

Episode-9

Time signature

It is essential to understand time signatures when learning both music and dance.

90% of music that we listen to, follows the time signature of 4 counts or beats per bar.

In previous lessons, we have learned a few strumming patterns based on 4 counts or beats. This helps us to develop a good sense of rhythm and keep the correct timing while playing songs.

Let's go further and understand:

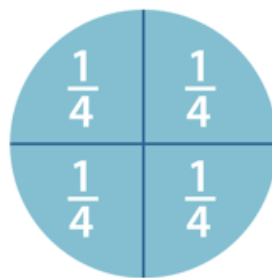
A) Quarter note

In a count of 4 beats, each beat is called a quarter note ($\frac{1}{4}$).

Or we can say that each count is a quarter note.

(The term count or beat are interchangeable.)

Just like if we divide a piece of cake into 4 equal parts, each part will be known as a quarter of the cake.



(Diagram: Quarter note)

As discussed previously we get 4 counts in one bar meaning there are 4 quarter notes in one bar.

We write them like this : / 1 2 3 4/

To make it easier for understanding let's assume 1 quarter note to be 1 second long.

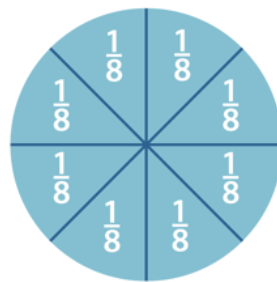
This makes the whole bar to be 4 seconds in total.

So, /1 2 3 4 / = 4 seconds

B) Eighth note

Now, we can divide each quarter note into further 2 halves. This will make each note $\frac{1}{2}$ a second long. Mind it, the total time of the bar is still 4 seconds. Only instead of 4 quarter notes (each 1 second long) now we have 8 eighth notes (each note is $\frac{1}{2}$ a second long now)

Observe that the cake is still the same size, only we have divided further into 8 equal parts Each part is known as an eighth of the cake.



(Diagram: Eighth note)

This is how you write 8 eighth notes in one bar:

/ 1 n 2 n 3 n 4 n / which is still equal to 4 seconds in total.

C) Clapping exercise.

This exercise should be followed as shown in the video.

Step 1 - Clap quarter notes for 2 bars meaning in total clap 8 times. /1 2 3 4/1 2 3 4/

Step 2 – For the first bar, say out loud quarter notes, and for the second bar shift smoothly to eighth notes without giving any jerks or breaks.

Step 3 – Perform these 2 bars in a loop for few times to ensure stability and consistency.

Try to do this exercise with the video if necessary.

D)Rhythm exercise

This exercise should be played as shown in the video.

Step 1 - Mute the strings with the left hand.

Step 2 - Play with the right-hand Quarter note strumming pattern for the first bar and then Shift to playing the eighth note strumming pattern in the second bar. Without any gaps in between. (Counting out loud what you play will help grasp quickly)



(Diagram: Rhythm exercise-1)



(Diagram: Rhythm exercise-2)

Try to do this exercise along with the video. If that seems fast for you then just play this exercise at a speed that you are comfortable with.

Remember we are looking for consistency here, not speed. We are not competing with anyone so, take as much time to practice these strumming patterns as this is very crucial for your right-hand movement. This will ensure that whatever song you play, will be at the correct and consistent speed.