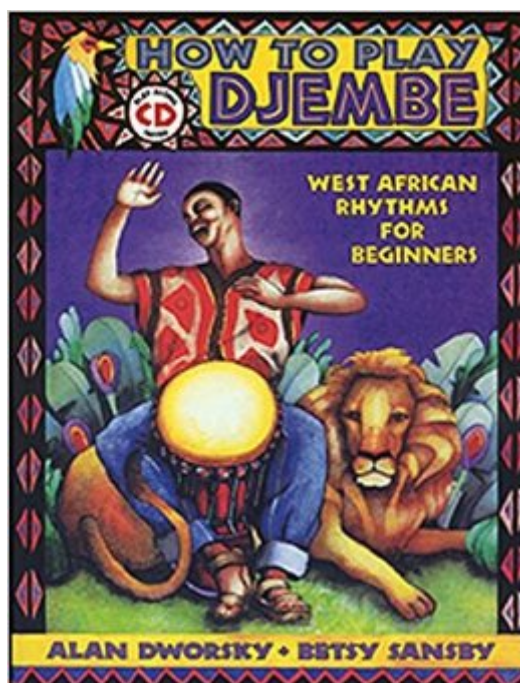


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How To Play Djembe (Book/CD Set)



Synopsis

This book is a complete, step-by-step, user friendly course on how to play djembe. Right from the start, in addition to learning how to make all the basic strokes, you'll be learning interlocking parts for some of the most popular West African rhythms; Kuku, Djole, Kassa, Madan, Suku, Sunguru Bani and Thiba. After working through only a few lessons, you'll be able to put the parts together and start playing these irresistible rhythms with your friends. The rhythms are written in simple charts, so no music reading is required. The CD that comes with the book gives you a chance to hear how each part sounds separately and how the parts for each rhythm fit together. It was recorded by John Camara, a master drummer from Bamako, Mali. Each rhythm lasts at least five minutes, so you'll have plenty of time to play along. And when John solos during the final three minutes of each track, you'll feel the thrill of playing your part along with an ensemble and lead drummer.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

If you are trying to learn to play the djembe "in a void", i.e., by yourself - then this book & CD are for you. They won't substitute for a flesh & blood teacher BUT they are good, second-best form of instruction. The book is well laid-out, uses layman's vocabulary, and notation is easy to use and interpret, though I am still figuring out triplets and 12/8 time (!). Instructions include playing position and posture, the "handing" of the three basic sounds: bass, tone/open, and slap, as well as how to tune your rope-strung African djembe. A nice feature for actual practicing is that the book will lay flat

on the floor and the musical notation is printed large enough that you can see it from a standing position. Dworsky and Sansby start you off learning syncopating parts to Kuku, a very popular West African rhythm, as well as Djole, Kassa, Suku, Madan and a couple others. The accompanying CD, is perhaps the key element to this instruction. The CD contains the djembe artistry of Sidi-Joh Mohammed Camara, a master drummer from Bamako, Mali. This is what makes the whole process really come alive. You learn the parts by reading and practicing, then playing what you hear on the CD with Sidi. You also hear Sidi-Joh playing the parts ensemble with others so you know what the whole sound and rhythm are like. In the instructional tracks, usually two parts are played. You can separately listen to either part by turning your CD player's balance either full left or full right, and play along with Sidi. I am an enthusiastic beginner on djembe having only started 4 months ago. I'm only able to get personal instruction sporadically. Considering that the book and CD are about the same cost as an hour's private lesson with a djembe artist, it's a good buy. Heartily recommended.

I have the Conga Book by the same authors and have been pleased with both. Their system of notation makes learning rhythms easy, and their helpful hints and comments enhance the learning experience. The CD is what truly makes this book 5 stars. It has a multitrack feature. You can adjust the balance on your stereo to hear one drum part at a time. I like to play one part while my stereo plays another. In addition, the tracks go for about five minutes so you can really get into the rhythm, build stamina, and maybe practice soloing! Happy drumming!

In general, this book/CD combination is great. The text of the book is clear, the authors' approach in starting with simple patterns and then adding to / subtracting from the simple pattern to arrive at the traditional pattern is very effective. The authors' present the material clearly and succinctly, and is paced very well. This book is a good resource for getting started on the djembe. There is only one thing that keeps me from giving this book/CD five stars. A previous reviewer says the CD allows you to hear what the "whole rhythm" is like, which isn't entirely true. The book doesn't address bell and djun-djun (bass drum) parts at all, and these parts are not present on the CD. These rhythms are incomplete with just the djembe parts. The book/CD never gives the student a complete view of what the African rhythms, as played by a proper ensemble, should sound like. I don't fault them for not teaching these parts, as this is a book about playing djembe, but much of the rhythm context is missing. With the excess space on the CD, the removal of the sample tracks from the "Jaguar..." album, and a bit of creative work, the authors should have been able to give the listener a taste of what the full rhythms sound like, even if only for a couple minutes each. I still recommend this book

to the beginner, but recommend that the beginner seek another source as well that better emphasizes the whole of the rhythms.

This book teaches you the basics of Djembe drumming. The book includes a great sounding CD to play along with. However; the authors should have included more complex patterns and rhythms. But, with only 1-2 hours per day of practice for a month, you will probably surprise yourself with how much you have improved.

The book is not bad.. but so much of learning the djembe has to do with sound, listening, playing, and repeating. The cd is not user friendly. Each track has multiple drum "lessons" on it, and they are not marked or verified what is what. This cd could have been very helpful.. even if it said lesson 5 is on track 2 at 2:15, I could have worked with that. But just playing a bunch of songs on one track and having a new drummer figure it out, is poorly executed. On top of having multiple lessons on a single non-user-friendly track, you also need a stereo that fades from left to right, I can do this on my computer, but it's still very confusing. It's not easy to pick up where you left off, the entire thing is a complete pain. I'm sure it was a good idea while they were making it, but in the end, it has ruined the book for me.

I bought this book and CD and also the DVD Gentle Djembe for beginners. I didn't like the book and CD. The instruction in the book is good but the CD is only useful if you can separate the left and right sounds to hear each part of a rhythm. It is designed for using the CD on a stereo player that can control each part independently. Neither my CD/DVD player, or an iPod has this capability. It would have been more useful if the author had played each part separately so that you could hear them individually. i don't think I would recommend this book/cd to anyone.

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