

Lesson 11

A Note Followed by Silence

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Course	Read & Play Music
Book 3	Read and Play Tunes with Fascinating Rhythms
Part 1	Precision and Speed
Lesson 11	A Note Followed by Silence

CONTENTS

Music Theory

A note followed by a rest

A note at the end of a piece of music

Holding the last note

Practical

Exercise 1: Quarter note followed by a rest

Exercise 2: Different pitches

Exercise 3: Half note followed by a rest

Exercise 4: Mix of note followed by a note, and note followed by a rest

Exercise 5: Dotted half note followed by a rest

Exercise 6: Note at the end of the music

Exercise 7: Note at the end of the music - $\frac{3}{4}$ time

Exercise 8: Mix of notes followed by rest, and note at end of music

Exercise 9: One more mixture at the end of the music

A tune with lots of rests

Colonel Bogey



LESSON 11:

A NOTE FOLLOWED BY SILENCE

MUSIC THEORY

BUILD YOUR KNOWLEDGE

In the last few lessons, we began to put some attention on the *end* of notes.

You learned to play legato, where a note is ended just as the next note begins. And you learned to play staccato, where a note is ended quickly to leave a gap before the next note.

Now we're going to consider the end of a note when it is followed by a silence instead of another note.

There are two ways a note can be followed by a silence:

- If the note is followed by a rest
- If the note is at the end of the music.

A note followed by a rest

Look at this piece of music:



Let's say you start your metronome ticking, and you play the note on one of the ticks. That's beat 1:


play: 

 beats 1

 ticks ↑

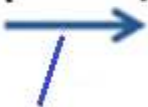
Question: How long should you hold down the middle C key before releasing it?

The answer is, if you're going to play the music exactly as written, you should hold it down until the next metronome tick, which indicates beat 2. That's what the printed music tells us: the middle C is on beat 1, and the rest (silence) starts on beat 2.

play: 

 beats: 1 2 3

 ticks: ↑ ↑ ↑



 duration of a note

 followed by a rest

Turn on your metronome to a speed of 60 and play the above music now. Count the beats '1 2 3'. Play the middle C on '1', and release it on '2'.

Then turn off your metronome and do it again, counting aloud '1 2 3'.

A note at the end of a piece of music

The other case where a note can be followed by a silence is at the end of a piece of music. Here's an example:



You can see it's the end of the music because of the double bar-line.

How long should we play the last note?

Since it is a quarter note, 1 beat in duration, it should be played for 1 full beat. That means waiting for the *next* metronome tick and releasing the note at that moment. If you don't have a metronome ticking, you have to *imagine* one more beat *after* the end of the music, to know when to end the last note.

imagine this extra beat
after the end

play:

ticks: ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑

beats: 1 2 3 1 2 3 1

duration of last note

(A blue arrow points from the '1' under the seventh tick to the last note on the staff.)

Turn on your metronome to a speed of 60 and play the above music now. Count the beats including the extra '1' at the end: '1 2 3 1 2 3 1'. Release the last note (middle C) on the final '1'.

Then turn off your metronome and do it again, counting '1 2 3 1 2 3 1'.

Holding the last note

In playing some types of music, it is common to make the last note longer to give a feeling that the music has come to an end. But for now, for these exercises, I want you to give the final note its correct duration as indicated by the printed music.

PRACTICAL

BUILD YOUR SKILL

In all of these exercises, you use your metronome.

I've suggested a metronome tempo (speed) of 60. If you find that too slow or too fast, find a tempo that works for you.

To do these exercises, you need a keyboard that sustains the sound when you hold down a key. You won't get accurate note endings if the sound fades out after a second or so.

Exercise 1:

Quarter note followed by a rest

METRONOME  = 60

The symbol above means turn on your metronome and set it to 60 BPM (Beats Per Minute).

1. **Listen** to a few ticks.
2. **Play** the music below in time with the ticks. Work at releasing each note exactly when the next tick occurs. Count aloud the beats as you play:

ticks: ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑

the beats: 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

Exercise 2:

Different pitches

1. **Listen** to a few ticks.
2. **Play** the music below in time with the ticks. Work at releasing each note exactly when the next tick occurs.

ticks: ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑

the beats: 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

Exercise 3:

Half note followed by a rest

1. **Listen** to a few ticks.

2. **Play** the music below in time with the ticks. Work at releasing each note exactly when the next tick occurs. The first half note ends when you hear the tick for beat 3.

ticks: ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑

the beats: 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

Exercise 4:

Mix of note followed by a note, and note followed by a rest

1. **Listen** to a few ticks.
2. **Play** the music below in time with the ticks. Work at releasing each note exactly when the next tick occurs. Count aloud the beats as you play.

If you make mistakes or your playing is inaccurate, turn down the metronome to a slower speed.

ticks: ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑

the beats: 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

Exercise 5:

Dotted half note followed by a rest

1. **Listen** to a few ticks.
2. **Play** the music below in time with the ticks. Work at releasing each note exactly when the next tick occurs. Count aloud the beats as you play.

ticks: ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑

the beats: 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

Exercise 6:

Note at the end of the music

1. **Listen** to a few ticks.
2. **Play** the music below in time with the ticks. Work at releasing each note exactly when the next tick occurs. Count aloud the beats as you play.

Since this is the end of the music (shown by the double bar-line at the end), you need to hold down the final note until the imaginary next beat. Review the theory section above if you're not clear about that. The metronome ticks will help you with this.

4

hold the note at the end of the music until the imaginary next beat

ticks: ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑

the beats: 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1

Exercise 7:

Note at the end of the music - 3/4 time

1. **Listen** to a few ticks.
2. **Play** the music below in time with the ticks. Work at releasing each note exactly when the next tick occurs. Count aloud the beats as you play.
Tip: Remember the imaginary next beat at the end.

3

ticks: ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑

the beats: 1 2 3 1 2 3

Exercise 8:**Mix of notes followed by rest, and note at end of the music**

1. **Listen** to a few ticks.
2. **Play** the music below in time with the ticks. Work at releasing each note exactly when the next tick occurs. Count aloud the beats as you play.

ticks: ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑

the beats: 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3

Exercise 9:**One more mixture at the end of the music**

1. **Listen** to a few ticks.
2. **Play** the music below in time with the ticks. Work at releasing each note exactly when the next tick occurs. Count aloud the beats as you play.

ticks: ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑

the beats: 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

Tune 1:

A tune with lots of rests

1. **Listen** to a few ticks.
2. **Play** the music below in time with the ticks. Work at releasing each note exactly when the next tick occurs. Count aloud the beats as you play.

Colonel Bogey

ticks: ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑

the beats: 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4