Introduction

Right from the start, it is important to learn how to write down music clearly. As a musician, unclear manuscript can waste valuable rehearsal time and might lead to performance mistakes. In an exam, badly written work may be misunderstood and could lose you vital marks.

This workbook offers advice and practical exercises, which provide a solid foundation for notating music and understanding it in context. Working through the book will equip and fully prepare you for the Grade 1 Music Theory exam; it is also an excellent resource for developing your general music literacy skills. To enhance your learning, each chapter begins with a reference to The AB Guide to Music Theory, a book that supplies further background knowledge on each topic. Where keywords are introduced in the text, they are highlighted in **bold** and accompanied by a definition.

Bear in mind that this workbook presents an introduction to understanding music notation: any printed music which you are learning to play or sing will provide a good model to help consolidate theory into practice. Look closely to see how the notes and signs are written, and where they are placed. Practise copying out music carefully – mastering it may be a slow process, but speed and technique will come with time.

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### Time values

*(The AB Guide to Music Theory, Chapter 1/1)*

#### Exercise 1

What are these notes called?

- Name
- Name
- Name
- Name

#### Exercise 2

How long is each note? Complete the following sentences with the right number. (As an example, the answer to the first one is given.)

**Example**

- A.executeUpdate() lasts as long as 2
- A.executeUpdate() lasts as long as
- A.executeUpdate() lasts as long as
- A.executeUpdate() lasts as long as
- A.executeUpdate() lasts as long as
The semibreve (whole-note) rest hangs below a line, usually the fourth line, like this:

\[
\underline{\text{---}}
\]

The minim (half-note) rest sits on a line, usually the third line, like this:

\[
\underline{\text{---}}
\]

You can draw a crotchet (quarter-note) rest in two ways:

\[
\frac{1}{4} \quad \text{or} \quad \frac{1}{4}
\]

The first one is a little harder to draw, but try to use it because it is often used in printed music. Draw it like this – a sideways ‘z’ on top joined to a sloping ‘c’ below:

\[
\frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{4} = \frac{1}{4}
\]

**Exercise 1**

Now practise drawing crotchet (quarter-note) rests. Copy this one:

\[
\underline{\text{---}}
\]

Usually, you draw the crotchet (quarter-note), quaver (eighth-note) and semiquaver (16th-note) rests in the middle of the stave, like this:

\[
\underline{\text{---}}
\]

**Exercise 2**

Add ONE rest at each * to make the bars complete. A completely silent bar always has a

\[
\underline{\text{---}}
\]

rest – not only in 4 but also in 3 and 2.

**Example**

(a)

(b)

(c)
More on time values

(The AB Guide to Music Theory. Chapter 1/1–2)

Exercise 1  ✔
What is this note called: \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \)?

How long is each note? Complete the sentences.

**Example**

A \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) lasts as long as \( 2 \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \)
A \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) lasts as long as \( \text{\textfrac{3}{8}} \)
A \( \text{\textfrac{3}{8}} \) lasts as long as \( \text{\textfrac{3}{16}} \)
A \( \text{\textfrac{3}{16}} \) lasts as long as \( \text{\textfrac{3}{32}} \)

Exercise 2  ✔
Add ONE note at each * to complete the bar.

(a) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) *  
(b) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) * \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \)  
(c) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) *  
(d) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) *  

Notes with tails are often joined (beamed) together. For example, you can write:

\( \text{\textfrac{3}{8}} \) as \( \text{\textfrac{3}{8}} \); \( \text{\textfrac{3}{16}} \) as \( \text{\textfrac{3}{16}} \); and \( \text{\textfrac{3}{32}} \) as \( \text{\textfrac{3}{32}} \)

Exercise 3  ✔
Join up the quavers (eighth notes) and semiquavers (16th notes) in these pieces of music.

**Example**

(a) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) 
(b) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) 
(c) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) 
(d) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) 
(e) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) \( \text{\textfrac{3}{4}} \) 

...
Ties

(The AB Guide to Music Theory, Chapter 3/2)

A tie ( or ) joins notes which sound the same. It turns them into one sound (, for example, sounds like ). You can join any number of notes in this way, but they must be the same notes, and they must be next to each other. The tie goes from the head of the first note to the head of the next, on the outside, like this:

Exercise 1

Add ties where you can in these pieces of music. Write the total number of crotchet (quarter-note) beats made by the tie.

Example

(a) ___ beats
(b) ___ beats
(c) ___ beats
(d) ___ beats
(e) ___ beats

Dots

(The AB Guide to Music Theory, Chapter 3/2)

A dot after a note or rest makes it half as long again.

Exercise 1

How long does each note last?

Example

A \( \frac{3}{4} \), lasts as long as ___ 
A \( \frac{3}{4} \), lasts as long as ___ 
A \( \frac{3}{4} \), lasts as long as ___ 
A \( \frac{3}{4} \), lasts as long as ___ 

The dot needs to go just to the right of the note or rest. If the note-head is in a space, the dot goes in the same space; if the note-head is on a line, the dot normally goes in the space just above the line, like this:
Exercise 2  
Add dots where necessary to make the bars complete.

Example

Exercise 3  
Put in the bar-lines where they are missing.

Example
At Grade 1, all the time signatures had a crotchet (quarter note) as the sign for one beat. Grade 2 includes time signatures that use a minim (half note) or a quaver (eighth note) as the sign for one beat.

Music with two beats in a bar is said to be in **duple** time. The beats can be minims (half notes), crotchets (quarter notes) or quavers (eighth notes).

Music with three beats in a bar is always in **triple** time.

Music with four beats in a bar is always in **quadruple** time.

**Remember!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Signature</th>
<th>Beats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Duple</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triple</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quadruple</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Exercise 1**

What does the 2 in $\frac{2}{3}$ mean?

What does the 8 in $\frac{8}{3}$ mean?

Give the full meaning of $\frac{3}{4}$

Write the time signature $\frac{6}{4}$ in numbers.

Explain the difference between $\frac{3}{4}$ and $\frac{2}{3}$

$\frac{3}{4}$ means

$\frac{2}{3}$ means

**Exercise 2**

Add the time signature to each extract.

**Example**

Gibbons, Song 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Allegretto</th>
<th>Mahler, Symphony No. 4 (3rd mvt)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(Adagio)</th>
<th>Sibelius, Symphony No. 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(b)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presto</th>
<th>J. S. Bach, Italian Concerto (3rd mvt)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(c)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exercise 3

Add the missing bar-lines in these extracts. They all start on the first beat of the bar.

Example

J. S. Bach, Sinfonia No. 13

Byrd, Galliard (from Parthenia)

Mozart, Symphony No. 41 ("Jupiter") (4th mvt)

Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 130 (4th mvt)

Vaughan Williams, hymn tune "Randolph"

Sibelius, Symphony No.

Brahms, Serenade Op. 11 (1st mvt)
Exercise 1 ✓ Write ONE note that will last as long as each of these groups of notes.

Example

\[ \frac{3}{2} \quad \text{are played in the time of a} \quad \frac{1}{2} \text{minim (half note)} \]

\[ \frac{3}{2} \quad \text{are played in the time of a} \]

\[ \frac{2}{2} \quad \text{are played in the time of a} \]

\[ \frac{2}{2} \quad \text{are played in the time of a} \]

\[ \frac{2}{2} \quad \text{are played in the time of a} \]

\[ \frac{3}{2} \quad \text{are played in the time of a} \]

\[ \frac{2}{2} \quad \text{are played in the time of a} \]

When you beam together notes that make a triplet, you do not need to draw a slur or bracket over or below the 3. But you do need to draw a slur or bracket if the triplet group consists of separate notes, or of a mixture of notes and rests.

Exercise 2 ✓ Add triplet signs where necessary to make these bars fit their time signatures.

Example

\[ \frac{2}{4} \quad \frac{3}{2} \quad \text{d} \]

\[ \frac{4}{4} \quad \text{d} \]

\[ \frac{4}{4} \quad \text{d} \]

\[ \frac{4}{4} \quad \text{d} \]

\[ \frac{4}{4} \quad \text{d} \]

\[ \frac{4}{4} \quad \text{d} \]

\[ \frac{4}{4} \quad \text{d} \]

\[ \frac{3}{2} \quad \text{d} \]

\[ \frac{4}{4} \quad \text{d} \]

\[ \frac{3}{2} \quad \text{d} \]

\[ \frac{4}{4} \quad \text{d} \]
Rests

These are the main points to remember about the arrangement of rests:

1. If you need to show a complete bar's rest, you should write it like this:

   \[ \frac{1}{2} - | \frac{1}{2} - | \frac{1}{2} - | \frac{1}{2} - | \frac{3}{2} - | \frac{3}{2} - | \frac{3}{2} - \]

   (A bar's rest in \( \frac{3}{4} \) is written differently, but you will not need to use this until Grade 4.)

2. In quadruple time, use a two-beat rest if the first half of the bar is silent. The same applies to the second half. For example,

   \[ \frac{1}{4} - | \frac{1}{4} - | \frac{1}{4} - | \frac{1}{4} - | \frac{1}{2} - | \frac{1}{2} - | \frac{1}{2} - | \frac{1}{2} - \]

3. Everywhere else, a new beat always needs a new rest. Look at these examples:

   \[ \frac{3}{4} \]

   \[ \frac{3}{4} \]

   \[ \frac{3}{4} \]

   \[ \frac{3}{4} \]

   \[ \frac{3}{4} \]

   \[ \frac{3}{4} \]

4. Where you need to use rests of less than a beat, group the notes and rests in half-beats (shown below by \( \frac{1}{4} \)).

   \[ \frac{1}{2} \]

   \[ \frac{1}{2} \]

   \[ \frac{1}{2} \]

5. Do not use more rests than are needed. For example, write

   \[ \frac{1}{2} \]

   \[ \frac{1}{2} \]

   \[ \frac{1}{2} \]

6. Groups of notes that can be beamed together can still be beamed together when a rest is used instead of a note. For example: \[ \frac{1}{4} \] (compare \[ \frac{1}{4} \])
Grouping notes and rests

(The AB Guido to Music Theory, Chapter 5/1-3)

Simple uses of beams, ties, and dots were covered in Grade 1. Now these will be looked at with the new time signatures: 3/4, 3/8, 3/16.

The main points to remember when you put notes in groups are as follows:

1. In time signatures with a minim (half-note) beat (2/2, 3/2)
   - always use a semibreve (whole note) not two tied minims (half notes) where possible

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccc}
\frac{1}{2} & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\
\frac{3}{2} & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\
\end{array}
\]

- beam together a group of four quavers (eighth notes), which could be replaced by a minim (half note)

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccc}
\frac{1}{2} & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\
\frac{3}{2} & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\
\end{array}
\]

- Similarly, beam together four semiquavers (16th notes), which could be replaced by a crotchet (quarter note)

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccc}
\frac{3}{2} & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\
\frac{3}{4} & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\
\end{array}
\]

- Do not beam together more than four quavers (eighth notes).

2. In 3/4, beam together quavers (eighth notes) and/or semiquavers (16th notes) that make a complete bar

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccc}
\frac{3}{4} & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\
\frac{3}{8} & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\
\frac{3}{16} & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\
\end{array}
\]

3. Except for in 3/8, do not beam together more than four semiquavers (16th notes).

Stems

When you want to beam together notes written on a stave, a new problem can arise. Look at:

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccc}
\cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\
\cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\
\end{array}
\]

Here the stems of the first two notes go down, but the stem of the last note goes up. But when you beam notes together, all the stems in the group go either up or down – usually according to what suits most of them. The three notes in the example above would be beamed like this:

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccc}
\cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\
\cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\
\end{array}
\]

Similarly, \[
\begin{array}{cccccccc}
\cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\
\cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\
\end{array}
\]

– the first note ‘wins’ because it is further from the middle line of the stave.
Exercise 1

Look at these extracts carefully. See if you can find any mistakes in how the notes and rests are grouped. Rewrite them, and correct the mistakes.

Example

A Mozart, Violin Sonata, K. 481 (3rd movement)

Schumann, Album for the Young ("Guckuk im Viertel")

Johann Strauss, Die Fledermaus

Meyerbeer, The Prophets

J. S. Bach, Inventions
The exam

Below are some examples of the types of questions that candidates may be asked in this section of the exam. If you can't answer a question, then carefully re-read the preceding chapter and the 'Guide To Music Notation' at the front of the book.

When answering questions that involve writing scales in notation, you can choose to write them in either the treble or bass clef. Either way, you need only write them ascending using whole notes (as shown here).

| Q2. Write the notes of the A natural minor scale using letter names. | A2. |
| Q5. Name the major scale that has this key signature. | A5. |
| Q6. Which scale is this? | A6. |
| Q7. Write one octave of the A natural minor scale in either the treble or bass clef. | A7. |
the exam

Below are some examples of the types of questions that candidates may be asked in this section of the exam. If you can't answer a question, then carefully re-read the preceding chapter.

| Q1. What type of note is this? | A1. |
| Q2. How many of these notes are needed to fill a bar of 3/4 time? | A2. |
| Q3. How many eighth notes (quavers) does a dotted quarter note (dotted crotchet) last for? | A3. |
| Q4. Complete the following bars by adding an appropriate rest in the spaces marked *. | A4. |
| Q5. Re-write this bar correctly. | A5. |
| Q7. In a clef of your choice, on a note of D, write a two bar rhythm in 3/4 time using a combination of quarter notes (crotchets), dotted quarter notes (dotted crotchets), eighth notes (quavers) and some of their equivalent rests. | |
the exam

Below are some examples of the types of questions that candidates may be asked in this section of the exam. If you can't answer a question, then carefully re-read the preceding chapter and the 'Guide to Music Notation' at the front of the book.

When answering questions that involve writing chords in notation, you can choose to write your answers in either the treble clef or the bass clef. You should place the notes of each chord vertically on top of one another, using whole notes (as shown in the example here). The notes of each chord should be written in root position, that means put the root note at the bottom, then write the third note and finally the fifth.

Q1. Which triad contains the notes G B D?  
A1. 

Q2. Write the notes of the Am triad using letter names.  
A2. 

Q3. Write the notes of the C triad using letter names.  
A3. 

Q4. Which chord is this?  
\[ \text{\includegraphics[width=0.2\textwidth]{chord}} \]  
A4. 

Q5. Write out the Em triad in either the treble clef or bass clef.  
A5. 

Q6. Name the root and the fifth of the E minor triad.  
A6. Root: _____ Fifth: _____ 

Q7. B is the third of which major triad, C major or G major?  
A7. 

16 chords
the exam

Below are some examples of the types of questions that candidates may be asked in this section of the exam. If you can't answer a question, then carefully re-read the preceding chapter and the 'Guide To Music Notation' at the front of the book.

Q1. What type of note is this?  

Q2. What type of note is this?  

Q3. Write the symbol for a half note (minim) at a pitch of your choice. Use either the treble or bass clef.

Q4. Write the symbol for a half rest (minim rest).

Q5. What type of rest is this?

Q6. How many of this type of note are needed to fill a bar of \( \frac{3}{4} \) time?

Q7. Using a clef and note of your choice, write two different bars of rhythm in \( \frac{3}{4} \) time, using only half notes (minims) and quarter notes (crotchets).

Q8. Complete the bars by inserting the appropriate rest or rests in the spaces marked *.
Below are some examples of the types of questions that candidates may be asked in this section of the exam. If you can't answer a question, then carefully re-read the preceding chapter and the 'Guide To Music Notation' at the front of the book.

When answering questions that involve writing scales in notation, you can choose to write them in either the treble or bass clef. Either way, you need only write them ascending using whole notes (as shown here).

| Q2. Write the notes of the A pentatonic minor scale using letter names. | A2. |
| Q4. Write the key signature for G major in either the treble or bass clef. | A4. |
| Q5. Which scale is this? | A5. |
| Q6. Using the correct key signature, write one octave of the E pentatonic minor scale in either the treble or bass clef. | A6. |
| Q7. Which type of scale contains only the following scale degrees: 1 2 3 5 6 8? | A7. |
| Q8. On which degree of the C pentatonic major scale does the note E occur? | A8. |
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Q1. What type of note is this?  
   ![Note Symbol]
   A1.

Q2. What type of note is this?  
   ![Note Symbol]
   A2.

Q3. Write the symbol for a quarter note (crotchet) at a pitch of your choice. Use either the treble or bass clef.  
   A3.

Q4. Write out the symbol for an eighth (quaver) rest. Use either the treble or bass clef.  
   A4.

Q5. What type of rest is this?  
   ![Rest Symbol]
   A5.

Q6. How many eighth notes (quavers) are there in a half note (minim)?  
   A6.

Q7. How many quarter notes (crotchet) are there in a whole note (semibreve)?  
   A7.

Q8. Complete the following bars by inserting the appropriate rest or rests in the spaces marked *.
   ![Bars with Rests]
   A8.

Q9. At a pitch of your choice, write a two bar rhythm in 4\(\text{\texttimes}\) time using quarter notes (crotchet) and eighth notes (quavers) and their equivalent rests. Use either the treble or bass clef.
   A9.
the exam

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When answering questions that involve writing chords in notation, you can choose to write your answers in either the treble clef or the bass clef. You should place the notes of each chord vertically on top of one another, using whole notes (as shown in the example here). The notes of each chord should be written in root position, that means put the root note at the bottom, then write the third note, then the fifth and finally the seventh.

Q1. Which chord contains the notes  
   G B D F#?  
   A1. ________

Q2. Write the notes of the Cmaj7 chord using letter names.  
   A2. ________

Q3. Write the notes of the Em7 chord using letter names.  
   A3. ________

Q4. Which chord is this?  
   A4. ________

Q5. Write out the Gmaj7 chord in either the treble or bass clef.  
   A5. ________

Q6. Is the note of E the 3rd or the 5th of the Am7 chord?  
   A6. ________

Q7. B is the 7th of which major 7th chord – Cmaj7 or Gmaj7?  
   A7. ________
the exam

Below are some examples of the types of questions that candidates may be asked in this section of the exam. If you can't answer a question, then carefully re-read the preceding chapter and the 'Guide To Music Notation' at the front of the book.

When answering questions that involve writing scales in notation, you can write your answers in either the treble or bass clef. Either way, you need only write them ascending using whole notes.

Q1. Which minor key has 1 flat in its key signature? A1.

Q2. Use letter names to write out the notes of the pentatonic major scale that has one flat in the key signature. A2.

Q3. Use letter names to write out the notes of the major scale that has two sharps in the key signature. A3.

Q4. Using the correct key signature, write one octave of the F major scale in either the treble or bass clef. A4.

Q5. Using the correct key signature, write one octave of the B pentatonic minor scale in either the treble or bass clef. A5.

Q6. Which type of scale has the following scale spelling – 1 3 4 5 7 8 ? A6.

Q7. Write out the scale spelling of the natural minor scale. A7.
Below are some examples of the types of questions that candidates may be asked in this section of the exam. If you can't answer a question, then carefully re-read the preceding chapter and the 'Guide to Music Notation' at the front of the book.

When answering questions that involve writing chords in notation, you can write your answers in either the treble clef or the bass clef. You should place the notes of each chord vertically on top of one another, using whole notes. The notes of each chord should be written in root position — that means put the root note at the bottom, then write the third note, then the fifth and finally (where appropriate) the seventh.

Q1. Which chord contains the notes, D F# A C#?

Q2. Write the notes of the Bm7 chord using letter names.

Q3. Which chord is this?

Q4. Write out the Dm7 chord in either the treble or bass clef.

Q5. Which type of chord has the following chord spelling? 1 3 5 7

Q6. Write out the chord spelling for the minor 7th chord.