

something—another note—to “complete” it. Its dissonance must be resolved to consonance. So try this:

1 – 3 – 5 – 8
 1 – 3 – 5 – 8
 2 – 4 – 6 – 6
 2 – 4 – 6 – 6
 1 – 3 – 5 – 8
 1 – 3 – 5 – 8
 7 – 7 – 7 – 7
 7 – 7 – 7 – 8

Now the seventh sounds completed. The entire sequence has been resolved and here, in part, lies the essence of a phrase—a musical segment or statement that is completed upon reaching the resolve.

We have been giving each of these notes a whole beat every time we play it. As you get faster and more proficient in your coordination, you may want to begin splitting the value of your beats. You can split them in half, then again into quarters, into eighths, sixteenths, thirty-seconds, sixty-fourths... The master violinist Paganini did some truly incredible things beyond that.

A simple notation for dividing beats is a slash mark (/). This notation means that you play the note on either side of the line twice as fast as a whole beat. So try this sequence:

1 – 3 – 5/5 – 8
 1 – 3 – 5/5 – 8
 2 – 4 – 6/6 – 6
 2 – 4 – 6/6 – 6
 1 – 3 – 5/5 – 8
 1 – 3 – 5/5 – 8
 7 – 7 – 7 – 7
 7 – 7 – 7 – 8

A variety of strumming strokes can be used with this sequence. One with which it might be good to start is a series of all downstrokes (or upstrokes) except