

Part 1 **Getting started**

Music notation is sound written down

And it's written down in the same way, whether it's for the piano or for a singer, for the cello or clarinet, for the trumpet or tubular bells, for the flute or flugal horn. *Music notation is sound written down.*

Music notation is not code for pressing a key or a valve or for where to place your finger on a fingerboard. It's simply symbols that represent SOUND.

This book is going to help you to understand and make sense of the main symbols we use to represent sound on the written page or, in other words, to *read music*. Do sing all the examples. You may not always be singing in the same vocal range as on the recording (as it will at times be too high or too low for you) but that won't matter.

Here we go ...

Alternative US musical terms are given in brackets throughout.


More markings

There are even more markings on music to indicate how you should play or sing.

Tempo markings tell us the speed of a tune and are shown by a word (or words) at the beginning of the piece just above the first bar. They are often in Italian (because Italy was where music notation was born). This will affect the speed of your **pulse**. Here are two common tempo markings:

Adagio which means slow


Allegro which means lively

Articulation markings show whether the notes are joined smoothly or detached. We use **slurs**  to join up notes, making them flow smoothly. If notes are not joined by a slur they are slightly more detached.

Prepare, hear and sing these tunes in the usual way, thinking about the different tempo and articulation for each.

Track 39

Allegro (or Lively)



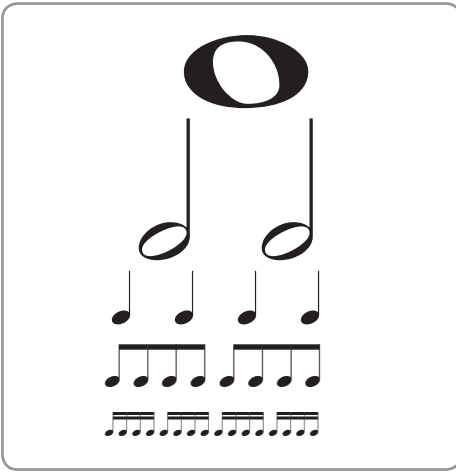
Track 40

Adagio (or Slowly)



Putting it all together

This is the family of note lengths so far and how they are related:



Here are three tunes to read that include some semiquavers.
Listen to track 5 for the note C.

Track 104

Moderato

f

Track 105

Moderato

mf

Track 106

Moderato

f

Then listen to these tunes.