

Roland Perrin

# real ear training

understand and notate music you hear

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## Introduction

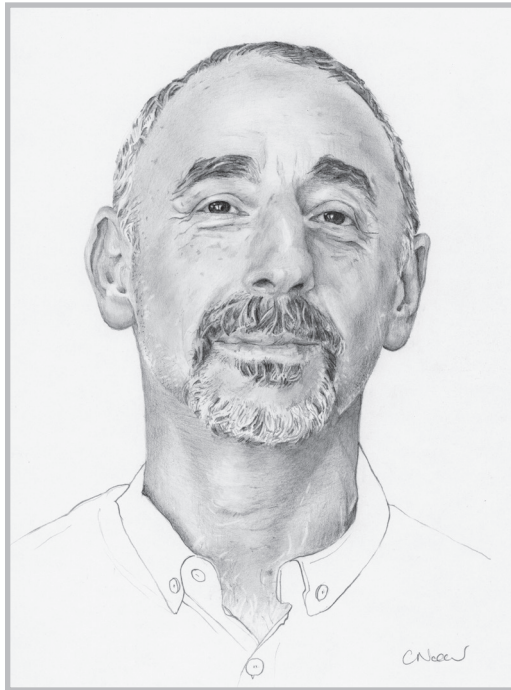
When I started out as a musician I never had a good ear, and I never had a good teacher to help me, so I ended up working out ways to teach myself. The methods I developed, and consequently present in this book, hugely improved my 'natural' ability to play and understand music by ear.

Imagine turning on the radio and hearing a good song with a great tune, beautiful chords and an irresistible bass and drums groove. You go to your instrument and play the tune. You get a piece of paper and write down the whole thing - tune, chords, bass line and drum-kit part.

This is what you will be learning in this book: how to understand and reproduce the music you hear.



*Roland Perrin*



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## How to use this book

*Real Ear Training* is for anyone wishing to develop their musical listening skills, whether you are learning through school or college, or teaching yourself. This book will take you step by step through all the processes you'll need to recognise and write down the music you hear. You'll start by covering the basics of pitch and rhythm recognition, and over 16 sessions you will progress to train your ears to hear melodies in 2 parts, over 4 octaves, and chord progressions in different inversions. You'll learn how to identify rhythms with different note values, in swing and even feel, in percussion ensembles and rhythm sections.

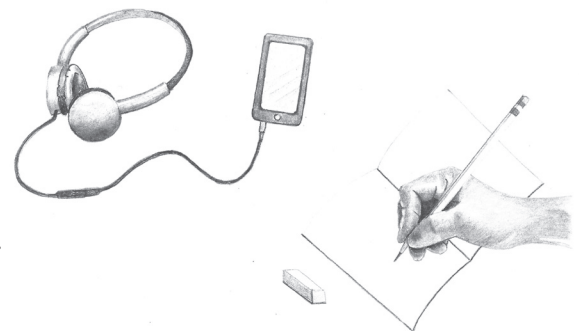
Each session looks at **(a) pitch recognition**, and **(b) rhythm**.

You'll have some **Homework** questions to tackle at the end of each half-session, with space to fill in the answers. Don't forget to check your answers at the back of the book.

At the end of each level there's a **test**, so you can make sure that you're ready to head to the next stage.

### Helpful hints

- Allow **60 minutes for each half-session**, and make sure to have a break in between! Make sure to take at least a few hours.
- Work through each session carefully; **don't skip any sections** as you'll need to put everything you've learnt together in order to progress to the next level of the book.
- Before a test, you may find it useful to complete the level's homework questions again, as revision!
- You'll need a computer or phone, headphones, a pencil and an eraser. Do not use the piano or any other instrument to help with the homework, or at any time when working with this book



### Tracks

**0.0** For online audio scan the QR code or go to [fabermusic.com/content/audio](http://fabermusic.com/content/audio). Here you'll find all of the tracks you need to complete the exercises, homework and test questions. Each track is labelled with the session number, followed by the individual track number. For example, track **1.1** is session 1, track 1.

### Reading music

You'll need just a basic knowledge of music notation to get started, and you'll find some helpful reminders of the key terms and note-values throughout the book.

The first stage of *pitch* ear training is learning how to reproduce major scale melodies. Here's a summary of the process for identifying a major melody.



**Listen** and **hum** or **sing** along with the track.

**1 3 5 4 2**

Recognise and write the degree of the major scale as **numbers**.



Close your eyes and **visualise** the notes on the stave.



**Write** the notes on manuscript paper.




**Check** your answers.

You'll find a reminder of this process throughout the book, when you see these images:




**Tip**


Melodies with higher notes and the right-hand notes on the piano use the **treble clef** .

## Developing your sense of pitch

Start with the following exercises to practise identifying the notes of the major scale.  
For each exercise:

**Tip**

 = 1 beat note

 = 1 beat rest

$\frac{4}{4}$  = 4 x  in a bar

- **listen** and **sing** the numbers along with the track
- read the notes and then sing the **numbers** without the track
- close your eyes and **visualise** the notes on the stave while singing the numbers again

Each track follows a one-bar count-in.



1.1 *sing*  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

1.2 *sing* 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 *breathe* 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

1.3 *breathe* 1 2 1 *breathe* 1 3 1 *breathe* 1 4 1 *breathe* 1 5 1

1.4 *breathe* 1 5 1 *breathe* 1 4 1 *breathe* 1 3 1 *breathe* 1 2 1

1.5 1 3 5 6 5 3 1

1.6 1 3 5 6 7 6 5 3 1

1.7 *breathe* 1 3 5 6 7 8 8 7 6 5 3 1

## Working out a melody



Use the following steps to work out and notate a major scale melody. You may like to listen again to the major scale in **1.1** to help you.

- 1 Listen to the melody on track **1.8** until you can hum along.
- 2 Identify the 1st note of the melody. (It is number **1** of the major scale.)

Sing the number **1** aloud, while you visualise it:



*If the 1st note of the melody was not 1 but, for example, the 3rd note of the scale, you would sing up from 1 until you found the correct note:*



- 3 Identify the 2nd note of the melody. Decide if it is higher or lower than the previous note. Then decide if it is a 'next-door' note or not. (In this case it is the **2**, so it is higher and next-door.) Visualise while you sing:



- 4 Identify the 3rd note of the melody. It is higher than the 2nd note but not 'next-door'. Sing up the scale until you recognise it. (It is the **4**.)



Visualise and sing the first 3 notes of the melody:



- 5 Now work out the other notes of the melody.



You will end up singing **1 2 4 3 1**. While singing you should be visualising the 1st, 2nd, 4th, 3rd and 1st notes of the C major scale in the treble clef.



### Homework

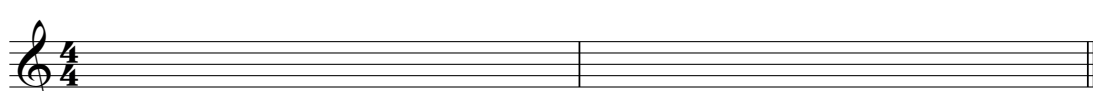
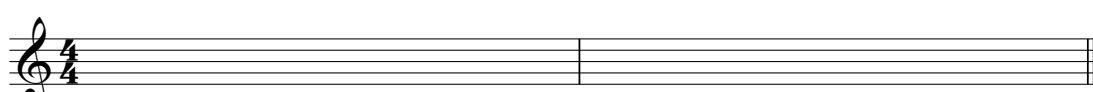
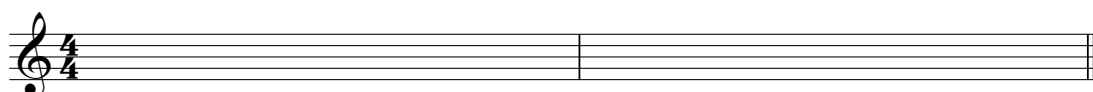
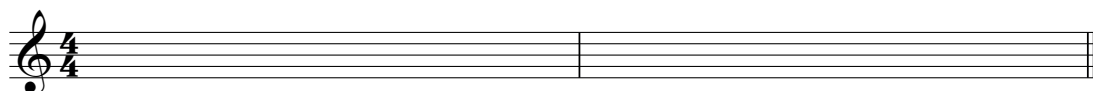
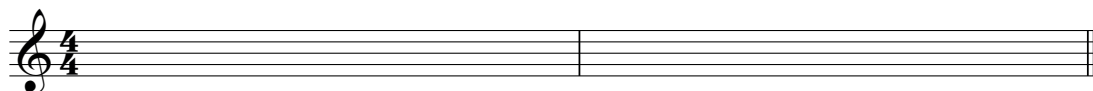
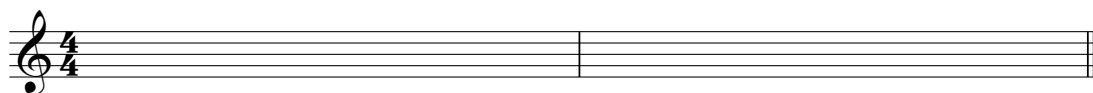


**Tip**

The count-in for each track is displayed in the top corner of each Homework section.

Notate the 9 melodies on tracks 1.9 to 1.17. Use 1.1 as a reference if needed.

- Each melody is 2 bars long and is in  $\frac{4}{4}$ . There is a one-bar count-in (see above).
- All melodies consist of  and  only.



Check your answers on page 99.



With this book, you'll discover how to understand and write down any rhythm you hear.

In this first session, you'll learn how to hear, feel and recognise the 8 different places where a note can occur in a bar of 4/4, using only ♪ and ♪♪

**Tip**



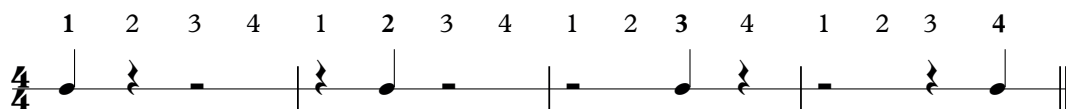
— = 2 beat rest

— = 4 beat or whole-bar rest

**On-beats**

Let's start by identifying a note as being on the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, or 4th beat of the bar. These are *on the beat*.

Listen to 1.18, counting the beats in your head.



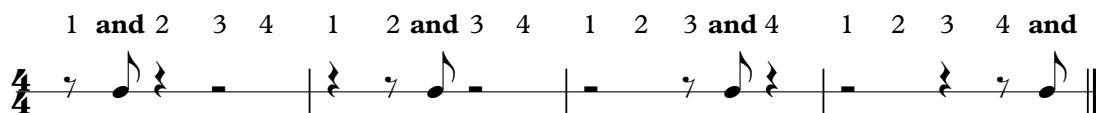
Listen again, clapping each note and counting the rests.

**Off-beats**

Here are the *off-beats* which fall in-between the strong beats.

These are called the **and** of 1, the **and** of 2, the **and** of 3, or the **and** of 4.

Listen to 1.19, counting the beats in your head.



Listen again, clapping each note and counting the rests.



## Recognising ♩ and ♪

Try these exercises to practise putting rhythms into the context of beats and bars. Clap along with each track until you are able to match the rhythm accurately. At the same time tap the pulse of 4 ♩ per bar and count aloud: 1 2 3 4.

In track 1.20, notice how the note falls on the 1st beat of bar 1, the 2nd of bar 2, the 3rd of bar 3, the 4th bar of bar 4, and then back again.

1.20

Here, the note is moved on by a ♩ in each bar.

1.21

Try clapping this exercise one line at a time, without the track. When ready, clap the whole exercise along with the track.

1.22

**Tip**

Write in the beats in each bar if you get lost.

**Tip The '3 times' rule** When mastering any musical phrase, play and repeat until you've played or clapped it without mistakes 3 times in a row. This can be anything from a single bar to a whole piece of music.

## Reproducing a rhythm

Here's the process for notating rhythms:



**Listen** to the track and **clap** along, working out where in the bar each note falls. Each track has a one-bar count-in. Repeat as many times as needed.



When working out the rhythm, **tap** the ♪ pulse with your foot and count aloud (**1, 2, 3, 4**).



**Visualise** how the rhythm appears when written down on the stave, and how it fits the bars.



**Write** the rhythms on manuscript paper.

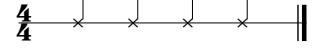


**Check** your answers.

You'll find a reminder of this process throughout the book, when you see these images:



## Homework





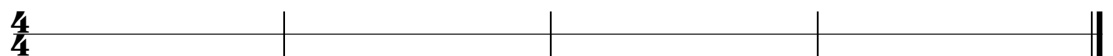
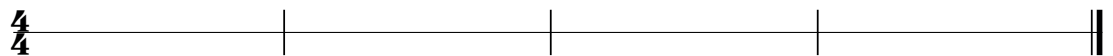
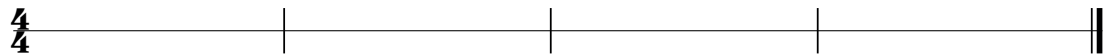
### Tip

The snare drum is one of the main drums in a drum kit. It will be discussed in more detail later in the book.



Notate the 5 snare drum rhythms on tracks **1.23** to **1.27**. Each track has a one-bar count-in and is 4 bars long.

- Tap your foot and count aloud the  pulse (the 'count'): **1, 2, 3, 4**. The pulse continues behind each rhythm.
- Clap along with the rhythm at the same time, relating it to the  pulse.
- Make sure you notate just the snare drum, and not the pulse.



Check your answers on page 99.

