

# Billy Higgins comping phrases

from Driftin' - Herbie Hancock, *Takin' Off* (Blue Note, 1962)

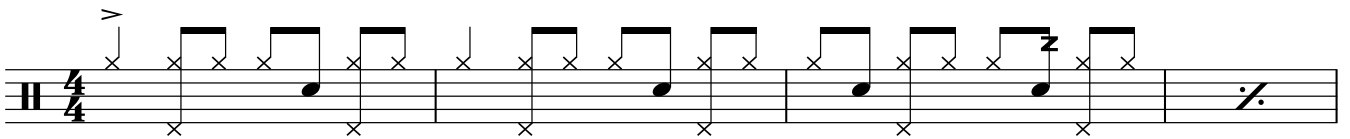
## Drum Set

♩ = 120

Transcribed by Jacob Wendt

Tenor Solo 1:05

Billy's comping starts sparse; repetitive phrases played with normal or crushed notes. He often plays the "and" of 1 and 3, filling in the space where no ride cymbal is played.



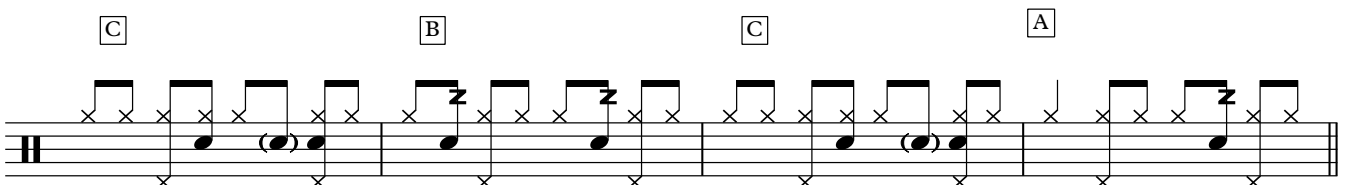
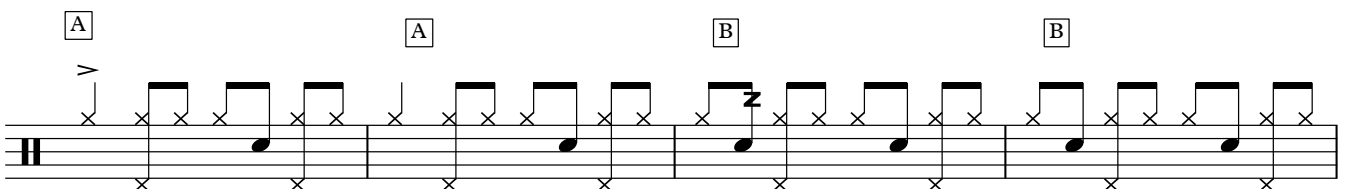
Tenor Solo 1:29 Here's a subtle phrase 4 bars before the bridge that rounds out the end of the A section.



Top of the form starts very similar to the previous solo.

Trumpet Solo 2:09

When Billy changes the ride pattern it's melodic; repeated here in the 5th and 7th bar. \*Check out the mini structures within his comping\*



**Trumpet Solo** 2:34 Another subtle phrase that rounds out the end of the section; last 4 bars before the bridge.

1st chorus of piano solo, bridge:

**Piano Solo** 3:47 Same use of varied melodic ride pattern; some triplet ideas and more dense phrases

2nd chorus of the piano solo, 2nd A section:

**Piano Solo** 4:36 Billy uses denser triplets here, with brief offset quarter note triplets in the 3rd bar

Drum Set

Let's look closer at the "mini forms" inside these comping phrase structures:  
 the use of repetition and a few different melodic ideas creates an almost "call & response type" pattern.  
 We can combine these smaller phrases to create larger ones, in groups of 4 bars or 8 bars.  
 (Play the jazz ride cymbal pattern and HH on 2 & 4 for all these examples)

For this example, play the A idea 3 times, then the B idea once.  
 Repeat, and for C, play your own "ending" idea that rounds out that 8 bar phrase.  
 We don't need to play something entirely new and different every bar! Repetition is good.

Here's the same comping phrase behind the trumpet solo at 2:09, with just the snare written and the crushed notes written as standard snare hits. See the structure?

Drum Set

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Here are some more ideas for possible mini structures, using rests and pacing:  
Playing one idea, then leaving a bar of space

A A

B B A

You can also play an idea twice, then leave 2 bars of space

A A

A A B

Here we only use one melodic idea, but with lots of space around it. The "rest" moment doesn't always have to follow an idea; we can also add space and rests \*before an idea, like the 5th measure here before the phrase comes back in.

A A

A A

Here the "phrase" is just two notes on offbeats. What makes it interesting is how we move it around and displace it measure to measure. The last bar is denser, and helps to round out the phrase.

A

\*repetition