

## Country Western, Train Beat And Country Rock - Styles, History And Development Drummers Guide

The primary creators of the Country Shuffle were Ray Price and his drummer, Buddy Harman. Since its development in the 1950s, the Country Shuffle has come to be used in a lot of Musical styles like Honky Tonk, The Nashville Sound, the Bakersfield Sound, and Modern Day Country. Its main characteristic is the swung eighth note feel borrowed from jazz and Blues. Early examples of the Country Shuffle are "Crazy Arms", "City Lights", and "I've Got a New Heartache." Tempos range from quarter note = 80-126 bpm.

Western Music's initial identification with Country music stemmed from its sounding somewhat similar to traditional Country and the use of the guitar as the primary instrument. Although it is no longer coupled with Country, a musician may need to play Western songs in a non traditional Country setting. The Country, Shuffle is the primary groove in virtually all Western songs, with the distinguishing feature being the slow tempo of virtually all Western tunes. So, a "Slow Shuffle" feel results. The tempo range is quite narrow, at quarter note = 80-92 bpm.

The Train Beat is an indispensable groove in most Country gigs. Though its roots stem from the Bluegrass genre, it is now used throughout Country music. Just as in Bluegrass, its main characteristic is the consistent snare pattern accenting the upbeats. But unlike Bluegrass, in the genres of Country Rock or Modern Day Country, it may sometimes be played with sticks, the snare drum remaining the exclusive surface. Also, the groove tends to have a slower tempo range than that of Bluegrass, which contributes to its being felt in 4/4 rather than cut time or "two feel." The tempo range is quarter note = 100-132 bpm. However, the abundance of snare drum notes simulates a fast, double time feel.

Beginning in the 1970s, Country music began incorporating the sounds and influence of mainstream Rock n' Roll. Artists such as Charlie Daniels, Linda Ronstadt, Alabama, Willie Nelson, and Waylon Jennings stand as pioneers of this marriage of styles. Current artists such as Garth Brooks, Shania Twain, Faith Hill and Clint Black have attained worldwide popularity outside of normal Country music circles. Traditional Country music continues to thrive through Modern Day Country artists such as Travis Tritt, Hank Williams Jr., and Winona Judd, with the late drummer Larrie Londin standing as one of the most notable session musicians of the genre. As it is heavily influenced by contemporary Rock n' Roll, most Country Rock grooves may be played straight or shuffled.

The main difference between Country Rock grooves and Modern Day Country grooves is that Country Rock grooves tend to be more active. Country Rock and Modern Day Country are often included in the same category due to their similar musical characteristics. However, Country Rock tends to incorporate a dynamic rhythm section with loud guitars and bigger drum sounds, similar to those in a Rock n' Roll band. Modern Day Country relies heavily on pop type grooves and modern production. Additionally, there are "crossover artists" that explore characteristics of both styles such as Tim McGraw and Americana. Similar drum grooves appear in both styles, and both may draw from the more traditional Country drumming styles. Tempos of both Country Rock and Modern Day Country range from slower ballads at quarter note = 58 bpm to brisk tempos of quarter note = 184 bpm or faster.

### About the Author

By Eric Starg. Eric practices various [Drum Techniques](#) on [Pacific Drum Sets](#) and [Pacific Snare Drums](#). Eric is an active member of Drum Solo Artist where he is answering drum related questions, and helping drummers with tips and advices.

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