

Preparatory Clave Exercises

Practice these exercises by clapping the clave while singing the top line.
Although the exercises are written in cut time, try playing them also in 4/4.

Son Clave 3-2

Sing

Clap

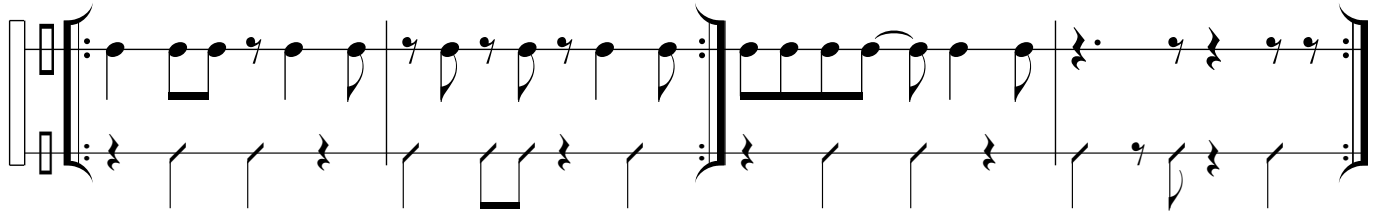
ta ta ta ta ta ta

ta ta ta ta etc.... ta ka ta ka ta ka ta ka

ta ka ta ka ta ka ta ka ta ka ta ka ta ka ta ta ta ta

ta ka ta ka ta ka ta ka ta ta ta ta ta ka ta ka ta ka ta ka

ka ka ka ka ta ka ta ka ta ka ta ka ta ka ta ka ta ka ka ka ka ka



Tumbao Exercises

The tumbao (bass line) generally anticipates the harmony consistently. It's one of the more difficult parts to feel.

Son Clave 3-2

Sing

Clap

(2-3 Clave)

Cascara Exercises

The cascara pattern is very useful when building your own lines, or listening for the direction of the clave.

Son Clave 3-2

Sing

Clap

(2-3 Clave)

(2-3 Clave)

Rumba Clave 3-2 >

The first system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a 3/4 time signature. It contains a melody with a 3-2 clave rhythm, marked with an accent (>) on the first measure. The lower staff is a bass clef with a key signature of one flat, containing a bass line that complements the melody. The system is enclosed in a large bracket on the right side.

The second system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff continues the melody from the first system, with accents (>) on the first, second, and fourth measures. The lower staff continues the bass line. The system is enclosed in a large bracket on the right side.

The third system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff continues the melody, with accents (>) on the first and second measures. The lower staff continues the bass line. The system is enclosed in a large bracket on the right side.

(“Palito” pattern)

The fourth system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, characteristic of the “Palito” pattern, with accents (>) on the first and second measures. The lower staff continues the bass line. The system is enclosed in a large bracket on the right side.

I IV V7 IV in C Major

1. Sing the rhythm.
2. Sing while clapping the clave.
3. Play the melody with the recording (I IV V7 IV in C major).
4. Change the pitches of the rhythm.
5. Transpose to other keys, and play along with the recording.

** These phrases were written in two measures rather than four measures for the sole purpose of this exercise.

2-3 Son Clave

C F G7 F Maj C Maj F G7 F C

The bass clef staff contains a sequence of notes: C4, F4, G4, F4, C4, F4, G4, F4, C4. Below the staff is a 2-3 Son Clave rhythm pattern consisting of two measures of eighth notes: (C4, F4, G4, F4) and (C4, F4, G4, F4).

The first treble clef staff shows a melody line starting with a whole rest, followed by a quarter note G4, a quarter note F4, and a quarter note E4. The second measure contains a whole rest. The third measure contains a quarter note G4, a quarter note F4, and a quarter note E4. The fourth measure contains a whole rest.

The second treble clef staff shows a melody line starting with a quarter note G4, a quarter note F4, and a quarter note E4. The second measure contains a whole rest. The third measure contains a quarter note G4, a quarter note F4, and a quarter note E4. The fourth measure contains a whole rest.

The third treble clef staff shows a melody line starting with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note G4, a quarter note F4, and a quarter note E4. The second measure contains a whole rest. The third measure contains a quarter note G4, a quarter note F4, and a quarter note E4. The fourth measure contains a whole rest.

The fourth treble clef staff shows a melody line starting with a quarter note G4, a quarter note F4, and a quarter note E4. The second measure contains a whole rest. The third measure contains a quarter note G4, a quarter note F4, and a quarter note E4. The fourth measure contains a whole rest.

The fifth treble clef staff shows a melody line starting with a quarter note G4, a quarter note F4, and a quarter note E4. The second measure contains a whole rest. The third measure contains a quarter note G4, a quarter note F4, and a quarter note E4. The fourth measure contains a whole rest.

The sixth treble clef staff shows a melody line starting with a quarter note G4, a quarter note F4, and a quarter note E4. The second measure contains a whole rest. The third measure contains a quarter note G4, a quarter note F4, and a quarter note E4. The fourth measure contains a whole rest.

I IV V7 IV in F Major

2-3 Son Clave

4-Measure Phrase

F B \flat C7 B \flat F B \flat C B \flat F

I- IV- V7(alt) IV- in G Minor

Play each phrase as written (clapping clave). Then listen to the rhythm section on the last two measures of each 4-measure phrase. Fill using your own ideas. Then repeat.

2-3 Son Clave

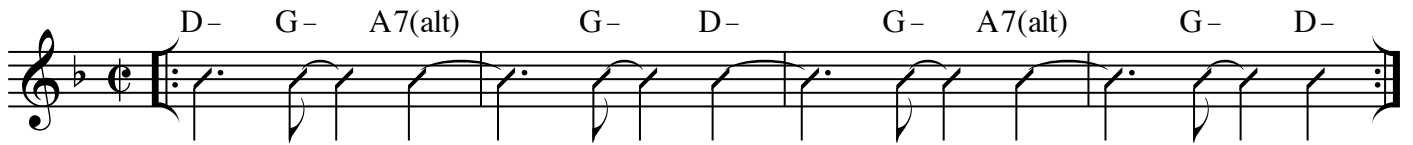
G- C- D7(alt) C- G- C- D7(alt) C- G-

I- IV- V7(alt) IV- in D Minor

Play each phrase as written (clapping clave). Then listen to the rhythm section on the last two measures of each 4-measure phrase. Fill using your own ideas. Then repeat.

2-3 Son Clave

D- G- A7(alt) G- D- G- A7(alt) G- D-



A musical staff in D minor with a 2-3 son clave rhythm. The notes are: D4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (quarter), B3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), F3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), D3 (quarter). Chords are indicated above the staff: D- (D4), G- (G4), A7(alt) (A4, C#4, E4, G4), G- (G4), D- (D4), G- (G4), A7(alt) (A4, C#4, E4, G4), G- (G4), D- (D4).



A musical staff in D minor with a 2-3 son clave rhythm. The notes are: D4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (quarter), B3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), F3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), D3 (quarter). The last two measures are marked "Fill..." and contain diagonal lines.



A musical staff in D minor with a 2-3 son clave rhythm. The notes are: D4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (quarter), B3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), F3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), D3 (quarter). The last two measures are marked "Fill..." and contain diagonal lines. Accents (>) are placed over the notes G4 and A4 in the third measure.



A musical staff in D minor with a 2-3 son clave rhythm. The notes are: D4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (quarter), B3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), F3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), D3 (quarter). The last two measures are marked "Fill..." and contain diagonal lines.



A musical staff in D minor with a 2-3 son clave rhythm. The notes are: D4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (quarter), B3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), F3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), D3 (quarter). The last two measures are marked "Fill..." and contain diagonal lines.



A musical staff in D minor with a 2-3 son clave rhythm. The notes are: D4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (quarter), B3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), F3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), D3 (quarter). The last two measures are marked "Fill..." and contain diagonal lines. Accents (>) are placed over the notes G4 and A4 in the third measure.

II-7(b5) V7(b9) I in F Minor

3-2 Rumba Clave

The musical score is written for a 3-2 Rumba Clave in F minor. It consists of six systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The first system includes chord labels: G-7(b5), C7(b9), and F-7. The music features a 3-2 Rumba Clave rhythm and various melodic and harmonic patterns.

Tito-Tito

I first heard these changes in Tito Puente's arrangement of "Maria Cervantes" by Noro Morales.

When the harmony moves this fast, using one scale common to all the chords (A minor) makes the solo monotonous quickly—even more so if there is no rhythmic phrasing. One way to create melodic interest and to clearly outline the harmony is by anticipating the guide-tone lines (3rd and 7th of the chord) combined with phrases in clave.

Guide Tone

D-7 G7 CMaj7 FMaj7 B-7(b5) E7(b9) A-7 A7

Anticipating Guide Tone

D-7 G7 CMaj7 FMaj7 B-7(b5) E7(b9) A-7 A7

Rhythm Figure (in Clave [2-3])

Rhythmic Figure in Pitch

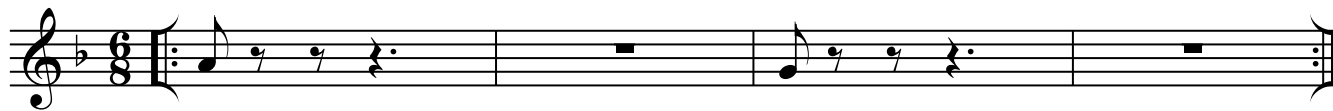
D-7 G7 CMaj7 FMaj7 B-7(b5) E7(b9) A-7

Afro-Cuban 6/8

Play with a relaxed feel, and articulate any attacks on beats 2 and 5, giving them the full value.
Play with and without accents.

C7

Bb7



C7

Bb7

