

Jazz Time Basics

These three videos were made with the beginner jazz drummer in mind and are meant to serve as a starting point. The first feel we'll tackle is a simple but very important feel to jazz, the Swing "4" Feel. This time feel revolves around a walking bass line in quarter notes in 4-4 time, which the drummer can support very effectively by simply playing quarter notes on the ride cymbal.

Ride Cymbal

1 2 3 4

All cymbal strokes should be played at the same volume, striking with the tip of the stick in the middle area of the cymbal's bow, not too close to either the bell or the cymbal's edge.

Now we'll add the hi-hat, played with the foot pedal on beats 2 and 4:

Ride Cymbal

Hi-Hat (foot)

1 2 3 4

Adding the snare drum on beats 2+4. Note the snare "back beat" pattern is used sparingly in this style.

R.C.

Snare Drum

H.H.

1 2 3 4

Adding bass drum (played lightly in quarter notes) and snare drum cross-stick on beat 4.

R.C.

S.D. (Cross Stick)

Bass Drum

H.H.

1 2 3 4

The Jazz Ride as it's often written (BUT NOT how it's usually played)

The Jazz Ride as it's usually played with skip beats on the third triplet of beats 2 and 4. The triplet subdivision is essential to the swing feel. Practise slowly with a metronome at 50 BPM.

R.C.

Subdivision:

Count: 1 trip let 2 trip let 3 trip let 4 trip let

Ride cymbal quarter notes with the triplet subdivision shown below for reference.

Subdivision: 1 trip let 2 trip let 3 trip let 4 trip let

Ride Beat with hi-hat on beats 2 and 4

"2" Feel on the hi hat o = slightly open + = closed

Once these basics are mastered the following off-beat patterns will expand your vocabulary while introducing some basic 4 limb independence.

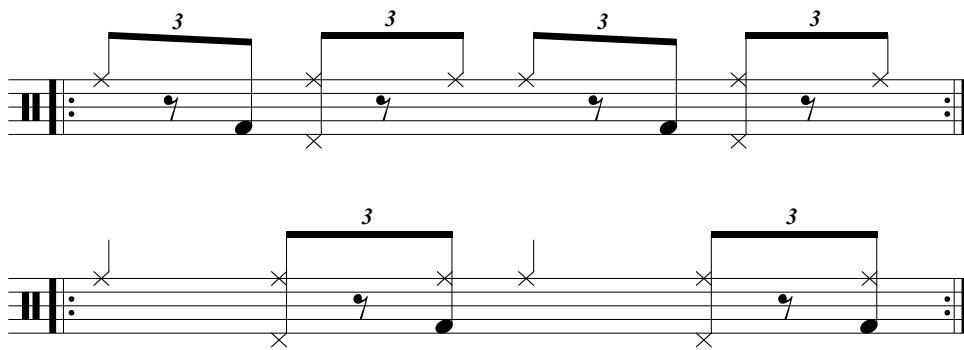
Adding bass drum in quarter notes:

Snare with skip beats: (third beats of triplets of beats 2 and 4)

Adding bass drum in quarter notes:

Bass drum off-beats:

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Some recommended texts for further study:

Advanced Techniques for the Modern Drummer by Jim Chapin

The Art of Bop Drumming by John Riley

Syncopation by Ted Reed