

Counting Music – What We Already Know

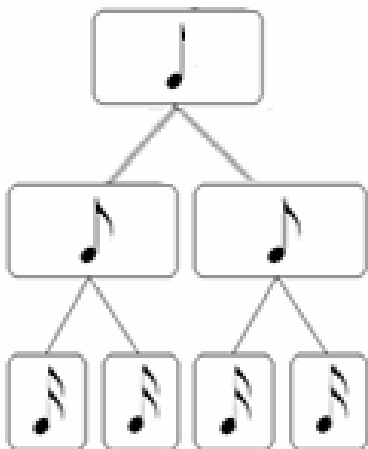
The rhythm tree we have worked with up until now has had its “ground level” at the quarter note pulse, meaning the quarter note equals one beat and anything less than that is only part of a beat. The only note that has fallen into that category is the eighth note, and since two eighth notes equal one quarter note, the eighth note is worth 1/2 of a beat all by itself. Because it doesn’t fall into a whole beat definition we had to come up with an alternate way to name the eighth notes that did not fall right on the pulse and we called them “+” (and). Look at the rhythm tree below and fill in the correct notes and values, then fill in the counting for the eighth notes in the chart to the right.

4
4

Sixteenth Notes

Whenever a pulse is divided into parts of a beat we call it a *subdivision*. Now that you have gotten comfortable with the eighth note subdivision and all of its variations (dotted quarter/eighth, eighth/dotted quarter, syncopation, etc) it is time to move deeper into the roots of the rhythm tree and subdivide eighth notes into **SIXTEENTH NOTES**. You are more than familiar with the top of the rhythm tree by now, so let’s take a look and the ground and roots to figure out how sixteenth notes work. Splitting an eighth note in half creates sixteenth notes.

They are seen four different ways ... but, they are all sixteenth notes.



Alone



In Pairs



In Groups of Four



Two sixteenth notes fit into one eighth note and two eighth notes fit into one quarter note; therefore, four sixteenth notes fit into one quarter note. Now that we have that defined, the time signature of 4/4 tells us the quarter note is worth one beat, so each sixteenth note is worth 1/4 of a beat.

