

Beatboxing and Salsa Music to Practice Rhythm and Timbre Perception
Prepared by Alvaro Lopez, Gluck Fellow in Music

Going to the basics of beatboxing art, the following video shows a good exercise for beginners in which three timbres are played resembling the kick drum, the snare drum, and the hi-hat. These three instruments cover low, mid and high pitch respectively, and are the most important sections in the drum set for pop music in a number of genres:

[Beatboxing beginners exercise](#)

As an interesting tool complementing a beatbox musician, the following video shows the *looper*. This is a machine that is being used by musicians in many genres to basically multiply themselves on stage to become a complete band by recording layers of loops belonging to different instruments:

[Beatbox and looper](#)

Salsa rhythm with its patterns in a wide range of percussion instruments is an interesting challenge for instrument spotting and rhythmic practice. It constitutes a big challenge for soloists because several timbres often intersect and a single mouth is limited to produce them simultaneously. So its recommended to sing the patterns by instrument independently. The following videos show the instruments in an isolated context, so it is possible to sing and remember the patterns as a reference when listening an ensemble.

[Clave, campana, guiro y maraca.](#)
[Congas](#)
[Bongos](#)

In salsa, besides the percussion patterns, it is possible to find other harmonic and melodic standards. For example, the bass line or *tumbao* and the piano pattern or *montuno*. The following videos show typical bass lines and piano tumbaos.

[Bassic bass line in salsa](#)
[Basic piano montuno](#)

When practicing rhythmic exercises it is important to keep the time or *tempo* with a metronome as shown in the last video. The practice of imitating sounds with the voice, even if it is not intended for a beatboxing act, constitutes a very useful exercise, not only for developing rhythmic skills but also for improving the sensibility to different timbres, and the ability to focus the attention on a single instrument among others in a piece of music.

As an interesting exercise, it would be stimulating to spot in the following videos the players that have assigned the usual salsa instruments, and also some others:

[Vocal sampling Guantanamera](#)
[Perico Macuna](#)