

# RHYTHMIC

# EDUCATION

By  
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CENTRO PROFESSIONE RITMO

This programme was developed from an experimental activity held during the 2018 summer camp of Accademia Calcio Umbro. It can be incorporated into any regular exercise routine in a corporate or educational setting, XXXX or, more simply, by anyone with a passion for rhythm. I believe that recognizing our inner beat brings enormous benefits to each of us, because beat means balance, and balance is the key to success in everything we do.

Rhythm is associated with our inner **self** and to acquire it, we have to feel it inside. By training what's **inside** we gain both physical and mental benefits. A regular rhythm helps us control our own performance, which leads to inner balance and an overall sense of well-being.

## FINDING AND FOLLOWING A BEAT (for control over physical and mental activity)



### IN FOOTBALL:

A sense of rhythm is fundamental in any sport.

For a football player, the essential tools are a ball and a metronome.

In the first set of drills, we will use our hands and the ball to acquire a sense of note values in music.

### LEVEL 1 • Understanding the whole note - half note - quarter note - eighth note.

#### THE PYRAMID

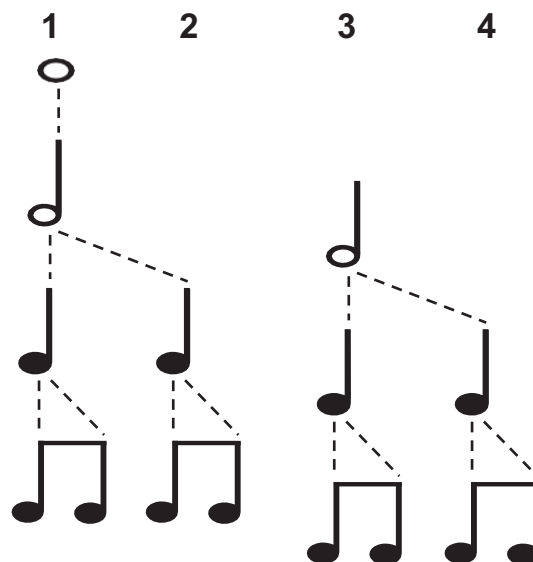
#### NOTE NAMES AND THEIR VALUES

○ Whole note - 4/4

◡ Half note - 2/4

• Quarter note - 1/4

• Eighth notes - 2/8



First we will tap the ball with our hands at a speed of 70 bpm (clapping your hands without a ball is also fine). Once we understand the note values and their duration, we will focus on pauses until players are familiar with the notation of notes and the corresponding rests. Then we move on to Level 2.

## LEVEL 2

To internalize tempo, we will follow the beat of the metronome first with our hands, then by stamping our feet on the ground to mark rests.

(Complete engagement of the mind and the entire body helps internalize the rhythm. This is necessary and sufficient for applying the concept to football technique.)

### BALL DRILLS: LEGEND



With the hands (Feeling the tempo and interpreting time values)

#### PART 1

- 1. Quarter notes on ball 1 2 3 4 Taps on ball
- 2. Basic 1 Ground 2 Hands
- 3. Silence Ball under the arm
- 4. Rest 1 Ground 2 Hands 3 Rest 4 R foot  
second time: L foot
- 5. Basic + Rest First measure Basic + Second measure Rest

#### PART 2

- 6. Pass Always to receiver's R foot
- 7. Quarter note throw Bounce on quarter notes
- 8. Eighth note throw Bounce on eighth notes
- 9. False finale  
bouncing in tempo. 1 Ground 2-3 Rest 4 Hands
- 10. Downbeat Upbeat on ball  
Stamp feet on upbeat. 4/1 2/2 1/4

### NOTES



The above legend should be performed at a tempo from 90 to 125 bpm.  
Best in the locker room or another enclosed space where tapping is more audible.

## LEVEL 3

- **Pitch work:** once players are familiar with the beat and theoretical notions, it's time for the traditional warm-up on the pitch at a tempo of 90-120 bpm, gradually increasing to about 130-145 bpm.
- **Slow, gradual warm-up.**
- **Repetitions.**



## NOTES

The tempo (bpm) is merely a recommendation. Every athlete will recognise the most suitable tempo depending on level of fitness. The Senegal national team performed a rhythmic warm-up at the 2018 World Cup in Russia.

## PART 1

- Footwork:
- Juggle ball on quarter notes at 90 bpm
- Dribble in rhythm (from whole notes to quarter notes)

**NB:** Dribbling to the **whole note** Kick every 4 beats  
**Half note** Kick every 2 beats  
**Quarter note** Kick every beat

This drill works with a single note value or in a sequence of 4 bars, going down and back up the pyramid.

### Stretching

The metronome is turned off during stretching. NB: Relaxing music can be played instead.

## PART 2

- Long passing: 2 players will pass the ball in time to a beat, tempo rising from 90 to 130 bpm.
- Juggling in pairs: players will juggle the ball in pairs, to a quarter note beat, using all parts of the body.

**NB:** it's OK if the ball hits the ground, as long as it does so to the beat. Always consider height from the ground and force.  
(See ball drills, no. 8.)

## PART 3

Exercises using equipment, with and without ball. All drills must be in time with the metronome. The result is a sort of group dance.

**NB:** Players may find it difficult to incorporate this dance-like rhythm. Those with dance experience will find it easier to do the drills to a beat.

## PART 4

Patterns of play, no net.

Starting with groups of 3, stationary passes and moving passes using the length of the pitch. Weave drill in rhythm, long passes to the beat of the **whole note**.

**NB:** for groups of 5-6 players, try beginning in a circle and then moving on to patterns of play.

- **Patterns of play with net**

Begin with penalties and shoot-outs to a beat.

Drills are symmetrical, meaning steps are taken in rhythm both when backing up and running forward.

Always start on the first quarter note and then strike the ball on 1.

**NB:** this is another drill requiring some dance ability.

Various attack patterns with shots on goal, to the quarter note rhythm set earlier. Full-pitch patterns of play with 11 players.

## IN CONCLUSION



Learning to perform drills to a beat is like studying an instrument or in any case learning music. Not everyone has the necessary discipline and perseverance. While it's a challenge to get everyone working together, if this can be managed it means preventing opponents from finding their own rhythm, because working with a metronome means an ever better sense of the beat, leading to faster, more natural movement.

## key terms



➔ RHYTHM, COORDINATION, CONTROL, INNER BALANCE, SPEED ➔

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Peppe Stefanelli was 13 when he began to study drums and percussion in Basel with Cosimo Lampis. He moved to Italy when he was 18 and became associated with various music schools, including as a student of Ramberto Ciammarughi and a member of his “Skilled Musicians” ensemble. His many collaborations include projects with Avion Travel, Frankie Hi-Nrg, Dirotta su Cuba, David Parsons, and Giorgio Panariello. Since 2000 he has played with the Paolo Belli Big Band on television—Torno Sabato (Rai 1), Ballando con le Stelle (Rai 1), Telethon (Rai 1), Miss Italia (Rai 1), Sanremo Estate (Rai 1)—and in countless live concerts, theatre projects, and conventions around the world. A creative and multifaceted musician, he cultivates



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