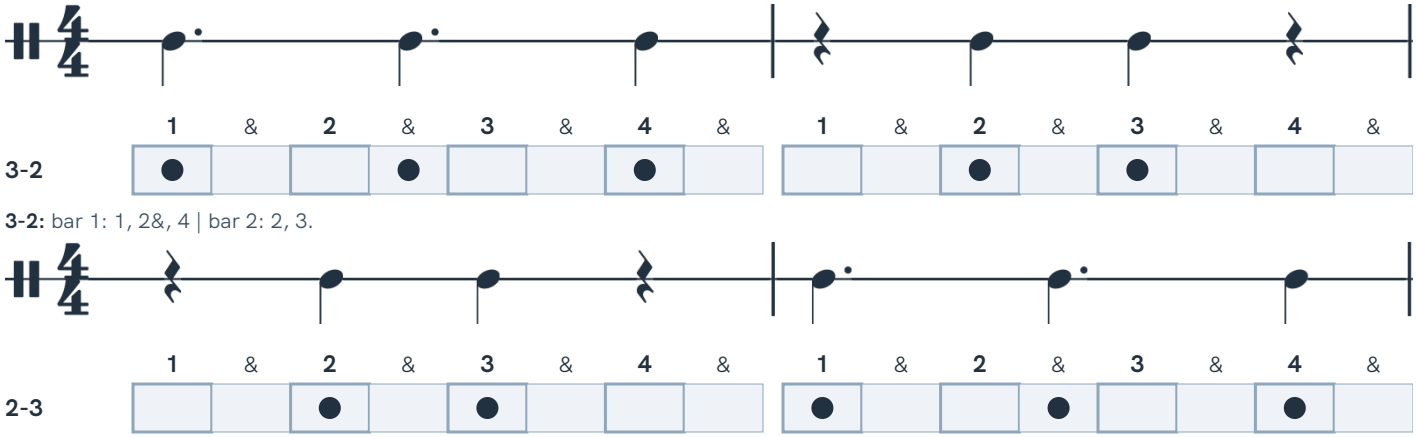
Son Clave: 3-2 and 2-3

The clave is a short rhythm that salsa and other Cuban-rooted music is built around. Learn it on a 16-step grid, hear where the rumba clave differs, and clap it against a steady beat.

1 · THE PATTERN: FIVE STROKES OVER TWO BARS

The **son clave** is a two-bar pattern in 4/4. One bar has **three** strokes (the **3-side**), the other has **two** (the **2-side**). Which side comes first gives the name. Every box below is one eighth note; the thick lines are the beats. A count like **2&** means the & of 2.

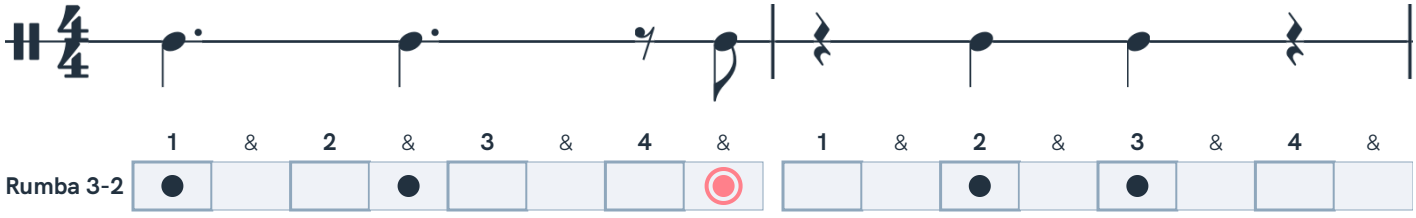


3-2: bar 1: 1, 2&, 4 | bar 2: 2, 3.

2-3: bar 1: 2, 3 | bar 2: 1, 2&, 4. Same five strokes: swap the two bars.

2 · SON OR RUMBA? ONE STROKE MOVES

The **rumba clave** has the same 2-side. On the 3-side, the third stroke comes **one eighth note later**: on the **& of 4** instead of on beat 4. That one ringed stroke is the whole difference.

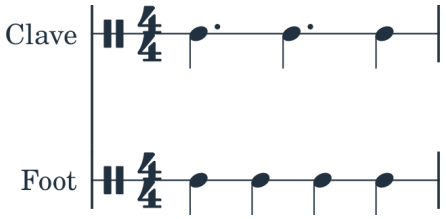


3 · COUNT AND CLAP

1. Tap your foot on the beats: **1 2 3 4**, twice. Keep it steady.
2. Say every count out loud: **1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &**.
3. Now clap only the clave strokes and keep saying every count.

3-2: clap on 1, 2&, 4 | 2, 3
2-3: clap on 2, 3 | 1, 2&, 4

4 · LOCK A PART TO IT



One bar of the 3-side over a steady beat (your foot): beats 1 and 4 land on the foot; the & of 2 lands between two foot taps. Play it: foot with your foot, clave with your hands.

Try it Clap the 3-2 son clave twice while your foot keeps the beat. Stop. Now start again with the 2-side: that is 2-3. Then clap the rumba clave and listen for the third stroke of the 3-side landing on the & of 4.

Listen: scan or visit **tissimo.co/worksheets/son-clave-3-2-and-2-3**
100 BPM · one-bar woodblock count-in, then the clave on a claves sound.

© 2026 Tissimo. All rights reserved.