

A dumbek is generally played by holding the drum in your lap under your left (or non-dominant hand) arm and striking with the fingers of both hands. (If you're not right handed, you can just reverse everything.) Generally speaking the heavy down beats in Middle Eastern rhythms are all played on the right (dominant) hand and the other hand is used for fill beats and other accents – they tend not to flow from hand to hand as so many African or Cuban rhythms do. It is also recommended for beginners to learn the proper Middle Eastern hand placement prior to using the rhythms listed below.

****Accents are UPPER CASE letters**

****Normal hits are lower case letters**

D Dum (right hand clear low tone)

T Tek (right hand high crisp tone)

K Ka (left hand, sounds like Tek)

– space after note (sustain)

_ space during a rest

. shortened space

P Pop (Ka while deadening head w/ other hand cupped)

S Slap (loud or accented right hand, non-clear tone)

G Grab (or Stop, like Grab)

Middle Eastern Drum Rhythms and their Variations

Please note that each set of two or four counts will be repeated throughout a "song". Each line represents a different variation of the beat for that rhythm.

4-COUNT

BALADI / baladii / BELADI / BELEDI

[easy-medium, Egyptian]

1--2--3--4--5--6--7--8--

D D t k t D t k T -

D D t k T D t k T t k

D t k D D t k t t k t k

D D K T D K T t k

GHAWAZEE

[easy-medium, upper/southern Egyptian]

1--2--3--4--5--6--7--8--

t t D t D D T -

t k t k D t k D D T -

KARATCHI

[easy-medium, Egyptian, modern?]

1--2--3--4--5--6--7--8--

T - T D T - T D

T k T D T t T D

T k k T D T k t k T D

Maqsoum

1--2--3--4--5--6--7--8--

D T t k T D t k T t k

D T k k T D k k T k k

D t k T K D k T -

MASMOUDI / MASMOODI / MASMUDI

[easy-medium] ----- ** The last half can be a separate rhythm!

1--2--3--4--5--6--7--8--

D t k t T t k t T -

D t k t k T t k t k D k

SERTO / SIRTO

[medium, Greek, syncopated]

1--2--3--4-- 1--2--3--4--

D - k D - k t k D - k T - k t k

D - k D - k t k D k T k T - T -

2-COUNT

"ARABIC"

[easy]

1--2--3--4--

D T D t k

T t k t k D

D k D k T k - k

AYOUB / AYUB / AYUBE / AYUUB / AYYUB / ayyuub

[easy, Egyptian]

1--2--3--4--

D t D t

D t k D t

D k k D k

D t k D D

D - k D K

KARATCHI / karAtshi

[easy]

1--2--3--4--

D k k T D == Nott

T k k T D == Jas

T k t k T D == Jas

T - - k T D == Mafufo