

RHYTHM

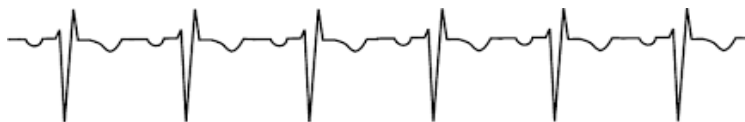
Whatever other elements a given piece of music may have (e.g., patterns in pitch or timbre), rhythm is the one indispensable element of all music. **Rhythm can exist without melody, but melody cannot exist without rhythm.** We differentiate between different rhythms not only by the number of beats per measure, indicated at the beginning of each piece of music by the time signature. Rhythm also differs through tempo, accents, syncopation, different kind of percussion instruments and above all through the innumerable musical styles and their characteristics. Let's get familiar with the various terms we need to describe rhythm.

Rhythm: refers to the arrangement of beats in a piece of music. Rhythm is expressed graphically with **notes** and **rests** (durations of silence in which no notes are played).

BEAT

Beat: is a regular, recurrent pulsation that divides music into equal units of time.

Upbeat/Offbeat: is an unaccented pulse preceding the downbeat.



Downbeat: is the first, or stressed, beat of the measure.

A Beat can be strong or weak, simple or complex, sloppy or tidy, regular or irregular, syncopated or unsyncopated, quantized or unquantized, on beat or off beat.

SYNCOPATION

Syncopation: when an accented note comes where we normally would not expect one, the effect is known as **syncopation**. Syncopation also occurs when a weak beat is accented, as in



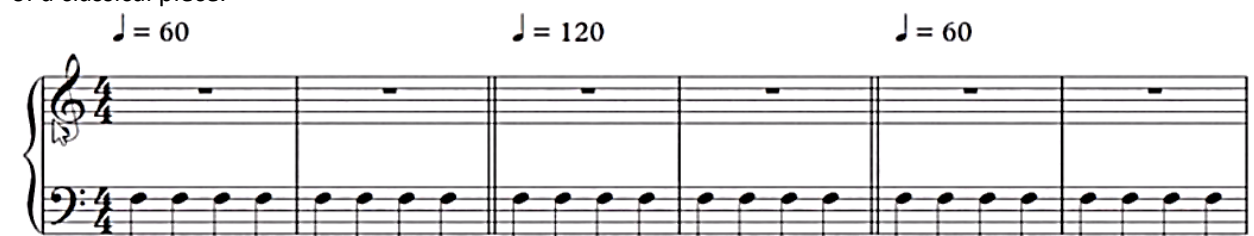
ACCENT

Accent: an accent is an emphasis placed on a note specifically indicated by an accent mark. Accents serve to articulate rhythmic groupings.



TEMPO

Tempo is the speed of the beat, the basic pace of the music. Nowadays that is usually expressed in BPM, meaning the total number of Beats Per Minute. A tempo indication in Italian is usually given at the beginning of a classical piece.



Italian Words commonly used to describe tempo:

- **Largo:** Very slow
- **Moderato:** Moderate
- **Allegro:** Moderately fast
- **Accelerando:** A gradual quickening of tempo
- **Adagio:** Slow, leisurely

- **Larghetto:** Not as slow as largo
- **Andante:** Moving with a moderate tempo
- **Vivace:** Lively, animated, brisk
- **Ritardando:** a gradual slowing down of tempo
- **Andantino:** Faster than andante
- **Lento:** Slow
- **Allegretto:** A little slower than allegro
- **Prestissimo:** Very rapidly
- **Rubato:** to be played with a flexible tempo
- **Presto:** Fast, rapid

Words added to tempo indications to make them more specific: **molto:** much and **non troppo:** not too much

MEASURE/BAR

Measure/Bar: a measure (or bar) refers to a single unit of time featuring a specific number of beats played at a tempo. When writing music on a page, composers break their compositions into measures—digestible sections that help players perform the music as intended.

The image shows a musical staff in 4/4 time with a tempo marking of ♩ = 150. The staff contains a single measure of music with lyrics underneath. Above the staff are five chord symbols: D-7, D♭7, C-7sus4, and B7♭5. The lyrics are: "This is just a lit - tle sam - ba built up - on one sin - gle note. Oth - er So I come back to this one note as I must come back to you. I will".

METER/TIME SIGNATURE

Meter/Time Signature: The organization of beats into regular groups.

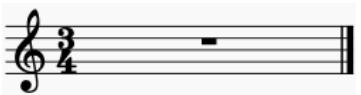
Duple Meter:



a measure has 2 half beats, we count **1-2, 1-2.**

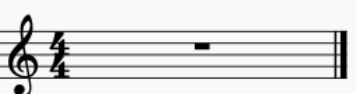
a measure has 2 quarter beats, we count **1-2, 1-2.** (e.g. **Tritsch-Tratsch-Polka by Johann Strauss II**)

Triple Meter:



a measure has 3 quarter beats. All waltzes are in triple meter, we count **1-2-3.** (e. g. **Nothing Else Matters by Metallica**)

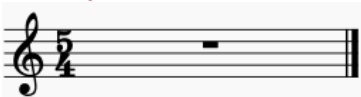
Quadruple Meter:



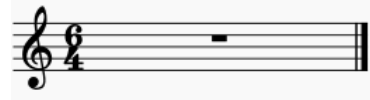
Antônio Carlos Jobim)

a measure has 4 quarter beats. The downbeat is strongest; but there is another stress on the third beat, which is stronger than the second and fourth beats and weaker than the first: **1-2-3-4.** (e.g. **One Note Samba by**

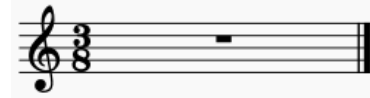
Quintuple Meter:



a measure has 5 beats. It's usually counted in a group of 3 quarter notes followed by a group of two, but sometimes you'll find it counted in the reverse: 2 then 3. (e.g. **Take Five by Paul Desmond**)

Compound Meter:

each beat in a measure can be subdivided by three. A beat with 6/4-time signature can be divided by two or three, it depends on the context.) equals 1 beat.) equals 1 beat. (e.g. **Hey Deedle, Deedle – traditional**)

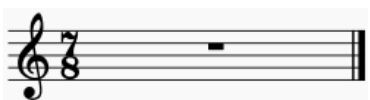
Simple Meter:

Invention 4 in D Minor, BWV 775)

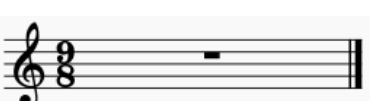
The time signatures 3/8 and 3/4 have almost the same rhythm structure in the way the beat is counted off. However, because 3/8 uses eighth notes instead of quarter notes, the eighth notes get the beat. (e.g. **Bach-**

Sextuple Meter:

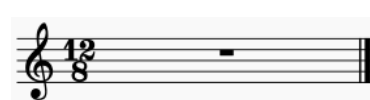
a measure has 6 eighth notes. The downbeat is strongest, and the fourth beat also receives a stress: **1-2-3-4-5-6**. (e.g. **If I Ain't Got You by Alicia Keys**)

Septuple Meter:

with 7 beats to the measure, In quintuple meter, for example, the measure is subdivided into groups of 2 and 3 beats: **1-2-3/4-5** or **1-2/3-4-5**. (e.g. **Money by Pink Floyd**)

Compound Triple:

a measure has 3 notes (three dotted quarter notes), thus making the meter triple. (e.g. **Apocalypse by Genesis**)

12/8 Meter:

Hold the Line by Toto)

each quarter note beat consisted of a group of three eighth notes (also called an eighth note triplet). With 4 beats and 3 sub-beats in each (4x3), you get a total of 12 sub-pulses. This is the basis of what we call 12/8. (e.g.

RHYTHM STYLES

Music can be described in terms of many genres and styles. Classifications are often arbitrary and may be disputed and closely related forms often overlap.

Popular Genres

Reggae, Down-tempo, Chill-out, Hip-hop, Jazz and Funk, Pop, R&B, Rock, Metal

Electronic genres and their tempo ranges include:

House, Deep House, Tech House

Electro House, Progressive House, Trance, UK Garage, Dubstep, Trap, Techno, Hardstyle, Jungle, Drum and Bass

Finally, some different social/partner dances:

Waltz, Foxtrot, Charleston, Tango, Cha Cha Cha, Rumba, Samba, Salsa, Jive, Paso Doble