

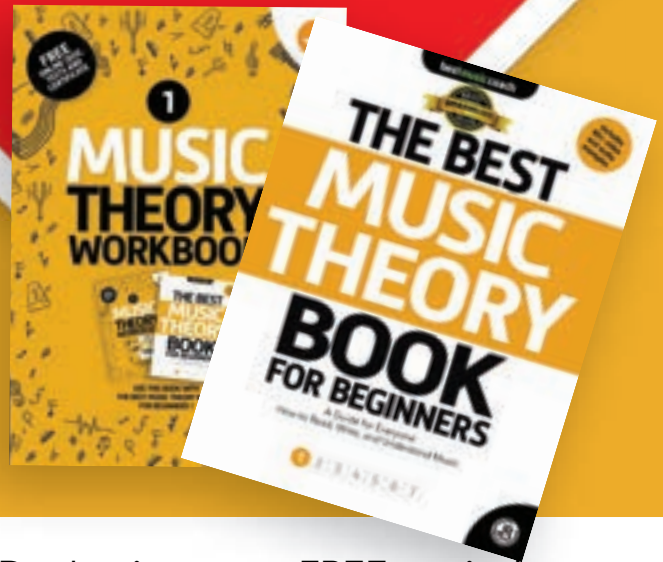
How this Series Works

After completing this book you will be here

Level 2

Level 1

You are here



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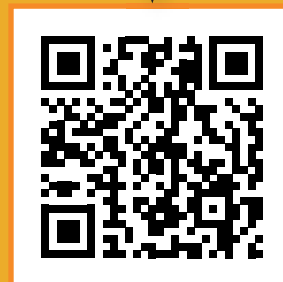
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Get the Music Theory Workbook Now!



Welcome to Best Music Coach!

learn the rules, follow the rules, break the rules, make music. the music in your heart may not conform to the rules you will learn in this book, or it may follow the rules without exception. rules provide a structure to be creative in. all ways of making music are fine. go make music and express yourself with passion.

A note to adult students and parents of younger students

I am thrilled that you chose this book and our coaches to guide you, or your family, on your musical journey. We are here to answer all your musical questions and to empower you, our students, readers, and coaches to discover and achieve your musical goals.

This book is for musicians, music students, and anyone who is interested in understanding more about music, even a perfect beginner who has never played an instrument or parent of a student who wants to understand and help their child!

In this book you will learn to understand, read, write, and analyze music.

This four-sided approach will give you a wholistic and complete understanding of music, in the same way being able to speak, understand the definitions of words, read, and write gives you complete control over the languages that you speak and understand. The end goal is to be able to apply the music theory knowledge to composition, songwriting, your instrument or musical discipline that you are pursuing, and to analyze music to benefit all aforementioned areas.

In this book and series you will learn everything you need to know for modern and classical music based on the European music theory system. This includes all types of pop, punk, metal, CCM, rock, hip-hop, funk, blues, rock n' roll, musical theater, jazz, fusion, classical music from all periods and many, many other genres and styles of music. Other systems exist, such as the North Indian and South Indian systems.

For best results with this book, work with a qualified music theory coach in weekly sessions of 30 minutes (ages 5-10) or 60 minutes (ages 11-Adult).

A quick note for the intrepid "I'll do it myself" folks reading this: This book is clear enough that you could teach yourself using it as a guide, and you will see measurably faster growth and progress as well as avoid developing bad habits with a coach.

Dan Spencer
Lead Coach

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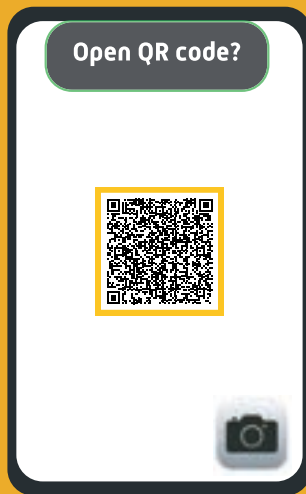
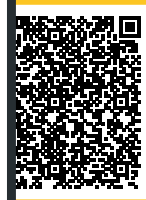
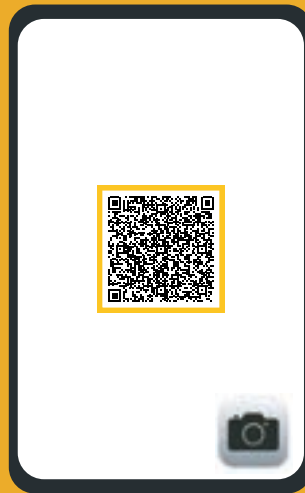
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How to Scan QR Codes

1



2



3

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. Manuscript paper.
3. Pencils.
4. A ruler.

Scan the code below for our recommendations.



How This Book Works

Audio and Video Examples

This book comes with audio and video examples of the exercises and songs. Any time you see the icon (23) it is showing the audio or video example number for you to listen to or watch to help you learn the song or exercise. All audio examples can be found by scanning the QR code below with your device or at bestmusiccoach.com/books

If You are Using a Printed (i.e. paper) Book, iPhone, Apple device, or Android:

To see, hear and play along with all of the exercises in this book (23), go to bestmusiccoach.com/books or scan the code below with your device.



Written Examples

This book has some writing exercises. If you are working out of a PDF, Apple book, or Kindle version, either write your answers on blank manuscript paper or screenshot them with your device to write in the answers with your finger or stylus.

How to Read Timestamps

Throughout this book, examples will be given using timestamps in songs. The timestamp shows how many seconds or minutes into the song the example begins, and how many seconds or minutes into the song the example ends.

03:29 – 05:00
minutes:seconds minutes:seconds

Example starts at three minutes
and twenty-nine seconds

Example ends at five minutes
and zero seconds

Song Titles and Writers

Many songs are titled and the songwriters who originally wrote the songs are credited in this book. You will see the following format before songs, but not exercises.

Song Title

Songwriter/Composer

Songs credited to "Best Music Coach" are by the author.

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

In this chapter you will learn how to understand, write, and perform notes, and even write and perform your own songs and compositions!

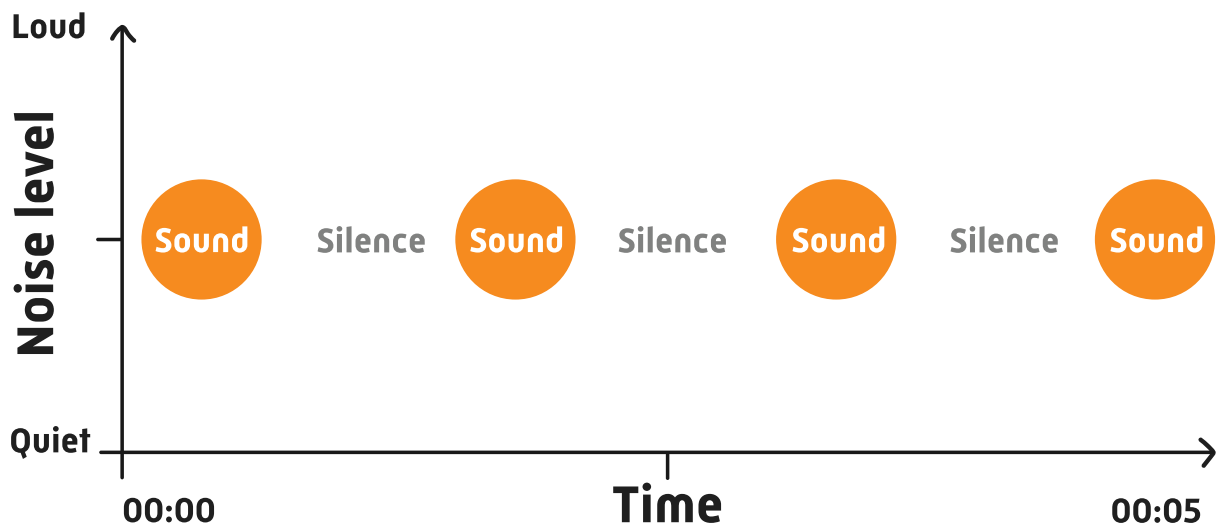
① Rhythm

- Rhythm is sound grouped into patterns.
- The patterns are made through sound and silence.
- Rhythm is like a light bulb, it is either on or off. On is sound, off is silence.
- Rhythm defines the passage of time through the presence and absence of sound.
- Rhythm can be
 - Fast
 - Slow
 - Loud
 - Quiet
 - Rhythm can speed up
 - Rhythm can slow down

Pulse

② Pulse: Sound

A pulse is a type of rhythm, a group of identical sounds that repeats at the same volume and at the same speed. No pulse is louder or more quiet than the pulse that came before or after it.



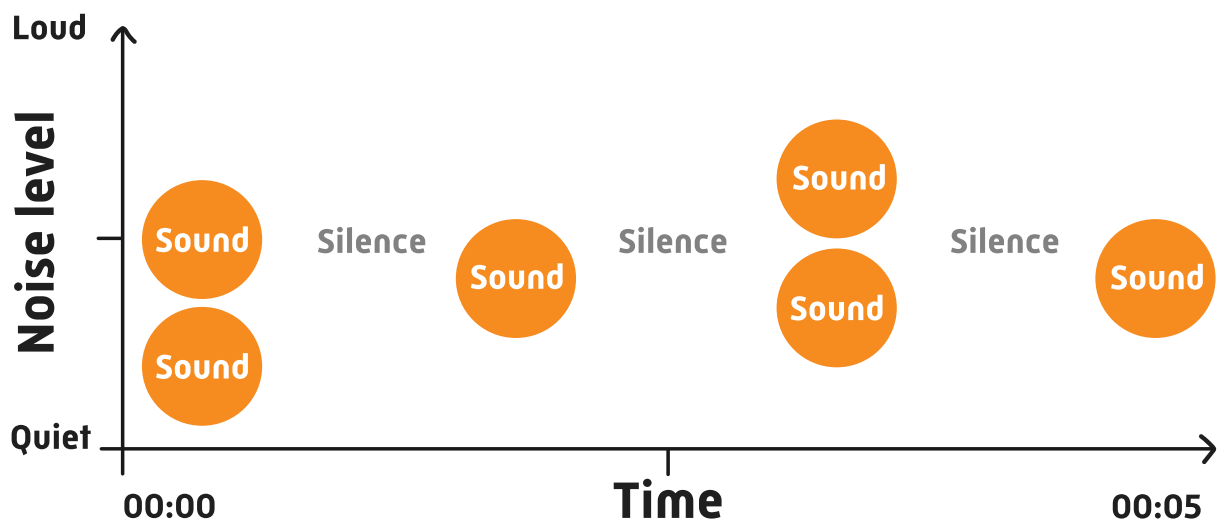
Pulse: Feeling

Pulse can also describe the underlying rhythmic movement of a piece of music that is felt but not seen or written. This means two different people can feel a pulse in two different ways for the same music!

1. Listen to any pop music and clap your hands along with it.
2. You are most likely clapping along with a pulse.

3 Beat

- A beat is a type of rhythm.
- A beat is often counted or associated with a particular pulse. When this association occurs a beat is then called "the beat" and is felt like a pulse (feeling), heard like a pulse (sound).
- A beat can align with a pulse (sound)
- A beat can align with the pulse (feeling).
- A beat is different from a pulse because it can be loud or quiet and does not have to sound the same as the beat that came before it.
- A beat is made with pulses that are different from one another. Sometimes there can be more than one sound happening at a time. These are different sounds that come together to create a beat.



Other Uses of the Word Beat


1. Used to describe a particular pulse. Example: "Can you feel the beat?"
2. An instrumental production for hip-hop and sometimes pop music that is ready and waiting for a singer or rapper to sing or rap over to make a song is sometimes called a "beat".

It might be fun (and also a good exercise to improve your music theory) to make a video diary of yourself writing and performing your own music and the exercises from this book every day or every week to track your progress over time. If you decide to do this and post your videos to YouTube, Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, or any social media, tag @bestmusiccoach for reshares, encouragement, and free tips and advice!

The Metronome

A metronome is a device or software application that produces a sound at even intervals of time (pulse) that can be sped up or slowed down. Metronome speed is measured by how many times it makes a sound or “clicks” per minute. This is called “beats per minute” (BPM). Every click of the metronome is considered a “beat” for examples in this book.

Metronome Speed Icon

The speed at which you should complete an example or group of examples will be shown like this:  60. This means to set a metronome to 60 BPM and begin the click before you start the example.

How to Use a Metronome

Sometimes taking on a new exercise at the recommended speed will be too hard at first. If this is the case go through the exercise carefully by

1. Count and clap the rhythm of the music without the metronome.
 - Do your best to keep an even speed.
2. Set the metronome to a slower speed, clap and count the music.
 - 60 BPM is a good starting point.
 - Increase the metronome speed by 5 BPM when you are comfortable and are not making any mistakes.
 - Continue increasing the speed of the metronome until you can clap the example at the suggested speed without making any mistakes.
3. Play the music with your instrument where applicable. First without the metronome, then use the metronome to slowly increase the speed of your performing, just like steps 1 and 2.

There are three main types of metronome:



Digital Metronome



Software Metronome
on a Phone



Mechanical/Electromechanical

Count In

The count in is giving the beat or pulse with spoken words or sounds so musicians can start making music at the same time and at the same speed as each other. This is like an "On your mark, get set, go!" for musicians. The beginning of the following songs feature a count-in.

LISTEN

I Saw Her Standing There
Patience
Hey Ya

The Beatles
 Guns N' Roses
 Outkast

60 Count In: Application

Give yourself a count in before performing the exercises in this book, or your own compositions.

4

Count In: Four

1. Listen to the metronome until you can hear the pattern and anticipate when the next click will happen before moving forward. When you feel you can anticipate the timing between the clicks:
2. Count "1, 2, 3, 4" aloud with each number you speak happening at the same time as a click.
3. Try to precise as possible and speak exactly with the clicking sound, not before or after.

5

Count In: Three

1. Listen to the metronome until you can hear the pattern and anticipate when the next click will happen before moving forward. When you feel you can anticipate the timing between the clicks:
2. Count "1, 2, 3" aloud with each number you speak happening at the same time as a click.
3. Try to precise as possible and speak exactly with the clicking sound, not before or after.

Tempo/Time

"Tempo" is an Italian word meaning "time." The word tempo is used in music to describe how slow or fast a piece of music or musical phrase should be played. It is also used when listening to a piece of music, to describe how fast it is being played. When talking about multiple "tempos," the plural is "tempi" in formal language. More often than not, musicians will say "tempos."

Tempo 1

Slow
 Medium
 Fast

At Last
Ho Hey
September

Etta James
 The Lumineers
 Earth, Wind and Fire

Tempo 2

Slow
 Medium
 Fast

Change is Gonna Come
Jump Start
Love is a Battlefield

Sam Cooke
 Greg Howe
 Pat Benatar

The songs in Tempo 2 are deceptive. Learn what makes these songs fast or slow later in the book.

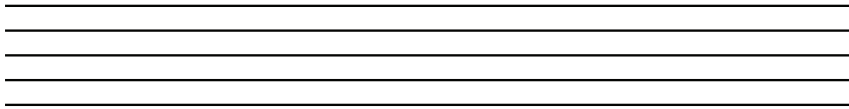
Lines

Music is usually written on lines. Either a single line or the staff, which is five parallel lines. You will see both single lines and the five-line staff used for examples throughout this book.

Single line



Staff (five parallel lines)



Notes

Musicians play, read, and write rhythm with symbols called "notes." Each kind of note is written differently.

open notehead



open notehead



stem

closed notehead



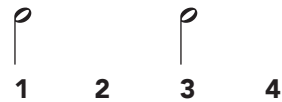
stem

The different kinds of notes show how long or how short a sound should be. A note's duration is called "rhythmic value." A whole note has a larger rhythmic value than a quarter note.

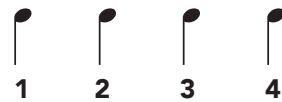
1 whole note = Long duration.
One whole note takes up all four counts.



= 2 half notes = Medium duration.
One half note takes up two counts.



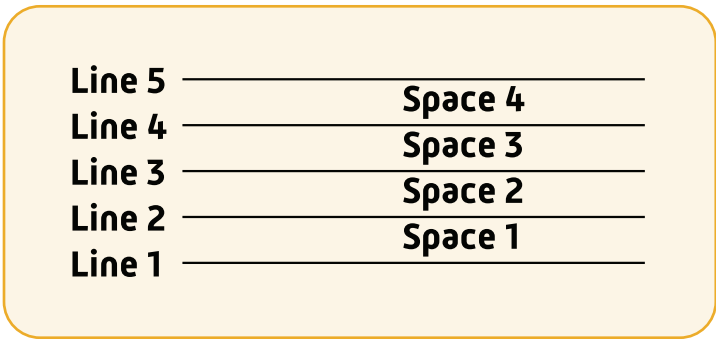
= 4 quarter notes = Short duration.
One quarter note takes up one count.



How to Write Whole, Half, and Quarter Notes

The Staff: Lines and Spaces

On the staff there are 5 lines and 4 spaces between the lines. We will give each line and space a number to quickly identify which line or space is being written on or written in.



How to Write Noteheads

Closed Noteheads

Closed noteheads should be written as a tilted oval. ●

Open Noteheads: Half Notes

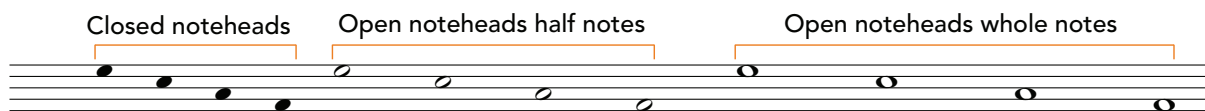
Open noteheads for half notes should also be written with a tilted oval shape. ◌

Open Noteheads: Whole Notes

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

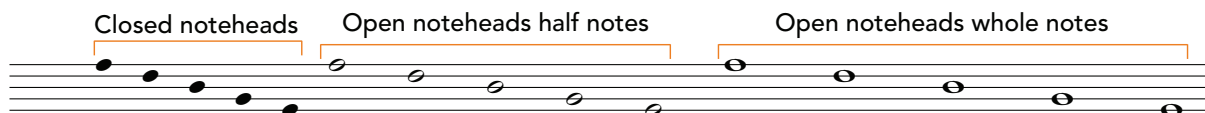
In a Space

The notehead should touch the line above the space and the line below the space without going over either of the lines. Keep the notehead in the space.



On a Line

The notehead should not touch the lines above or below it. Leave space around the notehead so anyone can see that it is clearly on a line. You should be able to see the line of the staff and space around it in the middle of open noteheads.



How to Write Stems

Stems and Noteheads

- Notes with a stem down look like a letter p.



- Notes with a stem up look like a letter d.



Stem Length

The length of the stem should be the length of 4 lines of the staff. This can get tricky when you are writing noteheads in different places. Do your best to keep the stem lengths consistent.

- Write a notehead in space 4.
- Write a stem that reaches down to line 1.
- Notes on other lines and in other spaces also have stems that are four staff lines long. For example, stems for noteheads on line 5 extend halfway into space 1.



Stem Direction: Stem Down

On or above the middle line of the staff



Stem Direction: Stem Up

Below the middle line of the staff



How to Write Whole, Half, and Quarter Notes

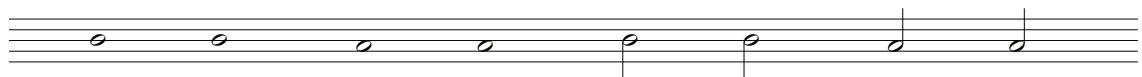
Whole Notes

- Write an open note head



Half Notes

- Write an open note head
- Write a stem



Quarter Notes

- Write a closed note head
- Write a stem



How to Clap Rhythms

You are encouraged to bounce, rock, sway, and move your body with the click of the metronome!

Reminder: You can start without the metronome or slow the metronome down if you need to. Give yourself a count in of "1, 2, 3, 4" along with the metronome before starting these exercises.

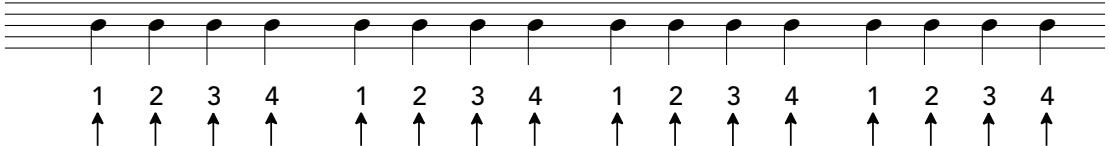
Key: Clap Hands = ↑ Count = count aloud

How to Clap Quarter Notes

1. Clap on every beat (on every click) of the metronome. These are called quarter notes.
2. Try to be precise as possible and clap exactly with the clicking sound, not before or after.
3. When this is comfortable, repeat "1, 2, 3, 4" aloud over and over again, with one number per clap, speak and clap exactly with the click.

60 **6**

Clap



Count

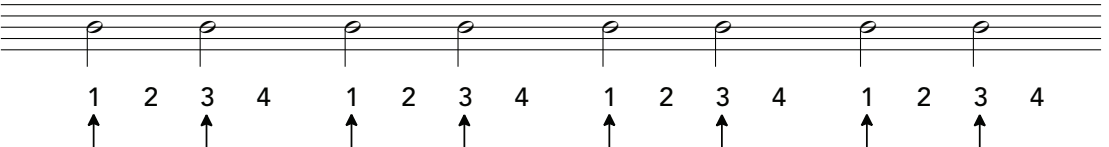
1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

How to Clap Half Notes

1. Clap on beat 1, skip beat 2, clap on beat 3, and skip beat 4.
2. Continue clapping every other beat.
3. Count "1, 2, 3, 4" aloud as you clap.

60 **7**

Clap



Count

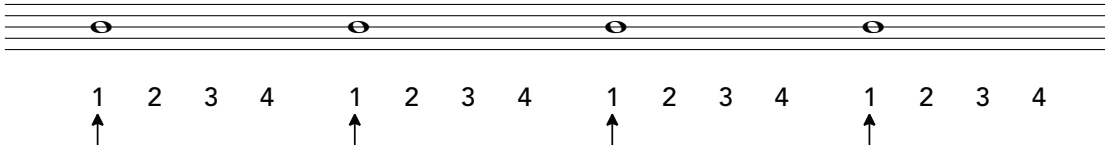
1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

How to Clap Whole Notes

1. Clap beat 1, then do not clap on beats 2, 3, 4.
2. You should be clapping once every 4 beats.
3. Add in the "1, 2, 3, 4" count.

60 **8**

Clap



Count

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

Why Clap?

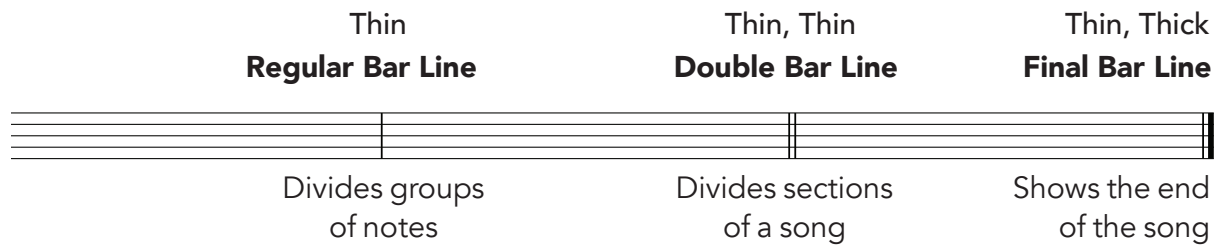
We clap before we play because it is much easier than playing an instrument and that gives us more brain power to think about the rhythm. We also clap because it helps us learn how the rhythm of the music sounds.

How to Clap Fast

Touch the palms of your hands together. Keep your non-dominant hand flat and still as you move your dominant hand from the wrist to clap against your non-dominant hand. This technique allows for speed without unnecessary tension. If you are a rightie, your non-dominant hand is your left hand, and your dominant hand is your right hand. Lefties are the opposite.

Bar Lines and Their Meanings

Bar lines divide groups of notes. Try writing these bar lines on a line of staff.



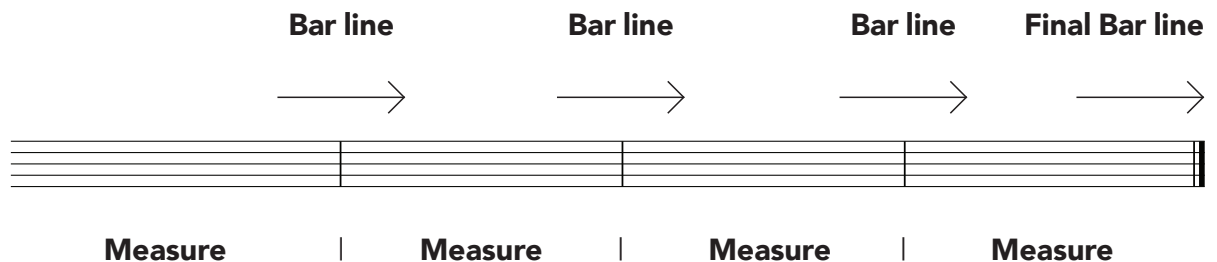
Pieces of Music vs. Songs

The word "piece" is more formal. For example, an instrumental symphony is a piece of music, and "Mary Had a Little Lamb" is a song since it has words and is typically sung. You can call a song a piece of music, just not the other way around.

Measures

A space where notes and other musical notation are placed that measures and shows time. Each measure takes place between bar lines.

- **m.** is the abbreviation of the word "measure."
- **mm.** is the abbreviation of the word "measures."
- The first measure has only one bar line.



Measures of 4

Measure	1st				2nd				3rd				4th			
Count	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Click	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16

Measures of 3

Measure	1st			2nd			3rd			4th		
Count	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
Click	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

What is an "Attack" in Music?

Whenever you clap a note or start any sound it is called an "attack". This word may seem aggressive, but is actually correct for playing music, and can be found in the dictionary!

Attack. Noun. The act or manner of beginning a musical note.

Composer vs. Songwriter

Composer. Noun. A person who writes music.

Songwriter. Noun. A person who writes music and lyrics for songs.

We can see from their definitions that composers and songwriters can be different things, in the same way pieces of music and songs are different. Songwriters typically are associated with writing songs that contain words (lyrics), whereas composers do not always write lyrics. This definition can be confusing, since we can also call people who write lyrics for songs "composers". It is important to note that many composers do write lyrics for their songs. So where does this leave us? Are you a composer or a songwriter when you write down your music?

You are both, or neither, or one or the other. In professional circles, composer describes a person writing more formal or complex music and songwriter describes someone who writes songs in a modern genre such as pop or rock. Neither is better or worse, they are just different.

Time Signatures

The top number of a time signature shows how many beats there are per measure. The bottom number shows the denominator of the fraction that corresponds to the name of the rhythmic value of the note that "gets" the beat. Look at the chart below for a breakdown of this explanation.

Bottom Number	4
Bottom Number as a Fraction	$\frac{1}{4}$
Name of the Fraction	Quarter
Note Value that Gets the Beat/Count	Quarter note

When a note "gets the beat" it lines up with the a count number. Every other note value is compared to the note value that gets the beat.

Top: Number of beats per measure? $\frac{4}{4}$ Four beats per measure.

Bottom: Which type of note gets the beat? $\frac{4}{4}$ Quarter note gets the beat.

Measures of 3

beats per measure
3
quarter note gets the beat

Measure **1st** **2nd** **3rd** **4th**

Count 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3

Measures of 4

beats per measure
4
quarter note gets the beat

Measure **1st** **2nd** **3rd** **4th**

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

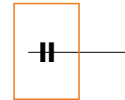
Because of its popularity and common use, $\frac{4}{4}$ is sometimes written as "common time".

$\frac{4}{4}$ = **C** = Common time

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

Percussion Clef

Percussion clefs are used for rhythm and clapping. This clef shows that only rhythm and counting are needed in the music that follows. The percussion clef is also called a "neutral clef."

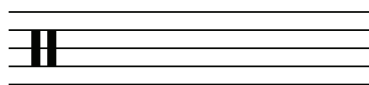


What is a Clef?

A musical clef is a symbol that is placed at the left-hand side of a staff. There are many different clefs that make the notes that follow them mean different things, the most common are treble and bass clefs.

How to Write a Percussion Clef

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



In $\frac{3}{4}$ the count in is 1, 2, 3.

60 (9)

Clap and Count 1

Clap Count $\frac{3}{4}$

Clap and Count 2

60 (10)

Clap Count $\frac{3}{4}$

In $\frac{4}{4}$ and C the count in is 1, 2, 3, 4.

Clap and Count 3

60 (11)

Clap Count $\frac{4}{4}$

Clap and Count 4

60 (12)

Clap Count C

How to Write Music 1

When you write music, you may be doing one of three things.

1. Creating something brand new - Original Composition

This is called composition, or the act of composing. This is when you create original (unique to you) combinations of notes in your measures.

2. Completing an exercise

Your music theory coach may assign a particular exercise for you to do, like writing down notes. This can include specific examples, or to create an original composition.


3. Copying another piece of music

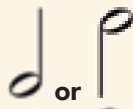

This is called "transcription", or the act of transcribing. You can transcribe music that you hear onto the paper, or copy other written music.



Measure Math 1

Measure Math 1 Rules:

Every measure must add up to the number of beats indicated in the top number of the time signature.

4 beats = 

2 beats =  or 


1 beat =  or 

Measure Math $\frac{4}{4}$

Do the addition for the following examples. Each measure in the incorrect example contains notes that do not add up to 4. In the correct example, every measure contains notes that add up to 4.

Incorrect

= 2 beats = 6 beats = 1 beat = 3 beats



Correct

= 4 beats = 4 beats = 4 beats = 4 beats

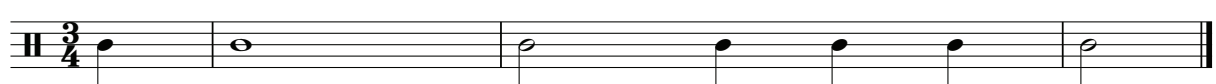


Measure Math $\frac{3}{4}$

Do the addition for the following examples. Each measure in the incorrect example contains notes that do not add up to 3. In the correct example, every measure contains notes that add up to 3.

Incorrect

= 1 beat = 4 beats = 5 beats = 2 beats



A musical staff in 3/4 time with four measures. The first measure contains a single quarter note. The second measure contains a single half note. The third measure contains a quarter note followed by two eighth notes. The fourth measure contains a single quarter note.

Correct

= 3 beats = 3 beats = 3 beats = 3 beats



A musical staff in 3/4 time with four measures. The first measure contains a single half note and a quarter note. The second measure contains three eighth notes. The third measure contains a quarter note and a half note. The fourth measure contains a quarter note followed by two eighth notes.

How to Write Lines of Music 1

How to Write a Line of Four Measures

1. Divide the staff line in half with a single bar line.
2. Divide the staff into quarters with two more bar lines. Leave extra space for the clef and time signature.
3. Write a final bar line (the thick line should be 4-6 times thicker than the thin line), percussion clef, and time signature. The top number of the time signature takes up the space from line 3 to 5. The bottom number of the time signature takes up the space from line 1 to 3.
4. Write notes to fill each measure with the number of beats shown in the time signature.

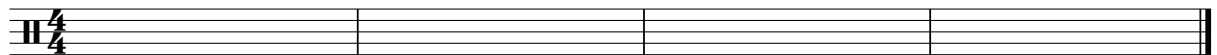
1.



2.



3.



4.



How to Write Whole Notes, Half Notes, and Quarter Notes in a Measure

Use this page as a quick reference for writing your first compositions.

How to Write Music in $\frac{4}{4}$


1. Every measure must add up to 4.
2. Notes cannot cross measure lines.
3. Whole notes can only be written on beat 1.
4. Half notes can be written on beats 1, 2, and 3.
5. Quarter notes can be written on beats 1, 2, 3, and 4.
6. Set up a line of music for yourself with a percussion clef and time signature in $\frac{4}{4}$.
7. Write 4 beats worth of notes in each measure.



How to Write Music in $\frac{3}{4}$



1. Every measure must add up to 3.
2. Notes cannot cross measure lines.
3. A whole note cannot be written in $\frac{3}{4}$. This is because the whole note gets four beats, and each measure in $\frac{3}{4}$ can only hold three beats in total.
4. Half notes can be written on beats 1 and 2.
5. Quarter notes can be written on beats 1, 2, and 3.
6. Set up a line of music for yourself with a percussion clef and time signature in $\frac{3}{4}$.
7. Write 3 beats worth of notes in each measure.

Measure Math 1 Rules:

1. Every measure must add up to the number of beats indicated in the top number of the time signature.

4 beats = 

2 beats =  or 

1 beat =  or 

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

Rhythm 2: Strong and Weak Beats 1

In this chapter you will learn about strong and weak beats. After completing this chapter you will be ready to start understanding, writing, and performing music that has rests!

Strong and Weak Beats

In every measure of most time signatures there are stronger and weaker beats. This is part of what gives music life. If all beats were equally strong, they would not be beats, they would be a pulse. Alternating strong and weak beats gives music momentum and movement.

Why Are Some Beats Strong and Some Beats Weak?

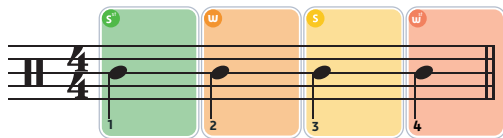
Stronger and weaker beats change how notes that align with the beat are stressed when performed. This means that together as a European/Western music culture, we have all agreed that certain beats get more emphasis than others. Every time signature has its own series of stronger and weaker beats. Other music cultures like that of India and Bali have different music rules and cultures!

Strong and Weak Beat Colors

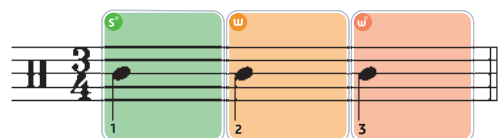
To help identify the strong and weak beats, use the color system below.



Strong and Weak Beat Colors $\frac{4}{4}$



Strong and Weak Beat Colors $\frac{3}{4}$



The Power of Low Sounds

The natural human tendency is to perceive lower sounds as being more important and more powerful than higher sounds. In many modern music genres, the strongest beats in the measure will have lower-sounding instruments on the strongest and strong beats to help emphasize them and give them more power.

Strong and Weak Beats: Drums

Since there is a drum set (or digital/analogue equivalent) in most songs in modern genres, strong and weak beats will be defined through listening to recordings of drum kits and reading the notation that corresponds to the recordings. You will see that the notation for the kick drum shows stem down below the middle line. This is an exception to the rule.

Drum Kit Basics

Kick Drum: the lowest, most powerful drum. The kick will sound on the strongest beats.

Snare Drum: the loudest, but higher sounding drum. The snare will sound on weaker beats.



13 1 Snare: Weak & Weakest Beats



14 2 Kick: Strongest & Strong Beats



Snare + Kick $\frac{4}{4}$



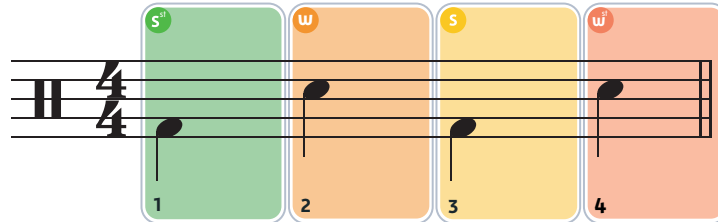
Snare + Kick $\frac{3}{4}$



Strong and Weak Beats: $\frac{4}{4}$

$\frac{4}{4}$

Measure	1 Measure			
Beats	Beat 1	Beat 2	Beat 3	Beat 4
Strength	Strongest	Weak	Strong	Weakest
Snare	Silent	Play	Silent	Play
Kick	Play	Silent	Play	Silent

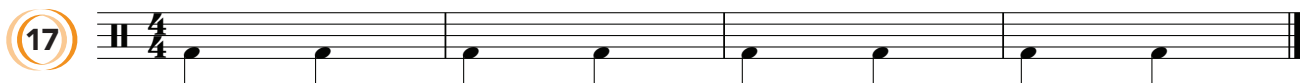


How to Identify Time Signatures by Ear: $\frac{4}{4}$

1. Listen to the recordings listed below very carefully and try to focus on the kick drum and snare only.
2. Sometimes the snare pattern will vary. In general listen for the snare on the weak and weakest beats.
3. Sometimes the kick pattern will vary. In general listen for the kick on the strongest and strong beats.
4. To confirm the time signature, count "1, 2, 3, 4" along with the music and try to align that count with a pulse that you can feel.

Example:

This kick drum pattern is featured in many songs. A kick drum pattern in this style can be found in **"We Didn't Start the Fire"** Billy Joel (00:14–00:39) and **"Into The Great Wide Open"** Tom Petty And The Heartbreakers (00:49–01:09).



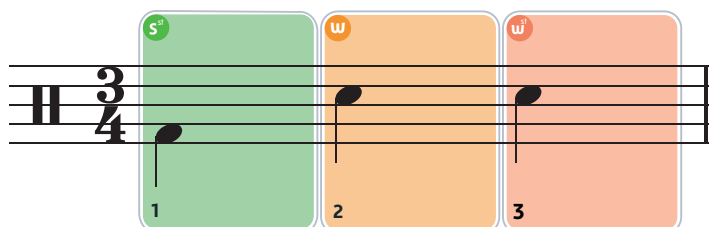
LISTEN

Dream On	Aerosmith
Roll Over Beethoven	Chuck Berry
Crazy In Love	Beyoncé feat. Jay-Z
Livin' On A Prayer	Bon Jovi
Bye Bye Love	The Everly Brothers
The Chain	Fleetwood Mac
Ain't Nobody	Chaka Khan
My Sharona	The Knack
Seasons of Love	Jonathan Larson
I'm Yours	Jason Mraz
Purple Rain	Prince
Losing my Religion	R.E.M.
Helpless	Neil Young.

Strong and Weak Beats: $\frac{3}{4}$

$\frac{3}{4}$

Measure	1 Measure		
Beats	Beat 1	Beat 2	Beat 3
Strength	Strongest	Weak	Weakest
Snare	Silent	Play	Play
Kick	Play	Silent	Silent



How to Identify Time Signatures by Ear: $\frac{3}{4}$

1. Listen to the recordings listed below very carefully and try to focus on the kick drum and snare only.
2. Sometimes the snare pattern will vary. In general listen for the snare on the weak and weakest beats.
3. Sometimes the kick pattern will vary. In general listen for the kick on the strongest beat.
4. To confirm the time signature, count "1, 2, 3" along with the music and try to align that count with a pulse that you can feel.

A few of these examples do not have drums, or only have drums in part of the song. Uh oh! What to do? Listen for the pattern of strong, weak, weakest. Remember, the strong and weak beats are something we have agreed on in this music culture, they show up everywhere in all instruments!

LISTEN

Sing it Again	Beck
Hickory Wind	The Byrds
Sunday's Best	Elvis Costello and the Attractions
Que Sera, Sera	Doris Day
The Times They Are A Changing	Bob Dylan
Manic Depression	Jimi Hendrix
How Much is That Doggie in the Window?	Patti Page
No Other One	Wheezer
La Bohème	Charles Aznavour

Remember back on p. 13 how it was difficult to tell which songs were faster or slower? Use your new knowledge of strong and weak beats and listen to the drums in those songs to hear where the actual beats are!

Review: Rhythm 2

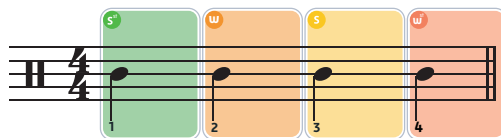
- Strong and weak beat culture
- Strong and weak beat colors



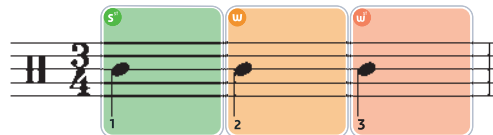
New Words You Should Know

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

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

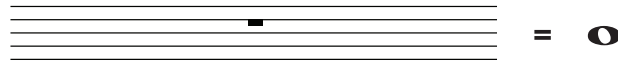
In this chapter you will learn how to understand, write, and perform notes and rests together!

Rests

Rests are musical notations that indicate a silence for a certain amount of beats/counts.

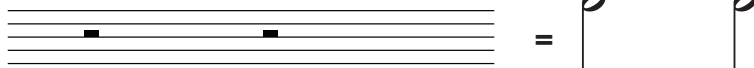
- Rests are silent.
- Count them, do not play not clap them.
- When clapping, you can perform an “anti-clap” on rests. Instead of bringing your hands together, move them apart and return to a neutral position with each count of rest.
- Whole rests are equal to whole notes in duration.
- Half rests are equal to half notes in duration.
- Quarter rests are equal to quarter notes in duration.

1 Whole rest



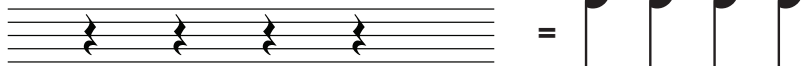
Are “heavy” with four beats, so they “sink” below the fourth line of the staff.

= 2 Half rests







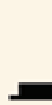
Are “light” with two beats, so they “rise” above the middle line of the staff.




= 4 Quarter rests



A whole rest may be used in any time signature to show a full measure of rest.

4 beats/4 counts =  or 

2 beats/2 counts =  or  or 

1 beat/1 count =  or  or 

How to Write Whole, Half, and Quarter Rests

Whole Rests

1. Write a small, solid rectangle that “hangs” from the 4th line of the staff.
2. The rectangle is the same length as a closed notehead.
3. The rest hangs down 50% of the way between the 3rd and 4th lines of the staff.
4. In $\frac{4}{4}$ write whole rests at the beginning of measures on beat 1.
5. In $\frac{3}{4}$ write whole rests in the middle of the measure, showing that the measure is silent, even though it does not have 4 beats.



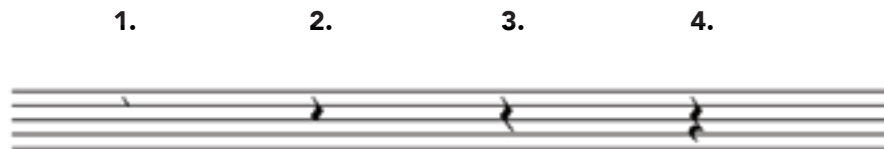
Half Rests

1. Write a small, solid rectangle that “rises” up from the 3rd line of the staff.
2. The rectangle is the same length as a closed notehead.
3. The rest rises up 50% of the way between the 3rd and 4th lines of the staff.



Quarter Rests

1. Start a diagonal line to the right, below the 5th line of the staff and write the line to the 4th line of the staff.
2. Write a diagonal line to the left, connecting the 4th and 3rd lines of the staff.
3. Write a diagonal line to the right, ending before the 2nd line of the staff.
4. Write a curved line that ends before the 1st line of the staff.



In $\frac{4}{4}$ write whole rests at the beginning of measures on beat 1. In $\frac{3}{4}$ write whole rests in the middle of the measure, even though it does not have 4 beats.

Rests: Clap and Count

Clap Rests 1

60 18 Clap Count

60 19

Clap Rests 2

Clap Count $\text{||} \frac{4}{4}$

These next examples are taken from famous operas. Operas are performances of many pieces of music that together tell a story, featuring opera singers. Operas are an example of a time when composers write words to their music. The instrument used in these examples is a bass drum. A bass drum is a large drum that is used in many music genres and military marches and is written with the stem up. Clap and count!

Keep reading and clapping on the second line of music!

"Rienzi" Richard Wagner, Bass Drum p. 28 mm. 3–10 (Fürstner publication)

60 20

Bass Drum $\text{||} \frac{4}{4}$

Measure numbers are used to show where in the piece of music the example is starting. In this example, 56 measures have already passed by.

"Rusalka" Antonín Dvořák, Bass Drum mm. 57–64

60 21

Bass Drum $\text{||} \text{C}$



"Les Vêpres Siciliennes" Giuseppe Verdi, Bass Drum mm. 45–55




60 22




Bass Drum $\text{||} \frac{4}{4}$

How to Write Music 2

Measure Math 2

4 beats/4 counts =  or 

2 beats/2 counts =  or  or 

1 beat/1 count =  or  or 

Measure Math $\frac{4}{4}$

Do the addition for the following examples. Each measure in the incorrect example contains notes and rests that do not add up to 4. In the correct example, every measure contains notes and rests that add up to 4.

Incorrect

= 2 beats = 6 beats = 1 beat = 3 beats



Correct

= 4 beats = 4 beats = 4 beats = 4 beats



Measure Math $\frac{3}{4}$

Do the addition for the following examples. Each measure in the incorrect example contains notes and rests that do not add up to 3. In the correct example, every measure contains notes and rests that add up to 3.

Incorrect

= 1 beat = 4 beats = 5 beats = 2 beats



Correct

= 3 beats = 3 beats = 3 beats = 3 beats

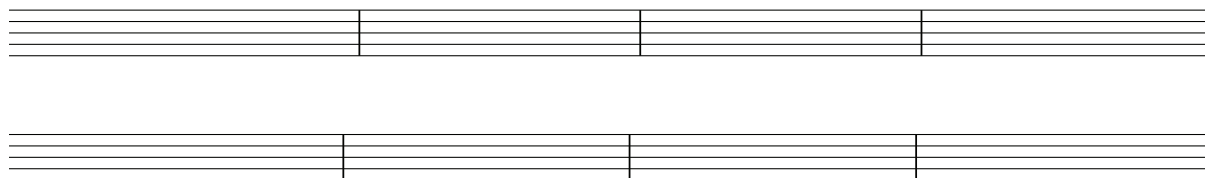


How to Write Lines of Music 2

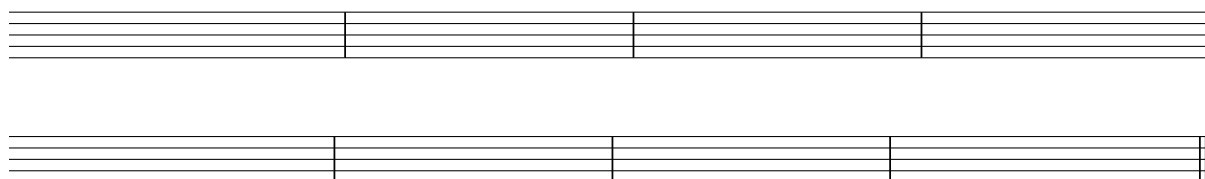
How to Write Two Lines of Four Measures Each

1. Divide two staves into halves, and quarters with bar lines.
2. Write a single bar line at the end of the first line and a final bar line at the end of the second line.
3. Write a percussion clef on both lines.
4. Write a time signature on the top line only.
5. Write notes and rests. (not pictured).

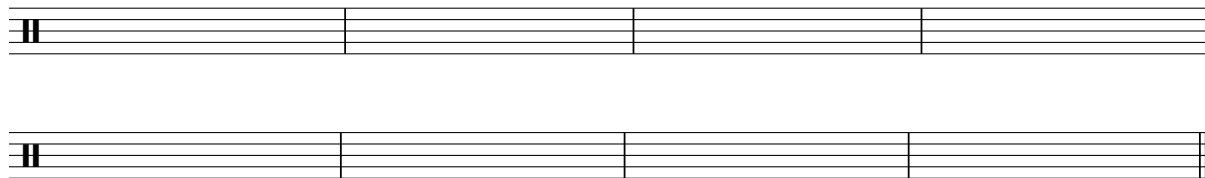
1.



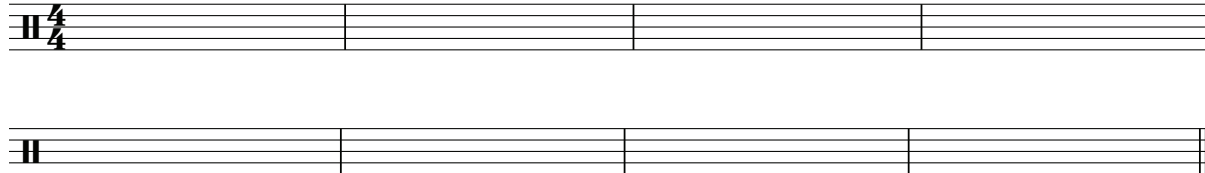
2.



3.



4.



How to Write Notes and Rests in a Measure


Rest Rules


1. A rest starting on a strong beat can last into a weak beat.
2. A rest starting on a weak beat cannot last into the next beat(s). Use two separate rests.
3. When possible, combine smaller rests into larger rests as long as this does not break the previous two rules.
4. A whole rest shows a measure of silence in all time signatures.
5. Whole rests should be written at the beginning of a measure in $\frac{4}{4}$.
6. Whole rests should be written in the middle of measures when used in $\frac{3}{4}$.


Where to Write Notes and Rests 1


Memorize the colors and which type of beats the different notations can be written on.


	Strongest	
	Strong	
	Weak	
	Weakest	



Whole Note


Half Note


Quarter Note


Whole Rest


Half Rest

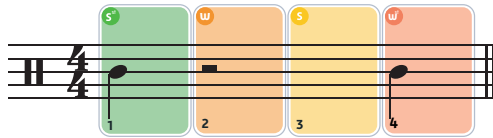

Quarter Rest

Explore these combinations and see correct and incorrect examples on the next page!

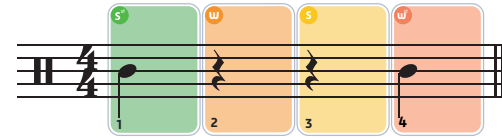
Examples in $\frac{4}{4}$

In $\frac{4}{4}$ there will always be an imaginary divide between beats 2 and 3 that only the whole note, whole rest, and half note can cross. To understand why the incorrect examples are wrong and the correct examples are right, see the rules and colors from the previous page.

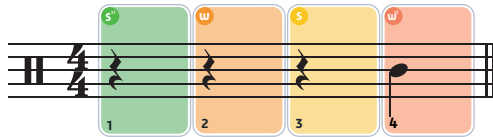
Incorrect



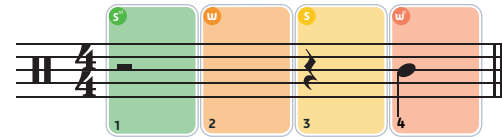
Correct



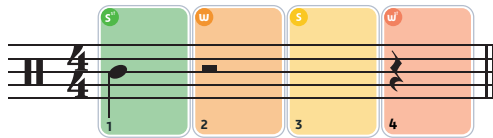
Incorrect



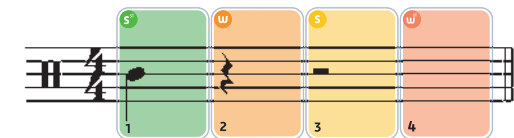
Correct



Incorrect



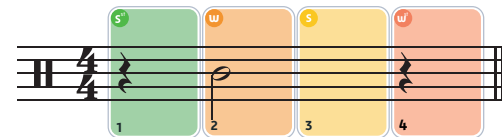
Correct



Dividing the Measure in Half $\frac{4}{4}$

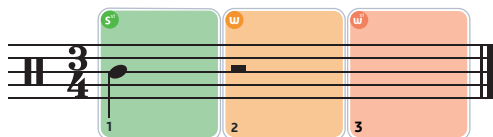
Another way to know which notations can or cannot be written somewhere is to imagine an invisible line between beats 2 and 3 that only whole+half notes and whole rests can cross.

Correct

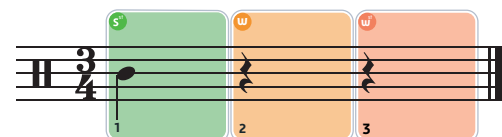


Examples in $\frac{3}{4}$

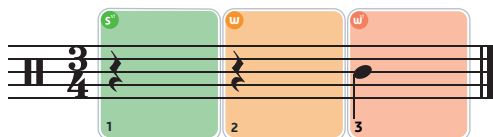
Incorrect



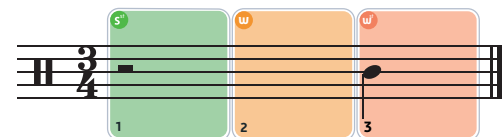
Correct



Incorrect



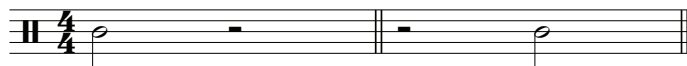
Correct



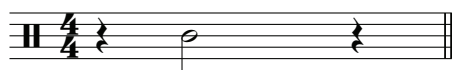
Composition Ideas

These are only a few ideas to get you started. There are many more combinations and permutations that can be made with a mix of whole, half, and quarter notes and rests. You need to perform your compositions to see how they sound to make sure they line up with your intention and ideas. Create compositions around your feelings, ideas, thoughts, emotions, dreams, and experiences. Express anything and everything through music. Tell your story.

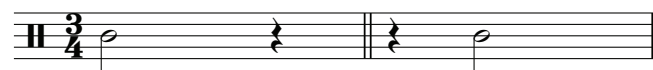
Two Consecutive Beats of Rest and Half Notes $\frac{4}{4}$



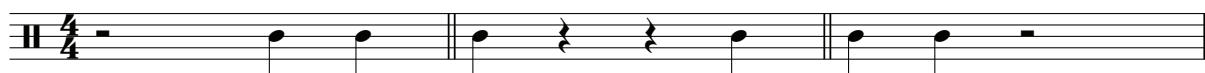
One Beat of Rest and Half Notes $\frac{4}{4}$



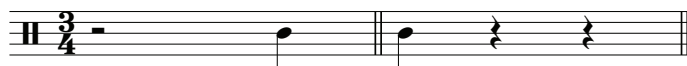
One Beat of Rest and Half Notes $\frac{3}{4}$



Two Consecutive Beats of Rest and Quarter Notes $\frac{4}{4}$



Two Consecutive Beats of Rest and Quarter Notes $\frac{3}{4}$



One Beat of Rest and Quarter Notes $\frac{4}{4}$



One Beat of Rest and Quarter Notes $\frac{3}{4}$



In $\frac{4}{4}$ write whole rests at the beginning of measures on beat 1. In $\frac{3}{4}$ write whole rests in the middle of the measure, even though it does not have 4 beats.

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

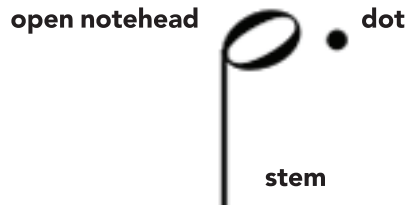
Rhythm 4: Dots, Ties, Repeat Signs

In this last chapter on rhythm, you will learn how to understand, write, and perform dots, ties, and repeat signs.

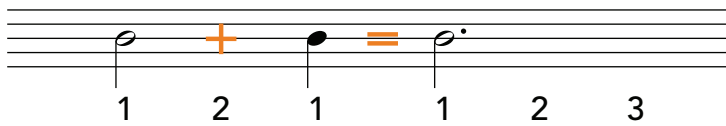
Dotted Notes 1

Dotted notes are worth $1\frac{1}{2}$ times the written note's rhythmic value.

Dotted Half Note



The written note value + $\frac{1}{2}$ of the written note value = dotted note value. This means that the dotted half note gets three beats/counts. Dotted half notes fill up an entire measure of $\frac{3}{4}$.



How to Write Dotted Notes

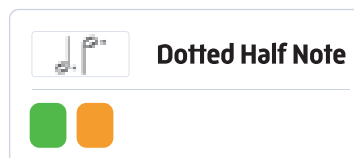
1. Write note value.
2. Write a small dot to the right of the notehead.
3. If the notehead is on a line, write the dot above the line the notehead is on.
4. If the notehead is in a space, write the dot in the same space as the notehead.



How to Write Dotted Notes in Measures

Dotted Half Note Rules

1. Just like half note, dotted half notes may cross the division between beats 2 and 3 when in $\frac{4}{4}$.
2. Dotted half notes may start on the weak beat of $\frac{4}{4}$ only.
3. Dotted half notes fill up an entire measure of $\frac{3}{4}$.



Correct

Correct

Correct

To hear how long the duration of a note is, you can say "taaaaa" aloud on the attacks and hold the "ta" for the full count of the note.

Dotted Notes: Clap and Count

Clap Dotted Notes 1

60 (23)

5

Clap Dotted Notes 2

60 (24)

5

9

13

Tied Notes

Ties connect notes together. Tied notes are worth the rhythmic value of both the notes connected by the tie. Tied notes are used to make the duration of notes longer by connecting notes together, the second note does not receive an attack. Ties can connect notes in many ways.

1. Combine the rhythmic value of two or more notes in connecting measures.
2. Combine the rhythmic value of two or more notes from one line of staff to another line of staff.

Tie Math

The number of actual beats/counts each note is worth is below each tied pair. There are many more possible combinations that you can make with ties. Get creative and have fun!

Quarter Notes Tied To/From

1 + 1 = 2, 1 + 2 = 3, 2 + 1 = 3, 1 + 3 = 4, 3 + 1 = 4, 1 + 4 = 5, 4 + 1 = 5

Half Notes Tied To/From

2 + 3 = 5, 3 + 2 = 5, 2 + 4 = 6, 4 + 2 = 6

How to Write Tied Notes

Tied Notes on or Above Line 3 of the Staff

1. Write the notes you wish to connect with a tie on the same line or space of the staff.
2. Write the tie from just above the first notehead to just above the second notehead.

1.

2.

Tied Notes Below Line 3 of the Staff

1. Write the notes you wish to connect with a tie on the same line or space of the staff.
2. Write the tie from just below the first notehead to just below the second notehead.

1.

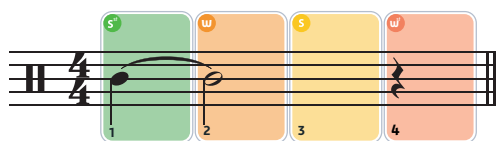
2.

How to Write Tied Notes in Measures

Tie Rules:

1. Only use ties when you cannot use a note that is worth the same number of beats.
2. Ties cannot skip over rests or other notes.
3. Ties on or above the middle line arch over.
4. Ties below the middle line arch under.

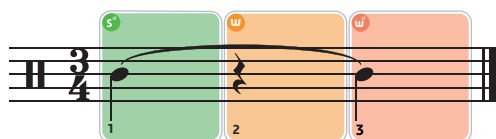
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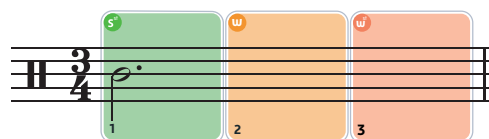
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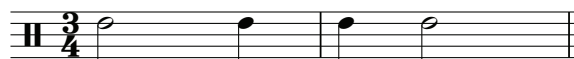
Correct



How to Write Tied Notes in Connecting Measures

1. Write the notes you wish to connect with a tie on the same line or space of the staff.
2. Write a tie showing that the notes are connected.

1.



2.



How to Write Tied Notes from One Line of Staff to the Next.

1. Write the notes you wish to connect with a tie on the same line or space of the staff.
2. Show the beginning of the tie from the last note of the first line.
3. Show the end of the tie on the first note of the next line.



How to Tie More than Two Notes Together

1. Write the notes you wish to connect with a tie on the same line or space of the staff.
2. Write ties showing that the notes are connected.
3. There is no limit to the number of ties you can use in a row.

3 + 4 + 4 + 1
=12

Tied Notes: Clap and Count

Clap Tied Notes 1

60 (25)

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4
↑ ta ↑ ta ↑ ta ta

5

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4
↑ ta ↑ ta ↑ ta

Clap Tied Notes 2

60 (26)

1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3
↑ ta ↑ ta ↑ ta ta

5

1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3
↑ ta ↑ ta ↑ ta

9

1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3
↑ ta ↑ ta ↑ ta ta ta

13

1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3
↑ ta ↑ ta ↑ ta ta ta

17

1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3
↑ ta

Repeat Signs

Repeat signs allow you to play the same measure, or measures, more than one time. Read and clap through the following examples to understand more about how repeat signs work.

Single Repeat Sign 1

1. Play/clap through the last measure.
2. Repeat back to measure 1.
3. Play/clap through to the last measure and stop.



60 (27)

Single Repeat Sign 2

Okay, so technically there are two repeat signs written here. This way of writing repeats works exactly the same as "Single Repeat Signs 1." This is a way of writing single repeats that you may see from time to time. When you want to write a single repeat sign, **do not do it this way**.

1. Play/clap through the last measure.
2. Repeat back to measure 1.
3. Play/clap through to the last measure and stop.



60 (28)

Double Repeat Sign 1

1. Play/clap through the last measure.
2. Repeat back to the **||:** in measure 2. Do not play the first measure again.
3. Play/clap through the last measure and stop.



60 (29)

Double Repeat Sign 2

1. Play/clap up to the ||: in measure 7.
2. Repeat back to the || in measure 2. Do not play the first measure again.
3. Play/clap through the last measure and stop.



1.>

2. <.....

3.>

1.>

2. <.....

3.>

5

How to Write Repeat Signs

Start Repeat Sign

1. Write a backwards final bar line.
2. Write a dot above the middle line of the staff and a dot below Line 3 of the staff.



End Repeat Sign

1. Write a final bar line.
2. Write a dot above the middle line of the staff and a dot below Line 3 of the staff.



How To Write Repeat Signs at the End of a Line of Staff

1. Prepare your staff with bars, clef, time signature and final bar line.
2. Write an end repeat sign by adding the dots.

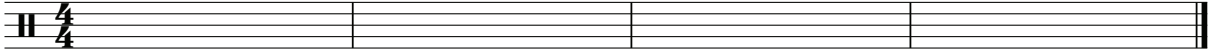
1.

2.

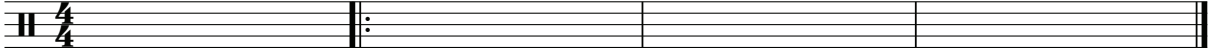
How To Write Repeat Signs in the Middle of a Line of Staff

1. Prepare your staff with bars, clef, time signature and final bar line.
2. Write a start repeat sign where you want the repeat to start.
3. Write an end repeat sign where you want the repeat to end.

1.



2.



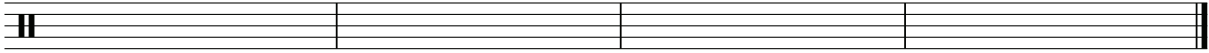
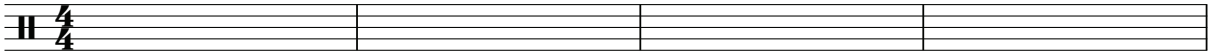
3.



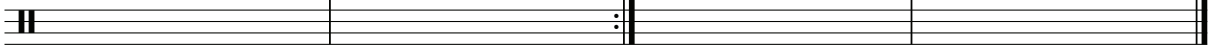
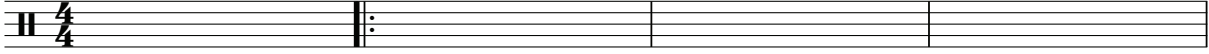
How To Write Repeat Signs Over Multiple Lines of Staff

1. Prepare your staff with bars, clef, time signature and final bar line.
2. Write a start repeat sign where you want the repeat to start and an end repeat sign where you want the repeat to end.

1.



2.



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

learn the rules, follow the rules, break the rules, make music. the music in your heart may not conform to the rules you will learn in this book, or it may follow the rules without exception. rules provide a structure to be creative within. all ways of making music are fine. go make music and express yourself with passion.

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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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. ISBN: 978-0571514564