

THIS LESSON IS EXCERPTED FROM

A FRESH APPROACH TO THE
DRUMSET



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BY
MARK WESSELS

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ABOUT THIS LESSON:

Lesson 28 is the fourth of five lessons on jazz fundamentals. Lesson 25 deals with basic swing grooves and fills, 26 is all about comping under the ride, 27 gets into setting up ensemble figures, and Lesson 28 deals with more complicated ensemble figures. When writing the book, it struck me that many others deal with setting up an initial ensemble entrance, but none deal with filling around figures AFTER the entrance. Also important are learning ensemble articulations so that you can orchestrate note lengths with the various sounds on the drumset.

Included are two sound files to practice some sample figures (#4 – a two measure phrase and #9 – a four measure phrase). In these sound files, you'll play time with a bass player, then set up and fill around the figures played by the pianist.

The full play along track is a typical small group chart. As with all jazz, there is no set "drum part" – what you play is completely up to you. Feel free to copy some of the licks that Donny Gruendler plays on the track with drums, or make up your own!

Good luck and have fun!

Mark Wessels

Lesson 28

More Complicated Ensemble Figures

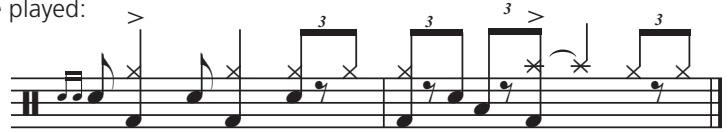


Providing a setup for an ensemble entrance is just one of the drummer's roles in a jazz setting. Usually a chart will also include important ensemble figures as well. It's the drummer's job to "catch" these figures – by either comping under the ride (with the snare and/or bass drum for example), or by playing fills to set up and 'punch' syncopated figures.

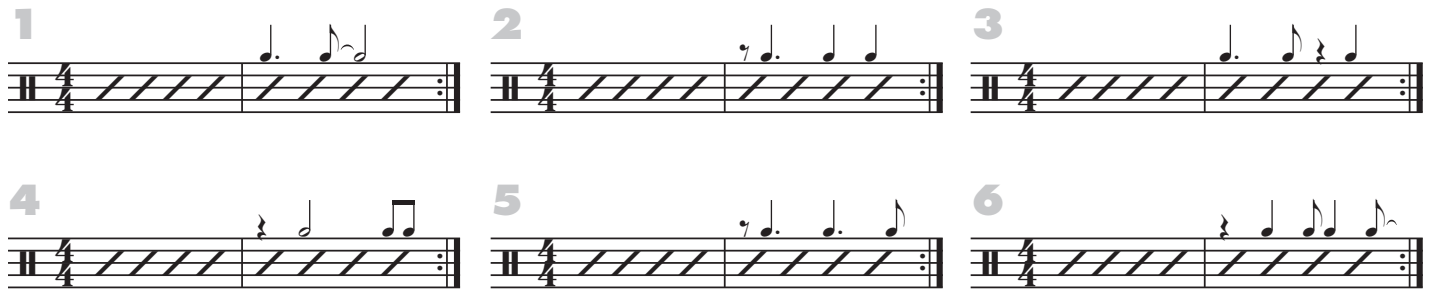
For example, this figure:



Might be played:



A drummer can choose to catch just a note or two of the figures or play driving fills around all of them – it all depends on the dynamics, orchestration, feel and style of the music. Practice catching these figures at various tempos and dynamics:



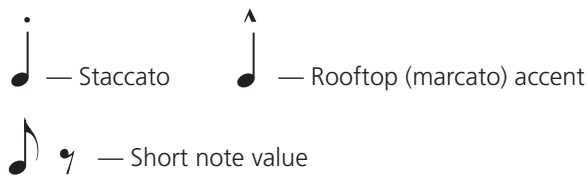
Ensemble Articulations

A good jazz drummer will try to match note lengths (articulations) and sounds of the ensemble with the sounds on the kit. If the ensemble plays a short, "staccato" articulation, the drummer should match

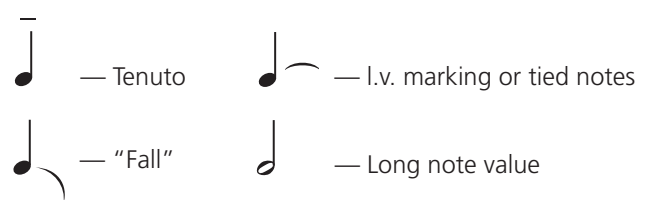
that note length (playing a rimshot, drum or choked cymbal). Long note lengths will be played with long sounds (cymbal crashes). Low and high sounds can be orchestrated on the kit as well.

Here are some examples of articulations that may be notated in ensemble figures in the drum part:

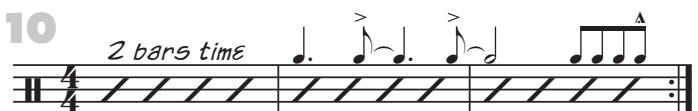
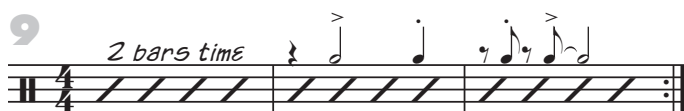
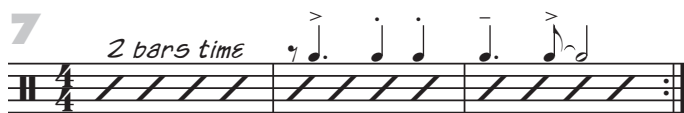
Short articulations:



Long, sustained articulations:



Practice singing these ensemble figures with the correct articulation before you work on catching the rhythms:



Technique Focus: Sticking Patterns

Apply the triple sticking patterns from Lesson 21 to the jazz ride.

1 First isolate a sticking pattern on count 1 and 3.

L L R L L R L

2 Next, move the same pattern to count 2 & 4.

L L R L L R L

3 Finally, play the pattern on all four beats. After you're comfortable, mix and match triple patterns – or mix & match triple stickings with (swung) duple patterns from the Appendix on page 94-95.

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

Jazz Chart Reading: Small Group



The chart below contains many common elements to a small group setting: An intro, the “head” (the melody), and an open solo (where one or more musicians may take a solo). In the head, decide whether to “catch” all the figures, just the accents or none at all – it completely depends on the intensity of the group and your personal style!

Medium Swing

mf (pno. solo)

f

mf (fig. 1st x only)

mf (fig. 1st x only)

mf (fig. 1st x only)

D.S.
al Fine



D.S. AL FINE



Repeat back to the Segno (sign) and play to the **Fine**.

Table of Contents

| | | | |
|---|-------|--|-------|
| PREFACE | 4-7 | LESSON TWELVE | 34-35 |
| How to Use the Book/CD, Note Values Chart, Drumset Notation Key, Notation Elements | | 3/4 Time Signatures, Grooves in 3/4 Time, Rudiment: Flam, Fills in 3/4 Time, Music Reading: 1st & 2nd Endings, Play-along Track: "Horseback Waltz" | |
| LEARN ABOUT THE INSTRUMENT | 8-9 | LESSON THIRTEEN | 36-37 |
| SETTING UP THE DRUMS..... | 11 | Music Reading: Dotted Notes, Style: Halftime Feel, Halftime Grooves, Play-along Track: "Halftime Show", Technique: Accented Paradiddles, Paradiddle Grooves | |
| LESSON ONE:..... | 12-13 | LESSON FOURTEEN | 38-39 |
| Gripping the Sticks, The Rebound Stroke, Rudiments: Singles, Doubles, Paradiddle | | Syncopated 8th Note Beats, Syncopated Combos, Technique: Single Hand Accent, Play-along Track: "Synco de Mayo" | |
| LESSON TWO:..... | 14-15 | LESSON FIFTEEN | 40-41 |
| Sticking Patterns, Bass Drum Technique, Hi-Hat Pedal Technique | | Music Reading: Sixteenth Notes, 16th Note Grooves, 16th Note Fills, Technique: Grid Diddles, Style: Rock Ballad | |
| LESSON THREE..... | 16-17 | LESSON SIXTEEN | 42-43 |
| Right Hand Hi-Hat Technique, First Rock Beat, Music Notation Basics | | Music Reading: 8th/16th Rhythmic Combinations, Syncopated LH 16th Grooves, Technique: Accent Grid, Syncopated BD 16ths, Style: Syncopated Rock | |
| LESSON FOUR | 18-19 | LESSON SEVENTEEN | 44-45 |
| Music Reading: Quarter/Half/Whole, The Ride Cymbal, Play-along Track: "Rock Steady" | | Music Reading: 16th Rests, Dotted 8ths, 16th Based Rhythmic Permutations, 16th Beat Combos, Rudiment: The Ruff, Style: 8th Note Funk | |
| LESSON FIVE | 20-21 | LESSON EIGHTEEN | 46-47 |
| 8th Notes, 8th Note Rock Beats, Music Reading: Quarters and 8ths, Play-along Track: "Solid as a Rock" | | Syncopated 16th Note Grooves, 16th Open Hi-Hat Combos, Syncopated Fills, Style: 16th Note Funk | |
| LESSON SIX..... | 22-23 | LESSON NINETEEN | 48-49 |
| New 8th Note Rock Beats, Technique: Independence, The Crash Cymbal, Play-along Track: "8 Ball in the Corner" | | Technique: Controlled Rebound, Play-along Track: "Slow Motion", Rudiment: Flam Tap, Style: Train Beat, Rudiment: Lesson 25, 6 & 7 Stroke Rolls | |
| LESSON SEVEN..... | 24-25 | LESSON TWENTY | 50-51 |
| The Toms, New Beats Using the Toms, Rudiment: Multiple Bounce Roll, Play-along Track: "Jungle Drums" | | Music Reading: 12/8 Time Signature, 12/8 Grooves, Technique: Accented 3's, 12/8 Fills, Style: 12/8 Blues | |
| LESSON EIGHT | 26-27 | LESSON TWENTY ONE | 52-53 |
| Drum Fills, Concepts: Sustaining Momentum, Play-along Track: "Solid Time" | | Triple Sticking Patterns, 12/8 Reading, Triple Combos, Triple Hi-Hat Combos, Play-along Track: "Crooked Stick Blues" | |
| LESSON NINE | 28-29 | LESSON TWENTY TWO | 54-55 |
| Open Hi-Hat Sounds, Rudiment: 5 Stroke Roll, 8th Note Combos, Cross Stick, Play-along Track: "Spy Games" | | Music Reading: 16th Notes in Triple Time, 12/8 Grooves Incorporating 16th Notes, Technique: 12/8 Accent Patterns, 12/8 Fills with 16ths, Style: 12/8 Rock | |
| LESSON TEN..... | 30-31 | | |
| Quarter Note Ride Pattern, Technique: Independence, Style: Two Beat, Play-along Track: "Two Bits", Technique: Tap, Down and Up Strokes, Time Check | | | |
| LESSON ELEVEN | 32-33 | | |
| Music Reading: 8th Rests, Upbeat Ride Pattern, Style: Disco, Fills Using the 8th Rest, Play-along Track: "Build it Up" | | | |

| | |
|---|-------|
| LESSON TWENTY THREE | 56-57 |
| Music Reading: 8th Note Triplets, Style: Blues Shuffle, Technique: Swing Sticking, Style: Texas Shuffle, Style: Rock Shuffle | |
| LESSON TWENTY FOUR..... | 58-59 |
| Technique: Controlled Rebound, Part 2, Style: Halftime Shuffle, Play-along Track: "Backstreet Shuffle", Rudiment: Swiss Army Triplet, Music Reading: 16th Note Triplets, Style: Hip Hop, Play-along Track: "Go Dog" | |
| LESSON TWENTY FIVE..... | 60-61 |
| Style: Jazz Swing, Technique: Triplet Accents, Jazz Fills, Technique: Swing Accent Patterns, Play-along Track: "Swingin' Easy" | |
| LESSON TWENTY SIX | 62-63 |
| Jazz Comping, Technique: Independence | |
| LESSON TWENTY SEVEN | 64-65 |
| Setting Up Ensemble Entrances, Incorporating Fills, Technique: Paradiddle-diddle/6 Stroke Rolls Play-along Track: "Kick it Old School" | |
| LESSON TWENTY EIGHT..... | 66-67 |
| Catching Ensemble Figures, Music Reading: Ensemble Articulations, Technique: Independence, Jazz Chart Reading: Small Group | |
| LESSON TWENTY NINE..... | 68-69 |
| Style: Jazz Waltz, Brush Technique, Jazz Ballad | |
| LESSON THIRTY..... | 70-71 |
| Afro Cuban Style: Cha-Cha, Son Clavé, Bass Tumbao, Guiro, Cha-Cha Bell Pattern, Conga Tumbao | |
| LESSON THIRTY ONE..... | 72-73 |
| Timbale Abaniquo, Play-along Track: "Time to Cha-Cha," Music Reading: Cut Time, Style: Mambo, Cascara, Conga Tumbao, Mambo Bell Pattern | |
| LESSON THIRTY TWO..... | 74-75 |
| Rhumba Clavé, Play-along Track: "Mambo Caliente," Style: Songo, Play-along Track: "Songo Mondo" | |
| LESSON THIRTY THREE..... | 76-77 |
| Brazilian Style: Bossa Nova, Play-along Track: "Bossa Breeze," Style: Samba, Play-along Track: "Escola de Samba" | |
| LESSON THIRTY FOUR | 78-79 |
| Caribbean Style: Calypso, Play-along Track, "Caribbean Nights," Style: Soca, Play-along Track, "Soca Dance Party," Style: Reggae, Play-along Track, "One Drop Reggae" | |

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---------|
| READING APPENDIX..... | 80-93 |
| DUPLE/TRIPLE STICKING COMBINATIONS .. | 94-95 |
| ACCENT PATTERNS | 96-97 |
| RUDIMENT CHART | 98-99 |
| MUSICAL GLOSSARY | 100-101 |

Play-Along Tracks: Index by Styles

ROCK / POP / COUNTRY STYLES

| | |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Basic Rock | 16, 19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 33 |
| Disco | 24 |
| Two Beat | 32 |
| Country Waltz | 35 |
| Halftime Feels..... | 38 |
| Syncopated Rock..... | 41, 45 |
| 16th Note Rock | 42 |
| Train Beat | 51 |
| 12/8 Rock..... | 57 |
| Rock Shuffle | 59 |

R&B / FUNK / HIP-HOP

| | |
|------------------------|------------|
| Funk..... | 47, 49, 51 |
| 12/8 Blues | 53, 55 |
| Blues Shuffle | 58 |
| Texas Shuffle | 59 |
| Halftime Shuffle | 60 |
| Hip Hop (Go-Go)..... | 61 |

JAZZ

| | |
|------------------|------------|
| Swing..... | 63, 67, 69 |
| Jazz Waltz | 71 |
| Jazz Ballad..... | 71 |

LATIN STYLES

| | |
|-----------------|----|
| Cha-Cha..... | 74 |
| Mambo | 76 |
| Songo | 77 |
| Bossa Nova..... | 78 |
| Samba..... | 79 |
| Calypso | 80 |
| Soca | 81 |
| Reggae..... | 81 |