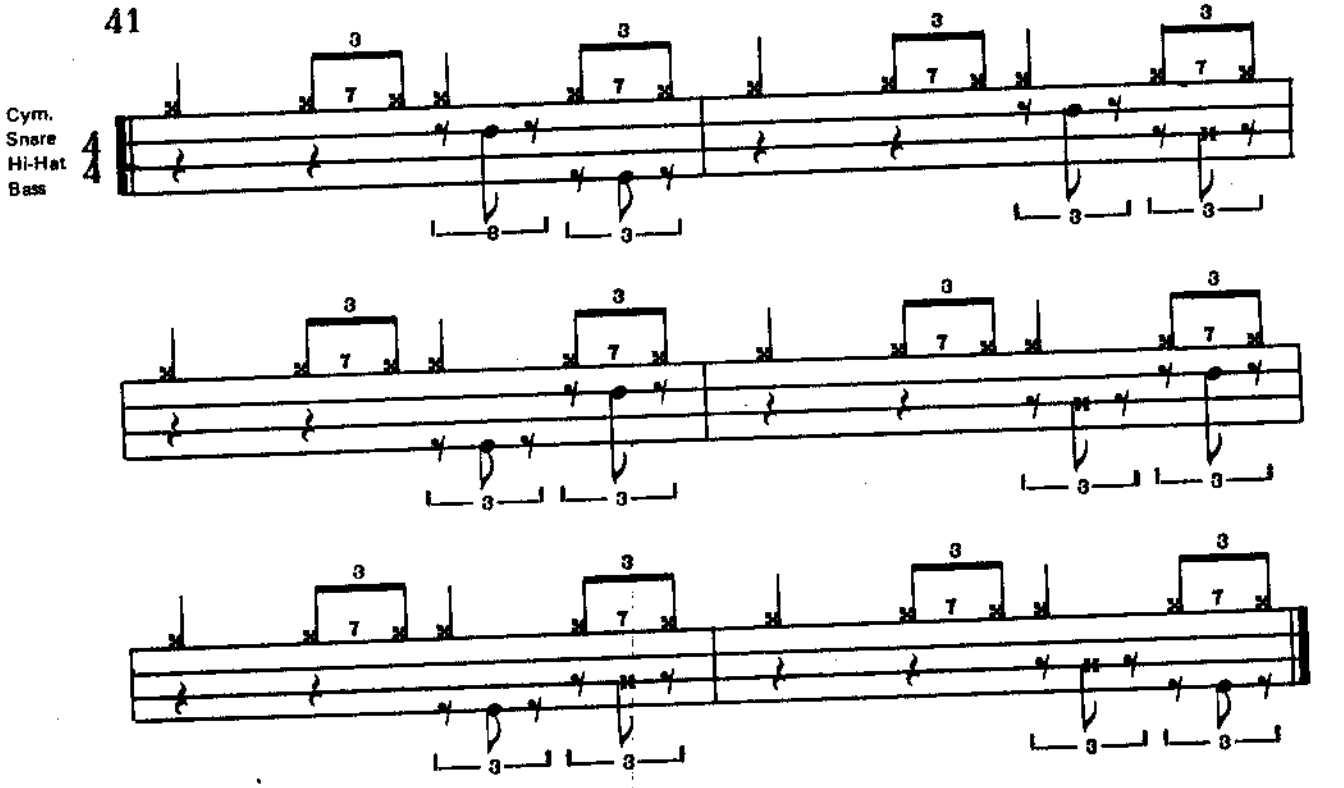


40

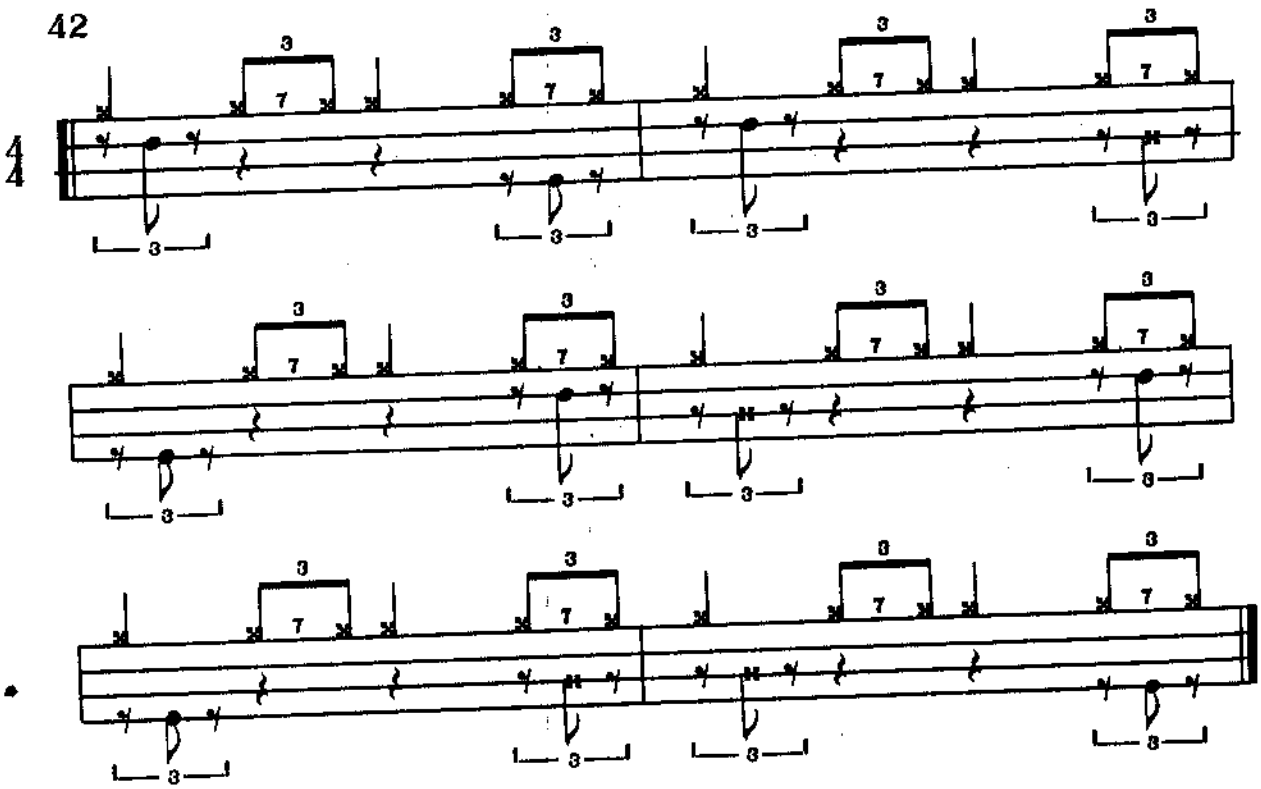


41

Cym.
Snare
Hi-Hat
Bass

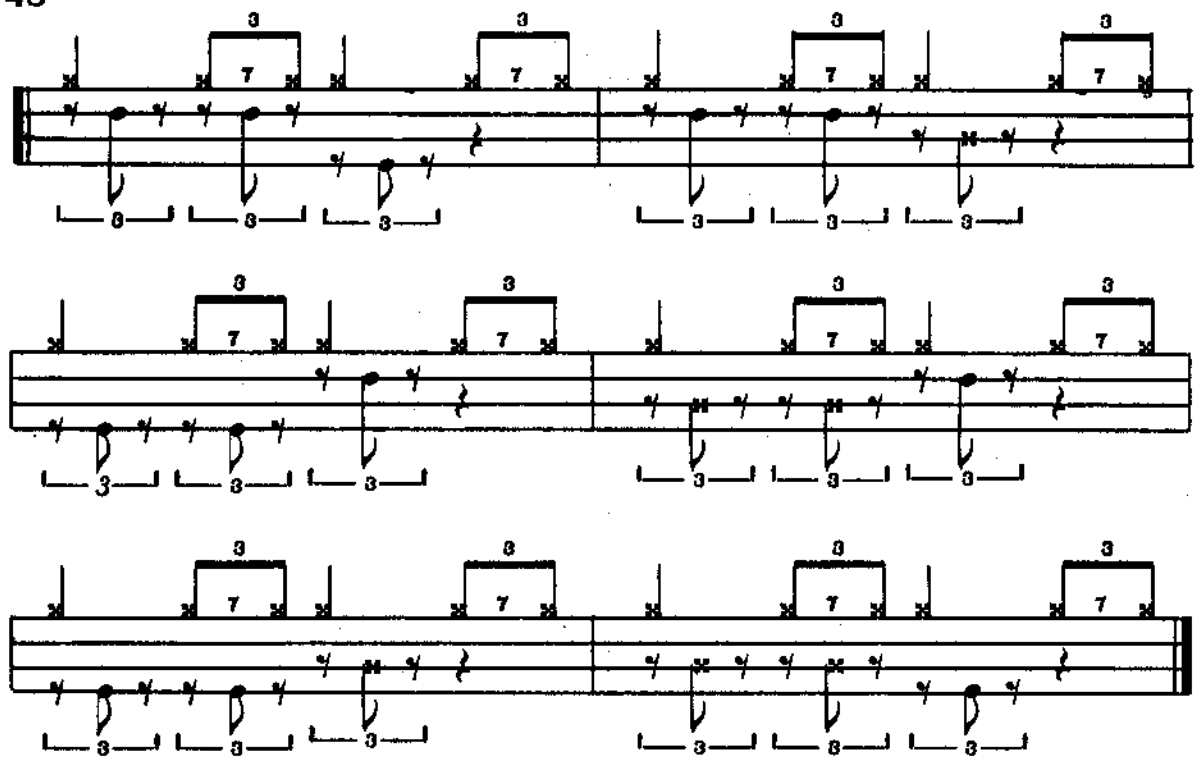


42

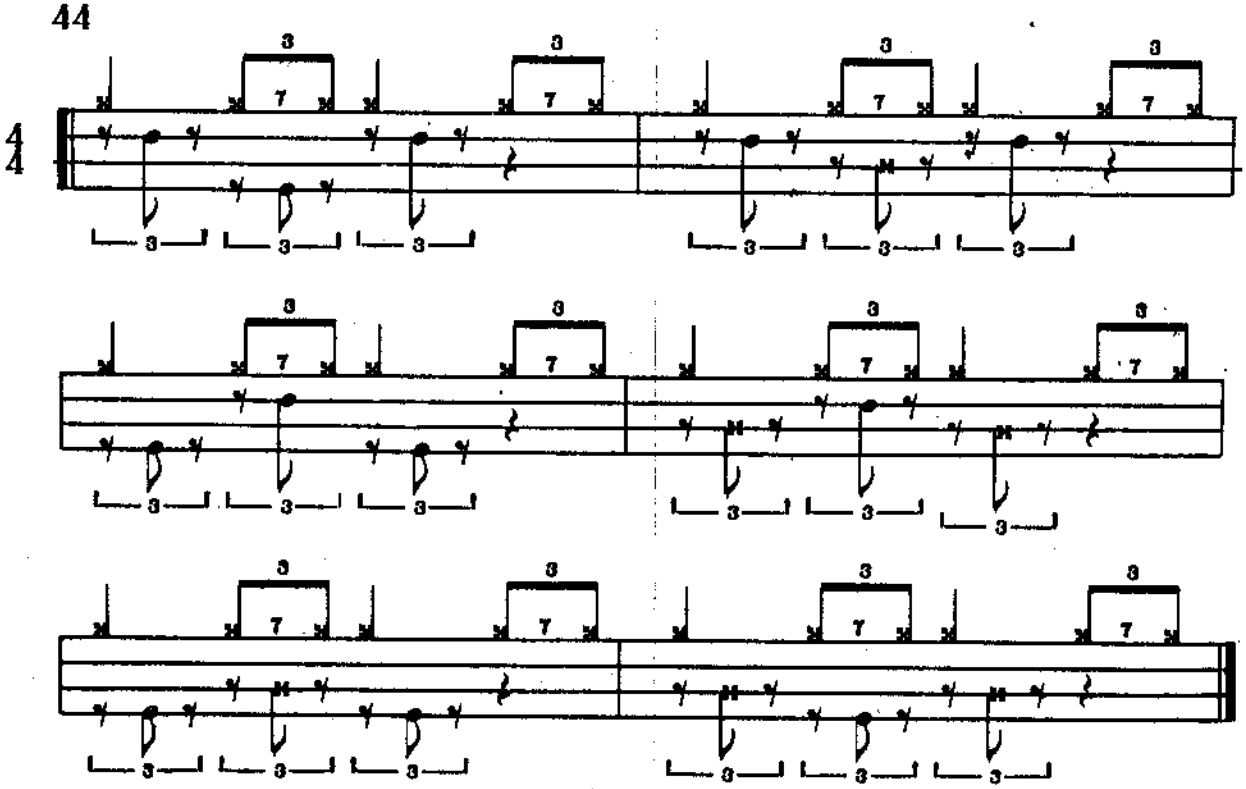


43

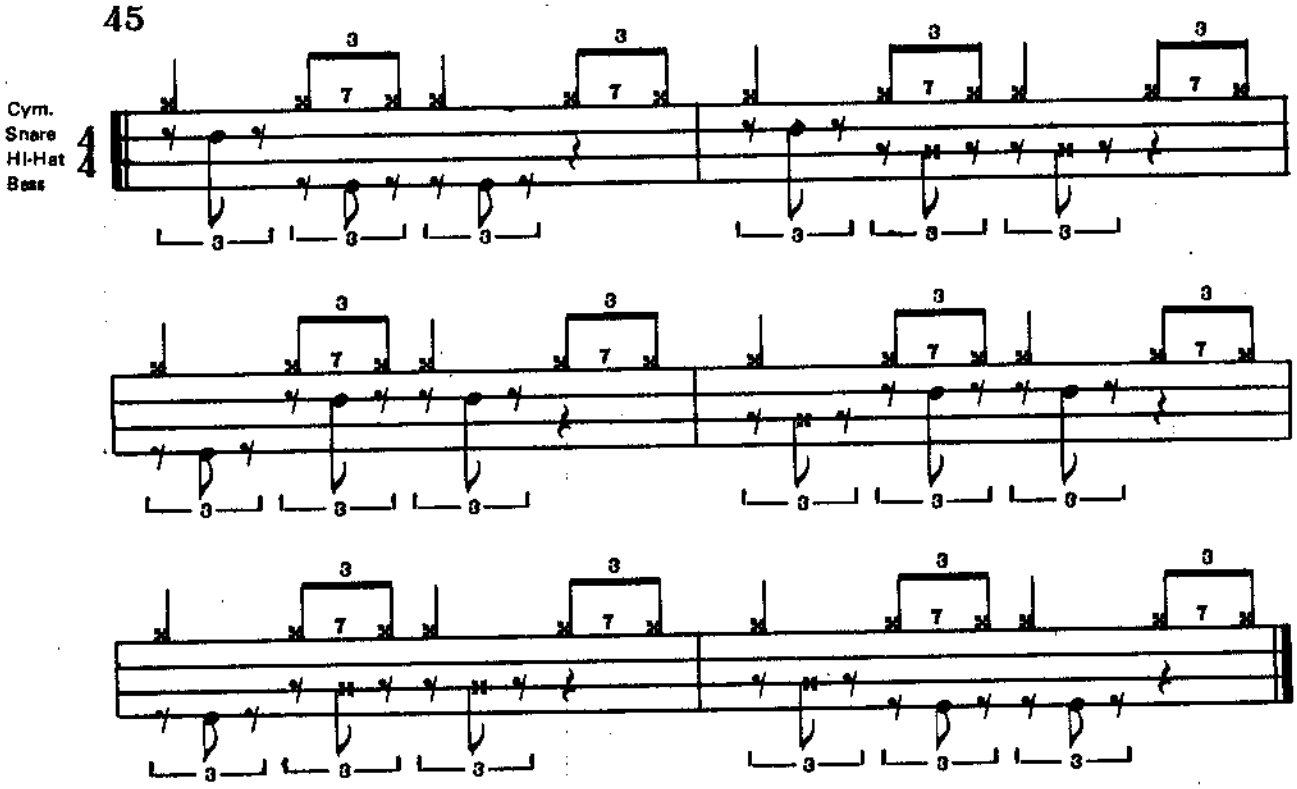
Cym.
Snare
Hi-Hat
Bass



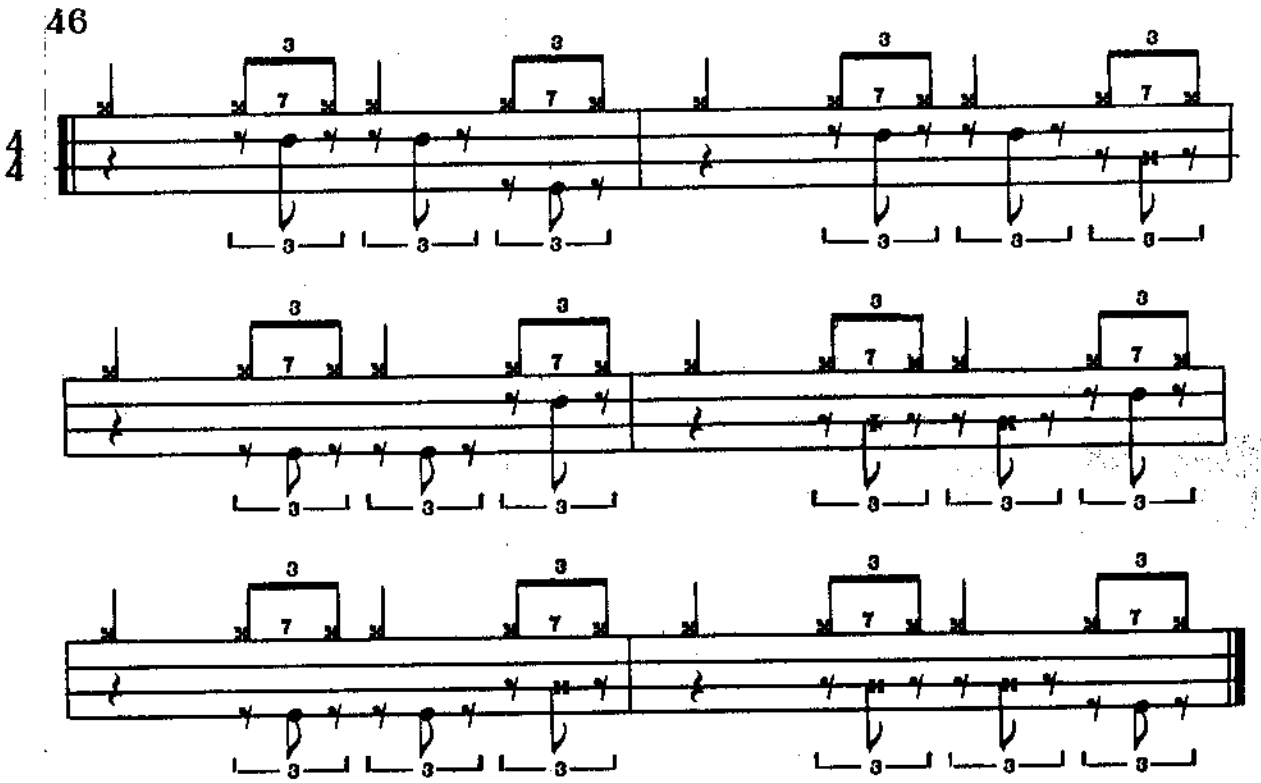
44



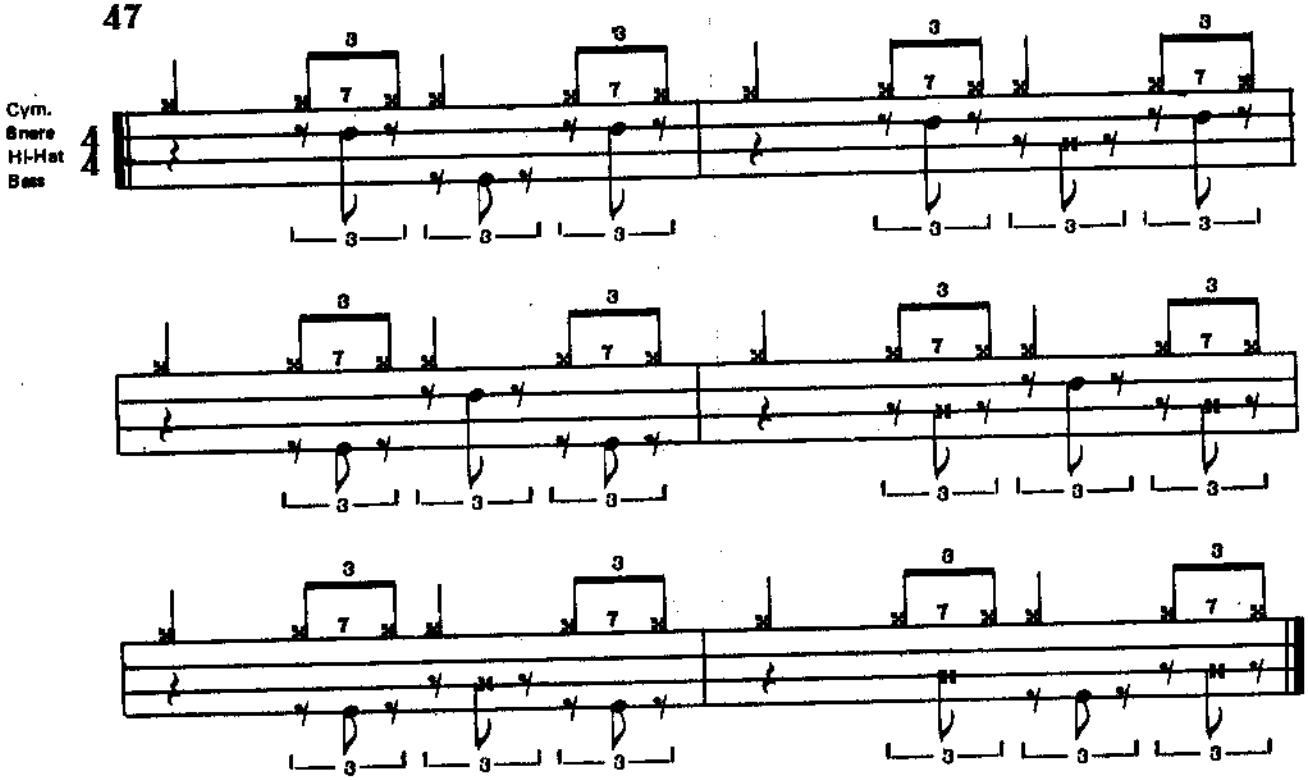
45



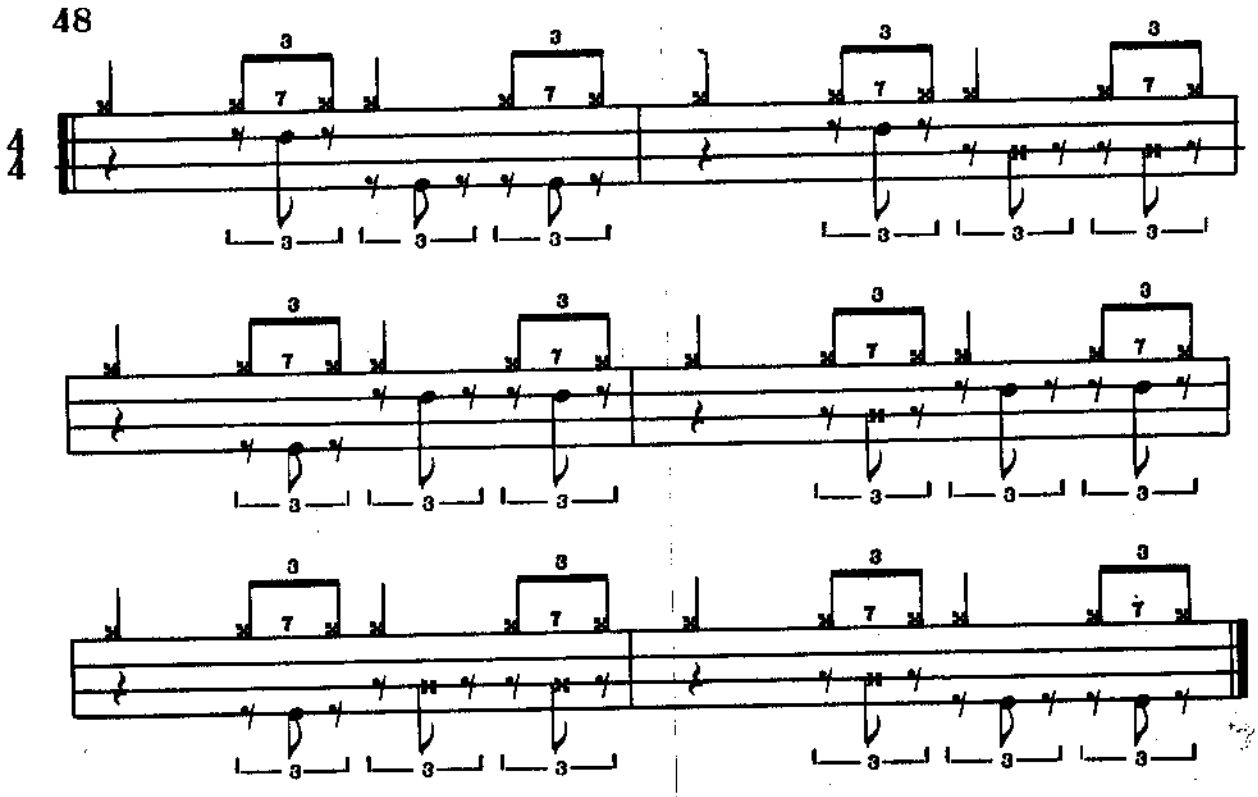
46



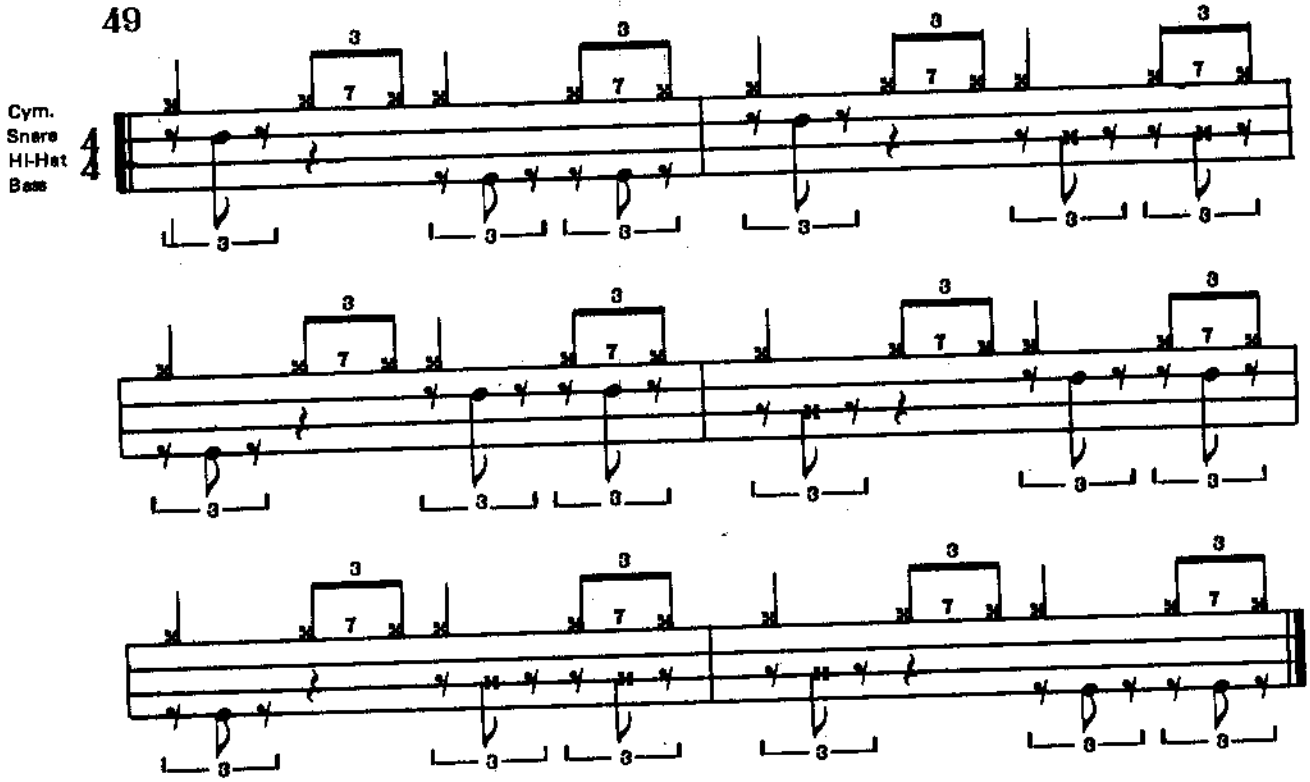
47



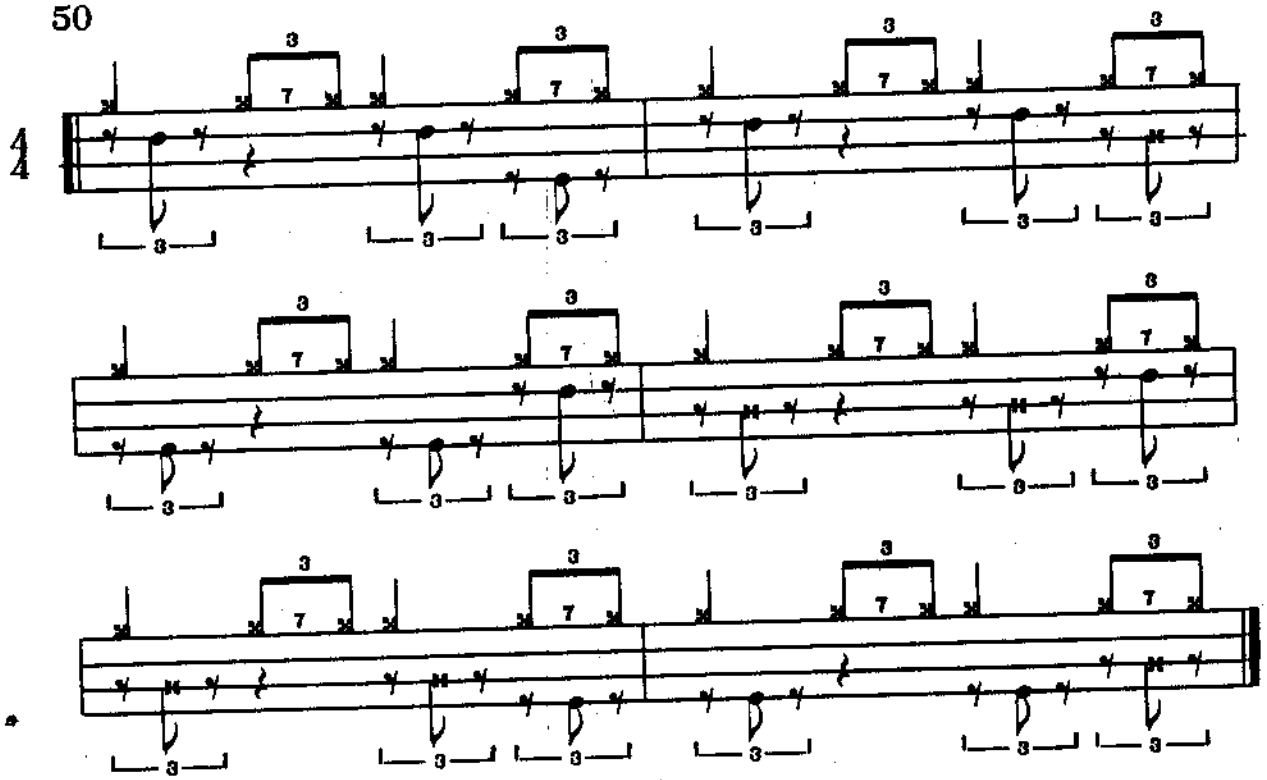
48



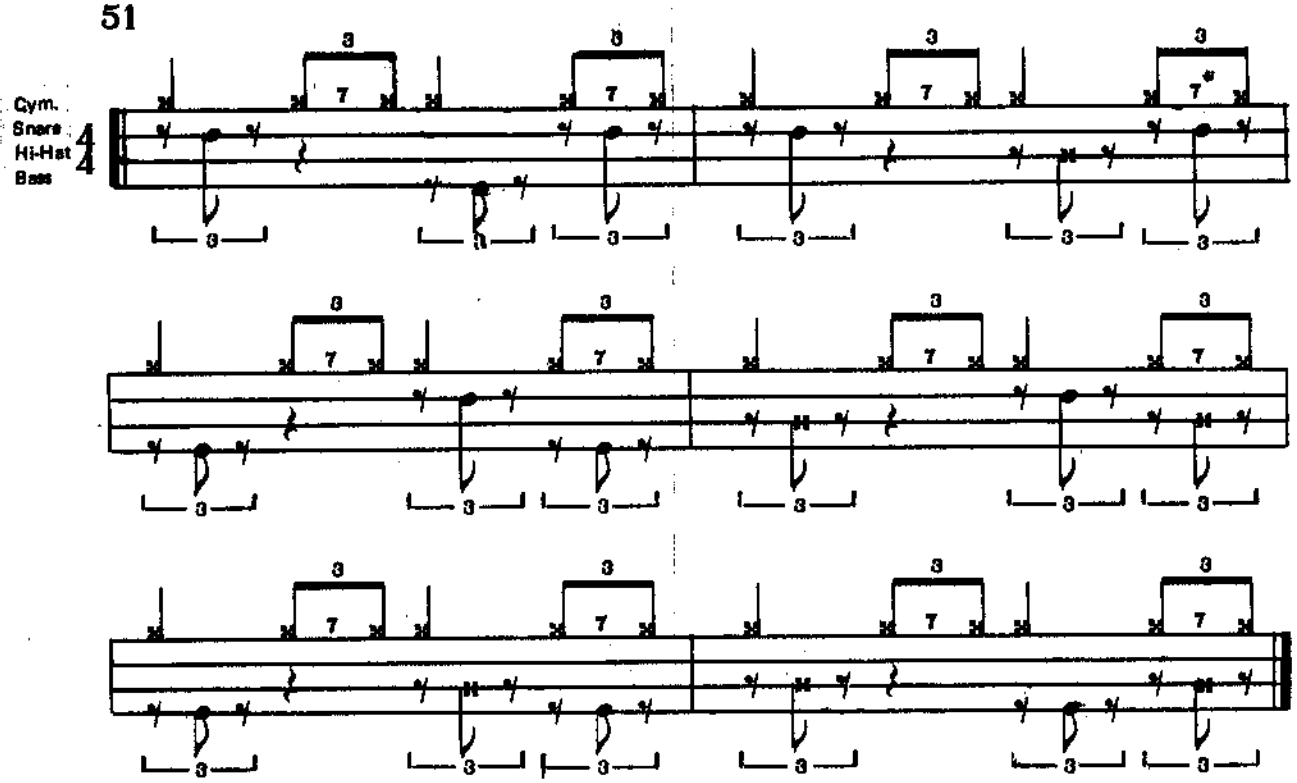
49



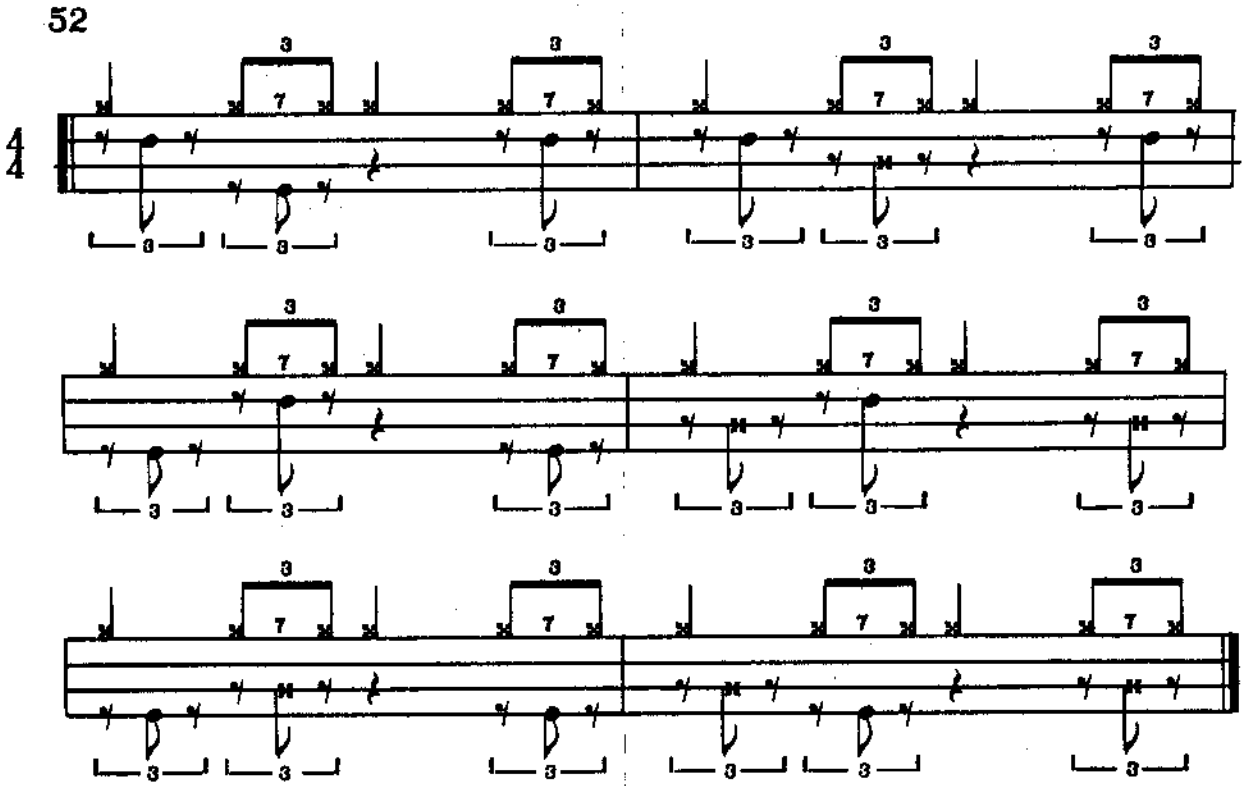
50



51

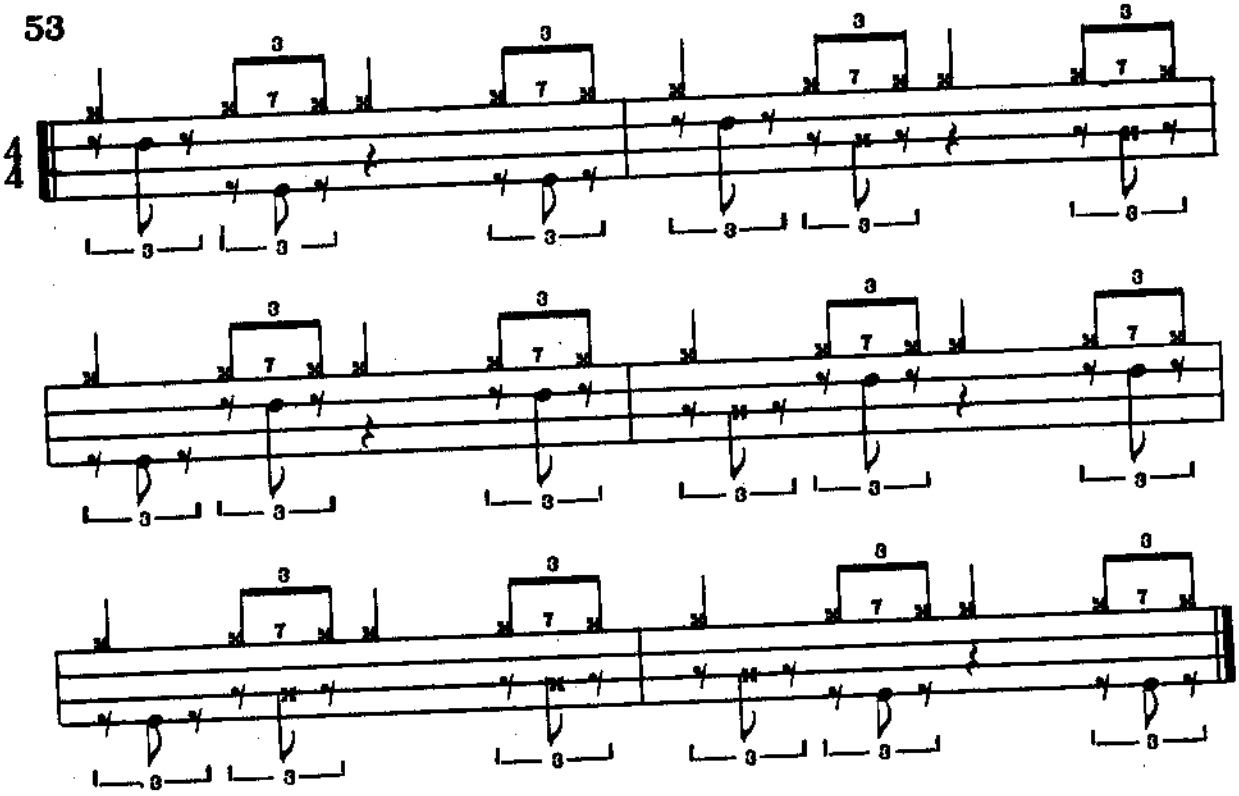


52

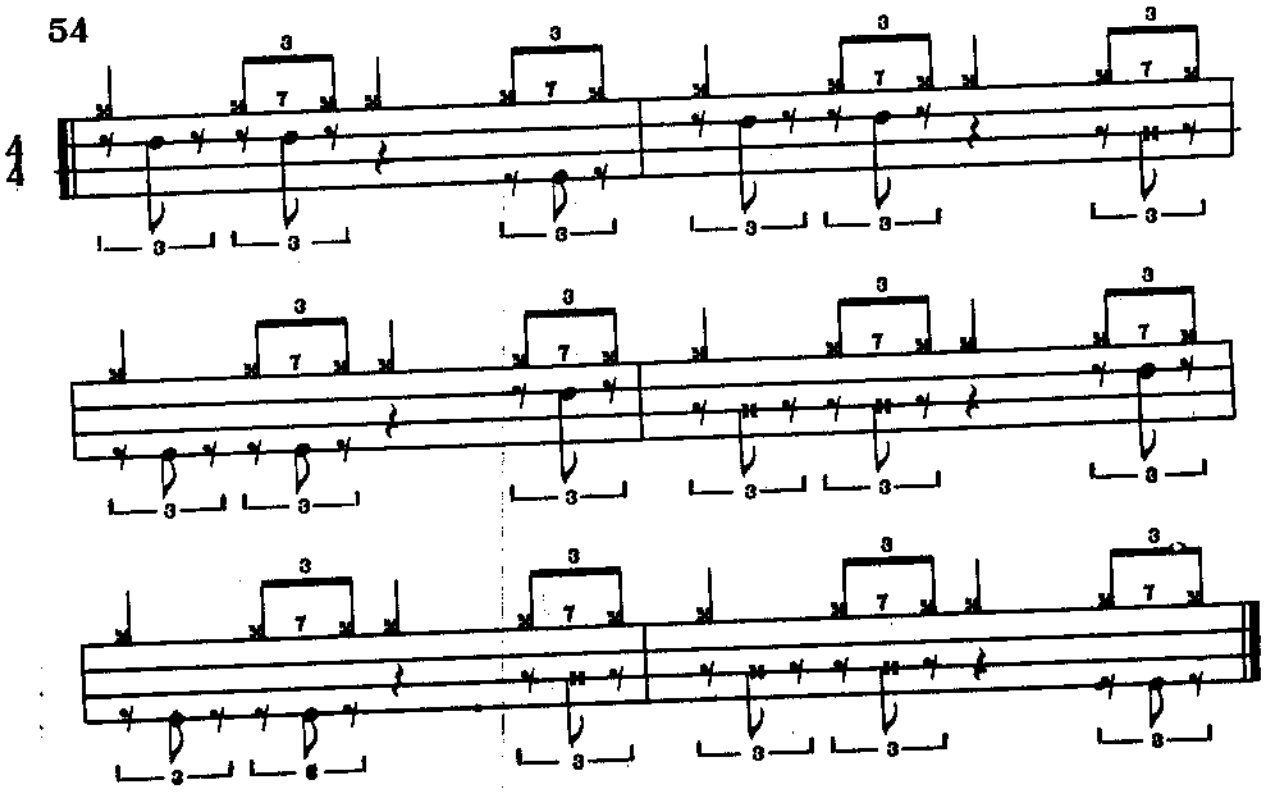


53

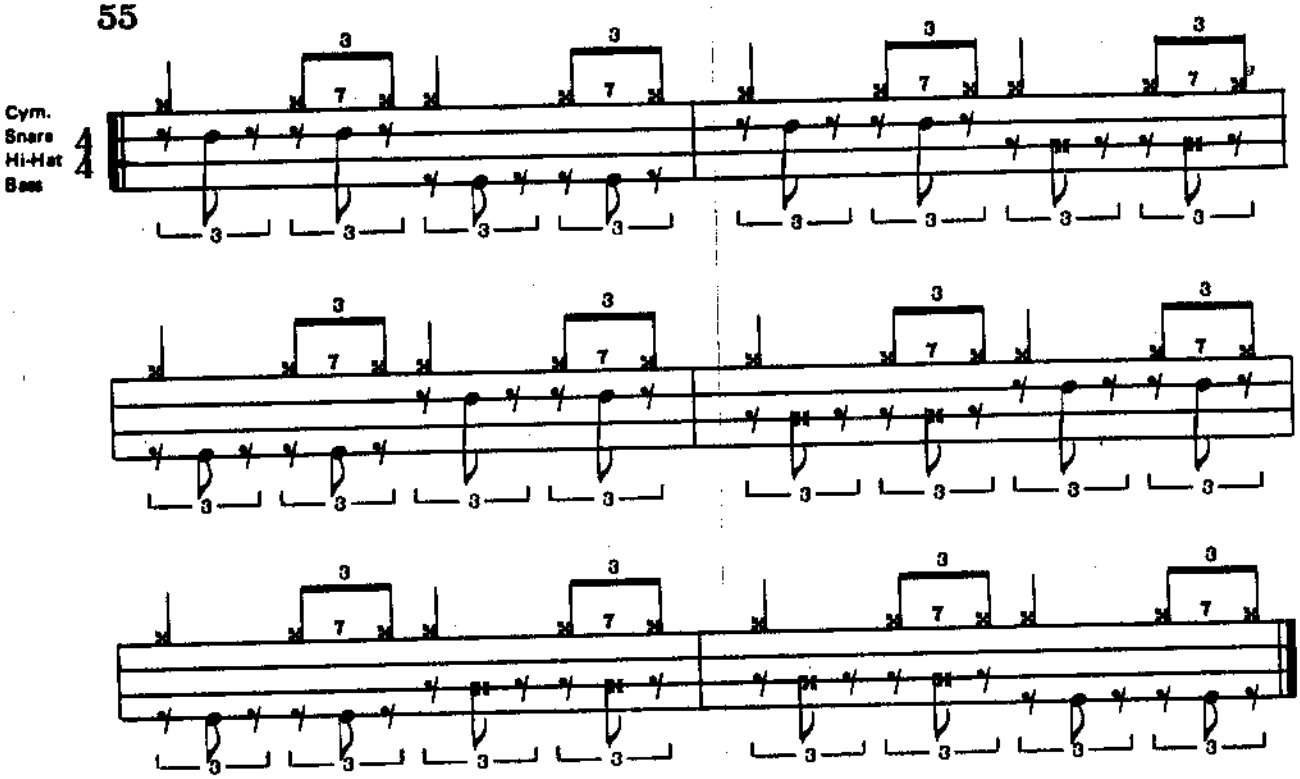
Cym.
Snare
Hi-Hat
Bass



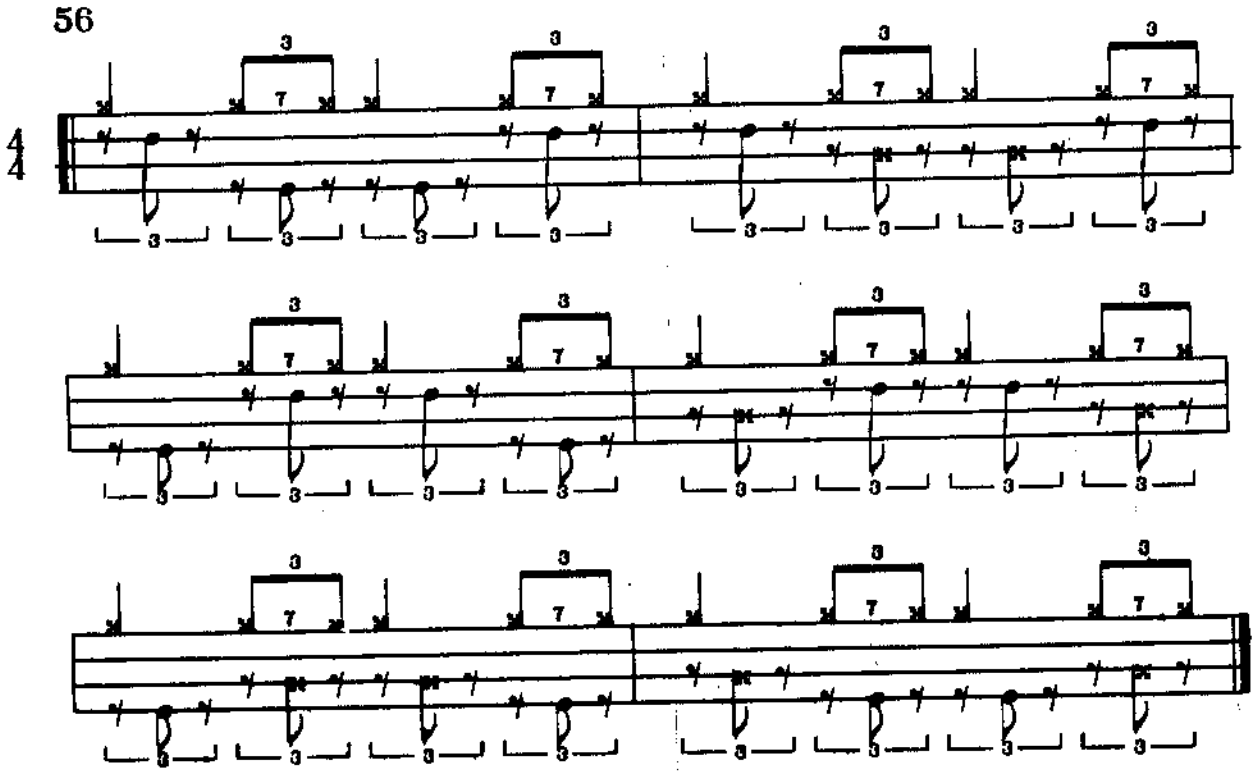
54



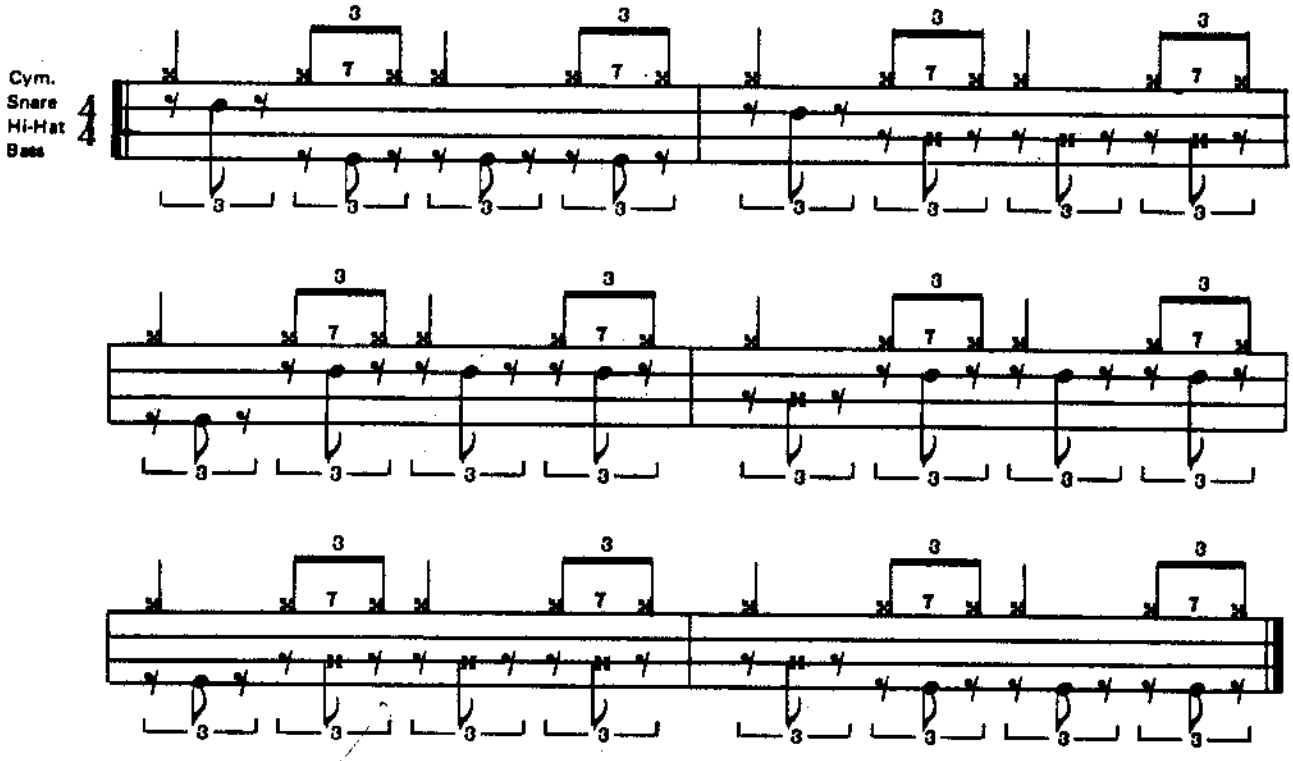
55



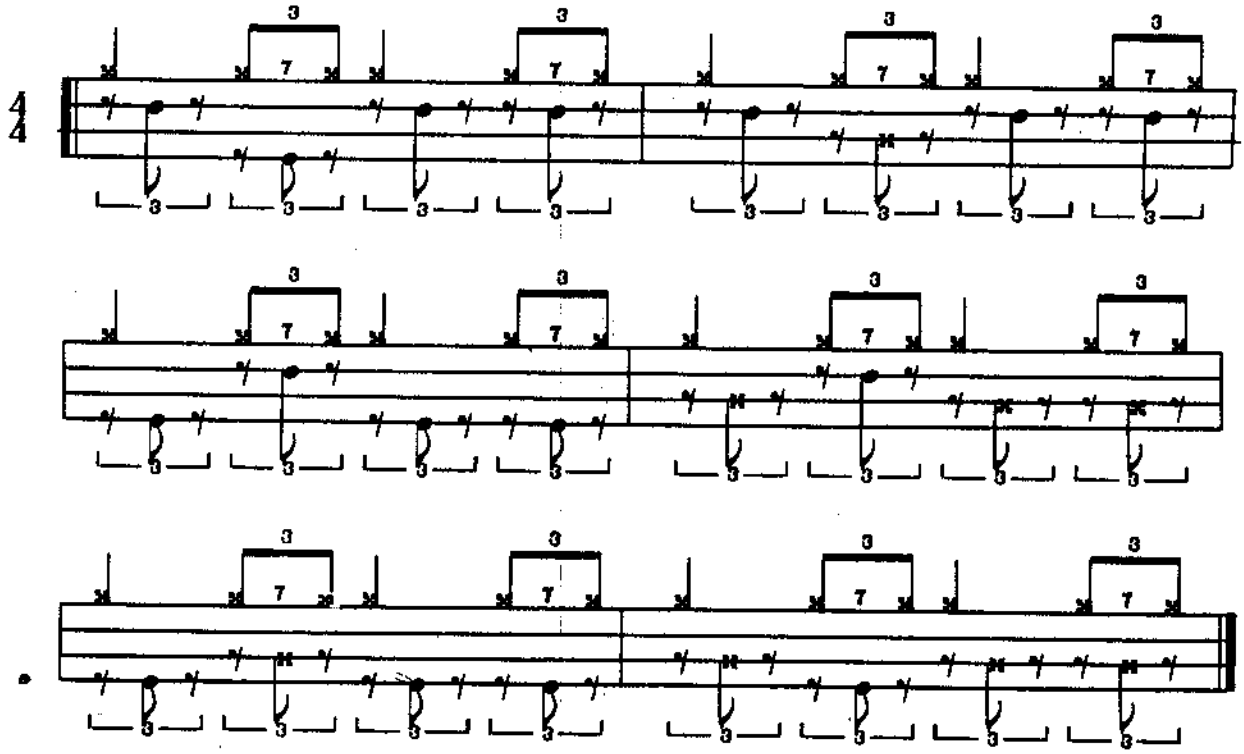
56



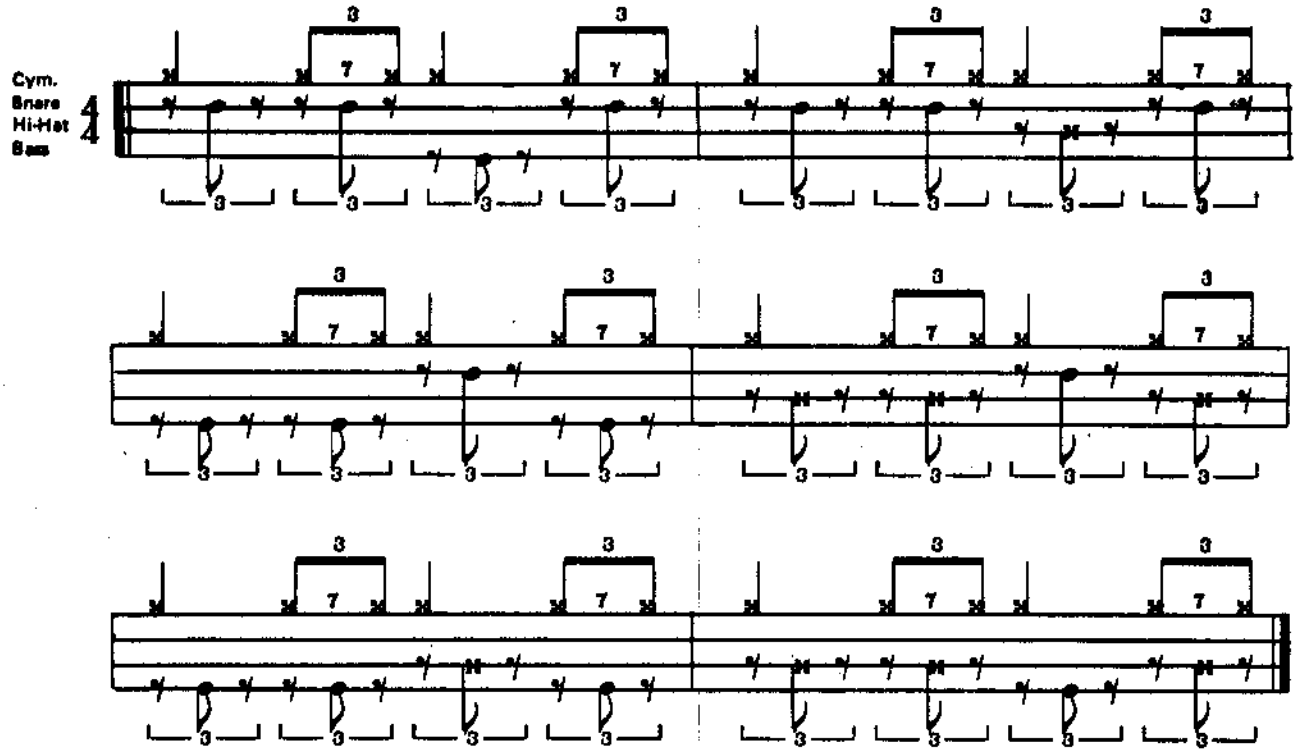
57



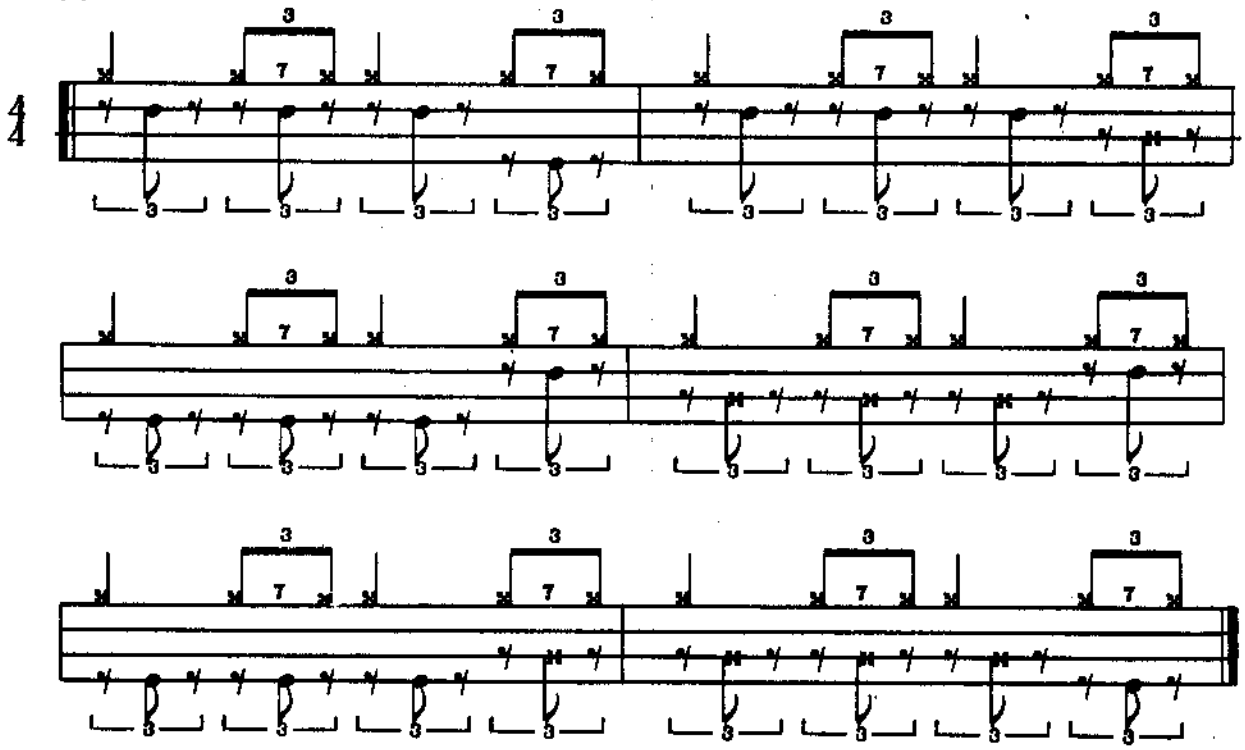
58

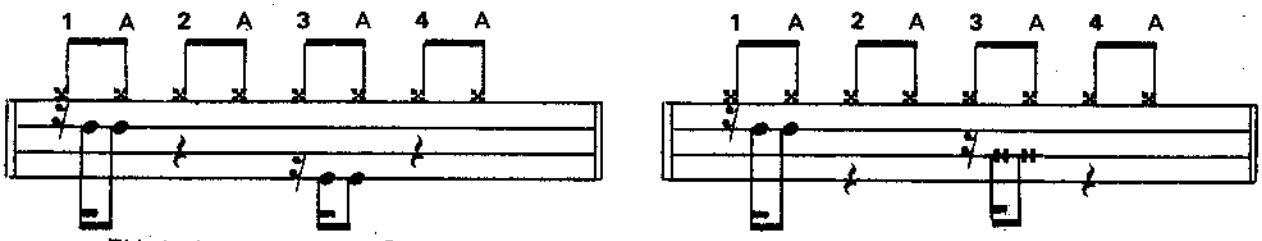


59



60

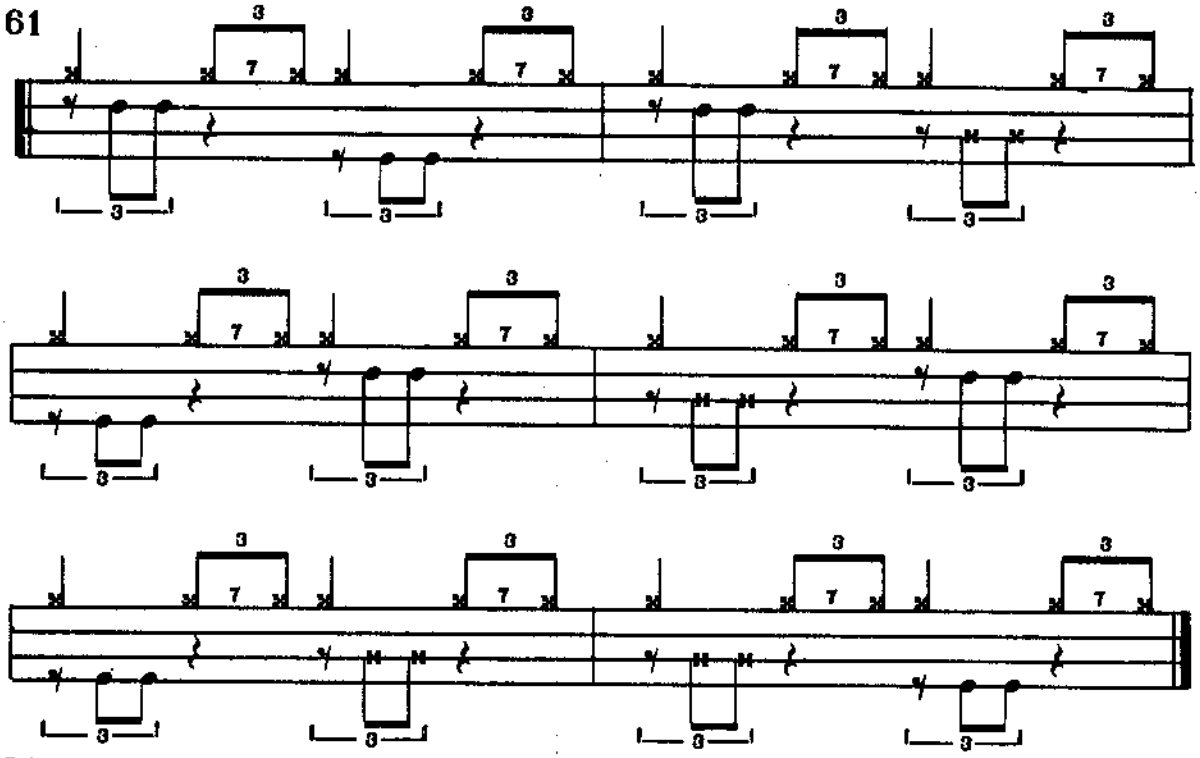




This is the conversion to Rock of the following exercises. Only the first two measures are shown.

61

Cym.
Snare
Hi-Hat
Bass



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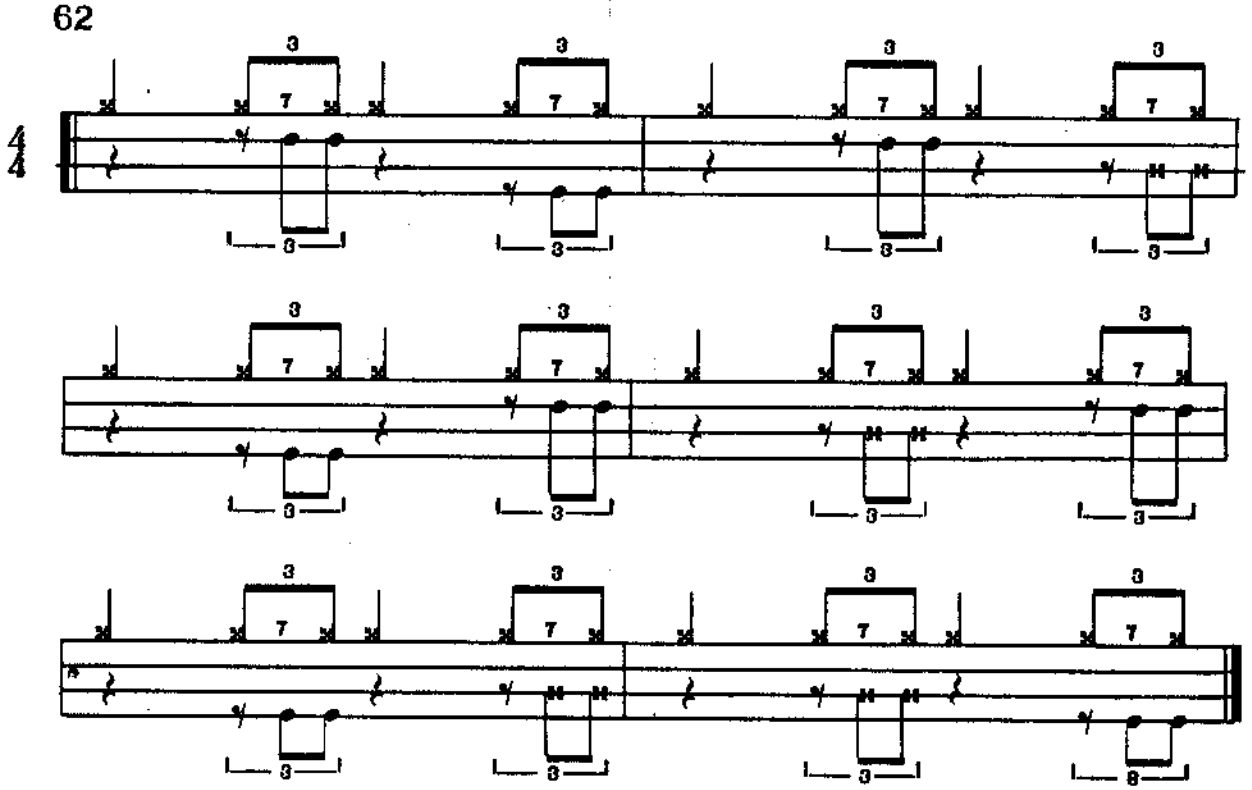

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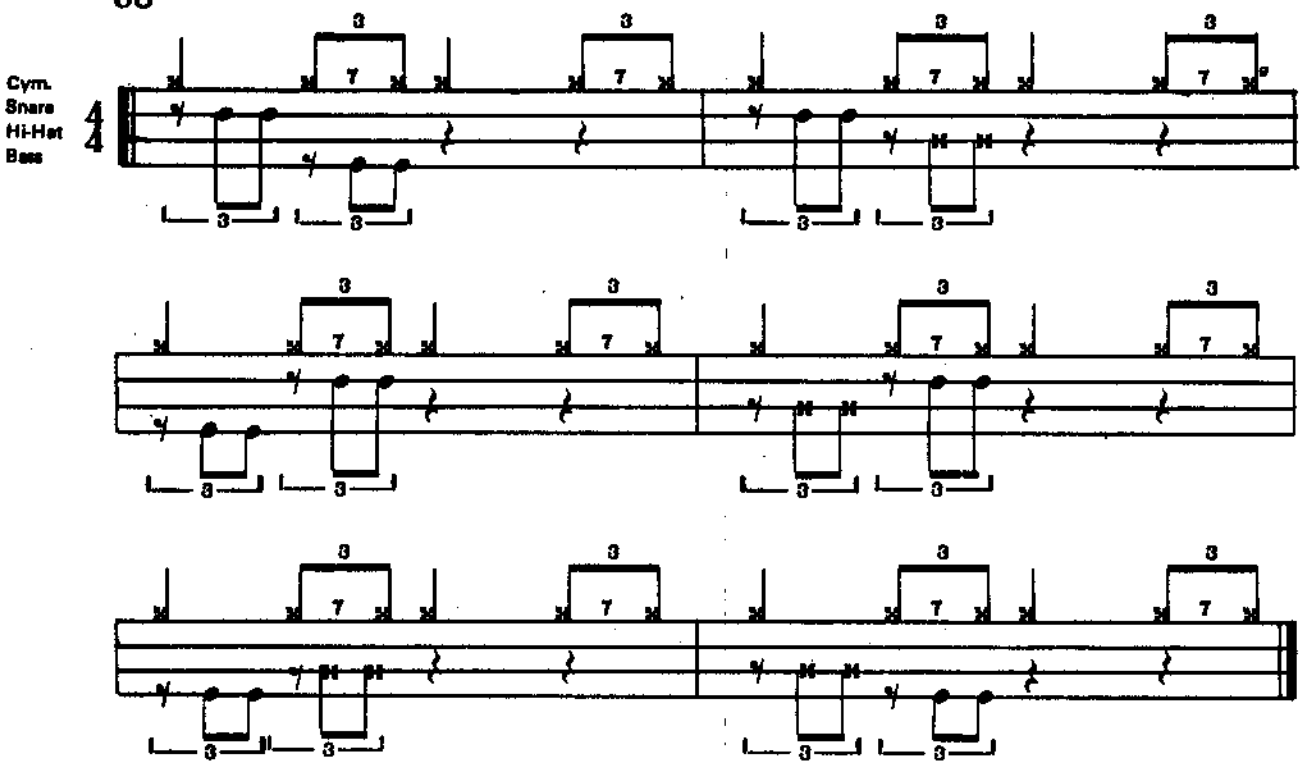

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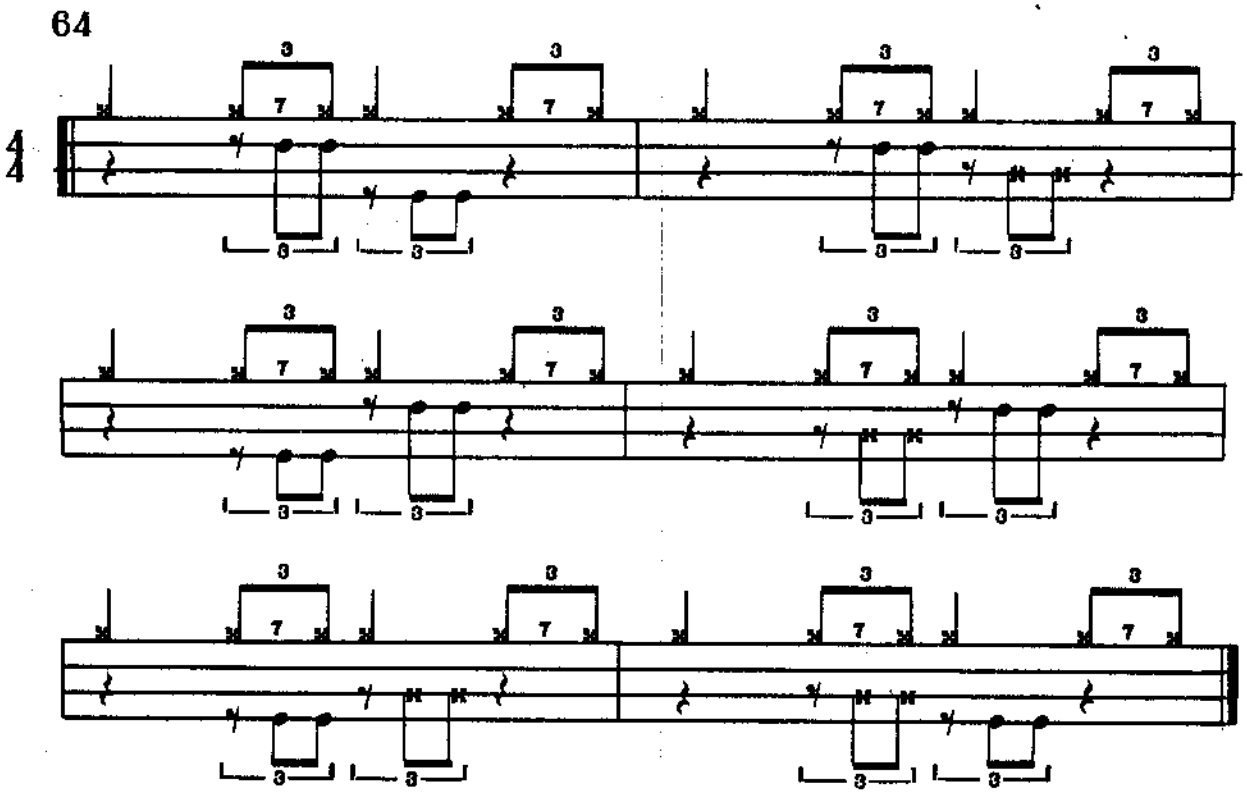

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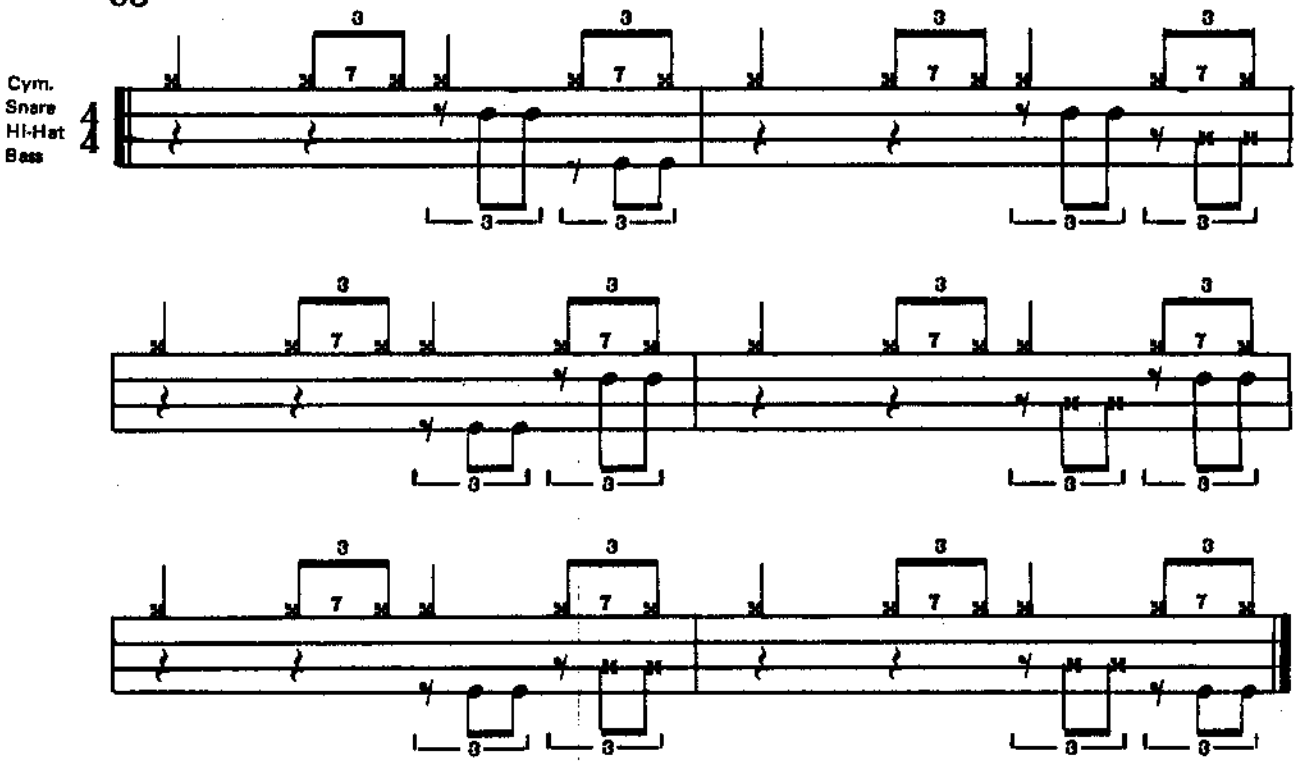

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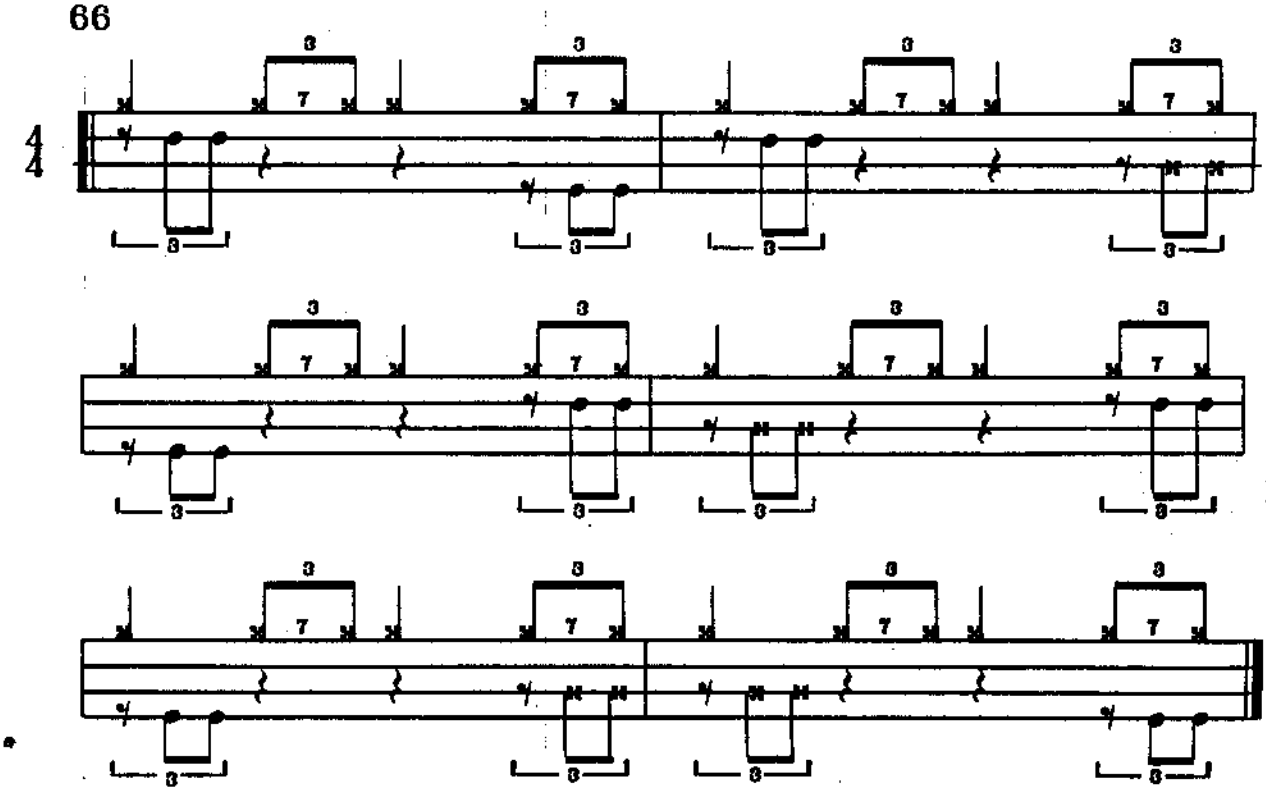

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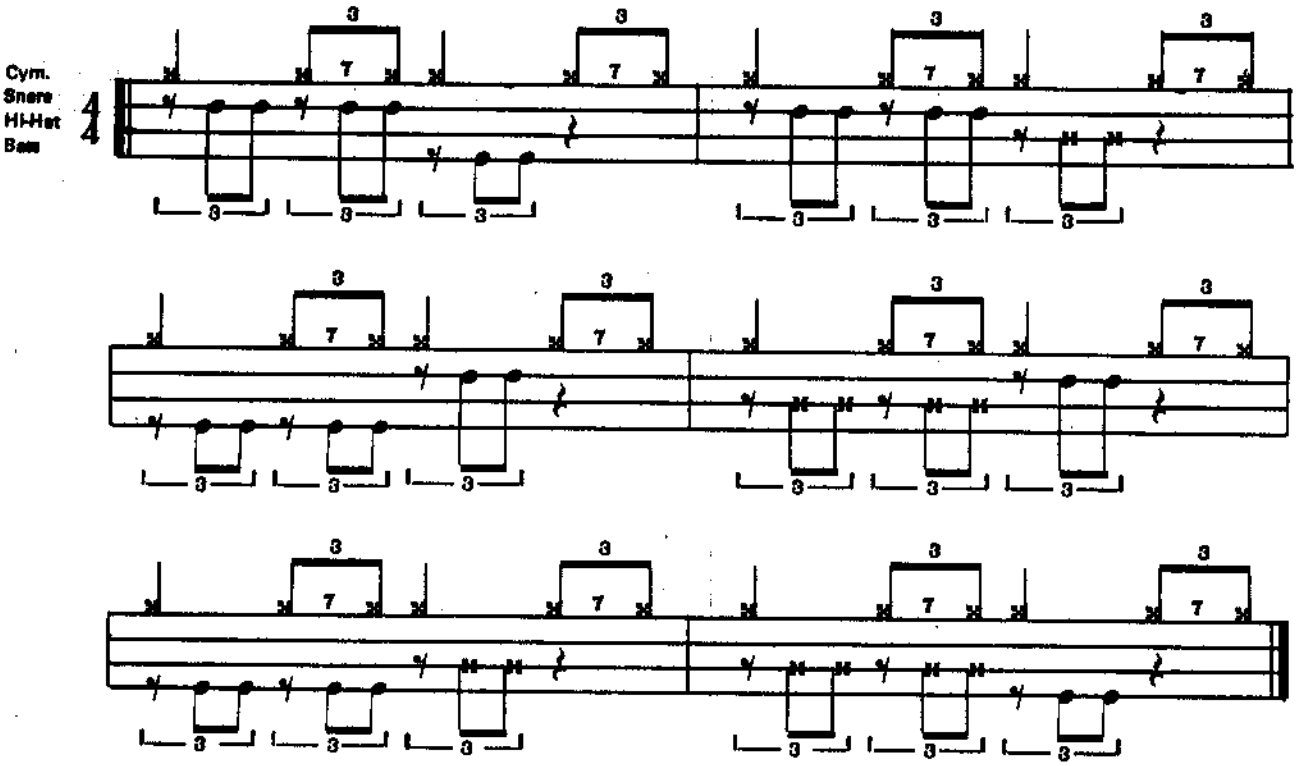

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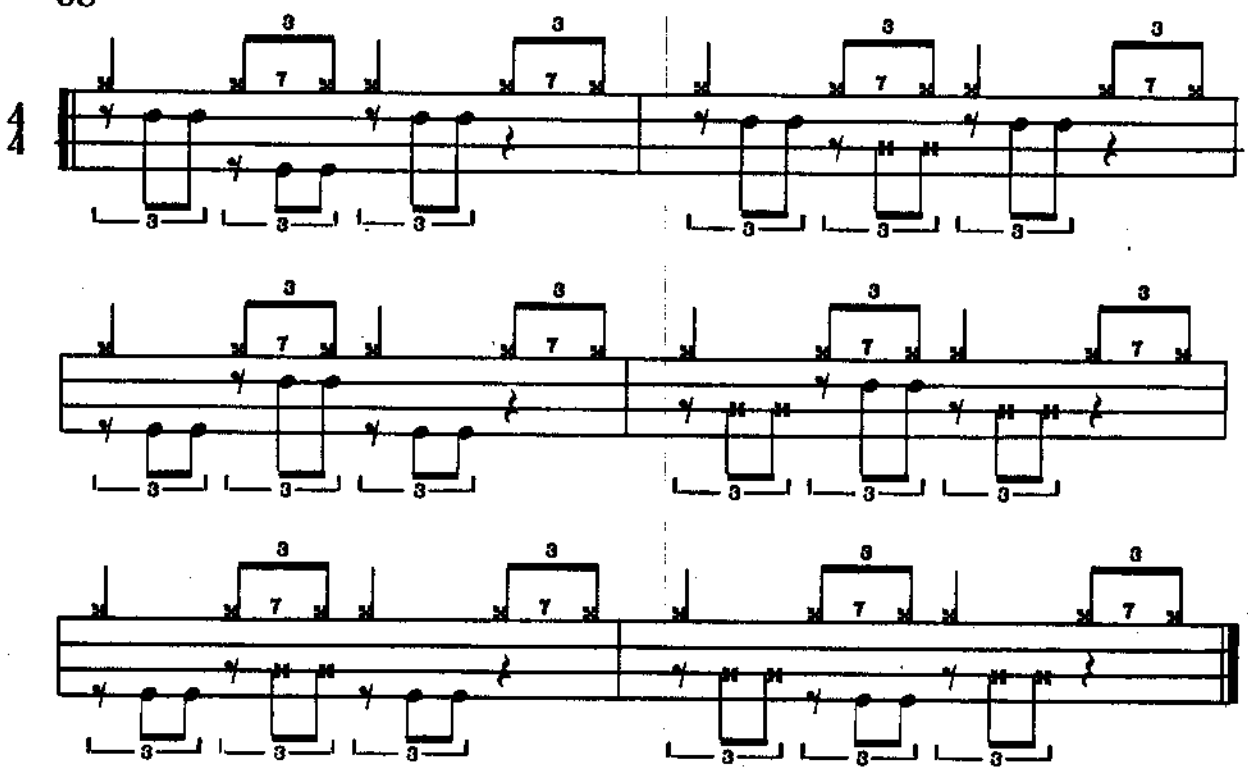

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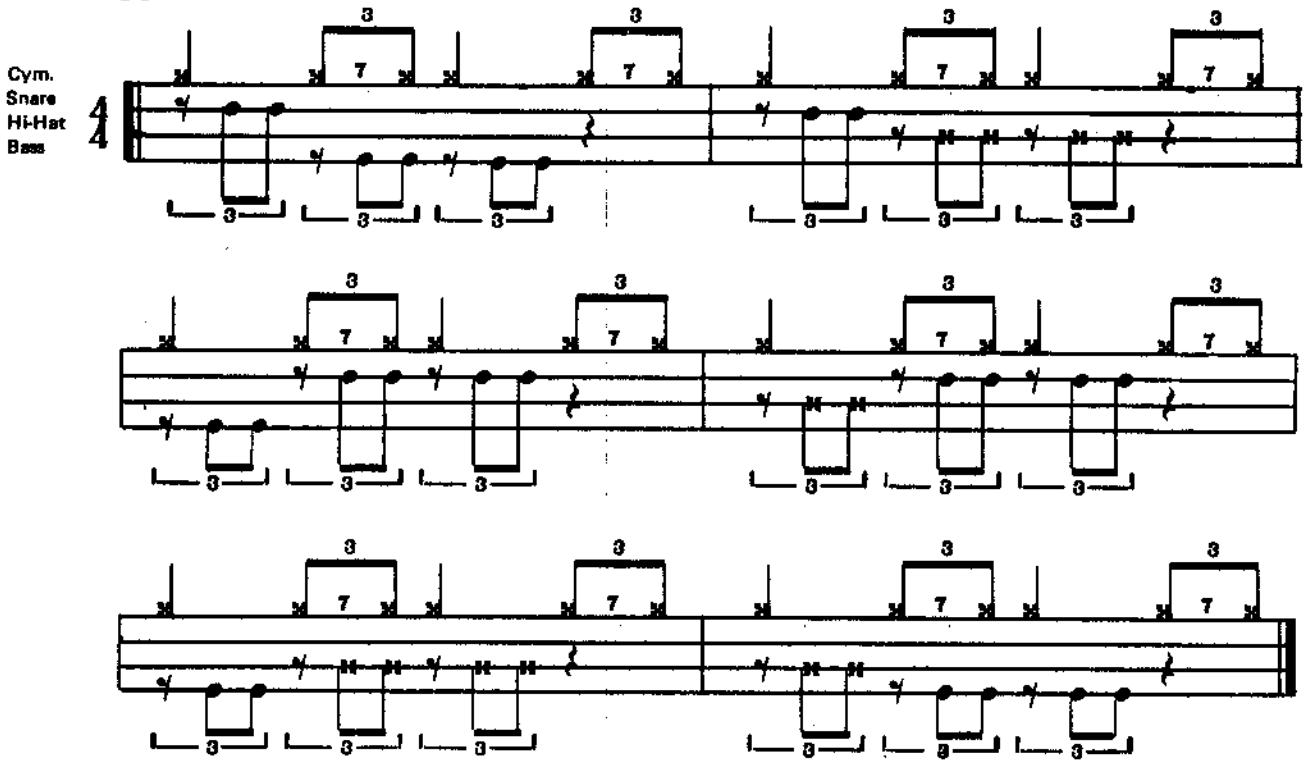

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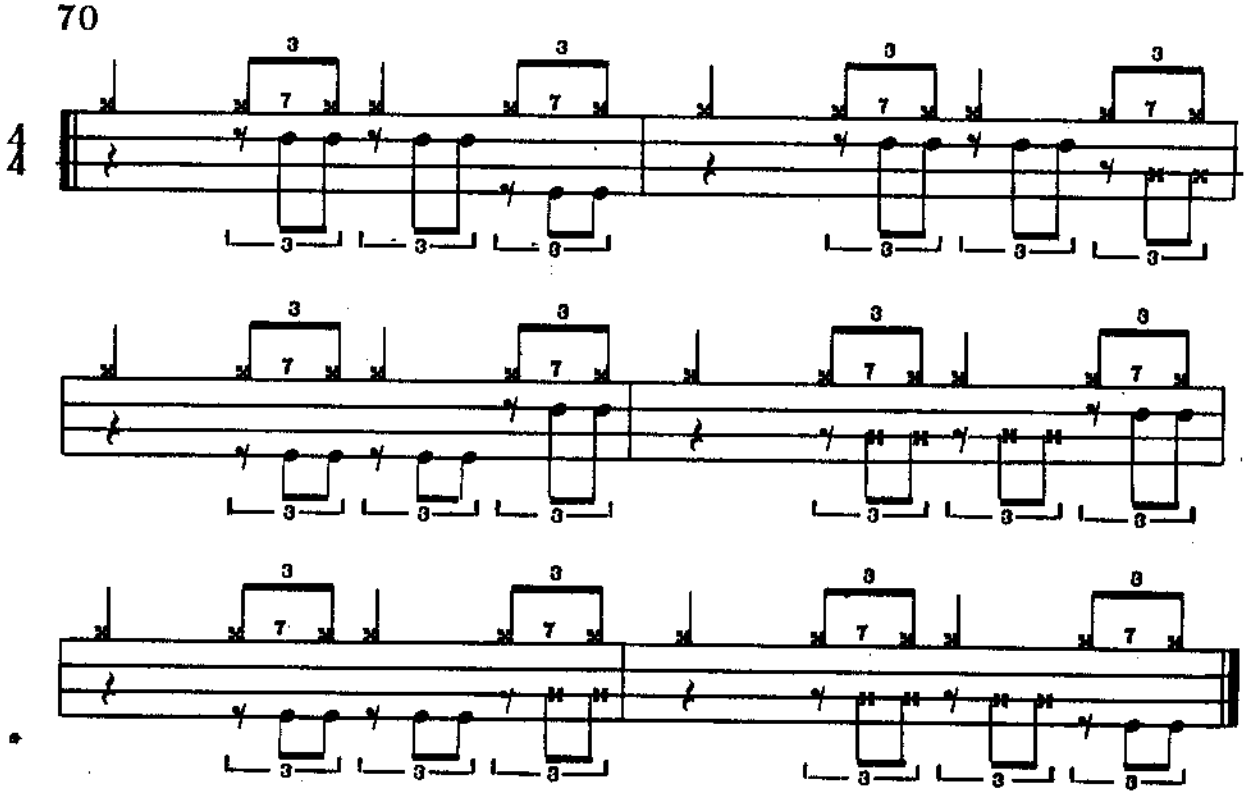

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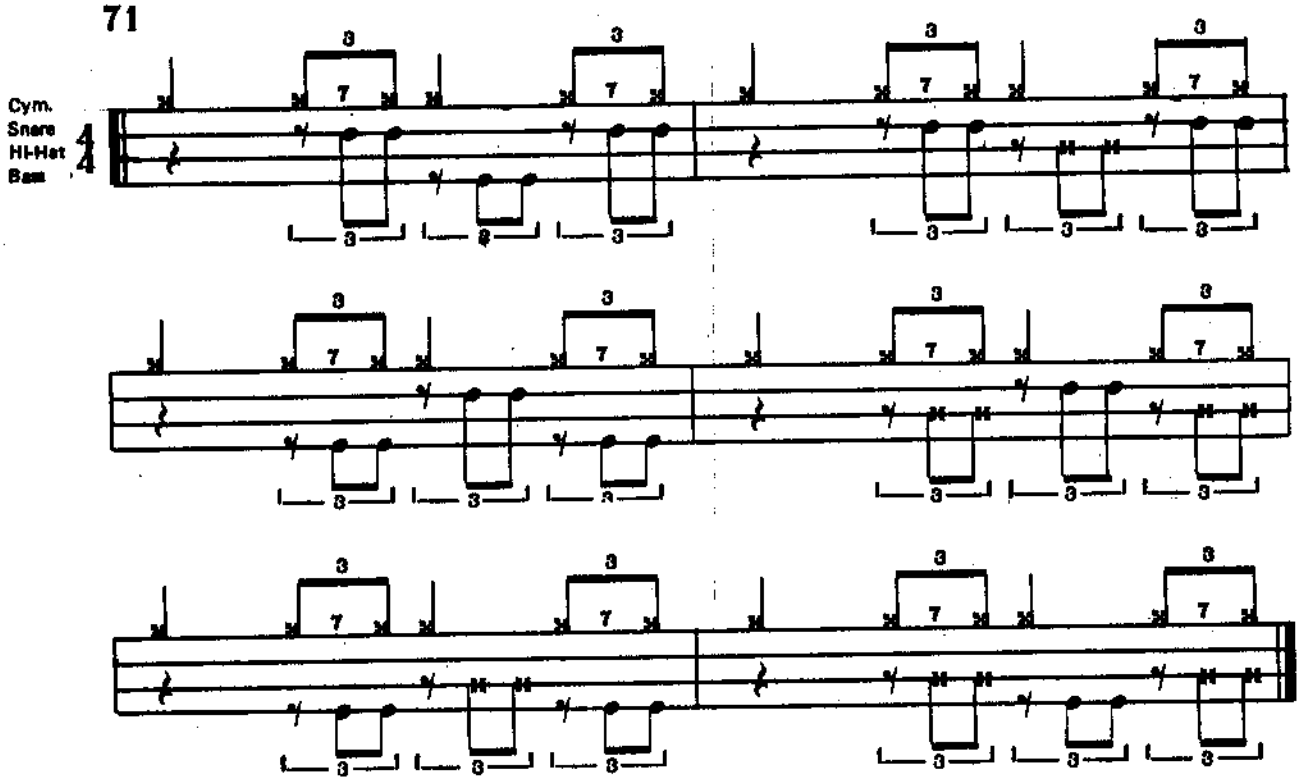

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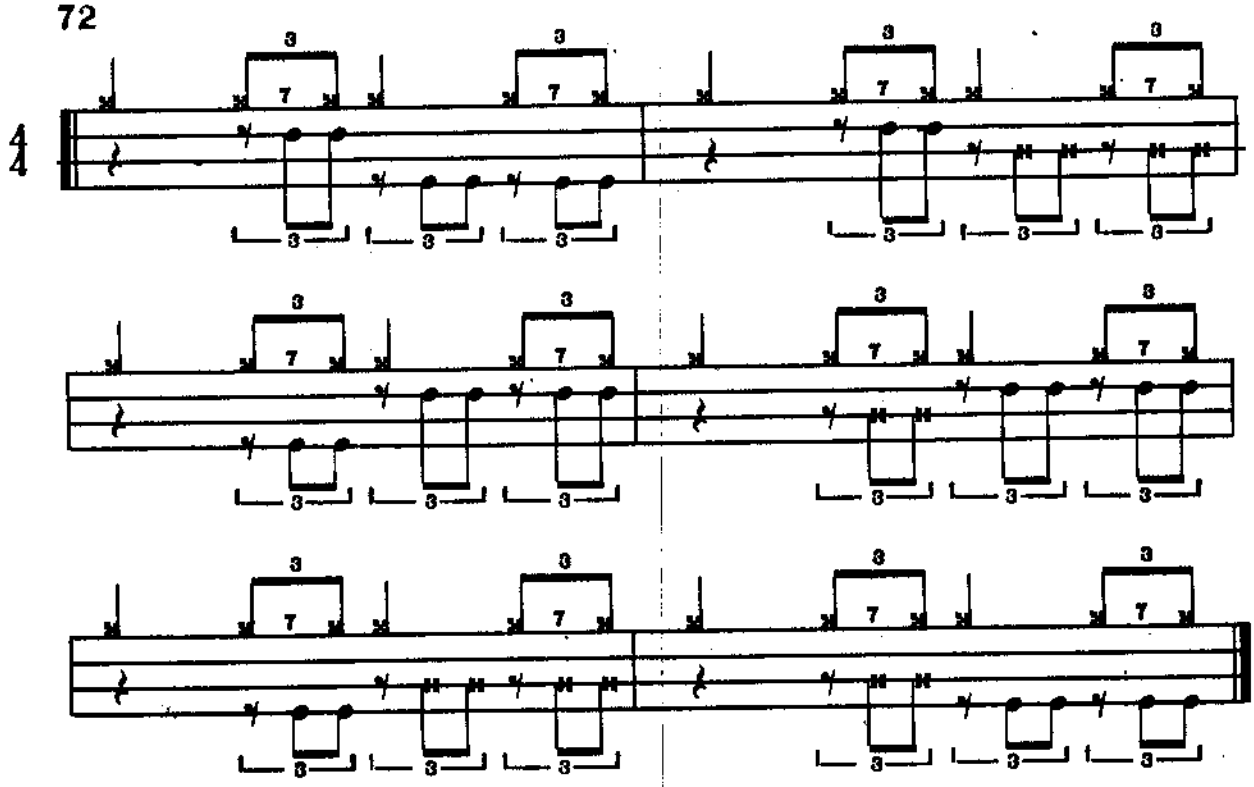

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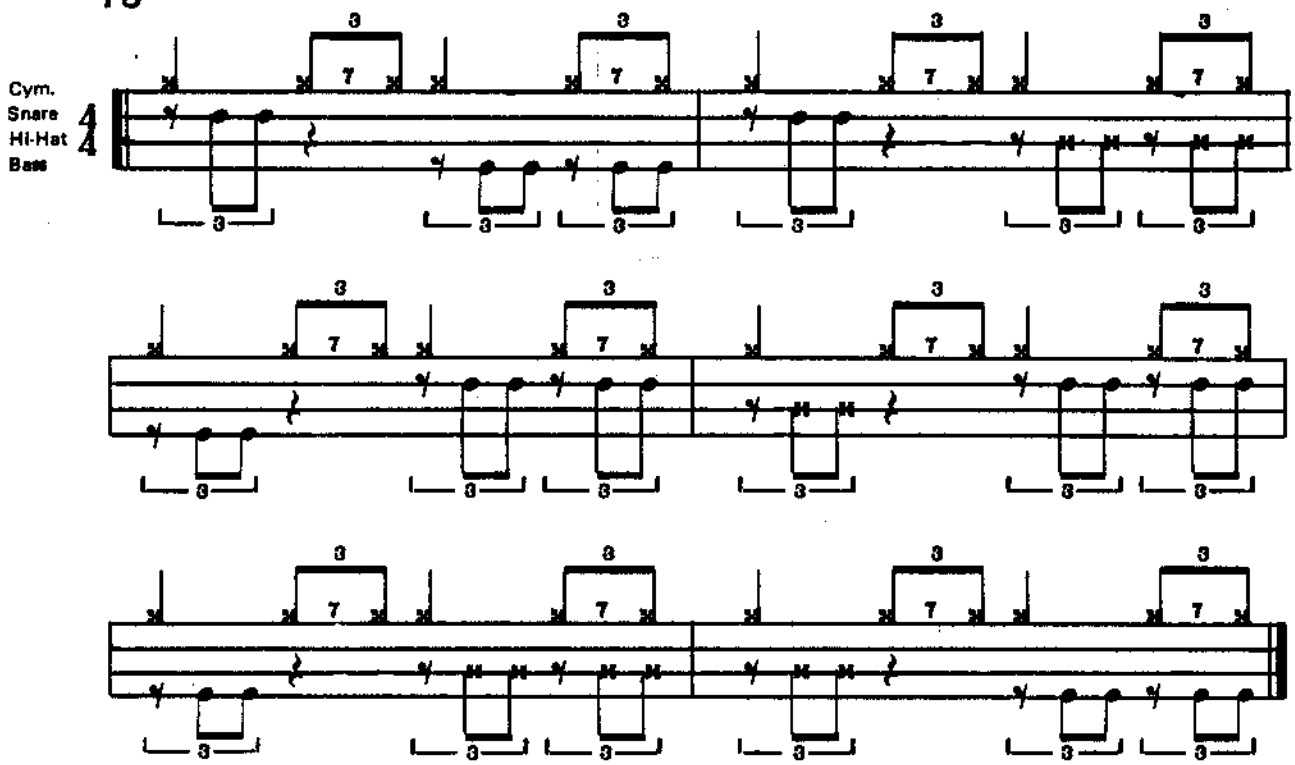

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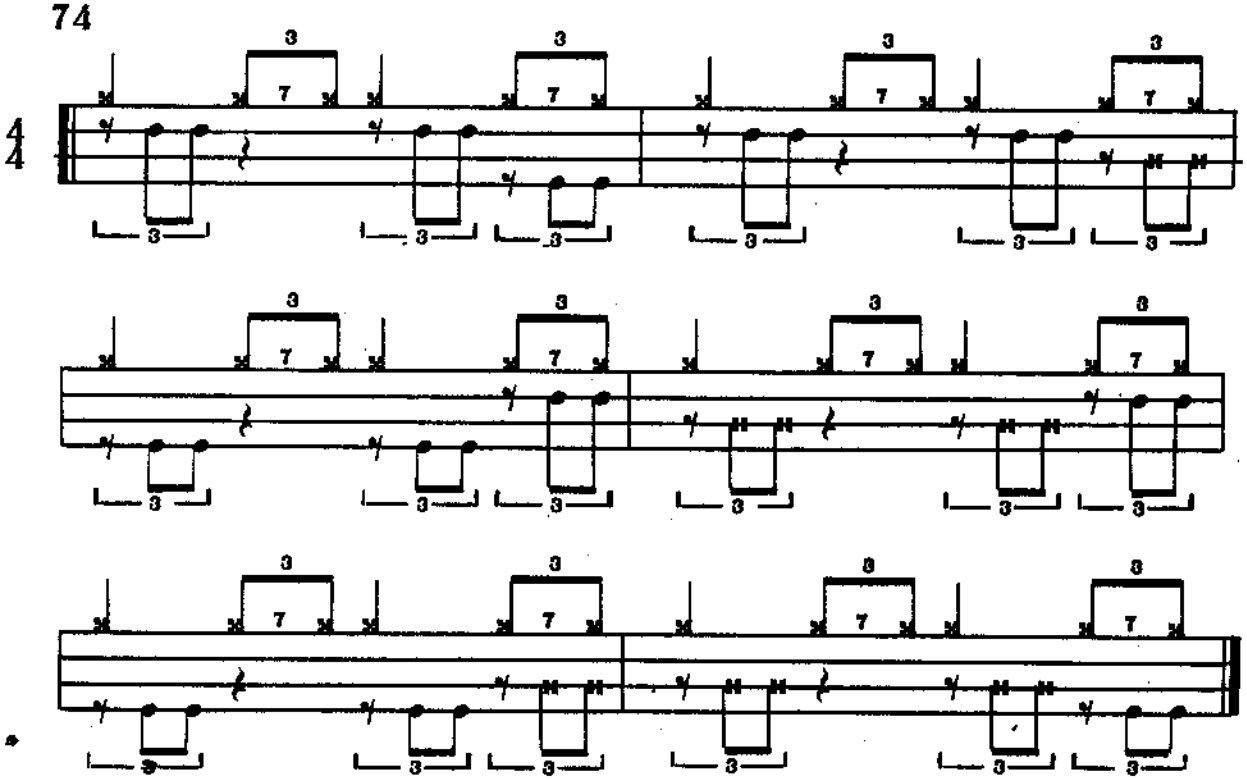

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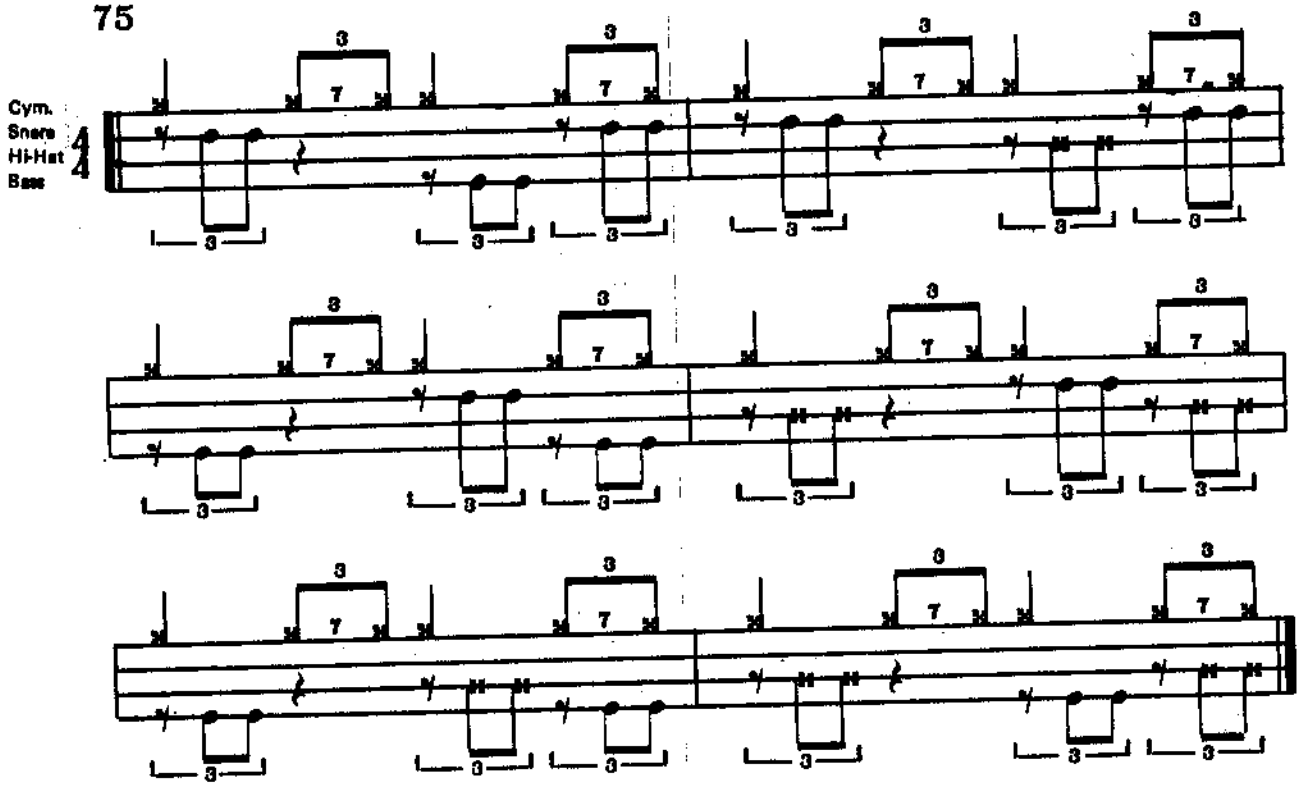

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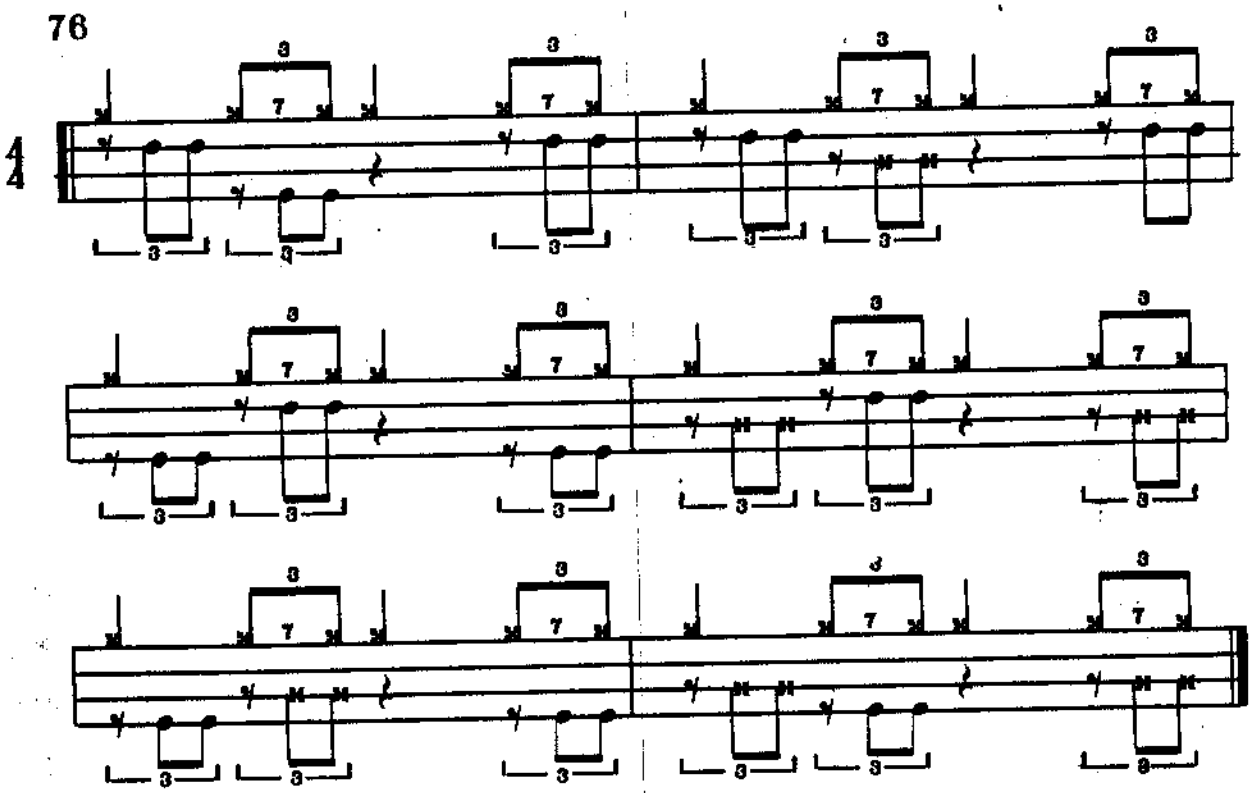

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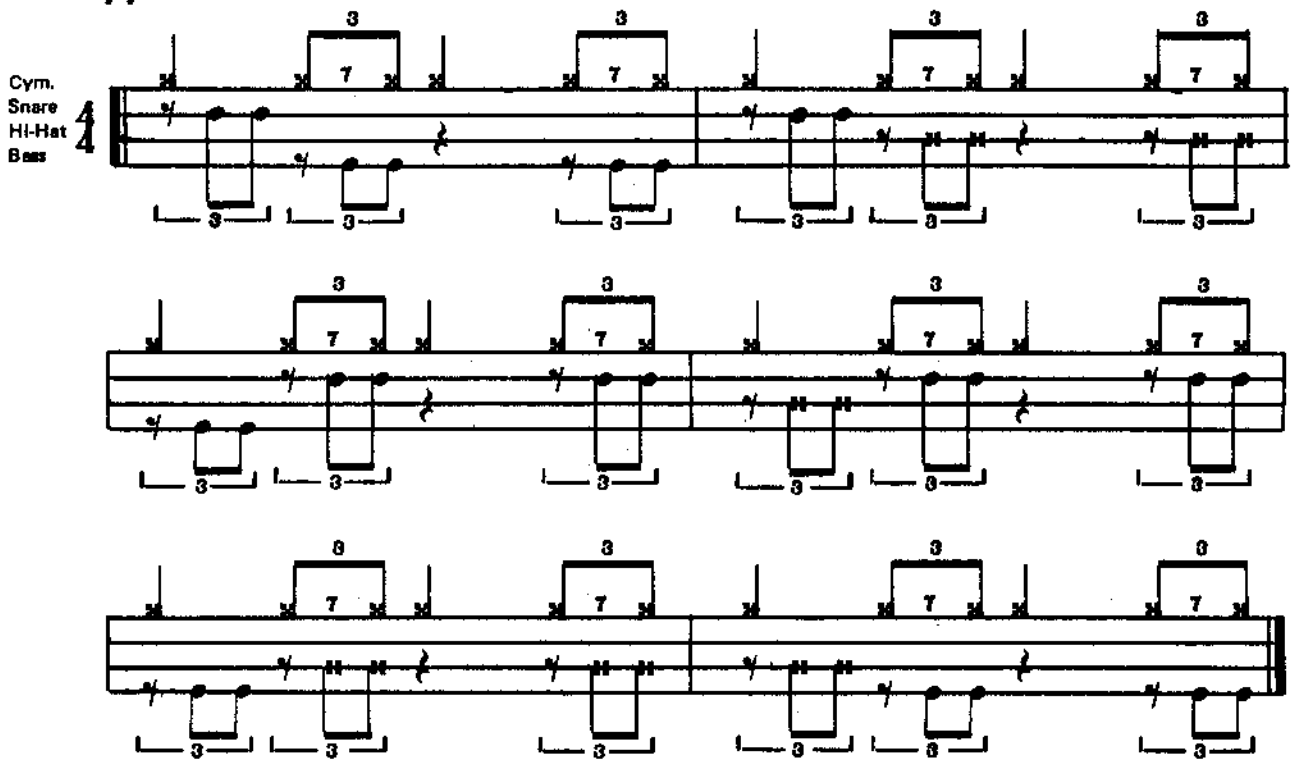

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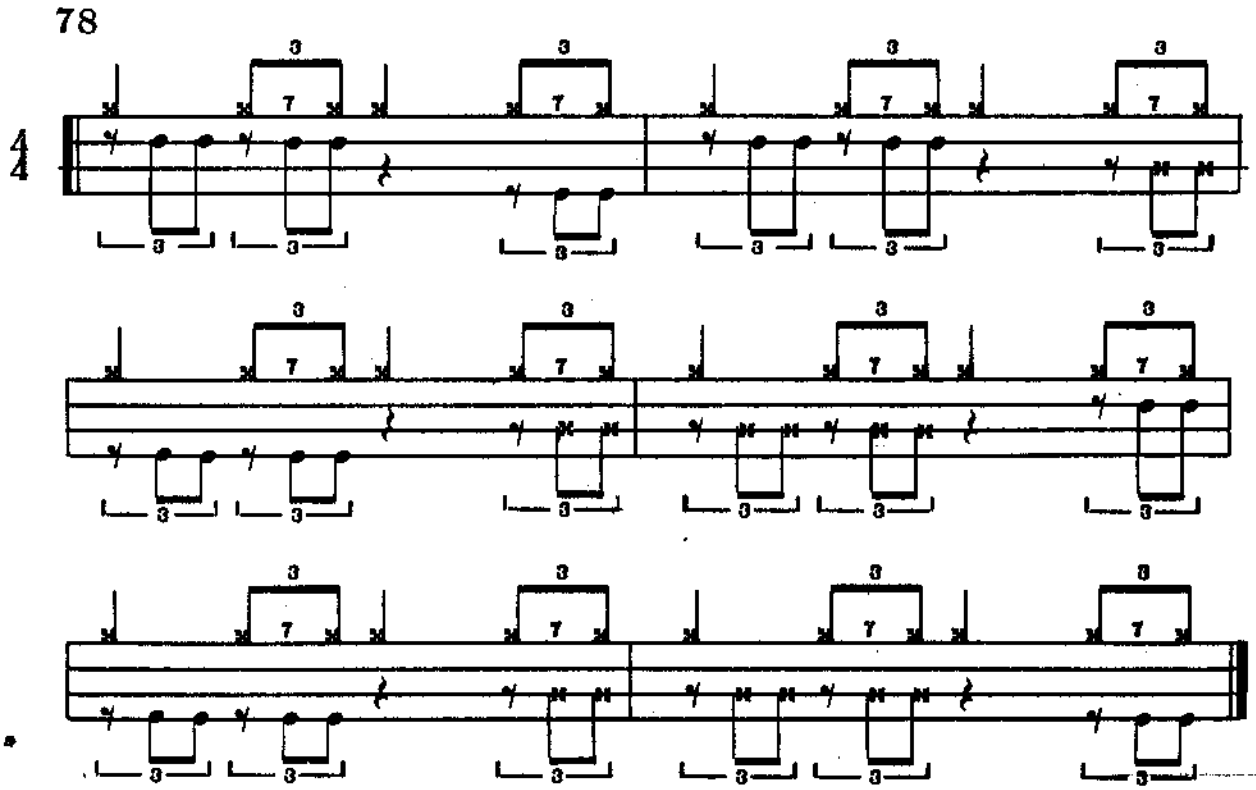

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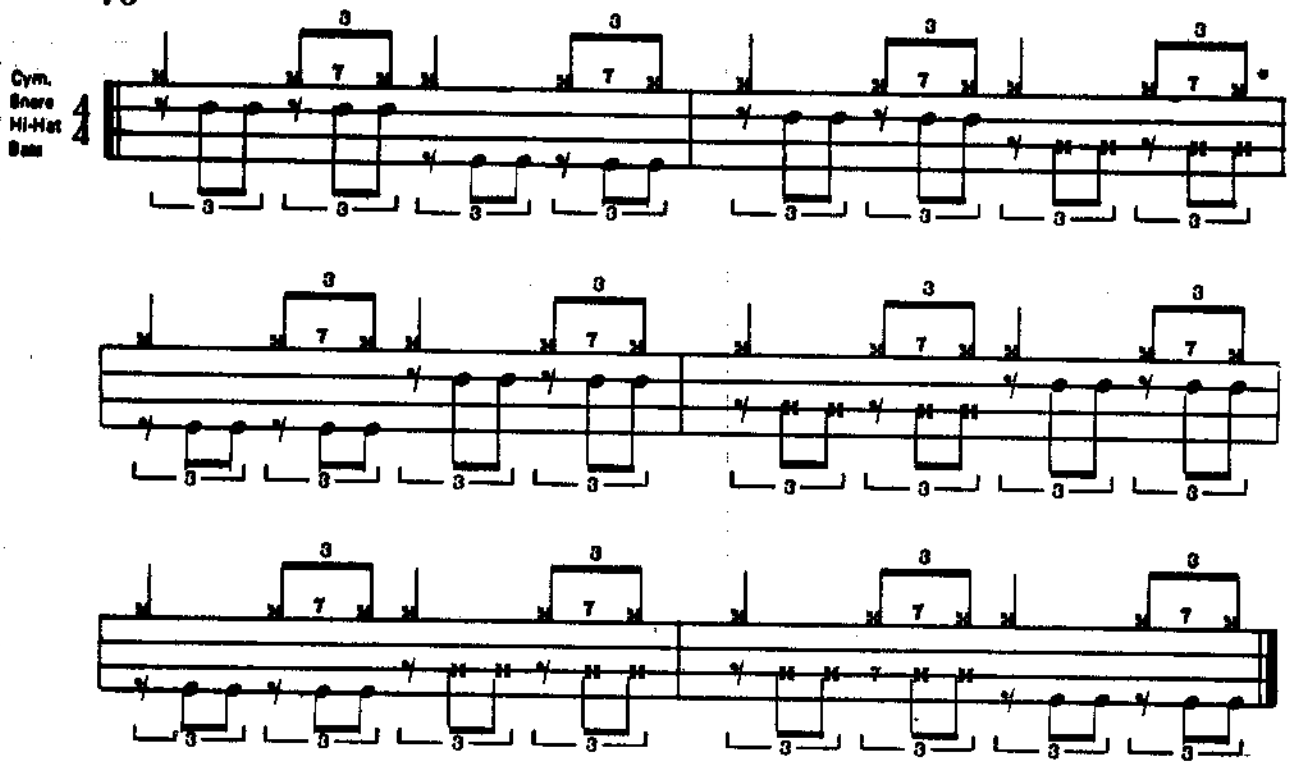

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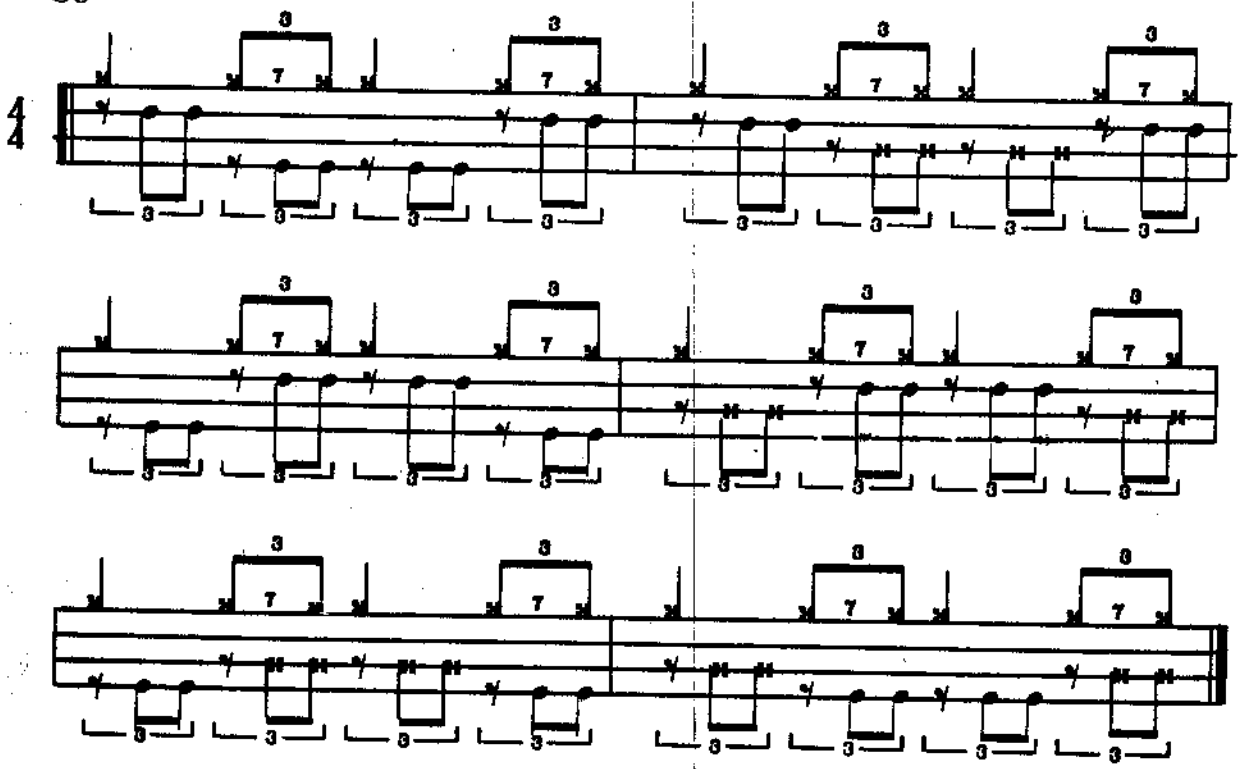

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