

THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO STARTING ON TABLA

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INTRODUCTION

This guide represents a completely fresh approach to learning Indian Tabla and applying it in more familiar Western contexts. The book covers the subject in such a way as to make the techniques and rhythmic frameworks totally accessible to anyone. It comes with all examples represented with an mp3.

The guide starts by covering a brief history with general information on the instrument with sections on playing styles, the phonetic vocal system, tuning and maintenance. The reader learns the individual strokes on the drums with concise yet detailed descriptions along with photos.

Each new stroke is introduced and is then incorporated into a set of patterns combining it with other strokes learnt up to that point. No knowledge of sight-reading is required for these patterns.

The guide is an ideal starting point for anyone interested in playing tabla, whether they want to pursue a full classical study of the instrument, or just simply learn a few basic patterns and sounds for a session or two, or even just for fun at home. The book is designed to be easily accessible and to open the door of tabla playing for everyone.

WAYS TO PRACTICE THE MATERIAL

To get the maximum benefit, work on each example thoroughly, concentrating on sound production and clarity. Only move up a speed when you feel it is really strong and clear at a slower tempo.

Each rhythmic theme has a few variations. Begin by practicing each of these separately and then move on to playing the variations one after the other in a sequence, repeating each variation 1,2 or 4 times. Slowly build up the speed and try to memorise them. You'll be surprised at how useful a long train journey can be when trying to memorise tabla patterns.

It is important to practice the material in the following three ways;

- 1/ Syllables only
- 2/ Drums only
- 3/ Drums and Syllables together

On the mp3's, the theme and each variation is demonstrated very slowly, once with the syllables and then just the drums.

Then, for selected compositions, the theme and its variations are repeated at two different tempos in a sequence with each variation being repeated twice, firstly with the syllables and then with the drums.

Before you approach any new material, listen to the relevant mp3 example and follow the syllables in the text.

Good luck and I hope you enjoy the first steps of learning this incredible instrument and if you have any comments please email me.

The Drums

The Tabla originates from North India and consists of a set of two drums, treble and bass. They are distinct from most other drums in the world, in that each drum is played with a different hand. Very seldom do you see both hands playing on one drum. The drums have a regal history dating back centuries to the time of Princes and their Kingdoms where all Palaces had their own set of full time musicians, including Tabla players.

The performer sits on the floor with the drums in front of him, which are nestled in two supporting rings called 'Adharas'. The high pitched drum is cylindrical in shape and stands about 10 inches high. It is made from wood, usually shisham or nim, and is hollowed out from the top like a big cup, remaining sealed at the bottom. The drum has only one skin, generally about 5 inches in diameter. The shell is wider at the bottom than the top by about 1 1/2 inches.

The bass Tabla is basically a small single headed kettle drum made from nickel alloy. (It is sometimes possible to find them made from clay.) Both drum heads (Puri) are made from goat skin and have a complicated hoop (Pagri) which is woven around the edge of the skin. The skins are fixed to the drum with a long leather strap called 'Chot'. This strap is threaded through the hoop and underneath the drum through a small leather ring.

Both inside and outside the skin there is a thin rim about 1 inch wide running around the edge. This is called the 'Kinar' or 'Kani' and is also made of goat skin.

The long leather strap is pulled tight, bringing the drum skin to tension. The treble drum is pulled a lot tighter and needs small wooden blocks (Gattha) inserted between the shell and the straps to get it up to the pitch required. Sometimes you see smaller wooden blocks used for the bass Tabla. (In Benares a completely different method is used for the bass Tabla. They use rope and metal rings to get the tension.)

The skins then have past patches applied to give the skins the resonance required. These patches (Shyahi) are made from a paste of iron fillings, flour and ground hill stone. In India a chemical is also sometimes added to stop ants eating the patches. The treble drum is tuned by knocking the wooden blocks with a small hammer. Finer tuning is then carried out by hitting the leather hoop of the skin either up or down, depending on the pitch required.

The drum is tuned to the tonic or dominant note in the scale of the piece of music to be played. It is important to bear in mind that Indian music does not change key and so, if you play music that does then you will need more than one high pitched Tabla at hand. The bass Tabla is generally not tuned to a particular pitch, largely because of the glissando technique that is used on that drum.

The Indian phonetic system

BOLS (Literally 'word')

As opposed to a system of written notation, Indian percussionists use a vocabulary, or syllables to represent the patterns they play. These words are intended to mimic the sounds that come from the drums. Each stroke and combination of strokes has its own word or set of words. It is possible to look at these words as an alphabet of phrases, out of which longer and longer patterns are composed. The words have no semantic meaning apart from the patterns they represent. Generally these words are the first thing a student learns when learning a new composition. Once they get familiar with the words of a composition they go on to playing it on the drums. It splits the difficulty of learning a new piece into two, first learning the rhythm of it and then the fingering and note articulation.

The vocabulary you find in North Indian, Hindustani percussion is notably different from that of South Indian, Carnatic percussion, both in the words they use and also in the general construction of the rhythmic compositional system. Below is a list of the main tabla phonetics (bols) , including a guide to pronunciation.

BOLS ON THE DYNHA (smaller treble drum)

TA / NA / RA	pronounced as in CAR
TIN	pronounced as in TIN, the metal
DIN	pronounced as in TIN, the metal
RE	pronounced as in REPRIMAND
TE	pronounced as in TERRY
TAK	pronounced as in TACK
THET	pronounced as in PET
THUN	(see note in next section)
TI	pronounced as in TEA
DI	pronounced as in capital letter 'D'
NE	pronounced as in NECESSARY
NUNG	pronounced as in HUNG, with an 'N'

BOLS ON THE BYHA (larger bass drum)

GE / GHE / GA	(see note below)
KE / KA / KO	(see note below)
KOT	pronounced as in COT
GAD	pronounced as in GOD

BOLS INVOLVING BOTH DRUMS TOGETHER

DHA	(= GE + NA)	pronounced as in CAR (see note below)
DHIN 1	(= GE + TIN)	pronounced as in DINNER (see note below)
DHIN 2	(= GE + THUN)	pronounced as in DINNER (see note below~)
DHE	(= GE + TE)	(see note below)
KRE	(= KE + TE, flam)	pronounced with rolled 'R'

NOTE: The Indian pronunciation can be difficult for a westerner because they often stress the letter 'H' when it is the second syllable.

CHAPTER THREE

Different sorts of rhythmic compositions used in the book

Kaida compositions (Persian, lit:basis/procedure)Kaidas are nearly always the first things a Tabla player learns. They are often lengthy compositions consisting of a theme which is developed over a number of variations, (Paltas) often up to as many as fifty. Kaidas can end with a 'Tihai' (a rhythmic phrase repeated three times, see section on Tihais below) or a 'Chuckradah' (a longer composition of three Tihais.)

Rella compositions (Hindi, Lit: rushing / a flood / an assault)

Another translation of Rella is 'Rail' and was used to compare this style of composition to a fast moving train. Rella's also come in theme and variation form.

Laggi compositions (Hindi. Lit: links of a chain)

Laggis are theme and variation compositions like Kaidas but are played with a much lighter touch. Laggis are more commonly found in 'Dholak' playing. (Dholak is a North Indian folk drum.)

It is also common to get some of these terms intertwined. For example, there are such things are Laggi Kaidas and rella Kaidas.

Tihai (Lit: a third part)

A Tihai is a rhythmical phrase which repeats three times and ends on the first beat of the time cycle. They can be used in any time cycle and can start from anywhere in the bar, so long as they repeat three times and end on the first beat.

The joy of Tihais is the syncopated and off beat feeling they create. Another point is that the audience gets to hear the phrase the first time, recognise it the second time and anticipate it the third time. Whether accompanying or playing solo, Indian percussionists end nearly all improvisations with a Tihai or its longer counter part, the Chuckradah. The basic format would run like this:

- 1 Basic time cycle - 2 Solo passage (Kaida, Rella etc)
- 3 Tihai or Chuckradah - 4 Back to basic time cycle

There are many other sorts of compositions for tabla such as 'Peshkar' and 'Gat', but for the purposes of this guide we will keep to these few, along with the western style rhythmic notations towards the final few chapters.

Tals, Time cycles and Theka

A Tal is the equivalent of the western *time* signature. It means literally 'The palm of the hand' in as much as all Indian Tals, or time cycles have the bar lines and stressed beats marked by claps and waves of the hand. There were once hundreds of Tals in use in India, but nowadays there are but a few. Four of the most popular Classical ones are:

Teel Tal	16 beats	4 x 4/4
Jhap Tal	10 beats	2x5/4
Rupak Tal	7 beats	3/4 + 2/4 + 2/4
EkTal	12beats	3x4/4

Two light classical Tals are:

Kerva	8 beats
Dadra	6 beats

Theka can be translated as 'support, mainstay or prop'. It is the basic fixed rhythm that the percussionist would play for any given Tal or Time cycle. The structure of the rhythm would emphasise the strong and weak beats indicated by the clapping cycle. In a nutshell, we could say that the Tal is the time signature and the Theka is the rhythm within that time signature. The compositions mentioned above (Kaidas, Rellas etc) would be looked at as rhythmic elaborations within the skeletal structure of the 'tal'

Tali and Khali

Quite simply, Tali means the stressed beats of a Tal, whilst Khali means the unstressed beats of a Tal. The percussionist would mark the stressed and unstressed beats in his Theka (Rhythm) by not playing the resonant sound on his bass drum (Ge) during the unstressed section. The reason for this is to give the soloist a positive landmark and reference point for him to identify where he is in a particular Tal. With all the poly-rhythms and off-beat phrases it is quite possible for any performer to get lost in the Tal.

Using the bass drum in this fashion can give rise to some very interesting patterns.

Basic Stroke Articulation

Having got this far, we can now begin looking at the basic playing technique of the instrument. There are a number of different classical playing techniques for the Tabla which generally come from different districts in India.

First strokes on the Byha (Bass drum, pronounced 'bayer')

'Ge' and 'Ke'

We will begin with the Bass Tabla called the 'Byha' or the 'Duggi'. This should be played with your weaker hand (so if you're left handed, you should play it with your right hand).

Let's look at our position at the drums and the position of our arms. If you look at fig 1 you will see that the drums should be perfectly central to your body. The arms come down from the shoulder out to the elbow and down to the drums, forming a scorpion like position.

To begin with, place both hands palm down on the drums and sit comfortably. Refer to the picture of the playing position, checking your position against it, using a mirror if possible. try to sit as straight as you can without your shoulders raised up.

PLAYING POSITION



We can now look at the first basic stroke played on the bass drum.

'GE' **Also sometimes called GA/GHE/GHIN**

This is the main resonating stroke produced on the Byha. It is the stroke most often associated with the glissando, pitch bending sound you hear on tabla.

What is especially attractive and characteristic about this stroke is the deep ringing, resonant tone. Once we have this basic sound then we can manipulate it in a tasteful way. It is interesting to note that folk players and classical players do the glissando in a completely different fashion. Folk players do a very quick movement of their hand on the drum which is derived from Dholak playing whilst Classical players on the other hand have far more subtlety and skill in their Byha technique.

The drum is angled away from you and towards the smaller drum. The black spot should be nearest the smaller drum and, if you look at the drum as if it were a clock face, your arm should enter from approximately 7 o'clock. (5 o'clock for left handed players.) The arm is resting on the drum, palm down. Be careful not to drop your elbow because this will cause the wrist to lift off the skin. The underside of the wrist rests on the skin but, not too heavily.... At the end of the day, the more subtle Byha playing comes when the wrist glides like a hover craft, only pressing when necessary.

Next, cup the hand as if you were holding a snooker ball. Relax the thumb and try not to point it outwards. The fingers are bent and the stroke is played by striking the finger tips on the drum head in a hammer-like striking motion. It is important to see that the bottom portion of the fingers are at right angles to the drum skin when they strike - this is what gives you the power in the stroke. Long finger nails will hinder this. The fingers are divided into two striking units:

UNIT 1 The index finger

UNIT 2 2nd, 3rd and 4th fingers. (NB Because of the length of our fingers, the little finger does not reach the head but it is important to involve it in the motion because you will then be using its muscles in the back of your hand to add strength to the striking unit.)

Examples of positions Three fingered 'GE'



One fingered 'GE'



New stroke 'KE' Sometimes known as KA/KO

This is the main non resonating stroke played on the byha.

The wrist remains on the drum head, palm down. The hand is held flat, not cupped like in the 'GE' stroke. Lift the finger tips from the drum about two to three inches, leaving the wrist in contact with the drum head. The fingers should be relaxed and slightly apart. The hand pivots at the wrist joint and the fingers strike the drum head flat, creating a soft but sharp slapping sound. The thumb is relaxed in the same manner as before. The fingers are not divided into two striking units as in 'GE'. This stroke will be notated 'KE' or 'KA' or 'KO'.

Examples of positions 'KE' preparation and stroke



First strokes on the Dynha (treble drum - pronounced 'dye-na)

We can now begin looking at the high pitched drum called the 'Dynha' or sometimes the 'Tabla'. this drum should be angled away from you a little bit more than the byha. It's interesting to note that 'Byha' and 'Dynha' translate literally into 'left' and 'right', even if you play them the other way around. The Dynha should be facing away from you centrally and the face of the drum should not bear left or right. The first sound we will look at for the Dynha is 'TE'.

This sound is the main non-resonant sound on the high pitched drum and is the characteristic sound of many fast compositions on Tabla. for the 'TE' stroke, the hand does not rest on the drum like the other hand but floats above it. The hand is held above the drum by approximately three inches, which we will call the starting positions. The fingers are split into two striking units:

UNIT 1 The index finger UNIT 2 2nd, 3rd and 4th fingers

The fingers are held flat, not bent like the 'GE' stroke. The wrist should not drop down below the rim of the drum. With the hand in the starting position above the centre of the drum, strike first with the three fingers, then with the index finger in the very centre of the black spot on the drum. The fingers should be straight and should hit the drum flat, staying on for a millisecond afterwards to avoid any unwanted resonance The sound you are aiming for is a sharp, closed, staccato type of sound. The thumb should be relaxed and should be quite close to, but not touching the index finger. Most importantly it should not stick out or dangle down the side of the drum, otherwise you lose some of the power of the striking units.

Examples of positions 'TE' 3 & 'TE' 1



First exercise using the first three sounds

Kaida (theme and variation composition) 16 beats

We will now begin our first Kaida using the three sounds we have so far. You'll probably need to refer back to the previous notes to remember all the details on hand positions etc. Each word or dash equals one beat. A double dash equals two beats in length. (All 'GE' and 'TE' strokes are to be fingered 3 / 1, ie, you must start with the three-finger unit.) Begin by clapping a steady quarter note pulse whilst reciting the syllables. Listen to the mp3's for help with the timing.

RHYTHM THEME ONE

1 (THEME)

GEGE TETE GEGE TETE
GEGE TETE GEGE TETE
KEKE TETE KEKE TETE
GEGE TETE GEGE TETE

2 (VARIATION)

GEGE TETE TETE TETE
GEGE TETE GEGE TETE
KEKE TETE TETE TETE
GEGE TETE GEGE TETE

3(VARIATION)

GEGE TETE TETE GEGE
TETE TETE GEGE TETE
KE KE TE TE TETE KEKE
TE TE TE TE GEGE TETE

4(VARIATION)

GEGE TETE TETE GEGE
TETEGEGE TETE TETE
KEKE TETE TETE KEKE
TETEGEGE TETE TETE

New stroke on Dynha 'TA' & 'NA'

Before we move on to our second Kaida, we need to add some new strokes to our repertoire.

'TA' is played on the small high pitched drum. It is played in the same manner as 'TE' apart from the fact that it is played with all four fingers as one unit. As you will see later on, there is another way of playing 'TA'. For now though, we will stick with this version.

'NA' is played on the small high pitched drum. It is the sound most easily associated with the sound of Tabla. It also has some other names but for the purposes of this book we will only use this syllable. Place your hand on the drum as in fig 1.



FIG 1

Lift your index finger and second finger about 1 1/2 inches from the head, leaving the third and fourth fingers resting on the edge of the black spot, as in fig 2. This we will call the 'resting' position.

FIG 2



With your thumb relaxed, leave your second finger in the air and strike the rim sharply with your first finger, as in fig 3. The finger should then return promptly to the resting position . Do not press too hard on the drum head with your third and fourth fingers and remember to relax your thumb, not holding it erect or letting it dangle down the side of the drum.

FIG 3



Note: We will also be using the 'KO' stroke in this next set of examples. Remember, this is to be played in the same manner as 'KE' The reason for this will be discussed later.

RHYTHM THEME TWO

(THEME)

GE GE TE TE GE GE NA NA
GE GE TE TE GE GE NA NA
KE KE TE TE KE KE NA NA
GE GE TE TE GE GE NA NA

2 (VARIATION)

GE GE TE TE GE GE NA NA
GE GE NA NA GE GE NA NA
KE KE TE TE KE KE NA NA
GE GE NA NA GE GE NA NA

3 (VARIATION)

GE GE TE TE GE GE NA NA
-- -- TE TE GE GE NA NA
KE KE TE TE KE KE NA NA
-- -- TE TE GE GE NA NA

4 (VARIATION)

GE GE TE TE GE GE NA NA
KO TA KO TA GE GE NA NA
KE KE TE TE KE KE NA NA
KO TA KO TA GE GE NA NA

5 (VARIATION)

GE GE TE TE KO TA KO TA
GE GE TE TE GE GE NA NA
KE KE TE TE KO TA KO TA
GE GE TE TE GE GE NA NA

Stroking patterns using both hands simultaneously: 'DHA' and 'DHE'

So far we have covered some kaidas using single sounds. We will now begin looking at some Kaidas using two sounds played at once. When two sounds are played simultaneously on the tabla, a new 'Bol' (phonetic) is used.

For example, if we play 'NA' and 'GE' together we get the bol 'DHA'.

NA + GE = 'DHA'

Similarly, if we play 'TE' and 'GE' at the same time we get 'DHE'.

TE + GE = 'DHE'

We can now go on to our third Kaida. The Kaidas in this book are being kept short for practical reasons but there are limitless possibilities as far as different variations are concerned.

RHYTHM THEME THREE

1(THEME)

DHA DHA TE TE DHE DHE TE TE

DHA DHA TE TE DHE DHE TE TE

TA TA TE TE TE TE TE TE

DHA DHA TE TE DHE DHE TE TE

2(VARIATION)

DHA DHA TE TE DHE DHE TE TE

DHE DHE TE TE DHE DHE TE TE

NA NA TE TE TE TE TE TE

DHA DHA TE TE DHE DHE TE TE

3(VARIATION)

DHA DHA TE TE DHE DHE TE TE
DHA TE TE DHE TE TE DHE TE
TA TA TE TE TE TE TE TE
DHA TE TE DHE TE TE DHE TE

4(VARIATION)

DHA TE TE DHA -- DHA TE TE
DHA DHA TE TE DHE DHE TE TE
NA TE TE NA -- NA TE TE
DHA DHA TE TE DHE_DHE TE TE

Notes for this composition....All 'TE' strokes should be fingered 3-1, as in the other kaidas. This will pose the challenge of getting from the one-fingered TE stroke into this position to play the NA on the edge of the drum.

New Bols 'TI' & 'THUN'

Let's add two more bols to our repertoire and go on to our first 'LAGGI' (a folk style composition characteristic of Dholak playing). The first new sound will be 'TI'. This sound is played on the treble drum with the second finger, the finger that is held in the air for the 'NA' stroke. Place your hand on the drum as in fig1.

FIG 1



Lift your index finger and second finger about 1 1/2 inches from the head, leaving the third and fourth fingers resting on the edge of the black spot, as in fig 2.

FIG 2



From this position, instead of bringing the index finger down onto the rim, leave it in the air and instead bring the second finger down sharply onto the edge of the black spot.

FIG 3



This should sound like a slightly softer version of 'TE', ie, it is a non resonant stroke. Notice how we can now access both the 'NA' and the 'TI' sound from our resting position. There are some districts in India who articulate most of their playing on the treble drum with these two fingers. This style of playing is called 'DUWUNGLIE' (meaning 'two fingers').

Now we can go on to our next bol: 'THUN' which is needed for the 'Laggi'. The bol 'THUN' is played with the index finger on the treble drum. It is one of the most resonant and ringing sounds on the instrument. Place your hand on the drum as in fig 1.

Lift your hand slightly away from the head by approximately one inch as in fig 1.

FIG 1



Now strike with your index finger, leaving the second, third and fourth fingers away from the head. The finger should strike flat, not just the tips but the whole finger, moving away from the head quickly, allowing it to ring. See fig 2.

FIG 2



The difficulty of this stroke is returning back to our 'NA' resting position without the damping fingers making a noise. Unless otherwise indicated, all the 'THUN' sounds should be played at the same time with a soft 'KE' sound to reinforce it.

Lets revise the set of 'Bols' we have so far.

GE	Bass drum, resonant stroke, fingered 3 or 1
KE	Bass drum closed stroke, whole hand flat
TE	Treble drum closed sound, fingered 3 or 1
TA	Treble drum, same as TE but all four fingers
NA	Treble drum, rim sound with index finger; second finger raised, third and fourth fingers damping
DHA	NA+GE
DHE	TE+GE
THUN	THUN + KE
TI	Second finger on treble drum, third and fourth fingers down, index finger raised. Sounds similar to TE.

We can now start on the Laggi.

RHYTHM THEME FOUR

1 (THEME)

DHA TI DHA DHA DHA THUN NA NA
NA TI DHA DHA DHA THUN DHA NA

2 DHA THUN DHA NA DHA THUN DHA NA DHA THUN DHA NA DHA THUN DHA NA
DHA TI DHA DHA DHA THUN NA NA NA TI DHA DHA DHA THUN DHA NA
NA THUN NA NA NA THUN NA NA NA THUN NA NA NA THUN NA NA
DHA TI DHA DHA DHA THUN NA NA NA TI DHA DHA DHA THUN DHA

The basis of the next example is $3+ 3+ 3+ 3 +4 (= 16)$

3 DHA THUN NA DHA THUN NA DHA THUN NA DHA THUN NA DHA DHA THUN NA
DHA TI DHA DHA DHA THUN NA NA NA TI DHA DHA DHA THUN DHA NA
NA THUN NA NA THUN NA NA THUN NA NA THUN NA NA NA THUN NA
DHA TI DHA DHA DHA THUN NA NA NA TI DHA DHA DHA THUN DHA NA

The basis of the next example is $6+ 6 + 4 (= 16)$

4 DHA TI DHA DHA THUN NA DHA TI DHA DHA THUN NA DHA DHA THUN NA
DHA TI DHA DHA DHA THUN NA NA NA TI DHA DHA DHA THUN DHA NA
NA TI NA NA THUN NA NA TI NA NA THUN NA NA NA THUN NA
DHA TI DHA DHA DHA THUN NA NA NA TI DHA DHA DHA THUN DHA NA

5 DHA TI DHA TI DHA DHA THUN NA TI DHA DHA TI DHA DHA THUN NA
DHA TI DHA DHA DHA THUN NA NA NA TI DHA DHA DHA THUN DHA NA
NA TI NA TI NA NA THUN NA TI NA NA TI NA NA THUN NA
DHA TI DHA DHA DHA THUN NA NA NA TI DHA DHA DHA THUN DHA NA

We can now go on to our first 'RELLA'. You already know all the strokes for this Rella. All that needs to be clarified is a new word that is introduced to represent the one-fingered 'TE' stroke.

Quite simply, 'TE TE' becomes 'TE RE'. The fingering is still 3/1 and you play exactly the same thing as 'TE TE'. One of the reasons for this change is so that the composition rolls of the tongue more easily and rhymes.

Also, 'NA' has been changed to 'TA' for the same reason. (This will be known as the 'TA 2' stroke and will be written with a dot above it for easy reference TA.)

Also, 'KE' and 'KA' are both used to represent the same stroke.

RHYTHM THEME FIVE (This rella has no resonant 'GE' strokes.) (THEME)

- 1 TE RE KETETAKATAKATE RE KETE TAKA
 TE RE KE TE TA KA TA KA TA KA TE RE KE TE TA KA
- 2 TE RE KE TE TAKATAKATE RE KE TE TAKATAKA
 TE RE KE TE TAKATAKATAKATE RE KE TETA KA
- 3 TETETETEKETETAKATAKATEREKETETAKA
 TE TETETE KETETAKATAKATEREKETETAKA
- 4 TERE KETETAKETE RE KETETAKATE REKETE
 TAKATERE KETETAKATAKATEREKETETAKA
- 5 TAKATEREKETETAKATAKATEREKETETAKA
 TAKATE REKETETAKATAKATEREKETETAKA

RHYTHM THEME SIX DELHI KHAIDA

NB 'TA 2', the rim sound is to be used.

This Kaida will seem more complicated to begin with but, once you are familiar with the first example, the rest is plain sailing. There is one new bol for this composition, 'DHIN' which is 'THUN with GE' instead of 'THUN with KE'.

DHIN = THUN + GE

Right, now you know all the bols. Here is a transcription of the first example. Note that the lower case syllables are played twice as fast as those in upper case.

(THEME)

1 DHA TI DHA GA NA DHA terekete
DHA TI DHA GA THUN NA KE NA
TA TI TA KA NA TA terekete
DHA TI DHA GA DHIN NA GE NA

Notice that in the third line, two different words are used to indicate the same stroke (NA & TA, both meaning 'TA 2' on the rim.)

THE DOHRA (VARIATION 2) The Dohra is nearly always the second part of a Kaida. It entails playing the first line of the first example three times and the second line once.

DHA TI DHA GA NA DHA terekete
DHA TI DHA GA NA DHA terekete
DHA TI DHA GA NA DHA terekete
DHA TI DHA GA THUN NA KE NA
TA TI TA KA NA TA terekete
TA TI TA KA NA TA terekete
DHA TI DHA GA NA DHA terekete
DHA TI DHA GA DHIN NA GE NA

3 (VARIATION)

DHA TI DHA GA NA DHA terekete

NA DHA terekete NA DHA terekete

DHA TI DHA GA NA DHA terekete

DHA TI DHA GA THUN NA KE NA

TA TI TA KA NA TA terekete

NA TA terekete NA TA terekete

DHA TI DHA GA NA DHA terekete

DHA TI DHA GA DHIN NA GE NA

4 (VARIATION)

DHA TI DHA GA NA DHA terekete

DHA -- DHA GA NA DHA terekete

DHA TI DHA GA NA DHA terekete

DHA Ti DHA GA THUN NA KE NA

TA TI TA KA NA TA terekete

TA -- TA KA NA TA terekete

DHA TI DHA GA NA DHA terekete

DHA TI DHA GA DHIN NA GE NA

5 (VARIATION)

DHA TI DHA GA THUN NA KE NA

DHA TI DHA GA THUN NA KE NA

DHA TI DHA GA NA DHA terekete

DHA TIDHA GA THUN NA KE NA

TA TI TA KA THUN NA KE NA

TA TI TA KA THUN NA KE NA

DHA TI DHA GA NA DHA terekete

DHA TI DHA GA DHIN NA GE NA

We can now go on to our next 'RELLA' The Bols are self explanatory.

RHYTHM THEME SEVEN (TE TE fingered 3/1)

(THEME)

DHA DHA terekete DHA DHA TE TE

DHA DHA terekete DHA DHA TE TE

TA TA terekete TA TA TE TE

DHA DHA terekete DHA DHA TE TE

2 (VARIATION)

DHA DHA terekete DHA DHA terekete

DHA DHA terekete DHA DHA TE TE

TA TA terekete TA TA terekete

DHA DHA terekete DHA DHA TE TE

3 (VARIATION)

DHA DHA terekete DHA DHA TE TE

DHA tere kete DHA terekete DHA TI

DHA tere keteDHA terekete DHA TI

TA TA terekete TA TA TE TE

Short 'TIHAI (Phrase repeated three times to end on beat 1.)

DHA DHA terekete DHA DHA TE TE DHA -- -- --

DHA DHA terekete DHA DHA TE TE DHA -- -- --

DHA DHA terekete DHA DHA TE TE/DHA

(±)

NB (+) becomes the first beat of the next time cycle.

Bear in mind that this is just an introduction to Tabla. There are strokes and sounds that we have not covered in this first installment which will be looked at in detail in future free lessons.

Good luck and enjoy this amazing instrument!

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