Rhythm and Metre & Repetition and Ostinato

Indian classical music is based on rhythm patterns called **TALAS** (single **TALA)**. A **TALA** is a repeating rhythm pattern usually played by the **TABLA**. Usually, one piece of music is based on a single **RAGA** and a single **TALA**.

There are over 300 different **TALAS**, or rhythmic cycles, in Indian classical music and like **RAGAS**, they all have names. However, some are used more frequently than others. Indian musicians must have a thorough knowledge of **TALAS** when they improvise, so that their playing or singing has rhythmic structure. Each **TALA** has a certain number of beats, or *mātrās*, per cycle (called the *avartan)*. And each cycle is divided into a number of sections called *vibhāgs*. This is shown more clearly in the diagram below:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	1
mātrā (beat)	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
vibhāg (section)	●				●				●				●				●
avartan (cycle)	●																●

By far the most popular *tala* is **TINTAL** (sometimes written *Teental)*. This has 16 beats per cycle, divided into four equal *vibhāgs* and is shown in the diagram below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
X				X				O				X			

It is common to mark tala by **hand claps** and **waves**. In **TINTAL** the beginning of the first, second and fourth sections is marked by a **clap**, but the beginning of the third section is weaker, and this is shown by a **wave** of the hand.

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Characteristic Rhythms and Metres of Indian Talas

Using **TABLA** (if you have access to them), drums, or even household instruments, perform the following common Indian Talas:





1. Ektāl Tala

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
X		O		X		O		X		X	

2. Kehrva Tala

1	2	3	4
X		O	

3. Jhaptāl Tala

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
X		X			O		X		

4. Rūpak Tala

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
O			X		X	

5. Dādrā Tala

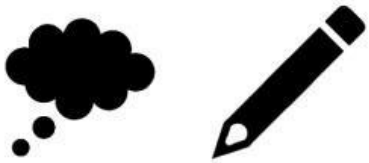
1	2	3	4	5	6
X			O		

6. Dhamār Tala

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
X					X		O			X			

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PIT STOP



What Indian Musical Instrument normally performs the **RHYTHM** within the ensemble?

What is a **TALA** in Indian Classical Music?

What is the most common **TALA** and how many beats does it have?

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