

Was having a good day

## Drum Lesson #6 The One Drop Reggae Drum Beat

Hi guys, Paul the drum kit tutor here. This 'lesson' is about the 'One Drop' reggae beat. No-one could say who invented it, but you will find it in the drumming of Carlton Barrett of the Wailers and many others.

It is simple in concept, but like with any music the 'feel' is what makes it good or bad. It is hard to put one's finger on what makes 'good feel' in a drummer, but I hazard a guess at 'micro timing', the subtle rhythmic nuances or maybe the power and accuracy. You have to 'feel the music' physically. Anyway! Back to the 'One Drop'. The snare drum is usually played with a 'cross stick' technique, where instead of hitting the snare in the middle of the skin, the drummer places the stick across the drum head and plays on the rim of the drum, thus making a 'chock' kind of sound. If you watch videos of the Wailers you will probably see Carlton Barrett playing like this, as well as many other reggae drummers. (This 'cross stick' technique is also use often in 'Latin' and Jazz styles.)

SO, the snare drum (cross stick) will be played on beat three of the bar AT THE SAME TIME as the bass drum. So, the bass drum and snare both play on the third beat. (We are playing four beats to the bar.)

The hi hat would be playing "One and two and **three** and four and" - semiquavers.

Bass and snare:..... **three**.....

There is a Wailers song called 'One Drop' so check it out on Youtube, CD , Spotify or vinyl!

You will hear that Carlton Barrett varies the hi hat rhythm, with a kins of 'slow triplet' feel for part of the bar. It is difficult to explain, but you know it when you hear it.

Have a listen to the song and see if you can play the basic version as explained above – if you don't have sticks use your hands on your legs. If you have sticks but no kit, drum on cushions or similar. Try to do the bass drum beat with your right foot (if you are left /footed you can use left foot instead – experiment).

When I started learning the drum kit, I loved the drumming of Style Scott another great reggae drummer. He played with the Roots Radics band who backed many huge artists such as Gregory Isaacs and whose music was used for many great Dub albums by Scientist in the 1970s and 80s. I would have to do more research to see if he played the "one Drop' rhythm specifically, but if you want to learn how to play reggae, you could do worse then to start by listening to those two drummers is.

Have a go at the 'One Drop' reggae beat and try your own variations. Enjoy!

Have a good week.

Peace.

Paul,