



Tips for Keeping Time

Here are some ways that you can learn to keep a steady, uninterrupted pulse.

- **Count:** As you get the hang of keeping the beat, it's a good idea to count along with the music as you play. You should count aloud at first, and eventually you'll internalize the rhythm and can count quietly to yourself.
- **Clap:** When you're having trouble with the rhythm, put your instrument aside and count the beats aloud while clapping the rhythm. This gives you a chance to feel the rhythm in your body.
- **Tap your foot:** This sounds easier than it is! Tap throughout the entire song, or tap just during the sections that are the most difficult. Also try to tap on beats two and four or even beats one and three—whichever feels best to you.
- **Sing:** Don't worry if the neighbors can hear you. If you know the lyrics of a song, singing will help you keep the rhythm going.
- **Slow it down:** Play the melody once slowly and as perfectly as possible. Then gradually speed things up. Eventually the accuracy you have at the slower speed will stay with you at the faster tempo.

by Ruth Parry
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