

Beginner Music Theory and Recorder Practice

by E. Anne Weil

for Amelia

To give you something fun to learn during
the quarantine.

Love,
Mom

Beginner Music Theory and Recorder Practice

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The songs included are all public domain and may be reproduced. Any or all portions of this work may be reproduced in any format for home and educational uses without additional permission from the author. (I really just wanted something fun for my child to do while we're stuck at home, and I didn't want to buy a bunch of books to teach her basic music theory, so I made my own color coded charts that match her already color coded keyboard - because that's what normal people do when they have Adobe InDesign, free time, and a propensity to write books...)

For Bible study and mental health resources (because that's really what I write about), or more information about the author, visit Mabbat.blog or write to:

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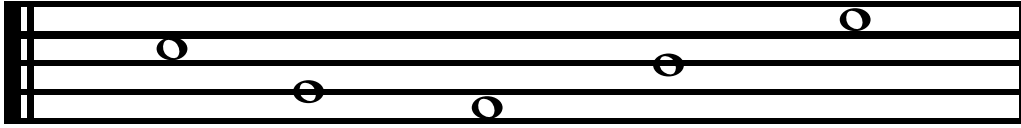
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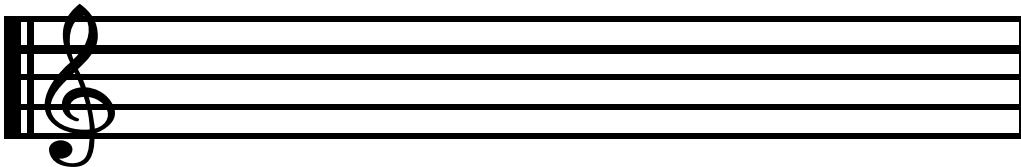
The Staff

Music is written down on a staff.

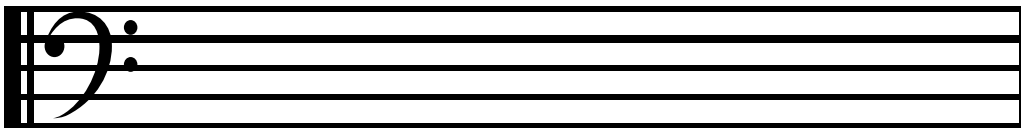


The staff is five lines with spaces in between the lines. Notes can be on any of the lines or spaces. The higher the note is on the staff, the higher the pitch is. The lower the note is on the staff, the lower the pitch.

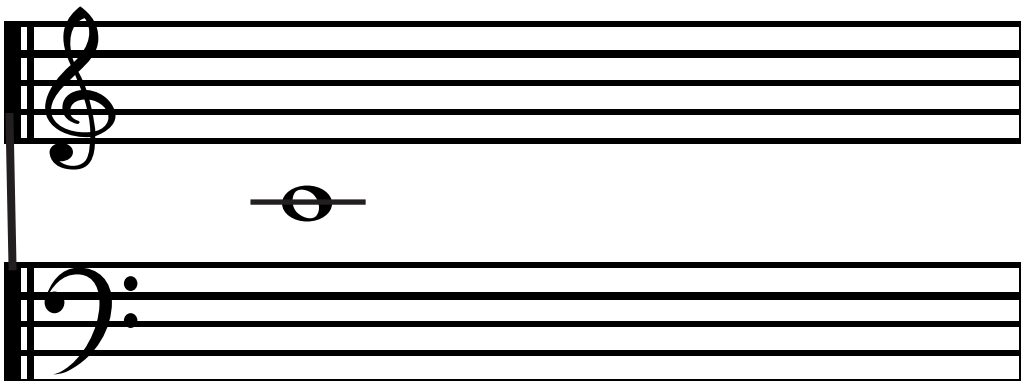
All of the music we will play is on the treble clef.



There is also a bass clef for lower notes that the recorder can't play.



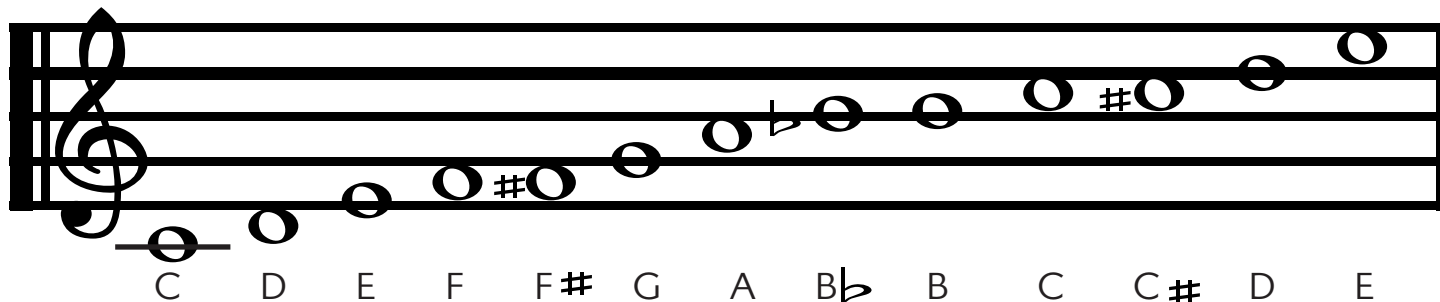
Together, the treble and bass clefs are called a grand staff.



We pretend there is a line between the treble clef and bass clef, and we call that note middle C because it's the middle note between all the high notes on the treble clef and all the low notes on the bass clef.

The Notes

There are 8 basic notes in a C major scale: C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C. We sometimes sing these as do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, ti, do.



The notes we can play on the recorder are middle C, D, E, F, F sharp, G, A, B flat, B, high C, C sharp, high D, and high E. When we say a note is sharp, it means that the note is a half tone higher than the natural note. When we say a note is flat, it means that the note is a half tone lower than the natural note. So F sharp is between F and G. B flat is between A and B.



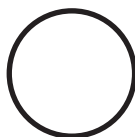
Here are the finger charts for each note your recorder can play. The circle at the top to the side is the thumb hole on the bottom of the recorder. The seven circles in a column are the top holes of the recorder. The line shows which holes can be covered by the same hand. The thumb hole and the top three holes are played by one hand, and the bottom four are played by the other hand.



CLOSED



OPEN



HALF CLOSED



C

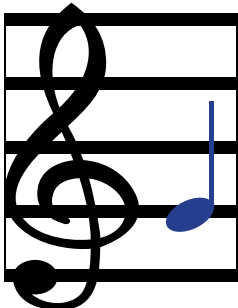
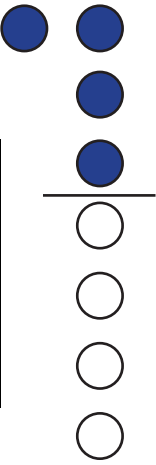
D

E

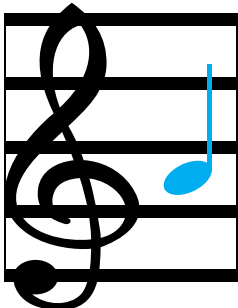
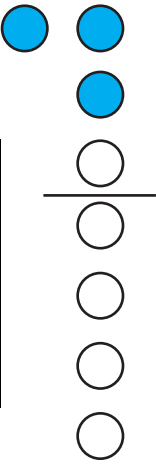
F

F#

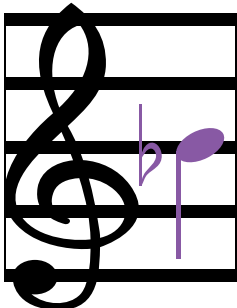
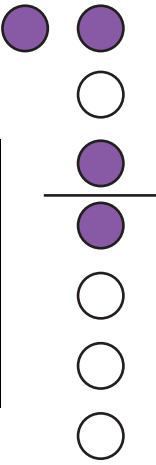
G

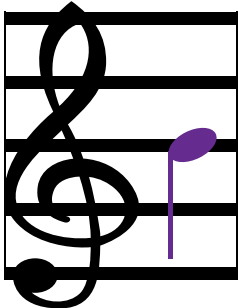
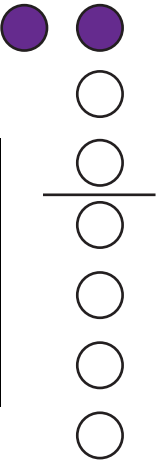
A

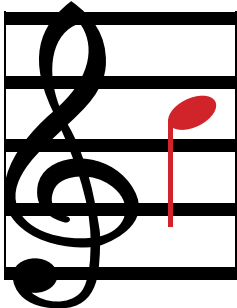
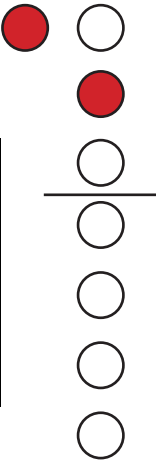
B \flat

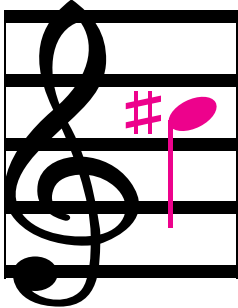
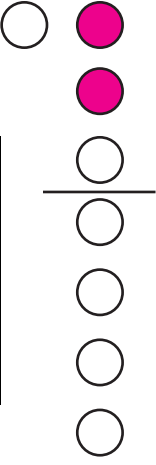
B

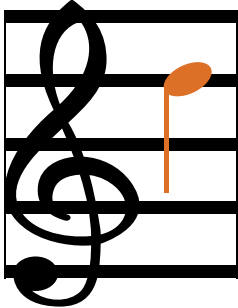
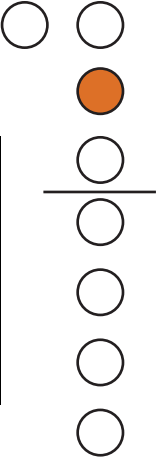

C

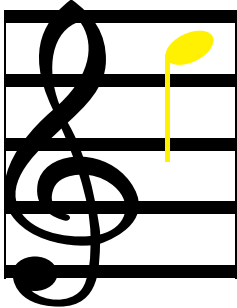
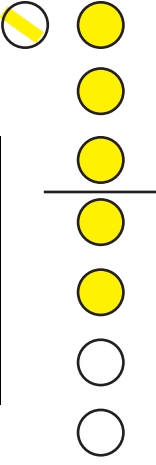
C \sharp

D

E

Beat Values

Music notes also tell us how long each note should be played. Each note shape tells us how many beats to hold a note. There are also rests that tell us how long to wait to play another note. Rests follow the same counting pattern as notes.

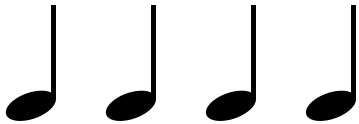


This is a whole note. It is 4 beats in common time.



These are half notes.

They are each 2 beats, so 2 half notes equal 1 whole note.



These are quarter notes. They are each 1 beat.

2 quarter notes equal a half note, and

4 quarter notes equal a whole note.



These are eighth notes.

They are each 1/2 a beat.

2 eighth notes equal a quarter note, 4 eighth notes equal a half note, and 8 eighth notes equal a whole note. I bet you didn't know you would do so much math in music!

Rests are marks that tell us to stop making notes for a certain amount of time.



This is a whole note rest. It is 4 beats.



These are half note rests. They are each 2 beats.



These are quarter note rests. They are each 1 beat.



These are eighth note rests. They are each 1/2 beat.

Sometimes there are dotted notes and rests. The dot tells us to add half the value of the note.



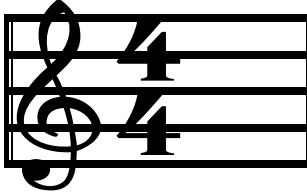
A dotted half note is 2 beats plus 1 beat for a total of 3 beats.



A dotted quarter note is 1 1/2 beats.

Time Signature

We already learned that the music staff will tell us higher or lower notes with a treble or a bass mark. The staff will also tell us a time signature. The time signature is the rhythm pattern that the song follows. It looks like two numbers stacked on top of each other, and it sits next to the clef mark. The top number tells us how many beats there are per measure, and the bottom number tells us which note is equal to one beat.



There are 4 beats per measure.

The quarter note equals 1 beat.

If there is no time signature marked, we use common time.


Common time is 4/4, or 4 beats per measure with a quarter note making one beat.

It can be marked with  or with the numbers .


Cut time is 2/2, or 2 beats per measure with a half note making one beat.

It can be marked with  or with the numbers .

Double time is 2/4, or 2 beats per measure with a quarter note making one beat.

It is marked with the numbers .

Triple time is 3/4, or 3 beats per measure with a quarter note making one beat. We also call this waltz time.

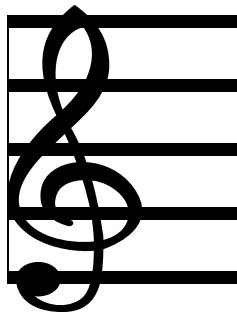
It is marked with the numbers .

Most of the music we will practice to begin with will be common time, but if you look at other music, you may see other numbers.

Key Signature

Music can be written in different keys that are marked by sharps or flats on the staff. The notes in those spaces or on those lines will be played sharp or flat through the whole song, so the individual notes will not be marked. A key signature tells us what scale the song uses, or which notes we should use as do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, ti, do. Each key signature tells us which note the scale starts on.

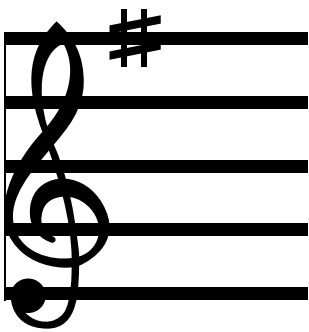
Most of the music we will practice is in C major, so there are no sharps or flats on the staff. Individual notes will be marked sharp or flat next to the note.



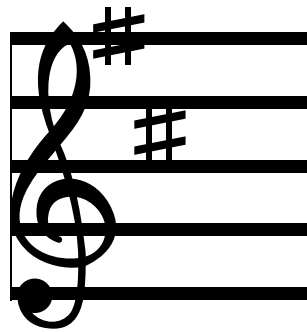
C major
A minor

If you look at other music, you may see other key signatures, and now you will know how to read the notes correctly if you remember to find the key signature at the beginning of the staff.

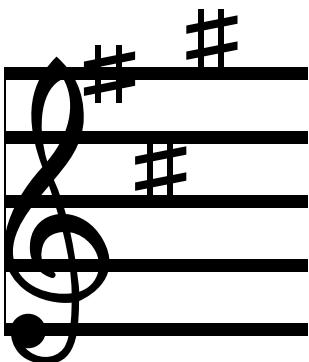
Here are all the other key signatures with their major key and minor key names.



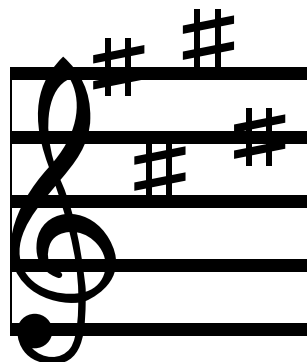
G major
E minor



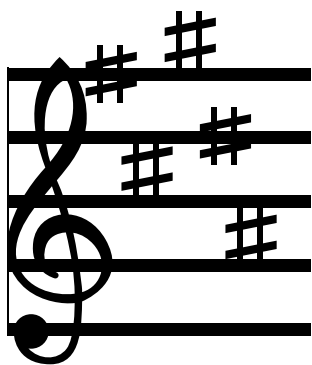
D major
B minor



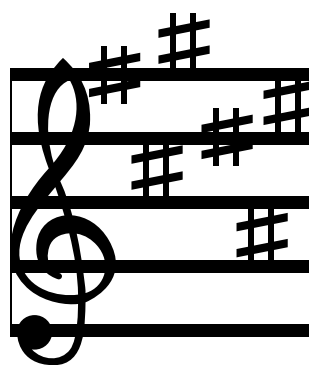
A major
F# minor



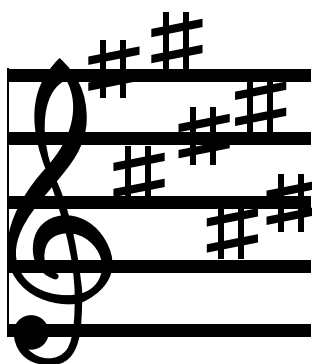
E major
C# minor



B major
G# minor



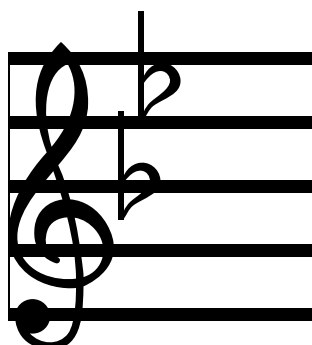
F# major
D# minor



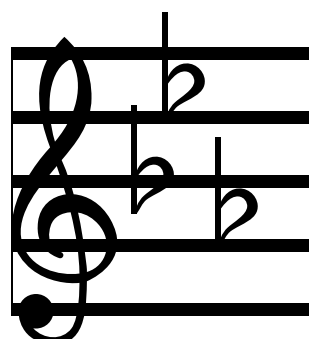
C# major
A# minor



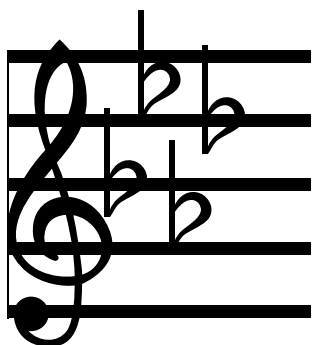
F major
D minor



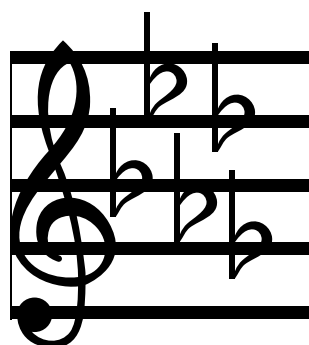
Bb major
G minor



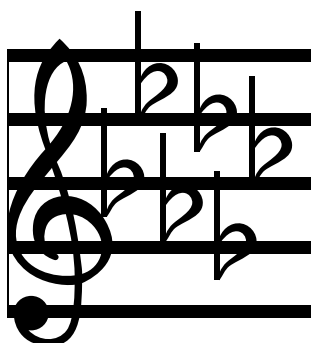
Eb major
C minor



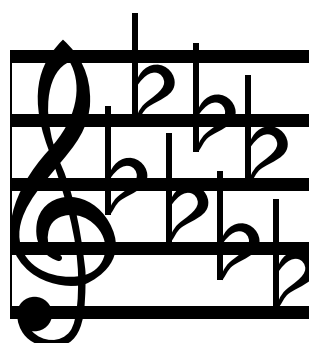
Ab major
F minor



Db major
Bb minor



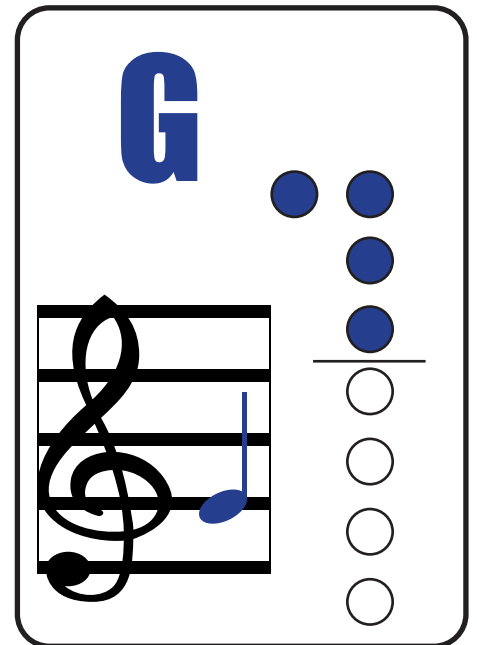
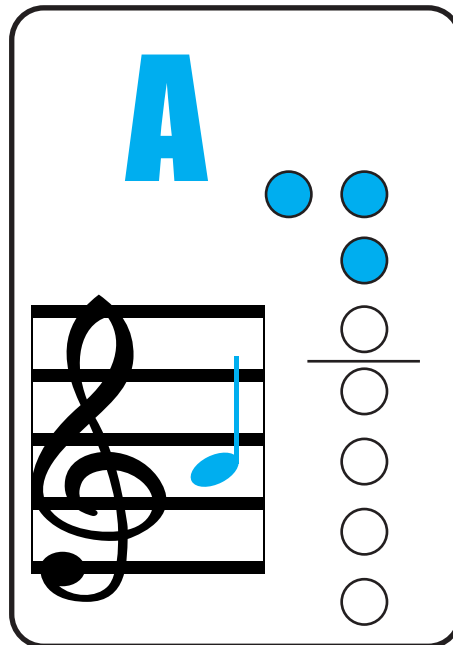
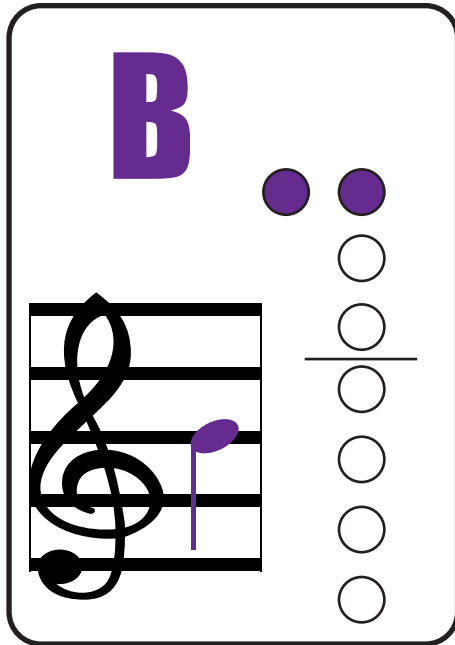
Gb major
Eb minor



Cb major
Ab minor

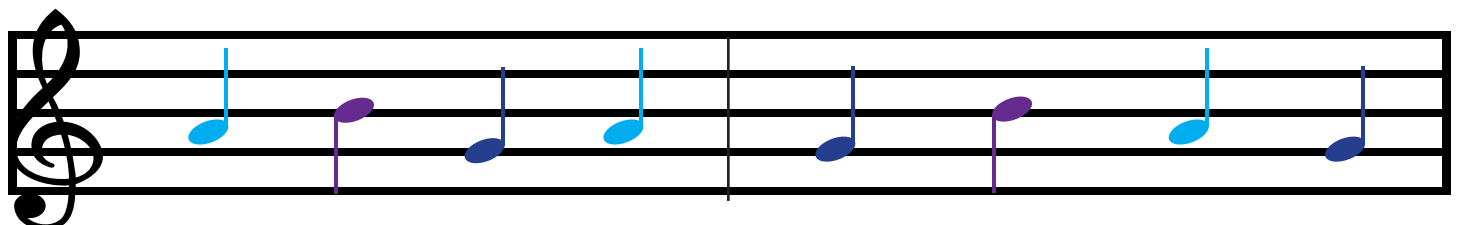
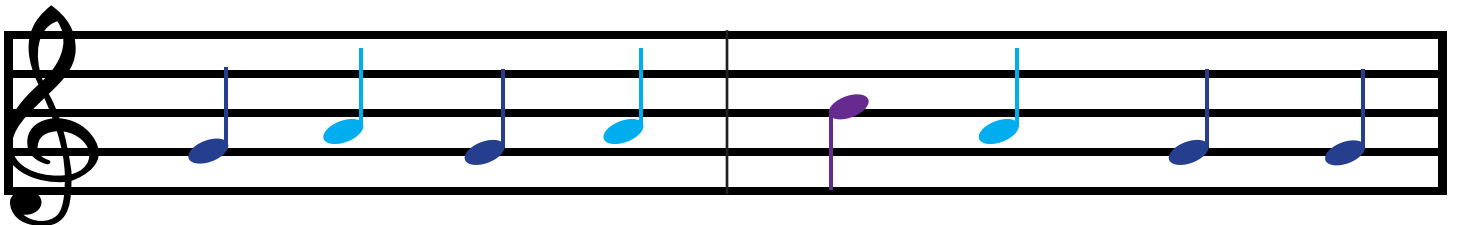
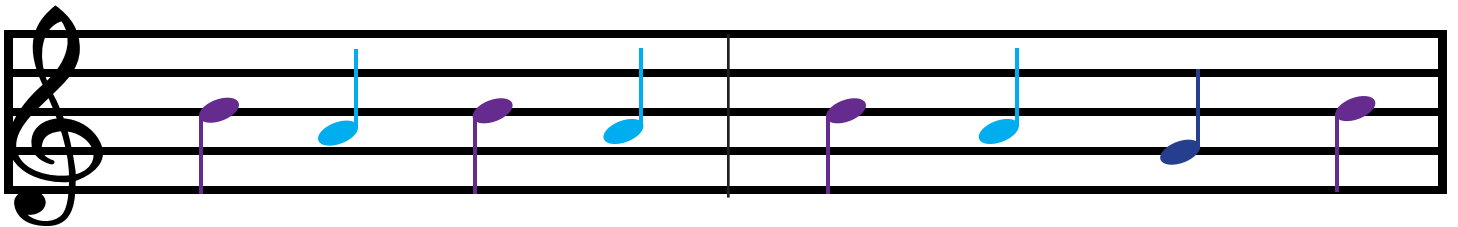
Practice with B A G

B, A, and G are the first notes we'll learn to play. All three notes use the thumb hole and just the top three top holes, so all of the notes should be covered with a single hand. If you are right handed, practice these notes with your right hand. If you are left handed, practice these notes with your left hand. Use your other hand to hold the recorder steady, but be sure you don't cover any other holes by accident.

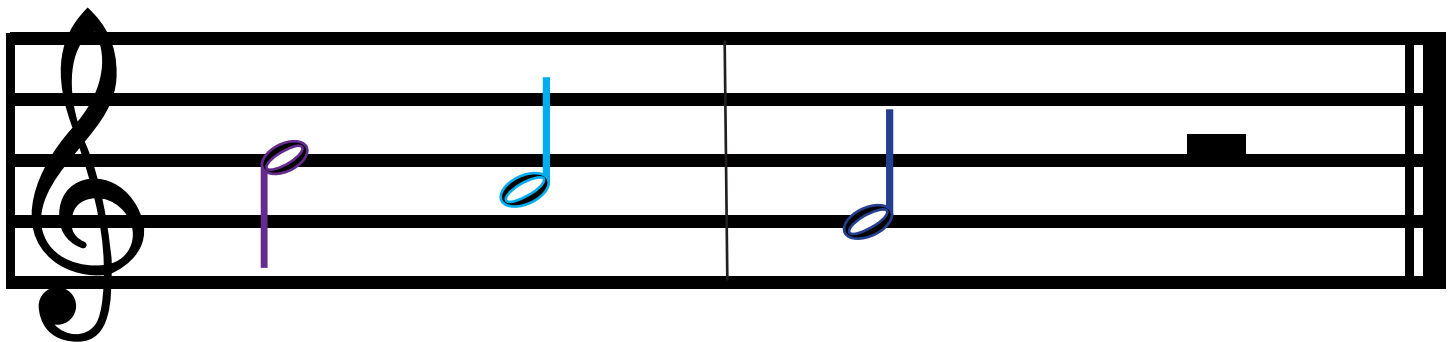
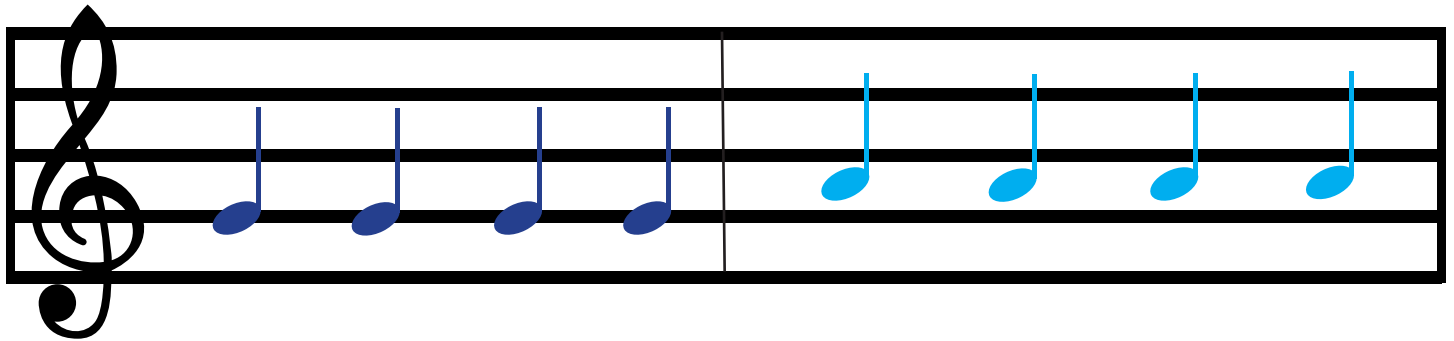
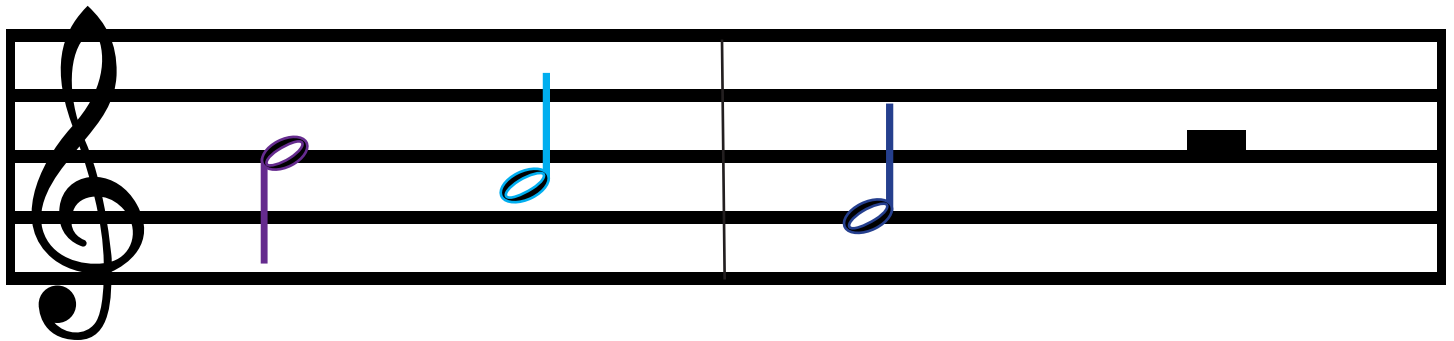
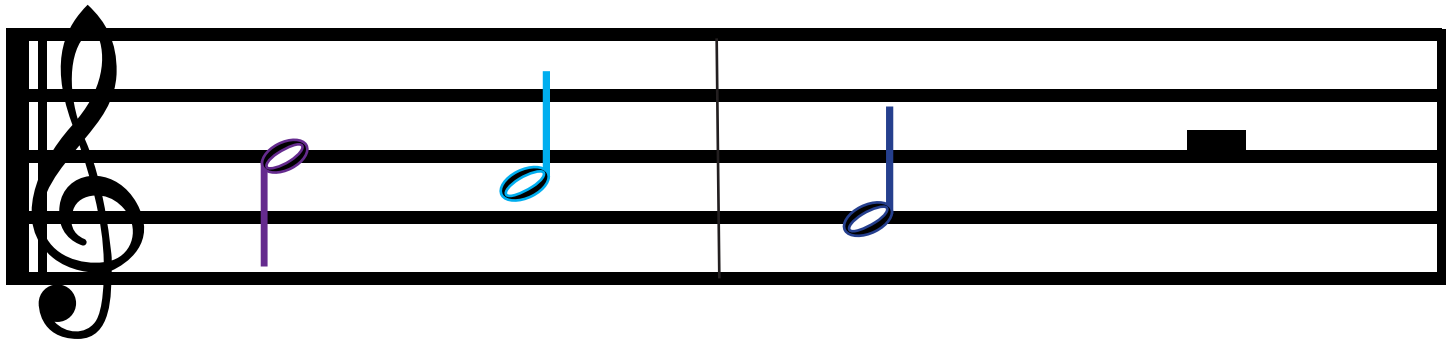


Practice playing each of the notes several times to learn the finger positions.

Now let's practice them in different orders. Try each line until you can play it smoothly.

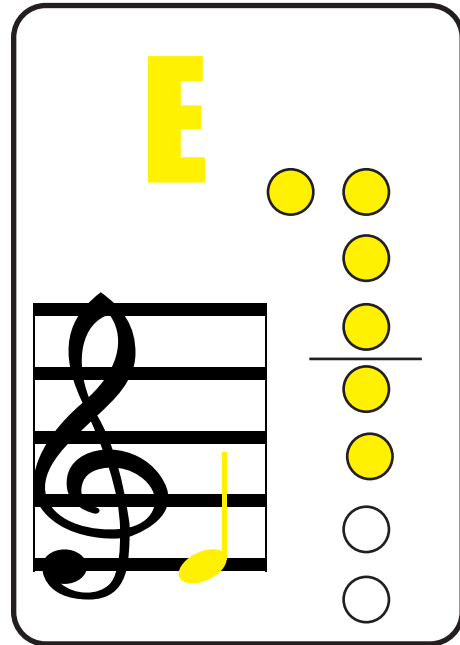
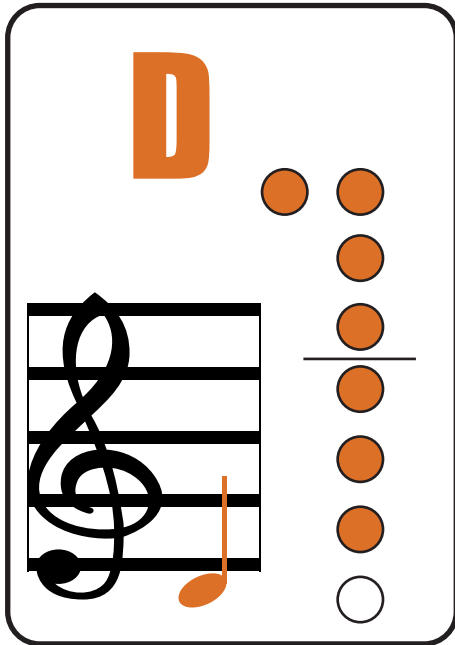


Hot Cross Buns

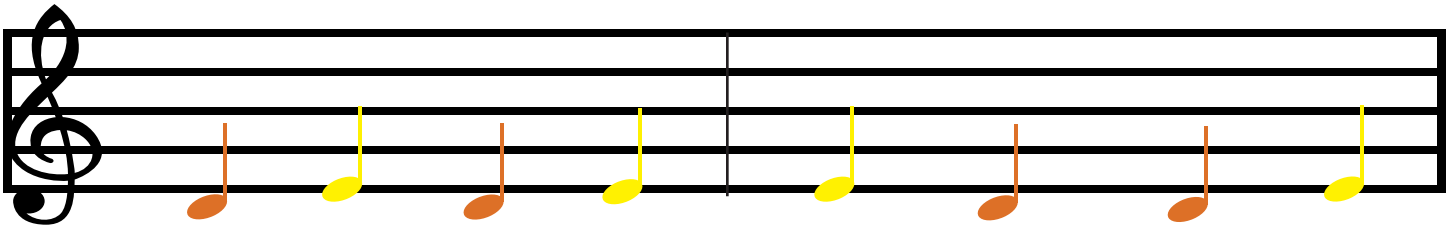


Practice with D and E

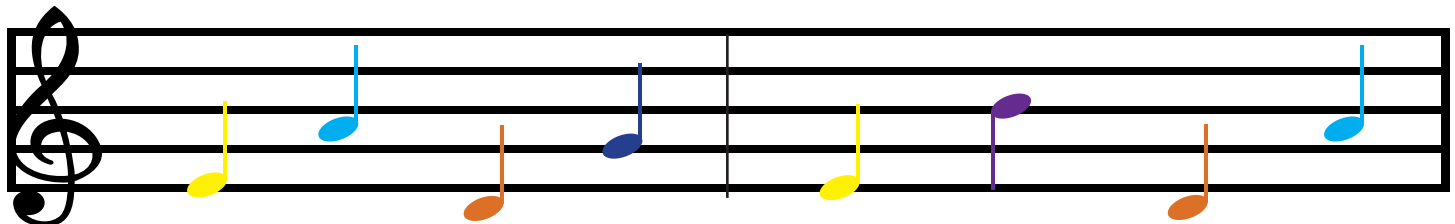
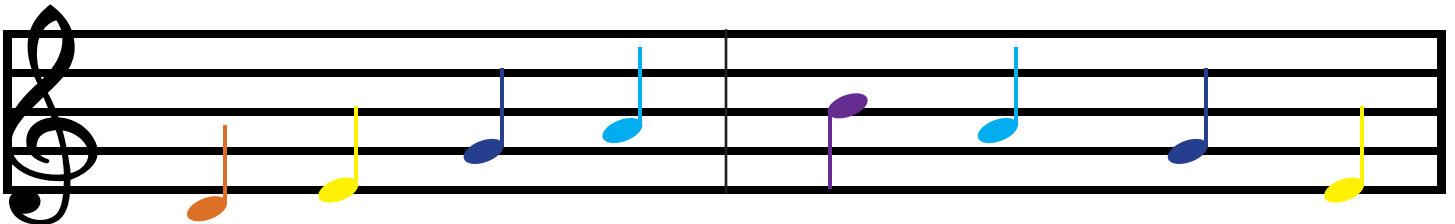
Now let's add D and E to our practice. Practice these two notes several times.



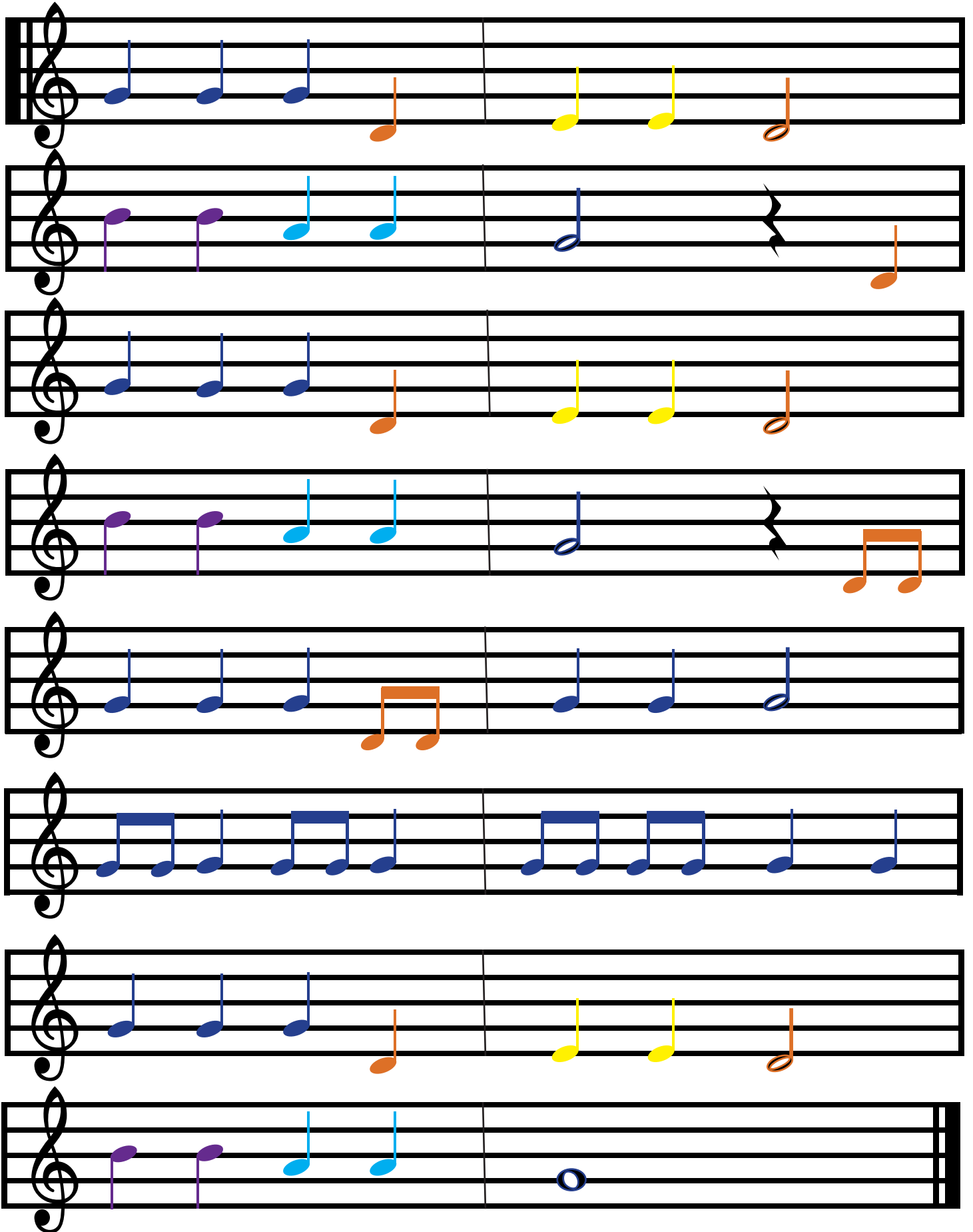
Now let's practice them in different orders. Try each line until you can play it smoothly.



Let's add the notes we've already learned. Try each line until you can play it smoothly.

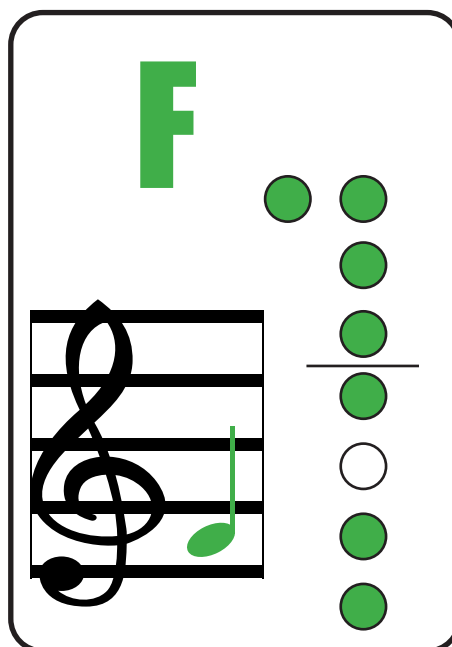
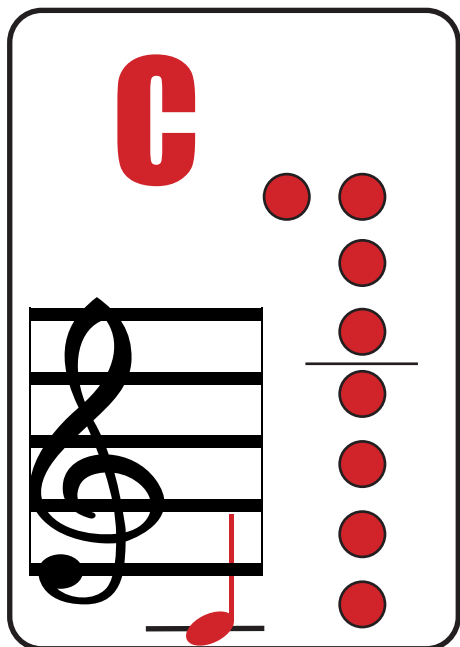


Old MacDonald Had a Farm

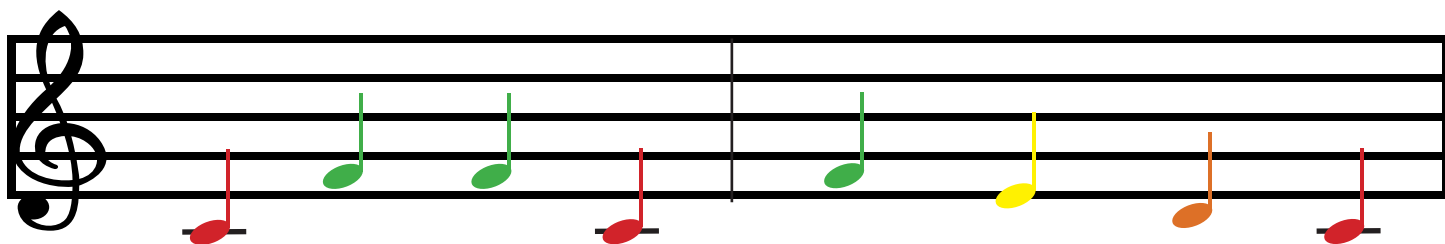


Practice with C and F

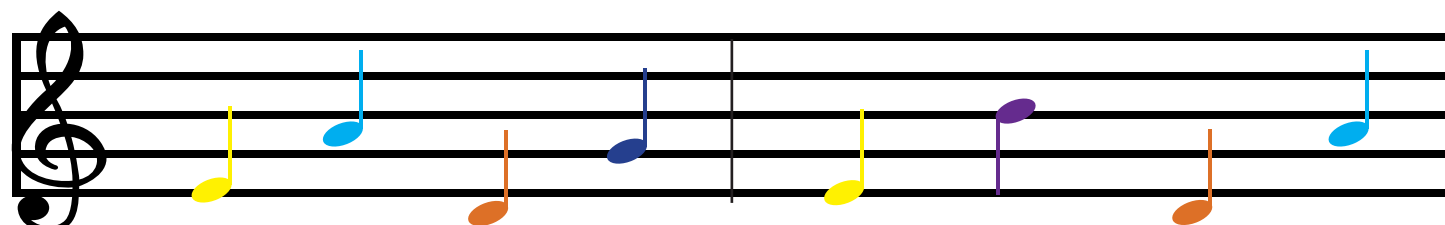
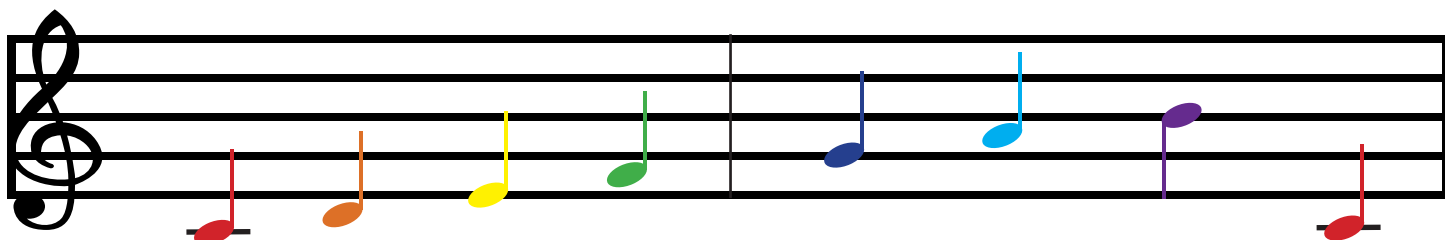
Now let's add D and E to our practice. Practice these two notes several times.



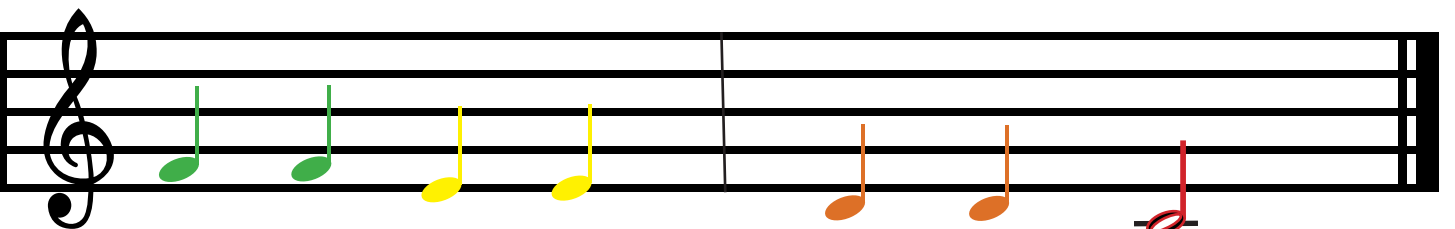
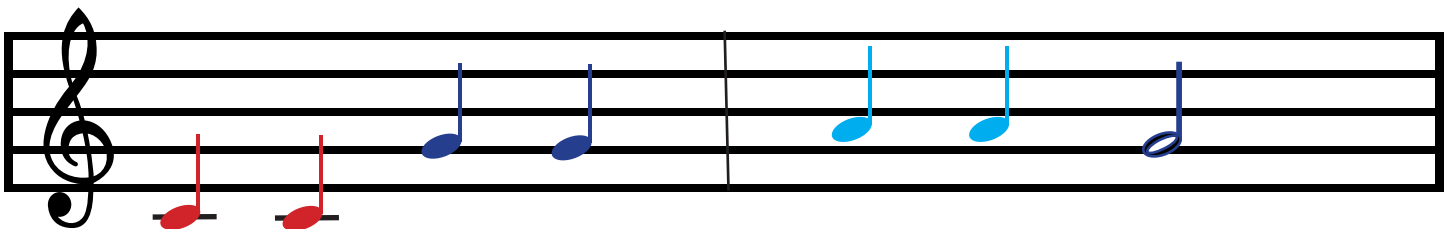
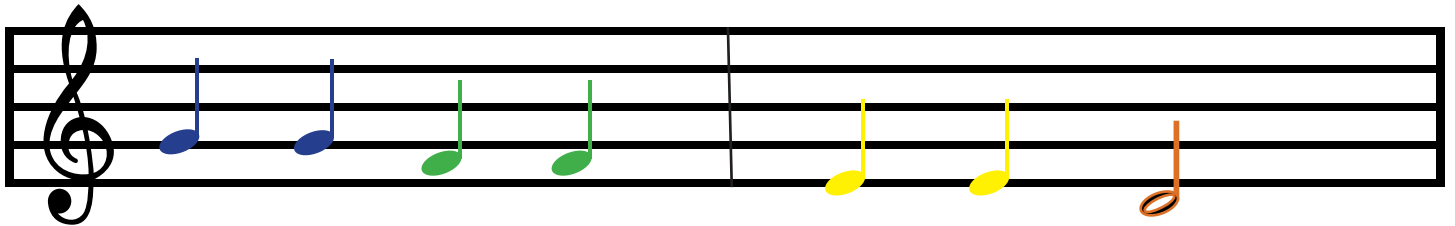
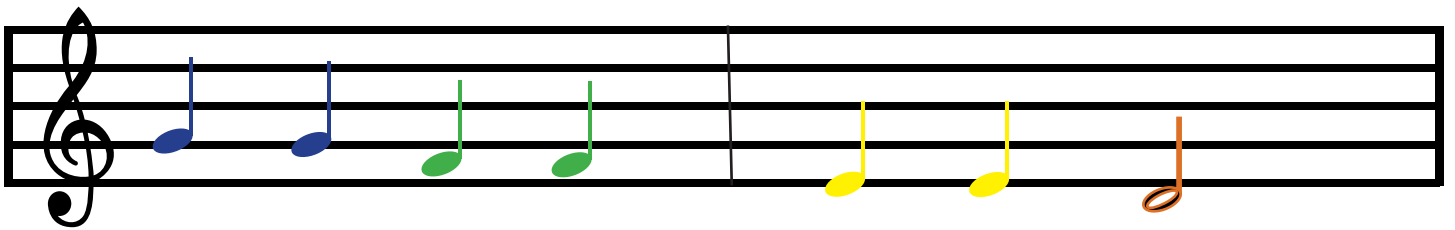
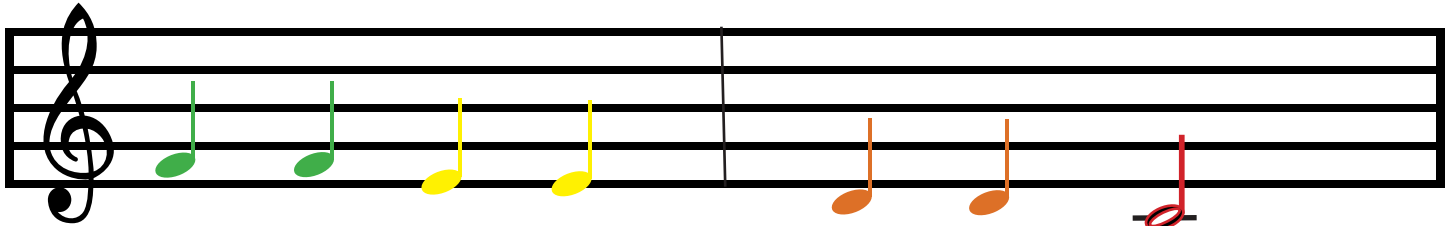
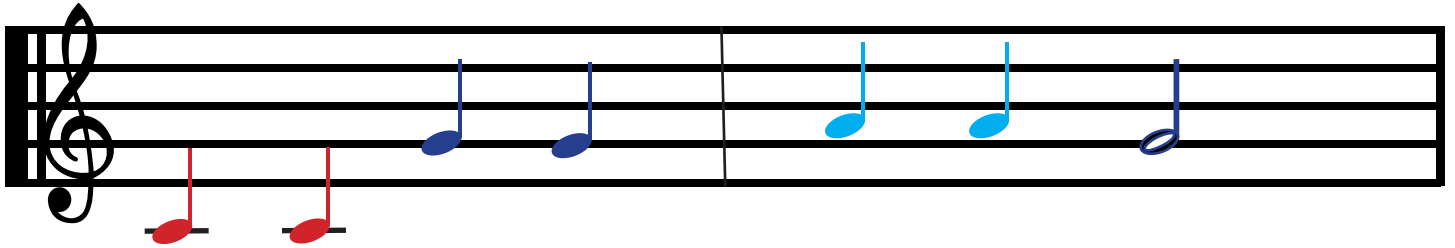
Now let's practice them in different orders. Try each line until you can play it smoothly.



Let's add the rest of the notes we've already learned. Try each line until you can play it smoothly.



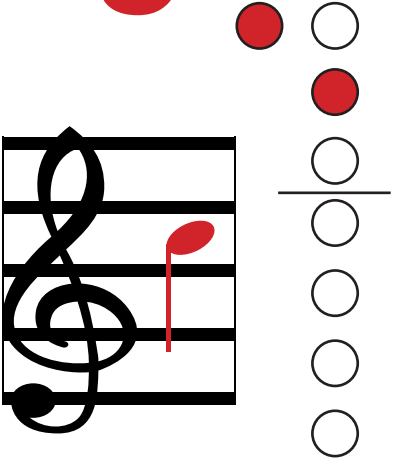
Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star



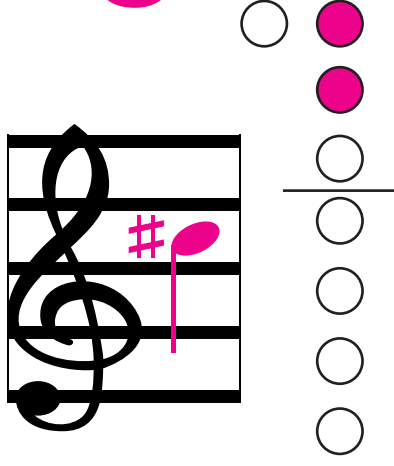
Practice with High C, C[#], and D

Let's add high C, C[#], and high D to our practice. C[#] and high D are the first notes we are learning that don't use the thumb hole, so watch out for those!

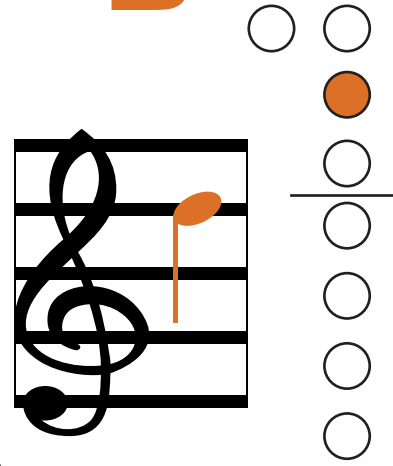
C



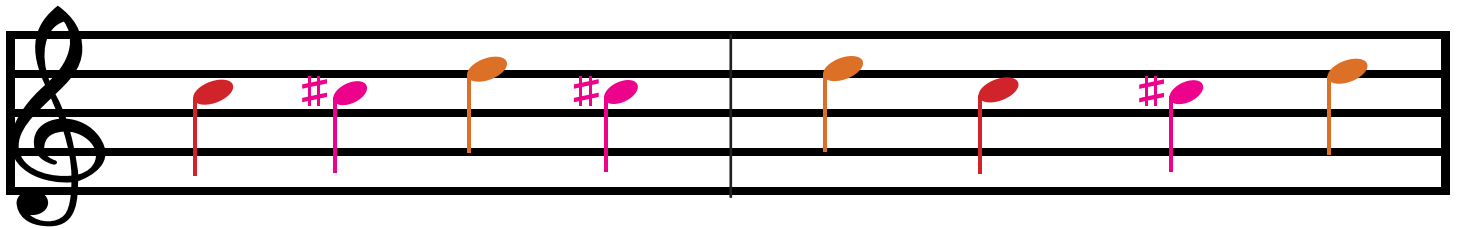
C[#]



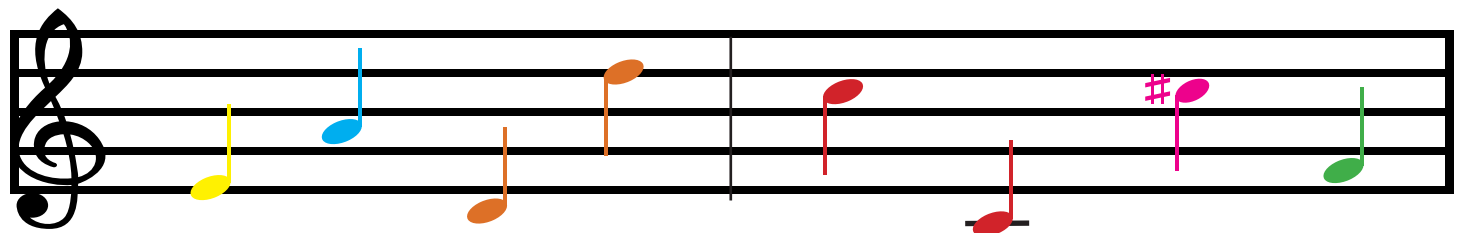
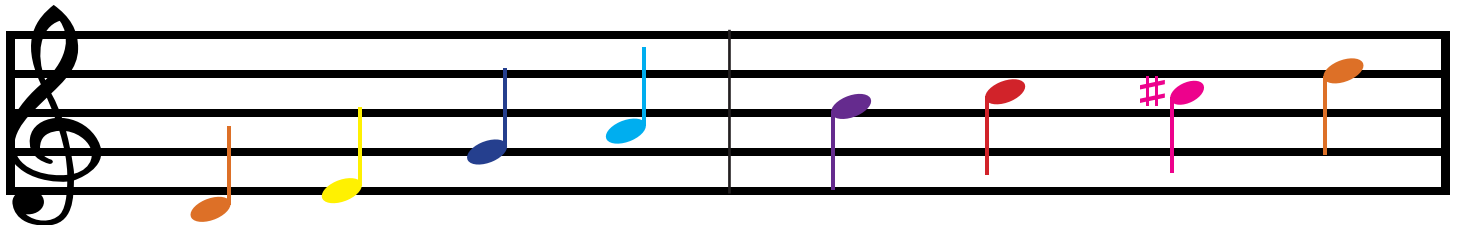
D



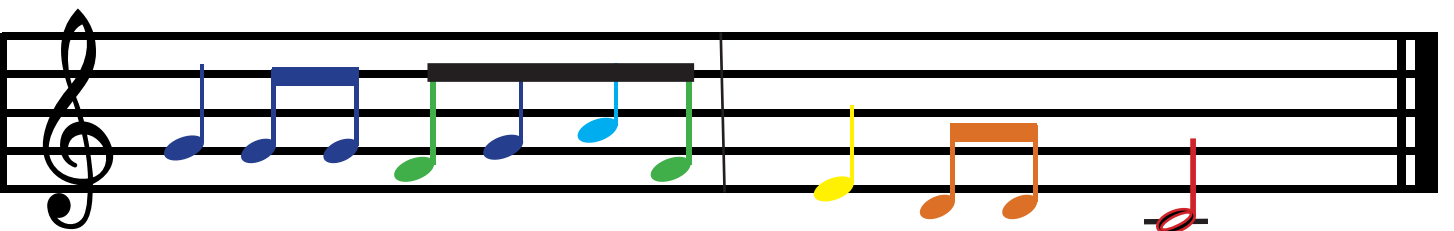
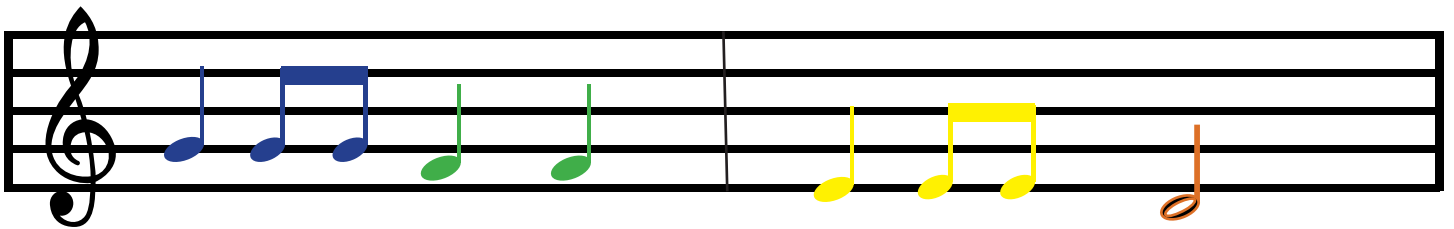
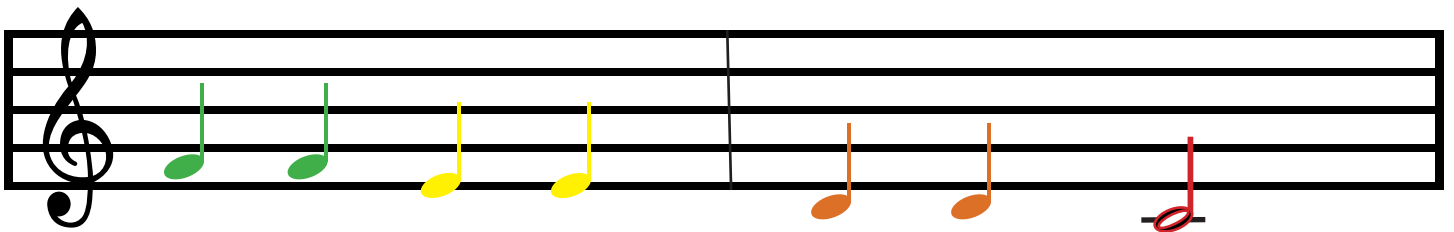
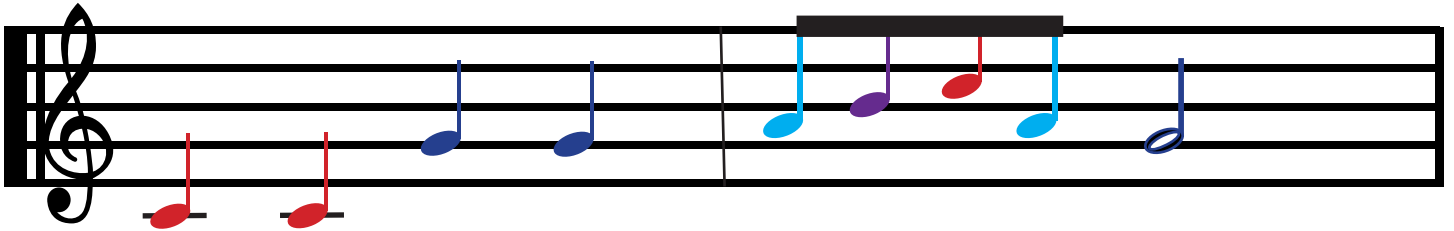
Now let's practice them in different orders. Try each line until you can play it smoothly.



Let's add the notes we've already learned. Try each line until you can play it smoothly.



Baa, Baa Black Sheep



Amazing Grace

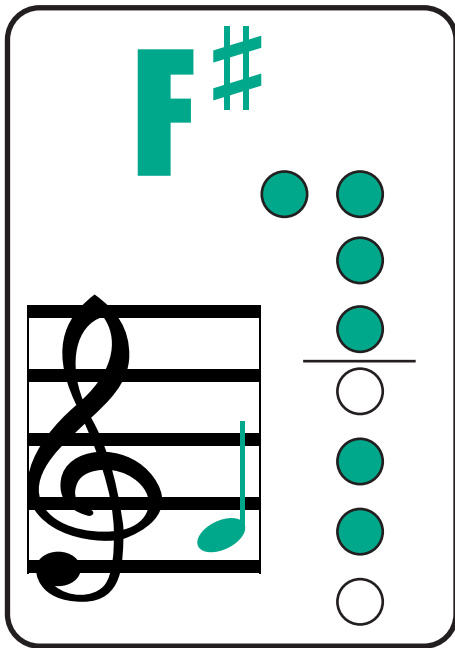
This musical score for 'Amazing Grace' is written in 3/4 time and consists of eight staves. The notes are color-coded: orange, blue, purple, yellow, and cyan. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a 3/4 time signature. The melody is as follows:

- Staff 1: Orange quarter note (G4), blue quarter note (A4), purple quarter note (B4), blue quarter note (A4), purple half note (G4), cyan quarter note (F#4).
- Staff 2: Blue quarter note (E4), yellow quarter note (F#4), orange quarter note (G4), orange quarter note (A4).
- Staff 3: Blue quarter note (E4), purple quarter note (F#4), blue quarter note (G4), purple half note (F#4), cyan quarter note (E4), purple quarter note (D4).
- Staff 4: Orange half note (C4) with a fermata, followed by a whole rest, then a purple quarter note (E4).
- Staff 5: Orange half note (C4) with a fermata, purple quarter note (F#4), blue quarter note (G4), purple half note (F#4), cyan quarter note (E4).
- Staff 6: Blue quarter note (E4), yellow quarter note (F#4), orange quarter note (G4), orange quarter note (A4).
- Staff 7: Blue quarter note (E4), purple quarter note (F#4), blue quarter note (G4), purple half note (F#4), cyan quarter note (E4).
- Staff 8: Blue half note (E4) with a fermata, followed by a blue quarter note (G4). The piece ends with a double bar line.

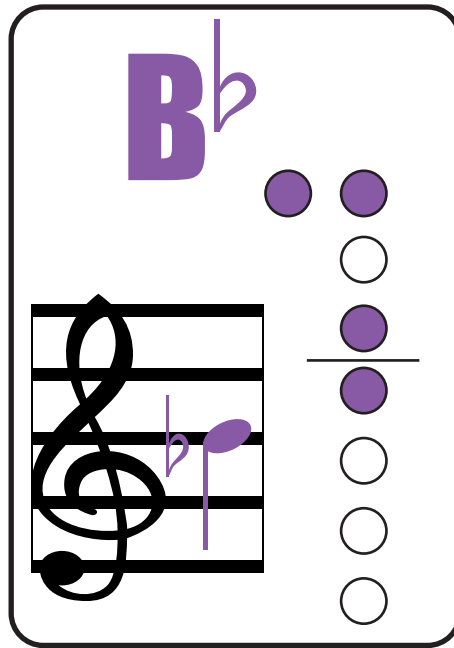
Practice with F[#], B^b, and High E

The last three notes we have to learn are F[#], B^b, and high E. Practice each note several times until you are comfortable with the finger positions.

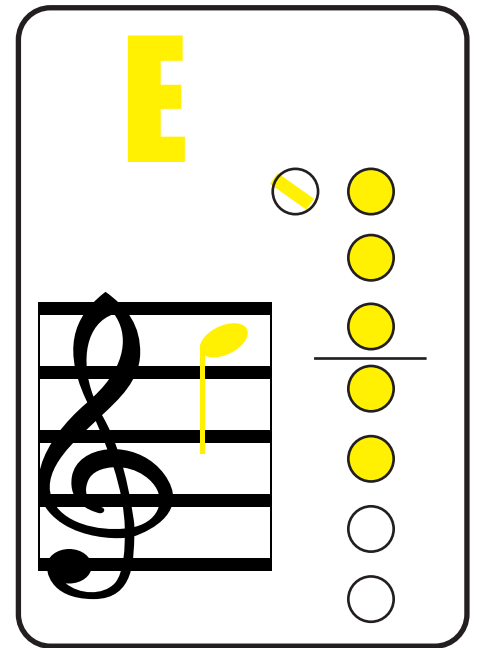
F[#]



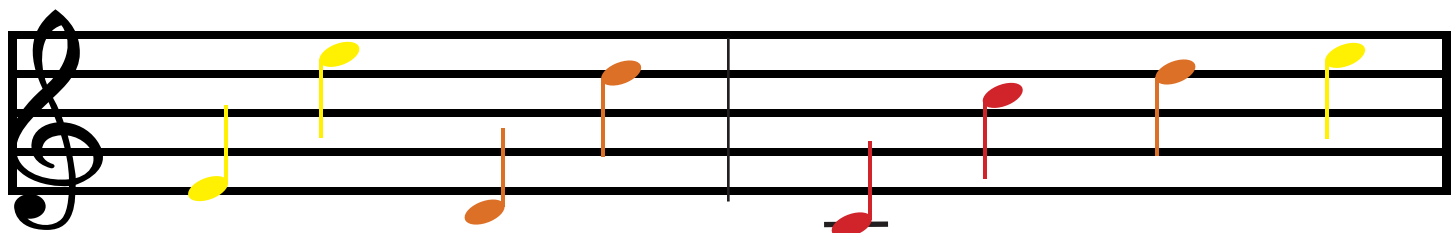
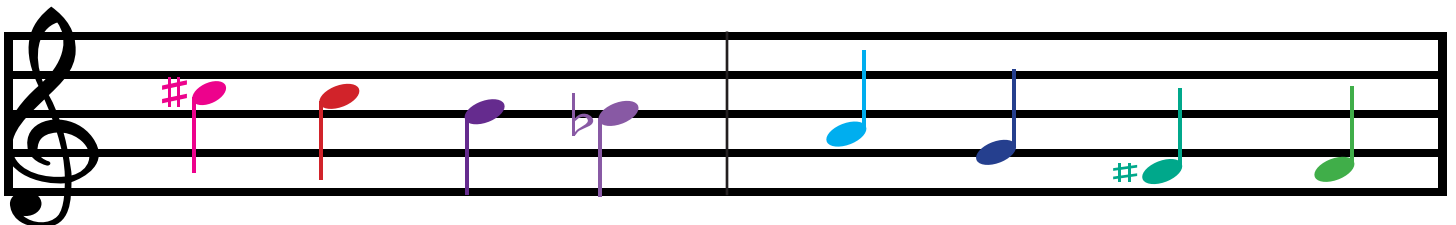
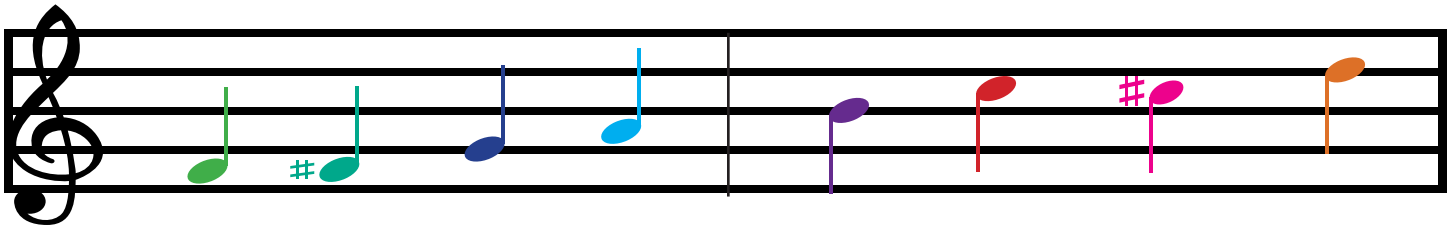
B^b



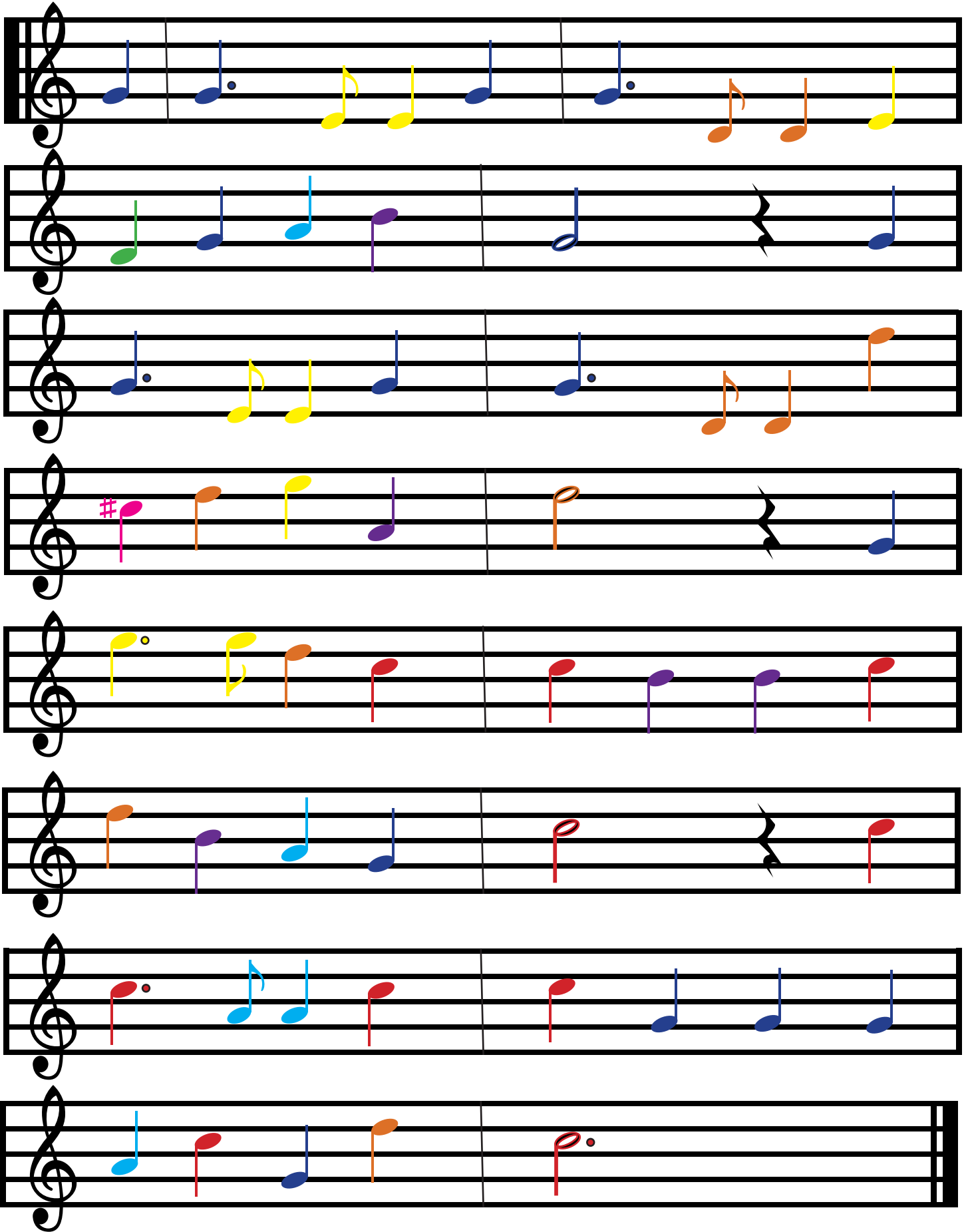
E



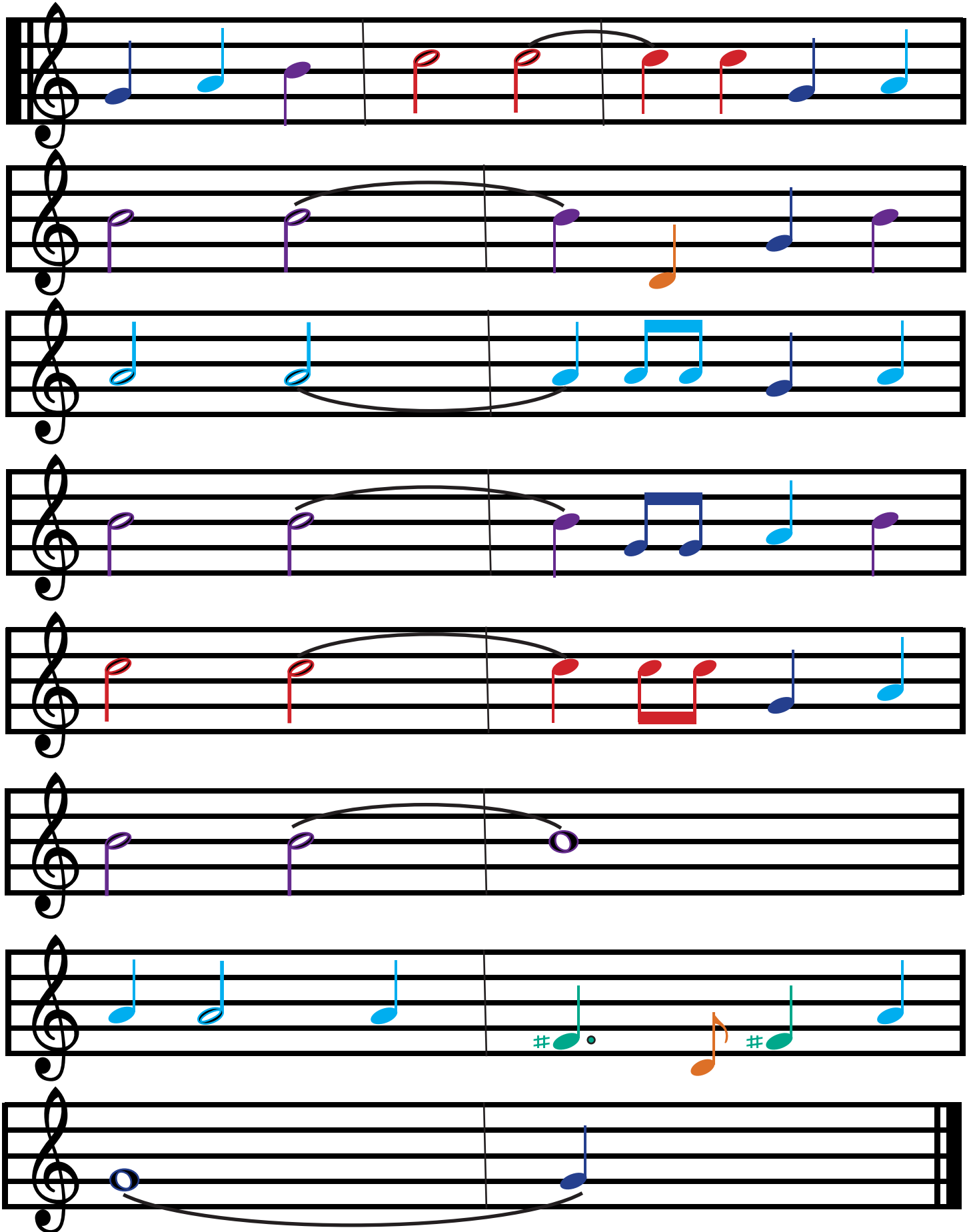
Now let's practice them with the other notes we already know. Try each line until you can play it smoothly.



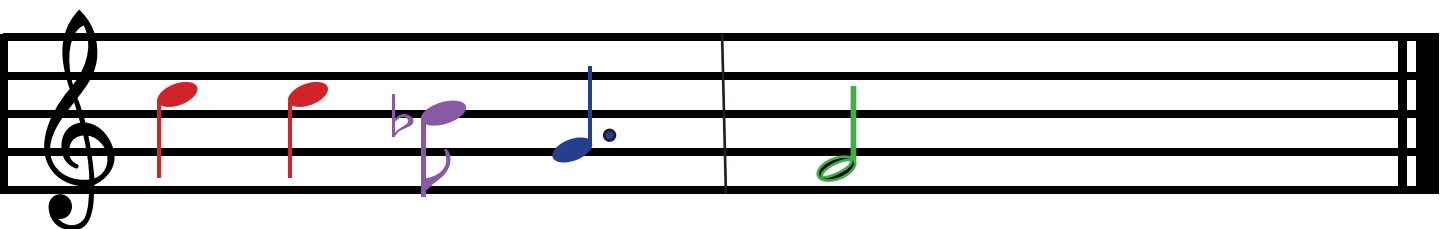
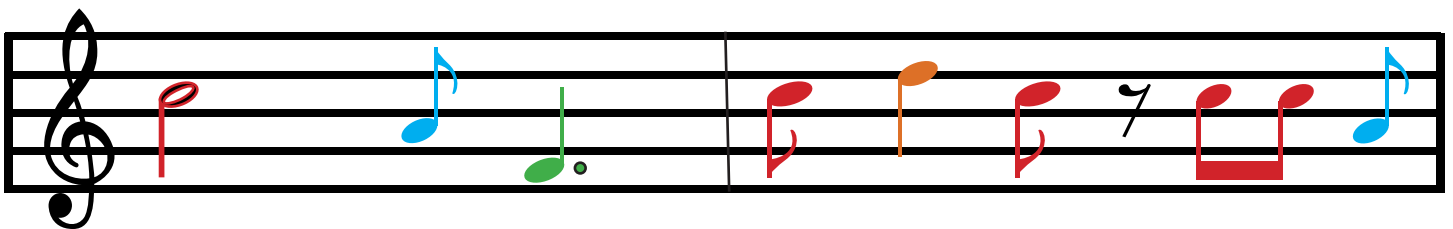
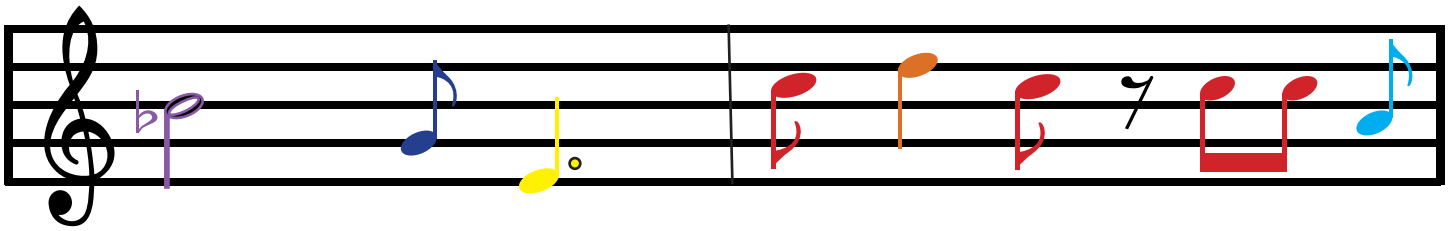
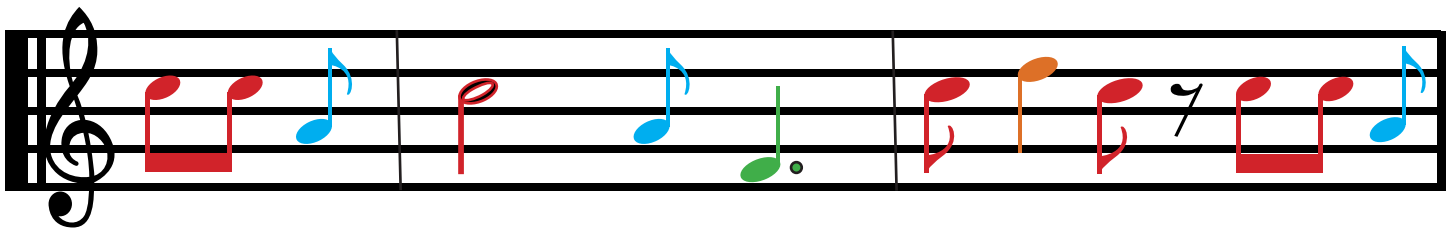
America the Beautiful



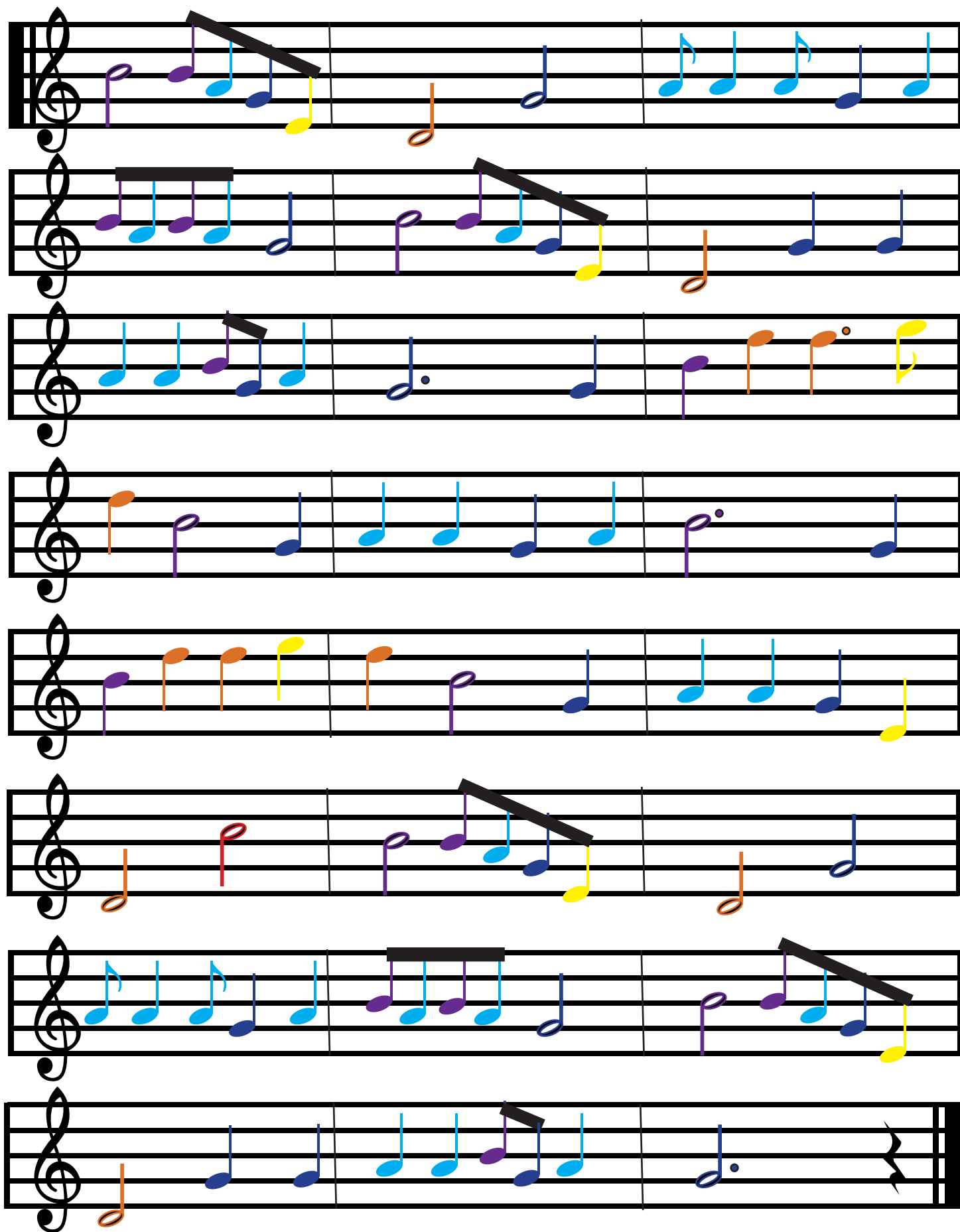
This Land Is Your Land



He's Got the Whole World in His Hands



Go Tell It on the Mountain



Can Can

The musical score for 'Can Can' consists of eight staves, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music is divided into two measures per staff. The notes are color-coded: red, blue, orange, yellow, and green. The first measure of each staff contains a sequence of notes, and the second measure contains a sequence of notes. The notes are as follows:

Staff	Measure 1	Measure 2
1	Red whole note	Orange, Green, Yellow, Orange
2	Blue, Blue	Blue, Blue, Yellow, Green
3	Orange, Orange	Orange, Green, Yellow, Orange
4	Red, Red, Purple, Blue	Blue, Green, Yellow, Orange
5	Red whole note	Orange, Green, Yellow, Orange
6	Blue, Blue	Blue, Blue, Yellow, Green
7	Orange, Orange	Orange, Green, Yellow, Orange
8	Red, Blue, Orange, Yellow	Red whole note

Mystery Song - Can you guess the tune?

