

“It’s Normal, Half the Time”

Play-Along Lesson

In our previous lesson we talked about the relationship between the half-time groove and a normal time groove and practiced moving between the two feels. In this lesson we’ll focus on how to use these two feels in a song form and work on arranging our drum parts to lead the band through the chart.

First off let’s take a look at our two main grooves.

Half-time groove: Keep the hi-hats closed with a nice rimshot on beat 3.

[A] Closed Hats

Normal time groove: Open the hi-hats a little bit to get a nice sloshy sound. This will give the groove a slightly heavier feel and help bring the energy up for our B section.

[B] Sloshy Hats

If you are unfamiliar with the half-time feel please take a moment to check out the previous lesson at drummagazine.com titled “Half Time - Normal Time”. It will give you a better understanding of what we are playing in this chart.

Intro/Re-Intro: Make sure you leave space here and let the guitar carry the section. This helps to set up the dynamics of the entire song. Play a SIMPLE fill where indicated on the chart. You are going to the verse (A section) not the chorus (B section) so don’t play a big fill! We’re building our parts over the entire song so you have to leave yourself some headroom.

A Section: This is our verse. You should keep the groove relaxed and even. Resist the urge to play fills at the end of each 4 bar phrase. Doing this will diminish the affect of our fill leading into the *B section* (chorus). On the last measure of *A* play a one bar fill that helps “propel” the song into the *B* section. Listen to the track without playing and you will hear the instrumentation start to build here as well. It’s important that our fill builds as well and helps to lead the song to the new and bigger section.

B Section: This is our Chorus. This section should be a little louder and have more energy than the *A section*. We achieve this two ways: 1)By switching from a half-time groove to a normal time groove and 2) by playing slightly open sloshy hi-hats. The normal time groove will give the song a complete energy boost and the open hats will help bring the dynamics of the drum part up even more to match the song. Again take a moment to listen to the song without playing. Notice there is an 8th note chunky guitar part and some power chords, maker sure you match them with your intensity.

Finally the fill leading back to the “*Re-Intro*” shouldn’t be a big fill. It should feel like you’re falling or sliding back to a lower dynamic. The fill that leads into the *B section* wouldn’t be appropriate here.

Also notice that on the last 8 bars of the coda the groove switches to the ride. This helps to add a new dynamic and compliment what is being played by the guitar. Be sure to listen to the other instruments!

♩ = 110

It's Normal, Half the Time

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Intro Guitar Only

Musical staff for Intro, Guitar Only, showing a 4-measure rest.

A Closed Hats

Musical staff for section A, Closed Hats, showing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with 'x' marks above them.

Musical staff for section A, Closed Hats, showing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with 'x' marks above them.

Fill

Musical staff for section A, Closed Hats, showing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with 'x' marks above them.

B Slosly Hats

Musical staff for section B, Slosly Hats, showing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with 'x' marks above them.

Musical staff for section B, Slosly Hats, showing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with 'x' marks above them.

To Coda

Fill

Re-Intro Guitar Only

Musical staff for Re-Intro, Guitar Only, showing a 4-measure rest.

Fill

D.S. al Coda

B Slosly Hats

Musical staff for section B, Slosly Hats, showing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with 'x' marks above them.

Musical staff for section B, Slosly Hats, showing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with 'x' marks above them.

Fill

Ride

Musical staff for Ride, showing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents (>) above them.

Musical staff for Ride, showing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents (>) above them.

Fill

Fine

It's very very important that we, as drummers, listen to the other instruments in the song. We have to get beyond just hearing drums and focus on the music as a whole. This takes a lot of practice in listening and requires you to be very unselfish.

There is a time and a place for everything, we just need to learn to know how and when. That comes with experience. The song will tell you what to play, you just have to listen.

More lessons available at www.DrumMagazine.com

Charlie studied music at the McNally Smith College of Music in St. Paul, MN and Musicians Institute in Hollywood, CA where he graduated with "Rock Drummer of The Year" honors. Following graduation, he was signed to Universal Records with the hard rock act, Speak No Evil and toured extensively throughout the United States. He has since toured Europe with his band JKB and has achieved critical acclaim through his work with his Rock-Fusion trio, EGH, with the CD releases Live at MI and "It's About Time". Charlie's also stays busy writing, producing and mixing for his production company Abrasive Productions and various TV shows including Malcolm in the Middle (Fox Television) at his studio in Hollywood, CA. For PIT, Charlie teaches private lessons, Live Playing Workshops, Rock Drums & Rhythm Section Workshop. For more lessons and information about Charlie check out www.charliewaymire.com!