

Conducting Technique Lesson 8
Subdivision/Accents/Subito Dynamic Changes/ Tempo Changes/
Skill Practice

The Subdivided Pattern

The subdivision is used to control very slow tempos. This may be executed through an entire piece or may be utilized in partial measures to execute a ritardando at the end of a section or a piece.

Below you will find the subdivided patterns for conducting in FOUR, THREE, and TWO.

Note that the subdivided portion of the gesture is given in the opposite direction of the beat that follows afterward. You can see that if we superimpose the subdivided pattern on top of the regular pattern for each meter, they match up. This enables us to move in and out of subdivision if the piece calls for it. (BIG DOTS REPRESENT THE REGULAR PATTERN)

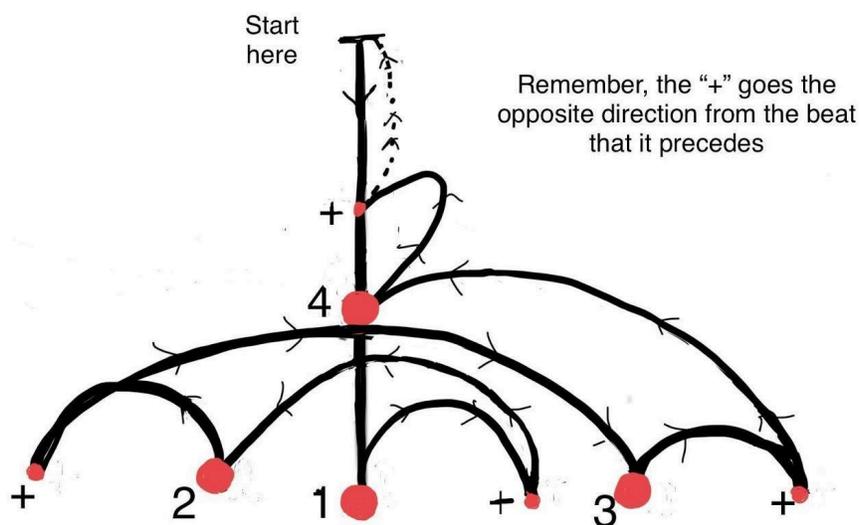


Figure 8.1 Subdivided Four Pattern

Demonstration video

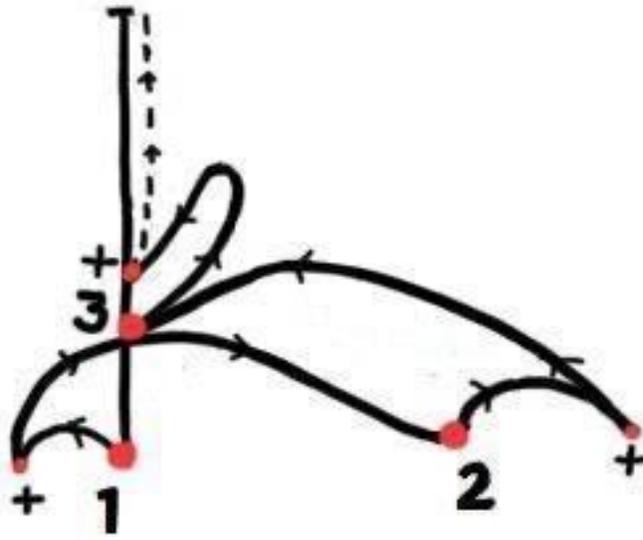


Figure 8.2 Subdivided Three Pattern

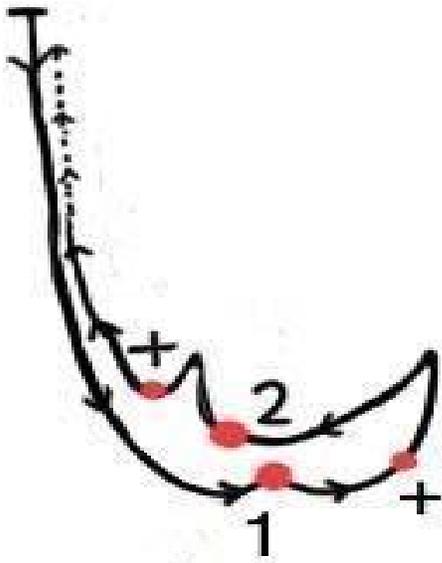


Figure 8.3 Subdivided Two Pattern

Video Demonstration: Subdivided Four, Three, and Two Patterns

<https://youtu.be/k0Ohnk9Py4g>

Skills: Partial measure subdivisions
Every other measure subdivision

Styles of subdivision -

Equal- The primary portion and the subdivided portion of the beat are equal in weight

Unequal- The primary portion is weighted heavier than the subdivided portion of the beat

Subdivision in various conducting styles:

legato
staccato
marcato
leggiero

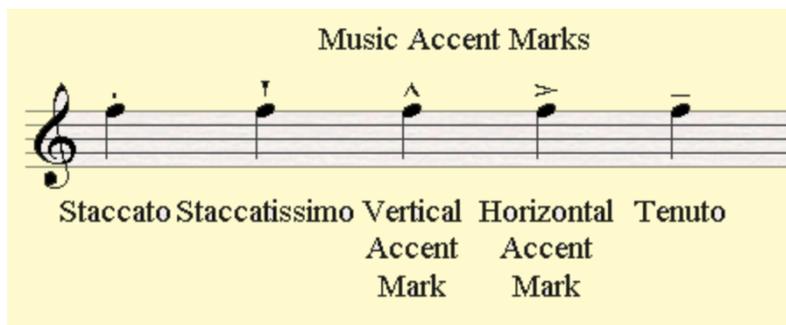


Figure 8.4 Accents and Articulation Marks

Define Accent/Articulation Marks

Execution of:

Staccato- "click"

Staccatissimo- "snick"

Vertical Accent- "jab"

Horizontal Accent- "hit"

Tenuto- "yaw"

Other types of accents

fp - fortepiano - loud then immediately soft

sfz - sforzando - sudden accent

sf - sforzato - sudden accent

fz - forzando, forzato - sudden accent

sfzp, sfp, fzp - sudden accent followed immediately by piano

rfz, rf - rinforzando - several notes are to be emphasised

The accent will be more effective if the conductor negates or retracts the prior beat, allowing gesture to drop into accent (pop)

Subito dynamic changes

When changing the dynamic suddenly, there are two techniques that are helpful:

Hot Touch- When moving from forte to piano suddenly, it is helpful to show a “hot-touch” gesture, as if touching a hot stove and retracting in toward body on the beat prior to the dynamic change.

Retract/Drop- When moving from a piano section to a forte section, it is helpful to lift inward toward body slightly on the beat prior to the dynamic change, allowing the gesture to drop into the forte

Tempo Adjustments

Accelerando- conduct ahead of the beat until tempo is achieved

Ritardando- show upward movement prior to giving to begin slow to use more space over time, then conduct slightly behind the beat. Always feel subdivision in your head while slowing (“3+, 4+” OR “3e+a, 4e+a”)

Subdivided Gesture: remember is using subdivision at end of piece or section, start slowing the tempo one measure prior to the subdivision to prepare it and signal something is about to happen

Subdivisions: Remember, you do not always need to subdivide the entire measure.