



Drum Kit Crash Course

An Introduction to the Drum Kit



By Chris McCaig

How To Hold The Drumsticks

The Matched Grip

Hold the stick between the flat part of the thumb and the first joint of the index finger. This creates the balance point from which the stick is free to pivot. Then add the second, third and fourth fingers lightly curved around the stick.



The wrist is positioned so that the palm is facing down. Strike the drum using a wrist stroke and allow the stick to rebound off the drum. Keep all muscles as relaxed as possible.

Choosing A Pair Of Drumsticks

There are many different kinds of drumsticks. They are available in different sizes and weights with either wood or nylon tips. A good starting size would be a 5A, or for younger drummers a 7A. Your teacher can recommend a good size drumstick for you.

When choosing a pair of drumsticks they should be the same length, weight and straightness.

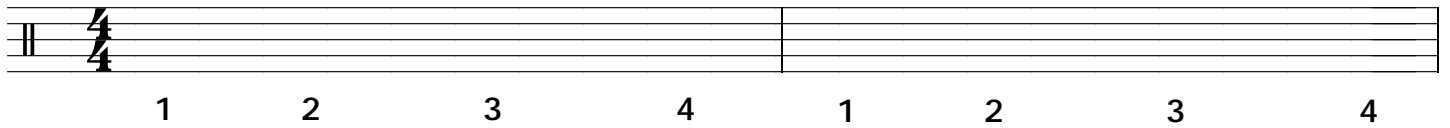
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Time Signature

This means that there are 4 beats in each bar.

I----- This is one bar -----| I----- This is one bar -----|



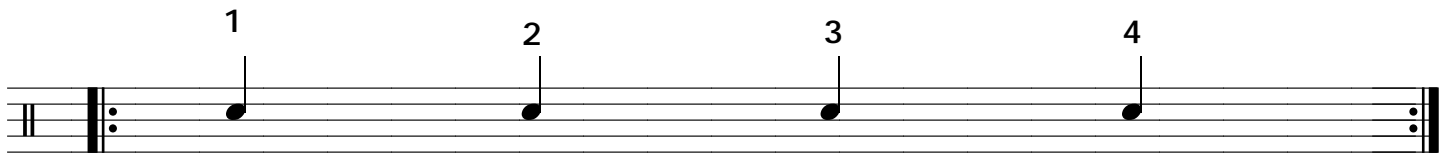
1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

The following notes all fit into one bar:

Quarter Notes

There are 4 quarter notes in a bar, so there is 1 quarter note on each beat.

Count them: 1 2 3 4.



1 2 3 4

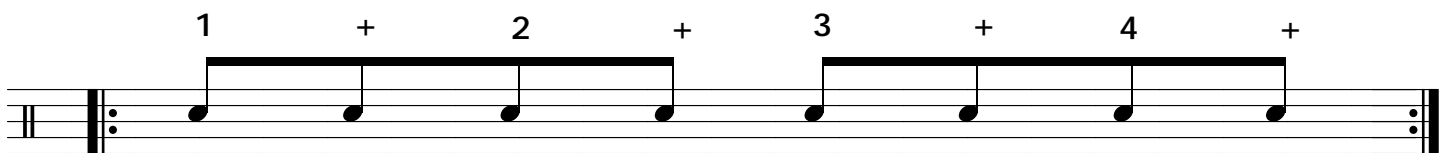
Repeat Sign

Eighth Notes

There are 8 eighth notes in a bar, so there are 2 eighth notes on each beat.

Count them: 1 and 2 and 3 and 4 and.

Note: 'and' is written as '+'.



1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

Sixteenth Notes

There are 16 sixteenth notes in a bar, so there are 4 sixteenth notes on each beat.

Count them: 1 e and ah 2 e and ah 3 e and ah 4 e and ah.

Note: 'and' is written as '+', 'ah' is written as 'a'.



1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a

Rudiments

Rudiments are drumming patterns made up of a series of right and left strokes. With practice they can be combined in a variety of ways on any part of the kit. These form the 'vocabulary' of drumming and should be practiced regularly.

The Single Stroke Roll ♩ = 80 - 160

R L R L R L R L

The Double Stroke Roll ♩ = 80 - 160

R R L L R R L L

The Single Paradiddle ♩ = 80 - 160

R L R R L R L L

Rudiments played with eighth notes ♩ = 50 - 100

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

Rudiments played with sixteenth notes ♩ = 40 - 60

RL RL RL RL RL RL RL RL RL RL RL RL RL RL
 RR LL RR LL RR LL RR LL RR LL RR LL RR LL RR LL
 RL RR LR LL RL RR LR LL RL RR LR LL RL RR LR LL

Rock Beats

A rock beat is a pattern played by the drummer in rock music.

The 3 parts of the kit used to play a rock beat are:

Hi-hat
Played with right hand.

Bass Drum
Played with right foot.

Snare Drum
Played with left hand.

Notice that the bass drum is written lowest, with the snare in the middle and the hi-hat at the top. This is similar to the way each part is set up on the kit.

Quarter Note Rock Beat ♩ = 80 - 160

1 2 3 4

Eighth Note Rock Beat ♪ = 50 - 100

1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

Sixteenth Note Rock Beat ♪♪ = 40 - 60

1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a

More Rudiments

Flams

A flam consists of a soft (grace) note followed by a louder note (accent >) .

The notes are played almost simultaneously.

The correct way to play them is with varied stick height, one higher than the other.

Right Flam

♩ = 60 - 120

Musical notation for Right Flam in 4/4 time. The staff shows four measures, each containing a flam consisting of a grace note (left hand) and an accented note (right hand). The notes are on the second line of the staff. Below each measure is the label 'LR'.

Left Flam

♩ = 60 - 120

Musical notation for Left Flam in 4/4 time. The staff shows four measures, each containing a flam consisting of a grace note (right hand) and an accented note (left hand). The notes are on the second line of the staff. Below each measure is the label 'RL'.

Alternating Flams

♩ = 60 - 120

Musical notation for Alternating Flams in 4/4 time. The staff shows four measures, each containing a flam. The first and third measures are Right Flams (LR), and the second and fourth measures are Left Flams (RL). The notes are on the second line of the staff.

Flam Tap

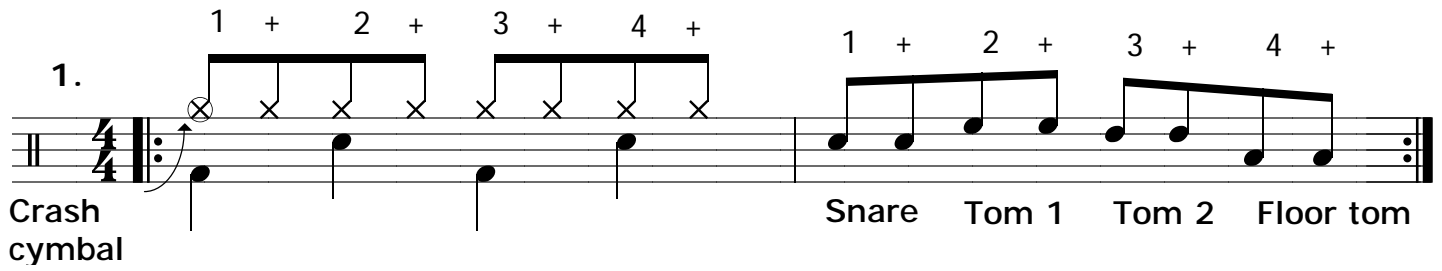
♩ = 40 - 80

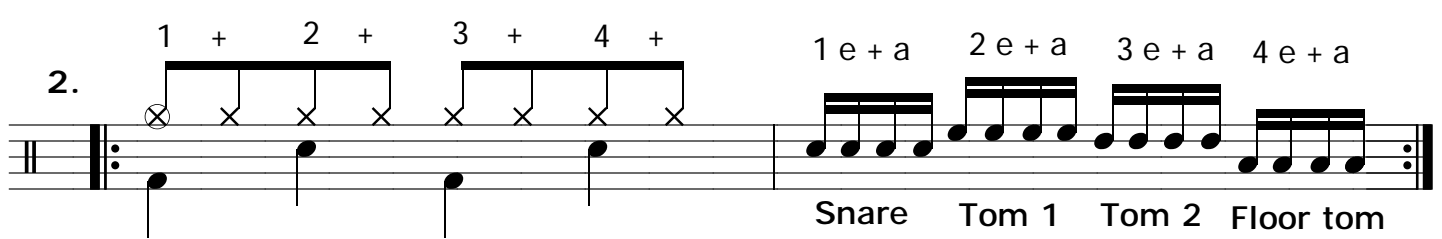
Musical notation for Flam Tap in 4/4 time. The staff shows four measures, each containing a flam tap consisting of a grace note (left hand) and an accented note (right hand), followed by a single note. The notes are on the second line of the staff. Below each measure are the labels 'LR R', 'RL L', 'LR R', and 'RL L' respectively.

Fills

♩ = 50 - 100

Fills are used to add variation to a song by filling in the space between sections (eg. verse and chorus). Descending fills start on the snare drum and work around the toms from highest to lowest.

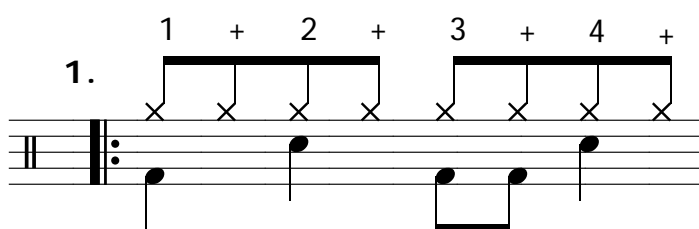
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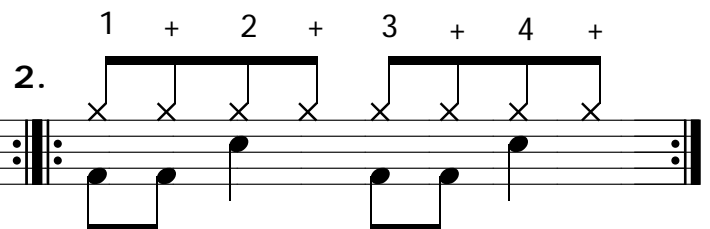
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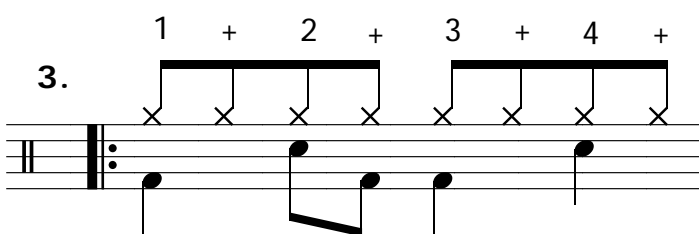
More Rock Beats

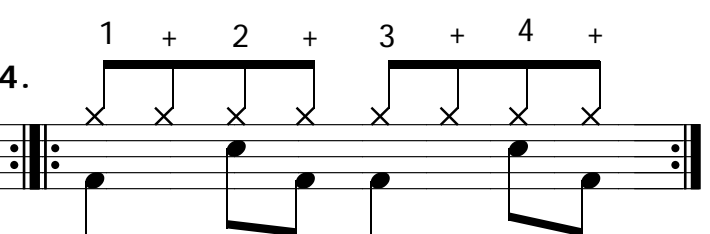
♩ = 50 - 100

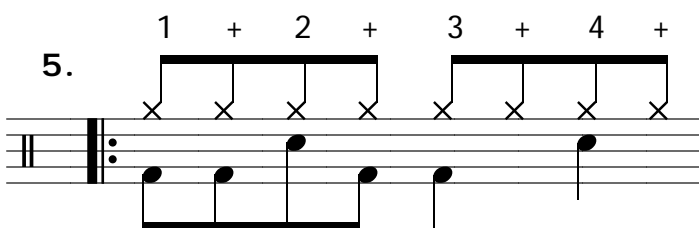
Bass drum variations for eighth note rock beats.

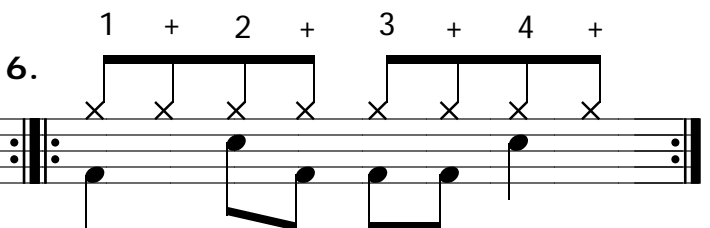
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CONGRATULATIONS!

You have now completed The Drum Kit Crash Course. You are now ready to begin the Drum Kit Studies series, beginning with Basic Drum Kit Studies.

These books are available for purchase from Beat Industry for the cost of \$30 each.

Drum Kit Studies



We also sell drum kits, drum sticks, practice pads, accessories and everything you need to help get you started on the drums. Ask your teacher for more details.

www.beatindustry.com