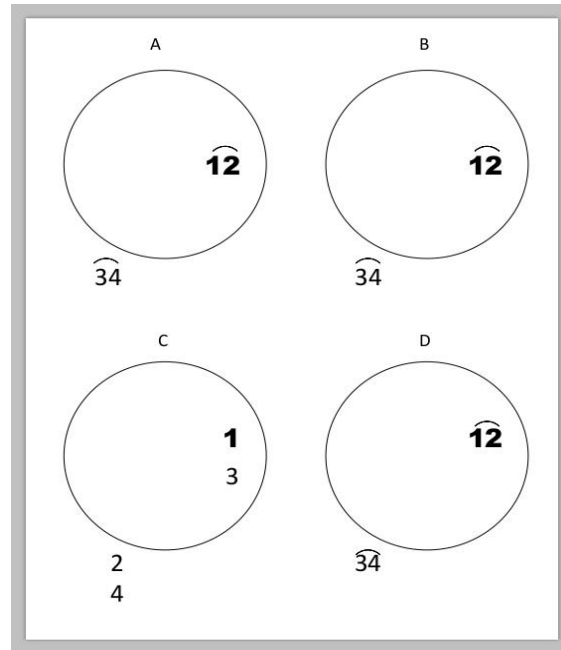


Gerald Pöch

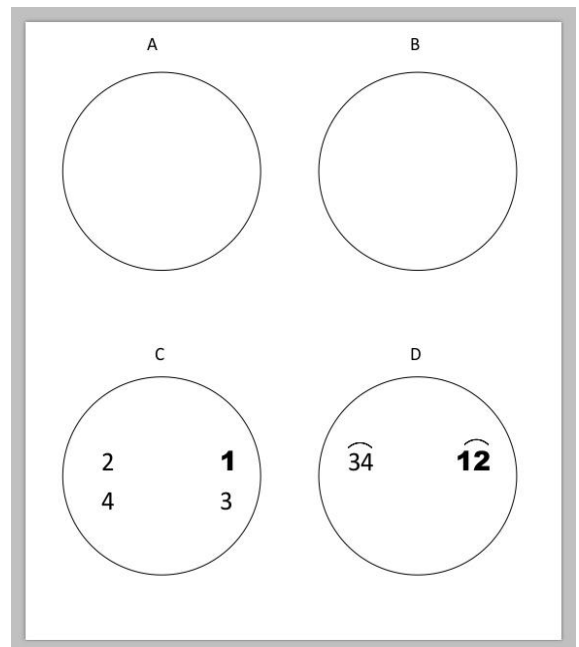
# Simple and Melodic Pieces for Conga and Djembe

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## 1. Learning quickly



## 2. Composing your own Rhythm piece



Clear presentation

For beginners and hobby musicians

*For my beloved*  
*And our Percussion Group*

## Introduction

Quite recently we have put a book onto our website ([www.trommeln-ohne-noten.at](http://www.trommeln-ohne-noten.at)) showing a vivid image of rhythms, providing many examples. In a first part of this booklet, I want to show simple and melodic pieces in 4/4 measure. In a second part it is demonstrated that almost everyone can easily compose such rhythms.

All pieces presented here are from the author and consist of four measures indicated by A – D with numbers for the sequence of beats according to the method referred to above. Examples given already exhibit their melodic character when slowly played.

Those who want to play with others can try to play them in canon or with rhythms like Bomba, Caballo, Salidor, Tango Nuevo or Calypso and Tumbao. Also, one can experiment with the first part (measure A and B) of the pieces of this booklet, preferably with those of another group. By this means you are more likely to get a polyrhythmic character.

Patterns for your own compositions consist of beats for the last two measures which have to be completed by beats for the first two, only. Take first measures from the examples of the first part or develop your own patterns for measures A and B. You will most likely be surprised about the effect of the rhythms generated in this way.

# Part 1

## Presentation of beating sequence

Basically, circles not only stand for measures but also indicate the area of a drumhead. Strokes are given by consecutive numbers 1 – 4 (here) for each measure and are shown inside the circle for Bass-strokes and outside for Open-strokes. Right hand strokes are indicated by numbers in the right part, left hand strokes in the left part of this image. This will be illustrated and explained further below and in the examples. All of them run over four measures and are repeated over and over again as long as you want.

A single number indicates a short stroke, two numbers attached a long one.

For instance,

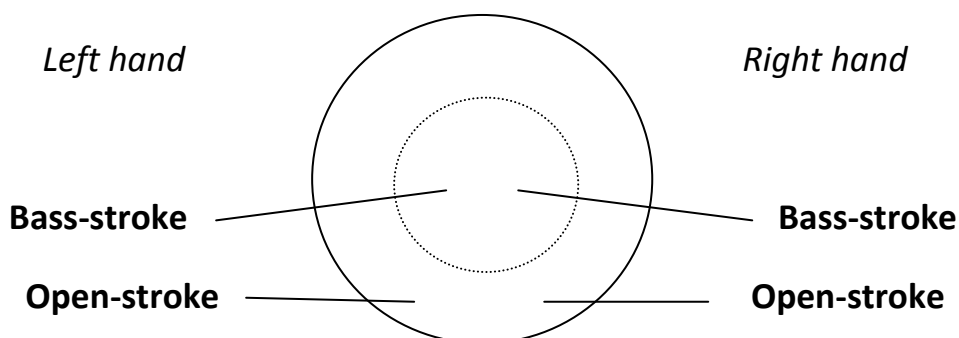
four short strokes 1 – 2 – 3 – 4

two long strokes  $\widehat{12} - \widehat{34}$  counted: one two – three four

The examples are grouped together according to short and long strokes, respectively, in the first measure.

Basic strokes are Bass, Open, and Slap. The latter is not used here.

The **Bass**-stroke is played with the flat hand near the center of the drumhead and gives a rather deep thud, The **Open**-stroke is played with the fingers near the edge hardly touching the rim of the instrument. Its sound is rather clear.



## First measure with two long strokes

A: long – long     $\widehat{12}$      $\widehat{34}$

Pieces starting with two long strokes impose as rather slow and solemn rhythms. They are best suited for beginners.

In each case the accentuation is on the first stroke and the slow rhythm is mostly interrupted by short beats in the third measure (C), once in B. Accentuated strokes are indicated by bold face, especially accentuated by bold face type numbers underlined.

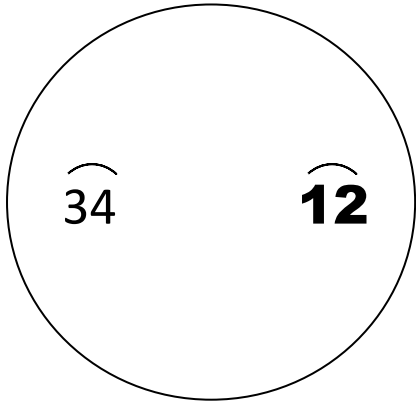
The plain character of the pieces will allow beginners to play them faster without difficulties.

Comment to “long” strokes:

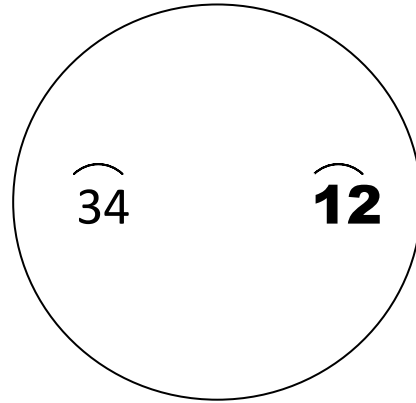
As in our e-book on [www.trommeln-ohne-noten.at](http://www.trommeln-ohne-noten.at) I here also prefer *two* closely attached numbers to characterize *one* stroke followed by a pause.

## *The Drummer Boy*

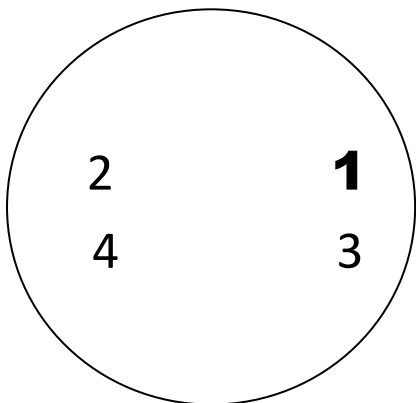
A



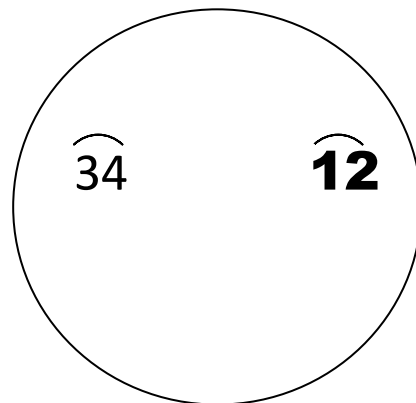
B



C



D

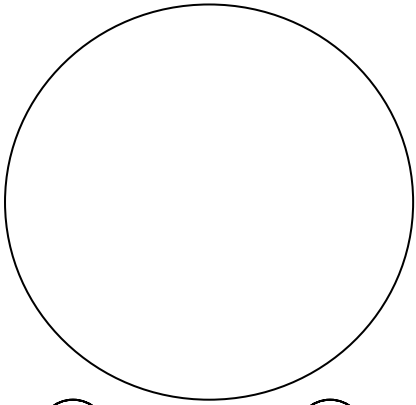


This piece starts like most rhythms with an accentuated first stroke played with the right hand.

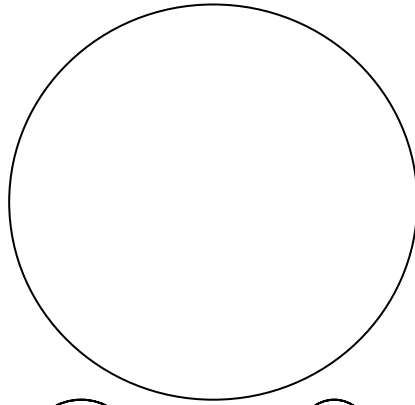
The drummer only beats the middle area of the drumhead producing the deep sound - and always hand by hand (right -left -right - left). The fast beats in C interpose with the slow rhythm of this piece.

## The Drummer Girl

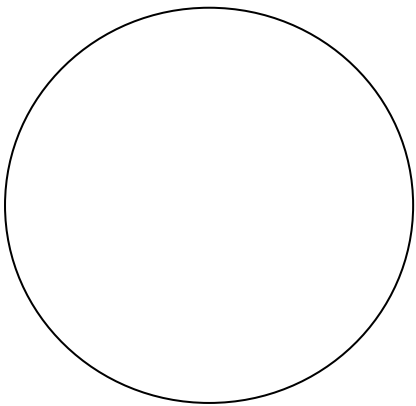
A


 $\widehat{34}$ 
 $\widehat{\mathbf{12}}$ 

B


 $\widehat{34}$ 
 $\widehat{\mathbf{12}}$ 

C



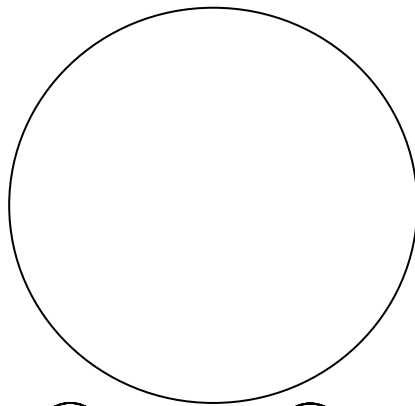
2

4

 $\mathbf{1}$ 

3

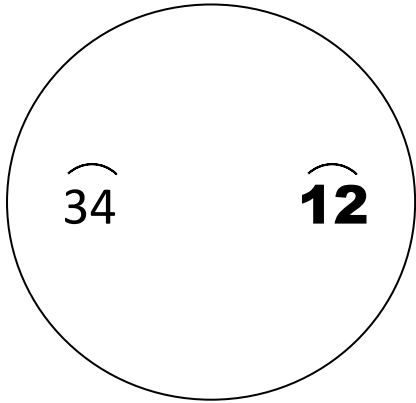
D


 $\widehat{34}$ 
 $\widehat{\mathbf{12}}$ 

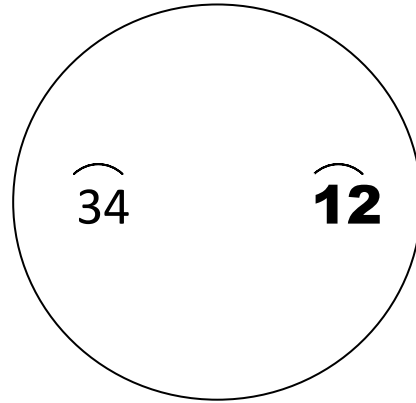
She plays the same rhythm as her brother but with Open-tones instead of Bass-strokes. Note how this changes the character of the rhythm.

*Cheerful*

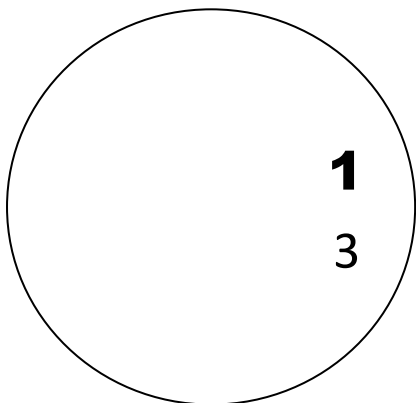
A



B



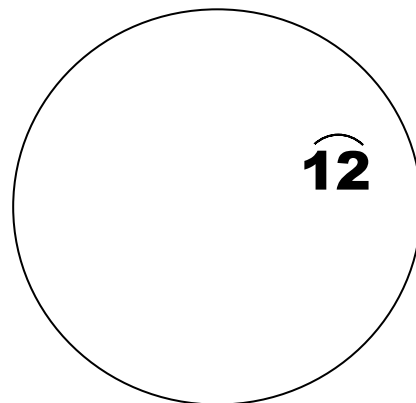
C



2

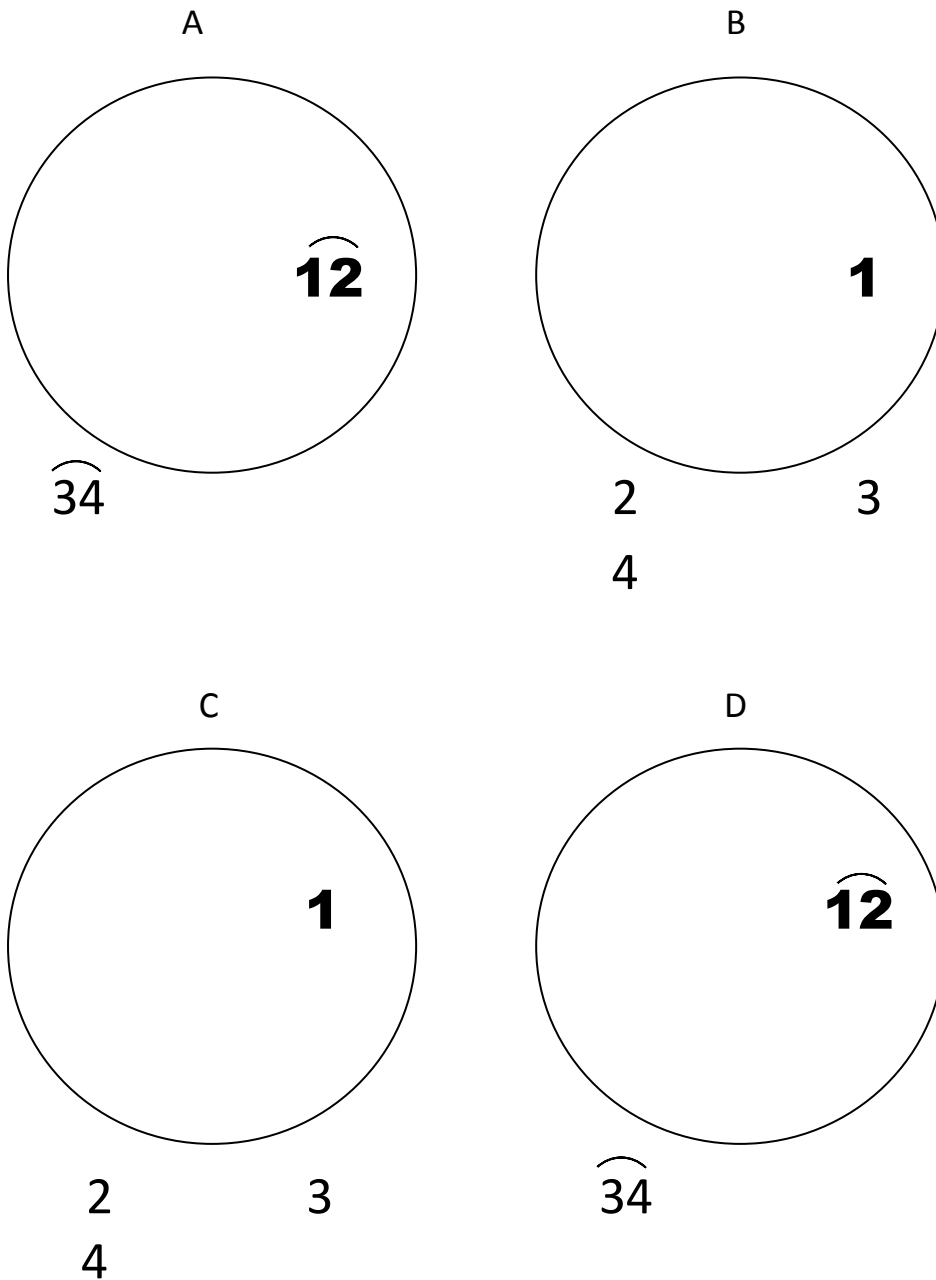
4

D



This piece is similar to the Drummer Boy but more vivid in the second part. Right-left playing in A - D, and Bass-Open in the second part (C-D).

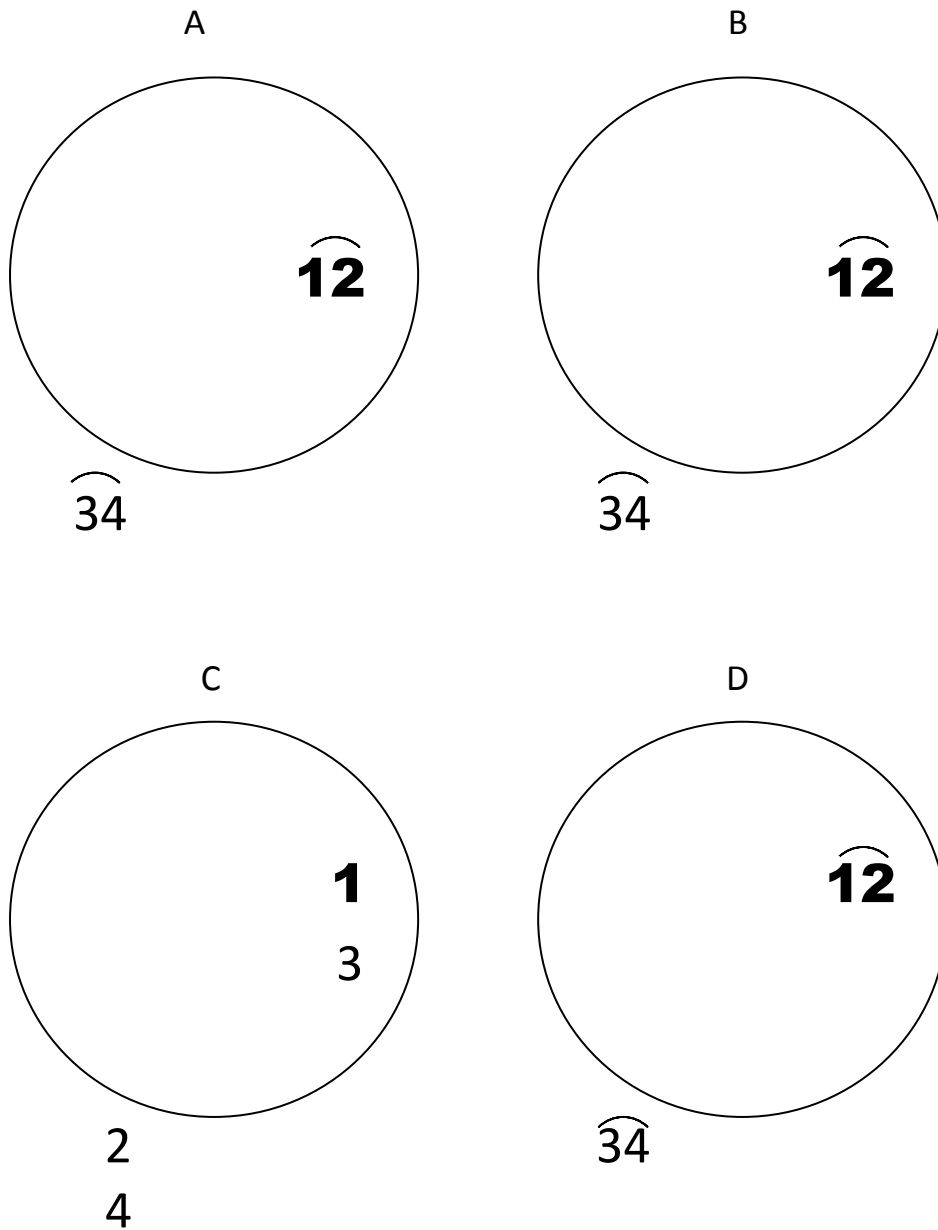


*Catch Me*

Contrary to the foregoing pieces all strokes are short in B and C. During the fast middle part children are running this way and that ...

Right – left playing throughout this rhythm.

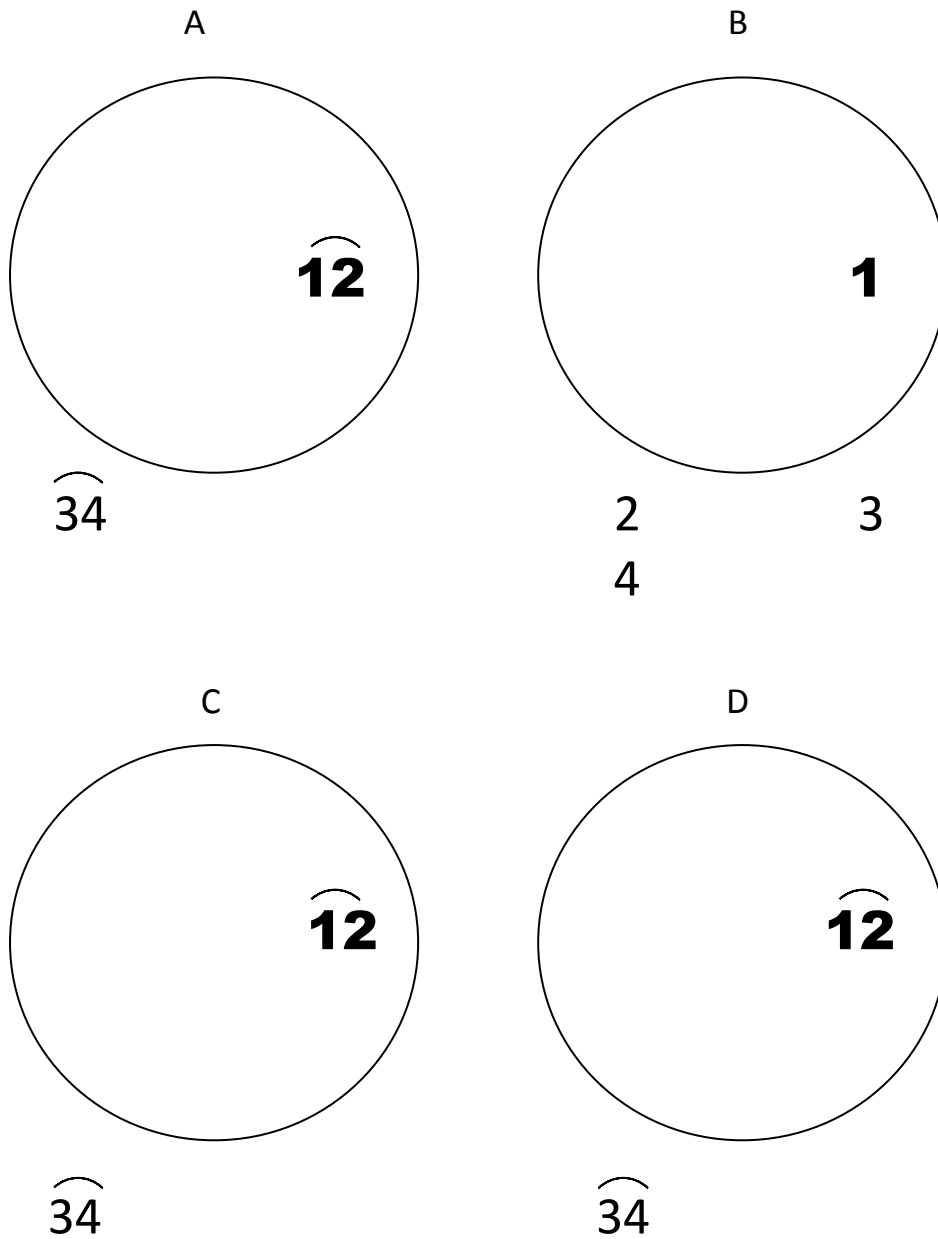
## *On Top of a Mountain*



This piece also resembles the “Drummer Boy”.

The slow rhythm is interposed by the fast part in C.

Right – left playing again. In addition Bass- and Open-strokes alternate.

*Relaxed*

Here, the slow rhythm is interrupted by four short strokes in B rather than in C.

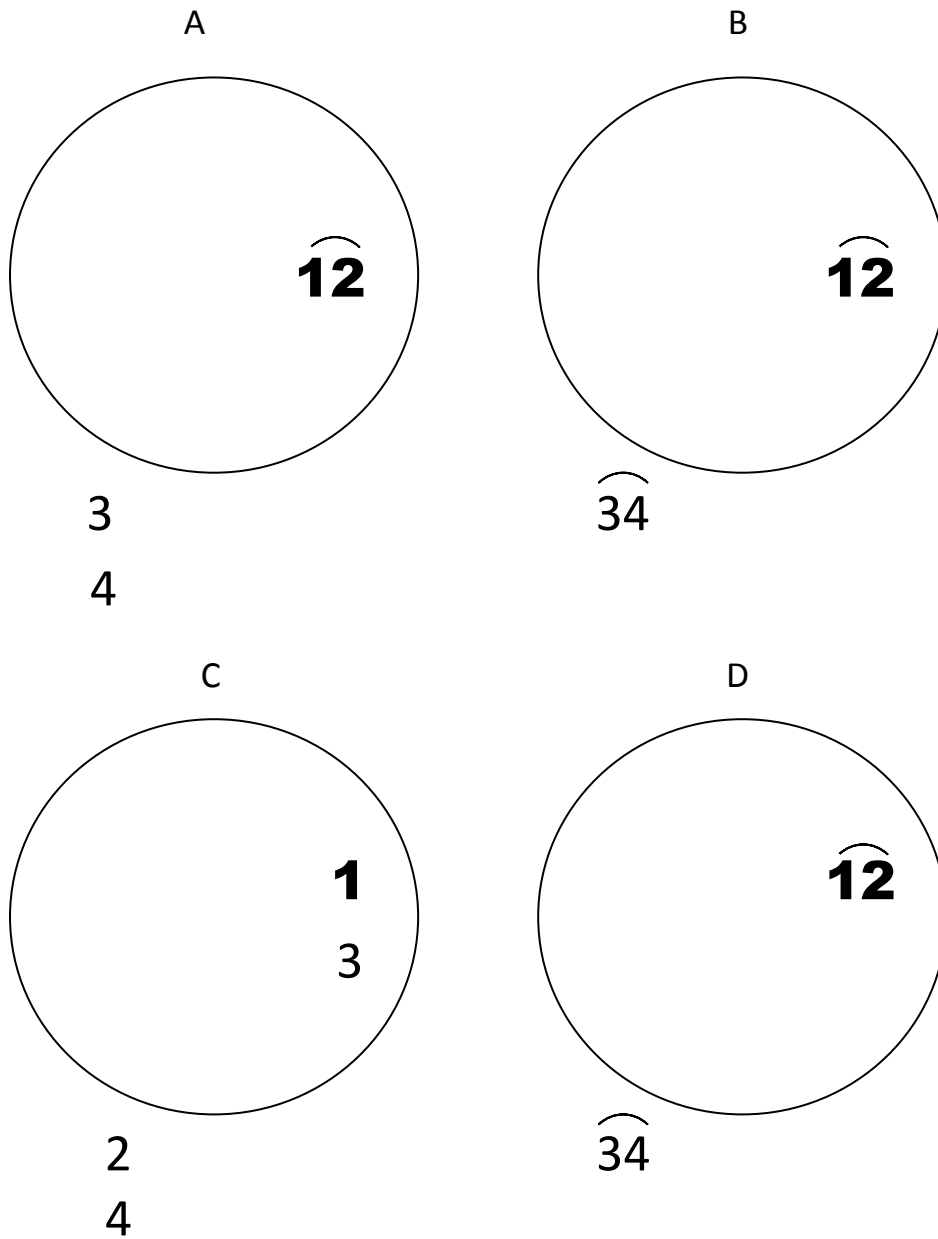
Hand to hand playing right – left throughout.

### First measure with a long one followed by two short strokes

A: Long – short – short  $\widehat{12}$  3 4

The following three pieces are examples of this type of rhythm with emphasis on the first stroke.

They are more vivid than those already shown and a bit more demanding.

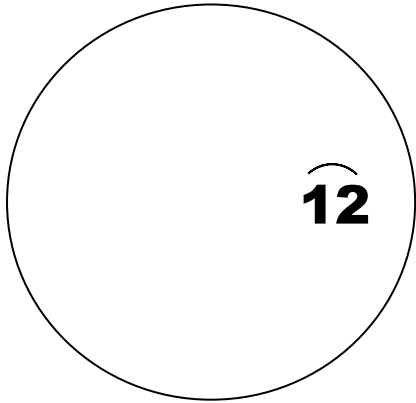
*Parade*

Note that both the third and fourth stroke in the first measure are played as Open-strokes with the left hand. The others are beaten right- left and Bass – Open, as well.

Imagine that the parade has reached the festival ground.

*The Dance*

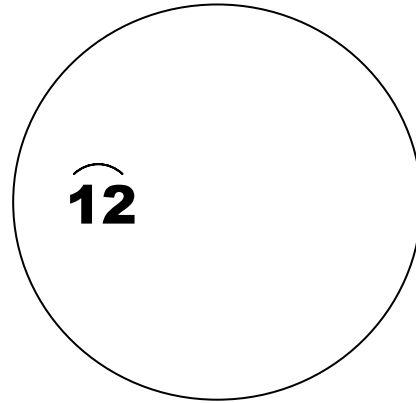
A



3

4

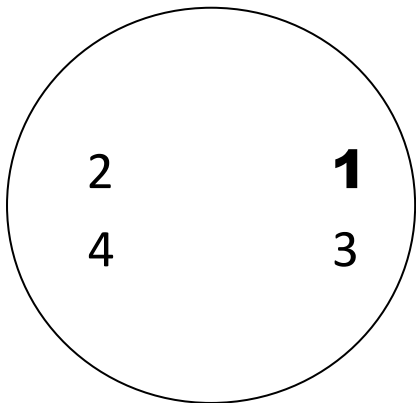
B



4

3

C



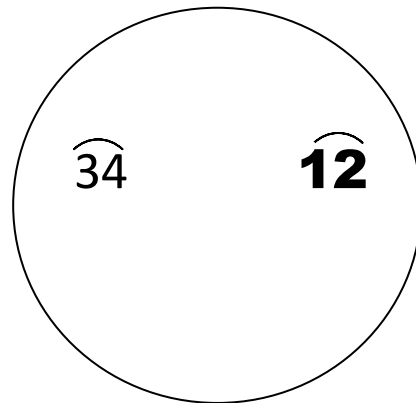
2

**1**

4

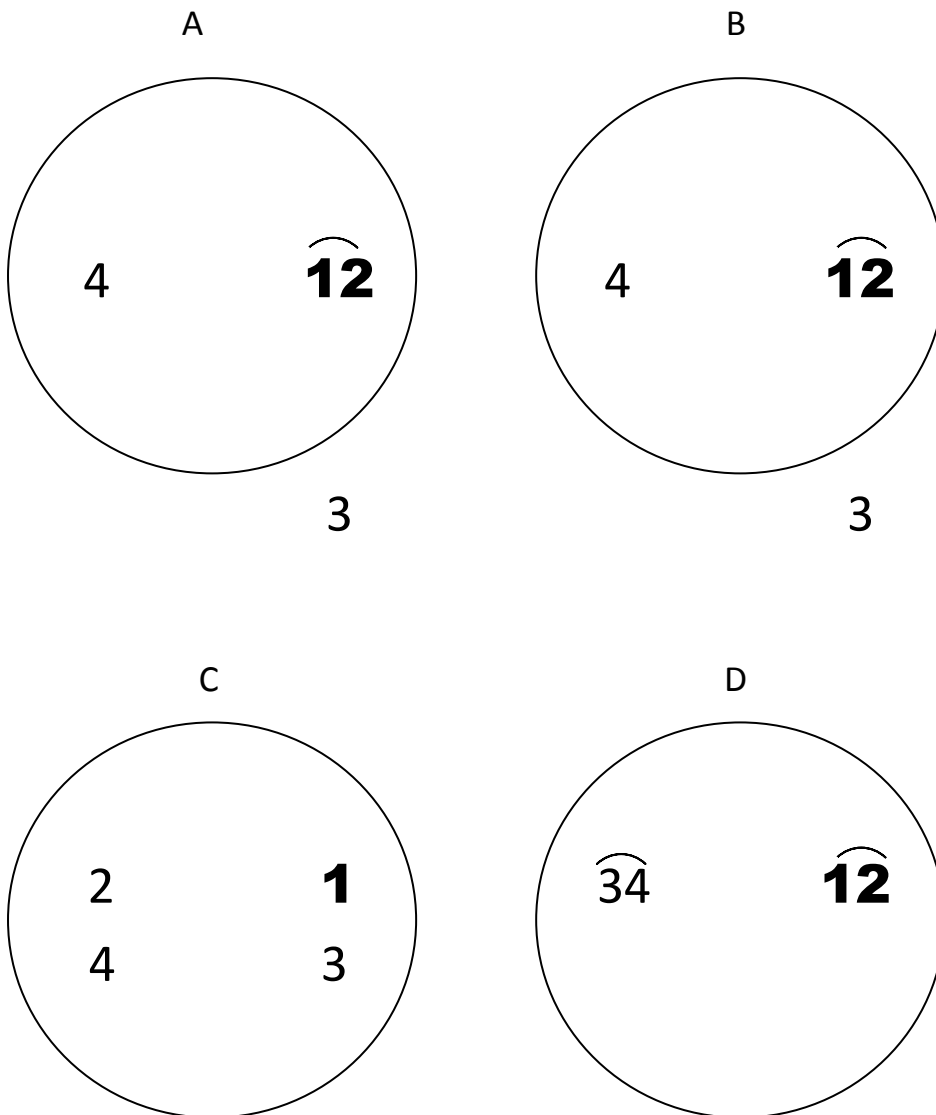
**3**

D

**34****12**

This rhythm is again played by right and left strokes and the first in each measure is accentuated. Therefore, the left hand stroke in B is accentuated.

Think of a dance to a racy melody.

*Looking at the Mirror*

In the first two measures the long and the following short stroke are both played by the right hand. The last two measures C and D are played alternately right – left.

Imagine a critical look into the mirror.

### First measure with two short and one long stroke

A: Short – short - long    1    2     $\widehat{34}$

This basic rhythm is close to an earwig. We find it in the well known Tumbao-rhythm. In the here presented examples the long stroke  $\widehat{34}$  is more or less accentuated besides the first one. This makes these rhythms with two short and one long stroke quite vivid.

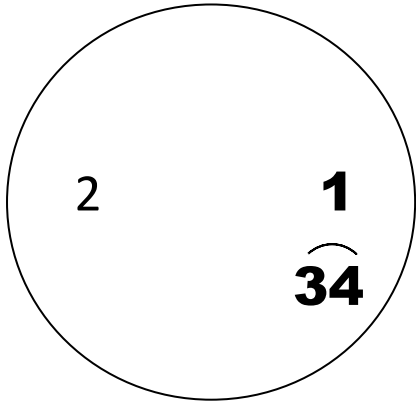
The Tumbao rhythm mentioned is usually played with a Slap of the long stroke which is considered by most percussionists as the third basic stroke besides Bass and Open. This stroke is not considered here since it is a more challenging stroke than Bass and Open.

Examples with a code number were selected by members of the family and are dedicated to them. The code number given is for their anonymity.

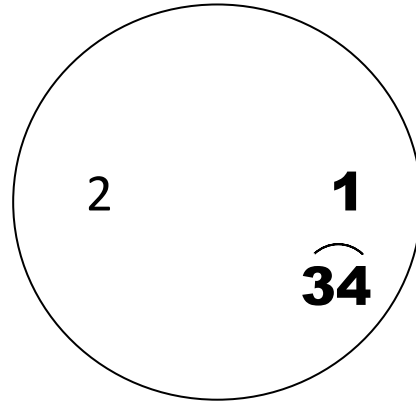


*Choice – Code 22*

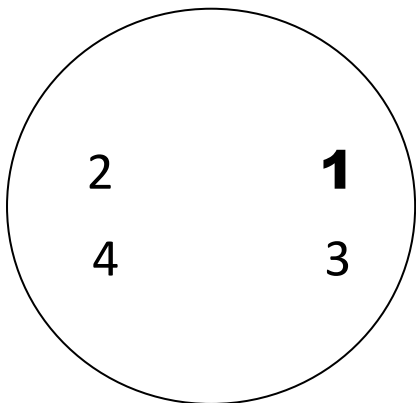
A



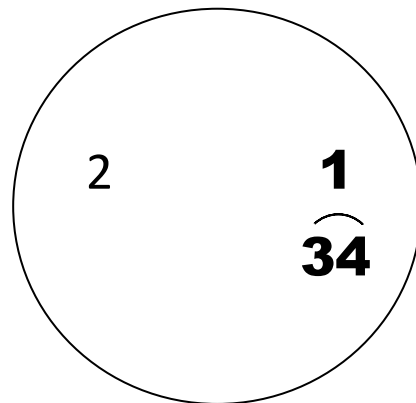
B



C

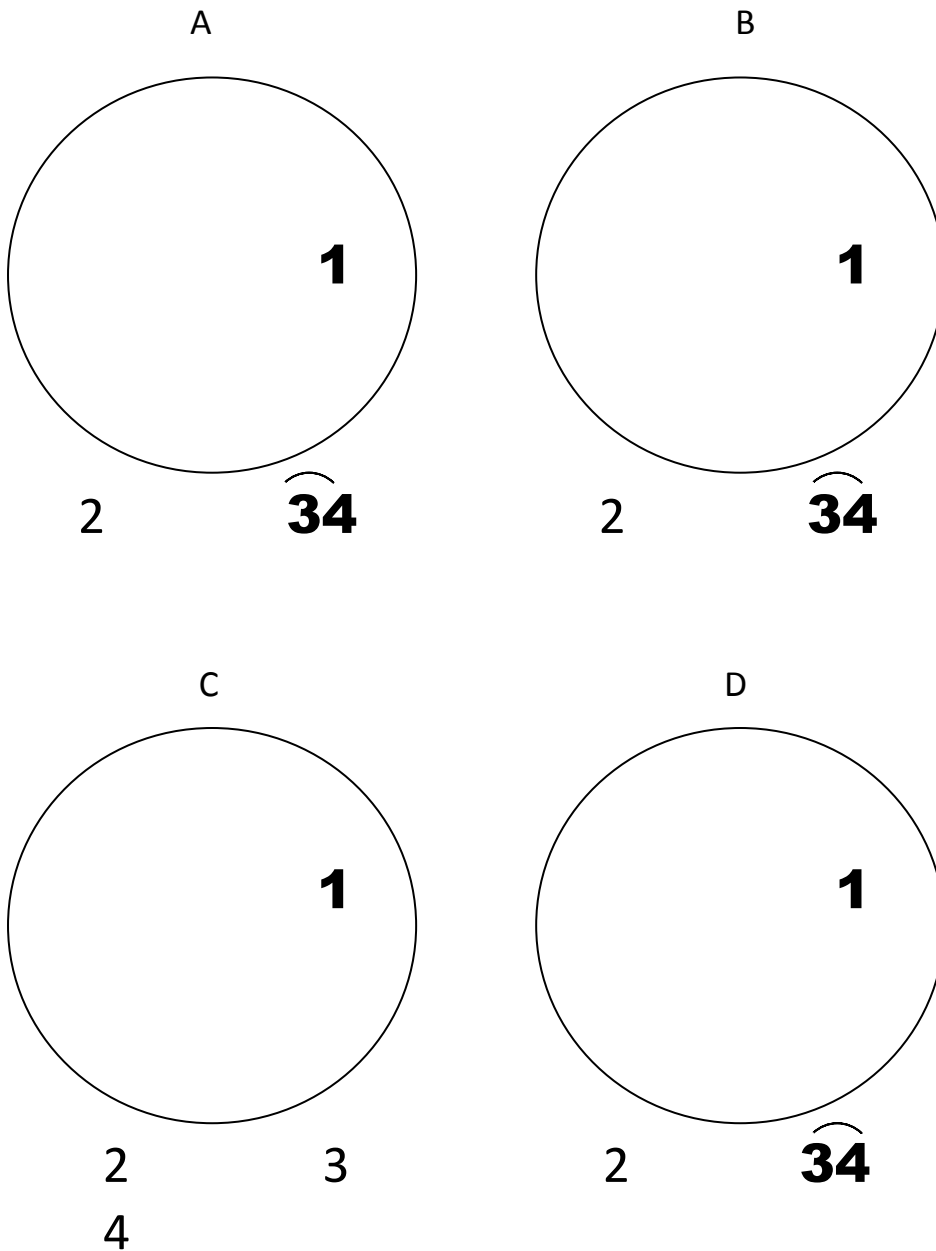


D



This rhythm is played with Bass strokes only. Together with the accentuated long strokes it is kind of decided in character.

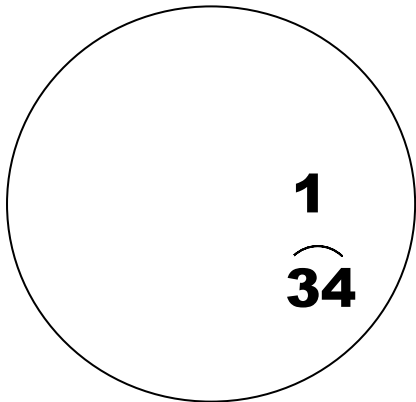
*Choice – Code 13*



Similar to the previous rhythm this example is more vivid because of the Open strokes in all four measures.

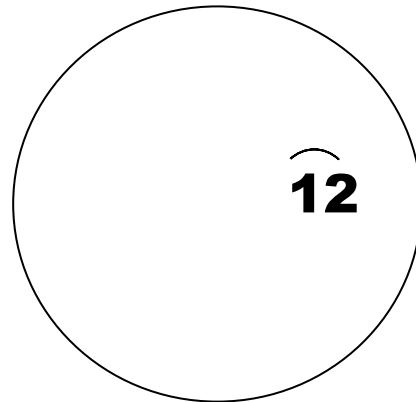
*Choice – Code 24*

A



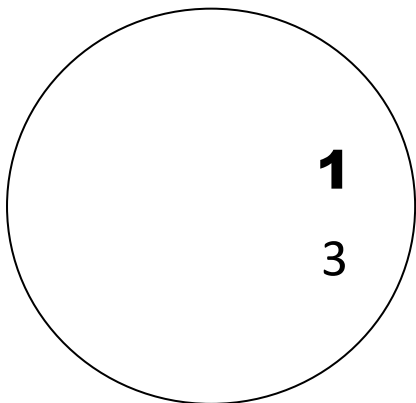
2

B



34

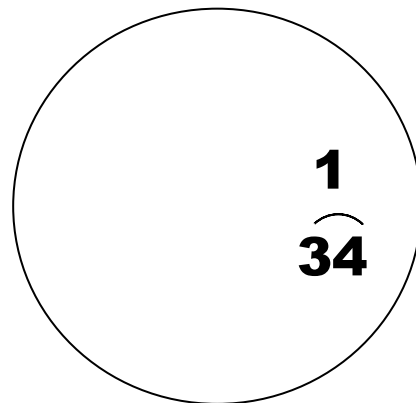
C



2

4

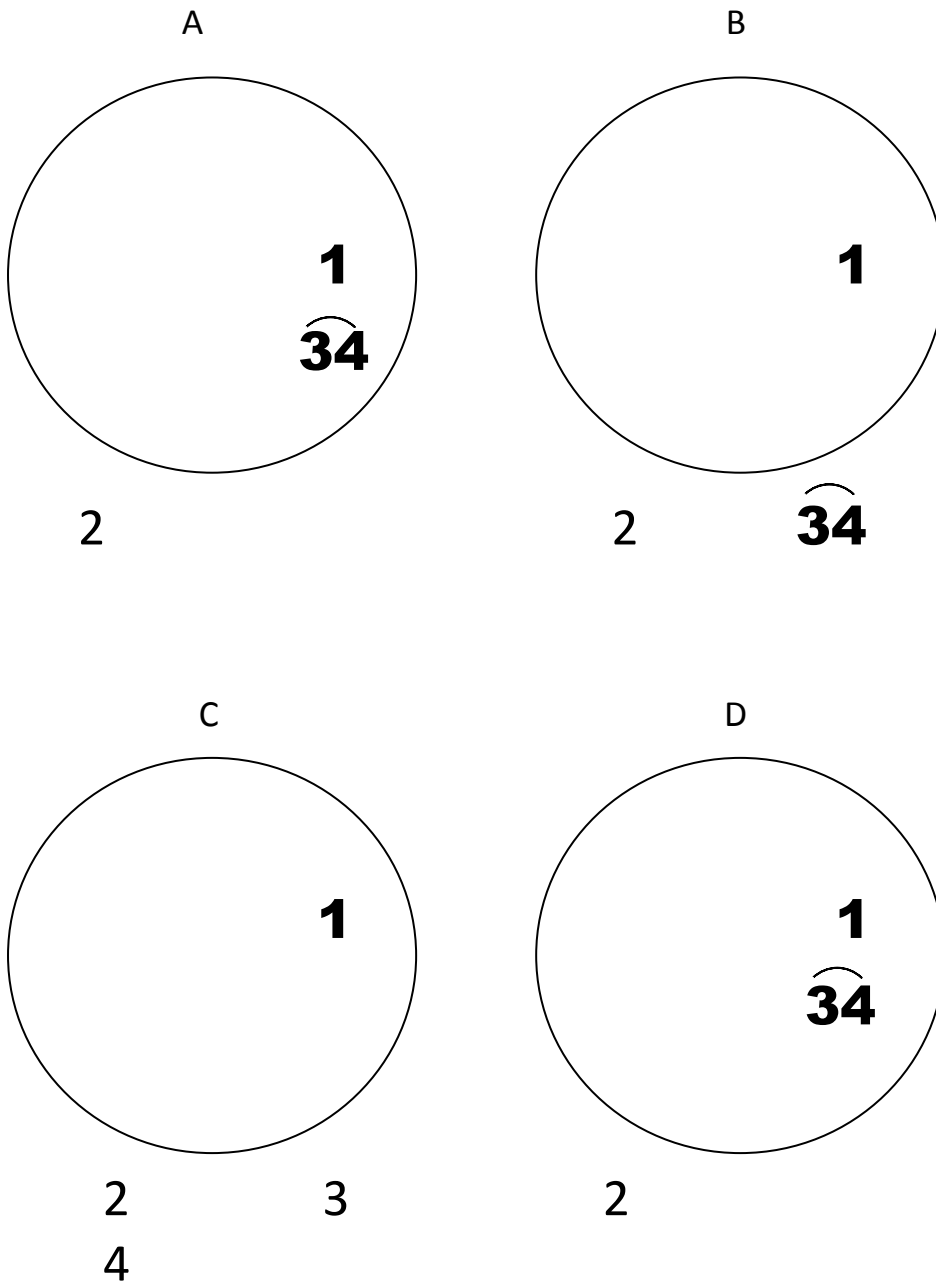
D



2

This rhythm is characterized by alternating Bass and Open strokes, hand by hand.

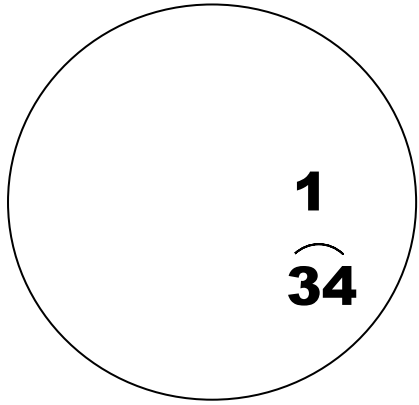
*Choice – Code 02*



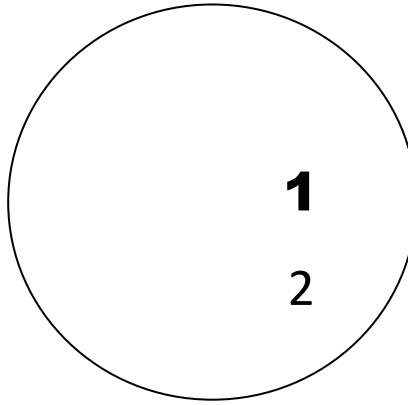
A “nice” and vivid rhythm example, played right – left, hand by hand.

*Pleasure*

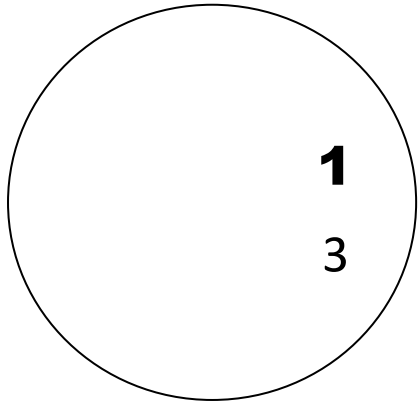
A



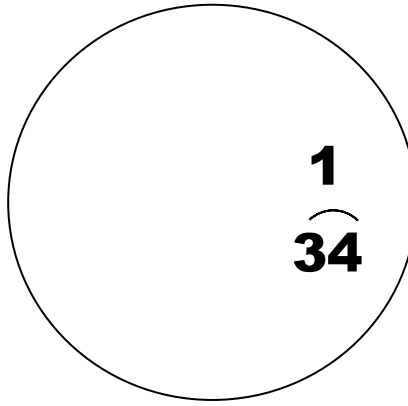
B



C

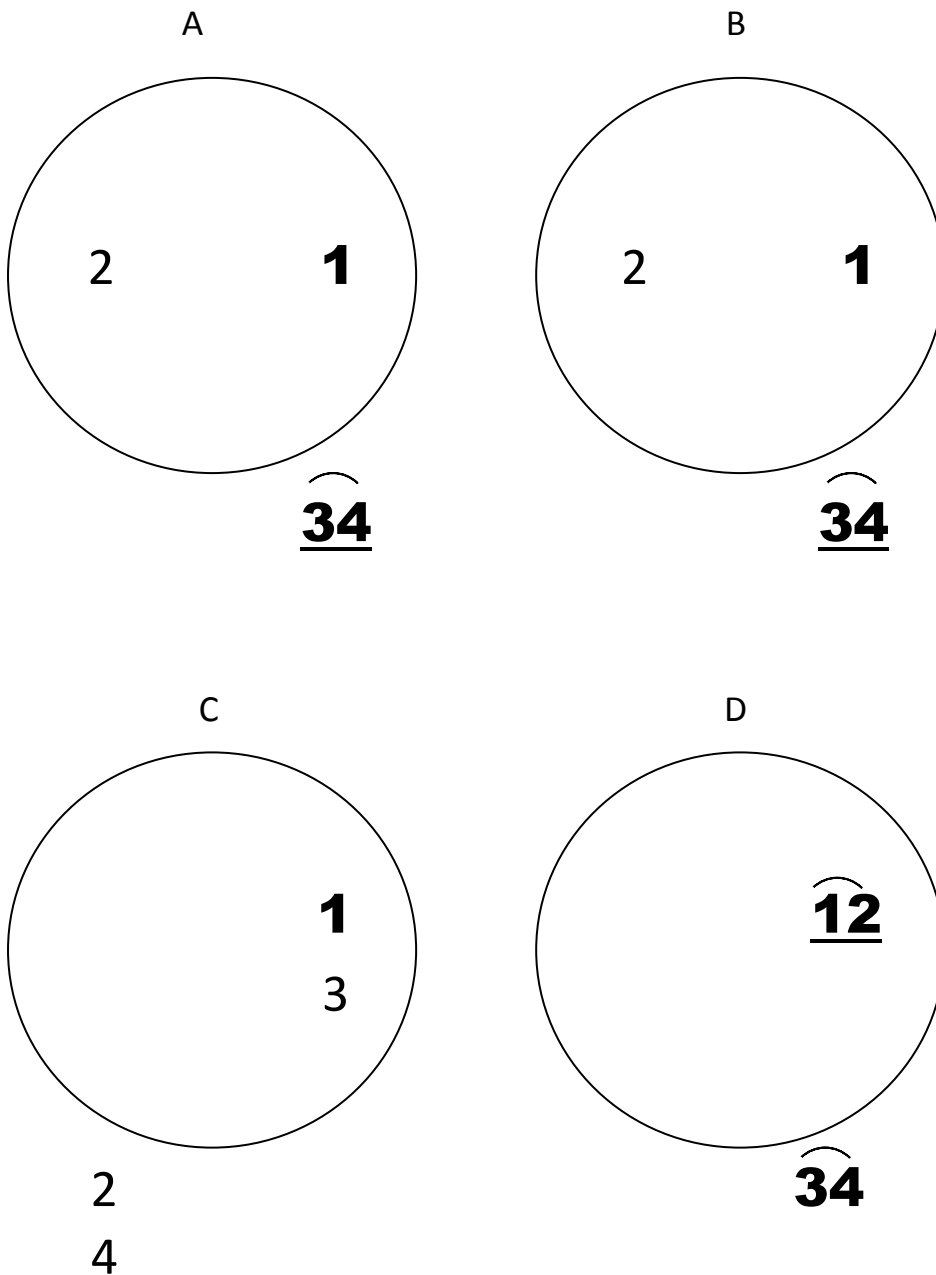


D



This rhythm differs from Choice- Code 24 only in the second measure. The first strokes in B are played with the right hand.

## Sack Race



The sack-racing play needs some skill. The extra emphasis put on the long strokes in the first measures goes for big jumps. The mark is reached in D (ending the race).

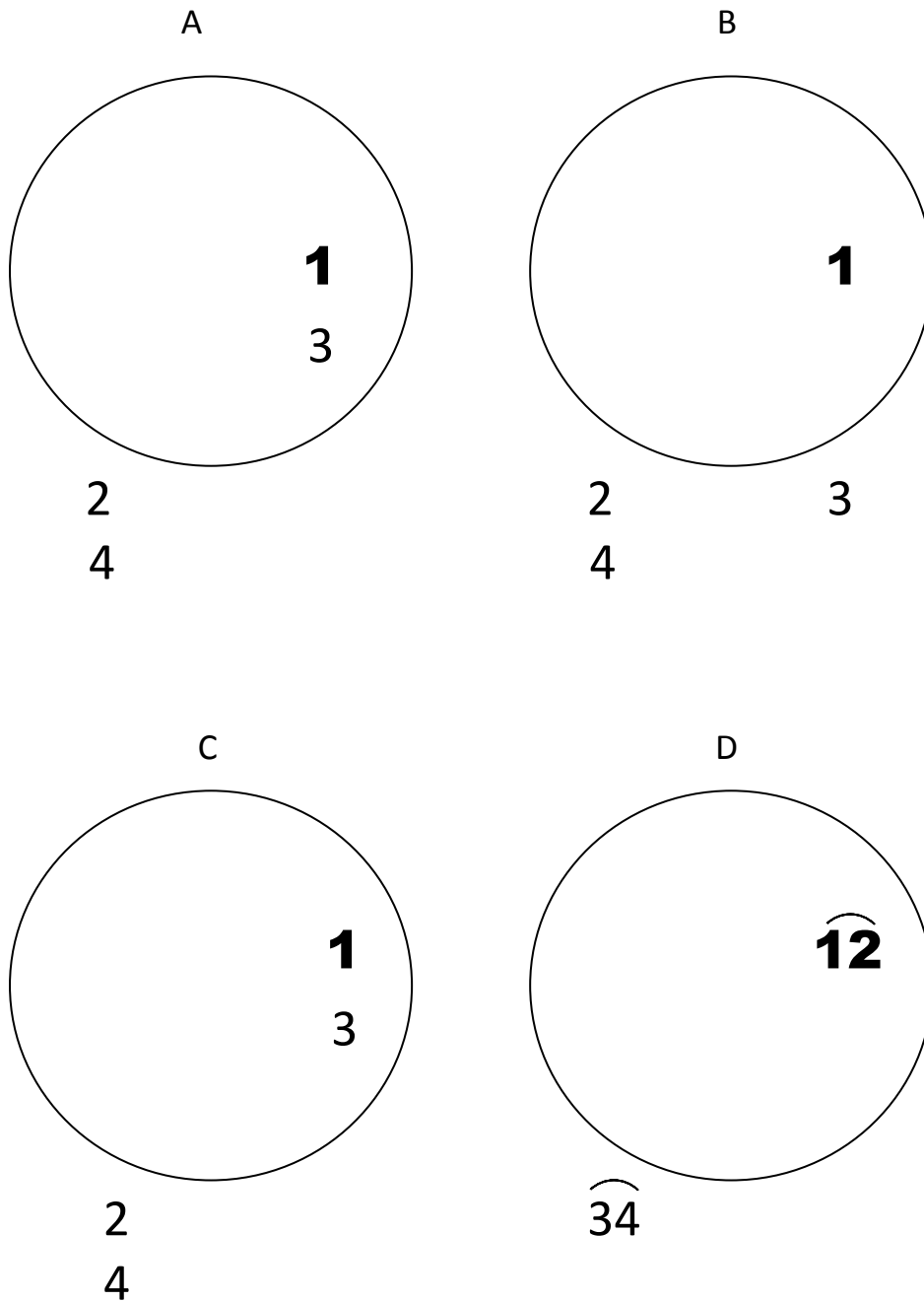
## First measure with four short strokes

A: Short – short – short - short    1   2   3   4

Rhythms starting with four short strokes are vivid and quite different due to variations in Bass and Open strokes, not to mention different accentuations.

The first three examples (again) show that small variations change the character of the pieces. The last two demonstrate that (additional) emphasis put on the second and fourth stroke change the character of the rhythms compared to those with accentuated first strokes.

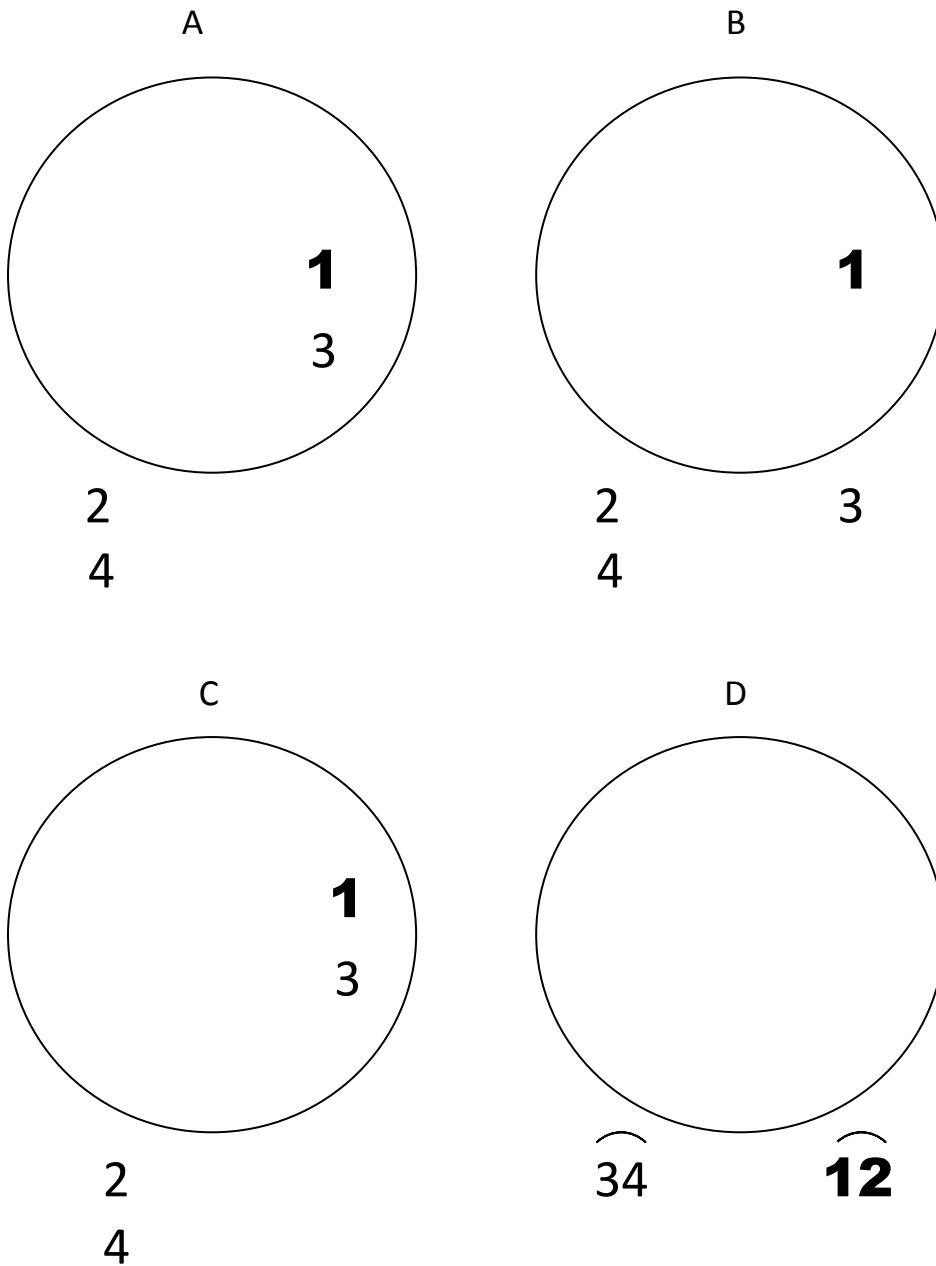
*In a Rocking Chair - 1*



A simple designed rhythm. Note that measures on the left, A and C are identical, those on the right side differ.

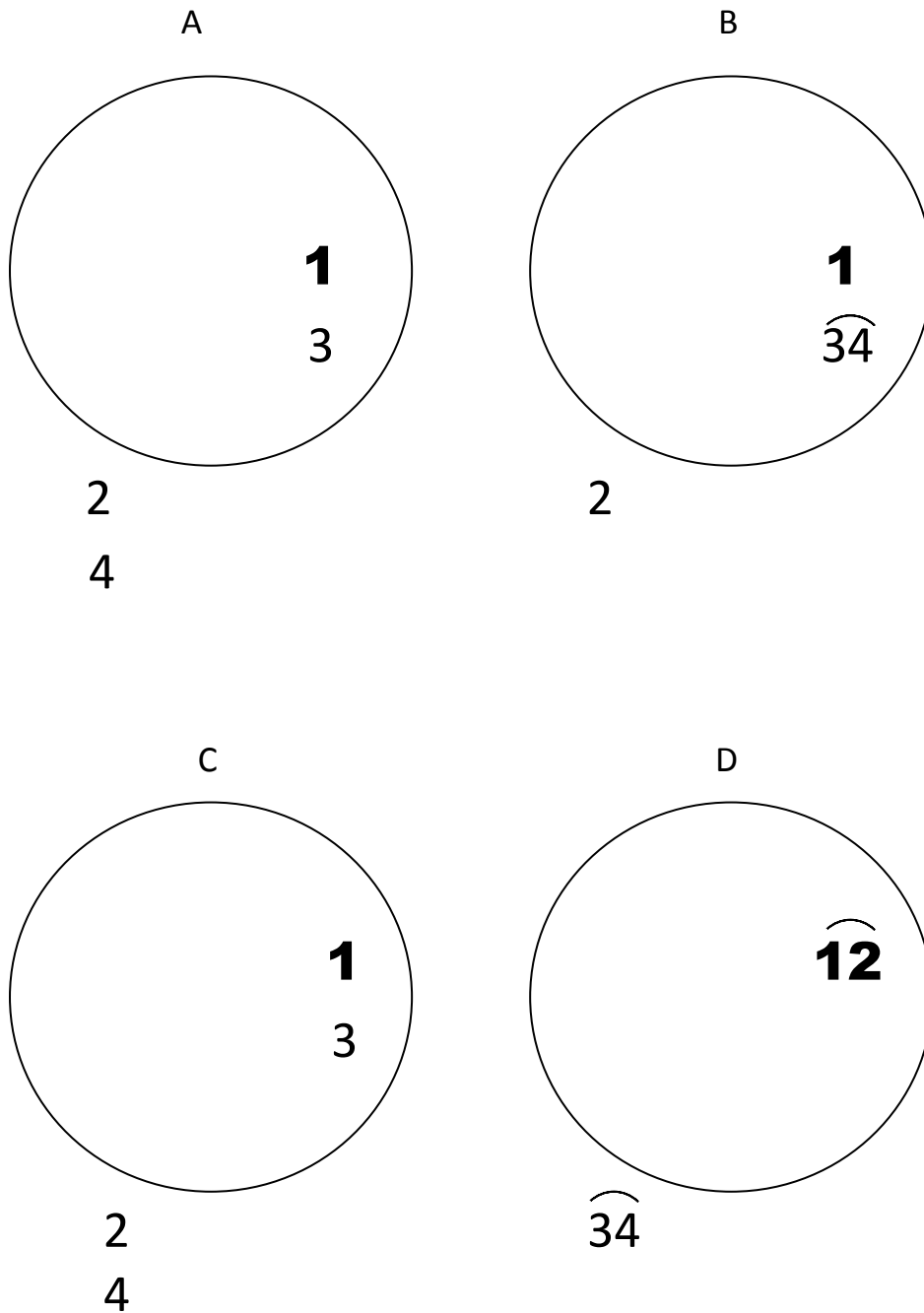
All strokes alternate between right and left and between Bass and Open in three of the four measures ( A, C, and D).



*In a Rocking Chair - 2*

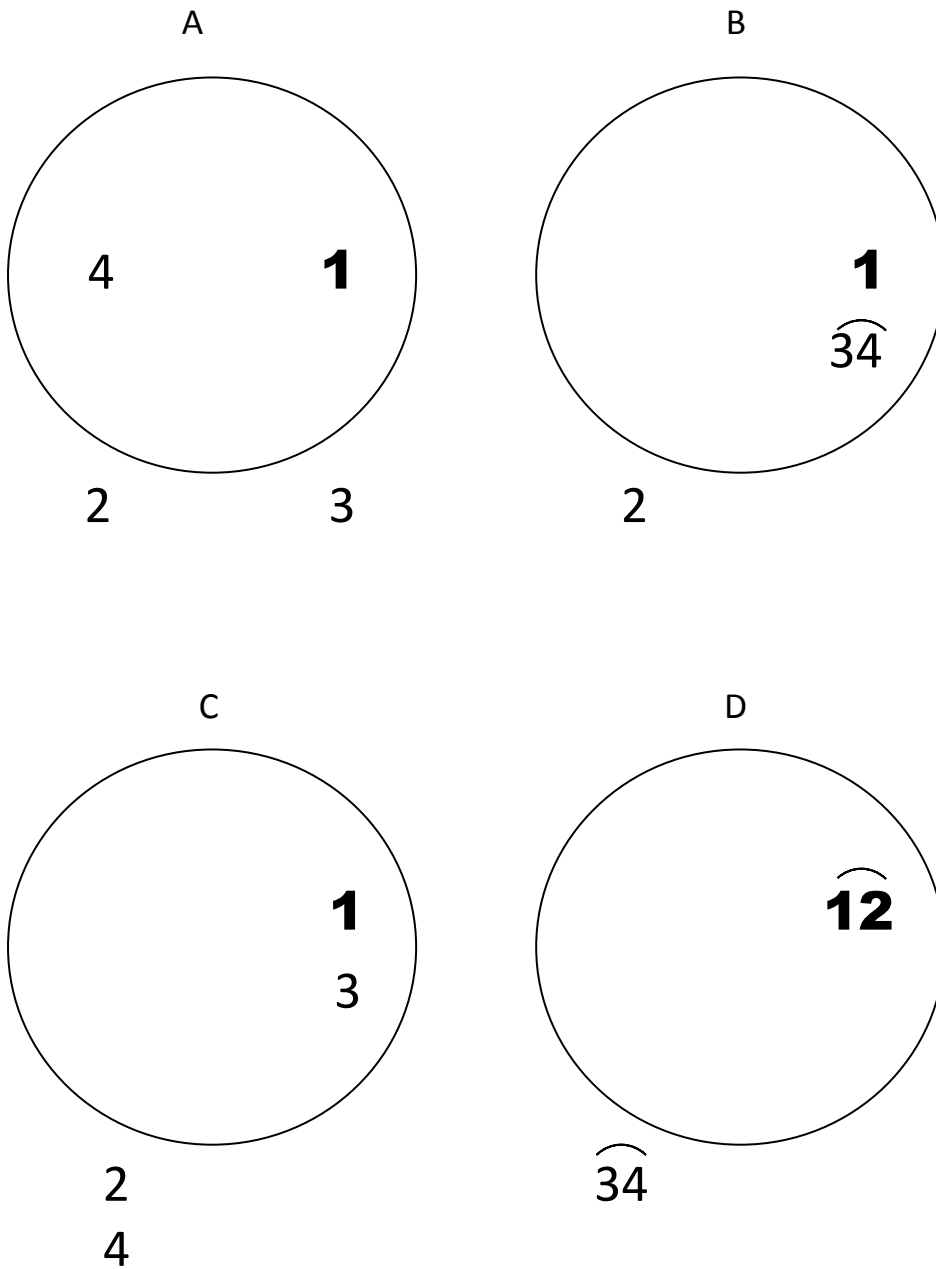
This version is almost identical to the former piece but with Open strokes In D. Note the slight change in its character.

*In a Rocking Chair - 3*

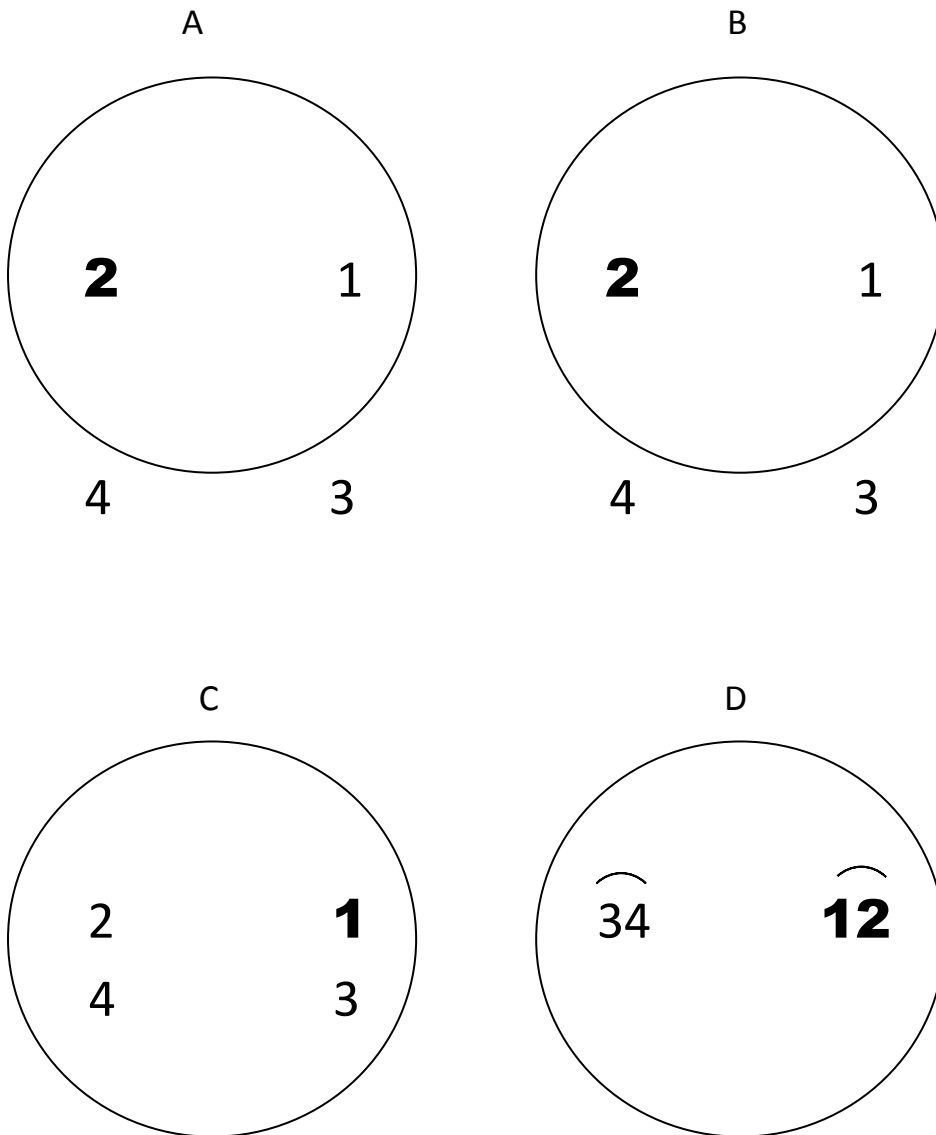


In this variation of the Rocking Chair theme we stop in B for a while. This interrupts the right- left manner of strokes.

*Happy*

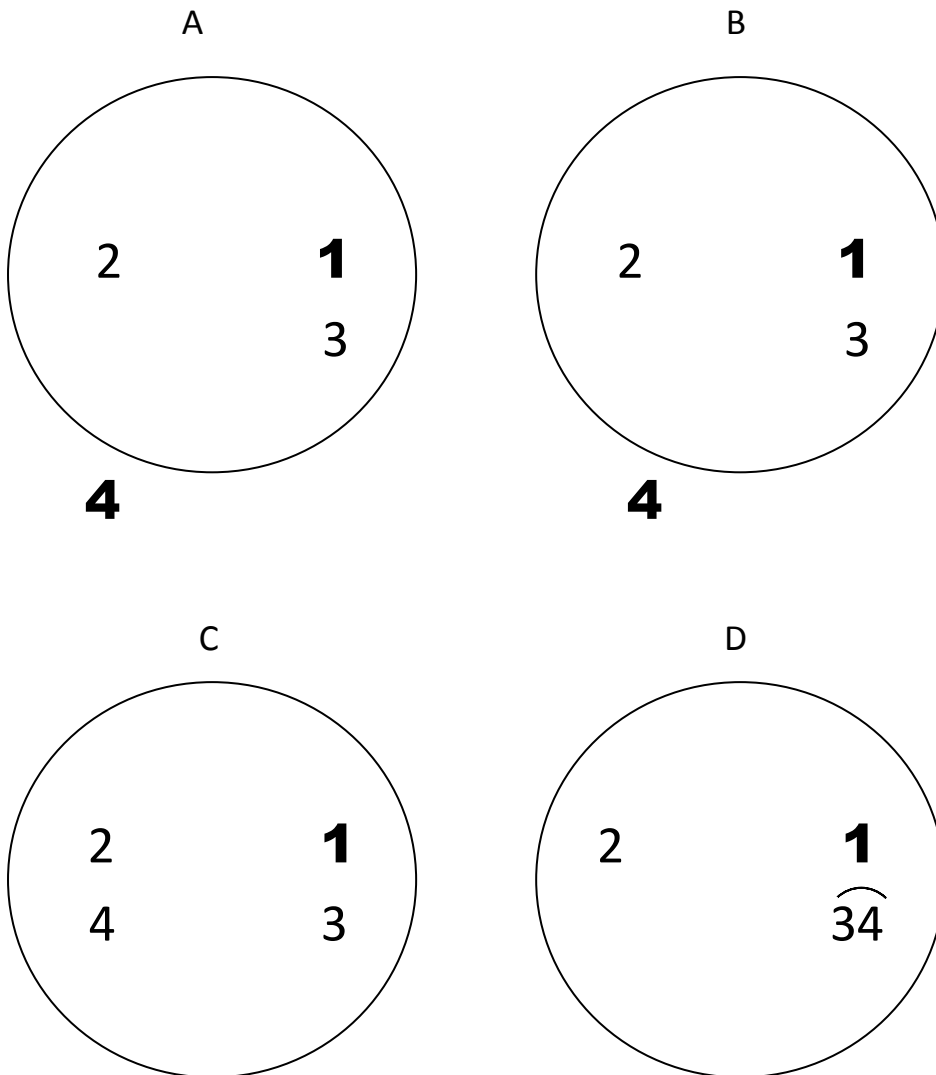


This is similar to the former piece. The difference lies in the first measure. It reflects love of life and happiness.

*Take the Old Train*

In the first two measures emphasis is given on the second rather than the first stroke as with a hard start of the engine.

All measures are played hand by hand, right and left.

*High Spirits*

This piece is characterized by accentuated Open-strokes **4** in A and B giving this piece gaiety and high spirits.

All measures are played right – left.

## First three measures with „dotted strokes“

In many melodies and songs we find dotted notes for syncopes similar to the example below.

Left: Common notation

Right: Strokes 1 – 4



Right-dotted numbers indicate strokes extended in time by half. Left-dotted means that duration of strokes is halved. The strokes above can also be written by numbers 1 – 8 instead of 1 – 4:

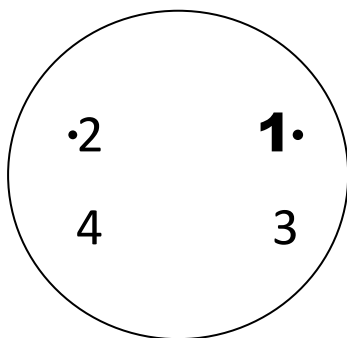
$\overset{\frown}{123}$     $4$     $\overset{\frown}{56}$     $\overset{\frown}{78}$

It may also help to imagine the beginning of known songs, e.g.:

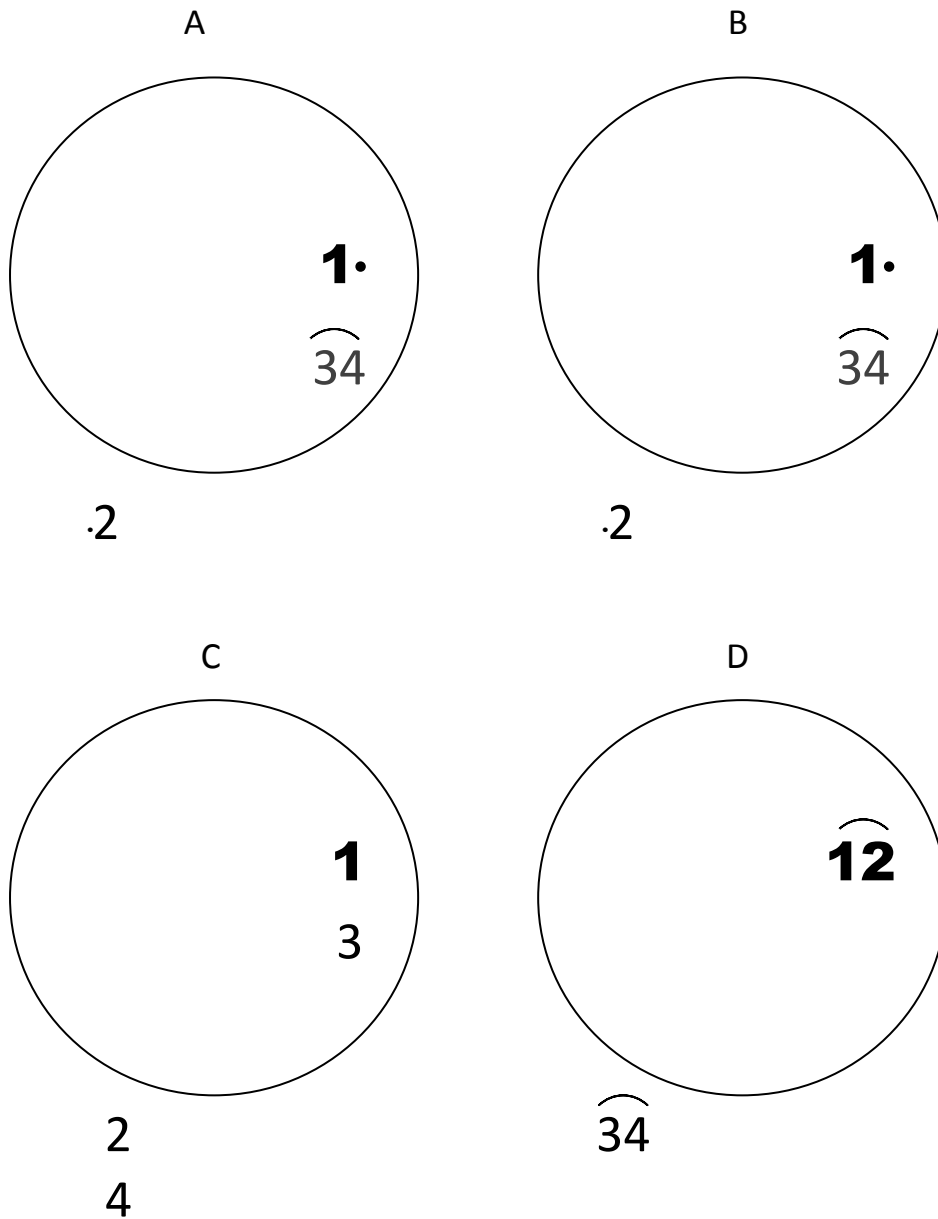
*Merrily We Roll Along (Refrain of "Good Night, Ladies")*

*Silent Night, Holy Night (6/4 measure)*

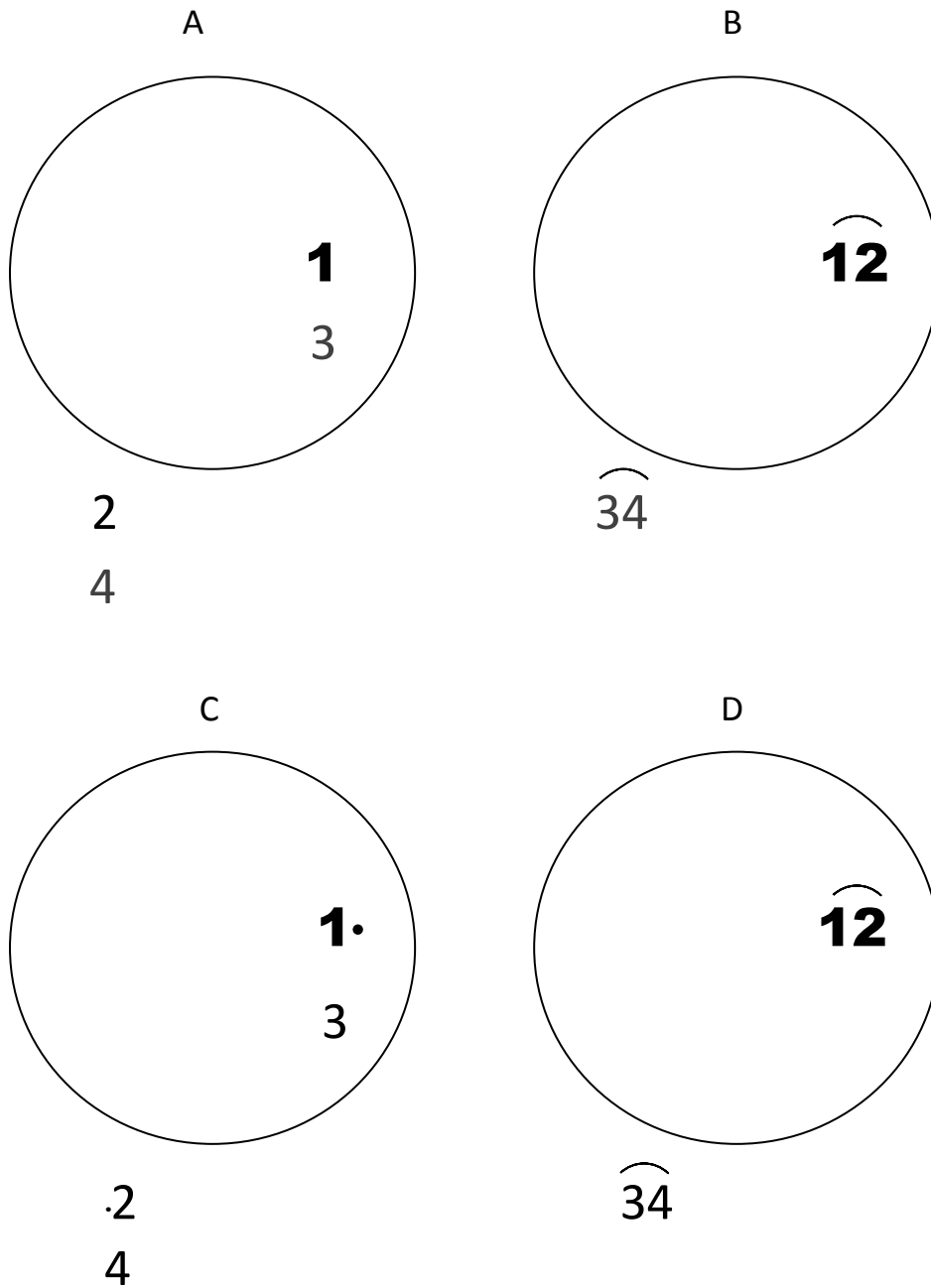
For instance, one can play those rhythms on the drum in the following manner:



Examples are given on the following pages.

*Hobby-Horse*

This piece starts with playing “dotted” strokes in measures A and B followed by “normal” strokes in C and D.

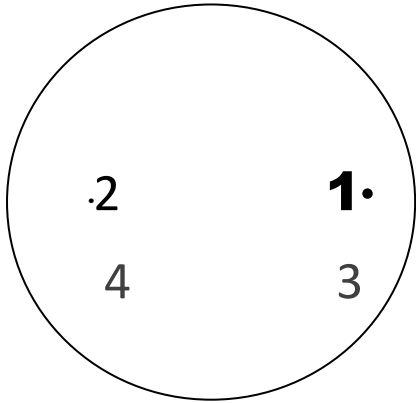
*Jointly*

Measures with fast and long strokes alternate in this piece. C is similar to A but with “dotted” strokes. Without these “dotted” strokes this rhythm would consist of two rather than four measures.

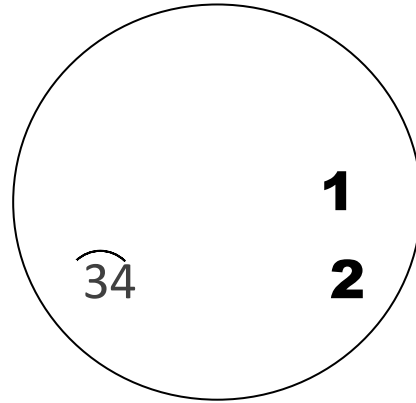


## Making The Point

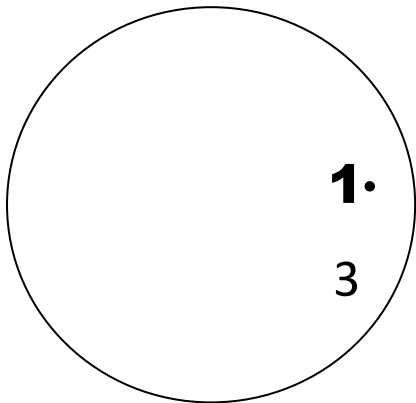
A



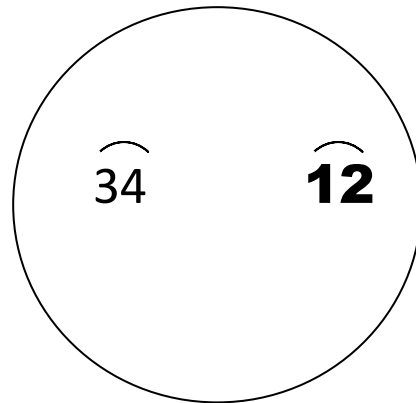
B



C

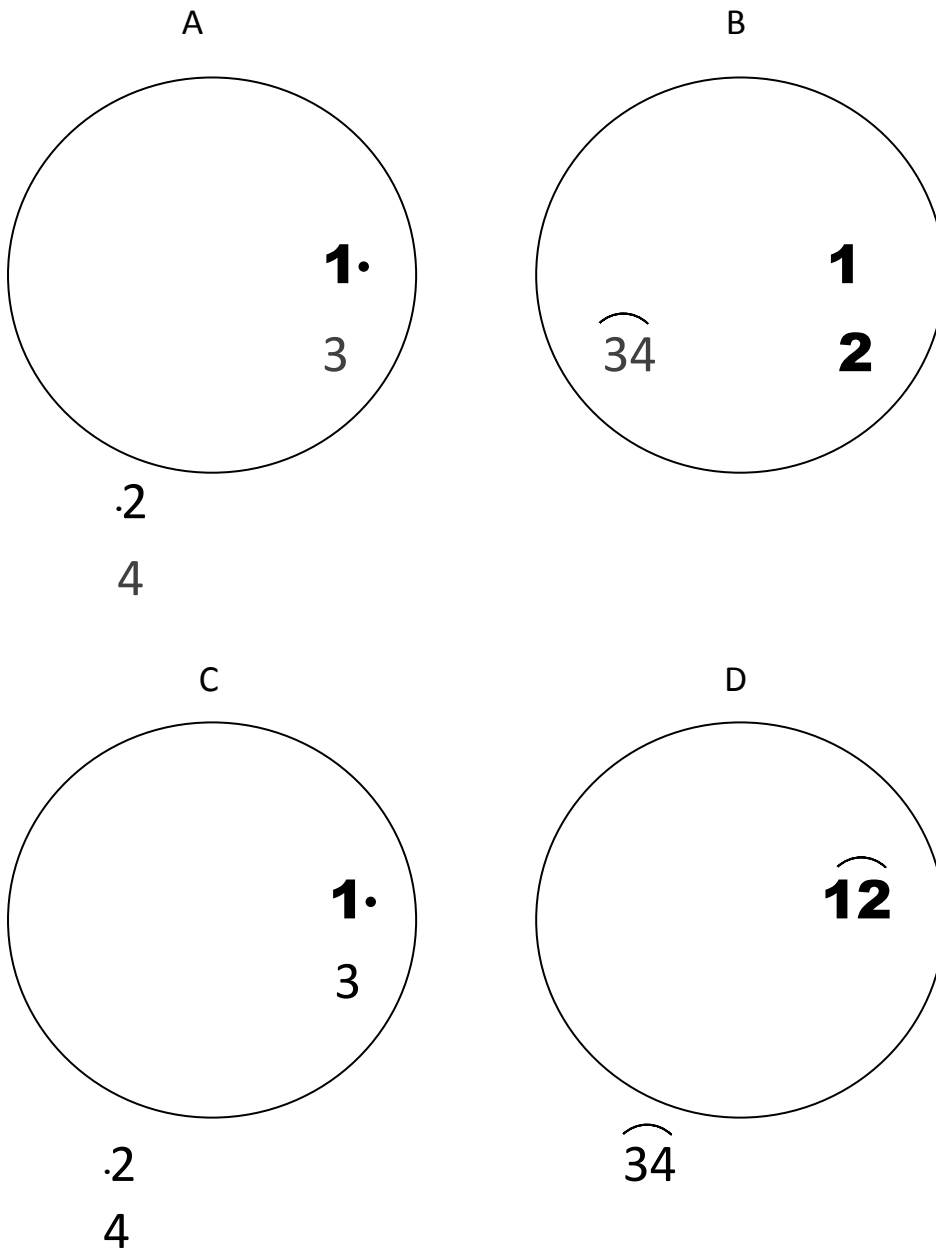


D



.2  
4

Here we play dotted Bass-strokes In A und in C. The second measure starts with two Bass-strokes followed by a long stroke. It is similar to the following rhythm piece "Merrily".

*Merrily*

This example is strongly influenced by the refrain “Merrily we roll along” ... of the song “Good Night, Ladies”.

## Part 2

### Composing your own simple four measure rhythm piece

In Part 1 you learned many simple and melodic rhythm pieces, which start differently but end in a similar way. Quite often the first two measures are the same or very similar. The last two measures are different in character. The third measure or the middle part of the rhythm is characterized by short strokes, the last measure by at least one long stroke:

C: Four short strokes usually

D: Long strokes, at least one

The following pages show five patterns of rhythm pieces with strokes for the last two measures, only.

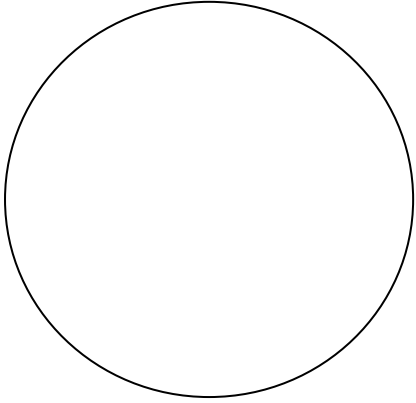
In order to compose your own rhythm

- 1) Select a pattern for C and D
- 2) Compose strokes for the first measure or select them from one of the previous examples. You can do the same for the second ones.
- 3) Play it. If you are not satisfied try to use another pattern for your begin.

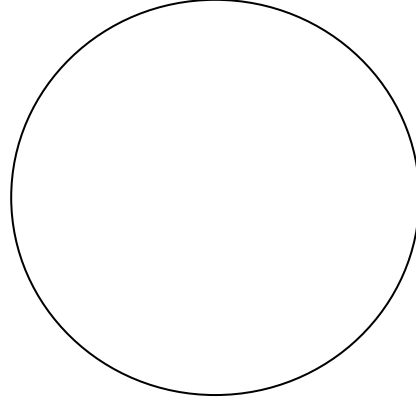
Such compositions are by experience satisfying. Later you may want to use a pattern of D only or freely compose all four measures. For this purpose an “empty” page is also enclosed.

*Patterns for compositions- 1*

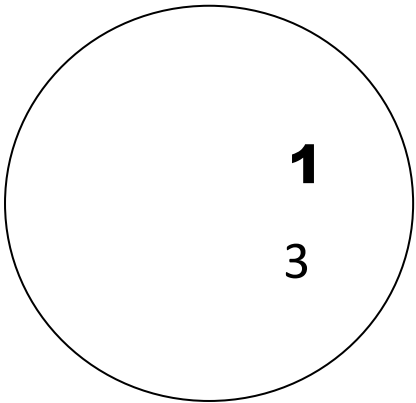
A



B



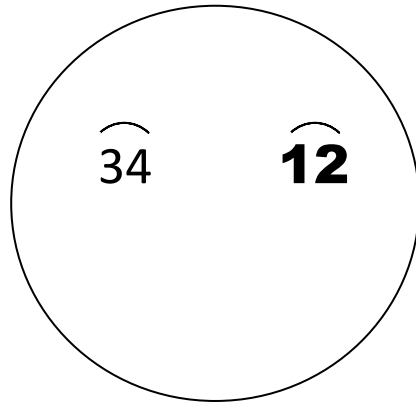
C



2

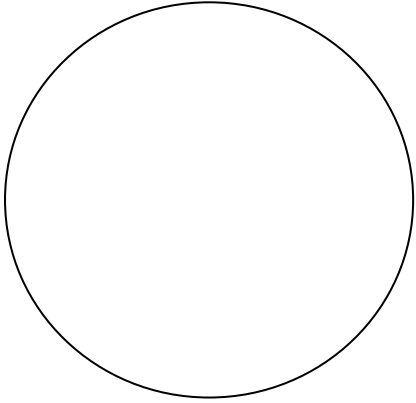
4

D

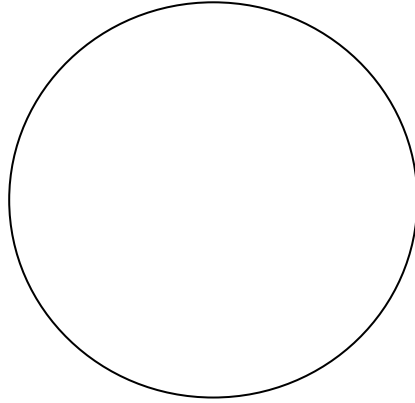


*Patterns for compositions- 2*

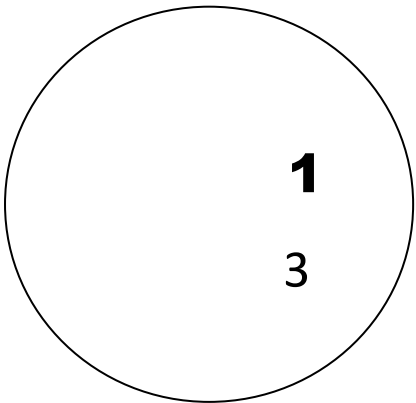
A



B



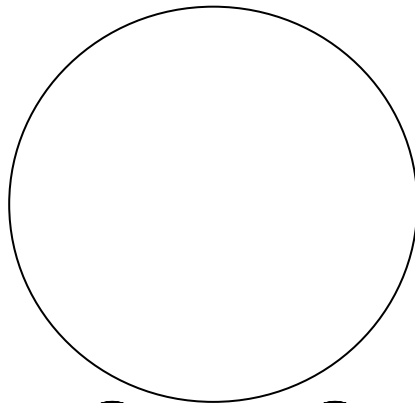
C



2

4

D

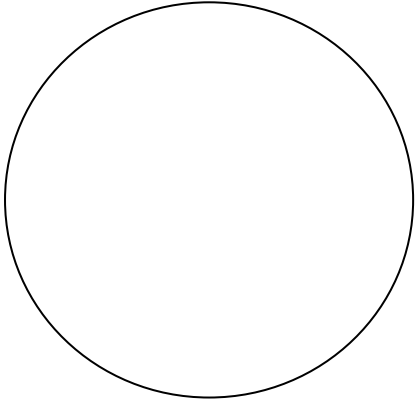


34

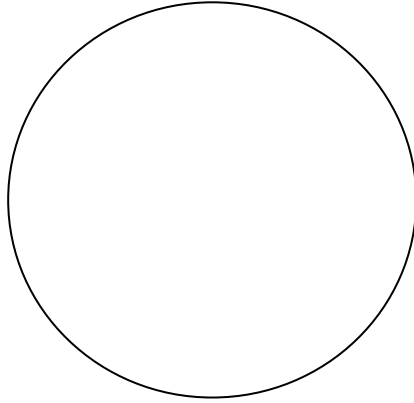
**12**

*Patterns for compositions- 3*

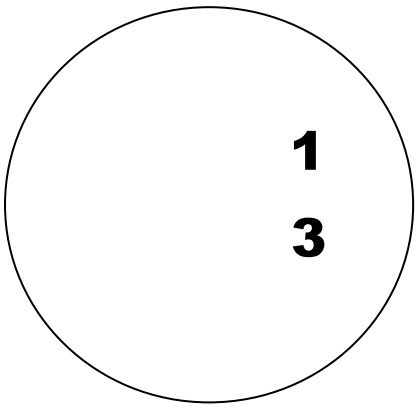
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B



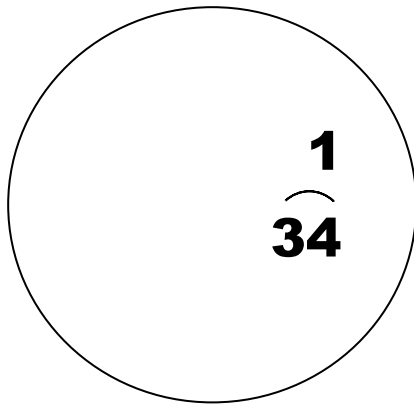
C



2

4

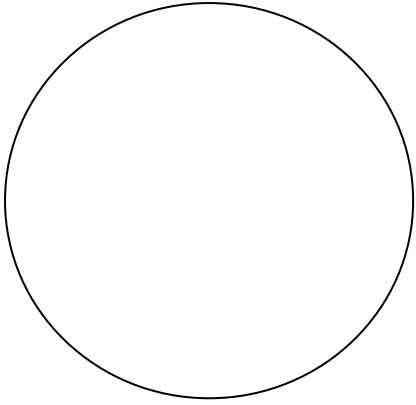
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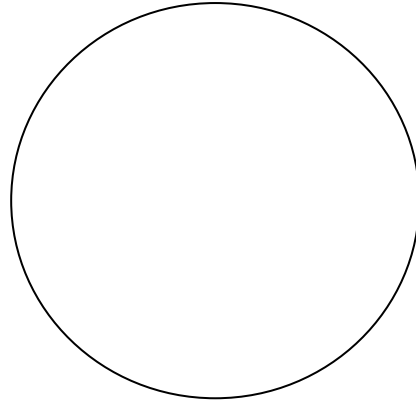
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*Patterns for compositions- 4*

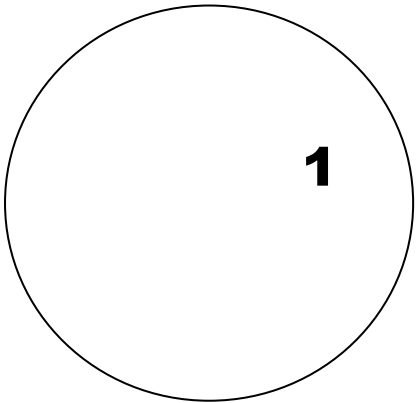
A



B



C

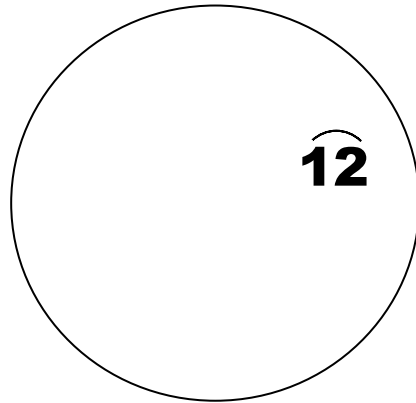


2

3

4

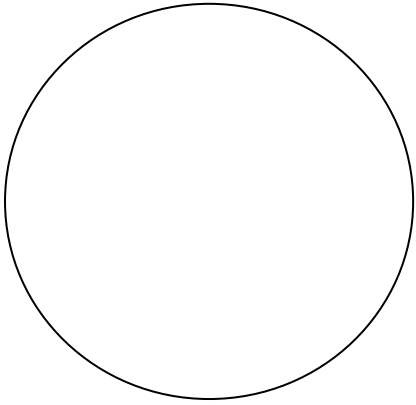
D



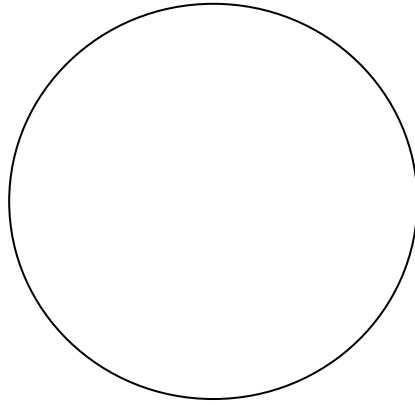
34

*Patterns for compositions- 5*

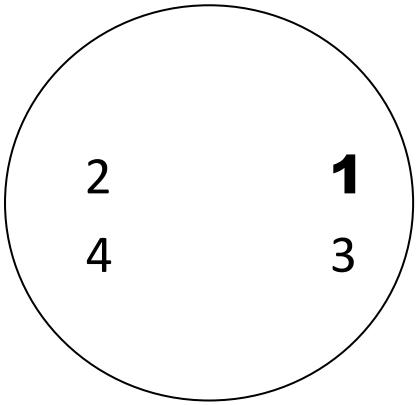
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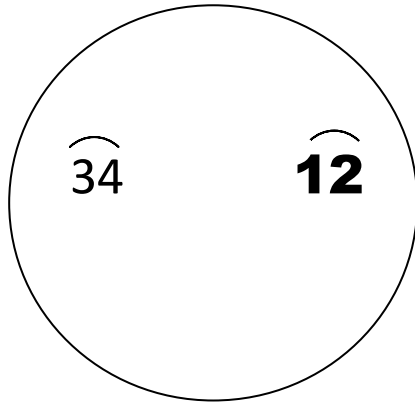
B



C

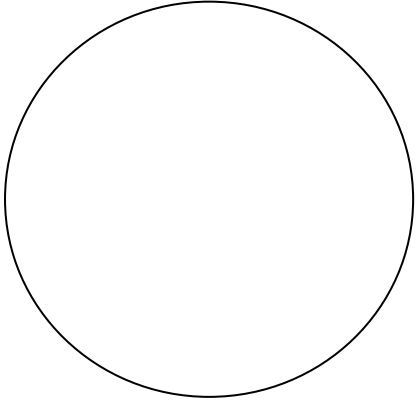


D

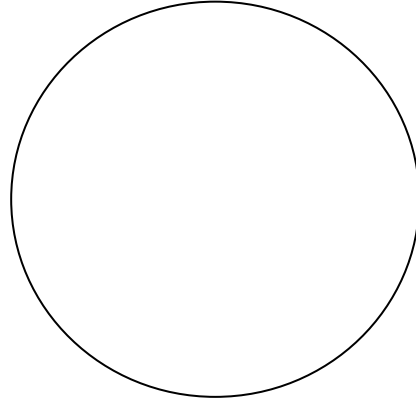




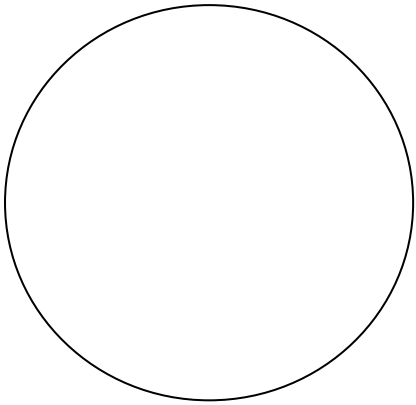
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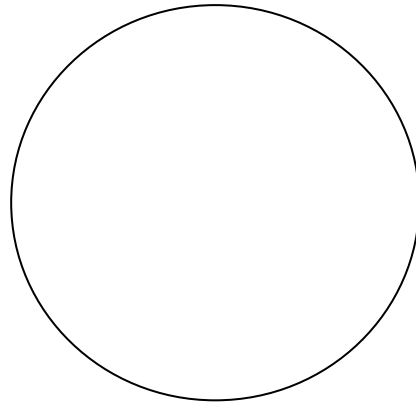
B



C



D



*Thanks to all who helped.*

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