

What is the Musical Metronome Calculator?

MMC uses the tempo measurement of a performance piece, song, exercise, etc., and the tempo measurement of your most relaxed ability to execute the piece, song, exercise, etc. to accurately calculate adjustment speeds of any type of play along music tracks.

The calculated result of these two tempo measurements gives you the ability to adjust any jam track, original track, or rhythm program to your relaxed tempo/groove. Thereby allowing you to practice against many types of backing tracks, always knowing exactly your progress toward achieving a musical performance at a goal tempo.

MM = 120

The image shows five staves of musical notation. The first staff has two notes with a wide interval. The second staff has a triplet of three notes with a narrow interval. The third staff has two groups of triplets. The fourth and fifth staves show more complex rhythmic patterns with multiple notes per measure. The notes are not evenly spaced, illustrating a problem with practicing at a single tempo.

Problem when practicing is to execute or fit different note values into one measure at one tempo.

MM = 120

MM = 80

MM = 60

MM = 40

MM = 30

The image shows five staves of musical notation, each with a metronome marking on the left. The notes are evenly spaced across all staves, illustrating a solution to the problem shown in the previous block. The first staff (MM = 120) has two notes. The second staff (MM = 80) has a triplet of three notes. The third staff (MM = 60) has two groups of triplets. The fourth staff (MM = 40) has two groups of triplets. The fifth staff (MM = 30) has two groups of triplets. The notes are evenly spaced across all staves, illustrating a solution to the problem shown in the previous block.

Solution is to spread out the space between notes equally so that different note values can be practiced easily, cleanly, accurately, predictably, effortlessly, and joyously!

What's My Tempo SM

Musical Metronome Calculator

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The Musical Metronome Calculator program is a tempo calculator designed to, on your instrument, strengthen your facility and improvisational skills through focused practice. MMC instantly provides the information necessary to control the tempo of any song, jam track, or book exercise, by providing the foundation to support your rhythmic and relaxation performance goals. This is about measured tempo *practice* which ultimately facilitates better and more consistent performances.

Overview

Inspiration often causes execution to suffer because the tempo of the desired rhythmic figures is too fast to execute in a clean and relaxed manner. Tempo is not just a correct or absolute reading for any song. Each of us has our own groove range for comfortable and relaxed playing in performance. That can change from day to day, hour to hour. Only by being able to *measure* your practice tempos accurately can you take control of your practice progress. Many successful interpretations of standard songs are recorded at different tempos because certain musicians can naturally adjust tempos to where they can comfortably play (groove) them. If you drive yourself at tempos beyond your capabilities, it leads to stilted performances. MMC will help you expand the range of tempos you can confidently play in a "groovy" style.

How does one focus in to practice this ability to deliver smooth expression in a controlled manner? Through calculated practice at predictable tempos no matter what the musical goal, using real music tracks as an alternative to a metronome.

The ability to vary and control the tempo of any song or jam track requires a suitable speed changing program as a companion to this calculator. Amazing Slow Downer by Roni Music (ronimusic.com), has been the leader in such control for over ten years. Available on PC, Mac, iOS, and Android platforms, ASD is the recommended and supported choice to make the best use of MMC. Many other programs also provide tempo adjusting functions. It is only important that you use one of them to make effective use of the power of MMC.

Any metronome, midi or drum beat program will work similarly. Besides providing percentage numbers to adjust tempo, MMC also provides corresponding beats-per-minute tempos for the purpose of controlling play along speeds when applied to a real metronome, midi program, or rhythm machine where you enter the tempo directly.

MMC Terms and Definitions

Index Tempo - Gauging the amount of space or time between notes. To determine your Index Tempo, start by playing your instrument first without any music in the background. Think of the Index Tempo as your most relaxed groove/tempo for a song or exercise at any given time of practice.

Pick out the part of your piece that you are having difficulty executing cleanly. Take only that small piece and slow it down until you can play it easily and effortlessly. Now use your metronome to measure that tempo. This is your Index Tempo for your practice session.

Index Tempo measurement is also useful for developing speed. At times you may want to be able to execute phrases or exercises cleanly at fast tempos. Once again, take the phrase and slow it down until you can play it easily and effortlessly. Use your metronome to measure that tempo. This is your Index Tempo for your practice session.

Song Tempo is the original or goal tempo of the song or exercise you are working toward mastering.

Target Figure is the tuplet figure (2, 3, 4, 6, 8) you are practicing to strengthen your facility and improvisational skills. (Tuplet does not mean 3, it means a grouping of beats per tick.)



Limb is more applicable to percussionists that often work with two limbs versus one limb and directly influences the skill level required to play the groove. Leaving the value at 1 is sufficient for most other instrumentalists'.

Figure Tempo is the speed of the Target Figure at the original song tempo, a tempo goal you may be working toward.

Practice Tempo is the adjusted tempo of the song to match the Target Figure to the Index Tempo.

Although focusing on the Target Figure at the Practice Tempo, you are encouraged to relax and at the same time work other figures besides the Target Figure.

Practice Range is the span of graduated tempos to practice within your slow down, midi, or drum beat program; from the relaxed Practice Tempo up to a speed 1/3 higher or 1/3 lower than initial Practice Tempo of the play along track.

Step Increase is the number of gradual, equal, percentage steps from Practice Tempo to Practice Range max/min tempo. Do either all 5 steps or skip every other one and do 3 steps if you like; moving from Practice Tempo to both maximum and minimum.

Afterword

You have the songs, you have the jam tracks, you have the transcriptions, you have the books on technique. But are you practicing musically?

In the end, it's all about the music. Building facility builds freedom of expression. The Musical Metronome Calculator helps to efficiently achieve that goal. Remember the word 'play' in play music means just that - have fun and effortlessly enjoy playing!