

# RAGAS AND TALAS/TAAL



0779CH07



षड्जश्च ऋषभश्चैव गान्धारो मध्यमस्तथा ।  
पञ्चमो धैवतश्चैव सप्तमोऽथ निषादवान् ॥

– नाट्यशास्त्र, 28/23

*Ṣhaḍjaśhcha Ṛṣhabhaśh chaiva Gāndhāro Madhyamas tathā.*

*Pañchamo Dhaivataśh chaiva saptamo'tha Niṣhādavān. |21|*

*Natya Shastra – 28.21*

The seven notes practised during the times of Natyashastra are as follows: Sadaj, Rishabh, Gandhar, Madhyam, Pancham, Dhaivat and Nishad

Every year, we build on our understanding of both styles of Indian Classical Music—Carnatic and Hindustani. This year, we will explore more compositions, *Ragas* and *Talas/Taals*. See how you can draw connections between the two styles of classical music, and between classical music and other styles of music that you listen to.



Gangubai Hangal

DO YOU  
KNOW?



The notes of Indian Classical Music evolved from the ritual chanting of the *Samaveda*. Initially, the *Vedas* were chanted with three notes, namely, *Udatta* (normal or medium tone), *Anudatta* (not raised, or lower note) and *Svarita* (raised pitch or higher). These gradually evolved into the seven notes (*sapta swara*) that we use in music.

## CARNATIC MUSIC

### SAPTA TALA ALANKARAS

A popular set of vocal exercises to build vocal strength and understand *talas* is the *sapta tala alankaras*.

### CARNATIC TALAS

There are seven main *talas* in Carnatic Music. They are:

1. *Dhruva*
2. *Matya*
3. *Rupaka*
4. *Jhampa*
5. *Triputa*
6. *Ata*
7. *Eka*

The three main parts or *angas* that make up a *tala* are:

1. *Laghu* (clap and finger counts\*): notated I
2. *Drutam* (clap and wave): notated as O
3. *Anudrutam* (beat): notated as U

**Note:** There can be different number of beats in a *laghu*, which is known as *jathi*. For this level, each *laghu* has four beats.

In this chapter, we will learn to sing the first three *alankaras* and keep *tala*:

### DHRUVA TALA

I <sub>4</sub>	0	I <sub>4</sub>	I <sub>4</sub>
S R G M	G R	S R G R	S R G M
R G M P	M G	R G M G	R G M P
G M P D	P M	G M P M	G M P D
M P D N	D P	M P D P	M P D N
P D N Ś	N D	P D N D	P D N Ś
Ś N D P	D N	Ś N D N	Ś N D P
N D P M	P D	N D P D	N D P M
D P M G	M P	D P M P	D P M G
P M G R	G M	P M G M	P M G R
M G R S	R G	M G R G	M G R S

### MATYA TALA

I <sub>4</sub>	0	I <sub>4</sub>
S R G R	S R	S R G M
R G M G	R G	R G M P
G M P M	G M	G M P D
M P D P	M P	M P D N
P D N D	P D	P D N Ś
Ś N D N	Ś N	Ś N D P
N D P D	N D	N D P M
D P M P	D P	D P M G
P M G M	P M	P M G R
M G R G	M G	M G R S

## RUPAKA TALA

0				I <sub>4</sub>			
S	R		S	R	G	M	
R	G		R	G	M	P	
G	M		G	M	P	D	
M	P		M	P	D	N	
P	D		P	D	N	Ś	
Ś	N		Ś	N	D	P	
N	D		N	D	P	M	
D	P		D	P	M	G	
P	M		P	M	G	R	
M	G		M	G	R	S	

As you can see, all these *alankaras* are built on patterns. Can you try making your own patterns of *sargams* or notes as vocal exercises?

Now let us sing a *swarajati*.

Before singing this composition, sing the *Arohana* and the *Avarohana*. Try keeping *tala* as you sing the composition. *Adi Tala* is a rhythm cycle of 8 beats.



Carnatic vocalist Aruna Sairam at a concert

A *swarajati* is a very old musical form in Carnatic Music comprising *swaras* and sometimes lyrics. Usually, it has three parts — *pallavi* (refrain or chorus), *anupallavi* (small section after the *pallavi*) and one or more *charanams* (verses).

DO YOU  
KNOW?



## RA RA VENU

Ragam: Bilahari

Talam: Adi |

Language: Telugu

Composer: Patnam Subramania Iyer

Arohanam: S R<sub>2</sub> G<sub>3</sub> P D<sub>2</sub> Ś

Avrohanam: Ś N<sub>3</sub> D<sub>2</sub> P M<sub>1</sub> G<sub>3</sub> R<sub>2</sub> S

### PALLAVI

S	,		R	G	,	P	,	D	,	Ś	,	N	,	D	,	
Ra			Ra	Ve		Nu		Go		Pa		ba		la		
P	,	D	P	M	G	R	S		R	S	Ṇ	Ḍ	S	,	,	
Ra		ji	ta	Sa	d	gu	na		Ja	ya	sh	ee	la			

### ANUPALLAVI

S	,		R	G	,	P	,	M	,		G	P	,	D	,	
Sa			ra	sa		ksha		Ne			re	me		mi		
Ṛ	,		Ś	N	,		D		P	,		M	G	,		R
Ma			ru	ba			ri	Ko			rva	le			Ra	(Ra Ra)

### CHARANAM

1.	G	P	D	Ṛ	Ś	Ś	Ś	,	Ġ	Ġ	Ġ	,	Ṛ	Ṛ	Ṛ	,	
	Na	Na	Vi	lu	tu	ni	Ga		r	va	ma	dan	chi	Sa	da		
	P	P	P	,	M	G	G	,	R	S	S	,	R	S	Ṇ	Ḍ	
	Na	nu	Ni		ya	da	pa	i	Da	ya	to		Po	du	ku	ra	(Ra Ra)

2.	S	,	,	R	G	,	G		G	,	,	,	,	,	R	G	
	Na	n		da	go		pa		la						Ne		
	P	,	,	P	P	,	P	,	P	,	,	,	,	,	D	P	
	nen			du	Po		ja		la						Ni		
	Ś	,	,	Ś	Ś	,	Ś	,	Ġ	Ř	Ś	N	N	D	P	,	
	Vin			du	Ra		Ra		Sa	da	ma	la	ma	di	to		
	P	D	P	M	G	G	R	,	G	P	M	G	R	S	R	G	
	Mu	da	mu	la	ra	ga	na		Ke	du	ru	ga	ga	ti	ya	ra	(Ra Ra)
3.	P	P	P	,	R	R	R	,	G	P	M	G	G	,	,	,	
	Pa	lu	ma		Ru	nu	ga		Ra	va	mu	na	Nin				
	G	P	M	G	M	G	R	S		R	G	R	S	S	,	,	
	Da	la	chi	na	Pa	lu	ka	vu	Na	lu	gu	ku	Ra				
	R	S	Ṇ	Ḍ	S	,	,	,	M	G	R	G	P	,	,	,	
	Ka	ri	va	ra	da				Ma	ri	ma	ri	Na				
	D	P	D	Ř	Ś	,	,	,	Ř	Ś	N	D	P	M	G	R	
	ya	dh	ar	amu	Kr	o			la	ra	ka	ni	ka	ra	mu	ga	(Ra Ra)



4.	P	,	,	,	M	G	R	G	D	,	,	,	M	G	R	G		
	Ra				Na	ga	da	ra	Ra				Mu	ra	ha	ra		
	P	,	,	,	M	G	R	G		P	,	P	,	P	,	,	,	
	Ra				Bha	va	ha	ra	Ra		Ve		Ra					
	Ġ	,	,	,	Ř	Š	N	D	Ř	,	,	,	Ř	Š	N	D		
	Ee				Ma	gu	va	nu	Ee				La	la	la	nu		
	Š	,	,	,	Ř	Š	N	D		Š	,	Š	,	Š	,	,	,	
	Ee				So	ga	si	ni	Ch	ai	ko		ra					
	Ġ	,	Ř	Š	Ř	,	Ř	,	Ř	,	,	,	Ř	,	Š	N		
	Ko		ri	ka	lim		Pon		Daa				den		da	mu		
	D	,	D	,	D	,	,	,		P	,	M	G	G	,	G	,	
	Nee	yan	da							Je		re	nu	ni		Ch	en	

## HINDUSTANI MUSIC

### TAAL/TALA

Here are a few basic *talas* of Hindustani music. Learn to count them and recite the syllables (*bols*) with the help of your teacher.

**TALA — JHAPTALA** — This *tala* has 10 units/*matras*.

Matra/Counting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Theka/Bol/ Syllables	Dhee	Naa	Dhee	Dhee	Naa	Tee	Naa	Dhee	Dhee	Naa
Chinha/Signs	x		2			0		3		

**TALA — RUPAK** — This *tala* has 7 units.

Matra/Counting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Theka/Bol/ Syllables	Tee	Tee	Naa	Dhee	Naa	Dhee	Naa
Chinha/Signs		0		1		2	

**TALA — EKTAAL** — This *tala* has 12 units/*matras*.

Matra	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Taal	Dhin	Dhin	Dhage	Tirkit	Tu	Naa	Kat	Taa	Dhage	Tirkit	Dhi	Naa
Signs	x		0		2		0		3		4	

### RAGAS

Do you remember that there are 12 notes in the Hindustani music system?

Seven *shuddha* — S R G M P D N

Four *komal* — R G D N (The underlined notes indicate *komal swaras*.)

One *teevra* — <sup>|</sup>M (denoted as <sup>|</sup>M)

### SAMAY CHAKRA (TIME THEORY OF HINDUSTANI RAGAS)

Classical Music is a *dharohar*, a treasure passed from one generation to another. *Ragas* in music express emotions and create moods. In Hindustani music, different *ragas* are sung at different times of the day. A pattern of notes sounds effective if you sing it at a particular time of the day. For example, *Raga Bhairav* is a morning *raga*, while *Raga Yaman* is generally sung in the evening.



Raga Mala Painting

## RAGA BHAIRAVI

*Thaat — Bhairavi*

*Aroh — S, R, G, M, P, D, N, Ś*

*Avroh — Ś, N, D, P, M, G, R, S*

*Pakad — M, G, S, R, S, D, N, Ś*

*Varjit Swar — no swar*

*Jati — Sampooran - Sampooran*

*Komal Swar — R, G, D, N*

*Vadi Swar — Madhyam*

*Samvadi Swar — Shadaj*

*Singing time — Early Morning*

### RAGA – BHAIRAVI SARGAM GEET (EKTAAL)

Beats	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Bol	Dhin	Dhin	Dhage	Tirkit	Tu	Na	Kat	Ta	Dhage	Tirkit	Dhi	Na
Symbols	X		0		2		0		3		4	

#### STHAYI

<u>D</u>	-	P	<u>D</u>	M	P	<u>G</u>	M	<u>G</u>	<u>R</u>	S	<u>N</u>
<u>D</u>	-	<u>N</u>	S	-	<u>R</u>	<u>G</u>	M	<u>G</u>	<u>R</u>	S	-
<u>G</u>	M	<u>D</u>	<u>N</u>	Ś	<u>N</u>	<u>ŚN</u>	<u>DP</u>	<u>ND</u>	<u>PM</u>	<u>GR</u>	<u>SS</u>

#### ANTARA

M	<u>G</u>	M	<u>D</u>	-	<u>N</u>	Ś	<u>N</u>	Ś	<u>R</u>	Ś	-
<u>D</u>	-	<u>N</u>	Ś	-	<u>R</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>R</u>	Ś	-
Ś	-	Ś	<u>N</u>	<u>D</u>	P	<u>ŚN</u>	<u>DP</u>	<u>ND</u>	<u>PM</u>	<u>GR</u>	<u>SS</u>
X		0		2		0		3		4	



## RAGA BHAIRAVI — TEENTAAL (CHOTA KHAYAL)

**Sthayi:** Kaisi ye bhalai rey kanhai paniyaa bharat mori gagari girayee kara ke larai

**Antara:** Sanad kahe aiso dheeta bha yo kanhai kaa karun maney naahi manat kanhai karat larai

## RAGA BHAIRAVI — TEENTAAL

(Kramik Pustak Mallika Part – 2)

Beats	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Bol	Dha	Dhin	Dhin	Dha	Dha	Dhin	Dhin	Dha	Dha	Tin	Tin	Ta	Ta	Dhin	Dhin	Dha
Symbols	X				2				0				3			
													N <sup>s</sup>	S	G	M
	<b>STHAYI</b>												Kai	si	Yeh	Bha
	(D)	-	<u>D</u>	P	-	<u>D</u>	P	P	M <sup>P</sup>	P	M	<u>D</u>	P	M	<u>G<sup>M</sup></u>	<u>R</u>
	la	ṡ	i	Re	ṡ	K	nha	i	Pa	ni	ya	Bha	r	t	Mo	ri
	<u>G<sup>M</sup></u>	P	<u>D</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>D</u>	P	<u>G<sup>M</sup></u>	M	<u>G<sup>R</sup></u>	<u>R</u>	S	S				
	Ga	g	ri	Gi	ra	i	Ka	r	ke	La	ra	i				
	<b>ANTARA</b>												<u>ṡ</u>	-	<u>ṡ</u>	<u>N</u>
									<u>D</u>	M	<u>D</u>	<u>N</u>	he	ṡ	Ae	so
	<u>ṡ</u> <u>R</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>ṡ</u> <u>R</u>	<u>R</u> <u>G</u>	<u>ṡ</u>	<u>ṡ</u>	<u>D<sup>P</sup></u>	-	<u>D</u>	<u>D</u>	P	<u>G<sup>P</sup></u>	<u>G<sup>M</sup></u>	<u>R</u>
	Dhi	ṡ	t	Bh	yo	K	nha	i	Ka	ṡ	ka	ru	Ma	ne	Na	hi
	G	P	D	N	D	P <sup>M</sup>	G	M	G <sup>R</sup>	R	S	S				
	Ma	na	t	K	nha	i	Ka	r	t	L	ra	i				
	X				2				0				3			

## RAGA – BHAIRAVI — TARANA (TEENTAAL)

**Sthayi** — Dir Dir Ta Na De Re Na Ta Na Dim Ta Na  
Ta Na De Re Ta Na na na Ta Dim Ta de Re Na

**Antara** — Alali Alali Tom Tan de Re Na Ta Dim Ta De Re Na Ta Dim Ta De Re Na  
Dha Kit Dhum Kit Ta Ka Dhe Tat

$\dot{S}$ N DP ND PM DP MG RR SS

Beats	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Bol	Dha	Dhin	Dhin	Dha	Dha	Dhin	Dhin	Dha	Dha	Tin	Tin	Ta	Ta	Dhin	Dhin	Dha
Symbols	X				2				0				3			
<b>STHAYI</b>									<u>N</u>	Sa	<u>G</u>	M	P	<u>D</u>	P	-
									Dir	Dir	Ta	na	De	re	Na	5
	P	<u>D</u>	P	<u>N</u>	<u>D</u>	M	<u>G</u>	-	<u>G</u>	P	M	<u>D</u>	P	M	<u>G</u>	<u>R</u>
	Ta	na	Ta	di	5	m	Ta	na	Ta	na	De	re	Ta	na	Na	Na
	<u>R</u>	<u>G</u>	P	M	<u>G</u>	<u>R</u>	S	-								
	Ta	Di	M	Ta	De	re	Na	5								
<b>ANTARA</b>									<u>G</u>	<u>G</u>	M	M	<u>D</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>D</u>
									A	la	li	A	la	li	A	la
	$\dot{S}$	$\dot{S}$	$\dot{S}$	$\dot{S}$	<u>N</u>	<u>R</u>	$\dot{S}$	-	$\dot{S}$	<u>G</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>G</u>	$\dot{S}$	<u>R</u>	$\dot{S}$	-
	To	m	Ta	na	De	re	na	5	Ta	di	m	Ta	De	Re	Na	5
	$\dot{S}$	<u>G</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>G</u>	$\dot{S}$	<u>R</u>	$\dot{S}$	-	P	<u>D</u>	<u>N</u>	$\dot{S}$	<u>N</u>	<u>D</u>	P	M
	Ta	Di	m	Ta	De	re	Na	5	Dha	kit	dhum	kit	Ta	Ka	Dhe	tat
	$\dot{S}$ <u>N</u>	<u>DP</u>	<u>ND</u>	<u>PM</u>	<u>DP</u>	<u>MG</u>	<u>RR</u>	<u>SS</u>								
	X				2				0				3			

## USTAD ZAKIR HUSSAIN (1951–2024)

Zakir Hussain was a renowned tabla maestro of India. He was the son of Ustad Alla Rakha, a well-known Tabla player. Zakir Hussain started playing the tabla at a very young age. His study with his father was intensive, “You grow up in a musical atmosphere”, he said, “and you don’t have to do anything else”. He began playing at concerts around the age of seven and started touring at the age of twelve.



He played across a wide range of formats, from accompanying legendary Hindustani musicians like Pandit Ravi Shankar to solo tabla concerts. He was a founding member of the pathbreaking world music band, Shakti. He toured with the band for several decades. He collaborated with a range of musicians from around the world and performed in some of the most prestigious venues of music. He received countless awards, including the Padma Vibhushan and the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award from the Government of India, and three Grammy awards.

### ACTIVITY 7.1: PLAYING THE TABLA



If there is a tabla teacher in your school, learn some simple rhythms from them.

## EXERCISES

1. (a) How many sections are there in *teentala*?

(i) 3 (ii) 2

(iii) 6 (iv) 4

(b) How many sections are there in *rupak*?

(i) 6 (ii) 2

(iii) 3 (iv) 4

(c) The *bols* of *rupak* are:

(i) Ti Ti Na Dhi Dhi Na

(ii) Ti Ti Na Dhi Na Dhi Na

(iii) Na Dhi Na Dhi Na

(iv) Na Tin Tin

2. Identify the Carnatic *tala* from the *angas* (parts):

(a) I 0 I I

(b) I 0 I

(c) 0 I

3. Unscramble the names of *ragas*:

(a) I R V B H A A

(b) A A Y N M

(c) K J A M A H

(d) A M A O H N

(e) I L H A A B I R

(f) A A A A A S B N H K R H N M R



## ASSESSMENT

### CHAPTER 7: RAGAS AND TAAL/TALAS

CG	C	Learning Outcomes	Teacher	Self
1	1.1	Understands basic music terminologies, such as <i>naada</i> , <i>dhwani</i>		
1	1.1	Is familiar with the notes of Carnatic and Hindustani music		
1	1.1	Is able to sing selected compositions of Indian classical music using the correct notes of the <i>raga</i> , and in the correct <i>tala</i>		
1	1.1	Has a basic understanding of some Carnatic and Hindustani <i>talas</i>		

Teacher's Comments and Student's Observations

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