

Drum Rack Or Stands - Drum Racks And Drum Stands Discussed

Stands Stands for drum kits were initially fairly light weight, because they were designed to hold one cymbal, or a snare drum, or later on two rack toms. However, it wasn't until the 1980's that drum companies beefed up the hardware making it possible to have a steady base of support for multiple cymbal arms, etc. For a while stands keep getting heavier and bigger, finally adding counter-weight booms and getting big enough to jack up your car for a tire change. Nowadays, that "race" has backed off a bit and drum kit stands are available in a variety of sizes (and weights), with clamps and attachments for all sorts of gear. So you do not necessarily need a separate stand for each cymbal or other item with those options available nowadays.

Racks Drum racks had been "home made" versions until recent years. I remember seeing one from the 1930's. They are now available from several major companies in a variety of shapes and materials (aluminum, steel, PVC, other composites) with all sorts of extensions, add ons, clamps, arms you name it. It can probably be configured now from commercially available parts.

Okay, So Why Choose One Over The Other I have used both racks and traditional stands. I have even used a combination of by having spanner tubes connected to cymbals stands (which was the best of both worlds for me). It worked great for my touring needs because all of the cymbals, toms, microphones, etc. were on the spanner tubes and the supports were actually heavy duty cymbal stands. That made it easy to set up because I didn't have to juggle a one legged post while trying to clamp on a fairly heavy (because of all of the attachment clamps) spanner tube. As just the 28 clamps on the tubes made them very heavy.

About Using Racks If you seen the photos of Pasha's drum kit, then you realize that without using rack system components that he would require an incredible number of specialty stands. There is no question to me that using the racks are a must for him. Racks can eliminate a lot of floor clutter if you use a lot of gear that is now on (or else would be) on separate stands. It is now possible to have everything, including your snare drum, and hi-hat, attached to a rack set-up. If you don't use a rug to mark the floor positions of the components of your drum kit, then a rack might help you with positioning the components of your drum kit the same way each time. It might not happen to you, but I have experienced times when the tubes of the rack interfered with the spot I wanted to place a cymbal or a tom. So it takes a lot of time and trial & error to get it all "just right". That also means that a rack system might not be as easy to modify when you find yourself on a stage with less than desirable space.

About Using Stands Stands can be adjusted and moved "on the spot" without a lot of hassle in situations like a small stage. It is also possible to significantly reduce the number of stands by using clamps and attachments. Stands are a more flexible option if you tend to change your drum kit configuration for different performances.

Transport Whether you choose to use a rack or traditional stands, they must be transported to the next performance. So if you do a lot of one niters, either way could mean schlepping a lot of weight around if you have a large drum kit. I don't believe there is much of a weight or load volume difference. I did not want 400 pounds of drum stands to transport so here are some of my personal set-up decisions that might give you some ideas. I have reduced my hardware load considerably during the past five years. The attachments and clamps available now have made that possible. I don't usually use a really big set, so this is what works for me. On my left side I have one single braced stand that holds a cymbal, a mounted tambourine, and a rack tom. On my bass drum, the mounts hold two rack toms and a cymbal. On my right side, a second single-braced stand holds three cymbals, a cowbell and a jam block. The other hardware left to pack is my throne, bass drum pedals, snare stand and hi-hat stand. I purchased an SKB Hardware case (that looks much like a hard shell golf club flight case) that is 48" x 18" and has tilt-back wheels. I do not break down the tiers on my stands. I just remove the cymbals rods. I did not disassemble my hi-hat or snare stand. I simply collapse the legs. I can lay the still-assembled stands into the SKB case for transport. When I set up my kit, it is just a matter of placing the cymbals rods back into the ratchets and opening up the tripod legs. I think racks look really cool with some kits, although when they get really bulky it kind of hides the beautiful finishes on some drum kits. But, I think too many floor stands can look just as cluttered also. Maybe that's just the reality of using a really large drum kit. I have used racks, stands, and the combination of both. I had my logic and reasons for that. Nowadays my playing involves using various components, depending on the performances requirements. Since I change things quite often I'm back to using stands. If I had a larger kit and was playing the exact same set-up each performance, I'd probably get my rack gear back out. So, like so many aspects of drumming, it comes down to your personal preference of comfort, stability, convenience, portability, and even the desired "look". hey, it's all about you. Cheers, Ken Sanders

About the Author

Ken is uses stands by [Pacific Drums](#) and Gibraltar [Drum Rack](#). Ken is also an active [Drum Forum](#) member at Drum Solo Artist where he is answering drum related questions, and helping drummers with tips and advices.

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