

Pre Lesson 1 Study Guide

The Mach Music Three Conga Course

Description of the Tumbao

In Afro-Cuban music, the Tumbao is a basic rhythm played on the Conga Drum.

The basic Conga part or pattern used in most popular songs today are also called Tumbao. It's also referred to as Marcha.

Below I will demonstrate two Tumbao patterns. Exercise 1 is what most teachers generally teach and Exercise 2 is the one I like to play. The reason being is that I feel more comfortable playing the slap, which is on count 2, and playing a rebound with the right hand. It almost sounds like the left hand on Exercise 1 and then I'm ready to play on 3 with the left heel and left tip. Try it both ways and you will see the difference.

Exercise 1

Exercise 2

The image shows two musical exercises on a single staff. Exercise 1 is a 4-measure pattern in common time (C) with notes for LH, LT, R, LT, LH, LT, R, R. Exercise 2 is a 4-measure pattern in common time (C) with notes for LH, LT, R, R, LH, LT, R, R. A yellow oval highlights Exercise 2.

Now we're going to take this to another level by using three congas and in so doing, creating some melodic rhythms and different types of Tumbao. For now, let's go to the next page and study lesson 1 which is easier to play than the one above. Then you can go back to a single conga and finish learning these two exercises.