

LAKE SIDE

Percussion Studio

Concepts and Techniques

Study, Analysis, and Absorption of a Great Drummer

Step 1: Pick a great drummer.

Choose someone whose playing you really like, because you're going to spend a month immersed in it. Make it someone well known, with plenty of audio and video recordings available, and be prepared to explain what makes them a great drumset player.

Step 2: Immerse yourself.

Spend a week listening to this drummer's playing. Literally. Every free moment, every day, for a week. Watch videos, play along with records, or just listen carefully, for a total of at least ten hours.

Step 3: Select and Analyze.

Based on what you've heard and seen, select

- Three recordings
- Three grooves
- Three fills

that best exemplify this person's unique drumming style. There are no right or wrong answers here - the point is to pick recordings, grooves, and fills that show what you like about this drummer.

Step 4: Emulate and Extrapolate.

Learn to play the songs, grooves, and fills you selected in Step 3 (you knew that was coming, right?). Learn the songs as if you were going to play them in a cover band; memorize them start to finish and, be prepared to play them in front of other students (play along with the recording, or bring a band if you have one!).

Of course you will face extreme difficulty duplicating a great drummer's signature licks and grooves, and you should expect to struggle mightily. That struggle is the main point of this exercise! Then, the final step is to add your own spin to the songs, licks, and grooves you've worked so hard to learn, make them your own.