# OLCHS Rhythm Guide

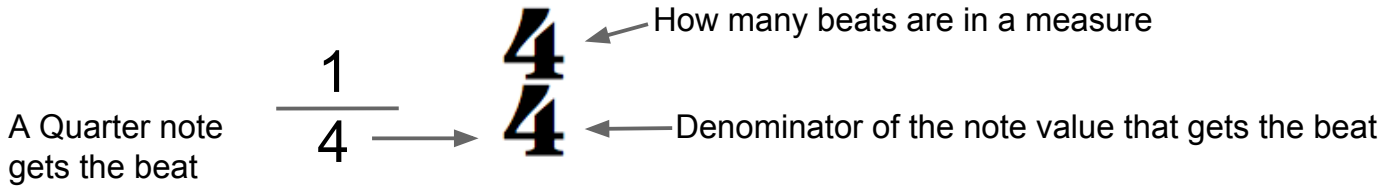
Notated music tells the musician which note to play (***pitch***), when to play it (***rhythm***), and how to play it (***dynamics and articulation***). This section will explain how rhythm is interpreted at OLCHS.

# Time and Meter

The ***beat*** is the pulse of the music. When you tap your foot to a song, you are tapping along with the beat. Most music is played with a steady beat. These beats ares separated into groups of strong and weak beats. The way in which these beats are organized is called the ***meter***. In pop music, the most common meter is of four beats where beats 2 and 4 are emphasized. If you have ever listened to any kind of dance music, you can anticipate when the music is going to take a breath. This is because we are so used to the meter or 4 that we can predict when things are going to happen.

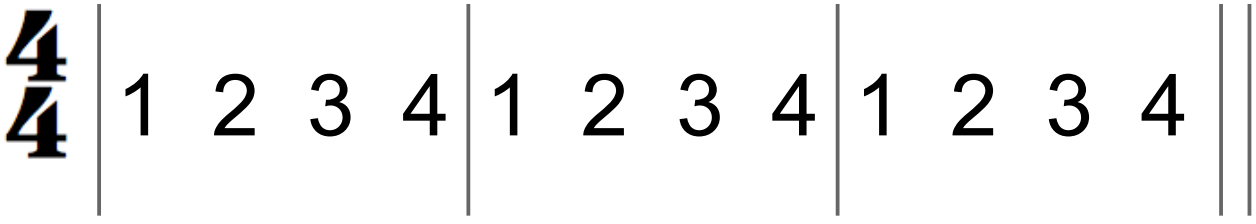
# Time Signature

There are many other meters besides 4 though and the way in which they are shown is through a ***time signature***. The time signature is at the beginning of a piece of music or whenever the meter changes in a piece. The top number shows how many beats are in a measure and the bottom shows the denominator (bottom part of a fraction) of the note value that receives the beat. The numerator (top part of a fraction) for the note value that receives the beat is alway one.




# Measures and barlines

A ***measure*** is a group of beats and they are separated by ***barlines***. The end of a section of music is signified by a ***double barline***. The counts start at 1 and go to however many beats are in the measure as dictated by the time signature. They repeat after every measure.

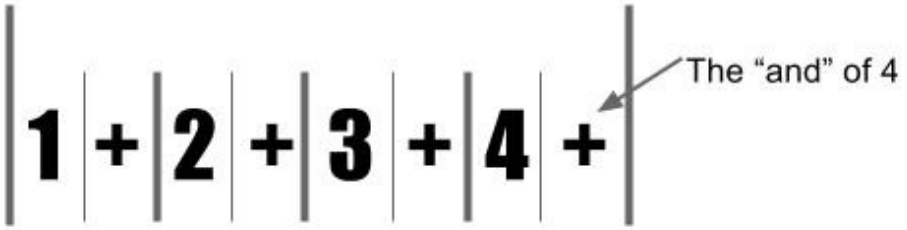



This example is in 4/4 time and is three measures long.

# Level 1- Novice

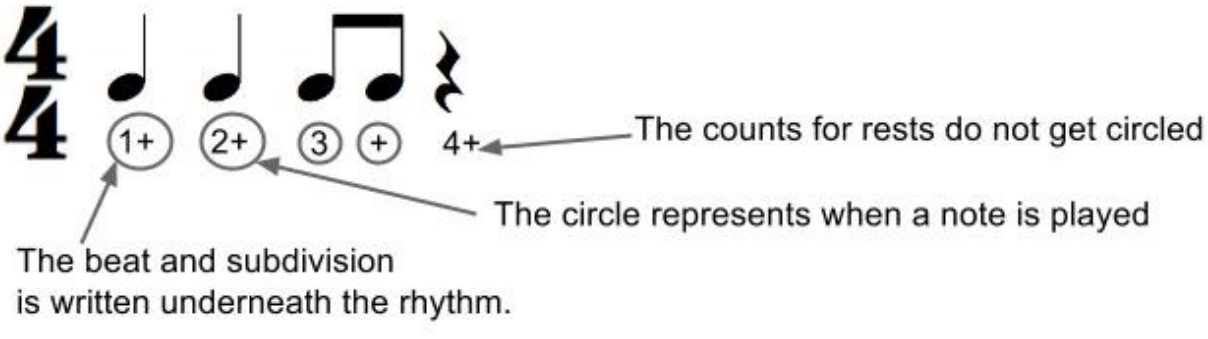
*Unsyncopated whole, quarter, half, and eighth note/rests*

A ***note*** tells the musician when and what to play and a ***rest*** tells the musician when not to play. The duration (how long) each note/rest is to be performed is its ***note value***. If the value of a note or rest is less than one beat a subdivision is used to keep everything in time. A ***subdivision*** is an equal division of a beat. The eighth note subdivision is used for every beat. The symbol used for an eighth note subdivison is a (+) and is spoken as the word "and." When meter is divided into multiples of 2 it is called ***duple meter.*** Any time signature with the denominator of a 4 is a duple meter.




| Notes | | Rests |
|---|---|---|
| 1+2+3+4+ | **Whole 4 counts** | 1+2+3+4+ |
| 1+2+ 3+4+ | **Half 2 counts** | 1+2+ 3+4+ |
| 1+ 2+ 3+ 4+ | **Quarter 1 count** | 1+ 2+ 3+ 4+ |
| 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + | **Eighth ½ count** | 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + |

# How to write in counts and circles



# Level 2a- Apprentice

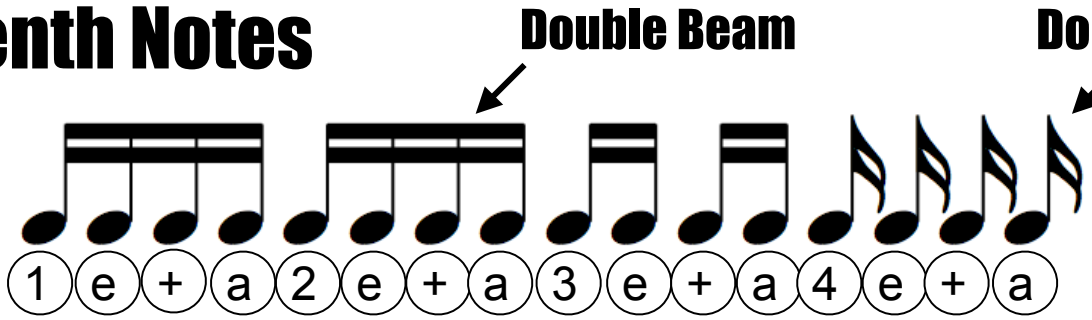
Sixteenth subdivision, Sixteenth notes, and sixteenth note combinations

## Sixteenth Subdivision

Sixteenth subdivision comes from dividing a beat into four equal parts. The name for eighth note subdivision stays the same (+) The name for the first the sixteenth subdivision is (e) and the second is (a)

| 1 | e | + | a | 2 | e | + | a | 3 | e | + | a | 4 | e | + | a |

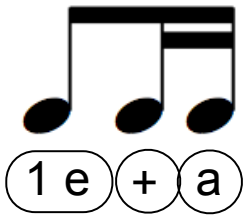
## Sixteenth Notes




A sixteenth note gets 1/4 of a count. When sixteenth notes are beamed together they have two beams. When they are not beamed together they have two flags.

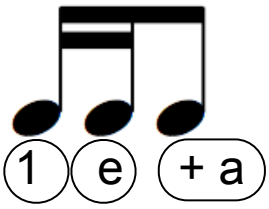
## Sixteenth Note Combinations

*16th Sight Rhythm B*

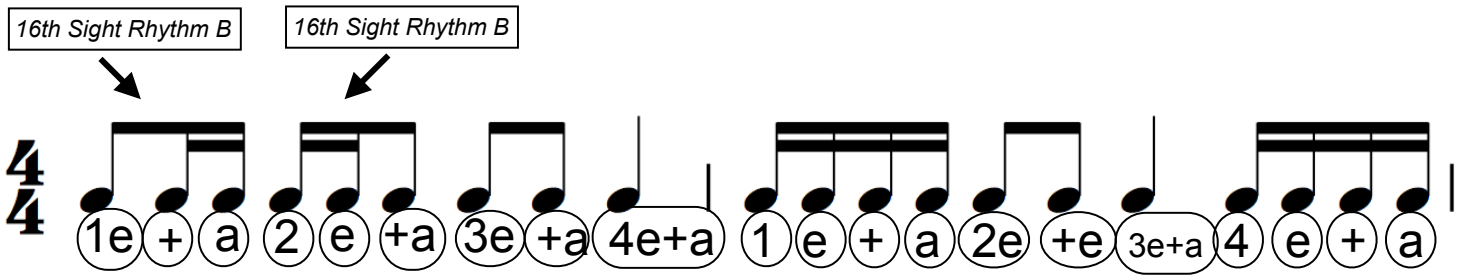



Sixteenth notes can be combined with eighth notes to create sixteenth note combinations. To make it easier to see where the beats are, the sixteenth notes and eighth notes are beamed together.

*16th Sight Rhythm D*




*16th Sight Rhythm B* *16th Sight Rhythm B*




*Remember that the subdivision is determined by what type of note/ rest is in each measure.*

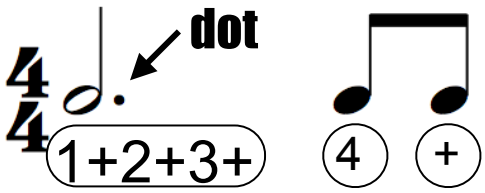
# Level 2b- Apprentice

Dotted half notes, ties, pickups, and pickup measures

## Dots

A dot added after a note or rest adds half of the original value to itself. It can be represented in an equation were V is the new value and N is the original value.

**V = 1/2N + N**



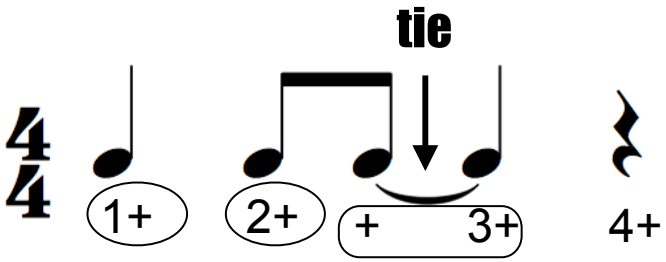

**dotted half value**

Here is a dotted half note. The original value of a half note is two counts. Half of two is one. one + two is three. A dotted half note gets three counts.

*V = 1/2n + n*
*V = 1/2(2) + 2*
*V = 1 + 2*
*V = 3*

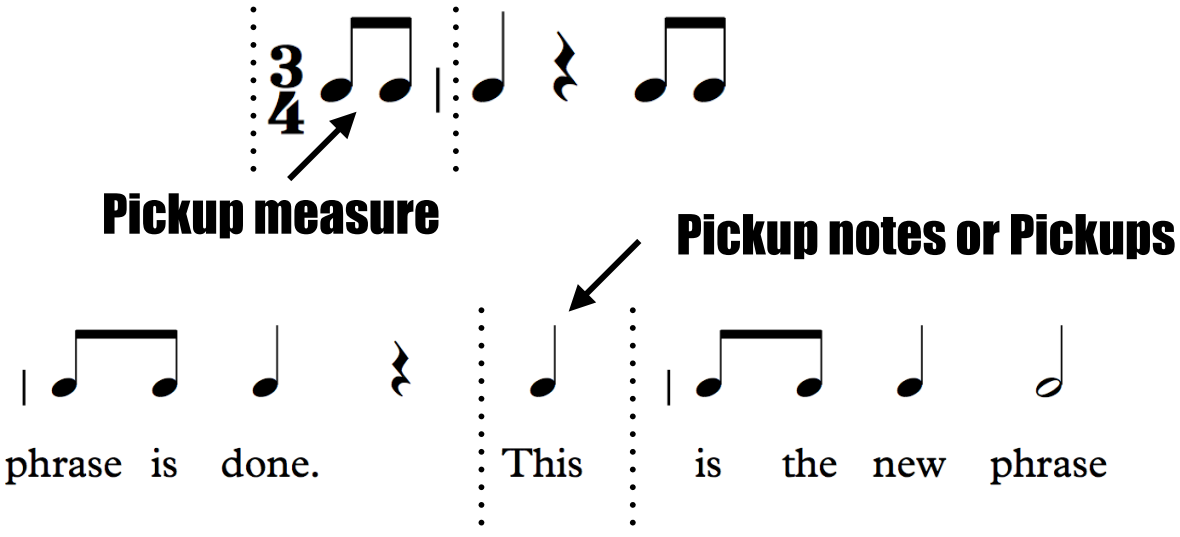
## Ties

A tie adds two or more notes together. When notes are tied, they only have one attack. Tied notes should only have one circle when counts are written in. Rests cannot be tied.




## Pickups and pickup measures

Not all music starts on beat one of a measure. Notes that appear in an incomplete measure at the beginning of a piece of music are called ***pick up notes*** or ***pickups*** and the incomplete measure is called the ***pickup measure.*** This can happen at the start of a phrase within a piece of music as well. The notes that come before beat 1 in a phrase are called the ***pick up notes*** or ***pickups*** as well.

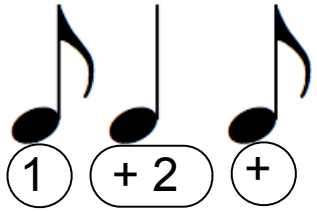


# Level 3a- Proficient

Eighth note syncopation, dotted quarter value, and eighth note pickups

## Eighth Note Syncopation

*Syncopation* is the emphasis of the weak beat. Without any subdivision, beats 2 and 4 are the weak beats. When there is an eighth note subdivision, all of the +'s are the weak beats. The following rhythm is the only syncopated rhythm using the notes that have been covered so far.




*8th Sight Rhythm C*

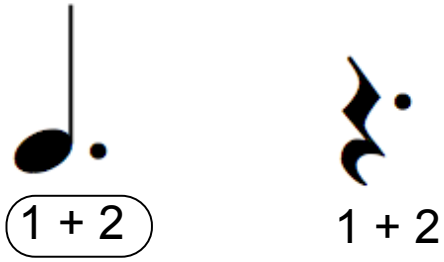
*An effective way to think about syncopated eighth note rhythms is to figure out how many eighth note subdivisions each note/rest has. An eighth note has one eight note subdivision and a quarter note has two eight note subdivisions. The eighth note on beat 1 only gets one eighth note subdivision (1). The Quarter note that follows it gets two eighth note subdivisions (+ 2). The final eighth note gets one eighth note subdivision (+).*

## Dotted quarter note/rest

A dotted quarter note/rest follows the same rule for dots as a dotted half note/rest. The original value of a quarter note/ rest is one beat. Half of one is one half. One plus a half is one and a half. A dotted quarter value is one and a half and receives three eighth note subdivisions .

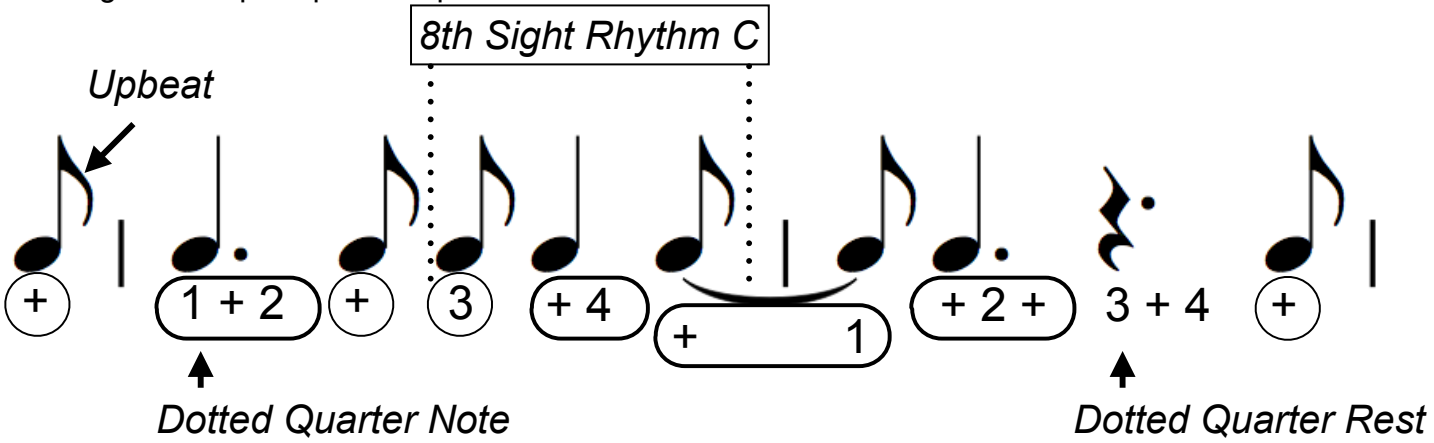
### dotted quarter value

*V = 1/2n + n*
*V = 1/2(1) + 1*
*V = 1/2 + 1*
*V = 1 1/2*




## Eighth note pickup

A pickup note doesn't always come in on a strong beat. When a pickup comes in on a weak beat, it is called an eighth note pickup or an upbeat.



# Level 3b- Proficient

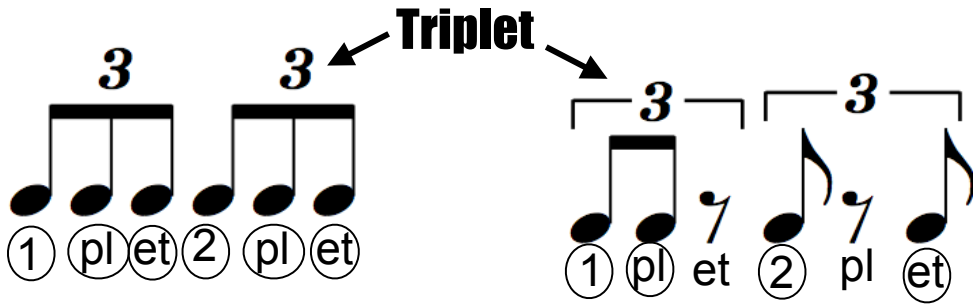
Triplet subdivision, eighth note triplets, and quarter note triplets

## Triplet subdivision

A triplet subdivision is a beat divided into three equal parts. There aren't any subdivisions in triplet that align with eighth or sixteenth notes. The subdivision syllables for triplet subdivision are the number, pl, and let.

| 1 | pl | et | 2 | pl | et | 3 | pl | et | 4 | pl | et |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

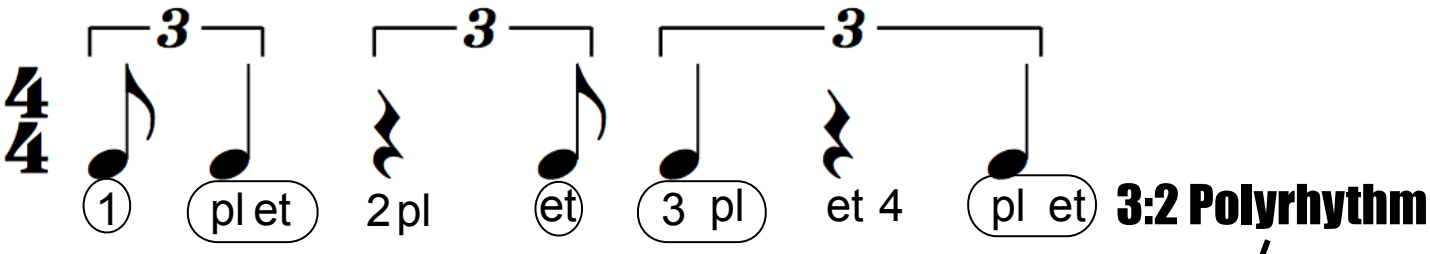
## Eighth note triplets and rests




An eighth note triplet gets 1/3 of a count. Eighth note triplets look like eighth notes, but they are beamed in groups of three and have a small three above them. When rests are in a triplet rhythm, brackets are added to clarify what is included in the triplet rhythm.

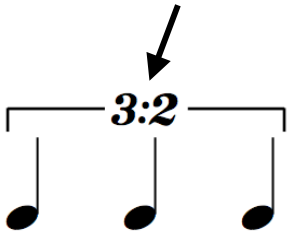
## Quarter note triplets and rests

A quarter value is equal to two eighth values. When writing in counts for a quarter note/ rest triplet, use two triplet subdivisions. Three quarter note triplets equal two beats of music.




*A quarter note triplet is equal to two eighth note triplets*

Another way to notate a quarter note triplet is with a ratio. There are three notes evenly distributed over two beats in a quarter note triplet creating a ***polyrhythm*** (two or more rhythmic feels occurring at the same time). The ratio of 3:2 shows this relationship. Ratios will be used later to show other polyrhythmic identities.

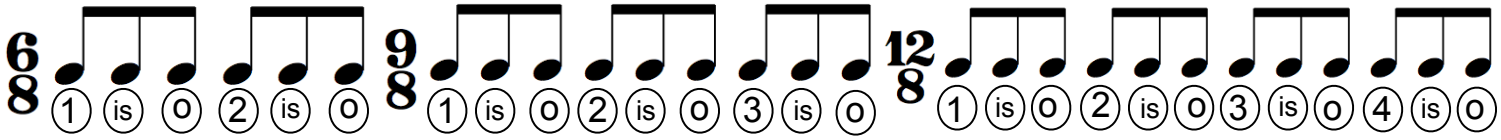


# Level 3c- Proficient

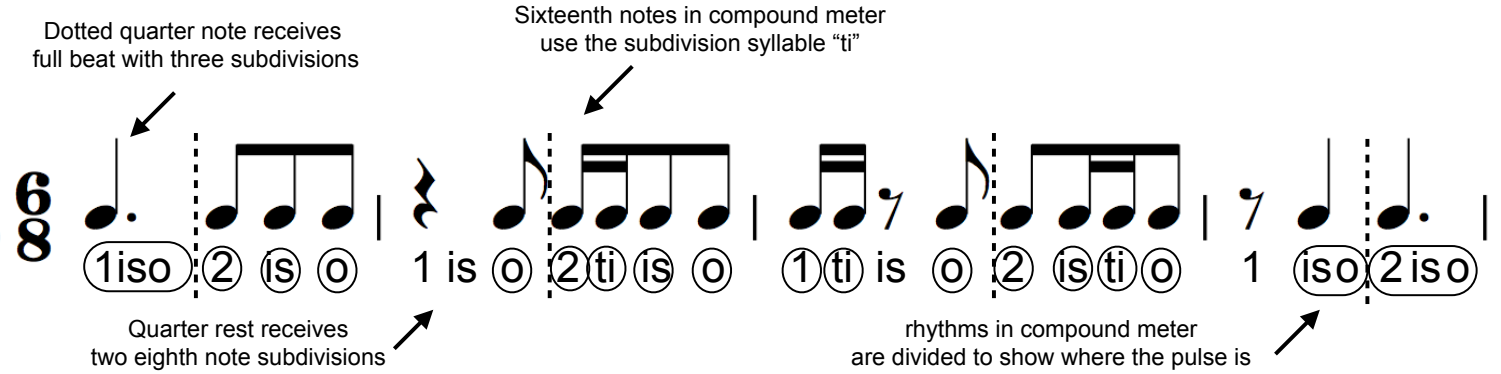
Compound meter

## Compound meter

***Compound meter*** or ***triple meter*** is used when the beat is divided into three equal parts. The most common compound meters are 3/8, 6/8, 9/8, and 12/8. Eighth notes are counted differently in compound meter to reflect where the strong beat is felt. A bar of 6/8 is counted *1 is o 2 is o* with an accent on 1 and 2. The counts for compound meter are written below for 6/8, 9/8, and 12/8.

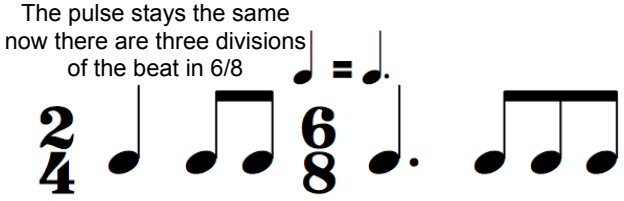



The dotted quarter note in compound meter receives one full beat of three eighth note subdivisions. The sixteenth subdivision syllable in compound meter is "*ti*"

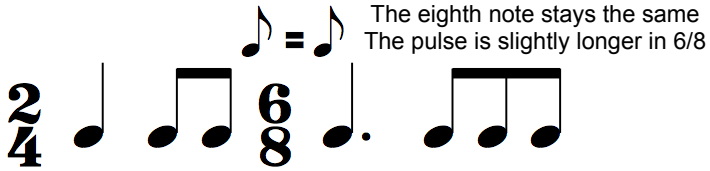



## Metric Modulation

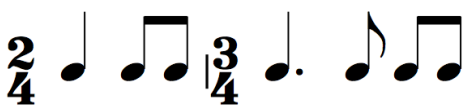
There are two ways that a shift from simple meter to compound meter can occur within a piece. Either the eighth note remains constant between the two and the pulse changes or the quarter note in duple meter becomes the dotted quarter note in triple meter and the pulse is consistent. The second option keeps the pulse in the same place, but divides the beat into three instead of two. Changing the grouping of the beat or changing the tempo of the beat based on a note value is a ***metric modulation.*** Metric modulation text is used when changing meters to inform the musician how the pulse is divided and felt. It is expressed in an equation showing which note values are constant or which note values change.




In simple meter this rhythm sounds like

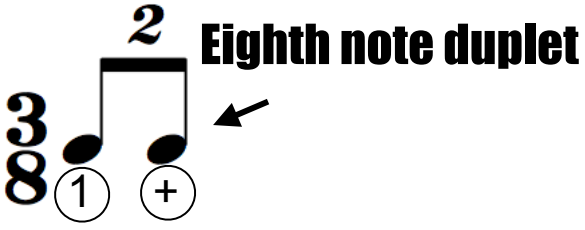




In simple meter this rhythm sounds like




## Duplets in compound meter

A triplet in simple meter divides the beat into three equal parts.
A duplet in compound meter divides the beat into two equal parts.
A "2" is written above the beat that is being changed.
Use simple meter eighth note subdivision for duplets



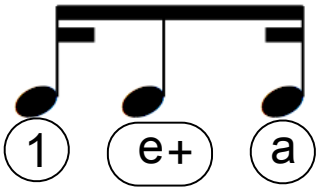
# Level 4a- Distinguished

Sixteenth note syncopation, dotted eighth value, sixteenth rest

## Sixteenth Note Syncopation

The one beat rhythm of a sixteenth note, eighth note, and sixteenth note is beamed together and is the first syncopated sixteenth note. When dealing with sixteenth note syncopation it is helpful to think in terms of how many sixteenth note subdivisions each note/rest value receives.

*16th Sight Rhythm C*




## Dotted eighth note/rest

A dotted eighth note/rest follows the same rule for dots as the other dotted notes/rests. The original value of an eighth note/ rest is one beat. Half of a half one quarter or one sixteenth subdivision. One quarter plus a half is three quarters or three sixteenth note subdivisions.

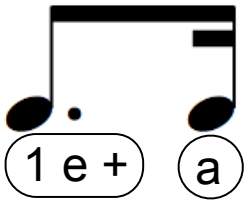
### dotted eighth value


*V = 1/2n + n*
*V = 1/2(1/2) + 1/2*
*V = 1/4 + 1/2*
*V = 3/4*

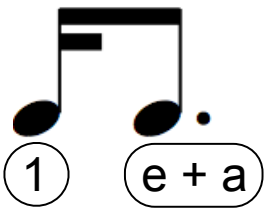
## Dotted eighth sixteenth combinations

There are two dotted eighth sixteenth combinations that are beamed together. The first is a dotted eighth followed by a sixteenth and the other is a sixteenth followed by a dotted eighth

*16th Sight Rhythm F*




*16th Sight Rhythm G*




## Sixteenth Rest

A sixteenth rest receives one quarter of a count or one sixteenth subdivision

1