

Instrument and Player Position

As you probably have been told before, instrument position and player posture are the easiest factors of instrument technique to execute correctly. Unfortunately, they are also the most often ignored factors of instrumental technique.

The drum set is a highly adjustable group of instruments. It is easy to customize the position of the different drums and cymbals in order to make the drum set fit you. Here are some general guidelines to follow when positioning the drum set for playing:

- Adjust the throne (seat) to a height that allows you to move your ankles in a natural manner. This will allow you to easily operate the pedals of the bass drum and the hi-hat.
- Position the snare drum and all of the toms (including the floor tom) so that they may all be reached using smooth, efficient motion. Keep the batter heads of the drums on as close to the same vertical level as possible.
- Keep all of the instruments as close together as is practical. Remember that cymbals need room to move after being struck without hitting other instruments.
- Make sure that you can reach all of the instruments comfortably from the seated position.
- Remember that the goal of playing a musical instrument is to sound good- not to look good. The best position for playing the instrument is not necessarily the one that looks the “coolest”, but hey- you’re playing drum set- you’re already cool!

Sitting down at the drum set

Before you sit on the throne, adjust it so that when you are sitting on it you can move your feet up and down at the ankle comfortably. Sit down with the snare drum between your legs, the bass drum to the right, and the hi-hat to the left. Adjust the bass drum and hi-hat so that they are close to you, but not so close that operating the pedals is uncomfortable. Adjust the snare drum to a comfortable playing height. Tilt the mounted (high and low) toms toward you and lower them so that they are close to the snare drum. The high tom (the one on the left), the snare drum, and your pelvis should all be in a straight line and you should be facing the high tom. Place the floor tom as close to the low (right) mounted tom as possible. Adjust each leg supporting it so that it is tilted slightly toward you and at a height that is close to the other drums. The ride cymbal should sit to the right of the bass drum and overlap the low mounted tom and the floor tom. Lower the ride cymbal enough that it is easy to reach- you will be playing it often if you are in jazz band. Place the crash cymbal to the left and slightly in front of the drum set. Once again, make sure that it is comfortable for you to reach.

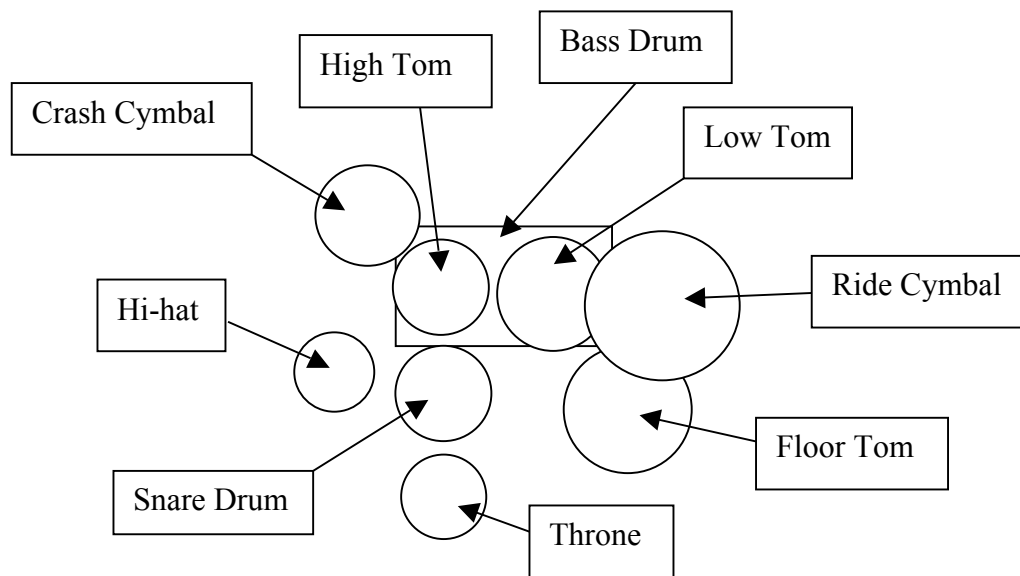


Figure12: Placement of the drum set components

Rock Style Explained

Rock is the simplest style to play on the drum set, so it is a logical starting point for the beginning drummer. The basic rock beat only requires the player to coordinate three limbs at once: both arms and the right leg. Here is a breakdown of what each limb does in rock rhythm:

- The right hand plays either constant eighth notes or constant sixteenth notes on the closed hi-hat or the ride cymbal.
- The left hand plays the snare drum on beats two and four. This is known as a back beat.
- The right foot plays the bass drum on beats one and three.

***The Rock Exercises are demonstrated in Chapter 4 of the video**



Rock Exercises

R1 Right Hand (Hi-hat or Ride Cymbal)



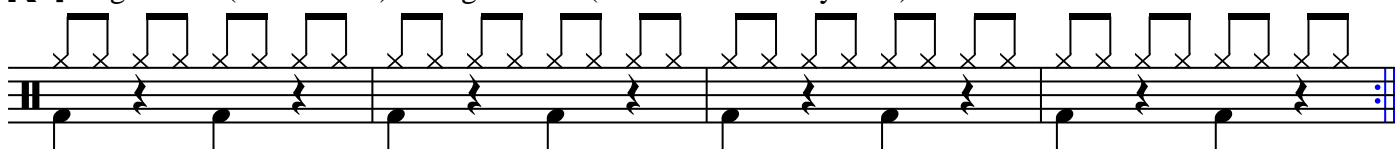
R2 Right Foot (Bass Drum)



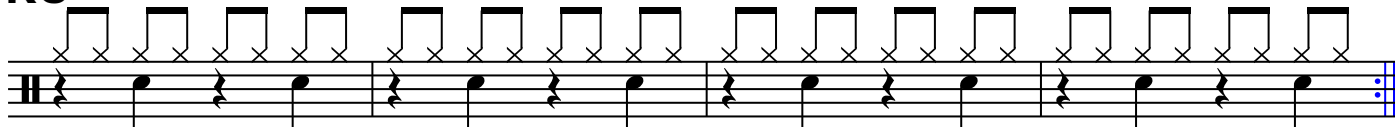
R3 Left Hand (Snare Drum)



R4 Right Foot (Bass Drum) & Right Hand (Hi-Hat or Ride Cymbal)



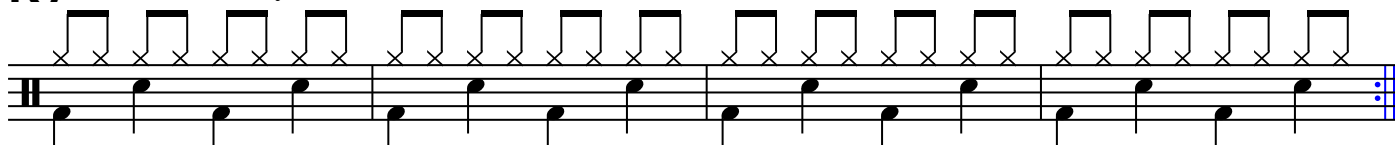
R5 Left Hand (Snare Drum) & Right Hand (Hi-Hat or Ride Cymbal)



R6 Left Hand (Snare Drum) & Right Foot (Bass Drum)



R7 Basic Rock Rhythm



R8 Advanced Rock Rhythm

