Rhythm Notation

Note Durations



The length (duration) of the Whole note is equal to two half notes.

$$\mathbf{O} = \left| \begin{array}{c} \\ \\ \\ \\ \end{array} \right| = \left| \begin{array}{c} \\ \\ \\ \\ \\ \end{array} \right| = \left| \begin{array}{c} \\ \\ \\ \\ \\ \\ \end{array} \right|$$

The quarter note is the same shape as the half note with the note head filled in. Its duration is half of the half note.

One whole note = two half notes = four quarter notes.

$$\mathbf{O} = \left[\begin{array}{c} \mathbf{O} \\ \mathbf{O} \end{array} \right] = \left[\begin{array}{c} \mathbf{O} \\ \mathbf{O} \end{array} \right]$$

Notes with Flags and Beams

Eighth Notes



Flags are always drawn on the right side of the stem.

Notice the beams that connect notes (the two examples to the right). Beams that connect note stems represent flags but help define a larger rhythmic grouping: in this case the quarter-note.

Sixteenth Notes



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Rhythm Notation

"Staff" = 5 horizontal lines Multiple staffs are called "staves" Time signature: this one means there are the equivalent of 4 quarter notes in each measure. Whole note 2 Θ 1/2 notes: The length (duration) of two 1/2 notes = one whole note 3 1/4 notes: The duration of two 1/4 notes = one 1/2 note while four 1/4 notes = one whole note 4 1/8 note 1/8 note with beams with flags Two 1/8 notes = one 1/4 note 5 Four 1/8 notes = one 1/2 note Eight 1/8 notes = one whole note Silence is golden, necessary, and must be notated. Rests (silence)



Vertical lines that go through all lines of a staff are called "barlines." Barlines are used to mark "measures." There are eight measures on the staff below.

0				
0				

Rhythm Notation



The whole and half rests are very similar to each other.

The whole rest hangs from the 2nd line from the top.

The half rest sits on the center line..

Imagine walking along the 2nd line from the top and falling in the hole (whole rest). Imagine the center line with a hat (half rest).



Beams are used to show rhythmic groupings. There is no durational difference between notes with flags and notes with beams.

Ties extend the note duration. The examples below tie a note to another note.



Another way to extend a note is to place a dot (.) after the notehead. A dot represents 1/2 the value of the note it proceeds and is added to the length of the note.



A dot after the whole note adds 1/2 note length to the note. Meas 22 is the same as meas 25.

adds a 1/4 note to the half note.

Rests

Silence is golden, necessary, and must be notated. This chart shows notes and their corresponding rests.



Whole Rest

The Whole Rest: the whole thing

There are similarities and differences between the whole note and the whole rest.

- The *whole note* always represents a durational value of *four ¼-notes*.
- The *whole rest* either represents a durational value equal to the *whole note*, or, when the entire measure is silent, a single *whole rest* is used to represent the *entire measure*.

Ties

Ties extend the duration of notes, allowing duration values other than those defined as simple subdivisions of the whole note.



A dot is equal to 1/2 the value of what it follows. This is added to the duration of the note value.



Beat and Pulse

Beat: originally the method of leading an ensemble of musicians by beating the floor with a staff to keep them playing together. The beat sets up a durational time component that is expressed in the music by simultaneous emphasis. It is often what conductors conduct, and what people dance, swing, or physically respond to when listening to music.

Pulse: Usually the subdivision of a beat that is heard as an underlying regular time interval. The pulse may also be the beat if there is no regular subdivision of the beat.

Rhythm

Sequence of durations.

Rhy-thm

Meter

Structured Rhythm



Measure by Measure

Measure:

A cyclic pattern of hierarchical rhythmic emphasis.

No cyclic pattern. A cyclic pattern of two. A cyclic pattern of three. A cyclic pattern of four.

Mythic Meter

Training-wheels definition of the time signature:

The top number indicates how many beats are in a measure; the bottom number indicates what gets the beat.



Not always true.

Meter: How True?

List of some time signatures and how often the *training wheels* definition is true.



Meter Rules!

Precise definition:

The bottom number refers to a rhythmic unit of time.

With the rare exception of some contemporary music, the unit of time is one of the basic $1/(2^n)$ durations (1 = whole-note, 2 = half-note, 4 = quarter-note, etc.).

The top number indicates how many of those units fit in a measure. Be aware that this does not indicate how many actual notes are in a measure.

	Bottom Number	Refers to	Note	
4	1	Whole	о	
4	2	Half	0	
	4	Quarter	•	ð
	8	Eighth		
12 8	3 4	$\begin{array}{c} 3\\ 2\\ \end{array}$	$egin{array}{c} 2^- \ 8 \ \end{array} \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \$	+3 3

Simply Metered

Precise definition:

The bottom number refers to a rhythmic unit of time, the top number indicates how many of those units fit in a measure.

	2 4	two quarter-notes per measure	3 1	three whole-notes per measure
	3 4	three quarter-notes	5 8	five eighth-notes
C	4 4	four quarter-notes	6 16	six sixteenth-notes
¢	2 2	two half-notes	7 8	seven eighth-notes
	3 2	three half-notes	12 64	twelve sixty- fourth-notes

Notice the absence of the word *beat* in this definition.

Each staff below represents music in a different time signature. The bottom number of a time signature refers to a note value: \circ \supset \bigcirc The top number indicates how many fit in a measure.



The Whole Rest is a special casee. it is usally equivalent to the duration of a Whole Note. However, the Whole Rest is also used when the entire measure is silent.



