

Pattern 1

Track 41

All the patterns in this lesson are in the key of D major. In pattern 1, your right hand plays the two pairs it will play throughout most of this lesson – D-A, D-E. For efficiency of motion, I recommend that you think of each pair as one fluid gesture. Play each one with a slight down-up motion of your wrist – down on the D and up on the A or the E. In between the pairs in your right hand, your left hand plays a single A on the pulse. I use the sustain pedal on this pattern:

To make the offbeat pairs easier for you to play, I'm going to have you start by doing basically the same thing I did with the cowbell. Only instead of banging the pulse on the floor, you're going to fill it in with your left hand. Then, later in the lesson, your right hand will be able to rely on muscle memory to play these pairs while your left hand plays a pattern I call "3-then-2."

These pairs are hard to play in time unless you're also playing the pulse. I learned this the hard way during an African drum class. While everyone else was drumming, the teacher handed me a cowbell and asked me to play these offbeat pairs. No matter how hard I tried, I couldn't do it. I kept drifting back onto the pulse. Finally, the teacher grabbed the bell out of my hand and showed me how to mark each pulse by banging the bell on the hardwood floor between strokes. That made playing the offbeat pairs a lot easier, although I'm pretty sure I damaged the floor.

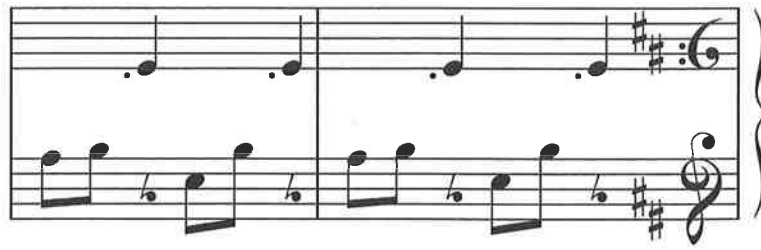


In every pattern in this lesson, your right hand is going to play the second and third eighth notes in each group of three. These are the offbeats of the 4-pulse. I call them the "offbeat pairs":

## 3-then-2



Lesson



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### 3-then-2



Lesson

In pattern 2, your left hand continues to play the pulse, but this time it creates a little melody. I still use the sustain pedal on this pattern, but now I press it down at the start of each measure:

**Pattern 2**

**Track 42**

The first system of musical notation for Pattern 2, Track 42. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#). The treble staff contains a melody of eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5. The bass staff contains a pulse of dotted quarter notes: G3, F#3, G3, F#3. A sustain pedal line is shown above the bass staff, with a line starting at the beginning of the first measure and ending at the end of the fourth measure.

The second system of musical notation for Pattern 2, Track 42. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#). The treble staff contains a melody of eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5. The bass staff contains a pulse of dotted quarter notes: G3, F#3, G3, F#3. A sustain pedal line is shown above the bass staff, with a line starting at the beginning of the first measure and ending at the end of the fourth measure.

In pattern 3, the melody in your left hand moves to its highest point. I press down the sustain pedal on every pulse in this pattern:

**Pattern 3**

**Track 43**

The first system of musical notation for Pattern 3, Track 43. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#). The treble staff contains a melody of eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5. The bass staff contains a pulse of dotted quarter notes: G3, F#3, G3, F#3. A sustain pedal line is shown above the bass staff, with a line starting at the beginning of the first measure and ending at the end of the fourth measure.

The second system of musical notation for Pattern 3, Track 43. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#). The treble staff contains a melody of eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5. The bass staff contains a pulse of dotted quarter notes: G3, F#3, G3, F#3. A sustain pedal line is shown above the bass staff, with a line starting at the beginning of the first measure and ending at the end of the fourth measure.

The next pattern is a combination of patterns 4 and 5. Notice that the melody in the right hand carries all the way through to the first A in measure 5. I always feel my spirits rise when this melody comes in:

Track 45 Pattern 5

In pattern 5, your left hand plays the same part it played in pattern 4. But this time, it becomes a support part for a melody played by your right hand. This melody is created only by the second note in each offbeat pair – the offbeat right before the pulse – so you'll want to bring out just those notes. Because the notes in this melody are exactly the same distance apart as the pulses, they create a shifted 4-pulse in your right hand that forms a polyrhythm with the primary 4-pulse in your left. To make sure you don't get turned around and start feeling this melody as the pulse, keep the primary 4-pulse going somewhere in your body while you play.

Track 44 Pattern 4

In pattern 4, the left hand starts lower and covers more ground. The feeling is one of quiet majesty: