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WINNER

PERCUSSION *Plus*

Andy Gleadhill's

SLAP DJEMBE®

Second Edition
With new compositions,
expanded lesson plans and
call and response patterns

A guide to playing & learning drum rhythms from around the world

- Exciting rhythms from a diverse mix of countries and cultures
- Fun facts and performance notes throughout
- Unique and easy-to-follow notation system suitable for djembes and similar drums
- Structured 10 week lesson plan for 9 to 12 year olds. UK KS2/3, US elementary/middle school
- Call and response patterns to help shape performances
- Enhanced online content to suit all learning styles



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About the author

Andy Gleadhill has been studying, teaching and performing music for over 40 years. As a dedicated ethnomusicologist, Andy has been around the globe learning about music and the cultures that each style is rooted in. The experiences gained through studying with top musicians in each culture and its connected musical disciplines have informed an extensive body of work on African drumming, Indonesian gamelan, Brazilian samba, the music of India, Caribbean steel pans, and more.

With this deep understanding of cultures and the music that plays an important part in all aspects of daily life, Andy delivers teacher training and seminars at education conferences all over the world as well as working with music teacher associations, education services, and examination boards.

He freely gives his time to support musical development worldwide, particularly in Africa, South America, and Asia, teaching on behalf of the British Council. As an executive committee member of the British Musician's Union and a member of the Royal Society of Musicians of Great Britain for over 30 years, Andy is firmly committed to sharing his passion for music education and supporting young people all over the world.

Andy was appointed as Global Brand Ambassador for Percussion Plus in 2021, and has been involved with many Slap Djembe projects since the first series of these drums was released.

As a musician Andy Gleadhill has played for major recording artists, film and television productions, and many of London's top West End shows.

www.andygleadhill.co.uk



To access audio and video files and other useful resources, please visit:

www.percussionplus.co.uk/AGSDresources

Or scan this code with your smart device

All the tunes in this book have been collected by a combination of field work in the countries of origin, talking and playing with musicians from the music's heritage and listening to authentic source recordings. It is important to note that, although every effort has been made to accurately reflect the music, what we are making are honest representations of another culture's music and so we must respect the people and cultures whose music it is. Music does not adhere to political and geographic boundaries and so many tunes will be traditional to several countries, with many regional variations and may have originated in other countries to the ones used in this book.

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How to play the Slap Djembe

The design on the drumhead shows where the hand should strike the drum to obtain a fabulous variety of sounds, from punchy bass to cracking highs. When you hit the skin, let your hand bounce back allowing the sound to ring. Sit with the drum tilted away from you and slightly off the ground to allow the air to move and the notes to resonate.



THE BASS

The area in the centre of the drum produces a warm and full bass note. To produce a good bass note, the djembe must be struck in the middle of the drumhead with the hand slightly cupped, palm down, returning quickly from the drum. You can use your whole arm and pretend that you are bouncing a basketball.



THE TONE

Straighten all of your fingers. Aim to strike the drum so that the joint where your fingers join your hand (at the first knuckle) is at the rim of the drum. Think of your hand as an extension of your arm and remember not to keep your hand on the drum but to bounce back from the drumhead as soon as you have played the note. This will produce a clear tone, with a good ring and projection.



THE SLAP

This note is played around the edge of the drum. Relax your hand and arm and hit the drum with a slap-like motion. Spread your fingers out slightly when you strike the edge of the drum for a whip crack-like sound. For an even brighter slap, hold one hand down in the middle of the drum while simultaneously playing the slap note on the edge of the drum.











If you are just beginning to learn you can substitute the slap for a basic tone in the tunes until you gain more confidence in producing your slap sound.

You can use all these techniques in combination for varying effects. More advanced players will enjoy learning complex patterns, all of which are made easy to follow with the Slap Drumming 'How to Play' screen printed drum skin.

Understanding the notation in this book

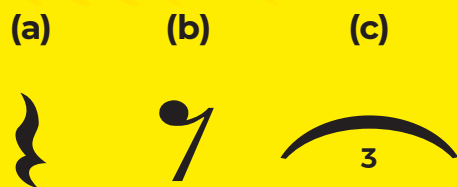
Look at the example below. On the top line of the notation are the beat numbers and underneath are the tone symbols to play. You will see these are the same symbols as the ones printed on the Slap Djembe – the bass, the tone, and the slap. There is also a rest sign which indicates a silent beat where no sound is played.

Example 1:

Fanga - Core rhythm						SLAP DJEMBE	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
							
BASS	REST	REST	BASS	REST	TONE	SLAP	REST

Taking a rest

(a) is the symbol for a full count rest and (b) is the sign for half a count rest. In some examples we use a musical beat known as a triplet when three equal notes are played in the space of just one count. This is shown in example (c).



Simply play what you see. Repeat each rhythm so that when you get to the last beat you loop back to the first beat and play round the tune again. Remember to keep a steady beat and begin slowly. You can increase the speed of the tunes as you get more confident with the rhythms.



Origins

The djembe is a West African drum that has a rich and storied history and makes a broad pallet of tones. It is highly suited to ensemble playing, as the range of sounds available and the different sizes of drum enable you to build a varied soundscape.

The origins of the djembe can be traced back to the Mandé people, who are believed to have developed the drum in the 12th century in what is now modern-day Mali, Guinea, and Burkina Faso. The word “djembe” is derived from the Mandinka language, where “djé” means “gather” and “bé” means “peace”.

The djembe was originally employed primarily as a sacred instrument in religious and spiritual ceremonies, as well as for communication and storytelling within African communities. It was used in a variety of rituals, including initiations, harvest celebrations, and rites of passage. The drum was also used to bring people together and communicate messages over large distances.



Popularity

The popularity of the djembe extended throughout West Africa over time, and it became a vital component of the cultural and musical traditions of many people. Each group evolved its unique djembe playing techniques, rhythms, and cultural importance.

The djembe became internationally recognised in the mid-twentieth century thanks to the efforts of African artists and musicians who toured and performed around the world. This exposure led to the integration of the drum in global music scenes and partnerships with artists from various backgrounds. The djembe is now widely used by composers and performers all around the world, and it is commonly seen in music classrooms.

Construction

The craftsmanship and construction of djembes have evolved over time. Traditionally, the drum was carved from a single piece of hardwood such as lenke, djala, or mahogany, with the drumhead made from goat or cow skin. Modern djembes like the Percussion Plus Slap Djembe range feature synthetic drumheads and alternative materials for the shell to create an instrument that is lightweight and durable while still maintaining the traditional design and sound.

Slap Djembe World rhythms

In this book there are two drumming tunes each from different countries in Africa, Australasia and Oceania, Asia, Europe, North America, and South America. We have also included an additional three arrangements from the continent of Africa, the birthplace of the djembe drum. For each country's music there will be an example of the core rhythm and some details about the country and its music's social and cultural context.

There then follows a three-part arrangement for large, medium, and small sized drums to facilitate group playing. Each of the tunes has been graded for difficulty with 1 being the simplest and 5 the most involved.

At the start of each arrangement are performance notes to help you play the tunes.



North America

America (Apache)	30-31
Cuba (Bata)	32-33



South America

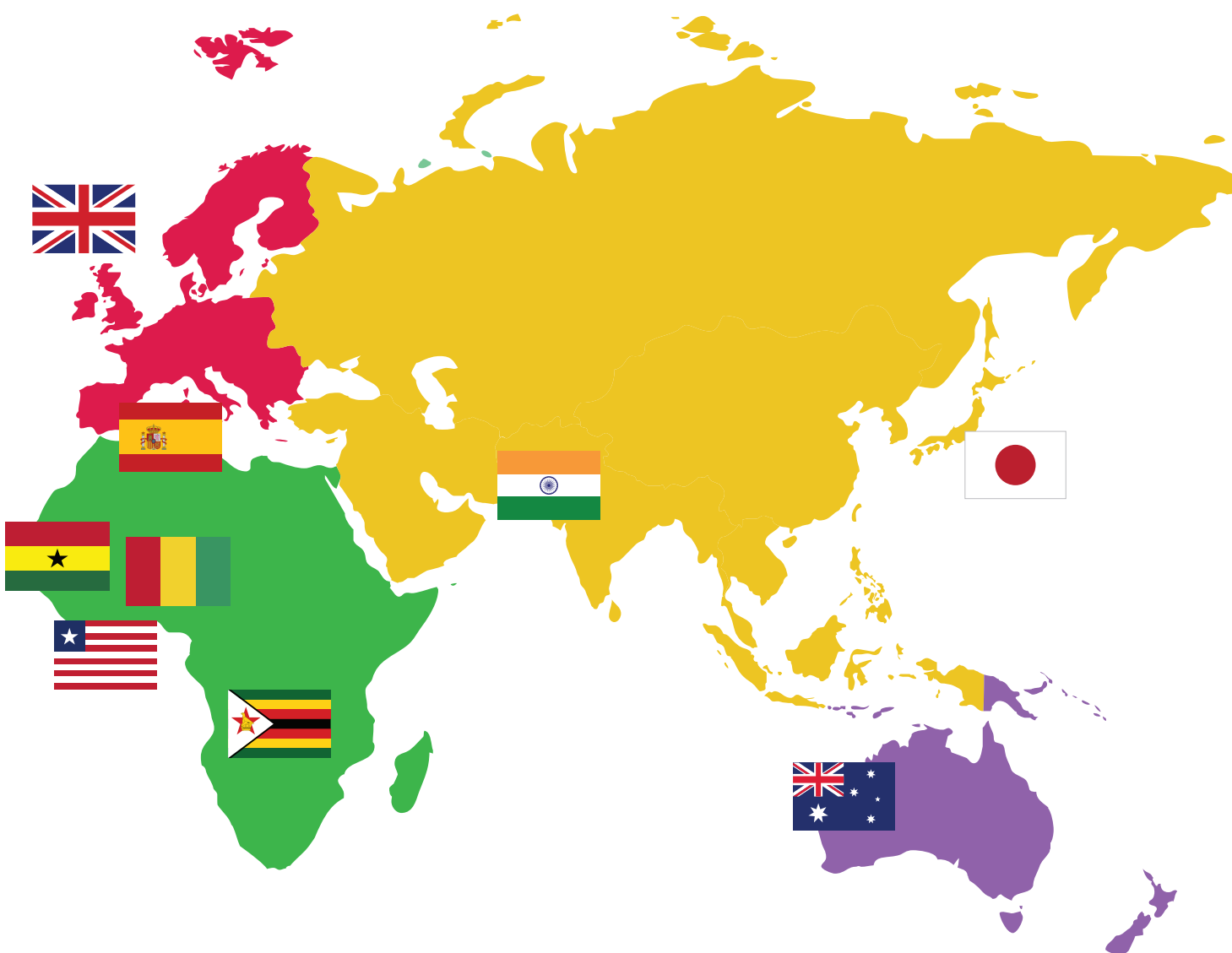
Brazil (Samba)	34-35
Colombia (Salsa)	36-37

Europe

Spain (Alegrias)	26-27
United Kingdom (Morris Dance)	28-29

Asia

India (Bhangra)	22-23
Japan (Taiko)	24-25



Africa

Liberia (Fanga)	8-9
Zimbabwe (Ngoma)	10-11
Ghana (Miam)	12-13
Ghana (Kye Kye Kule)	14-15
Guinea (Kuku)	16-17

Australasia / Oceania

Australia (Aboriginal)	18-19
Tahiti (To'ere)	20-21

Fanga from Liberia

Population 5.05 million

Capital City Monrovia

Language English, Kpelle

Landscape Coastal lowlands and inland hills

Climate Tropical



AFRICA



Did you know?

The average resident of Liberia is under 18 years of age.



West African percussionists perform live at a traditional event

The Music

The fanga is a West African dance: the rhythms played for the dance are also known as a fanga. The beats are usually performed on djembe drums.

Musical fun fact

The djembe is thought to have originated from the olo, an African kitchen utensil used for grinding flour.

Fanga - Core rhythm

SLAP DJEMBE

1



BASS

2



REST

3



REST

4



BASS

5



REST

6



TONE

7



SLAP

8



REST

Fanga – Three part arrangement

SLAP DJEMBE









Difficulty: 

Andy's performance notes









Establish a steady beat using the rhythm from the part for the low drums. Next, add in the middle drum part and finally the high drum part. Remember to begin at a slow steady tempo before speeding up.











Fanga - Big Drums (Low)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
							
BASS	REST	TONE	TONE	BASS	REST	TONE	TONE

Fanga - Medium Drums (Middle)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
							
BASS	REST	REST	BASS	REST	TONE	SLAP	REST

Fanga - Small Drums (High)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
							
BASS	REST	REST	BASS	BASS	REST	TONE	TONE

Ngoma from Zimbabwe

Population 14.86 million

Capital City Harare

Language English, Shona, Ndebele

Landscape Landlocked, inland plateau, highveld, escarpment

Climate Temperate



AFRICA



Did you know?

The noise from Victoria Falls can be heard as far as 40 kilometres away.



A musician from Zimbabwe plays a traditionally made mbira

The Music

The ngoma is a musical tradition of the Bantu population and the word ngoma comes from the Bantu word for drum. The ngoma is also traditional in the Congo and other Central African countries.

Musical fun fact

Zimbabwe is the home of the mbira, the forerunner of the modern thumb piano.

Ngoma - Core rhythm

SLAP DJEMBE

1



BASS

2



REST

3



BASS

4



REST

5



TONE

6



BASS

7



REST

8



TONE

Ngoma – Three part arrangement

SLAP DJEMBE









Difficulty: 

Andy's performance notes









Begin with the simplest part for the low drums. Then, add in the part for the middle drums and finally the high drum part. When playing the high drum part remember to always play one hand after the other, don't try to play the fast notes with just one hand. Also, remember to begin by practising each part slowly and building up speed as you gain more confidence.















Ngoma - Big Drums (Low)

1  BASS	2  TONE	3  TONE	4  BASS
5  BASS	6  TONE	7  TONE	8  BASS

Ngoma - Medium Drums (Middle)

1  BASS	2  REST	3  BASS	4  REST
5  TONE	6  BASS	7  REST	8  TONE

Ngoma - Small Drums (High)

1  TONE	2  TONE	3  TONE	4  TONE	5  BASS	6  BASS
7  TONE	8  TONE	9  TONE	10  TONE	11  BASS	12  BASS

AFRICA



Miam from Ghana

Population 34 million

Capital City Accra

Language English, Akan Ewe

Landscape Costal lowlands and inland plains

Climate Tropical



Did you know?

Famous jazz musicians including Ahmad Jamal and Louis Armstrong visited Ghana in the late 1950s.



Drumming plays an important part across all areas of life in Ghana

The Music

The Miam (pronounced mee-yam) is a form of Ghanaian drumming from the Royal Court of Asantehene. It accompanies a dance for special occasions.

Musical fun fact

The Ghanaian genre Highlife started in the 19th century as a fusion of African metre and jazz melodies. It is characterised by jazzy horns and finger plucked guitars.

Miam - Core rhythm

SLAP DJEMBE

1



BASS

2



REST

+



TONE

3



TONE

4



REST

5



BASS

6



REST

+



TONE

7



TONE

8



REST

Miam – Three part arrangement

SLAP DJEMBE

Difficulty: 

Andy's performance notes

Start by establishing the low drums part and then adding in the middle drums followed by the high drums.









After a few cycles, try adding the tailored call and response pattern – see online content for details. Swap between the main tune and call and response a couple of times before playing a final call and response to finish on the last beat of the response.











Miam - Big Drums (Low)

1  BASS	2  REST	3  REST	4  REST
5  BASS	6  REST	7  REST	8  REST

Miam - Medium Drums (Middle)

1  BASS	2  REST	3  TONE	4  REST
5  BASS	6  REST	7  TONE	8  REST

Miam - Small Drums (High)

1  TONE	2  TONE	3  REST	4  TONE
5  REST	6  TONE	7  TONE	8  REST



Kye Kye Kule from Ghana

Population 34 million

Capital City Accra

Language English, Akan, Ewe

Landscape Coastal lowlands and inland plains

Climate Tropical



Did you know?

The northern musical traditions of Ghana prominently use minor pentatonic and chromatic scales, while the music of the coast is largely percussive.



The shekere is made from naturally grown gourds making each instrument wonderfully unique

The Music

Kye Kye Kule (pronounced chay chay koolay) is a popular rhyme used to teach rhythm and continuity in language skill development at Ghanaian schools.

Musical fun fact

Ghana is home to the seperwa, a stringed instrument with between 6 and 14 strings which has a square wooden box resonator.

Kye Kye Kule - Core rhythm

SLAP DJEMBE

1



BASS

2



REST

+



BASS

3



BASS

4



SLAP

5



BASS

6



REST

+



BASS

7



BASS

8



SLAP

Kye Kye Kule – Three part arrangement

SLAP DJEMBE

Difficulty: 

Andy's performance notes

This arrangement includes a technique known as a roll in the small drum part. You can read more about this in Week Four of the Ten weekly lessons section later in the book. When performing the rolls on beats 4 and 8 be sure to roll over the whole length of the note by playing one hand after the other as quickly as you can.











NEW
Tailored call and response
pattern available online!













Kye Kye Kule - Big Drums (Low)

1  BASS	2  REST	3  REST	4  TONE
5  BASS	6  REST	7  REST	8  TONE

Kye Kye Kule - Medium Drums (Middle)

1  BASS	2  REST	+  BASS	3  BASS	4  SLAP
5  BASS	6  REST	+  BASS	7  BASS	8  SLAP

Kye Kye Kule - Small Drums (High)

1  BASS	2  TONE	3  BASS	4  TONE	+  TONE ROLL.....
5  BASS	6  TONE	7  BASS	8  TONE	+  TONE ROLL.....

Kuku from Guinea

Population 14.5 million

Capital City Conakry

Language French, Sasu

Landscape Coastal plains, highlands, savana

Climate Tropical



Did you know?

Guinea's population belongs to at least 24 ethnic groups, which gives a diverse range of traditional music styles.



Djembes from Guinea are recognised by the deep bowl which can be over half the height of the drum

The Music

Kuku is a dance from the Susu people, performed in a circle. Kuku was originally danced by women to celebrate a successful harvest from a fishing trip.

Musical fun fact

Guinean Mandé music is performed by West African historians, storytellers and poets known as griots who pass on history in oral traditions from one generation to the next.

Kuku - Core rhythm

SLAP DJEMBE

1



BASS

2



TONE

+



TONE

3



REST

+



TONE

4



TONE

5



BASS

6



TONE

+



TONE

7



REST

8



TONE

Kuku – Three part arrangement

SLAP DJEMBE

Difficulty:  









Andy's performance notes

This tune is best performed fast but it is always best to start slowly when learning it and gradually increase the speed as you become more confident with the rhythms.









NEW
Tailored call and response
pattern available online!











Kuku - Big Drums (Low)

1  BASS	2  BASS	3  REST	4  REST
5  BASS	6  BASS	7  REST	8  REST

Kuku - Medium Drums (Middle)

1  TONE	2  REST	3  BASS	4  TONE
5  TONE	6  REST	7  BASS	8  TONE

Kuku - Small Drums (High)

1  BASS	2  TONE	+	3  TONE	+	4  TONE
5  BASS	6  TONE	+	7  TONE	+	8  TONE

Aboriginal from Australia

Population 25.69 million

Capital City Canberra

Language English

Landscape Deserts, coastal, plateau, lowlands, highlands

Climate Equatorial, tropical, sub-tropical, desert, grassland, and temperate



AUSTRALASIA
OCEANIA



Did you know?

90% of Australians live on the coast.



Aboriginal people playing a didgeridoo and wooden claves at a tribal ceremony

The Music

This Aboriginal tune is based on the rhythms played in folk music by clapsticks, rhythms generated by vocal sounds and rhythms played on the body (body percussion).

Musical fun fact

The didgeridoo, an Aboriginal musical instrument, is made from eucalyptus wood that has been hollowed out by termites.

Aboriginal - Core rhythm

SLAP DJEMBE

1



BASS

2



REST

3



BASS

4



REST

5

+



TONE



TONE

6

+



TONE



TONE

7



SLAP

8



REST

Aboriginal – Three part arrangement

SLAP DJEMBE









Difficulty: 

Andy's performance notes









Make sure the part for the low drums has a good steady beat and that everyone listens to it before adding in their part. You can practise the middle drum part with an ordinary tone on beat 7 to make sure you have the correct rhythm before changing to the slap on beat 7.











Aboriginal - Big Drums (Low)

1  BASS	2  REST	3  BASS	4  REST
5  TONE	6  TONE	7  BASS	8  REST

Aboriginal - Medium Drums (Middle)

1  BASS	2  REST	3  BASS	4  REST
5  TONE	6  TONE	7  SLAP	8  REST

Aboriginal - Small Drums (High)

1  TONE	2  REST	3  BASS	4  REST
5  TONE	6  REST	7  BASS	8  REST

To'ere from Tahiti

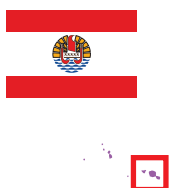
Population 281,000

Capital City Papeete

Language French

Landscape Island, rainforest

Climate Tropical marine



AUSTRALASIA
OCEANIA



Did you know?

Tahiti receives fewer tourists in a year than Hawaii gets in one day.



Traditional to'ere drums on stands during a performance

The Music

To'ere drumming has three groups. Bass drums called tariparau give the music its pulse with a low sound. The fa'atete plays a more involved rhythm at a medium pitch. The to'ere, a hollowed out log with a slit carved out, has a high woodblock like sound.

Musical fun fact

To'ere drums are made from coconut wood with shark skin heads.

To'ere - Core rhythm

SLAP DJEMBE

1



TONE

2



REST

3



TONE

4



REST

5



TONE

6



REST

+



BASS

7



SLAP

8



REST

To'ere – Three part arrangement

SLAP DJEMBE















Difficulty: 

Andy's performance notes













Be careful when playing the high drum part to make sure you are playing it at double the speed of the other two parts.



To'ere - Big Drums (Low)










1	+	2	+	3	+	4
						
TONE	TONE	TONE	TONE	TONE	TONE	BASS
5	+	6	+	7	+	8
						
TONE	TONE	TONE	TONE	TONE	TONE	BASS

To'ere - Medium Drums (Middle)

1	2	+	3	+	4
					
BASS	TONE	TONE	TONE	TONE	BASS
5	6	+	7	+	8
					
BASS	TONE	TONE	TONE	TONE	BASS

To'ere - Small Drums (High)

NB: Remember to play this part at double speed!

1	2	3	4
			
TONE	REST	TONE	REST
5	6	+	7
			
TONE	REST	BASS	REST
		7	
			
		SLAP	



Bhangra from India

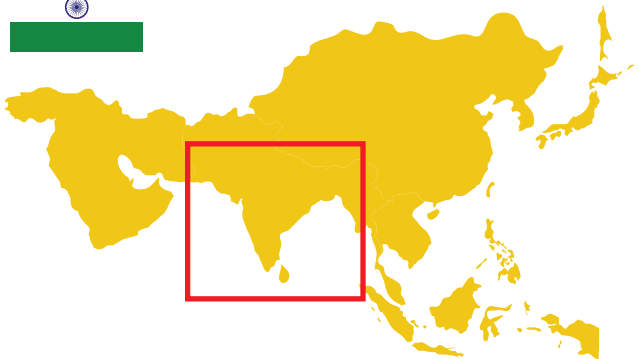
Population 1.38 billion

Capital City New Delhi

Language Hindi

Landscape Mountain ranges, deserts, plains, hills, plateaus, and coastal

Climate Tropical



Did you know?

The majority of India's population is Hindu and believes the cow is a sacred animal.



An Indian man plays a dhol drum at a friend's wedding ceremony

The Music

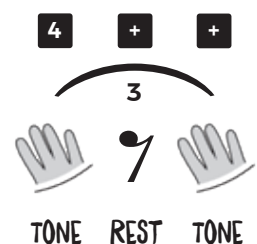
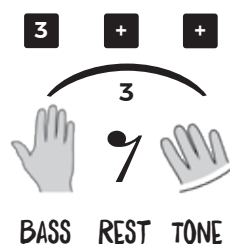
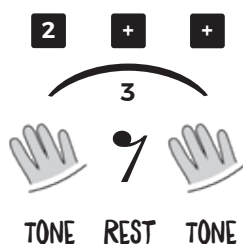
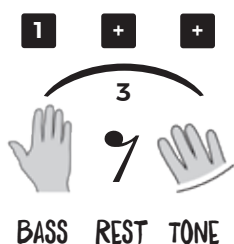
Traditional Bhangra music originated from the Punjab region of India where it is played to celebrate the harvest. Modern bhangra was developed by Punjabi settlers who brought the music to the UK.

Musical fun fact

Indian classical music often has a drone accompaniment traditionally played on an instrument known as a tempura, but some contemporary Indian musicians now play the drone through an app on their phone.

Bhangra - Core rhythm

SLAP DJEMBE



Bhangra – Three part arrangement



Andy's performance notes

Begin by playing the small drum part before adding the middle drum part and finally the low drum part. The key to playing this piece is to play the low part A twice, then play low part B once followed by low part C once, and then repeat that pattern.



Bhangra - Big Drums (Low) Part A

X2

1	2	3	4
BASS	REST	REST	BASS

Bhangra - Big Drums (Low) Part B

1	2	3	+	4
BASS	REST	REST	TONE	BASS

Bhangra - Big Drums (Low) Part C

1	2	+	+	3	4
BASS	REST	REST	BASS	REST	BASS

Bhangra - Medium Drums (Middle)

X4

1	+	+	2	+	+	3	+	+	4	+	+
BASS	REST	TONE	TONE	REST	TONE	BASS	REST	TONE	TONE	REST	TONE

Bhangra - Small Drums (High)

X4

1	+	+	2	+	+	3	+	+	4	+	+
TONE	REST	TONE	TONE	REST	TONE	TONE	REST	TONE	TONE	REST	TONE



Taiko from Japan

Population 125.8 million

Capital City Tokyo

Language Japanese

Landscape Mountainous, coastal

Climate Warm summers, cold winters



Did you know?

In Japan it is considered good manners to slurp your noodles.



A Japanese performance group in traditional kimono and fox masks drum taiko

The Music

Taiko is the Japanese word for drum. It is also used to refer to the kumi-daiko ensemble style playing developed by Daihachi Oguchi in 1951, a trained jazz musician from Nagano. It was further developed by Den Tagaysa and his group Ondekoza on the Japanese island of Sado.

Musical fun fact

When in training, the musicians in the Ondekoza taiko group would run a whole marathon every day.

Taiko - Core rhythm

SLAP DJEMBE

1



BASS

2



REST

3



TONE

4



TONE

5



BASS

6



REST

7



TONE

8



TONE









Taiko – Three part arrangement

Andy's performance notes









When all the parts have been playing round and round for a while, try swapping the parts so that the low drums play the middle drum parts, the middle drums play the high drum part and the high drums play the low drum part. Next, swap again so the low drums now play the small drum part, the high play the middle and the middle play the low drum part. Continue swapping around the parts on the shout of SO-RE.











Taiko - Big Drums (Low)

1  BASS	2  REST	3  REST	4  REST
5  TONE	6  REST	7  TONE	8  REST

Taiko - Medium Drums (Middle)

1  BASS	2  REST	3  TONE	4  TONE
5  BASS	6  REST	7  TONE	8  TONE

Taiko - Small Drums (High)

1  BASS	2  TONE	+	3  BASS	4  TONE	+
5  BASS	6  TONE	+	7  BASS	8  TONE	+



Alegrias from Spain

Population 47.35 million

Capital City Madrid

Language Spanish

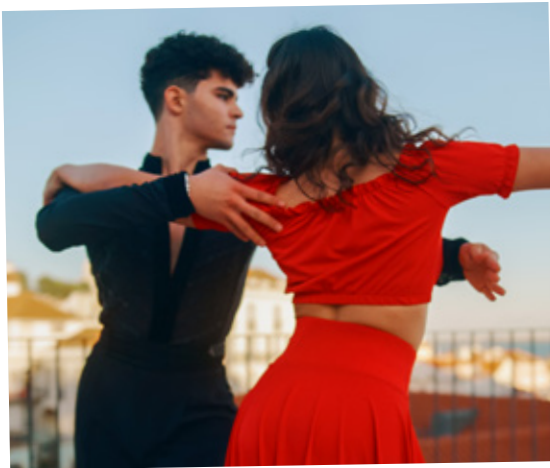
Landscape Mountainous, large central plateau, coastal

Climate Temperate, hot summers, cool winters



Did you know?

There is no tooth fairy in Spain, but they do have a tooth mouse.



Two Spanish flamenco dancers

The Music

The alegrías rhythm is used in Spanish flamenco music. It is often played by palmistas, performers who play the rhythm with clapped hands.

Musical fun fact

The percussion instrument known as a cajón comes from the Spanish word meaning 'box.' It is thought that this is because these drums were originally made from old shipping crates from cargo ships.

Alegrias - Core rhythm

SLAP DJEMBE

1



TONE

2



TONE

3



BASS

4



TONE

5



TONE

6



BASS

7



TONE

8



BASS

9



TONE

10



BASS

11



TONE

12



BASS

Alegrias – Three part arrangement

SLAP DJEMBE













Difficulty: 

Andy's performance notes













The alegrias rhythm is end weighted. This means the strong beats are on counts 3, 6, 8, 10, and 12, which should be accented or given more weight. Establish the core rhythm on the middle drums first, then add in the high drums followed by the low drums.



Alegrias - Big Drums (Low)

1  REST	2  TONE	3  BASS	4  REST	5  TONE	6  BASS
7  REST	8  BASS	9  REST	10  BASS	11  REST	12  BASS

Alegrias - Medium Drums (Middle)

1  TONE	2  TONE	3  BASS	4  TONE	5  TONE	6  BASS
7  TONE	8  BASS	9  TONE	10  BASS	11  TONE	12  BASS

Alegrias - Small Drums (High)

1  TONE	2  REST	3  BASS	4  TONE	5  REST	6  BASS
7  REST	8  SLAP	9  REST	10  SLAP	11  REST	12  SLAP



Morris Dance from England

Population 67.22 million

Capital City London

Language English

Landscape Coastal, city, agricultural, low mountains, hills

Climate Temperate with cool, wet winters and warm, wet summers



Did you know?

Stonehenge is older than The Pyramids.



Bells attached to the dancer's legs add to the sound and pagentry of a Morris dance

The Music

Morris Dancing is an English folk tradition. It is often accompanied by an accordion and a tambour drum.

Musical fun fact

Part of the Morris Dance music is provided by bells that are attached to the dancers' clothing and shoes.

Morris Dance - Core rhythm

SLAP DJEMBE

1



BASS

2

+

+

3



TONE TONE TONE

3



BASS

4

+

+

3



TONE TONE TONE

Morris Dance – Three part arrangement

SLAP DJEMBE

Difficulty: 

Andy's performance notes

Make sure you play the triplet in the middle drum part evenly.
Try alternating the middle and high drum parts for variety.



Morris Dance - Big Drums (Low)

1



BASS

2



REST

3



BASS

4



REST

Morris Dance - Medium Drums (Middle)

1



BASS

2

+

+



3



TONE

TONE

TONE

3



BASS

4

+

+



3



TONE

TONE

TONE

Morris Dance - Small Drums (High)

1



TONE

2

+



TONE



BASS

3



TONE

4

+



TONE



BASS

Apache from America

Population 329.5 million

Capital City Washington D.C.

Language English

Landscape A wide range from tropical islands to snow-capped mountains

Climate Mostly temperate, arctic climate in Alaska, tropical climate in Hawaii and South Florida



NORTH
AMERICA



Did you know?

The United States is the only country that has all of Earth's five climate zones: tropical, dry, temperate, continental, and polar.



A tribal storyteller playing a small animal skin drum

The Music

This is a drumming tune from the Indigenous North American Apache tribe. The Apache use traditionally crafted drums for a range of ceremonies including birth rituals and coming of age celebrations.

Musical fun fact

Most Apache music uses just two instruments, the drum and the voice.

Apache - Core rhythm

SLAP DJEMBE

1

+



TONE

BASS

2

+



REST



BASS

3

+



TONE



BASS

4

+



SLAP



REST

Apache from America – Three part arrangement

SLAP DJEMBE









Difficulty: 

Andy's performance notes









Begin by playing the low part first, then add in the high part, and finally the core rhythm on the middle drums. Try to make the repetitive rhythms as atmospheric as you can.











Apache - Big Drums (Low)

1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
							
BASS	REST	BASS	BASS	BASS	REST	BASS	BASS

Apache - Medium Drums (Middle)

1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
							
TONE	BASS	REST	BASS	TONE	BASS	SLAP	REST

Apache - Small Drums (High)

1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
							
BASS	REST	REST	TONE	BASS	REST	REST	TONE

Bata from Cuba

Population 11.33 million

Capital city Havana

Language Spanish

Landscape Coastal plains and hills

Climate Subtropical



Did you know?

The national sport of Cuba is baseball.



A Cuban musician performing at a bar in Havana

The Music

Bata drums are double headed, hourglass shaped drums with one end larger than the other. They are used in traditional religious ceremonies as well as for entertainment.

Musical fun fact

Bata drums were first broadcast in a radio transmission from Cuba in 1935.

Bata - Core rhythm

SLAP DJEMBE

1



TONE

2



BASS

3



BASS

4



TONE

5



REST

6



BASS

7



TONE

8



BASS

9



REST

10



SLAP

11



REST

12



REST

Bata – Three part arrangement

SLAP DJEMBE













Difficulty: 

Andy's performance notes













This tune has 12 counts in the phrase rather than the 8 found in most of the previous tunes. Try to produce a heavy accent on the bass note on beat 5 in the low drum part. You can add dynamics to the tune by starting softly, building up the sound and then gradually fading away.















Bata - Big Drums (Low)

1  REST	2  TONE	3  TONE	4  REST	5  BASS	6  REST
7  REST	8  TONE	9  TONE	10  REST	11  BASS	12  REST

Bata - Medium Drums (Middle)

1  TONE	2  BASS	3  BASS	4  TONE	5  REST	6  BASS
7  TONE	8  BASS	9  REST	10  SLAP	11  REST	12  REST

Bata - Small Drums (High)

1  BASS	2  REST	3  TONE	4  REST	5  BASS	6  REST
7  TONE	8  REST	9  BASS	10  REST	11  TONE	12  REST

Samba from Brazil

Population 212.6 million

Capital City Brasília

Language Portuguese

Landscape Long coastal plains, rainforests, hills, and wetlands

Climate Tropical



SOUTH AMERICA



Did you know?

There are more than 400 airports in Brazil.



Samba music is always associated with the vibrant colours and elaborate costumes of carnival

The Music

Samba is the national music of Brazil. It is most famous for the samba bands that play at the country's carnivals. It is a mixture of influences from indigenous folk music, African music, and Portuguese military music.

Musical fun fact

The players in a samba band listen out for calls made on a tri-tone whistle called an apito to know when to change to different sections of the music.

Samba - Core rhythm

SLAP DJEMBE

1



BASS

2



REST

+



TONE

3



TONE

+



TONE

4



TONE

5



BASS

6



REST

+



TONE

7



TONE

+



TONE

8



TONE

Samba – Three part arrangement

SLAP DJEMBE









Difficulty: 

Andy's performance notes









When all the parts are playing together, ask the low and middle parts to stop playing while the high drums continue as a solo. They can then try improvising around their rhythm. After a few moments, bring everyone back in and then do the same with the other two parts. You can use a whistle to signal when parts come in and out.









Samba - Big Drums (Low)

1  BASS	2  TONE	3  BASS	4  TONE
5  BASS	6  TONE	7  BASS	8  TONE

Samba - Medium Drums (Middle)

1  BASS	2  REST	+	3  TONE	+	4  TONE
5  BASS	6  REST	+	7  TONE	+	8  TONE

Samba - Small Drums (High)

<div>1</div> <div></div> <div>BASS</div>	<div>2</div> <div></div> <div>REST</div>	<div>+</div> <div></div> <div>TONE</div>	<div>3</div> <div></div> <div>REST</div>	<div>4</div> <div></div> <div>TONE</div>
<div>5</div> <div></div> <div>REST</div>	<div>6</div> <div></div> <div>SLAP</div>	<div>7</div> <div></div> <div>SLAP</div>	<div>8</div> <div></div> <div>REST</div>	



Salsa from Colombia

Population 50.88 million

Capital City Bogotá

Language Spanish

Landscape Coastline, pacific coast, Andes mountain range, grassland plains, and the Amazon Rainforest

Climate Tropical and isothermal



Did you know?

It is the law that the Colombian national anthem is played on the radio and TV every day at 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.



In salsa music the percussionist is an important part of the sound of the band

The Music

Salsa is popular in many countries of South America and the Caribbean. It is hard to separate the music from the dance as they go together hand in hand. Salsa bands are mainly acoustic, comprising of vocals, brass instruments, percussion, bass, and guitar.

Musical fun fact

Salsa music can be very fast, sometimes up to 250 beats per minute!

Salsa - Core rhythm

SLAP DJEMBE

1



BASS

2



TONE

+



TONE

3



REST

+



TONE

4



REST

+



TONE

5



BASS

6



BASS

7



TONE

+



TONE

8



REST

+



SLAP









Salsa - Three part arrangement

Andy's performance notes









Salsa can be quite fast and intricate, so make sure you establish a good steady beat with the big drums first before adding in the more complicated middle and high drum parts.











Salsa - Big Drums (Low)

1  BASS	2 	+	3  BASS	4 	+
	TONE	TONE		TONE	TONE
5  BASS	6 	+	7  BASS	8 	+
	TONE	TONE		TONE	TONE

Salsa - Medium Drums (Middle)

1  BASS	2 	+	3  REST	+	4  REST	+
	TONE	TONE		TONE		TONE
5  BASS	6  BASS		7 	+	8  REST	+
			TONE	TONE		SLAP

Salsa - Small Drums (High)

1 	+	2 	+	3 	+	4 	+
TONE	BASS	TONE	TONE	BASS	TONE	BASS	BASS
5 	+	6 	+	7 	+	8 	+
TONE	BASS	TONE	TONE	BASS	TONE	BASS	BASS

Group playing

Although it is possible to play Slap Djembe as a solo instrument, it is most commonly a group activity. Making music and having fun while interacting with other musicians is all part of the drumming experience. Slap Djembe drumming should be an inclusive activity in which everyone can take part. The layout of the room that your group is using will make all the difference to the sound of a drumming group.

In this book the tunes are written out in three parts representing the three different sizes of drums that can be used – big, medium, and small. This helps people of all ages and abilities play together in groups.

It is important that each part of the music is equally balanced and not drowned out by another part. If you have a lot of big drums and only a few small drums you will not achieve a balanced sound. The larger drums, by nature, will have a bigger sound than the smaller ones so you may need fewer big drums with more medium and small drums to create your balanced group.

I suggest that the players are positioned in a semicircle with the largest drums on the left, the medium drums in the middle, and the small drums to the right with the teacher or leader sat opposite the semicircle facing the middle players.



Creating a Performance

The musical examples in this book are short representations of original beats and rhythms from all over the world. Here we will look at ways that we can develop and expand the rhythms into impressive performances.

As with any good piece of music it is important to have a structure for developing our rhythms into performance ready pieces. Consider the following:

1. Introduction

2. Establishing the rhythm

3. Developing the rhythm

4. Conclusion and ending

Introduction

The beginning of a piece of music will influence the rest of the performance so it is important that the music gets off to a good start.

Establishing the rhythm

Whichever rhythm you are performing, begin by establishing a good steady beat to create a solid foundation. Start your rhythms slowly at first, you can increase the speed of your playing as you become more familiar with the rhythms.

When establishing the rhythm for the first time it is a good idea to keep to its simplest form and save the more complicated variations for later in the performance.

Developing the rhythm

To make the performances more interesting, two or three different variations of each rhythm can be incorporated. Try playing each part of the rhythm on different sized drums and experiment with swapping the parts between the drums.

Dividing the group in two with each side taking it in turns to play the tune will create an interesting stereo effect. Some of the rhythms will work as a round with groups of players starting the beat at different times.

Dynamics (loud and soft volumes) can be used to dramatic effect and will add interest for the listener.

When the group has become confident and familiar with the beats, individual group members can take turns to improvise and solo on top of the established rhythm. Try to keep each solo focussed and in the same style as the underlying beat.

Rhythms from the original beat can be rearranged and incorporated into a solo. Improvisation is a skill that will take time to become comfortable with so try to practise it regularly and you will gain confidence.

Conclusion and ending

There are different ways to bring your performance to a close. As with the introduction, the ending of a performance needs to be carefully thought out in advance and musically accurate. Here are a few options to consider:

- When playing some of the rhythms, try gradually reducing the volume and fading out to nothing. This can create an eerie atmosphere.
- Have the entire group play round and round the rhythm, gradually increasing the speed of the beat until it is too fast to play and becomes a long roll. The leader will then raise their hand to signal for the group to stop playing. When the leader lowers their hands again, the group recommences the loud rolls. Alternate between long and short rolls and make sure everyone in the group is watching the leader as they may try and catch you out! To end, the group follows the leader as they slowly play one hand after the other, gradually speeding up until the group plays one last long roll.
- Introduce a **“Call and Response”** section. This is a new rhythm not previously featured in the performance which can be used for a powerful finale or as a linking passage between two tunes. The next chapter will tell you more about this musical device!



Call and response patterns are an important part of drumming performances in many traditions around the world. The earliest strains of music were known to imitate sounds heard in nature, such as bird song and the nighttime calls of jungle animals which are forms of call and response.

Everyday examples

Cartoon music and advertising jingles make frequent use of this musical “question and answer” to be memorable and easily recognised. Invite students to watch out for call and response patterns when consuming media or gaming, and then devise their own patterns. This is a great way of introducing composition and improvisation into the classroom.

How to use

Call and response patterns can be used as an interlude between parts of a performance and even to link separate tunes together into a flowing medley. Players should move from the original tune seamlessly into the call and response pattern, and then back into the original tune or on to a new section of the performance.


You'll need a signal to let the players know to move on to the call and response pattern. This could be a few short blasts on a whistle (see example 10), a particular rhythmic pattern, or a vocal cue from the lead player or teacher.

The call can be played by a solo player, with the rest of the group answering with the response. Another way is for different instruments to play call and response, for example the low drums play the call while the middle and high drums play the response.

When to use

Call and response patterns are often used as a dramatic ending. Try the following with any of the tunes in this book to craft your unique performance!

New technique

When playing hand drums, it's not possible to perform a long note as you might on a stringed or wind instrument. To get around this, we can use a technique called a roll. The beats of the rhythm that are to be played as a roll will be indicated by this marking over the top .

How to perform the roll is explained in week four of the Ten weekly lessons section on page 52 and you'll find an example in **call and response pattern 7**.











Call and response patterns

Call and response pattern 1

Call






1	+	2	+	3	+	4
						
TONE	TONE	BASS	REST	TONE	TONE	BASS

Response

5	+	6	+	+	+	7	+	8
								
TONE	TONE	TONE	TONE	TONE	TONE	TONE	TONE	TONE

Call and response pattern 2

Call

1	2	3	+	4
				
TONE	TONE	BASS	TONE	TONE

Response

5	+	6	+	7	+	8
						
TONE	TONE	REST	TONE	BASS	TONE	TONE

Call and response pattern 3

Call

1	2	+	3	4
				
TONE	REST	TONE	BASS	TONE

Response

5	+	6	+	7	+	8
						
TONE	TONE	REST	TONE	REST	TONE	BASS






Call and response pattern 4

Notice that the response of the call and response pattern begins on the + of beat 4 not on beat 5.

Call

1	2	3	4	+
				
BASS	REST	BASS	REST	TONE

Response

5	6	7	+	8
				
TONE	TONE	TONE	TONE	REST

Call and response patterns

Call and response pattern 5

Call

1



TONE

2



TONE

3



TONE

+



BASS

4



SLAP

Response

5



TONE

+



BASS

6



SLAP

+



REST

7



TONE

+



BASS

8



SLAP

Call and response pattern 6

Call

1



TONE

2



REST

+



TONE

3



REST

+



TONE

4



TONE

Response

5



REST

6



BASS

7



BASS

8



BASS

Call and response pattern 7

Call

1



TONE

2



REST

3



BASS

4



BASS

Response

5



TONE

+



TONE

6



REST

7



TONE.....

8



Call and response pattern 8

Call

1



TONE

2



BASS

3



BASS

4



TONE

+



TONE

Response

5



REST

+



TONE

6



REST

+



TONE

7



REST

+



TONE

8



REST

+



TONE

Call and response patterns

Call and response pattern 9

Call

1



TONE

2



TONE

+



TONE

3



TONE

4



TONE

Response

5



REST

6



BASS

7



BASS

8



REST



Call and response pattern 10

As mentioned in the introduction to call and response, this samba styled pattern is introduced by two short whistle blasts. Samba bands would traditionally use a tri-tone whistle, but you can use a referee's whistle or anything similar that will be loud enough to cut across your drum circle.

Signal

1



WHISTLE

2



WHISTLE

Call

1



TONE

+



TONE

2



REST

+



TONE

3



TONE

4



TONE

Response

5



TONE

6



TONE

7



TONE

+



TONE

8



TONE

NEW

Find additional call and response patterns online!



Ten weekly lessons

Week One

Elements of music

Slap drumming is an excellent way to learn about music and incorporate all the basic elements of music into lessons from the very beginning.

Here I will list the basic elements of music and then identify where they are introduced in the weekly lessons.

When you are playing Slap drums, see if you can recognise the elements of music that you are using.

1. Rhythm	A beat or pulse
2. Pitch	High and low sounds
3. Tempo	The speed of the music e.g. slow or fast
4. Duration	Short and long sounds
5. Dynamics	Loud and soft sounds
6. Timbre	The different sounds of each instrument
7. Texture	Thick and thin sounds of many or solo players
8. Structure	The way a tune is put together

It is important that the first lesson is spent getting to know the drums and becoming comfortable with the best playing position (see the **How to play** section earlier in the book).

Demonstrating the way that the air flows through the drum will help new players understand why the drum needs to be held up off the ground.

Talking about the music and country of origin will help to give historical and social context to the lessons. Of course, people will want to play as soon as possible, so begin by explaining the playing technique for the tone and play a simple warm-up exercise of keeping a slow and steady beat on the tone, playing one hand after the other Right, Left, Right Left etc. as in **example 1. Please note, in all warm-ups R = play with the right hand and L = play with the left hand.**

The purpose of this exercise is to establish a steady and even beat.

Play even beats one hand after the other. This is the drumming pattern or rudiment known as single strokes. This introduces musical element 1: **rhythm**.









To start with, the leader can play the first four beats with the group answering by playing the second four beats straight after.

Then do the same thing but playing two beats with each hand R R L L etc. as in **example 2.** This rudiment is known as **double strokes**.









Finally, mix things up by playing R L R R L R L L as in **example 3.** This rudiment is known as a **paradiddle**.

Each lesson from now on can begin with these three exercises, and each week we will aim to improve the quality of the sound whilst achieving good steady beats. Remember to start slowly and at each new lesson you can gradually increase the speed.









Example 1 - Single strokes

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
							
R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L

Example 2 - Double strokes

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
							
R	R	L	L	R	R	L	L

Example 3 - Paradiddle

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
							
R	L	R	R	L	R	L	L

Ten weekly lessons

Week Two







Start the lesson with the previous week's warmups. For the first few weeks of drumming the students may only need to work on playing the warmup exercises and developing good hand positioning on the drums. In the second week we can introduce tone and bass sounds. This introduces musical element 2: **pitch**.

Explain the technique for producing the bass tone on the drum. Concentrate on the quality of the sounds being produced as well as playing together as a group. We can now play the warmup exercises using the two different sounds of tone and bass. For example, with a steady beat play: tone, tone, tone, tone, bass, bass, bass, bass, round and round as in **example 4**.



Examples 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9 can be played in two different ways. The first is to use one hand to play all the tone notes and the other hand to play all the bass notes. Then we can play the same exercises but always playing one hand after the other R L R L etc. as in the examples below.

Example 7 uses either single strokes or paradiddle.









Example 4

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
								
	TONE	TONE	TONE	TONE	BASS	BASS	BASS	BASS
4a	R	R	R	R	L	L	L	L
4b	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L









Example 5

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
								
	TONE	TONE	TONE	TONE	BASS	BASS	BASS	BASS
5a	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L
5b	R	R	R	R	L	L	L	L









Example 6

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
								
	BASS	BASS	TONE	TONE	BASS	BASS	TONE	TONE
6a	R	R	L	L	R	R	L	L
6b	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L





Example 7

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
								
	BASS	BASS	TONE	TONE	BASS	BASS	TONE	TONE
7a	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L
7b	R	L	R	R	L	R	L	L

Example 8

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
								
	TONE	BASS	TONE	TONE	BASS	TONE	BASS	BASS
8a	R	L	R	R	L	R	L	L
8b	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L

Example 9

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
								
	BASS	TONE	BASS	BASS	TONE	BASS	TONE	TONE
9a	R	L	R	R	L	R	L	L
9b	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L

Ten weekly lessons

Week Three

When the group can maintain a good steady beat (this may be after a few weeks of rehearsals) try alternating between your normal tempo, half speed and double speed. The underlying pulse will remain the same. This introduces element 3: **tempo**.

Week Four

In the next exercise we will play two short notes followed by one longer note that will be played as a roll when two beats run into each other indicated by the sign  as in **example 10**.

First it is a good idea to practise just the long note or roll.

A roll is performed by the drummer playing one hand after the other as fast as possible.

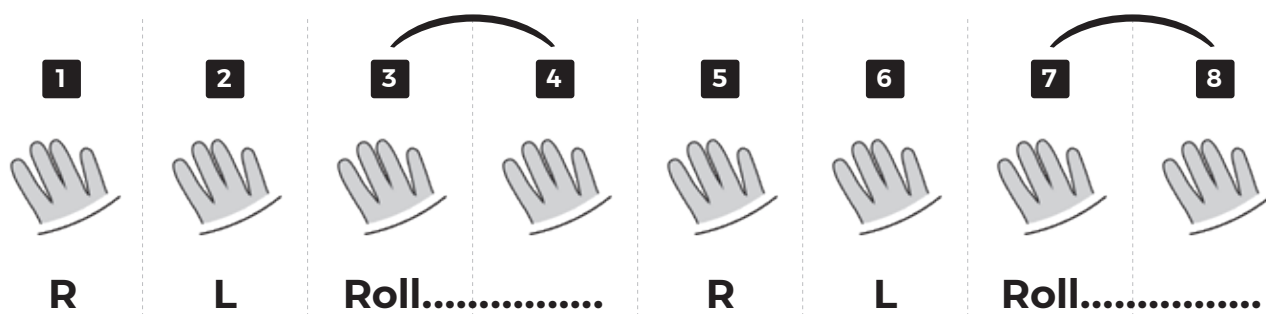
Try to keep your roll even by using each hand with equal weight and speed.

When you are happy with your roll you can play **example 11**.

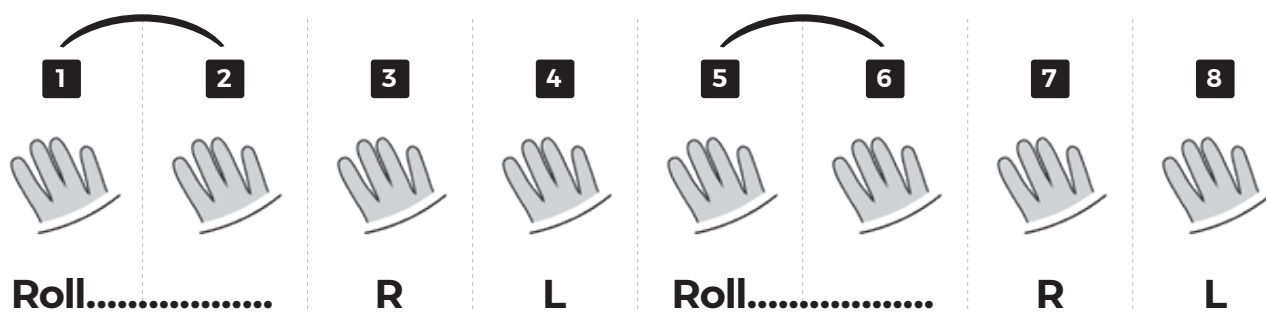
Make sure your long note (roll) is equal in length to the two short notes.

This introduces element 4: **duration**.

Example 10











Example 11











Now we can add in the two different pitches of tone and bass.

Example 12

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
							
TONE	TONE	BASS.....		TONE	TONE	BASS.....	
R	L	Roll.....		R	L	Roll.....	

Example 13

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
							
BASS.....		TONE	TONE	BASS.....		TONE	TONE
Roll.....		R	L	Roll.....		R	L

Ten weekly lessons

Week Five

Now we can introduce musical element 5: **dynamics**. To do this, we will divide the group into two halves.

The side to the left of the leader will play **example 14a** and the side to the right will play **example 14b**. Both groups will start playing at the same time.

Ask the group playing **example 14a** to play their short tone notes softly by lightly touching with just one finger on the edge of the drum and the long bass notes loudly with a slightly cupped hand in the centre of the drum.

At the same time, the group playing **example 14b** can play the bass notes quietly by just tickling the centre of the drum and the tone notes strongly with a firm strike at the edge of the drum on the tone graphic.

Now try reversing the volumes on **example 14b** so it begins with the roll played strongly and the single beats softly.

Listen to the sound of the long note as it moves from one side of the room to the other. Make sure you can identify the high and low sounds, the long and short sounds, and the strong and soft sounds. In playing just this exercise, we are using all eight of the elements of music in our list **rhythm, tempo, pitch, dynamics, duration, timbre, texture, and structure**.

Example 14a

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
TONE	TONE	BASS.....		TONE	TONE	BASS.....	
R	L	Roll.....		R	L	Roll.....	
Soft	Soft	Strong.....		Soft	Soft	Strong.....	









Example 14b

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
BASS.....		TONE	TONE	BASS.....		TONE	TONE
Roll.....		R	L	Roll.....		R	L
Soft.....		Strong	Strong	Soft.....		Strong	Strong

Week Six

We can now introduce the technique required to produce the slap sound on our drums. First practise playing a slap on the edge of the drum where the slap graphic is printed. Remember to relax your hand and arm and make a slap like motion. Spread your fingers out slightly when you play the drum. Next try doing the same action while holding your other hand down on the centre of the drum in the bass position. This will help to dampen the drum and produce a higher slap sound. When you are happy with your slap sound try using it in tunes such as **example 15** below.

Example 15

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
							
TONE	TONE	BASS	SLAP	TONE	TONE	BASS	SLAP
R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L



Ten weekly lessons

Week Seven

We are now going to look at how to learn one of the tunes in the book over four lessons. The tune we going to learn to play is tune one, the fanga, but the same method of teaching can be applied to each tune in the book.

Start every lesson with one of the warmup exercises from the previous weeks before going on to learning a tune.









When learning a new tune, it is always a good idea to begin by learning the simplest part of the arrangement. You should get everybody in the group to learn each part together before dividing up the parts among the different sized drums.

The simplest part of the fanga is the part for the low drums. One way to learn this would be for the teacher to play the rhythm and then ask the students to copy and repeat it after them. Another way is to ask the students to read the graphic notation and discover the music that way. Sometimes it helps to 'say it before you play it' so the low part would be:

BASS REST TONE TONE BASS REST TONE TONE

Keep playing the rhythm round and round at a slow steady tempo so you develop a good grounding for the tune.

Example 16

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
							
BASS	REST	TONE	TONE	BASS	REST	TONE	TONE

Week Eight









Again, begin the lesson with warm-up exercises.

Now we can learn the next easiest part, which is the tune for the small drums. Start again by saying the words before playing the tune:

BASS REST REST BASS BASS REST TONE TONE

Now we can play the rhythm on the drums. Again, remember to start at a slow and steady speed to establish the rhythm.

Example 17

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
							
BASS	REST	REST	BASS	BASS	REST	TONE	TONE

When you have mastered the part for the small high drums you can now get the group to try playing the low and high parts at the same time. You may find it helpful to divide the group in two and get the first group to begin playing the simpler low part round and round. When this has become a steady established beat, you can add in the second group playing the high drum part. Once this is working well, try starting both groups together at the same time.

Ten weekly lessons

Week Nine

By now each lesson should naturally begin with the warm-up exercises, each week playing them a little quicker to build up confidence.

We can now look at getting everyone to play the main fanga tune, the part for the medium drums in the same way we learnt the other parts in the previous lessons.

You may find it easier to get the students to learn the first four beats on their own to start:









BASS REST REST BASS

Then learn the second group of four beats:

REST TONE SLAP REST

And then putting them together into the whole tune before playing it round and round.

Example 18

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
							
BASS	REST	REST	BASS	REST	TONE	SLAP	REST

Once this is established you can begin to put the three parts together, first building them up one at a time and then trying to start all together.

Week Ten

Now we have learnt all the parts of the tune Fanga we can begin to build it into a performance ready piece by following the advice in the performance notes, trying some of the arrangement suggestions in the chapter on creating a performance and adding a call and response pattern.



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