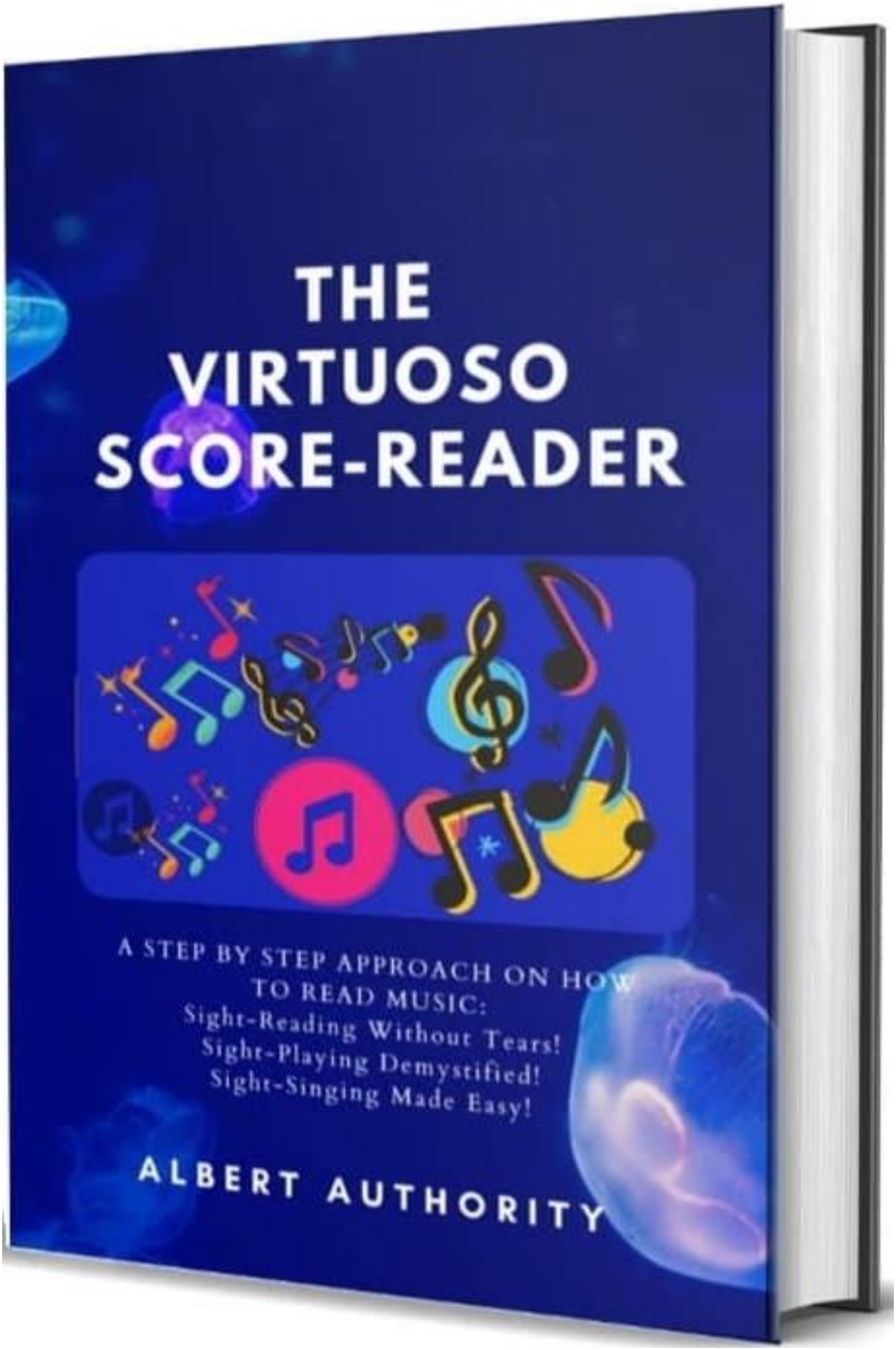


This e-Book covers the basic concepts that will enable its users to read musical notation and understand music theory in a simplified yet detailed approach.

The Virtuoso Score-Reader

A STEP BY STEP APPROACH ON HOW TO READ MUSIC:

Sight-Reading Without Tears!

And

Sight-Singing Made Easy!

By

Authority, O.U. Albert, PhD (Cambridge)
(Doctor of Philosophy in Music Theory and Composition,
Head, Department of Music,
SIS, Mumbai, India)

Foreword by

Professor Solomon O. Ikibe
(Professor of Theatrical Musicology and Ethnomusicology,
Head, Department of Performing Arts,
University of Ilorin – Nigeria)

Edited by

Dr. Mudiakevwe Igbi
(Doctor of Philosophy in Music Composition and
Lecturer of Music, Department of Theatre Arts,
University of Africa, Toru Orua, Bayelsa State, Nigeria)

And

Dr. Titus O. Stephen
(Doctor of Philosophy in Ethnomusicology and
Senior Lecturer, Department of Music,
Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife – Nigeria)

VMK Press
9038 Cherry Hill Road,
College Park **MD**, 20740
Maryland, USA
+1-317-414-5325

Foreword

The ***Virtuoso Score-Reader*** by Dr. Albert Authority is a concise but explicit way to knowing how to read and play music at sight without stress from the scratch. Having the imprimatur to have known the author and his musicality, I am obliged to make it clear without mincing words that this book is a must-get for every music enthusiast as it is set to equip everyone to read and play music. Those who already know how to read and play music would still find the book interestingly useful as some topics which might have been glossed over are succinctly explicated for deeper understanding and better application of the musicological aesthetics therein. This ***Virtuoso Score-Reader*** is a sure bet to being the musicological musician anyone desires to be.

Professor Solomon O. Ikibe

Acknowledgment

Writing this book took the author about six years. Although the task of data gathering and presentation was herculean, the author still found it enjoyable considering the fact that it is a worthy contribution to the advancement of scholarship and use for the generality of mankind.

Through the constant review and critique from professional colleagues, friends and musicians who have been accessing and using the materials originally in the form of training modules, I was able to collate and put this book together. Special thanks to my Professor of Music at the University of Ilorin, Solomon O. Ikibe, for taking painstaking time to review the manuscript and graciously accepting to write a Foreword. My heart felt appreciation to my friend and brother, Dr. Mudiakevwe Igbi for proof reading the script and making necessary corrections. I also thank Dr. Olusegun Titus for reviewing the work and making some useful input. Thanks to Miss Olaoyo Christiana who formatted the manuscript and helped in the kindle Edition publication. I appreciate you all for your efforts and inputs.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITIONS

There is no 'cast-in-stone' definition for music. As an art form, different opinions come into play. Music is whatever people think it is music to them. Mine approach to defining music is to list the qualities music must have, such as, sound which has rhythm, melody, pitch, timbre, etc.

Music could therefore be defined as:

''1. The science or art of ordering tones or sounds in succession, in combination, and in temporal relationships to produce a composition having unity and continuity.

2. Vocal, instrumental, or mechanical sounds having rhythm, melody, or harmony.

3. The art of combining vocal or instrumental sounds (or both) to produce beauty of form, harmony, and expression of emotion"
(R E Allen; H W Fowler; F G Fowler, 1992).

4. the pattern of sounds produced by people singing or playing instruments.

5. the art of creating or performing music.

6. an art form consisting of sequences of sounds in time, especially tones of definite pitch organized melodically, harmonically, rhythmically, and according to tone colour

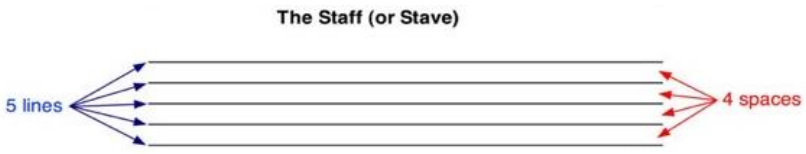
7. the art of sound combination. (Albert Authority, 2020)

8. the artistic and scientific combination of sounds. (Albert Authority, 2021)

MUSICAL STAFF

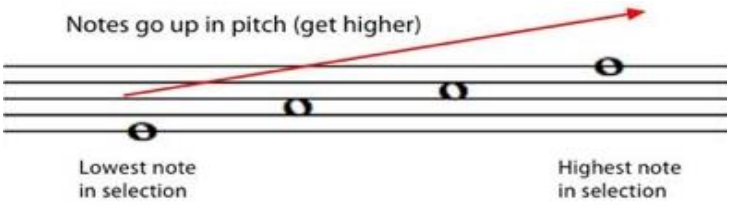
The music staff (or music stave as it is also called) is the series of 5 lines and 4 spaces that music is written down on. Music notation developed from one single line, used in the early days of writing down church chants. The first person to come up with the idea of writing music down on a line was ***Guido*** of Arezzo who was a Benedictine monk and singing teacher who became famous across North Italy for the speed at which he managed to teach students to sing chants. He also invented the ***doh-re-me*** system, although it was called *ut-re-me* when he first developed it.

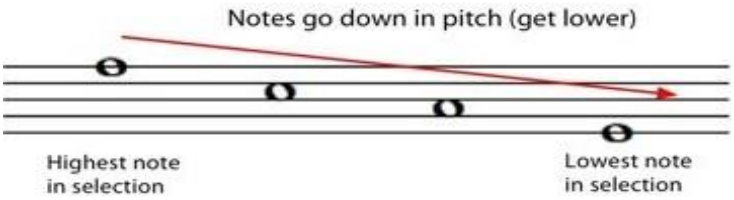
The terms music staff and music stave are interchangeable. Staff tends to be the American usage and Stave tends to be the British usage. Here is a picture of the staff showing the lines and spaces.



POSITION OF THE NOTES ON THE MUSIC STAFF

The position of notes on the lines or in the spaces determines the pitch of the note. Pitch is how high or low a note is. The scientific word for what musicians call pitch is frequency. The higher the note on the staff, the higher the pitch of the sound.





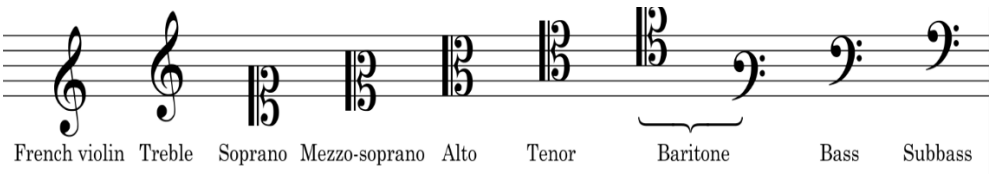
It does not matter which clef is used; this rule is always the same. If the notes are higher on the staff, they are higher in pitch. If the notes are lower on the staff, they are lower in pitch.

Notes can be on a line or in a space. When a note is on a line the staff line runs through the middle of the note. When a note is in a space it sits between the staff lines. In both examples above the first and last notes are on lines, the middle notes are in spaces.

CLEFS (TREBLE, BASS, ALTO –THE MOVABLE CLEF)
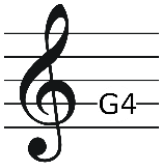
A clef (a French word which means a "key") is a musical symbol used to indicate the pitch of written notes. Placed on one of the lines at the beginning of the stave, it indicates the name and pitch of the notes on that line. This line serves as a reference point by which the names of the notes on any other line or space of the stave may be determined.

In modern music, only three clefs are used regularly: the treble or G clef, the bass or F clef, and the C clef which consists of the alto clef, and the tenor clef. Of these, the treble and bass clefs are by far the most common. The tenor clef is used for the upper register of several instruments that usually use bass clef (such as cello or trombone), while the alto is only used by the viola and a few other instruments.



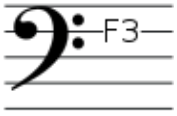
The primary aim of a music clef is to establish the pitch of a particular line. Each type of clef assigns a different reference note to the line on which it is placed. (treble clef fixes G on the 2nd line of the staff.

Treble clef *(G on 2nd line)*



The Bass clef fixes F on the 4th line of the staff.

(**Bass clef -** *F on 4th line)*



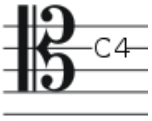
The Alto clef fixes Middle C on the 3rd line of the staff.

(**Alto clef -** *Middle C on 3rd line)*



The Tenor clef fixes the Middle C on the 4th line of the staff.

(Tenor clef -*Middle C on 4th line)*



The names of notes on a staff depend on which music clef is at the start of the staff. There are different types of clefs used in music history, however, this book focuses on the G, F and C clefs.

Chapter 2

MUSICAL ALPHABETS AND MUSIC SYLLABLES

The musical alphabet includes only the first 7 letters of the English Alphabets:

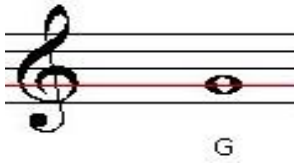
A, B, C, D, E, F, G.

On the musical staff, every line or space represents a different letter. Music Syllables are seven.

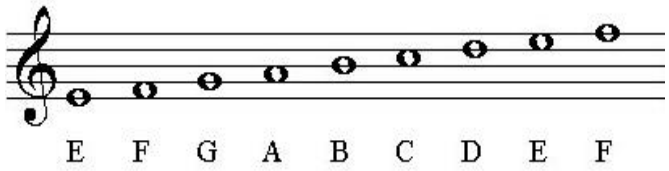
do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, ti

LETTER NAMES OF THE STAFF

The treble clef is also known as the G clef because it indicates that the second line from the bottom will be G.

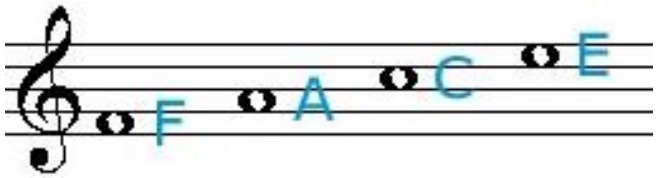


Notice how the clef makes a circle centred on the second line. The remainder of the notes on the staff are named by going up and down the musical alphabet on alternating lines and spaces. The remainder of the notes on the staff are named by going up and down the musical alphabet on alternating lines and spaces.



TREBLE AND BASS STAVES

A popular technique for memorizing the notes in each clef is to use mnemonic devices for the lines and spaces. For the treble clef lines, the following phrase has been used for many years:

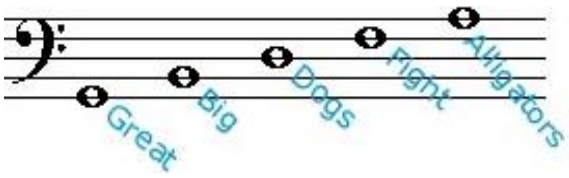




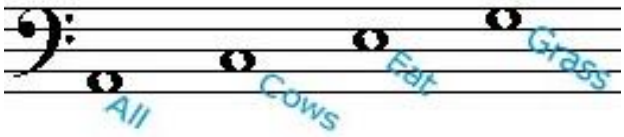
The spaces in treble clef spell the word **FACE**. The Lines, **E**very **G**ood **B**oy **D**oes **F**ine.

For bass clef, the following phrases work well:

Lines: **G**reat **B**ig **D**ogs **F**ight **A**lligators.



Spaces: **A**ll **C**ows **E**at **G**rass.



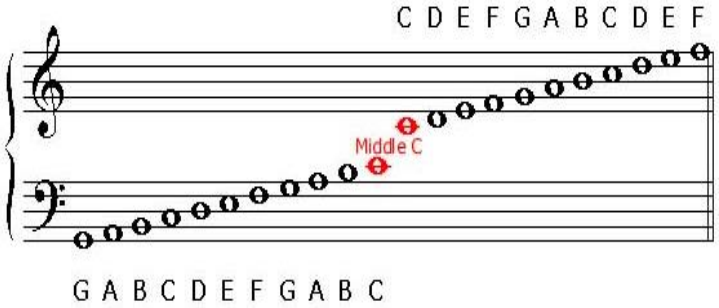
These phrases and mnemonic are useful for the initial stages of learning to identify pitches in these clefs. However, to achieve true fluency, the student must practice this skill until all notes can be identified straight at first sight. Some excellent training note-reading drill are listed below:

1. Get a piece of music notated on staff and try reading the letter names (including accidentals as indicated by key signature. For a real good time and tremendous reading practice, try lay your hands on the recording of the piece(s) and try to follow the score while you listen. This is a great way to improve your reading ability!

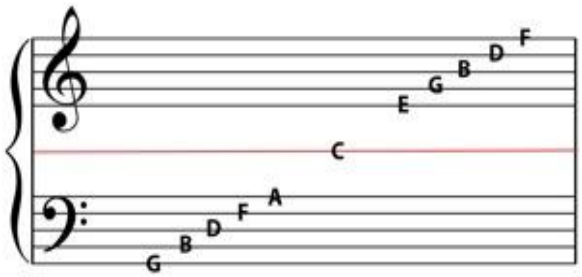
2. Start taking piano lessons - you are going to have to do it anyway and a little head start would not hurt.

GREAT / GRAND STAFF, MIDDLE C

There are two staves which make up the Grand Staff. The top stave uses the Treble Clef to identify notes and the bottom stave uses the Bass Clef. The bass and treble clef are often joined together and form the grand staff (also known as Great staff). Notice where Middle '**C**' appears in both staffs.



The Middle '**C**' is an invisible line running through the middle of both staves! Although it is made up of two staves of five lines, the Grand Staff has 11 lines and 10 spaces. You may have heard of middle "**C**" as earlier mentioned. Many people assume this is the note in the middle of the piano - well...it depends on how many keys your piano has as to whether it is or not. Middle C is the *closest* C to the middle of the piano, but Middle C is also the note in the middle of the Grand Staff or the note which divides the Great staff into two equal halves.

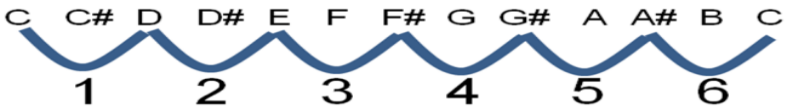


OCTAVE

An Octave is the repetition of a note at a higher or lower pitch. Imagine a piano, the keys from the left are the bass notes lower than the ones in the right. If you go on playing the white keys, starting in **C**, from the left to the right, you will follow the sequence: **C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C**... going on in this cycle until the end of the keys in the piano. As the notes start getting higher, it becomes easy to perceive that the next **C** will be higher in pitch than the previous one. Always, when you finish a cycle and the note returns to be a **C**, you have completed one octave.

We have used 'C' as example here, but this is also valid for any note so long you start and finish with the same note. If we start with **D, E, F, G, A, B, C, D**... we will close one octave when we arrive in 'D' again.

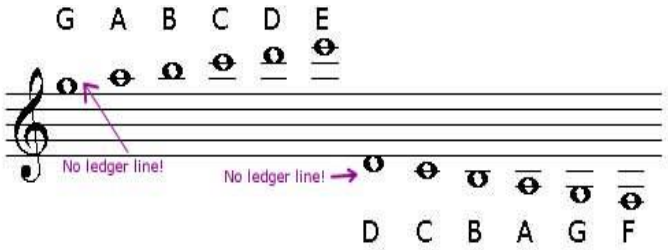
The same logic can be applied to one octave below, where the sound becomes an octave lower in pitch than before. With accidentals, in music, we have 12 notes (12 semitones), we can conclude that on octave comprises the distance of six tones or twelve semitones. Check below how in six tones or twelve semitones, we return to the starting note:



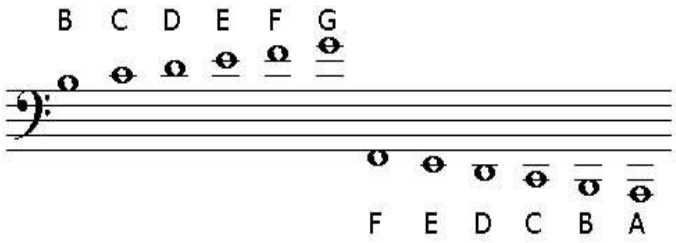
LEDGER LINE

To notate pitches that go higher or lower than the staff permits, ledger lines are used. When writing ledger lines, remember to keep the spacing between them the same as the spacing of the staff lines. Notice also that the notes that sit right on the top or at the bottom of the staff do not require a ledger line!

Ledger lines in the treble staff:



Ledger lines in the bass staff:

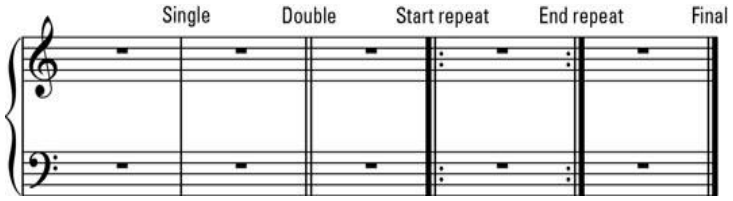


Reading notes on ledger lines tends to be a weakness for students; so, I recommend that you work particularly hard to learn these well.

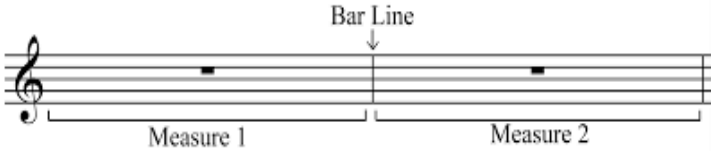
BARS AND BAR-LINES

A **bar line** (or bar-line) is a single vertical line used to divide a musical staff into measures or bars. In piano music – or any music in which a grand staff is used – bar lines connect *both staves* throughout the composition; these are called "systemic bar lines." The word measure is more common in American English while the word bar is more common in British English.

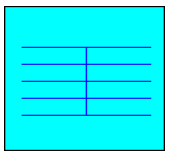
There are different types of bar lines that indicate a particular way to perform in time. There are also repeat bars with accompanying markings and symbols that indicate which passage is to be repeated.



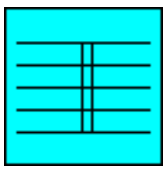
In British English, bar is synonymous with measure. There are different types of Bar Lines, each with a different function. Types of bar lines include the **double bar**, the **repeat bar**, and the **final bar line**.



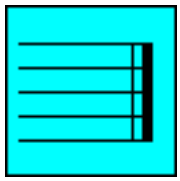
Bar lines are placed on the musical staff to separate the divisions of time. Time is divided in groups of pulses as defined in the time signature. The space between two bar line is called a measure or bar.



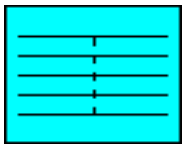
The single line has no purpose other than to divide the musical staff into equal measures. **The double line** is usually used when a major change occurs in the music, such as a key change or metre change. Often, double lines are used to divide one complete musical idea from another. This enables performers to easily recognize the beginning or end of a major musical section.



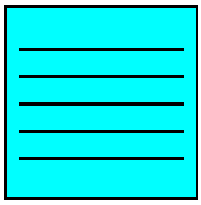
A **"Final" Double Bar**, not to be confused with the double line, indicates that the end of the piece has been reached. It shows that the piece of music is over. It consist of a thick and normal line.



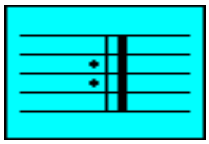
The dashed bar line indicates that time within a measure is approximate. It may also indicate a subdivision of time due to complex rhythms.



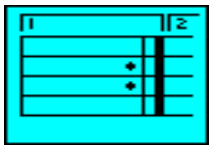
The absence of bar lines indicates that time is unmeasured. The music usually moves freely in time without a steady pulse or beat. Rhythmic values are continually held for their proper duration as the tempo varies slightly.



Repeat bars, that have a pair of dots on the left of the double bar, indicate that the music is to be repeated from a double bar having a pair of dots to its right. If there are no double bars, with a pair of dots on its right, the music is repeated from the beginning.

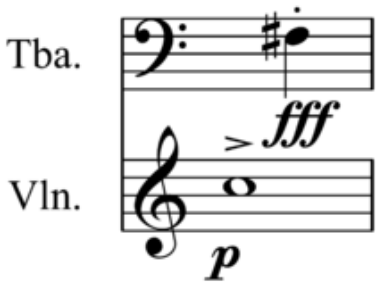


Repeat endings may have bracketed numbers indicating the order in which such endings are to be played. After playing through the first time, the performer takes the first ending for the repeat. The second time the performer will take the second ending and so on.



MUSICAL FEATURES

Music can be analysed by considering a variety of its elements, or parts (aspects, characteristics, features), individually or together. A commonly used list of the main elements includes *pitch*, *timbre*, *duration*, *volume*, *form* or *structure* and *texture*.



This notation indicates differing pitch, dynamics, articulation, instrumentation, timbre, and rhythm (duration and onset/order). Musical features are all the musical elements that give identity to any musical sound, tone, piece, or excerpt. The various musical features are:

PITCH

Pitch is how high or low a tone is. It is the organization of pitches with a pattern of **intervals** between them which creates **scales.** Some words we might use to describe scales are major/minor, chromatic, pentatonic. Pitch is the quality that makes it possible to judge sounds as "higher" and "lower". It is the height or depth of a sound or highness or lowness of a sound.

DURATION

Duration is the length of time a pitch or a tone sound. It is how long or short a note, phrase, section, or composition lasts. Different musical notes are use to represent durations in music.

RHYTHM

This is the time element of music. Rhythm is the flow of music in time; we usually hear these in relation to a steady pulse, and mentally organize this pulse or **tempo** into **meter** (sometimes called a "time signature"). Meter or time signature organizes beats into groups, usually of two or three; beats can be divided into small units usually 2, 3 or 4 subdivisions.

MELODY

A melody, also tune, voice or line, is a linear succession of musical tones that the listener perceives as a single entity. Melody is often referred to as musical line. It is a combination of pitch and rhythm (some might include duration). Sometimes a melody is the **theme** of a composition. We might characterize melody by its **contour** (rising or falling) and the size of the intervals in it. Different types of melody exist.

CONJUNCT MELODY

A melody that uses mostly small intervals (or scale steps) and is smooth is said to be a **conjunct melody**.

DISJUNCT MELODY.

Not surprisingly, a melody that uses large intervals is called a **disjunct melody**.

MOTIF

A **motif** (or motive) is either a very short melody or a distinctive part of a longer melody.

TIMBRE

Timbre can also be described as sound quality or tone colour. It is that quality of a sound which distinguishes different types of sound production, such as choir voices and musical instruments, such as string instruments, wind instruments, and percussion instruments. It also enables listeners to distinguish different instruments in the same category (e.g., an oboe and a clarinet). Terms we might use to describe timbre are bright, dark, brassy, reedy, harsh, noisy, thin, buzzy, pure, raspy, shrill, mellow, and strained. I prefer to avoid describing timbre in emotional terms such as excited, angry, happy, sad, etc. These are not the sound qualities; they are effects or interpretations. Rather than describe the timbre of an instrument in other terms, it is often clearer just to describe the timbre by naming the instrument once we have learned the names and sounds of a few instruments.

VOLUME / DYNAMICS / INTENSITY

In music, this is the degree of loudness or softness. Soft (piano, ***p***); Loud (forte, ***f***); Medium Soft (mezzopiano, ***mp***); Medium Loud (mezzoforte; ***mf***); Very Soft (pianissimo, ***pp***); Very Loud (fortissimo, ***ff***); Gradually get louder = Crescendo (cresc., <); Gradually get softer = Decrescendo or Diminuendo (decresc. or dim., >) Lot more is discussed about these later on in this book.

DYNAMICS

Dynamics is how loud or soft a tone sounds. A composition that has extremely soft passages as well as extremely loud passages is said to have a large or wide **dynamic range**. Dynamics can change suddenly or gradually (**crescendo**, getting louder, or **decrescendo**, getting softer.) Dynamics may also refer to all the various expressional signs and symbols on a piece of music to create different effects.

FORM OR STRUCTURE

Music is often organized into sections. The overall organization of these sections is called form. The form of a song or piece of music shows its structure and can often help the listener relate to and understand what the composer intended to say. This is the pattern or organization of a musical composition. If we label our musical materials, ideas, or sections with the letters of the alphabet we can show how musical forms are created. Any single section of music, consisting of phrases or other musical sections, we can call **A**. This musical section can be repeated to create an **AA** form.

If we instead chose to add a new section, **B,** we would have the musical form **AB**. This would be two contrasting musical sections. If we chose to add another **A** to an **AB** form, but this time with variation we would have the form **ABA'**. (The **'** is called *prime*. It is used to indicate variation, development or slight change or modifications).

With the processes of repetition, contrast, and variation there can be many musical forms.
The most seen musical forms are:

Strophic – AAA. This is also called hymn or song form where we have different stanzas to same tune or music.

Through Composed – ABC. Different stanzas to different tunes or music.

Binary – AB. Two contrasting sections.

Ternary – ABA. Three sections with the first section (A) repeated.

Rondo - ABACA, or ABACADA

Arch – ABCBA

Sonata Form – Exposition, Development, Recapitulation.

Sonata Rondo - ABA - C – ABA Design; Shape;
AB; ABA; rondo; theme and variations; symphony; suite; opera; cantata; oratorio; sonata; round (circle round); canon

TEXTURE
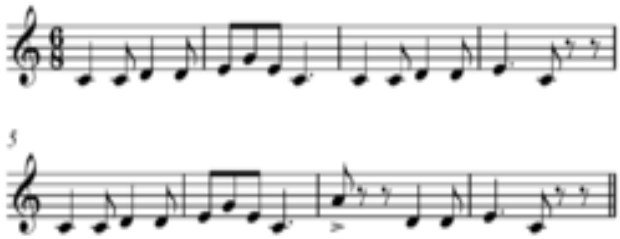
Texture is a term used in music to describe how individual parts or voices are put together. Single Part, different parts, simple, complex, thick, thin, unison, multiple parts, melody, and harmony are terms used to quality or describe the texture in a piece of music. Texture is how the melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic materials are combined in a composition, thus determining the overall quality of the sound in a piece. Texture is often described regarding the density, or thickness, and range, or width, between lowest and highest pitches, in relative terms as well as more specifically distinguished according to the number of voices, or parts, and the relationship between these voices. For example, a thick texture contains many 'layers' of instruments or voices. One of these layers could be a string section, or another brass. The thickness also is

changed by the amount and the richness of the instruments playing or the voices singing the piece. The thickness varies from light to thick. A piece's texture may be changed by the number and character of parts playing at once, the timbre of the instruments playing or the voices singing these parts and the harmony, tempo, and rhythms used.

Texture explains how busy or light the various activities present on a piece of music, i.e. is it unison? Melody line only? SATB? Orchestra presence, or all of these. There are different types of texture, namely:

MONOPHONIC TEXTURE:
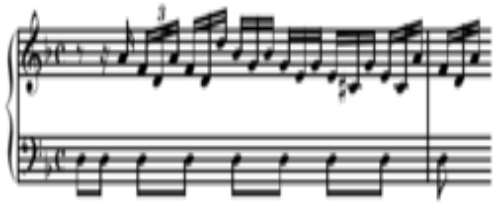
One voice or line. Monophonic texture includes a single melodic line with no accompaniment. "Pop Goes the Weasel" melody.



BI-PHONIC TEXTURE.

Two distinct lines, the lower sustaining a drone (constant pitch) while the other line creates a more elaborate melody above it. Pedal tones or ostinato would be an example.
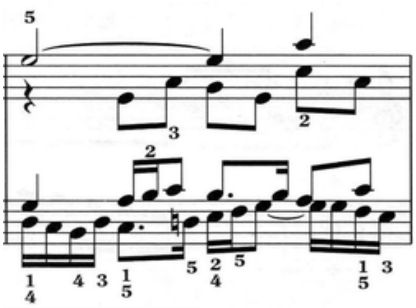
Pedal tone in Bach's Prelude no. 6 in D Minor, BWV 851, from *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, Book I, mm. 1–2. All pedal tone notes are consonant except for the last three of the first measure.



POLYPHONIC, COUNTERPOINT OR CONTRAPUNTAL TEXTURE.

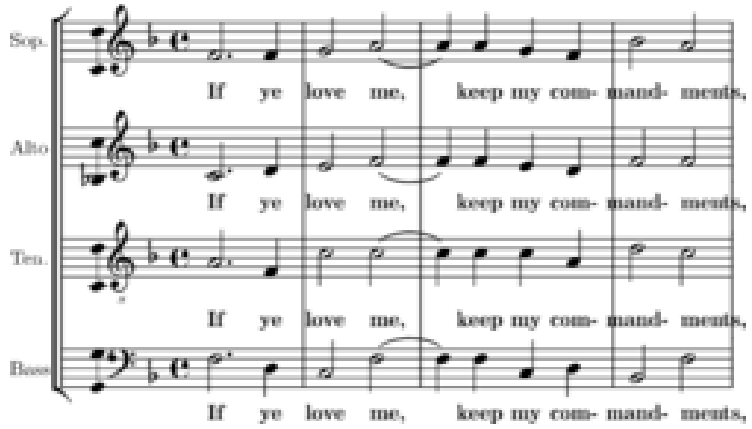
This entails many voices, usually similar, as in Renaissance or Baroque counterpoint. Multiple melodic voices which are to a considerable extent independent from or in imitation with one another. This a characteristic texture of Renaissance music, also prevalent during the Baroque period – between 1600 and 1750.

A bar from J.S. Bach's "Fugue No.17 in A flat", BWV 862, from *Das Wohltemperirte Clavier* (Part I), a famous example of contrapuntal polyphony.



HOMOPHONIC TEXTURE.

Homophonic texture is a melody with simple accompaniment or chords moving in the same rhythm (i.e. homo-rhythmic). This is the most common texture in Western / European Art music where there is a main melody with other voices or parts as accompaniment. It is a multiple voices structure of which one, the melody, stands out prominently and the others form a background of harmonic accompaniment. If all the parts have much the same rhythm, the homophonic texture can also be described as homorhythmic. This is the characteristic texture of the Classical period (i.e. 1750 to 18250 and continued to predominate in Romantic music while in the 20th century, "popular music is nearly all homophonic," and, "much of jazz is also" though, "the simultaneous improvisations of some jazz musicians creates a true polyphony". Homophonic textures usually contain only one Primary Melody. Most of the hymns we sing are homophonic in texture.



The above excerpt is a good example of homophonic music titled "If ye love me," composed in 1549. The voices move together using the same rhythm, and the relationship between them creates chords: the excerpt begins and ends with an F major triad.

HOMO-RHYTHMIC

Homophonic texture has multiple voices with similar rhythmic material in all parts. It is also known as "chordal".

HETEROPHONY

This means “mixed” or multiple similar versions of a melody performed simultaneously (rare in European music; possibly used in Ancient Greece). Two or more voices simultaneously performing variations of the same melody.

COLLAGE

Collage is the juxtaposition & superimposition of extremely different textures or sounds.

BEAT AND METRE

A beat is what gives music its rhythmic pattern; it can be regular or irregular. Beats are grouped together in a measure; the notes and rests correspond to a certain number of beats. Meter refers to rhythmic patterns produced by grouping together strong and weak beats. A meter may be in duple (two beats in a measure), triple (three beats in a measure), quadruple (four beats in a measure) and so on.

Most music in the world has a pulse or beat (exceptions include *shakuhachi* music from Japan, Gregorian chant from Europe, various forms of Arab music, some Australian *didjeridu* music, etc.). Usually, the pulses are organized (by the performer, listener, and composer) into groups, usually from 2 to 5 beats in a group, and are usually regular (the same number of beats repeating over and over, and the beats always the same length). This grouping is the general idea of METER. Most music derived from European sources falls into **DUPLE** (2 beats), **TRIPLE** (3 beats) or **QUADRUPLE** (4 beats) meters.

Beats themselves can be **SUBDIVIDED** into smaller parts, usually 2, 3, 4, 6 or 8 even parts (duple or triple subdivisions). Music derived from folk music in the Balkans or from other sources such as India have beats that are IRREGULAR in size. These beats usually are groups of two or three sub-pulses (or pulse subdivisions). I prefer the term "asymmetrical," but there is no ideal term for this concept.

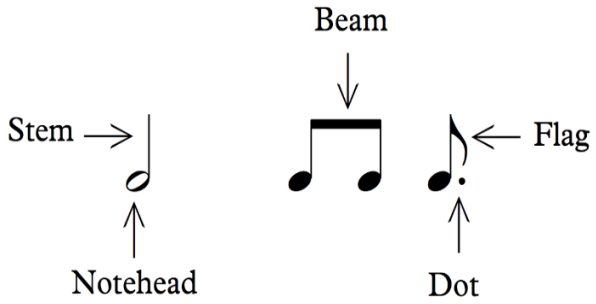
The organization of time in European music is in three levels. The middle ground, the level to which we are most likely to tap our foot, is the beat (or pulse) which is grouped at a higher level into groups of beats known as measures or bars. Going the other direction, beats are subdivided into smaller parts. Sometimes it is difficult to decide what is the basic level or speed of the pulse (or tempo). For example, fast music in a triple meter could be heard as a slow or moderate tempo (60 beats per minute) with its beat subdivided into three parts, or as a very fast stream of beats (180 beats per minute) that are grouped into threes.

In music, there is a play between repetition (pattern) and variety. The regularity of meter gives rise to a set of expectations, and these expectations can be manipulated to create emotion, motion, surprise, etc. For example, in a 4-beat meter ("4/4" or "common time"), the first beat is the strongest beat, and the third beat is the next strongest. The second and fourth beats are "weak" beats. Heavy accents on these weak beats create a feeling of surprise known as "syncopation." Repeated heavy accents on the second and fourth beats create a feeling known as "rock 'n' roll." Another use of the strong/weak beat distinction is the relative degree of melodic closure; when the melody ends on beat 1 (the "downbeat"), it is called a strong cadence and has the greatest feeling of closure, finality, rest, or completeness.

Chapter 3

PARTS OF A MUSICAL NOTES

When written on a staff, a note indicates a pitch and rhythmic value. The notation consists of a note head (either empty, white, or filled in, shaded), and optionally can include a stem, beam, dot, or flag.



A NOTE is a symbol that represents pitch and rhythm. As for pitch, it is placed on either a line or space of the musical staff. As for rhythm, it is placed proportionately within a measure according to the time value of the note.

The part of a note that is common to all note symbols is the note head. A **note head** may take different shapes and sizes depending on the effect the composer intends for that sound. The note head is placed on a line or a space of the musical staff to indicate what pitch to play.

The **STEM** is part of a note that is common to all note types smaller in duration than the whole note. A note head placed below the middle line of the musical staff has the stem going up. Likewise, a note head placed above the middle line of the musical staff has the stem going down. For the stem going up, it is placed to the right of the note head. For the stem going down, it is placed to the left. When a note head is placed on the middle line of the musical staff, the stem can go either up or down.

When there are two or more notes grouped in harmony or by beam, the stem goes opposite the direction of the furthest note from the middle line of the musical staff.

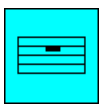
The **FLAG** is part of a note that is common to all note types smaller in duration than a quarter note. The more flags on the note stem, the shorter the duration of the note. Flagged notes are often beamed together within the space of a beat. In vocal music, notes are beamed over a sustained syllable.
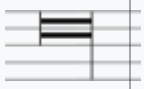
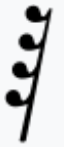
REST

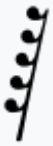
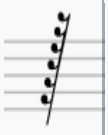
A rest means no sound is to be played for a duration of time. The various types of rest symbols, like the various types of note shapes, signify different durations of silence in time. A rest indicates a duration of silence. Various rest symbols signify different durations of silence. Rests may apply to one or several voices depending whether or not there is linear independence in the music.

WHOLE REST

A whole rest is usually equivalent, in value, to the whole note. It is often placed in an empty measure regardless of the time value as indicated by the time signature.



Note	Rest	American name	British name	Dotted value	Double dotted value
		Large, Duplex Longa, or maxima (occasionally *Octuple Note*, *Octuple whole note*, or *Octuple entire musical note*) **32 counts**		**32 + 16= 48**	**32+16+8=56**
		Long or Longa (occasionally *quadruple note* or *quadruple whole note*) **16 counts**		**16 + 8 = 24**	**16+8+4=28**
		Double whole note, Double note	Breve **8 counts**	**8 + 4 = 12**	**8+4+2=14**
		Whole note	Semibreve **4 counts**	**4 + 2 = 6**	**4+2+1=7**
		Half note	Minim **2 counts**	**2 + 1 = 3**	**2+1+½=3½**
	 or	Quarter note	Crotchet **1 count**	**1 + ½ = 1 ½**	**1+½+¼=1¾**
		Eighth note	Quaver **½ count**	**½ + ¼ = ¾**	xxxxxx
		Sixteenth note	Semiquaver ¼ count	**¼ + 1/8 = 3/8**	xxxxxx
		Thirty-second note	Demisemi-quaver **1/8 count**	**1/8+1/16 = 3/16**	xxxxxx
		Sixty-fourth note	Hemidemi-semiquaver **1/16 count**	**1/16 + 1/32 = 3/32**	xxxxxx

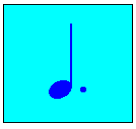
Note	Rest	American name	British name	Dotted value	Double dotted value
		Hundred twenty-eighth note	Semihemi-Demisemi-quaver (rare) **1/32 count**	**1/32 + 1/64 = 3/64**	xxxxxx
		Two hundred fifty-sixth note	Demisemi-Hemidemi-Semiquaver (rare) **1/64 count**	**1/64 + 1/128= 3/128**	xxxxxx

DOTS, TIES AND SLURS

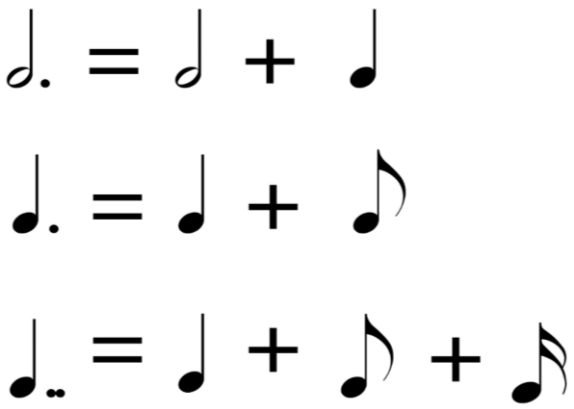
Dots and Ties allow for basic durations to be lengthened. **A dot** occurs after a pitch or a rest, and it increases its duration by half. For example, if a quarter note is equivalent in duration to two eighth notes, a dotted quarter note would be equivalent to three eighth notes. Generally, undotted notes divide into two notes; dotted notes divide into three. Thus, undotted notes are typically used to represent the beat level in simple meter, while dotted notes are used to represent the beat in compound meter.

Multiple dots can be added to a duration. Subsequent dots add half the duration of the previous dot. For example, a quarter note with two dots would be equivalent in duration to a quarter, eighth, and sixteenth note.

One or many dots may be placed on the right side of a note. The dot extends the duration of the note by half the original value of the note. Each extra dot extends the duration of the note by half the preceding dot value.



A dot may be placed after a note or a rest. It is mostly common to find dotted figures in compound time. Dotted figures are often used in subdivisions of a beat or to represent a grouping of beats, such as a dotted half representing three quarter notes, or, as in compound time, the beat itself. The dotted figures should be used in such a way that the divisions of the beats are easy to read.

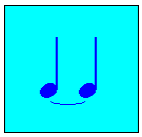


TIES

A tie lengthens a duration by connecting two adjacent identical pitches. Ties are used to either sustain a pitch beyond the length of a single measure, or to make a particular rhythmic grouping in a measure clearer. In the example below, the duration of the first pitch is longer than a single measure, so it is represented by tying the dotted half note, which lasts the full bar, to the first beat of the subsequent bar.



Ties connect one note value to another. It is especially common over a bar line. Sometimes two notes may be tied within the same measure. A tie connects notes of same pitch.



SLUR

If the note being tied over a bar line has an accidental, the accidental is also carried over.



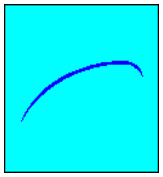
The curve of the tie may be up or down depending on the stem directions of the note on the musical staff. For the stem going downward, the tie is curved up, starting above the note head, from one note to the other. Likewise, for the stems going upward, the tie is curved downwards, starting below the note head, from one note to the other.



One or more of any notes within a chord may be tied to another. The tie is curved upward for the top note of the chord and the tie is curved downward for the bottom note of the chord. For the notes in between the chord, the ties are evenly alternated between the upper and lower curved ties.
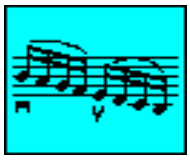


A phrase mark, better known as a slur, indicates that a passage of music should be played legato. Legato is an Italian word meaning smooth. Phrase marks play a significant part in musical shape. It is usually placed on the note head side to avoid crossing over note stems. A slur connects notes of different pitches.
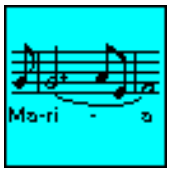


A phrase is a section in music that express a complete idea. For example, in classical music, phrases are usually symmetrical in length. For music that is written today, a phrase can be any length. The purpose of a phrase mark is to define sections expressing complete ideas.



A phrase mark is often called a slur. It defines a group of notes, within a phrase, to be played legato. It is properly balanced with other articulations to bring musical expression to its fullest.



For bowed instruments, a slur indicates one continuous motion of the bow for the duration of the slur. The bow changes direction at the end of each slur and articulation.



In vocal music, slurs group notes under one syllable. The slur ends at the change of all syllables. Slurs are mostly used when notes, such as the quarter note, half note and whole note, cannot have beam groupings.

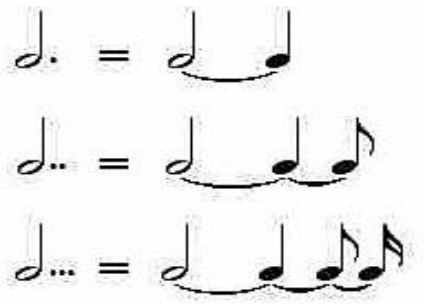
DOTTED NOTES AND RESTS

Often, when reading music, you will come across a note immediately followed by a small dot. The dot signifies that the preceding note is equal to the sum of its own value, plus half its value.

Not only can notes have a dot, but also rests may be dotted as well. The dot signifies the same thing for a rest as it does for the note. A dotted rest would equal the sum of its own value, plus half its value.

EXAMPLE 1:

A dotted minim would equal three crotchet beats: the sum of its value (two crotchet beats) plus half its value (one crotchet beat).



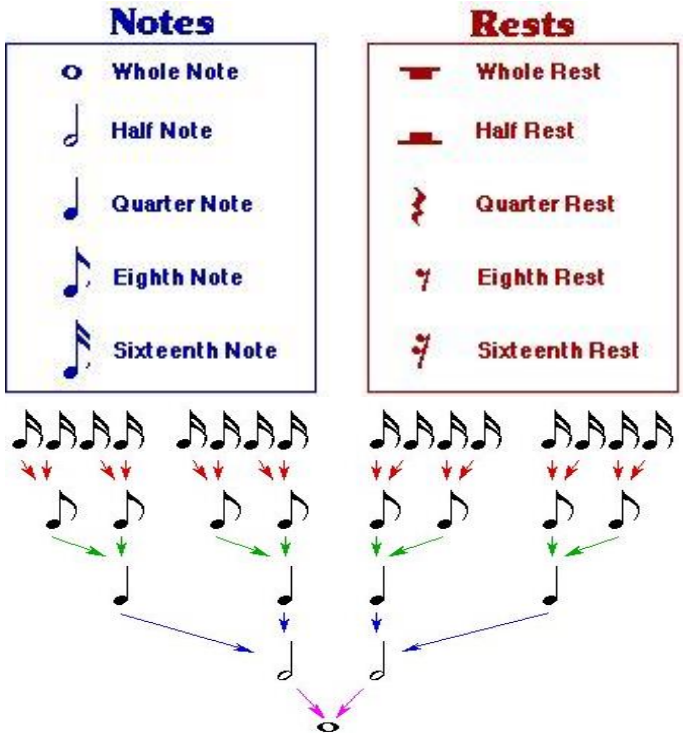
EXAMPLE 2:

A dotted quarter note would equal one (crotchet) and a half (quaver) beats; the sum of its value (one beat) plus half its value (half of a beat).

RHYTHMIC VALUES

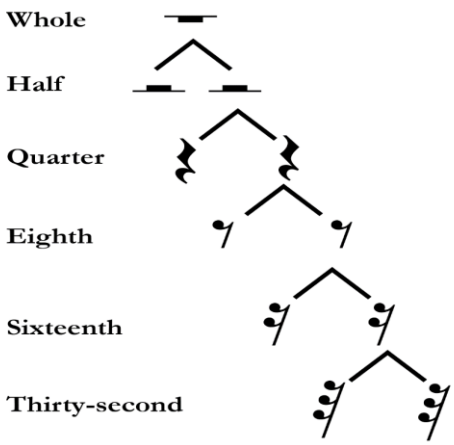
Rhythm refers to the combination of long and short durations in time. Durations are notated with either unfilled / white or filled / black note heads. Unfilled note heads can appear with or without a stem; filled note heads always appear with a stem. Flags can be added to the stems of filled note heads; each flag shortens the duration by half.

Time in music is represented by rhythmic values. These note values are related mathematically. The largest note in common use today is the whole note. The chart below describes the relationships of the other notes. Notice that for notes with stems, every additional flag halves the note value.



RESTS

Rests represent silence in musical notation. For each durational symbol there exists a corresponding rest.



Music reading is a skill that can be developed with regular practice by anyone. One valuable skill to gain is the instant recognition of short rhythmic phrases. The memorization of the following rhythmic units will help in improving one's music reading skills.

Chapter 4

RHYTHM AND BEATS
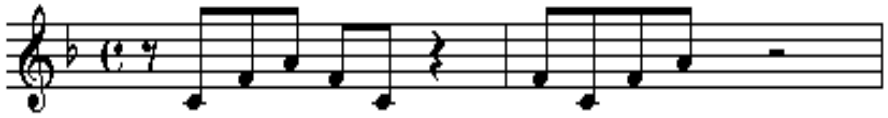
READING NOTATED RHYTHMS

The first step towards understanding rhythms is to learn to read them correctly. This is not difficult once you know how to go about it.
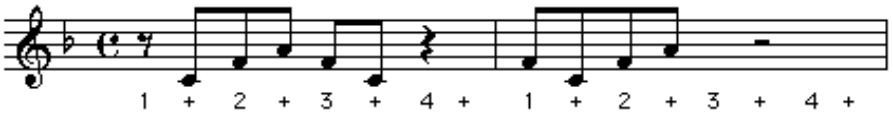
Always subdivide each 4/4 bar into 8 half-beats: 4 downbeats and 4 off-beats (or 'upbeats').

1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

The numbers (1, 2, 3 and 4) represent the **downbeats**. The plus signs (+) are the **upbeats**. When confronted with a rhythm like this:



simply write underneath the score all 8 half beats at their correct positions, like this:



1, 2, 3, 4 = downbeats + = upbeats ('offbeats')

ALWAYS use a PENCIL when writing on a score, never a ballpoint or a pen!

Subdivide music written in 3/4 time in the same way, except that there are now only 3 beats in each bar.

1 + 2 + 3 +

Subdivide music written in 6/8 time (or 3/8 , or 9/8) as :

1 2 3 4 5 6 or as: 1 + + 2 + +

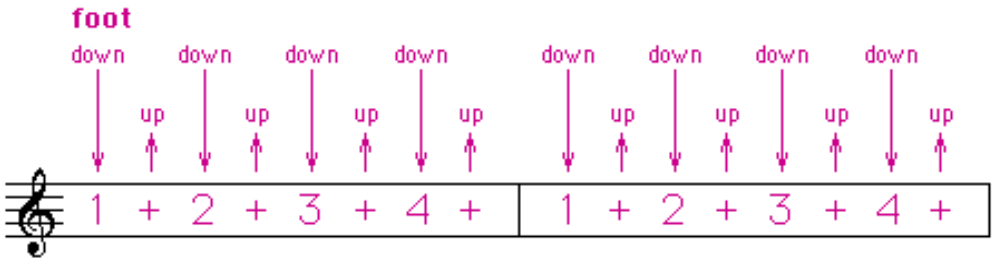
Always write with a **pencil only** on any music score and never use a pen or ballpoint. This way the marks can be erased in the future by either yourself or by another player who uses the same score (for example a part score for a band or orchestra).

TAPPING THE BEAT

Besides being able to read the rhythm you need to be able to play it and keep track of the beats as the music progresses.

The best way to do this is by tapping each beat with your foot. Keep the heal of your foot on the floor and tap with your toes.

- on each **downbeat**: toes are **on the** floor.
- on each **off beat**: toes are lifted **off** the floor.



You may need some practice at a slow tempo to get the coordination going between your foot and you are playing. First tap your foot while clapping the rhythm. Once that goes OK tap the foot while playing on your instrument.

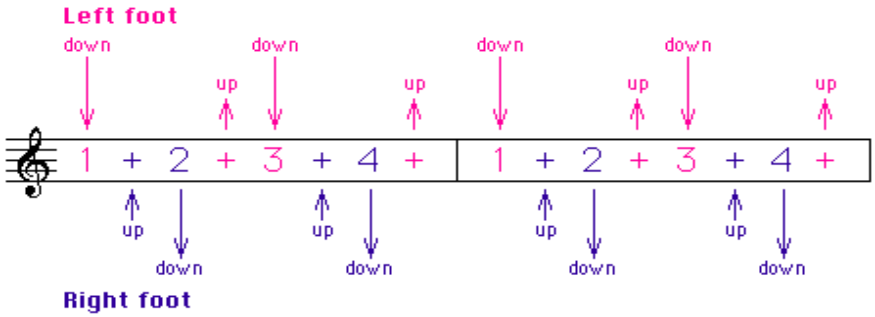
TAPPING THE BEAT USING BOTH FEET

Years ago, one of my piano teachers at the University of Nigeria Nsukka, Enugu State, Nigeria, got me into the habit of tapping the rhythm with two feet.

This helps to keep track of where you are in a bar.
In 4/4 time:

- My **left toes** always touch the floor at downbeats 1 and 3.
- My **right toes** touch the floor at downbeats 2 and 4.

This means that when my left foot taps the ground, I know that I am either at the beginning (beat 1) or in the middle (beat 3) of the bar. This helps enormously in reading and keeping track of where you are in the music always as a beginner.
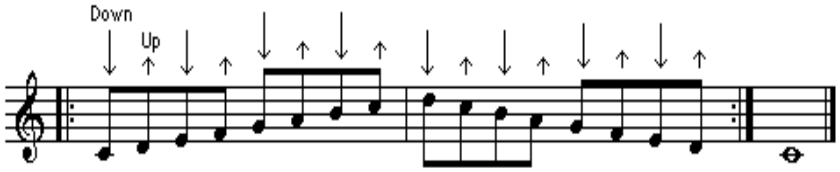


You need to practise this method at first, but once mastered it is quite useful, especially for reading difficult music and at fast tempos. I also of the opinion that tapping the beat with two feet helps to maintain a steady even rhythm, as the feet movement simulates our walking action which (at least when sober) is one of the most regular body movements we make.

TAPPING EXERCISES

Here are three types of exercises you can do to establish independence and coordination between tapping the beat while playing or singing the rhythm.

EXERCISE 1

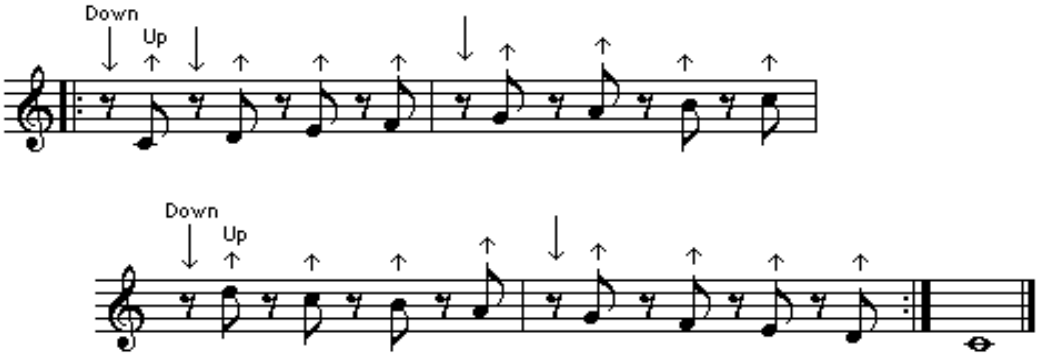
First start tapping your foot (or feet) until a regular beat pattern is established. Select a slow tempo, around 60 bpm. When using a metronome tap on the metronome clicks, lift the foot in between them. Then slowly play or sing a scale in quavers while tapping the beat with your foot. Keep repeating the scale until you have both the tapping synchronised and fully under control.



Select the tapping method (with one foot or with both feet) you wish to learn right from the start, and start working on it.

EXERCISE 2
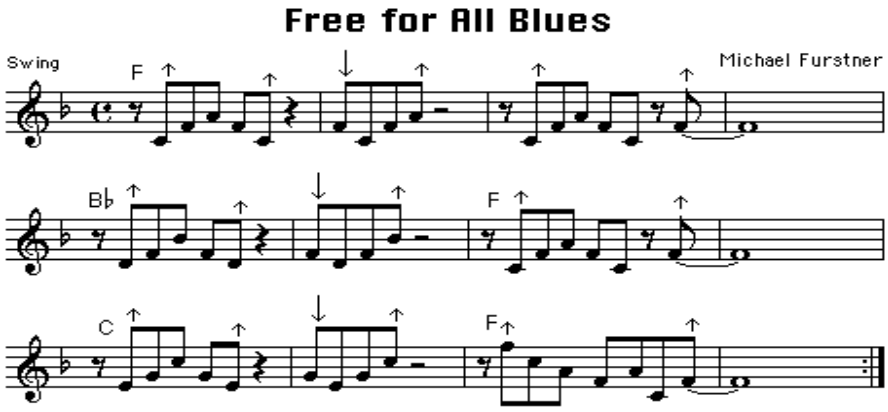
Once you have mastered Exercise 1 start playing or singing a scale with quavers rests on the downbeat and quaver scale-tones on the upbeats while at the same time tapping the beat with your foot. Keep repeating the scale until you have this fully mastered.



EXERCISE 3

You are now ready to take on a song.

First write the half beats (in numbers and plus signs) underneath the score, then play it while tapping the beat with your foot.



As you progress through this Course you will gradually be able to play the music and tap the beat without the half-beats written underneath the score.

Chapter 5

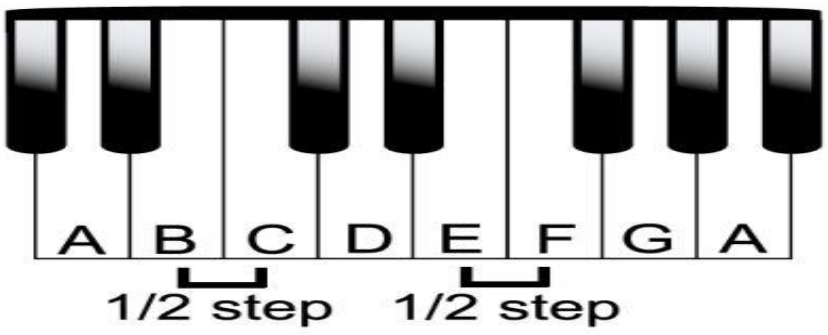
PIANO AND KEYBOARD INSTRUMENTS

The keyboard has been described as ‘‘the king of all western musical instruments’’. (Mudiakevwe Igbi, 2020). This is due to its adaptability and capability to suit accompaniment of diverse musical styles.

According Mudiakevwe, ‘A keyboard in music refers to the instrument made of a set of keys arranged on a board and played by striking different notes with the fingers. These notes are usually linked to the chromatic scale, and the run from bass to treble sections’’. David K. also defined keyboard instrument as ‘’a musical instrument played using a keyboard, a row of levers which are pressed by the fingers’. (David Kelzenberg, 2021).

‘Today, the term keyboard often refers to keyboard-style synthesizers. Under the fingers of a sensitive performer, the keyboard may also be used to control dynamics, phrasing, shading, articulation, and other elements of expression—depending on the design and inherent capabilities of the instrument’. (David Kelzenberg, 2021).

The Keyboard has white keys and black keys arranged in a pattern. The black keys are in groups of twos and threes. This makes it easier to find notes on the keyboard. The white keys are represented by the musical alphabet **A B C D E F G**



This is repeated over and over from left to right on the keyboard. The lowest note on the piano is an **A**. You can find **C** by looking for groups of two black keys. The note just to the left of the first black key is **C**. All adjacent notes on the keyboard are HALF STEPS /SEMITONES APART. This is the smallest interval in Western Music. Some other cultures use intervals that are smaller.

For example, Indian classical music uses microtones-intervals that fall between the semitones. Notice that some of the adjacent notes on the keyboard are white keys to black keys, and some are white keys to white keys. The notes B and C, and E and F have no black keys between them. The distance between B and C, and E and F is a half-step / semitone. Two semitones make a tone.

KEYBOARD INSTRUMENTS

A keyboard instrument is a musical instrument played using a keyboard, a row of levers which are pressed by the fingers. The keyboard originated from the organ, which is a mechanical set of panpipes in which the air flow is produced by bellows which are controlled by the keyboard. Electric organs first appeared in the 1940s, and by the 1960s and 1970s the electronic organ was the instrument of choice in the keyboard market.

‘’Much effort has gone into creating an instrument that sounds like the piano but lacks its size and weight. The electric piano and electronic piano were early efforts that, while useful instruments in their own right, did not convincingly reproduce the timbre of the piano.” (Don Gayhardt, 2017).

The first organ incorporating drum machines was also introduced in the 1970’s. Full accompaniment sections, which allowed entire orchestrations to be played as notes on the keyboard. Original organs used analogue technology, but when pianos went digital, so did organs! This meant that electronic keyboards could sound like any instrument. During the 1980s, as electronic circuitry became more compact, portable modern music keyboards were introduced.

Now-a-days; keyboards are often used, though some concert hall, and modern homes still prefer the upright or grand pianos to synthesizer keyboards. They provide the same benefits and pure sound of a full-sized piano or Grand piano along with extra sounds and instruments that can make anyone who is willing to learn into one person keyboard band. Keyboard instruments therefore describe the range of sounds that synthesizer keyboards are now able to produce through various settings. Instruments whose sound is produced by means of keys that are arranged in a particular order, making up the keyboard is referred to as keyboard instrument.

The following is a list of keyboard instruments categorized by type:

[A.] CHORDOPHONES

These are musical instruments which make sound by way of a vibrating string or strings stretched between two points.

CLAVICHORD

Clavichord is an early stringed instrument like a piano but with more delicate sound.



ELECTRIC PIANO

An electric piano is an electric musical instrument which produces sounds when a performer presses the keys of the piano-style musical keyboard.



CLAVINET

The Clavinet is an electrically amplified clavichord that was invented by Ernst Zacharias and manufactured by the Hohner Company of Trossingen, West Germany from 1964 to the early 1980s.



CLAVIER

Clavier is a stringed instrument that has a keyboard. It is the keyboard of an organ, harpsichord, piano, etc. It is also any stringed instrument that has a keyboard, or a dummy keyboard used for silent practice.

PIANET



RHODES PIANO



WURLITZER ELECTRIC PIANO



HARPSICHORD

Harpsichord is a keyboard instrument with horizontal strings which run perpendicular to the keyboard in a long tapering case, and are plucked by points of quill, leather, or plastic operated by depressing the keys. It is used chiefly in European classical music of the 16th to 18th centuries.



SPINET



VIRGINAL



Forte-piano, Piano, Pianoforte - a keyboard instrument that is played by depressing keys that cause hammers to strike tuned strings and produce sounds

GROUND PIANO



UPRIGHT PIANO



TANGENT PIANO



BOWED CLAVIER



HURDY GURDY

The hurdy gurdy or hurdy-gurdy is a stringed musical instrument that produces sound by a crank-turned rosined wheel rubbing against the strings. The wheel functions much like a violin bow, and single notes played on the instrument sound like a violin. Melodies are played on a keyboard that presses tangents.



[B] AEROPHONES

Aerophones are musical instruments which produce sound primarily by causing a body of air to vibrate.

ACCORDION, PIANO ACCORDION, SQUEEZE BOX

This is a portable box-shaped free-reed instrument; the reeds are made to vibrate by air from the bellows controlled by the player.



HARMONIUM/REED ORGAN



MELODEON

Melodeon or diatonic button accordion is a member of the free-reed aerophone family of musical instruments. It is a type of button accordion on which the melody-side keyboard contains one or more rows of buttons, with each row producing the notes of a single diatonic scale.



MELODICA

The melodica, also known as the pianica, blow-organ, key harmonica, or melodyhorn, is a free-reed instrument like the pump organ and harmonica



PIPE ORGAN, ORGAN

Pipe organ or Organ is a wind instrument whose sound is produced by means of pipes arranged in sets supplied with air from a bellows and controlled from a large complex musical keyboard

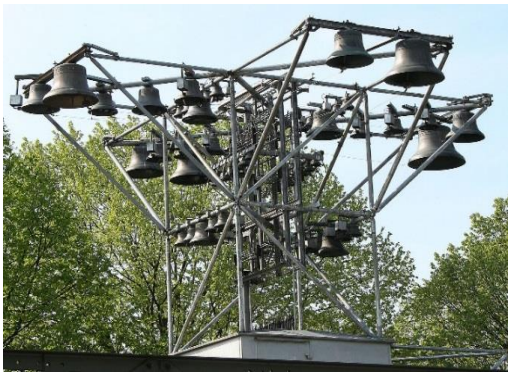


[C] IDIOPHONES

These are instruments that are made from materials that have their own unique sounds– ceramics, glass, metal, or wood all create different vibrations.

CARILLON

A carillon is a musical instrument that is typically housed in the bell tower of a church or municipal building. It is a set of bells played using a keyboard or by an automatic mechanism similar to a piano roll.



CELESTA

It is a musical instrument consisting of graduated steel plates that are struck by hammers activated by a keyboard. The celesta or celeste is a struck idiophone. It looks like an upright piano, or a large wooden music box. Four- or five-octave models usually have a pedal that sustains or damps the sound. The three-octave instruments do not have a pedal because of their small "table-top" design. One of the best-known works that uses...



GLASSCHORD

The glasschord is a crystallophone that resembles the celesta but uses keyboard-driven hammers to strike glass bars instead of metal bars.



DULCITONE

A Dulcitone is a keyboard instrument in which sound is produced by a range of tuning forks, which vibrate when struck by felt-covered hammers activated by the keyboard.



TOY PIANO

The toy piano, also known as the kinderklavier, is a small piano-like musical instrument. Most modern toy pianos use round metal rods, as opposed to strings in a regular piano, to produce sound. The toy piano is a kind of child's keyboard.



VIBRAPHONE

The vibraphone is a musical instrument in the struck idiophone subfamily of the percussion family. It consists of tuned metal bars, and is usually played by holding two or four soft mallets and striking the bars.



MARIMBA

The marimba is a percussion instrument consisting of a set of wooden bars struck with mallets to produce musical tones. Resonators suspended underneath the bars amplify their sound.



METALLOPHONE

A metallophone is any musical instrument consisting of tuned metal bars which are struck to make sound, usually with a mallet. Metallophones have been used in music in Asia for thousands of years.



GLOCKENSPIE

A Glockenspiel is a percussion instrument composed of a set of tuned keys arranged in the fashion of the keyboard of a piano. Other names for Glockenspie are Concert bells, orchestral bells, bells



[D] ELECTROPHONES

These are electronic version of keyboard instruments.

DIGITAL PIANO

A digital piano is a type of electronic keyboard designed to serve primarily as an alternative to the traditional piano, both in the way it feels to play and in the sound produced.



ELECTRONIC KEYBOARD



ELECTRONIC ORGAN

An electric organ, also known as electronic organ, is an electronic keyboard instrument which was derived from the harmonium, pipe organ and theatre organ.



ELECTRONIC PIANO

An electric piano is an electric musical instrument which produces sounds when a performer presses the keys of the piano-style musical keyboard. ... Unlike a synthesizer, the electric piano is not an electronic instrument. Instead, it is an electro-mechanical instrument.



KEYTAR

A keytar is a relatively lightweight electronic keyboard (with or without a built-in synthesizer) that is supported by a strap around the neck and shoulders, like the way a guitar is supported by a strap. Keytars allow players a greater range of movement onstage, compared to conventional keyboards, which are placed on stationary stands or which are part of heavy, floor-mounted structures. The instrument has a musical keyboard for triggering musical notes and sounds. Various controls are placed on the instrument's "neck", including those for pitch bends, vibrato, portamento, and sustain.

The term "keytar" is a portmanteau of the words "keyboard" and "guitar", and is a slang word. This style of keyboard was mostly referred to by manufacturers as a "MIDI Controller", "Remote Keyboard", "Strap-on Keyboard", or variations thereof.



MELLOTRON

The Mellotron is an electro-mechanical, polyphonic tape replay keyboard originally developed and built in Birmingham, England, in 1963. It evolved from a similar instrument, the Chamberlin, but could be mass-produced more effectively.



OPTIGAN

The Optigan is an electronic keyboard instrument designed for the consumer market. The name stems from the instrument's reliance on pre-recorded optical soundtracks to reproduce sound. Later versions were sold under the name Orchestron.



SYNTHESISER, SYNTHESIZER

A synthesizer is an electronic musical instrument that generates electric signals that are converted to sound through instrument amplifiers and loudspeakers or headphones. It is an electronic instrument (usually played with a keyboard) that modifies sounds electronically and can imitate a variety of other musical instruments.



KEYBOARD BASS

Keyboard bass (sometimes referred as a synth bass) is the use of a low-pitched keyboard or pedal keyboard to substitute for the bass guitar or double bass in music. It is an electronic keyboard instrument specifically used to reproduce the bass note range.



KEYBOARD CONTROLLER

A keyboard controller is a device with piano or synth-style keys, and usually a selection of knobs, buttons, and sliders. These transmit MIDI data to external sound modules (synthesizers), computer software synthesizers, or a hardware or software sequencer.



Due to this range of instruments as well as the capability of high-end keyboards to be able to record a combination of instruments and save the sounds which can be tweaked and replayed later. This helps with compositions that could be costly if for example someone were to hire a harpsichord player. The instruments can also combine instruments that are not normally used together to create unique melodies. Keyboards can also be connected to a computer and music for each instrument transcribed directly to sheet form as they are played. These conveniences continue to make keyboards the popular choice for emerging and seasoned musicians alike.

Chapter 6

ACCIDENTALS (sharps, flats and naturals**)**

‘’Accidentals were first applied to the note B, by about the 10th century. To fulfill certain theoretical and aesthetic rules, B was sometimes flatted and, later, F was sometimes sharped. At first there was no sign for a natural; a sharp cancelled a flat, a flat cancelled a sharp.’’ (Emily Rodriguez, 2017). Accidental, in music, is a sign or symbol placed immediately to the left of (or above) a note to show that the note must be changed in pitch. A sharp (♯) raises a note by a semitone; a flat (♭) lowers it by a semitone; a natural (♮) restores it to the original pitch. Double sharps (𝄪) and double flats (𝄫) indicate that the note is raised or lowered by two semitones. Sharps or flats that are placed at the beginning of a musical staff are called a key signature which indicate the tonality, or key, of the music and are not considered accidentals.

Accidentals were first applied to the note B, by about the 10th century. To fulfil certain theoretical and aesthetic rules, **B** was sometimes flatted and, later, F was sometimes sharped. At first there was no sign for a natural; a sharp cancelled a flat, a flat cancelled a sharp. By the late Renaissance, E♭, A♭, and C♯ were fairly common. Accidentals applied to all notes became increasingly common in music of subsequent periods.

In common modern practice, the effect of an accidental carries through the bar in which it occurs. A common misconception is that accidentals affect future notes in the same measure across octaves. This is simply not true. Accidentals only affect the note in the octave in which they occur. So, if **middle C** has a sharp accidental and there is a **C** (which is an octave higher) later in the same bar, the sharp doesn't affect it. Accidentals only apply within the bar and octave in which they appear, unless cancelled by another accidental sign, or tied into a following measure. If a note has an accidental and the note is repeated in a different octave within the same measure, the accidental does not apply to the same note of the different octave.

FIVE DIFFERENT TYPES OF ACCIDENTALS:

In all, accidentals, or **sharps** and **flats**, are useful for creating expressive music with a variety of notes. A sharp raises a note, while a flat lowers a note. Accidentals in a measure last throughout the measure but can be cancelled by a natural sign. Sharps and flats share a common pitch and are called enharmonic.

FLAT ACCIDENTAL

In music, **flat**, or bemolle (Italian: "soft B") means "lower in pitch". In music notation, the flat symbol, ♭, derived from a stylised lowercase "b", lowers a note by a half step (semitone). Intonation or tuning is said to be flat when it is below the intended pitch.

DOUBLE FLAT ACCIDENTAL

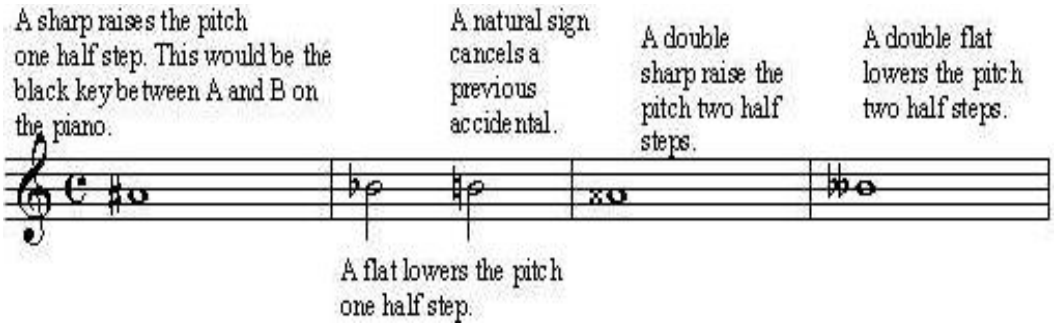
An accidental sign consisting of two flat symbols (𝄫) that lower a note by two half steps (two semitones). The **double flat** symbol alters the pitch of the note to which it is attached as well as any subsequent occurrence of the same note (identical line or space) in the same measure.

SHARP ACCIDENTAL

A **sharp** raises a note by a semitone in pitch.

NATURAL ACCIDENTAL

A **natural** is an accidental which cancels previous accidentals and represents the unaltered pitch of a **note**. A **note** is **natural** when it is neither flat (♭) nor sharp (♯) (nor double-flat nor double-sharp).



HOW TO DRAW ACCIDENTALS

The **flat**:



The **sharp**:



The **natural**:



The **double flat**:



The **double sharp**:

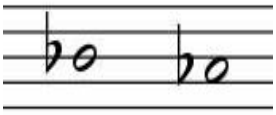


All accidentals are written to the left side of the note head to which they apply, so that when we are reading music from left to right across the page, we see the accidental first, and then the note.

DRAWING A FLAT SIGN

The **flat sign** lowers a pitch by one half step. It consists of a small loop and a stem. The loop of the flat sign is placed directly on the line or space of the note head to which it belongs. When the flat effects a pitch that is on a space, the loop of the flat sign should be in the middle of that space. When it effects a pitch on a line, the line should run through the middle of the loop of the flat sign. The stem of the flat sign is the length of approximately two and a half staff spaces.
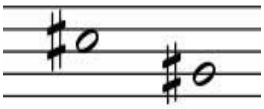
How to draw flat signs with correct placement of the accidentals:



DRAWING A SHARP SIGN

The **sharp sign** raises a pitch by one half step. It is similar to the pound sign (also called the number sign) that is produced by typing shift-3 on a computer keyboard. The horizontal lines of the sharp sign slant upwards and to the right. The space in the middle of the sharp sign is placed on the exact same staff line or space as the note head that it effects. The height of the sharp sign is approximately three staff spaces.
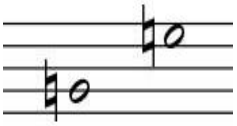
How to sharp flat signs with correct placement of the accidentals:



DRAWING A NATURAL SIGN

The **natural sign** is used to cancel any previous accidentals. It looks similar to the sharp sign, but some of its lines are not as long. Just like the sharp sign, the space in the middle of the natural sign is placed on the exact same line or space as the note head it effects. The height of the natural sign is approximately three staff spaces.

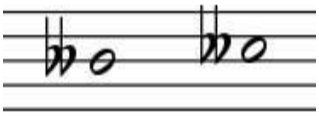
How to draw natural signs with correct placement of the accidentals:



DRAWING A DOUBLE FLAT SIGN

The **double flat** lowers a pitch by two half steps. It consists of two flat signs next to each other. The two flat signs in the double flat touch each other, as shown below. The loops of the double flat are placed on the same line or space of the note head that it alters.

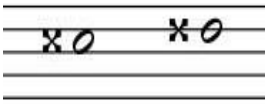
How to draw double flat signs with correct placement of the accidentals:
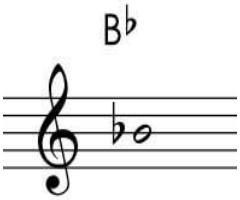


DRAWING A DOUBLE SHARP SIGN

The **double sharp** looks like a fancy letter X. Its height is one staff space, and it should be centred on the same line or space as the note head that it alters.
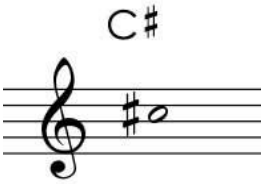
How to draw double sharp signs with correct placement of the accidentals:



In printed music, the accidental is always on the left-hand side of the note head that it alters, as shown in all of the examples above. However, when we write or say the name of a pitch with an accidental, we say the name of the pitch first, and then the name of the accidental. For example, the note below is called "B flat." We do not call it "flat B."



The example below is called "C sharp," not "sharp C."

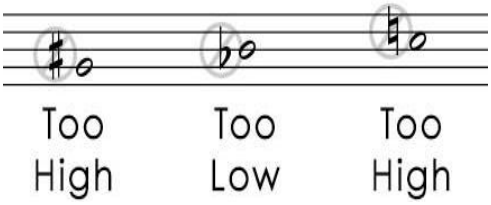


COMMON ERRORS IN WRITING NOTES WITH ACCIDENTALS

Avoid these common errors when writing notes with accidentals.
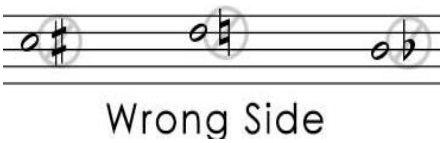
FLOATING ACCIDENTALS.

In the example below, none of the accidentals are on the appropriate line or space. They do not indicate whether or not the pitch should be altered.



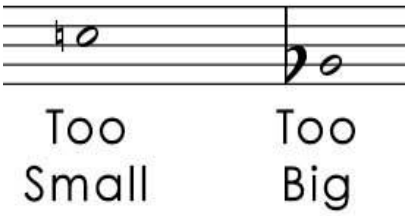
ACCIDENTALS ON THE WRONG SIDE.

Remember that the accidental goes on the left hand side of the note head. The examples below are centred perfectly on the correct line or space, but they are on the wrong side of the note head, and therefore have no meaning.



ACCIDENTALS THAT ARE THE WRONG SIZE.

The correct size of each accidental is demonstrated in the correct examples above. Avoid making them too big or too small.



ENHARMONIC EQUIVALENT

In modern **musical** notation and tuning, an **enharmonic** equivalent is a note, interval, or key signature that is equivalent to some other note, interval, or key signature but "spelled", or named differently.

In western music theory and practice, notes such as C♯ and D♭ are understood to be "enharmonically equivalent." If you include double sharps and double flats, there are three of these notes for all but one of the twelve degrees of the chromatic scale:

B♯	B𝄪	C𝄪	D♯	D𝄪	E♯	E𝄪	F𝄪	G♯	G𝄪	A♯	A𝄪
C	C♯	D	E♭	E	F	F♯	G	A♭	A	B♭	B
D𝄫	D♭	E𝄫	F𝄫	F♭	G𝄫	G♭	A𝄫		B𝄫	C𝄫	C♭

These enharmonically equivalent notes:

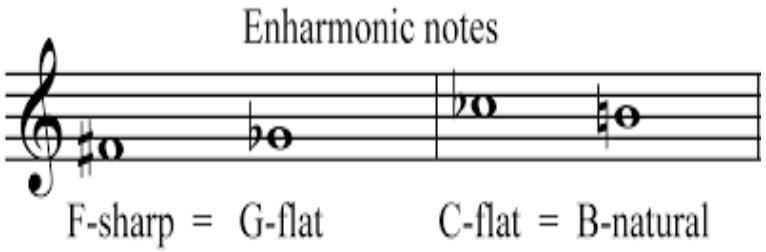
- have *different names* and
- are *represented differently* in traditional notation

And yet they:

- *sound the same* since they have the *same pitch* (or very similar pitches, see below) and
- are *played the same way* on most instruments

ENHARMONIC NOTES:

Enharmonic notes are notes that have the same pitch but have different note spellings. For example, F-sharp and G-flat are enharmonic notes, as are C-flat and B-natural.



Chapter 7

KEY SIGNATURES

A key signature is a collection of every accidental found in a scale. To demonstrate this, we will use the key of E flat Major, which has three flats. Instead of writing a flat next to every B, E, and A; we can simply add a key signature to the beginning of the measure. The purpose of the key signature is to minimize the number of such accidentals required to notate the music. **Key signature**, in musical notation, can also be explained as the arrangement of sharp or flat signs on particular lines and spaces of a musical staff to indicate the key of that piece; (i.e. the corresponding notes, in every octave, are to be consistently raised, by sharps, or lowered, by flats, from their natural pitches.) The key signature is placed after the clef at the beginning of a staff or after a double bar line—the separation necessary for a change of signature—within a staff.

HOW MANY KEY SIGNATURES DO WE HAVE?

There are **15** major key signatures: 1-7 sharps, 1-7 flats, and 1 natural (i.e. no sharps or flats.)

HOW DO YOU FIND THE KEY SIGNATURE?

To find the name of a **key signature** with sharps, look at the sharp farthest to the right or nearest to the time signature. The **key signature** is the note a semitone above that last sharp. In other words, the farthest sharp is a leading note (***ti*** in tonic sol-fa). So, all you need to do is to simply count ***te-doh***. The letter name of the line or space where ***doh*** falls is the name of the key.

To find the name of a **key signature** with flats, look at the flat farthest to the right or nearest to the time signature. The letter name of the line or space where the farthest flat is placed is the Subdominant (OR ***fah*** in tonic solfa) of the scale of that key. So, all you need to do is to simply count ***fah-soh-lah-te-doh*** or ***fah-mi-rey-doh*** to arrive at your tonic note or line or space of that key.

Key signatures can specify major or minor keys. To determine the name of a minor **key**, find the name of the **key** in major and then count backwards three semitones or to your left.

HOW CAN YOU TELL IF IT'S MINOR OR MAJOR?

Most often, we can just look at the first chord, and we can usually simplify even that: usually the bottom note in the first chord is the tonic. For example, **if** you see a key signature with no flats or sharps, then you **know** it must be either C **major** or A **minor**.

HOW TO WRITE THE KEY SIGNATURE ON THE STAFF
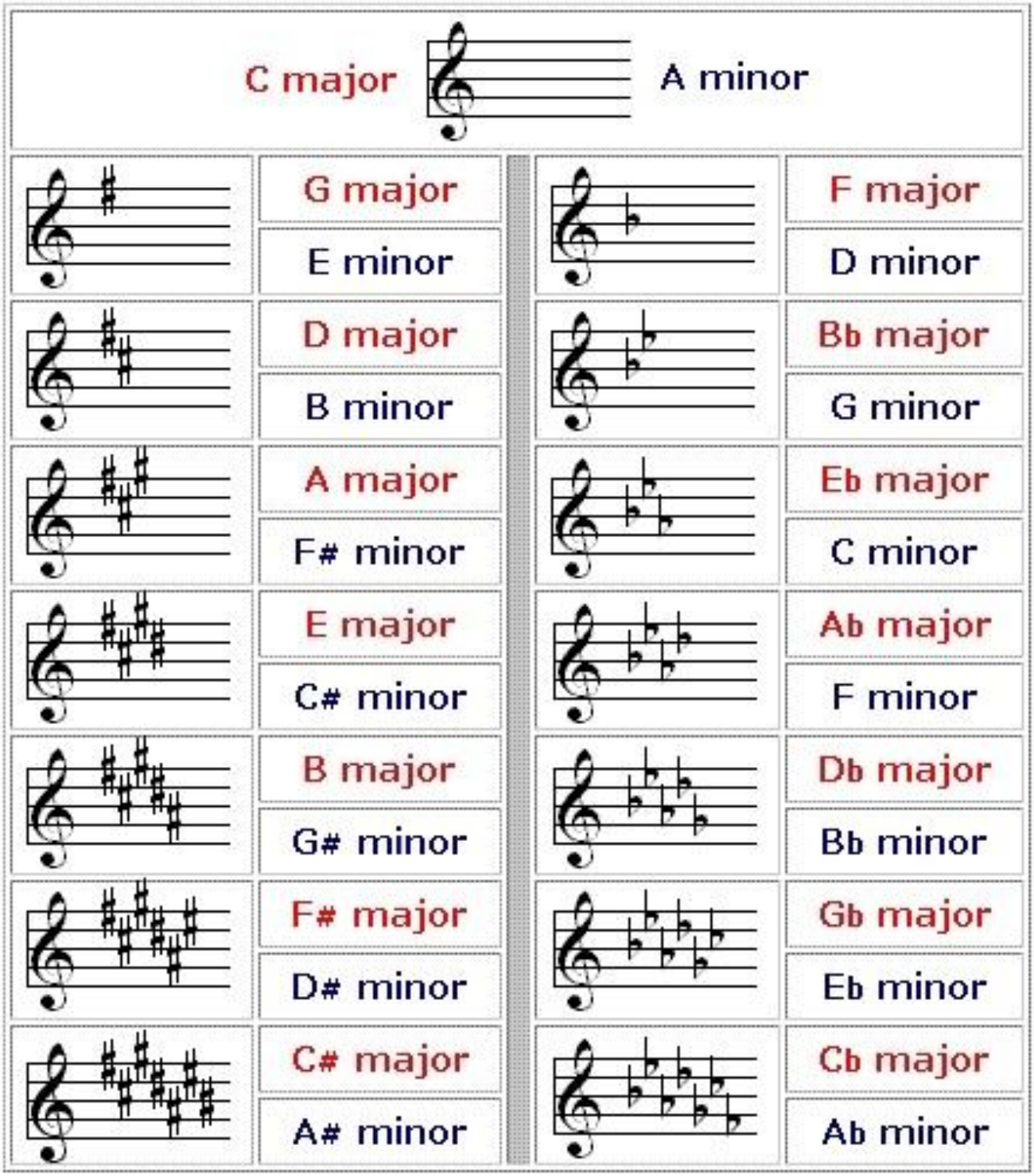
The sequence of sharps or flats in **key signatures** is generally rigid in modern music notation. Make sure you never write a sharp/flat on a ledger line in a key signature!

WRITING KEY SIGNATURE FOR SHARP KEYS:

To remember the order of the sharps, start at F♯ and then count 5 notes forward: F-G-A-B- C. The next sharp is C♯. Repeat the process to find the next sharp: C-D-E-F- G, so the next sharp is G♯, and so on.

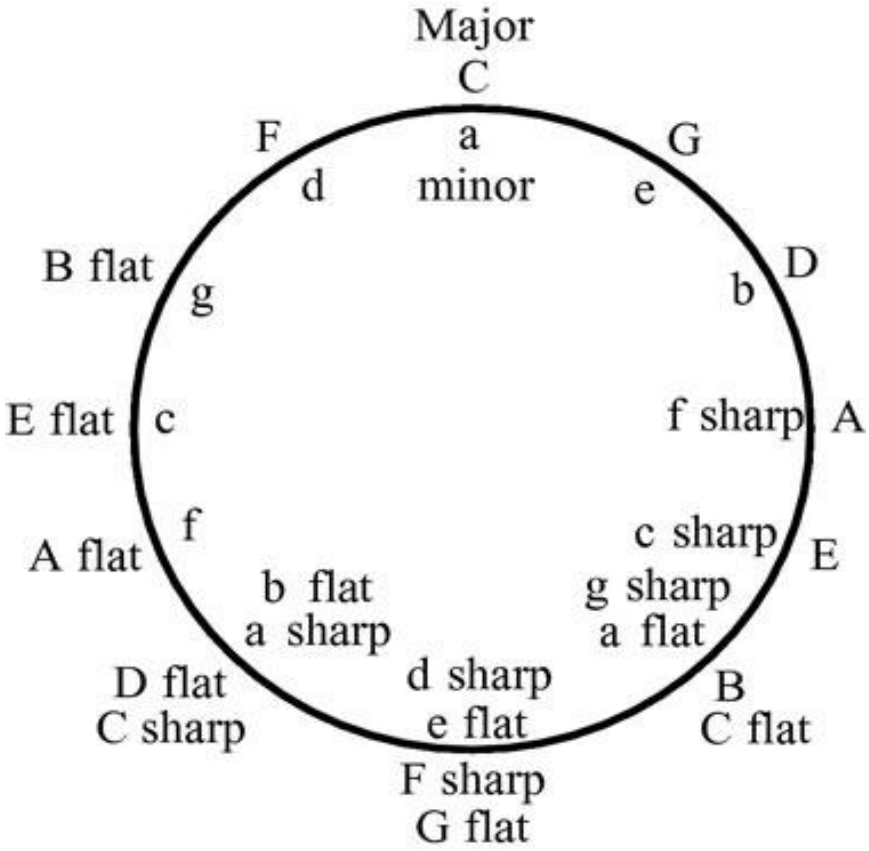
WRITING KEY SIGNATURE FOR FLAT KEYS:

To remember the order of the flats, start at B♭ and then count 4 notes forward: B-C-D-E. The next flat is E♭. Repeat the process to find the next flat: E-F-G-A., so the next flat is A♭, and so on.
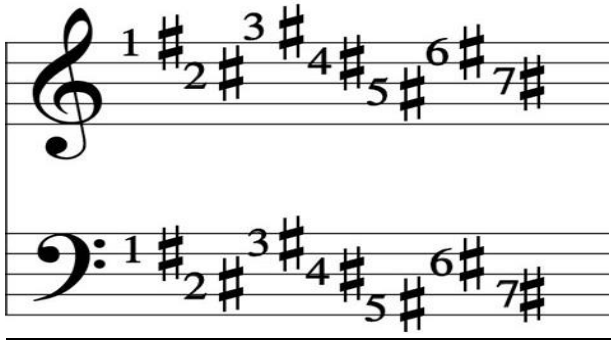


HOW TO READ KEY SIGNATURES

Key signatures are important when reading music. You must understand how to read key signatures to know how to play or sing the notes the way the composer intended. To better understand how to read key signatures, take another look at the circle of fifths.



Circle of fifths shows the major keys on the outside of the circle and the minor keys on the inside of the circle.

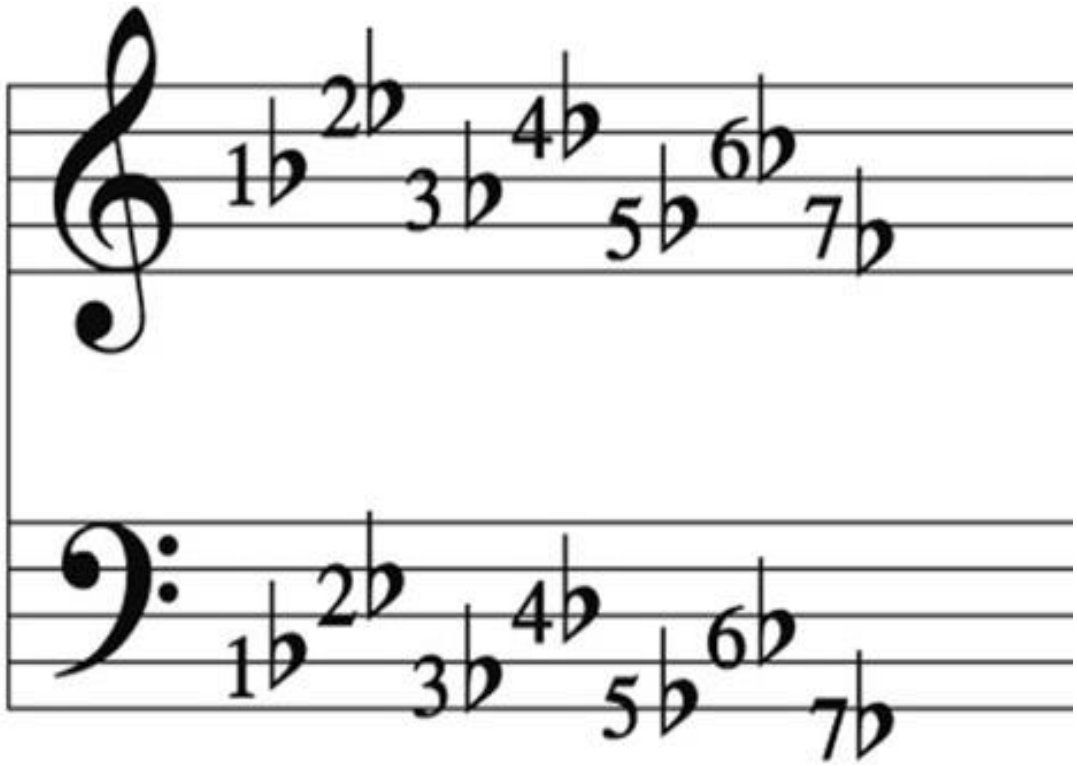
To figure out how many sharps are in each key signature, count clockwise on the Circle of Fifths from C major. The number of sharps in each successive key goes up by one in that key's key signature. So, if there is one sharp in the key signature, then move one "stop" from C Major, which gets you to G major (or e minor); if there are two sharps in the key signature, move two stops away from C, landing you at D major (or b minor). Therefore, to play a song in the key of B major — five stops away from C major on the circle — you know there will be five sharps in that key.



The sharps are arranged on the key signature going "up."
Therefore, to play a song in the key of B major — five stops away from C major on the circle of fifths — you know there will be five sharps in that key. Sharps appear in a specific order as you go around the Circle clockwise: F#, C#, G#, D#, A#, E#, and B# (remember: ***F**ather **Charles** **G**ot **D**own **A**nd **E**nd **B**attle to help you recall the order of the notes sharpened)*.

For major scales that have flats, you go counter-clockwise around the circle of fifths. The flats appear in a specific order in every key as you go around the circle counter-clockwise: B♭, E♭, A♭, D♭, G♭, C♭, and F♭ (remember: ***B**attle **E**nds, **A**nd **D**own **G**oes **C**harles' **F**ather to help you recall the order of the notes flattened*).

Therefore, if the key signature shows one flat (B♭), you would move counter-clockwise or anti-clockwise one stop away from C major, landing you at F major (or d minor).



The flats are arranged on the key signature going "down."

So, for example, G♭, which is six steps away from C major on the circle, has six flats in its key signature.

Recalling your mnemonic (***B**attle **E**nds, **A**nd **D**own **G**oes **C**harles's **F**ather*), you know that those flats are B♭, E♭, A♭, D♭, G♭, and C♭. Bb major, which is two steps away, has two flats, and now you know those flats have to be B♭ and E♭.

Chapter 8

TYPES OF SCALES (Diatonic Major and Minor, Chromatic)

WHAT IS A SCALE?

A scale is a ladder of musical sounds. Scales are collections of notes arranged in patterns of semitones, tones, or other intervals. It is a succession of pitches ascending or descending in steps. There are two types of steps: semitones (half steps) and tones (Whole steps.) A half step (H) or semitone consists of two adjacent pitches on the keyboard. A whole step (W) or tone consists of two half steps / semitones. Composers and improvisers use scales as pitch resources in their music. They choose specific scales and choose notes from those scales to form melodies and harmonies in their music.

THE TYPES OF SCALES

Major scale, Minor scales, Chromatic scale, pentatonic scales, Whole-tone scale, Octatonic scale.

THE MAJOR SCALES

A major scale has the following arrangement of Tones (T) and Semitones (S) **T-T-S-T-T-T-S.** Or semitones between the 3rd and 4th and the 7th and 8th degrees of the major scale and Tones between the other scale degrees. (A scale degree is the name used to describe each step of a scale).
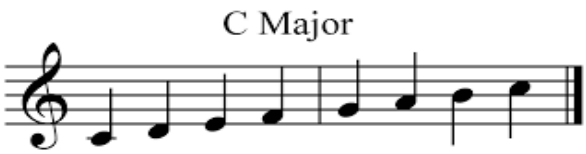
If we look at the keyboard, we see that this pattern occurs naturally from C to the next C.

C	**D**	**E**	**F**	**G**	**A**	**B**	**C**
	T	**T**	**S**	**T**	**T**	**T**	**S**

This is just one of the many possible scales but all major scales work in the same way.
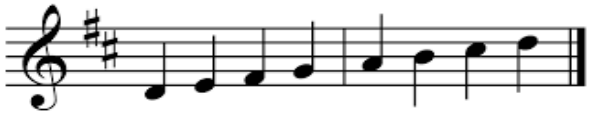
There are semitones between *E-F* and between *B-C*, the 3rd and 4th degrees and the 7th and 8th degrees. There are no black keys between these notes. All of the other notes have black keys between them and are Tones.

MAJOR SCALES WITH NO SHARPS OR FLATS: C Major
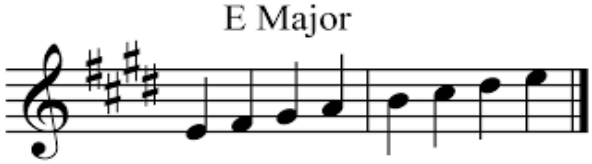


MAJOR SCALES WITH SHARPS: D, E, G, A
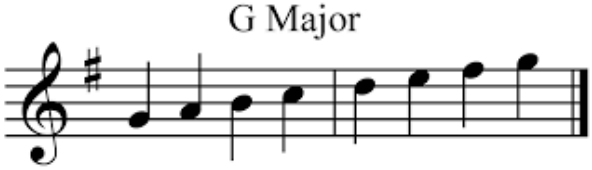
D Major
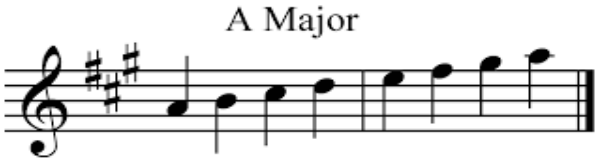


E Major



G Major
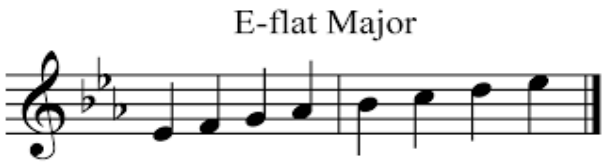


A Major
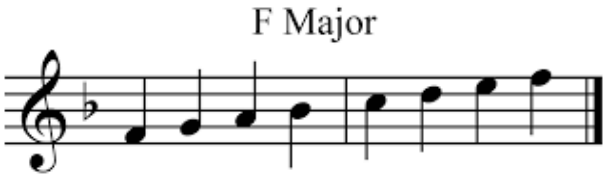


MAJOR SCALES WITH FLATS: E-flat, F, A-flat, B-flat
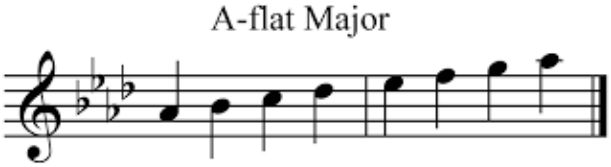
E-flat Major
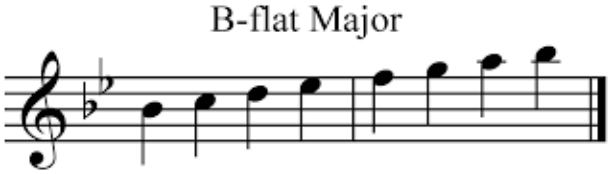


F Major
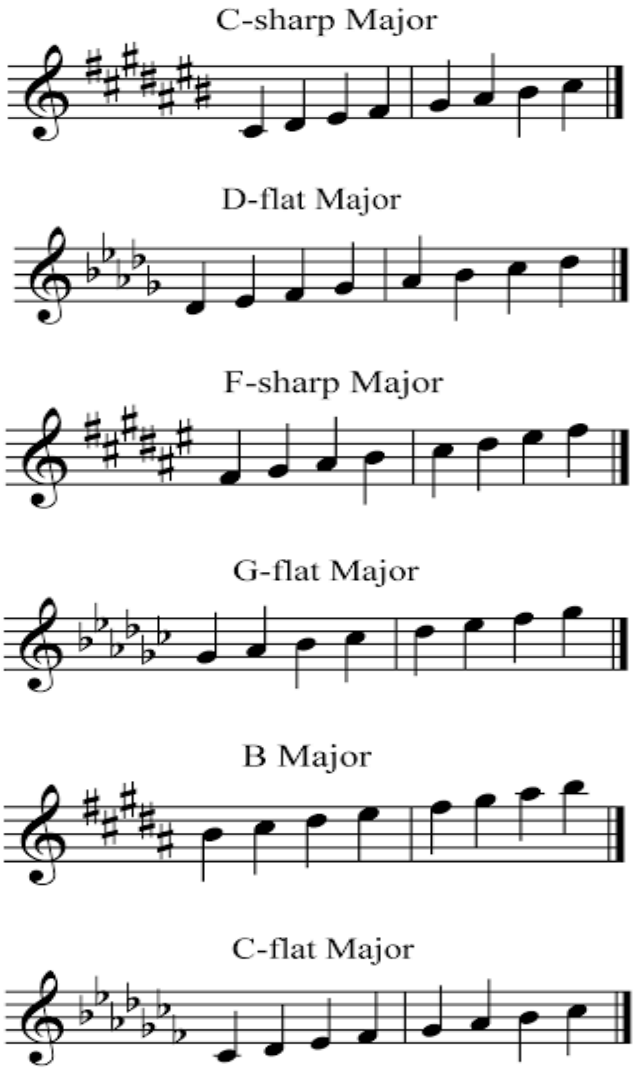


A-flat Major



B-flat Major



ENHARMONIC MAJOR SCALES: C-sharp/D-flat, F-sharp/G-flat, B-natural/C-flat



THE MINOR SCALES
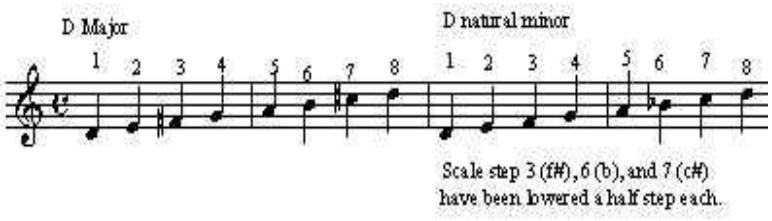
Just like major scales, the minor scales are identified by their arrangement of tones and semitones. There are three types of minor scales. They are, Natural Minor, Harmonic Minor and Melodic Minor.

NATURAL MINOR

The Natural Minor scale has the following pattern of semitones (S) and tones (T):
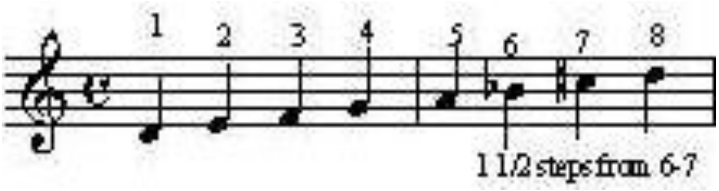
T-S-T-T-S-T-T.

The natural minor scale has semitones between the 2nd – 3rd and 5th – 6th. To convert from a major scale to a natural minor scale, lower or flatten the 3rd, 6th, and 7the degrees of the scale.



HARMONIC MINOR

The Harmonic Minor scale has the following pattern of semitones, tones and one augmented second (A2): **T-S-T-T-S-A2-S**. It has semitones between the 2-3, 5-6 and 7-8 degrees of the scale. This means that there are one and a half semitones (i.e. 3 semitones) from the 6th degree to 7th degree of the scale. Below is an example of a harmonic minor scale (D Harmonic Minor).



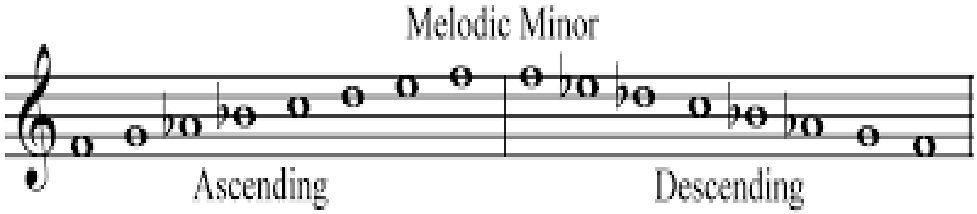
MELODIC MINOR

The Melodic Minor scale is different because when we go up the scale we use one pattern and when we go down the scale we use another. The ascending pattern is

: **T-S-T-T-T-T-S**

The descending pattern is the Natural Minor Scale: **T-S-T-T-S-T-T.**

Here are the ascending and descending patterns for the Melodic Minor scale starting on F:



AN OVERVIEW OF MINOR SCALES

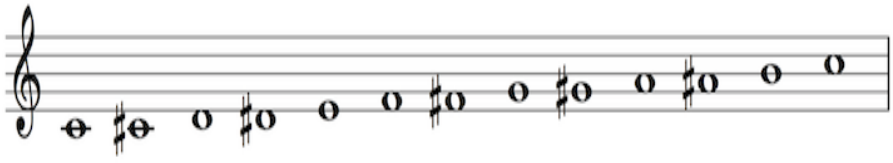
The melodic minor has semitones between the 2nd -3rd, and 7th – 8th degrees of the scale.
The natural minor has semitones between the 2nd – 3rd, and 5th – 6th degrees of the scale.
The harmonic minor has semitones between the 2md – 3rd, 5the – 6th, and 7th – 8the degrees of the scale.

TO CONVERT A MAJOR SCALE TO THE MINOR FORMS:

Major to Melodic Minor: Lower or flatten the 3rd degree of the scale.
Major to Natural Minor: Lower or flatten the 3rd, 6th, and 7th degrees of the scale.
Major to Harmonic Minor: Lower or flatten the 3rd and 6th degrees of the scale.

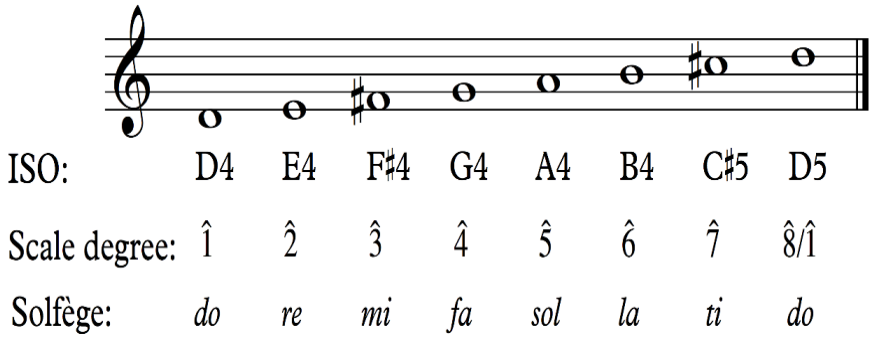
THE CHROMATIC SCALE

A Chromatic Scale is a scale that is made of only semitones (S). The chromatic scale consists entirely of semitones, and uses every pitch on the keyboard within a single octave. Here is the chromatic scale that spans the pitches C4 through C5 (i.e. C through C'.)



SCALE DEGREES AND SOLFÈGE

While ISO notation allows us to label a pitch in its specific register, it is often useful to know where that pitch fits within a given scale. For example, the pitch class D is the first (and last) note of the D-major scale. The pitch class A is the fifth note of the D-major scale. When described in this way, we call the notes scale degrees, because they're placed in context of a specific scale. Solfège syllables, a centuries-old method of teaching pitch and sight singing, can also be used to represent scale degrees (when used in this way, this system is specifically called movable-do solfège).

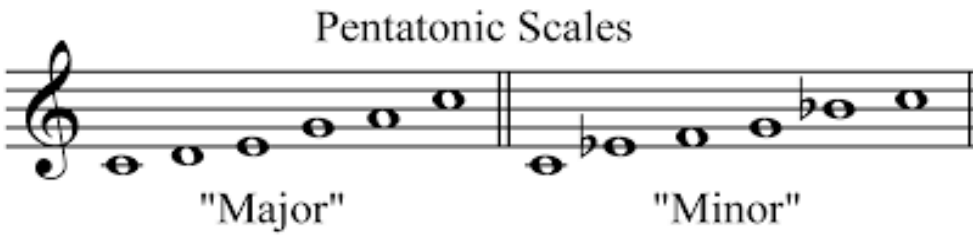


Scale degrees are labelled with Arabic numerals and carets (^). The illustration below shows a D-major scale and corresponding ISO notation, scale degrees, and solfège syllables.

If you sing through the above example, you will notice that the ending lacks the same sense of closure you heard in the major scale. This closure is created in the major scale, in part, by the ascending semitone between ***ti*** and ***do***. Composers often want to have this sense of closure when using the minor mode, too. They're able to achieve this by applying an accidental to the seventh scale degree, raising it by a semitone. If you do this within the context of the natural minor scale, you get something called the harmonic minor scale.

THE PENTATONIC SCALES.

Pentatonic Scales are scales that have five notes. There are many possible pentatonic scales but the most common ones are the **"Major" Pentatonic** and the **"Minor" Pentatonic.**
The "Major" Pentatonic scale has this interval pattern: **M2-M2-m3-M2-m3**
The "Minor" Pentatonic scale has this interval pattern: **m3-M2-M2-m3-M2**



If you play only the black keys of a keyboard you are playing a pentatonic scale.

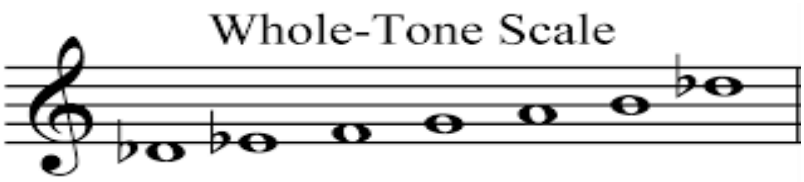
THE WHOLE-TONE SCALE.

A **Whole-Tone Scale** is a scale made entirely of tones and has only six notes.

The pattern for a whole-tone scale is easy to remember because it consists only of tones (T):

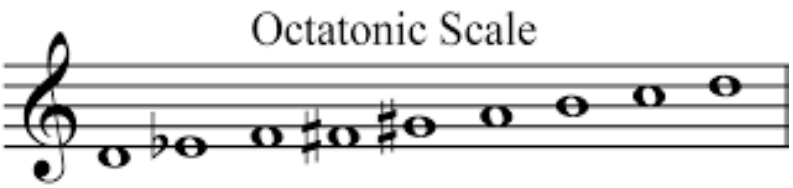
T-T-T-T-T-T

A WHOLE-TONE SCALE STARTING ON D-FLAT:

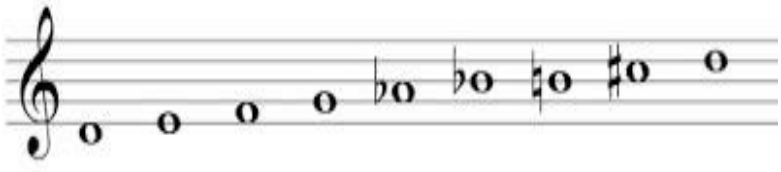


THE OCTATONIC SCALE.

The Octatonic Scale is a scale that has eight notes that is constructed from alternating semitones (S) and tones (T). S-T-S-T-S-T-S-T. Below, is an example of an octatonic scale starting on D:



An octatonic scale may also begin with a whole-step: **T-S-T-S-T-S-T-S**



There are other scales like heptatonic, hexatonic and the variants of pentatonic scale which are not listed here.

These scales are also called diminished scales.

NUMBER OF NOTES A SCALE

The chromatic scale (**twelve notes**), the whole tone scale (**six notes**), the pentatonic scale (five notes), the octatonic or diminished scales (**eight notes**).

SCALES IN MUSIC HISTORY

Scale, in music, any series of tones arranged in a step-by-step rising or falling order of pitch. A scale defines the interval relationship of each tone to the others upon which the composition depends. Scales further serve to classify and catalogue the tonal material used in composition.

A great variety of scales have been used in the past and in different cultures; no single interval is common to all of them. In the 6th century. BC, Pythagoras defined the mathematical relationship of the perfect intervals (the octave, fourth, and fifth) and of the intervals between them (an interval being the difference in pitch between two tones). The Greek system was taken up by the Christian church, which adapted its note series to a number of modes used in medieval music, especially in plainsong.

The church modes, under the impact of the composition of polyphonic vocal music, became reduced in due course to the two characteristic scales of later Western music, the major and the minor. The major scale, called diatonic, has five whole tones (**T**) and two semitones (**S**) arranged thus: **TTSTTTS** (as in the white notes on the piano keyboard taken from one C to the next C); this scale, with certain modifications, became the basis of Western musical tonality until the end of the 19th century. The dissemination and influence of the diatonic scale was therefore very great. The minor scale is based on **TSTTSTT**. This arrangement produces the lower third, sixth, and seventh degrees that are characteristic of the minor mode; the higher seventh degree, a semitone rather than a whole tone below the main note, or "tonic," is often borrowed from the major mode for use at cadences.

Akin to the modes, the concept of key was developed, whereby a home tone, or tonic, is the principal focus of a composition, and the various other tones assume importance according to their relationship to the tonic. The increasing complexity of instruments demanded more refined tuning systems. By J. S. Bach's time equal temperament had become established. The resulting scale, called chromatic, consisted of 12 notes divided by semitone intervals (the white and black notes of the keyboard). Although the diatonic scale is basically heptatonic (seven-noted), music that is in a major or minor tonality usually employs the remaining five tones of the chromatic scale as auxiliary or ornamental tones. Music that employs them freely is said to be highly chromatic, while music that employs them sparingly is said to be diatonic.

The 12 scales, one for each note as the home tone, plus the 12 concomitant minor scales remained the basic organizing structure of Western music until the system was challenged by the dodecaphonic (twelve-tone scale) composers, in particular Arnold Schoenberg, who worked into the mid-20th century. (See atonality; serial music). The whole-tone scale, which divides the octave into six equal whole tones (C, D, E, F sharp, G sharp, and A sharp, on the piano), gives a feeling of vagueness that made it adaptable to impressionism; its possibilities were thoroughly explored in the works of Debussy. The pentatonic scale (the black keys of the piano illustrate one form) has long been thought of as having an Asian character because of the prevalence of pentatonic scales in Chinese, Japanese, and Javanese music. The most complex scales known belong to Arabian music and Hindu music.

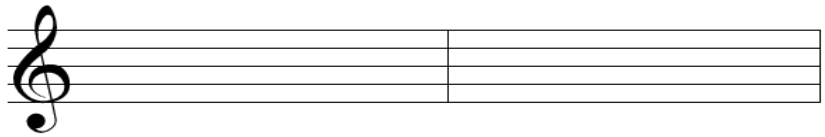
Chapter 9

TIME SIGNATURES

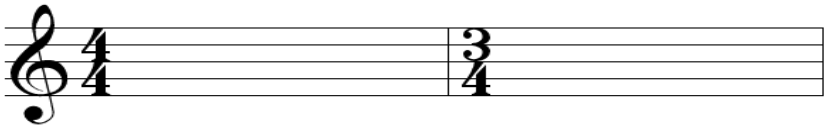
The Time Signature (also known as meter **signature**, metre **signature**, or measure **signature**) is a notational convention used in Western **musical** notation to specify how many beats (pulses) are to be contained in each measure (bar) and which note value is equivalent to one beat.

BARS AND TIME SIGNATURE

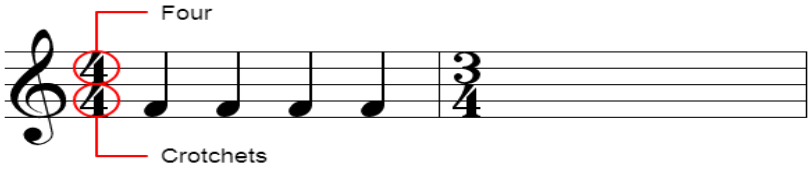
Vertical black bars called **bar lines** divide the staff into **bars** (or measures). This stave has been split into two.



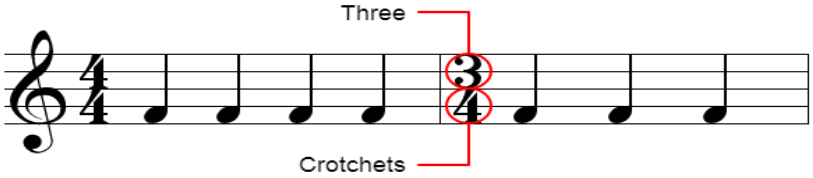
Time signature defines the amount and types of notes that each bar contains.
The first bar is in 4/4 time and the second bar is in 3/4 time.



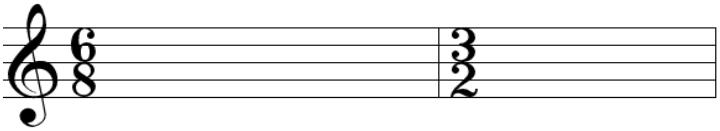
The first bar (4/4) contains four crotchets.
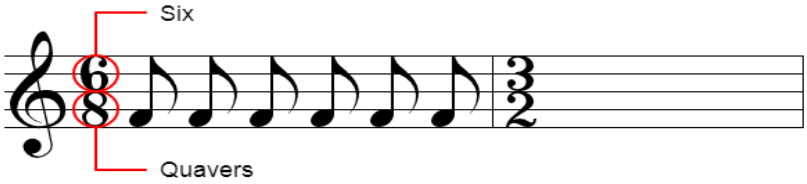


The second bar (3/4) contains three crotchets.
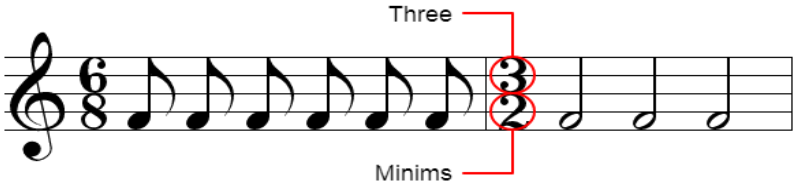


Next, we will discuss non-crotchet time signatures.



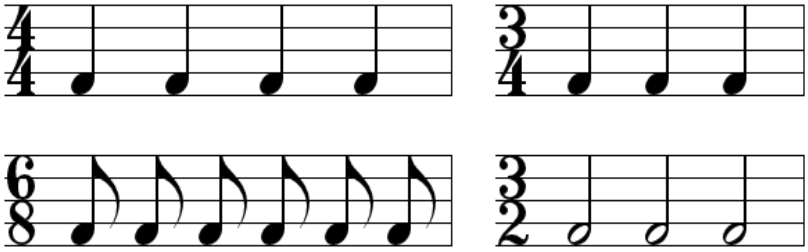
6/8 time contains six quavers.



3/2 time contains three minims.



Below are the time signatures discussed so far:



In **music**, a **time signature** tells you the meter of the piece you're playing. Composers decide the number of beats per measure early on and convey this information with a **time signature**. The two numbers in the **time signature** tell you how many beats are in each measure of **music**. ... It **means** each measure has only four beats.

A **time signature** of 4/4 means count 4 (top number) quarter notes (bottom number) to each bar. So the pulse, or beat, is counted 1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 3, 4, and so on. That means all the notes in each bar must add up to 4 quarter notes. Any combination of rhythms can be used as long as they add up to 4 quarter notes.
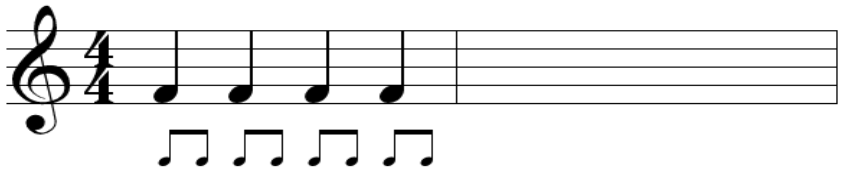
SIMPLE METER / TIME SIGNATURE

Each time signature can be classified into certain **meter**. The terms **duple**, **triple** and **quadruple** refer to the number of beats in a bar. The term simple means that each of these beats can be broken into two notes. Simple time signatures are signatures that the beat is divisible by **2**.

You can easily tell if a time signature is a simple time signature by the top number of the time signature. If the top number is **2**, **3** or **4** then the time signature is a simple time signature.

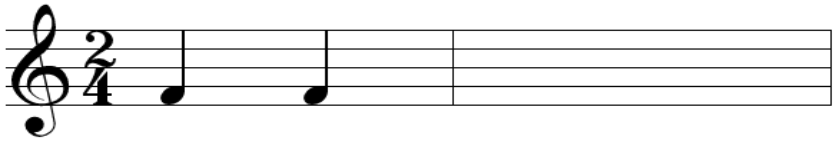
The beat in a simple time signature will divide in to **2** equal parts. Let us look at an example in **4/4** to demonstrate this. **4/4** is a simple time signature because the top number is **4**.

The beat of **4/4** is a quarter (crotchet) note because if we imagine the bottom number, **4**, as a fraction under the number **1**, (1/4), then that will equal one fourth, or a quarter.

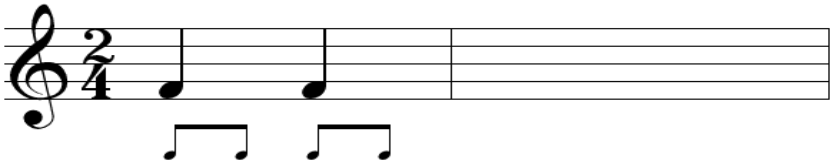


Since the beat of **4/4** is a quarter note it can easily divide into **2** equal parts, or two eighth (quaver) notes.

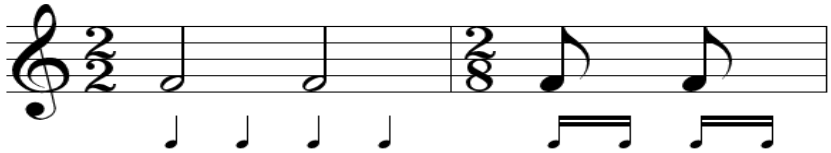
Let us also look at the following:
For example **2/4** time is clarified as **simple duple**. ‘’**Duple**” refers to the two beats per bar.



‘’Simple’’ states that each of these beats can be divided into two notes.



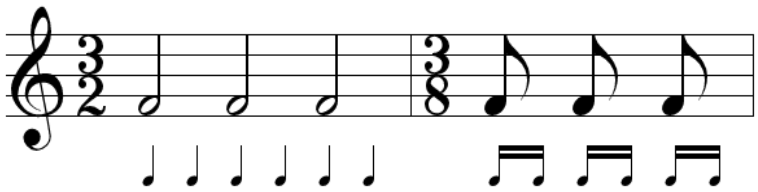
2/2 and **2/8** are also **simple duple**.



Let us look at another example in **3/2**, a common time signature used in renaissance music.
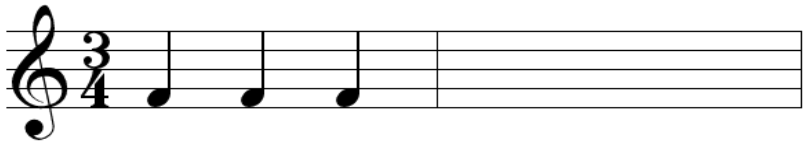
3/2 is a simple time signature because the top number is **3**.

The beat of **3/2** is a half (minim) note because if we imagine the bottom number, **2**, as a fraction under the number 1, (1/2), then that will equal one half, or a half (minim) note.

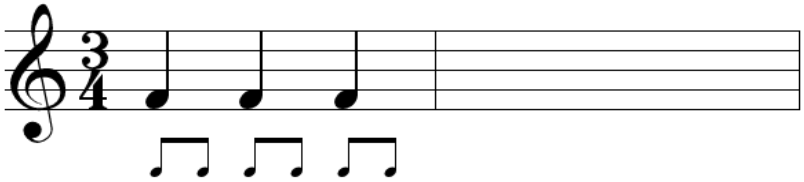


Since the beat of **3/2** is a half (minim) note it can easily divide into 2 equal parts, or two quarter (crotchet) notes.

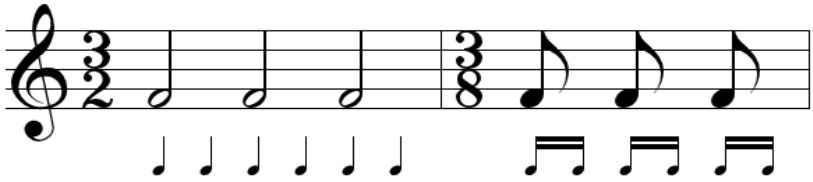
3/4 time is classified as **simple triple**. Triple refers to the 3 beats per bar.
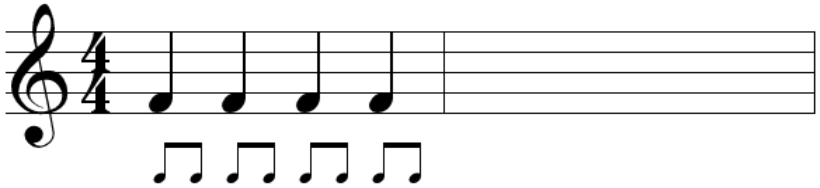


Again, ''simple'' states that each of these beats can be divided into two notes.



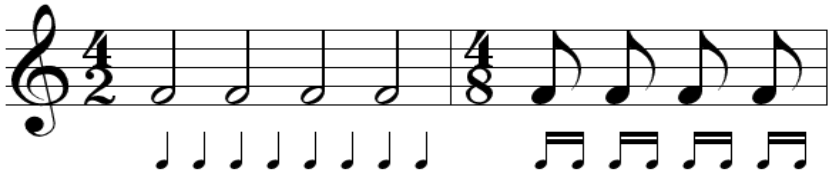
3/2 and **3/8** are also simple triple.



4/4 time is classified as **simple quadruple** due to its four beats which can be divided into two notes.



4/2 and **4/8** are also simple quadruple.



Remember that a time signature in simple meter will always have a **2**, **3**, or **4** for the top number.



SIMPLE TIME SIGNATURES TABLE

Simple Time Signatures will have a top number of **2**, **3**, or **4**

TIME SIGNATURE	NAME	THE NOTE THAT IS = ONE BEAT	DIVISION OF BEAT
2 2	Two-Two Time		
2 4	Two-Four Time		
2 8	Two-Eight Time		
2 16	Two-Sixteen Time		
3 2	Three-Two Time		
3 4	Three-Four Time		
3 8	Three-Eight Time		
3 16	Three-Sixteen Time		
4 2	Four-Two Time		
4 4	Four-Four Time		
4 8	Four-Eight Time		
4 16	Four-Sixteen Time		

COMPOUND METER / TIME SIGNATURE

One of the more confusing aspects of learning to read music for many music students is compound meter. I have a number of music students and even music teachers who do not understand its basics of compound meter. This lesson will clear up the confusion once and for all.

Any time signature in which the top number is a multiple of 3 (but not equal to 3) is an example of compound meter.

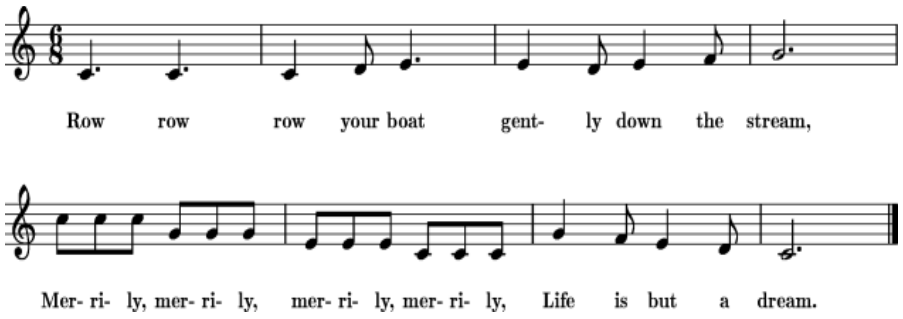
Thus, if the top number of a time signature is 6, 9 or 12 (other numbers are almost never encountered), that time signature is a compound meter.

The most important thing to learn about time signatures in general is that the top number does not indicate the number of beats per measure!

Only in the case of simple meter does the top number equal the number of beats in each measure.

To understand why this is the case, let's take a look at some examples of compound meter. The most common one is 6/8: It's tempting to assume that there are six beats per bar in 6/8 time, but this isn't the case. To understand this point, let's look at a familiar example:

Sing the popular nursery rhyme "**Row, row, row your boat**" and tap the beats. Notice how you do not tap each syllable of "***Merrily, merrily, merrily***" but only the first syllable? This is because the song is in two beats.



You may also look at the songs **''Oh to be like Thee''** in 9/8 time (3 dotted beats par bar)", **''Blessed Assurance''** in 9/8 time (3 dotted beats par bar), **''Praise Him! Praise Him''** in 6/8 time (2 dotted beats par bar) etc. for more examples. Each beat happens to total a dotted crotchet note. A dotted crotchet note has the value of a crotchet note plus a quaver note. Since two quaver notes have the rhythmic value of a crotchet note, a dotted quaver note also has the same rhythmic value as three quaver notes.
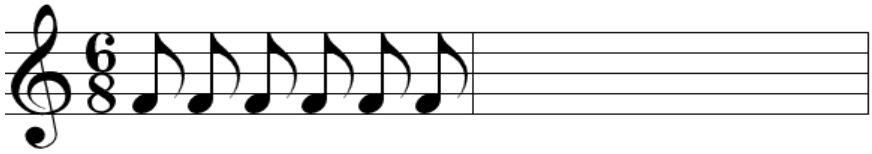
Thus, in 6/8 time, there are a total of six quaver notes per bar, but only two beats, each having the duration of a dotted crotchet note.

This is the essence of compound time. The beat unit is not represented by the lower number of the time signature. Thus, for 6/8 time signature, a quaver note is not the beat. Similarly, for 9/4 time signature, a crotchet note is not the beat.
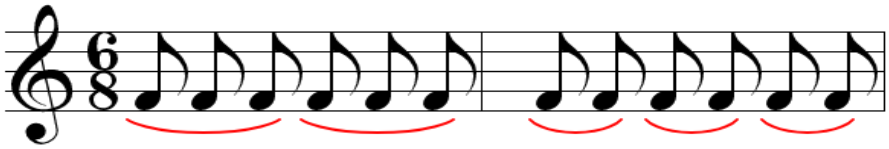
Let's use 9/16 as an example. Can you figure out the beat unit? Since the top number, 9, is a multiple of three, this is an example of compound time signature. Nine divided by three equals three beats per bar.

Each beat totals three semiquaver notes, since 16 is the bottom number of the time signature. Three semiquaver notes total a dotted quaver note. Thus, in 9/16 timer, there are three dotted quaver note beats: While beats in simple time are divided into two notes, beats in compound time are divided into three notes.
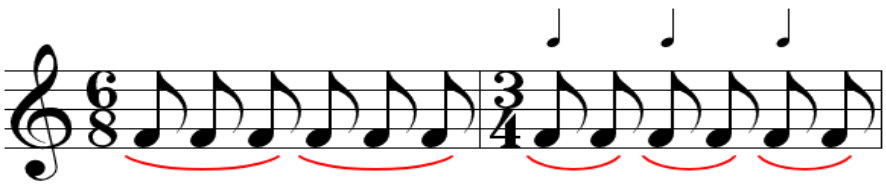
To further explain or demonstrate the above statements, we would examine the following;
6/8 time.
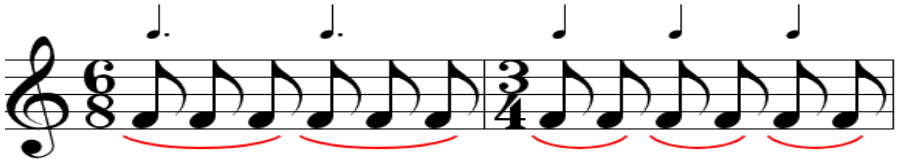


The six quavers can either be grouped into two beats (**compound duple**) or three beats (**simple triple**).



Since the simple triple pattern already belongs to **3/4**, **6/8** is **compound duple**.
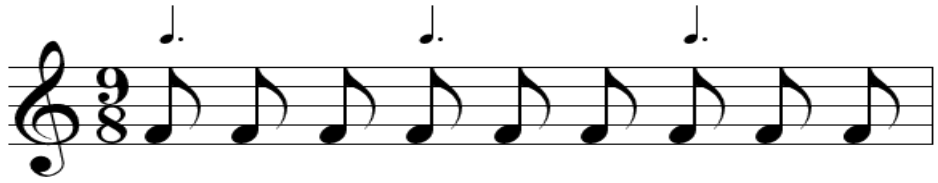


Notice that each beat in **6/8** is a dotted crotchet. In fact, all dotted meter or time signature will have some dotted note as its beat.
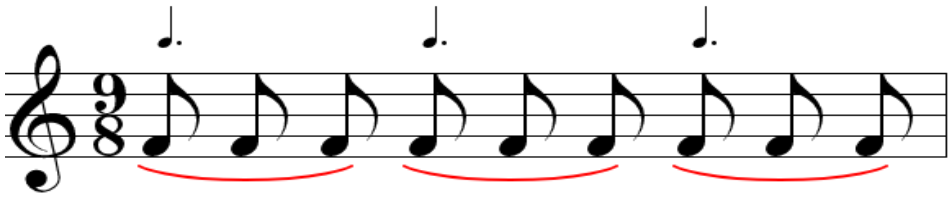


Any time signature with a **6** on top is a **compound duple**. **6/8** and **6/4** are the most used.



9/8 time is classified as **compound triple**. There are three beats (three dotted crotchets), thus making the time triple.
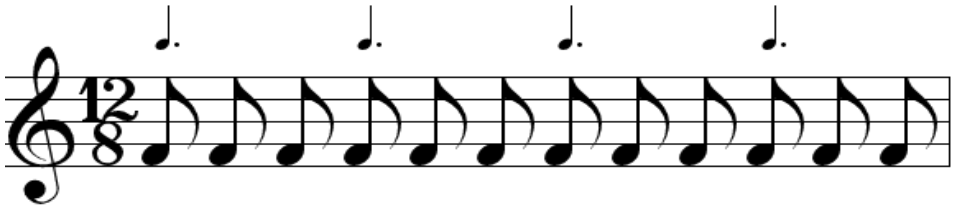


Since each beat is made up of three notes, the time signature is compound.
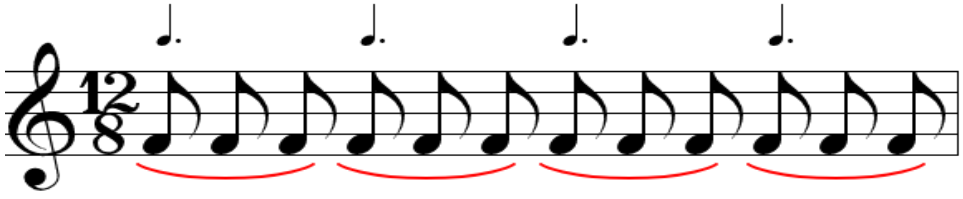


Any time signature with a 9 on top is a **compound triple**. Although **9/8** is the most common; **9/2**, **9/4** and **9/16** can also be used.



Finally, **12/8** time is classified as **compound quadruple**. There are four beats, thus making the time quadruple.



Since each beat is made up of three notes, the time is compound.

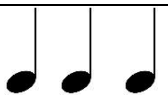
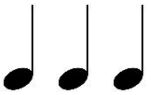
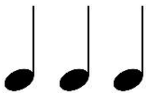


Any time signature with a **12** on top is a **compound quadruple**. **12/8** and **12/16** are the most used.



COMPOUND TIME SIGNATURES TABLE:

Compound Time Signatures will have a top number of **6**, **9**, or **12**

TIME SIGNATURE	NAME	THE NOTE THAT IS = ONE BEAT	DIVISION OF BEAT
6/2	Six-Two Time		
6/4	Six -Four Time		
6/8	Six -Eight Time		
6/16	Six -Sixteen Time		
9/2	Nine-Two Time		
9/4	Nine -Four Time		
9/8	Nine -Eight Time		
9/16	Nine -Sixteen Time		
12/2	Twelve-Two Time		
12/2	Twelve -Four Time		
12/2	Twelve -Eight Time		
12/2	Twelve -Sixteen Time		

SIMPLE TIME SIGNATURE VERSUS COMPOUND SIGNATURE

Though the simple and compound time signatures have been explained above, I still feel they could be placed side by side in comparison to make room for clearer understanding of the time concept. In simple time the beat unit is a plain (not dotted) note value. All beat subdivisions are divided into two parts.

	Whole Note Beat Unit	**Half Note Beat Unit**	**Quarter Note Beat Unit**
Primary Division			
First Subdivision			
Second Subdivision			
Third Subdivision			

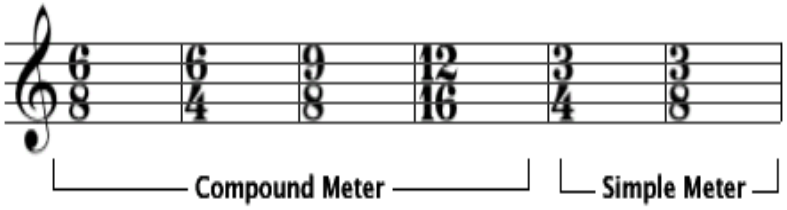
COMPOUND TIME SIGNATURE - BEAT UNITS

In compound time signature the beat unit is a dotted note. Any dotted note value can serve as the beat unit. The first beat subdivision is divided into three parts. All beat subdivisions after the first are divided into two parts.

	Dotted Whole Note Beat Unit	**Dotted Half Note Beat Unit**	**Dotted Quarter Note Beat Unit**
Primary Division			
First Subdivision			
Second Subdivision			
Third Subdivision			

COMPOUND TIME SIGNATURES

RULE: The time signature represents compound meter if the upper number is greater than or equal to six, and is a multiple of three. The lower number is usually 8 although it can also be a 2, 4, or 16.



PERFORMING COMPOUND TIME

Compound time can be counted two ways:
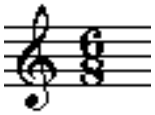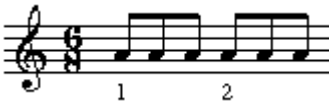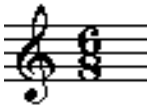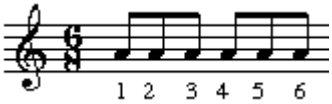
THE PREFERRED METHOD

The number of beats per bar (beat unit) is equal to the upper number of the time signature divided by three.

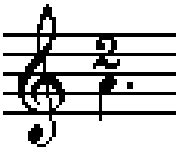
The beat unit is equal to the duration of three note values of the lower number.
For example, in nine eight time the number of beats per bar (beat unit) is three (9 ÷ 3 = 3). The beat unit is equal to the duration of three eighth notes. Stated another way; in nine eight time there are three beats per bar and a dotted quarter note gets one beat.

FOR SLOW TEMPOS ONLY
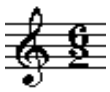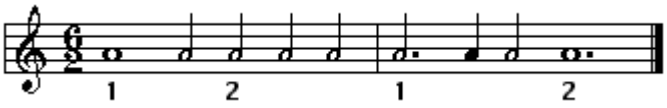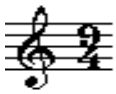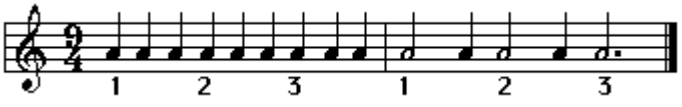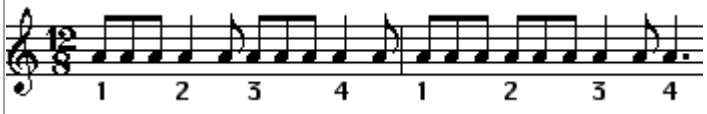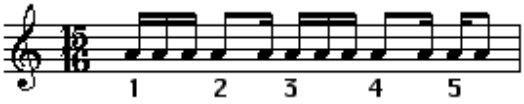
The upper number in the time signature represents the number of beats in one bare. The lower number represents the beat unit. This method should only be used in slow tempos. Method one is the preferred method.

Method	Time Signature	Beats per bar	Beat Unit	Example
Preferred Method		2		
Slow Tempos Only		6		

Some contemporary scores indicate "six eight" time using the following time signature which clearly indicates there are two beats per bar and a dotted quarter note gets one beat.
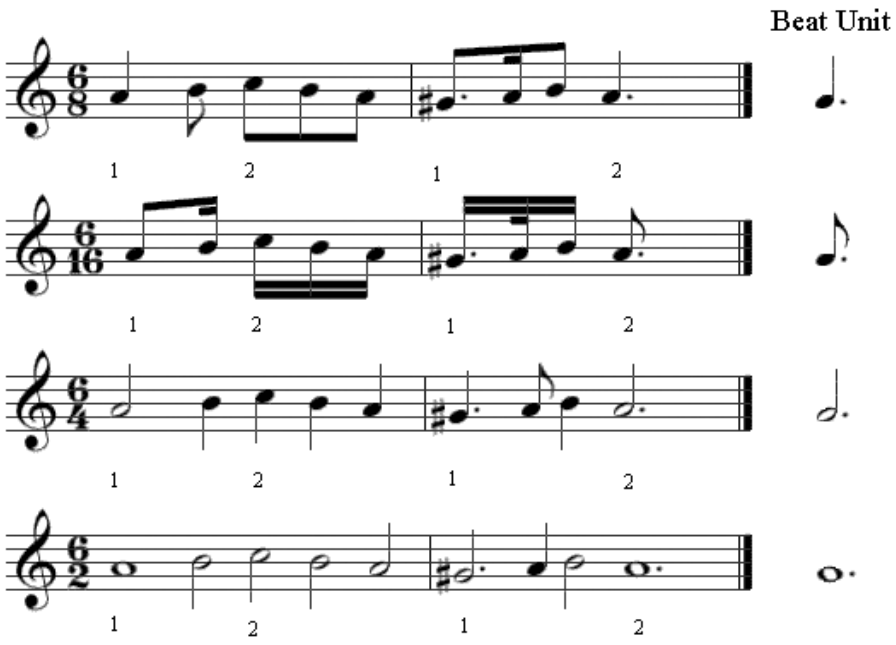


Here are other examples of the preferred method of counting compound time.

Time Signature	Beats per Measure	Beat Unit	Example
	6 / 3 = 2		
	9 / 3 = 3		
	12 / 3 = 4		
	15 / 3 = 5		

COMPOUND DUPLE TIME

Here's a four bar rhythm notated in different meter signatures. In all cases there are two beats per bar (6 ÷ 3) and the beat unit is equal to three notes represented by the lower number or the time signature. Although they all look different, they all sound the same. Notice how much easier it is to see the beat units in six eight time.
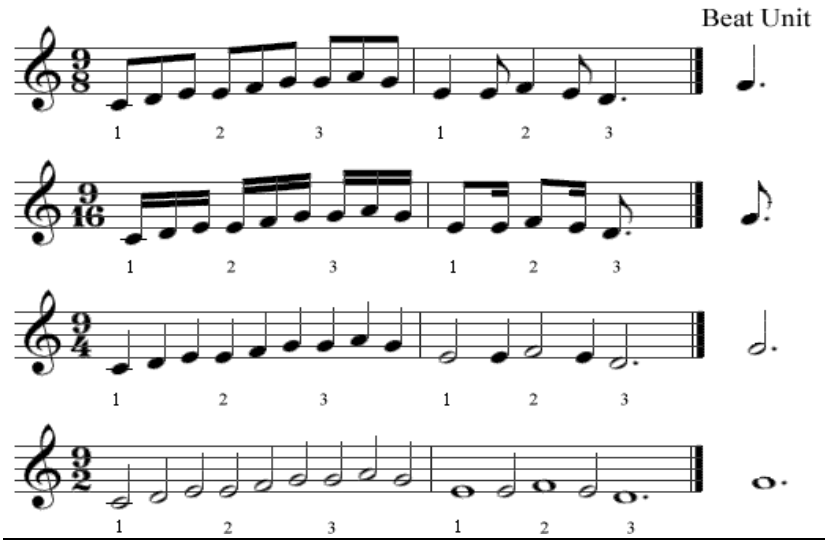
Note that beams reflect the beat unit.



COMPOUND TRIPLE TIME
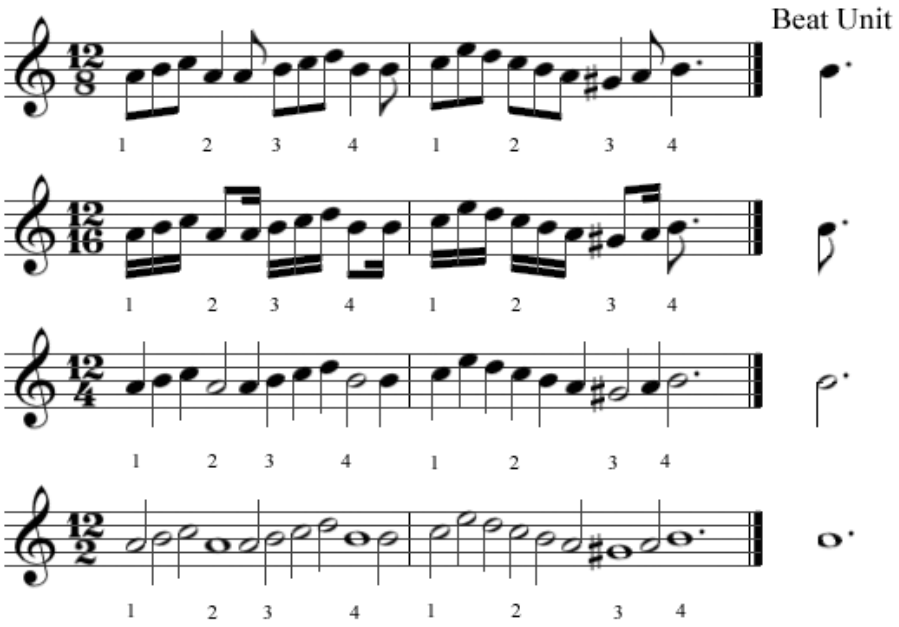
Here's a four bar rhythm notated in different time signatures. In all cases there are three beats per bar (9 ÷ 3) and the beat unit is equal to three notes represented by the lower number or the time signature. Although they all look different, they all sound the same. Notice how much easier it is to see the beat units in nine eight time.

Note that beams reflect the beat unit.



COMPOUND QUADRUPLE TIME
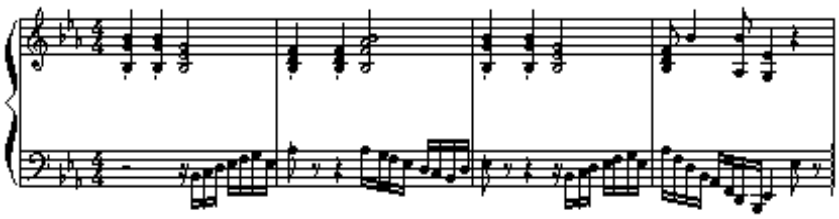
Here's a four bars rhythm notated in different time signatures. In all cases there are four beats per bar (12 ÷ 3) and the beat unit is equal to three notes represented by the lower number or the time signature. Although they all look different, they all sound the same. Notice how much easier it is to see the beat units in twelve eight time.



REGULAR DIVISIONS

When the beat is divided into regular divisions, the subdivisions are always the exact number of notes that occur naturally in that subdivision in simple and compound time.
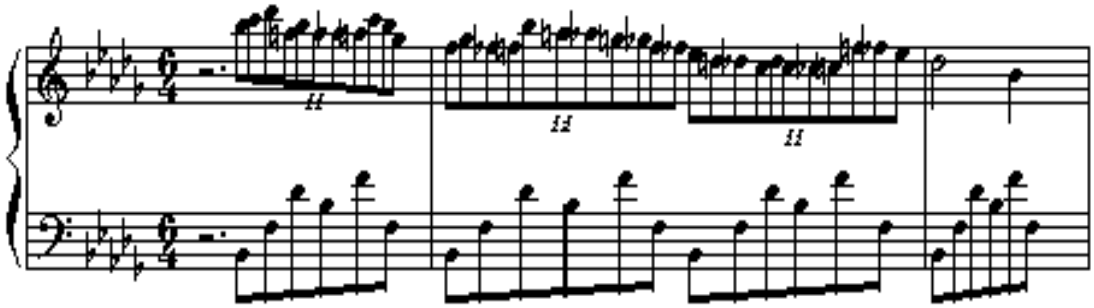
Beethoven: Piano Sonata 13, Op. 27 No. 1



IRREGULAR DIVISIONS
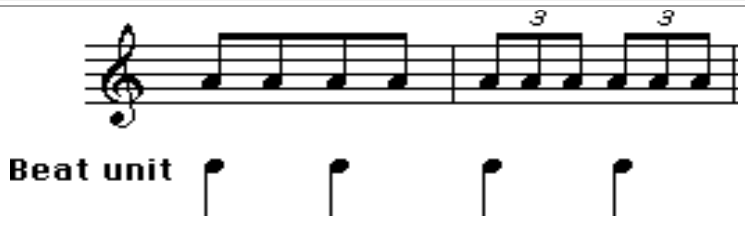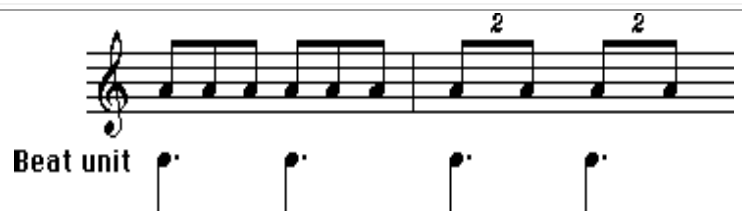
When the beat is divided into irregular divisions, the subdivisions can be divided into any number of notes. For example five or seven notes to a beat would be irregular in both simple and compound time. Here's an example by Chopin where the subdivision is divided into eleven notes.

Chopin: Nocturne Op. 9 No. 1
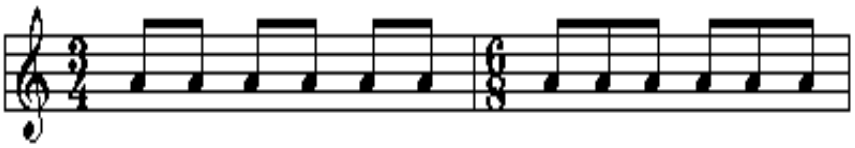


BORROWED DIVISIONS

The first level subdivision of simple time (two notes) and compound time (three notes) can be borrowed from each other. In simple time you'd play three notes in the space of the normal two. In compound time you'd play two notes in the space of the normal three. It is called a "borrowed" division.

Simple Time	
Compound Time	
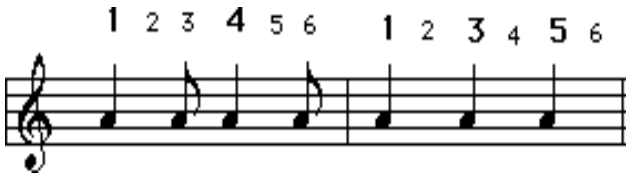
BEAMING AND THE BEAT UNIT

Beaming reflects the beat unit. Three four time is felt as three beats per bar with the first subdivision having two parts per beat. Six eight time is felt as two beats per bar with the first subdivision having three parts per beat.



HEMIOLA

Hemiola refers to three beats of equal value in the time normally occupied by two beats. If you've spent a bit of time learning about rhythm patterns and how to compose or arrange in different time signatures, at some point you have probably come across the term hemiola. "Hemiola is a unique-sounding technique than can give any rhythm a syncopated, off-the-beat feel" (Brant Wilson, 2019). The accents shifts from two beats subdivided in threes in the first bar to three beats subdivided in twos in the second bar.
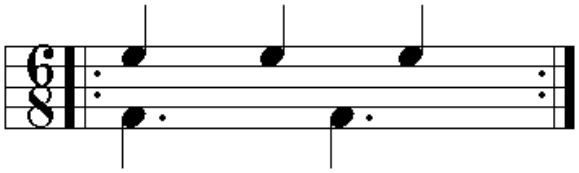


The word "hemiola" originates from the Greek words "hemi," meaning half, and "holos," meaning whole. In other words, one and a half. And so, a hemiola is a rhythmic pattern that uses a ratio of three to two, and the Greeks, ever concerned with ratios, noticed that three divided by two gives you one and a half, thus their description "hemiola."

So what does this look like more concretely? There are two types of hemiolas for us to investigate: vertical and horizontal.

VERTICAL HEMIOLA

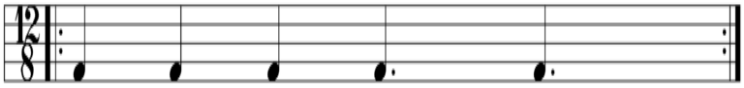
This simply means that the rhythm of three and the rhythm of two are being played simultaneously, or on top of each other (thus vertical). The simplest way of representing this in musical notation is in 6/8 time, with a pattern of three quarter notes per bar played at the same time as a pattern of two dotted quarter notes.



Though it can take some practice to learn how to play, vertical hemiola can spice up your music by forcing the listener to feel the beat in two time signatures at once. Additionally, hemiolas of this sort can act as a sort of syncopation, with one rhythm emphasizing the off-beats of the other. For both of these reasons, hemiola can be found in a variety of indigenous musical traditions, particularly in Africa and the Balkans.

HORIZONTAL HEMIOLA,

Horizontal Hemiola, on the other hand, is when the patterns of three and two happen not simultaneously but unfold across time. This can be as simple as taking the two lines and putting them next to each other rather than on top of each other (like in the vertical arrangement). For example:
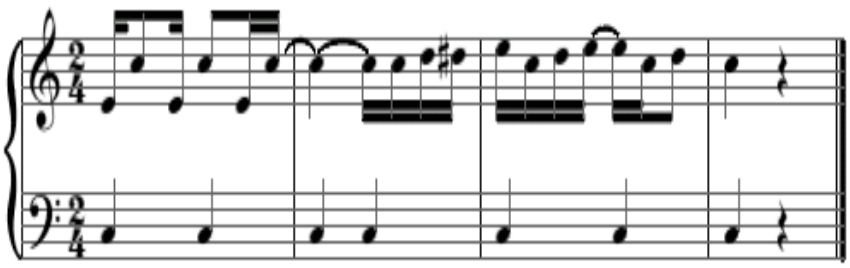


Other examples of horizontal hemiola, particularly in classical music, act as momentary, unwritten changes in time signature. If you have a piece written in a 3/4 time signature, having half notes play over two bars can create an interesting effect that will draw in the listener.



SYNCOPATION

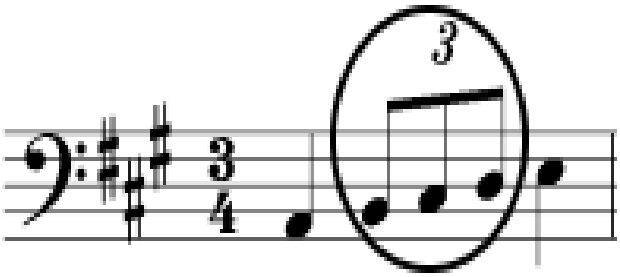
The deliberate displacement of notes away from the beat unit is termed syncopation. Emphasis is given to notes that occur just before or just after the beat unit (i.e. strong beat). Syncopation is usually notated by tying two or more notes across a beat boundary or bar line. In this famous tune, listen to how the melody notes are close to but do not coincide with the steady beat in the bass clef. Syncopation is one of the principle features of Ragtime which literally means "ragged time."

Scott Joplin: ***''The Entertainer Rag''***. This is one of the first pieces I played as an undergraduate, studying music at the University of Nigeria in 1995. It was at first, a very difficult rhythm until it was surmounted.



TRIPLETS

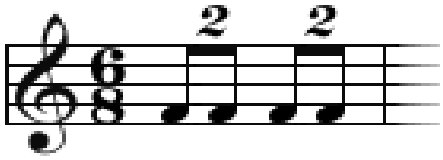
Triplets are 3 notes that fit in the same rhythmic space as 2 of the same notational value. Triplets are used or are very commonly seen in simple time signatures when we need to show a rhythmic value that would normally be found in compound time, when we want to play three notes in the space where there would normally be two or when the composer wants to split the main beat into three, instead of two:



A triplet (circled here) will have 3 of the note value marked with a "3" above or below to represent that it is a triplet. Three quavers take up the same amount of time as two normal ones. The most common triplet is the quaver note triplet as shown in the diagram above.
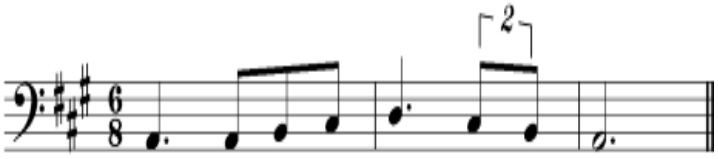
DUPLET

Duplet is a note-grouping of two, which fits into the length of three notes of same note-type. Duplets are used in compound meters when we need to show a rhythmic value that would normally be found in simple meter. The duplet forces **two notes to take the space of three**:



Duplets create a temporary *irrational rhythm* within a song. While rarely used, they can be seen in bridges, but are most frequently used in jazz piano. A duplet will have two of the note value with a number **2** above or below to represent that it is a duplet. The most common duplet is the quaver note duplet, often found in 6/8 time.

Duplets work in a similar way with triplets- but instead of writing three notes in place of two, we use a duplet to write **two notes** in place of **three:**



This example is in 6/8. Normally the dotted crotchet beat would be divided into three quavers, as in the first bar. The **duplet** is used in the second bar, to divide the dotted note into just 2 quavers. It has the effect of making them a little bit slower than the regular quavers when played or sung.

Chapter 10

INTERVALS

DEFINITIONS OF INTERVAL

1. An Interval is the difference between two pitches.

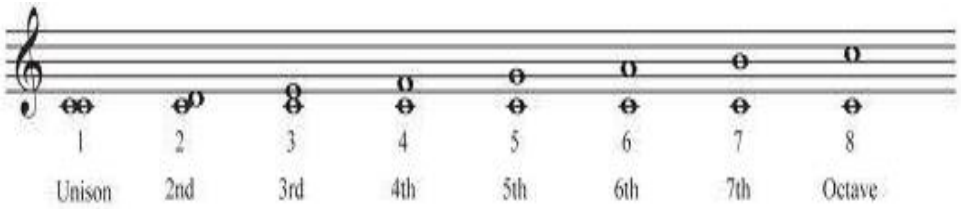
2. An interval is the distance between pitches.

3. Interval is the vertical distance between two notes.

4. Music intervals are the distance between two notes and their relationship to each other. This basically means how far one note is to the other when being played.

5. An interval in music is defined as the distance in pitch between two notes. We use the word "interval" to describe in greater detail how close or how far apart two notes are from each other.

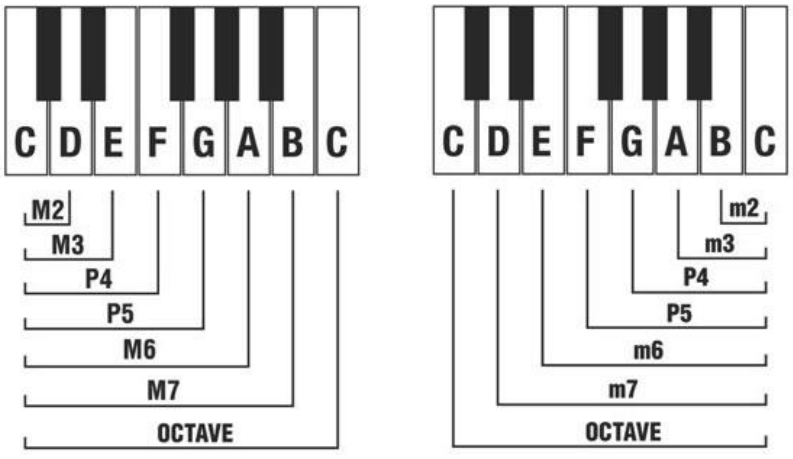
Intervals can range anywhere from unison (same note) to an octave (8th).



For example, the distance between a C and a D would be a second. We will go over what this means shortly.

INTERVALS ON THE PIANO

Here is what each of these intervals look like on the piano…



IMPORTANCE OF INTERVALS

Knowing what an interval in music is gives us a more effective language to communicate with. It is a way of describing exactly what we are looking at on the page. This terminology has standard usage across the world.

Anywhere you go, you should be able to now talk about intervals well with full understanding of each other.

The magic behind musical intervals is that once you learn them, and can recognize them, you will be able to play almost any song by ear.

Before you are able to learn to play by ear using music intervals you need to understand piano chords.
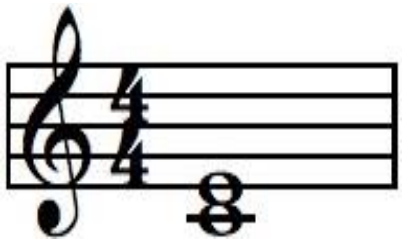
When you have a good knowledge of chord come back here to continue. Once you have a basic knowledge of chords and how they are built you will be able to use them along with intervals to start playing by ear.

Knowing music intervals and being able to recognize them when you hear and see they will help you tremendously when playing an instrument.

Say for instance you are playing a song by ear and you are trying to quickly play the melody. If you know your intervals, you'll be able to play it back easily.

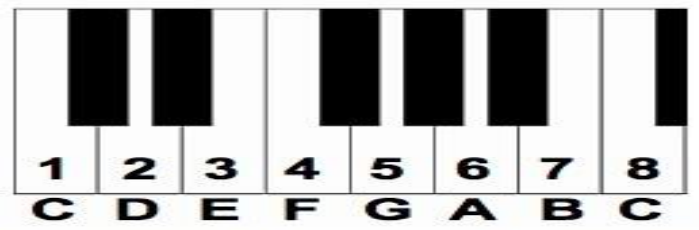
To help better illustrate this concept, think of the melody of your favourite song. Focus on the first two notes of the song. The interval for those two notes will be how much higher or lower the second note is related to the first note.

Look at the image below.



A music interval is how much distance there is between the **first note** and the **second note.** In this example the distance is a **major third.** There are twelve standard notes in music, so there will be twelve different intervals. Each interval has a unique sound that once memorized, can be used to help you play music by ear.

To really understand intervals we need to number the keys on the piano. Take a look at the images below and see that the piano is labelled from 1 to 8, starting on C, and going up on all the white notes. This is going to be our reference point for when we start finding intervals.

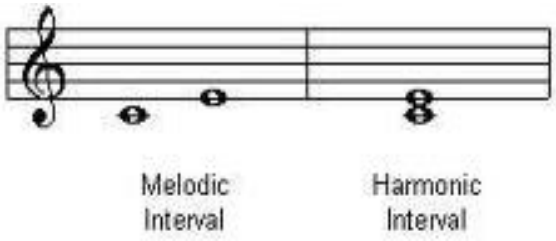


If **C** is the starting note, then the rest of the 12 notes in the image are going to be given a music interval based on its **relation to C.**

So **D** in its relation to **C** would be a **Major 2nd** because it's the second note relative to C. This is the same with **E**, it is a **Major 3rd** from **C.**

TYPES OF INTERVALS

Not to confuse you here, but intervals can also be described by whether they sound together or apart. Two types of intervals exist in the music world; Harmonic and Melodic.



HARMONIC

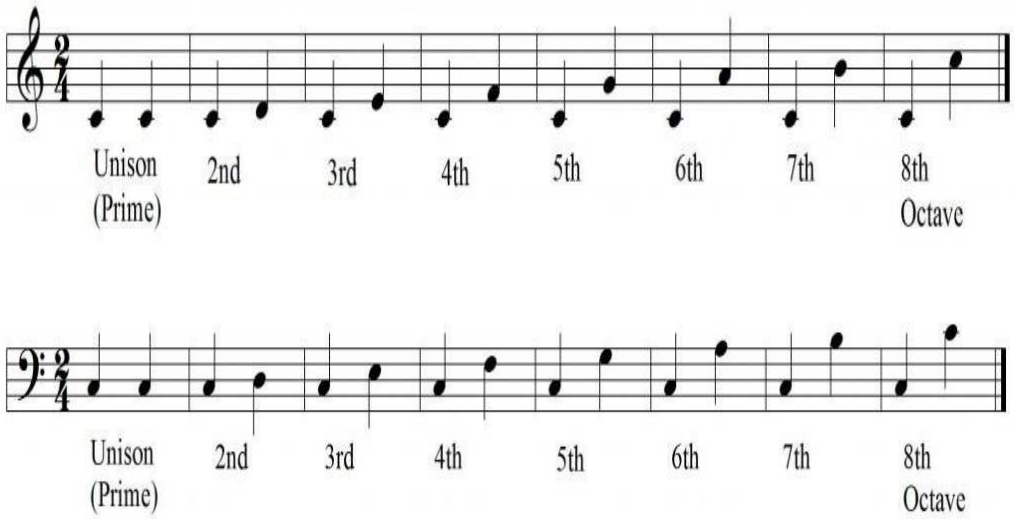
An interval can be described as vertical or harmonic if it pertains to simultaneously sounding tones, such as in a chord. The word "harmonic" is similar to "harmony". This is exactly how I like to think of this. Harmony is hearing how two or more notes blend together. Each note must be played together (like a chord) in order for this to happen. A Harmonic interval is when the notes are played at the same time. Like when a choir sings they are singing harmony. So, when these notes are played together they are harmonic intervals. See the example below:



MELODIC

An interval can be described as horizontal, linear, or melodic if it refers to successively sounding tones, such as two adjacent pitches in a melody. A melodic interval involves two notes that

sound separately. In other words, you play each note one at a time. I like to think of this as being similar to a melody line. Melodic intervals are when the notes are played separately or one after the other. Think of the tune of your favourite song. How does the singer change from one note to the next. This is a melodic interval. See the examples below:



These types of intervals are going to be the beginning part of your ear training experience. Once you know better you will be able to recognize harmonic intervals.

TABLE OF INTERVALS

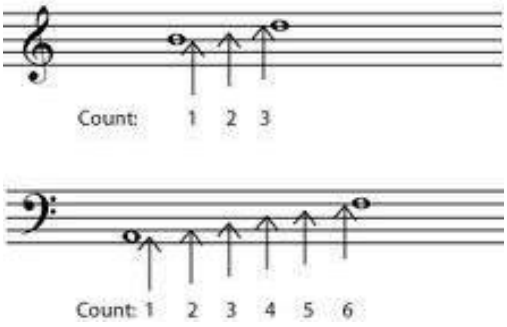
Number of semitones apart	Music interval	Notes
1	Minor 2nd	C - C#
2	Major 2nd	C - D
3	Minor 3rd	C - D#
4	Major 3rd	C - E
5	Perfect 4th	C - F
6	Augmented 4th / Diminished 5th	C - F#
7	Perfect 5th	C - G
8	Minor 6th	C - G#
9	Major 6th	C - A
10	Minor 7th	C - A#
11	Major 7th	C - B
12	Octave	C - C

HOW TO NAME INTERVALS

To decide what an interval is, you count both notes on the music staff and all the lines and spaces in between. You may find it helpful to use the tip of your pencil to guide you (pointing at each note, line or space) as you practice this. Start with the bottom note and count it as "**1**".

1. Count the following lines or spaces (in between the two notes) in succession as "2", "3", etc. until you reach the last note.

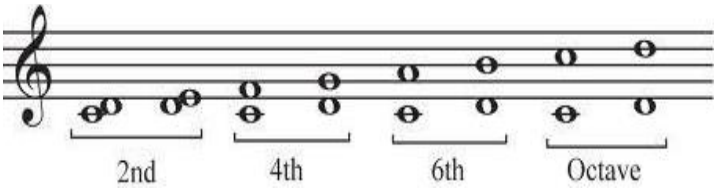
2. The last note should be counted as the last number. This last number is used to describe the interval.



The only exception to this rule is when two notes are exactly the **same pitch**. In this case, we would say the interval is **unison**. Something else to note is that an **8th interval** can also be called an **octave**.

EVEN NUMBERED INTERVALS

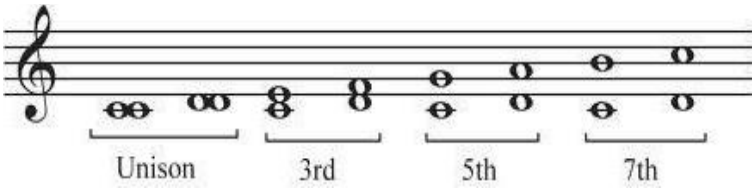
The even numbered intervals always appear on the staff as **one space note and one line note**.



This includes all 2nds, 4ths, 6ths, and octaves (8ths). Isn't that interesting?

ODD NUMBERED INTERVALS

The odd numbered intervals always appear on the staff as **two line notes or two space notes**.



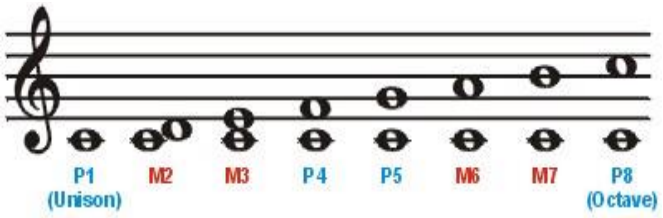
Unisons, 3rds, 5ths, and 7ths are what this all includes.

NAMING INTERVALS AND DESCRIBING THE DISTANCE BETWEEN THEM

Naming each one of these intervals is important so we can associate a name with each of them in order to communicate them with others we are playing with and also so we can have another method of recognition.

Intervals have a number and a prefix. The number represents the number of pitch names (A, B, C, D, E, F,

G) from the first to the second pitch. For example, the whole step F to G contains two pitch names, F and G. This interval is called a second. The interval from F to A contains F, G and A; three pitches. This interval is therefore called a third. The trend continues through to the interval containing eight pitch names. An interval containing eight pitch positions (from A to A' or from G to G') is called an octave. An interval from one pitch to the exact same pitch is called a unison. The diagram below shows a C major scale. The intervals are marked.



The second part of an interval name is based on the quality of the interval. It is referred to as the prefix.

Intervals could either be described as **PERFECT**, **MAJOR**, **MINOR**, **AUGMENTED** or **DIMINISHED**.

Perfect intervals include the intervals of a First (i.e. unison, PU / PP / P1 = Perfect Unison / Perfect Prime), fourth, fifth and the octave. Perfect intervals are labelled with a capital "**P**."

WHY IS IT CALLED PERFECT?

That is a very good question that involves more historical analysis into the times of antiquity in order to really answer it properly. From my understanding, the term "perfect" originated due to the musical overtone series. Apparently perfect intervals ring in a way that other intervals do not. These sound qualities were first discovered and praised in the East.

A Greek Philosopher named Pythagoras was the first person from the West to explore this interesting observation. He is responsible for incorporating it into our current musical language and practice. The label of "perfect" in addition to a number describes the interval's *quality*. These intervals are called perfect because the ratios of their frequencies are simple whole numbers.

The **Major** prefix is only used for the intervals of Seconds, Thirds, Sixths and Sevenths. Major intervals are labelled with a large "**M**."

Minor intervals occur when a major interval is made one semitone smaller. This can be done by raising / sharpening the bottom note or lowering / flattening the top note. Minor intervals are labelled with a small "**m**."

Augmented intervals are when a major or perfect interval is made one semitone larger, and the interval number (i.e. number of alphabets involved) does not change. Augmented intervals are labelled with an "**A**," or the abbreviation "**Aug**.," or a "**+**." For example, above, if the P5 from C to G were changed to a C to G#, it would become an augmented fifth, or +5, or A5.

Diminished intervals are created when a perfect or minor interval is made one semitone smaller and the interval number (i.e. number of alphabets involved) is not changed. Diminished intervals are labelled with a "**d**," the abbreviations "**dim**" or a "**°**." For example, if the perfect fifth from C to G above were changed to a C to G**♭**, the interval would become a diminished fifth, or °5.

Therefore unisons, fourths, fifths, and octaves can be diminished, perfect, or augmented. Seconds, thirds, sixths, and sevenths can be diminished (only if the interval is decreased by two semitones, such as with a double flat), minor, major, or augmented.

Here are some examples of how this system works:

P1	- This is perfect unison.
M7	- This is a major seventh.
m2, **min2**	-This is a minor second.
A6, Aug. 6, **+6**	- These are all augmented sixths.
d5, **dim. 5, °5**	- These are all diminished fifths.

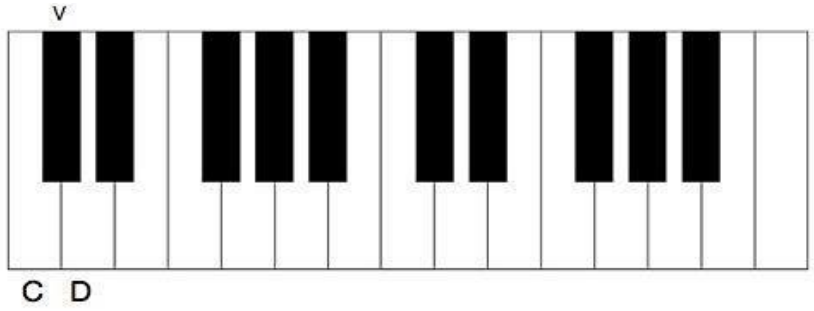
MAJOR AND MINOR SECOND

Each interval will have a starting note and an ending note. The first note is going to be known as the root note.

So let's begin with **C** and assume we are in the key of **C**. **C** will be our reference note for naming all of the intervals. So start with **C** and go up to the next note in the key of **C** which is **D**.

You have gone up to the second note which is called a major second. Which is two half steps away from **C**. Pretty easy right.

But what about the black note in between the **C** and the **D**? Take a look at the keyboard and you will see what I mean.



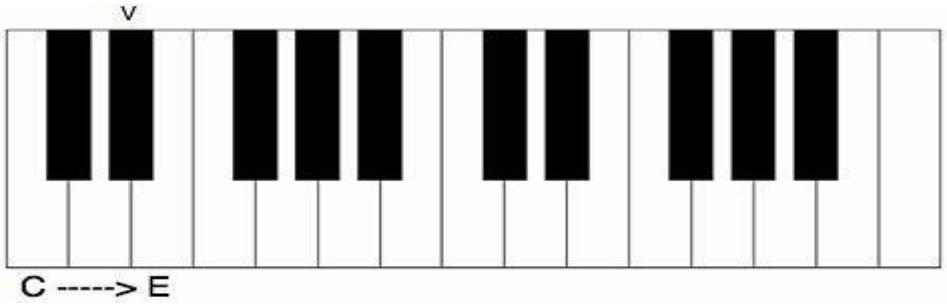
That black note in between the C and the D is called a Minor Second or one half step away from C. Minor Seconds are 1 half step away from the root note and Major Seconds are 2 half steps away.

An easy way to remember the difference between a major and a minor is if the note belongs in the key then it is a major, if it doesn't then it's a minor.

D belongs in the key of C so it's a Major Second. This black note (Db/C#) does not so its a Minor Second.

MAJOR AND MINOR THIRD

The same concept goes for the the next note intervals. The distance from the C to the E is four half steps which is called a Major Third. But there is another black note directly to the left of the E. You guessed it! The Eb/D# note is a Minor Third or three half steps.

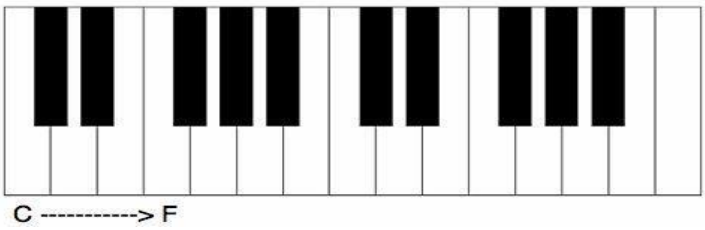


PERFECT FOURTH

The next note in the scale of C is the F. So if you count up the scale of C the F would be the fourth note in the scale. This interval is called a Perfect Fourth.

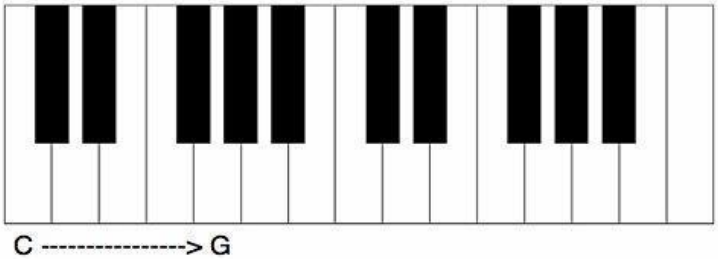
Perfect music intervals cannot be major or minor but it can be augmented or diminished.

When a note is augmented it means that a perfect note has been raised one half step. A note that is diminished it means that a perfect note has been lowered one half step.



PERFECT FIFTH

A perfect fifth is the fifth note in the scale or seven half steps.



AUGMENTED FOURTH/ DIMINISHED FIFTH

So we have named all of the music intervals so far except for the F#/Gb.

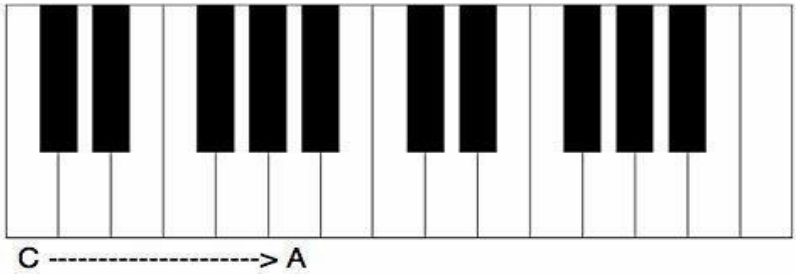
Based on what you've learned so far you would think to call this a minor fifth right?

If you remember, we learned that perfect music intervals cannot be minored it can only be augmented or diminished.

With the definition of augmented and diminished music intervals this tells us that this interval is going to be called either a diminished fifth or an augmented fourth. You can call it either one. It is called an augmented fourth because it is raised one half step from the fourth. The same goes for the diminished fifth. It is lowered one half step from the fifth so it is called a diminished fifth.

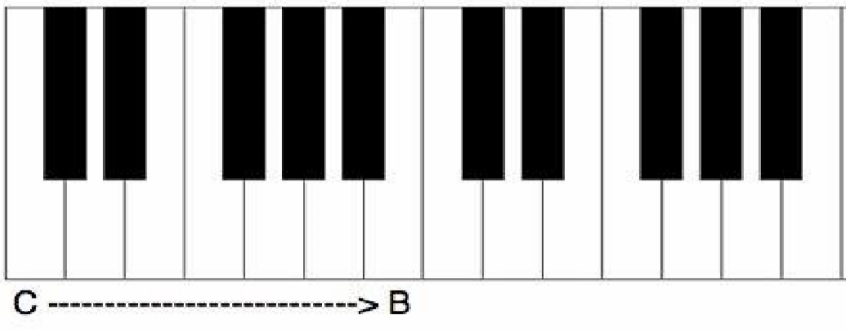
MINOR AND MAJOR SIXTH

The distance between the C and A is going to be called a Major Sixth. This is because if you count up the notes in the key of C you will notice that the A is the sixth note in the scale. What about the note to the left of the A? You guessed it. It's the Minor Sixth.

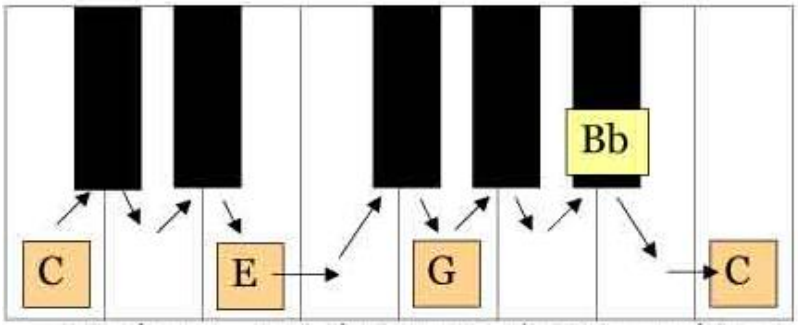


MINOR AND MAJOR SEVENTH

The same thing goes for the Seventh note in the key of C. The B is called the Major Seventh.

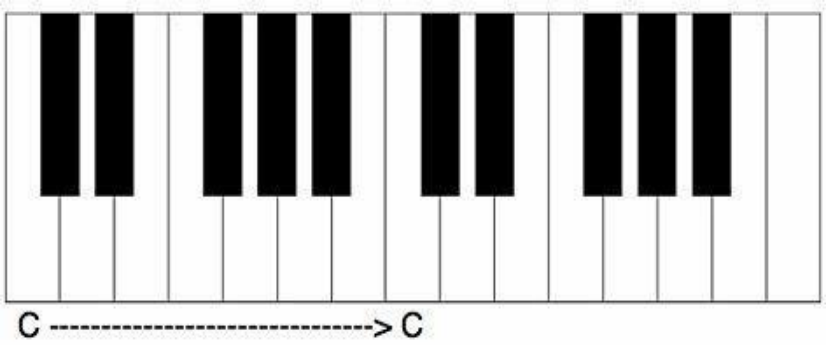


The note to the left of the B is called the Minor Seventh.



OCTAVE

We have gone all the way up the B and now get to another C. When you play two notes that are the same this is called Unison.



This means the distance from two identical notes at a higher or lower pitch is called Octave.

NAMING THE SEMITONES

I have explained all of this in a way that you might understand it better. But to really understand the theory behind music intervals you have to understand the number of semitones it takes from the first note to get to the second note.

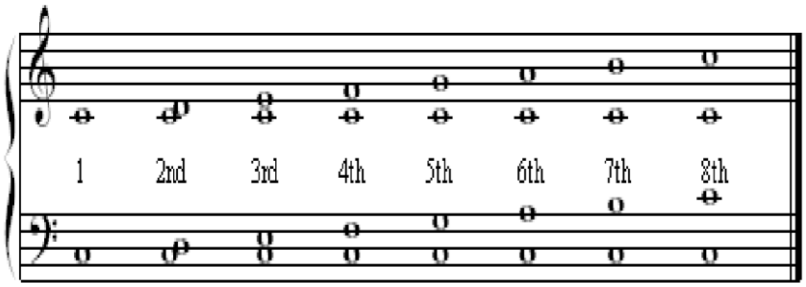
Here is a list of the number of semitones it takes to form that interval.

PERFECT INTERVALS

C / C	= 0 semitone	= perfect first / unison / perfect prime
C / C♯	= 1 semitone	= augmented first / unison / prime
C – F♭	= 4 semitones	= diminished fourth
C – F	= 5 semitones	= perfect fourth
C – F♯	= 6 semitones	= augmented fourth
C – G♭	= 6 semitones	= diminished fifth
C – G	= 7 semitones	= perfect fifth
C – G♯	= 8 semitones	= augmented fifth
C – C'♭	= 11 semitones	= diminished Octave
C – C'	= 12 semitones	= Perfect Octave
C – C'♯	= 12 semitones	= augmented Octave

MAJOR INTERVALS

C – D♭♭	= 0 semitone	= diminished second
C – D♭	= 1 semitone	= minor second
C - D	= 2 semitones	= major second
C – D♯	= 3 semitones	= augmented second
C – E♭♭	= 2 semitones	= diminished third
C – E♭	= 3 semitones	= minor third
C – E	= 4 semitones	= major third
C – E♯	= 5 semitones	= augmented third
C – A♭♭	= 7 semitones	= diminished sixth
C – A♭	= 8 semitones	= minor sixth
C – A	= 9 semitones	= major sixth
C – A♯	= 10 semitones	= augmented sixth
C – B♭♭	= 9 semitones	= diminished seventh
C – B♭	= 10 semitones	= minor seventh
C – B	= 11 semitones	= major seventh
C – B♯	= 12 semitones	= augmented seventh

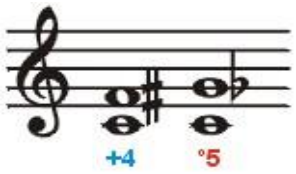


CONSONANCE AND DISSONANCE

Consonant intervals are intervals that are stable. These intervals require no resolution. The consonant intervals are P1, m3, M3, P5, M6, and P8. All other intervals within the octave are said to be dissonant. Dissonant intervals are tense, and require resolution. The intervals of M2, m2, P4, m6, M7, m7 their augmented and diminished forms and all augmented and diminished intervals and dissonant intervals.

ENHARMONIC INTERVALS

Enharmonic intervals are intervals that sound the same but are "spelled" differently. These intervals result from the inclusion of enharmonic equivalents. The most common enharmonic intervals are the diminished fifth and the augmented fourth, shown below. These two intervals divide the octave into two equal parts. These intervals contain three tones, for this reason these intervals are referred to as the tritone.



INVERTING INTERVALS

When an interval is inverted, the lower tone is raised one octave. The table below shows some intervals and their inversions.

To calculate the outcome of an inverted interval, use the formula (9 – z) where ‘’z” is the value of the given interval to be inverted. E.g. inverted 2nd becomes (9 – z = 9 – 2) = 7th and so on.

INTERVALS AND THEIR INVERSIONS.

The Interval of:

Unisons	when Inverted becomes Octaves
2nds	when Inverted becomes 7ths
3rds	when Inverted becomes 6ths
4ths	when Inverted becomes 5ths
5ths	when Inverted becomes 4ths
6ths	when Inverted becomes 3rds
7ths	when Inverted becomes 2nds
Octaves	when Inverted becomes Unisons
Perfect	when Inverted becomes perfect
Major	when Inverted becomes Minor
Minor	when Inverted becomes Major
Diminished	when Inverted becomes augmented
Augmented	when Inverted becomes diminished

SIMPLE INTERVALS

Simple intervals are intervals that span distances within an octave.

COMPOUND INTERVALS

Compound intervals are intervals that span distances greater than an octave. These intervals are often labelled as their simple equivalents, as if an octave had been removed from the interval. The actual, or compound, interval name is only used if it is very important to stress the actual interval size. E.g. the interval of a:

9th	= compound 1st
10th	= compound 2nd
11th	= compound 3rd
12th	= compound 4th
13th	= compound 5th
14th	= compound 6th
15th	= compound 7th etc.

To get know the corresponding simple interval from a given compound interval, use the formula (x – 8) where ''x" is the value of the given compound interval. For instance, the corresponding simple interval of a 14th = 14 – 8 = compound 6th and so on.

IDENTIFYING INTERVALS

The easiest way to find an interval's name is to first, count all the pitch names present, including the notes themselves (ignore sharps and flats at this point). Then, find out (had it been missing a flat or sharp) what type of interval it would be, depending on whether it is perfect (1, 4, 5, 8) or major (2, 3, 6, 7). If there are no sharps or flats, you are done. If there are, figure out if the flat or sharp decreases or increases the distance between the two pitches. If it increases the distance, the interval is augmented. If it decreases the distance of an interval which would ordinarily be a perfect interval, it is diminished. If it decreases the distance of an interval which would ordinarily be a major interval, it is minor.

The table below might be of help when calculating quality of intervals.

Major intervals	**- 1 semitone**	**= Minor**
Minor intervals	**+ 1 semitone**	**= Major**
Minor intervals OR Perfect intervals	**– 1 semitone**	**= diminished**
Major intervals OR Perfect intervals	**+ 1 semitone**	**= augmented**

CONCLUSION

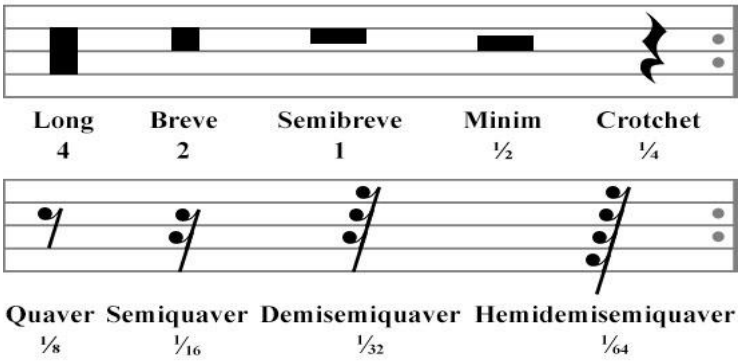
The thing you must know about intervals is that there is a set of intervals for each key signature. We worked in the key of C in the examples given so far. But if you are playing in another key like A♭ then you must know the intervals for that key.

You just do the same thing we did before with the new key. Count up the notes in the scale to find the interval.

Now that you know the theory behind Music Intervals you can now start to practice using them. Once you have mastered these intervals it will help you to play music better by ear and know how a song goes just by hearing it.

Chapter 11

NOTES AND RESTS

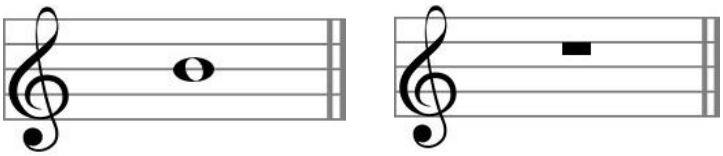


Notes represent the length of time of a particular pitch. Each note stands for a particular number of beats. In written music, the length of a note is shown by its shape. When there is no note sounding, a *rest* is written, and the duration is shown by its shape. To make things easier, we have classified notes on the basis of their relation with the whole note or a semi breve.

WHOLE NOTE OR SEMIBREVE

A hollow oval note head represents a whole note or a semibreve. The length of a full note is equivalent to four beats in a 4/4 time. A whole note receives 4 counts, which means, you must hold the note for its full value.

A whole rest corresponds to a whole note, which means, the rest period is equivalent to the duration of the musical note. A whole rest is denoted by a filled-in rectangle hanging under the second line from the top of the staff.

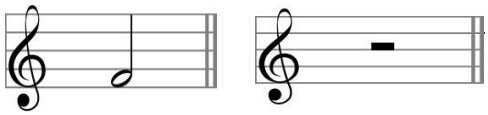


NOTES LESSER THAN A WHOLE NOTE

HALF NOTE OR MINIM

A half note or minim is played for half the duration of a semibreve. In other words, a minim receives 2 counts, allowing the musician to hold the note for 2 counts instead of 4. The minim, like the semibreve, is a hollowed oval with a stem or tail attached. The stem or the tail of the minim can either be drawn upwards or downwards depending on the placement of the note on the stave. When a note falls below the middle line of the stave the stem is drawn upwards from the right side of the note, while the stems drops down from the left side when the note falls above the middle line of the stave.

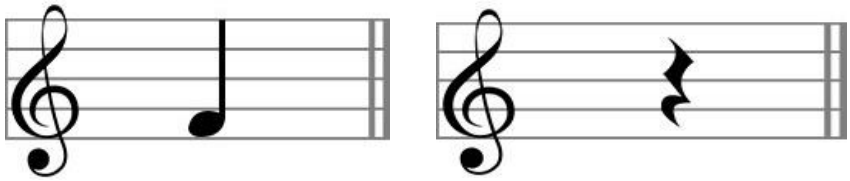
A half rest corresponds to a half note or a minim. A half note is represented by a filled-in rectangle sitting above the third or the middle line of the staff.



QUARTER NOTE OR CROTCHET

A quarter note is half of a minim, and one-fourth of a full note. It is represented by a filled-in oval. Like the minim, a quarter note has a tail or a stem attached to the note head, which points upwards or downwards depending on how the note falls in a musical piece of work. The note head orientation for the minim and crotchet largely depends on the position of the stem.

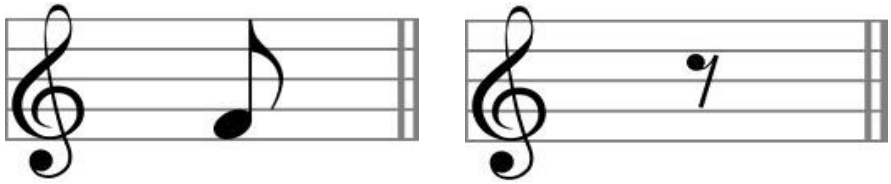
The crotchet rest corresponds to a quarter note. Like the quarter note, the crotchet rest receives one count or beat in a bar of 4/4, in a musical piece of work. It is represented like a filled-in squiggle.



QUAVER OR EIGHT NOTE

A quaver note is played for one eighth the duration of a whole note or semibreve. It is represented with a filled-in oval with a stem accompanied with a flag. The flag is always positioned on the right side of the stem. However, a note placed above the middle line of the staff will have the flag pointing upwards and downwards if the note falls below the middle line ensuring the curve of the flag is towards the right. Multiple eight notes falling next to each other are connected with a beam instead of the regular flag.

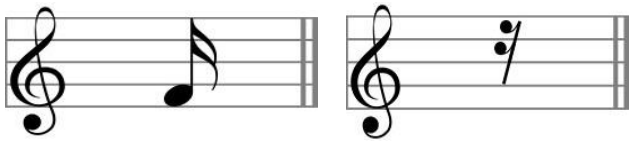
The quaver rest corresponds to the eight note, and is represented with a filled-in curlicue flag just like their note heads. The eight-note has a single curly flag that rests on the left side of a slanting stem.



SEMIQUAVER OR SIXTEENTH NOTE

A sixteenth note, also known as a semiquaver is half of a quaver. It is played for one sixteenth the duration of a whole note. It is represented by a filled-in oval note head with a straight stem—like a quaver—with two flags. Multiple semiquaver notes falling one after the other are beamed with two horizontal lines.

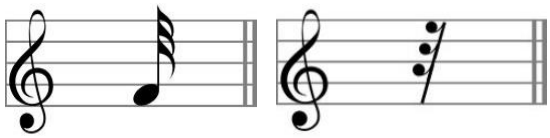
Like the quaver rest, the semi quaver rest is denoted with curly flags resting on a slanted stem. The number of curly flags is in proportion to the number of flags adorning the note head.



THIRTY-SECOND NOTE

A thirty-second note or a demisemiquaver is played for half the duration of a semiquaver. It is represented by a filled-in quarter note with three flags on the right side of the stem. Multiple demisemiquaver notes falling one after the other are beamed together with three equidistant horizontal bars.

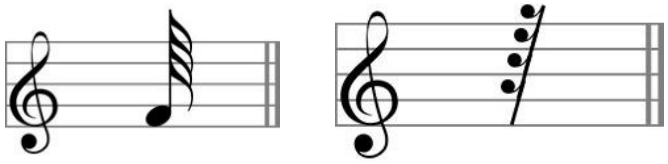
The demisemiquaver rest consists of a slanting line with three curlicue flags attached to the top of the stem.



SIXTY-FOURTH NOTE

A sixty-fourth note, also called a hemidemisemiquaver note, lasts for just about 1/64 of the duration of a semibreve. In other words, it is half of a demisemiquaver note and one eighth that of a quaver note. It is represented by a filled-in note head with four flags attached to a straight stem. Multiple notes are beamed together with four horizontal bars. It is important to note that music notes and rests as short as these are occasionally found.

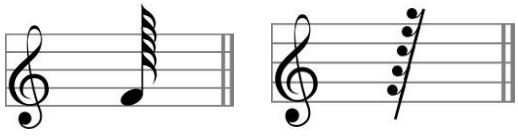
The hemidemisemiquaver rest has four curlicue flags attached to a slanting stem.



HUNDRED TWENTY-EIGHTH NOTE

A semihemidemisemiquaver, or a hundred twenty-eighth note, is relatively unknown and lasts for 1/128 of the duration of a semibreve. Used to represent brief, rapid sections in extremely slow movements in a piece of music. Five flags adorn the stem of the basic quarter note, and multiple notes are beamed with five horizontal bars.

Five curlicue flags attached to the slanting stem represents the semidemihemisemiquaver or quasihemidemisemiquaver rest.

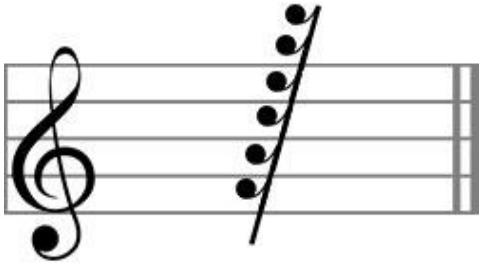


TWO HUNDRED FIFTY-SIXTH NOTE

Played for 1/256 of the duration of a single whole note, the demisemihemidemisemiquaver or the two hundred fifty-sixth note is used very rarely in musical notations. It is represented in music notes with a filled-in note head with six flags attached to the main stem. It is also known as the semigarrapatea note, and it is used to denote rapid sections of music.

The 256th rest is denoted by six curlicue flags adorning a slanting stem.



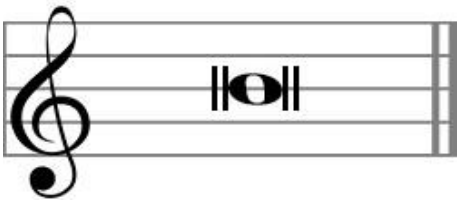


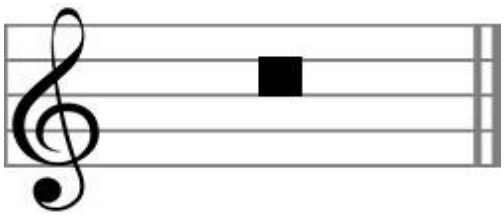
NOTES GREATER THAN A WHOLE NOTE

DOUBLE WHOLE NOTE

Also known as a breve or a double note, it is twice as long as a semibreve. It is the longest note value that is still in use in modern music notation. Like the whole note, it is represented by a hollow oval with double stems on either sides.
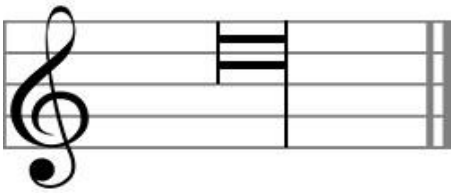
A double whole rest is represented by a filled-in rectangle that spans the vertical space between the second and third line from the top of the musical staff. Like the notes, the breve rest denotes a silence that is twice that of a semibreve rest.

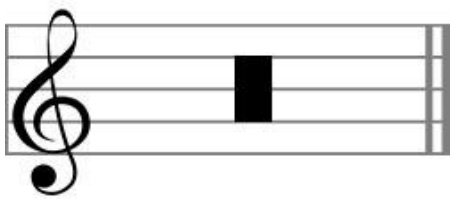




QUADRUPLE WHOLE NOTE

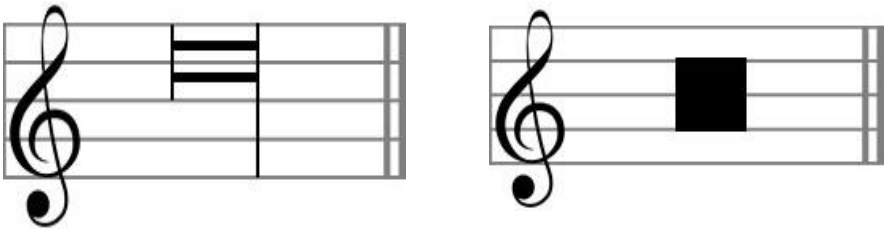
Also known as a longa or a sextuple whole note, is four to six times as long as a double whole note. The modern form of the longa can alternatively be written as a semibreve with two stems on either side—one stem is longer than the other—like the longa note with the stem facing upwards. A longa rest associated with the note is represented by a vertical filled-in rectangle.
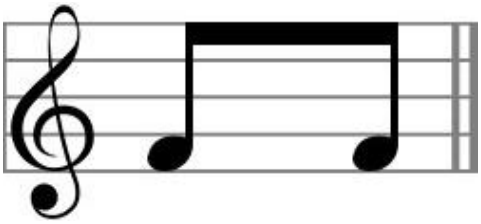




MAXIMA OR OCTUPLE WHOLE NOTE

Used specifically in early music, the maxima or the octuple longa is considered to be a rare musical note that is twice as long as the longa, or eight to twelve times as long as a semibreve. Incidentally, the duplex longa or maxima occurs only in instances of early music. It resembles a quadruple whole note, except that the horizontal bars are slightly longer than the longa notes. The maxima rest is symbolized by two longa rests, or the more modern alternative for it is a filled-in longa rests.



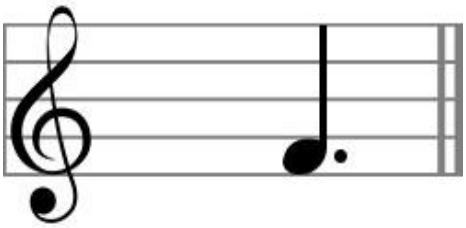
BEAMED NOTES

Beams or horizontal bars are used to connect multiple quaver notes together. The beams join the tails or stems of two or more quaver notes together to form a beat. The number of beams joining quaver notes corresponds to the number of flags adorning the single quaver note of shorter value. For example, two or more quaver notes will have a single bar or beam joining them, while a sixty-fourth quaver note with three flags will have three beams attaching the tails together.



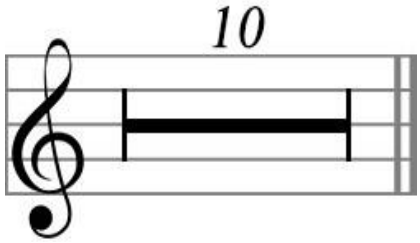
DOTTED NOTES

A dot is placed to the right of a note head to lengthen the duration of the beat of the particular note. For example, a single dot placed next to a minim or a quarter note increases the beat of the note to that of a minim plus a quaver note—equaling 3 beats instead of half. Additional dots are used to lengthen the previous dot instead of the note. So, if a half note has two dots, it is equivalent to a half note plus a quarter note, which is added to a quaver note. In short, half the value is added to the note head using a dot.



MULTI-MEASURE REST

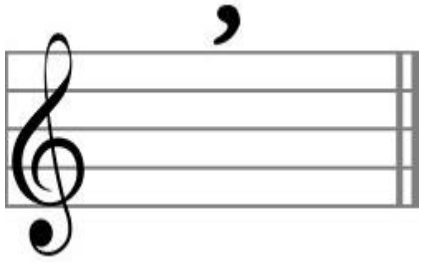
Also called a gathered rest or a multi-bar rest, it is a horizontal line placed on the middle stave with serifs on either side. It is used to simplify musical notation, and to indicate the number of measures in a resting part. It is used to denote rest of more than one bar in the same meter. The number printed above the stave corresponds to the length or duration of the rest of the particular note.



BREAKS

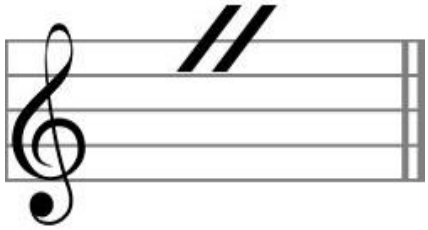
BREATH MARK

A breath mark or a luftpause is represented by a filled-in single inverted comma placed above the musical staff. For a singer or a performer playing a wind instrument, it translates as an instruction to pause for breath. For those playing non-wind instruments, it is an instruction to take a slight pause. For example, in the case of a bowed instrument, the breath mark is indication for the player to lift the bow and play the next note with either a downward or upward bow. The breath mark works just like a comma does in a sentence.



CAESURA

Like a breath mark, the caesura indicates a brief pause or break in the piece of music. It is placed between notes or measures before or above the lines of a stave. It is represented with two slanting parallel lines often referred to as railroad tracks or tram lines. The break or interruption in music can be of any length, and the time often depends on the discretion of the conductor.



Chapter 12

MUSICAL SIGNS AND TERMS OF PERFORMANCE

MUSIC PERFORMANCE TERMS

TEMPO TERMS

Term	Meaning
Presto	Very rapidly
Vivace	Quickly; spirited
Allegro	Fast; lively
Allegretto	Moderately fast; slower than Allegro
Moderato	Moderately
Andantino	Somewhat faster than Andante
Andante	At a walking pace
Adagio	Rather slow; leisurely
Lento	Slow
Largo	Slow; broad
Grave	Very slow; solemn

CHANGE-OF-TEMPO TERMS

TERM	INTERPRETATION
A tempo	Return to original tempo
Accelerando (accel.)	Gradually increasing in tempo
Meno mosso	With less movement or motion
Piu mosso	With movement or motion
Rallentando (rall.)	Gradually slowing in tempo
Ritardando (rit.)	Gradually slowing in tempo
Ritenuto (riten.)	Immediately slowing in tempo; also used synonymously with rallentando and ritardando

DYNAMIC LEVELS
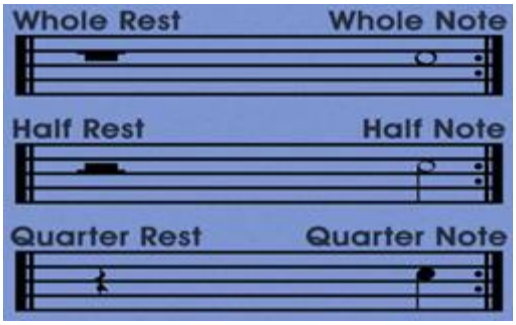
TERM	INTERPRETATION
Crescendo (cresc.)	Gradually becoming louder
Decrescendo (decresc.)	Gradually becoming softer
Diminuendo (dim.)	Gradually becoming softer
Pianissimo (pp)	Very soft
Piano (p)	Soft
Mezzo piano (mp)	Moderately soft
Mezzo forte (mf)	Moderately loud
Forte (f)	Loud
Fortissimo (ff)	Very loud
Sforzando (sf., sfz.)	Strongly accented; with an emphatic stress

OTHER MUSIC TERMS

TERM	MEANING
Animato	Animated; with spirit
Cantabile	In singing style
Coda	A concluding section of a composition
Con moto	With motion
Da capo (D.C.)	Repeat from the beginning
Da capo al fine	
(D. C. al fine)	Repeat from the beginning to Fine (the end)
Dal segno (D. S.)	Repeat from the sign 𝄋
Dal segno al fine	Repeat from the sign 𝄋 to Fine (the end)
Dolce	Sweetly; delicately
Espressivo	Expressively
Fine	The end of a composition
Giocoso	Humourously; playfully
Grazioso	Gracefully
Legato	Smoothly; connected
Leggiero	Lightly; nimbly
Maestoso	Majestically; with dignity
Marcato	Marked; stressed
Meno	Less
Molto	Much
Mosso	Motion
Pesante	Heavily
Piu	More
Poco	Little; a little
Scherzando	Playfully
Sempre	Always
Simile	In the same manner
Sostenuto	Sustained
Troppo	Much

MUSICAL SIGNS

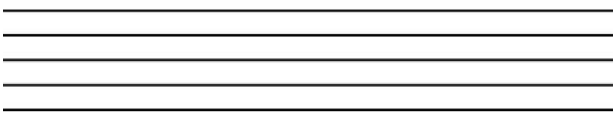
From articulation to rhythm, musical notes are written in symbols or easily distinguishable marks. Each of these musical notes has a pitch, duration, and intensity. Having knowledge about these marks is beneficial when it comes to reading scores and composing melodies. Going through this Module will give you the meaning of music symbols employed in Western music.



The mnemonics "Every Good Boy Does Fine" and "All Cows Eat Grass," helps one memorize the notes on the lines of the treble clef and the spaces of the bass clef, respectively.

Sheet music, or music notation as it is known, employs a series of symbols and marks that pertain to certain notes, pitch, and tone. Music notations are visually represented symbols, which often include both modern and ancient musical symbols. Most of these symbols have been studied in module one. Notwithstanding, it is necessary to bring it up again to help link the topics in the present module.

The Staff

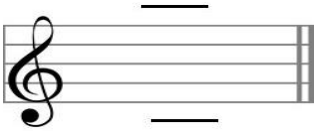


The *staff* or stave forms the very basis of sheet music. Notes are written on a staff of five lines consisting of four spaces between them. The staff is counted from the lowest line upwards. The lines and the spaces correspond to pitches of a eight-note musical scale depending on the defining clef in use.

Modern music notation which is commonly used by musicians of different genres throughout the world is said to have their origins in European classical music. This popular system uses a five-line staff to place the musical notes. Sheet music is used as a record or a guide to interpret, read and to perform or compose a piece of music.

To be able to read this sheet music, one has to study the musical notations, for which, one has to be acquainted with the symbols used to represent the notes which is the very essence of these series of lesson. Given below is a list of the musical symbols employed to write sheet music.
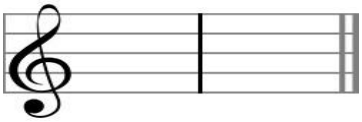
LEDGER OR LEGER LINES AND SPACES



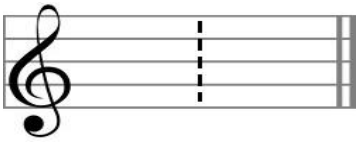
Ledger or leger lines and spaces extend the staff to pitches that fall below it. It is a short line added above or below the staff. Ledger lines are generally placed behind note heads and are spaced at the same distance as the lines of the staff. Range of notes that go beyond the two staffs are put on extra short lines or between the spaces formed between them.

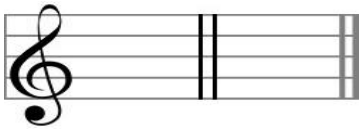
BARS OR MEASURES

Vertical lines called bars are used to connect the first and first lines of the staff. The vertical bars are used to divide the staff into measures or bars.

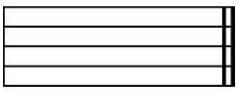


A single bar line is used to separate a measure. Each bar or measure refers to a segment of time that is defined by a given number of beats and note value. To make it easier to understand, the term *bar line* refers only to the vertical line, while the term *measure* refers to the beats or music that are contained between two bar lines.



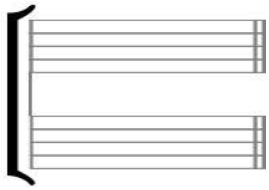


A *double bar line* is used to separate different sections of music. A double bar line is also used to signify changes in key signature, time signature or major change in style and tempo. A dotted bar is used to sub-divide long measures of a complex meter into shorter segments.
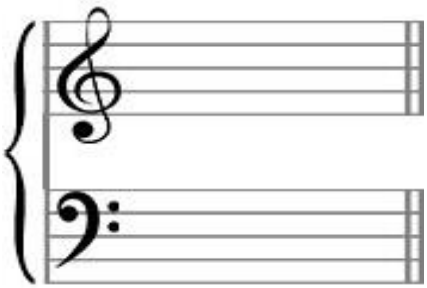


A bold or thick double bar line or the end line is used to indicate the end of a movement in a piece of music. It is used to signify the end of an entire composition.

BRACKETS



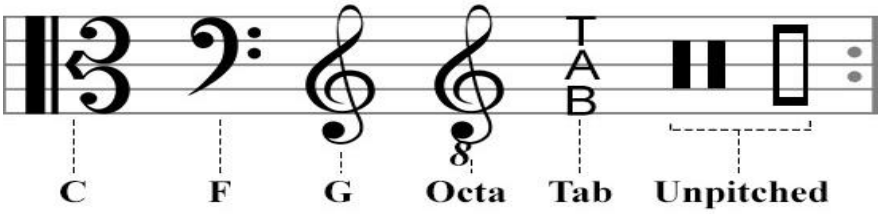
A bracket is generally used to indicate the connection between the staff of two or more separate instruments. To say the least, it is used to connect two or more lines of music that are to be played simultaneously by multiple instruments.

ACCOLADE



The brace on the other hand connects two or more lines or staves of music played simultaneously by a single instrument. Also called an *accolade*, the brace connects multiple parts for a single instrument (the right and left-hand stave of a piano—for instance is connected using a brace).

CLEF



The stave, essentially, is mere lines; however, the presence of the clef marking the beginning of the stave is what assigns a certain pitch to the notes. The clef, in other words, helps to accurately relate to the pitch of the musical note placed on or between specific lines on the stave. In short, a clef is used to fix the position of certain high and low notes on the stave.

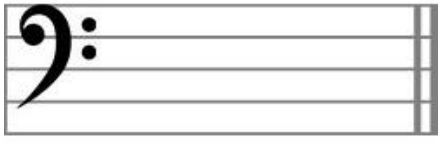
G CLEF OR THE TREBLE CLEF

Originally resembling the capital letter 'G', the treble clef fixes the second line as the note G on the stave. The treble clef denotes the high notes on the stave, and is commonly used for most modern vocal music.



F CLEF OR THE BASS CLEF

The bass clef fixes the fourth line as the note 'F' on the bass stave. The two dots placed above and below the fourth line from the bottom of the staff is the pitch F. Specifically used in choral music, the bass clef represents the bass and baritone voices.



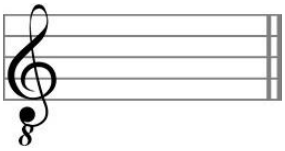
C CLEF OR ALTO AND TENOR CLEF

The alto and tenor clef fix the third and fifth lines on the stave as the middle C respectively. In modern notation, it is used for the viola, and is often used when composing music using the bassoon, cello, trombone, and double bass. It is a movable clef, and when it points to the fourth line, it is called a tenor clef.



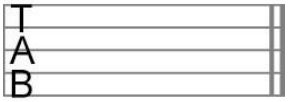
OCTAVE CLEF

The octave clef is nothing but a modified version of either the treble or the bass clef. The number 8 or 15 is affixed either to the top or bottom of the clef to raise or lower the intended pitch by one or two octaves, respectively. Generally, you will find a treble clef with an eight below in notes written for the guitar and the octave mandolin. It is sometimes used for tenor part in vocal scores. This serves as a reminder that the tenor part sings an octave bellow the treble clef.



TABLATURE

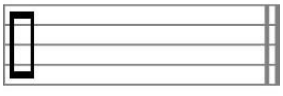
Used specifically for stringed instruments, the tablature or Tab is often written instead of a clef. Like the neutral clef, the Tab clef is not a true clef, but a mere symbol used instead of a clef. Tablature generally involves writing notes on six lines when writing notes for a regular six-string guitar.



NEUTRAL CLEF

The neutral clef is used while composing musical notes for non-pitched percussion instruments like drums and cymbals. It is simply used as a convention to indicate that the lines and spaces on the stave are assigned to a percussion instrument with no precise pitch. Generally, it is not a compulsion for the neutral clef to be placed on a regular five-stave, it can be placed on a single stave or line.





Chapter 13

MORE ON KEY SIGNATURES AND ACCIDENTALS
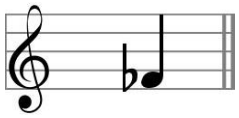
In written music, key signatures stand for a set of sharp of flat symbols placed on the stave. Key signatures are written adjacent to a clef placed at the beginning of a line of musical notation. The key signature is used to define the diatonic scale in a piece of music without the need of accidentals being employed for individual notes.

ACCIDENTALS

Accidentals are notes that are used in musical notations to symbolize notes that fall between two main notes. The accidentals either raise or lower the note it precedes by a semitone. In other words, the notes placed before the corresponding note heads help raise or lower the pitch by half a tone.
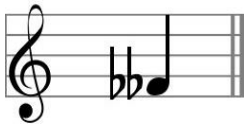
FLAT

Also known as a soft B or a bemolle, the flat note lowers a natural note by half a step. In music notation, a flat note lowers the pitch of a note by a semitone and is denoted by a stylized lowercase 'b'. For example, a flat note placed before a natural B note makes it a B flat represented by B♭. The order of the flats in key signature notation are B♭, E♭, A♭, D♭, G♭, C♭, and F♭. An easier way to remember this is with the mnemonic: Before Eating A Doughnut Get Coffee First; or Battle Ends And Down Goes Charles' Father.
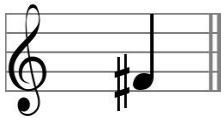


DOUBLE FLAT

Double flats are, in reality, two flats that reduce the natural note by a whole step or by two semitones. It is represented by two flat notes placed next to each other. It can also be written as integrated stylized letter 'b' written in the lower case.



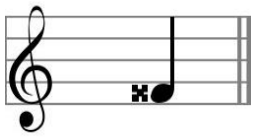
SHARP

Contrary to a flat note, a sharp note placed before a natural note raises the keynote by half a tone. A sharp note is represented with a hash sign (♯) placed before the natural note. In short, a sharp note raises the frequency of a natural note by a small musical interval. The order of sharps in a key signature notation are F♯, C♯, G ♯, D♯, A♯, E♯, and B♯, which can be remembered by the mnemonic Father Charles Goes Down And Ends Battle.
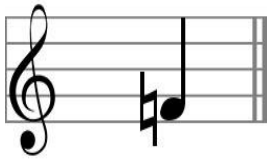


DOUBLE SHARP

Like flat notes, sharps also have a double sharp that raise the tone of a natural note by an entire semitone. It is represented by a horizontally placed cross. When placed before a semitone, the double sharp increases the value of the note by a whole step. For example, an F with double sharp would be equivalent to a G natural.



NATURAL

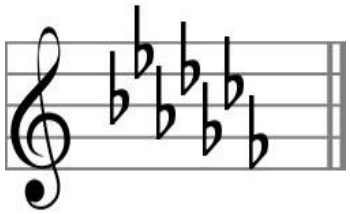
A natural sign (♮) is used in musical notation to cancel a preceding sharp, double sharp, flat, or double flat note employed to lower or raise the keynote in a musical piece. It is used to signify a natural note which is neither sharp nor flat. In the very sense, the natural sign is used to cancel out the previous notes and represents an unaltered pitch of a given note.



KEY SIGNATURES

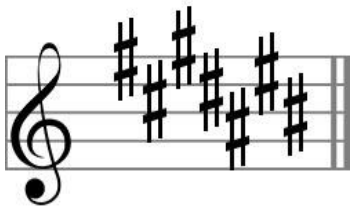
FLAT KEY SIGNATURES

A flat key signature lowers the pitch of a corresponding line of a defining major or minor key by a semitone. The number of flats in the key signature varies depending on the natural note being taken. For example, the number of flats on a C major key is 0, while that on the C minor key is 7.



SHARP KEY SIGNATURES
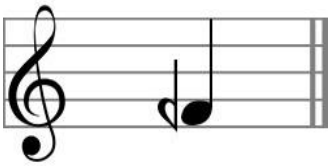
A sharp key signature is used to raise the pitch of an entire line of a defining major or minor key by an entire semitone. Like the flat key signature, the number of sharps on the stave indicate the keynote being played in a piece of music. The number of sharps varies from 0 to 7 sharps from the C major to the C sharp (C♯) major key, respectively.



QUARTER TONES

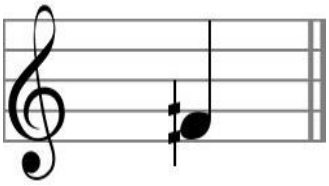
A quarter tone music divides an octave into twenty-four equal intervals that is better understood as twenty-four equal steps or tones. Quarter tone notation employs a new set of accidental signs or marks that add a microtonal value alongside a conventional sharp, flat, or natural note.

DEMIFLAT



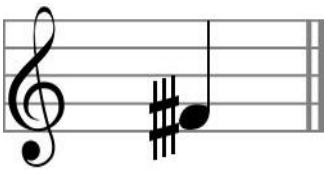
The demiflat note is known to lower the pitch of a note by an entire quarter of a tone or half a semitone. It resembles a reversed flat note and is placed before the note head, like the accidentals in a piece of music notation.

DEMISHARP
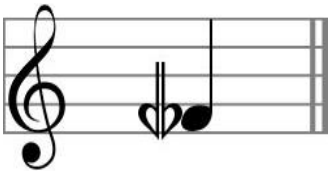


The opposite of a demiflat, the demisharp is used to raise the pitch of a note by a quarter tone or half a semitone. It is represented by a vertical line striking through two horizontal beams.

SESQUISHARP



On the contrary, a sesquisharp is known to raise the pitch of a natural note by three quarters of a tone. It is represented either by two horizontal bars with three vertical lines or two vertical lines and three diagonal bars placed before the note head on a stave.

SESQUIFLAT
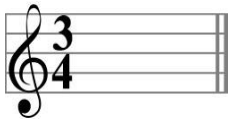


The sesquiflat, also known as a flat-and-a-half, lowers the pitch of a note by three quarters. It is written with a flat accidental and a demiflat sign placed next to each other. Musically understood, a note is lowered by a quarter note short of a lower natural note.

Chapter 14

METER SIGNATURES, BEATS AND NOTE MODIFIERS

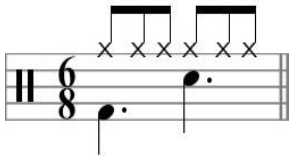
Normal music has a regular pulse or throb which is termed as beats. These beats are grouped into regular groups to form the time or meter of the music. Time signatures are used to establish the number of beats in each uniformed section or measures.

SIMPLE TIME



Basic or simple time signatures employ two numerals stacked on each other, which are placed immediately after the clef or the key signature. It is used to indicate the beats in each bar. The lower numeral indicates the note value representing one beat, while the upper numeral indicates the number of such beats in each bar. 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4 are some of the most common simple time signatures used in written music. The beat in a simple tune is divided into two sub divisions making it easier to understand.

COMPOUND TIME



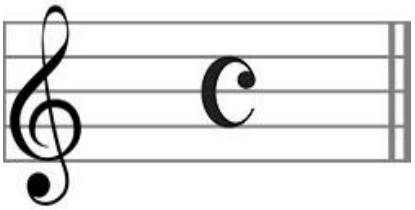
Even though compound time is written as two numerals stacked on each other, the number of pulse within each beat is split into three equal parts instead of two equal parts. Simply put, the top number is written in multiples of 3—6, 9, or 12—which signify the triple pulse of the beat, while the lover number is most commonly an eighth-note. It is commonly written as 6/8 (Duple Meter), 9/8 (Triple Meter), and 12/8 (Quadruple Meter), signifying the division of the beat in groups of three.

CUT TIME



Cut common time or alla breve is denoted with a stylized letter 'C' with a line through it. It refers to a musical meter that is equivalent to 2/2, or a half note pulse. It is used to signify a fairly quick tempo and is a prominent part of military marches. It can also be read as diminished imperfect time, which is the half of a 4/4 time.

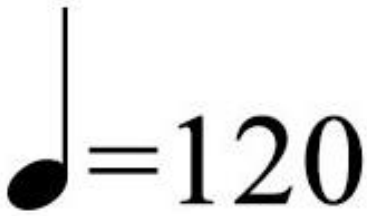
COMMON TIME



A stylized upper case 'C' is sometimes used to denote the 4/4 time instead of the numbers used in simple time signature. It represents common time or what is considered as imperfect time. It is symbolic of the broken circle used in music notation to represent a two by four time employed in the fourteenth century rhythmic notation.

METRONOME MARK

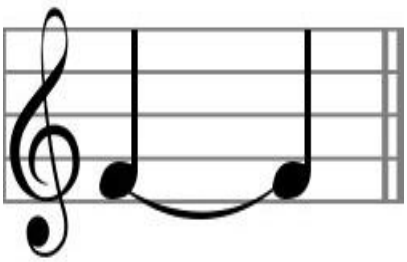
The metronome mark is a unit typically used to measure the tempo of a piece of music. As shown in the image, the metronome mark is indicative of the number of crotchet or quarter notes to be played per minute. In a compound time signature, the beat is made up of three note durations, which is when a dotted quarter note is used to indicate the beats per minute.



NOTE RELATIONSHIPS

In a musical composition, notes are often grouped together to show the position of the beats in a bar. For a piece of work to be called music, the notes need to be synchronized and must fall smoothly in place. This harmony is brought about by the introduction of different note relationships or marks used to determine the relationship of one note with the other.

TIE



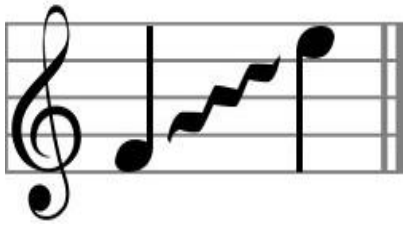
A tie is denoted by a curved line that connects two or more note heads falling on the same pitch. Any number of notes falling on the same pitch can be tied together with a curved line. Simply understood, the presence of the tie mark indicates the duration of the notes on the particular line or space on a stave is to be added together.

SLUR



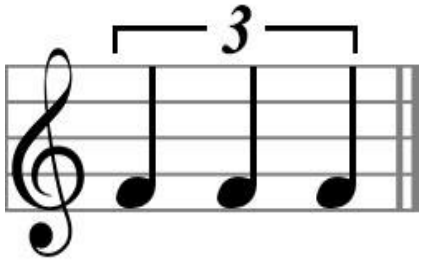
Not to be confused with a tie, a slur is a curved line that joins note heads of different pitches. When the same slur sign is extended over two or several notes at a time, stretching as far as several bars of music it is called phrase mark. This is done to indicate that the following notes have to be played smoothly and in one breath. It is employed to lay stress on a particular stretch of musical work.

GLISSANDO



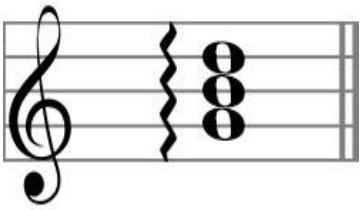
The glissando or portamento, as it is known, is used to indicate a continuous and unbroken glide from one note to another. Simply understood, the sign stands for a smooth glide from one pitch to another. When the glide is taken continuously, it is termed as a portamento. This is the effect you create when you glide a finger across the keys of the keyboard in succession from one note to the other.

TUPLES



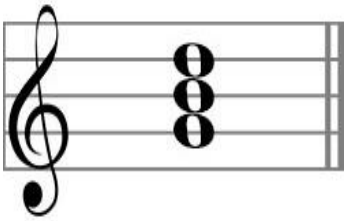
A tuplet is also known as an irrational rhythm that groups or divides the beat into different number of subdivisions. The most common tuplet is that of the triplet, wherein the notes are grouped with a bracket with the number written in between.

ARPEGGIATED CHORD



An arpeggiated chord, or an arpeggio, is a group of notes played one after the other in a sequence. It is also called a broken chord, owing to the fact that the notes are played in quick succession. This allows clear distinction of the notes being played.

CHORD

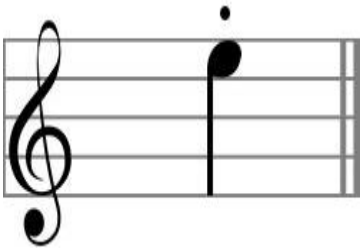


A harmonic set of three or more notes sounded simultaneously or in quick succession is known as a chord. The triad is the most frequently encountered chord which consists of three distinct notes played simultaneously.

ACCENTS

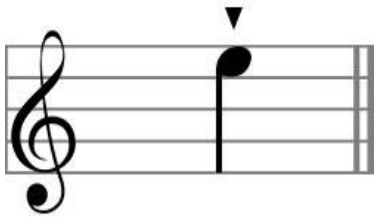
Accents or articulations are used to specify how an individual note is to be performed within a musical passage. The articulation affects the transition or continuity on a single note or between multiple notes and sounds.

STACCATO



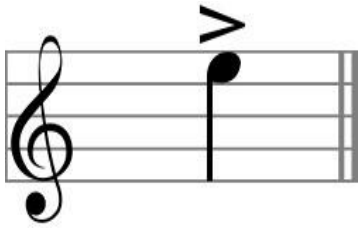
A staccato is denoted by a single dot placed above or below a note head. It is used to signify a note of shortened duration. The note on which the staccato is placed is played for half the actual note value. So a quarter note with a staccato will be played for half its value, with silence forming the rest half of the value.

STACCATISSIMO
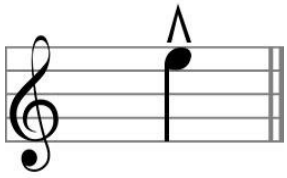


A staccatissimo, also known as a spiccato, is a tiny pike placed over or under a note. It signifies a longer silence as compared to the staccato, implying that the note is played for a quarter of its actual duration. Used in string instruments, it implies a bowing technique where the bow bounces lightly on the string.

MARCATO



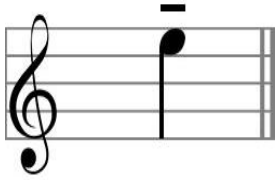
The marcato, also called the regular accent, is an open horizontal wedge placed above or below the staff. It indicates playing a note or a long chord to be played louder and more forcefully than that of the surrounding music. It lays emphasis on the beginning of the note which has to be tapered off rather quickly.

STRONG MARCATO



Also known as a martellato or marcatissimo, the strong marcato is denoted with vertical open wedge placed above or below the staff. It signifies a greater dynamic accent or very strong accentuation played on the note. It is characterized by a rhythmic thrust of the note followed by a decay of the sound.

TENUTO



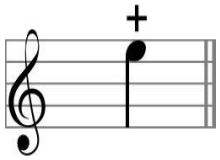
Marked by a horizontal line placed above or below the note head, the tenuto signifies that the note be held to its full length or longer. It could also indicate that the particular note be given more emphasis than the surrounding notes in a musical piece.

Chapter 15

NOTATION SYMBOLS AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

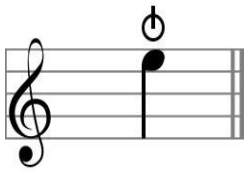
BOWED STRING INSTRUMENTS

PIZZICATO



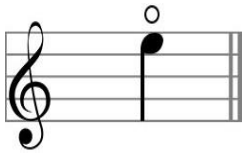
Also known as the left-hand pizzicato or the stopped note, the pizzicato is denoted by a plus sign. For a stringed instrument, like a guitar, it implies that the pitch of a stopped note is determined by pressing the strings at one of the frets.

SNAP PIZZICATO



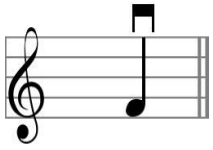
When employed on a stringed instrument, the snap pizzicato is played by vertically stretching the string away from the instrument causing it to snap against the frame. The technique is also called slapping and is popular in jazz music.

HARMONIC



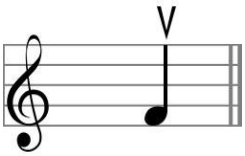
A circle is used to denote an open note or a natural harmonic, also known as a flageolet, which is to be played on the note. For a percussion instrument, it signifies releasing the hi-hat allowing it to ring or the vibrations to be heard.

DOWN BOW



Quite the opposite of an up bow, the down bow instructs the player to play the instrument with a down stroke.

UP BOW



Employed when playing a stringed instrument, the accent mark indicates that the note be played with an upward stroke.

PIANO PEDAL MARKS

Pedal marks appear in music for instruments with sustain pedals, such as the piano, vibraphone and chimes or keyboard with attached pedal..

ENGAGE PEDAL

 Tells the player to put the sustain pedal down.

RELEASE PEDAL

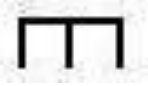
 Tells the player to let the sustain pedal up.

VARIABLE PEDAL MARK



More accurately indicates the precise use of the sustain pedal. The extended lower line tells the player to keep the sustain pedal depressed for all notes below which it appears. The ∧ shape indicates the pedal is to be momentarily released, then depressed again.

CON SORDINO, UNA CORDA



Tells the player to put the soft pedal down or, in other instruments, apply the mute.

SENZA SORDINO, TRE CORDE



Tells the player to let the soft pedal up or, in other instruments, remove the mute.

OTHER PIANO NOTATION

	left hand	right hand
English	l.h.	r.h.
	left hand	right hand
German	l.H	r.H
	linke Hand	*rechte Hand*
French	m.g.	m.d.
	main gauche	*main droite*
Italian	m.s.	m.d.
	mano sinistra	*mano destra*

1, 2, 3, 4, 5

FINGER IDENTIFICATIONS:

1 = thumb
2 = index
3 = middle
4 = ring
5 = little

OTHER STRINGED INSTRUMENTS

(With the exception of harp)

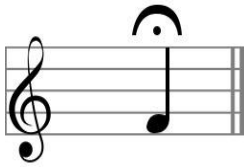
0, 1, 2, 3, 4

FINGER IDENTIFICATIONS:

0 = open string (no finger used)
1 = index
2 = middle
3 = ring
4 = little
Thumb = (cello/bass) Thumb position

FERMATA

Also known as a pause, or a grand pause, the fermata or carona is used to add length to a note or rest. Although the duration of the pause depends on the music conductor, it is most often considered to be twice as long as a regular pause. It can also be placed at the end or the middle of a piece of movement.

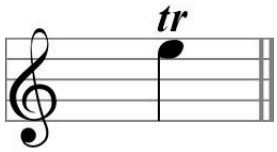


ORNAMENTS
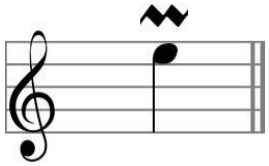
Ornaments are embellishments or musical flourishes used to decorate a line in a musical piece. They are often used to modify the pitch pattern of individual notes in a single line of music.

TRILL

A trill or a shake, is a rapid alternation between an indicated note and the one immediately above it. In short, it is used to alternate between a note above the actual written note, sometimes requiring the player to end a note below the written note.

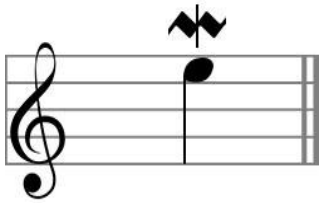


MORDENT



Placed above the note, the mordent instructs the player to play the principal note followed by the immediate next note, ending it with the principal note.
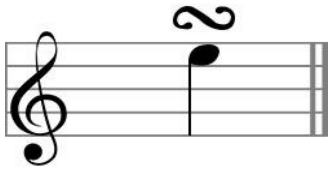
INVERTED MORDENT
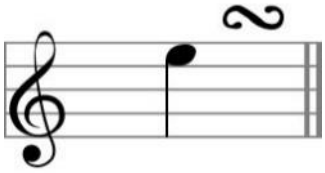


The opposite of the mordent, this ornament instructs playing the principal note followed by the immediate lower note and returning to the principal note.

TURN

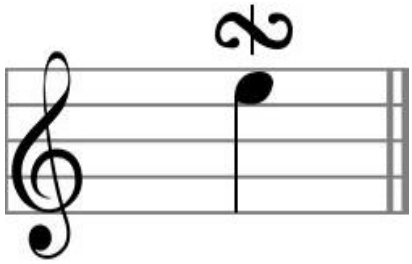
Marked by a mirrored letter 'S', lying on its side, the turn, or gruppetto as it is known, indicates a sequence of adjacent notes in the particular scale to be played. When placed directly above the note head, it implies that the auxiliary note be played before the principal note followed by the lower auxiliary note. Which means, you play a higher notes followed by the main note and play the immediate lower note and return to the principal note. When placed to the right of the note, you play the principal note before playing the turn sequence. In short, when the note is placed to the right you end up playing a quintuplet.
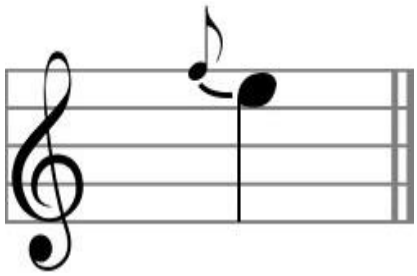




INVERTED TURN

An inverted turn resembles a turn with a vertical line running through it. It can also be written as a vertically mirrored letter 'S'. The sequence this sign indicates is the reverse of the turn ornament. It means, the player starts with the lower auxiliary note followed by the principal note and the higher auxiliary note, finally ending on the principal note.
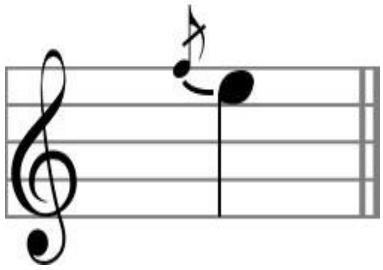


APPOGGIATURA



Also known as a grace note, the appoggiatura resembles a smaller quaver note and is written just above the principal note head. It receives half the value of the note it precedes. When placed before a dotted note, it receives two-thirds of its value. It is also known as the long appoggiatura.

ACCIACCATURA



Like the appoggiatura, the acciaccatura resembles a smaller quaver note written with a stroke through its tail. It is played on the beat as quickly as is convenient and is about a demisemiquaver in length. The delay on the principal note with a acciaccatura is scarcely perceptible unlike that with the long appoggiatura.

Chapter 16

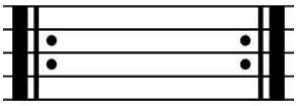
REPETITION, CODAS AND DYNAMIC SIGNS

TREMOLO

Also known as the tremolando, it is symbolized by strokes through the stem of a note. Simply put, it indicates that a note be rapidly repeated to create a tremble or a shuddering effect depending on the instrument being used.



REPEAT



In a piece of music, the repeat sign indicates that the section be repeated. A single repeat sign placed at the end of the piece indicates the entire stretch be repeated from start to finish, while a corresponding mirrored sign indicates the beginning of the repetition.

SIMILE MARKS

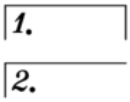
Denote that preceding groups of beats or measures are to be repeated. In the examples here, the first usually means to repeat the previous measure, and the second usually means to repeat the previous two measures.



VOLTA BRACKETS

Volta brackets (1st and 2nd endings, or 1st- and 2nd-time bars)

A repeated passage is to be played with different endings on different playings; it is possible to have more than two endings (1st, 2nd, 3rd ...).



Unlike the repetition sign in which an entire section is repeated, the simile denotes that a group of beats are to be repeated. When a single slash with two dots is shown, it means only the previous beat is to be repeated, while two slashes with a vertical bar suggests the previous two measures are to be repeated.

DA CAPO

$D.C.$

Literally meaning from the beginning, the abbreviated D.C. is taken as a directive to repeat the previous part of the music.

DAL SEGNO

$D.S.$

Abbreviated as D.S., the sign is taken as a directive to repeat a particular piece or passage of music starting from the nearest segno.

SEGNO



Used with a dal segno, it indicates the beginning of the repetition of a passage. It resembles the letter 'S' placed at an angle and has a slash running through it.

CODA



A circle with a cross is used to indicate the coda. This is used to instruct a forward jump in the music, and it is used after a D.C. or D.S. to indicate an end.

CRESCENDO



A crescendo sign placed below a musical stave instructs the player to gradually increase the volume while performing the passage.

DIMINUENDO



The opposite of the crescendo, the diminuendo is used to instruct the player to gradually decrease the volume of the particular passage.

PIANO

The letter p written in small case is used to denote piano. It means soft.

FORTE



Used as a contrast to dynamic piano, the letter *f* written in smaller case denotes loud.

Mezzo Piano



The letters *mp* written in small case are used to denote mezzo piano. They instruct the player to reduce the relative intensity of the musical line to a level that is softer than that of a dynamic piano.

Mezzo Forte



Considered to be half as loud as the forte, the mezzo forte written as *mf is* used to increase the intensity of the musical line. It is assumed to be the prevailing dynamic level.

Dynamic Pianissimo



It is considered to be the softest indication in a piece of music. Simply put, it indicates very soft.

Dynamic Fortissimo



Quite the opposite of *pp*, fortissisimo indicates that the piece of music be played very loud.

Dynamic Pianissimo



Triple *p* s indicates that the relative intensity or volume of a musical line be extremely soft.

Dynamic Fortississimo



Triple *f* s indicate that the intensity of a line of music be played extremely loud.

Sforzando



It indicates an abrupt and fierce accent on a single note or chord. It's literally translation is to be forced out.

Forte Piano
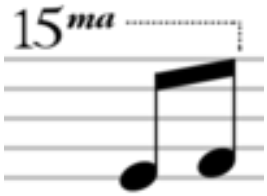


Forte piano indicates that a section of music has to initially be played loud followed by soft piano.

OCTAVE SIGNS

Ottava

The 8va (pronounced ottava alta) sign is placed above the staff (as shown) to tell the musician to play the passage one octave higher.

An 8va or, as alternative in modern music, an 8vb sign (both signs reading ottava bassa) is placed below the staff meaning play the passage one octave lower.



QUINDICESIMA

The ***15ma*** sign is placed *above* the staff (as shown) to mean *play the passage two octaves higher*. A ***15ma*** sign *below* the staff indicates *play the passage two octaves lower*.

8va and ***15ma*** are sometimes abbreviated further to ***8*** and ***15***. When they appear below the staff, the word *bassa* is sometimes added.

Chapter 17

SHAPED NOTE

Shape notes are a music notation designed to facilitate congregational and community singing. The notation, introduced in late 18th century England, became a popular teaching device in American singing schools. Shapes were added to the note heads in written music to help singers find pitches within major and minor scales without the use of more complex information found in key signatures on the staff.

Shape notes of various kinds have been used for over two centuries in a variety of music traditions, mostly sacred but also secular, originating in New England, practiced primarily in the Southern region of the United States for many years, and now experiencing a renaissance in other locations as well.

The idea behind shape notes is that the parts of a vocal work can be learned more quickly and easily if the music is printed in shapes that match up with the solfège syllables with which the notes of the musical scale are sung.
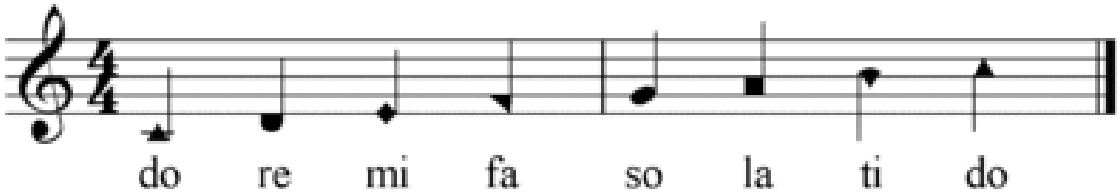
A skilled singer experienced in a shape note tradition has developed a fluent triple mental association, which links a note of the scale, a shape, and a syllable. This association can be used to help in reading the music. When a song is first sung by a shape note group, they normally sing the syllables (reading them from the shapes) to solidify their command over the notes. Next, they sing the same notes to the words of the music.

The syllables and notes of a shape note system are relative rather than absolute; they depend on the key of the piece. The first note of a major key always has the triangular Doh note, followed (ascending) by Re, Mi, etc. The first note of a minor key is always La, followed by te, doh, etc.

The first three notes of any major scale – doh, re, mi – are each a tone apart. The fourth to sixth notes are also a tone apart and are also fa, sol, la. The seventh and eighth notes, being separated by a semitone, are indicated te - doh.

The four syllable variation of Guido's original system was prominent in 17th century England, and entered the US in the 18th century. Shortly afterward, shapes were invented to represent the syllables. The other important systems are *seven-shape* systems, which give a different shape and syllable to every note of the scale.

Such systems use as their syllables the note names "**do**, **re**, **mi**, **fa**, **so**, **la**, **ti**, **do**" familiar to most people. In the seven-shape system invented by Jesse B. Aikin, the notes of a C major scale would be notated and sung as follows:



EFFECTIVENESS OF SHAPE NOTES

A controlled study on the usefulness of shape notes was carried out in the 1950s by George H. Kyme with an experimental population consisting of fourth- and fifth-graders living in California. Kyme took care to match his experimental and control groups as closely as possible for ability, quality of teacher, and various other factors. He found that the students taught with shape notes learned to sight read significantly better than those taught without them. Kyme additionally found that the students taught with shape notes were also far more likely to pursue musical activities later on in their education.

SHAPE NOTES AND MODULATION

Many forms of music employ modulation, that is, a change of key in mid-piece. Modulation is problematic for shape-note systems, since the shapes employed for the original key of the piece no longer match the scale degrees of the new key.

ORIGIN AND EARLY HISTORY

As noted above, the syllables of shape-note systems greatly antedate the shapes. The practice of singing music to syllables designating pitch goes back to about AD 1000 with the work of Guido of Arezzo; other early work in this area includes the cipher notation of Jean-Jacques Rousseau (18th century), and the tonic sol-fa of John Curwen (19th century).

American forerunners to shape notes include the 9th edition of the Bay Psalm Book (Boston), and *An Introduction to the Singing of Psalm Tunes in a Plaine & Easy Method* by Reverend John Tufts.

Some copies of *The Easy Instructor, Part II* (1803) included a statement, on the verso of the title page, in which John Connelly (whose name is given in other sources as Conly, Connolly, and Colony) grants permission to Little and Smith to make use in their publications of the shape notes to which he claimed the rights. Little and Smith did not themselves claim credit for the

invention, but said instead that the notes were invented around 1790 by John Connelly of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Andrew Law asserted that he was the inventor of shape notes.

CURRENTLY ACTIVE SHAPE NOTE TRADITIONS

Although seven-shape books may not be as popular as in the past, there are still a great number of churches in the American South, in particular Southern Baptists, Primitive Baptists, almost all of the non-instrumental Churches of Christ, some Free Methodists, United Pentecostals, and United Baptists in the Appalachian regions of West Virginia, Ohio and Kentucky, that regularly use seven-shape songbooks in Sunday worship.

These songbooks may contain a variety of songs from 18th-century classics to 20th-century gospel music. Thus today denominational songbooks printed in seven shapes probably constitute the largest branch of the shape-note tradition.

In addition, nondenominational community singings are also intermittently held which feature early- to mid-20th century seven-shape gospel music such as Stamps-Baxter hymnals or *Heavenly Highway*.

In these traditions, the custom of "singing the notes" (syllables) is generally preserved only during the learning process at singing schools and singing may be to an instrumental accompaniment, typically a piano.

Some African-American churches use the seven-shape note system. Seeing how easy and fast it is for singers to sing from books in which songs are scored in shape notes, I decided to publish my songbooks in shape note e.g. Royal Harmony volumes 1 & 2, Echoes of glory volumes 1 & 2, Let the people sing, Calvary Tunes, Springs from Calvary volumes 1 to 3., Songs of Zion volumes 1 & 2, Faith of our Fathers volumes 1 & 2 and so on.

NOMENCLATURE

Shape notes have also been called **character notes** and **patent notes**, respectfully, and **buckwheat notes** and **dunce notes**, pejoratively. I call it ‘’cheap” notes.

Chapter 18

SOME TIPS AND TRICKS FOR SIGHT READING MUSIC

Sight reading seems to be one of those challenges that either a beginning musician loves or has recurring nightmares about. For those of us in the latter category, we've consulted with music educators who specialize in the important skill of sight reading music to make it less scary and (maybe even) a little enjoyable!

DAILY SIGHT-READING PREP

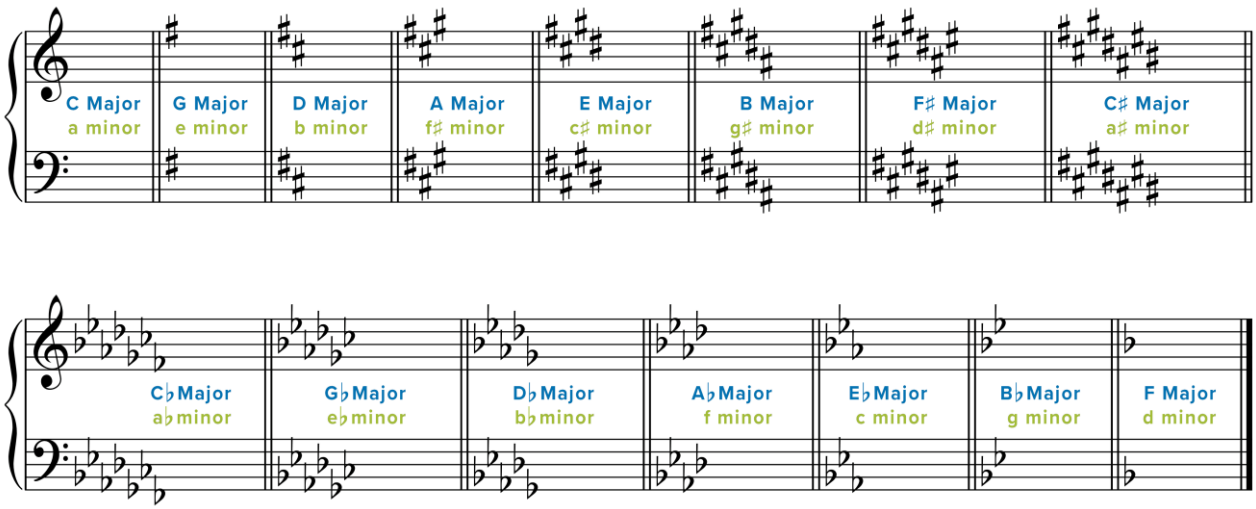
The first few tips and tricks I have for you apply to the things you can do on a daily basis to improve your sight-reading skills!

1. FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH A VARIETY OF RHYTHMS

Sight-reading can look different based on whether you are an instrumentalist or a vocalist, but there is one thing both groups have in common: rhythm. Familiarizing yourself with a variety of rhythms (4/4, 3/4, 6/8, etc.) will help you to be ready in any situation.

2. MEMORIZE KEY SIGNATURES

Memorizing your key signatures is especially helpful for instrumentalists, as you need to be aware of how many sharps or flats are coming up in your upcoming sight-reading exercise. It can also be helpful for vocalists if you're timbre is more comfortable in certain key signatures. This may take a bit of time initially, but in the long run, it will not only make sight-reading easier but practicing and performing too!



3. KNOW YOUR SCALES

For instrumentalists, knowing your scales will help you tangibly memorize your key signatures. It will also create muscle memory for fingerings and hand placement for each key signature so that when you begin to sight-read, your hands will do what they are used to doing!

For singers, scales have a different purpose. Many singers use scales in the form of Solfège, an exercise used for sight-reading vocal music in which each scale degree is assigned a coordinating syllable or tonic solfa. Solfège helps vocalists to memorize intervals, so they can easily identify pitches, regardless of what key they are in.

If you are a vocalist who prefers not to use solfège you should still practice your scales so that you can be familiar with the tonality differences in major and minor keys, as well as intervals between pitches.

4. PRACTICE WITHOUT A SAFETY NET

We've all used safety nets when it comes to sight-reading. We think to ourselves, I can definitely sight-read this, but just to be sure…

For example, an instrumentalist might look down at their hands while they attempt to sight-read. A vocalist might use a piano to define those hard-to-read-notes. Whatever you use for your safety net, do your best to practice without it. It's good to make mistakes. Without them, how can you learn?

5. PRACTICE SIGHT-READING DIFFERENT TYPES OF MUSIC

When it comes to sight-reading, you never really know what you're going to get. You could be presented with anything from a lively tango to a slow jazz ballad or complex hymns. If you're a vocalist, you might even be presented with different languages! So in order to avoid sheer panic, familiarize yourself with different styles of music, rhythms, and scores. You'll be able to relax when you're presented with a new piece of music and you can say, "Oh yeah! I've seen this before."

RIGHT BEFORE SIGHT-READING.

There are a few things you should do before delving straight into your sight-reading…

6. EXAMINE THE PIECE YOU ARE SIGHT-READING

Before you begin to play or sing, take a moment to mentally digest the music in front of you. Tap out the rhythm, read through the notes, and follow the structure of the song. Also, take a moment to identify any spots or page turns that may cause you trouble.

7. IDENTIFY ANNOTATIONS IN THE PIECE

Sight-reading is more than just notes and rhythm! Take a moment to look for any dynamic changes or musical direction notated within the piece. Also, pay close attention to tempo and time signatures to make sure they don't change within the song. Showing that you can follow annotations will demonstrate impressive musicality.

8. MAKE MARKINGS ON THE PAPER (OR ON YOUR TABLET, IPAD OR MOBILE DEVICES)

If you are allowed to make markings in your music ahead of time, DO IT! As we mentioned earlier, you will want to take notice of any areas in the music that might give you trouble. For example, if you're a vocalist and you see a big jump in the vocal line, you may want to circle or highlight it. You will likely be trying to remember a lot of things while you are sight-reading, so visual reminders can be very helpful in the moment.

9. SOUND THE WHOLE PIECE OUT IN YOUR HEAD

Last but not least, go through the entire piece from start to finish as if you were giving a mental performance. If allowed, you can even hum the song as you read. Though it's important to pay attention to the details, it's also important to get an idea of the song in its entirety. As you are going through, ask yourself these questions:

a.) Where is the climax of the song?
b.) What is the main melody?
c.) Are there any patterns repeated throughout?
d.) Does the song have definitive sections?
e.) Are there modulations or key changes?

DURING SIGHT-READING

10. BREATHE, RELAX AND KEEP GOING, EVEN IF YOU MAKE A MISTAKE

Sight-reading isn't meant to be perfect. And just like anything else you do, the more you practice, the better you will get! So don't focus on the mistakes that you make during the performance, and don't feel as though you have to stop and correct them. Just keep going, do the best you can, and remember that by testing your abilities as a musician, you are making yourself better in the long run.

HOW TO READ SHEET MUSIC: STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS

Have you ever heard a song on the radio and thought, "Hey, it'd be really cool to know how to play that."? Do you have friends who play musical instruments, and you want to get in on the fun? Do you just want to expand your general artistic knowledge? Well, learning the basics of how to read sheet music can help you achieve all of these, and in a shorter amount of time than you might have thought!

At its very simplest, music is a language just like you'd read aloud from a book. The symbols you'll see on pages of sheet music have been used for hundreds of years. They represent the pitch, speed and rhythm of the song they convey, as well as expression and techniques used by a musician to play the piece. Think of the **notes** as the **letters**, the **measures** as the **words**, the **phrases** as the **sentences** and so forth. Learning to read music really does open up a whole new world to explore and makes playing and singing fun. It also reduces the amount of time spent rehearsing before programmes, events, services or camp meetings or retreats.

Follow our step-by-step introduction to the language of music below, download your FREE tools at the end of this article, and you'll be playing along in no time at all.

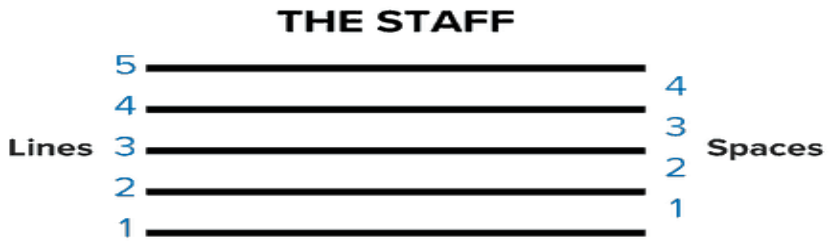
HOW TO READ SHEET MUSIC

STEP 1: LEARN THE BASIC SYMBOLS OF NOTATION

Music is made up of a variety of symbols, the most basic of which are the staff, the clefs and the notes. All music contains these fundamental components, and in order to learn how to read music, you must first familiarize yourself with these basics. Although we have gone through most of these right from the first module in this series, it won't be a bad idea to refresh our minds on a few of them.

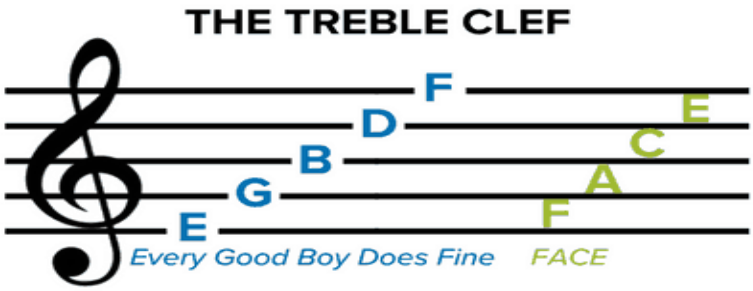
THE STAFF

The staff consists of five lines and four spaces. Each of those lines and each of those spaces represents a different letter, which in turn represents a note. Those lines and spaces represent notes named A-G, and the note sequence moves alphabetically up the staff.



TREBLE CLEF

There are two main clefs with which to familiarize yourself; the first is a treble clef. The treble clef has the ornamental letter G on the far left side. The G's inner swoop encircles the "G" line on the staff. The treble clef notates the higher registers of music, so if your instrument has a higher pitch, such as a flute, violin or saxophone, your sheet music is written in the treble clef. Higher notes on a keyboard also are notated on the treble clef.



We use common mnemonics to remember the note names for the lines and spaces of the treble clef. For lines, we remember EGBDF by the word cue "Every Good Boy Does Fine." Similarly for the spaces, FACE is just like the word "face."

BASS CLEF

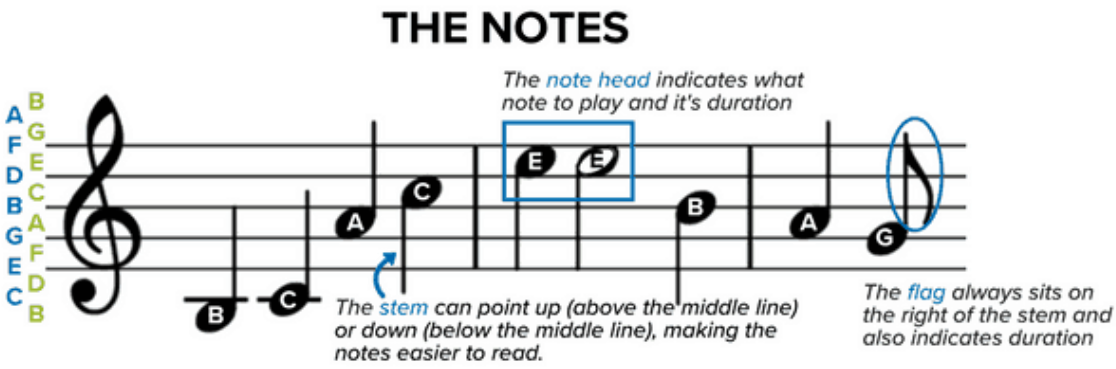
The line between the two bass clef dots is the "F" line on the bass clef staff, and it's also referred to as the F clef. The bass clef notates the lower registers of music, so if your instrument has a lower pitch, such as a bassoon, tuba or cello, your sheet music is written in the bass clef. Lower notes on your keyboard also are notated in the bass clef.



A common mnemonic to remember note names for the lines of the bass clef is: GBDFA "Good Boys Do Fine Always." And for the spaces: ACEG, "All Cows Eat Grass."

NOTES

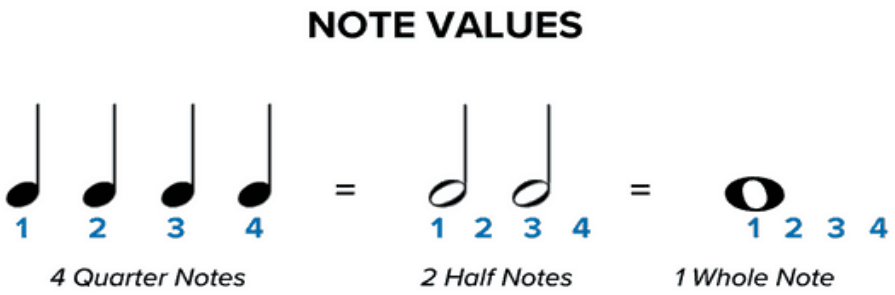
Notes placed on the staff tell us which note letter to play on our instrument and how long to play it. There are three parts of each note, the note head, the stem and the flag.



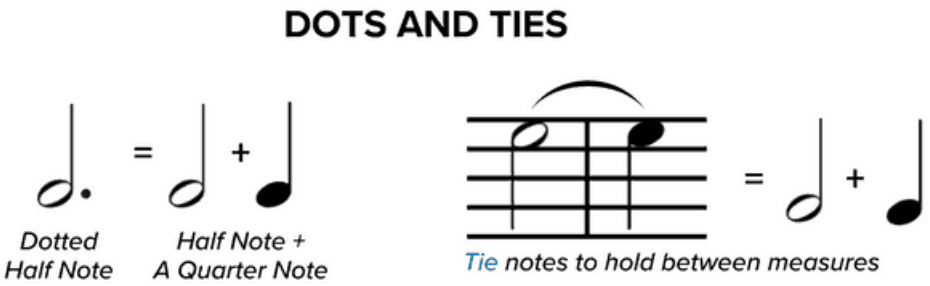
Every note has a note head, either filled (black) or open (white). Where the note head sits on the staff (either on a line or a space) determines which note you will play. Sometimes, note heads will sit above or below the five lines and four spaces of a staff. In that case, a line (known as a ledger line) is drawn through the note, above the note or below the note head, to indicate the note letter to play, as in the B and C notes above.

The note stem is a thin line that extends either up or down from the note head. The line extends from the right if pointing upward or from the left if pointing downward. The direction of the line doesn't affect how you play the note, but serves as a way to make the notes easier to read while allowing them to fit neatly on the staff. As a rule, any notes at or above the B line on the staff have downward pointing stems, those notes below the B line have upward pointing stems.

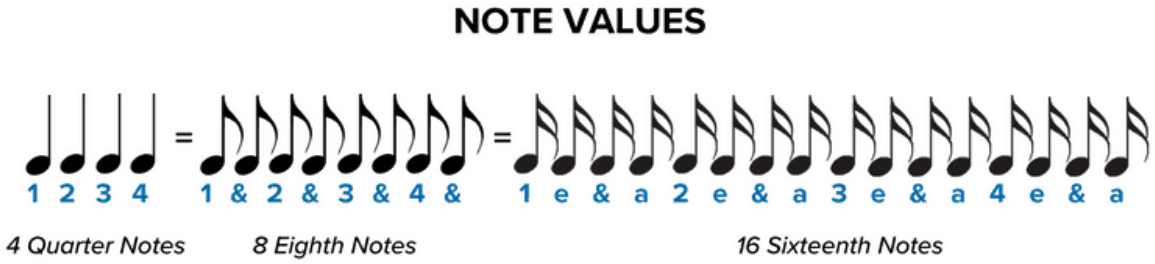
The note flag is a curvy mark to the right of the note stem. Its purpose is to tell you how long to hold a note. We'll see below how a single flag shortens the note's duration, while multiple flags can make it shorter still.

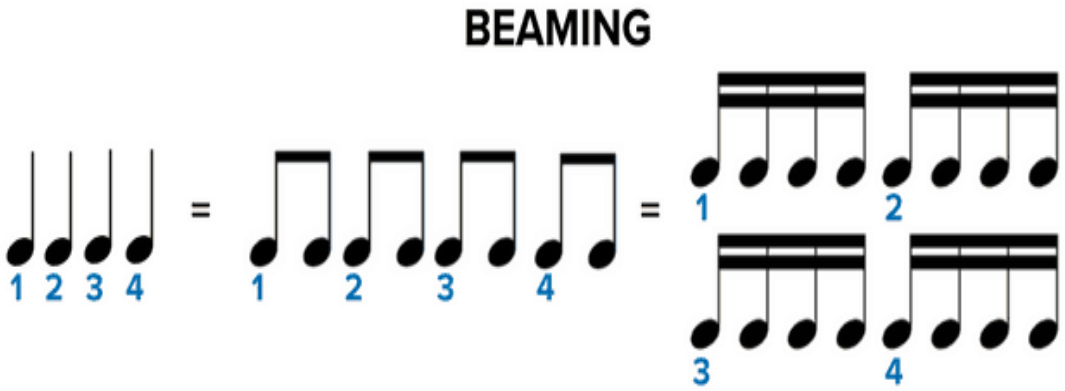


Now that you know the parts to each note, we'll take a closer look at those filled and open note heads discussed above. Whether a note head is filled or open shows us the note's value, or how long that note should be held. Start with a closed note head with a stem. That's our quarter note, and it gets one beat. An open note head with a stem is a half note, and it gets two beats. An open note that looks like an "o" without a stem is a whole note, and it gets held for four beats.



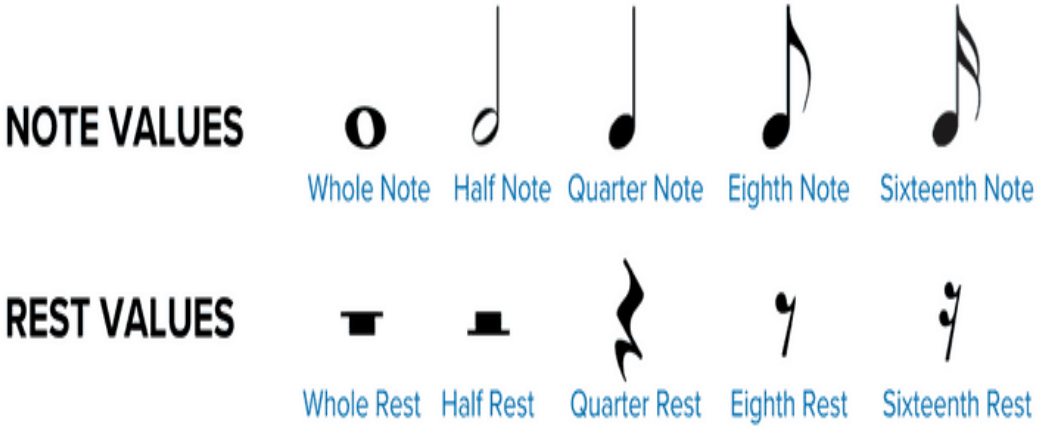
There are other ways to extend the length of a note. A dot after the note head, for example, adds another half of that note's duration to it. So, a half note with a dot would equal a half note and a quarter note; a quarter note with a dot equals a quarter plus an eighth note. A tie may also be used to extend a note. Two notes tied together should be held as long as the value of both of those notes together, and ties are commonly used to signify held notes that cross measures or bars.





The opposite may also happen, we can shorten the amount of time a note should be held, relative to the quarter note. Faster notes are signified with either flags, like the ones discussed above, or with beams between the notes. Each flag halves the value of a note, so a single flag signifies 1/2 of a quarter note, a double flag halves that to 1/4 of a quarter note, et cetera. Beams do the same, while allowing us to read the music more clearly and keep the notation less cluttered. As you can see, there's no difference in how you count the eighth and 16th notes above. Follow along with the sheet music for "Alouette" to see how beams organize notes!

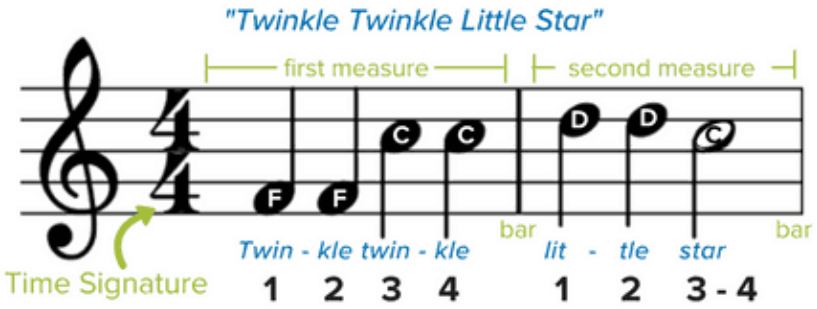
But what happens when there isn't a note taking up each beat? It's easy, we take a rest! A rest, just like a note, shows us how long it should be held based on its shape. See how whole and quarter rests are used in the song "Here We Go Looby-Loo."



STEP 2: PICK UP THE BEAT

In order to play music, you need to know its meter, the beat you use when dancing, clapping or tapping your foot along with a song. When reading music, the meter is presented similar to a fraction, with a top number and a bottom number, we call this the song's time signature. The top number tells you how many beats to a measure, the space of staff in between each vertical line (called a bar). The bottom number tells you the note value for a single beat, the pulse your foot taps along with while listening.

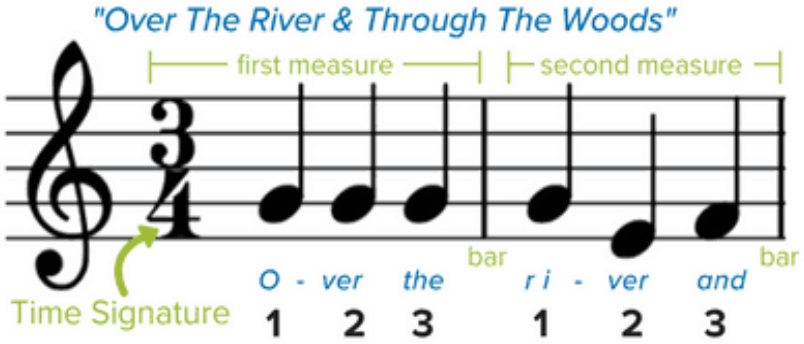
4/4 TIME SIGNATURE



In the example above, the time signature is 4/4, meaning there are 4 beats per bar and that every quarter note gets one beat. Click here to listen to sheet music written in 4/4 time, and try counting along 1,2,3,4 – 1,2,3,4 with the beat numbers above.

In the example below, the time signature is 3/4, meaning there are 3 beats per bar and that every quarter note gets one beat. Click here to listen to sheet music written in 3/4 time, try counting the beats, 1,2,3 – 1,2,3.

3/4 TIME SIGNATURE

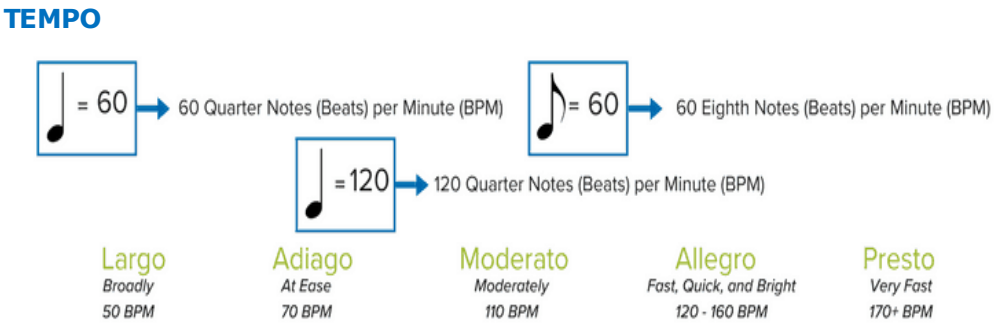


Let's look again at the above examples, notice that even though the 4/4 time signature in "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" calls for 4 beats per bar, there aren't 4 notes in second bar? That's because you have two quarter notes and one half note, which added together equal 4 beats.
In addition to your note values and time signature, the last piece to feeling the rhythm is knowing your tempo, or beats per minute.

Tempo tells you how fast or slow a piece is intended to be played, and often is shown at the top of a piece of sheet music. A tempo of, say 60 BPM (beats per minute) would mean you'd play 60 of the signified notes every minute or a single note every second. Likewise, a tempo of 120 would double the speed at 2 notes every second.

You may also see Italian words like "Largo," "Allegro" or "Presto" at the top of your sheet music, which signify common tempos. Musicians use a tool, called a metronome, to help them keep

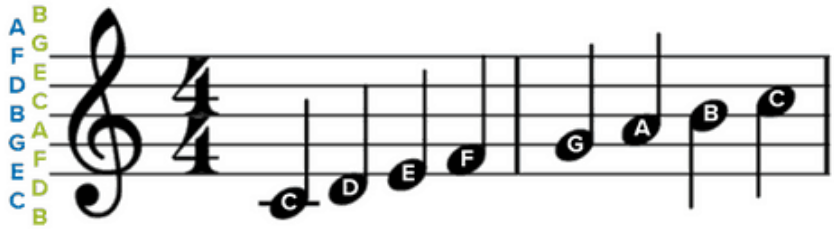
tempo while practicing a new piece. Click here to see an online metronome tool, and click on the circles next to the BPM values to see how a tempo can speed up and slow down.



STEP 3: PLAY A MELODY

Congratulations, you're almost on your way to reading music! First, let's look at scales. A scale is made of eight consecutive notes, for example, the C major scale is composed of C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C. The interval between the first note of your C major scale and the last is an example of an octave. The C major scale is very important to practice, since once you have the C scale down, the other major scales will start to fall into place. Each of the notes of a C major scale corresponds with a white key on your keyboard. Here's how a C major scale looks on a staff and how that corresponds to the keys on your keyboard:

THE SCALE

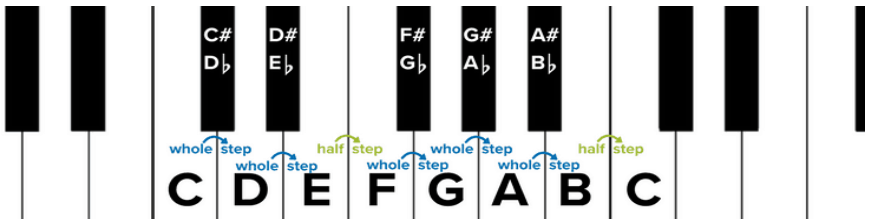


THE SCALE ON THE KEYBOARD



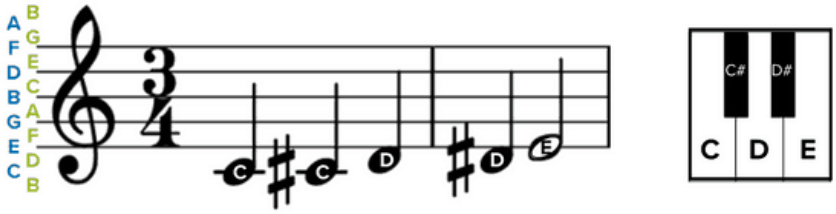
You'll notice that as the notes ascend the staff, and move to the right on your keyboard, the pitch of the notes gets higher. But, what about the black keys? Musically, whole tones, or whole steps between the note letters, would limit the sounds we're able to produce on our instruments. Let's consider the C major scale you just learned to play. The distance between the C and the D keys in your C scale is a whole step, however the distance between the E and the F keys in your C scale is a half-step. Do you see the difference? The E and the F keys don't have a black

key in between them, thus they're just a half step away from one another. Every major scale you'll play on a keyboard has the same pattern, whole-whole-half-whole-whole-whole-half. There are many other types of scales, each with unique sounds, like minor scales, modal scales and more that you'll come across later on, but for now let's focus just on major scales and the major scale pattern. Look at the C major scale again on the keyboard below.
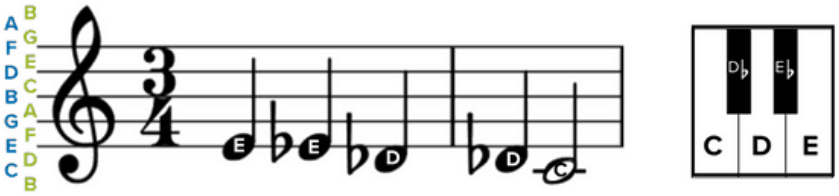


Semitones, or half-steps on the keyboard, allow us to write an infinite variety of sounds into music. A sharp, denoted by the ♯ symbol, means that note is a semitone (or half step) higher than the note head to its right on sheet music. Conversely, a flat, denoted by a ♭ symbol, means the note is a semitone lower than the note head to its right. You'll notice on the keyboard picture and notated staff below, showing each half step between the C and the E notes, that whether you use the sharp or the flat of a note depends on whether you're moving up or down the keyboard.

SEMITONES FROM C TO E USING SHARPS
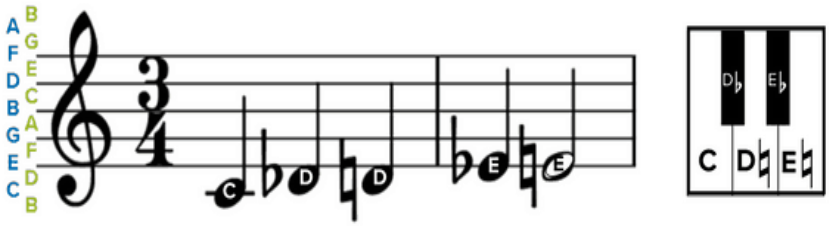


SEMITONES FROM C TO E USING FLATS



There's one more symbol to learn regarding semitones, and that's the natural, denoted by a ♮. If a note is sharp or flat, that sharp or flat extends throughout the measure, unless there's a natural symbol. A natural cancels a sharp or flat within a measure or a song. Here's what playing C to E would look like with natural symbols.

PLAYING FROM C TO E USING NATURAL NOTES



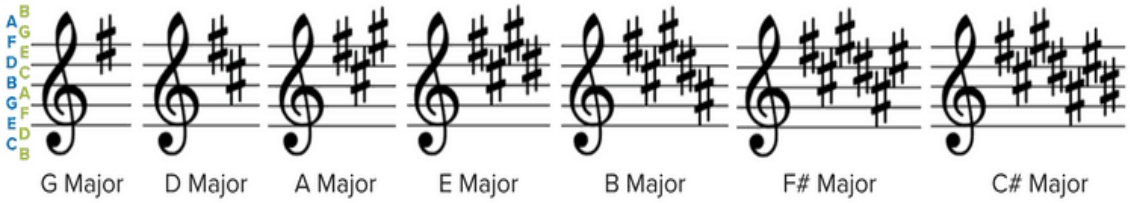
Finally, in order to read music, you'll need to understand key signatures. You actually already know one key signature, the key of **C**! The C major scale you learned above was in the key of **C**. Scales are named after their tonic, the preeminent note within the scale, and the tonic determines what key you play in.

You can start a major scale on any note, so long as you follow the whole-whole-half-whole-whole-whole-half pattern.
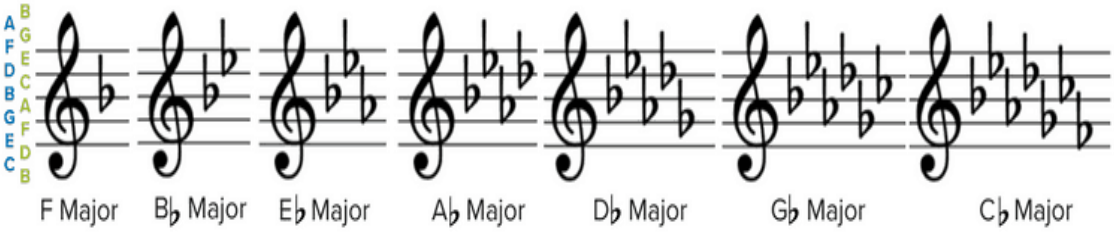
Now, following that pattern in keys other than the key of C will require you to use sharps and flats. Since that's the case, we place the sharps or flats for your song's key signature right before the meter, after the clef, on your sheet music. That tells you to maintain those sharps or flats throughout the music, unless of course there's a natural symbol to override it.

You will begin to recognize the key signatures of pieces based on what sharps or flats are shown. Here's a quick glimpse at some key signatures using sharps and flats:

KEY SIGNATURES WITH SHARPS



KEY SIGNATURES WITH FLATS



RHYTHM

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

A basic understanding of music notation (recommended)

What You Will Learn

1. What rhythm is?
2. Basic concepts of rhythm in music, including notes, time signatures, and more

Rhythm in Music

WHAT IS RHYTHM?

Rhythm is the part of music that deals with time. It includes the following things:

a. How fast the music is.

b. The length (or value) of individual notes.

c. How notes are grouped with others.

NOTE VALUES

Rhythms are indicated with notes that specify the rhythm to be played. The parts of a note are described below:

1. Note head - required - oval shaped object that can be filled in or empty in the middle depending on the value of the note.

2. Stem - straight line extending up or down from note head. Note values smaller than a whole note will have a stem.

3. Beam - straight horizontal line that connects the stems of two or more notes of the same value. Beams are used on notes that are an eighth note or smaller.

4. Flag - may be used instead of a beam. Like the beam, they are only used on notes that are an eighth note or less.

TYPES OF NOTES

The value of a note is determined by the type of note head used, the presence or absence of a stem, and the number of beams or stems.

WHOLE NOTES

The largest note value used in music is generally the whole note, which is a note head by itself that isn't filled in:



Other note values are a fraction of the whole note.

HALF NOTES

The next largest note value is a half note, which is half the value of a whole note. It is indicated with an empty note head with a stem:



QUARTER NOTES

Quarter notes are one-fourth the value of a whole note and are indicated with a filled-in note head with a stem:



EIGHTH NOTES

An eighth note is one-eighth the value of a whole note. They are indicated with a filled-in note head with a stem and a single beam or flag. Whether a beam or flag is used depends on the context. Two notes together in the same beat will usually be beamed, while notes on different beats may use flags.



SIXTEENTH NOTES

A sixteenth note is one-sixteenth of a whole note. They have two beams or flags.



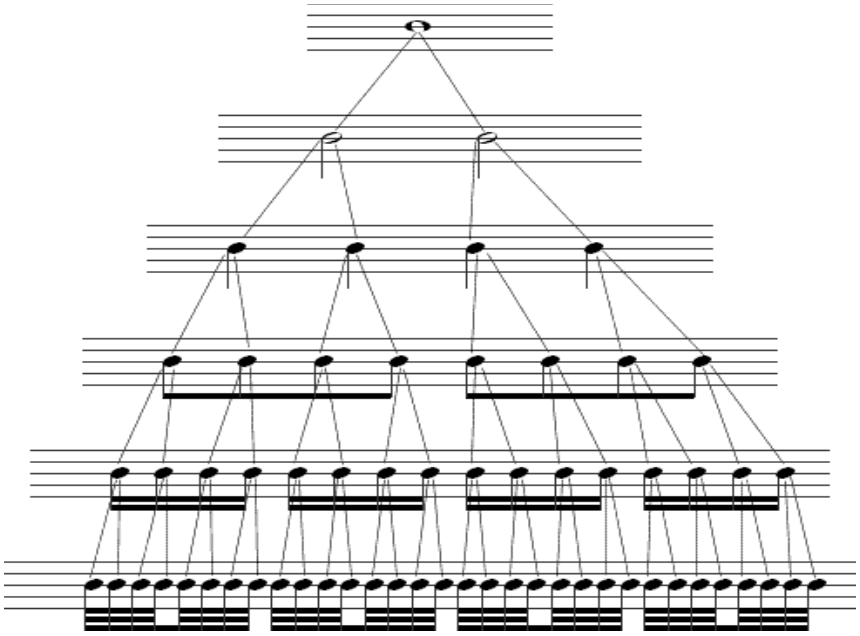
THIRTY-SECOND NOTES

Thirty-second notes are one-thirty-second the value of a whole note. They have three beams or flags.



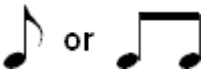
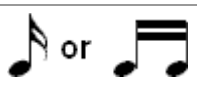
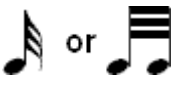
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NOTE VALUES

The chart below shows the relative value of all of the notes mentioned above:



RESTS

A rest indicates that nothing is to be played for the duration of the rest. Each note value has a rest of equivalent value. The chart below shows the rests that correspond to each note value described above.

Rest Description	Rest Image	Note Description	Note Image
whole rest		whole note	
half rest		half note	
quarter rest		quarter note	
eighth rest		eighth note	
sixteenth rest		sixteenth note	
thirty-second rest		thirty-second note	

The exact value of a note or rest is determined by the time signature and tempo (explained below). None of these notes or rests have a specific value except in the context of these things, with the exception of the relative value between notes and rests of various lengths. For example, a half note can be described as half the value of a whole note, but unless there is a time signature and tempo, it is impossible to say exactly how long the half note lasts.

TIME SIGNATURES

A time signature specifies how many beats are in a measure and which note value gets the beat. A beat is the regular pulse in a piece of music. The beat is affected by the time signature and tempo. A time signature will tell you how the beats are grouped while the tempo will tell you how long each beat is. All beats can be divided into smaller note values. This is known as subdividing.

The time signature indicates the note value that is used as the beat and how many of those notes occur per measure. A measure is a section of music that is equivalent to the number of beats specified in the time signature.

Some measures, such as pickup measures, are an exception to the rule above. Pickup measures have fewer beats than the time signature indicates.
A time signature is represented by two numbers stacked on top of each other. Here is an example of 4/4 (pronounced 'four four') time signature.



The top number specifies the number of beats in a measure. The bottom number indicates the note value that gets the beat. For example, the time signature above indicates that there are four beats in the measure (top number) and that the quarter note gets the beat (bottom number). The numbers in a compound time signature have a different meaning that those in a simple time signature. This will be explored further in the lesson on compound time signatures.

The chart below lists the numbers that correspond to each note value for the bottom number in a time signature. These aren't the only numbers used as the bottom number, but they are the most common.

Number	Note value that gets the beat
2	half note
4	quarter note
8	eighth note
16	sixteenth note
32	thirty-second note

CLASSIFYING TIME SIGNATURES

Time signatures are classified according to the number of beats in a measure and how each beat is subdivided.

CLASSIFYING BY THE NUMBER OF BEATS

Time signatures are classified as duple, triple, or quadruple depending on whether there are two, three, or four beats in a measure.

Classification	Number of Beats
duple	**2**
triple	**3**
quadruple	**4**

It is possible to have more than four beats in a measure, but the beats will usually be divided into groups of twos, threes, and fours. This means that even though a time signature like 5/4 indicates there are five beats in a measure, it will generally be a pattern of two beats followed by three beats or three beats follow by two beats.

CLASSIFYING BY HOW EACH BEAT IS SUBDIVIDED

Time signatures can be further classified as either simple or compound.

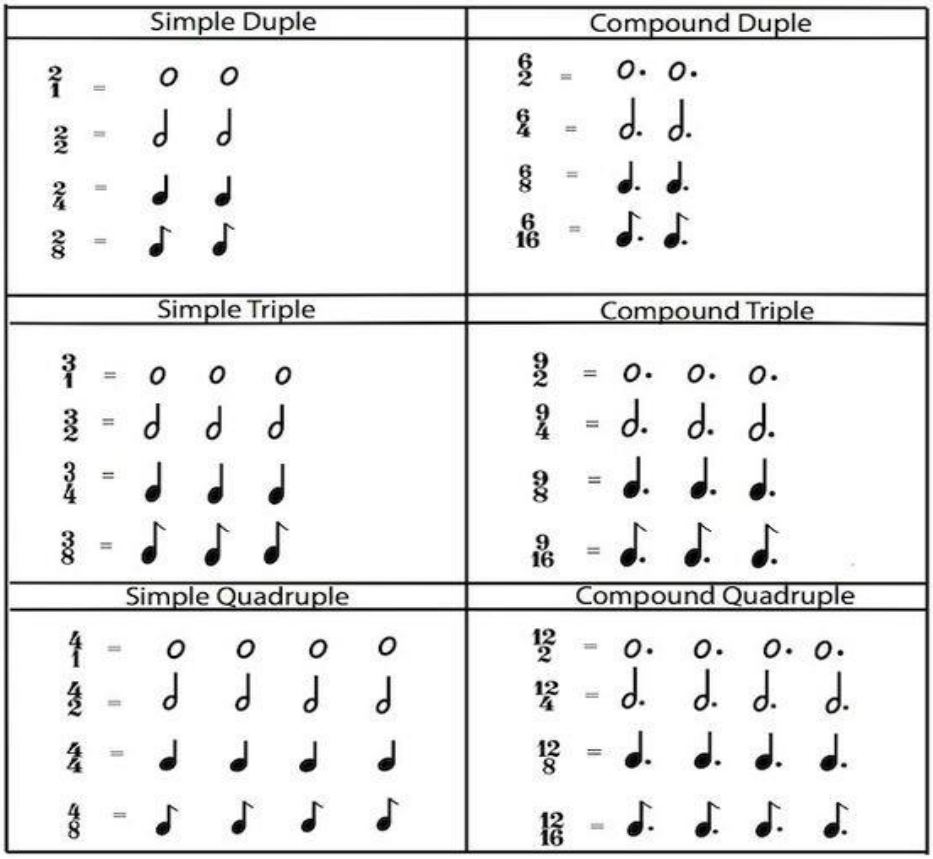
a. simple: each beat is divided into two parts

b. compound: each beat is divided into three parts

This doesn't mean that you can't have other subdivisions of the beat, but that the standard subdivision for most time signatures is either two or three parts per beat.

CLASSIFYING COMMON TIME SIGNATURES

The chart below lists common time signatures and their classification according to the rules above:
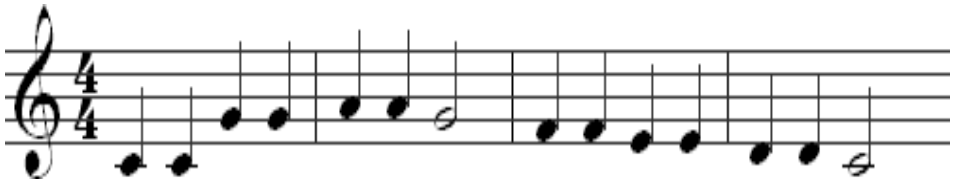


RHYTHMS MAY IMPLY OTHER TIME SIGNATURES
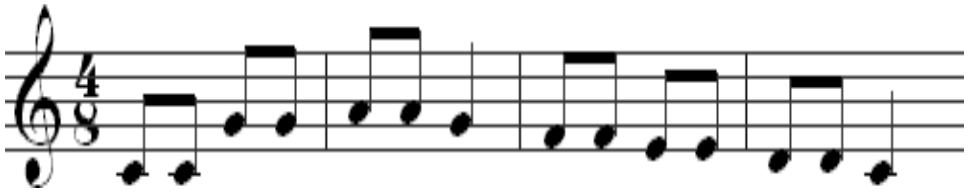
It should be noted that rhythms don't always sound like the time signature that is indicated. Due to accents and other musical devices any time signature can be made to sound like any other. For this reason, any music could theoretically be notated in any time signature. However, the time signature used is generally the one that makes the most musical sense.

EQUIVALENT TIME SIGNATURES

Although you will see time signatures like 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4 most frequently, there are variations of these time signatures that are used from time to time. These time signatures are equivalent in the way they sound, but use a different note value as the beat. For example, 4/8 is equivalent to 4/4. 4/8 just uses eighth notes as the beat instead of the quarter note as in 4/4 time. The examples below show four measures from Twinkle Twinkle Little Star. The first example is in 4/4:



Below is the same music notated in 4/8. Both of these sound exactly the same when played.



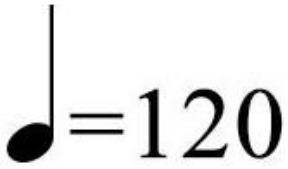
Instances of time signatures like 4/8, 3/8, or 2/16 are less common, but you should be familiar with how they work. They may look intimidating at first, but they are actually as simple as 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4 once you understand the underlying concepts.

TEMPO

Tempo deals with how fast the music is played. Tempos can be any speed from very slow to very fast. The tempo will determine how long each beat is. There are two ways of notating tempos: textual indications and metronome markings.

Textual tempo indications are words that have a specific meaning regarding tempo. They aren't exact and interpretation can vary depending on the piece, style, and player. Most of the standard tempo indications come from the Italian language and are more commonly found in classical music.

Metronome markings include a note value and a number that indicate how many of the note value occur per minute. For example, the metronome marking below indicates that there are 120 quarter notes per minute:



COUNTING RHYTHMS IN COMPOUND TIME SIGNATURES

The Difference between Simple and Compound Time Signatures

SUBDIVISION OF THE BEAT

All of the rhythms you have learned so far have been in simple time signatures. A simple time signature subdivides each beat into two parts. It is also possible to have a time signature where each beat is subdivided into three parts. These are known as compound time signatures. 6/8, 9/2, and 12/16 are examples of compound time signatures.

WHAT THE NUMBERS MEAN

In a simple time signature, the top number gives the number of beats per measure, while the bottom number tells you which kind of note gets the beat. Compound time signatures don't work this way. The meaning of the numbers in a compound time signature are explained below.

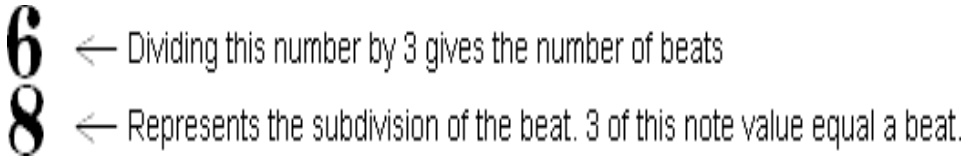
NUMERATOR (THE TOP NUMBER)

The top number represents the number of subdivisions in a measure. For example, if the subdivision is an eighth note and the top number is six, there would be six eighth notes per measure. Don't confuse this with the beat. The top number in a compound time signature must be divided by three in order to determine the number of beats per measure. Dividing the '6' in 6/8 by three equals two. This means that there are two beats in each measure of 6/8.

DENOMINATOR (THE BOTTOM NUMBER)

The bottom number represents the note value that subdivides each beat. This number can be used to determine the kind of note that gets the beat by adding three notes of this value together. The resulting note will always be a dotted note of some kind. For example, the bottom number in 6/8 time is '8', which represents an eighth note. If you add three eighth notes together, they equal a dotted quarter note. The dotted quarter note is the note that gets the beat in a measure of 6/8 time.

If you combine what you learned from each of these numbers, you find that 6/8 means that there are two beats per measure with the dotted quarter note getting the beat.



HOW TO TELL SIMPLE AND COMPOUND TIME SIGNATURES APART.

It is relatively easy to distinguish between simple and compound time signatures. A time signature is compound if the top number is greater than three and can be divided by three. Any time signature where the top number is equal to three or is another number that can't be divided by three is simple. This is a bit of an oversimplification since composers may occasionally group rhythms in a time signature that is normally compound in such a way that it is no longer compound. However, most music doesn't do this and the rule given above will work in most cases.

SUMMARY OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SIMPLE AND COMPOUND

The chart below summarizes the differences between simple and compound time signatures.

Characteristic	Simple	Compound
Top number in time signature	Gives the number of beats per measure	Dividing the number by 3 gives the number of beats per measure. If the number is greater than 3 and is also divisible by 3, the time signature is probably compound.
Bottom number in time signature	Indicates the type of note that gets the beat.	Indicates the note value for the subdivision of the beat. Adding 3 of this value together gives a dotted note value equal to one beat.
Subdivision	Beat is subdivided into two parts.	Beat is subdivided into three parts.
The beat	A normal note (quarter note, half note, etc.)	A dotted note value (dotted quarter note, dotted eighth note, etc.)

COMMON COMPOUND TIME SIGNATURES

The chart below shows some frequently used compound time signatures with details on how many beats per measure and which note gets the beat.

Time Signature	Number of Beats	Type of Note that Gets the Beat
$\frac{6}{8}$	2	dotted quarter note
$\frac{9}{8}$	3	dotted quarter note
$\frac{12}{8}$	4	dotted quarter note
$\frac{6}{4}$	2	dotted half note
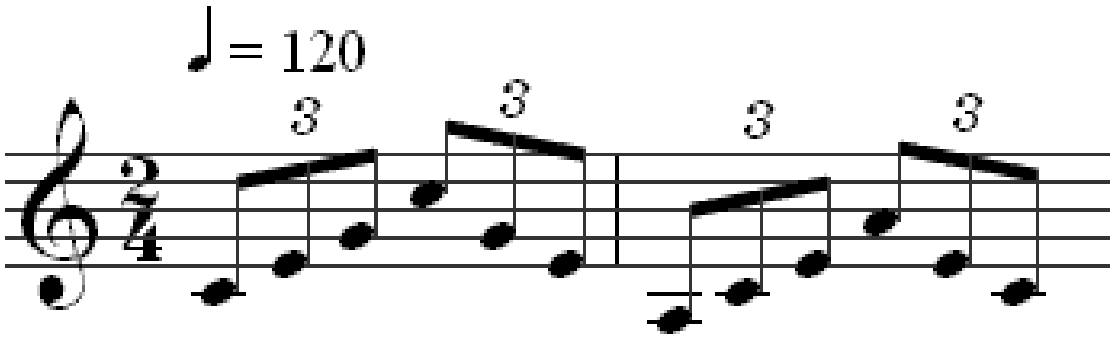
EQUIVALENT TIME SIGNATURES

Compound signatures have variations that are equivalent to each other just like simple time signatures. Sometime signatures are more common than others, but variations do occur. The most common compound time signatures are 6/8, 9/8, and 12/8. However, you will also see time signatures like 6/4, 12/16, and 9/2 from time to time.

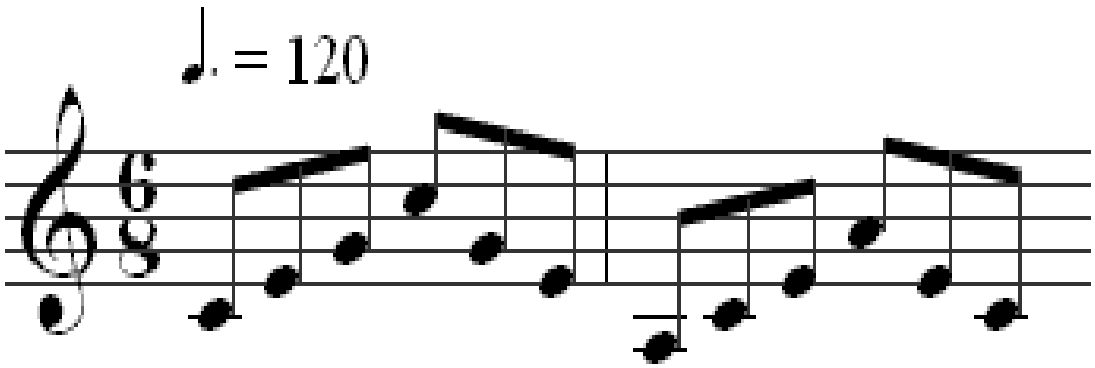
TRIPLETS AND COMPOUND TIME SIGNATURES

Many people confuse compound time signatures and triplets. It is incorrect to refer to the subdivision in a compound time signature as a triplet. Remember that a triplet is three notes of one value in the space of two notes of the same value. Since the normal subdivision in a compound time signature is three, it can't be a triplet because the subdivision occurs in the space of three notes, not two.

It is possible to rewrite music in a compound time signature by using triplets in a simple time signature. Here is an example of the same passage notated in a simple time signature using triplets:

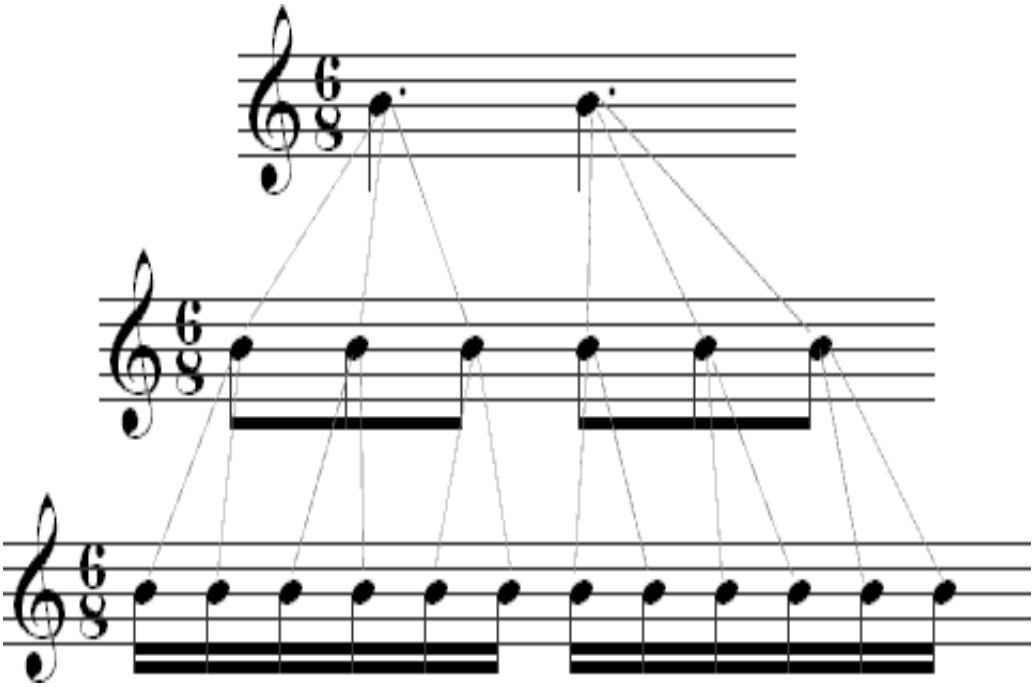


This passage is rewritten in a compound time signature below.
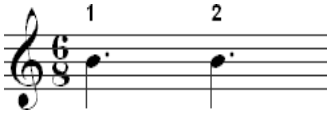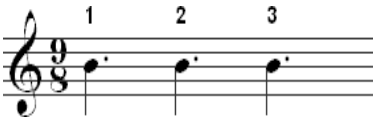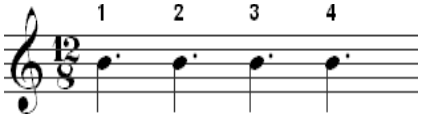


SUBDIVISIONS IN COMPOUND TIME SIGNATURES

After the first subdivision of the beat, the rhythms in a compound time signature are subdivided pretty much like rhythms in simple time signatures. For example, in 6/8, the dotted quarter note is subdivided into three eighth notes. Each eighth note is subdivided into two sixteenth notes. Sixteenth notes are subdivided into thirty-second notes. Below is a chart that shows how dotted quarter notes are subdivided into eighths and then sixteenths in 6/8:
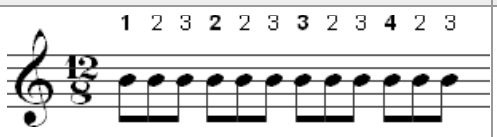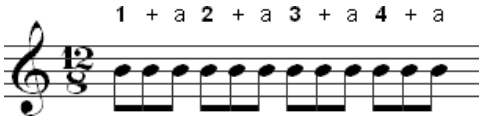


COUNTING IN COMPOUND TIME SIGNATURES

Rhythms consisting of notes values equal to or greater than a beat can be counted as you would any other time signature. The chart below shows how this works in 6/8, 9/8, and 12/8.

Type of Time Signature	Example Time Signatures	How to Count	Musical Example
Duple	6/8, 6/4, 6/2	Count: one, two	
Triple	9/8, 9/4, 9/2	Count: one, two, three	
Quadruple	12/8, 12/4, 12/2	Count: one, two, three, four	
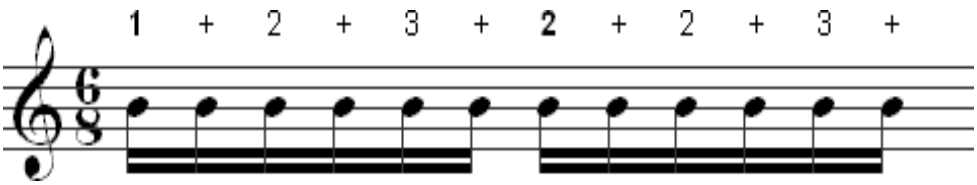
COUNTING EIGHTH NOTES IN COMPOUND TIME SIGNATURES

The chart below shows two methods for counting eighth notes in compound time signatures. 12/8 is used for the examples, but the methods can easily be adapted to any other compound time signature.

Count	Example	Notes
one two three, **two** two three, **three** two three, **four** two three		This method is somewhat awkward at first, but it is a good approach because it is easy to keep track of beats and count subdivisions beyond an eighth note.
one and a, **two** and a, **three** and a, **four** and a		This is a simple method that works well with music that includes only one subdivision of the beat, such as an eighth note in 12/8. It doesn't work as well with subdivisions beyond this.
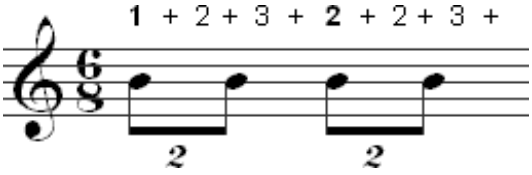
COUNTING SIXTEENTH NOTES IN COMPOUND TIME SIGNATURES

Sixteenth notes can be counted by adding "and" between each number. This is similar to how eighth notes are counted in simple time signatures. Using this approach for 6/8, would result in the count "one and two and three and, two and two and three and." This is shown below:



COUNTING DUPLETS

A duplet is a common rhythm in compound time signatures. Like a triplet, it is a tuplet. A duplet is when two notes of one value occur in the space of three notes of the same value. It is indicated with a "2" above or below the two notes. In a compound time signature such as 6/8, this means that an eighth note duplet is two eighth notes that occur in the space of three eighth notes. The use of duplets can make a compound time signature feel like it is a simple time signature because the characteristic feel of the compound time signature is lost when the beat is no longer subdivided by three. Duplets can be counted by keeping track of the sixteenth notes. The first duplet occurs on the beat. The second one occurs on the "and" of two. Below is an example of duplets in 6/8 with the count shown above the music:



Chapter 19

HOW TO COUNT QUARTER, HALF, AND WHOLE NOTES

WHY YOU SHOULD LEARN TO COUNT

Learning to play rhythms properly requires counting the rhythms as you play them. Many players are unwilling to count, thinking that they can just 'feel' the rhythm. This may work for some music, but there are many downsides to just feeling the rhythm.

1. Players who don't count often skip rests or shorten longer note values.

2. Counting allows you to internalize the rhythm in a way that just 'feeling' the rhythm doesn't. Certain parts of the beat feel different and counting often helps you develop a better understanding of this than not counting.

3. Counting allows you to play with other musicians. It is easy to come in too early or late if you aren't counting.

4. Counting helps you keep track of long periods of rest for your instrument. Some music you play may have multiple measures where your instrument doesn't play. This can be difficult to keep track of if you aren't counting.

5. There are rhythms that are far too complex to learn just by feel. Counting these rhythms allows you to play them more easily.

6. Rhythm is one of the most important aspects of technique. Playing a rhythm even slightly wrong can result in poor technique. Counting makes it less likely that you will play a rhythm incorrectly.

THE BASICS OF COUNTING

Counting is done by associating numbers and words with each beat or part of a beat. For now, you will only use numbers since the rhythms are fairly basic. The basic concept is to start on 'one' for the first beat of the measure and count one additional number for each beat in that measure. When you reach the last beat of the measure, start over with 'one' at the beginning of the next measure.

Note that music doesn't always start on the first beat of the measure. This concept will be explained later, but for now, you can always start counting on 'one' since none of the examples will start on a beat other than the first beat.

Counting for several of the most common time signatures is explained in the section below. All of these time signatures are simple time signatures. Keep in mind that a simple time signature has two parts:

1. A top number that indicates how many beats are in the measure.
2. A bottom number that indicates what kind of note gets the beat.

4/4 Time
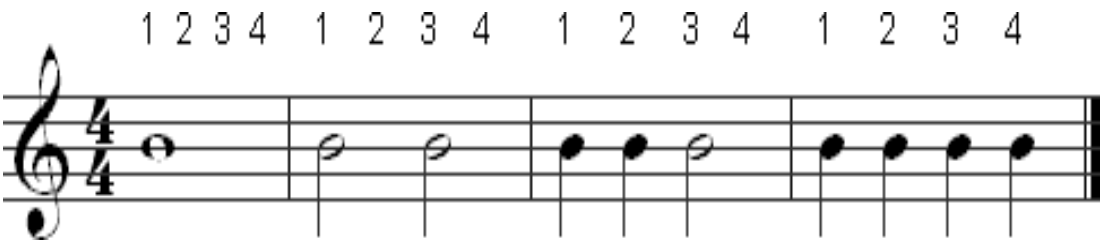
Number of beats: 4
Note that gets the beat: quarter note
Type of time signature: simple quadruple

HOW TO COUNT IN 4/4

Music in 4/4 time can be counted by counting 'one, two, three, four' with each number corresponding to a quarter note beat. You should count even when a note is held for several beats so that you can keep track of where you are in the measure.

A whole note is equal to four beats (or quarter notes) in 4/4 time. In other words, a full measure of 4/4. If you recall what you learned about note values in the last lesson, you should be able to divide each measure of 4/4 into smaller note values that are a division of the whole note. For example, a half note is half the value of the whole note. This means that there are two half notes in a measure of 4/4.

Here is an example of how counting works in 4/4:
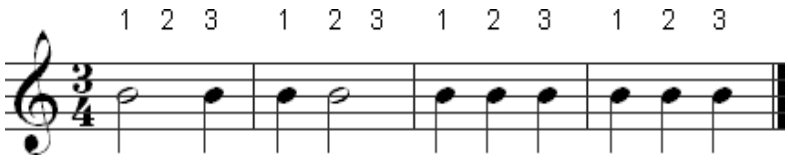


3/4 Time

Number of beats: 3
Note that gets the beat: quarter note
Type of time signature: simple triple

HOW TO COUNT IN 3/4

Count 3/4 time by counting 'one, two, three' with each number corresponding to a beat. Here are some examples of this:



2/4 Time
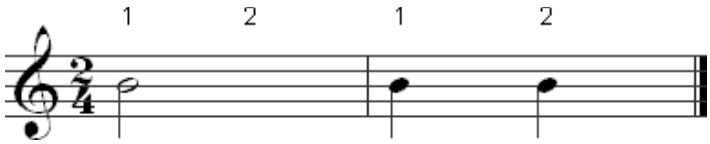
Number of beats: 2

Note that gets the beat: quarter note

Type of time signature: simple duple

HOW TO COUNT IN 2/4

Count 2/4 time by counting 'one, two'. Below is an example of this:
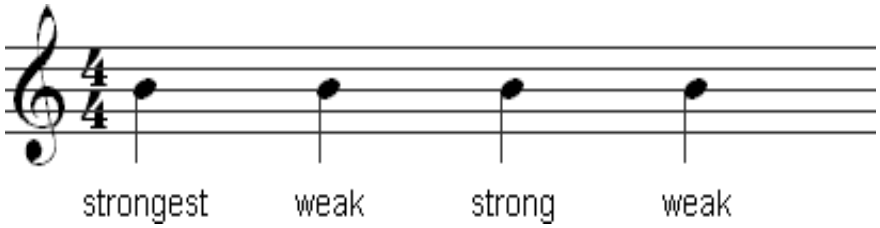


STRONG AND WEAK BEATS

Each time signature has strong beats and weak beats that occur in a certain pattern, with the first beat of the measure generally being the strongest beat. These are more theoretical than practical since they don't occur in all music. Here is an example of how strong and weak beats are arranged in 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4.

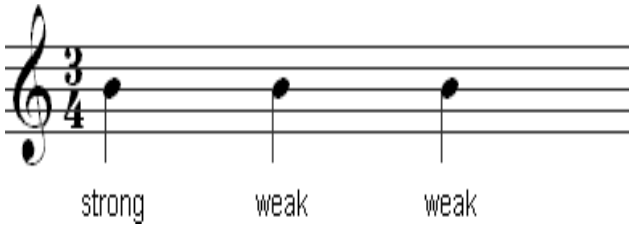
STRONG AND WEAK BEATS IN 4/4

The pattern of strong and weak beats in 4/4 is: strongest, weak, strong, weak. Beat one is the strongest beat in 4/4. Beats two and four are the weak beats and beat three is a strong beat, but not as strong as beat one.
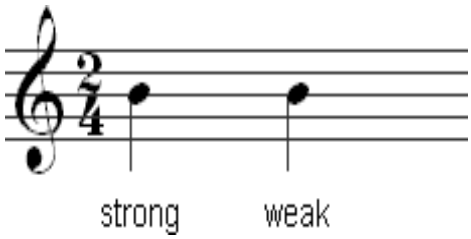


STRONG AND WEAK BEATS IN 3/4

Strong and weak beats are arranged in the following pattern in 3/4: strong, weak, weak. This pattern of strong and weak beats is commonly heard in waltzes.



STRONG AND WEAK BEATS IN 2/4

The pattern of strong and weak beats in 2/4 is: strong, weak.



These patterns of strong and weak beats don't occur in all music. For example, the mazurka (a Polish dance) is in 3/4 time, but the strong beats will occur on the second or third beat as a result of accents. Rock music commonly emphasizes beats two and four instead of one and three in 4/4.

QUARTER, HALF, AND WHOLE RESTS

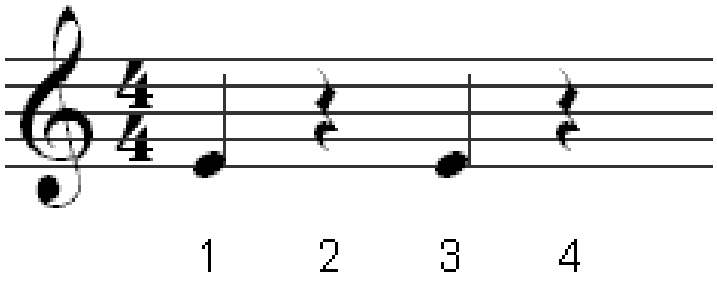
Rests are used to indicate a period of silence. Each note value has a rest that corresponds to that value.

QUARTER RESTS

A quarter rest is used to indicate one beat of rest in time signatures like 4/4 where the quarter note gets the beat. The symbol for quarter rests is shown below:

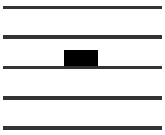


Rests should be counted just like notes. They have rhythmic value even though nothing is played for the duration of the rest. Here is an example of how quarter rests are counted in 4/4:
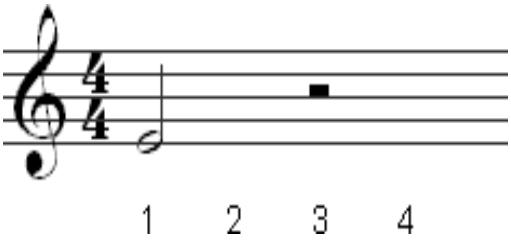


HALF RESTS

A half rest is equivalent to two beats of rest in time signatures like 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4. It is indicated by a small rectangle that rests on the third line of the staff:
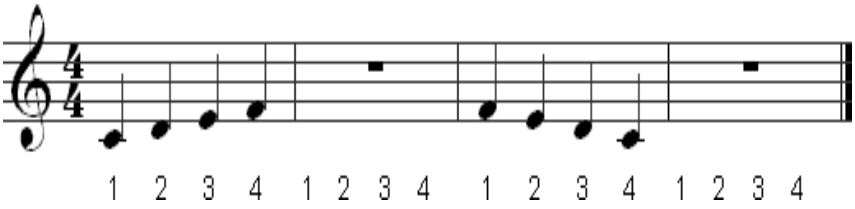


Below is an example of counting half rests in 4/4:
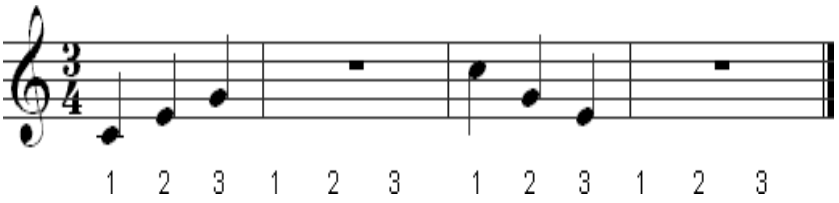


WHOLE RESTS

A whole rest is used in several different ways. It can be used to indicate four beats of rest in a time signature like 4/4. When used like this, it is equal to four beats. The whole rest looks similar to the half rest, but it hangs from the fourth line of the staff.



The whole rest is also used to indicate an entire measure of rest in time signatures other than 4/4 even when the number of beats is greater than or less than four. For example, the whole rest is used in the following example to indicate a full measure of rest in 3/4:



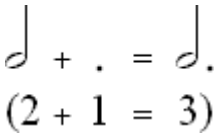
HOW TO COUNT DOTTED NOTES AND TIES

DOTTED NOTES

A dot placed next to a note increases that note's value by half. The dot is always placed to the right of the note head as shown below:



The note above is known as a dotted half note. The value of of a dotted half note is three beats because the half note is two beats and the dot adds one (half the value of the original note).
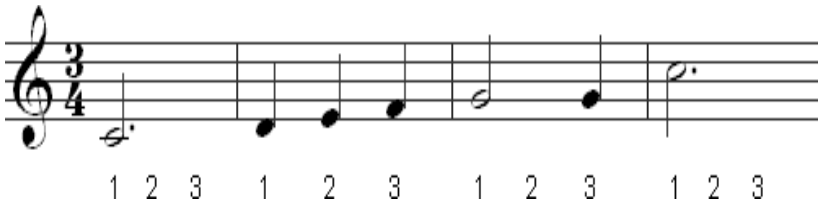


It is possible for a note to have more than one dot, although this occurs infrequently. Each dot after the first one adds half the value of the dot before it. For example, adding a second dot to the dotted half note adds half the value of the first dot. This results in a note that is three and a half beats.
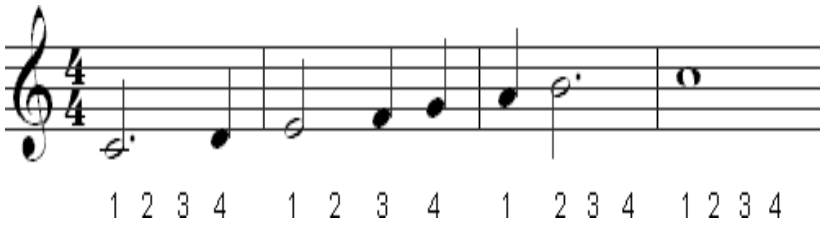


COUNTING DOTTED HALF NOTES

Dotted half notes are equal to a full measure in 3/4. Here is an example of how they would be counted:



A dotted half note is three beats in 4/4. Below is an example of how to count a passage with dotted half notes:

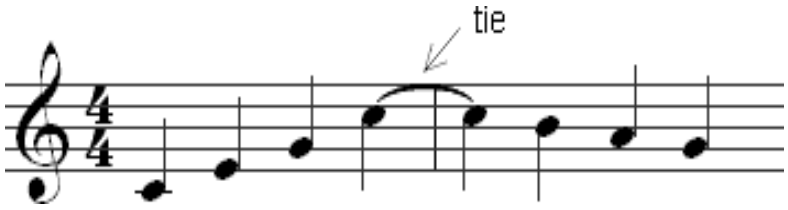


DOTTED RESTS

Dots can also be added to rests. The dot affects the rest in the same way it affects a note by adding half the value of the rest. However, dotted rests aren't used frequently in simple time signatures. They are common in compound time signatures which you will learn about in a later lesson.

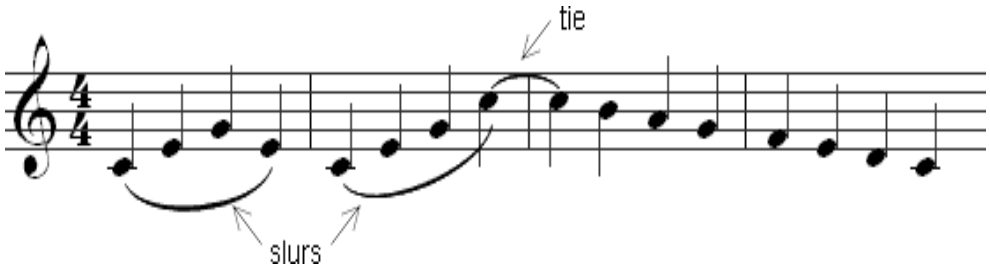
TIES

A tie is a curved line between two of the same pitches that combines the rhythmic value of the two notes. Below is an example of a tie combining a note from one measure with the first note of the next measure:
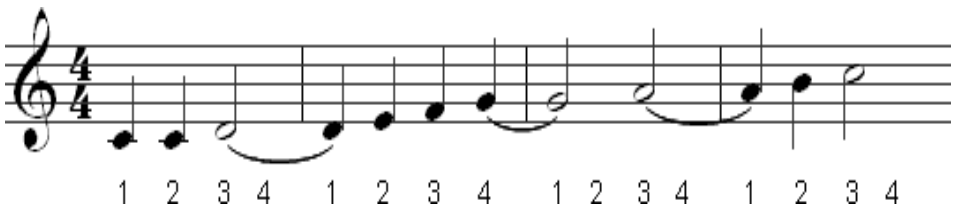


Note that a tie can be used within the same measure or extend into the next measure as shown above.

Don't confuse the tie with a slur. Both are curved lines, but the slur is generally used between different pitches. You will occasionally see slurs between notes of the same pitch, but there is generally other notation that indicates that the notes aren't tied.



COUNTING TIED NOTES

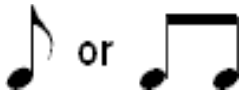
Tied notes should be counted the same as notes that aren't tied. The only difference is that the tied note isn't played again. Below is a passage in 4/4 with tied notes that demonstrates how to count these rhythms:



COUNTING EIGHTH NOTES AND RESTS

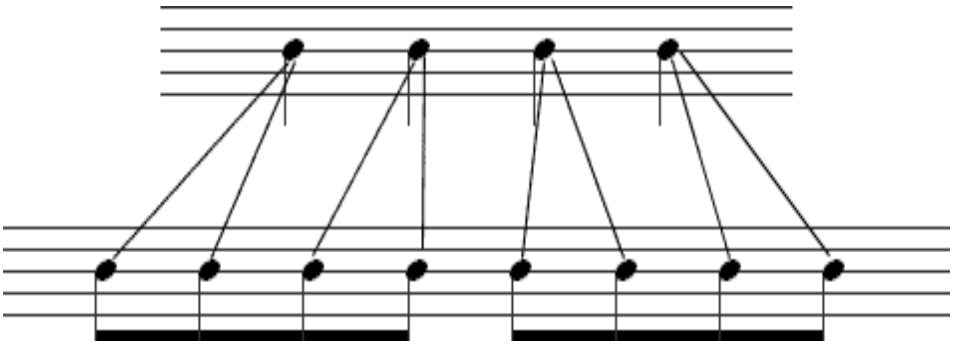
EIGHTH NOTES

An eighth note is indicated by a filled-in note-head with a stem. It also includes a beam or flag at the end of the stem as shown below:



SUBDIVIDING WITH EIGHTH NOTES

The eighth note is equal to half a beat in 4/4 time. This means that there are two eighth notes in one quarter note. This applies to other simple time signatures, such as 2/4 and 3/4 that have the quarter note as the beat. Remember that a time signature is simple if each beat is subdivided into two parts. For 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4, the eighth note is that subdivision. Below is a example quarter notes being subdivided:

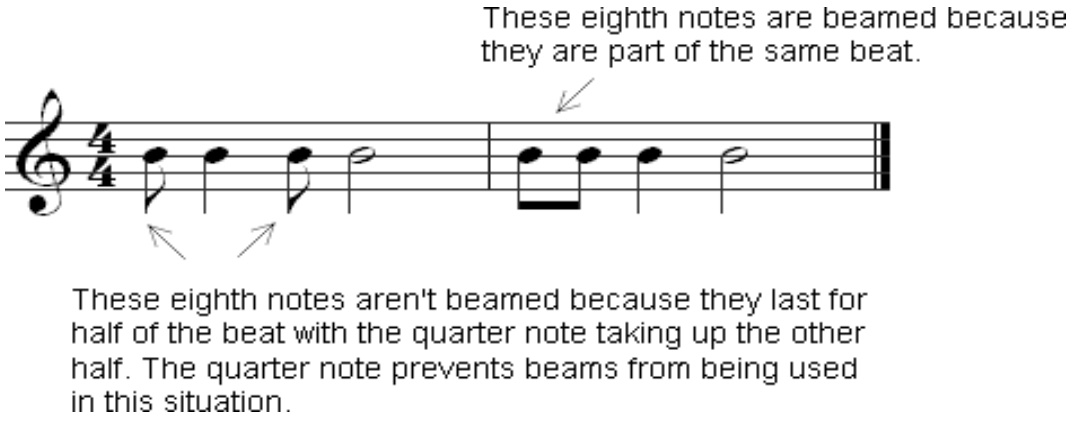


FLAGS AND BEAMS

Whether a beam or flag is used depends on several factors, including where the eighth notes occur, who is writing the music, and how many eighth notes are present. Below are a couple of guidelines for using beams and flags:

1. If there is a single eighth note followed by a note that is a quarter note or larger, a flag will generally be used for the eighth note.
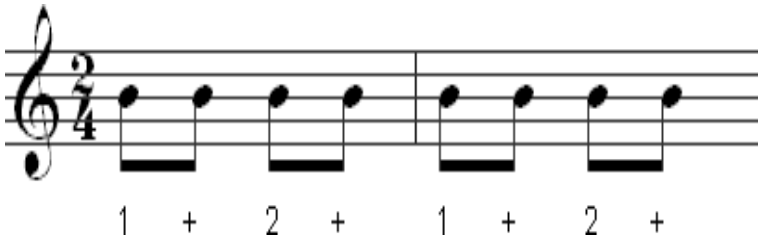
2. If two eighth notes occur on the same beat, they will usually be beamed.
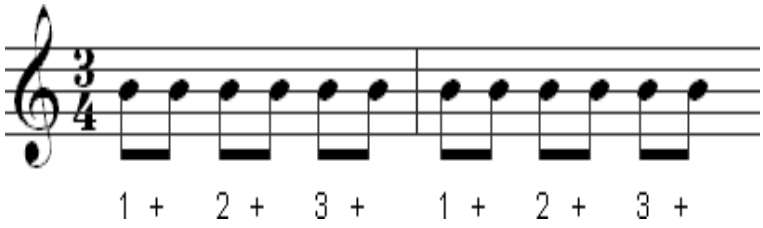


HOW TO COUNT EIGHTH NOTES

Eighth notes can be counted by adding 'and' in between the numbers you already use to count each beat. For example, eighth notes in 4/4 time would be counted 'one and two and three and four and'. A plus sign (+) is used in place of the word 'and' in the examples. This is done to reduce clutter in the musical examples.

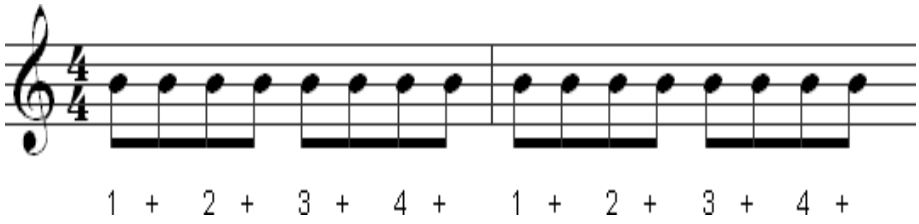
EIGHTH NOTES IN 2/4



EIGHTH NOTES IN ¾



EIGHTH NOTES IN 4/4
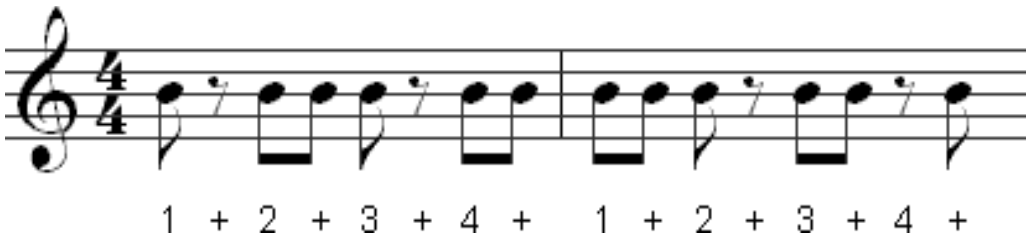


EIGHTH RESTS

An eighth rest is equal to an eighth note. The eighth rest is indicated by the following symbol:



As with other rests, the eighth rest should be counted even though nothing is played. Below is an example of counting in a passage with eighth rests (note that '+' is used as a substitute for the word 'and' to reduce clutter in the music):



DOTTED QUARTER NOTES

A dotted quarter note is equal to one and a half beats (or three eighth notes) in 4/4 time. Below is a dotted quarter note:
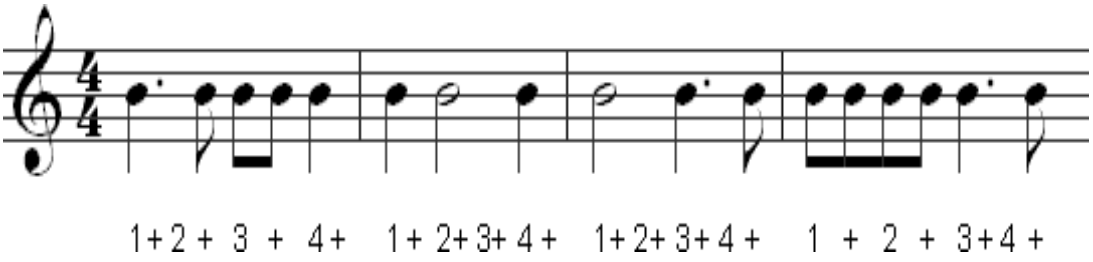


A dot adds half the value of the note that precedes the dot.

COUNTING DOTTED QUARTER NOTES

Counting dotted quarter notes requires keeping track of the eighth note pulse for at least some beats due to the half beat in the dotted quarter.
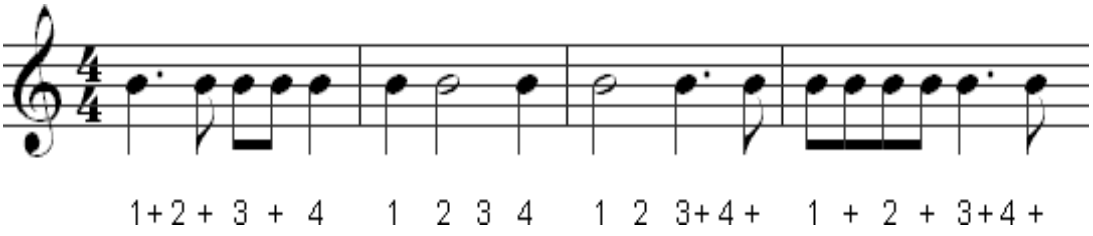
COUNTING ALL EIGHTH NOTES

One approach to counting dotted quarter notes is to count all of the eighth notes as shown below:



COUNTING THE SMALLEST SUBDIVISION

You can also count just the smallest subdivision for each beat. This means that for any quarter, half, or whole notes, you would count just the beat and not the 'and' of the beat. Eighth notes would be counted for any dotted quarter notes or eighth notes. This is shown below:



As shown above, it isn't necessary to always count the smallest subdivision if the rhythms are mixed. For example, if the eighth note is the smallest note value, but there are a lot of quarter notes and half notes, count the eighth notes when they occur, but just keep track of each beat anywhere else.
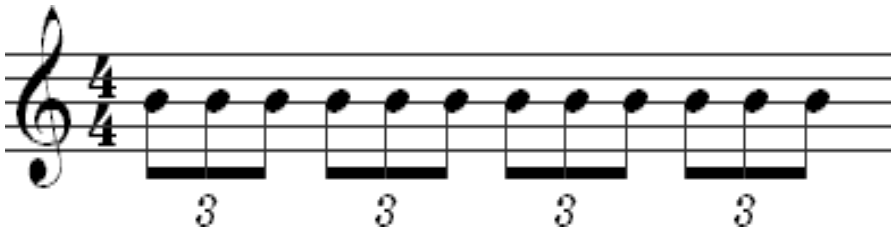
Dotted quarter rests are also possible, although they occur less frequently in simple time signatures than in compound time signatures.

COUNTING EIGHTH NOTE TRIPLETS AND RESTS
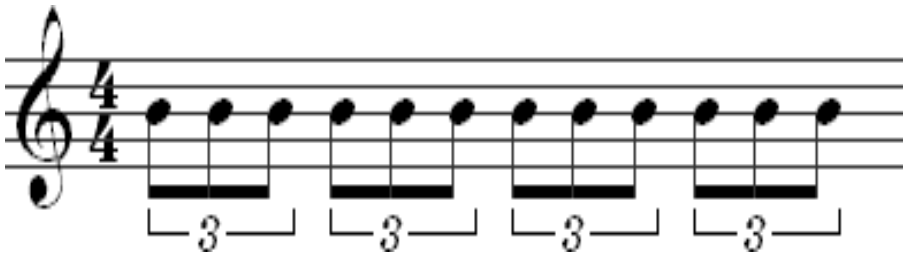
WHAT IS A TRIPLET?

A triplet is when three notes are played in the space of two notes of the same value. Therefore, an eighth note triplet is when you play three eighth notes in the same amount of time as you would normally play two eighth notes.

The eighth note triplet is notated by beaming three eighth notes together and placing a '3' above the middle note:

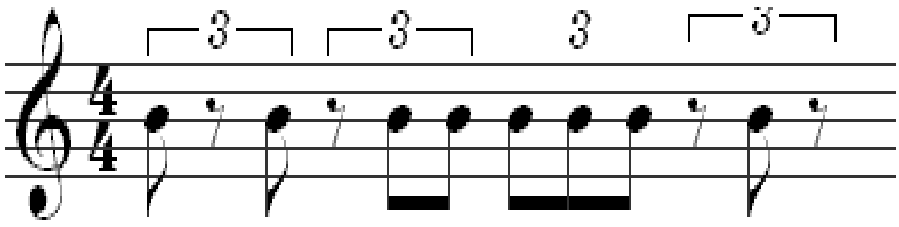


You may also see a bracket along with the "3" as shown below:



These are just two different ways of notating the eighth note triplet. Which you see will depend on the publisher or composer.

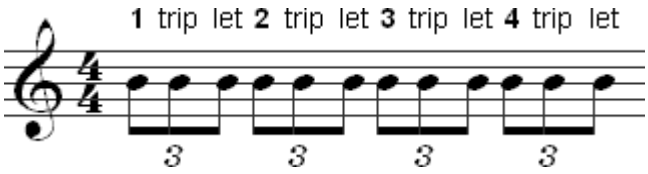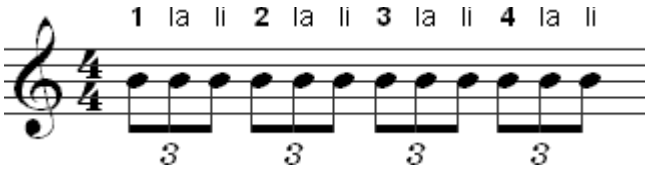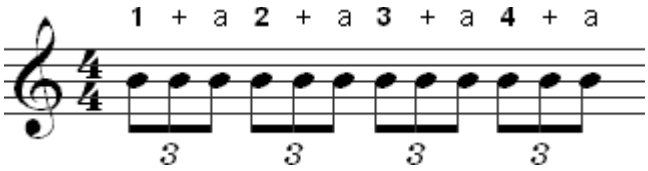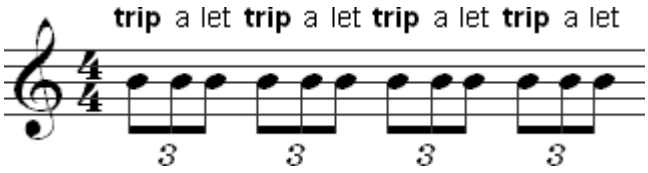
Brackets are also used when there are rests in the triplet to make it obvious that the rests are part of the triplet.



A triplet is the simplest incarnation of a tuplet. A tuplet is a certain number of a note value spread over the duration of a different number of the same note value. A triplet is three in the space of two. There are many other kinds of tuplets besides triplets, some of which are quite complex. These will be covered in later lessons.

COUNTING EIGHTH NOTE TRIPLETS

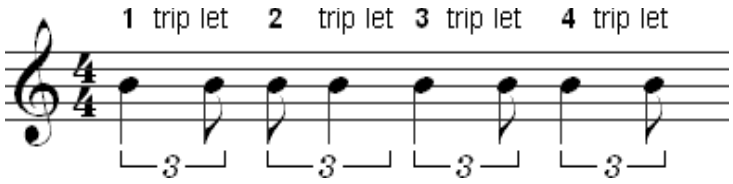
There are multiple ways of counting eighth note triplets. Below are four of the most common approaches.

Count in 4/4	Example	Notes
1 - trip - let, **2** - trip - let, **3** - trip - let, **4** - trip - let		This is one of the most frequently used methods for counting triplets. The numbers allow you to keep track of the beat. This counting approach will be used for all musical examples on this site.
1 - la - li, **2** - la - li, **3** - la - li, **4** - la - li		"la li" is pronounced "lah lee." This method of counting triplets is from the Eastman School. It is as good as the first approach because it keeps track of the beats.
1 and a, **2** and a, **3** and a, **4** and a		This approach is not as good as the first two. Although it allows you to easily keep track of the beats, it might be somewhat confusing once you start counting certain sixteenth note rhythms.
trip - a - let, **trip** - a - let, **trip** - a - let, **trip** - a - let		Counting "trip - a - let" is another fairly common way of counting triplets. However, it doesn't keep track of the beats.

Try each of these approaches for counting triplets and use the one that works best for you.

QUARTER NOTES IN EIGHTH NOTE TRIPLETS

Since there are three eighth notes in the triplet, it is possible to combine either the first two or last two into a quarter note as in the examples below:



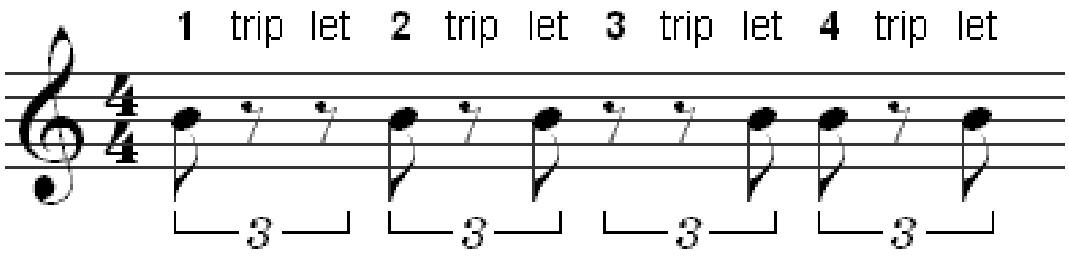
The quarter note is part of the triplet so its value is equal to two of the eighth notes in the triplet (2/3 of the beat) rather than a full beat like you would have with a regular quarter note.

RESTS IN EIGHTH NOTE TRIPLETS

Eighth note triplets may include rests. The most common rests are eighth and quarter note rests.

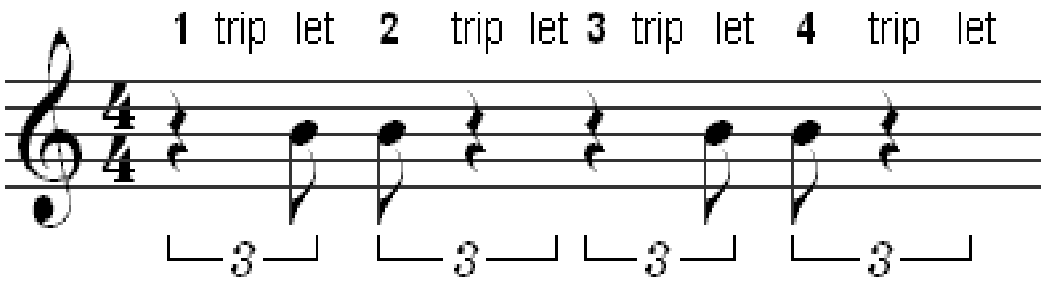
EIGHTH NOTE RESTS

The eighth rest in a triplet looks just like a regular eighth note rest except that it will be contained within the brackets of the triplet:



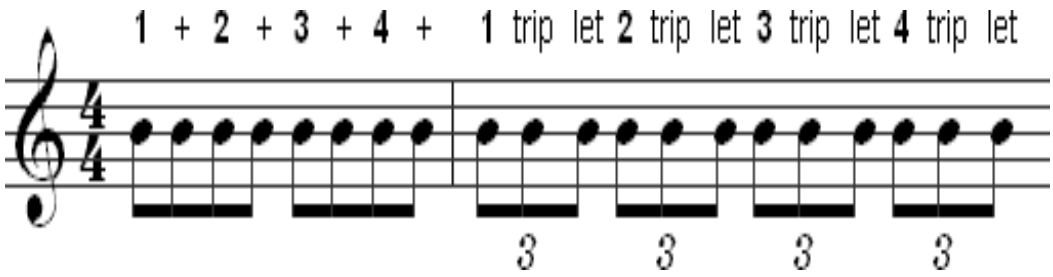
QUARTER RESTS

The quarter rest looks like a regular quarter rest, but will be within the brackets of the triplet to indicate that it is part of the triplet:



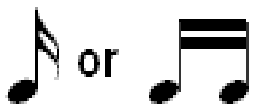
SWITCHING BETWEEN EIGHTH NOTES AND EIGHTH NOTE TRIPLETS

Switching from playing eighth notes to eighth note triplets can be difficult at first. You should practice each rhythm separately until you can easily play them before trying to play alternating eighth notes and eighth note triplets.



HOW TO COUNT SIXTEENTH NOTES AND DOTTED EIGHTH NOTES

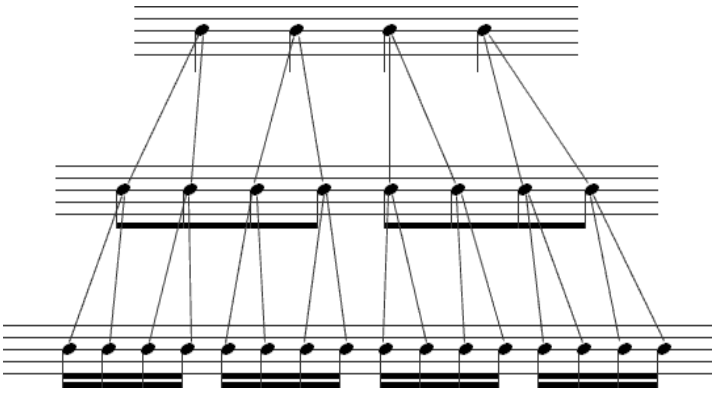
What is a Sixteenth Note? A sixteenth note has two flags or beams:



Sixteenth notes are one fourth of a beat in 4/4 time. This means that there are four sixteenth notes in a quarter note and two sixteenths in an eighth note.

SUBDIVIDING WITH SIXTEENTH NOTES
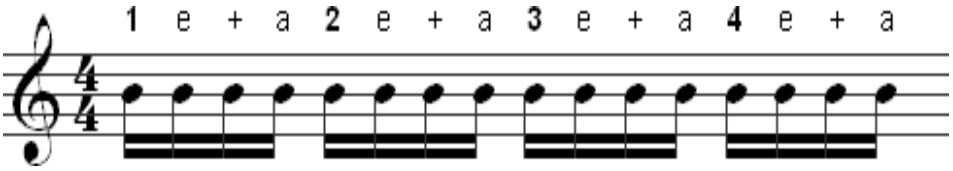
The chart below illustrates the subdivision from quarter notes to sixteenth notes:



COUNTING SIXTEENTH NOTES
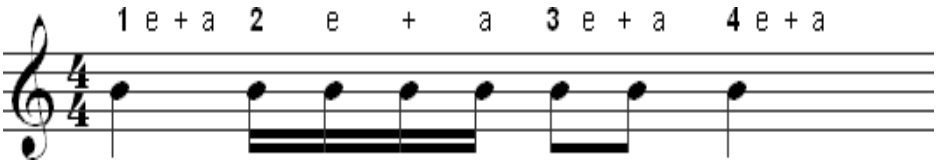
COUNTING STRAIGHT SIXTEENTH NOTES

Straight sixteenth notes should be counted in 4/4 by saying, '**one** e and a, **two** e and a, **three** e and a, **four** e and a'.
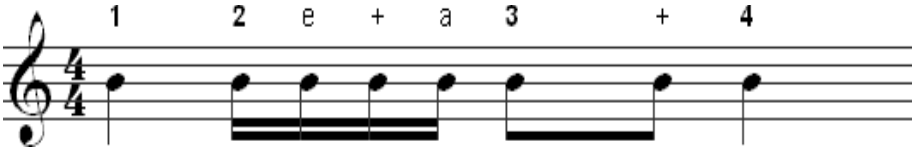


COUNTING MIXED RHYTHMS WITH SIXTEENTH NOTES

Sixteenth note rhythms mixed with other rhythms can be counted using the sixteenth note subdivision (one e and a, etc.) or by counting just the smallest subdivision on each beat. For example, the following passage includes quarter notes, eighth notes, and sixteenth notes.



You can also count this passage by counting the smallest subdivision for each beat. For example, if the smallest note value on a beat is an eighth note, you don't need to count anything smaller than an eighth note for that beat. Below is the same passage again with the count changed to use this approach:
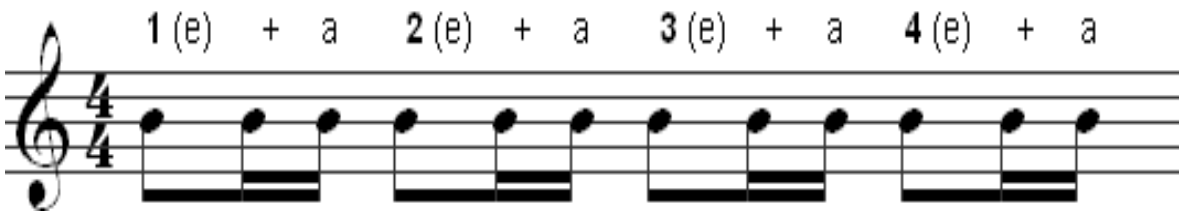


Counting steady sixteenth notes does work, but it can be difficult at faster tempos. It is better to get used to counting the smallest subdivision for each beat so that you aren't counting unnecessarily.

COMMON SIXTEENTH NOTE RHYTHMS

There are several sixteenth note rhythms that you will encounter frequently. Many of these rhythms can be counted several ways, both by counting each sixteenth note and by counting only when a note occurs. You may want to start by counting every sixteenth to improve your rhythmic accuracy at first. Once you are comfortable with each rhythm, you can omit the optional counts shown in parentheses. These rhythms are discussed below.

GALLOP
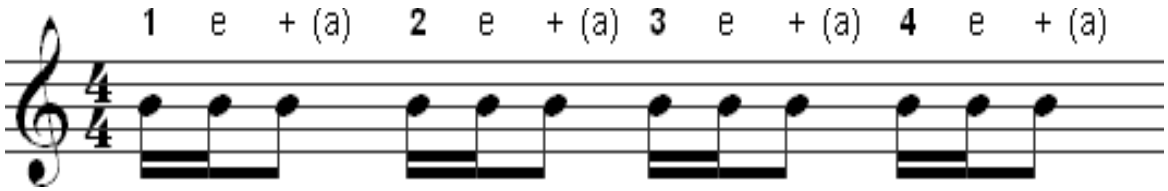
A gallop is an eighth note followed by two sixteenth notes. It is known as a gallop rhythm because it resembles the sound of a horse galloping. These rhythms can be counted by counting '**one** and a, **two** and a, **three** and a, **four** and a' as in the example below:



If you currently count triplets using '**one** and a, **two** and a, etc.', you may want to consider using one of the other methods to avoid confusion with the count used for the gallop rhythm.

REVERSE GALLOP
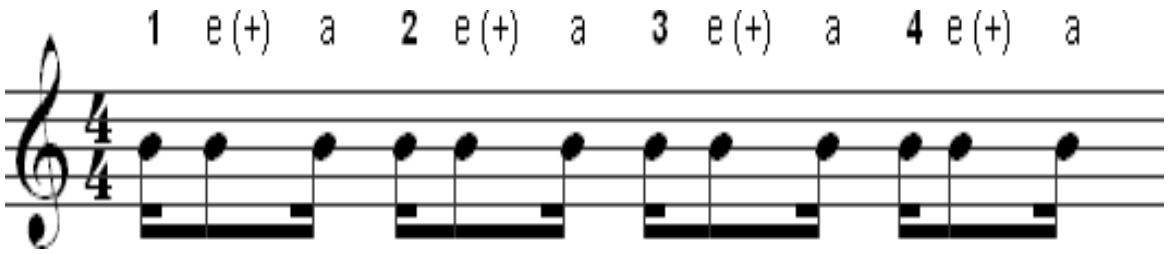
The reverse gallop rhythm is a pattern of two sixteenth notes followed by an eighth note. It can be counted by counting '**one** e and, **two** e and, **three** e and, **four** e and' as shown below:



You can choose the approach that works best for you. Keep in mind that the more you count the more difficult it is to count at faster tempos.

SIXTEENTH EIGHTH SIXTEENTH

The sixteenth - eighth - sixteenth rhythm is another common rhythm that mixes sixteenth notes and eighth notes. This rhythm is generally counted by counting all of the sixteenth notes. However, it is possible to omit the 'and' from the count.
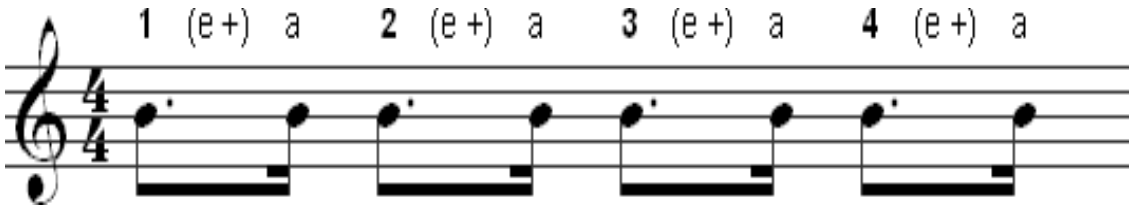


THE DOTTED EIGHTH NOTE

A dotted eighth note is an eighth note with a dot after it. Since a dot adds half the value of the note after which it appears, the dotted eighth note is equal to three sixteenth notes or 3/4 of a beat in 4/4 time. Dotted eighth notes are frequently used with a sixteenth note to form a quarter note beat in time signatures such as 4/4. There are two rhythm patterns possible when combining the dotted eighth and a sixteenth note:
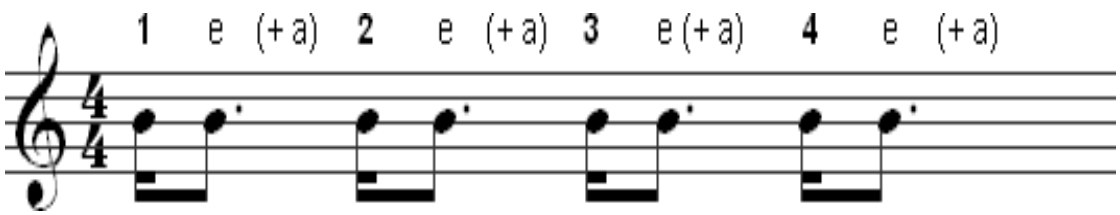
DOTTED EIGHTH - SIXTEENTH RHYTHM

This is the more common pattern involving dotted eighth notes and sixteenth notes. It can be counted by counting all of the sixteenth notes or by counting only when there is a note as shown below:



SIXTEENTH NOTE - DOTTED EIGHTH RHYTHM

This rhythm can be counted by counting all sixteenth notes or by counting '**one** e, **two** e, etc.' This is shown in the example below with the optional words enclosed in parentheses:



Chapter 20
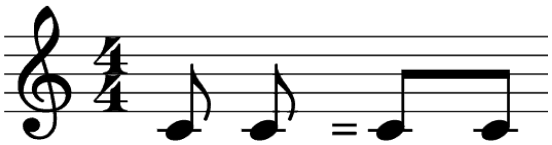
NOTE GROUPING & BEAMING IN MUSIC.

In music theory, notes with less rhythmic value than a quarter note, such as an eighth or sixteenth note, have "tails" attached to them. Connecting several notes with tails is what we call "beaming." Beaming notes together is important because it makes sheet music significantly easier to read. Not only are we going to cover how to beam notes together, but we are going to dive into how to group those beamed notes and rhythms depending on the time signature.
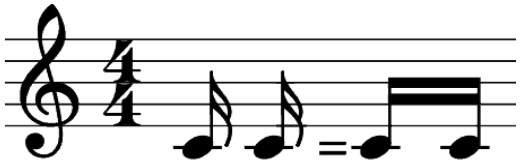
If you are feeling a little lost, check out our articles How to Read Sheet Music and A Complete Guide to Time Signatures to give yourself a refresher!

BEAMING
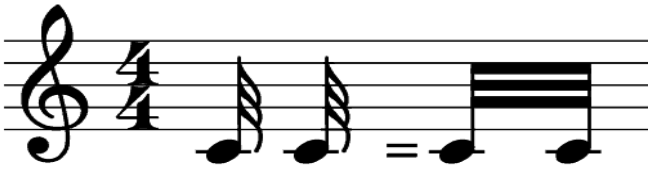
Before we get into grouping, let us first cover how to beam together eighth notes, sixteenth notes, and thirty-second notes. Eighth notes are connected by a single line.



Sixteenth notes are connected by two lines.



Thirty-second notes are connected by three lines.



GROUPING: THE RULES

More than two notes can be connected in music, but start connecting too many, and your music will get just as confusing as it would have been without any beaming. Because of this factor, there are general "grouping" rules in sheet music. These rules generally stay the same for all simple and compound time signatures:

1. Do not beam across a **bar line**.

* All beaming takes place within the measure! If you have a stray eighth note at the end of a measure, it should be written with the tail, rather than connected to the first beat of the next measure.

2. Do not beam across the **centre** of a measure.

* For example, in 4/4 time, the centre of the measure lies between beats two and three. These beats are almost always separated to ensure clear rhythm for the reader.

3. **Sixteenth Notes** are grouped **by beat**.

* For example, in a meter where the quarter note gets a beat, a maximum of **four** sixteenth notes should be grouped together. If a *dotted* quarter note gets a beat, a maximum of *six* sixteenth notes can be grouped together.

4. **Thirty-Second Notes** are grouped **by beat**.

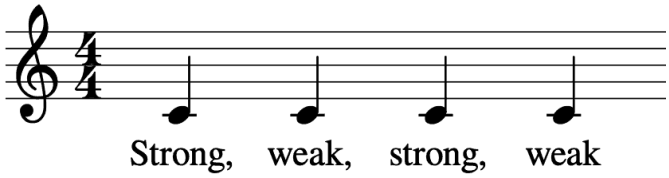
* For example, in 4/4 time, a maximum of *eight* thirty-second notes can be grouped together. But because the triple lines of thirty-second note beams can get a little messy, we connect groups of four with a single line.

These rules will make more sense once we get into individual time signatures, so let us get started!

GROUPING: 4/4 TIME
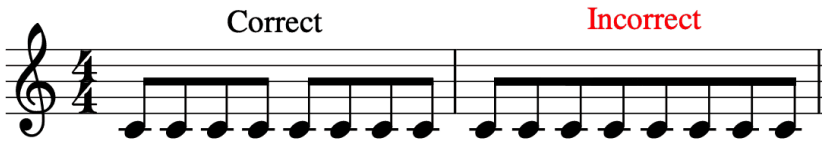
We are going to start with **4/4 time** since it is the most common time signature.

Every time signature has "strong" and "weak" beats. In 4/4 time, beat **one** is the strongest beat in the measure. Beats **two** and **four** are weak, while beat **three** is the *secondary* strong beat, meaning that it is strong, but not *as* strong as beat one.
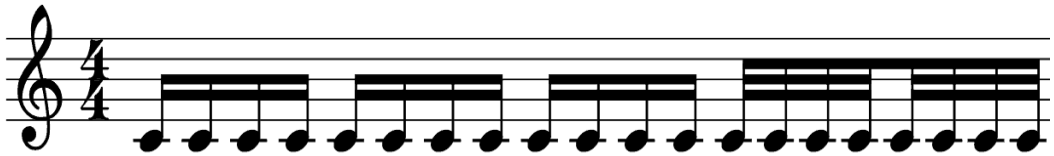


Now that you have seen where the "strong" beats lie, you can see why it's important not to **beam over the middle of the measure.**
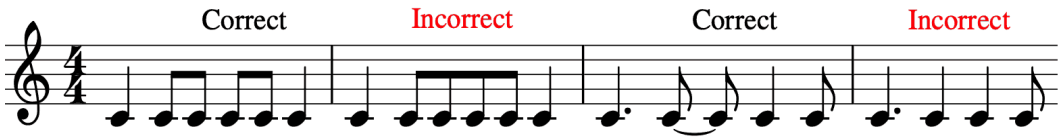
In 4/4 time, beats two and three should always be separated. However, beats one and two *can* be grouped together, as well as beats three and four. Observe how to beam eighth notes in the example below.
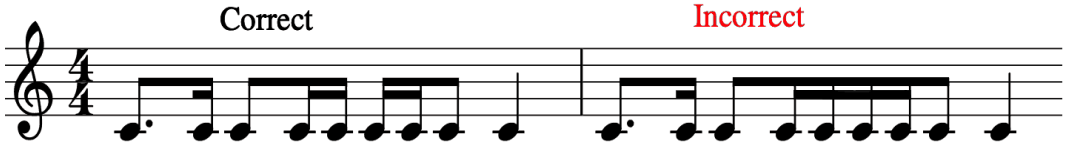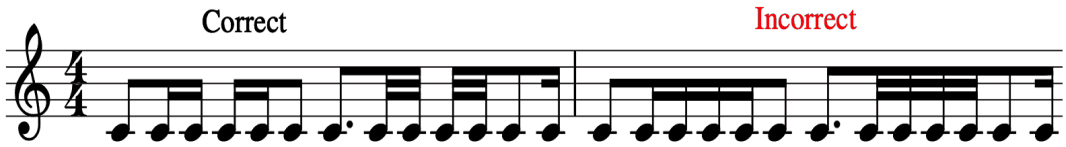


Remember that both **sixteenth and thirty-second notes should be grouped by beat**. In 4/4 time, this means that there will be a maximum of *four* sixteenth notes in a beat, and a maximum of *eight* thirty-second notes in a beat. Recall the single line that connects two groups of thirty-second notes.



Now, let us look at some examples of correct and incorrect beaming in 4/4 time. Remember the rules!
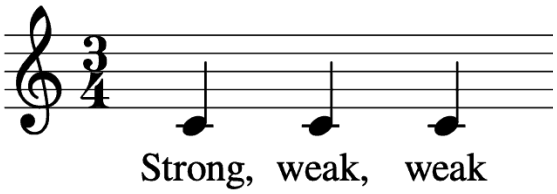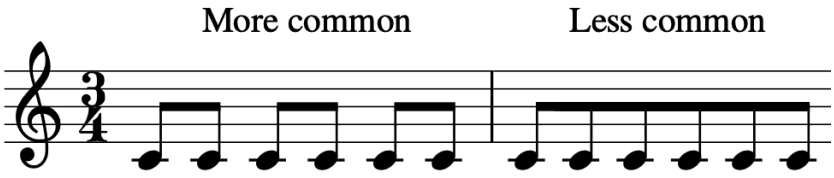






Are you starting to see how the correct examples are much easier to read than the incorrect examples?

GROUPING: 3/4 TIME
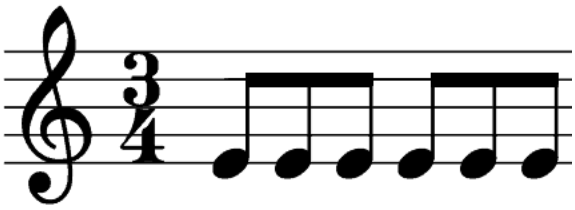
In 3/4 time, beat **one** is the strongest, while beats **two** and **three** are both considered weak.



Because there is an odd number of beats per measure, the "center" of 3/4 time is in the middle of beat two. However, as both beats two and three are weak, there is no need to separate them. Though most choose to group eighth notes by beat in 3/4 time, both of the following groupings are correct:



It is important to note that eighth notes in 3/4 time should **not** be grouped like this:

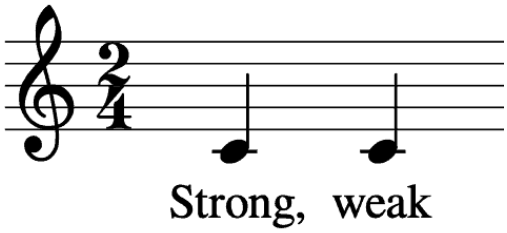


Remember that 3/4 is a **simple** time signature, meaning that the beat is divisible by **two**, not three. This grouping is the correct grouping for 6/8 time, which we will come back to shortly.

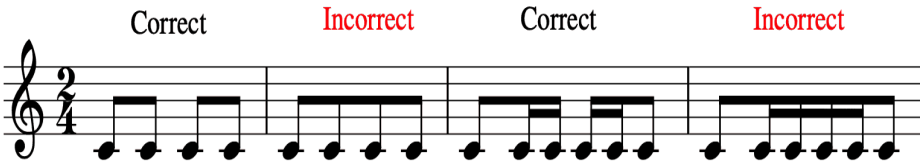
Sixteenth and thirty-second notes are the same in 3/4 time as they are in 4/4 time since the quarter note is still the equivalent to one beat.

GROUPING: 2/4 TIME

In 2/4 time, beat **one** is strong and beat **two** is weak.



The centre of the measure in 2/4 time is between beats one and two, so remember: do not beam over it! Again, the quarter note is equivalent to one beat, so we can have a maximum of four sixteenth notes per beat, and eighth thirty-second notes per beat.
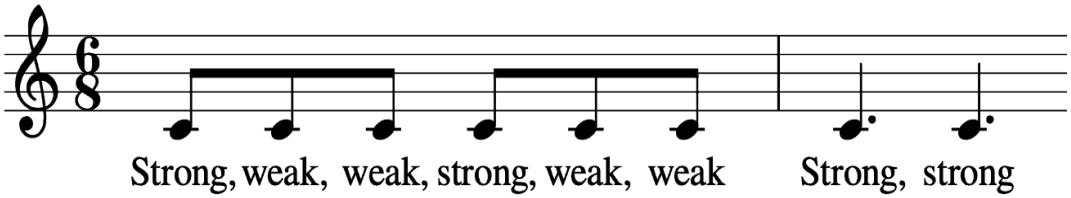


GROUPING: 6/8 TIME

We are moving onto a compound time signature, which means, everything changes! Yay! 6/8 will be the only compound time signature we cover, as it is by far the most common, and once you get the hang of it, 9/8 and 12/8 will be self-explanatory.
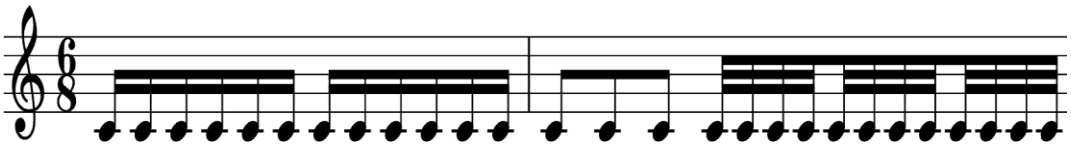
It is important to remember that in **compound** time signatures, the beat is divided into **three** equal parts, while in simple time signatures, the beat is divided into two equal parts. Because of this, in 6/8 time, there are six eighth *notes* per measure, but it often feels like there are only two *beats*. If this isn't ringing any bells, take a moment to review compound time signatures here.

In 6/8 time, we will refer to the eighth notes as "divisions" rather than beats. Divisions **one** and **four** act as the two **beats**, with one being the strongest out of the two. Divisions **two**, **three**, **five**, and **six** are all weak.

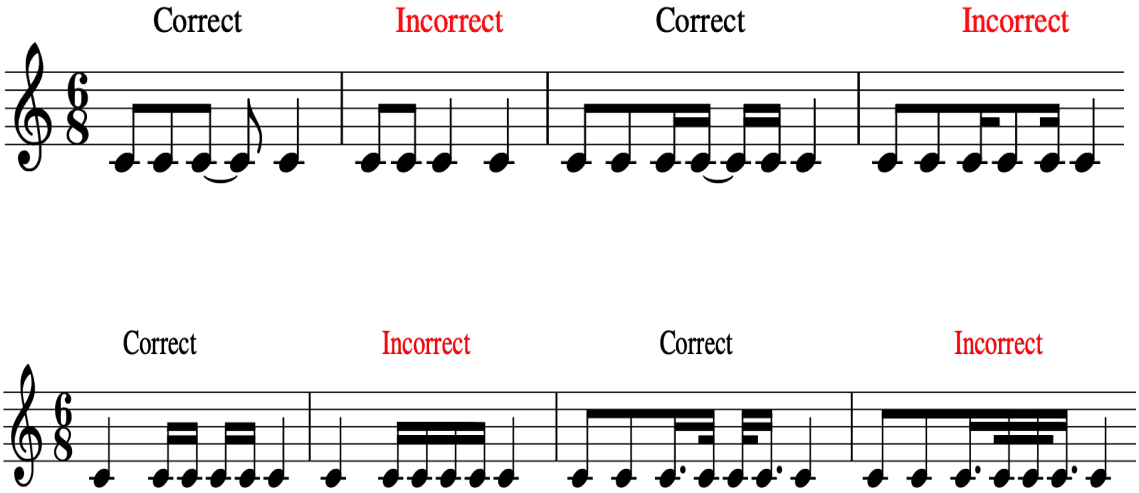


The centre of the measure in 6/8 time is between divisions three and four, so we keep them separated, as indicated in the image above.

Now that we are in compound time, the beat has changed from a quarter note to a dotted quarter note. So instead of four sixteenth notes per beat, we now get *six*, and instead of eight thirty-second notes per beat, we now get *twelve*. Thirty-second notes, however, will still be in subgroups of four, connected by a single line.



Now, let us observe some examples of correct and incorrect groupings in 6/8 time. Remember the rules!



Now that you have gone through several examples, you are probably starting to get the hang of beaming and grouping in sheet music. As we have mentioned a few times, the only reason there are "rules" around these things is to make reading sheet music easier, which all musicians can appreciate! We hope you have learned a little something in this lecture note.

Chapter 21

SOME MUSICAL TITBITS

What is the lowest note a person can sing?

The lowest vocal note produced by a male is G -7 (0.189 Hz) and was achieved by **Tim Storms** (USA) at City-walk Studios in Branson, Missouri, USA, on 30 March 2012. Timothy is the bass singer for the vocal group 'Pierce Arrow'. The attempt was witnessed by two college music professors and an acoustician.

What is the highest note in music?

In vocal music, the term **Soprano C**, sometimes called High C or Top C, is the C two octaves above **Middle C**. It is so named because it is considered the defining note of the soprano voice type. It is C_6 in scientific pitch notation (1046.502 Hz) and c''' in **Helmholtz** notation.

Who can sing the highest note in the world?

Female voice - **Georgia Brown** has a vocal range of eight octaves, extending from G2 to G10, as verified at Aqui Jazz Atelier Music School in Sao Paulo, Brazil, on 18 August 2004.

The highest note that she hit, the G10, is technically not a musical note but a frequency. The full range was verified by music experts using a piano, violin and Hammond organ. *Guinness World Records - Greatest vocal range, female*

Male voice- **Adam Lopez** - Highest Vocal Note- Guinness World Record. The note is a D7, the last D on the piano.

What is the lowest vocal range?

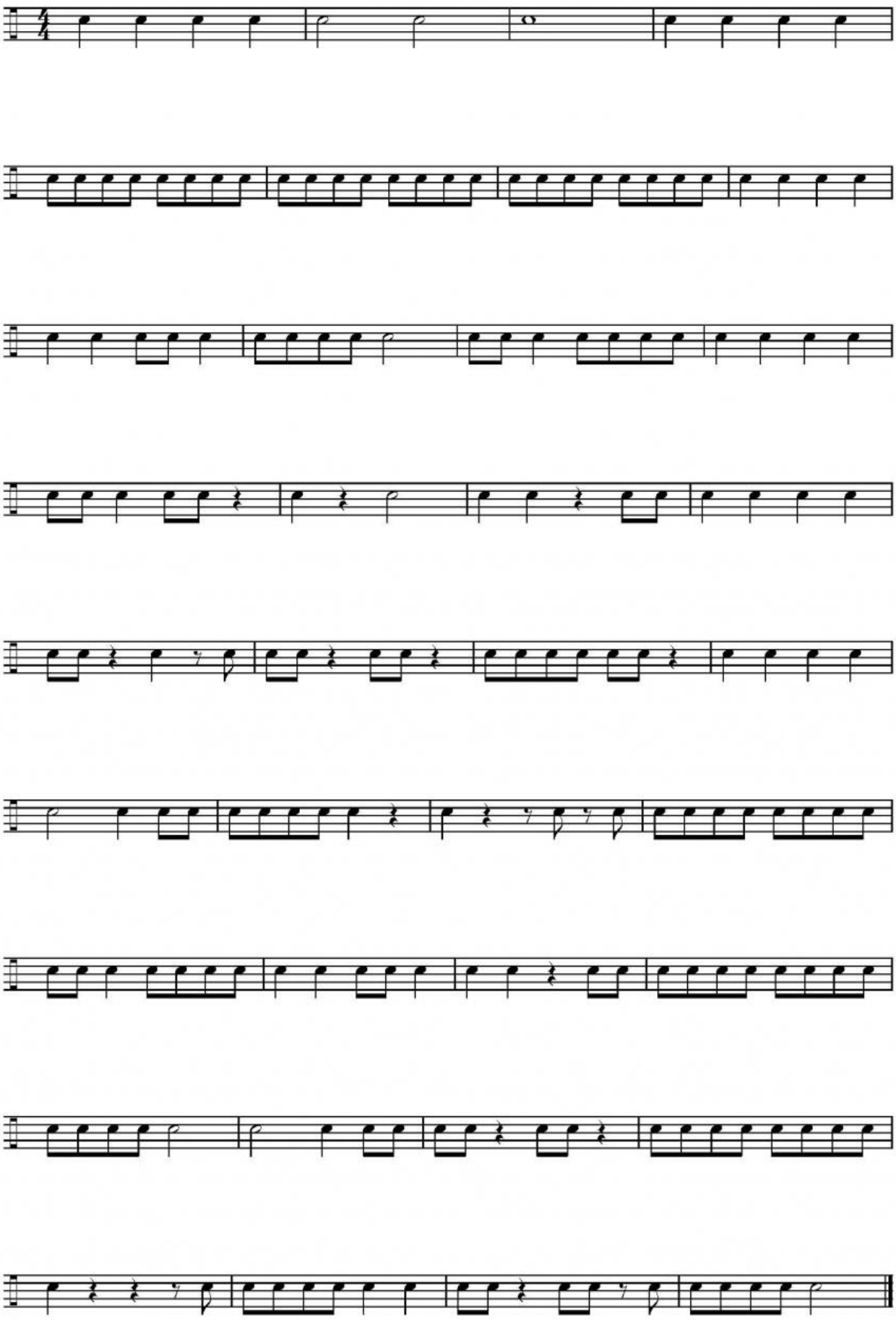
The bass voice has the lowest tessitura of all the voices. The typical bass range lies between E2 (the second E below middle C) to E4 (the E above middle C). In the lower and upper extremes of the bass voice, some basses can sing from C2 (**two octaves** below middle C) to G4 (the G above middle C).

What is the highest note a human can hear?

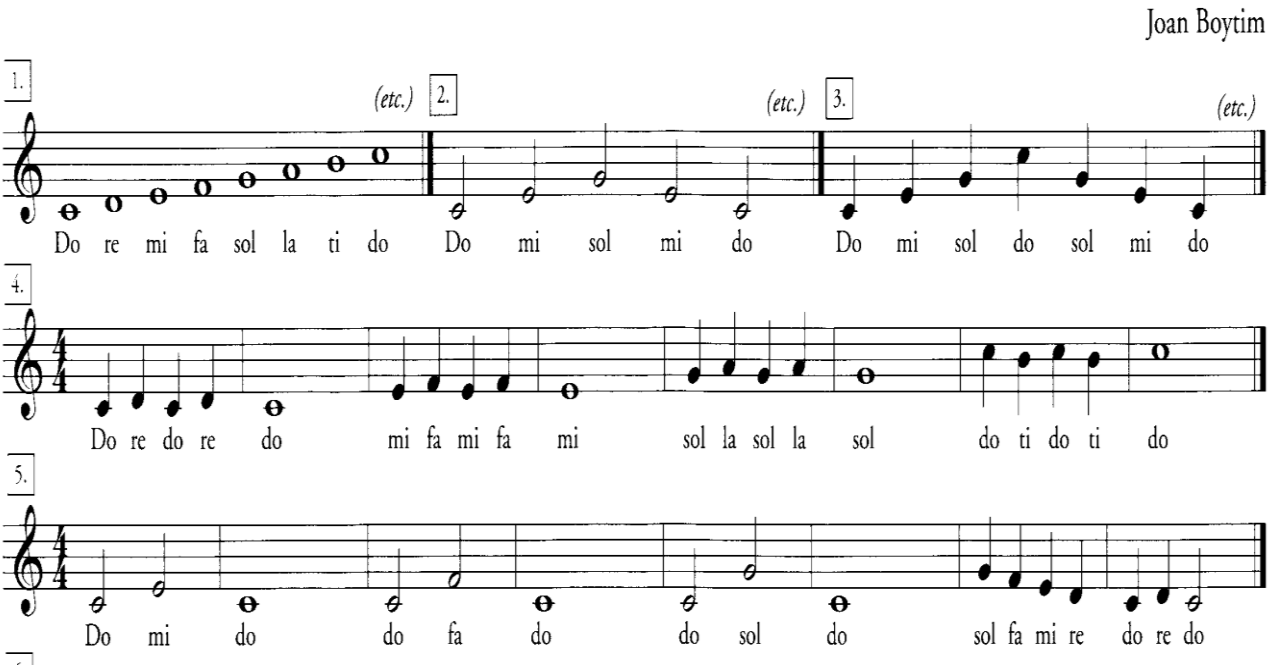
Background. **Humans hear** frequencies from 20 Hz up to 20,000 Hz. As we get older, or exposed to loud sounds which damage our ears (such as loud concerts), the upper limit decreases. This test helps you benchmark the **highest** boundary of your system's frequency extension.

TIPS FOR SIGHT READING MUSIC / GOOD MUSICIANSHIP
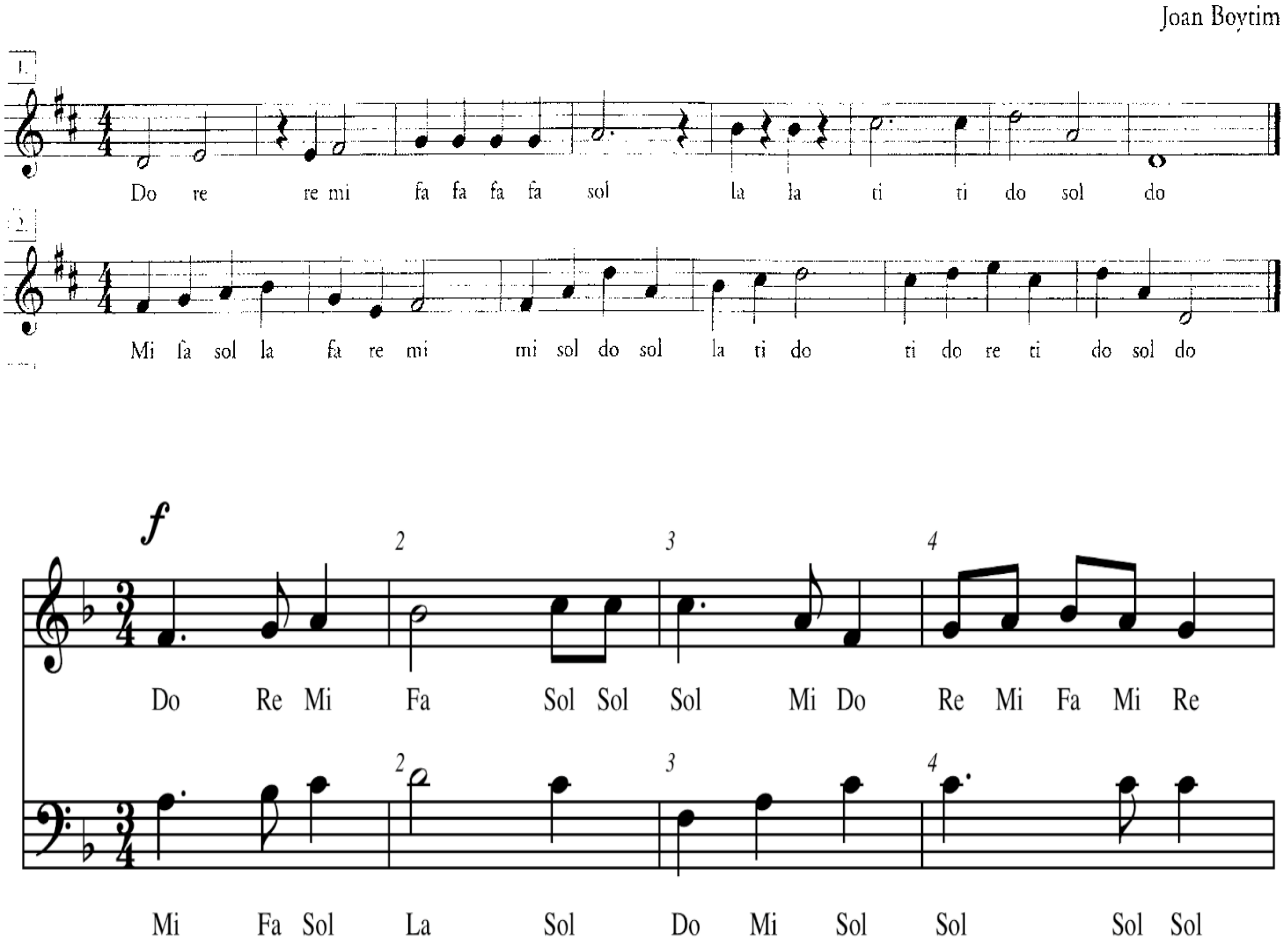
1. Familiarize yourself with a variety of rhythms.
2. Memorize key signatures at-a-glance.
3. Know your scales forward and backward.
4. Practice playing without looking at your hands.
5. Practice sight singing.
6. Take a minute to examine the piece you're sight reading. Tap out the rhythm, read through the notes and follow the structure.
7. Mentally commit changes in key or time signature within the piece.
8. Make markings on the paper (or on your tablet/iPad), if available.
9. Sound the whole piece out in your head, recognizing patters.
10. Breathe, relax and keep going, even if you make a mistake.
11. (Bonus tip) Never leave home without your sheet music and pencil!
12. Invest in music materials that will help you improve on your sight-reading skills.
13. Never live a day without going through your sight-reading exercises.
14. Consistency and diligence is the key to success in this regard.
15. Attend musical concerts and shows that would help you grow in your skill.
16. Download and watch classical and Art musical materials online.
17. Do personal Study, attend paid personal classes if available.
18. Save and acquire personal musical instruments / materials.
19. Do not listen to discouraging statements of fellows around you. Stay on your track.
20. Do not stop until you have reached the top of your goal.



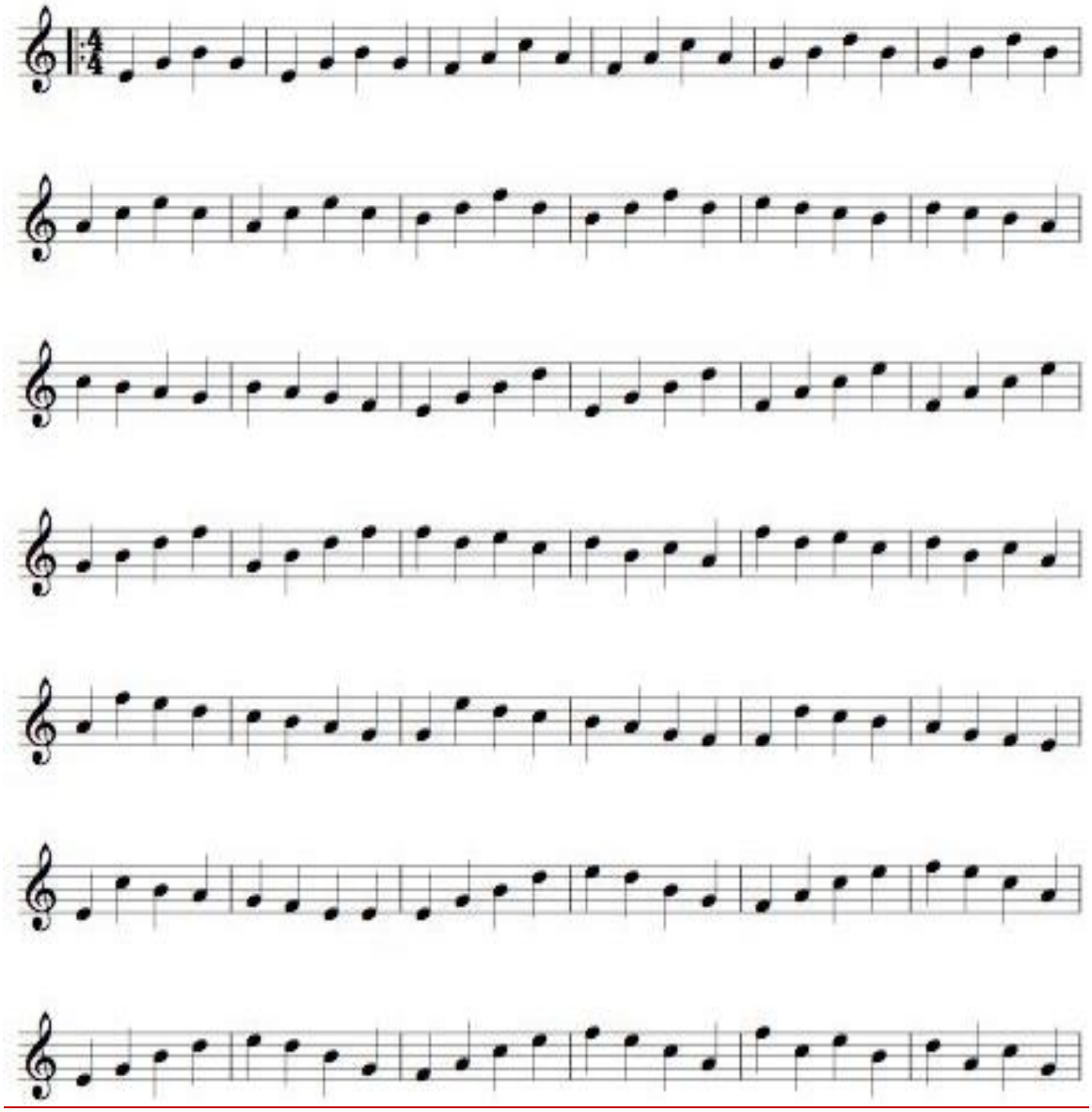
SOLFEGGIO SYLLABLE SHEETS – SET 1
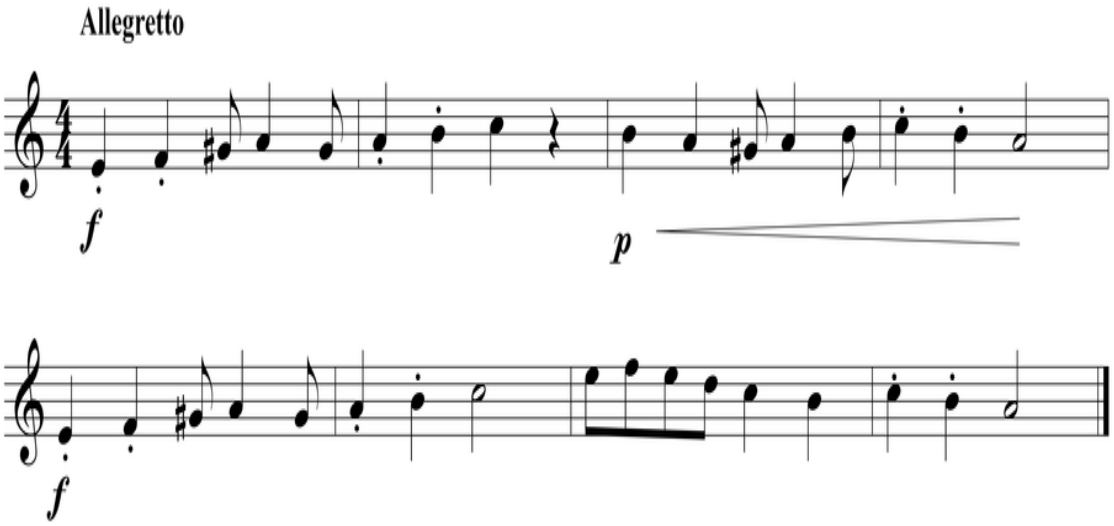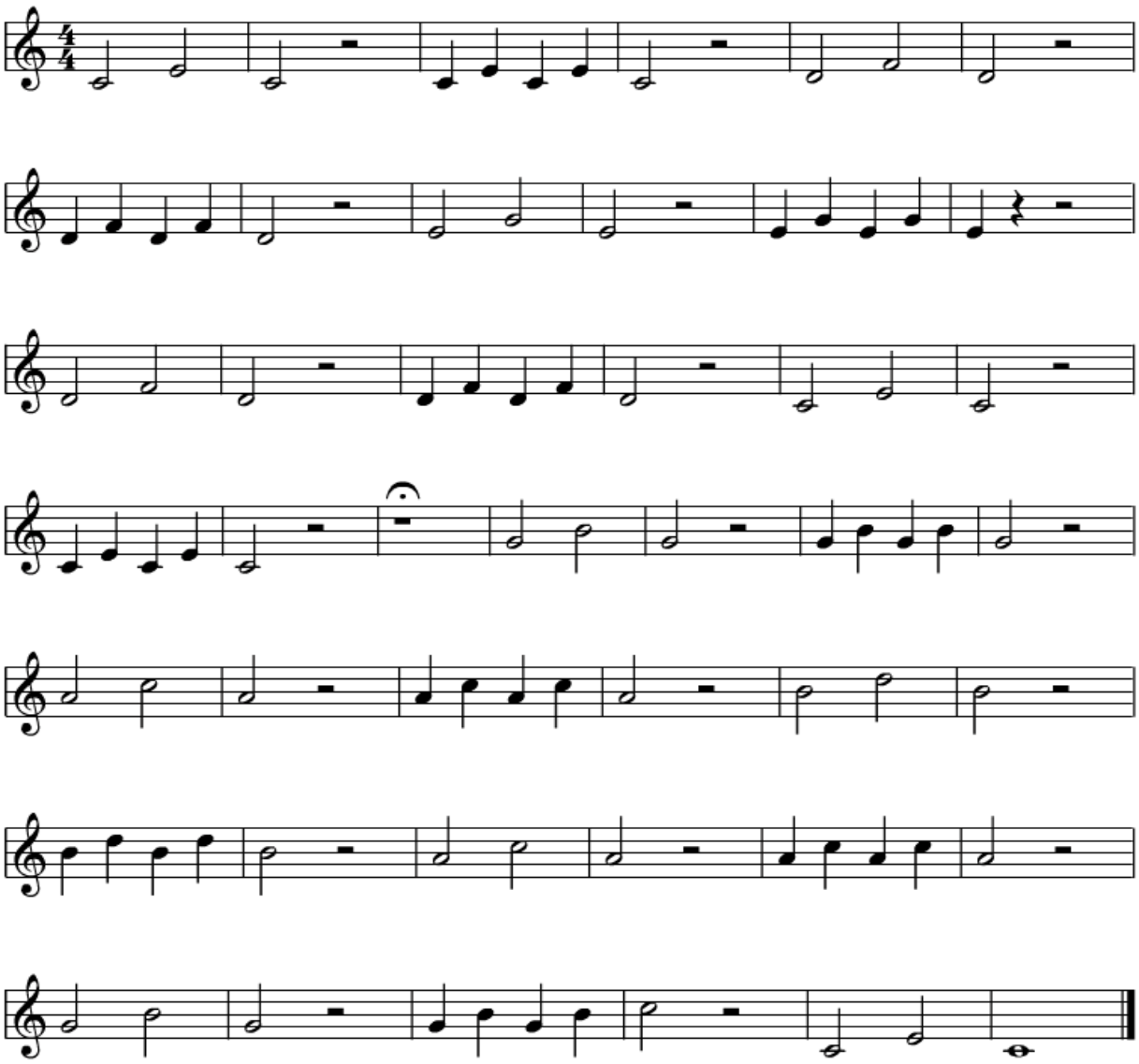


SOLFEGGIO SYLLABLE SHEETS – SET 2
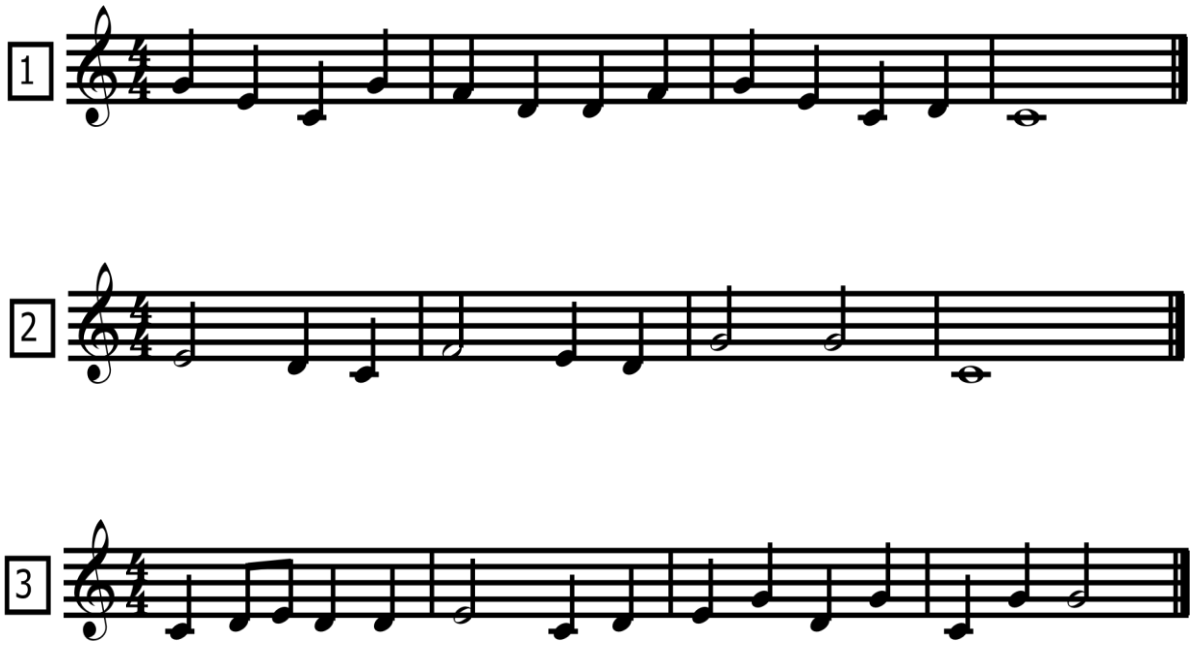


TREBLE CLEF SIGHT-READING EXERCISE WORKSHEET
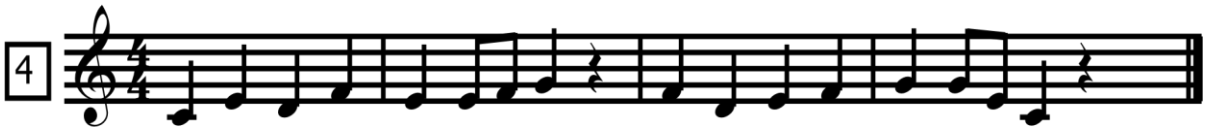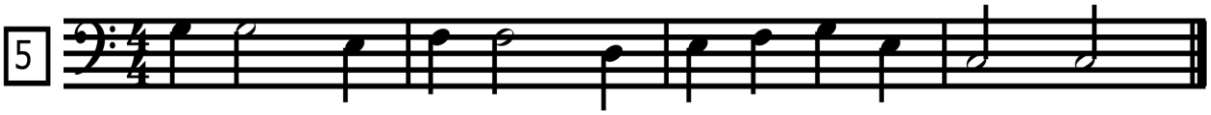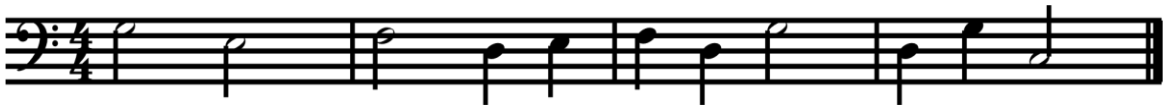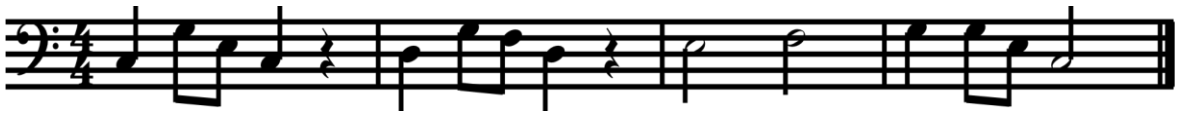






MORE SIGHT READING EXERCISES



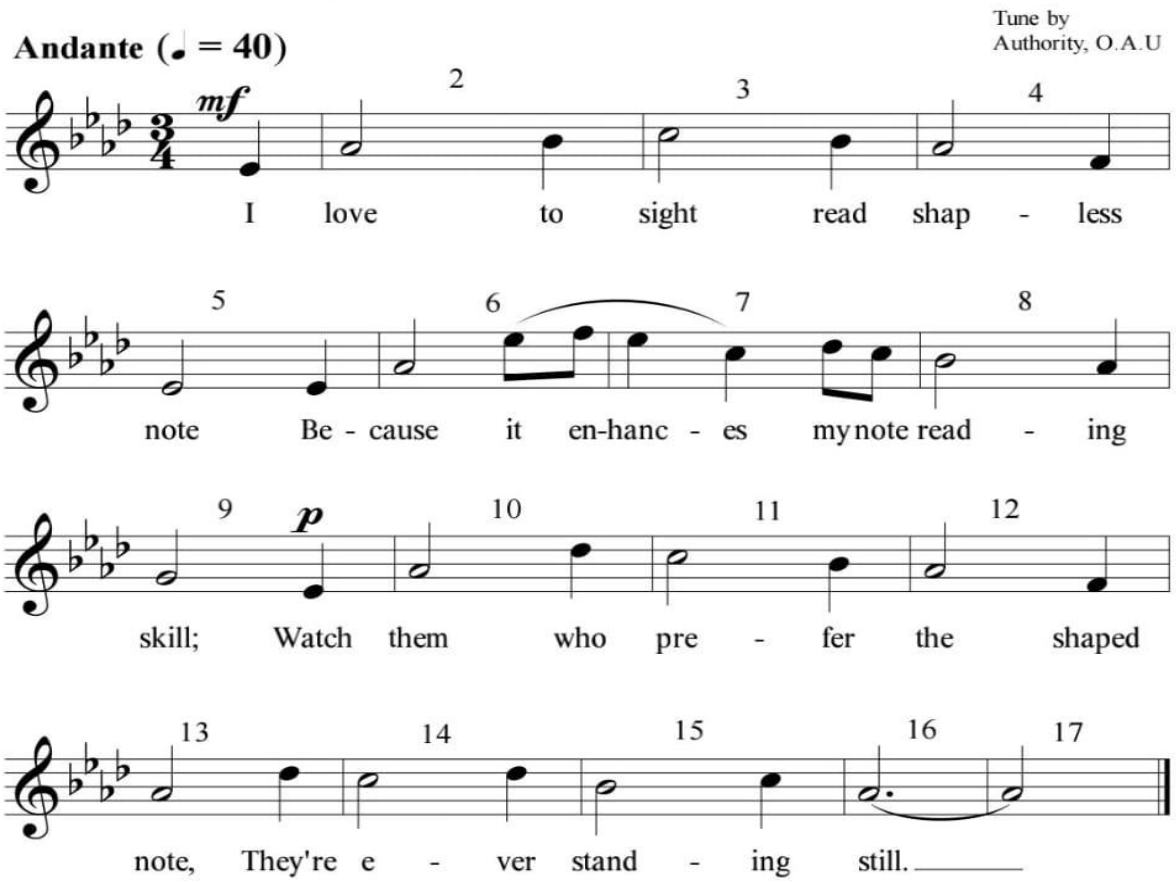




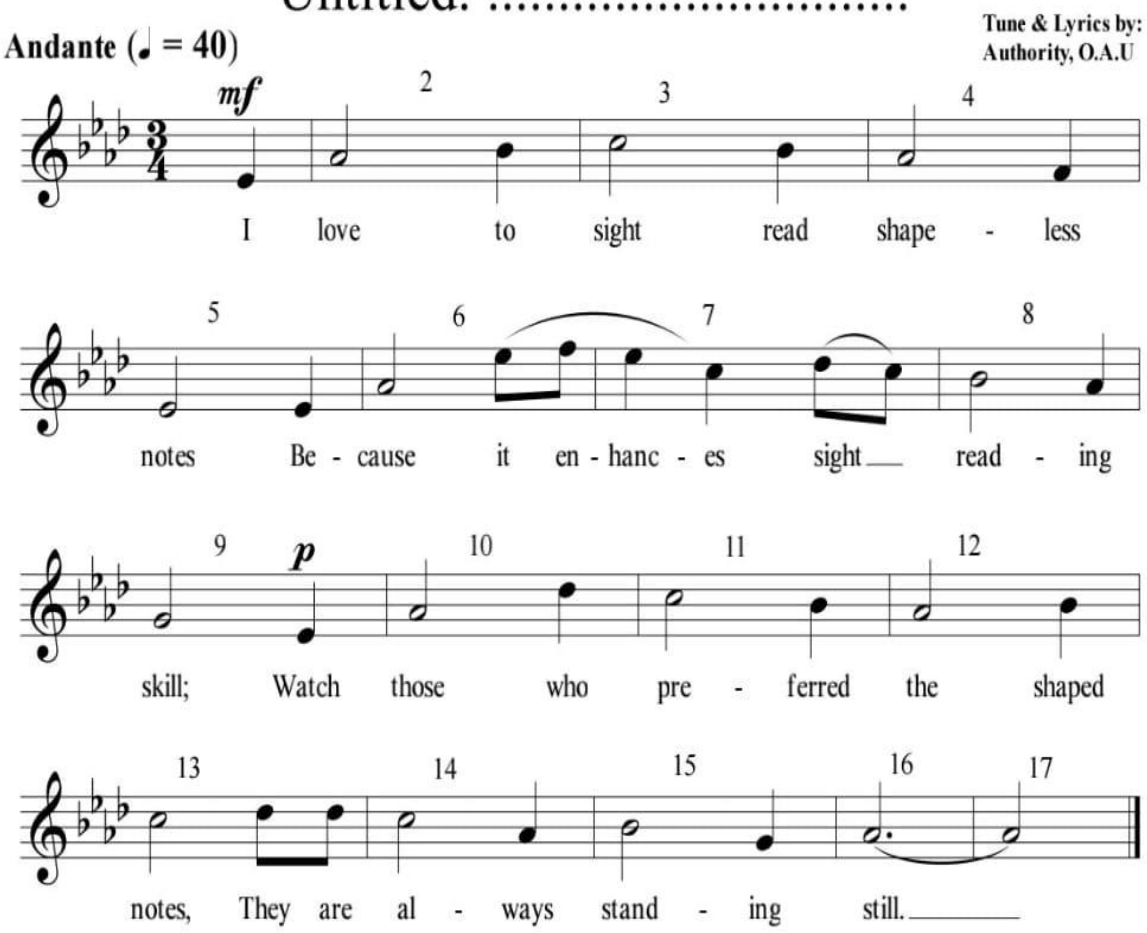




Sing and Record: Assignment



Untitled: .....



QUESTIONS:

1. Sing, record and send this pice through voice note on whatsApp, to the platform.
2. What title will you give this piece? .....
3. What is (♩ = 40) called ..... and what does it mean?

.....

4. What is the formal structure of this piece? .....
5. What are the curved lines in measures 6 & 7 .....and 16 & 17 .....called?
6. The piece begins with what volume? .....
7. The straight line connecting the last 2 notes in bar 6, 7, 13 is called what? .....
8. Which words that form a rhyme in the piece? ..... and .....
9. The bar that begins the piece is incomplete, what is it called? .....and how was it made complete in the piece? .....

.....

10. What is the relative minor of the key of the piece?.....

Chapter 22

MUSICAL TERMS

Musical Terms and Glossary Back to Music There are probably thousands of different terms and words used in music throughout the world. Various composers and music writers may use these terms in different ways. We've tried to take the most used terms and give some basic definitions here. Many of the music terms listed below come from the Italian language. That is because Italy was where many of these terms were first introduced. List of Musical Terms:

A cappella - singing without any instruments
Adagio - slow
Allegro - to play music brisk and happily, sometimes fast
Alto - high pitched, an alto voice is lower than a soprano, but higher than a tenor
Andante - moderate tempo or pace of music
Arpeggio - notes of a one chord are played quickly, one after the other.
Bass - low, the lowest of the voices and the lowest part of the harmony
Bravura - to play music boldly
Bridge - the part of a song that transitions between two main parts
Capo - the beginning
Chord - when three or more notes are played at the same time. There are many different types of chords or combinations of notes that can be played in music.
Coda - the end, tail, or closing section of a song
Common time - this is a typical beat of 4 beats per measure. Many songs have this timing and it is indicated by a "C" or haft circle.
Crescendo - growing steadily louder
Dissonance - a combination or quality of sounds that sound unstable
Dolce - to play a piece of music sweetly
Forte - to play music loudly or strongly
Harmony - when several notes or chords come together to create a certain sound.
Improvisation - making up the song or melody as you play
Key - a musical key is when the notes of a song are centred on a certain note or class of notes that sound "right" when played.
Legato - to play music smoothly, to blend notes together
Lento - slowly
Measure - the period or time frame of song that has the entire timing. The measure is then repeated over and over during the song.
Meter - a pattern of strong and soft beats throughout the music

Octave - In music, an octave has all notes (A,B,C,D,E,F,G) as well as their sharps and flats included. This octave is repeated in both higher and lower pitches. So the next higher A note, after the note you are playing, is considered one octave higher.

Pizzicato - when you pluck the strings on a stringed instrument, rather than playing them with a bow

Score - this is the written down version of music. Generally for a complex piece that shows the music for a number of musical instruments.

Solo - played by a single musical instrument or voice

Sonata - a song written for one or more instruments playing solo

Soprano - the highest of the singing voices

Sotto voce - quietly

Staccato - when each music note is played sharply and by itself.

Stanza - the verse of a song

Tempo - timing or speed of the music

Tenor - a range of voice that is between the bass and the alto.

Vibrato - the repeating changing of the pitch of a note

8va, 8vb – 8va instructs the performer to play the notes one octave away from where they are notated. Generally if the "8va" is located above the written notes, the performer should play the notes one octave higher than where they are written. Likewise if "8va" is written below the notes, then the performer should play them one octave lower than where they are written. Some composers use "8vb" to indicate one octave below. These indications are also often accompanied by dotted lines to indicate the duration of the octave change. At the conclusion of the octave change, composers often indicate to start playing the notes exactly where written with the term "loco". See also: "loco".

15ma – in the same way that "8va" instructs performers to play the written notes one octave higher or lower, "15ma" is used to indicate a change of two octaves. See also: "8va".

A

A piacere – see "piacere".

A tempo – a performance indication that instructs the performer to perform the music at the previous tempo. This sort of indication often appears after a "ritardando" or other temporary "tempo" altering indication.

Absolute music – music that contains no extra-musical references. This kind of music usually does not contain any kind of descriptive titles. Examples of pieces of this type would include most sonatas and concertos. See also: program music.

Accelerando – becoming faster (usually abbreviated: accel.). See also: "stringendo".

Accent – emphasizing a tone by playing it louder than the tones around it. See also: "articulation".

Acciaccatura – literally: to crush. A type of "ornament" (usually in 17th and 18th century keyboard music) in which a "dissonant" note is played at the same time as a "consonant" note.

See also: "ornament", "mordent", "turn", "appoggiatura", "grace notes", "and trill "," Nachschlag".

Accidental – in musical notation, any of the symbols used to raise or lower a pitch by one-two "half steps" that are not placed in the "key signature". See also: "flat", "sharp", "natural", "half step", "key signature".

Accompaniment – the part of a musical "texture" that plays a supportive role usually in order to accompany a "melody". See also: "melody", "texture", "homophonic texture".

Ad libitum – at the pleasure of the performer. Usually it is used to indicate that a part of a piece may be omitted (in a piece with several instruments or voices) or it can indicate that the performer can "improvise" "ornamentation" or brand new material (such as a "cadenza") or it could indicate that the performer can vary the "tempo". See also" improvisation", "ornamentation", "cadenza", "tempo".

Adagio – tempo indication. Slow. Faster than largo and slower than lento. See also "tempo".

Affettuoso – a performance indication that instructs the performer to perform the music "affectionately" or "tenderly".

Affrettando – a performance indication that instructs the performer to perform the music in a hurried manner.

Agitato – a performance indication that instructs the performer to perform the music in an agitated or excited manner.

Alla – "in the style of". This term usually comes before another word. Example: "alla marcia" is a performance indication that instructs the performer to perform the music in the style of a march.

Allargando – broadening and becoming slower. This slowing down in tempo is usually accompanied by a crescendo. The idea is to produce the overall effect of the feel of the music becoming more broad.

Allegretto – tempo indication. Not as fast as allegro. Also usually with a sense of a light character. See also "tempo".

Allegro – tempo indication. Fast. See also "tempo".

Amabile – a performance indication that instructs the performer to perform the music in a sweet (amiable) style. See also: "dolce".

Amoroso – a performance indication that instructs the performer to perform the music "lovingly". See also: "amabile", "dolce".

Andante – tempo indication. Literally "walking", a medium slow tempo. See also "tempo".

Ancora – "again" (Italian). The French version is: "encore". Besides the typical usage in English for this word, it can also be used in combination with other Italian words: "ancora più forte" essentially meaning to perform even louder.

Animato – "animated". A performance indication that instructs the performer to perform the music more animated or becoming more animated. This usually refers to playing in a faster tempo.

Animé – animated (French). See also: gravement, lent, vif, vite.

Appassionato – impassioned.

Appoggiatura – a type of "ornament" consisting of two notes: the "appoggiatura" itself is most often a "dissonance" (most often a "note" one step above the principle "note") happening on a rhythmically strong "beat" followed by the principle "note" on a rhythmically less strong beat. It is usually indicated in the same manner as a "grace note". See also: "ornament", "mordent", "turn", "trill", "grace notes", "and acciaccatura "," Nachschlag".

Arioso – in piano music, it refers to an "arioso" style. This means that the music is songlike (with a clear singing melody) and therefore reminiscent of an "aria". The most well-known example of this is found in Beethoven's Op. 110 Piano Sonata.

Arpeggio – a "chord" whose "notes" are sounded one at a time rather than simultaneously. See also: "chord".

Articulation – this term refers to the various different ways that tones are performed according to their initial "attack" and the decay of the tone. See also: "staccato", "legato", "accent", "marcato", "sforzando".

Assai – literally means "much" or "very much". One common usage is "allegro assai" meaning very fast.

Augmented triad – a "triad" composed of four half-steps between the bottom two "pitches" and four half-steps between the upper two "pitches". This chord can be indicated as such the following ways: Aug, +. See also: "triad", "minor", "diminished", "Major".

Authentic cadence – a type of "cadence" involving two "chords": "dominant" progressing to "tonic". See also: "cadence", "chord", "phrase", "dominant", "tonic".

B

Bar line – a vertical line used to mark off measures.

Baroque Era – in "Western Art Music, the style period lasting from roughly 1600-1750. For more details on its characteristics, see "Description of Four Style Periods". See also: "Classical Era", "Romantic Era", Modern Era", "Western Art Music".

Bass clef – a symbol placed at the beginning of the staff indicating the specific names of the lines and spaces for the staff on which it is placed. The bass clef is also called the "F clef" since it indicates that the fourth line (counting up from the bottom) is the "F" below "middle C". See also "clef", "treble clef", "staff".

Beat – regular, recurrent pulsation that divides music into equal units of time.

Ben, bene – literally means "well". The most common usage is "ben marcato" meaning well marked. See also "marcato".

Binary form – a 2-Part form: AB. Usually each section is set apart by repeats. See also: "form"

Brillante – literally means "brilliant". This usually refers to a manner of playing that should be very vivacious or excited.

Brio – literally "spirit". Typically found with "allegro con brio" meaning "fast with spirit".

C

Cadence – a resting place at the end of a phrase. See also: "authentic cadence", "plagal cadence", "half cadence", "deceptive cadence", "tonic triad", "dominant triad", "phrase".

Cadenza – most often found during a concerto, this is a point in the music during which the orchestra stops playing for several minutes and the soloist performs material from earlier in the piece usually presented in a showy, flashy manner. This was originally improvised during the "classical era". Also typical of "classical era" "concertos", when it is time for the orchestra to come back in, the soloist performs a "trill". The cadenza was typically located at the end of the first movement during the "classical era". See also: "concerto", "double exposition", "classical era", "trill".

Calando – decreasing in speed and getting softer.

Cantabile – literally "singable" or in a song-like manner. It refers to a manner of playing that emphasizes the lyrical qualities of a passage.

Capriccio – a humorous or bizarre piece. "a capriccio" indicates to perform in a humorous style.

Chamber music – music that is generally designed to be performed in the intimate setting of a room, rather than in a large, public concert hall (though chamber music is often performed in large concert halls these days). It is usually performed by a small group of 2-9 musicians, with one player per part.

Chord – a combination of 3 or more tones sounded together. See also: "harmony", "triad", "tonic", "dominant".

Chromatic scale – a "scale" consisting entirely of "half steps". See also: "half step", "scale".

Classical Era – in "Western Art Music", the style period lasting from roughly 1750-1820. For more details on its characteristics, see "Description of Four Style Periods". See also "Baroque Era", "Romantic Era", "Modern Era", "Western Art Music".

Clef – a symbol placed at the beginning of a staff to indicate the names of the lines and spaces. See also "treble clef", "bass clef", "staff".

Coda – literally "tail". A coda is the "end" of the piece. Usually this term is used with "DC al coda" which instructs the performer to return to the beginning of the piece, then go to the coda (when another symbol or text indicates to do so). It is also often found with "DS al coda" meaning to return to "the sign" then to the coda.

Compound meter – a meter in which the basic rhythmic pulse (or beat) is divided into groups of three. The best way to determine if a meter is a compound meter is by looking at the top number of the time signature. If the top number is a 6, 9, 12, 15, etc. then you have a compound meter. Examples of compound meters include: 6/8, 6/4, 9/8, 12/8, and 6/16. See also "meter", "simple meter", "measure", "beat", "measure".

Compound Ternary Form – (often called "Minuet and Trio Form") This is a very large "ternary form" in which each of the "A" and "B" sections contains its own "binary form". It can be diagrammed as follows: a,b; c,d; a,b. In this way "a,b" is the first main section followed by "c,d" (2nd main section) which is then followed by an exact repeat (most often) of the first main setion. See also: "form", "binary form", "ternary form".

Comodo – (also "comodamente") literally "comfortable" or "easy". Usually referring to tempo, it indicates that the tempo should produce the effect of the music sounding comfortable or easy (not rushed or hurried).

Con – literally "with". Typical usages include "con moto" (with motion – meaning that the tempo should move along and not drag), "con sordino" (with mutes – see "con sordino"), "con brio" (with spirit – see "brio"), "con dolore" (with sorrow), "con forza" (with force), "con fuoco" (with fire), "con giusto" (with taste), "con passione" (with passion), "con spirito" (with spirit – similar to "con brio").

Con sordino – "with mutes". In piano music, this term can be used to mean that the performer should use the left pedal. See also: "senza sordini", "una corda", "tre corde".

Concerto – the solo concerto features a soloist accompanied by an entire orchestra. For example, a piano concerto would feature a pianist on stage with an orchestra behind him/her. Concertos are usually three movements long: the first movement is usually fast and in "sonata form", the second movement is usually slow and in "ternary form", and the third movement is usually fast and in "rondo form". See also: "sonata form", "ternary form", "rondo form", "movement", "double exposition", "cadenza".

Consonance – the perceived stability of two or more "tones". See also: "dissonance", "chord", "triad", "tone".

Contemporary Era – in "Western Art Music", the style period lasting from roughly 1900-present day. For more details on its characteristics, see "Description of Four Style Periods". See also "Baroque Era", "Classical Era", "Romantic Era", "Western Art Music".

Counterpoint – see "polyphonic texture".

Crescendo – becoming louder. See also "dynamics".

D

Da capo, D.C. – literally "to the head" meaning to return to the beginning of a piece (usually abbreviated "DC").

Dal segno, D.S. – literally "to the sign" meaning to return to the sign (looks like a sideways "S" with a slash through it). This term is usually used with "DS al coda" indicating to return to the sign then proceed to the coda at the indicated time or "DS al fine" meaning to return to the sign then "finish" the piece at the "fine".

Decrescendo – becoming softer. The same as diminuendo. See also "dynamics".

Delicato – literally "delicately" meaning to perform the music in a delicate manner.

Diminished triad – a "triad" composed of three half-steps between the bottom two "pitches" and three half-steps between the upper two "pitches". This chord can be indicated as such the following ways: dim., o. See also: "triad", "minor", "Major", "Augmented".

Diminuendo – becoming softer. Generally considered the same as decrescendo. See also "dynamics".

Dissonance – the perceived instability of two or more tones. See also: "consonance", "chord", "triad", "tone".

Dolce – (also dolcissimo). "sweetly" This is a performance indication that instructs the performer to perform the music in a sweet manner. See also: "amabile".

Dolente – literally "sad" meaning to perform the music in a sad-sounding manner.

Dominant chord – the "chord" built upon the fifth "scale degree". It is "Major" in a "Major" "key" and "minor" in a "minor" "key" although it is almost always altered to be "Major" in a minor key. It has a tendency to gravitate towards the "tonic chord". See also: "chord", "scale degree", "authentic cadence", "Major", "minor".

Doppio Movimento – indicates a sudden change in tempo that is twice as fast. See also: "tempo".

Double bar line – a "bar line" (see "bar line") that have two vertical lines with the second one being thicker. The double bar line indicates the end of a piece of music.

Double Exposition – a type of sonata form most often found in the first movement of "classical era" concertos. It features two expositions: the first is performed entirely by the orchestra and the second includes the soloist. See also: "concerto", "sonata form", "cadenza", "movement", "classical era".

Downbeat – the first, or stressed beat of the measure. See also "beat", "rhythm".

Dynamics – the relative loudness and softness of sound. From loudest to softest, the most common dynamic indications are: fortissimo, forte, mezzo forte, mezzo piano, piano, pianissimo. Other terms indicate changes in loudness or softness such as decrescendo and crescendo.

E

Eighth note – a kind of "note" that looks like a black oval with a stick attached vertically to it and then one flag attached to the far end of that stick. The name is derived from the fact that its duration is 1/8 that of a "whole note". In 4/4 time, the "eighth note" receives half a beat of duration. See also "note", "rest", "beat".

Espressivo – literally "expressively" meaning to play in an expressive manner. I have often found this term to be somewhat strange (Why should composers have to indicate when we should play "expressively"? Shouldn't we always do that?). Exactly how one should realize this term in the performance of any given piece depends upon the situation. Your teacher should be able to help you decide how to best interpret this term in a specific situation.

F

Facile, facilmente – literally "simple" meaning to play the music in a manner that sounds simple. See also "semplice".

Feroce – literally "ferocious" or "fierce" meaning to play the music in a manner that sounds ferocious.

Fine – literally "finish". This term is used to indicate the end of a piece (usually found at a double bar line). See also "da capo" and "dal segno".

Flat – a symbol placed to the left of a "note" indicating to perform the "pitch" one "half step" lower than the "natural" "pitch" that is notated. The symbol itself looks like: b. A double flat (bb) indicates to perform the pitch two half steps lower. See also: "interval", "sharp", "natural", "half step".

Form – the organization of musical ideas in time. Form usually deals with the organization of music on a larger scale. See also: binary form, ternary form, sonata form, compound ternary form, rondo form, theme and variations.

Forte – loud. (often abbreviated: "f") This instructs the performer to play loudly. This is louder than mezzo forte and softer than fortissimo. See also "dynamics".

Fortissimo – very loud (often abbreviated: "ff") This instructs the performer to play very loudly. This is louder than forte. See also "dynamics"

Frequency – the number of vibrations per second produced by a sound (Hertz – Hz.)

Furioso – literally "furious" or "violent" meaning to perform the music in a furious manner.

G

Geschwind – quick, fast (German). See also "langsam", "mäßig", "schnell", "lebhaft", "rasch".

Giocoso – literally "playful" meaning to play the music in a playful manner.

Grace note – a type of "ornament" indicated with smaller type than the notes around it (often crossed out as well). The "grace note" is not a rhythmically precise "note" and it takes its time from one of the notes around it. See also: "ornament", "mordent", "turn", "appoggiatura", "trill", "acciaccatura", "Nachschlag".

Grand Staff – the resulting combination of the two (treble on top and bass below) staves (plural for staff) placed next to each other and connected with a brace on the far left side and bar lines that run the full height of both staves.

Grandioso – literally "grandly" meaning to play the music in a grand manner.

Grave – tempo indication. Very slow and solemn, serious. Usually slower than adagio though sometimes roughly equivalent.

Gravement – gravely, solemnly (French). See also: lent, vif, animé, vite.

Grazioso – literally "graceful" meaning to perform the music in a graceful manner.

H

Half note – a kind of "note" that looks like an oval with a stick (stem) attached vertically to it. The name is derived from the fact that its duration is half that of a "whole note". In 4/4 time, the "half note" receives two beats of duration. See also "note", "rest", "beat".

Half step – the "interval" from one pitch to the very next. On the piano, it is the distance from one piano key to the very next white or black key. See also: "interval", "whole step", "sharp", "flat", "natural", "accidental".

Harmony – refers to the relationships of two or more tones sounded simultaneously and the way such relationships are organized in time. See also: "chord", "tonic", "dominant", "cadence".

Homophonic texture – one main melody accompanied by chords. See also: "texture", "monophonic texture", "polyphonic texture", "melody", "accompaniment".

I

Impetuoso – literally "impetuous" or "raging" meaning to play the music in an impetuous manner.

Improvisation – the process in which the performer creates original material during performance. Often improvisation must happen within certain guidelines such as following a particular progression of chords.

Inquieto – literally "restless" or "anxious" meaning to perform the music in a restless manner.

Instrument – ANY mechanism, other than the voice, that produces *musical* sounds.

Interval – the distance between two tones.

K

Key – the way in which the pitch relationships indicate the central tone about which the harmonic scheme of the piece revolves. Music that is in a "key" is usually either in a Major Key or a minor key. This kind of music is also described as being "tonal". See also: "Major Key", "minor key", "tonality", "atonality".

Key Signature – an arrangement of sharps or flats located at the far left of every staff. This collection of sharps or flats indicates the "pitches" to be used during the given piece of music. For example, if an F# is indicated in the "key signature", then every "F" encountered in the piece must be played as F# unless otherwise indicated. See also: "key", "tonal", "sharp", "flat", "accidental".

L

Langsam – slowly (German). See also "mäßig", "schnell", "lebhaft", "rasch".

Larghetto – tempo indication. Not quite as slow as largo. See also "tempo".

Largo – tempo indication. Slow and broad. See also "tempo".

Leading tone – the 7th note in a scale located one "half step" below "tonic". In a "minor key", the leading tone must be altered with an "accidental" in order to be a true leading tone. See also: "scale degree", "scale"., "Major key", "minor key".

Lebhaft – lively (like the Italian "vivace"). (German) See also "langsam", "mäßig", "schnell", "rasch".

Ledger Line – a short line running parallel to the lines of the staff and located above or below the staff as needed when the staff itself does not posses enough lines and/or spaces to notate the desired pitch. The line represents a continuation of the lines of the staff.

Legato – a manner of playing (a kind of "articulation") in which the means of connecting one not to another produces the effect of sounding smooth and connected. In the most literal sense, legato is holding one note until the next is sounded without any silence in between the two. See also "articulation" and "staccato".

Leggiero – lightly, delicately.

Lent – slow (French). See also: gravement, vif, animé, vite.

Lento – tempo indication. Slow. Faster than adagio and slower than andante. See also "tempo".

L'istesso tempo – an indication used when the "meter" of a piece of music changes, but the speed of the beat stays the same. For example, when changing from 4/4 to 2/2, the quarter note pulse in 4/4 will equal the half note pulse in 2/2. See also: "beat", "meter", "tempo".

M

Maestoso – literally "majestic" meaning to perform the music in a majestic manner.

Major Key – a "key" in which the collection of notes is based upon the "Major Scale". See also: "key", "Major Scale".

Major Scale – a type of "scale" in which the pattern of "whole steps" and "half steps" is as follows: WWhWWWh. See also: "scale", "whole step", "half step", "key", "Major Key".

Major Triad – a "triad" composed of four half-steps between the bottom two "pitches" and three half-steps between the upper two "pitches". This chord can be indicated as such the following ways: Maj., M. See also: "triad", "minor triad", "diminished", "Augmented".

Marcato – (marc.) marked or emphasized.

Martellato – hammered. To play with a hammered touch.

Marziale – literally "martial". This usually refers to a "march" when found in music and is often interpreted as meaning "march-like".

Mäßig – moderately (German). See also "langsam", "schnell", "lebhaft", "rasch".

Measure – a group containing a fixed number of beats.

Melody – a series of single notes which add up to a recognizable whole. Usually a tune that lends itself to singing. See also: "accompaniment", "texture", "homophonic texture", "monophonic texture", "polyphonic texture".

meno – literally "less". It is often paired with the term "mosso" meaning motion. "Meno mosso" therefore indicates a change in tempo: less movement or slower. Literally: less motion. This change is usually sudden, as if indicating a new tempo. See also "più mosso".

Mesto – literally "sad" or "melancholy" meaning to perform the music in a sad manner.

Meter – the organization of beats into regular groups. The same as "time signature". A meter is classified according to how many beats there are in each measure and how the beat is divided (into two parts in simple meters and three parts in compound meters). Meters with two beats per measure are usually called duple (such as 2/4, 2/2, 6/4, 6/8, and 6/16). Meters with three beats per measure are usually called triple (such as 3/4, 3/8, 9/8, and 9/16). Meters with four beats per measure are usually called quadruple (such as 4/4, 12/8, and 12/16). See also "simple meter", "compound meter", "beat", "measure", and "rhythm".

Mezza voce – ("half voice") To play with a restrained sound – half voice. See also: "sotto voce".

Mezzo forte – moderately loud (often abbreviated: "mf") This instructs the performer to play moderately loud. This is louder than mezzo piano and softer than forte. See also "dynamics".

Mezzo piano – moderately soft (often abbreviated: "mp") This instructs the performer to play moderately soft. This is louder than piano and softer than mezzo forte. See also "dynamics".

Minor Chord - see "Minor Triad".

Minor Key – a "key" in which the collection of notes is based upon the natural "minor scale". See also: "key", "minor scale", "scale", "relative keys", "parallel keys".

Minor Scale – a "scale" in which the "half step" between the 2nd and 3rd "scale degrees" is characteristic. There are three types of minor scales: natural (the notes are derived from the "minor key" signature and have the following pattern: WhWWhWW), harmonic (characterized by a raised 7th "scale degree" or "leading tone" and having the following pattern: WhWWh – W+h – h), and melodic (characterized by a raised 6th and 7th scale degree ascending and using the natural minor scale descending). See also: "scale", "minor key", "key", "scale degree", "leading tone".

Minor Triad – a "triad" composed of three half-steps between the bottom two "pitches" and four half-steps between the upper two "pitches". This chord can be indicated as such the following ways: min, m, - . See also: "triad", "Major triad", "diminished", "Augmented".

Minuet and Trio Form – see "Compound Ternary Form".

Misterioso – literally "mysterious" meaning to perform the music in a manner that allows it to sound mysterious.

Moderato – tempo indication. Moderate, or medium tempo. See also "tempo".

Modern Era - see "Contemporary Era".

Modulation – a shift from one "key" to another within the same piece of music. See also: "key", "tonality".

Molto – very. For example, allegro molto: very fast.

Monophonic texture – (one sound) singing or playing alone or in unison. Usually one "melody". See also: "texture", "homophonic texture", "polyphonic texture", "melody", "accompaniment".

Mordent – a type of "ornament" consisting of three pitches: the principle (notated) note is played then quickly followed by the note a half step below and just as quickly returning to the principle note. The mordent is most often indicated by a horizontal squiggly line with a straight vertical line through its middle. See also: "ornament", "trill", "turn", "appoggiatura", "grace notes", "acciaccatura", "Nachschlag".

Morendo – dying away, fading away. Usually accomplished by becoming slower and softer, but the idea is to produce the overall effect of dying away. See also "perdendosi".

Motive – a short rhythmic or melodic idea that is sufficiently well defined to retain its identity when elaborated or transformed and combined with other material. Much shorter than a "theme". See also: "melody", "theme", "phrase".

Movement – a piece that sounds fairly complete and independent but is part of a larger composition. Pieces generally have anywhere from 1-4 movements with 3 movements being the most common setup. Separate movements provide more variety within one piece without actually having several different pieces. Each movement usually has its own unique character: fast, slow, fast is the most common setup of a piece in three movements.

N

Nachschlag – a type of "ornament" that is usually the termination of a "trill". Most often this includes one "note" lower than the principle note, the principle note, and then the note following the trilled note. See also "ornament", "mordent", "turn", "appoggiatura", "grace notes", "acciaccatura", "Nachschlag".

Natural – a symbol placed to the left of a "note" indicating to perform the "pitch" without any alterations higher or lower than the note name itself. This is always going to be a white key on the piano. See also: "interval", "flat", "sharp", "half step".

Non troppo – not too much. Usually used in association with allegro: allegro non troppo (fast but not too fast).

Note – an object usually placed on a staff used to indicate both pitch and duration (rhythm). Except for the "whole note", it includes both a "notehead" and a "stem". The stem is placed on the left side of the notehead when going down and on the right side of the notehead when going up. See also "whole note", "half note", "quarter note", "eighth note", "sixteenth note", "rhythm".

O

Octatonic Scale – a "scale" consisting of an alternation between "whole steps" and "half steps" between successive pitches. See also: "scale", "whole steps", "half steps".

Octave – the interval produced by two tones that sound similar and have the same note name, but are 12 half-steps apart. Each ascending successive octave doubles in frequency (i.e. 220Hz, 440Hz…). See also "interval".

Opus – (Latin for "work") Usually abbreviated (Op.) and usually paired with a number to designate a work in its chronological relationship to a composer's other works. "Numbers" also often accompany the opus numbers. This is the number of a piece within an Opus since there are often several different pieces within an opus. For example, Beethoven's Op. 2 contains three piano sonatas: Op. 2, No. 1 in f minor, Op. 2, No. 2 in A Major, and Op. 2, No. 3 in C Major.

Ornament – a symbol of ornamentation. See "ornamentation".

Ornamentation – the modification of music usually by adding additional notes to a "melody". Ornamentation is a process of decorating a melody with additional notes. See also "trill", "mordent", "turn", "appoggiatura", "grace notes", "acciaccatura", "Nachschlag".

P

Parallel Key Signatures –Major and minor keys that share the same "tonic" and have different "key signatures". For example: C Major and c minor have the same tonic but different key signatures (C Major is no sharps or flats, and c minor has three flats). See also: "key", "Major Key", "minor key", "key signature", "relative keys".

Pentatonic Scale – a "scale" consisting of five notes. The most common pentatonic scale can be derived from playing the five black keys on the piano (any three black-key group and the neighboring two black-key group). See also: "scale".

Perdendosi – dying away. Usually in performance this includes becoming slower and softer. See also "morendo".

Pesante – literally "heavy" meaning to perform the music in a manner that makes it sound heavy.

Phrase – a musical sentence or idea; analogous to a phrase in language, it is a shorter unit which makes up a complete "melody". Phrases are usually punctuated by "cadences". See also: "melody", "cadence", "periodic phrasing", "antecedent phrase", "consequent phrase".

Piacere – usually "a piacere" meaning "at the pleasure" of the performer. It is a a performance indication that instructs the performer to perform the music freely – usually in terms of tempo. See also: "rubato".

Pianissimo – very soft (often abbreviated: "pp") This instructs the performer to play very softly. This is softer than piano. See also "dynamics".

Piano – soft. (often abbreviated: "p") This instructs the performer to play softly. This is softer than mezzo piano and louder than pianissimo. See also "dynamics".

Pitch – the relative highness or lowness of a sound.

Più – "more". See "più mosso" for a typical combination of "più" with another word.

Più mosso – Indicates a change in tempo: more movement or faster. Literally: more motion. This change is usually sudden, as if indicating a new tempo.

Pizzicato – this indication refers to a manner of playing a string instrument during which the string is plucked with the finger. Some composers like to call upon pianists to imitate this type of plucked sound, and therefore this term can be found as a performance indication in piano music. This is like a very crisp staccato. Franz Liszt is an example of a composer that used this performance indication in his piano music. See also: "staccato", "articulation".

Plagal Cadence – ("false cadence") a type of "cadence" involving two "chords": "subdominant" (IV chord) progressing to "tonic". See also: "cadence", "chord", "phrase", "subdominant", "tonic".

Poco – little. Examples: poco a poco (little by little, usually meaning to change something a little bit at a time – such as tempo: poco a poco rit. – slow down little by little), poco allegro (not very fast allegro).

Polyphonic texture – (many sounding) simultaneous performance of two or more melodic lines of relative equal interest. See also: "homophonic texture", "monophonic texture", "texture", "melody", "accompaniment".

Polyphony – see "polyphonic texture".

Prestissimo – tempo indication. As fast as possible. See also "tempo".

Presto – tempo indication. Very fast. See also "tempo".

Program Music – music that contains some extra-musical reference. These sorts of pieces usually have descriptive titles. Examples include: Robert Schumann's "Carnival", Franz Liszt's "Liebestraume". See also: "absolute music".

Q

Quarter note – a kind of "note" that looks like a black oval with a stick attached vertically to it. The name is derived from the fact that its duration is ¼ that of a "whole note". In 4/4 time, the "quarter note" receives one beat of duration. See also "note", "rest", "beat".

Quasi – literally "almost" or "nearly". This term is usually paired with some other term. For example "quasi allegro" would indicate to select of performance tempo that is almost fast.

R

Rallentando – Indicates a change in tempo: slowing down (abbreviation: rall.). Essentially the same as "ritardando". See also "ritenuto", "ritardando", "allargando", "stringendo", "accelerando", "allargando".

Range – the distance between the lowest and highest tones that a voice or instrument can produce.

Rasch – quick, lively (German). See also "langsam", "mäßig", "schnell", "lebhaft".

Register – part of the total range of an instrument or voice.

Relative Key Signatures –Major and minor keys that share the same "key signature". For example: *C Major* and *a minor* have the same key signature. See also: "key", "Major Key", "minor key", "key signature", "parallel keys".

Rest – a symbol usually placed on a staff to notate a duration of silence. Each kind of "note" value ("whole note", "half note", etc.) can also be replaced with a rest. This way while a "half note" indicates two beats of sound production in 4/4 times, a half "rest" indicates two beats of silence.

Rhythm – generally: "the flow of music through time." specifically: the particular arrangement of note lengths in a piece of music. However the true essence of rhythm is much more ***expressively*** realized. For example, a triple meter should have a very different "feel" than a quadruple meter. The importance of rhythmic nuance and the degree to which specific stylized pieces depend upon thoughtful rhythmic inflection can not be fully realized without considering the rhythmic subtleties of different dances such as "Mazurkas", Viennese Waltzes, etc. In light of these considerations, one can see how it is possible to execute with *correct rhythm* yet not actually play "rhythmically". See also "beat", "measure", "bar line", "time signature", "meter", "whole note", "half note", "quarter note", "eighth note", "sixteenth note", "syncopation".

Rinforzando – becoming strong. Usually a sudden accent (see "sforzando"), but sometimes becoming louder over a short period of time (more quickly than with a crescendo). See also: "crescendo".

Ritardando – Indicates a change in tempo: slowing down (usually abbreviated: rit. or ritard.) Generally the same as rallentando but more gradual than ritenuto. See also "ritenuto", "rallentando", "allargando", "stringendo", "accelerando", "allargando".

Ritenuto – Indicates a change in tempo: slightly slower. Ritenuto usually indicates a more sudden change in tempo than ritardando and rallentando. See also "ritardando", "rallentando", "allargando", "stringendo", "accelerando", "allargando".

Romantic Era – in "Western Art Music", the style period lasting from roughly 1820-1900. For more details on its characteristics, see "Description of Four Style Periods". See also "Baroque Era", "Classical Era", "Contemporary Era", "Western Art Music".

Rondo Form – a "form" characterized by returning 1st section. It can be diagrammed several different ways including: ABACABA, ABABA. See also: "form".

Rubato – literally "stolen time". It is a manner of playing (acceptable in some styles without the need to be notated as such – unacceptable in other styles) in which the performer varies the tempo. It is a tool of expression most often employed in music of the "romantic era".

S

Scale – a series of different tones arranged from lowest to highest or highest to lowest. See also: "Major Scale", "minor scale", "chromatic scale", "whole-tone scale", "octatonic scale", "pentatonic scale".

Scale Degree – the notes in a scale numbered from one to seven (if you consider the eighth note a repeat of the first) in which the first note is "tonic" and the seventh note is the "leading tone". See also: "scale", "tonic", "leading tone".

Schnell – fast (German). See also "langsam", "mäßig", "lebhaft", "rasch".

Semplice – literally "simple" meaning to play the music in a manner that makes it sound simple. This term may be used to indicate that you should perform the music without ornamentation. See also "facile", "ornamentation".

Senza sordini – "without mutes". For the piano, to play without the use of the left pedal.

Sforzando – forced; Accented at least in relation to the prevailing dynamic but often simply loud. Often notated: sf or sfz.

Sharp – a symbol placed to the left of a "note" indicating to perform the "pitch" one "half step" higher than the "natural" "pitch" that is notated. The symbol itself looks like: #. A double sharp (x) indicates to perform the pitch two half steps higher. See also: "interval", "flat", "natural", "half step".

Simple Meter – a meter in which the basic rhythmic pulse (or beat) is divided into groups of two. The best way to determine if a meter is a simple meter is by looking at the top number of the time signature. If the top number is not a 6, 9, 12, 15, etc. then you have a simple meter. Examples of simple meters include: 4/4, 3/4, 2/4, 2/2, and 3/8. See also "meter", "simple meter", "measure", "beat", "measure".

Sixteenth note – a kind of "note" that looks like a black oval with a stick attached vertically to it and then two flags attached to the far end of that stick. The name is derived from the fact that its duration is 1/16 that of a "whole note". In 4/4 time, the "sixteenth note" receives 1/4 a beat of duration. See also "note", "rest", "beat".

Smorzando – dying away. Usually accomplished by getting slower and softer.

Sonata – a piece for an instrument. Not to be confused with "sonata form", a "sonata" is a work usually cast in three movements. The first movement is usually fast and in "sonata form", the second movement is usually slow and in "ternary form", and the third movement is usually fast and in "rondo form". See also: "instrument", "sonata form", "movement", "concerto", "ternary form", "rondo form".

Sonata Form – often called "sonata-allegro form", it features three main sections: exposition, development, recapitulation. The exposition contains the main material of the piece (usually a first and second theme) and also transports the music from the tonic key to a different key (usually the second theme is already in the new key). The development simply develops the material from the exposition (by excerpting parts of the first and/or second theme and often times changing it in one way or another). The development is the most unstable part of the piece and sets up the need for a return which is fulfilled by the recapitulation. The recapitulation presents both themes (usually both are heard) in the tonic key therefore producing a sense of resolution. See also: "form".

Sotto voce – ("under voice") to play in an undertone. See also: "mezza voce".

Staccato – a manner of playing (a kind of "articulation") in which a note produces the effect of sounding short and detached. In the most literal sense, staccato is holding the note for half of its notated value. Usually a staccato note also has a slightly sharper edge to the sound than a non-staccato note of equivalent duration (for example comparing a staccato quarter note versus an eighth note followed by an eighth rest). See also "articulation" and "legato".

Staff – a set of five horizontal lines on which notes are placed.

Strepitoso – noisy, boisterous.

Stringendo – pressing, becoming faster. Usually more intensifying than accelerando. See also: "accelerando".

Subdominant Chord – the "chord" built upon the fourth "scale degree". It is "Major" in a "Major" "key" and "minor" in a "minor" "key". See also: "chord", "scale degree", "plagal cadence", "Major", "minor".

Syncopation – generally: accenting an 'off-beat' note or a note that is not on a strong beat. This is often accomplished by accenting the space in between beats or by accenting weak beats.

T

Tempo – the "speed" of the beat. Common tempo indications (from slowest to fastest) include: "grave", "largo", "larghetto", "lento", "adagio", "andante", "moderato", "allegretto", "allegro", "presto", "prestissimo". See also "ritardando", "ritenuto", "accellerando", "allargando", più mosso, meno mosso, and "rallentando". See also the German indications: "langsam", "mäßig", "lebhaft", "schnell", "rasch". See also the French indications: gravement, lent, vif, animé, vite.

Ternary Form – 3-Part form: ABA. See also: "form".

Texture – the way in which different layers of sound are heard at once, and how these different layers relate to one another. See also: "homophonic texture", "monophonic texture", "polyphonic texture", "melody", "accompaniment".

Theme – a musical idea, usually a "melody", that forms the basis or starting point for a composition or a major section of one. See also: "melody", "phrase", "form".

Theme and Variations – a type of "form" characterized by a theme presented at the beginning of the piece followed by a series of variations. See also: "form".

Timbre – quality of a sound that distinguishes one instrument or voice from another. For example, what we hear that would allow us to distinguish between a saxophone and a piano even while both instruments are performing the exact same pitch. (often also called "tone color")

Time signature – see "meter".

Tonality – the organization of tones around a central "pitch" called "tonic" and the tendency of all pitches within a piece of music to ultimately gravitate towards tonic. See also: "tonic", "tone", "key".

Tone – a sound that has a definite "pitch".

Tonic chord – the "chord" built upon the first "scale degree". It is "Major" in a "Major" "key" and "minor" in a "minor" "key". See also: "chord", "scale degree", "cadence", "Major", "minor".

Tre corde – Literally "three strings". With the piano, this indication tells the performer to play without the left pedal depressed. See also: "una corda", "con sordino".

Treble clef – a symbol placed at the beginning of the staff indicating the specific names of the lines and spaces for the staff on which it is placed. The treble clef is also called the "G clef" since it indicates that the second line (counting up from the bottom) is the "G" above "middle C". See also "clef", "bass clef", "staff".

Triad – a "chord" made up of specifically three "notes". See also: "chord", "harmony", "tonic", "dominant", "Major", "minor", "diminished", "Augmented".

Trill – an "ornament" consisting of the more or less rapid alternation between two pitches in which the trilling note is one step above the written note. It is usually indicated with an abbreviation (tr) and/or a squiggly line placed above the note to be trilled. When performing trills, in addition to the speed of the trill itself, performers must also consider how to start and end the trill. The most common generalization about starting a trill is that music before Beethoven starts each trill on the upper note and after Beethoven the trill is started on the principle (notated) note. Some trills may be terminated with a "Nachschlag". See also "ornament", "mordent", "turn", "appoggiatura", "grace notes", "acciaccatura", "Nachschlag".

Turn – a type of "ornament" consisting of at least four notes. Most often including the note above the principle, the principle note, the note below the principle, and then concluding on the principle note. It is usually notated with a symbol resembling an "S" rotated 90 degrees clockwise. See also: "ornament", "mordent", "trill", "appoggiatura", "grace notes", "acciaccatura", "Nachschlag".

U

Una corda – literally "one string". On the piano, it means to depress the left pedal during performance. See also: "con sordino", "tre corde".

V

Vif– lively (French). See also: gravement, lent, animé, vite.

Vite – fast (French). See also: gravement, lent, vif, animé.

Vivace – a tempo indication meaning lively. Roughly equivalent to "allegro" or possibly faster.

W

Western Art Music - a common title of convenience used to describe music that has evolved from the "written tradition" (vs. the "oral tradition" or "folk tradition") in western culture (and the societies that have strong roots in western culture). This is the music that most individuals in western culture would simply call "classical" as opposed to music that is more "popular" (such as rock, rhythm and blues, rap, country, etc.). Other titles commonly used to designate this kind of "classical" music include: "serious music", "art music".

Whole note – a kind of "note" that simply looks like an oval. The name is derived from the fact that its duration is twice as long as that of a "half note" and four times as long as that of a "quarter note", etc. In 4/4 time, the "whole note" receives four beats of duration. See also "note", "rest", "beat".

Whole step – the distance from one note to another note two "half steps" away. See also: "half step", "interval".

Whole-tone scale – a "scale" consisting entirely of "whole steps". See also: "scale", "whole steps".

Chapter 23

ITALIAN WORDS AND MARKS OF EXPRESSIONS

This is a list of Italian musical terms used in English.

Many musical terms are in Italian, because many of the most important early composers from the Renaissance to the Baroque period were Italian, and that period is when numerous musical indications were used extensively for the first time. Here are some of these expressions:

MUSICAL FORMS

ITALIAN TERM	LITERAL TRANSLATION	DEFINITION
A cappella	*in chapel style*	Sung with no (instrumental) accompaniment, has lots of harmonizing
Aria	*air*	Piece of music, usually for a singer
Aria di sorbetto	*sorbet air*	A lesser aria within an opera
Arietta	*little air*	A short or light aria
Arioso	*airy*	A type of solo vocal piece during an opera or operetta
Ballabile	*danceable*	(song) to be danced to
Battaglia	*battle*	An instrumental or vocal piece suggesting a battle
Bergamasca	*from Bergamo*	A peasant dance from Bergamo
Burletta	*a little joke*	A light comic or farcical opera
Cabaletta	from *copola* (*couplet*)	A two-part musical form
Cadenza	*falling*	A florid solo at the end of a performance
Cantata	*sung*	A piece for orchestra and singers
Capriccio	*caprice*	A lively piece, free in form, often used to show musical skill
Cavatina	*small instrumental tone*	A simple melody or song
Coda	*tail*	The end of a piece
Concerto	*concert*	A work for one or more solo instruments accompanied by an orchestra
Concertino	*little concert*	A short concerto; the solo instrument in a concerto
Concerto grosso	*big concert*	A Baroque form of concerto, with a group of solo instruments
Da capo aria	*from the head aria*	A three-section musical form
Dramma giocoso	*jocular drama*	A form of opera
Dramma per musica	*drama for music*	Libretto
Fantasia	*fantasy*	A musical composition or "idea" typified by improvisation
Farsa	*farce*	A one-act comical opera
festa teatrale	*theatrical party*	A genre of opera
Fioritura	*flowery*	A highly embellished vocal line
Intermedio	*intermediate*	A short connecting instrumental movement – an intermezzo

Intermezzo	*interval*	A short connecting instrumental movement
Libretto	*little book*	A work containing the words to an opera, musical, or ballet
Melodramma	*melodrama*	A style of opera
Opera	*work*	A drama set to music for singers and instrumentalists
Opera buffa	*humorous opera*	A comic opera
Opera semiseria	*semi-serious opera*	A variety of opera
Opera seria	*serious opera*	An opera with a serious, esp. classical theme
Operetta	*little opera*	A variety of light opera
Oratorio	*oratory*	Large musical composition for orchestra, choir, and soloists
Pasticcio	*pastiche*	A musical piece containing works by different composers
Ripieno concerto	*padding concert*	A form of Baroque concerto with no solo parts
Serenata	*Serenade*	A song or composition in someone's honour. Originally, a musical greeting performed for a lover
Soggetto cavato	*carved subject*	A musical cryptogram, using coded syllables as a basis for the composition
Sonata	*sounded*	A composition for one or two instruments in sonata form
Verismo	*realism*	A genre of operas with scenarios based on contemporary everyday life

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

Piano(forte)	*soft-loud*	A keyboard instrument
Viola	*viola*, orig. Latin *vitulari* "be joyful"	A medium-sized stringed instrument
(Violon)cello	*Small violone* (*violone* means "big viola")	A large stringed instrument
Viola da gamba	*leg viola*	A stringed instrument held between the legs
Viola da braccio	*arm viola*	A stringed instrument held in the arm, such as a violin or viola
Viola d'amore	*love viola*	A tenor viol with no frets
Tuba	*tube*	A large brass instrument
Piccolo	*little*	A tiny woodwind instrument
Sordun	*deaf, dull in sound*	An archaic double-reed wind instrument
Timpani	*drums*	Large drums
Cornetto	*little horn*	An old woodwind instrument
Campana	*bell*	A bell used in an orchestra; also *campane* "bells"
Orchestra	*orchestra*, orig. Greek *orkesthai* "dance"	An ensemble of instruments

VOICES

Soprano	*upper*	The highest vocal line
Mezzo-soprano	*middle-upper*	Between soprano and alto
Alto	*high*	Second-highest vocal line

Contralto	*against high*	Alto, esp. a female alto
Basso	*low*	Or "bass;" the lowest vocal line
Basso profondo	*deep and low*	A very deep bass voice
Coloratura soprano	*colouring soprano*	A soprano specialised in complex, ornamented melody
Soprano sfogato	*unlimited soprano*	A soprano who has extended her upper range beyond the usual range of a soprano
Spinto soprano	*pushed soprano*	A soprano whose voice, while normally of lyric weight and fluidity, can be pushed to a more forceful weight
Squillo	*ringing*	The resonant clarity of an operatic singer's voice
Tenore contraltino	'	A tenor voice capable of a slightly higher range of sustainable notes than usual
Tenore di grazia or '"Leggiero tenor"'	'	A lightweight, flexible tenor voice
Tessitura	*texture*	A singer's comfortable range
Falsetto	*little false*	A vocal register immediately above the modal voice range
Falsettone	'	Falsetto, sung using the usual techniques of modal voice register
Castrato	*castrated*	A male singer, castrated so as to be able to sing soprano (now sung by women, conventional countertenors, or sopranisti)
Musico	*musician*	Originally, a trained musician; later, a castrato or female singer
Spinto	*pushed*	A forceful voice, between the lyric and dramatic in weight
Passaggio	*crossing*	A vocal range

TEMPO

Tempo	*time*	The speed of music e.g. 120 BPM
Grave	*solemn*	Slow and solemn, slower than largo
Largo	*broad*	Slow and dignified
Larghetto	*a little bit broad*	Not as slow as largo
Lentando	*slowing*	Becoming slower
Lento	*slow*	Slow
Tardo	*slow*	Slow
Adagio	ad agio, *at ease*	Slow, but not as slow as largo
Adagietto	*little adagio*	Faster than adagio; or a short adagio composition
Andante	*at a walking pace*	Moderately slow, flowing along
Andantino	*slightly faster than andante*	*slightly faster than andante*
Moderato	*moderately*	At a moderate speed
Allegretto	*a little bit joyful*	Slightly slower than allegro
Largamente	*broadly*	Slow and dignified
Mosso	*moved*	Agitated
Allegro	*joyful; lively and fast*	Moderately fast
Sostenuto	*sustained*	A slowing of tempo, often accompanied by legato playing
Fermata	*stopped*	Marks a note to be held or sustained
Presto	*ready*	Very fast

Prestissimo	*very ready*	Very *very* fast, as fast as possible
Accelerando	*accelerating*	Accelerating
Affrettando	*becoming hurried*	Accelerating
Allargando	*slowing and broadening*	Slowing down and broadening, becoming more stately and majestic, possibly louder
Ritardando	*slowing down*	Decelerating
Rallentando	*becoming progressively slower*	Decelerating
Rubato	*robbed*	Free flowing and exempt from steady rhythm
Tenuto	*sustained*	Holding or sustaining a single note
Accompagnato	*accompanied*	The accompaniment must follow the singer who can speed up or slow down at will
Alla marcia	*as a march*	In strict tempo at a marching pace (e.g. 120 bpm)
A tempo	*to time*	Return to previous tempo
L'istesso tempo	*Same speed*	At the same speed

DYNAMICS – VOLUME

Calando	*quietening*	Becoming softer and slower
Crescendo	*growing*	Becoming louder
Decrescendo	*shrinking*	Becoming softer
Diminuendo	*dwindling*	Becoming softer
Forte	*strong*	Loud
Fortissimo	*very strong*	Very loud
Marcato	*marked*	A note played forcefully
Mezzo forte	*half-strong*	Moderately loud
Piano	*gentle*	Soft
Pianissimo	*very gentle*	Very soft
Mezzo piano	*half-gentle*	Moderately soft
Sforzando	*strained*	Sharply accented
Stentato	*in the manner of Stentor*	Loud, boisterous
Tremolo	*trembling*	A rapid repetitive variation in the volume (or pitch) of a tone
Messa di voce	*placing the voice*	A style of singing involving changing volume while holding a single note

MOODS

Affettuoso	*with feeling*	Tenderly
Agitato	*agitated*	Excited and fast
Animato	*animated*	Animated
Brillante	*brilliant*	Brilliant, bright
Bruscamente	*brusquely*	Brusquely – abruptly
Cantabile	*sing able*	In a singing style
Colossale	*colossal*	In a fashion which suggests immensity
Comodo	*convenient*	Comfortably, moderately

Con amore	*with love*	With love
Con fuoco	*with fire*	With fiery manner
Con brio	*with bright*	brightly
Con moto	*with movement*	With (audible) movement
Con spirito	*with spirit*	With spirit
Dolce	*sweetly*	Sweet
Espressivo	*expressive*	Expressively
Festoso	*happy*	With happiness
Furioso	*furious*	With passion
Grazioso	*graciously or gracefully*	With charm
Lacrimoso	*teary*	Tearfully, sadly
Maestoso	*majestic*	Stately
Misterioso	*mysterious*	Mysteriously, secretively, enigmatic
Pesante	*heavy*	Heavy, slowly, sadly
Risoluto	*resolved*	Resolved, decisive
Scherzando	*playfully*	Playfully
Sotto	*subdued*	Subdued
Semplicemente	*simply*	Simply
Slancio	*passion*	Enthusiasm
Vivace	*vivacious*	Up-tempo

MUSICAL EXPRESSION (GENERAL)

Molto	*very*	Used with other terms, such as *molto allegro*
Assai	*very*	Used with other terms, such as *allegro assai*
Più	*more*	Used with other terms, such as *più mosso*
Poco	*little*	"A little". Used with other terms, such as *poco diminuendo*
poco a poco	*little by little*	"little by little", "slowly but steadily". Used with other terms, such as *poco a poco crescendo*
ma non tanto	*but not so much*	Used with other terms, such as *adagio ma non tanto*
ma non troppo	*but not too much*	Used with other terms, such as *allegro ma non troppo*
Meno	*less*	Used with other terms, such as *meno mosso*
Subito	*suddenly, quickly*	Used with other terms, such as *subito fortissimo*

PATTERNS WITHIN THE MUSICAL SCORE

Lacuna	*gap*	A silent pause in a piece of music
Ossia	*alternatively*	A secondary passage of music which may be played in place of the original
Ostinato	*stubborn*	A repeated motif or phrase in a piece of music
Ritornello	*little return*	A recurring passage in a piece of Baroque music
Segue	*it follows*	A smooth movement from one passage to another with no pause
Stretto	*tightened*	In a fugue, the repeating of a motif by a second voice before the first rendition is completed
Pensato	*thought*	A composed imaginary note

DIRECTIONS

Attacca	*attach*	Proceed to the next section without pause
Cambiare	*change*	Any change, such as to a new instrument
Da Capo (al fine)	*from the beginning (to the end)*	Abbreviated as D.C., informs the performer to go back to the beginning *(capo)* (finishing where the part is marked *fine*)
Dal Segno	*from the sign*	Abbreviated as D.S., informs the performer to repeat a specific section marked by a sign *(segno)*
Divisi	*divided*	Instructs one section to divide into two or more separate sections, each playing a separate part. Often these separate parts are written on the same staff.
Oppure	*otherwise*	Informs the player of alternative ways to play a passage. See Ossia.
solo	*alone*	A piece or performance to be played by a single musician

TECHNIQUES

Altissimo	*very high*	Very high
Arpeggio	*harp-like*	A chord with the notes spread out in time (rather than sounded simultaneously)
Acciaccatura	*crushing*	An extra, very fast grace note
Appoggiatura	*leaning*	A type of ornament that creates a "yearning" effect
Basso continuo	*continuous bass*	Continuous bass accompaniment by chordal instrument(s) and bass instrument(s) (see figured bass.)
A bocca chiusa	*mouth closed*	Wordless humming in a choral piece
Chiuso	*closed*	Calls for a horn to be muted by hand
Coll'arco	*with the bow*	Cancels *col legno* and *pizzicato* (in a string passage, arco is usually expected, as it is the "default" approach, and is not written except at the end of col legno or pizzicato passages.)
Colla voce	*with the voice*	A note to accompanists to play with (in time with) the singer's text, especially when slowing for textual effect
Col legno	*with the wood*	Calls for a bowed instrument's strings to be struck with the wood of the bow rather having the hair of the bow drawn over the strings
Coloratura	*coloration*	Elaborate ornamentation of a vocal line
Glissando	*glide*	A sweeping glide from one pitch to another used for dramatic effect
Legato	*tied together*	A series of notes played with a smooth connection between them
Martellato	*hammered*	Notes are strongly accented and detached
Con sordino	*with mute*	Calls for mute to be applied, esp. to string instruments.
Senza sordino	*without mute*	Calls for mute to be removed, esp. from string instruments.
Pizzicato	*plucked*	Calls for a bowed instrument to be plucked with the fingers
Portamento	*carrying*	A sliding of pitch between two notes
Portato	*carried*	A style of playing between staccato and legato
Sforzando	*using force*	Played with strong, marked emphasis
Coperti	*covered*	Of a drum, muted with a cloth
Una corda	*one string*	With the soft pedal, on a piano

Due corde	*two strings*	With the soft pedal, on a piano. For why both terms exist, see piano.
Tre corde or **tutte le corde**	*Three strings* or *all the strings*	Cancels an una corda
Spiccato	*separated*	Playing a stringed instrument by bouncing the bow lightly on the strings
Tutti	*all*	A direction for the entire ensemble to play or sing, rather than just a soloist or principal player
staccatissimo	*very detached*	Forcefully exaggerated staccato
Staccato	*detached*	A form of musical articulation in which notes are distinct and separated from each other by short gaps
Scordatura	*mistuning*	Alternate tuning (of strings)
vibrato	*vibrating*	A rapid repetitive variation or undulation in the pitch of a tone

ROLES

Prima donna	*first lady*	Leading female role
Primo uomo	*first man*	Leading male role
Banda	*band*	A small music ensemble used as a supplement to the orchestra in an opera
Comprimario	con primario, *with the first*	A supporting role
Concertino	*little concert*	The smaller, more virtuosic, group of musicians in a concerto grosso
Coro	*choir*	An ensemble of singers
Diva	*female deity*	A leading female singer
Ripieno	*filling* or *stuffing*	The larger group of musicians in a concerto grosso
Convenienze	*conveniences*	The rules relating to the ranking of singers in opera

CRITICISM

Bel canto	*beautiful voice*	Any fine singing, esp. that popular in 18th- and 19th-century Italian opera
Bravura	*skill*	A performance of extraordinary virtuosity
Bravo	*skillful*	A cry of congratulation to a male singer or performer. Fem. *brava*, pl. *bravi*, fem.pl. *brave*. The use of ! after "Bravo/a/i/e(!)" strongly emphasizes the written expression.

MUSICAL DIRECTION AND STAGING

Maestro	*Master, teacher*	Conductor, music director, music teacher, also composer and other eminent musicians and singers
Maestro sostituto	*Deputy master*	Assistant conductor
Maestro collaboratore	*Collaborating master*	Assistant conductor
Maestro suggeritore	*Master prompter*	Prompter
Stagione	*season*	A variety of formal organisation of players and crew in the staging of operas

Chapter 24

STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH TO SIGHT READING

I have delibrately retain this for the last chapter of this book with the expectation that the user / reader would have gone throuhg all the basics that are required for effeciency in score reading.

In this last chapter which may also be in the firs, I shall be explaianing with practical demostration, how to pick a new piece and sing through with minimal difficulties.

Sight Reading, Sight Playing and Singing are terms used for describing the ability to read and perform directly from a piece of music previously unseen and unrehearsed, relating the look of the notes on a score into their recognised audible sounds. Many vocalists sing by ear and never find the need to learn to sight read, but literate musicians enjoy the freedom of been able to read sheet music at first sight.

Sight-reading is an extremely useful ability or skill that doesn't happen overnight. In order to sight-read, your brain has to do a myriad of things. A competent sight reader can use their skills to learn songs faster, deputise with any choir in the absence of the choir, band or orchestra director. To read and perform music at sight can be fun as well as useful!
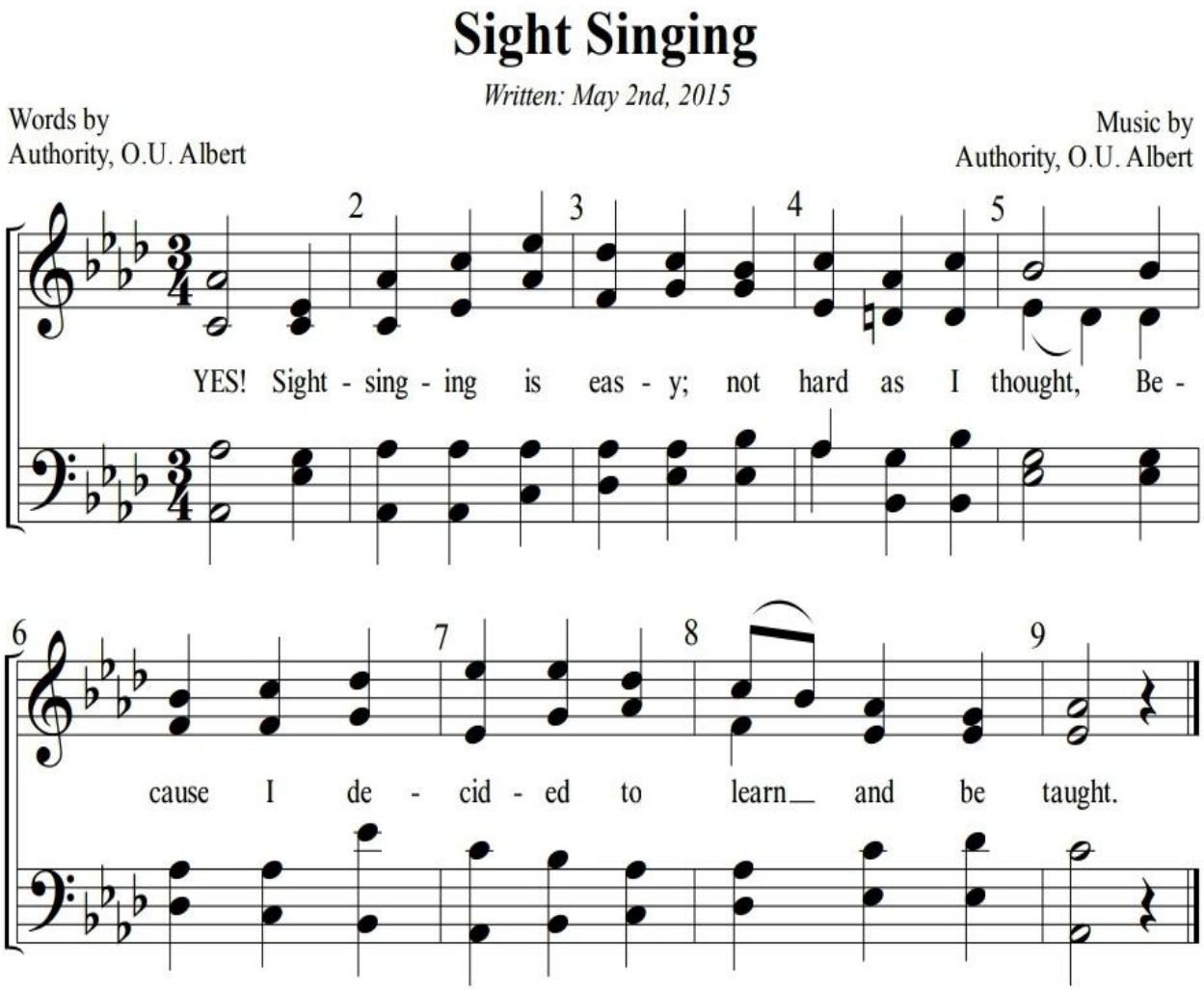
SIGHT-SINGING BASICS

You need to have covered the following topics before attempting sight reading. There are quite a number of other essential topics, but these are the basic requirements. They have been treated in previous chapters.

(a) Clefs,
(b) Staves,
(c) Music alphabets,
(d) Letter names of the staff,
(e) Musical Signs and terms performance,
(f) Key signatures,
(g) Scales,
(h) Time signatures,
(i) Ledger & Bar lines,
(j) Note & Rest values,
(k) Interpreting Rhythm,
(l) Accidentals,
(m) Intervals.

SIGHT-SINGING IS A PROCESS

Sight reading takes time to improve, as with any self-improvement program, but these helpful tips will show you how to get there faster than you ever believed possible! Experienced musicians may skip the steps though they do unconsciously observe them. The piece below was written purposely to illustrate the ***Easy Steps to Sight Reading***.



1. IDENTIFY THE METER.

The meter can be found by looking at the top number of the time signature. Then identify the beat value and the division value from looking at the bottom number to help you **understand and establish the rhythm of the piece**. (*See chapters 9 and 14*).

APPLICATION:

In the piece above, the time signature is Three-Four **(3/4), Simple Triple Time. It has Three Crotchet beats per bar / measure. The interpretation of these, simply put, is, you will have a count of three quarter notes per bar (3/4) 1-2-3 / 1-2-3/1-2-3/. Crotchet is given a ONE-BEAT value. Consequently, minim = 2 beats, dotted minim = 3 beats, quaver = ½ beat and so on.**
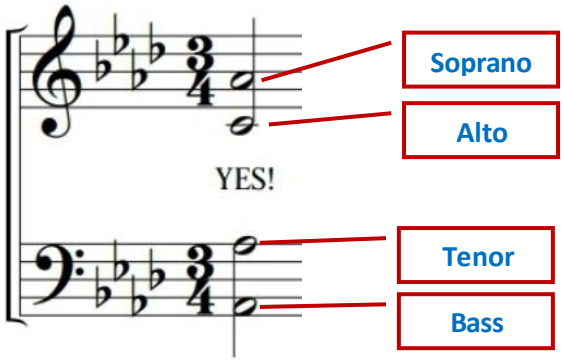
2. IDENTIFY THE KEY.

The key signature will give you two possibilities for key: one major and one minor. Look for any accidentals at the beginning of the piece to establish the key of the given piece (*sharp, flat, major or minor*).

APPLICATION:

There are four (4) flats at the beginning of the piece, suggesting the key of A flat (A♭). The quickest way I teach my students to find out whether it is a major or minor key is to look at the first and most importantly the last chord of the piece. If the piece ends on the tonic chord or chord I of the suspected key (A♭) then it is a major key, otherwise, you may have to investigate further. If the last chord ends on Chord vi of the suspected key (A♭), then there is every likelihood that the key is a relative minor of A flat major (i.e. F minor). (*See chapters 7 and 13 for further details)*. **The key of the piece above is A flat (A♭) major.**

3. IDENTIFY YOUR PART – *Soprano, Alto. Tenor, Bass*



APPLICATION:

In a four-part (SATB) piece, the Soprano part is usually the highest part, the Alto comes under the soprano on the treble staff while Tenor is above the Bass part in the bass stave.

4. IDENTIFY THE FIRST NOTE IN YOUR PART (i.e. *sol-fa name)*

APPLICATION:
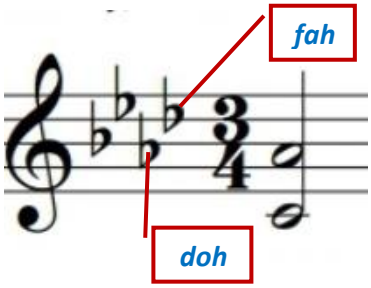
When sight reading for the purpose of singing, advanced sight-readers can proceed straight to just looking at the pitches and intervals between notes and sing the text without having to go through the syllable (tonic sol-fa) first. Whereas, the beginners or those not too proficient, would have to go through the tonic sol-fa to master the tune before applying the lyrics. Hence the need to transcribe the notes into tonic sol-fa. In order to transcribe to tonic solfa, take the following steps:

a) Take a look at the key signature – A flat major.
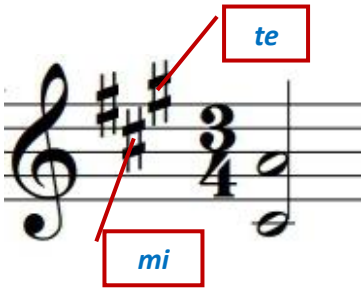
Any lines or spaces that bear same letter name as the key signature is the tonic or *doh*. So line 'A' or Space 'A' is the *doh*.

b) Take a look at the flat(s) OR sharp(s) in the key signature.

- The flattest note OR the flat that is nearest or closest to the time signature is the 4th degree of the scale, in order words, the *'fah'*. Therefore, $D^{\flat}$ is the *'fah'* in the piece under consideration. The flattest but one note (i.e. second to the nearest note to the time signature) is the *'doh'*.



- The sharpest note OR the sharp that is nearest or closest to the time signature is the 7th degree of the scale, in order words, the *'te'*. The sharpest but one note (i.e. second to the nearest note to the time signature) is the *'mi'*.

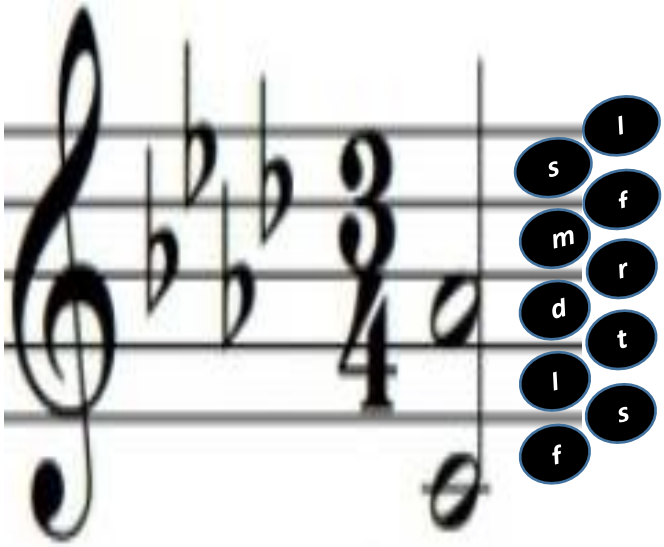


The first note for **Soprano = *doh*, Alto = *mi*, Tenor = *doh*, Bass = *doh*.**

5. TRACE OTHER NOTES – *counting both the lines and the spaces.*

APPLICATION:

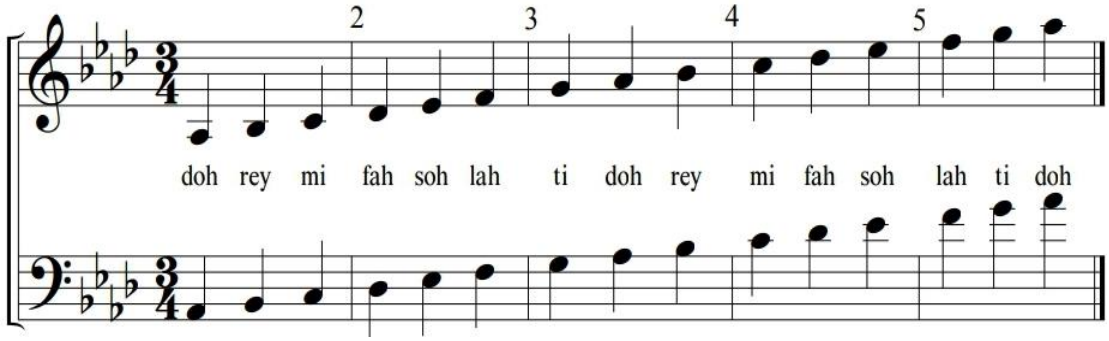
Trace the tonic sol-fa of the lines and spaces in the key of the given piece and try as much as possible to memorise it. This will make for fluency in sight reading, to begin with.



6. TRANSCRIBE TO SOL-FA NAMES *with pencil on the score.*

APPLICATION:

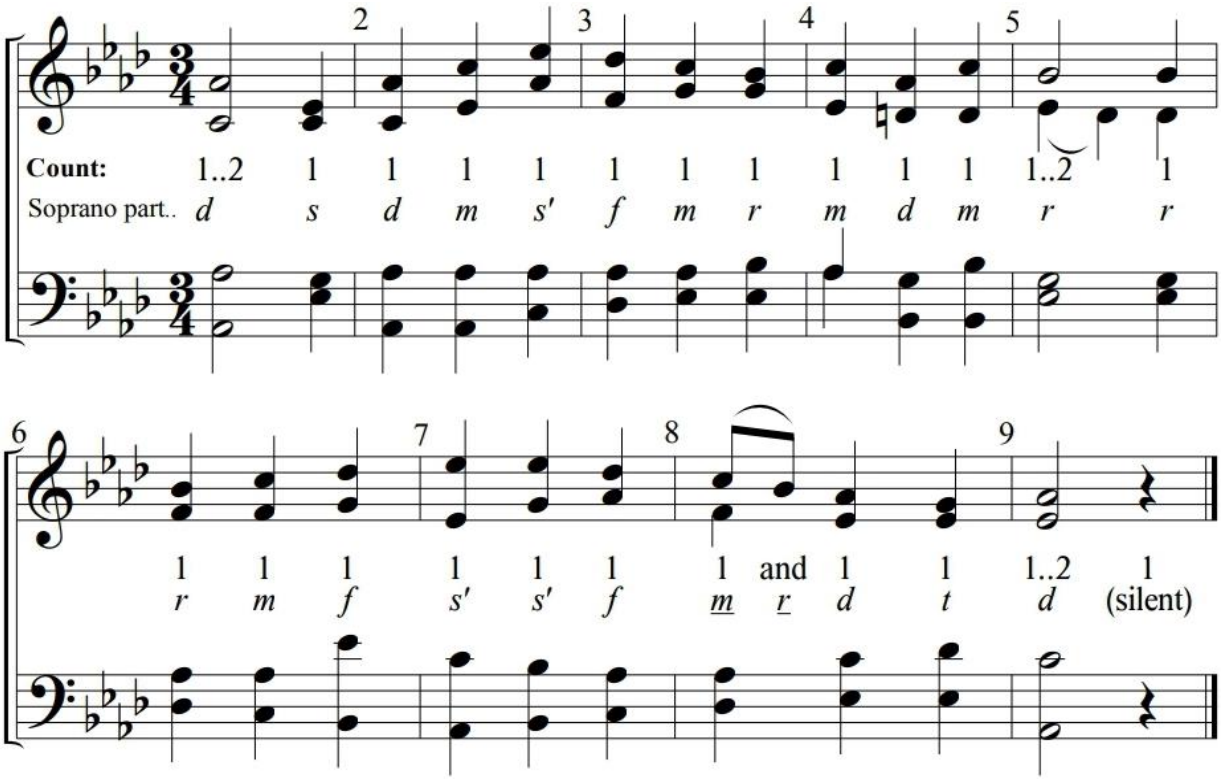
You might want to write the syllables in full (*doh rey mi fah soh lah ti doh'*) or abbreviate them (*d r m f s l t d'*), it does not really matter so long you understand them. Though, it saves time and space to use the abbreviations.



7. INTERPRET THE RHYTHMIC UNITES *(macro, micro, semi-micro rhythms)*

APPLICATION:

When you are counting rhythm, once the unit beat or the one-beat note is determined, try as much as possible to treat each note as an entity. If you look closely at the piece below, although there are first, second and third beats in each bar, I represented each note as a separate beat. In the first bar, the first note is a MINIM – 2 beats, while the second note, a CROTCHET – 1 beat. So, look at each note as per the number of beats it has and not the position of the beat in the bar. At this point, try to combine the tonic sol-fa with the beat values of the notes they represent.



8. REPLACE THE SOL-FA NAMES WITH NEUTRAL SYLLABLES – *such as awh, wey, ooh, la, na and so on.*

APPLICATION:

The essence of this is to help you master the tune which make note painting easy when applying the lyrics.

9. APPLY THE LYRICS

APPLICATION:

Begin slowly at first, then resume the right tempo as you master the lines.

10. OBSERVE ALL DYNAMICS

APPLICATION:

Apply all the dynamics and performance terms, signs, both written and unwritten.

11. SING THE PIECE AS WRITTEN.

APPLICATION:

Sing the piece as written. Keep to phrasing, articulations and every musical terms and performance symbols indicated on the piece.

NOTE RANGE

Be sure to sing the **lowest and highest notes** out loud before you begin the melody. This way you will know both the sound and the feel of those notes ahead of time, which will help you perform them and detect errors as you sing.

BROWSE THROUGH

With a comfortable key and tempo, and at least a rough running through, sing the melody straight through, while conducting the meter, without stopping. You may set up a metronome to guide in this regard.

FLUENCY

Guess what will help you improve your skills? **PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE**! Fluency comes with singing many melodies that reinforce previously learned patterns. Don't forget to take baby-steps!

FINALLY:

I encourage every student and teacher to follow this process. It is an easy approach to sight reading music sheet. You may want build your syllabus and rudimentary lessons around it so that you can arrive at your desired goal quickly.

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