

Introduction

This collection of rhythmic studies is based on the concepts of Daniel Kazez – *Rhythm Reading* (Norton, 1997). His excellent book is quite detailed and offers many examples and strategies for learning rhythm. I have chosen to simplify the process, assuming a basic understanding of rhythms and the ability to perform them is already in place – most likely a review of the process and possibly a deeper understanding of how various rhythms relate to each other. Younger students might find it useful to proceed from front to back. Others having difficulty with a particular rhythm can go directly to the appropriate page.

As a practical consideration, I have chosen to use the three most common meters found in music – two simple meters with ♩ and ♪ visually representing the beat, and one compound meter with ♫ visually representing the beat.

Sections I – III each begin with a **cell** showing the basic note value that represents a beat. The following pages in each section introduce one common rhythmic cell that shows extensions or divisions of that basic beat. Students needing work with a particular rhythm can go directly to that rhythmic cell for drill.

The line of rhythms directly beneath each cell demonstrates how that cell can be generated from known rhythmic values. In this line, ties are often used to demonstrate how smaller note values can be combined to generate the cell. Again, these cells are common groupings of notes that will be encountered in everyday music. Progressively challenging exercises follow for each cell.

Section IV introduces borrowed rhythms – triplets and duplets. Section V adds ties to previously introduced exercises so that less-usual note durations can be practiced as well.

No attempt is made to show overly complex rhythmic notation that might be found in more advanced repertoire. I hope that the grounding provided here will enable the performer to use the same beat-based method to successfully navigate those occasions.

About Beats

- 1) A beat is a feeling, often (but not always) allied with a sound, coursing through music that is continuous, steady, and therefore **predictable**. That predictability is critically important to produce accurate rhythms. (And yes, the speed of the beat does fluctuate at times in music, and the music eventually stops.)
- 2) Any note value can visually represent a beat – dependent on the meter signature (time signature) and tempo. Please consider this beat note value as beginning a sound on the beat and **continuing** until the next beat begins. That note is not

simply a vertical event focused on the beginning of the beat, but a sustained sound throughout the duration of the beat.

- 3) Note values that represent complete beats can be extended in the notation to produce sounds longer than a beat, and divided to produce sounds shorter than a beat.
- 4) Beats and partial beats that are meant to be silent in the music are represented by corresponding rest values. A continuous, steady, predictable beat must continue through rests.

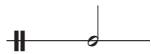
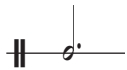
How to Practice

- 1) Always sing or play each rhythm or exercise while physically making a beat – clap, snap fingers, pat leg, tap foot, conduct, march in place, etc.
- 2) In the line that follows each cell, repeat each measure at 3 tempi – slow, moderate, and fast (or maybe moderate, then slow, then fast) - until it is completely understood.
- 3) Play/sing each exercise at 3 tempi – continue physically making the beat.
- 4) Repeat each exercise as needed until it can be performed multiple times, in a variety of tempi, without error before moving to the next exercise.

William Stanley
2025

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III. Compound meter - ♩ beat





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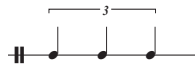


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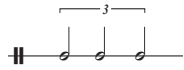
IV. Borrowed Rhythms



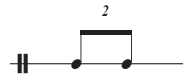
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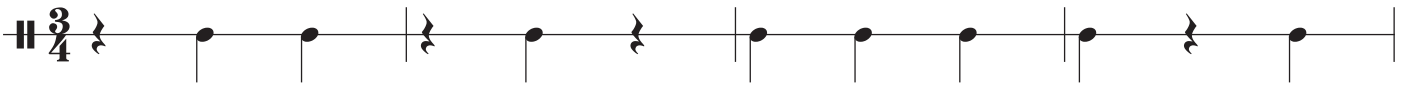
I. Simple Meter - beat



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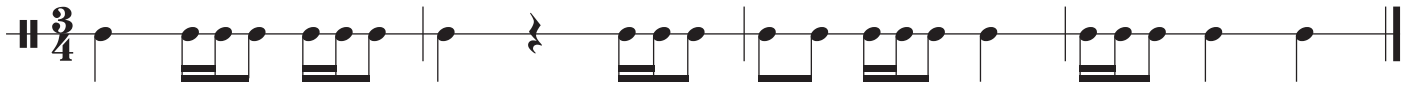




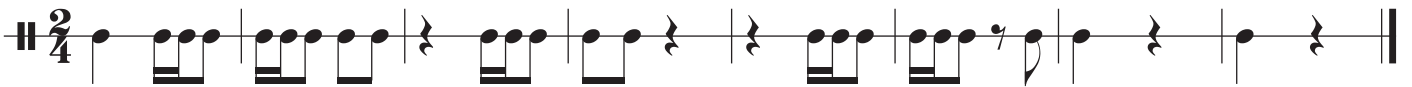
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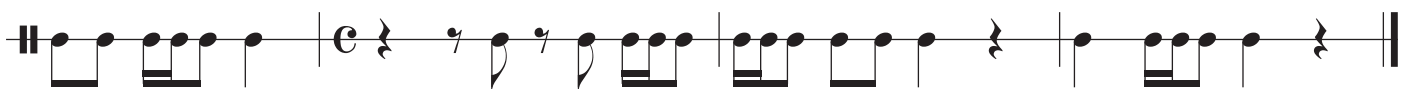
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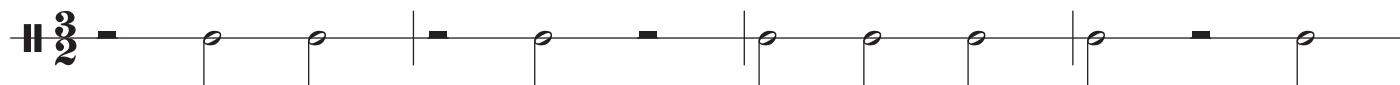
II. Simple Meter - beat



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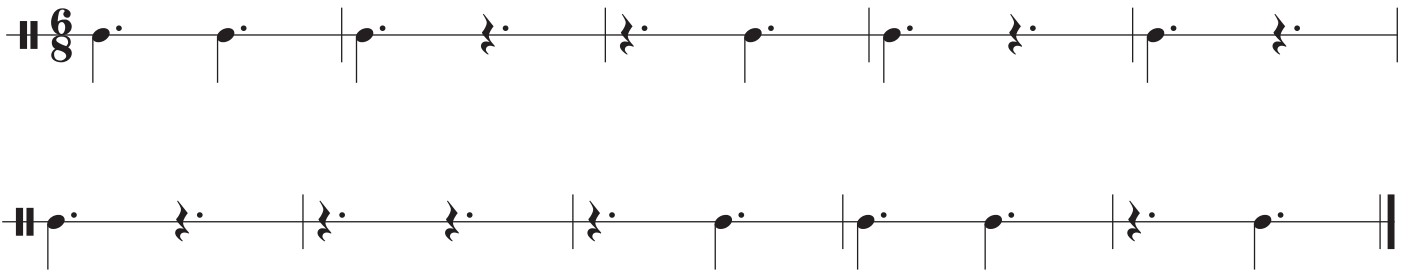
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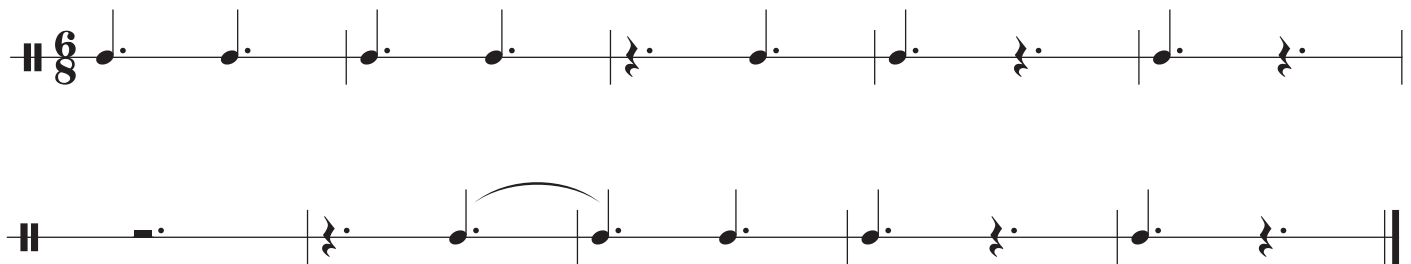
III. Compound Meter - beat



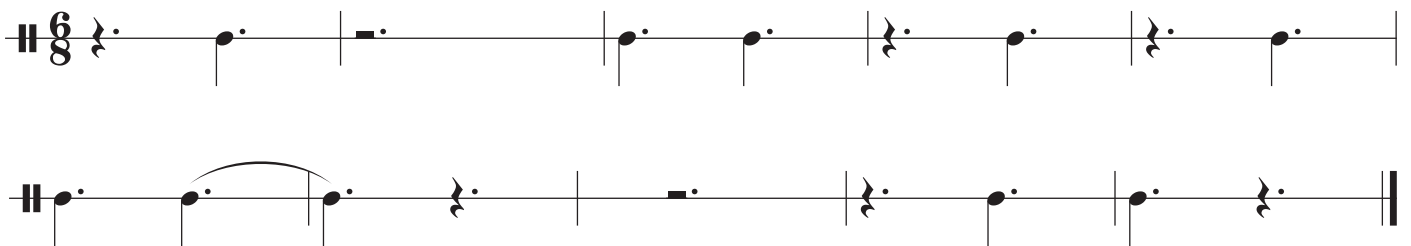
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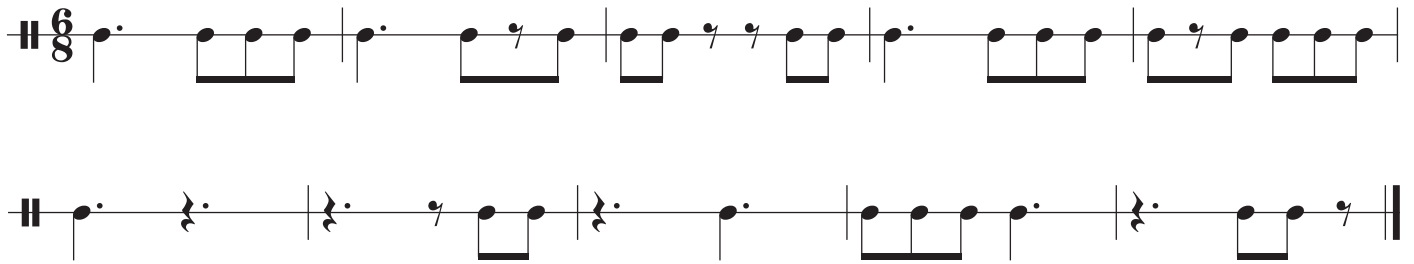


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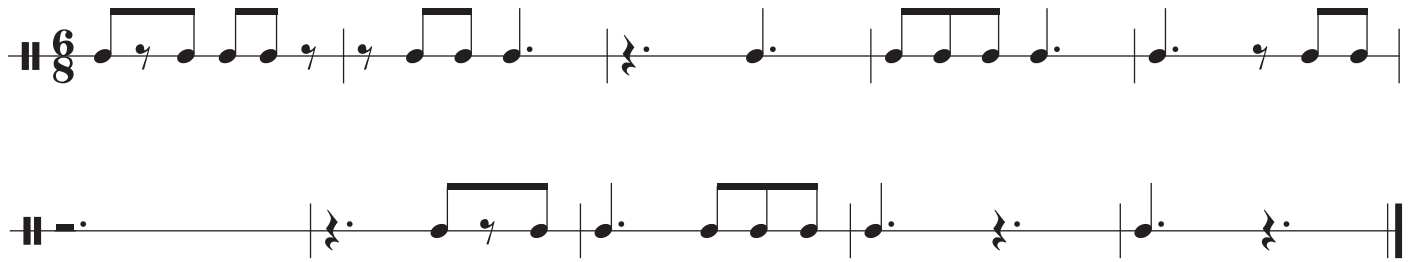




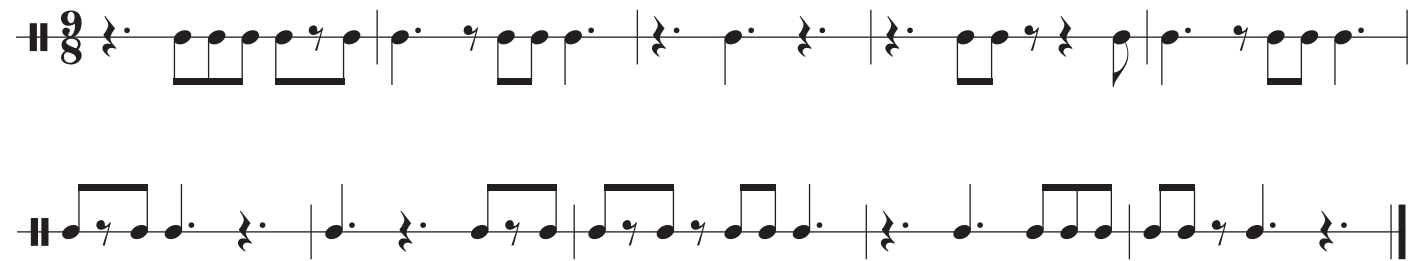
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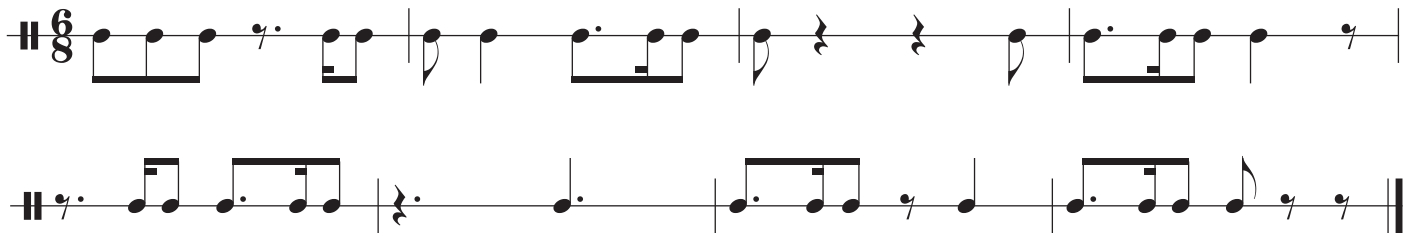
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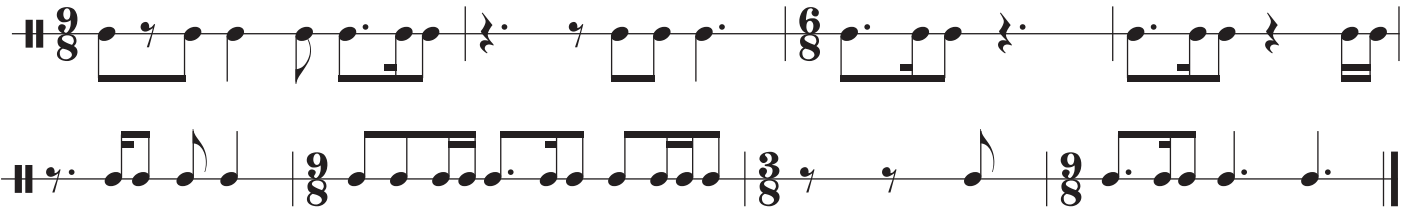
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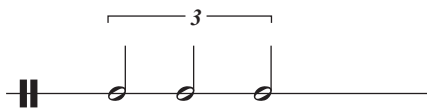


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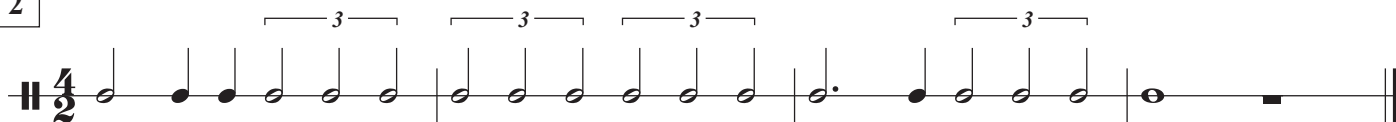




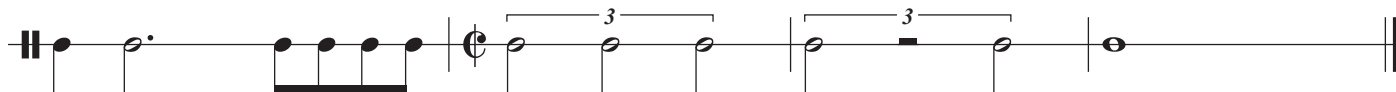
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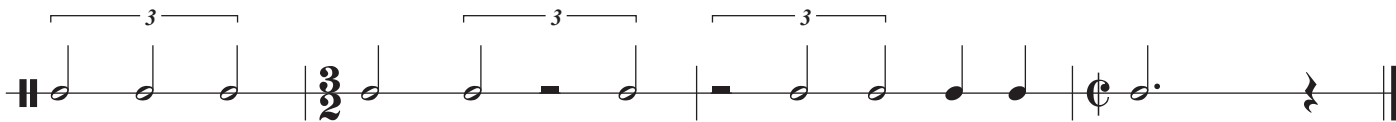
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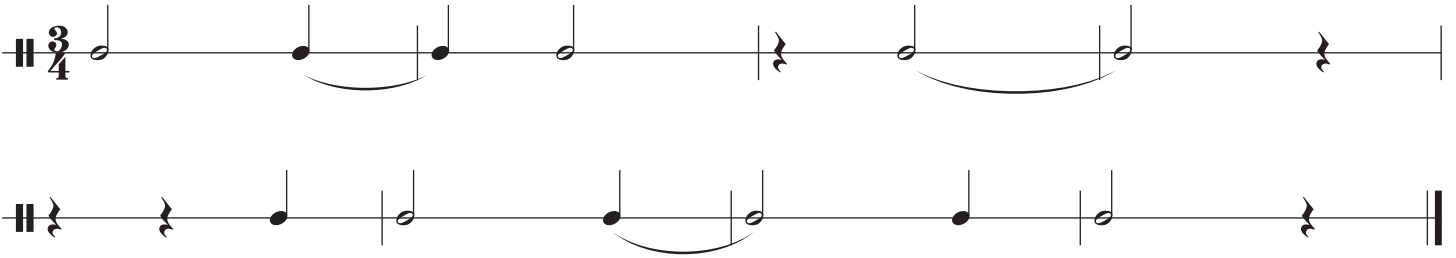


V. Exercises With Ties

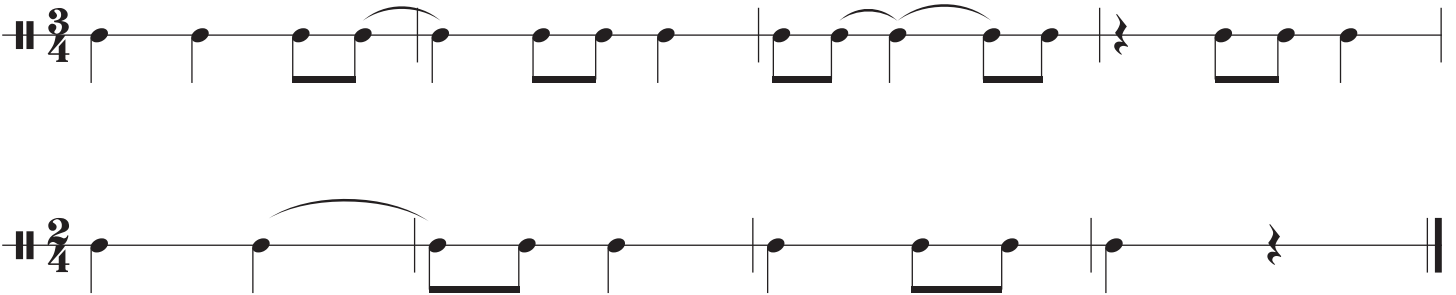
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