









Note Types and Values

How do you know when to play each of the notes, especially if you've never heard the song you're playing? If you're reading sheet music, you can tell by the type of note you're looking at. These rhythms are the same on all instruments:

NAME	NOTE	LENGTH OF NOTE (Counted in "beats")	Example of the counts the note would receive
Whole Note		4	<u>"1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &"</u>
Half Note	 or 	2	<u>"1 & 2 &"</u> or <u>"3 & 4 &"</u>
Quarter Note	 or 	1	<u>"1 &"</u> or <u>"2 &"</u> or <u>"3 &"</u> or <u>"4 &"</u>
Eighth Note	 or  or 	1/2	<u>"1"</u> or <u>"&"</u> or <u>"2"</u> or <u>"4"</u>

By counting "1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &" evenly throughout the song, you can put each note exactly in its place, even if you've never heard the song before. Each thing you say is worth half of a beat, so a quarter note, for example (worth one whole beat...or two halves) would be held down while you said "1 &" or "2 &", etc. Here's an example of how you should count sheet music:



NOTE: *The position of the notes do not affect how you count them.

*Most songs get counted "1&2&3&4&". For examples of exceptions, see the "time signatures" page.