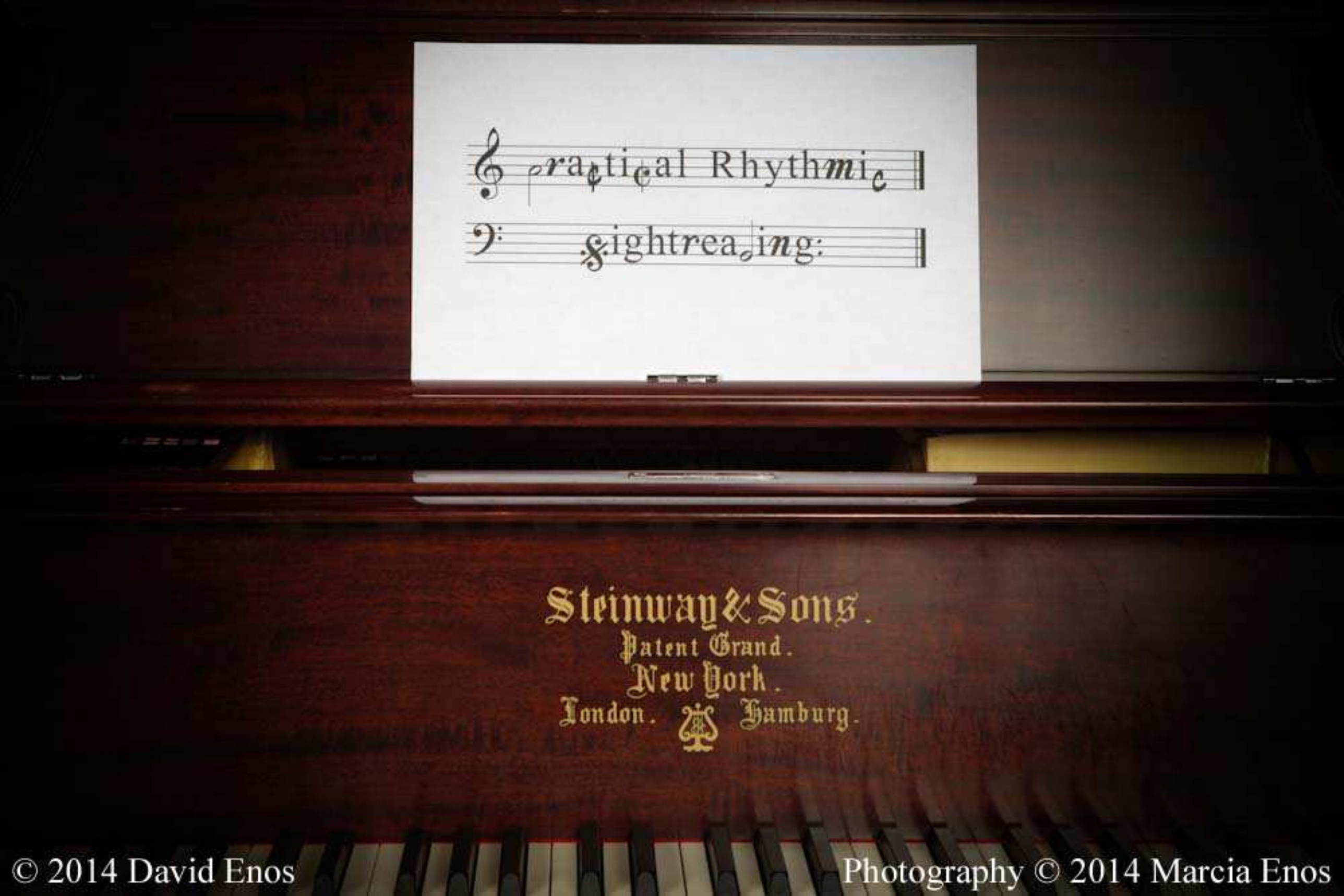

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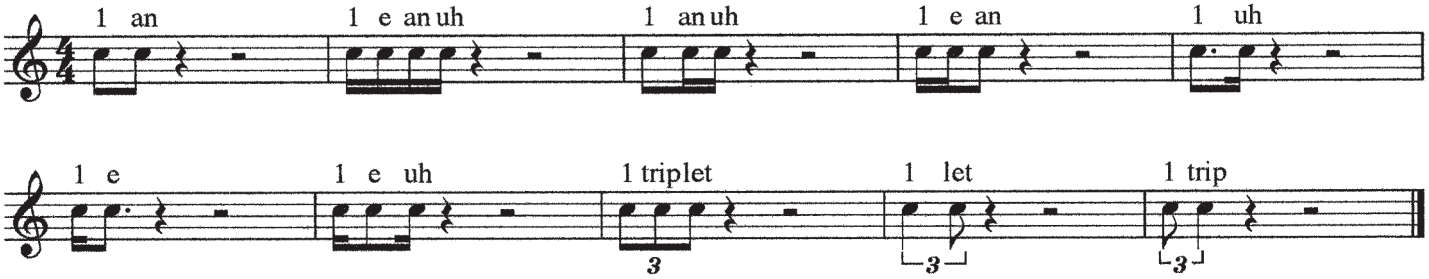
MEET THE SUBDIVISIONS

If we subdivide one beat by using various combinations of eighth notes, eighth rests, sixteenth notes, sixteenth rests, eighth note triplets, and eighth rest triplets, we find there are only 43 different rhythmic subdivisions possible in common time. The correct way of counting each rhythm is written above each subdivision; it should be mentioned, however, that you should eventually get away from counting these rhythms out loud (or even in your head) with these syllables. Your eventual goal is to have the sound of each subdivision memorized by how they look on paper; that is, be able to look at each rhythm on paper and immediately associate it with a certain sound. This is very much like a musician with great ear training who can hear the sound of an interval in his head before playing it just by looking at the written music. This memorization of the sound of each rhythm is a crucial element of sightreading because at a fast tempo it becomes impossible to count the rhythms out loud (or to even think of how they are counted).

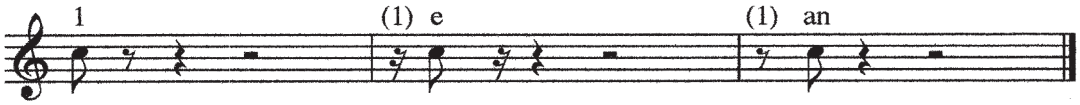
There are many odd ways to write the same rhythm. Rhythms can often be presented in a variety of ways - different combinations of rests, ties, beamed or unbeamed flags, etc. You could, for example, have an eight note followed by a quarter rest followed by an eighth note on beats 1 and 2. This is called "hiding the beat", however, and is considered bad form. The proper way to write this would be an eighth note followed by two eighth rests and one eighth note over beats 1 and 2. Writing the rhythms in this way helps to outline the beats for the sightreader.

EXERCISE 2:

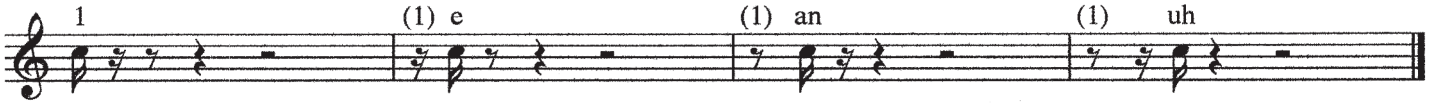
Note-inclusive subdivisions:



Shifting an 1/8th note over each 1/16th subdivision:

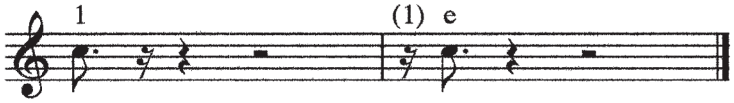


Shifting a 1/16th note over each 1/16th subdivision:

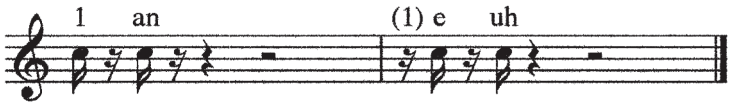


Shifting a 1/16th rest over each 1/16th subdivision:

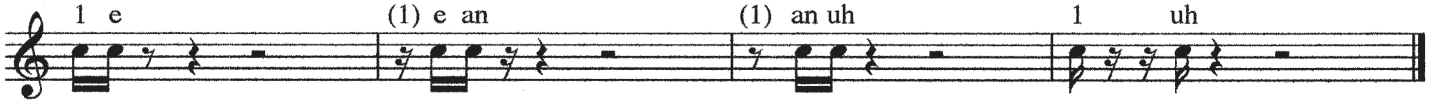
Shifting a dotted 1/8th over each 1/16th subdivision:



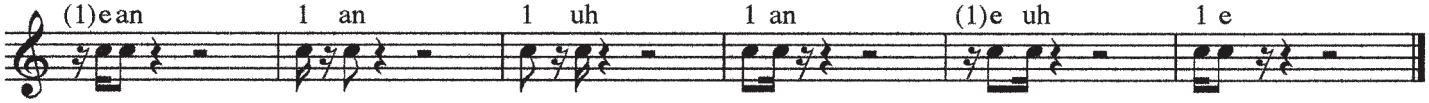
Alternating 1/16th notes and 1/16th rests:



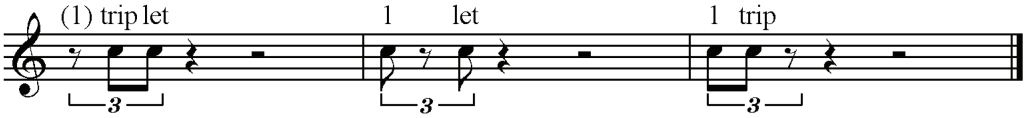
Mixing two 1/16th rests and two 1/16th notes over one beat:



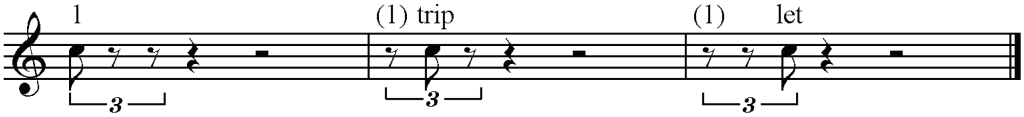
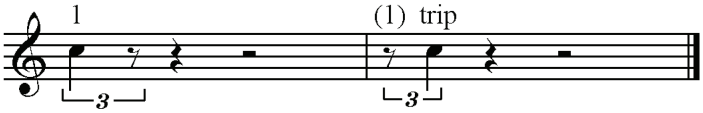
Mixing a 1/16th rest, 1/16th note and an 1/8th note over one beat:



Shifting an 1/8th triplet rest over each 1/8th triplet subdivision:



Shifting an 1/8th triplet note over each 1/8th triplet subdivision:



Shifting a 1/4 triplet note over each 1/8th triplet subdivision: