

Simple Duple (2 beats per measure)

In simple time, each main beat is naturally divisible by two.

| Time Signature | Main Beat Unit | Examples / Beaming Logic |
|-----------------------|----------------|--|
| 2/2 (Cut Time) | Half Note | Used for fast tempos; beams usually group notes into two large half-note pulses. |
| 2/4 | Quarter Note | The standard "march" time. Two quarter notes per bar. |
| 2/8 | Eighth Note | Uncommon. Often used in complex modern music or folk dances to indicate a very quick, "micro" duple feel. |

Simple Triple (3 beats per measure)

Each measure has a "Strong-weak-weak" pulse.

| Time Signature | Main Beat Unit | Examples / Beaming Logic |
|----------------|----------------|---|
| 3/2 | Half Note | Common in Renaissance music or slow, choral pieces. Three half notes per bar. |
| 3/4 | Quarter Note | Classic "Waltz" time. Sub-beats (8th notes) are often beamed in groups of 2 or 6. |

| | | |
|------------|-------------|---|
| 3/8 | Eighth Note | Often felt "in one" (one big pulse per bar). Common in Baroque dances like the Passepied. |
|------------|-------------|---|

Simple Quadruple (4 beats per measure)

Also known as "Common Time."

| Time Signature | Main Beat Unit | Examples / Beaming Logic |
|----------------|----------------|---|
| 4/2 | Half Note | Uncommon. Found in older sacred music. It creates a very spacious feel. |
| 4/4 | Quarter Note | The most common signature in modern music. Beams are usually split at the "invisible barline" in the middle of the measure. |
| 4/8 | Eighth Note | Uncommon. Similar to 2/4 but implies a much lighter or more detailed rhythmic texture. |

Irregular / Asymmetric Time (Odd Meters)

The main difference between a "Simple" and "Compound" signature is at the top number. If the top number is **6, 9, or 12**, it is **Compound**, meaning the main beat is a **dotted note** (divisible by three).

For example: 5/4 or 5/8: grouped as (2+3) or (3+2). 7/4 or 7/8: grouped as (2+2+3), (3+2+2), or (2+3+2), 9/8 or 9/4, 12/8 or 12/4 etc.