

GROOVE FACILITY

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DEVELOPING DYNAMICS IN THE GROOVE

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

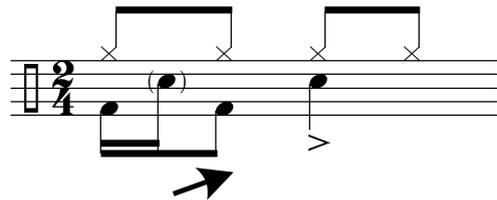
In a modern funk groove, we would expect to find well-placed underlying ghost notes behind a strong accented backbeat. The idea is that the ghost notes provide forward movement, while the accented backbeat defines the groove.

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.

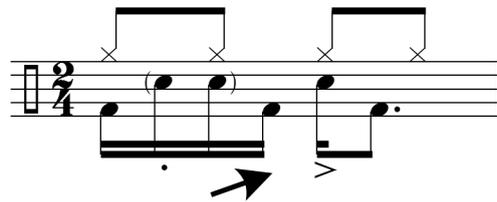
Now let's look at putting two other components together to create a two-beat figure, this time with two ghost notes and an accented backbeat.

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.

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

Let's look at putting some more components together with accents and ghost notes.

Up until now we have studied how to apply the informal pull-out motion to our grooves to play ghost notes preceding an accented backbeat. We must also understand how to play ghost notes following an accent with the same effectiveness. To do this, we need to use informal control strokes.

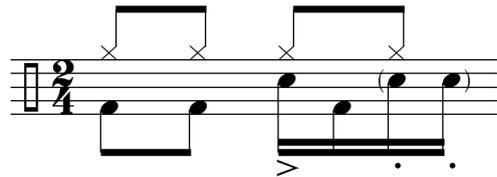
Let's put two components together to see how an informal control stroke can be used in a groove to control ghost notes that follow an accented backbeat.

Here are the two components we will use:



Let's imagine that component A3 will feature an accent which will be our backbeat, followed by two ghost notes after the bass drum note. When the two components are put together, we have this figure:

VIDEO EX. 19



After the accent has been played using the the Moeller downstroke whipping motion, the potential rebound is controlled so the stick is not allowed to bounce back up. The stick stays in the low position and plays the two tap strokes from this position. This is very important when trying to create a flowing groove pattern with effective dynamics. If the stick is allowed to bounce back up too high, your ghost notes will be too loud, and loud ghost notes don't usually work in any groove. Remember, 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. You must stop the rebound with a very gentle, controlled motion.

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