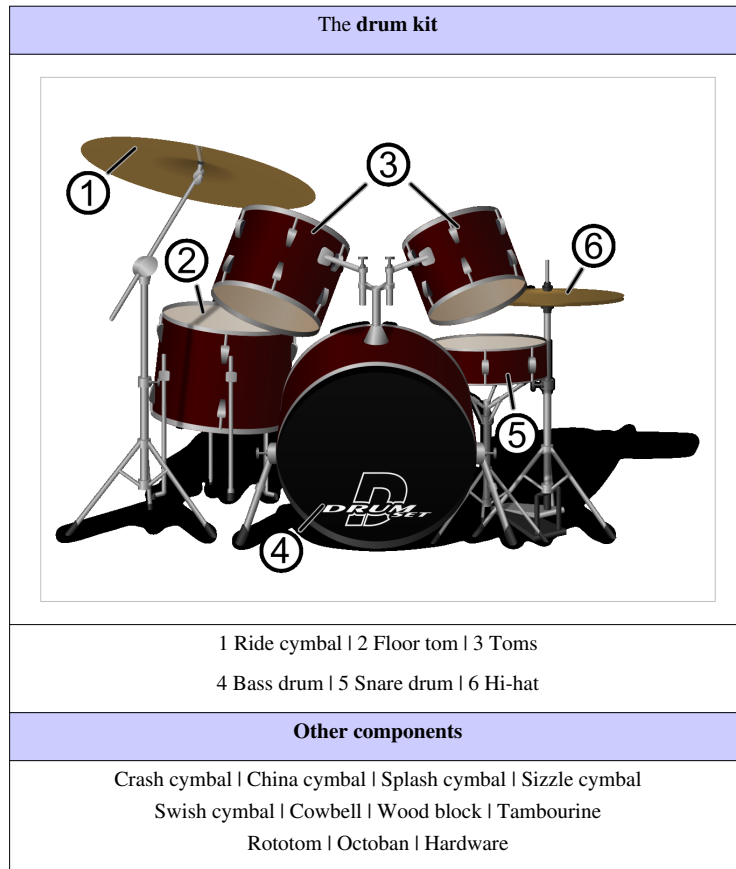


# Rototom



**Rototoms** are drums which have no shell. They consist of a single head in a die-cast zinc or aluminum frame. Unlike most other drums, they have a variable definite pitch. Composers are known to write for them as tuned instruments, demanding specific pitches. Rototoms are often used to extend the tom range of a standard drum kit. They were invented by the drumhead company Remo.

They can be tuned quickly by rotating the head, which sits in a threaded metal ring. Rotation raises or lowers the tension hoop relative to the rim, which increases or decreases the pitch of the drum by increasing or decreasing the tension of the drum head.

Master James Holland, former percussionist of the London Philharmonic Orchestra, highly recommends them in his book "Percussion",<sup>[1]</sup> which is part of the Yehudi Menuhin Music Guides series. Rototoms are often used as a training substitute for timpani students, as they have a very similar sound, are not as loud and expensive as timpani, and do not require as much room space.

A few drumming greats who used rototoms were Bill Bruford and Terry Bozzio. Roger Taylor of Duran Duran used rototoms extensively on their self titled debut album Duran Duran of 1981. Roger Taylor of Queen has used rototoms since the early 1970s most recently in the cover of "Let There Be Drums" on the Return of the Champions DVD and album. Bev Bevan, the drummer for the Electric Light Orchestra also used rototoms, most notably on the albums *Discovery* and *Secret Messages*. Nick Mason of Pink Floyd used rototoms to record the distinctive introduction to "Time" on the 1973 album "The Dark Side of the Moon". The intro to Curtis Mayfield's



"Pusherman", heard on the *Superfly* soundtrack, makes prominent use of the drum's pitch-sliding feature. Phil Collins of Genesis used rototoms earlier in his career. Taylor Hawkins of the Foo Fighters uses several rototoms in his kit as well.

## Notable Rototom Users

- Bridgemen Drum & Bugle Corps from Bayonne, New Jersey
  - Danny Carey of Tool
  - Tim Alexander formerly of Primus
  - Roger Taylor of Queen
  - Roger Taylor of Duran Duran
  - Fang (Mike Baldwin) of A.V.K.
  - Nick Mason of Pink Floyd
  - Bev Bevan of Electric Light Orchestra
  - Bill Bruford of Yes and King Crimson
  - Terry Chambers of XTC
  - Phil Collins of Genesis
  - Neil Peart of Rush
  - Stewart Copeland of The Police
  - Terry Bozzio
  - Taylor Hawkins of Foo Fighters
  - Lucius Borich of Cog
  - John Fell of Heroine Sheiks
  - Fenriz of Darkthrone
  - Damon Che of Don Caballero
  - Lol Tolhurst of The Cure
  - Alex Van Halen of Van Halen
  - Mike Mangini of Extreme
  - Mike Portnoy formerly of Dream Theater
  - Tim Fogarty of El Ten Eleven
  - Jon Farriss of INXS
  - Yukihiro of L'Arc-en-Ciel
  - Shinya of Dir En Grey
  - Glenn McClue of Progressive Transitions
  - Eric Kretz of Stone Temple Pilots
  - Jeremy Colson of Steve Vai
  - Travis Barker of Transplants
  - Arin Ilejay of Avenged Sevenfold
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## References

[1] "Percussion", Kahn & Averill Publishers; New Ed edition (June 1, 2001), ISBN 1-871082-39-0 (<http://www.amazon.com/dp/1871082390/>)

## External links

- Roto Tom Drums Fan Website (<http://www.rototomdrums.com>)
  - Photo of rototom closeup (<http://www.8thstreet.com/images/remo-rototoms.jpg>)
  - Photo of rototom in a drum kit (<http://www-ccrma.stanford.edu/~be/drum/rototom.gif>)
  - More pictures of rototom ([http://ostinato\\_drumming.tripod.com/id45.html](http://ostinato_drumming.tripod.com/id45.html))
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