



Lesson: Music in 3/4 and 6/8 Time Signatures

Ages: 7-18

Projected time: 40-60min total

Supplies needed: Pencil, writing paper, a metronome.

Metronome: [Google Metronome](#)

Project Intro: Students will learn about music in 3/4 and 6/8 time signatures with audio and visual examples from various musical sources/performances on YouTube.

Vocabulary:

Beat: a main accent or rhythmic unit in music or poetry.

Measure: a segment of time within a piece of music defined by a given number of beats.

Time Signature: the time signature is used to specify how many beats are contained within each measure and which note value is equivalent to a beat. Time signatures use fractions to represent note values.

Example:	1/1 = 1 whole note	1 whole note = 2 half notes
	1/2 = 1 half note	1 half note = 2 quarter notes
	1/4 = 1 quarter note	1 quarter note = 2 eighth notes
	1/8 = 1 eighth note	1 eighth note = 2 sixteenth notes

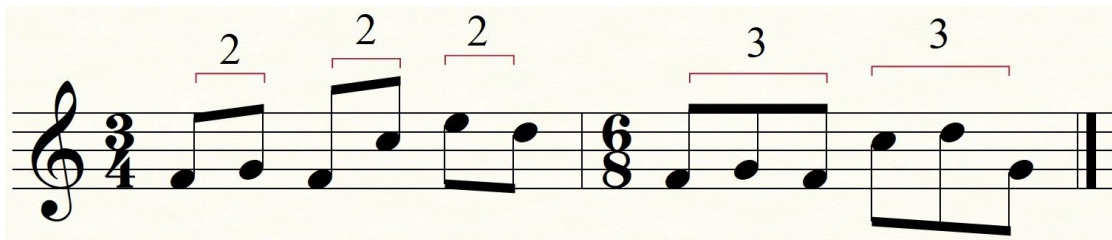
Piano: a large keyboard musical instrument with a wooden case enclosing a wooden soundboard with metal strings of various length on the inside. In a piano, hammers strike the strings when the keys are depressed. The strings' vibration is stopped by felt dampers when the keys are released. Since a piano uses strings and then hammers to strike those strings, a piano is considered both a string and a percussion instrument.

Waltz: dance music in 3/4 time that has a strong emphasis on the first of three beats.

Orchestra: a group of instrumentalists, especially one combining string, woodwind, brass, and percussion sections and playing classical music. Don't confuse it with a symphony. The orchestra or symphony orchestra performs the symphony.

Symphony: an elaborate musical composition for full orchestra.

Conductor: a person who directs the performance of an orchestra.



3/4 and 6/8 time signature: While both time signatures contain the same number of eight notes (six in total) per measure, the difference between the two time signatures is the way the notes are grouped and emphasized. In 3/4, the first beat carries the most weight and in 6/8 the first and fourth eighth notes have the most weight or emphasis.

PART 1: Keeping Time in 6/8

1. On paper, write the number 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 with a dash or short line between them and draw a little star underneath the number one and the number four.

Example: 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6
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2. Set the metronome to 120 beats per minute or 120bpm.
3. Now begin counting out loud from 1 to 6 with each tick that you hear. Try to count at the same time that you expect to hear a click, anticipate the tick. Do not count after or before the tick.

Example: Metronome goes: Tick Tick Tick Tick Tick Tick

You say: 1 2 3 4 5 6

4. After counting up to the number 6 return to the number 1 and continue counting.

Example: 1 2 3 4 5 6, 1 2 3 4 5 6, 1 2 3 4 5 6

5. Continue counting in time with the metronome until it feels natural and easy. If you can, emphasize the number 4 and the number 6 while you read them out loud (remember the stars?)
6. You are now counting in 6/8 Time. In this case, each number represents a single beat with a total of 6 beats.
7. Turn off the metronome. Can you keep counting in time without the help of the metronome? If you think you can, then move on to step number 8 and listen to music that's in 6/8.
8. [The Animals - House of the Rising Sun \(1964\)](#)
[Journey - Lights \(Official Video\) \(1978\)](#)
[Seal - 'Kiss From A Rose' \[Live @ SiriusXM\] \(1994\)](#)

Part 2: Keeping Time in 3/4

1. Now we can focus on music that's based around the 3/4 time signature. On paper, write the number 1, 2, 3 with a dash or short line between them and draw a little star underneath the number one.

Example: 1 - 2 - 3

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2. Set the metronome to 120 beats per minute or 120bpm.
3. Now begin counting out loud from 1 to 3 with each tick that you hear. Try to count at the same time that you expect to hear a click, anticipate the tick. Do not count after or before the tick.

Example: Metronome goes: Tick Tick Tick Tick...

You say: 1 2 3 1...

4. After counting up to the number 3 return to the number 1 and continue counting.

Example: 1 2 3, 1 2 3, 1 2 3

5. Continue counting in time with the metronome until it feels natural and easy. If you can, emphasize the number 1 while you read it out loud (remember the star from step 1?)
6. You are now counting in 3/4 time. In this case, each number represents a single beat with a total of 3 beats.

7. Turn off the metronome. Can you keep counting in time without the help of the metronome? If you think you can, then move on to step number 8 and listen to music that's in 3/4.
8. The most common type of music done in 3/4 time is a waltz. Let's watch and listen to some examples of waltzes and see if you can feel the dancing pulse of the music.

[The Beautiful Blue Danube by Johann Strauss II \(1866\)- Conductor André Rieu](#)

Two versions of Claude Debussy's Valse Romantique. One with the score and one showing the pianist's hands:

Score: [Debussy: Valse Romantique \(1890\) \(performed by Maestro Zoltan Kocsis\)](#)

Hands: [Debussy: Valse romantique \(1890\) \(performed by Anna Nadirya\)](#)

[Ravel: La Valse \(1920\) / Conductor Leonard Bernstein · Orchestre National de France](#)

That's it. Good job completing this project! How was the music?