

Completing a Given Rhythm or Melody

Music Theory Foundations — Quick Reference

This is the first taste of composition in the AMEB syllabus — given the opening of a rhythm or melody, continue it in a way that makes musical sense. It's less about being "correct" and more about being consistent.

Given Opening



A simple two-bar idea using only notes of the tonic triad.

Task: Complete the Second Bar



Given only the first beat of each bar, continue the pattern in a way that feels balanced and complete — here, a natural answer mirrors the opening in reverse.

A Simple Approach

- Look at what's already there: which key, which notes, which rhythm pattern?
- Keep using notes from the same key signature, unless the task asks for something chromatic.
- Match the rhythm style already established — don't introduce a new note value out of nowhere.
- Aim for a sense of "arrival" by the end — often by stepping back toward the tonic note.

Key Rules to Remember

- Consistency matters more than originality in this exercise — stay within the established key and rhythm.
- A common, safe choice is to answer a rising phrase with a falling one, or vice versa, for a balanced shape.
- Ending on the tonic note (or the tonic triad) usually gives the strongest sense of completion.