

LESSON 11

Date: _____

Simple Time ~ Meters where the principle subdivision of the beat is by two. The top number of the time signature will be 2, 3, or 4.

Compound Time ~ Meters where the principle subdivision of the beat is by three. The top number of the time signature will be 6, 9, or 12. In theory, the top number can be any multiple of 3 (excluding 3), however, any number larger than 12 is rare.

Meter ~ A recurring pattern of stresses or accents that provide the beat of music. The most common meters are duple (2), triple (3), and quadruple (4).

Pulse ~ We will reserve this term for the subdivision of beats. In simple time there are two pulses per beat. In compound time there are three pulses per beat.

Note: The terms time/meter and beat/pulse are often used interchangeably. Time is a complex topic with many subtleties and layers.

In Level 4, you will study examples of compound and complex time signatures that can be organized into duple, triple, and quadruple meters. Together with simple time signatures, they are the most commonly used time signatures used in music.

In compound time signatures, the bottom number indicates which type of note is designated as the pulse.



In compound time, half notes are rarely designated as the pulse. As such, only time signatures with 4, 8, and 16 as the bottom note will be studied.

COMPOUND DUPLÉ TIME (**STRONG** WEAK: **S** W W **W** W W)

6 6 pulses in a bar: 2 beats in a bar, 3 pulses in a beat

4 the quarter note gets one pulse

6 6 pulses in a bar: 2 beats in a bar, 3 pulses in a beat

8 the eighth note gets one pulse

The image shows two staves of music in 6/8 time. The top staff illustrates the division levels: a half note (labeled 'Multiple Level'), a quarter note (labeled 'Beat Level'), and a dotted quarter note followed by an eighth note (labeled 'Principle Division (compounding) Level'). The bottom staff shows 'Subsequent Division Levels' with a sequence of eighth notes.

6 6 pulses in a bar: 2 beats in a bar, 3 pulses in a beat

16 the sixteenth note gets one pulse

The image shows two staves of music in 6/16 time. The top staff illustrates the division levels: a half note (labeled 'Multiple Level'), a quarter note (labeled 'Beat Level'), and a dotted quarter note followed by an eighth note (labeled 'Principle Division (compounding) Level'). The bottom staff shows 'Subsequent Division Levels' with a sequence of sixteenth notes.

DOTS

A dot lengthens a note by half of the value of the note. Subsequent dots continue to lengthen the note by half of the value of the previous dot. It is rare to see notes that have more than two dots. A note that has two dots is referred to as a double dotted note.

The image shows two staves of music in 4/4 time. The top staff shows a sequence of notes with increasing numbers of dots: a quarter note, a dotted quarter note, a double dotted quarter note, and a triple dotted quarter note. The bottom staff shows a sequence of eighth notes with increasing numbers of dots: an eighth note, a dotted eighth note, a double dotted eighth note, and a triple dotted eighth note.

