

Latin for Drummers - Candombe in 3/4.

The seed came from Africa, but it grew and bloomed on the other side of the Atlantic. Candombe is the heritage of the African slaves in the River Plate's zone.

Write code. How to read what each drum plays

Symbol	Represents
Chico Drum	
×	Symbolize what the hand plays. With it we represent a stroke that creates a high-pitched aggressive sound.
♩	Symbolize what the stick plays. With it we should be able to hear the tone of the drum.
Piano Drum	
●	Written on the 3 rd space. Symbolize a low-pitched stroke, where the hand remains on the head, WITHOUT bouncing! It's similar to the "bass tone" of the Congas.
×	Symbolize what the stick plays. Where the stick remains pressed on the head, WITHOUT bouncing!
♩	Symbolize what the stick plays. With it we should be able to hear the tone of the drum
Repique Drum	
×	Symbolize what the hand plays. With it we represent a stroke that creates a high-pitched aggressive sound.
♩	Symbolize what the stick plays. With it we should be able to hear the tone of the drum.

The original metric of Candombe it's a 4-beat bar. The melody of the drums, their improvisations and even the way you walk, when the group plays on the street, are based over this 4-beat structure.

When we re-interpret this rhythm with a new metric structure, the first conclusion it's that we have too many beats or we miss some.

In order to make the decision, about which elements to keep (in case we need to keep them) and which to remove (in case we need to remove them) or even add (in case we need to add some) we need to identify which elements are essentials for the identity of the language and for the groove to work.

Let's remember what each drum plays, the relation with the pulse and the Madera in the original 4-beat structure.

The image shows musical notation for five different drum parts in a 4-beat bar. The staves are labeled REPIQUE, PIANO, CHICO, MADERA, and PULSE. The PULSE staff at the bottom shows a simple 4-beat bar with beats numbered 1, 2, 3, and 4. The other staves show rhythmic patterns for each drum type, with REPIQUE and CHICO using 'x' symbols for hand strokes and '♩' symbols for stick strokes. The PIANO staff uses a '●' symbol for a low-pitched stroke and 'x' and '♩' symbols for stick strokes. The MADERA staff shows a rhythmic pattern with 'x' and '♩' symbols.

Reinterpreting the groove in 3/4

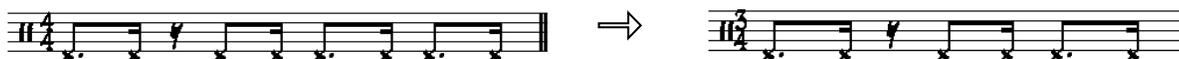
1. – “Madera”:

“Madera” it’s a figure that you play on the shell of the drum. The one who’s leading starts to play this figure to call the other drummers to join in. Little by little, the other drummers copy and play this figure on their own drum and in this way, everybody it’s on tune and know the intention and the speed of the rhythm.

The “Madera” and its relation with the pulse:



To adapt it to a 3-beat structure I’ve used this variation and I’ve removed the last beat:



The new “3-beat Madera” and its relation with the pulse:



2. – The Chico drum.

“...Without Chico there’s no Candombe...” Says an old saying. This drum plays a one-beat figure that repeats itself constantly.



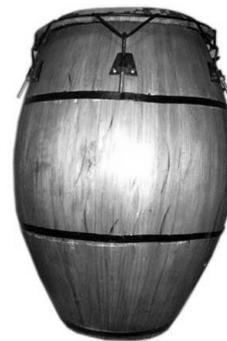
To adapt it to a 3-beat structure I’ve removed the last beat. This is the drum that’s less affected by this interpretation. The new groove and its relation to the “ 3-beat Madera” and the pulse



(Notice the accent on the second 16th of every beat. This is a main aspect of Candombe!)

3. – The Piano drum.

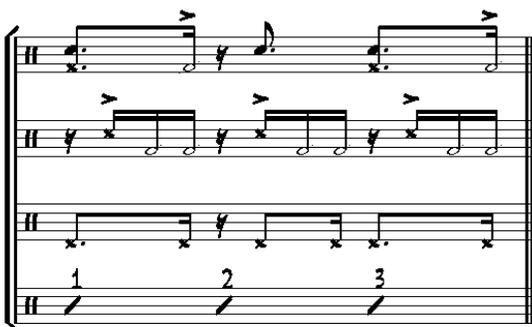
It's the biggest and low-pitched drum. Its function it's to play the base and even when there are moments of variation and improvisation, it should always keep a steady base.



Let's remember the base and the relation to the pulse:



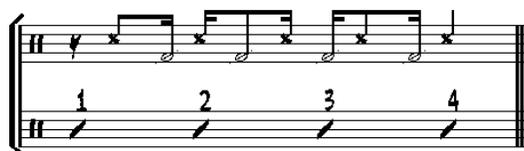
In order to reduce it to a 3-beat bar, I eliminate the last beat. Here's the new base and its relation with the Chico drum, the "3-beat Madera" and the pulse:



(Notice the accented notes and the relation to the "Madera")

4. – The Repique drum.

This is the drum that's most affected by this transforming process. Why? Because originally its base it's played with alternate hands and it ends on the 4th beat of the bar.



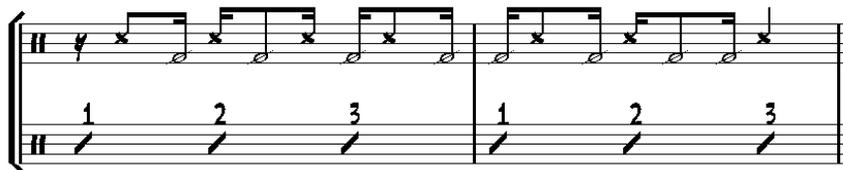
To modify the bar structure from a 4-beat bar to a 3-beat one makes it necessary to change the base in order to keep most of the original elements.

Here's a suggestion for the new bar structure:



The rhythm of this drum can be played continuously, that means that its original 1-bar pattern can be linked and continued in the next bar.

Here's a possible variation for this 3-beat structure:



We've re-adapted the "Madera" and all the rhythms of each drum. Let's put all together with the new 3-beat bar...and we have a 3/4 Candombe!

Musical score for Candombe. It consists of five staves labeled REPIQUE, PIANO, CHICO, MADERA, and PULSO. REPIQUE, CHICO, and PULSO have rhythmic patterns with 'x' marks. PIANO has a melodic line with accents. MADERA has a rhythmic pattern with 'x' marks. The bottom staff, PULSO, has three strokes labeled 1, 2, and 3.

I hope you enjoy this interpretation and you can apply it to your playing. Have fun! You can check <http://www.agustrizzi.com/> for more articles about Candombe and other things.