

## "LATIN!": What Exactly Do You Mean by That?

Understanding Latin and Brazilian Styles for Drumset

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The styles presented here are far too frequently found labeled as "Latin!" on jazz charts, without any further detail. Each has its own unique characteristics, national origin, and history, and variations of each are plentiful. As follows are basic versions of each style: suitable for virtually any situation, but nothing anyone will necessarily get excited about. Once these initial patterns are solid, spend time listening further and exploring potential variations so you are never stuck with only one groove for any style you might be asked to play.

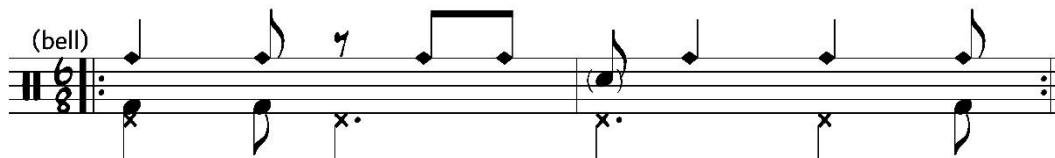
### NOTATION GUIDE



Recommended Method Books for Reference:

- Essential Styles for the Drummer and Bassist Bk. 1 by Steve Houghton and Tom Warrington (Alfred Music)
- Groove Essentials 1.0 by Tommy Igoe (Hudson Music)
- Latin Percussion in Perspective by Dom Moio (Mel Bay Publications)
- Salsa Guidebook for Piano & Ensemble by Rebeca Mauleón (Sher Music)
- Survival Guide for the Modern Drummer by Jim Riley (Hudson Music)

### 6/8 Afro-Cuban/Bembé (♩ = 132 )



- Country of Origin: Cuba
- Moderate tempo, compound-meter groove
- Distinctive bell pattern with optional "back beat"

Reference tracks:

- [Deep Six – Mark Walker](#)
- [Virtue – Poncho Sanchez](#)
- [Conga Blue – Poncho Sanchez](#)
- [Afro Blue – Mongo Santamaria](#)
- [Afro American – Mongo Santamaria](#)

### Bossa Nova 3/2 (♩ = 140)

- Country of Origin: Brazil
- “Adult Contemporary” pop; mellow style
- Listen for the unique clave pattern and heartbeat bass drum

#### Reference tracks:

- Flying Over Rio – Trio da Paz
- Desafinado – Stan Getz & João Gilberto
- Wave – Antônio Carlos Jobim
- Água de Beber – Astrud Jobim

### Samba (♩ = 100)

#### alternate right hand

#### lighter alternate

- Country of Origin: Brazil
- Up-tempo, energetic groove
- Listen for the partido alto rhythm and heartbeat bass drum

#### Reference tracks:

- Fanfarra – Sergio Mendes (Bateria)
- Cilada - Molejo
- Vou Festijar – Beth Carvalho
- O que é, o que é – Gonzaguinha
- Sambas de Enredo – Samba Schools from Rio de Janeiro

### Mambo 2/3 (♩ = 90)

(hi-hat)

### skeleton

(hi-hat)

### includes conga voice

(bell)

### songo

(hi-hat)

- Country of Origin: Cuba
- Up-tempo dance groove
- Listen for the mambo bass and subtle presence of clave

#### Reference tracks:

- [Hot House \(Songo\) – Arturo Sandoval](#)
- [Descarga Total – Maraca](#)
- [Ran Kan Kan – Tito Puente](#)
- [Mambo Leah – Mongo Santamaria](#)

### Cha Cha (♩ = 120)

(hi-hat)

- Country of Origin: Cuba
- Moderate tempo, straight-ahead groove
- Listen for the mambo bass and quarter note cross-stick

#### Reference tracks:

- [Cha Cha Cha – Tito Puente](#)
- [Funky Cha Cha – Arturo Sandoval](#)
- [Oye Como Va – Tito Puente](#)
- [Pa' Gozar – Spanish Harlem Orchestra](#)

### Bolero (♩ = 108)

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

- Country of Origin: Cuba
- Moderately slow march feel
- Tom notes should be played on snare drum if congas are present

#### Reference tracks:

- [Cosas del Alma – Poncho Sanchez](#)
- [Obsesion – Spanish Harlem Orchestra](#)
- [Espérame en el Cielo – Spanish Harlem Orchestra](#)

### Soca (♩ = 96)

(hi-hat)

- Country of Origin: Trinidad/Tobago
- Up-tempo groove in two
- Steady pulse from feet with shifting back beat

#### Reference tracks:

- [Curry Tabanca – Trinidad All Stars](#)
- [Renegades Panarama 2024](#)
- [Shift Yur Carcass – The Shadow](#)
- [Sugar Bum Bum – Lord Kitchener](#)