

# Breaks & Signs

you can use these breaks and signals in any rhythm

## Changing the tune

*sign X with the sticks or arms*



After this sign, show the sign of the new tune you want to change to.  
If you don't use it, only the break following the new tune's sign is played, without changing the tune.

## Into the tune

*move both hands from the shoulders down in a half circle each, like waves, backs of the hands touching each other at the bottom.*

Signal everyone or a group of instruments to go back into the tune.



## Continue playing

*Turn your hands around each other horizontally*

Show together with instrument section sign(s).



## Everybody else

*Circle with your index finger above your head*

After showing something to one section, always signal to the rest of the band what they should do.



## Stop

*Raise one fist  
(look at the inner side of your hand)*

In the moment of stopping, move your fist down.  
In order to "Stop" the band you have to count in.



## Stop immediately

*Raise two fists  
(look at the inner side of your hand)*

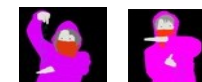
In the moment of stopping, move your fists down.  
When "Stop immediately" is shown, everybody should stop immediately, even in the middle of the music.



## Speeding Up / Down

*signed with circling a watch on the hand clock wise, while pointing upwards with the drumsticks.  
Or downwards, to slow down.*

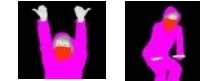
Some breaks can be used for speeding up or slowing down. Others need more practise and some experience.  
Speeding up can also be done following one instrument section, either by signing to everyone to listen to and follow while playing, or by stopping all other instruments and then, after speeding up, get all back in with a break or just count them in.  
For speeding up you would take the most stable section, but maybe not the surdos.



### Volume Up / Down

move flat hands up / tho the bottom

Take care that the band only changes loudness, not speed.



### Loop

draw with you second hand a half circle over the sign you want to repeat

For repeating a sign (or a sequence) endlessly, show with your second hand the loop sign.

### 4 x repeat, from soft to loud

with the left hand, show the sign.  
move your right flat hand along the left arm,  
from elbow to hand upwards without stopping,  
on the side facing your body.

The break you show is repeated four times.  
This is played from soft to loud.

eg with Clave Break:



### Speaking Break

make blabla with one hand

Speaking Break 2: blabla with two hands and some distance between each other

Speaking Break 3: blabla with two hands, like eating each other.

Shout whatever you agreed on.



### Let instruments play another instrument's rhythm

First who, then what

First show the instrument section(s), of **who** you mean.

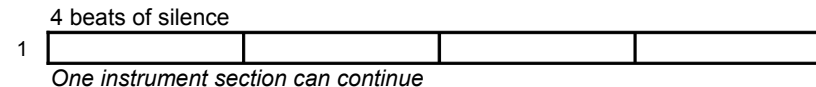
Then show the instrument section, of **what** they should play.

Remember some instruments have two sticks and some have two sounds (agogos). Not everything is possible.



### Silence Break

4 fingers up

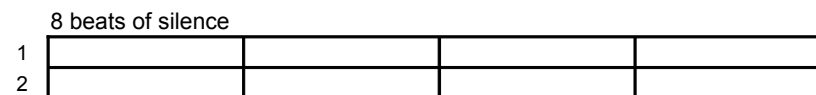


One instrument section can continue

A Surdo and agogo can pick up on the last beat if it fits to the rhythm.

### Double Silence Break

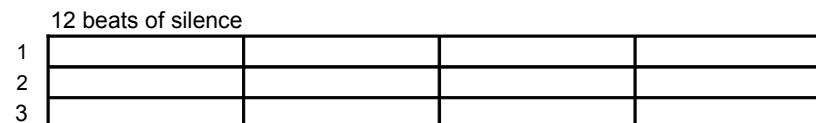
4 fingers from each hand up,  
while hooking your thumbs into each other



A Surdo and agogo can pick up ...

### Triple Silence Break

4 fingers from one hand up,  
4 fingers from one hand down,  
while hooking your thumbs into each other



### Quad Silence Break

4 fingers from each hand down, while hooking your thumbs into each other



16 beats of silence

1				
2				
3				
4				

### Continue One Line

move one index finger horizontally in front of you



1	.....	.....	.....	.....
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Continue playing what you played for 4 beats

### Continue Two Lines

move two index fingers horizontally in front of you



1	.....	.....	.....	.....
2	.....	.....	.....	.....

Continue playing what you played for 8 beats

### Break Eight Up

sign eight fingers waving towards the sky



	1		2		3		4					
1	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
	T+!		T+!		T+!		T+!		T+!		T+!	
2	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
	T+!		T+!		T+!		T+!		T+!		T+!	

T+! = Tamb + low agogo – or twice as fast!

< from soft to loud!

### Democracy Break

hold both your hands open around your mouth, like calling



1	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
2	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
3	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
4	This	is		what	de	mo		cra	cy	looks	like	
5	S	S		S	S	S		S	S	S	S	
6	This	is		what	de	mo		cra	cy	looks	like	
7	E	E		E	E	E		E	E	E	E	
8	This	is		what	de	mo		cra	cy	looks	like	
9	This	is		what	de	mo		cra	cy	looks	like	
10	This	is		what	de	mo		cra	cy	looks	like	
11	E		E		E		E		E		E	

< from soft to loud!

**"Tamborim Stroke"**

sign the 'OK!' sign (making a ring with thumb and index, spread your fingers)



Short break where everyone plays the same as the

Tamborims, for one line. Does not work with all the rhythms.

**Rise Up / Storming Break**

show the arm as measure, with one stick / or hand on your elbow don't make a fist!



Show together with instrument section sign(s): usually the Surdos, but everything else is possible. Show everyone else to continue or to stop. Using the arm as a measure, the maestra signals to the chosen section(s) to start "storming" quietly, that is, to hit carefully sixteenths with two sticks, like in „Eight Up“. Raise the volume by moving the "measure" up the stretched-up arm. Before reaching top level, signal a break to everyone, e.g. a Silence Break. You can also signal to one section to continue. When the section playing the Rise Up Break can't stand it anymore and everyone is screaming, count in the Break and enjoy, e.g. the flashing solo or a screaming silence, before everyone comes back into the groove.

**Alerting / Magic Wand Break**

show your flat hand and hit it with stick



Stop the Surdos. Give a sign for when the Surdos should hit once, by hitting the stick on the hand in the air. It's easier to follow if you paint a small loop in the air with your stick, just before hitting. Start with just on the count [the first], then every two beats ... Break with any of the Breaks after which everyone plays as normal .. n' in!

**Chaos Break**

Point with index finger to your temple (works instantly, no counting in)



When everything goes bad, the chaos break saves you! Show the "chaos break" and everybody will instantly play the "chaos" getting loader and loader until you count in something else.

**Again Sign**

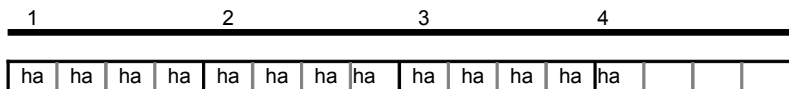
Hit with your flat hand on your forehead



A break sequence was great and you want to do it again. Use the "again sign". If something didn't work out well, it's better to show everything again, since maybe someone didn't get it.

**Laughing Break**

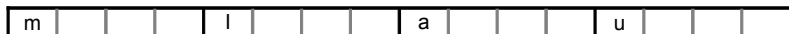
Draw with your two index fingers a smiling mouth on your face



laughter from high to low sound

**Cat Break**

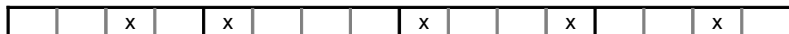
Show the claws with one hand to the band



miau from high to low sound

**Clave inverted**

Clave sign top down



**What - Sign**

Flat hands opened upwards – looking wondering



You ran out of ideas? You want to change the tune, but don't know which one? Use the What-Sign and ask the band. You choose one out of the suggested ideas.