

# RHYTHMIC DEVICES



# MOTIVE

- Also called: motif, cell, fragment or figure
- The smallest rhythmically, melodically or harmonically significant musical idea
- Used as compositional building blocks

# RHYTHMIC TRANSFORMATION

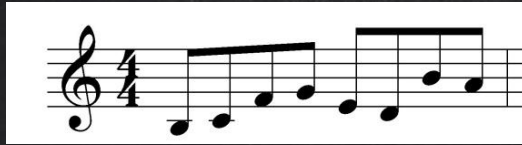
- rhythmically modifying a motive so that in a new context it is different but yet made of the same elements



# AUGMENTATION

the pitches remain the same but the rhythms are  
lengthened or multiplied

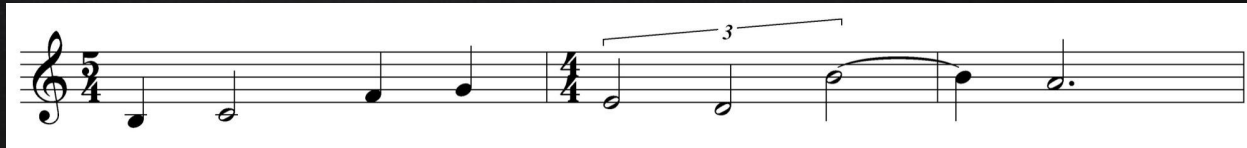
**Original Motive:**



**Augmented Motive: Pitches remained the same but the rhythm was augmented (lengthened)**



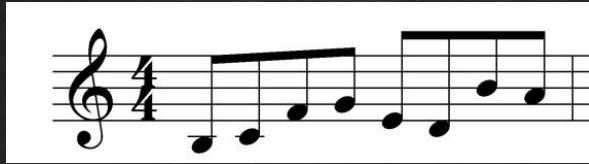
**The lengthened rhythm does not have to be exactly duplicated:**





the opposite of Augmentation the pitches remain the same but the rhythms are shortened

**Original Motive:**



**Augmented Motive: Pitches remained the same but the rhythm was augmented (lengthened)**



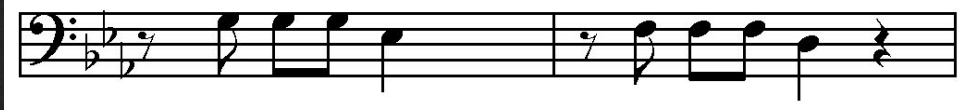
**The lengthened rhythm does not have to be exactly duplicated:**



# FRAGMENTATION

When a motive is broken into smaller parts.

original motive



fragmented motive







# POLYRHYTHM



Polyrhythm is the simultaneous use of two or more rhythms.

Polyrhythms require at least two different rhythms to be played concurrently

The rhythmic conflict may be the basis of an entire piece of music (cross-rhythm), or a momentary disruption.



# CROSS RHYTHM



Butour Ngale - African polyrhythm demonstration  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=haGWi5TibI>

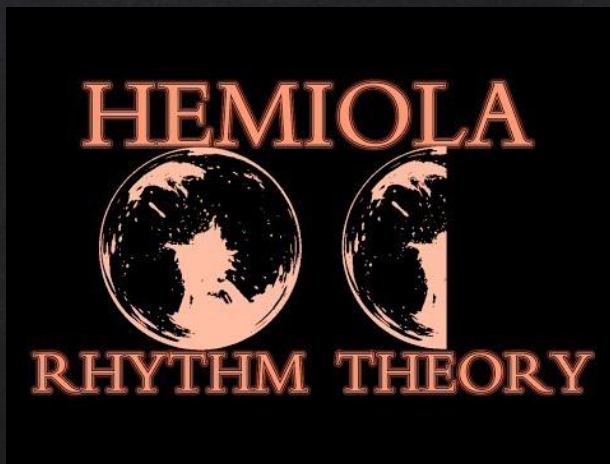




## Brahms Violin Sontata in G

# HEMIOLA

2:3 polyrhythm – two groups of three beats are replaced by three groups of two beats, giving the effect of a shift between triple and duple meter



HEMIOLA: What It Is & Writing Funky Jams With It [RHYTHM MUSIC THEORY

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HhODahQ-U4U&t=86s>

# ASYMMETRICAL/ IRREGULAR METER

Establishing a regular metric pattern from an sequence of two or more time signatures.

A 5/8 time signature, for example, is usually understood as the sum of two simple meters  
 $3/8 + 2/8$  or  $2/8 + 3/8$ .

Stravinsky The Rite of Spring Score Part  
[4https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wZtWAqc3ayk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wZtWAqc3ayk)





# DUplet

#1

#2

A type of tuplet – a note–grouping of two, which fits into the length of three of its note–type .

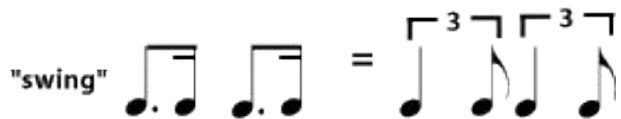
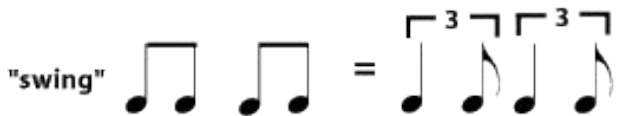
An example would be dividing a dotted quarter note into two eighth notes instead of three eighth notes as you would in a measure of music under a compound time signature.

This is a type of borrowed division.

# SWING RHYTHMS

A rhythmic feel where eighth note pairs are played as if they were triplets. *Straight* means to play the rhythms as written.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bKV\\_VLxLwAs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bKV_VLxLwAs)

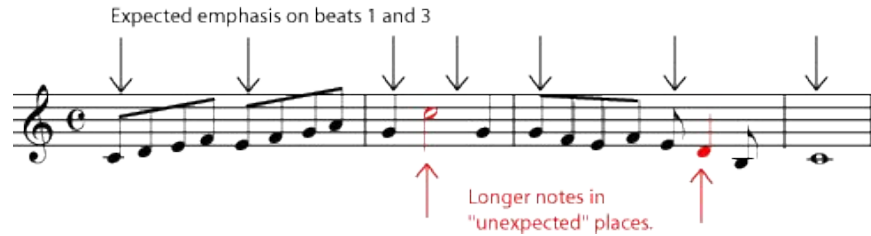


Swing: Eight notes have a different duration

# SYNCOPIATION

Syncopation occurs when a strong note happens either on a weak beat or off beat.

Expected emphasis on beats 1 and 3



Longer notes in "unexpected" places.

