

# Drum Set Performance: Playing Beyond the Groove

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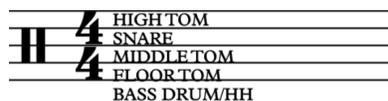
- **Premise:** When playing, and practicing drum set, we often focus on two major areas: groove and timing. This is certainly correct, but what is there beyond these two elements? Tone, Balance, Vocabulary, Phrasing, Musicality, Melody etc. These areas are just as important, but often overlooked, and it is these elements that separate a good drummer from a great one.

## Assumptions:

1. You are a solid snare drummer. Every good drum set player starts off as a good snare drummer. Remember, if you have difficulty succeeding with one drum, adding more to mix typically does not help.
2. You have solid timing and are capable of playing a stylistically appropriate groove.
3. You have a suitable instrument that is tuned well to play on.

## Movement, Playing Zones, Balance and Tone Quality

When we perform as musicians, whether it is on marimba or timpani, or any other instrument for that matter, our tone is what represents us as an individual. Besides tuning the drums properly, being accurate in our playing zones and playing with solid snare drum technique are the other ways to ensure consistent tone quality. One way to improve our playing zones is to use simple movement exercises that are repetitive and based on how the instrument is set up.



### Clockwise Motion



### Counter Clockwise



## Vocabulary

1. **Orchestration:** This is a great way to get a lot of mileage out of a simple drum fill. Orchestration simply means changing the order of events on the kit. Even with a small four piece drum set, you can create countless variations. After some practice you will find that you gravitate towards certain versions of the fill, that's good. Play your favorites countless times until they are part of you, and discard the rest. You won't like everything you come up with, and that's okay. Start simple: