

Latin Rhythms: MYSTERY UNRAVELED



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Glossary of Latin Music Terms

BOLERO (boh-LEH-roh) Is a Latin ballad and it is not to be confused with the Maurice Ravel composition of the same name. It is in the pretty slow tempo range but can sometimes have open vamps for improvisation that pick up in energy quite a bit, Such as in a Bolero-Son.

BONGO (bohn-GOH) A small double drum (held between the knees, resting on the claves of the seated musician).

CENCERRO - (sen-SEH-roh) A large hand-held cowbell played with a stick. It produces two notes, depending upon where it is struck. In Cuban music and SALSA, it is usually played by the bongo artist when the band goes into the “ride” or MAMBO section after the main vocal. In good hands, it can drive an entire band with ever-increasing excitement and power.

CHACHACHA (cha-cha-CHA) Some claim that this is the second section of the DANZON; others argue that it is a slower MAMBO. It was sometimes called a double MAMBO in New York since its basic dance step was the MAMBO with a double step in the fourth-to-first beats...chachaCHA! The CHACHACHA developed around 1953 in the hands of Cuban CHARANGAS. It was an elegantly hot music in its original flute-and-fiddle form.

CHARANGA (cha-RANG-gah) A Cuban dance orchestra consisting of flute backed by two or three fiddles, piano, bass and TIMBALES. CHARANGAS tended to play different dances from the Afro-Cuban CONJUNTOS, the most characteristic of which was the DANZON. CHARANGAS might range from large society units to small street bands. Modern CHARANGAS use the bongo and conga drums in the rhythm section and swing mightily in a light, precise, non-funky way.

CIERRE (see-EH-reh) This is essentially a passage like a jazz break. The CIERRE can range from a two-note bongo phrase to a complicated pattern for full band, more like a bridge passage. Good CIERRES are fundamental to SALSA structure, but they are so varied and used in so many ways that more precision of definition would be misleading.

CLAVE (CLA-veh) An offbeat 3-2 or 2-3 rhythmic pattern over two bars, it is the basis of all Cuban music into which all elements of arrangement and improvisation should fit. CLAVE is an African-derived pattern with equivalents in other Afro-Latin music. African music has no single equivalent of CLAVE, but much western and central African music is organized within an eight-beat frame which is the basis for many clave-like patterns, providing the underpinning for polyrhythmic interplay. The common 3-2 Cuban CLAVE varies in accent, according to the rhythm being played. It seems to be part of the inspiration for the two-bar bass pattern in modern black music. The 2-3 reverse clave is less common.

CLAVES Twin strikers of resonant wood used to play the CLAVE pattern.

CONGA (COHN-ga) A major instrument in the SALSA rhythm section, the CONGA is literally the Congolese drum derived from, and used by, the Afro-Cuban religious cults. There are several types of CONGAS: the small QUINTO, a solo improvising instrument; the mid-sized CONGA, and the large TUMBADORA. The CONGA is capable of a great variety of sounds achieved through different ways of striking or rubbing the head and by raising the instrument, held between the knees, while playing it.

CONJUNTO (con-HOON-toh) In U.S. terms, this could be translated to mean “combo”. The classic Cuban CONJUNTO sprang from the carnival marching bands and combined voices, Trumpets, Piano, Bass, Conga, and Bongo. Over the years, CONJUNTOS began adding a

Trombone and, in New York, substituting Trombones for Trumpets. The basic CONJUNTO sound is brassy and joyous.

CORO (COR-oh) The “chorus”. In SALSA, the two or three-voice refrains of two or four bars sung during MONTUNOS. The lead singer improvises against the refrains. COROS are used in various ways in arrangements: as reprises or, by an alteration of the refrain, to establish a change of mood.

DESCARGA (des-CAR-gah) “Discharge” ... the slang of Latin musicians meaning jam session.

GUAGUANCO (gwah-gwan-COH or wah-wahn-COH) African roots and was originally a drum form related to the RUMBA. Though it is often played in 4/4, it has a strong 6/8 feel. The basic rhythm is traditionally carried by three CONGA drums and usually includes a good deal of solo drumming. The modern GUAGANCO is one of the few 2-3 reverse CLAVE forms.

GUARACHA (gwa-RAH-cha) The original Cuban GUARACHA was a topical song form for chorus and solo voice, with improvisation in the solo. It was presented in 3/4 and 6/8 or 2/4 time signature. The GUARACHA developed a second section, employed for much improvisation, as in the SON MONTUNO. It almost died out in the 1930s but is today one of the forms most commonly used by SALSA groups; a fast, cheerful rhythm with a basic chica-chica pulse. Some musicians credit its last section as the source for the instrumental MAMBO.

GUIRO (GWEE-roh) Basically a scraper. The Cuban and Puerto Rican Guiro, often called Guayo in Puerto Rico, is made from a notched gourd and played with a stick or fork-like scraper. The singer often plays it.

GUIRA (Dominican Republic) the guiro’s metal counterpart- it is a characteristic instrument used in merengue and is played with a metal, fork-like stick.

LATIN/JAZZ A hybrid of jazz and Latin music. Examples could range all the way from a Cuban number with a few Louis Armstrong phrases to a straight jazz number with a CONGA drum. It is most usefully confined to crosses with a Latin rhythm section, or those combining jazz and Latin elements and an instrumental frontline. Other fusions include Latin/Rock and Latin/Soul.

MAMBO (MAHM-boh) an Afro-Cuban form, which has its basis in the Congolese religious cults. Though Perez Prado once claimed to have created it in 1943, its growth is not attributable to any single musician. The big band MAMBO of the 1940s and 1950s developed contrasting brass-and-sax riffs, which many musicians regard as stemming from the last section of the GUARACHA.

MAMBO SECTION A section of contrasting riffs for SALSA frontline instruments, balancing Trumpets against Saxes or Trombones for example. The section may also feature an instrumental solo. Said to be derived from the GUARACHA, it got its name when it became a main part of the MAMBO during the late 1940s and early 1950s.

MARACCAS (mar-RAH-kas) A tuned pair of rattles made from gourds filled from pebbles or seeds. It is one of a wide range of Amerindian-derived rattles.

MERENGUE (meh-REN-geh) Originally from the Dominican Republic, this highly commercialized dance form dates back to at least the early 19th century, the modern MERENGUE has a brisk, snappy 2/4 rhythm and a flavor quite different from the more flowing Cuban dances.

MONTUNO SECTION (mon-TOON-oh) A vehicle for improvisation (solo section). It is based on a two or three-chord pattern repeated ad-lib under the instrumental or vocal improvisations. The piano often maintains a repeated vamp.

RUMBA (ROOM-bah) Most of what Americans call RUMBAS were forms of the SON which swept Cuba in the 1930s. The Cuban RUMBA was a secular drum form with many variants, including the GUAGUANCO and the CUMBIA though modern musicians tend to regard all these as separate. A highly African percussion-and-voice form, its descendent variations are the be heard by groups called RUMBAS or RUMBONES. By analogy, a percussion section of a SALSA number, or a percussion-only jam session, is sometimes called a RUMBA or RUMBON.

SALSA (SAL-sah) A contemporary word for hot, up-tempo, creative Latin music, it means “gravy” or “sauce”. Originally, it was used as a descriptive such as “swinging” or “funky”. The origins of the present use are obscure, but it began to develop in the late 1960s. The style now has many other elements and SALSA is more precise than the earlier term, “Latin”.

SHEKERE (SHAY-keh-reh) An African-derived rattle made from a gourd, covered with beads in a net-like pattern.

SON (sohn) perhaps the oldest and certainly the classic Afro-Cuban form. Some date it back to the 18th Century and place it in Oriente province. It is an almost perfect balance of African and Hispanic elements in Cuban music. It surfaced in Havana around WW I and became a popular urban music played by string-and-percussion quartets and septets. Almost all the numbers Americans called RUMBAS were, in fact, SONES, including “El Manicero” (“The Peanut Vendor”). Technically, the song was a form of SON derived from the street cries of Havana and called a PREGON. The SON rhythm of is strongly syncopated, with a basic chicka-CHUNG pulse.

SON MONTUNO (sohn mon-TOON-oh) A reverse CLAVE (2-3) form, usually mid-paced or slow, with a pronounced CHUNG-chicka feel. The SON MONTUNO developed as a separate form from the general SON tradition. Its rhythmic pulse is almost the exact reverse of a SON. It was, like the GUARACHA, one of the first forms to include a second, improvised section, the MONTUNO. Though it is not fast, the Afro-Cuban SON MONTUNO has an intense, relentless quality highly suitable to the SALSA format.

SONERO (soh-NEH-roh) In the strict sense, a man who sings or plays the Afro-Cuban SON, but the word is now used for the improvising lead singer in the SALSA style. A good SONERO improvises rhythmically, melodically, and verbally against the refrain of the CORO. The improvised phrases are known as INSPIRACIONES or, sometimes, SONEOS. Since the GUARACHA was also improvised, the word GUARACHERO is a synonym, though less used.

SONGO (SON-goh) The Songo (along with some generic versions of the Mozambique) is probable the most imitated Cuban rhythm throughout the world today. It is a unique blend of Rumba and Son styles integrated with funk/fusion and jazz style improvisation. The rhythmic patterns are more syncopated and freer from repetition than the tumbao approach of the Son styles.

TIMBALES (teem-BAH-less) A percussion set-up consisting of two small metal-single headed drums mounted on a stand, with two cowbells, and very often a cymbal or other additions. The timbalero (timbale player) plays the “cascara” part on the shell. In the absence of timbales the drummer plays the cáscara on the shell of the Floor Tom, on the Cymbals or the Hi-Hat.

TUMBAO (Toom-BAH-oh) A repeated rhythmic pattern for *bass (guitar)* or *conga drums*. It offers a constant rhythmic counterpoint to the rhythms of the percussion section.

TIPICO (TEE-pee-coh) An imprecise but extremely important concept in modern SALSA. Literally it means “typical” or “characteristic”, but it is more generally used to identify the down-home, rural, popular styles of Latin countries.

(Excerpts from the AFRO-CUBAN RHYTHMS FOR DRUMSET by Frank Malabe and Bob Weiner, published by Manhattan Music, Inc. Distributed by CPP Media 15800 N.W. 48th Avenue, Miami, FL 33014 and Alfred Publishing (www.alfred.com))

Brazilian Musical Terms

A-go-go: a group of two or three bells joined together and played by striking with a stick and squeezing, to create syncopation.

Bossa Nova: a style of music created by acoustic guitar players singing and playing in the streets of Rio. They are joined by **percussion** instruments, such as the ganza (shaker), and pandero (tambourine).

Cabasa: (Afuche): a round coconut shell with small seashells strung around it with a handle. The updated version is a wooden cylinder with a metal cover with metal beads, played by rubbing the beads against the metal cover.

Ciaxia: a metal snare drum, 3” x 14”, with the snares sometimes across the top head, using a large drum sling to carry on the body.

Cuica: a drum, with a skin at one end, either plastic or animal, with a stick attached. You play it by rubbing the stick through the open end with a wet rag or sponge. (No rosin or sticky material!)

Ganza (shaker): a cylinder or square shaped cone with various material inside, from small metal pellets, to rice, (depending on sound), and played in a forward-backward shaking motion.

Pandero (tambourine): a round thin drum with a skin and jingles played on the surface of the head in a certain rhythm pattern. (See Brazilian patterns)

Reco-Reco: The Brazilian version of the guiro or gourd, but made out of bamboo cylinders with grooves and scraped with a thin stick.

Repenique: small two-headed tenor drum played with a stick and using a large sling to carry on the body.

Samba: The **Batucada** is the most popular form of samba. Origin: basic African rhythm patterns stemming back to Angola. The Batucada is the rhythm pulse of the Escola de Samba, (samba school). There are approximately 8 or 9 different **styles** of samba.

Surdo: a large bass drum, sized from 16” x 28”to 22” x 24”, using a large drum sling to carry on the body. This instrument is played with a mallet and is the heartbeat and the pulse of the samba.

Tamborin: a small drum 6” in diameter played with a stick and held with the hand.

Suggested Resources

Aretz, Isabel (Relatora de Libretos): *America Latina En Su Musica Mexico: Siglo XXI* Editores & Paris: Unesco, 1987.

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Uribe, Ed: *THE ESSENCE OF Brazilian Percussion & Drum Set*, Warner Bros. Publications, Distributed by Alfred Publishing Company, P.O. Box 10003, Vn Nuys, CA. 91410, 1996.

Recommended Discography

Irakere

Irakere en Vivo
Bailando Asi
Irakere

El Gran Combo

25th Anniversary
Mejor Que Nunca

Grupo Niche

Grandes Exitos

Eddie Palmieri

Azucar Pa Ti
Sentido

Paquito de Rivera

40 years of Cuban Jam Session
Manhattan Burn

Tito Puente

El Rey
Para Los Rumberos
Salsa Meets Jazz

Celia Cruz

Exitos
Canta Celia Cruz
Homenaje a Beny More

Ray Barretto

Que Viva la Musica
Ritmo de la Vida

Ruben Blades

Caminando
Buscando America

*For an additional source of old as well as new recordings refer to the DESCARGA Catalogue 328 Flatbush Ave. Suite 180 Brooklyn, NY 11238 (718) 693-2966

Stan Getz

Girl from Ipanema

Claudio Roditi

Bossa Nova

Oscar de Leon

La Salsa Yo Soy
Con Bajo y Todo

Willie Colon

La Gran Fuga
There Goes the Neighborhood

Los Van Van

Songo

Arturo Sandoval

El Tren Latino

Arsenio Rodriguez

Sabroso y Caliente

Israel "Cachao" Lopez

Maestro de Maestros
Descargas con el Ritmo de Cachao

Machito

Afro-Cuban Jazz
Latin Soul Plus Jazz

Jerry Gonzalez

Rumba Para Monk
River is Deep

Machito

Afro-Cuban Jazz
Greatest Hits

La 440

Ven, Sigueme

The Full Rhythm Section: Suggestions for putting it All Together

*Remember there is no mystery behind an authentic performance-
The trick is for the director and players to give proper attention to detail!*

Save Rehearsal Time and Frustration

- Rehearse the tune with rhythm section **first**
- Do a little research on the proper rhythmic patterns
- Put the rhythmic “jigsaw puzzle” together in “**layers**”
- If any element causes instability, try changing the layering order and bring the troublesome element in only when other components are synchronized

For All Styles: General Rhythm Sectional Hints

- Players must avoid overfilling and know **their role** in this rhythmic “jigsaw puzzle”
- Be very conscious of how each rhythm section part fits into the whole
- Work to get all elements **tight**
- Fills should not interfere with one another; keep it **simple**
- Tutti fills (to setup major horn entrances, etc.) are very effective

Remember the Clave!

- Decide 2/3 or 3/2 right away (Son, Rumba, etc.) Once the pattern is established, it does not change.
- Look for hints in the music (drum parts) if you cannot tell right away
- Look for hints in the melodic line or comping patterns. The Clave remains fixed, and the phrases revolve around it. An even number of measures constitutes no change in the direction of the clave, whereas, an odd number of measures creates a change in direction.
- Have an auxiliary percussion player either clap or play clave on a wood block
- If the tune is written in 6/8 you’ll know to decide between either the 2/3 or 3/2 Afro-Cuban 6/8 clave

***Remember that using the wrong clave pattern
will make the whole tune “feel” wrong!***

Suggested Rhythm Section Patterns for Common Styles

Son/ Son Montuno

- Originally played in an ensemble consisting of a Guitar, a Tres and Clave
- The usual Clave pattern of the Son Montuno is 2/3, but depending on the melody it can be a 3/2 pattern
- Notice that the Bass anticipates the harmony of the measure following

COMMON SALSA PATTERN (2-3 CLAVE)

SON MONTUNO (MEDIUM TO MED. FAST)

The musical score is arranged in a system with the following parts from top to bottom:

- TIMBALES:** Features a complex rhythmic pattern with various note values and rests.
- CONGA:** Shows a rhythmic pattern with notes and rests, including a sequence of 'L L R R R L R R'.
- BONGOS:** Features a rhythmic pattern with notes and rests.
- MARACAS:** Shows a rhythmic pattern with notes and rests.
- GUIRO:** Features a rhythmic pattern with notes and rests.
- CLAVES:** Shows a 2-3 clave pattern with notes and rests.
- PIANO:** Includes a melody line with chords: C, Dm/F, G, Dm/F.
- BASS:** Shows a bass line that anticipates the following measure's harmony.

Modern Songo Drum Set Variation

- Probably the most popular, most imitated Drum Set style
- Combination many styles (Son, Rumba, Conga, fusion, funk)
- Very personalized and free style
- Drummer should be proficient in basic patterns of the component styles

SONGO

CLOSED HI-HAT

The musical score is arranged in five staves. The top three staves are for percussion: DRUM SET, COWBELL, and CLAVES. The bottom two staves are for melodic instruments: PIANO and BASS. The key signature has one flat (Bb) and the time signature is 4/4. The drum set part features a closed hi-hat pattern of eighth notes, with the snare drum playing a pattern of eighth notes and quarter notes. The cowbell and claves play rhythmic patterns of eighth and quarter notes. The piano and bass parts provide harmonic support with chords and a walking bass line.

DRUM SET

COWBELL

CLAVES

PIANO

BASS

MAMBO

- Mostly up-tempo musical style (faster than the Son Montuno)
- A repeating instrumental section of a song, also known as Montuno
- Originated in Cuba and evolved as a blending of the Mambo section, elements of the Son, and some influences of American Jazz orchestras.

MAMBO

The musical score is arranged in a system with six staves. The top four staves are for percussion: Drum Set, Clave (2/3), Cowbell, and Congas. The bottom two staves are for Piano and Bass. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The score consists of four measures. The Drum Set part includes notes for MAMBO BELL, ON S.D. RIM, and SM. TOM. The Congas part includes rhythmic notation with letters L and R and numbers 1 and 2. The Piano part includes chord symbols: C9, C9(b9), C9sus, and C7. The Bass part includes a simple melodic line.

DRUM SET

CLAVE (2/3)

COWBELL

CONGAS

PIANO

BASS

CHA-CHA-CHA

- Always played in 4/4 time with a bouncy 2/4 feel
- A dance and musical style derived from the early Cuban danzon-mambo
- World-wide audience appeal

CHA-CHA-CHA

MODERATELY ♩ = 192
L.H. CROSS RIM

The musical score is arranged in six staves. The top five staves are for percussion: Drum Set, Clave (2/3), Guiro, Congas, and Piano. The bottom staff is for Bass. The Drum Set part includes notation for Hi-Hat, S.D., Hi-Hat, and Tom. The Clave part is marked (2/3). The Guiro part has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. The Congas part includes rhythmic notation with letters L and R and numbers 1-5. The Piano part has a treble and bass clef with chord symbols Gsus15, G15, Gsus15, and G15. The Bass part has a bass clef. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of four measures.

MERENGUE

- Popular dance rhythm native of the Dominican Republic
- If there is no guira (metal guiro), the drummer plays this crucial part on the Hi-Hat
- Along with Salsa, the most commercialized Latin song style
- The primary pattern of the Bass was and still is roots and fifths played on down beats

MERENGUE*

(3/2 CLAVE) BRIGHT ♩ = 140 SM. COWBELL OR WOODBLOCK

TAMBORA (OPT. TIMBALES)

High Drum (Left hand muffled sound) Open tone on low drum

COWBELL

Lg. Cowbell (muffled)

CLAVE (3/2)

PIANO

07 Gui

BASS

S.O. (SNARES OFF) LIGHT RIM SHOTS (NEAR EDGE OF RIM)

DRUM SET

BASS DRUM HI-HAT

(3/2 CLAVE)

The musical score is arranged in six staves. The top staff is for Tamboza (or Timbales), showing a rhythmic pattern with notes and rests, and a key signature of two flats. The second staff is for Cowbell, with notes and rests. The third staff is for Clave, showing the characteristic 3/2 pattern. The fourth staff is for Piano, with a treble and bass clef, showing chords and a melodic line. The fifth staff is for Bass, with a bass clef, showing a simple root-fifth pattern. The bottom staff is for Drum Set, showing patterns for snare drum (S.O.), light rim shots, bass drum, and hi-hat. The tempo is marked as BRIGHT ♩ = 140. The key signature is two flats. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

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BOLERO

- A show lyrical ballad – not to be confused with the Maurice Ravel composition of the same name
- Usually placed at a show tempo
- Different than the Cha-cha-cha but rhythmically incorporates the same parts, especially in an open vamp section
- Typical Bass line rhythmic pattern is a half note followed by two quarter notes

BOLERO
LATIN BALLAD ♩ = 88

The musical score for Bolero is arranged in a grand staff format with the following parts:

- MELODY:** Treble clef, 3/4 time signature, key signature of three flats (B-flat major). The melody begins with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5. A slur covers the final two measures, which contain a half note G4 and a quarter note F4.
- MARACAS:** Percussion staff with rhythmic notation consisting of 'x' marks for the top maraca and 'r' marks for the bottom maraca. A 5-measure slur is placed over the first two measures.
- CONGAS (OPT. ADD BONGOS):** Percussion staff with rhythmic notation using 'x' and 'o' marks. A 5-measure slur is placed over the first two measures.
- CLAVE (2/5):** Percussion staff with rhythmic notation using 'x' marks. A 5-measure slur is placed over the first two measures.
- PIANO:** Treble and bass clefs. The right hand plays chords with the following chord symbols: F#m7, Bb7, Bbm7, Eb9, A7(b9), Abmaj7, and D7(b9). The left hand plays a bass line with notes G2, Bb2, D3, F3, Ab3, and Bb3.
- BASS:** Bass clef. The bass line follows a pattern of half notes (G2, Bb2) and quarter notes (D3, F3, Ab3, Bb3).
- DRUM SET:** Percussion staff with rhythmic notation for Hi-Hat, S.D. (Snare Drum), and Light S.D. (Light Snare Drum). A 5-measure slur is placed over the first two measures.

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BOSSA NOVA

- Based on a clave rhythm, but one that is variant of the traditional clave beat
- The last note of the traditional clave beat is delayed one eighth note
- The syncopation does not alter the basic two-measure phraseology
- The clave rhythm is usually placed on the snare drum by the left stick

BOSSA NOVA

MODERATELY ♩ = 152

The musical score is arranged in a grand staff format with the following parts from top to bottom:

- MELODY:** Treble clef, 3/2 time signature. The melody consists of a half note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, a half note C5, a quarter note B4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note G4.
- MARACAS:** Percussion staff with 'x' marks for hits. The rhythm is 2L 2L 2L 2L in the first measure, 2L 2L 2L 2L in the second, and a final 2L in the third measure.
- CABASA:** Percussion staff with 'x' marks for hits. The rhythm is 2L 2L 2L 2L in the first measure, 2L 2L 2L 2L in the second, and a final 2L in the third measure.
- CLAVE (3/2):** Percussion staff with 'x' marks for hits. The rhythm is x 4x 4x x in the first measure, x 4x 4x x in the second, and a final 2L in the third measure.
- PIANO:** Treble and bass clefs. The right hand plays chords Gmi7 and Fmi7. The left hand plays a bass line with chords Gmi7 and Fmi7.
- BASS:** Bass clef. The bass line consists of a half note G2, a quarter note A2, a quarter note B2, a half note C3, a quarter note B2, a quarter note A2, and a quarter note G2.
- DRUM SET:** Percussion staff with 'x' marks for hits. The rhythm is x x x x x x x x in the first measure, x x x x x x x x in the second, and a final 2L in the third measure. Labels include 'CLOSED HI-HAT', 'CROSS STICK', and 'LIGHT S.D.'. A note at the bottom says '(OPT. CLAVES DOUBLES S.D. & SHAKER DOUBLES HI-HAT)'. There is also a '2' above the final measure.

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SAMBA

- Usually played at a faster tempo
- Should have the feeling of a 2/4 pulsation
- The syncopation does not alter the basic two-measure phraseology
- The clave rhythm is usually played on the snare drum by the left stick

SAMBA

SIGHT $\text{♩} = 120$

The musical score is arranged in a system with the following parts from top to bottom:

- MELODY:** Treble clef, key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat), common time. It begins with a whole rest followed by a two-measure phrase: quarter notes G4, A4, B-flat4, quarter notes C5, B-flat4, A4, quarter notes G4, F4.
- CHOCALLO (CYLINDER):** Percussion staff with a double bar line and a common time signature. It features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents, marked "(OPT. ADD SHAKER)".
- CABASA:** Percussion staff with a double bar line and a common time signature. It features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents.
- AGOGO BELL:** Percussion staff with a double bar line and a common time signature. It features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents.
- CONGAS:** Percussion staff with a double bar line and a common time signature. It features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents, marked with "R" and "L" for right and left hands.
- PIANO:** Grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The right hand has chords and eighth notes, with chord markings $Gm7$ and A^b_{MA7} . The left hand has a bass line with eighth notes.
- BASS:** Bass clef, common time. It features a bass line with quarter and eighth notes.
- DRUM SET:** Percussion staff with a double bar line and a common time signature. It features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents.

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AFRO-CUBAN 6/8

- Derived from the fundamental rhythms in West Africa base on 6/8 feels
- Different styles of 6/8 are often defined by what is being played by the Congas or the characteristic Bata drums – not simply by use of the 6/8 feels
- The 6/8 clave pattern can also be played on the cowbell or ride cymbal for different textures and feels

AFRO-CUBAN

BRIGHT ♩. = 126

The score is arranged in a multi-staff format. The top staff is the **MELODY** in treble clef, 6/8 time, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The tempo is marked 'BRIGHT ♩. = 126'. The second staff is **SHEKERE**, represented by 'x' marks for strokes. The third staff is **CONGA**, with 'R' and 'L' indicating right and left hand strokes. The fourth staff is **COWBELL**, also using 'x' marks. The fifth staff is **MARACAS**, with 'R' and 'L' strokes. The sixth staff is **CLAVES**, using 'x' marks. The seventh staff is **PIANO**, showing chords and bass lines in both treble and bass clefs, with chord symbols F9, Eb9, F9, and Gb9. The eighth staff is **BASS** in bass clef. The ninth staff is **Hi-Hat** and **Cowbell**, with 'x' marks and 'S.O.' (Soft) and 'B.O.' (Brim) markings.

* EXCERPT FROM CHICK ON THE GRILL BY VICTOR LOPEL. © 1997 BELWIN-MILLS PUBLISHING CORP. (ASCAP)
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Putting it Together:

Basic Hints for Full Rhythm Section Rehearsal

(All examples below cater to the typical secondary school Jazz ensemble setting: piano, guitar, bass, drums, 2-congas)

Merengue

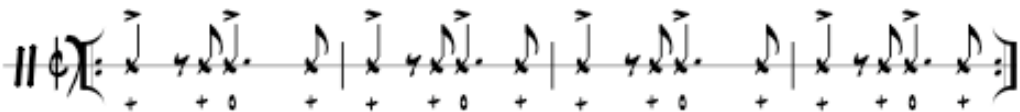
This suggested rehearsal “layering” order can be varied as needed

Drums:

- Play crucial “guira pattern” on Hi-Hat

MERENQUE $\text{♩} = 200$

HI-HAT



- Add Bass Drum

MERENQUE $\text{♩} = 200$

BASS DRUM



Enter Bass Guitar:

MERENQUE $\text{♩} = 200$

BASS



- Outline root/fifth of each chord
- Once pattern is established bass can vary the rhythm slightly/add passing tones in approach to next root
- Notes are spaced, accented (as if eighth note/eighth rest, etc.)

Enter Piano:

PIANO



- Also outlines the triads (makes more use of passing tones)
- Typically 2-bar patterns (can be one or four-bar patterns)
- Using pinky finger, RH can effectively double the thumb note
- Left hand can mirror same part w/out octave doubling, or mirror RH rhythm in a different inversion for a fatter sound

Bossa Nova

Although Brazilian music is not considered part of Salsa, it is not uncommon to find a Salsa ensemble incorporating such rhythms as the **Bossa Nova** or **Samba** into its repertoire.

This suggested layering order can be varied as needed

Drums:

- First: lay down “time keeper” pattern (RH...straight 8th notes)
 - Can be played on ride, crown of the ride, or Hi-Hat
- Enter Bass Drum and Hi-Hat

BOSSA NOVA $\text{♩} = 200$

**CYMBAL/
BASS DRUM**

- Bass Drum stress beat 1 and 3 (a bit heavier on 3)
- mirrors basic Bass Guitar line

Enter Bass Guitar:

- Bossa pattern (same as bass drum)

BOSSA NOVA $\text{♩} = 200$

BASS

- Typically outlines root/fifth of each chord
- Once pattern is established bass can vary the rhythm/add passing tones in approach to next root
- **legato**, accent the dotted quarters, more weight on beat 3

Drums:

- Add cross stick (2/3 Bossa pattern)

BOSSA NOVA $\text{♩} = 200$

DRUMS
(CROSS STICK)



- Once the Clave is established drummer can play off of the melody line w/crosstick on occasion for variety

Guitar:

BOSSA NOVA $\text{♩} = 200$

CHords: Cmi, Bb7, Cmi, Bb7

GIUITAR



Piano:

BOSSA NOVA $\text{♩} = 200$

CHords: Cmi, Bb7, Cmi, Bb7

PIANO

QUE: Bass



- * Typically outlines the chord changes in “comping-style” block chords (unlike Salsa, Merengue, etc., which breaks up the arpeggios in rhythmic fashion)
- * Often uses 2-bar comping patterns (can use one or four-bar patterns)
- * Keep the Bossa clave in mind but vary rhythm

Piano and Guitar can alternate role as dominant comping voice during different sections to avoid clashing and “getting in the way”

More Like a Samba?

Samba is often (although not always) played at a brisker tempo than the Bossa...

Drums:

- First: lay down “time keeper” pattern
 - Suggested pattern: RH- three 8th notes, one 8th rest (especially at faster tempos)
 - Can be played on ride, crown of the ride, or hit-hat
 - When played on the crown of the Hi-Hat while “crunching” on 2 and 4, a tasty, **characteristic triangle part** is simulated...
- Enter bass drum and hit-hat

SAMBA ♩ = 200
Hi-Hat “CRUNCHING” 2 & 4

CYMBAL/
BASS DRUM



- Bass Drum stress beat 1 and 3 (a bit heavier on 3)
 - Mirrors basic Bass Guitar line
-
- Add suggested cross stick pattern

SAMBA ♩ = 200

CROSS STICK



- Once the clave is established, the drummer can play off of the melody line w/cross-stick on occasion for variety

“Salsifying” Your Rhythm Section

Try Starting with the Clave!

- Have an auxiliary percussion player play the Clave pattern on a Wood Block or simply clap the rhythm
- The auxiliary percussionist may switch to another (appropriate) auxiliary percussion part whenever the drummer takes over the clave “duties”

Enter the conga “tumbao”...

Basic 3/2 Conga pattern:

3-2 SON CLAVE

CONGAS

H = HEEL
T = TOE
O = OPEN

THE ESSENCE OF AFRO-CUBAN PERCUSSION & DRUM SET, ED URIBE

- **Important:** the 1st and 2nd measures in the second excerpt are **reversed to fit with the Clave**. (The right hand “open” hit should coincide with the 2nd and 3rd notes of the “3” clave measure)

Basic 2/3 conga pattern:

2-3 SON CLAVE

CONGAS

H = HEEL
T = TOE
O = OPEN

THE ESSENCE OF AFRO-CUBAN PERCUSSION & DRUM SET, ED URIBE

Note: The above examples can be used in most situations (two-Conga) setups. Players can utilize one, two or three-Conga setups.

Adding the Bass Guitar: Factors to Consider

- Harmonic factors: Needs to establish Root/Fifth of each chord
- The “salsa” bass line is often difficult for younger players due to syncopation/ties.
- Try starting with a simplified version and then progress to final form

“Try starting with a simplified version without the ties.”

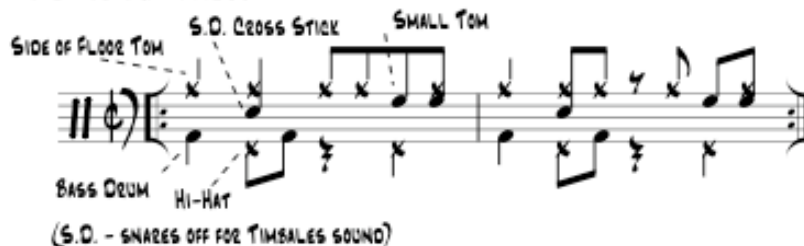
Final form:



- The final form should be the **targeted goal** for an authentic performance
- Once bass line is mastered, passing tones/rhythmic variations can be added

Adding the Drumset:

2-3 SON CLAVE "CASCARA" PATTERN



Or

3-2 SON CLAVE "CASCARA" PATTERN



- This groove better suited for more subdued sections (head, solo beginning, etc)
- Later on the Hi-Hat can also do the clave- freeing up your auxiliary percussionist to incorporate other appropriate rhythms
- This example is only **one** of many **basic** patterns

Adding in the Piano “Montuno” ...

- Piano pattern should be played legato
- Note that the rhythm is **slightly adjusted** according to clave

Basic piano pattern for 2/3...

- The downbeat measure is played with the “2” bar of the 3/2 or 2/3 clave

SALSA $\text{♩} = 200$

PIANO (2/3)

Cvi F7 Bb7

Basic piano pattern “with octaves added”

SALSA $\text{♩} = 200$

PIANO

Cvi F7 Bb7

Basic piano pattern “with both hands”

SALSA $\text{♩} = 200$

Cvi F7 Bb7

Last, but not least...

Other "salsa" instruments

2/3 CLAVE

The image shows five staves of musical notation for different salsa instruments, all in 2/3 time and marked with a 2/3 CLAVE signature. The instruments and their patterns are:

- TIMBALES:** Features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, accented, and a bass line with quarter notes.
- BONGOS:** Features a steady eighth-note pattern.
- MARACAS:** Features a steady eighth-note pattern with accents.
- QUIRO:** Features a steady eighth-note pattern with accents.
- CLAVES:** Features a sparse pattern of quarter notes and eighth notes, characteristic of the clave rhythm.

TIPS ON THE TUNING AND CARE OF YOUR CONGA DRUMS

The importance of a well-tuned and maintained drum cannot be over-emphasized. A drum that is correctly tuned and properly cared for will sound better and be easier to play. A poorly tuned drum will make it very difficult to execute the strokes and achieve the congas sounds and tones. For each of the three basic sizes of conga drums, the best tonality and volume is found in the middle tonal range of the drum.

- The QUINTO, the smallest of the three, is anywhere from 9" to 11" in head diameter. It should be tuned from a D at the lowest to the A above.
- The CONGA, the middle sized, drum is anywhere from 11" to 12" in head diameter. It should be pitched from the C at the lowest point to the E above.
- The TUMBA (Tumbadora) is the largest of the three, and anywhere from 12" to 13" in head diameter. It should be tuned from an A at the lowest point to the C above, depending on size.

Please be aware that a natural skin will never be in perfect tune due to the variance in the thickness of the skin. The head should be kept clean from oil or gritty build-up by washing the skin with a sponge, using gentle hand soap and warm water. After cleaning, generously rub in hand lotion, containing lanolin, which replenishes the oils that have been exhausted by playing. The hand lotion process should be done on all drums, especially new ones, at least twice a year, because soaking the skin in water before mounting it on the drum takes the oil out. You will notice that the drum will get louder and the pitch will be deeper after the process because the lanolin makes the skin vibrate more and it also becomes more pliable.

Conga Drum Tuning Set-Ups:

- Three Drums: A on low drum, C on the middle drum, and an E on the small drum.
- Two Drums: A on the low drum to the D on the middle drum.
- If you are playing a small and a middle drum: C on middle drum, E on small drum.

TIPS ON THE TUNING AND CARE OF BONGO DRUMS

The heads on the bongo drum are usually very thin, and one must be very careful to keep the skin pliable and moist for the high pitching, especially the smaller drum of the two. The head sizes of a professional set of bongos are usually 7" and 8-1/2" in head diameter. The smaller drum has the thinner skin and is a lot more susceptible to tearing, usually because it is not moist and pliable. Tuning the small drum of the bongo to a high A puts a lot of strain on the skin, but has the best sound. To achieve this, you must have a thin conditioned skin on the drum. The C below is a good pitch for the large drum, but also has to be clean and pliable for tuning. Please be aware that a natural skin will never be in perfect tune because of the natural variance in the thickness of the skin.

The head should be kept clean from any oil or gritty build-up, by washing the skin with a sponge, using gentle hand soap and warm water. After cleaning, generously rub in hand lotion, containing lanolin, which replenishes the oils that have been exhausted by playing. The hand lotion process should be done on all drums, especially new ones, at least twice a year, because soaking the skin in water before mounting it on the drum takes the oil out. You will notice that the drum will get louder and the pitch will be deeper after the process because the lanolin makes the skin vibrate more and it also becomes more pliable.

TIPS ON THE TUNING AND CARE OF YOUR TIMBALES

The sizes in a set of timbales vary a great deal, from 6" mini-timbale to a 15" deep shell. The traditional set of timbales is 13" and 14" head diameter and the contemporary sizes are 14" and 15", with a shell depth of 6" to 8". Plastic heads are the most effective for the sounds.

- The small drum is tuned to an A, using the method very much the same as you would tune a tom tom or a snare drum.
- The large drum should be a C to a D below. The high pitching of the small drum is for the rim shots that are part of the traditional sound of the instrument. This rim shot sound is the simulation of the slap of the conga or bongo. After tuning the instrument, make sure that the tension is even on all the lugs.

IMPORTANT: Timbales are set up the opposite of drumset (timpani set up - left to right) and the mambo bell is parallel and above the small drum. Patterns are played on the sides as well as the bells. The fills and solos are played on the drums.

Jerry Steinholtz (<http://www.jerrysteinoltz.com>)

CLINICIANS

Michele Fernandez Denlinger graduated from Miami Senior High School in 1985, where she was as an integral member of the band program under the leadership of then-director Victor Lopez. She attended the University of Florida on a full scholarship for Oboe with plans to major in education and enter law school. After graduating with honors in 1989 with a bachelor's degree in music education, Michele traded in her law school plans for a chance to return to her Alma Mater, where she taught band for the next ten years. During that time her Marching, Symphonic and Jazz Bands consistently earned top rating at evaluations and appeared at the Midwest Clinic (1993 and 1998), the International Association of Jazz Educators Conference (1994 and 1999), the Montreux Jazz Festival in Switzerland (1996), the Florida All-State Convention, and have also been featured in numerous national publications as well as receiving a feature spot on CBS Sunday Morning in 1999. Michele was a recipient of the Downbeat Magazine's Music Educator Award and an FEA teacher of the year award in 1999. During her time as Director of Bands at Miami High, she earned her Master's Degree from Florida International University, where she later served as an adjunct professor in the Music Education Department. In addition she also served as clinician at various festivals, a local arranger and drill writer, and also performed as a pianist in a local salsa band for several years. After taking a four-year leave of absence in 1999 to care exclusively for her young family, Michele returned to Miami High School in 2003, where she has since taught Exceptional Student Education (ESE) and served as a chemistry tutor for the science department. She is now teaching English in an ESE inclusion class and occasionally serves as a band clinician the South Florida area.

Anthony M. Falcone is the Associate Director of Bands at the University of Nebraska. His duties include directing the Cornhusker Marching Band, conducting the Symphonic Band, teaching instrumental arranging, and assisting with the administration of all university bands. He is also active in the Percussion Studio, teaching lessons, and conducting the Percussion Ensemble. He has held previous appointments at the University of Arkansas-Fayetteville; Truman State University in Kirksville, Missouri; and James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia.

As a conductor, Mr. Falcone is a regular clinician with Region Bands, and summer camps, and has been the Music Director for the Arkansas Winds Community Concert Band in Fayetteville. He is very active as a clinician, arranger, and adjudicator for school music programs throughout the country, and has had arrangements for marching percussion published by Arranger's Publishing Company and Warner Bros. Publications. He is also a member of the education committee for Vic Firth Inc. Mr. Falcone is a member of Phi Mu Alpha-Sinfonia Professional Fraternity in Music; Pi Kappa Lambda National Music Honor Society; Phi Beta Mu, International School Bandmaster Fraternity; and an honorary member of Kappa Kappa Psi National Honorary Band Fraternity.

Mr. Falcone has performed across the nation as a percussionist and percussion soloist. He has appeared on national television, radio and motion pictures, and has performed with noted entertainers Shirley Maclaine, Mac Davis, Mark O'Conner, and Marvin Hamlisch. He has been a member of the All-American College Marching Band at Walt Disney

World, bands for the 50th Presidential Inaugural, and Statue of Liberty 100th Anniversary, and the Crossmen Drum and Bugle Corps. He has served as Principal Percussionist and Timpanist with the North Arkansas Symphony Orchestra, and the Arkansas Music Festival; and as percussionist with the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra. Locally he is a member of the Plymouth Brass, and a regular performer with the Lincoln Municipal Band, and the Lincoln Symphony Orchestra. He is also currently Nebraska Chapter President of the Percussive Arts Society.

Mr. Falcone is a native of Alexandria, Virginia and attended Fairfax County Public Schools. He received his B.M.Ed. and M.M. degrees from James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia where he studied percussion with C. William Rice and conducting with Dr. J. Patrick Rooney. He was also a student of concert artist Leigh Howard Stevens in his intensive Summer Marimba Seminar and has participated in master classes with William Kraft, William F. Ludwig, Jr., Evelyn Glennie, Gordon Stout, Bob Becker, and Raymond Des Roches.

Victor Lopez has been an educator with the Miami-Dade County Public Schools System for the past 32 years. He is a highly acclaimed composer, arranger, and adjudicator, and has achieved success in music performance, education, and administration. He holds music degrees from the University of Florida and Florida International University. For sixteen years he served as director of bands at Mays Junior High School and Miami Senior High School, and for the past sixteen years, he has worked as an administrator in the Miami-Dade County Public Schools. He was the principal at G. W. Carver Middle School, which under his leadership received the National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence Award. Currently he is the principal at Miami Senior High School, his alma mater. Among many of his accomplishments, Mr. Lopez was named the “1978 Miami-Dade County Public Schools Teacher of the Year” and the “1979 State of Florida Teacher of the Year.” In addition to being the former lead trumpet player and arranger for the Miami Sound Machine, he has recorded and performed with various artists and has appeared in numerous music videos. Although being a school principal keeps him busy, Mr. Lopez has found time to serve his community as a councilman in the Doral Community Council in Miami, Florida. He has also participated in the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTACS) committee, which drafted model arts education licensing standards and supporting materials for national certification. Additionally, he has been a board member of the Florida Schools Music Association, a non-profit organization that oversees all of the music activities in the State of Florida. Mr. Lopez is in constant demand across the United States and Canada as a clinician/conductor, adjudicator, and commission writer. His compositions/arrangements have been published by Hal Leonard Publishing Company, Arrangers’ Publishing Company, Educational Programs Publications, Warner Bros. Publications and he currently serves as an exclusive composer, arranger and clinician for Alfred Publishing Company with over 350 publications to his credit. Presently, Mr. Lopez is writing a dissertation as required for the Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) degree in Educational Administration and Supervision at Florida International University.