

Get to Grips

with the **Tenor and Bass Drums**



Foreword

The North Channel that separates Ulster from Scotland is just over 10 miles wide at its narrowest point and there has been constant movement between Scotland and Ulster for centuries. This has resulted in close links of language and culture, contributing to the cultural identity of the 'Ulster-Scot'.

One music tradition shared between Ulster and Scotland is Piping and Drumming and it is a very important aspect of Ulster-Scots culture, heritage and identity.

Learning a musical instrument requires dedication and determination and is a commitment over time. However, the learning experience is rewarding and opens up many opportunities for developing personal skills and playing with others. At the same time it provides opportunities to celebrate our Ulster-Scots cultural identity.

This book is one of a series that supports the Ulster-Scots music tuition programmes. There are opportunities for the young and not so young to enjoy the experience of learning new piping and drumming skills and I trust that this book will help you on that journey, supported by expert tutors and tuition programmes provided by the Ulster-Scots Agency.

Richard Hanna

Director of Education and Language

Acknowledgements:

Thanks to Andy McGregor and Grahame Harris
Cover Image: Shine-a-light / Alamy Stock Photo

Introduction

My pipe band journey began at the age of 15 when I attended a concert by local pipe band Letterkenny and District. I had already started learning the drum kit and had become keen to try the pipe band style of drumming. I have since performed at international tattoos and concert halls, and I have enjoyed my fair share of success in competition.

Being in a pipe band is all about enjoying what you do, the journey that you take, the people you meet, the highs and lows of competition, the places you get to perform in and the amazing opportunities that will, through time, present themselves to you as a competent player.

Learning the tenor drum will take dedication. The flourishing in particular takes considerable time, co-ordination and practice to master. As with any instrument, you will **only** be rewarded by the time and hours you put into it through practice.

I have been performing for over 19 years, and the experiences that I've had through music and the Music Service for Pipes and Drums programme are second to none. The friends I have made along the way and the places I have performed in (Scotland, France, Germany and Russia) have made this one of the best choices I have ever made.

I am grateful and privileged to be able to have a career through what started as a hobby. I hope you find this teaching aid useful and informative.

Welcome to the highly visual and fun art of bass and tenor drumming.

Kerry Doherty

Bass and Tenor Drumming Tutor for Music Service for Pipes and Drums

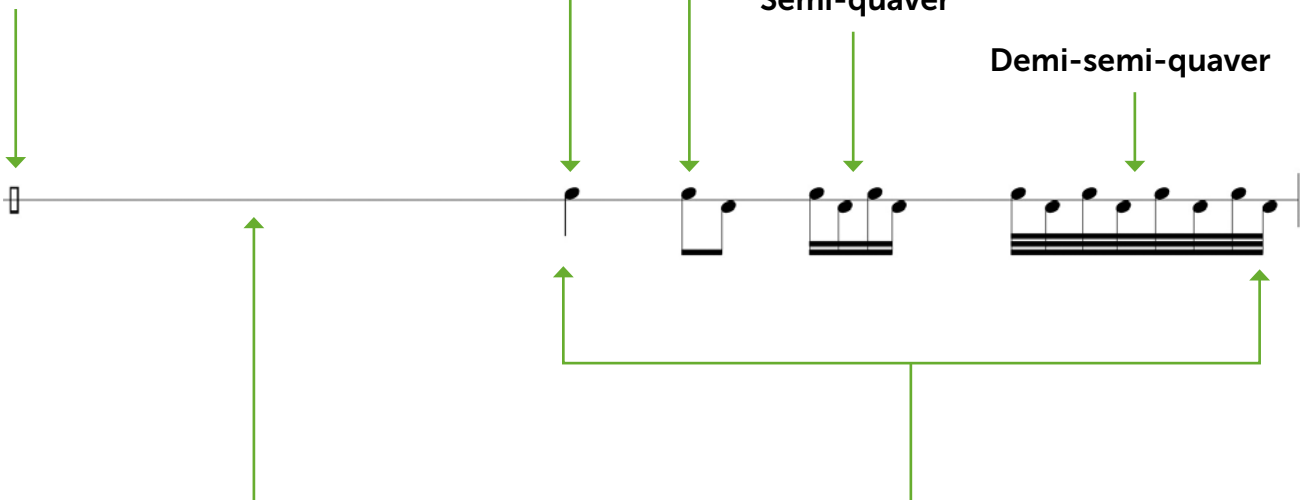
Before we Begin



When you see this symbol in a lesson, please refer to the accompanying tutorial video at www.discoverulsterscots.com/tenor-drum. The number corresponds to the video on the playlist.

Clef Sign

The clef used in drumming music is the **percussion clef**. This is a neutral clef and does not show pitch.



Single Line Staff

Single line staves are used for **single-pitched instruments** such as djembe, tambourine and snare drum. The note placed **above** the staff is the **right hand**. The note placed **below** the staff is the **left hand**.

Notes


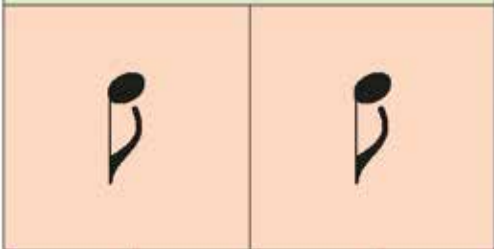


There are many different note shapes that show the **duration/length** of a sound. The first four notes we see are **crotchet**, **quaver**, **semi-quaver** and **demi-semi-quaver**.

The crotchet is the longest of these notes and the demi-semi-quaver is the shortest.

Duration Table

The **length** of **sounds** is shown on paper by using different shaped **notes**. Below are the first notes we will see. In this example, the **crotchet** is the longest note. Each note is **half the length** of the note above.

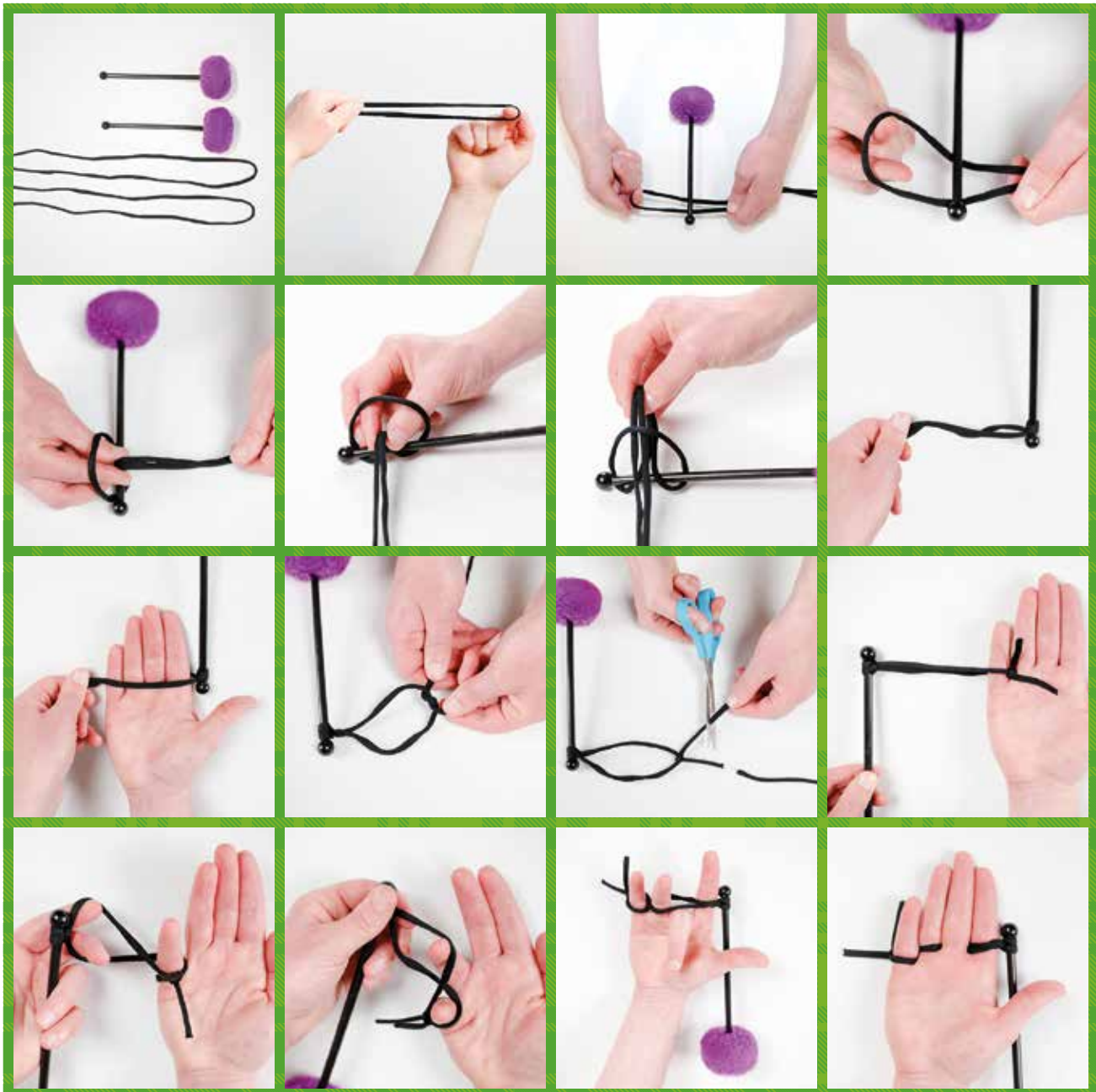
For example, if a crotchet is 1 second long, a quaver will only be half a second long.

Crotchet		1/4 note
Quaver		1/8 note
Semi-quaver		1/16 note
Demi-semi-quaver		1/32 note

Stringing Mallets



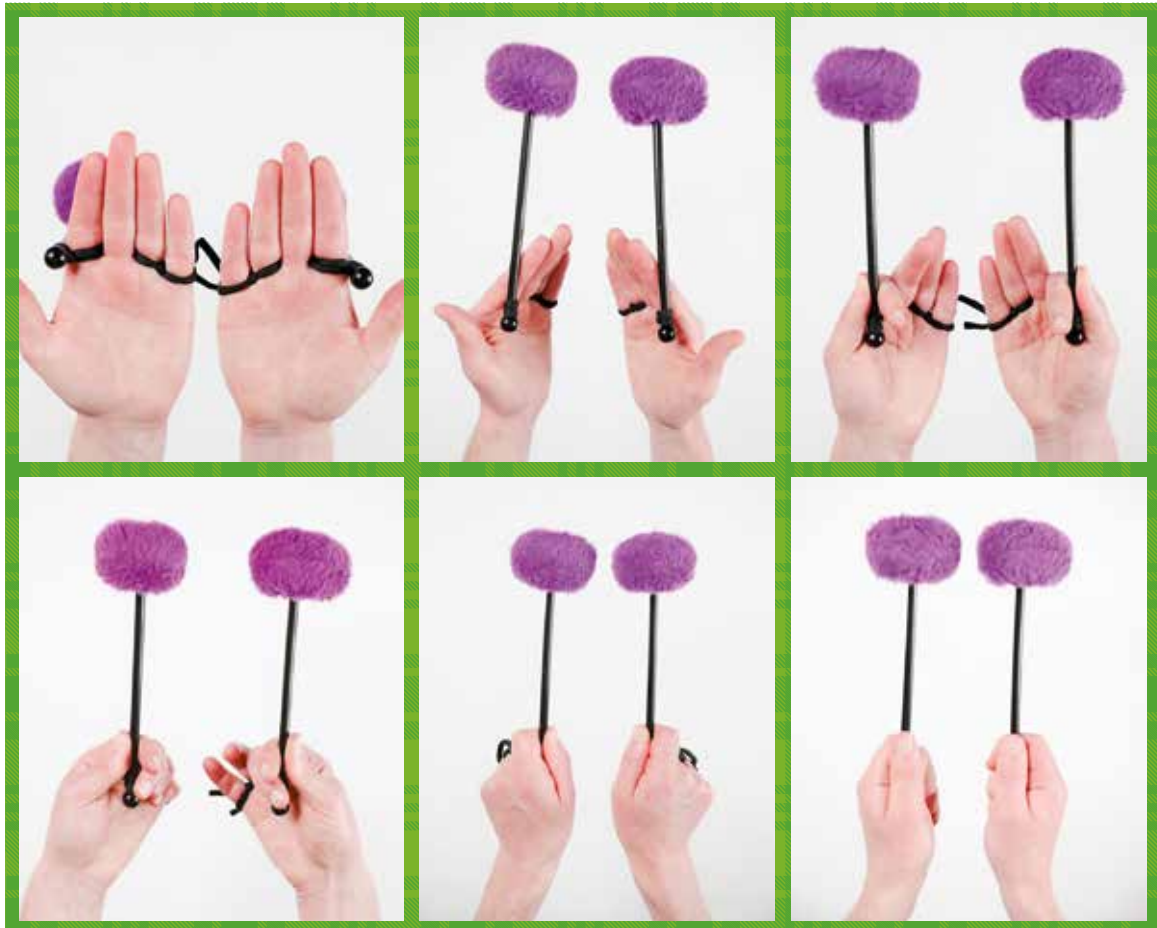
Tenor sticks are called **mallets**.



Hand Placement



It is very important to perfect this early. Please refer to the tutorial video to help you master how to hold the sticks.



It's always good practice to carry at least one spare set of strings with you while practising or performing, whether at competition or on parade.

Oval padded trainer laces are used as tenor strings and can be purchased in most sport shops.



Single Stroke



You will now attempt playing beats on alternate hands using polyrhythms to help you. As you play, try counting the number or saying the words indicated above and below the notes.

The notes below are crotchets

RIGHT HAND Car Car Car Car Car Car

LEFT HAND

1 2 1 2 1 2

The notes below are quavers

RIGHT HAND Foot-ball Foot-ball Foot-ball Foot-ball Foot-ball Foot-ball

LEFT HAND

1 & 2 & 1 & 2 & 1 & 2 &

The notes below are semi-quavers

RIGHT HAND HE-LI-COP-TER HE-LI-COP-TER HE-LI-COP-TER HE-LI-COP-TER HE-LI-COP-TER HE-LI-COP-TER

LEFT HAND

1 - a - n - d 2 - a - n - d 1 - a - n - d 2 - a - n - d 1 - a - n - d 2 - a - n - d

The notes below are demi-semi-quavers

RIGHT HAND

LEFT HAND

For this rhythm, you could use the polyrhythm **su-per-ca-li-fr-ag-lis-tic**. This rhythm is also described as sounding like a machine gun.

Mummy Daddy



This exercise focuses on playing **two beats** on **each hand**. Instead of counting numbers, it is often easier to say which hand you are using or 'Mum-my Dad-dy'.

Mum - my Dad - dy Mum - my Dad - dy

RIGHT HAND

LEFT HAND

R R L L R R L L

Mum-my Dad-dy Mum-my Dad-dy Mum-my Dad-dy Mum-my Dad-dy

RIGHT HAND

LEFT HAND

R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L

RIGHT HAND

LEFT HAND

R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L

Paradiddle



You will see a vertical line now appears across the staff. This is called a **barline**. Barlines are used to separate the music into **equal portions**.



A **bar** is the **space** in **between two barlines**.



You will also see **two numbers** appear at the beginning of the staff. This is known as the **time signature**. The top figure tells us there are **two beats** in **each bar**, and the bottom figure tells us that **each beat** is equal to a **quarter note/crotchet**.

This exercise is a mix of 'Single Stroke' and 'Mum-my Dad-dy' together. Once again, it is easier to begin this exercise by saying which hand you are using.

PA RA DID DLE PA RA DID DLE

R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L

PA RA DID DLE PA RA DID DLE PA RA DID DLE PA RA DID DLE

R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L

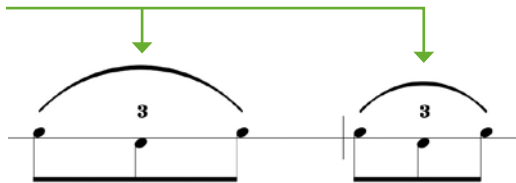
R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L

As this exercise gets faster, continue to say PA-RA-DID-DLE.

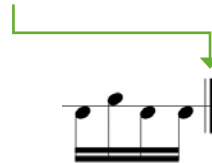
Triplet



Triplets are when **three notes** are played in the time of **two notes**. An easy way to remember this technique is to say Tri-pl-et.



The next sign you will see is the **double barline**. This is used to show the end of a section of music.



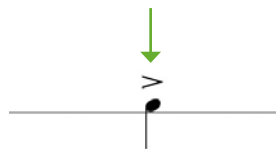
Tri-pl-et Tri-pl-et Tri-pl-et Tri-pl-et Tri-pl-et Tri-pl-et Tri-pl-et Tri-pl-et

1 i d 2 i d 1 i d 2 i d 1 i d 2 i d 1 i d 2 i d

The Accented Triplet



You will now notice an **accent** symbol appearing on the music. This tells you to apply **more stress** on a note, which is achieved by lifting your stick a little higher and striking the drum **slightly harder**.



Tri-pl-et Tri-pl-et Tri-pl-et Tri-pl-et Tri-pl-et Tri-pl-et Tri-pl-et Tri-pl-et

1 i d 2 i d 1 i d 2 i d 1 i d 2 i d 1 i d 2 i d

The Triplet Hand Exercise



This exercise will improve co-ordination of your hands/wrists.

Tri-pl-et Tri-pl-et Tri-pl-et Tri-pl-et Tri-pl-et Tri-pl-et Tri-pl-et Tri-pl-et

1 i d 2 i d 1 i d 2 i d 1 i d 2 i d 1 i d 2 i d

Tri-pl-et Tri-pl-et Tri-pl-et Tri-pl-et Tri-pl-et Tri-pl-et Tri-pl-et Tri-pl-et

1 i d 2 i d 1 i d 2 i d 1 i d 2 i d 1 i d 2 i d

The speed of the triplet comes from the movement of your index finger and thumb, not the wrist.



A pipe band is louder than a pneumatic drill.

Flourishing – Singles (Tenor Drum only)



One of the properties of playing the tenor drum that makes it unique is **flourishing**. Flourishing is the **movement** of the **mallets**, and it is extremely **visual**. The first **flourish** we will look at is the **single**.

In music, single flourishes are marked with: ’ ˘

’ : Flourish with your left hand and strike with your right hand.

˘ : Flourish with your right hand and strike with your left hand.



The image shows four staves of musical notation in 2/4 time, illustrating single flourishes. Each staff begins with a 2/4 time signature. The notation consists of quarter notes on a single line, with a vertical bar line after every two notes. Above each note is a flourish symbol: a comma (’) for left-hand flourish and a grave accent (˘) for right-hand flourish. The sequence of symbols across the four staves is: Row 1: ’ ˘ ’ ˘ ’ ˘ ’ ˘; Row 2: ’ ˘ ’ ˘ ’ ˘ ’ ˘; Row 3: ’ ’ ˘ ˘ ’ ’ ˘ ˘; Row 4: ’ ’ ˘ ˘ ’ ˘ ˘ ’ ˘. Each staff ends with a double bar line.

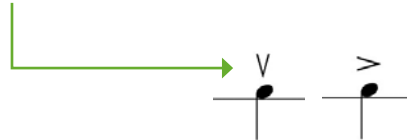
It is best to begin learning to flourish with the hand that you write with.



Introduction to Bass Drum

The bass drum is the instrument in a pipe band that links the pipers and drummers. An important aspect of bass drumming is the metric accent.

Metric accent is placing an **accent** or emphasis on the **first beat** of a bar of music. This symbol represents an accent.



In a **4/4** the 3rd beat in each bar has a **medium accent** this is marked with a sideways V.

We will look at the metric accent of 2/4, 3/4 and 4/4 time signatures.

2/4 has **two crotchet beats** in the bar with a **metric accent** of **strong weak**.

8



3/4 has **three crotchet beats** in the bar with a **metric accent** of **strong weak weak**.

9



4/4 has **four crotchet beats** in the bar with a **metric accent** of **strong weak medium weak**.

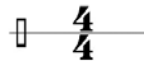
10



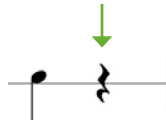
Green Glens of Antrim (Tenor Drum only)

11 

The first tune will cover the majority of techniques that you have been taught so far. As you can see, the **time signature** is **4/4**. This means there are **four beats** in each **bar** and each **beat** is equal to one **crotchet**.



You will now notice your first **rest** symbol. Similar to notes, there are different types of rests, with each shape representing a different length. In music, a rest represents a **period of silence**. This is a crotchet rest. The period of silence is the same length as 1 crotchet.



Tenor Score:

Green Glens of Antrim

12 

Bass Score:

The bass score consists of four staves of music in 4/4 time. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The music is written on a single-line staff with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody consists of eighth notes and quarter notes, with a repeat sign at the end of each staff. The notes are: Staff 1: G4 (accented), A4, B4 (accented), A4, G4. Staff 2: F4 (accented), G4, A4, B4 (accented), A4, G4. Staff 3: F4 (accented), G4, A4, B4 (accented), A4, G4. Staff 4: F4 (accented), G4, A4, B4 (accented), A4, G4. The piece concludes with a double bar line.




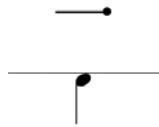
Early drum heads were made from calf skin.

Flourishing – Flats (Tenor Drum only)

13 

The next flourish we will look at is **flats**. Please refer to the tutorial video for visual demonstrations of flourishing.

This symbol represents a flat flourish. 



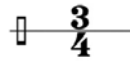
14 

The musical score consists of four staves, each representing a measure of music. Each staff begins with a square drum icon and a 2/4 time signature. The notation shows a sequence of eighth notes and flat flourish symbols. The first staff contains four measures, each with an eighth note followed by a flat flourish. The second staff contains four measures, each with a flat flourish followed by an eighth note. The third and fourth staves each contain four measures, each with an eighth note followed by a flat flourish. The first and third staves end with a single bar line, while the second and fourth staves end with a double bar line.

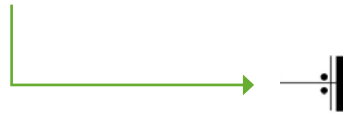
I See Mull (Tenor Drum only)

15 

As you can see, the **time signature** is $\frac{3}{4}$. This means there are **three beats** in each **bar** and each **beat** is equal to one **crotchet**.



Now you will see the **repeat sign**. When this appears at the end of a section/part, you must **play** that section/part **twice**.



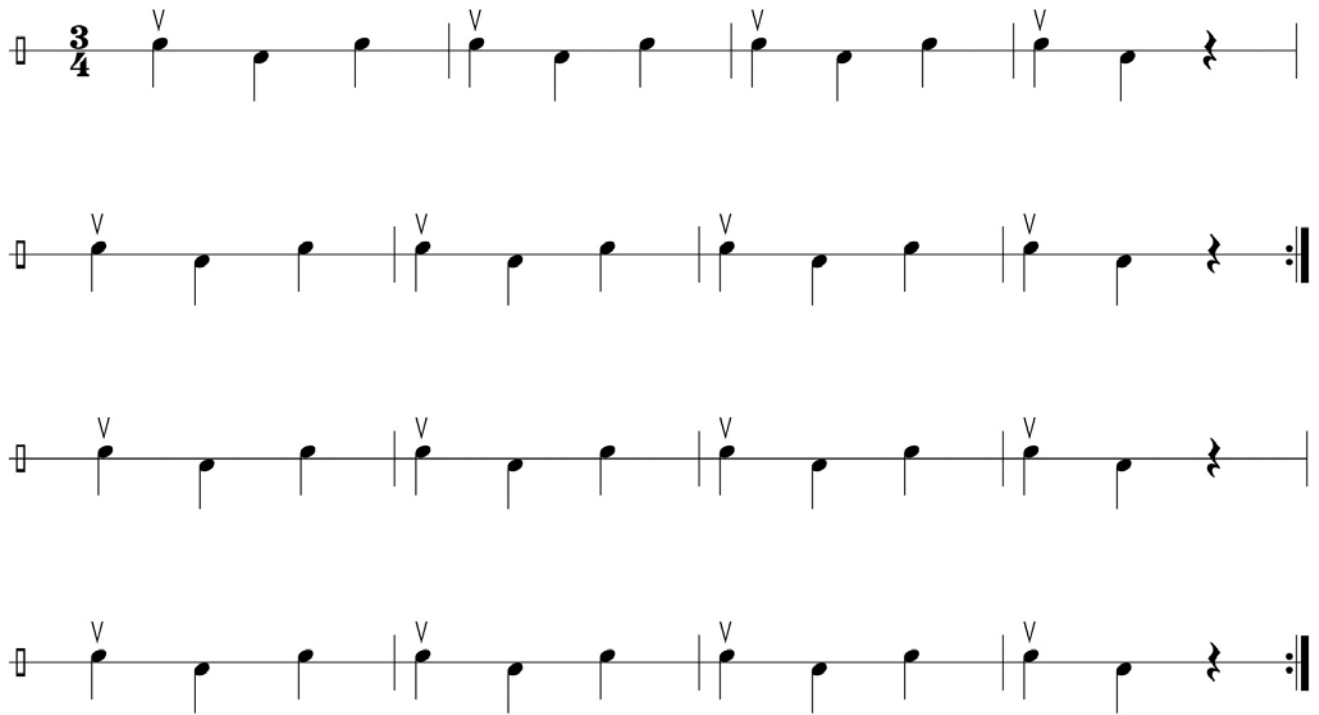
Tenor Score:

The Tenor Score consists of four staves of music in 3/4 time. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a 3/4 time signature. The first staff contains a sequence of notes: a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, and a quarter note. This is followed by a repeat sign. The second staff contains a sequence of notes: a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, and a quarter note. This is followed by a repeat sign. The third staff contains a sequence of notes: a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, and a quarter note. This is followed by a repeat sign. The fourth staff contains a sequence of notes: a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, and a quarter note. This is followed by a repeat sign. The score includes various rhythmic patterns, including triplets and rests, and ends with a double bar line and repeat sign.

I See Mull

16 

Bass Score:

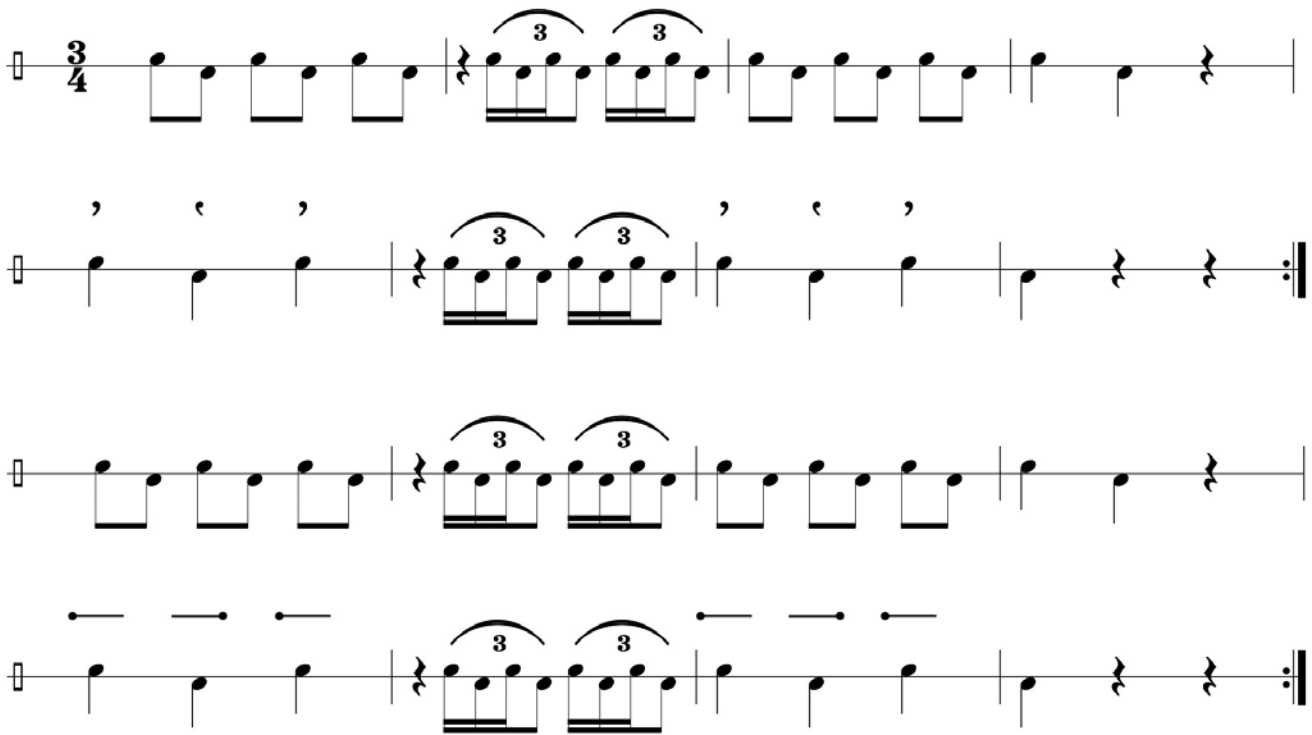


Queen Victoria banned the playing of tenor drums in Pipe Bands for around 10 years after which they were reintroduced.

Colin's Cattle (Tenor Drum only)

17 

Tenor Score:



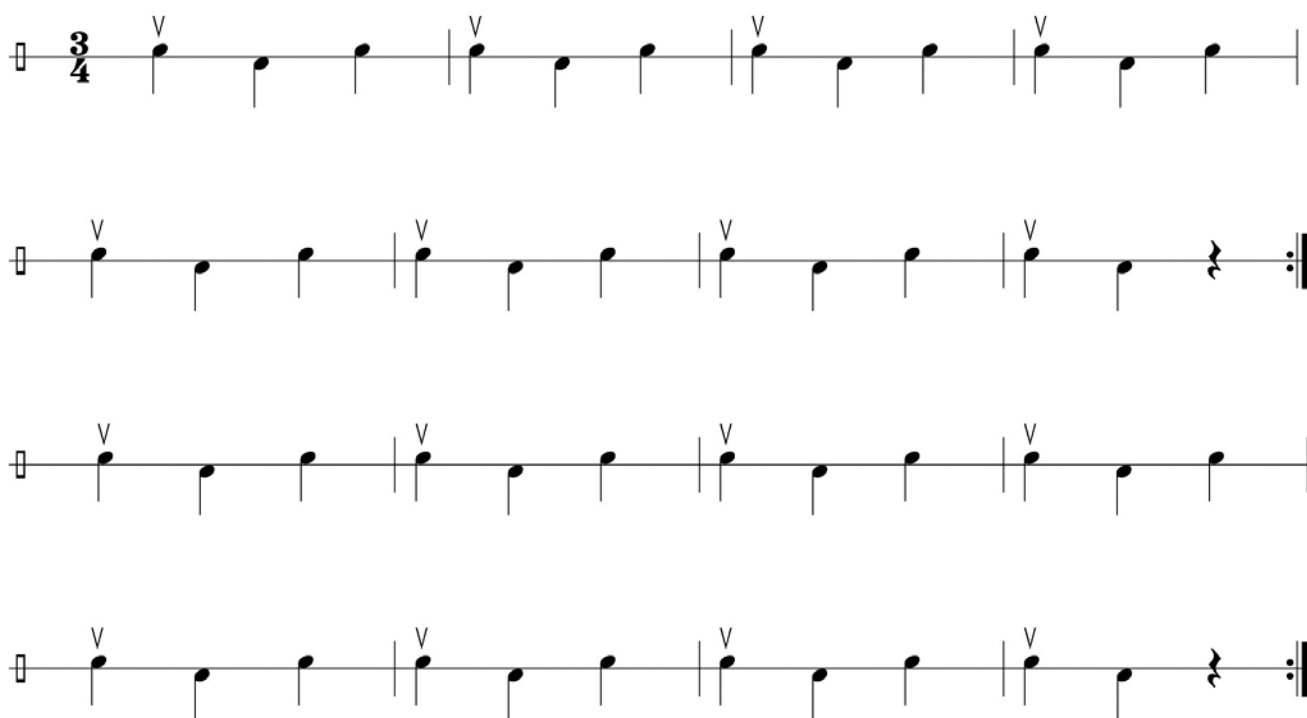
The musical score is written on four staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a 3/4 time signature. The melody consists of eighth notes, with two triplet eighth notes in the second measure. The second staff includes a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents (marked with a comma) and triplet eighth notes. The third and fourth staves continue the melody with eighth notes and triplet eighth notes. The score concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.



The first tenor drummers were Africans recruited into a Scottish regiment.

Colin's Cattle

Bass Score:



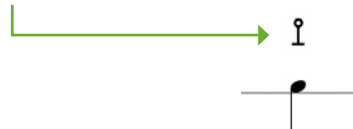
The musical score is written for a Bass instrument in 3/4 time. It consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a 3/4 time signature, and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody consists of quarter notes on the following lines of the staff: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. This sequence is repeated four times across the staff, with a repeat sign at the end of each four-measure phrase. Above the first note of each phrase is a 'V' mark, indicating an accent. The second staff continues the melody with the same sequence of notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, repeated four times. The second measure of the fourth phrase ends with a fermata, followed by a repeat sign and a double bar line. The third and fourth staves also contain the same sequence of notes, repeated four times each, with a fermata and repeat sign at the end of the fourth measure of the fourth phrase.

Stop Stalls Exercise (Tenor Drum only)

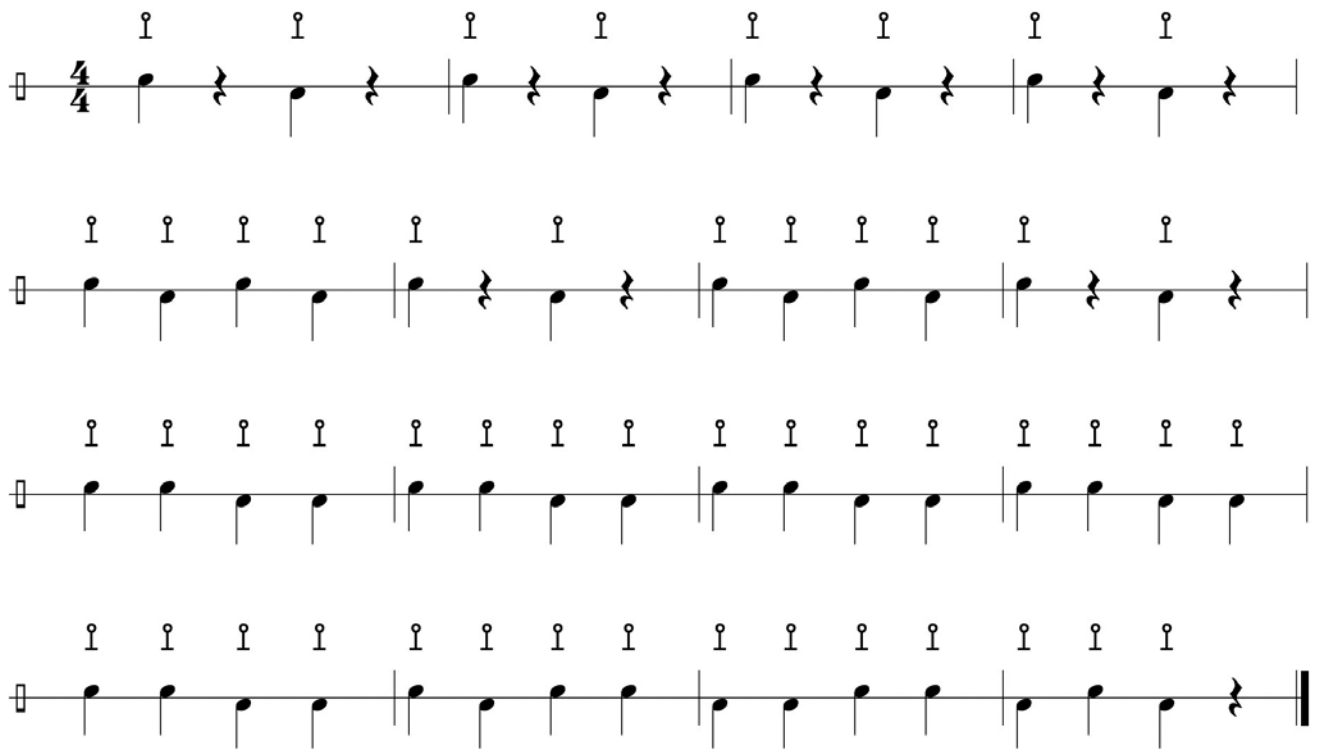
18 

The next exercise we will look at is **stop stalls**. Please refer to the tutorial video for visual demonstrations of flourishing.

This symbol represents a stop stall.



19 

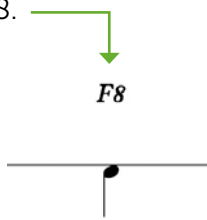


Forward Figure 8s (Tenor Drum only)



The next exercise we will look at is a **forward figure 8**. Please refer to the tutorial video for visual demonstrations of flourishing.

This symbol represents a forward figure 8.



Exercise 21: Forward Figure 8s (Tenor Drum only)

2/4

F8 *F8* *F8* *F8* *F8* *F8* *F8* *F8*

F8 *F8* *F8* *F8*

F8 *F8* *F8* *F8* *F8* *F8* *F8* *F8*

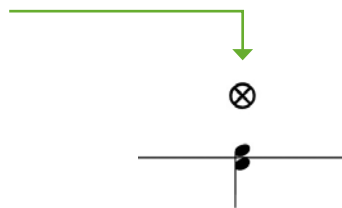
F8 *F8* *F8* *F8* *F8* *F8* *F8* *F8*

Introduction Rolls Movement (Tenor Drum only)

22 

We will now look at introduction **rolls movement**. Please refer to the tutorial video for visual demonstrations of flourishing.

This symbol represents mesh.



23 

Minstrel Boy (Tenor Drum only)

Tenor Score:

The image shows a tenor drum score for the piece 'Minstrel Boy'. It is written in 4/4 time and consists of four systems of two staves each. The first staff of each system contains the drum notation, including notes, rests, and double lines for snare drum patterns. The second staff contains the rhythmic notation, with note heads and stems. The first system starts with a 4/4 time signature. The second system ends with a circled 'X' symbol. The third system ends with a circled 'X' symbol. The fourth system ends with a circled 'X' symbol.

Minstrel Boy

Bass Score:

The musical score for the Bass part of 'Minstrel Boy' is written in 4/4 time. It consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The notation is as follows:

- Staff 1: Four measures. Measure 1: Quarter note G4 with an accent (>) and a dynamic marking (V). Measure 2: Quarter note A4 with an accent (>). Measure 3: Quarter note B4 with an accent (>). Measure 4: Quarter note C5 with an accent (>).
- Staff 2: Four measures. Measure 1: Quarter note B4 with an accent (>). Measure 2: Quarter note C5 with an accent (>). Measure 3: Quarter note D5 with an accent (>). Measure 4: Quarter note E5 with an accent (>).
- Staff 3: Four measures. Measure 1: Quarter note D5 with an accent (>). Measure 2: Quarter note E5 with an accent (>). Measure 3: Quarter note F5 with an accent (>). Measure 4: Quarter note G5 with an accent (>).
- Staff 4: Four measures. Measure 1: Quarter note G5 with an accent (>). Measure 2: Quarter note A5 with an accent (>). Measure 3: Quarter note B5 with an accent (>). Measure 4: Quarter note C6 with an accent (>).

The score concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots at the end of the fourth staff.

Blue Bells of Scotland (Tenor Drum only)

Tenor Score:



The musical score is written for a Tenor Drum in 4/4 time. It consists of two systems, each with a melody line and a drum accompaniment line. The melody line uses a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The drum accompaniment line uses a tenor drum clef and features a consistent rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The score is divided into four measures. The first measure contains the melody and a drum accompaniment line with a dotted line above it. The second measure contains the melody and a drum accompaniment line with a dotted line above it. The third measure contains the melody and a drum accompaniment line with a dotted line above it. The fourth measure contains the melody and a drum accompaniment line with a dotted line above it and a circled X symbol at the end.

Blue Bells of Scotland

Bass Score:

The bass score for 'Blue Bells of Scotland' is written on four staves in 4/4 time. The first staff begins with a 4/4 time signature. The music consists of a sequence of eighth notes, with alternating accents (marked with a 'v' and a '>') on the first and second notes of each pair. The pattern repeats every four measures across all four staves. The final measure of each staff ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

I Love a Lassie (Tenor Drum only)

26 

You will now notice a dot and cut placed on the notes. **Dots lengthen** the note and **cuts shorten** the note.



Tenor Score:

Musical score for Tenor Drum in 4/4 time, consisting of four staves:

- Staff 1:** Four measures of quarter notes. The first three measures contain a sequence of quarter notes (e.g., G4, A4, B4, C5). The fourth measure contains a quarter note followed by a quarter rest.
- Staff 2:** Four measures of quarter notes. The first three measures contain a sequence of quarter notes. The fourth measure contains a quarter note followed by a quarter rest. A circled 'X' symbol is placed above the final note.
- Staff 3:** Four measures. The first two measures contain eighth notes with accents. The third and fourth measures contain quarter notes. A comma and a c-clef symbol are placed above the notes in the third measure.
- Staff 4:** Four measures. The first two measures contain eighth notes with accents. The third and fourth measures contain quarter notes. A comma and a c-clef symbol are placed above the notes in the third measure.

I Love a Lassie



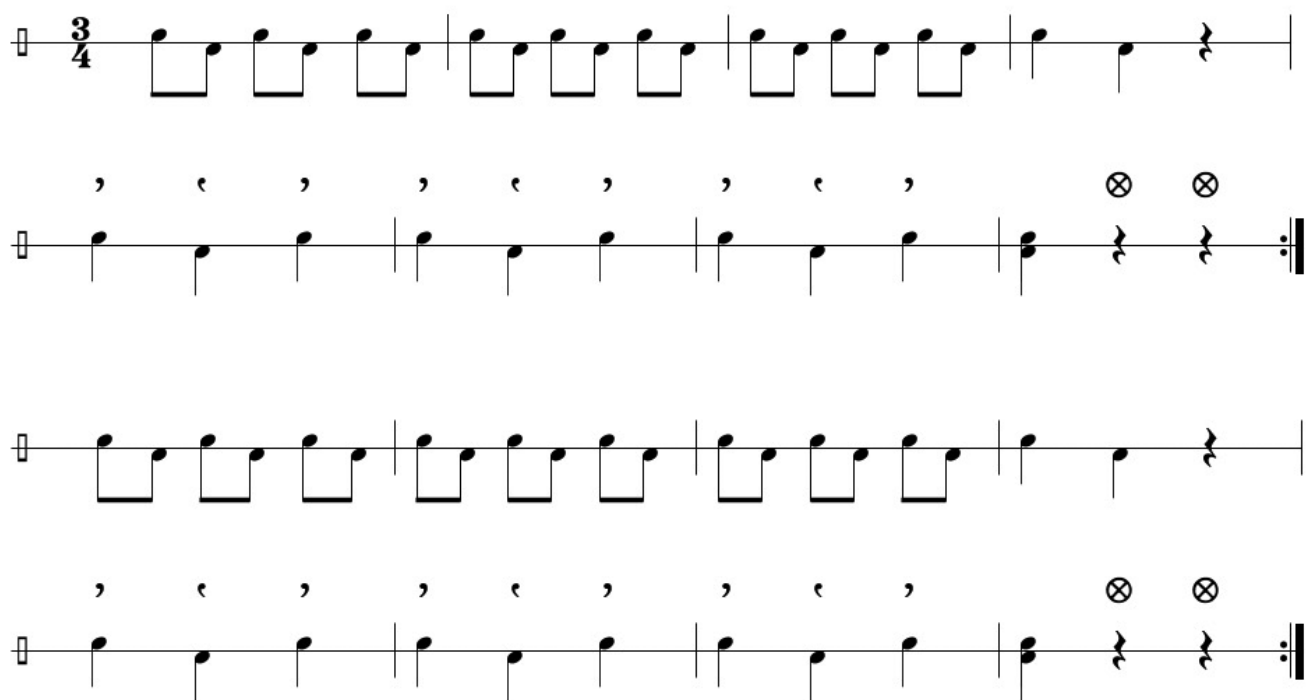
Bass Score:

The image displays a bass score for the song "I Love a Lassie" in 4/4 time. The score is written on four staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The music consists of eighth and quarter notes, with various articulations such as accents (>) and breath marks (V). The melody is: G4 (V), A4, B4 (dot), C5 (>), B4, A4 | G4 (V), A4, B4 (>), C5 | G4 (V), A4, B4 (dot), C5 (>), B4, A4 | G4 (V), A4, B4 (>), C5. The second staff continues the melody: G4 (V), A4, B4 (dot), C5 (>), B4, A4 | G4 (V), A4, B4 (>), C5 | G4 (V), A4, B4 (dot), C5 (>), B4, A4 | G4 (V), A4, B4 (>), C5, followed by a double bar line. The third staff repeats the first four measures: G4 (V), A4, B4 (dot), C5 (>), B4, A4 | G4 (V), A4, B4 (>), C5 | G4 (V), A4, B4 (dot), C5 (>), B4, A4 | G4 (V), A4, B4 (>), C5. The fourth staff repeats the next four measures: G4 (V), A4, B4 (dot), C5 (>), B4, A4 | G4 (V), A4, B4 (>), C5 | G4 (V), A4, B4 (dot), C5 (>), B4, A4 | G4 (V), A4, B4 (>), C5, followed by a double bar line.

Castle Dangerous (Tenor Drum only)

28 

Tenor Score:



The score is written in 3/4 time and consists of two systems. Each system has two staves. The upper staff of each system contains a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The lower staff contains rhythmic notation, including commas, accents, and circled 'X' marks, which correspond to specific drum strokes. The piece concludes with a repeat sign and a final double bar line.

Castle Dangerous

Bass Score:

The bass score for 'Castle Dangerous' is written in 3/4 time and consists of four staves. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a 3/4 time signature. The first staff includes a 'V' above the first note. The music is a simple, rhythmic pattern of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, G4, F4, E4, D4. This pattern is repeated four times across the four staves. The first and third staves end with a fermata over the final note, while the second and fourth staves end with a repeat sign (double bar line with two dots).

