

Reader's Corner

This section is dedicated to answer questions of our readers. If you have a question, email us at newsletter@moonlitinthesun.com!

Do violinists and violists ever hold their instruments like a guitar when plucking?~A. Deniz, Leesburg, VA.

Sometimes! Although we're really not supposed to. Although plucking the string is an accepted thing (it's called *pizzicato*), and so is playing with the wood of the bow (that's called *col legno*), there's no official or accepted term for playing a violin or viola like a guitar. But sometimes we come across some music that's plucked (*pizzicato*) for a long time (a page, two pages, or even the whole piece), and sometimes, for fun, we hold the like a guitar. Another think you might see violists and violinists do is leave their bow on their lap or the music stand. After all, there isn't any reason to hold the bow if we're not using it. Of course, we do this only during rehearsals, unless the conductor lets us know we should do it during the performance.

Learning music

We've got rhythm. Ever wonder how a musician knows how long should each note be?

You've probably tapped your foot while listening to music. Each tap of your foot corresponds to one *beat* of the music. In the same piece, some notes are played faster than the beat, others are played slower, and some notes are played each beat. How does a player know which notes are fast, and which are slow? You guessed it: By looking at the music. Actually, there are two things to look at: The time signature, and the note itself. Take a look at the music below:



The “time signature” in the beginning of the music above is a “3” over a “4”. The “4” means that a *quarter note* gets one beat, and the “3” means there are three beats in each measure (a *measure* is the notes between the vertical lines). In the line of music above, the first three notes are quarter notes. So, each time you tap your foot, the player plays one of these quarter note.

The next six notes are *eighth notes*. We play two eighth notes in the same time it takes to play one quarter note. So, each time you tap your foot, the player plays two eighth notes.

Looking at the music above, we come to another time signature: a “3” over an “8”. The “8” means that an eighth note gets one beat, and the “3” means there are three beats in one measure. So, each time you tap your foot, the player plays one eighth note.

The next three measures have four beats per measure (a “4” over a “4”), and the quarter note gets one beat. Here we have two types of notes: The half note, which looks like a quarter note that's not filled in – it gets two beats (or, you can play two quarter notes in the time it takes to play one half note); and the whole note, which gets four beats (or, you can play four quarter notes in the time it takes to play one whole note). The idea is that a half note gets half as many beats as a whole note, and a quarter note gets one-quarter as many beats as a whole note, etc...

The last time signature is a “2” over a “4”, which means that there are two beats per measure, and a quarter note gets one beat. Here, though, we have sixteenth notes, and the player plays four sixteenth notes each time you tap your foot. Another way of thinking about it is that a sixteenth note gets one-sixteenth as many beats as a whole note.

Had enough? No? Well, there are 32nd notes, 64th notes, and also 128th notes (which look pretty scary). Most music doesn't have notes faster than 32nd notes, though.

Looking for a flute, viola, violin, cello, or piano teacher? Contact us at 571.223.5321.

Make your own

Looking for a new musical instrument? Try making balloon drums! They can easily be made with balloons and kitchen bowls. Cut off the mouth piece of the balloon. Now stretch the balloon over a bowl. Secure the balloon with a tightly stretched rubber band, duct tape, or packing tape. The drum can be played with chopsticks or pencils using the eraser end. Different sounding drums can be created by using coffee cans, glass bowls, or ceramic bowls, creating more than one can add to the fun. Try using different size balloons and bowls. Note: Plastic bowls do not work well.

Upcoming Moonlit In The Sun Performances

- **June 5 from 6:30-8:30pm** at Leesburg's First Friday. Come hear us at the SoNa Bank on the corner of King and Market streets in Old Town Leesburg. Introducing **Flutist** Lauren Sileo, Juilliard graduate and Moonlit in the Sun's newest member. Flute, violin, and piano trio. Also, see Nancy join with Alban Deniz for a Mozart piano sonata for four hands! Come by to hear a song, stay and enjoy a concert. For more information, visit the [First Friday website!](#)
- **July 11 from 1:00-3:00pm** at Leesburg Outlet Mall Coca-cola concert series. Our Flute, Viola, Cello, and Piano ensemble will be performing. For more information on this concert series, visit <http://www.premiumoutlets.com/outlets/sales.asp?id=14>
- Visit our website for updates to our schedule!



