



# ODD TIME DRUM GROOVES

LEARN HOW TO CREATE  
GROOVES AND FILLS IN ODD TIME



MANY EXAMPLES INCLUDED

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# Foreword

Most Western popular music is written in 4/4, but there is so much more. Time signatures like 5/4, 7/8, 9/4 and 15/8 may look difficult, but they are not. They can be challenging at first, but you just have to get used to it.

In this book I explain how you can play along with music with an odd time signature and how you can create your own odd time drum grooves and fills. There are many examples included, mostly with a link to hear it. I have seen many drum lessons about odd time signatures in which a 4/4 groove is converted and one or more beats are added or removed, but that way you will always end up with the same kind of grouping. It is very important to understand the grouping. Therefore I have developed a method to create grooves, that work for every odd time signature.

You'd think there wouldn't be a lot of music with an odd time signature, but you have to search in the right places. It is easy to find hundreds of Greek songs with an odd time signature. I also recommend listening to folk music from other Balkan countries, progressive rock and math rock.

In this book there are also a lot of music titles. Be sure to listen to the studio version (unless otherwise indicated) of the mentioned artist, as a song can be played differently by another artist or at a live performance.

Basic knowledge of music theory and reading sheet music is required for this book.

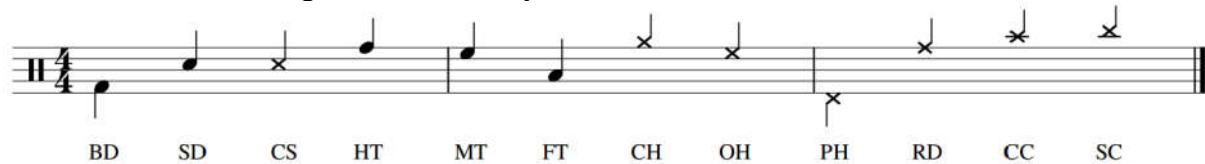
Keep in mind that after some time the mentioned links might not work anymore.

I wish you a lot of fun exploring odd time signatures!

Fred Bolder

# Basics and misunderstandings

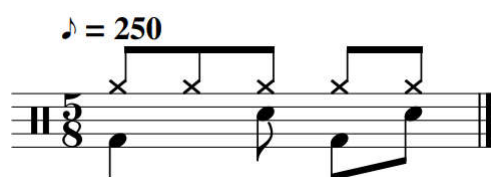
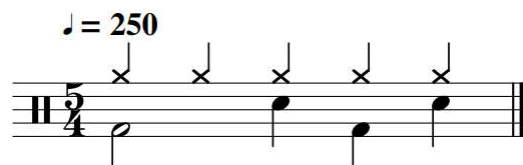
In this book, the following drum notation key is used.



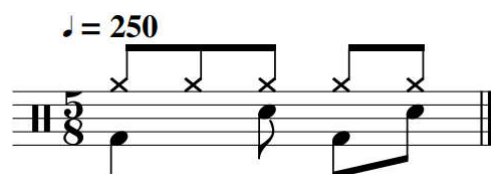
BD = bass drum, SD = snare drum, CS = cross stick, HT = high tom, MT = mid tom, FT = floor tom, CH = closed hi-hat, OH = open hi-hat, PH = pedal hi-hat, RD = ride cymbal, CC = crash cymbal, SC = splash cymbal

A time signature looks like a fraction, but it is not. The top number indicates the number of beats per measure. The bottom number indicates the note that gets the beat (4 = quarter note, 8 = eighth note etc). The bottom number does not indicate the tempo, so music written in 5/8 doesn't have to be faster than music written in 5/4. I think that people are often confused, because the tempo on sheet music is mostly indicated in quarter notes per minute, so not beats per minute.

Take a look at the two following grooves. They sound exactly the same and also the tempo is the same. Compare the tempo indication in each groove. In the first groove there is a quarter note followed by an equal sign and in the second groove there is an eighth note (so eighth notes per minute). In both cases the tempo is 250 beats per minute, because the note in the tempo indication is the same as the note that is indicated by the bottom number of the time signature.



The tempo of the following groove is two times faster than the tempo of the previous two examples. That is because an eighth note gets the beat and the tempo is 250 quarter notes per minute and thus  $250 \times 2 = 500$  eighth notes per minute. If you change the number after the equal sign to 125, the tempo is the same as the previous two examples.



You might wonder “Why does the 5/8 time signature exist, since we can write the same thing in 5/4?” This has to do with the readability and what is more common for a music style. You can see the

**Pattern 12 (2-2-3)**



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H8Kt85VNFuA>

**Pattern 13 (2-2-3)**



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PrnAx3Bu8sk>

**Pattern 14 (3-2-2)**



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LdOKf1R\\_8\\_M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LdOKf1R_8_M)

**Pattern 15 (2-3-2)**



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h0kV3JZkw-k>

**Pattern 16 (3-2-2)**



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hlWyRjQ95cc>

**Pattern 17 (2-2-3)**



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=akVbBi6Yub4>

# Grooves and fills in 11

Play the grooves 3 times and then the fill. After the fill, start over again, but on count 1 play the crash cymbal instead of the hi-hat or the ride cymbal.

## Pattern 1 (2-2-3-2-2)



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aowEqf6YUWE>

## Pattern 2 (3-3-3-2)



If you don't have a splash cymbal, you can play the crash cymbal instead, but a little softer.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=888WN8vWM3E>

## Pattern 3 (2-2-3-2-2)



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n-AuojSYhGY>

## Pattern 4 (3-2-2-2-2)



You can use this pattern for the song “Dafino vino crveno” (see Song titles).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ty2tdkSSRW4>

## Pattern 5 (3-2-2-2-2)



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xVbaxxZdxPg>