Getting started

If you play another instrument – or if you learnt the piano a long time ago – you may not need to work through everything on pages 3–5. However, you may like to use these pages for revision!

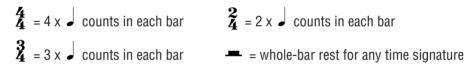
Feeling the beat

Just as you have a regular heartbeat, music has a regular beat (or pulse) too. Note and rest values are defined by a number of beats or counts:

= semibreve or whole note* = 4 counts = minim or half note = 2 counts = crotchet or quarter note = 1 count = quaver or eighth note = 1/2 count = semiquaver or sixteenth note = 1/4 count	Note and rest values					
= crotchet or quarter note = 1 count = quaver or eighth note = 1/2 count 7	0	=	semibreve or whole note*	=	4 counts	_
= quaver or eighth note = $1/2$ count 7		=	minim or half note	=	2 counts	_
		=	crotchet or quarter note	=	1 count	}
\Rightarrow = semiquaver or sixteenth note = $\frac{1}{4}$ count		=	quaver or eighth note	=	¹ / ₂ count	7
	A	=	semiquaver or sixteenth note	=	¹ / ₄ count	4

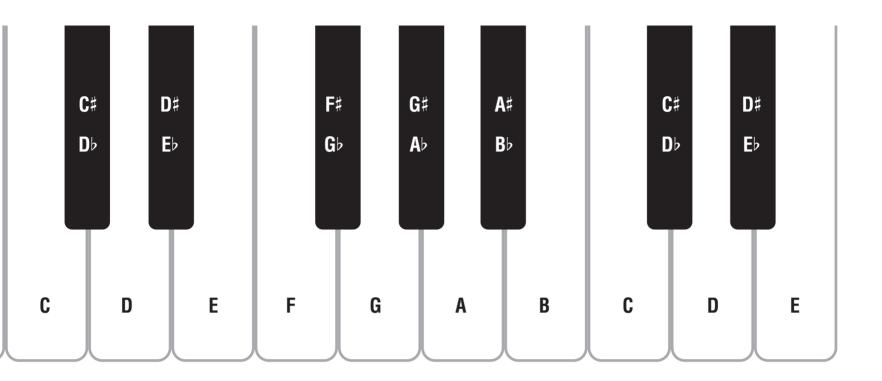
Time signatures

These appear at the beginning of a piece of music and tell you how many beats or counts there are in each bar (or measure). The top figure tells you the number of beats in each bar; the bottom figure tells you the value of those beats.



Activities Work on your sense of pulse with the following activities. You'll need a CD player and a bouncy ball! 1 Listen to 1 on the CD. This track is in 4 time (with a count-in 1 2 1234). 2 Play 1 again, but this time count the beats in each bar '1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 3, 4' etc. 3 Listening to 1, bounce your ball so that it hits the floor on beat 1 of each bar. Try this exercise again but in double time, so the ball bounces on beats 1 and 3. 4 Practise clapping the following rhythms to the accompanying CD tracks:

^{*} English followed by US terms are given throughout.



The keyboard

The keyboard has groups of black and white notes, which form a repeating pattern. The **black notes** are grouped in twos and threes. The **white notes** are named after the first seven letters of the alphabet: A B C D E F G. The distance between each note, black and white, is called a **semitone** (half-step).

Middle C is the C closest to the centre of the keyboard. On the stave, middle C has its own line (called a **ledger line**). In the treble clef, it looks like this:



Activities

- 1 Can you find and play middle C on the keyboard?
 - top tip If you are absolutely centred at the keyboard, middle C should be in front of you.
- 2 Find and play all the Cs on the keyboard.
- 3 Find and play all the As on the keyboard.
- **4** Listening to **1**, play four bars of **3** Cs. Use either the right or the left hand.
- 5 Now play four bars of $\sqrt{ }$ Cs to $\boxed{ 1}$.

top tip Always keep relaxed and don't forget to breathe!



Sunday morning





fact file This piece is in E minor.

