

OPEN-HANDED PLAYING: A STEP BEYOND

VOLUME 2 Linear Approach Rudimental Approach Play-Along Songs

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THE LINEAR APPROACH

Definition

The linear approach makes use of the basic idea in linear phrasing, which is to never play two or more instruments at the same time. Performing linear patterns in the open-handed mode will give you additional choices and more freedom in the way you organize your movements and the sounds that you will create.

As there are certain players/instructors whose names are closely related to the issue of linear phrasing, we would like to especially point out the work of David Garibaldi, Gary Chaffee and Rick Gratton, who are well-known for this style of playing. We strongly recommend their material as an outstanding additional source to be practiced open-handed.

The Linear Approach ...

- will strengthen your control and coordination between hands and feet.
- allows for more freedom regarding your choice of sounds.
- works great for funk, fusion and certain genres of Latin music.
- can be a good option for solos and/or fills while using another approach for your grooves/comping.

For example: Play the following linear groove, first with hands crossed, then open-handed. You'll surely notice that, from a conceptual point of view, the open-handed position (see version B) causes less problems in terms of avoiding accidental stick clicks or similar challenges.

FUNK - OHP Example:

VERSION A: R R L R L R L R R L R

VERSION B: L L R L R L R L L R L

To give yet another example of how open-handed technique can enrich your playing and musical expression drastically, let's take a brief look at the following examples. Pattern A shows a basic Songo groove; pattern B illustrates some of the various options that suddenly occur when open-handed playing is used. It's the same, identical rhythmic information. But this time, we use the freedom of the hands to add more sounds, which is really important when you're trying to cover the work of a percussionist. For example, pattern B brings in floor tom and rack tom, as well as a cowbell in the second bar. Pattern B is surely not for continuous use, but it's a good way to bring in some interaction and additional color.

**COMBINED PATTERNS:
PATAFLAFLA - FLAM ACCENT - INVERTED FLAM TAP**

In this final section of the chapter on rudimental relationships, we'd like to introduce two more mixtures of rudiments of the same breed. Example A consists of two inverted flam taps and four flam accents. A 1 is the very same pattern transferred to the drumset and using flat flams instead of regular flams. The bass drum adds a tumbao phrase which clearly puts the phrase into an Afro-Cuban context. Example A 2 still is exactly the same pattern; this time the flams have been opened up to 32nd note distances creating a drum-&-bass-like style.

Example A consists of three parts:

- Staff 1:** A rhythmic notation in 4/4 time. The notes are: quarter, eighth, eighth, quarter, quarter, eighth, eighth, quarter, quarter, eighth, eighth, quarter, quarter, eighth, eighth, quarter. Below the staff is the pattern:
 e L R L R L e L R L L R L R e L R L L R L R
 L R L e L R L R e L R L L R L R e L R L
- Staff 2 (A 1):** A drumset version of the pattern. The first half of the pattern uses flat flams (marked with 'x') and the second half uses inverted flam taps (marked with '>').
- Staff 3 (A 2):** A drumset version where the flams are opened up to 32nd note distances, creating a drum-&-bass feel.

Example B consists of one pataflafla, one flam accent, three inverted flam taps and one flam accent. Note how the first half of the phrase looks similar, although we didn't think about the same rudiment when we created it. B1 adds a samba bass drum and uses flat flams while B2 again opens up the flams to real 32nd notes, producing a drum-&-bass feel.

Example B consists of three parts:

- Staff 1:** A rhythmic notation in 4/4 time. The notes are: quarter, eighth, eighth, quarter, quarter, eighth, eighth, quarter, quarter, eighth, eighth, quarter, quarter, eighth, eighth, quarter. Below the staff is the pattern:
 e L R L R L e L R L L R L R e L R L L R L R
 L R L e L R L R e L R L L R L R e L R L
- Staff 2 (B 1):** A drumset version of the pattern. The first half uses flat flams (marked with 'x') and the second half uses inverted flam taps (marked with '>').
- Staff 3 (B 2):** A drumset version where the flams are opened up to real 32nd notes, producing a drum-&-bass feel.