

Samba and Bossa Nova for Keyboard and Guitar

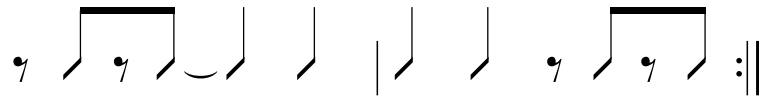
The real focus of successful "comping" in samba and bossa nova lies in the rhythms used, so we'll first look at the following patterns as rhythms only. Then we'll see how the actual chord changes should be played employing these rhythms.

As bossa nova is basically a style of samba and they share many of the same rhythmic characteristics, we will treat them as much the same thing. There are two basic comping patterns involved in samba.

Pattern A:



Pattern B:



Or:



You may notice that Pattern B is nearly the same as Pattern A begun on the second measure. But since the phrase begins and ends on the upbeat; the barline is obscured which gives it more syncopation and propulsion. You will probably find that this takes some getting used to.

Outside of Brazil, the standard rhythm is Pattern A. In Brazil, however, both patterns are common. In the Brazilian style, phrases usually start with Pattern A and shift to Pattern B, resulting in a more syncopated, propulsive feel. Here are three examples showing how this shift is accomplished, followed by Pattern B:

