

MUSIC REFERENCE SHEET: SIGNS AND SYMBOLS

The shape of a music note or rest shows us its relative length.

NOTE(S)	REST	AMERICAN NAME	ENGLISH NAME
		Whole note	Semibreve
		Half note	Minim
		Quarter note	Crotchet
		Eighth note(s)	Quaver(s)
		Sixteenth note(s)	Semiquaver(s)
		Thirty-second note(s)	Demi-Semiquaver(s)

STANDARD KEYBOARD LAYOUT:

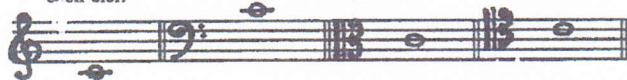


The interval between one note on the keyboard and the next (black or white) is called a **SEMITONE**.
The interval between any note and the next note higher or lower with the same name is called an **OCTAVE**.

Music notes are written on and between a set of five lines called a **STAVE**. Little extra lines called **LEGER LINES** are used for notes too high or too low to fit onto the stave.

A **CLEF** shows us which set of notes is being used on each stave.
The **TREBLE** or **G** clef (which curls round the G line) is used for higher notes from about middle C upwards.
The **BASS** or **F** clef (which has a dot on each side of the F line) is used for lower notes from about middle C downwards.
There are also two C clefs in common use:
The **ALTO** clef (used by viola, alto and tenor trombones) has middle C on the middle line of the stave.
The **TENOR** clef (used by bassoon, 'cello, tenor trombone) has middle C on the second line down from the top of the stave.

The clef and the position of the head of a note on the stave show us the pitch of the note (how high or low it is).
Here is a stave showing the above four clefs, with the note middle C after each clef.



Each of the following three signs has a "window" in it. The sign applies to the note written on the line or in the space which appears in the middle of the window.

- b FLAT:** play the next note a semitone lower
- # SHARP:** play the next note a semitone higher
- n NATURAL:** cancel an earlier sharp or flat.

The **DOUBLE FLAT** bb and **DOUBLE SHARP** x lower and raise the note by a **whole tone** (i.e. 2 semitones) respectively.
Here are examples of the above 5 signs in use: They are always written to the left of the note to which they apply, so that the sign is read before the note:



B flat C Sharp B natural F double sharp B double flat

KEY SIGNATURE: Sharps or flats at the beginning of lines of music are called the **KEY SIGNATURE**. They tell us to play all notes with those names, in any octave, flat or sharp, unless there is a natural sign before an individual note.

ACCIDENTAL: Sharp, flat and natural signs elsewhere in the music are called **ACCIDENTALS**. They apply only to notes in the same position on the stave and in the same bar, not to any other note with the same name.

Most music is divided into **BARS** by vertical lines called **BAR LINES**. A **DOUBLE BAR LINE** marks the end of a whole piece or section.

TIME SIGNATURE (two numbers like a fraction placed at the beginning of a bar):
The upper number shows us the number of beats in a bar.
The lower number shows us the kind of note that lasts for one beat.

$\frac{3}{2}$ means 3 half-note (minim) beats in each bar, etc.

The letter C as a time signature = $\frac{4}{4}$ and $\text{C} = \frac{2}{2}$
All these are called **SIMPLE time signatures**.

BUT when 6, 9, 12 or a larger number divisible by 3 is the top number, a group of 3 notes is considered as one beat.

E.g. $\frac{6}{4} = 2$ ♩ beats $\frac{9}{8} = 3$ ♩ beats. These are called **COMPOUND time signatures**. A whole beat in compound time is always written as a dotted note (see below).

OTHER SIGNS COMMONLY USED IN MUSIC:

 **ACCENT**

 **ACCIACCATURA:** (pronounced "a-cha-ka-too-ra")
A crushed note with no exact length, squashed in before the next big note.

 **APPOGGIATURA:** (pronounced "a-poj-a-too-ra") A note to be leaned on. The small note usually takes half the length of the big note which follows it (or up to two thirds if the big note is dotted).

 **CODA:** last section of a piece of music
AND go straight to Coda from this sign.

 **CRESCENDO:** Getting louder.

 **DIMINUENDO** or **decrescendo:** Getting quieter.

 A **DOT** after a note or rest makes the note or rest last for half as long again.

 A **SECOND DOT** lasts half as long as the first.

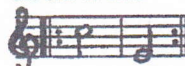
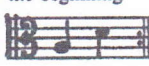
 **PAUSE (fermata):** hold the note longer than its written length.

REPEAT:

The music from the beginning

The music between the sets of dots

The previous bar



RESTS:

1 bar rest 2 bars rest 4 bars rest number of bars rest



 **SLUR** (joins notes of different pitch):
Play legato (smoothly), without gaps between notes.

STACCATO: The following are three ways of indicating notes to be played shorter than their written length.

Mezzo Play Staccato Play Staccat- Play
staccato issimo



 **TENUTO (ten.):** Hold the note for its full length or sometimes a little longer.

 **TIE** (joins notes at the same pitch): Musical "plus sign". Add notes together to make one longer note.

 **TRILL:** Play the written note then the one above several times quickly.

 **TRIPLET:** Play 3 notes of equal length in the time usually taken by 2 of the same type.

