

KIDA PRAISE CREW

MUSIC LESSON MANUAL.

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(I pray that may the Almighty God give us understanding.)

TOPIC: Understanding the Basic Musical Notations (Symbols).

Content:

- i. Musical Notation.
- ii. Musical symbols.
- iii. The staff, bar line, ledger line.
- iv. The Grand staff.
- v. Music notes and their Length (Duration).
- vi. Music Rest Length.
- vii. Accidentals.
- viii. Key Signature.
- ix. Time signature.
- x. Exercises and evaluations.

i. Musical Notation:

Musical notation is a system used to visually represent music played with instrument or sung with human voice through the use of symbols.

ii. Music symbols:

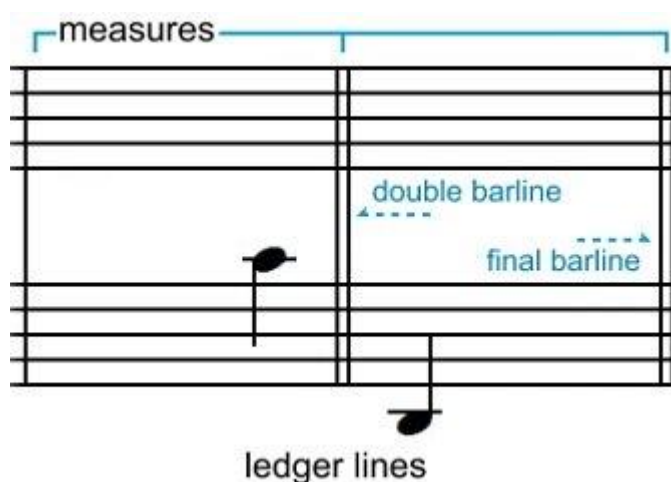
Musical symbols are used to show how a music piece will sound like. For instance, a Musical symbol can be used to indicate the type of beat to be used.

If you are going to learn to read music you will surely encounter some or all of the music symbols explained in this lesson.

Once you get familiar with all the strange hieroglyphics on a sheet of music you will feel like you know a whole new language.

While you won't see all of them when learning to read treble clef speed music it is nice to know what they mean when you do encounter them.

iii. The Staff and Bar Lines.



A **musical staff** consists of five horizontal lines and the four spaces between the lines. It is on the music staff you will find various notes and rests and other music symbols.

Because all the available notes will not fit on the staff, they will be placed on **Ledger lines** either above or below the staff.

A **ledger line** or **leger line** is used in **musical** notation to notate pitches above or below the **lines** and spaces of the regular **musical** staff. A **line** slightly longer than the note head is drawn parallel to the staff, above or below, spaced at the same distance as the **lines** within the staff.

A staff will be divided into **measures** by **bar lines**. Each measure will contain a certain number of beats determined by the **Time signature**.

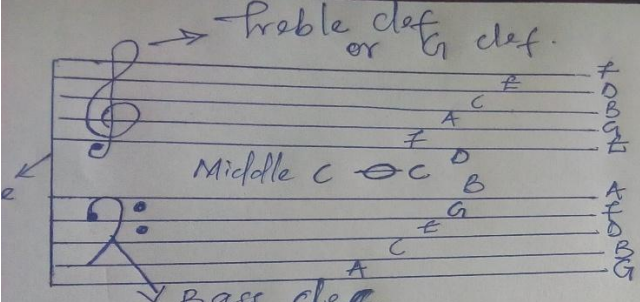
Bar line:

A bar line is a single vertical line used to group music notes into measures. A measure between two bar lines can only occupy a maximum of 4 beats, it could be "a semibreve" or "2 minims" or "4 crotchets" or even "8 quavers" in a measure depending on the Time signature. However, the type of beat and music note that would be used in the measure is determined by the given **Time Signature**.

Double Bar line:

A double bar line is used to indicate the end of a music piece. Sometimes you will see two bar lines very close to each other. It will sometimes indicate a change in the time signature or key of the song. At the end of a song you will generally see a bold double bar line meaning that the "Song is over!"

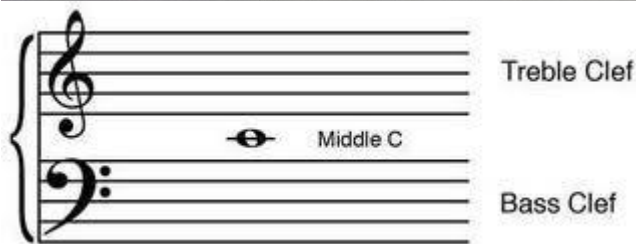
iv. The Grand Staff with Clef signs:



Handwritten diagram of a grand staff (two staves) with a treble clef (G clef) on the top staff and a bass clef (F clef) on the bottom staff. The notes are labeled with letters: Treble staff (F, C, G, D, A, E) and Bass staff (B, F, C, G, D, A). A double bar line is shown between the two staves. The text "Middle C" is written between the staves, with a dot indicating its position on the first line of the bass staff.

In order to avoid confusion, you can turn each key into a word to form a sentence. For example, for the treble staff, you can have "Every Good Boy Deserves Favour". The spaces on the treble staff can be left as a word "FACE".

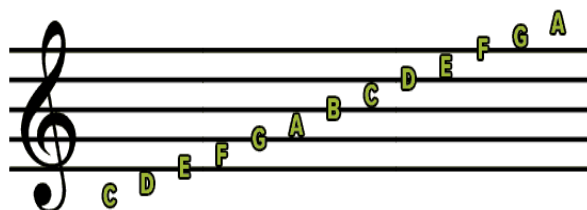
For the Bass staff, you can have "Great Buses Drive Fast Always". While the spaces on the Bass staff can be given "All Cow Fats Grass".



If you are reading music for both hands you will be using the **Grand Staff** which is two staves tied together by the brace at the beginning.

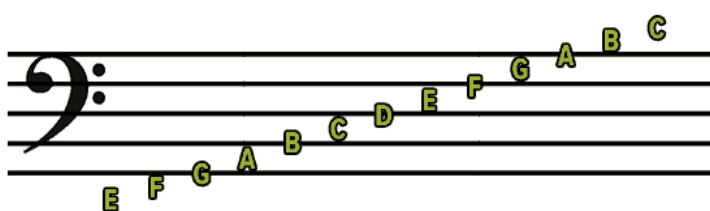
On the top staff, you will see the **Treble clef** or **G clef sign**. The notes written on this staff will generally be played by the right hand. The **treble clef** is also called the "**G clef**" because the symbol at the beginning of the staff (a stylized letter "G") encircles the second line of the staff, indicating that line to

be G4 (or G above middle C).



Many professional players and hobbyists will focus mostly on this clef and learn to read chord symbol, while classical pianists are required to be able to read and play both clefs

On the bottom staff is the **Bass Clef** or **F clef sign**. The notes on this staff will generally be played by the left hand.



v. Music Notes and their lengths.

There exist lot of music notes, but basically, we will be treating just five of them.

Name	Symbol.	American Name	No. of Beat / count.
Semibreve		Whole note	4
Minim		Half note	2
Crotchet		Quarter note	1
Quaver		Eighth note	1/2

a. Table showing Musical notes, the American name and number of beat they possess.

a. Semibreve:

A semibreve is also called the **Whole Note**, it is represented by a hollow circle with no stem. It is a music note of four (4) beats. This beat sustains its sound for a duration of four counts.

b. Minim:

A minim is also called **Half Note**, it is represented by an unfilled oval with a stem. It is a music note of two (2) beats. This beat sustains its sound for a duration of two counts.

c. Crotchet:

A crotchet is also known as **Quarter Note**, it is represented by a filled oval with a stem. It is a music note of one (1) beat. This beat sounds along with the count.

d. Quaver:

A quaver is also known as **Eighth Note**, it is represented by a filled oval with a stem and a flag. It is a music note of one (1) beat. This beat sounds along with the count.

e. Semiquaver:

A semiquaver is also known as **Sixteenth Note**, it is represented by a filled oval with a stem and two flags. It is a music note of one (1) beat. This beat sounds along with the count.

Note: The stem of musical notes could be attached either at the top-right-hand side or the bottom-left-hand side of the head (oval). Meanwhile, this does not change their meaning.

Dotted note:

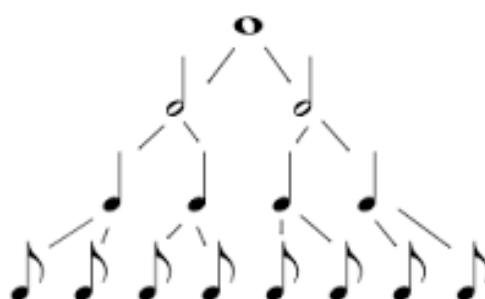
A dot placed after a note makes that note as half as long again. For instance, a dot placed after a Minim and a crotchet as shown below, adds a crotchet beat to the Minim and adds a quaver beat to the crotchet.



Normally, we know that a minim has **two crotchets** and a crotchet has **two quavers**. However, because of the dot placed after each of them, half of them is added, which makes them **3 crotchets** and **3 quavers** respectively.



b. Picture of each music note in their respective order.



b. This chart shows the subdivisions of each music note from semibreve to quaver.

With **music notes**, the pitch is determined by where the notes are placed on the staff.

When a notes pitch is higher or lower than the staff will accommodate, then the notes are placed on **ledger lines in the manner shown below:**



The way the note looks in terms on its color and stems and flags will determine how long the note is held. There are also 32nd (3 flags) and 64th (4 flags) notes that are not pictured above and are not as common.

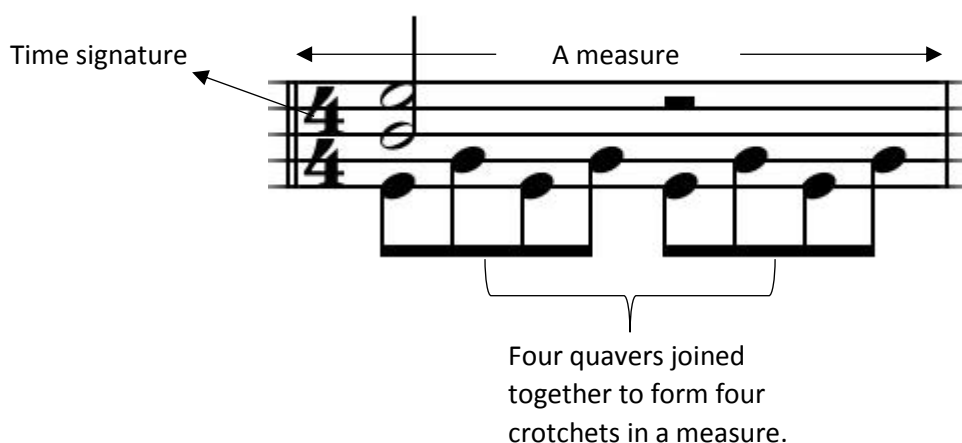
Name	Note	Rest
Whole Note		
Half Note		
Quarter Note		
Eighth Note		
Sixteenth Note		

vi. Music Rest Lengths

Rests are music symbols that make the absence of note or a period of silence. If there were no rests, music would turn to noise.

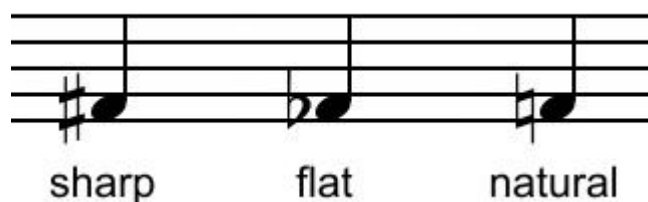
The way a rest looks will determine how long the period of silence will be. A rest with the duration of a whole note (semibreve) is called a whole rest. A half rest will equal silence for the length of a half note (minim) etc.

Dotted rests are used in the same manner as dotted notes. A dotted quarter rest will indicate one and a half beats of silence.



In the event of notation overlap – such as a half-note chord written in a measure full of eighth-notes – rests and notes may appear simultaneously despite each other as in the above example.

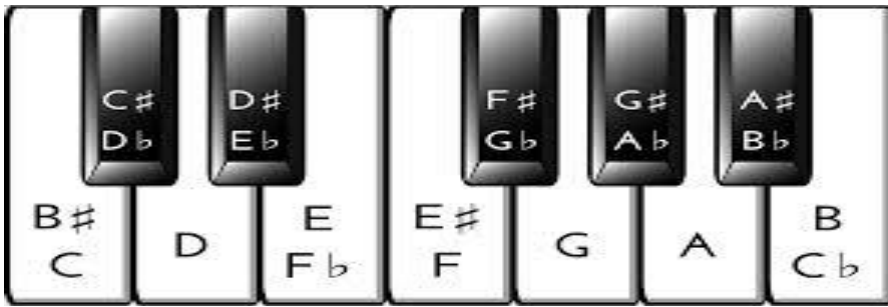
vii. ACCIDENTALS



The music symbols in front of the notes in the example above are called **accidentals** and turn a note into a sharp, a flat or a natural.

- **A sharp (#):** Makes a note *higher* in pitch by a half step.

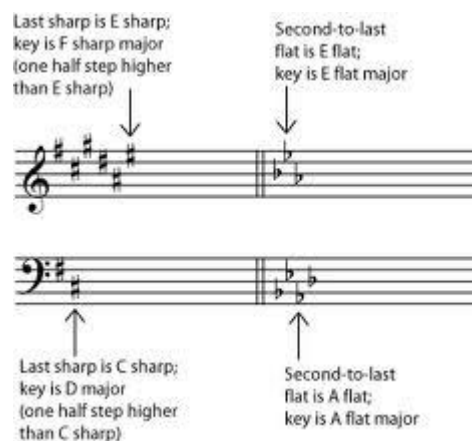
- **A flat (b):** Makes a note *lower* in pitch by a half step.



- **A natural (♮):** Returns a note to its original pitch after having been sharpened or flattened. Naturals also cancel out sharps or flats implied by a key signature

viii. Key Signatures:

A group of sharps or flats at the beginning of a staff just after the clef sign is called the **key signature**.



The key signature will tell you what key the song is in and what music scale the song will be based around.

It allows us to write music without having to put individual sharps or flats in front of the notes on the page which can get pretty messy especially in keys with 5 or 6 or even 7 sharps or flats.

Because the sharps or flats are at the beginning of the song it saves us from having to write individual accidental in front of the notes which can get pretty messy and hard to read. Especially in keys with 5, 6, or even 7 sharps or flats.

ix. Time Signatures



A **time signature** looks like a fraction and is found at the beginning of a music piece after the clef sign and the key signature if any.

The top number will tell us how many beats are in each measure and the bottom number will tell us how which type of note is to be used.

Therefore,

1. A $\frac{4}{4}$ (omit the division sign when pronouncing the time signature, it is simply read as “four four”) time signature will have 4 beats in each measure and a **Crotchet** (quarter note) will have one beat.



2. A $\frac{2}{2}$ (omit the division sign in the time signature, it is simply read as “two two”) time signature will have 2 beats in each measure and a **Minim** (Half

note) will have one beat. (Check the second staff of the first illustration for a chart).

4 4 time is the most common time signature you will see and because of that, it is often called "**common time**".

For more illustration, check the charts below...

(1)



This line explains example two (The "two two" time signature)



(2)



6 Steps to Adding Bar Lines

We'll look at some examples (grade by grade) in a moment but first, here are the steps we'll go through to make sure we add the bar lines at the right spots. (Often, you won't even need all of these steps.)

1. Look at the **top** number of the time signature. This number tells us **how many beats** every bar must get.

2. Look at the **lower** number of the time signature. This number tells us **what kind of beats** we have.
3. **Count the note values** of the melody and group them according to the time signature.
4. As you know, some notes are exactly one beat long but many others are longer or shorter. Watch out especially for **dotted notes** (and in grade 4, watch out also for **double dotted notes**).
5. You might also encounter some **rests**. Remember that these are equivalent to note values and count just the same.
6. **Tied notes** don't change the values of notes. They simply join 2 (or more) notes together. As we'll see they can be good hints at what the time signature actually is.

Example 1

Let's say we are given this melody. The given time signature is 4/4 and only the first bar line is written. We need to add the remaining bar lines.



Let's move in steps as outlined in the 6 points above:

Step 1: The top number of the time signature is 4. That means we're dealing with 4 beats in every bar.

Step 2: The bottom number of the time signature is also 4. That means that the beats are crotchets (in US terms, quarter notes). We get to this answer by dividing the semibreve (the whole note) by that bottom number: 4.

Step 3: Now that we know that every bar must have 4 quarter crotchet beats, count the note values. Every 4 crotchet beats must be grouped into a bar.

Notice that I **didn't** say "Every 4 notes must be grouped into a bar" but "Every 4 quarter note beats". **Remember that one note can take up any amount of beats: from half a beat (or less), to 4 beats (or more).** This is why it's so important to consider the value of the beat.

This example is fairly simple so we don't need those other steps. Here's the answer.

Working:



Since the beat is a crotchet beat, the minim (the half note) takes up 2 beats. The crotchet itself, of course, takes up exactly 1 full beat. So, all we have to do now is draw a bar line after every 4 crotchet beats:

Example 2

This next example is in 2/4. Just for an extra bit of challenge, no bar lines at all are given.



The steps to add bar lines are exactly the same as before. Steps 1 and 2 are about figuring out the time signature – in this case, it's 2/4 and that means 2 crotchet beats in every bar.

What we do now is simply count the notes and every 2 crotchet beats, we draw a bar line. From music theory, you know that a quaver (an eighth note) is half a crotchet. And that means that 2 quavers will make a full crotchet.

Since the beats are crotchet beats, then every 2 quavers also make a full beat. And so here is the answer (*look at the working on top to see the pattern*):



Example 3

Now here's an example with several dotted notes as well as a rest.



The steps in adding bar lines are exactly the same as before. Simply remember that:

- A dot **adds half** the value **to the original**. So, a dotted crotchet is worth 3 quavers (2 from the original plus 1 from the dot); and a dotted minim is worth 3 crotchets (2 from the original plus 1 from the dot).



Dotted notes: the dot adds half of the original to the original itself

- Rests are counted just as notes are. In this case we have a crotchet rest so (just like a crotchet note) it's exactly one beat long.

So, the answer to this example is as follows. *The working out is on top in orange.*



x. Exercises and evaluations:

You might want to evaluate yourself by asking yourself the questions written below:

Trust me, if you succeed in answering these questions correctly, you are good to go and it a step to prove that you can learn and understand more of complex musical notations...

1. What is Musical Notation?
2. In summary, explain the following music notes
 - a. Semibreve
 - b. Minim
 - c. Crotchet
 - d. Quaver
3. How many:
 - a. Quavers are there in a minim?
 - b. Crotchets are there in a semibreve?
4. Explain these terms with examples:
 - a. Time signature.
 - b. Ledger line.
 - c. Key signature.
5. Why do we use double bar line?
6. What is a grand staff?
7. The number of accidentals (sharp (#) or flat (b)) indicates

_____.

8. Draw and explain the treble clef and a bass clef.
 - b. List for each, the keys that can be found on the treble clef and the bass clef in a Grand staff.
9. Write a music piece for each of the following time signature:
 - a. "four four"
 - b. "three four"
 - c. "two four"
10. Insert bar lines into the music piece below;

4-4 bar lines

Where do the missing bar lines go?

Remember you need 4 beats in every bar.

The image shows three musical staves, each with a 4/4 time signature. The notes are as follows:

- Staff 1: A whole note, followed by a quarter note, a half note, a quarter note, a dotted half note, and a quarter note.
- Staff 2: A quarter note, a half note, a quarter note, a whole note, a quarter note, a half note, a quarter note, and a quarter note.
- Staff 3: A quarter note, a half note, a quarter note, a whole note, a quarter note, and a half note.

Dashed lines are placed above and below the notes to indicate where bar lines should be inserted. The first bar line is at the beginning of each staff. The second bar line is after the first note in each staff. The third bar line is after the second note in each staff. The fourth bar line is after the third note in each staff. The fifth bar line is after the fourth note in each staff. The sixth bar line is after the fifth note in each staff. The seventh bar line is after the sixth note in each staff. The eighth bar line is after the seventh note in each staff. The ninth bar line is after the eighth note in each staff. The tenth bar line is at the end of each staff.

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Thank You for taking time to Learn,

God bless you...

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