Summit Intermediate School Bands

Rhythm Drills

By Jonathan M. Peske
How to practice these drills:

- Practice each measure individually first.
  - Then work on the entire line.
  - Then try to do more than one line.
  - How far can you play without making a mistake?
- **Use a metronome!** Each drill has a metronome marking. If that feels too fast, you can always go slower. Use the online metronome, or one of your own.
- Your goal is to be extremely precise. Don’t just get it “close,” get it perfectly right. Try for 3 times in a row perfectly correct. Perfect practice makes perfect.
- Write in counting for the rhythms—where are counts 1, 2, 3, 4?
- Practice counting and clapping the rhythms.
- Listen to the exercises performed by the computer online at [www.sisbands.org/Rhythm.htm](http://www.sisbands.org/Rhythm.htm)
- Be sure to hold notes for full value and count carefully through rests.
- Once you feel you really know it, move the metronome to a faster tempo—can you still play it perfectly?
- Try playing the rhythm on the page, but with changing notes. This is a way to improvise. Can you pick notes so that the line of rhythm sounds like a logical melody?
- With a friend: Each person picks a different line and you both play your lines at the same time. Can you play yours right when you hear other rhythms?
- Spend a few minutes every day working on rhythm—it will make you a better player!
Rhythm Drills
Quarter Notes and Quarter Rests

A
Set a metronome so that you play with a steady beat.

\[ \text{\textbf{A}} \]
\[ \text{\textit{q}} = 100 \]

B

C

D

E

F

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Rhythm Drills
Quarter Notes, Two Eighths, Quarter Rests

\[ \text{\textbf{A}} \]
Set a metronome so that you play with a steady beat.

\[ \text{\textbf{B}} \]

\[ \text{\textbf{C}} \]

\[ \text{\textbf{D}} \]

\[ \text{\textbf{E}} \]

\[ \text{\textbf{F}} \]
Rhythm Drills
Mixed Quarter, Half, Whole notes, Ties, Rests

\[ \text{Count carefully! Be sure to hold notes full value.} \]

\[ \text{A} \]

\[ \text{B} \]

\[ \text{C} \]

\[ \text{D} \]

\[ \text{E} \]

\[ \text{F} \]

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Rhythm Drills
2/4, 3/4, 5/4 time signatures

A
\( \frac{1}{4} \) = 100
Watch out for time signature changes!

B
\( \frac{3}{4} \)

C
\( \frac{9}{4} \)

1 2 + 3

D
\( \frac{13}{4} \)

E
\( \frac{17}{4} \)

F
\( \frac{21}{4} \)

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Set a metronome so that you play with a steady beat.

Count the ties carefully.

Notice the meter change.
You need to look very carefully at where each beat is. Does the note fall ON the beat, or OFF the beat? \( \text{\textit{\textbullet}=80} \)

A

\( \frac{3}{4} \)

B

C

D

E

F

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Rhythm Drills
Basic Syncopation

Set a metronome so that you play with a steady beat.

Careful!

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A
Set a metronome so that you play with a steady beat.

B
Notice the time signature change. Watch out for another one....

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Triplets

A
Set a metronome so that you play with a steady beat.

\[ \begin{array}{c}
1 & \text{triplet} & 3 & 4
\end{array} \]

B

C

D
Notice the ties.

E
Remember that 2 eighth notes equal one quarter note.

F

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Rhythm Drills
Cut Time

A \( \text{\( \frac{\text{\( \frac{3}{4} \)\)}}{\text{\( \frac{1}{4} \)}} \)\) = 80
In cut time, the half note gets the beat and there are two beats in the measure.

B

C

D

E

F

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6/8 time

In 6/8, the eighth note gets the number, but the beats are subdivided in groups of three, so it feels like triplets.

Careful!

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Rhythm Drills
Basic Sixteenth Note patterns

A
Set a metronome so that you play with a steady beat.

B

C

D
Careful!

E

F

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Rhythm Drills
The Dotted Eighth-Sixteenth Note Pattern

Give the dotted rhythm energy by putting a small space before the sixteenth.
Make sure there is a difference between the dotted eighth notes and the straight eighth notes.

A
\( \frac{4}{\text{a}} \)
\( \text{d} \) = 80

B
C
D
E
Here is the pattern reversed:

F
Be very careful!

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Rhythm Drills
Mixed Review

A  \( \frac{3}{4} \)-\( \frac{4}{4} \)  Count carefully! Set a metronome so that you play with a steady beat.

B

C

D  Watch out for time changes.

E  Keep the tempo the same through the meter changes.

F

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Rhythm Drills
Cut Time

Remember that the half note gets the beat.

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Sometimes, you actually do count in 6. Try these exercises counting in slow 6.

A  \( \frac{1}{120} \)

B

C An eighth note can still be split into two sixteenth notes. Try these in slow 6, then fast 6.

D

E 3/8 time just has less beats per measure.

F

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A $\frac{1}{4} - \frac{4}{4}$ Set a metronome so that you play with a steady beat.

B 5

C 9

D 13

E 17

F 21

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In compound meter, the eighth notes get grouped in groups of 2s and 3s.

A

\[ \text{\( \frac{7}{8} \)} \]

Here is 3+2+2:

\[ \text{\( \frac{1}{2} \)} \]

B

\[ \text{\( \frac{7}{8} \)} \]

Here is 2+2+3:

\[ \text{\( \frac{5}{8} \)} \]

C

Sometimes, the pattern will change back and forth:

\[ \text{\( \frac{7}{8} \)} \]

D

Sometimes, the time signature will change too:

\[ \text{\( \frac{7}{8} \)} \]

E

\[ \text{\( \frac{10}{8} \)} \]

F

\[ \text{\( \frac{10}{8} \)} \]

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