

Drum Tuning



A practical guide to getting the desired tone from your drums!

General Topics

Shells

The type of wood and the way it's constructed has a dramatic affect on the timbre and projection of your drums!



Heads

Pick the right heads! No matter what style of music you're playing, drum heads are a major factor in the overall tonality, longevity, and volume.



Hoops

Hoops can play just as big a role in your tone as the heads you choose. They can bring as much style to your drums as to your ears.



Muffles

Do you want a drum that rings on and on, or a big rock thud? Well, muff dat. To muff or not to muff... that is the question!



Setup

Rim mounts anyone? Perhaps a virgin kick? Which setup will let your drums breathe and sing?



Snare Wires

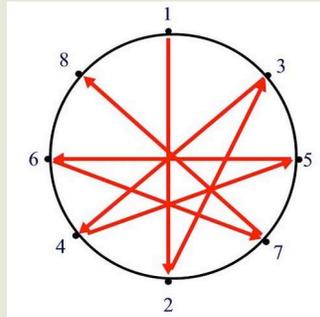
So many snare wires, so little time! Each one can give your drums the edge you're looking for.



TUNING!

Correct tuning is essential for achieving the best sound from your drums and best performance from your heads. Here are some general rules the pro's use for drum tuning:

- 1) Tune your drums by using a combination of the "criss-cross" technique for basic tuning and the "clockwise" method for fine tuning. A drum's "criss-cross" pattern is based on the number of tension lugs it has. Use the recommended tuning patterns shown in the illustrations below as a guide.
- 2) "Seat" new heads by tightening them above the desired pitch before fine-tuning. This stretches and helps position them properly on the drum's bearing edge.
- 3) Tune up. Loosen the head slightly below the desired tension and push down on it to relax it before tightening the head to achieve the final desired tension and pitch.
- 4) Tune in even increments. This will stretch the head evenly and allow it to vibrate at its maximum efficiency—producing the fullest and most dynamic tone.



Follow this pattern to ensure heads are seated correctly on your drum.

- 5) Tune to the drum's "sweet spot". This is the point where each drum "sings", feels good and is the most resonant.
 - Begin by placing the drumhead on the drumshell and place the hoop over the head.
 - Align the holes in the hoop with the lugs on the drum, insert a tension rod through each hole and thread them into the lug receiver until they are finger-tight.
 - Repeat at each position, following the appropriate "criss-cross" lug pattern starting at position 1.

Repeat this step as necessary until the drum rings when struck.

- With the head properly seated and evenly tensioned, return to position 1 and continue tightening each tension rod in smaller increments. Tap the drum at each tension point with your stick or finger about one inch in front of the tension rod and adjust the tension so that each tension point sounds exactly the same as the points next to and across from it.
- For fine tuning, continue tightening the head by going around the drum clockwise from tension rod to tension rod and maintaining the same pitch at each position.

Check out some of Bob Gatzes's Drum Tuning Tip Videos on YouTube: <http://goo.gl/MegRT>

