



Thespian Progression Levels
Drums

ABOUT THE THESPIAN PROGRESSION LEVELS APPROACH

The **aim** of the system is to ensure that the students in our Group Sessions are progressing throughout their time with us. The progression levels will almost act like a scheme of work which will help to ensure that each branch is following a similar standard ensuring quality and progression is equal across all branches. The progression levels will eventually coincide with the requirements of an official grading board for the Performing Arts Discipline.

There are 8 progression levels for each discipline which will increase in complexity:

Level One -	A
Level Two -	C
Level Three -	H
Level Four -	I
Level Five -	E
Level Six -	V
Level Seven -	E
Level Eight -	D

As per our slogan, 'You **believed** it, together we **achieved** it!', when members first join our company they **believed** - they believed they could become a performer, they could learn their chosen discipline to the best of their ability, they could meet with other people with similar interests and enjoy their learning. The idea is that by the end of their time with us they will have **achieved** what they set out to.

LEVEL ONE - A

This Level is designed for our beginners who have only just joined the organisation. Even if members have previous experience, we have to start at this level to ensure we cover any gaps from their previous studies.

To complete Level One in Drums, students must:

1. To be able to identify and play 3 rudiments correctly:
Single strokes, double strokes, and paradiddles
2. To be able to name all drums and cymbals:
Bass drum, Snare , High Tom , Mid Tom , Low Tom , Hi-Hat , Crash and the Ride cymbal.
3. To be able to show good Hi-Hat control:
Show good/correct positioning(i.e.Right hand always playing hi-hat, over the left hand), keeping the Hi-Hat closed when not needed and to be able to open and close the Hi-Hat.
4. To be able to consistently show the correct positioning when playing a groove on the ride cymbal:
5. To be able to play the 'getting started' groove, where you play the hi-hat and bass drum on beats 1 and 3, and the hi-hat and snare drum on beats 2 and 4
6. Demonstrate professional and personal skills
Include; wearing the correct uniform, practising away from sessions, be punctual, demonstrate respect and kindness, be able to show teamwork

LEVEL TWO - AC

This Level is designed for our students who have now proven they know the very basics of Drums. They are now ready to dive deeper into learning and gaining new skills. This level will work on performance skills as well as theory.

To complete Level Two in Drums, students must:

1. To be able to identify the position of each drum and cymbal on the stave and to identify the names of each musical note and their values:
Semiquavers, quavers, crotchets, dotted crotchets, minims, dotted minims, and semibreves
2. To be able to be able to play a straight eighth groove:
3. To be able to understand what improvising is:
4. To be able to count and play an 8 bar groove with a short fill on the 8th bar:
5. To be able to identify the different time signatures and know what they mean:
6. To Understand what a fill is and be able to play one:
7. Perform in a Thespian Arts Showcase:

LEVEL THREE- ACH

This Level is designed for our students who have now become very good beginner musicians. They are now ready to become a very talented drummer who really understands it.

To complete Level Three in Drums, students must:

1. To be able to identify and play 3 more rudiments correctly: flam, drag, and four-stroke ruff:
2. To be able to accurately play to a recording of a song, keeping the correct tempo throughout the music:
3. To be able to play a straight eighth groove, adding the crash cymbal on the first beat of every 8 bars:
4. To be able to identify the names of the different rests and their values:
5. To be able to play a swung groove on the ride cymbal:

LEVEL FOUR- ACH

Now Level three was tough, but this level really takes you to an intermediate drummer who should definitely be considering looking at official drum grading.

To complete Level Four in Drums, students must:

1. To be able to play a disco groove:
2. To be able to identify and play 2 more rudiments correctly: rim click and stick shot:
3. To be able to play a piece of music in 3/4 time:
4. To be able to play a piece with another drummer, both playing accurately and keeping the correct tempo:
5. To be able to accompany a singer in a piece of music:
6. To understand what a crescendo and diminuendo is, and play each of these correctly:
7. To be able to sight read a line of music accurately:
8. To be able to improvise a 2 bar fill:

LEVEL FIVE- ACHIE

Level Five aims to really strengthen your theoretical understanding. This learning will help you with not only drums, but Music in general.

To complete Level Five in Drums, students must:

1. Understand how to play a single-stroke drum roll as a crescendo:
2. To be able to play 5 new rudiments:
Five-stroke roll, seven-stroke roll, nine-stroke roll, eleven-stroke roll, and a six-stroke roll
3. To be able to accurately play a complex solo piece to a recording:
4. To be able to improve a 4-bar fill:
5. To be able to understand different music terminology:
This can be things such as tempo and dynamics
6. To be able to play buzz strokes as well as bounced double strokes and to understand the difference between the two:
7. To be able to teach someone else how to play a straight eighth groove:

LEVEL SIX- ACHIEV

By this point you are already a fantastic musician with lots of skills and lots of knowledge. Remember to go over your previous learnings to ensure you are ready to learn this next level. Level Six, Seven and Eight will require you to really have understood and remembered your knowledge from the previous levels.

To complete Level Six in Drums, students must:

1. To understand and play the different rhythms, focusing on triplets:
2. To be able to play a buzzed drum roll and a bounced drum roll as a crescendo and diminuendo:
3. To be able to play a shuffle groove as well as a half-time swing groove:
4. Able to lead the rudiments at the start of the lesson:
5. Must be able to accompany a singer in a piece of music and perform it in a show:
6. To understand and play the different rhythms, focusing on triplets:

LEVEL SEVEN- ACHIEVE

There are only 4 items on this level, which means one thing... IT IS TRICKY! Stick with it as you are now becoming a really good musician who is ready to look at performing more and maybe start working with other musicians.

To complete Level Seven in Drums, students must:

1. To be able to play a 16th note groove:
2. To be able to improvise an 8 bar fill:
3. To be able to learn the drums to a song by ear and perform it to the class:
4. To be able to sight read a page of music:
5. To be able to play a straight eighth groove to a metronome or piece of music with a bpm of 165-170:

LEVEL EIGHT- ACHIEVED

At this point, you really should consider doing official grading. Speak to your tutor to arrange this. You could now consider next steps, maybe you continue with grading, start tutoring others, or look to join a band.

To complete Level Eight in Drums, students must:

1. To be able to play in a band:
This should consist of a drummer, guitarist, and keyboardist (as a minimum)
2. To be able to play in multiple different time signatures:
2/2, 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 5/4, 6/8, 7/8 etc
3. To be able to perform in a show, accompanying at least 2 other instruments:
4. To be able to create your own song, with many different grooves and fills throughout, and perform it to the class or in a show:

YOU HAVE **ACHIEVED** IT

Congratulations! You are now a Level 8 Thespian Student specialised in Drums.

Thank you for working so hard during lessons. You should be really proud of your achievements. This has been incredibly challenging but your work has paid off.

You are an asset to not only our Drum Group but to Thespian Arts.