

APPLYING THE THIRD DIMENSION: DYNAMICS

Now that we have fully explored the different eighth- and sixteenth-note components and discovered how to link them together to make different grooves, we can look at how to apply accents and ghost notes within these components to add a new dimension to our groove playing.

We have already been using accents and ghost notes on the hi-hat with the Moeller pumping motion since chapter 1. This adds forward movement to the groove, and takes our groove playing to a higher level than if we simply played all the hi-hat notes at the same volume.

 **VIDEO EX. 6** It is important to remember that the accents and ghost notes we have been applying on the hi-hat are generated as a result of a specific set of movements linked together to make one relaxed, consistent motion, and not by differences in muscular power applied to the individual notes (Video Ex. 6 - Moeller Pumping Motion).

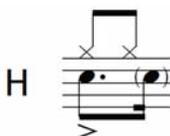
To further develop the depth of our groove, we can apply the same motions to the snare drum notes within the different components. This will require a greater level of independence. Each hand will need to apply the pull-out and control-stroke techniques at different moments within a component, while maintaining consistent motion.

Let's look at some exercises to help us develop this dynamic independence using some of the components we have been working on in chapters 1 and 2.

INFORMAL PULL-OUTS

In this component, the snare drum plays a dotted eighth-note accent followed by a sixteenth-note ghost note, while the hi-hat continues to play the Moeller pumping motion. This component features the informal pull-out: the ghost note is played as the hand moves upwards to prepare for the Moeller whipping motion that creates the accent (Video Ex. 12).

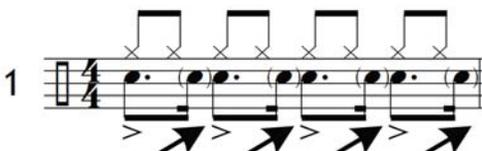
VIDEO EX. 12



If we repeat this component, we can see how one pull-out creates fluid motion—rather than thinking of this as two separate notes played at two different volumes.

In the example below, the arrow indicates the upward movement of the hand before it whips back down again to play the accented note. The ghost note is merely the consequence of a stick drop during this upward movement. It is not a note that is played, but it is simply a note that “happens.”

VIDEO EX. 13



DEVELOPING THE PULL-OUT MOTION IN OUR COMPONENTS

Here are some exercises to develop the pull-out within different components:

The exercises are as follows:

- Exercise 1 (I):** Treble clef, 4/4 time. Four measures of quarter notes with accents (>) and slurs. Rhythmic pattern: quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter.
- Exercise 2 (H):** Bass clef, 4/4 time. Four measures of quarter notes with accents (>) and slurs. Rhythmic pattern: quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter.
- Exercise 3 (G):** Treble clef, 4/4 time. Four measures of quarter notes with accents (>) and slurs. Rhythmic pattern: quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter.
- Exercise 4 (F):** Bass clef, 4/4 time. Four measures of quarter notes with accents (>) and slurs. Rhythmic pattern: quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter.
- Exercise 5 (J):** Treble clef, 4/4 time. Four measures of quarter notes with accents (>) and slurs. Rhythmic pattern: quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter.
- Exercise 6 (J):** Bass clef, 4/4 time. Four measures of quarter notes with accents (>) and slurs. Rhythmic pattern: quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter.

You will need to work on these components slowly to ensure that you are using the correct movements and that you are relaxed. Don't forget, if you have any tension or hesitation that disturbs the fluid motion in these components, it will be heard in your playing. Remember: relaxed motion creates relaxed sound.

ADDING THE BASS DRUM

The components A6, A7, A8 and A9 below feature the same notes on the snare drum as on the previous page. Now we add the bass drum on the remaining two sixteenth notes, which requires greater independence.

The image displays four musical exercises, labeled A7, A6, A9, and A8, arranged in a 2x2 grid. Each exercise is presented on a single staff in 4/4 time. The snare drum part is represented by a series of eighth notes, with the first two notes of each eighth note pair beamed together. The bass drum part is represented by eighth notes that occur on the two sixteenth notes of each eighth note pair. The exercises are numbered 1, 2, 3, and 4 respectively. Exercise A7 shows a snare drum pattern of eighth notes with bass drum on the remaining two sixteenth notes. Exercise A6 shows a snare drum pattern of eighth notes with bass drum on the remaining two sixteenth notes. Exercise A9 shows a snare drum pattern of eighth notes with bass drum on the remaining two sixteenth notes. Exercise A8 shows a snare drum pattern of eighth notes with bass drum on the remaining two sixteenth notes. Each exercise includes a snare drum part and a bass drum part, with arrows indicating the direction of the bass drum strokes.

It is important to make sure the addition of the bass drum in the above components is not a distraction from correctly executing the pull-out motion that will produce the desired dynamics on the snare drum. If you are to make your grooves work, the movement needs to remain completely independent of any influence from your other limbs. Practice the exercises until the required independence is achieved and your motions are fluid and relaxed.

INFORMAL CONTROL STROKES

Now let's look at some exercises to help us develop the informal control stroke.

In this component, the snare drum plays a sixteenth-note accent followed by a dotted-eighth ghost note and the hi-hat continues to play the Moeller pumping motion. This component features the informal control stroke. The accented note is played with the Moeller whipping motion. The rebound is then controlled and the stick simply drops from its low position to play the ghost note (Video Ex. 14).

VIDEO EX. 14



Let's repeat this component so we can see how using the informal control stroke creates fluid motion, rather than thinking of this as two separate notes played at two different volumes.

The dot indicates that the ghost note is simply played as a light tap movement from the low position after the accented note has been controlled.

VIDEO EX. 15



Practice this exercise until you are completely comfortable and relaxed. To execute the ghost note at the correct volume, you need to stop the stick from bouncing back up too high (which would make your following ghost note too loud). You will do this by gently blocking the stick's rebound. Don't fall into the trap of squeezing the stick to stop it from bouncing back up. This will create tension that will be heard in your groove playing.

DEVELOPING THE INFORMAL CONTROL-STROKE MOTION IN COMPONENTS

Here are some exercises to develop the informal control stroke within different components:

1 **F**

2 **G**

VIDEO EX. 16



3 **H**

4 **I**

Once again, you will need to work on these components slowly to ensure you are using the correct movements and that you are relaxed. The coordination and independence required for these components can be quite challenging at first. However, just as in the previous exercises, it is simply a question of programming your muscle memory until the movements become second nature. You will need to practice the movements until this has been achieved. It may take some time, but only then will your grooves sound natural. Again, if you have any hesitation or awkwardness present in the motions, this will be heard in your overall groove playing. Don't accept anything less than fluid, relaxed, and consistent motion.

ADDING THE BASS DRUM

The components A6, A7, A8 and A9 below feature the same notes on the snare drum as on the previous page. Once again, we add the bass drum on the remaining two sixteenth notes, which will require greater independence.

The image displays four musical exercises, labeled A6, A7, A8, and A9, arranged in a 2x2 grid. Each exercise is presented on a single staff in 4/4 time, with a snare drum part on the top line and a bass drum part on the bottom line. The snare drum part for all exercises is a continuous eighth-note pattern: (.) x x x x x x x x. The bass drum part consists of eighth notes on the second and fourth beats of each measure. Exercise A8 (top left) shows snare notes on all four beats and bass notes on the second and fourth beats. Exercise A9 (top right) shows snare notes on all four beats and bass notes on the second and fourth beats. Exercise A6 (bottom left) shows snare notes on all four beats and bass notes on the second and fourth beats. Exercise A7 (bottom right) shows snare notes on all four beats and bass notes on the second and fourth beats.

Here again, it is important to make sure the addition of the bass drum in the above components does not distract you from correctly executing the control-stroke motion. The movement needs to be executed independently of any influence from your other limbs. Practice the exercises until the required independence is achieved and your motions are fluid and relaxed.

DEVELOPING DYNAMICS IN THE GROOVE

Let's look at putting components together with different dynamics to create movement within a groove.

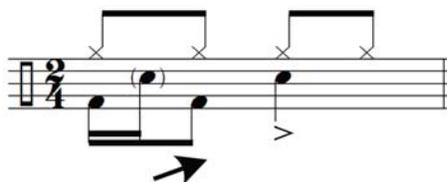
In a modern funk groove, we would expect to find well-placed underlying ghost notes behind a strong accented backbeat. The idea is that the ghost notes provide forward movement, while the accented backbeat defines the groove.

Let's put two components together to see how we can implement this idea.

Here are the two components we will use:



Let's imagine that component B7 will feature a ghost note, and component b will feature an accent which will be our backbeat. When we put them together, as in the following example, we can see how we apply the informal pull-out to produce the different dynamics between the two notes with a completely fluid and relaxed movement:



The ghost note is generated as a result of the stick dropping lightly from a low position. During the stick drop, the hand moves upwards to prepare for the whipping motion needed to create the accent in the second component. This is the informal pull-out motion. Even though there is a note played on the bass drum in between the ghost note and accent, the movement used is still the same as in the previous exercises on developing the informal pull-out.

Practice this movement, while maintaining the pumping motion on the hi-hat, until you feel comfortable and relaxed.

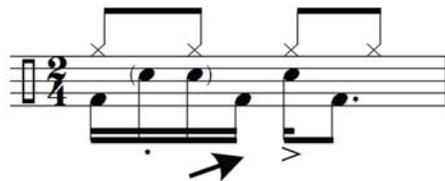
Now let's look at putting two other components together to create a two-beat figure, this time with two ghost notes and an accented backbeat.

Here are the two different components we will use:



Component A9 features two ghost notes, and component F3 features an accent which will be the backbeat. When we put them together, as in the following example, we will use a tap stroke followed by the informal pull-out to produce the different dynamics required.

VIDEO EX. 17



The two ghost notes should sound at the same volume, both as a result of the stick dropping lightly from a low position. However, during the stick drop on the second ghost note, the hand moves upwards to prepare for the whipping motion needed to create the accent on the second component. This is the informal pull-out motion.

Practice this movement while maintaining the pumping motion on the hi-hat until you feel comfortable and relaxed.

DEVELOPING THE INFORMAL PULL-OUT MOTION IN GROOVE PLAYING

Here are some examples of grooves using different components to develop the informal pull-out to manage ghost notes that precede accents.

In the following exercises you will notice that we have not used an arrow to indicate where an upstroke will be used, therefore you must figure out which motions are needed to create the required dynamics. Don't forget, the ghost notes will always be played as tap strokes, unless they precede an accent (in which case you will use an upstroke to prepare for the following accented note). You will need to work on this until the informal pull-out motions become automatic.

1	<p>D7 i G3 I3</p>	2	<p>D7 A14 E6 i</p>
3	<p>A9 A14 J3 F3</p>	4	<p>D2 H4 G3 I3</p>
5	<p>D5 J4 E4 F3</p>	6	<p>g A6 E5 B6</p>
7	<p>D5 A3 E4 A3</p>	8	<p>C3 J4 E3 E3</p>

VIDEO EX. 18



Work on these grooves until you are sure all your motions are consistent. If you have difficulties with any part of a groove, simply go back and study the movement required in the particular component. Once you have mastered the motion required, go back to the groove and study how to link the components together. This will enable you to eliminate any sign of tension in your groove.