



Lesson 17

Get the Timing from the Notes, Not from the Spacing

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LESSON 17:
GET THE TIMING FROM THE
NOTES, NOT FROM THE SPACING

MUSIC THEORY
BUILD YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Here is a measure containing 4 quarter notes. Below that is a measure with one of the quarter notes subdivided into a pair of 8th notes. Since a pair of 8th notes has the same duration as a quarter note, you'd expect the pair of 8th notes to take up the same amount of space as the quarter note, like this:



However, in the real world of printed music, it doesn't always work that way. The notes can be spaced any way the printer wants. For example, the measure with the pair of 8th notes could look like this:



In that example, the spacing of the notes gives us no visual clue as to how long to hold each note.

Here's the rule:

You get the *timing* of the music from the *notes*, not from the *spacing*.