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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

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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The Rebound Stroke

The REBOUND stroke (also called the “FREE STROKE” or “NATURAL STROKE”) is named for how the stick is allowed to naturally rebound when it strikes the drum head. The rebound stroke is one of FIVE basic strokes for playing the drums.

Starting Without the Stick

Raise your arm to the playing position and pretend to dribble a basketball using a relaxed wrist motion. Keep the fingers, wrists and forearms completely free of any tension!



With the Stick

Starting in the playing position, raise the tip of the stick until it's perpendicular to the floor. Allow a little space between the palm of the hand and the back fingers.

As you “throw” the stick to the drum, allow it to rebound naturally back up. Watch yourself in the mirror as you play. There should be no stopping points in the path of the stick as it travels from up to down to up.



One Hand Exercise



To master the rebound stroke, you must train your muscles to respond in the same way every time – even when you're not thinking about it. We refer to this as “muscle memory.” Muscle memory can be good or bad depending on the habits you develop!

To train your muscles correctly on the rebound stroke, set a metronome on '60' and play right hand strokes for 2-5 minutes. Watch yourself in a mirror to constantly check your grip and path of the stick. Concentrate on the motion of the stick and make sure that there is NO TENSION in your arms, wrists, hands or fingers.

R R R R R R R R R R R R R R R

Once you've played the “One Hand Exercise” with a metronome set on '60' (called “60 beats per minute” or “60 bpm”), increase the tempo to 70 bpm and play for another couple of minutes. Keep increasing the tempo until you reach 100 bpm. The play-along tracks “1-2 ; A-E” are metronome clicks at these 5 speeds.

MATCHED GRIP PLAYERS CAN SIMPLY REPEAT THIS EXERCISE ON THE LEFT HAND!

Watch yourself in the mirror to constantly monitor your grip and the path of the stick, making sure that you maintain good posture! Practice with the play-along tracks until you develop a consistent rebound stroke.

Rebound Stroke with the Left Hand Traditional Grip

Without the sticks, start with your forearm raised slightly. Rotate the wrist until the palm of the hand faces up. Keep your shoulder and elbow relaxed.



Bring the forearm down while rotating the wrist until your thumb faces the ceiling. Practice this motion up and down, making sure the wrist stays aligned with the forearm.



Repeat the motion with the stick in the left hand. Stay as relaxed as possible in the wrists and fingers, making sure that the contact point of the thumb and index finger remains in tact. Allow some wiggle room between the index finger and middle finger if that helps you to relax the hand.

Repeat the "One Hand Exercise" with the left hand. Realize that it might take a considerably longer amount of time before your left hand becomes comfortable with the motion of the rebound stroke, so be patient and persistent with your practice routine!



Rebound Exercise: "8 on a Hand"



Practice this exercise everyday as a way to warmup your muscles and to reinforce the proper rebound stroke. Try playing along with the audio files in "double time" tempo (twice as fast).

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

Essential Rudiments

The RUDIMENTS serve as building blocks to great hand technique. Practice these first three rudiments with the play-along tracks – with perfect rebound strokes – and work to balance your sound so that each stroke sounds the same. Note that rudiments usually start on the left hand. This is to make sure that the left hand (usually the weaker hand) is emphasized and eventually becomes as strong as the right.

Single Strokes ("Single Stroke Roll")

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

Double Strokes ("Double Stroke Roll")

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

Single Paradiddle

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

Lesson 2

Sticking Patterns



Practicing various sticking patterns will help you to develop a consistent sound from left to right. Start slow, practicing each exercise separately with a metronome or play-along tracks. Watch yourself in a mirror and listen to each stroke!

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| ① R L R L R L R L | ⑬ L R L R L R L R |
| ② R R L L R R L L | ⑭ L L R R L L R R |
| ③ R L L R R L L R | ⑮ L R R L L R R L |
| ④ R L R R L R L L | ⑯ L R L L R L R R |
| ⑤ R L L R L R R L | ⑰ L R R L R L L R |
| ⑥ R R L R L L R L | ⑱ L L R L R R L R |
| ⑦ R L R L L R L R | ⑲ L R L R R L R L |
| ⑧ R R R L R R R L | ⑳ L L L R L L L R |
| ⑨ R L L L R L L L | ㉑ L R R R L R R R |
| ⑩ R R R R L L L L | ㉒ L L L L R R R R |
| ⑪ R L R R L R R L | ㉓ L R L L R L L R |
| ⑫ R R L R R L R L | ㉔ L L R L L R L R |

There are literally hundreds of ways to apply these simple sticking permutations to the drumset. Throughout the book, you will learn a few common methods that will help you learn control, coordination and independence.

Practice each exercise at least 20 times each day. Focus your attention on your technique, listening for a consistent sound from hand to hand.

THIS IS NOT A RACE! Playing fast as you can won't help you to develop proper form and muscle memory. Be patient and take it slow!

There are more sticking combinations located in the APPENDIX on page 98 in the back of the book. For even more exercises, check out "STICK CONTROL FOR THE SNARE DRUMMER" by George Lawrence Stone.

Bass Drum Technique

HEEL DOWN

This technique is generally preferred by drummers who want control on low volume and expressive playing. To play with the heel down technique, simply play your right foot while leaving the heel touching the footplate.



HEEL UP

The heel up technique is preferred by drummers who want the greatest volume. With this technique, play by lifting the leg and dropping the foot to the floor – or by suspending the leg in the air while you play the pedal with the ball of the foot.



Open Tones and Dead Tones

An OPEN TONE is achieved by allowing the beater to rebound off the drum head – similar to a snare drum rebound stroke. This allows the bass drum head to vibrate freely and achieves the most resonant sound from the drum.

A DEAD TONE is played by “burying the beater” into the drum head. This type of stroke has the maximum punch and attack, but the least resonance because the batter head isn’t allowed to vibrate.

Bass Drum Pedal Exercise

Practice playing bass drum strokes along with a metronome or play-along tracks. Once you achieve a consistent sound with a relaxed stroke, try playing the bass drum along with the sticking patterns from the previous page.

- 1** Play a bass drum stroke along with every stroke in the hands:

HANDS	R	L	R	L
BASS DRUM	●	●	●	●

- 2** Play a bass drum note along with every other stroke in the hands:

HANDS	R	L	R	L
BASS DRUM	●		●	

Hi-Hat Pedal Technique

Most drummers use both the heel up and heel down techniques on the hi-hat: HEEL DOWN when playing open hi-hat sounds with the sticks – and HEEL UP when playing left foot hi-hat “chick” sounds.

Hi-Hat Pedal Exercise

Practice both the heel up and heel down techniques with the play-along tracks. After you’re comfortable, play hi-hat AND bass drum beats along with the hands playing the Sticking Patterns on the previous page.

- 3** Play a bass drum and hi-hat stroke along with every stroke in the hands:

HANDS	R	L	R	L
BASS DRUM	●	●	●	●
HI-HAT	X	X	X	X

- 4** Play a bass drum and hi-hat note along with every other stroke in the hands:

HANDS	R	L	R	L
BASS DRUM	●		●	
HI-HAT	X		X	

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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!***

www.mwpublications.com



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!

INCLUDING VIDEO LESSONS FROM WORLD-RENOWNED DRUMMER,
STANTON MOORE!



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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