

## **Help Topics**

Welcome to NotePlay, an arcade-style game with music-education in mind. It is designed to help you focus on one of the essential skills of successful sight-reading (the ability to read pitch) in a friendly, interactive environment.

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## **How to Play**

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## Commands

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## Keyboard

### Function keys

F1	Help Index
F2	New game
F3	Pause game
F4	Stop game
F6	All Notes Off

### Playing NotePlay with the computer keyboard

While we recommend that you use a MIDI-compatible keyboard with NotePlay, it is possible to play the game using your computer's keyboard. The following table illustrates how the keys are arranged.

Q	E	R	Y	U	I	P	[
A	S	D	F	G	H	J	K
L	:	:					
A#	C#	D#	F#	G#	A#	C#	D#
B	C	D	E	F	G	A	B
C	D						

The letter S is middle C, the letter E is C#, the letter G is F, the letter Y is F#, and so on. To raise a note an octave, hold down the CTRL key while pressing the correct letter. To lower a note an octave, hold down the SHIFT key. To lower a note by two octaves, use the CAPS LOCK key.

When you are not actively playing a game, you can play a key, or press a letter on the keyboard, and the corresponding note is displayed on the Grand Staff and its letter name appears at the top of the screen. Use this method to explore the keyboard assignments.

See also

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[How to play](#)  
[Game menu](#)  
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## Overview

The object of NotePlay is to play the notes displayed on the Grand Staff before your time runs out. Notes are displayed in groups of four. Once you play these notes correctly four more notes are displayed. If you complete a level by playing all the notes presented before your time runs out, you move to the next level. With each level the game becomes a little more difficult.

Your available time for a level is tracked in the Timer bar right below the Grand Staff. When the Timer bar fills up, the game is over. Below the Timer is the Progress bar. For each correct note you play the Progress bar advances. If you fill the Progress bar before the Timer fills, you advance to the next level and the game continues.

Although you only have a limited time to complete each level, you should strive for accuracy over speed. The more accurate you are, the more points you earn, and the faster you will develop sight-reading skills.

At the end of a game, your score is compared to the list of high scores. If your score was high enough, you will be asked to enter your name. Type it in using the computer keyboard, then press ENTER. The High Scores table appears. Click OK or press ENTER to close it and return to NotePlay.

### See also

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[Playing the game](#)

[Scoring](#)

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## Playing the game

The object of NotePlay is to play all the notes in a level before your time runs out. The following sections describes how to play the game.

### To start a new game

Choose Game | New, or press F2.

### To play the notes

Use your MIDI keyboard, the computer's keyboard, or click the keys of the on-screen piano. We recommend you use a MIDI keyboard for best performance and greatest enjoyment.

### To pause a game in progress

Choose Game | Pause, or press F3. To resume playing, use the Pause command again.

### To stop a game

Choose Game | Stop, or press F4.

### To select a Skill Level

Choose Options | Skill Level, then select the desired Skill Level. There are six Skill Levels, and each contains six individual levels. The higher the level, the more difficult the game.

### To practice a single level

Choose Options | Play Mode, then select the Practice option button, enter a number from 1 to 36 in the Practice Level text box, and choose OK. When you start a new game, NotePlay begins at this level and never advances.

### To slow the game down

Choose Options | Play Mode, then select the Slow option button, and choose OK. The Slow mode doubles the amount of time you have for each level, but reduces your the points awarded. Use the Slow mode to make the game more accessible for small children.

See also

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## Scoring

For each note you play correctly you receive one hundred points. This means harmonic intervals are worth two hundred points, triads are worth three hundred, and so on.

In addition, for each correct note you play, points are added to the running bonus. This bonus is added to your score after each correctly played note. But if you make a mistake, the running bonus is reset to zero.

If you finish a level without making any mistakes, you are awarded an extra one thousand bonus points. Although accuracy is richly rewarded, speed is not entirely forsaken. At the end of a level you are awarded extra points for the amount of time left on the Timer.

If you start a game at a Skill Level other than the first level, you are not penalized. Scores are adjusted accordingly. For example, starting at the second Skill Level doubles your potential score. Starting at the third level triples your score, and so on.

### See also

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## Tips and strategies

- If you are a beginning piano player, start with your hands in the following position: place the thumb of your right hand on middle C and the remaining fingers on D, E, F, and G so the pinky is on G; place the pinky of your left hand on the first C below middle C and the remaining fingers on D, E, F, and G so the thumb is on G. Keep your hands slightly cupped and placed near the black keys.
- At the beginning of each level, look at the keyboard to see what keys/notes will be used as NotePlay plays the brief melody. Also, take a look at the top of the screen for any hints.
- Try to play in tempo, even if you have to go too slow to finish a level. This not only helps you concentrate but will make it easier for you to apply the skills you learn with NotePlay to real music.
- Dont play too fast. Accuracy is more important and you receive more points for being accurate. Once you begin playing accurately, speed will follow naturally.
- When you are on a level with vertically-aligned notes, that is, notes that are played simultaneously in both hands, read from low to high. Reading the lowest note first can often give you harmonic clues.
- Accidentals (sharps and flats) carry through a complete measure.
- Use your right hand for playing notes in the Treble clef, and your left hand for notes in the Bass clef. Use middle C as a convenient divider. See Chapter 2 for more information on hand position.
- Use good posture. Try to remain relaxed without slumping down in your chair. Keep both feet flat on the floor and make sure your arms are not outstretched or cramped.
- And finally, practice traditional sight-reading drills at your piano or keyboard everyday.

### See Also

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[Playing the game](#)  
[Scoring](#)



## Game menu

### New

Starts a new game. You can start a new game at any time.

### Pause

Pauses the current game. To restart play, choose Pause again. The game is automatically paused whenever you minimize the window, or activate another window.

### Stop

Stops the current game.

### High Scores

Opens the High Scores table, displaying a list of the highest scores and the names of the respective players. To clear the High Scores table, choose the Clear Scores button below the table.

### Exit

Closes NotePlay and returns you to the Program Manager.

### See also

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[How to play](#)

[Commands](#)

[Track High Score](#)

## Skill Level

This command adjusts your initial level of play. To select a Skill Level, choose Options | Skill Level, then select the desired level from the cascading menu.

A check mark appears next to the current level. Each Skill Level is composed of thirty-six individual levels.

### See also

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## Play Mode

There are four play modes. To select a play mode, choose Options | Play Mode to open the Play Mode dialog box, then select the appropriate option button and choose OK.

### Slow

Slow doubles the time you have to complete a level. Use this mode to make NotePlay more accessible to small children, or to help you through a difficult level. The Slow mode lowers the points awarded.

### Normal

Normal follows the regular game procedure. This is the default.

### Practice

Practice allows you to choose one of the thirty-six levels to practice. Enter the desired level in the Level text box. When you begin a new game, NotePlay uses only this level; it starts here and does not advance to a higher level.

### Automatic

Automatic lets you use NotePlay with a non-MIDI instrument, like a regular piano. Use the Delay option to set the amount of time between each measure, and use the Speed option to set the tempo NotePlay plays each measure.

### See also

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## MIDI Options

Use the MIDI Options command to select a MIDI channel, patch, and specify MIDI thru. To set MIDI options, choose Options | MIDI Options, then specify the desired options and choose OK.

### MIDI Channel

MIDI Channel changes the MIDI channel that is used to play sounds if you have a MIDI controller card. You can use any channel you want. Type the desired channel in the MIDI Channel text box.

### Patch

Patch specifies a patch on your synthesizer. A patch is a particular sound or voice your synthesizer can generate, such as piano or horns. Changing this option is equivalent to manually selecting a patch, or voice, from your synthesizer.

### MIDI Thru

MIDI Thru sends MIDI information coming to the computer from your MIDI instrument directly out to a sound module. An X in the box next to MIDI Thru indicates this option is on. Choose the check box to toggle between on and off.

### See also

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[MIDI Input](#)  
[All Notes Off](#)  
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## MIDI Input

If you have more than one sound card or MIDI interface installed in your computer, you can use this command to select the device you want to use with NotePlay. To specify a device, choose Options | MIDI Input, then select the desired device from the cascading menu. A check mark appears next to the current device.

See also

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[MIDI Options](#)

[All Notes Off](#)

[Commands](#)

## Track High Scores

Turn this command on to record high scores in the High Scores table. A check mark next to the command indicates it is on.

**See also**

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## All Notes Off

This command can help you with an occasional problem. Sometimes notes that you play in the program do not get turned off and the result is a note that is sustained and will not stop. If this ever occurs, choose Options | All Notes Off to turn on this command. It has no other affect on the game.

**See also**

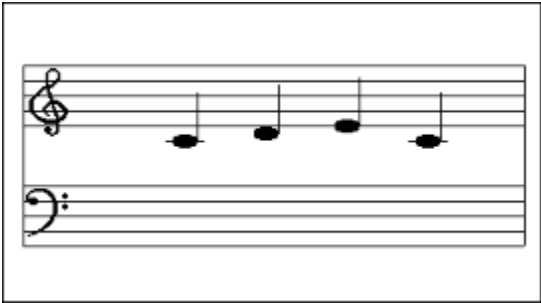
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[MIDI Options](#)

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**Grand Staff**





## **MIDI keyboard**

**MIDI** stands for Musical Instrument Digital Interface. A MIDI instrument transmits and receives information in a standard way that allows it to communicate with other MIDI devices, such as synthesizers, computers, and computer software.

## Computer keyboard map

The following table illustrates how the keys are arranged.

Q	E	R	Y	U	I	P	[			
A	S	D	F	G	H	J	K	L	:	:

A#	C#	D#	F#	G#	A#	C#	D#		
B	C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C	D

## **Interval**

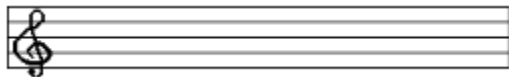
An **interval** is the difference in pitch between two notes. The smallest interval in traditional Western music is the halfstep. This is the distance from one piano key to the adjacent piano key. When the two notes of an interval are played together, it is called a **harmonic interval**.

## Triad

A **triad** is a three-note chord built on thirds. The note the triad is built on is called the root. The next note is a third above the root, and the third note is a fifth above the root. For example, a C major triad consists of C-E-G.

## Treble clef

The treble clef is an ornate letter G. It establishes the second line of the staff as G.



## Bass clef

The bass clef is derived from an ornate letter F. The two dots above and below the fourth line of the staff designate that line as F.

