

# **A Musical Tutorial**

## **Musical Terms**

**Use the Search Button to find the desired musical term.**

**Mezzo Forte**

***mf***

Moderately loud.

## **A Tempo**

Return to original tempo (speed).

## Accent Sign



Play the note louder, stress, accent.

## **Allegretto**

Moderately fast.

**Allegro**

Fast.

## **Andante**

Slowly, moderate walking pace.

## **Binary Form**

Dual, two part. A form of movement with two distinct sections.



## Coda



Ending, passage ending the movement.

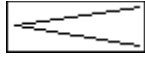
## Common Time

# C

The common time symbol is another way to indicate 4/4 time.

## Crescendo

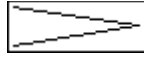
*cresc.*



Gradually play louder.

## Diminuendo

*dim.*



Gradually play softer.

**Da Capo al Fine**

***D. C. al Fine***

Go back to the beginning and play to Fine.

## **Dynamics**

Musical notation that indicates volume change.

## Fermata



Hold the note longer than its written value.

**Fine**

The end.



**Forte**

*f*

Loud.

**Fortissimo**

*ff*

Very loud.

## **Semitone, Half Step**

Distance between two adjacent keys with no key in between them.  
See also whole tone.

## **Largo**

Very slowly. Large broad, stately movement.

## **Legato**

Smooth and connected, slurred

## Sharp



Raise the note by a semitone by playing the key immediately to the right.

## Flat



Lower the note by a semitone by playing the key immediately to the left.

## Natural



Cancels a flat or a sharp. A white key on the keyboard.

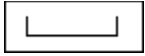


## Octave Sign

*8va*

When written above notes, play the notes one octave higher.  
When written below notes, play the notes one octave lower.

## Pedal Sign

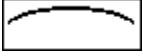


Press and hold damper pedal for notes included in the pedal sign.

## **Damper Pedal**

The right-most piano pedal. Also known as the loud pedal.

## Slur



Notes smoothly connected together, legato.

## Quarter Note



In Common Time , 4/4, a quarter note represents one beat.

## Half Note



In Common Time , 4/4, a half note represents two beats.

## Dotted Half Note



In Common Time , 4/4, a dotted half note represents three beats.

## Whole Note



In Common Time , 4/4, a whole note represents four beats.



## Time Signature

Two numbers placed at the beginning of the music, right after the key signature. The top number indicates how many beats per measure, while the bottom number indicates the type of note that gets one beat.

Example Time Signatures:

**4**

**4**

Four beats per measure. Quarter note gets one beat.

**6**

**8**

Six beats per measure. Eighth note gets one beat.

## Key Signature

The sharps or flats at the beginning of the staff.

## **Beat**

The division of a measure is counted in beats.

See [time signature](#).

## Measure



The music between two bar lines. The metrical unit of musical composition.

## Staff



Five parallel lines used in music notation.

## Bar Line



Bar lines divide the staff into measures.

## Bass Clef



Also known as the F clef, fixes the place of the note F. The F line passes between the two dots of the clef. Normally indicates notes to be played with the left hand.

## Treble Clef



Also known as the G clef, fixes the place of the note G. The clef curls around the G line. Normally indicates notes to be played with the right hand.



## Interval

The distance (in pitch) between notes is measured in intervals.(2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, etc)

ie: The distance from one white key to the next white key is a 2nd. Every other white key is a third.

## Staccato



Separated and detached. Short and disconnected, abrupt. Staccato is represented as a dot under or over a note.

## Scale

An continuous alphabetical sequence of notes from any note to its octave.

## Octave

An interval of a perfect 8th.

## Repeat Signs



Repeat from the beginning.



Repeat the section between the two repeat signs.



Repeat from beginning playing the second ending on the second repetition.

## **Ternary Form**

Three part. A form of movement with three distinct sections.

## **Ritardando**

*rit.*

Gradually slow down.

## **Tempo**

Rate of speed, movement.



## Tie



A curved line joining notes of the same name. The notes are held for their combined value.

## Transpose

Perform or rewrite in a different key than the original.

## **Chord**

Three or more notes sounded at the same time.  
See also triad.

## Triad

A three note chord composed of the root, 3rd, and 5th.

## Root

The lowest note of a chord or triad in its fundamental position.

## Whole Tone, Whole Step

Distance between two adjacent keys with one key in between them.  
See also semitone.

## **Eighth Note**



In Common Time , 4/4, an eighth note represents one half beat.

## Sixteenth Note



In Common Time , 4/4, a sixteenth note represents one quarter beat.



## Grave

Extremely slow, very solemn.

## **Moderato**

A moderate pace.

## **Vivace**

Fast and lively.

# Rapido

Rapid.

**Presto**

Very quickly.

## **Prestissimo**

As fast as possible.

**Pianissimo**

*pp*

or

*ppp*

Very soft.

**Piano**

***p***

Soft.



**Mezzopiano**

***mp***

Moderately soft.

## Whole Rest



In Common Time , 4/4, a whole rest represents a four beat rest.

## **Rest**

A period of silence.

## Half Rest



In Common Time , 4/4, a half rest represents a two beat rest.

## Quarter Rest



or

In Common Time , 4/4, a quarter rest represents a one beat rest.

## **Eighth Rest**

7

In Common Time , 4/4, an eighth rest represents a one half beat rest.

## Sixteenth Rest



In Common Time , 4/4, a sixteenth rest represents a on quarter beat rest.

## Thirty-Second Note



In Common Time , 4/4, a 32nd note represents one eighth beat.



## Double Flat



Lower the note two semitones by playing the second key immediately to the left.

## Double Sharp



Raise the note by two semitones by playing the second key immediately to the right.

## Arpeggio



Notes of a chord are played successively instead of being played simultaneously.

## Dal Segno



Repeat from.

IE.

When used in conjunction with D.S. al Fine - repeat from the dal segno sign and play to Fine.

**D. S. al Fine**

***D. S. al Fine***

Go back to the dal segno sign and play to Fine.

## Trill



A quick succession or alteration of two notes either a tone or semitone apart.



