

*Appendix 2***RHYTHMIC COUNTING SYLLABLES****Rhythmic counting systems**

Rhythmic counting syllables encourage a precise understanding of the relationship between rhythm and meter. Syllables are assigned to the notes of the rhythm based on their position within the measure and individual beats of the music. Two common counting systems are the **standard system** and the **Eastman system**.

**Simple time:
Notes on the beat**

For **simple time signatures**, notes on the beat use the number of the beat, in both the standard system and the Eastman system:

All: 1 2

**Simple time:
Upbeats**

Notes on the second half of the beat use **&** ("and") for the standard system, and **te** ("tay") for the Eastman system.

standard: 1 & 2 &
Eastman: 1 te 2 te

**Simple time:
The second
fourth of the beat**

Notes on the second fourth of the beat use **e** ("ee") for the standard system, and **ti** ("tee") for the Eastman system.

standard: 1 e & 2 e &
Eastman: 1 ti te 2 ti te

**Simple time:
Other notes**

All other notes in simple time use **a** ("ah" or sometimes "uh") for the standard system, and **ta** ("tah") for the Eastman system.

standard: 1 e & a 2 e & a
Eastman: 1 ti te ta 2 ti te ta

**Compound time:
two systems**

For **compound time signatures** or **triplets/sextuplets**, many teachers of both the Eastman counting system and the standard system use the same syllables, shown first in the examples below. Some teachers of the standard system prefer the “alternate method” on the second line of each example.

**Compound time:
Notes on the beat**

In all cases, notes on the beat use the number of the beat:

A musical staff in bass clef with a 6/8 time signature. It contains two quarter notes. The first note is on the first line of the staff, and the second note is on the second line. Below the staff, the standard method counts '1' under the first note and '2' under the second note. The alternate method counts '1' under the first note and '2' under the second note.

**Compound time:
The second third
of the beat**

Notes on the second third of the beat use **la** ("lah"). The alternate method uses the number two on the second third of the beat.

A musical staff in bass clef with a 6/8 time signature. It contains four eighth notes. The first note is on the first line, the second on the second line, the third on the second space, and the fourth on the third line. Below the staff, the standard method counts '1' under the first note, 'la' under the second, '2' under the third, and 'la' under the fourth. The alternate method counts '1' under the first note, '2' under the second, '2' under the third, and '2' under the fourth.

**Compound time:
The last third of
the beat**

Notes on the last third of the beat use **li** ("lee"). The alternate method uses the number three on the last third of the beat.

A musical staff in bass clef with a 6/8 time signature. It contains six eighth notes. The first note is on the first line, the second on the second line, the third on the second space, the fourth on the third line, the fifth on the third space, and the sixth on the fourth line. Below the staff, the standard method counts '1' under the first note, 'la' under the second, 'li' under the third, '2' under the fourth, 'la' under the fifth, and 'li' under the sixth. The alternate method counts '1' under the first note, '2' under the second, '3' under the third, '2' under the fourth, '2' under the fifth, and '3' under the sixth.

**Compound time:
Other notes**

All other notes use **ta** ("tah"). The alternate method uses “and” for other notes.

A musical staff in bass clef with a 6/8 time signature. It contains twelve eighth notes. The first note is on the first line, the second on the second line, the third on the second space, the fourth on the third line, the fifth on the third space, the sixth on the fourth line, the seventh on the fourth space, the eighth on the fifth line, the ninth on the fifth space, the tenth on the sixth line, the eleventh on the sixth space, and the twelfth on the seventh line. Below the staff, the standard method counts '1' under the first note, 'ta' under the second, 'la' under the third, 'ta' under the fourth, 'li' under the fifth, 'ta' under the sixth, '2' under the seventh, 'ta' under the eighth, 'la' under the ninth, 'ta' under the tenth, 'li' under the eleventh, and 'ta' under the twelfth. The alternate method counts '1' under the first note, '&' under the second, '2' under the third, '&' under the fourth, '3' under the fifth, '&' under the sixth, '2' under the seventh, '&' under the eighth, '2' under the ninth, '&' under the tenth, '3' under the eleventh, and '&' under the twelfth.

Other notes

Any note not covered by the above, in both simple and compound time signatures, will use the syllable **a** (standard system) or **ta** (Eastman system).