



North Kent Music Lessons

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## Time Signatures

A time signature is the two numbers that you can see at the beginning of a piece of music.

e.g.  $\frac{4}{4}$

The top number in a time signature tells us how many beats there are in a bar.

The bottom number tells us what kind of beats they are.

So at the bottom 1 = Semibreves or whole notes

2 = Minims or half notes

4 = Crotchets or quarter notes

8 = Quavers or eighth notes

e.g.  $\frac{3}{4}$  = Three crotchets/quarter notes in a bar

## Simple Time

Most music is in simple time i.e.  $\frac{2}{4}$   $\frac{3}{4}$   $\frac{4}{4}$

The main sub division of the note values is two.



Crotchets divide by two to give quavers





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Quavers divide by two to give semiquavers

1 e & a 2 e & a 3 e & a 4 e & a

And so on.

Compound Time

i.e  $\frac{12}{8}$   $\frac{9}{8}$   $\frac{6}{8}$

In compound time the first sub division of the beat is three.

This gives the music a different feel.

To find out how many main beats there are in a bar divide the top number of the time signature by three.

Quaver groupings in different time signatures

Notes in red indicate where beats start.