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RHYTHM

Simple Meters;

The Beat and Its Division into Two Parts

The Rhythm Generator on MySearchLab provides virtually unlimited rhythm-reading exercises corresponding to this chapter.

An important attribute of the accomplished musician is the ability to “hear mentally”—that is, to know how a given piece of music sounds without recourse to an instrument. Sight singing, together with ear training and other studies in musicianship, helps develop that attribute. The goal of sight singing is the ability to sing *at first sight*, with correct rhythm and pitch, a piece of music previously unknown to the performer. Accomplishing that goal demonstrates that the music symbols on paper were comprehended mentally before being performed. In contrast, skill in reading music on an instrument often represents an ability to interpret music symbols as fingerings, with no way of demonstrating prior mental comprehension of the score.

To help you become proficient in sight singing, this text provides you with many carefully graded music examples. Beginning in this chapter, you will perform the simplest of exercises in reading rhythm, after which you will perform easy melodic lines that incorporate those same rhythmic patterns.

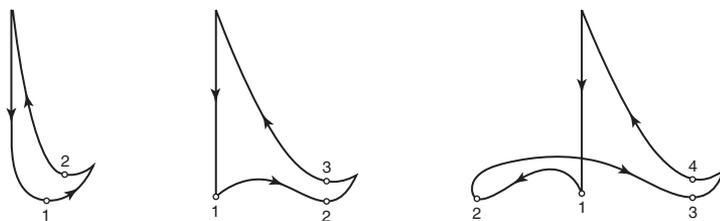
RHYTHMIC READING

In simple meters (also known as simple time), the beat is divisible into two equal parts; therefore, any note value so divisible can represent the beat. Most commonly used are the quarter note ($\text{♩} = \text{♩} \text{♩}$), the eighth note ($\text{♪} = \text{♪} \text{♪}$), and the half note ($\text{♩} = \text{♩} \text{♩}$), though other values (♩ , ♩ , ♩) are sometimes seen. In this chapter, the note value representing the simple division

of the beat (that is, half of the beat) will be the shortest note value used. In reading, follow these suggestions:

1. *Rhythmic syllables.* Accurate rhythmic reading is best accomplished through the use of spoken or sung rhythmic syllables. Any spoken method (even a neutral syllable) is preferable to clapping or tapping for a variety of reasons: dynamics and sustained notes are more easily performed vocally, faster tempos are possible, and vocalizing leaves the hands free for conducting. There are a variety of good rhythmic syllable systems in current use; several popular systems are illustrated in Appendix A.
2. *The conductor's beat.* The use of conductor's beats is highly recommended. Shown below are hand-movement patterns for two beats, three beats, and four beats per measure. Successive downbeats of each pattern coincide with successive bar lines. You should conduct with your right hand.

The Conductor's Beats: two beats, three beats, and four beats per measure



The *downbeat* (1) drops in a straight line and describes a small bounce at the instant the first beat occurs. The first downbeat is preceded by an *upbeat*, beginning at the point of the last beat of the pattern being used. Therefore, the last beat of each measure is the upbeat for the following measure.

Practice these three conductor's beats without reading or singing. Next, with the left hand, tap twice for each beat of the conductor's beat. These taps represent the normal simple division of the beat-note value. When you no longer have to concentrate on these hand movements, you are ready to begin rhythmic reading and sight singing.

3. *Striving for continuity.* It should be obvious that only the first performance of an exercise can be considered reading at first sight. (After that, you are practicing!) Therefore, on the first try, you should not stop to correct errors or to study what to do next. As you read an exercise, use the conductor's beat and tapping to keep going without pause until the very end. If you make a mistake, don't hesitate or stop; the next "1" (downbeat) will be the next bar line where you can pick up your reading and continue to the end. If you made errors or lost your place, you can review and practice in anticipation of doing better on the next exercise. Follow this procedure beginning with the very first exercises. Conducting and tapping easy exercises now is the best way to prepare yourself for the more difficult exercises to follow.
4. *Notation for rhythmic reading.* Exercises such as *a* on the following page are designed specifically for rhythmic reading and therefore use a simple one-line staff. However, reading rhythmic notation from a melodic line, as in example *b*, should begin as soon as possible. As seen in this pair of examples

(illustrated with one of many possible solmization systems), there is no difference in the resulting rhythmic performance.

(a)

(b)

The melodies of Chapters 2 and 3 include only the same type of rhythm patterns found in this chapter.

Section 1. The quarter note as the beat unit. Beat-note values and larger only: ♩ = 1 beat, ♪ = 2 beats, ♫ = 3 beats, ♮ = 4 beats.

Not all exercises begin on the first beat of the measure. Determine the beat number of the first note before reading. If there is an anacrusis (i.e., a pick-up), silently count from the downbeat and enter on the appropriate beat.

1.1

1.2

1.3

1.4

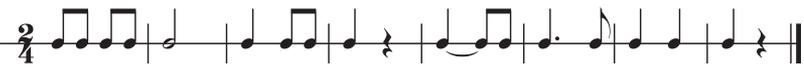
1.5

1.6

1.7

1.8

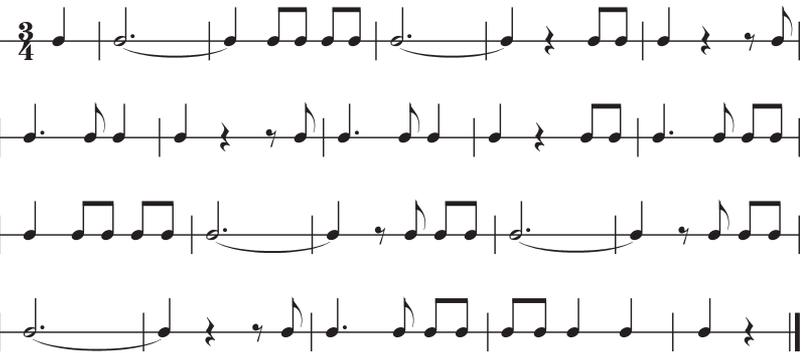
1.18 $\frac{2}{4}$ 

1.19 $\frac{2}{4}$ 

1.20 $\frac{3}{4}$ 

1.21 $\frac{4}{4}$ 

1.22 $\frac{4}{4}$ 

1.23 $\frac{3}{4}$ 

1.24 $\frac{4}{4}$ 

Section 3. Two-part drills.

Suggested methods of performance:

1. One person: Tap both lines, using both hands.
2. One person: Recite one line while tapping the other.
3. Two people: Each recite a line.

1.25

Musical notation for drill 1.25 in 2/4 time. It consists of two staves. The first staff has a sequence of notes: quarter, quarter, eighth, eighth, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter. The second staff has notes: quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter. The piece ends with a double bar line.

1.26

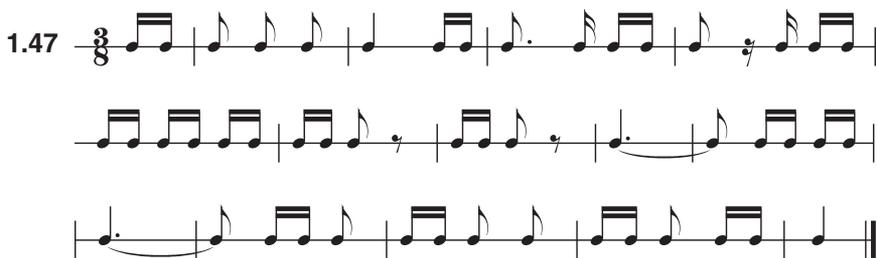
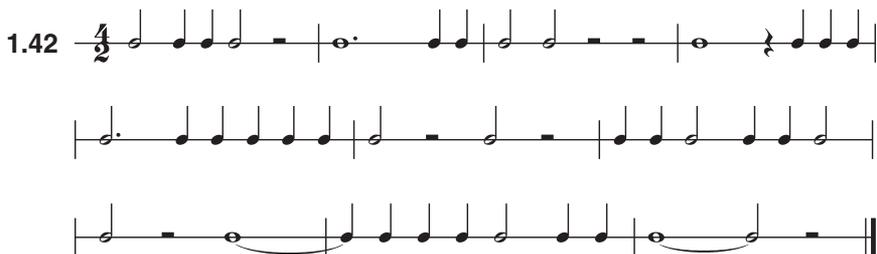
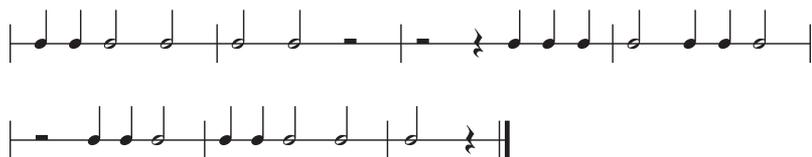
Musical notation for drill 1.26 in 3/4 time. It consists of three staves. The first staff has notes: eighth, eighth, eighth, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter. The second staff has notes: quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter. The third staff has notes: quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter. The piece ends with a double bar line.

1.27

Musical notation for drill 1.27 in 4/4 time. It consists of three staves. The first staff has notes: quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter. The second staff has notes: quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter. The third staff has notes: quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter. The piece ends with a double bar line.

1.28

Musical notation for drill 1.28 in 2/4 time. It consists of two staves. The first staff has notes: quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter. The second staff has notes: quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter. The piece ends with a double bar line.



1.50 $\frac{2}{16}$ 1 2 1 &

1.51 $\frac{2}{16}$

1.52 $\frac{3}{16}$

1.53 $\frac{4}{16}$

Section 5. Two-part drills.

1.54 $\frac{3}{2}$

1.55 $\frac{3}{2}$

1.56 $\frac{3}{2}$

1.57 $\frac{4}{3}$

1.58 $\frac{4}{2}$

1.59 $\frac{2}{8}$

1.60 $\frac{3}{8}$

1.61 $\frac{3}{16}$

1.62 $\frac{4}{16}$