



Compound Meters

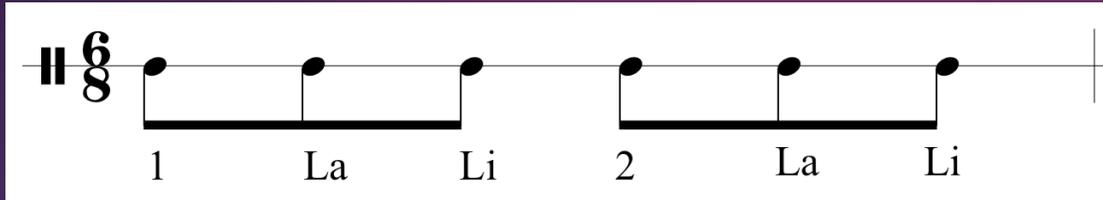
CHAPTER 4

Compound Time Signatures

- ▶ Top number is 6, 9, 12 (all divisible by 3---this tells you double, triple, or quadruple)
- ▶ Bottom number is usually 8, but can also be 4 or 16
- ▶ Shows what note gets the *division* of the beat
- ▶ Add three of these notes together to get the beat unit (i.e. in 6/8 an eighth note gets the beat division; add three eighth notes together and you'd have a dotted quarter note, which gets the beat in 6/8 time)
- ▶ See pg 70 (fig 4.1) for major compound beat units
- ▶ See ex. 4.2 and 4.3 for examples to analyze

Counting in Compound Time

- ▶ Use 1-la-li 2-la-li for eighth note patterns (see Fig 4.3)



- ▶ Use ta for any sixteenth note subdivisions (see Fig 4.4)

Syncopation in Compound Time

- ▶ Syncopations are created in compound meters by
 - ▶ Placing ties from a weak part of a beat across a stronger part (like from a ta to a la)
 - ▶ Placing an accent mark on a weak beat or the weak part of a beat (like on beat 2 or on the li portion of the beat)
 - ▶ Placing a rest on the strong part of a beat that causes a weaker part to sound accented

Mixing Beat Division

- ▶ You will occasionally see instances of a beat being divided into three parts instead of two in a simple meter. These three part divisions, marked with a 3, are borrowed from compound time and are known as triplets.
- ▶ When notating triplets, use a note value that is one duration unit smaller than the beat unit it replaces (see Fig. 4.7); Example—an eighth note triplet replaces a quarter note. A sixteenth note triplet replaces an eighth note.
- ▶ You will occasionally see instances of a beat being divided into 2 parts or 4 parts instead of 3 in a compound meter. These 2 note groupings, marked with a 2, are borrowed from simple time and are known as duplets. Four note groupings are called quadruplets.

Odds and Ends

- ▶ Polyrhythm—a 2 part subdivision sounding simultaneously with a 3 part subdivision i.e. a quadruplet sounding at the same time as a triplet.
- ▶ Hemiola—in the case of compound meter, when a three part division of the beat is temporarily grouped in twos (ex. 4.11)
- ▶ Rubato—temporary tempo fluctuation