

# Intro To Music

## ELEMENTS OF SOUND

All SOUND is made up of 4 components. Main terms for describing musical sound are

1. Pitch
2. Duration
3. Volume
4. Timbre

**Pitch-** Described as High or Low (Highness or lowness of a sound)

Frequency: the number of vibrations per second- High pitches have a very fast frequency with many vibrations per second whereas Low pitches have a slow frequency fewer vibration per second.

On the very popular instrument, the piano, the high pitches are found on the right side of the piano and the low pitches are found on the left side of the piano.

Interval: the distance between two pitches (example: on the piano two keys near each other form a small interval where as two keys more widely separated form a large interval.

Octave is a doubling of the frequency. An octave is the 8<sup>th</sup> letter tone above or below a given note. *A1 to A2 or Do to Do.*

Half-step (semi-tone): smallest interval in western music; two key immediately adjacent to each other on the piano keyboard regardless of color. Often referred to as sharps (#) and flats(b). There are 12 different half steps in an octave

**Duration** - Length of time a particular sound or silence lasts.

**Volume** - Loudness or softness of a sound. The word Dynamics is another word in music for volume. Do not confuse volume with pitch!

**Timbre (Tone Color)**- The way each instrument or voice sounds different. This is why when listening to music you can tell the difference between a trumpet or a flute or a piano.

Timbre also has to do with the general quality of the sound of that instrument or voice: mellow, rough, bright, brassy, etc.

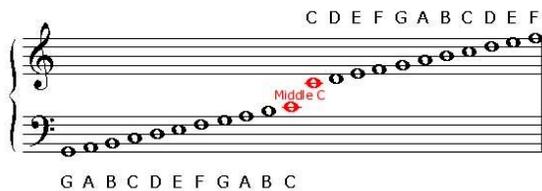
**Notation** - is the process of taking the terms above and translating them to written words and symbols, which all musicians can recognize.

**Pitch-** In music we use *notes to indicate sound* or what pitch we want played. A note is placed on either a line or space of the staff. We name these notes using the letters of the music alphabet, which goes from A-G.

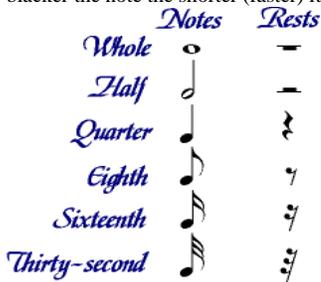
The treble clef (  ) is placed at the left side of the staff and is used to indicate high pitches. High pitched instruments like violin, flute and trumpet all use the treble clef.

The bass clef (  ) is placed at the left side of the staff and is used to indicate low pitches. Low pitched instruments like the double bass, bassoon and the tuba all use the bass clef.

The grand staff is when both a treble and a bass clef staff are combined together. The grand staff is used by keyboard instruments like the piano because they have such a wide range of both high and low pitches.



**Duration-** various types of notes show length of sounds, depending on shape and color; system of proportions (half note twice as long as a quarter note, etc.); the blacker the note the shorter (faster) it is. *For every different type of note there is a corresponding symbol to indicate the same length of time of silence called rests.*



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

**Volume-** shown by letters or other signs placed near the notes.