



## **Beginner Percussion Book**



**By Matthew Delaney**

## **"So you've started to play an instrument . . ."**

We are so pleased you have decided to learn a musical instrument and this guide has been put together by the teachers at Musica Kirklees in order to help you to get the best start possible.



You may find the first few lessons tricky as it is hard to get used to something new. The key to getting better will be to practise regularly. Like training to be an athlete, the muscles and skills used while playing an instrument need to be reminded regularly about what they should be doing. If someone at home can sit with you while you practise, or even try to learn with you, they can help by listening and filling in your Music Diary. This diary allows parents or carers at home to have contact with the teacher. Sometimes they might want to ask questions or give explanations; sometimes they can just say how you are doing.

After a while you will hopefully feel to be making real progress. You will then be able to join a Music Centre or other Musica Kirklees group, play at school and be part of any amount of wonderful musical opportunities available in Kirklees.

Playing an instrument can be hard work but it is also great fun. Learning all the different skills will allow you to be involved in lots of exciting musical experiences while you are growing up and to continue to enjoy making music when you have left school, college or university.

Good Luck – practise hard and have fun!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thom".

Thom Meredith  
Principal  
Musica Kirklees

## **Stick grip**

There are two ways to correctly hold the drum sticks. The first is called **Traditional grip**.

### **Left hand**

#### **Step 1**

Place the butt end of the stick between the thumb and the palm of the left hand.



#### **Step 2**

Support the stick with the middle section of your ring (third) finger.



### Step 3

Place the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> fingers on top of the stick.



### Step 4

Rest the thumb against the middle section of the 1<sup>st</sup> finger



## **Right hand**

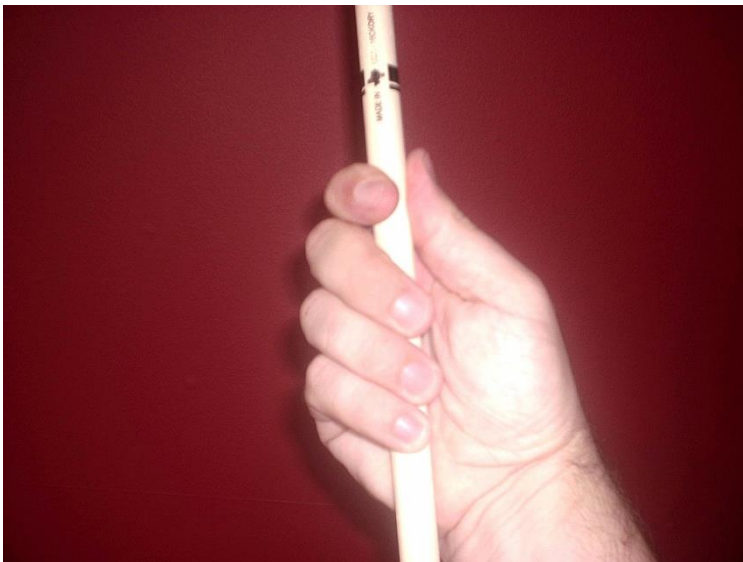
### **Step 1**

Pinch the stick between the 1<sup>st</sup> joint of the 1<sup>st</sup> finger and the flesh part of your thumb.



### **Step 2**

Gently rest the remaining fingers under the stick. Do not grip with these fingers.



## **Playing position / technique**

### **Step 1**

Place the sticks approximately 1 inch above the drum head in an "A" shape.



### **Step 2**

Lift the right stick away from the drum by bending the wrist and pointing the tip of the stick upwards. Bring the stick down with a flick of the wrist.

### **Step 3**

Lift the left stick away from the drum by turning the wrist as you would if turning a doorknob, point the tip of the stick upwards. Bring the stick down with a rapid twisting flick of the wrist.



**An alternative way of holding the sticks is called Matched grip. This method involves holding both sticks the same way as the right hand in Traditional grip, see diagram below.**



Below are some examples of disgraceful stick grip. Look at the right hand index finger in figure 1, shocking! Also in figure 1, his left hand stick has slipped off the middle section of his third finger.

In figure 2 he has misplaced his right hand thumb and has no fingers on top of the left hand stick, I despair! **Please remember, these are things which you must not do!!!!**



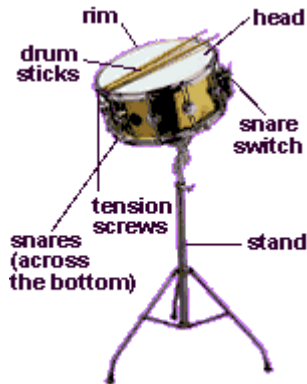
Figure 1



Figure 2

## Care of instrument

**The snare drum** was originally called the side drum; because the player would carry it strapped to his waist and played it off to one side. The snare drum is shaped like a cylinder, with skin stretched over its top and bottom. The "snare" is a set of wires or strings strung across the bottom of the drum. The rattling of these snares helps to produce the snare drum's unique sound. The snare drum is nowadays more commonly held on a stand.



You should always ensure that the drum is firmly gripped by the snare drum stand; be careful that the arms of the stand are clear of the snare head as this head is very thin and easily damaged. Don't be tempted to fiddle with the snare wires as they are also easily damaged. **Never play on the snare head** (underneath).

When the drum is in transit, leave the snares switched on, if possible put the drum in a case.

Remember that your drum and sticks are not toys, don't be tempted to let friends who are not percussionists "play" your drum, *See picture below.*





## Practice

Whether sitting or standing at the snare drum, always ensure that the drum is at waist height, just like this sensible chap.



Make sure that your back is straight and that your feet are flat on the floor (especially if you are standing). Don't be tempted to rest your arms on your legs and don't let your elbows go behind your torso; keep them level or slightly in front of the torso.

Don't have the drum too high like this silly boy!



Here are some other **REALLY BAD** ways to approach your drum.



Picture 1



Picture 2



Picture 3



Picture 4

1. This fellow has his drum stand too low.
2. This lad thinks his instrument is a coffee table.
3. This is bad use of the drum!
4. Clearly a rat.

## Pieces and warm ups

This first set of exercises and piece of music introduces crotchets and crotchet rests. Each of the bars contains 4 crotchet beats; these are counted 1,2,3,4 as we play them.

Ex. A



Ex. B



Ex. C



## NO.1 Watch it Crotchet

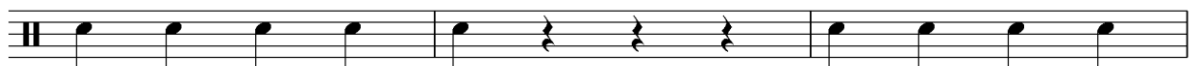
M Delaney



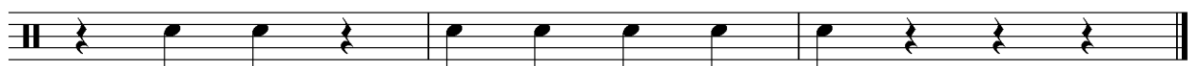
6



11



14

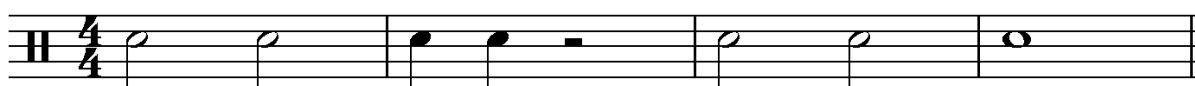


In the next piece, we encounter minims, minim rests and semibreves. A minim lasts for 2 crotchets, a semibreve last for 4 crotchets. Remember to count out loud.

Ex. A



Ex. B

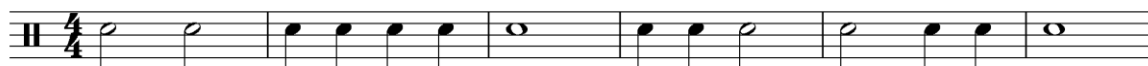


Ex. C

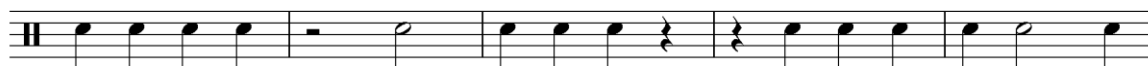


## NO.2 A Change is as Good as a Rest

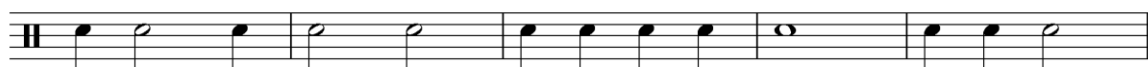
M Delaney



7

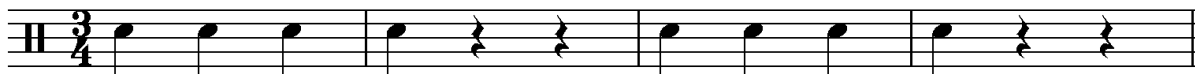


12

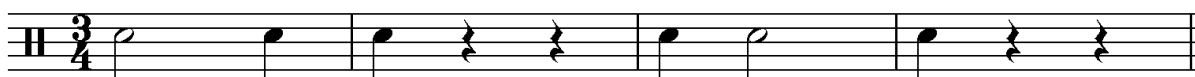


In our third piece we learn about music which contains only 3 crotchets per bar. We discover that a minim with a dot after it is worth 3 crotchets, the dot gives us an extra 50% free!

Ex. A



Ex. B

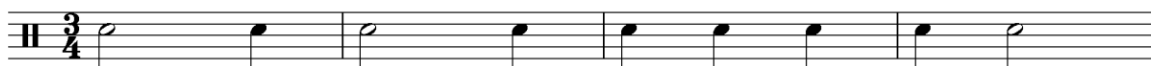


Ex. C

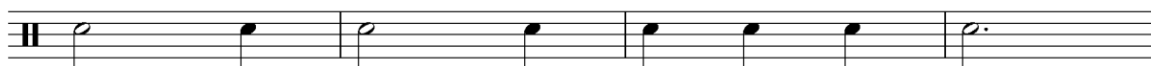


## NO.3 Three's a Breeze

M Delaney



5



9





In our next piece we discover the quaver. These are notes which are twice as fast as the crotchet. It also takes 2 of them to fill a crotchet beat. These notes are counted 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &.

Ex. A



Ex. B



Ex. C



## NO.4 Savour the Flavour of the Quaver you Raver

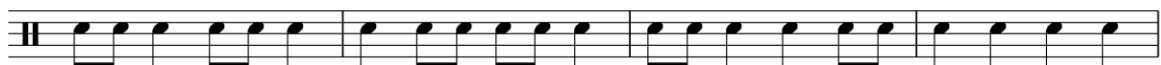
M Delaney



5



9



13



The fifth piece which we encounter includes no new notes; however, we do have another new time signature (The bit that tells you how many beats in a bar). We now play only 2 crotchet beats in every bar.

Ex. A



Ex. B

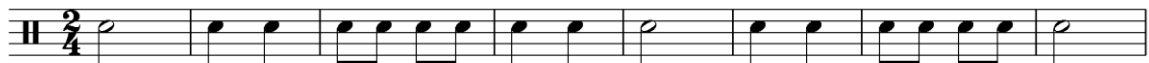


Ex. C



## NO.5 Two Easy

M Delaney



9



Another name for the Time Signature of 3/4 is "Waltz time", named after the dance which has three beats per bar. Again we have no new notes, just the notes we know in a new setting.

## NO.6 Waltzing Matt-ilda

M Delaney



Top Secret Drum Corps. of Basle, Switzerland.

Ex. A



Ex. B

Ex. C

4/4

II

NO.7 Be Braver, do not Waver, 'cos Here Comes  
the Semi-quaver <sup>M</sup>

What do we do if we only want to play the second half of a pair of quavers?  
 Easy, we change the first quaver into a quaver rest (they look a bit like number 7's). We still count them as 1 & but we don't play the rest (you could whisper the counting of the rest to help you).

Ex. A



Ex. B



Ex. C



## NO.8 Do not Waver, be the Best - Now Here Comes the Quaver Rest

M Delaney



5



9



13

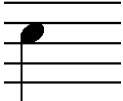



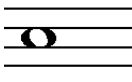


Hudd ers!

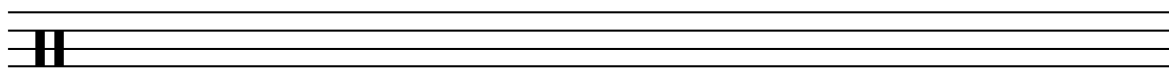


Being able to talk about music with the correct terms is just as important as the ability to play the notes themselves; this is called music theory.

Can you write the correct names next to these notes?

	<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>
	<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>
	<input type="text"/>		

Try writing some notes on the staff below. Make sure the note heads are in the correct space! Can you play what you have written?



Writing your own music is called composition. There is another page of 'manuscript paper' (paper with music staves) at the back of the book. Try writing your own music using the notes you've learned in the book. Don't forget to add a time signature and bar lines!

Mick Stupp is a very confused gentleman and so is this piece named after him. This piece contains all of our notes and rests so far - mixed up!

## NO.9 Mick Stupp

M Delaney



The two dots next to a double bar line mean repeat the section of music between the two sets of dots.

Ex. A



Ex. B



Ex. C



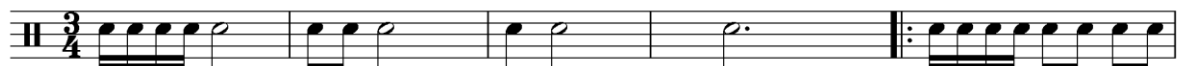
The title of the following piece is a parody of a poem by Robert P. Weston and Bert Lee published in 1931 called "Beat the retreat on thy drum". If you want to read the poem you can find it online:

<http://monologues.co.uk/Stamley-Holloway/Beat-the-Retreat.htm>

While it won't make you a better drummer, it is quite funny!

## NO. 10 Beat the Repeat on Thy Drum

M Delaney



6



9



13



For our next piece we mix up some of our rhythms to make new ones. For instance, if we take a quaver followed by 2 semi-quavers we have a rhythm which sounds like "woodpecker" and is counted 1 &a. We can reverse this with 2 semi-quavers followed by a quaver, this sounds like "skinny cat", and is counted 1e&.

Ex. A - Woodpecker



Ex. B - Skinny Cat



Ex. C - Both!



## NO.11 Skinny Cats and Woodpeckers

M.Delaney



4



7



10



14

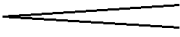



## **DYNAMICS and ITALIAN TERMS**

There are several ways of making music more exciting. One way is to use different dynamics. Dynamics are the different levels of volume which we use in music. Here is a list of the more common ones with their abbreviations and meanings:-

<b><u>Dynamic</u></b>	<b><u>Abbreviation</u></b>	<b><u>Meaning</u></b>
Pianissimo	<i>pp</i>	Very quiet
Piano	<i>p</i>	Quiet
Mezzo piano	<i>mp</i>	Moderately quiet
Mezzo forte	<i>mf</i>	Moderately loud
Forte	<i>f</i>	Loud
Fortissimo	<i>ff</i>	Very loud

Dynamics can also change gradually whilst we are playing, here are some examples of words and signs which you may see:-

<b><u>Word</u></b>	<b><u>Sign</u></b>	<b><u>Meaning</u></b>
Crescendo		Gradually getting louder
Decrescendo/Diminuendo		Gradually getting softer

Ex. A



Ex. B



Ex. C



As well as altering the volume of our music, we can also change the speed. Here are some common words you may encounter:-

### **Word**

### **Meaning**

Allegro	Fast and lively
Andante	At a walking pace
Moderato	At a moderate speed
Lento	Play slowly
Rallentando (rall)	Becoming gradually slower
Accelerando (accel)	Becoming gradually faster
Subito	Suddenly
Subbuteo	Table football...

#### Ex A

Allegro



#### Ex B

Lento



#### Ex C





Here are some basic rudiments and good warm up exercises. Don't be afraid to do these daily at home.

No.1 the paradiddle



No. 2 the single stroke roll



No. 3 the double stroke roll



No. 4 the double paradiddle



No. 5 the triple paradiddle



## A selection of some of the most common percussion instruments:



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9

**1. Xylophone** - from the Greek words *xylon* = *wood* and *phone* = *sound*. Keys are made of **wood** - usually rosewood.

**2. Glockenspiel** - German name meaning 'toy bells'. Keys are made of **metal**.

**3. Timpani** - the most common percussion instrument in the classical orchestra, timpani originated in Arabian military bands and came to Europe in the 15th Century.

**4. Cymbals** - the standard design originated in Turkey. there are also Chinese cymbals which have an up-turned edge creating a different timbre.

**5. Triangle** - like the cymbal, this originated in Turkey, and became popular in classical orchestras in the 18th Century.

**6. Tambourine** - Originated in ancient Egypt, this instrument is used in all kinds of music including pop, classical and folk.

**7. Bass Drum** - along with cymbals and triangle, this low-pitch drum originated in Turkey and typically provides a strong beat for marching or dancing.

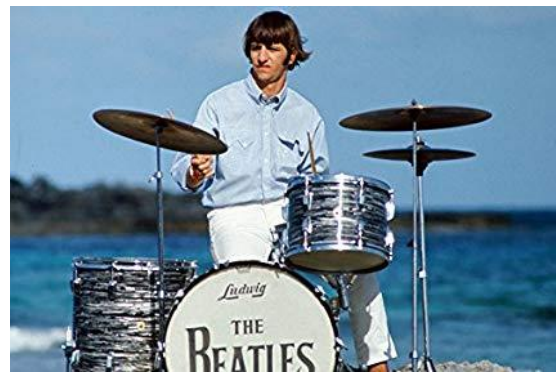
**8. Snare drum** - The snare drum developed from the medieval Tabor, a European marching drum used for signals as far back as 1300.

**9. 'Trap set'** - the ancestor of the modern drum kit, trap sets developed in theatres in the U.S.A., when percussionists were required to play many instruments at the same time. The modern drum kit evolved in the 1900-1930s.

**Here are a few famous drummers and percussionists. You should research them and listen to the music they have written and recorded.**



**Steve Gadd**



**Ringo Starr**



**Liberty Devitto (with Mr Delaney & Mr McKee )**



**Vinnie Colaiuta**



**Dame Evelyn Glennie**



**Buddy Rich**



**Sheila E**



**Cindy Blackman**

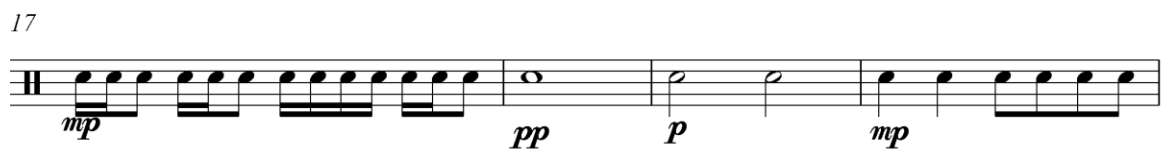


**Clyde Stubblefield**

# FIRST PIECE AT LAST!!!!

M.Delancy

ALLEGRO



decrescendo.....

## Musical Games

Can you find the 10 hidden terms and expressions as used by many famous (and some not so famous) percussionists.

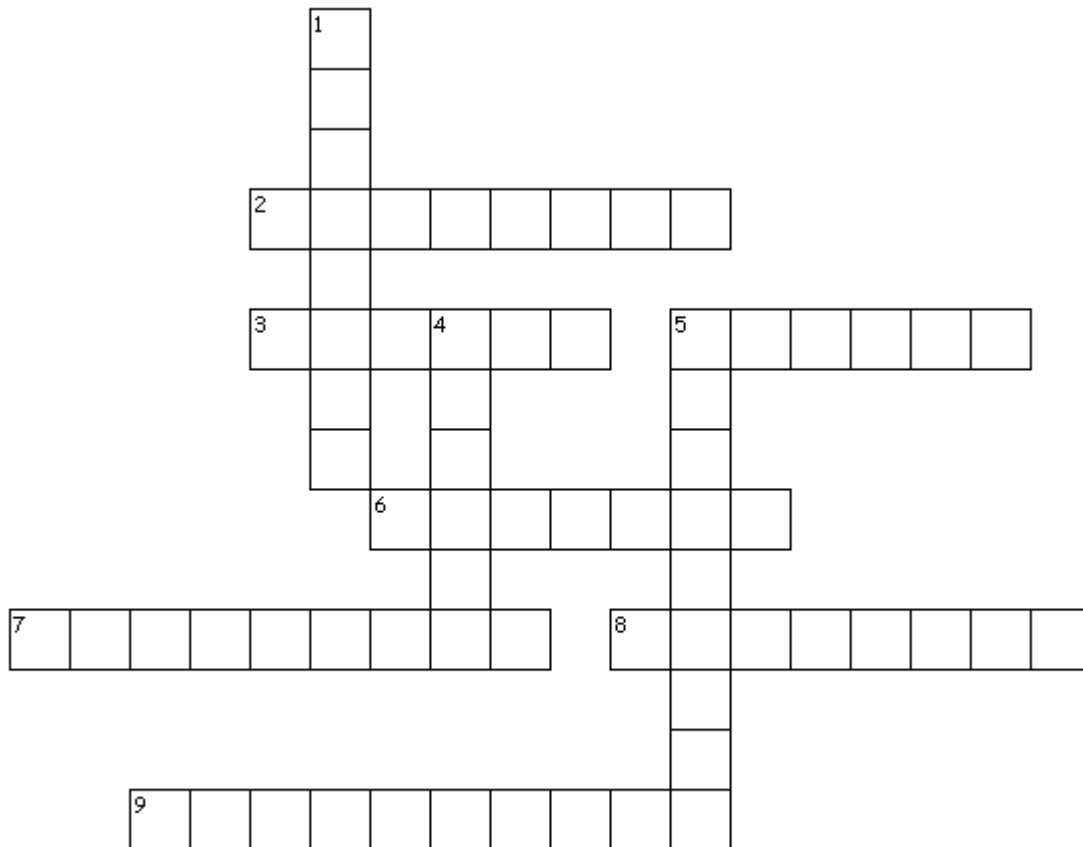
d	r	u	m	s	t	i	c	k	n
a	e	r	a	n	s	x	m	o	p
e	s	n	a	r	e	w	i	r	e
h	u	d	d	e	r	s	f	i	e
m	a	l	f	q	s	r	s	m	l
u	g	l	y	u	h	o	m	s	d
r	r	o	c	a	e	n	e	h	t
d	e	r	u	v	l	a	l	o	o
e	e	w	q	e	l	n	s	t	w
p	n	w	v	r	e	l	u	r	n

Snare  
Percussion  
Quaver  
Drumhead  
Drumstick  
Shell  
Rimshot  
Snarewire  
Roll  
Flam



## Drummers Definitions

A crossword full of words used by drummers everywhere.



### Across

- 2. You can play this with a pedal or a stick (8)
- 3. Equal to half a crotchet (6)
- 5. These make your drum sound snappy (6)
- 6. Famous percussionist's surname, Dame Evelyn \_\_\_\_\_ (7)
- 7. A series of rosewood notes on a frame (9)
- 8. Three sides of equal length played with a metal beater (8)
- 9. RLRR LRLL (10)

### Down

- 1. Famous Drummer's surname, Vinnie \_\_\_\_\_ (8)
- 4. Instrument played with a bow belonging to the string family (6)
- 5. The note equal to 4 crotchets (9)

**Tick the box at the end of each statement when you are able to complete the task set.**

1. Set up my snare drum correctly.	
2. Hold my drumsticks using either Traditional or Matched grip.	
3. Produce a clear note with both hands without "buzzing" my sticks.	
4. Play a paradiddle.	
5. Play a single stroke roll.	
6. Play a double stroke roll.	
7. Play a double paradiddle.	
8. Play a triple paradiddle.	
9. Understand simple time signatures.	
10. Name and understand the note values in the pieces that I play.	

**Look What I Can Do!**

# **Manuscript Paper**

