



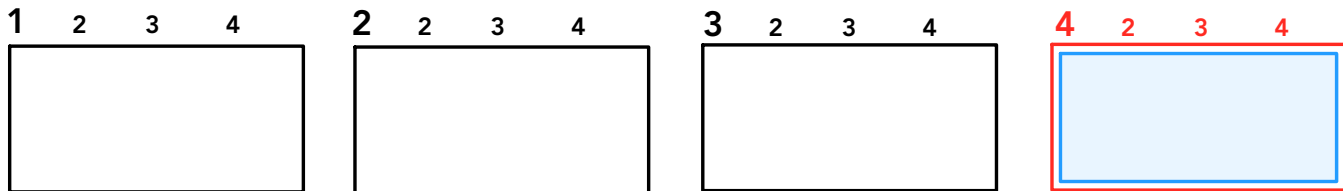
## Putting Fills In Just The Right Place

When learning about fills, one of the hardest things for new drummers to understand is when to start a fill and when to end it. We've already said that a fill should end on "1" of the next measure, so now all that remains is to figure out where the fill should start.

I have taken the majority of fills that can be played and divided them into 3 categories or "families" based on what type of fill it is and the size of the fill. At first, we will be using these fills with our "3 + 1" Pattern (groups of 4 measures). Remember, we will only be putting fills in the "fill zone" measure, shown as a red rectangular box below. **The blue shading represents where the fill will be played.**

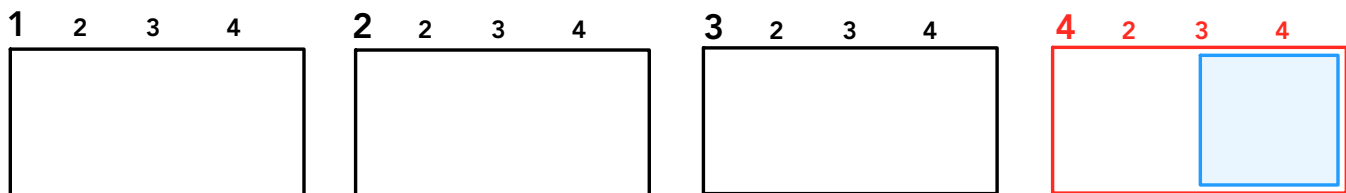
### "1 Family" Fills

The first group of fills is called "1 Family" fills. These fills are the longest and will take up the entire measure (4-counts) to play. The reason they are called "1 Family" is because they start on the "1" position count of the "fill zone" measure.



### "3 Family" Fills

The next group is called "3 Family" fills because they start on the "3" position count of the "fill zone" measure. These fills are not as long and are only played over counts "3, 4."



### "4 Family" Fills

The final group is called "4 Family" Fills. These fills are very short and are played on the "4" position count of the "fill zone" measure. Typically, these short fills sound best on the snare.

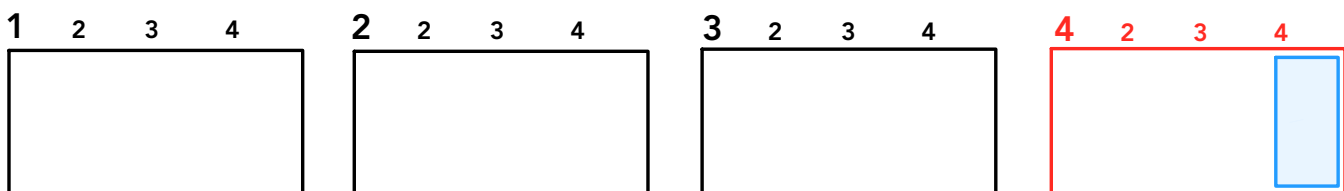


Figure 14-1



## "Ready To Go" Goodness

I have listed a handful of sample fills for each family on the following pages. These are "ready to go," great sounding fills that work and help you sound good! Often times, beginner fills can sound a bit corny due to a lack of experience and rhythm. The fills I have provided will offer a solid foundation and get you sounding good right away.

## Ovals and More Ovals

The fills are shown as a diagrams of 4 ovals. Each oval represents a count (using a 4-count) shown above the oval and below each oval, the recommended drum that it should be played on. Feel free to experiment with your own combinations as you get a better feel for these fills. Again, these are just a small sample of the limitless combinations you can make once you understand the "Rhythmic Blocks" that are being used. Each oval includes the verbal count and "food word" that will help you play it with the correct rhythm.

## Again, Sometimes Less Is More

Often times, it is very common to not play a fill at all during the "fill zone" but to just simply use a crash cymbal & kick drum on the "1" of the next measure following the "fill zone." Sometimes fills are not needed and will only be a distraction to the song, but each song is different and the more you play and study your favorite songs, you will start to get a feel for how often fills should be used. The purpose of the "fill zone" is that if you do want to add a fill, you know a good spot to put it.

## A Great Way To Think About Fills

Here's a great way to better understand placement of cymbal crashes and fills: To use an analogy, let's compare a song to a book with 5-6 small chapters, each chapter having a few pages. Imagine each chapter as a section of the song (verse, chorus, solo, etc.). Naturally, you turn each page and eventually reach a new chapter. You would use a crash each time you turn the page WITHIN the chapter. A fill, however, is used to guide you from the end one chapter to the start of the next. Hopefully you know that I'm not saying you need a book beside you as you play...but it's a great example!

## This Is Just The Beginning

The fills in this course are designed to be useful and give you some good-sounding fills, right from the start. Do realize, however, that there is a great big world out there with thousands and thousands of songs and drum fills. You will no doubt hear more advanced fills that go beyond our "rhythmic blocks" and may not follow the rules of the "fill families" that you are about to learn. **THAT'S OK!**

This course is designed to give you the understanding to be able to analyze fills that you hear. The more you work at this, the sooner you will improve and your fills will grow more and more complex, just like the fills you hear in your favorite songs!