



**Chhandayan Center  
for Indian Music**  
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[www.Tabla.org](http://www.Tabla.org)

# CURRICULUM OUTLINE

For the Study of Tabla



**Presented by  
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## 8. ADVANCED 2 : YEAR 8

### Theory

- 1) *Dasha Praan* - I
- 2) Ability to transcribe Tabla compositions in western notation system
- 3) Significance of Indian rhythm and percussions in World music
- 4) Significance of Indian music in world culture
- 5) Compose and notate –
- 6) Ragas: .... and ability to recognize them –
- 7) Biographies –
- 8) Required qualities in a complete tabla player

### Practical

- 1) Tabla solo presentations in Tintaal, Jhaptaal, Roopak, Ektaal, Ara-Chautaal, Panchamsawari and Dhamar
- 2) Accompaniment with vocal music – Classical, semi-classical and light
- 3) Accompaniment with instrumental music
- 4) Accompaniment with dance
- 5) Performance in a band of world music

## Practical

### 1) Study of Jhumra taal :

a) Descriptive : number of beats, divisions, *tali-khali* markings, *Sam*, *ang* and *Theka*,

e) Ability to play *Theka* in *Vilambit Laya* with *Khanapuris*

### 2) Study of Tilwara taal :

d) Ability to play *Theka* in *Madhya Laya* with variations

e) Ability to play *Theka* in *Vilambit Laya* with *Khanapuris*

### 3) Study of Ekwai Taal :

b) Ability to count *Theka* on palm in *Madhya laya* (medium tempo)

e) Ability to play *Theka* in *Vilambit Laya* with *Khanapuris*

### 4) Study of a few other Taals –

d) Ability to play *Theka* in *Madhya Laya* with variations

### 5) Practical application of five *Jatis* in different taals

### 6) Accompaniment with *Khayal* in *Vilambit Ektaal* and *drut Tintaal*

### 7) Accompaniment with Instrumental Music (Sitar/Sarode etc.) in *Vilambit* and *drut Tintaal*

### 8) Listening and appreciation of recordings of old masters of vocal and instrumental music

## Chhandayan Center for Indian Music

### Curriculum Outline for the Study of Tabla

This is a comprehensive course for a student of tabla. It is designed to cover most of the essential areas in the study to take a student from beginner up to the preliminary level of performing as a soloist and accompanist. While covering the topics, both theoretical and practical, three parallel approaches need to be taken according to students' maturity in terms of age and progress. The progress at each level, however, will depend on several common factors, such as aptitude, receptivity, retaining capacity, regularity, diligence and dedication. Physical and neurological structures also play a significant role. In musical excellence, however, talent is always the most essential element, a gift that cannot be acquired. This curriculum is meant to be appreciative of all gharanas or schools.

## 1. BEGINNER 1 : YEAR 1

### Theory

- 1) Geographical description of past and present India and a glimpse into her cultural diversity
- 2) Introduction to the tradition of Indian music
- 3) *Guru-Shishya parampara* : an oral tradition in the pursuit of knowledge; Music as a *Gurumukhi Vidya*, Guru as the main source of knowledge
- 4) *Raga* and *Tala*, their definitions and brief descriptions
- 6) Terminology - understanding of different types of Tabla compositions: *Tukra*, *Chakradar*, *Qayeda*, ...
- 7) General vocabulary – *Saraswati*, *vidya*, *sangeet*, *guru*, *ustad*, *shishya*, *shagird*, .....
- 8) Introduction to tabla notation system, understand the arrangement and meaning of all signs
- 10) Biographies – Ravi Shankar, Ali Akbar Khan, Vilayat Khan, ..... Bhimsen Joshi, M.S. hubhalakshmi, .....

### Practical

- 1) Ability to play basic notes and warm-up exercises listed for the level in the text book – play with Clarity and boldness in stipulated speeds
- 2) Study of Tintaal :
  - a) Descriptive : number of beats, divisions, *tali-khali* markings, Sam, *ang* and *Theka*,

- 5) Study of Carnatic taals :

a) Descriptive : number of beats, divisions, *tali-khali* markings, Samam and *Theka*

b) Ability to recite *Theka* with *tali-khali* in *Madhya laya*

- 6) Listening and appreciation of recordings of old masters of tabla in solo and accompaniment

## 7. ADVANCED 1 : YEAR 7

### Theory

- 1) Analytical study of the different *angs* in Tabla and their applications
- 2) Ability to transcribe tabla phrases in western notation system
- 3) Knowledge of different *Gharanas* in vocal and instrumental music
- 4) Compose and notate – *Tukras*, ... *Qayeda* in ...
- 5) *Shruti* – names and significance of application in ragas
- 6) *Mel* and *That* – names, determination, significance
- 7) *Nava Rasa* – Names and descriptions
- 8) Ragas: ....a few ragas and ability to recognize them –
- 9) Biographies –

## 10) Biographies –

**Practical**

## 1) Study of Ektaal :

- a) Ability to play *Theka* in *Vilambit laya* with *Khanapuri*
- b) Ability to play *Theka* in *Drut laya* up to the level of *Jhala*
- e) Two *Qayedas* with eight variations and a *tehai* in each
- g) two *Gats*, one *Manjadar Gat* and one *Tindarja Gat*
- i) Ability to play solo in Ektaal for ten minutes

## 2) Study of Pancham Sawari taal :

- d) Ability to play *Theka* in *Madhya Laya* with ..

## 3) Study of Mattataal :

- c) Ability to recite *Theka* with *tali- khali* in ..
- e) Ability to play *Theka* in *Vilambit Laya* with *Khanapuris*

## 4) Study of Jat Taal :

- b) Ability to count *Theka* on palm in *Madhya laya* (medium tempo)
- f) Ability to move from *Vilambit Laya* to *Madhya Laya* *Tintaal/SitarKhani taal* and then on to *Laggi*

- b) Ability to count *Theka* on palm in *Madhya laya* (medium tempo)

- c) Ability to recite *Theka* with *tali- khali* in *Madhya laya*

- d) Ability to recite *Theka* with *tali- khali* in single and duple

- e) Ability to play *Theka* in *Madhya laya*

- f) Ability to play four .... In *Madhya laya*

- i) Two simple *Qayedas* in .....

- j) Three *Chakradars* in *Madhya laya*

## 3) Study of Keharwa taal :

- a) Descriptive : .....

- b) Ability to count *Theka* on palm in .....

- c) Ability to recite *Theka* with *tali- khali* in ..

- d) Ability to recite *Theka* with *tali- khali* in single and duple

- e) Ability to play *Theka* in *Madhya laya*

- f) Ability to play four variations of *Theka* in *Madhya laya*

## 4) Study of Dadra taal :

- a) Descriptive : number of beats, divisions, *tali- khali* markings, *Sam*, *ang* and *Theka*,

- b) Ability to count *Theka* on palm in *Madhya laya* (medium tempo)

- c) Ability to recite *Theka* with *tali- khali* in *Madhya laya*
- d) Ability to recite *Theka* with *tali- khali* in single and duple
- e) Ability to play *Theka* in *Madhya laya*
- f) Ability to play four variations of *Theka* in *Madhya laya*

*At this level there will be assigned projects for young students*

## 2. BEGINNER 2 : YEAR 2

### Theory

- 1) ... different categories of instruments with ...
- 2) Origin of tabla – a historical .....
- 3) An overview of *Hindustani* tala system
- 4) Ability to write complete notation of ...
- 5) Overview of a few percussion instruments; look, playing technique and sound:
- 6) Introduction to Tabla *gharanas* – names, locations, sequence of origination
- 7) General vocabulary
- 8) Study of a few forms of songs :
- 9) Biographies

- c) Ability to recite *Theka* with *tali- khali* in *Madhya laya*
  - d) Ability to play *Theka* in as in *Madhya laya*
  - e) Ability to play four variations of *Theka* in *Madhya laya*
  - g) Ability to play a few brief *laggis* and *tehais* in *Madhya laya*
- 10) Listening and appreciation of recordings of contemporary masters of tabla in solo and accompaniment

## 6. INTERMEDIATE 3 : YEAR 6

### Theory

- 1) A detailed study of the evolution of Indian music through the centuries
- 2) *Laya* – meaning and significance - an insight
- 3) *Layakari* (Metric Modulation) – .. methodology
- 4) Significance of Time Theory in ragas
- 5) Different forms of Carnatic music
- 6) Present day formats of presentation in Carnatic music
- 7) Ragas: .... of a few .. and ability to recognize them –
- 8) Overview of different traditions of instrumental music – forms and structures of presentations
- 9) Compose and notate – ...

- a) Descriptive : number of beats, divisions, *tali-khali* markings, Sam, *ang* and *Theka*,
  - g) Two *Parhan Tukras* in *Madhya laya*
- 6) Study of Surphank taal :
- b) Ability to count *Theka* on palm in *Madhya laya* (medium tempo)
  - d) Ability to recite *Theka* with *tali-khali* in *ekgoon, dergoon, dogoon, tingoon* and *chhargoon*
  - f) Ability to play four variations of *Theka* in *Madhya laya*
  - h) Two *Chakradars* in *Madhya laya*
- 7) Study of Ara-Chautaal :
- c) Ability to recite *Theka* with *tali- khali* in *Madhya laya*
  - e) Ability to play *Theka* in as in *ekgoon, dergoon, dogoon, tingoon* and *chhargoon*
  - i) Two *Qayedas* with five variations and one *tehai* in each
- 8) Study of Chaartaal Ki Sawari
- f) Ability to play four variations of *Theka* in *Madhya laya*
  - g) Five *Mukhras* in *Madhya laya*
- 9) Study of Dhumali, Panjabi and Laoni taals :

## Practical

- 1) Identification of different parts of tabla and ability to explain how they are put together
- 2) Ability to tune Dahina
- 3) Ability to recite Tintaal *Theka* with *tali-khali* in ...
- 4) Study of Tintaal :
  - b) Ability to recite *Theka* with *tali- khali* in *Vilambit laya*
  - d) Ability to play four variations of *Theka* in *Vilambit laya*
  - f) Four *Mohoras* in *Madhya Laya*
  - h) Five *Qayedas* with at least eight variations in each and a *tehai*. One of the *Qayedas* should be in *ari chhand* (triplet).
  - i) Two *Gats*
  - j) Four *Chakradars*
  - k) Ability to perform a Tintaal solo in *Madhya Laya* for seven minutes with *lehra*
- 5) Study of Roopak Taal :
  - g) Five *Mukhras* in *Madhya laya*
- 6) Study of Jhaptaal :
- 7) Study of Ektaal :
  - g) Five *Mukhras* in *Madhya laya*

## 8) Study of Keharwa taal :

- a) Ability to play *Theka* in different ...and tonal modulations
- b) Breaks and pick-ups applicable at each level of tempo
- c) Two *laggis* applicable for each level of tempo
- d) .....

## 9) Study of Dadra taal :

*At this level there will be assigned projects for young students*

### 3. BEGINNER 3 : YEAR 3

#### Theory

- 1) Tabla *Gharanas* and *Baajs* – their origins, evolutions and special identities
- 2) Parallel study of Tabla notation systems introduced by
- 3) Terminology :
- 4) History of Indian music in Europe and America
- 5) An overview of *Carnatic* tala system
- 6) Present day formats of presentation in Hindustani music –
- 7) Overview of a few percussion instruments; ...:

## 6) Overview of different traditions of vocal music – forms and structures of presentations

## 7) Ragas: ... of a few ragas .. ability to recognize them –

8) *Hindustani* and *Carnatic* - Listening to examples of both and identifying similarities in content and differences in

## 9) General vocabulary –

## 10) Biographies –

#### Practical

## 1) Study of Tintaal :

- a) Two *Bedam tehais*
- b) One *Rela* based on ‘dhene ghene’

## 2) Roopak taal compositions :-

- a) One *Rela* based on ‘terekeTe’ and one *Rela* based on ‘dhere dhere’
- b) *Peshkar* – *Peshkar* with eight variations
- c) Ability to play *Theka* up to the level of Jhala

## 3) Study of Jhaptaal :

- b) Four *Qayedas* with eight variations and a Tehai in each
- f) *Peshkar* with six variations
- j) Ability to play a solo in Jhaptaal in own choice of tempo or tempi for fifteen minutes

## 5) Study of Dhamar taal :



- g) Two *Parhan Tukras* in *Madhya laya*
- h) Two *Chakradars* in *Madhya laya*

6) Study of *Tewra* :

- f) Ability to play four variations of *Theka* in *Madhya laya*
- g) Two *Parhan-Tukras* in *Madhya laya*
- h) Two *Chakradars* in *Madhya laya*

7) Study of *Deepchandi taal* :

- 8) Ability to tune and play *Tanpura*
- 9) Listening and appreciation of recordings of old masters of vocal and instrumental music

## 5. INTERMEDIATE 2 : YEAR 5

### Theory

- 1) *Jati* – understanding and significance in *Hindustani* and *Carnatic tala* systems
- 2) *Goon* – systematic analysis of all goons, ability to write taals and compositions in different goons.
- 3) *Chhand* –
- 4) Ability to write different talas in notation –
- 5) Terminology - of Tabla compositions:

- 8) General vocabulary –
- 9) Biographies –

### Practical

- 1) Practice exercises on *Bayan* as listed for the level in the text book – play with clarity and boldness in stipulated speeds
- 2) Practice exercises on both drums as listed for the level in the text book - play with clarity, boldness in stipulated speeds
- 3) Study of *Tintaal* :
  - a) One *Uthan*
  - d) *Parhans*
  - f) Ability to play all compositions of *Tintaal* with equal ease in *Madhya* and *Vilambit Layas*
  - g) Ability to perform a *Tintaal* solo in *Vilambit* and *Madhya laya* for fifteen minutes with *lehra*
- 3) Study of *Roopak taal* :
  - a) Ability to recite *Roopak Taal Theka* with *tali-khali* in steps of ...
  - b) Ability to play *Roopak taal* in different tempi with variations, *Mukhras* and *Tehais*.
  - c) Four *Tukras* – two short, two long
  - d) Three *Qayedas* with eight variations and ..
  - f) two *Chakradars*

*At this level there will be assigned projects for young students*

## 4. INTERMEDIATE 1 : YEAR 4

### Theory

- 1) Present day scenario of Indian music in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh
- 2) Similarities and differences between *Hindustani* and *Carnatic* music
- 3) Overview of a few instruments; look, playing technique and sound:
- 4) General vocabulary –
- 5) Terminology - understanding of different types of Tabla compositions:
- 6) Different form of Hindustani and Carnatic music
- 7) Comparative study of the different tabla *Gharanas*
- 8) Ability to notate different talas :
- 9) Compose and notate one *Tukra*, ... one *Qayeda* with 5 variations in Tintaal
- 10) Biographies –

### Practical

- 1) Study of Tintaal :
  - a) *Ateet* and *Anagata* - two examples of each
  - b) Peshkar with five variations
  - c) Two *Qayedas*, one *Gat-ang* and one in *Biar chhand*
  - d) One *Chalan* with five variations
  - f) One *Bedam Chakradar* and one ...
  - g) One *Rela* based on 'dhere dhere' with ...
  - h) Ability to perform a solo in Tintaal in Vilambit and *Madhya layas* for twenty minutes
- 2) Ability to play a solo in Roopak taal in *Madhya Laya* for ten minutes
- 3) Accompaniment with vocal music in Keharwa and Dadra taal
- 4) Study of Sitarkhani taal :
  - a) Descriptive : number of beats, divisions, *tali-khali* markings, *Sam*, *ang* and *Theka*,
  - b) Ability to count *Theka* on palm in *Madhya laya* (medium tempo)
  - f) Ability to play four variations of *Theka* in *Madhya laya*
  - g) Five *Mukhras* in *Madhya laya*
- 5) Study of Chautaal :