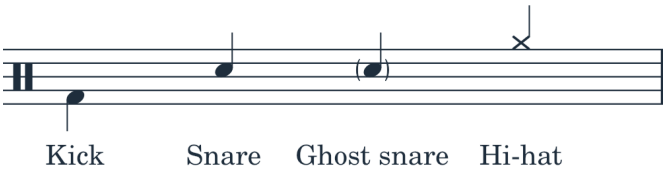
Drum Kit Grooves III: Ghost Notes, Shuffle and Half-Time

Three more grooves on the drum staff. Under each staff, a grid shows the same bar: one box per count, a dot = a stroke.

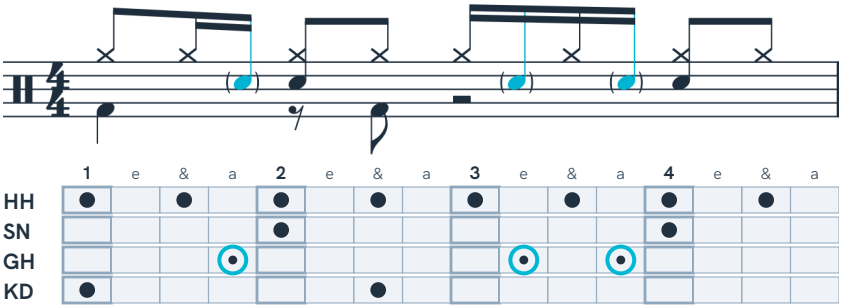
1 · THE LEGEND FOR THESE GROOVES



VOICE	WHERE	HEAD	GRID
Hi-hat	space above the staff	×	HH
Snare	space 3	round	SN
Ghost snare	space 3	round, in ( )	GH
Kick	space 1	round	KD

A ghost note is a very soft snare stroke between the louder notes, usually on an e or an a. The parentheses mean: play it much softer than the backbeat (the loud snare). Stems up = hands, stems down = feet. The hand that plays the snare also plays the ghosts. Other charts differ: read the legend before you play.

2 · THE GHOST-NOTE GROOVE

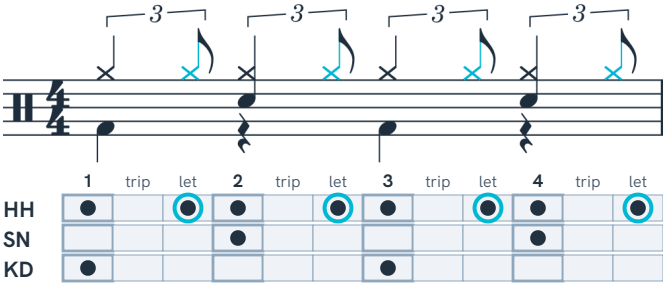


The hi-hat plays on every eighth-note count (1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &; where a ghost note follows, its × is written as a sixteenth), the kick 1 and 2&, the snare the backbeat on 2 and 4.

The three **ghost notes** (the cyan notes, small dots) fall on **1 a, 3 e, 3 a**: sixteenth notes between the hi-hat strokes. Count 1 e & a and keep them quiet.

Per bar: hi-hat **8** · snare **2** · ghost **3** · kick **2**

3 · THE SHUFFLE

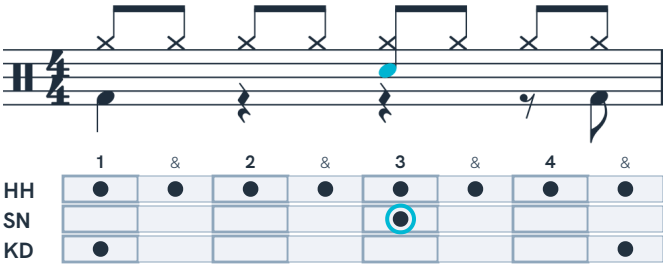


Count **1 trip let 2 trip let**: a triplet splits each beat into three even parts. The hi-hat plays the first and the third: **long-short**, 8 strokes per bar (the cyan notes are the short ones, on every **let**). Kick 1 and 3, snare 2 and 4.

Charts differ: some write the middle part as a rest. Many write plain eighths with the word Shuffle or Swing on top and play them long-short, as in Handout 338 (swing eighths) and Handout 488 (the guitar shuffle).

Per bar: hi-hat **8** · snare **2** · kick **2**

4 · THE HALF-TIME GROOVE



The backbeat moves from 2 and 4 to **3** (the cyan note): one snare per bar instead of two, so the groove feels **half as fast** at the same tempo. This is one common half-time feel; there are others.

Handout 507's one drop also has its only backbeat on 3, where the kick and cross-stick play together. Here the kick plays 1 (and 4&) and the 3 is a full snare stroke.

Per bar: hi-hat **8** · snare **1** · kick **2**

Try it

1. Ghost-note groove: on which counts are the ghost notes? _____
2. Shuffle: how many hi-hat strokes are in one bar? _____
3. Half-time groove: on which beat is the snare? _____

Listen: scan or visit **tissimo.co/worksheets/drum-kit-grooves-three** · tracks 1–3 = the ghost-note groove, the shuffle and the half-time groove, each played 4 times at quarter = 80 after a one-bar woodblock count-in; the ghost notes are played much softer. A rhythm model with General MIDI drum sounds, not a drum-tone demonstration.

Answers: 1. counts 1 a, 3 e and 3 a · 2. 8 strokes · 3. beat 3

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