

COUNTING & BEATING

BEAT IT!

The name of the game is to play the right note at the right time.

THE MARLA SWIFT METHOD

(refer Marla Swift, Penguin Australia, 2008)

- Counting is **OUT**, Beating is **IN**.
- For most of the time you **DO NOT** need to **COUNT** (some Dotted Notes are the exceptions).
- For all of the time you **DO** need to **BEAT** or at least **FEEL** the **BEAT**.
- We all have a built-in conductor or, if you like, a built-in metronome; it's called the **FOOT**.
- The foot keeps the **BEAT**, the foot goes **DOWN, UP, DOWN, UP** (just like the conductor's baton).
- Get into the habit of making the foot go **DOWN** (↓) on **EVERY BEAT** of the **BAR** (of course, the foot also goes **UP** (↑) on **EVERY HALF-BEAT**, but that comes automatically).
- To determine the number of **BEATS** to the **BAR** look at the **TIME SIGNATURE**:

Diagram illustrating the Marla Swift Method for counting and beating. It shows two musical examples:

- 4/4 Time Signature:** A bar with four quarter notes. Below the notes are blue arrows indicating the footwork: ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑.
- 2/4 Time Signature:** A bar with a half note followed by a quarter note. Below the notes are blue arrows indicating the footwork: ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑.

and then you'll know all about the footwork.

- In complicated bars it is a good idea to **MARK** the Beats with a **DOWN-ARROW** (↓).
- **DOTTED NOTES** lasting **MORE THAN 2 BEATS** always need to be both **COUNTED** and **BEATEN**:

Diagram illustrating the Marla Swift Method for counting and beating in more complex situations:

- 4/4 Time Signature:** A bar with a dotted half note followed by a quarter note. Below the notes are blue arrows indicating the footwork: 1 2 3 ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, 1 2 3 ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓.
- 6/8 Time Signature:** A bar with a dotted quarter note followed by an eighth note, then a quarter note, then a dotted quarter note followed by an eighth note. Below the notes are blue arrows indicating the footwork: 1 2 3 ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, 1 2 3 ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓.