

BREAKDOWN PATTERNS

Besides using ongoing alternating double kick patterns, it is very common in extreme metal to accent the kick drums together with the rhythm guitar, thus creating unison patterns based on various groups of eighth and sixteenth notes. These groups have a certain number of sequential notes—mostly three, five, and eight. This kind of playing is often used in subgenres like metal core, death core, and modern thrash metal. Typically, in the middle of a faster song, the tempo slows down and the whole band plays these sequential unison rhythms in order to create a musical “breakdown.” On the enclosed CD, the following example, which shows basic breakdown patterns, is played at two different tempos: 100 and 150 bpm.



Example 2-3



Below you'll find exercises on how to phrase breakdown patterns in various ways. Of course, there are many more options for phrasing a pattern, but these exercises at least give you a good starting point. Sometimes the snare drum is syncopated, which makes the patterns sound more interesting, but also more challenging. Example 2-4 illustrates the difference between an “even” hand phrasing and a more syncopated one. Depending on the musical situation, you'll have to choose which one feels and fits better. After having explored these exercises and developed a certain vocabulary regarding double-kick phrasings, be creative and make up your own patterns.

Example 2-4