Two other quick ways to create drum parts

Method 1: use the Ideas window (Sibelius 5, 6 and 7)

Method 2: use the “Add Drum Pattern” plug-in

Other Resources

Book: Guide To Standardized Drumset Notation by Norman Weinberg

Tutorial Videos
Basic drum kit parts in Sibelius

Introduction

3 ways to enter drum parts from scratch
There are 3 ways to enter drum parts from scratch in Sibelius:

• manual input using the computer keyboard
• manual input using a MIDI keyboard
• recording the drum part “live” using a MIDI keyboard

The first method is slow and tedious because you need to manually change noteheads as you go. The second and third method, which involve using a MIDI keyboard, are much quicker.

If you are going to spend time creating drum parts, I can highly recommend purchasing a MIDI keyboard - even a small inexpensive one - to make life easier.

An explanation of each method is given below.

Manual input using the computer keyboard

When creating drum kit patterns you often only need to notate one or two bars because you can copy and paste the pattern for the remainder of the score.

Because we'll need to notate two rhythmically independent parts, we need to use two voices on one stave in Sibelius.

• Voice 1 (blue) has stems pointing up
• Voice 2 (green) stems pointing down

Using voices in drum kit notation

• Use voice 1 use for parts of the kit played with hands (ie. cymbals and snare)
• Use voice 2 for parts played with the feet (bass drum, hi-hat foot pedal)

The complete pattern:

Exceptions

Not all drum patterns should be notated this way, but it’s a good general rule to go by. An exception to this rule is when the snare works rhythmically with the kick drum, as in the following example:

In the above example, the snare is notated in Voice 2, with the kick drum, whilst the hi-hat is in voice 1.

Entering the hi-hat part: voice 1

• Select bar one (it should have a blue box around it)

• Press N (for note entry)

• Enter the rhythm for hi-hat part (quavers in the space on top of the stave)

• Don’t worry that the stems are pointing down – they’ll move up automatically when we add the kick drum part

• And don’t worry about the fact that there was no sound when you entered the notes. In order for the snare drum part to make a sound, we need to change the noteheads to crosses

Changing the noteheads

• Press Escape twice to make sure you have nothing selected
• Now select bar one again

• Sibelius 5 & 6:
  ✦ Go to Window > Properties and click on the Notes tab
  ✦ From the noteheads drop-down menu, select notehead number 1 (cross)
  ✦ Press Escape
  ✦ You can also use the shortcut Alt+Shift+1 (Opt+Shift+1 on Mac)

• Sibelius 7:
  ✦ Go to Notations > Noteheads and click on the lower half of the Type button
  ✦ Select the Cross notehead (notehead number 1)
  ✦ Press Escape
  ✦ You can also use the shortcut Alt+Shift+1 (Opt+Shift+1 on Mac)

Add the snare part
• Select the 3rd hi-hat quaver and type Shift+5 to add a note a 5th below for the snare drum part

• While that note is still selected, change it back to a normal notehead by selecting notehead 0 by using the shortcut Alt+Shift+0 (Opt+Shift+0 on Mac)

• Add another snare drum note to the 7th quaver (beat 4) and change the notehead back to a normal notehead, as you did before

• Press Escape

Enter the bass drum (kick) part: voice 2
• Select bar one again
• Press **N** for note entry

• Switch to voice 2 by clicking on the Voice 2 button on the Keypad (see right), or by pressing **Alt+2** (**Opt+2** on Mac)

• Enter the bass drum rhythm. You’ll notice that the stems of the voice 1 part (hi-hat and snare) jump up automatically when the first bass drum note is entered

![Image of drum notation]

• Press **Escape**

That’s all – the pattern is complete. You can now copy and paste the pattern into the other bars of the drum part.

### Manual input using the MIDI keyboard

Instead of using your computer keyboard to enter notes on the drum kit stave, you can speed things up by using a MIDI keyboard. It’s quicker with a MIDI keyboard because the noteheads are automatically entered in the correct way (ie. hi-hat part will automatically have cross-noteheads).

**Set-up: before you start**

• Go to **File > Preferences** (Sibelius 7 and PC users of Sibelius 6 and earlier) or **Sibelius > Preferences** on Mac (Sibelius 6 and earlier)

• Select **Note Input** from the menu on the left

• Under **Percussion Staves**, select **The MIDI device’s drum map**. This means you’ll be using the inbuilt MIDI percussion instruments in your keyboard to enter notes on the drum kit stave

![Image of percussion staves settings]

**Enter the hi-hat and snare parts**

• Select bar one

• Press **N** (for note entry)
• Select quaver on the Keypad

• Play the **F sharp** below the bass clef (**F#**2) on keyboard to create the hi-hat notes. When you reach beat 2 and 4, play **F#2** and **D2** at the same time to create the hi-hat and snare simultaneously.

• Press **Escape** twice to finish

**Bass (kick) drum part**

• Select the bar again

• Press **N** and then press **Alt+2 (Opt+2)** to enter notes into voice 2

• Enter the bass drum part by using **C2** on your MIDI keyboard

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**Recording the drum part “live” with a MIDI keyboard**

Even quicker still, is recording the entire drum kit part in all at once using Sibelius’s Flexi-time input method.

**Set-up part #1**

• Go to **File > Preferences** (Sibelius 7 and PC users of Sibelius 6 and earlier) or **Sibelius > Preferences** on Mac (Sibelius 6 and earlier)

• Select **Note Input** from the menu on the left

• Under **Percussion Staves**, select **The MIDI device’s drum map** (see image below). This means you’ll be using the inbuilt MIDI percussion instruments in your keyboard to enter notes on the drum kit stave

**Set-up part #2**

Open Flexi-time Options:

• Sibelius 5 & 6: go to **Notes > Flexi-time options**

• Sibelius 7: go to **Note input > Flexi-time** and click on the Flexi-time options **dialogue launcher button** (see image right)
• Then, on the **Flexi-time tab** check the **Record into multiple voices** option (see image, right)

• On the **Notation tab**, choose the minimum rhythmic value you will play under **Adjust Rhythms** (see image, right)

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**Recording the drum pattern**

• Select the bar or rest where you want to start recording the drum part

• Click the **Record** button (on the Playback window), or use the shortcut **Ctrl+Shift+F** (**Cmd+Shift+F** on Mac)

• Play the drum pattern on your keyboard, using the MIDI drum map (ie. C2 for the kick drum, F#2 for the hi-hat and D2 for the snare)

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**Copying patterns and repeat bar signs**

**Copy and paste**

You can copy and paste a notated pattern by using one of the following methods:

• Select the bar and press **R** (for repeat)

• Select the bar and then hold down **Alt** (**Opt** on Mac) and click at the beginning of a bar
Repeat Bar Signs

Drum patterns are much easier to read if you make use of the repeat bar sign. It looks a little like a division sign and at a glance, the drummer can see that they should repeat the pattern in the previous bar.

\[
\text{Rock} \quad \begin{array}{c}
\text{Ad lib.} \\
\end{array}
\]

To add the repeat bar sign in Sibelius 6 and 7, do the following:

- Select the bar after the initial drum pattern appears
- Go to the 5th Keypad layout
- Click on the appropriate repeat bar sign (or press number 1, 2 or 4 on your computer’s numeric keypad)
- You can also use the 2-bar repeat sign or 4-bar repeat sign

Open and closed signs

Open sign
- To add an open sign (o) to a note, select the note and then choose o from the 4th keypad layout

Closed sign
- To add an closed sign (+) to a note, select the note and then choose + from the 4th keypad layout
- Using the closed and open signs will be reflected in the playback of your score

Slash notation

Slash notation indicates that a player should improvise a part in the appropriate style. There's usually a written instruction included to indicate whether the drummer should “play time” (a timekeeping pattern), or a fill or a solo.
How to create slash notation

• Create 4 crotchets on the middle line of the stave

• Select the entire bar

• Sibelius 5 & 6:
  ✦ Go to Window > Properties and click on the Notes tab
  ✦ From the noteheads drop-down menu, select notehead number 3
  ✦ Press Escape
  ✦ You can also use the shortcut Alt+Shift+3 (Opt+Shift+3 on Mac)

• Sibelius 7:
  ✦ Go to Notations > Noteheads and click on the lower half of the Type button
  ✦ Select the Beat without stem notehead (notehead number 3)
  ✦ Press Escape
  ✦ You can also use the shortcut Alt+Shift+3 (Opt+Shift+3 on Mac)

How to add a text indication ("Play time" or "Fill" or "Solo")

• Select the first note in the bar

• Press Ctrl+T (Cmd+T on Mac)

• A flashing cursor will appear and you can type the text you need

Rhythmic Notation (slashes with stems)

Rhythmic notation specifies the rhythm the drummer should play, but allows them to improvise the instrumentation.

How to create rhythmic slash notation

• Enter the rhythm on middle line of drum set stave

• Select the bar/s

• Sibelius 5 & 6:
✦ Go to Window > Properties and click on the Notes tab
✦ From the noteheads drop-down menu, select notehead number 4
✦ Press Escape
✦ You can also use the shortcut Alt+Shift+4 (Opt+Shift+4 on Mac)

- Sibelius 7:
  ✦ Go to Notations > Noteheads and click on the lower half of the Type button
  ✦ Select the Beat with stem notehead (notehead number 4)
  ✦ Press Escape
  ✦ You can also use the shortcut Alt+Shift+4 (Opt+Shift+4 on Mac)

### Numbering Bars Automatically

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Play time</th>
<th>(4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Numbering Bars" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### How to number bars

- Select the bar/s
- Sibelius 5 & 6: go to Plugins > Text > Number Bars
- Sibelius 7: go to Text > Plugins > Number Bars
- In the window that opens, choose the appropriate settings
- Click OK
Two other quick ways to create drum parts

**Method 1: use the Ideas window (Sibelius 5, 6 and 7)**

- Sibelius 5 & 6: go to **Window > Ideas**
- Sibelius 7: go to **View > Panels > Ideas**
- Click on the **Library** tab
- Search for drum parts using the search field at the top – eg. type in “Jazz drums”
- Click and hold the mouse button on an Idea to hear it

When you find one you like, copy and paste it into your score

- Select the idea in the Ideas window
- Select the destination bar in your score
- Click on the **Paste Idea** button

**Method 2: use the “Add Drum Pattern” plug-in**

- Sibelius 5 & 6: go to **Plug-ins > Composing Tools > Add Drum Pattern**
- Sibelius 7: go to **Note Input > Plug-ins** and under **Composing Tools**, choose **Add Drum Pattern**
- Choose a style from the drop-down menu
- Click **OK**. The drum part will be added to your score

**Other Resources**

**Book: Guide To Standardized Drumset Notation by Norman Weinberg**

- Published by the Percussive Arts Society
- Distributed by Hal Leonard (06620063)

**Tutorial Videos**

- I’ve made 3 tutorial videos about creating drum parts in Sibelius that can be found on Youtube: [www.youtube.com/katiesw1](http://www.youtube.com/katiesw1)