

have a lot to do with numbers. For a little encouragement I will use the words of Miles Davis here: “learn all this stuff and then forget it”, of course only after you internalized everything completely.

Now what exactly is a grouping of 3? A grouping of 3 means a group of three notes – in our case 16th notes – which, being repeated, moves against the main quarter note pulse. **Example A** shows groupings of 3 over two bars. The accented notes are played with the right hand and the right foot on the ride cymbal and bass drum (BD), whereas the unaccented notes are played softly with the left hand on the snare (ghost notes).

Thus, a grouping of 5 is a group of 5 notes, which is being repeated and thereby moves against the pulse. **Example B** gives you groupings of 5 over two bars, each with two accents on the first and third note. Again, as with the groupings of 3, the accents are played with the right hand (ride plus BD) and the unaccented notes with the left hand.

Example C shows the groupings of 7, which were composed, following the same principle. In this case, the first, third and fifth stroke are accented and played with the right hand, whereas the remaining unaccented notes are again played with the left hand.

Of course you could also play all of the groupings, applying an innumerable set of accentuations and stickings, but for now, the above pattern is very suitable.

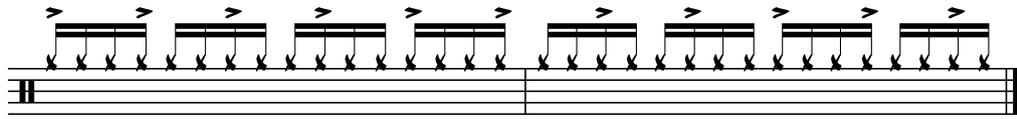
Unfortunately, only playing the groupings won't suffice. Your goal is to have a clear idea of the different rhythmical patterns. And this is where it gets a bit more challenging because you really should (I originally wanted to write: HAVE TO) count out loud while playing. – No, just playing quarter notes with the left foot is not enough. –

You can only completely see through these patterns by counting. If you don't keep track of the pulse the entire time, these exercises are just robotic and only theoretical. The very conscious process of counting out loud helps you to internalize the quarter note pulse much faster.

Here are two counting methods to begin with: at first simplify the exercises by playing the stickings on the hi-hat only. Start with playing the groupings of 3 over two bars and count the 16th notes: 1e+a 2e+a 3e+a 4e+a.

If you are able to play and count the other groupings over two bars, reduce the counting to quarter notes: 1 2 3 4. To avoid misunderstandings take a look at **Example D**. Afterwards you should also count while playing the orchestrations of examples A-C. Remember to always play a musical form while practicing. Combining two bars of groove with two bars of groupings is a possible way of doing this. Play with and without a click.

Example D / Counting methods 1 & 2



#1: 1 e & a 2 e & a 3 e & a 4 e & a 1 e & a 2 e & a 3 e & a 4 e & a
#2: 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

These exercises will make a huge contribution to being able to move freely on the kit without having difficulties with bar boundaries or different time signatures. I wish you a lot of fun. I can guarantee you: it is worth the effort.

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