MUSIC PREPARATION FUNDAMENTALS FOR JAZZ COMPOSERS & ARRANGERS

by Darcy James Argue

Why Bother?

Well-prepared lead sheets, scores, and parts are **essential for good sight-reading**. Good notation shows respect for the musicians reading your music, and allows them to play more musically. Bad notation causes unnecessary mistakes and eats up valuable rehearsal and recording time.

Music notation software has many advantages over traditional hand-copying, but **does not eliminate the need to learn good music preparation skills**. Regardless of whether you prepare music by hand or use notation software, every part you put on the music stand in front of another musician needs to be prepared to a **professional standard**.

If you use music notation software, you must take the time to create a **template** that is configured to follow best notation practices. Setting up a good template will save you an *enormous* amount of time!

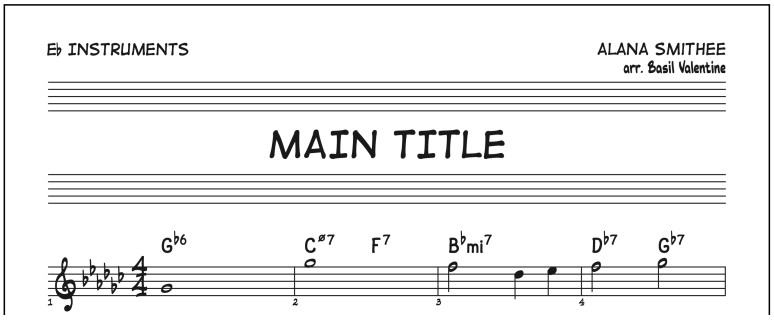
Do <u>not</u> assume that the software's defaults are correct.

Score & Part Setup

IF COPYING MUSIC BY HAND

Select paper with **10 staves per page** and a staff size of **8mm**. Do not use staff paper with more than 10 staves per page. Do not use staff paper with excessive margins, or where the staves are crammed too close together — you need room between staves to include chord symbols, ledger lines, repeat endings, and other elements.

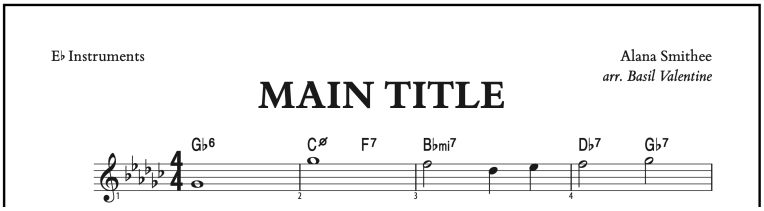
Write the title **between** the first two staves and begin the music on the **third staff**. Write the **Part Name** (e.g, "C Lead Sheet," "B♭ Lead Sheet") or **Instrument Name** (e.g. "Tenor Sax") at **top left**. Write the **composer's** (or composers') **name(s)** at **top right**. If the work is an arrangement, write the arranger's name below the composer's.



IF USING NOTATION SOFTWARE

Use a staff size of **7.5mm** or **8mm** for lead sheets and parts. Lead sheets and parts should generally have **8 or 9 staves** on the first page, and **10 staves** on subsequent pages.

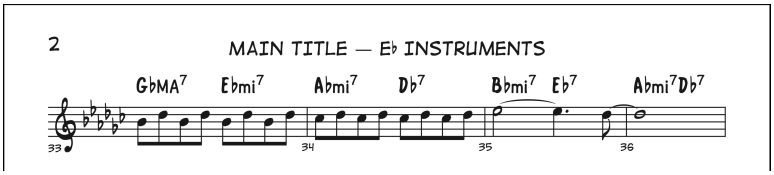
Center the title **1 inch** *(25 mm)* **below** the top edge of the page. Place the **Part Name** (e.g, "C Lead Sheet," "B♭ Lead Sheet") or **Instrument Name** (e.g. "Tenor Sax") at **top left** and the the **composer's** (or composers') **name(s)** at **top right** — both go **above** the title — with a page margin of **0.5 inches** *(12.5 mm)* on all sides. If the work is an arrangement, add the arranger's name below the composer's.



Parts must be printed be **single-sided**. For parts longer than three pages, you must include time for the player to turn the page (i.e., a multimeasure rest) at the bottom of page 3, and every subsequent odd-numbered page. Make the page break at a valid spot for a page turn — pages do not have to be full!

Multi-page parts **must be taped,** accordion-style, with the sticky part of the tape on the **inside** of the folded edge. To achieve this, pages 1-2 are taped on the **front** side, pages 2-3 are taped on the **back** side, and so on. **Be extremely careful about page order when taping music**. (I recommend Nexcare Gentle Paper Tape as it can be easily removed without tearing the page if you make a mistake while taping.)

Multi-page parts must also include a **header** at the top of **page 2** and **all** subsequent pages. The header should include the **title**, **instrument name**, and **page number**. This is particularly helpful when you are laying out pages to be taped!

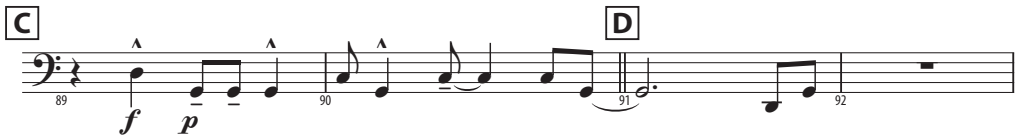


Scores may be bound or stapled into **double-sided booklets** rather than taped.

When generating PDFs, or when photocopying, scanning, or printing music, be sure not to reduce, clip, or distort the music, make it too heavy or too faint, or otherwise reduce legibility. If you are scanning music using your phone, use a dedicated mobile scanning app, like **Adobe Scan**. Do not use the camera app on your phone.

Use **portrait** orientation (not landscape) for all scores and parts. Landscape was once traditional for large-ensemble jazz scores, but is not recommended in the era of music notation software — particularly when printing to US Letter or A4 paper!

Use a **double barline** at the end of every phrase. Mark each phrase with a **rehearsal mark:** a **boxed letter** or **boxed measure number**. Rehearsal marks should be **centered above the left edge** of the system, or **centered above the barline** when it appears mid-system.



Rehearsal letters are not the same as the letters used for formal analysis. **Always use sequential rehearsal letters**: A, B, C, D — not A, A, B, A, or A, A2, B, A3, or similar. Every rehearsal letter must be unique. **Never repeat rehearsal letters.**

Rehearsal marks should occur at structurally significant points, generally **every 8–16 measures**. They should help to make the form clear at a glance. Avoid long stretches with no rehearsal marks.

In addition to rehearsal marks, **every measure must be numbered.** Place measure numbers immediately **below** the staff, at the **beginning** of each measure (see example above). It is not sufficient to include measure numbers only at the beginning of each system.

Parts for transposing instruments (e.g., "Alto Sax in Eb," "Trumpet in B♭") must be transposed correctly, **including key signatures and chord symbols.**

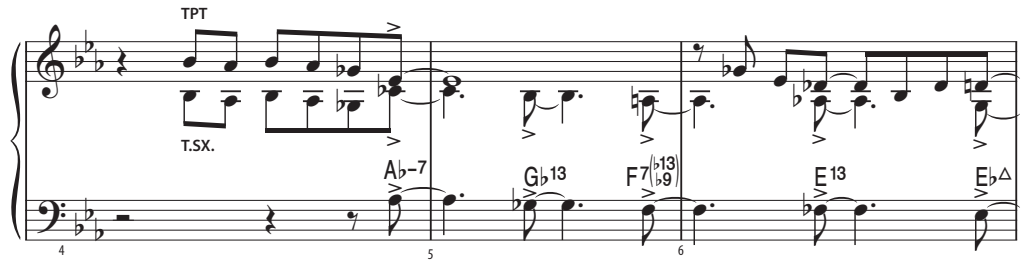
Each horn player needs an **individual part**. Do not combine multiple horn parts onto the same page.

In general, with a simple lead sheet, rhythm section instruments (guitar, piano, bass, drums) may all read from their individual copy of your **C Lead Sheet**. If you have written a specific bass line, you may use a C Lead Sheet written on a **grand staff**: add a bass clef staff and group the two staves with a piano brace.

If the rhythm section parts are too complex to fit on a grand staff C Lead Sheet, you can prepare a **master rhythm part** to distribute to every rhythm section player. For very complex arrangements, or music for larger ensembles, prepare **individual rhythm section parts** for guitar, piano, bass, drums, etc.

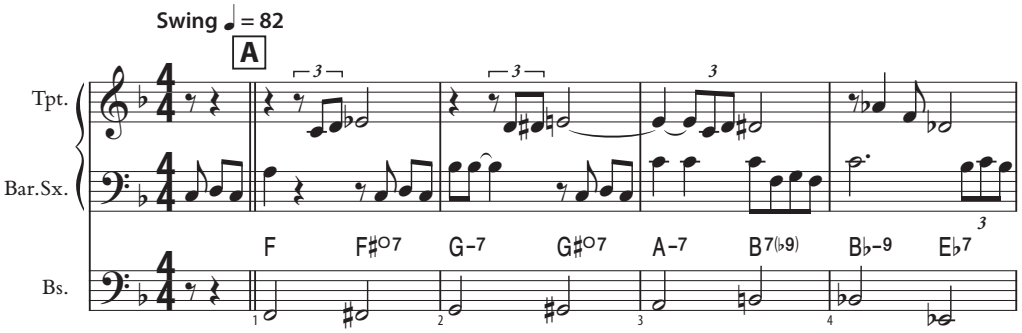
In all cases, rhythm section parts should include *all* of the information the player needs — melody cues, for instance. Don't just give the rhythm section players a page containing only slash notation and chord symbols, with no other information!

Your C Lead Sheet must show <u>all</u> of the music you have written. For example, if you write a two-horn arrangement with two independent horn parts, your C Lead Sheet must clearly show **both** horn parts, by combining **stems-up** (Horn 1) and **stems-down** (Horn 2) voices, in **concert pitch**, on a single staff. Be certain to **clearly** indicate which notes each instrument is playing:



(Don't forget — this is for the C Lead Sheet **only**. Each horn player gets an individual part showing only the notes they play.)

If the horn parts are unclear when combined onto a single staff — for instance, if the instruments are widely separated in range, or if the texture is highly contrapuntal — you should prepare a **Full Score —** one staff per instrument — for your (and your instructor's) reference, and a Master Rhythm Part (or individual rhythm section parts) for the rhythm section.



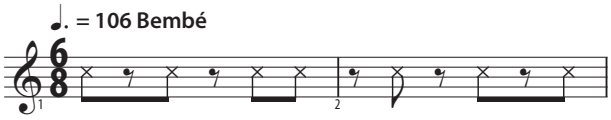
A Full Score can be written either as a **Concert Pitch Score** or a **Transposed Score.** This must be clearly specified on the first page of music — i.e., never write just "Score." (N.B. In arranging and composition classes, using a Concert Pitch Score often makes it easier to give and receive feedback.)

Note that in a Concert Pitch Score, instruments often use clefs that are different from the clef used in the transposed part. For example, bari sax is written in bass clef (in the score only, of course). Tenor sax is often written in a mix of bass clef and treble clef, depending on the register. **Octave-transposing clefs** should never be used (with the exception of for tenor voice). This is a very bad default setting for transposing instruments (like tenor sax) in certain notation programs! Even in a Concert Pitch Score, **octave-transposing instruments** (e.g., guitar, bass) are still written at transposed pitch — i.e., as they appear on the player's part — rather than at the sounding pitch. This avoids excessive ledger lines.

Tempo

The **tempo** (or tempo range) and **style** must be specified at the beginning of the piece. Initial tempo markings are **left-aligned to the beginning of the time signature**. Include both a metronome mark and a

style or feel, e.g., "♩ = 208 Med-Up Swing"; "♩ = 116–120 Straight 8ths (Open Feel)"; "♩. = 42 Sludgecore." Write the metronome mark using the **musical symbol** for the beat duration. Do not write, e.g., "120 BPM.



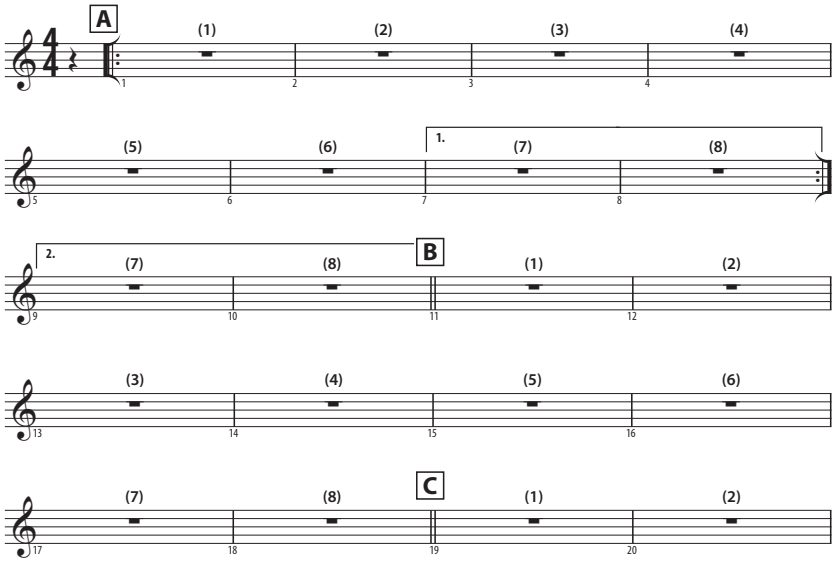
Traditionally, tempo markings have been written with the style coming *before* the metronome mark, e.g., "Blazing Swing ♩ = 420." I recommend reversing this order; placing the metronome mark first makes it easier to see at glance, and, when there are tempo changes, aligns the metronome mark to the point in the music where it takes effect.

Phrasing

In music preparation, "phrasing" means "how the measures are distributed on each system." Good phrasing makes the form easy to see at a glance. Bad (lopsided) phrasing obscures the form.

Good phrasing also makes it easy for players — particularly rhythm section players — **to glance away from the part** (in order to make eye contact with other musicians, for example) and easily find their place in the music when they look back.

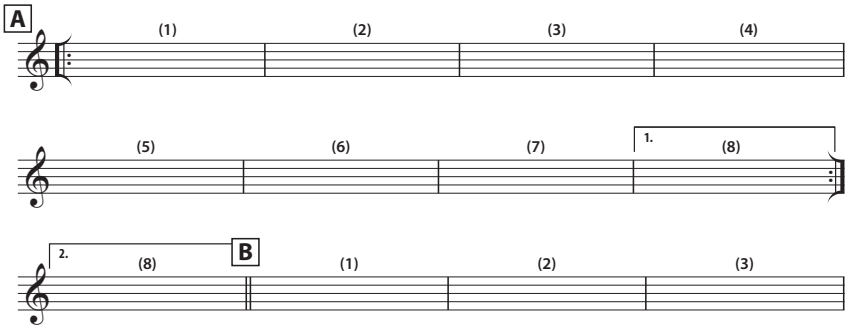
An important convention of jazz music preparation is that phrases must begin either **at the beginning of the system** or **at the midpoint of the system** — i.e., at the third measure of a 4-measure system:



As a general rule of thumb, a default of **4 measures per system** is a good and useful starting point.

However, **pickup measures**, **first & second endings**, and so on can easily throw off the phrasing balance:

WRONG



To resolve this phrasing imbalance, **do not** force both first and second endings on a single system if this would cause more than 4 measures on a system:

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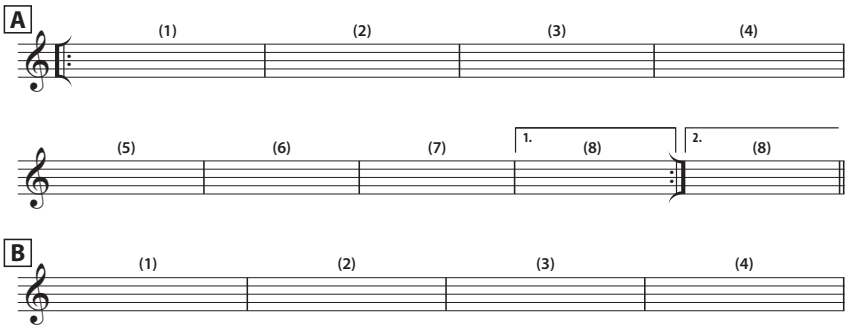

Instead, use **a three-measure system** and a mid-system rehearsal letter:

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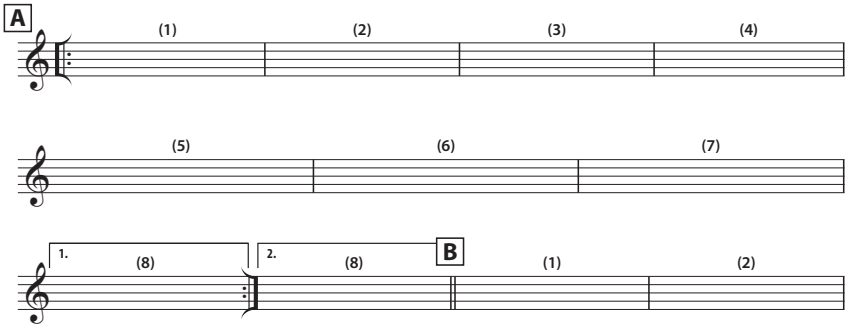

Here's another example of using a three-measure system to avoid lopsided phrasing caused by ending repeats:

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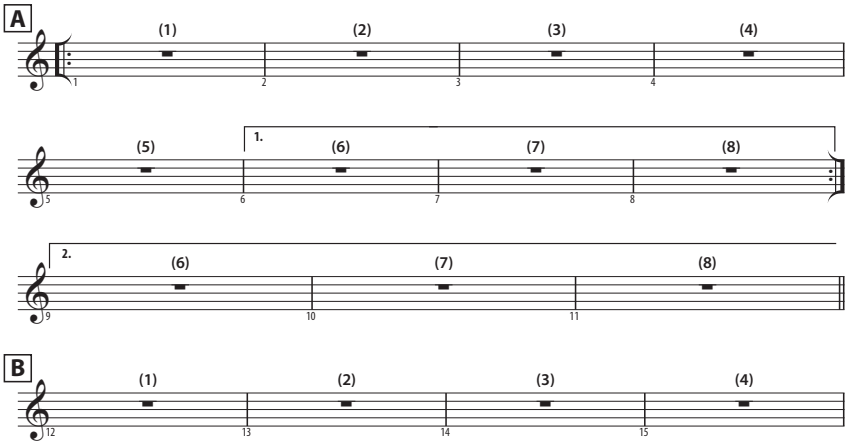


Three-measure systems may be required for busy passages, e.g., lots of eighths/sixteenths, or on vocal parts to avoid lyric collisions.

Do not use fewer than 3 measures in a system unless the music is *extremely* dense and otherwise would not fit without collisions. This includes the final system.

Do not use more than 4 measures in a system unless the notation consists **entirely** of long note values (whole notes and/or half notes) or of **slash notation** (i.e., rhythm parts, solo changes, etc). In those specific cases — and **only** those cases — systems containing 6 or 8 measures are acceptable.

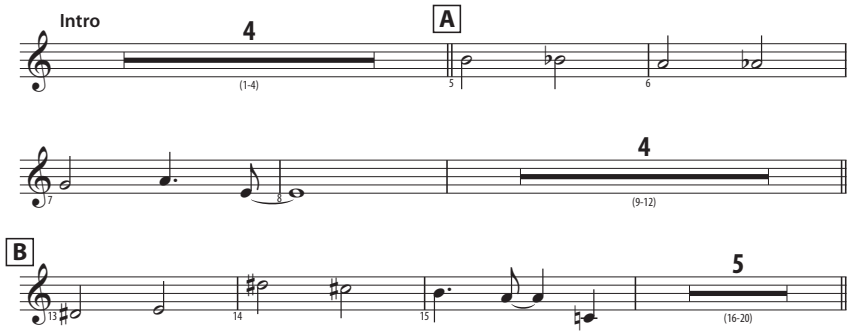
In a phrase containing an odd number of measures (e.g., a 7-bar phrase), one system will be a 3-measure system.

Consult **Chapter 11: Phrasing** of Clinton Roemer's *The Art of Music Copying* for additional guidance.

Multimeasure Rests

In the parts, consecutive empty measures should be combined into multimeasure rests. **Break multi-measure rests** at the end of every phrase, and at every **fermata**, **tempo change**, or **feel change**.

In phrases containing an even number of measures (e.g., 8-bar phrases), odd-numbered multimeasure rests should be given the space of **one measure**, and even-numbered multimeasure rests get the space of **two measures**:



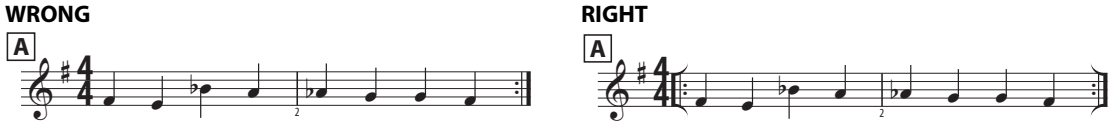
Multimeasure rests must show **measure number ranges**, — e.g., "(1–4)" — centered below the rest.

Up to four multimeasure rests per system are acceptable, regardless of how many phrases are involved. Including a system break after every multimeasure rest wastes space.

Repeats and Jumpers (D.S., D.C., etc.)

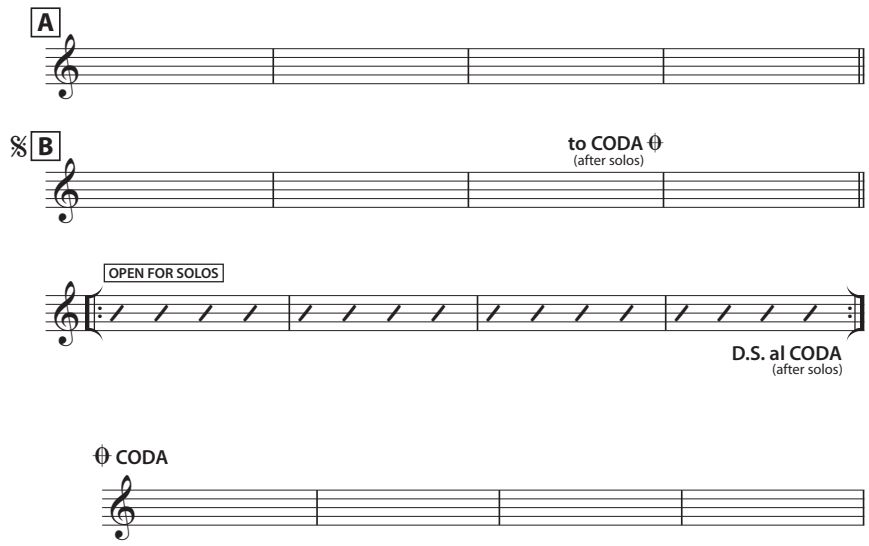
Use **winged repeats**. These help the repeats stand out on the page.

Always use a **forward-facing repeat** at the beginning of a repeated section, even when the piece repeats back to the beginning.



Take care when using **jumpers** (D.S., D.C., Codas, etc):

- The measure you are jumping *from* must include the text "**to CODA** 𝄋" (including the 𝄋 symbol). This text should be **above** the staff and aligned to the right barline of the **last measure to be played** before jumping to the Coda.
- The measure you are jumping *to* — i.e., the first measure of the Coda — must include the text: "𝄋 **CODA**" (including the 𝄋 symbol). This text should be above the staff, aligned with the start of the measure.
- The Coda must begin on a **new, indented** system, with **additional vertical white space** separating it from the previous system. (If you are using manuscript paper, leave an **empty staff** before the Coda.)



If a player is to lay out for one or more pass through a repeated section, use text that tells them **when they play**, as opposed to when they don't. For example, use "**2nd X only**" rather than "**Tacet 1st X**."

It is assumed that all repeats mean "play twice" unless otherwise specified. If a passage is to be played more than twice, indicate that at the **beginning** of the the repeat: "**3x**," "**4x**" etc.

Avoid using "**Open**" for open repeats — on a brass part, "open" can also mean "no mute." Instead, use "**Repeat till cue**" or "**Repeat for solos**" or similar.

Key Signatures

Key signatures must appear at the beginning of **every system** — not just the first system.

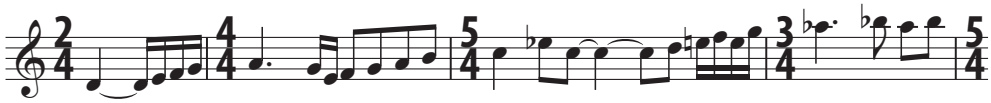
Use **standard major and minor key signatures only**. For modal compositions, use the key signature of the nearest major or minor key with the same tonic. For example, for a piece in F lydian, use a key signature of F major. For a piece in D dorian, use a key signature of D minor.

For highly chromatic or non-tonal compositions written without a key signature, the transposed parts should be transposed using **accidentals only**. In other words, when a C Lead Sheet or Concert Pitch Score is keyless, the **transposed parts must also be keyless**. This option is called **Open Key** in Dorico and Sibelius, **Open/Atonal Key Signature** in MuseScore, and **Keyless** in Finale.

Time Signatures

Do not abbreviate 4/4 to "C."

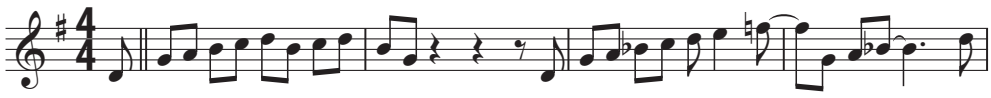
Traditional, inside-the-staff time signatures are fine for music that does not change meter. In music with many time signature changes, **oversized time signatures** are helpful: the bottom time signature number should extend up to the 4th staff line, and the top time signature number should sit on the 4th staff line and extend above the staff.



Beaming

In 4/4, **four consecutive eighth notes** beginning on beat 1 or beat 3 are beamed together. It is **incorrect** to beam these eighths in pairs — it makes the lines look discontinuous and is difficult to read:

WRONG



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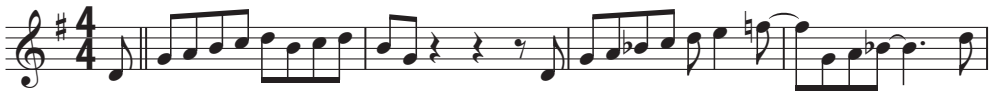
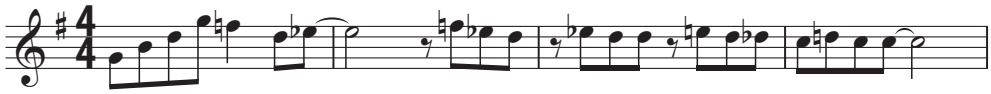


In modern practice, **three consecutive eighth notes** are **not** beamed together in 4/4. This helps to visually distinguish this figure from triplets:

WRONG



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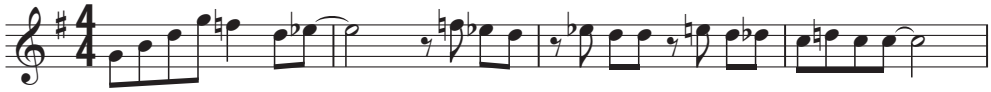

Eighth note triplets, sixteenth notes, and smaller rhythmic values are **beamed to the beat.** Whenever these smaller values are used, **every beat must be clearly visible**.

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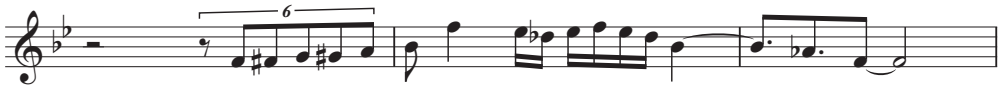

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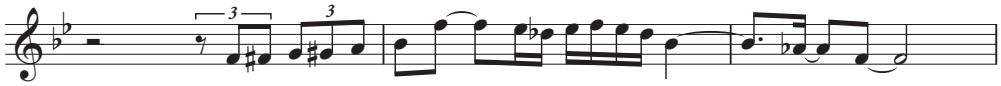

Rests inside beams should be allowed to **float vertically** so that the stem length is not distorted. (Sibelius users should use the **Float Rests** plug-in.)

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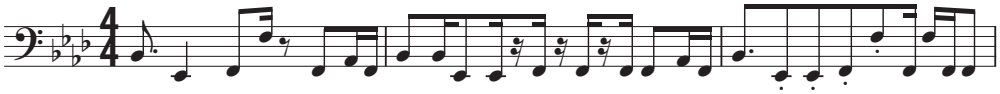

Do not use stemlets. They distort stem length, and beam direction and slope. Except in certain very extreme cases, stemlets almost always make the music more difficult to read.

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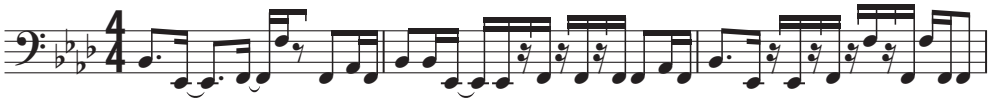

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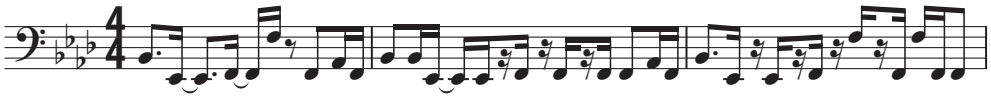

When beaming time signatures other than 4/4:

- **2/4** should be beamed like half a measure of 4/4.
- In **3/4**, you may beam 6 consecutive eighths beginning on Beat 1, or 4 consecutive eighths beginning

on Beat 2. In all other cases, show two out of three beats. **Never use a half rest in 3/4**.

- **2/2** (cut time) is beamed the same as 4/4.
- **5/4** is beamed as as if it were a measure of 3/4 plus a measure of 2/4 (i.e., either 3+2 or 2+3).
- **6/4** is (traditionally) beamed as two measures of 3/4.
- **3/2** is beamed as three measures of 2/4.
- **7/4** is beamed as two measures of 2/4 plus one measure of 3/4 (i.e., 2+2+3; 3+2+2; or 2+3+2).
- It is best to **avoid measures longer than 7/4**. Frequent time signature changes are better than measures that are too long.
- **Asymmetrical meters**, like 7/8, should **reflect the underlying beat structure**. A measure of 7/8 that is subdivided 2+2+3 is beamed differently from one that is subdivided 3+2+2.

Compound Meter

Compound meters such as 6/8, 9/8, 12/8 are **beamed to the beat** — i.e., the dotted quarter note:

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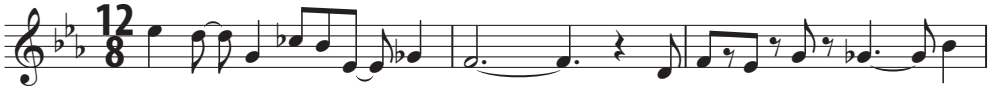

Rhythmic Clarity

In 4/4, you should avoid writing figures that obscure the "invisible barline" that divides the bar in half. In other words, **show beat 3**:

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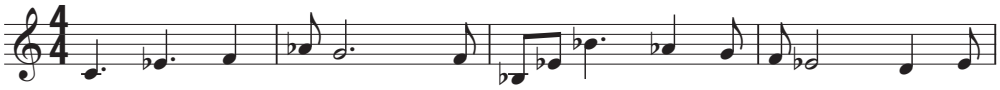

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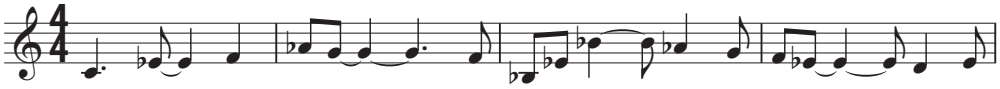

There are a small number of exceptions to the invisible barline rule. In 4/4, these figures — and **only** these figures — are permitted to cross beat 3:

- whole notes
- half notes and dotted half notes beginning on beat 1 or beat 2.
- half note triplets

Make careful note of the above exceptions! Do **not** clutter these figures with inappropriate ties:

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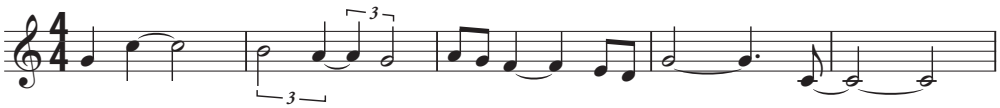

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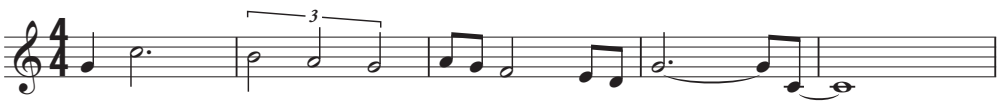
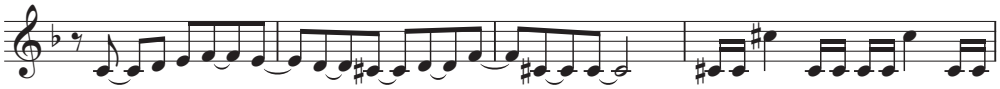


It is **correct** to use **off-beat quarter notes**, so long as they do not cross the invisible barline. Do not split these into tied eighth notes, unless the beat also contains sixteenth note subdivisions. **Never tie notes that share the same beam.**

WRONG



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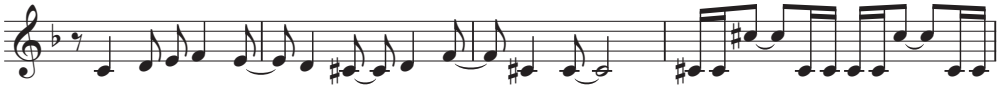
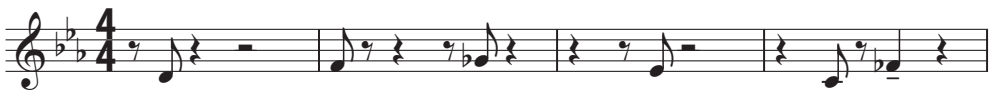


Odd meters (5/4, 7/4, etc.) **have their own invisible barline**, which helps clarify how the measure is subdivided (e.g., 5/4 subdivided 3+2, 7/4 subdivided 2+2+3, etc). See **Beaming** above for beaming of odd meters.

Every instrument should have the same **time signature**, the same **beat**, and the same **beaming pattern**. Use accents (not beaming) to indicate emphasis that cuts against the meter.

Short notes **on the beat** should be shortened using **staccato dots**, rather than rests.

WRONG



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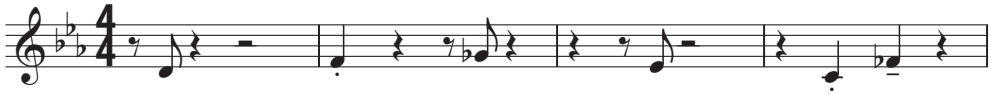
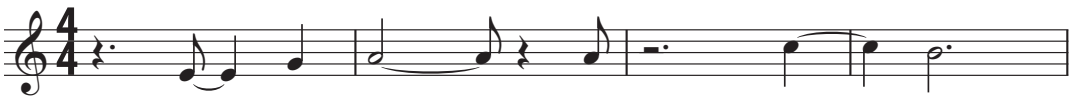


Rests

Rests must be **grouped to clarify the beat**. Rests that last longer than a beat must begin on the beat.

In simple meter (e.g., 3/4, 4/4), do **not** use dotted rests longer than the length of a beat — the largest available dotted rest is a **dotted eighth rest** that does not cross the beat boundary. **Never use dotted quarter rests or dotted half rests in simple meter**.

WRONG



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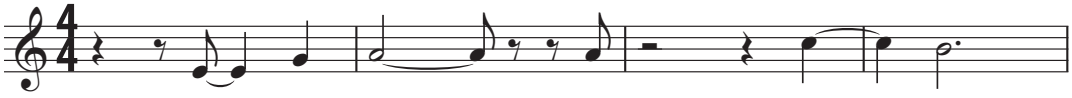
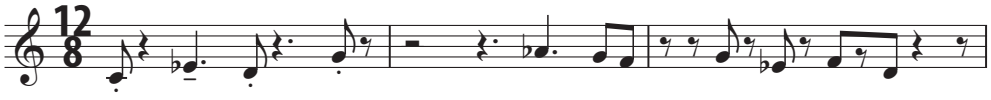


In compound meter (e.g, 12/8, 6/8), **dotted quarter rests** are used when they begin on the beat. **Dotted half rests** are used at the beginning of the bar, or on beat 3.

For clarity in compound meters, combine two consecutive eighth rests into one quarter rest **whenever the first rest occurs at the beginning of a beat**. Do not combine consecutive eighth rests when the first rest does not begin on the beat.

WRONG



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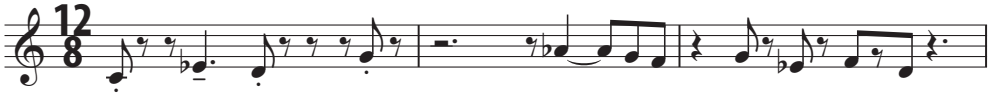
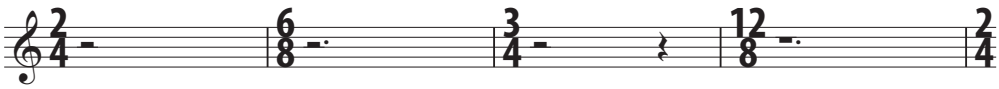


Empty measures always take a whole rest centered between the barlines, regardless of the time signature.

WRONG



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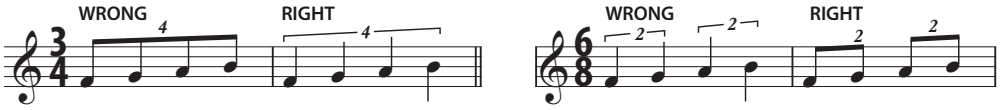
Tuplets

In simple meter (e.g., 4/4, 3/4) tuplets must be **shorter** than the regular notes they replace, but longer than the next smallest note value. For example, quarter-note tuplets are **shorter than regular quarter** notes, but **longer than regular eighth notes**.

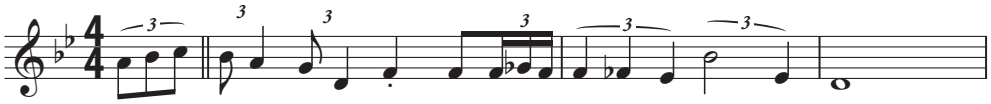
The exception to this rule occurs in **compound meter**, e.g., 6/8, 12/8), where duplets and quadruplets are **longer** than the regular notes they replace. For example, in 6/8, eighth note duplets are **longer than regular eighth notes**:



Beamed tuplets take a **number only**, on the beam side. Stemmed or mixed tuplets require a **bracket** in addition to the number. Tuplet brackets should appear on the stem side.

Tuplets included on the same beam as non-tuplet notes — e.g., three triplet sixteenth notes and an eighth note — **also require a bracket**:

WRONG



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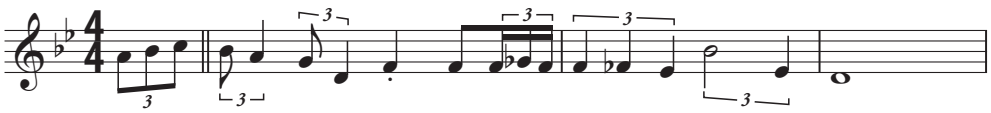


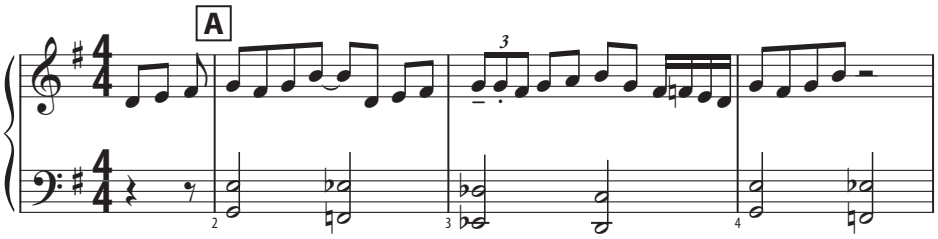
In *The Art of Music Copying*, Clinton Roemer suggests the older manuscript practice of adding a slur for all beamed tuplets, and placing all tuplets above the staff regardless of stem/beam direction. **This is not recommended** in modern music preparation.

Pickup Measures

A pickup measure is an incomplete measure that begins the piece. Pickup measures cannot be used anywhere except the beginning of the piece.

Pickup measures are **not included in measure numbering.** The end of a pickup measure must be marked with a **double bar**. Instruments/staves not playing in the pickup measure must have **rests equivalent to the number of beats in the pickup**, and those rests should **clarify the meter**.

WRONG



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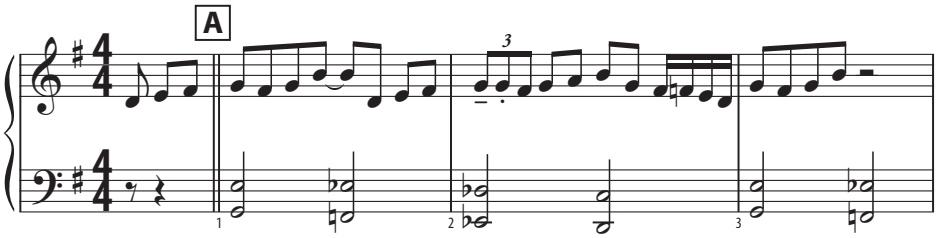
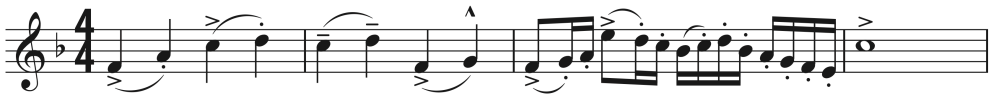


Articulations

Most articulations are placed on the note side. Staccato and tenuto marks can be placed inside the staff



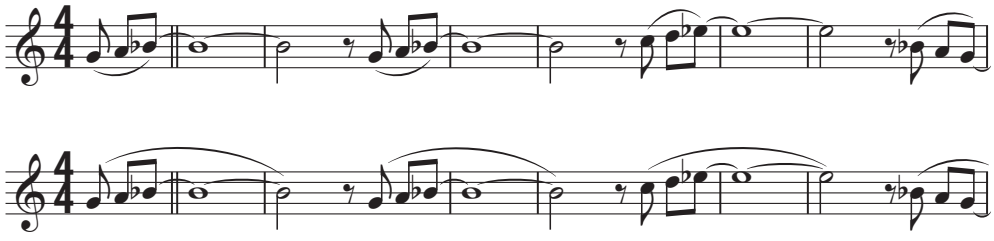
when appropriate. Marcato accents (𝛬) always appear above the staff. Staccato and tenuto marks go inside slur tips. Accents can go either inside or outside slurs.

In *The Art of Music Copying*, Clinton Roemer suggests the older hand-copying practice of placing all articulations above the notes and outside the staff — this is **not recommended.**

Use articulations to clarify your intended **phrasing** and **note length**. In a swing feel, quarter notes can be played either long or short, so it is a good idea to **mark every quarter note** with a **tenuto** (long) or **staccato** (short), unless the musical context makes the intended length obvious. (For example, in a ballad, quarter notes are assumed to be long unless marked otherwise, and long quarter notes do not need to be marked with tenutos.)

Slurs and Ties

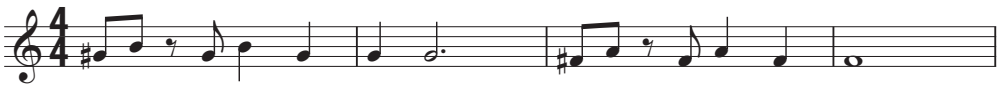
Notation programs often squash ties between closely-spaced notes, making them difficult to read. Always take care to ensure **all ties are clearly visible.**



Accidentals and Enharmonics

Accidentals hold throughout the measure and are cancelled by the barline. Even so, following a chromatic alteration, a **cautionary accidental** must be used in the subsequent measure as a reminder to the player.

WRONG



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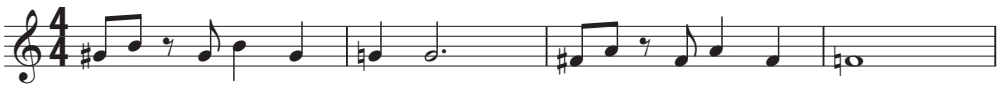
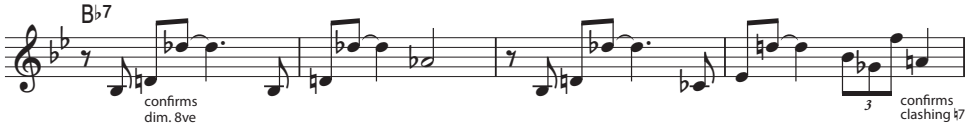


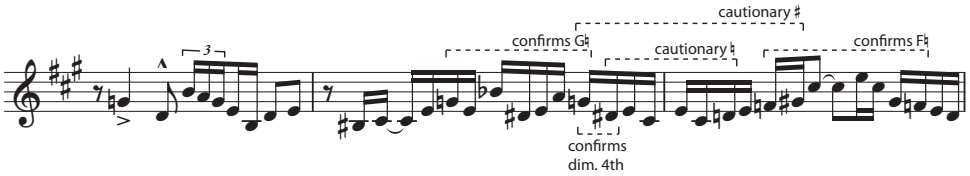
There is no need to parenthesize courtesy accidentals — parentheses distort spacing and make the accidentals less legible. So long as cautionary accidentals are used consistently and thoughtfully, omitting the parentheses will not cause any confusion.

Accidentals apply in the **given octave** only. The presence of a B♭ in one octave does not affect the B's in any other octave. However, cautionary accidentals provide helpful **enharmonic confirmation** of augmented or diminished octaves. Augmented/diminished fourths and fifths also sometimes benefit from confirmation, as do intentional clashes with the given chord symbol.



In general, spell perfect fourths, fifths, and octaves as perfect intervals. Avoid **augmented thirds** (e.g., E♭-G♯), **diminished sixths** (e.g., F♯-D♭), **augmented sevenths** (e.g., B♭-A♯), and other misleading enharmonic respellings of perfect intervals.

In dense chromatic music, it is sometimes necessary to use courtesy accidentals within the measure as a reminder of what came previously.



Use double-sharps and double-flats with caution. While they are sometimes appropriate for use in staff notation, **double-sharps and double-flats are best avoided in chord symbols**.

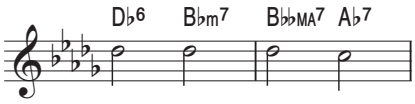
Use the enharmonic spelling that is **correct for the key**. For example, in the key of F♯, the IV chord is B^{MA7} and is spelled B–D♯–F♯– A♯. In the key of G♭, the IV chord is C♭^{MA7} and is spelled C♭–E♭–G♭–B♭:

As a general rule, try to avoid enharmonic clashes between melodic spelling and chord symbol spelling. For instance, in most situations, a D^{MA7} chord with a G♭ in the melody is confusing to read. However, melody notes are permitted to clash with chord symbols if the "correct" chord spelling would be awkward — this often occurs in keys with many sharps or flats.

For instance, in the key of D♭, the ♭VI chord is *technically* B𝄫^{MA7} — but as noted above, double flats in chord symbols are best avoided. You should flip this chord symbol enharmonically to A^{MA7}. However, in this case,

diatonic melody notes — for instance D♭ (scale degree $\hat{1}$) — should **not** be respelled, even though they may technically represent a clash with the respelled chord symbol (A^{MA7}):

WRONG



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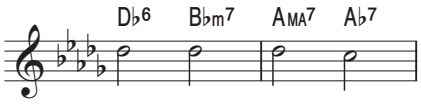
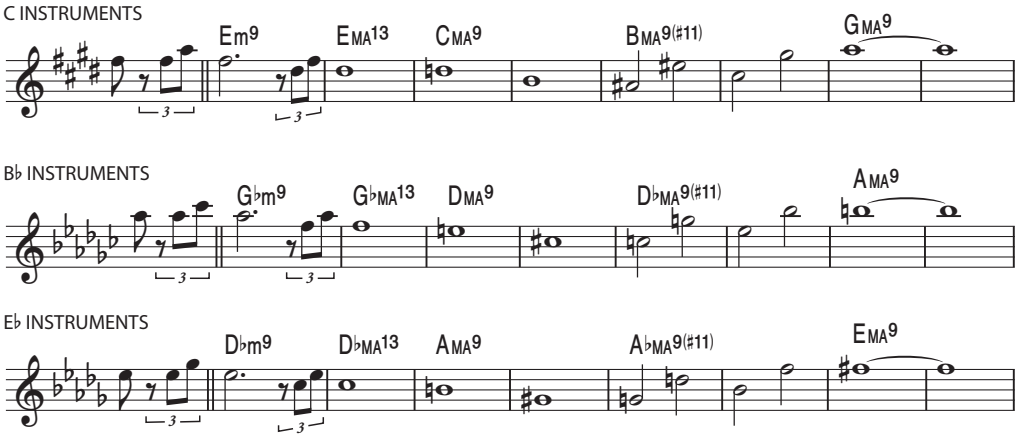


As a general rule of thumb, do not flip diatonic melody notes enharmonically unless the harmonic progression has taken us outside the original key.

In highly chromatic passages and/or rapidly moving passages, enharmonic spelling rules may be relaxed for ease of reading.

Transposing Instruments

When writing parts for transposing instruments, like trumpet or alto sax, it is sometimes necessary to wrap keys to their enharmonic equivalent to avoid placing the music in an excessively sharp key. For example, in a piece with a key signature of **E major**, the **B♭ instruments** should be written in the key of **G♭ major** (not F♯), and the **E♭ instruments** should be written in the key of **D♭ major** (not C♯).



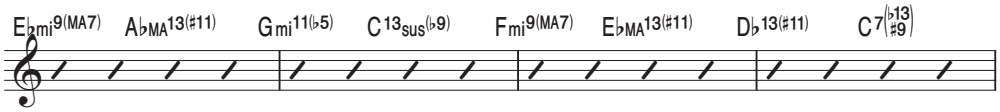
Transposed parts **must be checked carefully** for enharmonic issues. Notation and chord symbols may need to be enharmonically flipped to avoid awkward spelling of notes and chord symbols, including unwanted double-sharps and double-flats. Changes to the courtesy accidentals may be necessary.

Do <u>not</u> assume your music notation software will take care of this for you.

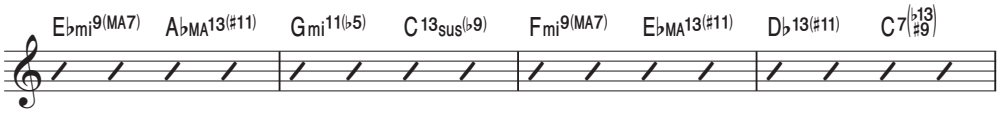
Chord Symbols

For rhythmic clarity, it is **extremely important** that chord symbols be **left-justified.** This means that the **left** edge of the chord symbol is aligned to the **beginning** of the beat where the chord is played.

WRONG



RIGHT



Chord symbols must never be centered, or otherwise misaligned. Here is how to do that in the major notation programs:

- In **MusScore**, chord symbols are left-justified by default.
- To left-justify chords in **Dorico**, under **Engraving Options > Chord Symbols > Horizontal Position > Horizontal alignment relative to note, chord or rest**, choose **Left**.
- In **Finale**, select the **Chord** tool and choose **Left-Align Chords** from the **Chord** menu.
- **Sibelius** is **very bad** about chord symbol alignment. Sibelius users, follow the instructions here: https://www.scoringnotes.com/tips/left-align-chord-symbols-sibelius/ and **save those settings in your template**.

Use a **sans-serif font** (Helvetica or similar) for chord symbols. Do **not** use a serif font like Times New Roman. Chord symbols are more legible when a sans-serif font is used.

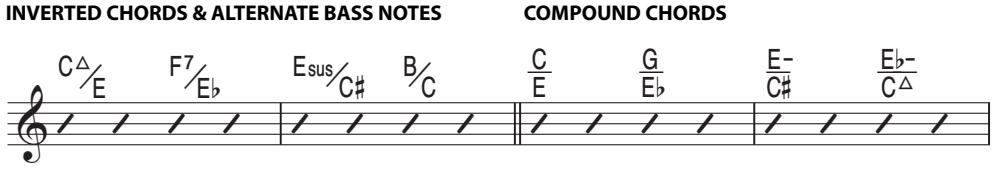
See the **Appendix: Chord Symbol Spelling** for recommended chord symbols.

Chord symbols should reflect any **tensions** included in the melody. For instance, if the melody note is a G♭ over an F dominant seventh chord, the chord symbol should be F7(♭9) — not just F7.

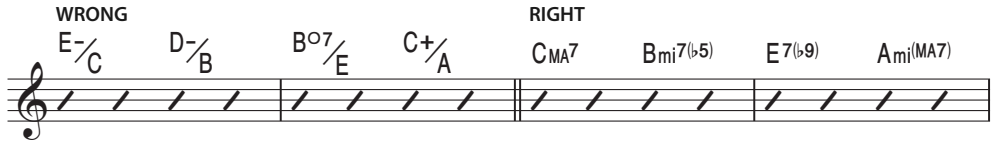
Chord alterations must be **parenthesized** and should be spelled with sharps and flats — e.g., G7(♭9), F7(♯9) — not pluses and minuses.

There are two types of slashed chords and they mean different things:

- Chords with a **diagonal slash** indicate an **inverted chord**, or a chord with an **alternate bass note**.
- Chords with a **horizontal slash** indicate a **compound chord**, i.e. two **complete** chords, one above the other).



Do **not** use slashed chords to replace common chord symbols:



Use **slash notation** in the staff (not rests) to indicate improvisation or comping — see above.

For transposing instruments, chord symbols must be **transposed** to the player's key.

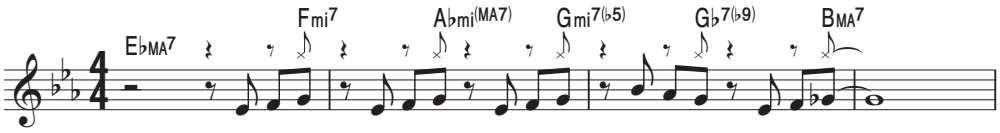
On a simple lead sheet, a separate solo section is only necessary if the solo changes or form differ from what is played during the head. For more complex arrangements or arrangements for larger forces, use a dedicated solo section.

Chord symbols hold until the next chord symbol. When the chord is unchanged over multiple measures, do **not** restate the chord every measure, and do **not** use the one-bar repeat symbol (𝄎). Exceptions: **do** restate the chord symbol at the beginning of a **new system**, in the first measure of a **2nd ending**, and in the first measure of the **Coda**.

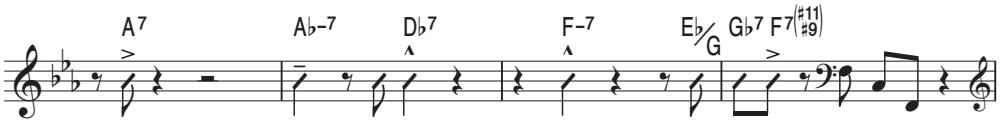
Chord symbols are usually attached to **primary beats** — generally beat 1 and beat 3. Chord players may play anticipations appropriate to the style and context.

On a lead sheet, use **rhythmic cues** — small x-noteheads or slash noteheads above the staff, with ledger

lines hidden — to show written anticipations, comping rhythms, unusual chord rhythms, or other specific rhythmic figures:



If the figures are too dense or complex to be shown above the staff, or when using a master rhythm part (or individual rhythm section parts), indicate cues using **rhythmic notation**: slash noteheads with stems, written inside the staff:



RECOMMENDED BOOKS

Clinton Roemer, The Art of Music Copying (Roerk Music). The music copyist's bible — absolutely essential for every jazz musician. Out of print, but available in most music department libraries.

Elaine Gould, *Behind Bars* (Faber Music). An excellent and very thorough encyclopedia of music engraving standards. Best for the advanced user of notation software looking to learn to create publisher-quality work.

RECOMMENDED MUSIC NOTATION SOFTWARE

Dorico Pro is a modern music notation software package from Steinberg. Dorico is also available for iPad.

Finale, from MakeMusic, is the longest-running music notation software. (N.B. I designed the Finale Jazz Font Default, which is included with the latest Finale version and is compatible with the music preparation guidelines given above.)

Sibelius|Ultimate is subscription-based music notation software from Avid. Sibelius is also available for iPad.

MuseScore is free, open-source music notation software. It has made great strides in recent years, but remains more limited than the commercial software packages listed above.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES & FORUMS

"But my software doesn't do that!" is not a valid excuse. It is also almost always incorrect. If there is something you are trying to do and you don't know how to do it, search the online knowledge base for your software, or ask your question on a software user forum, or consult with a knowledgable peer. There are many good online music notation resources — here are some of them:

GENERAL MUSIC PREPARATION ADVICE

Scoring Notes: https://www.scoringnotes.com

Of Note: http://www.rpmseattle.com/of_note

Tim Davies' deBreved: http://www.timusic.net/debreved/

DORICO

Steinberg Dorico blog: https://blog.dorico.com/

Dorico Users Group (Facebook): https://www.facebook.com/groups/dorico/

FINALE

MakeMusic Finale Blog: https://www.finalemusic.com/blog/

Finale 101 (Facebook): https://www.facebook.com/groups/1889032998012042/

Finale Powerusers (Facebook): https://www.facebook.com/groups/finalepower/

SIBELIUS

Avid Sibelius Blog: http://www.avidblogs.com/tag/sibelius/

Avid Sibelius Users (Facebook): https://www.facebook.com/groups/sibeliussoftwareforum/

Sibelius Power Users (Facebook): https://www.facebook.com/groups/323691061147132/

MUSESCORE

MuseScore Forum: https://musescore.org/en/forum

MuseScore Discussion and Support Group (Facebook): https://www.facebook.com/groups/musescore/

SIBELIUS-SPECIFIC ISSUES

If you use Sibelius, you must **left-align chords** and **float rests**, neither of which Sibelius does by default. Here are instructions on how to achieve these results:

Left-Align Chord Symbols in Sibelius
https://www.scoringnotes.com/tips/left-align-chord-symbols-sibelius/

Float Rests in Sibelius
https://www.scoringnotes.com/tips/new-plug-in-float-rests/

Additionally, Sibelius's default rhythmic notation and slash notation greatly benefit from these improvements:

Tweaking Slash Notation and Rhythmic notation in Sibelius
http://www.rpmseattle.com/of_note/sibelius-rhythmic-slash-notation-tweaks/

Norfolk and Pori Fonts for Sibelius

These two fonts are both improvements over the fonts that come with Sibelius:

- **Norfolk** is an engraved font based on the open-source font Bravura, which comes with Dorico but can be used with other software. I use Bravura with Finale — it's the font used for all of the musical examples shown in this handout. Sibelius requires some compatibility adjustments in order to use Bravura, which is what Norfolk provides.
- **Pori** is a manuscript-style font based on the open-source font Petaluma, inspired by Sher Publishing's *The New Real Book*.

These fonts also come with a much-needed solution to create diagonally-offset slash chords in Sibelius:

https://www.nycmusicservices.com/musicresources/

SCORING EXPRESS TEMPLATES

NYC Music Services, a professional music preparation service, offers **Scoring Express Jazz**, a set of well-designed jazz templates for Dorico, Finale, and Sibelius, which I highly recommend. These templates are available for purchase here:

https://www.notationcentral.com/product-category/templates/

APPENDIX: CHORD SYMBOL SPELLING

In the real world, chord symbol spelling is highly variable. Everyone wants to believe that their preferred method of spelling chords is the One True Way. In reality, what is considered correct is determined by consensus within musical communities. That said, there are practical reasons to prefer chord symbols that are concise, compact, consistent, unambiguous, and visually distinct from one another; this is the basis for the following recommendations. Chord symbols are more legible if a **sans-serif font** (like Helvetica) is used.

CHORD NAME	RECOMMENDED	ACCEPTABLE	DO NOT USE
MAJOR TRIAD	G		GMA, G triad, G△, G△TR, etc.
MINOR TRIAD	G–, Gm, Gmi	Gmin	GMI, Gm triad, etc.
AUGMENTED TRIAD	G+		Gaug
DIMINISHED TRIAD	G°		Gdim
SIXTH	G6		anything else
MINOR SIXTH	Gm6, Gmi6, G–6	Gmin6	GMI6, etc.
MAJOR SEVENTH	GMA7, G△	G△7, Gmaj7	GM7, Gma7, GMaj7, etc.
SEVENTH	G7		anything else
MINOR-MAJOR SEVENTH	Gm(MA7), Gmi(MA7), G–△	Gmin(MA7), G–△7	Gm(M7), GmMAJ7, etc.
MINOR SEVENTH	Gm7, Gmi7, G–7	Gmin7	GMI7, etc.
HALF-DIMINISHED	Gø, Gm7(♭5), Gmi7(♭5)	Gø7, G–7(♭5), Gmin7(♭5)	GMI7♭5, G–7–5, etc.
DIMINISHED SEVENTH	G°7		Gdim7
CHORDS w/EXTENSIONS	G△9, GMA13, G–9, Gm11, G13, G , etc.		GMA7(9), Gm7(11), G7(add13), G6/9, etc.
CHORDS w/SUSPENSIONS	Gsus, G7sus, G9sus	Gsus4, G7sus4, G9sus4	G4, G7(4), G11, etc.
CHORDS w/ALTERATIONS	G(♯11), G13(♭9), G7(♭13 ♯9), etc.		G♯11, G7–13+9, G+7(+9), etc.
INVERSIONS & CHORDS w/ ALTERNATE BASS NOTES	G/B, G7/F, G△/E♭, etc.		G/B, G7 on F, G△/E♭ bass, etc.
POLYCHORDS/COMPOUND CHORDS	G/B, G7/F, G△/E♭–, etc.		G over B, G7/F triad, etc.