

Advanced Funk Drumming In Depth

PART 2: 8 DIFFERENT HI-HAT OPENINGS

by Jim Payne

MUSIC KEY	
open	○
H.H.	⊕
S.D.	⊗
B.D.	⊙
Ghost Note	⊖

Hi-hat openings add a lot of spice to funk grooves. The crisp hi-hat bark, as some call it, makes for great accents. To hear creative ways of playing the hi-hat, check out the drumming of Zigaboo Modeliste with the Meters, Harold Brown with War, David Garibaldi with Tower of Power, and Mike Clark with the Headhunters.

One of the most common spots to place an open hi-hat is on the "&," but let's work with some more unusual openings.

ON THE "A"

Our first beat has a hi-hat opening on the "a" of 1. ("A" is pronounced "ah.") The 16th-note count is written below the staff. The backbeats are accented, and there are softer unaccented ghost notes on the "e" of 1 and the "a" of 2.

Notice that the right hand doesn't play the hi-hat on beat 2. Instead, the left hand plays the snare drum and the left foot closes the hi-hat. Whenever the hi-hat is closed with the foot, you don't have to strike it with the stick as well. The foot "chick" of the hi-hat will cover up the sound of the stick anyway. Plus, not playing the hi-hat with the stick can make the groove flow better because it's easier to play.

1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a 1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a

Here's the same concept with a broken hi-hat pattern that's known as the King Kong beat. The King Kong beat works great in funk because when you fill in the missing 16ths with the snare drum, you have a linear pattern with a built-in backbeat on 2.

Adding the bass drum on the "e" of 4 in the second measure turns the rhythm into a two-measure phrase, which makes the groove a little more interesting.

1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a 1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a

SHORT NOTE ON THE 1

In the next beat, the hi-hat is opened on 1 along with a bass drum note. The hi-hat is closed with the foot on the next 16th note, which is the "e" of 1.

Since the left foot is closing the hi-hat on the "e," this beat can take some extra practice. I've always found that two-part coordination, where one hand and one foot are playing together, is easier to execute. For some reason it's often harder to play one limb by itself.

1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a 1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a

Here are two warm-up exercises I've found useful for loosening up the hands to play rhythms that have a lot of ghost notes.

In this one, play the hi-hat and snare drum at equal volume.

1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a

This is one of my favorite exercises for developing left-hand ghost notes. It has three rights and three lefts superimposed over one another. Again, play the hi-hat and snare drum at equal volume, but accent the hi-hat on the quarter notes: 1, 2, 3, 4.

1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a

8TH-NOTE OPENING ON THE 1

In our next beat, the bass drum plays along with an open hi-hat on 1. The hi-hat is closed along with an accented snare hit on the "&" of 1. The right hand doesn't need to play the hi-hat on the "&" of 1. (That's why that hi-hat note has parentheses around it.) But sometimes it feels better to play the note because it keeps the flow going. Do what feels best to you.

1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a 1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a

LONG NOTE ON THE DOWNBEAT

Here's a groove with a long opening on the downbeat. It's similar to the pattern Mike Clark plays on the tune "Stingers" on his *Actual Proof* CD. Keep the hi-hat open until 2.

7
♩ = 92

1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a 1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a

SHORT/LONG OPENINGS WITH GHOST NOTES UNDERNEATH

Here's a hand exercise that can help you develop a feel for the next hi-hat opening. It consists of 16th notes grouped in threes, with two pairs of double strokes at the end. The second hi-hat note of each group is accented.

8
♩ = 92

1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a 1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a

This beat has both a short and a long opening. The hi-hat is opened on the "e" of 3 and closed on the "&." It's also opened on 4 in each bar. The two ghost notes on the "&" and "a" of 4 are played while the hi-hat is open. This may take some getting used to.

9
♩ = 84

1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a 1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a

8TH-NOTE HI-HAT OPENINGS WITH GHOST NOTES

This concept is similar to what we did in the previous beat, but this time the hi-hat is left open only for the duration of an 8th note. Example 10 demonstrates this idea. It's similar to what David Garibaldi plays on the classic Tower Of Power track "Oakland Stroke."

10
♩ = 100

1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a 1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a

ON THE "E"

Here's a linear beat with a hi-hat opening on the "e" of 1. The left foot closes the hi-hat on the "&" of 1.

11
♩ = 84

1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a 1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a

SUPER-LONG OPENINGS

This beat has a shuffle feel, so any 16th note on an "e" or "a" should be played a little later to make it swing. You can play it with a lot of swing or just a little.

The hi-hat is opened along with a strong bass drum hit on 1. The hi-hat is closed with the left foot on 2 along with the snare hit. The right-hand hi-hat note on 2 is optional, as indicated by the parentheses.

The hi-hat is opened again on the "a" of 3 along with the bass drum note and is closed on 4. Add another bass drum hit on the "&" of 1 in the second measure to make a two-measure phrase.

12
♩ = 80

1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a 1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a

That's it for now. Good luck, and feel free to make up some new grooves of your own using these concepts.



Jim Payne has played with Maceo Parker and the J.B. Horns and has produced albums for Medeski Martin & Wood. He teaches in New York City and online, and his new book/DVD, *Advanced Funk Drumming*, was recently released by Modern Drummer Publications. Check out Jim's Web site at funkydrummer.com.

To watch Jim demonstrate the beats in this article, log on to moderndrummer.com.



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