



INTRODUCTION



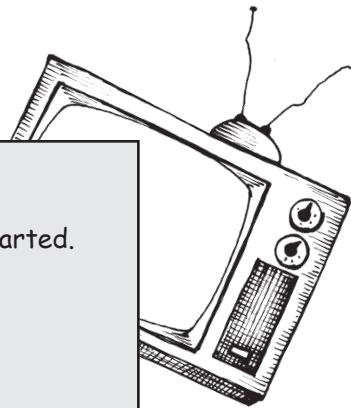
Hello, and welcome to *The Couch Potato Drum Workout*. This book provides you with many exercises and ideas for practicing while watching TV, or just relaxing on the couch. These exercises will help you refine your technical skills and give you more power, speed, and endurance for playing on the drumset. The concept here is to work some practice into the time usually spent passively watching TV. You can think of it as musical multitasking! Instead of just lying around on the couch, lazily checking out some game show, you can simultaneously be working on your drum roll, or mastering a new sticking pattern. Most of the ideas in this book are technical in nature and can be easily adapted to your groove playing. They are designed to make your life easier by sharpening your skills and keeping you in shape.

Sound good? Let's get rolling!

THE TOOLS YOU WILL NEED

Below is a list of fundamental items you will need to get started.

1. Drumsticks (or brushes)
2. Practice pad and stand
3. Music stand
4. Metronome



Yes, you can use other surfaces instead of a practice pad, for instance: your leg, a cushion, a pillow, or the couch itself. In the absence of a pad, these will all do fine. The problem is that the rebound or angle in which you are playing may not be ideal for prolonged practice. In most cases, a good pad with an adjustable stand will provide the best surface to play on. You will also need a music stand for this book, or something that will serve as one, so you can play along with the exercises.

It is highly recommended that you use a *metronome* (an adjustable time-keeping device) to really nail your timing. If the continuous clicking or beeping is annoying to you, simply use the metronome to get a starting speed, or *tempo*, and then shut it off. Play for a few minutes and turn it back on to see if you have maintained the original tempo. This is a great exercise for developing a good sense of time.

Later in this book, there will be examples for the feet as well as the hands. With some creativity, all of these can be practiced on the couch.



TIPS FOR PRACTICING IN FRONT OF THE TV



PRACTICING WITH A METRONOME

Let's say you're on the couch with a pad and sticks, and you want to watch a football game and practice at the same time. You know you should be working with the metronome to keep your time in check—but how do you do this? Because a metronome produces a constant ticking sound, this can be most challenging, especially if there are other people in the room. Let's face it, the sound of you practicing on a pad may already be enough to tolerate! Below are a few suggestions that can help.

1. Turn on the metronome to the desired tempo, then play for a minute and lock into the speed. Turn the metronome off for a few minutes and continue to play. Periodically, turn it back on to see if you have stayed with the original timing. This is good for internalizing tempo and giving others in the room a break from the steady ticking sound.
2. If your metronome has a blinking light, mute the sound and play along by watching the light. Other metronomes will have different types of moving icons, instead of lights, that you can follow.
3. Use the TV as a metronome. If there is a song on a particular show or commercial you are watching, quickly adjust your practicing to match its tempo. This will give you the ability to hear a tune and rapidly find its speed.
4. Play to the metronome while the TV volume is turned up. This is a challenge because what you will be hearing on TV will be worlds apart tempo-wise from what you have your metronome set to. See how well you can concentrate on the timing without being drawn away from it by a catchy TV jingle!

FOOT TAPPING

Let's assume for a moment that you are practicing on the couch without a bass drum pedal. You can still work one (or both) of your feet into the mix as you do this. In fact, it is highly recommended that you tap your right foot (bass drum) or left foot (hi-hat) to give your practice an added dimension of realism. Make sure your foot is exactly in time with your hands. Sometimes, this is a little tricky because, unlike a bass drum, a foot tap on the floor doesn't make much sound. Below are some examples of hand patterns with the right foot tapping quarter notes.

A

R L R L R R L L R L R L R R L L R L R L R L R L L R

B

R L R L R L L L R L R L R L L L R L L R R L L L