

Eighth Notes Reading and Sticking

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Hello and welcome to you all. After looking at quarter notes last month it's time to look at our first sub-division, (the notes in between beats 1,2,3 and 4.) These are called eighth notes and yes, you guessed it, there are eight of them in a bar! However we don't count these from 1 to 8, but rather as 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &.

In exercises 1 to 4 we put together an eighth note kit pattern and in 5 to 8 we have some reading and sticking exercises.

Ex 1

We start to put together our pattern by playing the eighth (1/8th) notes on the hi-hats as this gives our bass and snare drum something to "lock" into. It's worth spending time making sure you are counting correctly and your beats are evenly spaced.

Ex 2

Now we add the bass drum to the 1/8th note hi-hat pattern on beats 1 and 3. Make sure the bass drum sits comfortably with the hi-hats before moving on.

Ex 3

To complete the basic pattern we now place the snare on beats 2 and 4.

Ex 4

In this exercise we have moved the 1/8th notes from the hi-hats to the ride cymbal and have added a hi-hat foot on beats 2 and 4.

Ex 5

Here we are playing 1/8th notes on the snare drum using a single stroke. Make sure the beats are evenly spaced, that you keep a steady motion and both sticks sound the same. It's easy to let our strongest hand become dominant but we are after an **even** sound.

Ex 6

We now introduce the 1/8th note rest. This has been placed on beats 1, 2, 3 and 4, so we now see the "&" (or "off beat" as it is also known) as a single 1/8th note. Remember to count all the notes (1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &) as you play, to help keep it even.

Ex 7

This time the 1/8th note rest is on beats 2 and 4. Here we have a good example of seeing the 1/8th notes written both as a single note and joined together.

Ex 8

Finally the 1/8th note rest on beats 1 and 3.

When you feel confident with these rhythms and stickings, try playing 4 bars of each and then move on to the next, then 2 bars and finally 1 bar. Then try putting them in different orders as this will create some great syncopated rhythms.

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1

2

3

4

5

R L R L R L R L
L R L R L R L R

6

R R R R
L L L L

7

R L L R L L
L R R L R R

8

R L R R L R
L R L L R L

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