



## It's About Time

As we learn about music, you'll soon realize that playing music is all about "time." In real life, we need to keep track of time in order to keep us on schedule. Well, in music we have methods of time that everyone follows and understands so that we all play together and things sound orderly and nice.

The "COUNT" is basically what gives us our entire frame of reference as we play. Every musician in a band, orchestra, etc., is following the exact same count at the exact same time. That is how music sounds orderly. Before we can play a beat, we need to know the count to guide us.

## I'm Ready To Play...How Do I Know the Count To Use?

Without getting too deep into music theory, it is important to know that each piece of music has something called a TIME SIGNATURE that all the musicians use as a guide to get the necessary info needed to start playing. In short, this is how we will find our count.



A time signature looks like this. This is a time signature for 4/4 time.

## The TIME SIGNATURE tell us 3 key pieces of information:

- 1 - The count we will follow as we play
- 2 - How long each measure will be (how many beats are in a measure)
- 3 - What type of note each beat will be

Time signatures have 2 numbers - the first number tells us how many beats (counts) are in each measure and the second number tells us what kind of note those beats will be. (4=quarter note & 8=8th note)

$$\frac{4}{4} = \frac{\text{The number of beats in each measure}}{\text{The type of note each beat is}}$$

Above we have a 4/4 time signature, The 4/4 tells us is that there are 4 beats in each measure, and also that each beat will be a quarter note. **Each beat will also be our count, so if there are 4 beats per measure, then our count is: "1, 2, 3, 4."**