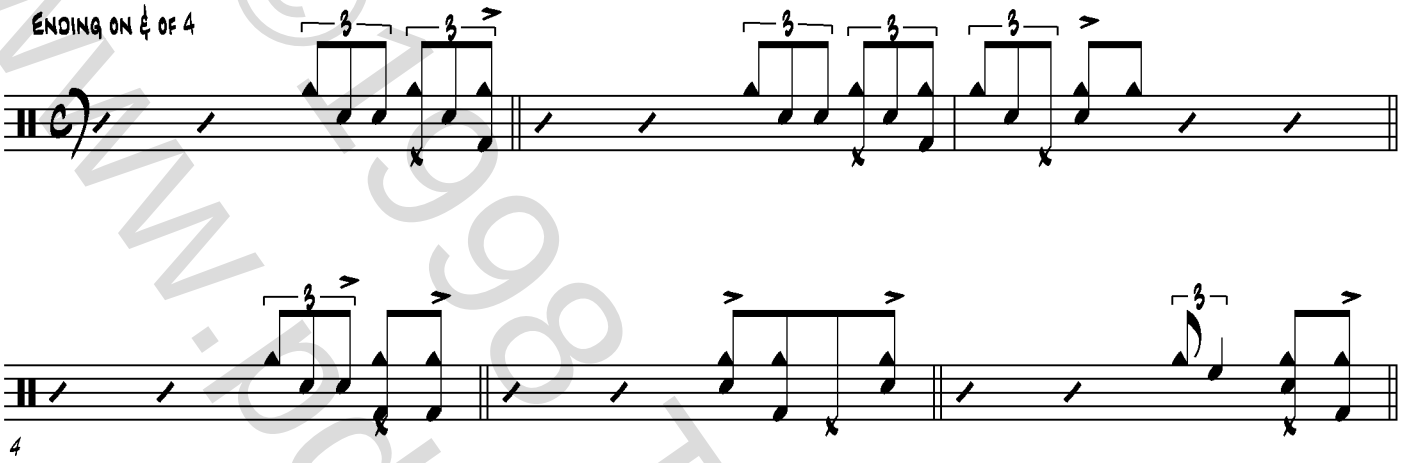
Big Nick - Elvin Jones - Analysis

Todd Bishop

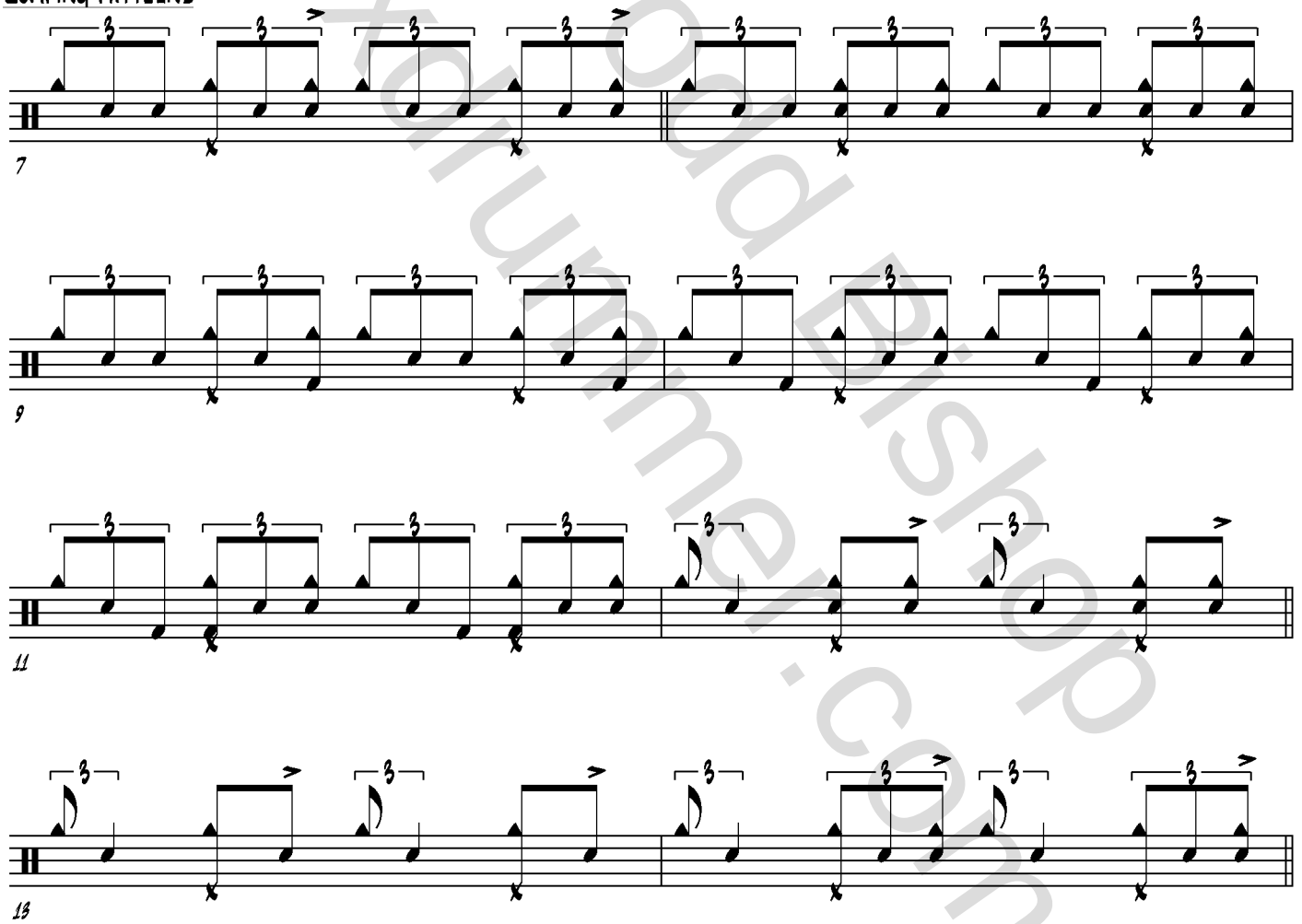
Phrase Endings

Ending on & of 4

Ending on 2 of first bar, next phrase



Comping Patterns



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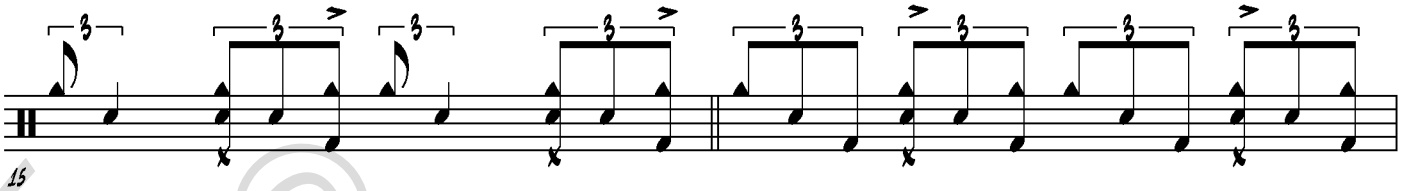
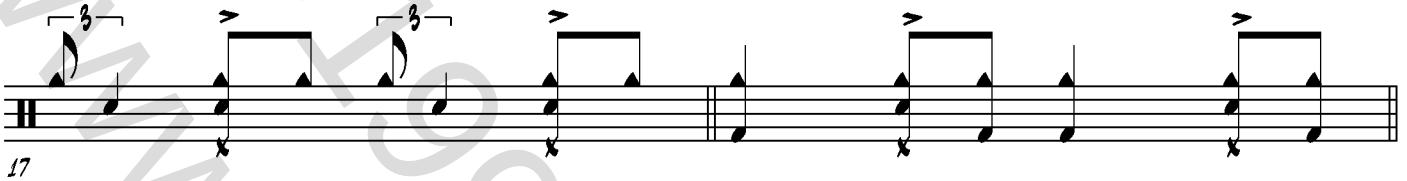
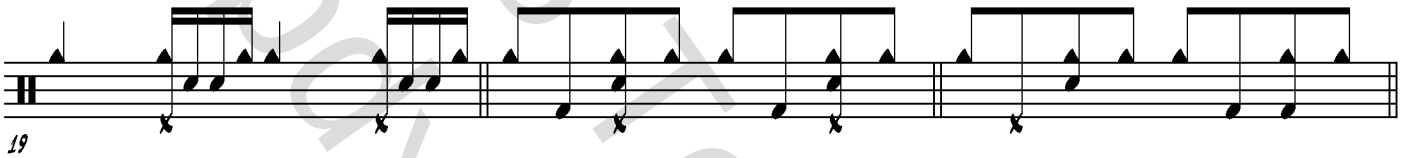
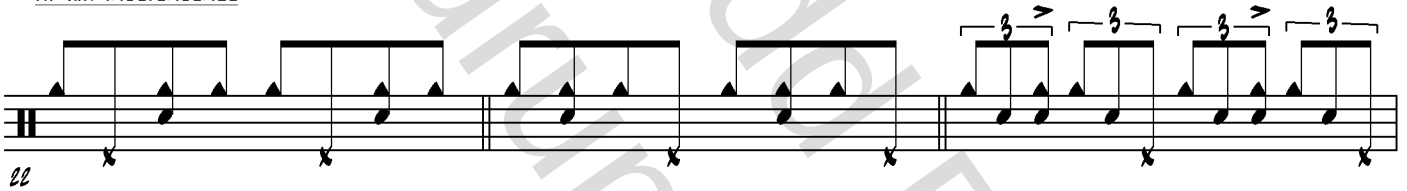
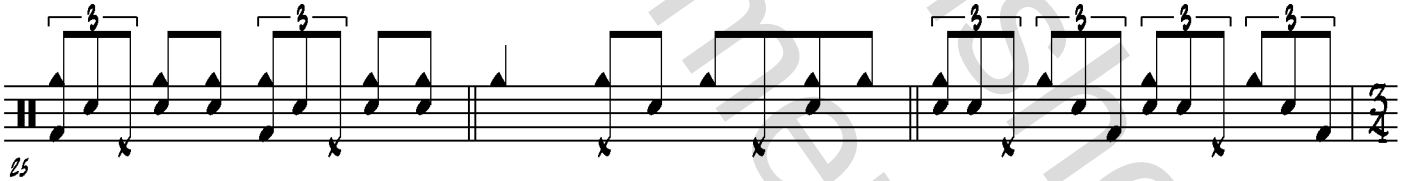






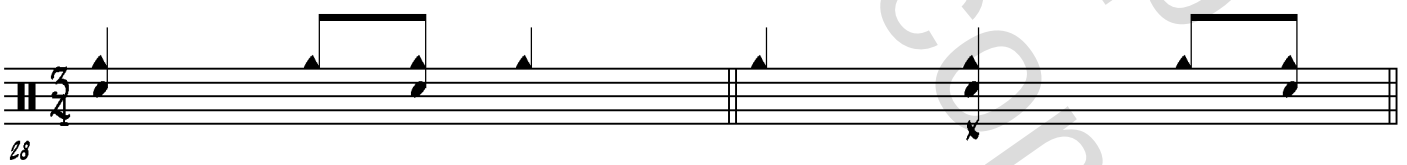
Hi-hat independence





3/4 over 4/4 ideas

Hi-hat in 3



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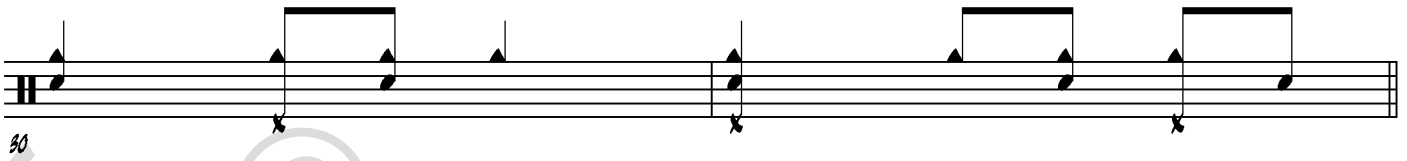
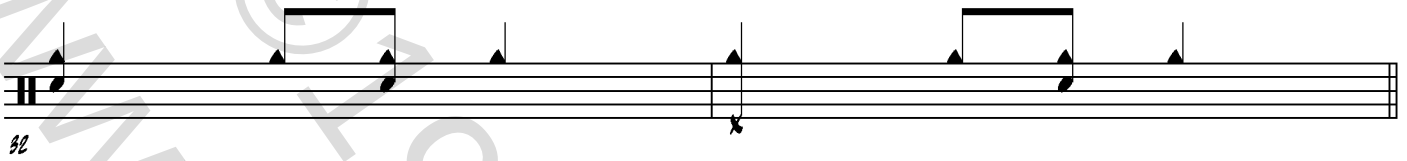
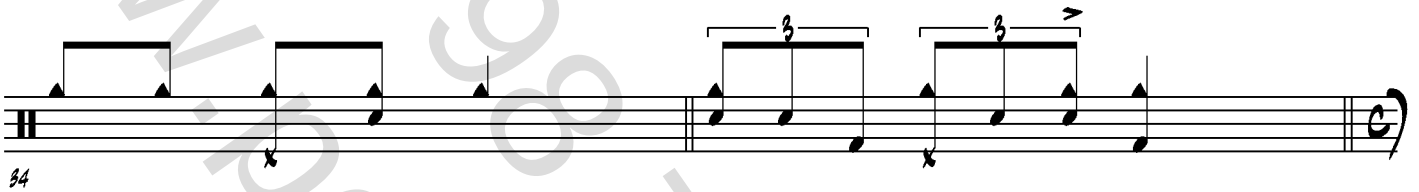
Hi=hat in 4

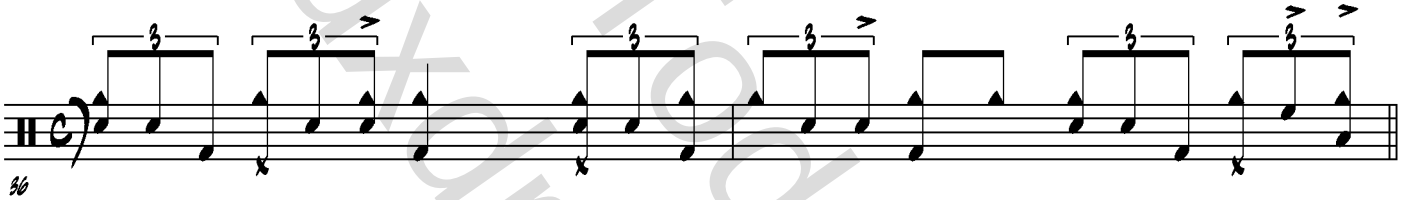


Hi-hat in 6





Complete phrase in 4



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Ways of practice

Phrase Endings:

- Make a 2 or 4 bar phrase by playing 1 or 3 bars time (or one of the comping ideas), then the written ending.

Comping Patterns/Hi-hat independence:

- Repeat each measure.
- Play each measure with 1 measure time in between.
- Play 2 beats of each measure with 2 beats time in between.

3/4 ideas:

- Learn the pattern by playing it in straight 3/4.
- Repeat a 2-measure phrase in 3/4, putting the hi-hat on 2 in bar 1, and 1 & 3 in bar 2.
- Make a 2 4/4-measure phrase by playing 2 bars of 3/4 pattern + a 2 beat phrase ending.
- Make a 4 4/4-measure phrase by playing 4 bars of 3/4 pattern plus 1 bar of 4/4.

Notes

- Big Nick is a Duke Ellington tune, and was originally recorded on the album John Coltrane & Duke Ellington.
- The tune is 8 bars long, played twice, plus a 2-bar tag before solos. There's a 16 bar piano solo followed by 48 bar soprano sax solo, then an 8 bar bass solo. At the end the head is played only once, ending with a slight ritard and a fermata on the last note of the melody.
- Elvin mostly plays the hihat on 2 & 4 throughout.
- There are no long suspended passages of 3/4 over 4/4; usually there are only 2 repetitions of a 3-beat pattern