

# the fabric of time



## INDIAN RHYTHMIC

## CONCEPTS FOR DRUM SET PART 21

It's interesting to note that once a piece of classical Indian music begins in a particular time signature it will not change this signature at all. This means that the musicians can only demonstrate their rhythmic skills within the limits of that particular time cycle. This is in part a reason why some of the rhythmic intricacies of Indian music have developed in the first place. For example, if they are playing in an eight beat time cycle and they want to play something in five then they might switch to five beats per crotchet. Another thing they might do is to add small odd length phrases together to add up to a longer equal length phrase.

Following this line of thought we will look at the two basic five and seven beat clapping cycles from South India called Khanda Jhapu and Misra Jhapu respectively. They look like this:

Example 1



Example 2



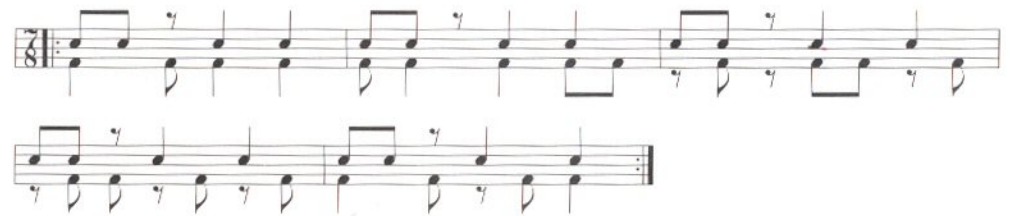
It stands to reason that,  $5 \times 7 = 7 \times 5 \dots$  so, if we play the seven beat pattern with one hand five times then we can in the same time space play the five beat pattern seven times. It looks like this:

Example 3

Key to Examples 3 & 4



I find it easier to read if it's written like this:

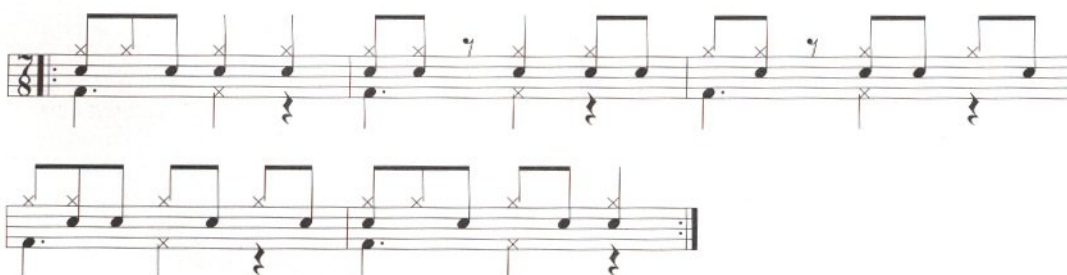


Example 4



Now we'll play it on the ride and snare with a nice simple pattern for our ever faithful tootsies.

Example 5



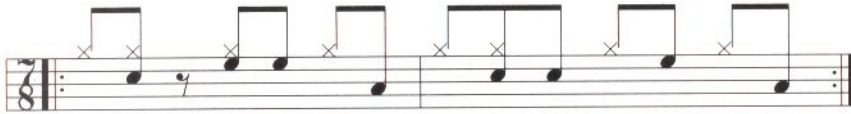
This is fine as an exercise but can be made much more useful if you select a two bar pattern. Here we have bars three and four.

► Example 6



It can sound more interesting if we move the left hand around the kit.

Example 7



Now with a simple repeating pattern for the bass drum and hi-hat.

Example 8



In case you didn't spot it, this is what is being played on the bass and hi-hat.

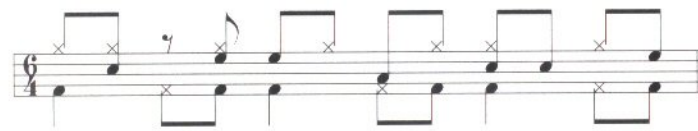
Example 9



Basic foot pattern underneath Ex 8

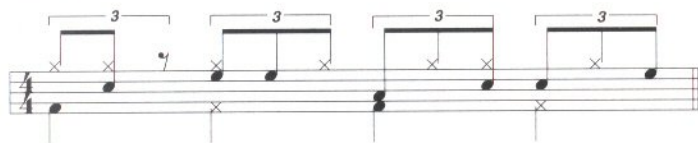
Another way of making this useful is to select a particular section from the overall pattern. I've selected the first twelve quavers from the previous example.

Example 10



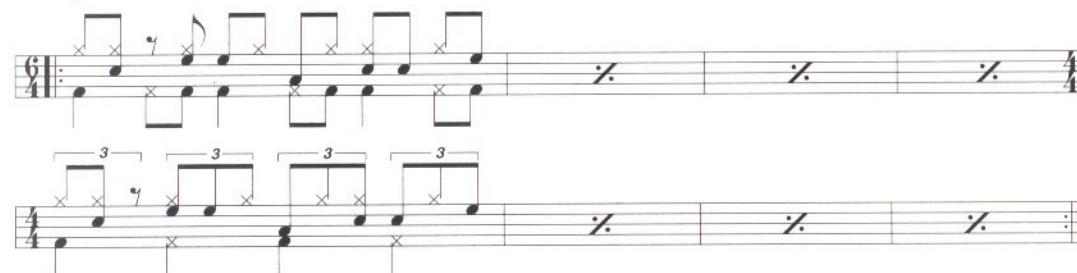
These twelve notes, if converted into triplets, will fill one bar of 4/4. It will look like this (I've changed the foot pattern to state the pulse).

Example 11



As mentioned in previous articles, Indian musicians milk these rhythmic ambiguities as often as they can get away with it. We can begin by juxtaposing these two patterns. Try playing this with a metronome and make it groove and feel comfortable. If you go out slightly with the click then don't jump back in anxiously. Take it smoothly and ease back in, thus avoiding a rhythmic 'glup'. Bear in mind, whatever techniques you learn, it can never take the place of playing the right thing in the right place. This might mean forgetting that you can think, and remembering that you can *feel*.

Example 12



See you next time for more rhythmicalisation.