Collegedunia NCERT Notes

Class 6 Arts (Kriti-I), 2026-27 Syllabus

Chapter 8: Taal or Talam and Raga or Ragam in Indian Music

These Grade 6 notes explain rhythm cycles, melodic patterns and the four NCERT music activities. Practise with a teacher's demonstration.

Also see for this chapter: NCERT Solutions

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1 Listening for rhythm and melody

Indian classical music brings rhythm and melody together. This chapter introduces Hindustani and Carnatic terms through counting, listening and singing.

1.1 The two musical questions

When listening, ask where the beats return and how the tune moves. These questions direct attention to different musical features.

- **Taal or talam:** a repeating organisation of beats.
- **Raga or ragam:** a melodic form with notes and characteristic movements.
- **Laya or layam:** the pace or tempo of the music.

These are connected, but their meanings differ. A melody can continue while a performer marks a steady cycle with the hand.

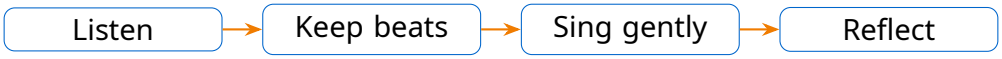
Learn by doing

Reading a beat table supports practice. Listening to a demonstration and keeping the cycle are also necessary.

1.2 A listening routine for this chapter

Choose one short classroom demonstration. Listen without speaking before trying to sing or clap along. Keep the sound comfortable.

1. Listen once for a steady pulse. Tap softly on the palm.
2. Listen again for the end of a repeating beat group.
3. Follow the tune with a gentle hum, if the teacher invites it.
4. Describe one thing heard and one thing that needs more practice.



A useful observation names a feature. For example, "I counted eight beats before returning to one" describes rhythm clearly.

"It was nice" gives little information. Add a reason, such as the calm pace or a repeated melodic phrase.

Music in a group

Singers and accompanying musicians must listen to each other. A shared beat cycle helps them remain together.

Practice example: One partner taps four equal beats twice. The other counts eight and then starts again at one.

This is a counting exercise. It does not become a named taal merely because it has eight taps.

Self-check

Can you explain rhythm without describing the tune? Can you describe a rising tune without changing the tapping speed?

2 Understanding the Hindustani taal table

A taal table shows more than a total number of beats. Read its divisions, hand signs and bols together.

2.1 Matra, vibhag, sam, tali and khali

A **matra** is one beat of a taal. A **vibhag** is a division containing a group of beats.

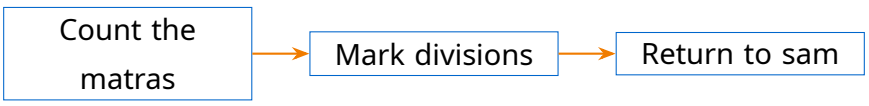
The first matra is called **sam**. It is the point to which the cycle returns. The sign X marks it here.

Term	Meaning in the chapter's tables
Matra	A counted beat within the cycle.
Vibhag	A group or division of beats.
Tali	A marked clap at a division's start.
Khali	A division marked with a wave, shown by 0.
Bol	A spoken rhythmic syllable, such as Dha or Na.

Keep all matras evenly spaced while learning a table. A clap or wave marks a place without adding another beat.

Khali is not a missing beat

Count the khali matra. A wave marks its position; it does not remove time from the cycle.



Check: If sam is beat one, what follows the last beat? The next cycle begins again on sam.

2.2 Reading bols without losing the pulse

Bols help us speak rhythmic patterns. Say one printed bol at each matra in the beginner tables used here.

1. Read the matra numbers before adding the bols.
2. Count aloud while making the correct clap or wave.
3. Speak the bols while keeping the same steady pulse.
4. Repeat the cycle without pausing after its last beat.

A cycle repeats

The last beat joins the first beat of the next cycle. Practise the join, rather than stopping after each table.

A slow, even pace is better than fast, uneven counting. Choose a pace at which every word and gesture remains clear.

When a partner makes an error, restart calmly at one together. Do not race to catch up by squeezing beats.

> **Three rounds**
>
> Use one round for numbers, one for gestures and one for bols. Then combine them slowly.

Teacher-led exercise: Speak any one chapter taal for three complete cycles. A partner counts the total matras.

- Three Keharva cycles contain 24 matras.
- Three Dadra cycles contain 18 matras.
- Three Teen Taal cycles contain 48 matras.

These totals count complete cycles only. They do not tell us how fast a performance lasts in seconds.

Explain your method

Multiply the beats in one cycle by the number of cycles. Keep tempo separate from the beat total.

3 Keharva and Dadra

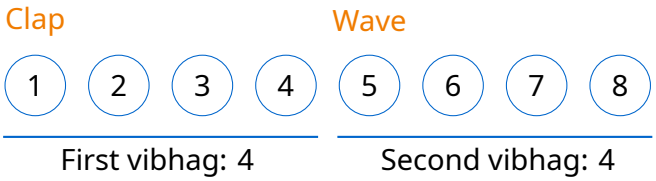
NCERT introduces two short Hindustani cycles before Teen Taal. Their beat totals and groupings make good starting points for practice.

3.1 Keharva: eight matras

Keharva has eight matras arranged in two vibhags. Each division has four matras, giving the grouping 4 + 4.

Sign	X				0			
Matra	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Bol	Dha	Ge	Na	Ti	Na	Ka	Dhin	Na

- Clap on matra 1, which is sam.
- Wave on matra 5, which begins the khali division.
- Count through matra 8 and return to 1.



Speak “Dha Ge Na Ti” and “Na Ka Dhin Na” as equal groups. Do not rush the last Na.

Find the halfway point

The wave on 5 begins the second half. It helps locate your place during the eight-beat cycle.

Practice: Count two cycles with hand signs. Then replace the numbers with bols and keep the join smooth.

Recall

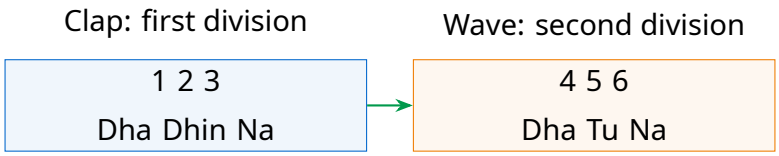
Keharva: 8 matras, 2 vibhags, tali on 1 and khali on 5.

3.2 Dadra: six matras

Dadra has six matras arranged in two vibhags. Each division has three matras, giving the grouping 3 + 3.

Sign	X			0		
Matra	1	2	3	4	5	6
Bol	Dha	Dhin	Na	Dha	Tu	Na

- Clap on matra 1.
- Wave on matra 4.
- Continue evenly through matras 5 and 6.



Both short cycles have two divisions. Their division lengths differ: Dadra uses three beats and Keharva uses four.

Count before naming

Do not call every repeating pattern Keharva. Check the beat total, grouping and taught bols before naming a taal.

Compare aloud: Say one Dadra cycle, then one Keharva cycle. Notice that the wave arrives earlier in Dadra.

The wave is on 4 in Dadra and 5 in Keharva. Neither wave adds a new matra beyond the printed count.

Remember the two short cycles

Keep the groupings together: Dadra is 3 + 3; Keharva is 4 + 4. Say the groups before the bols.

4 Teen Taal and cycle practice

Teen Taal is a sixteen-matra cycle. Its four equal divisions help us read the longer notation used later in the chapter.

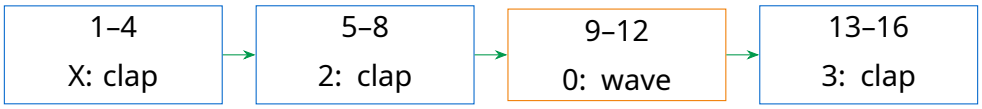
4.1 Four groups of four

Teen Taal, also written teentaal, contains four vibhags of four matras each. Its signs are X, 2, 0 and 3.

Matras	Sign and action	Bols
1, 2, 3, 4	X: clap	Dha Dhin Dhin Dha
5, 6, 7, 8	2: clap	Dha Dhin Dhin Dha
9, 10, 11, 12	0: wave	Dha Tin Tin Ta
13, 14, 15, 16	3: clap	Ta Dhin Dhin Dha

- Tali falls on matras 1, 5 and 13.
- Khali falls on matra 9.
- Sam is matra 1, marked X.

The sign 2 marks the second clap, not beat two. The sign 3 marks the third clap, not beat three.



NCERT bol pattern

Learn the version printed above for this chapter. Performers may teach other bol forms; ask before changing your class pattern.

4.2 Keeping your place across cycles

Longer cycles need patient practice. Begin with the four division starts, then fill in the remaining matras evenly.

1. Say 1, 5, 9 and 13 with the correct gestures.
2. Count every matra from 1 to 16.
3. Speak the bols in groups of four.
4. Repeat twice without stopping after 16.

The sign is not the count

At the sign 2, say matra 5. At the sign 3, say matra 13. Keep the two rows separate.

A partner can watch the gestures while you count. Ask the partner to notice whether the wave falls on 9 each time.

Then swap roles. Give one exact comment, such as "Your second clap arrived on 5 in both cycles."

Practice check	What to listen or look for
Steady pulse	Matras have equal duration during this beginner exercise.
Clear divisions	Gestures occur on 1, 5, 9 and 13.
Smooth return	Beat 16 leads directly to the next beat 1.
Clear bols	Each syllable is spoken without rushing.

Accompanying a song

The NCERT Bilawal swaramalika and Yaman bandish use teentaal. Beat practice prepares us to follow their notation.

Download the Full NCERT Solutions →

Check: Two Teen Taal cycles contain 32 matras. Four divisions appear in each cycle, making eight divisions altogether.

5 Talam in Carnatic music

In Carnatic music, a talam keeps a repeating beat cycle. The chapter introduces its parts through simple hand actions.

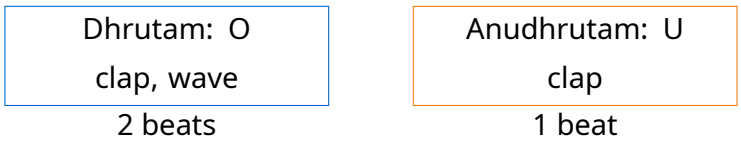
5.1 Avartanam and the three angams

One complete talam cycle is an **avartanam**. Its parts are called **angams**. The chapter introduces laghu, dhrutam and anudhrutam.

Angam	Symbol	Action and beat count
Laghu	| with a number	Clap, then count fingers; 3, 4, 5, 7 or 9 beats.
Dhrutam	O	Clap followed by a wave; 2 beats.
Anudhrutam	U	A single clap; 1 beat.

The number beside the laghu tells its beat count. In $|_4$, the clap itself is the first of four beats.

1. Make one gentle clap for the first beat.
2. Count the remaining beats with the finger actions taught in class.
3. Keep equal time between actions.



Count the clap once

A four-beat laghu is not a clap plus four extra beats. Its total is four, including the clap.

NCERT says anudhrutam is less used than the other two angams. Here, learn its action and symbol without assuming every talam uses it.

5.2 Jaati changes the laghu count

The five jaatis below describe possible laghu lengths. Keep these separate from the note-count jaatis of ragas introduced later.

Laghu jaati	Beats in one laghu
Tishra	3
Chaturashra	4
Khanda	5
Mishra	7
Sankeerna	9

Spellings can differ between learning materials. These names follow the chapter's simple transliterations.

What changes?

The jaati changes the number of beats in a laghu. A dhrutam still has two beats.

Worked example: Two dhrutams contribute 2 + 2 = 4 beats. A chaturashra laghu contributes four more.

The total for that combination is 4 + 2 + 2 = 8. That is the Adi pattern taught here.

- Say the angam names before adding their counts.
- Read the laghu's number carefully.
- Check the total after adding all parts.

Label before adding

Write "laghu" or "dhrutam" above each part. This stops the symbols from becoming an unexplained string of numbers.

Self-check: What is the count of a tishra laghu? Three. Does that make every talam three beats? No.

The cycle may contain other angams too. Add all of them to find its full count.

6 Rupaka, Adi and Triputa

The chapter gives specific talam examples. Always name the example and its grouping together, rather than relying only on its total.

6.1 Chaturashra jaati Rupaka and Adi

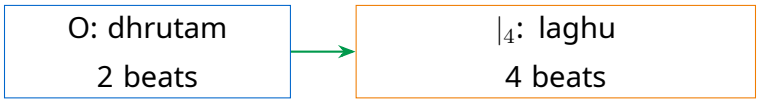
NCERT presents Rupaka as one dhrutam followed by one laghu. In its chaturashra form, the grouping is 2 + 4.

Rupaka example

$O\ |_4$: dhrutam + four-beat laghu = $2 + 4 = 6$ beats.

The book also writes the total as 4 + 2. That addition gives six, but its stated angam order is dhrutam first.

Follow the written symbol order $O\ \ |_4$ for the hand sequence. Ask the teacher before comparing other performance conventions.



Adi talam has one four-beat laghu followed by two dhrutams. Its cycle has eight beats.

Adi example

$|_4\ O\ O$: laghu + dhrutam + dhrutam = $4 + 2 + 2 = 8$ beats.

- Rupaka example: 6 beats, grouped 2 + 4.
- Adi example: 8 beats, grouped 4 + 2 + 2.
- Practise each as a continuous cycle, using the correct actions.

Compare structure

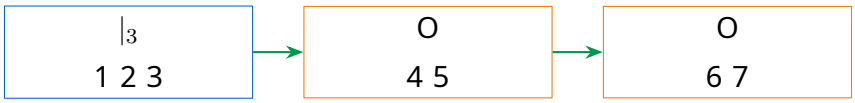
Dadra and this Rupaka example both total six. Their divisions and musical systems differ; equal totals do not make them identical.

6.2 Triputa in the Kalyani activity

The Kalyani geetam in Activity 4 is set to Triputa tala. NCERT gives its seven-beat grouping as 3 + 2 + 2.

Triputa used in Activity 4

$|_3\ O\ O$: three-beat laghu + dhrutam + dhrutam = $3 + 2 + 2 = 7$ beats.



1. Mark a clap and the remaining laghu counts for beats 1 to 3.
2. Mark the first dhrutam with a clap and wave on 4 and 5.
3. Mark the second dhrutam with a clap and wave on 6 and 7.
4. Return to the first beat of the next cycle without a pause.

The laghu here has three beats. Adi's laghu has four beats, so the two examples have different totals.

Keep the three parts

For the geetam's cycle, say "three, two, two". Then count all seven beats while making the actions.

Classroom comparison: Write Adi and this Triputa pattern one above the other. Circle only the laghu number that changes.

Use the specified form

These counts describe the forms taught in this chapter. A talam name without its jaati may need more detail.

7 Raga, ragam and notation

A raga uses swaras in meaningful musical movements. Its identity includes characteristic phrases and ornamentation, rather than only a list of notes.

7.1 Ascending, descending and expressive movement

An ascending note pattern is called aroha or arohanam. A descending pattern is called avaroha or avarohanam.

Carnatic term	Hindustani term
Ragam	Raga
Arohanam	Aroha
Avarohanam	Avaroha
Gamakam	Gamak
Layam	Laya

These paired terms help us read the chapter. They do not mean that every musical practice in both traditions is identical.

Raga and rasa

NCERT explains raga as something that colours the mind. The emotional response associated with music is called rasa.

Gamakas decorate musical notes through movements such as oscillation or gliding. Hear a teacher's example before trying them.

Listening for expression

Two performances may use the same note names yet sound different. Listen for note movement, emphasis and repeated phrases.

7.2 Octaves and note-count jaatis

NCERT uses dots to show the octave. A dot above a swara marks the higher octave, called taar saptak.

A dot below marks the lower octave, called mandra saptak. No dot marks the middle octave, called madhya saptak.

Position	Example	Meaning
Dot above	$\dot{S}$	Higher Sa
No dot	S	Middle Sa
Dot below	$\underset{\cdot}{S}$	Lower Sa

The dot changes the octave marking. It does not mean that the singer should become louder.

Raga jaati	Number of distinct notes
Audav	5
Shadav	6
Sampoorna	7

Count distinct note names, not the repeated Sa at the octave. S R G P D $\dot{S}$ uses five distinct swaras.

Two uses of jaati

Laghu jaati concerns beat counts: 3, 4, 5, 7 or 9. Raga jaati concerns note counts: 5, 6 or 7.

Worked check: S R G M P D N $\dot{S}$ has seven distinct swaras. Its note-count type is sampoorna.

Count names once

Write S, R, G, M, P, D and N separately. Tick each name used, then count the ticks.

8 Activities 1 and 2: Bhoop and Bilawal

The first two activities connect note patterns with singing. Follow the official audio or a teacher for pitch and phrasing.

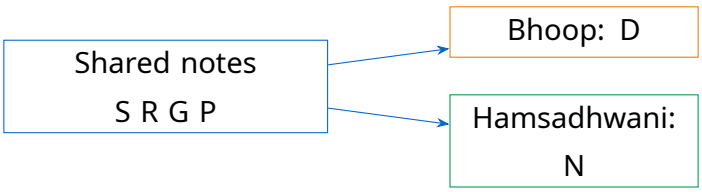
8.1 Activity 1: compare Bhoop and Hamsadhwani

NCERT gives two five-note patterns. The following lines preserve their note order while using a dot for the higher Sa.

Raga	Aroha	Avaroha
Bhoop	S R G P D $\dot{S}$	$\dot{S}$ D P G R S
Hamsadhwani	S R G P N $\dot{S}$	$\dot{S}$ N P G R S

- Both patterns use S, R, G and P.
- Bhoop uses D in the pattern shown.
- Hamsadhwani uses N instead of D.
- Neither pattern shown uses M.

Both use five distinct swaras. Each is therefore audav in the chapter's note-count explanation.



Practice: Speak each pattern first. Sing it gently after a teacher, then descend without adding an omitted note.

A pattern is a beginning

Learning ascending and descending notes begins raga study. Characteristic phrases and gamakas also help give a raga its identity.

8.2 Activity 2: a swaramalika in Bilawal

A swaramalika is a composition sung using swaras, also called sargam. The chapter's traditional Bilawal example is set to teentaal.

Bilawal pattern in the activity

Aroha: S R G M P D N $\dot{S}$
Avaroha: $\dot{S}$ N D P M G R S.

All seven swaras occur in the pattern shown. The composition's notation is arranged under a sixteen-matra count.

1. Count one complete teentaal cycle before singing.
2. Locate the sthayi and antara labels in the textbook.
3. Learn a short phrase by listening and repeating.
4. Join phrases while keeping the 1, 5, 9 and 13 gestures.

Sthayi and antara label sections of this composition. Learn one section carefully before joining it to the other.

Some printed cells hold a sustained note. Follow the notation and audio rather than forcing a fresh syllable into every beat.

Bols and swaras have different jobs

Teentaal bols describe the rhythmic pattern. The swaramalika's swaras describe the melody. Keep both layers in mind.

Listening task: Have one group quietly mark the taal while another sings a learned phrase. Then exchange roles.

- Did both groups return to the beginning together?
- Did the pulse stay steady during longer notes?
- Which phrase needs slower practice?

Working as an ensemble

Successful group music needs careful listening. A loud clap should not cover a classmate's voice or the teacher's demonstration.

9 Activity 3: a bandish in Yaman

A bandish is a composition in Hindustani classical music. The chapter introduces Yaman through a short khayal and a second composition about the guru.

9.1 The higher Ma and the chapter's note order

Yaman uses a higher form of Ma than the regular Ma previously sung. Here M' marks that higher Ma, often called tivra Ma.

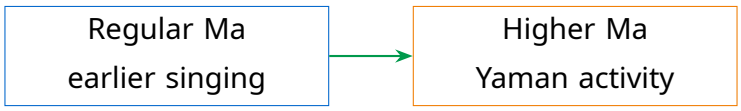
NCERT Yaman pattern

Aroha: N R G M' D N $\dot{S}$

Avaroha: $\dot{S}$ N D P M' G R S.

The opening N leads towards the middle R in the taught ascent. Hear its octave placement in the demonstration.

The ascent printed in this chapter omits P. The descending line includes P. Read each direction independently.



Listen for the changed pitch, not louder volume

- Listen closely to the teacher's higher Ma.
- Repeat a short phrase at a comfortable pitch.
- Keep the changed Ma consistent when descending too.

An octave dot is different

A dot above a note marks an octave. The prime on M' here marks altered Ma, not an octave change.

NCERT associates Yaman's predominant mood with shringar, or love. Listen respectfully; personal responses can also vary.

9.2 Learning the two Yaman compositions

The short khayal titled Kanha Bansuri describes Krishna's flute and the gopikas of Vrindavan. The chapter sets it to teentaal.

The second bandish begins Guru Bin Kaise Gun Gaaye. It concerns the value of the guru in learning music.

Learning focus	What to do
Text	Hear the teacher explain unfamiliar words.
Melody	Repeat a small phrase before joining longer lines.
Taal	Keep teentaal while notes or words continue.
Sections	Identify the labelled sthayi and antara.

NCERT explains two duration marks in this notation. "s" extends a word; the hyphen extends a swara.

Holding a sound

An extension continues the sound through time. Keep the beat moving while holding it; do not insert an extra syllable.

Practice sequence: Speak one lyric line clearly. Listen to its melody. Sing the phrase and then add gentle taal gestures.

- Stop to clarify a word rather than guessing its meaning.
- Keep breaths relaxed and avoid forcing high notes.
- Follow the teacher's phrasing before adding ornamentation.

Pandit Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande developed a Hindustani notation system. NCERT mentions his collection Kramik Pustak Maalika in six parts.

Written notation helps preserve compositions. Listening remains necessary because printed symbols alone cannot teach every musical detail.

10 Activity 4: a geetam in Kalyani

The Carnatic activity introduces Kamalajaadala, a geetam in Ragam Kalyani. Learn its swaras and sahitya, or lyrics, through listening.

10.1 Kamalajaadala and its seven-beat cycle

NCERT credits Kamalajaadala to Purandaradasa. It praises Vishnu's compassion and glory and is set to Triputa tala.

Kalyani notes printed in NCERT

Arohanam: S R_2 G_3 M_2 P D_2 N_3 $\dot{S}$

Avarohanam: $\dot{S}$ N_3 D_2 P M_2 G_3 R_2 S.

The subscripts specify swara forms in Carnatic notation. They are not beat numbers. M_2 is the higher Ma used here.

The chapter compares Kalyani with Shankarabharanam. Their note sets differ at Ma: Kalyani uses the higher Ma.

- **Ragam:** Kalyani.
- **Composition type:** geetam.
- **Composer:** Purandaradasa.
- **Tala in this activity:** Triputa, 3 + 2 + 2.

1. Listen to the teacher or chapter audio.
2. Learn a short swara phrase accurately.
3. Sing the matching words with clear pronunciation.
4. Add the seven-beat hand cycle after the phrase is secure.

Keep the count during the song

Words and swaras may continue across beats. Continue marking the talam instead of restarting it at every word.

NCERT describes a geetam here as a Carnatic composition praising a God or Goddess. Discuss its cultural meaning respectfully.

10.2 Warm-ups, gamakas and careful practice

The chapter follows the geetam with four vocal warm-up patterns in Kalyani. They include different note sequences and octave positions.

Practise from the official notation while listening to a demonstration. Do not replace its dotted notes with undotted notes.

1. Sit or stand comfortably with relaxed shoulders.
2. Listen to one short pattern at a comfortable pitch.
3. Repeat gently, matching the teacher's swara sequence.
4. Pause when needed. Ask for help if a pitch feels strained.

Gamakas need listening

Gamakas use movements such as oscillating or gliding between pitches. Copy a clear demonstration gently, rather than shaking the voice at random.

Practice record: After each short session, write which pattern you tried. Name one improvement and one question for the teacher.

Focus	What improved?	What needs help?
Pitch	Example: upper Sa felt clearer.	Example: lower notes need guidance.
Pulse	Example: count stayed even.	Example: return after 7 needs practice.
Words	Example: one phrase became clear.	Example: ask about pronunciation.

Listen, sing, check

Use three simple prompts: listen first, sing gently, check one detail. Repeat patiently rather than rushing all four patterns.

The Carnatic trinity comprises Tyagaraja, Muthuswami Dikshitar and Shyama Shastri. The geetam here is by Purandaradasa.

Related Collegedunia Resources

Same chapter, other resources:

- Chapter 8 NCERT Solutions

Continue learning:

- Read Kriti-I Chapter 8, pages 53–60.

11 Quick reference and classroom revision

Use these tables after completing the listening and singing activities. They are revision aids, not replacements for practical music learning.

11.1 Beat-count reference sheet

Each count below belongs to the particular chapter example. Compare both the total and the grouping before answering a question.

Example	Total	Grouping	Main markers
Keharva	8	4 + 4	Clap 1; wave 5.
Dadra	6	3 + 3	Clap 1; wave 4.
Teen Taal	16	4 + 4 + 4 + 4	Claps 1, 5, 13; wave 9.
Rupaka example	6	2 + 4	Dhrutam, laghu.
Adi example	8	4 + 2 + 2	Laghu, two dhrutams.
Triputa activity	7	3 + 2 + 2	Laghu, two dhrutams.

Simple counting rules

Matras in repeated cycles = matras per cycle $\times$ number of cycles.
Total talam beats = sum of the beats in all its angams.

Worked check: Four Dadra cycles contain $4 \times 6 = 24$ matras.

- Beat count answers “how many?”
- Grouping answers “how are they divided?”
- Gestures help show important positions in the cycle.

11.2 Recall questions with explained answers

Try each question before checking the answer. Use a hand gesture or sung example when a written sentence is insufficient.

1. **What is sam?** The first matra of a Hindustani taal cycle. It is the return point, marked X here.
2. **Where is Dadra's khali?** On matra 4. Dadra divides six matras into 3 + 3.
3. **What makes a dhrutam?** One clap and one wave, together making two beats.
4. **How does Adi differ from this Triputa example?** Their laghus have four and three beats respectively.
5. **What does a dot below a swara show?** The lower octave, called mandra saptak.
6. **Why are Bhoop and Hamsadhwani audav?** Each pattern uses five distinct swaras; upper Sa repeats the note name.
7. **How do their note sets differ?** The shown Bhoop pattern has D; Hamsadhwani has N instead.
8. **What is a swaramalika?** A composition sung in swaras or sargam. The chapter's example uses Bilawal and teentaal.
9. **What changes in Yaman's Ma?** It is higher than regular Ma. Louder volume is not the change being described.
10. **Which geetam uses Kalyani here?** Kamalajaadala, credited to Purandaradasa and set to seven-beat Triputa.

Practical self-assessment

Can you keep one complete cycle, explain its divisions and repeat a learned phrase? Name the part needing more practice.

Source and scope: NCERT Kriti-I, Grade 6, Chapter 8, printed pages 53–60, Reprint 2026-27. These notes paraphrase its concepts and add labelled practice tasks.

Use the textbook and its audio for complete song notation, pronunciation and performance. No past-paper frequency or competitive-exam claims are made.