

PiTTi Hecht

Conga **Basics**

- >> Stroke techniques with example photos
- >> Numerous exercises
- >> Many rhythms from various musical styles

Incl. CD



PiTTi Hecht

*Conga***Basics**

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Conga, Shaker, LP JamBlock played by Pitti "Conga" Hecht
Bass played by Detlef "DEFF" Wiederhöft
Recorded at: Red lounge music, Cologne
Translation: Sylkie Monoff, www.sylkiemonoff.com

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Preface

A warm welcome to “Conga Basics”!

This book will make you play the congas with the help of easy exercises. Congas fascinate me. I have been playing and teaching them since 1978 and I come into contact with them almost every day. As a conga player, I travel through the whole world, get inspired by many great musicians and motivated by my audience. In over 400 workshops and more than 5,000 live performances I’ve almost always had a couple of congas with me as well. No matter if it is Pop music, Latin, Jazz, Rock, Folk or just simply drum music – I love the congas and their sound.

With the help of this book you can quickly learn how to play the congas and plunge into the wonderful world of rhythms. You will see how simple and groovy conga drums may be and how easily you can make music with a CD or with your friends.

Don’t hesitate and start right now.

Have much fun and I’ll see you on stage!

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Preparatory exercise for the open tone

Rest two thirds of your hand on the conga drumhead.



Now lift the whole forearm.
The wrist stays stretched.



Then place the hand back in its initial position without playing a tone.



Repeat this movement several times without a sound to get a feel for the drumhead. Switch your hands after a while and focus on the feeling in your fingers and the hand when touching the drumhead.

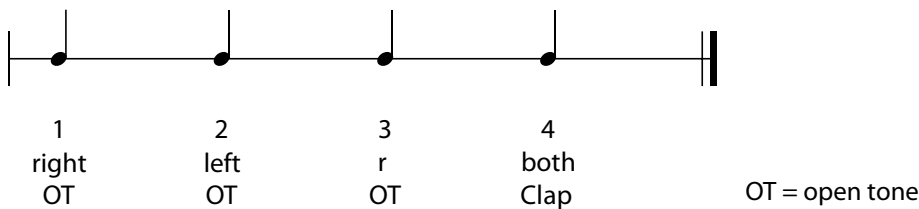
The first practice rhythm

Before the actual conga rhythms, here are a couple practicing rhythms. This way you will get used to your instrument and the unfamiliar movement sequences. Sit down comfortably, loosen your arms and concentrate on the exercises. If you are insecure about a stroke, look at the photos from the previous pages again and listen to the sound examples for the exercises.

Now play the first rhythm in 4/4 time. The hands play alternate strokes. Use the open tone (OT). Start with the right hand. Clap on 4 and start all over from the top. Play everything nicely, slowly and evenly. Listen to the sound of your strokes and experiment a little with the hand position until you like the sound.

Play the first practicing rhythm for about 2–5 minutes.

Exercise 9

**9**

The second practice rhythm

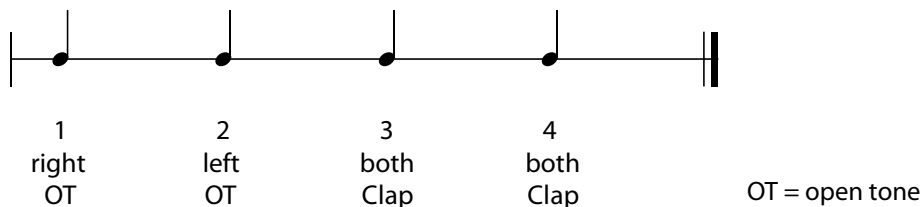
Now you play two strokes on the congas and then you clap twice.

Start with the right hand again. Play everything really slowly and evenly.

As a variation, you may start very slowly, become faster and slow down again without stopping.

Play the second practicing rhythm for about 2–5 minutes in different tempos.

Exercise 10

**10**

Rock

For rock, you play loudly and with few variations. Make sure that the strokes on 4, +, 1 are very accurate with 4 falling on the right drum, the low conga.

As a variation, you may as well play the “One and” softly with the left hand.

♩ = 110



50

Hand-to-Hand

Hand-to-Hand musical notation for Rock. The notation shows a sequence of strokes on a staff with a double bar line at the end. The strokes are: 1 right OT, + left OT, 2 right CS, + left MT, 3 right MT, + left MT, 4 right OT, + left MT. The notation is labeled 'Quinto Conga'.

Hand-to-Hand / Floating-Hand-Mix

Hand-to-Hand / Floating-Hand-Mix musical notation for Rock. The notation shows a sequence of strokes on a staff with a double bar line at the end. The strokes are: 1 right OT, + left OT, 2 right CS, + right MT, 3 left H, + left T, 4 right OT, + left T. The notation is labeled 'Quinto Conga'.

Pop Slow Beat

The Pop Slow Beat is a truly universal rhythm for slow and midtempo musical pieces. Therefore, it can be employed in many different musical styles.

Here is an example for a slow pop music piece.

♩ = 126



51

Pop Slow Beat musical notation (first line). The notation shows a sequence of strokes on a staff with a double bar line at the end. The strokes are: 1 right OT, + left MT, 2 right CS, + left MT, 3 right MT, + left OT, 4 right OT, + left MT. The notation is labeled 'Quinto Conga'.

Pop Slow Beat musical notation (second line). The notation shows a sequence of strokes on a staff with a double bar line at the end. The strokes are: 1 right OT, + left H, 2 right CS, + left T, 3 left H, + left OT, 4 right OT, + left MT. The notation is labeled 'Quinto Conga'.

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