

# The Basics of Musical Time

**Beat** - a regularly recurring pulse; the most basic unit of musical time.

**Tempo** – how fast the beat moves, usually measured in beats per minute.

**Meter** – the grouping of beats into repeated patterns. The most common beat groupings are two, three and four. In music notation, meter is indicated by dividing these groups of beats into measures with barlines.

**Beat Division** – dividing the beat into two or three equal parts

**Beat Subdivision** – dividing the beat into more than three parts. Usually beats divided into two parts are subdivided into four parts. Beats divided into three parts are subdivided into six parts.

**Duration** – the length of time a pitch is held. Holding a pitch for longer than a beat is commonly referred to as beat multiplication.

**Rhythm** – the combination of beat division, subdivision and multiplication to form distinct patterns.