

# Contra Campana Variations

## in Cuban popular music

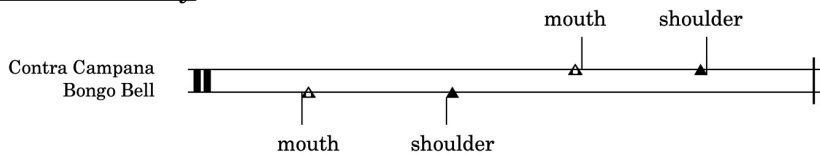
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The bongo bell and contra campana are two cowbells used in salsa, timba and other styles of Cuban popular music to drive a band forward during louder sections of a song (vocal choruses, instrumental solos, etc). They are generally played on large-mouth instruments with the contra campana pitched lower than the bongo bell.

Traditionally the bongocero would play a repeated pattern on a handheld bell and the timbalero played an opposing ("contra") pattern on a bell mounted on the timbales. Eventually drummers consolidated both parts into a single player and also moved them from timbales to the drum set.

Below is an outline of the basic pattern and variations that may change the feel of a song. Practice them first as written making sure to lock in with clave. Once the patterns feel comfortable, mix variations together to begin creating your own.

### Notation Key



### Patterns

**Basic**

(1)

Clave

Contra Campana  
Bongo Bell

(2)

Clv.

C. Camp.  
B. Bell

(3)

(4)

(5)

Clv.

C. Camp.  
B. Bell

The patterns are written on two staves: Clave (top) and Contra Campana/Bongo Bell (bottom). The Clave pattern is a 2/4 measure with a half note on the first beat and a half note on the second beat. The Contra Campana/Bongo Bell pattern is a 2/4 measure with a half note on the first beat and a half note on the second beat. The patterns are numbered 1 through 5, showing variations in the timing and pitch of the notes.