

# Bossa Nova

## Lesson #3

(SVDL55)

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Welcome to the third lesson in my 3-Part "Bossa Nova" lesson series. In this lesson I will teach you how to play variations on the groove, some transitions and a few fill concepts.

For the first few examples we are going to play the low tom on the 3rd beat of the measure. This will be simulating a Surdo which is a large bass drum used in many kinds of Brazilian music where it lays down the pulse of the groove much like a "back-beat" in rock and funk music. For these examples use your left hand to play the low tom.

1.

♩ = 132

low-tom

Now we'll add a few snare drum notes to create a Batucada inspired rhythm as used by the percussion section of a Brazilian Samba school.

2.

For this version we'll play a snare buzz stroke on the last eighth note of measure two. I will use this Surdo concept for the bridge of a Bossa Nova song to help give it a lift and make a bit more interesting.

3.

snare buzz stroke

For our final version we'll play a buzz stroke on the last eighth note measure one.

4.

Buzz stroke

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Here's a simple fill that can be used when making a transition from the hi-hat to the ride cymbal or when going from one section of the song to the next. Notice that both notes of the fill are played on the hi-tom with your right hand and the last note of the measure is played just using the bass drum.

5.

.....FILL.....  
hi-tom

R R ↗  
bass drum only

Now we'll play the same fill with your right hand on a ride cymbal and the hi-hat playing on 2&4 with your foot.

6.

....FILL....

Next, we'll practice playing the Bossa Nova moving back and forth between the hi-hat and ride cymbal and we'll incorporate the transition fill from the two previous examples. **NOTE:** To help make a smooth transition from the ride cymbal back to the hi-hat, don't play the hi-hat with your foot on beat 4 of the fill measure.

7.

No hi-hat

Bossa Nova songs don't typically require a lot of fills. This style of music is all about setting a mood with a consistent groove that the bass drum pattern provides. However, you will need to occasionally play fills. Here are a few that work well for me.

For this first example, play a basic Bossa for the first two bars. On bar three, start with the Bossa Nova pattern, then, on bar four, play a fill between your snare and toms using your left hand.

8.

Now, we'll start with a basic Bossa Nova for the first two bars. However, this time, we'll play a two bar fill using the rhythm from lesson #2, example 9. It will also be played with the left hand between the snare and toms.

9.

Musical notation for example 9. The top staff shows a two-bar fill with diagonal slashes. The bottom staff shows the corresponding drum notation with bass drum notes and snare/tom crosses.

Whenever possible I like to keep the bass drum playing through a fill on a Bossa Nova song. However, occasionally that's not feasible. Here's a fill that works well for in this situation.

10.

Musical notation for example 10. The top staff shows a four-bar fill with diagonal slashes. The bottom staff shows the corresponding drum notation with bass drum notes and snare/tom crosses. The final two bars have a specific rhythm pattern: L R R L R L.

Here is a polyrhythmic fill that I like to use to stir things up a bit. I'm sure you'll dig it.

11.

Musical notation for example 11. The top staff shows a four-bar fill with diagonal slashes. The bottom staff shows the corresponding drum notation with bass drum notes and snare/tom crosses. The final two bars have a specific rhythm pattern: R L R R L R R L R R L R R L R R.

This is the same rhythmic concept incorporating the ride cymbal and hi-tom.

12.

Musical notation for example 12. The top staff shows a four-bar fill with diagonal slashes. The bottom staff shows the corresponding drum notation with bass drum notes and snare/tom crosses. The final two bars have a specific rhythm pattern: R L R R L R R L R R L R R.

Well, that wraps up this lesson series. I sure hope you enjoyed it. The best way to get a good feel for a new style of music, is to listen to recordings of the artists who do it well. Check out some of the great Brazilian artists such as Antonio Carlos Jobim, Dori Caymi, Toninho Horta and Eliane Elias.