



BUILD PATH

Arranging Essentials For Worship Musicians

Lesson 5: Arrangement Hacking - The 3 Gs

Lesson 1: Why Arranging Matters

Lesson 2: The Sonic Spectrum

Lesson 3: The Rhythmic Spectrum

Lesson 4: Three Approaches to Arranging

How To Arrangement Hack

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Arrangement Hacking = Listening to a song to determine how to *approximate* it.

The 3 Gs of Arrangement Hacking

The Groove

The Glue

The Grace

Groove

Groove

"The predictable, consistent forward motion of the song."

Norm Stockton

Groove

Groove is the *tracks* that song rides on.



If the right instruments are creating the right groove—and the rest of the band and vocalists are connecting with that—

If the right instruments are creating the right groove—and the rest of the band and vocalists are connecting with that—you'll have a tight sound.

Groove

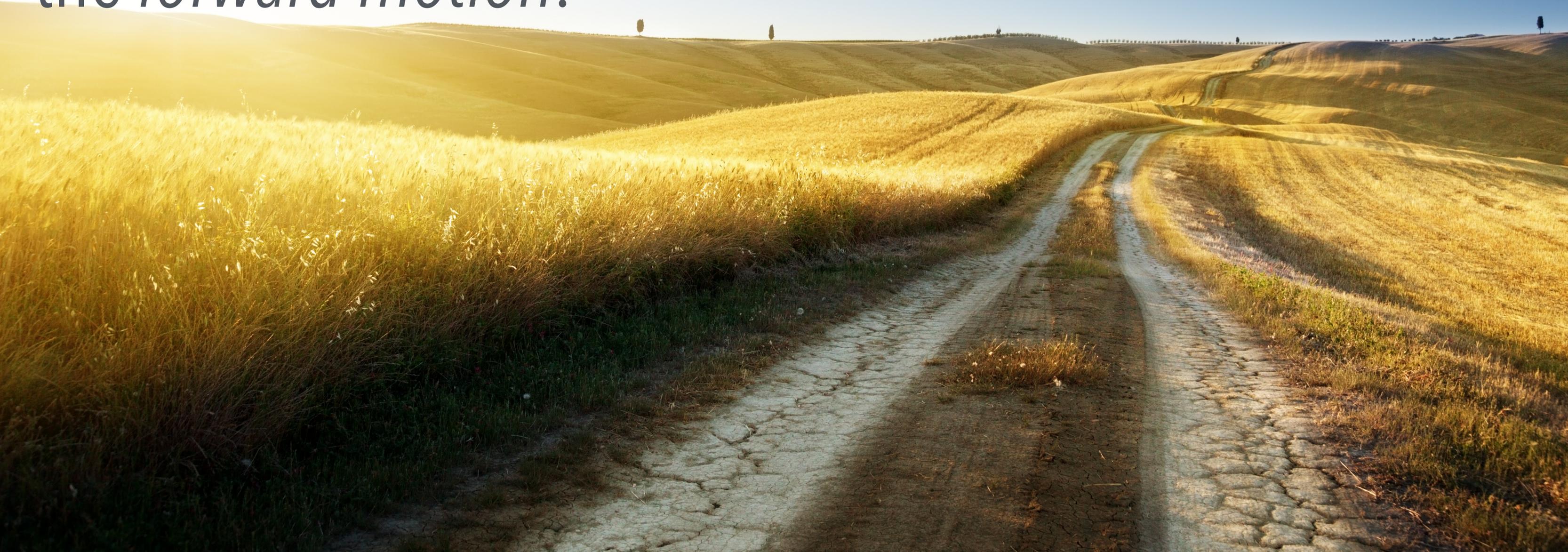
Groove is built on the
Foundation and complemented
by the *Rhythm*.



A close-up photograph of a guitar neck, showing the fretboard, frets, and strings. The wood has a dark, rich grain. Two circular inlays are visible on the fretboard. The background is blurred, showing parts of the guitar's body and bridge.

Foundation:
What the rest of the band is built on

If the bass and drums cut the
tracks in the road, the rhythm is
the *forward motion*.



The *Rhythm*

The *rhythm* creates the *forward motion* and the *excitement* to the music.

"Driving Instrument"

*Building a groove if you don't
have a full band...*

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have a full band...*

Find a way to create the feel of the foundation.

Groove

Groove: Typical Mistakes

1. Instruments *compete* for harmonic or rhythmic foundation.

Groove: Typical Mistakes

2. Rhythmic clashing.

Groove: Typical Mistakes

2. Rhythmic clashing.

Often between drums and acoustic guitar.

Groove: Rookie Mistakes

3. Nobody intentionally playing the harmonic foundation.

Groove: Rookie Mistakes

3. Not mixing the foundation properly.

The *bass and drums* should be ***prominent in the mix***, since they carry the rest of the band rhythmically and harmonically.

Too many churches are *scared* of the drums and bass, and they end up being *buried in the mix*.

The mix won't feel "full".

Glue



A red glue stick with a white cap and a white puddle of glue on a blue background. The glue stick is positioned horizontally, with the red tip pointing to the right. The white cap is on the left, and the red body extends to the right. A white puddle of glue is on the right side of the image. The background is a solid blue color.

Glue is the
middle stuff
that holds
the band
together.

Glue

1. The *Pad* or the *Constant*.

Glue: The Pad

The measure of the pad isn't that people notice it, but if they notice *if it's NOT there*.

Glue: The Pad

The pad takes the pressure off all the other instruments to cover every moment.

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The pad takes the pressure off all the other instruments to cover every moment. *It allows us to create **more space** with the other instruments.*

Glue: The Pad

Pad Options: *Ambient Guitar*

Glue: The Pad

Pad Options: *Pre-recorded Pads*

Glue: The Pad

Pad Options: *Light acoustic guitar strumming*

Glue: The Pad

Guidelines: Don't make the pad too prominent.

Glue: The Pad

Guidelines: Enhancement tracks contain pads.

Glue: The Pad

Guidelines: Violin or flute can create a pad*

*Or other instruments capable of sustaining notes.

Glue: The Pad

Guidelines: Less experienced keyboard players.

Glue: The Pad

Guidelines: Less experienced keyboard players.

Doesn't need an expensive keyboard.

Glue: Rookie Mistakes

1. No pad.

Glue: Rookie Mistakes

2. Mixing the pad too high or too low.

Glue: Rookie Mistakes

3. The pad played too rhythmically.

The pad *sustains*.

It *glues* the whole band together.

As worship team members, we're called to
serve the congregation, NOT our own musical
fulfillment.

Glue

2. The *Lead*

2. The **Lead**

The lead vocal or instrument.

Don't confuse the an instrumental solo lead with "filling." They function differently.

Instrumental breaks without “lead” solos...

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Breakdowns

When there is an instrumental break that's NOT a breakdown, you need to have a *lead instrument*.

Typically, extremely gifted musicians and producers *intentionally created that instrumental solo* to fit the song and *help move it forward*.

Glue: The Lead

Why NOT to duplicate/approximate the
instrumental solo:

Glue: The Lead

Why NOT to duplicate/approximate the
instrumental solo:

1. It's technically too advanced.

Glue: The Lead

Why NOT to duplicate/approximate the
instrumental solo:

2. We don't have a lead instrument.

You need to *communicate to the tech who is taking the lead* and when.

Glue: The Lead

Why NOT to duplicate/approximate the
instrumental solo:

3. It doesn't fit how we use the song
in our church.

Lead: Rookie Mistakes

Lead: Rookie Mistakes

1. Competing lead voices.

Lead: Rookie Mistakes

2. Not mixing the lead voice high enough.

Lead: Rookie Mistakes

3. Not being clear on who's playing the instrumental lead.

Lead: Rookie Mistakes

Be clear on who's playing what part.

Glue

The Pad

The Lead

Grace

Grace

Grace is the *extra stuff* that adds beauty, tension or other enhancements.

Grace

The Fill

Grace: The Fill

Fills generally occur in the spaces between lead lines. It's really the *answer* to the lead.

Grace: The Fill

It's NOT a solo, but simply something to create interest in the open spaces.

Grace: Rookie Mistakes

1. OVER-filling.

“Noodling” Guitarists.

Grace: Rookie Mistakes

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Guitarists "noodling" on scales.

Grace: Rookie Mistakes

1. OVER-filling.

Filling every open spot.

Main Culprits: Electric Guitarists, Keyboard and Drummers.

Grace: Rookie Mistakes

1. OVER-filling.

Call each other on *over-filling*—a little fill goes a long way.

Grace: Rookie Mistakes

2. Competing for the fills.

Grace: Other Elements

1. Single-line motifs or riffs.

These need to *add to the song* without taking something away from the melody or the lead.

Grace: Other Elements

2. "Pixie dust"

Sound tech can add grace elements.

Grace: Rookie Mistakes

1. Too much/too often.

Grace elements lose their effectiveness if played too much.

Grace: Rookie Mistakes

2. Competing grace elements.

Grace: Rookie Mistakes

3. Over- or under-mixed.

Grace: Rookie Mistakes

4. Never adding any.

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Rhythm - creates the forward motion of the song.

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The Pad/Constant - subtle, sustaining notes/chords.

The Lead - the voice or instrument on melody/solo.

3 G's of Arrangement Hacking

Grace: stuff that adds beauty, interest and tension.

The Fill - creating interest in the open spaces.