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Reading Music Notation

THE MUSIC STAFF

Music is written on a five-line **staff**. Between each line and its neighbor, there is a space. There are four spaces on a staff.

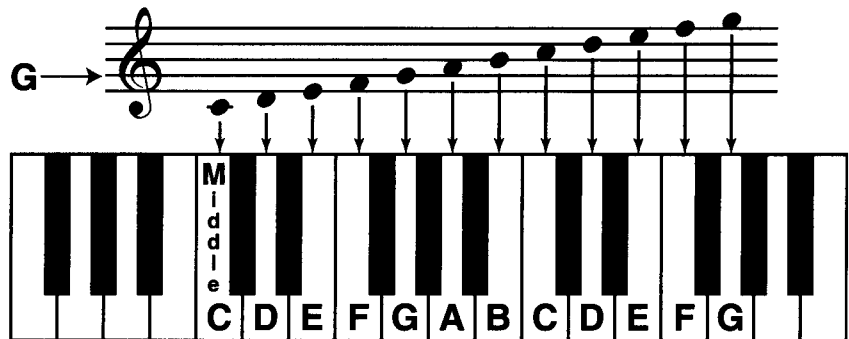
Line 5	
Line 4	Space 4
Line 3	Space 3
Line 2	Space 2
Line 1	Space 1

Musical sounds are shown by the position of notes on the staff. Notes on the higher lines and spaces sound higher than those on the lower ones.

At the beginning of each staff there is a **clef**. The **treble clef** looks like this:



Notice that the treble clef surrounds the G line. It is sometimes called the **G clef**. Notes are placed on the staff, and each one has a name from the **musical alphabet**, which has seven letters: A B C D E F G. The seven letters then repeat. Learning which key is **middle C** will help you learn the whole keyboard. It is near the center of the keyboard, just to the left of a group of two black keys.

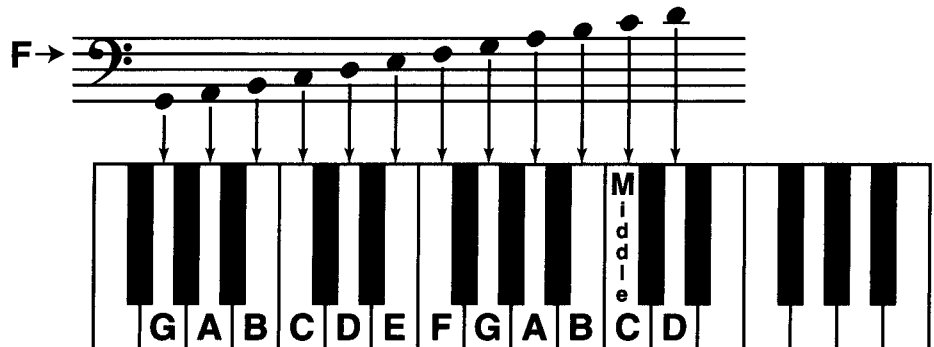


Notice that middle C sits below the staff and, since it is the next note below D, which is in a space, it needs its own little line called a **ledger line**.

The bass clef looks like this:



The notes on a bass clef staff are positioned differently than those on a treble clef staff. Note that the two dots in the bass clef surround the F line. It is sometimes called the **F clef**.



Middle C can be written in both clefs, treble and bass. In bass clef, middle C sits above the staff. Like middle C in treble clef, it also needs a ledger line.