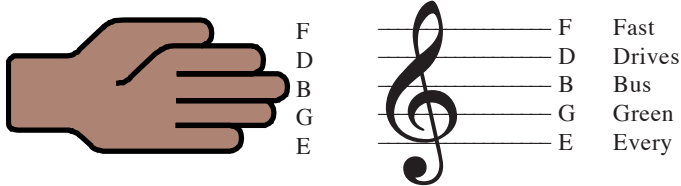


# BASIC THEORY FOR PIANISTS

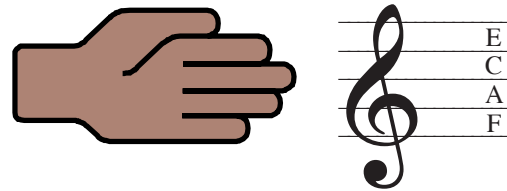
## THEORY 1 - TREBLE CLEF NOTE NAMES LINES

Use fingers of your hand, with the thumb at the top to remember the lines on the treble staff. Memorise the first letter of each word in this phrase: **Every Green Bus Drives Fast**; (E is the pinkie and F is the thumb).



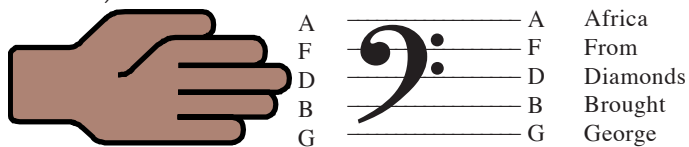
## THEORY 1 - TREBLE CLEF NOTE NAMES SPACES

In the treble staff, the spaces spell **F-A-C-E** (reading up!). “FACE rhymes with SPACE”



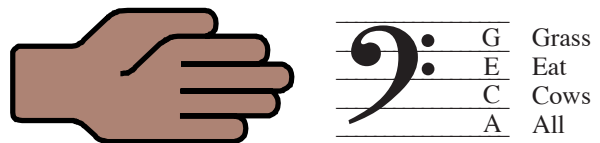
## THEORY 3 - BASS CLEF NOTE NAMES LINES

Use fingers of your hand, with the thumb at the top to remember the lines on the bass staff. Memorise the first letter of each word in this phrase: **George Brought Diamonds From Africa**; (G is the pinkie and A is the thumb).



## THEORY 4 - BASS CLEF NOTE NAMES SPACES

In the treble staff, the spac**A**ll **C**ows **E**at **G**rass (reading up!).



## THEORY 5 - KNOWING THE NAMES OF THINGS

Identify those elements of music notation marked in this example in any piece of music.

## THEORY 6 - NOTE AND REST DURATION

You can tell how long to hold a note or a rest by what it looks like. Learn the names of the different note and rests:



Quavers and semiquaver notes are often beamed together:



## THEORY 7 - MORE ON NOTE VALUES

Remember "The Power of 2"!

There are 2 semiquavers in a quaver



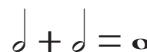
There are 2 quavers in a crotchet



There are 2 crotchets in a minim

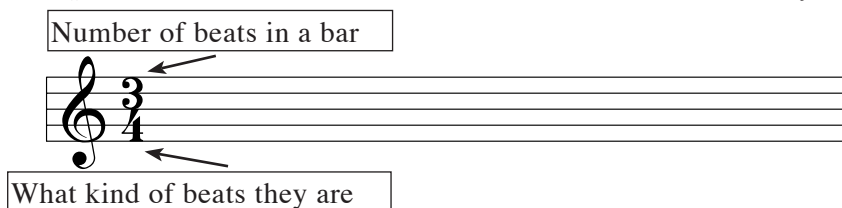


There are 2 minims in a semibreve



## THEORY 8 - TIME SIGNATURES

You should know what the top number and bottom number in time signatures mean. *Usually*, this is what they mean:



## THEORY 9 - WORKING OUT THE KEY FROM THE KEY SIGNATURE

To find the key note, look at the Key Signature:



You'll need to learn this rhyme for major keys:



The note above the last sharp is the key note,  
 The second last flat is the key note;  
 C major has no sharps nor flats,  
 F major has one flat.

## THEORY 10 - WORKING OUT THE KEY SIGNATURE FROM THE KEY

The order of sharps in a key signature is FCGDAEB. The order of flats is BEADGCF.

LEARN THIS:

Father Charles Goes Down And Ends Battle

## THEORY 11 - MAJORS AND MINORS

Each key signature does a double duty: there is one major, and one minor key for each key signature. The keys are related because they share the same key signature. To find the relative minor from the major, come down three semitones (three letter names). (Obviously), to find the major from the minor, come up three semitones (three letter names).

For example, C major and A minor are related.

## THEORY 12 - THE STRUCTURE OF A MAJOR SCALE

Tone - Tone - Semitone - Tone - Tone - Tone - Semitone

More accurately: T-T-S - T - T-T-S (two tetracords joined by a tone in the middle)

Play a C major scale, and observe the semitones between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, and the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> notes.

## THEORY 13 - GEOGRAPHY

||: || means 'play it again'

e.g. ||: ♩ ♩ ♩ || means ♩ ♩ ♩ | ♩ ♩ ♩ |

First and second endings are indicated by a square bracket, and (usually) a number.

**D.C. (Da Capo)** means "Go back to the beginning". Capo is the Italian word for head

**D.S. (or D.%)** means "Go back to the sign, %". % (an ornate letter S) is a sign.

**Fine** means "The End".

**DC al Fine** means "Go back to the beginning and finish at the mark Fine";

**DS al Fine** means "Go back to the sign and finish at the mark Fine".

The **Coda** is the bit on the end of the music. In Pop music it is called the **Outro**. The sign that marks where in the music you jump to the Coda is shown by the sign, ⊕.

**DS al Coda** means "Go back to the sign, %, and then cut to the Coda at the sign ⊕".

## THEORY 14 - HOW FAST IS IT?

Be able to pronounce and know the meaning of common words about speed:

<b>presto</b>	very fast
<b>allegro</b>	fast
<b>andante</b>	walking speed
<b>moderato</b>	at a moderate speed
<b>lento</b> or <b>largo</b>	slow
<b>adagio</b>	very slow

## THEORY 15 - IS IT GETTING FASTER OR SLOWER?



**accelerando (accel)** means **getting faster**



**ritardando (rit.)** means **getting slower**

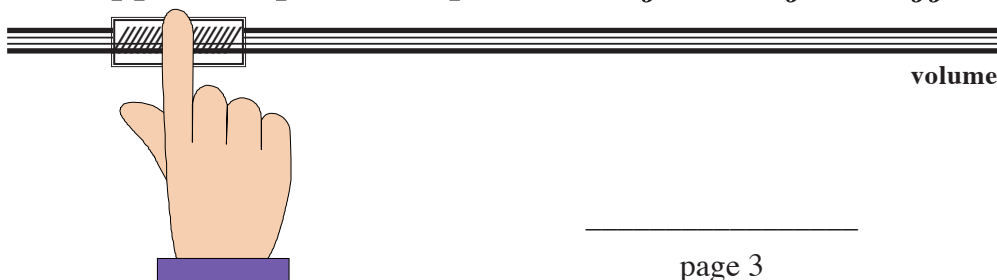
**rallentando (rall.)** means **getting slower**



## THEORY 16 - HOW LOUD IS IT?


Do you know all these terms for how loud and soft music is?

very soft	soft	half-soft	half-loud	loud	very loud
pianissimo	piano	mezzopiano	mezzoforte	forte	fortissimo
<i>pp</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>mp</i>	<i>mf</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>ff</i>



## THEORY 17 - IS THE MUSIC GETTING LOUDER OR QUIETER

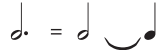
Do you know all these terms for changing how loud and quiet music is?

crescendo  getting louder  
 diminuendo  getting quieter

## THEORY 18 - DOTS AFTER NOTES

Dots after notes lengthen them by half their original length.

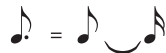
If you add a dot to a minim, it is like tying the minim to the crotchet. The dot is shorthand for the tied crotchet:-



If you add a dot to a crotchet, it is like tying a quaver to the crotchet. The dot is shorthand for the tied quaver:-



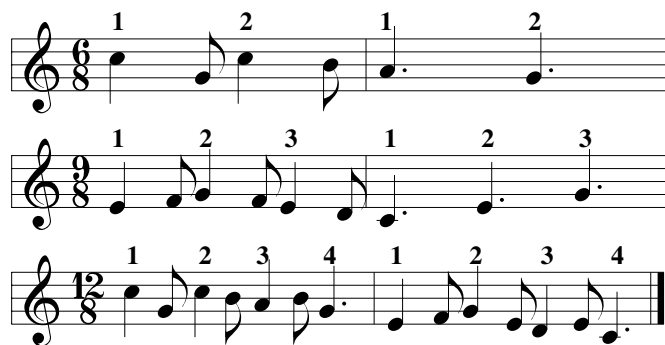
If you add a dot to a quaver, it is like tying a semiquaver to the quaver. The dot is shorthand for the tied semiquaver:-



## THEORY 19 - COMPOUND TIME






You already know that in most time signatures, the top number tells you how many beats there are in the bar and the bottom number tells you what kind of beats they are. However, the so-called "compound time signatures" don't obey this rule - you have to divide the top number by 3 to get the number of beats in the bar, and the bottom number has to be grouped in three to tell you what kind of beats they are.

For example, in  $\frac{6}{8}$  there are indeed six quavers in each bar, but they are grouped into 2 beats ( $2 = 6 \div 3$ ), each of which is a dotted crotchet (a dotted crotchet = three quavers)



## THEORY 20 - SUMS

A crotchet isn't always one beat long - it depends on the time signature. Can you find out how many beats the crotchet has in each line of music here and add them up?

	NO. OF BEATS
	_____
	_____
	_____
	_____
	_____

TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_