



Arco Iris Leader Signals

July 2014

Hello! Hopefully this guide will help you get your head around all those funny dance moves the leaders do in the middle of the bathhouse every wednesday. There are a lot of signals so don't worry about trying to remember them all. You'll probably pick most of them up just by playing but this handy reference is here for you if you want it! There is helpful text strewn throughout the pages which explain some extra details about the signals. Or you can just use the pretty pictures. Happy drumming!

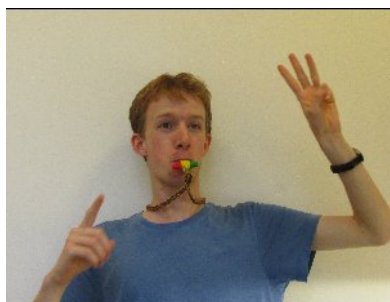
Get these first

Wait for the whistle! The leader will signal their instructions to the band. When they are ready they will raise four fingers and issue four blasts from the whistle (1a). Don't change what you're playing until the leader has counted you in!

Main groove. This is the main section of the piece, signalled moving hands side to side (1b, 1c). This can either be used to signal the timing of the piece or that the main groove will be returned to after the next/current break.

Stopping. The command to stop has a few different forms. (1e) and (1d) mean the same thing and are generally used when most or all of the band is stopping. Thumbs down (1f) is usually aimed at one or a few specific sections. Bringing two hands together or clenching fists are sometimes used if the timing of the stop is unusual or of particular importance. Get ready when you see the open forms (2a, 2d) and stop the instant the hands come together (2b) or fists close (2e).

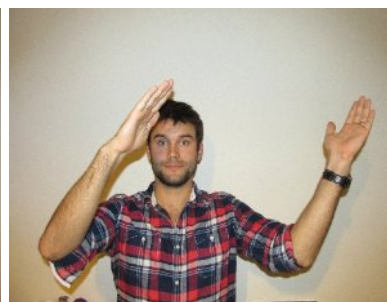
Keep going (2c). After the next break keep playing what you're playing right now. When used in conjunction with break 4, keep playing through break 4.



(a) Wait for the Whistle!



(b) Main Groove



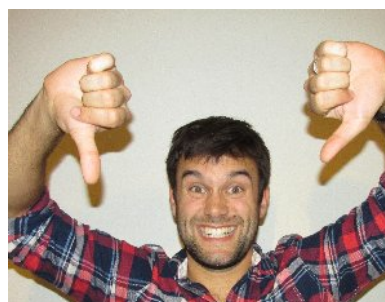
(c) Main Groove



(d) Stop: One hand



(e) Stop: Two hands



(f) Thumbs down (usually when talking to specific instruments)

Figure 1: Get these first



(a) About to stop...



(b) Stop on the clap!



(c) Circular motion. After the break, keep going with what ever you're currently doing



(d) About to stop...



(e) Stop when fists clench

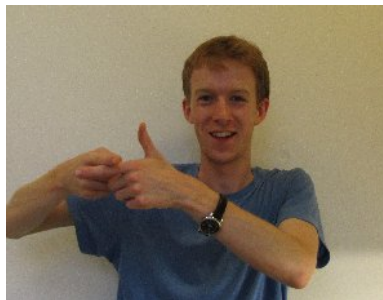
Figure 2: Get these first

Talking to specific instruments

The leader can pass instructions to individual sections as indicated in figs 4 and 3. They might give a set of commands to a few specific sections then motion to everyone else (4d) to follow a different set of commands.



(a) Tams



(b) Bells



(c) Shaker



(d) Timba



(e) Caixa



(f) Repinique

Figure 3: Talking to specific instruments



(a) High Surdo



(b) Mid Surdo



(c) Low Surdo



(d) "Everyone else"
(circular motion)

Figure 4: Talking to specific instruments

Breaks

Many pieces have breaks 1, 2 and 3 (5a - 5c) but they will mean different rhythms in different pieces. For example, break 2 in london school is different from break 2 in Bathhouse Ragga.

Stop for 4 beats or 1 bar (6a) and stop for 8 beats or 2 bars (6b) can be used in any piece. It's especially important to keep counting beats/stepping/playing your pattern in your head during the silence. Watch the leader for clues when to come back in.

A few pieces have breaks with signals unique to that piece (6c - 6k). For the whatever break (6e, 6h) the hand moves up and down. For the crescendo break in Marcha (6g) don't forget to stop on beat 4 before the break itself. Break 5 tumbaiao (6i) is the same as Break 1 in Barravento. Break 8 in tumbaiao (6j) is a crescendo of 8 beats, which is different from the stop for 8 beats break (6b).



(a) Break1



(b) Break 2



(c) Break 3

Figure 5: Breaks



(a) Stop for four beats



(b) Stop for eight beats



(c) Pineapple break, London School



(d) Tickle break, London School



(e) Fag break, Whatever



(f) Main break, Marcha



(g) Crescendo break, Marcha



(h) Fag break, Whatever



(i) Break 5, Tumbaiao



(j) Break 8, Tumbaiao



(k) Samba turn, Tumbaiao

Figure 6: Breaks

Moving between grooves and sections

From the top (7a). Go back to the start of the piece, usually wait for the leader's intro.

Chopped down section (7b) is signalled by a scissoring action. When used it often means move to a quiet, more sparse section.

Double up (7c) is used in Bathhouse Ragga Break 3 for Caixa and Rep and in Simi's Reggae Break 3 for the surdos.

A chorus (7d - 7f) is signalled with a horizontal wave motion. It is a section played over the top of what everybody else is playing.

Jungle (7g - 7i) has three surdo sections in addition to the main groove. The rest of the band also has a 'Banana' section, signalled with one fist.

Tumbaiao samba section (7k) has the same signal as the samba turn break (6k). When counted in, play the break

then the samba section. When the leader signals this followed by main groove, just play the break then go back into the groove.



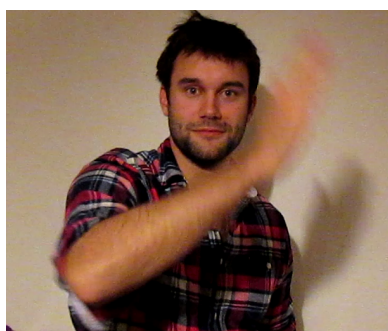
(a) "From the top"



(b) Chopped down section



(c) Double up



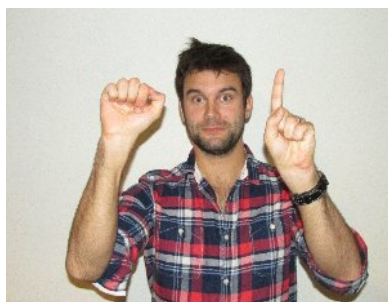
(d) Chorus



(e) Chorus



(f) Chorus



(g) Banana section 1, Jungle



(h) Banana section 2, Jungle



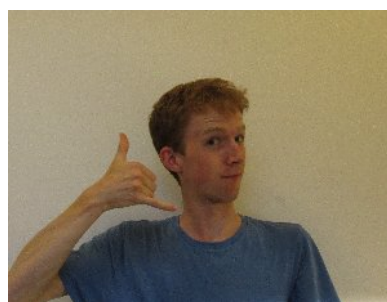
(i) Banana section 3, Jungle
(the bit where the surdos go crazy)



(j) Marcha groove



(k) Samba section, Tumbaiao



(l) Drum 'n' base, Barravento

Figure 7: Moving between grooves and sections

Tempo, Dynamics, Miscellaneous



(a) Loud



(b) Quiet



(c) Bring the volume down
(Hands brought down in increments)



(d) Speed up
(circular motion)



(e) Slow down
(circular motion)



(f) Pick-up
(vertical motion)



(g) Rumble



(h) Surdo roll



(i) Play on the beat



(j) Step to the right



(k) Step to the left



(l) "...then do this..."

Figure 8: Tempo, Dynamics, Miscellaneous

Volume: For (8a) and (8b) remember to wait for the whistle before changing. For (8c) the leader usually expects the volume change to take place immediately, reflecting how far the hands have been brought down.

Important note for volume changes! It is crucial that the tempo stays constant when changing here. Changing in volume does not give you the right to speed up or slow down!

Speed (tempo): Try and respond to speed changes as best you can (8d) and (8e). Watching the leader for clues as to what the new tempo should be and listening to what the rest of the band are doing is essential. Speed changes aren't usually counted in to, watch the leader carefully. If you think you're out of time, stop, try and figure out the new beat then come back in.

Pick-up (8f). A pick-up is a group of notes usually played in the last one or two beats of a bar, before some kind of change. For example, in Bathhouse Ragga, the bells have a pick-up in the last beat of break 1 (sounds like "Ding-dong! "), before everyone goes back into the groove.

Rumble (8g). Use your drum (or your neighbour's) to make as much amorphous noise as possible.

Surdo Roll (8h). This is not a rumble! You still need to play in time. Think: "One e and a Two e and a..." Try and accent the beats ("One.....Two.....") if you can.

Play the pulse (8i). Just play on the beat. "One, Two, Three, Four..."

Stepping (8j, 8k). Stepping all together helps us stay in time and makes us look really tight when performing. Step to the right on the "One" of each bar (leader steps to the left). If you get lost with the timing, try watching the stepping of the leader or other players.

Stringing commands together (8l). This can be used between several breaks that are to be played in sequence. For example in London School, tickle break followed by Pineapple Break followed by Stop is commonly used.



(a) Watch the leader

(b) Listen to everyone around you

Figure 9: Tempo, Dynamics, Miscellaneous

Sometimes the leader may want to emphasize the need to watch the leader carefully (9a) or to listen to the rest of the band or key instruments (9b).

and finally...

And finally, don't forget to smile! Even when you're concentrating or battling through a parade, smiling causes endorphin release making you love samba EVEN MORE than you already do :) It also makes you look really attractive.



Figure 10: Don't forget to smile!

If you have any questions about any of the signals or pieces feel free to ask one of the leaders or other players. If anyone spots any mistakes/unintentional innuendos or notices a signal that should be described here but isn't, please email the Webmaster or Musical Coordinator so they can fix them!
Thanks to Nicholas and Stu for letting us use their faces.