

Basics of Beatboxing

Beatboxing is the art of using the voice to imitate drum and percussive sounds, and combining that with singing, rapping and vocal effects to make music.

If you look up 'beatboxing' on youtube you will find lots of examples of amazing beatboxing music.

This can seem totally overwhelming at first, as it is easy to think "how can I ever achieve that", but it doesn't have to be that complicated.

We start with just three basic sounds: The Bass Drum (or Kick), the Snare Drum and the hi-hat.



The Bass Drum (Kick Drum)

This is as simple as simply saying the sound of the letter 'b', as if you are saying the word 'bogus'. Its like saying the letter with just the 'attack' on the start of the sound, not the whole sound.

Try to let the pressure in the mouth build up behind the lips, and control the release of the sound. The secret to it is to try and get as much pressure behind the lips as possible, and force the air out.



The Snare Drum

There are many ways to create snare sounds with the voice.

The two main ones are 'pff' and 'k'.

'pff' is the more traditional beatbox snare sound, and 'k' is sometimes referred to as a 'rim shot'

The 'pff' sound has really two sounds - the 'p' which is the attack of the stick hitting, and the 'ff' which is the vibration of the snares.



The Hi-Hat

The closed hi-hat is one of the easiest of the sounds to get. You just think of the letter 't', so it starts with just the tongue on the roof of the mouth, and force out the sound 't'.

We always use the lower case 't' to notate the sound, rather than the upper case 'T'

To make it an 'open' hi-hat sound, just add a 's' to it, so a 'ts' sound.

Beatboxing is an improvised art form, which has developed by beatboxers listening to others and copying each other.

There are many tutorials and guide videos available on youtube.com if you'd like to see these sounds demonstrated.