

# Meeting a Piece of Music for the First Time

Peter Erskine, p.60 Jan 1988 Modern Drummer

1. Be mindful of your manners, trying not to be guilty of musically inappropriate forwardness.
2. Have some idea where the backbeat should go.
3. Get out of your own determined mind-set and have an awareness of the musical context.
4. Start out simple, with your ears wide open so that you are not filling up the musical space with your own ambitions.
5. That way you can hear what the bassist and rhythm guitar player are doing. Then you can get a little more clever or intimate.
6. Respect what the rest of the rhythm section is doing.
7. If they aren't doing anything continuous and steady, the drums need to provide that.
8. A good drumbeat should be as solid as a mountain, while at the same time having the quality of sunlight or fresh air coming through it.
9. When in doubt, play simply and not too busy. And always listen to the bass player, whose pattern will guide your feet and hands as to what to play.