

MUSIC LITERACY FOR SINGERS

MODULE 1
THIRD EDITION



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COLOUR IN THE STAR WHEN YOU'RE DONE THE BOOK. CONGRATULATIONS!

READING MUSIC: THE EASY ABCs

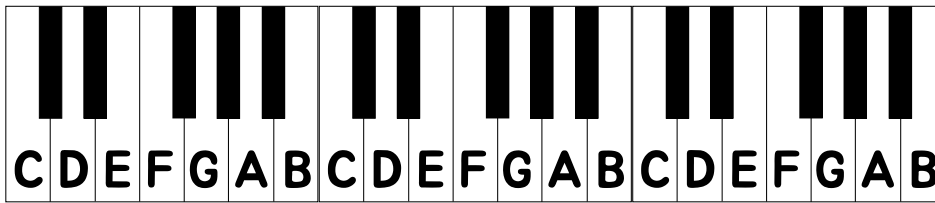
The musical alphabet has only 7 letters: A B C D E F G (that's it!)

- In music, those are ALWAYS capital (or upper-case) letters.
- Sometimes they go left-right: A B C D E F G

And sometimes they go up-down:

- Do you have a keyboard or piano at home? If not, below is what they would look like. Keep an eye out, and have a look the next time you see one!

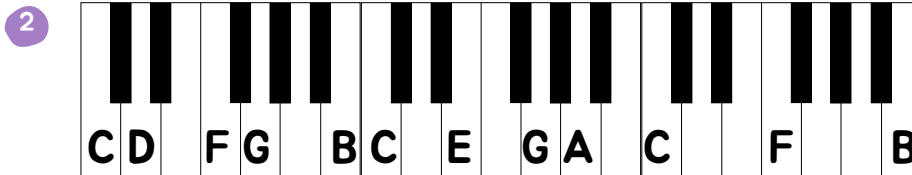
Notes follow the same alphabet pattern on a keyboard, too!



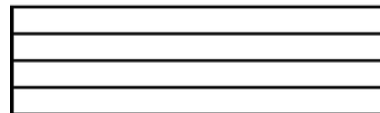
G
F
E
D
C
B
A

Your turn to practice!

1 A B _ D _ F _ A _ C D E _ G _ B C _



- Music is (usually!) written on a staff, like this:



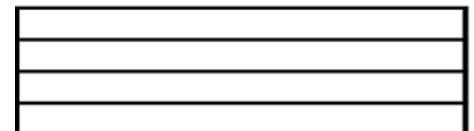
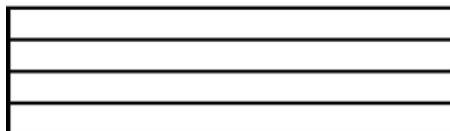
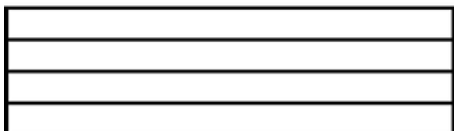
- Notice that there are 5 lines, and 4 spaces in between those lines.

Your turn: 3 Draw a note... (like this )

On a line:

In a space:

Anywhere:



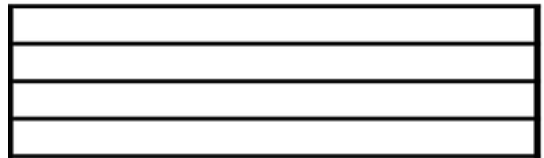
MUSICAL LINES & SPACES: MEET THE STAFF

Remember those 5 lines and 4 spaces? Here they are again!

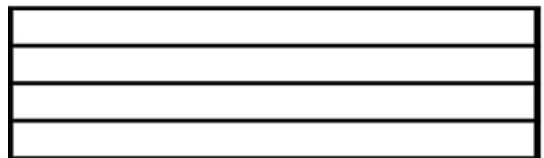
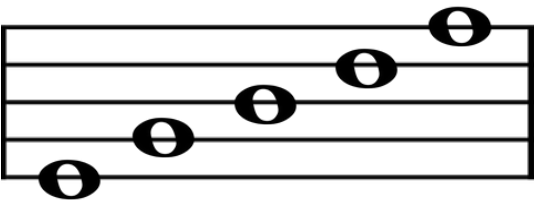
Here are notes in the 4 spaces:



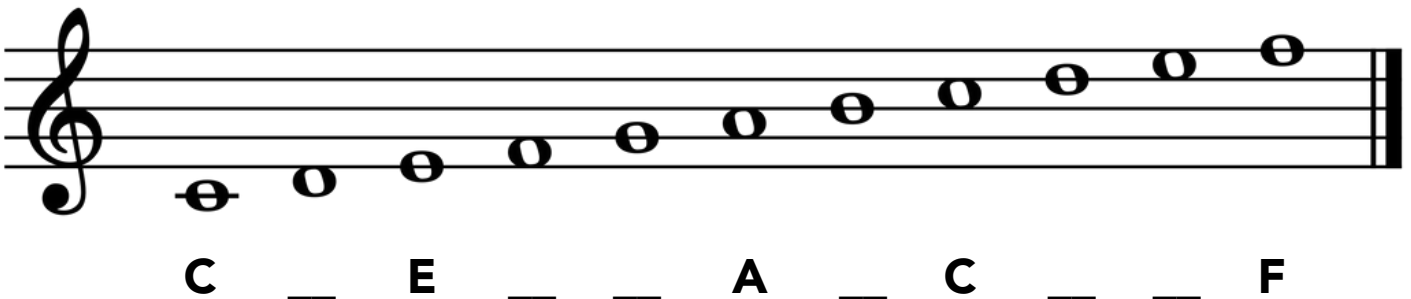
1 Copy those notes!



Here are notes on the 5 lines:



2 Remember those ABC's? Fill them in here!

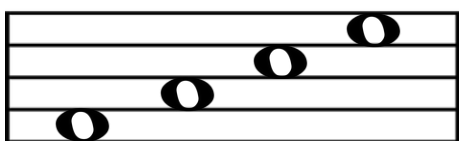


A tool to memorize the notes on the lines is: Elephants Get Big Dirty Eet

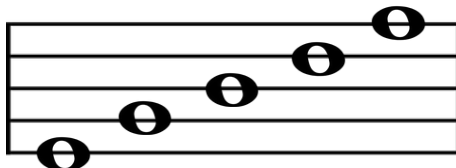
The notes in the spaces spell the word F A C E!

3 Name these notes (using UPPERCASE LETTERS!)

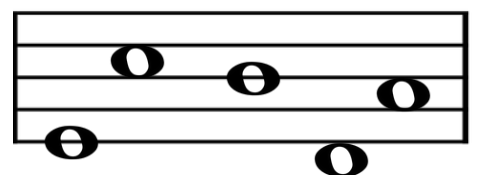
In the spaces:



On the lines:



A mix of both:



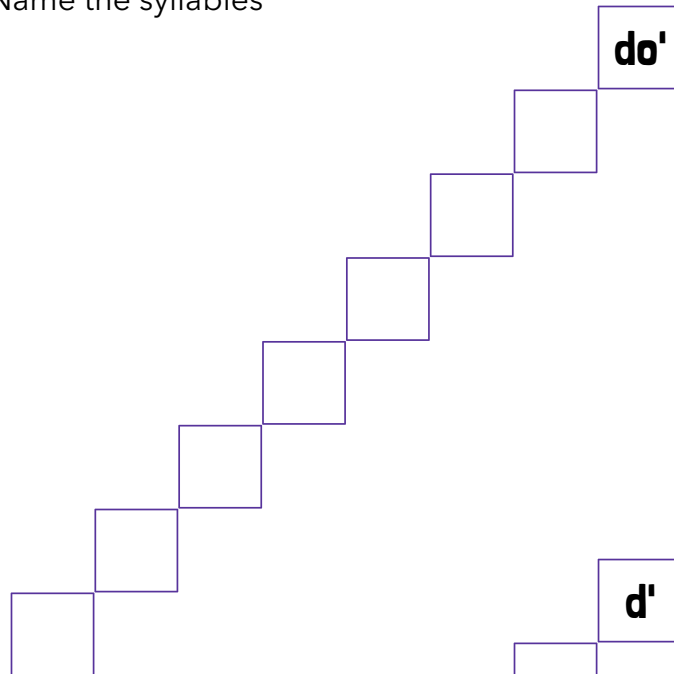


DO, RE, MI: THE SYLLABLES

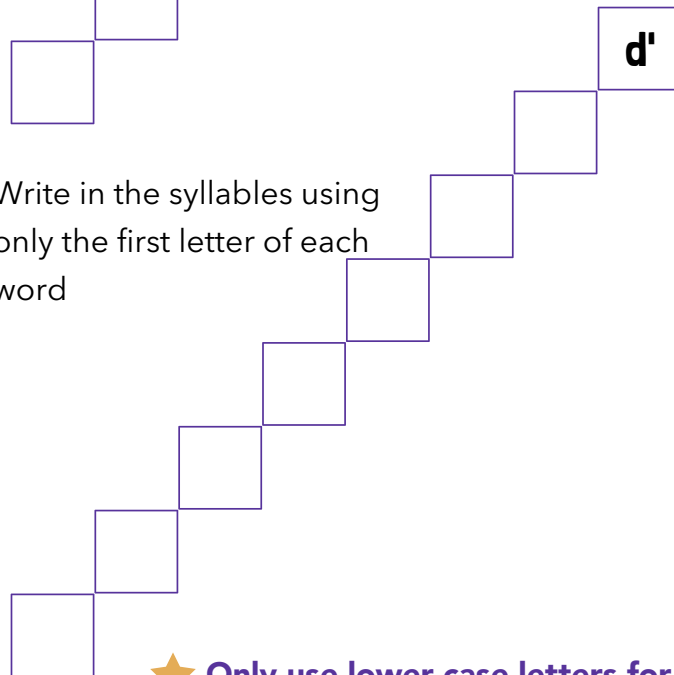
Another way to read music is by using a pattern of sounds we call solfa syllables.
You can see the sounds and the hand signs below!



1 Name the syllables



2 Write in the syllables using only the first letter of each word



★ Only use lower-case letters for solfa!

3 Complete the song using solfa syllables and their hand signs:



Twin-



kle



twin-



kle



lit-



tle



star



How



I



won-



der



what



you



are



THE KEYBOARD

Remember the note names from page 1?

If we know where one note is on the keyboard, it's easy to find others! We will start by finding all of the Ds to help us find other notes. Look for groups of two black keys - D is always in the middle! Then follow your alphabet: D E F G A B C!

- 1 Add letter names to the remaining white keys:

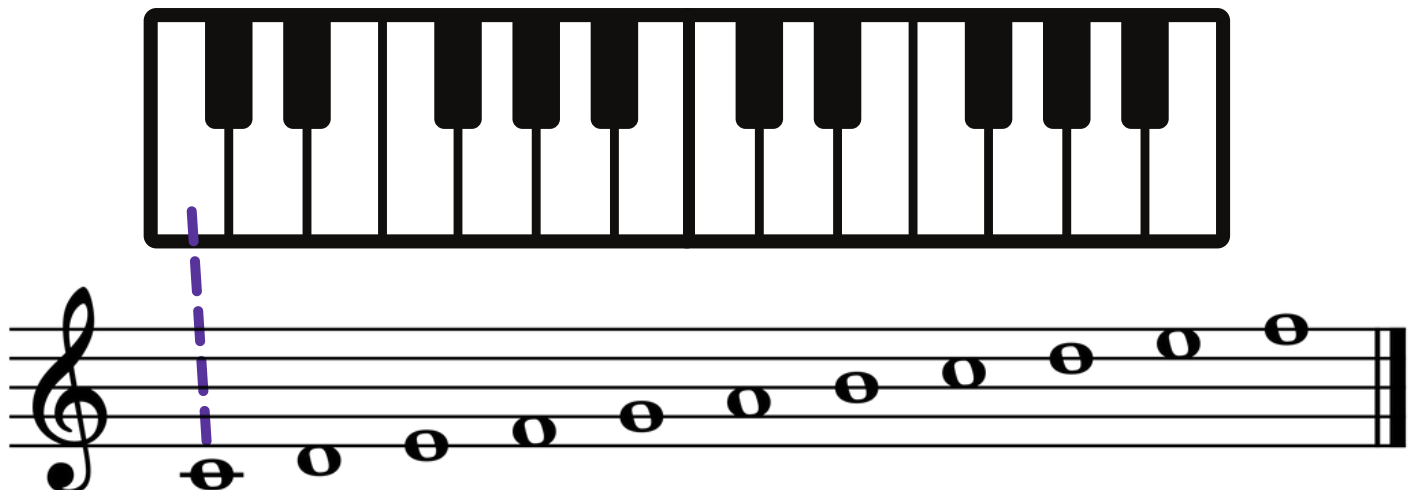


- 2 A scale has eight notes, and begins and ends with the same letter name. Write the letter names of a scale beginning on C:

- 3 True or false?

Black keys are in groups of twos and threes	TRUE	FALSE
E is next to a group of two black keys	TRUE	FALSE
C is next to a group of three black keys	TRUE	FALSE
B is next to a group of three black keys	TRUE	FALSE

- 4 Match each key to the corresponding note on the staff and identify each note in the blanks below (hint: you know the first one from page 2!)

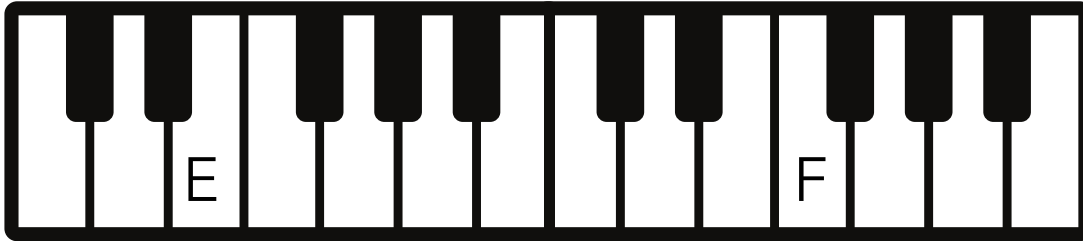


note names _____

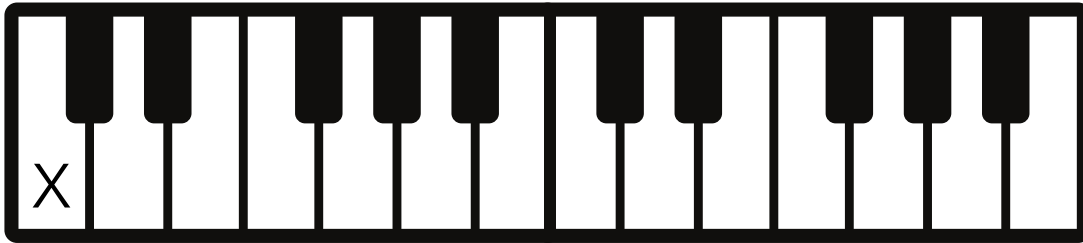
solfa _____

...CONTINUED THE KEYBOARD

- 5 Add letter names to the remaining white keys:



- 6 Circle the groups of two black keys on the keyboard. Then, mark an X on each key in a C major scale (hint: the first X is put in for you, there should only be seven more!)



- 7 True or False?

There is a black key between D and E.	TRUE	FALSE
There is a black key between G and A.	TRUE	FALSE
There is a black key between B and C.	TRUE	FALSE
There is a black key between C and D.	TRUE	FALSE
There is a black key between E and F.	TRUE	FALSE
There is a black key between A and B.	TRUE	FALSE
There is a black key between F and G.	TRUE	FALSE



LET'S GET IN TREBLE (CLEF)

Meet the treble clef!

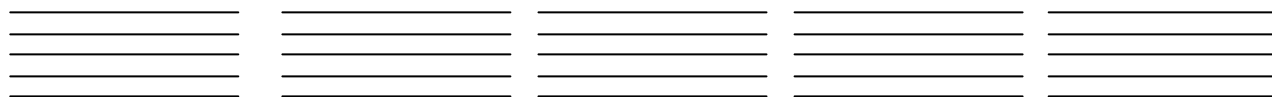


Treble clefs are used for high notes on the staff.

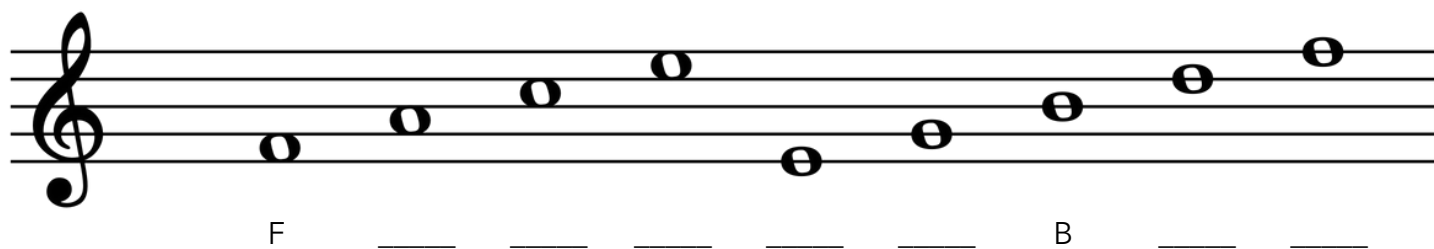
To draw a treble clef, try doing it in a few different steps:



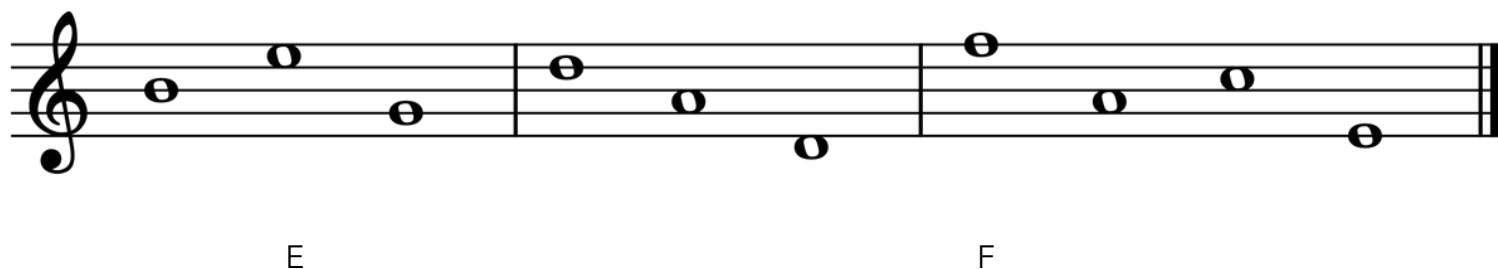
Your turn:



1 Fill in the blanks: (if you need help, check page 2)

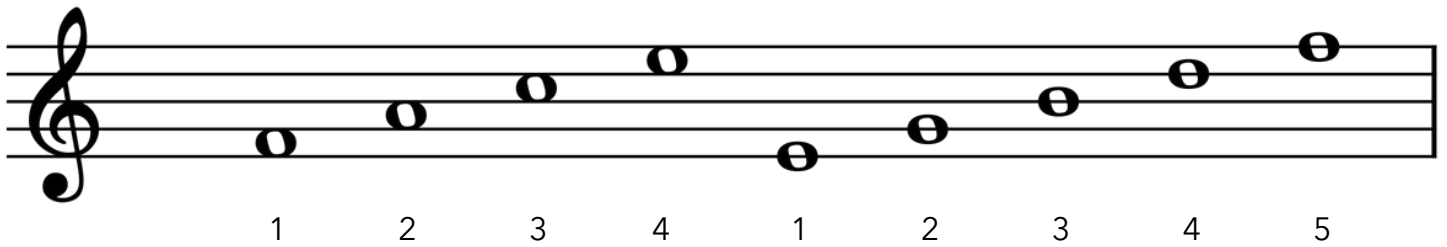


2 Let's make some words!

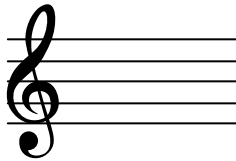


LET'S GET IN TREBLE (CLEF)

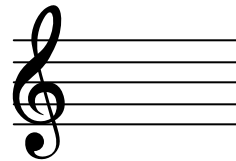
When we talk about the staff, we number each line and space, and count from the bottom up:



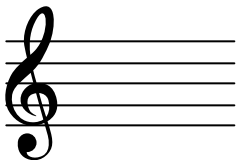
3 Draw a note on the 2nd line:



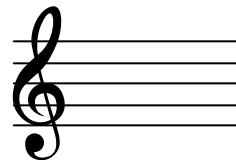
Draw a note on the 4th space:



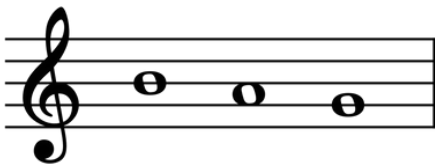
Draw a note on the 5th line:



Draw a note on the 3rd space:



4 Name the notes below to complete the sentences:



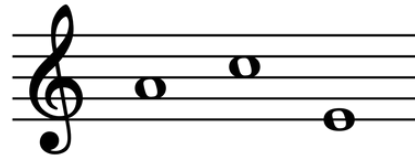
Don't forget your ____



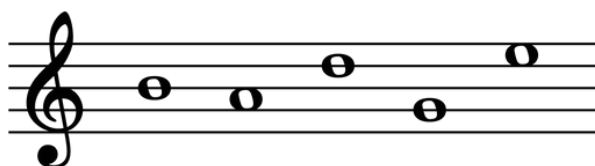
My bird lives in a ____



I got stung by a ____



Do you have an ____

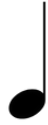



The officer showed their ____



EVERY NOTE (& REST) HAS VALUE!

Meet the quarter note!
Quarter notes are held for one beat



You'll notice that it has both a filled in head and a stem, but no flag ()

When notes are low on the staff, the stems go up and look like the letter "d" →



When notes are high on the staff, the stems go down and look like the letter "p" →



- 1 Draw five quarter notes with their stems going **down**:

Draw five quarter notes with their stems going **up**:

- 2 We also have quarter rests. While a note shows sound, a rest shows silence.
Quarter rests are also held for one beat.

Draw five quarter rests:

- 3 Circle the quarter notes and rests in the line below:

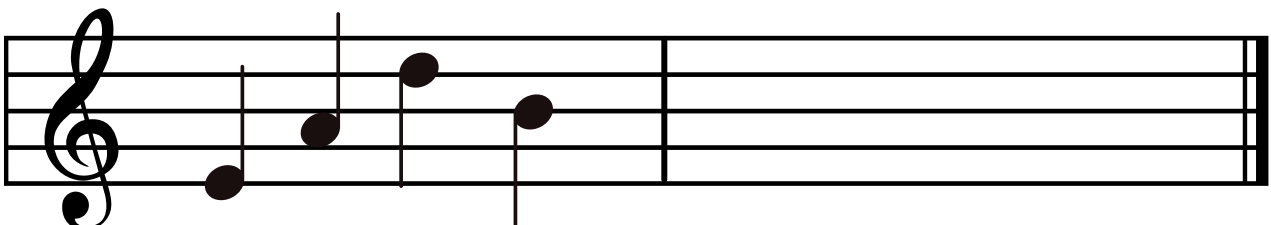


- 4 When we draw notes low on the staff, their stems go up:
When we draw notes high on the staff, their stems go down:
On the middle line of the staff, the stems can go up or down.



When it comes to stems, opposites attract! **Low note, high stem. High note, low stem.**

Name the notes below:

Copy the notes and name them again:



EVERY NOTE (& REST) HAS VALUE!

- 5 Next up, we have an eighth note:  Eighth notes are held for 1/2 a beat. You'll notice that the note head is filled in and it has a stem with a flag: 

Flags always go on the right side of the stem. It doesn't matter if the stems are pointing up or down, the flags are always on the right.

Circle the notes that are drawn correctly:      

★ Remember, stems on the right point up, and on the left point down.

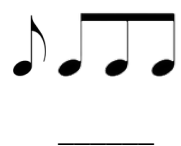
- 6 Draw five eighth notes with their stems pointing up:

Draw five eighth notes with their stems pointing down:

- 7 When we have more than one eighth note in a row, they are often connected with a beam into groups of 2 or more.



How many eighth notes are in each group?



- 8 Circle all the eighth notes in groups below. There are 12 eighth notes.



- 9 We also have eighth rests. In the same way that a quarter rest indicates one beat of silence, an eighth rest indicates only half a beat of silence!

Draw five eighth rests:

EVERY NOTE (& REST) HAS VALUE!

- 10 This is a half note:  A half note is held for two beats. You'll notice that the note head is open or not filled in.

Draw six half notes in the box (stems up and down, just like quarter notes on page 8!):

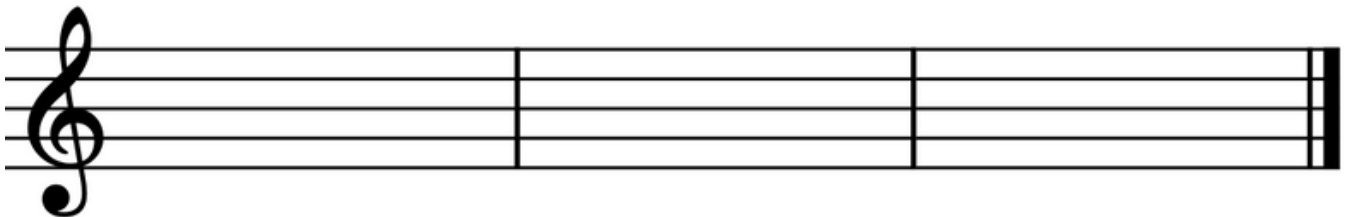
- 11 Circle the half notes in the line below:



Half rests are a little different. When we read and write them in music, they are attached to the middle line on the staff...



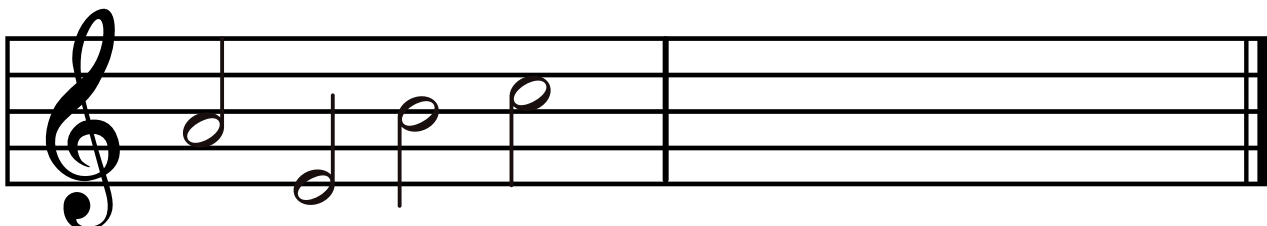
Half rests are always drawn on top of the middle line of the staff! Try drawing some on the staff below...



- 12 Now let's practice drawing half notes on the staff...

Name the half notes below:

Copy the notes and name them again:





YOU'RE A SIGHT SINGER!

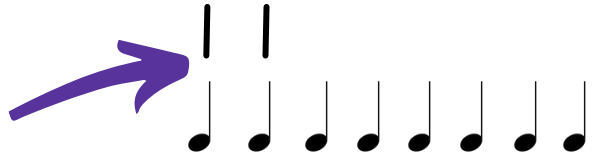
- 1 The pulse of a song is called the beat. The beat can be fast or slow, depending on how the song goes! Before you sing a song, you should always count or tap the beat.

Tap a slow and steady beat - one tap for each stroke.
How many beats are in this line? _____



★ A quarter note gets one beat.

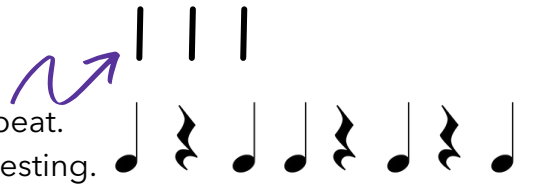
Draw a stroke over each quarter note and clap the beat:



★ A quarter rest gets one beat.

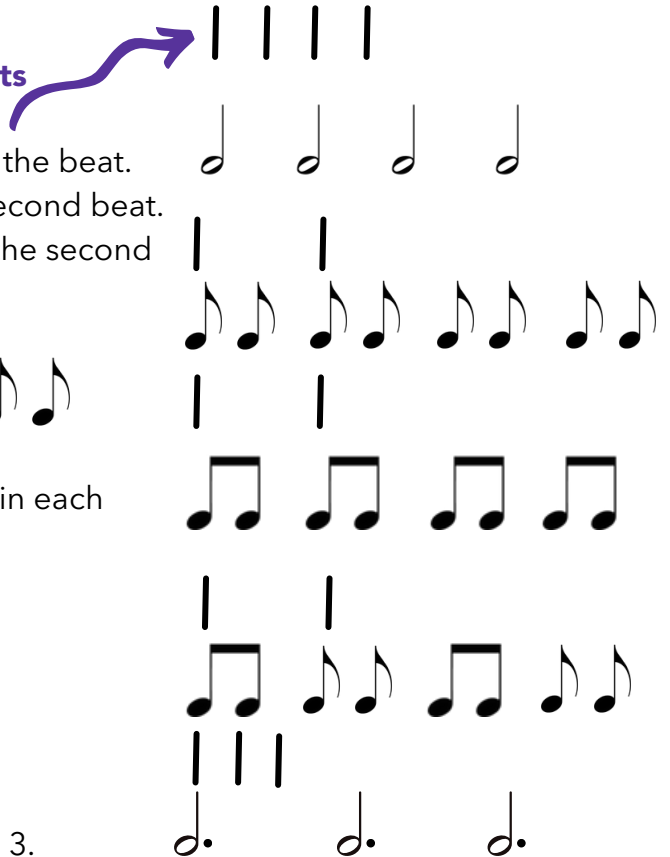
Draw a stroke over each quarter note and rest, and clap the beat.

When you get to the rest, open your hands to show you are resting.





★ A half note gets two beats, and a half rest also gets two beats.

Draw two strokes over each half note and half rest. Clap the beat.
Clap once for each half note and bounce them for the second beat.
Open your hands for the half rest and bounce them for the second beat.



★ Two eighth notes share one beat.

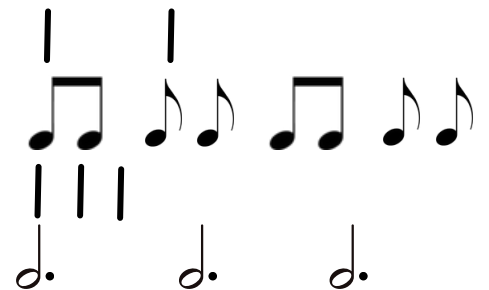
Remember, two eighth notes can have flags, like this:  or can be joined together by a beam, like this: 


Draw one stroke above the stem of the first eighth note in each pair, but clap twice on each beat.

★ A dotted half note gets three beats.

Draw three strokes over each dotted half note.

Clap once for beat one and bounce them for beat 2 and 3.



- 2 Add the strokes you need to this line: 



YOU'RE A SIGHT SINGER!

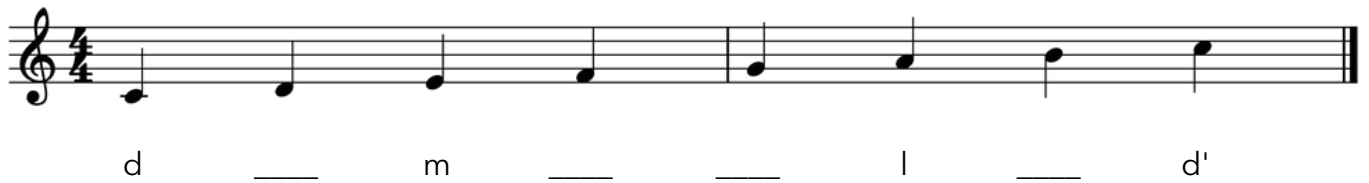
- 3 Add the strokes to this line. Once you're done - try clapping it too!



Hot cross buns hot cross buns one a penny two a penny hot cross buns

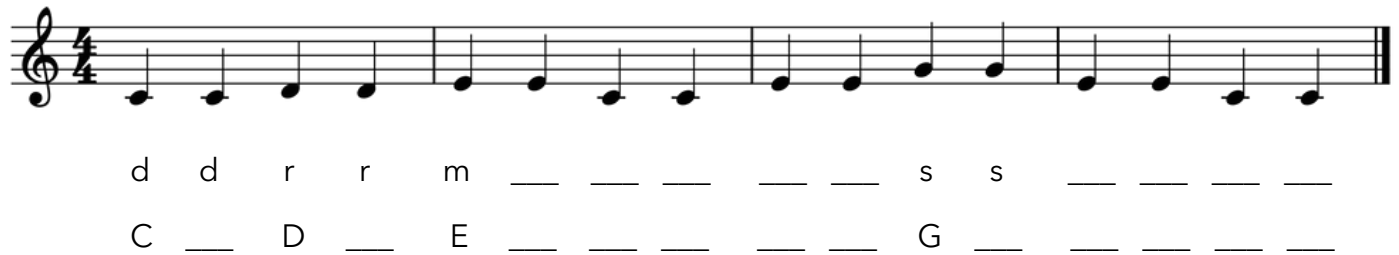
- 4 Fill in the missing solfa syllables of the C major scale:

★ Remember: solfa syllables are always lowercase!



d _ m _ _ l _ d'

- 5 Below is a melody that you haven't learned yet. Add the missing syllable and note names:



d d r r m _ _ _ _ s s _ _ _ _
C _ D _ E _ _ _ _ G _ _ _ _

Now that you've filled in all the notes - let's try singing it! Sing it first with the syllables (and hand signs), and then with the letter names.

- 6 Let's do it again! Add the missing syllables:



_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Now that you've filled in all the syllables - let's try singing it! Remember to use hand signs (on page 3) too!

Do you recognize the song? What is the name of it? _____



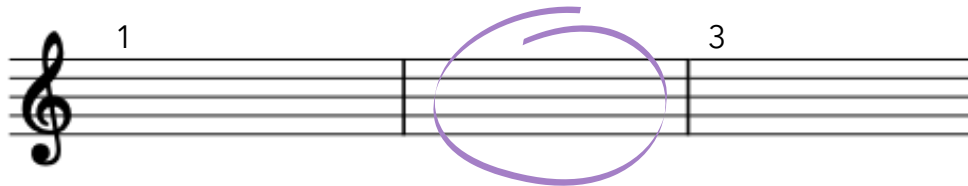
MEASURES & BARLINES

- 1 In your music, you've seen lines that separate the staff into sections, helping you count beats and rhythms. These are called barlines! Circle the rest of the barlines in the example below...

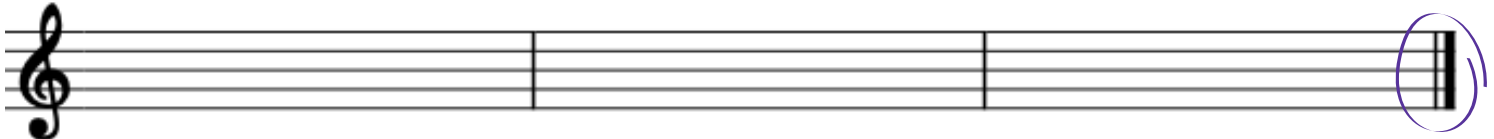
Hint: there are 4 more!



- 2 The spaces between the barlines are called bars or measures. Because music can be long when written out, musicians count measures. Measure numbers can appear above or below the staff, and some written music only shows occasional numbers. Whether or not the number is written in the music, we count them the same way. Add the missing bar number below...



- 3 At the end of your music you'll find a double barline, which indicates that the song is finished... Add the missing bar numbers below!



- 4 How many measures are in the example below? _____

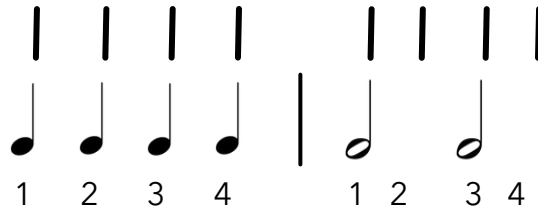
Circle the double barline that indicates the e____ of the music!

Twinkle, twinkle, li-ttle star, how I won-der what you are? Up a-boveth world so high,
like a dia-mond in the sky. Twinkle, twinkle, li-ttle star, how I won-der what you are?

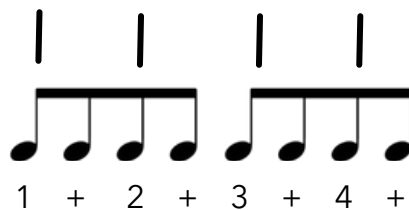


COUNTING RHYTHMS

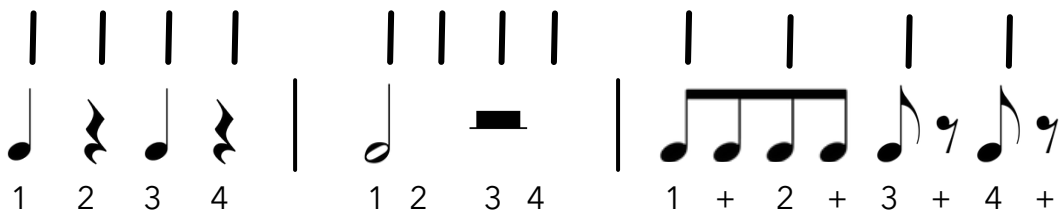
- 1 When reading music, not only do we use strokes to track the beats, but we use a tool called counts to track the rhythm. We do this by counting the number of beats that each note gets...



Eighth notes are a little different, because they only get h___ a beat. When counting them we count the first eighth note as the number, then the second one as "+" (read as "and")...



We also use counts when we see rests in music.



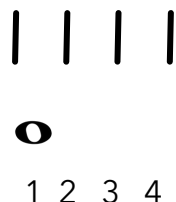
- 2 Add strokes and counts below!



- 3 Throughout our learning, we've been using what is called a whole note. A whole note takes up 4 beats, so gets 4 counts! You have lots of practice drawing these.

Since a whole note gets four beats the counts we use go up to 4. The same rule applies to strokes!

Copy the strokes and counts on the whole note below!

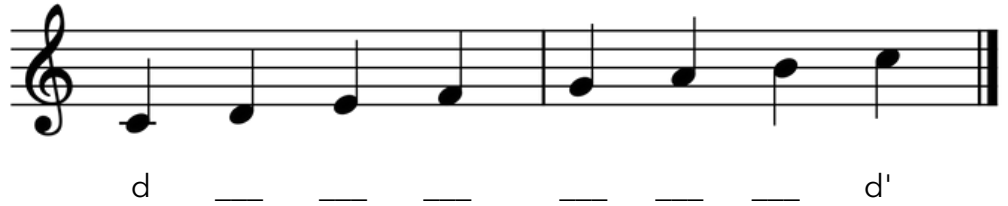


1 2 3 4

DO CAN BE ANY NOTE!

- 1 Surprise! Solfa syllables can move! Solfa syllables move when we change keys.
Add the syllables to the scales below:

In this example, do is C



In this example, do is D



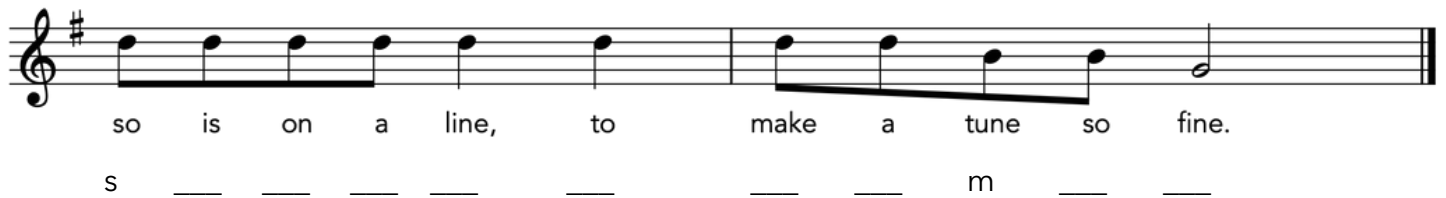
In this example, do is F



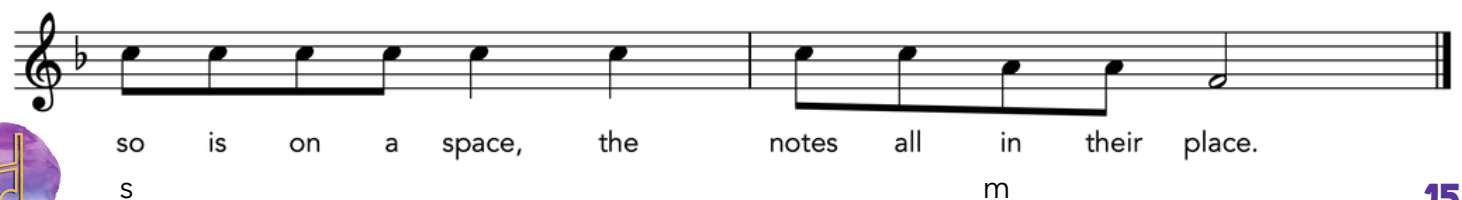
In this example, do is G



- 2 Add in the missing syllables to this song. Try singing it, too!



- 3 Add in the missing syllables to this song. Try singing it, too!

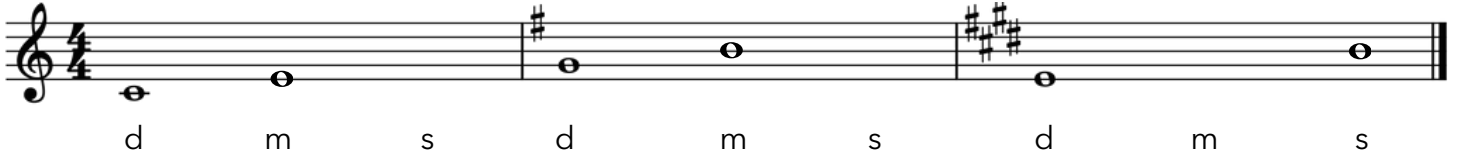


DO, MI, SO: THE THREE MUSKETEERS

- 1 Remember the song from the last page? Let's try it again!

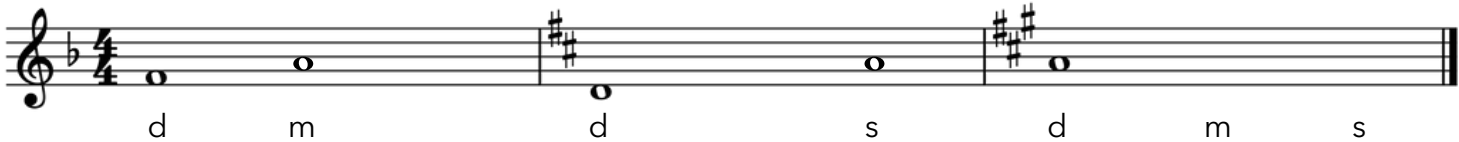
When **do** is on a line, then **mi** is on a line, and _____ is on a line

Draw in the missing notes below:



- 2 When \mathbf{do} is in a space, then _____ is in a space, and _____ is in a space.

Draw in the missing notes below:



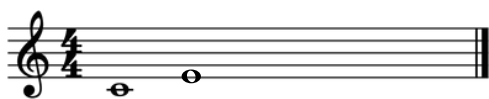
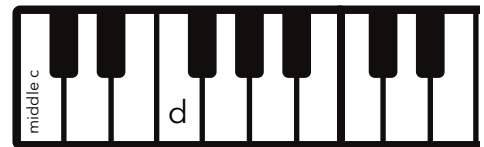
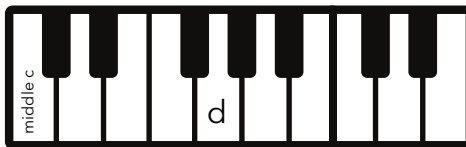
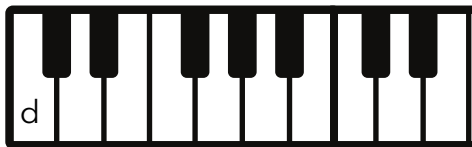
- 3** The song below only uses do, mi, and so. The starting note, G, is do. Add the missing syllables, then try singing it with syllables hand signs.



- 4 Below are do, mi, and so, in different keys. Using the song from before to help you...

- ☐ Draw in the missing notes.
- ☐ Draw in the missing letter names.
- ☐ Do is marked on the keyboard - draw in the missing mi and so.
- ☐ If you have a keyboard, try playing these!

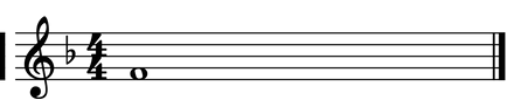
Psst... having trouble remembering note names? Check page 2 for a quick reminder!



d m s m d
C _____ G _____ _____



d m s m d
G B _____



d m s m d
F _____

When the key is C major,
do is C.

When the key is G major,
do is G.



When the key is F major,
do is .

LOUD & SOFT, FAST & SLOW

In music, we use Italian language to mark the volume in music. Changing the volume you sing at in a song makes music more interesting to listen to and makes listeners connect to the music through emotion. Volume, or soft and louds in music are called **dynamics**.

1 Fill in the blanks below:

The word for soft is piano. The short form is ***p***. The word for loud is forte (pronounced for-tay). The short form is ***f***. Mezzo (pronounced met-soh) means medium. Mezzo piano (***mp***) means me ___ i ___ m s ___ f ___. Mezzo forte (***mf***) means medium lo ___. To make music even louder or softer, we add "-issimo" to the end of a word, which means, "very." Pianissimo (***pp***) means v ___ ry s ___ ft. Fortissimo (***ff***) means ___ ry lo ___.

The word crescendo means to get gradually louder, (pronounced kre-shen-do). You can shorten this word by only using the first five letters, c ___. Crescendos can also be written with this symbol: . The opposite of a crescendo is a decrescendo (pronounced dee-kresh-en-do), which means to gradually become softer. The short form is the first seven letters, de ___. Another word that can also mean to become gradually softer is diminuendo (pronounced dih-min-yoo-en-do). The short form is the first three letters, d ___. The symbol for decrescendo and diminuendo is the same - it looks like this: .

2 Write these terms in order from loudest to softest: forte, piano, pianissimo, mezzo forte, fortissimo, mezzo piano:

loudest



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

softest



LOUD & SOFT, FAST & SLOW

...CONTINUED

Tempos (or tempi, if you're feeling very fancy) describe the speed of music. There are three ways that tempo is communicated to players: Italian terms, modern language, and BPM (beats per minute - the precise way!).

Just like when we learned dynamics, Italian is the language of music. This is more common in classical music; in popular music (jazz, pop, rock) musicians tend to use more casual language, such as "fast," "slow," "lazily," "relaxed," and "moderate."

"Beats per minute" (or BPM) means counting the number of beats in one minute. For instance, a tempo notated as 60 BPM would mean that a beat sounds exactly once per second. A 120 BPM tempo would be twice as fast, with two beats per second.

Here are some of the most common tempos used in classical music, in alphabetical order:

Italian Term	Meaning	BPM
Adagio	popular slow tempo, meaning "at ease"	66-76
Allegro	most common speed, the 'heartbeat' speed	120-168
Andante	"at a walking pace"	76-108
Grave	slow and solemn	20-40
Largo	most commonly indicated "slow" tempo	40-60
Lento	slowly	40-60
Moderato	moderately	108-120
Presto	very fast, common in fast movements of symphonies	168-200
Vivace	lively and fast	168-176

3 Write all the new tempi you just learned in order from fastest to slowest:

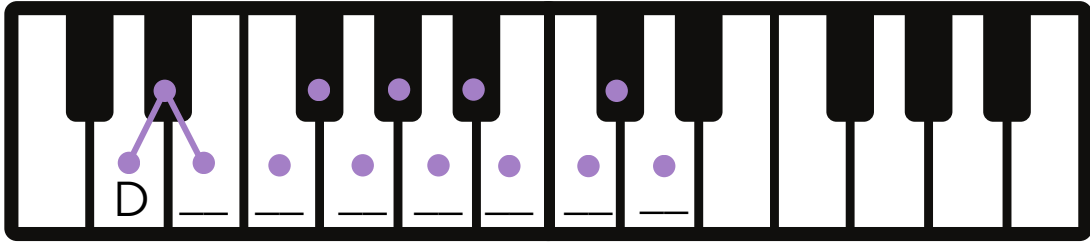
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____

fastest

slowest

SHARPS, FLATS, & HALF STEPS


- 1 Fill in the names of the missing blank keys below:



Did you notice that some of the white keys don't have a black key in between them? Which keys don't have a black key in between them? ____ and ____, ____ and ____.

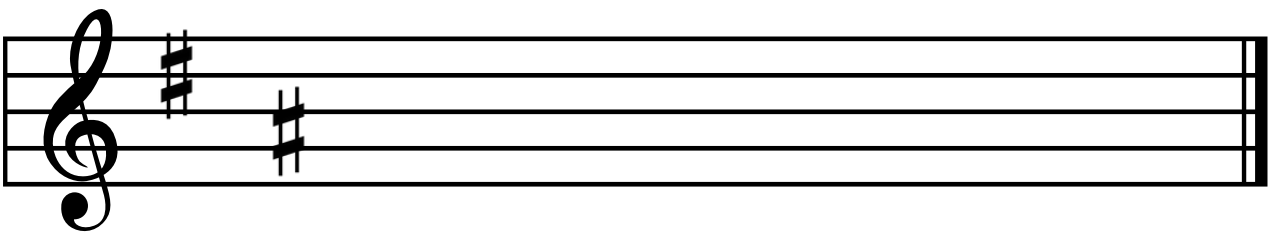
★ The distance from one key to the closest black or white key to it is called a half step. Another name for a half step is "semitone."


- 2 Connect all the dots on the keyboard above. When you've done this, you will have connected all of the half steps together. A scale made up of all half steps is called a chromatic scale. "Chromatic" is pronounced crow-mah-tik.

- 3 This is a sharp:  You might recognize this sign - it is also used as a number sign, a pound sign, and a hashtag. Make sure you call this a "sharp" when you're talking about music.

When you see a sharp in front of a note, it makes the note sound a half step higher. The box part should be on the line, or inside the space.

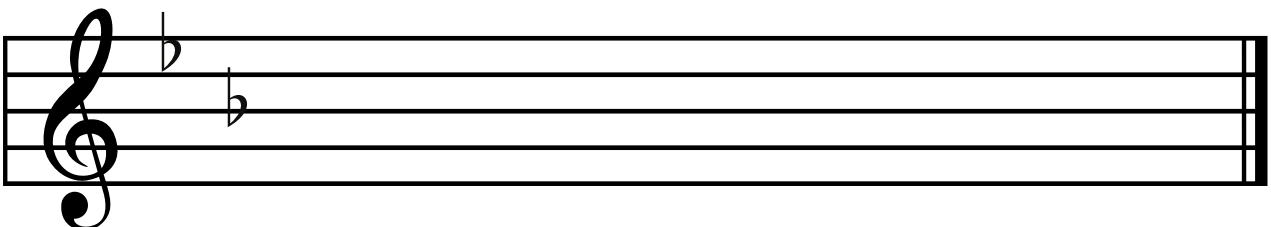
Practice drawing some sharps:



- 4 This is a flat:  It kind of looks like the letter "b."

When you see a flat in front of a note, it makes the note sound a half step lower. The round part should be on the line, or inside the space.

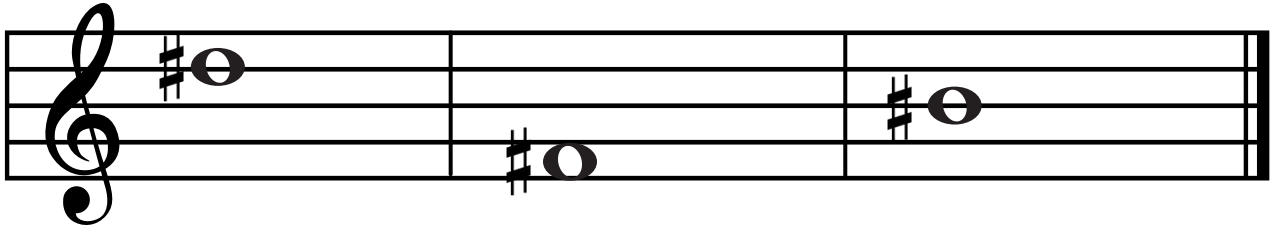
Practice drawing some flats:



SHARPS, FLATS, & HALF STEPS

- 5 When you see a sharp (\sharp) in front of a note, the note becomes a half step higher. When you draw the sharp (on the staff,) the sharp comes before the note. When you write the note (using words), the sharp comes after the note. The box part goes on the same line or space as the note.

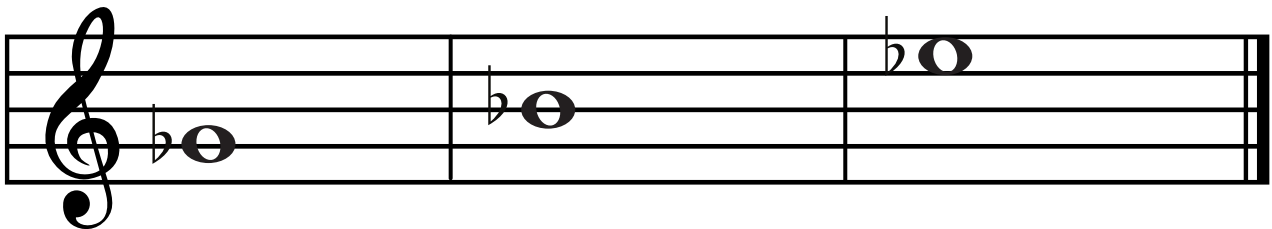
Draw the sharps/notes and identify them below:



D \sharp

- 6 When you see a flat (\flat) in front of a note, the note becomes a half step lower. When you draw the flat (on the staff,) the flat comes before the note. When you write the note (using words), the flat comes after the note. The bulb part of the flat goes on the same line or space as the note.

Draw the flats and notes, and identify them below:



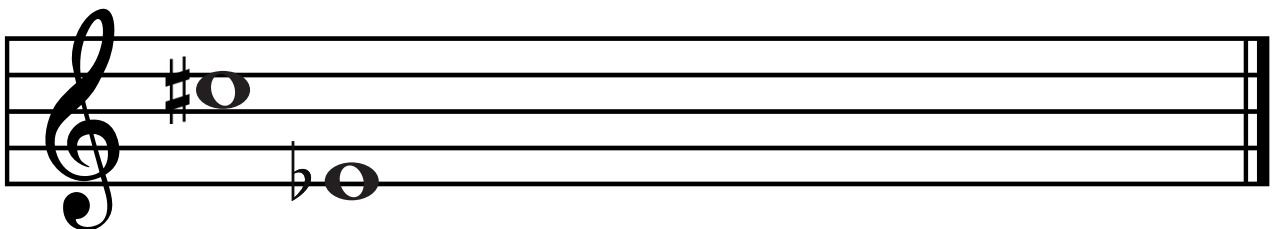
G \flat

- 6 Here's a little saying to help you remember where to put sharps and flats:

★ **Before the note, after the name! That's the sharp and flat game!**

Copy the saying above to help memorize it:

- 7 Draw the notes below:



C \sharp

E \flat

D \sharp

G \sharp

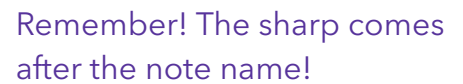
B \flat

F \sharp

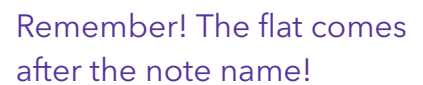
D \flat

A \sharp

- Label the black keys (using sharps only) and the white keys below:



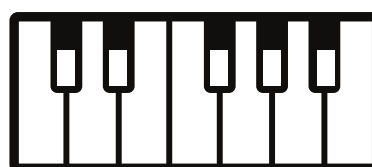
- Label the black keys (using flats only) and the white keys below:



- 11 Name the notes below:

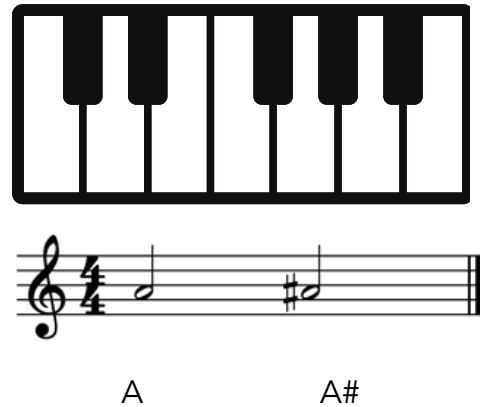
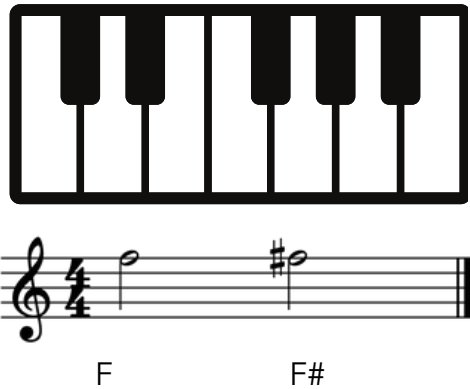
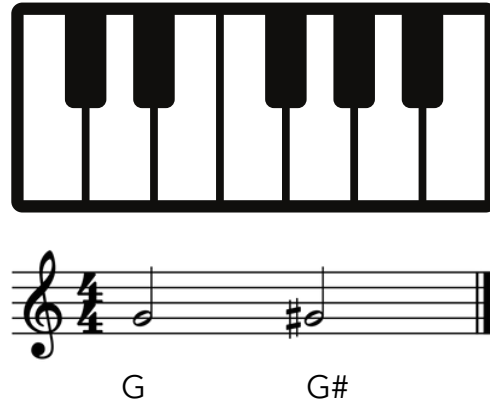
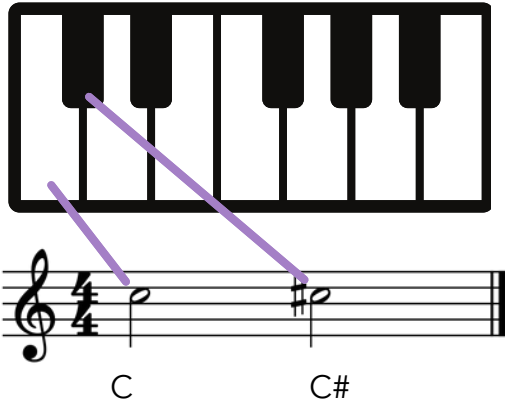


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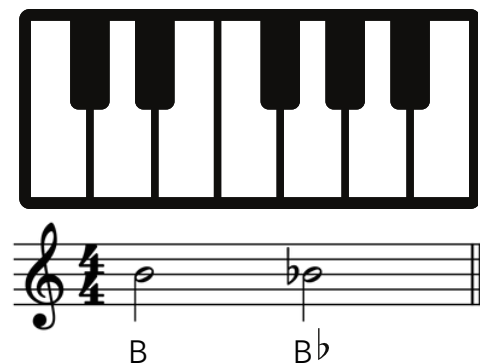
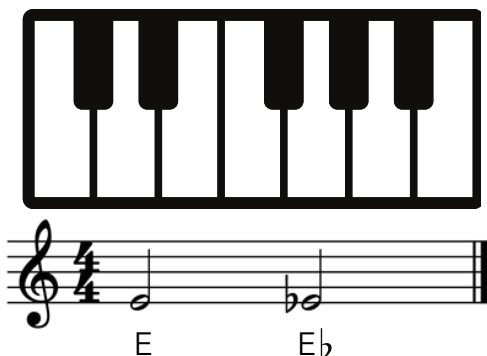
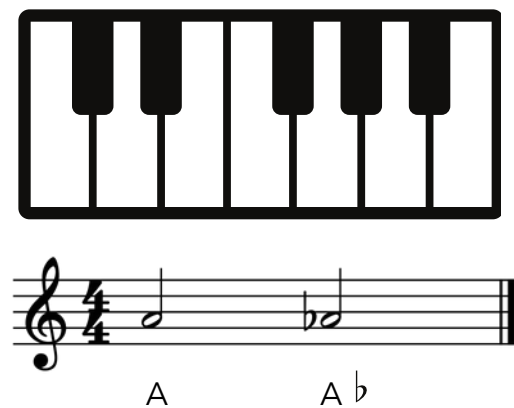
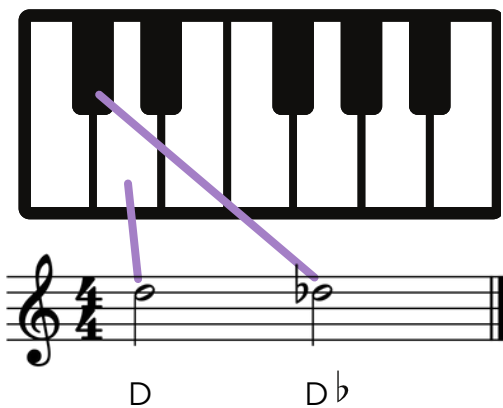


SHARPS, FLATS, & HALF STEPS ...CONTINUED

- 13 Draw a line from the note on the staff to the note on the keyboard. Hint: the second note is a half step higher!



- 14 Draw a line from the note on the staff to the note on the keyboard. Hint: the second note is a half step lower!



LONDON BRIDGE IS FALLING DOWN

mf Lon - don bridge is fall - ing down fall - ing down

fall - ing down Lon - don bridge is fall - ing down

My fair la - dy.

"London Bridge is Falling Down" is a song you've probably heard before. It is a traditional English nursery rhyme that is sung all over the world. Many people learn this song as children, or when learning to sing or play the piano. Let's take a look at this song.

1 What is the first word of the song (measure 1)? _____

What is the last word in measure 4? _____

What is the first word in measure 7? _____

What is the last word in measure 6? _____

(Hint: if you're unsure where measure 6 is, just count up from measure 4, where you see the number.)

2 Dynamics tell us when to play or sing loud or _____ in a song.

What is the dynamic of this song? _____

What does this dynamic mean in English? _____

3 What is the first note of this song? _____ What is the last note of this song? _____

How many notes are in measure 3? _____

Which two measures are the same? _____ and _____

The key of this song is D major. In which measure do we finally hear do (D)? _____

If D is do, then F# is mi, and A is _____. Which solfa syllable does the song start on? _____



GLOSSARY

adagio - a popular slow tempo that means "at ease", 66-76bpm


allegro - the most common tempo, also known as the "heartbeat" speed, 120-168bpm


andante - a tempo that means "at a walking pace", 76-108bpm

bar/measure - the space between barlines containing notes and rests


barline - lines that divide the staff into smaller groups of notes

counts - numbers that we write under notes to keep track of rhythms in music

crescendo/cresc -  - a dynamic marking that tells us the music gradually gets louder

decrescendo/decresc or diminuendo/dimm -  - a dynamic marking that tells us the music gradually gets softer

dynamic - a type of musical marking that indicates the volume (loudness or softness) of the music

flat -  - an accidental that indicates that a note is a half step lower

forte - ***f*** - a dynamic marking that means loud

fortissimo - ***ff*** - a dynamic marking that means very loud

grave - a tempo that means the music should be slow and solemn, 20-40bpm

half step/semitone - the smallest distance between two notes on a keyboard (right next to each other)

hand signs - correlate to and help to indicate solfa syllables when singing

keyboard - the notes found on a piano

largo - the most commonly used "slow" tempo marking, 40-60bpm

lento - a tempo marking that means "slowly", 40-60bpm

measure - see "bar/measure"

mezzo forte - ***mf*** - a dynamic marking that means "medium loud"

GLOSSARY

mezzo piano - *mp* - a dynamic marking that means “medium soft”

moderato - a tempo that indicates a “moderate” or medium pace, 108-120bpm

note names - the alphabet we use to name musical notes (ABCDEFGG)

pianissimo - *pp* - a dynamic marking that means very soft

piano - *p* - a dynamic marking that means soft

presto - a tempo that means “very fast”, commonly used in the fast movements of symphonies, 162bpm-200bpm

semitone - see “half step/semitone”


sharp -  - an accidental that indicates that a note is a half step higher

solfa syllables - a different way of naming the notes in a scale (d r m f s l t d')

staff - the five lines and four spaces that notes are written on

strokes - a tool used to indicate where each beat lies in a bar

tempo - a marking that indicates the speed that the music is sung/played at

treble clef -  - a symbol at the beginning of the music that indicates that we are reading the higher notes are on the staff

vivace - a tempo that means “lively and fast”, 168-176bpm

