

Music Basics

Lesson 3

Basic Notation Introduction



Edited Transcript:

Now it might be a result of my classical training, where the first thing you do is learn to read notes, but I've always been rather puzzled and kind of amazed at musicians who proudly claim that they can't read music and seemingly have no desire to learn.

There are many musicians (you could probably name a few yourself) who became famous as musicians, songwriters and pop stars who proudly claim that they can't read music.

I'll let you in on a little secret: some of them downplay the amount of musical knowledge they have because it makes them seem a little bit more genius like.

I would also tell you that many of them became successful because somebody in their team *did* know how to read music.

I've always maintained that every musician, every music student, should learn how to read music

What are the benefits to be gained from learning how to read music?

Learn songs more quickly and easily.

Let's say you want to learn to play a song. You can listen to the recording of it and try to pick it up by ear (that's a valuable skill too! I will teach you how to do that in my "From Ears to

Fingers” video series) but when you combine reading the music and hearing it you can learn it that much faster.

While it's true that you can learn a song simply by ear you can learn it faster when you read music.

Let me let me share an example from my own personal experience.

I was in a “Society Band” from 1991 to 2002. We played at a lot of high-end functions like debutante balls and country club dinner-dances. We also played a lot of very high-class wedding receptions.

One of the things you do when you're a band at a wedding reception is play the first dance. The couple usually request a song, and if we didn't know it, we had to learn it. Very often I was the lead singer on these songs (so yes, I was a wedding singer!). If I had to learn a song, I could get the sheet music and try to learn it just from the music, but I wanted to make sure that it sounded more like the record and so I would get a recording of it as well.

Very often the record would be supplied to us by the bride or the bride and groom. I would listen to it and also read the sheet music and that enabled me to learn the song much more quickly. I would have the music with me on the stand while I was performing it at the wedding, and that way I wouldn't get the lyrics wrong! Knowing how to read music helped me learn these songs much faster.

I must emphasize that the type of music reading that I'm going to teach you is different than what you would learn in classical music. You'll be able to pick this up very quickly. It's called the **popular approach**. This is the way that every musician who doesn't play classical music reads music.

Later on, of course, you could learn the traditional classical approach if you want to play classical music, but if you want to play hymns, worship songs, and popular tunes, if you want to be able to hear a song on Spotify or wherever you're listening to music and learn to play it yourself, then it helps to know how to read basic music notation.

So that's a quick introduction to what we're going to be doing in this next series of videos