



Before we go any further, you will need to learn a few basic things about musical notes, how they are related to each other and work together to create music. Larger notes can be broken down into smaller notes for different uses.

As you listen to music, you will notice that some notes play quickly and some last longer. Some notes are rapidly played together and some have longer spaces between them. Each of the notes we will learn have a specific duration. Learning what they are and how to use them and how to group them together is how music is made.

It Starts With A Whole Note

To get started, we already learned about measures and that a 4-count measure has 4 beats (counts). The largest type of note is the **WHOLE NOTE** and since there are 4 beats per measure in 4/4 time, a whole note will last for 4 beats, counted "1, 2, 3, 4." Let's take a look at all the ways we can subdivide notes, starting with the whole note, which takes up a complete, 4-count measure.

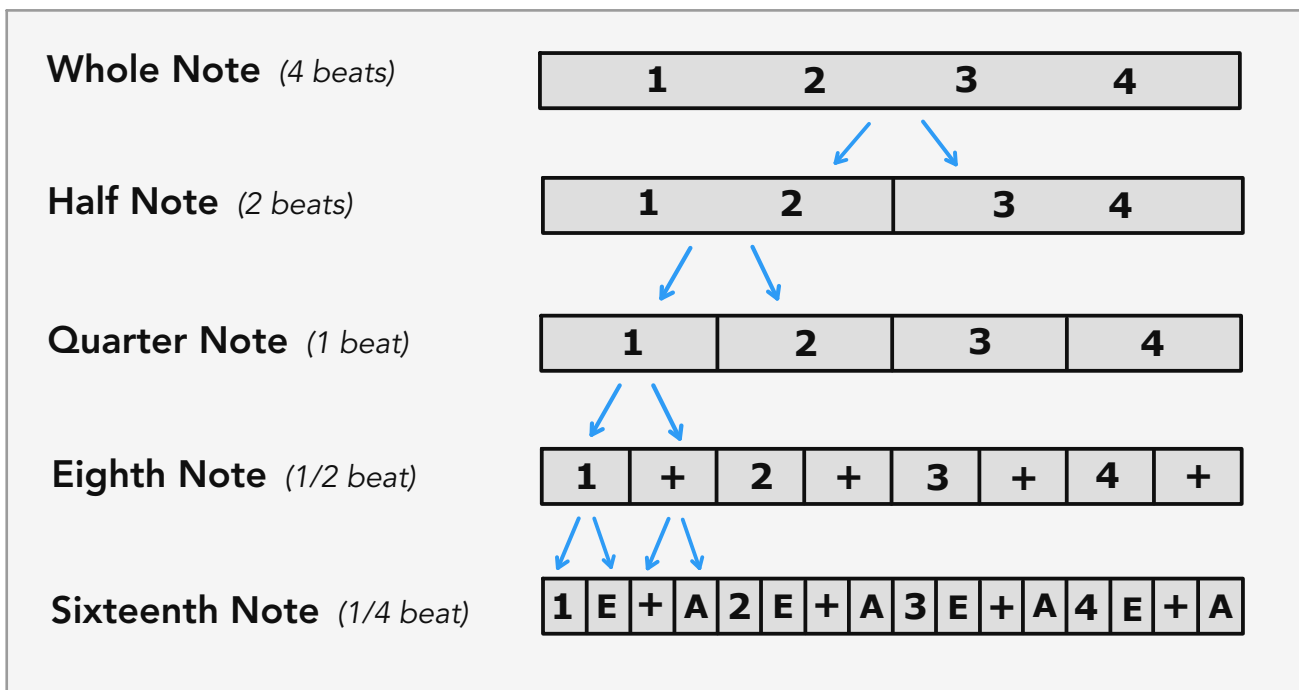


Figure 6-1

The blue arrows indicate how each larger note **SUBDIVIDES**, breaking into two smaller notes. Note that the two new smaller notes take up the same space as the larger note above each of them.



Quarter, Eighth & Sixteenth Notes

Our focus will primarily be on quarter, eighth and sixteenth notes, so it is important to understand them and the space that they take up. Quarter notes have a lot more empty space (nothing being played) between them than sixteenth notes do, for example.

If we were to play a few measures of quarter notes and then a few measures of sixteenth notes, you would hear many more hits in rapid succession from the sixteenth notes compared to the quarter notes.

15 minutes per day

Lesson 6 - "Hands On" Exercises

- Study figure 6-1. Starting with the whole note, see how each note breaks in half into 2 smaller notes. This continues all the way down to the bottom where we have sixteenth notes.
- Starting with the sixteenth notes at the bottom of Figure 6-1, reverse the process and note how the smaller notes take up the same space as the larger note above. (2 eighth notes become 1 quarter note)
- How many quarter notes are in a 1 measure? (There are 4)
- How many eighth notes makes up 1 measure? (There are 8)
- How many sixteenth notes are in a quarter note? (There are 4)

Why It Matters

Realizing that within a large note there are many smaller notes that could be played gives you options for creativity. Understanding how these small notes all work together to create large notes is important