

Bass



22 GROOVE STUDIES FOR STRINGS

by Tracy Silverman

String Orchestra Companion to
The Strum Bowing Method

22 GROOVE STUDIES FOR STRINGS

Bass

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The Basics of *The Strum Bowing Method*

Here are a few of the key concepts of Strum Bowing. There is a complete glossary at the end of the book.

Groovon:

The smallest particle of a rhythmic groove

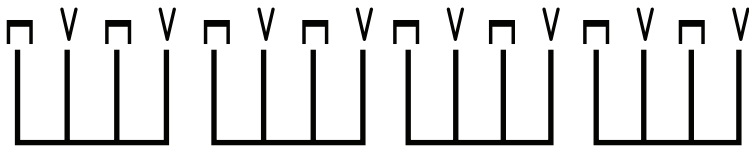
- Just as atoms are made up of smaller elements, such as protons, neutrons and electrons, a beat is made up of what I call *Groovons*. These are the smallest particles of a groove—the fastest notes you hear in the song.

Subdivision:

1. *The act of dividing a pulse evenly into smaller increments. For instance, a quarter note can be divided into four sixteenth notes.*
 2. *A fraction of a pulse, such as a sixteenth note.*
- You can subdivide time just as you can subdivide space. You can divide a pulse in music into smaller sub-pulses just as you can divide an inch into half and quarter inches. You can take a quarter note and divide it into two 8th notes or four 16th notes, and so on.
 - This subdivision can show up on many different instruments. It could be the strumming of a guitar; the congas, bongos or the shaker in the percussion; a keyboard part; or a fast moving vocal part, as in a rap. If you want to be able to groove with a song, the first thing you have to do is find the Groovon.

Grid:

A consistent framework that helps keep rhythms evenly aligned; a rhythm ruler; a.k.a. The Groovon Grid.



- The consistent down/up motion of strumming creates a rhythmic grid. In the diagram above, each line of the grid represents a Groovon, a subdivision of the beat.

Groove:

A consistent subdivision of the pulse defined by a pattern of accented and ghosted notes.

- On strings, a groove is a pattern of down and up bows. Some of the strokes are accented, and some are not.

Ghost Notes:

The unstressed notes in a groove; dropped notes; nearly inaudible pitched or non-pitched sounds; the opposite of accents.

- Jazz players call the unaccented notes *Ghost Notes*. Every groove has a different pattern of accents and ghosts.

Groove Study 1: Step By Step

OK, now that you know all about Groovons and grids, let's have a try at our first groove.

Here's an easy step by step way to learn new grooves. Later we'll learn these steps as the GPS (Groove Proficiency System) but for now, just power through and hang in there and we'll break it down later.

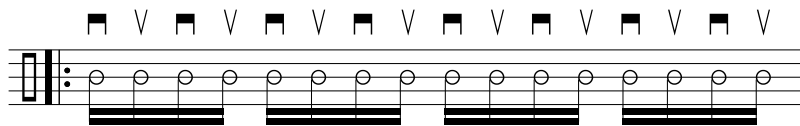
First, get the groove in your voice. Sing this rhythm. You can say "Dah" or "Bop" or any nonsense syllable you like.

Ex. 1A



Now, let's find the Groovon. What is the smallest particle of this groove? What would you play if you were playing a shaker? Air strum sixteenth notes like this:

Ex. 1B



Let's sing the rhythm from Ex. 3A at the same time.

Ex. 1C

Dah dah dah Dah dah dah

Next, change the lyric from “dah dah dah” to the bow direction lyrics as shown below. Don’t stop air strumming!

Ex. 1D

Down up down Down up down

Now, while you air strum and say the bow directions out loud, place your bow on the string, and play the Groovons. Let your voice help you emphasize the accents, but keep your bow moving on all the notes. Make sure you’re actually saying, “Down, up down” out loud, not just in your head.

Ex. 1E

Down up down Down up down

Let's try it again but with a slightly cooler rhythm.

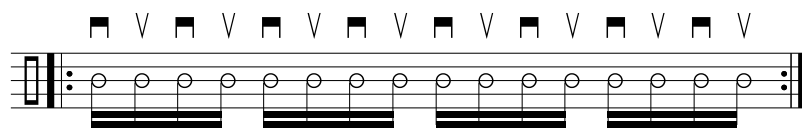
First, get the groove in your voice. Sing this without playing:

Ex. 1F



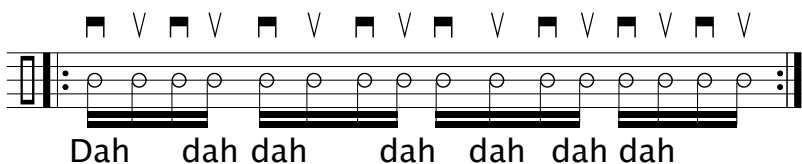
Now let's get the groove in our bodies. Air strum the Groovon:

Ex. 1G



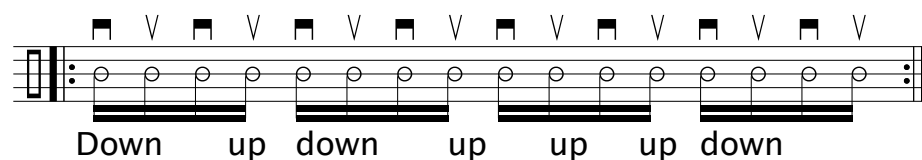
Let's put the two together. While you air strum, add your voice:

Ex. 1H



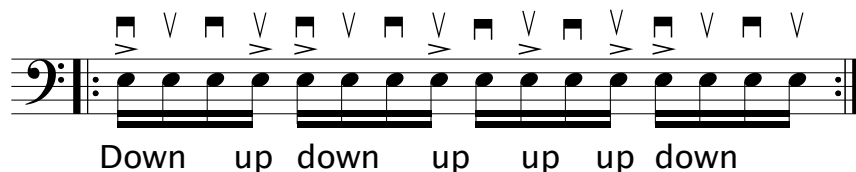
Next, swap the nonsense lyric for the bow direction lyric, still air strumming.

Ex. 1i



And finally, put the bow on the string and keep singing the bow direction lyric. Let your voice help your bow arm.

Ex. 1J



Groove Prep

Groove Study 1: Step By Step

“Step By Step” is a review of what we just worked on.
4 simple steps:

1. **Get the groove in your voice:** Sing the groove
2. **Get the groove in your body:** Air strum the Groovon
3. **Get the groove in your brain:** Say the bow direction. Keep air strumming
4. **Get the groove on your instrument:** Give it a try! Keep singing!



Mike Block (Silk Road Ensemble),
Assoc. Prof., Berklee College of Music
www.mikeblockmusic.com

Groove Study 1

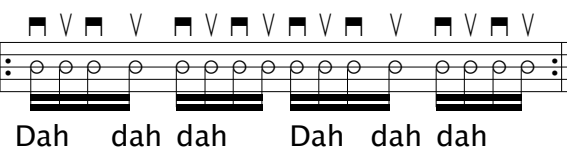
Step by Step

Tracy Silverman

Vocal Only



Air Strum and Sing



Groove Study 2:

Shades of the Ghost

Basic Ghosting Skills

Both hands work together to play ghost notes.

Right hand—tiny bow strokes with minimal bow pressure.

Left hand—dampen the string by either

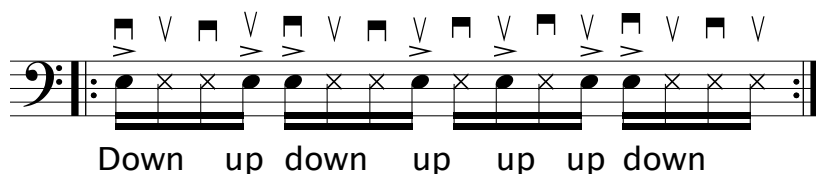
- 1) Laying your pinky across the string, or
- 2) Applying lighter finger pressure.

Dampen

To mute the string by touching it lightly with a finger of the left hand without producing a harmonic.

Let's revisit the exercise from the last chapter and apply these new techniques:

Ex. 2A



Both hands work together to play ghost notes.

As you play Ex. 2A above, start by playing all the sixteenth notes equally. Then gradually bring out the accents more and more while dropping the ghost notes in between the accents.

Use the chart below to help visualize going from played notes to ghost notes.

When you are ghosting, keep your bow moving back and forth for each sixteenth note. Remember to use tiny bow strokes and to dampen the ghost notes with your left hand.

All notes the same

Accents and ghosts



Groove Prep

Groove Study 2: Shades of the Ghost Basic Ghosting Skills

Start playing all the notes equally in the first bar. Then with each bar, move farther to the right on the shaded diagram above, with the ghost notes getting progressively softer.

Use a combination of **light bow pressure** and **left hand damping** to make your ghost notes as quiet as possible. Use tiny bow strokes. It should almost feel like you're "pinching" the string with the bow on the accents. Then release the pinch for the ghost notes.



Mimi Rabson,
Assoc. Prof., Berklee College of Music
www.mimirabson.com

Groove Study 2

Shades of the Ghost

Tracy Silverman

No ghosting

Partial ghosting

3 Mostly ghosting

Maximum ghosting

The image displays a bass line in 4/4 time, divided into four sections illustrating different ghosting techniques. The first section, 'No ghosting', consists of a continuous eighth-note pattern. The second section, 'Partial ghosting', shows a pattern where some notes are marked with an accent (>) and others are marked with an 'x'. The third section, 'Mostly ghosting', features a triplet of notes marked with an accent (>) followed by notes marked with an 'x'. The fourth section, 'Maximum ghosting', shows a pattern where only the first note of each group is marked with an accent (>), while the subsequent notes are marked with an 'x'. The notation includes a bass clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a repeat sign at the end of the fourth section.

Groove Study 3:

The Ghost of Grooves Past

Refining Your Ghosting Skills

Groove Prep

Groove Study 3: The Ghost of Grooves Past
Refining Your Ghosting Skills

This one is just a little more complicated, requiring a little more control for more accents. Keep working on the pinch and release idea, as you change between accents and ghosts.



Chris Howes

Jazz Violinist, Educator

www.christianhowes.com

Groove Study 3

The Ghost of Grooves Past

Tracy Silverman

1st time, use lighter finger pressure for ghosts.
2nd time, lay pinky across string for ghosts.

The notation is written on a single bass staff in 4/4 time. It begins with a double bar line and a repeat sign. The first measure contains a quarter note followed by a triplet of eighth notes, with a 'ghost' (x) on each of the eighth notes. The second measure contains a quarter note followed by a triplet of eighth notes, with a 'ghost' (x) on each of the eighth notes. The third measure contains a quarter note followed by a triplet of eighth notes, with a 'ghost' (x) on each of the eighth notes. The fourth measure contains a quarter note followed by a triplet of eighth notes, with a 'ghost' (x) on each of the eighth notes. The fifth measure contains a quarter note followed by a triplet of eighth notes, with a 'ghost' (x) on each of the eighth notes. The sixth measure contains a quarter note followed by a triplet of eighth notes, with a 'ghost' (x) on each of the eighth notes. The seventh measure contains a quarter note followed by a triplet of eighth notes, with a 'ghost' (x) on each of the eighth notes. The eighth measure contains a quarter note followed by a triplet of eighth notes, with a 'ghost' (x) on each of the eighth notes. The ninth measure contains a quarter note followed by a triplet of eighth notes, with a 'ghost' (x) on each of the eighth notes. The tenth measure contains a quarter note followed by a triplet of eighth notes, with a 'ghost' (x) on each of the eighth notes. The eleventh measure contains a quarter note followed by a triplet of eighth notes, with a 'ghost' (x) on each of the eighth notes. The twelfth measure contains a quarter note followed by a triplet of eighth notes, with a 'ghost' (x) on each of the eighth notes. The thirteenth measure contains a quarter note followed by a triplet of eighth notes, with a 'ghost' (x) on each of the eighth notes. The fourteenth measure contains a quarter note followed by a triplet of eighth notes, with a 'ghost' (x) on each of the eighth notes. The fifteenth measure contains a quarter note followed by a triplet of eighth notes, with a 'ghost' (x) on each of the eighth notes. The sixteenth measure contains a quarter note followed by a triplet of eighth notes, with a 'ghost' (x) on each of the eighth notes. The seventeenth measure contains a quarter note followed by a triplet of eighth notes, with a 'ghost' (x) on each of the eighth notes. The eighteenth measure contains a quarter note followed by a triplet of eighth notes, with a 'ghost' (x) on each of the eighth notes. The nineteenth measure contains a quarter note followed by a triplet of eighth notes, with a 'ghost' (x) on each of the eighth notes. The twentieth measure contains a quarter note followed by a triplet of eighth notes, with a 'ghost' (x) on each of the eighth notes. The notation is divided into five systems, each starting with a measure number (3, 5, 7, 9) and ending with a double bar line and repeat sign.

Groove Study 4:

Groovin' the Ghost

Apply Ghosting to a Groove

Groove Prep

Groove Study 4: Groovin' the Ghost

Applying Ghosting to a Groove

This is pretty much the same as Groove Study 3, but now we are exploring more shades of ghosting. Use the two bars of vocal only at the beginning to get the groove firmly established in your head. Then, keep saying the bow direction while playing because your voice will help you bring out the accents and contrast them with the ghost notes.



Alex DePue

Violinist (Steve Vai)

www.alexdepue.com

Groove Study 4

Groovin' the Ghost

Tracy Silverman

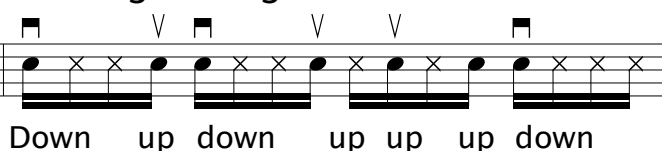
Vocal Only



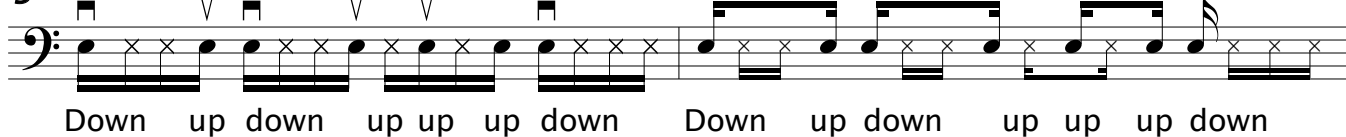
3 No ghosting



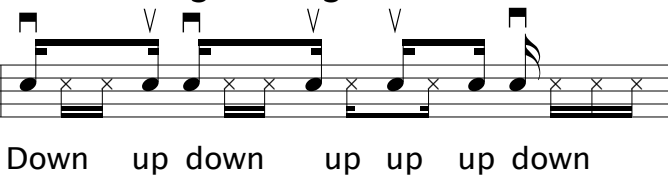
Partial ghosting



5 Mostly ghosting



Maximum ghosting



7 Vocal Only



Groove Study 5:

Deck the Halls With Placekeeper Notes

We can think of the ghost notes we just finished working on as placekeeper notes. They are there to keep the pulse steady by keeping the beats evenly spaced. They're like the small marks on a ruler.

Placekeeper Notes

Ghosted subdivisions that fill long notes or rests and keep you properly aligned on the grid.

Your Inner Drummer

If you're creating or contributing to a groove, it's crucial to hear an inner drummer in your imagination. This inner drummer plays all the Groovons, filling all the gaps between the accents of a groove.

Filling in the Blanks

In the following exercises, we will practice filling in any note longer than a sixteenth note—the Groovon—with additional Groovons.

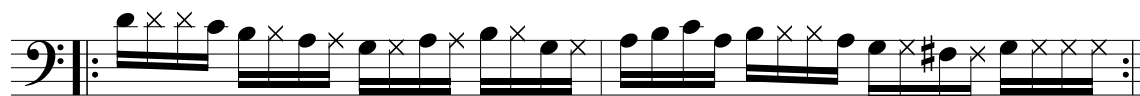
We're going to take this melody:

Ex. 5A



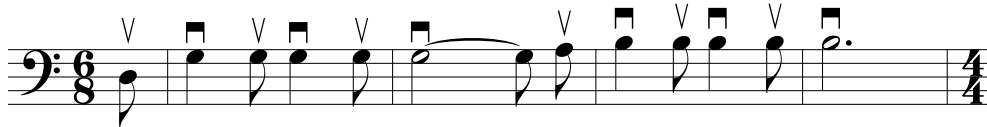
...and turn it into a placekeeper version with the placekeeper notes shown as ghost notes:

Ex. 5B



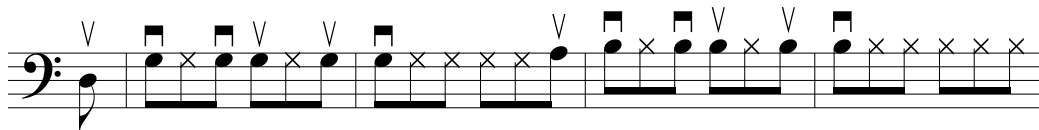
Or we can take this tune:

Ex. 5C



...and fill in the missing Groovons with ghost notes.

Ex. 5D



Now that we have our inner drummer playing, let's ghost those placekeepers completely but keep the bowing they created:

Ex. 5E



Groove Prep

Groove Study 5: Deck the Halls with Placekeeper Notes

Remember to use tiny bow strokes at bar 3. At bar 9, play the same as bar 3 but with ghosts so quiet that you barely move the bow at all. Think the placekeepers, but don't actually play them. Feel how your arm wants to move just a little bit to keep the strum going?



Darol Anger

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Groove Study 5

Deck the Halls with Placekeeper Notes

Tracy Silverman

The image displays a bass line for the song "Deck the Halls" in 4/4 time, featuring placekeeper notes. The notation is written on a single bass staff. The first measure is marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic and includes a repeat sign. The subsequent measures are marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The piece is divided into measures numbered 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, and 15. Placekeeper notes are indicated by 'x' marks above the notes. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The notation includes various note values, rests, and dynamic markings.

3

5

7

9

11

13

15

The Groovon in the Dell

Groove Prep

Groove Study 6: The Groovon in the Dell

This one is very similar to 5A. Start out by ghosting the placekeeper notes. Then, in bar 9, reduce the volume of the ghost notes to zero, but keep the same feeling of the strum in your arm so that the bowing for the accents is the same as when you play all the placekeepers. This will keep the rhythm more precise and help it adhere better to a grid. Notice how the pulse, the strong beats on the first and fourth eighth notes, alternates between down bow and up bow.



Billy Contreras

Jazz Violinist

String Department, Belmont University

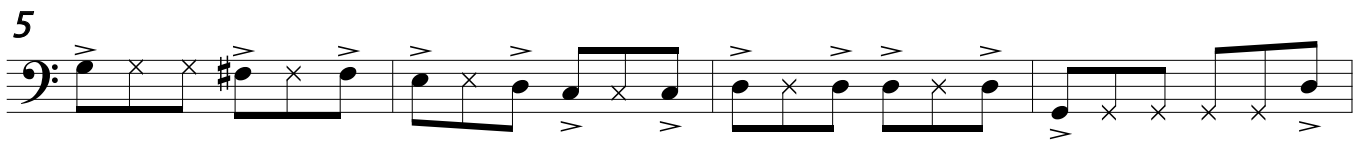
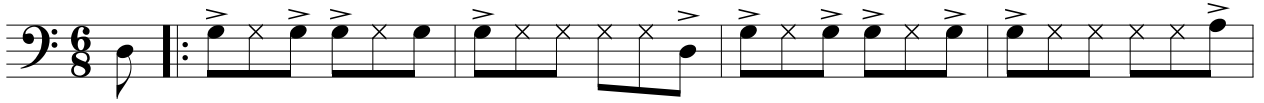
www.belmont.edu/music/faculty/faculty_listing_a-g/Contreras_Billy.html

Bass

Groove Study 6

The Groovon in the Dell

Tracy Silverman



Talk to the Hand

The Power of Vocalizing



You can speed up your learning process just by using your voice.

Tell your arm and hands exactly what you want them to do. “Down up down” is more specific than “Dah dah dah.” Your arm may be very skilled, but don’t assume it’s smart. Give it clear instructions.

*If you SAY IT,
it will be
clearer in
your mind
and easier
to PLAY IT.*

If You Can Say It, You Can Play It

Your larynx is located between your brain and your arms. When you say things out loud, your voice makes the connection between your brain and fingers. Coincidence? I don’t think so.

If you SAY IT, it will be clearer in your mind and easier to PLAY IT.

Groove Prep

Groove Study 7: Talk to the Hand

We're going to take the "Groovon in the Dell" melody from Groove Study 6 and use our voices to help coordinate our bowing. Be ready to sing out loud for this because it doesn't really work if you don't. The 6/8 meter makes the bowing a little trickier and less intuitive. That's why we are using our voices to help us get it straight.



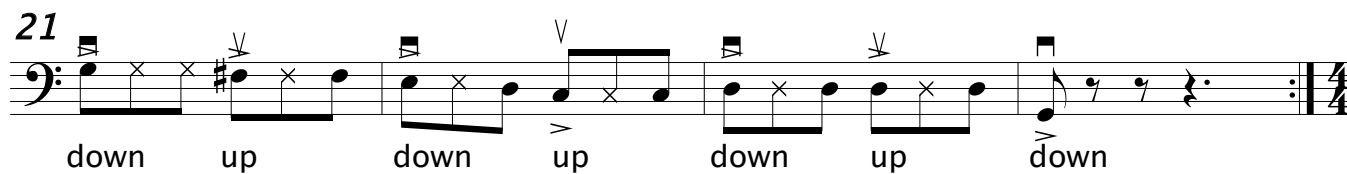
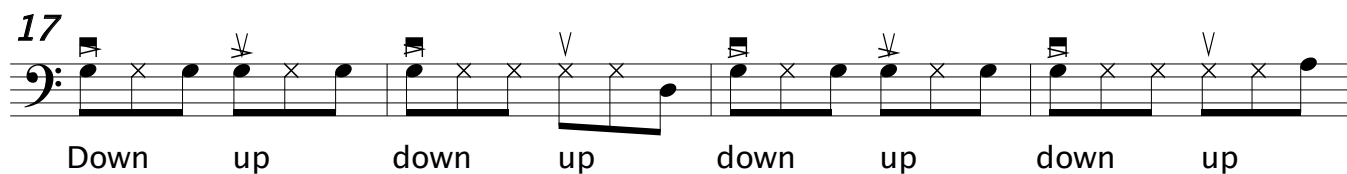
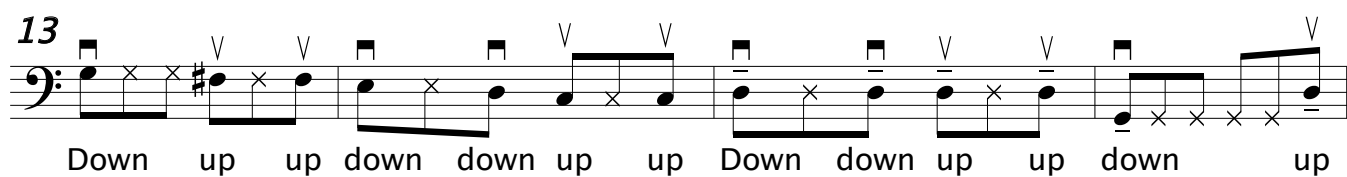
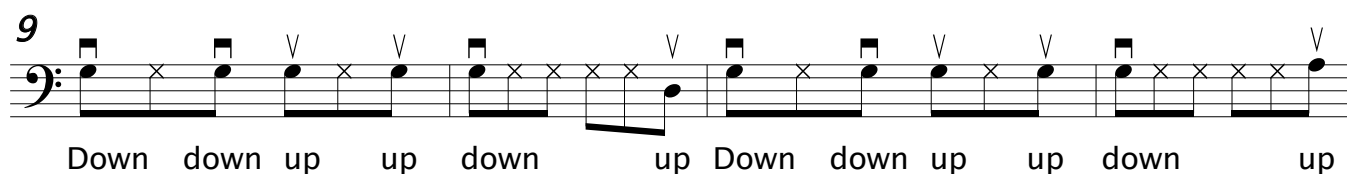
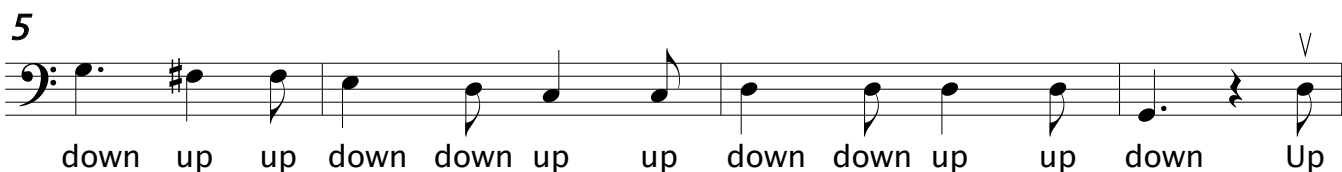
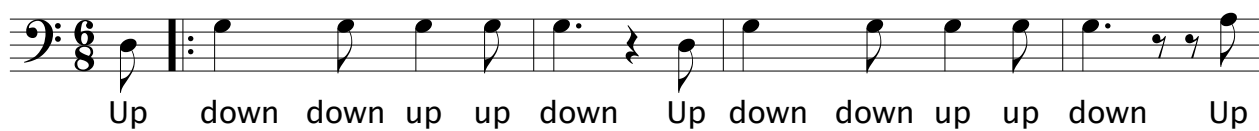
Mark Wood

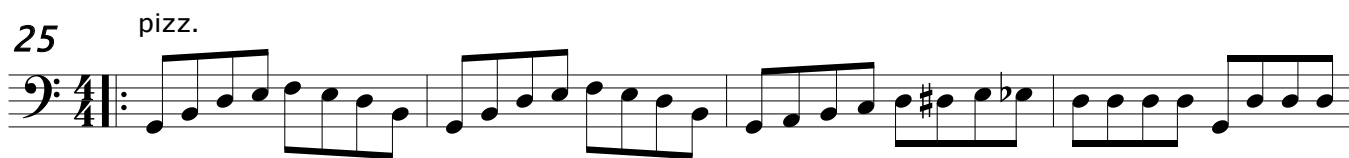
7-String Electric Violinist, founder of Wood Violins,
Mark Wood Rock Orchestra Camp, Electrify Your Strings
www.markwoodmusic.com

Groove Study 7

Talk to the Hand

Tracy Silverman





Groove Study 8:

Dancin' Fool

The Power of Physicalizing

When I use the term *physicalize*, I mean to unlock your muscles and allow your body to engage freely. It means your body is free and allowed to move the way it's supposed to.

Good rhythm playing is always accompanied by some kind of rhythmic body movement: the “dance” of the groove. Rhythmic music is a by-product of rhythmic movement.

When you are connected to that sense of dance and allow it to guide the way you play, listeners respond by feeling like they want to move, too. When dance inspires music, that music inspires dance. It's a non-vicious cycle.

It's really the only way to keep a groove steady. Just ask a drummer or watch a rhythm guitar player. They're movin' to the groovin'. Isaac Newton's law of inertia states that “a body in motion stays in motion.”

That motion keeps it steady. Without it, the pulse is likely to rush or drag.

A great groove sounds like it has always been there, like it started before time began and will never end. Grooves represent infinity. A groove is like a million ton freight train on a flat prairie that's been rolling along at the exact same speed for days. You can't alter it. You just hop on and ride it for a while.

Physicalize

To activate your inner drummer and express the subdivision of the pulse physically as a strum or other motion; to allow your body to respond to a groove with movement; to dance to the groove.

Rhythmic music is a by-product of rhythmic movement.

Groove Prep

Groove Study 8: Dancin' Fool

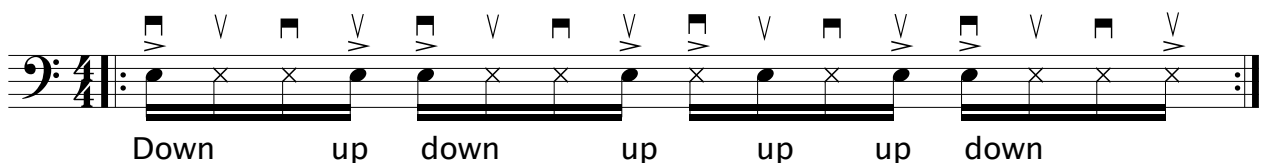
Stand up, even you cello players. Say and play this groove, and let yourself dance while you play it. Don't force yourself to move, but focus on the energy of the groove until the music moves your body. Feel free to let your feet tap, your hips sway, your head move, etc. You may have no problem dancing to music without playing an instrument, but it's not always easy to be relaxed and physically loose while operating a string instrument. Don't worry about a good tone or ghosting or perfect intonation right now. Just shout out the lyrics and get your body into the groove.

*Grooves
represent
infinity.*

Bass

Groove Study 8 Dancin' Fool

Tracy Silverman



Groove Study 9:

GPS

(Groove Proficiency System)

GPS (Groove Proficiency System) for Strings

1. **Hum It** Get It in Your Voice: Vocalize the Groove
2. **Strum It** Get It in Your Body: Find the Groove
3. **Say It** Get It in Your Brain: Discover the Bow Direction
4. **Play It!** Get It on Your Instrument

1. Hum It

Get It in Your Voice: Vocalize the Groove

Beatbox this groove. Go ahead and turn it into a whole drum kit or electronic drum beat in your imagination.

Ex. 9A

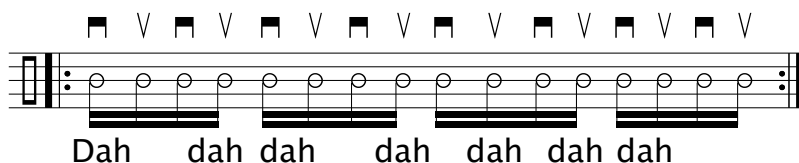


2. Strum It

Get It in Your Body: Find the Groove

Next, strum an imaginary guitar. You should be air bowing all of the sixteenth notes, not just the accents. Keep beatboxing!

Ex. 9B



3. Say It

Get It in Your Brain: Discover the Bow Direction

Gradually slow down your beatboxing of the groove until you are going slowly enough to be able to verbalize each Groovon. It should sound like this: “DOWN up down UP DOWN up down UP down UP DOWN up down up.”

Now drop all the unstressed notes, and what you're left with is the Bowing Key to playing the groove. "DOWN, UP DOWN, UP, UP, UP DOWN." Shout these bow direction lyrics like commands to your bow arm.

Ex. 9C

4. Play It!

Get It on Your Instrument

If you can say it, you can play it.

Now, while you're shouting those bow directions, go ahead and put your bow on the strings.

Ex. 9D

Musical notation for the bass line of 'The Fish Song'. The notation is on a single staff with a bass clef. It consists of a series of eighth notes, each followed by a quarter rest. The notes are: G2 (labeled 'Down'), A2 (labeled 'up'), G2 (labeled 'down'), A2 (labeled 'up'), B2 (labeled 'up'), C3 (labeled 'up'), B2 (labeled 'down'), and A2 (labeled 'down'). The notes are written on a single staff with a bass clef. The notes are: G2 (labeled 'Down'), A2 (labeled 'up'), G2 (labeled 'down'), A2 (labeled 'up'), B2 (labeled 'up'), C3 (labeled 'up'), B2 (labeled 'down'), and A2 (labeled 'down').

Keep the constant strum going the whole time while you emphasize the accents.

Dial in your ghosting. Remember to use tiny bows and little “pinches” on the accents.

Groove Prep

Groove Study 9: GPS
(Groove Proficiency System)

1. **Hum It** Get It in Your Voice: Vocalize the Groove
2. **Strum It** Get It in Your Body: Find the Groove
3. **Say It** Get It in Your Brain: Discover the Bow Direction
4. **Play It!** Get It on Your Instrument



Tracy Silverman and Darol Anger

Groove Study 9

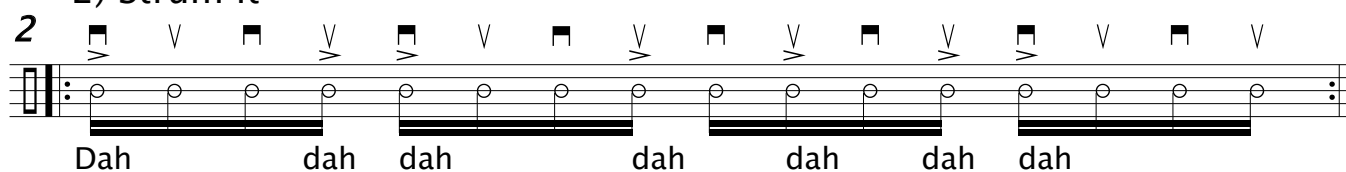
GPS: Groove Proficiency System

Tracy Silverman

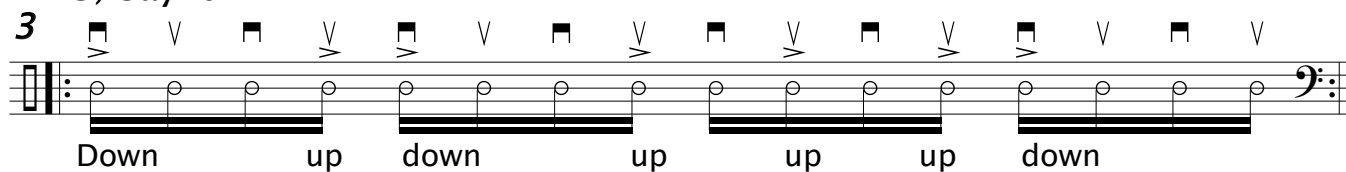
1) Hum It



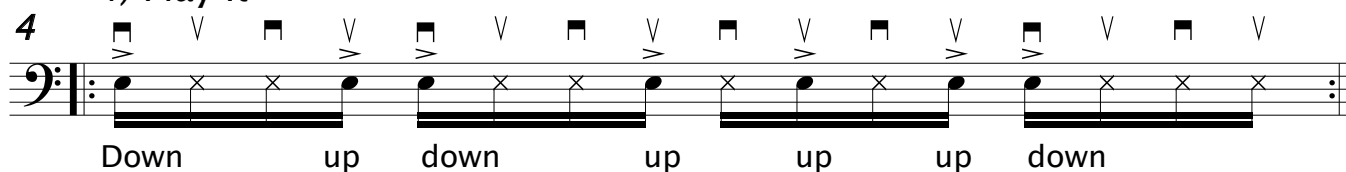
2) Strum it



3) Say It



4) Play It



Groove Study 10:

Down Down Down!

Let's learn a new groove using our GPS from Groove Study 9.

1. **Hum It** Get It in Your Voice: Vocalize the Groove
2. **Strum It** Get It in Your Body: Find the Groove
3. **Say It** Get It in Your Brain: Discover the Bow Direction
4. **Play It!** Get It on Your Instrument

1. Hum It

Get It in Your Voice: Vocalize the Groove

Put down your instrument and beatbox this groove. As before, allow your body to move freely and help you get into the groove. You can make drum sounds, or you can say "Dah dah dah" or anything you like. You could say "Bar-Bar-Bar, Bar-be-cue Pork" because the groove sounds a little like "Barbara Ann" by the Beach Boys. (If you're a vegetarian, you can say "Bro-Bro-Bro, Broc-co-li Soup.")

Ex. 10A

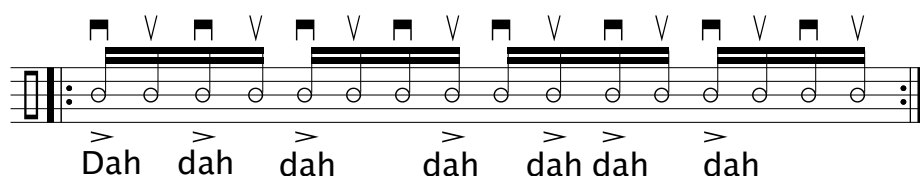


2. Strum It

Get It in Your Body: Find the Groove

While you beatbox, strum an imaginary guitar.

Ex. 10B

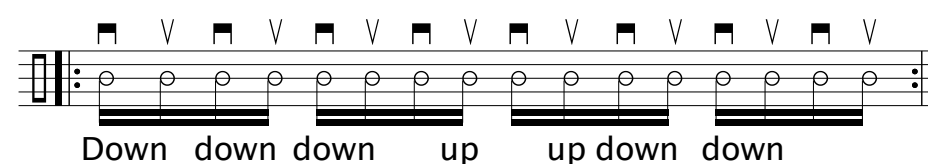


3. Say It

Get It in Your Brain: Discover the Bow Direction

Slow it down and say “Down, up, down, up...” on each Groove, but maintain the accents from the groove as you do this. It should sound like this: “DOWN up DOWN up DOWN up down UP down UP DOWN up DOWN up down up.” This reveals your Bowing Key to this groove as, “DOWN DOWN DOWN, UP, UP DOWN DOWN.” These are the commands you need to give to your bow arm as you air bow.

Ex. 10C



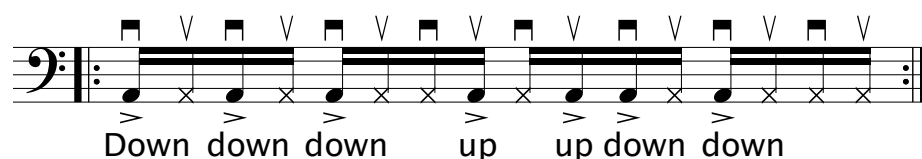
4. Play It!

Get It on Your Instrument

If you can say it, you can play it.

Keep saying the bow direction, and keep air bowing to make sure you have your strum locked in. Put your bow on the strings, and keep it moving in sixteenth notes while your voice helps you bring out the accents: "DOWN DOWN DOWN, UP, UP DOWN DOWN."

Ex. 10D



Try to get those ghosts to vanish into thin air. Remember to use tiny bows!

Groove Prep

Groove Study 10: "Down Down Down!"

Remember that this bowing:

Ex. 10E



...is shorthand for this:

Ex. 10F

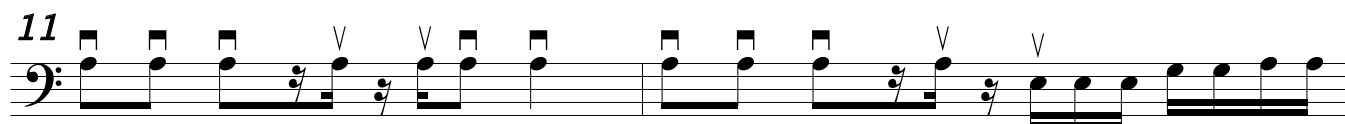
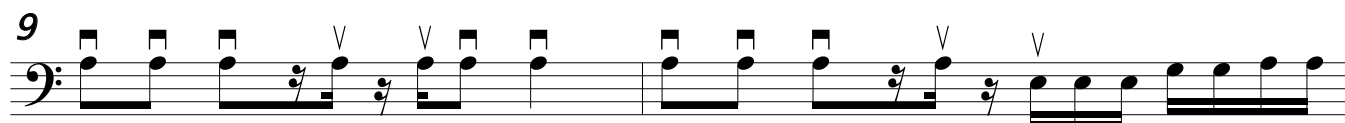
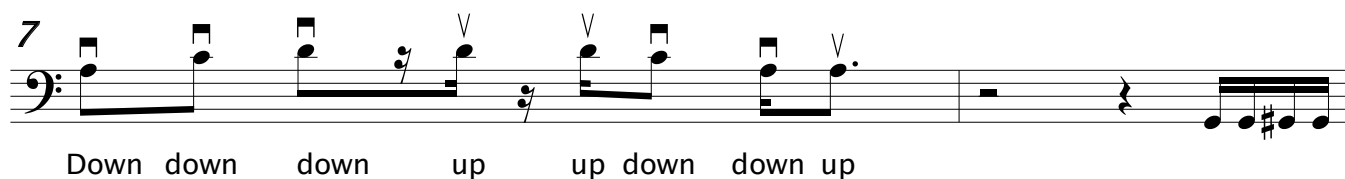
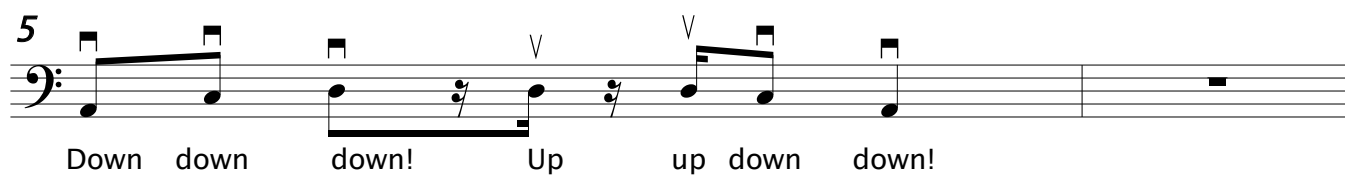
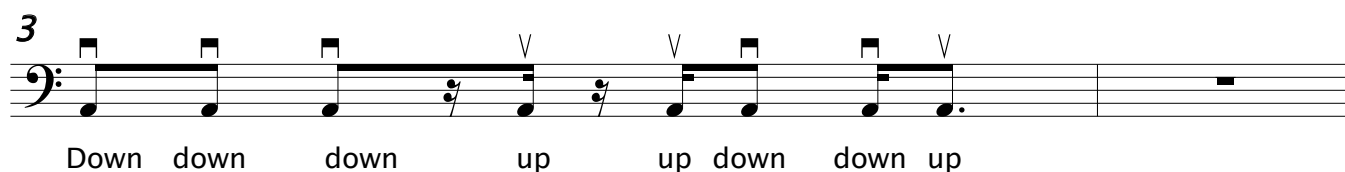
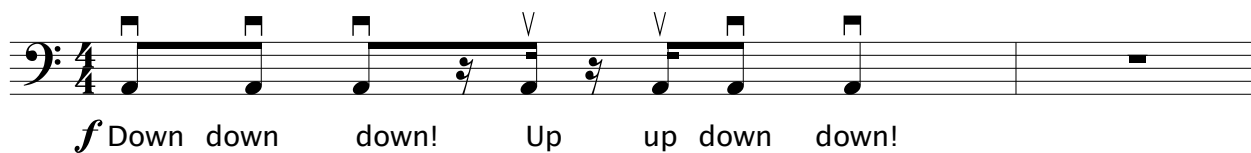


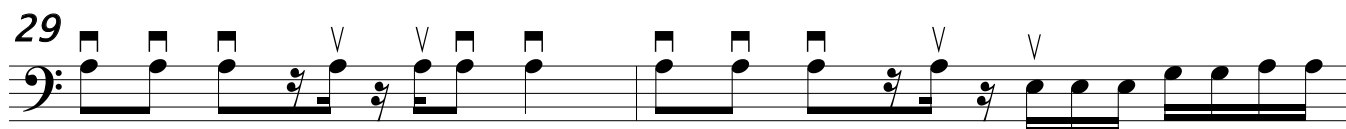
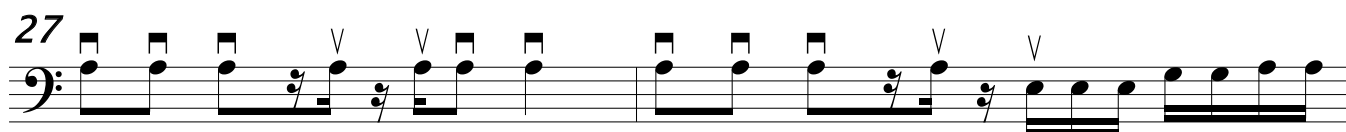
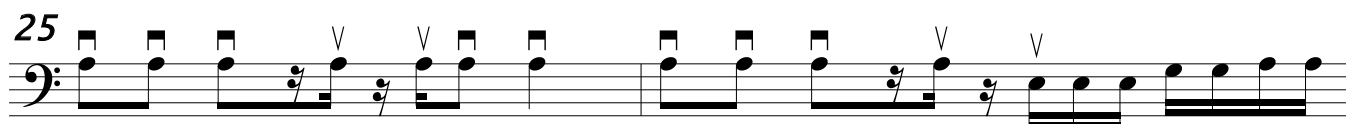
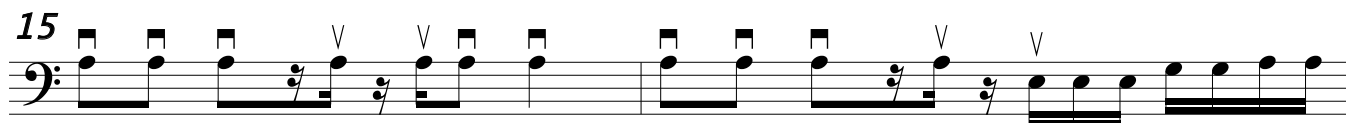
Tracy Silverman and Darol Anger

Groove Study 10

Down Down Down!

Tracy Silverman





Groove Study 11: Doin' the Strum

Let's learn another new groove using our GPS.

1. **Hum It** Get It in Your Voice: Vocalize the Groove
2. **Strum It** Get It in Your Body: Find the Groove on
3. **Say It** Get It in Your Brain: Discover the Bow Direction
4. **Play It!** Get It on Your Instrument

1. Hum It

Get It in Your Voice: Vocalize the Groove

Sing and beatbox the groove in Ex. 11A below. Go ahead and let your body move with the groove.

Ex. 11A

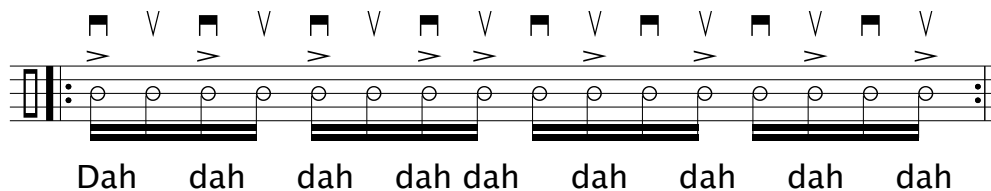


2. Strum It

Get It in Your Body: Find the Groove on

While you're verbalizing the rhythm, air strum the Groovons.

Ex. 11B

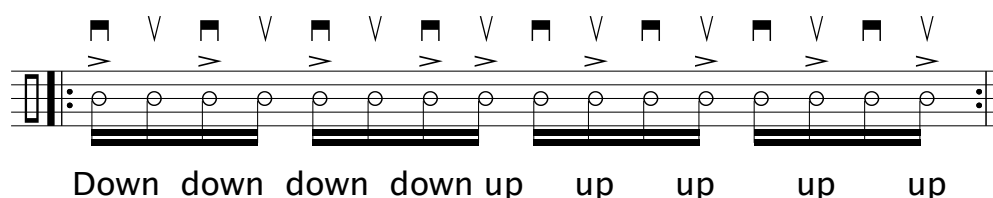


3. Say It

Get It in Your Brain: Discover the Bow Direction

Now, call out the bow directions of the accents as you air bow. Slow it down and say “DOWN up DOWN up DOWN up DOWN UP down UP down UP down UP down UP.” Then, drop out the unstressed words to reveal your Bowing Key: “DOWN DOWN DOWN DOWN UP UP UP UP UP.”

Ex. 11C



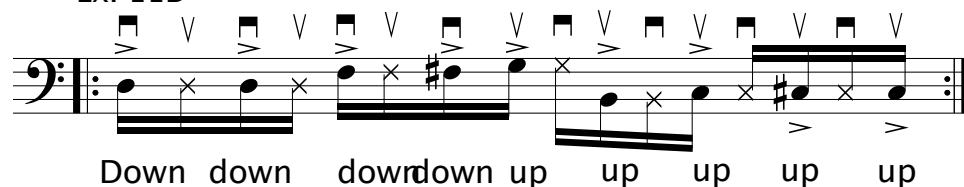
Musical notation for Ex. 11C. The staff shows a sequence of notes with accents. Above the staff, a series of 'V' marks indicate bow direction: down, up, down, up, down, up, down, up, down, up, down, up, down, up, down, up. Below the staff, the corresponding bow directions are written: Down, down, down, down, up, up, up, up, up, up, up, up, up, up, up, up.

4. Play It!

Get It on Your Instrument

Now, place your bow on the string, play all of the sixteenth notes, and let your voice direct your arm to emphasize the accents of the groove. Try to ghost those placekeeper notes as much as possible. Remember to use tiny bow strokes and to mute the strings with your left hand when you play the ghost notes

Ex. 11D



Musical notation for Ex. 11D. The staff shows a sequence of notes with accents. Above the staff, a series of 'V' marks indicate bow direction: down, up, down, up, down, up, down, up, down, up, down, up, down, up, down, up. Below the staff, the corresponding bow directions are written: Down, down, down, down, up, up, up, up, up, up, up, up, up, up, up, up.

You can apply Strum Bowing to any riff. It's a simple process that never changes: all down beats are down bow and all up beats are up bow. Easy to remember.

Play

Random Tunes

The best way to develop a well-rounded technique is to work in a number of different genres. Just as we are better people when we know and love many different kinds of people, we are better musicians when we know and love many different kinds of music.

Surf a variety of radio stations or Internet playlists, or choose tunes randomly from your music collection. Whatever tune comes up, challenge yourself to break down the learning process with the Groove Proficiency System and figure out how to play it using Strum Bowing

Groove Prep

Groove Study 11: Doin' the Strum

All the bowings in this piece are consistent with the rule of Strum Bowing: all down beats are down bows, and all up beats are up bows, except for the riff in the Violin 1 part at bars 9-12 and 15-18. Go crazy on the tremolo at the end.

Bass

Groove Study 11

Doin' the Strum

Tracy Silverman

f

5 pizz.

7

9

11

13

17

21 arco

ff

23

The musical score is written for a bass instrument in 4/4 time. It begins with a four-measure introduction marked *f*. The main body of the piece consists of measures 5 through 23. Measures 5-12 are marked *pizz.* (pizzicato). Measures 13-16 continue the pizzicato texture. Measures 17-20 are marked *arco* (arco). Measure 21 is marked *ff* (fortissimo) and features a series of vertical strokes (V) above the notes. Measures 22-23 conclude the piece with a final chord and a fermata.

Variations on a Groove



Variety

Good rhythm players have an instinct for variety. They understand that the human brain is designed to start ignoring things after a short time if they remain static, so their playing is vibrantly alive and constantly in flux. It breathes with the music. Yes, there is beauty in repetition, but not necessarily in exact repetition.

*Yes, there is
beauty in
repetition,
but not
necessarily
in exact
repetition.*

Unpredictability

Many rhythm players will keep you involved by intentionally throwing in seemingly random accents. By focusing on the underlying subdivision, the strum, you can shape and spice up your groove without losing it. In fact, it's much easier to do that than to keep playing the same thing over and over again as exactly as possible. That's work. You don't work a cello.

Groove Prep

Groove Study 12: Variations on a Groove

This Groove Study is more of a guided improvisation. Start with our familiar Practice Groove 1 as your home base. Next, you'll play a variation of it. Then, try to make up your own variations. After that, come back to the original home base groove. Repeat. It will sound decidedly chaotic in the improvisation section, but it works as long as everyone is strumming together and all the Groovons line up.



David "Doc" Wallace

Chair of the String Dept.,
Berklee College of Music
www.docwallacemusic.com

Groove Study 12

Variations on a Groove

Tracy Silverman

Practice Groove 1

Down up down up up up down Down up down up up up down

Variation 1

Down up down up up up down Down up down up up up down

4 Make up your own variations

Practice Groove 1

Down up down up up up down Down up up up up up down

Variation 2

Down up up up up up down Down up up up up up down

10 Make up your own variations

Practice groove 1

Down up down up up up down Down up down up up up down

Groove Study 13:

Triplets and the 12/8 Shuffle

The consistent up/down strum that we've been using in the previous Practice Grooves also applies to triplets, quintuplets and other odd numbered groupings or meters.

Some styles, such as Celtic tunes in 6/8 or 9/8 time and 12/8 blues shuffles, subdivide each beat into groups of three. As with any other application of Strum Bowing, the bow maintains consistent down/up subdivisions. But in odd number groupings, the downbeat accents alternate between down and up bows. For instance:

Ex. 13A



As you practice this, try to make the up bow accents equal to the down bow accents. Use your voice to help you.

Groove Prep

Groove Study 13: Triplets and the 12/8 Shuffle

This piece is all about getting comfortable with triplet accents. That means getting comfortable with strong up bow accents on the back beat, the second and fourth beats of the bar.

In bar 11, I introduce the idea of repeated down and up bows. Add placekeeper ghost notes in between them so that the idea of the strum from bars 9-10 carries over into bars 11-12.

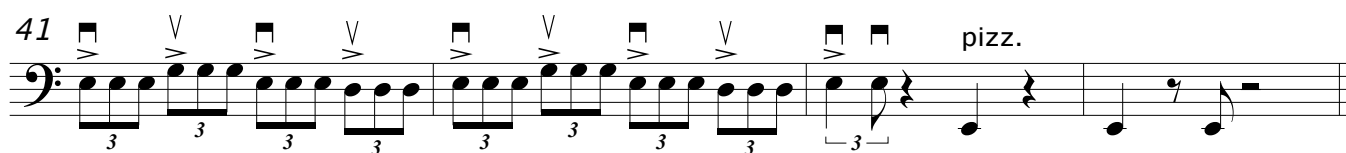
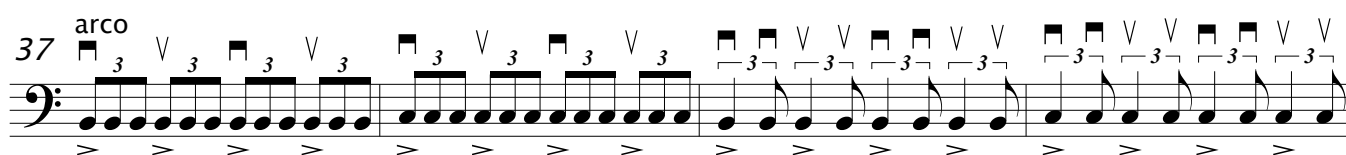
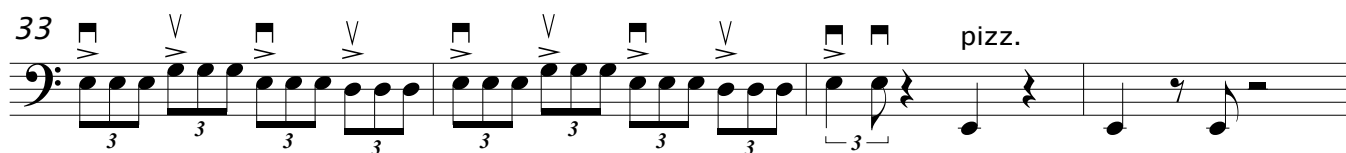
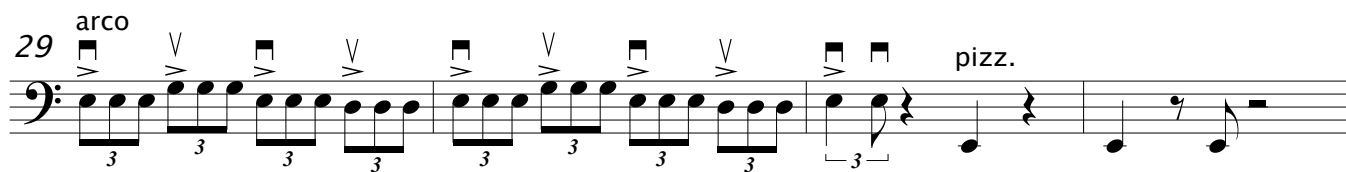
Bars 25-28 introduce a cross rhythm. This may be a little tricky at first, but it will probably feel natural very quickly. It's a little difficult to read but not hard to play. Bars 27-28 should sound identical to bars 25-26; they're just written as the shorthand version, just as bars 23-24 are a shorthand version of bars 21-22. Thank you, basses, for keeping time for us and holding it all together!

Groove Study 13

Triplets and the 12/8 Shuffle

Tracy Silverman

The bass line notation for Groove Study 13 is written in 4/4 time and consists of six staves. The first staff begins with a 4/4 time signature. The notation includes various musical symbols such as triplets (indicated by a '3' below a bracket), accents (indicated by a 'V' above a note), and pizzicato (indicated by 'pizz.' above a note). The second staff is marked with a '5' and 'arco' above the first measure. The third staff is marked with a '9' and 'arco' above the first measure. The fourth staff is marked with a '13' and 'pizz.' above the first measure. The fifth staff is marked with a '17' and a '4' above the first measure. The sixth staff is marked with a '21' and 'pizz.' above the first measure. The notation includes various musical symbols such as triplets (indicated by a '3' below a bracket), accents (indicated by a 'V' above a note), and pizzicato (indicated by 'pizz.' above a note).



Casey Driessen

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Chop 'Til You Drop

The *Chop* is the vertical form of Strum Bowing. It is a non-pitched percussive sound. We can isolate it and use it as a simple back beat, or we can adapt it into a non-pitched version of Strum Bowing, complete with accents and ghosts. Once we develop the Chop, we can combine it with the horizontal Strum Bowing we learned to create something I call a 3D Strum.

*It's not a
down bow.*

*It's an
out bow.*

The Down Stroke

For the basic down stroke, you are going to throw the bow onto the string and leave it there. It's not a down bow. It's an *out bow*.



Chuck Bontrager (Tributosaurus)

Concertmaster, Hamilton Chicago Orchestra

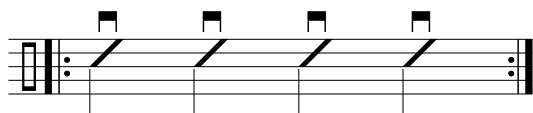
www.chuckbontrager.com

Five Rules of The Chop

- 1. At the frog** The placement of the stroke is at the very bottom of the bow, as low in the bow as you can get without hitting the metal ferrule at the frog.
- 2. Hair out** Rotate the bow so the hair is away from you. This rotation causes the bow to skid away from you a tiny bit when it hits the string. That tiny skid is what produces the chop sound. On violin and viola, that means the stick is toward you and the hair is toward the fingerboard. On cello and bass, the stick is toward you and the hair is toward the bridge.
- 3. Right hand loose** Keep your bow grip relaxed and loose so that the bow is free to skid as it hits the strings. Otherwise it won't make much, if any, sound.
- 4. Dampen the strings** Dampen the strings with the left hand. (See Ch. 4: "Ghost Notes—How to *Not* Play An Instrument.") Don't push the strings down all the way or you will hear pitched notes.
- 5. Leave bow on the strings** After you throw the bow onto the strings, leave it right there. Don't bounce it. This is so you can then make a sound with the up stroke.

As you try out this new stroke, review the five rules above to keep yourself on track.

Ex 14A



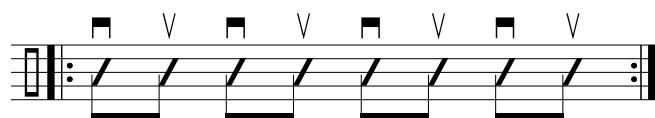
What you are shooting for is a completely non-pitched “chuck” that sounds a little bit like a snare drum. Practice for consistency of tone and dynamics. You can Chop on any string you like, and it’s often a good idea to land on 2 strings at once so you can throw the bow a little harder.

The Up Stroke

The reason we leave the bow on the string after the chop (rule number five) is so that we can then make a sound when we pick it back up. Pull the bow up off the string with a quick jerking motion with your fingers and wrist so that it catches the string and makes a non-pitched, short percussive noise similar to the noise of the down stroke. It’s almost like pizzicato with the bow. Practice this until you can make the up stroke as loud as the down stroke.

I call this basic Chop stroke a Simple Chop. We will learn about the Compound Chop in the next Groove Study.

Ex. 14B



Groove Prep

Groove Study 14: Chop 'Til You Drop

The first four bars are only down strokes so that you can focus on making sure you are following the Five Rules of the Chop. Don't be concerned if your bow makes a little up stroke sound on the rest as you pick it up for the next down stroke. Then, in bars 5-6 and 9-10, you have the chance to practice the up stroke. Try to make it as loud as the down stroke.



Rachel Barton Pine

Concert Violinist, Recording Artist

rachelbartonpine.com

Groove Study 14

Chop Till You Drop

Tracy Silverman

The image displays a bass line for a song, consisting of four staves of music. Each staff begins with a 4/4 time signature and a repeat sign. The notation uses eighth notes, quarter notes, and rests, with some notes marked with a 'V' for emphasis. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Staff 1: Chop chop chop til you drop. Chop chop chop til you drop.

Staff 2: chop and chop and chop and chop Chop chop chop til you drop.

Staff 3: chop and chop and chop and chop

Staff 4: Keep your fingers loose like you're never gonna stop.

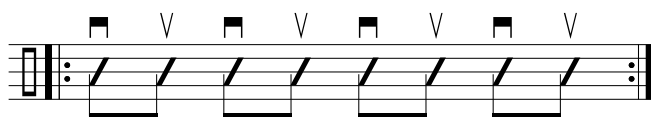
Groove Study 15:

Double-time It

The *Compound Chop* is a double-time version of the Simple Chop.

In order to integrate the Chop into Strum Bowing, we need to be able to play Groovons using the vertical stroke. The Compound Chop allows us to strum vertically just as we learned to strum horizontally.

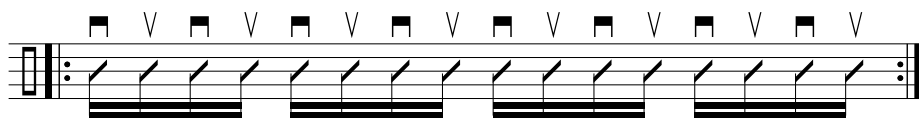
Ex. 15A



As you play the Simple Chop above, start to play more quietly. Don't throw the bow as hard, don't lift it as far from the strings and economize your motions and bow usage. Gradually, let the tempo get faster. Don't force it; just let it creep faster and faster as the motions become smaller and it gets more comfortable.

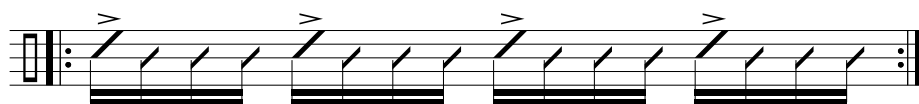
Let's think of the rhythm as sixteenths rather than eighths.

Ex. 15B



As you play this sixteenth note chop, add an accent on the first of each group of four Groovons.

Ex. 15C

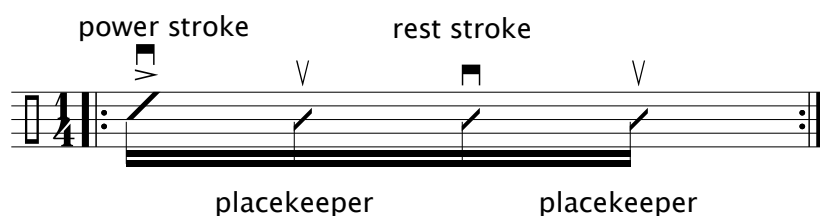


Power Stroke, Rest Stroke

Let's call that first accent the Power Stroke and the third Groovon the Rest Stroke. In between the Power Stroke and the Rest Stroke are two unaccented placekeeper up strokes that keep us accurately lined up on the grid.

If we zoom in on the microscopic level of one beat, it would look like this:

Ex. 15D



Groove Prep

Groove Study 15: Double-time It

Keep you motions small and efficient, especially on the faster compound chops.



Martin Hayes

Irish fiddler

(The Gloaming, The Martin Hayes Quartet)

Groove Study 15

Double-time It

Tracy Silverman

Chop and Chop and Chop and Chop and Chop and Chop and Chop and Chop and

3

Dou - ble time it Dou - ble time it Dou - ble time it Dou - ble time it

4

Dou - ble time it Dou - ble time it Dou - ble time it Dou - ble time it

5

Chop Dou-ble time it Dou-ble time it Dou-ble time it Dou-ble time it

7

Chop Dou-ble time it Dou-ble time it Dou-ble time it Dou-ble time it

9

Chop Dou-ble time it Dou-ble time it Chop Dou-ble time it Dou-ble time it

11

Chop and Chop and Chop and Chop and Chop

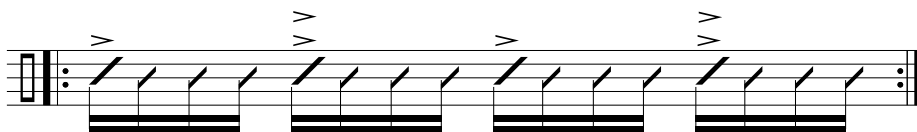
Groove Study 16:

Hit It on the Back Beat

The Back Beat

Once you have the Compound Chop under control, you can take it up a notch by adding a Back Beat. All that means is that you put a heavier accent on the second and fourth beats.

Ex. 16A



Groove Prep

Groove Study 16: Hit It on the Back Beat

This piece adds a backbeat to the Chop and the Compound Chop. In bar 9, the cellos and basses have a riff with a strong syncopation on the last sixteenth note. Using your voice to say the bow direction will help. In bar 20, there is a Led Zeppelin-inspired riff in the bass and cello, which is then echoed by the viola and violins. The three down bows imply unwritten ghosted up bows in between. Also, there are a few places for you to practice switching quickly from vertical chops to horizontal bow strokes, such as bars 15 and 19.

Groove Study 16

Hit It on the Back Beat

Tracy Silverman

Vocal only

Ev - ery bo - dy hit it on the back - beat Chop Chop

3 Vocal only

Ev-ery bo-dy Ev-ery bo-dy Ev-ery bo-dy hit it on the back - beat

5 Say/play

Chop Hit it on the back-beat Chop Hit it on the back-beat

7

Chop Hit it on the back-beat Chop Hit it on the back-beat

9

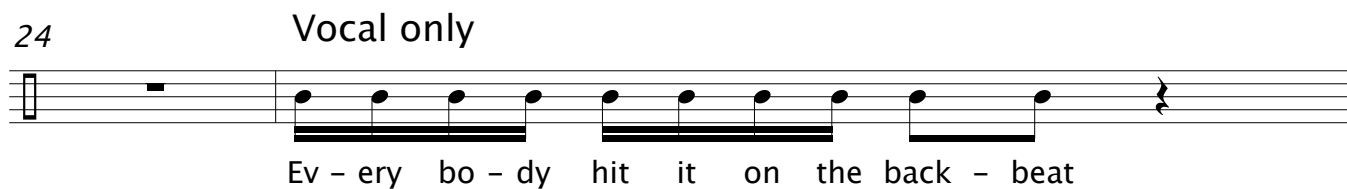
Down up Down up

13

Chop Chop

16

Chop Chop Chop



Groove Study 17:

Groovin' the Chop

Let's go back to the 3 practice grooves from Groove Studies 9, 10 and 11 and see if we can play them with vertical strokes instead of horizontal ones. When we play these grooves with vertical strokes, it doesn't matter what the notes are. We are playing only the rhythm of the groove as if we were playing a non-pitched percussion instrument instead of a violin.



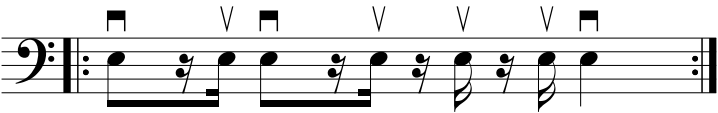
Daniel Bernard Roumain (DBR)

Professor of Practice & Institute Professor
Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts (ASU)
www.danielroumain.com

Practice Groove 1

Here is Practice Groove 1 from Groove Study 9:

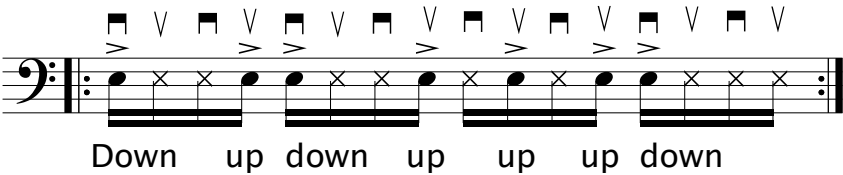
Ex. 17A



Ex. 17A shows a musical staff in bass clef with a key signature of one flat. The notation consists of a sequence of notes: a quarter note, an eighth note, a quarter note, an eighth note, a quarter note, an eighth note, a quarter note, and a half note. Above the staff, there are accents (V) over the second, fourth, sixth, and eighth notes. The staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Here is how we actually play it with the added place-keeper ghost notes:

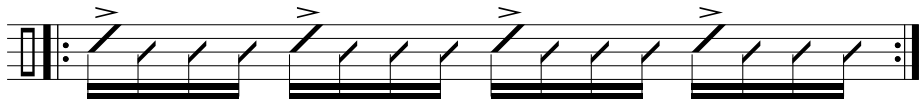
Ex. 17B



Ex. 17B shows the same musical staff as Ex. 17A, but with additional notes. The notation consists of a sequence of notes: a quarter note, an eighth note, a quarter note, an eighth note, a quarter note, an eighth note, a quarter note, and a half note. Above the staff, there are accents (V) over the second, fourth, sixth, and eighth notes. Below the staff, there are labels: "Down", "up", "down", "up", "up", "up", "down". The staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

To play this same groove as a vertical chop, start by playing a Compound Chop.

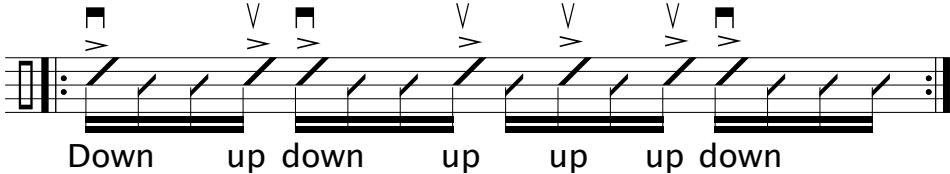
Ex. 17C



Ex. 17C shows a musical staff in bass clef with a key signature of one flat. The notation consists of a sequence of notes: a quarter note, an eighth note, a quarter note, an eighth note, a quarter note, an eighth note, a quarter note, and a half note. Above the staff, there are accents (>) over the second, fourth, sixth, and eighth notes. The staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Now, add the accents of Practice Groove 1. Use your voice to help.

Ex. 17D



Ex. 17D shows the same musical staff as Ex. 17C, but with additional notes. The notation consists of a sequence of notes: a quarter note, an eighth note, a quarter note, an eighth note, a quarter note, an eighth note, a quarter note, and a half note. Above the staff, there are accents (>) over the second, fourth, sixth, and eighth notes. Below the staff, there are labels: "Down", "up", "down", "up", "up", "up", "down". The staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Practice Groove 2

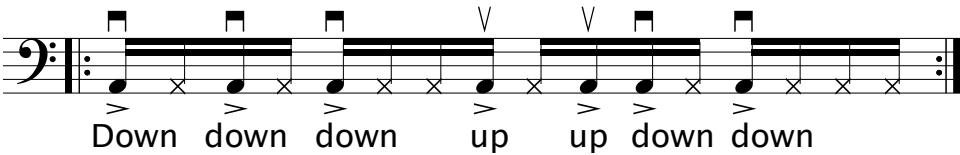
Let's apply this same process to Practice Groove 2 from Groove Study 10. Here's the shorthand version:

Ex. 17E



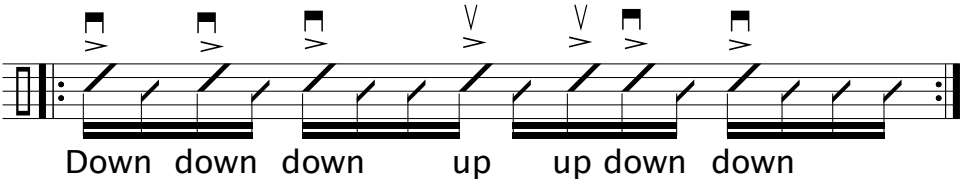
...which we actually play like this with added placekeeper notes:

Ex. 17F



...and which can be played vertically like this:

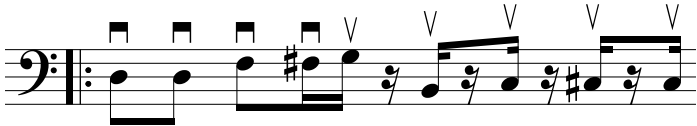
Ex. 17G



Practice Groove 3

Here's Practice Groove 3 from Groove Study 11:

Ex. 17H



Musical notation for Ex. 17H, a bass line in 4/4 time. The notes are: G2, A2, B2, C#3, D3, E3, F#3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5. There are five 'V' marks above the notes: C#3, D3, E3, F#3, and G4.

Here it is with the ghosted placekeeper notes:

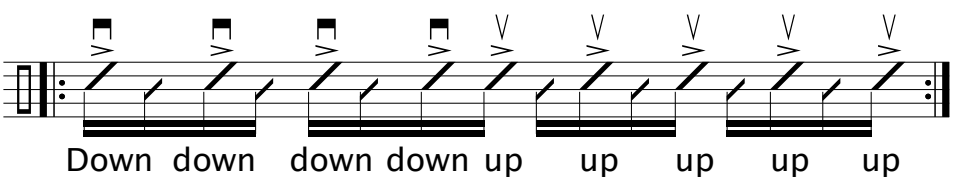
Ex. 17i



Musical notation for Ex. 17i, a bass line in 4/4 time. The notes are: G2, A2, B2, C#3, D3, E3, F#3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5. There are five 'V' marks above the notes: C#3, D3, E3, F#3, and G4. Below the notes are the words: Down down down down up up up up up.

And here it is as a vertical Chop pattern:

Ex. 17J



Musical notation for Ex. 17J, a vertical Chop pattern in 4/4 time. The notes are: G2, A2, B2, C#3, D3, E3, F#3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5. There are five 'V' marks above the notes: C#3, D3, E3, F#3, and G4. Below the notes are the words: Down down down down up up up up up.

Groove Prep

Groove Study 17: Groovin' the Chop

We start by reviewing our Simple and Compound Chops. Then, we take the practice grooves we learned horizontally in Groove Studies 1, 9, 10 and 11 and play them vertically. In bars 29-32, we have Practice Groove 3 in the cellos and violas while violins and basses play Practice Groove 2 at the same time. As always, use your voice to help you play the rhythms.



The Turtle Island String Quartet

circa 1995

Groove Study 17

Groovin' the Chop

Tracy Silverman

3/4

Chop and Chop and Chop and Chop and

3

Chop and Chop and Chop and Chop and

4

Dou - ble time it Dou - ble time it Dou - ble time it Dou - ble time it

5

Dou - ble time it Dou - ble time it Dou - ble time it Dou - ble time it

6

Chop and Chop and Chop and Chop and Chop and Chop and Chop and Chop and

10

Vocal only Say/play Vocal only Say/play

Down up down Down up down Down up down Down up down

4

18

Down up down up up up down Down up down up up up down

20

Down up down up up up down

23

Down up down up up up down Down up down up up up down

25

Down up down up up up down Down up down up up up down

27

Bar - bar - bar. Bar - be - cue. Pork

30

Bar - bar - bar. Bar - be - cue. Pork. Bar - bar - bar. Bar - be - cue. Pork.

32

Bar - bar - bar. Bar - be - cue. Pork.

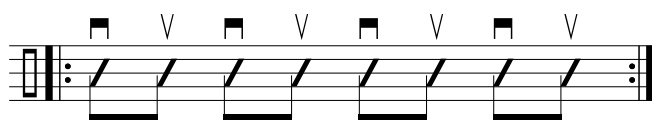
Groove Study 18:

Changing Gears

You've mastered horizontal and vertical strokes! Now, you're ready to combine the two.

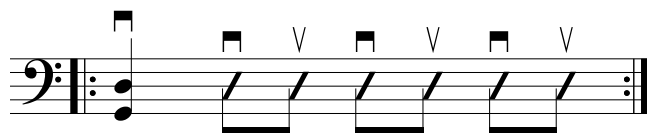
First, play a Simple Chop.

Ex. 18A



Now, add a horizontal stroke on the first beat.

Ex. 18B



Since the Chop takes place exclusively at the frog, you will play the horizontal notes at the frog as well. Remember to dampen the strings with your left hand for the Chops but to lift the dampening fingers for the horizontal down beat stroke.

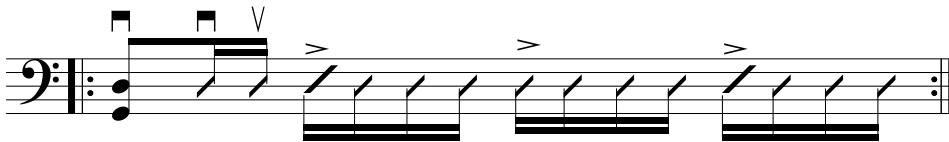
Now, double time the Simple Chop to make it a Compound Chop.

Ex. 18C



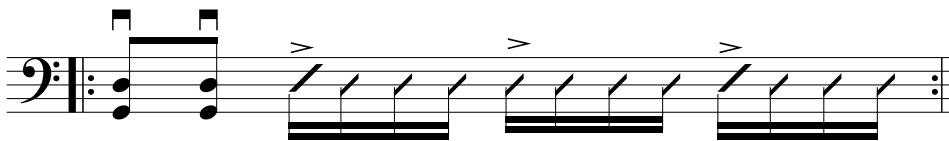
Add a horizontal note on the downbeat, just as before. And you can also start to bring out the back beat on the second and fourth beats.

Ex. 18D



Now, instead of one horizontal eighth note on the down beat, play two eighth notes.

Ex. 18E



Groove Prep

Groove Study 18: Changing Gears

We start with the Simple Chop, then add a horizontal down beat stroke as we did above in Ex. 16B. Then, we do the same with the Compound Chop, similarly to Ex 16D. In bar 11, we add the second horizontal note, as we did in Ex. 16E.



Joe Deninzon,
Electric Violinist, (Stratospheerius)
www.joedeninzon.com

Groove Study 18

Changing Gears

Tracy Silverman

1 Chop and Chop and Chop and Chop and

2 Down Chop and Chop and Chop and Chop and Chop and Chop and

4 Down Chop and Chop and Chop and

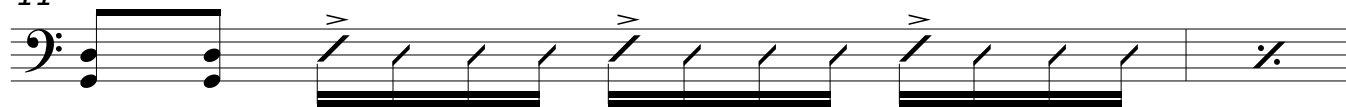
5 Dou - ble time it Dou - ble time it Dou - ble time it Dou - ble time it

6 Down Dou - ble time it Dou - ble time it Dou - ble time it

7 Dou - ble time it Dou - ble time it Dou - ble time it Dou - ble time it


8 Down Dou - ble time it Dou - ble time it Dou - ble time it

11




Down down Dou-ble time it Dou-ble time it Dou-ble time it

13




Down down Dou-ble time it Down down Dou-ble time it

15



Down down Dou-ble time it Down down Dou-ble time it

17



Yeah!

Groove Study 19:

3-D Barbecue

You've just finished learning the basics of the 3-D Strum, a groove that combines vertical and horizontal bow strokes. Let's practice it with some grooves we are already familiar with.



Earl Maneein

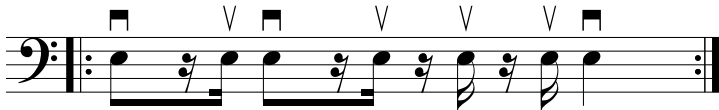
Violin, (SEVEN)SUNS, Black Heart Sutra)

www.earlmaneeinmusic.com

Practice Groove 1

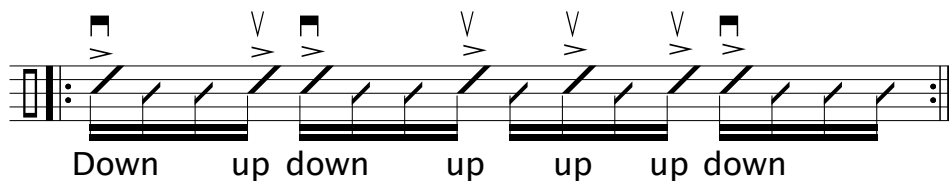
We took our Practice Groove 1

Ex. 19A



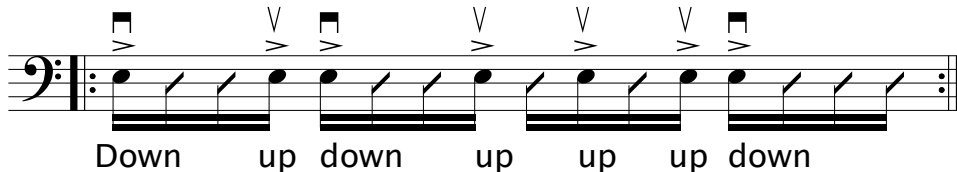
...and learned how to play it vertically like this:

Ex. 19B



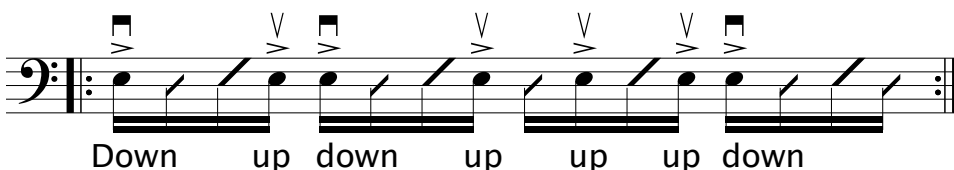
Now let's turn those vertical accents back into horizontal notes. Remember to play it all at the frog.

Ex. 19C



You can take this groove one step further by putting a heavy Chop back beat on the second and fourth beats. Use your left hand to dampen the strings for the vertical Chops but open the strings up to ring on the horizontal strokes. Slow it down if you need to. Use your voice to help you. If you can say it, you can play it!

Ex. 19D



Practice Groove 2

Now let's do the same process for Practice Groove 2 from Chapter 9.

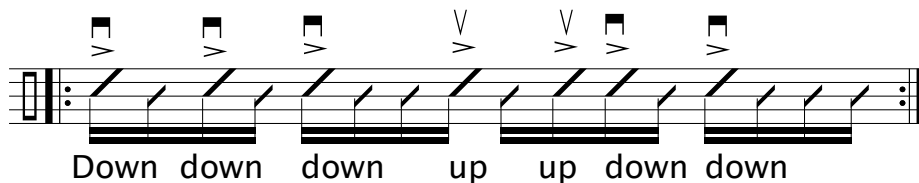
Here's the original riff:

Ex. 19E



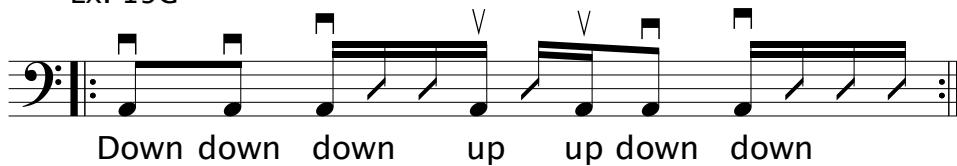
Now play the groove vertically like this:

Ex. 19F



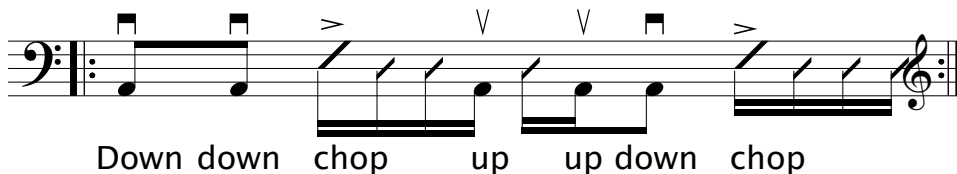
Let's turn those accents into horizontal bass notes. Remember to keep it all at the frog.

Ex. 19G



Now let's replace the bass notes on the backbeats with heavy Chops.

Ex. 19H



Groove Prep

Groove Study 19: 3-D Barbecue

This piece is based on Practice Groove 2. The riff is broken down at the beginning—part of it is in the upper strings and part is in the lower strings. At bar 19, the groove continues but with solos on top. At bar 27, we have 4 bars of classical-flavored counterpoint, but then we're right back to the groove at bar 31. Then we have a hemiola (cross rhythm) for the big ending.



Richard Greene

Violinist, legendary “Inventor of the Chop”

www.richardgreene.net

Groove Study 19

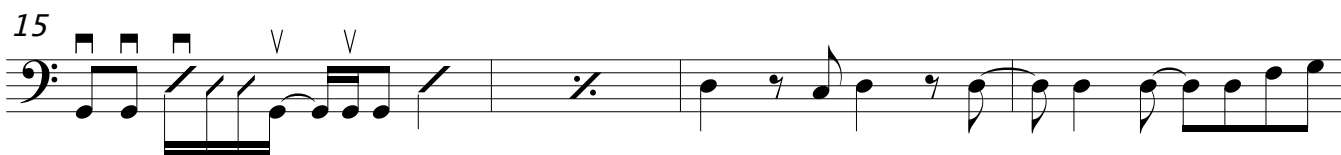
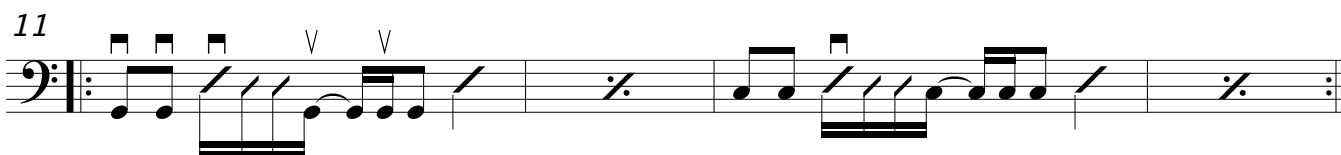
3D Barbecue

Tracy Silverman

♩ = 72




Bar-bar - bar - bar-be-cue pork Down down down up up down down



Improvise using any of these notes



23

[illegible]

31

Exercise 31 is a short piece in bass clef, 3/4 time. It consists of three measures. The first measure contains a half note Bb and a quarter note D. The second measure contains a half note E and a quarter note F. The third measure contains a half note G and a quarter note A. The piece ends with a double bar line.

[illegible]

38

38

[illegible]

Groovin' on the Vertizontal



Groove Prep

Groove Study 20: Groovin' on the Vertizontal

In this piece, we take 3-D Strum versions of Practice Grooves 1 and 2 and use them in the context of a bass line and melody—the musical equivalent of defining a word by using it in a sentence. At bar 5, we have the harmonized version of the groove with a double-time back beat. In bar 9, we add a melody in the violin 1. In bar 21, we shift to Practice Groove 2, but we start it more minimally, with just a few of the accents, and let it build into the fully accented groove, which doesn't become complete until bar 33. We return to the first groove at bar 37 and end with the riff from bar 20.

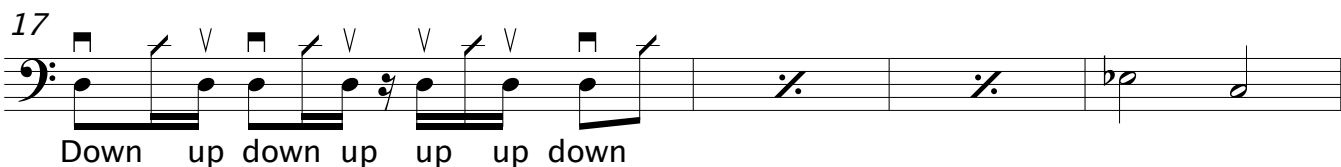
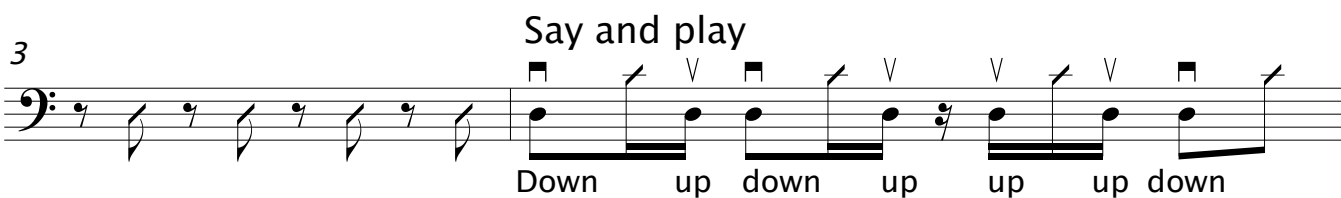
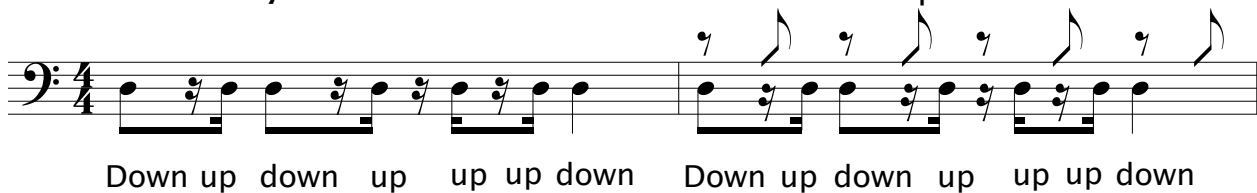
Groove Study 20

Groovin' on the Vertizontal

Tracy Silverman

Vocal only

Vocal and Chops



Freestylin'—A Groove Jam



The beauty of the Chop and percussive bowing is that there are no pitches to worry about. You can practically ignore your left hand! Rhythmic variation is a great way to get started with improvisation. You'd be surprised how much you can do with just two or three different notes if the rhythms are interesting.

You'd be surprised how much you can do with just two or three different notes if the rhythms are interesting.

Improv Tips

- **Don't disturb the groove.** Listen to what's going on around you, and try to fit in. Be a percussion player. Find the accents of the groove, and Chop along with it.
- **Find the most important pitches being used.** Sing them.
- **Play the pitches that you're singing on your instrument.** Ghost the notes until you're sure about them.
- **Drift higher in the bow** toward the middle; less vertical, more horizontal strokes.
- **Explore. Be flexible.**
- **Move or dance while you play.**
- **Sing along!**

Groove Prep

Groove Study 21: Freestylin'— A Groove Jam

A quick reference to the Suzuki method in bar 2, and then a highly syncopated riff in bar 4. There is a dialogue between the two, and in bars 9-16, we create a rhythmic jam by overlapping the two rhythms on various combinations of instruments. Bar 17 begins something new. In this section, I have written out all the sixteenth note pitches, but you should supply your own rhythmic groove of accents and ghosts. You could start with one of the two rhythms from earlier in the piece, or you could start with one of the Practice Grooves. But, I encourage you to venture off into your own territory, using the given pitches as the Groovons. This is a chance for you to improvise a groove, and a chance for everyone to improvise at the same time. Like all creative acts, it's a little messy but fun!



Julie Lyonn Lieberman

Performer/Author/Educator, Artistic Director: Strings
Without Boundaries
www.julielyonn.com

Bass

Groove Study 21

Freestylin': A Groove Jam

Tracy Silverman

pizz.
f

5

arco

9 4

13

17 Div.
arco
pizz.

21

25

29

33 Shake it out!
arco

The bass line is written in 4/4 time. It begins with a four-measure phrase of eighth notes, marked 'pizz.' and '*f*'. This is followed by a four-measure phrase of eighth notes, marked 'arco'. The third measure of this phrase contains a '4' above the staff, indicating a four-measure rest. The fourth measure is a half note. The fifth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The sixth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The seventh measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The eighth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The ninth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The tenth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The eleventh measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The twelfth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The thirteenth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The fourteenth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The fifteenth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The sixteenth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The seventeenth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The eighteenth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The nineteenth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The twentieth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The twenty-first measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The twenty-second measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The twenty-third measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The twenty-four measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The twenty-fifth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The twenty-six measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The twenty-seventh measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The twenty-eighth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The twenty-ninth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The thirtieth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The thirty-first measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The thirty-second measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The thirty-third measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The thirty-four measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The thirty-fifth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The thirty-six measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The thirty-seventh measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The thirty-eighth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The thirty-ninth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The fortieth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The forty-first measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The forty-second measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The forty-third measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The forty-four measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The forty-fifth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The forty-six measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The forty-seventh measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The forty-eighth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The forty-ninth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The fiftieth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The fifty-first measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The fifty-second measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The fifty-third measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The fifty-four measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The fifty-fifth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The fifty-six measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The fifty-seventh measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The fifty-eighth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The fifty-ninth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The sixtieth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The sixty-first measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The sixty-second measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The sixty-third measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The sixty-four measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The sixty-fifth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The sixty-six measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The sixty-seventh measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The sixty-eighth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The sixty-ninth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The seventieth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The seventy-first measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The seventy-second measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The seventy-third measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The seventy-four measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The seventy-fifth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The seventy-six measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The seventy-seventh measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The seventy-eighth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The seventy-ninth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The eightieth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The eighty-first measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The eighty-second measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The eighty-third measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The eighty-four measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The eighty-fifth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The eighty-six measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The eighty-seventh measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The eighty-eighth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The eighty-ninth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The ninetieth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The ninety-first measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The ninety-second measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The ninety-third measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The ninety-four measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The ninety-fifth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The ninety-six measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The ninety-seventh measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The ninety-eighth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The ninety-ninth measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes. The hundred measure is a four-measure phrase of eighth notes.

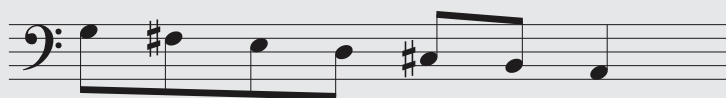
Groove Study 22: Side By Side

Groove Prep

Groove Study 22: Side By Side

Bars 1-4 make a big crescendo. Start off in the middle of the bow pianissimo, and gradually move towards the frog to get heavier and louder. Lay your left pinky over the strings to dampen them for the ghost notes. Second violins, it's all you at bar 9. The firsts have the melody, the violas have the harmony, and the seconds are "driving the bus" by playing all the Groovons. Then at bar 25, the rhythm moves to the first violins. The solo section at bars 41-57 is intended to encourage a dialogue between players. I wrote it as a back-and-forth between two people, but it could go around a whole group of people. The solo sections start at four bars each, then go down to two bars, and at bar 53 it's one bar each. The whole solo section is over an A7 chord, which is this scale:

Ex. 22A

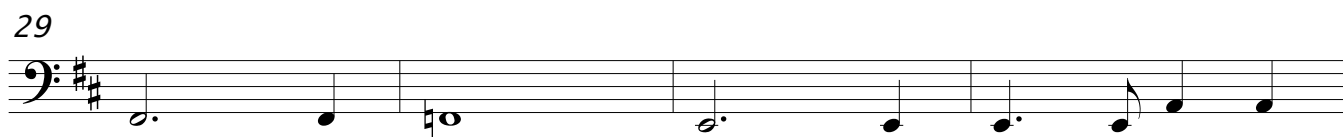
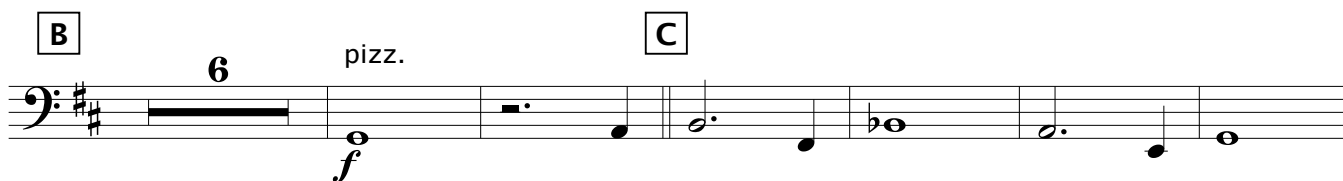
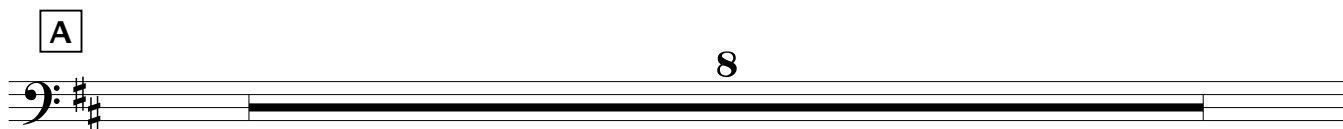
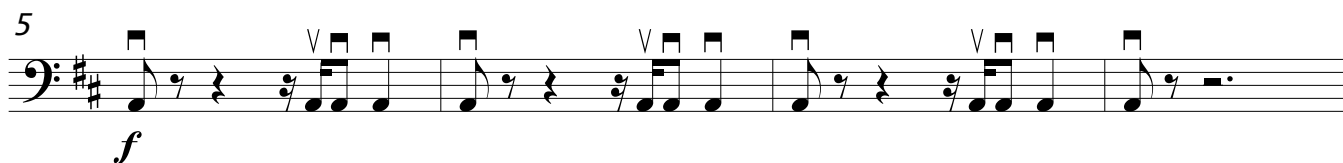
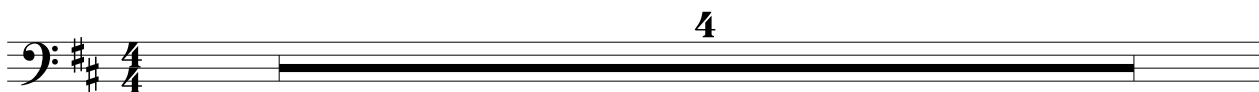


It's an A Major scale with the seventh lowered from a G# to a G natural. It should feel pretty comfortable for most string players. I encourage you to approach the improvisation as a rhythmic variation of just a few notes.

Groove Study 22

Side By Side

Tracy Silverman

 $\text{♩} = 110$ 

E

45



49



53

**F**

61

**G**

69



73



Glossary



3-D Strum: A combination of horizontal and vertical strumming.

Back Beat: The second and fourth beats in a 4/4 meter.

Bowing Key: The bow directions determined by Strum Bowing; the bowing that results when you add placekeeper notes to a phrase and impose a constant down/up bowing grid, then remove the placekeepers but retain the bowing.

Chop: Also referred to as the Simple Chop; a non-pitched vertical bow stroke consisting of a down stroke and an audible up stroke.

Compound Chop: A double-time version of the Simple Chop in which the first note is stressed and the other 3 are not.

Dampen: To mute the string by touching it lightly with a finger of the left hand without producing a harmonic.

Feel: The personality that you bring to a groove; those subtle intangibles of timing and dynamics that create a rhythmic character.

Gesture Bowing: Emphasizing with your bow arm the way you might if you were speaking emphatically.

Ghost Notes: The unstressed notes in a groove; dropped notes; nearly inaudible pitched or non-pitched sounds; the opposite of accents.

GPS for Strings: A method for learning how to play new grooves with Strum Bowing. The four steps are:

1. Hum It—Get It in Your Voice: Vocalize the Groove
2. Strum It—Get It in Your Body: Find the Groove
3. Say It—Get It in Your Brain: Discover the Bow Direction
4. Play It!—Get It on Your Instrument

Grid: A consistent framework that helps keep rhythms evenly aligned; a rhythm ruler; a.k.a. The Groovon Grid.

Groove: A consistent subdivision of the pulse defined by a pattern of accented and ghosted notes.

Groovon: The smallest particle of a rhythmic groove; the smallest usable subdivision of the beat; a Groovon is to a beat what protons and neutrons are to atoms.

Physicalize: To actualize your inner drummer, i.e. to express the subdivision physically as a strum or other motion; to allow your body to respond to a groove with movement; to dance to the groove.

Placekeeper Notes: Ghosted subdivisions that fill long notes or rests and keep you properly aligned on the grid.

Pocket: Another word for groove or feel. Drummers and bass players often refer to being in the pocket or having a great pocket.

Power Stroke: The first, heaviest stroke of the Compound Chop.

Pulse: The beat. For instance, in 4/4 time, there are four pulses per measure.

Rest Stroke: The third, unstressed stroke of the Compound Chop.

Strum Bowing: Using your bow like you're strumming a guitar.

Subdivision: 1) The act of dividing a pulse evenly into smaller increments. For instance, a quarter note can be divided into four sixteenth notes.

2) A fraction of a pulse.

Swing: The unequal subdivision of a pulse, in which the first note is typically twice as long as the second, creating a triplet. The amount of swing can vary from a subtle unevenness to a "hard" swing.

Syncopation: Accenting a normally unaccented up beat. It usually has the feeling of anticipating the following beat.



For video demonstrations of the musical examples in this book, audio recordings of the 22 Groove Studies for Strings, and all things Strum Bowing related, please visit **Strumbowing.com**

If you have questions, thoughts or suggestions, please visit and feel free to contact me at **www.tracysilverman.com** where you can also sign up for my newsletter, The Scuttlebutt.

I teach jazz and electric violin at Belmont University in Nashville, TN. For information about workshops/clinics/residencies, teacher training, video lessons or performances, you can reach me at **info@tracysilverman.com**

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Groooooooooove on....



Strum Bowing \ˈstrəm ˈbō-ɪŋ\ noun

Using a bow like you're strumming a guitar.

22 Groove Studies for Strings is a set of progressive string orchestra etudes for middle school through college string ensembles that reinforces and utilizes the techniques from *The Strum Bowing Method*. Grade level 3.

"My old partner in the Turtle Island String Quartet has distilled it down to a pretty exact science, and does it with humor and warmth. I don't know how someone could go through this book and not come out grooving!"

– **Darol Anger** (Turtle Island String Quartet,) Assoc. Prof., Berklee College of Music

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