

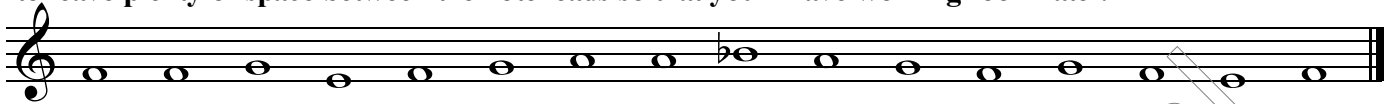
Writing Down A Song

by Allen Cole

<http://allencole.tripod.com/writdown.htm>

Once you can play by ear, you are also ready to write music. Don't feel like you have to be able to take every song through all five steps. If you are a beginner, just write down the pitches as in Step 1. You can play the rhythms from memory. As you get more advanced and learn to count better, go ahead and try the other steps one by one

Step 1: Play the song by ear and write down the pitches as open noteheads. Use pencil, and be sure to leave plenty of space between the noteheads so that you'll have working room later.



Check behind yourself: Sing the phrase to make sure you have the right number of notes. Then play the notes on your instrument to make sure that they are the right pitches.

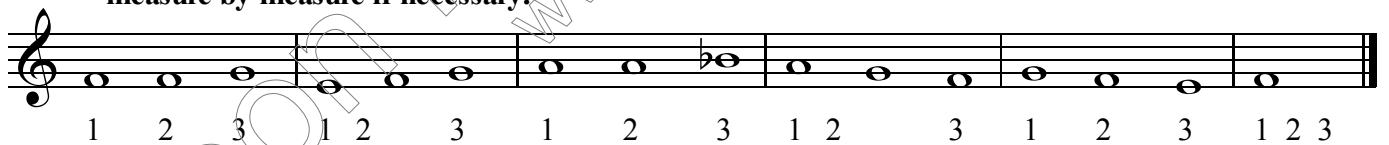
Step 2: Sing the phrase to yourself while tapping your foot to keep time. Do the beats feel like they come in groups of 2 or groups of 3? Every time you feel beat 1, write it down beneath the place where you feel it.



Step 3: Divide the phrase into measures by putting a barline to the left of each beat 1.



Step 4: Sing the phrase to yourself again, and place the other beats. You can do it measure by measure if necessary.



Note that not all beats occur right on the beginning of a note. Some notes are between beats.

Step 5: Analyze the rhythm in each measure, filling in noteheads and adding stems, flags, dots, ties and rests as needed.

