

Fire Fire Fire



A Highlife Song from Ghana

By Stuart Brown

This is a fun song I adapted from a traditional highlife song from Ghana, called Fire Fire Fire that was taught to me by my Ghanaian friend, Tanko Akpo, from The Black Star Steel Band.



This version of the song has some very simple words actions that are easy to learn. Try these first before moving on to playing the melody on instruments. The song will suit a range of abilities - some of the class can sing, some can learn to play the melody and others can play simple percussion or try and add the bassline or chords.

The songs has a very simple 4 note melody (G, A, B, C) which moves in step in an easy repetitive rhythm. It is easily learned and is great for introducing Figurenotes notation and learning simple step-wise melodies and can be played on any classroom instrument such as glockenspiel, xylophone, keyboard, Thumbjam on iPad, etc.

MP3 play-along backing tracks are included of the full song and individual sections (both slow and fast and with and without vocals).

Ghana

Ghana is a country in West Africa. Can you spot it on the map below?



Words and Actions

Let's start by learning the words and actions to the song:

Fire Fire Fire



Keep me warm



Fire Fire Fire



Keep me warm



Heat me up
Heat me up
Heat me up



Keep me warm



Learn the Melody

This is the flag of Ghana.
What 4 different colours
can you see in it?

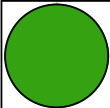
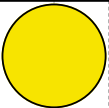

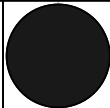
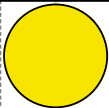

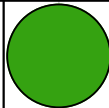
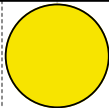

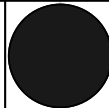
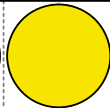



Next we're going to match
those colours to some musical
notes to play a melody!
See if you can spot the same
4 colours on the keyboard:



Now try and match the coloured shapes in the music below to those on the notes of your keyboard, glockenspiel, xylophone or iPad to play the melody to Fire Fire Fire.

Start by trying the first 2 bars:
green, yellow, black / black, yellow, green

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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|  |  |  | |  |  |  | |  |  |  | |  |  |  |
| fire | fire | fire | | keep | me | warm | | fire | fire | fire | | keep | me | warm |

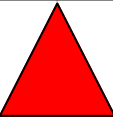

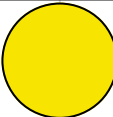
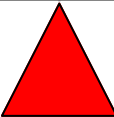
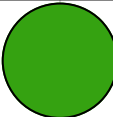
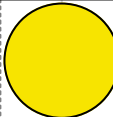
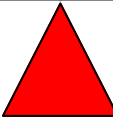
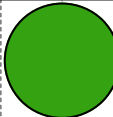
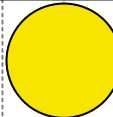

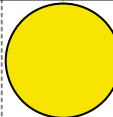

Good news! The next 2 bars are exactly the same!

Well done! You've learned the first line of the song!

Now try playing it along with the backing track named
"Fire Fire Fire Part1 slow"

Now try the second line.

Start with the first bar: red, green, yellow

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    |    |    |    |
| heat me up | heat me up | heat me up | keep me warm |

Good news! The next 2 bars are exactly the same!

Now try the last bar: green, yellow, black

Well done!


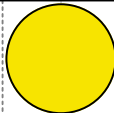
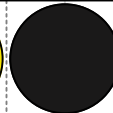

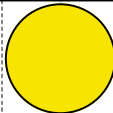
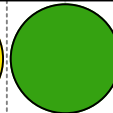

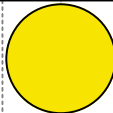
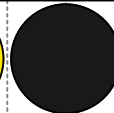

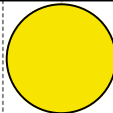
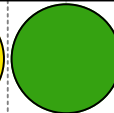
Now let's try playing the whole of that part with the backing track named:

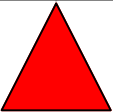


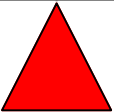


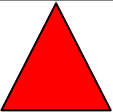



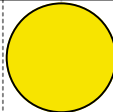

"Fire Fire Fire Part2 slow"

Well done. Now let's put the whole song together!

Try it on your own first and then with the backing track named:
"Fire Fire Fire Full Song slow"

The song repeats round and round so you can play it as many times as you want. If you find the slow version easy you can also try the fast version.

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|  |  |  | |  |  |  | |  |  |  | |  |  |  | |
| fire | fire | fire | | keep | me | warm | | fire | fire | fire | | keep | me | warm | |

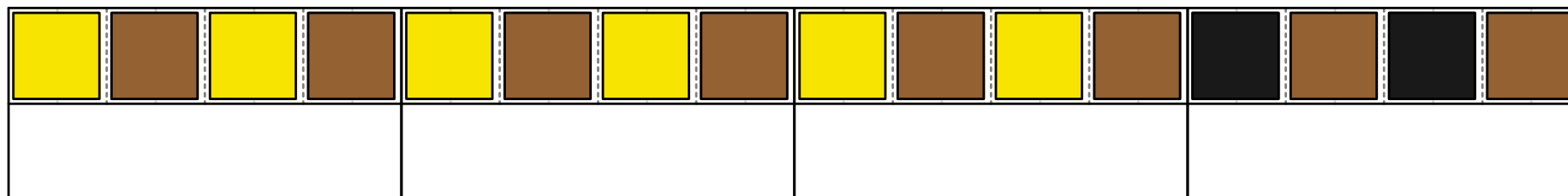
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|  |  |  | |  |  |  | |  |  |  | |  |  |  | |
| heat | me | up | | heat | me | up | | heat | me | up | | keep | me | warm | |

Bass Part

Now we can add a bass part. You can use a keyboard, bass xylophone, marimba, Thumbjam (with a bass sound) or any other bass instrument.

The bassline just uses 3 notes (black, brown and yellow) and keeps a steady 4 beat rhythm.
Try and play the bassline along with the backing track named:
“Fire Fire Fire Full Song slow”

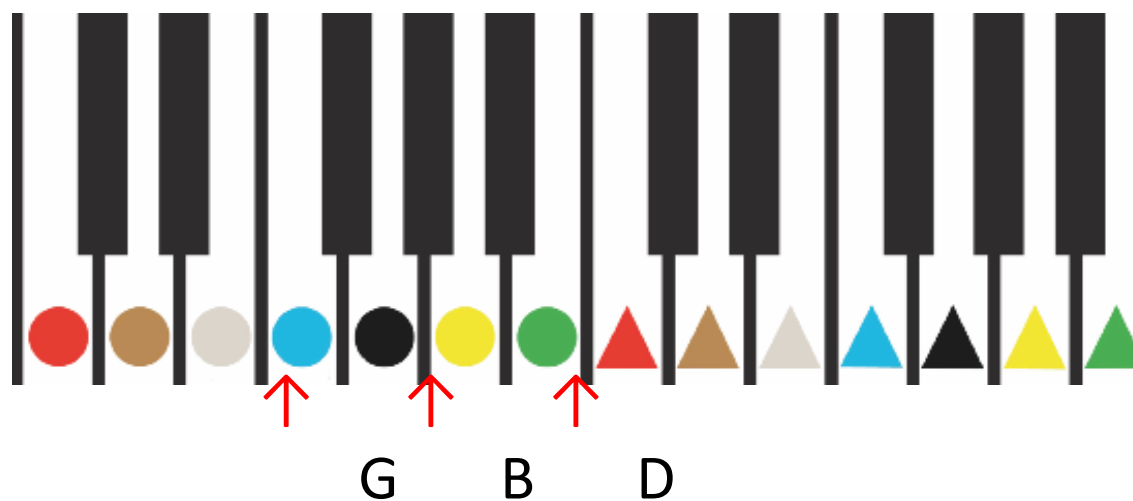
bass



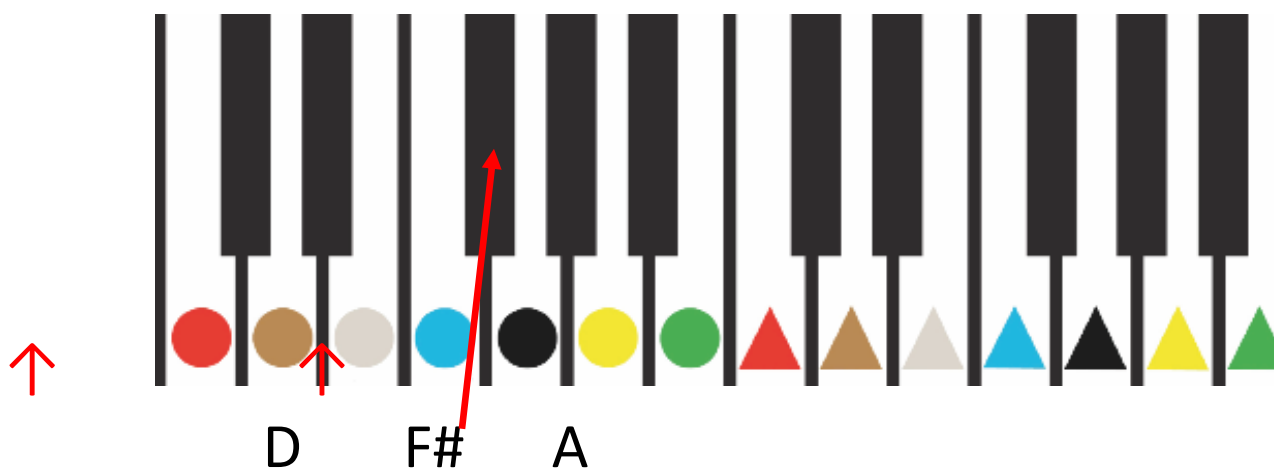
Chords

You can also add chords to the song.
You only need 2 chords (G and D).

Here are the notes of the G chord:






And here are the notes of the D chord:



Try playing the chords along with the backing track named:
“Fire Fire Fire Full Song slow”

Each chord lasts for 4 counts.







| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| G | G | G | G |
| | | | |

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
|  D |  D |  D | G |
| | | | |

Now try playing the chords every 2 counts to give more rhythm to the song.

Try this along with the backing track named:
“Fire Fire Fire Full Song slow”

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| G | G | G | G | G | G | G | G |
| | | | | | | | |

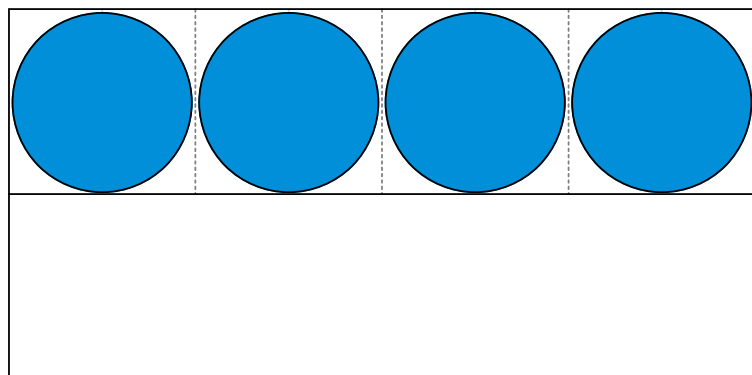
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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|
|  D |  D |  D |  D |  D |  D | G | G |
| | | | | | | | |

Percussion Rhythms

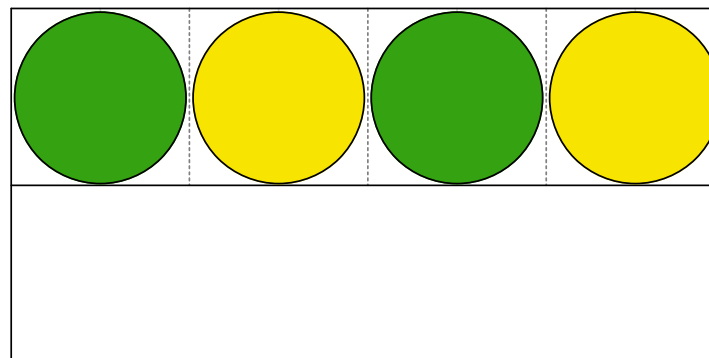
Here are some ideas for rhythms you can add on percussion.

1. Keep the beat!

On one drum

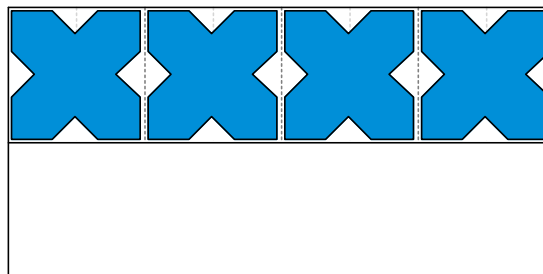


Between two drums

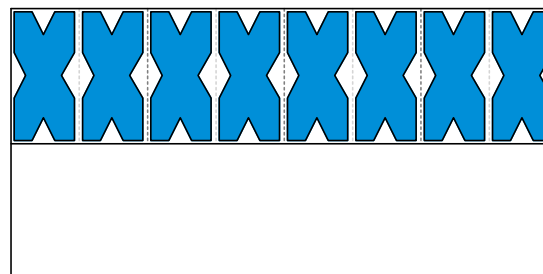


2. Shake something!

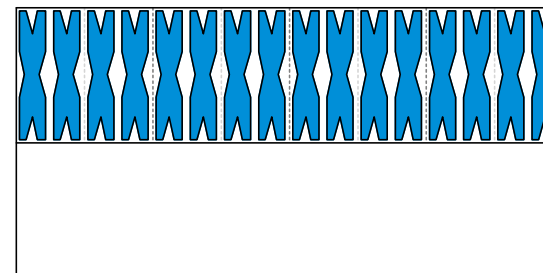
Shake on all 4 beats



Now twice as fast!



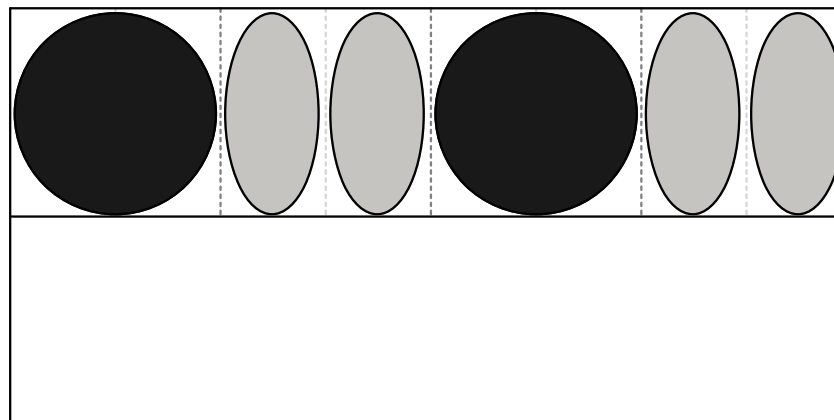
Now 4 times as fast!



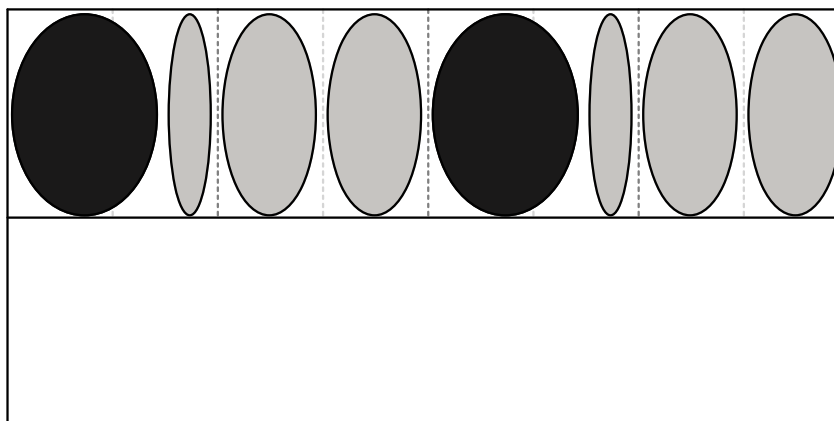
3. Play a rhythm!

Do this on two parts of a drum, 2 different drums
or any percussion instrument that can make 2 different sounds.

Easy:



Harder:



Put the Whole Song Together

Now you all know what your favourite part is to play why not try playing all together with everyone doing different parts.

You can choose to:

- Sing the song and do the actions
 - Play the melody
 - Play the bassline
 - Play the chords
- Keep the beat or play a rhythm on drums or percussion

Have fun!