Standard 5 Piece Drum Kit

Crash Cymbal
Tom Toms
Bass Drum
Hi - Hat
Snare
Floor Toms

Crash Cymbals
Tom Toms
Ride Cymbal
Hi - Hat
Floor Toms
Snare

Overhead View
Holding The Stick And Getting Ready to Play

A) Find a spot on the drum stick that is about 1/3 of the length from the end. Place that portion of the stick between the first point of your index finger and pad of your thumb. This creates what is called the fulcrum.

B) The other 3 fingers do not grip the stick, but hold the stick loosely. Your thumb should point toward the drum stick tip. Your palm should be face and parallel to the ground.
Drum Tuning

The basic rule to remember is to tighten the lugs in opposite order. Don’t tune the drum in a standard clockwise or counter clockwise order. The illustration below demonstrates a standard pattern for a 6 lug drum. This would also apply for 4, 8 and 10 lug drums.

* Place a medium amount of tension equally across the diameter of the shell

Strike the head lightly about one inch from the edge next to each lug. You should hear a slightly different pitch from each lug. Tighten or loosen the lugs until you have a single pitch coming from each lug based on the pattern above.
Notating Rhythms

Drum Key: Where various drums and cymbals are located on the staff

A few basic tools are needed before we can begin notating our rhythmic ideas:

The Staff
Five lines and four spaces make up the staff, which is where time signatures, rhythmic figures, barlines and rests are placed to make up a musical composition.

Bar Lines
The vertical lines that divide the staff into "bars" or "measures"

Time Signature / Repeat Signs
Two numbers expressed as a fraction at the beginning of a composition. The top number tells you how many beats are in a measure, this can be any number. Repeat signs are used as a shortcut when music is repeated.

For now, we will only be using the 4/4 time signature which means there are Four Beats in a measure and each Quarter Note will get one beat. Notice the numbers over the rhythm symbols in the following charts.
Notating Rhythms

Quarter Note
Each quarter note gets 1 count in 4/4 time.

Eighth Notes
Each quarter note gets 1/2 count in 4/4 time.

Sixteenth Notes
Each quarter note gets 1/2 count in 4/4 time.
Two sixteenth notes are as long as one eighth note.
Four sixteenth notes are as long as one quarter note.

Quarter Rest  Eighth Rest  Sixteenth Rest
Rudiments

Practice rudiments to develop your sticking techniques and also to build strength and endurance. These are great exercises to warm up with. All rudiments should be practiced Open (slow) and Closed (fast) at an even tempo.

Single Stroke Roll

Double Stroke Roll

Paradiddle

* Alternate your starting hand. First start off with your right hand and start exercise again with your left hand.
Rock Beat on the Drum Set

Here is the basic rock beat using the straight 1/8 note hi-hat pattern on top of the staff with the Bass and Snare Drum denoted.

Bass Drum  Snare  Bass Drum  Snare

Here is the 1/16 note fill starting on the snare drum, Hi-Tom, Mid-Tom and Floor Tom. Be creative and start this fill on different drums. This will enable you to become more acquainted with your drum set and give you more versatility.

Sixteenth Note Fill

Opening And Closing The Hi Hat

Open the Hi Hat on the "+" at the end of the measure and close the Hi hat on Beat 1
Ride Cymbal

The Ride Cymbal can be denoted on the staff in the same manner as the Hi-Hat pattern previously played (1/8 notes). Used differently depending on the sound you want to create with your beats. Note the various tones that you can make with your ride cymbal. Start at the bell and work your way to the outer part of the ride to create different tones.

Open the Hi-Hat on the "+" of the 4 count and strike it with your left hand and close Hi-Hat on the 1 count.

Crash Cymbals

Use your crash cymbals to help accent the music when playing with other musicians.
Enhancing The Basic Rock Beat

The Basic Rock Beat

Bass Drum  Snare  Bass Drum  Snare

Example 2

Example 3

Example 4
Rock Beat Using 1/16 note pattern

So far we’ve covered playing rock beats with 1/8 note patterns on the Hi - Hat. They should also be practiced using a 1/16 note pattern. It can be played using 2 hands or with one hand. Here is the basic with the 1/16 note pattern.

What I call "Playing on the and" on the hi hat the counts 1,2,3,4 have an eight note rest. Only play the Hi - Hat or Ride Cymbal on the "+"
Rock Beat Using 1/4 note pattern

Here is an example of the basic rock beat using a 1/4 note pattern on the Hi - Hat or ride cymbals.

You can get creative once you get this basic pattern down. A good exercise for you to do is to refer to the "Enhancing the rock beat" section and play the same beats on the snare and bass drum. Practice substituting the 1/8 note hi - hat pattern with 1/16 and 1/4 note patterns to make up your own beats.
The Shuffle

Here is the shuffle pattern notated on the staff. It is written 1ah 2ah 3ah 4ah

Notice that the bass drum is still on counts 1 and 3, and the snare is on counts 2 and 4.

* Once you get more comfortable with this pattern you can get creative and add bass and snare drum in other parts of the shuffle pattern.

1/8 note triplets

Each group of three notes connected by a beam is called a triplet. The number 3 over the note, indicates this. Each triplet is equal to one beat. There are four beats in each measure. The counting for the triplets is, one-trip-let, two-trip-let, three-trip-let, four-trip-let.

This series of triplets makes for a good fill along with the shuffle. Practice mixing the triplets up on different drums as you did when practicing the 1/16 note fills.
**Quadruplet**

Here is the quadruplet notated on the staff using the snare, hi tom and floor tom. This makes for a really tasty and cool fill.

**1/16 note triplets**

Here is the 1/16 note triplet notated on the staff. This also makes for a great fill. It is noted starting on the snare and going around from the hi, medium and floor toms.

*experiment throwing in double stroke roll rudiments with your 1/16 note patterns on the hi-hat*

**Another Tasty fill**
12 Bar Blues

Bass Drum  Snare  Bass Drum  Snare

Triplet Fills

Use your snare drum and any tom that is in front of it. Go slowly at first and gradually speed up and slow it down. This is good to incorporate into solos of fills with beats.

Alternate hands counting the triplet as you play.
Triplet Fills (Continued)

Use the bass drum, floor tom and mid-tom to play a series of triplets.

Count the triplet as you play. This is also good to use for solos or as fills with beats.