

Musical Knowledge – Grade 1

Learn the symbols and meanings

Playing techniques

Staccato



Play this note short and spikey

Strum



The arrow means use your thumb and play the strings one after another in that direction

Pause



Hold the note under this sign on a little longer

Rit. Or Rall.

rit.



Slow down

Dynamics

Piano (quiet)

p

Forte (loud)

f

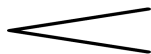
Mezzo Piano (medium quiet)

mp

Mezzo Forte (medium loud)

mf

Crescendo (getting louder)



Decrescendo (getting quieter)



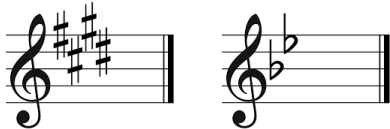
Musical Symbols

Treble clef



This appears at the start of every line of music and tells you that the music is written for a high-sounding instrument

Key Signature



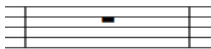
This appears at the start of the first line of music and tells you which notes are always sharp or flat. Sometimes, there isn't a key signature which means everything is natural. It will appear between the treble clef and the time signature.

Time Signature



This appears at the start of the first line of music and the top number tells you how many beats are in a bar. Ignore the bottom number for now!

Bars



Music is divided up into bars which are the vertical lines. The time signature will tell you how many beats each bar has.

Stave



These are the horizontal lines that the music is written on. There are always five. The line or space that a note sits on tell you what pitch the note is.

Natural sign



This sign in front of a note tells you that that note is a normal note.

Flat sign




This sign in front of a note tells you that that note needs to be played one fret lower than normal. If you see it in the key signature, it means this note is always flat in this piece.


Sharp sign



This sign in front of a note tells you that that note needs to be played one fret higher than normal. If you see it in the key signature, it means this note is always sharp in this piece.


Note and Rest values


Quaver  A half beat note. Sometimes they come on their own with a tail but when there are two next to each other, the tails join up.


Crotchet  A one beat note.


Minim  A two beat note.

Semibreve  A four beat note.

Quaver rest  A silence that lasts for half a beat.

Crotchet rest  A silence that lasts for one beat.

Minim rest  A silence that lasts for two beats. Look at it sitting on top of the line.

Semibreve rest  A silence that lasts for four beats. Look at it hanging down from that line.

Note reading



By now you should be able to read and play all of these notes. But sometimes it can be a bit confusing! Use the rhymes below to help you remember which notes sit in which lines and spaces. And remember they climb up like a ladder each time, going one more letter onwards in the alphabet!

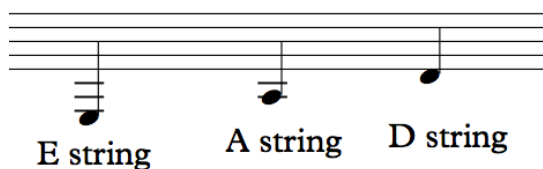
Lines



Spaces



Now you're at Grade 1, you'll also be expected to know some new high and low notes. When the notes get too high or low to sit on the staff, they use some extra lines above or below and sit on these. These are called **ledger lines** and they just extend the staff higher or lower. They work in the same way, you just count up or down one line or space at a time to get higher or lower.



Parts of the Guitar

