

Bo Diddley Beat

Bo Diddley was a blues-rock pioneer. The American guitarist, vocalist, and songwriter influenced many of the biggest Rock 'n Roll acts. He became famous for bringing a driving beat, based on the 3-2 Son clave and propelled by the drums (mainly the floor tom) to his genre of music. Clifton James (drums) and Jerome Green (maracas) comprised Bo Diddley's main percussion section.

3-2 Son Clave

Using alternating sticking, play all the notes on the floor tom, accenting the 3-2 Son Clave.

[illegible]

Looking at letter **b**, there's only 1 left hand accent, which is on the 'a' of 1. Make sure to keep the volume the same as the right hand accents. Down strokes are to be played for all accents, except for a Full stroke on the '&' of 3.

Match accents with bass drum. The right foot and left hand match up on the ‘a’ of 1. Aim for tight double stops and try to avoid flams. The **b** example fills in the 16th notes.

③ **a** R L R R R **b**

4/4

R L R R R

b

Foot pattern with upbeats stepped on hi-hat. Example [b](#) adds the floor tom accents, with the same sticking as above.

④ a b R L R R R

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Full Groove. You can use 8th note subdivisions on the metronome.

⑤ a ♩ = 100 – 110



Can step 8ths, flange upbeats

b With added accent on 'e' of 3.

c With 32nd notes on '&' of 4.



Can add accent on 'e' of 2; if so, the 'a' of 1 becomes a full stroke.

Can add bass drum on 'e' accents.

Left hand moves to the snare drum for a displaced backbeat on the '&' of 4.

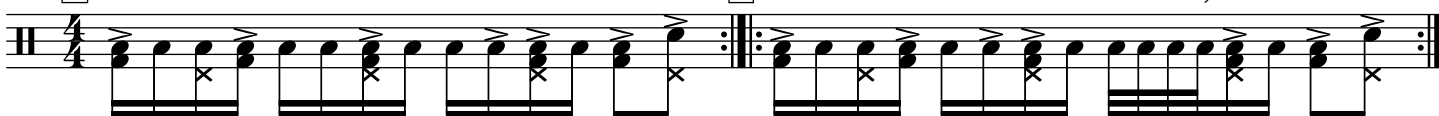
⑥ a



Can step 8ths, flange upbeats

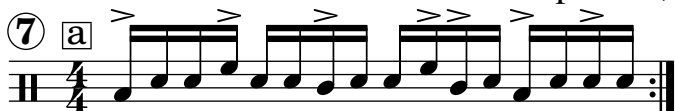
b With added accent on 'e' of 3.

c With added accent on 'e' of 2, 32nds on 3.



Full stroke with left hand on 'a' of 1.

Here is a melodic drum fill for a 5-pc. kit, based on the Bo Diddley beat and accent pattern.



You can play any or all of the unaccented snare notes as doubles. In the following examples, it's like playing 5 and 6-stroke rolls in the first half.



The bass drum will match all of the accents, while the left foot steps upbeats. Play a 4-bar phrase using any examples from ⑤ or ⑥ for 3 measures, then one of these fills for the 4th bar.



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Bo Diddley patterns played on snare drum or practice pad using 5 flam rudiments.

Flam accents, flam taps, and flammed mills.

⑧ a

R L R L R L R R L L R L

Doesn't switch hands
Play with left hand lead

b

R L R L R L R R L L R L

Full stroke on 'a' of 1
Pataflafla in the middle of beat 2

2-bar phrase with flam accents, pataflaflas, and flamadiddles.

⑨ a

R L R L R L R L R R L R L R L L R L R L L L

2-bar phrase in 7/8 with flam accents, pataflaflas, and flam taps.

b

R L R L R L R L R R L R L R L L R L R L L

Full stroke on '&' of 3.

Can add accented flam on 'e' of 2; if so, the 'a' of 1 becomes a full stroke.