

Neil Peart GROOVES



From Rush's Studio Albums

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DRUMMER

- Neil Peart -

GROOVES

From Rush's Studio Albums

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60 Neil Peart Grooves

Ask any rock drummer to name some of the most influential drummers of the last few decades, and Neil Peart is very likely to be on the list.

Widely regarded as one of the most creative, original, groovy, technical and versatile drummers ever lived, he was inducted into the Modern Drummer Hall of Fame in 1983 (when he was just 30 years old), he inspired the most passionate air-drumming community, and with his lifetime band Rush has created some of the most astounding music ever produced.

Not to mention his extraordinary mastery of the English language, which allowed him to write inspiring lyrics for Rush - plus some very good books.

A drummer who thought like a percussionist, Neil's body of work is so immense that it would take an encyclopedia to cover it: odd times, syncopations, orchestrations, ghost notes, dynamics, and an extremely personal sound and vocabulary, are masterfully blended while serving the music.

To pay homage to what he created - and to help drummers figure out his most challenging rhythms - I went through Rush's discography and tried to pick the most unusual solutions, going in chronological order from Fly by Night (1975) to Clockwork Angels (2012).

I then selected 60 of the most interesting beats and spent some time transcribing the material to put together this booklet, just a little tribute to the gifts Neil has left us.

As Taylor Hawkins beautifully put it: "With his composition, craft and technique, his drumming was songwriting. Just as musical, just as melodic as any other instrument in the band. Bringing the drums to where they should be, to the forefront of every song".

I recommend checking out the songs at the indicated timestamps and listen to the way Neil sounds, to understand not only the what but also the nuances in how he plays.

For the most complex patterns, start by practicing the sticking involved very slowly, then speed up and lastly orchestrate as shown.

I believe studying such great masters is a must for every drummer, regardless of their style, as practicing ideas like these can be truly inspirational.

You can click on each groove in the PDF to go to its specific time in the YouTube video where I show each example.

As for many of my generation, Neil has been the reason why I picked up sticks as a teenager.

Revisiting his playing three decades later, all I can say is that his ability to craft the perfect drum part is out of this world.

The way he combines ideas, builds throughout the arrangement, selects the perfect drum sounds, is always a complete work of art.

The drums were like a whole orchestra to him.

To understand Neil's greatness we can do a simple exercise: let's choose a Rush song and imagine there is no drum arrangement and we have to come up with the parts.

We will quickly realize how complex, intricate, intelligent and highly creative his solutions are.

Please note that the transcriptions are made for a standard five piece drum set, so that anyone can play the beats on a basic kit, while Neil often orchestrated his parts on numerous toms and cymbals, using the entirety of his beautiful kits, which included percussions, triggers and electronic drums.

Lastly, I only focused on Rush records, but I invite the fans who are not

aware of it to go check out his work with the Buddy Rich tribute Band (a project he started and produced) and with Vertical Horizon.

This is part of my 'Groove Masters' mini-series. I have also created four booklets about Vinnie Colaiuta, Steve Jordan, Jeff Porcaro and John JR Robinson, which you can download here:

Vinnie Colaiuta Grooves

Steve Jordan Grooves

Jeff Porcaro Grooves

John JR Robinson Grooves

And if you feel like improving your groove, check these out:

'Groove Workout & Tools' - Altitude Drumming - Volume 7

'Groove Mastery & Formulas' - Altitude Drumming - Volume 8

The click sound is intentionally mixed on the left channel. Pan to the right to listen to just the drums without the metronome.

Neil Peart Grooves

Anthem (0:18)

Fly by Night - 1975

♩ = 304 bpm

1)

R L R R L R L R L

Detailed description: This is a drum notation for the Anthem groove. It is in 7/8 time with a tempo of 304 bpm. The notation consists of a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The rhythm is a series of eighth notes: R, L, R, R, L, R, L, R, L. There are accents over the second and fourth eighth notes of the first measure and the second and fourth eighth notes of the second measure.

Beneath, Between and Behind (0:17)

Fly by Night - 1975

♩ = 114 bpm

2)

R R L R R L R L L

Detailed description: This is a drum notation for the Beneath, Between and Behind groove. It is in 4/4 time with a tempo of 114 bpm. The notation consists of a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The rhythm is a series of eighth notes: R, R, L, R, R, L, R, L, L. There are accents over the first and third eighth notes of the first measure and the first and third eighth notes of the second measure.

Lakeside Park (0:03)

Caress of Steel - 1975

♩ = 98 bpm

3)

R R L R R L R L L

Detailed description: This is a drum notation for the Lakeside Park groove. It is in 4/4 time with a tempo of 98 bpm. The notation consists of a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The rhythm is a series of eighth notes: R, R, L, R, R, L, R, L, L. There are accents over the first and third eighth notes of the first measure and the first and third eighth notes of the second measure.

The Necromancer (5:29)

Caress of Steel - 1975

♩ = 147 bpm

4)

R R L R R L R L L

Detailed description: This is a drum notation for the The Necromancer groove. It is in 4/4 time with a tempo of 147 bpm. The notation consists of a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The rhythm is a series of eighth notes: R, R, L, R, R, L, R, L, L. There are accents over the first and third eighth notes of the first measure and the first and third eighth notes of the second measure.

The Fountain of Lamneth (2:18)

Caress of Steel - 1975

♩ = 98 bpm

5)

R ll R L R

Detailed description: This is a drum notation for the The Fountain of Lamneth groove. It is in 4/4 time with a tempo of 98 bpm. The notation consists of a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The rhythm is a series of eighth notes: R, ll, R, L, R. There are accents over the first and third eighth notes of the first measure and the first and third eighth notes of the second measure.

Neil Peart Grooves

Cygnus X-1
(8:08)

A Farewell to Kings - 1977

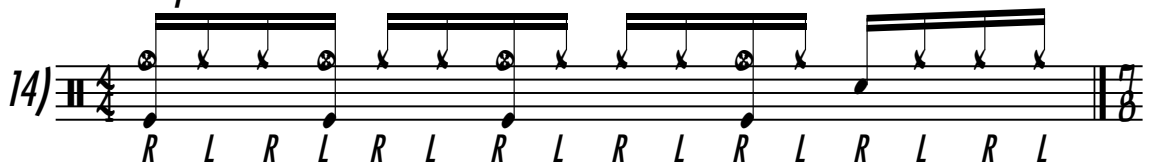
♩ = 310 bpm

13) 

La Villa Strangiato
(1:46)

Hemispheres - 1978

♩ = 153 bpm

14) 

La Villa Strangiato
(3:33)

Hemispheres - 1978

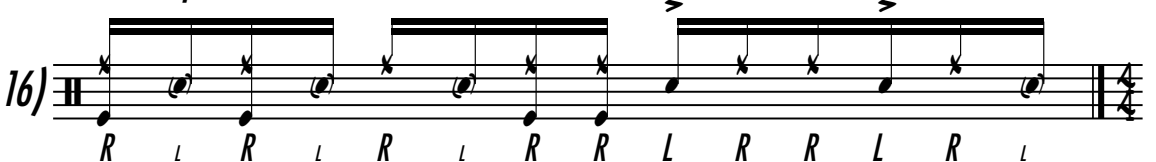
♩ = 284 bpm

15) 

La Villa Strangiato
(5:25)

Hemispheres - 1978

♩ = 288 bpm

16) 

The Spirit of
Radio (1:53)

Permanent Waves - 1980

♩ = 136 bpm

17) 

Neil Peart Grooves

Freewill (2:59)

Permanent Waves - 1980

♩ = 304 bpm

18) Musical notation for the Freewill groove, showing a 4/8 time signature. The notation consists of two measures of eighth notes with 'x' marks above them, indicating cymbal hits. The first measure has six notes, and the second measure has five notes. The notes are beamed together. The tempo is 304 bpm.

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

Different Strings (2:59)

Permanent Waves - 1980

♩ = 127 bpm

19) Musical notation for the Different Strings groove, showing a 4/4 time signature. The notation consists of four measures of eighth notes with 'x' marks above them, indicating cymbal hits. The first measure has four notes, the second has four notes, the third has a triplet of four notes, and the fourth has four notes. The notes are beamed together. The tempo is 127 bpm.

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

Natural Science (3:41)

Permanent Waves - 1980

♩ = 326 bpm

20) Musical notation for the Natural Science groove, showing a 4/8 time signature. The notation consists of three measures of eighth notes with 'x' marks above them, indicating cymbal hits. The first measure has four notes, the second has four notes, and the third has four notes. The notes are beamed together. The tempo is 326 bpm.

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

YYZ (1:10)

Moving Pictures - 1981

♩ = 141 bpm

21) Musical notation for the YYZ groove, showing a 4/4 time signature. The notation consists of four measures of eighth notes with 'x' marks above them, indicating cymbal hits. The first measure has four notes, the second has four notes, the third has four notes, and the fourth has four notes. The notes are beamed together. The tempo is 141 bpm.

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

Tom Sawyer (2:58)

Moving Pictures - 1981

♩ = 87 bpm

22) Musical notation for the Tom Sawyer groove, showing a 4/4 time signature. The notation consists of four measures of eighth notes with 'x' marks above them, indicating cymbal hits. The first measure has four notes, the second has four notes, the third has four notes, and the fourth has four notes. The notes are beamed together. The tempo is 87 bpm.

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

Neil Peart Grooves

Tom Sawyer
(0:11)

Moving Pictures - 1981

♩ = 87 bpm

23)

Red Barchetta
(2:00)

Moving Pictures - 1981

♩ = 144 bpm

24)

Limelight
(1:01)

Moving Pictures - 1981

♩ = 130 bpm

25)

Witch Hunt
(2:54)

Moving Pictures - 1981

♩ = 122 bpm

26)

Neil Peart Grooves

Manhattan Project
(2:10)

Power Windows - 1985

♩ = 162 bpm *Splash*

36)

R R R

Detailed description: This is a 4/4 drum groove. The bass drum (R) plays a steady quarter-note pattern. The snare (x) plays a pattern of quarter notes with accents, grouped in pairs and fours. The cymbal (*) plays a pattern of quarter notes with accents, also grouped in pairs and fours. The notation includes a 'Splash' instruction and a tempo of 162 bpm.

Marathon
(1:59)

Power Windows - 1985

♩ = 156 bpm

37)

R L R L R L R L R

Detailed description: This is a 4/4 drum groove. The bass drum (R) plays a steady quarter-note pattern. The snare (x) plays a pattern of quarter notes with accents, grouped in pairs and fours. The cymbal (x) plays a pattern of quarter notes with accents, grouped in pairs and fours. The notation includes a tempo of 156 bpm and a specific limb pattern: R L R L R L R L R.

Mystic Rhythms
(0:00)

Power Windows - 1985

♩ = 120 bpm *China*

38)

R L R L R

Detailed description: This is a 4/4 drum groove. The bass drum (R) plays a steady quarter-note pattern. The snare (x) plays a pattern of quarter notes with accents, grouped in pairs and fours. The cymbal (x) plays a pattern of quarter notes with accents, grouped in pairs and fours. The notation includes a tempo of 120 bpm and a 'China' instruction. The limb pattern is R L R L R.

Force Ten
(2:35)

Hold Your Fire - 1987

♩ = 170 bpm

39)

R L R L R L

Detailed description: This is a 6/4 drum groove. The bass drum (R) plays a steady quarter-note pattern. The snare (x) plays a pattern of quarter notes with accents, grouped in pairs and fours. The cymbal (x) plays a pattern of quarter notes with accents, grouped in pairs and fours. The notation includes a tempo of 170 bpm and a specific limb pattern: R L R L R L.

The Pass
(1:06)

Presto - 1989

♩ = 115 bpm

40)

R R R

Detailed description: This is a 4/4 drum groove. The bass drum (R) plays a steady quarter-note pattern. The snare (x) plays a pattern of quarter notes with accents, grouped in pairs and fours. The cymbal (x) plays a pattern of quarter notes with accents, grouped in pairs and fours. The notation includes a tempo of 115 bpm and a specific limb pattern: R R R.

Neil Peart Grooves

**Armor and Sword
(0:52)**

♩ = 102 bpm

Snakes & Arrows - 2007

53) Musical notation for 'Armor and Sword' in 4/4 time. The notation shows a series of eighth and sixteenth notes with stems pointing down, indicating a specific drum pattern. The notes are grouped with beams. Below the staff, the drum pattern is written as: R LL R R R R R. The piece ends with a double bar line.

**The Main Monkey
Business (1:22)**

♩ = 82 bpm

No Snare

Snakes & Arrows - 2007

54) Musical notation for 'The Main Monkey Business' in 4/4 time. The notation shows a series of eighth and sixteenth notes with stems pointing down. The notes are grouped with beams. Below the staff, the drum pattern is written as: R R R R R L R L R R. A star symbol is placed above the final note, with the word 'China' written next to it. The piece ends with a double bar line.

**The Main Monkey
Business (3:40)**

♩ = 82 bpm

No Snare

Snakes & Arrows - 2007

55) Musical notation for 'The Main Monkey Business (3:40)' in 4/4 time. The notation shows a series of eighth and sixteenth notes with stems pointing down. The notes are grouped with beams. Below the staff, the drum pattern is written as: R R L R R L R L L. The piece ends with a double bar line.

**The Way the Wind
Blows (0:54)**

♩ = 180 bpm

Snakes & Arrows - 2007

56) Musical notation for 'The Way the Wind Blows' in 8/8 time. The notation shows a series of eighth and sixteenth notes with stems pointing down. The notes are grouped with beams. Below the staff, the drum pattern is written as: R R L R R L L R R L R R L L. The piece ends with a double bar line.

**Good News First
(1:07)**

♩ = 110 bpm

Snakes & Arrows - 2007

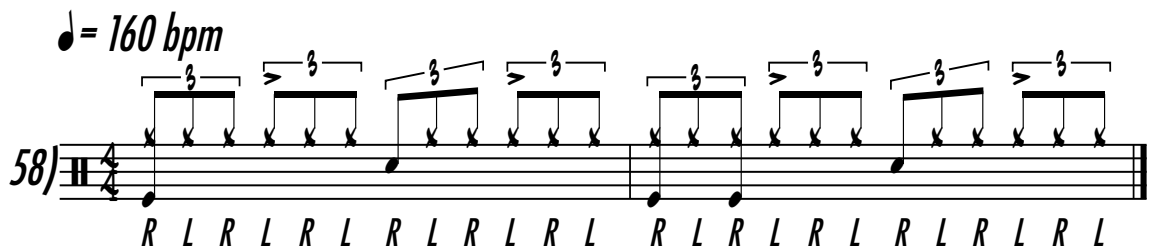
57) Musical notation for 'Good News First' in 4/4 time. The notation shows a series of eighth and sixteenth notes with stems pointing down. The notes are grouped with beams. Below the staff, the drum pattern is written as: L R R. A star symbol is placed above the final note, with the word 'China' written next to it. The piece ends with a double bar line.

Neil Peart Grooves

Clockwork Angels
(1:07)

Clockwork Angels - 2012

♩ = 160 bpm

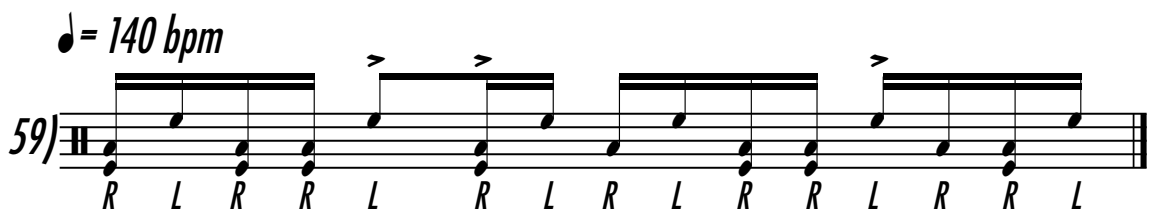
58) 

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

The Anarchist
(0:00)

Clockwork Angels - 2012

♩ = 140 bpm

59) 

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

Headlong Flight
(1:20)

Clockwork Angels - 2012

♩ = 180 bpm

60) 

l R l R l R China