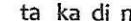


Learning rhythm with the TAKADIMI system of rhythm solfège

Simple Meter — The beat is always voiced with *ta*. The division and subdivision are always *ta-di* and *ta-ka-di-mi*. Any note value can be the beat. Three common values are shown.

Time sig.	Beat	Division	Subdivision
e.g. 2 3 4 2 2 2	 ta	 ta di	 ta ka di mi
e.g. 2 3 4 4 4 4	 ta	 ta di	 ta ka di mi
e.g. 2 3 4 8 8 8	 ta	 ta di	 ta ka di mi

Common Patterns (beat-length)

beat = ta								
	ta di	ta ka di mi		ta di mi		ta ka di		ta mi
beat = ta								
	ta di	ta ka di mi		ta di mi		ta ka di		ta mi
beat = ta								
	ta di	ta ka di mi		ta di mi		ta ka di		ta mi

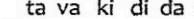
Examples (A *ta* in parentheses is not voiced but may be thought or “felt.”)

Musical notation for the first section of the song 'Ta Da'. The notation consists of a treble clef, a common time signature, and a key signature of one sharp. The lyrics are: ta ta ta di ta di ta ka di mi ta di ta di mi ta di ta mi ta di ta di mi ta di ta. The music features eighth-note patterns and rests.

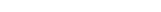
Musical notation for the first line of the song 'Takadimi'. The notation is in common time (indicated by '1 2 3 4') and consists of two measures. The first measure contains four groups of eighth notes: 'ta ta di' (two pairs), 'ta di ta' (one pair followed by one note). The second measure contains four groups of eighth notes: 'ta mi ta mi' (two pairs), 'ta ka di mi ta di' (one pair followed by one note, then a longer group of three pairs). The notes are represented by vertical stems with small circles at the top.

Musical notation for the first section of the song 'Ta Ta'. The notation consists of a series of notes and rests followed by lyrics: ta ta | ta di ta | di ta (ta) di mi ta | ta (ta) di | ta (ta) di mi | ta ka di (ta) | di mi | ta | . The notes are primarily eighth and sixteenth notes, with some quarter notes and rests.

Compound Meter — Compound meters have dotted beat notes, and the beat is always voiced with *ta*. The division and subdivision are always *ta-ki-da* and *ta-va-ki-di-da-ma*. Any dotted note value can be the beat. Three common values are shown.

Time sig.	Beat	Division	Subdivision
e.g. 6 9 12 4 4 4	 ta	 ta ki da	 ta va ki di da ma
e.g. 6 9 12 8 8 8	 ta	 ta ki da	 ta va ki di da ma
e.g. 6 9 12 16 16 16	 ta	 ta ki da	 ta va ki di da ma

Common Patterns (beat-length)

 beat = ta	 ta ki da	 ta da	 ta ki	 ta va ki di da ma	 ta di da	 ta ki di da	 ta ki da ma
 beat = ta	 ta ki da	 ta da	 ta ki	 ta va ki di da ma	 ta di da	 ta ki di da	 ta ki da ma
 beat = ta	 ta ki da	 ta da	 ta ki	 ta va ki di da ma	 ta di da	 ta ki di da	 ta ki da ma

Additional patterns are possible. Some occur in the examples below.

Examples

Musical notation for the first section of the song 'Takidada'. The notation consists of eight measures of music for a single voice. The key signature is G major (no sharps or flats). The time signature is common time (indicated by '8'). The vocal line includes lyrics such as 'ta ta', 'ta da ta', 'da ta di da', 'ta ki da ta', 'ta ki da ta', '(ta) da ta di da', and 'ta'. The melody involves various note values including eighth and sixteenth notes.

Musical score for 'Kida Ta' in 4/4 time. The lyrics are: (ta) ki da (ta) ki da ta di da ta da ta ki da ta di da ta. The score includes a bass line and a treble line with various note heads and rests.

A horizontal musical staff with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a common time signature. The staff consists of ten measures separated by vertical bar lines. The notes include quarter notes, eighth notes, and sixteenth notes. Below the staff, the lyrics are written in a cursive font: 'ta ta ta da ta' in the first measure, 'ta da ta ki da ta' in the second, 'ta da ta ki da ta di da ta' in the third, 'ta di da ta di da ta' in the fourth, and 'da ta' in the fifth.

A musical score for a vocal piece. It features a treble clef, a common time signature, and a key signature of one sharp. The music is divided into measures by vertical bar lines. The lyrics are placed below the notes, corresponding to the rhythm and pitch. The first measure contains six eighth notes. The second measure contains five eighth notes. The third measure contains four eighth notes. The fourth measure contains five eighth notes. The fifth measure contains four eighth notes. The sixth measure contains three eighth notes followed by a dotted half note. The seventh measure contains two eighth notes followed by a dotted half note. The eighth measure contains three eighth notes. The ninth measure contains four eighth notes. The tenth measure contains five eighth notes.

Takadimi

Advanced applications

Duplets and triplets — Use the same syllables for any division of the beat into two or three.

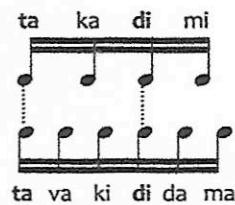
Musical notation in common time (C) with a tempo marking of 120 BPM. The first measure shows a quarter note followed by a eighth-note pair (duplet). The second measure shows a eighth-note pair followed by a triplet. The third measure shows a triplet followed by a eighth-note pair. The lyrics are "ta ta di ta ki da ta".

The duplet in m. 3 is performed just like the others in mm. 2 and 4. The syllable *di* falls at the midpoint of the beat in both simple and compound meter. A duplet can be written either way.

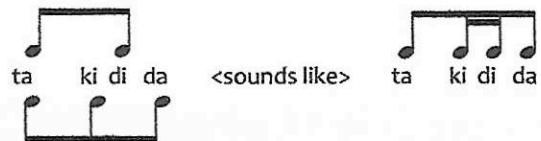
Musical notation in 6/8 time with a tempo marking of 120 BPM. The first measure shows a quarter note followed by a eighth-note pair (duplet). The second measure shows a eighth-note pair followed by a triplet. The third measure shows a triplet followed by a eighth-note pair. The lyrics are "ta ta ki da ta".

Two against three

Ta and *di* align at the beginning and midpoint of the beat in both simple and compound meters. Rhythms that involve both simple and compound divisions will share this attack point.



"Two against three" rhythms will produce the composite rhythm *ta-ki-di-da*. Work with the composite rhythm first, then emphasize the *ta-di* and *ta-ki-da* separately. Listening for the *ta-ki-di-da* composite will help ensure accuracy.



Changing meter — Changing meter can involve either the beat staying the same or the division staying the same. In this example the beat stays the same. Syllables can help make the distinction plain. The *ta-ki-da* triplet in m. 2 and the regular division of the beat in m. 3 will sound exactly alike.

Musical notation in 2/4 time with a tempo marking of 120 BPM. The first measure shows a eighth-note pair followed by a eighth-note pair. The second measure shows a triplet (three eighth notes) followed by a eighth-note pair. The third measure shows a eighth-note pair followed by a eighth-note pair. The lyrics are "ta mi ta ka di mi ta di mi ta ki da".

Irregular divisions — To perform irregular divisions of the beat, add a syllable to a common pattern.

Musical notation in 2/4 time with a tempo marking of 120 BPM. The first measure shows a eighth-note pair followed by a eighth-note pair. The second measure shows a eighth-note pair followed by a eighth-note pair. The third measure shows a eighth-note pair followed by a eighth-note pair. The lyrics are "ta ta di ta ka di mi ti ta di ta ki da ta di ta va ki di da ma ti ta di mi ta".

Asymmetric meters — Asymmetric meters combine simple and compound divisions. Keeping the divisions equal will produce beats of varied lengths.

Musical notation in 5/8 time with a tempo marking of 120 BPM. The first measure shows a eighth-note pair followed by a eighth-note pair. The second measure shows a eighth-note pair followed by a eighth-note pair. The third measure shows a eighth-note pair followed by a eighth-note pair. The lyrics are "ta ki da ta di ta di da ta di ta ki di da ta".

Takadimi is helpful in teaching other advanced techniques including super-tuplets (triplets and duplets over more than one beat), 4:3 relationships, syncopations, and metric modulation.

Rhythms for practice — Always practice rhythm with appropriate musical expression. Use vocal inflection to show lines and gestures.

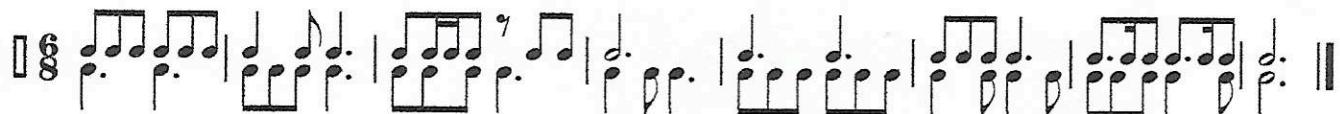
1. Here's an example in simple meter. Can you improvise a second 4 measure phrase to go along with this one?



2. Cut time or "alla breve" indicates the half note gets the beat. In this case there are two half notes in a measure, so 2/2.



3. Perform the rhythm as a duet, or for a challenge, speak the top line on syllables and clap or tap the bottom line.



4. Reading rhythm from staff notation can be different from reading traditional rhythmic notation. Let the contour and melodic groupings suggest an expressive reading.



Teaching with Takadimi

Takadimi is beat-oriented and pattern based. The beat is always *ta* regardless of notation; the syllables help students learn common beat-length patterns. It can be used pre-notationally with preschool children and can help in learning highly complex rhythm throughout the college curriculum and beyond.

Takadimi is great for reading rhythm but it can also be used apart from notation. Try translating the rhythm of popular songs and jingles to takadimi syllables. "Call and response" games are a fun way to practice rhythm patterns and learn important musical skills at the same time. Improvising on syllables is a valuable learning tool. Improvise a short pattern—one or two measures, or even a phrase—then have a student improvise a response. Takadimi syllables encourage play, and play is a powerful learning tool.

The Rhythm Book, a comprehensive college-level rhythm textbook based on Takadimi is available. Contact Richard Hoffman at info@takadimi.net for more information. For an excellent guide to using Takadimi in the elementary classroom, see Micheal Houlahan and Philip Tacka, *Kodály Today: A Cognitive Approach to Elementary Music Education* (New York: Oxford University Press), 2008.

The **Takadimi system** of rhythm pedagogy was developed by Richard Hoffman, William Pelto, John W. White along with a number of colleagues at Ithaca College in the 1990s. More information on the system, its origins, and pedagogical rationale can be found in Hoffman, Pelto, and White, "Takadimi: A Beat-Oriented System of Rhythm Pedagogy," *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy*, 1996.

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