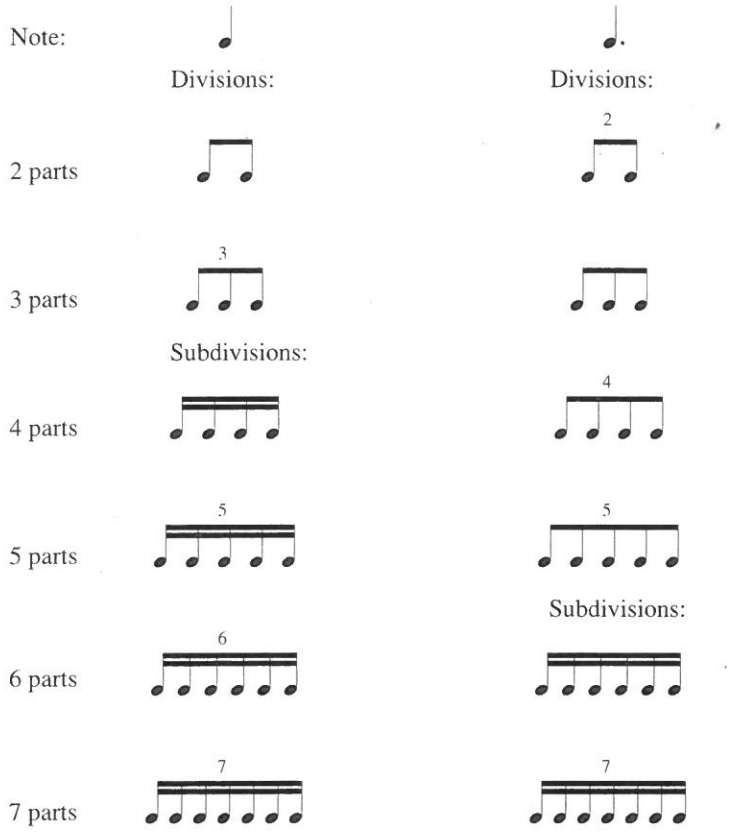
Irregular Division of Notes

A note value may be divided or subdivided into any number of equal parts, as shown in the chart in figure 1.19. Those divisions and subdivisions that require added numbers are called *irregular divisions and subdivisions.*

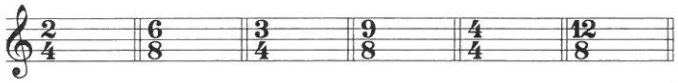
figure 1.19



Meter Signatures

Meter may be defined as a regular, recurring pattern of strong and weak beats of equal duration. This recurring pattern of durations is identified at the beginning of a composition by a *meter signature* (time signature).

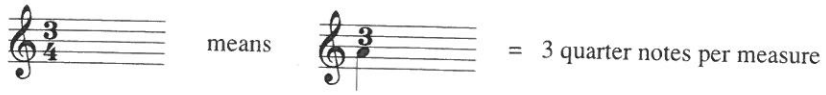
figure 1.20



The lower digit indicates a basic note value: 2 signifies a half note, 4 refers to a quarter note, 8 to an eighth note, and so forth.

The upper digit indicates the number of basic note values per measure. It may or may not indicate the number of pulses per measure (as will be seen later in compound meters).

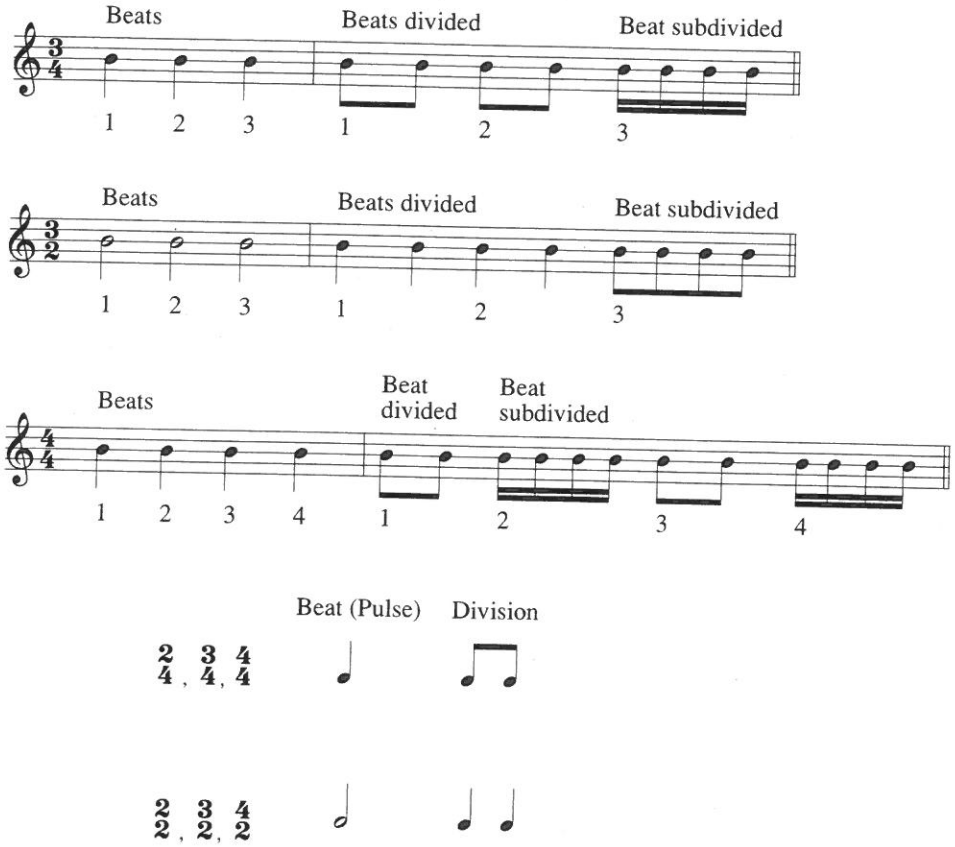
figure 1.21



Simple Meter

In *simple meter*, each beat is divided in two parts (simple division). The upper numbers in simple meter signatures are usually 2, 3, or 4. Some simple meters showing the division of the beat are seen in figure 1.22.

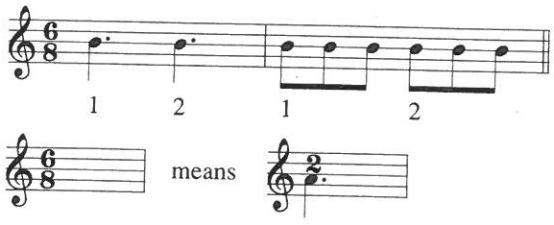
figure 1.22



Compound Meter

In *compound meter,* each pulse is a dotted note, which is divided into groups of three parts (compound division). The most common compound meter signatures are 6/8, 9/8, and 12/8. In compound meter signatures the lower number refers to the division of the beat, while the upper number indicates the number of these divisions per measure.

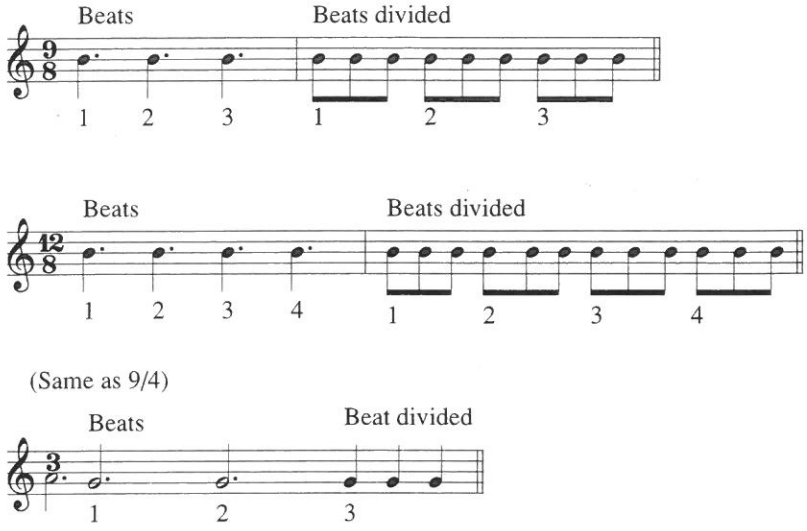
figure 1.23



Compound Meter Signatures:

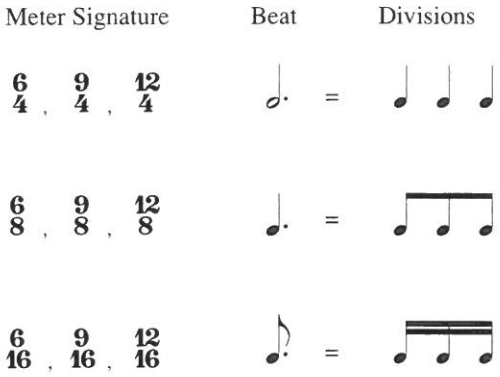
In 6/8 meter there are only two basic pulses, in 9/8 meter there are three, and in 12/8 meter there are four.

figure 1.24



Note that the basic pulse in compound meter will be some kind of dotted note value:

figure 1.25



Dynamic Markings

Dynamic marks indicate the general volume (amplitude) of sound. Although imprecise, such marks denote approximate levels of intensity. The following words, abbreviations, and signs are common:

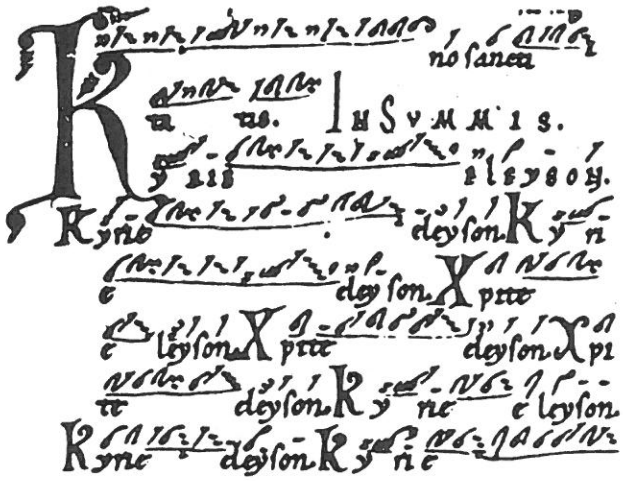
Symbol	Term	Definition
pp	Pianissimo	Very soft
p	Piano	Soft
mp	Mezzo piano	Moderately soft
mf	Mezzo forte	Moderately loud
f	Forte	Loud
ff	Fortissimo	Very loud
	Cresc. or crescendo	Gradually become louder
	Decresc., decrescendo, or dim., diminuendo	Gradually become softer
sfz sf	Sforzando, sforzato	Sudden accent on a single note or chord
sfp	Sforzando piano	Sudden accent followed immediately by soft
fp	Fortepiano	Loud followed immediately by soft

History

Neumatic Notation

From about A.D. 650 to A.D. 1200, music notation consisted of a set of symbols called *neumes* (pronounced "newms"). These symbols took their name from the Greek word for gesture. Written above the Latin texts associated with the liturgy of the Christian church, neumes could not convey pitch or duration, but rather served as a memory aid in recalling previously learned melodic lines. Figure 1.26 is an example of neumatic notation from a twelfth-century manuscript.

figure 1.26



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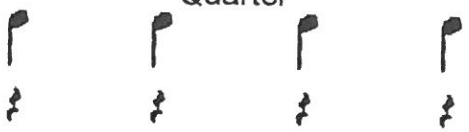
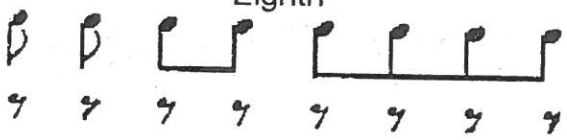
Whole

Half

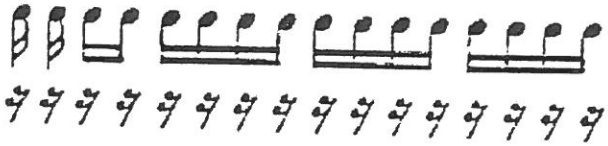
Quarter



Eighth

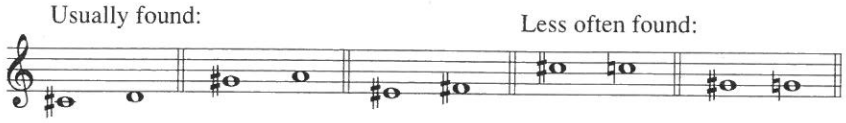


Sixteenth



In passages of music involving half-step motion, sharped tones are most often followed by tones with a different letter name a half step higher.

figure 1.14



(Assignment 1.4, page 26; Workbook/Anthology 1C–ID)

Notation of Duration

Notation of duration is illustrated in the following chart:

figure 1.15

Name	Note	Rest	Equivalents
Breve (double whole note)	𝅜		Two Whole Notes
Whole Note	𝅝		Two Half Notes
Half Note	𝅗𝅥		Two Quarter Notes
Quarter Note	♩		Two Eighth Notes
Eighth Note	♪		Two Sixteenth Notes
Sixteenth Note	𝅘𝅥𝅯		Two Thirty-second Notes
Thirty-second Note	𝅘𝅥𝅰		Two Sixty-fourth Notes
Sixty-fourth Note	𝅘𝅥𝅱		Two One Hundred Twenty-eighth Notes

The Tie

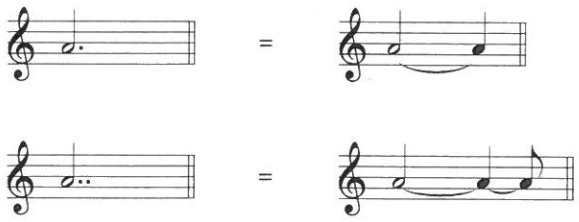
The *tie* is a curved line that connects two adjacent notes of the same pitch into a single sound with a duration equal to the sum of both note values.

figure 1.16

The Dot

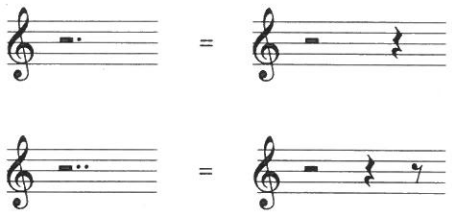
Placed to the right of a note head, the *dot* lengthens the value of the note by half again its value. A *second dot* lengthens the dotted note value by half the length of the first dot:

figure 1.17



Dots may also be used with rests and affect them in the same way:

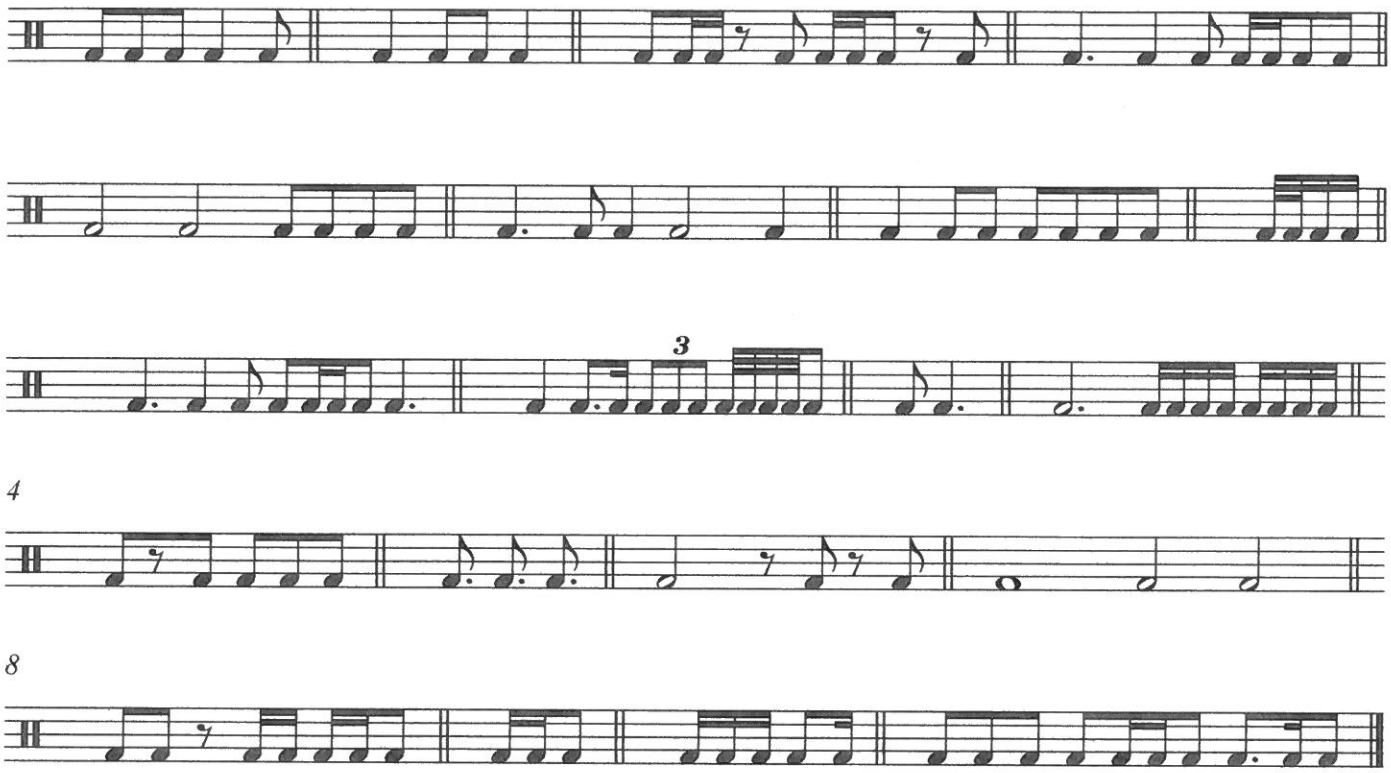
figure 1.18



Note Value	=	**How Many**
Half	____	eighths
Whole	____	quarters
Dotted quarter	____	eighths
Quarter	____	sixteenths
Dotted half	____	quarters
Sixteenth	____	thirty seconds
Dotted eighth	____	sixteenths
Quarter tied to eighth	____	eighths
Half	____	sixteenths
Dotted whole	____	quarters
Dotted quarter	____	sixteenths
Dotted eighth tied to sixteenth	____	sixteenths
Dotted eighth	____	thirty seconds
Dotted half	____	eighths
Half tied to quarter	____	sixteenths
Quarter	____	thirty seconds
Dotted sixteenth	____	thirty seconds
Whole tied to half	____	eighths
Breve	____	halfs
Half tied to a dotted quarter	____	eighths
Double dotted half	____	eighths

Add a Meter

Add a meter signature that will fit according to the duration and grouping of each bar.



Add a Note

Add **one** note value to complete the measure