

## CHORD NOTATION SYSTEM EXPLAINED

First, you must have the melody in your head. Almost all songs are structured in rows of 4 measures. The system allows you to see the blueprint of the song in an easy-to-remember format and grasp the structure as a whole. An autoharp arrangement can be written with the accompaniment above and the chords used to play the melody below (the lyrics, if any).

In Common (4/4) time, each measure is given 4 beats. If the measure is split between two chords, you play 2 beats on each.

Measure	1	2	3	4
Rhythm Chord	C	C / G	C	C / G
Lyric	Yan- kee Doo-dle	came to town a-	rid- in' on a	po- ny
Melody Chords	C / C / G / C	C / C / G / G G └─┘	C / C / G / C	C / C / G / G └─┘ └─┘

For the melody line, each measure is divided into four sections separated by a slash, the duration next to a slash being equal to a quarter note, example: C / C / G / C

Likewise, in Waltz (3/4) time, the measure is divided into three beats, ex: G / F / C

If a melody note is a half-note, it is designated by a tie underneath. Thus, two half-notes:

C / C / Am / Am in 4/4  
└─┘ └─┘

C / C / Am in 3/4  
└─┘

If the measure contains eighth-notes, they are placed in the space of a quarter-note.

CC / GC / CC / FF counts as "one-and-two-and-three-and-four-and"

C / CG / F / C counts as "one-two-and-three-four"

C / C / G / G G counts as "one-two-three-four-and" (see measure 2 above)  
└─┘

You don't need the cells, rhythm chords, or lyrics. An arrangement can be written just as chords:

### ***TWINKLE, TWINKLE, LITTLE STAR***

C / C / C / C	F / F / C / C └─┘	Dm / Dm / C / C	G7 / G7 / C / C └─┘
C / C / F / F	C / C / G / G └─┘	C / C / F / F	C / C / G7 / G7 └─┘
C / C / C / C	F / F / C / C └─┘	Dm / Dm / C / C	G7 / G7 / C / C └─┘

You can also write this substituting a number step for the chord - which makes the chart applicable to any key:

1 / 1 / 1 / 1      4 / 4 / 1 / 1      2- / 2- / 1 / 1      5<sub>7</sub> / 5<sub>7</sub> / 1 / 1

Each step of the scale is assigned a number; for instance, in the key of C, the scale C-D-E-F-G-A-B would correspond to 1-2-3-4-5-6-7

"1" would be the C chord, "4" would be the F chord, "7b" would be Bb, "3b" would be Eb, etc.

The minors are denoted by the "minus" sign  
 Sevenths, ninths, sixths, etc. by the number in a smaller font  
 Diminished chords by "o"

Thus, "2-7" (in the key of C) means D minor 7th

In Common (4/4) time, each measure is divided into four sections separated by a red slash, the duration next to a slash being equal to a quarter note:

5 / 4 / 1 / 5 means play the melody notes for that measure with one beat on each chord G / F / C / G

If a melody note is a half-note, it is designated by a tie underneath. Thus, two half-notes:

4 / 4 / 4-6 / 4-6

If the measure contains eighth-notes, they are placed in the space of a quarter-note.

2<sub>7</sub> 2<sub>7</sub> / 2<sub>7</sub> 2<sub>7</sub> / 2#<sub>07</sub> 2#<sub>07</sub> / 2#<sub>07</sub> 2#<sub>07</sub> counts as "one-and-two-and-three-and-four-and"

1 / 1 1<sub>add2</sub> / 6<sub>7</sub> / 2- counts as "one-two-and-three-four"

Other notations logically follow from these basics. This is NOT the Nashville Number System but is sort of a derivative of it.