

Lesson 26

Odd Time Signatures: Part 2

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Hi and welcome to part 2 of our study on odd time signatures. In this month's issue we are going to take a look at a 5/4 time signature. Before we begin let's just go over the theory side of things for those of you that may have missed the last thrilling instalment. The top number tells us the amount of beats per bar and the bottom number tells us the value of the beats within the bar. So a 5/4 time signature is telling us that we have to play within a framework of 5 quarter notes. Exercises 1 to 5 are based around building a pattern with a straight 1/8th note feel, whilst exercises 6 to 8 are based on Dave Brubeck's "Take Five". Make sure that you count through all of the exercises and don't rush!



Ex 1

We begin with a basic 5/4 structure to get you familiar with counting in 5's. The hi-hats are playing the 5 quarter notes through the bar, the bass drum is on beats 1 and 4 and the snare on beats 3 and 5. Play this until you feel comfortable counting in 5's.



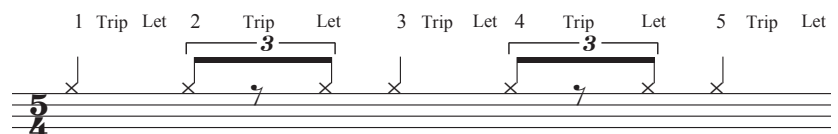
Ex 2

Here we have the same placement of the bass drum and snare drum beats, but the hi-hats are now playing 1/8th notes throughout the bar. Keep Counting!



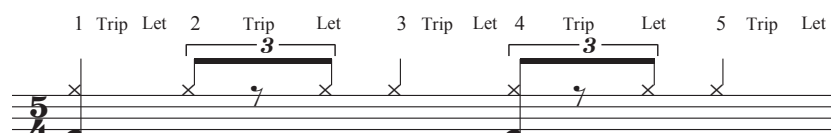
Ex 3

In exercise 3 we add a "ghost" note on the "&" of beat 1 as well as an extra bass drum beat on the "&" of beat 2. By adding these extra beats we create a more interesting groove...



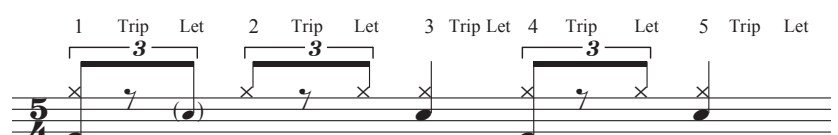
Ex 4

...so let's add some more! Here we have 2 more "ghost" notes on the snare; on beat 2 and on the "&" of beat 5. There is also another bass drum on the "&" of beat 3.



Ex 5

Here we have the same pattern as in exercise 4, but the hi-hats are now playing 1/4 notes. This idea often works better if you are playing at faster tempos.



Ex 6

Exercises 6, 7 and 8 are based on a swing / jazz interpretation of a 5/4 groove. To begin with, let's look at the ride cymbal pattern. Play this slowly, making sure you count the triplets evenly.

Ex 7

We now start to build a groove around the ride cymbal pattern by adding the bass drum on beats 1 and 4.

Ex 8

The next step to building up our groove is to add the snare drum. The snare plays a "ghost" note on the "Let" of beat 1 as this helps the pattern to flow. We then have 2 more snares on beats 4 and 5. Although these beats should be played louder than the "ghost" note, don't overdo it - remember this is jazz!

Well that brings us to a close this month. Until next time, take care and keep counting. Steve.

For more lessons, videos and information, visit www.back2thebeat.co.uk

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