

RHYTHM AND TIME

WHAT IS RHYTHM?

Rhythm is a series of events, which occur in time with an exact relation to pulse and meter. Furthering the definition, it is a combination of different note durations, joined with periods of silence or breaks in a piece of music. With percussion instruments, it is a combination of different sounds or patterns that are played.

WHAT IS TIME VALUE?

The time value of a note is its duration, or length of time.

WHAT IS A REST?

A rest is a symbol of a note duration that is used to show silence or a musical break in a piece of music. Symbols for rests are similar to note values.

NOTE DURATIONS

The five most common note durations or values in beginning music studies are the following, with the corresponding beats in brackets:

Whole (4); Half (2); Quarter (1); Eighth (1/2); Sixteenth (1/4). Faster durations occur in more advanced music studies.

WHAT IS A TIED NOTE?

A tied note is two or more notes of the same pitch which are connected by a curved line (called a tie). The initial value of the note is played or sung, but the value continues as long as the note is tied. Rests are never tied; instead, they are lengthened with the use of dots.

WHAT ARE DOTTED NOTES?

Dotted notes and rests increase the initial value of the note. The first dot increases the value of the initial note or rest by one half; each subsequent dot increases the value by 1/2 of the prior dot.

IMPORTANCE AND GROUPING OF RHYTHMS IN MUSIC

Rhythms are grouped according to the time signature found at the beginning of the musical work, specifying the number of beats in a measure. The same principle is used for both grouping notes and rests. These measures are divided by bar lines in order to show the division of music into measures. Without bars or measures in music, melody and harmony would be very difficult if not impossible to follow, learn, analyze and perform.

Note: Most written music has only one time signature at the beginning of the work. A notable exception to this is with some 20th and 21st C. music, in which there can be multiple time signatures used.

ACCENTS

An accent is an emphasis placed on a particular note, either as a result of its context, or specifically indicated by an accent mark.