

Styles & Genres









Tune Types: Jigs 2 - Rhythm

THE PLAYING of jigs is all about the rhythm, but often you need to hear the rhythm to get it. You can also get the rhythm from the musical notation, but what can you do if you don't read music? I have devised a

simple system for understanding the rhythm. It's not new; the Kodály Method has its own (e.g. *tum-ti-ti-ti*), as does Sol-Fa (e.g. *ta-té-ti*) and the Bol system from India (e.g. *Ta Ki Ta*).


Rackety Humpty Dum

My simple system is based on the principal that jigs have two beats in every bar, and that one of three things can happen on those beats: one note, two notes, or three notes.

dum	You get one note on the beat, and it will be a <i>dotted quarter note</i> . When you see this, say "dum".	 dum	If you get two of these dotted quarter notes in the bar, say "dum dum".	 dum dum
humpty	You get two notes on the beat, a <i>quarter note and an eighth note</i> . When you see this, say "humpty".	 hum - pty	If you get two humpties in the bar, say "humpty dumpty".	 hum - pty, dum - pty
rackety	You get three notes on the beat, usually <i>three eighth notes</i> . This will be a "rackety".	 rac - ket - ty	If you get two racketies in the bar, say "rackety tackety".	 rac - ket - ty tac - ket - ty

By voicing these words, you can get an idea of the rhythm of the tune. Below is an old Scots jig with the rhythm system added. Say the words and see how the musical notation fits in with the words. Try it out on other jigs in your collection.

Drummond Castle (traditional)

 rac-ke-ty dum rac-ke-ty dum hum-pty rac-ke-ty rac-ke-ty tac-ke-ty
 rac-ke-ty dum rac-ke-ty dum rac-ke-ty tac-ke-ty rac-ke-ty hum-pty
 hum-pty rac-ke-ty hum-pty rac-ke-ty hum-pty rac-ke-ty rac-ke-ty tac-ke-ty
 hum-pty rac-ke-ty rac-ke-ty hum-pty rac-ke-ty tac-ke-ty rac-ke-ty dum

Jigs 2