



### A 6-Count Beat... Wait, What?

Up until now we have been dealing with beats that use a 4-count. There are actually many different types of beats you will learn as you progress and they have different counts. Aside from the 4/4 (4-count beat), one of the most common time signatures is 6/8 time, which uses a 6-count for the beat.

### A Completely Different Feel

This beat has a "waltz" feel to it and gives the impression of a hard swing that moves back and forth as you play it, almost like a ship swaying side to side. You will notice that while the kick hits on "1," there is a wider gap before the snare, which is played on "4." The 6/8 beat mainly focuses on the 2 pulses or beats on "1" and "4," rather than on every count like in 4/4.

#### 6/8 Beat

| <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>6</b> |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| H        | H        | H        | H        | H        | H        |
| K        |          |          | SN       |          |          |

### Easy Does It

Once behind the drums, start tapping the hi-hat as you repeat the six count out loud over and over. When you are ready, add the kick drum on "1." Once you are comfortable with that, try adding the snare on "4."



**Practice playing the 6/8 beat over and over until it sounds and feels smooth.** It may take some time to feel natural, but stick with it and you'll have it in no time.



## Applying the "3 + 1" Pattern to a 6/8 Beat

Below you'll see what a "3 + 1" pattern looks like for a 6/8 beat. Everything we have learned about measures and counting measures is still true for a 6/8 beat (or any beat), just be sure the number of beats in each measure matches the correct count (time signature) that you should be playing. In the case of a 6/8 beat, there are 6 beats. Therefore, each measure box below shows a 6-count above it.

### "3 + 1" Pattern - 6-Count Beat

|             |             |             |             |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1 2 3 4 5 6 | 2 2 3 4 5 6 | 3 2 3 4 5 6 | 4 2 3 4 5 6 |
|             |             |             |             |



Using the "3 + 1" pattern, play the 6/8 beat in groups of 4 measures. Be sure to count out the measures as you play.

## Playing Fills in 6/8

Be aware that the fills you have learned up until now won't quite work correctly in the "fill zone" measure of this 6/8 beat. Why? They are all based on a 4-count, not a 6-count.

I won't be covering 6/8 fills here, but I do encourage you to apply the same principle we used with the other fills: experiment going around the drums in time with each of the 6 counts. You could also try some shorter fills only using "4, 5, 6" for fun.

Just as you learned smaller subdivisions earlier, there are some here that can be helpful for fills ("1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5 + 6 +"). Finally, just remember that you still need to finish the fill with a crash on the "1" count.



## Very Common

As you try to play along with your favorite songs (which you certainly should be trying by this point) you've probably encountered a song that doesn't seem to work with a 4-count. It's a good bet that a 6-count might fit! There are a large number of very popular songs that use a 6-count in popular music today. Remember the kick starts on "1" and the snare usually hits on "4."



### "Play Along" Songs" - 6/8 Beat

Listed below are some songs you can listen to and hear the concepts discussed in this lesson. A major key to improving is playing along to music and trying to match the drumming. For this particular beat, there are literally thousands and thousands of songs that can be used. These are just a few to get you started!

"Nothing Else Matters" - Metallica

"We Are The Champions" - Queen

"Open Arms" - Journey

"Cry Baby" - Demi Lovato

"Flower Shops" - Ernest & Morgan Wallen

"American Child" - Phil Vassar

"Oh Darling" - The Beatles

"Breakaway" - Kelly Clarkson

"How He Loves" - John Mark McMillan

"Crazy" - Aerosmith

"Gravity" - John Mayer

"Good, Good Father" - Chris Tomlin

"O Come To The Altar" - Elevation Worship

"Kiss From A Rose" - Seal

"Fall Away" - The Fray

"Lights" - Journey

"Back At Your Door" - Maroon 5

"Let Me Roll It" - Wings

"Dear John" - Taylor Swift

"Easy" - Rascal Flatts

"Beautiful Crazy" - Luke Combs

"A Thousand Years" - Christina Perri

"Thin Ice" - Pink Floyd

"Somebody To Love" - Queen

"Run To The Father" - Cody Carnes

"Bed of Roses" - Bon Jovi

"Piano Man" - Billy Joel

"Judith" - A Perfect Circle

"Everybody Hurts" - R.E.M.

"Eclipse" - Pink Floyd

"Strawberry Wine" - Deana Carter

"Who You Say I Am" - Hillsong Worship

"Lovin', Touchin', Squeezin'" - Journey

"Perfect" - Ed Sheeran

"Reckless Love" - Cory Asbury