

Most West African rhythms derive heavily from 6/8 feels. One popular 6/8 feel (which originated in Cuba) is called the Bembe, originating from the word bembes, which are religious gathering that include drumming, singing and dancing. The real challenge of the Afro-Cuban take on the rhythm is slipping in and out of the two different meter feels. Depending on how you and/or your bandmates are accenting, the Afro-Cuban 6/8 can be felt in 4 or 6.

6/8 Clave



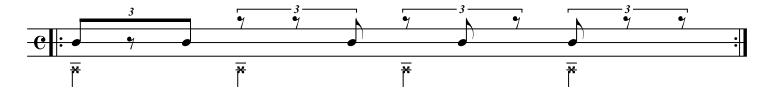
6/8 Clave written in Common Time (triplets). Notice that two bar pattern in 6/8 is reduced to a one bar pattern in 4/4



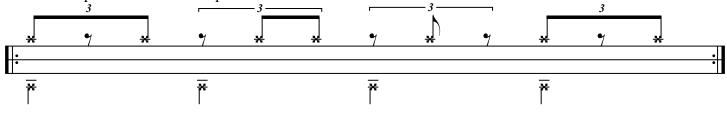
6/8 Clave with the HH playing dotted quarters. Try playing the clave switching your count every two bars from 6/8 time to common time.



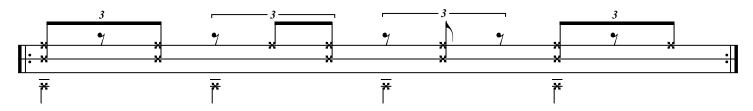
6/8 Clave written in Common Time with HH pattern on quarter notes



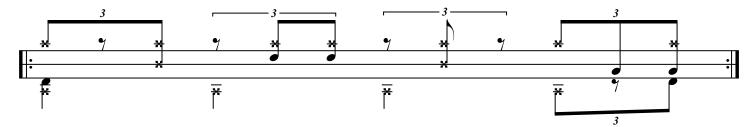
6/8 Cowbell pattern with HH on quarter notes



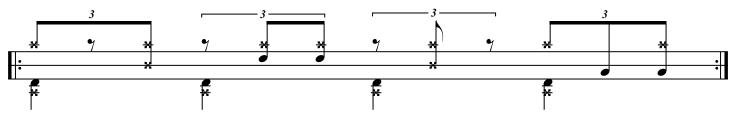
Playing quarter notes on the HH helps lock in the bell pattern. See the similarities between this pattern and the 6/8 clave pattern.



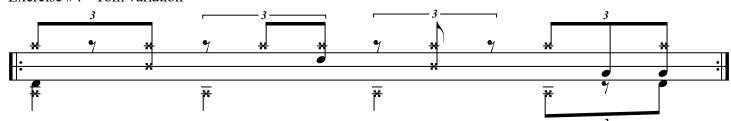
Exercise #2



Exercise #3 - Strong quarter note pulse on the bass drum



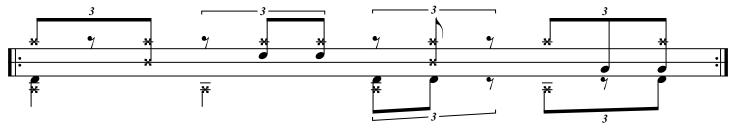
Exercise #4 - Tom variation



Exercise #5 - Tom variation with strong quarter note pulse on the bass drum



Exercise #6 - Bass Drum Variation



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