

Note & Rest Values

How long each note lasts, and its matching rest (silence). Beat counts shown are for 4/4 time, where a crotchet gets one beat.

Note	Name	Beats (4/4)	Matching rest
	Semibreve (whole note)	4	Semibreve rest
	Minim (half note)	2	Minim rest
	Crotchet (quarter note)	1	Crotchet rest
	Quaver (eighth note)	1/2	Quaver rest
	Semiquaver (sixteenth note)	1/4	Semiquaver rest

Reading a time signature

The two numbers at the start of a piece tell you how the beats are grouped. The top number is how many beats are in each bar. The bottom number tells you which note gets one beat (4 means a crotchet, 8 means a quaver).

- 4/4** Four crotchet beats per bar - the most common of all.
- 3/4** Three crotchet beats per bar - the feel of a waltz.
- 2/4** Two crotchet beats per bar - a march.
- 6/8** Six quavers per bar, felt in two groups of three - a lilting, rolling feel.