

# Djembe Resources and Rhythm Grids

## Using Bass and Tone

**B** = Bass (flat hand in middle of the drum)  
**T** = Tone (fingers on edge of drum)

### 1. ONE BANANA

1 banana 2 banana 3 banana 4 banana 5 banana 6 banana 7 banana 8  
**B T T T B T T T B T T T B T T T B T T T B T T T B**

Play bass on the numbers only, until pulse is well-established.  
Then add in 'banana' on tone with the other hand.

### 2. LEMON LIME

Lemon Lime / Keep in time / Keep it neat / Feel the beat  
Not too fast / Not too slow / Keep it steady / Go Go Go!

SAY the rhythm while playing the pulse.  
PLAY the rhythm of the words.  
Split into 2 groups. Half play pulse and other half play rhythm. SWAP on signal.

### 3. HELLO

H E L L O  
This is how we say Hello  
Move your feet to the beat  
Can you feel your heart beat?

**B B B B**  
**T T T T T T**  
**B B T B B T**  
**T T T T T T** (just two fingers, quietly)

Initially, just use one hand on the bass and the other on the tone.  
To extend, try alternating hands RLRL

## 4. THE DJEMBE SONG

Groove 1

	1	2	3	4
Tone				
Bass			R	L
Clap	x	x		
VOICE	<i>Djem</i>	<i>be!</i>		

Perform x8

Groove 2

	1	2	3	4
Tone			R L	R
Bass				
Clap	x	x		
VOICE	<i>Klo</i>	<i>go!</i>		

Perform x8

Groove 3

	1	2	3	4
Tone				
Bass	R	R		
Clap			x	
VOICE				

Repeat as required. Sing 'We will rock you' or make up own words eg favourite food over the top.

Ending

	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1
Tone			R				R	L			R L	R			R L	R L	
Bass																	R
Clap	x	x			x	x			x	x			x	x			
VOICE	<i>One!</i>				<i>Two!</i>				<i>Three!</i>				<i>Four</i>				

## 5. AKWA ABA

	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	
Tone		x		x		x		x		x		x		x		x	
Bass																	
Clap	x		x		x		x		x		x		x		x		
VOICE	A	kwa	a	ba	to	you	my	friend		It's	so	nice	to	see	You a-	gain	A

Repeat as required

Melody line: E F A G F G E D C F A G F G E D C

NB. Tone tap is both hands together

### How to play the welcome game

All sing the song and play the simple clap-tap rhythm, then one at a time the children stand up and walk around the circle, patting hands with each child in turn, instead of the clap. Each time the tune gets back to the beginning, the next child stands up and starts going around the circle. When they get back to their seat, they sit back down again.

### Things to watch out for!

Ensure everyone plays in time together and it doesn't rush. It helps if the leader claps above their head so it's very obvious when you're meant to be clapping / hitting the drum!

## 6. The Breakfast Bap Rap

These 3 rhythms can be played one after another (4 times over) or by layering Rhythms 1 and 2 and using Rhythm 3 as the ending.

Rhythm 1

	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
TONE					x		x						x		x	
BASS	x	x	x	x					x	x	x	x				
	<i>Ba-</i>	<i>-con</i>	<i>in</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>bread</i>		<i>roll</i>		<i>Ba-</i>	<i>-con</i>	<i>in</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>bread</i>		<i>roll</i>	

Rhythm 2

	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
TONE					x	x	x						x	x	x	
BASS	x		x						x		x					
	<i>Pour</i>		<i>some</i>		<i>ketch</i>	<i>-up</i>	<i>on</i>		<i>Pour</i>		<i>some</i>		<i>ketch</i>	<i>-up</i>	<i>on</i>	

Rhythm 3 / Ending

	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
TONE									x	x	x	x	x		-	
BASS	x				x										-	
	<i>Then</i>				<i>You</i>				<i>Stick</i>	<i>it</i>	<i>in</i>	<i>yer</i>	<i>mouth</i>		<i>YUM!</i>	

## 7. HOW ARE YOU?

'How are you' is a syncopated rhythm (like the 'conga').  
Practise playing it against a steady beat.

Intro

**Call:** How are you? **Response:** OK! (perform 3 times)  
**Everyone:** A one, a two, a one two three four!

Main groove

	1	e	and	a	2	e	and	a	3	e	and	a	4	e	and	a
Tone	R			R				R								
Bass											L		L			
Clap									X						X	
VOICE	How			are				You?				O			K!	

Perform groove 3 times then rest for 4 beats.  
Aim for complete silence in the rest bar.  
Repeat as necessary.

Ending

	1	e	and	a	2	e	and	a	3	e	and	a	4	e	and	a
Tone	R			R												
VOICE								One				One				

1	e	and	a	2	e	and	a	3	e	and	a	4	e	and	a
R			R												
								Two				Two			

	1	e	and	a	2	e	and	a	3	e	and	a	4	e	and	a
Tone	R			R												
VOICE									Three			Three				

1	e	and	a	2	e	and	a	3	e	and	a	4	e	and	a
R			R												
								Four				Four			

	1	e	and	a	2	e	and	a	3	e	and	a	4	e	and	a	1
Tone	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	
Bass																	R
VOICE	One	e	and	a	Two	e	and	a	Three	e	and	a	Four	e	and	a	STOP!

To teach this, introduce the call and response as two puppets talking to one another - one high pitch and the other low.  
Build the rhythms up gradually. Start with the drum beats, then add in the first clap, then the second.  
Take time to go over the last part of the ending slowly so that everyone is in time, and gradually speed up.

## 8. KELELE!

Teacher call	Pupil response	Tune
Kelele, kelele, owa owa kelele	Kelele, kelele, owa owa kelele	<i>EGG EGG EG ED CDD</i>
Kelele, kelele, owa owa kelele	Kelele, kelele, owa owa kelele	
Owa owa kelele	Owa owa kelele	<i>EG ED CDD</i>
Owa owa kelele	Owa owa kelele	
Choy----- boy	Oi	<i>Ascending glissando - Shout Oi!</i>
Choy----- boy	Oi	
Choy boy choy boy	Oi Oi	
Choy boy choy boy	Oi Oi	

	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Tone						L L		
Bass	R		R		R		R	
VOICE	<i>Ke lele</i>	<i>ke lele</i>	<i>O</i>	<i>wa O wa ke lele</i>				

## 9. JABBA JABBA DJEMBE

	1	2	3	4
Tone	R L R L			
Bass		R L	R L	R L
VOICE	<i>Jabba jabba</i>	<i>Djembe</i>	<i>Djembe</i>	<i>Djembe</i>

Split into two groups. Group 2 starts when first group has reached beat 3. Extension: split into 3 then 4 groups, with each group entering on a different beat of the bar. It helps if the leader points to each group to show when their rhythm pattern starts.

## 10. COW CHICKEN COW

## Djembe 1

	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Tone				R L				R L				R L				
Bass	R				R				R	L R	L		R			
	<i>Cow</i>			<i>Chicken</i>	<i>Cow</i>			<i>Chicken</i>	<i>Cow</i>	<i>Cow</i> <i>Cow</i>	<i>Cow</i>	<i>Chicken</i>	<i>Cow</i>			

## Djembe 2

	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Tone	R	R			R L	R L			R	R			R L	R L		
Bass			R				R				R				R	
	<i>Half</i>	<i>past</i>	<i>three</i>		<i>Have a</i>	<i>cup of</i>	<i>tea!</i>		<i>Half</i>	<i>past</i>	<i>three</i>		<i>Have a</i>	<i>cup of</i>	<i>tea!</i>	

## Djembe 3

[illegible]

## 11a. KUKU - main riffs

### Djembe 1

	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Tone				L			L			L		L			L	
Bass	R				R				R				R			
	<i>oom</i>			<i>pah</i>	<i>loom</i>		<i>pah</i>		<i>oom</i>	<i>pah</i>		<i>pah</i>	<i>loom</i>		<i>pah</i>	

### Djembe 2

	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Tone			R	L			R				R	L			R	
Bass	R	L			R				R	L			R			
	<i>doub</i>	<i>le</i>	<i>doub</i>	<i>le</i>	<i>one</i>		<i>one</i>		<i>doub</i>	<i>le</i>	<i>doub</i>	<i>le</i>	<i>one</i>		<i>one</i>	

### Djembe 3

	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Tone	R	L		L	R	L	R		R	L		L	R	L	R	
Bass																
	<i>I</i>	<i>want</i>		<i>some</i>	<i>choco</i>	<i>late</i>	<i>cake</i>		<i>I</i>	<i>want</i>		<i>some</i>	<i>choco</i>	<i>late</i>	<i>cake</i>	



## 11b. KUKU - Call and response intro and interlude

**Leader: TONE    Class: BASS**

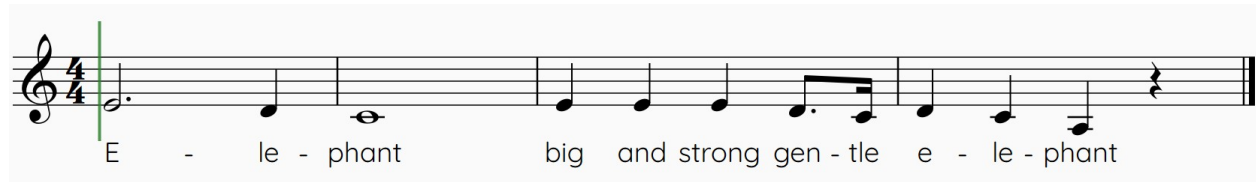
	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
Tone (call)	R			L	R			RL	R	L	R	L	R				R				L	R			RL	R						L
Bass (response)															R												R		R			
VOICE																																Who

	1			2			3			4			1			2			3			4		
Tone	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L														
Bass													R			L			R			L		
VOICE	<i>lives</i>	<i>in</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>pine</i>	<i>app</i>	<i>le</i>	<i>un</i>	<i>der</i>	<i>the</i>	<i>Sea?</i>			<i>Sponge</i>			<i>Bob</i>			<i>Square</i>			<i>Pant s</i>		

## 12. ELEPHANT (swung quavers)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Tone	R			R L	R	CLAP		
Bass		R	R				R	
	<i>E</i>			<i>le</i>	<i>phant</i>			

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Tone	R			R L	R	CLAP		
Bass		R	R				R	
	<i>Big</i>	<i>and</i>	<i>strong</i>	<i>gentle</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>le</i>	<i>phant</i>	



Try building this rhythm up bit by bit until they've learnt the whole thing. Internalise the silent beats.

eg. T 2 3 4 5 6 7 8... (repeat as needed)

T B 3 4 5 6 7 8...

T B B 4 5 6 7 8...

T B B TT T 6 7 8...

To keep the children on their toes, hold up 1, 2 or 3 fingers to indicate how many notes they should play.

Once the rhythm is confident, sing the song and ask children to join in with you. Split class into two groups if necessary - one to sing and the other to play. Get gradually quieter then drop out voices all together.

To end, have 8 beats of silence (or several lots of 8 beats) followed by a loud BASS to surprise the audience!

### 13. SENWA DEDENDE

	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2
Tone		L	R		R	L		L								
Bass	R			L			R		R			R				
	<i>Sen</i>	<i>wa</i>		<i>de</i>	<i>den</i>		<i>de</i>		<i>sen</i>			<i>wa</i>				

	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2
Tone		L	R		R	L		L								
Bass	R			L			R		R			R				
	<i>Sen</i>	<i>wa</i>		<i>de</i>	<i>den</i>		<i>de</i>		<i>sen</i>			<i>wa</i>				

	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2
Tone		L	R		R	L		L		L	R		R	L		L
Bass	R			L			R		R			L			R	
	<i>Sen</i>	<i>wa</i>		<i>de</i>	<i>den</i>		<i>de</i>		<i>Sen</i>	<i>wa</i>		<i>de</i>	<i>den</i>		<i>de</i>	

	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2
Tone		L	R		R	L		L								
Bass	R			L			R		R			R				
	<i>Sen</i>	<i>wa</i>		<i>de</i>	<i>den</i>		<i>de</i>		<i>sen</i>			<i>wa</i>				

Sen - wa de - den - de, sen - wa. Sen - wa de - den - de, sen - wa.

Sen - wa de - den - de, sen - wa de - den - de, sen - wa de - den - de, sen - wa.

This uses the 123 123 12 pattern and the challenge is to simply alternate Left and Right hands as you play it, so that the Bass is always on beat 1. It helps to picture the 3 points of a triangle as you play.

## USEFUL VIDEO LINKS

[Drumming](#) in Africa - video of djembes being played energetically in Ghana

[How drums are made](#)

[Intro to the djembe](#) - 5 min video explaining more about the djembe - history, geography with maps, parts of the instrument etc and a short intro to Bass, Tone and Slap

[Drumming technique](#) - video explaining Bass, Tone and Slap in detail

[Sweet easy beats](#) - putting rhythms to words. Eg. 'I love apple pie'. Extension: start the rhythm half-way through the phrase eg. 'Apple pie I love' and layer up in 2 groups.

[Kalani drum circle videos](#) - really fun drumming warm ups

- [Dynamics and slowdown](#) - how to use body signals to indicate dynamics and tempo.
- [I can play my drum](#) - leader says 'I can play my drum' and all play once on word DRUM. Try missing out some of the words. Extend to 'I can play my drum because it's so - much - FUN'
- [Drum call](#) - play whatever number of taps leader calls out. Reverse it: play 2 taps when 1 is called and 1 tap when 2 is called. Leader plays instead of calling out the number. Try going round circle one at a time with each child calling a number for everyone else to copy.
- [Signal](#) - create rhythms using hand signals given by 4 leaders in the circle, each person representing a different beat of the bar. One hand up = crotchet; two hands up = quavers; no hand = rest
- [Rumble Ball](#) - use instruments to represent different motions of a bouncing / rolling ball. Eg bass as it hits floor; tone as it's caught; stroke the skin as it rolls
- [Orbit](#) - Leader sends a rhythm around the circle one person at a time. Extend by sending 2 or 3 other rhythms. Keep a steady pulse!
- [Echos](#) - Split into two groups. Leader taps rhythm for the group 1 to copy, then group 2 copies group 1 (like a canon). Extension: the leader plays the next rhythm immediately after the first, with no gaps. Requires extreme concentration!

# Rhythm Clock

