The ABC CLARINET TUTOR

By **Alun Cook**

Guidance for teachers and pupils

This book is designed for use WITH help from a teacher. It is not a "teach-yourself" book. You could probably do quite well under your own steam, and although I have put in many explanations, there are lots of things left unsaid which would be provided by an expert tutor. Nothing (as all teachers know!) beats a good teacher.

Why did I write it? Because the modern generation of tutor books leave something to be desired:

+ This is purely a Clarinet Tutor and does not try to fit in with teaching other instruments at the same time. It goes at a gentle pace and uses the easiest path to the fastest progress.

+ There is masses of material - your average student will probably miss out much of the early material - the high flyer will rattle through at a great rate. The students who struggles in the early stages should have plenty of progressive work to help them.

+ The book is designed to produce good sight-readers. There are some tutor books which are so full of familiar tunes that many students who complete the book can hardly read at all, relying on their ears and guesswork. There are many familiar tunes in this book, but they need to be discovered - rarely do they have obvious titles.

+ There are plenty of duets, trios and clapping games to keep groups interested.

+ The more complex fingerings and rhythms at the end of the book (beyond the upper register section) are mostly in the low register in case these sections need to be covered early for ensemble work.

+ There are not many dynamics marked, and in general everything should be played loudly with a strong tone (unless it is a lullaby or similar).

Pupils need to know that the magic ingredient to playing any instrument is PRACTICE - and that means playing every day, but more importantly, "playing" is not necessarily "practising". Practice is about understanding why you can't play something and getting to the root of the problem. Playing a whole piece through several times probably means that you are "practising" your mistakes (i.e. getting better at playing it wrongly). Work out where the problem is (it is usually just moving between 2 notes) and try to master the change..

I have been using this book with my pupils for many years now, and it is a popular download from the SibeliusMusic website. It will remain FREE on this website but I would hope that many users would like to download the piano accompaniments for the two sets of early concert pieces, "A Rocking Week" an "Stepping Down". These enable players of a very elementary standard to perform satisfying concert pieces.

I always welcome any feedback, corrections, comments or suggestions.

(You can download a colour cover for this book on www.aluncookmusic.com in PDF format)

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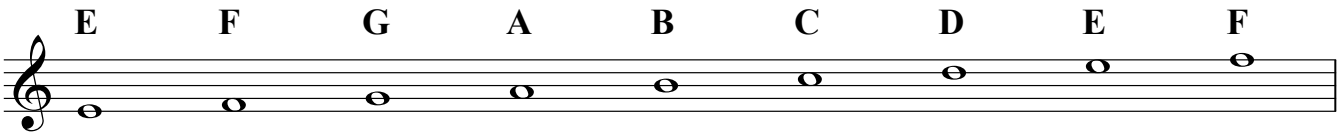
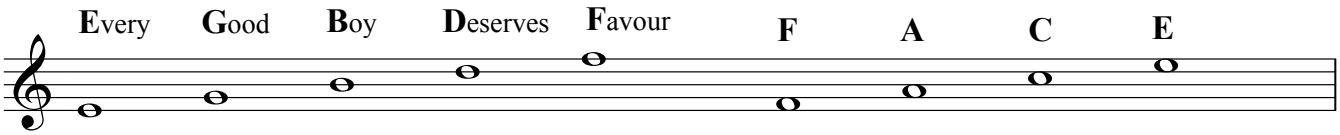
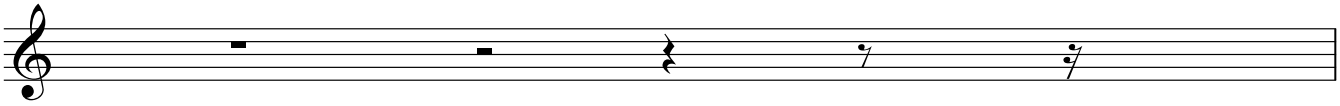




THE NOTES ON THE LINES

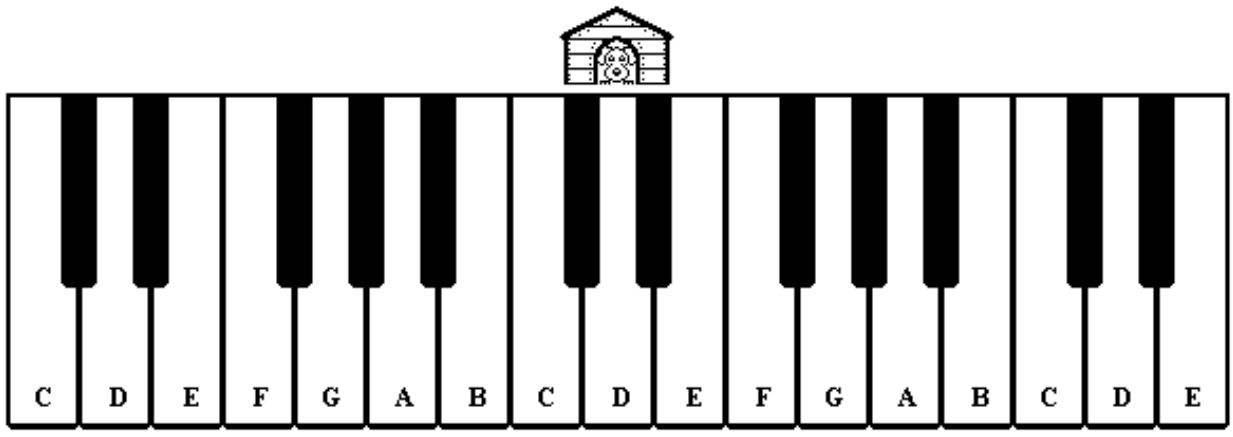
THE NOTES IN THE SPACES

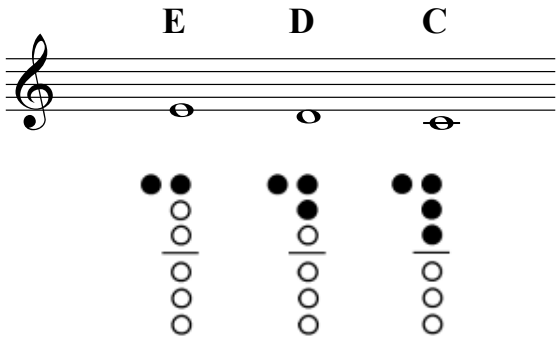
𝅝	SEMIBREVE = 4 Beats	(whole note)
𝅗𝅥	MINIM = 2 Beats	(half note)
♩	CROTCHET = 1 Beat	(quarter note)
♪	QUAVER = ½ Beat	(eighth note)
𝅘𝅥𝅯	SEMIQUAVER = ¼ Beat	(sixteenth note)



RESTS: SEMIBREVE or a whole bar rest — MINIM — CROTCHET — QUAVER — SEMIQUAVER

It is really useful to understand the piano keyboard. If you are new to this and do not know the note names, look for the "Dog in the Kennel". To explain, the black notes go in a series of 2 then 3 then 2 then 3 etc. Find a group of 2 (that's the "Kennel") and the note in the Kennel is D (for Dog!)



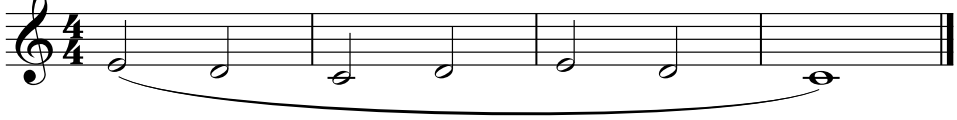


= CROTCHET = 1 beat

= MINIM = 2 beats

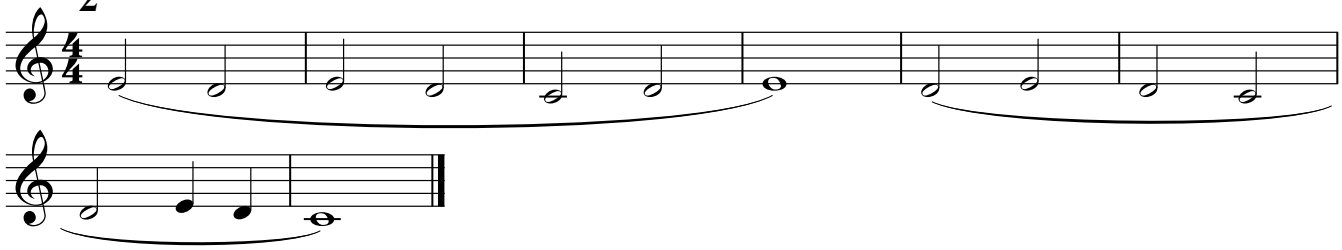
= SEMIBREVE = 4 beats

1



The curved lines under the notes are called "slurs". They ask you to play the notes smoothly (all in one breath).

2



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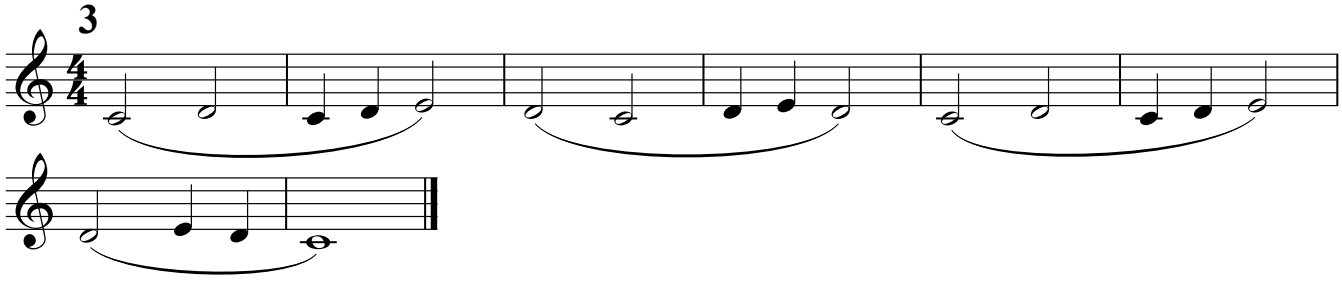

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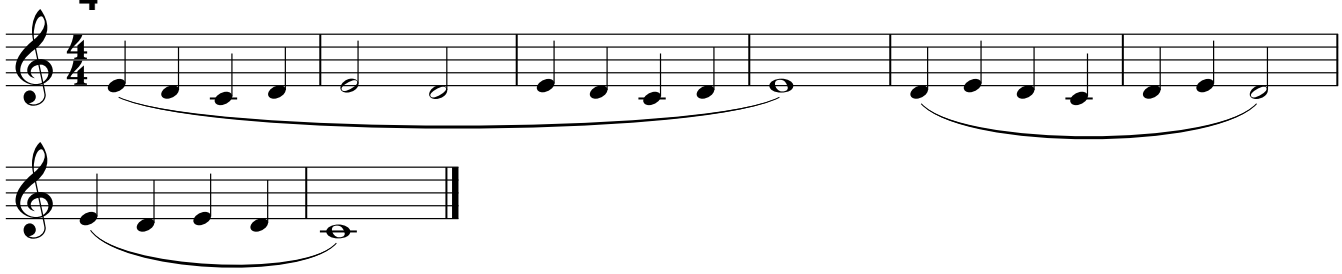

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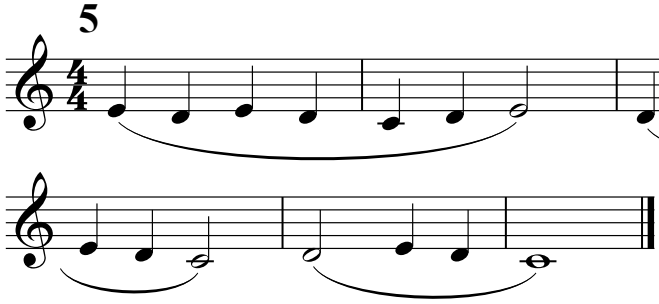

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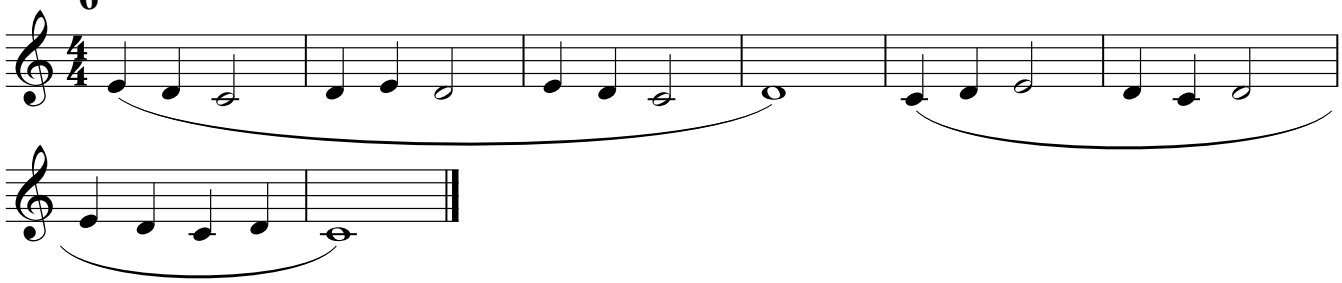
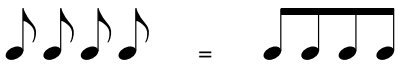


When you have several quavers together they are usually joined with a line at the top or bottom called a beam.

= QUAVER worth half a beat - (half a crotchet)



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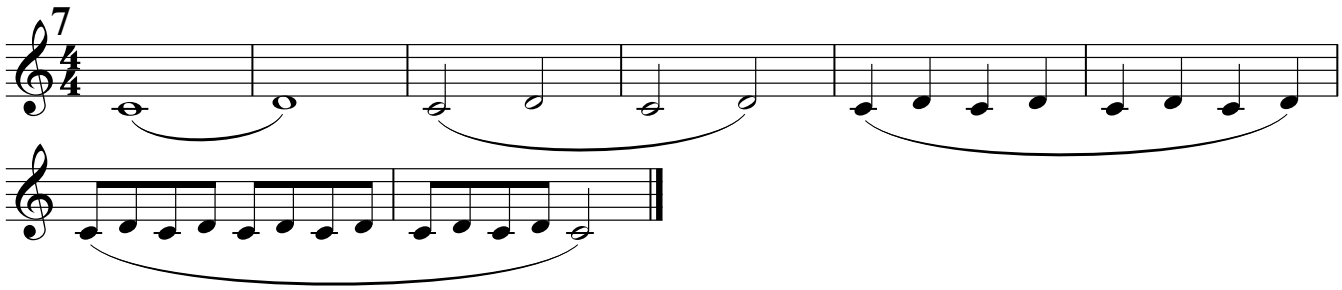

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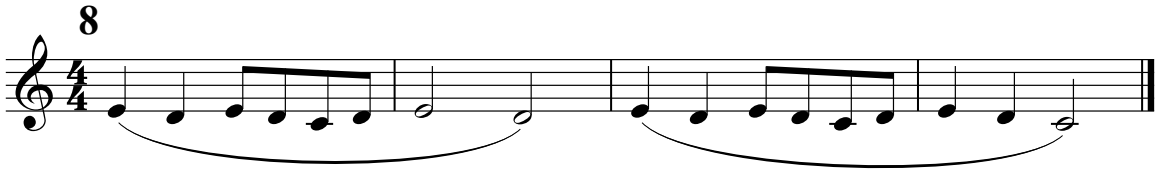

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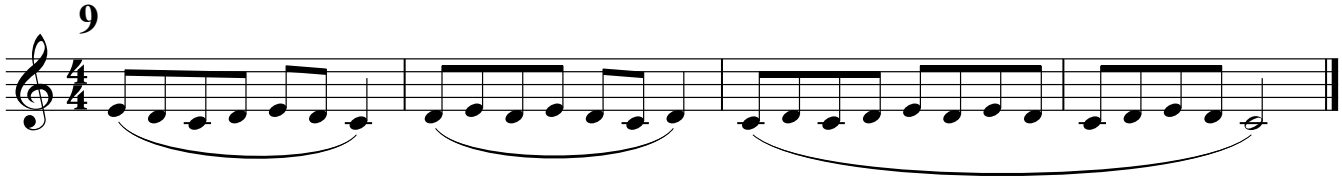


= DOTTED MINIM = 3 Beats

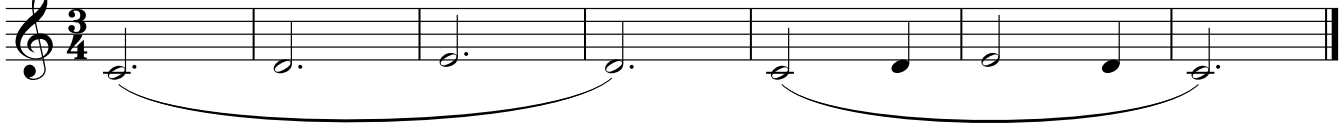
TAKE YOUR PICK FROM THESE EXPLANATIONS
* The dot makes the note 50% longer
* The dot increases the length of the note by half its original value
* Cut the note in half - add the half on
* 2 + half of 2 = 3

3
4

NEW TIME SIGNATURE
The top number tells you how many beats there are in every bar

The bottom number tells you which type of beats are being used - i.e. 4 at the bottom means count in crotchets

10



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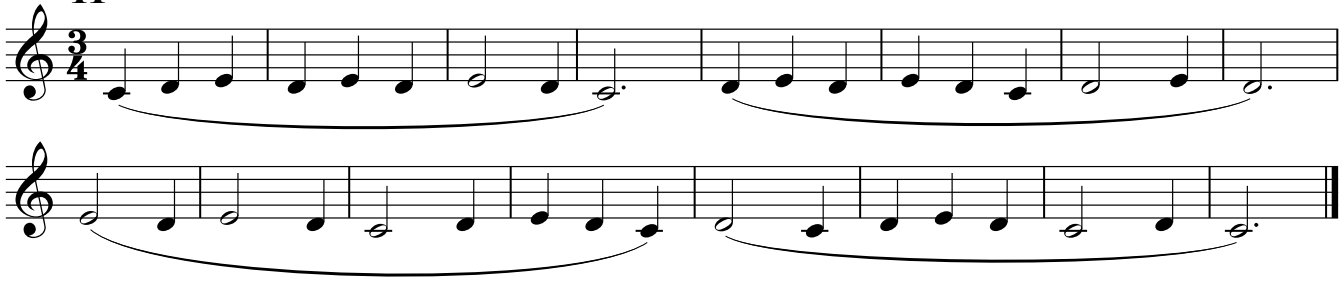

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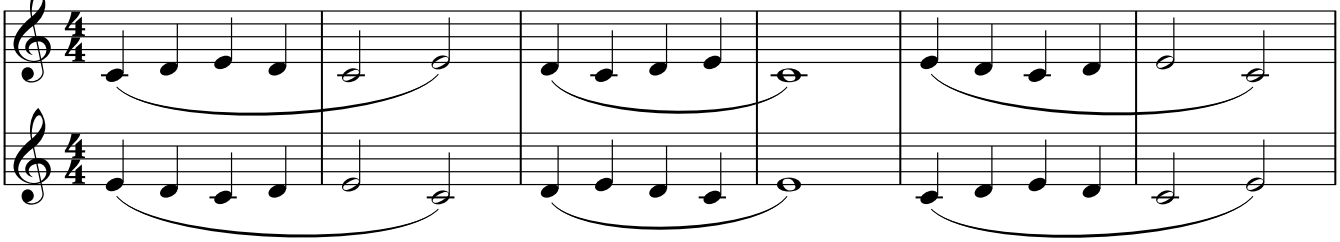
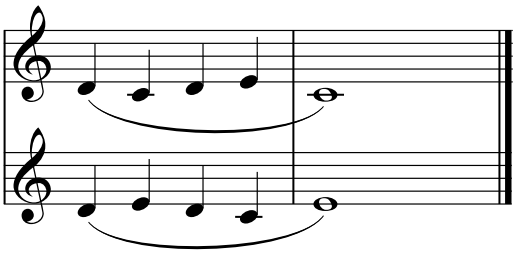
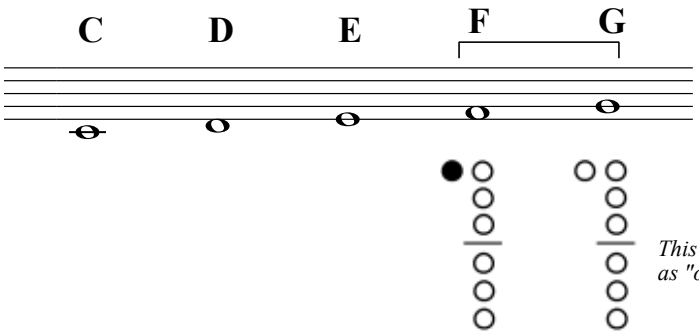




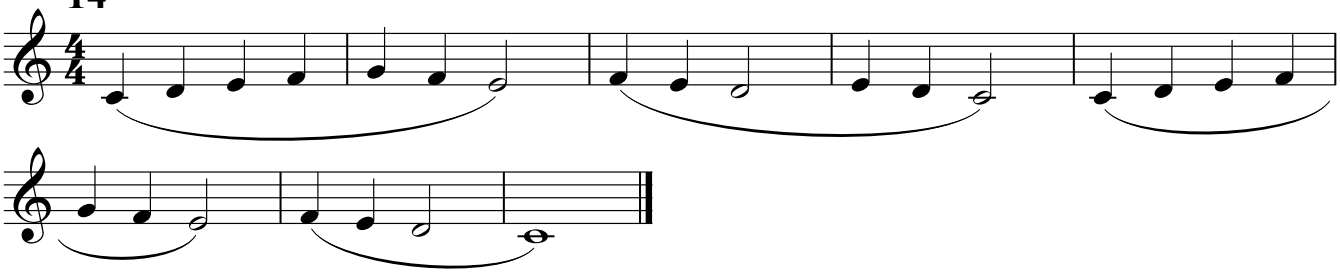
Always start your practice by playing without music. Playing tunes by ear is great! Although we have only learned 3 notes written down, you will have been shown enough notes to be able to play plenty of tunes by ear:
Frere Jacques
Londons Burning
London Bridge is falling down
Away in a Manger
Happy Birthday

NEW NOTES



This "G" is known as "open G"

14



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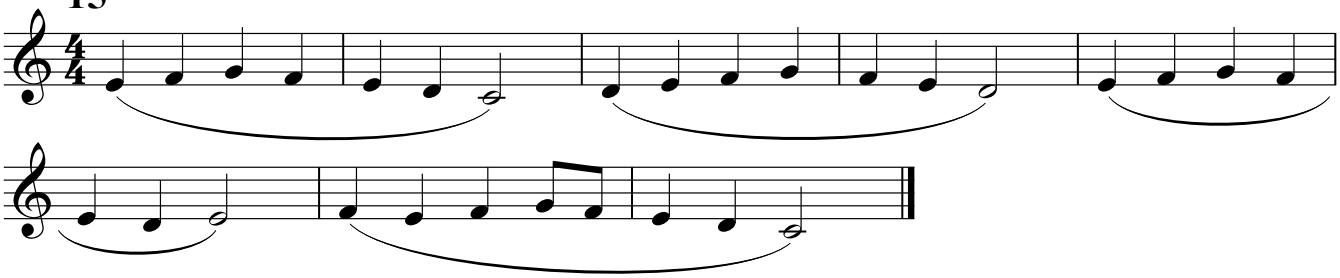
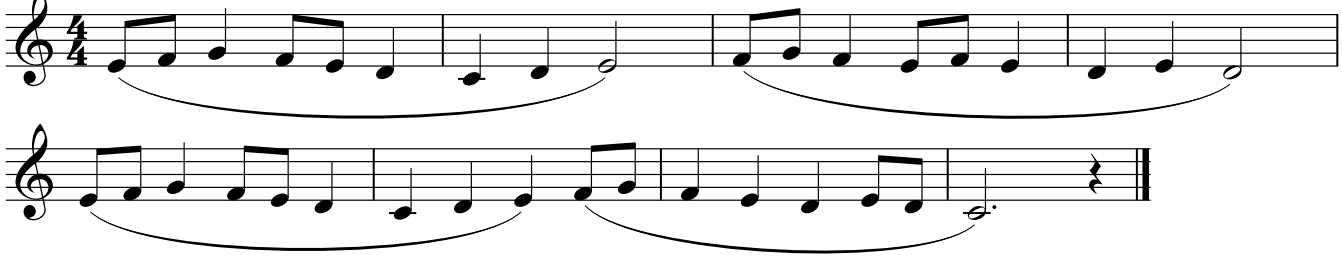
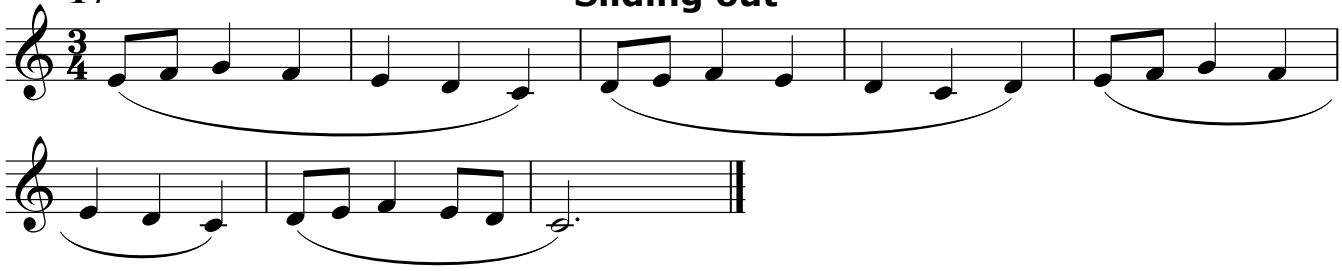


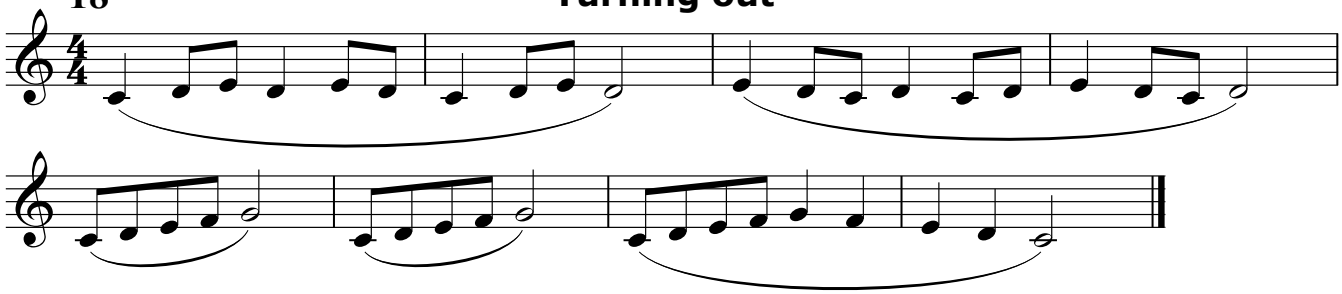
16 **Stepping out**



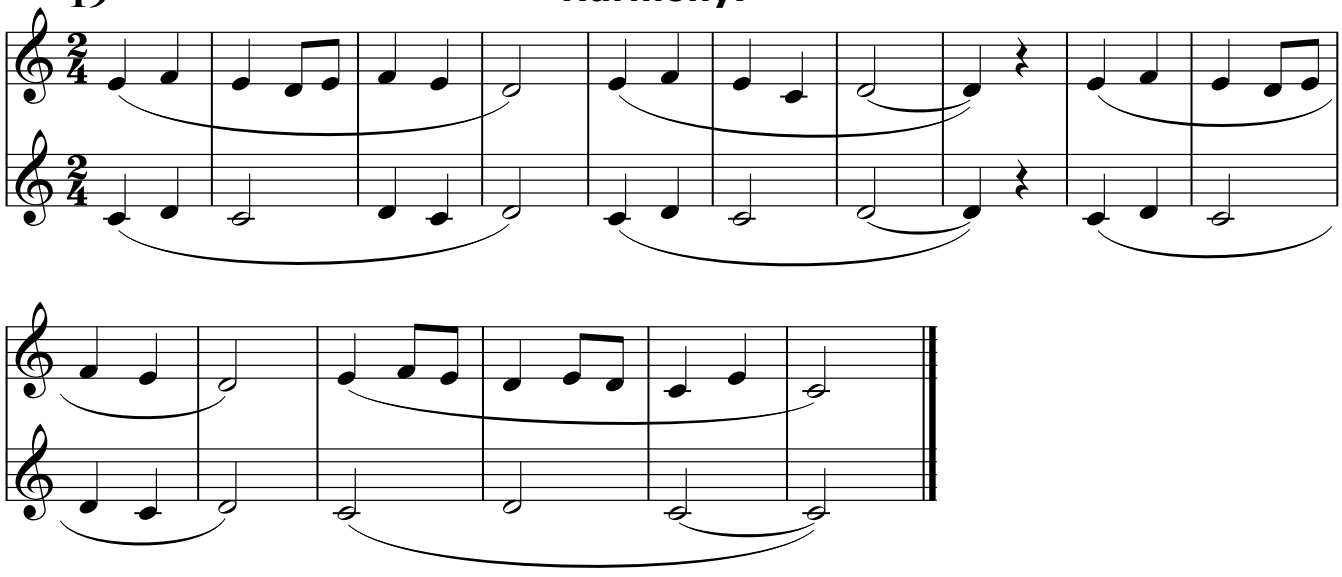
17 **Sliding out**



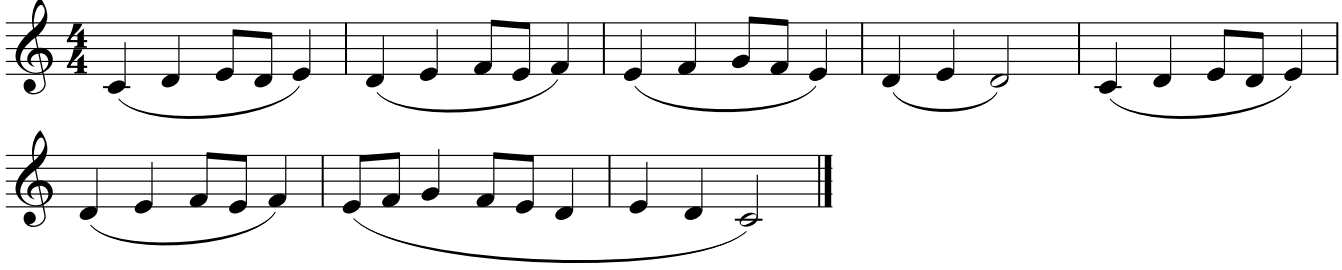
18 **Turning out**



19 **Harmony!**

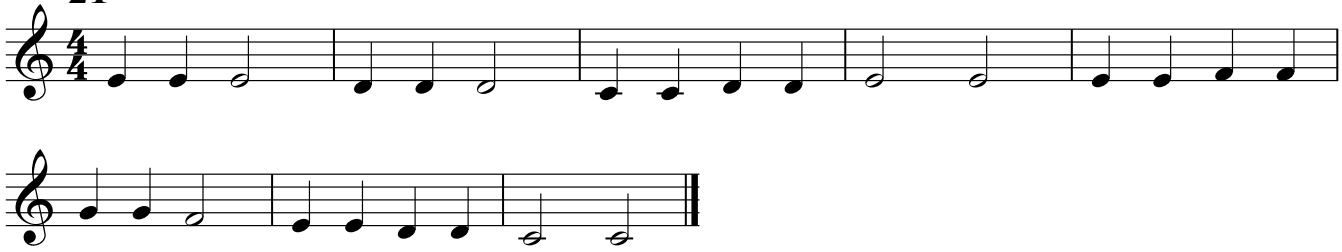


20 **Melody**



T-T-T-TONGUING

21



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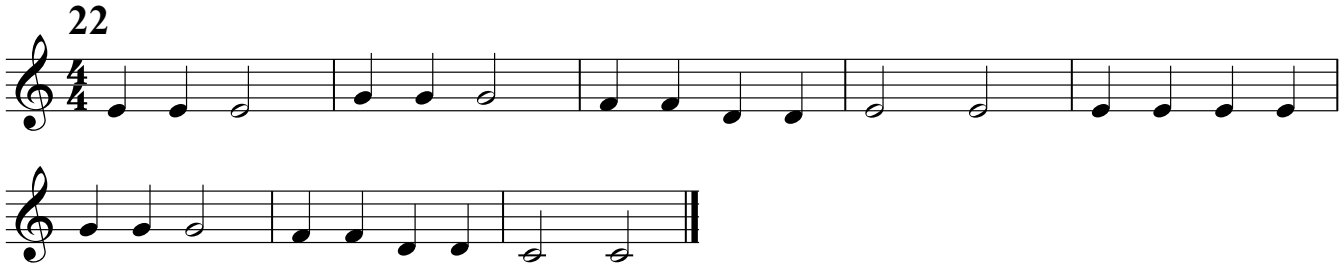
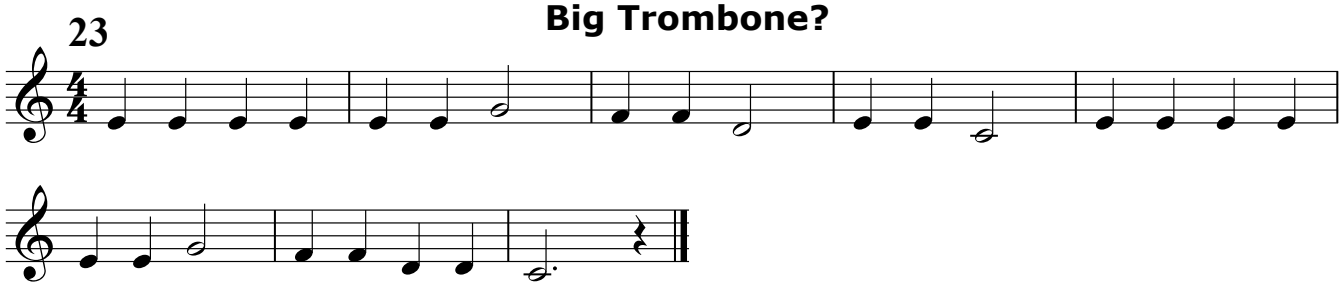


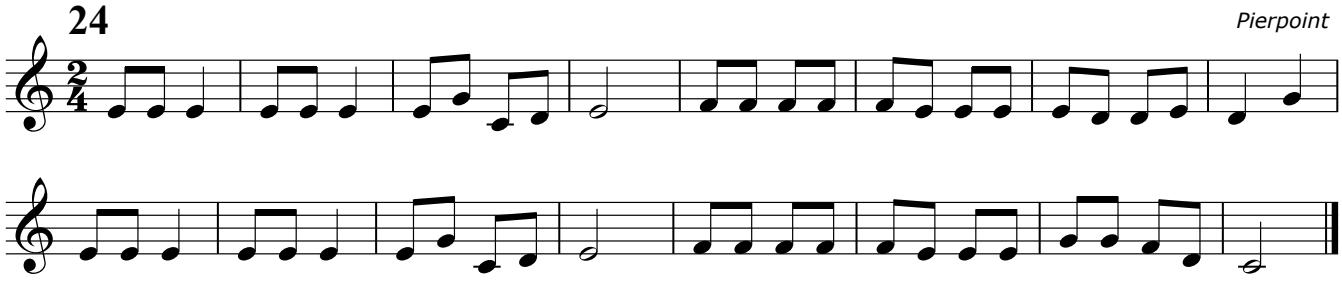
Big Trombone?

23



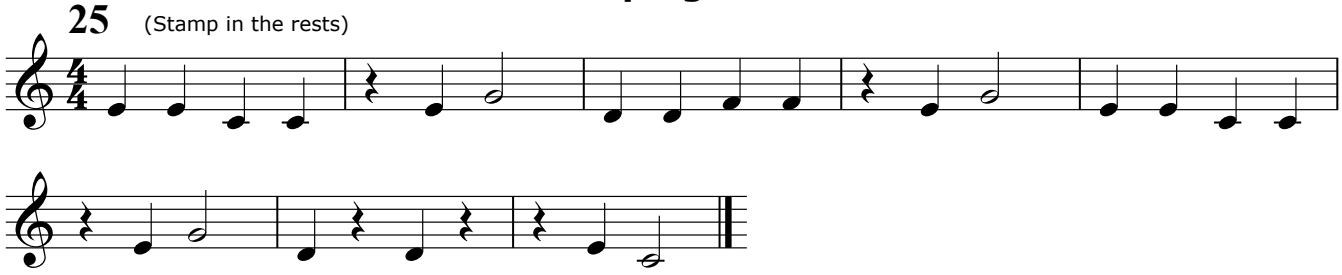
24

Pierpoint



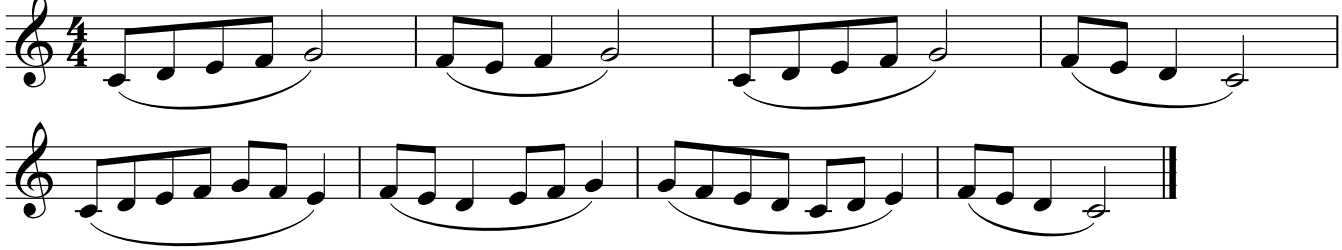
Stamping Dance

25 (Stamp in the rests)

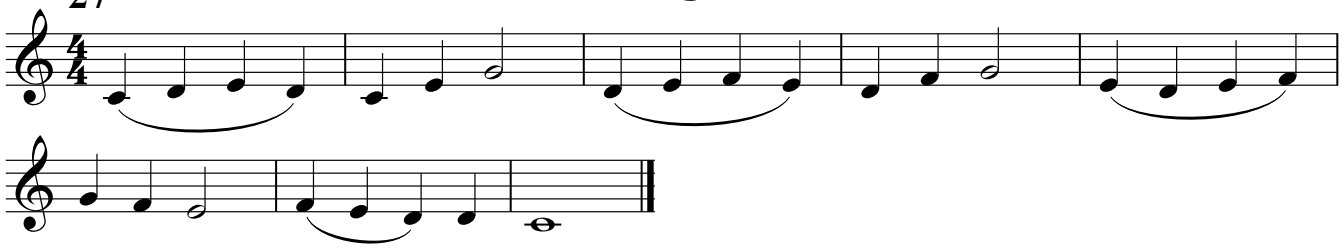


SLURS AND TONGUING

26 Climbing up the Hill

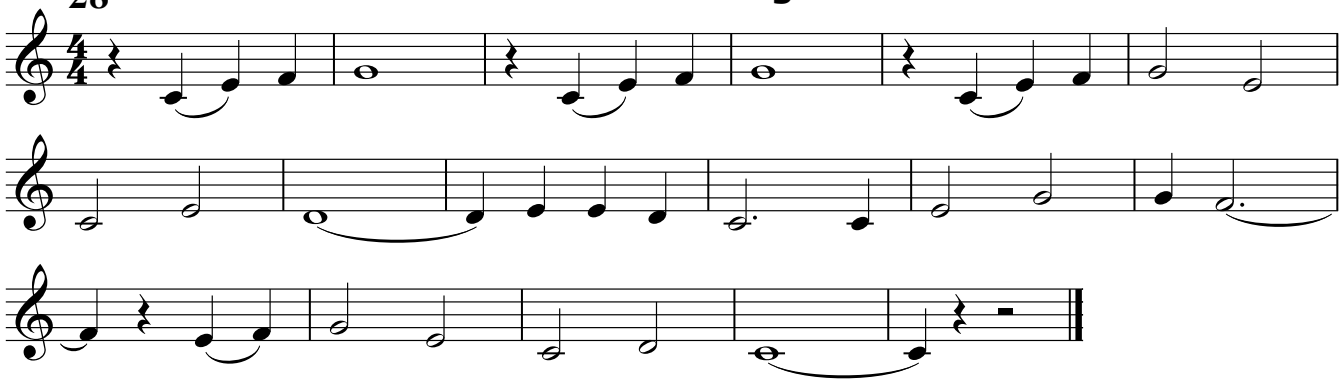


27 Mixing it

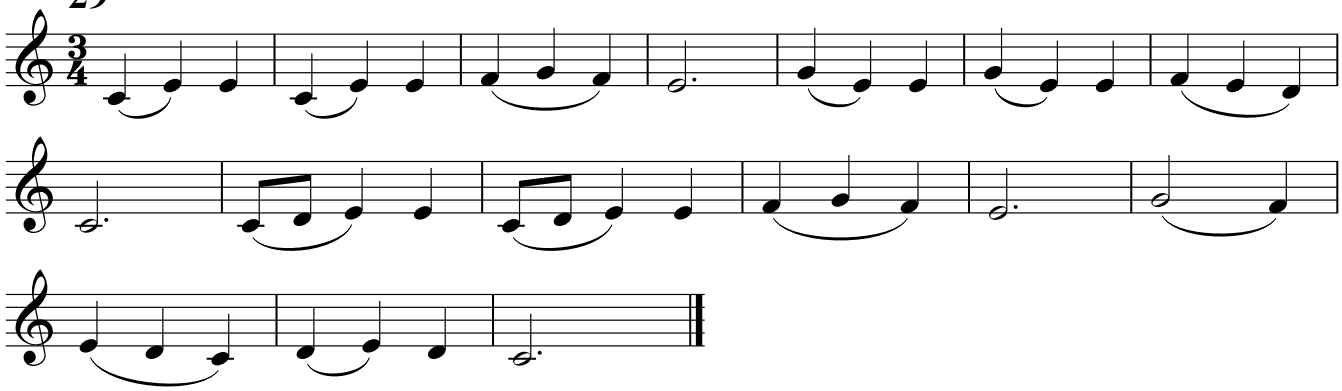


28 Who's coming?

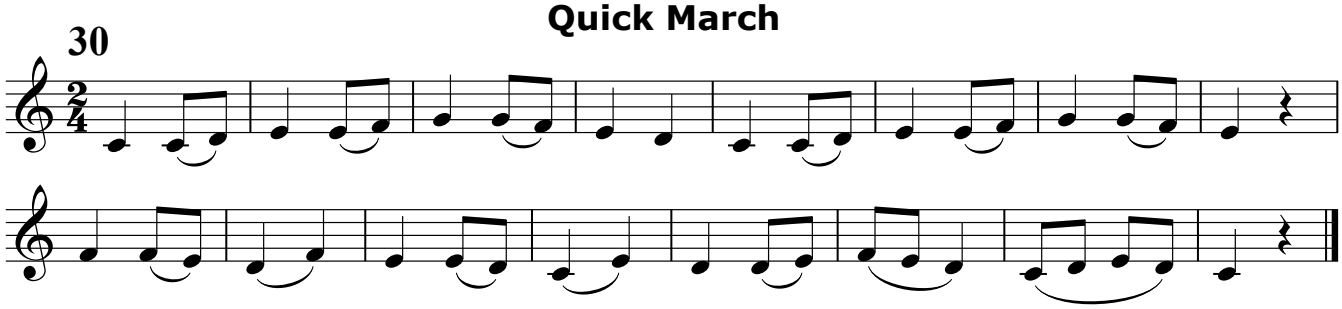
Traditional



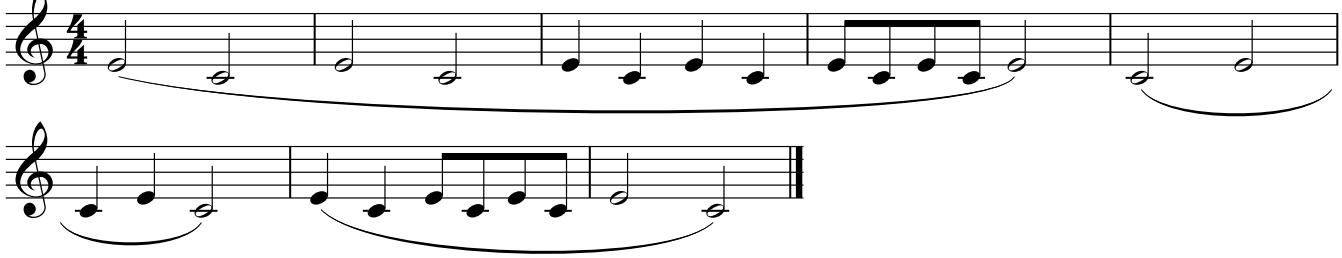
29 Katie's Waltz



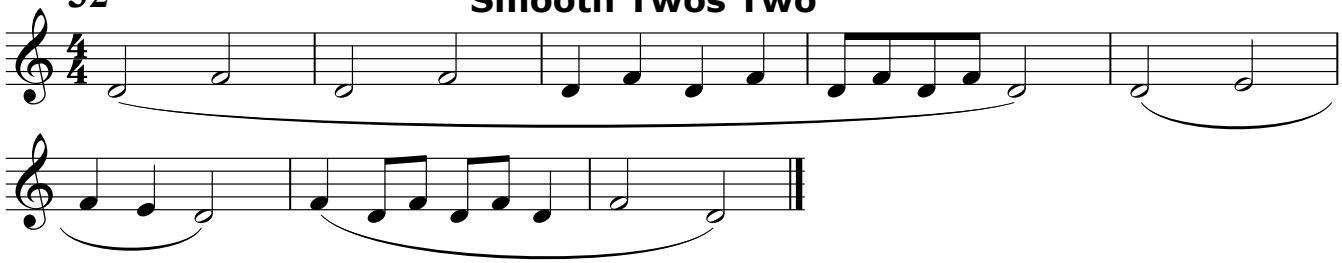
30 Quick March



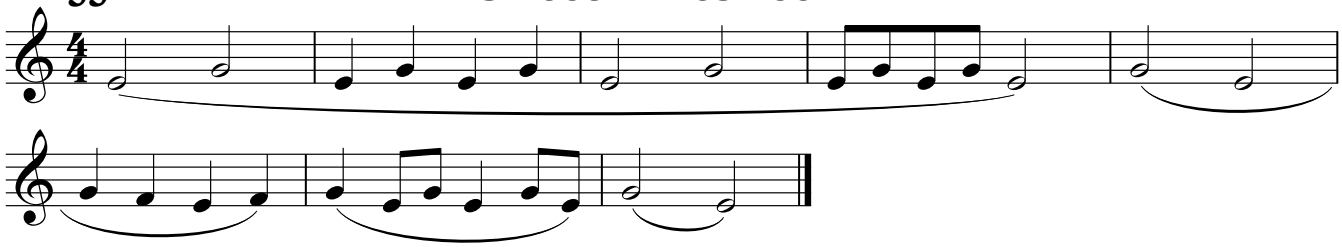
31 Smooth Twos



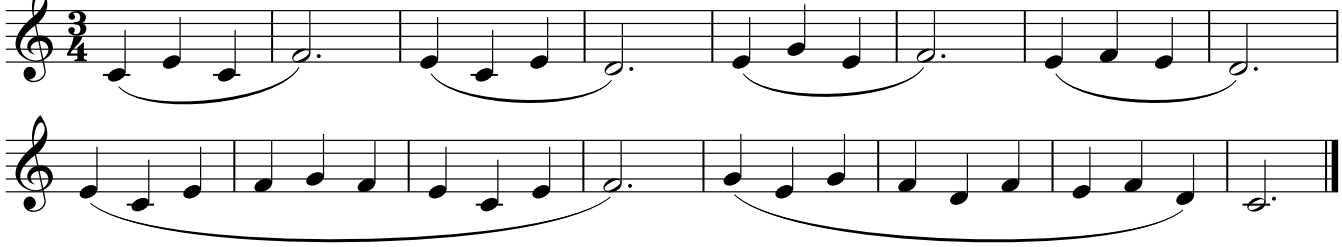
32 Smooth Twos Two



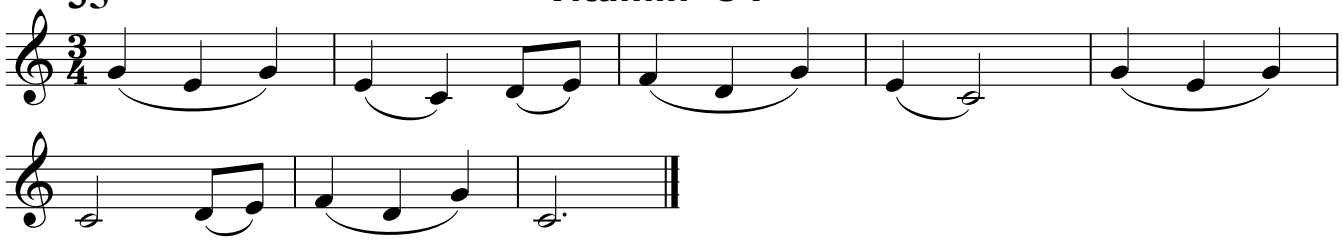
33 Smooth Twos Too

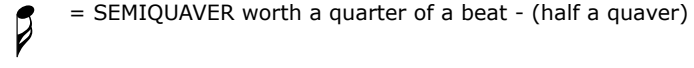


34 Twos into Three



35 Vitamin 'C'?





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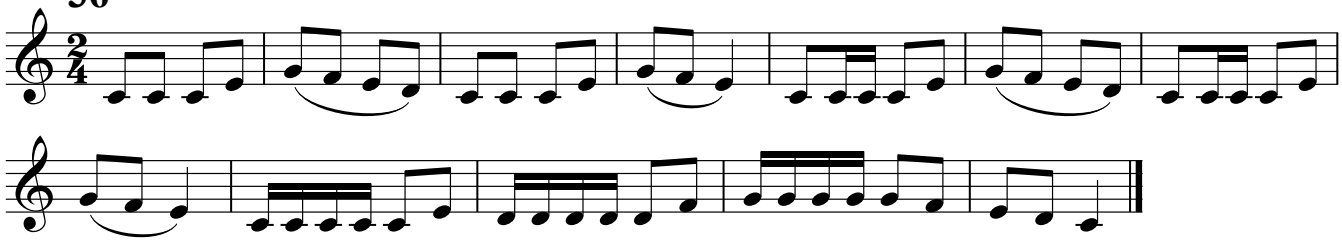

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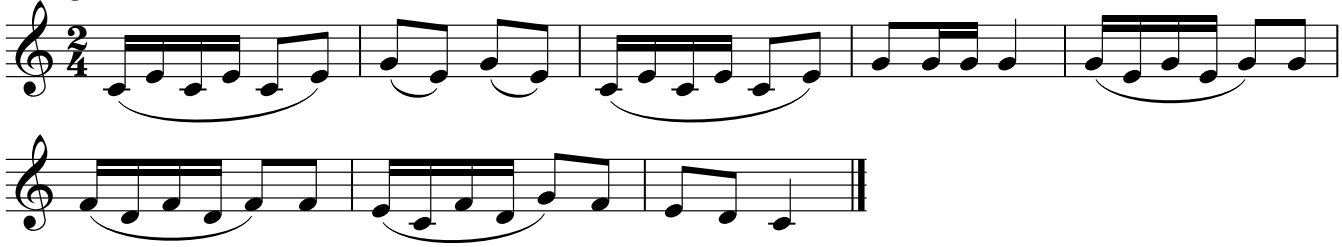

Thin Ice

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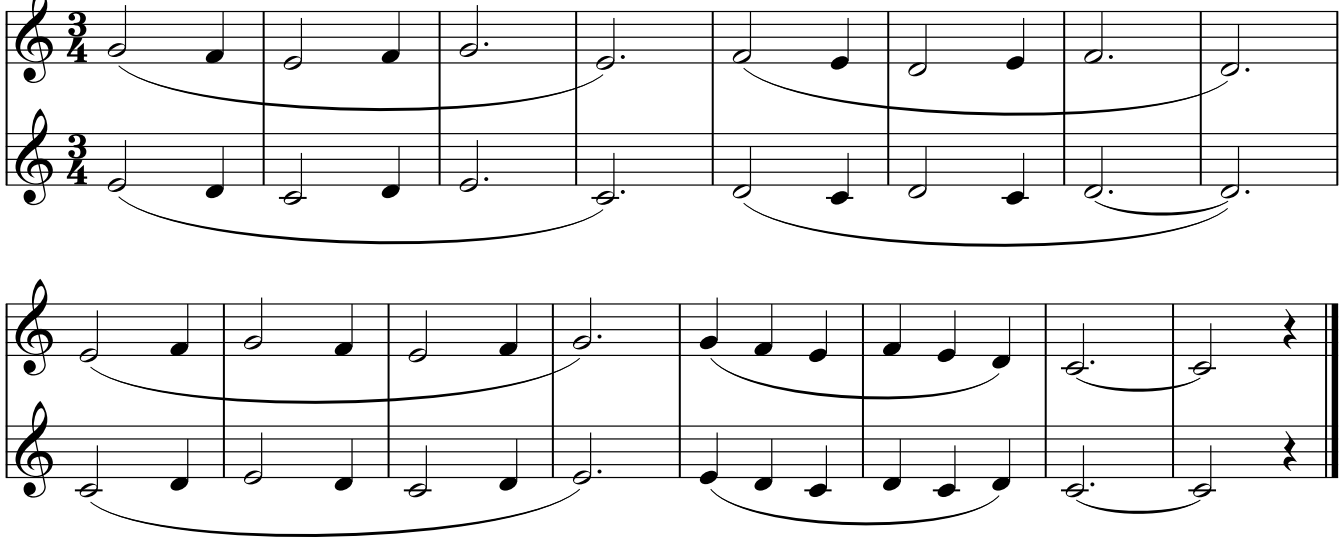
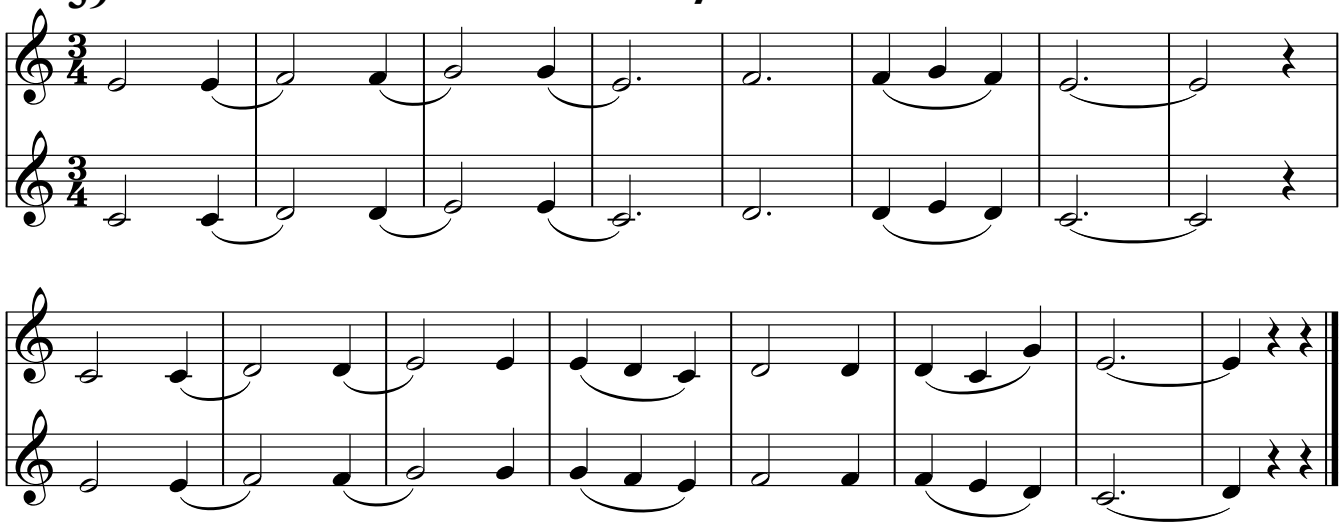


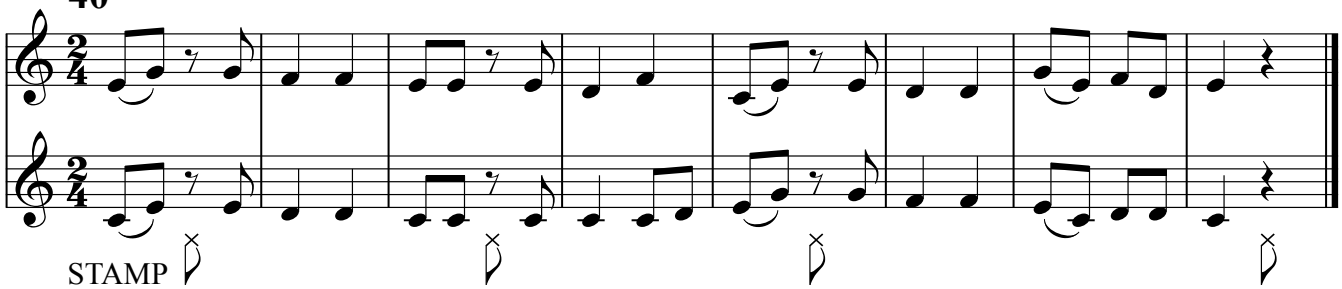
Lullaby

39



Mind Your Feet!

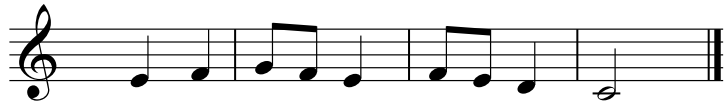
40



QUIZ TIME

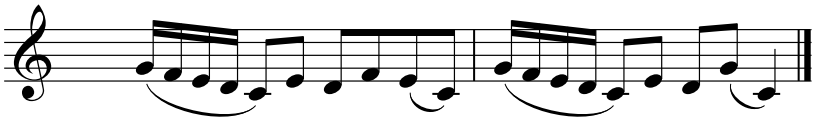
Can you add the time signature to each of these pieces

1



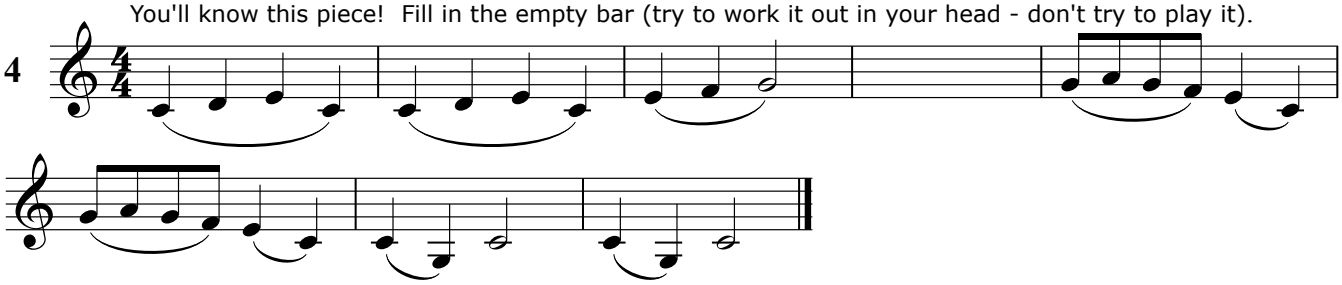
2

3

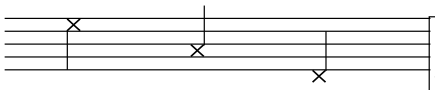


You'll know this piece! Fill in the empty bar (try to work it out in your head - don't try to play it).

4

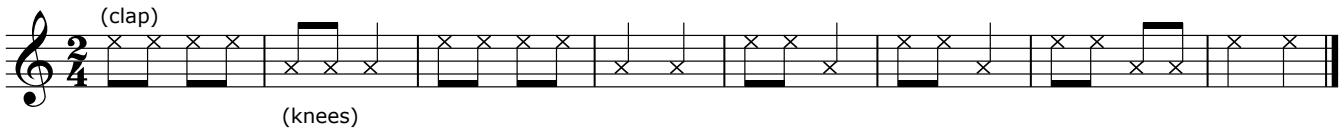


CLAP TRAPS 1

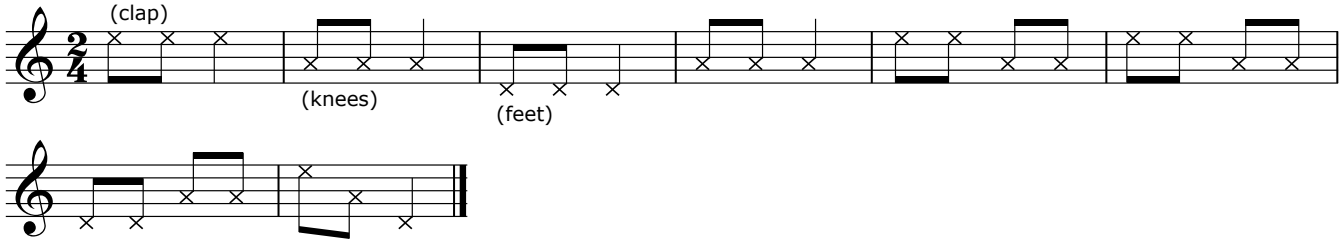


No need for the clarinet for this, but it is best to sit down. Clap your hands, slap your knees and use your feet (no need to stamp - just use your heels or toes).

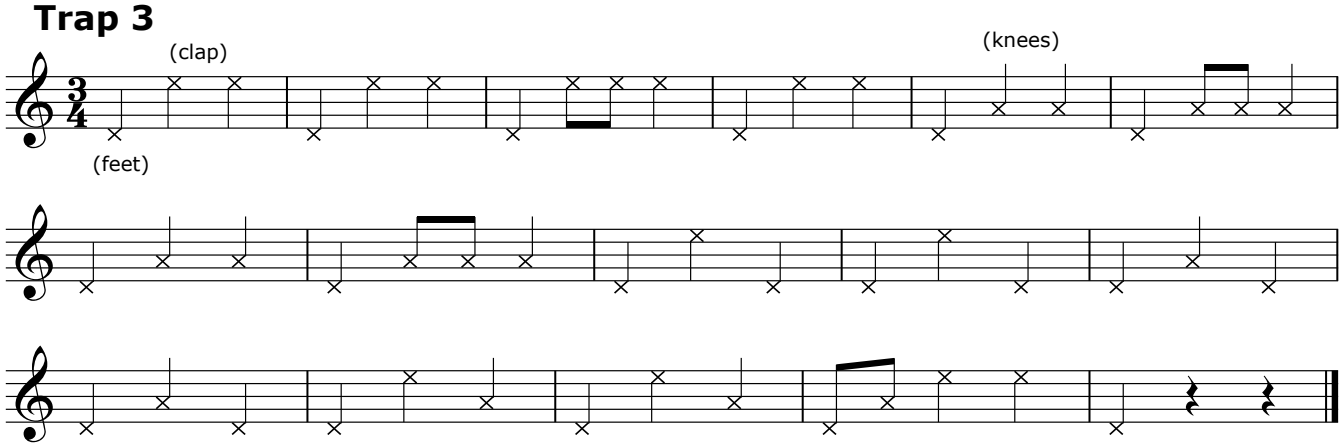
Trap 1

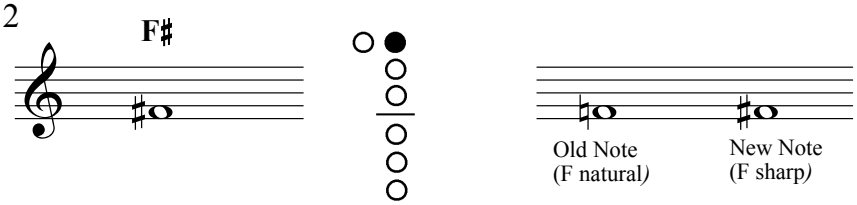


Trap 2



Trap 3

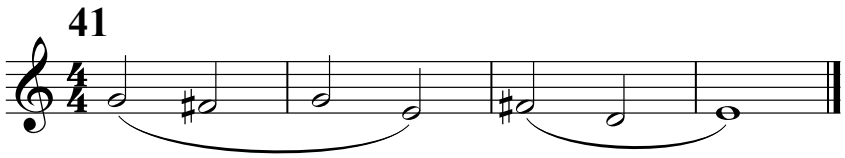


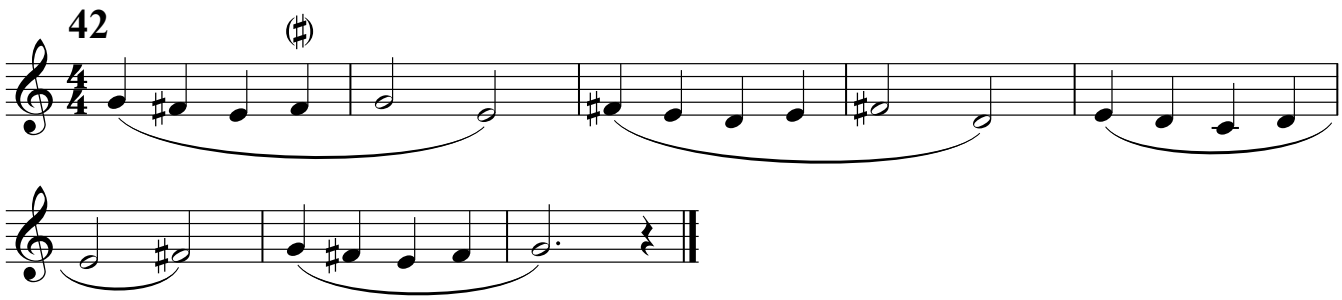


The SHARP sign raises the sound of a note by the smallest amount possible (which is called a semitone). Sharps sound higher than ordinary notes (naturals). Compare the sound of the old F with the new F#

The NATURAL sign returns a sharpened note back to normal

All signs continue their effect until the end of the bar.

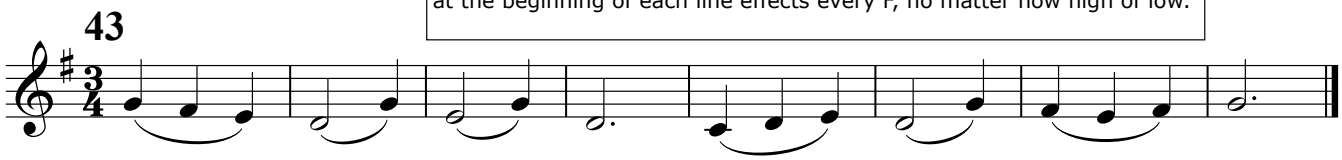


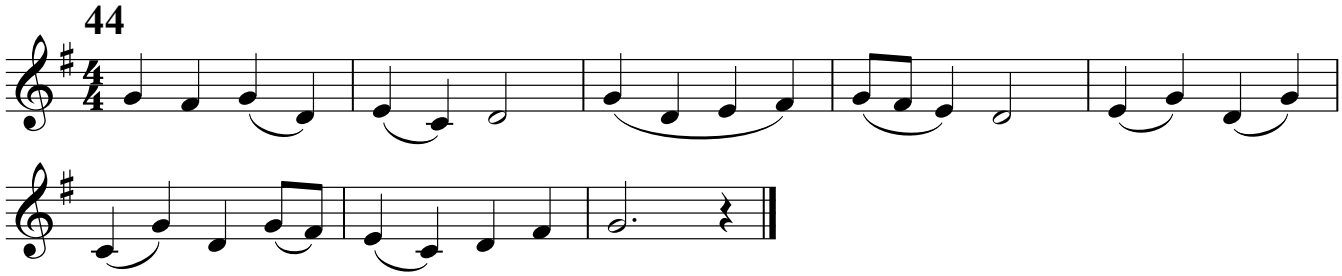


KEY SIGNATURE
G major

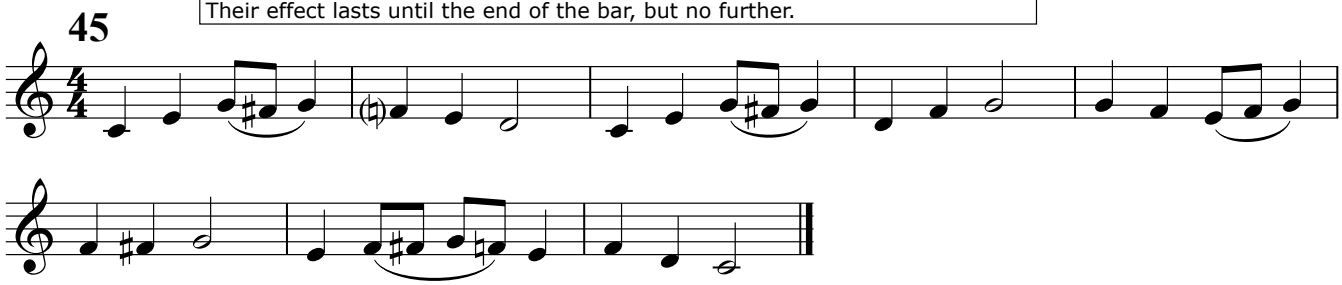
KEY SIGNATURE - If a piece (a tune) is based around a set of notes which repeated use the same sharps (or flats) they are placed at the beginning of each line, to save having to write them in all the time. This is called a Key Signature.

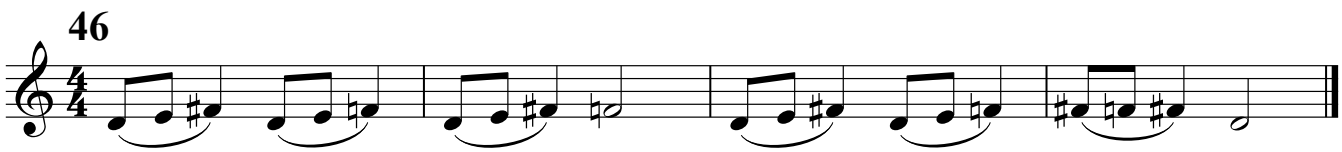
G major is the name of the KEY which has an F#. The sharp sign at the beginning of each line effects every F, no matter how high of low.



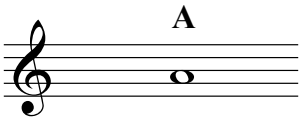


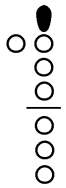
Extra sharps, naturals (or Flats) added in a piece are known as ACCIDENTALS. Their effect lasts until the end of the bar, but no further.





ROCK AND ROLL

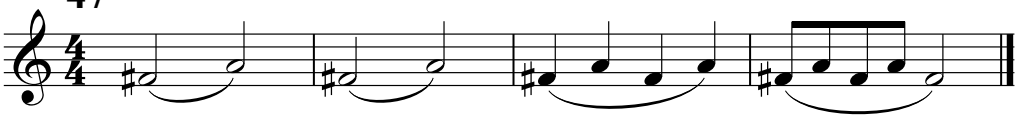




This section is very important for your future progress. Developing the correct hand and finger position is essential if you are to be able to moving quickly around the instrument.

You must ROCK and/or ROLL your finger onto the 'A' key without lifting it. Listen to see if you are getting an extra note inbetween. The excercises on the next 3 pages will help you to do this!

47



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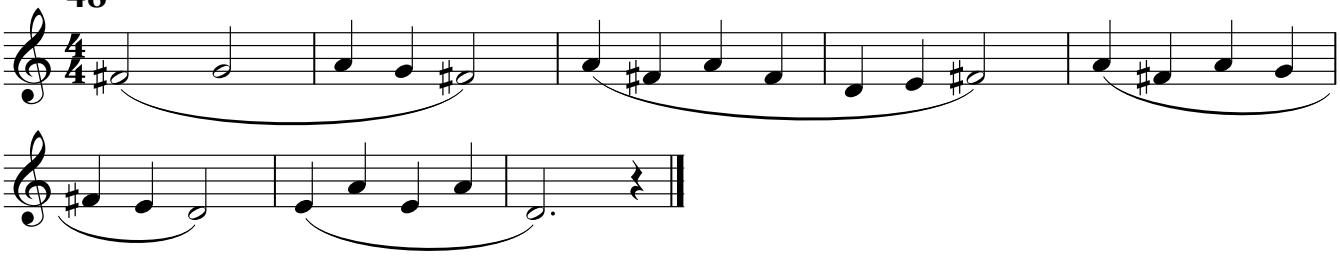
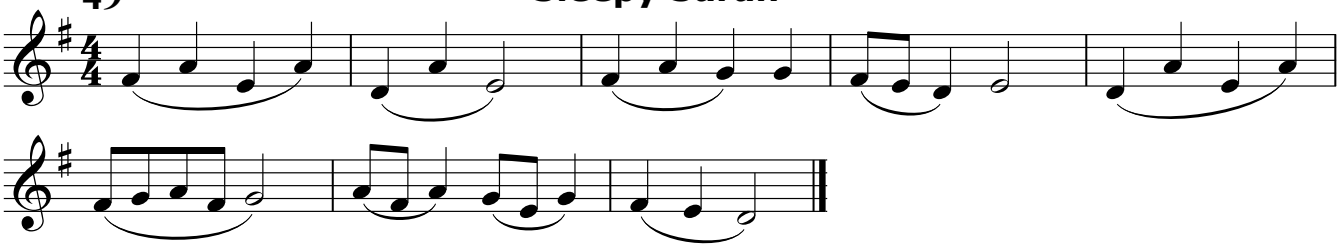
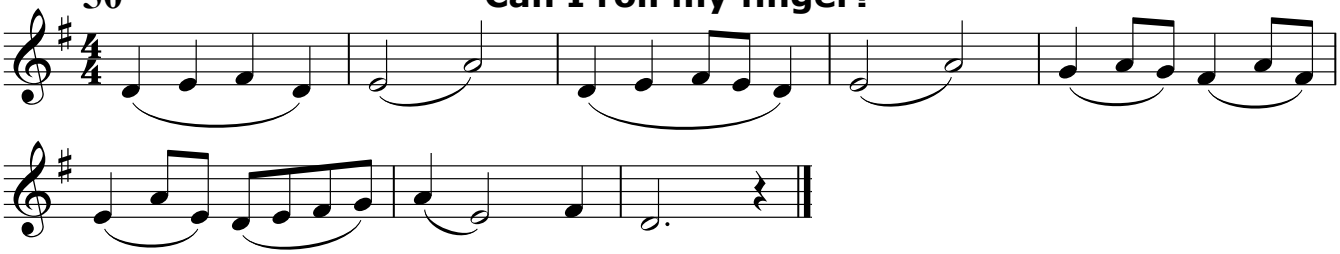


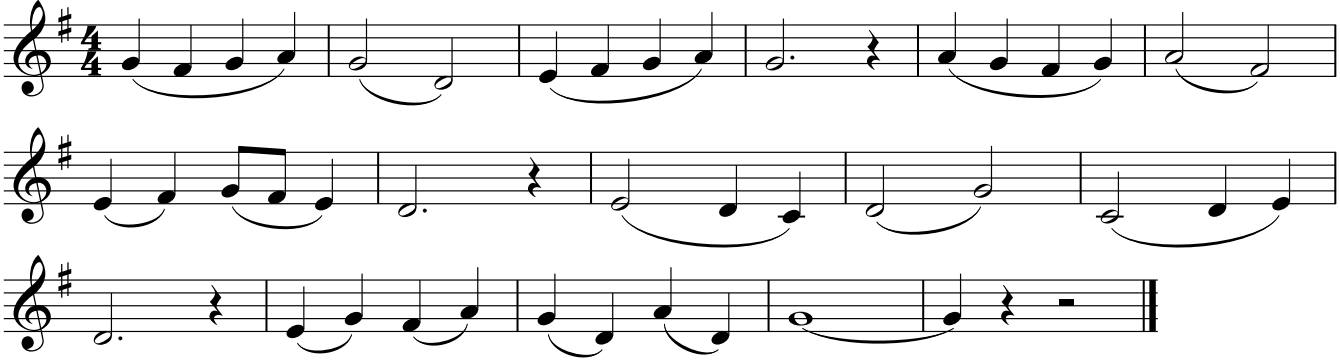
49 **Sleepy Sarah**



50 **Can I roll my finger?**



51 **I can roll my finger!**



DYNAMICS

pp	*p*	*mp*	*mf*	*f*	*ff*
pianissimo	piano	mezzo - piano	mezzo-forte	forte	fortissimo
very quiet	quiet	moderately quiet	moderately loud	loud	very loud

(Literally "half-soft" and "half-loud")

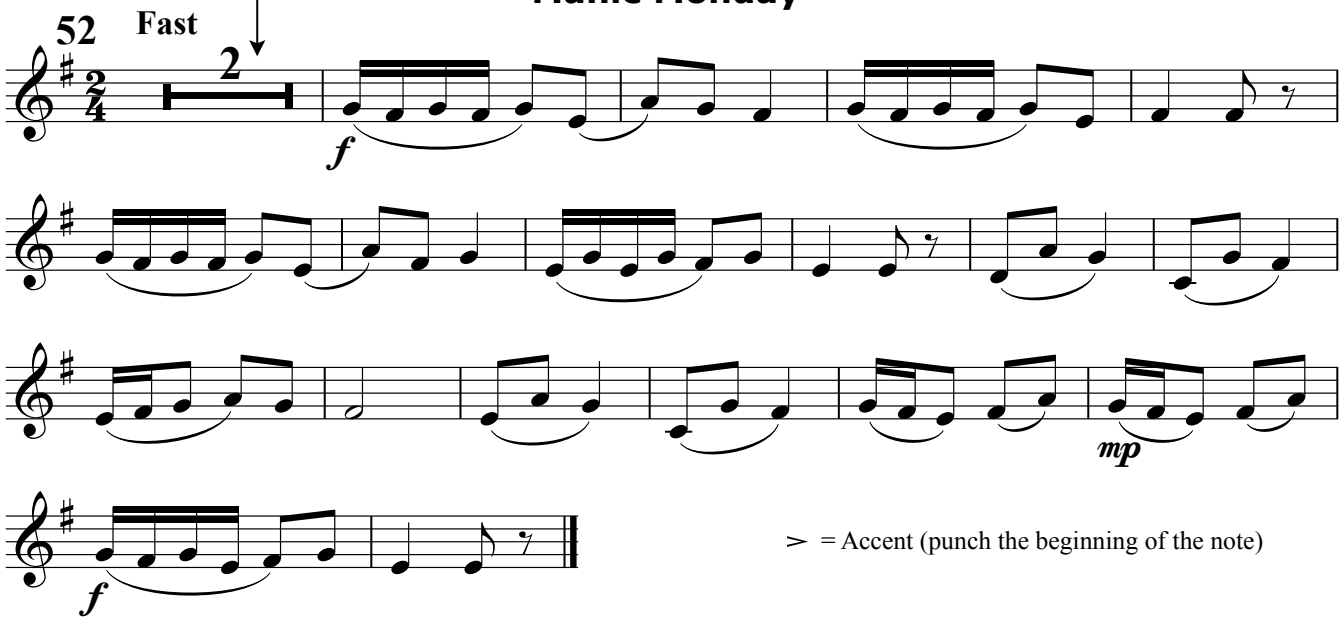
Concert Pieces

A Rocking Week

A piano accompaniment is available for these 5 pieces at **www.aluncookmusic.com**

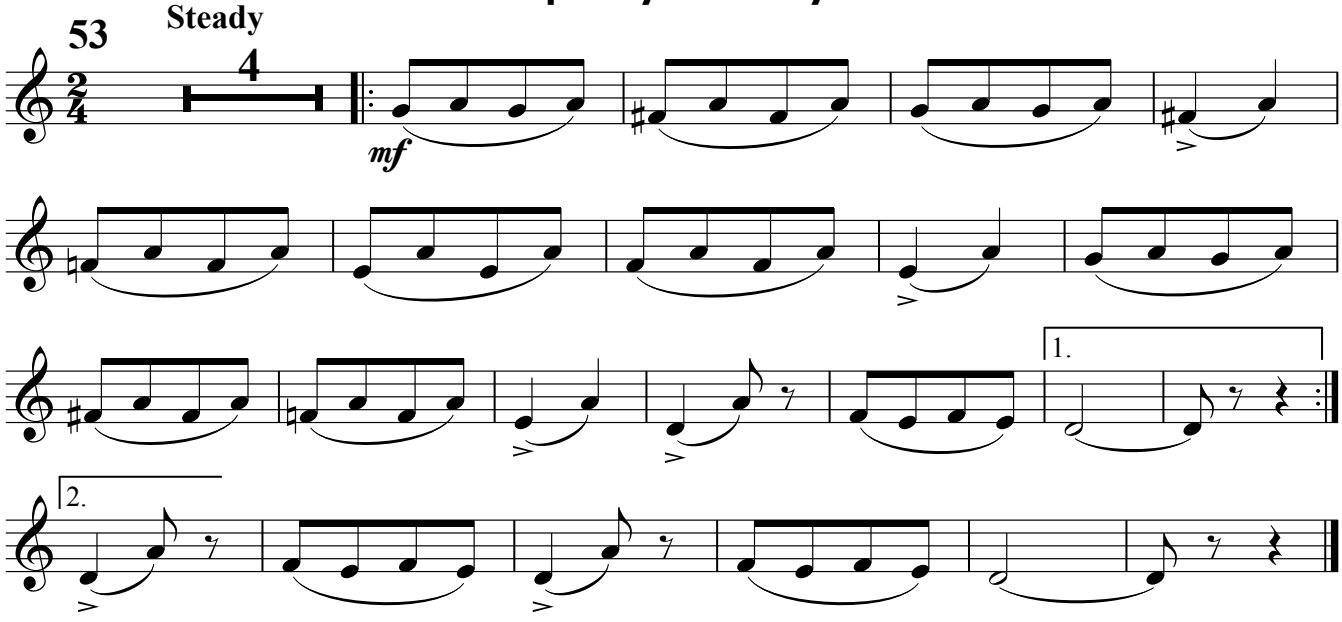
This means 2 bars rest. If you are using the piano accompaniment, the piano has 2 bars introduction

Manic Monday



> = Accent (punch the beginning of the note)

Spooky Tuesday

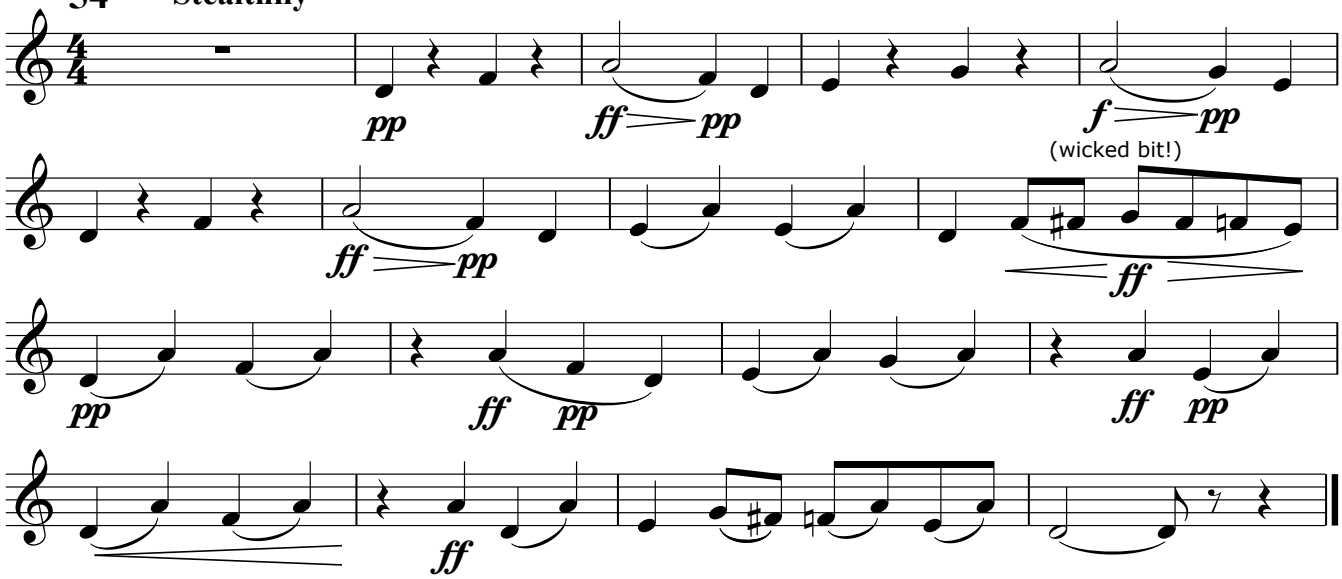


crescendo
(getting louder)

diminuendo
(getting softer)

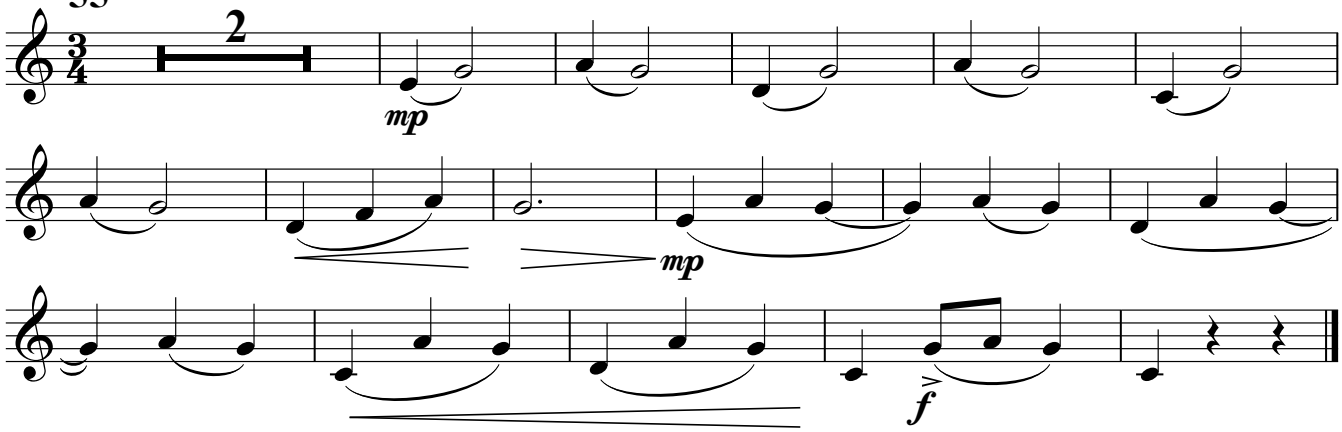
Wicked Wednesday

54 **Stealthily**



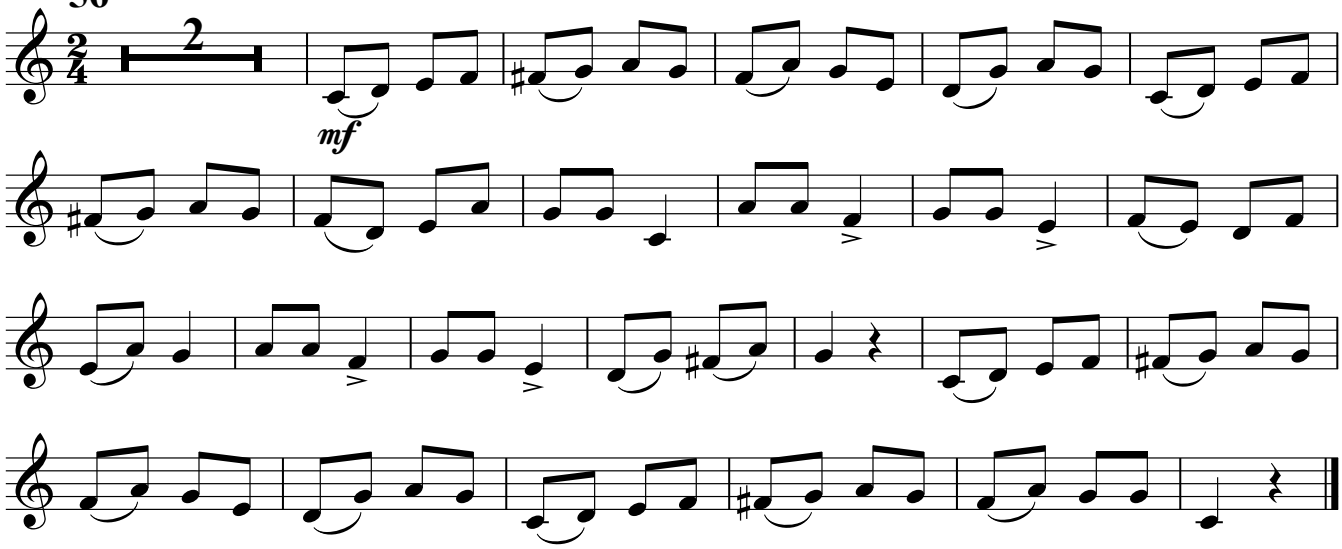
Therapeutic Thursday

55 **Relaxed**



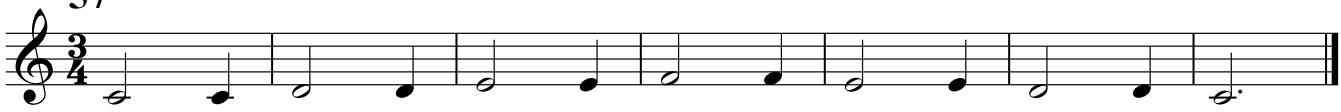
Fiendish Friday

56 **Fast**



Going Dotty!

57



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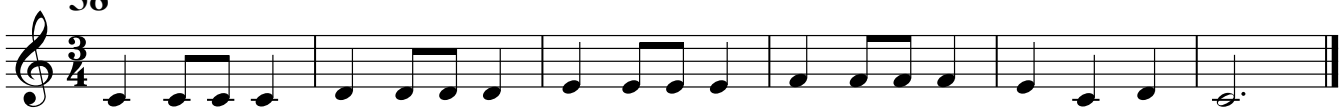

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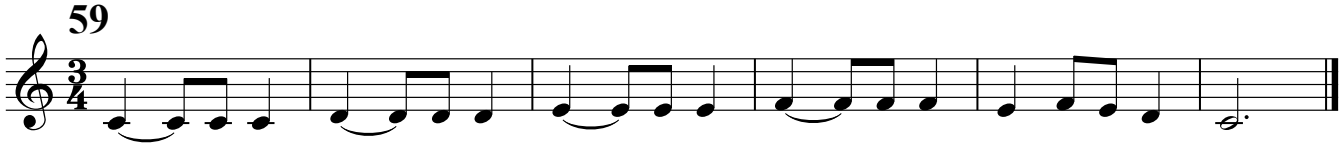

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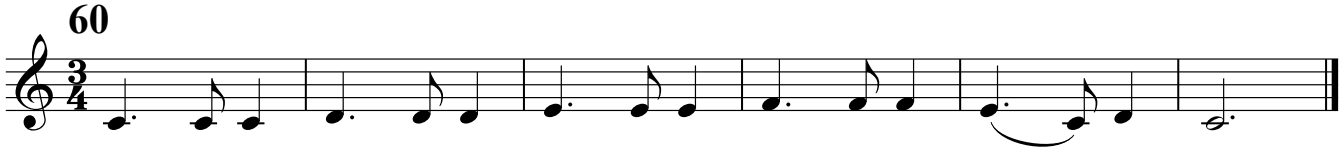
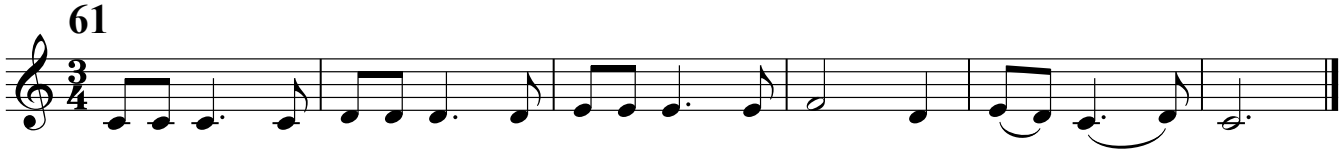


61



♩. = DOTTED CROTCHET = 3 Quaver Beats (one and a half crotchets)

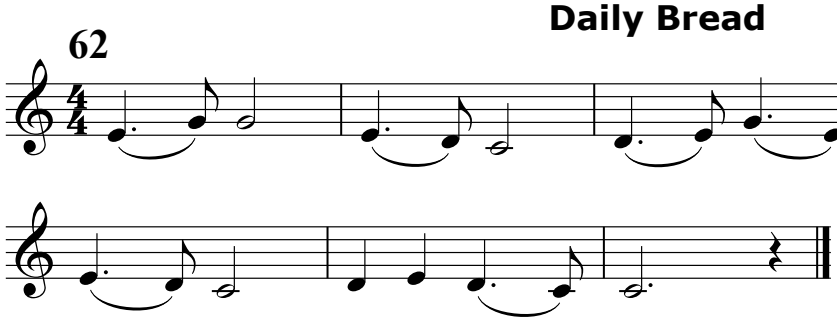
TAKE YOUR PICK FROM THESE EXPLANATIONS
* The dot makes the note 50% longer
* The dot increases the length of the note by half its original value
* Cut the note in half - add the half on
* 2 + half of 2 = 3

THE GOLDEN RULE
Always count 3 on a dotted note.

It may be 3 quavers or 3 crotchets, but it will always be divisible by 3.

Daily Bread

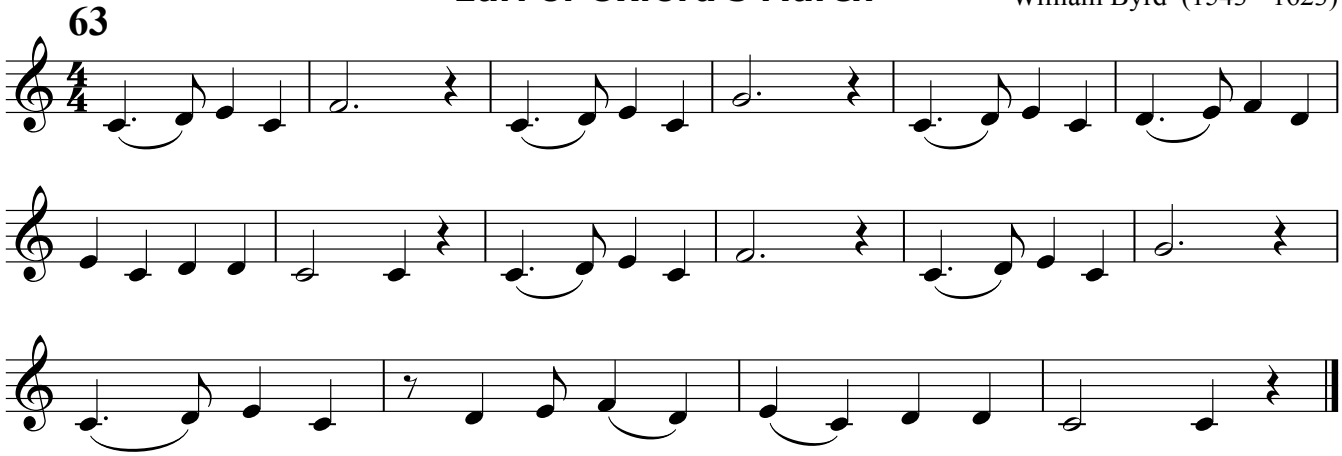
62



Earl of Oxford's March

William Byrd (1543 - 1623)

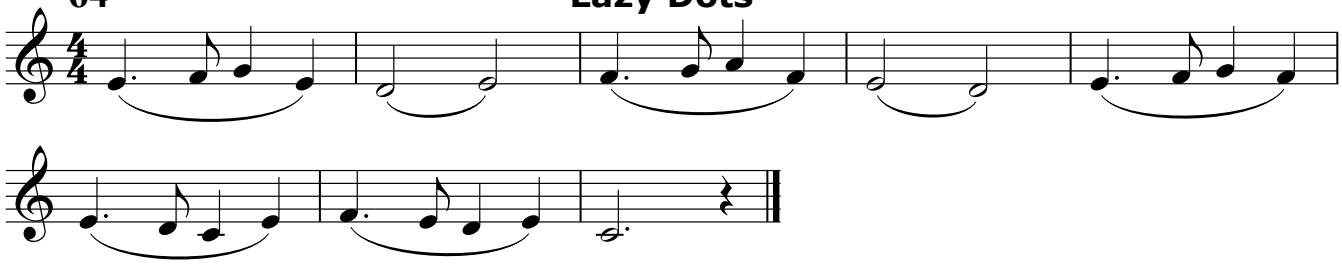
63



MORE DOTTED RHYTHMS

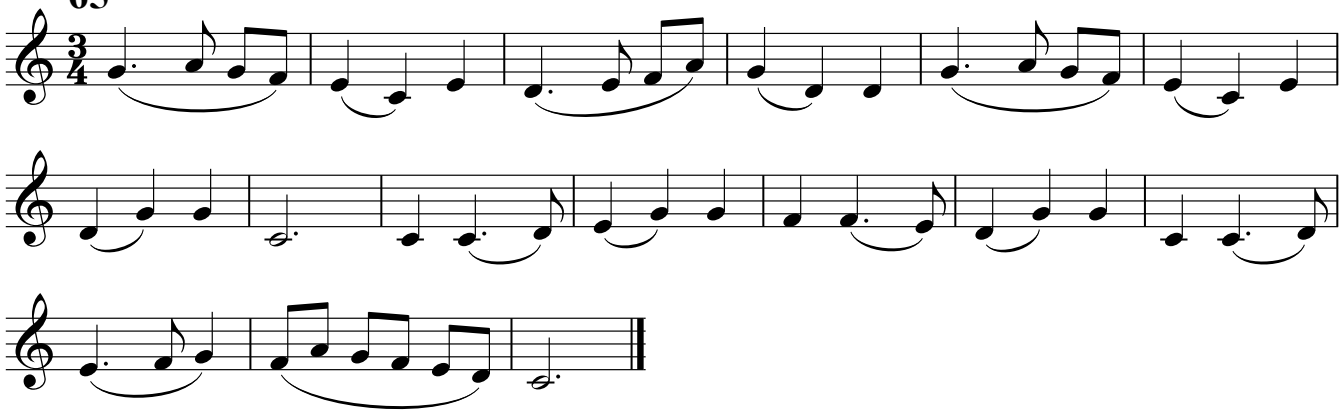
64

Lazy Dots



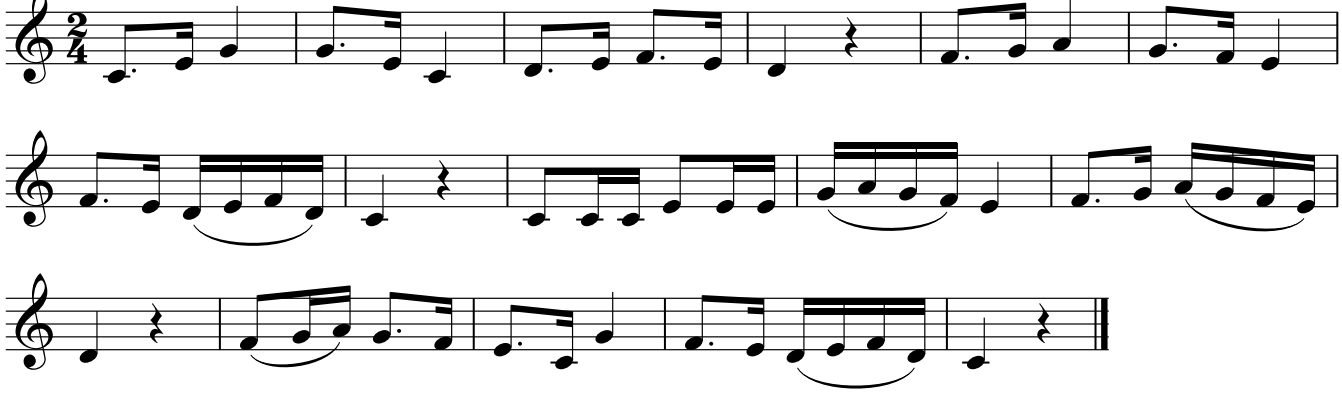
Waltzing Dots

65



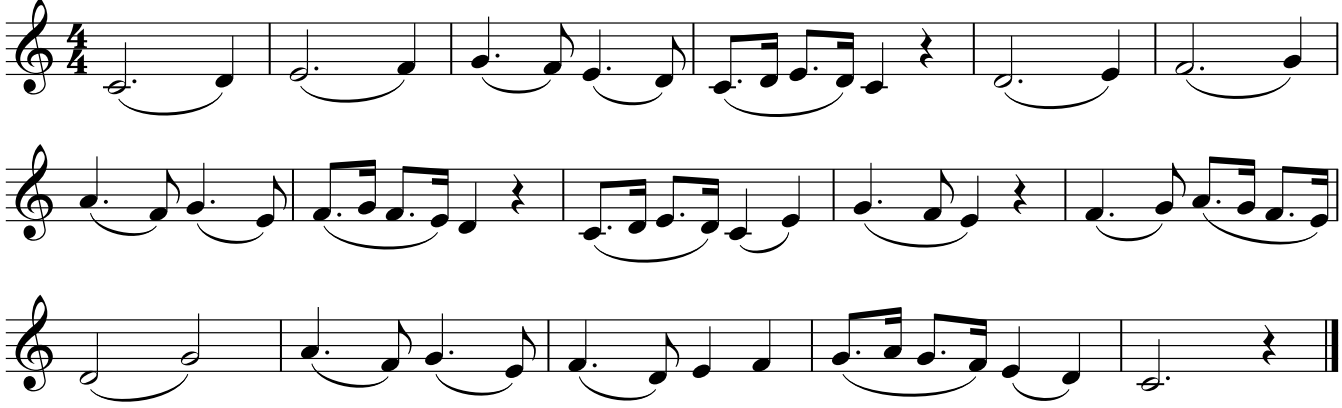
66 Steady

Polka Dots

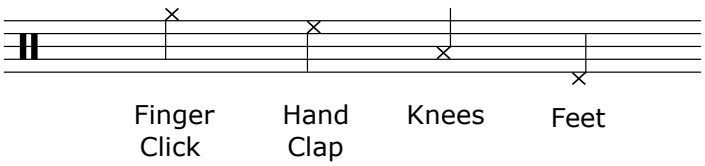


Thoroughly Dotty

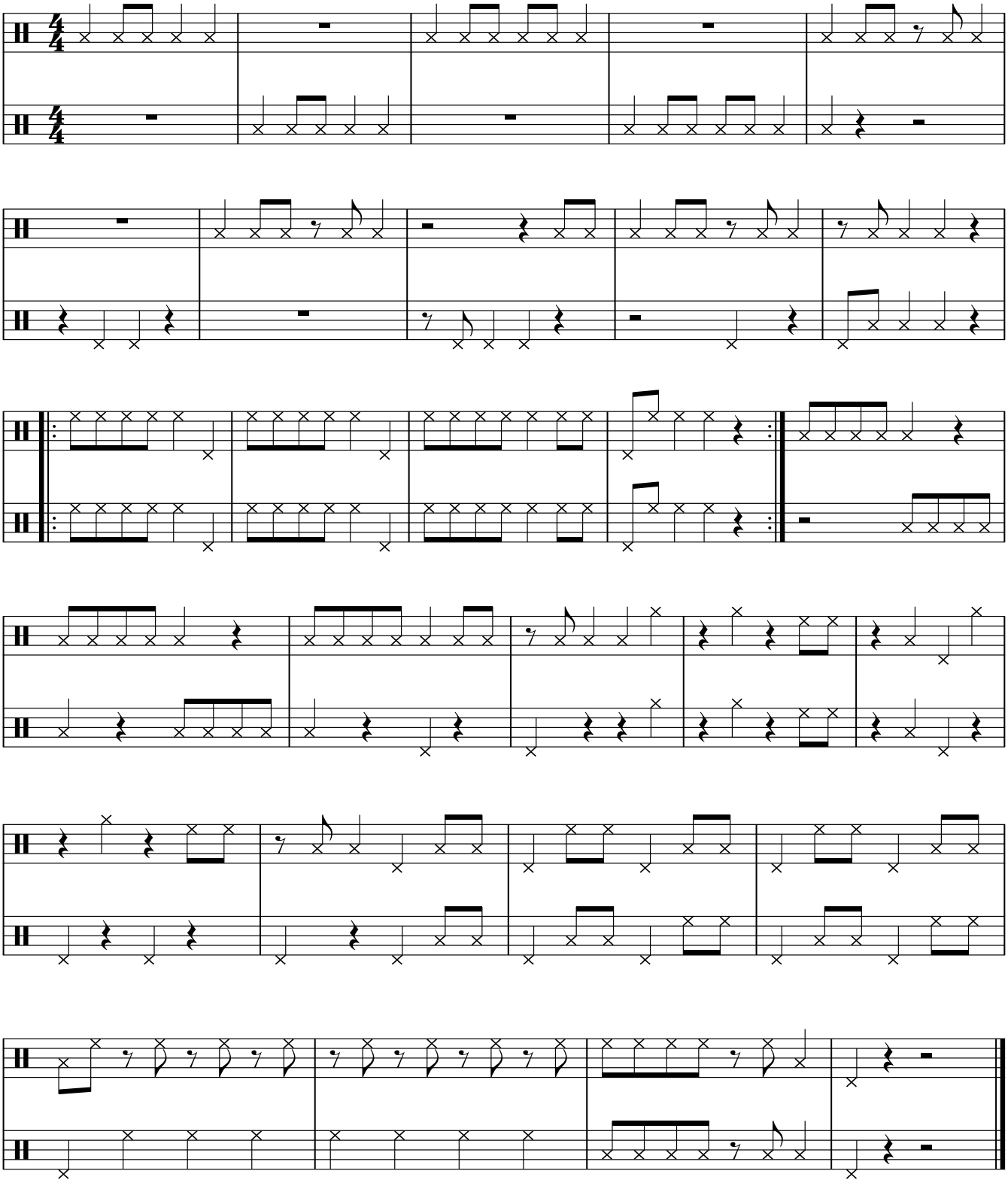
67 Moderato

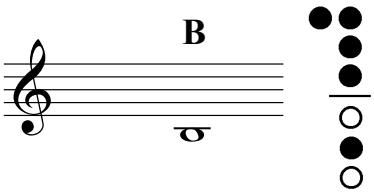


Clap Traps 2



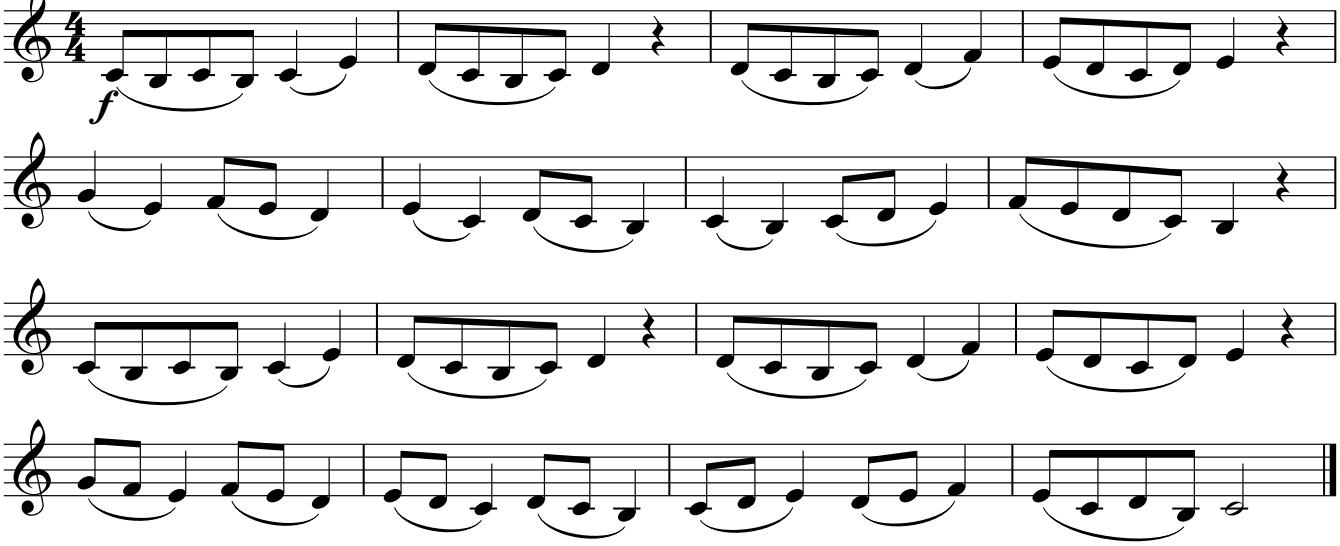
Fast

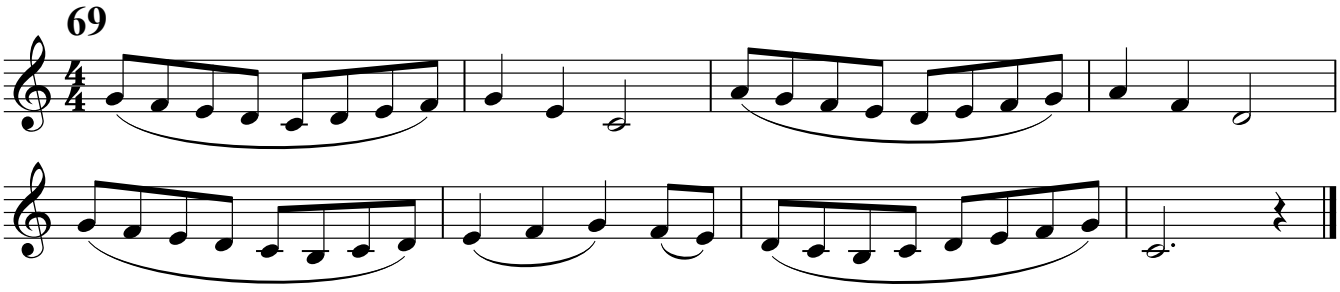




Stepping Down - Middle and Off
A piano accompaniment is available for this piece as part of set of 12 concert pieces which help you to use the right hand fingers and work your way down the instrument,
Available from **www.aluncookmusic.com**

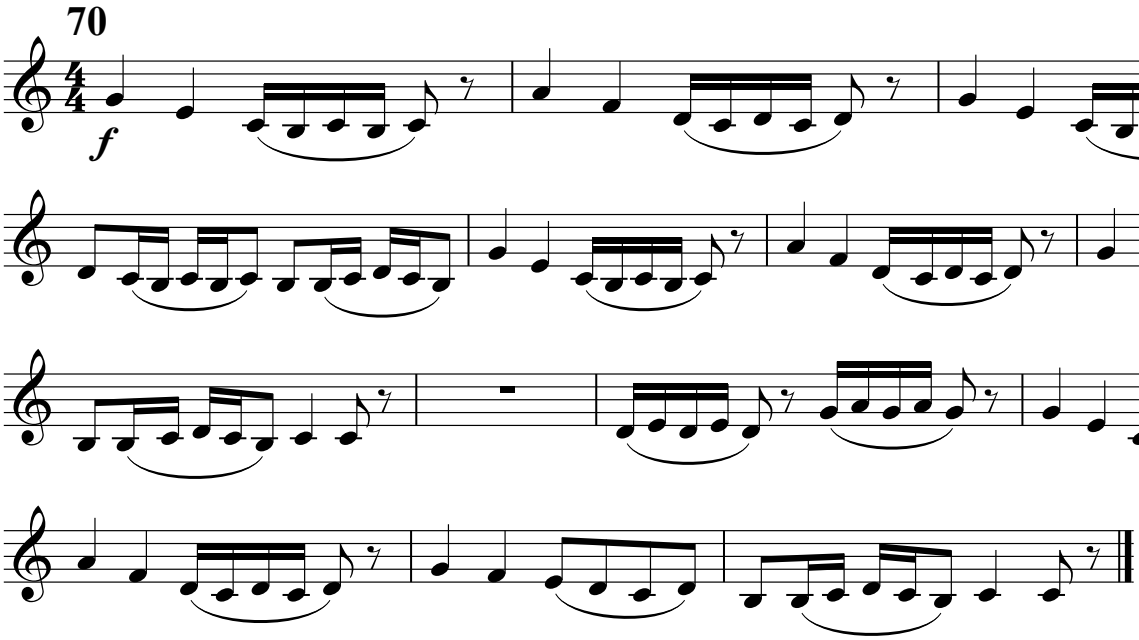
Middle and Off





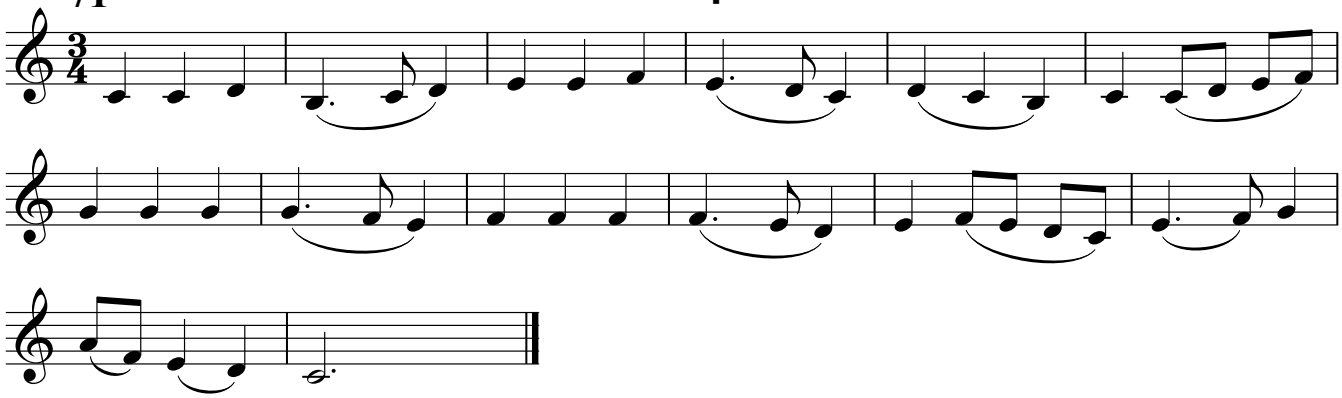
Stepping Down - Tiddle-iddle-um
A piano accompaniment is available for this piece as part of set of 12 concert pieces which help you to use the right hand fingers and work your way down the instrument,
Available from **www.aluncookmusic.com**

Tiddle-iddle-um



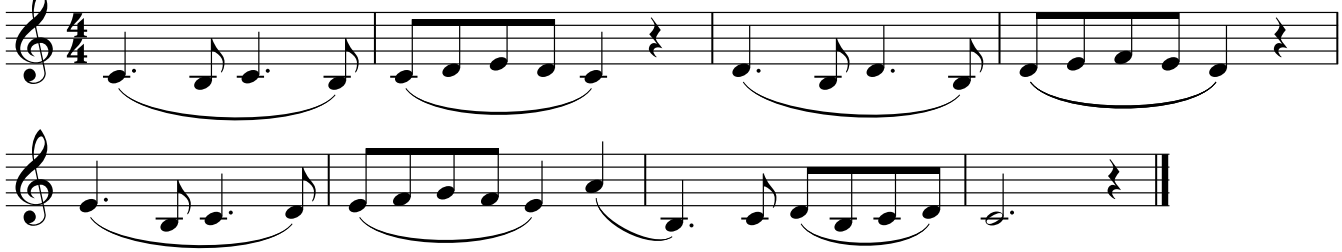
71

Stand Up!



72

One Giant Leap!



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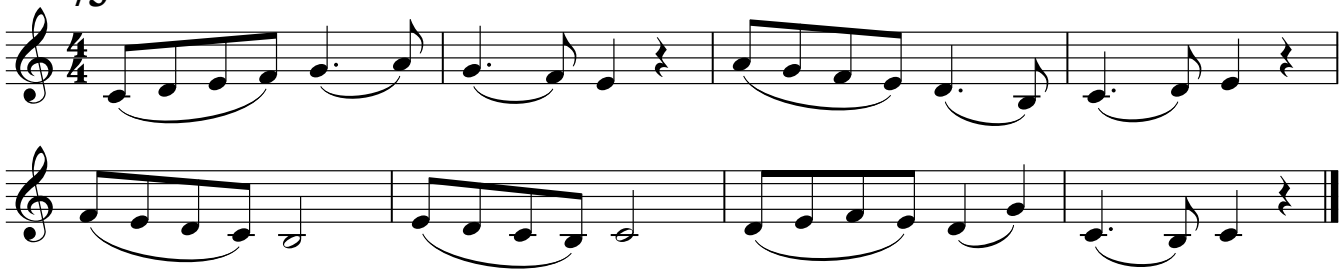

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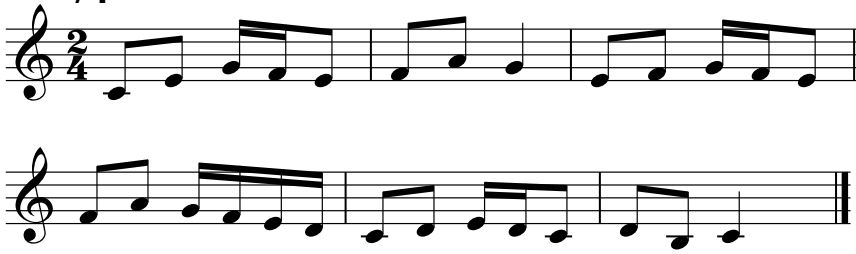

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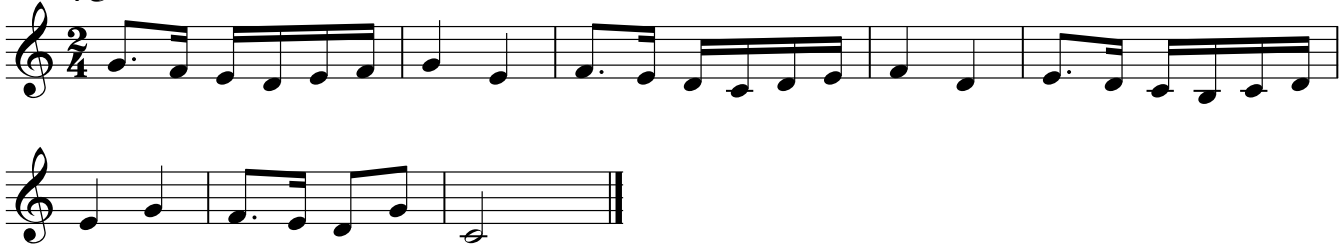
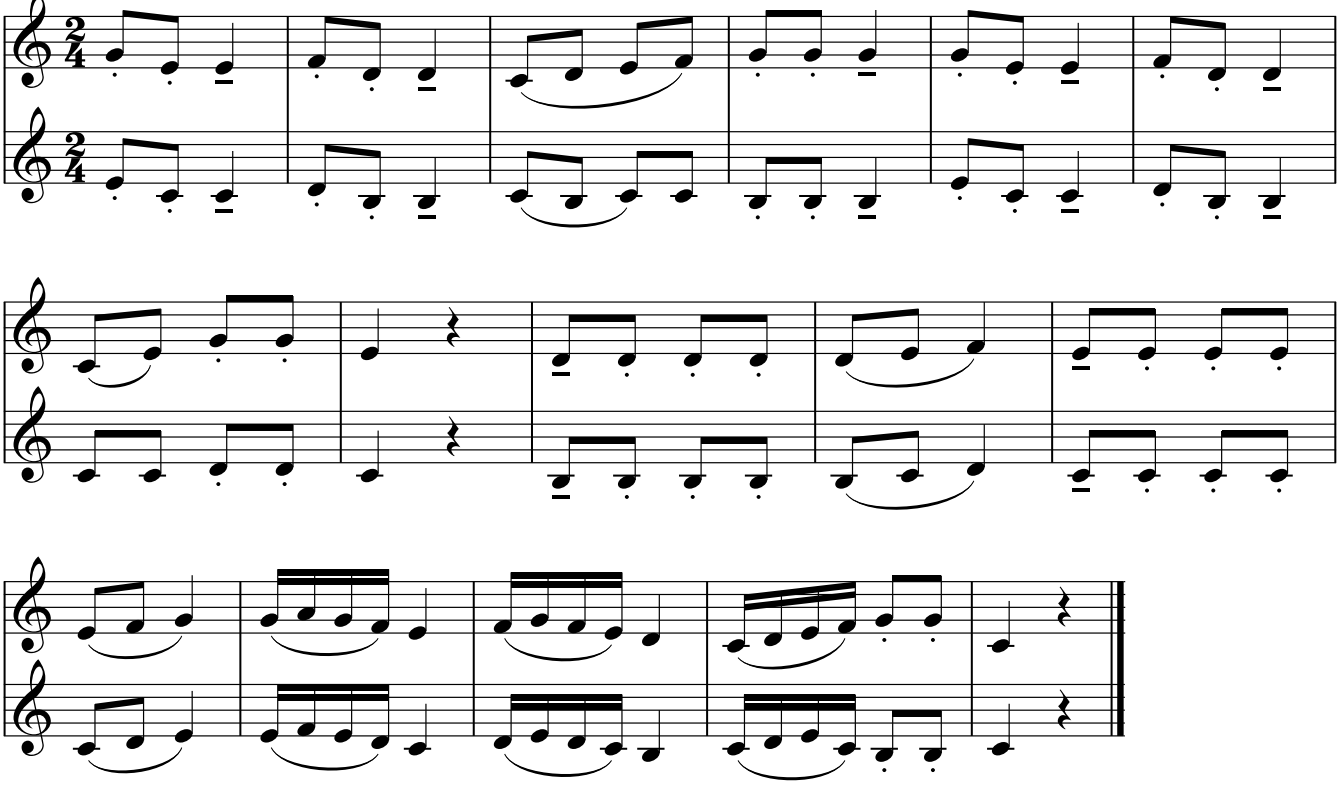


MORE ARTICULATION

· = Staccato (Short) dots placed above or below the note
– = Tenuto (Long) Tenuto means "held" and is used to mean lengthened or stressed.
Best to think of Tenuto as the opposite of a dot (staccato).
Staccato = short and usually light **Tenuto = long and usually heavy**

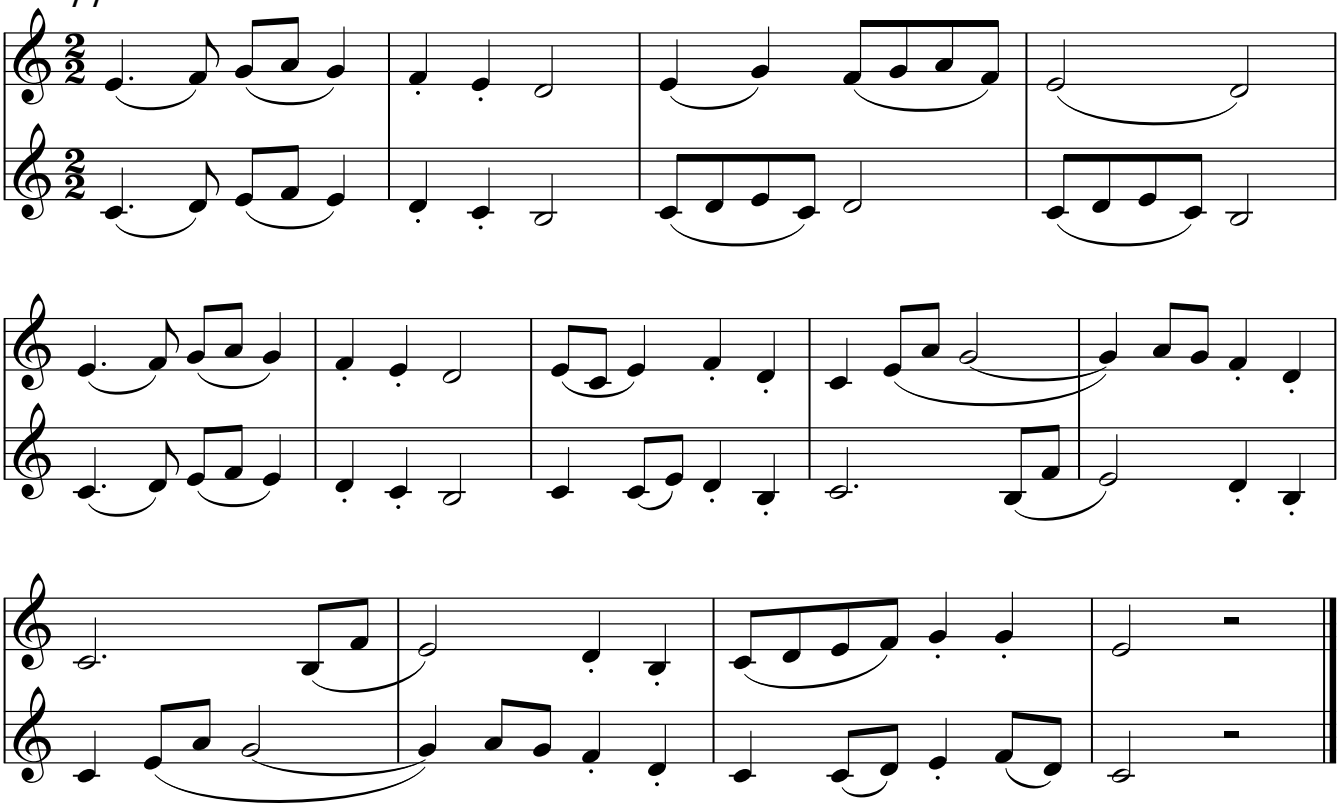
76 *Trad.*

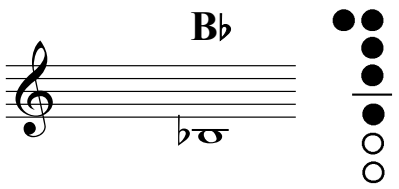


NEW TIME SIGNATURE
Two minims in a bar.
Mathematically the same
as 4/4 but feels twice as fast

Short but Sweet

77

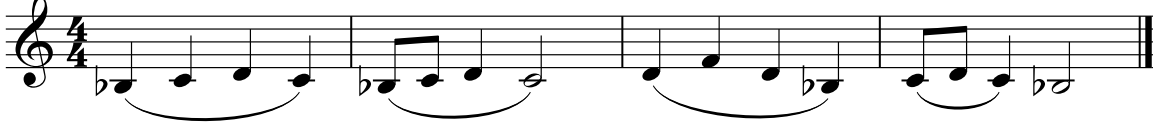




The FLAT sign lowers the sound of the note (by the smallest amount possible which is called a semitone). Flats sound lower than ordinary notes. Compare the sound of the old B with the new Bb

The NATURAL sign returns a flattened note back to normal

78



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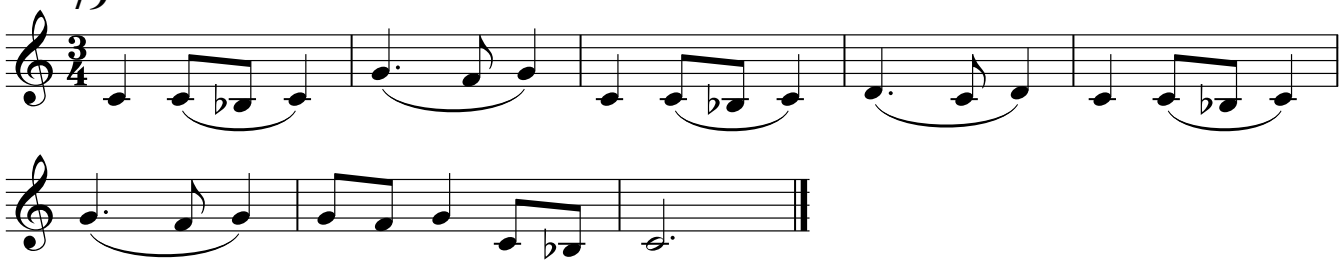
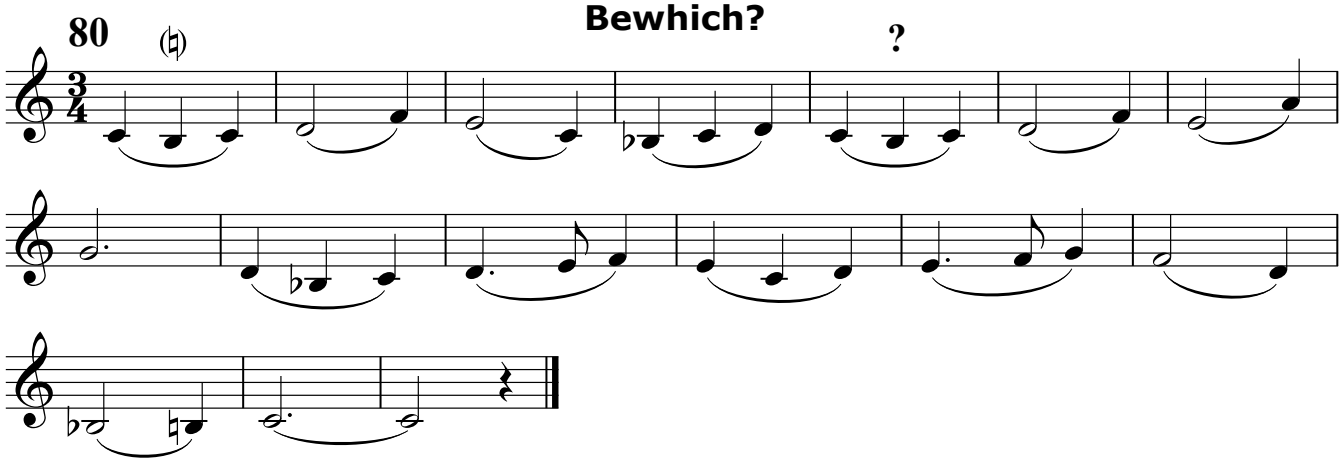


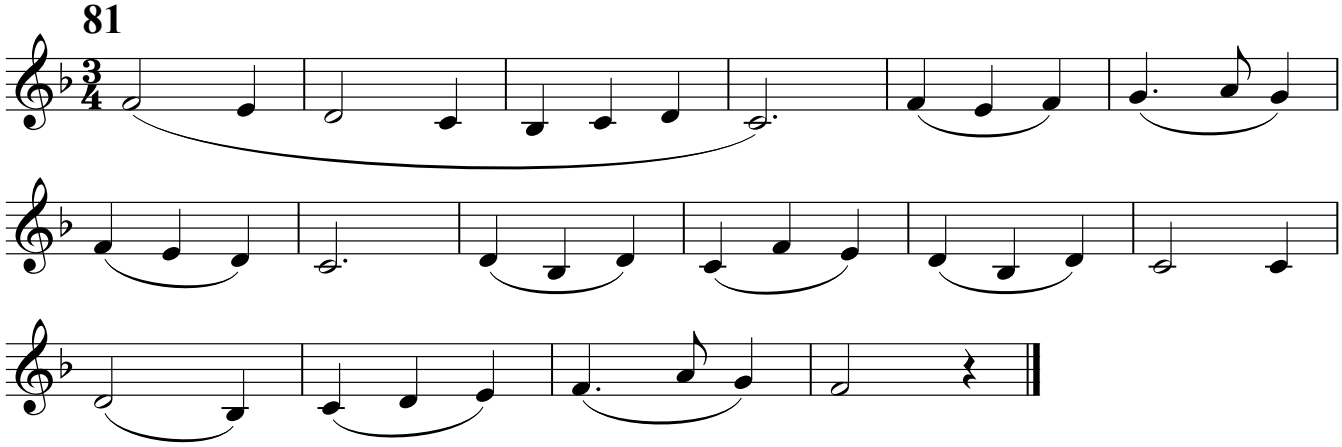
Bewhich?

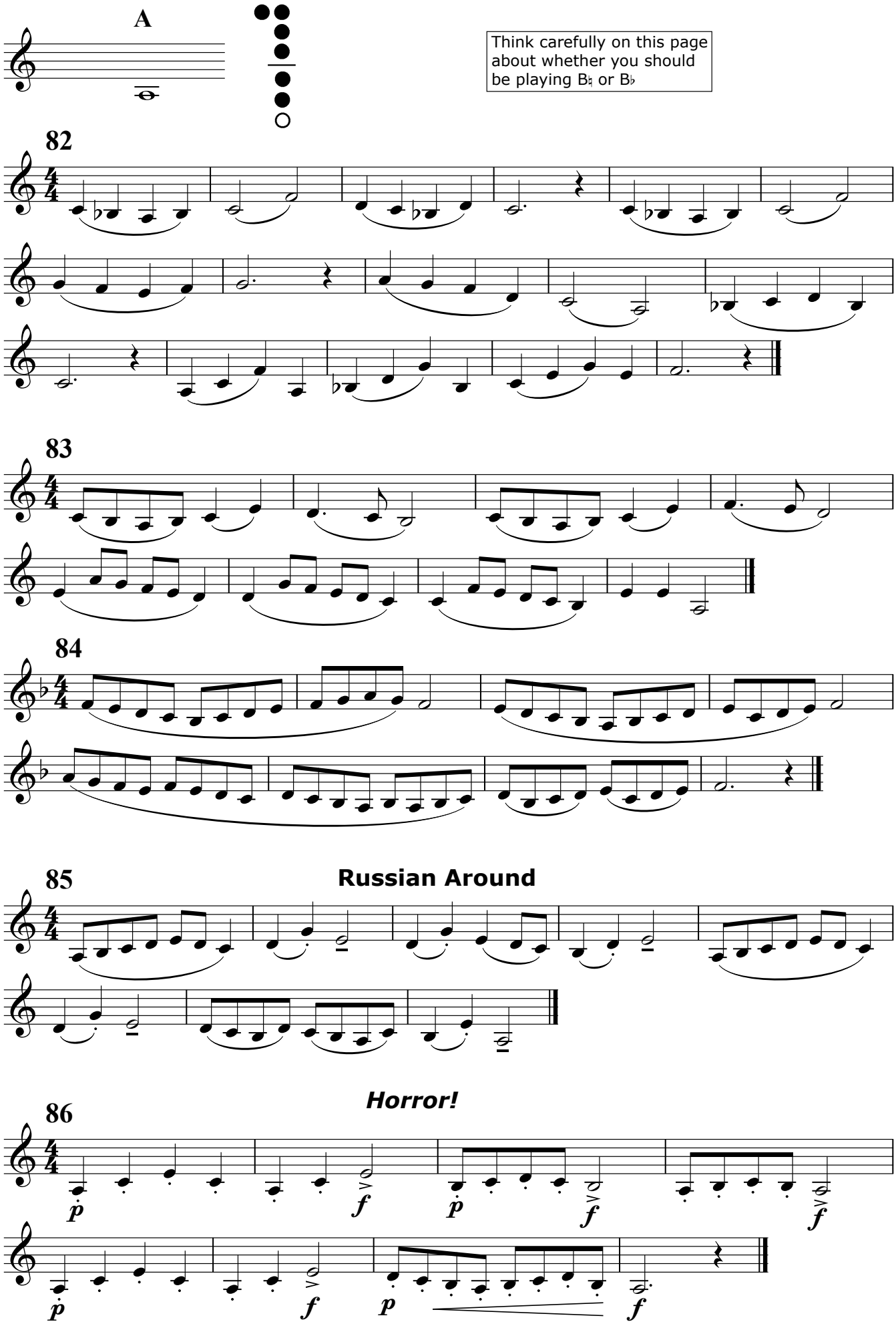
80

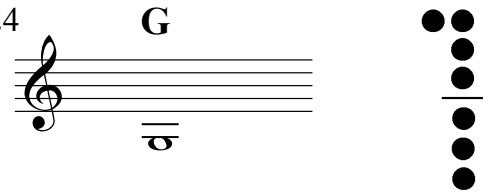


KEY SIGNATURE - F Major

81




A
Think carefully on this page about whether you should be playing B♮ or B♭
82
83
84
85
Russian Around
86
Horror!



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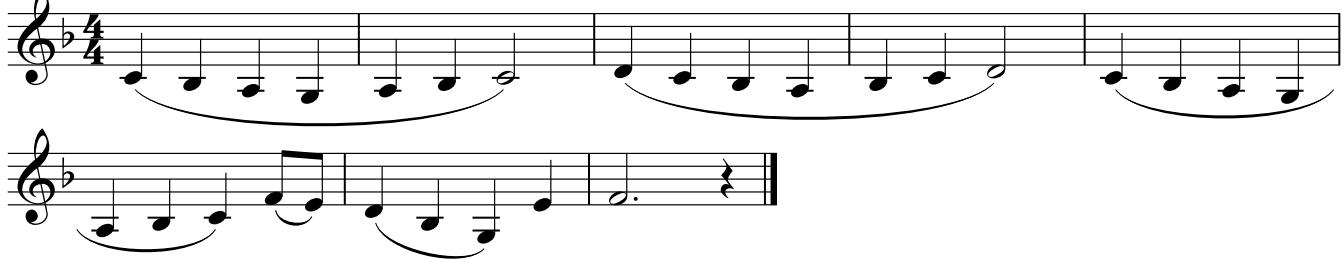

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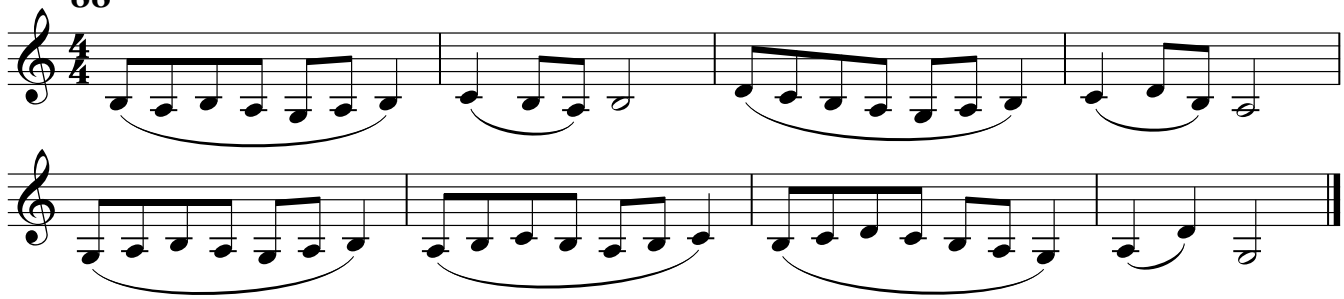
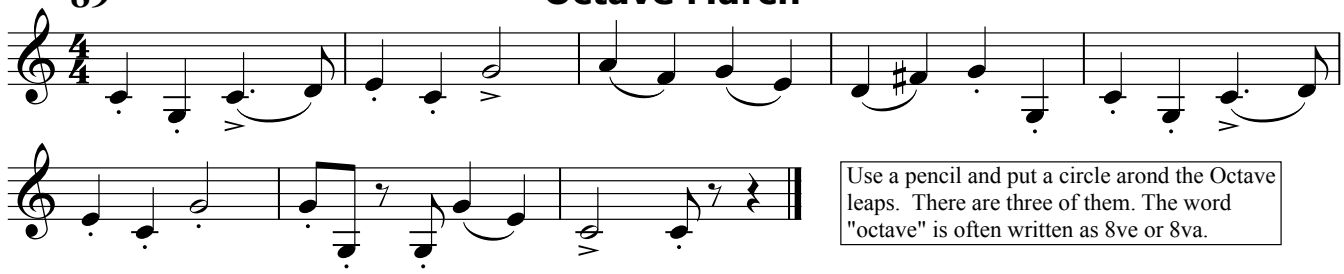
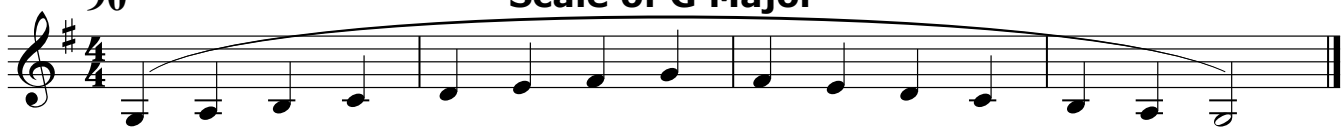


89 Octave March

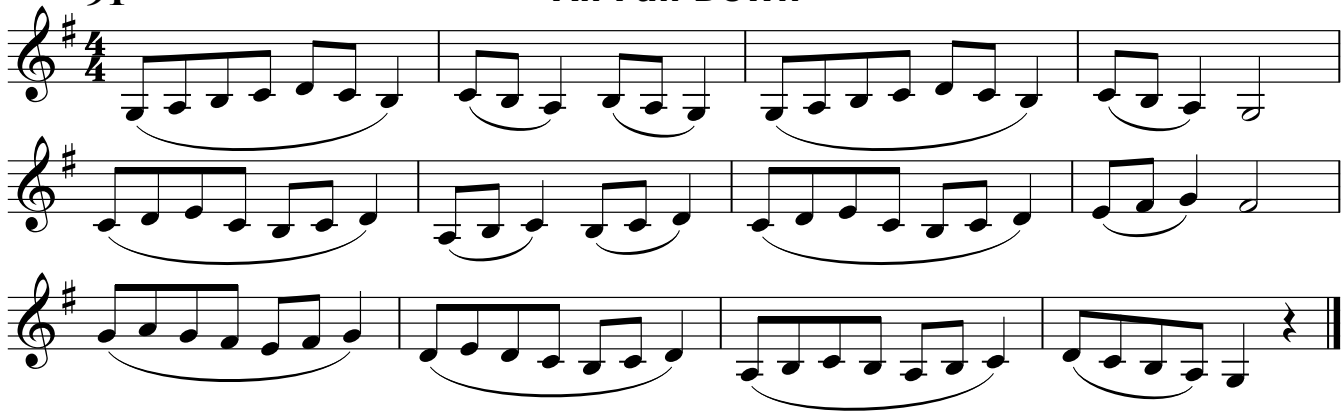


Use a pencil and put a circle arond the Octave leaps. There are three of them. The word "octave" is often written as 8ve or 8va.

90 Scale of G Major

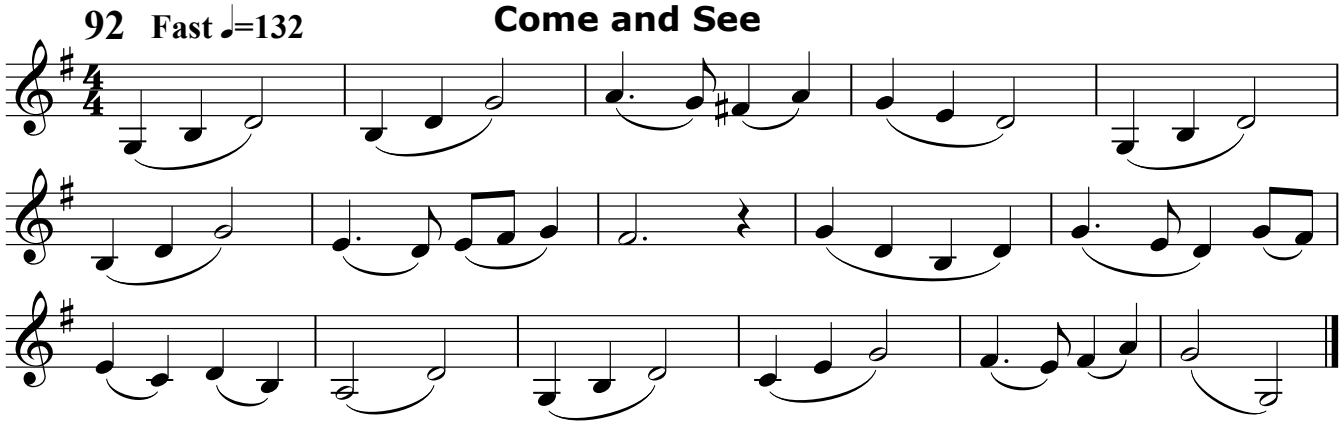


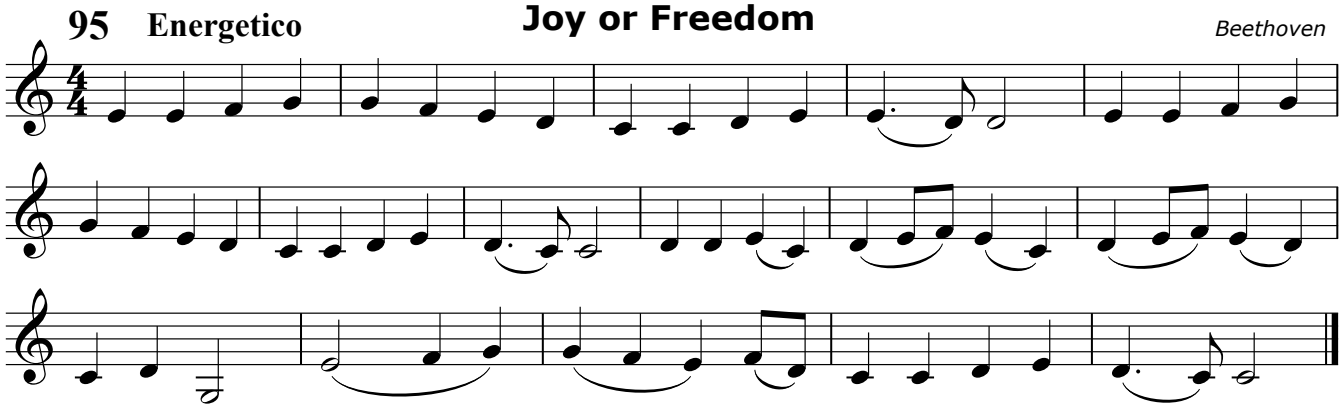
91 All Fall Down



Speed - Time - Tempo Composers need to tell you how fast they want the piece to be played. This is often done with words (fast, slow, etc.) but if they have a really firm idea of the speed they want, they will use a **metronome mark.** A metronome is a machine that ticks like a clock, and you can control the speed of the ticking. The ticking is measured in beats-per-minute, so ♩=60 will mean 60 crotchets in a minute, which is one-per-second. You can probably estimate ♩=60 without needing a metronome, and ♩=120 will be twice as fast (two beats per second), often used as the time for marches.

A Common Language. Composers will usually include a word (rather than just a metronome mark) as they can often describe the mood or style of the piece as well as the speed. Most composers use Italian as a common language - if you ever try reading scores in Russian, German, Polish, French, you will understand why.

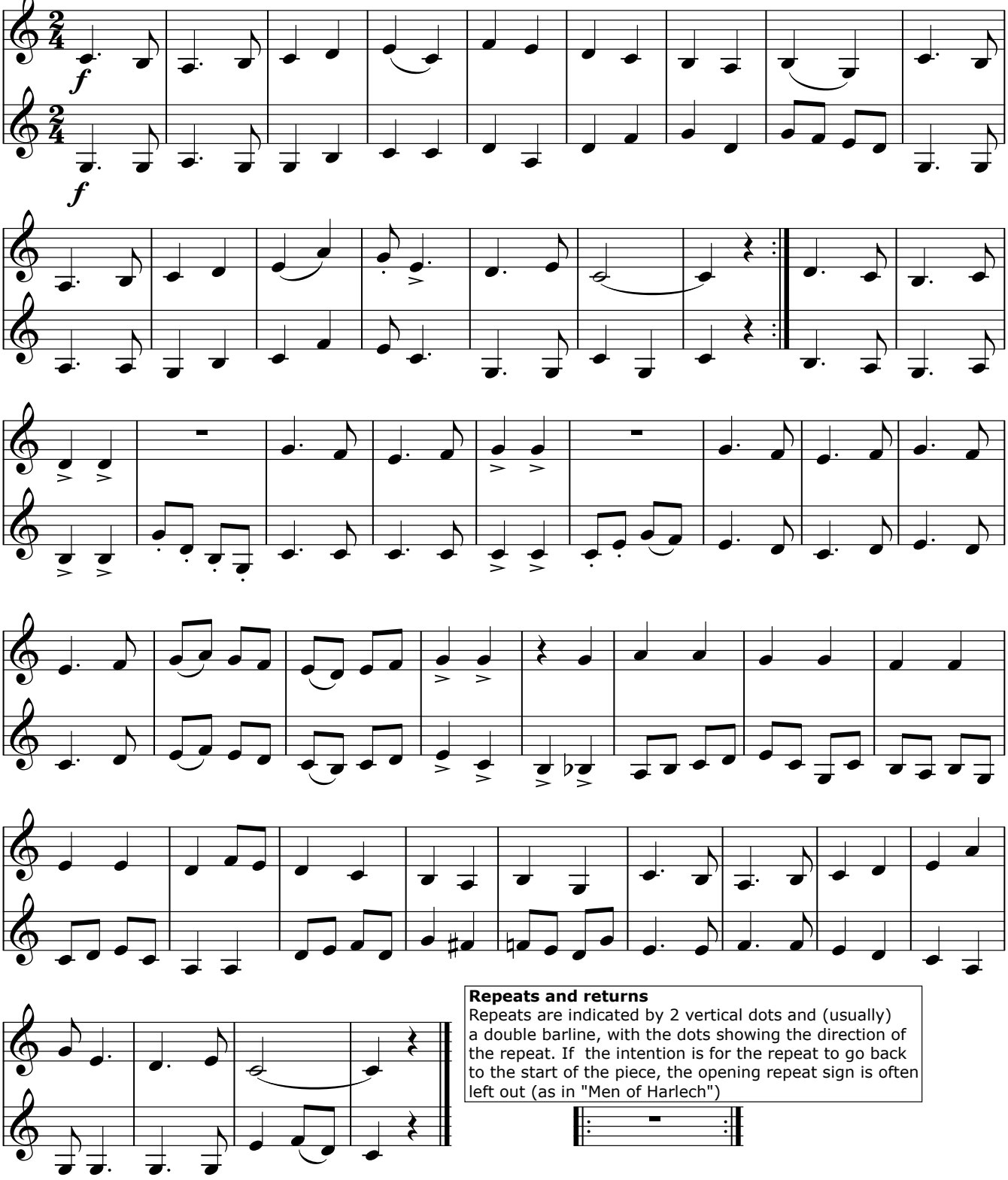




Men of Harlech

96 **March**

Welsh Traditional

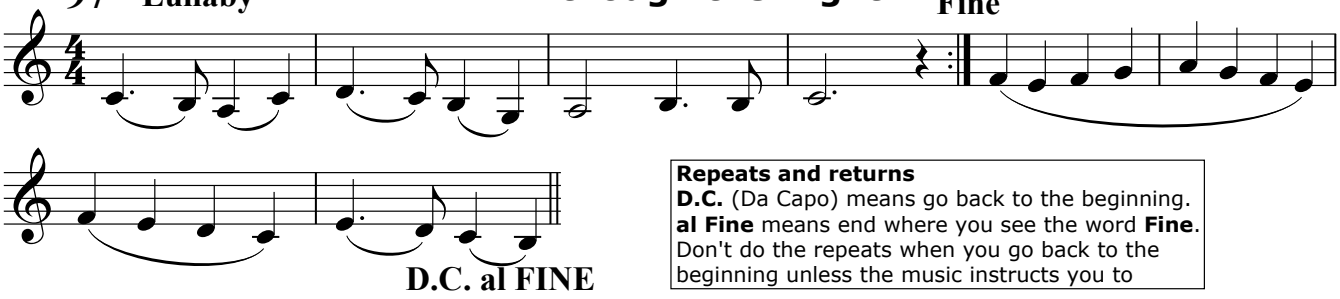


Repeats and returns
Repeats are indicated by 2 vertical dots and (usually) a double barline, with the dots showing the direction of the repeat. If the intention is for the repeat to go back to the start of the piece, the opening repeat sign is often left out (as in "Men of Harlech")

All though the Night

97 **Lullaby**

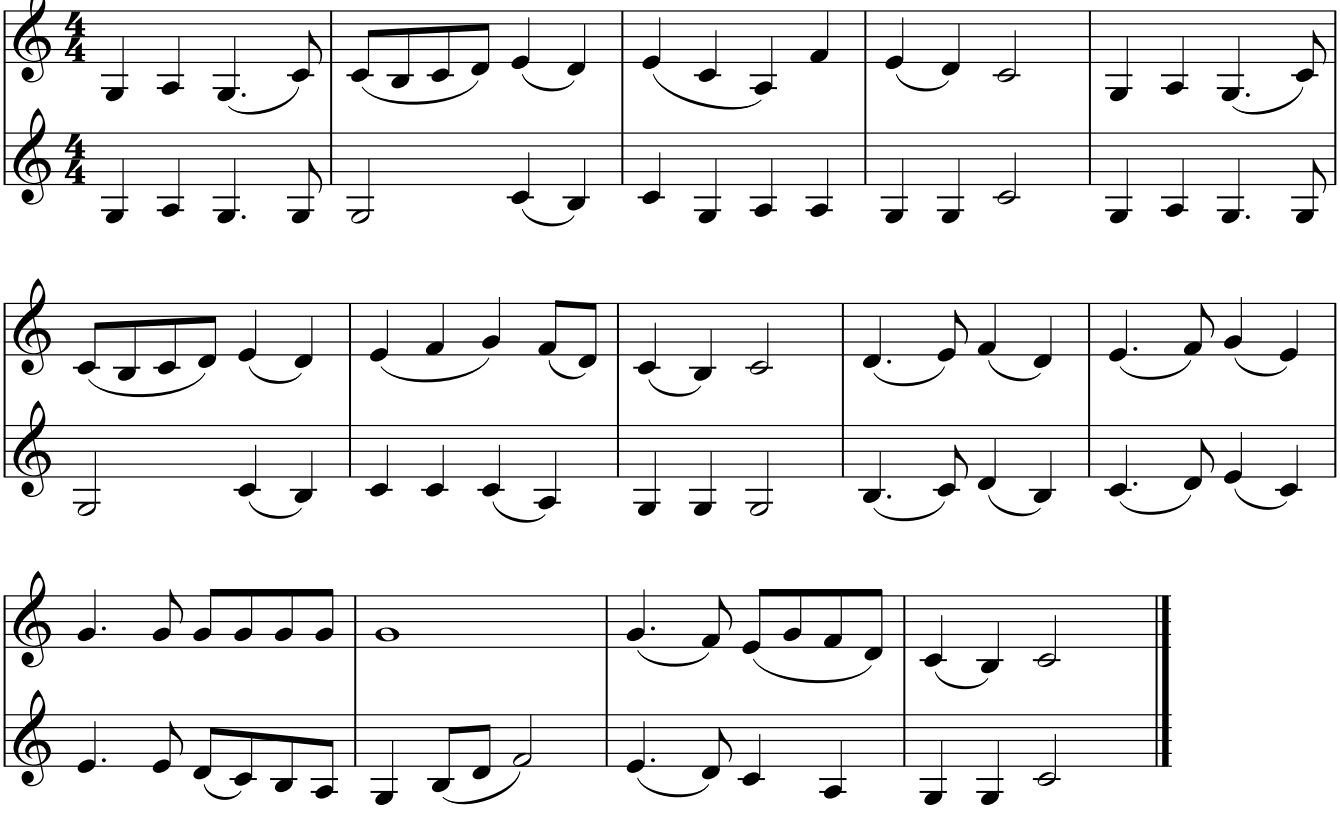
Welsh Traditional



Repeats and returns
D.C. (Da Capo) means go back to the beginning.
al Fine means end where you see the word **Fine**.
Don't do the repeats when you go back to the beginning unless the music instructs you to

98 Cwm Rhondda

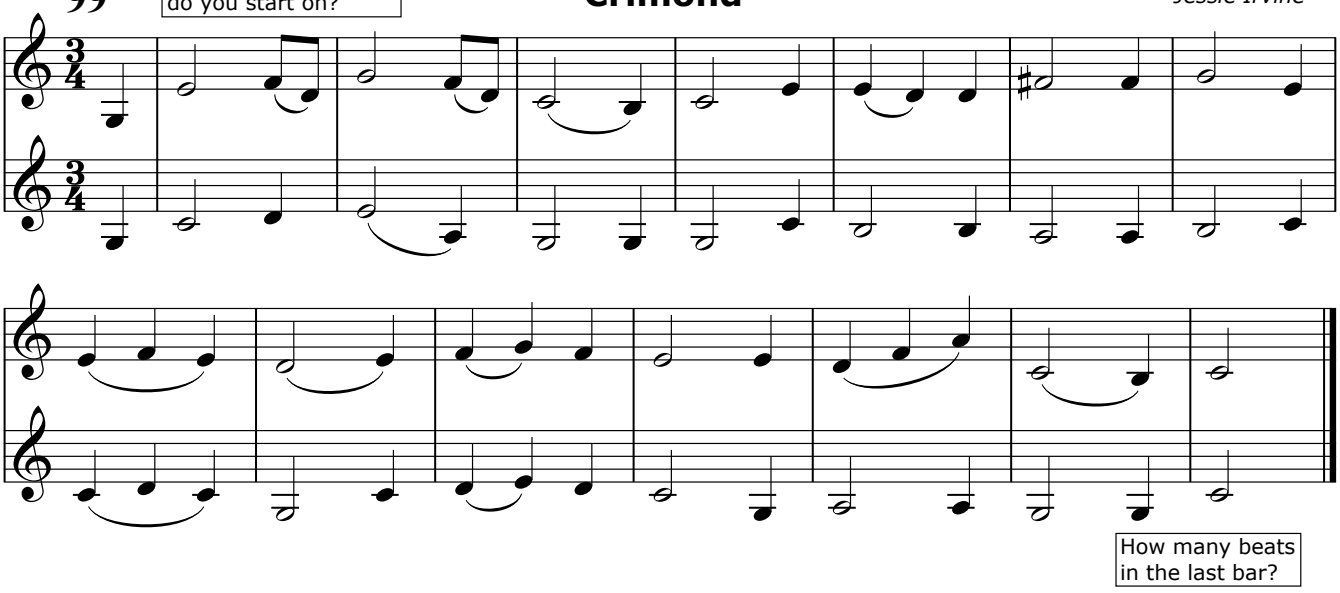
John Hughes



99 Crimond

Jessie Irvine

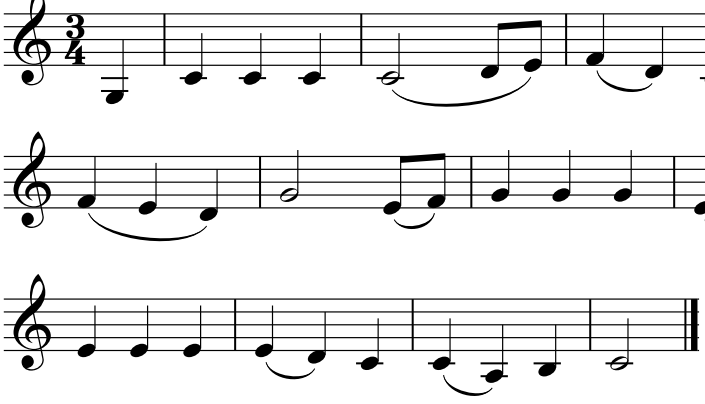
Which beat of the bar do you start on?



How many beats in the last bar?

100 Farewell and Adieu

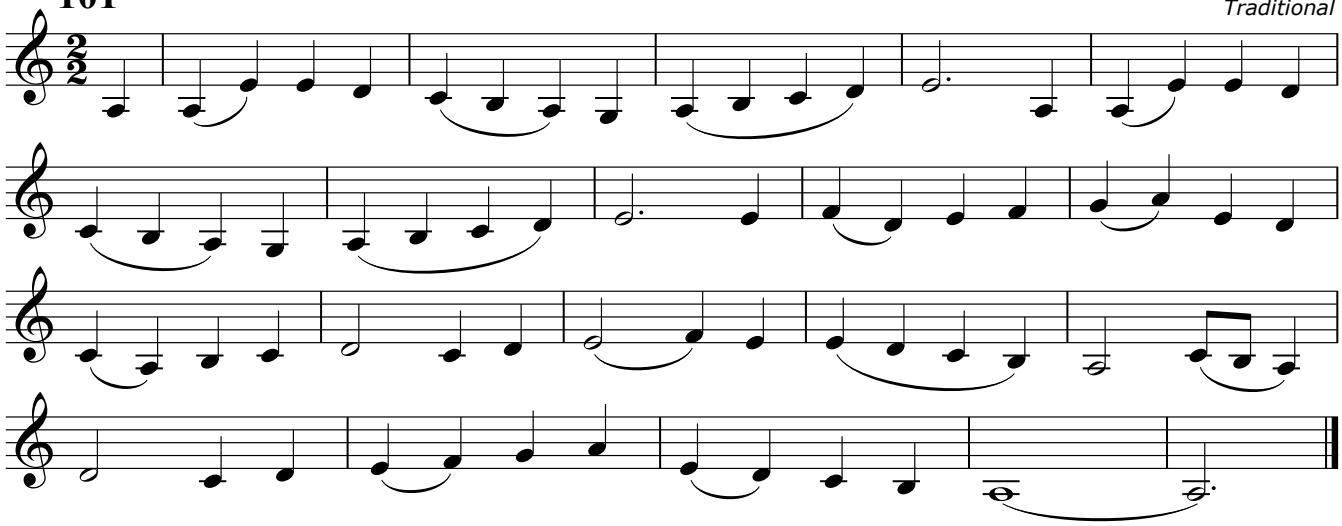
Traditional



Festive Cheer!

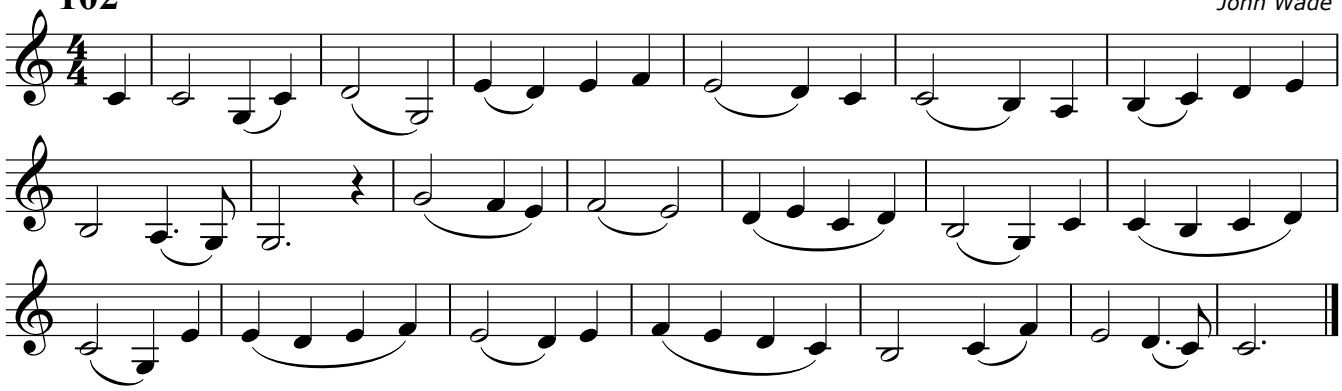
101

Traditional



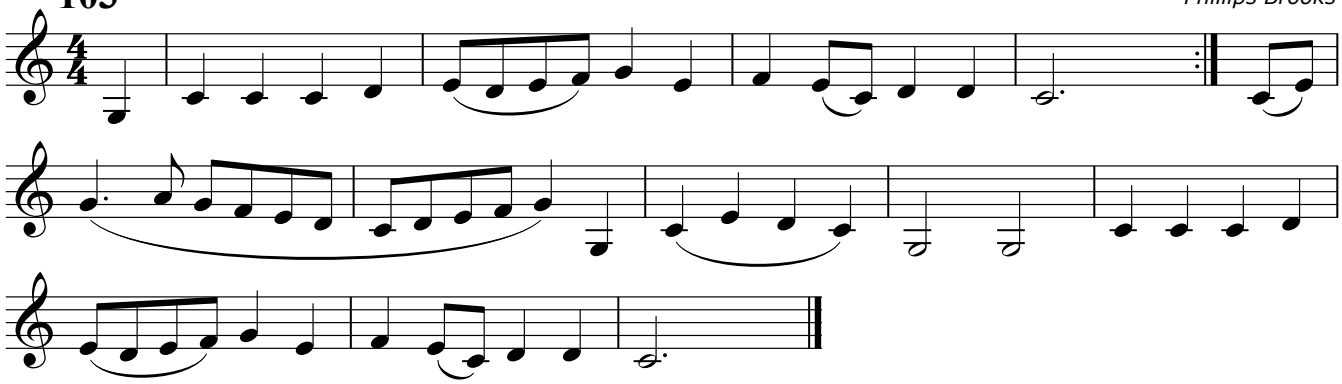
102

John Wade



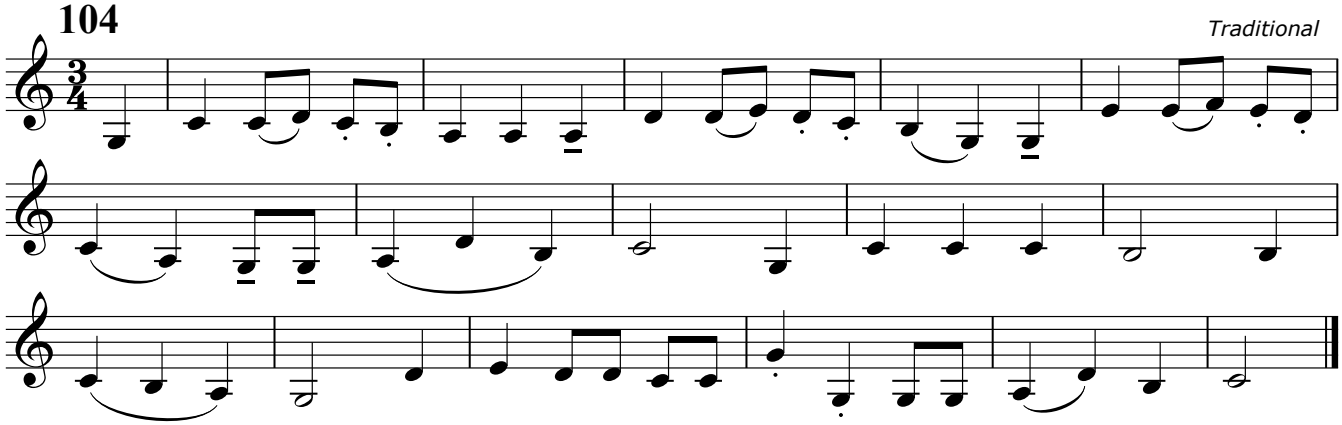
103

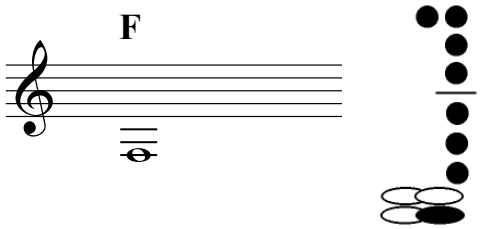
Phillips Brooks



104

Traditional





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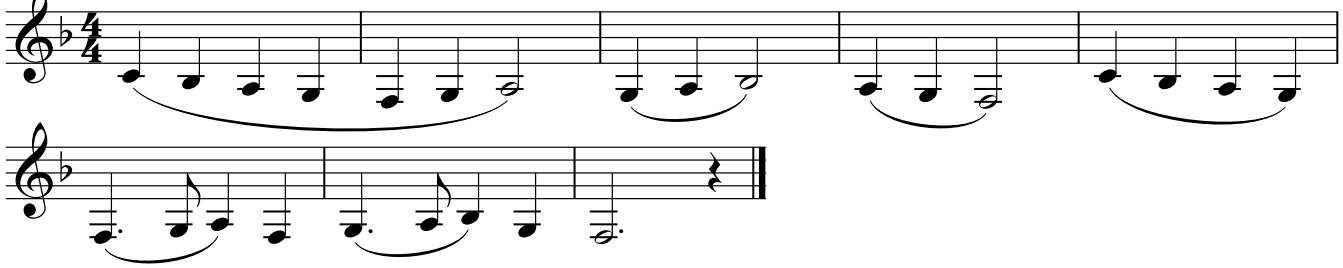

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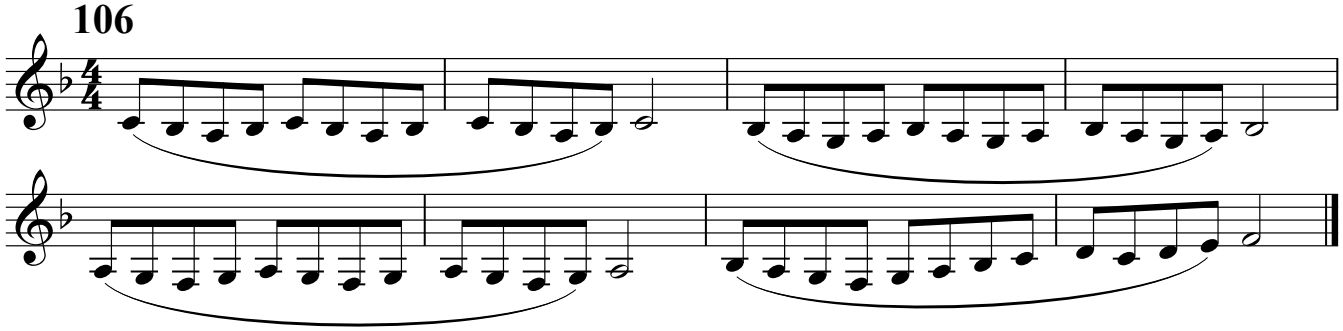

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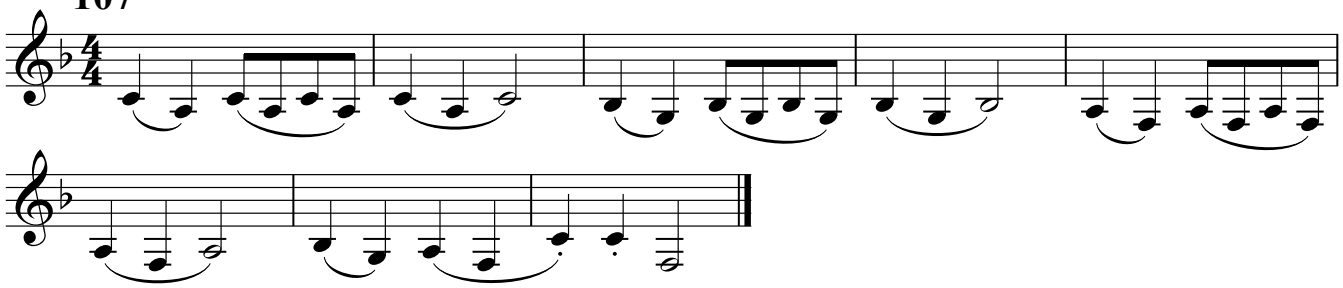
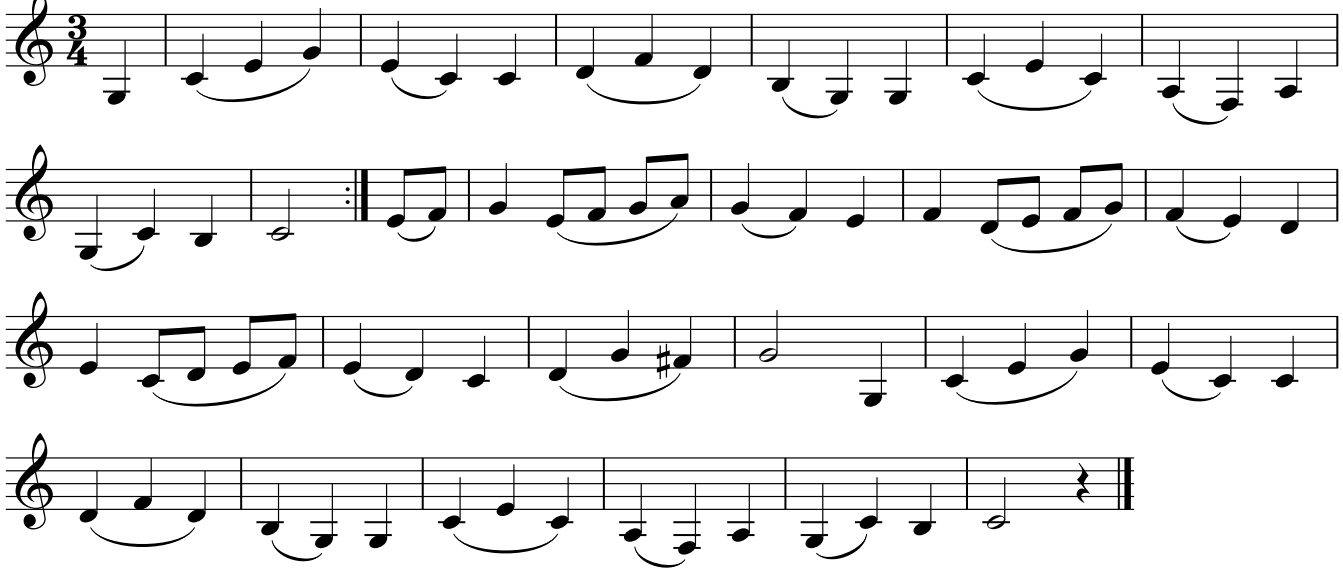


The Ash Grove

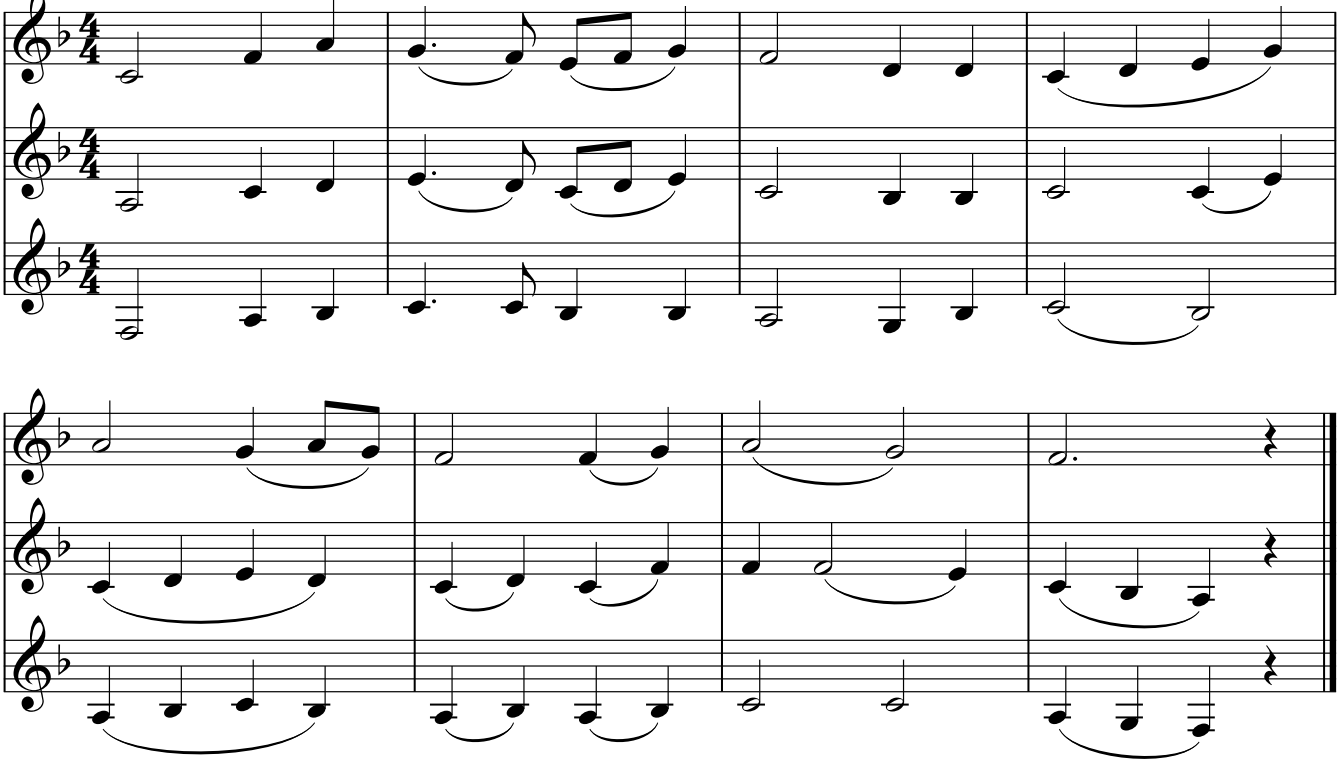
Traditional

108



Nobility

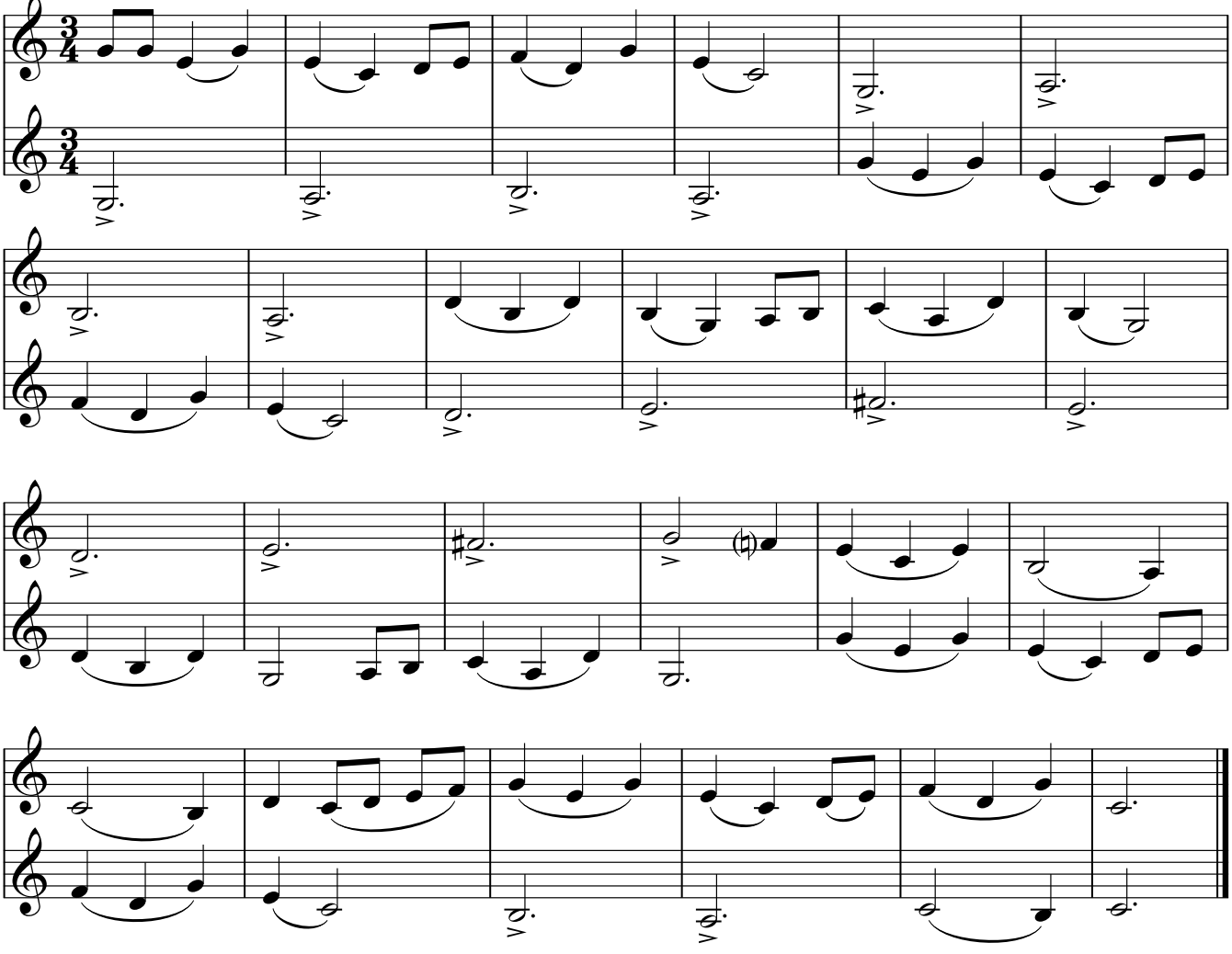
109



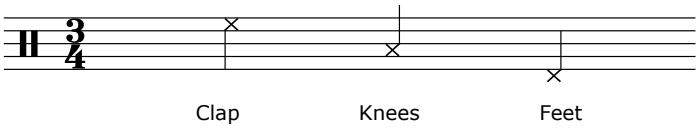
"All Right, Fruit?"

Traditional

110

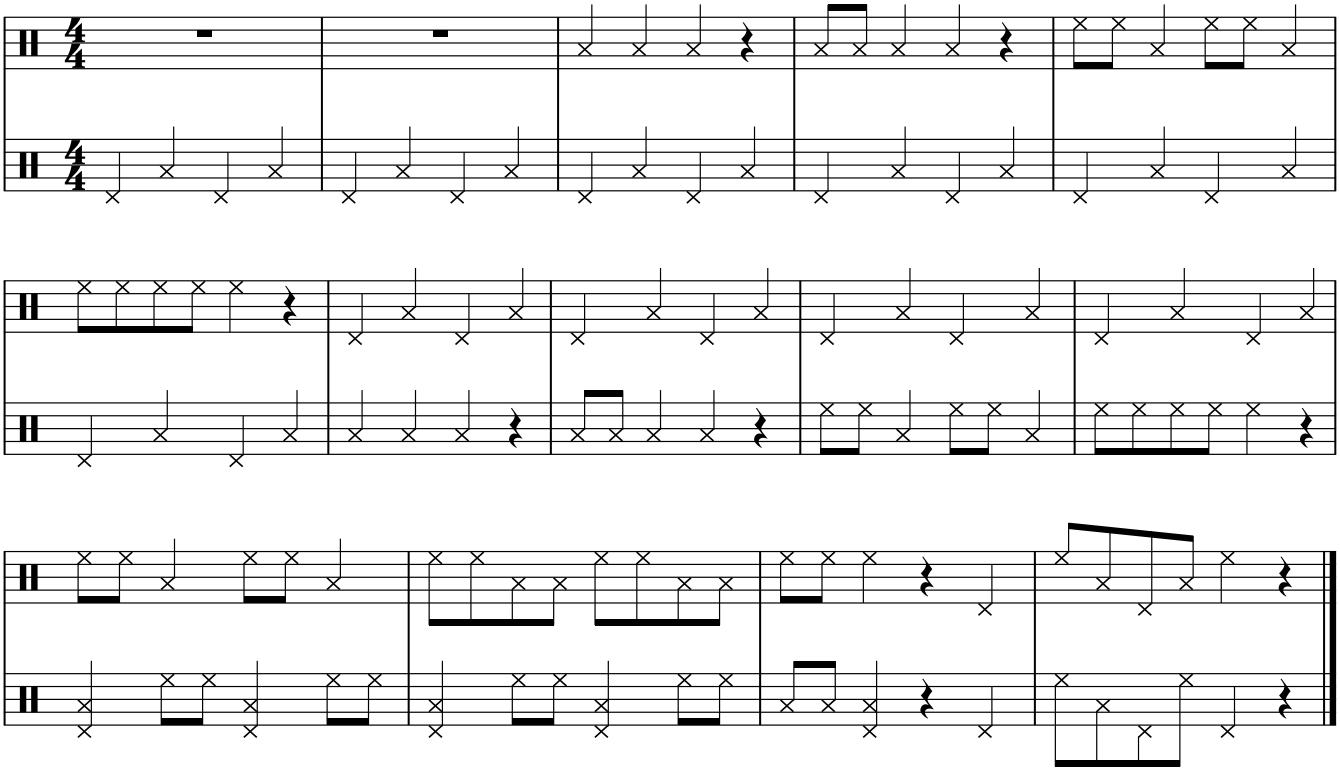


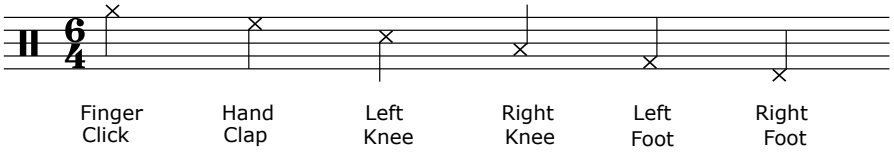
CLAP-TRAPS 3



111

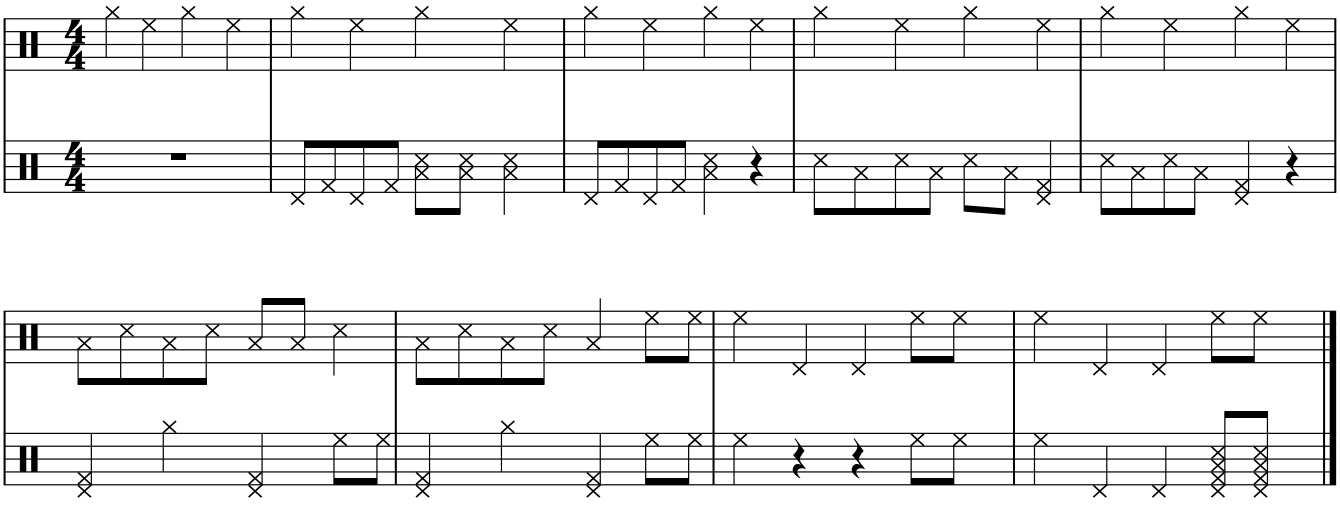
Mr Plod



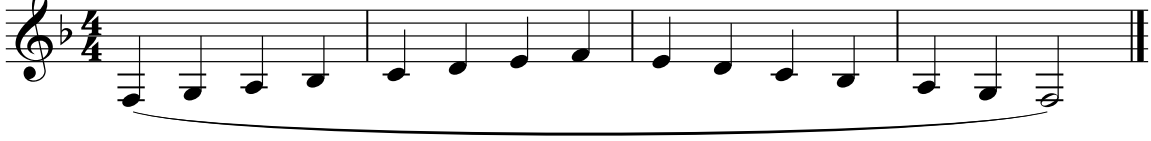


Hickory Clickory

112



113 **Scale of F major**



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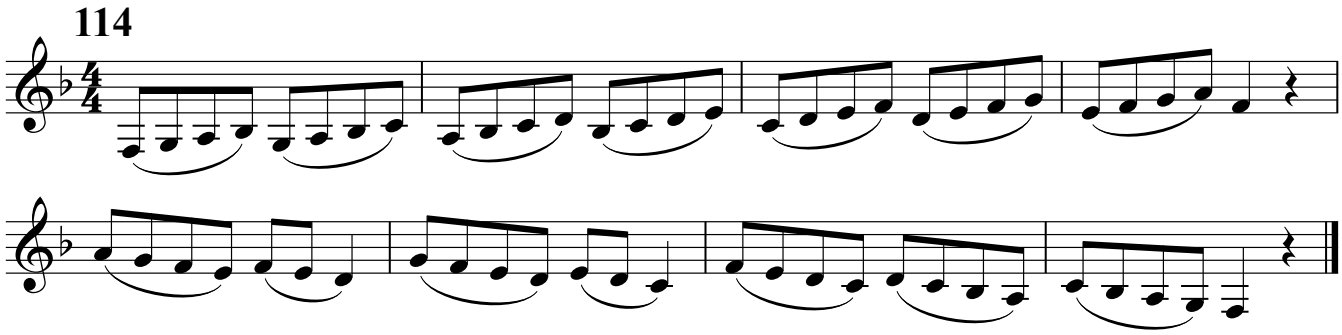

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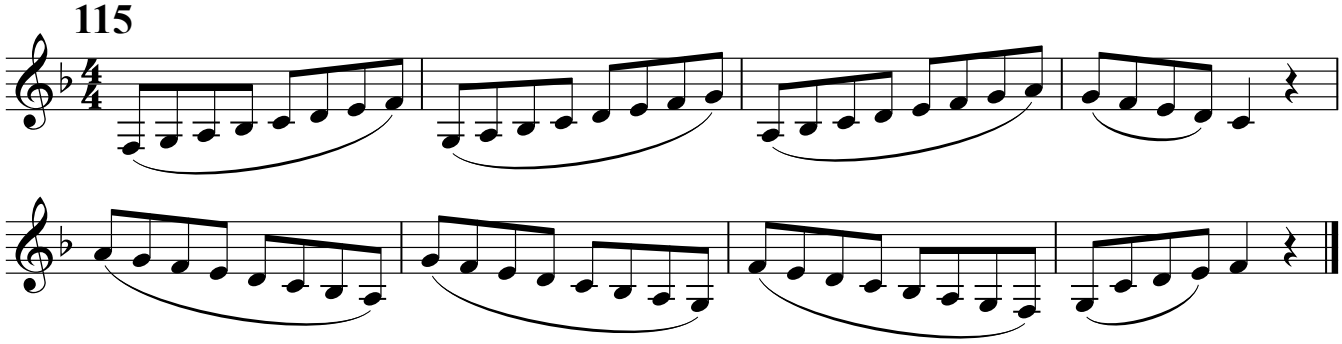

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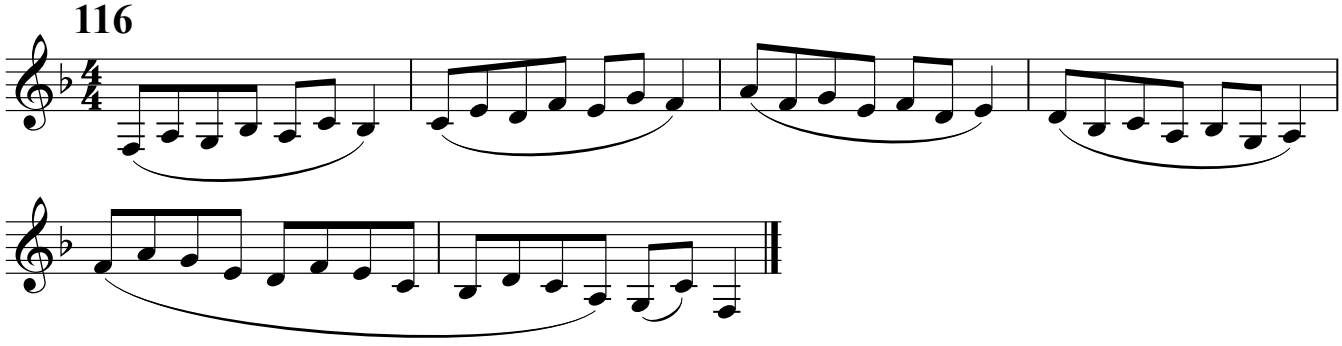

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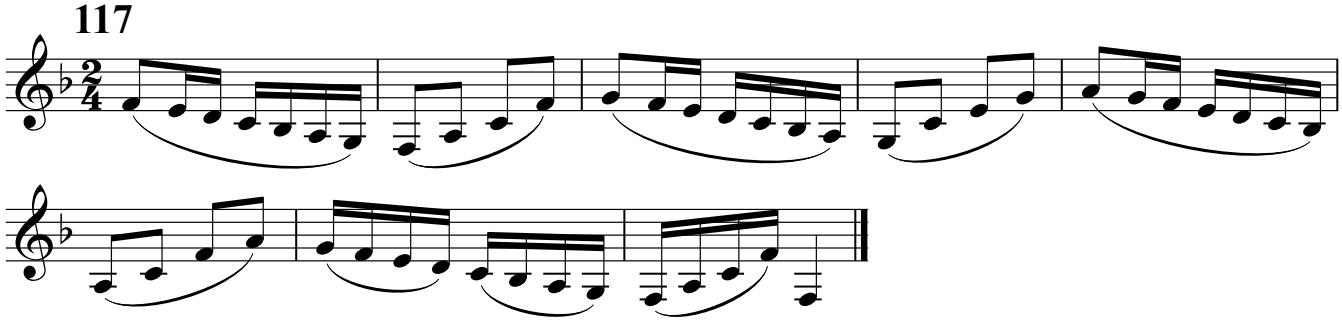
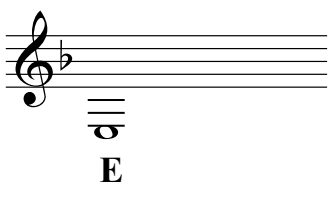
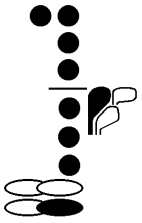


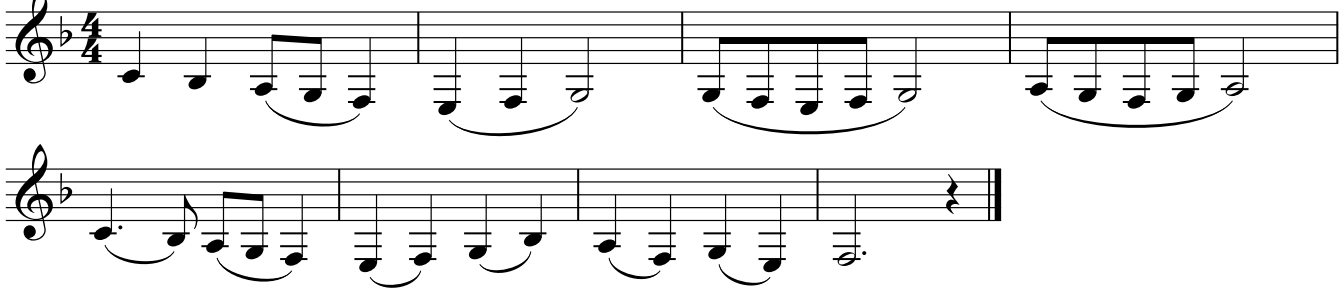




This is the lowest note on the clarinet

You don't have to have the R.H. finger down (the one you use for low F), but if it is already down, you might as well leave it down.

118



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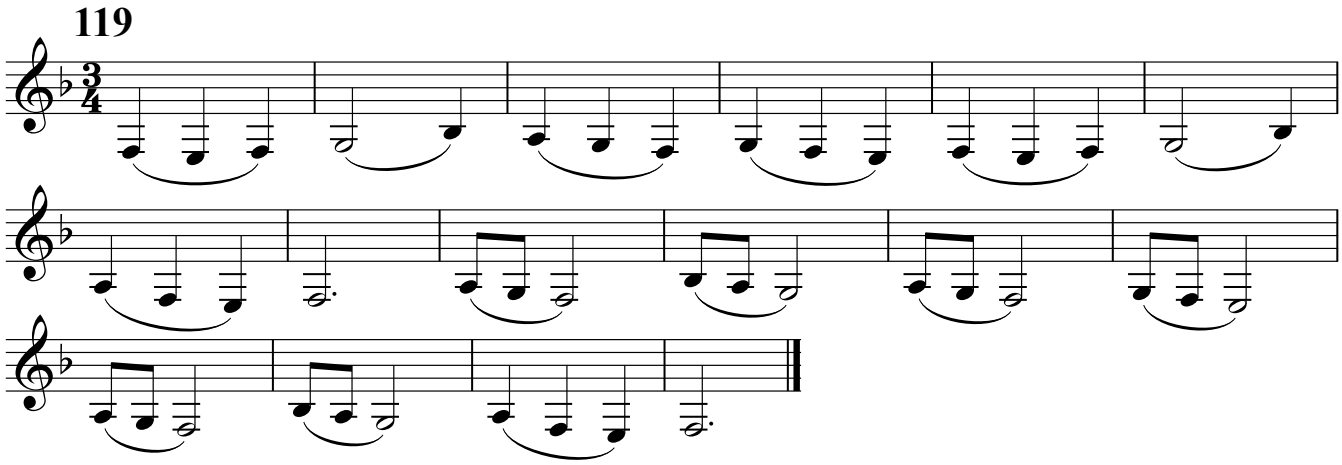

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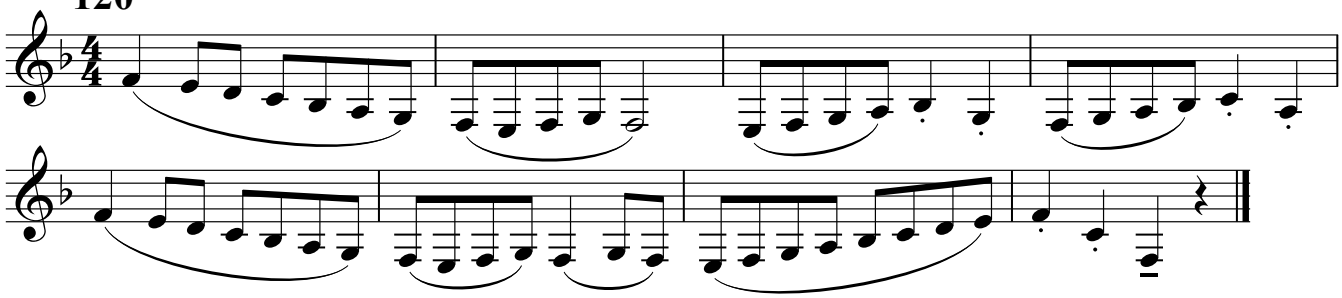
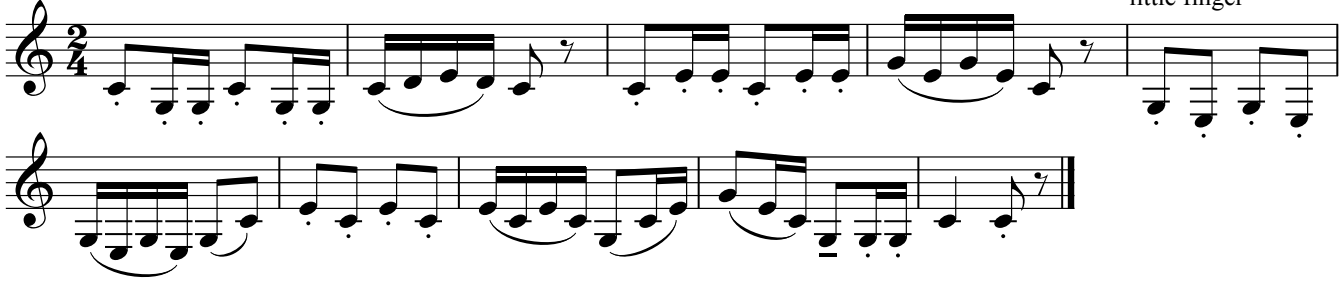
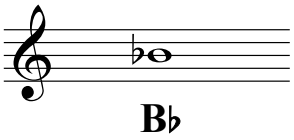


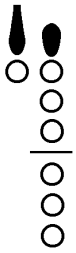
121

Foxy Fanfare

Only move L.H. little finger



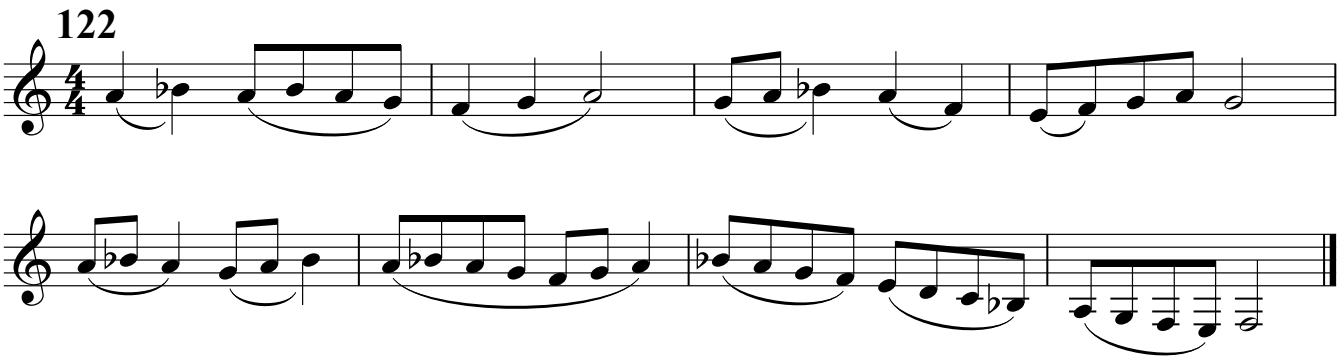




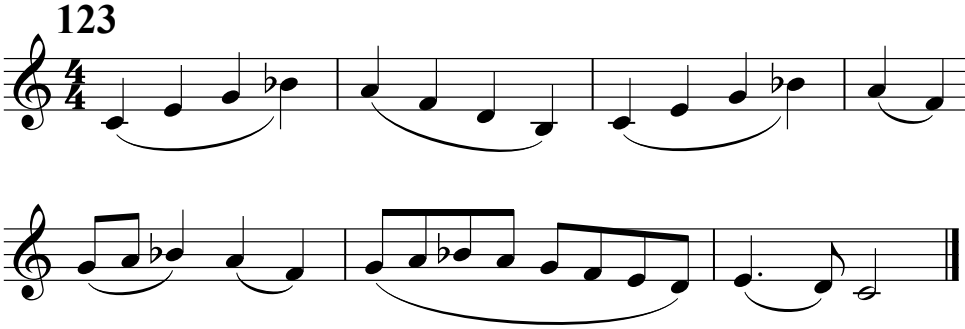
This is the highest note in the LOW register

The key at the back that you lean on with your thumb is called the "Speaker" key

122

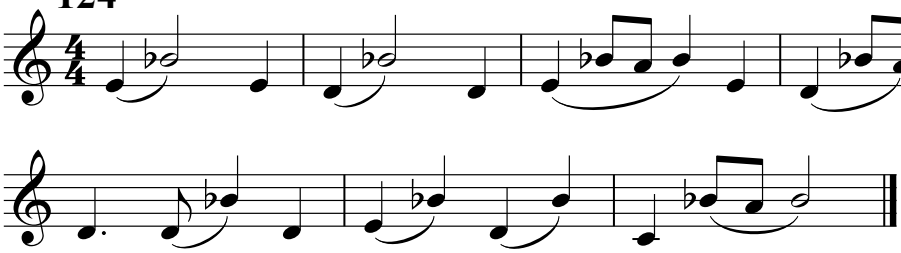


123



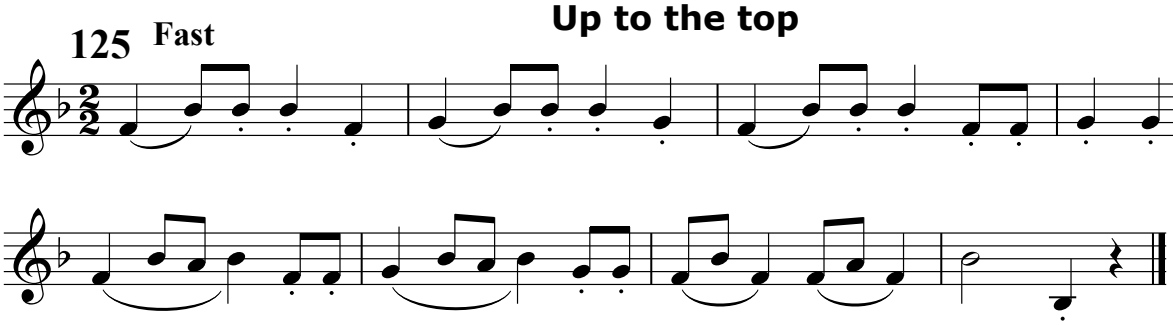
124

I want to be flat

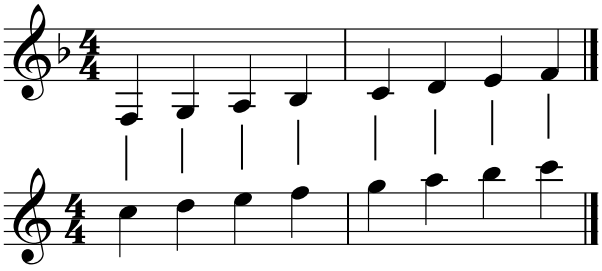


125 **Fast**

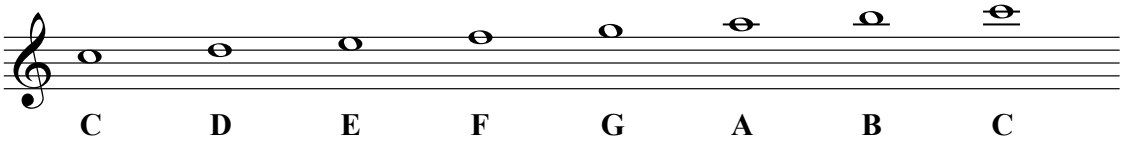
Up to the top



THE UPPER REGISTER

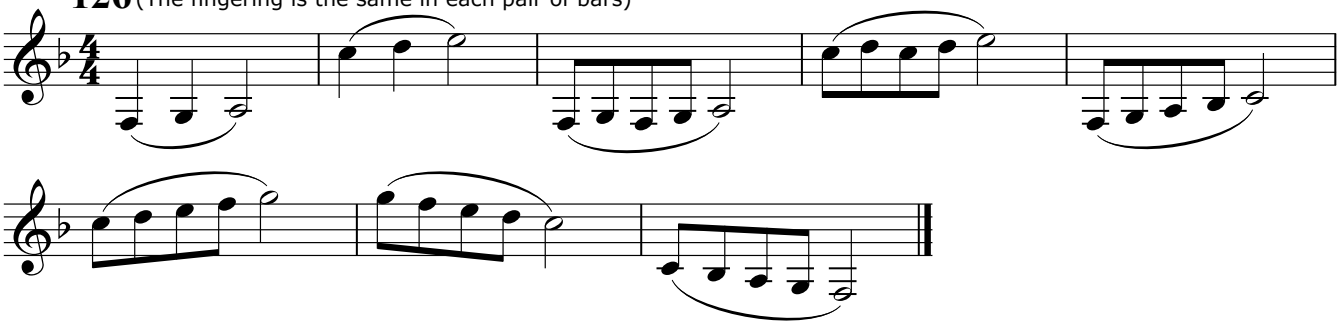


To get the upper register notes (the high notes) use the same fingerings as you did in most of the low register (try a scale of F major) AND ADD the speaker key (the one at the back that you can lean on with your left thumb).

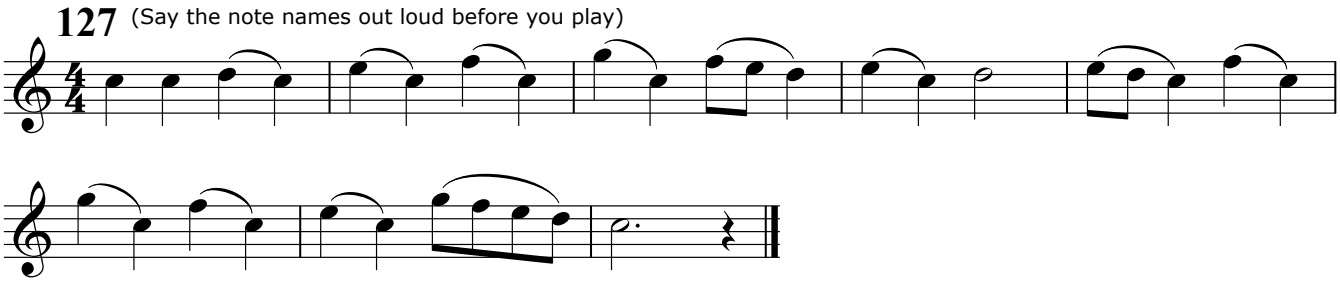


Unfortunately the names of the new notes are different from the same fingerings in the low register, but if you ever learned the recorder, you should find this very familiar.

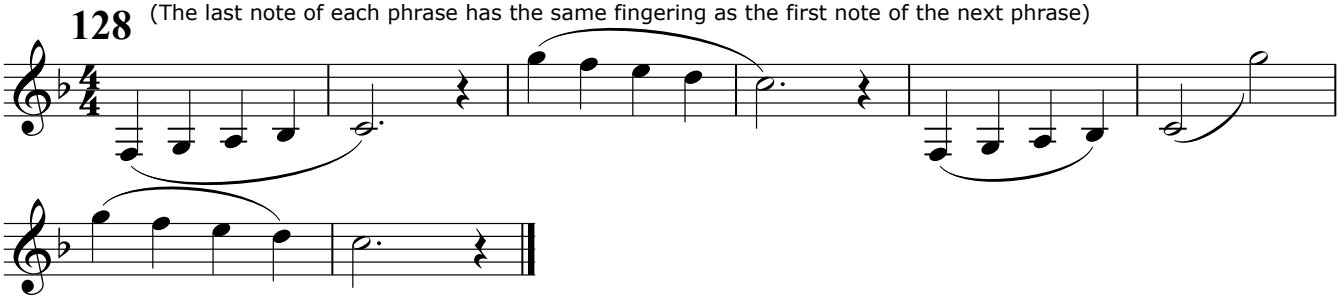
126 (The fingering is the same in each pair of bars)



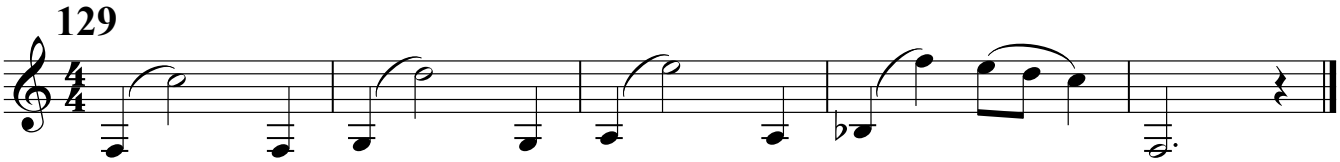
127 (Say the note names out loud before you play)



128 (The last note of each phrase has the same fingering as the first note of the next phrase)

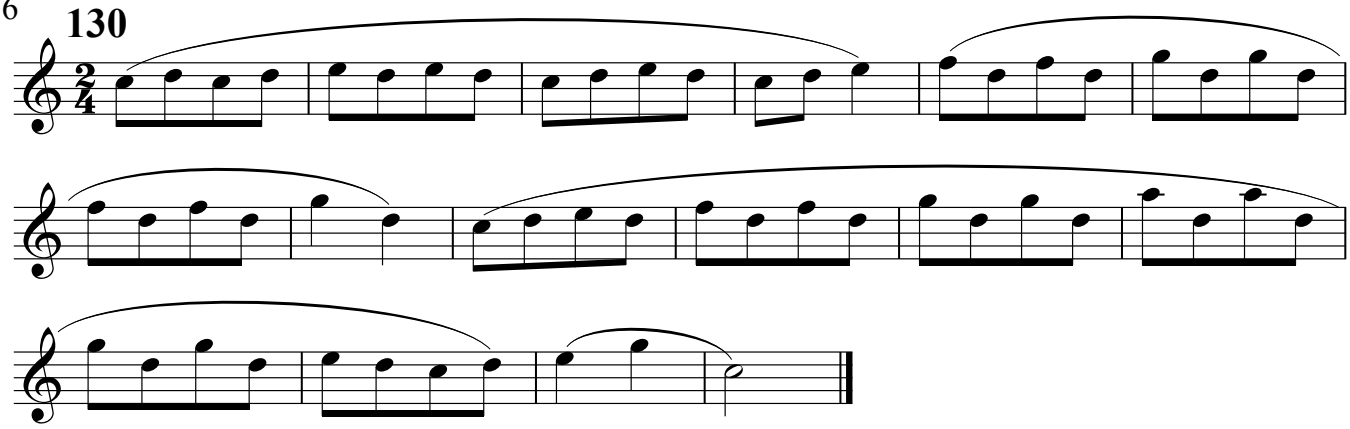


129



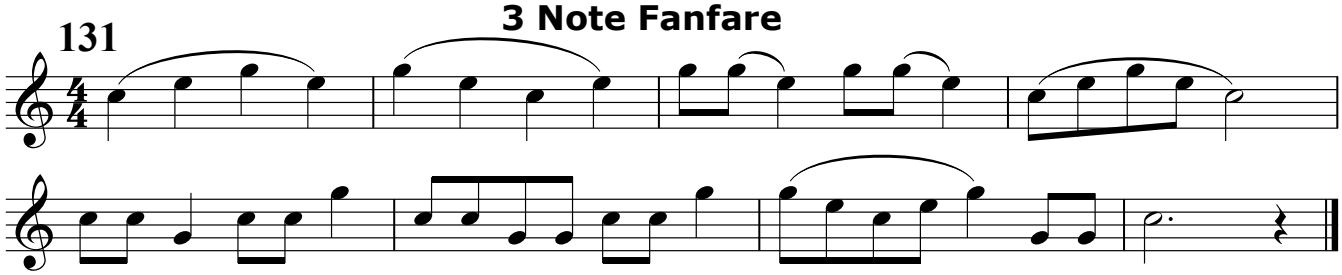
Seedy Playing

130



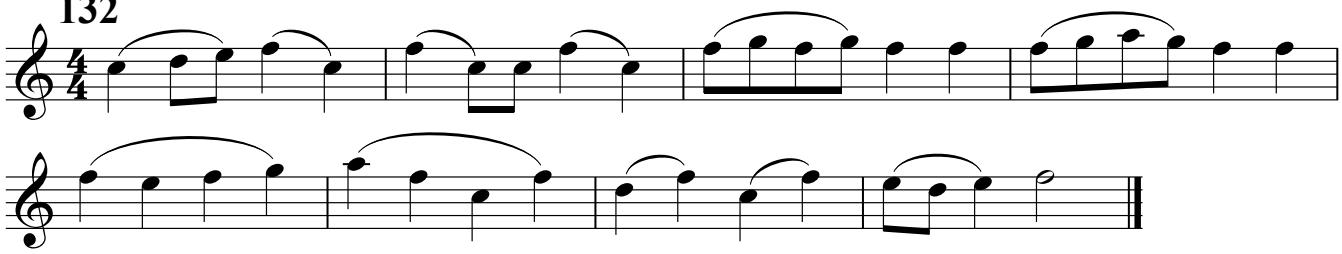
3 Note Fanfare

131



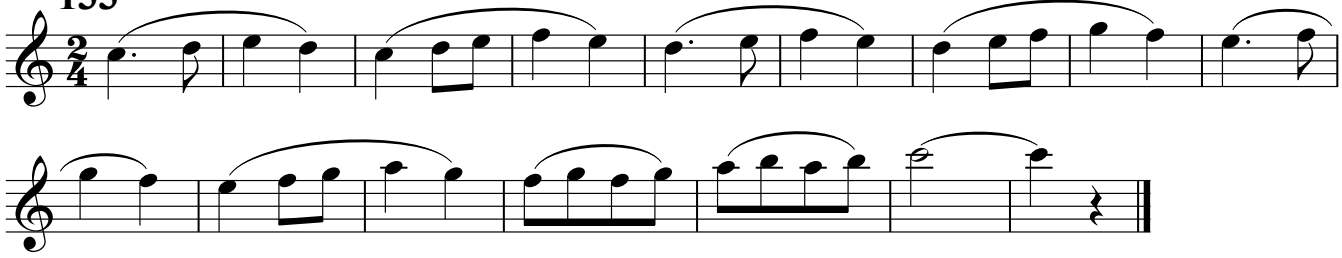
F-ffective

132



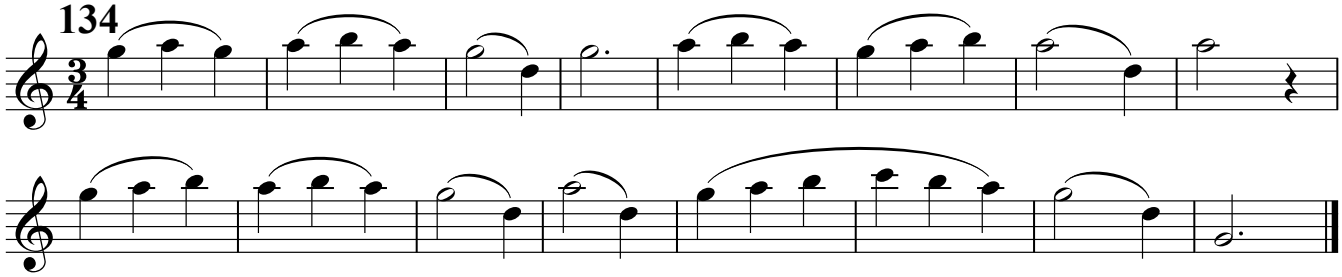
Building Up!

133



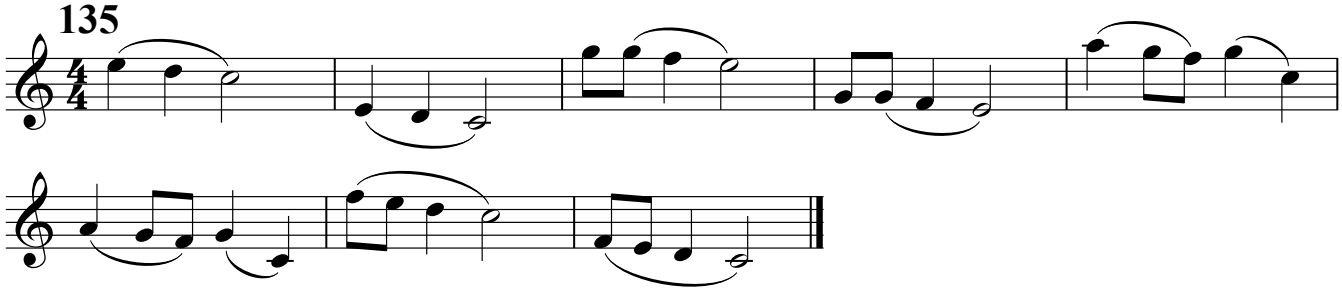
High Brow

134

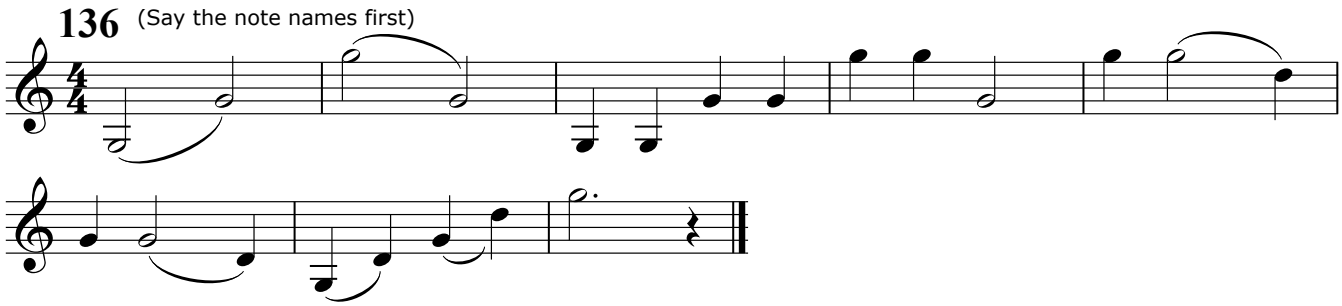


The Name's the Same

135

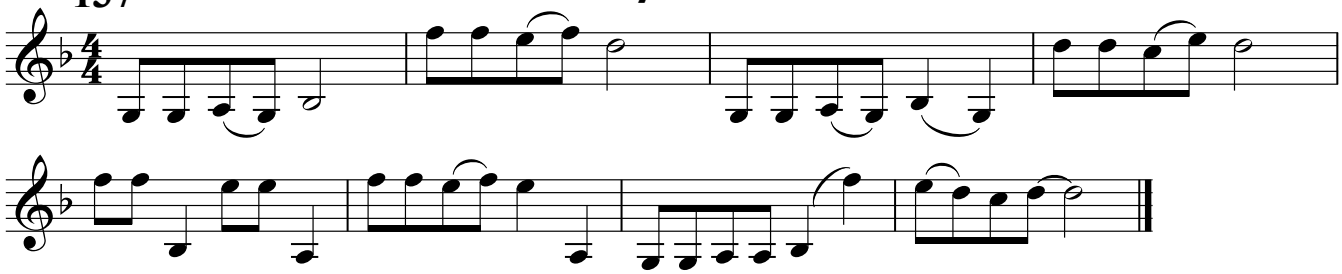


136 (Say the note names first)



Rocky Path

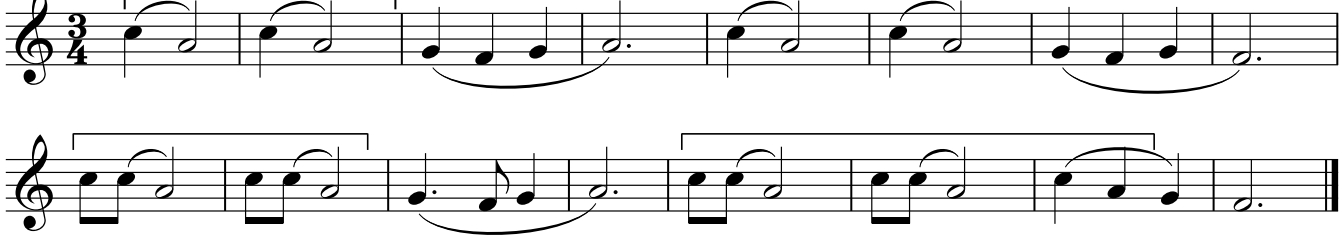
137



Keep all your right hand fingers down through the brackets

Level Crossing

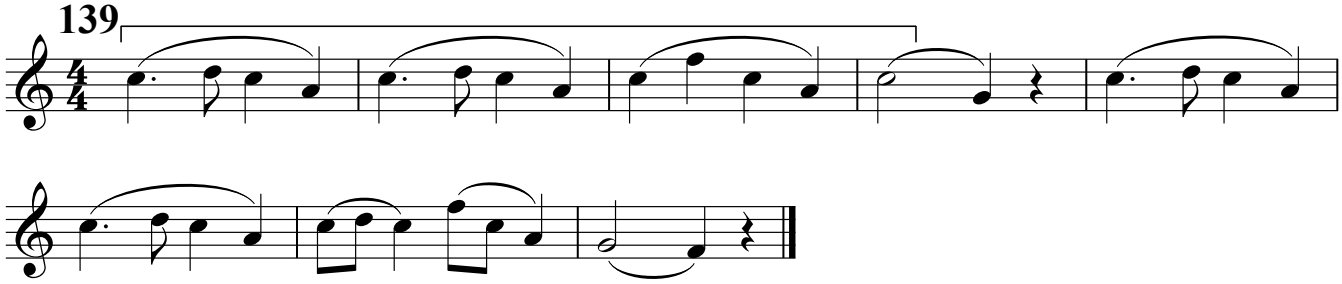
138



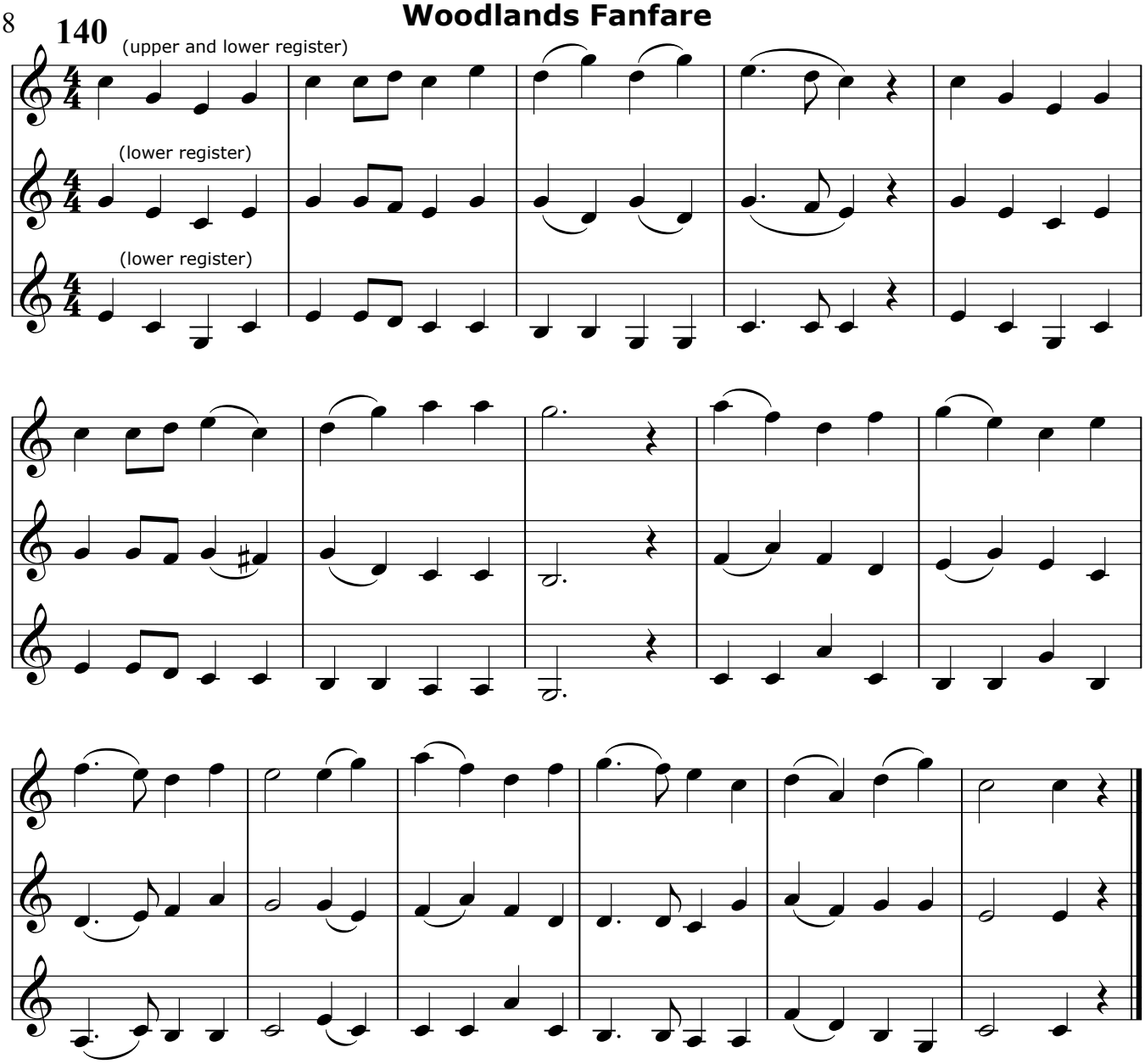
Same here - R.H down through brackets

Can I do it?

139

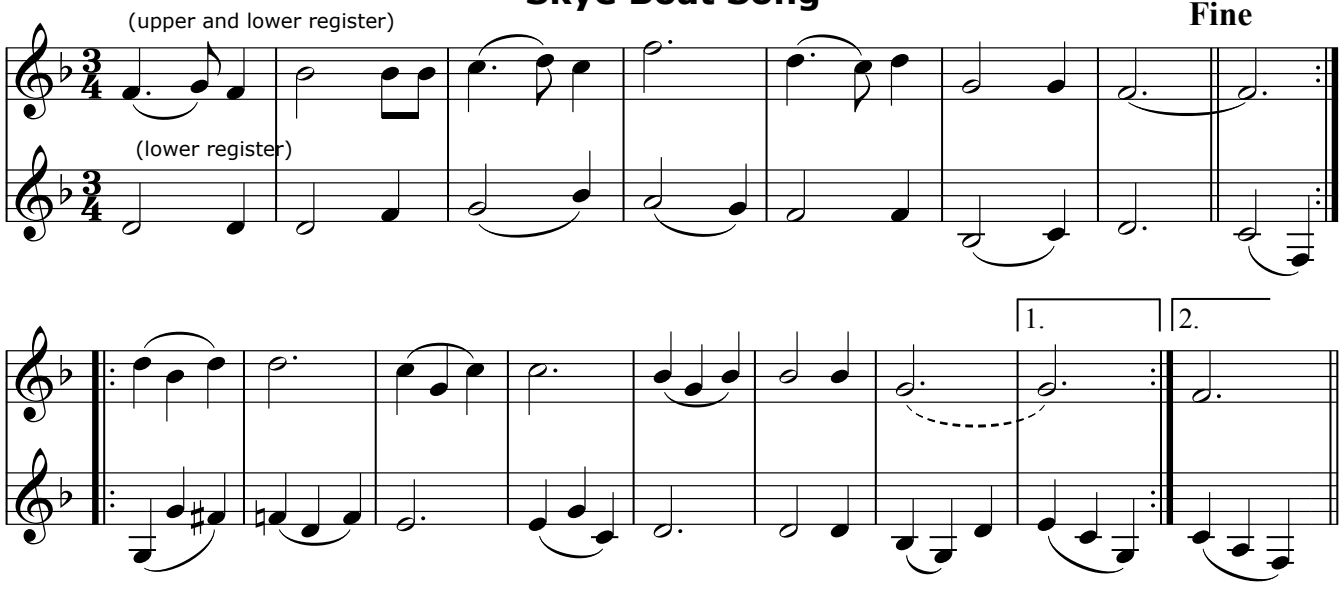


Woodlands Fanfare



First and second time brackets - used to give alternative endings to sections

Skye Boat Song



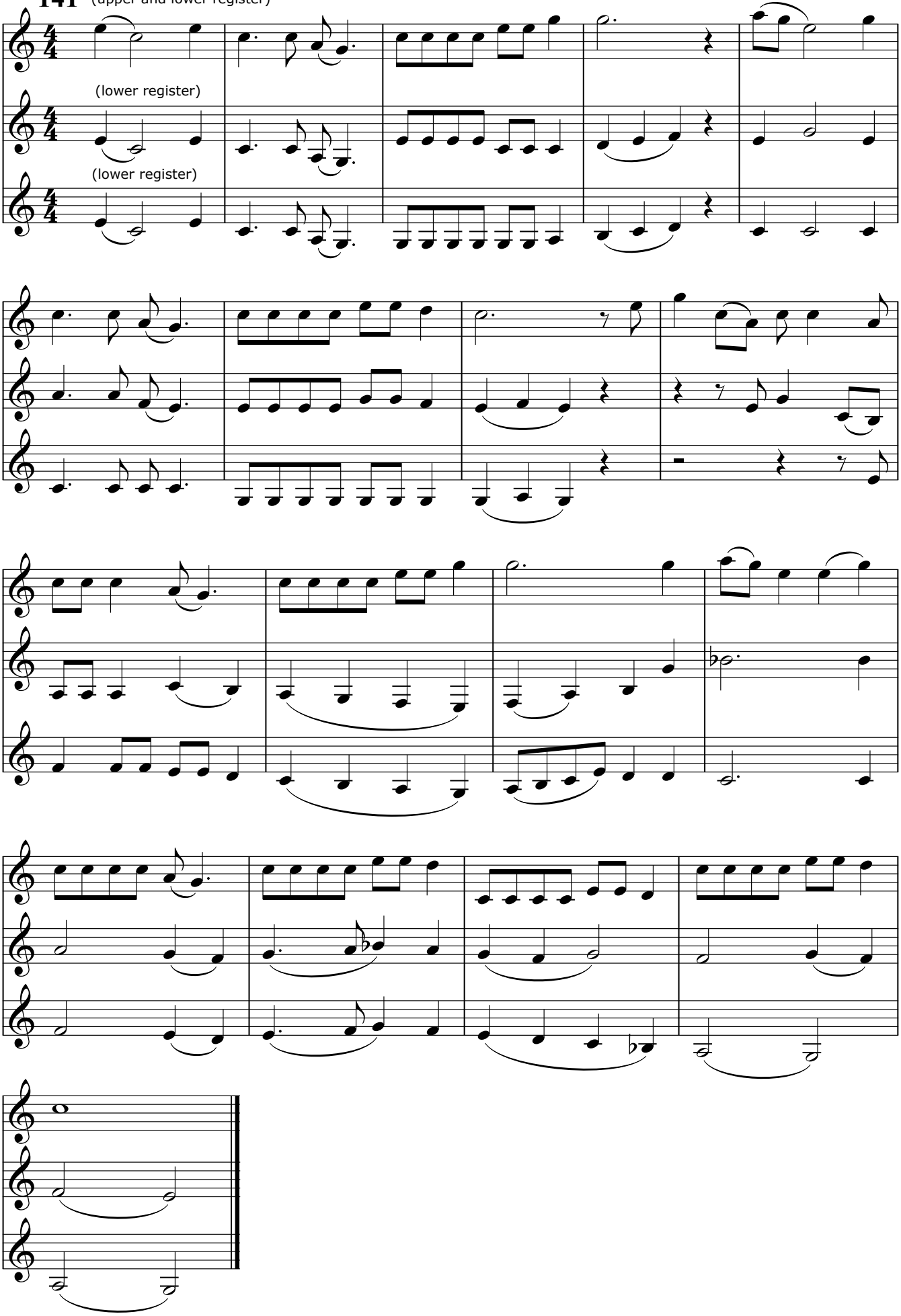
Swing Low and High

Traditional

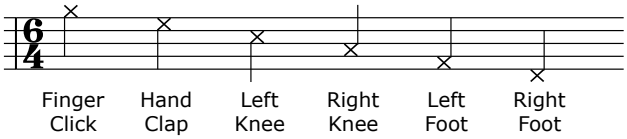
141 (upper and lower register)

(lower register)

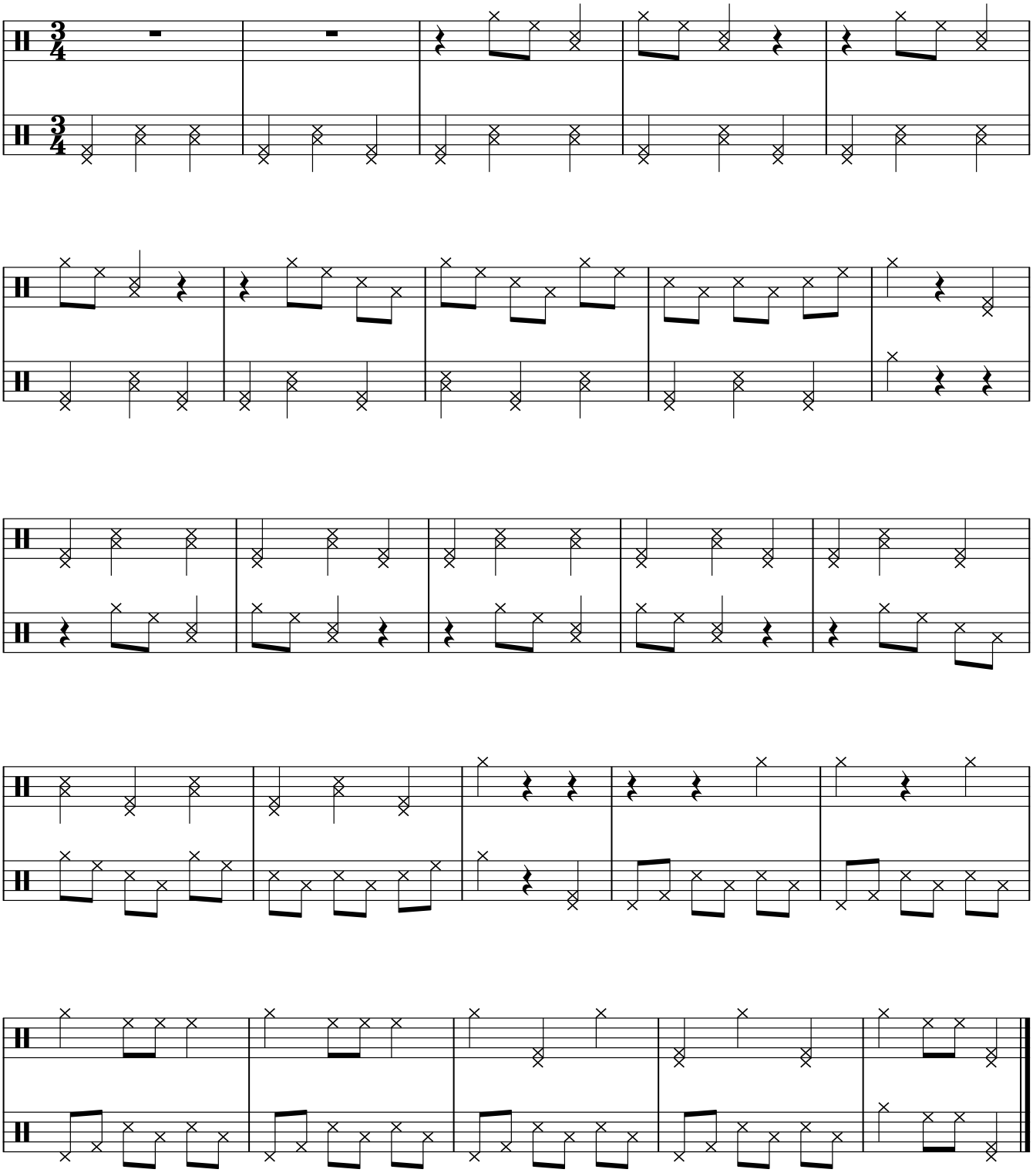
(lower register)



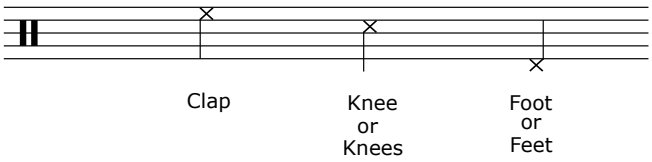
CLAP-TRAPS 4

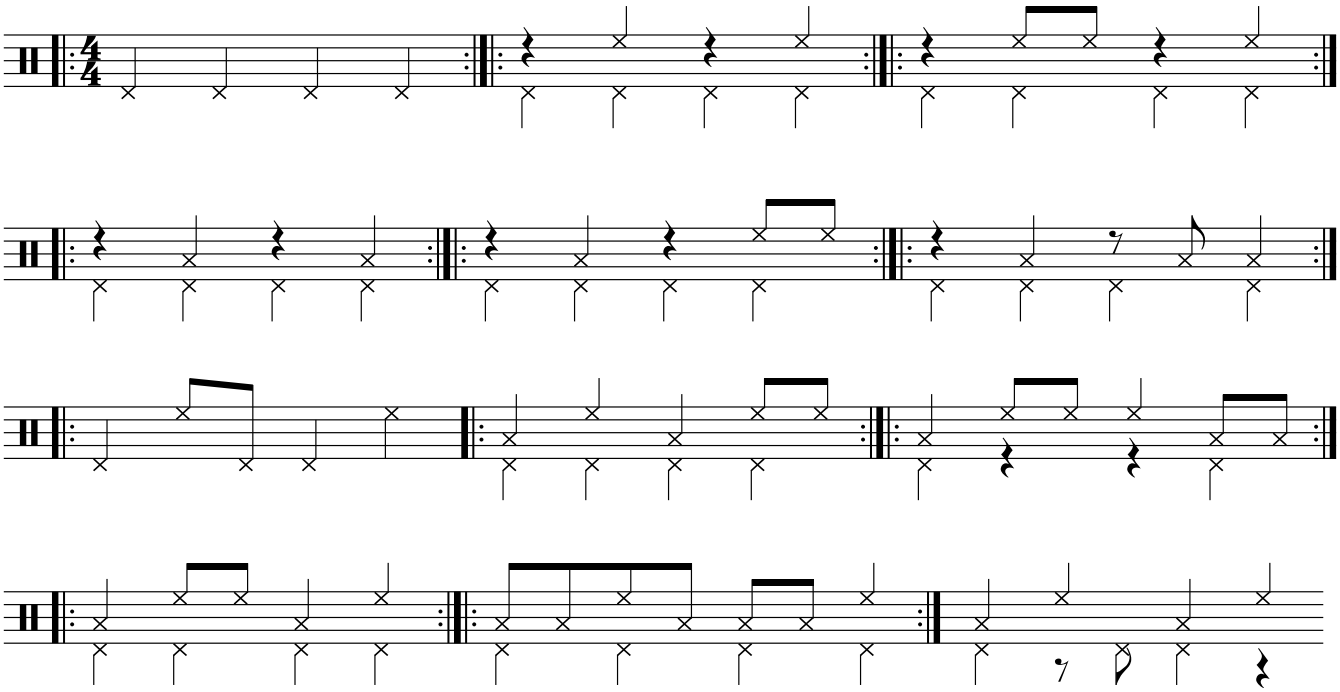


Wo Sind Mein Lederhosen?

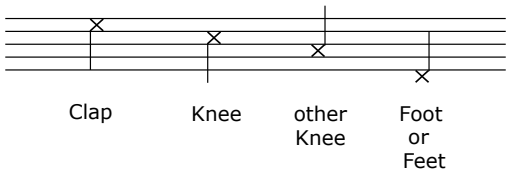


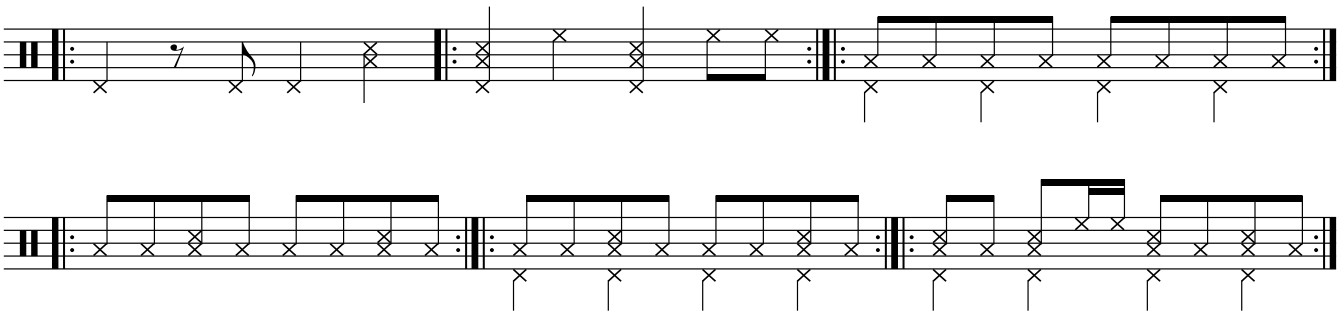
KIT-CLAPS



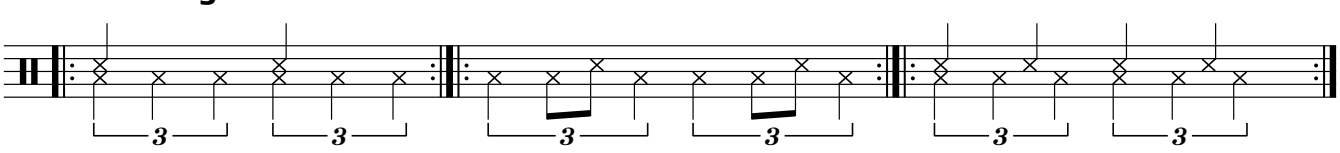


Using Both Knees





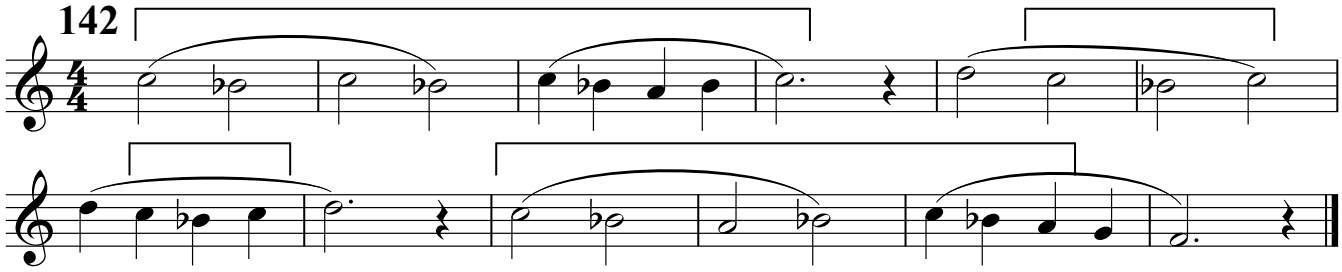
Three against Two



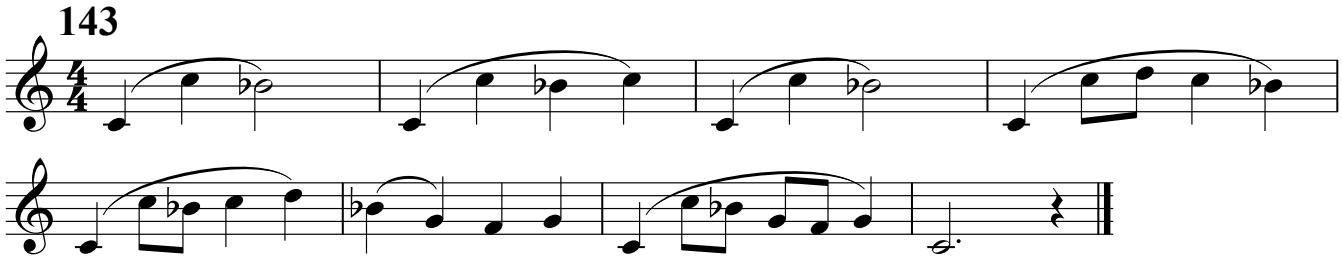
Crossing the "Break" through Bb

Keep all your right hand fingers down through the brackets

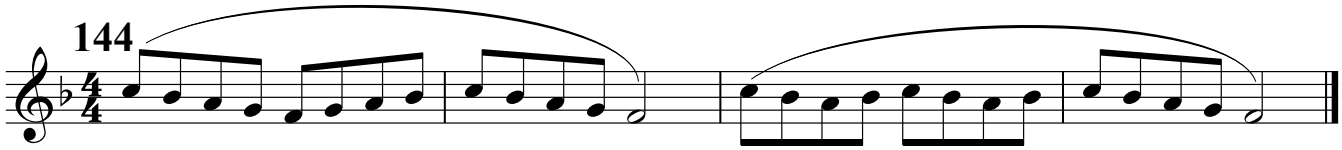
142



143

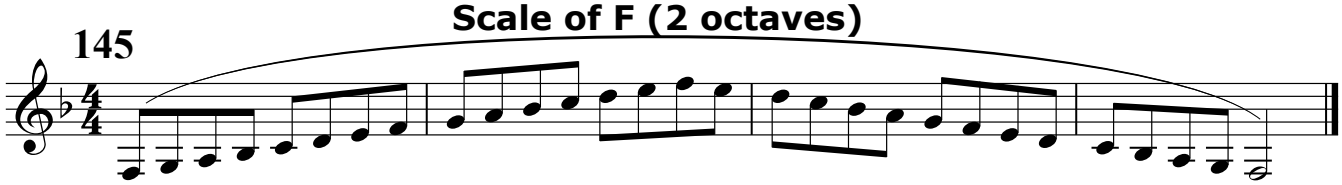


144



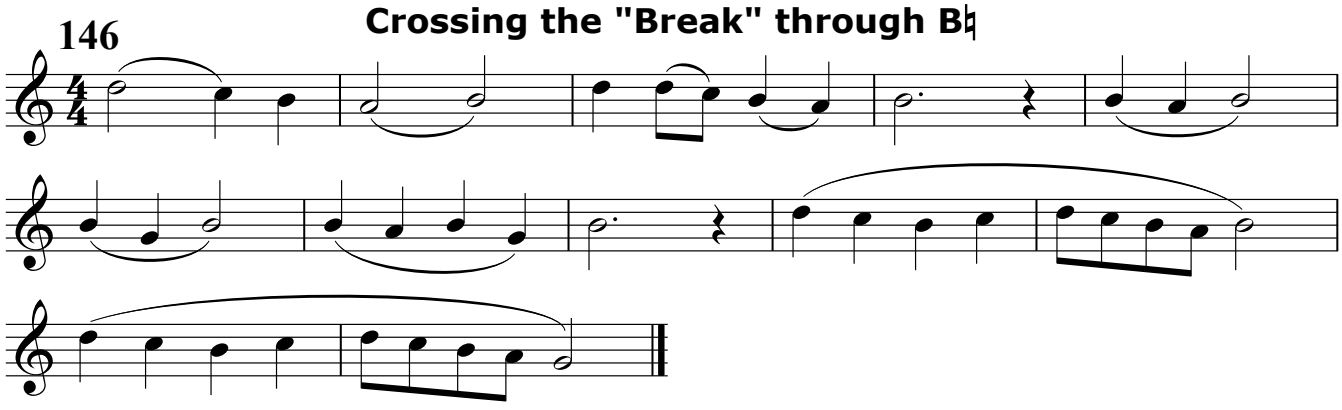
Scale of F (2 octaves)

145



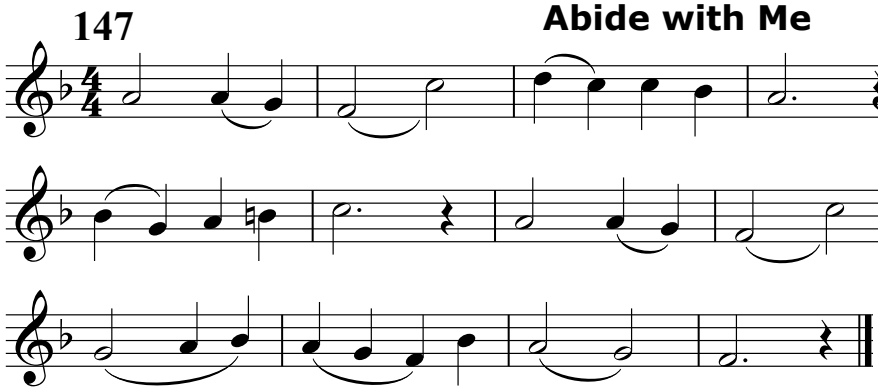
Crossing the "Break" through B♮

146



Abide with Me

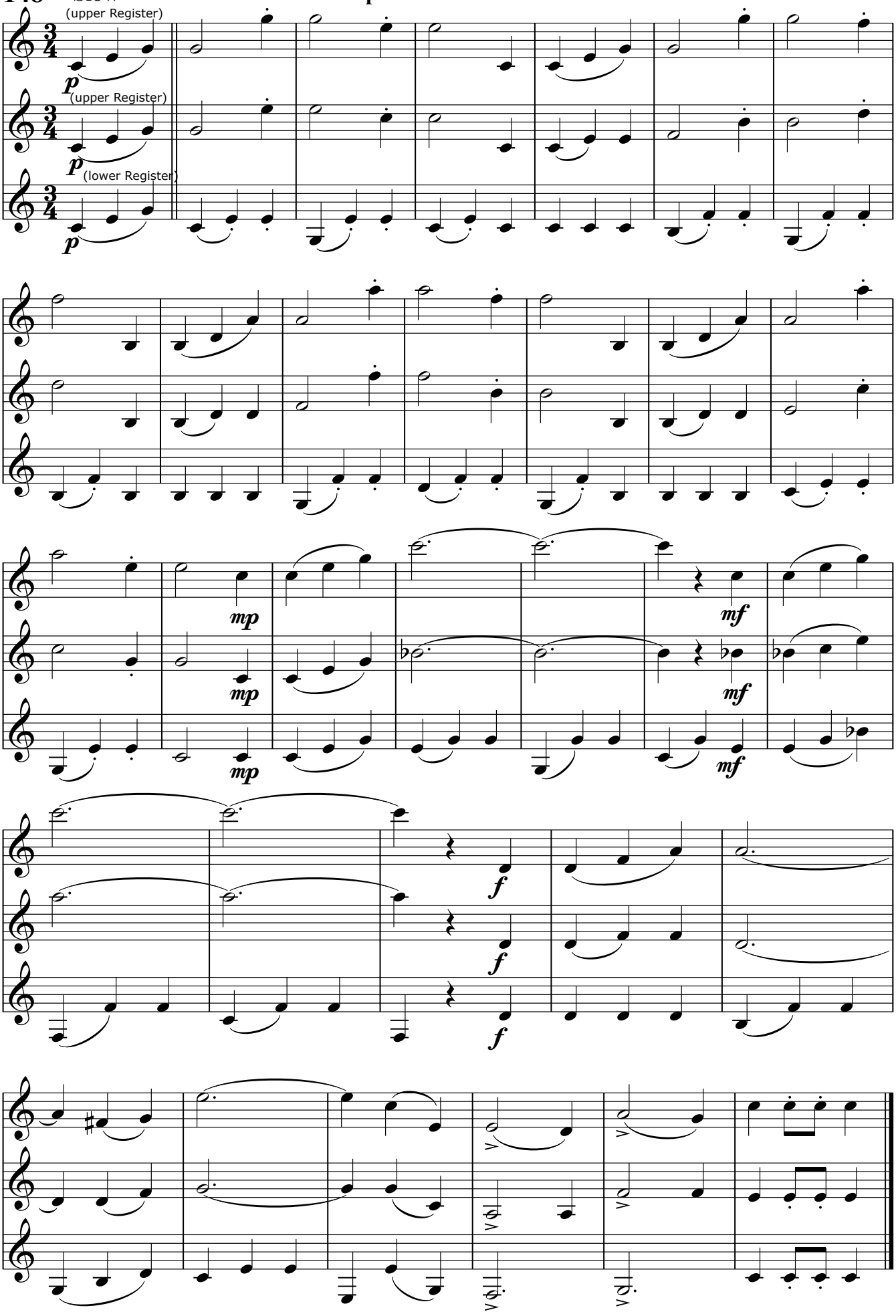
147



Blue and Beautiful

J. Strauss

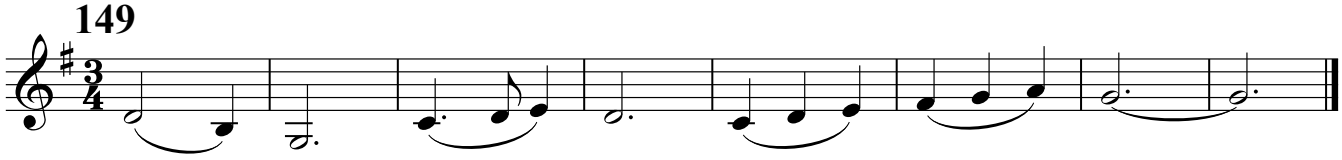
148 **Slow** **Viennese Waltz Tempo**



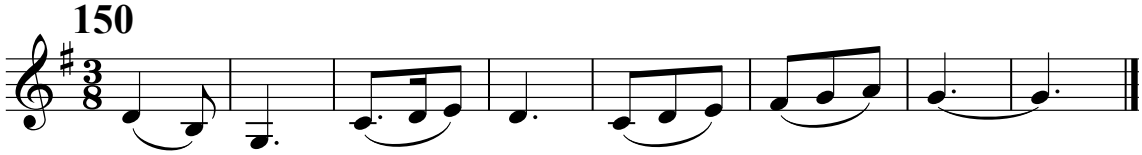
COMPOUND TIME SIGNATURES

Compound means a mixture. In 6/8, 9/8, 12/8 time signatures you need to count in multiples of 3 quavers, for example if there are six quavers in a bar (6/8) that is 2 lots of 3 quavers, so in 6/8 there are 2 "big" beats, each of which can be divided into 3 little ones.

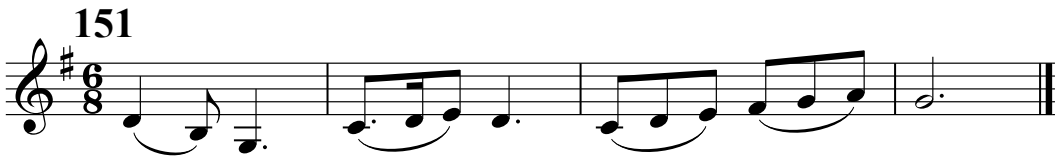
149



150

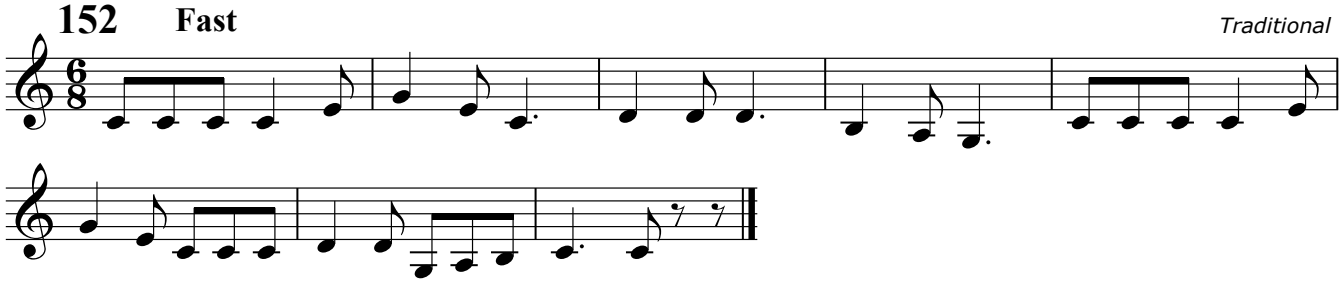


151

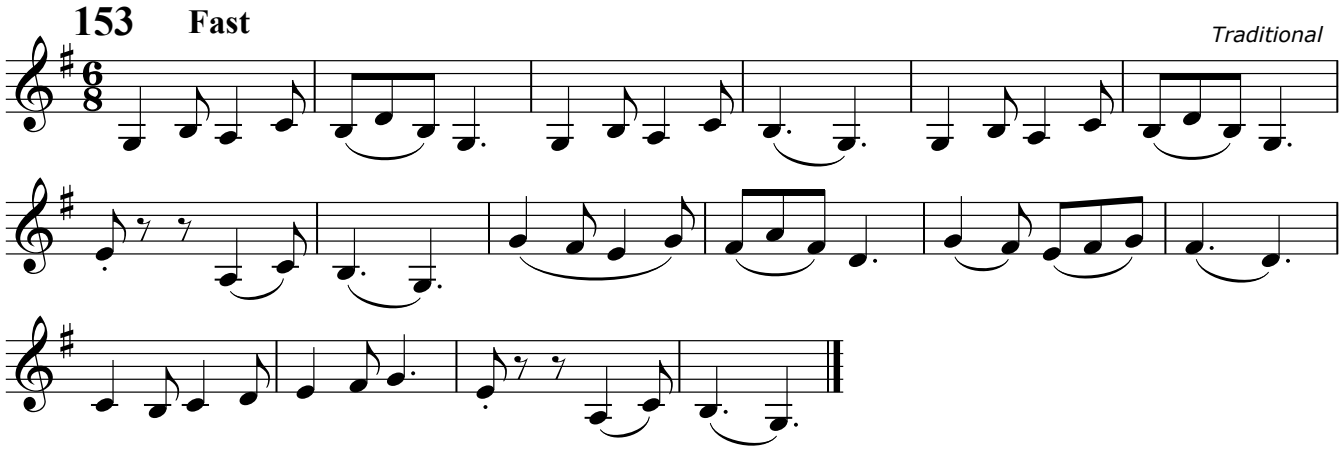


These are the most common rhythms that you will find in compound times - try clapping each bar several times

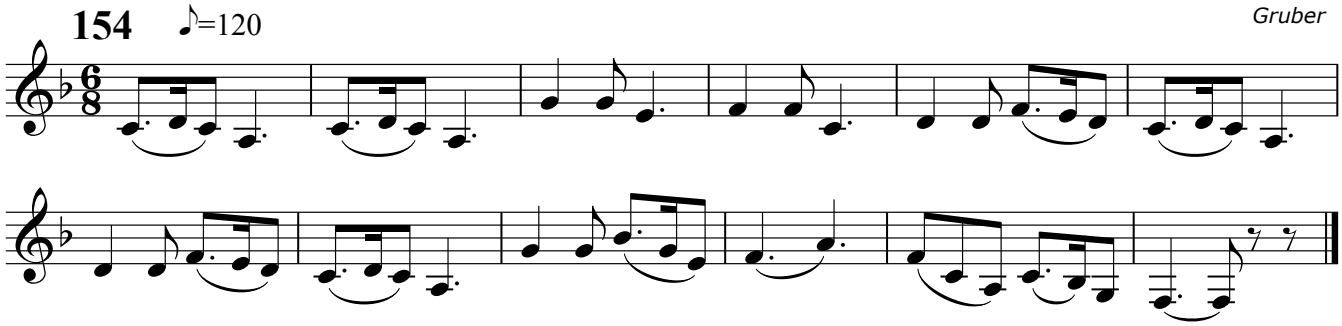
152 **Fast** *Traditional*



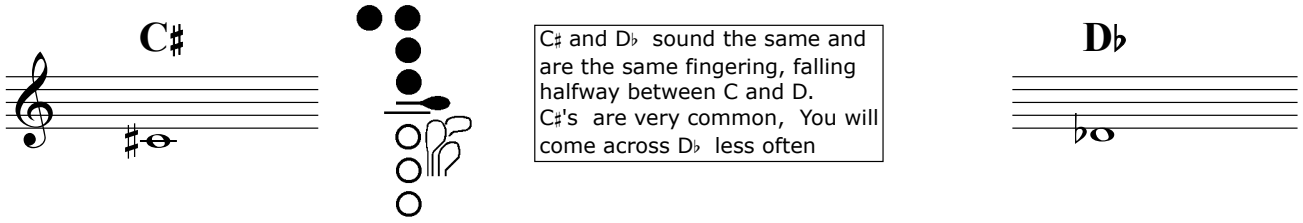
153 **Fast** *Traditional*



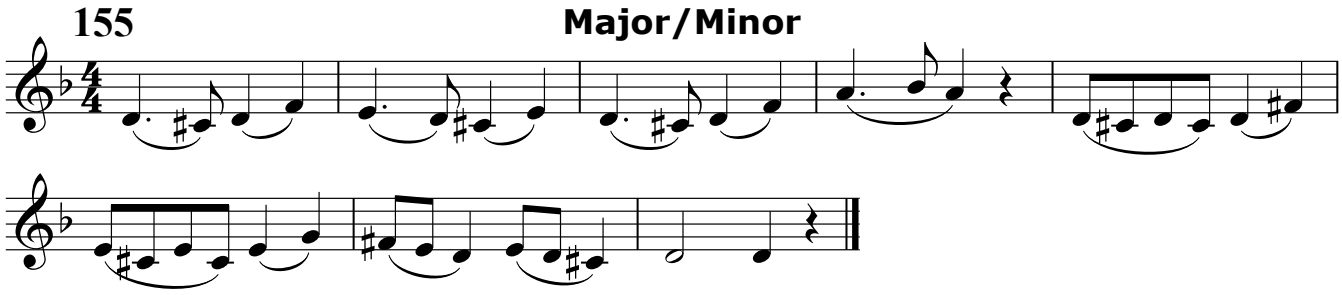
154 ♪=120 *Gruber*

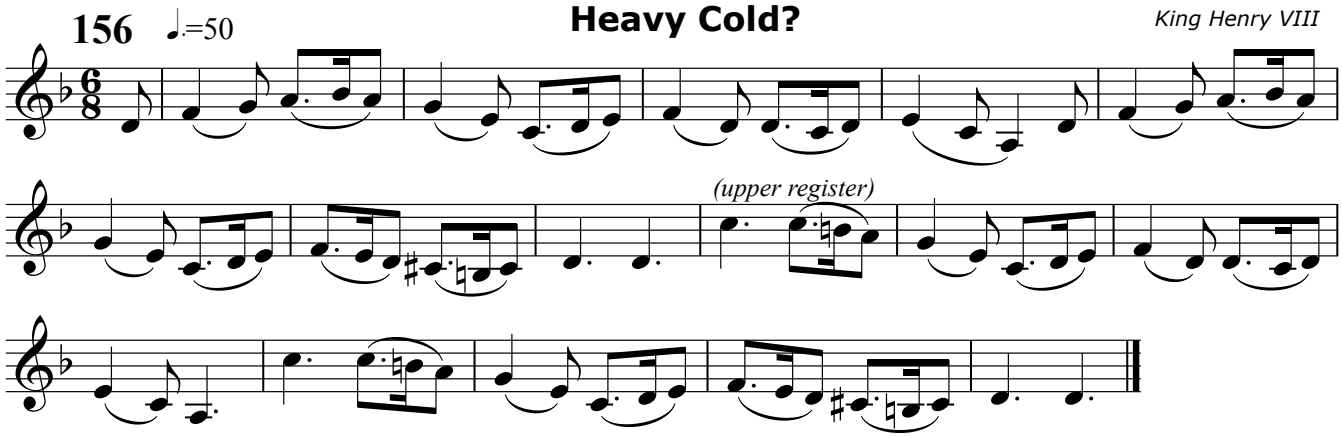


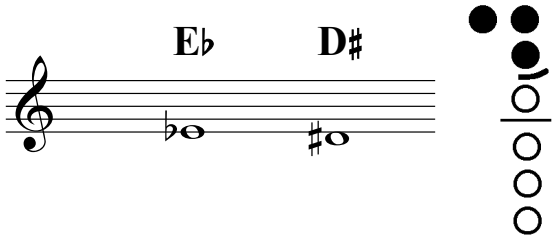
Filling in the Gaps



C♯ and D♭ sound the same and are the same fingering, falling halfway between C and D.
C♯'s are very common, You will come across D♭ less often



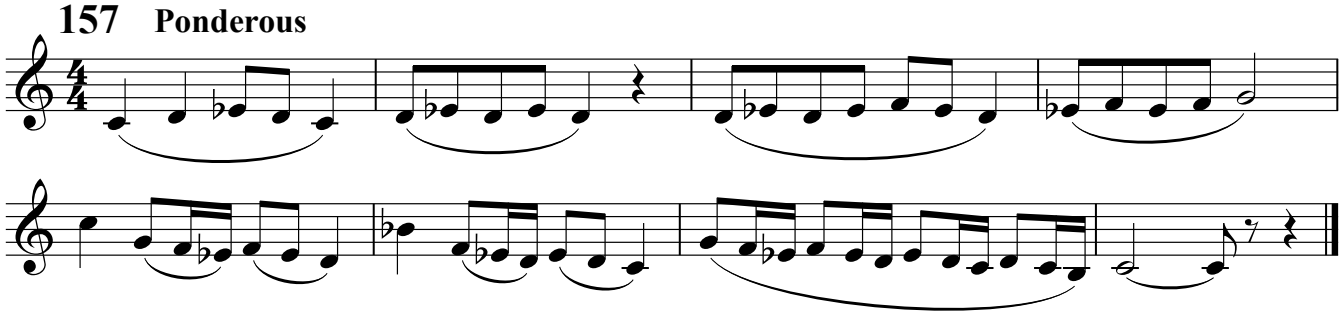




E♭ / D♯ FAST FINGERING

There are two fingerings for E♭ / D♯ . This first example is the fastest and should be used in preference wherever possible. It keeps the finger movement in one hand which our brains can process more efficiently and therefore faster.

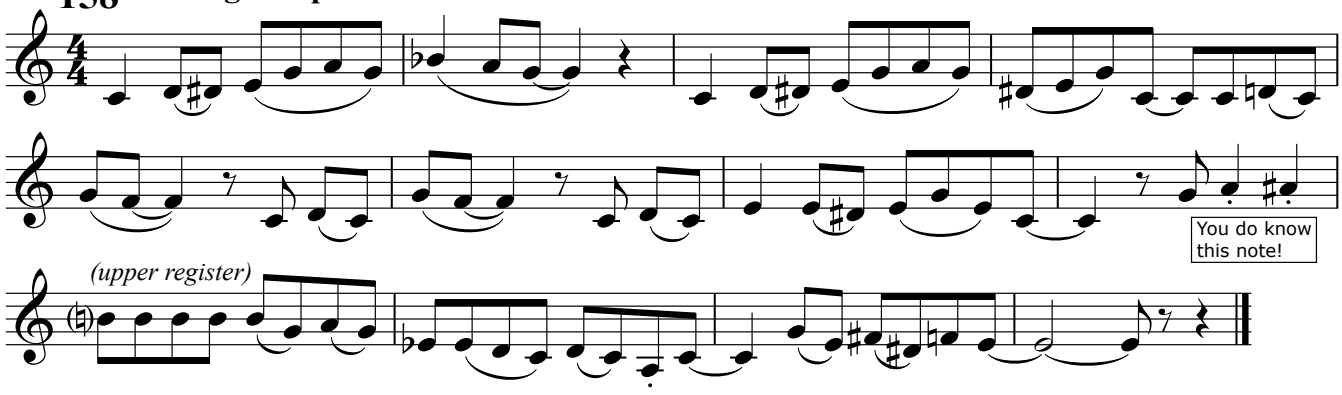
You will understand that E♭ / D♯ are effectively the same note and are both found frequently in clarinet music



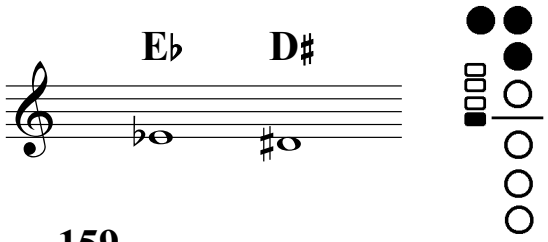
Swing Tempo
In Swing (or Jazzy) music, every pair of quavers is played with the first quaver lengthened and the second one shortened, so that the ratio between them is 2/3 to 1/3 rather than ½ and ½. The quavers that falls on the main beats of the bar are always the longer ones. To get a feel for the style, think of the Pink Panther theme.

Blowaway Blues

158 Swing Tempo



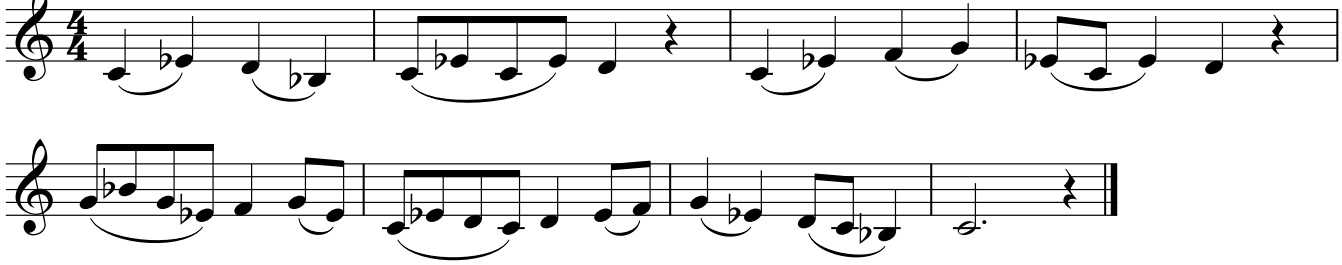
"Classical" composers version of the same tune
Jazz musicains read and write music in swing style all the time and happily use the style above, but many non-jazz composers find it hard to write a "long-short-long-short" rhythm which looks like an "even" rhythm, so they write as below, and the player has to adjust the ¾ - ¼ rhythm into a 2/3 to 1/3 ratio.



E♭ / D♯ SIDE KEY FINGERING

This is the other fingering and is actually the one you will be using most of the time. The problem with the "fast" fingering is that you cannot use it if your left hand 3rd finger is being used on the note before or the note after.

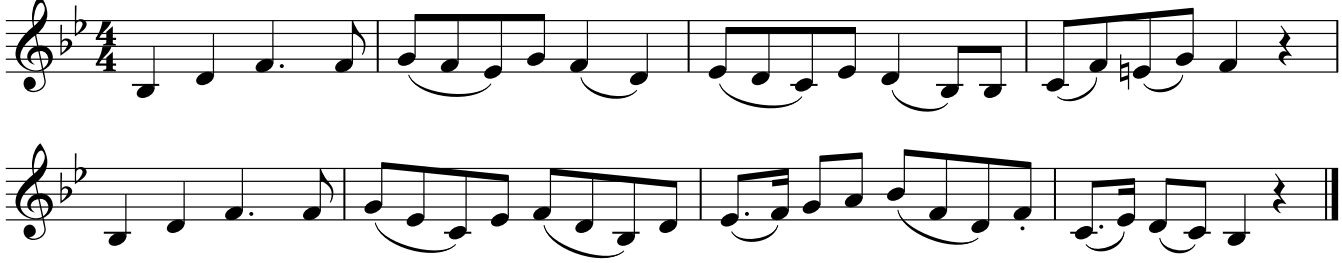
159

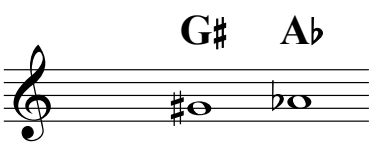


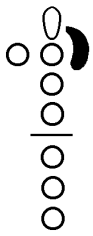
Now you decide which fingering is best to use. Remember the "fast" fingering should be used if possible

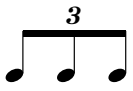
Choosing Time

160







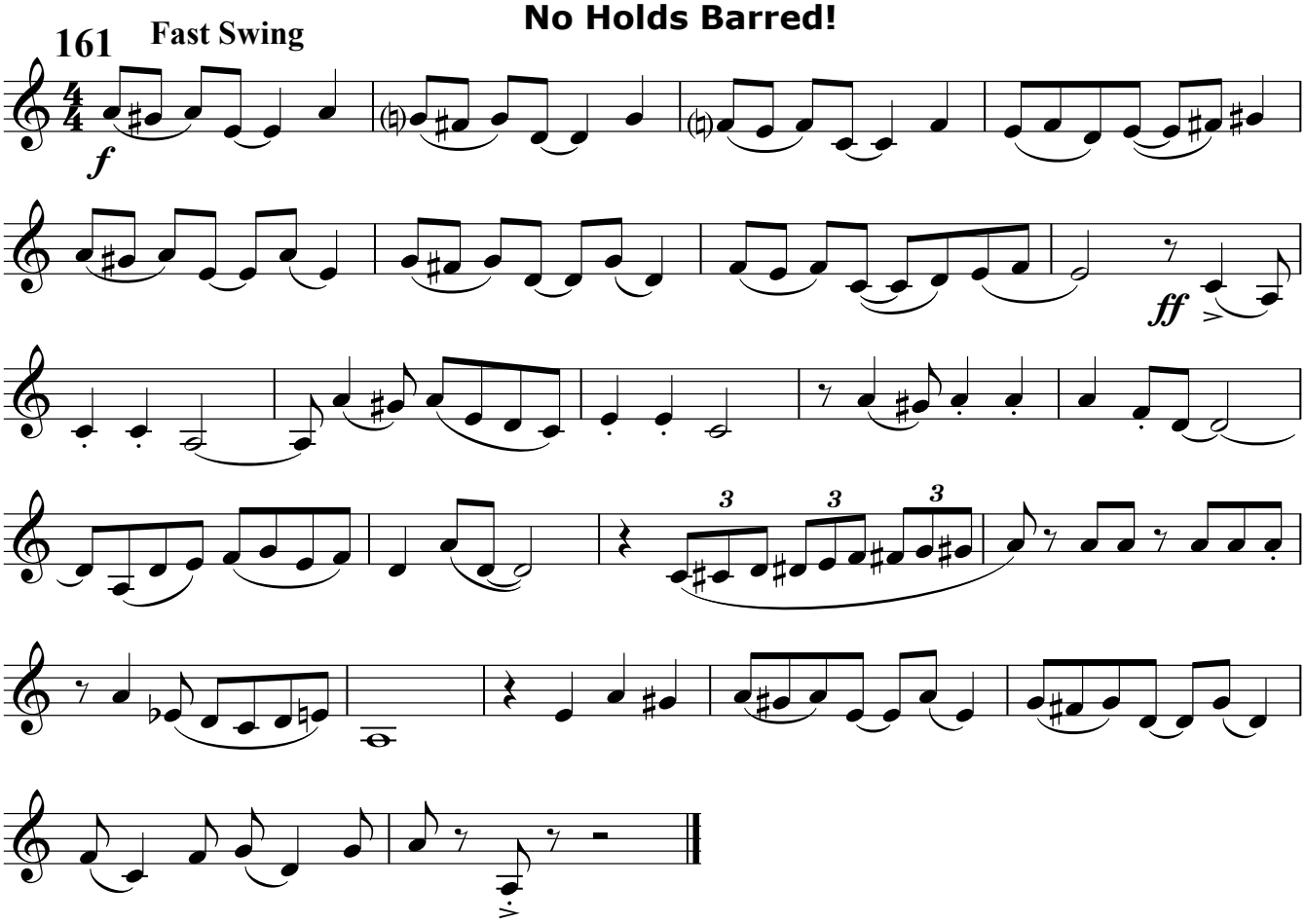


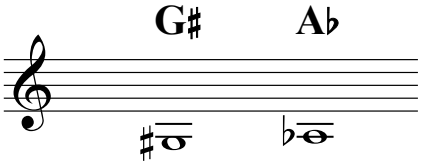
TRIPLETS

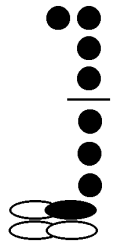
Golden Rule is:
3 in the space of 2

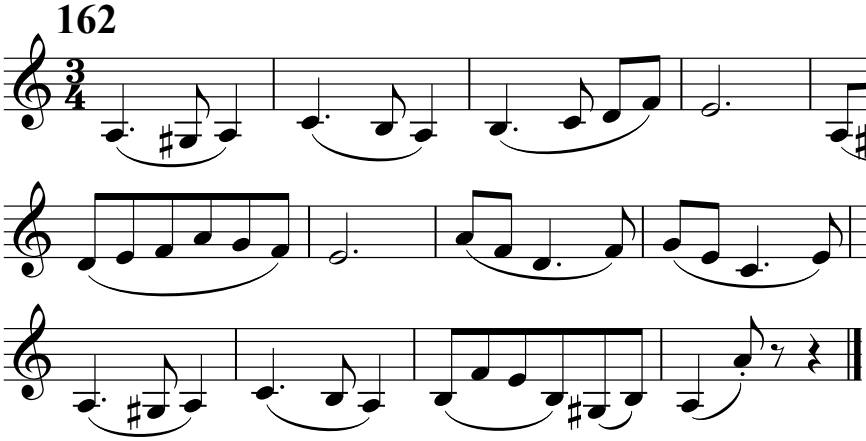
It might be 3 quavers in the space of 2 quavers, or 3 semiquavers in the space of 2 semiquavers etc.

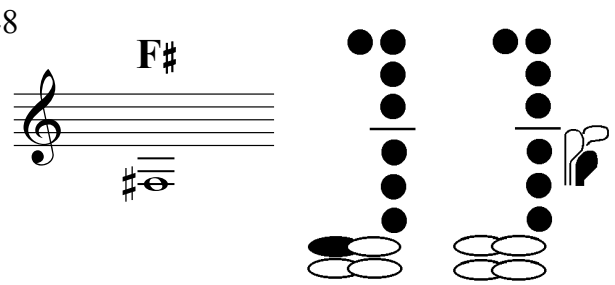
No Holds Barred!





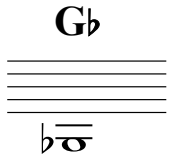


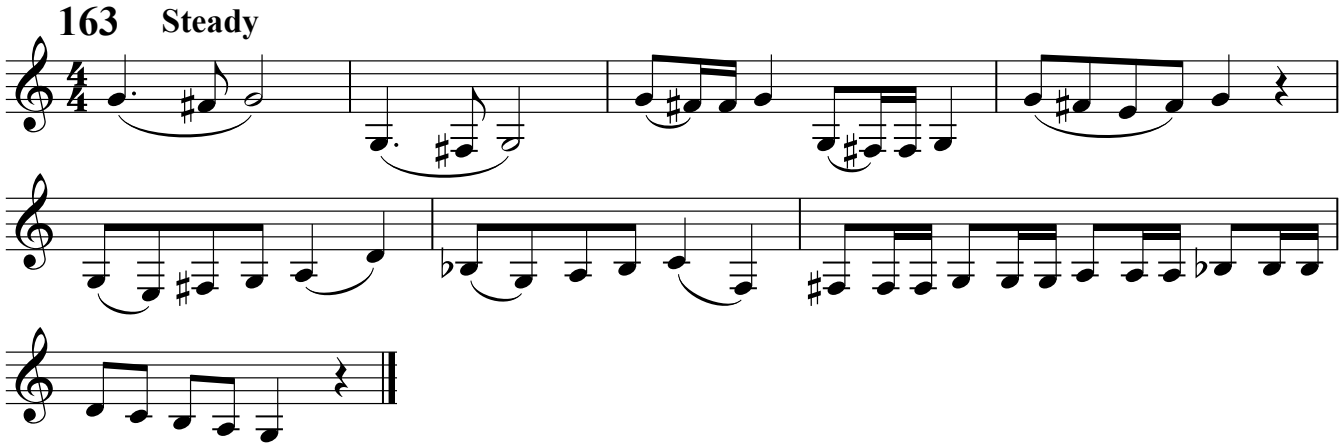




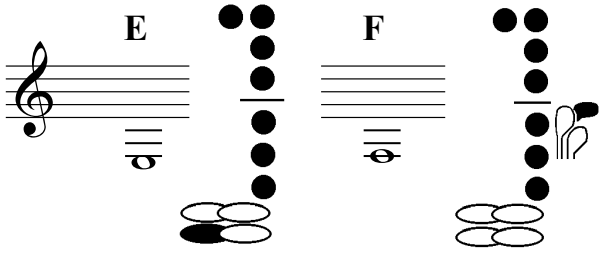
F# is a very common note and both fingerings are good and need to be very familiar to you.

G♭ is the same note. You will not come across it nearly as often

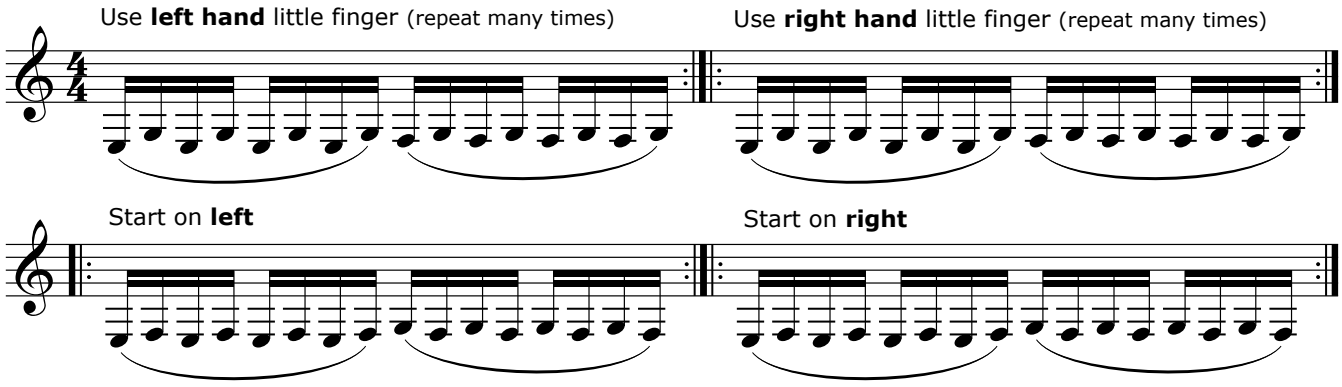




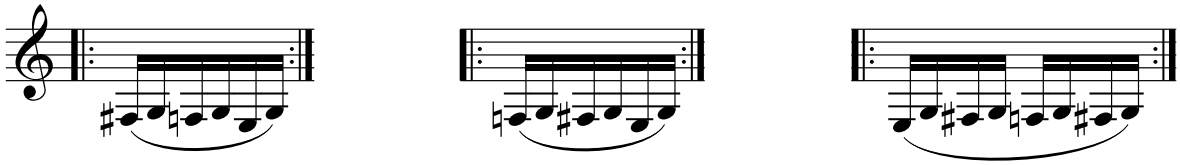
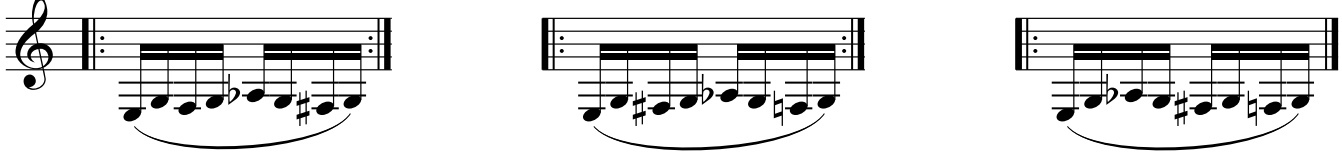
Alternative Fingerings



The exercises below are just examples - as soon as you understand what each one does, stop reading the music and concentrate on tone and fingering. The left and right hand little finger exercises can be varied enourmously!



Left-hand little-finger exercises



Right-hand little-finger exercises