



What is a Measure?

In real life, we communicate time with hours. These hours can add up to make days, but they can also be broken down into smaller segments called minutes and even seconds. In music, the unit of time we use is called a **MEASURE**. The notes that we will play will all fit within the context of a measure.

You remember, the time signature tells us how many beats (counts) will be in each measure. We've already mentioned that in 4/4 time, there are 4 beats per measure. Therefore, each time we count "1, 2, 3, 4" it will be one full measure. **Measures are also commonly called "BARS."**

In a 4-count, "1, 2, 3, 4," = 1 measure

Counting Measures

Measures are a way to communicate how long something will be played in music. For example, it is common to say that we will be playing something for 8 or even 16 measures. It is necessary at times to keep track of how many measures you are playing (or have played) at certain points in a song.

When counting measures, you'll soon find that it is easy to get distracted and that repeating the same count over and over can quickly become confusing. To help with this, we'll use a handy trick:

Instead of counting: "1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 3, 4"

We would count: "1, 2, 3, 4, 2, 2, 3, 4, 3, 2, 3, 4, 4, 2, 3, 4"

When we add the measure count to the beginning of each new measure, it makes it easy to keep track of where we are as we play.



Practice counting out 4 measures using this method. Then try and count out 8 measures. Be sure to count out loud!