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# A FRESH APPROACH TO THE DRUM SET

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## A FRESH APPROACH TO THE **DRUMSET**



### A DRUMMER'S GUIDE TO:

Rock Beats and Fills • Hand & Foot Technique • Coordination and Independence • Reading Music •  
Understanding Song Construction • R&B, Jazz & Latin Styles and more!

BY  
**MARK WESSELS**  
with **STANTON MOORE**

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# A FRESH APPROACH **TO THE DRUMSET**

BY MARK WESSELS *with* STANTON MOORE

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## *Introduction*

When I set out to write this book, my number one goal was to include EVERYTHING a drummer needs to lay a solid foundation for future success. As any experienced drummer will tell you, becoming a great musician always comes back to the fundamentals – whether you want to play rock, funk, jazz, country, metal or Latin music!

In my own teaching studio, I had 5 or 10 methods that I used with my students, each containing some nugget of content that made it indispensable. But the frustration I had was in the planning and pacing of all that material. Each aspect of what I taught – technique, independence, musicianship, reading, grooves, fills, styles – could easily take over if I wasn't careful. The question really wasn't what my students needed to learn, but how much – and when?

That's why it's taken many years to plan and write this book. The goal since the beginning has been to successfully mix the building blocks of fundamentals with learning to play in all of the essential styles. Also, I wanted to have hip sounding "music-minus drums" tracks on each lesson that immediately applied the fundamentals to having fun playing music.

As you flip through the pages, I hope that you'll see that it's not just for beginners! There's enough material and concepts here to keep you busy well into the advanced stages of your drumming career.

I think you'll find that working through this book will be fun, motivating and rewarding. I wish you the best on your musical journey!

– **MARK WESSELS**

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## Sticks on the Hi-Hat

To play the hi-hat with the sticks, start by depressing the pedal so the hi-hat cymbals are in the "closed" position. The hi-hat can be played with the tip or the shaft of the stick – each creates a unique sound (the tip is used for lighter sounds, the shaft for heavier sounds).

Most drummers play "right-over-left" on hi-hat/snare patterns, although playing the left hand on the hi-hat (called "open handed playing") offers many advantages as well. Experiment with each hand on the hi-hat and find what works best for you.



## Beginning Independence



Start by counting "1, 2, 3, 4" out loud while you play the top part (x) on the hi-hat, then add your opposite hand on the snare drum playing the bottom notes.

Next, try the bottom notes on the bass drum instead of snare drum. The play-along track alternates between the two: 4 times with hi-hat/snare, then 4 times hi-hat/bass.

**1**

|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| X | X | X | X |
| ● |   |   |   |

"1" "2" "3" "4"

**2**

|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| X | X | X | X |
|   |   | ● |   |

"1" "2" "3" "4"

**3**

|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| X | X | X | X |
| ● |   | ● |   |

"1" "2" "3" "4"

**4**

|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| X | X | X | X |
|   | ● |   | ● |

"1" "2" "3" "4"

**5**

|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| X | X | X | X |
| ● | ● | ● |   |

"1" "2" "3" "4"

**6**

|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| X | X | X | X |
| ● |   | ● | ● |

"1" "2" "3" "4"

### Extra PRACTICE

For more practice on these exercises, you can split the parts between the feet – playing the top line with the left foot hi-hat. Then try playing with any combination of hands and feet: including both hands and both feet!

## "ROCK STAR"



This rock beat is easy to learn – and it's been played by some great drummers on countless hit records! The right hand will play steady beats on all four counts while you alternate between bass drum and snare drum beats.

Start slowly and count out loud as you play. Practice the groove over and over until you can play with steady relaxed strokes. After you can get a consistent sound and feel, try playing it with the play-along track.

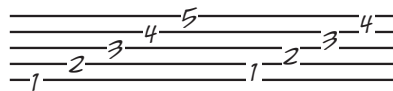
|           |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|-----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| HI-HAT    | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| SNARE     |   | ● |   | ● |   | ● |   | ● |
| BASS DRUM | ● |   | ● |   | ● |   | ● |   |
| Count:    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

WHAT you play is not as important as HOW you play it. Even a simple groove like this, played in perfect time with conviction and a great sound can be all that a song needs to make the band sound great!



# Music Notation Basics

Music is written on a **STAFF**



The staff has 5 lines and 4 spaces.



The **PERCUSSION CLEF** tells you that the notes on the staff are for non-pitched instruments.

## Note Values

A **WHOLE NOTE** is equal to FOUR COUNTS:



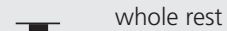
A **HALF NOTE** is equal to TWO COUNTS:



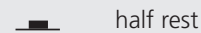
A **QUARTER NOTE** is equal to ONE COUNT:



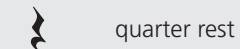
All note values have a corresponding rest:



whole rest

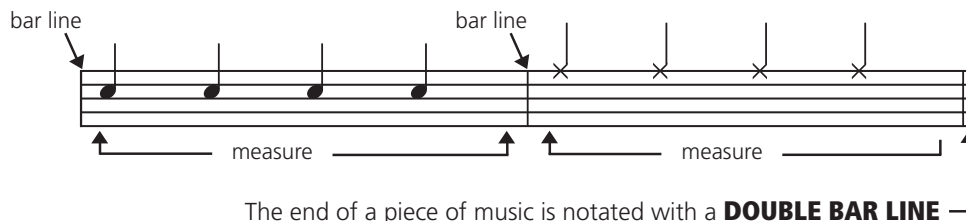


half rest



quarter rest

**BAR LINES** separate notes into equal numbers of beats. A **MEASURE** is the space between bar lines.



The end of a piece of music is notated with a **DOUBLE BAR LINE**

A **TIME SIGNATURE** tells you how many beats belong in a measure and what kind of note receives one beat.



← There are FOUR BEATS in a measure

← The QUARTER NOTE receives one beat

## Note Value Exercise



Play steady quarter note beats in the bass drum (bottom notes) while you play the whole, half and quarter note exercise on the snare (top notes). Count out loud while you play, **SUBDIVIDING** each beat by saying "and" between the numbers.



When you reach the **REPEAT SIGN**, repeat back to the beginning.



Count: 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &

1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &

# Table of Contents

|   |       |  |       |
|---|-------|--|-------|
| INTRODUCTION .....  | 2-9   | LESSON TWELVE .....  | 38-39 |
| LEARN ABOUT THE INSTRUMENT .....  | 10-11 | 3/4 Time Signatures, Grooves in 3/4 Time,<br>Rudiment: Flam, Fills in 3/4 Time,<br>Music Reading: 1st & 2nd Endings,<br>Play-along Track: "Horseback Waltz"          |       |
| SETTING UP THE DRUMS / TUNING .....   | 12-13 | LESSON THIRTEEN .....  | 40-41 |
| GRIPPING THE STICKS .....   | 14-15 | Music Reading: Dotted Notes,<br>Style: Halftime Feel, Halftime Grooves,<br>Play-along Track: "Halftime Show", Technique:<br>Accented Paradiddles, Paradiddle Grooves |       |
| LESSON ONE: .....   | 16-17 | LESSON FOURTEEN .....  | 42-43 |
| The Rebound Stroke,<br>Rudiments: Singles, Doubles, Paradiddle  |       | Syncopated 8th Note Beats, Syncopated<br>Combos, Technique: Single Hand Accent,<br>Play-along Track: "Synco de Mayo"   |       |
| LESSON TWO: .....   | 18-19 | LESSON FIFTEEN .....   | 44-45 |
| Sticking Patterns, Bass Drum Technique,<br>Hi-Hat Pedal Technique   |       | Music Reading: Sixteenth Notes,<br>16th Note Grooves, 16th Note Fills,<br>Technique: Grid Diddles, Style: Rock Ballad  |       |
| LESSON THREE .....  | 20-21 | LESSON SIXTEEN .....   | 46-47 |
| Right Hand Hi-Hat Technique, First Rock Beat,<br>Music Notation Basics  |       | Music Reading: 8th/16th Rhythmic<br>Combinations, Syncopated LH 16th<br>Grooves, Technique: Accent Grid,<br>Syncopated BD 16ths, Style: Syncopated Rock              |       |
| LESSON FOUR .....   | 22-23 | LESSON SEVENTEEN .....   | 48-49 |
| Music Reading: Quarter/Half/Whole,<br>The Ride Cymbal, Play-along Track:<br>"Rock Steady"   |       | Music Reading: 16th Rests, Dotted 8ths,<br>16th Based Rhythmic Permutations, 16th<br>Beat Combos, Rudiment: The Ruff,<br>Style: 8th Note Funk                        |       |
| LESSON FIVE .....   | 24-25 | LESSON EIGHTEEN .....  | 50-51 |
| 8th Notes, 8th Note Rock Beats,<br>Music Reading: Quarters and 8ths,<br>Play-along Track: "Solid as a Rock"   |       | Syncopated 16th Note Grooves,<br>16th Open Hi-Hat Combos, Syncopated Fills,<br>Style: 16th Note Funk   |       |
| LESSON SIX .....  | 26-27 | LESSON NINETEEN .....  | 52-53 |
| New 8th Note Rock Beats, Technique:<br>Independence, The Crash Cymbal,<br>Play-along Track: "8 Ball in the Corner"  |       | Technique: Controlled Rebound, Play-along<br>Track: "Slow Motion", Rudiment: Flam<br>Tap, Style: Train Beat, Rudiment: Lesson 25,<br>6 & 7 Stroke Rolls              |       |
| LESSON SEVEN .....  | 28-29 | LESSON TWENTY .....  | 54-55 |
| The Toms, New Beats Using the Toms,<br>Rudiment: Multiple Bounce Roll,<br>Play-along Track: "Jungle Drums"  |       | Music Reading: 12/8 Time Signature,<br>12/8 Grooves, Technique: Accented 3's,<br>12/8 Fills, Style: 12/8 Blues   |       |
| LESSON EIGHT .....  | 30-31 | LESSON TWENTY ONE .....  | 56-57 |
| Drum Fills, Concepts: Sustaining<br>Momentum, Play-along Track: "Solid Time"  |       | Triple Sticking Patterns, 12/8 Reading,<br>Triple Combos, Triple Hi-Hat Combos,<br>Play-along Track: "Crooked Stick Blues"   |       |
| LESSON NINE .....   | 32-33 | LESSON TWENTY TWO .....  | 58-59 |
| Open Hi-Hat Sounds, Rudiment: 5 Stroke<br>Roll, 8th Note Combos, Cross Stick,<br>Play-along Track: "Spy Games"  |       | Music Reading: 16th Notes in Triple Time,<br>12/8 Grooves Incorporating 16th Notes,<br>Technique: 12/8 Accent Patterns,<br>12/8 Fills with 16ths, Style: 12/8 Rock   |       |
| LESSON TEN .....  | 34-35 |  |       |
| Quarter Note Ride Pattern, Technique:<br>Independence, Style: Two Beat, Play-along<br>Track: "Two Bits", Technique: Tap, Down and<br>Up Strokes, Time Check |       |  |       |
| LESSON ELEVEN .....   | 36-37 |  |       |
| Music Reading: 8th Rests, Upbeat Ride Pattern,<br>Style: Disco, Fills Using the 8th Rest,<br>Play-along Track: "Build it Up"                                |       |  |       |

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| LESSON TWENTY THREE .....   | 60-61 |
| Music Reading: 8th Note Triplets, Style: Blues Shuffle, Technique: Swing Sticking, Style: Texas Shuffle, Style: Rock Shuffle  |       |
| LESSON TWENTY FOUR.....   | 62-63 |
| Technique: Controlled Rebound, Part 2, Style: Halftime Shuffle, Play-along Track: "Backstreet Shuffle", Rudiment: Swiss Army Triplet, Music Reading: 16th Note Triplets, Style: Hip Hop, Play-along Track: "Go Dog" |       |
| LESSON TWENTY FIVE.....   | 64-65 |
| Style: Jazz Swing, Technique: Triplet Accents, Jazz Fills, Technique: Swing Accent Patterns, Play-along Track: "Swingin' Easy"  |       |
| LESSON TWENTY SIX .....   | 66-67 |
| Jazz Comping, Technique: Independence   |       |
| LESSON TWENTY SEVEN .....   | 68-69 |
| Setting Up Ensemble Entrances, Incorporating Fills, Technique: Paradiddle-diddle/6 Stroke Rolls, Play-along Track: "Kick it Old School"   |       |
| LESSON TWENTY EIGHT.....  | 70-71 |
| Catching Ensemble Figures, Music Reading: Ensemble Articulations, Technique: Independence, Jazz Chart Reading: Small Group  |       |
| LESSON TWENTY NINE.....   | 72-73 |
| Style: Jazz Waltz, Brush Technique, Jazz Ballad   |       |
| LESSON THIRTY.....  | 74-75 |
| Afro Cuban Style: Cha-Cha, Son Clavé, Bass Tumbao, Guiro, Cha-Cha Bell Pattern, Conga Tumbao  |       |
| LESSON THIRTY ONE.....  | 76-77 |
| Timbale Abaniquo, Play-along Track: "Time to Cha-Cha," Music Reading: Cut Time, Style: Mambo, Cascara, Conga Tumbao, Mambo Bell Pattern   |       |
| LESSON THIRTY TWO.....  | 78-79 |
| Rhumba Clavé, Play-along Track: "Mambo Caliente," Style: Songo, Play-along Track: "Chango's Songo"  |       |
| LESSON THIRTY THREE.....  | 80-81 |
| Brazilian Style: Bossa Nova, Play-along Track: "Bossa Breeze," Style: Samba, Play-along Track: "Escola de Samba"  |       |
| LESSON THIRTY FOUR.....   | 82-83 |
| Caribbean Style: Calypso, Play-along Track, "Caribbean Nights," Style: Soca, Play-along Track, "Soca Dance Party," Style: Reggae, Play-along Track, "One Drop Reggae"   |       |

|                                       |         |
|---------------------------------------|---------|
| READING APPENDIX.....                 | 84-97   |
| DUPLE/TRIPLE STICKING COMBINATIONS .. | 98-99   |
| ACCENT PATTERNS .....                 | 100-101 |
| RUDIMENT CHART.....                   | 102-103 |
| MUSICAL GLOSSARY .....                | 104-105 |
| NOTATION REFERENCE CHARTS.....        | 106-107 |

## *Play-Along Tracks: Style Index*

### ROCK / POP / COUNTRY STYLES

|                      |                                |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Basic Rock .....     | 20, 23, 25, 27, 29, 31, 33, 37 |
| Two Beat .....       | 34                             |
| Disco .....          | 36                             |
| Country Waltz .....  | 39                             |
| Halftime Feels.....  | 41                             |
| Syncopated Rock..... | 43, 47                         |
| 16th Note Rock ..... | 45                             |
| Train Beat .....     | 53                             |
| 12/8 Rock.....       | 59                             |
| Rock Shuffle.....    | 61                             |

### R&B / FUNK / HIP-HOP

|                        |            |
|------------------------|------------|
| Funk.....              | 51, 53, 55 |
| 12/8 Blues .....       | 55, 57     |
| Blues Shuffle .....    | 60         |
| Texas Shuffle .....    | 61         |
| Halftime Shuffle ..... | 62         |
| Hip Hop (Go-Go).....   | 63         |

### JAZZ

|                  |            |
|------------------|------------|
| Swing.....       | 65, 69, 71 |
| Jazz Waltz ..... | 73         |
| Jazz Ballad..... | 73         |

### LATIN STYLES

|                 |    |
|-----------------|----|
| Cha-Cha.....    | 76 |
| Mambo .....     | 78 |
| Songo .....     | 79 |
| Bossa Nova..... | 80 |
| Samba.....      | 81 |
| Calypso .....   | 82 |
| Soca .....      | 83 |
| Reggae.....     | 83 |



# The Video Lessons

One of the most exciting resources available to you is the video instruction that accompanies each and every lesson throughout the book! World-renowned drummer and musician Stanton Moore will take you step-by-step through each lesson, not only demonstrating the fundamental concepts – but also showing you how he takes simple ideas and applies them to his everyday playing.

There's only so much you can learn by reading the notes on the page or listening to the accompaniment tracks. By purchasing the videos (available either on DVD or in pay-per-download lessons), you'll be able to watch Stanton as he takes each concept to the next level!

Because the content of this book is so deep, there are over 15 HOURS of video lessons available. And best of all, you can get a taste of how much you'll learn for FREE with the videos available throughout the introduction of the book!

***Find out more about this  
incredible resource!***

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# How to Use the Book

Fundamentally, there is no “right” or “wrong” way to approach any book, but here are a few suggestions that might help you get the most out of this method.

I recommend that beginners progress through the book, each lesson in succession (I designed the book so each lesson serves as a building block for the next). Drummers who have been playing for a while will probably want to skip around and use the book to fill some gap in their training – whether technical, rudimental or musical.

More advanced players can apply a “conceptual approach” to certain aspects of the book. For instance, you can apply an almost infinite number of practice variations to the “Sticking Patterns” or “Reading Studies” in the Appendix. I’ve included a few ideas to serve as a springboard for conceptual applications to get you started.

And of course, players at every level will benefit from the fantastic play-along tracks – whether you play the grooves as written or make up your own.

I encourage you to really make the most of all the grooves throughout the book, even if they look simple. Even professional drummers know that just because a groove is easy to play doesn’t mean that it’s easy to play with perfect time and a great feel. Record yourself often and analyze your own playing to see if you’re really mastering the groove, time and feel.

Expect that there will be times that you’ll get frustrated or discouraged. Not everything you learn is going to be easy! But when you become frustrated, don’t let discouragement keep you from having fun. Sometimes the best practice strategy is to just put the book away and just have a blast playing the drums!

## Book Icons

Throughout the book, you’ll see some common “sidebar” design elements that will help you easily recognize what type of information is being presented. Here are the types of icons and boxes scattered through the book:



The headphone icon lets you know that there are play-along tracks located on the CD. The number corresponds to the Lesson and the letter(s) to the specific play-along track(s).



The boxes with an exclamation point contain tips and advice related to the topic or grooves directly above it.

### *Extra* **PRACTICE**

These boxes give you ideas on how to expand upon the material presented. Helpful if you want to challenge yourself.



Boxes with the “Treble Clef” icon contain music theory information that’s necessary to learn to be able to read music.

### *Technique/Independence*

Topics covered in this gray box contain valuable exercises designed to promote hand and feet technical abilities - and to develop independence between your limbs.

### *Style Essential*

The topic under this header will help you learn an essential musical style necessary to become a well rounded, versatile drummer.

### *“SONG TITLE”*

Play-along tracks that are named in quotes and have a gray background bar are songs which include other instrumentalists. This makes it easy to tell the difference between tracks that are just drums from the ones that include a full band. Each play-along song has two versions: one with drums and one minus drums.



# A FRESH APPROACH TO THE **DRUMSET**



Whether you're a beginner, intermediate or advanced drummer, you'll benefit by the simple step-by-step approach for learning techniques, independence, music reading and grooves. A FRESH APPROACH TO THE DRUMSET will give you a solid foundation to take your drumming to the next level!

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Included FREE with this Book/CD package are instructional videos that will get you off to a great start! Acclaimed drummer & educator Stanton Moore takes you on an exciting tour of the drumset, shows you how to properly set up your drums, demonstrates how to tune your set to get a great sound, instructs you on how to grip the sticks properly and gets you started with a perfect stroke!

This FREE introductory video series is part of over 15 HOURS of video instruction available on each and every lesson with the downloadable videos! Throughout the book, Stanton Moore will take you step-by-step through each topic, not only demonstrating the fundamental concepts – but also showing you how he takes simple ideas and applies them to his everyday playing.

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