

# Time Signatures

Music

What the two numbers mean, and how the common ones feel to count.

*Top number: beats in a bar. Bottom number: which note gets one beat (4 = quarter, 8 = eighth).*

| Signature  | Count it    | Feels like                      |
|------------|-------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>4/4</b> | 1 2 3 4     | Common time — most pop and rock |
| <b>3/4</b> | 1 2 3       | Waltz — a swaying triple        |
| <b>2/4</b> | 1 2         | March                           |
| <b>6/8</b> | 1 2 3 4 5 6 | Two big beats of three — a lilt |
| <b>2/2</b> | 1 2         | Cut time — 4/4 taken at a run   |
| <b>5/4</b> | 1 2 3 4 5   | Uneven on purpose               |

6/8 is not 3/4 twice: it groups as 1-2-3 4-5-6, with the stress on 1 and 4.