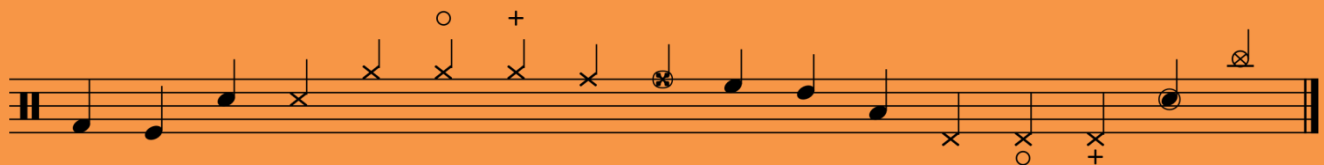


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NOTATION KEY

right	snare		closed	ride		foot	foot	hi-hat	china
kick	drum	hi-hat	hi-hat	bell	2nd tom	hi-hat	closed	cymbal	
	left	side	opened	ride	1st tom	floor	foot	hi-hat	ghost
	kick	stick	hi-hat			tom	splash	note	



FOREWORD

Back in 1983 while I was writing my book *Double Bass Drumming*, I took on a handful of students to teach the material and see how they reacted. One of those students was a 15-year-old kid from Commack, Long Island named John Macaluso. Those lessons started a lifelong friendship. I watched John grow as a musician over the years and saw him play with TNT and Yngwie Malmsteen, among others. Listening to his innovative drumming on the many albums he's played on has been inspiring. I've also seen John's drum clinics, which are informative and entertaining.

What impresses me about John's drumming is his creativity, power, and precision. He nails grooves with a strong rock backbeat, yet rarely relies on a simple ride pattern. Much of this is due to his use of linear drumming, which is the path he takes us down in this book. I like John's approach to linear drumming as he gives you the essence of a groove loud and clear, then decorates it with ghost notes in linear fashion so the groove becomes way more interesting—yet the impact of the beat remains the same. In this book, John takes us through standard rock beats and converts them to linear. He also takes popular contemporary rock grooves and gives them a linear interpretation. Thanks to the eBook format, you can see John play this material in the imbedded videos.

So now John and I have come full circle as I've been playing through *Linear Rock Drumming* as it's being written. I love the sound and challenge of playing linear and feel that these exercises have helped my balance and coordination. The concepts you'll develop by practicing this material will not only inspire new grooves but will also creep their way into your fills and solos. Dive in and have fun!

– Joe Franco



INTRODUCTION TO LINEAR

Balance & Mechanics

The year is 1986, Hollywood, California. Besides the 1960s in San Francisco, there has never really been a time when musicians, artists, actors, actresses and people in the entertainment field flocked to one specific place in the world all at the same time. In 1986 Hollywood, California was THAT PLACE. There were clubs to play everywhere, record companies signing new bands constantly, tours, gigs and opportunities that could change a person or band's life in seconds. That was the pull that drove everyone there from every corner of the globe. It was an exciting time, a historic time—but also a chaotic time. It was not for the part-timers, lazy ones or (to say it straight out) for the weak at heart. You were in it or you were not! It was a time for hard work to get a piece of the action. In people's minds, there was no time to waste, and competition was FIERCE!!! To be honest, also not so friendly. By this point, a lot of the classic bands that we know today had already made it; bands such as Van Halen, Motley Crue, and Ratt, were in the history books. It seemed there were new bands popping up every week, and that became a problem because of simple supply and demand. When a band hit, which seemed like one out of a billion others, the record companies were looking for a "sure thing": a band that sounded, looked and played like THEM. I personally did my time playing on the Sunset Strip with many different groups and I had a blast. However, when the time had come that I had to twirl my sticks to get the gig and play the same 4/4 beat that last week's drummer did, I sat back and asked myself, "Is this what you worked all those years for? Is this what you want?" The answer was NO! (By the way, I never thought twirling the sticks sounded good.) I wanted to do something different, something that stuck out like my drumming heroes had done years before: Joe Franco, Terry Bozzio, Keith Moon and Phil Collins. That wasn't so easy to do because now there were standards out there in sunny California. For rock musicians, there were basically two paths to go by (and I specify rock because that was what was happening at the time). Sure, there were other things happening, like electric jazz fusion and Latin jazz, but those bands were more like one in a billion to have success out there. Rock bands were in focus, and they were the bands that were trying to be signed and be the NEXT ONE—to coin a phrase, MAKE IT. The other path to go down musically was to play with the "shredders." These were technical guitarists making solo albums and bands with great guitarists playing instrumental music. It might seem strange in today's world, but instrumental albums were huge and selling big. Thousands of guitarists from all over the world were striving to be the NEXT GUY or GIRL.

The shredders were experimenting, and they had fewer rules to go by. Above all, they loved drummers that were doing the same thing as them: experimenting. They loved drummers that really played and had something to say with their sound. Chops groove, and freedom were in. So I went down that path, and I am glad I did. At the age of 19, I started to record a lot of albums and play gigs with a number of really talented guitarists. It was 1987 and I had just graduated from Musicians Institute. Back in New York, in eleventh grade, I had doubled up and went to day school and night school to graduate early and go rock. That was the plan, and that's what I've done. P.I.T. (Percussion Institute of Technology/Musicians Institute) was an intense one-year school. At graduation, the goal was the same. It was, "Now go out, rock and play what you have learned." I loved it. There is no greater school than the School of Real Life. I was from New York and moved to Los Angeles in 1986, and speaking of real life, I was amazed that in my own country, only 3,500 miles from home, it was ANOTHER WORLD. It was a completely different everything, good and bad, and I wouldn't have had it any other way. It was all preparation for what was about to come. The shredders welcomed expression, they wanted drummers who wanted to say something on the drum kit. There were great drummers from all over the world in that city and they were ALL going for the same gigs as YOU! To stick out, besides having "COOL HAIR," you needed something different, something that had a strong foundation in basic rock drumming to fit the songs but also have super chops and if possible, a drummer with a particular sound and signature in their playing. The signature of linear drumming was one of my tools.

Let's jump back a little, to New York, 1979. On August 5th, 1979, I took my first drum lesson. I was very lucky to have a great first drum teacher by the name of Jim Holland. I studied with Jim for 6 years. He was the first drummer I had ever seen playing linear. I remember instantly being drawn to the complexity of its sound, but at the same time being mystified by how "less" notes made it sound like "more." In New York in 1979, disco was big, of

LINEAR ROCK DRUMMING

course, so technically linear drumming was everywhere with the disco off beat (which is bass, hi-hat, snare, hi-hat, bass, hi-hat, snare, hi-hat). Jim was a brilliant teacher because he told me right away, "If you want to play drums for a living, learn it all: all styles of music, like them or not. You never know when you might need to use them." It's so true, and that's what I did, I learned as much as I could and put it away until I needed it. The second linear beat I learned was a reggae beat on a Bob Marley song. Even way back then I felt comfortable with the linear style.

Another reason Jim was such a great teacher was because the lessons were not only learning stuff that he had planned for you but also teaching you things that you wanted to learn. This made lessons exciting to go to. I do the same with my students today and it just works. Jim would devote some time in every lesson for your questions and show you songs you wanted to learn and/or beats, fills etc. I have been a huge Rush fan since I started playing drums. One day I brought in the Rush Hemispheres album because there was a beat in the song "La Villa Stangiato" that I wanted to learn. In the song (at 3:34 to 4:30) Neil Peart played an interesting groove that was so completely different from any beat I had ever heard at that time. This beat changed drumming for me, and I remember learning it like it was yesterday. From that lesson on, I gravitated to this style of drumming where the groove was always there, but something else was in there or on top, unobtrusively thrown in like an added spice that made a basic beat even more tasty. Thank you, Jim, for your years of teaching. I was very lucky to have grown up in Long Island, New York because it was a haven for drummers. There were drum clinics happening all around with the greats, such as Steve Gadd, Buddy Rich, Carmine Appice, Joe Franco, David Garibaldi, Ginger Baker, Nicko McBrain and many more. Oh, and we had basements to practice in, and that is super important for any drummer!!! For those who do not know, there are no basements in Manhattan apartments because they are APARTMENTS. Back to Cali.

It was at a drum clinic in 1986 where I saw linear drumming being used in a way that I had never seen before. This is where it changed my drumming and, in turn, my life. This was an entirely different level. One of my favorite drummers and biggest influences is Terry Bozzio. My big four favorites in order are Joe Franco, Terry Bozzio, Keith Moon and Phil Collins. The drum clinic was Terry Bozzio and opening was a guy named Sonny Emory. Sonny came out and just ripped it up with speed, finesse, taste, power, chops, ideas. It was amazing! He did a section of the clinic on linear drumming and had a handout sheet with five examples on it. The thing that was different was they were open-style, with the left hand on the hi-hat and the right hand going all over the kit, hitting toms, cymbals, etc. The whole time, keeping a serious groove while making music on the drums. It was beautiful. I HONESTLY JUST WANTED TO GO HOME—TO PRACTICE!!! I wanted to try all the ideas that I just got from watching his brilliant performance. From that day on, I dove even deeper into linear drumming, and it is a big part of my sound and style today. Thanks for the influence, Sonny Emory!

Let's all dive into this book together. Here we go.

LINEAR DRUMMING = ALL separate notes. Nothing hits together. Now each part of your drum set has its own voice. The subtitle of the book tells the whole story, UNITING each SEPARATE voice both rhythmically and tonally to make interesting and musical drumbeats. You can have up to four rhythms playing at once, all intertwined, working together in one beat. Each of your four separate limbs can play its own melody on the drum set. That union of rhythm and sound can be massive! Taking simple drum beats you have heard for decades and converting them to linear by filling in the holes between the main familiar beats can give endless possibilities. Melody, counter-rhythm and drum set orchestration and rolling feel are some of linear's advantages. Another advantage of using linear is that no matter where or what you play between the main drumbeat, "THE BEAT REMAINS THE SAME" under it all. Musically, that is incredibly important when working with bands, songwriters and musicians. You can use linear to play between a main beat and create as far as your mind takes you without ever stepping on the groove, song or pattern—ONLY ENHANCING IT. The band will love you for that! It's "DRUM STUFF" without necessarily sounding like "DRUM STUFF." Linear can also work to change the feel and vibe of a beat, you are in control of that. Filling in all the holes between kick and snare rhythms can make it sound like there are three or more drummers playing tightly together at once. There is a constant flow of notes that gives grooves a special feel and sound. Linear can make beats sound complex because there is a lot going on, but they are always "LISTENER FRIENDLY," which is important because that is a drummer's job: to move the audience, not confuse them. You will learn it all in this book with these 23 systems.

CHAPTER #1: You can look at these examples in two different ways and use whatever is most comfortable for you. One way is to look at the beats as drumbeats with kick, snare and hi-hat, cymbals and/or toms fill in the holes between them. A second way is to look at them as three separate rhythms playing at one time (four-way linear is in the upcoming chapters). These first examples are to get you familiar with playing beats with all separate notes. It might seem strange at first because there are no notes that land together to lean on. In normal drumbeats, you can lock into 2 & 4 with a snare and hi-hat together or lean into

LINEAR ROCK DRUMMING

the "1" of a beat with a kick and hi-hat. Linear is like walking a tightrope without a net. BALANCE is the secret to linear drumming! Play through each example at a medium tempo until you feel comfortable and balanced. You will start to feel what notes to lean on the more you play. The examples are fairly simple here, starting with the snare playing on 2 & 4 and the bass drum shifting places, moving one sixteenth note ahead with every example. IMPORTANT: To satisfy THE GODS OF LINEAR (THEY are always watching), play EVERY note separately. They allow you ONE exception: After you play an open hi-hat, the hi-hat pedal is allowed to land together with the bass drum. Both feet can land together. That is the one rule the LINEAR GODS will allow you.

The circled arrows are video icons. By clicking on them you will see a demonstration of the example in two different tempos.

DRUM SOLO Linear & Non-Linear

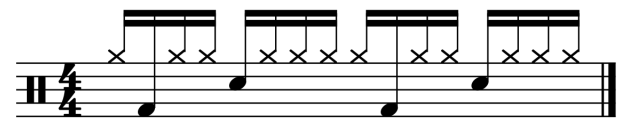
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2)

R F R R L R R R R F R R L R R R



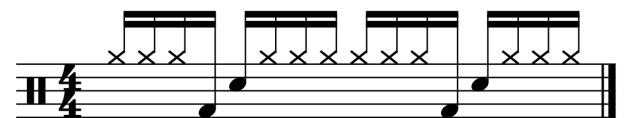
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R R F R L R R R R R F R L R R R



4)

R R R F L R R R R R R F L R R R



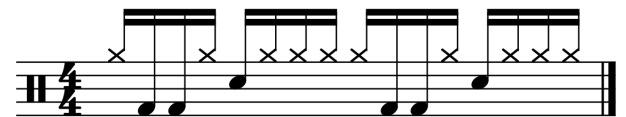
 5)

F F R R L R R R F F R R L R R R



6)

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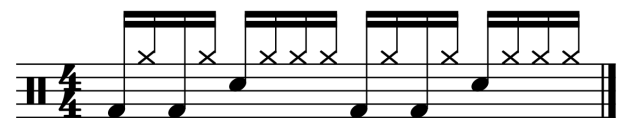
7)

R R F F L R R R R R F F L R R R



8)

F R F R L R R R F R F R L R R R



9)

R F R F L R R R R F R F L R R R



 10)

F R R F L R R R F R R F L R R R



Mix different patterns from this page to create different grooves

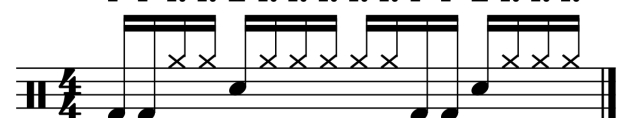
Study A)

F R R F L R R R F R F L R R R



Study B)

F F R R L R R R R R F F L R R R



ROCK BEATS GONE LINEAR

The Beat Remains The Same

Congratulations! You completed Chapter #1. Now that you understand the mechanics of playing beats with the linear separate note rule, it's time to give them some FEEL. The secret to linear drumming is BALANCE. When playing a basic beat on the kit, there are three main components: bass drum, snare and hi-hat. In most common beats, the hi-hat and bass drum hit together on 1 and the snare and hi-hat play together on 2 & 4. These areas of a beat can act as a crutch to lean on and help the body relax mentally and physically to catch a flow. That flow, when repeated consistently in time is a GROOVE. In linear drumming, those areas don't exist because nothing hits together. The solution is a focus note to lean on that repeats in the same spot every time. This is called a PRIME NOTE. Every drummer is different, so play the beats slowly and find that note that feels right to you to keep you grounded and lock into it. The PRIME NOTE is the ANCHOR of a linear beat! That one important note is a way to achieve balance at any tempo and play freely.

This chapter uses basic rock beats and some very famous ones to start you on the linear journey. Example #1 is a beat that you have heard on hundreds of songs in all styles of music, it's the infamous BOOM, BAP, BOOM/BOOM, BAP beat. We want to respect that rhythm and keep it the same because it has been proven to work on hit songs for decades. One of the key purposes of linear is to ENHANCE a beat or DECORATE it without disturbing it or complicating the original figure. That happens when the notes between bass and snare play different sound sources, like the hi-hat, cymbals, bells, toms, percussion instruments or anything you choose. That's where the magic happens: between the main beats. With linear, an average drumbeat can be taken to a whole new level rhythmically as well as sonically.

Most rock and pop music beats have an eighth-note pulse on top (with the hi-hat playing 1+2+3+4+), snare on 2 & 4, and the bass drum varies to fit the song. Linear beats sound best when they are in sixteenth-note form. One reason is that there are more notes to fill in the holes. Here, more is more. More notes give you more options for creativity on the drum set. They also help the beat have a real relentless rolling groove that works great in music. There are multiple advantages that will be shown throughout the book. These basic rock beats were converted into sixteenth-note form with the hi-hat filling in the holes, playing between the bass drum and snare. They still sound like authentic rock beats, but now the hi-hat hand can open up a whole new universe of things to do all over the kit.

No matter what is played on top of these popular rock beats, THE BEAT REMAINS THE SAME. That is the BATTLE CRY of this book! We are creating usable, musical, original drumbeats. No matter how crazy they are technically, melodically, or rhythmically, they are still "Listener Friendly." Your band and your audience will love you because you are still playing beats that they can relate to.