

2Bop vs. 2Swing

Cheat Sheet

Swing is often used to describe the feel of Jazz, irrespective of different Jazz genres.

When Bebop originally came on the scene in the early 1940s the older jazz musicians were horrified. Bebop "didn't mean a thing 'cause it ain't got that swing!" and perhaps was not even Jazz.

You couldn't dance to Bebop. It was all jumpy. Phrases appeared out of nowhere. Rhythms were not repeated. Syncopation was more important than groove. Bar lines were ignored. It was anarchic. It was rebellious. So how does a drummer bop if he doesn't swing? Where is the time?

Bebop drumming developed out of swing. In swing the ride cymbal most often plays a fixed pattern, with the hi-hat playing on the 2nd and 4th offbeats, a pattern, which is often used in Bebop as well.

Swing

The rhythm is on the **off-beat** (beats 2 and 4) played on the hi-hat with a fixed feel.

In swing the rhythm is explicit. The bass drum is often used to reinforce the 4/4 feeling and keep the beat

Bebop

Bebop uses the swing offbeat ride pattern but often improvises around the pattern. The beat is still on the off-beat like swing but played in a much more flexible way. The ride pattern might leave out notes, change, or be stretched over a number of bars. The **bass drum** is used sparingly, if at all, **but never on all 4 beats**.

Some Bebop ride patterns

The Hi-Hat

The **Bebop Hi-Hat** can deviate from the offbeat to be used as an instrument in its own right

Some Bebop hi-hat patterns

Flammed just before the offbeat

1/4 note triplets

Open and closed hi-hat

Double time

hi-hat on off-off beat

Shuffle style beat

hi-hat on 2nd note of triplet

2Bop vs. 2Swing

The Left Hand

Left hand improvisation, is the essence of Bebop drumming!

Phrases are used in different ways and can:

- answer as a **response** to a **solist's call**
- follow the **melody**
- often be "**rhythmically contrapunctual**" to the cymbal patterns, playing syncopated phrases.
- **cut across the bar** a la Charlie Parker: "bars are for prisons"
- **play musical phrases** together with the right hand, bass drum and hi-hat
- **not** often repeated as **grooves**

Improvisation is most commonly played on the snare drum but also on the toms, cymbals and hi-hat.

Phrases using the **missing 2nd note** (♩) of the triplet

§1 - Ostinato

§2 - 1/4 note triplets

The best way to learn Bebop drum independence is to listen to lead players and to use their phrases as rhythmic and melodic lines (Some drummers prefer to approach this using exercises of many permutations to achieve left hand independence)

§3 - Some random bebop phrases for the left hand

§3a - Sonny Rollins - Oleo

§3b - Charlie Parker - Confirmation

§4 - Following the Bebop melody

§4a - Thelonious Monk - Rhythm-a-Ning - 1st 8 bars

§4b - Charlie Parker - Perhaps - 1st 4 bars