

Learn drum notation and basic musical symbols

Learn percussion notation and the symbols for each instrument

Percussion scores use the standard 5-line staff used for musical notation. Match the symbols to the instruments shown on the left page.

Remember the position on the staff by being aware of the pitch of the instrument.

- × Crash/Ride cymbal
- × Hi-hat cymbals
- High tom
- Snare drum
- Floor tom
- Bass drum
- Low tom

Get acquainted with basic musical-notation symbols

In a percussion score the duration of notes and rests is marked like that of normal music scores. You can use the tables below for reference.

Name of note	Symbol	Fraction of whole note	Fraction of quarter note	Name of rest	Symbol	Fraction of quarter rest
Whole note	○	1	4	Whole rest	—	4
Half note	♩	$\frac{1}{2}$	2	Half rest	—	2
Quarter note	♪	$\frac{1}{4}$	1	Quarter rest	∫	1
8th note	♪♪	$\frac{1}{8}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	8th rest	∫	$\frac{1}{2}$
16th note	♪♪♪	$\frac{1}{16}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	16th rest	∫	$\frac{1}{4}$

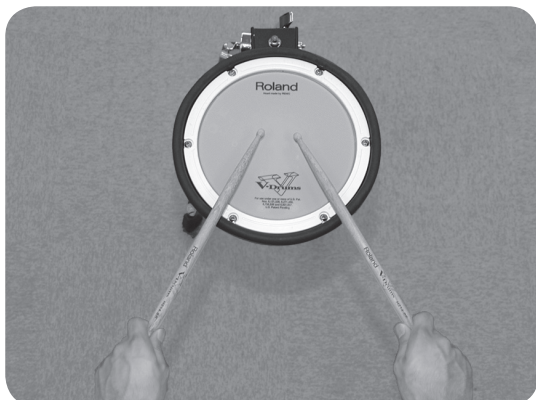
Name of note	Symbol	Duration	Multiple of quarter note
Dotted half note	♩.	♩ + ♩	3
Dotted quarter note	♩.	♩ + ♩	$1 + \frac{1}{2} = 1.5$
Dotted 8th note	♪.	♪ + ♩	$\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{4} = 0.75$

Lesson 1 First try some beats

Holding the sticks

Grip

Learn the “matched grip,” the basic way of holding the sticks.



▲ Overhead view of drumsticks with the tips positioned over the middle of a drum. The tips are held 3 to 5 cm from the striking surface. This is the “start position” from which to begin playing the drums.

Grip the stick using the thumb and the index and middle fingers. The other two fingers (ring and little finger) add support. The basic action allows light movement with the fulcrum of the three gripping digits.



▲ Left-hand grip (side view)



▲ Right-hand grip (side view)



▲ Left-hand grip (bottom view)



▲ Right-hand grip (bottom view)

Adopt a posture for comfortable playing

Form

Adopt a posture that can sustain your drum playing.

● Seating position

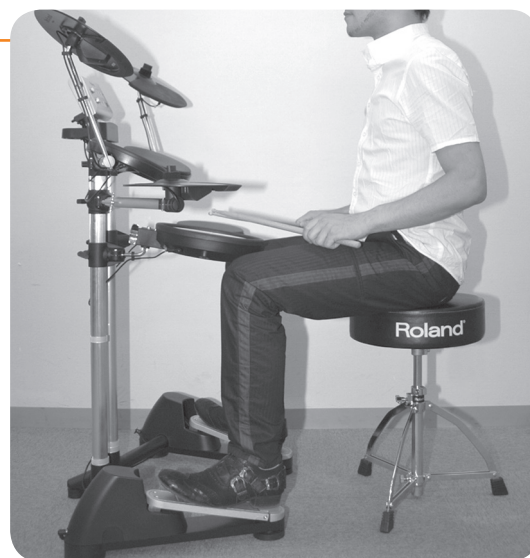
Set the throne directly in front of the snare drum. Sit forward with about half of each thigh on the throne. If you sit too far back you will find it hard to move your legs when playing the bass drum and hi-hat.

● Arm position

Relax the shoulders and let your arms fall naturally. Then bend your elbows and raise your wrists. Let your arms raise naturally, don't extend them too far sideways from your body

● Foot position

Move the throne forward and back until you find the position that best suits you for pressing the pedals.



Practice the basic striking action

Stroke

Practice the basic snare-drum striking action.



When you have adopted the right posture, let's beat the drum.

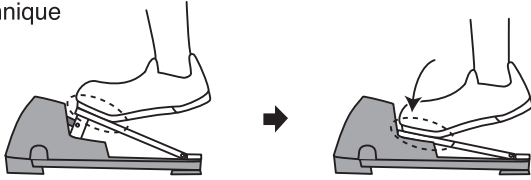
First, gripping the sticks, pivot your arms at the elbows. From an arms-raised position, try striking the drum. Aim to hit the middle area of the snare head. Try striking alternately with the left and right hands. The key to smooth playing is not to use arm strength. Rather, when lowering the arm, at the moment of striking, use the wrist to move the hand gripping the stick. It's helpful to form an image in your mind that your arm from the elbow down is a whip.

Practice beating the bass drum

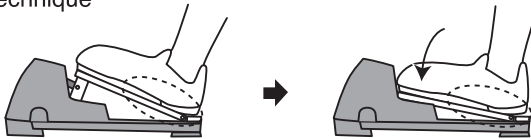
Kick

Practice using the right foot to beat the bass drum.

Heel-up technique



Heel-down technique



There are two kick techniques: heel-up and heel-down.

● Heel-up technique

With your heel raised, push down with the toe end of your foot. This is best suited for getting a powerful sound.

● Heel-down technique

Leaving your heel in contact with the pedal, the toe-end of your foot is raised and lowered to operate the pedal. This is best suited for fine motion control.

Exercise 1-1

So, paced by the metronome, try playing the HD-1 snare drum and bass drum.



First, set the HD-1 tempo dial to the position (around 80) shown in the diagram on the left, and press the metronome button. While striking, simultaneously count “one, two, three, four” with the metronome.

Snare drum
Bass drum

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

R (Right-hand) (Right-foot)

R (Right-hand) L (Left-hand) (Right-foot)

R (Right-hand) L (Left-hand) R (Right-hand) L (Left-hand) (Right-foot)

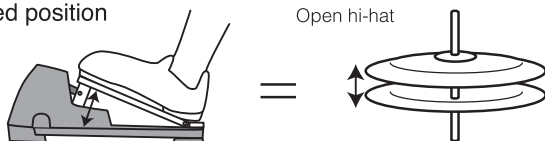
Try playing the hi-hat

Hi-hat cymbals

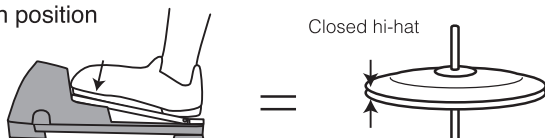
Try opening and closing the hi-hat with your left foot.*

* Note: If you are a left-handed person, it's possible that you may feel more comfortable playing the drum kit in the reverse position, with the snare and hi-hat positioned on the right side of the kit rather than on the left. If this is the case, you will operate the hi-hat with your right foot and the bass drum with your left. Since most drummers use a right-handed setup, we will refer to it for the remainder of the book.

Foot-raised position



Foot-down position



The two configurations of the hi-hat cymbals are controlled with the left foot.

● Open hi-hat

When the left foot is raised, the hi-hat is open. When struck in this configuration, it produces a “long” sound.

● Closed hi-hat

When the left foot is pressed down, the hi-hat is closed. When struck in this configuration, it produces a “short” sound.