

## ***Drum drum drum***

*How to beat out a groovy rhythm*

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In the October issue of Salem Monthly Newspaper, we took a look at some of the basic strokes that can be played on nearly any hand drum you might have hiding in the corner. This month it's time to put those sounds together and make some music! The strokes (bass, open and slap) can be combined in numerous ways, creating a variety of great sounding rhythms.

First, a quick review. Remember that the low-pitched "bass" stroke is produced by striking the center of the drum with the entire palm of your hand. Using your fingers as a paddle, the higher "open" tone can be created by hitting nearer to the edge of the drum, with the hand making contact with the rim along the base of your fingers. The "slap" stroke is made by striking the drum so that the rim meets the base of your palm, close to the wrist. Instead of pulling the hand away, stay affixed to the drumhead and give it a slight gripping tug with your fingertips. With practice this will produce a loud, high-pitched "crack." Be sure to remain relaxed and take the time to develop each of these strokes with both hands, striving to make your right and left hand strokes sound identical. For the full article, visit [www.salemmonthly.com](http://www.salemmonthly.com).

Notation is as follows: "B" stands for the bass tone, "O" denotes an open tone, and "S" symbolizes the loud slap stroke. A dash (-) in the notation means that we will leave a short pause, or "rest," in the phrase. Ready? Here we go, beginning with only "bass" tones and rests.

B B B – B – B –

Spoken, this pattern is "bass, bass, bass, rest, bass, rest, bass, rest." Start slowly and repeat the phrase over and over until it feels smooth and comfortable. When it does, try this one:

B – – B B – B – (bass, rest, rest, bass, bass, rest, bass, rest)

Let's add some "open" tones to the above rhythms.

B B B – B O B O (bass, bass, bass, rest, bass, open, bass, open); and

B O O B B – B – (bass, open, open, bass, bass, rest, bass, rest)

Finally, add "slap" strokes to our hand drum grooves.

B B B S B O B O (bass, bass, bass, slap, bass, open, bass, open); and

B O O B B S B S (bass, open, open, bass, bass, slap, bass, slap)

There you have it — it's as easy as that. The bass, open and slap strokes can be combined in any way that you like. The options are limitless. Grab a friend, invent some of your own rhythms, bang away and have fun. Here are a few more rhythms to help get things started.

B B O O B B S S (bass, bass, open, open, bass, bass, slap, slap)

B – – S – O O O (bass, rest, rest, slap, rest, open, open, open)

B – S B B – O O (bass, rest, slap, bass, bass, rest, open, open)

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