

Step 7: For tempi over 250 bpm, omit the middle triplet whilst keeping everything else we've developed intact to make the figure clearer, and more playable at faster tempi.



Figure 11: Step 7

#### RHYTHMIC TRANSPOSITION

Some time ago I attended a workshop in which Andrew Gander illustrated a method for transposing the rhythmic value of notes in a figure, enabling that figure to be adapted to a variety of musical idioms. In this case, we're recognising that each note in Step 6 has the rhythmic value of a quaver-triplet. We're going to change that value to semiquavers, which will see the 48-note figure play out in three bars of 4/4. To account for the fact that 64 notes are required for four bars of semiquavers, I continued the original pattern of superimposing a 5/8 meter following Steps 1 to 6, going beyond the initial four bars until I had a further 16 notes to add. This offers greater variety than if we were to have simply repeated the first bar. These extensions of Steps 1 to 6 are not shown here due to limitations of space, but if you understand the procedure for developing a rhythm from Steps 1 through 6, you'll be able to understand how I arrived at the content of the fourth bar in Step 8.

Step 8: Transpose the rhythm from Step 6 such that the quaver-triplets now have the rhythmic value of semiquavers. The left-foot hi-hat now plays on all four beats, changing the coordination, and the idiom. This figure sounds great when played at approximately 150 bpm.



Figure 12: Step 8

Step 9: Step 9 takes the same material from Step 8, and changes the rhythmic values to quavers, yielding an 8-bar phrase. The hi-hat has been changed once again to beats 2 and 4, putting the figure into an uptempo jazz idiom. The quavers can swing in tempi up to around 270 bpm, and should straighten out naturally at brighter tempi.

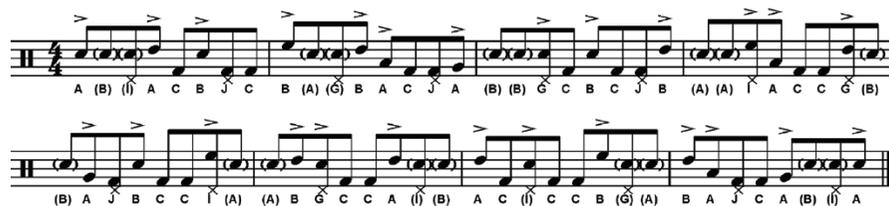


Figure 13: Step 9

#### ALTERNATIVE DISTRIBUTIONS

You don't need a seven-piece, or six-piece drumset to play the figure. You can also distribute the accents using cycles that fit on smaller five-piece, and four-piece configurations such as those shown in Figures 14, 15, and 16. In all cases, one hand cycles around an even number of surfaces, and the other cycles around an odd number. Experiment with combinations that start on a drum other than the snare, that alternate between clockwise and anti-clockwise cycles, and so on.

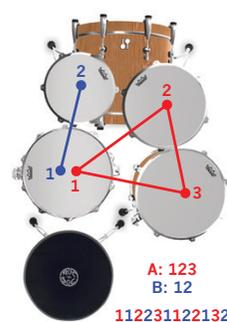


Figure 14: 5-piece A Distribution

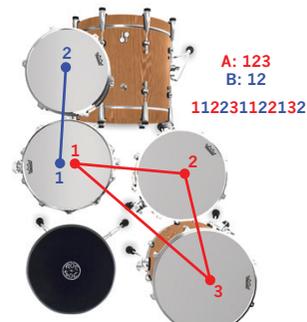


Figure 15: 5-piece B Distribution

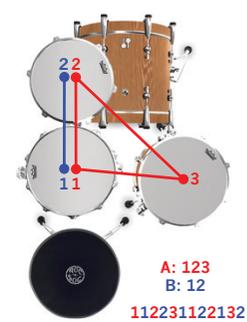


Figure 16: 4-piece Distribution

#### FINAL NOTE

Use these figures as studies to enhance your musical mind, and to expand your skill as a drummer. You can make progress as an improvising drumset soloist by generating many more such rhythms of your own, and putting each rhythm through as many distributions and transpositions as possible. The system I've outlined here is one of many devices you can use to be creative, so be sure to exercise discretion and taste when drawing on such repertoire for improvisation on a gig or recording session. You can also break these figures up, and play one bar of a figure at a time if it sounds right to you. As another variation, you can also alternate between the Step 1 version, and the Step 6 version of the figure in one pass of four bars – you don't always have to play at the Step 6 level. Drummers I've heard who can play this way – Gary Novak, Dave Weckl, Vinnie Colaiuta, and Andrew Gander – exercise great maturity and restraint by usually doing so for only a couple of bars per album or live set. The key is to intersperse this material in line with, and in contrast to, as many other devices as you can.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions about any aspect of what I've described here.

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