



World Rhythms for Didgeridoo

Worksheet

The metronome is an invaluable tool for developing your sense of rhythm. Use your own or one of the following:

- Streaming on the web: metronomeonline.com
- iPhone App: [Pro Metronome](#)

The basic 2-beat rhythm

- The essence of this rhythm is OUT-IN-OUT-IN (repeating)
- You can also think of it as ABS-CHEEKS-ABS-CHEEKS (repeating)
- Set your metronome at a medium tempo and say or sing each of the following numbers on the click:

1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2...

- For those who don't know circular breathing, you can still do this rhythm. In fact, practicing this is a great way to strengthen the muscles needed for circular breathing.

The 3-beat rhythm

The triple meter has a unique feel that is utilized in almost every musical tradition. In western music, the triple meter is known as the *waltz*. By accenting different parts of the 3 beat cycle we can break up the rhythm a number of different ways.

*Set your metronome at a medium tempo and say or sing each of the following numbers on the click: 1 2 3, 1 2 3, 1 2 3, 1 2 3...

Now do the same but accent beat one (say it stronger than the others):

1 2 3, **1** 2 3, **1** 2 3, **1** 2 3...

HA-We-ha

This 3 beat circular breathing rhythm is a powerful foundation for higher level playing. **HA** is a breath out that fills the cheeks. **We** is the sound your cheeks make when they squeeze allowing for a simultaneous nostril inhalation.

Repeated it sounds like:

HA-We-ha, HA-We-ha...

Note the two exhales right next to each other. The **HA** (in capitals) should have the louder sound. Some people prefer to use the sound **FF** instead of **We**, especially when practicing without the didgeridoo. This would sound like:

HA-FF-ha, HA-FF-ha...

Tresillo: Afro-Cuban Rhythm

Tresillo is a bell pattern essential to Afro-cuban, Afro-Brazilian and Latin music. Originally brought to the Americas by African slaves, this rhythm is found in most traditional African music and most Latin-American styles.

Tresillo is also known as the **Caribbean Clave**.

There are two ways to conceptualize Tresillo:

- A. Take a pattern of 8 beats and divide it as 3, 3, 2. In other words:

1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2

Using the building blocks of 3 and 2 that we learned earlier, this looks like:

Ha in ha **Ha** in ha **Ha** in

With a metronome you can practice playing this perfectly in time. This will really help to develop your feel for syncopated rhythms.

- B. Use strong exhales (abs) to play notes on beats **1**, **&(of 2)** and **4**. When you do this rhythm with circular breathing you can inhale in any space between the strong beats. Try to hear your inhales as a rhythmic element. This is what it looks like:

1 & 2 **&** 3 & **4** & ,

1 & 2 **&** 3 & **4** &...

Notice that this count is exactly the same as 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2, it just counted over a steady pulse of four beats and uses subdivision (the upbeats [&] between the beats)

Maksum: Middle-Eastern Rhythm

This rhythm is designed for the drum known as dumbek or darbuka. This music features two predominant drum hits: **dum (D)**, the bass drum sound and **tek (T)**, the snare, or higher pitched sound. For didge we have the option to use a different sound (such as the trumpet or voice) for each of these hits. To start we play all pulse beats with notes generated by abdominal rhythm (exhalations).

Maksum is a middle-eastern 4-beat rhythm often used for bellydance. It looks like this:

D	T	-	T	D	-	T	-	D	T	-	T	D	-	T	-
1	&	2	&	3	&	4	&	1	&	2	&	3	&	4	&

With didge we can play it like:

**Ha ha - ha ha - ha -
Ha ha - ha ha - ha -**

or including the inhales for circular breathing:

Ha ha In ha Ha In Ha In

Remember that when it says **In**, this is an inhalation and simultaneous squeezing of your cheeks to push air out your mouth.

The African 6/8 Clave

The 6/8 clave from Africa is a very powerful trance inducing rhythm. This 6-beat cycle must be subdivided to fully embrace the rhythm. First start by setting the metronome to 100 beats per minute and counting out the following cycle with numbers on each click and the word "and" between each click:

one and two and three and four and five and six and

(or alternately written as):

1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5 + 6 +, 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5 + 6 +...

What we are doing here is learning the full subdivision. Each number falls right on the click and each **and** fall on the upbeat, the beat between the clicks.

The African 6/8 clave goes:

1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5 + 6 +, 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5 + 6 +...

(or alternately written as):

Ha - Ha - Ha ha - ha - ha - ha,
Ha - Ha - Ha ha - ha - ha - ha

or with inhales:

Ha in Ha in Ha ha in ha in ha in ha

Inhale at any and/or every point where **in** is written.