



MODULE 4

TAP OUT TIME AND RHYTHM

Have you got rhythm?

In this module we crack open time and rhythm to understand how we can use it inside our songs and making to our advantage.

Have you ever said to yourself or out loud 'I don't understand rhythm' or 'I don't have a good sense of rhythm'?

Does rhythm sometimes seem to elude you?

Or are you the opposite and often find yourself tapping away on tables and your knees?

No matter where you are currently at this module will act as a guide, a workshop space and a new place of inspiration.

Rhythm is an important part of each song you write so let's dive in and see how we harness it to make our music sounding interesting, groovy and fun!



NOTE LENGTHS

Note Lengths and Values

Each note we choose to include in our music has a beginning, middle and end. By understanding that it's not just about playing or singing note but it's actually about **seeing the note length through to its completion** that creates the interesting and satisfying rhythmical patterns within our songs.

Referencing Words

As long as you have a solid understanding of where the main beats in the bar fall, you can split each main beat into sub- groups of different note values.

One way for us to easily do this and actually hear it, is by using reference words.

The key to reference words is to count the syllables.

For example, we use one syllable words to represent one beat i.e. crotches.

Note Lengths and Values

CROTCHET or QUARTER NOTE

Lasts for one beat

Reference Word: **CHIPS**

QUAVER or EIGHTH NOTE

Lasts for half a beat

Reference Word: **PIZ-ZA**

SEMI-QUAVER or SIXTEENTH NOTE

Lasts for a quarter of a beat

Reference Word: **PEP-PER-ON-I**

DOTTED NOTES

Note Length + Note Length divided by 2

I.e. $1 + \frac{1}{2} = 1 \frac{1}{2}$ beats

TRIPLETS

A group of three notes played inside another note-length Reference Word: **RA-DI-CAL**

Note Lengths and Values

As well as reference words another good practise (and one to move into when you have really grasped your note values) is to count numbers out loud when working with note values.

To do this we use numbers for our main beats of the bar i.e. in a bar of 4/4 that would be 4 main beats. We count quavers in pairs, the first quaver is assigned the number where it falls in the bar and then we use the word '*and*' to fill in the second quaver. For semiquavers you can use the phrase '*one and with a*', with the number at the start of the phrase aligning with the start of the main beat of the bar.

Crotchet = **1** **2** **3** **4**

Quaver = **1** & **2** & **3** & **4** &

Semiquavers = **1**& w a **2**& w a **3**& w a **4**& w a

1 and with a, 2 and with a...etc.

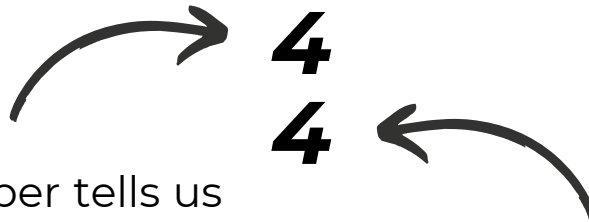


TIME SIGNATURES

Time Signatures

A time signature specifies how many beats are in each bar and it also tells us which note value is equivalent to "one beat".

Reading The Time Signature



The top number tells us ***how many beats*** are in the bar

The bottom number tells us what ***type of beats*** we can find in the bar i.e. what note value is equivalent to "a beat"

The Bottom Number

4 = Crotches

8 = Quavers

16 = Semiquavers

Simple Time

When we use the term 'Simple Time' we are referring to how each bar can be sub-divided by a factor of 2.

Let's take a look at the time signature $3/4$. We can take each of the three main beats in the bar and divide them each into two quavers, we then can divide each quaver again into two semiquavers.

It's this '**division of two**' that makes the time signature 'simple time'.

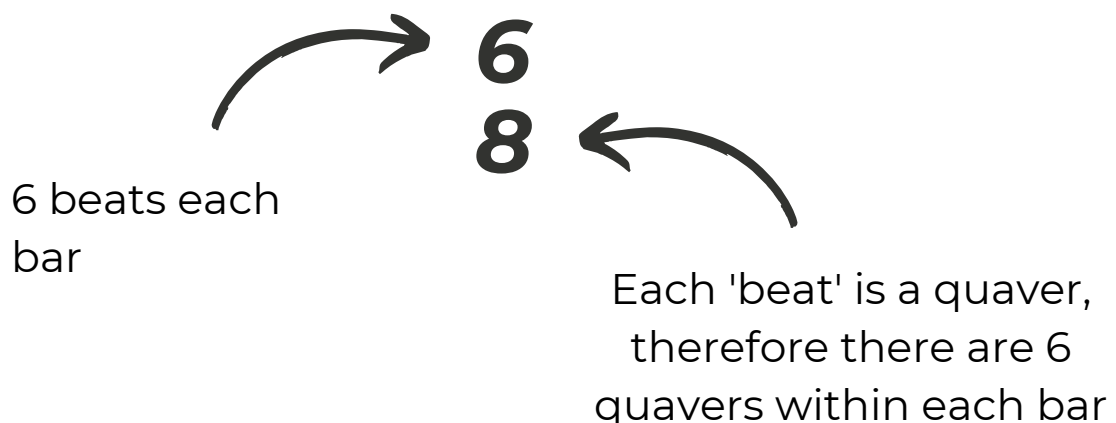
Crotchet = **1** **2** **3**

Quaver = **1** & **2** & **3** &

Semiquavers = **1** & w a **2** & w a **3** & w a

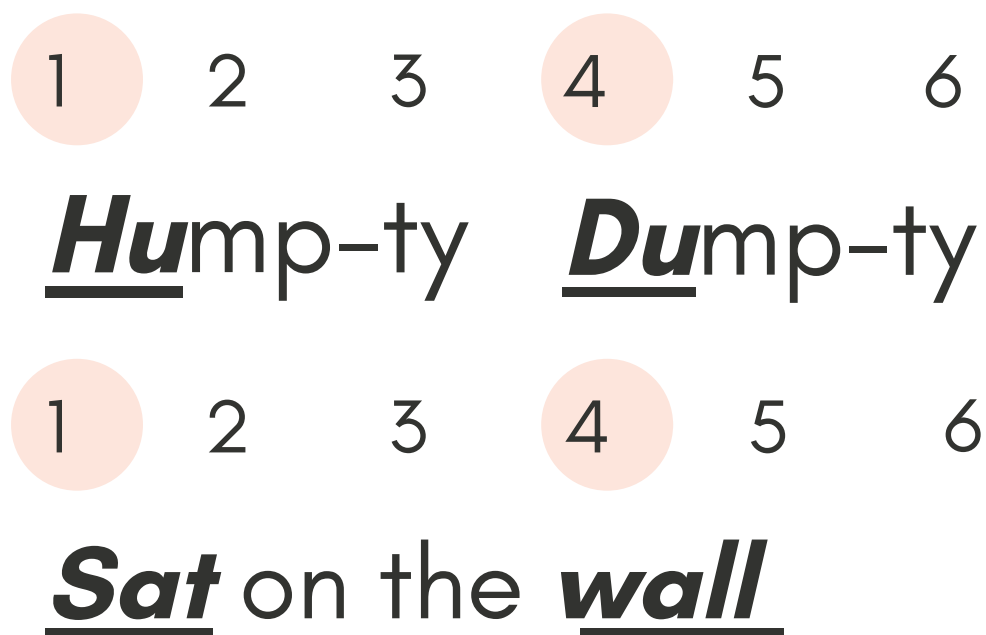
Compound Time

Let's look at the time signature $6/8$ to explore compound time signatures.

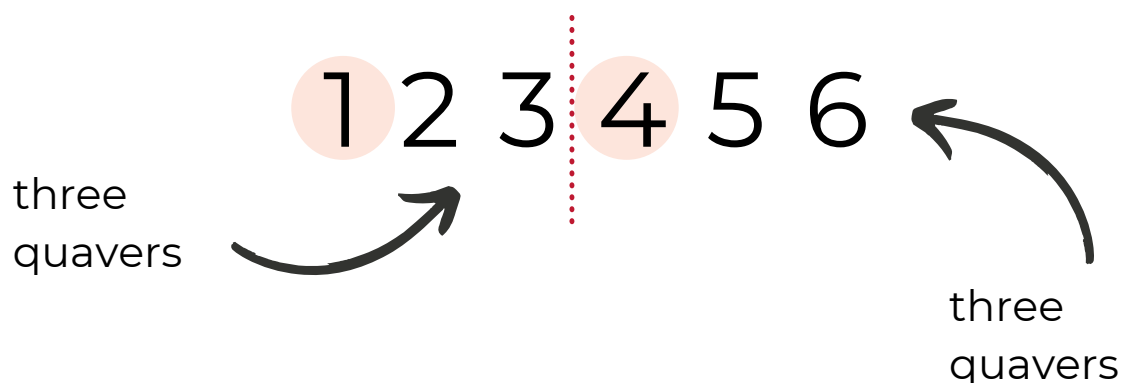


A time signature is compound time when we can split each bar into a **sub-group three**.

Sing the children's song Humpty Dumpty and you will feel that there are in fact TWO main stresses or pulses in each bar, even though there are 6 'beats' available.



Because of this two beat 'feel' we can say that each bar has two main 'pulses' one on 1 and one on 4. We can split each of these pulses in **sub-groups of three**, making the signature compound.



Time Signatures

There may seem like there are a lot of numbers and maths involved when looking at time signatures however I want to stress that the most important thing is the **feel** of the music.

Digest the information presented as much as you can and then listen to some music, with a pen and paper in hand take a note of all the time signatures you can identify.

With this practise you will start to 'feel' the swing of a 6/8, with its two main pulses in the bar and will be clapping and tapping your way towards feeling solid and tight with your rhythm in your songs!