



PRO TIPS
from

Bashiri Johnson



Chris Parker



Gerry Brown



Liberty DeVitto



Powered by

music
will™

LET'S PLAY ZIP-KIT



Mary Claxton
Jude Traxler
Dave Wish

nuvo



EXPRESS YOURSELF!

Thank you for purchasing your Zip-Kit.

We hope you will enjoy the unique portability and versatility of the Zip-Kit as you set out on your journey to explore the world of drumming. If you are in a school program, it's easy for you to carry your Zip-Kit between home and school just like all the other students with their instruments. You might even stop on the way for a quick practice or performance on the side-walk!!

The great thing about drumming is that you can pick up and play quickly and it taps into your basic human instinct to carry a beat! Don't be afraid to just go for it and Express Yourself! As long as you keep the beat, there's really no right or wrong!

This book provides some guidelines and exercises to get you started and there are more lessons online. The best way to learn and enjoy your drumming is to play along to your favorite music or jam with some friends.

The Zip-Kit is the brainchild of Dave Wish, the founder of Music Will, a charity dedicated to bringing more inspiring music education opportunities to more kids across the globe. After years of painstaking development work, he approached NUVO and we are thrilled to partner with him and Music Will to bring the Zip-Kit into the NUVO family of instruments.

You can find out more about Music Will [here](#) and we encourage you to share your Zip-Kit adventures on social media and link to Music Will at every opportunity.

Happy drumming on the go!



Dave Wish
Founder of Music Will and Inventor of the Zip-Kit

Watch the video to learn more about the Zip-Kit!





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Learning to play the Zip-Kit

Learning to play a musical instrument is much like learning to talk when you were an infant. First you hear words spoken by others, then you mimic them and later you learn to read. Lots of people compare music to a language and the method we use in this book is called “Music as a Second Language®”.

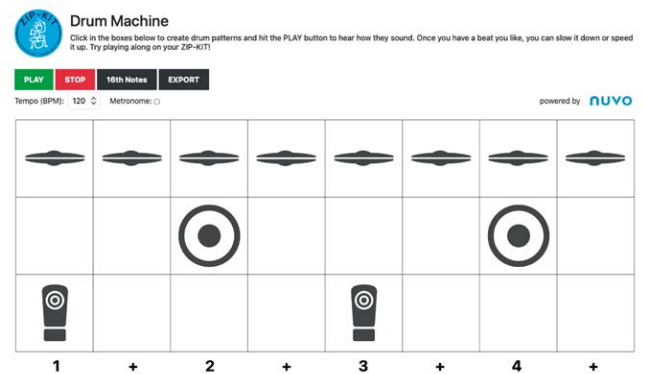
When learning the drums or in fact any musical instrument, you can simply mimic the sounds you hear on your favorite music tracks. You can develop all the skills you need without necessarily learning to read music. In fact there are many professional drummers who do not read music. This is called “playing by ear”.

You can also learn to read music and that may suit you better. There is no right way or wrong way to learn and we hope this book will help you figure out what’s best for you. The lessons in this book are arranged in a logical sequence but feel free to jump around if it suits you better.

Remember, listening to and playing along with your favorite tunes can be a great way to learn, especially if you get together with your friends to make music. Just dive in and keep it loose and above all, have fun!

Lessons

The lessons in this book use a “drum grid” as shown in the example. These indicate when to play each element of the Zip-Kit. We will explain this in more detail in Lesson 2.



Videos

You will also find play-along videos and these can be accessed by clicking the video icons ().

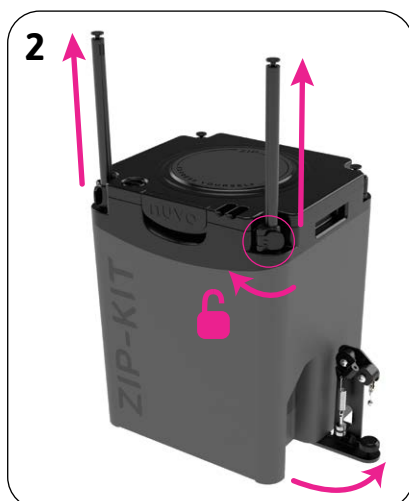
In the videos you will see a real drummer demonstrating the beats and you can play along. This is a great way to mimic and learn.



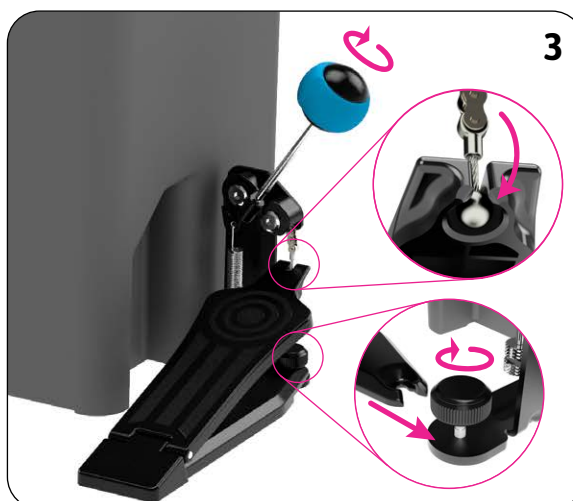


Scan or click the QR code to watch the video on setting up your Zip-Kit

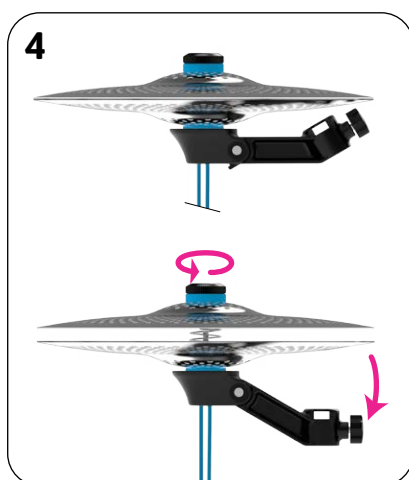
Open the lid of the Zip-Kit and take out all the parts



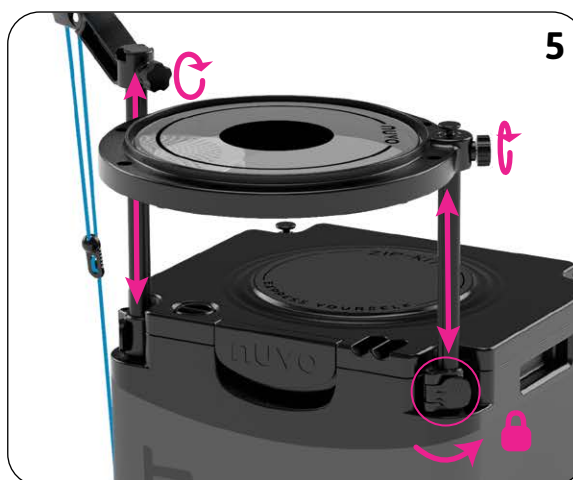
Release the latches, extend the poles, and lock in place by closing the latches. Swivel the pedal mount out to the side so it is perpendicular to the face of the bucket.



Attach the beater by turning it clockwise into the screw mount. Mount the pedal to the pedal bracket by inserting the lower tip under the locking thumb nut. Position the metal ball under the upper pedal.



Open the hi-hat cymbals and unfold mounting arm.



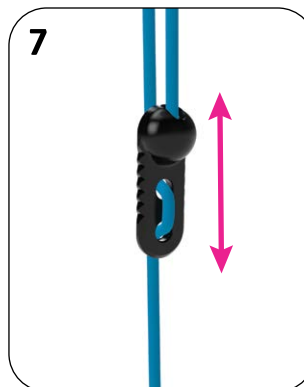
Mount hi-hat and snare drum to poles and lock in position with the thumb nuts.



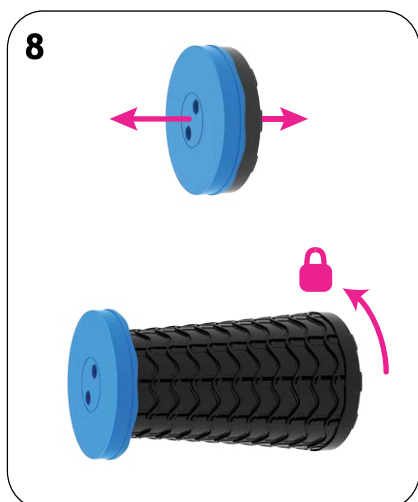
Setting up your Zip-Kit



6 Mount the hi-hat pedal to the pedal bracket by inserting the lower tip under the locking thumb nut. Position the hi-hat string catch under the foot pedal.



7 Adjust the string to set the foot pedal at a similar height to the kick pedal.



8 Extend the throne by pulling both ends outward, stop at the desired height then twist to lock.



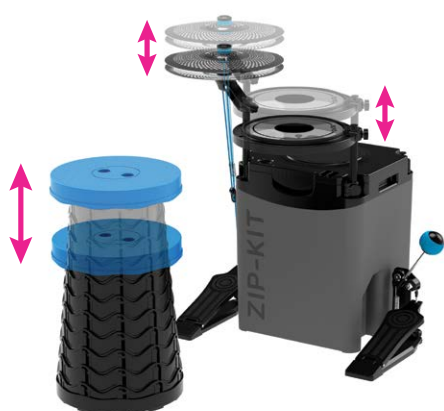
9 Place drum sticks in the holder on the lid and you are ready to play.

Useful Tips!

Now that you have configured the basic set up of your Zip-Kit, below are some tips you may find useful.



Place the Drum Mute directly on top of the snare to reduce playing volume.



Fully height-adjustable to suit children from 8 years old all the way to adults. Watch [video](#).



The Zip-Kit can quickly adapt to left-handed players by rotating the pedals through 180 degrees as shown. Watch [video](#).



Expand your Zip-Kit as you grow your technique and sound by adding toms and crash cymbals - more on page 26.



1. Sitting at the Zip-Kit

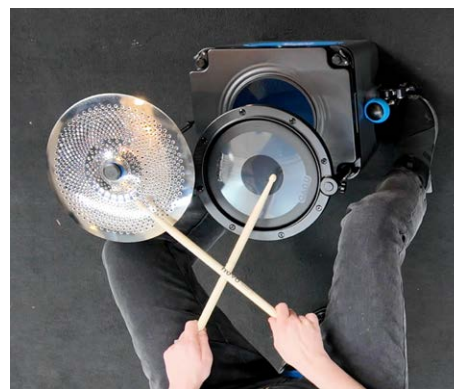
Most drummers play with their right foot on the bass drum pedal and the left foot on the hi-hat pedal. Adjust the position and height of the stool until you feel comfortable, relaxed and ready to groove.



2. Using Your Hands

To hold the drumsticks, grab them between your thumb and index finger, approximately one third of the way up from the base of the stick. Then, wrap the rest of your fingers gently around the stick. Make sure you don't have any tension in your shoulders, arms, wrists, or fingers. You should always feel relaxed while playing.

As a starting point, most drummers play with the right hand on the hi-hat cymbals and their left hand on the snare drum:



3. Using Your Feet

As a beginner, you will find it easier to rest your heel on the ground or the heel plate. Most importantly, find a comfortable position that suits you.





LESSON 2: Counting & Reading Beats

All drum sets have three important components: a kick drum, a snare drum, and a hi-hat that can open and close. Look at the pictures below and you will see all three components.

ZIP-KIT	Components	Icons
	 Closed Hi-hat	
	 Snare	
	 Kick	

In the drum beat grid below, the closed hi-hat is shown in the top row, the snare drum is in the second row, and the kick drum is shown in the third row.

Hi-hat								
Snare								
Kick								
Count	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+

Count out loud like this: “1 and 2 and 3 and 4 and 1 and 2 and 3 and 4 and” without stopping. Notice that you say the word “and” every time you see the “+” sign. The above drum grid is four beats long and it repeats over and over.

The drum icons tell you when to play each one. In the example above, you would:

1. Hit the hi-hats (closed) on “1 and 2 and 3 and 4 and” (a total of 8 times)
2. Hit the snare on “2” and “4” (a total of two times).
3. Hit the kick drum on “1” and “3” (a total of two times).

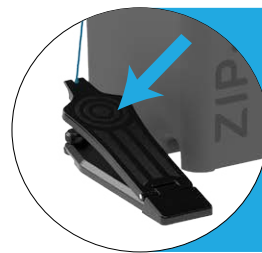
LESSON 3: Using Your Hands & Sticks



Let's try just our drum sticks to make beats on the hi-hats and the snare!

To play these beats, grab your sticks and:

1. Put your right hand above your left hand.
2. Use your right hand to hit the hi-hats.
3. Use your left hand to hit the snare.
4. Keep your left foot pressed down.



Keeping your left foot down on the hi-hat pedal keeps the hi-hats closed and gives them a quieter sound.

Position your right hand over the hi-hat, and left hand over the snare drum.

Now try to play along to the drum beats below!

Click on the video icon to see Mary playing the beats.



02

Beat 1

							
							
1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+



LESSON 3: Using Your Hands & Sticks (continued)

02

Beat 2



							
							
1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+

Beat 3

							
							
1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+



Beat 4

							
							
1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+



Bonus Challenge!

Try using your LEFT hand to hit the hi-hats and your RIGHT hand to hit the snare. This is called playing “open handed.” Some left-handed players prefer to play like this.



LESSON 4: Only Kick and Snare

These beats are played using just the kick and snare drums.

Your bass drum can be played with your heel touching the pedal/ground like this.



03 Backbeat



1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+

03 Bass Drum Variation 1



1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+



12

Bass Drum Variaton 2



1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+

10

Four on the Floor



1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+



Tips from the Pros - Bashiri Johnson

Bashiri has drummed for Whitney Houston, Miles Davis, Madonna and MANY many others!



Scan or click to watch



LESSON 5: Putting It All Together

Meet one of the parents of a zillion drum grooves, the backbeat! It is one of the heartbeats of drumming and the groove behind many different musical styles, from rock and pop to rap and country. Get these grooves in your hands and feet and you'll be amazed by where it might lead you!

You can hear these beats in many different songs, by many different artists, playing in many different styles. We have provided a few examples of songs that each version can work with.

Quarter Note Backbeat

							
							
							
1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+

Song examples:

Do I Wanna Know - *Arctic Monkeys*
Dynamite - *Taio Cruz*

Let's Dance - *David Bowie*
No One - *Alicia Keys*



Full Backbeat

							
							
							
1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+

Song examples:

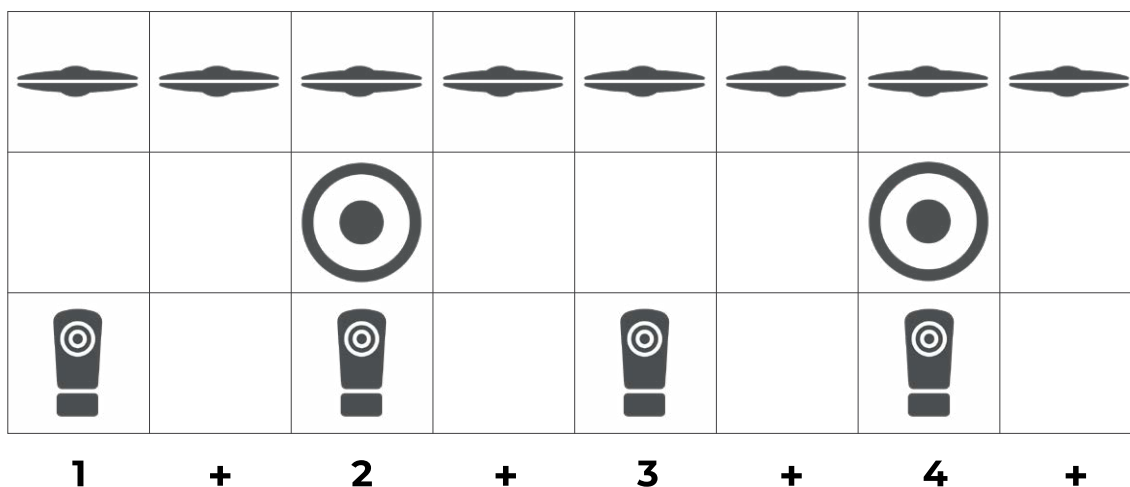
9 to 5 - *Dolly Parton*
Bad Romance - *Lady Gaga*
Comfortably Numb - *Pink Floyd*

Love on Top - *Beyoncé*
September - *Earth, Wind and Fire*
Where is My Mind - *Pixies*



10

Four on the Floor

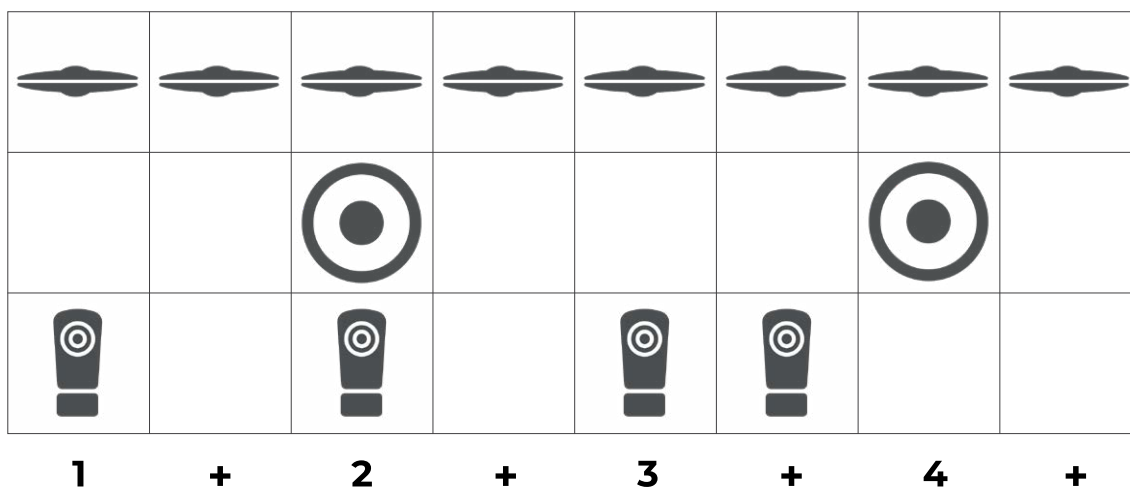


Song examples:

Boots on the Ground - 803Fresh
 Don't Start Now - Dua Lipa
 Dynamite - BTS
 Life During Wartime - Talking Heads

Soda Pop - Saja Boys
 Uptown Funk - Bruno Mars
 You Need to Calm Down - Taylor Swift

Bass Drum Variation 1



Song examples:

All Star - Smashmouth
 Clint Eastwood - Gorillaz
 Criminal - Fiona Apple

Delta Dawn - Tanya Tucker
 Heat Waves - Glass Animals
 Heathens - 21 Pilots



LESSON 6: Using Only Your Feet

Let's try using just our feet to make a beat!

Use your right foot to sound the kick drum, and your left foot to close the hi-hat.

You can put your sticks down and practice these beats using only your feet. Notice when you push your foot down on the hi-hat pedal you can create a nice “chick” sound. This is shown in the drum grid.

1. Rest both your feet on the pedals but do not push them down: Left foot on the hi-hat pedal and right foot on the kick pedal.



Hi-hat Pedal

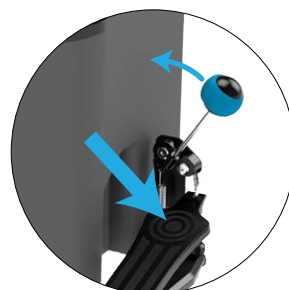


Kick Pedal

2. When you see the kick pedal icon, push your right foot down to get a nice sound. You can experiment with the sound by rotating the blue silicone band. It can make a soft thud or hard thump.

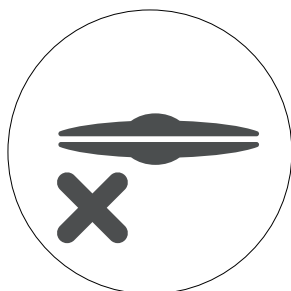


Kick Icon

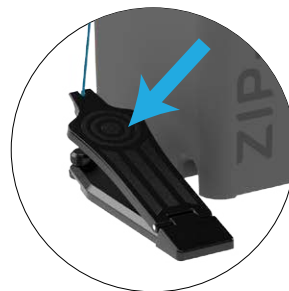


Beater hits the
bass drum

3. When you see this hi-hat icon with a cross at bottom left, push your left foot down just hard enough so that the hi-hats click together and make a nice “chick” sound.



“Chick” Icon



Push pedal down
to close hi-hats



Beat 9

							
							
1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+

Beat 10

							
							
1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+



Tips from the Pros - Chris Parker

Chris has drummed for Aretha Franklin, James Brown, Bob Dylan many others!



Scan or click to watch



LESSON 6: Using Only Your Feet (continued)

Beat 11

							
							
1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+

Beat 12

							
							
1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+

LESSON 7: Make Up Your Own Beats Online

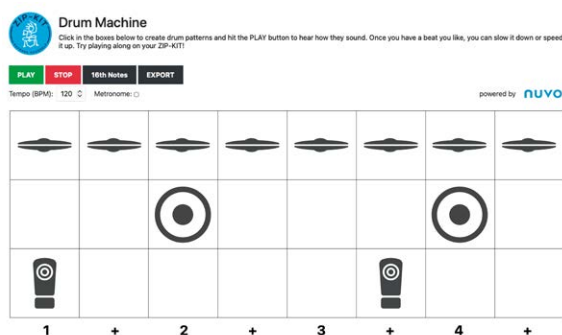


One of the most fun things about being a musician is making up your own music – and drummers do this a lot by making up their own beats! Even if you've just started to learn how to play a drum set, you can easily make up your own beats.

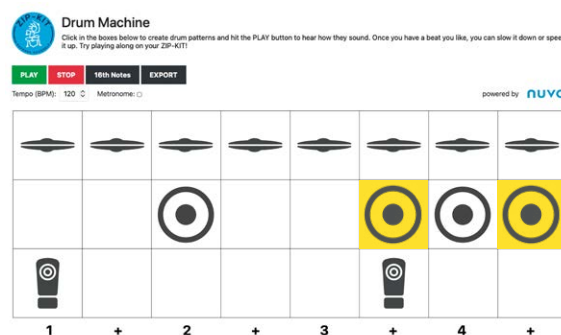
Here's how. Visit the Zip-Kit drum machine and click in the drum grid to make your own beats, OR, copy a beat you already know and then start changing things around. Once you make a beat you like, try playing along. You can adjust the tempo to make it play fast or slow. You can even save your beats to share with a friend.

Link to the Drum Machine: <https://zip-kit-drum-machine-cc7e5a.gitlab.io/>

Example 1

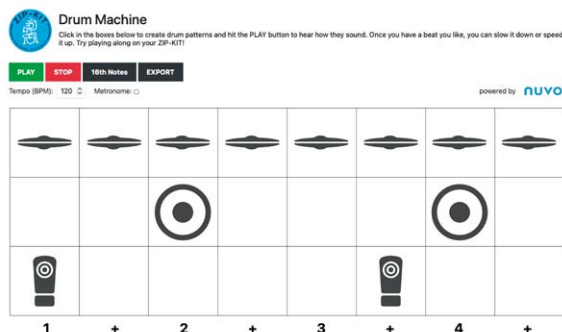


Add drums

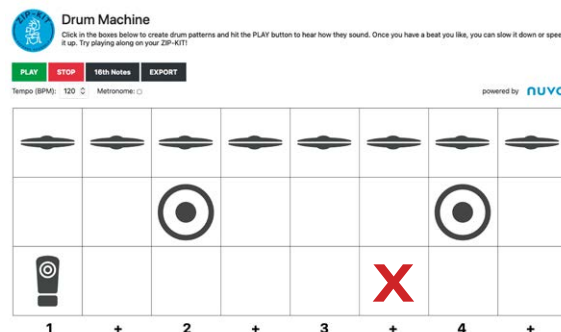


You can set up a simple beat using the drum machine, hit the PLAY button and adjust the tempo. You can then add drums to create a new beat. Slow it way down and learn how to play your new beat.

Example 2



Remove drums



Starting with the same beat as in Example 1, you can now remove one of the bass drum strikes (as indicated by **X**) to create another new beat.



LESSON 7: Make Up Your Own Beats Online (continued)

Example 3



Drum Machine

Click in the boxes below to create drum patterns and hit the PLAY button to hear how they sound. Once you have a beat you like, you can slow it down or speed it up. Try playing along on your ZIP-KIT!



Tempo (BPM): 120

Metronome: ☐

powered by **nuvo**

1	e	+	a	2	e	+	a	3	e	+	a	4	e	+	a

Finally, you can use the Zip-Kit drum machine to write grooves with even more beats in each measure. They are called 16th note beats. If you look at Example 3, you will see that it is the same beat from Example 1 but has a lot more hi-hat beats (in yellow).

For more free drum lessons online, visit www.musicwill/zip-kit.



Tips from the Pros - Gerry Brown

Gerry has drummed for Diana Ross, Stevie Wonder and performed with Lionel Richie, Marvin Gaye and others!



Scan or click to watch



One of the really fun things that we get to do as drummers is to play drum “fills.” A drum fill is something that we might add or subtract to a basic pattern or beat. We play fills for two main reasons:

1. To signal that we’re going to a new section of the song – maybe we’re going from the verse to a chorus and our drum fill is going to tell everyone we’ve arrived.
2. To emphasize something exciting happening in the music – maybe there’s a really cool guitar riff or keyboard line and we want to play something to give it a little boost!

We don’t play fills just for fun or because we’re bored with a beat – that can interfere with the feeling of the song. As drummers, people rely on us for the groove. Fills add a little something extra to the groove to add excitement and movement at the right moments.

Let’s get started!

Drum Fills Video

Click [here](#) to see and play along with a variety of drum fills. Remember that even for pros, simple is good!





Ready to put your skills to work? The Beat Library is your playground! You can watch every lesson in this book played on the Zip-Kit drum machine.

Here's how to dig in:

1. Open the beat in the drum machine.
2. Set the tempo nice and slow, and practice until it feels comfortable.
3. Speed it up gradually until you're locked in.
4. Press play on one of the song examples and groove along!



SLOWER



FASTER

Bass Drum Variation 2

1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+

Song examples:

End of Beginning - *Djo*

Girls Just Wanna Have Fun - *Cyndi Lauper*

Hit Me With Your Best Shot - *Pat Benatar*

Phantom Limb - *The Shins*



13



SLOWER

14



FASTER

Bass Drum Variation 3

1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+

Song examples:

Beast of Burden - *The Rolling Stones*

Evil Ways - *Santana*

Hero - *Mariah Carey*

Hold On - *The Alabama Shakes*

What's Up - *4 Non Blondes*

15



SLOWER

16



FASTER

Bass Drum Variation 4

1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+

Song examples:

APT - *Bruno Mars & Lady Gaga*

Birds of a Feather - *Billie Eilish*

Give Me One Reason - *Tracy Chapman*

Ritual Unions - *Little Dragon*

Shower - *Becky G*

Watermelon Sugar - *Harry Styles*



Beat Library (continued)

Soca Beat



LEARN



SLOWER



FASTER

1	e	+	a	2	e	+	a	3	e	+	a	4	e	+	a

Song examples:

Cuando Me Cura de Cora - *Bad Bunny & KAROL G*

Hips Don't Lie - *Shakira*

Gasolina - *Daddy Yankee*

Mi Gente - *J Balvin & Willy William*

Sorry - *Justin Bieber*



Tips from the Pros - Liberty DeVitto

Gerry has drummed for Billy Joel, Stevie Nicks & The Slim Kings



Scan or click
to watch



20

Disco Beat



LEARN

21



SLOWER

22



FASTER

1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+

Song examples:

A Dios Le Pido - *Juanes*

Disco Inferno - *The Trammps*

I Will Survive - *Gloria Gaynor*

Limbo - *Royal Blood*

Shut Up and Dance - *WALK THE MOON*

23



SLOWER

24



FASTER

Surf Beat

1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+

Song examples:

Misirlou - *Dick Dale*

Surfin' U.S.A - *The Beach Boys*

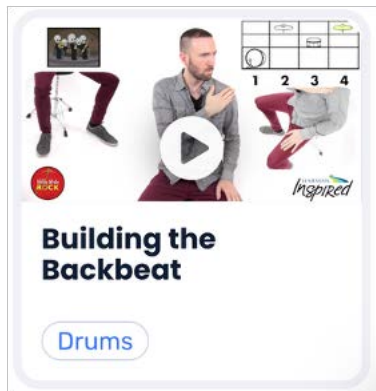
Walk, Don't Run - *The Ventures*



More Free Lessons

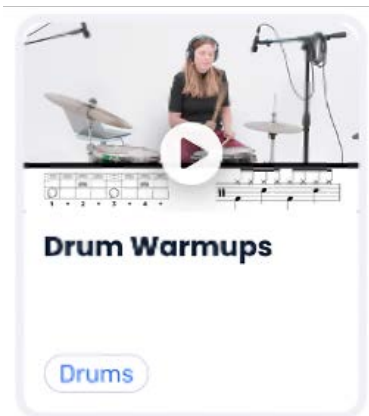
Are you looking for more free lessons?

Music Will's JamZone has a library of free drum lessons for you to explore!



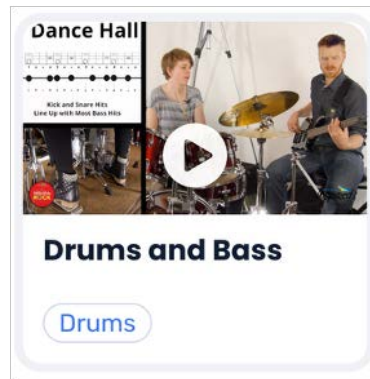
Building the Backbeat

Drums



Drum Warmups

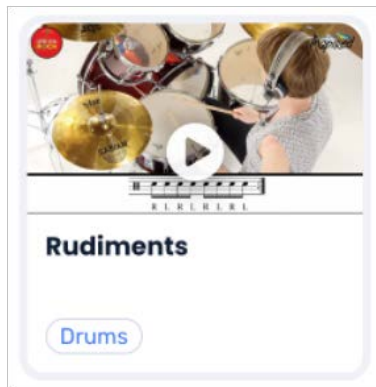
Drums



Dance Hall

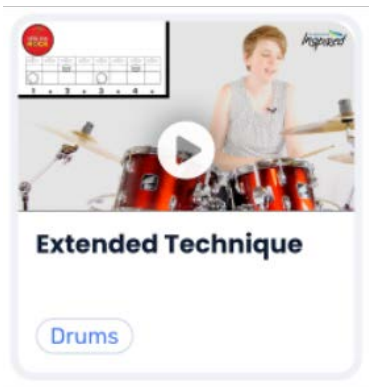
Drums and Bass

Drums



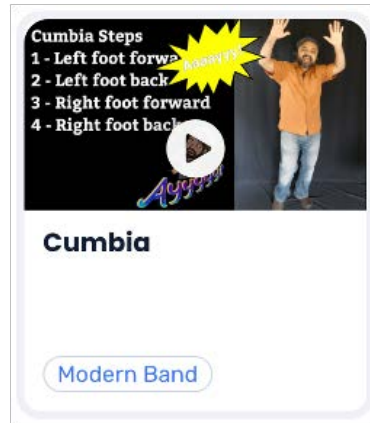
Rudiments

Drums



Extended Technique

Drums



Cumbia Steps

- 1 - Left foot forward
- 2 - Left foot back
- 3 - Right foot forward
- 4 - Right foot back

Cumbia

Modern Band



Your Essential Kit provides the core elements of a drum set: bass drum with kick pedal, hi-hat and snare drum. As you progress with your drumming journey you can add drums and cymbals to expand your kit. The accessories shown below can be added to the extendable poles using the articulated arms provided with each accessory.



Zip-Kit Tom



- Expand your sound by adding 1 or more Zip-Kit 8" Toms
- Fully tunable using the key provided with your kit
- Includes 2-ply hydraulic head with power dot
- Includes custom-design, versatile Articulated Arm
- Comes in durable zipper case
- Optional foam disc to mute your sound



Zip-Kit Crash Cymbal



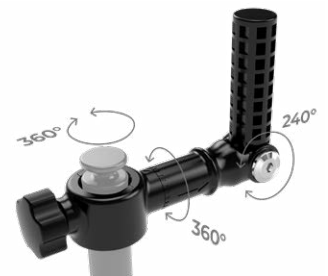
- Add extra color to your sound with a crash cymbal
- Holes give soft sound to balance the drums and hi-hat
- Includes adjustable elbow, felts and top nut
- Includes articulated arm, providing 3-axis adjustment
- Includes zipper case for protection when traveling



Zip-Kit Articulated Arm



- Spare part for expanding your Nuvo Zip-Kit drum set
- Can be attached to the telescoping poles on your kit
- Securable at any height by tightening the thumb nut
- Position it in any orientation to suit your drumming
- Allen key is provided to help secure the Arm





About “Tips from the Pros”

Music Will students and teachers get support from real, world-class musicians who actually care about kids learning music. The artists in this book aren’t just lending their names—they’re sharing lessons and tips because they believe learning should be hands-on, creative, and real. They’re involved because they support our mission and want students to grow, have fun, and see what’s possible through music.



Chad Smith

Red Hot Chili Peppers

“I’ve spent my life behind a drum kit, and I know how powerful access can be. The ZIP-KIT makes real drumming possible anywhere—no barriers, no excuses. Supporting tools like this means more kids discovering rhythm, confidence, and joy through music. That’s everything.”



Bashiri Johnson

Whitney Houston, Madonna & others

“Growing up in New York, drums were my voice. The ZIP-KIT is about access—real instruments for real expression, wherever you are. I support Music Will because every kid deserves that first spark. The ZIP-KIT removes obstacles and lets rhythm meet imagination. That’s how musicians are born.”



James Hetfield

Metallica

“Music saved my life. Rhythm gives power, focus, and release. The ZIP-KIT puts real drumming within reach for anyone who wants to play, not just those with space or money. I’m all about giving kids that same lifeline—and this kit is a serious step in that direction.”



Gerry Brown

Diana Ross, Stevie Wonder & others

“Having played around the world, I know rhythm connects people instantly. The ZIP-KIT makes that connection accessible—portable, playable, and real. This mission matters deeply to me, because education creates possibility. This kit helps young musicians find their voice through drums, anywhere.”



Liberty DeVitto

Billy Joel, Stevie Nicks & The Slim Kings

“I grew up learning by listening, playing, and figuring it out behind the kit. The ZIP-KIT brings that same hands-on discovery to anyone, anywhere. Supporting Music Will matters to me because access changes lives. This kit gives young players a real start and a real voice.”



Chris Parker

Aretha Franklin, James Brown, Bob Dylan

“As a working drummer, I’m all about versatility and feel. The ZIP-KIT is inspiring because it’s practical and musical. This means opening doors for young players to explore rhythm early. This kit proves that real drums don’t have to be complicated to be meaningful.”



Transforming lives by transforming music education.

We believe music education should be as diverse, dynamic, and powerful as the students it serves.

That's why, for more than two decades, we've led a movement to bring modern music—rock, hip hop, pop, Latin, country, R&B, and more—into classrooms across the country. Our programs center student voice, support teacher agency, and break down the barriers that have long limited who gets access to music in school.

We're reimagining what music education can be: relevant, inclusive, and rooted in the lived experiences of young people. Because when students see themselves in the music they're learning, everything changes—from confidence and creativity to connection and community.

And we're just getting started.

Learn more at musicwill.org



Our Impact

What kind of impact are we having in communities across the country?



1.8M

students served



100K

instruments and equipment donated



6,000

schools supported



Recorder+



jSax



jFlute



jHorn



Bridging the Gap Between Recorder and Band

NUVO is an award-winning musical instrument company founded in 2008 with a mission to make music education more accessible and enjoyable for beginners, especially children. Created to address the challenges of traditional instruments—often too large, fragile, or intimidating for young learners—NUVO designs instruments that prioritize comfort, durability, and early success.

NUVO's range of Pre-Band instruments are lightweight, ergonomically designed, and built for classroom and home use. They are constructed with durable, washable materials, making them easy to maintain and ideal for shared learning environments. These thoughtful design choices help students focus on playing music right away, building confidence and skills from the start.

Teachers around the world use NUVO instruments because they allow students to begin playing immediately and transition smoothly to traditional instruments when ready. NUVO also supports educators through curriculum resources such as WindStars, which bridge beginner instruments and standard band programs.

Parents appreciate NUVO products as an inviting entry point into music-making at home—affordable, durable, and fun, while still producing real musical results.

NUVO instruments are used in schools and homes across more than 30 countries. To explore NUVO's full range of innovative instruments and educational resources, visit www.nuvoinstrumental.com.



EXPRESS YOURSELF



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