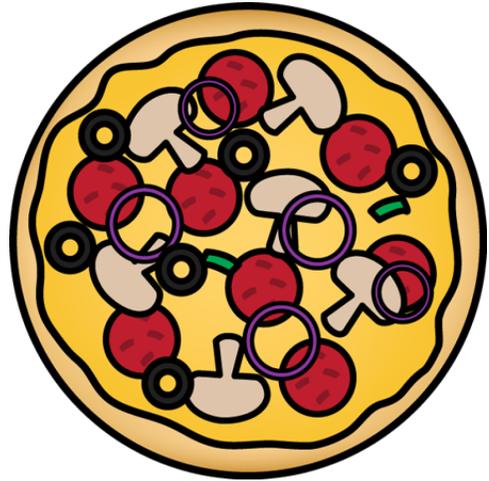
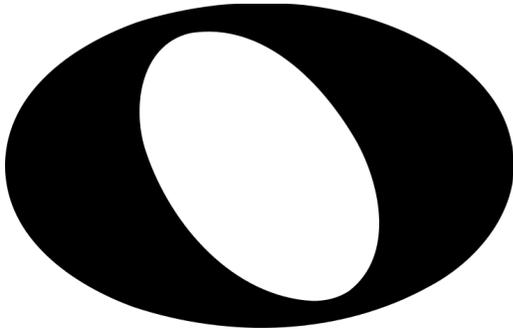


# Note Values, Durations, and Time Signatures

## note values

The whole note is the biggest note value. It looks like a **whole** pizza.



The half note is half the length of the whole note. That means there are two of them in a whole note. It looks like a whole note with a stem. Think of it as a half pizza.



The quarter note is one quarter the length of the whole note. That means there are four of them in a whole note, and two of them in a half note. Think of it as a quarter pizza.

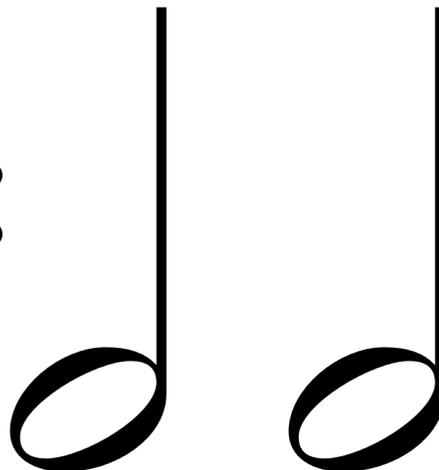
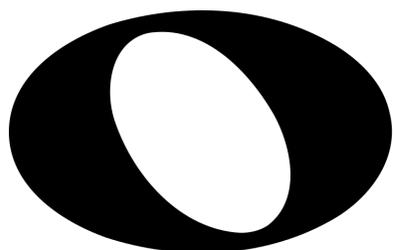


Lastly, the eighth note is an eighth of the length of the whole note, so eight of them equal one whole note. Likewise, there are four of them in a half note and two of them in a quarter note. Think of the eighth note as an eighth of pizza, or a typical slice. And when there are two eighth notes next to each other, a bridge connects them.

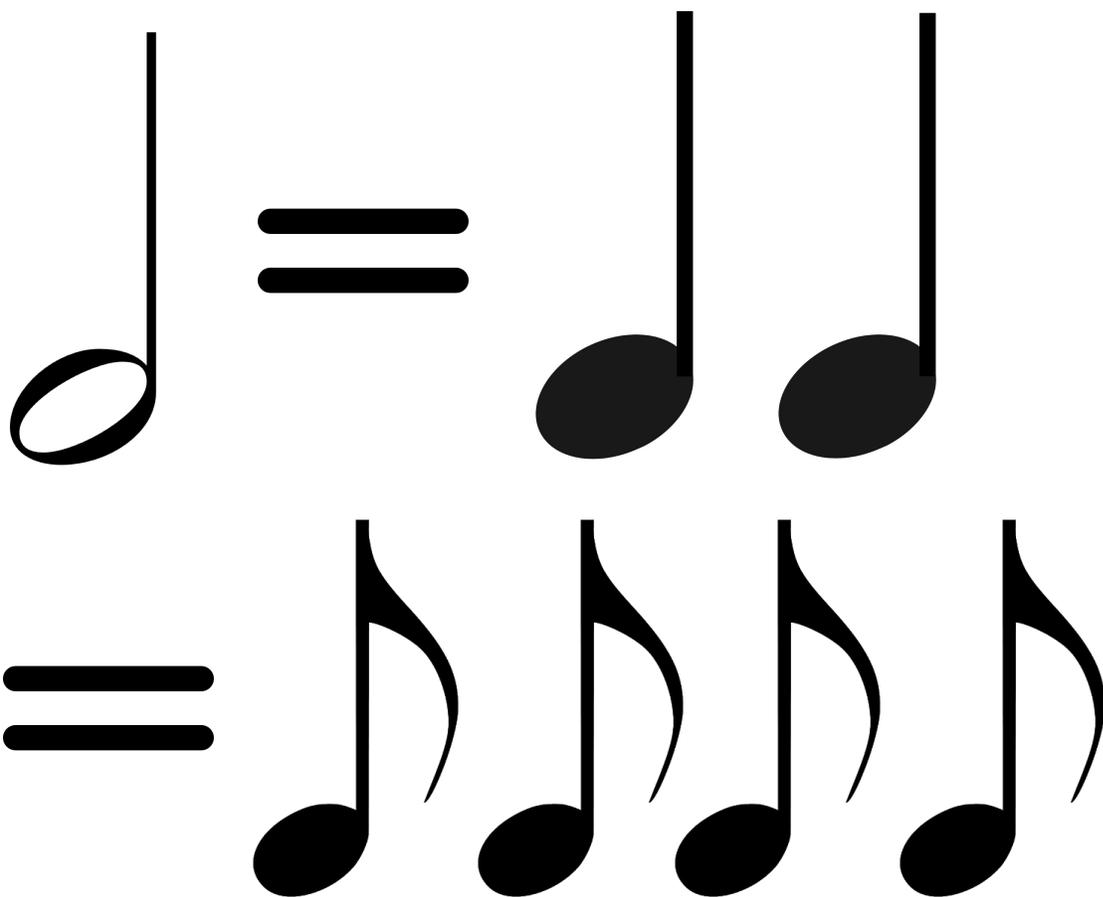


durations

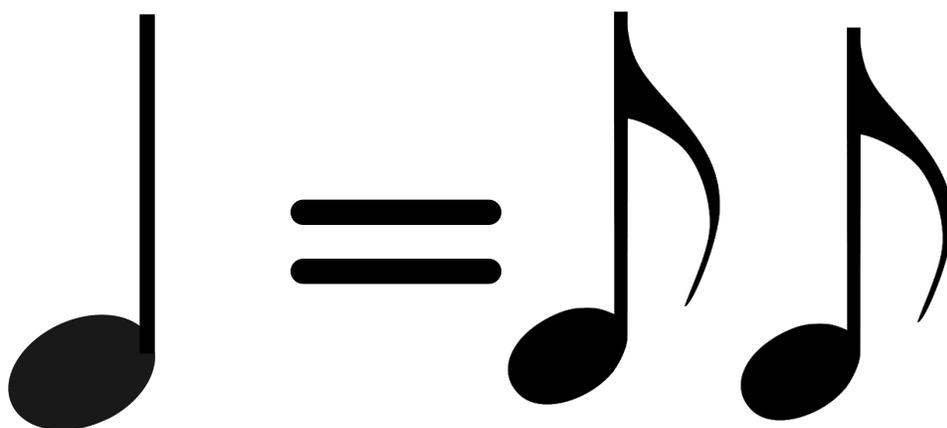
Let's start with the whole note...



Here is the half note...



And the quarter note...



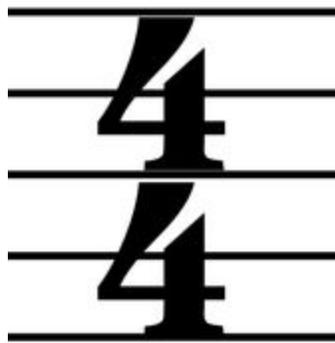
The eighth note cannot be broken down any further because it is our smallest unit.

## time signatures

A time signature is another way to organize music so people can read and play it. Written music is divided by measures, or bars, and the time signature tracks how the bars are spaced.

When you look at the start of any piece of music, you'll see the time signature.

This time signature is called "four-four."



In a time signature, the top number is how many beats there are in each bar, and the bottom number tells us what note value is equal to one beat.

So in our 4/4 time signature, the bottom four tells us that a quarter note—the one where **four** of them makes the **whole** pizza—gets one beat. And the top four tells us that when you put four quarter notes together, that's the end of the bar and we need to start a new one.

Here's an example of four bars of music:

