

We saw in a previous lesson the binary rhythms. Indeed, why did we call these “binary” rhythms? This is because the measure was beaten to the quarter note, to the half note ... But here we are entering the ternary: everything will be beaten with dotted quarter note or dotted half note, so the time signatures will be different! We will see all of this today in this course.

The fact of being in a ternary mode is changing the time level, and impacts the measures. In binary, time was divisible by multiples of 2, but in ternary, time is divisible by multiples of 3. So, we will always have eighth notes, quarter notes, half notes, ... but they will not have the same time value as in binary! Indeed, a ternary beat (beaten with dotted quarter notes) will be equal to 1 quarter note dotted, or 3 eighth notes, or 6 sixteenth notes,...

Little reminder: The point next to a note corresponds to half of its value (in binary), so a dotted quarter note will be worth the value of the note + the value of its point.

In addition, the tempo in ternary will no longer be indicated by white, black, eighth notes, or whole notes, but by dotted half notes, dotted quarter notes, ...



*Here, we can see a partition in ternary, beaten with dotted quarter notes, with the pulsations.*

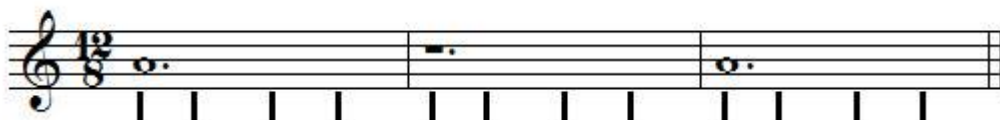
The time signature is here (6/8), that is to say that there will be 6 eighth notes per measure, and since we are in ternary and we are beating with the dotted quarter note, a dotted quarter note worth 3 eighth notes, we are left with 2-stroke measures.

If the time signature is (12/8), this means a measure of 4 beat times in dotted quarter notes.

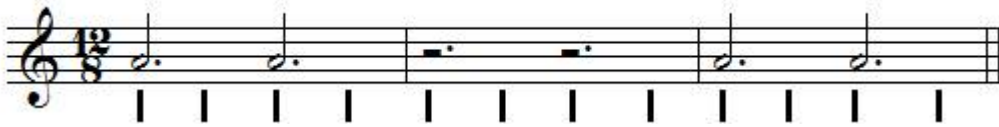
NB: The time signatures used in ternary are mainly (6/8) and (12/8).

Here are some ternary rhythms, with the pulsation:

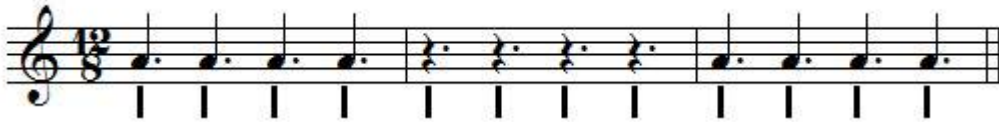
- Pointed whole notes / Pointed pauses



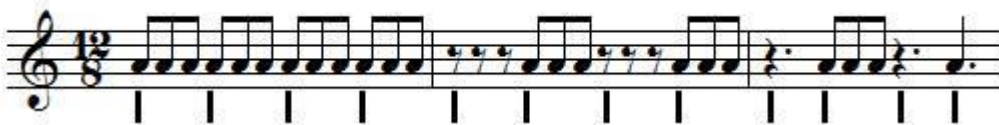
- Pointed half notes / Pointed half pauses



- Pointed quarter notes / Pointed silent



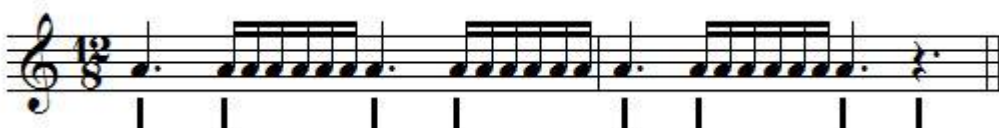
- Eighth notes / Half silents



- Quarter note + Eighth note



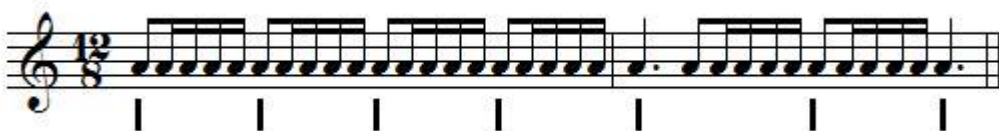
- Sixteenth notes



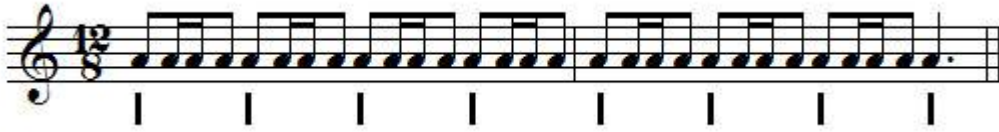
- Quarter note + 2 sixteenth notes



- Eighth note + 4 sixteenth notes



- Eighth note + 2 sixteenth notes + eighth note



- Sicilian



#### Conclusion: THE TIPS TO REMEMBER

- In ternary, we no longer divide times in 2 as in binary, but in 3.
- The building blocks of rhythms are the same as for binary, but they do not have the same time value.
- We no longer beat quarter note or half note, but dotted quarter note and dotted half note.
- The most commonly used ternary time signatures are (6/8) and (12/8), respectively measure of 2 beats and 4 beats, beaten with dotted quarter notes.