



As you improve on the drums you'll see that the hi-hat is not only used to keep the time, but also to help create dynamic tension. It is one of the most versatile and widely overlooked tools in the whole drum kit. We will discuss two very useful techniques you can use on the hi-hat to instantly sound better!

## The "Sizzle"

The hi-hat can be used to increase the volume of a drum beat, which can signal an increase in energy as the song moves into a new section. There is a world of options (and volume) between keeping the hi-hat cymbals closed and wide open. The more you open them as you play, the more exciting the drum part sounds.

One popular hi-hat position is called a "sizzle" and it is performed by allowing a small amount of the hats to be open and touching somewhat. The two hats still are almost completely closed together, but there is a tiny gap between them that creates a sloshy, "sizzle" when the hats are played. All that is required to achieve this is just to release a tiny amount of tension on the hi-hat pedal.

This is an effective trick to use as you are finishing a verse, preparing to do a fill into the chorus. As stated, it raises the tension and excitement and it tells the listener that "something is coming!"

## Hi-Hat "Bark"

Probably the most common thing to do on the hi-hat is to periodically allow the top and bottom cymbals to open briefly and then close, creating a unique sound that the hi-hat is known for. You may not realize it but you hear this technique in drum beats every day. Using this trick adds interest to your drum part and gives it some character, rather than just keeping a tight beat the entire time. You might hear some drummers refer to this technique as a hi-hat "bark" and if you prefer that, it is fine.

### How To Perform A Hi-Hat "Bark"

- Step 1:** Release the tension with the pedal and allow the cymbals to open briefly. Strike the hi-hat with the cymbals open. This produces a louder, open sound.
- Step 2:** Strike the hi-hat again but close the cymbals with the pedal just as the stick is making contact with the cymbal. This produces the normal "tick" sound that is heard when the two cymbals are closed together.



As you improve, you can experiment putting the "scoop" in wherever you like during a beat. I always will try to give you a solid, useable example that works in a real-world setting and sounds great.

Figure 19-1 shows a two measure pattern that is a great place to start working this trick into your playing. Notice the red "open hat" on the "and" count after "4," at the end of the 2nd measure (step 1). The technique finishes on the "1" count of the next measure (step 2). These two measures should be played one after the other and then repeated over and over.

## Hi-Hat "Scoop" - Example Pattern

<b>1</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>+</b>
H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H
		SN				SN	
K				K			
<b>1</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>+</b>
H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H
		SN				SN	H (open)
K				K			

Figure 19-1



15 minutes per day

## Lesson 19 - "Hands On" Exercises

- Try playing Figure 19-1, but only play the hi-hat part.
- Play Figure 19-1 as shown. Repeat the 2-measure pattern several times until it feels normal.
- Play a "3 + 1" pattern and add the "scoop" at the end of measure 2. Use whatever fills you like or make up your own. Repeat this pattern several times.
- Play a "3 + 1" pattern and add the "sizzle" to the 3rd measure. Use whatever fills you like or make up your own. Repeat this pattern several times.
- Play "7 + 1" pattern and add the "scoop" at the end of measures 2 & 6. Add the "sizzle" on measure 7 until the fill starts. Use whatever fill you choose or make up your own. Repeat this pattern several times.

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### Why It Matters

The hi-hat is one of the most versatile and widely overlooked tools in the whole drum kit. Learning to embrace the techniques can help you stand out from other drummers who are learning and add a new dimension to your playing. Proper use of the hi-hat can create dynamics and tension in your playing.

### Common Mistakes To Avoid

Be sure to study the two steps that are used to create the "scoop" effect. Take your time and make sure that it sounds clean and smooth.