

**SNARE DRUM ETUDES  
IN STRANGE & UNUSUAL  
TIME SIGNATURES**

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# INTRODUCTION

**SNARE DRUM ETUDES IN STRANGE AND UNUSUAL TIME SIGNATURES** is the companion book to **ROCK & JAZZ DRUMMING IN STRANGE AND UNUSUAL TIME SIGNATURES**.

The first half of the book contains etudes in quarter time signatures such as  $\frac{3}{4}^{\frac{1}{16}}$  time,  $\frac{4}{4}^{\frac{3}{16}}$  time, etc. The second half of the book contains etudes in eighth time signatures such as  $\frac{6}{8}^{\frac{1}{16}}$  time,  $\frac{9}{8}^{\frac{2}{16}}$  time, etc.

There are some who would say that practicing etudes in time signatures that don't exist or have never been used is a complete waste of time. Obviously, as the author I disagree. First, there are any number of classical pieces that contain sections in unusual time signatures. Second, the fact that something doesn't now exist doesn't mean it won't exist at some future point. Moreover, song writers and classical composers are continually looking to extend the bounds of what has already been done. I see no reason why the future won't possibly see the introduction of music in one or more of the time signatures contained in this study.

One problem that many students have is they don't count while sight reading, making it easy for them to lose their place on the music. Reading the etudes in this study is initially more difficult than reading in regular time signatures. Consequently the reader is forced into counting, which should carry over when reading in traditional time signatures.

One of the etudes in the first section is in  $\frac{4\frac{1}{2}}{4}$  time, phrased with the last eighth note on it's own, as indicated by the following example:

EX 1:

Count: 1 1 2 1 3 . 4 1 1

At first glance you could say, "Wait a minute - there are nine eighth notes all together, so why not simply call it 9/8 time?" The answer is simple - all time signatures tend to have a certain character, and they're usually phrased in a certain way. The following example shows how a bar of 9/8 time is typically written and phrased.

EX 2:

Count: 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3

Notice the rhythm in 9/8 is usually groups of threes with a triplet feel, and counted 123,123,123, which is very different from the feel and phrasing of the 9 eighth notes in  $\frac{4\frac{1}{2}}{4}$  time as seen in the first example.

Whenever a fraction such as  $\frac{1}{16}$  or  $\frac{3}{16}$  appears in the numerator it initially feels awkward to move from the last note of each bar directly into the first note of the next bar. This happens because I've phrased all the etudes with the extra fractional note at the end of the bar. Like most aspects of reading, practice will overcome.

**NOTE:** There are no tempo indications because the time signatures are initially so different. Simply start slowly and build up your ability to read the etudes to the best of your ability. Initially, don't worry about the dynamics. First develop the ability to read each etude from beginning to end with smoothness and ease, then replay them with the indicated dynamics. Moreover, feel free to add, or omit dynamics as you see fit - in other words, make each etude your own.

# SECTION ONE

## SNARE DRUM ETUDES IN STRANGE & UNUSUAL TIME SIGNATURES IN QUARTER TIME

In this first section you'll be presented with snare drum etudes in the following strange and unusual time signatures:

$\frac{3}{4}^{\frac{1}{16}}$  time,  $\frac{3}{4}^{\frac{3}{16}}$  time, and  $\frac{3}{4}^{\frac{1}{2}}$  time;

$\frac{4}{4}^{\frac{1}{16}}$  time,  $\frac{4}{4}^{\frac{3}{16}}$  time, and  $\frac{4}{4}^{\frac{1}{2}}$  time;

$\frac{5}{4}^{\frac{1}{16}}$  time,  $\frac{5}{4}^{\frac{3}{16}}$  time, and  $\frac{5}{4}^{\frac{1}{2}}$  time.

Each page contains two five-line etudes in the same time signature. The etude at the top half of each page is comprised of rhythmic patterns without any rolls. The etude at the lower half of each page contains rhythmic patterns featuring rolls. The same format is continued throughout the book. Several pages at the end of this section present etudes with a combination of time signatures within the same etude.

**NOTE:** On each page there's a suggested count above the first line of the top etude, but feel free to use whatever count you feel is best.

# ETUDES IN $\frac{3}{4}$ TIME

## ETUDE 1

Count: 1 - 2 - 3 - 1 1 + 2 - 3 + 1 1 - 2 + 3 + 1 1 + 2 - 3 + 1

1 *f*

5

9 *p*

13 *f p f p f*

17 *mf f*

## ETUDE 2

1 *mf ff*

5 *mf p mf*

10 *p mf f mf*

14

18 *ff*

# ETUDES IN 4 1/2 TIME

## ETUDE 3

Count: 1 - 2 + 3 + 4 + 1 1 + 2 + 3 - 4 + 1 1 + 2 + 3 - 4 - 1

1 *mf*

6

10 *f*

14 *mf*

18 *f*

## ETUDE 4

1 *p* *f* *p* *f*

7 *mf*

13 *f* *p*

17 *mf*

22 *f*

# ETUDES IN 5 1/2 TIME

## ETUDE 5

Count: 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5 + 1 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5 - 1

1 *f*

5 *mf*

9 *p* *f*

14 *mf* *f*

18 *p* *f* *p* *ff*

## ETUDE 6

1 *p* *f* *p*

5 *p* *mf*

9 *mf* *p* *mf*

12 *f* *p*

16 *mf* *f*