

# Table of Contents

---

## INTRODUCTIONS & INFORMATION

- 1 Title Page
- 2 Acknowledgements
- 3 Table of Contents
- 4 Welcome to Rockschool Drums Debut

## PERFORMANCE PIECES – HIT TUNES

- 7 'Like a Stone'.....Audioslave
- 10 'Fortunate Son'.....Creedence Clearwater Revival
- 12 'Another Brick in the Wall, Part 2'.....Pink Floyd
- 14 'Fate'.....H.E.R.
- 16 'Sunny'.....Bobby Hebb
- 18 'Forget Me'.....Lewis Capaldi

## PERFORMANCE PIECES – ROCKSCHOOL ORIGINALS

- 21 'Midnight Song'
- 22 'Short Fuse'
- 23 'Route 66'

## TECHNICAL EXERCISES

- 24 Single Strokes, Double Strokes, Paradiddles & Fill

## SUPPORTING TESTS

- 25 Sight Reading
- 26 Ear Tests
- 27 General Musicianship Questions

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- 28 Marking Schemes
- 29 Entering RSL Exams
- 30 Drums Notation Explained
- 31 Graded Music Shop
- 32 Upgrade your book to an interactive e-book!

# Table of Contents

---

## INTRODUCTIONS & INFORMATION

- 1 Title Page
- 2 Acknowledgements
- 3 Table of Contents
- 4 Welcome to Rockscool Drums Grade 1

## PERFORMANCE PIECES – HIT TUNES

- 7 'Come as You Are'..... Nirvana
- 11 'The Tracks of My Tears'..... Smokey Robinson & The Miracles
- 15 'Bad Habits'..... Ed Sheeran
- 18 'Where Is My Mind?'..... Pixies
- 20 'A Message to You Rudy'..... The Specials
- 22 'Wait a Minute!'..... WILLOW

## PERFORMANCE PIECES – ROCKSCHOOL ORIGINALS

- 26 'Ignite'
- 27 'Downtown Detroit'
- 28 'As Night Falls'

## TECHNICAL EXERCISES

- 29 Single and Double Strokes, Paradiddles & Fill

## SUPPORTING TESTS

- 30 Sight Reading
- 31 Improvisation & Interpretation
- 32 Ear Tests
- 33 General Musicianship Questions

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- 34 Marking Schemes
- 35 Entering RSL Exams
- 36 Drums Notation Explained

# Table of Contents

---

## INTRODUCTIONS & INFORMATION

- 1 Title Page
- 2 Acknowledgements
- 3 Table of Contents
- 4 Welcome to Rockscool Drums Grade 2

## PERFORMANCE PIECES – HIT TUNES

- 7 'Flowers' ..... Miley Cyrus
- 11 'Keep on Running' ..... The Spencer Davis Group
- 15 'Since U Been Gone' ..... Kelly Clarkson
- 19 'Go Your Own Way' ..... Fleetwood Mac
- 23 'Kyoto' ..... Phoebe Bridgers
- 27 'Feel Good Inc.' ..... Gorillaz

## PERFORMANCE PIECES – ROCKSCHOOL ORIGINALS

- 32 'Headline Act'
- 34 'Elevator Shoes'
- 36 'Surfer Ticket'

## TECHNICAL EXERCISES

- 38 Single and Double Strokes, Paradiddles, Flams, Triplets & Fill

## SUPPORTING TESTS

- 40 Sight Reading
- 41 Improvisation & Interpretation
- 42 Ear Tests
- 43 General Musicianship Questions

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- 44 Marking Schemes
- 45 Entering RSL Exams
- 46 Drums Notation Explained
- 47 Graded Music Shop
- 48 Upgrade your book to an interactive e-book!

# Table of Contents

---

## INTRODUCTIONS & INFORMATION

- 1 Title Page
- 2 Acknowledgements
- 3 Table of Contents
- 4 Welcome to Rockschool Drums Grade 3

## PERFORMANCE PIECES – HIT TUNES

- 7 'On Broadway'..... George Benson
- 11 'good 4 u'..... Olivia Rodrigo
- 15 'Is This Love'..... Bob Marley and the Wailers
- 19 'Best of You'..... Foo Fighters
- 23 'Bluish'..... Arlo Parks
- 27 'Heads Will Roll'..... Yeah Yeah Yeahs

## PERFORMANCE PIECES – ROCKSCHOOL ORIGINALS

- 32 'Camden Square'
- 34 'Restless'
- 36 'Long Beach Skyline'

## TECHNICAL EXERCISES

- 38 Single Strokes, Double Strokes, Paradiddles, Flams and Drags, Triplets & Fill

## SUPPORTING TESTS

- 40 Sight Reading
- 41 Improvisation & Interpretation
- 42 Ear Tests
- 43 General Musicianship Questions

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- 44 Marking Schemes
- 45 Entering RSL Exams
- 46 Drums Notation Explained
- 47 Graded Music Shop
- 48 Upgrade your book to an interactive e-book!

# Table of Contents

---

## INTRODUCTIONS & INFORMATION

- 1 Title Page
- 2 Acknowledgements
- 3 Table of Contents
- 4 Welcome to Rockscool Drums Grade 4

## PERFORMANCE PIECES – HIT TUNES

- 7 'Weak' ..... Skunk Anansie
- 11 'Alive' ..... Pearl Jam
- 15 'Your Smiling Face' ..... James Taylor
- 19 'The Changingman' ..... Paul Weller
- 23 'Getting Started' ..... Sam Fender
- 27 'You Can't Hurry Love' ..... The Supremes

## PERFORMANCE PIECES – ROCKSCHOOL ORIGINALS

- 32 'Conjunction'
- 34 'Promise'
- 36 'The Jump'

## TECHNICAL EXERCISES

- 38 Single and Double Strokes, Paradiddles, Flams and Ruffs, Hands and Feet Patterns

## SUPPORTING TESTS

- 40 Sight Reading
- 41 Improvisation & Interpretation
- 42 Ear Tests
- 43 General Musicianship Questions

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- 44 Marking Schemes
- 45 Entering RSL Exams
- 46 Drums Notation Explained
- 47 Graded Music Shop
- 48 Upgrade your book to an interactive e-book!

# Table of Contents

---

## INTRODUCTIONS & INFORMATION

- 1 Title Page
- 2 Acknowledgements
- 3 Table of Contents
- 4 Welcome to Rockschool Drums Grade 5

## PERFORMANCE PIECES – HIT TUNES

- 7 'For Once in My Life' ..... Stevie Wonder
- 11 'Black Smoke Rising' ..... Greta Van Fleet
- 15 'Keep Yourself Alive' ..... Queen
- 19 'Canned Heat' ..... Jamiroquai
- 23 'Bros' ..... Wolf Alice
- 27 'Every Little Thing She Does Is Magic' ..... The Police

## PERFORMANCE PIECES – ROCKSCHOOL ORIGINALS

- 33 'Flight Check'
- 36 '7th and 42nd'
- 39 'Down at the Abbey'

## TECHNICAL EXERCISES

- 42 Single and Double Strokes, Paradiddles, Flams and Ruffs, Rolls, Hands and Feet Patterns & Fill

## SUPPORTING TESTS

- 44 Sight Reading
- 45 Improvisation & Interpretation
- 46 Ear Tests
- 47 General Musicianship Questions

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- 48 Marking Schemes
- 49 Entering RSL Exams
- 50 Drums Notation Explained
- 51 Graded Music Shop
- 52 Upgrade your book to an interactive e-book!

# Table of Contents

---

## INTRODUCTIONS & INFORMATION

- 1 Title Page
- 2 Acknowledgements
- 3 Table of Contents
- 4 Welcome to Rockscool Drums Grade 6

## PERFORMANCE PIECES - HIT TUNES

- 7 'The Chicken'.....Jaco Pastorius
- 13 'If I Could Change Your Mind'.....HAIM
- 17 'Parallel Universe'.....Red Hot Chili Peppers
- 21 'Ain't No Mountain High Enough'.....Marvin Gaye & Tammi Terrell
- 25 'Lost in Yesterday'.....Tame Impala
- 31 'End of The niGht.'.....Phony Ppl

## PERFORMANCE PIECES - ROCKSCHOOL ORIGINALS

- 36 'Shadow Realm'
- 39 'Delicate'
- 42 'Third Quarter'

## TECHNICAL EXERCISES

- 46 Single and Double Strokes, Paradiddles, Ratamacues, Rolls & Stylistic Studies

## SUPPORTING TESTS

- 50 Quick Study Piece
- 53 Ear Tests
- 54 General Musicianship Questions

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- 55 Marking Schemes
- 56 Entering RSL Exams
- 57 Drums Notation Explained
- 58 Graded Music Exam Formats
- 59 Graded Music Shop
- 60 Upgrade your book to an interactive e-book!

# Table of Contents

---

## INTRODUCTIONS & INFORMATION

- 1 Title Page
- 2 Acknowledgements
- 3 Table of Contents
- 4 Welcome to Rockschool Drums Grade 7

## PERFORMANCE PIECES – HIT TUNES

- 7 'Falling in Between' ..... Toto
- 11 'Soul with a Capital "S"' ..... Tower of Power
- 15 'Precious' ..... Esperanza Spalding
- 19 'It's Just Talk' ..... Pat Metheny Group
- 25 'Charlie Big Potato' ..... Skunk Anansie
- 31 'Help Is on the Way' ..... Rise Against

## PERFORMANCE PIECES – ROCKSCHOOL ORIGINALS

- 37 'Byte-Size'
- 42 'Just for the Record'
- 47 'La Puerta Abierta'

## TECHNICAL EXERCISES

- 52 Single Strokes, Paradiddles, Flams, Ratamacues, Rolls & Stylistic Studies

## SUPPORTING TESTS

- 57 Quick Study Piece
- 60 Ear Tests
- 61 General Musicianship Questions

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- 62 Marking Schemes
- 63 Entering RSL Exams
- 64 Drums Notation Explained

# Table of Contents

---

## INTRODUCTIONS & INFORMATION

- 1 Title Page
- 2 Acknowledgements
- 3 Table of Contents
- 4 Welcome to Rockschool Drums Grade 8

## PERFORMANCE PIECES – HIT TUNES

- 7 'Spain' ..... Chick Corea
- 13 'Breathing Underwater' ..... Hiatus Kaiyote
- 17 'Anthem' ..... Rush
- 23 '<maybe> it's my fault' ..... WILLOW
- 29 'La Peligrosa' ..... Alexander Abreu and Havana D'Primera
- 35 'Tidal Wave' ..... Tom Misch & Yussef Dayes

## PERFORMANCE PIECES – ROCKSCHOOL ORIGINALS

- 40 'Copenhagen'
- 44 'The Switch'
- 48 'Four by Twelve'

## TECHNICAL EXERCISES

- 52 Single Strokes, Paradiddles, Triplets, Ratamacues, Rolls & Stylistic Studies

## SUPPORTING TESTS

- 57 Quick Study Piece
- 60 Ear Tests
- 61 General Musicianship Questions

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- 62 Marking Schemes
- 63 Entering RSL Exams
- 64 Drums Notation Explained

# Welcome to Rockschool Drums *Technical Handbook*

---

In this book you will find printed in full all the rudiments and exercises needed to complete the Technical Exercises section of Rockschool's Drums grade exams.

This book should be read in conjunction with the relevant grade books (Debut–Grade 8) published by Rockschool and the *Syllabus Guide* for Drums. The *Syllabus Guide* can be downloaded for free from our website: [www.rslawards.com](http://www.rslawards.com)

In the Rockschool grade exam system, the Technical Exercises form the core of each grade. Mastering them gives players a valuable insight not only into the types of rudiments and exercises needed for any improvisational work they may be required to do, but also into the other types of 'unseen' tests they will encounter in the exam, such as the Sight Reading, Improvisation & Interpretation and Ear Tests, and at Grade 6 or higher, the Quick Study Piece.

This book is divided and ordered by grade, starting with Debut and then progressing from Grade 1 to Grade 8. Its many features include the following:

- At the start of the book we have included some Frequently Asked Questions which we hope will cover the enquiry topics most commonly sent in to the Rockschool office by teachers and learners.
- A grade-by-grade ordering of technical material showing all the exercises needed to complete the exam.
- Each section is introduced by a page which summarises the content found in each grade. These pages show what's new grade-by-grade as well as showing, at a glance, the technical work required for each grade.
- At Grades 6–8 the Technical Exercises conclude with a Stylistic Study. Candidates may choose one of the three Studies to perform in the exam. Please note that the choice of style in the Study will dictate the style of the Quick Study Piece.

Throughout you will find tips on what the examiners are looking for as well as explanations of common musical terms.

Any suggestions made in the book are not meant to be exhaustive, but will give guidance on some of the more pressing sticking issues, particularly at the higher grades.

We hope you find this book useful and that it will inspire you to approach the Technical Exercises in our exams without fear. To make best use of it, you will need your kit and either a physical or a virtual metronome which can be downloaded as a phone app for very little cost.

## Audio

In addition to this book, we have also provided audio examples where appropriate. The following symbol is used to indicate which exercises have accompanying audio:



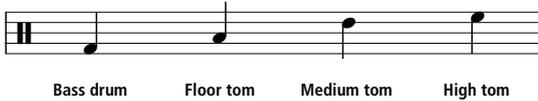
These audio examples can be downloaded from RSL directly at [www.rslawards.com/downloads](http://www.rslawards.com/downloads)

You will need to input this code when prompted: **V44LY3KJQ8**

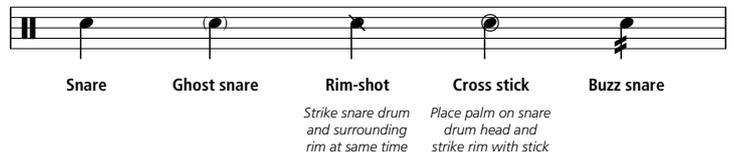
The audio files are supplied in MP3 format. Once downloaded you will be able to play them on any compatible device.

# Drums Notation Explained

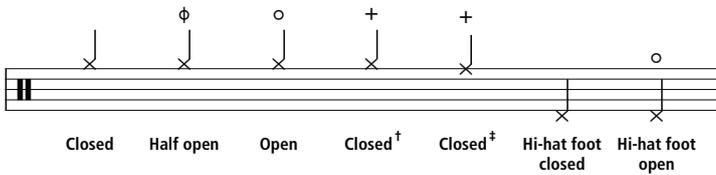
## BASS DRUM & TOMS



## SNARE



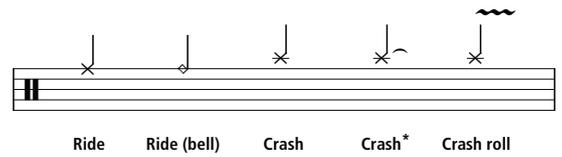
## HI-HAT



<sup>†</sup> Used on the first closed hi-hat that follows an open hi-hat

<sup>‡</sup> The hi-hat is closed without being struck. Note that the hi-hat closed (cross) symbol may appear above drum voices other than the hi-hat (as shown above). This simply means another drum voice is being played at the same moment that the hi-hat is being closed.

## OTHER CYMBALS



Allow all cymbals to ring on unless explicitly stopped, as indicated by the keyword 'Choke'. Occasionally ties may be used (\*) to emphasise that cymbals should be allowed to ring on. This can avoid confusion during syncopations and pushes.

## GENERAL MUSIC NOTATION



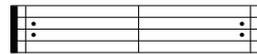
Accentuate note (play it louder).



Slashes are used to demarcate bars during solos, fills, developments and other ad lib. sections.

### D. al Coda

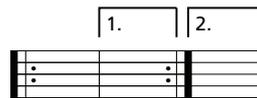
Go back to the sign (Coda symbol) then play until the bar marked **To Coda** then skip to the section marked **Coda**.



Repeat the bars between the repeat signs.

### D.C. al Fine

Go back to beginning of song and play until bar marked **Fine** (end).



When a repeated section has different endings, play the first ending only the first time and the second ending only the second time.



Repeat the previous bar. In higher grades these may also be marked *sim.* or *cont. sim.*



Repeat the previous two bars. In higher grades these may also be marked *sim.* or *cont. sim.*



In rudiments, each stem slash subdivides the note value by half.

## MUSICAL TERMS WITH SPECIFIC EXAMINATION DEFINITIONS

**Fill**                      Play an individual, stylistic fill.

**Develop**                Extend the musical part in a stylistically appropriate manner.

**Cont. sim.**                Continue in similar way but vary the pattern slightly.

**Rit. (ritardando)**      Gradually slow the tempo.