

Chapter 9

Inverted Dotted Figures and Simple Syncopated Figures

Welcome to the demonstration chapter for *The Refinement of Rhythm Volume 1* by Bengt-Olov Palmqvist. To purchase any of our publications, or for further information and demo materials from the series, please visit www.refinementofrhythm.com. We hope you enjoy working through this chapter, and we look forward to hearing from you...

In Chapter 4 dotted figures such as $\overset{\text{>}}{\text{♩}} \text{ ♩}$ were introduced, where the metric accent occurs on the dotted note. If this rhythmic figure is reversed to $\overset{\text{>}}{\text{♩}} \overset{\text{̄}}{\text{♩}}$ the strong metric accent still occurs on the first note, but the second note is now given a musical stress called an **agogic accent**.

Practise the following drill with an emphasis on the accents:

Drill 31 Sing $\frac{2}{4}$ $\overset{\text{̄}}{\text{♩}} \overset{\text{̄}}{\text{♩}}$ | $\overset{\text{̄}}{\text{♩}} \overset{\text{̄}}{\text{♩}}$:|| = $\overset{\text{̄}}{\text{♩}} \overset{\text{̄}}{\text{♩}}$

Clap \times \times | \times \times

Notice the difference between the following two patterns, where

- a) the rhythmic pattern functions as an **inverted dotted figure**: $\overset{\text{̄}}{\text{♩}} \overset{\text{̄}}{\text{♩}}$
- b) the rhythmic pattern functions as an **upbeat figure**: $\overset{\text{̄}}{\text{♩}} | \overset{\text{̄}}{\text{♩}}$

Two pairs of equal note values such as $\text{♩} \text{ ♩}$ joined by a tie $\text{♩} \text{ --- } \text{♩}$ are often notated as $\text{♩} \text{ ♩}$


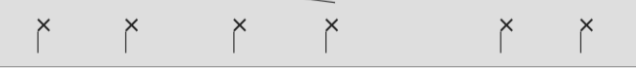
Looking back to the inverted dotted figure a) $\overset{\text{̄}}{\text{♩}} \overset{\text{̄}}{\text{♩}}$ and substituting the augmentation dot with its corresponding note value, the rhythmic pattern changes from $\overset{\text{̄}}{\text{♩}} \overset{\text{̄}}{\text{♩}}$ into $\overset{\text{̄}}{\text{♩}} \overset{\text{̄}}{\text{♩}} \text{ ♩}$

This special rhythmic pattern and effect is called **syncopation**.

This chapter only focuses on ♪ note syncopations (when in ♪ beats). The characteristic of syncopation is the intentional disruption of the natural metric flow. In $\frac{2}{4}$ meter the strong metric accent is expected to coincide with the first beat and the lesser accent on the second beat. When the accent is shifted from a strong to a weaker beat, it contradicts the meter and focuses the musical interest on a weak beat.





Practise the following drill taking care with the accents:

Drill 32

Sing	$\frac{2}{4}$	
Clap		

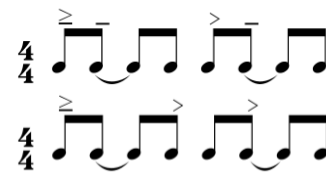
The beat must be kept steady and accurate so that you do not lose the metric pulse, otherwise the feel for the syncopated pattern easily becomes lost.

Compare the following two patterns which illustrate what can happen if the syncopation is inaccurate:

Correct	$\frac{4}{4}$	
		
Incorrect	$\frac{4}{4}$	
		

The metric and agogic accents are of vital importance.

Preparatory exercise 7 on the next page should be performed as follows:



If the metric accents were to be misplaced like this:

the meter has suddenly changed from $\frac{4}{4}$ meter to an asymmetrical meter:



NB. See discussion on **asymmetrical meters** Chapter 16, p. 163 onwards












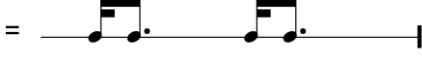
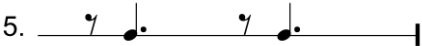








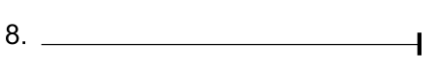



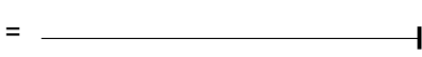


In preparatory exercises 5, 8 and 10, the rest on the beat must be 'active' so that the pulse and movement does not stop or trip up. Remember the phrasing and direction, even though the rhythmic pattern is short.

Here are suggested interpretations for the performance of preparatory exercises 8 and 9:



Preparatory Exercises

Practise Column A while clapping or tapping the beat. Complete the notation for exercises 7 to 10 in Column B and then practise them.

A $\frac{4}{4}$	B $\frac{4}{8}$
1. 	1. 
2. 	2. 
= 	= 
3. 	3. 
4. 	4. 
= 	= 
5. 	5. 
6. 	6. 
7. 	7. 
= 	= 
8. 	8. 
9. 	9. 
= 	= 
10. 	10. 

Example 215 Bars 1-3: Notice how misinterpretation of the notation, accents and phrasing can change these bars from simple triple meter into compound duple meter.

Simple triple meter:

Compound duple meter:


♩ = 104


[CD 2: Track 70](#)

Example 216 ♩ = 120

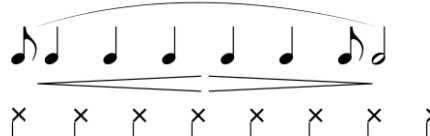
[CD 2: Track 71](#)

Example 217 Bar 2: A common mistake can occur when the third note is played too early, before the third beat. This, of course, creates a different rhythmic pattern altogether.

Correct 

Incorrect 

Bars 3-4 and 7-8: The tie across the bars should not interfere with the flow of the syncopated pattern as it moves over the bar line. Do not let the bar line work against the flow of notes like a 'wall'. Instead, see the rhythmic pattern over the two bars as one long phrase, and 'ignore' the fact that a bar line happens to appear half way through.

e.g. 

♩ = 126

CD 2: Track 72




Example 218 ♩ = 126


CD 2: Track 73




Example 219 Bar 5: Practise this drill to clarify and secure the syncopations.

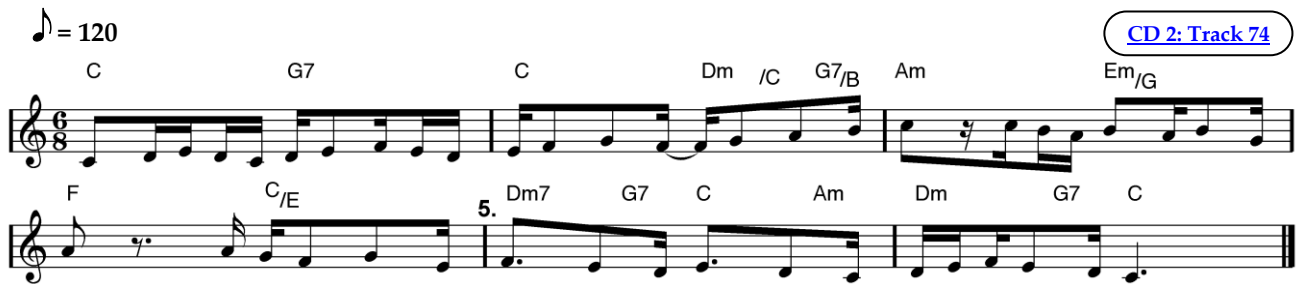
Drill 33

Sing $\frac{3}{8}$ 

Clap 

= 

$\text{♩} = 120$ CD 2: Track 74



Chords: C, G7, C, Dm /C, G7/B, Am, Em/G, F, C/E, 5. Dm7, G7, C, Am, Dm, G7, C

Example 220 Alla breve $\text{♩} = 96$

CD 2: Track 75



Chords: C, F, C, G7, C, D7/F#, G, G#o, Am, Am/G, F#o, F7, Am/E, F7/Eb, D7/9, Bø, Am/E, E-7/9, Dm7/9, G7, C

Canons

Example 221 ♩ = 108

CD 2: Track 76

Musical score for Example 221, a canon in 3/4 time with a tempo of 108 beats per minute. The score consists of three systems of two staves each. The first system shows the initial entry of the two parts. The second system continues the canon. The third system concludes the piece with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Example 222 ♩ = 96

CD 2: Track 77

Musical score for Example 222, a canon in 4/4 time with a tempo of 96 beats per minute. The score consists of four systems of two staves each. The first system shows the initial entry of the two parts. The second system continues the canon. The third system continues the canon. The fourth system concludes the piece with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Improvisation over a given rhythm

Example 223

Example 223 consists of two staves in 4/4 time. The top staff contains a melody of eighth and quarter notes with rests. The bottom staff contains a bass line of eighth and quarter notes, ending with a double bar line.

Example 224

Example 224 consists of two staves in 4/4 time. The top staff contains a melody with eighth notes and quarter notes, including some syncopation. The bottom staff contains a bass line of eighth and quarter notes, ending with a double bar line.

Example 225

Example 225 consists of three staves in 3/4 time. The top staff contains a melody with eighth and quarter notes. The middle and bottom staves contain bass lines with eighth and quarter notes, ending with a double bar line.

Example 226

Example 226 consists of two staves in 3/4 time. The top staff contains a melody with eighth and quarter notes. The bottom staff contains a bass line with eighth and quarter notes, ending with a double bar line.

Example 227

Example 227 consists of two staves in 4/8 time. The top staff contains a melody with eighth and quarter notes. The bottom staff contains a bass line with eighth and quarter notes, ending with a double bar line.

Example 228



Example 229



Music References for Further Study

Composer	Work	Extract
Bach, J.S.	[Two Part] Invention No. 6 in E major BWV 777	bb. 1-20
Bartók, B.	<i>First Term at the Piano</i> (<i>Kezdök zongoramuzsikája/Die erste Zeit am Klavier</i>) (Sz. 53, BB 66)	No. 14 No. 17
Bartók, B.	<i>For Children (Gyermekeknek)</i> (Sz. 42, BB 53) Volume I	No. 13 'Ballade' No. 14
Bartók, B.	<i>Mikrokosmos</i> (Sz. 107, BB 105) Volume III	No. 95 'Song of the Fox'
Beethoven, L.v.	Piano Concerto No. 5 in E-flat major ('Emperor'), Op. 73	1st movement, bb. 64-77
Beethoven, L.v.	Piano Sonata No. 10 in G major, Op. 14 No. 2	2nd movement, bb. 21-41
Berlioz, H.	<i>Symphonie fantastique</i> , Op. 14	4th movement 'Marche au supplice' (<i>'March to the scaffold'</i>), bb. 62-77
Brahms, J.	String Quartet No. 2 in A minor, Op. 51	4th movement (Finale), bb. 91-97, 284-290
Debussy, C.	String Quartet in G minor, Op. 10 (L. 85)	1st movement, bb. 1-12
Franck, C.	Symphony in D minor (1886-8)	3rd movement, bb. 330-337
Haydn, J.	Piano Trio in B-flat major (Hoboken XV: 8)	1st movement, bb. 37-45
Martinů, B.	Trio for Flute, Cello and Piano (1944)	1st movement, bb. 10-11, 42-46 3rd movement, Fig. 19 (bb. 351-378)
Sibelius, J.	<i>Karelia Suite</i> , Op. 11	1st movement 'Intermezzo', bb. 53-75
Stravinsky, I.	<i>The Firebird (L'Oiseau de feu)</i>	'Infernal Dance', bb. 1-26