



Jost Nickel's **GROOVE BOOK**



CD INSIDE



**MORE THAN
200
MP3
GROOVES
AND
EXERCISES**

Groove Design
Orchestration
Split & Switch Grooves
Linear Grooves
Ghost Notes
Displacements
Bass Drum:
Technics & Control
Go-Go Grooves
Timing
and much more



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I dedicate this book to my wife, **Mareike**, and my daughter, **Alma**.

www.jostnickel.com

Advice:

The attached CD contains MP3 files. It can be used with all hardware that is compatible to MP3 like computers • tablets • MP3 players • most CD players and most car stereos. Once copied onto your computer, these sound files can be imported into any MP3 player, such as an iPod.

Note: Some older model CD players and car stereos may not be able to read this MP3 data disc. In this case, you have permission to save these files onto your computer and use a program such as iTunes to burn new audio CDs, playable on your current CD player. Incorrect handling may cause the damage of an incompatible device. In these cases, the manufacturer's liability is excluded.

Preface

I am delighted that you are holding my book in your hands.

You're most welcome!

The title *Groove Book* tells its own tale: This book is exclusively about groove.

I decided upon *Groove* as the topic for my first book because I have fun playing and listening to grooves on the one hand, and then on the other hand, I find drummers most fascinating when they get into a great groove.

All grooves in this book will sound great and be fun to play.

Additionally, it was important to me to show you a range of possibilities for creating your own great-sounding grooves, and how to play these grooves in different ways to expand your own pattern repertoire.

I tried to keep the text passages to a minimum because we all like to start playing the notes rather than reading the words—right?

But that said, I ask you to read the explanations carefully, especially those that focus on the development of your own grooves; I know they will be helpful.

How to Work with This Book:

Please take your time after studying each chapter to reflect on its contents:

- What are the key points to highlight?
- What did you most enjoy?
- Can you transfer these concepts to another context?

Please free yourself from the music notation as soon as possible. Frequently you are able to play things by heart very quickly, without reference to the music text. The moment you can play by heart you are free to listen to your own playing more consciously, and you will be able to pay more attention to technical and musical details.

I'm sure you will find certain grooves that you like best in each chapter. Mark your favorite grooves and add those to your own groove repertoire.

Have fun working with my book!

Jost Nickel



Contents

Preface 3

Contents 4

Disambiguation 6

 What Is “Groove” Actually About? 6

 Drum Key 6

 How to Count Rhythms in This Book 7

Chapter 1: Orchestration Concepts – The Split and the Switch 8

 Paradiddle 8

 The Split 9

 The Switch 10

Chapter 2: Groove Design 12

 Groove 1 12

 Groove 2 18

 Groove 3 23

 Groove 4 28

Chapter 3: Do It Yourself 33

 The Four Basic Rules 33

 No Rule Without Exception 37

Chapter 4: Linear Grooves 40

 Linear Groove – Initial Pattern 40

 Do It Yourself – Two Simple Rules 42

 Linear Groove Study 1–2 45

 Linear Switch Grooves 47

Chapter 5: Ghost Notes 49

 Ghost Notes 1 – Ostinato Approach 49

 Ghost Notes 2 – Intertwined Approach 52

 Ghost Notes 3 – Ghost Notes Before and After Snare Accents 57

Chapter 6: Bass Drum Displacement 65

 Displacement of a Bass Drum Beat 65

 Omitting a Bass Drum Beat 68

Chapter 7: Snare Displacement	71
Snare Displacement Studies 1–10	71
Chapter 8: Half Time – Double Time	82
Half Time – Double Time – “Double Double Time”	82
Examples 1A–5B	82
Chapter 9: Bass Drum Technique and Control	88
Heel Up	88
Heel Down	90
Chapter 10: Three-Note Groove Variations	94
3-Note 1	94
3-Note 2	96
3-Note 3	98
3-Note 1 in Half-Time Grooves	100
Chapter 11: Go-Go Grooves	103
Cowbell Pattern 1	103
Cowbell Pattern 2	106
Cowbell Pattern 3	108
Cowbell Pattern 4	110
Cowbell Pattern Studies 1–4	112
Chapter 12: Timing, Groove, and Philosophy	114
Philosophy	114
Perfect Timing?	115
Playing Live with a Click?	116
Tempo and Adrenaline	116
The “Right” Live Tempo	116
Playing Laid-Back, On Top, on On the Beat?	117
Tempo Anecdotes	118
Timing and Groove Exercise 1	119
Timing and Groove Exercise 2	122
Timing and Groove Exercise 3	122
Epilogue	123
Appendix: Reading Text Exercises	125

What Is “Groove” Actually About?

Especially in the context of drumming, the term “groove” has two basic, different meanings. On one hand, “groove” is used in order to describe *what* is played. If you hear an interesting pattern you can also say: “This is a good groove.”

But when it is also about *how* to play, the term “groove” can be used, too. In case you say that a drummer has a good groove, it means that his playing feels very good. This feeling starts with the musician himself, is transmitted to the accompanying musicians, and then goes to the audience.

Independent of which instrument is played, those musicians whose playing creates the best feeling, “the best groove,” are always most favored.

In a band, all musicians are responsible for the groove, but we drummers bear the biggest responsibility for the groove.

When you start to work with the different grooves in this book, the first question will always be what do I play? You will practice new beat sequences, new stickings, and unfamiliar ways to orchestrate. But please don't forget how to play each new groove. Play each pattern until there are no more problems and it feels dead easy. To make a long story short, practice each pattern until it feels right and it is really grooving. Be sure that each groove activity will result in a better groove!





The Drumset Notation in This Book

How to Count Rhythms in This Book

Whole Note

Half Notes

Quarter Notes (4ths)

Eighth Notes (8ths)

Sixteenth Notes (16ths)

Orchestration Concepts – The Split and the Switch

In the beginning of this book, I introduce you to two basic concepts of orchestration that I will come back to in some of the following chapters.

Orchestration is the allocation of beats to single instruments of the drumset.

The target is to bring out the best from the patterns that are familiar to you already.

Instead of learning more and more new patterns, I vary my grooves by different orchestrations, accentuation, and the like to be able to find more alternatives of rhythmic expressions.

In order to learn both orchestration concepts, start with a sticking you are already familiar with. Let's start with one of the most popular stickings: **the paradiddle**.

Paradiddle – Groove A

Ghost note¹
 R = right hand
 L = left hand

For a good sound, it's important that you take care of the hi-hat accents. I play the first stroke of the double strokes on the hi-hat in a softer volume than the second stroke. The first exercise shows these differentiated accents, but in the following exercises I won't show the accents anymore to keep the reading text clear.

If I play these grooves on the ride cymbal, I play the accents on the bell and the unaccented strokes about one inch to the left. I realize this motion from the wrist. My arm doesn't really shift.

Paradiddle – Groove B



¹ Ghost notes are an excellent way to expand the dynamic range of your playing. Ghost notes (smaller note heads) are played at a very soft volume. To create this sound, strike the snare from a lower stick height. For more detailed information, please refer to the section on ghost notes starting on page 49.

One-bar combinations also sound good with the Switch. Basically, I swap my hands on 3. If a double stroke is planned for the third beat, this double stroke remains on one instrument, i.e. either on the snare or the hi-hat.

In the next groove, the right hand therefore changes as early as on 2a from the hi-hat to the snare.

Groove 1 – Switch 5



Switch

R L R R L R L R R L R R L R R L

Groove 1 – Switch 6 | LH plays hi-hat and changes on 3e to the snare:



Switch

R L R R L R L R R L R R L R R L

Here are a pair of two-bar Switch grooves (these are combinations from the examples **Groove 1 – Switch 5** and **Groove 1 – Switch 6**):

Groove 1 – Switch 7



Switch

R L R R L R L R R L R R L R L R R L R L R R L R R L

Groove 1 – Switch 8



Switch

R L R R L R L R R L R R L R L R R L R L R R L R R L

Six Steps to Bass Drum and Snare Combinations

We have augmented a constant bass drum and snare combination with hi-hat patterns and ghost notes in different ways.

Step 1: Select a bass drum and snare combination

Step 2: plus hi-hat pattern

Step 3: plus ghost notes

Step 4: Intermittent hi-hat pattern plus ghost notes

Step 5: The Split

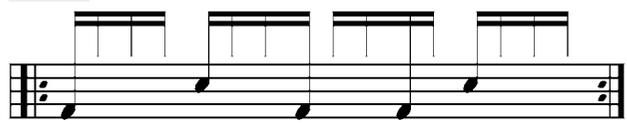
Step 6: The Switch

Appendix – Reading Text Exercises

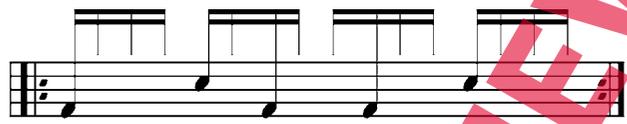
Write down your own grooves on the following four pages.

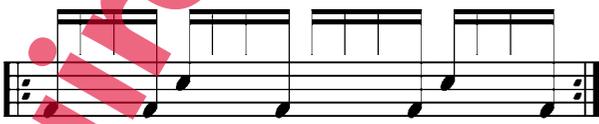
1. Grooves with interrupted/intertwined sixteenth-note patterns (see page 33).
2. Linear Grooves (see page 42).
3. Ghost Note Grooves (see page 56).

Reading Text 1 – Bass Drum and Snare (1)

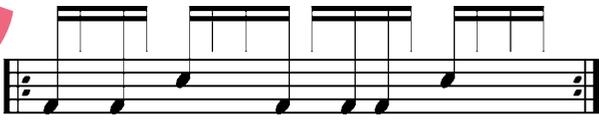
1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

5. 

6. 

7. 

8. 

9. 

10. 