

## **CONGA SANTIAGUERA – BOKÚ OR FONDO (HAND DRUM) PATTERNS**

The “*conga*” in Cuba usually refers to musical groups that parade in carnival and the genre of music they play. In Oriente, a “conga” consists of percussion (including several bokuses, bells, and bass drums), voices, and a “*corneta china*, (Chinese trumpet)” a loud reed instrument that plays melodies and improvises.

The bokú (also known as fondo) is a conical hand drum similar to a conga drum but light enough to carry in a street parade.

The numbers assigned to the drum parts here are not necessarily standard in Cuba but are used here to distinguish the different parts. The bokú is probably the instrument whose patterns vary most widely among the different *congas*.

The patterns listed here are a few of the more common ones.

These patterns are notated in 2/2 or cut time. Tempo is about 150 -160 bpm (where the half note is the beat).

## NOTATION OF BOKU (CONGA) SOUNDS

P= PALM T=TOUCH OR TIPS (FINGERTIPS) B = BASS  
 O = OPEN TONE > = CLOSED SLAP + = MUFFLED

### **DRUM I –simplified version “Fondo basico” -- Los Hoyos:**

1	2	3	4
O		>	>
R		R	L

### **DRUM#1: BASIC PATTERN**

1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
O			T	>		>	
R			L	R		L	

## DRUM#1: TWO BAR VARIATIONS:

1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+	<b>1</b>	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
O			T	>		>		<b>O</b>		O		>		>	
R			L	R		L		<b>R</b>		L		R		L	

1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+	<b>1</b>	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
O			T	>		>		<b>O</b>		>		>		>	
R			L	R		L		<b>R</b>		L		R		L	

1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+	<b>1</b>	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
O			>	T		>		<b>O</b>		>		>		>	
R			L	R		L		<b>R</b>		L		R		L	

1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+	<b>1</b>	+	2	+	3	+	4	
O			T	>		>		<b>O</b>		T		>		T	
R			L	R		L		<b>R</b>		L		R		L	

## DRUM#2

This part is identified by an open tone on the “and” of beat two

### **DRUM #2 : BASIC**

1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
>			O	>		>	
L			R	L		R	

### **DRUM #2 : EASY/BEGINNERS VERSION**

1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
P			O	P			
R			R	L			

## DRUM#3

1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
T			>	>		>		>		>		O		T	O
L			L	R		L		R		L		R		L	R

## DRUM #3 : EASIER/BEGINNERS VERSION

1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
P				P				P		T		O		P	O
L				L				L		L		R		L	R

### SOURCES:

**Private lessons with Felix Navarro, lead percussionist, of the Santiago-based Folkloric Group Cutumba.**

**Private lessons with Lazaro Bandera Malet, musical director, La Conga de Los Hoyos**

**Private lessons with Richard Lineonel Ferrara, musical director, Conga Paso Franco**

**Private lessons with Raul Lopez Martinez, director, Conga San Agustin**

**Private lesson with Mauricio Herrera, NYC-based percussionist from Holguin, Cuba.**

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