

## Chapter 47:

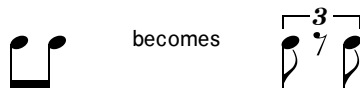
# The Shuffle

The shuffle beat is an important part of a drummer's vocabulary. It provides a welcome change from straight, driving beats, it can inject "soul" into an otherwise pedestrian arrangement, and when well played, it is infectious!

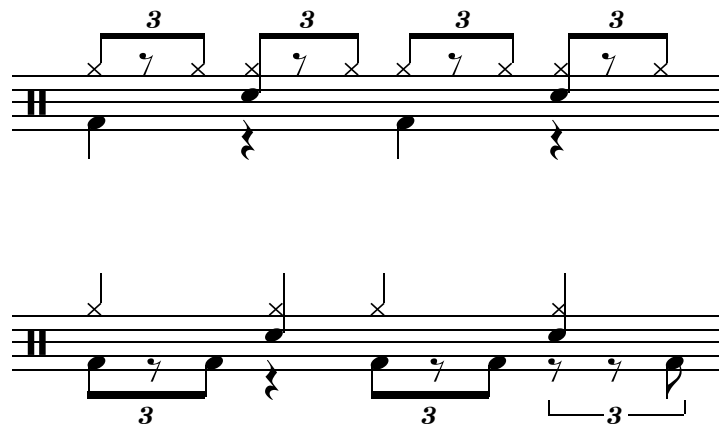
## The Basic Shuffle

In its simplest form, a shuffle beat is created when pairs of 8<sup>th</sup> notes is rearranged to form the first and third notes of a triplet group. Think of the second beat of the group as a rest.

This rearrangement of the 8<sup>th</sup> notes is most commonly applied to the hi hat and kick



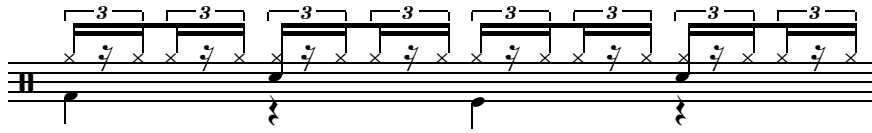
drums, but any and all parts need to be thought of in groups of three. Many variations on this are possible. The following are just two:



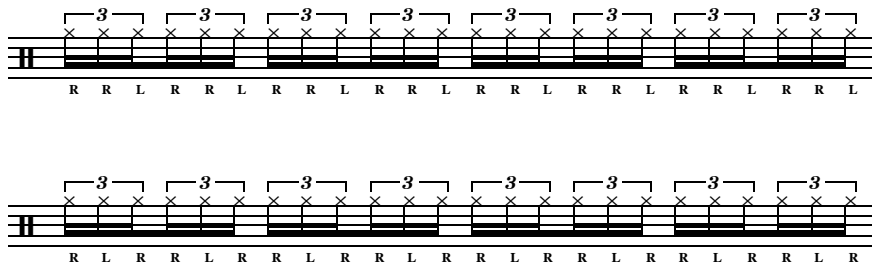
## The 16<sup>th</sup>-Note Shuffle (16<sup>th</sup>-Note Swing)

The shuffle effect is not limited to 8<sup>th</sup> notes. The shuffle becomes several degrees cooler when the shuffle occurs at the 16<sup>th</sup> note level! Although he was never comfortable with the reputation, the late Jeff Porcaro was widely considered to be a master of the shuffle, and in particular the 16<sup>th</sup> note shuffle (listen to Toto's *Rosanna* to hear the kind of feel Porcaro was able to impart with the shuffle).

A basic 16<sup>th</sup> note shuffle looks something like this:

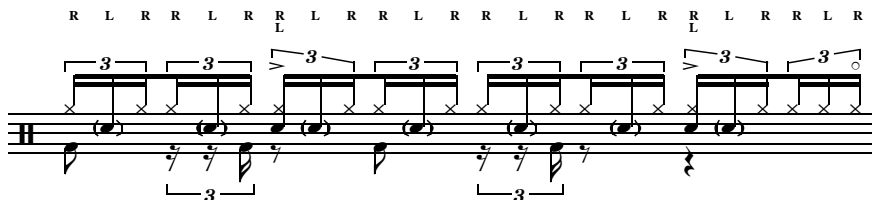


The hi hat part can be played with alternating left and right hands, or with just the right hand. The two bars below demonstrate two popular sticking patterns that can help you generate the correct shuffle feel without falling into a swing feel. Practice these on just the hi hat for a while:



Next, try leaving out the middle beat of each triplet group; you can put it back in occasionally for variation or as part of a fill. Finally, add in kick and snare parts.

Jeff Porcaro's *Rosanna* pattern makes use of the second sticking pattern. In this pattern, the left hand plays those middle-of-the-triplet beats as ghost notes on the snare drum. The hardest part of this pattern is getting your left hand to also play the solid back beats on 2 and 4:



Sample pages from a fictional instructional book  
 Audio Graffiti ([www.audiograffiti.com.au](http://www.audiograffiti.com.au))

