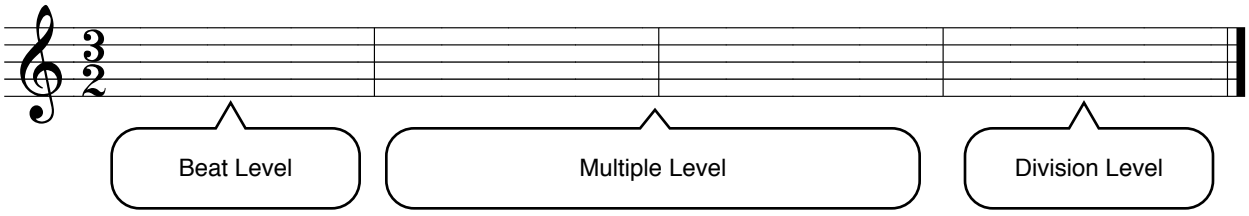
LESSON 7

Date: _____

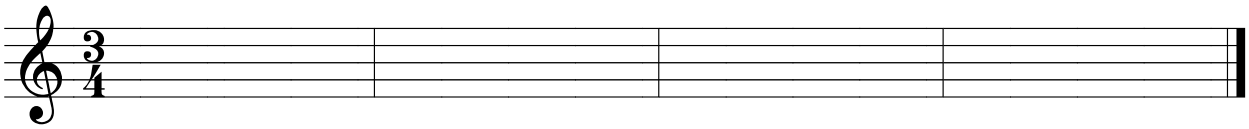
SIMPLE TRIPLE TIME (**STRONG** WEAK WEAK)

The top number of the time signature is always **3** . This means there are always 3 beats in a bar. The bottom number in time signatures represents the note that gets one beat.

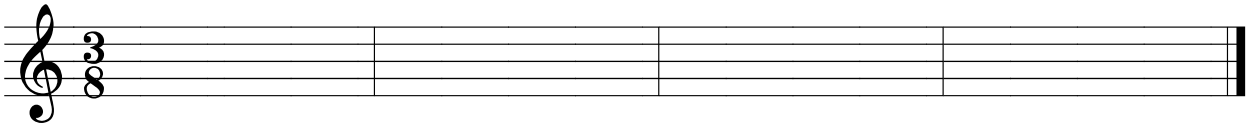
3 3 beats in a bar
2 the half note gets one beat



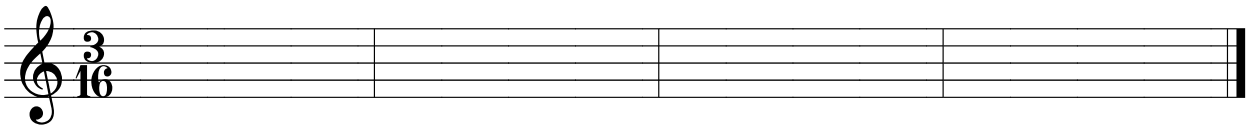
3 3 beats in a bar
4 the quarter note gets one beat



3 3 beats in a bar
8 the eighth note gets one beat



3 3 beats in a bar
16 the sixteenth note gets one beat

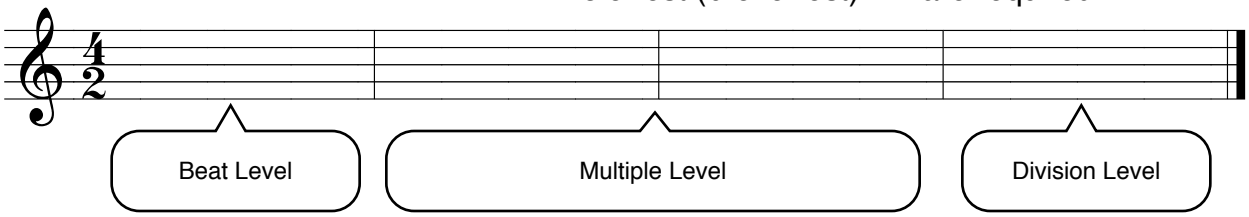


SIMPLE QUADRUPLE TIME (**STRONG** WEAK **MEDIUM** WEAK)

The top number of the time signature is always 4. This means there are always 4 beats in a bar. The bottom number in time signatures represents the note that get one beat.

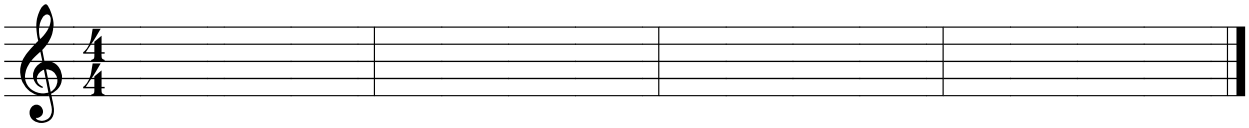
4 4 beats in a bar
2 the half note gets one beat

In order to fill a complete bar with one note or rest, the double whole note (breve*) and double whole rest (breve rest) are required.

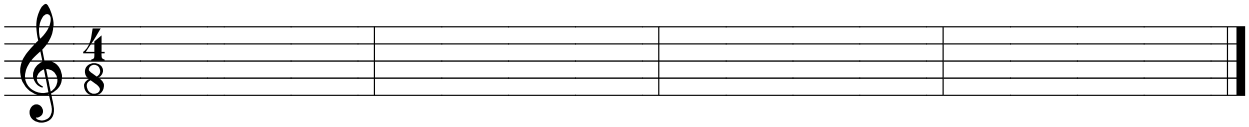


4 4 beats in a bar
4 the quarter note gets one beat

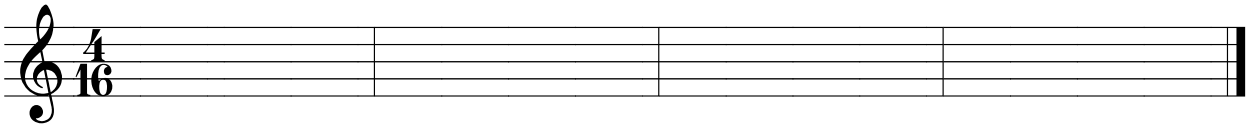
This time signature is often abbreviated as C and is commonly referred to as *common time*.



4 4 beats in a bar
8 the eighth note gets one beat



4 4 beats in a bar
16 the sixteenth note gets one beat



CHOOSING A TIME SIGNATURE

Although some time signatures can be interchangeable from a purely mathematical perspective, composers make time signature choices based on a variety of (sometimes subtle) factors.

1. Musical Feel and Flow
   The primary objective is to communicate the desired rhythmic feel and flow of the music. This impacts the meter (eg. duple, triple, or quadruple).

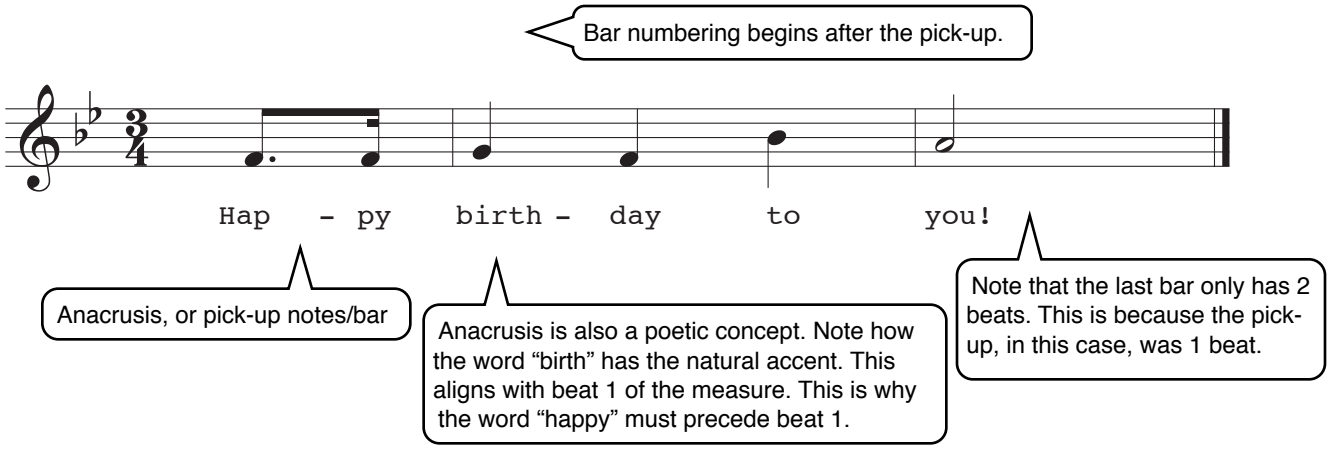
2. Legibility and Impact on Performer
   A time signature selection will impact musical notation. A larger bottom number (shorter note value for the beat) usually implies more complex rhythm notation. It can also imply a faster rhythm, even though we understand that tempo is a distinctly different concept than rhythm. This may impact the number of flags and/or beams that are required. This in turn affects ease of sight reading and/or performance.

3. Tradition
   Historically, different time signatures have different connotations and traditions.

   - $\frac{4}{4}$ most common time signature used for rock music
   - $\frac{2}{2}$ generally used for marches and fast orchestral music

4. Inner Rhythmic Experience
   A time signature selection and the ensuing notation can affect the way a veteran performer experiences time. This is a subtle process that develops after performing a huge array of differently notated meters.

Not all music begins on beat one (strong beat). When music begins using an incomplete bar, these note(s) and/or the incomplete bar is referred to as an anacrusis, or a pick-up. If a pick-up is present, the incomplete beats are usually reconciled by adjusting the number of beats in the last bar. In this way, the pick-up and the last bar form one complete bar. The first bar after the pick-up is assigned bar number 1.



Rhythm can be classified into three levels:

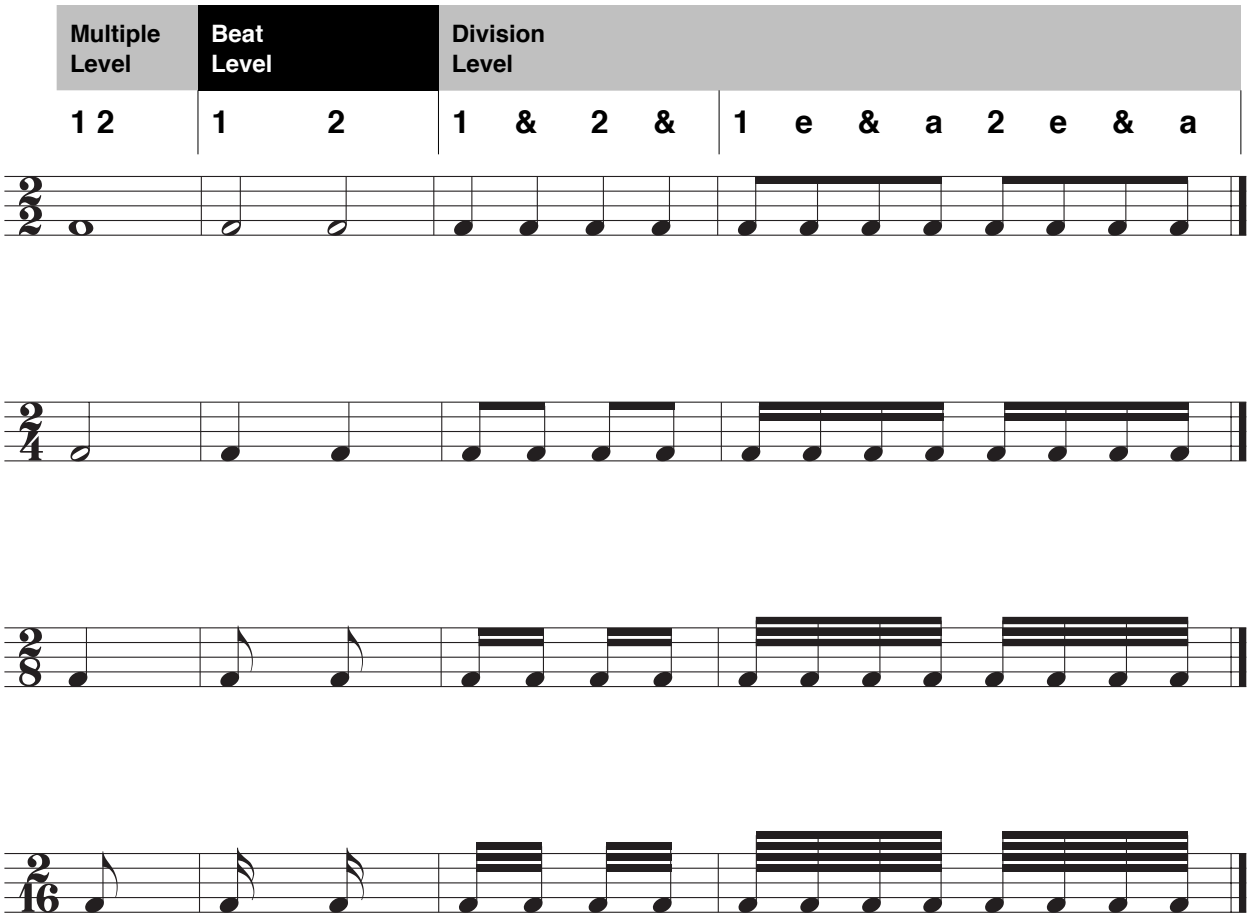
- Beat Level ~ This is when the rhythm matches the beat of the music. I.e. the rhythm is the note indicated in the bottom number of the time signature.
- Multiple Level ~ The rhythms used are slower (longer in duration) than the beat note.
- Division Level ~ The rhythm used are faster (shorter in duration) than the beat note.

The following musical examples illustrate the three rhythmic levels.

Notes:

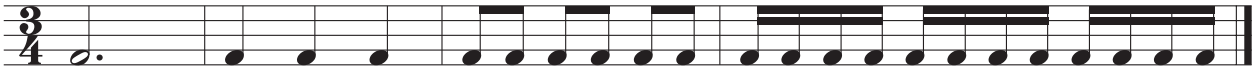
1. The counting within a meter is **identical** from one time signature to the next.
2. Within the Division Level, notes are beamed according to beat groups.

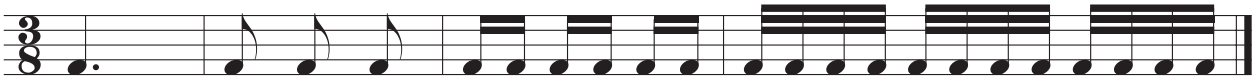
DUPLE METER

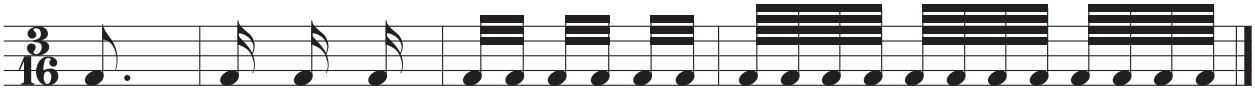


TRIPLE METER

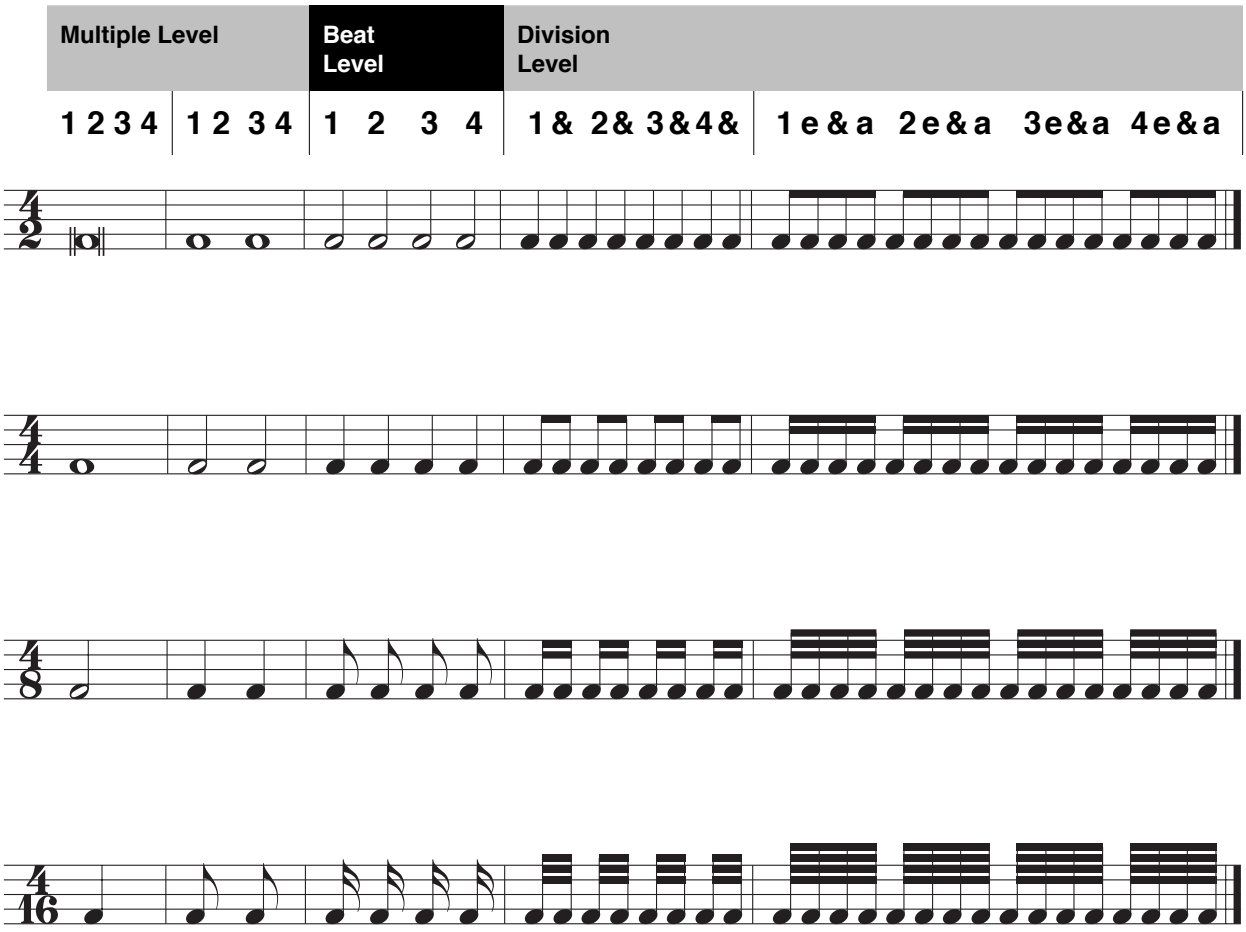
Multiple Level	Beat Level	Division Level	
1 2 3	1 2 3	1 & 2 & 3 &	1 e & a 2 e & a 3 e & a







QUADRUPLE METER



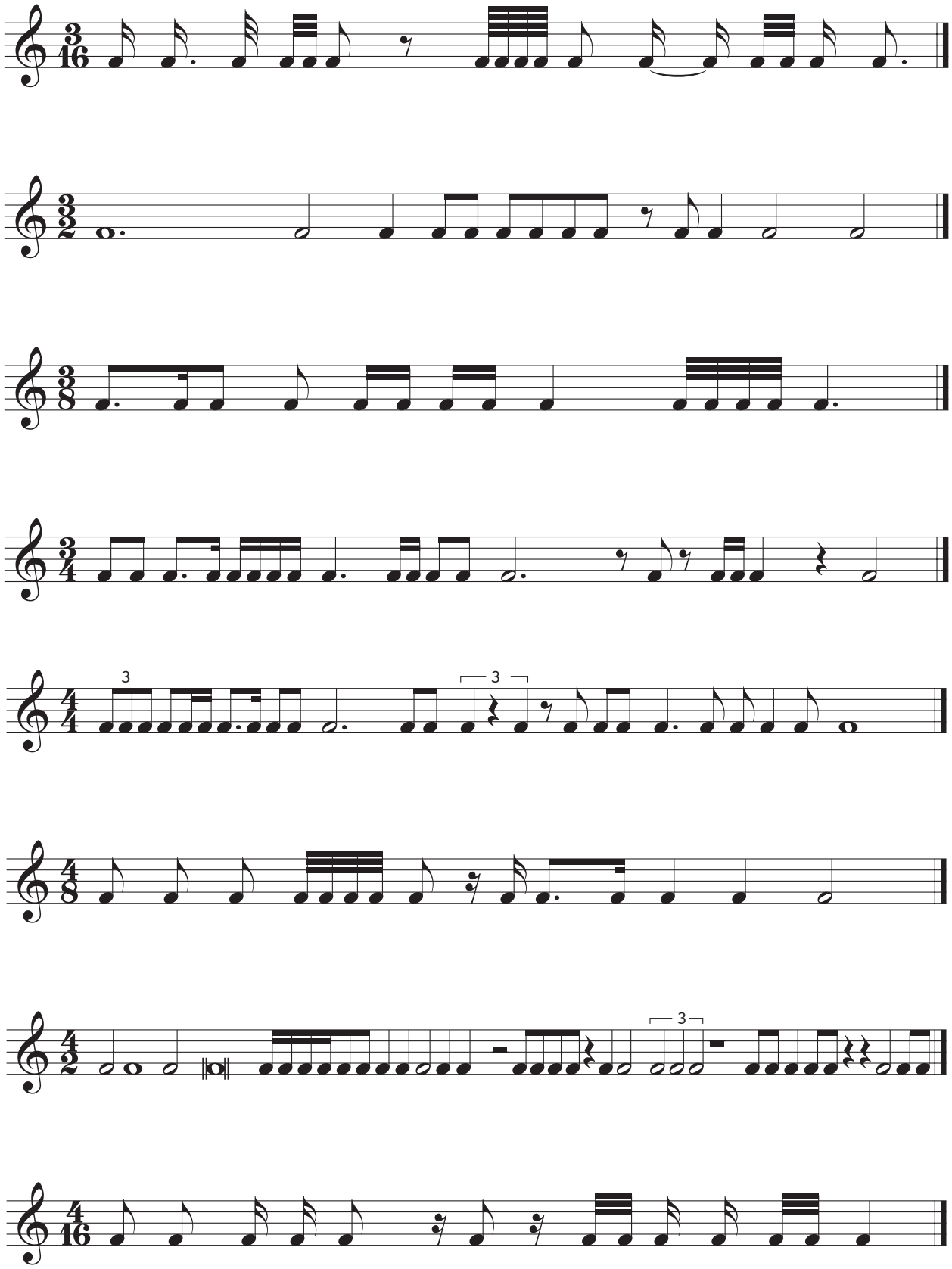
*In Britain, music symbols are given different names. You will occasionally encounter these terms. To avoid confusion it is best to be familiar with both North American (NA) and British (UK) music nomenclature.

NA:	double whole note	whole note	half note	quarter note
UK:	breve	semibreve	minim	crotchet

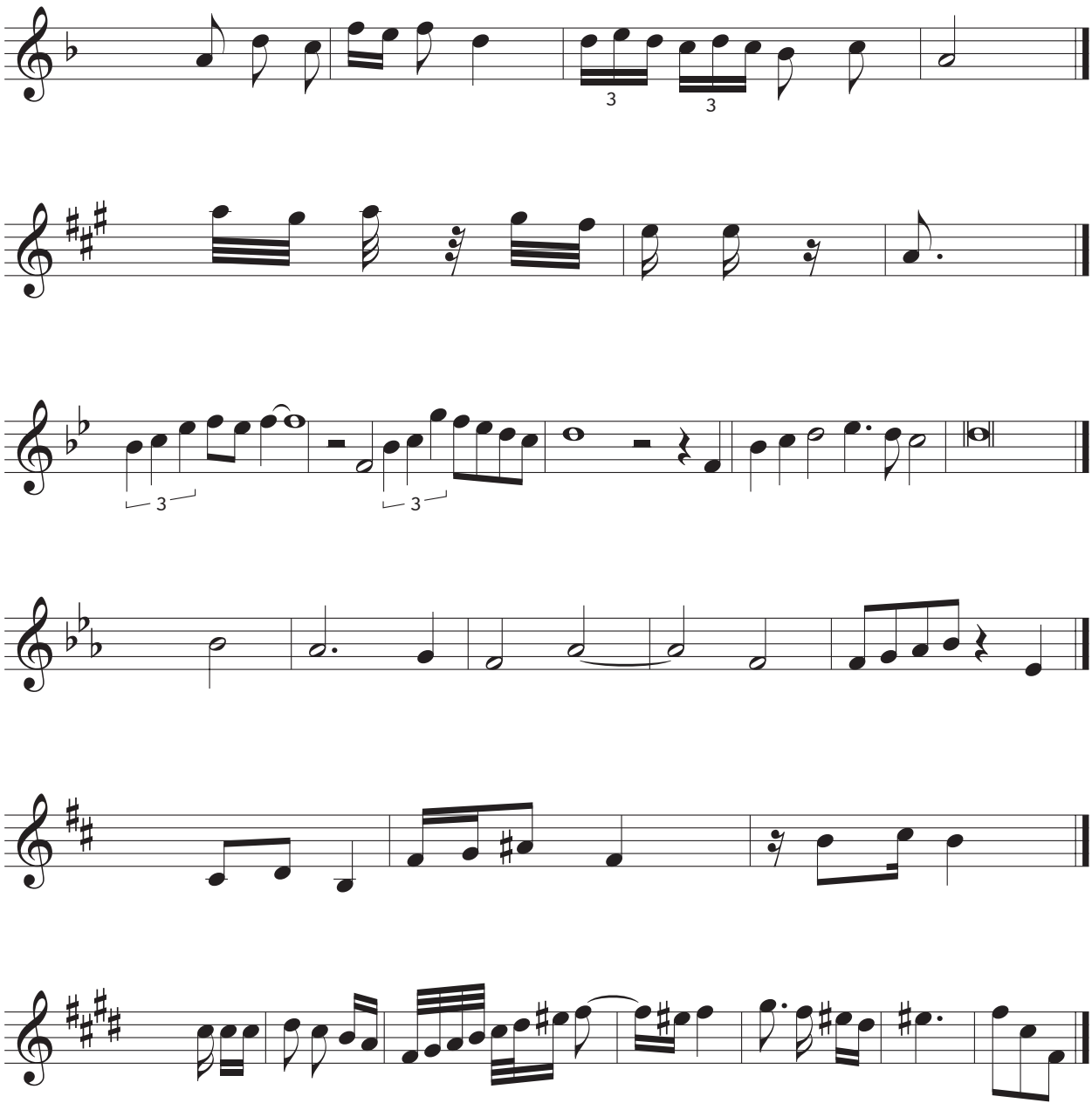
NA:	eighth note	sixteenth note	thirty-second note	sixty-fourth note
UK:	quaver	semiquaver	demisemiquaver	hemidemisemiquaver

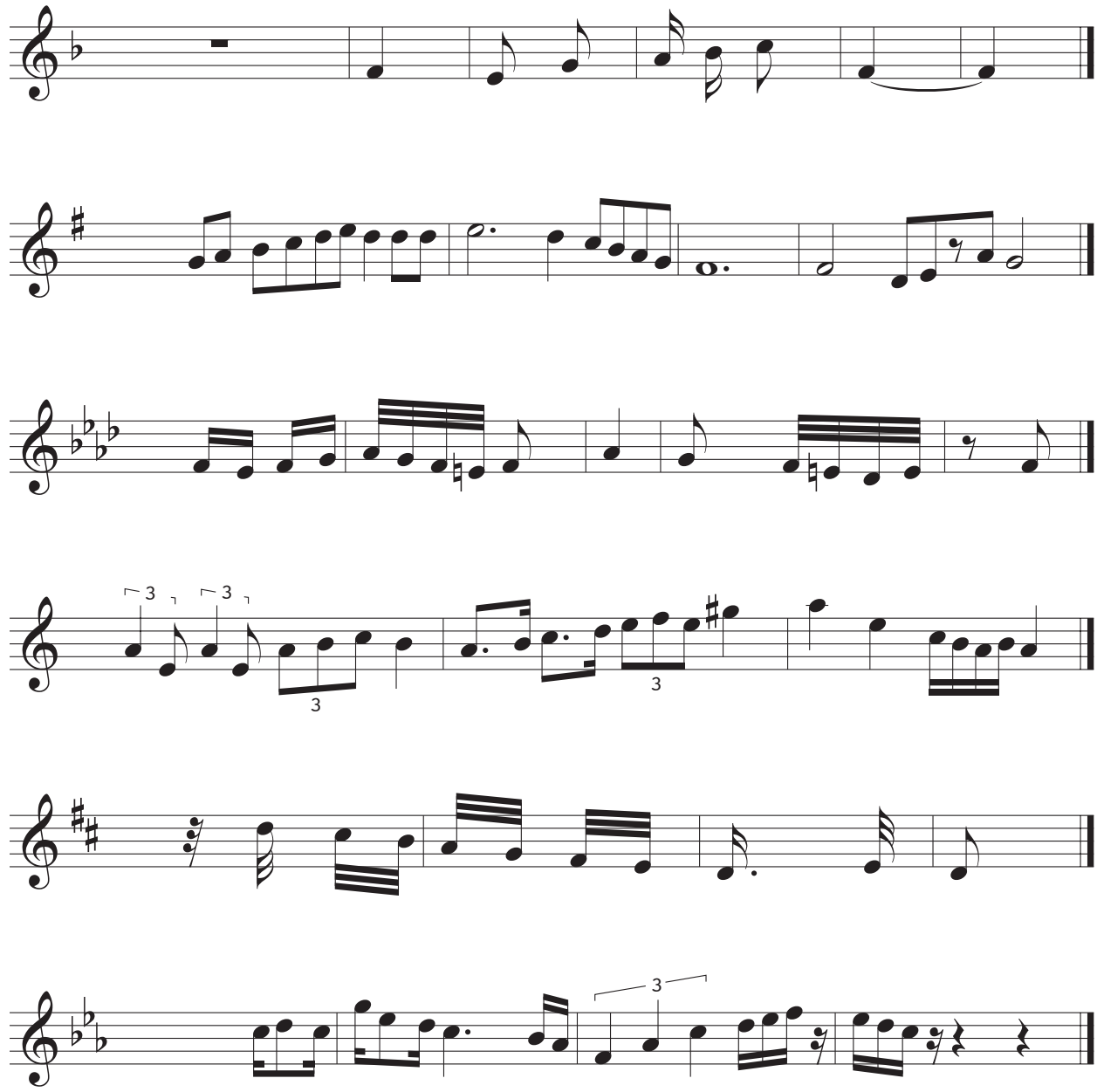
PRACTICE

1. Add bar lines to the following musical excerpts. Write the counting under each rhythm. Be sure each symbol of the counting is correctly aligned with the music.

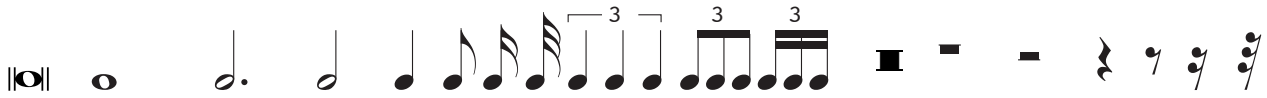


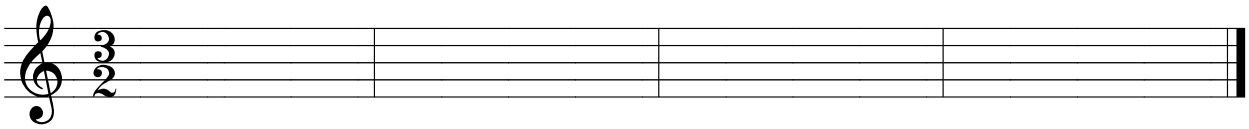
2. Add time signatures to the following musical excerpts. Write the counting under each rhythm. Be sure each symbol of the counting is correctly aligned with the music.





3. Compose rhythms given each of the following time signatures. Use each of the following note and rest values at least once.

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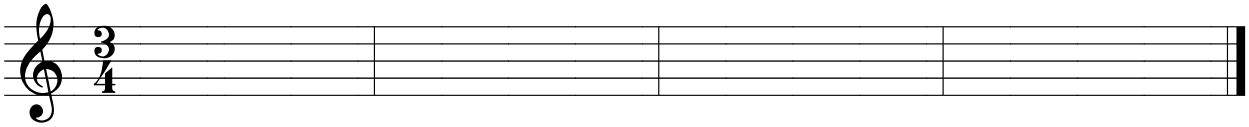
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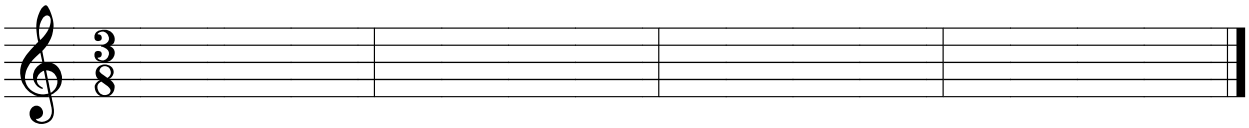
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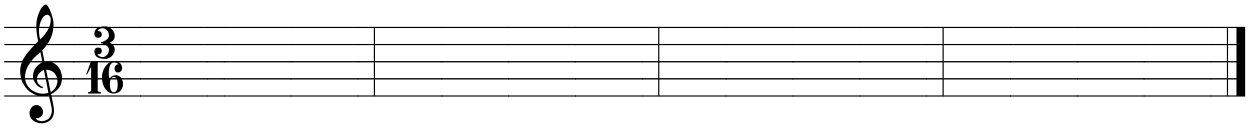
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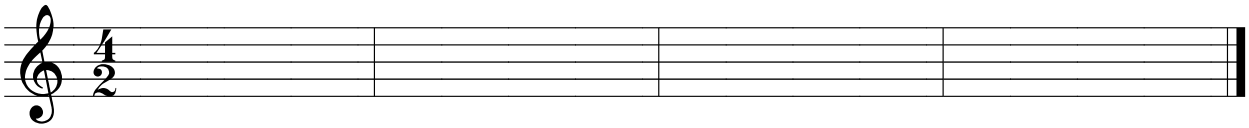
16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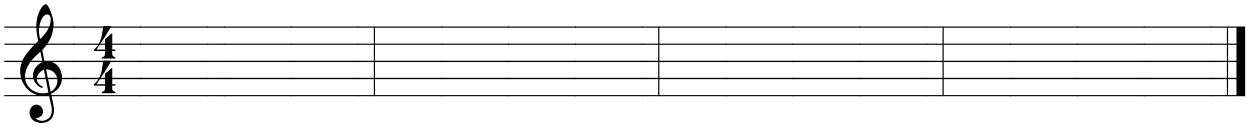
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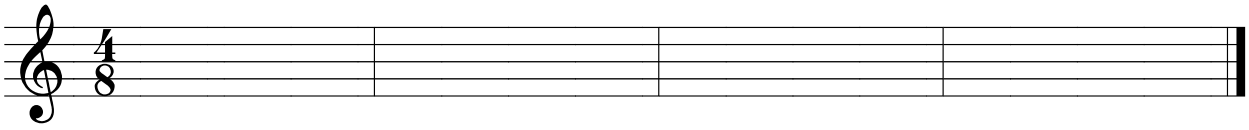
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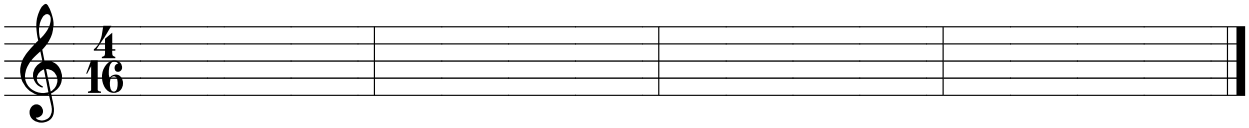
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16