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# How to Read Music Notes on a Staff

**KS2 MUSIC**

Ages 9-12 🕒 3 min read

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## What is a Musical Staff?

A **musical staff** is like a special ladder that musicians use to read music. It has **five horizontal lines**, and the spaces between them are just as important as the lines themselves. Each line and space represents a different **musical note**, which tells a musician which sound to play on their instrument.

Think of the staff like a treasure map — it shows musicians exactly where to go, note by note, to create the right melody.

Think of it like a numbered scoreboard in a game, where each position has a different value. On a musical staff, each line and space has its own note name.

## Understanding the Treble Clef

At the very beginning of a staff, you'll see a curly symbol called a **treble clef** (it looks a bit like a fancy letter G). This symbol tells you which notes live on which lines and spaces.

The lines on a treble clef staff, from bottom to top, spell out the words **E-G-B-D-F**. Musicians remember this with the phrase: "**Every Good Boy Does Fine**." The spaces between the lines spell **F-A-C-E** — which is conveniently already a word!

So if you see a dot on the second line from the bottom, you know that's a **G**. If it's in the space above that line, it's an **A**.

Think of it like a postcode system. Each address (line or space) has its own unique name, and knowing the system helps you find the right house every time.

## Reading Notes Step by Step

To read a note on a staff, look at where the **note head** (the oval-shaped dot) sits. Is it on a line or in a space? Once you identify which line or space, you'll know which note name it is.

Musicians practice this skill the same way you might learn to read words — first slowly, then faster and faster until they can glance at a page and immediately know what to play.

## **Why Does This Matter?**

Learning to read a musical staff is one of the most important skills for any musician. It's the universal language that lets musicians all over the world play the same song together, whether they're in a school band, an orchestra, or a rock band. Without the staff, there would be no way to write down and share music!