Harmony University Advanced Rhythm Reading

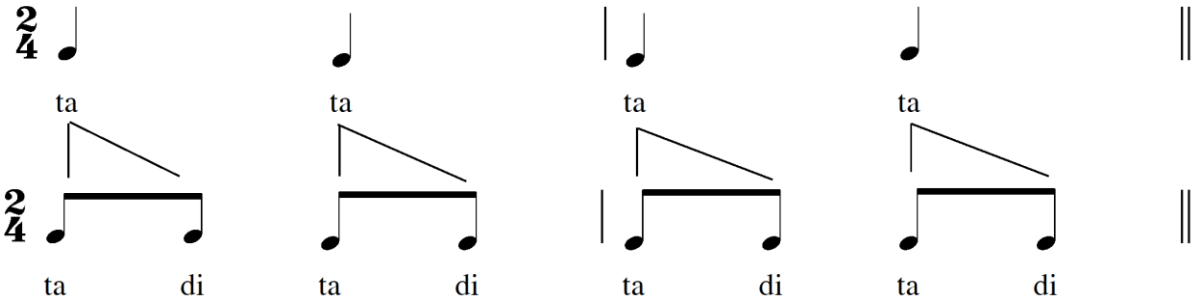
Jay Krumbholz

Rhythm

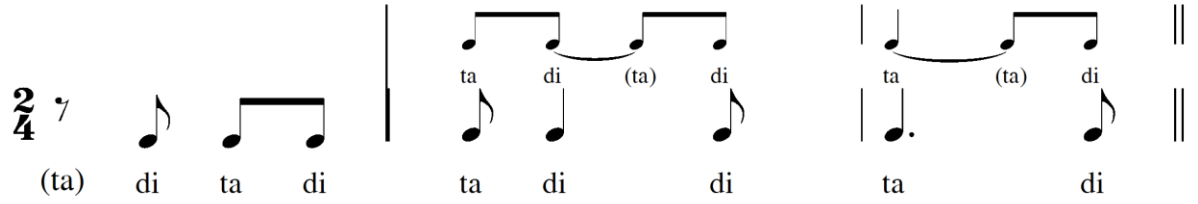
Our study of rhythm will be aided through the use of a rhythmic syllable system called "Takadimi," developed by Richard Hoffman, William Pelto, and John White.[1] It is recommended that you practice with a metronome to help you maintain a steady beat.

Simple meter: meters in which the beat subdivides into two parts.

1. The syllable *Ta* **always** falls on the beat.
2. When the beat is divided in half, as is the case with all simple meters, the syllable *di* **always** falls on the second half of the beat:



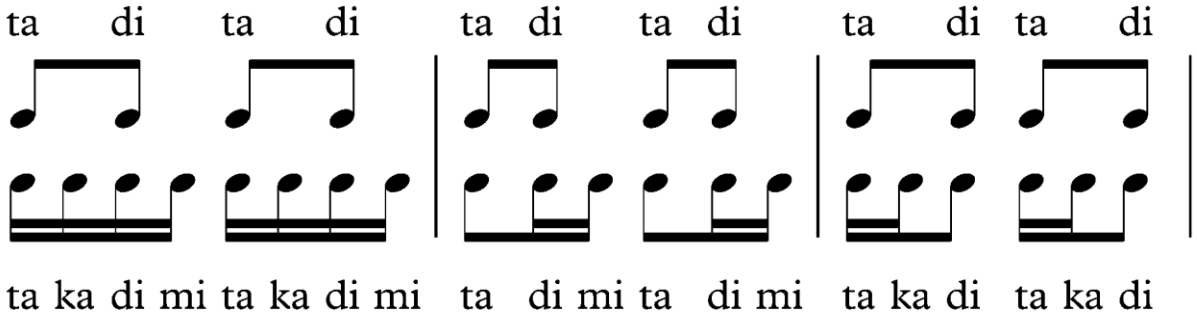
3. Ties, dots, and rests do not affect takadimi syllables, because the syllables are associated with a specific location within the beat and not with any particular note value



With the further subdivision of eighth notes into sixteenth notes, takadimi uses two additional syllables: *ka* and *mi*. Here's a selection of rhythms using sixteenth notes.

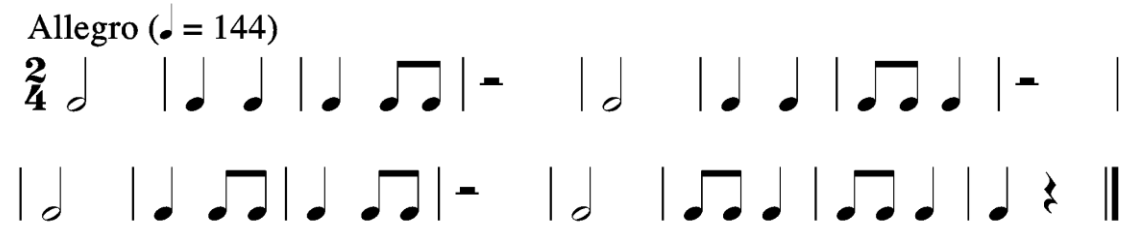
[1] Richard Hoffman, William Pelto, John W. White, "Takadimi: A Beat-Oriented System of Rhythm Pedagogy," *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy*, vol. 10 (1996), 7–30. See also www.takadimi.net.

Note that the syllables *ta* and *di* always represent the downbeat and half-way point respectively.



Chapter 1

1.1



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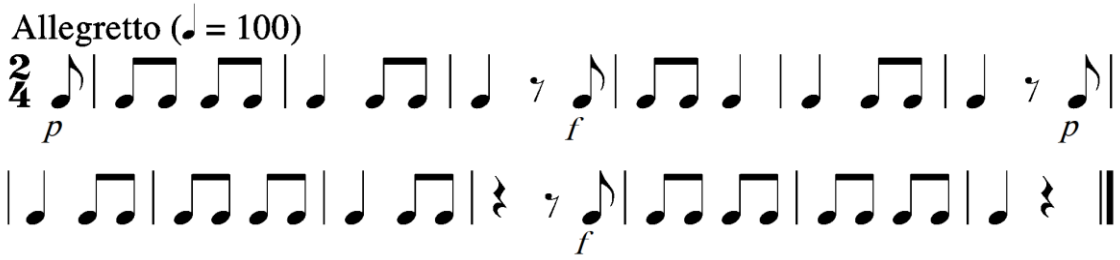

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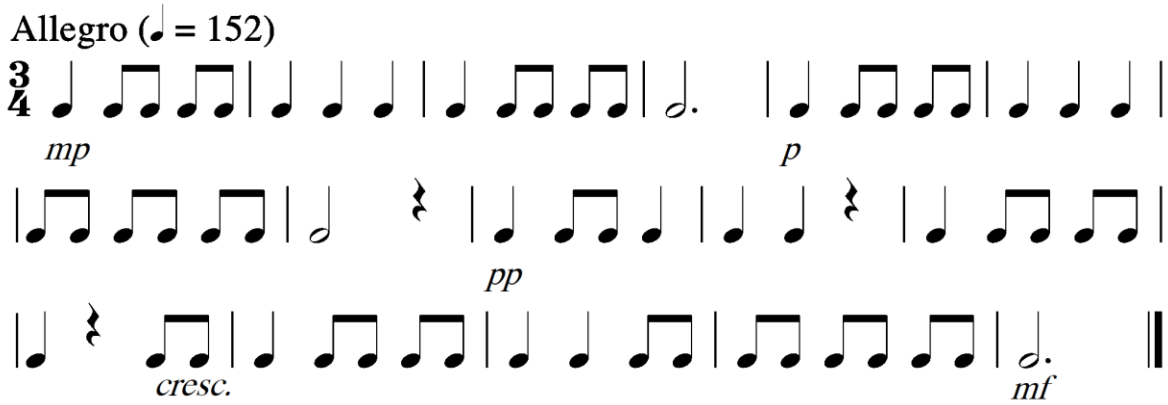

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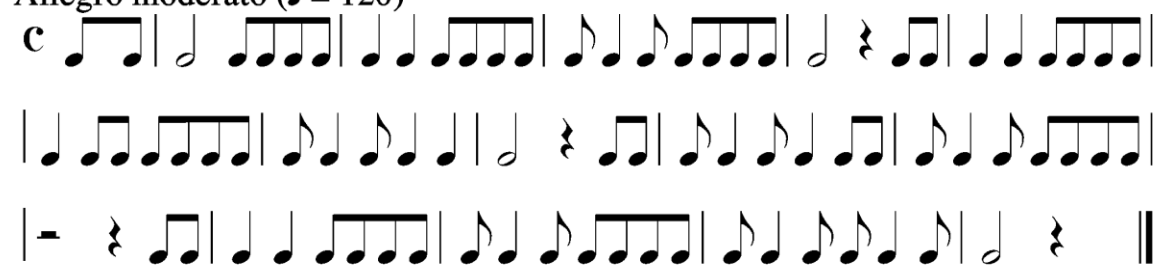
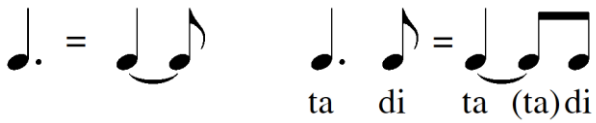


Chapter 2: Dotted quarter notes and tied eighth notes. A dot extends a note by half the value of the note; thus, a dotted quarter note represents a quarter extended by an eighth-note.

In performing dotted notes, counting the divisions of the beat (ta-di, ta- di, etc.) silently helps us to make sure the dotted note is held for the correct length of time. Remember that the particular takadimi syllable you use is determined by whether the note occurs on the beat (*ta*) or off the beat (*di*), not by what type of note value it is.



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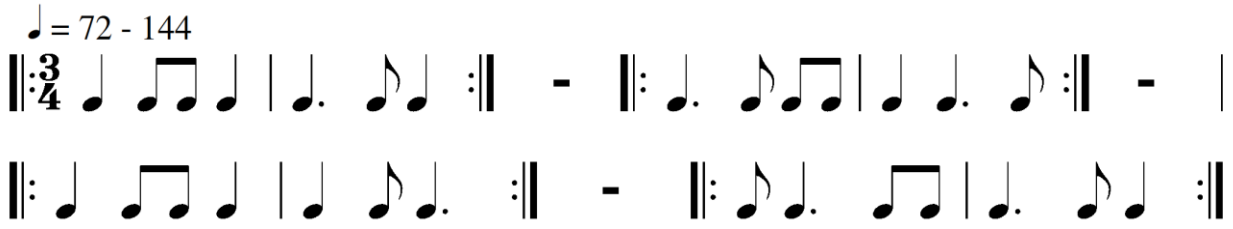

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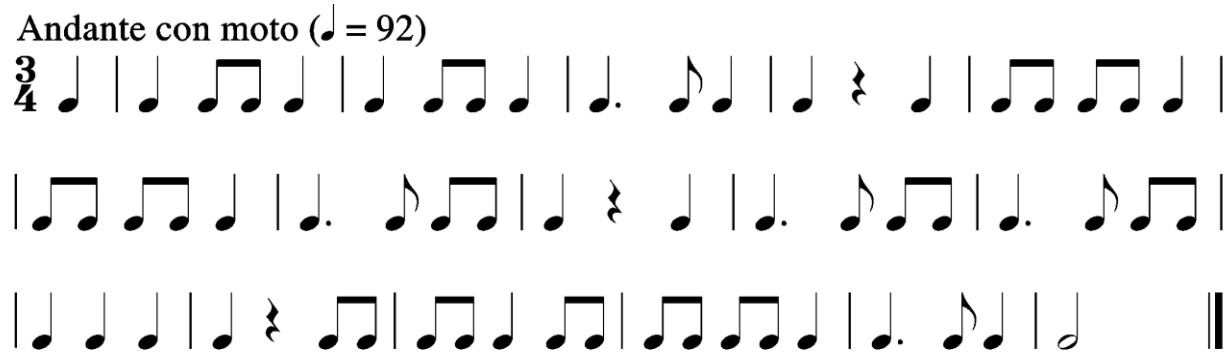

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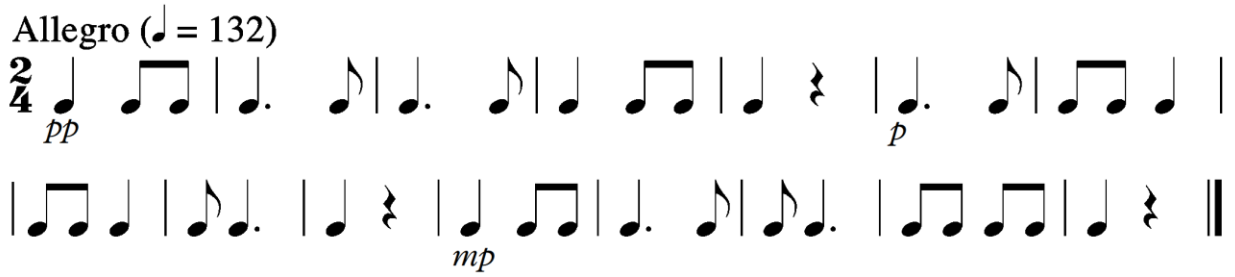

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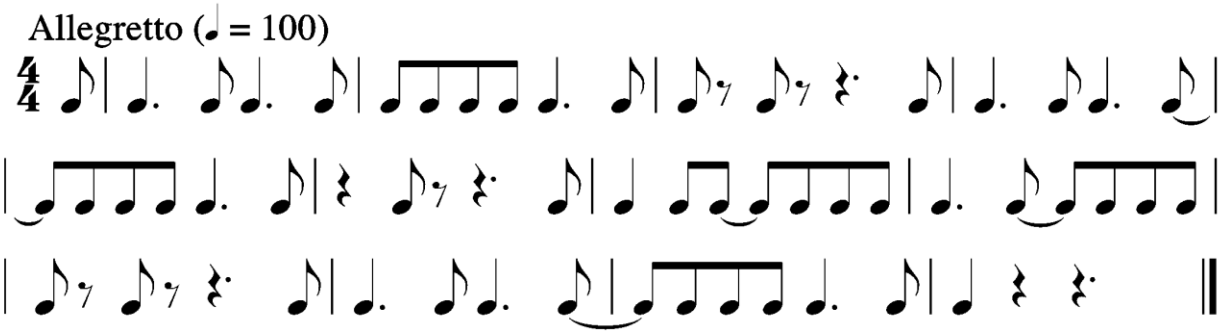
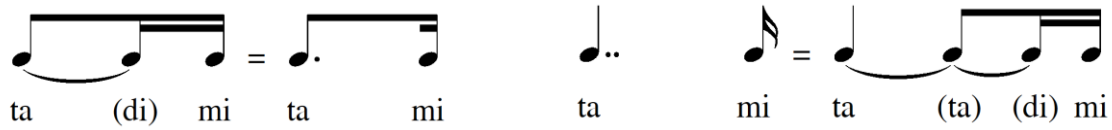


Chapter 3: Dotted eighths in Simple Meter; double dotted quarters

Since a dot adds to a note half of its value, a dot adds to the eighth-note the value of a sixteenth-note. A second dot adds an additional half the value of the first dot.



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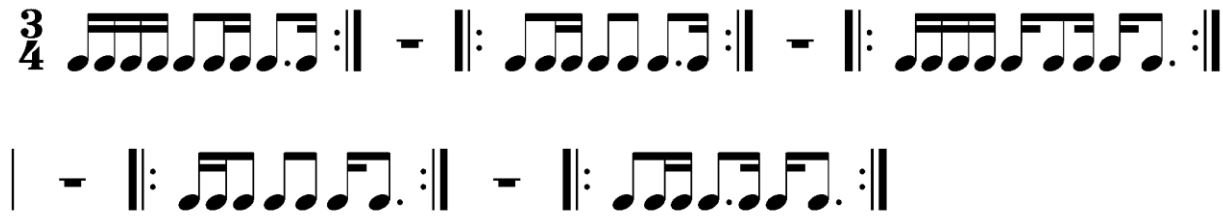

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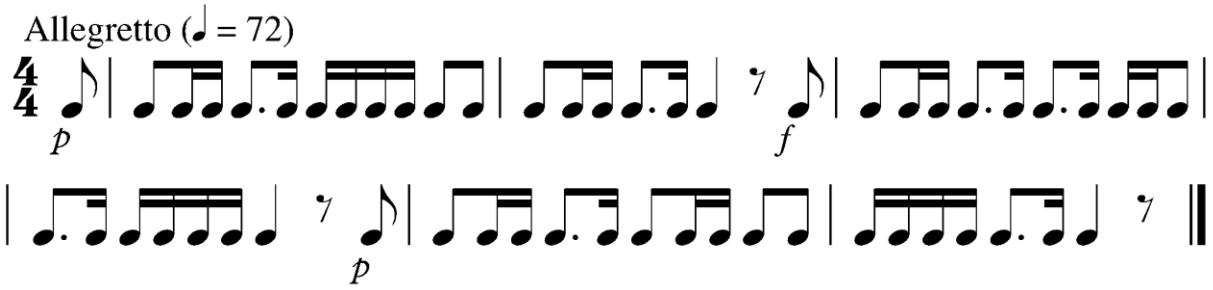

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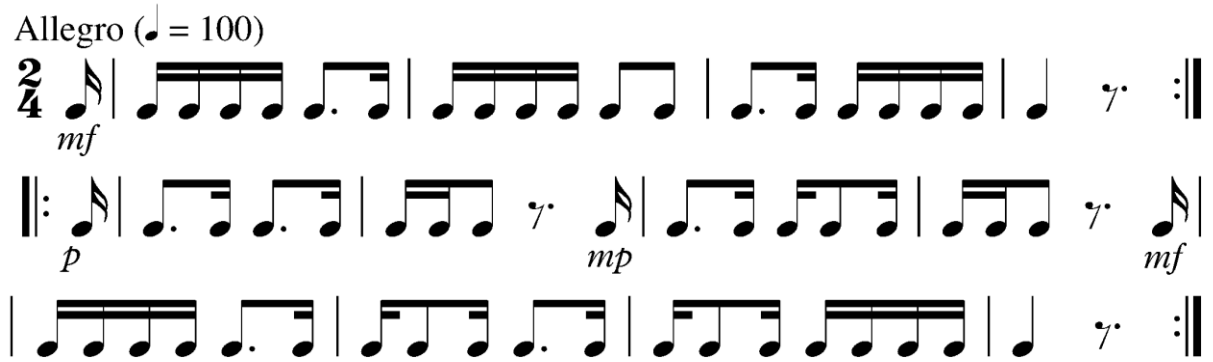

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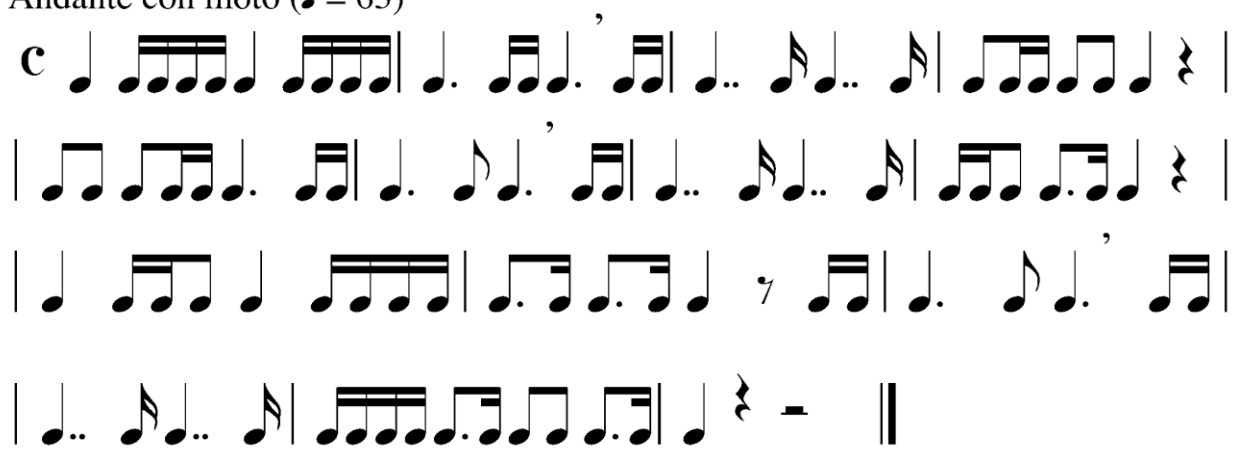
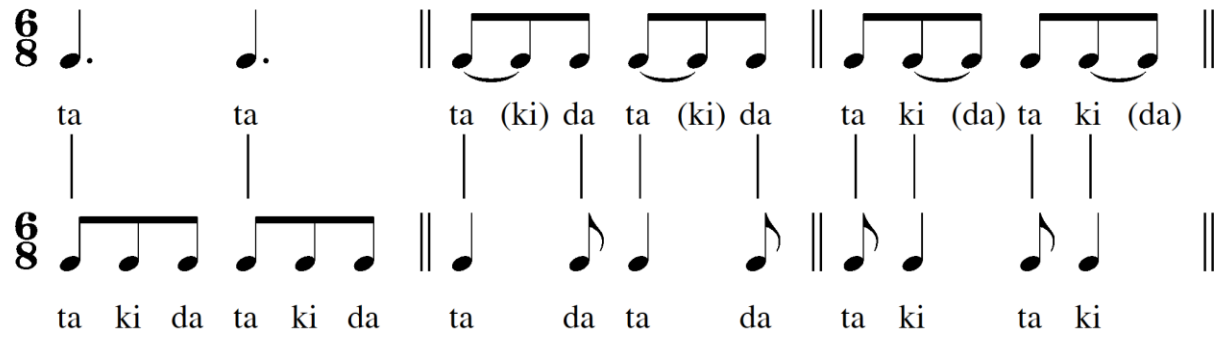


Chapter 4: Compound Meter

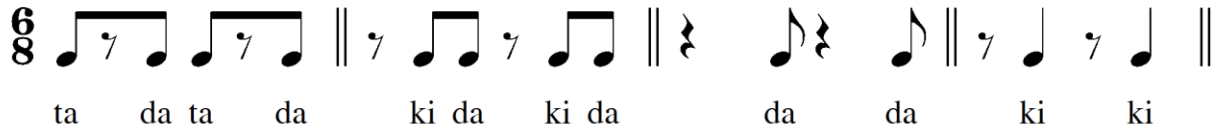
Compound meters are those meters in which the beat subdivides equally into groups of three. The beat note is *always* a dotted note.

FIRST-LEVEL SUBDIVISION

Just as in simple meter, the syllable *ta* **always** falls on the beat. Recall that in simple meter, the syllable *di* is used for the note that occurs exactly halfway through the beat. In compound meter the subdivisions that occur ⅓ and ⅔ of the way through the beat receive the syllables *ki* and *da* respectively. Because they don't occur at the same moment as *di*, they receive different syllables. There are three common patterns you'll encounter in compound meter: *ta-ki-da*, *ta-da*, and *ta-ki*.

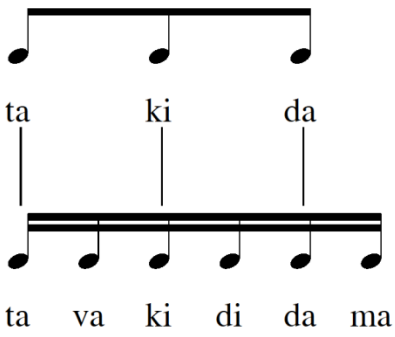


With the use of rests, a few more patterns emerge.

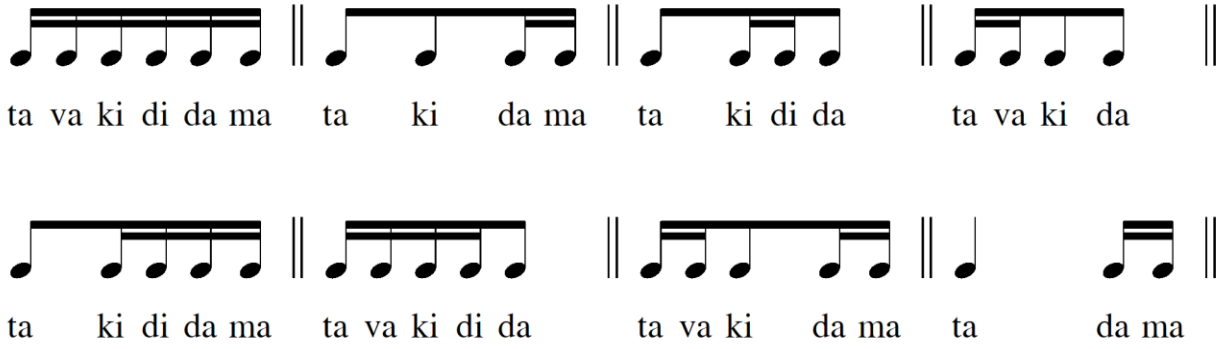


SECOND-LEVEL SUBDIVISION

When the primary subdivisions of the beat are themselves subdivided, *ta*, *ki*, and *da* remain in the same rhythmic place and the syllables *va*, *di*, and *ma,* respectively, are used for the second-level subdivisions. (Note that the syllable *di* is exactly halfway into the beat and, in fact, corresponds to the *di* in simple meter.)

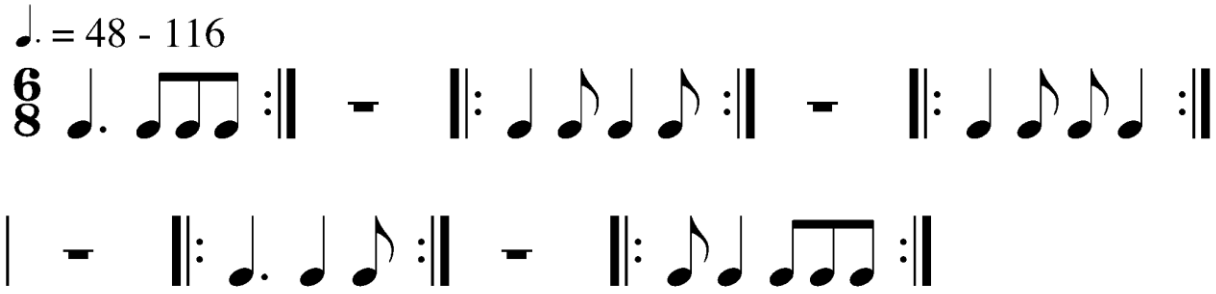


Here are a few common rhythmic patterns in compound meter that use second-level subdivisions and how they would be performed using the takadimi syllables.



Rhythms in $\frac{6}{8}$.

4.1



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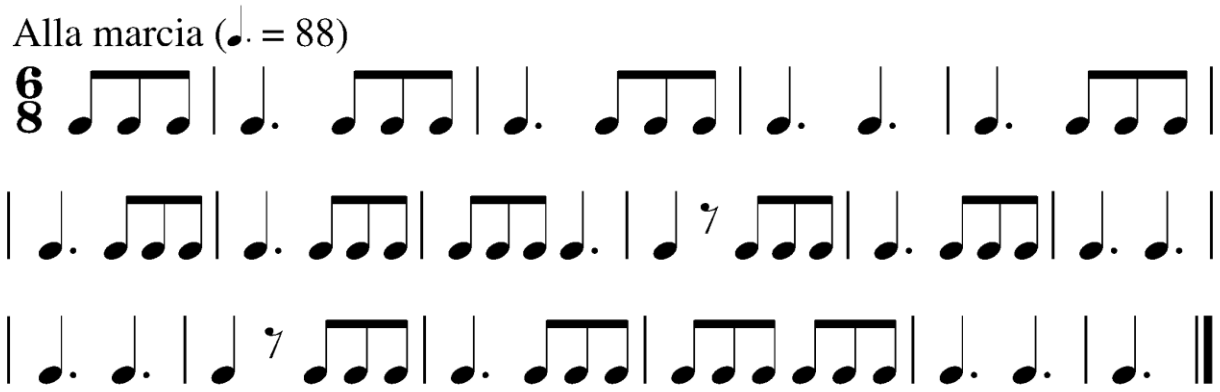

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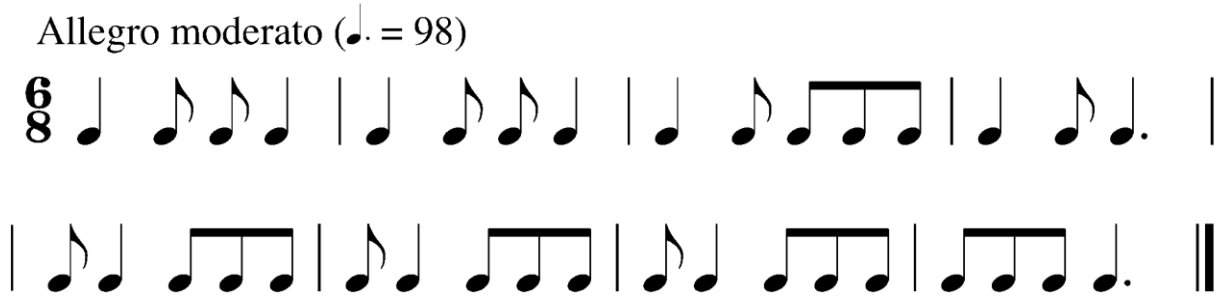

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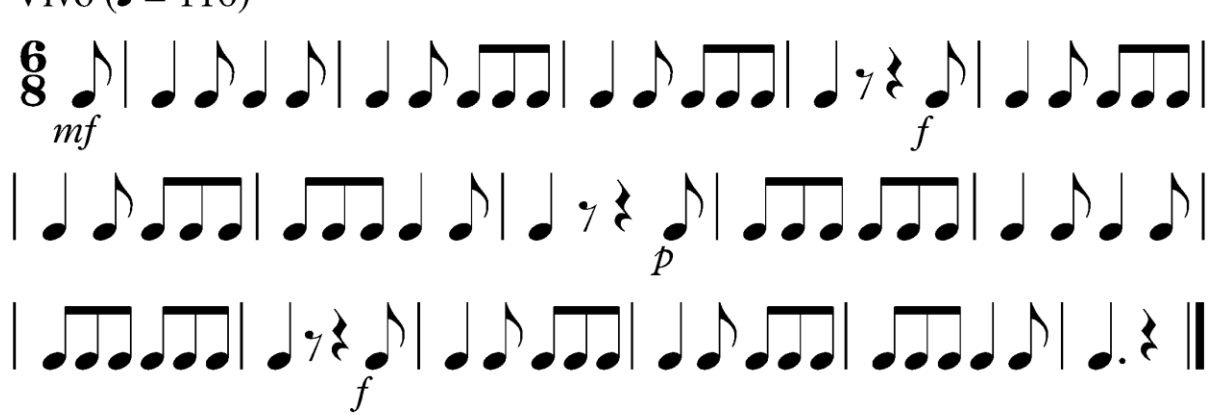

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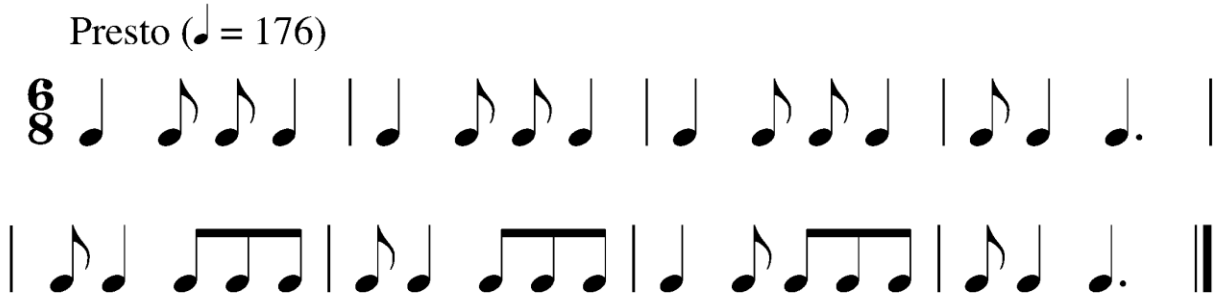

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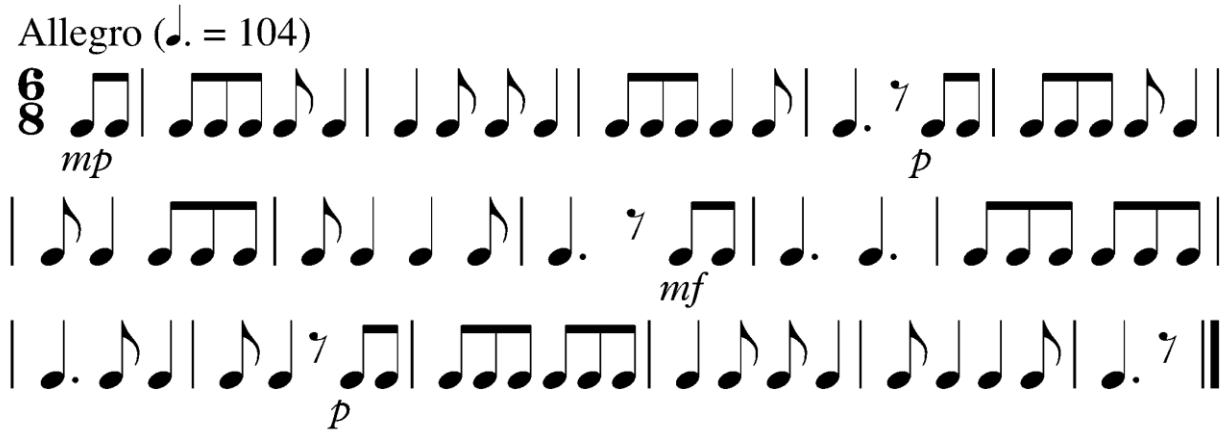
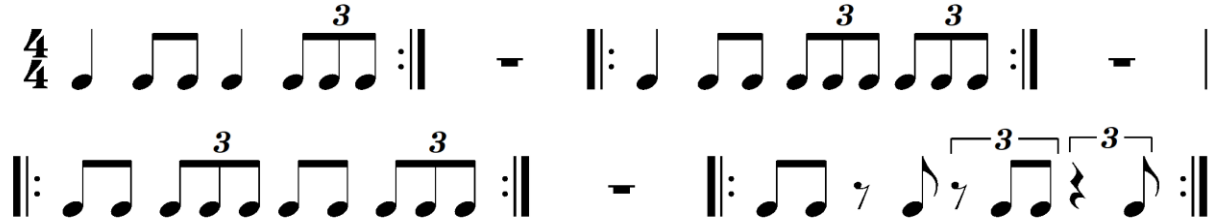


Chapter 5: Triplets: The division of the beat into thirds is already familiar to you (drom compound meter) and therefore requires no new syllables. Basically, a compound meter beat is inserted into a simple meter environment, so we'll use the appropriate takadimi syllables (*ta ki da*).

5.1



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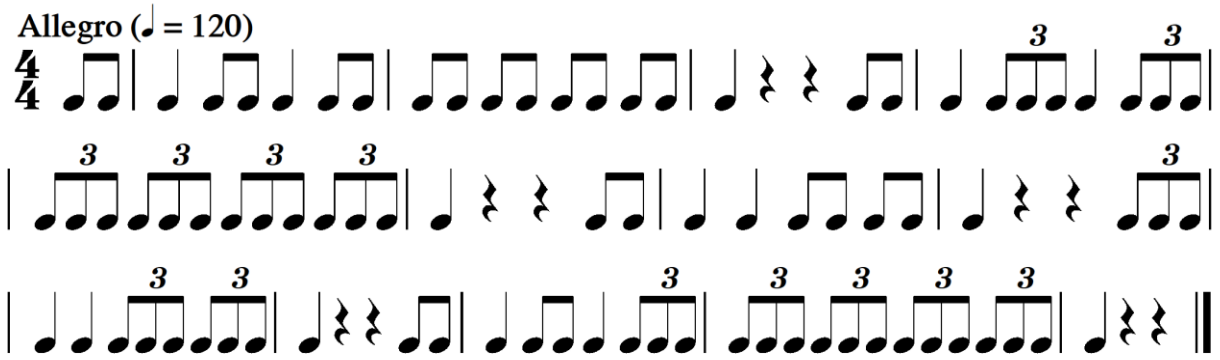

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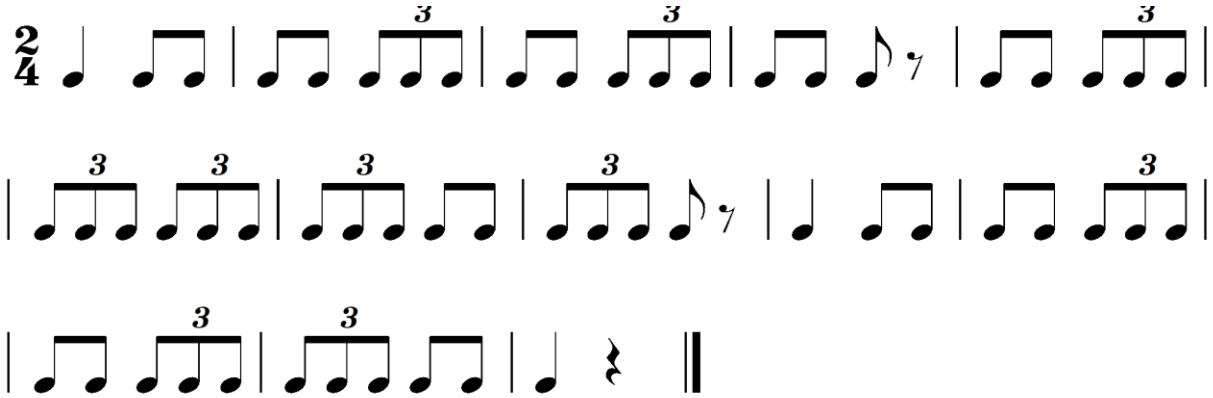

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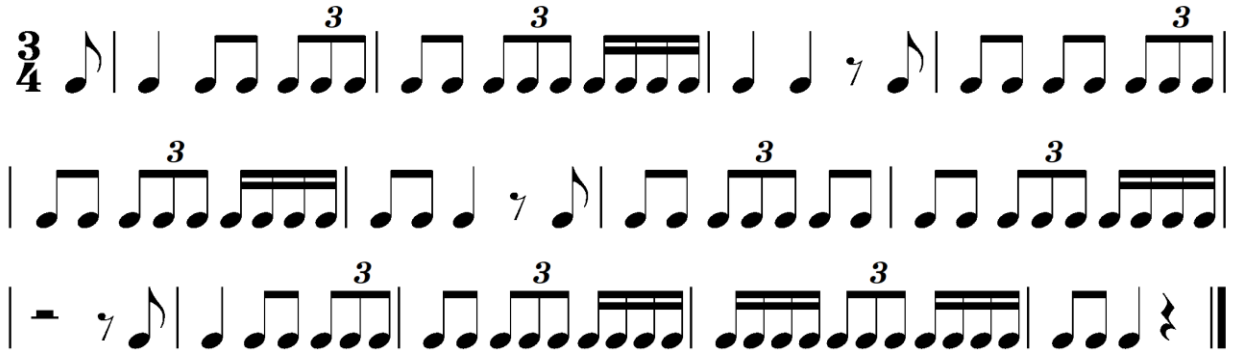

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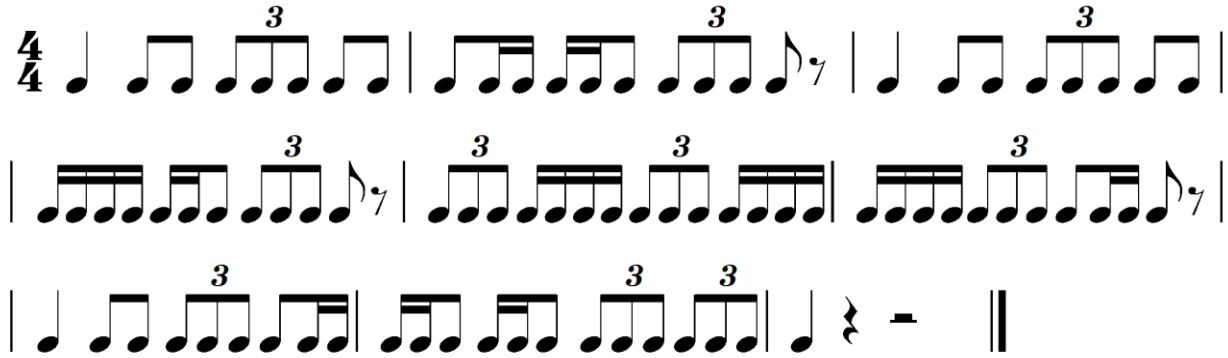
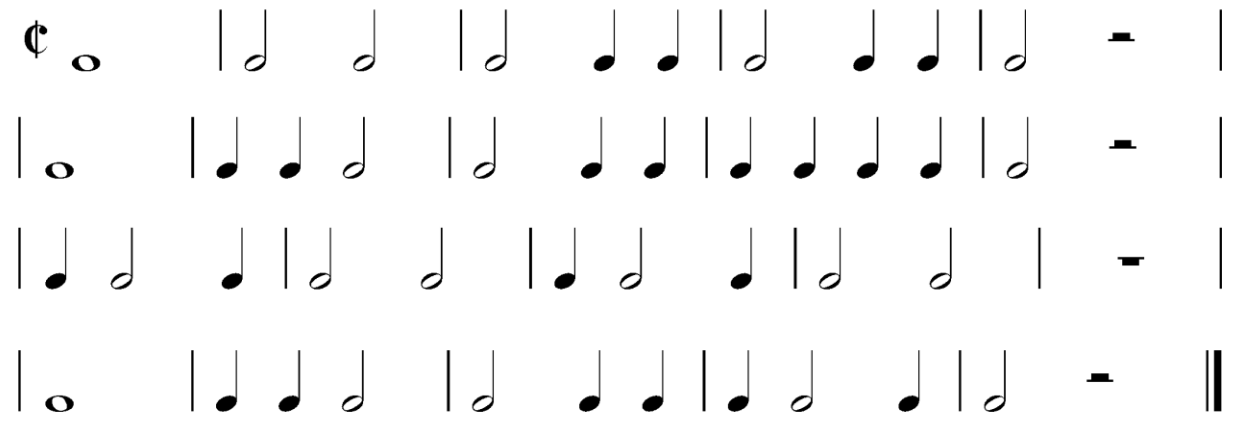


Chapter 6: Half Note Beat. There are no new rhythms in this section. The perceived difficulty comes in learning to feel the half note as the beat note rather than the quarter note.

6.1



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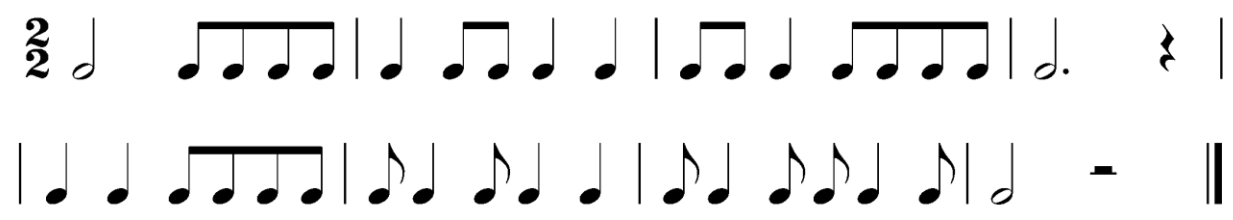

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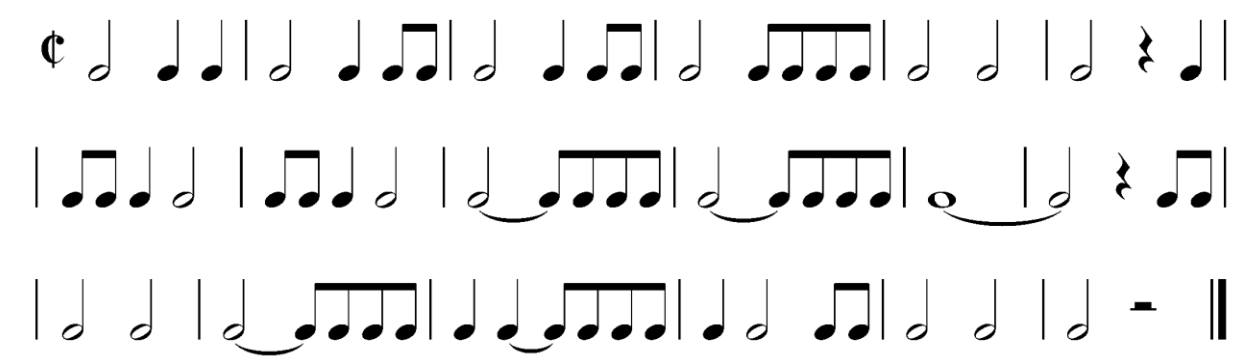

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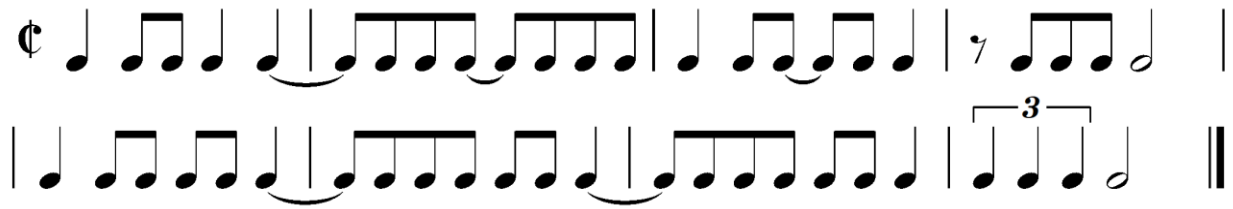

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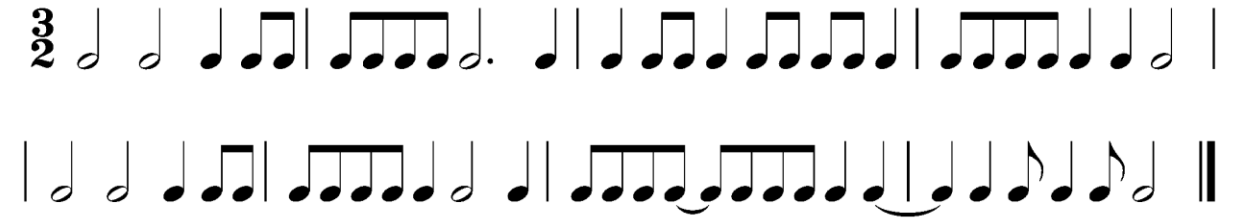

Chapter 7: 3 Notes in 2 beats. The best way to approach this pattern is through compound meter. It makes it easy to see where the second and third notes of the triplet occur with respect to the beats.

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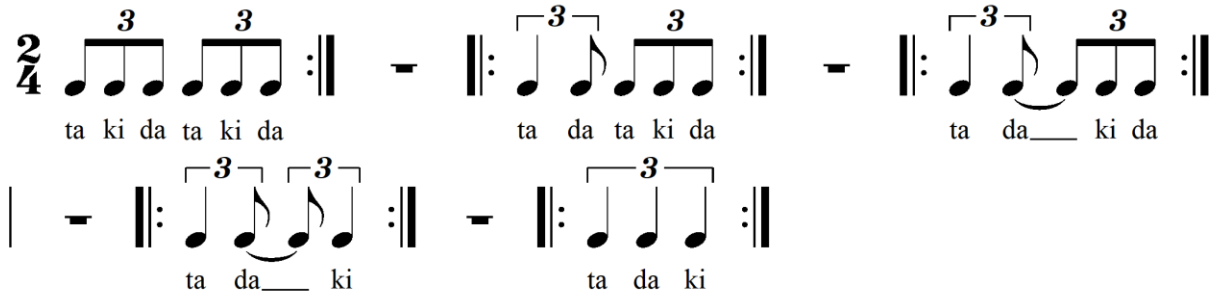

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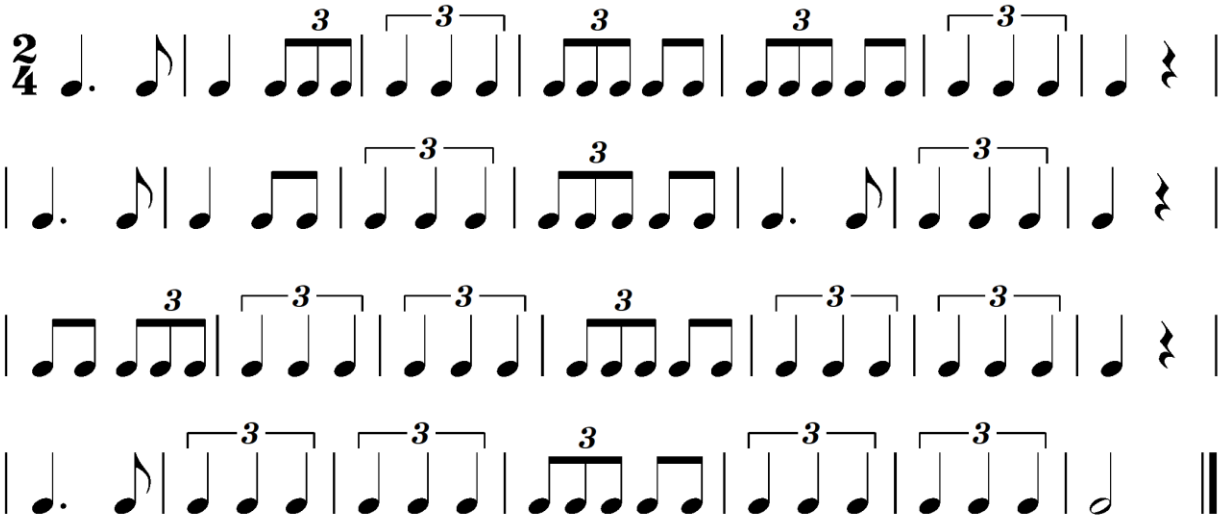

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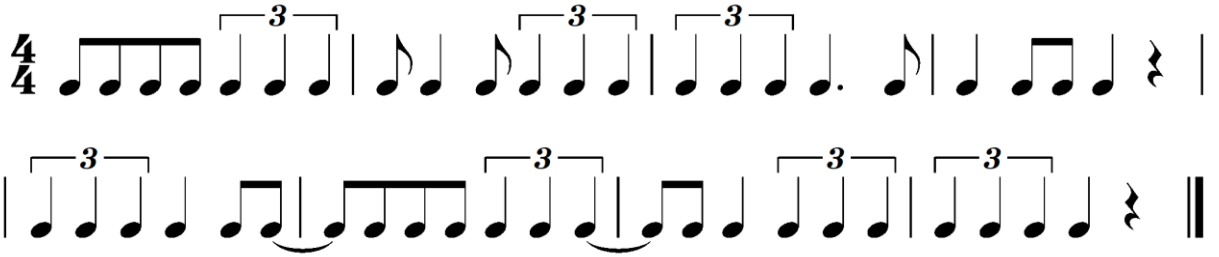

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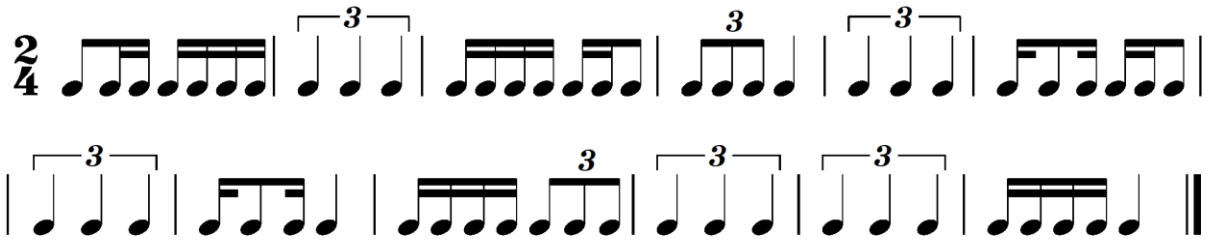

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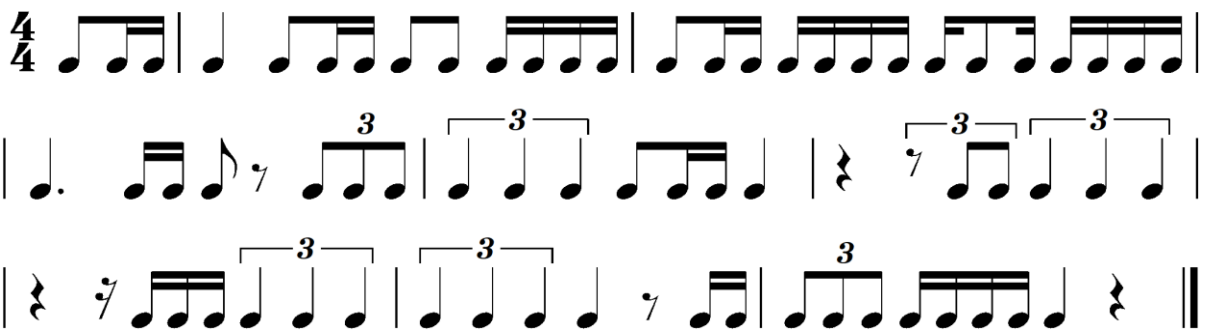
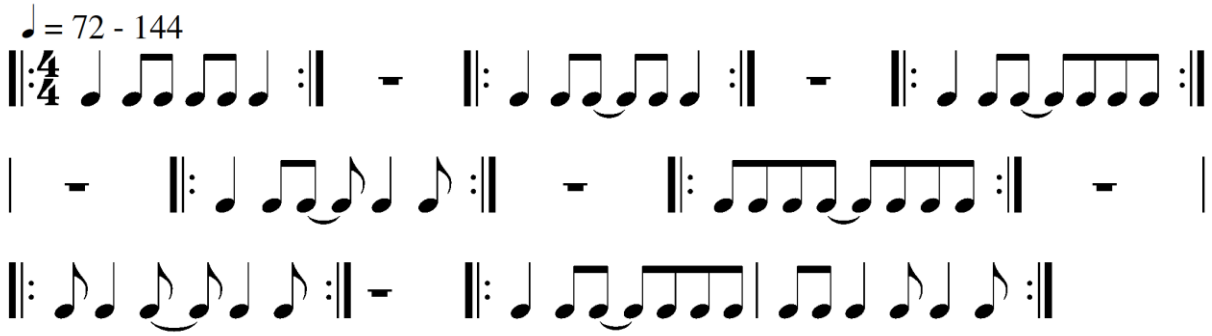


Chapter 8: Syncopation. Syncopation is a shifting of the normal accent, usually by stressing the normally unaccented beats or unaccented parts of a beat.

8.1:



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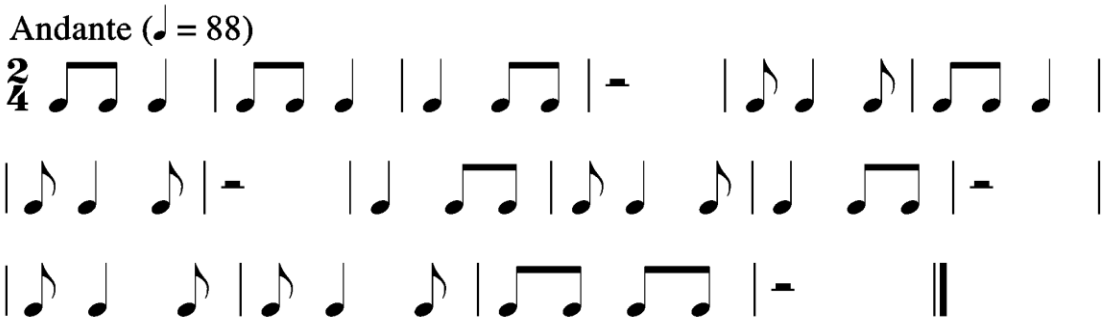

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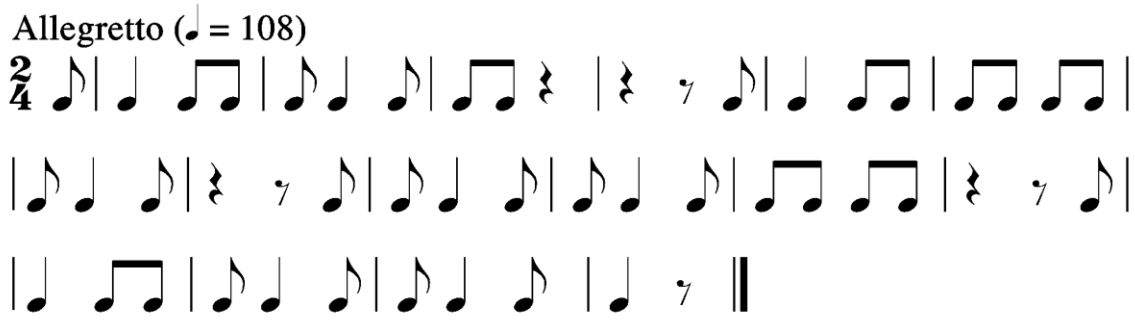

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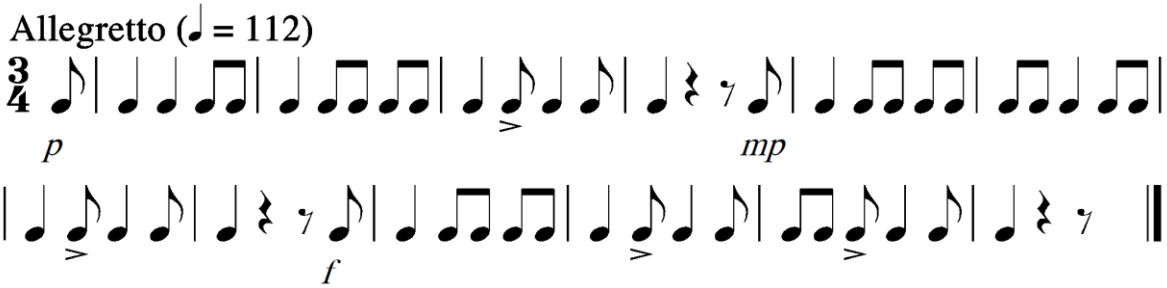

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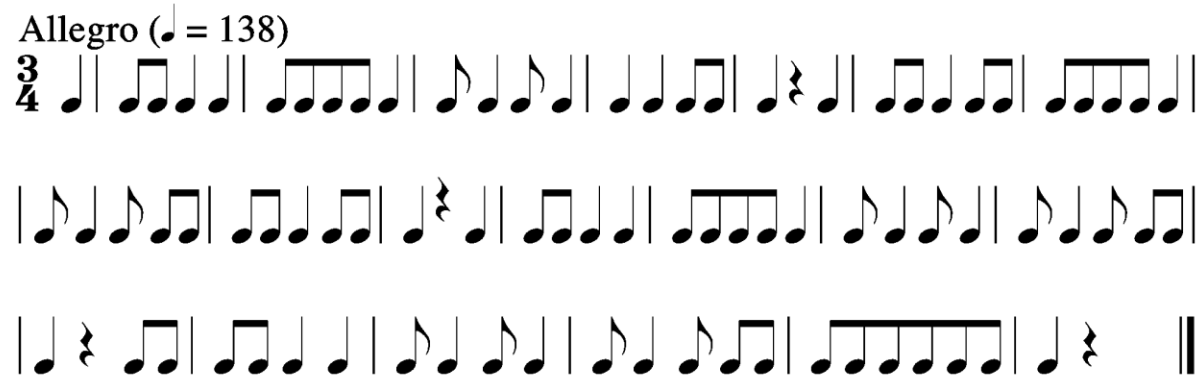
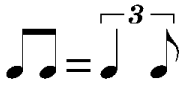


Chapter 9: Swing. Essentially, swing is a type of performance in which music notated in simple meter is performed as if in compound meter. You can use the *takadimi* syllables for compound meter to perform the rhythms.

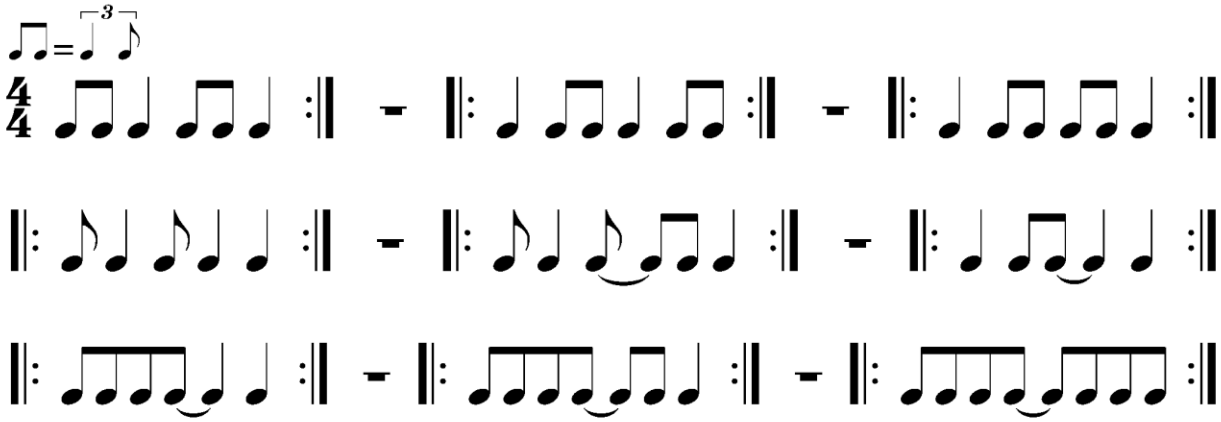
A measure notated:

or as:

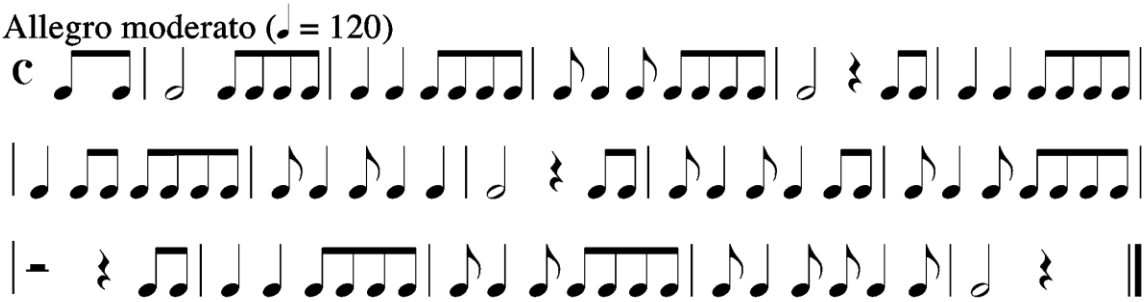
is actually performed like:

Swing is indicated by  at the beginning of the song.

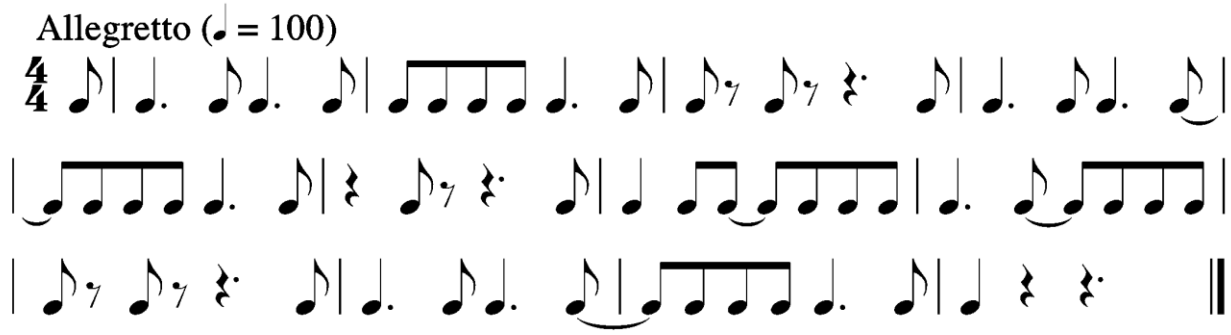
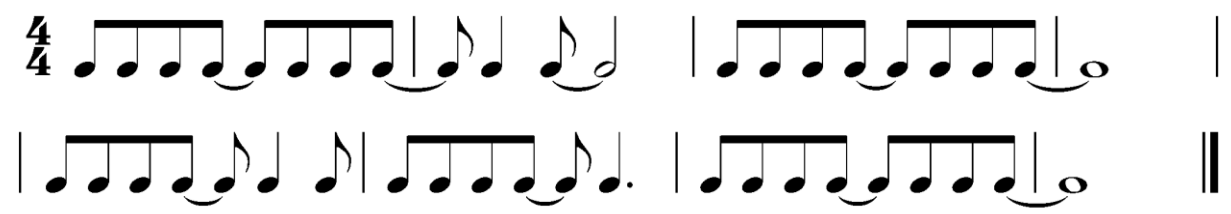
9.1



9.2



9.3



9.4