

READ MUSIC NOW

Your Ultimate

**Practical Guide
To Reading Music**

**BEST SELLER
& 3-TIME AWARD WINNER**

ABOUT THE BOOK

READ MUSIC NOW is an award winning book ever produced, and topmost best seller on Amazon. This is a handbook for anyone who would like to have deep knowledge in music. You don't have to play an instrument to learn it. You may have other reasons for wanting to read music – for instance, if you sing in a choir, or would like to follow scores while listening, or if your work brings you into contact with printed music.

Unlike many other books that based on theory, this book practically explains in and out of reading music. In this book, it is my goal to teach you how to read musical notation, understand its concepts and ultimately have a **SOLID COMPREHENSIVE KNOWLEDGE** of Music in general. I will take a slightly unconventional approach because it is my belief that everyone reading this handbook should fully understand the guiding principles of musical notation, not just the easiest and most essential concepts.

This book explains every concept of how to read music, one concept at a time, as necessary to read the musical examples in each chapter. This method of learning to read music eliminates many of the frustrations of the traditional rhythm teaching methods. So, all your thoughts of knowing how that your cool favourite songs are composed shall be brought to reality with this book

For the sake of understanding, concepts are broken down to the basic elements to teach you music theory concepts simultaneously as you are learning to read musical notation. This will give you a firm foundation for understanding the larger, more important structure of the music you are reading. To crown it all, there is **PICTORIAL GUIDE** for each topic so as give you solid grounding knowledge. So, I hope the knowledge embedded in this book assimilates into you, as it has done to many of the readers.

Goodluck...

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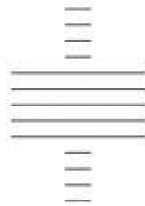
A final word

Glossary

IMPORTANT SYMBOLS IN MUSIC



stave



ledger lines



treble clef



bass clef



semibreve



minim



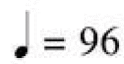
crotchet



quaver



semiquaver



= 96 metronome mark



beamed notes



dotted notes



barlines



time signatures



double barlines



sharp



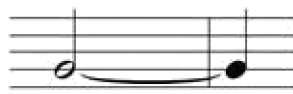
flat



key signatures



natural



ties



staccato



slurs



accent



semibreve rest



whole-bar rest



pause



minim rest



tenuto



crotchet rest



dynamics



quaver rest



trill



semiquaver rest



grace note



dotted rests



spread chord

12



multi-bar rest



triplets



repeat marks



common time



segno



double sharp



repeat sign



double flat



alto clef

CHAPTER 1

On a page of printed music, most of the symbols, and the way they are positioned, concern two things:

✓ **Pitch**

High or low notes; whether a note is C, D, E or whatever

✓ **Duration**

Whether notes are long or short; how they relate to each other in *time*

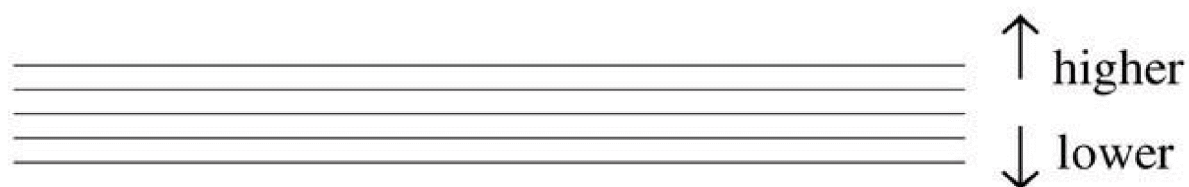
We'll start in this chapter with **pitch**.

WHAT IS PITCH?

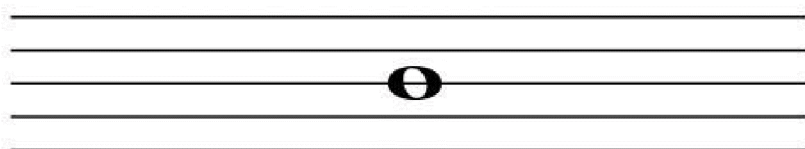
In music we talk of sounds being 'high' or 'low' - meaning high-pitched or low-pitched. You probably know this instinctively, but high-pitched sounds are those made at the right-hand end of a piano keyboard, or by high-pitched instruments such as piccolo or descant recorder. Low-pitched sounds come from the left-hand end of the piano, or from instruments such as double-bass or tuba.

THE STAFF

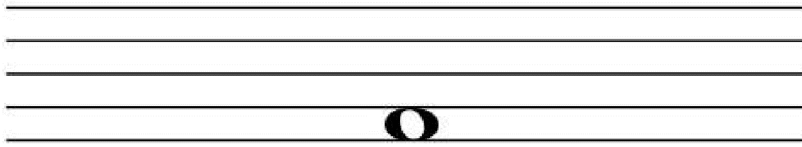
When music is written down, the **staff** - a set of five horizontal lines - is a way of indicating high or low:



Notes can be positioned on the lines:

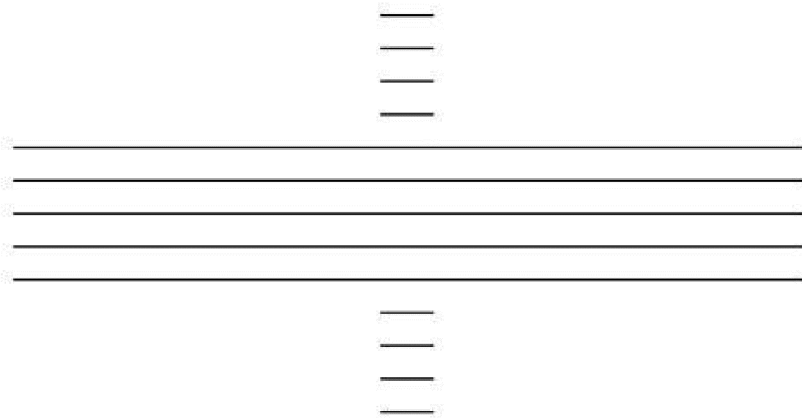


or in the spaces:

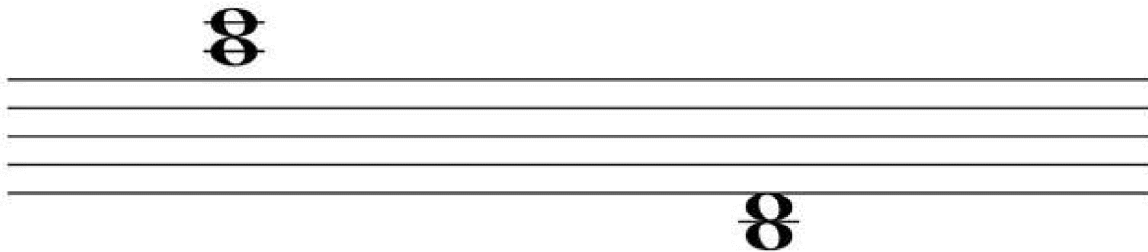


Ledger lines

The five-line staff can be extended upwards or downwards by using **ledger lines**:

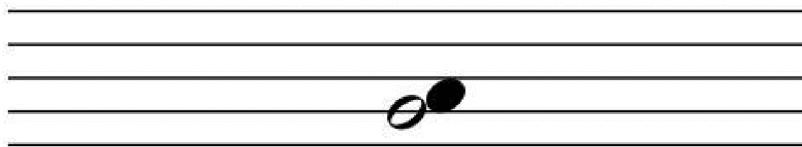


Notes can be put on or between the ledger lines:

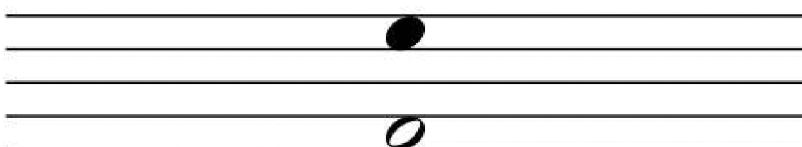


Higher and lower notes

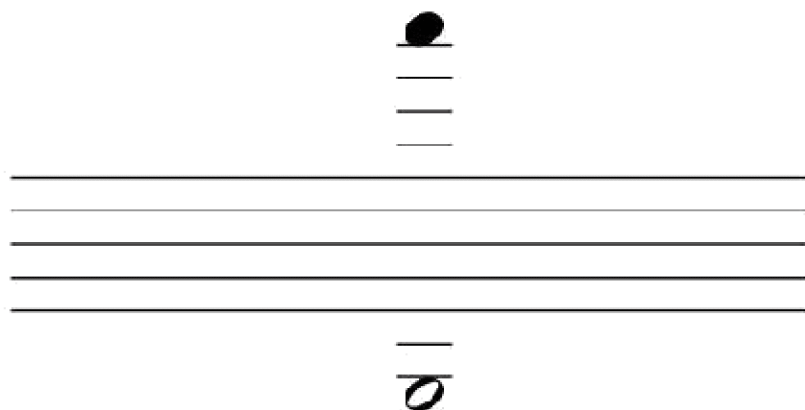
These two notes are very close together - but the black note is a little higher than the white note:



These two are further apart:



and these two are still further apart:




but in each case the black note is the higher one.

CLEFS

But what notes are they, those notes? What are they called? We don't know. We only know how far apart they are, *relative to each other*.

In order to give the notes a more fixed identity, we must attach a **clef** to the **staff**.

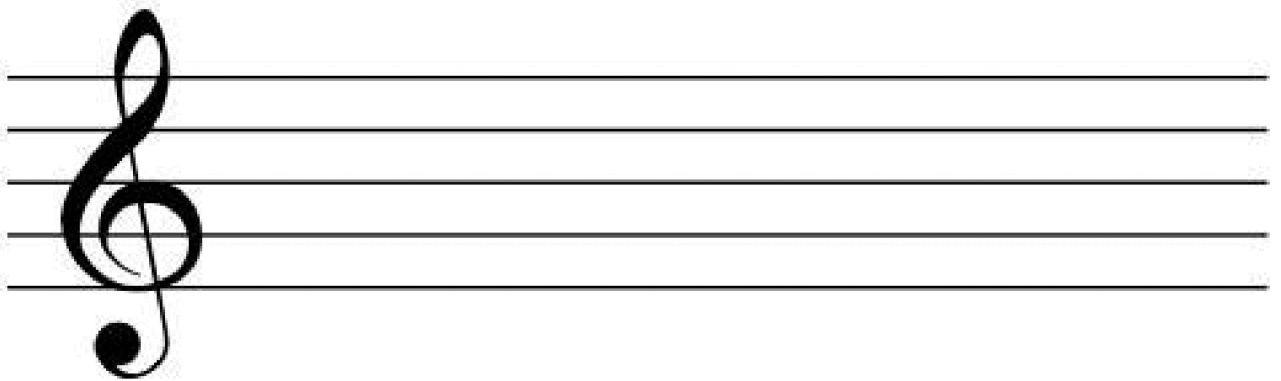
This is a **treble clef**: 

And this is a **bass clef**: 

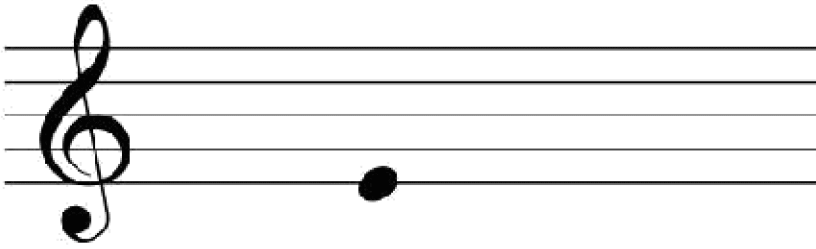
There are other clefs, but those two are by far the most commonly used.

USING A CLEF FIXES THE PITCH

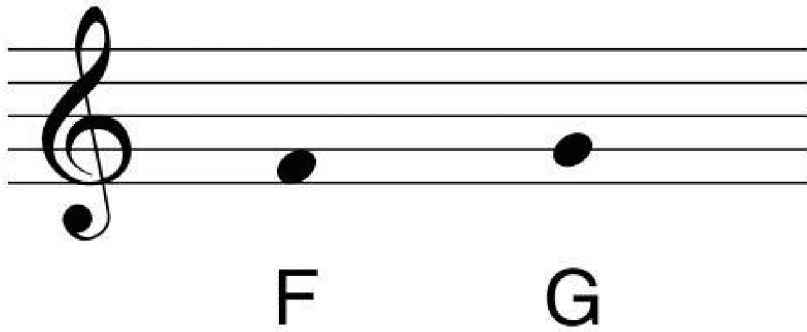
When we put a clef on a staff, it has the effect of *fixing or identifying* the pitch of the lines and spaces. For instance, if we put a treble clef on a staff, like this:



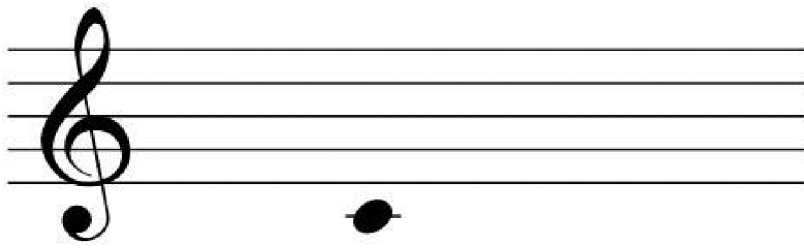
We can then put a name to each note - each line and each space. The bottom line, for instance, is E:



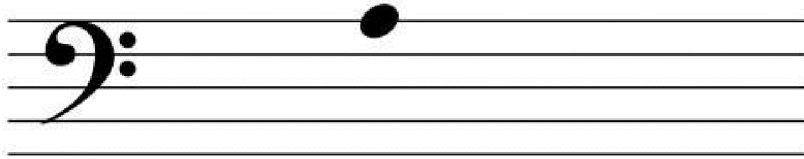
And these are F and G:



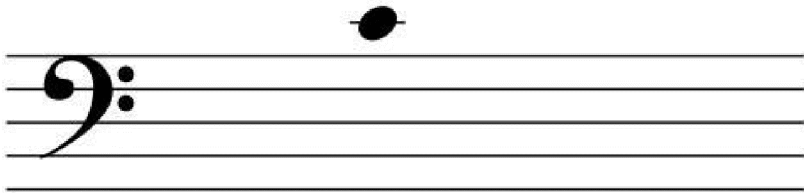
More precisely still, we can call the bottom line 'the E above middle C', to distinguish it from other Es. Middle C itself is written on the first ledger line below the staff:



Putting a *bass* clef on the staff also fixes the pitches of the lines and spaces, but at a different, lower pitch range. The top line, for instance, is A - 'A below middle C':



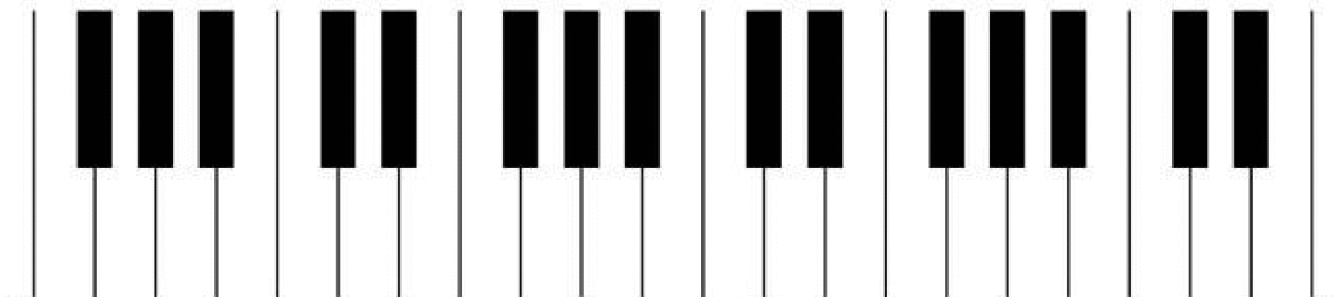
And this is middle C, using the bass clef:



WHAT DO WE MEAN BY 'MIDDLE C'?

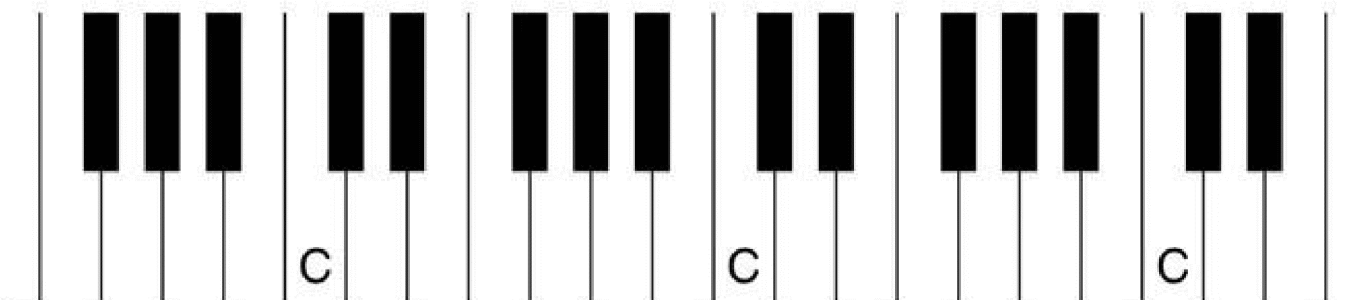
Finding C on a piano

Look at this diagram of a piano keyboard:



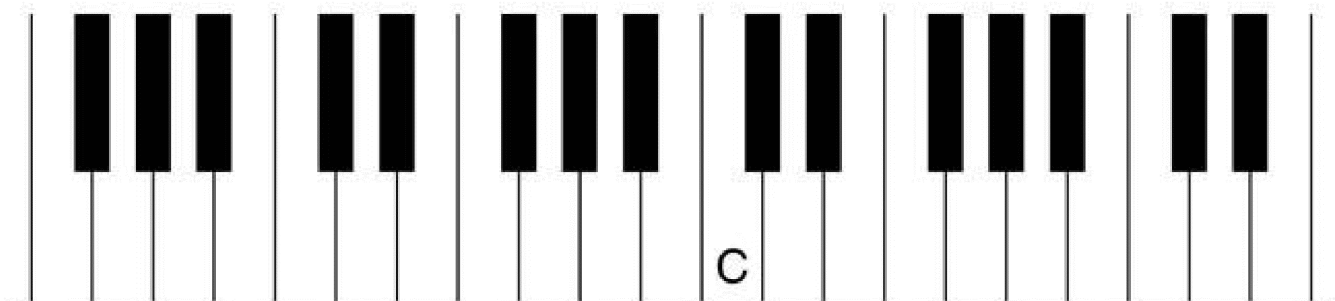
Keyboard players orientate themselves by looking at the pattern of black notes - alternate twos and threes. They need to do this even if they are only playing white notes.

C is *always* just to the left of the *two* black notes. Every white note to the left of a pair of black notes is a C:



Middle C

The C nearest the middle of any piano is called 'middle C'.



There's nothing special about middle C. It's just one note, *a particular pitch*.

But by giving that note a special name - a name that distinguishes it from other notes, even other Cs - we gain a point of reference. And that point of reference applies to all music, not just piano music.

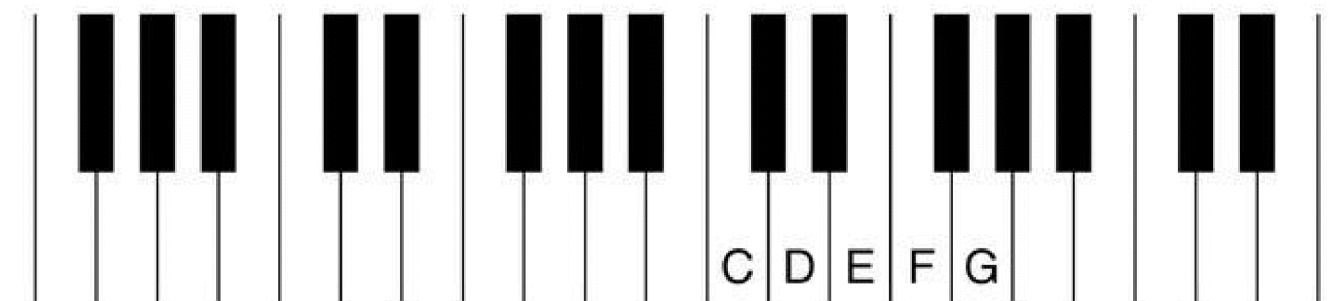
Incidentally, middle C is always near the middle of a true piano keyboard, but electronic keyboards are sometimes laid out differently. Middle C may be quite far over to the left - or its position may be electronically switchable.

'Higher' or 'lower' - on a piano

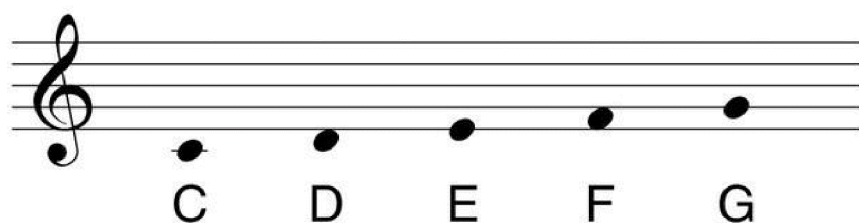
When you sit facing a piano keyboard, the higher notes are on your right, the lower ones on your left. This may seem obvious to you, but it's worth being clear about. When we play 'upwards' on the piano we play notes from left to right. 'Downwards' is from right to left.

Going up from middle C

If we play five white notes on a piano, starting on middle C and going 'up' (rightwards), this is what we play:

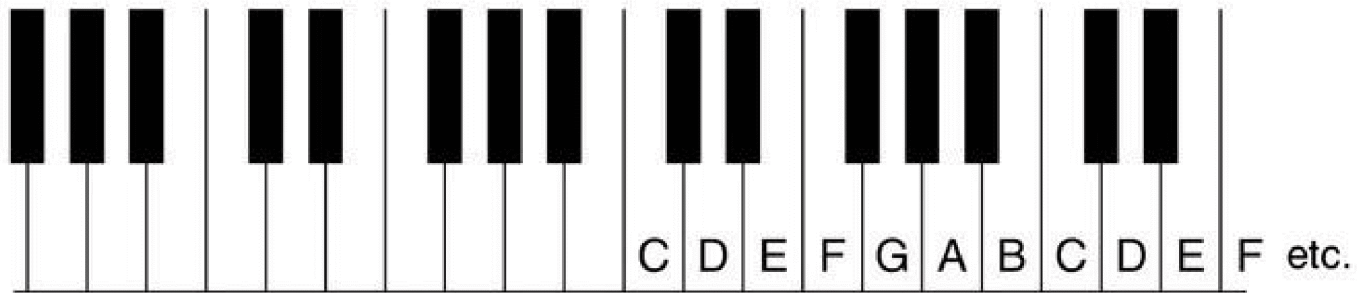


If we write five notes on a staff with a treble clef, also starting on middle C and going up, we write the same five notes:

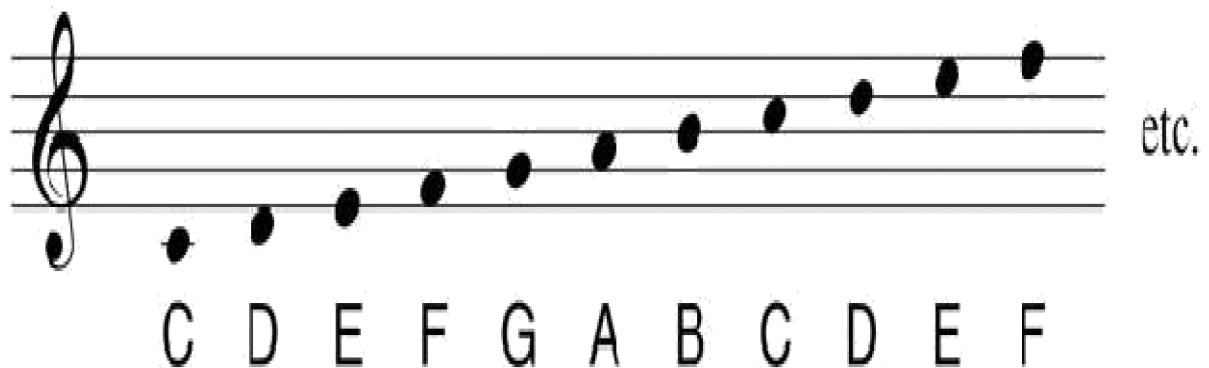


NOTE-NAMES

To identify the notes, to give them 'names', we use the first seven letters of the alphabet, A to G. As we've seen, if we start at middle C and go up, step by step, we get D, E, F and G. But the next note up is A, and the cycle of seven letters starts again:



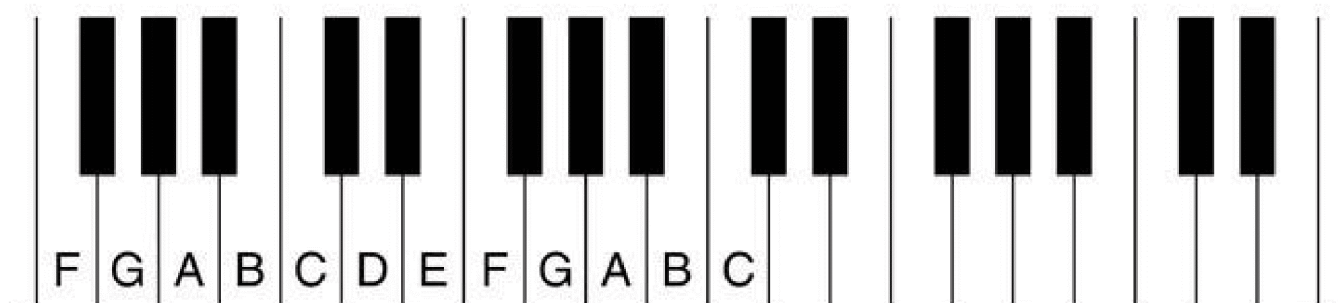
In notation, the same notes look like this:



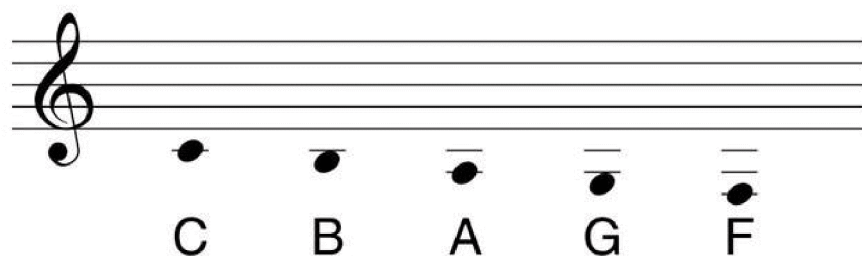
Look again at the pattern of black and white notes on the keyboard. The five black notes mesh with seven white notes, corresponding to the seven letter names A to G. This is why C, or any other note, always recurs in the same position relative to the black notes.

Going down from middle C

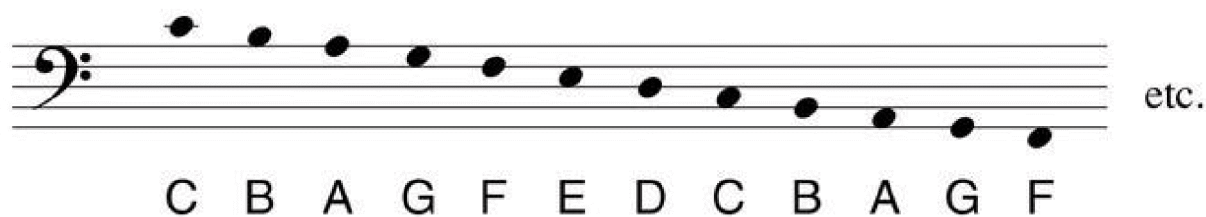
Similarly, if we go *down* from middle C, this is what we get:



We could start writing this with the treble clef:



but we'd need more and more ledger lines. The bass clef is a lot more suitable, because of the pitch range:



We read music just like we read words: from left to right. When you look at the staff above, you are reading a descending series of notes, starting with middle C. Of course, when you look at the same notes on the keyboard diagram, further above, they appear from right to left, because the lowest notes are at the left end of a keyboard.

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