

Basic Music Theory For Vocal Students

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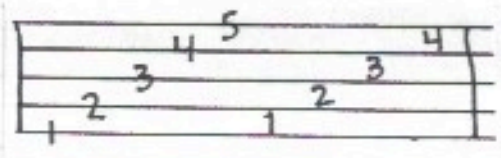
Basic Music Theory for Vocal Students

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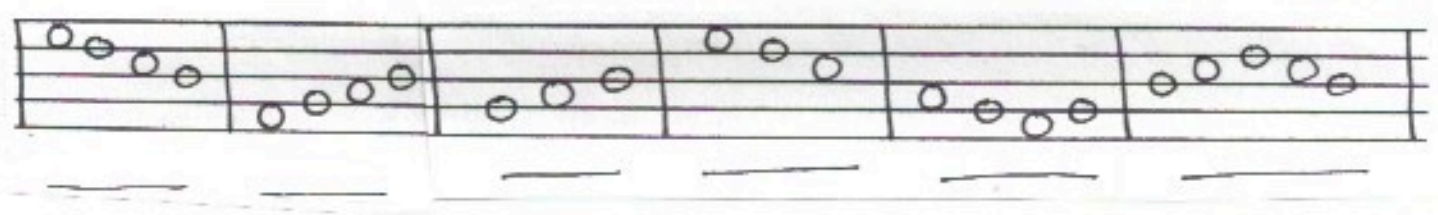
Unit 1: Staff

A. The Staff is where the notes go. It has 5 lines & 4 spaces.



B. Notes on the staff can move up, down, or up & down. The closer to the top of the staff the note is, the higher the sound. The closer to the bottom of the staff the note is, the lower the sound.

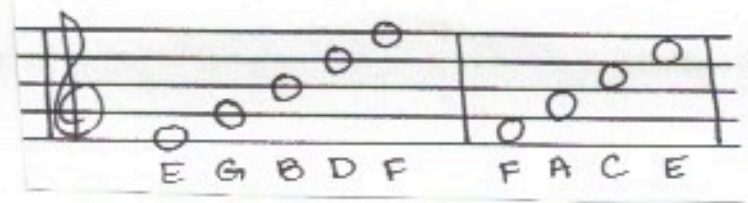
Here are some examples of notes on the staff. Can you tell whether they are moving up, down, or both?



C. Treble Clef (G): The treble clef is used for higher sounding instruments (flute), higher voices (women's), and Right Hand (RH) on the piano.

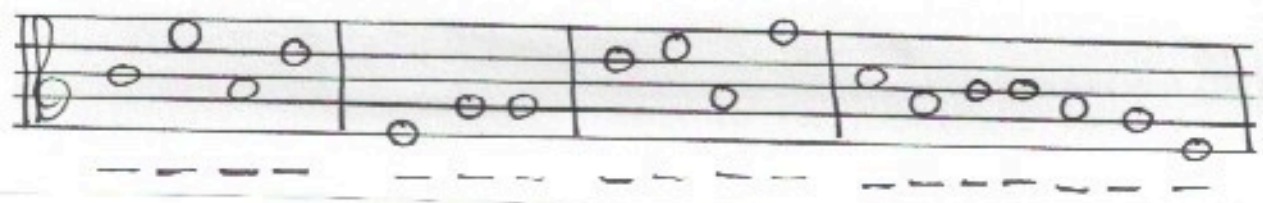
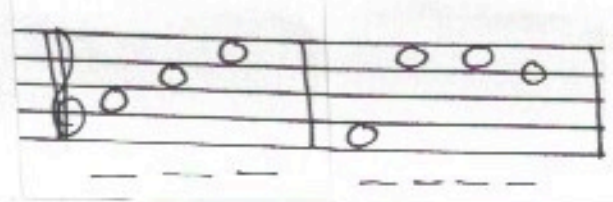
The Music Alphabet has 7 letters: A B C D E F G. Each of those letters has a special place on the staff. Here are the letters on the Treble Staff.

We remember where these letters go by using certain phrases:



Every Good Boy
Deserves Fudge FACE 😊

Here are some examples of notes on the treble staff. Each section will spell a word.



D. Bass Clef (♭): The Bass Clef is used for lower sounding instruments (tuba), lower voices (bass), and Left Hand (LH) on the piano.

Here are some letters on the Bass Staff.

We remember where these letters go by using certain phrases:

G B D F A A C E G

Good Birds Don't Fly Away All Cows Eat Grass

Here are some examples of notes on the Bass Staff. Each section will spell a word.

E. Ledger Lines: Ledger lines are small lines that allow for notes off the staff. It is a way to continue the lines & spaces of the staff without extending it all the way across the page, but rather just for the individual notes that need it.

Here are some examples of notes using ledger lines in both treble clef and Bass clef.

G A B C D C B A

B C D E F E D C

See if you can write the correct letter for each ledger line note below.

Unit 2: Rhythm & Note Values

A. Basic Notes & Rests

♩ Quarter note = 1 Beat

♮ Half note = 2 Beats

♪ Eighth notes = 1 Beat (1 Beat but 2 sounds = faster than)

♩. Dotted Half note = 3 Beats

○ Whole note = 4 Beats

♩ Quarter rest = 1 Beat

▬ Half rest = 2 Beats

▬ Whole rest = 4 Beats (or a whole measure)

(Rests are moments of silence in the music.)

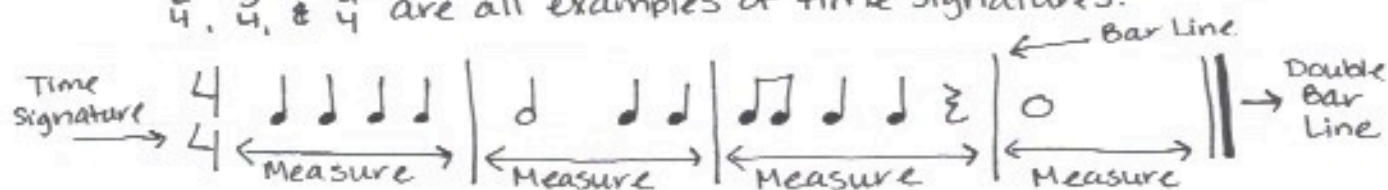
Match each note with correct name & number of beats.

1. ♩ _____
2. ○ _____
3. ♩ _____
4. ♪ _____
5. ♩. _____
6. ▬ _____
7. ▬ _____
8. ♩ _____

- A. Half note
- B. Whole Rest
- C. Dotted Half note
- D. Quarter note
- E. Half Rest
- F. Quarter Rest
- G. Eighth notes
- H. Whole note

- I. 1 Beat
- J. 2 Beats
- K. 3 Beats
- L. 4 Beats

B. Time Signatures : A time signature tells us how to count:
 $\frac{2}{4}$, $\frac{3}{4}$, & $\frac{4}{4}$ are all examples of time signatures.



Bar lines divide the notes into smaller sections called measures. A Double Bar Line comes at the end to show us when to stop.

4 → The top number tells us how many beats are in each measure.

4 → The bottom number reminds us that the ♩ gets 1 Beat.

A Repeat Sign :|| tells us to play or sing it again.

Here's an example of how we count in $\frac{4}{4}$ time.

$\frac{4}{4}$

Write in the counts for the exercise below.

$\frac{4}{4}$

Write in the rest of the counts for the following exercises.

$\frac{2}{4}$

$\frac{3}{4}$

C. Slurs & Ties & Note Stems

Slur

A slur is a curved line over or under the notes of different letters. It means to play the notes legato or smoothly. For singers, it also indicates that one syllable or word is getting more than one note.

A tie is a curved line over or under notes of the same letter. It means we add the notes together & hold them as if they are one note.

Tie

Note Stems

When the notes are on the 3rd line of the staff or above, the stems go down on the left side.

When the notes are below the 3rd line of the staff, the stems go up on the right.

This helps keep our notes more organized & neat!

Write either slur or tie on each blank.



Unit 3: Dynamics & Tempos

A. Dynamics tell us how loud or soft to sing.

<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Italian</u>	<u>English</u>
ppp	pianissimo	very soft
p	piano	soft
mp	mezzo piano	medium soft
mf	mezzo forte	medium loud
f	forte	loud
ff	fortissimo	very loud
	crescendo (cresc.)	gradually get louder
	decrescendo or diminuendo (dim.)	gradually get softer

Put these dynamics in order from loudest to softest
[f p mf ppp mp ff]

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

What do you think "ppp" might mean?

B. Tempo tell us how fast or slow to sing.

Italian

largo
adagio
andante
moderato
allegretto
allegro
vivace
ritardando (rit.)
accelerando (accel.)


English


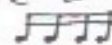
Very slow
Slow
Slow but moving (walking speed)
moderately or medium speed
Somewhat fast
fast, cheerful
Very fast, lively
gradually slow down
gradually speed up

Put these tempos in order from fastest to slowest
[allegro, largo, moderato, andante, allegretto]

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
4. _____ 5. _____

Unit 4: More Rhythm


A.  Sixteenth notes = 1 Beat

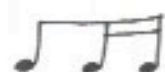
Just like the eighth notes  have 2 sounds but only 1 Beat, the sixteenth notes  have 4 Sounds but only 1 Beat. That makes them extra fast!

When we count the 16th notes we say:


1 e + a

Sometimes we can combine 16th notes with 8th notes in different patterns.



1 e ta


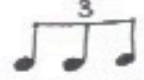



1e + a


1e+ a

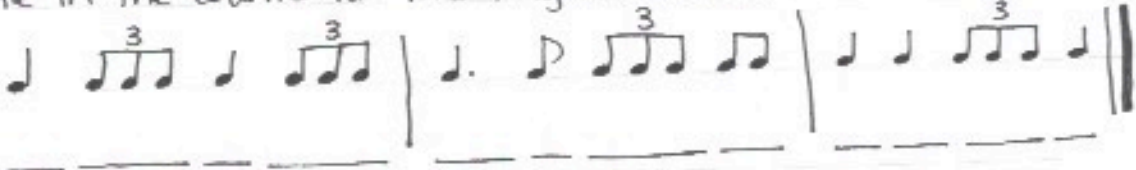

1 eta

C.  Triplet = 1 Beat

Normally we see 2 eighth notes  in 1 Beat
But here we see 3 eighth notes squeezed into 1 Beat
Here are some examples of how we count them.

			
trip-i-let	trip-1-let	trip-i-let	4
1 triplet	2-trip-let	3 triplet	4
1 + a	2 + a	3 + a	4

Write in the counts for the rhythm below.

4 

4 _____

Unit 5: Articulation

Articulation is how we touch the keys.

<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Italian</u>	<u>English</u>
	Staccato	Short, detached Bouncy
	Legato	Smooth, connected Slurred
	Accent (English)	play louder. Strong emphasis
	Tenuto	hold or stretch note for full value, slight emphasis
	Fermata	hold longer than normal value or as long as you want

Label the following articulations.

Unit 6: Musical Directions

A. **Repeat Sign** \rightarrow play or sing again from beginning

Double Repeat Sign \rightarrow only repeat the section between the 2 repeat signs



1st & 2nd Endings \rightarrow The 1st time play through 1st ending, repeat, then skip the 1st ending & play 2nd ending instead

1 Rewrite the following example using a repeat sign.

2 Rewrite the following example using a pair of repeat signs.

3 Rewrite the following example using 1st and 2nd endings.

Stephen Foster (1826-1864)

Camptown Races

- | | | | |
|----|------|-----------|-------------------------|
| B. | D.C. | Da Capo | the beginning |
| | D.S. | Dal Segno | the sign (S) |
| | | Fine | the end |
| | | Coda | separate ending section |

A.

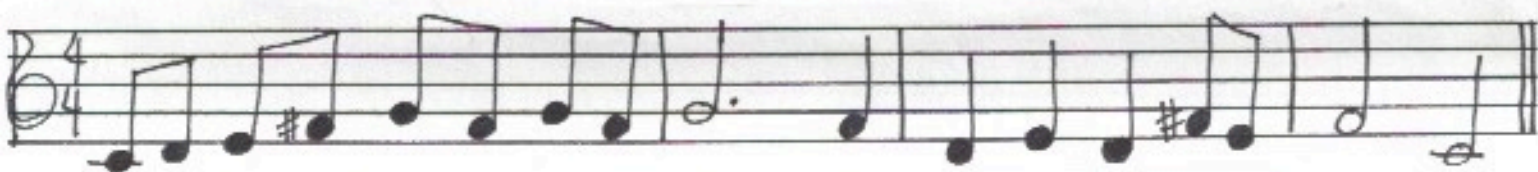
#	Sharp	makes note sound higher
b	Flat	makes note sound lower
♮	Natural	Cancels a # or b

The term "accidentals" refers to the collective group of #, b, ♮, especially ones not related to the key signature (discussed in detail later).

When a # or b is added in the music, it lasts for that letter for a whole measure. In a new measure it goes back to normal (natural) unless otherwise noted.



Circle all the notes that would be played sharp.

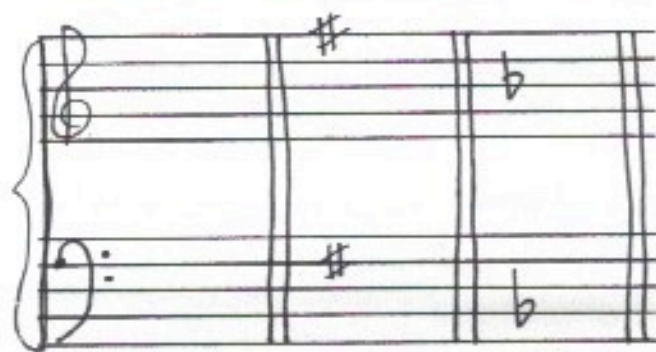


Circle all the notes that would be played flat.



B. Key Signatures

A key signature is used at the beginning of the music to show which notes will be # or b for the entire song. Instead of writing a # next to every F, for example, it's only written once at the beginning.



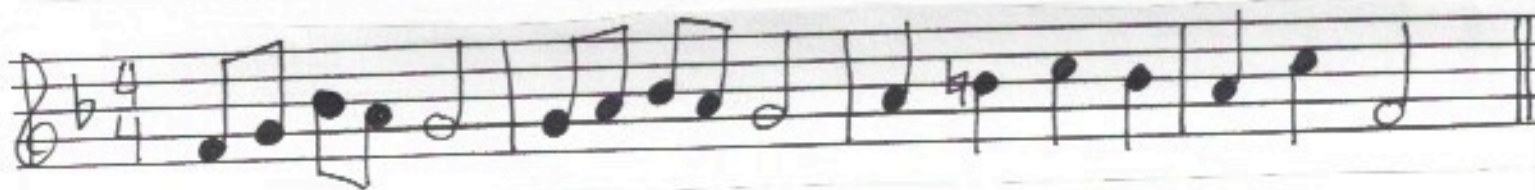
Key of: C G F



F C G

Fill in the correct # or b for each key signature.

Circle all the notes that are B^b and put an X over all the notes that are B naturals.



Circle all the notes that are F[#] and put an X over all the notes that are F naturals.



Unit 8: Solfege & Scales

- A. Scale: A scale is a series of 8 notes in alphabetical order. For example, C to C or G to G. Here is an example of a C scale.



Under the letters of the C scale, are Solfege syllables. The Solfege syllables are used when singing scales & for use in ear training.

Write in the Solfege syllables for this G scale.

G A B C D E F# G G F# E D C B A G

Write in the solfege syllables for the F scale.

F G A B^b C D E F F E D C B^b A G F

B. Intervals are the distance from one note to the next. On the staff, you can count the lines & spaces between the notes.

Here are the intervals & Solfege using notes of the C scale. Each interval sound can be remembered by singing these familiar songs.

← 2nd
Happy Birthday
Silent Night

Do Re

← 5th
Twinkle Twinkle
ABC Song

Do So

← 3rd
Michael Row the Boat
Oh when the saints

Do Mi

← 6th
My Bonnie Lies Over
the Ocean
Dashing through the
Snow

Do La

← 7th
Somewhere Over
the Rainbow

Do Ti

← 4th
Here Comes the Bride
Amazing Grace

Do Fa

← 8th
Somewhere Over
the Rainbow
On the weather outside
(Let it snow)

Do Do

Write the number of each interval below by counting both notes & any lines or spaces in between them.

A musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The staff contains seven intervals, each marked with a vertical bar line. Below the staff are seven horizontal lines for writing the interval numbers.

Interval 1: G4 to A4	Interval 2: A4 to B4	Interval 3: B4 to C5	Interval 4: C5 to D5	Interval 5: D5 to E5	Interval 6: E5 to F#5	Interval 7: F#5 to G5
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

C. Sightsinging & Ear Training

For each example below, write the solfege syllable for each note (using the C scale = C is Do). Then sing each one using the solfege.

1.

2.

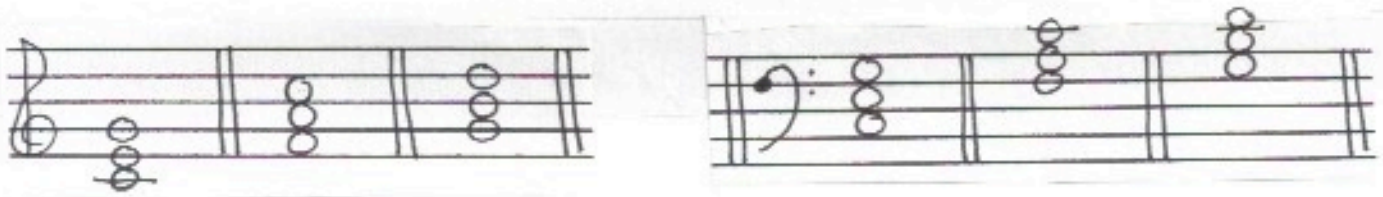
3.

Unit 9: Chords

A chord is a group of notes, usually 3, that are all played at one time. Chords provide background music, or accompaniment, to the melody, which is the main part of a song.

The name of each of the chords is also the name of the bottom note of each chord.

Write the name of each chord below.



Chord Symbol
C G F C



A chord symbol is often used above a melody to indicate which chord is being used.

Unit 10: More Time Signatures

- A. $\frac{6}{8}$ Time Signature means there are 6 beats in each measure & the Eighth note gets 1 beat. All the time values are doubled what they were in $\frac{4}{4}$.

$\frac{1}{2}$ Beat

3 Beats

1 Beat

1 Beat

6 Beats

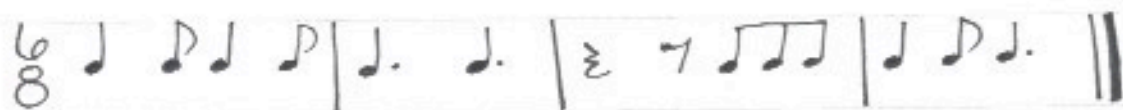
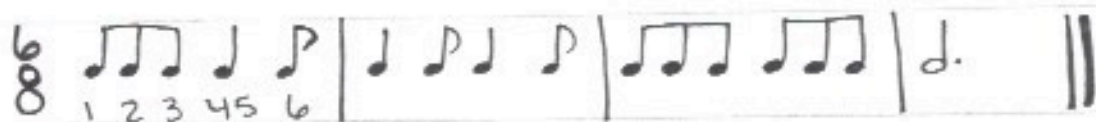
2 Beats

2 Beats

$\frac{1}{2}$ Beat

3 Beats

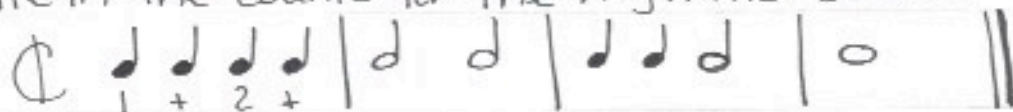
Write in the rest of the counts for the rhythms below.



B. C Cut Time is sometimes written as $\frac{2}{2}$ meaning there are only 2 beats in each measure & the half note gets 1 beat. All time values are cut in half what they were in $\frac{4}{4}$.

C $\frac{1}{2}$ Beat C 1 Beat C $\frac{1}{2}$ Beat C 1 Beat
 C $1\frac{1}{2}$ Beats C 2 Beats C $\frac{1}{4}$ Beat

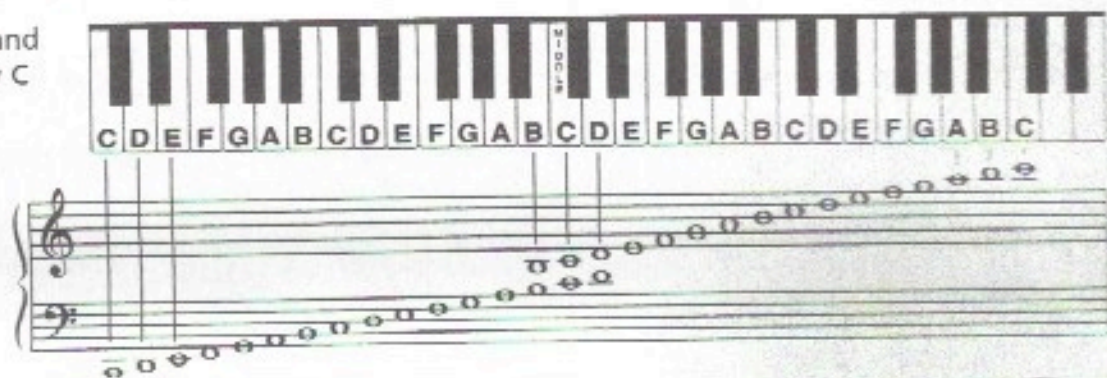
Write in the counts for the rhythms below.



Unit 11: Piano Keys

A full size piano has 88 keys of black & white. The black keys come in groups of 2 & 3. The white key before a set of 2 black keys is always letter C. Here are the notes on the grand staff & their corresponding key on the piano.

All the notes on the grand staff from bass clef Low C to treble clef High C:



References

Essentials of Music Theory
Complete Lesson Book
Alfred's Publishing Co., Inc.

Any further questions, contact:
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