




NOTE VALUES

As well as looking at the pitch of notes on the staff, we need to also think about some of the other elements needed to create a piece of music. Another important consideration is the **length** or **duration** of the notes. Notes can be written several different ways and each tells us how many counts or beats to hold them on for.

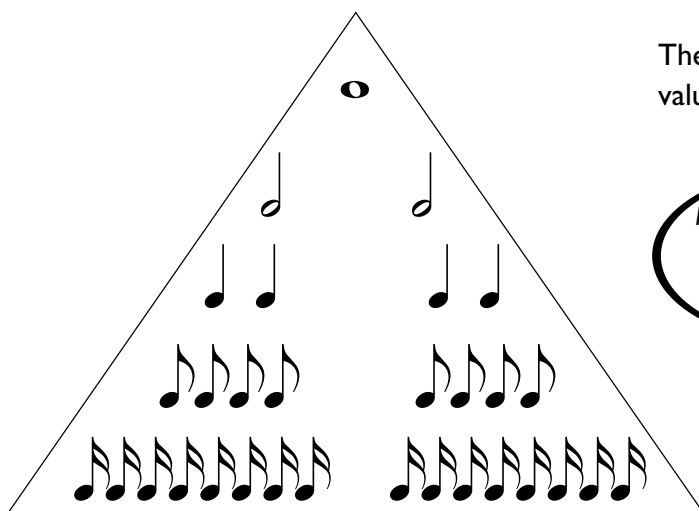
Here is a: whole note  it is worth 4 beats

half note  it is worth 2 beats

quarter note  it is worth 1 beat

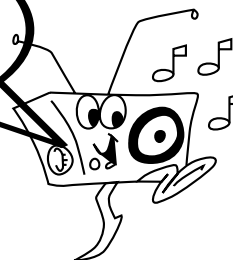
eighth note  it is worth 1/2 beat

sixteenth note  it is worth 1/4 beat



The note pyramid shows how the note values can be worked out.






For example can you see that there are 2 half notes in a whole note?



- Note: When two or more eighth notes or sixteenth notes are written together they can be

joined up like this :  or 

Now try these questions:


1. How many quarter notes are there in a whole note: **2** **3** or **4** ?
2. Complete this sentence: A _____ is a two count note.
3. True or false: a whole note is worth 1 beat? _____
4. True or false:  +  +  +  =  _____
5. Complete this sentence: A _____ is worth a 1/4 beat.




DOTTED NOTES


Both **dots** and **ties** increase the value of notes.

A dot written after a note increases its value by half as much again.





For example: a quarter note  = 1 beat


therefore a dotted quarter note  =  +  = 1 1/2 beats
1 + 1/2

A half note  = 2 beats therefore a dotted half note  =  +  = 3 beats




Now see if you can work out how much these notes are worth:


A dotted quarter note  = _____ eighth notes?

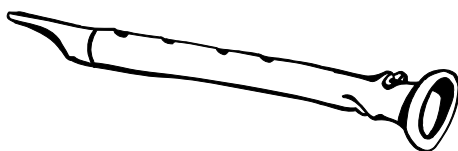
A dotted half note  = _____ quarter notes?

How many sixteenth notes  are there in a dotted eighth note  ? _____

How many quarter notes  are there in a dotted quarter note  ? _____

A quarter note  + a quarter note  + an eighth note  = _____

A dot above or below  a note means that you should play the note staccato - so don't confuse it with a dot after a note!



Did you know that staccato is an Italian musical term telling you that the notes are short and detached?

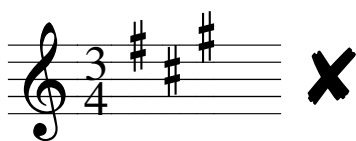
KEY SIGNATURES

When we looked at major scales you will remember that sometimes you have to add sharps or flats to keep the correct pattern of tones and semitones in the scale. So that it is easier to read and remember these accidentals we use a **key signature**.

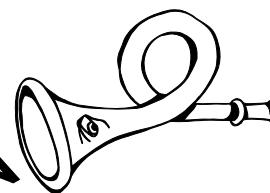
Here is the key signature for G major:



The key signature is written at the beginning of the line and tells us that we are in the key of G and that every time we have to play an F it should be played an F sharp unless it is cancelled out by another accidental.



Remember at the beginning
of a piece the key signature
is always written **before** the
time signature.

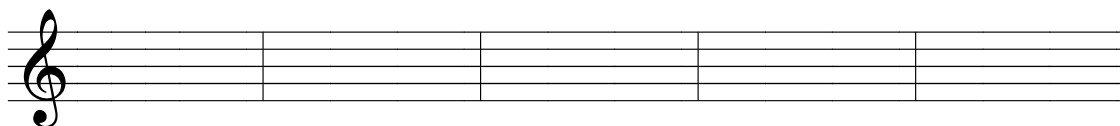


Here are the key signatures for C, D, F, A and B flat major:

**C major****D major****F major****A major****B flat major**

When you are writing a key signature always make sure that you put the accidental on the correct line or space and that they always follow the same order.

Now try to fill in the correct key signature below:

**C major****D major****F major****G major****B flat major**