

Style & Kit Reference 1.2

Groove Agent 3

Steinberg Media Technologies GmbH
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Groove Agent 3

The sounds of Groove Agents 3

The sound library of Groove Agent 3 was created to cover as many musical bases as possible. Authenticity was also a key issue: the idea was to tailor drum kits and percussion instruments to a perfect fit for each musical style, as well as to capture natural room ambience for every sound.

What's more, special stylistic devices were employed during the recording of drum sounds to invoke the spirit of the given era and lend these sounds authenticity. Case in point: '50s-style kits were played with brushes and mallets, while '80s-style kits featuring additional piccolo snare drums were thumped with rods.

Rather than falling back on a sample library to prep the contents of Groove Agent, every drum sound was recorded in a pro studio in Sweden using high-quality analog equipment. All sounds were recorded with multiple microphones to capture the room's natural sound, which can be added to the VST instrument using the Ambience control. Contemporary electronic sounds feature standard studio effects such as reverb and echo.

The Styles

Groove Agent 3 features 123 dynamic and spirited ready-to-go drum styles from the past 50 years - each including up to 25 variations and its own drum kit assigned to it.

Up to 25 complexity levels serve to select different variations of the given style. In addition to variations on the basic rhythmic pattern, fills and halftime grooves suitable for each style are also available. Random and auto fill functions liven up the proceedings, while the Shuffle and Humanize knobs add a dash of swing and natural feel to the rhythm recipe.

Groove Agent 3 suits almost any musical style from classical to contemporary, capturing the full sonic palette of several high-quality drum kits and digital drum machines. This makes it a rich and versatile instrument and style library. one that sounds just as powerful and emotive in the context of a heavy rock song as it does in a dance music production.

All of the carefully created Styles provide inspiration throughout the musical creation process, and aid all musicians in creation of fully-fledged drum tracks. Offering new combinations of styles and drum kits, Groove Agent 3 grants you unparalleled creative freedom.

See below in the "Style Reference" for the entire exhaustive list of Styles.

NEW Styles in Groove Agent 3

With Groove Agent 3 we wanted to add new dimensions to our drum tool concept, so we hired, at great expense, a highly-talented session drummer capable of delivering live drumming performances ranging "from very sparse to very hot".

He sat behind his drum kit and we recorded him playing over 1,000 unique grooves plus hundreds of percussion patterns. Each style was played in 25 variations, plus fills and half tempo feels; all in all, we added 42 Styles to the Groove Agent Arsenal of styles .

Acoustic Drum Kits in GA3

These exquisite drum kits are included in Groove agent 3:

- **'50s Jazz Kit**

A slightly dampened, sounding relatively open and loose drum kit.

- **'60s Pop Kit**

A heavily dampened kit, recalling a time when towels were draped over toms.

- **'70s Rock Kit**

Loud, deep and resonant, this kit sounds enormous.

- **'80s Studio Kit**

Retro, hip sound as featured on contemporary CDs

- **Studio Kit**

A top of the line set with some of the best drums and cymbals around. We wanted to achieve a sound that would fit a variety of styles that demand punchy, clean, modern drumming. There are three high quality snares included, each with a different size and composition, carefully tuned to bring out the individual characteristics of each instrument.

- **Heavy Kit**

This drum-set is intended to fit many of today's Metal and Rock styles, where busy bass drumming is a vital ingredient. The dry character of the ride-cymbal and the great sound from the crashes will cut through any wall of guitars.

- **Noisy Kit**

We wanted to create a modern drum sound using traditional drums. These instruments are very small but along with the boom-box effect they sound much bigger than they really are. The snares are a thin, high pitched piccolo and a small 10" mini-snare. Some of the cymbals are rare vintage instruments that are almost impossible to find anywhere today, while others are modern, noisy sounding instruments that have seen better days...

Also includes vintage drums such as a Red Slingerland "Radio King" (the world's most recorded snare drum), a black handmade snare drum from Hanus & Hert in Prague and a Slingerland copper snare.

NEW - these are the all-new Kits in Groove Agent 3:

Providing the fuel for the explosive new styles are 3 new acoustic and several digital drum kits, such as the Linn LM-1 Drum Computer. The all-new top-quality studio kits offer a highly polished, refined sound and can be widely used in many modern pop and rock productions. Real highlights are also the all-percussive sounds.

- **Gula**

It looks a bit odd with its extended bass drum (two kick drums mounted head-to-head), but the sound is easily recognised as the very popular sound found on many hit songs recorded at Gula. This kit is referred to as “Gula”.

- **Clean Adult Fun** (Premier Gen-X)

The second kit was a Premier Gen-X set with pinstripe heads. It's tuned to produce a dry, clean, elegant and widely-useful sound, hence the name “Clean Adult Fun”.

- **Fula** (Ludwig)

For the third set of recordings, we moved into the reverberant Stone Room and used an old, precious Ludwig kit from the early sixties, nick-named “Fula”. Think “Ringo Starr”, and you'll know what sort of drum set we're talking about. Mother-of-pearl finish, white heads and almost no damping gives a very dynamic jazz-to-pop sound that can be used in a wide variety of situations.

Vintage drum machine Kits in GA3

Some of these beauties are over thirty years old. We think we've managed to capture and re-package the better part of the magic of these drum machines of yesteryear. These vintage drum machines get their ambience from a vintage EMT plate reverb unit.

In Groove Agent 3 we also spiced up the sonic palette with some very well known digital drum machines from the eighties, such as the Linn LM-1 Drum Computer .

Percussion Sounds in GA3

Groove Agent 3 offers a wealth of various percussion instruments in its sound library's treasure-trove. Alongside standard GM sounds, a battery of intriguing instruments, including African drums, rain stick, tambourine, cascabeles, and many more are included. We included lots more Percussion sounds in Groove Agent 3 which play hand in hand with the all new Percussion Agent.

Style Reference

Here's a short description of each style, as expressed by the musicians themselves. As you can see, we've had to abandon the idea of sorting styles chronologically. There are so many styles now, that a new sorting method became necessary. We hope that the introduction of genres (categories) will prove helpful.

Those styles that were new in Groove Agent 2 are marked with an asterisk (*) and the new Groove Agent 3 styles have two asterisks (**) in front of their names. To assist you in finding styles that suit your music, we've added a "T" after the names of those styles that have a triplet or swing feel.

Jazz

Swing (T)

Here's a style used for jazz and big band playing. It's hard to cover all the possibilities in a field as complex as swing/big band drumming, so I chose a straight, forward view for this one. The style was programmed around 144 BPM. It's divided into two sections: the first half in "2", the second in "four on the floor" in order to match the different bass patterns often used in this type of drumming. RB

Jazz Trio (T)

The lost art of brushes. We've implemented the "brush stroke" in Groove Agent and combined it with my own inspiration from brush greats such as Buddy Rich, Louie Bellson, Jo Jones and all the lessons taken from brush legend Ed Thigpen (known from the Oscar Peterson Trio among others). You should know that I don't agree 100% with Sven about what happens when we push the sidestick button. It's a "hire one drummer – get two" effect and that's not so bad, after all. RB

Tom-Toms (T)

This style is used in many different situations. With its origin in the 1920's, when Duke Ellington played "jungle music" in Harlem and then made totally unforgettable by Gene Krupa with the Benny Goodman Orchestra at Carnegie Hall playing "Sing, Sing, Sing" in 1938, this type of drumming is heard in almost every movie made reflecting the 30's and 40's. RB

* Bop (T)

This busy jazzy style could easily be used in a small jazz combo, like piano, bass, drums and a solo instrument. A good choice when you want to make your version of one of the many jazz standards out there. So open up Real Book, hit the Run-button and play. MEB

** Acid Jazz (T)

Just snap into it, this cool yet energetic blend of jazz and funk. There's the liquid fluency of the ride cymbal and the ruff back-beat of the snare, all in one style. From level 16 and up the playful kick changes pattern to give a slightly different groove. There's a tambourine and finger-snaps from the percussionist - plus an overdubbed tiny splash on some higher levels. But you should definitely try mixing in some nice congas and stuff from the Percussion Agent into this. Have fun. NE

Latin

Samba

This Samba style is a mixture between the authentic Samba (when played on the drum kit) and the Samba style that many jazz and fusion drummers use in their playing. MEB

Cha-Cha

Cha-Cha style is a sidestick based style that sounds best with the sidestick button enabled. MEB

Rumba

This is the Afro-Cuban version of the Rumba, not to be confused with the Rhumba (with an "h") that can often be heard in older drum machines. MEB

Bossa Nova

The traditional Bossa Nova style is played with the sidestick on the snare drum. Activate the sidestick button for that authentic feel. MEB

Songo

Songo was created in the late sixties by drummer Chanquito of the group Los Van Van. This style has inspired many of today's jazz and fusion drummers. Songo is one of the more modern Afro-Cuban styles and is sometimes a drummer's first step into the world of Latin music. MEB

* Mozambique

The Mozambique was invented in the 1960s and is one of the more modern Latin rhythms. It's often heard on recordings with funk, jazz and Latin bands and has been developed by several well known drummers. MEB

** 6/8 Latin

If you want more swing in your 6/8 arrangements, try this one. It's based around a sensitive and lively snare drum, covering a wide range of velocity levels. The congas and the triangle add a nice Latin touch. This one works nicely with most tempo settings, with a sweet spot around 94 BPM. MMB

##Moods

Paint

Sometimes there's no need for regular, rhythmic drum playing. If you tell a drummer to "do something", they will probably get into some sort of creative mood and start producing wonderful noises. This is a style that emulates such a situation. SB

* Ominous

This style is a non-rhythmic sound-fx journey through different moods and places, preferably unpleasant ones... Heartbeats, scary noises, chimes and many more noises merge into a melting pot of suggestive impressions. It ranges from the simple to the complex but in a non-linear fashion, beyond the boundaries of standard pattern playing. Still the Fill, Sidestick and Half tempo functions will vary the contents. Also try using the Random function a lot. So, imagine where you will be, and it will be so... NE

* Machinery

Factory hall? No it's not a reverberation algorithm this time. It's the static rhythm of machines working together. Some are small and fast, others are big and slow or vice versa, and they're added one by one and speeding from a small scale industry into the final cacophony of hammers and wheels. Move carefully and put your helmet on. NE

** Old Squeaky

Have you ever thought of pulling the emergency brake while on the train, just to make your daily commute more interesting? Well, of course you have, and of course you've never pulled the red handle. So here's your chance. Just hit the fill button to cut off the electrical power to the tracks, i.e. the drum tracks. Old Squeaky – a brakebeat for all occasions. MMB

** Free Form

When talking about the fine art of improvisation, a guy once said: "If you get any ideas, just forget'em." Don't ever stick to anything. That must have been the motto for this Free Form style. It's totally wacko, with absolutely no structure or thought. But it still has a very nice and inspiring, spontaneous live feeling. The percussionist is somewhat hesitant at first, but is eventually on too. Make good use of the Random function, or even better: Change levels often so that no accidental patterns are created... Or whatever. Feel free. NE

** Storm

Look what the Storm brought us: a blend of different styles from different cultures. There is a soft latin touch to it, as well as marching drums and a nice R'n'B djembe groove in the higher levels, all interacting beautifully. Try adding reverberation to get a more pompous feeling or go to half speed. Eh... that would be a moderate gale, right? NE

Blues

12/8 (T)

This style is a hybrid. The original idea was to create a slow 12/8 feel, similar to what you can hear in many love songs from the fifties. While composing the patterns, I raised the tempo just for fun and noticed that with faster BPM rates there's a whole new feeling, a funky and pretty modern touch. Use it in a ballad or turn it up for that groovy beat. PS

Boogie (T)

Some bands built their careers on simple three-chord songs where the drummer had to work a bit harder. This is a classic boogie style where the feeling is focused on the hihat and ride. PS

* Slow Blues (T)

If I were forced to choose one style and one tempo for an all-night jam session, I'd say "Slow blues at 60 BPM" without hesitation. It's a mood and tempo that could last an entire evening. There are so many cool standards that fit here: "Summertime", "Red House", "Sweet Sixteen" and numerous other classics. Or any relaxed improvisation. Slow Blues in Groove Agent is rather dynamic; see how it increases in volume and intensity as the complexity levels get higher. Also, it re-starts a couple of times (at level 7, 12 and 18) from its basic closed hihat groove. SB

##Country

Shuffle (T)

An uncomplicated style which can give you, as a drummer, a lot of possibilities if you are creative. Instead of just playing backbeats on the snare drum, you can play the whole pattern along with the hihat or ride cymbal, which will give you a "fat" sound in what you're producing. It's harder for your left hand (if you play an ordinary drum set) but a lot more fun. RB

- # Fox (T)** This is one style that has been around for longer than anyone cares to remember. Call it foxtrot, slowfox or whatever; some people would still refer to it as “music”. A merry and light uptempo style. SB
- #Train Beat** This is a style where the drummer has to work hard with the snare drum. It works well in country and rock’n’roll songs and will give your music a “busy” feeling. PS
- ## Pop**
- # 3/4** Here are a number of different styles that have the 3/4 signature in common. The complexity doesn’t go from easy to wild in this one. It’s more like a journey through different attitudes and emotions, all in “three quarter time”. For best results, set your sequencer’s time signature to 3/4. SB
- # Twist** The inspiration here was of course Chubby Checker’s classic “Let’s Twist Again”. On the record, the song is played really straight and simple, but as you crank up the complexity slider here in Groove Agent, you’ll get more variations and additions of bass drum patterns and ride cymbals. RB
- # Pop** High energy pop drumming at your service. Fave tempo is 146 BPM. These rhythms were created to inspire all the other boys in the band. Pop drumming is the motor to a popcycle, with fill-ins from corny to rocket fuel. Can you find the two-bar fill going from A to Z and back again? Happy ride. dB
- # Backbeat (T)** This is the perfect up-tempo style. The drumming is pretty intense and it doesn’t stop to catch its breath, and maybe that is why it’s very easy to create a dance friendly song based on this groove. PS
- # Olympic** It’s funny how a drumming style without accentuated backbeats can make a song really swing. I took the drumming from The Beatles’ Get Back and scaled it down. The result can be heard at the lower levels. I also took the style a few steps further, the levels to the right. Wirebird suggested that this one could be used for gymnastic exercises, hence the style name. SB
- # * 6/8 (T)** One silly omission in the original edition of Groove Agent was that the 6/8 style was missing. There are many lovely songs that need this kind of rhythm, songs like “If you don’t know me by now” and “When I need you”. Please note that you must set the time signature of your host to 6/8 to play this style properly. SB
- # * Steady Beat** Here’s a very basic style that suits almost any tempo. It’s perfect when you need a steady drummer who doesn’t do any unexpected exercises, someone who never flips out, someone who’s not into impressing anyone – but just plays. Plays a steady beat. This style can also be used if you want something with a triplet feeling. Just turn the Shuffle-knob to the right and you will have a steady Shuffle-beat. MEB
- # ** Wonderland (T)** The inspiration to this style comes from some of the best Stevie Wonder songs. It’s a mixture of some of his classic grooves that have become part of many a good drummer’s “musical libraries”. This one is played with a 16th note triplet feeling. MEB

Dance Floor

Tamla

For this style I was inspired by the rock classic "Pretty Woman". This rhythm was also frequently used by artists on the legendary Tamla Motown label. There can't be a better way to start an up-tempo song, than with a snare drum pounding the beat. PS

Soul

This style is influenced by some of the groovy drummers behind James Brown. MEB

Disco

In the early 1970's, the disco era began. In April 1976, the famous New York club Studio 54 took disco-ing to a higher level, but it was the movie Saturday Night Fever that spread the hustling world wide. The drums may sound muffled and some of the fills are kind of cheesy, but that is the charm of this style. When mixed with the rest of the band, this beat makes a nice and funky dance groove. So bring out your bell-bottom pants and your platform shoes, grow some hair on your chest, put on a satin shirt slashed to the waist and get down on it. FvW

* Bombay Dance Hall (T)

It's the third millennium global dance hall beat. Could be London, could be Bombay, could be Sollerntuna. It doesn't really matter, as long as everybody is having a good time. Some artists marry this style to Reggae, others to Hip Hop. It's all around and it's up to you. Try adding or subtracting ambience to the different instruments to vary the sense of space. NE

** Jillie Bean

This style is inspired by the two world famous pop songs Bille Jean and Thriller by Michael Jackson. It features a cool, straight pop groove with a 8th feel that begins Jacko and ends Whacko. FvW

** Mad:ish

The grooves in this style come from some of the most captivating Madonna songs. The beats are very basic with some small variations in the grooves that makes the style so "floory". After a couple of days with Madonna tunes in my headphones, I finally realised the greatness of her music. MEB

Rock

Bonzo

This style is, as the name suggests, to some extent inspired by the late great John Bonham of Led Zeppelin, perhaps the most influential hard rock drummer. I suggest you turn the Ambience dial up to at least 2 o'clock to get that big heavy feel. The patterns A to E are intended to emulate Mr. Bonham's habit of playing the drumkit with his bare hands. To achieve this effect, Percussion 2 should be activated for these patterns. Percussion 1 is supposed to sound like a tambourine attached to the hihat. The complexity increases from pattern 1-10 with hihat and then it starts over for Pat 11-20 with ride. The Half Tempo Feel patterns have small snare triplet things going on that are not found in the regular patterns.

Although perhaps not environmentally correct, some songs just call for being run on leaded fuel. MD

Dark Side

It never ceases to amaze me, how you can sell so many records and play so few notes. There's a fair amount of inspiration from Pink Floyd's "Dark Side of the Moon" album in this style, well suited for slow songs. SB

Arena

During the glory days of the 80s, the hard rock guys wore tight pants, sprayed their long hair and stole make-up from their girlfriends. There is no doubt that they really could play drums though – hard and distinctive. Since the music should be hard and loud, the dynamic has pretty much just one level – louder.

The fills are very typical for those drummers, intense, distinctive and almost composed sometimes. PS

* Indie Punk

A classic drum figure for a Punk song should be powerful and fast. But a drum figure for a Modern Punk song must be powerful, fast, individual and creative in order to stress the structure of the song. These characteristics are implemented in this style. Enjoy and keep on rocking. MS

* Unplugged

Music Television made it popular. A big rock song must also be played in a smooth ambience so the audience can easily listen to the voice of the singer. This style is full of soft played beats/fills and uses the popular and lovely rods. MS

* Ballad

It's early in the morning, your coffee is still hot and your latest ballad needs some steady and powerful drums. Try this one. The tambourine can add extra sparkle to the chorus and maybe straighten out the overall drum sound as well. (And psst, here's something I just discovered: try this one at 120 BPM. Pretty energetic, eh?) MS

** Wattsup

Sometimes drum machines tend to sound way too stiff and play too much in time. And no matter how you try to kick things up, the machine never lets loose. Here's a style representing a loose and swaying rock'n'roll attitude.

The drumming here is a bit behind, a bit before and never really right on the beat. For an even more human feel, try to vary the tempo slightly throughout your song. Maybe push the tempo up in the choruses while taking it back down during verses. Wattsup rolls up and down and is stony and uneven. It may sound as bad programming to some, to me it's only rock'n roll. And I like it. MMB

** 5/4 Rock

This is a rather basic rock pattern, with one significant difference: the odd meter that adds a fifth beat to the bar. You might think it's like driving a car with five wheels instead of four, but really – this style can add new dimensions to any rock production. The percussionists get busy keeping a steady groove as the drummer hits the low tom or snare on all those "extra" beats. Gimme five... NE

** Irish Rock

"Slowly evolving, one little step at the time, but rock steady and without hesitation towards perfection." That could be a description of the Irish nation. But it's this very style, inspired by the beats of the amazing Mr Larry Mullen Jr of U2. Half Tempo provides just that and a straighter timing usable for really slow songs. The differences between patterns are deliberately kept small to make it easy to build a varied yet consistent song structure by combining levels closer or further apart. Take use of the Random function and by all means, don't miss the nice fills. See them as an expression of the Irish spontaneity... NE

World

New Orleans Funk

In the winter of 1968-69, great drummer Joseph “Zigaboo” Modeliste recorded the classic New Orleans R’n’B style tune “Cissy Strut” with funk pioneers The Meters. Zigaboo invented the characteristic funk groove often referred to as “the second line” style, very typical for The Meters’ groove. The Zigaboo grooves are (together with James Brown’s “Funky Drummer”) among the most sampled and recycled grooves in the history of modern Afro-American music. This exact groove is found at complexity level 8. Enjoy. MK

Cajun (T)

You no longer need to go “Deep down in Louisiana close to New Orleans” to get that spicy cajun feeling. Just tune in to Groove Agent’s 1971 Cajun style, set your VSTi host to preferred 86 degrees, or... BPM, and get cooking. Add a pinch of accordion and a bouncing bass to the busy snare, and you’re off. Bon appetite. MK

Reggae (T)

This is a triplet based version of reggae usually played with sidestick. The sound of the drums is very dry. When we recorded these drum samples for Groove Agent, sound engineer Jens Bogren turned around, looked at us and asked: “Do you really want it to sound like that?”. We nodded. MEB

TexMex

I once played a song to Sven with a strange, loose kind of drumming together with bass, piano and slide guitar. It sounded a bit like a not-so-very-well-rehearsed-gig in a small restaurant somewhere on the borderline between Texas and Mexico. “This is very weird and very cool”, Sven said. “We have to include this in Groove Agent”. “Ok.”. JS

World Ethno

Take one big, wide pad, one fretless bass and one electric guitar playing 8ths through a delay unit, and you’ll find yourself in a “world/ethno” kind of ambience, that’ll make you say “Manu”??. JS

* Roots

Roots, rock, reggae. The percussionist – playing big bottles and a vibra-slap – is free-wheeling through the different complexity levels, whereas the drummer goes from simple to busy. He’s using rim-shot already on some mid levels, so selecting the “Sidestick” function will make him play a deep fur-drum accordingly. Enough of tech-talk, it’s time to quote the old rasta in Trench-town who once said: “It’s like football. It’s there. It’s in your knees...”. NE

** 3/4 Nordic Woods (T)

Influenced by the woods up in the north and mixed with some heavy folklore grooves, the “3/4 Nordic Woods” started to take shape on my computer. The style starts with some simple beats that take you out alone in the dark woods, where you hear some drumbeats coming from far away. Then the style grows into some rather complex grooves at the end of the journey, all played in 3/4 time. MEB

** Mandela

Picture yourself below the equator, in the good hands of a crowd longing for freedom and democracy. The heavy beat from the bass drum has become unstoppable. Eager hands play skin drums and triangles, and in all of this, there’s also the programmed grooves of modern electronica. They all start off whispering but soon enough a roar will reach the oppressors. You can blow out a candle, but you can’t blow out a fire... NE

** Senegal (T)

Somewhere deep in Africa, before the people were influenced by western culture: Was life better then? Maybe. But either way, this style brings you one of the most common rhythm patterns in traditional Sub-Sahara. The agogobell has it. It's in 12/8 but programmed here to fit a 4/4 metric. The timing is already fairly "native" but can be even more loose using the Humanizer. In half tempo feel mode, the agogo and shaker keep up the basic beat while the rest of the instruments cool down. Picture yourself with your tribe under the stars... NE

Music Academy

Funk

This is funk drumming inspired by funk guru George Duke (Party Down) at one end to the unexpected Frank Zappa (I Don't wanna Get Drafted) at the other... As a matter of fact, they did some great music together, too. Of course, many are the innovators of funk. Earth Wind & Fire's Fred White really did some seriously simple but stunningly groovy stuff.

In the 1970's, funk music was often played quite straight except for the drums that added a little more swing to it. Add the Slick Triangle and the Wood Block at any time. Style programmed in 126 BPM. dB

Slick

This style is a 16th note based beat, inspired by the sessions recorded in L.A. around 1980, with master drummers like Jeff Porcaro and John Robinson. Actually, the beat itself isn't very innovative, but it's too representative for this great genre to leave it out. A slow tempo is a must for this style. Favorite tempo range is 73-88 bpm. FvW

Breakbeat

Wirebird shouted "HEEEELP" from deep down in "the Pixelmine", when he created that fabulous front panel. I said "With what?". "With breakbeats.", he shouted from below. "You mean dirty, groovy, kind of playing-too-much à la Chemical Brothers?". "Yepp.". "Yo, I'll do it..", I replied. And while you're at it, dear user, why don't you run the whole thing through some nice distortion. JS

LA Shuffle (T)

Somewhere around complexity level 15 you will find a sibling to a girl called Rosanna. All over these grooves you will hear a whole bunch of her relatives from earlier decades, also known as ghost notes. Tiny triplets in between, especially from the snare drum, that add a fine masked web to a sturdy, laidback foundation. A slick style, yeah. Not to be used in a too high BPM environment. 78 is perfect. dB

Westcoast

This is the beat many drummers would play if you told them to just cruise at 98 Bpm. A straight "perfect-day-for-going-to-the-beach" groove with influences from modern gospel music and contemporary pop/rock beats. FvW

Fusion

The inspiration for this busy style comes from some of the fusion records of the early nineties. MEB

Busy Beat

A lot of 16th notes coming at you in this one, especially at the higher complexity levels. Busy Beat is a kind of modern funk style with plenty of ghost notes on the snare drum. I've been inspired by the groove from the Spin Doctors' hit "Two Princes" as well as Candy Dulfer's song "Funkyness". If you listen carefully, the sources of inspiration should be obvious. Programming was made at 104 Bpm. FvW

** Ambitious

Here's the typical 16th note based groove you always hear when drummers are asked to "Play something." at soundchecks. There is a lot of funky, backward playing here with a lot of show off. In the higher complexity levels our ambitious drummer takes off in a latin direction. FvW

** 5/4 Fusion (T)

This 5/4 style is a fusion of jazz, rock and Latin and gets rather complex at higher levels. It starts off with subtle percussion and adds hihat, snares and ride along the way. The 3+2 feel goes up to level 17, where it turns into the more unusual 2+3 structure. Level 20 is a bit special with its "floating" and irregular meter. It can actually be used as a sort of random fusion swing in any metric form, thereby meandering the pattern. It tricky, it cool... NE

** 7/8 Funk (T)

"Seven of eight" – sounds like a cyborg space woman... Well, it is odd, but not that odd. Playing a 7/8 pattern takes some exercising and this agent sure made her homework, with some good help from her percussionist friends. From level A to 12 they're elaborating on basically the same idea, and in 13–16 it gets more altered. In the last four levels we get a more aggressive rock pattern. So watch out: The odd can bite. NE

** Paradiddle Triplet (T)

These grooves are an extension of the HM Paradiddle style. It's basically the pattern I used on the song "Virtual Future" on the Beware The Heavens album by Synergy. Maybe you can hear influences from Mikkey Dee during his King Diamond days here. RM

Heavy

Hard Rock

I grew up listening to The Beatles in the early seventies. After that I was a young soul without a home, listening to whatever was on the radio, but I never found "my thing". Then, when I was sixteen, someone gave me a black album from a band I'd never heard of, and I was just blown away by the intro of "Hells bells" starting up their album "Back in black".

Yepp, I became a hard rocker.. So here you have some steady and heavy drums for anyone with Angus-ambitions.. JS

* Grunge

Nirvana, Mudhoney, Melvins... I think this list wouldn't get an end. The Music Industry calls them Grunge. So, preheat your amp, strap your guitar, aim at the F# power-chord and press the "Run"-button for this style. MS

* HM Straight

HM Straight and HM Triplets are based on the European style of Heavy Metal with a lot of double bass pedal work as well as some of my own chops from the albums/bands I played in, such as the albums "Beware the heavens" by Sinergy and "Sign Of truth" and "Anima Mundi" by Dionysus. The triplet rolls were inspired by the one and only Scott Travis, especially from the time before Judas Priest when he played with Paul Gilbert in Raxor X. The Raxor X song "Scarified" is a milestone in metal with its magnificent drum intro groove and I made a lot of variations of grooves of this type. The more straight and powerful grooves were made in the style of Jörg Michael, one of today's most hired and respected German drummers. RM

* HM Triplets (T)

A triplet based groove with a lot of 3-stroke rolls in the bass drums. The rolls in particular were inspired by my friend and Brazilian metal band Angra drummer Aquiles Priester, who developed it to a new level in modern metal drumming. While touring with Saxon I got the chance to pick up a drum fill or two which I throw in here and there. It's from another great drummer and friend, the legendary Fritz Randow, one of the most technical drummers in European metal. RM

* Grind

These grooves are kinda busy and made for higher tempos. Notice how the bass drum uses 8th notes, 8th note triplets and then 16ths in various modern approaches. These grooves were influenced and played in the style of The Haunted, Krisiun and Hate Eternal. If you're huge a fan of brushes, these grooves are not for you. ;-) RM

* Progressive

Here's a rather technical style with a lot of busy fills. "Progressive" is a mixture of the sound of new progressive styles and some old progressive bands back in the 80s. Certain levels were recorded in various odd meters and played over a loop of four bars. Don't get lost. MEB

** Three Beat

Let's jog back to the 80's rock arena when both you and your music were supposed to be muscular yet clean. This beat has a fat kick on all four beats in the bar but instead of the usual backbeat on the 2&4 the fat snare is on 3, giving this style even more weight. The fat toms play an important role adding a clean groove. Get a workout. NE

** HM Paradiddle

Joe Franco is the main inspiration behind this style. He was the first guy to produce instruction books and videos for double bass drum playing. You can also hear some influence from Tommy Alridge and Virgil Donati. In fact, some of the stuff here was actually played by Mr. Donati himself on a clinic in Sweden. RM

HipHop

Basic Hip-Hop

This style was inspired by early Hip-Hop and the way it sounded in the early digital drum machine era. LW

Hip-Hop

Groovy, fat and heavy Hip-Hop with a modern sound in contrast to the Basic Hip-Hop style. It's been programmed to sound a little "off" in the beat with a nice swing to it. Closely related to Modern RnB. New, fresh kick, snare and effects noises were designed especially for this style. LW

Nu RnB

An effective groove with poly-rhythmic fills for that special feeling. Modern RnB/Hiphop style with a compressed sound, if you like. Kick and snare were designed especially for this style. LW

* Live Hip-Hop

In a big discussion about Hip-Hop, a friend told me that a real drummer in a Hip-Hop band only needs a bass drum, a snare, a hihat, a crash and no toms. He was right. This style will provide you with a full palette for your live song. Don't forget to use the percussion in the chorus. MS

* Sloppy Hip-Hop

The “Sloppy Hip Hop” style is inspired by the works of Beastie Boys and others, giving you a sense of floating time, where quantizing is banned... The basic character of the groove is slightly altered from level 14 and up. Warning: Changing the loose handclap to a more distinct sound may produce some really weird timing effects, as will excessive use of the Humanize-function. Select this style when you’re in the mood for drifting away, avoiding all the boundaries of a regulated beat. NE

* Kelly

This is a cool, yet energetic modern R&B-style. The basic beat is slow and heavy while the hihats and other small sounds play in double tempo, creating a dynamic contrast. Try using a lot of different fills to vary the formula. No feelings were hurt during the making of this style. NE

Electronica

Elektro

My intention here was to create a style that sounds like an analog drum machine programmed for early synth-pop tunes. It’s not an 808 or a 909 but a totally new “box” with retro and electronic sounds. LW

Mini Works

All the sounds in this style come from the legendary Mini, built by a very clever guy called Moog. Every sound is note-off dependant. This means that the important note-off events become tempo-independent.

Mini Works is built up around this rule, which turns the note-offs into important rhythmical components as well as all the cool little note-ons. There are 5 different grooves with 5 complexity levels each. Like five time zones in a synth clock. Every sound has its own effect in ambience mode which makes the note-off function even more extreme. Fave tempo: 95 BPM. Fave ambience: none. dB

Ambient

Time to chill with some ambient grooves and spacious rhythms. It’s 5 am at the club and the previously crowded dance floor is visited only by a couple of slow dancers, chillin’ to the beat as the faint early morning light passes through the drapes. My favorite tempo for this style is somewhere around 90 BPM. Try experimenting with different combinations of dry and wet sounds and alternative pitches. The long reverb tail on some of the low pitched drums can create a really nice rhythmic tension to dry high pitched cymbals or percussion sounds. W

Mini Club

Again, a Moog-only built up sound bank. And again 5 different grooves with 5 complexity levels each. This style will hopefully find its way to the floor of the future dance club. Try the note-off dependant sounds, too. Every sound slot has to be active to make these rhythms complete. There are no special percussion add-ons in this one. Original groove was made in 120 BPM with absolutely no ambience, but personally I like the full ambience version just as much, especially since every sound has its own special FX treatment. dB

* Vintage FR-3

Original rhythms from a very old drum machine. Slow Rock x 3 (“home” tempo: 80 BPM). Samba x 4 (110). Rhumba x 3 (130). Beguine x 4 (130). Mambo x 4 (140). Bossanova x 3 (145). Rock’n Roll x 4 (160). There were no fills in this machine, so we’ve created some for you. Same goes for Sidestick and Half Tempo Feel. This baby didn’t even have a cymbal. The sound differs somewhat from the real thing, in that the original machine sounds a bit different each time it is played. MS

* Vintage TR-7

A slightly newer analogue box. Slow Rock and Ballad x 2 ("home" tempo: 80 BPM). Western (90). Samba 1 + 2 (110). Rhumba x 2, Beguine x 2, Cha-Cha x 2, Mambo x 2, Baion x 2, Tango and 6/8 March (130). Bossa Nova x 3 and Bolero (145). Rock'n Roll 1 x 2 and Rock'n Roll 2 (155). MS

* Vintage CR-8

An almost modern drum machine because you could program it, but still analogue sounding. Habanera ("home" tempo: 70 BPM). S. Rock (80). Samba 1 + 2 and Merengue (110). Mambo, ChaCha, Tango, Beguine, Enka and Rock 1-6 (120). Then comes a combination of Rock 1/Rock 4 (120). Disco and Swing 1 + 2 (120). Rhumba and Rhumba/ChaCha combination (130). BossaNova and BossaNova/Mambo combination (145). Foxtrot (160). Combining two rhythms is a cool trick. MS

* Meek Ballad

Follow me back to the early 80s. This could be the next great thing... The slowly evolving groove adds a few more programmed hits on every level, giving you a fair chance to find just the desired complexity. The style was created by adding each instrument one by one, just as it was in the childhood of these legendary "rhythm composers". The meek shall inherit the earth. NE

* Axis Y

Back in the 80s, people had ugly hair cuts, pink jackets and played on hexagonal drums. Beware, because some of that might return any day. This style prepares you for at least the musical revival. Put on your dancing shoes and get into the groove. NE

** Click Track

Here's your easy ticket to a more musical click track, to play along with in the studio. The fill button is designed to help the drummer get the feel for the subdivisions (8ths and 16ths). This style is recorded with the subdivisions of even 16th notes but can easily be switched to triplet feeling with the "Shuffle" knob. I'd recommend using Click Track with the sidestick button activated. MEB

** League

Inspired by the song "Do or Die" from Human League's milestone album "Dare" of 1981, this style brings you the full capacity of the legendary Linn LM1. (The last four levels have a somewhat different pattern.) Only a few could afford a real Linn drum machine back then, but from now on, we suppose there will be a huge revival for this wonderfully fat piece of sound gear. In its Groove Agent 3 software form, of course. NE

** LM Ballad

A ballad is all about emotions, right? Sometimes sweet, sometimes painful. Anyway, this is no place for logic and reason, is it? Well, apparently it is. Because even a machine, such as the famous Linn LM-1, could be a tool for expressing those matters of the heart. At least it was back in the swinging 80's. But if this won't work for you, don't despair. GA would still send you her love: "I never meant 2 cause u any sorrow, I never meant 2 cause u any pain..." NE

** Oberdorf

When digital drum machines were State of the Art, people (rich people) used them to replace live drummers. Now we know better, don't we? These legendary instruments will hold a place in our hearts not because of their ability to be alive, but for their charming machine nature. This style emulates a typically programmed dance pattern of the 1980's. You can ask yourself what future generations will say about our tools. NE

Modern Pop

Modern Soul

Straight and very well suited for slow pop and soul ballads. Modern Soul contains a hybrid of analog, processed sounds and electronic sounds. LW

Trip-Hop

This is a trip to the darker side of Trip-Hop. Picture yourself in a spooky attic late at night, on your knees looking for an old photo album in a worn chest. Suddenly the room comes to life, the floor squeaks and wooden toys start playing in a slow, rhythmic groove. What next? Get into the groove or run for your life. W

Nordic Pop

A straight and modern pop groove, inspired by the Nordic hit phenomenon during the past ten years or so. Steady, compressed and simple. New, fresh kick and snare were designed especially for this style. LW

* Bristol Trip (T)

Portishead was one of the bands that popularized Trip Hop. They loved to play their songs live with an acoustic drum kit and a tricky-playing drummer. Be my guest. MS

** Pop Paradiddle

This is basically the kind of stuff I'd play in a contemporary pop band or during a studio session, when a "drum machine style" is called for. If the band used loops during production, this style of drumming will maintain that feeling in a live situation. RM

Club

Detroit Techno

As you may have already guessed, the techno roots are in Detroit. In this style I decided to give you a lot of noise. No energy has been saved here. They would call it "Hard to the bone" in the old days. DS

House

House music is a quite laidback electronic style that lives on its own groove. It's a bouncy style with percussion as one of its main elements. House was born when DJs added 808 and 909 analog drum machines to beef up the dance music. DS

Trance

When creating this Trance style, I wanted to make room for catchy melodies, so the drumming is easy and not supposed to take too much room in a mix. Now, if you still think the drums occupy too much sonic space, tweak the knobs until your melodies become the main element again. DS

Drum n Bass

This style combines the use of high speed beats with a natural half tempo feel, resulting in a playful rhythmic ballet. Thunderdome sub basses push the speaker limits, while frantic high pitched sounds keep the flow going. NE

2-Step

A very tiny and fast affair with high pitched sounds. There's a slight swing factor in this mixture of 2-Step, Garage and early synth-pop. LW

Tribal Techno

This style was programmed to fit the sound of modern techno. It has a lot of my own personality in it. This is my tribute to the underground techno culture. You may recognize some of the grooves. The name of the style says a lot. Listen to those tribal grooves and you will understand the name. DS

* Daft

Keep it fair and square. Simple and stupid. Keep it going. Keep it up. Perhaps the bottle will distract you. Never mind. It's just a bottle. Keep it safe. NE

** Grime

A few years ago pirate radio stations in London started broadcasting a new and more aggressive form of Rap and 2-Step, influenced by hard core electronica. "Grime" was born. MC's often spit out their lyrics double time over the beat accompanied by sparse breaks and futuristic bleeps and growls. This style is also referred to as Eskibeat, Sublow or 8bar and only recently it left the realms of the underground to face mainstream success. Be part of it – and why not add some distortion... NE

** Jungle

In the beginning there were drummers. Some of them played pretty fast. But not fast enough. So then there were DJ:s, pitching up and editing funky drum loops to make the beats really fast and complex, calling it "Jungle". "What the heck", said the drummers and actually started to play those crazy high speed loops live. That takes some heavy exercising. Or – it takes a Groove Agent. NE

Special Agent styles

Rasmus Kihlberg gives a brief introduction to every style he recorded. The "T" indicates a triplet or swing feel. The original recording tempo is also indicated. As a general rule, the Special Agent styles can be used in tempi 15% lower and 50% higher than the recorded tempo. Example: "Four On Da Floor" can be used between 85 BPM and 150 BPM without sounding too unnatural.

Motown (recorded at 120 BPM)

Oh, how obvious it feels to include this style. It's a really classic style found on numerous Motown records. We've tried to create a happy marriage between the sound ideals from 1966 and 2006 here. I even included some classic fills. Enjoy. RK

Four On Da Floor (recorded at 100 BPM)

Welcome to the 1980s. Try this style in songs where you want the drums to dominate the sound. Plenty of kick drum here. Listen, and you'll notice that there's always a kick drum playing with the snare backbeats. RK

Slow Funk (recorded at 60 BPM)

16th based drumming, suitable for smooth ballads as well as quicker tunes. Does this sound like it's inspired by a Chicago album from the 1980s? I think so. Try this in a Soul or R'n'B song to add a "live" touch. RK

Indie Rock (recorded at 110 BPM)

A sloppy drummer style. Attitude is everything here. Rough and dirty. I'd recommend adding lots of loud guitars to any song where this style is used. RK

Rotterdam (recorded at 90 BPM)

Here's a variation on the old "Amsterdam" theme, meaning that the bass drum plays a little more irregularly. It's also my salute to Mr. Jim Keltner, a living legend indeed. Never a beat too many. Well, maybe a crash cymbal at the end of a song... RK

- # Shuffle Funk** (T, recorded at 85 BPM) A couple of centuries ago, fusion bands seem to pop up from everywhere. This style represents a mixture from that school. Triplet based grooves, bordering to dotted 8ths and 16ths. Perfect for "instrumental music". Electric Jazz, anyone? RK
- # Choo Choo Brush** (rec at 120 BPM) My reason for including this style in Groove Agent 3 is that I frequently get requests like "Try playing the same thing but with brushes". This groove is very Don Henley/Eagles. It works with practically any song based on a straight 8ths feel. RK
- # Slow Rock** (T, recorded at 60 BPM) Do you remember how the Slow Rock preset in really old drum machines used to sound? This is really a 12/8 style more than anything else, but it plays well with the host time signature set to 4/4. Blues players, look here, this is for you. The shuffle beat in the kick drum should inspire any bass player to give that little extra. RK
- # Stiff Little 16ths** (recorded at 88 BPM) Drum machines used to sound like this some 20 years ago. Every level in this style is based on even 16th notes. You may think that I play like a machine on this one. Well, that's fully intentional. Oh Vienna – Rasmus the drum computer. RK
- # Country Rock** (recorded at 110 BPM) Here's something that could be applied to a song approaching the classic "American FM Rock/Country Rock" territory. A good, punchy kick drum gives provides a solid ground to the bassplayer. Minutes before I recorded this, I listened to Keith Urban's "Somebody Like You". That should say it all. RK
- # Medium Bounce** (T, rec: at 110 BPM) This style is a must to anyone trying to make jazz drums sound right. Not an easy task... I give you the building blocks to a classic build-up of a standard jazz song, from triplet based brushes to big band drumming. When using this style in your song, try switching complexity levels now and then. It'll add a healthy "random drummer" feeling. Jazz ain't easy... RK
- # VariBossa** (recorded at 110 BPM) This is a traditional Bossa Nova groove that evolves into different clave rhythms. It can be used both on soft pop tunes and traditional Bossa Nova songs. Beware of the fills – they tend to go over the top at times... RK
- # Rrrock** (recorded at 110 BPM) The title says it all, eh? Thanks to Gula Studion, this groove has become incredibly useful as "rock backing with a live feel". Preferred volume setting: Loud. RK
- # Beguine Mix** (recorded at 110 BPM) Beguine Mix is a strange mix-up of various Latins style grooves. It's hard to specify any real style really. Beguine with pop music touch, maybe? Classic rumba played on an indie kit? You decide. Maybe we should have called this one "Stop the Beguine" (as opposed to "Begin the Beguine")..? RK
- # Jazz Ballad** (T, recorded at 70 BPM) I've never heard this style work properly on any sample CD. It's extremely hard to program. Here's the groove that will take your song to the smoky jazz club around the corner. It also contains a so called Elvin Jones groove, meaning mallets playing triplets on the toms. Really useful when you need to broaden the horizons of your composition. RK