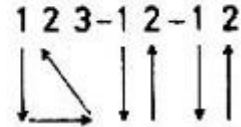


ARTICLE

* ان ميزان $\frac{7}{8}$ هو ميزان دور هندي، وهو أعرج يتألف من سبع وحدات زمنية، يمثل شكل علامة ذات السنّ أي (الكروش) مدة وحدته الزمنية، كما هو مبين وواضح في الشكل أدناه بما فيه إمكانية الدم وإمكانة التثك.

عذّه أو ضربيه باليد يتمّ على النحو الآتي:



ODD METERS - 7/8 ANYONE?

by Stewart Hendrickson

Recently some Irish musicians have been composing tunes in odd meters such as 7/8. One example of this is the "[Road To Barga](#)" (starts at about 1:47 on the video) by Cillian Vallely of the Irish band Lunasa.



After a bit of difficulty, I learned this tune, and like to play it on fiddle at jams ([hear me play it](#)). The response I get is very interesting. Guitar players want to play along, but they get thoroughly confused with the rhythm, hopelessly out of beat, or just plain give up.

When I explain that it is in 7/8 time they still can't get it. It's played as /123 12 12/ or in pulses of /P3 P2 P2/ where P3 is three beats and P2 two beats. Any Greek musician would have no trouble with this as it is the common [Kalamatianos rhythm](#) of the popular Greek line dance. But even my musician friends who are into drumming have difficulty beating out this rhythm. Listen to [Cat Stevens' Ruby Love](#) - it's the same 123 12 12 beat.

The best way to experience and learn these odd meters is not by counting, but by listening to the music and learning the dances. For example, the [Greek Kalamantianos](#) is characterized by three dance counts – long, short, short (P3, P2, P2). Listen to the pulses in the music and move your feet accordingly. After a while the rhythm will feel natural and you will “get it.” Another way is to just repeat the words "Jaffa cake chocolate biscuit, jaffa cake chocolate biscuit" to the music.

The Greeks have been playing music in 7/8 and other odd meters for hundreds

(even thousands) of years, as have Middle Eastern, Eastern European and Balkan musicians. But Americans are only used to hearing and playing music in 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4 time. Even 3/4 or waltz time is difficult for some.

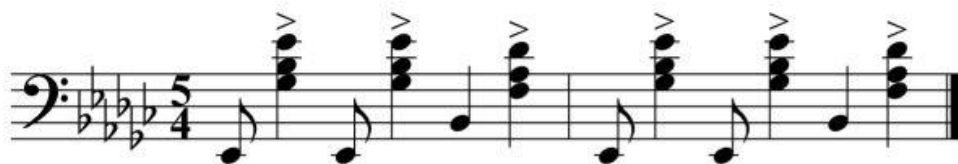
Time signatures define the pulse or timing of a musical piece. The upper number defines the number of beats in a measure while the lower number indicates the note which receives one beat.

Common meters are 2/4 and 4/4 where there are two or four beats to the measure and each quarter note gets one beat, and 3/4 with three beats to the measure. Some simple compound meters are 6/8, 9/8, or 12/8, which can be divided into two, three, or four groups of three beats respectively (each eighth-note receiving one beat). For example 6/8 is counted /123 123/ and is the common rhythm for an Irish jig, 9/8 is counted /123 123 123/ in a slip jig, and 12/8 is counted /123 123 123 123/ in a slide.

Odd meters are defined by complex signatures which do not divide easily into groups of two, three, or four beats. Some examples of odd meters would be 5/8, 7/8, and 11/8. These might be counted as /12 123/, /123 12 12/, or /123 123 123 12/ respectively. Each group of beats represents a rhythmic pulse.

Igor Stravinsky was one of the first to introduce odd meters into western classical music in his “Firebird Suite” and “[The Rite of Spring](#)”. The jarring rhythms in particular were not well received by western ears. Stravinsky wrote of his 1913 premiere in Paris of “The Rite of Spring”: *At the performance, mild protests against the music could be heard, from the beginning. Then when the curtain opened ... the storm broke...I was unprepared for the explosion...I left the hall in a rage...I have never again been that angry.*

Dave Brubeck shook up the jazz world in 1959 by his use of odd meters. Tired of hearing most jazz in common 4/4 time, he started to experiment in polyrhythms. After returning from a trip to Turkey in 1958, he produced an album of all original compositions in a variety of time signatures. This album “Time Out” was almost rejected by Columbia Records for its challenging use of unusual meters. But the third cut, “Take Five,” soon became the biggest-selling jazz single of all time. It is in 5/4 time with the following piano intro (see and hear it played by the [Dave Brubeck Quartet](#)):



It could also be signed as 10/8, in which case it would be counted /123 123 12 12/.

On the same album, “[Blue Rondo a la Turk](#)” has a time signature of 9/8 and is counted /12 12 12 123/ rather than the usual /123 123 123/. Another Brubeck

composition “Eleven Four” is signed as 11/4 (naturally!) and counted /123 12 123 123/. Some of Brubeck’s best music is available on the two-CD remastered album “The Dave Brubeck Quartet at Carnegie Hall” and “Time Further Out,” his follow-up to “Time Out.”

[Math rock](#), a style of rock music that emerged in the late 1980s, frequently uses odd meters such as 7/8, 11/8, or 13/8, or features constantly changing meters based on various groupings of 2 and 3.

Then there’s Frank Zappa's "[Toads of the Short Forest](#)", where Frank says: *On stage now, drummer A is playing in 7/8, drummer B is playing in 3/4, the organ player is in 5/8, the bass in 3/4, and the sax player is blowing his nose.*

If you want to experience some of these odd meters in Seattle I would recommend listening to [Cathie Whitesides and Hank Bradley](#) play Greek music at [Georgia’s Greek Restaurant](#) in NW Seattle. Or [Balkanarama](#), another group that plays at Georgia’s. Or listen to Seattle violinist Sandra Layman’s CD, “[Little Blackbird: Klezmer, Romanian, Greek, Turkish, and Hungarian Music.](#)”

Pangéo is a five-member Seattle group that plays traditional Greek and Balkan folk music. Listen to their CD “[Pangéo – Northern Borders.](#)” Pangéo recently disbanded, but seek out [Christos Govetas and Ruth Hunter](#) and listen to their latest CD “[Pasatempo, Rebetika with Christos Govetas.](#)” They often play in [festivals](#) at [St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church](#) in the Montlake District. Better yet, come to [St. Demetrios and learn Greek dancing.](#) That’s the best way to understand these rhythms.

[Stewart Hendrickson](#)