

Understanding Musical Notation

Staff ↓

Music notes appear on the lines and spaces of the staff.

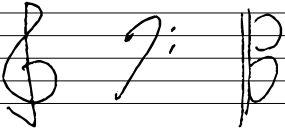
Notes



Stem and Flag determine the duration of a note. The Head determines the name of the note or how high/low the pitch should be.

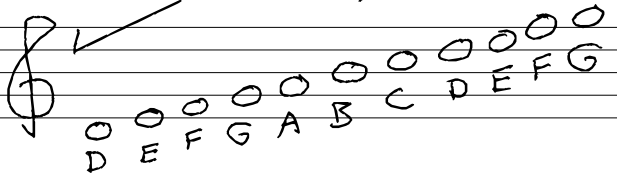


Clefs determine the range of notes available on the staff. They are also fun to draw.



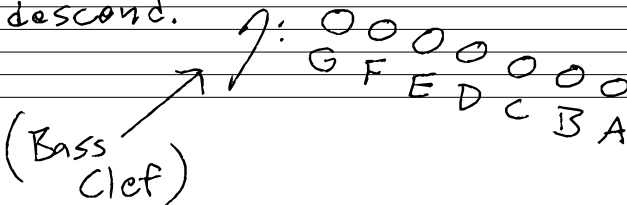
Notes are arranged in ABC order when ascending the staff, but they repeat after the letter G.

(Treble Clef)



Musicians can do a neat trick because we also learn to do ABCs backwards when notes descend.

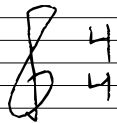
The notes on the staff correspond to notes on your instrument.



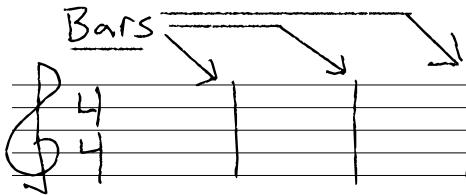
(Bass Clef)

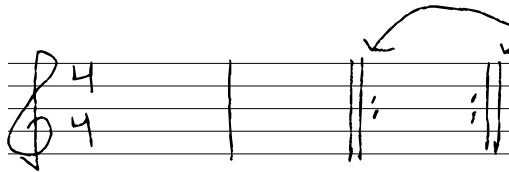
Understanding Musical Notation (the sequel)

Music and rhythm require counting while playing. But don't worry; you usually just count to 4 again and again and again.

 Time Signature: ignore the bottom number for now, but the top number is how high we need to count.

Like most language, music uses punctuation.

Bars  Bars let us know that an amount of time has passed. Usually 4 beats/pulses.

 Repeats mean to play a section of music at least twice.

Note Duration



whole Notes	Half Notes	Quarter Notes	Eighth Notes
last 4	last 2	last 1	split a beat
beats.	beats.	beat.	in two or
			get one half

The flags on these notes can be arranged to show the time they represent more clearly.

