

Rhythm Sectional Objectives

by

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1. Make sure all the section members are in eye-contact and are set up in close proximity. The bass amp should be behind the drummer and pointing toward the band; up off the floor in most cases as well. The piano lid should be open towards the horn section. Usually the drummer is in between the piano and the horns. The bass usually stands near the ride cymbal, and the guitarist sits next to the pianist in front of the bassist and drummer.
2. Make sure of Tempo markings with the metronome.. Decide which note type gets the beat. Fast tempi use the half note, medium, the quarter, slow, the eighth, etc. With the metronome clicking aloud, practice holding different tempi.
3. Identify the ending of every section (Intro, A sections, bridge, coda, etc.), and apply the appropriate dynamic movement a few measures before the end of each section. Decide where the loudest climactic point is in the tune (there may be several), practice playing this part of the tune, and then try working backwards from this point.
4. Work all sections that have written-out melodic and rhythmic parts.
5. Identify any pedal-point sections (where the bass note stays the same), and crescendo throughout.
6. Isolate the bass and drums. In a swing feel, make sure the bass and the ride cymbal swing pattern are locked together. On latin feels, rock, or funk, make sure the kick drum and bass lines are locking together.
7. Make sure the piano and guitar are using the same 'voicings' when playing together. In general, don't use the root in the bottom voice, and be sure most voicing include the third and the seventh.
8. Don't have the piano and guitar both comping constantly throughout the tune. Decide where not to have both guitar and piano playing together, and mark these.
9. Drummers should pay special attention to the kick rhythms in the horn section. Be sensitive to the instruments for which your kicks are indicated (Saxes don't need to be kicked as hard as the brass, or full horn section.). Don't just play the kick rhythm indicated, but try to set-up the rhythms. When in doubt, just keep good time and listen to the horns.