

Dr. Spoons DRUM REMEDIES

The Bluffers Guide to... ROCK!

Hi everyone, for the next few months I aim to guide you through a series of style studies. This series is designed to give you a bit of background knowledge to each style, some grooves to work on and some recommended listening if you decide that it floats your boat and you want to hear more.

I thought I'd get the ball rolling with Rock this month, not because everyone can do it, some people out there cant, but because it's a great bread & butter style to have under your belt.

The genre of rock encompasses so many great bands and superb drummers that it is impossible for me to cover them all in the few words that this column allows. When the rock genre started to emerge, the public at large feared the whole image and lifestyle associated with the music. The fans and the bands, tales of amazing hedonism and outrageous behaviour meant that many bands' reputation preceded them wherever they went. With the diversity of music in the world today and the advent of technology like the internet, it is hard to imagine the impact that the raw power and brutality of the then new music had back then.

So what's it all about? Well the golden rule is: keep it simple. It's got to rock! This is no time for flashy hi-hat tricks and amazing ghosting on the snare. Stick to the groove and don't put in any of those chops busting fills.



THE KIT

Ideally, a phat Bass drum, Snare drum of no less than 5" depth, 13" Rack with 16" & 18" Floor Toms, 14" Hats, 17" & 18" Crashes and a nice clanky Ride.



Image: Mick Hutson/Redferns



Doctor Spoons



'doctor spoons' is an experienced and versatile, freelance Drummer & Percussionist, whose inventive grooves have provided a solid rhythmic foundation for a wide roster of artists on an international level. From the stark urban Hip Hop beats of the 'Groove Criminals' & 'Hoodie' to the power pop energy of 'Jence'. The doc also performs with U2 tribute act 'fu2k' and renowned cabaret band 'Jaxster'. Doc is a qualified teacher and head of Music and Music Technology at West Herts College, Watford.
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Doctor Spoons plays Jalapeno Hand Made Drums & Aquarian Drum Heads.

The Classic Track

The first example shown here is a transcription of my all time fave rock groove 'Back in Black' by AC/DC. The drummer is Phil Rudd and the track from the album of the same name was released July 1980 on Atlantic Records. It really does rock; straight-ahead and solid, interspersed with some great phrasing with the guitar, it does just what it says on the tin. The track starts out with a two-bar count on the hats accompanied by muted guitar and then drives all the way to the finish. Simple but extremely effective. I have included it here because I know a great many players who have been inspired to take up drums by hearing Phil Rudd powering away with AC/DC, myself included, so thanks to Phil for his inspiration.

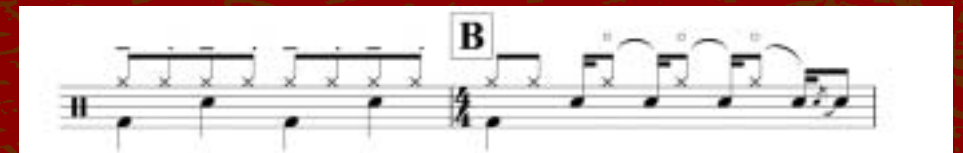
So that's how it looks, try playing it using compression in the bass drum and keep those hats very slightly open so you get a nice sizzle when you strike them. During the B section make sure the hats are open to gain the sound you need, you really have to hear the track to appreciate its full sound so if you haven't got it go and buy it now, I insist!

Exercises

Moving on, I have prepared six bars of Rock style grooves for you to take a look at, The first one uses crotchets on the hats, which should be played open, try to set up a good powerful sizzle from the hi-hat cymbals as opposed to a slushy noise, In the Bass drum I have used crotchets, quavers and semi-quavers, the alternation between hands and feet keeps the rhythm flowing well. Have a go!



For the second example, I am using the same Snare Drum and Bass drum figures seen in exercise A, but have swapped to the ride cymbal and have added the left foot on hi-hat pedal. During the first bar remember to play all the crotchet notes on the bell and during the second bar we change to quavers and accent the (+) or off beat on the bell of the ride whilst playing the unaccented notes on the taper of the cymbal. Don't forget to belt the snare drum for all of these; we are after a solid powerful groove, no tickling the skins O.K.!



For the last example I have given you an introductory fill for the second half of the first bar in quaver triplets (A triplet is 3 notes played in the space of two). The first shape in bar one (the thing that looks like a hat is a minim rest (2 beats) In other words you start the introductory fill on beat 3 of the bar. I have also introduced a shuffle feel into the Bass Drum Part, this feel gives the rhythm a great deal of momentum, again we are looking for a good hi-hat sound and powerful snare to lock it all down, This groove is demonstrated beautifully on 'Can't get enough of your love' by Bad Company, another of my fave Classic Rock bands.



Well that's it for this month, next time we will take a trip to planet funk and examine some classic funky grooves, mean time if you want to expand some of your Rock listening hear a few classics you should be checking out: -

- Recommended listening
- Everything by Led Zeppelin (John Bonham)
- Back in Black AC/DC (Phil Rudd)
- Machine Head Deep Purple (Ian Paice)
- Ace of Spades Motorhead (Filthy Phil Taylor)
- Sabotage Black Sabbath (Bill Ward)

Cheers for now. Doc.