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## Introduction

The purpose of this book is to give you the necessary tools to develop an authentic musical language on the drum set based on melodic content. The exercises and concepts provided here are designed to inspire creativity and challenge you to reach new levels of awareness and musical ability. Focusing on the melodic themes and phrases keeps the exercises rooted in a musical context rather than focusing only on independence or technical exercises. Using themes and melodies to develop strategies for comping and soloing helps to connect to the phrasing, form, and foundation of the music.

## How To Use This Book

This book will help you develop your own concepts for *what* to play while playing time and soloing. The techniques introduced in Chapter 3 will give you the keys to create your own improvisations over the context of a phrase, form, tune, or style. Any one of the phrases in Chapter 4 can be developed using the concepts in Chapter 3. Furthermore, any of the phrases or melodies in the book can be applied to the comping steps and/or improvisation steps laid out in Chapters 1 and 2.

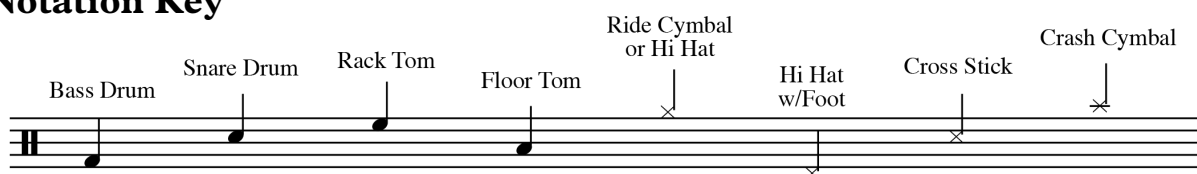
Pick one tune a week from the “Categorized Jazz Standards” list found in Chapter 6. Find five recordings of that tune (possibly from the “Recommended Listening” list) and learn how to sing the melody. Once you can sing the melody and have identified the form, you can create your own exercises based off of that melody. You can take a 1- or 2-bar theme from that melody and play it using the concepts in Chapter 3, or you can take the whole melody through the comping and improvisation steps in Chapters 1 and 2. Pretty soon, you will start to build up a repertoire of material that is rooted in the tradition through listening, but is innovative and fresh through your own improvisational approach. This is a tried and true way to develop authentic jazz language, in a realistic musical context, and will have you playing musical time and solos with thoughtful phrasing over the form relatively quickly.

\* All of the eighth notes in this book should be played with a triplet “swing” time-feel unless otherwise noted. This is especially important in exercises with a ride cymbal beat, because the ride beat defines the swing feel for the whole band.

## Videos, Recordings, and Play-alongs

Download links are available for recordings of each of the tunes presented in Chapter 5. These recordings are available as performance examples with drums, as well as play-alongs with the drums removed. There are also video performances of each of the tunes with the drums, so you can see how I approach playing this music. These are all available at [www.waynesalzmänn.com](http://www.waynesalzmänn.com).

## Notation Key



# Chapter 1

# Developing Melodic Comping Language

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This chapter breaks down the five steps to developing a melodic approach to playing jazz time. These steps are presented using 4-bar and 8-bar phrases, and a 12-bar blues from my original tunes located in Chapter 5. Once you have worked through the written exercises using the provided phrases, you can choose any of the phrases in Chapter 4 and take them through the five comping steps. Once you feel comfortable with those phrases, you can start to take full melodies through the five steps by picking tunes in the “Categorized Jazz Standards” list found in Chapter 6.

“Spacious Comping in 4-bar Phrases,” “Comping Variations on a Theme,” and “Call and Response Phrases” are also found in this chapter. These are designed as exercises to get you thinking about things other than licks, and help you to not overplay in certain circumstances. Any of the themes found in Chapter 4 can be used as the main theme in the “Comping Variations on a Theme” exercise.

Video and audio recordings of my band performing the tunes used in this chapter can be found at [www.waynesalzmänn.com](http://www.waynesalzmänn.com).

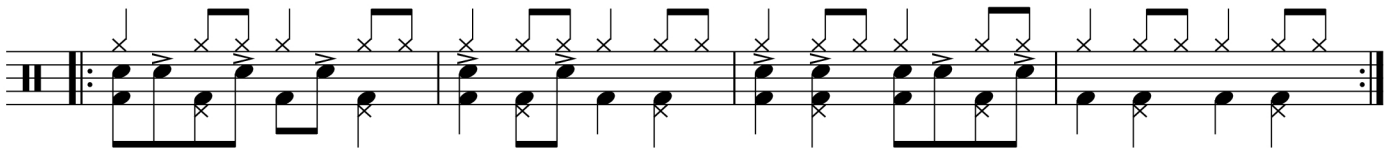
# Five Comping Steps in 4-Bar Phrases

## (First 4 bars of "Between the Beats")

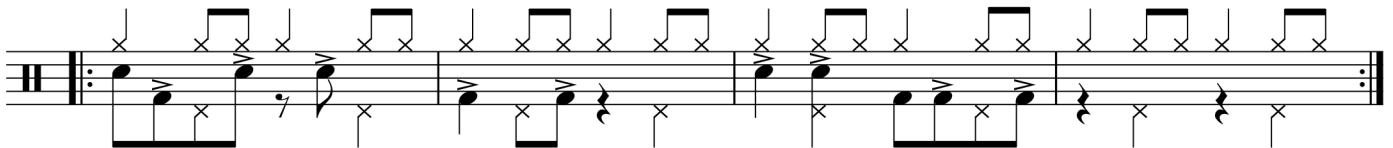
**Step One: Sing** - Listen to the included recording of this tune, and learn how to sing the melody.



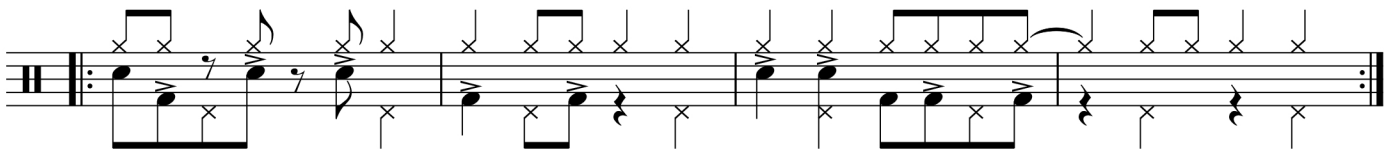
**Step Two: Snare Drum** - While playing time with the ride cymbal, hi hat, and *feathering* the bass drum, play the melody on the snare drum with the left hand.



**Step Three: Two Voices** - While playing time with the ride cymbal and hi hat, play the melody with the snare drum and bass drum. Pay close attention to the contour of the melody and the length of the notes.



**Step Four: Ride Cymbal** - While playing 2 & 4 on the hi hat, play the melody on the ride cymbal with the right hand. Use the snare drum and bass drum to "support" the ride cymbal melody. If there is space or long notes in the melody, play quarter notes in the space to keep continuous time with the cymbal.



**Step Five: Space** - While playing time with the ride cymbal and hi hat, use the bass drum and snare drum to comp in the spaces between the melody notes.

