

FaT Samba Music Sheets explained

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Let's go back to the beginning:-

A **Music Manuscript** is a piece of paper with groups of 5 lines drawn across its width. Each group of 5 Lines is called a **Stave**, or Staff as the Americans call it.

The 5 Lines have 4 spaces in between them. There are 2 more spaces, 1 above and 1 below.

In our Percussion Band, we only use the Spaces, as we only need 6 different sounds and it makes it easier to read. (*Musicians use the lines, as well, to give 12 different sounds.*)

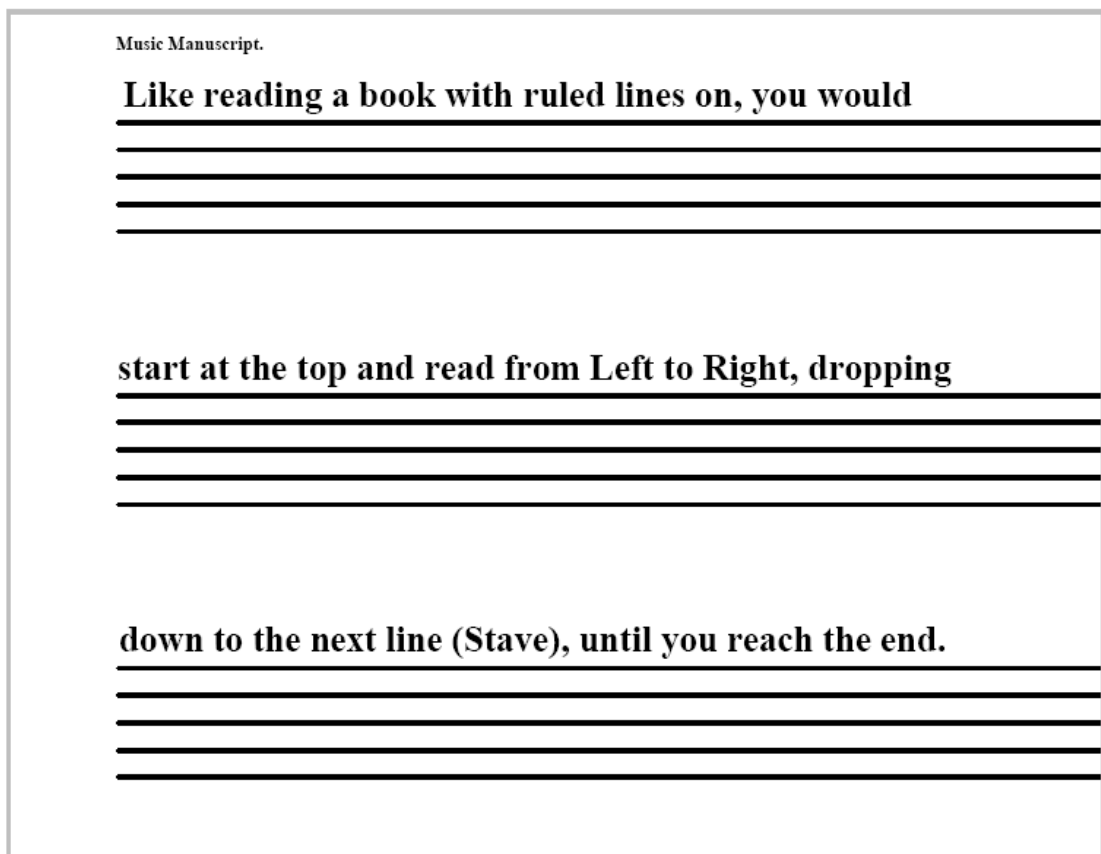


Figure 3-1

The example above, Figure 3-1, shows 3 staves for 1 Instrument or 1 Group of Instruments, all playing the same rhythms, at the same time. However, we have 9 Groups of Instruments in our band, all playing different rhythms, at the same time. This is solved by 3 methods, all of which we use.

The first solution is to have more than one Stave at a time. These Staves are linked together by a single vertical line at the beginning of the Staves. A different Group of Instruments uses each Stave. Because the Staves are linked together, it shows that they are all played at the same time, with their own rhythms. Figure 3-2 shows how they are linked.

In Figure 3-2, you'll see that we have started to add some more lines to the Staves. The vertical lines are called a **Bar lines**. They mark the beginning and end of a Bar.

A **Bar** is a measure of time. Each Bar contains **Beats**, the number of which is decided at the beginning of the Stave – but more of that later...

The **double Bar Line** at the end marks not only the end of the 2nd Bar but also the End of the **Phrase**. In Figure 3-2 we are showing a 2 Bar Phrase, but there can be more Bars per Phrase.

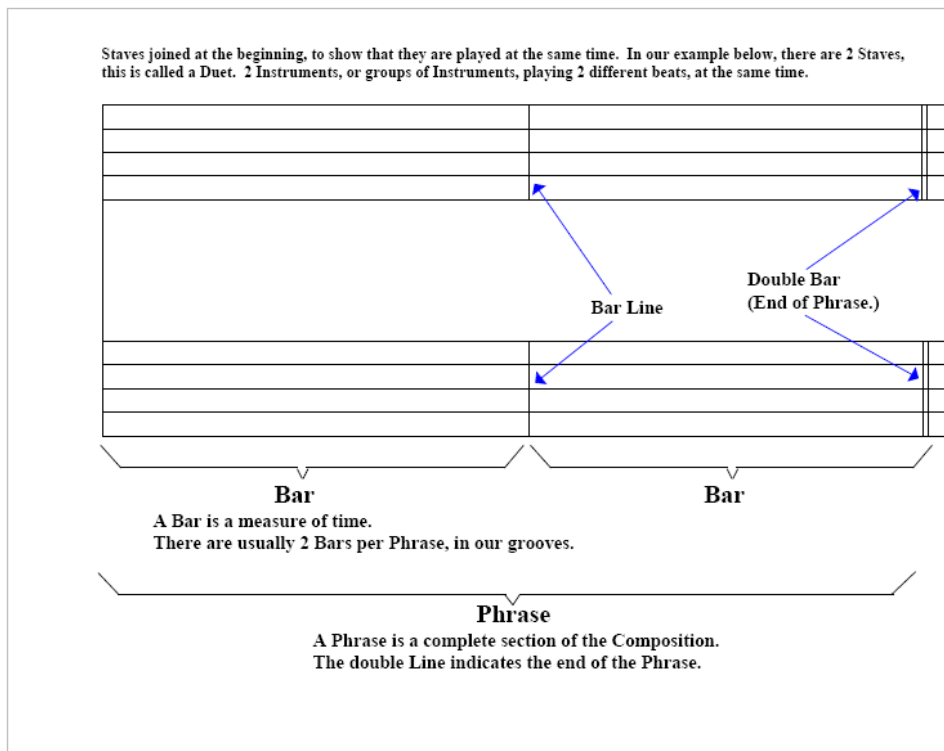


Figure 3-2

Sometimes the Music is longer than the width of the manuscript (*paper*). In our Grooves, this happens when there are more than 2 Bars in a Phrase. Figure 3-3 shows how each Instrument reads the Music. In this example, the Timba players follow the second space in the Middle Stave of the top Stave Group and then the second space in the Middle stave of the bottom Group of Staves and so on, until the end of the phrase is reached. (In my example this is on the Bottom Group of Staves.)

Likewise the Low Surdo players will follow the space below the bottom Stave of each group of Staves.

Everyone plays together, at the same time and speed, following their appropriate Stave Space.

If you're not mentioned in the Set of Staves, you don't play anything. See the [Butterfly Beach Break](#) for an example of this.

Each Stave, especially the ones that are linked together are spaced out the same, so each player can see what the other players are playing at the same time as them. Once a Stave has Clefs and Notes written on them, they are called **Scores**.

A Score consists of 1 or more Phrases. Sometimes a Phrase needs to be repeated. This is shown by a Colon (:) at the start and end of the Section to be repeated. As Our Grooves are mainly a single Phrase that is repeated many times, you'll come across this |: and :| quite a lot. A Fill and a Break on the other hand is usually a single Phrase that does not repeat (there are exceptions) and so they do not have the colon symbols, just | and ||. See Figure 3-3, for examples of repeat markers and Figure 3-2 for examples of no repeats.

A Bar has Beats, usually 4 in our Grooves, the number of Beats is shown before the first Bar Line. The number under it is the size of the beat. (The length of time it lasts.) Please see list below.

The length of time that a whole beat lasts depends on the BPM (Beats Per Minute), so 60BPM means that 1 Beat lasts 1 Second, as our Grooves are usually 120BPM, they last for 0.5 Seconds.

So if you see 4 over 4 at the start of a Score, then it means that there are 4 Beats to the Bar and each one is a Crochet in length. A beat can be split into smaller bits, but each fragmented Bar must last for the allocated length of 4 Crochets.

E.g. 2 x Quavers last the same time as 1 Crochet. Likewise 1 x Quaver and 2 x Semi Quavers.

The figure shows a musical score for three instruments: Agogo, Timba, and Low Surdo, in 4/4 time. The score is divided into four bars, labeled 'Bar 1' through 'Bar 4'. Each instrument part is written on a staff. The Agogo part consists of quarter notes. The Timba part consists of quarter notes with rests. The Low Surdo part consists of quarter notes with rests. A red dashed line with arrows indicates the 'Start' of the sequence at the beginning of Bar 1 and the 'Finish (Repeat sequence)' at the end of Bar 4. A blue bracket on the right side of the first two staves indicates that 'All 3 play together' during this time. The rests in the Low Surdo part are marked with a vertical line and a '1' or '2' under the staff, indicating the beat number.

Figure 3-3

Everyone plays together, following their appropriate Space in the Score. If you're not mentioned in the Set of Staves, you don't play anything. See the [Butterfly Beach Break](#) for an example of this.

When we play our Grooves, we step the **Tempo** with our feet. Left, Right, Left, Right.... Each Step is the start of a Beat. This is shown on our scores by a – under the Staff, with the number of the Bar's Beat (1 to 4). Or, sometimes we use a coloured vertical line to show the Beats.

You can also count in your head the Tempo, to help you keep in time with the Groove. The usual way to count Quavers (half beats) is to count "1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &".

Not every Beat, ½ Beat or Quarter beat is played. The silence beats are called **Rests**.

The Low Surdo is often played with 1 Stick and the Left hand. A Crochet Rest is played with the Left hand, to silence the Drum. For this reason, Minim's are used on the Low Surdo's Scores to show that when a Beat has been played, it is not to be silenced by another note or by the Left hand, on the following Beat. – See Figure 3-3 for an example of this. (The other drums do not resonate as long as the Low Surdo so they do not normally need to be silenced in this way.)

We know **which note is ours**, by the height of the note on the staff.

We know **when to hit the drum** by the position and type of Notes that are written in the spaces on the Staff.

We know **how long the Beat lasts for**, by the shape of the note and the distance it is from the next note.

We know **when to hit the Rim of the drum**, or the sticks together, by an “x” above the note.

We know **when to hit the drum louder** by the < sign above the note.

Any deviation from this is notated on the Manuscript, accordingly.

By rule of thumb, a score that has several instruments playing the same rhythm has a single row of Notes in the space below the Middle Line.

The notes that are above the Middle line tend to have the leg below the note, and the lower notes have the leg above the note.

The pretty Treble Clef is used to show that it is the higher pitched instruments and the Reversed C Bass Clef is used to show that it is the lower pitched drums.

4 The Top number of Beats per Bar.

4 The Bottom number is the length of the Beat.

Where 4 = a Crochet (whole Beat).

Minum	2 Beats	=	hollow oval with leg
Crotchet	1 Beat	=	solid oval with a leg
Quaver	½ Crochet	=	solid oval with a tail on the leg
Semi Quaver	½ Quaver	=	solid oval with 2 tails on the leg
Demi Quaver	½ Semi Quaver	=	solid oval has 3 tails on the leg.

2 Quavers together have the 1st Quaver’s tail touching the 2nd Quaver’s tail, which is pointing forwards.

Full Beat (Crochet) Rest = 3

Half Beat (Quaver) Rest = 7

Quarter Beat Rest = 7 with 2 horizontal bars instead of the one.

BPM equals the Beats per Minute.

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