

Montessori Meets Music and Rhythm

A Resource for Teachers & Parents

Music and rhythm are natural ways for young children to connect with their environment, their bodies, and each other. In Montessori, music isn't about memorizing songs—it's about **exploration, movement, and joyful expression**.

This activity introduces children to rhythm and beat in a simple, hands-on way.

Activity: “Follow the Beat” with Everyday Instruments

Materials

- A small **basket or tray** with rhythm instruments:
 - Wooden sticks (or chopsticks)
 - Small drum (or an overturned pot with a wooden spoon)
 - Shakers (you can make these by filling small containers with rice or beans)
 - Bells (handheld or wrist bells)
 - A **silence activity space** (a rug or mat for group circle time)
 - A **visual card set** (optional): pictures of each instrument to help toddlers choose
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Objectives

- Develop listening and concentration skills
 - Explore rhythm, beat, and tempo
 - Encourage self-expression and group coordination
 - Introduce the concept of **grace and courtesy** by waiting, taking turns, and listening to others
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Procedures

1. Invite the Child/Children

Gather the children around a rug or mat. Say with enthusiasm:

“Today we’re going to explore music and rhythm with our instruments!”

2. Presentation

- Choose one instrument and demonstrate.
- Play a **simple steady beat** (tap-tap-tap).
- Pause and invite the children to listen carefully.

3. Child’s Turn

- Offer the instrument to one child: *“Would you like to try?”*
- Encourage the child to copy your beat.
- Guide gently if needed: *“Listen and follow my beat.”*

4. Add Variety

- Introduce faster and slower beats.



- Switch instruments and let children experiment.
- Play a “call and response” game: teacher plays a rhythm, child echoes.

5. **Group Rhythm**

Once comfortable, invite the group to play together:

- All children tap along to the same beat.
- Take turns leading (child becomes the “conductor”).

6. **Closure with Silence**

Montessori always returns to quiet. Signal the group to stop (raise your hand, ring a bell). Allow a moment of silence to notice the contrast between sound and stillness.

Extensions

- **Movement + Rhythm:** March, clap, or stomp to the beat.
- **Songs & Poems:** Add rhythm instruments to favorite rhymes or Montessori songs.
- **Cultural Music:** Introduce instruments from different countries to connect with Montessori’s cultural curriculum.
- **Math Connection:** Count beats out loud together (1-2-3-4).

Grace & Courtesy Connection

Music and rhythm are natural opportunities to practice grace and courtesy:

- Waiting your turn for an instrument
- Listening when another child is leading the beat



- Respecting silence after the music

Through rhythm, children not only learn music—they learn patience, cooperation, and joy in shared experiences.

✨ **When Montessori meets music and rhythm, children discover the power of sound, silence, and connection. It's not about perfection—it's about expression, discovery, and community.**

