

PDQB Level 3 – Theory

Before beginning the Level 3 Course students should ensure they have a sound knowledge of the topics covered in the Level 2 Course including:

- How Pitch is represented in music notation
- The Treble Clef
- Simple Notes and the Table of Relative Note Values
- Lengthening and Shortening notes (Dots and Cuts)
- Laying out the Stave

Section 1 – Rests

A rest is defined as a period of silence and each note value will have its equivalent rest.

Here is each note along with it's equivalent rest:

**THE SEMIBREVE
REST**



Equal in value to



**THE MINIM
REST**



Equal in value to



**THE CROTCHET
REST**



Equal in value to



**THE QUAVER
REST**



Equal in value to



**THE SEMI-QUAVER
REST**



Equal in value to



**THE DEMI-SEMI QUAVER
REST**



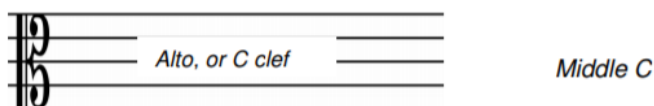
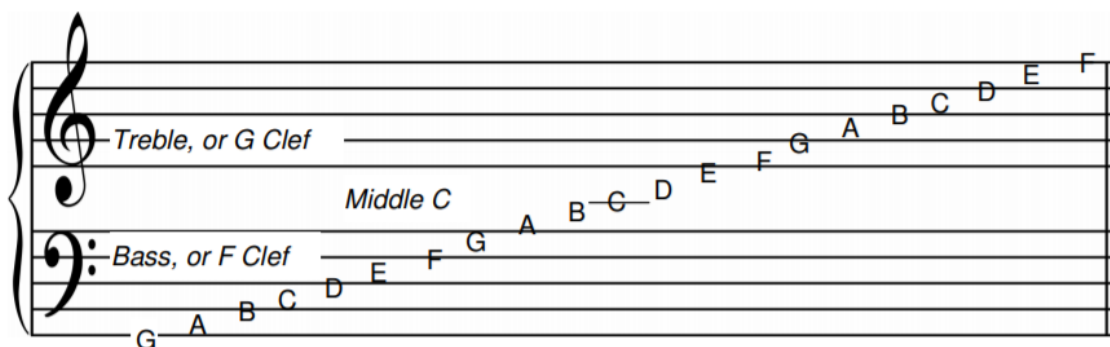
Equal in value to



Rests can be lengthened in the same way as notes by having a dot or dots added to it

Section 2 – The Great Staff, Clefs and The Compass of the Bagpipes

THE GREAT STAFF



The Great Staff covers the full range or 'COMPASS' of the highest to lowest voices. The term 'VOICES' is used to describe instruments as well as human voices.

The voice ranges fall into roughly three groups.

The highest or **'TREBLE'**
The mid, or **'ALTO'**
The lowest, or **'BASS'**

These are shown by using signs called 'CLEFS'.

The Great Staff is normally only used for instruments such as piano, organ or harp, which are capable of producing the full range of notes.

The Great Staff is divided into two short staves, the middle line is omitted.

Instruments which have a short compass use the 'SHORT STAFF' consisting of 5 lines and 4 spaces. The lines and spaces of both the Great Staff and the Short Staff are named from the lowest upwards.

THE SHORT STAFF AND CLEFS

The Short Staff consists of 5 lines and 4 spaces and is used for voices that do not require the full Compass of the Great Staff.

All bagpipe music is written on a Short Staff.

When the Short Staff is used a sign is placed at the beginning of the Staff which fixes the pitch of the music to be played in either TREBLE, ALTO or BASS range. In Pipe Band music, the Great Staff consists of two short staves, namely TREBLE and BASS.

This sign is called a "CLEF", a French word meaning KEY.

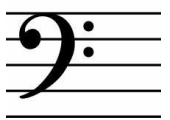
There are three types of Clefs, the Treble, or 'G' Clef, the Alto or 'C' Clef and the Bass or 'F' Clef.



The five lines above Middle 'C' on which bagpipe music is written is the treble part of the Great Staff. The "TREBLE" or 'G' Clef is said to be a distortion of an old letter 'G' and curls round the 'G' line on the staff.



Based on Middle 'C', the 'C' clef is used for the intermediate range. More than one form of this sign exists although whichever is used it must indicate clearly Middle 'C'. This illustration shows Middle 'C' at the central point where the two curves meet.



The five lines below Middle 'C' is the bass part of the Great Staff and the line where the sign originates and curls round is the 'F' line. This is the group on which the Bass and Tenor Drum notations are written for Pipe Bands.

The Compass of the bagpipe

Range of Chanter Scale

G A B C D E F G A

Middle C

Leger Line

Bass Drone Tenor Drone Bass Drum Tenor Drum

✚

All tuned relative to Low A on the Chanter

Section 3 – Kinds of Time and Simple Time Signatures

Most music played has a natural and definite pattern of **beats** or **pulses** running through it forming a basic **rhythm**. Without pulse patterns music would sound dull and monotonous.

Rhythm is the regular recurrence of the strong and weak **accents** arising from the division of the music into Bars.

These rhythmical patterns generally fall into three groups **DUPLE – TRIPLE - QUADRUPLE**

The 2 pulse pattern is called “DUPLE TIME”

The pulse pattern for Duple Time is **Strong - Weak**

The 3 pulse pattern is called “TRIPLE TIME”

The pulse pattern for triple time is **Strong – Weak - Weak**

The 4 pulse patter is called “QUADRUPLE TIME”

The pulse pattern for Quadruple time is **Strong – Weak - Medium - Weak**

The SCQF Level 3 Bagpipes Syllabus requires a knowledge of the 4 Simple Time Signatures commonly used in bagpipe music. Simple time signatures are where the value of a beat is one of the simple notes from our Table of Relative Note Values ie – Minims, Crotchets and Quavers.

The time signature is the 2 numbers placed at the beginning of the tune after the clef sign.

In simple time signatures the top number tells us the number of beats in the bar and the bottom number tells us the value of the beat.

Here are the Simple Time Signatures we need to know:



The top number tells us there are 2 beats to the bar. The 4 tells us that the value of a beat is a quarter note (Crotchet)

This is an example of SIMPLE DUPLE Time.



The top number tells us there are 3 beats to the bar. The 4 tells us that the value of a beat is a quarter note (Crotchet)

This is an example of SIMPLE TRIPLE Time.



The top number tells us there are 4 beats to the bar. The bottom 4 tells us that the value of a beat is a quarter note (Crotchet)

This is an example of SIMPLE QUADRUPLER Time.

4/4 is also known as Common Time and is often symbolised by placing a letter C in place of the time signature. For Example



The fourth Simple Time Signature we need to know about is 2/2 or Cut-Common Time

Reels are written in 2/2

Fiona MacLeod

PM Donald MacLeod



The top number tells us there are 2 beats to the bar. The bottom 2 tells us that the value of a beat is a half note (Minim)

This is an another example of SIMPLE DUPLER Time.

The letter C with a vertical line through it can be used to represent Cut-Common Time or 2/2



Section 4 – Notation of Bagpipe Music

The SCQF Level 3 Exam requires you to be able to notate all the embellishments required for the practical part of this level so refer to the Exercise sheet and practice writing these out.

You will be asked to write music notation from memory using correct Time Signatures, Clefs and Bar Lines for one part (eight bars) of one of the simple time tunes you submit in your practical.

Practise these and compare your results with the original score until your music writing is fully accurate.