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Detection of drift in tempo

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The detection threshold for a continuous drift in tempo in a click sequence was investigated. Eight stimuli with varying drift magnitudes were presented to musically trained and untrained listeners. The listening test used a modification of the method for Parameter Estimation by Sequential Testing (PEST) to present longer or shorter portions of stimuli to the listener, depending on the responses. The results showed that longer presentation times were needed for stimuli with lower drift magnitude. When presented with longer sequences listeners were able to detect drifts less than a tenth of the previously reported detection threshold for tempo changes.