

Lesson 27

Odd Time Signatures: Part 3

Printed in *Drummer Magazine*, November 2008

Hello and welcome to part 3 of our study on odd time signatures. In this issue we are looking at 7/4 time. Exercises 1 to 4 demonstrate how we can take a simple 7/4 structure, then add ghost notes and bass drum parts to create a more technical groove which could be used for anything with a straight 1/8th note feel. In exercise 5 we convert the pattern into a 7/4 Latin groove, and in exercises 6 to 8 we convert the pattern into a jazzy/ swing feel.

Ex 1

Exercise 1 is a basic framework of a 7/4 pattern. The hi-hats play the 7 quarter notes evenly through the bar, with the snare drum playing on beats 3 and 7 and the bass drum on beats 1, 4 and 6. Play this over until you feel comfortable with the placement of the bass and snare drum beats, making sure you count as you play.

Ex 2

In this exercise we add some "ghost" notes on the snare. These are played on the "&" of beat 1, beat 4 and beat 5; it is vital to count the 1/8th notes through the bar (1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 5 & 6 & 7 &) to help place the beats evenly.

Ex 3

To make the pattern a little funkier we have now added extra bass drum beats; these are played on the "&" of beats 2 and 6.

Ex 4

By adding a "ghost" note on the "&" of beat 3 and 7 we now have all of the 1/8th notes in the bar being played. Although this is technically quite difficult to do it helps the pattern to groove.

Ex 5

This is rhythmically the same as exercise 4, but we are playing the ride cymbal instead of the hi-hats. In addition, the snare drum part has been spread around the kit to give more of a Latin sound to the groove. The snare is played as a cross stick on the "&" of beat 1 and the "3 &". It then moves to the high tom on the "&" of beat 4, plays a "ghost" note on the "&" of beat 5 and plays the "7 &" on the floor tom.

Ex 6

Once again this is the same pattern as exercise 4, but here we are counting triplets to give us a jazzy/swing R&B feel. Although it might seem awkward, it is important to count the triplets when you practice; start as slowly as is necessary for you to be able to count as you play.

Ex 7

In this exercise we just add 2 more "ghost" notes on the "Trip" of beats 1 and 4 to complete the triplets.

Ex 8

Finally, we replace the "ghost" notes on the "Let" of beats 3 and 5 with the bass drum as an alternative bass line to exercise 7.

For more exercises check out my site www.back2thebeat.co.uk and if you have any questions or comments please contact me at info@back2thebeat.co.uk Till next time, take care, Steve.

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Typeset by Chris Rowe