

Basic Signs and Terms

Pitch

A *treble clef*  indicates notes of high pitch. A *bass clef*  indicates notes of low pitch.

 is a *stave* or *staff*. Notes are written on the lines or in the spaces of the stave.

In piano music, two staves are used, connected by a *brace* {

The small lines for notes above or below the stave are *leger lines*.

		
sharp	natural	flat
raises the pitch of a note by one semitone	Cancels a sharp or flat	lowers the pitch of a note by one semitone

Duration

				
semibreve whole note	minim half note	crotchet quarter note	quaver eighth note	semiquaver sixteenth note

The *time signature* shows how many beats are in each bar. A *bar line* shows the end of a bar.

If the time signature shows crotchet beats, a semibreve would receive four beats, a minim would receive two beats, a crotchet would receive one beat and a quaver would receive half a beat.

A semibreve rest is also called a *whole bar rest*.

A dot after a note or a rest adds half of its value. So $\text{dotted crotchet} = \text{crotchet} + \text{quaver}$

Curved lines linking notes of the same pitch are *ties*, which join two notes into one longer note.

Dynamics

<i>pp</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>mp</i>	<i>mf</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>ff</i>
<i>pianissimo</i> very soft	<i>piano</i> soft	<i>mezzo piano</i> moderately soft	<i>mezzo forte</i> moderately loud	<i>forte</i> loud	<i>fortissimo</i> very loud
 <i>crescendo</i> gradually becoming louder			 <i>diminuendo</i> gradually becoming softer		

Articulation

Curved lines joining notes of different pitch are *slurs*. Slurred notes should be played *legato* (smoothly and well connected).

Staccato, indicated by a dot above or below a note, means short and detached.

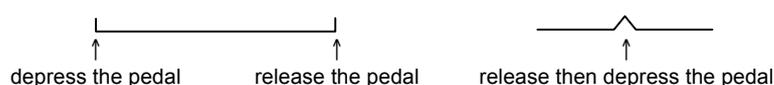
Other signs

An accent (>) means emphasise the note.

:|| means repeat from the beginning; ||: || means repeat the section between the signs.

Some pieces have alternative endings for repeating sections (first and second time bars). If the repeat is not played, the first time ending should be omitted.

Sustaining pedal signs:



A *double bar line* indicates the end of a section (||) or the end of the piece (|||).