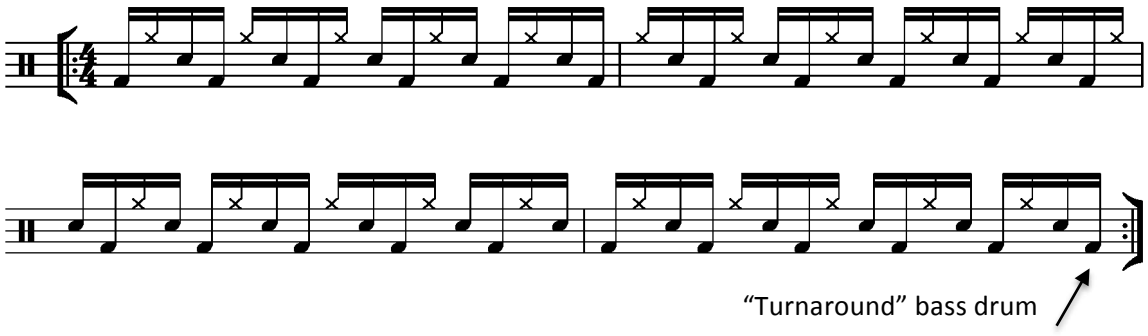
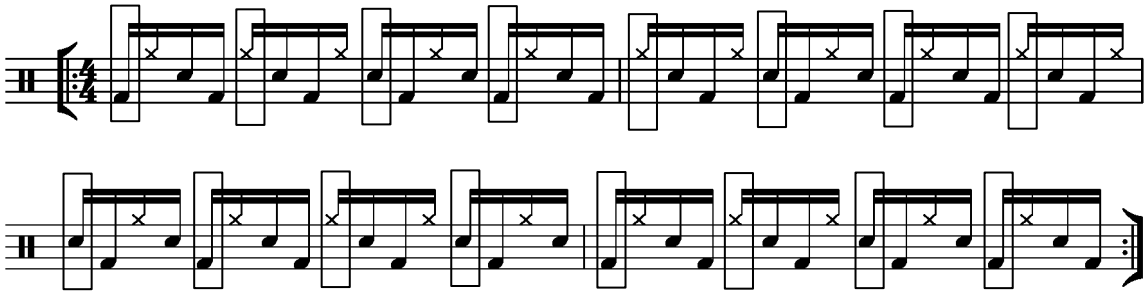
Basic Linear Training Exercise

The following exercises are designed to help you feel a repeated linear pattern of three sixteenth notes that travel over the bar. By doing this exercise you will be able to feel syncopated linear patterns in all possible sixteenth note subdivisions.

Start by playing the following four-bar pattern between the hi-hat, snare drum and bass drum. Play all notes at a mezzo-forte dynamic, avoiding accents any notes. Take notice of the "turnaround" bass drum double between the last bar of the pattern (the "ah" of beat 4) and the downbeat of bar 1. *You must subdivide sixteenth notes verbally (out loud) while playing this pattern.* Start at 60 bpm.

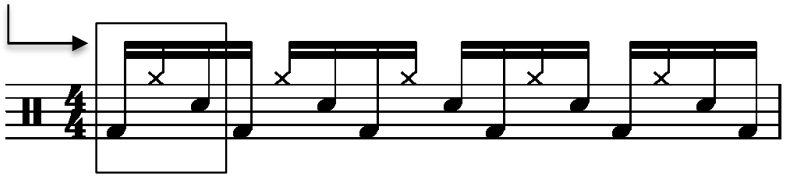


Next, take notice of what voice (hi-hat, snare drum or bass drum) lands on each downbeat. Switch your counting from sixteenth note subdivision to quarter note subdivision *(count out loud on every downbeat: "1-2-3-4").*

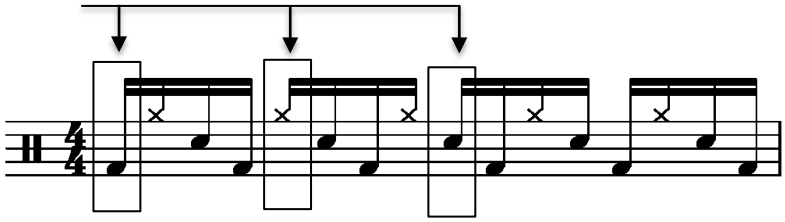


During this exercise try and focus on “feeling” the sixteenth note template and avoid “hearing” the pattern. Also, notice that the downbeat voices mimic the actual sixteenth note pattern as follows:

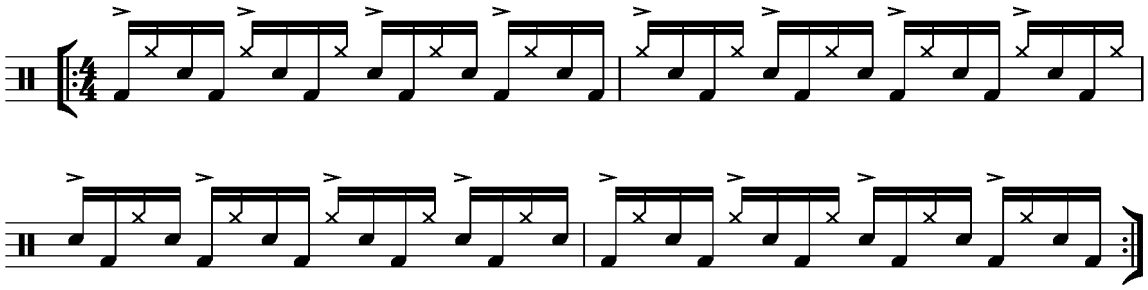
Repeated sixteenth note pattern (bass drum, hi-hat, snare drum)



Repeated downbeat pattern (bass drum, hi-hat, snare drum)

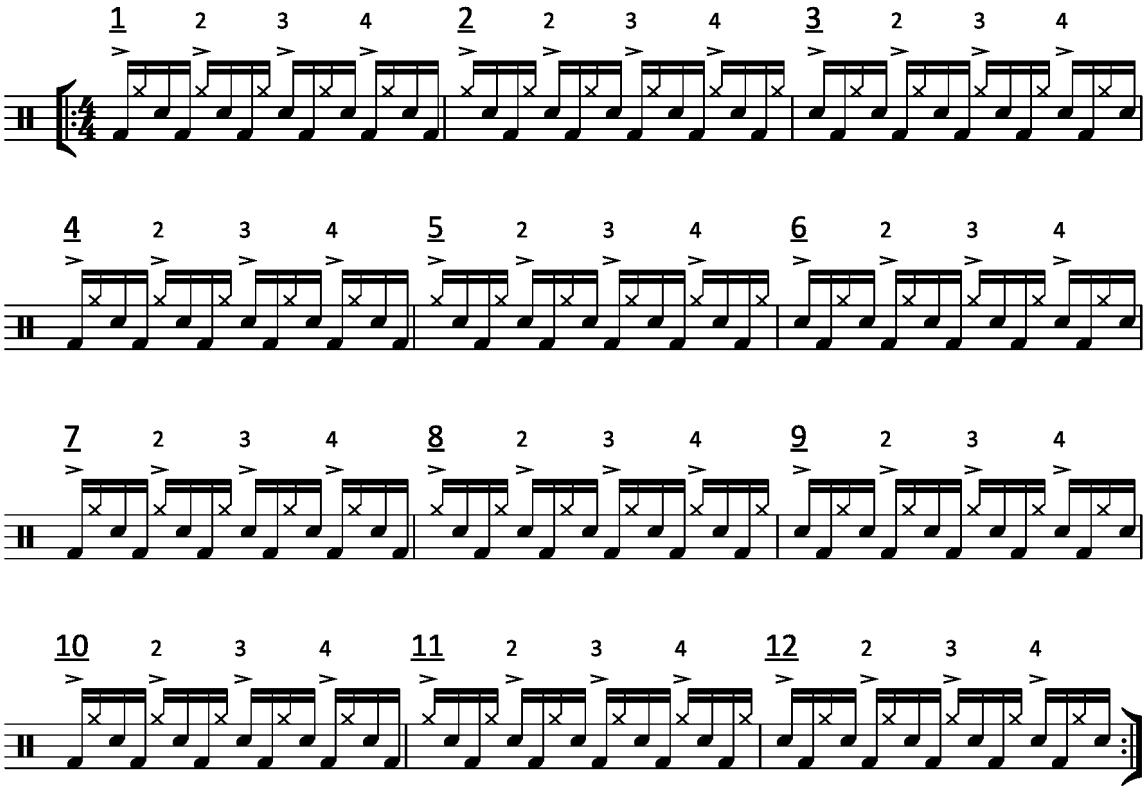


Next, **accent** every downbeat. Play the accented notes at fortissimo and the unaccented notes at mezzo-forte. *Again, count quarter notes out loud.*

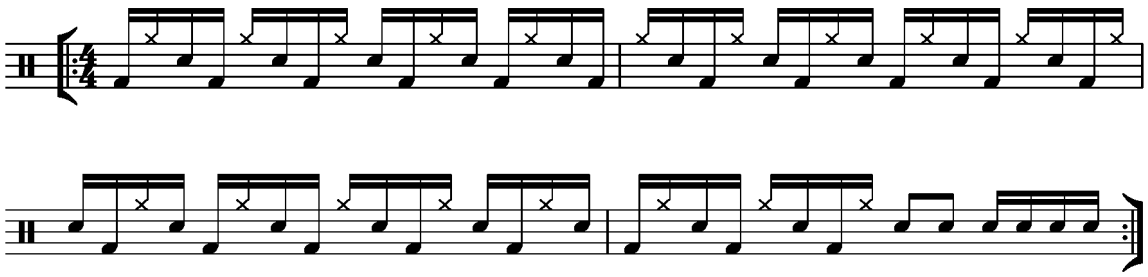


The exercise above is an excellent way to help you solidify your linear and subdivision abilities. Take your time, this is a difficult exercise but with patience you will get it. Keep the tempo slow and only move the tempo up when you are comfortable. Practicing at a slow tempo (60 bpm) will only deepen your ability to place notes in their proper place.

Finally, play this pattern over twelve bars by eliminating the bar 4 “turnaround” bass drum note. In addition, assign a larger number to every bar as you play (and count out loud). The counting is displayed above the notes:



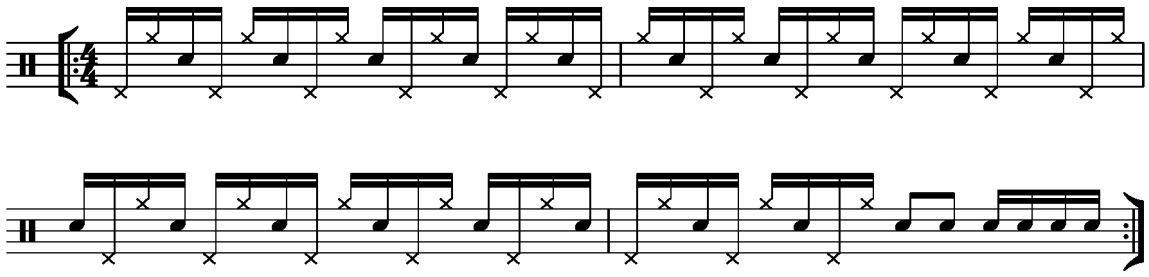
You mind find that once you get the pattern going it is difficult to exit it to play a fill, etc. To help add fills play the four bar linear pattern and add a snare drum fill starting on beat 3 of measure 4. By adding a fill a clearly defined four-bar phrase is created as follows:



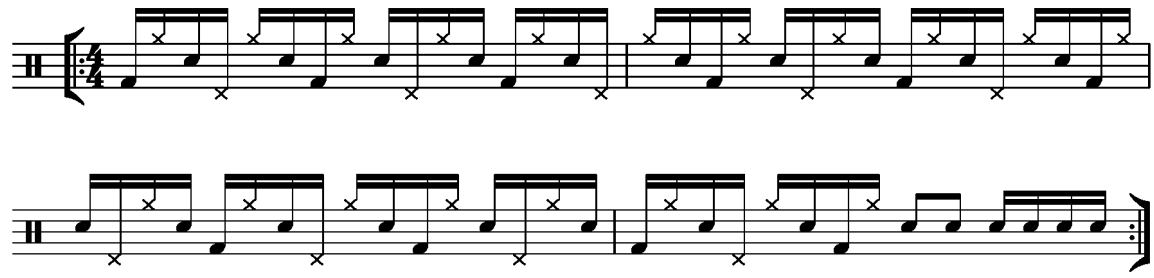
Linear Variations

One of the concepts behind with this simple linear pattern is to present a way to develop and enhance a basic idea into personal, creative expression. Using the linear pattern from above we will explore some easy variations that will alter the way this idea is perceived.

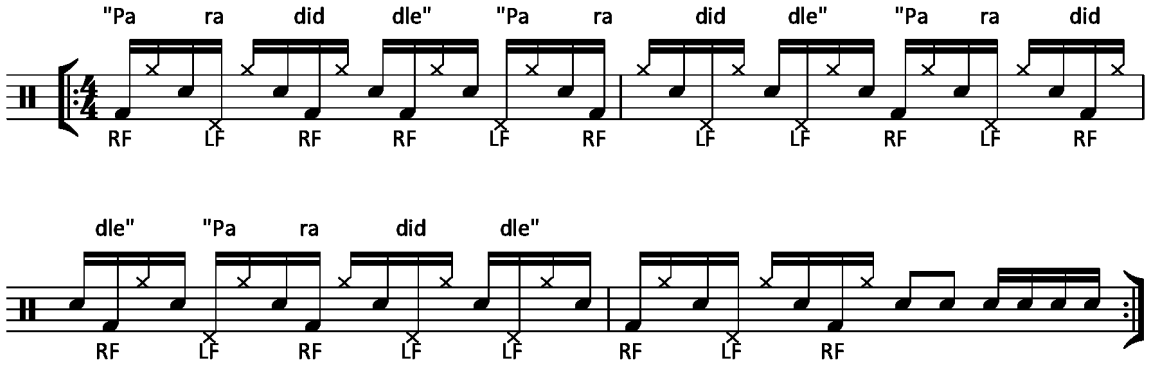
Variation #1 – One simple variation is to replace the bass drum notes with the hi-hat with the foot. For example:



Variation #2 – Alternate the movement between the feet:



Variation #3 – “Paradiddles” between the feet:



Drummer and educator based in Los Angeles, California. Currently the Program Chair for Drums at Musicians Institute in Hollywood, Stewart Jean is a dedicated professional.

As Program Chair for Drums at MI Stewart steers the program down a path of success for his students. Authoring and co-authoring contemporary curriculum, developing innovative teaching methods and consistently providing a nurturing learning environment are some of the highlights Stewart has brought to Musicians Institute.

Maintaining a steady drumming career Stewart has performed or recorded with Raul Midon, Bruce Kulick, Don Felder, Jimmy Buffett, Betty Wright, Sam Moore, Preston Smith, Bo Diddley, Christian Zallies, Diego Bertie and Pedro Suarez Vertiz.

Stewart received a Bachelors Degree in Music from the University of Miami as a graduate of the Studio Music and Jazz Program. While in Miami Stewart also served as Jazz coordinator for the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts.