

Takadimi “Cheat Sheet”

Dr. Adam Potter

TAKADIMI HOW-TO

No matter the meter, the basic unit of pulse always receives the syllable “Ta.”

Simple meters:

♩ pulse

Whole note	○															
	To(-o-o-o)*															
Half note	♩								♩							
	Tu(-u)								Tu(-u)							
Quarter note (BEAT)	♩				♩				♩				♩			
	Ta				Ta				Ta				Ta			
Eighth note (BEAT DIVISION)	♩		♩		♩		♩		♩		♩		♩		♩	
	Ta		di		Ta		di		Ta		di		Ta		di	
Sixteenth note (BEAT SUBDIVISION)	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩
	Ta	ka	di	mi	Ta	ka	di	mi	Ta	ka	di	mi	Ta	ka	di	mi

♩ pulse

Double whole note	⏏															
	To(-o-o-o)															
Whole note	♩								○							
	Tu(-u)								To(-u)							
Half note (BEAT)	♩				♩				♩				♩			
	Ta				Ta				Ta				Ta			
Quarter note (BEAT DIVISION)	♩		♩		♩		♩		♩		♩		♩		♩	
	Ta		di		Ta		di		Ta		di		Ta		di	
Eighth note (BEAT SUBDIVISION)	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩
	Ta	ka	di	mi	Ta	ka	di	mi	Ta	ka	di	mi	Ta	ka	di	mi

* The original Takadimi system would solmize all note values occurring on the pulse as “Ta.” In modified Takadimi, we solmize note values occurring on the pulse with durations of two pulses or longer as “Tu” (too) and four pulses or longer as “To” (toh).

Compound meters:

♩. pulse

Whole note	♩.																													
	To(-o-o-o)																													
Dotted half note	♩.												♩.																	
	To(-o)												To(-o)																	
Dotted quarter note (BEAT)	♩.						♩.						♩.						♩.											
	Ta						Ta						Ta						Ta											
Eighth note (BEAT DIVISION)	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩
	Ta	ki	du	Ta	ki	du	Ta	ki	du	Ta	ki	du	Ta	ki	du	Ta	ki	du	Ta	ki	du	Ta	ki	du	Ta	ki	du	Ta	ki	du
Sixteenth note (BEAT SUBDIVISION)	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩	♩
	Ta	va	ki	di	du [†]	mu	Ta	va	ki	di	du	mu	Ta	va	ki	di	du	mu	Ta	va	ki	di	du	mu	Ta	va	ki	di	du	mu

What about rests?

In modified Takadimi, all rests are solmized as [ʃ] (“sh”).

WHY TAKADIMI?

- ✓ Takadimi is a *sound-before-sight* method (beat-function-based and verbal).
- ✓ Takadimi easily applies to both *reading* and *writing* musical notation. In the examples below, “syllable” (Takadimi!) is the conduit through which we cognate the transfer. “Sight” refers to notation.
 - Writing music:* sound → (syllable) → sight
 - Reading music:* sight → (syllable) → sound
- ✓ Takadimi is a “womb-to-tomb” method: it can be understood by the youngest students but is complex enough to accommodate all musics.
- ✓ By *patsching* while chanting Takadimi, it can help students not only learn but also feel metric function: each beat in the bar has its own weight and direction.
- ✓ Takadimi syllables are easy to articulate at varied tempi.
- ✓ Articulating Takadimi syllables aids instrumentalists in learning to tongue.
- ✓ In both simple and compound meters, the exact middle of the beat is the syllable “di,” so poly- and cross-rhythms align.

[†] The original Takadimi system solmized the fifth and sixth beat-subdivisions in compound meters as “da-ma.” In modified Takadimi, we solmize these as “du-mu” so each subdivision has its own vowel, “ah” for beat division 1, “ee” for beat division 2, and “oo” for beat division 3.