

Rhythm Lessons

The next step in learning music is to learn about rhythms.

This is another musical language we have to learn in music. Not every key we play on the piano is held for the same amount of time.

Example

AT THE PIANO

Play middle C and count to 10.

Play middle C and count to 5.

Now combine them. Play middle C twice. First play middle C and count to 10, next play middle C and count to 5. Now we have a rhythm.

Rhythm Lessons

When a composer writes music, he or she has to let the musician know how long to hold a note to create rhythm. Again we use symbols.

Alana's Notes

There are a lot of symbols to learn when first starting music lessons. I will give you the information first, then we will do a lot of exercises to learn this information. Believe me, you do not have to memorize everything at once. After a while, the information is automatic and it becomes as easy as everything else we have learned.

Let's have some fun while we are learning and it will be a much easier process.

Rhythm Lessons

MUSIC HAS SEVERAL COMMON COUNTS.

Remember our 10 counts and 5 counts on page 1? Well, this would be for an unusual piece of music.

Normal counts are 1-2-3, 1-2-3-4, or 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8.

Each count would be steady and held for the same amount of time.

Example

AT THE PIANO

A clock ticks like this: tick tock. Now play the note on every tick tock tick tock tick tock tick tock (say this out loud).

1	2	3	4
○	○	○	○
1	2	1	2

See how even playing this note sounds!

Rhythm Lessons

How does a composer tell you how many beats he wants you to count?

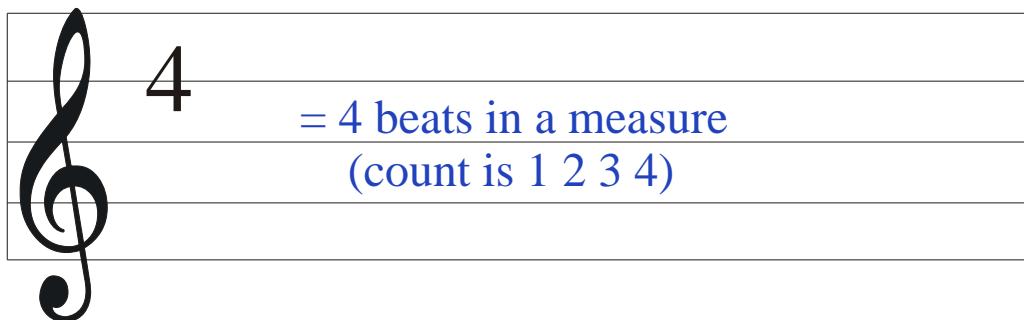
He shows the number at the beginning of each song.

This is called the TIME SIGNATURE.

Example

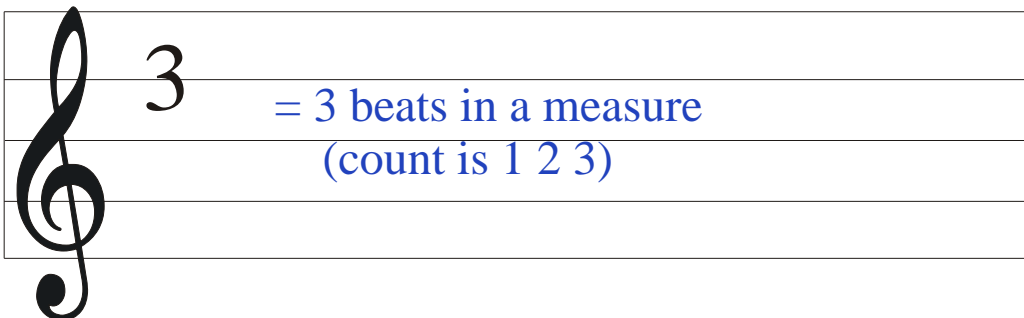
A Time Signature tells us how many beats to count in a measure.

STAFF



4 = 4 beats in a measure
(count is 1 2 3 4)

STAFF




3 = 3 beats in a measure
(count is 1 2 3)

Rhythm for the Beginning Student

A time signature has two parts

The first number (top) tells us
how many beats in a measure.


STAFF



4 = 4 beats in a measure
(count is 1 2 3 4)

The second part (below) tells us
what kind of note gets one beat.

STAFF



= 4 beats in a measure
= a quarter note gets on count

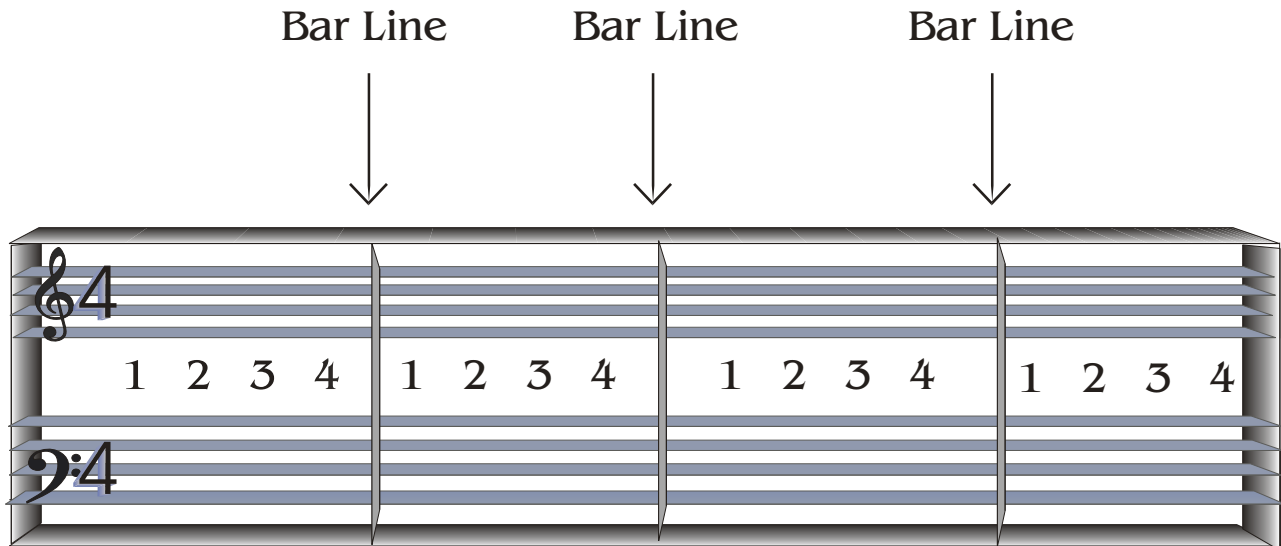
Example

I 4 = 4 beats in a measure
 4 = a quarter note equals one beat

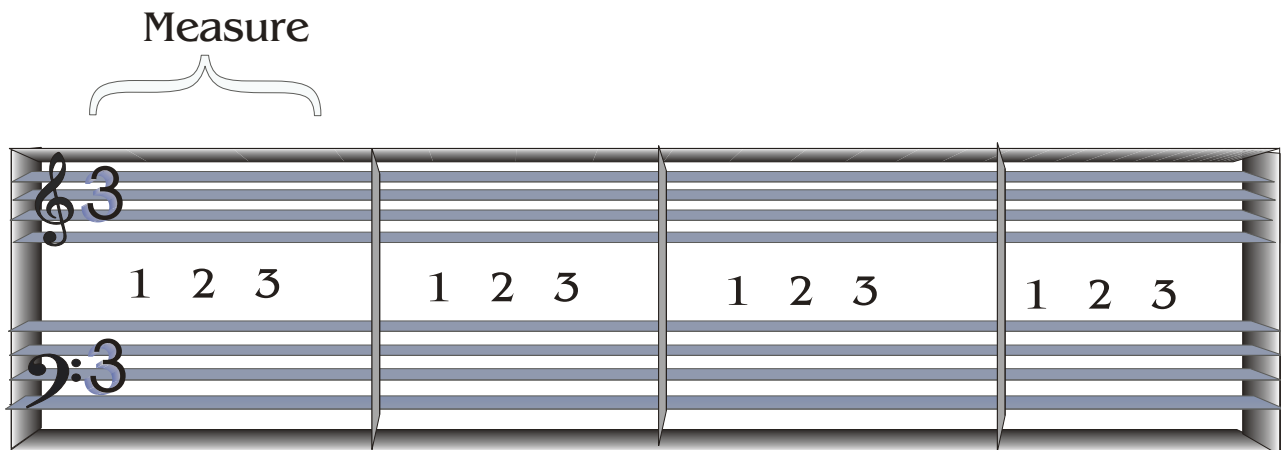
II 3 = 3 beats in a measure
 8 = an eighth note equals one beat

Rhythm Lessons

Now we are going to learn about bar lines. Bar lines create spaces and each space it creates is called a measure.



Bar lines divide the staff into measures. Each measure contains the counts or beats of its song. The measures above each have four beats. The measures below each have 3 beats.



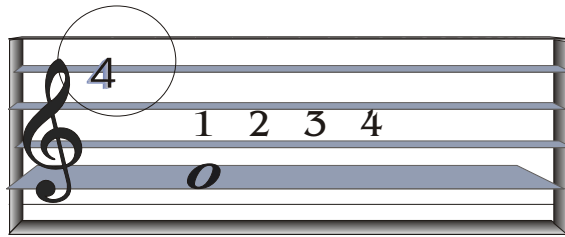
Rhythm for the Beginning Student

Notes are also symbols. Their design tells us how many beats to hold the note. A whole note is white in the center and is held for 4 beats. A half note has a stem and is held for 2 beats.

WHOLE NOTE

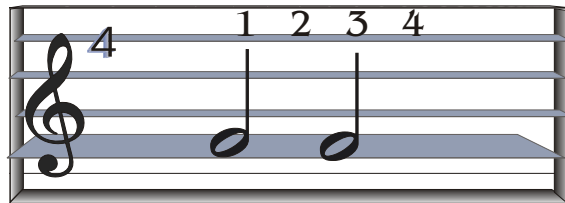
O A whole note is held for 4 beats.

4 beats in a measure



HALF NOTE

♪ A half note is held for 2 beats.
A measure that has 4 beats, takes 2 half notes/



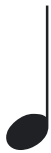
1 2 1 2

Rhythm Lessons

A quarter note is filled in with black and has a stem.
Quarter notes = 1 beat.

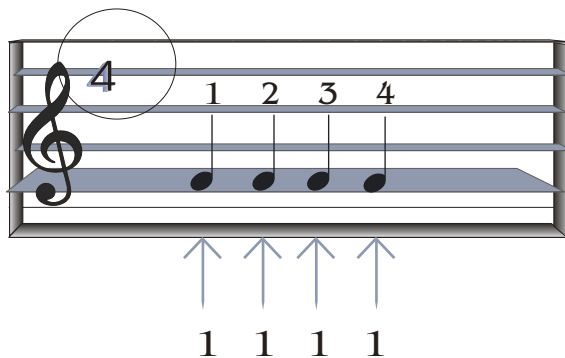
An Eighth note is filled in with black, has a stem and a flag.
Eighth note = $\frac{1}{2}$ beat.

QUARTER NOTE



A quarter note is held for 1 beat.
A measure that has 4 beats, has 4 quarter notes.

4 beats in a measure



EIGHTH NOTE



An eighth note is held for $\frac{1}{2}$ beat.
A measure that has 4 beats, has 8 eighth notes.

