I'VE GOT RHYTHM

Exploring Rhythm and Pulse



A. Key Words

PULSE – A regular **BEAT** that is felt throughout much music. Certain beats of the pulse can be emphasised to establish regular pulse patterns *e.g.*
***1** 2 3 4, **1** 2 3 4 = a 4-beat pulse*
***1** 2 3, **1** 2 3 = a 3-beat pulse (often called a **WALTZ**)*
***1** 2, **1** 2, **1** 2 = a 2-beat pulse (often called a **MARCH**)*
RHYTHM – A series of sounds or notes of different lengths that create a pattern. A rhythm usually fits with a regular pulse. Everyday sentences can be used to create rhythms. The patterns made by words create rhythms and this rhythm has a 4-beat pulse:

Music is my favourite

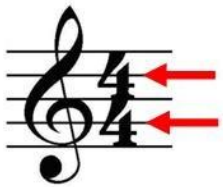


ACCENT – Emphasising or stressing a particular note or notes. Accents affect the **ARTICULATION** and are shown with this symbol >
DURATION – The length of a sound – *long/short*
TEMPO – The speed of a sound or piece of music – *fast/slow*
TEXTURE – Layers of sound or how much sound is heard – *thick/thin*
STRUCTURE – The organisation of sound or how sounds are ordered
SILENCE – The absence of sound or no sound, shown in music by **RESTS**.
RHYTHM GRID NOTATION – A way of writing down and recording rhythms using boxes



B. Time Signatures
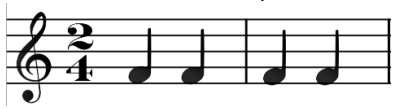
A **TIME SIGNATURE** tells us how many beats (and what type of beats) there are in each **BAR** of music and is made up of two numbers at the beginning of a piece of music.



Top Number = **HOW MANY BEATS**
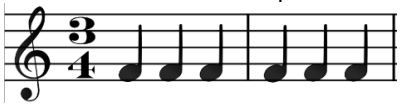
Bottom Number = **TYPE OF BEAT**

2/4 = **TWO CROTCHET** beats per **BAR**
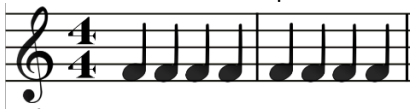


*e.g. a **MARCH***

3/4 = **THREE CROTCHET** beats per **BAR**



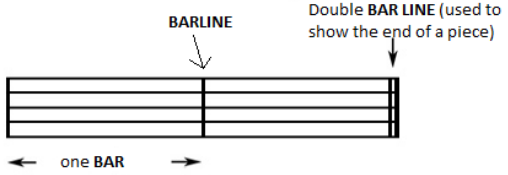
*e.g. a **WALTZ***

4/4 = **FOUR CROTCHET** beats per **BAR**



Bottom Numbers:
2 = Minim 4 = Crotchet 8 = Quaver

BARS AND BARLINES



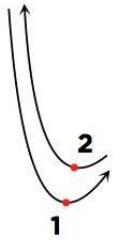
C. Ostinatos, Cyclic and Polyrhythms

RHYTHMIC OSTINATO – a short repeated pattern made up of notes of different lengths but without a particular pitch.
CYCLIC RHYTHM – a rhythm which is repeated over and over again (in a cycle) many times.
POLYRHYTHM - the use of several rhythms performed simultaneously, often overlapping to create a thick, **POLYRHYTHMIC TEXTURE**. A common polyrhythm often used in Latin-American and African Music is to play a 3-beat and 2-beat rhythm simultaneously as shown below. This is called a "3 against 2 Polyrhythm"

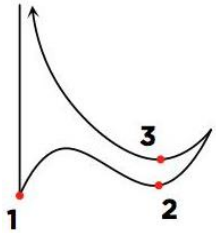
3 beat rhythm	X		X		X		X		X		X	
2 beat rhythm	X			X			X			X		

D. Conducting Pulses and Beats

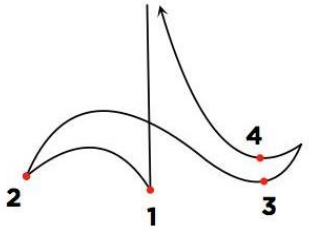
Conducting a 2-beat Pulse/Beat (*e.g. a March)*



Conducting a 3-beat Pulse/Beat *(e.g. a Waltz)*



Conducting a 4-beat Pulse/Beat



E. Note Values - Note Names, Symbols and Duration

Note Name	Note Symbol	Note Value
Semibreve		**4 beats**
Minim		**2 beats**
Crotchet		**1 beat**
Quaver		**½ of a beat**
Pair of Quavers		**2 x ½ beats = 1**

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