

Gene Krupa

DRUM METHOD

You are holding in your hands the first drumset method ever written! In 1938, as the drumset was first making its mark on the face of modern music, Gene Krupa wrote this method to help teach the world to "Sing, Sing, Sing." After nearly 70 years, it is a testament to Gene's genius that much of this drum method is as relevant today as it was when it was written.

With an in-depth study of the mechanics of snare drum playing and military rudiments, this book offers a solid foundation for the beginning drummer to build upon. The sections on bass drum, hi-hat, and cymbal playing offer a unique glimpse into Gene's masterful approach to the drumset in its infancy.

Gene Krupa is widely considered to be the "father" of the modern drumset. He was the first drummer to record a bass drum played with a foot pedal and was instrumental in the invention of the modern-day hi-hat and tunable tom-toms. With his work with the Benny Goodman band and his famous drum solo on "Sing, Sing, Sing," Gene is credited with playing the first extended jazz drum solo and bringing the drumset to the forefront of the band, paving the way for the predominant role it plays in today's contemporary music.



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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The most colorful and dynamic personality of "Swingdom" is unquestionably Gene Krupa, the titanic genius of rhythmic drumming. But this creator of a seventh heaven of musical frenzy is more than an entertaining showman; he is acknowledged to be, by drummers and musicians themselves, the foremost living exponent of the art of rudimental and creative drumming.

Gene Krupa was born in Chicago in 1909, and this was especially fortunate for him because Chicago was destined to be the center of the greatest advance of swing music during the years 1924-1930. Those were the years when Fletcher Henderson's orchestra, Louis Armstrong, Frank Teschmacher, Joe Sullivan, Bix Beiderbecke, Bud Freeman, "Baby" Dodds, Pee Wee Russell, Zutie Singleton, Dave Tough, George Whettling, "Wingy" Manone and other great musicians of the Chicago style of jazz music were reaching their greatest heights. Gene listened to these artists, lived with them, played with them, and made many of the recordings that today are rare collectors' items.

Krupa was not satisfied with merely the spontaneous enthusiasm of rhythmic drumming. He felt that there must be an intellectual side to his instrument as with any other, and so he took up the study of rudiments from Sanford E. Moeller, then recognized as the finest teacher in New York. As the result of this study, plus his inherent creative powers, he evolved a style of drumming which has done more for drummers than anything in the history of music. From Vishnudrass Shirali, who plays on 12 drums for Uday Shan-Kar, the Hindu dancer, Gene learned many things about contrapuntal rhythmic combinations. Another great inspiration to his art were the Belgian Congo records made by the Denis-Roosevelt expedition to Africa in 1935.

To return to Krupa's life. When he was thirteen he sat in with his first band, The Frivolians, who were playing at Wisconsin Beach, Wisconsin. Later he was to play with the more famous bands of Red Nichols, Irving Aaronson, Russ Columbo, Mal Hallett and Buddy Rogers.

Then in the year 1935 came the historic meeting with Benny Goodman. Benny gave Gene a featured role in his orchestra, and together with the rise of swing, the stars of Goodman and Krupa began to rise in the firmament. In 1938 came the news of the formation of a band conducted by Gene Krupa himself.

Gene Krupa has made his mark in American jazz as an original and amazingly versatile drummer, and now he makes his debut as an author with this authentic volume on the art of Drumming.

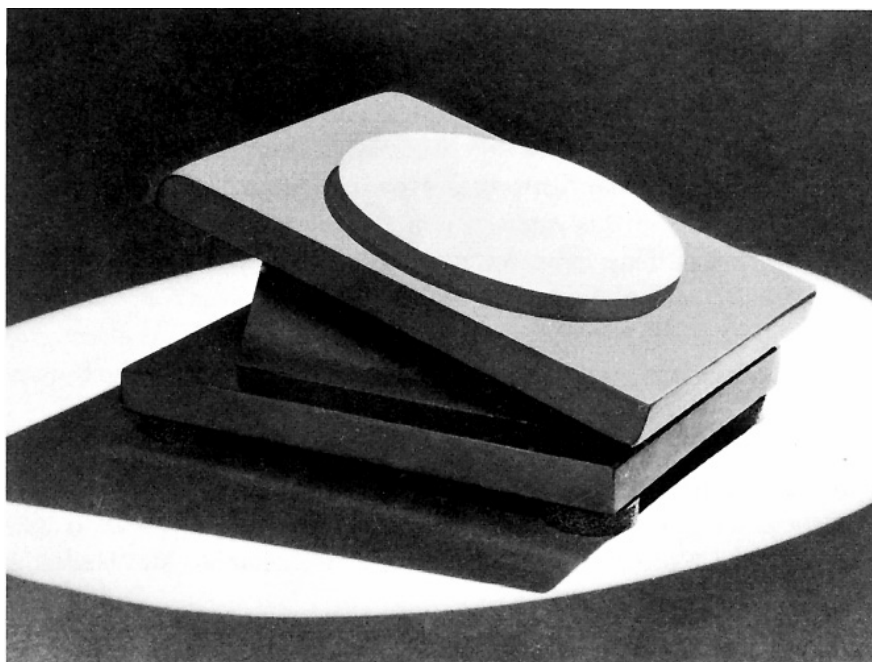
SNARE DRUM, BY VIRTUE OF ITS IMPORTANCE, WILL BE STUDIED FIRST

Practice Pad

Most beginners and many drummers depend upon the drum, instead of themselves, to do the work. It is for this reason that a practice pad is recommended to the student.

Position and form are the first requisites of rudimental drumming. From the correct motions of the hands and arms comes proper muscular development. A snare drum is not conducive to adequate control of the muscles because the sound of the snares influences the beginner by leading him away from the development of a good foundation.

It is not difficult to beat a drum, but picking the beats off the drum at different tempos and with varying shades of volume is an entirely different matter.

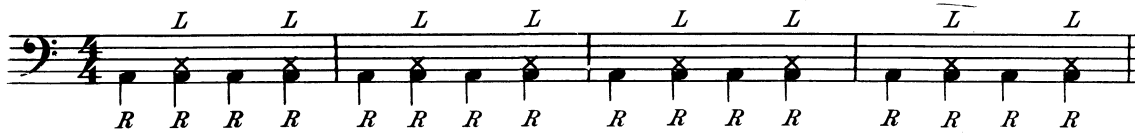


The above picture shows the practice pad recommended for your study periods. It is the "table model", which has the advantage of mobility. It can be carried easily from place to place, and with the rubber shock absorbers does not transmit its vibrations to the object it is placed upon.

The pad used in the pictures which illustrate positions is the "stand model", which permits the drummer to sit while playing and to use his feet. It is especially recommended to advanced students.

PLAYING HI HAT WITH STICKS

You must now be “Quadridextrous” (if we may be allowed to coin a word) because you have to use both feet and both hands, each playing different rhythms on different instruments at the same time. Hi Hat is usually played with the right stick, but sometimes both hands are used for making single stroke rolls or various rhythmic figures.



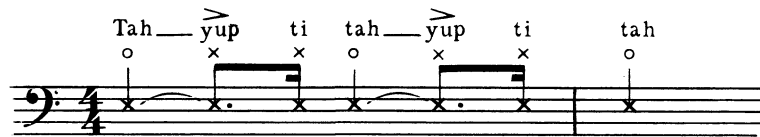
While the feet are playing the above measures the right hand plays the following:



o means that the left foot is up (cymbals are open).

x means that the left foot is down (cymbals are closed).

When this beat is made correctly it will sound:



After you are able to play the preceding exercises with ease, incorporate the use of the left hand (playing single, accented taps on the snare drum) as follows:



The left hand plays the notes indicated by the marks in the C space (second from the top) of the staff.

The accent marks are good for right on Hi Hat, left on snare drum (rim shot, if desired), left foot on Hi Hat and right foot on bass drum. This is a very important fundamental beat for dance drumming; keep it “jumping”, don’t let it drag.

The pictures on the following page illustrate the hand positions in playing this beat.