

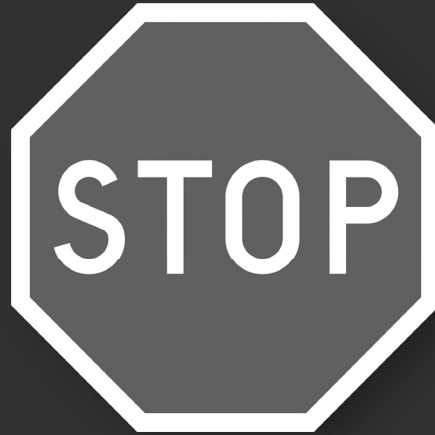
best music coach

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# MUSIC THEORY WORKBOOK

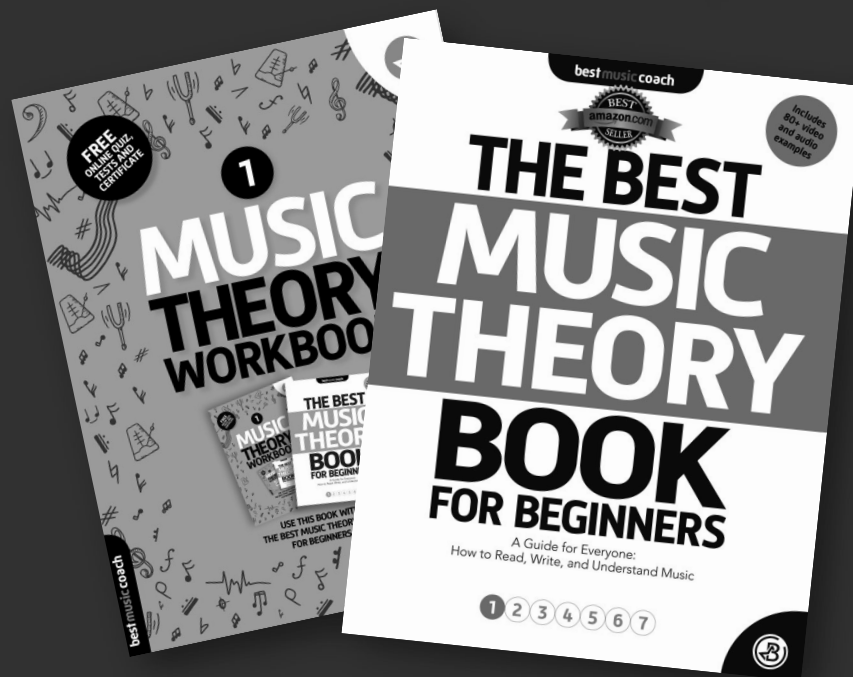
The Fast and Easy Way to "Get" Music Theory  
For Beginners





# MUSIC THEORY WORKBOOK 1 IS NOT A TEXTBOOK

USE IT WITH  
**THE BEST MUSIC THEORY BOOK FOR BEGINNERS: 1**  
*to learn about music theory*



2nd Edition  
© Best Music Coach LLC 2022  
978-1-957835-07-5

# Welcome to Best Music Coach!

A note to adult students and parents of younger students

The whole point of learning music theory is so that you can read, write, and understand music. A music theory textbook can show you how to do all three. Here's the problem. If you know how to do something but you do not actually do it...you will quickly forget what you learned.

Some people try to make up exercises and teach themselves. It turns out that teaching yourself is more work than learning in the first place!

This workbook is the perfect companion to The Best Music Theory Book for Beginners 1.

The Best Music Theory Workbook for Beginners 1 helps you "Get it" with 135 pages of exercises and worksheets with clear instructions. This workbook comes with a complete answer key so you won't have to guess if you get it right. Complete this workbook with confidence.

I made this workbook so you actually DO the things you learn in The Best Music Theory Book for Beginners. Because when you DO you LEARN.

Everything's mapped out for you... reading, writing, and understanding music.

Commit to making progress and follow through!

When you follow this workbook step by step, you'll take your understanding to the next level!

This book does work for self study, you do not need a teacher. You will make faster progress with a few lessons, but you will be fine if you use the answer sheet and go slowly.

Go grab your FREE answer key on p.8!

Dan Spencer  
Lead Coach

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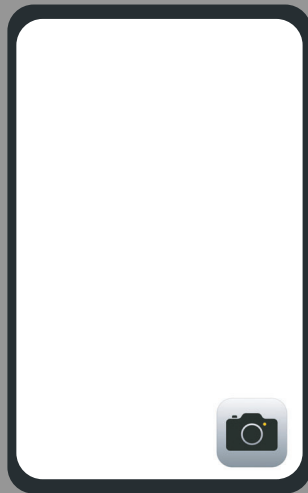
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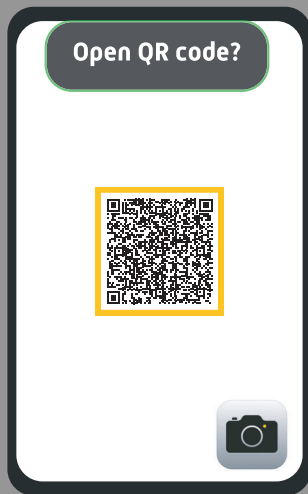
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# How to Scan QR Codes

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1. On an iPhone open the camera. On Android, download and open a QR code scanner application.
2. Hold your phone so you can see the QR code on the screen, and the screen is in focus.
3. On iPhones, tap the banner that asks you if you want to open the QR code. On Android, tap the button that asks you to open the QR code.

# Music Theory: Introduction

## What is Music Theory?

The study and understanding of the elements and structure of music. To put it simply, music theory is the key to understanding the "how" and the "why" behind the music you hear or play.

## Why Learn Music Theory?

### Learn Pieces of Music Faster on any Instrument or Voice

Just like using a map or GPS app will help you get to your destination faster, music theory can act as the map or GPS app to show you the way to the end of a piece of music, speeding memorization and in some cases increasing your emotional connection to the music built on understanding what is actually going on.

### Get Better at Reading Music

Understanding all the intricacies of music theory will improve your ability to read music. Many things you will learn in this book will give you a stronger relationship to written music.

### Strengthen Your Relationship to All the Music in your Life

Music theory will help you understand and relate to the music you are hearing, singing and/or playing. With this understanding, you will be able to play the music more accurately, with a deeper intellectual and emotional understanding and interpretation. Think about how many new things you have learned so far in your life from reading books. How much more could you learn about music from being able to read and understand what is happening in a piece of music? Music theory will make you a smarter and sharper musician when playing, writing, and studying music.

## What You Will Need

1. This book.
2. *The Best Music Theory Book for Beginners 1*
3. Manuscript paper.
4. Pencils.
5. A ruler.

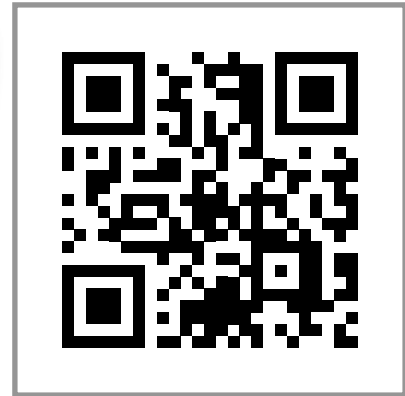
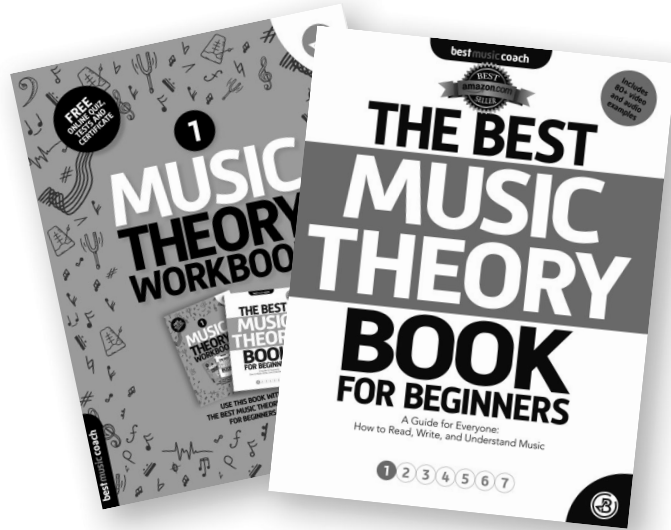
Scan the code below for our recommendations.



# How This Book Works

## How to Understand Exercises

You may find exercises and ideas easier to understand with a music teacher or coach. If you have not read "The Best Music Theory Book for Beginners 1" you may not understand the exercises and ideas in this book. Buy a 3rd edition copy if you have not already.



## FREE Answer Keys

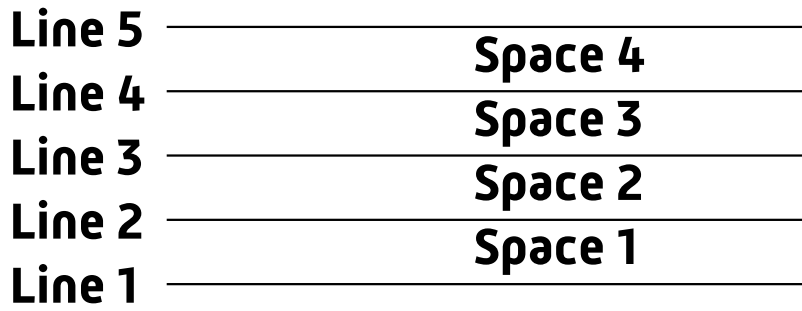
Download your FREE copy of the answer keys for this entire book by scanning the QR code below or at <https://bestmusiccoach.com/courses/music-theory-workbook-1>





**Workbook**  
**Rhythm 1:**  
**How to**  
**Understand,**  
**Write, and**  
**Perform**  
**Notes**

# Staff Line and Space ID



1. Identify the line or space that the dot (notehead) is placed on.
2. Write in the blank below each dot L for line and S for space followed by the number of the line or space.

### Example

S1 L3 S3 L4 S3 L5 L2 S3 L3 L5 L3 L1 S4 L3 S2 L1

### Exercise 1

Write S and the number space the dot (notehead) is in.

### Exercise 2

Write L and the number line the dot (notehead) is in.

### Exercise 3

A mix of lines and spaces.

# Write Noteheads

## Closed Noteheads

Closed noteheads should be written as a tilted oval. ●

## Open Noteheads: Half Notes

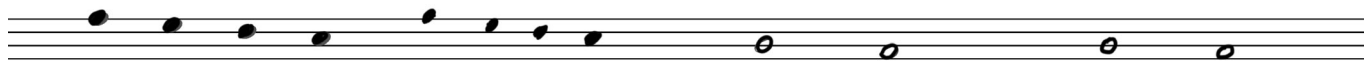
Open noteheads for half notes should also be written with a tilted oval shape. ○

## Open Noteheads: Whole Notes

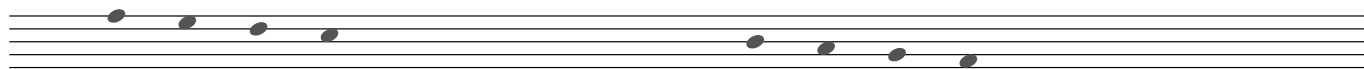
Open noteheads for whole notes should be oval and not tilted. ○

1. Review p. 15 of *The Best Music Theory Book for Beginners* before beginning.
2. Alternate between tracing and writing the three types of noteheads.
3. Color in and trace the gray noteheads, then try to copy them free hand in the blank spaces.

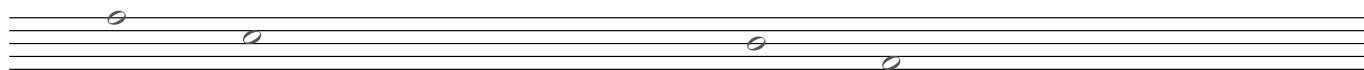
## Example



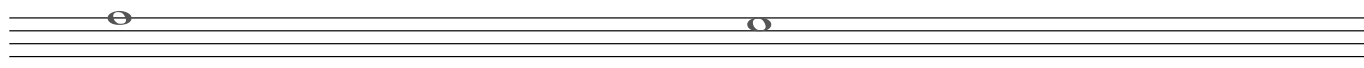
## Exercise 1: Closed Noteheads



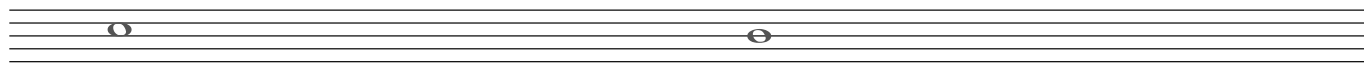
## Exercise 2: Open Noteheads: Half Notes



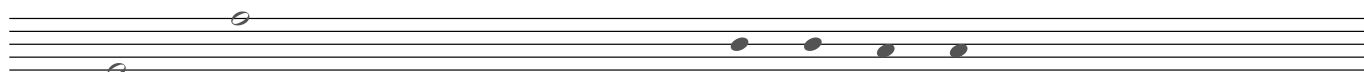
## Exercise 3: Open Noteheads: Whole Notes



## Exercise 4: Open Noteheads: Whole Notes



## Exercise 5: Mix

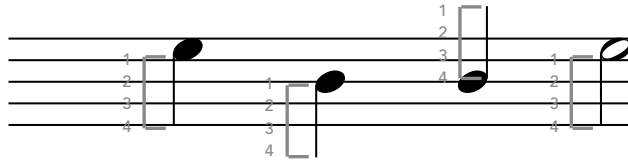


# Write Stems

In the following exercises, you will practice writing stems with the correct length on each notehead. Remember to pay attention to the direction of the stem (up or down).

## Stem Direction: Stem Down

On or above line 3 of the staff



## Stem Direction: Stem Up

Below line 3 of the staff



### Example

Add the correct stem (length and direction) for each notehead.



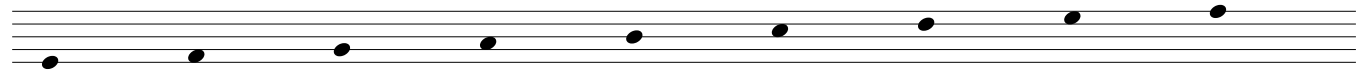
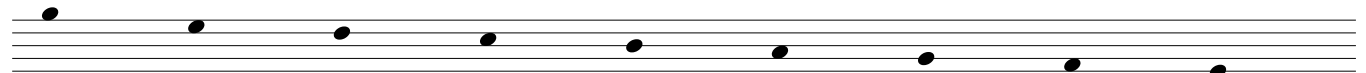
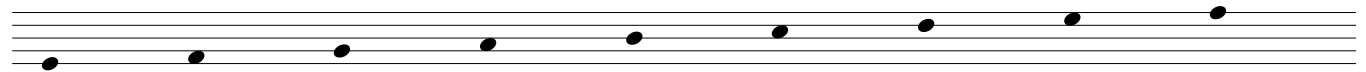
### Example Answer

The length of each stem should be four staff lines long.



### Exercise 1

1. Add the correct stem (length and direction) for each quarter notehead.
2. All notes which are under the middle line of the staff are stem up.
3. All notes above and on the middle line are stem down.



**Exercise 2**

1. Add the correct stem (length and direction) for each half notehead.

**Exercise 3**

1. Add the correct stem (length and direction) for each quarter notehead.
2. Pay attention to the direction of the stem, since the notes are in a random order.

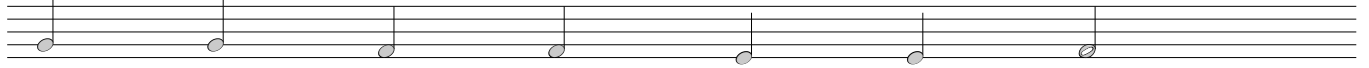
**Mini quiz 1:**

1. Noteheads which are above the middle line of the staff should point \_\_\_\_\_
2. When a notehead is on the middle line, it usually should point \_\_\_\_\_

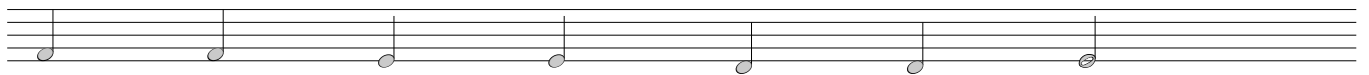
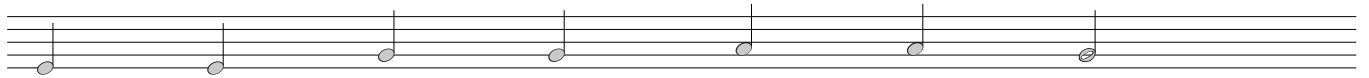
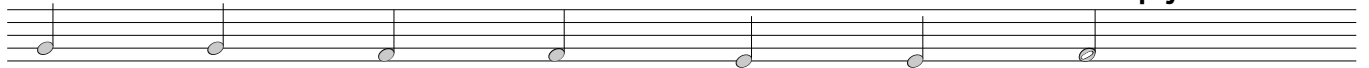
# Note Tracing Exercises

## Exercise 1

1. Trace the notehead and stem for each note.

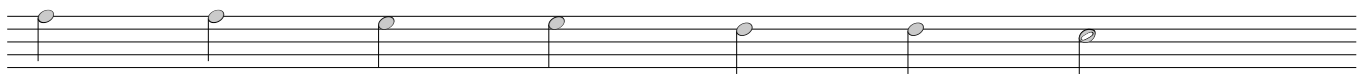
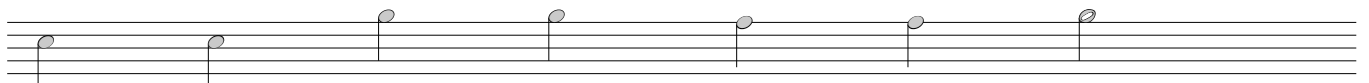
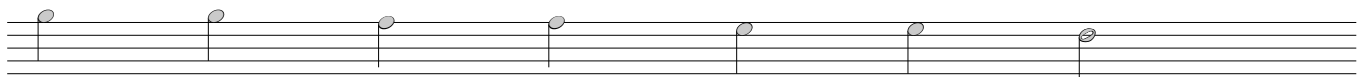
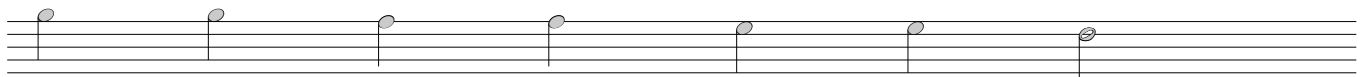


Remember to leave the notehead empty for half notes!



## Exercise 2

1. Trace the notehead and stem for each note.



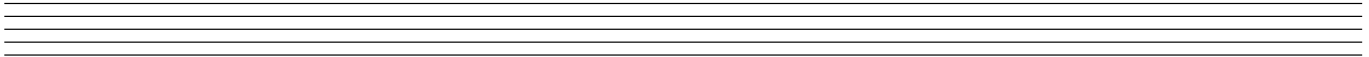
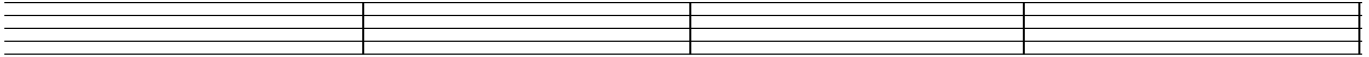
# Write Bar Lines

Reminder: The three most common types of bar lines are:

1. Regular Bar Line (these are used to separate measures).
2. Double Bar Line (these are used often to separate sections or show the end of an exercise that does not happen in regular measures).
3. End Bar Line (these are used to end the song).

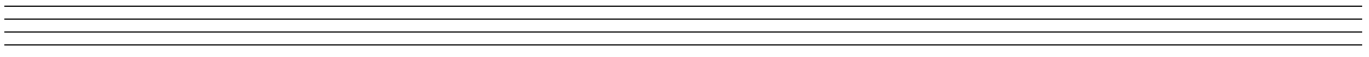
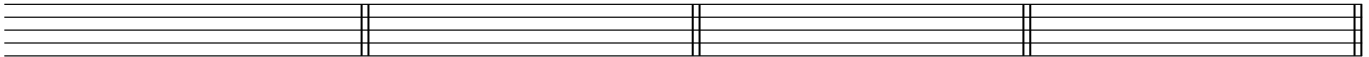
## Exercise 1

1. Copy the bar lines from the top staff by writing them on the bottom staff.



## Exercise 2

1. Copy the double bar lines from the top staff by writing them on the bottom staff.



## Exercise 3

1. Copy the final bar lines from the top staff by writing them on the bottom staff.



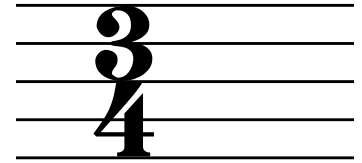
# Write Time Signatures

To write the time signature, you write two numbers on top of each other.

The **top number** of the time signature takes up the space from line 3 to line 5 of the staff

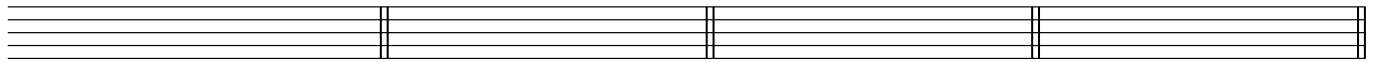
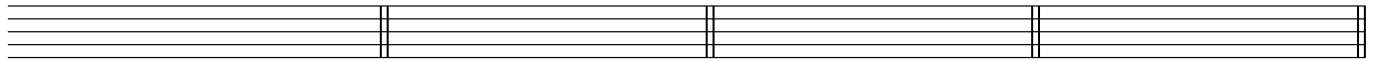
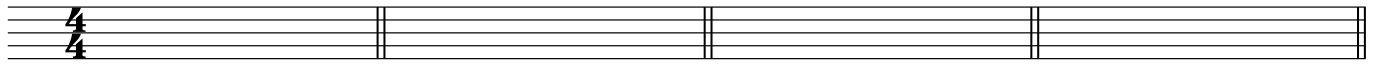


The **bottom number** of the time signature takes up the space from line 1 to line 3 of the staff.



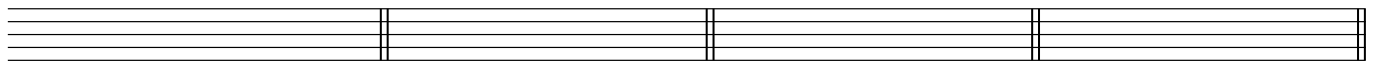
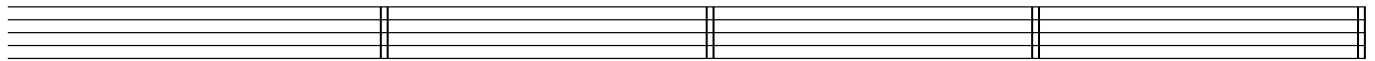
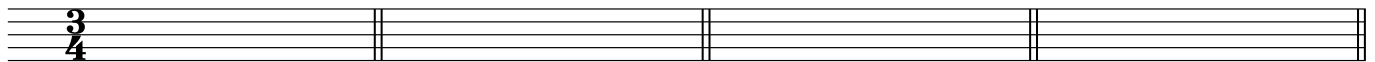
## Exercise 1

1. In each blank measure, write the time signature for  $\frac{4}{4}$ .
2. Leave some open space to the left of each time signature, between the time signature and the double bar line.



## Exercise 2

1. In each blank measure, write the time signature for  $\frac{3}{4}$ .
2. Leave some open space to the left of each time signature.





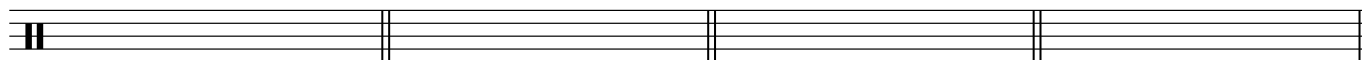
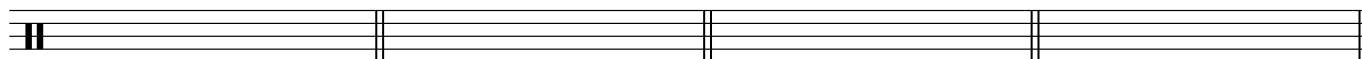
# Write Percussion Clefs

To write a percussion clef:

1. Write two vertical lines from the 4th line of the staff to the 2nd line of the staff.
2. Make the lines thick.

## Exercise 1

1. Using the above steps, fill in all 12 measures with percussion clefs.
2. The first measure of each line is already filled in as an example.



# Write Percussion Clefs and Time Signatures

## Exercise 1

1. Write a percussion clef then a  $\frac{4}{4}$  time signature in every measure.
2. The first measure is already filled in as an example.



## Exercise 2

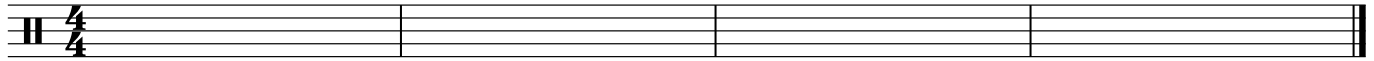
1. Write a percussion clef then a  $\frac{3}{4}$  time signature in every measure.
2. The first measure is already filled in as an example.



# Write Lines of Music 1

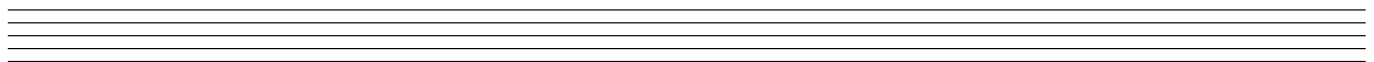
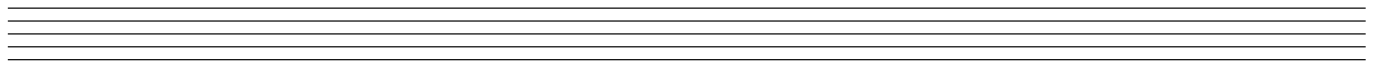
1. Write a barline in the middle of the line of staff.
2. Write two more bar lines on either side of the first bar line.
3. Write a percussion clef, time signature, and final bar line.

## Example Answer



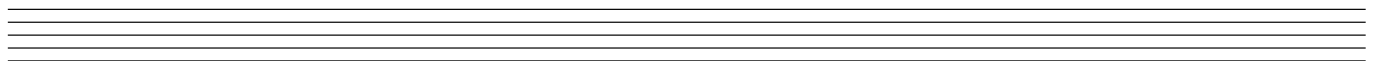
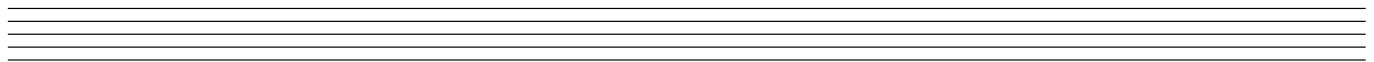
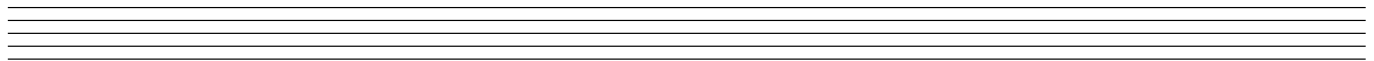
## Exercise 1

1. Going one line at a time, write a barline in the middle of the line of staff.
2. Write two more bar lines on either side of the first bar line.
3. Write a percussion clef,  $\frac{4}{4}$  time signature, and final bar line. Repeat Steps 1-3 on each line of staff.



## Exercise 2

1. Going one line at a time, write a barline in the middle of the line of staff.
2. Write two more bar lines on either side of the first bar line.
3. Write a percussion clef,  $\frac{3}{4}$  time signature, and final bar line. Repeat Steps 1-3 on each line of staff



# Space Notes on the Staff

In the following exercises, you will write your own notes. The goal of these exercises is to write the proper spacing between each note.

## Space Notes on the Staff: $\frac{4}{4}$

In this exercise, write the noteheads in space 2 of the staff above each number. The numbers show which beat of the measure each note starts on. Look to the next number to see how long the first note will last. You are trying to figure out if you need to write a whole, half, or quarter note. Pay attention to the spacing of your notes and how many beats (4) should be in each measure.

### Example

### Example Answer

The measure below has one note on beat 1, and another on beat 3. It takes two half notes to fill one measure of  $\frac{4}{4}$ , since each half note lasts for two beats.

### Example 2

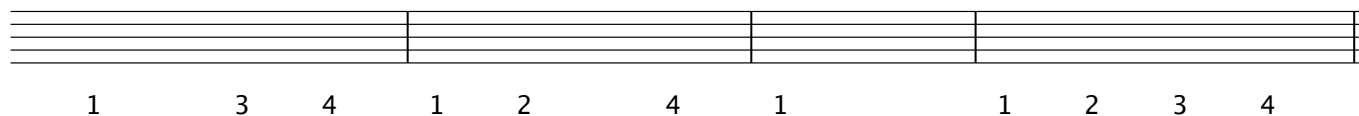
### Example Answer 2

In the measure below the half note is on beat 2, and lasts for two beats. Leave space for beat 3 before adding the quarter note on beat 4.

Which note takes up one whole measure of  $\frac{4}{4}$ ? A whole note!


1. Add a time signature and percussion clef.
2. Write all noteheads on line 3 of the staff with stem down for half and quarter notes.

**Exercise 3**



A musical staff divided into four measures. The first measure contains the counts '1 3 4', the second '1 2 4', the third '1', and the fourth '1 2 3 4'. Each count is positioned below the staff.

**Exercise 4**




A musical staff divided into four measures. The first measure contains the counts '1 2 3', the second '1', the third '1 2 3 4', and the fourth '1 3'. Each count is positioned below the staff.

**Exercise 5**



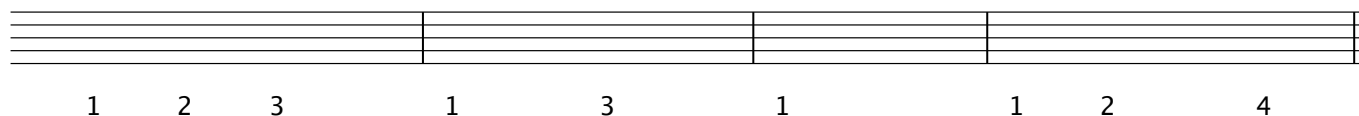
A musical staff divided into four measures. The first measure contains the counts '1 2 4', the second '1 2 3 4', the third '1 2 3', and the fourth '1 3 4'. Each count is positioned below the staff.

**Exercise 6**



A musical staff divided into four measures. The first measure contains the count '1', the second '1 3', the third '1', and the fourth '1 2 4'. Each count is positioned below the staff.

**Exercise 7**



A musical staff divided into four measures. The first measure contains the counts '1 2 3', the second '1 3', the third '1', and the fourth '1 2 4'. Each count is positioned below the staff.

**Exercise 8**



A musical staff divided into four measures. The first measure contains the counts '1 2 3 4', the second '1', the third '1 3 4', and the fourth '1 2 3 4'. Each count is positioned below the staff.

# Space Notes on the Staff: $\frac{3}{4}$

Remember that the  $\frac{3}{4}$  time signature has 3 beats per measure. This is because the top note in a time signature always shows the number of beats in each measure.

## Example

1            3            1    2    3            1            3            1    2

## Example Answer

1            3            1    2    3            1            3            1    2

1. Add a time signature and percussion clef.
2. Write all noteheads on line 3 of the staff with stem down for half and quarter notes.

## Exercise 2

1            3            1    2            1    2    3            1            3

## Exercise 3

1    2    3            1            3            1            3            1    2

## Exercise 4

1    2            1    2    3            1            3            1            3

## Exercise 5

1            3            1            3            1    2            1    2    3

# Review: Rhythm 1

- Rhythm
- Pulse  
Pulse: sound  
Pulse: feeling
- Beat
- The metronome
- Count in
- Tempo/Time
- Lines  
Single line  
Staff (five lines)
- Notes  
Whole Notes  
Half Notes  
Quarter Notes
- The staff: lines and spaces
- How to write noteheads  
Closed noteheads  
Open noteheads: half notes  
Open noteheads: whole notes  
In a space  
On a line
- How to write stems  
Stem down notes: p  
Stem up notes: d  
Stem length  
Stem direction
- How to write whole, half, and quarter notes
- How to clap notes  
Quarter notes  
Half notes  
Whole notes  
Why we clap  
How to clap fast
- Bar lines and their meanings  
Regular bar line  
Double bar line  
*Final bar line*

## New Words You Should Know

1. Rhythm
2. Pulse
3. Beat
4. Metronome
5. Tempo
6. Staff
7. Notehead
8. Stem
9. Bar line
10. Measure
11. Attack
12. Time signature
13. Clef

- Measures  
**m.** = measure  
**mm.** = measures
- What is an "attack" in music?
- Composer vs. songwriter
- Time signatures  
When a note get the beat it gets the count
- Percussion clef
- How to write music 1  
Measure math  
How to write lines of music  
How to write whole notes, half notes, and quarter notes in a measure  
How to write and perform your own compositions

# **Workbook**

## **Rhythm 2: Strong and Weak Beats 1**

# Strong and Weak Beats

It might not seem important now, but the strong and weak beats are REALLY important for when you start to understand and break down your favorite songs and understand music.

## Strong and Weak Beats in $\frac{4}{4}$

Write the order of strong and weak beats!

Strongest \_\_\_\_\_ Weakest

\_\_\_\_\_ Strong \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Strong and Weak Beats in $\frac{3}{4}$

Write the order of strong and weak beats!

\_\_\_\_\_ Weakest

\_\_\_\_\_ Weak \_\_\_\_\_

Strongest \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# Review: Rhythm 2

- Strong and weak beat culture
- Strong and weak beat colors

**S<sup>st</sup>** Strongest

**S** Strong

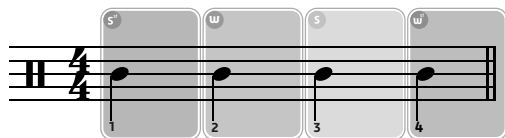
**w** Weak

**w<sup>st</sup>** Weakest

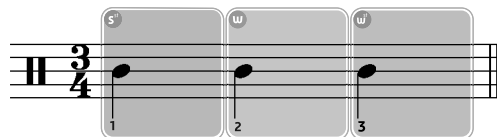
## New Words You Should Know

1. Music culture
2. Snare
3. Kick

- Strong and weak beats in  $\frac{4}{4}$



- Strong and weak beats in  $\frac{3}{4}$



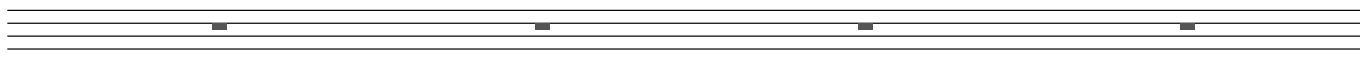
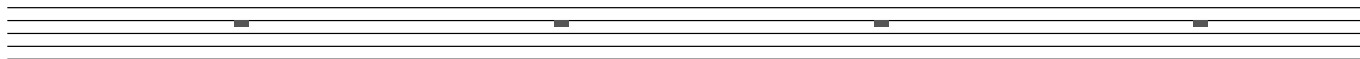
- The power of low sounds
- Strong and weak beats: drums
  - Snare
  - Kick
- Strong and weak beats:  $\frac{4}{4}$ 
  - How to identify time signatures by ear

**Workbook**  
**Rhythm 3:**  
**How to**  
**Understand,**  
**Write, and**  
**Perform Rests**

# Trace Rests

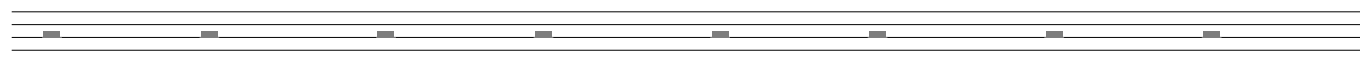
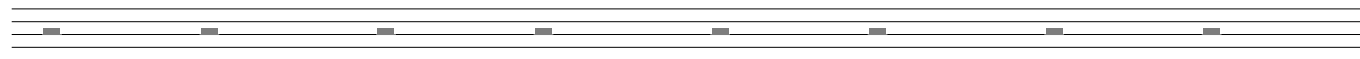
## Exercise 1

1. Trace the whole rests.
2. Whole rests hang down from the 4th line of the staff. There is no answer key for this exercise.



## Exercise 2

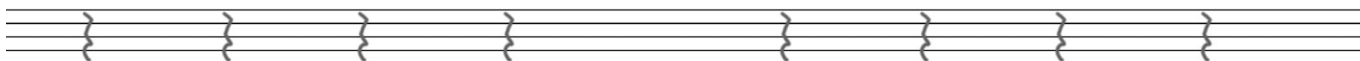
1. Trace the half rests.
2. Half rests "sit" on Line 3. There is no answer key for this exercise.



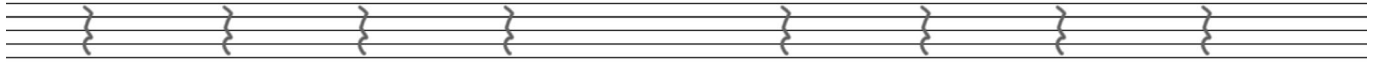
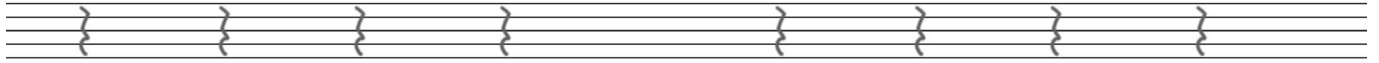
## Exercise 3

1. Trace the quarter rests.
2. See page 35 of The Best Music Theory Book for Beginners 1 for how to write quarter rests. There is no answer key for this exercise.

**Tip: Start tracing from the top and work your way down. Make sure to trace the lines so that the rests are not bigger than they need to be.**



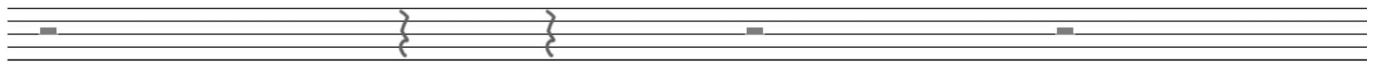
Continue tracing quarter rests.



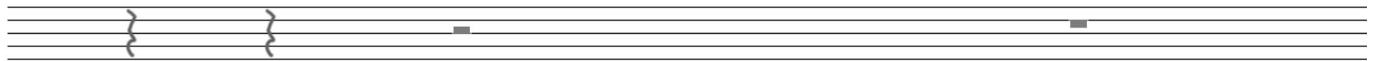
## Trace and Label the Rests

1. Trace the rests.
2. After you finish tracing all the rests, write underneath each rest to label their names with the correct letter. The first rest letter is already done as an example.

(W = whole rest) (H= half rest) (Q= quarter rest)



H



### Mini quiz 2:

1. Which line do half notes rests sit on top of? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Which line do whole rests hang below? \_\_\_\_\_

# Write Rests to Complete the Measure

1. Each measure has empty beats with count numbers below the staff.
2. Fill in the empty beats using whole, half, and quarter rests.
3. Follow Rest Rules and measure math!

## Example

Example musical staff in 4/4 time. The first three measures contain quarter notes on beats 1, 2, 3, and 4. The fourth measure is empty. Count numbers 1-4 are written below each beat.

## Example Answer

Example Answer musical staff in 4/4 time. The first three measures contain quarter notes on beats 1, 2, 3, and 4. The fourth measure is empty. Count numbers 1-4 are written below each beat.

## Exercise 1

Exercise 1 musical staff in 4/4 time. The first three measures contain quarter notes on beats 1, 2, 3, and 4. The fourth measure is empty. Count numbers 1-4 are written below each beat.

## Exercise 2

Exercise 2 musical staff in 4/4 time. The first three measures contain quarter notes on beats 1, 2, 3, and 4. The fourth measure is empty. Count numbers 1-4 are written below each beat.

## Exercise 3

Exercise 3 musical staff in 4/4 time. The first three measures contain quarter notes on beats 1, 2, 3, and 4. The fourth measure is empty. Count numbers 1-4 are written below each beat.

# Rhythm 3: How to Understand, Write, and Perform Rests

## Exercise 4

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

5

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

## Exercise 5

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

5

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

## Exercise 6

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

5

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

## Exercise 7

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

5

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

Exercise 8

1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3

5

1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3

Exercise 9

1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3

5

1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3

Exercise 10

1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3

5

1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3

Exercise 11

1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3

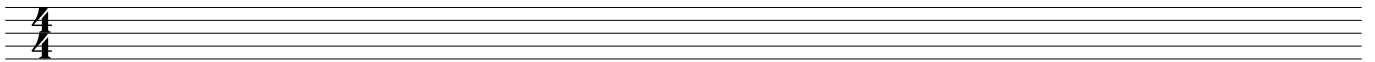
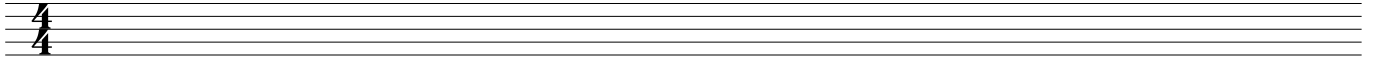
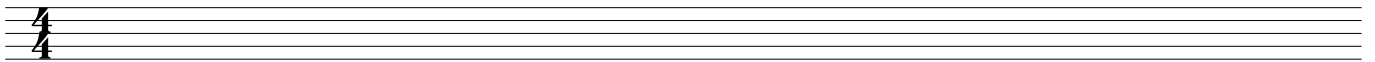
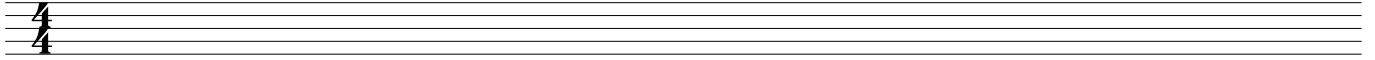
5

1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3

# Write Lines of Music 2

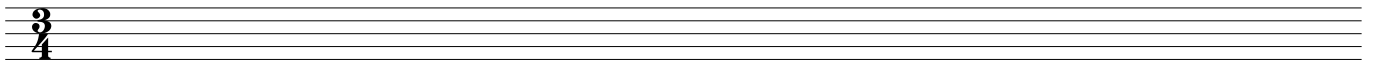
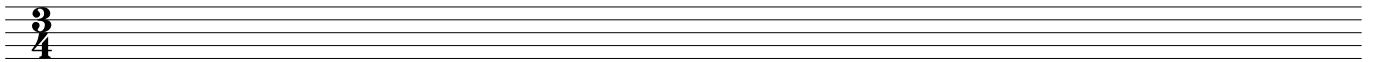
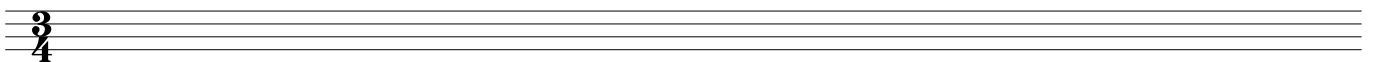
## Exercise 1

In the following two groups of staves in  $\frac{4}{4}$ , there should be a total of 8 measures in each two-line group. See p. 38 of *The Best Music Theory Book for Beginners 1* for a complete walkthrough. When you are finished, write two of your own rhythmic compositions using whole, half, and quarter notes and rests. Write noteheads on line 3 of the staff with all stems down.



## Exercise 2

In the following two groups of  $\frac{3}{4}$  staves, there should be a total of 8 measures in each two line group. See p. 38 of *The Best Music Theory Book for Beginners 1* for a complete walkthrough. When you are finished, write two of your own rhythmic compositions using whole, half and quarter rests and half and quarter notes. Write noteheads on line 3 of the staff with all stems down.





# Review: Rhythm 3

- Rests
  - Whole rests
  - Half rests
  - Quarter rests
- A whole rest can be used in any time signature to show a full measure of rest
- Measure math 2
- How to write lines of music 2
- How to write notes and rests in a measure
- Where to write notes and rests
- Divide the measure in half in  $\frac{4}{4}$
- Composition ideas

## New Words You Should Know

1. Rests
2. Composition ideas

# **Workbook**

## **Rhythm 4:**

### **Dots, Ties, Repeat Signs**

# Write Dotted Notes

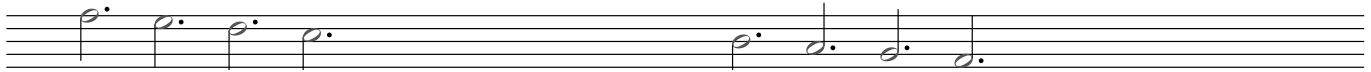
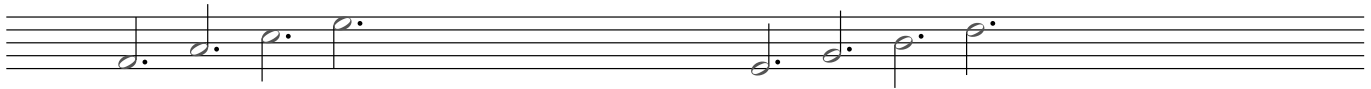
## Exercise 1

1. Trace the dotted half notes.



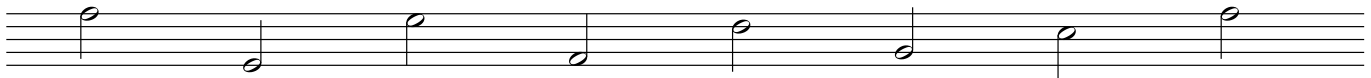
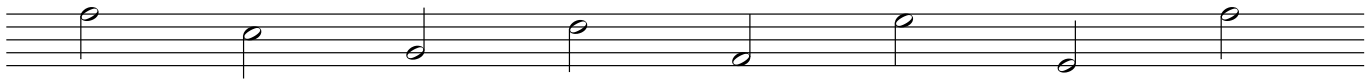
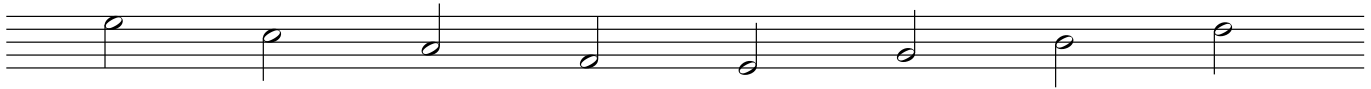
## Exercise 2

1. Trace the dotted half notes then copy them in the same order on the same lines and spaces in the blank spaces to the right of each group of notes.



## Exercise 3

1. Add the dots to the half notes to make dotted half notes.
2. Review the rules for dot writing on p. 44 of *The Best Music Theory Book for Beginners 1*.



# Space Notes, Dotted Notes, and Rests on the Staff

Now you can use dotted half notes! Remember that a dotted half note will take up an entire measure of  $\frac{3}{4}$ .

## Exercise 1

1. Use notes only!!!

Exercise 1 consists of two staves of music. The first staff is in 3/4 time and contains four measures. The notes and fingerings are: 1, 1, 3, 1, 1, 2. The second staff is in 4/4 time and contains four measures. The notes and fingerings are: 1, 1 2 3, 1, 3, 1.

## Exercise 2

1. Write in the rests to complete the measure.

Exercise 2 consists of two staves of music. The first staff is in 4/4 time and contains four measures. The notes and fingerings are: 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4. The second staff is in 4/4 time and contains four measures. The notes and fingerings are: 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4.

## Exercise 3

1. Write in the rests to complete the measure.

Exercise 3 consists of two staves of music. The first staff is in 3/4 time and contains four measures. The notes and fingerings are: 1 2 3, 1 2 3, 1 2 3, 1 2 3. The second staff is in 3/4 time and contains four measures. The notes and fingerings are: 1 2 3, 1 2 3, 1 2 3, 1 2 3.





## Review: Rhythm 4

- Dotted notes
  - Dotted half note
  - How to write dotted notes
  - How to write dotted notes in measures
- Tied Notes
  - How to write tied notes
  - Tie math
  - How to write tied notes in measures
  - How to write tied notes in connecting measures
  - How to write tied notes from one line of staff to the next
  - How to tie more than two notes together
- Repeat signs
  - Single repeat sign 1
  - Single repeat sign 2
  - Double repeat sign 1
  - Double repeat sign 2
  - How to write repeat signs
  - How to write repeat signs at the end of a line of staff
  - How to write repeat signs in the middle of a line of staff
- How to write repeat signs over multiple lines of staff

## **We Want to Hear From You!**

Let us know what you think about this book, how we can make this book better for you, and what else you would like to see from Best Music Coach!

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# **Acknowledgments**

Thank you Jasara for your radical support.

## **Sources:**

Many of the rules for engraving in this book can be traced directly to *Behind Bars: The Definitive Guide to Music Notation* - Elaine Gould.  
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