MUSICAL STRUCTURE

Introduction to the Grand Staff of Mens & Mixed Choir Singing

Invented by

Guido d'Arezzo (995 - 1050)

Dedicated to the
MGV Lyra Choir, Vancouver, BC, CANADA
to their 60th Anniversary in 2025!

Jochen W. Petersen
2025-05-20

GUIDO D'AREZZO

Guido d'Arezzo (995 - 1050) was an Italian medieval (middle age) music theorist and Benedictine monk, best known for developing **modern musical notation**.

His innovations, including the **staff notation system** and **solmization (the precursor to "do, re, mi")**, revolutionized music education and made it easier to learn melodies.

His treatise, *Micrologus* (1026), became one of the most widely used music texts of the Middle Ages. His contributions were so significant that Pope John XIX invited him to Rome to explain his methods.

However, resistance from fellow monks led him to leave Pomposa Abbey and continue his work in Arezzo.

His legacy lives on in the way music is taught and written today!

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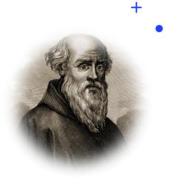- Bar Lines & Measures
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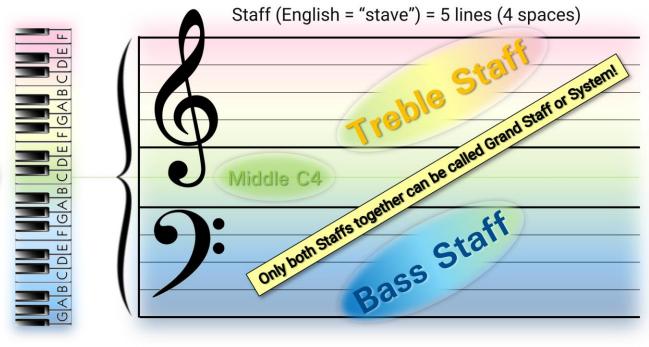- Octave Structure
- Standard & Shifted Octaves
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BASS & TREBLE STAFF

WITH MIDDLE C4

Grand Staff

C4

Staff (English = "stave") = 5 lines (4 spaces)
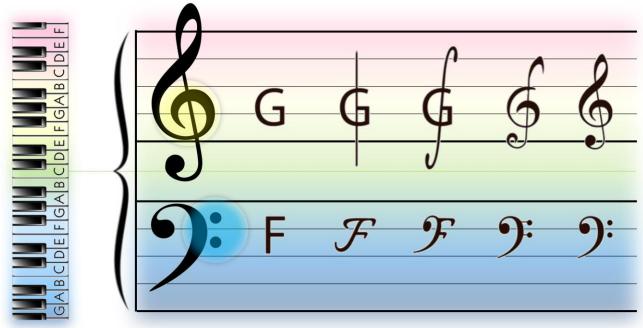
Treble Staff

Middle C4

Only both Staffs together can be called Grand Staff or System!

Bass Staff

MAIN NOTES
BASS (F) & TREBLE (G) CLEF

Grand Staff

C4

G4

Treble Staff

F3

Bass Staff
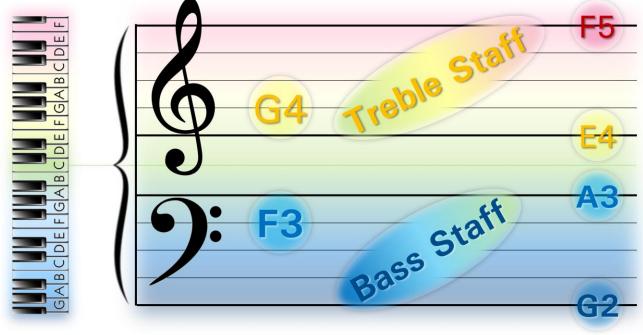
MAIN NOTES
F & G CLEF EARLY DRAWINGS

Grand Staff

C4

MAIN NOTES

STAFF RANGES

Grand Staff

C4

Treble Staff

F5

G4

E4

A3

F3

Bass Staff

G2
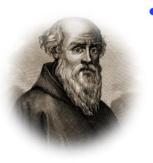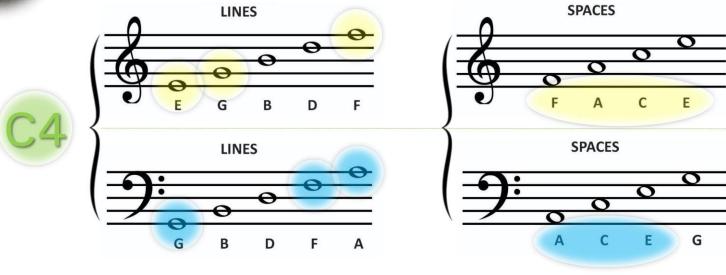
MAIN NOTES

LINE & SPACE NOTES

BAR LINES & MEASURES

Grand Staff

C4

Bar Lines

Measure
(1 Beat)

BEATS & TEMPO
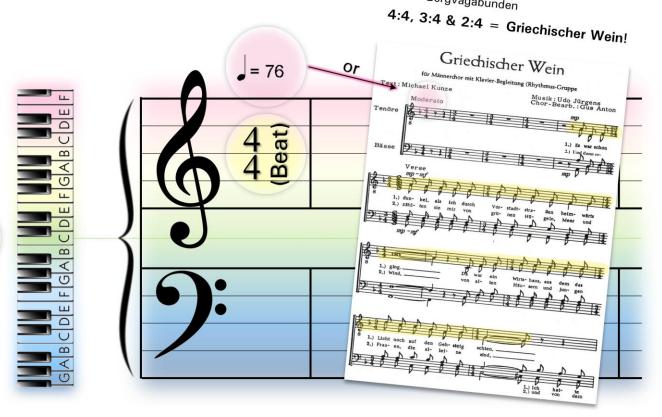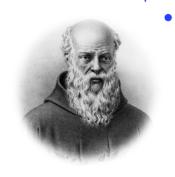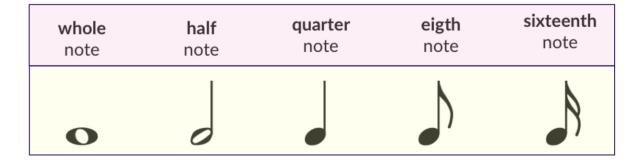
Beats (Examples):
4:4 = Deutsches Sängermarschlied
3:4 = Freude am Leben
2:4 = Bergvagabunden

4:4, 3:4 & 2:4 = Griechischer Wein!

Grand Staff

C4

♩ = 76   or

4
4
(Beat)

Griechischer Wein
für Männerchor mit Klavier-Begleitung (Rhythmus-Gruppe)

Text: Michael Kunze

Musik: Udo Jürgens
Chor-Bearb.: Gus Anton

Moderato

Tenöre

Bässe

1.) Es war schon
2.) Und dann er-

Verse

1.) dun- kel, als ich durch Vor- stadt- stra- ßen heim- wärts
2.) zähl- ten sie mir von grü- nen Hü- geln, Meer und

1.) ging.
2.) Wind,

Da war ein Wirts- haus, aus dem das
von al- ten Häu- sern und jun- gen

1.) Licht noch auf den Geh- steig schien.
2.) Frau- en, die al- lei- ne sind,

1.) Ich hat- te
2.) und von dem

NOTES & RESTS

whole note	half note	quarter note	eigth note	sixteenth note

whole rest	half rest	quarter rest	eigth rest	sixteenth rest

DOTTED NOTES & RESTS

Note	Name	Beats	
𝅝 ·	Dotted whole note	6 beats	𝅝· = 𝅝 + 𝅗𝅥
𝅗𝅥 ·	Dotted half note	3 beats	𝅗𝅥. = 𝅗𝅥 + 𝅘𝅥
𝅘𝅥 ·	Dotted quarter note	1½ beats	𝅘𝅥. = 𝅘𝅥 + 𝅘𝅥𝅮
𝅘𝅥𝅮 ·	Dotted eighth note	¾ beat	𝅘𝅥𝅮. = 𝅘𝅥𝅮 + 𝅘𝅥𝅯

A dot increases the length of a note by ½ its value.
The same increasing values also applies to the rests.

DYNAMIC & ACCENT

(EXCERPT)

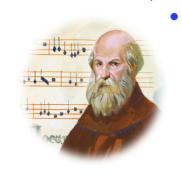|			
	Crescendo gradually get louder		**Decrescendo** gradually get soft
	Legato		**Staccato**
	Sharp one half step up		**Fermata** hold as long as you want
	Natural return to original pitch		**Repeat**
	Flat one half step down		**Coda** goto end
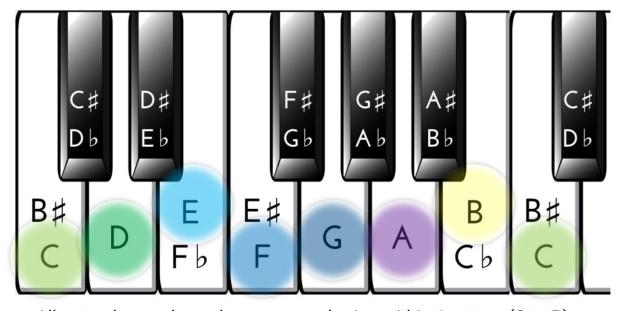
DYNAMIC
(VOLUME)
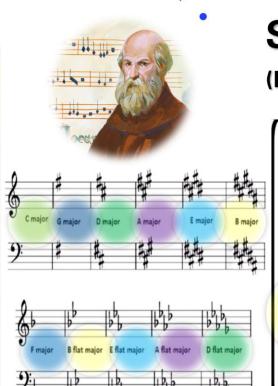
Term	Sign	Meaning
piano pianissimo	ppp	very, very quiet
pianissimo	pp	very quiet
piano	p	quiet
mezzo piano	mp	moderately quiet
mezzo forte	mf	moderately loud
forte	f	loud
fortissimo	ff	very loud
forte fortissimo	fff	very, very loud
subito forte	sf	suddenly loud
subito forte piano	sfp	suddenly loud and soft
sforzando	sfz	forceful sudden accent

NATURAL ♮ NOTES

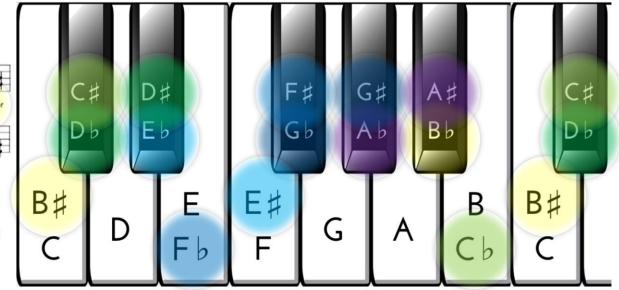All natural notes have the same numbering within 1 octave (**C to B**).
Higher octave number always starts with note C (C1; C2 ... C7).

SHARP ♯ & FLAT ♭ NOTES
(INCL. MAJOR & FLAT MAJOR KEYS)

C major G major D major A major E major B major

F major B flat major E flat major A flat major D flat major

C# / Db   D# / Eb   F# / Gb   G# / Ab   A# / Bb   C# / Db
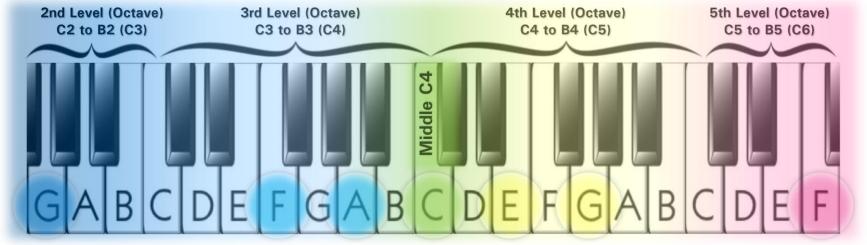
B#   C   D   E   E# / Fb   F   G   A   B   Cb   B# / C

All sharp & flat notes have the same numbering within 1 octave.
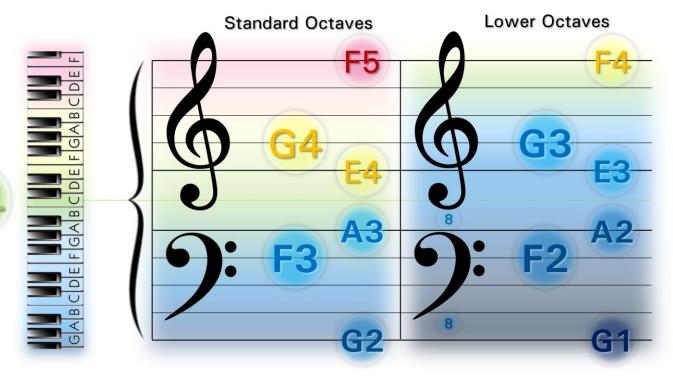**Sharp Note = half step up (right); Flat Note = half step down (left).**

OCTAVE STRUCTURE
PIANO LAYOUT (GRAND STAFF)

2nd Level (Octave)
C2 to B2 (C3)

3rd Level (Octave)
C3 to B3 (C4)

4th Level (Octave)
C4 to B4 (C5)

5th Level (Octave)
C5 to B5 (C6)

Middle C4

G A B C D E F G A B C D E F G A B C D E F

A **series of eight (8) notes**, occupying the interval **between and including two notes**.
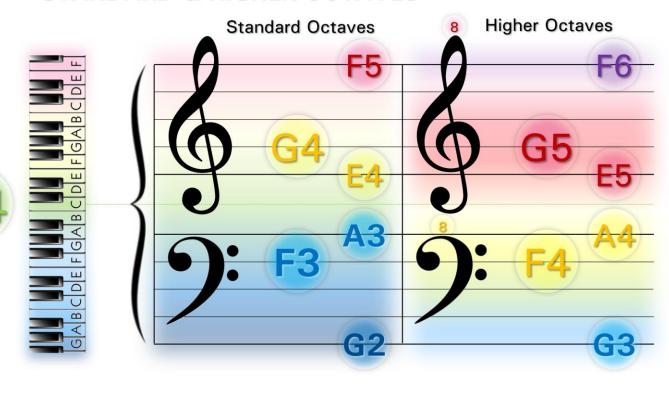**Higher octave number always starts with C note** (C1; C2 ...).
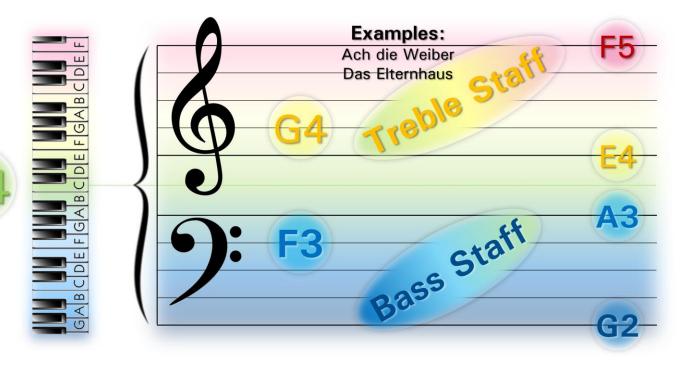
BASS & TREBLE CLEF
STANDARD & LOWER OCTAVES

Grand Staff

Standard Octaves

Lower Octaves

C4

F5

G4

E4

A3

F3

G2

F4

G3

E3

A2

F2

G1

BASS & TREBLE CLEF
STANDARD & HIGHER OCTAVES

Grand Staff

Standard Octaves

8   Higher Octaves

C4

F5

G4

E4

A3

F3

G2

F6

G5

E5

8

A4

F4

G3

Grand Staff

TREBLE CLEF
STANDARD OCTAVE (G4)

Examples:
Ach die Weiber
Das Elternhaus
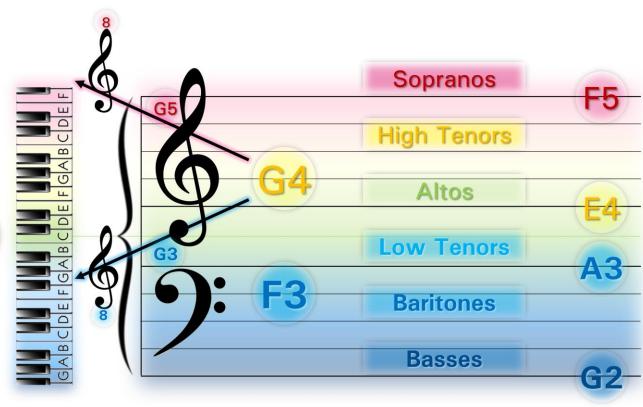
Treble Staff

F5

G4

E4

C4

A3

F3

Bass Staff

G2
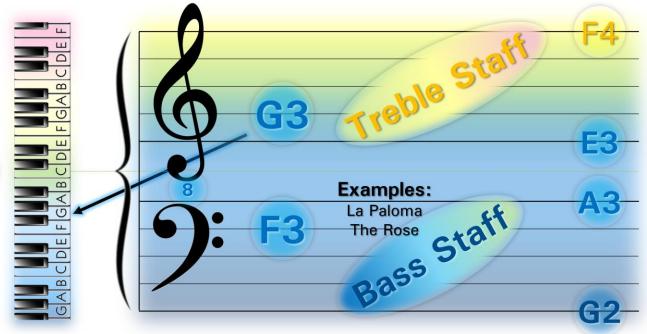
TREBLE CLEF
HIGHER OCTAVE (G5)

Grand Staff

DIFFERENT VOICE RANGES

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Thank you !

Männergesangverein
Lyra
Vancouver, BC
(est. 1965)