
Building A Rock Groove (Using Quarter Notes)

Understanding Quarter Notes

To understand how to play a **rock groove**, we need to understand that music is ordered into **bars**. The most common bar is divided into 4 **beats**, and we feel that quite naturally. Because it is the most commonly used bar, it is called **common time**.

In a bar of common time there are four beats. If we take a look at the example below, you will see that for each beat there is a **note**. You will see that because there are four notes, the bar is divided into 4. These notes are accordingly called **quarter notes**.



Lesson Objectives

- Understand and be able to count **quarter notes**.
- Understand and develop **three way co-ordination**.
- Play a **rock groove**.

Developing Three Way Co-ordination

To really understand quarter notes, we should use them to build a rock groove. To play a rock groove, we need to use three of our limbs. This is called **three way co-ordination**. Co-ordination needs to be developed in stages. The first stage is to count the 4 beats in the bar out loud and play the **bass drum** on beats 1 and 3.

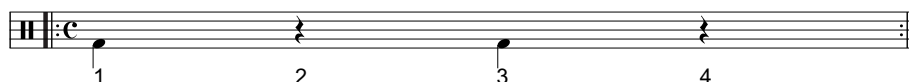
For each exercise throughout the course you have multimedia clips. These will help you understand the exercises and give you an opportunity to play along with them as well. There are video and play along files, so you can see, hear and play along with the exercises.

Watch the video for the exercise first, so you can see what to do. You can then listen and play along to the MIDI file using your DrumXtractor™.



Playing the bass drum

Exercise 1: lesson001.idsbrg.01



NOTE: There are 4 clicks at the beginning of each exercise to count into the exercise.



Playing the snare drum

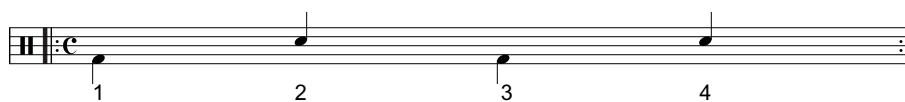
The second stage requires you to play the **snare drum** on beats 2 and 4. Again, count out loud and when you say “2” and “4”, hit the snare drum.

Exercise 2: lesson001.idsbrg.02



Now we are ready to develop **two way co-ordination** with the bass drum playing on beats 1 and 3 and the snare drum being played on beats 2 and 4.

Exercise 3: lesson001.idsbrg.03



The exercises for the hi-hat require you to play the hi-hat cymbals with them closed together. You close the hi-hat by placing your foot on the hi-hat pedal and strike the cymbals with your drum stick. Watch the video clip before moving on to your first hi-hat exercise.



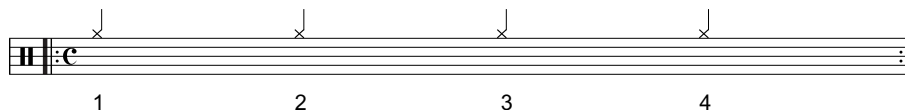
Playing the hi-hat with the cymbals closed

The third part of the process brings in the **hi-hat**. The hi-hat pattern requires you to play all four beats. So again count “1, 2, 3, 4” and hit the hi-hat on each beat.

Video 1: Playing the hi-hat with the cymbals closed

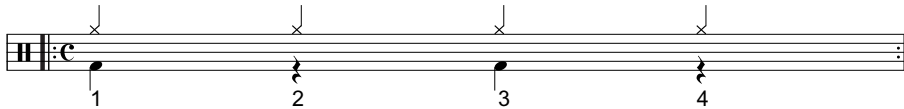
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Exercise 4: lesson001.idsbrg.04

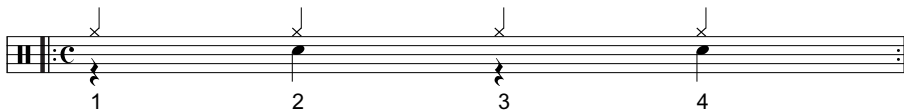


We need to be able to play all three **voices** together i.e. the hi-hat, snare drum and bass drum. I would try building through two way co-ordination with the hi-hat firstly, before leaping in with the whole pattern.

Play the hi-hat on all four beats and try and bring the bass drum in underneath on beats 1 and 3.

Exercise 5: lesson001.idsbrg.05

Now play the hi-hat with the snare drum. Leave the bass drum out for the moment.

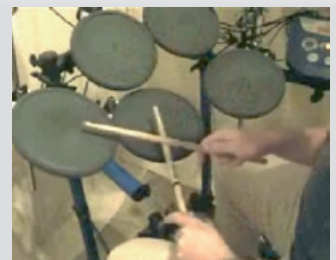
Exercise 6: lesson001.idsbrg.06

Playing the hi-hat with the snare drum.

Playing a Rock Groove

Finally, play all three voices together, hi-hat on all four beats, snare drum on beats 2 and 4 and the bass drum on beats 1 and 3.

You may wish to bring each voice in separately, which is fine and often helps you build the pattern. Eventually, you will be able to just start the whole pattern at once.

Exercise 7: lesson001.idsbrg.07

Playing a Rock Groove.

Practising and Playing Along

Hopefully you are now feeling quite comfortable with the exercises, but you will need to play them over and over to improve.

We have another play-along track which has some music to play to. This should help you build the speed and stamina of your performance.

You can keep increasing the tempo using your Xtractor as you become more comfortable, but take it in small increments, so that you can build the quality of your performance up.

Play Along: `lesson001.idsbrg.playalong`

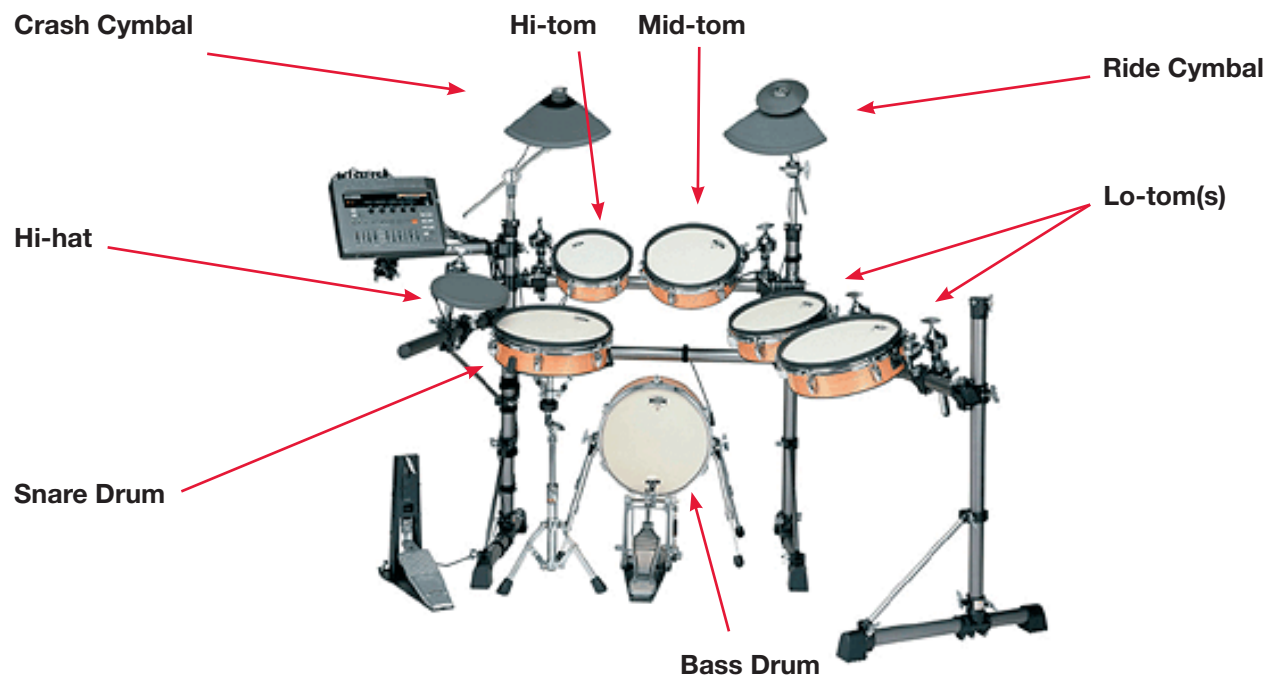


After a while, record your own performance into the computer with the music and listen to see how it compares with the drums on the MIDI file. After that, you can play your first rock groove along to your favourite CDs picking out the 4 beat pulse from the music.

Anatomy of the Drum Kit



An acoustic drum kit in the standard arrangement



An electric drum kit in the standard arrangement

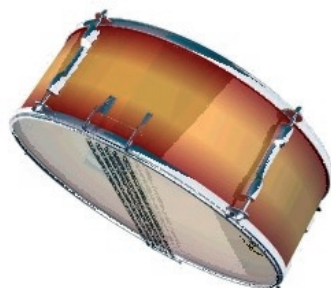
The Drum Kit Guide (Part 1)

Hi-hat



The Hi-hat

The **hi-hat** is made up of two cymbals, with one on top of the other. They both sit together on a stand which can be operated by a foot pedal. You can play the hi-hats by striking them with a stick, normally with the foot depressed and the cymbals close together. They are also played by closing them together with the foot, or by striking and opening at the same time (used a lot for **Disco/House Grooves**).



Snare drum

The Snare Drum

The **snare drum** has a number of strands of metal wire across the **bottom head**, which resonate against the bottom head (drum skin) when the drum is struck. The strand of wires is called a **snare** hence the name of the drum.

The snare drum can be played by striking the drum's top skin, or by catching the **rim** at the same time, called a **rim-shot**. Furthermore, you can lay the stick across the drum and chop down on the rim's edge. This latter technique is often called **cross stick**, or **stick across**.



Bass drum

The Bass Drum

The deepest drum in the kit, the **bass drum**, lies on the floor and is operated exclusively by a foot pedal.

The bass, snare and hi-hat work together in rock and pop music at the centre of grooves and the control of these three voices is a large part of developing **three way co-ordination**.