

Many Notes, Fewer Chord Changes

After four count-in clicks, the music begins on beat 1. Listen for a new harmony, even when the notes keep moving.

1 · ONE HARMONY CAN CONTAIN MANY ATTACKS

Harmonic rhythm means how long each chord lasts. Bank: C = C-E-G; F = F-A-C; G = G-B-D. These examples use only those triads, with one low root per harmony.

Track 1 · Blocked: C | F | G | C. Hold each chord for four beats.



Track 2 · Broken: same chord schedule. A new chord tone each beat keeps the harmony.



2 · SEPARATE CHANGE TIMES FROM ATTACK TIMES

Read each box as one quarter-note beat in 4/4. S = start, not a change. x = new harmony; dots = attack times (simultaneous notes count as one attack time).

	Bar 1				Bar 2				Bar 3				Bar 4			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Change	S				x				x				x			
Track 1 attacks	•				•				•				•			
Track 2 attacks	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

Track 2: 16 attack times, four chord spans (one chord held for a length of time), **three changes after the start**. Track 1 has four attack times but the same three changes.

3 · KEEP THE TEMPO; USE TWO CHORDS PER BAR

Track 3 · C-F | G-C | F-G | C-F. Each chord lasts two beats.



	Bar 1				Bar 2				Bar 3				Bar 4			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Change	S		x		x		x		x		x		x		x	
Attacks	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

Eight chord spans, **seven changes after the start**. Both broken examples have 16 attack times at quarter = 72. Here the chord durations change, while the beat stays steady.

Try it

Listen to Track 2 without watching. Say “change” only when the chord changes. Then do Track 3. How many changes follow the starting chord?

Listen: scan or visit tissimo.co/worksheets/harmonic-rhythm-change-timeline
In-house MIDI/MP3 examples · quarter-note tempo 72 BPM



Mini-key: Track 2: 3; Track 3: 7. The initial chord is excluded. Real music can be ambiguous; these examples use the declared chord bank.