



The featured artist this quarter is Albe Bonacci.

Albe Bonacci is a full-time studio and performing drummer and clinician in Los Angeles. Originally from Salt Lake City, Utah, he studied orchestral snare drumming and multi-percussion with Douglas Wolf at the University of Utah, is a graduate of Percussion Institute of Technology (PIT) in Los Angeles, and The Drummer's Collective in New York. Albe has studied privately with Ralph Humphrey, Joey Heredia and countless others.



Groove, Feel, Pocket

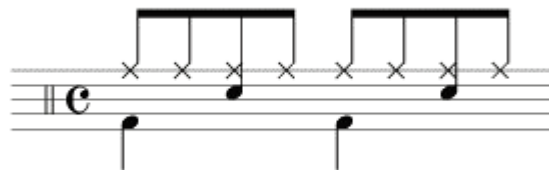
by Albe Bonacci

Slang terms often used but rarely broken down in ways to analyze what works and why. So what is a groove? A beat? Time? A rhythm? Yes, I'd say all of the above. And if it is rhythm, what is rhythm?

My dictionary says "an ordered recurrent alteration of strong and weak elements in the flow of sound".

I like thinking of high points and low points or levels. Picture a mixing console or EQ on a stereo. I firmly believe that a good groove has both strong and weak notes happening together or accenting in certain parts depending on the style and tempo.

A simple beat we all play is:

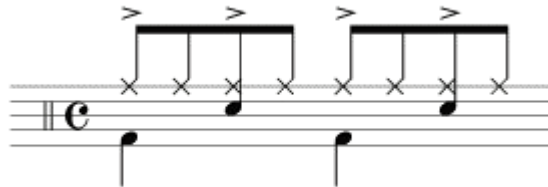


But a couple of technical moves can help the beat move forward and speak a bit more clearly. So, let's put some "sauce" on it.

The first thing is getting a rim shot on the backbeat (aka 2 and 4). This will make the snare drum pop even at low volumes but can take time to develop consistency. Most older players can't NOT do it.

Next, let's give a little shove to the hi hat on the quarter note pulse 1,2,3,4. Again, this is a technique issue; kind of a down stroke, tap approach with some shoulder of the stick hits the edge of the hat. This should give our beat a more moving, tight, secure sound.

It looks like this:



So, to further show strong and weak beats and dissect this even more we need to go to a 16th note ostinato.

Ostinato #1:



Be careful of the sticking; three lefts in a row with the accent on the middle note, or 2 and 4. So let's give it a spin before adding anything else.

You could also use a single stroke sticking for faster tempos and further right hand movement for toms, etc.

Ostinato # 2 is very similar with an added accent on the "Ah" of 2 and 4. A nice little push forward for this one.



Of course, we could use the ride too and we put the "+" of our beat on the bell of the ride like this:


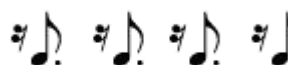




Don't leave your hi hat idle. Use it on 2 and 4, 1, 2, 3, 4, offbeat 8ths, splash on all the above or alternate open/close on the 8ths. Dare to think for yourselves, people.

Also, the off beat 8th note could also be a china, cowbell, floor tom, etc.

Okay, time for some bass drum. NOTE: All base drum patterns should also be played in the 8th note grooves found in the previous lesson.

BD Group #1

	the Quarters 1,2,3,4
	the E's
	the &'s
	the Ah's

BD Group #2



BD Group #3



BD Group #4 Variation (not especially musical, but challenging)



Two more cool ostinatos w/ two BD examples from above:

①

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

②

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

I'll finish by saying that the ostinato should be used in conjunction with the other foot rhythms. Just make sure you are musical. Some of the bass drum exercises here are not musical but for purposes of exercise.

The light at the end of the tunnel is that some of the coordination benefits will be very useful and the accenting will be great for improved feel.

Some great books, obviously, Ted Reed's *Syncopation* and *New Breed* by Gary Chester. Remember, rhythm has accents and accents make these things move and form a "pocket", a "groove". Pulse doesn't groove. We need an accent. Clocks keep time but don't groove. Our heartbeat even has an accent, or groove, because we humans are groovy. Have fun.

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