MUSIC THEORY

INSTRUCTOR'S GUIDE

LEVEL 2

MUSIC AND ARTS MINISTRIES
CANADA AND BERMUDA

Table of Contents

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3rd Edition

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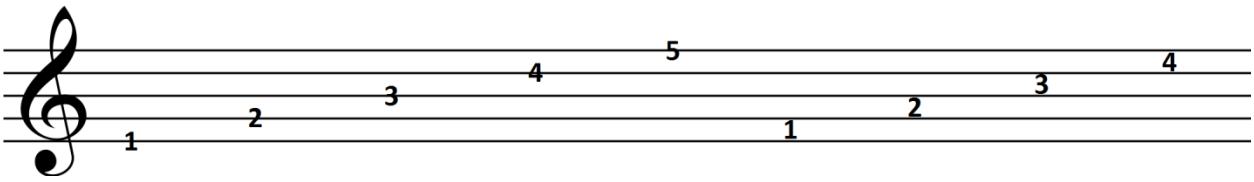
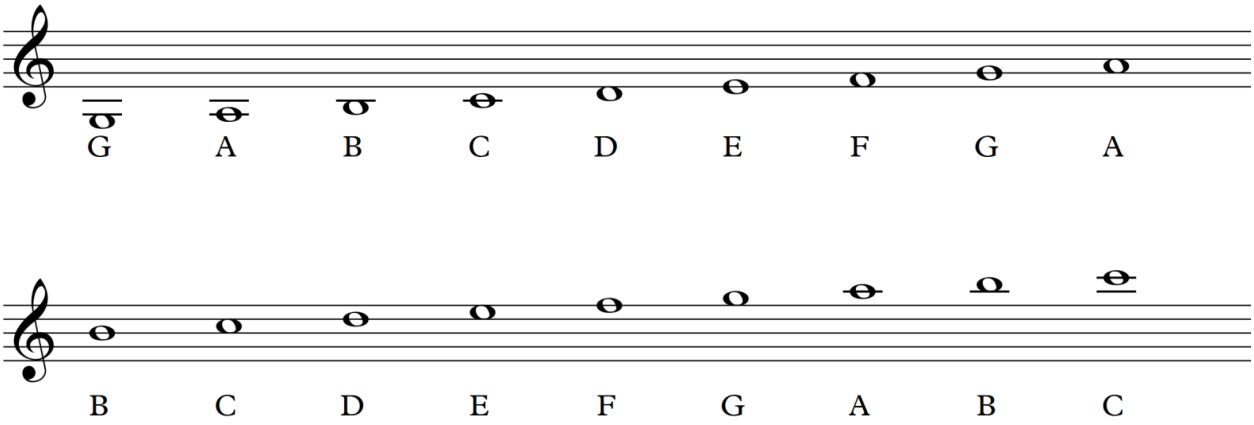
Review of Level 1

The seven letters of the musical alphabet: A B C D E F G
An octave = 8 notes

The Staff - 5 lines and 4 spaces:



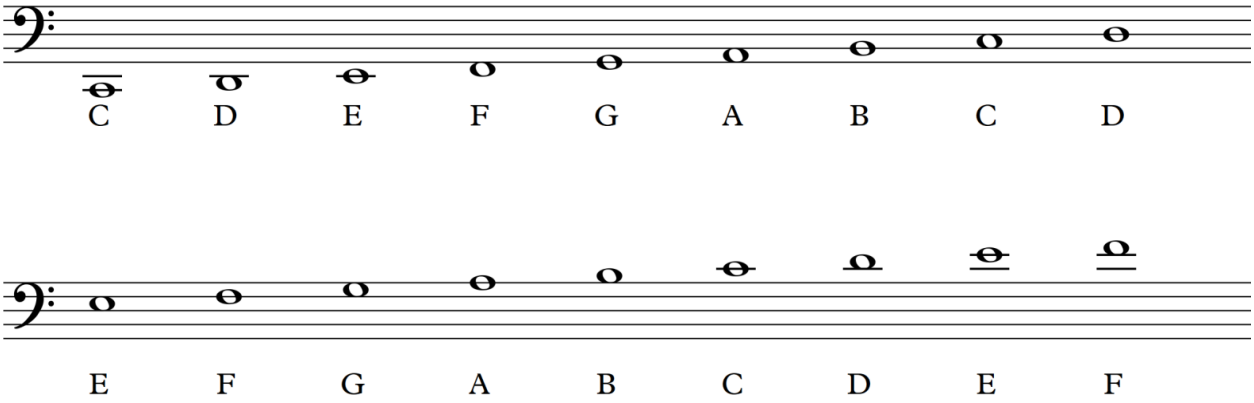
The Notes of the Treble Staff:



Treble Clef rhymes:

F A C E (spaces) & Every Good Boy Deserves Fudge (lines)

The Notes of the Bass Staff:

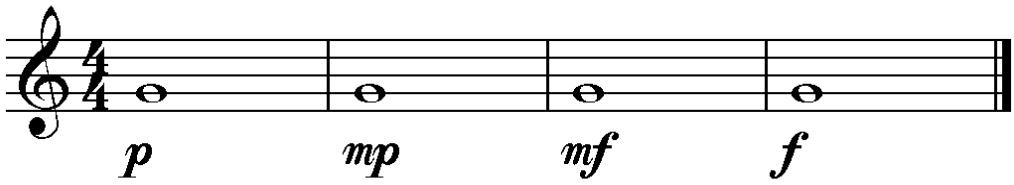


Bass Clef rhymes:

All Cows Eat Grass (spaces) & Grounded Birds Don't Fly Away (lines)

Dynamics refer to volume – how loud or soft the notes are sung or played.

Dynamic markings from soft to loud:



Tempo is how fast or slow a piece of music is played.

Tempo Markings:

Allegro – Fast

Moderato – at a medium speed

Adagio – Slowly

Lesson 2.1 – Note Values

Notes can be played for different amounts of time. Some notes are played for a short time, some are played longer.

Let's start learning about **rhythm** by talking about some of these short and long notes: **whole notes, half notes, and quarter notes.**

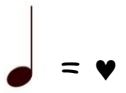
whole note **half note** **quarter note**

Note Values

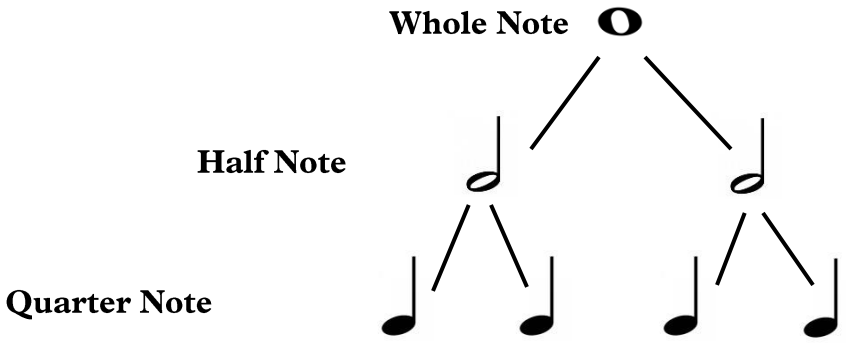
Most music has a **beat** (or **pulse**).

- Sometimes the beat of the music is fast.
- Sometimes the beat of the music is slow.

Each of the above notes has a different length:

- whole note = 4 beats 
- half note = 2 beats 
- quarter note = 1 beat 

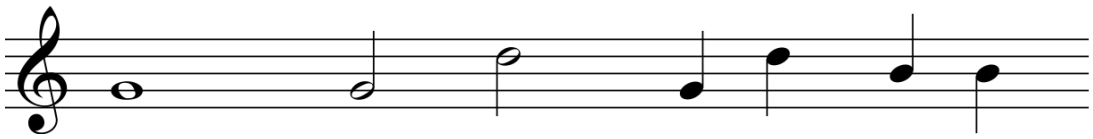
Here's the relationship between different note values:



Stem Direction

- If a half note or quarter note is above line 3 on the staff, the stem goes *down* on the *left* side of the note.
- If it is below line 3 on the staff, the stem goes *up* on the *right*.
- If it is on line 3, the stem can go either up or down, it is your choice.

Study this example carefully to make sure you understand these rules!

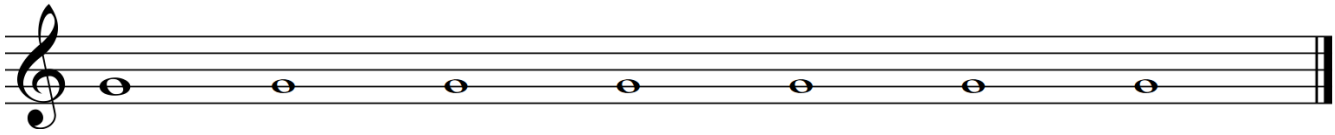


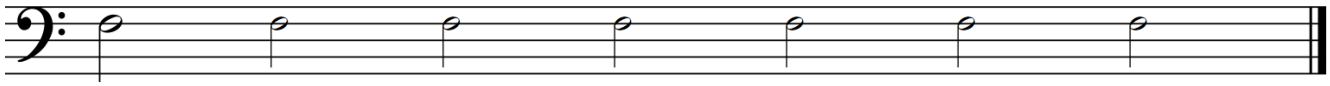
EXERCISE

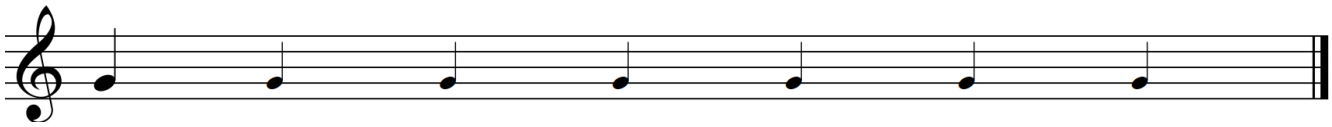
Practice writing whole notes, half notes and quarter notes.

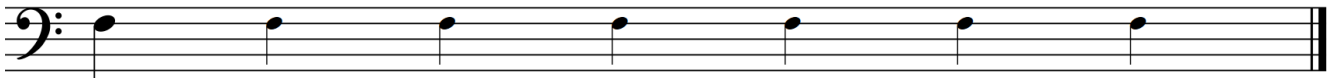
Write at least 6 of each. Remember to put the stems in the right direction!

BONUS! Name each note you draw.









Bar Lines and Time Signatures

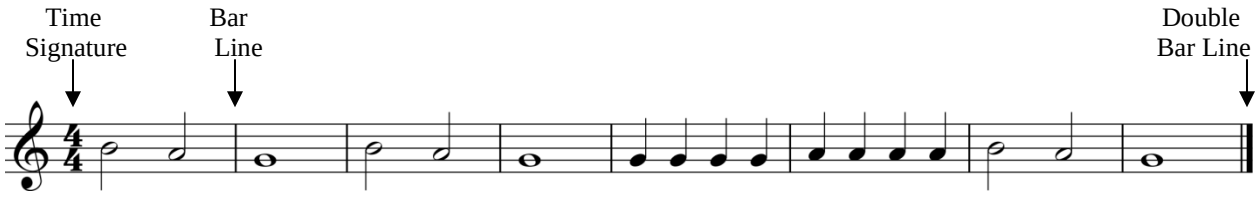
In the same way that we use punctuation when writing sentences, we use **bar lines** to help organize the music. You would never write:

I like music music is fun do you like music too

Instead, we use punctuation so we know where one sentence ends and the other begins:

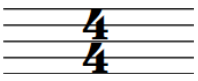
I like music. Music is fun. Do you like music, too?

Bars are separated by vertical lines called **bar lines**. Bar lines are like musical punctuation. At the end of a piece of music, there is a special bar line called a **double bar line**.



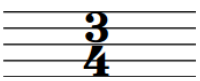
Notice at the beginning of this example there is a **time signature**. This lets us know how many beats are in each **bar**. The top number tells us how many **beats** there are in a measure, and the bottom number tells us what kind of note gets one **beat**:

"Common Time"



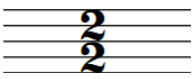
Four beats per measure
Quarter note gets the beat

"Waltz Time"



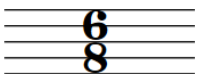
Three beats per measure
Quarter note gets the beat

"Cut Time"



Two beats per measure
Half note gets the beat

"Compound Time"



Six beats per measure
Eighth note gets the beat

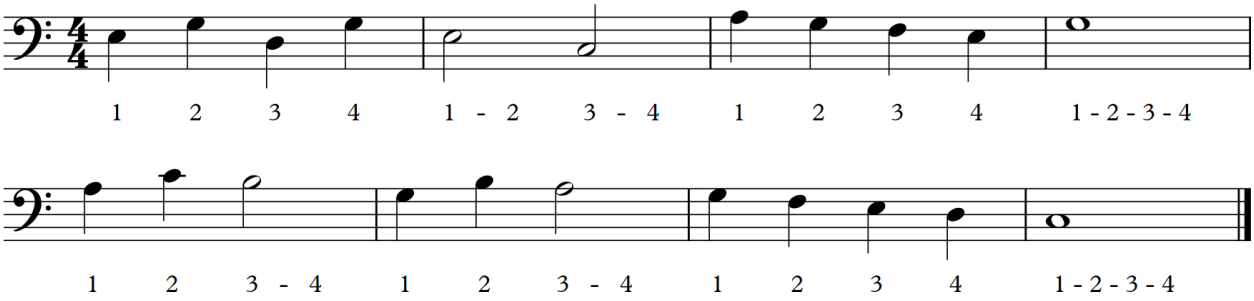
Counting Music

TIP

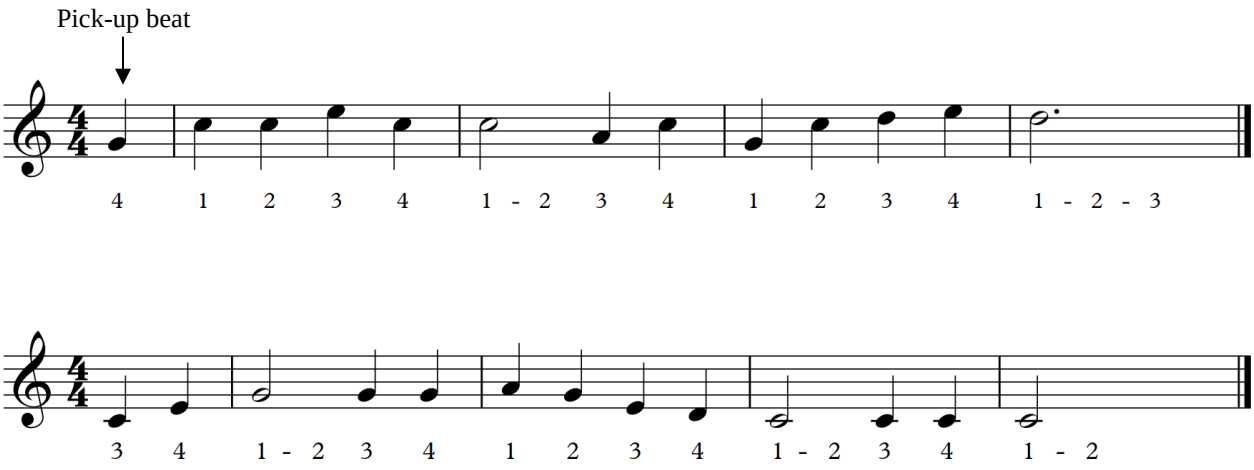
*It is important when playing and singing that we always **count** along with the music—if not out loud, then in our heads.*

We do this by counting out the beats of the music. Sometimes we actually write out the beats on the music to help us count.

Here is an example of a piece with the counts (beats) written out.



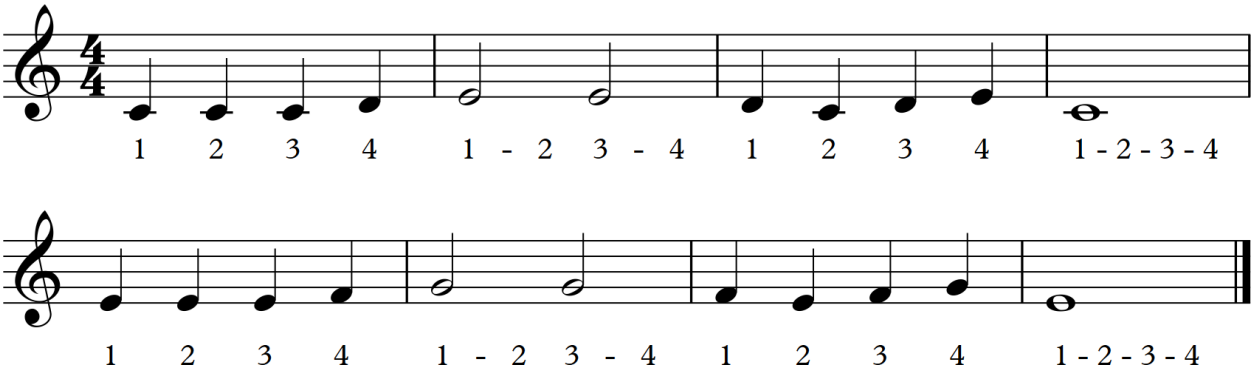
NOTE: Sometimes pieces begin on a beat other than 1. When that happens, the preceding beat is called an **anacrusis (pick-up beat)**.



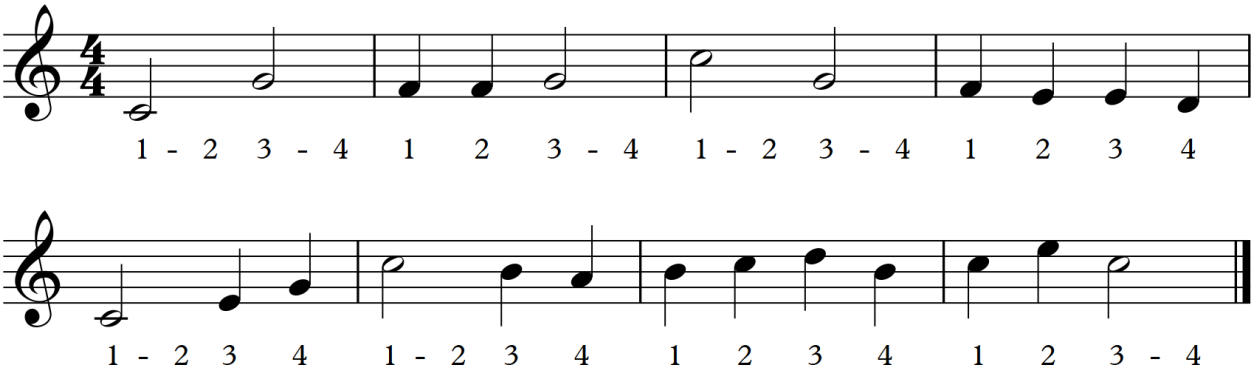
EXERCISE

Practice writing out the counts for the following pieces. Also, draw the appropriate clef at the beginning of each line.

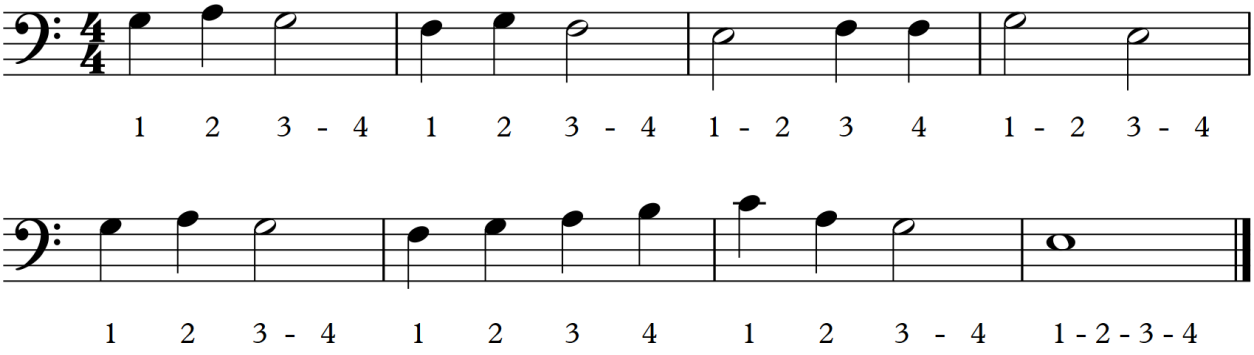
(a) Treble Clef



(b) Treble Clef



(C) Bass Clef

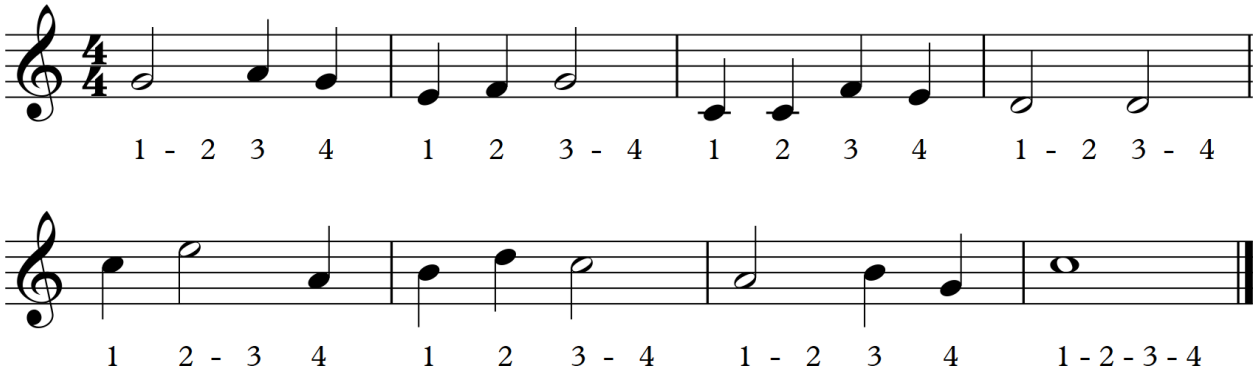


BONUS! Practice clapping the rhythm of these pieces while saying out loud the counts you have written.

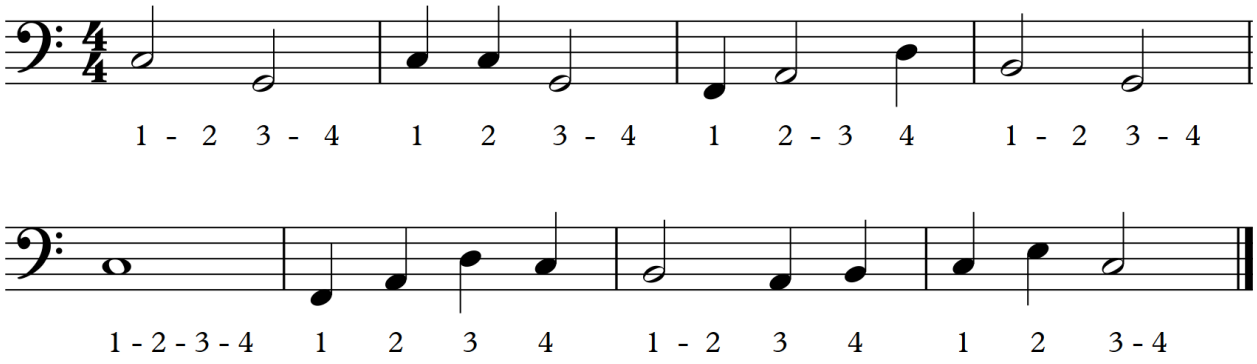
EXERCISE

Write the counts for the following pieces. Add bar lines. Make sure each bar has four beats.

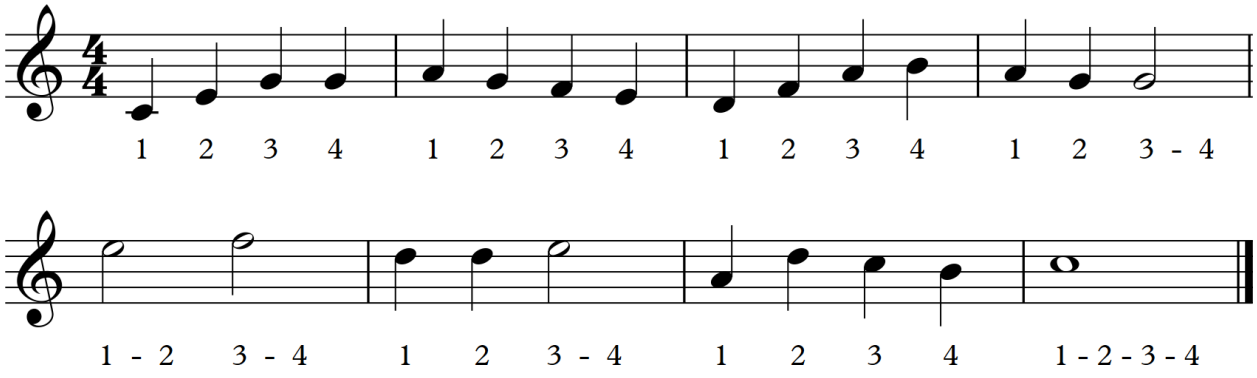
(a)



(b)



(C)



SUMMARY

- ✓ Music has notes of various lengths. Each note gets a different number of beats.
- ✓ The stems on half notes and quarter notes go up if the note is below line 3, down if the note is above line 3, and either up or down if it is directly on line 3.
- ✓ Music contains **bars** (or **measures**). Each bar ends with a **bar line** and the end of a piece has a **double bar line.**
- ✓ Each bar has a certain number of **beats** which are indicated by a **time signature.**
- ✓ The top number in the **time signature** tells you how many beats are in a bar, and the bottom number tells you what kind of note gets one **beat**.
- ✓ A 4/4 **time signature** tells you that there are 4 beats in each **bar** and that a **quarter note** gets one beat.
- ✓ It is important to always count when playing music. You should be able to write out the counts on the piece of music itself to help you.

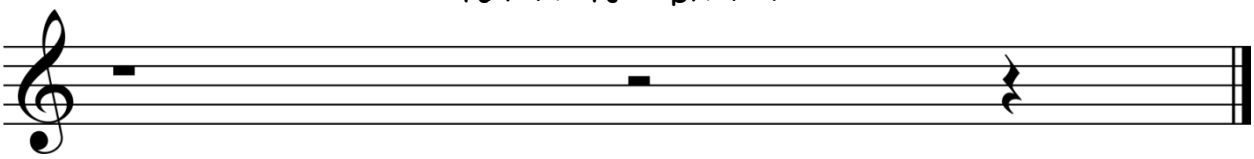
Lesson 2.2 - Rests

Rhythm in music does not only include notes. It also includes **rests.**

Like notes, **rests** in music last for a specific length of time. Rests are silence in music.

There are whole rests, half rests, quarter rests and more that you will learn later.

Rhythm Rest Symbols



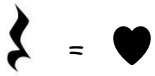
Whole Rest Half Rest Quarter Rest

Rest Values

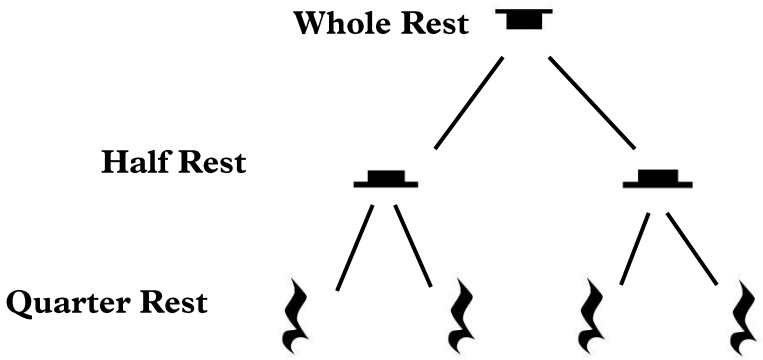
A whole rest has the same value as a whole note – 4 beats! The same is true of the other rests – they have the same value as the note with the same name:

Whole rest = 4 beats 

Half rest = 2 beats 

Quarter rest = 1 beat 

Here's the relationship between different rest values:



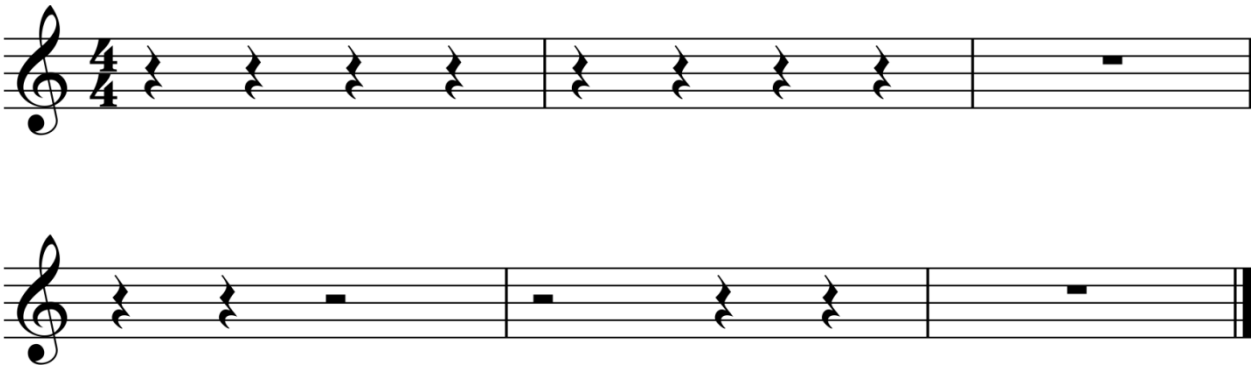
EXERCISE

Practice writing rests on the staff below.

Make sure you include each type of rest.

- Write a Treble Clef at the beginning of each staff below.
- Don't forget: Each bar has four beats!
- *TIP: Be careful to place the whole rests and half rests on the correct lines.*

TEACHER NOTE: The answers will vary between students. Check for the correct number of beats in each bar.



Time Signatures

We have already seen music written in the 4/4 time signature. Music can also be organized in 3/4 and 2/4 (plus more!).

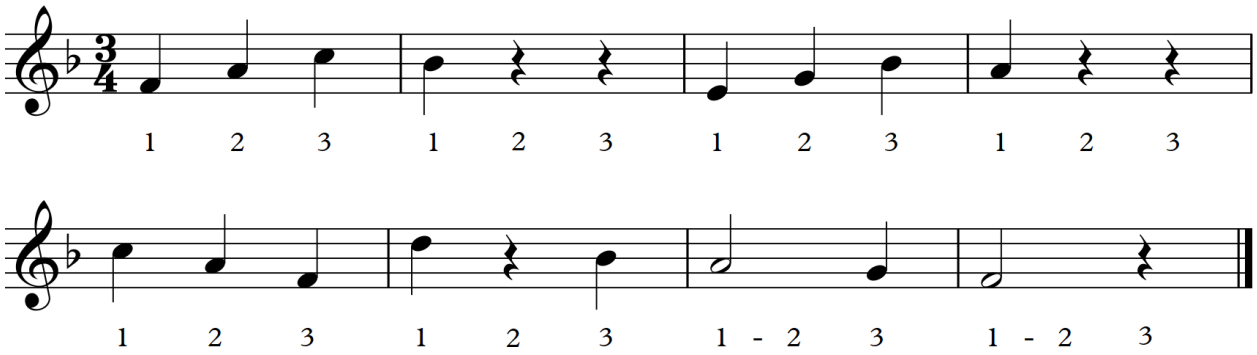
How many beats do you think are in 3/4 time? 3

How many beats do you think are in 2/4 time? 2

Remember: the number on **top** tells us how many beats are in each bar!

Counting

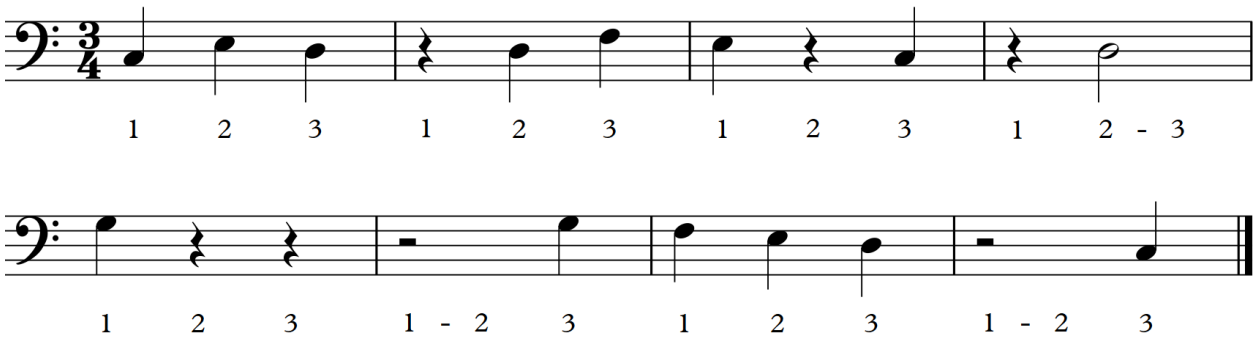
In the last lesson, you learned how to write the counts under notes. If you see a rest, count the same way you would for a note. Here's an example in 3/4 time:



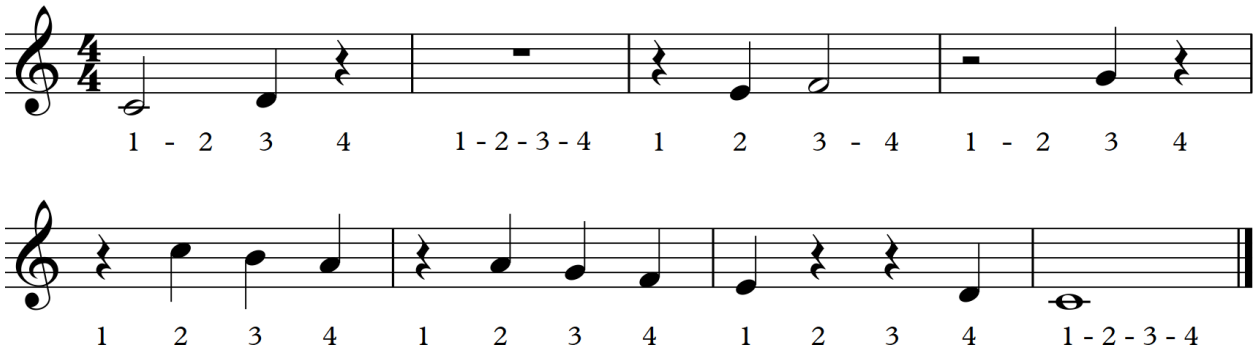
EXERCISE

Practice writing counts for the following examples.

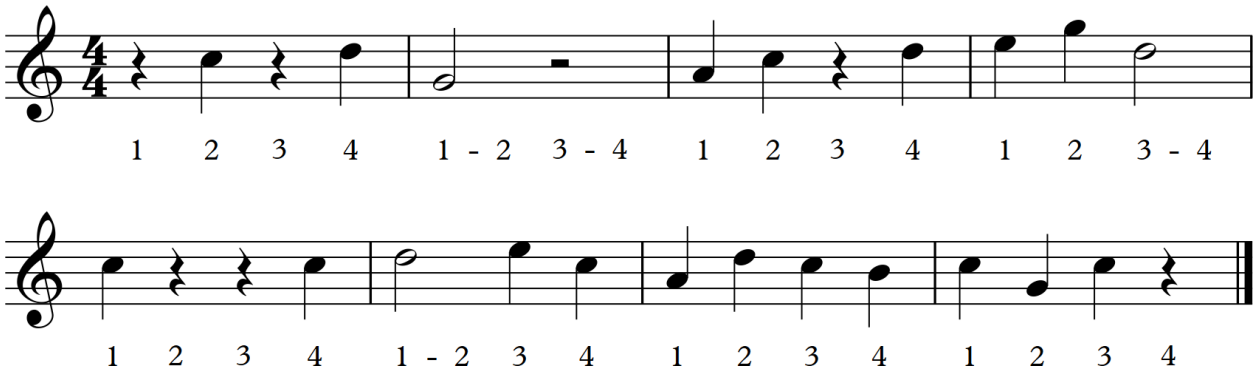
(a)



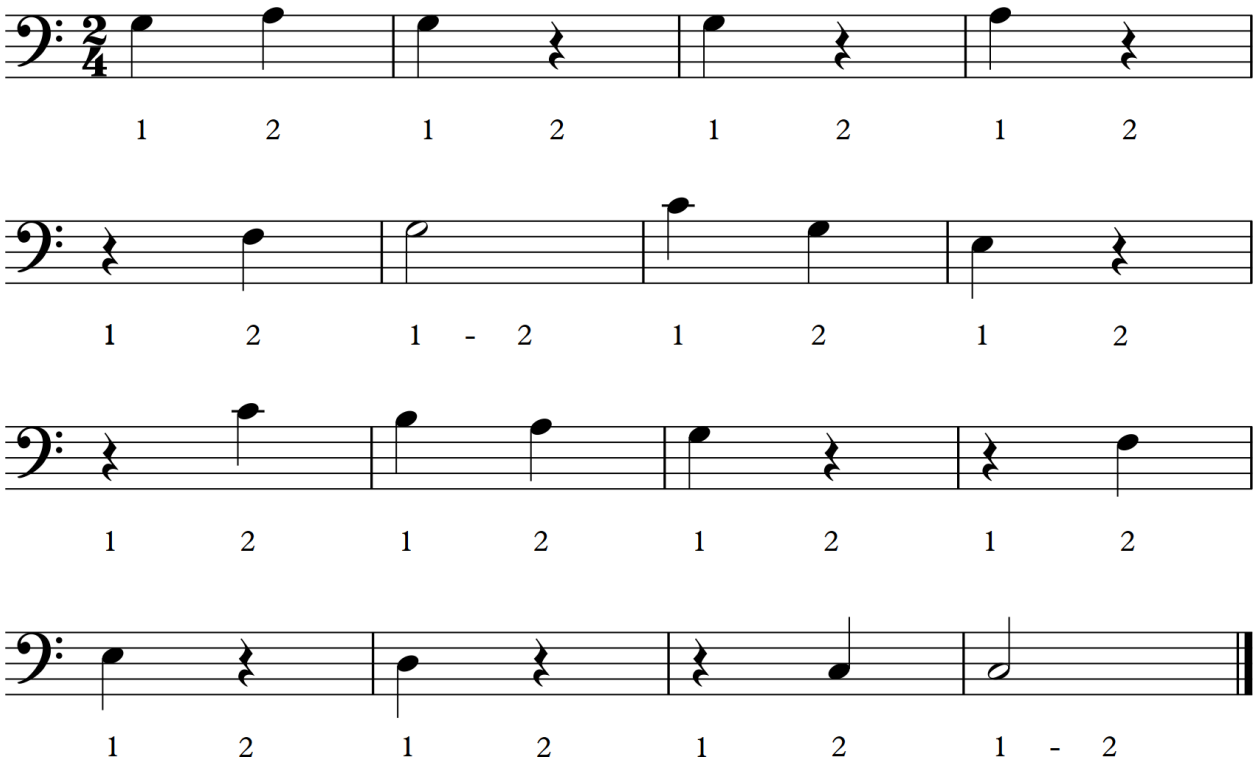
(b)



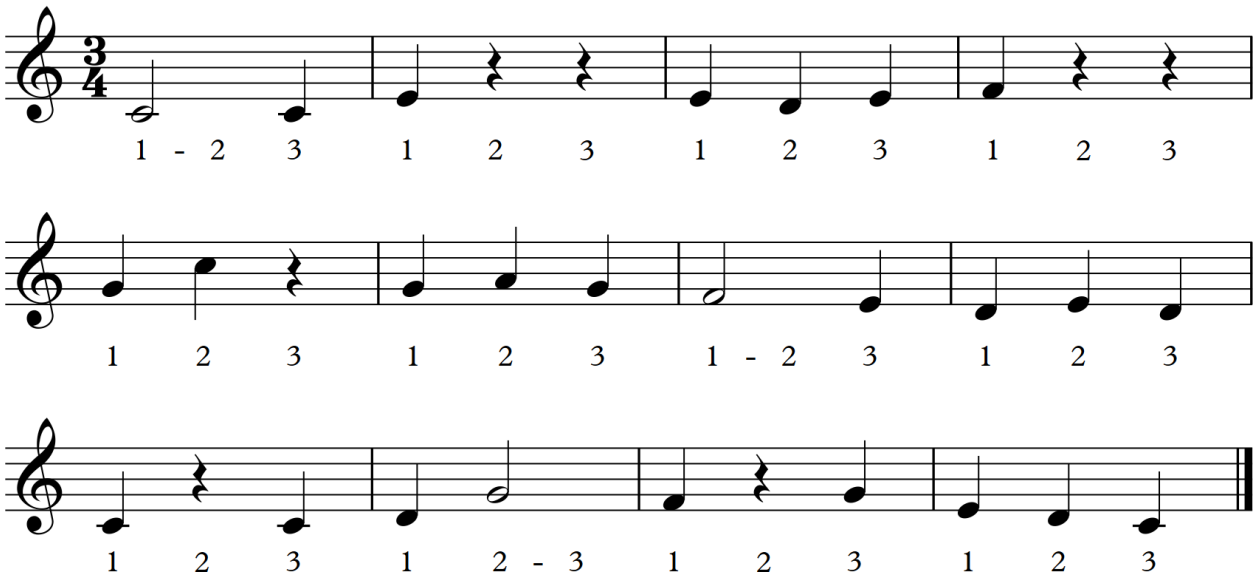
(c)



(d)


1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2
1 2 1 - 2 1 2 1 2
1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2
1 2 1 2 1 2 1 - 2

(e)


1 - 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3
1 2 3 1 2 3 1 - 2 3 1 2 3
1 2 3 1 2 - 3 1 2 3 1 2 3

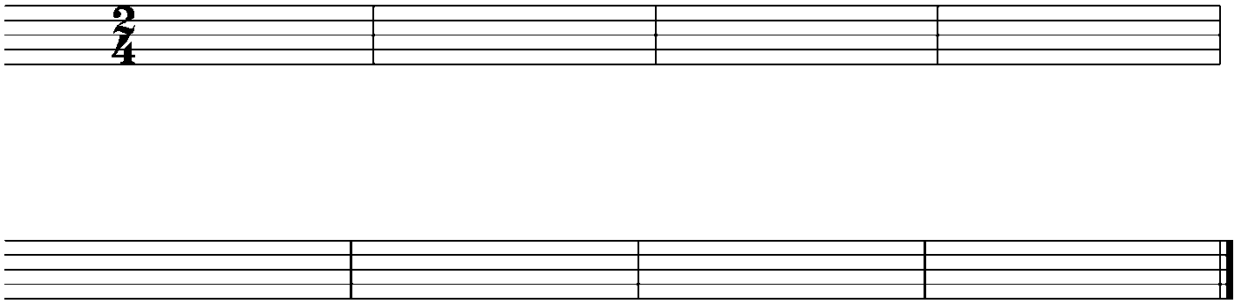
Write Your Own Song!

Write your own song that is eight bars long in each of 4/4, 3/4 and 2/4 time. Remember everything we have learned so far.

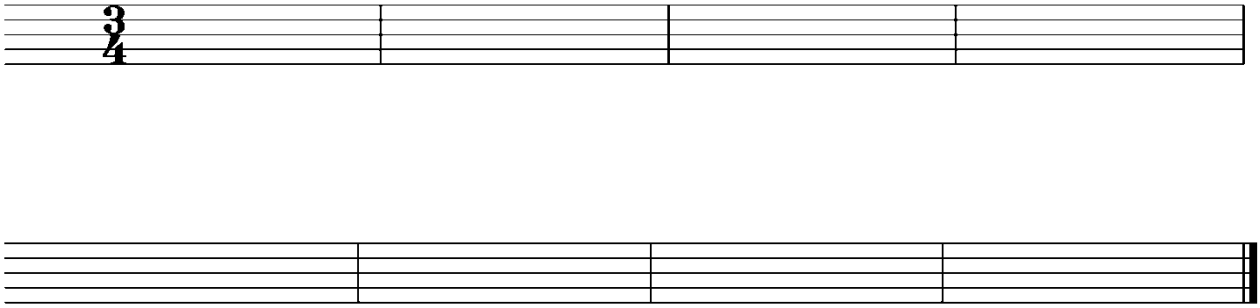
- Write at least one example in Treble Clef and one example in the Bass Clef.
- Include ALL note values and ALL rest values.

TEACHER NOTE: Do only as many as time permits. The answers will vary between students. Check for correct rhythm and stem direction.

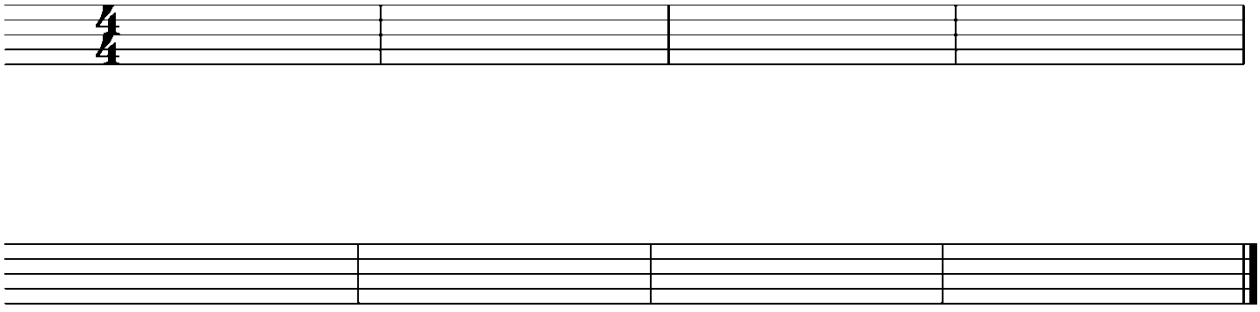
(a)



(b)



(C)

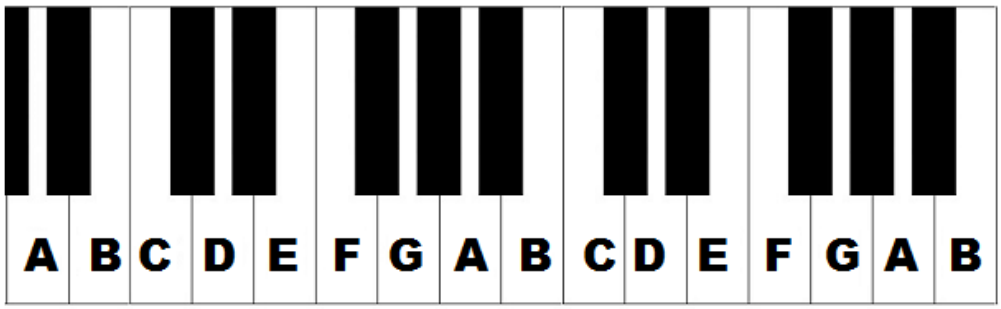


SUMMARY

- ✓ Rhythm also includes **rests**, which is silence in music.
- ✓ There are **whole rests, half rests and quarter rests**. Each type of rest has the same value as the note with the same name (whole rest = 4 beats).
- ✓ 2/4 time signature has two quarter notes in a bar, while 3/4 time signature has three quarter notes in a bar.
- ✓ Rests are counted the same way as notes.

Lesson 2.3 – The Piano Keyboard

The following is a piano keyboard example of all of the notes we can play and sing in music:



The **white notes** on a keyboard are A B C D E F G.

- If we move from a white key to the next higher key on its right (black or white), that note is called a **sharp**.
  Sharps are represented by the symbol ♯ (ex. G♯).

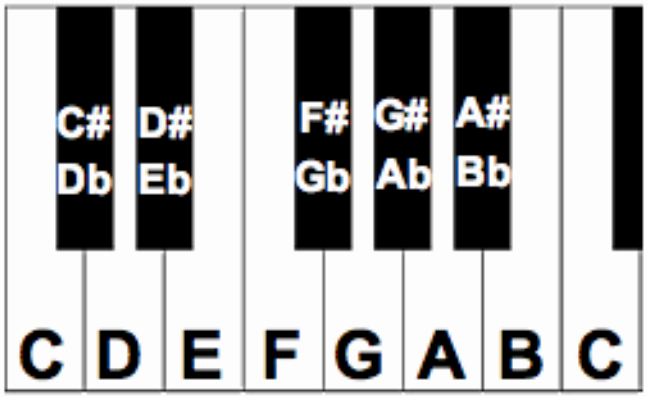
- If we move from a white key to the next lower key on its left, (black or white), that note is called a **flat**.
  Flats are represented by the symbol ♭ (ex. G♭).

- The white keys can also be called **natural**. **Naturals** are represented by the symbol ♮ (ex. G♮).

These symbols are called ACCIDENTALS.

Sharp Symbol	Natural Symbol	Flat Symbol
♯	♮	♭

Here is one octave of the piano keyboard showing the names of the notes on both the white and black keys:



If we move from F to the next highest note (to the right) on the keyboard (in this case a **black note**), that new **black note** is **F sharp**.

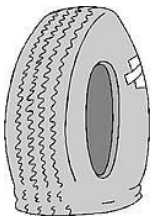
If we move from F to the next lowest note (to the left) on the keyboard (in this case a **white note**), that new **white note** is **F flat**.

Have you ever stepped on a tack? Ouch! It would make you jump high in the air.

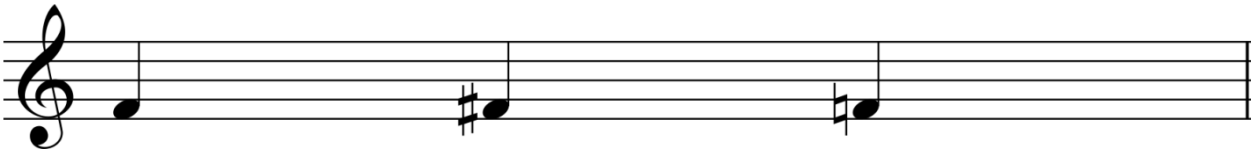
Sharps go **higher** in sound.

Have you ever been driving in a car and the tire goes flat? It gets lower and lower to the ground.

Flats go **lower** in sound.



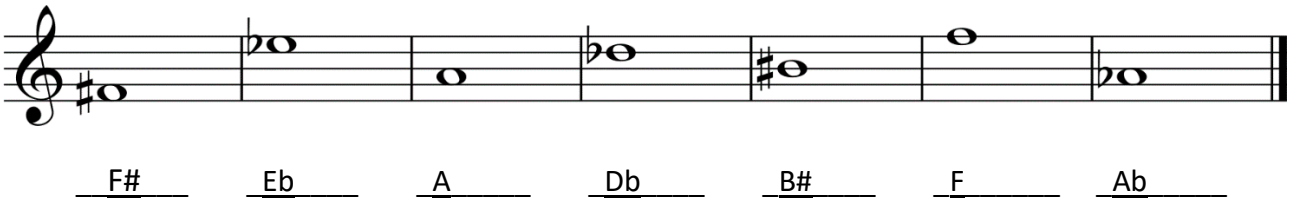
If a note becomes natural again, after previously being sharp or flat in the **same bar**, a natural symbol must be written. For example:



EXERCISE

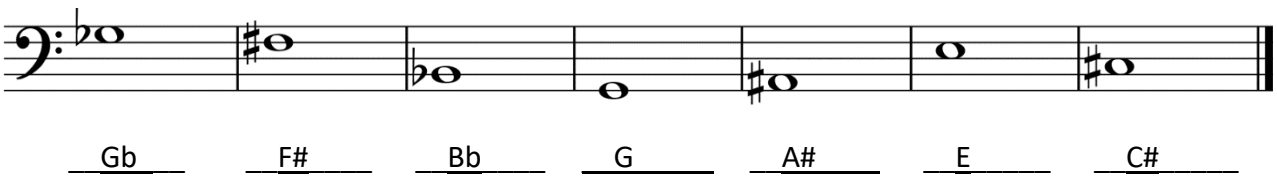
Name the following notes. The first one is done for you.

(a)



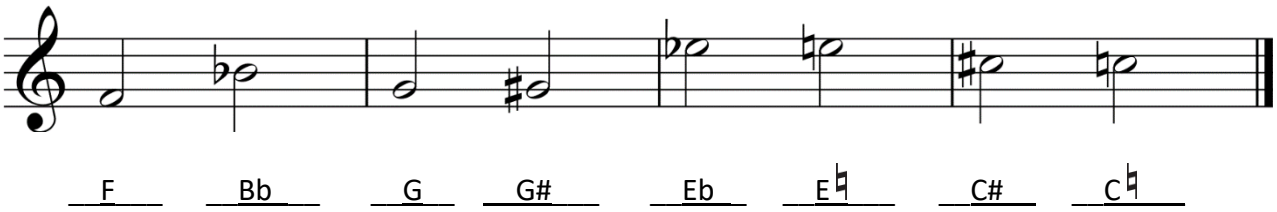
F# Eb A Db B# F Ab

(b)



Gb F# Bb G A# E C#

(C)



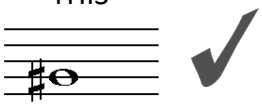
F Bb G G# Eb E♮ C# C♮

Writing Accidentals

When writing sharps and flats, first draw the note on the staff. Then, add the sharp, flat or natural symbol to the left of the note. Remember that the accidental is always written on the same line or space.

Sharp, flat and natural signs are to appear to the **LEFT** of the note, not the right.

THIS



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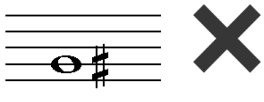

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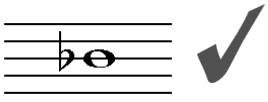
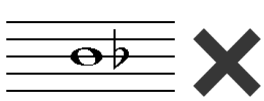
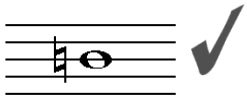


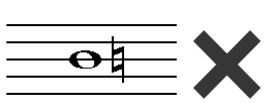
NOT THIS



THIS

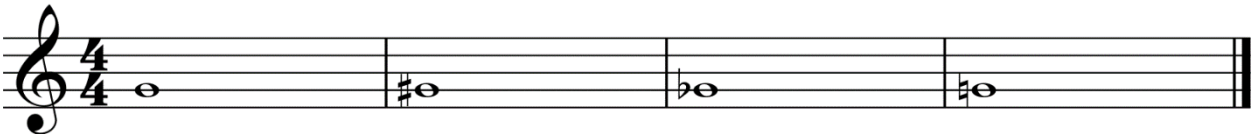


NOT THIS

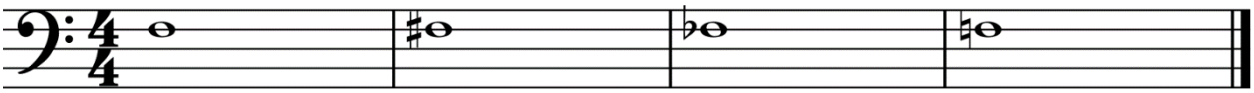


EXERCISE

1. Draw a Treble Clef and a whole note **G**. Then write a whole note **G sharp, G flat** and **G natural**.

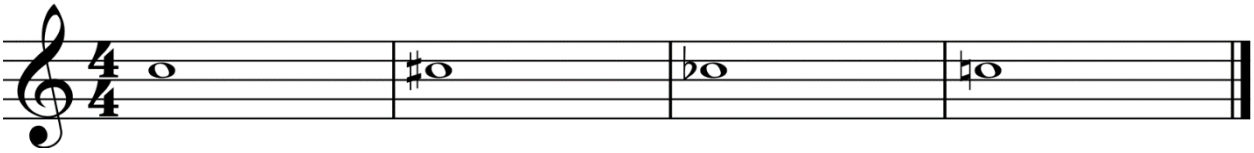


2. Draw a Bass Clef and the note **F**. Then write a whole note **F sharp, F flat** and **F natural**.

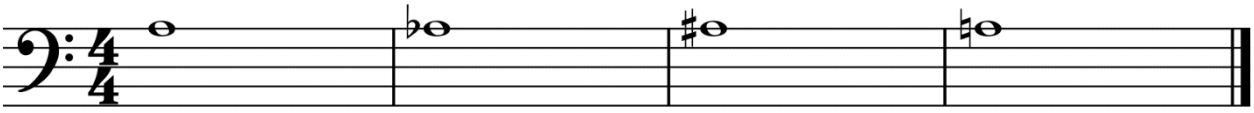


Bonus! FOR FURTHER PRACTICE (if time permits).

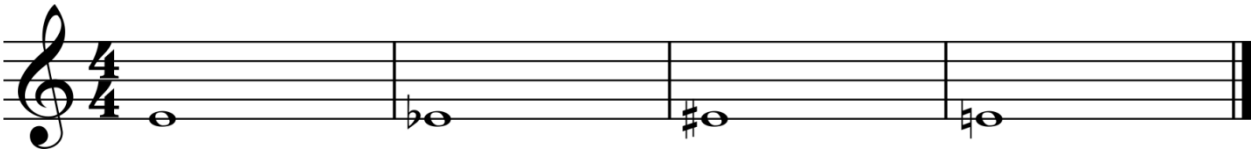
3. Draw a Treble Clef and write a whole note on **C**. Then write a whole note on **C sharp, C flat** and **C natural**.



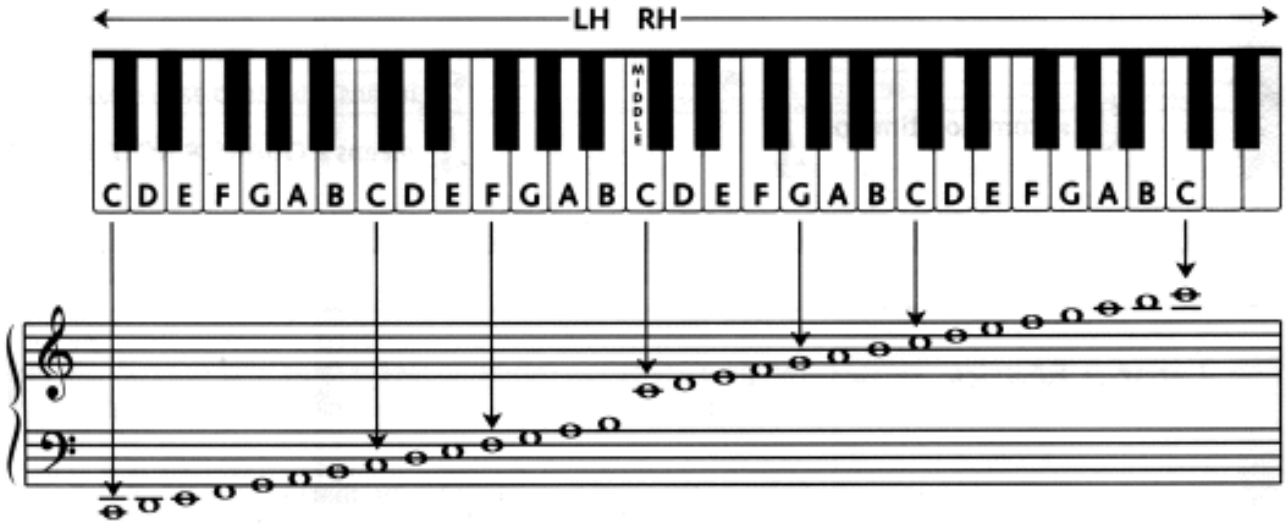
4. Draw a Bass Clef and write a whole note on **A**. Then write a whole note on **A flat, A sharp** and **A natural**.



5. Draw a Treble Clef and write a whole note on **E**. Then write a whole note on **E flat, E sharp** and **E natural**.



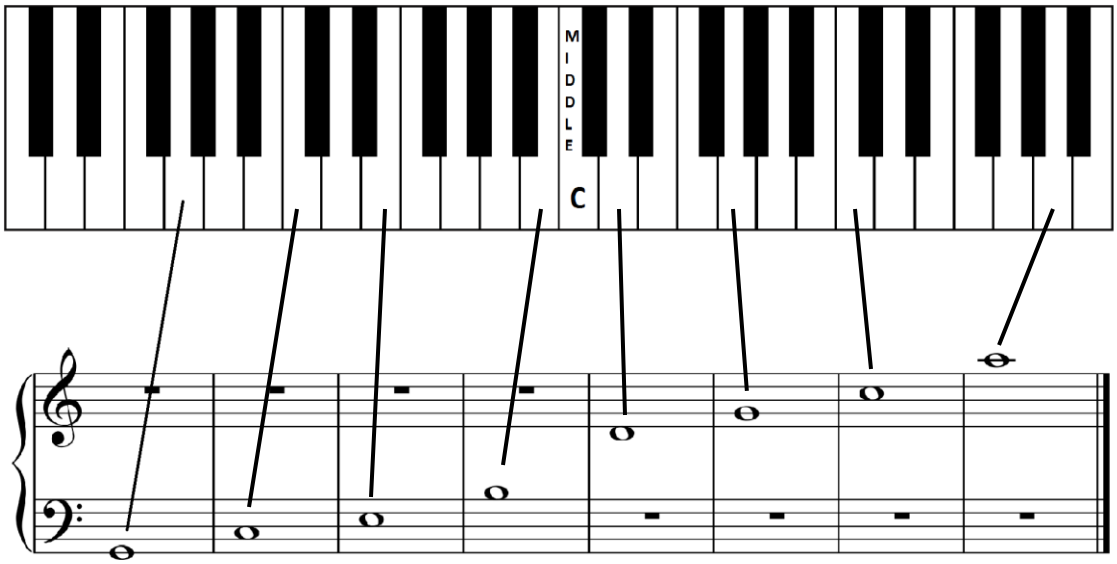
Notice how the keyboard notes relate to the notes on the staff:



*NOTE: There are **two black notes** in between C and E and **three black notes** in between F and B. This helps us remember where C and F are on the **keyboard.***

EXERCISE

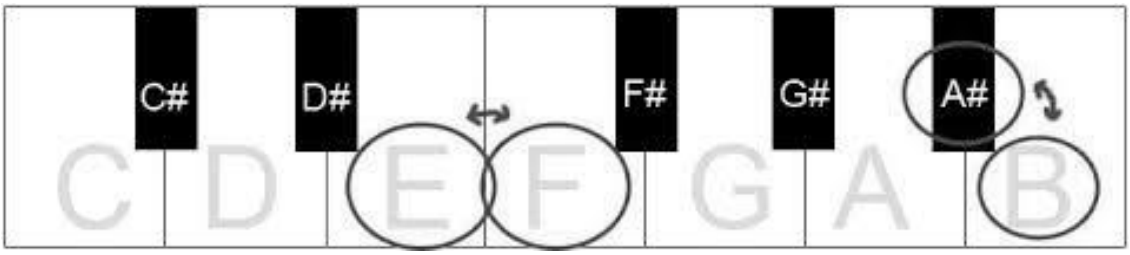
Draw lines to connect the notes on the staff to the notes on the keyboard (one is done for you).



Semitone

The **distance** between one note and the next closest note is a **semitone,** or **half step**. On the keyboard, a semitone is the distance from one key to the next key with no key in between.

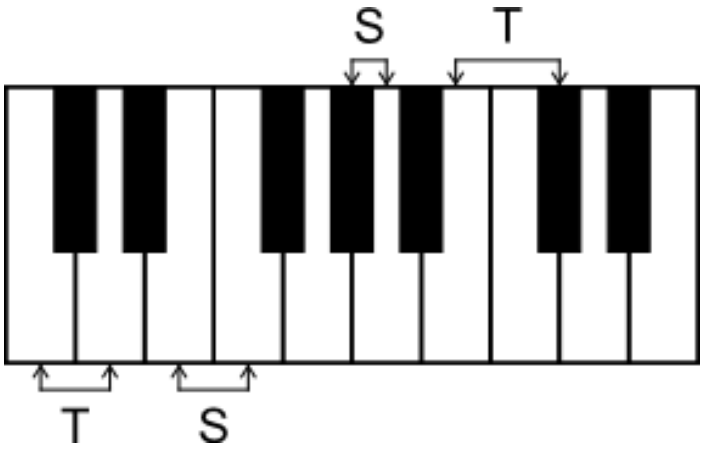
In the following example, **E** to **F (or F to E)** is indicated as a **semitone** because they are right next to each other. **A#** to **B** is also a semitone.



Tone

The distance from one note and the note **two semitones higher** or **lower** is called a **tone**. If we look at the keyboard, a tone is the distance between two notes that have one key in between them.

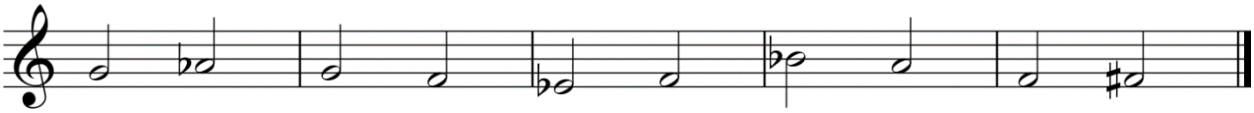
For example, the distance between **C** and **D** is a **tone** because they are 2 semitones apart. Note that **B** to **C#** is also a tone because the distance between them is 2 semitones, even though it includes a white note and a black note.



EXERCISE

Mark the distance between the following notes as either a **semitone (S)** or a **tone (T)**. It may help to refer to the keyboard diagram on page 19.

(a)

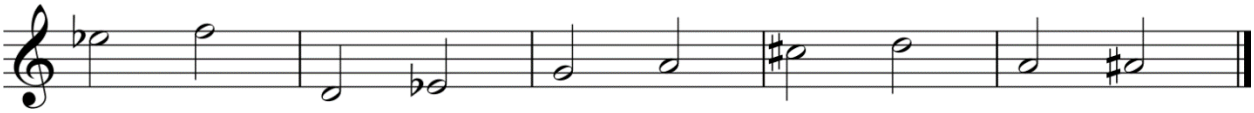


S T T S S

(b)

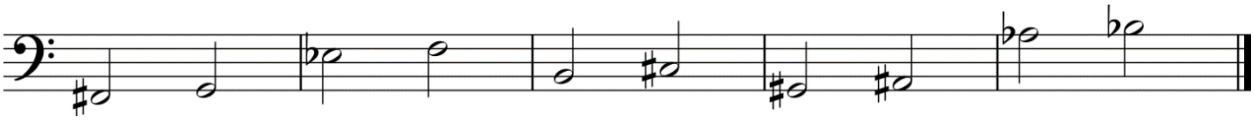
S S T T T

(c)



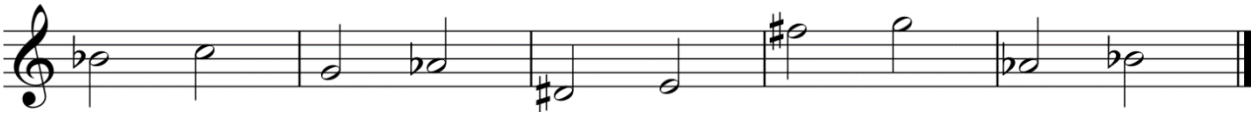
T S T S S

(d)



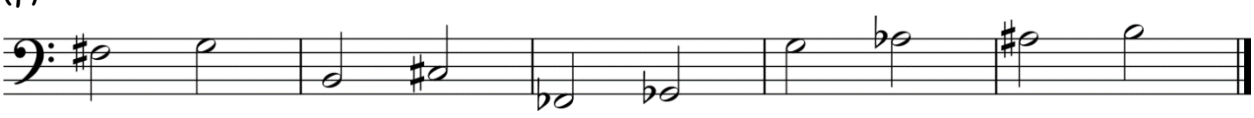
S T T T T

(e)



T S S S T

(f)



S T T S S

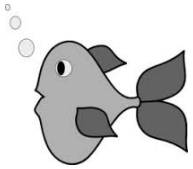
SUMMARY

- ✓ The **piano keyboard** provides a useful diagram with all of the notes we can play or sing in music.
- ✓ If a note is **raised** to the **next highest** note on the **keyboard**, that note is now **sharp**.
- ✓ If a note is **lowered** to the **next lowest** note on the **keyboard**, that note is now **flat**.
- ✓ A **natural** cancels a **sharp** or **flat**.
- ✓ The **sharp, flat,** and **natural** symbols are called **accidentals:** ♯ ♭ ♮
- ✓ Write a **natural symbol** when a note that was previously **sharp** or **flat** in the **same bar** becomes **natural**.
- ✓ There are **two black notes** in between C and E, and **three black notes** in between F and B on the **keyboard**. This helps us remember where C and F are on the keyboard.
- ✓ When writing sharps and flats on the staff, first write the note name you want and then write the sharp, flat or natural symbol to the **left** of the note, on the same line or space as the note itself.
- ✓ A **semitone** is the **distance** between two notes that are right next to each other, i.e. the next closest note.
- ✓ A **tone** is the **distance** between two semitones.

Lesson 2.4 - Dynamics

When we perform music, we want to make it as expressive and meaningful as possible. This is done in a variety of ways. One of these ways is through the use of **dynamics**.

Dynamics tell us how loudly or softly to play or sing.



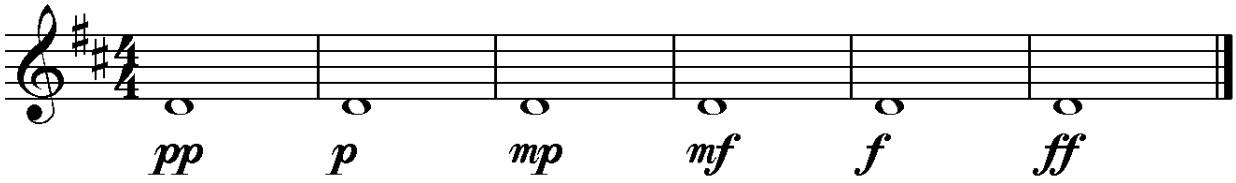
In level 1, you learned that 'piano' (***p***) means soft and 'forte' (***f***) means loud. You also learned that 'mezzo piano' (***mp***) means medium soft and 'mezzo forte' means medium loud (***mf***).

Here are two more dynamic markings:

pp – *pianissimo* (very soft)

ff – *fortissimo* (very loud)

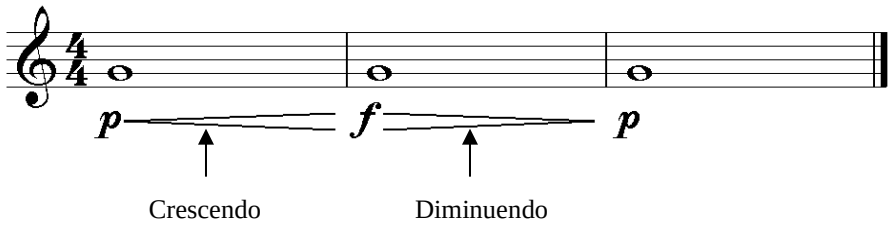
Softest to loudest:



Dynamics are written below the staff.

Dynamic Changes

Sometimes composers want the effect of changing dynamics gradually. This is done through the use of the **crescendo** and the **diminuendo** (also called **decrescendo**).



When we **crescendo**, we gradually get louder. When we **decrescendo**, we gradually get softer.

Tempo

Tempo is the speed of the music (**fast or slow**). Tempo markings are given at the top left hand corner of a piece of music.

Some general tempo markings:

- **Allegro** means **fast**.
- **Adagio** means **slow**.
- **Moderato** means **medium speed**.

Other terms:

- **Allegro Moderato** means **moderately fast**.
- **Allegro Molto**. Molto means "a lot" so Allegro Molto means '**very fast**'.
- **Presto** also means '**very fast**'.
- **Adagio Molto** means '**very slow**'.

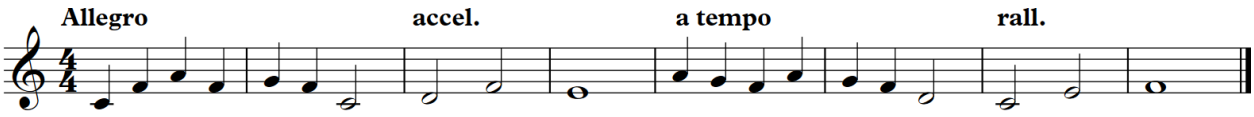
Tempo Changes

Just like dynamics can be changed gradually, tempo can also be changed gradually.

When a piece gradually becomes faster, it is referred to as an **accelerando**. When written in the music, it is often shortened to **accel.**

When a piece gradually becomes slower, it is referred to as a **rallentando**. When written in the music, it is often shortened to **rall.**

Usually after an **accelerando** or a **rallentando**, the piece returns to the original tempo. When this happens, the term **a tempo** is used. This means "back to the original tempo."

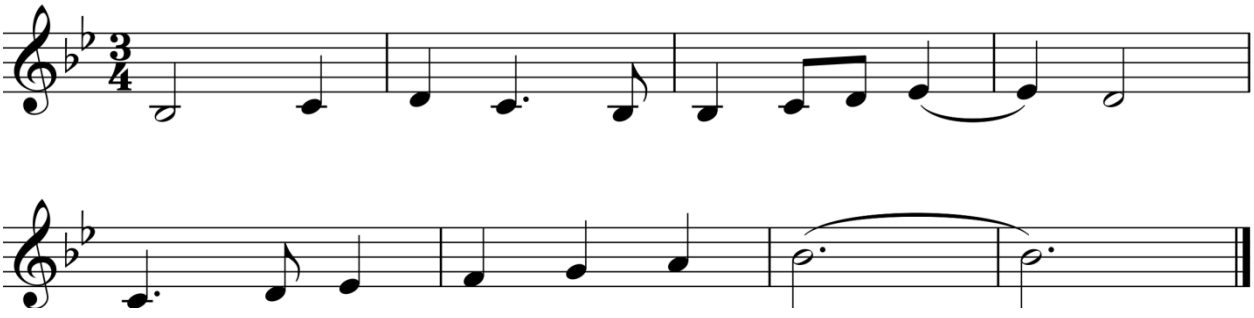


EXERCISE

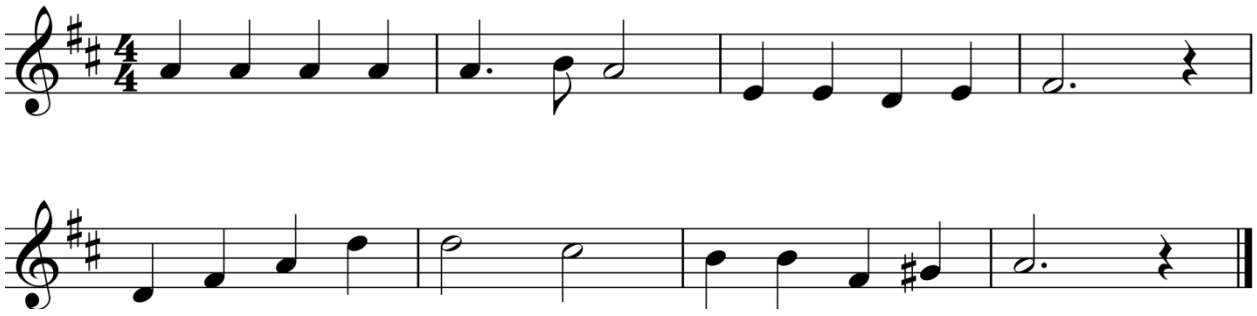
Add tempo and dynamic markings to the following pieces. Use the lists on pages 27 and 28 if you need help.

TEACHER NOTE: Answers will vary between students.

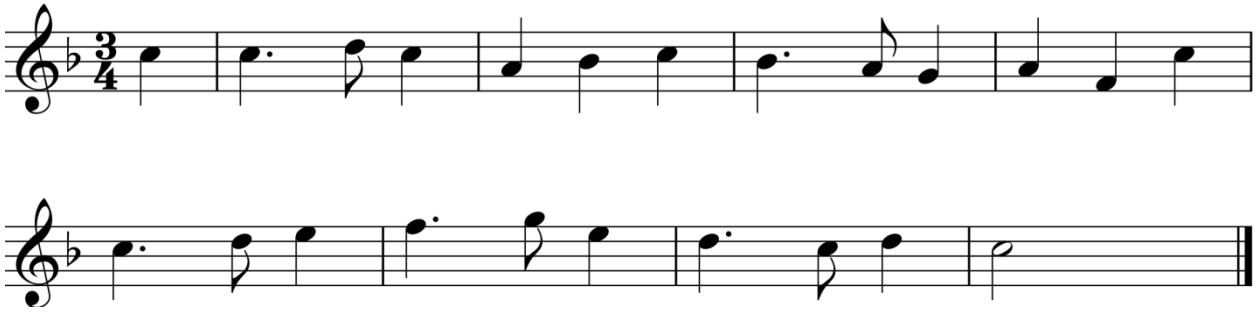
(a)



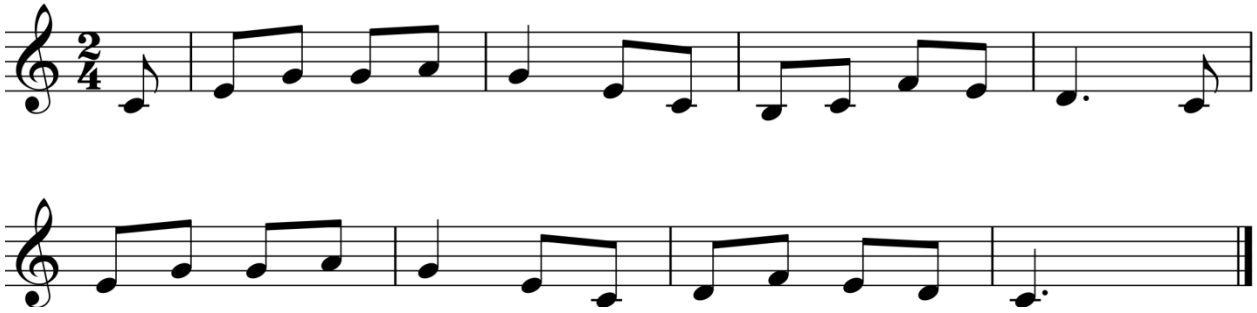
(b)



(C)



(d)



SUMMARY

- ✓ Dynamic markings (***pp***, ***p***, ***mp***, ***mf***, ***f***, ***ff***) tell us how loud or soft to play or sing.
- ✓ Pianissimo, or ***pp***, is very soft. Fortissimo, or ***ff***, is very loud.
- ✓ A **crescendo** is used to gradually **increase** the volume and a **diminuendo** (or **decrescendo**) is used to gradually **decrease** the volume.
- ✓ **Tempo markings** such as **Allegro, Moderato, Adagio** and **Presto** tell us how fast or slow to play.
- ✓ The **tempo** can also be changed gradually through an **Accelerando** (gradually getting faster) or a **Rallentando** (gradually getting slower).
- ✓ Tempo markings are written above the staff. Dynamic markings are written below the staff.

Supplementary Material

The activities below are intended to reinforce the concepts taught in this level.

Create a Rhythm

Using felt, poster board or a similar material, cut out various whole, half and quarter notes, as well as whole, half, and quarter rests. Cutting out bar lines is also helpful.
Divide your class into small groups. Have them create different rhythms in 2/4, 3/4 and 4/4 time. Then have each group clap their rhythm for the class.
You can keep score for each team and reward points for creating a correct rhythm. Points can also be rewarded for the correct clapping of the rhythm as a team.
This will reinforce the note and rest values they have learned, and will also develop team building as they have to "practice" their rhythm pieces to perform for the class.

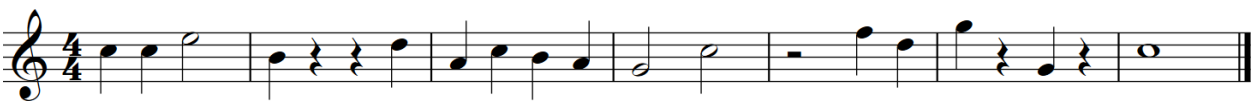
Music Bingo

This game can be used to reinforce all of the material covered in this level.
Print a blank bingo template. Provide them with a list of terms covered in the material. This could be dynamic words, notes on the keyboard, note values, etc. Have them draw or write items from the list onto their Bingo cards.
Using this same list, you can call out terms until someone reaches "Bingo."
Students can design multiple Bingo cards if you plan to use this game on more than one occasion.

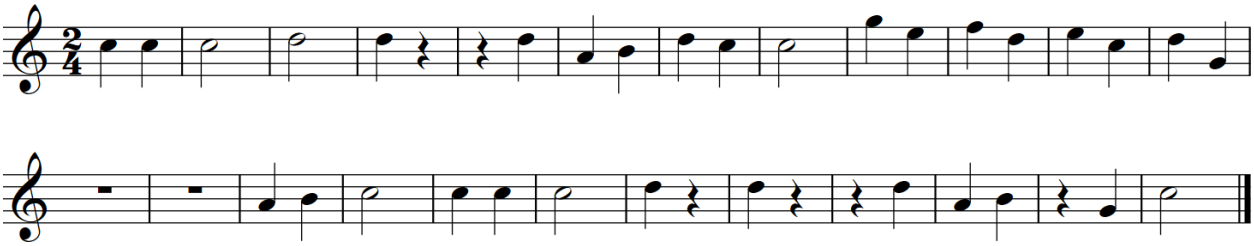
Rhythm Review

On the next page are additional rhythm examples, intended for extra practice.
Have students sight read these rhythms by clapping or tapping them.
You can also clap the rhythm and have them clap it back. This is a good way to start ear training at an early level.

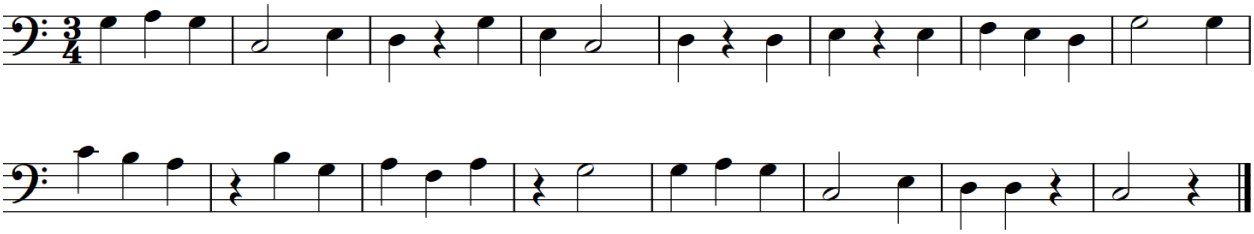
(a)



(b)



(c)



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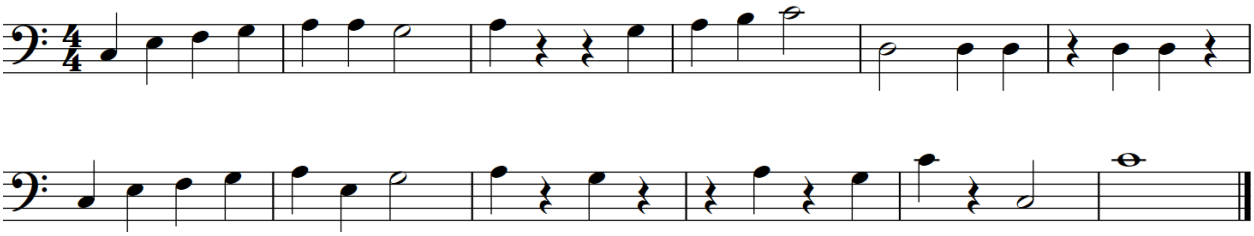

MUSIC THEORY - Leader's Guide LV2

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