



Learning to play the drums can be very fun, but it can also be frustrating. There will be “ups and downs,” good days and bad days. It is so important to keep this journey fun and encouraging or you might be tempted to give up. I want to encourage you that you WILL improve, just be patient with yourself and KEEP IT FUN!

I've included some tips that I have learned as I have helped others to improve, though I still use them, myself.

Allow Yourself To Be Bad At This For A While

It's funny but a lot of people are shocked and frustrated when they can't master a new technique or skill right away. They actually get pretty mad about it. Think of all the things you can now, do but it took your body a while to get good at...riding a bike, playing sports, getting good at video games, I could go on and on.

For most people, the coordination needed to play the drums will take time to develop AND THAT'S OK (and normal). Have some patience with yourself and realize that every time you get it right, you are improving! Every time you get it wrong, your mind is learning what not to do next time. It will come, just give it time! It's a process; try to have fun along the way!

We Have Found the “Magic Formula” - Slow Repetition

99% of students won't do this...It might seem like there's more to it, but if you take the time to go slowly over anything you are struggling to learn, you will get better at it, GUARANTEED! Learning the the drums is all about developing coordination; getting your body to move different parts at different times, sometimes together, sometimes separate...it's weird at first.

Once you have gotten the motions and patterns of what you are working on correct, then that is the time to continue it slowly over and over. Do this for a couple of minutes until it becomes “automatic,” THEN you can speed it up. Repetition and being willing to practice slowly at first will conquer almost any drumming challenge you will ever face.

Find A “Base Camp” When You Practice

When learning a new drum pattern or beat, most student are in such a hurry to play it fast. They don't even realize that it sounds sloppy, the notes aren't clear or it's just plain incorrect. We know it's important to go slow, but when is it ok to go faster?



I like to think of practicing like climbing a mountain. When people climb a mountain, they don't do it all in one day. They make camps along the way. Start your exercise and gradually increase speed until it starts to sound sloppy or hard to perform, then slow down just a tad - that is where you "camp" as you practice it slowly. Resist temptation to speed up. After a day or two, try again to go a bit faster and if you can, YOU'VE IMPROVED! Continue on until you hit your next wall and then "camp" there, repeating the process.

Remember, don't proceed until you are ready! Find where it starts to be a challenge and then camp there until it gets easier. Don't forget the magic formula - slow repetition!

Practice Wherever You Can - If Possible, Use Drums

MYTH: You can only improve at the drums when you are playing them. Surprisingly enough, you don't have to be behind the drum set to practice. Once your hands and feet learn the job that they are supposed to do, they can do it anywhere. The drums are unique in that a lot of practicing and coordination can be developed by simply doing the motions with your hands and feet, giving your brain a chance to learn things by repetition. If you take advantage of this, when you sit down behind the drums your brain and body have already figured out 90% of what they need to do.

Most of the practicing I do is not behind a drum kit. My main practice kit is my steering wheel in my car or my counter top at home, my bed, but most often it is my legs or my belly. If I have a new drum part to learn that is difficult, I work it out ahead of time, away from my drums.