

Rules for Ties and Rests

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Notated music, like any language, follows what a linguist would call *well-formedness rules*. For example, even though the sentence “I now want to the bus get on,” might be intelligible to most native-born speakers of English, we would recognize “I want to get on the bus now,” as being more correct and easier to understand. For ties and rests, the well-formedness rules are somewhat complex, but result in notation that is simpler to read because it meets the expectations of musicians. As a performer, you may not have considered this before, but now, as you begin to write music, you must know the rules.

A. Rules for Ties

1. If the tie crosses a barline, write both measures as you would without the tie, then add the tie.

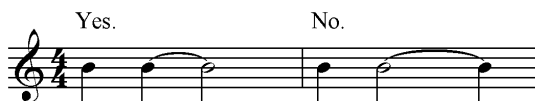


2. If the tie is within the measure and:

- a. if the first note of the tie begins on the first beat of the measure, begin with the larger note value and tie to a smaller note value.



- b. if the first note of the tie begins on a subsequent beat of the measure, begin with a beat-length note and
 - i. if the tie contains all of beat 3 in quadruple time, tie to a note of equal or greater value.



- ii. if the tie does not contain all of beat 3 in quadruple time, or if the measure is in triple or duple time tie to a note of lesser value.



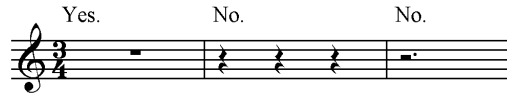
- c. if the first note of the tie begins after a beat, tie to a note of greater value so that the note tied to begins on the beat.



3. Generally, tie larger notes to smaller ones, except to fill in the remainder of a beat when a note begins after the beat.

Rules for Rests:

1. If a rest lasts an entire measure, write it as a whole rest.



2. If a rest lasts more than one measure in all staves, write it as a multirest.



3. If a rest begins on a beat and

- a. if the rest lasts for one beat, use a beat-length rest.



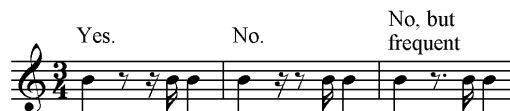
- b. if the rest lasts for more than one beat but less than two beats, use a beat-length rest, plus a smaller rest to complete the silence.



- c. if the rest lasts for two or more beats, and crosses beat 3 in quadruple time, fill the space up to beat 3 and start a new rest on beat 3.

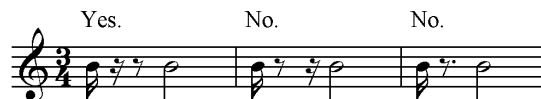


- d. if the rest lasts for less than a beat, fill in the space before the next beat, from largest value to smallest.



4. If a rest begins after a beat and

- a. if the rest lasts for less than a beat, fill in the space after the note, from smallest value to largest.



- b. if the rest lasts for more than a beat, fill in the space after the note, from smallest value to largest, and see #3 above.



5. Generally, rests are part of beat-length units that musicians are accustomed to seeing and must be written as such, even if the notation is theoretically equivalent.