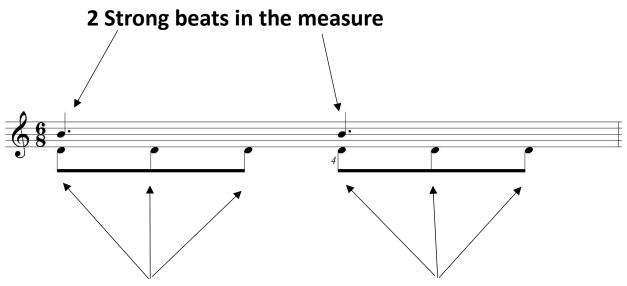
Reading Rhythms and Sightreading

- Tricks to sightreading in 6/8
- Reading swing rhythms
- How to sightread better

Let's start with a brief explanation of 6/8...



In 6/8, technically the eighth note gets 1 beat. However, in reality, we usually think of 6/8 in 2, with the .getting 1 beat. This is crucial to understanding the tricks to sightreading in 6/8.



Each strong beat can be divided into 3 notes

When reading rhythms in 6/8, don't worry about how it's counted. Instead, try to take a step back and look at the big picture. When you do, you'll notice that the notes are usually flagged in a way that shows where the big beats are in each measure.

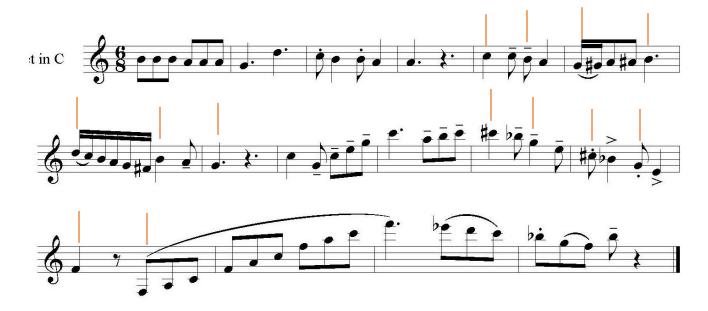
The *first* part of the trick is to always VISUALLY IDENTIFY the BIG BEATS. For example...



The *next* part of the trick is to realize that, in 6/8, everything happens in 1 of 3 places: ON THE BEAT, BEFORE THE BEAT, or AFTER THE BEAT

The *last* part of the trick is to keep a steady beat and allow every note to fall in one of those three places.

Let's look at how this works in real life...



What questions do you have?

Reading Swing Rhythms...

It's really not possible to learn how to swing in words. The ONLY way to learn how to swing is by LISTENING and IMITATING.



Learning how to read swing rhythms is also best learned by listening and imitating. However, some discussion can give us a starting point.



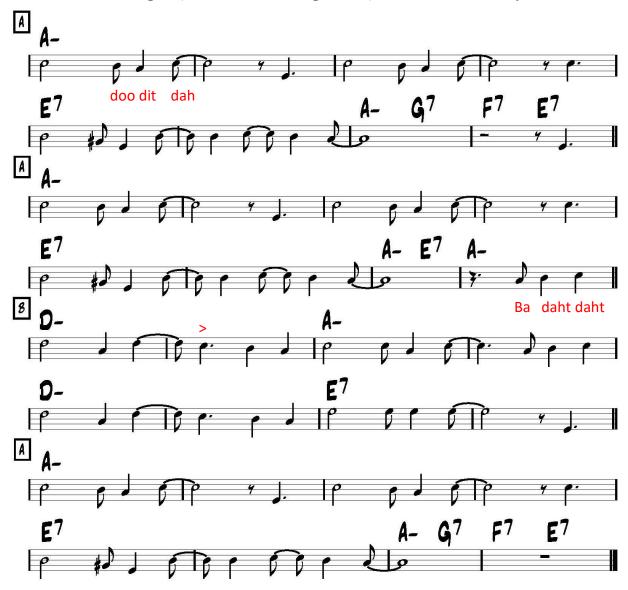
- Eighth notes that are written as tied to other eighth notes are usually played as a "dit".
- Quarter notes that land on off-beats are usually played as "dit" unless marked long.

Step 1: Listen! (internalize it, feel it)

<u>Step 2</u>: Sing it! (match everything exactly)

Step 3: Play it! (match the articulations and feel that you sang)

Let's listen & sing it (1st me, then together) with the "scat syllables":



Now, I'm going to play through it (in concert key). Sing the scat syllables along with me as I play it. Does it line up? (If you are a concert key instrument and would like to play along, feel free)

What questions do you have?

How to Sightread Better...

- 1. Keep a steady beat.

 I highly recommend using a metronome whenever you sightread!
- 2. Look at the BIG PICTURE and visually identify where your downbeats are.

 Just like we did with 6/8 rhythms
- 3. The most important thing is playing correct RHYTHMS. Correct notes are secondary. You could play all the right notes, but if you don't put them in the right spots, they're not right notes anymore because you're not with the band.
- 4. Try to think in your key signature.

 It might help to play through the major scale that goes with that key signature before you start sightreading.
- 5. Focus on putting correct notes on the downbeats.

 When you think in your key signature and you put the right notes on the downbeats, you'll be surprised at how many correct notes you'll play in between the downbeats!
- 6. Sightread as OFTEN as possible!

 Buy a new etude book and force yourself to sightread one etude each day, slowly, with a metronome. It really is true that the more you do it, the better you get at it.

7. Pretend like you know what you're doing Confident sound, posture, keep going, don't stop/restart... You just might surprise yourself!

What questions do you have??