Published on *MuseScore* (https://musescore.org)

Table of contents

Handbook for MuseScore 4

About the Handbook

This handbook is valid for **MuseScore version 4.0 and above**. If you are using a different version of the program, please consult the appropriate handbook for your version:

MuseScore 3 Handbook
MuseScore 2 Handbook
MuseScore 1 Handbook

This handbook is maintained and translated by the MuseScore community. Contributions and Help with translations   are welcome! In case of doubt, please consult the English version of this handbook   , or ask for help in the Support Forum   .

If you are upgrading from MuseScore 3, you may find the following pages useful:

Upgrade from MuseScore 3.x (includes a list of keyboard shortcuts that have changed)
MuseScore 3 features not (yet) implemented in MuseScore 4

Exploring the Handbook

Use the chapter links below to explore content in each chapter of the handbook.

To search for information:

Try browsing the illustrated Glossary for notations you are incapable of naming.
Open "Full Table of Contents", use "Find in page (Ctrl/Cmd⌘ + F)" function of your web browser, or
Use this Google search syntax `site:musescore.org your topic`, e.g. site:musescore.org tempo   , or
Use the search function as shown on the screenshot below
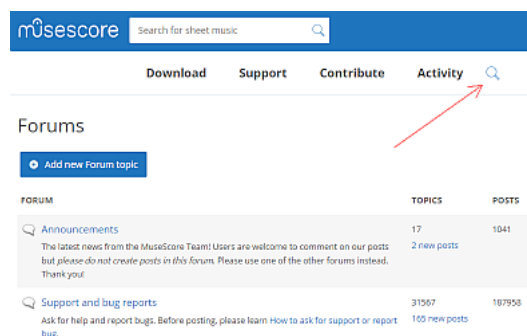
If you can't find the information you need in the Handbook, please ask for help in the Support Forum   .

Download the handbook and create a PDF

Use this link to view a printer-friendly version of the handbook, then use your browser's Print facility to turn that page into a PDF for offline viewing.

Chapter links and table of contents

Full Table of Contents

Editing the Handbook

Guidelines for writing articles

So you'd like to contribute to the MuseScore 4 handbook – great! We're so happy you're here.

This page contains brief guidelines to get you started with writing articles. Please read this page carefully before editing anything in our handbook. This information is intended to help, but if you're in doubt about anything or have any questions, please join the discussion on the Documentation   forum.

Structure - General principles

Each page should explain a single topic more or less completely. If a page feels like it is getting too long, try splitting it into separate pages.

Not every page is identical, but keeping the following in mind can help you structure your page content in a way that's easy to understand for the reader:

Start with an overview

Starting your page with an overview can help introduce a topic before launching into details. Overviews don't usually need a section heading.

Establish a hierarchy

Think about what most users will be trying to achieve, and why they might be coming to the handbook to look for information. Put solutions for the most common tasks towards the top of the page; less commonly needed information can go towards the bottom.

Group information logically

Related concepts should be discussed together. This may sometimes require less-commonly-used features to be discussed alongside more-commonly used ones, but that's okay.

Focus on user tasks, not just UI components

For instance, a section about "Creating custom key signatures" is better than a section called "Using the master palette".

Create a table of contents

Please be sure to enable the "Generate a table of contents" option for all Handbook pages.

Headings

In an effort to ensure consistency of style for community-written pages, we have already provided headings on many pages. Please organize your content within this structure. For pages that lack headings, feel free to create your own in a style similar to that used elsewhere.

For accessibility reasons, headings should *never* be formatted in regular bold text. All headings need to be formatted as tags with semantic meaning.

All pages start by default with a Heading 1. The first section heading you will enter will therefore always be a Heading 2. Please also don't skip heading levels (By, for example, adding a heading 4 after a heading 2).

Heading level	Usage and MarkDown syntax
Heading 1	Default for all page headings (Not editable by contributors)
Heading 2	Use for the start of every section. MarkDown syntax: `## Heading name`
Heading 3	Use for the start of every sub-section, and to introduce single-step instructions (I.e. where a list is not necessary). MarkDown syntax: `### Heading name`
Heading 4	Use sparingly if additional sub-sections are required. MarkDown syntax: `#### Heading name`

Lastly, try to always start your headings with a **verb**. E.g. "Adding time signatures", rather than "Time signatures"

Content

The MuseScore handbook broadly contains two main types of information: **descriptive material**, and **goal-oriented instructions**.

Descriptive material

This is used to explain different areas of the program. For example,

A Palette is a folder containing musical symbols which can be applied to the score. MuseScore's default palettes contain collections of related symbols, but you can customize palettes to display almost any kind of symbol, line or text.

Descriptive material tends to be longer and more "fleshed out" than goal-oriented instructions, but we still ask that you use simple, plain language wherever you can.

Goal-oriented instructions

These explain how to perform a specific task. The instructions should be *as short and direct as possible*, generally taking the form of a numbered list. For example,

To create a new palette

> Open the **palettes** tab
> Click **Add palettes**
> Click **Create custom palette**
> Name your new palette and click **Create**

Notice that we use **bold** text for named components of the user interface, including menus. Keyboard shortcuts, such as `Ctrl+S`, are rendered with <kbd> tags (see Syntax).

When writing goal-oriented instructions, please:

> Use only numbered lists (no dot points)
> Begin each numbered instruction with a verb
> Write only one task/direction per numbered item

For example, instead of writing this:

> Open the **palettes** tab and click **Add palettes**

Please write this:

> Open the **palettes** tab
> Click **Add palettes**

Please be sure to include keyboard options for goal-oriented instructions, where such options exist. This is especially important for improving the program's accessibility.

Use of non-written media

The use of non-written media is encouraged as a supplement to written descriptions. This includes:

> Animated GIFs
> Screenshots of relevant parts of the user interface

Creating animated GIFs

Animated GIFs offer many advantages over screenshots and videos in that they expose in the shortest amount of time the sequence of actions required to achieve a particular task. There are lots of tools available for creating GIFs, however we recommend the following workflow to ensure crisp and clear image quality while maintaining as small as possible file size (ideally <2MB per GIF).

> Use only the MuseScore 4 interface, and set its appearance to dark mode with blue highlights (to achieve consistency across the entire handbook)
> Plan and rehearse the mouse clicks and keyboard shortcuts you will use, aiming to demonstrate the required steps in as short as possible time (ideally <10s)
> Use a free tool like gifcap　　to record the contents of your screen
> Use a free tool like KeyCastr　　to record keystrokes (where required)
> Only show the amount of UI required demonstrate a particular task

Linking to other pages

It's really helpful to link to other pages in the handbook. You might do this wherever you mention a different part of the user interface, or even when referring back to previous versions of the handbook.

There is a specific process for adding links to other handbook pages, which will allow accurate redirects regardless of the language version being read.

Use the right syntax

[node:######,title="Name of the page you want to link to"]

or, to link to a specific heading within the page:

[node:######,fragment="heading-slug",title="Name of the page you want to link to"]

Link to the page's node number, not the page's URL

To find a page's node number:

> Open the desired page in your browser
> Click the "three dots" icon in the top-right of the page
> Click **Edit** in the context menu that appears
> Click on your browser's search bar to read the URL

You will find the page's node number in the URL address visible in this edit screen (yes, it only appears in the edit screen). It will look something like this:
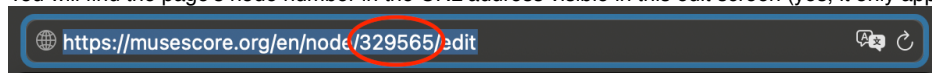
You can use this as a bookmarlet in your bookmarks

```
javascript:void function()
{prompt("",`[node:${drupalSettings.path.currentPath.replace("node/","")}${document.querySelector("meta[property=\"og:title\"]").content?`,tit
`,fragment="${decodeURIComponent(window.location.hash).replace("#","")}"`:""}]`)}();
```

Taken from node,title,fragment bookmarklet

Syntax

The handbook is written in MarkDown with a few permitted HTML tags.

If you're not familiar with MarkDown, it doesn't take long to learn. Get started by reading this page first　　(a MuseScore account is required to properly view the content on that page, also note that you cannot use Filtered HTML anymore).

Some examples for stuff beyond MarkDown:

Keys
> `<kbd><kbd>A</kbd></kbd>`, looks like `A`. (See Writing keyboard shortcuts below.)

Key combinations
> `<kbd><kbd>Shift</kbd>+<kbd>A</kbd></kbd>`, looks like `Shift+A`. (See Writing keyboard shortcuts below.)

Buttons
> `<kbd><samp class="button">Advanced Style Properties…</samp></kbd>`, looks like `Advanced Style Properties…`, but this particular form is not used in the MuseScore 4 handbook (instead use **bold** for text that appears in the program).

Menu entries
> `__File→Open__`, looks like **File→Open**

Images
> `<img src="image URL" alt="File name description" width="500px"/>`, can be a useful alternative to inline images, where the image width needs to be specified

Writing keyboard shortcuts

Use the <kbd> syntax described above and follow these guidelines:

For accessibility reasons, always use words instead of symbols for the names of all whitespace keys, arrow keys, and modifier keys.

> Good: `Cmd+Space`; `Win+Return`; `Shift+Tab`

> Bad: ⌘+␣; ⊞+⏎; ⇧+⇥

For keys that represent printable characters, the appropriate character should be used (e.g. write `$` not `Dollar`).

Use common abbreviations like `Ctrl`, `Cmd`, `Esc`, `Del`, `PgDn`. Don't abbreviate key names that are not normally abbreviated.

Except where it matters, prefer `Return` instead of `Enter`, and `Del` instead of `Backspace`.

For combinations, write modifier keys in this order: `Win+Ctrl+Alt+Shift+Fn+…` (Mac: `Ctrl+Cmd+Option+Shift+Fn+…`).

When in doubt, consult Default keyboard shortcuts for the canonical way to write key names and combinations.

Leaving a revision log message

Finally, whenever you make a change to a page (however big or small!), please leave a concise message that briefly describes the changes you made. For example,

> Added content about xxx
> Added images
> Corrected content
> Added keyboard tags

Leave this information in the **Revision log message** text field in the right panel of the **Edit** view for each page:

Published
Last saved: 2022-11-04 15:28
Author: bradleykunda
☑ Create new revision
Revision log message

Briefly describe the changes you have made.

Introduction to MuseScore 4

Download and installation

Windows

macOS

Linux

AppImage

Install

The easiest way to install the program is by using an **AppImage**:

> Go to the Download→Software   page at musescore.org
> Under **Linux→AppImage (recommended)**, click on the **Download** (64 bit) link
> When the download is complete, right-click on the AppImage and select **Properties**
> Switch to the **Permissions** tab
> The next step varies depending on your file manager:
>> **Nautilus-based (Nemo, Files, Caja)** : Check the "Allow executing file as program" box.
>> **Dolphin**: Check the "Is executable" box.
>> **Thunar**: Check the "Allow this file to run as a program" box.
>> **PCManFM**: Change the "Execute" option in the drop down list to "Anyone".
> Exit the dialog.
> Right-click inside the directory in which the AppImage is installed and select **Open in Terminal**
> In the Terminal type, **./[file name] install** (the dot and slash at the beginning are important!)

Steps 7–8 ensure that a MuseScore entry appears in the system's menu and is linked to the new location of the AppImage (/home/[user name]/.local/bin). The correct file associations are also automatically made.

Note: Instead of steps 7 and 8 (above) you can, of course, install using the absolute file path instead. That is:

> Open the Terminal
> Type **[file path] install**

Tip: if you apply copy to the AppImage and press `Ctrl+Shift+V` in the terminal this will enter the absolute file path of the file that has just been "copied".

Uninstall

No formal uninstall proceedure is needed to remove the installed AppImage. Just delete menu entries and any shortcuts manually, then delete the App itself, and its links (which will be in ~/.local/bin).

Create your first score

We'll start by creating a new score from a template (Alternatively, you can learn about creating a score from scratch in Setting up your score).

To create a score from a template:

Click **New score** in the **Scores** screen
In the **New score** dialog that appears, browse templates by **Category**, or use the search bar to look up a template directly
Click **Next** to enter additional score information (or skip this step and let MuseScore pre-fill your score with default information, which you can always change later)
Click **Done** to create your new score
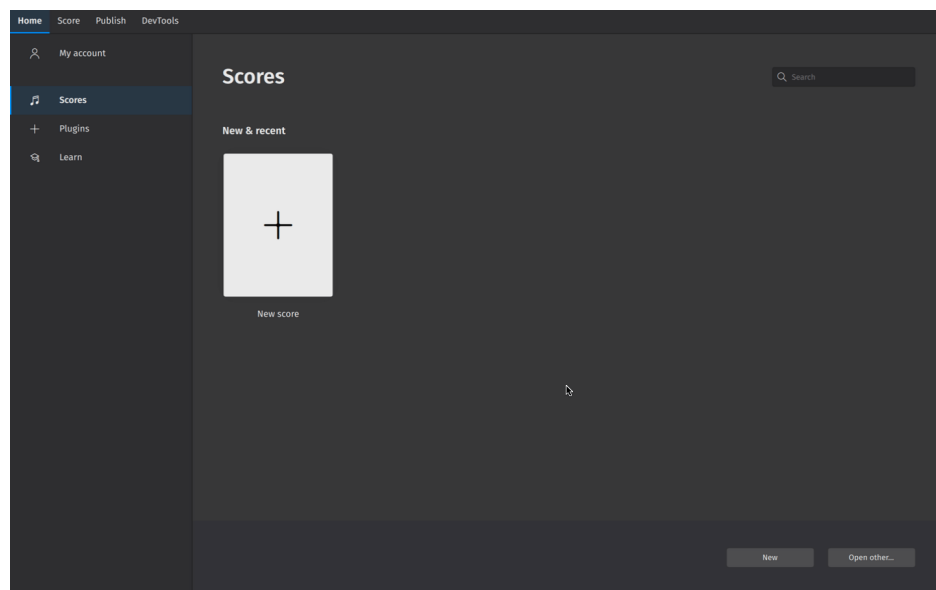
Entering score information

In the **Additional score information** screen, you can set:

The initial key signature (the default key signature contains no sharps or flats)
The initial time signature (the default time signature is 4/4)
The initial tempo (Click **Tempo**, then **Show tempo marking on my score** for this to appear)
A pickup measure (anacrusis or upbeat measure), and its duration
The initial number of measures in the score (the default is 32, but you can add/remove measures from the score edit window)

Entering notes

The simplest way to enter notes in MuseScore is to:

Hit `N` on your keyboard to enter note input mode
Start typing note names (`A, B, C, D, E, F, G`)
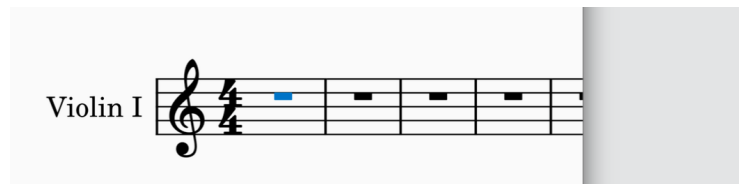
You're now engraving in MuseScore! You'll notice the blue note input highlight, which indicates that you are in note input mode. It shows you where in the measure your next note will be entered.

You can specify the duration of each note you enter in the **Note input** toolbar. To change note duration:

Ensure you are in note input mode (See above)
Click on the desired note duration, or
Use shortcut keys `1` through `7` to select different note values
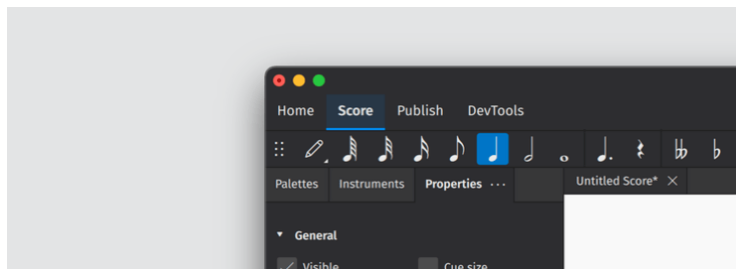
Learn more about this topic in <u>Entering notes and rests</u>.

Adding items from the palettes

The **Palettes** panel contains almost every notational object you might need to add detail to your score. The simplest way to add palette items to your notation is to:

Select an existing object (or range of objects) in your score (e.g. a notehead, clef, measure, etc.)
In the **Palettes** panel, open a palette by clicking the triangular arrow button
Click once on a palette object
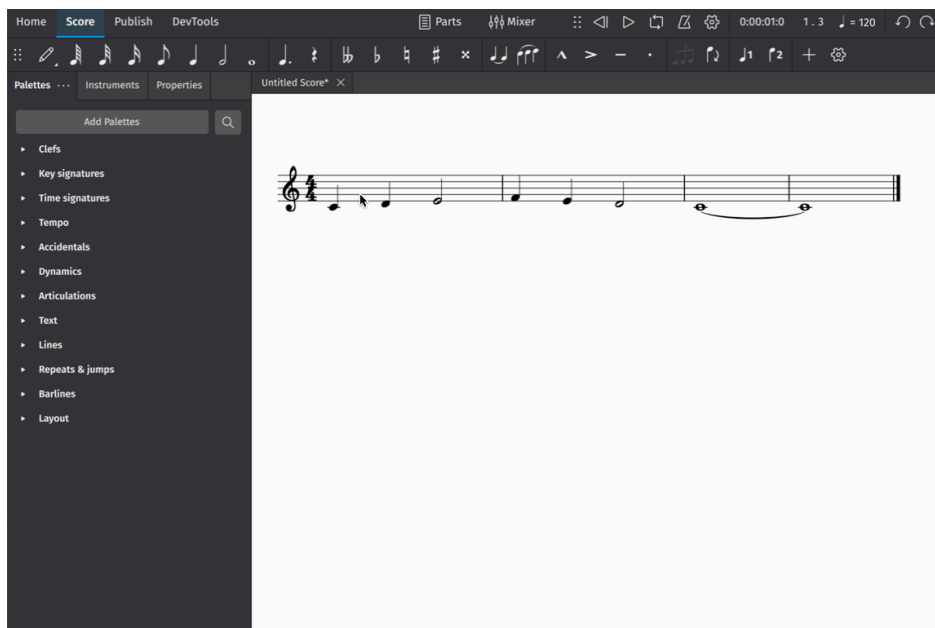
Learn more about this topic in <u>Palettes</u>

Making adjustments in Properties

The **Properties** panel can be revealed by clicking on the **Properties** tab on the left side of the screen:
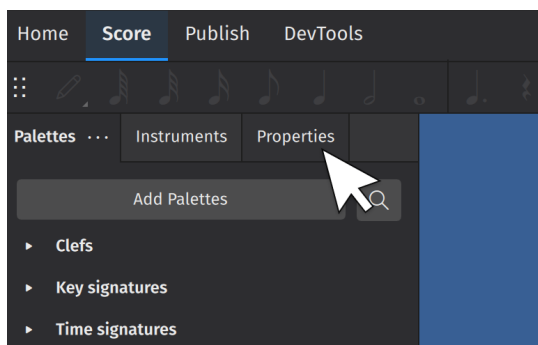
(Users of MuseScore prior to version 4 will know this as the Inspector).

The properties panel will show settings that are specific to the object being selected. These settings usually affect the visual appearance of the selected object. Most of the time, changes you make in **Properties** will apply only to the object you have selected (e.g. you'll change the selected hairpin, and not every hairpin in your score).

As you add details to your score, click on any object to see what settings are available.
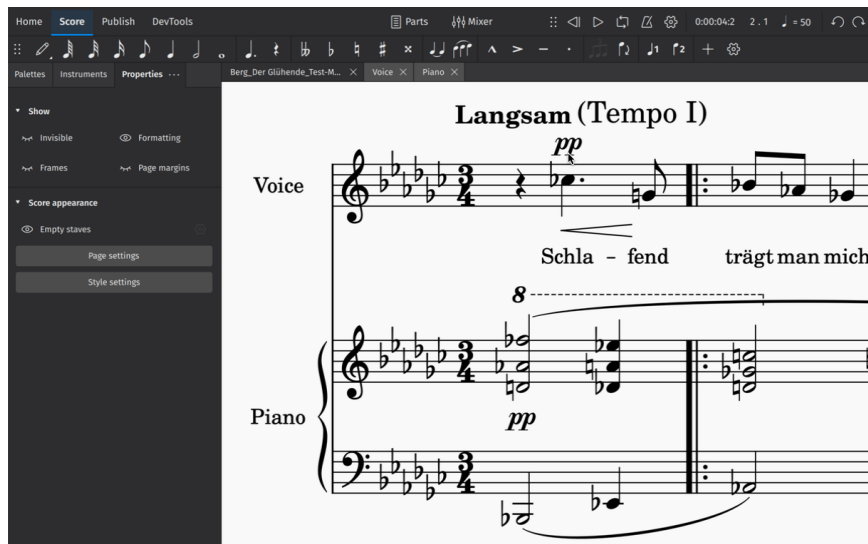
Learn more about this topic in Properties.

Inserting and deleting measures

To insert a single measure:

> Click on a measure to select it
> In the **Measure** section of **Properties**, click **Insert measures**
> Click the **+** button

This **Measure** section contains controls that allow you to insert multiple measures at once. Simply set the number of measures you wish to insert in the text field. You can also use the dropdown menu to change the point where new measures will be inserted.

To delete a measure or group of measures:

> Select the measure(s) you wish to delete
> In the **Measures** section, click the trash can icon
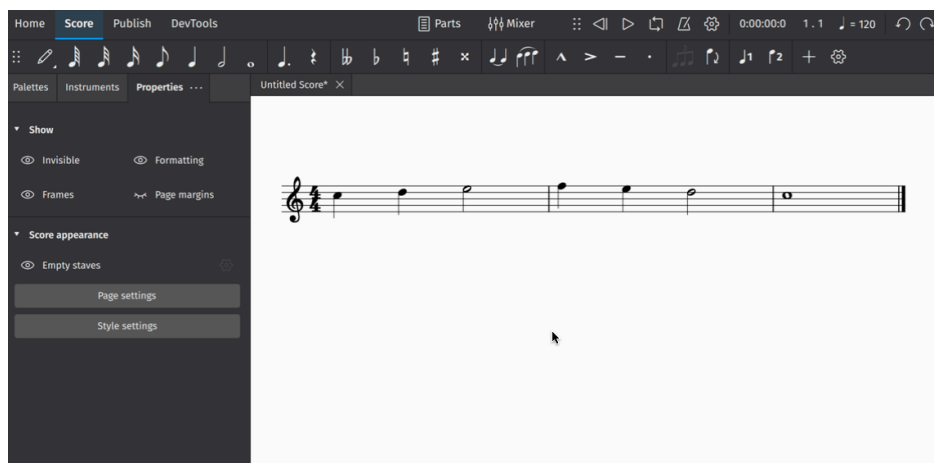
More information on this topic can be found in Measures.

Exporting your score

Export allows you to create non-MuseScore files, such as PDF, MusicXML, MIDI, and various audio and image formats.

To export your score:

> Select the **Publish** tab
> Click **Export**
> Select the parts you wish to export
> Choose the file format for your exported file(s)
> If exporting multiple parts, choose whether you want each part combined into one file or exported as a separate file
> Click **Export**

You can also share scores online on musescore.com   .

Saving your score

Scores can be saved locally or to your MuseScore cloud storage.

To save your score:

Go to **File**
Click **Save**

A dialog opens asking you "How would you like to save", then offering you the options of "Save to the cloud" or "Save to computer".

Save to computer

The **Save to computer** option triggers your operating system's "Save" dialog, allowing you to save the score as a (compressed) MuseScore file, **.mscz**.

Save to the cloud

Scores saved online (to the cloud) appear in the program's **Home: Scores** tab with a cloud symbol at the corner of the file icon. A copy is also automatically saved on your computer in the **Cloud scores** folder in your user "MuseScore 4" folder.

Learn more about this topic in Opening and saving scores.

New features in MuseScore 4

If you're coming to MuseScore 4 from earlier versions, you'll notice changes not only to the user interface, but also to many familiar features and ways of doing things. These changes have been designed to improve the user experience while providing much greater functionality. Here's a very quick overview of some of the major changes.

New user interface

MuseScore 4 comes with a sleek new interface. Nearly every part of the application has been completely redesigned to be cleaner and easier to read. You can choose between light, dark and high contrast themes, as well as pick your preferred accent color. Changes to the appearance of the app can be made in Preferences.

Instruments and parts

A new instruments panel allows you to hide, rearrange and customize your instruments without having to leave the score view.

The instruments panel integrates tightly with the process of creating parts, making it much easier to produce custom parts with any combination of available instruments. There's now also a convenient button in the toolbar that allows you to quickly open any available part.

Inspector

The Inspector from earlier versions of MuseScore is now known as the Properties panel. Every option in this panel has been re-organized and the entire experience has been streamlined. By default, the Properties panel displays multiple useful options, like the ability to show or hide empty staves and various other types of score markings. Whereas previously you needed to select single element types before you could make changes to them, MuseScore 4 always displays relevant settings, regardless of how many different elements you have selected.

New playback and VSTi support

Playback improvements are the single largest change to MuseScore 4. Apart from new sample libraries (*Muse Sounds*, available as a separate download), there's now support for VSTi plugins, which can be applied to instruments using the new mixer panel. The mixer also lets you easily switch between VSTi, SoundFonts and the *Muse Sounds* libraries, while also supporting VST effects. Sounds will now always be saved on a per-score basis, so there is no longer any need for the Synthesizer panel found in MuseScore 3 (this has been removed in MuseScore 4). If you previously used SFZ files for playback in MuseScore 3, we now recommend that you use a free VST sampler, like Sfizz   or Sforzando   , both of which support SFZ playback.

Engraving improvements

MuseScore 4 features many engraving improvements, some of which will have an effect on the appearance and layout of scores created in earlier versions. The most significant changes affect the placement of beams, slurs and ties, horizontal spacing, and page layout. There are far too many changes to list here, so those interested in learning more about the particularities may wish to read this dedicated document (link forthcoming) that explains and illustrates everything in detail.

An unavoidable consequence of having made such significant engraving improvements is that it will not be possible to open a score in MuseScore 4 from an earlier version of MuseScore and have it look identical.

Cloud storage

When you save a document for the first time, you'll now be asked whether you want to save your file locally to your computer, or to the cloud. This new option is part of an exciting expansion we are making to services on musescore.com. Learn more about this in Open/Save/Export/Print and Share Scores Online.

Other changes

As you use the program, you'll find lots of other small but significant changes that have been designed to make the process of composing and notating music just that bit easier. These include:

An expanded note input toolbar, with one-click access to frequently used elements like tuplets and articulation marks. There's also a convenient "+" menu where you can quickly add everything from notes and intervals, to frames and text elements.
Easy-access features in the Properties panel that let you quickly add and remove measures, and show and hide empty staves
A beautiful new mixer
Improvements to the time signature properties dialog
A streamlined experience for setting the language of the app
A new Learn center for instructional videos on how to get the most from the app

Viewing and navigation

Accessibility

Screen readers

MuseScore 4 supports the following screen readers on each operating system:

Windows 10 and 11: Narrator and NVDA
macOS: VoiceOver
Linux: Orca

Speech with JAWS is mostly working, but the output is not as complete as it is with Narrator or NVDA.

Speech on Windows

If screen reader speech output stops working for you at any time, try pressing `Alt+F` to focus the File menu, then press `Esc` twice to return to where you were in the app, at which point speech should work again as normal. It can be necessary to do this if you start the screen reader after MuseScore is already running, for example.

Speech on macOS

VoiceOver's Quick Nav mode   must be turned off while using MuseScore 4. You can toggle Quick Nav on or off by pressing the `Left` and `Right` arrow keys simultaneously while VoiceOver is running, or you can disable Quick Nav from within VoiceOver Utility > Commanders.

MuseScore's interface is navigable with the tab cursor and with VoiceOver's own cursor. In general it's best to use the tab cursor because this matches the interface on other platforms, and as such is the interface described in most documentation and tutorials. VoiceOver's cursor can be used to reach areas of the application that are not yet accessible via the tab cursor. When using the tab cursor, remember to use the arrow keys as well as `Tab` for navigation (see Navigating the UI).

Speech on Linux

On Linux it is necessary to start the screen reader running before you launch MuseScore, otherwise accessibility features will be disabled to save system resources. If you forget to do this, simply exit MuseScore and launch it again. The same is true of all Linux applications built on the Qt framework.

Orca is the most feature-complete screen reader available for Linux. Orca is built into the GNOME desktop environment, so it is recommended that Linux users with accessibility needs use a distribution based on GNOME or one of its derivatives.

Keyboard access

Navigating the UI

Keyboard navigation in MuseScore 4's user interface (UI) relies on the arrow keys in addition to the tab key. Press the tab key to cycle through each control group, then use the arrow keys to navigate to individual controls within the group. This new system of navigation allows you to navigate to anywhere in the interface with far fewer keypresses than if the tab key was used to access every individual control, as is commonly the case in other applications, including previous versions of MuseScore. The new navigation system is still being refined, and feedback is welcome in the Development Forum   .

In addition to the arrow keys and tab, there is a new `F6` shortcut that will take you between different panels within the program. Here is how the navigation shortcuts work together to create a hierarchical system of navigation:

`Up`, `Down`, `Left` and `Right` **arrow keys:** Move focus from one control to the next within a control group (e.g. navigate between buttons in a toolbar).

`Tab` and `Shift+Tab`**:** Move focus out of one control group and into the next one (e.g. navigate between toolbars).

`F6` and `Shift+F6`**:** Move focus between panels and large sections of the UI (e.g. navigate from toolbars to the Palettes or notation view).

By default, the grave accent key ` (sometimes called "backtick") can be used as an alternative to `F6` for navigation between panels. Grave accent is found above the `Tab` key on most QWERTY keyboards. If it's not there on your keyboard, consider changing this shortcut in Preferences to set it to whatever key is above `Tab` on your keyboard, as it can be convenient to have the navigation keys located close to each other.

Once you have navigated to a button or control, in most cases it can be activated by pressing the `Spacebar`, `Enter` or `Return` key. Within lists and other item views, `Spacebar` is often used to select items rather than to activate them. Once selected, certain items can be deleted by pressing the `Delete` key, or modified by tabbing to other UI controls that become active once something has been selected. For example, this approach can be used within the Instruments panel to remove instruments that you have previously added to the score.

Navigating the score

Navigation within the score (i.e. inside the "Notation view") is much the same as it was in MuseScore 3. Here are the shortcuts that are of particular value to accessibility users:

Shortcut	Action
Alt+Right and Alt+Left	**Move to next or previous element.** These shortcuts enable you to visit all kinds of notation elements, not just notes and rests.
Alt+Up and Alt+Down	**Move to note above or below.** These shortcuts enable you to move between individual notes in a chord, and also to reach notes and rests in other voices and in other staves.
F2 or Alt+Shift+E	**Edit selected element.** This is the keyboard equivalent of double-clicking on an element with the mouse. It enables you to edit text objects, including lyrics, dynamics, and tempo markings. It also enables you to adjust the length of line elements such as hairpins, slurs, and voltas (use the Tab key to change which end of the line you are adjusting). When you are done editing, press Esc to return to Normal mode.

Other aspects of keyboard navigation are described on pages throughout this handbook.

Video tutorials

The following accessibility tutorials are designed to get you up and running with MuseScore, using your keyboard and screen reader. They don't cover every aspect of the program, but they should give you a solid foundation that will enable you can take full advantage of the rest of this Handbook.

Video	Description
Installing MuseScore	This video covers the installation of MuseScore on Windows, including Muse Hub and Muse Sounds. The process is similar on macOS and Linux, although on Linux you need to install Muse Hub and MuseScore separately.
Score setup	This video covers the initial setup of your score, including choosing instruments and selecting the key and time signature and other settings.
Entering music	This video covers basic note input.
Adding markings	This video covers adding markings such as dynamics to your score, by using the palettes.
The user interface	This video walks through the main window of the program, so you can understand where all the different panels, toolbars, and controls are, and how to reach them by keyboard.
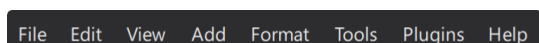
The user interface

Menu bar

The **Menu bar** in MuseScore 4 contains the following menus:

- **File**: Create a new file, open and save files, import and export various formats, create and edit instrument parts, and print
- **Edit**: Undo and redo options, copy/cut/paste options, and Find / Go to function
- **View**: Show or hide various palettes, dialogs, and other workspace elements
- **Add**: Add different kinds of score elements; notes, text, measures etc.
- **Format**: Adjust global and local formatting of the score. Also allows you to stretch or contract the score, load and save score styles, and much more
- **Tools**: Many useful commands are available here including transpose, exchange voices, slash notation etc.
- **Plugins**: Manage your plugins
- **Help**: Access the online handbook, report bugs and give feedback, and restore factory settings
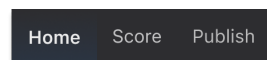
Keyboard users on Windows and Linux can access these menus by holding the Alt key and pressing a certain letter or number key, known as the *mnemonic access key*, that is displayed with an underline in the name of the menu item you are looking for. For example, press Alt+F for **File** followed by Alt+A for **Save as**. The letters 'F' and 'a' are underlined in the UI while the Alt key is held.

On macOS, MuseScore's menus are part of the system-wide menu bar, which you can navigate to by pressing Ctrl+F2.

Home tab

Beneath the main menu are three tabs, the first of which is the **Home** tab. This tab contains the following sections:

My account

Create a new MuseScore account, or login to your existing account. With an active account, you can get technical assistance and report bugs in the forums at musescore.org   . You can also save your files to the cloud on musescore.com   .

Scores

This section allows you to set up a new score, or to open an existing one. Learn about creating new scores in Setting up your score.

Plugins

This window displays a list of available plugins. See the chapter on Plugins to learn about managing these useful add-ons.

Learn

This is where video tutorials are hosted. Clicking on any video tutorial opens it on the official MuseScore YouTube channel .

Score tab

This are is where you do most of your work in MuseScore, including adding music notation and listening to the playback of your score. The workspace consist of several regions (numbered according to labels in the below diagram):
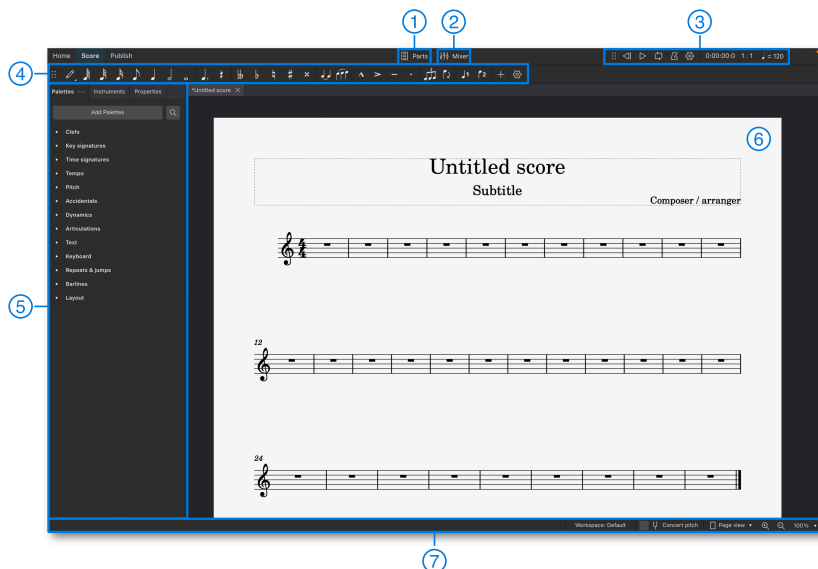
Parts: The button near the top center of the window opens the **Parts** dialog, where you can create, edit and delete instrument part scores.
Mixer: The button to the right of **Parts** opens and closes the **Mixer** panel.
Playback toolbar. Located to the right of the mixer icon.
Note input toolbar: Extending across the program window, this includes essential notation elements used in score writing. Use it to set the note input duration, toggle accidentals, apply common articulations, enter tuplets, and change between voices.
Side bar: The area on the left-hand side of the program window contains various panels such as Palettes, Properties, and Instruments. These can be hidden or displayed as desired.
Document/Score window: This area contains your score, and is where notation elements are added, edited, and deleted.
Status bar: This runs along the bottom of the window. The left-hand side displays useful information about the score when one or more elements are selected. The right-hand side contains controls for switching between workspaces, selecting concert or written pitch views, and specifying the page display and zoom factor (magnification).

Keyboard users can use the Tab key or F6 to navigate between these UI regions via the keyboard. Within each region, navigation is performed with the arrow keys and Tab.

Almost all panels and toolbars can be un-docked and repositioned according to your project requirements and workflow preferences. Learn more about this in Workspaces.

Publish tab
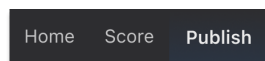
This tab allows you to view your score without the clutter of the note input toolbar or sidebar panels. There are options to print the score, and to export it in a variety of image, audio and document formats. When your score is finished, you can also publish it to musescore.com .

Context menus

In certain parts of the application, primarily in the Score tab, context menus are available with additional functionality, such as options to copy, edit, customise, delete, or view the properties of whatever item(s) were selected at the time you opened the menu.

Element context menus

Within the score, every element has a context menu. To open the context menu for a particular element, right-click on the element with the mouse, or select the element via the keyboard and press Shift+F10 (some PC keyboards also have a dedicated Menu key near to the right Ctrl key). The exact options available in the context menu can differ depending on the type of element you selected, so it is worth experimenting to find out what options are available for different kinds of elements. For example, when you right-click on an empty region within a measure the resulting context menu contains

options for **Staff/Part properties** and **Measure properties**. This is currently the only way to get to those options and the dialogs they lead to.

UI context menus

Outside of the score, the presence of a context menu is often indicated by a small button with three dots, or by a settings cog. Press the button to open the menu. Sometimes the button is associated with another item in the vicinity, such as in the Palettes, where there is three-dots button for each palette. In this case you can right-click on the palette name, or select it with the keyboard and press the `Shift+F10` or `Menu` key shortcut, as an alternative to using the three-dots button.

Navigating your score

Scrolling

Mouse wheel

> Use the scroll wheel to move the view up and down.
> Use `Shift` plus the scroll wheel to move the view left and right.

Scrollbars

Scrollbars appear at the right-hand and bottom edges of the score view. Click and drag them to quickly move the score view up and down, or left and right. Scrollbars are usually hidden from view, but can be revealed by hovering over the edge of the score view with your mouse.

Keyboard

You can also scroll the score using the `PgUp`, `PgDn`, `Home`, and `End` keys on your keyboard. If your keyboard lacks dedicated keys for these functions, most systems will also allow you to access these functions by holding `Fn` or a similar key, then pressing `Up`, `Down`, `Left`, or `Right` respectively.

By themselves, `PgUp` and `PgDn` scroll one screenful at a time. This may be less than an actual page of your score. If you hold `Ctrl` (Mac: `Cmd`) while pressing `PgUp` or `PgDn`, it moves a full page at a time.

Element navigation

When a single element is selected in your score, it acts as a cursor. You can change the selection—and thus move the cursor—using common keyboard shortcuts.

The `Left` and `Right` keys will move horizontally through your score one note or rest at a time. If you hold `Ctrl` (Mac: `Cmd`) while pressing `Left` or `Right`, you can navigate a full measure at a time.

To move the cursor vertically through the various notes, voices, and staves in your score, use the shortcuts `Alt+Up` and `Alt+Down` (Mac: `Option+Up` and `Option+Down`).

You can also use the shortcuts `Alt+Left` and `Alt+Right` (Mac: `Option+Left` and `Option+Right`) to select elements other than notes or rests. These commands allow you select almost any elements—including articulations, barlines, hairpins, and more—using the keyboard alone.

In addition, `Ctrl+Home` (Mac: `Cmd+Home`) will select the first element in your score, and `Ctrl+End` (Mac: `Cmd+End`) will select the last element. Again, for keyboards that lack dedicated `Home` and `End` keys, most systems provide the alternative of `Fn+Left` and `Fn+Right` respectively.

See Default keyboard shortcuts to learn more.

Navigator

The Navigator is a panel that displays thumbnails of score pages. To view or hide the Navigator, click **View → Navigator**.
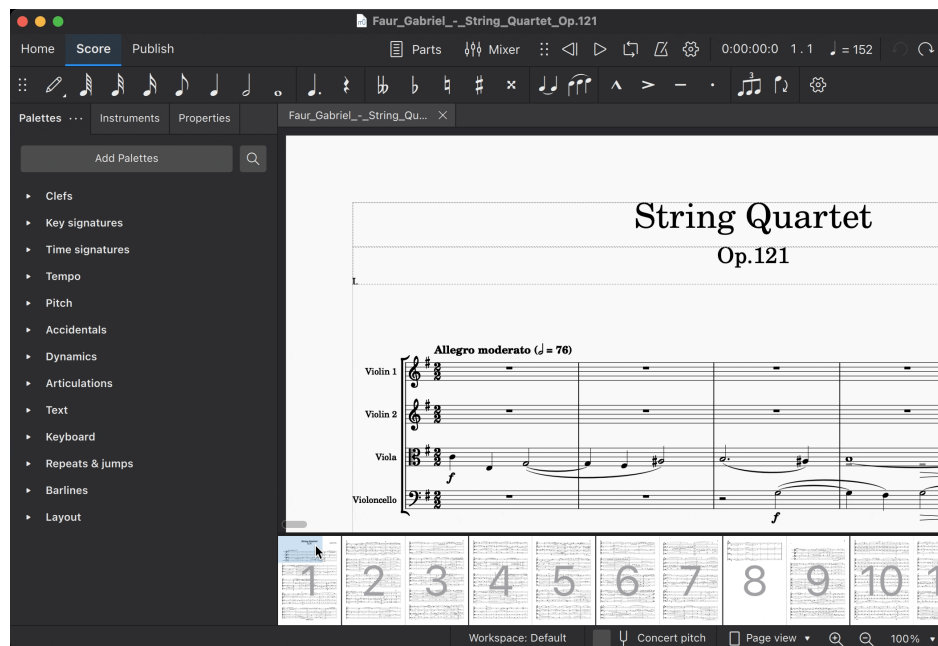
The blue bounding box represents the area of the score currently in focus in the score view. Click on the box and drag it to move around your score.

Timeline

A navigation aid that shows instruments and score structure. For details, see Timeline.

Views

You can switch between different views of the score using the pop-up in the right-hand side of the status bar.

Page view

The score is shown as it will appear when printed or exported as a PDF or image file: that is, page by page, with margins. MuseScore applies system (line) and page breaks automatically, according to the settings made in Page settings and Style. In addition, you can apply your own system (line), page or section breaks.

Continuous view (horizontal)

The score is shown as one unbroken system. Even if the starting point is not in view, measure numbers, instrument names, clefs, time and key signatures will always be displayed on the left of the window.

Continuous view (vertical)

The score is shown as a single page with a header but no margins, and with an infinite page height. System (line) breaks are added automatically, according to the settings made in Page settings and Style. In addition, you can apply your own system (line) or section breaks.

Zoom

There are several ways to zoom the score in or out:

Zoom in

`Ctrl++` (Mac: `Cmd++`)
or scroll **up** with the mouse scroll wheel while holding `Ctrl` (Mac: `Cmd`).

Zoom out

`Ctrl+−` (Mac: `Cmd+−`)
or scroll **down** with the mouse scroll wheel while holding `Ctrl` (Mac: `Cmd`).

Status bar zoom controls

To zoom in and out of your score from the **Status bar** controls:

    Click on the magnifying glass icons in the right-hand area of the status bar
    Click the number field to the right of these icons, then type a custom zoom level
    Choose from one of the preset zoom levels in the pop-up list on the extreme right
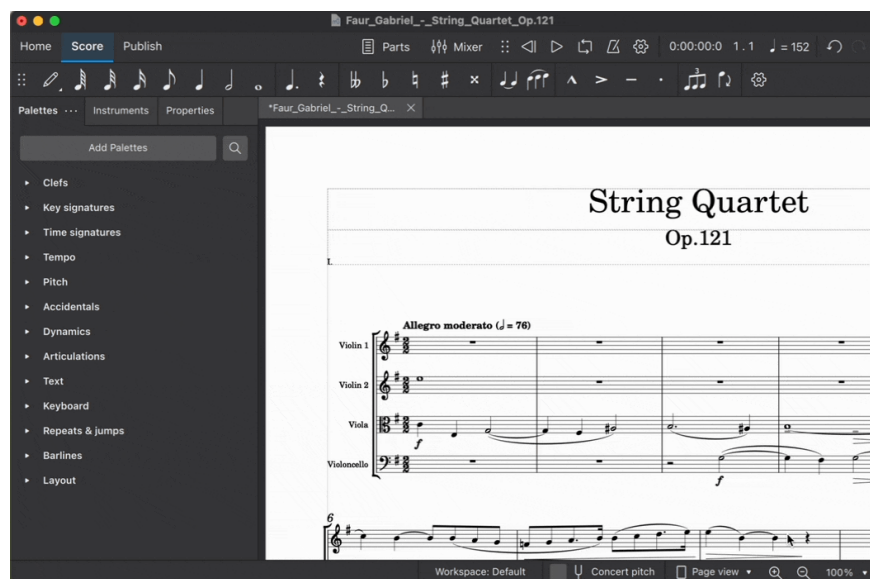
Restoring 100% zoom

This restores the zoom to the default (100%) level.

`Ctrl+0` (Mac: `Cmd+0`)

Find/Go to

The **Find/Go to** panel allows you to speedily navigate to a specific measure, rehearsal mark or page number in the score.

To show the panel:

    Go to **Edit → Find**, or
    Press `Ctrl+F` (Mac: `Cmd+F`).

To hide the panel:

    Click the **X** (close) button on the left side of the panel, or
    Press `Esc` while the panel has focus.

Navigating to a numbered measure

Enter the measure number (counting every measure, starting with 1, irrespective of pickup measures, section breaks or manual changes to measure number offsets).

Navigating to a numbered page

Enter the page number using the format **pXX** (where **XX** is the page number).

Navigating to a numerical rehearsal mark

Enter the number using the format **rXX** (where **XX** is the number of the rehearsal mark).

Navigating to an alphabetic rehearsal mark

Enter the name of the rehearsal mark (the search is *not* case sensitive).

Pro tip! It is best to avoid naming rehearsal marks with the single letters "R", "r", "P", "p", or one of these letters with an integer (e.g. "R1" or "p3"), as this can confuse the search algorithm.

Timeline

Overview

Timeline is a navigation aid that displays at the bottom of the program window, giving you an overview of the instruments and main structural elements measure-by-measure. You can easily move about the score by clicking on a measure or a structural element.

There are four parts to the timeline:

Meta labels

This is found in the top left corner of the timeline. These are the names of the meta rows.

Instrument labels

This is found in the bottom left corner of the timeline. These are the names of the rows in the main grid.

Meta rows

This is found in the top right corner of the timeline. These hold the meta values of the score.

Main grid

This is found in the bottom right corner of the timeline. This holds multiple 'cells' (a specific measure and staff in the score represented as a square)

Meta elements

Meta elements are those found in the score that are not notes, but are still important to the score—such as key signature, time signature, tempo, rehearsal marks, bar lines, and jumps and markers.
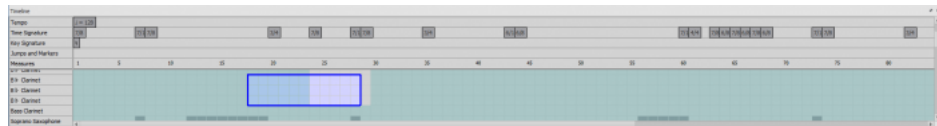
Basic interactions

Selecting a measure

To select a measure in the timeline, press the mouse button on the cell. A blue box will appear around the selected cell and the respective measure in the score will be selected. The score view will place the selected measure in view.

Selecting multiple measures

Drag selection

Holding `Shift` and holding the left mouse button and dragging the mouse over the main grid will create a selection box. Upon releasing the mouse button, all the cells underneath the selection box will be selected, as well as all the measures in the score.

[Shift] selection

If a cell is already selected, holding `Shift` and selecting another cell in the timeline will stretch the selection to that new cell, similar to how the score does

[Ctrl] selection

If no cells are currently selected, holding `Ctrl` and selecting a cell will select the entire measure

Clearing a selection

To clear selection, holding `Ctrl` and clicking anywhere on the grid or the meta rows will clear any current selection.

Meta values selection

Selecting the meta values on the timeline will attempt to select the respective meta values in the score.

Scrolling

Standard scrolling

Scrolling the mouse wheel up or down will move the grid and instrument labels down or up respectively. The meta labels and rows do not move.

[Shift] scrolling

Holding `Shift` and scrolling the mouse wheel up or down will move the grid and meta rows left or right respectively. The meta labels and instrument labels do not move.

[Alt] scrolling

Holding `Alt` and scrolling the mouse wheel up or down will move the grid and meta rows left or right respectively, faster than `Shift` scrolling. The meta labels and instrument labels do not move.

Dragging

To drag the contents of the timeline, hold the left mouse button and move it around.

Labels interaction

Rearranging meta labels

All meta labels besides the measures meta may be rearranged in any way. By moving the mouse cursor onto one of the meta labels, small up and down arrows will appear. Click the left mouse button on the up arrow to swap the meta label with the one above it. Click the left mouse button on the down arrow to swap the meta label with the one below it.

Collapsing the meta labels

In order to hide all the meta labels while keeping all the meta information on the timeline, click the left mouse button on the measures meta to collapse all the currently visible meta rows into one row, where the meta values are staggered in that row. Click the left mouse button again on the measures meta to expand the meta rows.
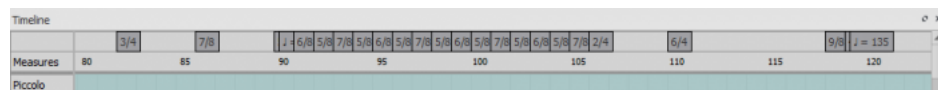
Hiding instruments

All instruments--hidden or not--will be displayed on the timeline. To start this interaction, the mouse cursor is moved over an instrument label. A small eye will appear on the right side of the label that is open if the instrument is visible on the score, and closed if the instrument is hidden. Click the left mouse button on the eye to toggle between the two options.
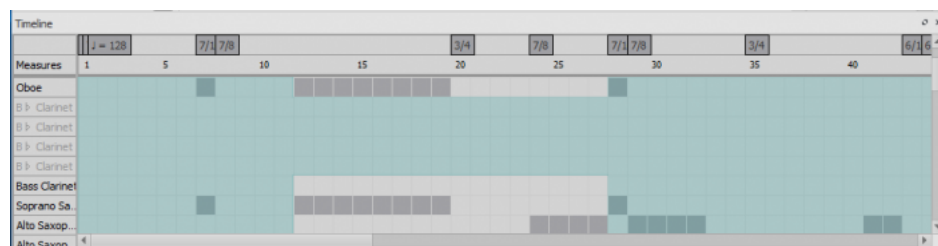
Zooming

To zoom in or out of the score, hold `Ctrl` and scroll the mouse wheel up or down respectively (Mac: `Cmd` + scroll).

Basics

Setting up your score

Overview

To create a new score, use one of the following options:

> in the <u>Home: Scores</u> tab, select **New score**, or click **New** (bottom right).
> From the menu, select **File→New**.
> Use the keyboard shortcut, `Ctrl+N` (Mac: `Cmd+N`).
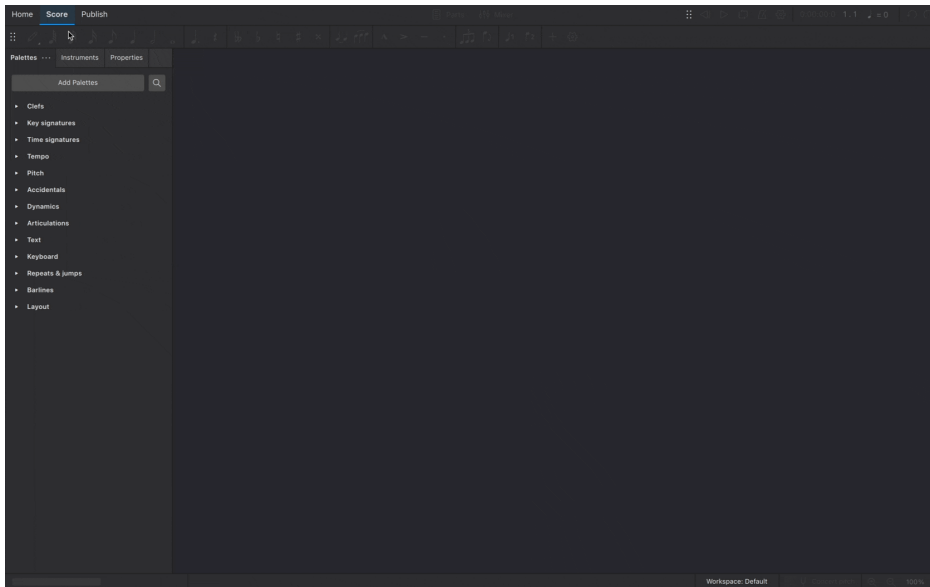
This will open the **New Score** dialog (More instructions about this dialog are below). Once you've finished setting up your score, it will be visible in the **Score** tab.

Instruments

When creating a new score, you can either choose the instruments yourself, or use a template that comes pre-configured with appropriate instruments (these can always be changed later).

Choose instruments

In the **New Score** dialog, make sure the **Choose instruments** tab is selected.
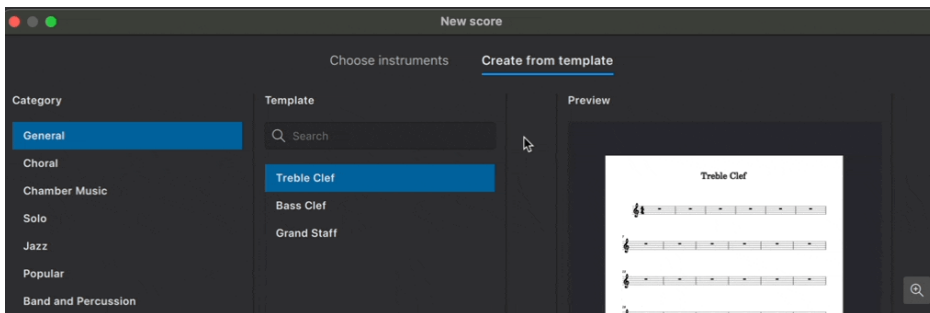
MuseScore contains over 500 instruments, grouped according to the instrument family they belong to.

The dropdown menu under the **Family** heading on the left filters instruments by type/genre. "Common" is selected by default, which displays some of the most common instruments or voices you are likely to need. if you want to display all available instruments, select **All instruments**.

If you know the instrument/voice you are looking for, you can simply type its name, or part name, in the search bar under the **Instruments** heading. Press the clear button (**X**) to clear the selection.

Adding instruments

To add an instrument to your score:

> Click on the instrument name to select it
> Click the → button to add the instrument to your score (Pro tip: double-clicking an instrument name does the same thing).
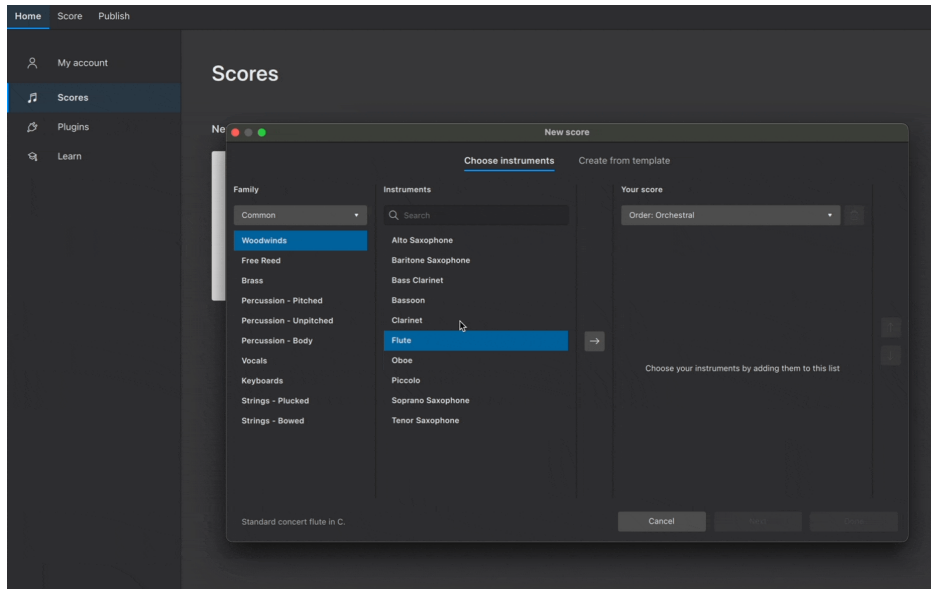
Instruments are automatically arranged according to the order shown in the dropdown menu under the **Your Score** heading on the right. From this menu, you can choose from a range of standard score configurations or use a custom one.

Make soloist

To make an existing instrument the soloist:

> Click on the instrument name (under the **Your score** heading on the right of the dialog)
> Click the "Make soloist" button.

This reorders an existing instrument in the score to the soloist position. This position is defined in the **Order …** dropdown list under the **Your Score** heading. For example, in an 'Orchestral' ordering system, soloists are above the strings. If required, you can designate multiple soloist instruments.

Changing order of instruments

To manually change the order of instruments:

> Select an instrument in the **Your Score** panel
> Click on ↑ or ↓ to change its position
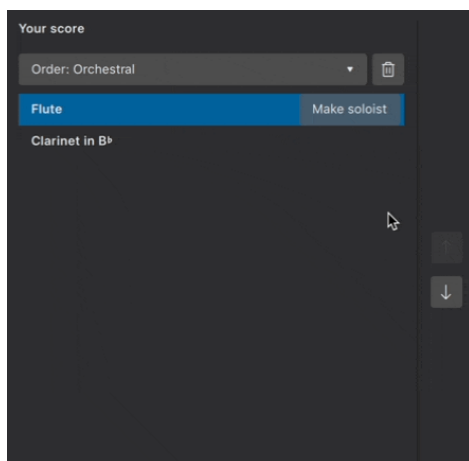
Removing instruments

To delete an instrument from your score:

> Select an instrument in the **Your Score** panel
> Click the trash icon
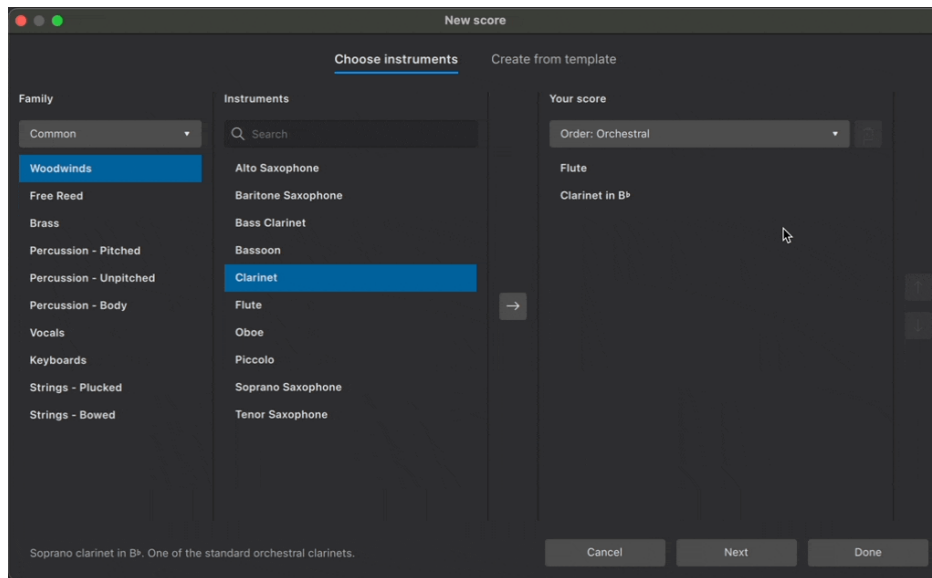
You can also delete multiple instruments at once by first holding down `Shift` and selecting multiple instruments, then clicking the trash icon.

Create from template

Scores can also be created from pre-configured templates.

Templates are organized into categories based on musical style or ensemble configuration. Each template contains the instruments most commonly required for a particular type of score. Instruments are ordered and styled according to conventional practice.

To create a score from a template:

        Click **Create from template**
        Select a group of templates from the **Category** panel
        Choose your desired template from the center panel
        Click **Done**
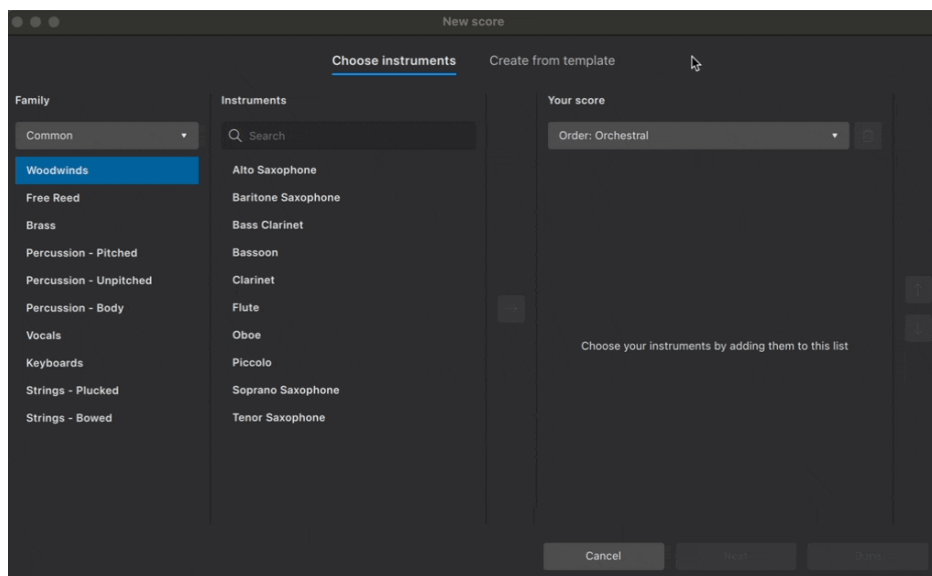
You can also search across all available templates in the search bar.

Visit Templates and styles to learn more templates, including how to create your own for future use.

Additional score information

Click **Next** in the **New score** dialog to specify additional information about your score.
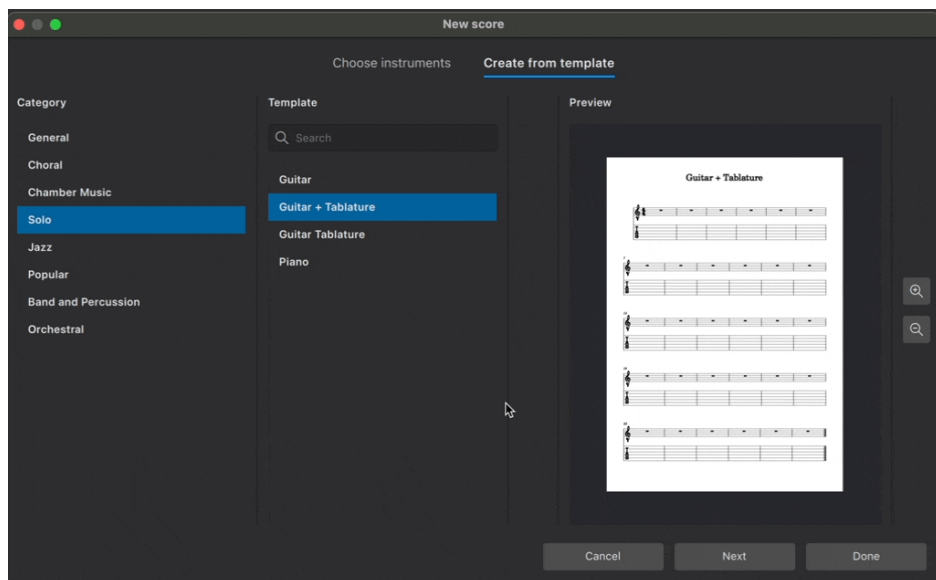
Key signature

By default, new scores are created with a key signature containing no sharps or flats (C major). Specify a different key signature by clicking the button under **Key signature**. Major keys are shown first; minor keys can be displayed by selecting the **Minor** tab.

Time signature

New scores will be created in 4/4 by default. Change this by clicking the button under **Time signature**. Change the number of beats per bar using the arrows in the spin box, and change the beat quality from the dropdown menu. You can also select common and cut-common (alla-breve) time signatures in this popup.

Tempo

By default, new scores will play at a tempo of crotchet (quarter note) = 120 beats per minute (bpm). Metronome markings are not automatically included in new scores.

To customize the starting playback tempo, and to show a metronome marking above the uppermost stave:

    Click the button under **Tempo**
    Tick **Show tempo marking on my score**
    Select the desired beat value
    Enter the desired number of beats per minute (20-400) in the text field or use the up and down arrows to scroll through the tempo range.

Learn more about tempo text indications, metronome markings, and playback speed in tempo markings.

Measures

New scores are created with 32 measures and no pickup (anacrusis). To change the starting number of measures in your new score:

    Click the button under **Measures**
    Enter the desired number of measures in the **Initial number of measures** field

Learn more about Adding and removing measures at any time after score creation.

To start your score with a pickup:

    Click the button under **Measures**
    Tick **Create pickup measure**
    Enter the desired number of beats for the pickup in the text field
    Select the metrical value of the pickup measure from the drop-down menu

You can always create a pickup later. Learn how to do this in Pickup and non-metered measures.

Title and other text

Enter text in the fields at the bottom of the **New score** dialog, and MuseScore will automatically place it in an appropriate format in your new score. You can enter text labels for the score's:

    Title
    Composer
    Subtitle
    Lyricist
    Copyright

This information also becomes data in the score's project properties (menu **File**), which you can change at any time.

Once you've finished specifying additional score information, click **Done** to confirm your selections and create your score.

Changing instruments after score creation

There are three ways to change existing score instruments:

> Use the keyboard shortcut I while in the **Score** tab
> Click **Add** from the Instruments panel (If this panel is not yet visible, press F7, or select **View → Instruments**)
> Click **Replace instrument** in the Staff/Part properties dialog

Entering notes and rests

Overview

inputting music via the computer keyboard is both quick and easy. To enter a note or rest, simply choose a duration, then type the pitch name (A-G) for a note or a 0 (zero) for a rest. You can also input notation using a mouse, MIDI keyboard or MuseScore's own virtual piano keyboard (see below for details).

MuseScore supports virtually unlimited undo, so you don't have to worry too much about making mistakes. Just click the undo button on the far right of the toolbar, or use the standard keyboard shortcut Ctrl+Z (Mac: Cmd+Z).

Entering notes

The information in this page refers primarily to music notation on standard staves. See also tablature and percussion notation.

The most common input method (and the one assumed on this page) is *step-time* in which notes and rests are entered one at a time. For other modes of entry see Alternative note input methods.

Selecting a start point

To add a note or rest to the score, start by selecting a location to begin entry. You can use the mouse or the keyboard navigation commands.
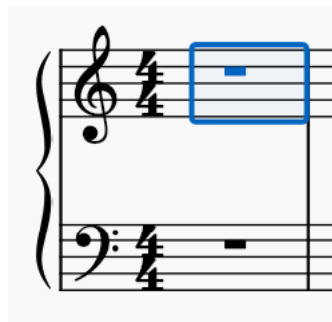
Entering note input mode

Next, enter note input mode by pressing the pen icon in the toolbar, or using the keyboard shortcut N. A note input cursor appears, indicating where the next note will be added.
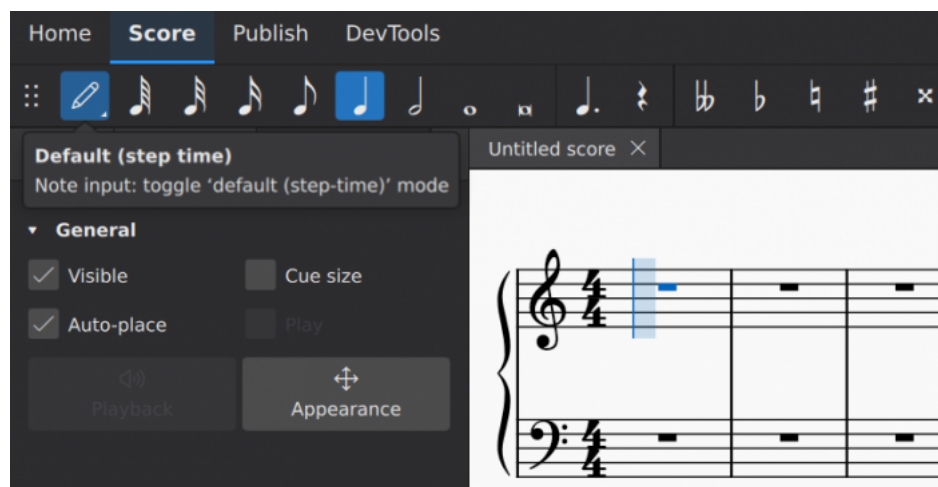
If you forget to select a starting location first, MuseScore will place the cursor at the last input position, or in some other logical place, so be sure the cursor is where you intend.

Once in note input mode, you will enter notes left to right by first selecting a duration and then entering a pitch or rest. When you are done entering notes in this location and are ready to do something else—for example, entering notes at a different location, adding other markings, or performing other operations like copy and paste—you can leave note input mode by clicking the note input button or pressing N again. You can also press Esc to return to

normal mode from note input or any other mode.

Selecting duration

While in note input mode, select a note value for the next note to be entered by:

Clicking a corresponding note icon in the **Note Input** toolbar (directly above the score window)

Entering the keyboard shortcut 1–9 corresponding to the desired duration
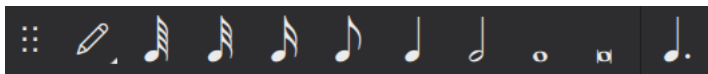
The keyboard shortcuts are designed to be efficient and easy to remember. The most common note values are eighth, quarter, and half (UK: quaver, crochet, minim) and these are represented by the keys 4, 5, and 6 respectively (the middle row of a numeric keypad). Shorter note values are represented by smaller numbers, longer values by larger numbers. The full list is as follows:

64th (hemidemisemiquaver): 1
32nd (demisemiquaver): 2
16th (semiquaver): 3
Eighth (quaver): 4
Quarter (crotchet): 5
Half (minim): 6
Whole (semibreve): 7
Double whole (breve): 8
Longa: 9
Dot: . (changes the selection into a dotted note/rest)

Other durations, including double dots and 128th notes, can be selected if you first customize your toolbar and/or define your own keyboard shortcuts.

Note: it is also possible to select duration using a MIDI keyboard, if you set up the keys you wish to use for this in advance.

Selecting pitch

Once you have selected a duration, you can enter pitches using the computer keyboard, mouse, MIDI keyboard, or virtual piano keyboard.

Selecting pitch using the computer keyboard

This is normally the most efficient way to enter notes in MuseScore.

To enter a note of a given pitch using the computer keyboard, simply press the corresponding letter (A–G) on your computer keyboard.

Notes entered in this way will replace any rests or notes that were already present at the cursor location. To add a note to an existing note or chord, press Shift while entering the note. See the section on chords below for more information.

When entering notes by letter name, MuseScore will choose the octave that is closest to the previous note on that staff. This works well for passages that move mostly by steps and small leaps. If you need to change the octave for a larger leap, use Ctrl+↑ and Ctrl+↓ (Mac: Cmd+↑ and Cmd+↓) to raise or lower the pitch of the previously entered note by an octave.

Selecting pitch using the mouse

To enter a note using the mouse, position your mouse on the desired line or space in the staff, then click. The mouse cursor will show you a preview of the note you are about to enter to help you place it accurately.

If any notes already exist at the location where you are entering a new note, the new note will be added above or below it. To replace existing notes instead, press Shift while entering the new note.

It can be difficult to enter notes very far above or below a staff with this method, because MuseScore may interpret clicks far from the intended staff as an attempt to enter notes onto the staff above or below. Instead, try entering the note an octave lower or higher, then raise or lower the pitch by an octave

using `Ctrl+↑` and `Ctrl+↓` (Mac: `Cmd+↑` and `Cmd+↓`).

Note: although one would normally enter notes left to right, the mouse entry method actually allows you to enter a note at any location where there is an existing note or rest to replace.

Selecting pitch using a MIDI keyboard

If you have a MIDI keyboard connected, you can enter notes by simply pressing the corresponding keys.

When playing notes on a MIDI keyboard, they are entered consecutively so long as you release each key fully before pressing the next. If you press a key before releasing the previous key, the new note is added above or below the previous note.

Notes entered via MIDI keyboard that are outside of the current key signature will have accidentals applied automatically, but the spelling of the accidental may not be what you intend. To change the enharmonic spelling of a note, press `J`.

Selecting pitch using the virtual piano keyboard

You can also input notes using the on-screen **Piano keyboard** window. To display this, use **View→Piano keyboard** or press the shortcut `P`. The window can be closed the same way.
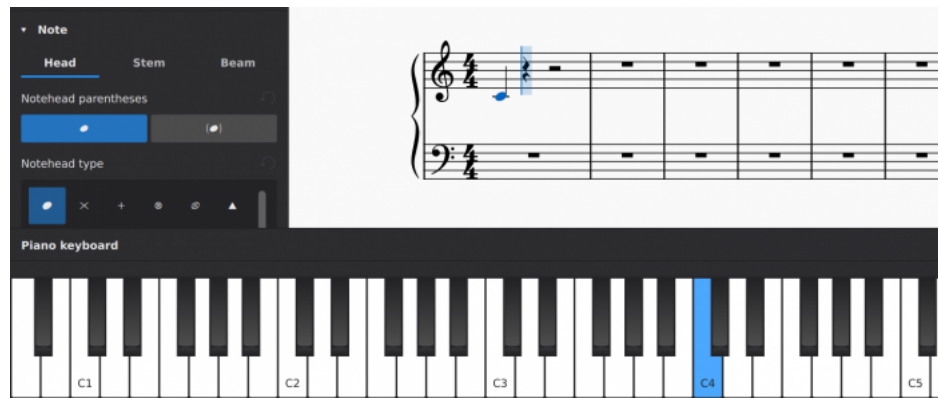
To enter a note of a given pitch, simply click the appropriate piano key with your mouse.

As with the computer keyboard, notes entered in this way replace any existing notes or rests. To create chords instead, press and hold `Shift` while entering notes.

Note: to resize the keyboard, position the mouse within the window and hold `Ctrl` (Mac: `Cmd`) while scrolling up or down.

Entering chords

For the purpose of this section, chords are any combinations of multiple notes all starting at the same time, all sharing the same duration, and all sharing a single stem.

If you wish to enter notes that sound together but start at different times, have different durations, or have separate stems, see Voices. Text of the form "Dm7" is a chord *symbol*, discussed in Chord symbols.

Just as for individual notes, chords can be entered by computer keyboard, mouse, MIDI keyboard, or virtual piano keyboard. Except for MIDI keyboard (where you can play multiple notes at once), the notes are still entered one at a time, but in a way that tells MuseScore to combine them into a chord rather than add them sequentially.

- To add a note to a chord using the **computer keyboard**, press and hold `Shift` while entering the note
- To add a note to a chord using the **mouse**, click the location where you wish to add the note
- To add a note to a chord using a **MIDI keyboard**, either play all the notes at the same time, or play them one at a time but do not release one key before pressing the next
- To add a note to a chord using the **virtual piano keyboard**, press and hold `Shift` while entering the note

When using `Shift+A–G` to add a note to a chord, the note will be added above any notes already present at the cursor location. You can also specify the note to be added based on the interval above or below the currently-selected note.

- To add an interval above the selected note, use one of the following:
  - From the **menu bar**, select **Add→Intervals** and choose an interval from the list;
  - Press `Alt+1–9`.
- For intervals below the selected note, you will need to apply a custom shortcut of your own (see Preferences).

Entering rests

Rests can be entered using the computer keyboard or mouse. The duration is selected in the same way as for notes (e.g., using the toolbar or keyboard shortcuts 1–9). Then instead of entering a pitch as you would for a note, choose one of the following options.

From the computer keyboard: press 0 (zero)
From the note input toolbar: click the rest icon, then click in the score

Using a mouse: right-click in the score

Accidentals

Standard accidentals (flat, natural, sharp, double flat, double sharp) can be entered either by selecting one before entering the pitch it applies to or by adding them to a note already entered.

Selecting an accidental before entering a pitch

To specify an accidental to be applied to the next note entered, you can use the buttons on the **Note input** toolbar above the score or the corresponding keyboard shortcuts. This can be done either before or after selecting the duration.

The default accidental shortcuts are:

Flat : –
Sharp : +
Natural : =

Unlike selecting duration—which applies to all subsequent notes until you change it—an accidental is applied only to the next note entered. But the usual rules of music notation apply, so if you apply a flat to a given note, any subsequent notes you enter of that same pitch within the same measure will be flatted as well, even though no explicit flat sign will be added in front of them.

Adding an accidental after entering a pitch

Appropriate accidentals are automatically added to a note when you increase or decrease its pitch:

↑: move pitch up a semitone (spells with sharps).
↓: move pitch down a semitone (spells with flats).

You can also apply an accidental to a note by clicking the appropriate icon in the **Accidentals** palette. This palette also contains a large number of microtonal and other special accidentals.

Adding courtesy/cautionary accidentals

Although the rules of music notation say that a barline cancels an accidental, and that any note on the same staff line or space in the next measure returns to the pitch indicated by the key signature, it is considered good practice to add a *courtesy* (also called *cautionary*) accidental anyhow. These do not change the pitch of the note, so they cannot be added with the ↑ and ↓ keys. However, any of the other methods described above work.

While parentheses or brackets are not required for courtesy accidentals, some editors do choose to use them. To add parentheses or brackets around an accidental, you will need to temporarily leave note input mode, select the accidental, then either use the **Properties** panel to select a bracket type, or click the parentheses or brackets in the **More** section of the **Accidentals** palette.

Note: there are also a set of plugins pre-installed with MuseScore that can automatically add courtesy accidentals as needed.

Ties

A **tie** is a curved line between two notes of the *same* pitch, indicating that they are to be played as one combined note. Even though they look similar, ties should not be confused with slurs, which join notes of *different* pitches and indicate *legato* articulation.

MuseScore makes it very easy to enter ties. Because ties are always between notes of the same pitch, you do not need to enter the pitch for the second note—just select the duration and enter the tie; MuseScore will add the note automatically. After entering the first note, follow these steps to create the tie:

Select the duration for the second note

Click the tie button on the toolbar or use the shortcut T
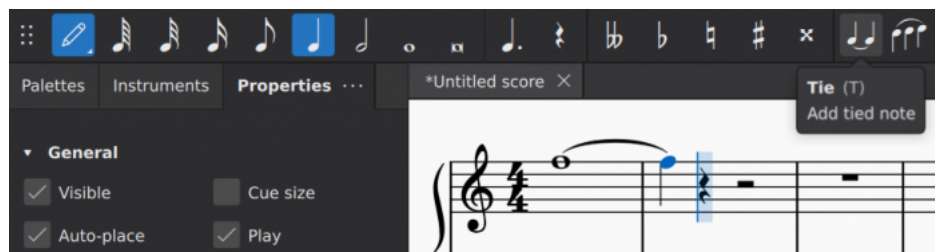
The tie command adds the second note and ties it to the first in one step. If the first note you entered is part of a chord, then the tie command actually creates an entire second chord with the same pitches as the first and ties all of the notes.

Note: ties normally connect adjacent notes in the same voice, but MuseScore also supports ties between non-adjacent notes and between notes in different voices as described in the section on editing.

See also

Editing notes and rests
Voices
Tuplets
Alternate note input modes
Tablature
Drum notation
Slash notation
Noteheads

Working with multiple voices

Overview

A MuseScore **voice** is a line of music on a staff that has its own rhythm independent of other music on the same staff. Other notation programs may refer to it as a "layer".

"Voice", in a different sense, may also refer to a pitch range in vocal music—soprano, alto, tenor, bass etc. It is important not to mix up the two meanings by assuming, for example, that the four "voices" in an SATB choir are equivalent to MuseScore "voices" 1–4 (see below); that would be to confuse chalk with cheese.

MuseScore allows **up to four voices in one staff**: Voice 1, Voice 2, Voice 3, and Voice 4. When writing music on a staff, one usually starts in voice 1 then moves on to voice 2. Voices 3 & 4 are less commonly used.

Two voices on the same staff are normally indicated using opposing stems—an upper voice with stems up and a lower voice with stems down:

In a four-part SATB arrangement on two staves, you would use voices 1 & 2 on the top staff for soprano and alto, and voices 1 & 2 on the bottom staff for tenor and bass:

Entering notes and rests in multiple voices

The first step to enter multiple voices is to determine whether you need to write notes as voices in **one staff,** or spread voices among **multiple staffs** such as four voices among two staffs of a piano, or among **multiple instruments** such as four voices on four string instruments. **You should consider the design of MuseScore's notation function and your production needs, do not base your decision merely on academic reasons:**

> MuseScore sets stem directions automatically based on the voice used **and** which voices are used in each measure. In measures where only Voice 1 is used, but no notes or rests are written on Voice 2, Voice 3 or Voice 4, stem directions of notes are determined by pitch—notes above the center line have stems pointing down, notes below the center line have stems pointing up. Otherwise, the stem directions are determined according to the voice—up for Voice 1 and Voice 3, down for Voice 2 and Voice 4.
>
> To assign an overriding stem direction setting manually, use the **Flip direction** button on the toolbar, or the keyboard shortcut X, also see Stems and flags.
>
> Writing on voice 2 right away may seem correct academically, but musescore will create rest symbols in voice 1 automatically which might be redundant in some cases. Popular options in this scenario are: manually hide rests afterwards (jump to how to); or simply use voice 1 instead of voice 2.
>
> It's not yet possible to assign different sounds to individual voices, so you may have to use multiple instruments. For example, you cannot assign a Soprano VSTi to voice 1 and a Tenor VSTi to voice 2, only one or the other.
>
> Sometimes you must use *multiple voices in one staff* to create certain visual notation result in Musescore, even if they aren't different voices musically. For example, in MuseScore, inside one voice, a chord can only be created with notes of the same duration. If constituent notes of a chord have varying durations, you must use separate voices to write them. A list of common similar scenarios can be found on the Handbook 3 Voices page.

Using multiple instruments

If you decide you need to write different voices as notes on different instruments, start by creating multiple instruments using Setting up your score: Changing instruments, then edit clef symbols as required, and then compose on **Voice 1 in all of these staffs.** A common example is to write four voice SATB open score on four instruments' Voice 1.

To convert separate staffs into one staff containing multiple voices, or to do the opposite, see Implode and explode. A common example is SATB open score <-> short score conversion,

Enter notes and rests in multiple voices in one staff

To enter new notes into a Voice:

> Select your starting point in the score.
> Click the pen icon on the toolbar or press N to enter note input mode.
> Select the desired voice using the toolbar icons or press one of the keyboard shortcuts `Ctrl+Alt+1`—`Ctrl+Alt+4`
> Enter notes and rests normally as described in Entering notes

You can repeat these steps to enter notes into other voices.

Note: to enter new notes, make sure you are in note input mode *before* selecting the desired voice, otherwise you will change the voice of any currently-selected elements instead.

Note: the note toolbar only displays voice 1 and 2 icons by default. You can make all voice icons visible using the controls that appear when you click the gear icon on the toolbar. For more information, see the section on customizing the note input toolbar.

Editing notes and rests in multiple voices

Adjusting rests

To make sense notation wise, rests should be used in each existing voice whenever necessary to complete beats of a measure, Musescore creates them automatically. In measures containing multiple voices, rests are automatically added to voices of lower number whenever appropriate. MuseScore also automatically positions rests to avoid overlapping other score elements.

To hide, delete, or adjust the position of these rests to create better layout, use one of the following methods:

default layout   rest adjusted   rest hidden

Hiding or deleting rests

Rests may be hidden by selecting them and unchecking the **Visible** box in the **Properties** panel or using the keyboard shortcut V.

Rests in voices 2-4 may also be deleted by selecting them and pressing `Delete`. However, this leaves a "hole" in the voice that can be difficult to edit later. To restore missing rests from a voice, you can use the commands in **Tools→Voices** to exchange the contents of the voice with those of voice 1, which will fill the holes with rests again. You can then use the same command to move the contents of the voices back where they were.

Note: to ensure the correct duration of each measure, voice 1 rests can be hidden, but they cannot be deleted.

Positioning rests

While MuseScore will normally avoid collisions with other voices, it can sometimes be helpful to move rests up or down to create more space or to clarify which voice they apply to.

To move a rest vertically, select it and press `Up` or `Down` to move it a staff space at a time.

For more information on manual positioning, see Changing position of elements.

You can also change the default vertical offset between rests and elements in other voices from 1 space to 2 spaces in Format→Style…→Rests
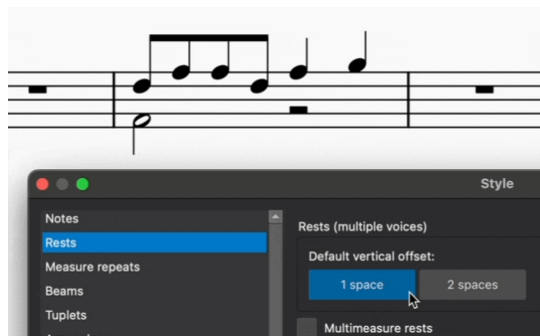
Changing voice of existing notes

Notes originally entered into one voice can be moved into another voice, depending on the situation. For more information, see Changing voice in normal mode.

Combining voices into chords

In cases where the rhythms match, notes originally entered as multiple voices can be combined into chords in a single voice. For more information, see the Implode command.

Separate chords into Voices

To separate a chord written in one voice into separate notes of different voices:

> Manually select the notes
> Press the toolbar button to assign a Voice to selected notes, or use the Ctrl+Alt+1—Ctrl+Alt+4 Keyboard shortcuts.
> Explode onto an empty stave, and then implode. See Implode and explode

See also

> Instrument Parts (and see Part in the Glosary)
> Editing notes and rests
> Stems and flags
> Positioning of elements
> Implode and explode

Alternative note input methods

Accessing alternative note input methods

In addition to the default step-time note entry method, there are several other methods by which notation can be entered in MuseScore.

To enter these alternative note input methods:

> Click and hold the **Note input** button in the **Note input toolbar**.
> Select from one of the available note input methods.

Keyboard users can get to the **Note input** button by pressing Shift+Tab or Shift+F6 a few times from the score. Screen readers will say something like *"Note input toolbar: Default (step-time)"*. Press Space on this button to open a menu that contains all the available note input methods.
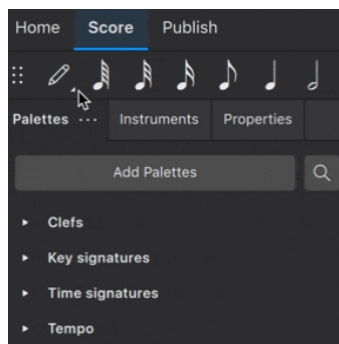
Each note input mode can also be activated directly using an assigned keyboard shortcut (See Keyboard shortcuts to learn how to assign these).

Note that the selected note input method remains in effect even when you leave note input mode and will be enabled the next time you enter note input mode. So if you change to the **Re-pitch** method for a single passage, be sure to change back to the **Step time** method when you are done.

Rhythm only

The **Rhythm** note input method allows you to enter durations with a single keypress. This is especially useful for unpitched percussion instruments that use a single sound. In addition, you can combine Rhythm and Re-pitch methods for an efficient workflow in certain circumstances.

    Select your starting point in the score.
    Select the **Rhythm** note input method as described above.
    Select a duration from the note input toolbar, or use the keyboard shortcuts 1-9, to add a note of the selected duration.
    Add a dotted duration by pressing . and selecting/typing your desired duration. In this mode, the duration dot is toggled on/off for all subsequently entered durations. It's worth noting that the duration dot needs to be activated *prior to* entering the note value, rather than afterwards.
    Enter rests by clicking the rest icon in the note input toolbar and select/type your desired duration. When the desired duration already has been selected (from the previous entered note), pressing 0 will enter the rest. Click the rest button to return to entering notes.
    Continue pressing duration keys to enter notes with the chosen durations.

By default, notes are entered onto the middle staff line. You can use the cursor keys to change the pitch of the note just entered, and subsequent notes will also be entered using that pitch. You can also use Re-pitch mode to quickly enter pitches for a passage after entering the rhythm.

Re-pitch

The **Re-pitch** note input method allows you to change the pitches of a sequence of notes while leaving their durations unaltered.

    Select your starting point in the score.
    Select the **Re-pitch** note input method as described above, or use the keyboard shortcut Ctrl+Shift+I (Mac: Cmd+Shift+I).
    Enter pitches using the computer keyboard, MIDI keyboard or virtual piano keyboard. Note: you cannot use the mouse to input notes in the **Re-pitch** method.

The **Re-pitch** method can be an extremely efficient way of entering notes in music with repeated rhythmic patterns. Simply copy and paste an existing passage that uses the same rhythm as your new passage, then use re-pitch mode to alter the pitches. The same technique can be used to enter multiple instrumental or vocal parts that share the same rhythm but different pitches.

Real-time

The real-time note input methods basically allow you to perform the piece on a MIDI keyboard (or MuseScore's virtual piano keyboard) and have the notation added for you. However, you should be aware of the following limitations which currently apply:

    You must pre-select the shortest duration you wish to use.
    You cannot enter tuplets in **Real-time** note input.
    You must enter notes onto a single staff and in a single voice, just as with other note input modes.
    It is not possible to use a computer keyboard for **Real-time** note input.

These restrictions mean that MuseScore has very little guessing to do when working out how your input should be notated, which helps to keep these methods accurate.

Real-time (metronome)

With the **Real-time (metronome)** note input method, you play at a fixed tempo indicated by a metronome click. You can adjust the tempo by changing the delay between clicks from the menu: **Edit**→**Preferences...**→**Note Input** (Mac: **MuseScore**→**Preferences...**→**Note Input**).

    Select your starting position in the score.
    Select the **Real-time (metronome)** note input method as described above.
    Select a duration from the note input toolbar to represent the metronome click.
    Press and hold a MIDI key or virtual piano key to enter a note of the selected duration.
    Listen for the metronome clicks—with each click the note grows by the selected duration.
    Release the key when the note has reached the desired length.

The score stops advancing as soon as you release the key. If you want the score to continue advancing—necessary to enter rests—then you can use the Real-time Advance shortcut to start the metronome. The same action will stop the metronome again.

Real-time (foot pedal)

With the **Real-time (foot pedal)** note input method, you indicate your input tempo by tapping on a key or pedal. You can play at any speed you like, and it doesn't have to be constant. The default key for setting the tempo (called "Real-time Advance") is Enter on the numeric keypad (Mac: Fn+Return), but it is highly recommended that you change this to a MIDI key or MIDI pedal (see below).

    Select your starting position in the score.
    Select the **Real-time (foot pedal)** note input method as described above.
    Select a duration from the note input toolbar to represent the metronome click.
    Press and hold a MIDI key or virtual piano key.
    Press the "Real-time Advance" shortcut with each press, the note grows by the selected duration.
    Release the note when it has reached the desired length.

Real-time Advance shortcut

The "Real-time Advance" shortcut is used to start the metronome with the **Real-time (metronome)** method or to tap beats with the **Real-time (foot pedal)** method. It is called "Real-time Advance" because it causes the input position to move forward, or "advance", through the score.

The default key for Real-time Advance is Enter on the numeric keypad (Mac: Fn+Return), but it is highly recommended that you assign this to a MIDI key or MIDI pedal via MuseScore's MIDI remote control. The MIDI remote control is available from the menu: **Edit**→**Preferences...**→**MIDI mappings** (Mac: **MuseScore**→**Preferences...**→**MIDI mappings**).

Alternatively, if you have a USB footswitch or computer pedal which can simulate keyboard keys, you could set it to simulate Enter on the numeric keypad.

Insert

Insert note input method allows you to insert and delete notes and rests within measures, automatically shifting subsequent music forward and backward within the measure. The measure duration is automatically updated as you go.

To insert a note:

Select your starting position in the score.
Select the **Insert** note input method as described above.
Enter a note or rest as you would in **Step time** mode. Each note is inserted before the current cursor position, and the measure duration is increased to compensate.

When the notes are entered they will be placed just before the selected starting element, which will be highlighted with a square blue marker. The start element and any subsequent notes or rests within the same measure will be shifted forward. You can move the insertion point forward and backward using the arrow keys → or ←, and the new insertion point will then be highlighted.

Alternatively, if you have only one or two notes to insert, you can do this directly with the default **Step time** note input method. Press `Ctrl+Shift` (Mac: `Cmd+Shift`) while adding the note by mouse or keyboard shortcut (A-G).

To insert a rest, first insert a note of the desired duration, then press `Delete`.

To delete a note or rest, use the shortcut `Ctrl+Shift+Delete`. The measure duration is decreased to compensate. The shortcut works with both the **Step time** and **Insert** note input methods.

Because inserting and notes may cause the measure duration to increase or decrease beyond what is specified by the time signature, a small "+" or "-" sign will be shown above the measure when this happens.

Adding and removing measures

Inserting measures

MuseScore allows you to insert or delete measures in the score using a variety of methods. Measures can be inserted:

After a selection
Before a selection
At the start of the score
At the end of the score

Measure context menu

To insert one or more measures:

Right-click on a blank area of a measure
From the context menu, choose **Insert measures**
From the options presented, choose the location where you want the measure(s) inserted
Complete the dialog box and press **OK**.

The Properties panel

To insert one or more measures:

Click on a measure
Go to the **Properties** panel
Click **Insert measures** in the **Measure** section
Type the number of measures you wish to insert (or leave it as "1" to insert a single measure)
Select where you want the measure(s) to be inserted from the dropdown menu (or leave it as is to insert the new measure(s) after the selection point)
Click the **+** button

This popup remains open until you click another part of the user interface. As such, you can continue pressing the **+** button as many times as you need to insert further measures.
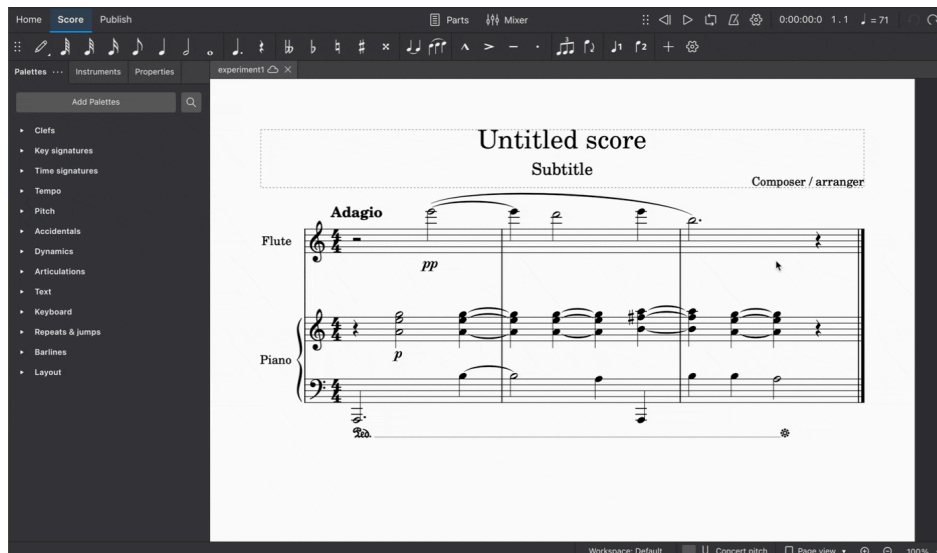
In addition, you can insert measures from one of two menus:

Note input toolbar

> Select something in your score (can be anything except line objects)
> Click the **+** button in the **Note input** toolbar
> Navigate to **Measures**
> Choose where you want the new measure(s) to be inserted

Menu bar

> Select something in your score (can be anything except line objects)
> Click the **Add** in the **Menu bar**
> Navigate to **Measures**
> Choose where you want the new measure(s) to be inserted

Inserting measures with keyboard shortcuts

To quickly insert *one measure* before the selection point:

> Select something in your score (can be anything except line objects)
> Press `Ins`

Insert more measures before the selection point by repeatedly pressing `Ins`.

To quickly insert *multiple measures* before the selection point:

> Select something in your score (can be anything except line objects)
> Press `Ctrl+Ins` (Mac: `⌘+Ins`)
> Type the number of required measures in the dialog that appears
> Click **OK**

To append to the end of your score, you can use the keyboard shortcut `Ctrl+B` (Mac: `⌘+B`) for a single measure, or `Alt+Shift+B` (Mac: `Option+Shift+B`) for multiple measures.

Add measures to a frame

It is also possible to add measures to a frame in the score:

> Click on the frame
> Use one of the methods shown under "Note input toolbar" or "Menu bar", or a keyboard shortcut (above).

Deleting measures

To delete one or more measures using keyboard shortcuts:

> Select a measure (or hold `Shift` and select multiple measures)
> Type `Ctrl+Backspace` or `Ctrl+Del` (Mac: `⌘+Backspace` or `⌘+Del`).

Alternatively,

> Select a measure (or hold `Shift` and select multiple measures)
> Right-click on any measure within the selection
> Select **Delete measures**

You can also:

Select a measure (or hold Shift and select multiple measures)
Go to **Tools**
Select **Remove selected range**

Remove empty trailing measures

To remove any empty measures at the end of your score:

Go to **Tools**
Select **Remove empty trailing measures**

See also

Other measure-related pages:

Selecting elements

You can select elements in MuseScore using the keyboard or mouse. Selections can consist of a single element, a list of individual elements that may possibly be discontinuous, or a range of measures and staves that includes the elements within it. Certain commands work only on single elements or lists; some work only on ranges; others work on any type of selection. The documentation for any given command should explain which types of selection are allowed.

When selected, elements display in blue (or whatever color is defined for the voice the element belongs to).

For range selections, a blue rectangle appears around the entire range.

Selecting a single element

To select a single element with the mouse, simply click it.

To select a single element with the keyboard, use the cursor keys to navigate to the element. Note that there is no separate concept of a "cursor" in MuseScore that is separate from the selection, except while in **Note Input** mode. In **Normal** mode, the left and right cursor keys select elements one by one as you navigate, so even though there is technically not a cursor, the selection itself acts in a similar way.

By themselves, the cursor keys navigate through notes and rests only. When combined with Alt, they navigate through all elements, including articulation, dynamics, and other markings.

Notes

A note normally consists of multiple elements: the notehead, stem, flag, dot, accidental, etc. Most commands that operate on a single note expect you to select the notehead itself.

Chords

The notes of a chord share a single stem and flag. Even a single note can be considered a "chord" in the sense that it consists of these multiple elements.

To select a complete chord (all noteheads plus the stem and other elements), first make sure nothing is currently selected (you can press Esc to be sure) and then Shift+click the chord. This creates a range selection that encompasses the chord.

Note that the selection may also include content in other voices if present, but see the section on <u>excluding elements</u> from range selections for information on how to avoid that if necessary.

Overlapping elements

If multiple elements overlap, clicking selects the topmost element. To select the element underneath a currently-selected element, `Ctrl`+click it. This deselects the currently-selected element and selects the next element beneath it, if any. Thus, repeated `Ctrl`+click operations cycle through a set of overlapping elements.

Selecting a list of individual elements

You can select a list of elements manually by selecting each individually or automatically by using commands to select elements that are similar to a given element.

Selecting multiple elements manually

To add an element to the list of selected elements, `Ctrl`+click it. If an element is already selected, `Ctrl`+click removes it from the list of selected elements.

You can also use `Ctrl`+click to add or remove individual elements from a <u>range selection</u>. In the process, this converts the selection into a list selection.

If the elements you wish to select are outside of the staff and clear of other elements, you may be able to create a list selection by using `Shift`+drag to draw a selection box around the desired elements. If any notes or rests are included, however, a <u>range selection</u> is performed instead.

Selecting similar elements automatically

To select all elements of a given type in the entire score or in a given staff:

> Right-click one such element
> In the resulting menu, click **Select→Similar** or **Select→Similar on this staff** as appropriate

To select all elements of a given type within a range:

> Click the first such element
> `Shift`+click the last such element

—OR—

> Perform the <u>range selection</u> using the techniques described below
> Right-click one element within the range
> In the resulting menu, click **Select→Similar in this range**

To create more complex selections of similar elements:

> (Optional) Perform a <u>range selection</u>
> Right-click an element
> In the resulting menu, click **Select→More**
> Check the desired boxes within the resulting dialog (see below)

The options available in the select dialog will depend on the type of element you right-clicked.
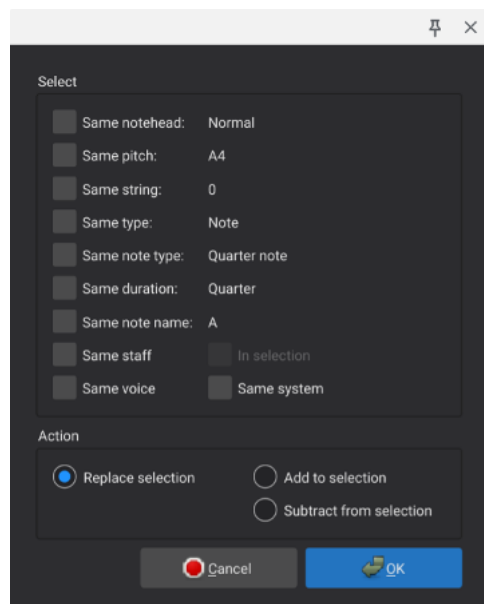
The selection options specific to notes are:

Same notehead: notes with the same notehead group (normal, cross, slash, etc.)
Same pitch: notes with the same pitch name, accidental, and octave
Same string: notes with the on the same string (tablature only)
Same type: notes of the same type (normal, acciaccatura, appoggiatura)
Same note type: notes of the same duration, not considering presence of dots or tuplets
Same duration: notes of the same actual duration
Same note name: notes with the same pitch name and accidental, not considering octave
Same staff: notes in the same staff
Same voice: notes in the same voice
In selection: notes within the current selection
Same system: notes in the same system

In addition to the type-specific selection options, there are action options at the bottom of the dialog that are common to all element types. These control what happens to the selected elements, and only one of these can be chosen at a time:

Replace selection: if checked, this action selection replaces an existing selection
Add to selection: if checked, this action adds elements to an existing selection
Subtract from selection: if checked, this action removes elements from an existing selection

Selecting a range of measures and staves

A range selection includes all elements from a given beginning and ending time position across a given set of staves. It is the usual starting point for operations such as copy and paste.

Selecting a range by dragging

To select a range of measures and staves with the mouse alone, use Shift+drag to draw a rectangle around it. Note that this is only feasible for relatively small selections that fit on screen at once.

Selecting a range by clicking

A more flexible method for making selections uses a combination of mouse and keyboard:

Click the first note or rest of the desired selection
`Shift`+click the last

In between the click and `Shift`+click, you can use [navigation commands to position the score. This allows you make selections that span several pages.

This method works just as well if you first click the last note/rest then `Shift`+click the first.

Selecting a range using the keyboard

You can also make range selections using the keyboard alone or primarily:

Select the first note or rest using keyboard navigation or by clicking
Hold `Shift` while using keyboard navigation to extend the selection as you navigate

The available commands include:

`Shift+Left` and `Shift+Right` to extend the selection one note or rest at a time
`Shift+Ctrl+Left` and `Shift+Ctrl+Right` to extend the selection one measure at a time (Mac: use `Cmd` instead of `Ctrl`)
`Shift+Up` and `Shift+Down` to extend the selection one staff at a time

`Shift+Home` and `Shift+End` to extend to the beginning or end of the system
`Shift+Ctrl+Home` and `Shift+Ctrl+End` to extend to the beginning or end of the score (Mac: use `Cmd` instead of `Ctrl`)

Special range selections

MuseScore includes some special commands to make command selections:

Edit→Select all or `Ctrl+A` (Mac: `Cmd+A`) to select the entire score
Edit→Select section to select the current section of the score (everything between the previous and next section breaks)

Excluding elements from a range selection

For certain operations involving range selections, you might want to exclude elements of a given type from the selection. For example, you may wish to copy the notes, rest, and most other markings in a phrase, but skip the lyrics. Or in a passage with multiple voices, you may wish to delete everything not in voice 1. To exclude elements of a given type from a range selection:

Perform the range selection normally
Open the **Selection Filter** with **View→Selection filter**
Remove the checkmarks next to any element types you want excluded from the selection
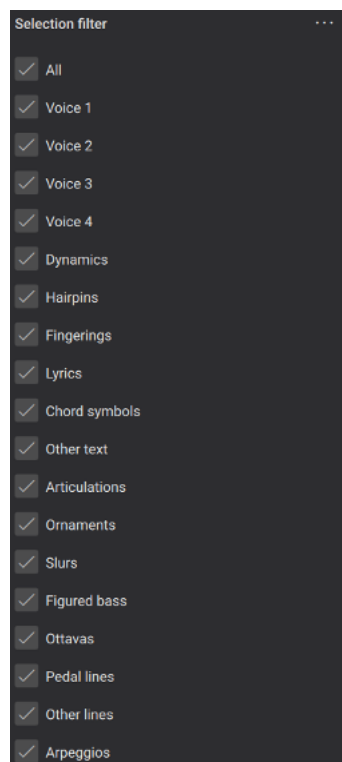
Note that if you exclude voice 1, you will not be able to select any measures that lack content in other voices. So be sure to restore voice 1 after performing the operation for which you are excluding voice 1. For example, if you wish to copy and paste only voice 2, make your range selection, use the **Selection Filter** to exclude voice 1, use **Edit→Copy** or `Ctrl+C`, then restore the checkbox next to voice 1 before attempting to select the destination to paste.

Editing notes and rests

Overview

After you have entered notes into your score, you may wish to change something about them - pitch, duration, time position, etc. MuseScore provides a number of commands for this purpose. Many of the most powerful commands are only available after you leave note input mode and return to normal mode, but there are a number of quick edits possible while still in note input mode.

Making changes in note input mode

Immediately after entering a note or rest, it is selected, and there are a handful of commands that operate on the selected note or rest while in note input mode. These commands also work if you use the cursor keys to navigate to a previously-entered note or rest.

Changing duration in note input mode

There are two commands that alter the duration of an existing note or rest while in note input mode:

`Shift+W` increases the duration
`Shift+Q` decreases the duration

Both commands will first add or remove a dot if appropriate, then will move to the next larger or smaller note value. So for instance, pressing `Shift+W` on a quarter note changes it into a dotted quarter, and pressing `Shift+W` again changes it to a half note.

Changing pitch in note input mode

The commands for changing the pitch of a selected note while in note input mode are:

`↑` - move pitch up a semitone (spells with sharps)
`↓` - move pitch down a semitone (spells with flats)
`Alt+Shift+↑` - move pitch up a step diatonically
`Alt+Shift+↓` - move pitch down a step diatonically
`Ctrl+↑` (Mac: `Cmd+↑`) - move pitch up an octave
`Ctrl+↓` (Mac: `Cmd+↓`) - move pitch down an octave

Replacing notes and rests in note input mode

Most note input in MuseScore is in what a word processor might call "replace" or "overwrite" mode. This means that if you wish to replace a note with a different one, you don't need to delete the old note first—just enter the new one directly, and it automatically overwrites what was there before.

Note: sometimes you may wish to add a new note and move some of the subsequent notes later to make room. In MuseScore, this is done by moving the subsequent notes directly using cut and paste.

Deleting notes in note input mode

To delete a note and replace it with a rest, simply press `Del`.

Note: if you instead wish to move subsequent notes earlier to take the place of the deleted note, there is no need to first delete the original note - simply move the subsequent notes directly using cut and paste.

Moving notes in note input mode

Although for the most part, moving notes to a different time position is done in normal mode, there is one pair of commands that can be used to change the time position of a note or rest in certain cases while in note input. If you have two notes or rests of the same duration and you wish to exchange them while in note input mode, you can use `Shift+←` or `Shift+→` to exchange a note or rest with its neighbor of the same duration.

Making changes in normal mode

Most changes one might want to make to notes and rests already entered are more easily performed in normal mode—the mode you are in when you leave note input or any other mode.

Except where noted, the methods described below work on either a single selected note or rest, a list selection consisting of multiple notes or rests, or entire range selections. See the page on selections for more information.

Changing duration in normal mode

Changing selected notes to a specific note value

To change the duration of one or more selected notes in normal mode to a specific note value, simply click the appropriate duration icon or use the keyboard shortcuts `1`–`9`.

Increasing or decreasing the duration of a selected note

To increase the duration of a selected note, you can use the `Shift+W` command as described above. This adds an augmentation dot if one is not already present, or changes to the next longer note value if the note is already dotted. For example, an eighth note will be changed into a dotted eight note, and a dotted quarter will be changed into a half note. You can also use `W` to double the duration, thus changing an eighth note into a quarter note directly, or a dotted eighth into a dotted quarter.

The commands `Shift+Q` and `Q` to perform the opposite operation, decreasing or halving the duration in the same way.

All of these commands work on only a single selected note.

Doubling or halving all note values in a range selection

If you have entered a passage using eighths and sixteenths but wish to double the durations of all notes and rests—thus doubling the duration of the passage itself—see the section on the paste half/double duration commands.

Changing pitch in normal mode

The same commands that work to change pitch in note input also function in normal mode, including single, list, and range selections. These commands are:

`↑` - move pitch up a semitone (spells with sharps)
`↓` - move pitch down a semitone (spells with flats)
`Alt+Shift+↑` - move pitch up a step diatonically
`Alt+Shift+↓` - move pitch down a step diatonically
`Ctrl+↑` (Mac: `Cmd+↑`) - move pitch up an octave
`Ctrl+↓` (Mac: `Cmd+↓`) - move pitch down an octave

In addition, when in normal mode, the accidental buttons on the **Note input** toolbar and corresponding keyboard shortcuts will toggle (add or remove) accidentals on any selected notes, thus potentially changing their pitch. The **Accidentals** palette can also be used to add accidentals to selected notes.

Deleting notes and rests in normal mode

To delete a note and replace it with a rest, simply press `Del`.

If multiple notes are selected as a list, `Del` replaces them each by rests individually.

If you select a range, `Del` replaces the entire passage with the correct rests according to the meter.

Rests cannot normally be deleted, as removing them would leave a measure with fewer beats than it should have. However, see the remove selected range command below for information on how to do this when required. Also, rests in voices 2–4 can be deleted without removing time from a measure.

Removing notes and rests and their associated time

To completely remove selected notes or rests—thus leaving the piece with fewer measures if entire measures are selected, or fewer beats within the measure if a partial measure is selected—use **Tools**→**Remove selected range** or the keyboard shortcut `Ctrl+Del` (Mac: `Cmd+Del`).

Adding ties in normal mode

Ties can be added in normal mode, but unlike in note input mode where the tie command automatically adds a note and creates a tie, in normal mode, both notes must already exist.

To add a tie in normal mode:

Select a note that you wish to tie to the next note of the same pitch
Click the tie button or use the shortcut `T`

This works even if the next note of the same pitch is in a different voice.

If you select multiple notes, MuseScore will start a tie at each of them. You can use the technique to tie entire chords at once.

This technique also allows you to tie notes that are not adjacent, such as to show an arpeggiate-and-hold pattern on piano.

Changing voice in normal mode

A note entered into a given voice may be moved into another voice if this is musically possible, or the contents of two voices may be exchanged.

Moving selected notes into another voice

To move a selection of one or more notes into another voice, either press one of the voice buttons on the toolbar or use the keyboard shortcuts `Ctrl+Alt+1–4` (Mac: `Cmd+Option+1–4`). Notes will be moved to the extent it is possible without compromising the current content of the destination voice.

A note can be moved into another voice if there is currently silence (rests, or nothing at all) in the destination voice at that time position for the duration of the note to be moved. In that case, the note will simply be moved to the new voice.

A note can also be moved into another voice if there is already a note or chord of the same duration starting at that time position. In that case, the note will be combined with the existing note or chord.

Exchanging the contents of two voices

MuseScore can also exchange the contents of any pair of voices. These commands work only on full measures (or multiple measures), not on individual notes.

To exchange the contents of any two voices, use the corresponding command in **Tools**→**Voices**:

Exchange voice 1-2
Exchange voice 1-3
Exchange voice 1-4
Exchange voice 2-3
Exchange voice 2-4
Exchange voice 3-4

See also

Entering notes and rests

Copy and paste

The cut, copy, and paste commands are powerful tools in MuseScore. They can be used to reproduce entire passages of music, to move music earlier or later, to copy text or other markings between staves, to exchange the content in different measures, and more.

Accessing the commands

In all cases, the first step is to select what you want to cut or copy.

As with other programs that support cut, copy, and paste, you can access these commands from the **Edit** menu, from a context menu that appears upon right-click or related gesture (e.g., `Ctrl`+click, or two-finger tap), or via the standard keyboard shortcuts.

Command	Shortcut (Windows)	Shortcut (Mac)	Context menu	Main menu
Cut	Ctrl+X	Cmd+X	**Cut**	**Edit→Cut**
Copy	Ctrl+C	Cmd+C	**Copy**	**Edit→Copy**
Paste	Ctrl+V	Cmd+V	**Paste**	**Edit→Paste**
Swap with clipboard	Ctrl+Shift+X	Cmd+Shift+X	**Swap with Clipboard**	**Edit→Swap with clipboard**
Paste half duration	Ctrl+Shift+Q	Cmd+Shift+Q	N/A	**Edit→Paste half duration**
Paste double duration	Ctrl+Shift+W	Cmd+Shift+W	N/A	**Edit→Paste double duration**

Note: When using the context menu, take care to always right-click *on* a selected item; if you right-click on an empty space by mistake your selection will be lost!

Copying a range

To copy a range—whether a single chord, a single measure, several measures on one staff, or multiple measures across multiple staves—do the following:

Select the range you want to copy
Use the **Copy** command from the menu or press Ctrl+C (Mac: Cmd+C)
Select the first note or rest of the destination

Use the **Paste** command from the menu or press Ctrl+V (Mac: Cmd+V)

Copied music will replace the existing content of the destination. All elements in the selected range will be copied, with the exception of system-wide elements such as tempo text, key and time signature changes, and repeats. You can use the **Selection Filter** to exclude other elements of a given type from the operation.

Copying a single element or list of elements

MuseScore allows you to copy lyrics, chord symbols, dynamics, articulation, or other markings from one place to another while keeping the notes in the destination intact. For chord symbols and dynamics, MuseScore will preserve the relative beat positions of the markings if possible. For lyrics and articulations, MuseScore will copy note by note.

To copy a single element or list of elements to a new destination:

> Select the elements you want to copy
> Use the **Copy** command from the menu or press `Ctrl+C` (Mac: `Cmd+C`)
> Select the first note or rest of the destination
> Use the **Paste** command from the menu or press `Ctrl+V` (Mac: `Cmd+V`)

Moving elements

In MuseScore, cut and paste is way to move element from one location to another. This can be used to move a passage from a flute part to a clarinet part, from one measure to another within a single part, or simply shift a passage earlier or later. The latter is especially useful as a way to "insert" or "delete" a note or rest while shifting existing notes to the right or left. Simply cut and paste the notes you wish to shift to their new position.

To move a selection:

> Select what you want to move
> Use the **Cut** command from the menu or press `Ctrl+X` (Mac: `Cmd+X`)
> Select the first note or rest of the destination
> Use the **Paste** command from the menu or press `Ctrl+V` (Mac: `Cmd+V`)

Swapping a selection with the clipboard

The **swap with clipboard** command combines two operations into one: (1) First it overwrites a selected part of the score with the contents of the clipboard, just like the *paste* command; (2) Second, it transfers the overwritten part of the score *back to* the clipboard, just like the *copy* command.

It can be used, for example, to swap two equal-length sections of a score, **A** and **B**:

> Select section **A**
> Apply the cut command
> Select section **B**
> Apply the swap with clipboard command to paste **A** over the contents of **B** while moving the contents of **B** to the clipboard
> Select section **A** again (or just the first note, rest, or measure)
> Apply the paste command

Like the other commands discussed here, you can access the **swap with clipboard** command from the menu or via a keyboard shortcut—in this case, it is `Ctrl+Shift+X` (Mac: `Cmd+Shift+X`).

Repeating a selection

A common use for copy and paste is to duplicate a given passage immediately after the original. MuseScore provides a special **repeat selection** command to simplify this process. To quickly repeat a note, chord, measure, or other passage to the location immediately following the selection:

> Select the passage to be repeated
> Press `R`

Unlike the other commands discussed here, **repeat selection** works in note input mode and it repeats the entire chord containing the selected note. This is useful for creating a series of repeated chords.

Copying a selection to multiple staves

If you wish to copy a passage to multiple staves—for instance, to double a flute part in the oboes and clarinets—you can use the explode command:

> Select the passage you wish to copy
> Extend the selection to include the staves below (e.g., by pressing `Shift+↓`)
> Use **Tools**→**Explode**

This copies the original selection, assuming it contains only single notes—no chords and no multiple voices. If there are chords or multiple voices, then these are distributed among the remaining staves as described in the section on the explode command.

Paste half/double duration

If you have entered a passage using mostly eighth notes but wish to halve the entire passage to using mostly sixteenth notes, or double it to quarter notes, MuseScore provides a pair of special commands to accomplish this. You can either modify the durations of a selection in place or create a separate copy of the passage with the modified durations. To halve or double the duration of a passage:

> Select a range to modify
> Use the copy command
> If you wish to create a separate copy of the passage with the modified durations, select the destination
> Use the paste half duration or paste double duration command

Duplicating individual elements

Individual elements—even those that are not normally copied as part of a range select, like time signatures or voltas—can be duplicated using the mouse:

While pressing `Ctrl+Shift` (Mac: `Cmd+Shift`), and click and hold on an element
Drag it anywhere in the score

When you release the mouse button, the selected element is copied to the new location
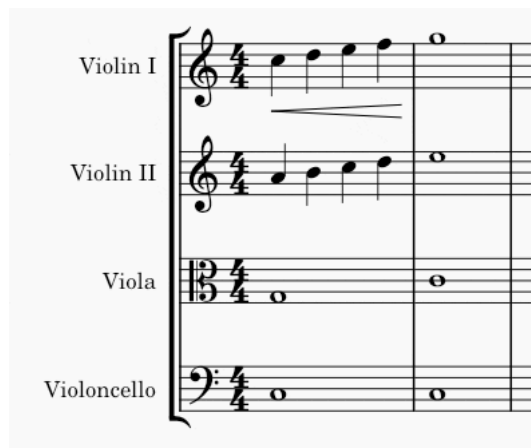
See also

[Selecting elements](#)
[Implode and explode](#)

Using the palettes

Overview

Musical symbols and text may be applied to your score using the **Palettes** panel. MuseScore comes with a set of preset palettes divided into categories —such as **Key Signatures** and **Articulations** etc. A basic working set of palettes is visible by default, but more advanced or specialist palettes can also be displayed if required.

You can add, delete, edit and rearrange items inside any palette, as well as create and customize your own palettes.

This chapter shows you how to display palettes, search for items, and how to apply palette symbols to your score. Customizing the palettes area is dealt with later in [Palettes (Customization)](#).

Accessing the palettes panel

The **Palettes** panel is normally displayed on the left sidebar of the main window. There are three tabs displayed at the top of the sidebar: **Palettes**, **Instruments**, and **Properties**. If one of the other tabs is currently being displayed in the sidebar, click the **Palettes** tab to display the palettes instead.
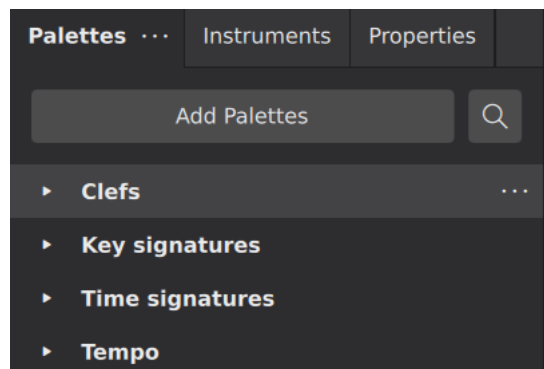
You can open and close the **Palettes** panel using **View**→**Palettes** or the keyboard shortcut `F9`. If all of the panels in the sidebar are closed, the sidebar itself closes as well, allowing more room for the score display.

Like most other panels within MuseScore, the **Palettes** can also be [undocked](#) to function as a separate window.

Adding palette items to your score

To add a palette item to your score, first open the appropriate palette if it is not already open, by clicking its title or the arrow icon to the left. The items in that palette will be displayed in a grid.
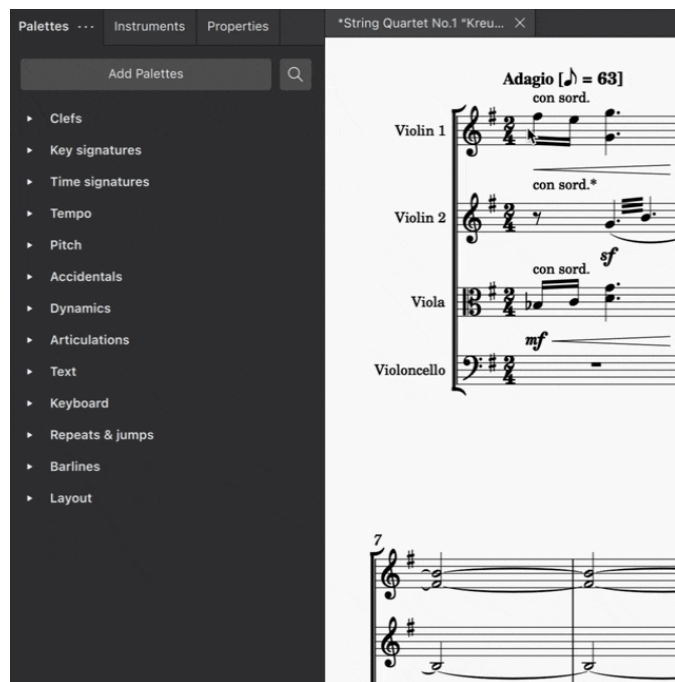
in general, to apply palette items to your score, you can either select the target elements in the score and then click the palette item, or drag the item from the palette to a target element. See the section on searching and navigating below for information on applying palette items via the keyboard.

Items applied to individual score elements

Many palette items—for example, articulations, dynamics, and most other text—can be applied to individual notes, rests, or other score elements. When using drag and drop, be sure to drag the palette item onto a specific score element, and do not release until the target element highlights to indicate it can accept the palette item.

It is usually more efficient, however, to select the target elements in your score first and then click the palette item. This is especially true if you wish to apply the same palette item to multiple score elements, since this method allows you can apply the palette item to multiple score elements at once.

To apply a palette to one or more score elements:

    Select the elements you wish to apply the palette item to (single, list, or range selection)
    Click the palette item

The palette item will normally be added to each of the selected elements. Note that with a range selected, when clicking a palette item representing text (including dynamics and tempo markings), the item will be added to the first element in the range only. System text (including tempo markings) will be applied to the top staff only; other text will be applied to the first selected element of each selected staff.

Items applied to ranges

Palette items such as hairpins, slurs, ottavas, and pedal markings are applied to a range rather than a single note or rest. The process for adding them is the same:

    Select the range of elements you wish to apply the palette item to
    Click the palette item

Items applied to full measures

Certain palette items such as barlines, time signatures, voltas, and layout breaks are normally applied to a measure as a whole—or a range of measures—instead of a specific note or rest. The process for adding these to the score is the same as for other palette items:

    Select the measure or range of measures you wish to apply the palette item to
    Click the palette item

Expanding and collapsing palettes

A palette can be opened (expanded) or closed (collapsed) individually by clicking on the title bars or the icon to the left of the title. In addition, you can expand or collapse all palettes at once, or let MuseScore close palettes automatically. To access these options, click the **...** button at the top of the palette window to popup the palettes menu.
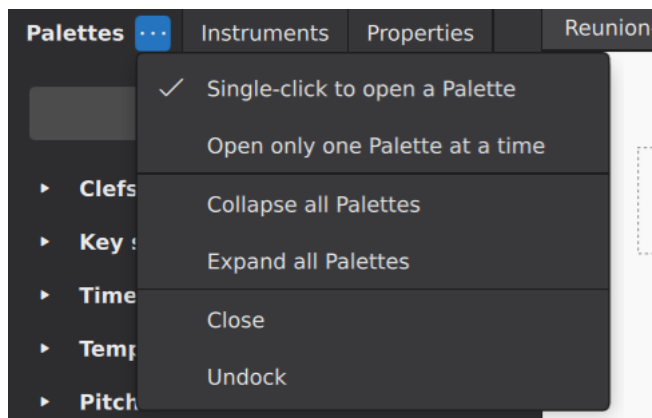
Single-click to open a Palette: controls whether palettes are opened by single or double click
Open only one Palette at a time: if checked, then whenever you open a palette, any already-open palettes are automatically closed
Collapse all Palettes: immediately close all open palettes
Expand all Palettes: immediately open all palettes

Searching and navigating the palettes

You can also search and navigate the palettes using your keyboard instead of a mouse.

Search

To search for palette elements by name, use the keyboard shortcut `Ctrl+F9` (Mac: `Cmd+F9`), or click the magnifying glass icon at the top of the **Palettes** panel.
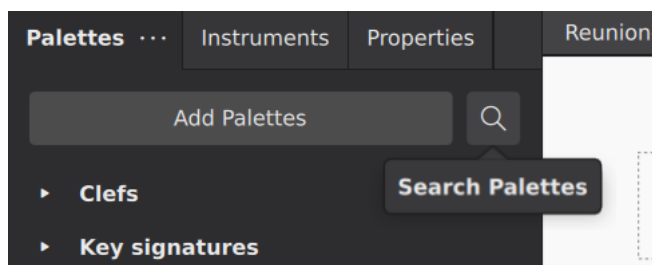
This will display a search box. As you type characters into the box, MuseScore will display any matching palette items.
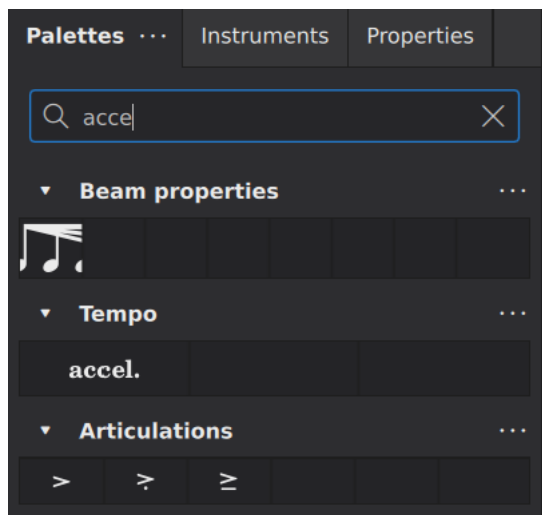
To close the search box, click the "X" icon.

Navigation

The palettes are completely accessible by keyboard. The search facility described above is one method you can use to start the process, but you can also focus the keyboard on the **Palettes** panel by using `Shift+F6` to move focus to the sidebar.

Once focus is on the palette panel, the ↑ and ↓ keys will move through the various individual palettes. You can then open and close a palette by pressing `Enter`. To access the elements with a palette, press → to access the palette, then ↑ and ↓ to move through the elements on the palette. Pressing `Enter` will apply element in the same way as clicking it.

Accessing more palette items

Some palettes also contain additional elements that are not displayed by default. To access those, click the `More` button at the bottom right of the palette.
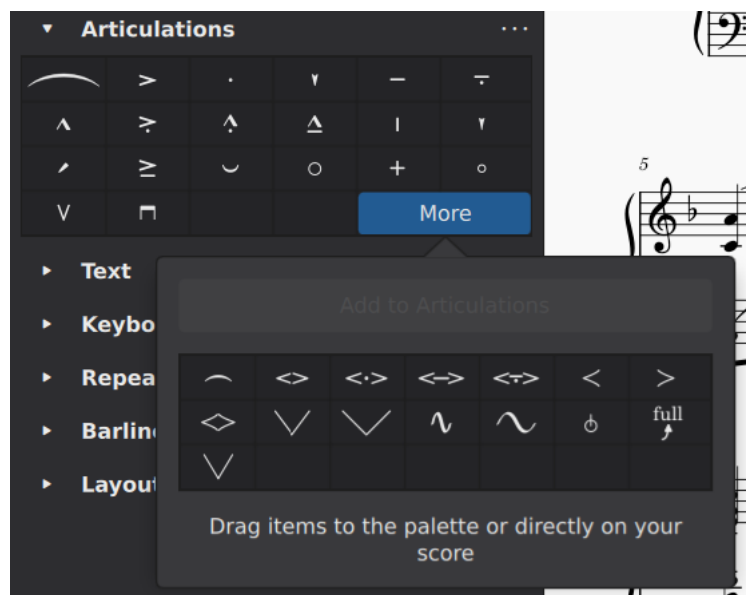
You can add any of these additional items to the main part of the palette by simply dragging. For more information, see Palettes under Customization.

Adding more palettes

The palettes that are shown by default are the ones most users will need often. But MuseScore provides additional palettes that you may also find useful.

To access these extra palettes:

Click the `Add Palettes` button at the top of the **Palettes** panel.
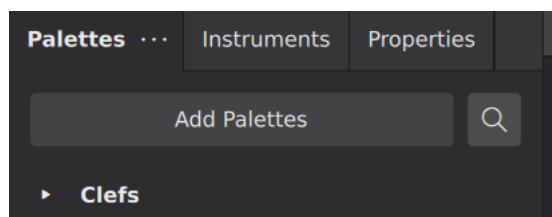
This will display a list of palettes you can add to your **Palettes** panel. To add any palette, click the + button next to the palette name.
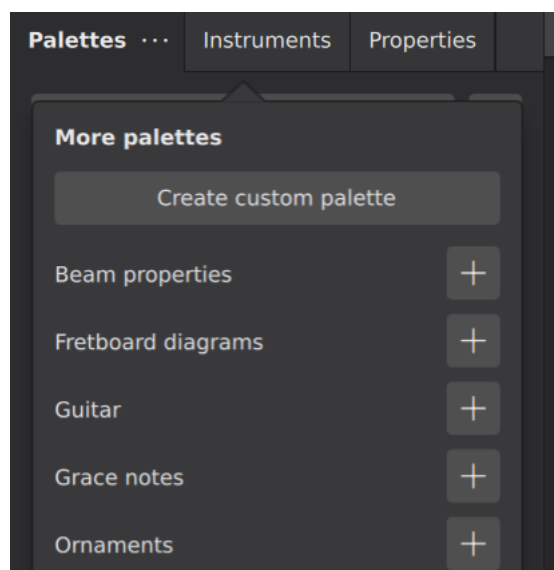
Added palettes appear at the top of the panel. To reorder them simply drag them into position.

You can also create an empty custom palette that can be filled later with your own choice of elements.

Clicking the `Create custom palette` button, see Palettes (Customization).

The Master palette

The **Master palette** is MuseScore's repository of all musical symbols; it also provide an alternative pathway for creating custom key signatures and custom time signatures.

To display the **Master palette**, use the keyboard shortcut `Shift+F9`, or from the menu select **View→Master palette**.
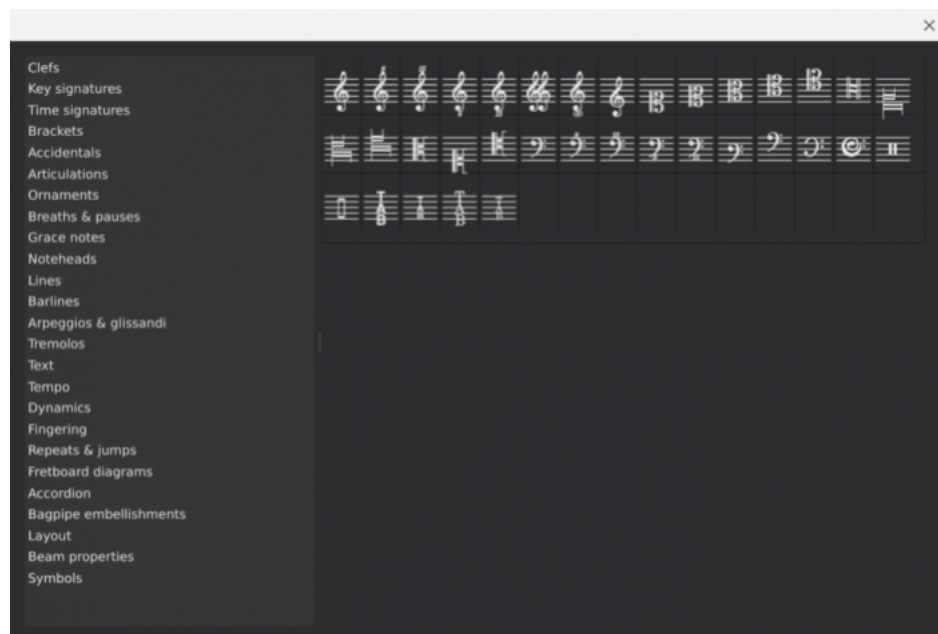
The **Master palette** window is divided into categories matching the names of the default palettes (whether displayed or hidden) in the **Palettes** panel; in fact, the contents of each small palette are drawn from the corresponding section of the Master. The exception is the Symbols category of the **Master palette** which contains items not found in the **Palettes** panel.

Items *can* be applied to the score from the **Master palette** in the same way as from the small palettes; however, aside from applying items from the **Symbols** section, it is usually better to do so from the **Palettes** panel.

Items found in all sections of the **Master palette** window, except "Symbols", are *functional* in that they have an effect on the score: Key and Time signatures, for example. However, items from the **Symbols** palette are *non-functional*—that is, they are for display only.

See also, the chapter on Other symbols.

See also

Palettes (Customization) for information about customizing the palettes panel.
Other symbols for information about the **Symbols** palette.
Working with images for information about how to add images to your score.

Properties panel

The **Properties** panel shows settings for objects you select in the score. It was known as the "Inspector" in MuseScore 2 and 3.

You can select one object (say, a dynamic mark) or multiple objects at a time (say, a dynamic mark, a notehead, and a hairpin). If any of the objects you have selected contains editable settings, **Properties** will be the place to find them.

An important thing about **Properties** is that by default it affects only the object(s) you have selected, so changing how one hairpin looks won't change all of the hairpins in your score—only those you have selected. However, for most settings, you can also choose to save as the default style for the score.

Accessing the Properties panel

From the **Score** window, click on the **Properties** tab in the panel on the left side of the screen:
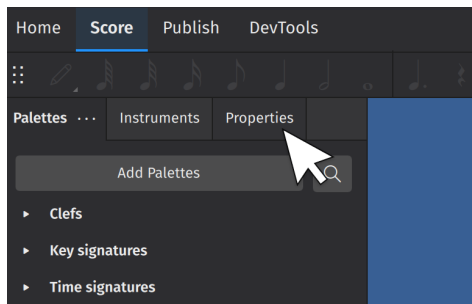
Global settings

This is what the **Properties** panel looks like when you have *nothing selected in your score*. All these settings affect your *entire* score (not just individual elements):
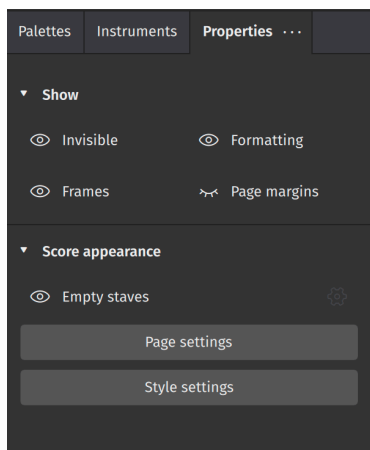
Show

>   **Invisible** hides/shows all invisible objects in your score
>   **Frames** hides/shows Frames
>   **Formatting** hides/shows formatting elements added from the layout palette
>   **Page margins** hides/shows the page margin

Score appearance

>   **Empty staves** hides/shows staves that contain no notated music within a system. This setting mirrors the **Hide empty staves within systems** settings in the **Style** dialog.
>   **Page settings** triggers the Page settings dialog.
>   **Style settings** triggers the **Style** dialog.

General settings

These settings are visible whenever something is selected in your score.
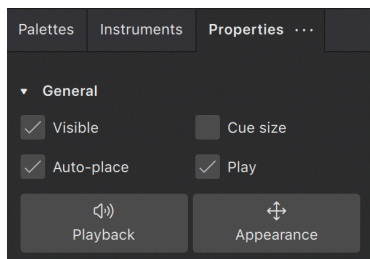
Visible

Click this box to hide/unhide selected elements, or use the keyboard shortcut V.

Use this feature to hide elements so they don't appear in your exported or printed score. This can be useful when, for example, applying tempo marks or dynamics solely to affect playback in MuseScore. Use the **Invisible** toggle in **Properties** (when nothing is selected) to show or hide these hidden elements in the score view (hidden elements will be rendered in a lighter shade).

Auto-place

Usually checked by default, this feature positions the selected object according to MuseScore's vertical and horizontal collision avoidance algorithms. Uncheck **Auto-place** to have more control over the positioning of certain elements. Learn more about this feature in Positioning elements.

Cue size

This feature is used to create small **cue notes**: i.e. notes provided to assist the performer by indicating what another ensemble/orchestra member is playing at the same time. Checking the box makes any selected notes smaller, including their stems and any attached beams.

Play

When checked, this property allows playback of the selected element. Uncheck **Play** to silence the element.

Playback settings

The **Playback** button displays the editable playback properties of the element (if none, it will be greyed out).
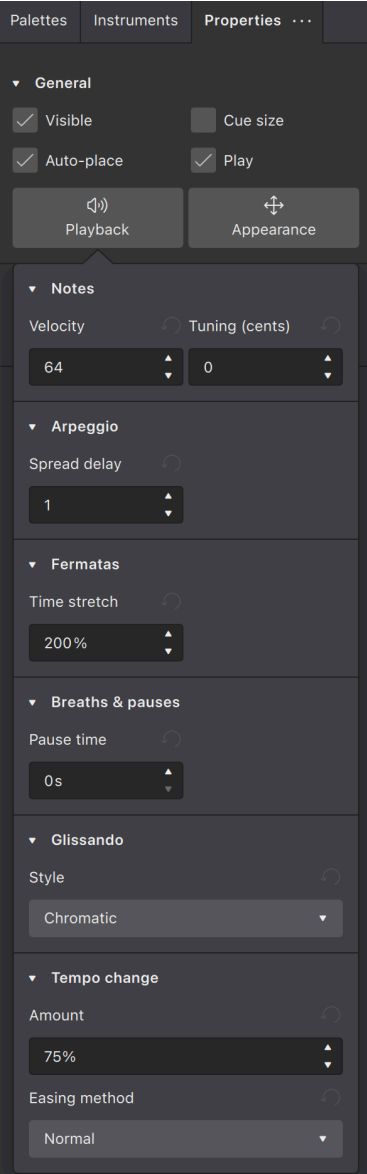
Appearance settings
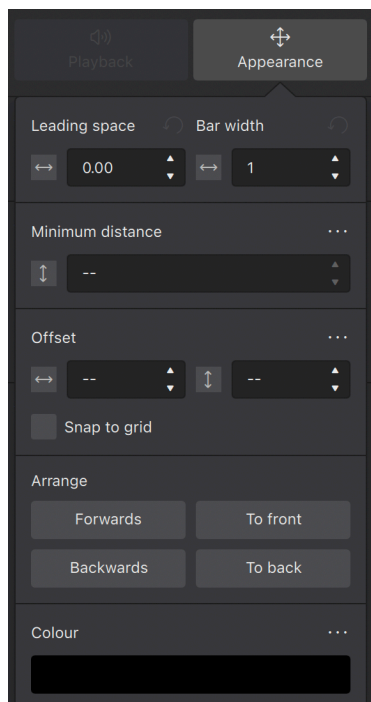
Leading space

This changes the leading space of selected elements: i.e. the space in front of the element. The leading space adjustment is applied across all staves, so that notes at the same time position remain aligned.

Measure width

This changes the width of the measure as a proportion of the original width: e.g. 1.5 = one-and-a-half times the default width.

Minimum distance

This is used by the auto-place collision avoidance algorithm and applies only to elements that are applied above/below the staff by default, such as staff text, dynamics, fingerings, lines etc. It sets the minimum distance (in sp.) of the selected objects from other elements that are closer to the staff, or the staff itself.

Offset

When newly applied, elements assume a default position. The horizontal/vertical offsets give you a more precise way of positioning an element than dragging it or moving with the keyboard arrows.

Snap to grid

This feature allows you to constrain drag operations to increments of a desired distance. First you need to check the **Snap to grid** box, then press **Configure grid** and set the desired horizontal/vertical step distances.

You can switch **Snap to grid** on/off as required by checking/unchecking the box.

Arrange

The four buttons in this section control how overlapping elements are drawn. They work as follows:

Forwards moves the selected element in front of the next element
Backwards moves the selected element behind the next element
To front moves the selected element in front of *all other elements*.
To back moves the selected element behind *all other elements*, including the staff lines.

Color

Click on this button to change the color of selected element(s). Choose a preset or custom color, or create your own by clicking the **+** button. This is stored for future reference in the list of custom colors to the right.

Saving and restoring default settings

After changing any given setting, you can click the "three dots" menu button adjacent to the setting to reveal a menu that allows you to either **Reset** the setting to the default for the score, or **Save as default style for this score**. The latter option is only available for properties that correspond to style settings, but this includes many of the properties in this panel.

Adjusting elements directly

Changing the position of elements

To reposition most score elements, use any of the following methods:

Click and drag the element with your mouse (see also Snap to grid).
Press the keyboard arrows, either on their own for small steps (0.1 sp), or in combination with `Ctrl` (Mac: ⌘) for larger steps (1 sp).
Adjust the horizontal and vertical offsets in the Properties panel.

Certain score elements, such as articulations, ornaments, symbols, and notes and rests, can only be moved with the keyboard arrow keys after placing the element into "Edit mode". To move these elements with the arrow keys:

Right-click on the desired element
Select **Edit element** to place the object in "Edit mode", or use the keyboard shortcuts `F2` or `Alt+Shift+E` (Mac: `⌥+Shift+E`)
Use the `←→↑↓` keys to move the object in increments of 0.5 sp, or click and drag it with the mouse

Changing the shape of elements

To change the shape of elements such as slurs and ties after adding them to the score:

Click on the slur or tie to be adjusted
Click and drag the adjustment handles that appear around the element (N.b. red letters in the below diagram are for reference only)

Note that:

Handles B, C, and D change the shape of the curve at that point
Handles A end E adjust the element's length (This can also be achieved by pressing `Shift+←/→` to move the ends one chord/rest at a time)
Handle F repositions the whole line without changing its shape or length

If you wish to change the note to which a slur or tie is connected, the recommended method is to use the keyboard shortcuts described above (`Shift+←/→`). This is the most efficient way of changing both the visual and playback range of notes encompassed by a slur or tie.

Working with lines

Changing the range of a line

To change the start and end points of a line:

Select the line to reveal its adjustment handles
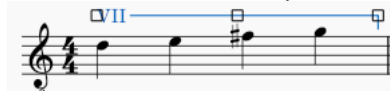
Click either the start or end adjustment handle
Press `Shift+←/→` to move the handle one step at a time (a step = one note/rest, or one measure—depending on the line type). **Note**: You can use `Tab` to move the focus between handles when adjusting.
Fine-tune the position of handles using the keyboard arrows `←/→` if required. Note that this does not affect the playback range of the line.

As with slurs and ties, it is recommended to use `Shift` when adjusting line length with the arrow keys to ensure that the playback range also adjusts accordingly.

Creating diagonal lines

Although lines are horizontal by default, they can be set at any angle simply by dragging the start or end adjustment handles; or by selecting a start/end handle and using the Up/Down keyboard arrows.

Editing line text

To edit the text of text line elements such as "system text line", "staff text line", and "barré line":

Select a text line element in your score
Go to the **Properties** panel
Click the **Text** tab in the **Text line** section
Enter the desired text in the **Beginning text** field.

Note: If the text line spans more than one system, you may also wish to modify the contents of the **Text when continuing to a new system** field.

See also

Other lines: Line properties
Positioning of elements

Parts

MuseScore in Minutes: Layouts & Parts

Opening a part

MuseScore 4 automatically creates a separate (default) part for every instrument in your score.

To open all parts at once:

> Click **Parts** in the toolbar (This will open the **Parts** dialog)
> Click **Open all**

To open an individual part:

> Click **Parts** in the toolbar
> Click a part to select it
> Click **Open selected**

You can also select specific parts to open at once. Do this by holding `Control` (Mac: ⌘) while selecting the parts you'd like to open, then click **Open selected**. You can also select a range of contiguous parts by clicking the first and holding `Shift` while clicking the last.
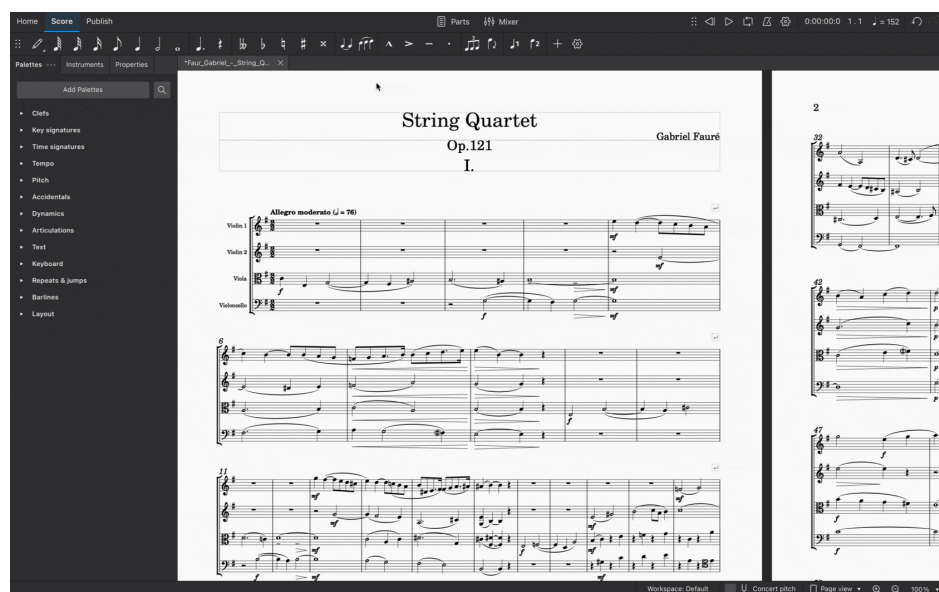
Closing a part

Click the **X** close button in a part tab to close a part.
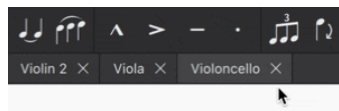
Note that changes you make to a part will be saved with that part and retrievable the next time you open it from the **Parts** dialog.

Creating custom parts

The **Parts** dialog is tightly integrated with the new Instruments panel. This integration makes it easy for you to create parts with any combination of instruments from your score.

There are two ways to customize parts in MuseScore 4: using the default (i.e. ready-made) parts to reveal other instruments, and creating entirely new

parts.

Reveal instruments in default parts

As we've already seen, MuseScore 4 automatically creates a new (default) part for every instrument in your score. All you have to do is open the part from the **Parts** dialog.

In fact, each default part already contains *all* of the instruments in your score – they're simply hidden from view (except, of course, the chosen part instrument).

This means you can "reveal" other instruments *within* any of the default parts. To do this:

> Open a part (as described above)
> Select the **Instruments** panel
> Click the eye icon next to another instrument

This instrument will now be visible in the chosen part.

This makes creating custom parts an incredibly flexible process. Revealing or hiding other instruments is completely non-destructive, meaning you can customize every instrument in every part, and hide or show only what you want to reveal to different players (or for different musical projects) without having to create entirely new parts each time.

Create a new part

MuseScore 4 does of course give you the option to create a completely "blank" part from scratch, allowing you complete customization control. To do this:

> Click **Parts** in the toolbar to open the **Parts** dialog
> Click **Create new part**
> Give your new part a name
> Click **Open selected**

Your new part will now be open in the **Score** tab, but it will appear to contain no instruments. To add instruments to this part:

> Go to the **Instruments** panel
> Click the "eye" icon next to each instrument you'd like to appear in your part

Choose which voices appear in each part

Sometimes it will be necessary to create individual parts from staves that contain multiple voices. You might, for example, want to extract separate parts for orchestral players who share a staff in the main score (E.g. Flute I and Flute II). Or you might wish to create individual vocal parts from choral scores where, for example, four voices are notated across two staves.

You'll need to first create (see above) or duplicate (see below) a part. To then select which voices will appear in a part:

> Open a part (see above)
> Go to the **Instruments** panel
> Expand an instrument by clicking on the triangular dropdown icon
> Click the settings icon next to the staff name
> Select which voice(s) you want to appear in your part by ticking/un-ticking the checkboxes under **Voices visible in the score**
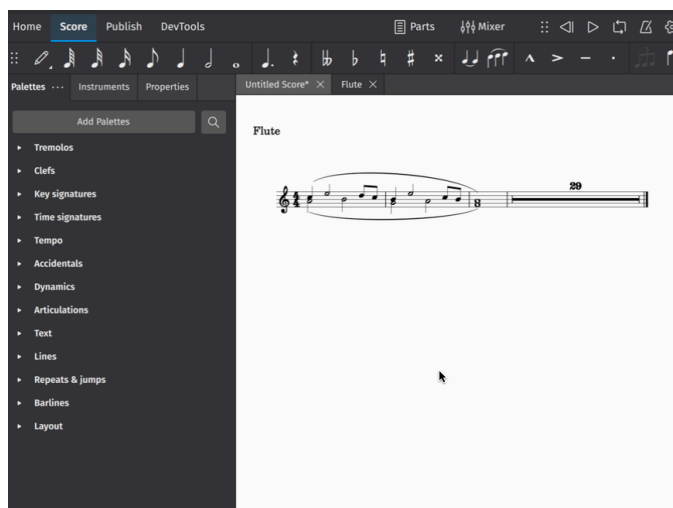
Applying styles to parts

Style settings for a wide range of engraving elements can be applied specifically to parts without affecting the main score.

To change style settings for a specific part:

> Ensure a part has been opened and is currently selected in the **Score** tab
> Go to **Format → Style...**
> Make your desired style settings changes (applicable changes will be visible in the score in real time)

Click **OK** to confirm your changes

Changes you make in this dialog will affect *only* the part selected in the **Score** tab. If you want changes to affect *all* parts (but not the main score), select **Apply to all parts** before clicking **OK**.

Learn more about saving and loading default style settings in Templates and styles.

Renaming, duplicating and deleting parts

This all takes place in the **Parts** dialog (accessible from the **Parts** button in the toolbar).
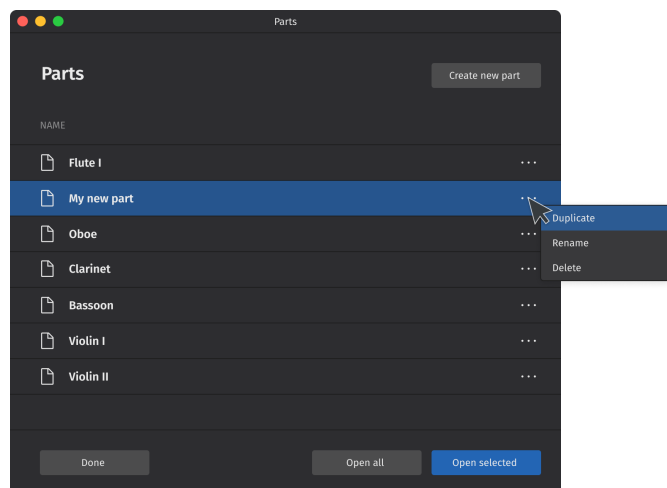
Simply click the "three dots" menu icon next to a selected part to reveal its options. Note that only *newly created parts* (created by clicking the **Create new part** button) can be deleted. All parts can be duplicated or renamed.

To duplicate any part:

Select a part in the **Parts** dialog
Click the "three dots" menu icon for the selected part
Select **Duplicate** from the context menu that appears
Enter a new name for the part (or leave the default name as is)
Hit `Enter`, or click anywhere in the **Parts** dialog

To rename any part:

Select a part in the **Parts** dialog
Click the "three dots" menu icon for the selected part
Select **Rename** from the context menu that appears
Type your new part name
Hit `Enter` to confirm the new name

Note you can also double click on any part in the **Parts** dialog to rename it.

To delete a newly created part:

Select a newly created part in the **Parts** dialog
Click the "three dots" menu icon for the selected part
Select **Delete** from the context menu that appears

When a part is deleted, its tab in the **Score** tab (if already opened) will be closed. Any customizations made to that part will also be lost. The part will also no longer appear in the **Parts** dialog.

Exporting and printing parts

To export parts:

Click **File → Export...** (alternatively, select the **Publish** tab and click **Export...**)
Check the box next to the part(s) you want to export, or click **Select all** to choose all parts at once
Select whether to export **all parts combined in one file**, or leave the default export setting as **each part to a separate file**
Click **Export...**
Select your destination file and name your score in your operating system's **Export** dialog
Click **Save**

Parts will be exported in the PDF format by default. To change the export format, select your preferred format from the dropdown menu in **Export settings**. You can export your parts in a range of image and audio formats, as well as the braille format for compatible printers. For more information, see File Export.

To print parts:

Ensure the part you wish to print is selected in the **Score** tab
Click **File → Print**

Use your operating system's print dialog to print the selected part

Note that parts can currently only be printed one at a time.

Default keyboard shortcuts

On macOS, make the following substitutions:

Replace `Ctrl` with `Cmd` (or ⌘)
Replace `Alt` with `Option` (or ⌥)
Replace `Home` with `Fn+Left`
Replace `End` with `Fn+Right`
Replace `PgUp` with `Fn+Up`
Replace `PgDn` with `Fn+Down`
Add `Fn` with function keys

Navigation

Page navigation

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Zoom in	Ctrl+=	Cmd+=
Zoom out	Ctrl+−	Cmd+−
Zoom to 100%	Ctrl+0	Cmd+0
Go to first element in score	Ctrl+Home	Cmd+Fn+Left
Go to last element in score	Ctrl+End	Cmd+Fn+Right
Jump to next screen	PgDn	Fn+Down
Jump to previous screen	PgUp	Fn+Up
Jump to top of first page	Home	Fn+Left
Jump to bottom of last page	End	Fn+Right
Jump to next page	Ctrl+PgDn	Cmd+Fn+Down
Jump to previous page	Ctrl+PgUp	Cmd+Fn+Up
Find / Go to	Ctrl+F	Cmd+F

Score navigation

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Select next chord	Right	Right
Select previous chord	Left	Left
Go to next measure	Ctrl+Right	Cmd+Right
Go to previous measure	Ctrl+Left	Cmd+Left
Select next element in score	Alt+Right	Option+Right
Select previous element in score	Alt+Left	Option+Left
Select note/rest above	Alt+Up	Option+Up
Select note/rest below	Alt+Down	Option+Down

Note input

General

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Note input: toggle note input mode	N	N
Show/hide piano keyboard	P	P
Use voice 1	Ctrl+Alt+1	Cmd+Option+1
Use voice 2	Ctrl+Alt+2	Cmd+Option+2

Duration

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Set duration	1 — 9	1 — 9
Set duration: 32nd note	2	2
Set duration: 16th note	3	3
Set duration: 8th note	4	4
Set duration: quarter note	5	5
Set duration: half note	6	6
Set duration: whole note	7	7
Toggle duration dot	.	.
Enter tuplet	Ctrl+2 — Ctrl+9	Cmd+2 — Cmd+9
Enter tuplet: duplet	Ctrl+2	Cmd+2
Enter tuplet: triplet	Ctrl+3	Cmd+3

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Enter tuplet: quadruplet	Ctrl+4	Cmd+4
Add tied note	T	T
Halve selected duration (includes dotted values)	Shift+Q	Shift+Q
Double select duration (includes dotted values)	Shift+W	Shift+W

Pitch

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Enter note	A — G	A — G
Add note to chord	Shift+A — Shift+G	Shift+A — Shift+G
Enter interval	Alt+1 — Alt+9	Option+1 — Option+9
Toggle accidental: flat	–	–
Toggle accidental: natural	=	=
Toggle accidental: sharp	+	+
Enter rest	0	0
Add grace note: acciaccatura	/	/

Tablature

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Set duration (TAB)	Shift+0 — Shift+9	Shift+0 — Shift+9
Set duration: 32nd note (TAB)	Shift+2	Shift+2
Set duration: 16th note (TAB)	Shift+3	Shift+3
Set duration: 8th note (TAB)	Shift+4	Shift+4
Set duration: quarter note (TAB)	Shift+5	Shift+5
Set duration: half note (TAB)	Shift+6	Shift+6
Set duration: whole note (TAB)	Shift+7	Shift+7
Enter TAB: fret	0 — 9	0 — 9
Enter TAB: fret	A — K	A — K
Go to string above (TAB)	Up	Up
Go to string below (TAB)	Down	Down
Toggle ghost note	Shift+X	Shift+X

Selecting

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Select all	Ctrl+A	Cmd+A
Add to selection: previous note/rest	Shift+Left	Shift+Left
Add to selection: next note/rest	Shift+Right	Shift+Right
Add to selection: staff above	Shift+Up	Shift+Up
Add to selection: staff below	Shift+Down	Shift+Down
Select to beginning of measure	Ctrl+Shift+Left	Cmd+Shift+Left
Select to end of measure	Ctrl+Shift+Right	Cmd+Shift+Right
Select to beginning of score	Ctrl+Shift+Home	Cmd+Shift+Fn+Left
Select to end of score	Ctrl+Shift+End	Cmd+Shift+Fn+Right

Editing

General

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Escape	Esc	Esc
Undo	Ctrl+Z	Cmd+Z
Redo	Ctrl+Shift+Z	Cmd+Shift+Z
Copy	Ctrl+C	Cmd+C
Cut	Ctrl+X	Cmd+X
Paste	Ctrl+V	Cmd+V
Repeat selection	R	R
Insert one measure before selection	Ins	Ins
Insert measures before selection	Ctrl+Ins	Cmd+Ins
Insert one measure at end of score	Ctrl+B	Cmd+B
Insert measures at end of score	Alt+Shift+B	Option+Shift+B
Delete	Del	Del
Delete selected measures	Ctrl+Del	Cmd+Del
Show/hide properties	F8	Fn+F8
Edit element	F2	Fn+F2

Duration

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Set duration	1 — 9	1 — 9
Enter tuplet	Ctrl+2 — Ctrl+9	Cmd+2 — Cmd+9
Add tied note	T	T

Pitch

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Toggle accidental: flat	-	-
Toggle accidental: natural	=	=
Toggle accidental: sharp	+	+
Move pitch/selection up	Up	Up
Move pitch/selection down	Down	Down
Move pitch up an octave	Ctrl+Up	Cmd+Up
Move pitch down an octave	Ctrl+Down	Cmd+Down
Change enharmonic spelling (concert and written pitch)	J	J
Move note to higher string (TAB)	Ctrl+Up	Cmd+Up
Move note to lower string (TAB)	Ctrl+Down	Cmd+Down

Notation

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Flip direction	X	X
Use voice 1	Ctrl+Alt+1	Cmd+Option+1
Use voice 2	Ctrl+Alt+2	Cmd+Option+2

Manual adjustment

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Move text left	Left	Left
Move text right	Right	Right
Move text left quickly	Ctrl+Left	Cmd+Left
Move text right quickly	Ctrl+Right	Cmd+Right
Move selection up	Up	Up
Move selection down	Down	Down
Move selection up quickly	Ctrl+Up	Cmd+Up
Move selection down quickly	Ctrl+Down	Cmd+Down

Text

General

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Add text: staff text	Ctrl+T	Cmd+T
Add text: expression text	Ctrl+E	Cmd+E
Add text: system text	Ctrl+Shift+T	Cmd+Shift+T
Add text: tempo marking	Alt+Shift+T	Option+Shift+T
Add text: rehearsal mark	Ctrl+M	Cmd+M

Formatting

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Format text: bold face	Ctrl+B	Cmd+B
Format text: italic	Ctrl+I	Cmd+I
Format text: underline	Ctrl+U	Cmd+U

Lyrics

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Add text: lyrics	Ctrl+L	Cmd+L
Go to next syllable	Space	Space
Go to previous syllable	Shift+Space	Shift+Space
Lyrics: enter hyphen	-	-
Lyrics: enter melisma	_	_
Add lyric verse	Return	Return
Go to next lyric verse	Down	Down

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Go to previous lyric verse	Up	Up

Chord symbols, Roman numeral analysis, Nashville numbers, figured bass

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Add text: chord symbol	Ctrl+K	Cmd+K
Next text element	Space	Space
Previous text element	Shift+Space	Shift+Space
Advance cursor: next beat	;	;
Advance cursor: previous beat	Shift+;	Shift+;
Advance cursor: duration	Ctrl+1 — Ctrl+9	Cmd+1 — Cmd+9

Other score elements

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Show/hide palettes	F9	Fn+F9
Search palettes	Ctrl+F9	Cmd+Fn+F9
Add slur	S	S
Add articulation: accent	Shift+V	Shift+V
Add articulation: marcato	Shift+O	Shift+O
Add articulation: staccato	Shift+S	Shift+S
Add articulation: tenuto	Shift+N	Shift+N
Add hairpin: crescendo	<	<
Add hairpin: decrescendo	>	>

Score setup and formatting

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Add/remove instruments	I	I
Open instruments dialog	F7	Fn+F7
Toggle visibility of elements	V	V
Decrease layout stretch	{	{
Increase layout stretch	}	}
Add/remove system break	Return	Return
Add/remove page break	Ctrl+Return	Cmd+Return
Reset shapes and positions	Ctrl+R	Cmd+R

File Operations

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
New	Ctrl+N	Cmd+N
Open	Ctrl+O	Cmd+O
Close	Ctrl+W	Cmd+W
Save	Ctrl+S	Cmd+S
Print	Ctrl+P	Cmd+P
Quit	Ctrl+Q	Cmd+Q

User interface

Playback

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Play	Space	Space
Show/hide mixer	F10	Fn+F10

Notation: Instruments, staves, and systems

Working with instruments

Overview

The **Instruments** panel is a new feature in MuseScore 4. It gives you control over your instruments and some basic staff properties without having to leave the score view. All of the instruments in your score will appear in this panel.

Adding and ordering instruments

Accessing the Instruments panel

Open the Instruments panel by clicking on the **Instruments** tab on the left side of the screen:
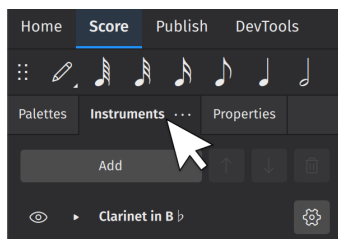
Adding instruments

Click **Add**. This will open the **Instruments** dialog (see Choose instruments for more information).

Deleting instruments

To delete an instrument from the score, select the instrument and click the trash can icon, or press `Delete`.

Changing the order of instruments

Select any instrument and use the ↑ or ↓ buttons to change its position in the score. Alternatively, you can drag the instrument up/down using the mouse.
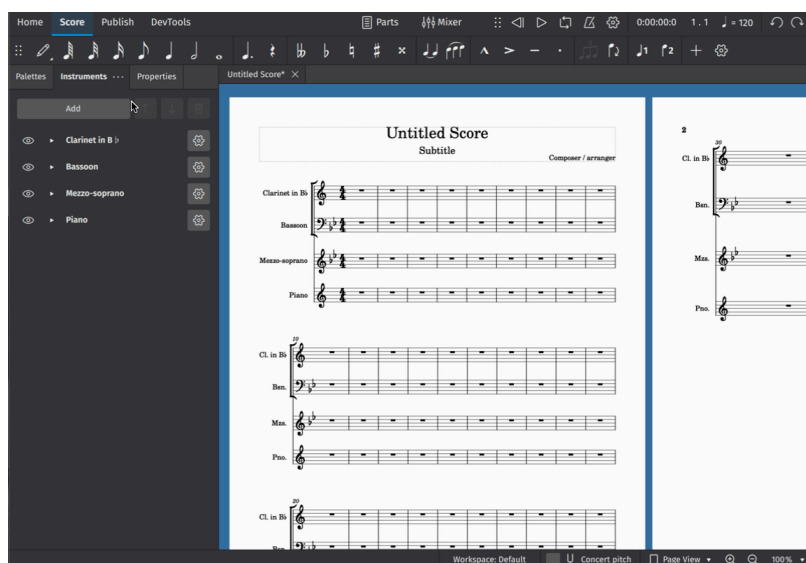
Instrument settings

Hiding/showing instruments

The visibility of entire instrument staves can be toggled by clicking the eye icon next to an instrument label.
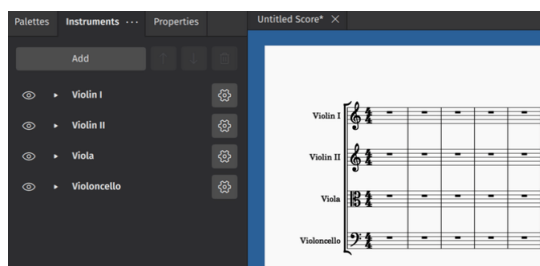
Hidden instruments aren't ever deleted — they are simply hidden. This means they won't be printed, but you can still generate and export parts for them.

This feature might be useful if you have alternative instruments or alternative versions of a part that you'd like to toggle between (e.g. for different performers or instrumental configurations). You might also like to isolate different sections of a larger score (say, for orchestra) without actually deleting anything or generating any new project files.

Renaming instruments

Click the cog icon to expose settings for renaming your instruments. Leaving any of these fields blank will ensure that no label appears on the score or in the part for that instrument.
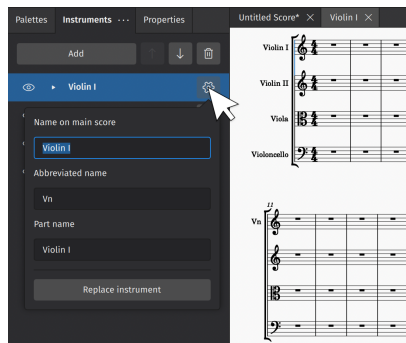
Replacing instruments

To replace an instrument in the **Instruments** panel:

> Click the cog icon to the right of the instrument name
> In the popup that appears, click **Replace instrument**
> Select your desired replacement instrument in the dialog that appears
> Click **OK**

Adding and configuring staves

The **Instruments** panel can also be used to add staves to an existing instrument and configure some of their basic properties.

To add a staff to an existing instrument

> If there are no staves visible under the instrument label, click the small black triangle to the left of the label to reveal them
> Click **Add staff**
> Click the cog icon of the newly-added staff, and adjust "Staff type", if required.

Added staves share the same instrument but their notation can be edited independently. Amongst other things, they can be used to create staff/tablature for stringed-instrument players (e.g. guitar, banjo, ukulele etc.).

To add a *linked* staff to an existing instrument

Certain notational objects on one staff can be made to automatically appear on other staves if they are *linked* together. Linked staves can be used to create staff/tablature for stringed-instrument players (guitar, banjo, ukulele etc.).

To create a linked staff:

> If there are no staves visible under the instrument label, click the triangular "show more" icon next to the label
> Click the cog icon next to the staff label (E.g. "Treble clef")
> Click **Create a linked staff**
> Click the cog icon of the newly-added staff, and adjust "Staff type", if required.
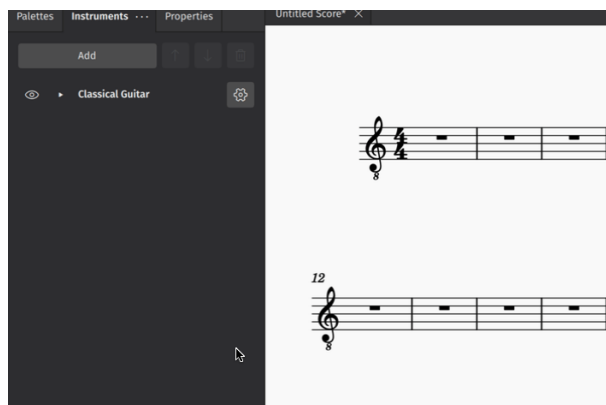
Configuring a staff

Each stave contains some independently configurable properties. By clicking on the cog icon alongside a staff label (E.g. "Treble clef"), you can:

> Change its staff type (including the clef and number of staff lines)
> Reduce the size of the staff (**Small staff**)
> Hide any measures that do not contain notation
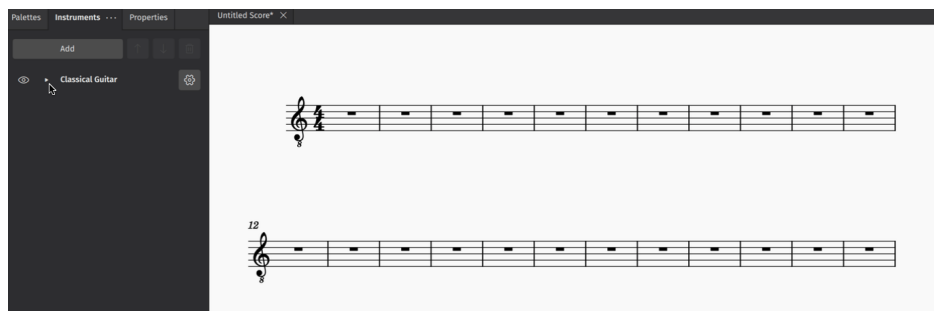
Learn more about staff customization in Staff/part properties.

Deleting staves

The **Instruments** panel can also be used to delete *extra* staves from an instrument:

- If there are no staves visible under the instrument label, click the small black triangle to the left of the label to reveal them
- Click the staff you want to delete
- Click the trash icon at the top of the instruments panel, or press `Delete`.
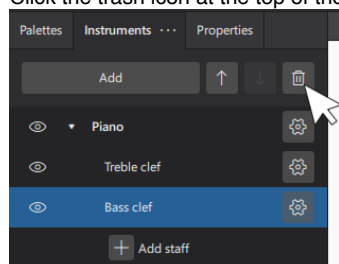
Note: Deleting a staff from an instrument will delete the staff in the main score as well as in any part that the instrument is used.

Showing staves only where needed

By default, a score will show all measures of all staves on all pages throughout the score, whether they contain notes or not. However, you may wish to have certain staves appear only on systems where they are needed. You may even wish to have a staff appear or disappear mid-system. MuseScore provides a number of controls for this purpose.

Hiding empty staves

Ensemble scores often typically omit the staves for instruments that are not playing on any given system.

Hiding all empty staves

To automatically hide staves on systems where they are empty:

> Ensure that nothing in your score is selected (press `Esc` if necessary).
> Go to the **Properties** panel.
> Click the icon next to **Empty staves**.
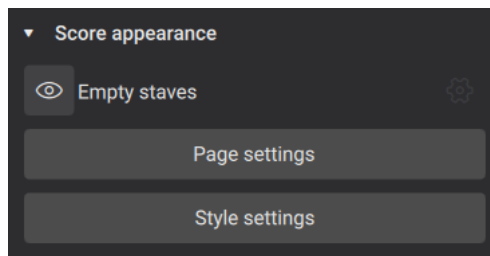
Alternatively, you can enable the **Hide empty staves within systems** option in **Format→Style→Score**.
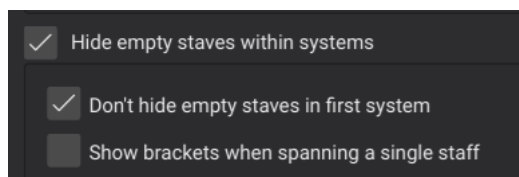
MuseScore will normally continue to show all staves on the first system, in accordance with common convention. If you would like to force MuseScore to hide empty staves on the first system as well, disable the **Don't hide empty staves in first system** option in the dialog. You can also control whether or not brackets are shown if, for example, only a single instrument from a section is playing, via the **Show brackets when spanning a single staff** option.

Excluding specific staves from being hidden

You can specify that certain staves should *not* be hidden when empty:

> Right-click a staff.
> Click **Staff/Part properties**.
> In the resulting dialog, set **Hide when empty** to **Never**.

For instruments that use two or more staves (like piano, organ, and harp), you may wish to specify that individual empty staves should be shown unless *all* staves for the instrument are empty. To do this, set the **Hide when empty** option to **Instrument** for each of the staves.

Temporary staves

In scores where some empty staves are not hidden in general, there may nonetheless be special staves that you wish to only show where needed. For example, this might be a solo part in an ensemble score, or a bass staff in a lead sheet. To set an individual staff to hide when empty without forcing all staves to be hidden when empty:

> Right-click a staff.
> Click **Staff/Part properties**.
> In the resulting dialog, set **Hide when empty** to **Always**.

Cutaway staves

Film scores and other contemporary scores often use a style of notation where individual *measures* are hidden when empty. These are sometimes called *cutaway* scores.

To accomplish this in MuseScore:

> Right-click a staff.
> Select **Staff/Part properties**.
> In the resulting dialog, set **Hide when empty** to **Always**.
> Enable the **Cutaway** option.

If you wish *all* staves to be displayed in this manner, you can use the **Properties** panel or the **Hide empty staves** style setting to hide the staves.

However, you will need to set the **Cutaway** option for each staff individually. You can speed up this process by using the arrow buttons in the **Staff/Part Properties** dialog:

Set the **Cutaway** option for the top staff.
Press the **Apply** button.
Press the ↓ button to move to the next staff.
Repeat steps 1-3 until you have gone through all staves.

Ossia

An *ossia* is a special type of cutaway staff in which a given musical passage is notated using a small staff above the normal staff, such as to show an alternate interpretation.

These can be created in MuseScore using a combination of features:

Add a staff as described in <u>Adding and configuring staves</u>.
Select and delete or otherwise adjust any automatically added <u>bracket</u>.
Enter the desired notation.
Right-click the staff.
Select **Staff/Part properties**.
In the resulting dialog, set **Hide when empty** to **Always**.
Enable the **Cutaway** and **Small** options.
Press **OK**.

If you wish to hear the ossia playback instead of the normal staff, select the corresponding measures on the normal staff and uncheck the **Play** setting on the **Properties** panel. Do the same for the ossia staff if you would rather hear the normal staff playback.

Depending on the look you desire, you might also want to hide the initial or final barline for the passage. To do this, select the barline and press V or uncheck the **Visible** option in the **Properties** panel.

You may also wish to decrease the distance between the ossia and the normal staff. To do this, use a <u>Staff spacer fixed down</u> from the **Layout** palette.

Other invisible measures

MuseScore also allows you to make individual measures invisible on any given staff, whether empty or not.

To set a measure to be invisible on a given staff:

Right-click the measure.
Select **Measure properties**.
Disable the **Visible** checkbox for the staff or staves in which you wish the measure to be set invisible.

Note: you cannot make a measure invisible on *all* staves—it must remain visible on at least one.

Implode and explode

Implode

The **Implode** command allows you to do *either* of the following:

Combine the notation of several voices in the same staff into one voice
Combine notation from several staves into separate voices in one staff.

Combine notes from multiple voices in a single staff into one voice

Select a range of measures in a single staff.
From the menu bar, select `Tools→Implode`.

All selected notes in the staff are now displayed in voice 1.

Combine notes from multiple staves into multiple voices on a single staff

Ensure that there is only one voice in each staff to be imploded;
Select a range of measures in the top staff and extend this selection downwards to include up to 4 staffs.
From the menu bar, select `Tools→Implode`.

The notation initially in the upper staff will now be in voice 1, that from the staff below in voice 2, and so on.

Explode

Explode allows you to do *either* of the following:

> Copy a passage of *single* notes, in a single staff, into one or more staves below.
> Transform the chords of a selected passage of music, in a single staff, into their constituent notes on one or more staves below.

Copy passage of single notes to multiple staves

> Ensure that the passage is in voice 1 (there should be no notes or rests in other voices).
> Select the desired range of measures
> Extend the selection downwards through as many staves as you wish to copy to.
> From the menu bar, select `Tools→Explode`.

The passage in the top staff is copied to each of the selected staves below.

Separate a passage of chords into its constituent notes

In this case the chords in a selected passage of music are separated into their constituent notes as follows:

> If the passage is all in voice 1, the top note of the chord is retained on the top staff, while the lower notes are moved to subsequent staves.
> If the passage contains multiple voices, voice 1 notes are retained on the top staff, while other voices are moved to subsequent staves.
> All exploded notes end up in voice 1.

> Ensure that there are enough staves underneath the source staff to receive the exploded notes. Create extra staves if necessary using the **Instruments** panel.
> Choose one of two options:
> > Select a range of measures in the source staff: this allows all notes to be exploded if there are enough staves available.
> > Select a range of measures that includes both the source staff and also extends downwards to include one or more destination staves: This limits the number of exploded notes/voices to the number of selected staves.
> From the menu bar, select `Tools→Explode`.

Notes: (1) If the selection is all in voice 1, MuseScore will discard the lowest note(s) of any chord that contains more notes than the number of staves in the selection. (2) If the selection is all in voice 1, and If a given chord has fewer notes than the number of destination staves, then notes will be duplicated as needed so that every staff receives a note. (3) Any existing music in the destination staves is overwritten. (4) If you select a partial measure, the explode command will automatically expand it to a full measure.

Mid-score instrument changes

Adding an instrument change

When a musician is required to double on a different instrument for a section of a piece, the instruction to switch instruments is generally placed above the staff at the beginning of that section. A return to the primary instrument is handled in the same manner.

In MuseScore, the instruction to change to a different instrument is handled by the **Change Instrument** text element, which is found in the **Text** Palette. This text element is different from Staff and system text in that it is linked to playback, allowing for a change in sound to the new instrument.

To add an instrument change:

> Click on a note or rest to select the start point for the change
> Click on the **Change instr.** palette item in the **Text** Palette
> Choose which instrument you wish to change to in the **Select instrument** dialog that appears
> Click **OK**

The instruction to change to the new instrument will appear above the selected insertion point in the score.
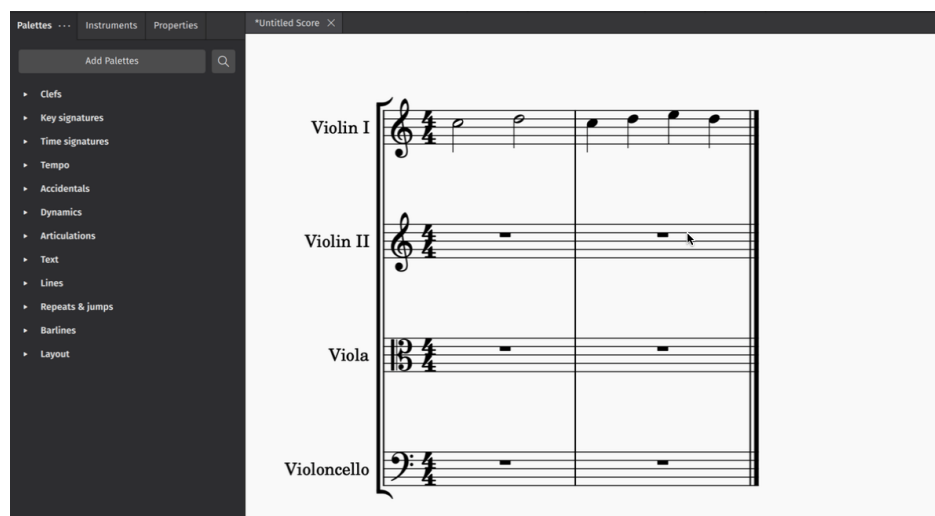
Working with instrument changes

Removing an instrument change

To remove an instrument change, click once on a **Change instrument** text element to select it, and press either `Del` or `Backspace`.

Re-labelling an instrument change

You can re-label any **Change instrument** text element in the score by double-clicking on it and entering new text. This will not affect the playback sound of the new instrument.

Instrument changes in the mixer

Playback sounds for instrument changes are reflected in the <u>Mixer</u> as separate channel strips stacked to the right of the primary instrument channel strip. These instruments are labelled in parentheses. You can change the assigned playback library, apply effects, adjust the volume, and mute, solo, and pan these channel strips just as you would any other instrument channel strip. For more information, see the <u>Mixer</u>.

Changing staff type

Changing to a different instrument may necessitate the use of different <u>key signatures</u>, <u>clefs</u>, and even staff type. Learn more about changing staff type in <u>Staff type change</u>.

Staff type change

You can change the appearance of a staff mid-score by adding a "Staff type change" element to a measure, and adjusting its properties in the <u>Properties</u> panel. This can be used when changing between pitched and unpitched staves or for various experimental notation effects.
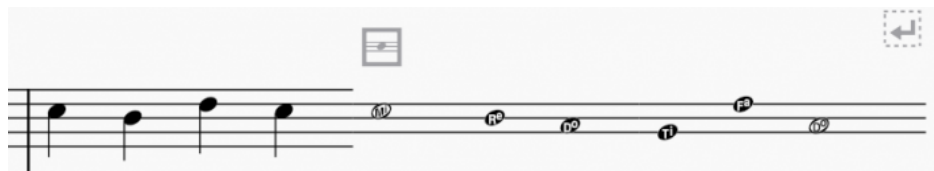
Adding a staff type change

Select a measure in the score and, in the **Layout** <u>palette</u>

Click the "Staff type change" symbol to add it to your score

Alternatively, you can drag the symbol from the palette to a measure in your score.

Setting staff properties

When you alter a "Staff type change" property in the **Properties** panel, the new value takes precedence over the value shown in the global <u>Staff/Part properties</u> dialog. Only those property values in **Staff/Part properties** that cannot be changed for the "Staff type change" will be valid throughout the score.

The properties that can be altered for the "Staff type change" in the **Properties** panel are:

Cue size
Use the **Small staff** size that is defined for the score

Offset
Displace the staff vertically

Scale
Change the size of the staff using a custom percentage

Number of lines
Change the number of lines making up the staff

Line distance
Change the distance between two staff lines

Step offset
Offset the notes on the staff relative

Invisible staff lines
Toggle visibility of the staff lines

Staff line color
Set the color of the staff lines

Notehead scheme
Specify alternate noteheads such as pitch names or shape note

Stemless
Toggle display of note stems

Show barlines
Toggle display of barlines

Show ledger lines
Toggle display of ledger lines

Generate clefs
Toggle display of clefs

Generate time signatures
Toggle display of time signatures

Generate key signatures
Toggle display of key signatures

Staff/Part properties

Overview

The **Staff / Part Properties** dialog allows you to make changes to the display of a particular staff; and to adjust the name, tuning, transposition, and instrument of the corresponding instrument part.

To open the dialog:

> Right-click onto either an empty area in a staff, or the instrument name, and select Staff / Part Properties….

An instrument part often consists of only one staff (e.g. violin, trumpet, flute) but there are notable exceptions. For example, a piano requires two staves—treble and bass; a guitar may need both an 8vb treble staff and a tablature staff, and so on.

Staff properties

The top section of the dialog allows you to adjust many aspects of the *appearance* of an individual staff. The following options are common to all types of staves:

> **Lines**: The number of lines making up the staff.
> **Line Distance**: The distance between two staff lines—measured in spaces (sp.).
> *Note*: It is not recommended to change this value from the default. If you need to make the staff larger or smaller, use the Page Settings dialog instead.
> **Extra distance above staff**: Increases or decreases the distance between the selected staff and the one above in all systems.
> *Note*: (1) This setting does not apply to the top staff of a system, which is controlled by the minimum/maximum system distance (see Formatting).
> (2) To adjust the spacing above just one staff line in a particular system, see Fitting systems on a page: Spacers.
> **Scale**: Changes the size of the selected staff and all associated elements as a percentage (to adjust the overall score size, use "Scaling" (Format→Page Settings…).
> **Hide when empty**: Together with the "Hide empty staves" setting in Format→Style…→Score, this determines if the staff will be hidden when it is empty:
>> **Auto** (default): The staff will be hidden if it is empty and "Hide empty staves" is set.
>> **Always**: The staff will be hidden when empty, even if "Hide empty staves" is not set.
>> **Never**: The staff will never be hidden when empty.
>> **Instrument**: For instruments containing multiple staves, the staff is hidden only if all staves for that instrument are empty.
> **Show clef**: Whether the staff clef will be shown.
> **Show time signature**: Whether the staff time signature(s) will be shown or not.
> **Show barlines**: Whether the staff barlines will be shown.
> **Hide system barline**: Show/hide barline at left-hand edge of the staff.
> **Merge matching rests**: Check if you want matching rests in different voices to be merged rather than separate.
> **Do not hide if system is empty**: Never hide this staff, even if the entire system is empty. This overrules any "Hide empty staves" setting in Format→Style…→Score.
> **Small staff**: Create a reduced-size staff. You can set the default from the menu in Format→Style…→Sizes.
> **Invisible staff lines**: Make staff lines invisible.
> **Staff line color**: Use a color picker to change the color of the staff lines.
> **Cutaway**: Used to create a cutaway staff in which only measures containing notes are visible (e.g. Ossia   (Wikipedia); or cutaway scores). This can be used independently of "Hide when empty" or "Hide empty staves".
> **Advanced style properties**: (see below)

Advanced style properties

Clicking on `Advanced Style Properties…` opens a dialog giving access to advanced display options for the staff. These options will vary depending on the staff type chosen.

Template (all staves)

At the bottom of the **Advanced Style Properties** dialog there are a number of buttons which allow you to make changes to the staff display by selecting a different template.

Note: The options available here depend on the type of staff—whether standard, plucked-string staff/tab, or percussion.

To change the template:

Make a selection from the drop-down list labeled "Template";
Press `< Reset to Template`;
Press `OK` to accept the changes and exit the dialog (or `Cancel` to cancel the operation).

Standard and Percussion staff options only

Lines / **Line distance**:
Show clef / time signature / **barlines** / **key signature** / **ledger lines**: Set to give the desired display on the staff.
Stemless: If checked, staff notes will have no stem, hook or beam.
Notehead scheme: See Notehead scheme.

Tablature options only

Lines: This number usually matches the number of strings in the String Data dialog (exceptions being the Baroque Lute, Theorbo etc. which have more strings than lines).
Line distance:
Show clef / time signature / **barlines**: Set to give the desired display on the staff.
Upside down: If not checked, the top tablature line will refer to the highest string, and the bottom tablature line to the lowest string (this is the most common option). If checked, the top tablature line refers to the lowest string, and the bottom tablature line to the highest line (e.g. Italian-style lute tablatures).
Preview: Displays a short section of a specimen score as it would look with the current properties applied.

Fret Marks tab

Fret marks are the numbers or letters used to indicate the location of notes on the fingerboard. The following group of properties define the appearance of fret marks:

Font: The font used to draw fret marks. A selection of eight fonts are provided supporting all the necessary symbols in 8 different styles—both modern and historic..
Size: Font size of fret marks in typographic points. Built-in fonts usually look good at a size of 9-10pt.
Vertical offset: MuseScore tries to place symbols in a sensible way and you do not usually need to alter this value (set to 0) for built-in fonts. If the font has symbols not aligned on the base line (or in some other way MuseScore does not expect), this property allows you to move fret-marks up (negative offsets) or down (positive offsets) for better vertical positioning. Values are in sp.
Marks are: Select from using *Numbers* ("1", "2"…) or *Letters* ("a", "b"…) as fret marks. When letters are used, the letter "j" is skipped and "k" is used for the 9th fret.
Marks are drawn: Choice of placing fretmarks *On lines* or *Above lines*.
Lines are: Choice of *Continuous* (lines pass through fret marks) or *Broken* (a small space appears in the line where the fretmark is displayed).
Show back-tied fret marks: If unchecked, only the first note in a series of tied notes is displayed. If ticked, all notes in the tied series are displayed.
Show fingering in tablature: Check to allow the display of fingering symbols applied from a palette.

Note Values tab

This group of properties defines the appearance of the symbols indicating note values.

Font: The font used to draw the value symbols. Currently 5 fonts are provided supporting all the necessary symbols in 5 different styles (modern, Italian tablature, French tablature, French baroque (headless), French baroque). Used only with the Note symbols option.
Size: Font size, in typographic points. Built-in fonts usually look good at a size of 15pt. Used only with the Note symbols option.
Vertical offset: Applies only when Note symbols is selected (see below). Use negative offset values to raise the note value symbols, positive values to lower them.
Shown as:
    None: No note value will be drawn (as in the examples above)
    Note symbols: Symbols in the shape of notes will be drawn above the staff. When this option is selected, symbols are drawn only when the note value changes, without being repeated (by default) for a sequence of notes all of the same value.
    Stems and beams: Note stems and beams (or hooks) will be drawn. Values are indicated for each note, using the same typographic mechanics as for a regular staff; all commands of the standard Beam Palette can be applied to these beams too.
Repeat: If several notes in sequence have the same duration, you can specify if and where to repeat the same note symbol. i.e. Never / At new system / At new measure /Always.
Note: This option is only available if "Shown as: Note symbols" is selected (see above).
Stem style:
    Beside staff: Stems are drawn as fixed height lines above/below the staff.
    Through staff: Stems run through the staff to reach the fret marks.
    Note: This option is only available when "Shown as: Stems and Beams" is selected (see above).
Stem position:
    Above: Stems and beams are drawn above the staff.
    Below: Stems and beams are drawn below the staff.

Note: This option is only available when "Shown as: Stems and Beams" and "Stem style: Beside staff" is selected (see above).
Half notes: None / As short stems / As slashed stems.
Note: This option is only available when "Shown as: Stems and Beams and "Stem style: Beside staff" is selected (see above).
Show rests; Whether note symbols should be used to indicate also the rests; when used for rests, note symbols are drawn at a slightly lower position. Used only with the Note symbols option.

Part properties

Instrument

The name of the instrument is shown here. To change the instrument,

Click on `Replace instrument` and make a choice from the "Select Instrument" dialog.

Names

Long instrument name: Name displayed to the left of the staff in the first system of the score or <u>section</u>.
Short instrument name: Name displayed to the left of the staff in subsequent systems of the score.

Usable pitch range

Amateur: Notes outside the amateur range are colored olive green / dark yellow in the score.
Professional: Notes outside the professional range are colored red in the score.

Note: To disable out-of-range coloration of notes, from the menu, select `Edit→Preferences…` (Mac: `MuseScore→Preferences…`), click on the "Note Input" tab, and uncheck "Color notes outside of usable pitch range."

Transposition

Set the octave, and up/down interval to ensure that transposing instruments are notated correctly. This is automatically done by the program for most instruments.

For transposing instruments an additional option is shown: "Prefer sharps or flats for transposed key signatures". There are three options:

Default: Let MuseScore decide
Flats: Prefer flats
Sharps: Prefer sharps

Strings and frets

Staves of fretted, plucked-string instruments have a few extra options in addition to those listed above,

Number of strings: Displays the number of instrument strings.
Edit String Data…: This button opens a dialog box which allows you to set the number and tuning of strings. See <u>Change tuning</u>.

Brackets

Various types of brackets and a curly brace are provided in the "Brackets" <u>palette</u>.

Brackets/braces are automatically applied when a score is created in the <u>New Score</u> dialog. You can easily change them if the default is not what you want (see below)

Adding brackets

To add a bracket or brace to all systems:

Click on the first measure of the staff where you want the bracket/brace to start, hold `Shift` and click on the measure where you want the bracket/brace to end.
Click the desired bracket icon in the "Brackets" palette.

Alternatively:

Select the start measure, and click the bracket into place from the "Brackets" palette.
Select the bracket, click on the adjustment handle and drag it down to the desired position. It will snap into place.

Nested brackets can also be applied using these methods, applying the innermost first and ending with the outermost. The order can be edited subsequently using the "Column" property (see below)

Editing brackets

If you select a bracket/brace, you can edit its properties in the **Properties** panel (sidebar).

Column: Moves the bracket inwards/outwards.
Span: Extends or retracts the end of the bracket/brace.

Changing bracket type

Select the bracket/brace in the score to be changed, then click on a new bracket/brace from the "Brackets" palette.

Changing bracket span

Use one of the following methods:

Select the bracket, click on the adjustment handle, and drag it to the desired position.
Select the bracket, click on the adjustment handle, and press `Shift+↑/↓` to move it from staff to staff.
Alter "Span" in the **Properties** panel.

Deleting brackets

To delete a bracket/brace, select it and press `Del`.

Customizing bracket appearance

Brackets/Braces also have a few global properties which can be adjusted from the **Style** menu:

Adjust **thickness** and **distance from the staff** in `Format→Style→System`.
Adjust **distance above/below** in `Format→Style→Page→`Enable vertical justification of staves.

Notation: Rhythm, meter, and measures

Time signatures

Overview

Time signatures are applied to the score from the "Time Signatures" <u>palette</u>.
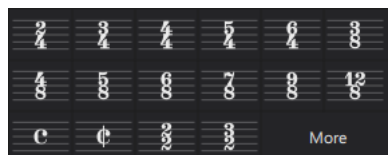
Setting the initial time signature for your score

This is done from page 2 of the <u>New Score dialog</u>.

Adding a time signature change to your score

Use any of the following methods:

Select an existing time signature, measure, note or rest in the score, and click a time signature in a palette.
Drag and drop a time signature from a palette onto a space in a measure, or onto an existing time signature.

Deleting a time signature

To delete a time signature in the score, select it and press `Del`.

Controlling the visibility of time signatures

To hide/show time signatures on a particular staff:

Right-click on the staff and choose "Staff/Part properties";
Uncheck/Check "Show time signature".

To disable/enable all courtesy time signatures (at the end of systems):

From the menu bar, select `Format→Style→Page`.
Uncheck/Check "Create courtesy time signatures".

To hide or show an individual courtesy time signature:

Select the parent time signature;
In the **Time signature** section of the <u>Properties</u> panel, uncheck/check "Show courtesy time signature".

Creating a custom time signature

In the **Time Signatures** palette, click on `More`, then, in the supplementary palette, click on the "Create Time Signature" button;
In **Value** enter the Numerator, Denominator, and Text (the latter is optional, when you need the display to be different from the actual time signature);
Adjust the default note beaming in the **Beam Groups** section (see <u>Beam groups</u> (below). To restore the default beaming pattern, press `Reset`;
Press `Add` to transfer the newly-created time signature to the Time Signatures palette.

You can also do the same thing from the **Master Palette** (`Shift+F9`).

Adding a local time signature for a single staff

In certain cases a score may show staves with different time signatures running at the same time. For example, in the following (J. S. Bach's Goldberg Variation no. 26):

The global time signature is 3/4, but the time signature of the upper staff has been set independently to 18/16.

To set a local time signature for just one staff:

> Hold down `Ctrl` (Mac: `Cmd`) and drag and drop a time signature from a palette onto an empty measure.

Resizing a time signature

> Select a time signature
> In the **Time signature** section of the **Properties** panel, adjust the horizontal and vertical **Scale** values.

Time signature properties

To open the **Time signature properties** dialog use one of the following:

> Right-click on a time signature and from the context menu select "Time signature properties".
> Select a time signature, then click on `Time signature properties` in the "Time signature" section of the **Properties** panel.
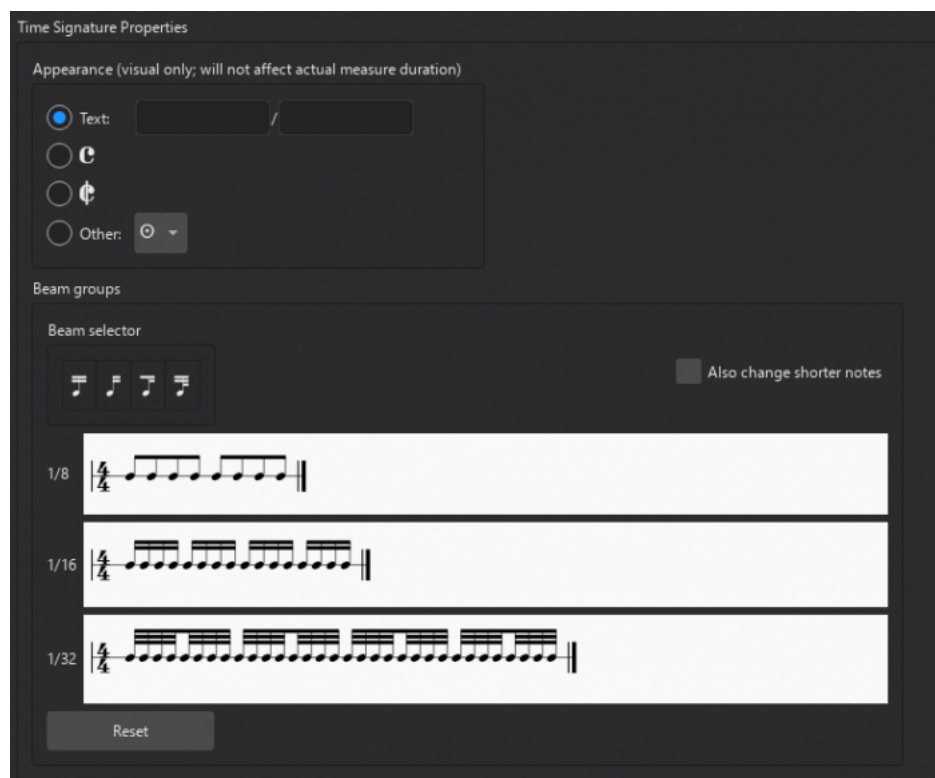
Appearance

This part of the dialog allows you to adjust the nominal appearance of the signature without affecting its underlying rhythmic value.

> **Text**: Insert the nominal numerator and denominator that you wish to appear on the score.

Alternatively, you can make a selection from a range of time signature symbols below.

Beam Groups

This section allows you to adjust the default beaming patterns of notes occurring in the section controlled by the time signature.

Click on a note to break the beam in front of it. Click again to reform the beam.
Alternatively you can drag and drop a "beam selector" icon to the note *after* the beam you want to make or break.
Click Reset to restore the default beaming pattern.

Check the "Also change shorter notes" box if you want changes to apply to beam groups below as well.
For more information on beams, see Beams.

Time signature style

There are a few global style properties for time signatures (see Format→Style).

Create courtesy time signatures: Found in the Page section. Check or uncheck to turn on or off.
Clef to time signature / **Key signature to time signature** / **Barline to time signature** / **Time signature to barline** / **Time signature to first note**:
Found in the Measure section. Allows you to set spacing for various aspects of time signature layout.

Stems and flags

Stem direction

Default stem direction

MuseScore aligns the stems of voice 1 notes according to the conventions of music theory. By contrast, voice 2 and voice 4 stems point *downwards* by default, while voice 3 stems point *upwards*. Voice 1 stems automatically flip upwards in the presence of voice 2 or 4 notes.

Flipping stem direction

Select either the notehead, stem or attached beam (if any)
Use any of the following methods:
Press X
Click on the "Flip direction" icon in the **Note input** toolbar
Select a stem direction from the **Stem** tab in the **Properties** panel

This action will flip any attached beam as well.

Changing stem length

Select the stem
Use one of the following methods:
Press ↑/↓ to extend or shorten the stem
Change **Length** in the **Properties** panel

Creating stemless notes

To hide the stems of individual notes:

Select one or more noteheads
Go to the Properties panel
Select the **Stem** tab
Select the checkbox next to **Stemless**

To hide all stems in an instrument part:

Right-click on the staff and select **Staff/Part properties**
Click on **Advanced style properties**
Select the checkbox next to **Stemless**

Stem and flag properties

Properties specific to stems and flags can be edited from the **Stem** tab in the **Note** section of the Properties panel:

Stemless removes the stem (and associated beams) from the selected note(s)
Stem direction:
Auto determines the direction of the stem according to the voice of the selected note(s)
Up and **Down** override the default stem direction
Flag style sets the appearance of flags for the entire score to either **traditional** (default) or **straight**
Thickness determines the stem's width
Length determines the stem's length
Stem offset can be used to move the stem in a horizontal and/or vertical direction

Stem and flag style

Global settings for **Stem thickness** and **Flag style** may also be set in **Format→Style→Notes**.

See also

Beams

Controlling which notes are beamed

Setting the default beaming for a time signature

By default, MuseScore beams notes according to settings in the Time signature properties dialog. To change this automatic pattern of note-beaming, see Beam groups.

Changing the beaming for selected notes

You can override the default beaming of any individual note, using beam symbols in the **Beam Properties** palette, or in the **Beam** tab of the **Properties** toolbar. Hover over the icons for more info on what each one does.
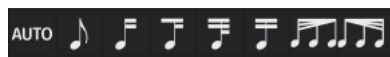
To change one or more note beams use one of the following methods:

- Select one or more notes and/or rests in the score and click the desired symbol in the **Beam Properties** palette.
- Select one or more notes and/or rests in the score and click on a symbol under "Beam types" (**Beam** tab of the **Properties** panel).
- Drag and drop a beam symbol from the **Beam Properties** palette onto a note or rest in the score.

The following table describes the effect of each beam symbol:

Icon	Name	Description
AUTO	Auto Beam	Apply default beaming as determined by the current time signature (see above).
	No beam	Break beams before and after the selected note.
	Break beam left	If the note is beamed to a previous note, break the beam.
	Break inner beams (eighth)	Start a second level beam at this note.
	Break inner beams (sixteenth)	Start a third level beam at this note.
	Join beams	Join beams on both sides of the note.
	Add feathered beam: decelerate	Start feathered beam to indicate gradually slower tempo.
	Add feathered beam: accelerate	Start feathered beam to indicate gradually faster tempo.

Note: The beam between two notes/rests is determined by both of the note/rests. For example: Two consecutive notes with a status of start beam here will not have a beam between them. If the two consecutive notes are set up to connect to each other they will beam, if one of them is not set up for this, the two notes will not beam.

Controlling the appearance of beams

Changing the angle of a selected beam

- Click on the beam you wish to adjust;
- Click on the left/right adjustment handle and adjust the height using one of the following methods:
  - Drag the handle.
  - Move the handle using ↑/↓.
  - In the **Beam** section of the **Properties** panel, adjust the "Beam height" properties.
- Use the center adjustment handle to set the overall height of the beam.

Creating a feathered beam

To create feathered beams use one of the following methods:

- Select one or more beams, notes or rests in the score and click the desired symbol in the **Beam Properties** palette.
- Select one or more beams, notes or rests in the score and click on a symbol under "Beam types" (**Beam** tab of the **Properties** panel).
- Drag and drop a beam symbol from the **Beam Properties** palette onto a beams in the score.

Please note that only beams with two or more components (i.e. 16th notes or shorter) can become feathered.
See the table above for a description of the beam symbol effects.

Beam properties

Properties specific to beams can be edited from the **Beam** tab of the **Note** section in the Properties panel:

Beam types: Alter the beaming pattern at selected notes.
Feather beams: Ditto.
Force horizontal: Make beams of selected notes horizontal.
Beam height: Adjust height and angle of beams.

Editing of these properties is covered in the sections above.

Beam style

A few global properties of beams can be set from **Format→Style→Beams**:

Beam distance: The vertical distance from one beam to the next.
Beam thickness
Broken beam minimum length
Flatten all beams: Check to make all note beams horizontal, regardless of context.

Regroup rhythms

Overview

Standard music notation normally follows a set of conventions designed to facilitate the reading of rhythm. The basic idea is to group notes in ways that clarify which notes belong to which beat. Rules include:

sixteenth notes should be beamed in a way that clarifies each beat
eighth notes should be beamed in a way that clarifies each group of two beats
longer notes that start off the beat should be broken up with ties to clarify each beat or group of two beats

A full discussion of this topic is beyond the scope of this Handbook, but for more information, see this handout .

Here is an example of a rhythm written incorrectly and then correctly:

MuseScore can correct many of these cases automatically.

Regrouping rhythms

To regroup rhythms according to the common conventions of standard music notation:

Select the passage you wish to regroup.
From the main menu, select **Tools→Regroup rhythms**.

The rhythm itself is not changed—only the notation of it.

See also

Tuplets

Creating tuplets

A tuplet is any group of notes that divide the beat in a way other than what is normally permitted by the time signature. Triplets consisting of three eighth notes in one beat are the most familiar type of tuplet.

Simple tuplets

A simple tuplet such as the triplet shown above can be entered in note input mode or in normal mode.

In note input mode

Navigate to the note/rest (or blank measure) where you want the tuplet to start.
Select a final duration for the whole tuplet group (e.g. for an eighth note triplet, this will be a quarter note—keyboard shortcut 5).
Use one of the following commands:

Press the keyboard shortcut for the required tuplet: i.e. `Ctrl+3` for a triplet; `Ctrl+4` for quadruplet … and so on, up to `Ctrl+9` for a nonuplet. (Mac: `Cmd+3 … Cmd+9`);
From the menu, choose `Add→Tuplets…`, then select the required tuplet.
From the note input toolbar, click on the **Tuplet** icon and select from the dropdown.

The note or rest is automatically divided for you and an appropriate annotation is applied.

Enter the desired series of notes/rests.

In normal mode

Select a note or rest that specifies the full <u>duration</u> of the desired tuplet group. You may need to create this in the score beforehand. Thus, if you want an eighth note triplet you need to select a quarter note/rest.
Use one of the following commands:
Press the keyboard shortcut for the required tuplet: i.e. `Ctrl+3` for a triplet; `Ctrl+4`for quadruplet … and so on, up to `Ctrl+9` for a nonuplet. (Mac: `Cmd+3 … Cmd+9`).
From the menu, choose `Add→Tuplets…`, then select the required tuplet.
From the note input toolbar, click on the **Tuplet** icon, and select from the dropdown.

The note or rest is automatically divided for you and an appropriate annotation is applied.

Enter the desired series of notes/rests.

Consecutive tuplets

If you need to input a series of tuplets, and don't want to continually repeat the tuplet command, you can select the notes of the first tuplet and press `R` (Repeat) as many times as needed; then move subsequent notes into position using keyboard arrows, retyping or <u>re-pitch mode</u>.

Custom tuplets

More complex tuplets can be created as follows:

In note input mode, select a note <u>duration</u> equaling the total duration of the tuplet; or, if in normal mode, select a note or rest of the desired overall duration.
Open the **Create Tuplet** dialog from either the menu (`Add→Tuplets…→ Other…`), or by clicking on the tuplet icon (note input toolbar).
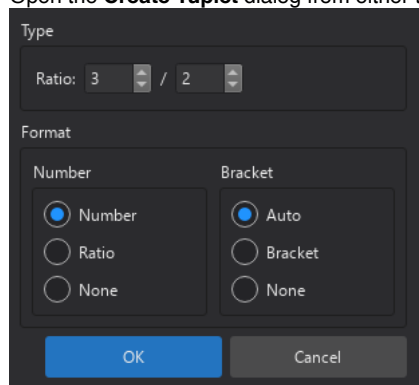
In the **Ratio** field, specify the desired number ratio of the tuplet.
Set **Number** and **Bracket** to get the required tuplet display.
Press `OK` to close the dialog.
Enter the desired series of notes and rests.

Nested tuplets

Tuplets can be nested within other tuplets.
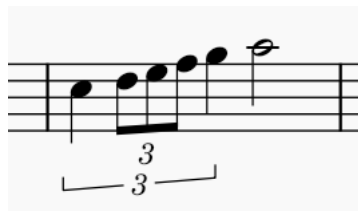
To create a nested tuplet:

Create the outer tuplet as described above.
While entering the individual notes, create inner tuplets in the way (select the total notated duration for the inner tuplet, then use one of the tuplet commands to divide it appropriately).

Changing the display of tuplets

You can choose to display or hide a tuplet number or bracket, change its orientation, or adjust line thickness. See <u>Tuplet properties</u> (below) for details.

Tuplet properties

The display of selected tuplets can be changed in the **Tuplet** section of the <u>Properties</u> panel.

Direction: Whether the tuplet indication appears above or below the staff. Available settings are "Auto", "above" (↑) or "below" (↓).
Number type: Affects the numerical display. Choice of "Number", "Ratio" or "None".
Bracket type: Sets bracket display. Settings are "Auto", "bracket", or "no bracket".
Line thickness: The thickness of the tuplet bracket, if displayed.

Tuplet style

You can set the global properties of tuplets in the score from **Format→Style→Tuplets**. These settings provide fine control over the default display of tuplets.

The settings include:

> Properties
> > Direction
> > Number type
> > Bracket type
> Brackets
> > Bracket thickness
> > Bracket hook height
> Vertical distance from notes
> > Maximum slope
> > Vertical distance from stem
> > Vertical distance from notehead
> > Avoid staves
> Horizontal distance from notes
> > Distance before stem of first note
> > Distance before head of first note
> > Distance after stem of last note
> > Distance after head of last note

Barlines

A full range of common barlines is contained in the **Barlines** <u>palette</u>.

Adding double and other special barlines

Changing barline type for *all* staves

> Select one or more barlines in a staff ;
> Click on the desired barline in the palette.

Alternatively, you can drag a barline from the palette onto a barline in the score.

Changes are applied automatically to *all* barlines at the same point in the score.

Changing barline type for a *single* staff

> Select one or more barlines in the score;
> Hold `Ctrl` then click on the desired barline in the palette.

Alternatively, you can hold `Ctrl` and drag a barline from the palette onto a barline in the score.

Only barlines in the one staff are affected.

Adding mid-measure barlines

> Select one or more notes.
> Click on a barline in the palette.

This will add a "barline" in front of each selected note. The barline is for visual purposes and does not factor into any measure operations.

If you wish to divide a measure, inserting a *real* barline in the process, see Splitting a measure.

Changing barline length

Here we are concerned with the *vertical* extension of barlines in order to link staves together, or their reduction to create partial barlines.

Extending *all* barlines in a staff

> Select a barline on the "start" staff;
> Use either of the following:
> > Drag the end handle downwards until it meets the destination staff. This method is the best for extending barlines through multiple staves.
> > Select the edit handle and press ↓.
> > Check the "Span to next staff" in the **Barlines** section of the **Properties** panel; then click `Set as staff default`
> Repeat if required for subsequent staves.

The barline snaps into place, and all other barlines in that staff follow.
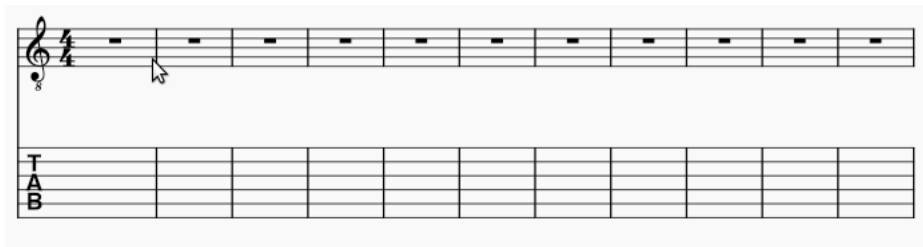
Extending *selected* barlines in a staff

> Select one or more barlines (and their counterparts in the staves below if there are more than two staffs to join).
> Check the "Span to next staff" in the **Barlines** section of the **Properties** panel.

Creating partial barlines

Partial barlines can be easily created by adjusting "Span from" and "Span to" in the **Barlines** section of the **Properties** panel.

Creating barlines between staves only (Mensurstrich)

See Working with Mensurstrich.

Barline properties

You can edit properties specific to barlines in the **Barlines** section of the Properties panel:

Style: Used to change selected barlines to one in the dropdown list.
Span to next staff: Check this to make selected barlines extend to the staff beneath.
Span from/to: used to set the vertical start and end points of one or more selected barlines.
Set as staff default: Applies the changes made in **Span to next staff** and **Span from/to** to all barlines in the staff.
Span presets: Applies the selected preset to one or more selected barlines in the score.

Barline style

Selected properties for all barlines in the score can be changed in **Format→Style→Barlines**:
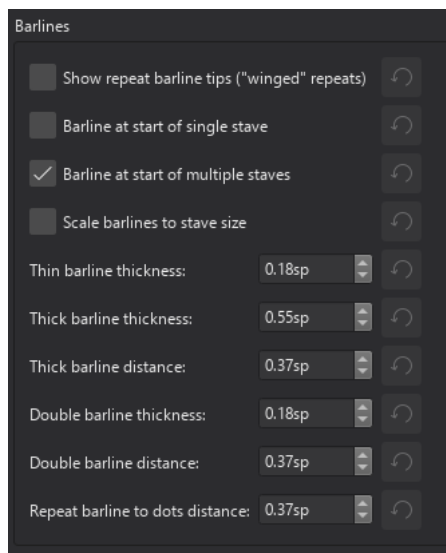
See also

Fixed Measure Widths   for a workaround to ensure barlines are aligned vertically between systems.
Repeat signs

Measure numbering

Showing and hiding measure numbers

Showing measure numbers automatically

By default, MuseScore shows measure numbers at the start of each system *except* the first one in a section. Numbering starts at the first complete measure in a section.

if you wish to change measure numbering:

> From the menu bar, select Format→Style→Measure numbers.
> Edit the following properties as required:
> > **Measure numbers**: This is ON by default. Uncheck to turn off measure numbering.
> > **Show first**: Check to show measure number on the first system of a section.
> > **All staves**: Check to show measure numbers on every staff.
> > **Every system** / **Interval**: If "Every system" is selected, measure numbers are shown at the start of each system. If "Interval" is selected, you can choose a measure interval at which to display measures.
> Make changes to positioning using the controls on the right.
> Edit the display of multimeasure numbers in the section below:
> > **Show measure number range at multimeasure rests**. If checked, you can also customize the appearance and position of the numbering. Unchecked (the default setting), only the count of multimeasure rests is displayed.

Showing measure numbers manually

To *always* show the number of a particular measure, regardless of style settings, open Measure properties and select "Always show" from the **Measure number mode** dropdown.

Hiding measure numbers

To hide *all* measure numbers, uncheck "Measure numbers" in Format→Style→Measure numbers.

To hide the number of a *particular* measure, regardless of style settings, open Measure properties and select "Always hide" from the **Measure number mode** dropdown.

Changing the measure number sequence

Excluding a measure from the count

In Measure properties, check "Exclude from measure count" (in the **Other** pane).

Altering the numbering of a measure

In Measure properties, edit "Add to measure number". Both positive and negative numbers are accepted.

Resetting measure numbering for a new section

By default, numbering of measures always restarts at the beginning of a new section. To prevent this, and make numbering continuous, select the break and in the **Properties** panel uncheck "Reset measure numbers for new section".

Changing the position of measure numbers

To adjust the position of all measure numbers, edit the X and Y offsets of "Position above" and "Position below" in `Format→Style→Measure numbers`.

Measure number properties

Note that any changes made to a measure number in the <u>Properties panel</u> may be lost if the layout changes.

Measure number style

Various properties for all measure numbers in the score can be adjusted in `Format→Style→Measure numbers`. Most are dealt with in the sections above.
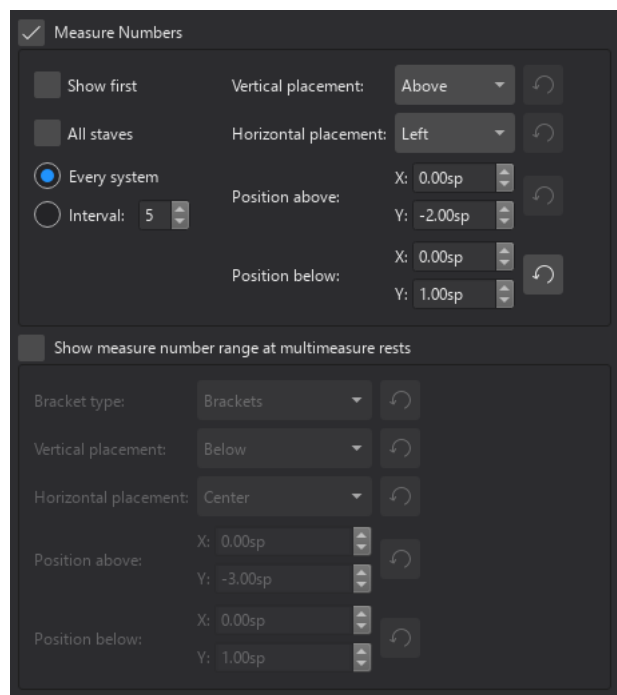
See also

Other measure-related pages:

Measure rests and multimeasure rests

Measure rest

A **measure rest** looks like a whole rest, but is *centered* within a measure and indicates that the entire measure (or a voice within it) is silent:

It is commonly used in all meters (except 4/2 and 8/4).

Multimeasure rest

A **multimeasure rest** is used to indicate a run of empty measures, the number of measures being shown by a figure above/below the staff.

Enabling and disabling multimeasure rests

Multimeasure rests can be turned on/off with the shortcut `M`, or by checking "Multimeasure Rests" in `Format→Style…→Rests`.

By default, if multimeasure rests are enabled, any sequence of two or more empty measures is automatically converted to multimeasure rests.

To change the minimum number of empty measures needed to trigger multimeasure rests:

> From the menu, choose `Format`→`Style…`→`Rests`.
> Check "Multimeasure rests" (if the option is not already enabled).
> Edit "Minimum number of empty measures".

Multimeasure rests can be turned on/off independently in the score and instrument parts.

Breaking multimeasure rests

Multimeasure rests are automatically broken at important points, such as double barlines, rehearsal marks, key signature or time signature changes, section breaks etc.

However, you can opt to break a multimeasure rest elsewhere as follows.

> Disable multimeasure rests;
> Right-click on the measure at which you want the multimeasure rest to break, and select Measure properties.
> In the dialog, check "Break multimeasure rest".
> Click `OK`.
> Re-enable multimeasure rests.

Multimeasure rest properties

You can edit properties specific to multimeasure rests in the **Multimeasure rest** section of the Properties panel:

Show number: This box is checked by default. Uncheck it to hide the multimeasure number.
Number position: Adjust the vertical position of the multimeasure number, above or below the rest.

Multimeasure rest style

Some global properties of multimeasure rests can be set from `Format`→`Style…`→`Measure numbers`:
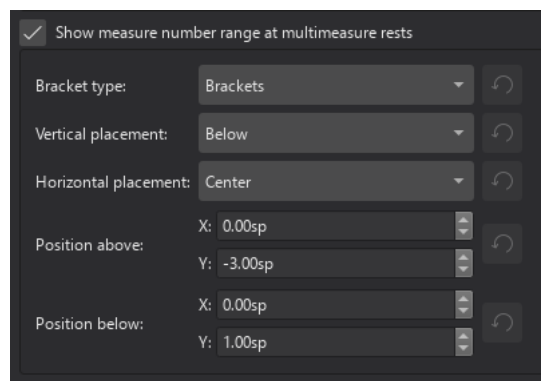
Others from `Format`→`Style…`→`Rests`:
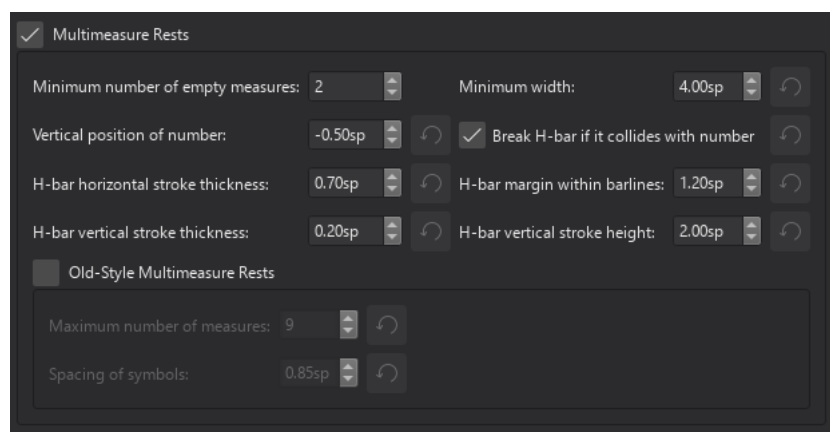
See also

Other measure-related pages:

> Measure numbering
> Pickup and non-metered measures
> Measure properties
> Adding and removing measures

<u>Mensural notation and Mensurstrich</u>

Pickup and non-metered measures

Creating a pickup measure

A **pickup** measure, also known as an **upbeat** or **anacrusis**, is a partial, or incomplete, measure at the beginning of a score or section.

Note: By convention, measure numbering starts at the first *complete* measure.

Specifying the pickup duration during score creation

Click on <u>Measures</u> in the "Additional score information" page (page 2) of the <u>New Score</u> dialog;
Check "Create pickup measure";
Choose an underlying time signature using the spin controls below.

Converting a measure into a pickup

Right-click on the measure and choose <u>Measure properties</u>;
In the **Measure duration** section, next to "Actual", choose an underlying "time signature";
Click OK; or click Apply and then ← or → if you want to configure an adjacent partial measure.

It is accepted musical practice to omit the same duration as the pickup from the final measure of the piece or of the same repeat section. The same method of shortening the measure applies here.

Creating non-metered measures

A non-metered measure is one which is less or greater in duration than the indicated time signature.

A measures of *less* duration than the indicated signature may be created in exactly the same way as a pickup measure (see above).

Other ways of creating non-metered measures are described below:

Inserting notes and rests

Extra notes/rests can be inserted in a measure with the help of either a keyboard shortcut, or by using a special mode of entry called **Insert mode**:

Using a keyboard shortcut

Select the note or rest in the score before which you want to insert notes/rests;
Enter note-input mode;
Select a <u>duration</u>;
Press Ctrl+Shift (Mac: Cmd+Shift) while adding the note/rest from the keyboard or mouse.

Using Insert mode

Make sure you have the element selected where you want to start inserting notes/rests;
Click and hold the Note input icon, and select **Insert** (or if Insert is the current default, just press N);
Enter a note or rest as you would in step-time mode. Each note is inserted before the current cursor position;
Move the cursor forward and backward if required (using the arrow keys), to change the insertion point.

If, at any time, the total duration of the notes and rests within the measure does not match the time signature, a small + or - sign will be shown above the measure.

Joining measures

This command joins selected measures into one measure.

Method A. To join two measures only:

Select the barline between the two measures;
Press Ctrl+Del; or select Tools→Remove selected range.

Method B. To join any number of measures:

Select the measures you want to join;
From the menu bar, select Tools→Measures→Join selected measures.

Notes: (1) If you select measures on only one staff in a score with multiple staves, the same measures will be joined in each staff of the system. (2) Beaming may be automatically modified.

Splitting a measure

This command inserts a barline before a selected note, splitting the measure into two.

Use one of the following methods:

Select a note; then hold Ctrl and click a barline in a palette.

Hold `Ctrl` and drag a barline (from a palette) to a note.
Select a note; then, from the menu bar, select `Tools`→`Measures`→`Split Measure Before Selected Note/Rest`.

See also

[Working with non-metered music](#).

Other measure-related pages:

[Measure numbering](#)
[Measure and multimeasure rests](#)
[Measure properties](#)
[Adding and removing measures](#)
[Mensural notation and Mensurstrich](#)

Measure properties

Opening and using the dialog

The **Measure properties** dialog allows you to adjust various properties of an *individual* measure—such as visibility, duration, numbering and width ("Stretch").

To open **Measure properties**, right-click on a measure and select "Measure properties".
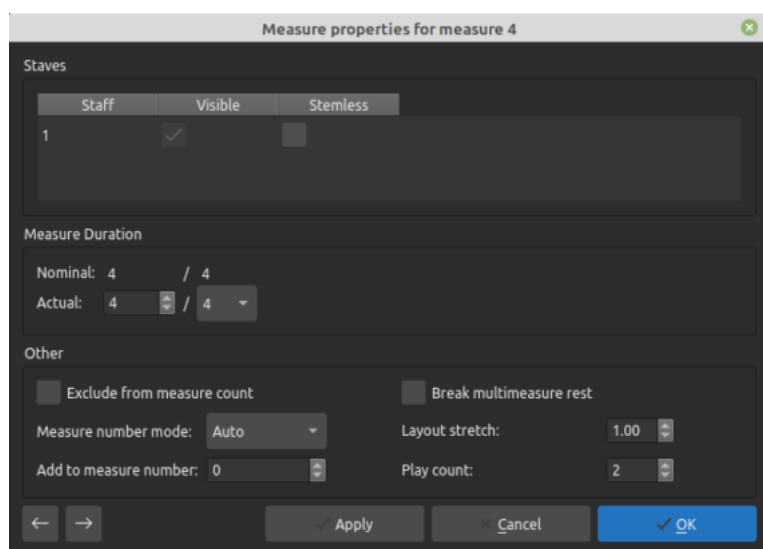
If you only want to adjust one measure, click `OK` to make the changes permanent. However, if you also want to adjust adjacent measures there is no need to close the dialog; simply click `Apply`, then use the arrows on the bottom left of the window to move the dialog to the new measure. The new measure number appears both at the top of the dialog and in the [status bar](#).

Staves

Visible : Uncheck/check the boxes to hide/show the selected measure.
Stemless: Check/uncheck the box to hide/show stems.

Measure duration

Nominal: This is the [time signature](#) set in the score.
Actual: Adjust these figures to increase or decrease the duration of a measure.

Other

Exclude from measure count: Check to make the count skip the selected measure.
Break multimeasure rest: See [Measure rests and multimeasure rests](#).
Measure number mode: Allows you to display/hide measure number for the selected measure irrespective of [style](#) settings.
Add to measure number: Changes numbering from this measure onwards in the score.
Layout stretch: This property is normally adjusted first with a shortcut (see [Stretch](#)); use "Measure properties" for fine adjustment.
Play count: This only appears if the measure is before an end repeat barline. It indicates the number of times the repeat section is played.

The play count of the measure with the end repeat barline must be set one higher than the number of times you want the measure to play (this is usually equal to the number of entries in that volta repeat list + 1).

Take the following score:

Measure 4 should have play count set to 4
Measure 6 should have play count set to 3

See also

[Fixed Measure Widths](#) for a workaround to ensure barlines are aligned vertically between systems.

Other measure-related pages:

[Measure numbering](#)
[Measure and multimeasure rests](#)
[Pickup and non-metered measures](#)
[Adding and removing measures](#)
[Mensural notation and Mensurstrich](#)

Notation: Pitch

Clefs

Clefs are applied to the score from the "Clefs" [palette](#).

Setting the initial clef for a staff

MuseScore automatically applies the most appropriate clef(s) for the instrument when creating a [new score](#). You can easily change this from the score window if needed.

Adding or changing a clef

Add/Change a start clef

To change a clef at the start of a system, use one of the following:

Select the first measure in the system and click a clef symbol in the palette.
Drag a clef from the palette onto the first system measure.
Select the clef and click a clef in the palette.
Drag a new clef from the palette onto the clef.

Add/Change a mid-measure clef

To add/change a mid-measure clef before a note, use one of the following:

Click on the note, then click a clef in the palette.
Drag a clef from a palette onto the note

To add/change a mid-measure clef in front of a barline, use one of the following:

Select the following measure and click a palette clef.
Drag a clef from a palette onto the following measure.

Notes: (1) "Mid-staff" clefs are always smaller than the main system clef. (2) Notes after a clef change are automatically repositioned so that they continue to sound at the original pitch.

Delete

To delete a clef, just select it and press `Del`. Note that clefs at the beginning of systems cannot be deleted.

Controlling the visibility of clefs

Standard clefs

To hide/show clefs at the beginning of all systems except the first:

From the menu bar, select `Format`→`Style`→`Page`;
Uncheck/check **Create clef for all systems**.

Mid-measure clefs are unaffected.

To hide/show all clefs on a selected staff:

Right-click on a measure;
Choose "[Staff/Part properties](#)";
In the dialog, uncheck "Show clef".

This affects clefs at the start of a system and mid-measure.

Courtesy clefs

To hide/show courtesy clefs:

> From the menu bar, select Format→Style→Page;
> Uncheck/Check the **Create courtesy clefs**.

If courtesy clefs are enabled, you can still hide an individual courtesy clef as follows:

> Select the relevant standard clef;
> In the Properties panel, uncheck/check **Show courtesy clef on previous system**.

Clefs and transposition

Using octave clefs

[To be added]

Using different clefs for transposed and concert pitch

[To be added]

Clef properties

See Courtesy clefs (above).

Clefs applied to an entire measure or the first note in a measure are shown before the barline.

To move the clef after the barline:
1. Select the clef
2. Open the **Properties** panel
3. Under **Position relative to barline**, choose **After**

To replace the first clef in a score, see Add/Change a start clef.

Clef style

Tablature users can select the type of TAB clef displayed:

> From the menu, select Format→Style→Clefs
> Set the default TAB clef to "Standard" or "Serif" as required.

Other style properties are available in Format→Style→Page, namely:

Create clef for all systems
Create courtesy clefs

For details, see Controlling the visibility of clefs (above).

Key signatures

Overview

Key signatures are applied to the score from the "Key signatures" palette.

Setting the initial key signature for your score

The initial key signature is set from page 2 of the New Score dialog.

Adding a key signature change to your score

Use one of the following methods:

> Select a measure and click a key signature in the palette.
> Drag a key signature from the palette onto an empty part of a measure.

Note: It is also possible, though uncommon, to add a key-signature mid measure by selecting a note then clicking a palette key signature, or dragging the key signature to a note.

Adding a local key signature for a single staff

If you wish to add a key signature to only one staff, leaving others unchanged, apply one of the following methods:

> Select the measure from which you want the new key signature to apply, then press and hold Ctrl (Mac: Cmd) and click on a key signature in the

(**Key signatures**) palette.
Press and hold `Ctrl` (Mac: `Cmd`), then drag a key signature from a palette on to a measure.

Selecting a key signature for a single staff

If you wish to select a key signature for a single staff only, press and hold `Ctrl` (Mac: `Cmd`), then click on the key signature.

Replacing an existing key signature

Use any of the following methods:

Select the key signature to be replaced, and click a new key signature in a palette.
Drag a key signature from the palette onto the key signature to be replaced (or onto the measure containing the key signature).

To replace the key signature on a single staff only, press and hold `Ctrl` (Mac: `Cmd`) before carrying out the above operations.

Deleting a key signature

To delete a key signature in the score, select it and press `Del`.
To delete a key signature from single staff only, hold `Ctrl` (Mac: `Cmd`) while selecting it, then press `Del`.

Controlling the visibility of key signatures

To show key signatures only at the beginning of a score, and at a key change:

From the menu bar, select `Format`→`Style`→`Page`;
Uncheck/Check "Create key signature for all systems".

To hide/show all courtesy key signatures (at the end of systems):

From the menu bar, elect `Format`→`Style`→`Page`;
Uncheck/Check "Create courtesy key signatures".

To hide/show a particular courtesy key signature:

Select the parent key signature;
In the Properties panel, uncheck/check "Show courtesy key signature on previous system".

Key signatures and transposing instruments

Care needs to be taken when working in written pitch and applying a key signature directly to a transposing instrument. For example, a Bb clarinet is written a tone *higher* than it sounds; so, to get the clarinet to display in **G major**, you need to apply a key signature of **F major** from the palette. And so on.
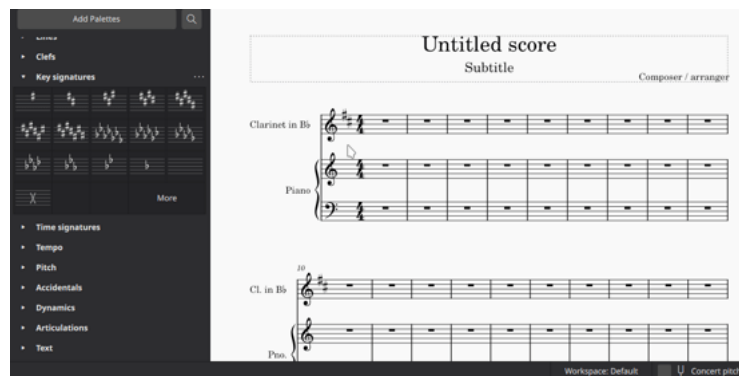
Open/Atonal key signature

Some instruments (e.g. French horn) are conventionally written with no key signature. To achieve this, you need to add an open/atonal local key signature to the staff (this is already done in scores created from templates).

An open/atonal key signature looks similar to a 'C major/A minor' key signature. However, unlike standard key signatures, an open key signature always remains the same, regardless of key changes to the rest of the score.

Creating a custom key signature

To create a custom signature:

In the "Key signatures" palette, click `More`, then `Create key signature`
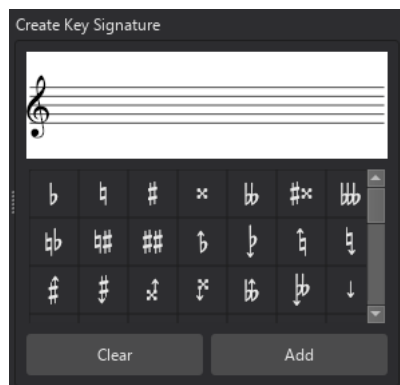
Drag accidentals onto the staff image as required. **Note**: Accidentals are horizontally aligned by default. If you want to an accidental in a custom position, hold `Ctrl` (Mac: `Cmd`) while dragging it.
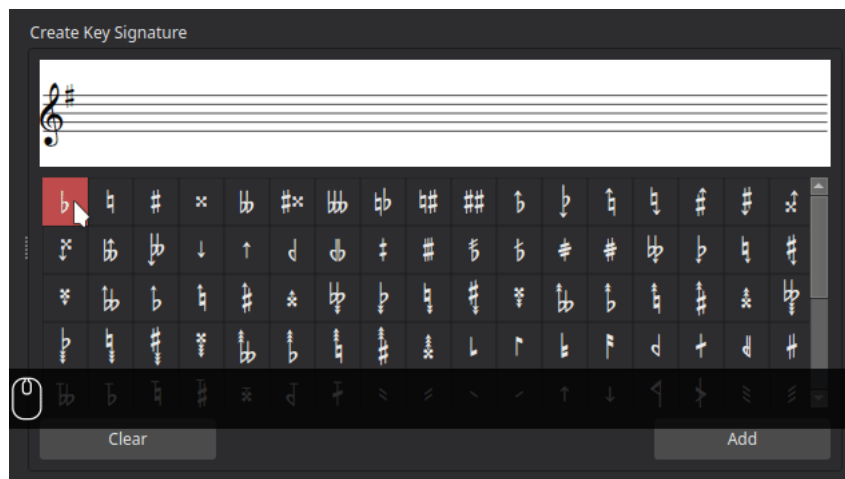
To remove an accidental select it and press `Del`. **Note**: The `Clear` button deletes all added accidentals.

To add the completed signature to the main palette, click `Add`.

Note: Custom key signatures are adapted to transposing instruments automatically. If You want transposing instrument to use custom key signature exactly the same, as it is in palette, You need to transpose it back. Select measure where key signature is placed and use `Tools`→`Transpose`.
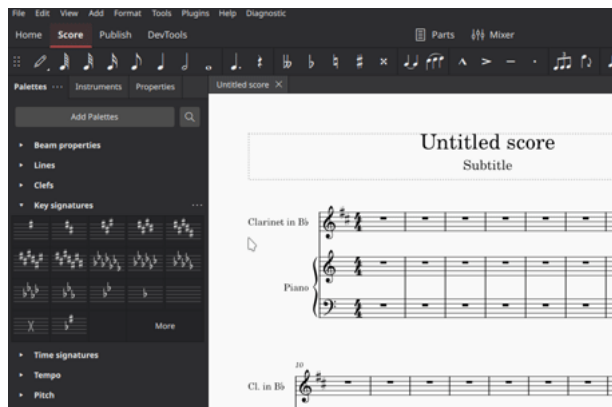
Key signature properties

You can edit properties specific to key signatures in the **Key signature** section of the Properties panel:

Show courtesy key signature on previous system: See Controlling the visibility of key signatures (above).
Mode: You can select a mode for the key signature if required—major, minor, dorian etc. The default is "unknown".

Key signature style

Various style properties affect key signature display.

`Format`→`Style`→`Page`

Create key signature for all systems

Create courtesy signatures

The use of these properties is discussed in <u>Controlling the visibility of key signatures</u> (above).

`Format→Style→Accidentals`
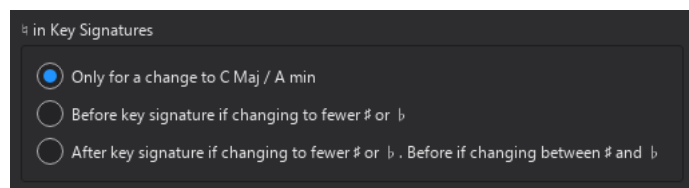
Here you can change the way accidentals are displayed in key signature changes in the score.

`Format→Style→Measure`

Clef to key signature
Key signature to time signature
Barline to key signature
Key signature to barline
Key signature to first note

These properties control the various distances before and after key signatures in the score.

See also

> <u>Transposition</u>

Transposition

Overview

Transposition is the act of raising or lowering the pitch of a selection of notes by the same interval.

In MuseScore, you can transpose your music using keyboard shortcuts, or via the **Transpose** dialog.

Transposing with keyboard shortcuts

To transpose with keyboard shortcuts, first select a range of notes (See <u>Selecting elements</u>). Then use one of the following options, depending on how you need to transpose your music:

Transpose chromatically

Press ↑ or ↓ to move the selection up/down in semitone steps

Transpose diatonically

Press `Alt+Shift+↑/↓` to move the selection up/down in scale degrees (Mac: `⌥+Shift+↑/↓`).

Transpose by an octave

Press `Ctrl+↑/↓` to move the selection up/down in octave steps (Mac: `⌘+↑/↓`).

Using the transpose dialog

The **Transpose** dialog gives you more control over transposition, with options to transpose to selected keys or by specific intervals.

First select a range of notes you wish to transpose. (See <u>Selecting elements</u>). If no selection is made, the whole score is automatically selected for transposition.

Then open the dialog by selecting **Tools → Transpose...**
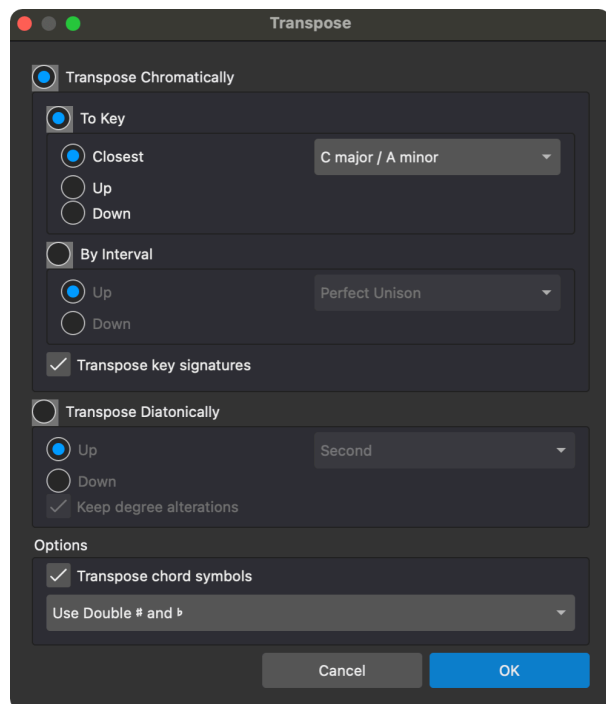
Transpose Chromatically

When this is selected, you can choose to transpose to a specific key, or by specified interval.

To transpose chromatically to a specific key:

> Select **To key**
> Select whether to transpose to the **Closest** key (relative to the current key signature of the selection), or **Up** or **Down** to the destination key signature
> Choose your destination key signature from the drop down menu
> Leave **Transpose key signatures** selected to transpose any existing key signatures in your selection (deselecting this will leave any existing key signatures unchanged)
> Leave **Transpose chord symbols** selected to transpose any existing chord symbols in your selection (deselecting this will leave any existing chord symbols unchanged)
> Click **OK**

To transpose chromatically by interval

To transpose selected notes up or down in semitone increments:

> Select **By interval**
> Select whether to transpose your selection **Up** or **Down** by the specified interval
> Select the transposition interval from the drop down menu
> Select options for **Transpose key signatures** and **Transpose chord symbols** as required (see above)
> Click **OK**

Transpose Diatonically

Select this to transpose the selection by a specified interval without changing the existing key signature(s). **Note**: the intervallic relationships between pitches in your selection will change as a result!

> Select **Transpose Diatonically**
> Select whether to transpose your selection **Up** or **Down** by the specified interval
> Leave **Keep degree alterations** selected to retain any accidentals in the selection (**Note**: accidentals will be modified relative to the existing key signature. **Note also**: Deselecting this will *remove* any existing accidentals upon transposition)
> Leave **Transpose chord symbols** selected to transpose any existing chord symbols in your selection (see above)
> Click **OK**

Working with transposing instruments

Transposed and concert pitch

Transposing instruments (such as the clarinet, French horn, trumpet etc.) are notated at a different pitch (and key signature) to how they sound. The notated pitch is called the *written pitch*, while the actual pitch is called *concert* or *sounding pitch*.

By default the program is displayed with all the staves at *written* pitch. However, if you wish to view the score at *concert* pitch just check the "Concert pitch" box (to the left of the tuning fork icon) in the status bar.
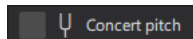
Setting the interval of transposition

When you set up a score in the New Score, or Add or remove instruments dialogs, transposed key signatures are automatically applied to any transposing instruments. However if for any reason you need to set up the staff transposition manually, this is how to do it.

Right-click on the instrument staff and select Staff/Part properties;
Next to "Transpose" in the lower part of the dialog, select the interval that the instrument sounds above/below concert pitch. (Music for the Bb clarinet, for example, is written a tone above its sounding pitch and the transpose setting is therefore a major second *down*.)
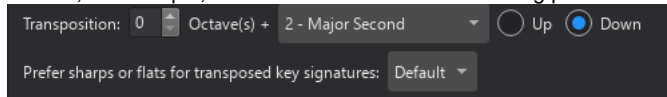
Click OK.

The correct transposed key signature will now appear on the staff.

Controlling enharmonic spelling

The enharmonic spelling of the transposed key signature, whether in sharps or flats, is set in Staff/Part properties (see Setting the interval of transposition).

To change the enharmonic spelling of pitches in the score, see Change spelling.

Octave lines

Overview

Octave (**Ottava**) lines are used to indicate that a section of music is to be played one or more octaves above or below written pitch; the line may be dotted or solid:

8--------⌐ or 8va--------⌐ : Play one octave above written pitch.
8--------⌐ or 8va--------⌐ : Play one octave below written pitch.

8va alta/bassa lines are particularly common in piano scores, though they are sometimes used in other instrumental music. 15ma alta (2 octaves above) and 15ma bassa (2 octaves below) are also occasionally used.

MuseScore automatically adjusts playback of the score under the ottava to the correct pitch.

Ottava lines may be found in the **Lines** palette.

Adding an octave line to your score

See Adding a line to your score.

To adjust the range and vertical position of the line, see Adjusting elements directly.

Octave line properties

Properties specific to the selected ottava(s) can be adjusted in the **Ottava** section of the Properties panel, namely:

Style tab

Type: Specifies whether the Ottava line is 8va, 8vb etc.
Show number only: Hides any text (such as "va").
Show line: Makes the line visible / invisible. Text is unaffected.
Allow diagonal: Allow line to slope if required.

For other properties in this tab, see Line properties.

Text tab

This has a similar user interface to general lines (see Line properties), but uses special code to specify the ottava text.

Octave line style

Default properties for ottavas can be adjusted in Format→Style→Ottava.

Noteheads

You can choose from an extensive range of alternative noteheads including diamond, crosshead, and many others.
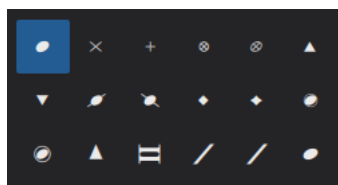
A number of alternative notehead systems are also available allowing you, for example, to write music with pitch names in noteheads, solfege, or shape-note music. e.g.

Changing notehead direction

To flip a notehead horizontally (left to right of stem or vice-versa), use one of the following:

Press Shift+X.
Set **Note direction** in **Properties: Note**.
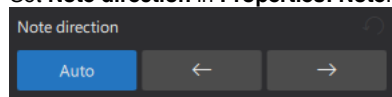
This also works for a selection of notes.

(**Note**: Contrast this command with X which flips the stem and beam *vertically* (top to bottom or vice versa)

Changing notehead shape

Select one or more noteheads;
Use one of the following:
  Select a notehead from **Notehead type** in **Properties: Note**.
  Click on a notehead in the **Noteheads** palette.

Alternatively, you can drag a notehead symbol from a palette onto a notehead in the score.

Sharing noteheads between voices

When two notes in different voices coincide on the same beat, they can either share a *single* notehead, or else be offset to allow the display of *both* noteheads. This is done *automatically* by MuseScore according to certain rules (see below).

To force two offset noteheads in different voices to share a single notehead, use one of the following methods:

Make the smaller-value notehead <u>invisible</u>. This works for the majority of cases.
Select the smaller value notehead and in the **Note** section of the **Properties** toolbar change "Head type (visual only)" to that of the higher value note.

Rules for automatically sharing or offsetting noteheads:

Notes with stems in the same direction do not share noteheads.
Dotted notes do not share noteheads with undotted notes.
Black notes do not share noteheads with white notes.
Whole notes never share noteheads.

Remove duplicate fretmarks in tablature

If you are using **paired standard and tablature staves** you will come across situations where a shared notehead in the standard staff generates two fretmarks in tablature. In this case simply hide one of the fretmarks by making it <u>invisible</u>.

Alternative notehead schemes

To apply an alternative notehead scheme to *all* notes on a staff:

Right click on an empty part of the desired staff and select **Staff/Part properties**
Click on the **Advanced style properties** button
Make a selection from the **Notehead scheme** dropdown.
Click OK twice to exit the dialog.

To apply an alternative notehead scheme to only *selected* notes on a staff:

Select the notes to be changed
In the **Properties** panel, select the desired option from the **Notehead system** dropdown in the **Note** section (you may need to click "Show more" at the bottom of the panel to reveal it).

There is a choice of normal noteheads, noteheads enclosing pitch names, **solfege** or various **shape-note** styles.

Adding pitch and velocity information to notes

To edit the playback velocity of a note:

In the **Playback: General** section of the **Properties** panel, edit "Velocity". This adds or subtracts the displayed value to/from the absolute velocity of the note indicated in the score.

To modify the playback pitch of a note (without altering notation):

In the **Playback: General** section of the **Properties** panel, edit "Tuning (cents)". This adds/subtracts the displayed value to/from the note pitch shown in the score.

Notehead properties

After selecting a notehead, the following properties can be edited in the **Note** section of the **Properties** panel:

Notehead parentheses: Add or remove parentheses.
Notehead type: See <u>Changing notehead shape</u> (above).
Hide notehead: Makes notehead invisible (see also, <u>Properties: visibility</u>).
Small notehead:
Duration dot position: This provides an alternative vertical offset for the duration dot.
Notehead system: See <u>Alternative notehead systems</u> (above).
Notehead type (visual only): See <u>Change offset noteheads to a shared notehead</u> (above).
Note direction: See <u>Changing notehead direction</u> (above).
Notehead offset: This changes the offset of the notehead *only* (to change the offset of the complete note, use "Offset" in **Properties: Appearance** instead).

Ambitus

An **ambitus** indicates the range of notes included within a stave. It is used to indicate the appropriate voice for a particular part. See Wikipedia: <u>Ambitus</u>   .

Adding an ambitus to your score

To create an ambitus choose one of the following methods:

Select the desired start clef and click on the **ambitus** symbol in either the **Pitch** or **Lines** palette.
Drag the **ambitus** symbol from either the **Pitch** or **Lines** palette and drop it onto the desired start clef.

Changing the range of an ambitus

The top and bottom notes of the range can be manually adjusted via **Properties**.

Ambitus properties

Four different properties of the ambitus can be manually altered:
1. **style**: vertical or diagonal
2. **notehead type**
3. **notehead duration**
4. **line thickness** of the line joining the two noteheads

Respell pitches

Manually changing the enharmonic spelling of notes

To change the enharmonic spelling of a note, or notes, in both written *and* concert pitch views:

> Select a note, or group of notes;
> Press J;
> Continue pressing J to cycle through the enharmonic equivalents.

To change the enharmonic spelling in the written pitch view, without affecting the concert pitch view, or vice versa:

> Select a note, or group of notes;
> Press Ctrl+J (Mac: Cmd+J);
> Continue pressing the same combination of keys to cycle through the enharmonic equivalents.

Note: If the pitches of selected notes are not all the same, the effect may be unpredictable.

Automatically respelling all notes in a selection

Respell pitches

> From the menu, select Tools→Respell Pitches.

Notation: Expressive markings

Articulations

Articulations can be found in the **Articulations** palette.
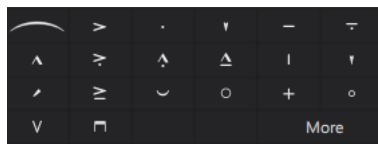
These include all kinds of accents, staccato and vibrato markings.

Adding articulations to your score

Articulations can be added to your score in any of three ways:

Toolbar

Certain articulations (accent, marcato, staccato, and tenuto) can be added from the note input toolbar (above the document pane).

> Select one or more notes;
> Click on the desired icon in the articulations toolbar area.
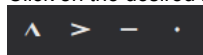
Articulations palette

To add any articulation:

> Select one or more notes;
> Click on the desired articulation in the **Articulations** palette;

Alternatively, drag and drop an articulation symbol from the palette to a notehead.

Keyboard shortcuts

To add an articulation with a keyboard shortcut (i.e. accent, marcato, staccato, or tenuto):

> Select one or more notes;
> Apply the relevant shortcut from the list below:
>> **Accent**: Shift+V
>> **Marcato**: Shift+O
>> **Staccato**: Shift+S
>> **Tenuto**: Shift+N

Articulations playback

Certain articulations affect note playback—such as staccato, staccatissimo, louré (tenuto + staccato), and accents. This is handled automatically by the program.

Articulation properties

For a selected articulation any editable properties will be shown in the Properties panel.

Use the placement controls to either let MuseScore automatically choose the standard placement, or manually select above or below.
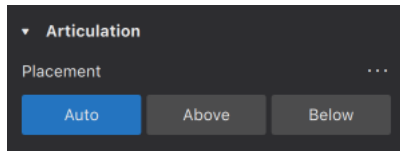
Placement: This alters the position of the symbol above or below the note.

Articulation style

Certain default properties for articulations can be edited in `Format→Style→Articulations, Ornaments`.
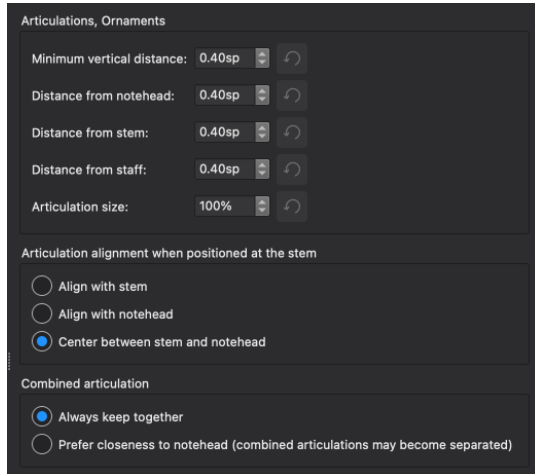
Alignment options

Align with stem

Align with notehead

Center between stem and notehead

Combined articulation options

Always keep together

Prefer closeness to notehead (combined articulations may become separated)

Dynamics

Dynamics are symbols indicating the relative loudness or softness of a note or phrase of music. They can be found in the **Dynamics** palette.
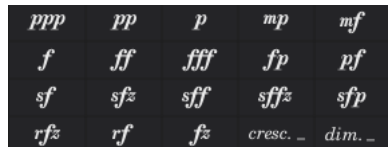
There are two types of dynamics: standard ones, such as *p* and *ff* etc., which apply to the score from the point where the dynamic appears; and *single-note* dynamics, such as *sfz*, which apply only to the note to which the dynamic is attached

Dynamics can be edited just like other text objects.

They have playback effect depending on each instrument's Sound setting selected in the Mixer, see MuseScore 3 features not implemented in MuseScore 4: Velocity controls   .

Adding dynamics to your score

Dynamics palette

To apply a dynamic to the score, use one of the following methods:

> Select one or more notes and click a dynamic symbol in a palette.
> Drag a dynamic symbol from a palette onto a note.

Combining dynamics with expression text

If the dynamic you want is not available in the palette, like *poco f*, you can do one of the following:

To snap expression text to a dynamic

> Select a dynamic or a note with a dynamic
> Add an **Expression text** element from the **Text** palette and it will snap to the right of the dynamic

Snap to dynamic can be turned off in the **Properties** panel.

To add text to a dynamic

> Select a dynamic
> Enter edit mode (double click)
> Type text before or after the dynamic text

Dynamic text and expression text can be styled independently in the **Properties** panel.

Adding text to a dynamic marking does not affect playback.

Keyboard shortcuts for adding dynamics

Dynamic	Windows & Linux Shortcut	Mac Shortcut
Piano *p*	Ctrl+Shift+P	Cmd+Shift+P
Forte *f*	Ctrl+Shift+F	Cmd+Shift+F
Mezzo *m*	Ctrl+Shift+M	Cmd+Shift+M
Rinforzando *r*	Ctrl+Shift+R	Cmd+Shift+R
Sforzando *s*	Ctrl+Shift+S	Cmd+Shift+S
Niente *n*	Ctrl+Shift+N	Cmd+Shift+N
Z *z*	Ctrl+Shift+Z	Cmd+Shift+Z

Dynamics properties

Select a dynamic marking and open the **Properties** panel to adjust its properties individually. To edit default dynamics styles in the score, see Dynamics style (below).

> **Scale**: Control the size of the dynamic marking.
> **Avoid barlines**: By default, dynamic markings avoid colliding with barlines, but this can be turned off..
> **Position**: Choose whether a dynamic sits above or below the stave

Alignment with notehead: For dynamic markings with custom text added, choose whether the dynamics symbol or the entire string of text centers to its attached note (under *Show more*)

Frame: Add a square or circular frame to the dynamic marking and customize its styling (under *Show more*)

Dynamics style

The default positioning of all dynamics in the score can be adjusted from `Format`→`Style…`→`Dynamics`.
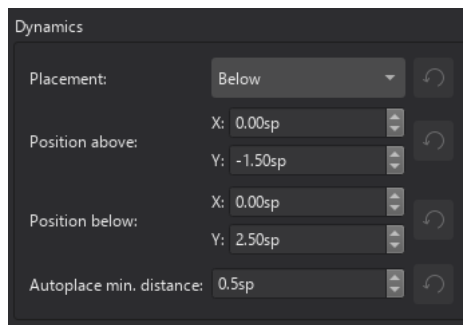
Hairpins

Types of hairpin

Hairpins are symbols used to indicate gradual changes of volume in the score. There are two kinds: crescendo (getting louder) and decrescendo (getting quieter).

There are also crescendo and diminuendo lines which do the same thing:

All can be found in the **Lines** or **Dynamics** palettes.

Adding a hairpin to your score

Lines palette

To enter a hairpin from a palette use one of the following options:

Select a range of notes or measures, then click on a hairpin in the palette.
Drag and drop a hairpin onto a notehead. The hairpin will extend to the end of the measure.

Keyboard shortcuts

To enter a hairpin using a keyboard shortcut:

Select a range of notes or measures;
Use one of the following options:
    For a crescendo hairpin press < ("less than" sign).
    For a diminuendo hairpin press > ("greater than" sign).

Changing appearance of hairpins

Range

To extend or contract the range of a hairpin, see Changing range of a line.

Height

To change the height, select the height adjustment handle (shaded in the image below) …

… then use keyboard arrows, offsets (**Properties** panel), or dragging, to move the handle into the desired position. (See Basics: Adjusting elements

directly.)

Alternatively you can adjust the "Height" in the **Hairpin: Style** section of the Properties panel.

Set at angle

To allow the hairpin to slope at a diagonal, check the "Allow diagonal" box in **Hairpin: Style** in the Properties panel. Then move the start/end adjustment handles to get the desired slope.

Other adjustments

See Hairpin properties.

Changing playback of hairpins

[To be added]

Hairpin properties

You can edit properties specific to hairpins in the **Hairpins** section of the Properties panel.

Style tab

Niente circle: Places a small circle at the point of the hairpin.
Allow diagonal: Allows the hairpin to be set at an angle; see Changing appearance of hairpins (above).
Line style: Choose solid, dashed or dotted lines.
Thickness / **Height**:
Height (new system): Specify the height of subsequent hairpins if the first one spans a system.
Position: Above or Below.

Text tab

Properties here allow you to specify beginning, end, and continuation texts and their vertical offsets.

Hairpin style

Default properties for all hairpins in the score can be adjusted from Format→Style→Hairpins:
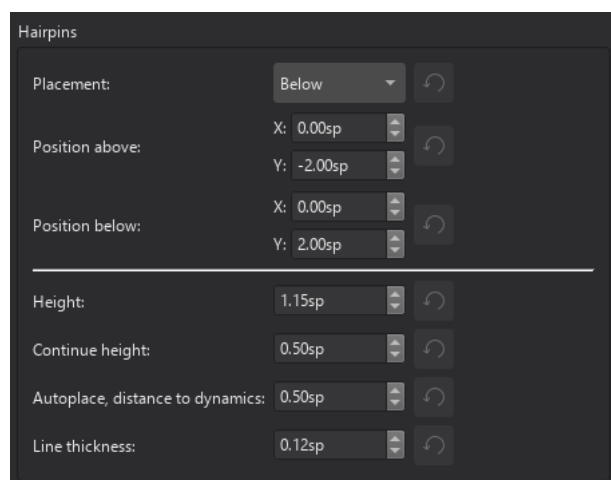
Slurs

A slur is a curved line between notes of different pitches indicating *legato* phrasing; exact interpretation depends on the instrument.

Slurs should not be confused with (note) ties which connect notes of the *same* pitch and extend the duration of the first note to encompass the connected notes.

Adding a slur to your score

After selecting a note, a slur can be created using any of the following:

    A keyboard shortcut, S. This option is both convenient and fast.
    The menu option, Add→Line→Slur
    A slur from the **lines** palette.

The exact method of applications depends on whether you are in note input or normal modes of operation. The keyboard shortcut method will be used as an example.

Adding slurs in normal mode

Method 1

Select the note where you want the slur to start:

Press `S` to add a slur extending to the next note:

To extend the slur to the next note, hold `Shift` and press → (right arrow). Repeat as required:

To flip the slur direction, press `X`:

Press `Esc` to exit edit mode:

Method 2

Select the note where you want the slur to start;
Choose one of the following options:
    To add a single slur: Hold down `Ctrl` (Mac: `Cmd`) and select the last note that you want the slur to cover.
    To add slurs to all voices: Hold down `Shift` and select the last note that you want the slurs to cover.
Press `S`.

Adding slurs in note input mode

Enter the first note in the slurred section;
Press `S` to begin the slurred section;
Type in the remaining notes in the slurred section;
Press `S` again to end the slurred section.

Multi-voice and cross-staff slurs

Using method 2 (above) you can create a slur between notes in the same *or* different voices. Cross staff slurs can be created in exactly the same way. e.g.

You can also adjust the start/end handles of an existing slur to move the start or end to a note of a different voice:

Click on the start/end handle of the slur.;
Press `Shift+↑/↓` to move the start/end between voices, and from staff to staff.

Changing appearance of slurs

To adjust the shape of a slur or its range, see Adjusting elements directly.

Slur properties

The following properties specific to slurs can be adjusted in the Properties panel.

Style: Solid, dashed or dotted line.
Position: Above or below.

Slur style

Some default properties for all slurs in the score can be adjusted in `Format→Style→Slurs/Ties`:
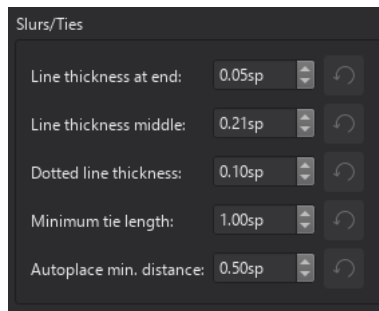
Breaths and pauses

Breaths and pause symbols may be found in the **Breaths & pauses** palette.
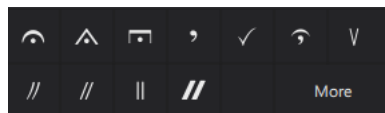
These symbols also have an adjustable playback effect.

Types of pauses

Fermata

A **fermata**, or **pause** appears above/below a note, and extends its written duration, indicating a pause in the music.

It may also be written above a rest, or a barline, indicating the end of a piece or section of music.

Breath mark

A **breath mark** is placed just above the staff, and tells a wind instrument performer or singer to take a breath here, or other instruments to pause slightly. It may occur between two notes or at the end of a measure.

Caesura

The **caesura** also indicates a pause, slightly longer than a breath mark but less so than a fermata. It may occur between two notes or at the end of a measure.

Adding a pause to your score

To add a fermata:

> Select a note, rest or barline;
> Click on a fermata symbol in the **Breaths & pauses** palette

Alternatively drag a fermata symbol onto a note.

To add a breath mark or caesura:

> Select a note;
> Click on a breath mark/pause symbol in the **Breaths & pauses** palette.

Alternatively drag a breath mark/caesura symbol onto a note.

MuseScore automatically places the breath mark/caesura in the correct position, just above the staff and after the selected note.

Changing pause playback

Pause symbols have a playback effect in the score. To adjust the pause length, click on `Playback` in the **Properties** panel and adjust "Time stretch".

Pause properties

The position of selected pauses can be altered by clicking on `Appearance` in the Properties panel and adjusting the offsets. Alternatively you can drag a symbol, or enter Edit mode and use the keyboard arrows to move it.

In addition you can position a **fermata** above or below the staff by selecting the desired option in "Placement on staff" in the **Fermata** section of the **Properties** panel.

Pause style

You can specify default positional properties for all fermatas in `Format→Style→Fermatas`.
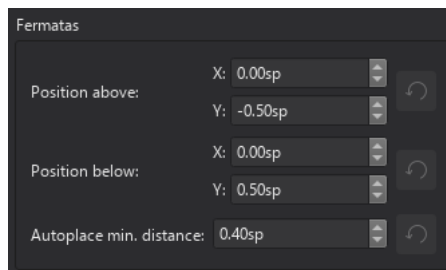
Ornaments

Ornaments and ornament lines can be applied from the **Ornaments** palette. This includes turns, trills, mordents and so on:
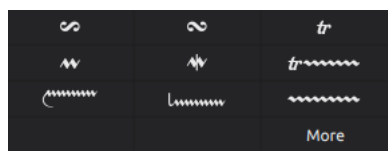
If the Ornaments palette is not already displayed in the palettes area, see Adding more palettes.

Adding an ornament to your score

Add an ornament

To add an ornament to the score:

> Select one or more notes;
> Click on the desired ornament in the **Ornaments** palette;

For a trill only, it is possible to use a custom shortcut instead at step 2.

Add an ornament line

The procedure for applying ornament lines is just like any other line, i.e.

> Select a start note;
> Press `Shift` and click on an end note;
> Click on an ornament line in the **Ornaments** palette

If you subsequently need to adjust the ornament's length, see Changing the range of a line.

Changing ornament intervals (adding accidentals)

Ornaments are aware of the key signature and of other accidentals in the bar. By default, trills, turns, mordents and other ornaments will display and play diatonic intervals. Use the Properties panel to change the interval, displaying the appropriate accidentals in the score and changing playback.

To change the interval of an ornament:

> Select an ornament
> Open the **Properties** panel
> Use the interval selectors to choose the desired interval. The score will display the appropriate accidentals for the chosen interval.

Trills can be customized by quality (major, minor, augmented, etc.) and interval number from unison to octave. The appropriate accidental or upper auxiliary note will display in the score above or below the ornament. For intervals larger than a second, consider using a tremolo.

Both the upper and lower interval can be set for **turns**.

Short trill and **mordent** intervals can be set to the minor or major second.

Any accidentals introduced only by an ornament must be confirmed or cancelled later in the measure for clarity, meaning it is not possible to delete accidentals where the note:

    is after AND in the same measure as an ornament with accidentals
    as the same pitch class as a note with an accidental specified by the ornament (excluding the base note)

For example, in a measure starting with a chromatic turn on A as seen below, all Gs and Bs later in the measure will have an accidental, even if it is the same as what appears in the ornament.

While these accidentals cannot be deleted, their visibility can be turned off. To do so:

    Select the accidental
    Open the **Properties** panel
    Uncheck **Visible**
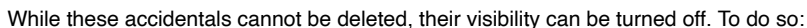
Ornament properties

The following properties of selected ornaments can be edited from the **Ornament** section of the **Properties** panel:

Accidental visibility

    Default only shows accidentals that have not shown up yet in the measure.
    Show any alteration shows accidentals again even if they appear earlier in the measure.
    Always display an accidental shows accidentals even for diatonic notes.

Placement

Use the placement controls to either let MuseScore automatically choose the standard placement, or manually select above or below.

Accidental properties

When selected, accidentals, including those linked to ornaments, have the following options in the **Properties** panel:

Add parentheses or brackets
Toggle small accidental

Ornament style

Default sizing and spacing properties for ornaments can be edited in `Format→Style…→Articulations, Ornaments`.
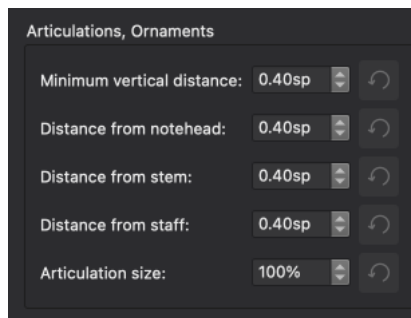
Ornaments can be individually repositioned by clicking and dragging in the score or via the **Appearance** dialog in the **Properties** panel.

Arpeggios and glissandi

Arpeggios, glissandi (slides) and strum arrows can be applied from the **Arpeggios & Glissandi** palette:
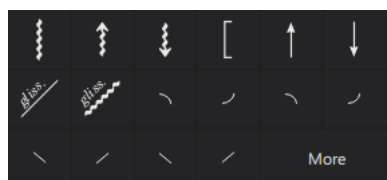
Many have an adjustable playback effect (see below).

Arpeggios

Adding an arpeggio/strum to your score

To add an arpeggio/strum to a score:

Click on any note in a chord (multiple selection is possible)';
Click on an arpeggio/strum symbol in the palette.

Alternatively you can drag an arpeggio/strum symbol from a palette onto a notehead.

Adjusting the height of an arpeggio/strum

Click on an arpeggio and two adjustment handles will appear at the top and bottom of the symbol. You can move either up or down by dragging, or by selecting a handle and using the up/down keyboard arrows.

Creating multi-voice or cross-staff arpeggios

Multi-voice arpeggios

By default arpeggio symbols only span notes of the same voice. If you have a chord consisting of more than one voice, just extend the arpeggio as shown above.

Cross-staff arpeggios

To create an arpeggio that crosses two staves:

First add an arpeggio to the chord component in the top staff;
Click on the bottom edit handle of the arpeggio and press `Shift+↓`.

The arpeggio should now extend to cover the chord in both staves. For it to stay that way, disable autoplace in its properties.

Changing playback of arpeggios

To change the speed of a selected arpeggio, press `Playback` in the <u>Properties</u> panel, and adjust "Spread delay".

If you want to turn off playback altogether, untick the "Play" box in the **General** section of the **Properties** panel.

Arpeggio style

Default properties for all arpeggios in the score can be adjusted from the style menu at `Format→Style→Arpeggios`:
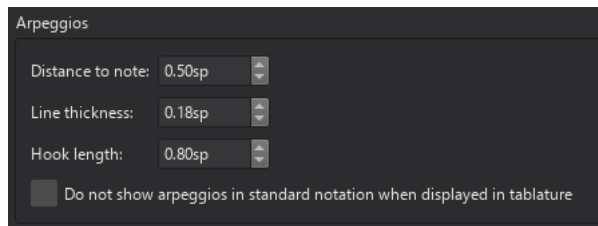
Glissandi

Note: Guitar slides are covered in <u>Guitar techniques</u>.

Adding a glissando to your score

> Select one or more start notes;
> Click on the desired glissando icon in the palette. A glissando is created extending to the next note in the same voice:
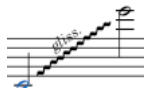
Alternatively you can drag a glissando symbol from the palette onto a notehead.

Glissandi can cross staves if needs be:

Editing range of a glissando

If required, you can change the start or end position of a glissando as follows:

> Select the edit handle whose position you want to change;
> Press `Shift+↑/↓/←/→`, to move the handle in the specified direction, one note at a time.

This method can also be used to move the edit handle between voices and across staves.

Changing appearance of glissandi

The line type of a selected glissando—whether straight or wavy—and any text associated with it, can be changed in the **Glissando** section of the <u>Properties</u> panel. You can also turn off text by unchecking the "Show text" box.

Changing playback of glissandi

To change the playback effect, click on `Playback` and select an option from the dropdown list: chromatic, white keys, black keys, diatonic, portamento.

You can also choose to turn off the playback effect by unchecking "Play" in the **General** section of the **Properties** panel.

Glissando properties

The following properties are available in the **Glissando** section of the **Properties** panel.

Glissando line: Choose from "Straight" or "wavy".
Show text: Uncheck/Check this box to turn off/on the display of the glissando text.
Text: Specify any text to appear with the glissando.

The default style of all glissando text is determined by the settings of "Glissando" in `Format→Style→Text styles`.

Bends

Note: For guitar bends, see <u>Guitar techniques</u>.

The **Arpeggios & glissandi** palette also contains bend symbols for brass instruments such as the trumpet:

These have a playback effect on the score.

Types of bends

Fall:
Doit:
Plop:
Scoop:

if you are not sure what's what, mousing over the palette icon will display the name of the symbol in a tooltip.

Adding a bend to your score

> Select a notehead;
> Click on the desired bend symbol in the palette.

Alternatively, drag a bend symbol onto a notehead in the score;

Changing appearance of bends

To change the shape of the bend, click on it and four adjustment handles become visible. Drag the handles, or click on them and press the keyboard arrows, until you get the shape you want.

Grace notes

Grace notes can be applied to the score from the **Grace notes** palette.
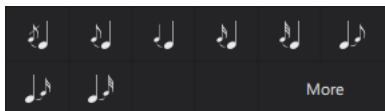
For bagpipe players there is a comprehensive range of grace notes in the **Bagpipe embellishments** palette.

Types of grace notes

Grace notes are small (cue-size) notes which ornament a previous or following note. They take their value from this parent note but do not themselves count towards the measure duration.

There are several kinds:

Acciaccatura():   Usually written with an oblique stroke through the note flag, or through the beam, if there is a beamed series.

Appoggiatura: A stressed note which takes half the value from the parent note.

Grace note after (trill endings):

Adding a grace note to your score

Note: For standard staves *and* tablature, the following instructions for adding grace notes work in both note input *and* normal modes.

Add grace note with keyboard shortcut

> Ensure that the "parent" note is selected (multiple selection is possible in normal mode).
> To apply an acciaccatura, press / (slash). For other grace notes use a custom shortcut (see <u>Preferences: Shortcuts</u>).

Add grace note from palette

> Ensure that the "parent" note is selected (multiple selection is possible in normal mode).
> Click on the desired symbol in the **Grace notes** palette.

Alternatively, you can drag and drop a grace note from the palette onto a note in the score.

Multiple grace notes

Sequential grace notes

You can add a run of grace notes to a selected note by repeatedly applying any of the following:

pressing the relevant keyboard shortcut (see above).
clicking on a grace note icon in a palette.
dragging and dropping a grace note from a palette onto a note.

Grace note chords

To apply a chord of grace notes:

Add a single grace note (as described above).
For standard staves use one of the following methods:
Press `Shift` and a note letter, `A` to `G`. This will add the corresponding note above.
Press `Alt+1–9`; or from the menu bar, select **Add→Intervals** and choose an interval from the list. This will add a note at the indicated interval above the selected note.
You can add intervals below in the same way, but using a custom shortcut (see Preferences: Shortcuts).
For tablature, select the grace note in **normal mode**, then add further chord notes using the method of adding intervals in step 2.

Editing grace notes

Change duration

To edit the visual duration, click on the grace note in normal mode, and select a duration from the note input toolbar or by using a keyboard shortcut (see Selecting duration).

Change pitch

Standard staves. To change the pitch of grace notes, use one of the methods described in Editing notes and rests.

Tablature. To change the pitch of grace notes, use one of the methods described in Changing the pitch in normal mode (tablature).

Changing playback of grace notes

[to be added?]

Grace note style

You can adjust the default size for all grace notes in **Format→Styles→Sizes**.

Tremolo and rolls

Types of tremolo and rolls

A **Tremolo** is the rapid repetition of one note or chord, or a rapid alternation between two notes or chords. The placement of tremolos is handled automatically by the program.

Single note tremolo

For stemmed notes, the rhythmic value of the tremolo is indicated by the number of diagonal strokes through the stem. One stroke indicates that the original note is divided into eighth notes. e.g.

Two strokes divides the note into sixteenth notes, and three strokes into thirty-second notes. On whole notes the tremolo symbol is placed above the note.

Tremolo between notes

In traditional two-note or two-chord tremolos, incomplete beams are drawn between the notes to indicate the rhythmic value of the tremolo (to change the style see below). One beam indicates eight notes, two beams sixteenth notes, and three beams thirty-second notes. e.g.

Buzz roll

A buzz roll symbol is also available from the Tremolos palette. However, it is notational only and currently has no playback properties.

Adding a tremolo to a single note

Click on a notehead in the score.
Click on the desired tremolo symbol in the **Tremolos** palette.

Adding a tremolo between notes/chords

Enter the notes at half the desired final duration of the tremolo.
Select a note in the first chord.
Click on the desired tremolo symbol in the **Tremolos** palette.

Tremolo beams appear between the notes/chords and the appearance of the noteheads is adjusted accordingly.

Example: To enter a two-note tremolo with the duration of a half note (minim), enter two normal quarter notes (crotchets). After applying a tremolo symbol to the first note, the note values automatically double to half notes.

Changing appearance of tremolos

Three styles of tremolos between notes/chords are supported in MuseScore; the default is traditional. To change the style:

Click on the (between notes) tremolo symbol.
In the **Tremolos** section of the **Properties** panel, click on the desired style icon under "Style (between notes)".

Other lines

Overview

Note: The following page applies mostly to special-purpose lines such as guitar barre lines, fingering/string number lines, ornamentation lines, vibrato lines, palm mute lines etc.

Information on more general-purpose lines can be found at:

Voltas
Hairpins
Slurs
Pedal lines
Octave lines

Lines often have text associated with them, and may feature a playback effect appropriate to the line type.

Adding a line to your score

Lines are applied to the score from a palette like any other element. By default, most can be found in the **Lines** palette; other specialist lines in the **Guitar** palette.

To apply a line to a selected range:

Select a range of notes;
Click on a line in a palette;

Alternatively you can drag a line from a palette to the start note, then use the end adjustment handle to extend it (see Changing range of a line).

To apply a line to a single note:

Select a note and click on the desired palette line.
Drag a palette line to the desired start note.

Adjusting a line

To adjust the range of a line, see Changing range of a line.

Types of lines

Guitar-related lines

Barre lines: Used to indicate fret positions. For further details, see Adding a barre line to your score.
Fingering/String number: Apply the fingering first, then a plain line (**LInes** palette), and adjust the length as required.
Vibrato : Apply from the **Guitar** palette. You can change the shape of the line in the **Vibrato** section of the Properties panel.

The following also have playback effects:

Palm mute: Apply from the **Guitar** palette. This changes the sound to that of a clean muted electric guitar.
Let ring: Apply from the **Guitar** palette. Acts like the sustain pedal on a keyboard.

Tempo lines

See Tempo markings.

Staff and System Text lines

A staff text line, like staff text, is affixed to one staff in a system, and is indicative *only* for that staff. It appears only in the part featuring *that* staff.

A system text line, like system text, is affixed to one staff but is indicative for all the staffs in the system. It appears in all instrument parts.

Trill lines

A variety of trill lines are available from the **Lines** palette.

Standard lines

Plain lines are applied from the **Lines** palette. They can be purposed to anything you like; their use in fingering/string number lines is discussed briefly above.

Line properties

The Properties panel allows you to view and edit General, Appearance, and Playback settings.

The name of the section below varies depending on the type of line. But it will have two tabs marked **Style** and **Text**:

Style tab

Clicking on the **Style** tab allows you to set the properties of the line itself:

Line type: A choice of straight, hooked, angle-hooked, or double-hooked.
Thickness / **Hook height**:
Style: Choice of solid, dashed or dotted line.
Dash / **Gap**: Adjust the appearance if "Dashed" is selected.

Text tab

Clicking on the **Text** tab allows you to apply and position any text associated with the line:

Beginning text: Enter the text, if any, to appear at the beginning of the line.
Vertical offset: Allows you to move the text vertically in relation to the line (in sp.).
Text when continuing to a new system: If the line spans a system, this is the text that will appear before the line in the next system.
Vertical offset: As above.

Line style

A few properties of all lines in the score can be set in Format→Style→Text Line; and in Format→Style→System Text Line:
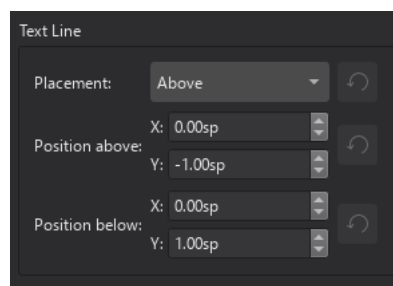
Other symbols

The **Symbols palette** is a category within the Master palette and houses all symbols and text from all built-in music fonts.
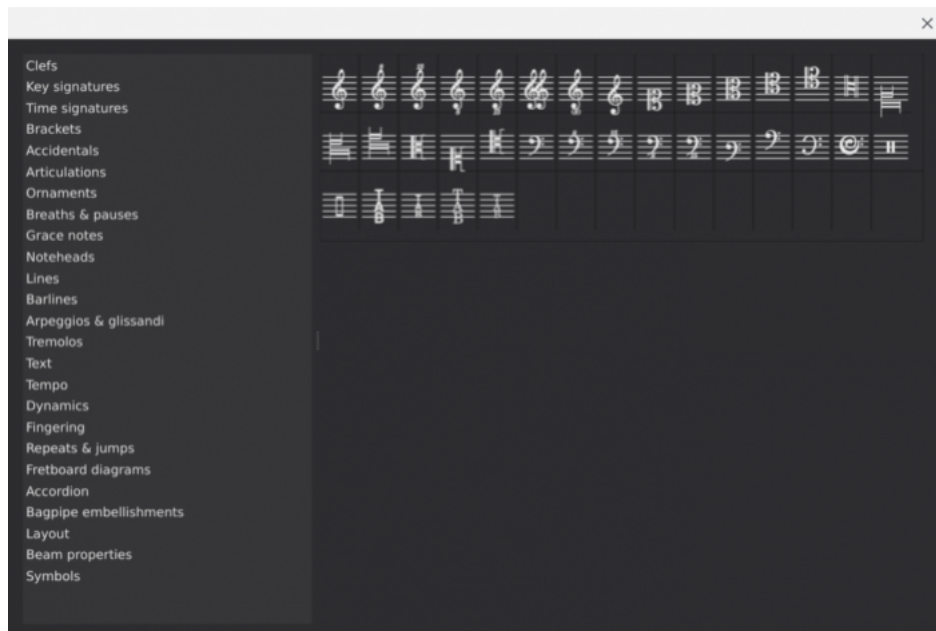
Unlike other categories in the Master palette, items in the **Symbols palette** are non-functional: they are for display purposes only and have no other effect on the score.

You should find most symbols and text items you need for scoring in the Palettes panel—use of the **Symbols palette** should be reserved for specialist items not available in the small palettes, or on those occasions when you really do need a non-functional element.

The Symbols palette

View

To view the **Symbols palette**, select **View**→**Master Palette**, or use the shortcut `Shift+F9`.

Selecting "Symbols" in the list of headings reveals *all* symbols under all subcategories. Selecting one subcategory to focus on a *specific* set.
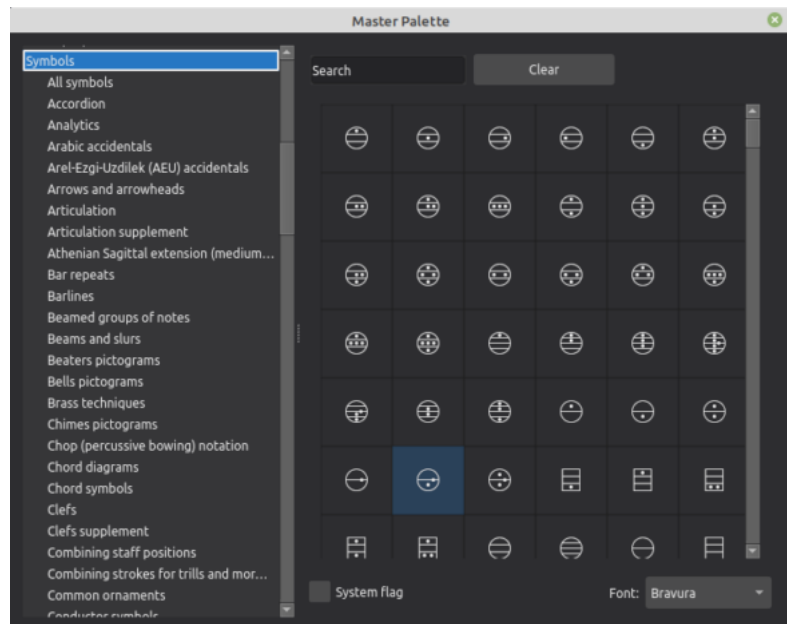
Search

You can search for a symbol by entering a term in the **Search** box at the top of the **Symbols** section. Specify the musical font you want in the dropdown at the bottom right.

Adding symbols to your score

Symbols added from the **Symbols palette** scale in line with the score (see Staff size), but their font-size is fixed.

If you need a symbol with an *adjustable* font-size, you should consider adding it instead from the Special characters palette as staff text.

Add a symbol

Use one of the following methods:

> Select one or more score elements (notes, rests, barlines) then click on the desired symbol in the **Symbols palette**.
> Drag the desired symbol from the **Symbols palette** onto a score element (note, rest, barline).

Add to other symbols

After adding a symbol, you can, if required, add an additional symbol to the existing one. Use one of the following:

> Select a symbol (previously added to the score from the Symbols palette), then click on the desired symbol in the **Symbols palette**.
> Drag the desired symbol onto the existing symbol in the score.

Reposition symbols

To reposition, you can drag the symbol, or edit the offsets in the **Apprearance** section of the **Properties** panel. You can also move the symbol using the keyboard arrows—after selecting it and entering **edit mode** by pressing `Alt+Shift+E` or `F2`.

If two symbols have been joined together (see Add to other symbols, above), moving the first-added symbol moves both. However you can still move the second symbol in relation to the first.

See also

> Using the palettes for information about how to search for and apply palette items to the score.
> Working with images for how to apply images to your score.

Notation: Repeats

Repeat signs

A **repeat sign** looks like a double barline with a dot above and below the center line of the staff (see image below). It is used to enclose repeated sections of the score.

Adding repeat signs to your score

Simple repeats

Place a start repeat barline at the beginning of the repeated section and an end repeat barline at the end.

If the start of the repeat section coincides with the beginning of the piece there is no need for a start repeat barline.

Multiple ending repeats

See Voltas, for repeat sections with multiple endings.

Changing playback of repeat signs

To change the number of times the repeat section is played, adjust the Play count of the final measure in the Measure properties dialog.

Changing appearance of repeat signs

In the **Properties** panel, you can specify repeat barlines with winged tips in "Barlines: repeat style".

Repeat properties

See Changing appearance of repeat signs (above).

Repeat style

You can specify repeat barlines with winged tips, and change the distance from the barline to dots for *all* repeat barlines in `Format→Style→Barlines`.

Voltas

Volta brackets are lines above the staff used to mark different endings for a repeat section. Score playback automatically follows the repeat indications. For example:
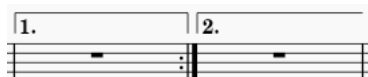
Here the repeat section is played once through with the ending marked "1", then a second time with the ending marked "2".

Adding voltas to your score

> Make sure that any repeat barlines are in the correct position;
> To apply the volta bracket use one of the following:
>> Select a measure and click on the desired line in the **Lines** palette
>> Drag a line from a palette onto a measure
> If required, edit the beginning and continuing text in the "Text" tab of the "Volta" section of the Properties panel.
> If required, specify the playback sequence by editing the "Repeats list" In the "Style" of the "Volta" section of the Properties panel. Enter a series of numbers, separated by commas;
> If required, ensure that the correct Play count is indicated in Measure properties.

Changing appearance of voltas

After selection, the general appearance of a volta line can be adjusted in the "Volta: Line type" section of the **Properties** panel. Line type, thickness, hook type, and line style (solid/dashed/dotted) can be specified.

The beginning and continuing text (and their vertical offsets) can be edited in the "Text" tab of the "Volta" section. This is an indication only and does not affect playback of the volta.

To change the range of a volta see Changing range of a line.

Changing playback of voltas

The actual playback is affected by the entry in the "Repeat list" (Volta: Style). This consists of a series of numbers each followed by a comma (the last comma is omitted). This can be freely edited, but remember to ensure that Play count is also amended accordingly.

Example of a complex Volta setting

A correct volta setting is not always straightforward—as in the following example:

Volta properties

If a volta is selected in the score you can edit its properties in the **Voltas** section of the Properties panel. These are covered in the sections above.

Voltas style

Properties for all voltas in the score can be edited from Format→Style→Volta.
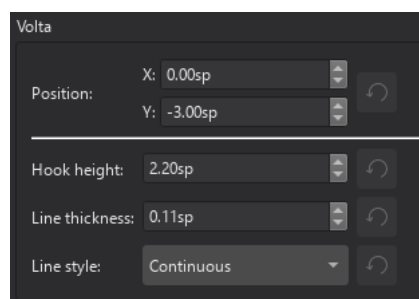
The "Volta" text style can be edited from Format→Style→Text Styles.

Jumps and markers

Jumps and **markers** are used to create repeated sections in a score.

Types of jumps and markers

Jumps include:

D.C. (Da Capo): Jump back to the start of the score.
D.S. (Dal segno): Jump back to the segno (see below).
To Coda; Jump to the coda.

Markers include:

Segno: 𝄋 .
Fine: The end of the piece.

Coda: ⊕ The final section of the score.

Adding a jump or marker to your score

Use one of the following methods

Select a measure, then click the desired repeat symbol in the **Repeats and jumps** palette.
Drag and drop a repeat symbol from the palette onto the desired measure.

Changing appearance of jumps and markers

Jumps and markers are <u>text objects</u> and can be edited as such in the "Text" section of the <u>Properties</u> panel. You can also <u>edit</u> and style the wording as required.

Changing playback of jumps and markers

If you select a jump or marker its playback properties can be viewed in the "Jump" or "Marker" section of the **Properties** panel.
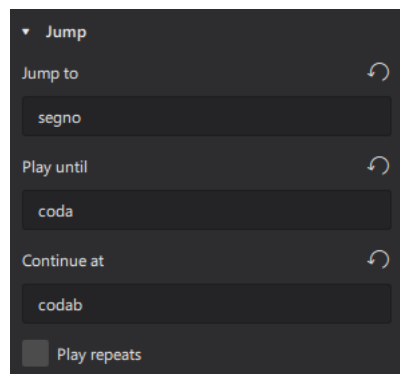
In the case of jumps, you can see the titles of the markers that playback subsequently jumps to. These default settings should work for most users, but you *can* change the destination markers if desired, as long as the named objects exist in the score.

You can also specify whether repeats are taken or not in the section jumped to, by checking/unchecking "Play repeats"

For markers, you can view and edit the title of the marker only.

Jump and marker properties

Properties specific to jumps and markers can be edited in the **Jump** and **Marker** sections of the <u>Properties</u> panel. See <u>Changing playback of jumps and markers</u> (above).

See also, <u>Text properties</u>.

Jump and marker style

You can change the default text properties of all repeat signs of a particular text style (either "Repeat text left" or "Repeat text right") in `Format`→`Style`→`Text Styles`.

Measure and multi-measure repeats

A measure repeat symbol indicates that the previous measure is to be repeated. Two- and four-measure repeat symbols indicate the repetition of the previous two or four measures.

Adding a measure or multi-measure repeat to your score

To apply a **measure repeat** symbol, select a measure in the score and click on the measure repeat icon in the **Repeats & Jumps** <u>palette</u>. Or drag the symbol on to a measure.
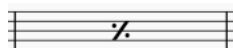
To apply a **two-** or **four-measure** repeat symbol, select the first blank measure following the section you want repeated, then click on the applicable measure repeat icon in the **Repeats & Jumps** palette. Alternatively, drag the repeat icon from the palette onto the same blank measure instead.
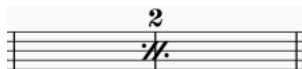
Note: You may need to click the **More** icon in the palette to reveal the two- and four-measure repeat symbols.

In the case of multiple-measure repeats a "Group measures" symbol appears above and between measures. This keeps the measures together on the same system, where possible, in case of any automatic layout changes in the score. This symbol can be deleted if desired.

Measure repeat properties

Number position in the **Measure repeat** section of the Properties panel, allows you to edit the vertical offset of the number above the measure.

Measure repeat style

Properties of *all* measure repeats in the score can be set from Format→Style…→Measure repeats:
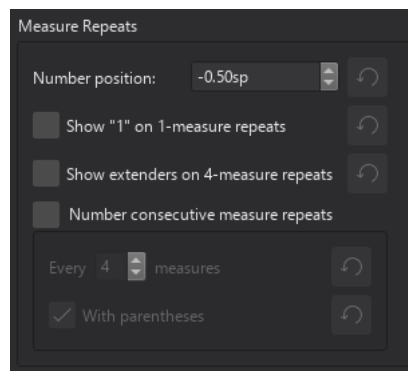
Repeat playback

Turning repeat playback on and off

By default, repeats are always played. If you want to turn off repeat playback,

Click on the **Cog** button in the **Play toolbar**
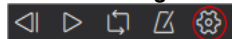
Uncheck "Play repeats".

Idiomatic notation: Keyboard

Pedal

Types of pedal markings

Adding pedal markings to your score

Creating pedal changes

Pedal properties

Pedal style

Cross-staff notation

Creating cross-staff notation

First of all, enter the notation on one staff only.

Select a note in the voice that you wish to move up or down to the other staff. e.g.

Press `Ctrl+Shift+↓/↑` (Mac: `Cmd+Shift+↓/↑`), to move the voice up or down to the other staff. Alternatively, you can click on the **cross-staff icon** in the **note input toolbar** and choose the same options from the context menu.

Note: This operation works on a voice basis, rather than on individual notes. It follows that if you want to ensure that notes remain on the same staff during the operation, they should be in a *different* voice to the one selected above.

Changing appearance of cross-staff notation

To adjust the beam angle and height, click on the beam, then click on an adjustment handle and use the keyboard arrows, or drag the handle with a mouse. e.g.

Alternatively you can make more precise adjustments from the beam section of the **Properties** panel.

See also

How to span a chord or stem over two staves

Accordion notation

these symbols are literally just symbol from the Symbols, but there is a dedicated palette for them
we could consider eliminating this page
we could also consider adding one for harp

Adding accordion symbols to your score

Idiomatic notation: Guitar

Fretboard diagrams

Fretboard (or **Chord**) **diagrams** usually appear above the staff on lead sheets and piano scores:
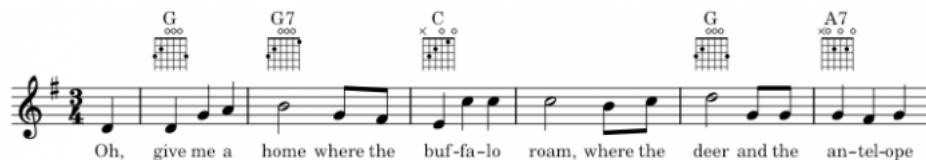
They are commonly used for guitar chords, but MuseScore allows you to create diagrams for any stringed instrument.

A library of common guitar chord diagrams (major, minor and 7th) is provided in the **Fretboard Diagrams** palette.

To reveal the chord name of any diagram in the palette, hover the cursor over it.

Adding a fretboard diagram to your score

Use one of the following methods:

Select one or more notes, then click a fretboard diagram in the palette.
Drag and drop a fretboard diagram from a palette on to a note.

Chord symbols linked to fretboard diagrams

When any of the preset diagrams is applied to the score, a chord symbol is automatically placed above it. This linked chord symbol has the same properties as a stand-alone chord symbol and can be edited and moved as such.

The default placement of a chord symbol in relation to its parent diagram is controlled by the "Distance to Fretboard Diagram" property (set in **Format**→**Style…**→**Chord Symbols**→**Positioning**). This value interacts with the chord symbol **Minimum distance** (to view, press **Appearance** in the Properties panel). Adjust the diagram's position manually if you need to override this.

A linked chord symbol can be deleted independently of its parent diagram. You can also add a new linked chord symbol to a fretboard diagram: see Entering a chord symbol.

Note: Neither fretboard diagrams nor their linked chord symbols are affected by transposition commands.

Creating a custom fretboard diagram

Select an existing fretboard diagram in the score; or add one from the **Fretboard diagrams** palette.
Ensure that the **Properties** panel is open (toggle F8).
Edit the properties in the Settings tab as required.
In the **General** tab, apply the following instructions to the **fretboard image**, as required:
    Remove all dots: Click the **Clear** button above the diagram.
    Add a finger dot: Click on a fret. The shape of the dot is determined by the **Marker type** setting. If **Multiple dots** is checked you can add more than one dot per string.
    Delete dot: Click on an existing dot.
    Add barre / partial barre: If "Barre" is unchecked, press Shift and click on the string fret where you want the barre to begin. If **Barre** is checked simply click on the fret. e.g.

    Add partial barre ending before first string: Create a standard barre first (see previous instruction). Then shorten it by Shift clicking (if **Barre** is disabled); or clicking (if **Barre** is enabled) the fret where you want the barre to end. e.g.
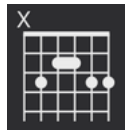
    Delete a barre: With **Barre** disabled, Shift click on the "top" of the barre. With **Barre** enabled, just click on the "top".
    Create multiple barres: Repeat the above steps at different fret positions.
    Open / Mute strings: Click just above the diagram to toggle a string between:
        No symbol
        Open (o)
        Mute/Unplayed (X)

Note: See also Fretboard diagram properties (below).

Finger markers

The default finger marker is a round black dot, which suffices for standard chord (and scale) diagrams. However a number of other shapes are provided—cross, square and triangle—to enable other notation styles.

Alternative notation styles

Some arrangers and educators have extended the basic form of the fretboard diagram, incorporating finger dots of various shapes, and allowing multiple dots per string. Jazz guitarist Ted Greene and his successors are notable examples.

Multi-dot notation style. With this approach, the chord signified by round dots on the fretboard diagram is played first (see image below). Then, on successive beats marked by chord symbols, the chord fingering is modified to incorporate other shapes on the same diagram; the usual playing order is: dot → X → square → delta, but this can vary.
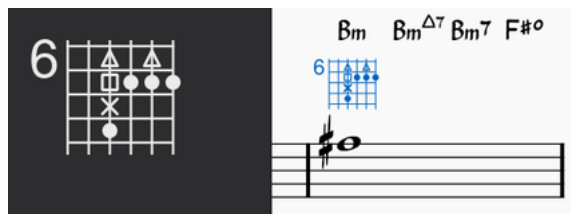
Optional-note notation style. Another use of multiple dots per string allows other symbols to show optional notes, rather than delayed notes:
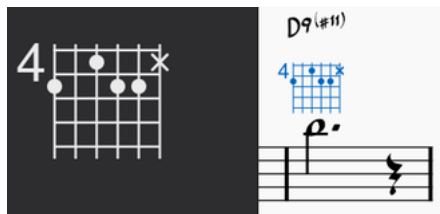
Fretboard diagram appearance

Select a chord diagram and click on **Appearance** in the **Properties** sidebar.

Edit the following properties as desired:

Leading: The leading space.
Measure width:
Min distance: Minimum distance from the staff.
Offset: Move the diagram horizontally or vertically.
Snap to grid:
Arrange: Backward or forward.
Color: Click on this button to change the color of a selected chord diagram.

Fretboard diagram properties
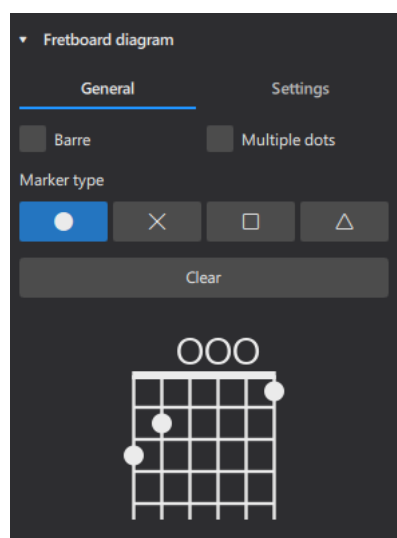
When a fretboard diagram is selected, its properties are viewable in the <u>Properties</u> tab of the sidebar as follows:

General (tab)

Barre: Check if you want to add or delete finger barres *with one click* on the fretboard image below. If unchecked, barres are added by `Shift` clicking instead.
Multiple dots: If unchecked you can only add one finger dot per string. If checked you can add multiple dots per string.
Marker type: When you click on the fretboard image the shape of the dot added is determined by this property. This allows you to add a variety of shapes if desired.
Clear: Clears everything leaving an empty fretboard.

Settings (tab)

Scale: Allows you to make the fingerboard larger or smaller.
Strings: The number of strings to be displayed.
Visible frets: Specifies the number of displayed frets: these are added, or removed, from the bottom of the diagram.
Fret number: Specifies the fret number to be displayed at the top left/right of the diagram.
Placement on staff: Positions the diagram above or below the staff.
Show nut: Check the box to embolden the nut. Applies to first position diagrams only.

At the bottom of the **Fretboard diagram** section of the sidebar is an image of the selected fretboard diagram. Any changes made to this image are automatically applied to the fretboard diagram in the score as well.

Fretboard diagram style

Global fretboard diagram properties can be set in **Format→Style…→Fretboard Diagrams**:
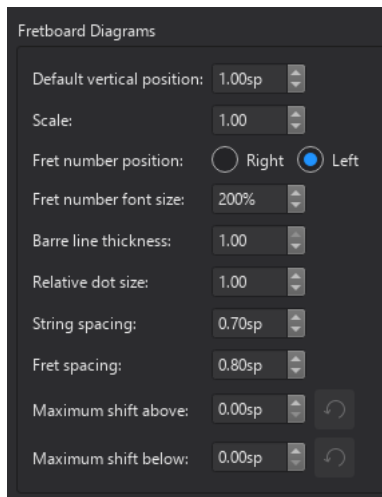
See also

[Customizing palette contents](#)

Guitar techniques

Adding a bend symbol to your score

Bends are created with the **Bend Tool** located in the **Guitar** palette.

Apply a bend

To apply one or more bends to the score, use one of the following options:

> Select one or more notes and click the bend symbol in the palette.
> Drag the bend symbol from the palette on to a note.

A default bend is created in the score. You can modify this bend or choose from a range of alternatives using "Bend type" in the **Bends** section of the [Properties](#) panel.

Edit a bend

Bend shape and length can be edited in the graphical display in the **Bends** section of the **Properties** panel:
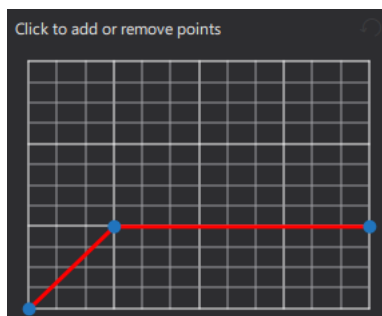
Each red line segment between blue nodes represents one step in the bend, and each step extends horizontally for 1 sp. in the score. The slope of any line shows whether it is an up-bend, a down-bend or a hold. So the above graph describes an up bend, then a hold—total length 2sp.

The **vertical axis** of the graph represents the amount by which the pitch is bent up or down: one unit (the side of a small square) equals a quarter-tone, 2 units a semitone, 4 units a whole-tone, and so on.

To add another step to a bend

> add another node by clicking on the appropriate line intersection.

To delete a bend step

> click on the relevant node to remove it.

Adjust bend height

The height of the bend is automatically adjusted so that any text appears just above the staff. This height can be adjusted, if necessary, with a workaround:

Create another note vertically above the note (shortening the height) or below the note (extending the height) at which you want the bend to start.
Apply the bend to the new note.
To adjust the height of the bend move this created note vertically so that the bend symbol gets the desired height.
Drag the bend symbol to the correct position (to the original note).
Mark the created note invisible and silent (using the Properties panel).

Reposition bend

Bends can be freely repositioned using the methods shown in Changing position of elements.

Adding a tremolo bar symbol to your score

Tremolo bar symbols are available from the **Guitar** palette (look for the oversized "V") and are applied and adjusted in a similar way to bend symbols (above)—with a similar graphical interface in the "Tremolo" bar section of Properties.

You can choose from a range of presets in "Tremolo bar type", or create your own custom one.

Adding a slide to your score

Slides can be found in the **Arpeggios and glissandi** palette. They are of two types:

Glissando-type slides: these run from one note or chord to the next.

In / Out slides: played before or after a note; these can be slide-up or slide down.

By default, slides have a playback effect on the score. You can turn this off by unchecking "Play" in the **General** section of the Properties panel.

Add a slide

Use one of the following methods:

Select one or more notes as start points, then click the desired slide icon in the palette.
Drag the desired slide from the palette onto a note.

In the case of in-between slides going from one chord to the next, the program will attempt to link the correct notes where possible. If further adjustment is required, see below.

Edit properties

For *in-between* slides, the following properties can be adjusted in the **Glissando** section of the **Properties** panel.

Type: Choose between Straight or Wavy.
Show text: Tick this box to display text. *Note*: If there isn't enough room between notes, the text is not displayed.
Text: The wording displayed above the slide (if any).

Adjust start and end points of a slide

In-between slides:

To move an end handle vertically or horizontally, from one note to the next:

Select the slide.
Click on the start or end handle:
    Use `Shift+↑↓` to move the handle up or down, from note to note.
    Use `Shift+←→` moves the handle horizontally, from note to note.

Slides in/out:

To adjust the position of the end handle:

Select the slide.
Click on the adjustment handle.
Drag the handle, or use the keyboard arrows.

Adding a barre line to your score

A Barre lines is a text-line drawn above a guitar staff to indicate that the passage requires a full or half barre. Symbols such as the following are commonly found in guitar music:

Full bar (2nd fret):
CII ------┐

Half barre (2nd fret):
½CII ----┐

The **C** before the roman numerals can be omitted and other variations in line style and text are possible—according to the publisher.

To apply a barre:

> Click on the start note for the barre, then shift click on the end note to establish the range.
> Click on the "Capo Line" symbol in the **Guitar** palette.
> Customize the line and text as required. See Line properties (Other lines).

To adjust the length of a line, see Changing range of a line.

Adding hammer-on and pull-off symbols to your score

Hammer-ons and pull-offs are notated by slurs. If you need text annotations as well, create them using staff text; they can be saved to a palette for future use (see Adding elements from your score).

Notating harmonics

Standard staff

A natural harmonic can be notated in one of three ways:

> At the pitch of the open string on which it is produced. For example, harmonics on the third string appear as:

> At the pitch of the string fret at which it is produced. The same harmonics now appear as:

> At concert pitch. The same harmonics now appear as:

An annotation, such as "Nat. Har.", "N.H.", "Har.", is usually attached, as well as string and fret numbers; the notehead may be standard or diamond-shaped, and rendered clear rather than black; fret numbers may be Arabic or Roman, and so on.

Fixing Playback: If harmonics do not play back at the correct pitch, mute them and create a hidden voice containing the harmonics at concert pitch.

See also, How to Read Harmonic Notation on the Classical Guitar   (douglasniedt.com).

Tablature

A natural harmonic in tablature may be rendered simply as a fretmark, or may be followed by a dot, or enclosed in a diamond, or a pair of angled brackets. e.g.
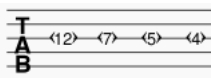
To create a pair of angled brackets:

> Select a harmonic and add staff text.
> Enter a "single left-pointing angle quotation mark" (U2039), then a space, then a "single right-pointing angle quotation mark" (U203A).
> Move the text so it sits over the fretmark;
> Adjust the font size of the staff text and the space inside it to just enclose the harmonic.
> Save it to a palette for future use.

Staff/Tablature pairs

You should ensure that the staff/tab pairs are *not* linked, since you need to be able to edit each staff independently of the other.

Notating guitar fingering

The types of guitar fingering and how to apply them are explained in Fingering.

Creating a tablature staff

Overview

Music for fretted, stringed instruments is commonly notated using **tablature** (often abbreviated as **tab**); this gives a visual representation of the strings and fret numbers. Tablature is frequently found in combination with traditional staff notation.
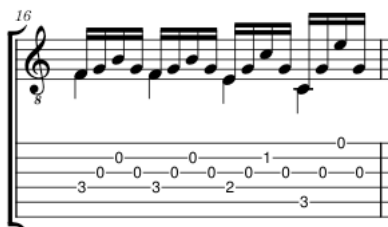
Types of tablature staves

A variety of tablature templates for common instruments are supplied. If this isn't quite what you're looking for, you can easily change the template (see Changing tablature staff type), and/or customize the staff (see Tablature: customization).

Adding a tablature staff to your score

There are three possibilities:

Create tablature as part of a new score.
Add tablature to an existing score.
Change an existing staff from standard to tablature.

Add tablature using the New Score dialog

To create tablature as part of a new score:

Open the New Score dialog.
Select the required tablature from either the **Choose Instruments** or **Create from template** tabs.
Complete the rest of the New Score dialog.

Add tablature using the "Add or remove Instruments" dialog

To create a tablature staff in an existing score:

In the **Instruments panel**, click on the Add button; or press the shortcut key, I. This brings up the **Add or remove instruments** dialog.
Click on the **Strings – Plucked** family and choose the desired tablature from the **Instruments** column.
Press OK.

Change an existing staff from standard to tablature

Make sure that the standard staff contains a plucked string instrument;
Use one of the methods described under Changing tablature staff type.

Creating paired standard and tablature staves

Music for the guitar (and other plucked-string instruments) is often notated using paired standard *and* tablature staves. In MuseScore, the staves can be either *linked* or *unlinked*.

Linked: Any change you make to the notation in one staff automatically updates the other.

Unlinked: Each staff is edited independently. To update the other staff, copy and paste the relevant music notation.

Note : In both cases, the staff/tablature pair shares the *same* instrument.

Create paired standard/tab staves using the New Score Wizard

There are two ways to do this when creating a new score (A or B):

A. For *linked* staves only:

Open the New Score Wizard.
In the "Create from template" tab, click on the "Solo" category and choose the "Guitar + Tablature" .
Complete the rest of the New Score wizard.
Change the instrument type, if required, in Staff / Part properties.
Change the tablature type, if required (see Changing tablature staff type).

B. For linked *or* unlinked staves:

Open the New Score Wizard.
In the "Choose instruments" tab, click on the "Strings – Plucked" family, and select a staff option from the "Instruments" column.
Complete the rest of the wizard.
Add the desired staff using the Instruments panel.

Create paired standard/tab staves using the Instruments dialog

Use this method when you want to add to an existing score:

Open the **Add or remove instruments** dialog: press I; or, alternatively, the Add button in the **Instruments** sidebar
Click on the **Strings – Plucked** family and choose the desired staff from the **Instruments** column.
Press OK.
Add the desired tablature from the Instruments panel.

Note: If you already have one staff of a standard/tab pair in your score, you can simply add the missing staff from the **Instruments** panel. See Adding and configuring staves.

Entering and editing tablature notation

Computer keyboard entry

In normal mode, select a measure, or note/rest.
Switch to note input mode: the cursor appears as a small "blue rectangle" on the currently "active" string.
Select the duration (see below) of the note or rest to be entered.
Press the up/down arrow keys to move the cursor between strings. Use the left/right arrow keys to navigate through the score.
Press a number from 0 to 9 to enter a fret mark from 0 to 9. To enter double digit numbers press each digit in sequence (*Note*: You cannot enter a number higher than the "Number of frets" value set in the Edit String Data dialog).
Press ; (semicolon) to enter a rest of the selected duration.
To enter grace notes, see Grace notes.
You can enter notes in different voices if required—just as you would in a standard staff.

Note for period instrument tablature: A to K (skipping I) can also be used to enter numbers **0** to **9**. In French tablature the corresponding letters appear instead; for **L**, **M**, **N**, you need to type respectively 10, 11, 12.

See also, Editing notes and rests" (below).

Mouse entry

Enter note input mode and select the note or rest duration (see below).
Click on a string and MuseScore will enter a 0 which means "open string." (For French tablatures MuseScore enters an *a*.)
You can immediately type a single or double digit number to replace the 0. (*Note*: You cannot enter a number higher than the "Number of frets" value set in the Edit String Data dialog).
You can also increase/decrease the fret mark using Alt+Shift+↑; or, Alt+Shift+↓.
You can enter notes in different voices if required—just as you would in a standard staff.

See also, Editing notes and rests" (below).

Selecting note duration

Whether you are using a keyboard or mouse, you can set note duration using one of the following:

Press Shift+0 up to Shift+9: to set duration from a 128th note to a longa (availability of these shortcuts may depend on the platform and/or keyboard layout);
Press **NumPad** 0 to 9: to set duration from a 128th note to a longa (if a numeric keypad exists and NumLock is on);
Click on the desired note duration icon in the Note Input toolbar above the document window;
Press Q to decrease the selected duration and W to increase it.

Note: This applies to **note input mode** only. If you want to change the duration of a selected note in **normal mode** see Changing duration in normal mode.

Period tablature notation

MuseScore also supports tablature notation for period instruments such as the renaissance and baroque lutes, Theorbo etc. There are a number of notation systems in use (French, Italian, German, Spanish), but the most common is French.

French tablature features 6 lines representing the top 6 courses. Instead of numbers, fretmarks are indicated by letters—as explained above. Any notes on bass courses below the 6th string (fretted or unfretted) are represented by symbols in the space underneath the 6th line of tablature.

To enter symbols *below* the 6th course:

In note input mode, move the cursor until it is in the space below the 6th line. Press ↓ to move the cursor to the next lowest course and so on. As you do so a "cue mark" appears at the left side of the cursor to show you which course is active:

Cue mark	Number of course	Fretmark entered automatically for unstopped course
no cue	7	a
/	8	/a
//	9	//a
///	10	///a
4	11	4
5	12	5
6	13	6
7	14	7

Conversely you can return to a higher course by pressing ↑, and the cue mark changes accordingly.
2. If the selected course is fretted simply enter a fretmark in note input mode (as shown above). If the selected course is unstopped press *any* note key in note input mode and MuseScore will automatically enter the correct zero fretmark (see table above).

Editing tablature notation

Changing the pitch

In note input mode:

      Position the cursor over the fret mark and type the desired number.
      Increment or decrement the fret mark using `Alt+Shift+↑`; or, `Alt+Shift+↓` (The fret mark automatically changes strings, if necessary, to achieve the lowest possible fret position).

In normal mode:

      Select one or more fret marks.
      Use any of the following commands:
            To increment or decrement, without changing the string: Press `↑`/`↓`.
            To increment or decrement, changing strings, when possible, to minimize the fret number: Press `Alt+Shift+↑`/`↓`.

Note: The fret mark cannot be higher than the "Number of frets" value set in the Edit String Data dialog.

Moving the fretmark to a different string

To move the fret mark to an adjacent string *without changing the pitch*:

In note input mode:

      Position the cursor over a fret mark, and press `Ctrl+↑`/`↓` (Mac: `Cmd+↑`/`↓`).

In normal mode:

Use one of the following methods:

      Select one or more fret marks, and press `Ctrl+↑`/`↓` (Mac: `Cmd+↑`/`↓`).
      Drag a fret mark up or down to an adjacent string.

Note: This operation can only proceed if the relevant string is free and can produce that note.

Changing the duration

See Changing duration in normal mode.

Crosshead/Ghost notes

To change a fret mark to a crosshead/ghost note:

      Select one or more fret marks (in normal mode).
      Press `Shift+X` to toggles ghost noteheads on/off.

Customizing a tablature staff

Changing tuning

      Right-click on the staff and select **Staff/Part Properties…**
      Press the `Edit String Data…` button at the bottom of the dialog box. This opens the **String Data** dialog:
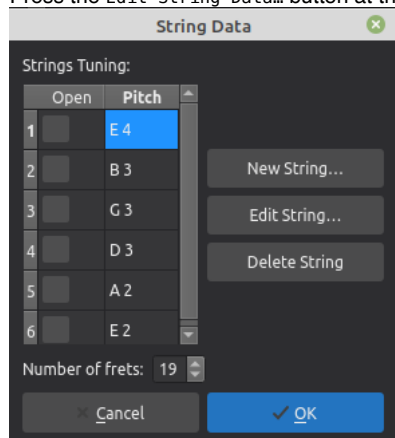
      Under **Strings tuning**, click on a string pitch and select `Edit String…`; Alternatively, just double-click the string pitch.
      Select a new pitch in the Note Selection box and click `OK`. Alternatively, just double-click the new pitch.
      Click `OK` to close the "String Data" dialog box.
      Click `OK` to close the Staff/Part Properties dialog.

Notes: (1) If the tuning is changed on a tab staff that already contains some notes, fret marks will be adjusted automatically (if possible); (2) Any change of tuning to a particular instrument applies only to the score at hand, and does not change any program default settings.

Adding or removing strings

Add a string

Right-click on the staff and select **Staff/Part Properties…**
Click on `Edit String Data…`
Click on a string pitch and select `New String…`
Select the new pitch and press `OK`; alternatively, just double-click the new pitch.

The new string is inserted *below* the selected string. You will also need to adjust the number of lines in Staff/Part properties→Advanced style properties.

Delete a string

Right-click on the staff, select **Staff/Part Properties…**
Click on `Edit String Data…`
Click on a string pitch and press `Delete String`.

Note: After deleting a tablature string you will also need to adjust the number of lines in Staff/Part properties→Advanced style properties.

Mark unfretted string "open"

For an instrument such as the Baroque lute, this feature is used to mark a bass course as unstopped—i.e. always played open like a harp string. This means that only a fret mark indicating a zero fret can be displayed.

To mark a bass course as unstopped:

Right-click on the staff, and select **Staff/Part Properties...**
Click on `Edit String Data…`
Check the required boxes in the **Open** column.

See also Period tablature notation.

Change number of instrument frets

This property defines the maximum fret number which can be entered on a tablature staff.

Right-click on the staff, and select **Staff/Part Properties…**
Click on `Edit String Data…`
Select or enter a new number using the "Number of frets" spinner.

Changing tablature staff type

MuseScore provides a range of common tablature types. If you want to change the tablature type, choose one of two options:

Change staff type from Instruments panel

Ensure that the Instruments panel is visible (toggle `F7`).
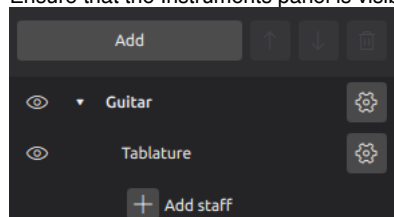
Click on the arrow next to the instrument name to reveal the staves.
Click on the edit cog next to the desired staff and choose an option from the "Staff type" dropdown.
To close, press `Esc`, or click outside the dialog.

Change staff type from Staff/Part properties

Right-click onto an empty area of the staff and select `Staff/Part Properties…`.
Click on `Advanced Style properties`, select the desired option from "Template", then press `< Reset to Template`. You can fine tune the display if necessary using the "Fret Marks" and "Note Values" tabs.
Click `OK` twice to exit.

Note: For customization options in detail, see Customizing appearance of tablature (below).

You will find the terms "simple", "common" and "full" in the tablature type names:

Simple: Displays just fretmarks.
Common: Displays fretmarks, rests, stems and beams.
Full: Displays fretmarks; rests, stems and beams, half-note stems.

Customizing appearance of tablature

Right click on the staff and select **Staff/Part Properties…**
Click on `Advanced Style Properties`….

This gives you access to a full range of tablature customization options. See <u>Staff properties: Tablature options</u>.

Applying capos

Overview

A capo is a device clamped onto a fretted stringed instrument so that it can be played at a higher pitch. MuseScore allows you to emulate this effect by adding **Capo** text to an instrument staff (or staves). This automatically transposes playback to the desired pitch while keeping the notes, or fretmarks, unchanged. Partial capoes are also possible (see <u>below</u>).

Applying a capo to your score

The capo element is available in the **Guitar** palette, which is hidden by default. To reveal this palette:

Click **Add palettes**
Click the **Add** button next to **Guitar**

To apply a capo to a staff:

Click on the note, or rest, where you want to add a capo marking.
Click the **Capo** element in the **Guitar palette**. "Capo 1" is shown by default.
Adjust the settings in the popup dialog (see below).
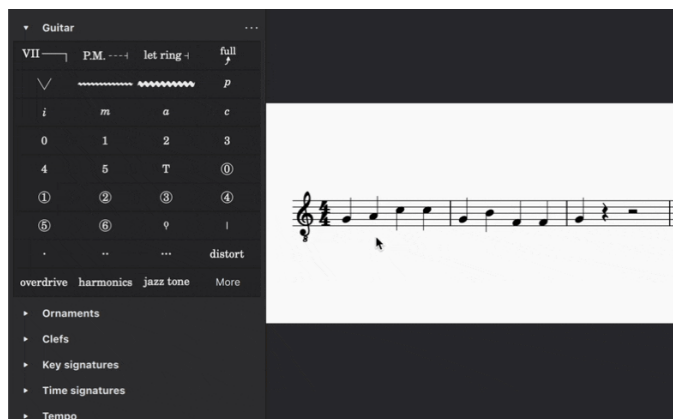
Adjusting capo settings

Turning capo on or off

Select **On** at the top of the dialog to indicate that a capo should be added to the instrument.
Select **Off** to indicate that the capo should be removed from the instrument and return playback to the original key.

Setting capo position

The number in the Fret spinner refers to the fret where the capo should be applied. For example, fret 1 transposes the key up by a semitone, fret 2 by a whole tone, and so on. The text label in the score will update automatically.

Specifying partial capo placement

The switches in the **Apply to** section let you specify that a capo should be applied only on certain strings. When at least one is turned off, the text in the score will change to indicate a partial capo.

Customizing capo text appearance

To change the wording of the Capo text:

Check the **Manually specify instruction text** box in the popup dialog.
Type the text you want to appear in the score.

To place the capo text beneath the staff:

Under **Position**, select **Below**.

Changing capo setting mid-score
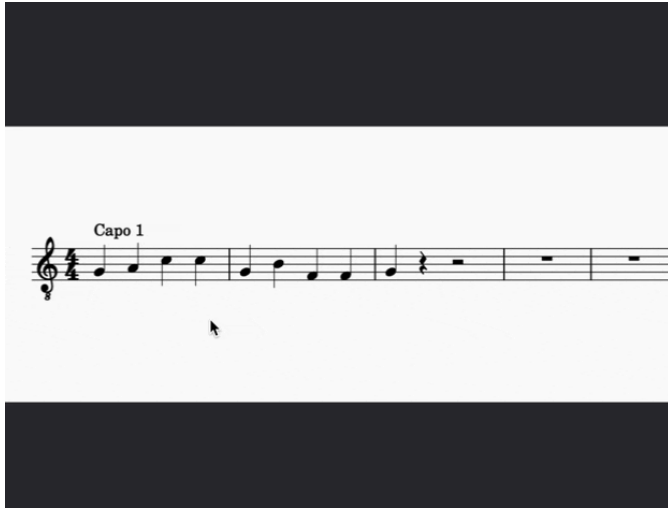
Using the steps above, you can, if desired, vary the capo setting at different points in the score. Each capo instance will affect the transposition of all music that follows it, up until the next capo mark.

Note: it is not possible to apply more than one capo *at the same time*. This feature is planned for a later release.

Idiomatic notation: Harp

Overview

Harps typically have seven strings per octave, with one string per pitch-class from C to B. Modern harps also have seven pedals, each of which has three positions: middle (natural), highest (flattened), and lowest (sharpened). Raising the pedal from middle position loosens the tension of one pitch-class of strings in every octave, lowering the notes by a half step, and lowering the pedal results in notes a half step higher. For example, moving the C pedal to the lowest position will make all C strings play C#.

In notated music for pedal harps, diagrams or text markings in the score indicate when to change pedal positions to change playable notes.

Adding a harp pedal diagram to your score

As of MuseScore 4.1 the harp pedal diagram element is available in the **Harp notation** palette.

To apply a harp pedal diagram to a staff:

> Click in the score where you want to add a harp pedal diagram.
> Click the Harp pedal diagram element in the **Harp notation** palette.
> Choose the tuning in the popup dialog.
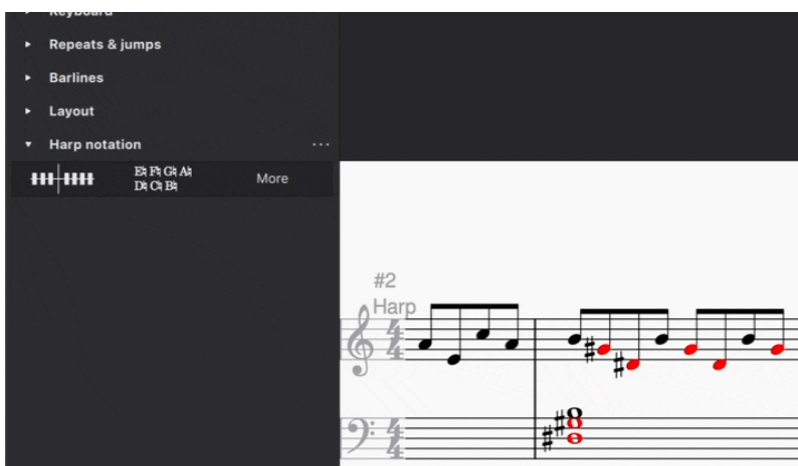
Notes that cannot be played with the selected pedal configuration will turn red.

The diagram view shows every pedal, while the text view shows only the notes that need to change since the last pedal marking.

By default, diagrams appear above the staves and text markings appear between them.

To change a diagram, select it in the score to reopen the popup dialog.

Reading harp pedal diagrams

Visual diagram

The diagram corresponds visually to the seven harp pedals. The three to the left of the vertical line are the left foot pedals; the four on the right correspond to the right foot. From left to right, the notes the pedals control are:

Left foot: D, C, B
Right foot: E, F, G, A

A bar on the line indicates the middle position, which plays a natural note. A bar above the line tells the player to raise the pedal, flattening the note, and a bar below indicates lowering the pedal, sharpening the note.

For example, the playable notes indicated by the diagram below are C#, D, E, F#, G#, A, and B.

Text diagram

The upper line of notes refers to the pedals controlled by the right foot, and the bottom line to the left foot pedals.

The first instance of a harp pedal text diagram in the score will always show the positions of all seven pedals. The text view shows only the notes that need to change since the last pedal marking.

Text diagrams appear between the staves by default, but can be manually repositioned.

Idiomatic notation: Percussion

Entering and editing percussion notation

Overview

In percussion notation, the lines and spaces of the music staff are allocated to different instruments—rather than different pitches—and a range of different notehead shapes is used.

The example below shows a simple drumkit beat on a five-line music staff. By convention, the bass drum rhythm is written on the lowest space of the staff, the snare drum on the third space, and the closed hihat, using crosshead notes, on the space above the staff.

Drumkit scores are often written using two voices: **voice 1** (with stems up) for instruments played by the hands, such as drums and cymbals; and **voice 2** (with stems down) for instruments played by the feet, such as the bass drum and hi-hat pedal.

Types of percussion staves

Percussion music is usually written on a 5-line, 3-line, or 1-line staff—depending on the instrument. When a percussion instrument is created using the New Score dialog, MuseScore automatically chooses the most appropriate staff type. This can be changed later, if necessary, using the "Staff type" column in the Instruments panel.

Adding a percussion staff to your score

See Setting up your score and/or Instruments panel.

Entering notes and rests in percussion staves

There are several ways of entering music on a percussion staff:

Using a Mouse (and the Drum Input Palette).
Via keyboard shortcuts.
Using an external MIDI keyboard.
Using the virtual piano.

After each note or rest is entered, the cursor automatically advances so that it is in the correct position for subsequent entry.

Mouse entry using the Drum input palette

Select a start location in the percussion staff.
Enter note Input mode (shortcut N). The **Drum input palette** (**DIP**) appears at the bottom of the window:

This displays a range of percussion instruments and how they will appear on the staff. If any instrument has a keyboard shortcut this is shown above the staff.
Click on an instrument in the DIP, and its name appears on the left-hand side of the palette. The color of the note shows the voice pre-allocated to that instrument: blue for voice 1, green for voice 2 etc.
Use one of the following methods:
Click on an instrument in the **DIP**; select the desired note duration, then, click on the staff at the desired location.
Select a note duration, then double-click the desired instrument in the **DIP**. The note is entered at the cursor position.
Note: Any existing notes in that voice are overwritten.
To enter another instrument in the same voice at a location, press Shift, then double-click the instrument in the **DIP**.
To enter a rest of the selected duration, press 0 (zero).

Using keyboard shortcuts

This method is suitable for adding instruments which have a keyboard shortcut displayed in the **Drum Input palette**.

Select a note, rest or measure in the percussion staff as a start point.
Enter note Input mode (shortcut N). The **Drum input palette** (**DIP**) appears at the bottom of the window (as above).
Choose a note duration.
Type the keyboard shortcut for the desired instrument; this is shown above the staff in the **DIP**. The note is entered at the cursor position.
Note: Any existing notes in that voice are overwritten.
To enter another instrument in the same voice, hold Shift, while entering the shortcut.
To enter a rest of the selected duration, press 0 (zero).

Note: Shortcuts can be changed in the Edit drumset dialog.

Using a MIDI controller

To add notes to a percussion staff from a **MIDI keyboard**:

Ensure that the MIDI keyboard is connected to your computer before launching MuseScore. Check that it is functioning correctly.
Note: If you click on the percussion staff in normal mode, you can "preview" the sound of the percussion instruments from the MIDI keyboard.
Click on the note or rest where you want to start.
Enter note input mode.
Select the voice in which you wish to enter notes.
Select a note duration.
Press an instrument key to add a note to the score. To add another instrument in the same voice, keep the first key held down while pressing the second key.
To enter a rest of the selected duration, press 0 (zero).

Note: Refer to a **GM2 drum map** for details about which MIDI keyboard key corresponds to which percussion instrument.

Using the on-screen piano keyboard

To add notes to a percussion staff from the virtual **Piano Keyboard**:

Ensure that the Piano keyboard is displayed. Press P (or select it from the menu, View → Piano keyboard).
Note: If you click on the percussion staff without entering note input mode, you can *demo* the percussion instruments from the Piano keyboard.
Click on the note or rest where you want to start.
Enter note input mode.
Select the voice in which you wish to enter notes.
Select a note duration.
Click on a (virtual piano) key to add a note to the score. To add another note to an existing one, press Shift and hold it while pressing the new note.
To enter a rest of the selected duration, press 0 (zero).

Note: Refer to a **GM2 drum map** for details about which piano key corresponds to which percussion instrument.

Drumset customization

Introduction

You can customize the drumset using the **Edit drumset** dialog. This can be opened in note input mode from the **Drum input palette** by clicking on the Edit drumset button (bottom left of the program window). Alternatively, in normal mode, right-click on the percussion staff and select Edit drumset...
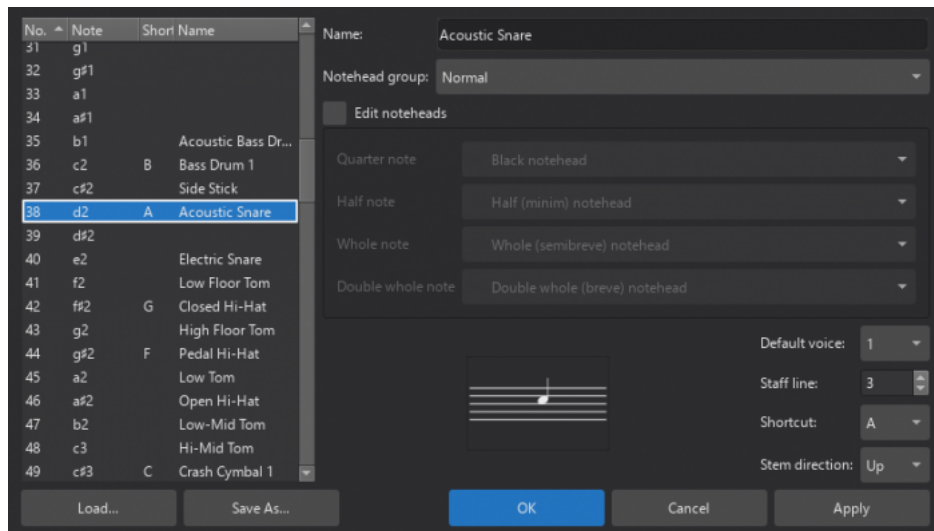
On the left is a list of available percussion instruments. You can put these in MIDI number order by clicking on the "No." heading; this automatically shows them in note order as well. Clicking again puts the list in reverse order.

The right of the dialog shows you how the selected instrument is displayed on the percussion staff: its name, position, notehead type and note-stem direction.

Any changes made here are automatically saved in the parent MuseScore file (after pressing OK). You can also save the drumset independently as a drumset file.

Customizing a drumset definition

Selecting a sound

> info on GM drum sounds
> how much of this is relevant for VST?

Defining the note

Name

Noteheads

Other properties

Saving and loading drumset definitions

Other percussion notation

Diddles

Diddles can be added by using an eighth-note Tremolo.

Pedal lines

To add a vibraphone pedal line, see Pedal.

Rolls

To add a drumroll to your score, see Tremolo.

Sticking

To enter sticking symbols (R, L):

> Select a start note;
> From the menu, select Add→Text→Sticking (alternatively, set up a keyboard shortcut to do the same
> thing). The cursor positions itself ready to accept your keyboard input;
> Input the letter just as you would normal text. To move forward or backwards to the next note, see Keyboard commands (chord symbols).
> To exit, press Esc, or click on a blank section of the score.

Alternative notation

Mensural notation and Mensurstrich

Adding a mensural time signature to your score

To apply mensural signs to a score you need to add a conventional time signature first, then modify its display by substituting with the appropriate mensural symbol in the Time signature properties dialog. Note that these signs are for show only; it is not possible to modify the duration ratio between different note values, and the actual underlying time signature remains unchanged.

Using mensural note symbols

[to be added]

> add from symbols palette, hide

Working with non-metered music

Early music, such as renaissance choral music, may be written without barlines or a time signature. This can be achieved in MuseScore as follows:

> Set up the instruments or voices of the score in the usual way (See Setting up your score);
> Hide the time signature;
> in Format→Style→Score, check the box titled "Display note values across measure boundaries";
> Right-click on a measure in the top staff and select Staff/Part properties;
> Uncheck "Show barlines"; repeat this for each applicable staff (see note);
> Click OK.

Note: In step 4 you can make the barlines invisible instead by selecting all and pressing V.

Note that the score still behaves as if measures are present. Measure properties can be applied if required.

Working with Mensurstrich

Mensurstrich is a form of modern notation of early music in which barlines are drawn *between* staves rather than across them:

Adding barlines between staves

> Right click on the bottom staff of the intended *mensurstrich* system, and select Staff/Part properties. Uncheck "Show barlines".
> Select the first (not the start!) barline for *each* of the remaining staves;
> Check the "Span to next staff" box in the **Barline** section of the **Properties** panel;
> Adjust "Span from" to set the position of the top of each barline;
> Press Set as staff default;

Displaying note values across measure boundaries

From the menu bar, select `Format→Style→Score`;
Check "Display note values across measure boundaries".

See also

Slash notation

Filling a range with beat slashes

To indicate that a range of measures is to be strummed—but without indicating the exact rhythm:

Select the desired range of blank measures
From the menu, select **Tools→Fill with slashes**

Apply chord symbols in the usual way to the slashes.
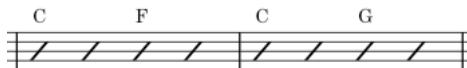
Using beat slashes is a quick and convenient way of indicating strumming. The exact rhythm is left to the player and only the chord symbols play back.

To notate the chord slashes with the correct duration:

Fill the applicable measures with beat slashes, as shown in steps 1 and 2 (above)
Select the slashes and in the **Properties** panel, uncheck "Stemless" in the **Note: Stem** section.
Change the duration of slashes, as required
To change a rest to a slash, copy and paste a slash to it of the same duration
To indicate a mute strum, select the slash and click the cross notehead in the **Noteheads** palette (or in the **Note: Notehead** section of the
Properties panel).
To ensure the correct note beaming pattern, select the range of measures and apply "Auto" from the **Beam properties** palette.
Apply chord symbols in the usual way to the slashes.

Creating rhythmic slash notation

To notate the strum rhythm, with the option to include correct playback, you need to use rhythmic slash notation.

Accompaniment rhythms on the staff

Add the chords, in full, in standard notation on the staff
Select the range of chords
From the menu bar, select **Tools→Toggle rhythmic slash notation**
To unmute the slash notation, select the applicable range of chords and check "Play" in the **Properties: General** panel.

Accent rhythms above or below the staff

Custom staff types

Customizing appearance of staff lines

Number
Color
Visibility
Line distance

Customizing appearance of generated elements

Clef
Key signature
Time signature
Barlines

Customizing appearance of notes

Ledger lines
Stems
Notehead scheme

Changing staff type mid-score

Most of the above plus line & step offset

Text

Entering and editing text

Overview

Many score objects are text-based. For example

> **Title, Subtitle, Composer, Lyricist**
> **Tempo marks**
> **Dynamics**, such as *p* or *mf*
> **Expressions** such as *Andante* or *Allegro*
> **Fingering** numbers
> **Lyrics**
> **Chord symbols**

And so on …

Text, of whatever type, always has an object to which it is attached.

> Some types of text (**Title, Subtitle** etc.) are associated with frames;
> Staff and System text are attached to a music staff;
> Jumps and markers are attached to measures;
> Fingering is attached to a particular musical note;
> Header and Footer text appear at the head and foot of the score respectively.

And so on …

See the table below, under "Types of text", for links to handbook pages for specific types of text.

Adding text to your score

A text object may get entered from a palette, the **Add** menu, or using a keyboard shortcut.

Note: Adding text to a frame is dealt with elsewhere; see Text blocks.

Add text from a palette

To add a text element to your score from a palette, either select one or more notes/rests and click on the desired palette item; or drag the text from the palette onto a note/rest. e.g.
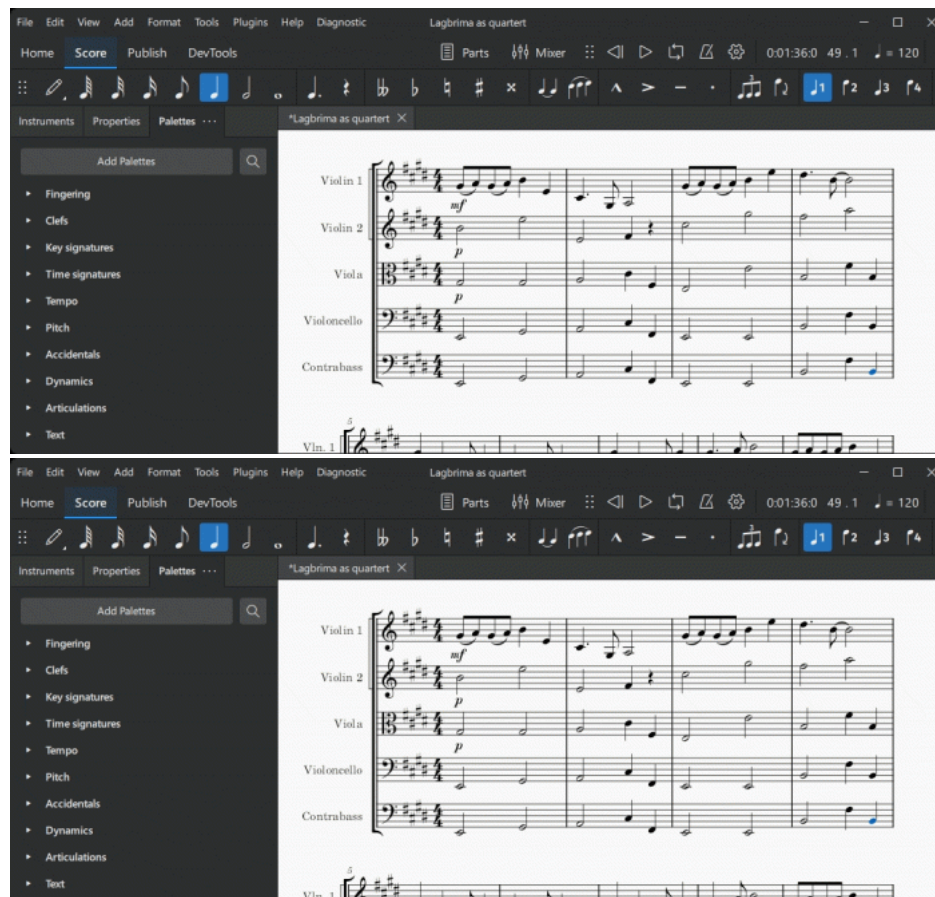
Add text from a menu

If the text object is associated with a staff you can add it by selecting a note, then choosing a text option from `Add→Text`.

Add text using a shortcut

Many text types can be entered using keyboard shortcuts. You can view a list of shortcuts next to the items in `Add→Text`.

To create a text object, select a note, then enter the required shortcut.

Deleting text objects from your score

To delete one or more text objects, <u>select</u> the objects then press `Delete`.

Editing text

To enter text edit mode use one of the following methods:

Double click on the text object.
Select the text object and press `Return`.
Select the text object and press `F2` or `Alt+Shift+E`.
Right-click on the text object and select "Edit element."

You can now add, edit and <u>format</u> the text within the text object.

To leave text edit mode either press `Escape` or click on a part of the score outside the edit area.

Keyboard shortcuts

The following keyboard shortcuts are available in *text edit* mode:

Function	Windows & Linux	Mac
Bold (toggle)	`Ctrl+B`	`Cmd+B`
Italic (toggle)	`Ctrl+I`	`Cmd+I`
Underline (toggle)	`Ctrl+U`	`Cmd+U`
Move cursor	`Home, End, ←, →, ↑, ↓`	`(Alt+) ←, →, ↑, ↓`
Remove character to the left of the cursor	`Backspace`	`Delete`
Remove character to the right of the cursor	`Del`	`→ Delete` or `Fn+Del`
Start new line	`↵`	`return`
Insert special characters (see below)	`Shift+F2`	`Fn+F2`

Special characters

Characters not available from the standard keyboard may be accessed using the **Special Characters** window.

To open **Special Characters** In text edit mode, press `Shift+F2`; or click on `Insert special characters` in the **Text** section of the <u>Properties</u> panel.

The dialog is divided into 3 tabs: Common symbols, musical symbols and unicode symbols. The musical and unicode tabs are further subdivided into alphabetically-arranged categories.

Clicking an item in the Special Characters dialog immediately adds it to the text where the cursor is positioned. Multiple items can be applied without

closing the dialog box, and the user can even continue to type normally, delete characters, enter numerical character codes etc., with it open.

A few special characters can also be created using shortcuts—see below.

Special character shortcuts

Character	Windows & Linux	Mac	Note
Sharp ♯	Ctrl+Shift+#	Cmd+Shift+#	May not work on some keyboard layouts
Flat ♭	Ctrl+Shift+B	Cmd+Shift+B	
Natural ♮	Ctrl+Shift+H	Cmd+Shift+H	
Piano *p*	Ctrl+Shift+P	Cmd+Shift+P	
Forte *f*	Ctrl+Shift+F	Cmd+Shift+F	
Mezzo *m*	Ctrl+Shift+M	Cmd+Shift+M	
Rinforzando *r*	Ctrl+Shift+R	Cmd+Shift+R	
Sforzando *s*	Ctrl+Shift+S	Cmd+Shift+S	
Niente *n*	Ctrl+Shift+N	Cmd+Shift+N	
Z *z*	Ctrl+Shift+Z	Cmd+Shift+Z	
Elision ‿	Ctrl+Alt+−	Cmd+Alt+−	

Types of text

Text type	Uses
Staff text	General purpose text attached to a single staff: appearing only in that instrument part.
System text	General purpose text attached to a single staff: appearing in all instrument parts.
Chord symbols	Display the chords associated with a melody: usually above the staff.
Fingering	Numbers or letters attached to notes showing which fingers to use.
Lyrics	Create lyrics attached to a melody.
Rehearsal marks	Facilitate rehearsals, divide score into sections, bookmark passages etc.
Dynamics	Indicate the loudness of a note or phrase.
Figured bass	Period notation for keyboarders.
Frame text	Title/composer/lyricist details at the start of a score; song sheet lyrics etc.
Headers/Footers	Page numbers, copyright info etc. at the top/bottom of a page.
Instrument text	Apply mid-staff instrument changes.
Repeats and jumps (voltas)	Da Capo, Dal segno, Fine etc.
Roman Numeral Analysis (RNA)	A chord analysis system.
Sticking	Letters (L and R) attached to (drum) notes showing which hand or foot to use.
Swing text	Change from straight to swing time, and vice versa.
Tempo marks	Apply metronome and/or expression marks.
Text-lines	Voltas, ottavas, pedal lines, guitar barre lines etc.

Formatting text

Overview—levels of formatting

There are three levels of text formatting in MuseScore:

Text style
Text object
Character

Text style

When you create a text object in the score it automatically assumes a **style** appropriate to its class. For example, a tempo mark will have the "Tempo" style; a fingering number, the "Fingering" style and so on.

A **style** consists of a group of text properties (font-size, align, offset etc.) with specific values. You can view the full range of text styles in `Format→Style→Text Styles`.

To check the style of a selected text object, click the `More` button in the **Text** section of the **Properties** panel. The style name will be visible under "Text style".

Text style is the top level of formatting.

Text object properties

The text properties of a particular, selected text object can be viewed and edited in the **Text** section of the Properties panel.

This is the second-level of formatting—the **text object** level.

Character formatting

Individual characters within a text object may themselves be formatted independently.

This is the third level of formatting—the **character** level.

Formatting hierarchy

Character formatting overrides **Text object** formatting, which, in turn, overrides **Style**.

Applying text properties

Apply to a text object

After clicking on a text object you can edit its text properties in the **Text** section of the Properties panel.
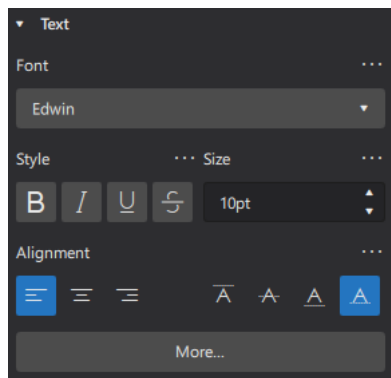
Click `More` to see:
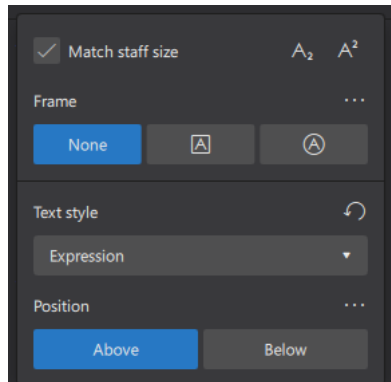
Apply to characters

In order to edit the characters within a text object you need to enter *text edit mode* using one of the following methods:

> Double-click on the text object.
> Select the object and press `F2` or `Alt+Shift+E`
> Right-click on the element and select `Edit element`

Then you can apply formatting to highlighted characters using the **Text** section of the Properties panel, and/or keyboard shortcuts (see Editing text).

Note that certain properties in the **Properties** panel are not applicable to characters—such as "Alignment", "Frame", "Text style" and so on. If you attempt to apply them, they are added to the text object instead.

Setting style defaults

If you want to change the default **style** properties of a particular class of objects, you can do so in the **Style** menu: From the menu bar, select `Format→Style→Text Styles`.

However, it is often better to do this from the **Properties** panel itself:

> Select a score object of the style in question;

Edit a property;
Click on the ellipsis (…) above the property and select "Save as default style for this score".
Repeat for other properties as required.

Selecting different text styles

If you wish to change the text style associated with a text object:

Click on the text object.
Click the `More` in the **Text** section of the **Properties** panel.
Select a new style from the dropdown list under "Text style".

Position

For text objects applied to the staff, the default position may be above or below the staff. This may be changed at the style or text object level with the **Position** property (Above/Below).

Staff and system text

Overview

Staff text and **System text** is general purpose <u>text</u> attached to a staff. It can be used for a variety of purposes not covered by other more specific types of text, e.g.

Musical expressions.
Performance indications.
Applying titles to movements.
Capo playback for guitarists (staff text only).
Applying swing and straight time (staff or system text).

and so on.

Staff text appears on *only* one staff in a <u>system</u>, applies only to that staff, and is present in its instrument <u>part</u>.

System text appears above the top staff of a system, applies to *all* staves, and is present in all the instrument parts.

Staff and system text can also be found incorporated into <u>lines</u>.

Adding staff text to your score

Select a note
Use one of the following methods:
  Press `Ctrl+T`.
  From the menu, select `Add→Text→Staff text`.
  Click on the "Staff text" icon in the **Text** <u>palette</u>
Enter the desired text in the bounding box.

Alternatively, drag the "Staff text" icon onto a note in the score before entering the desired text.

Adding expression text to your score

Select a note
Use one of the following methods:
  Press `Ctrl+E`.
  From the menu, select `Add→Text→Expression text`.
  Click on the "Expression text" icon in the **Text** <u>palette</u>
Enter the desired text in the bounding box.

Alternatively, drag the "Expression text" icon onto a note in the score before entering the desired text.

Adding system text to your score

Select a note
Use one of the following methods:
  Press `Ctrl+Shift+T`.
  From the menu, select `Add→Text→System text`.
  Click on the "System text" icon in the **Text** <u>palette</u>
Enter the desired text in the bounding box.

Alternatively, drag the "System text" icon onto a note in the score before entering the desired text.

Repeating system text on other staves

System text automatically appears above the top staff of the system. If you need a similar indication on a lower staff, add it to that staff using <u>staff text</u>.

[Adding automatically via a template? – to be added]

Staff and system text properties

Staff text properties, for swing and capo settings, can be accessed as follows:

> Right-click on the text object
> Select `Staff text properties`
> Choose one of the following tabs:
>> Swing settings
>> Capo settings

System text only has one property, swing, and this is applied using a similar context menu.

Staff and system text style

Some default properties for all staff text in the score can be set from `Format→Style→Staff text`.
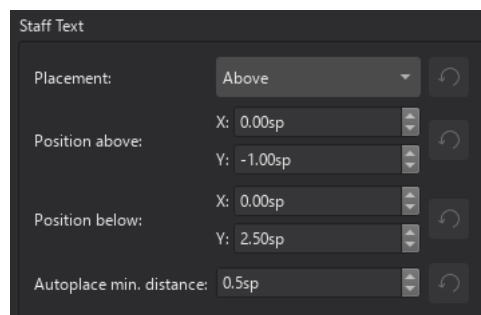
And for system text lines, from `Format→Style→System text line`.

Tempo markings

Overview

A variety of **tempo markings/marks** may be found in the **Tempo** palette. These include

> **Metronome marks**: ♩ = 80
> **Text indications**: Andante, Allegro etc.
> **Metric modulations**: ♩ = ♩.
> **Tempo change lines**: rall., accel. etc.

Metronome marks, text, and metric modulations modify the tempo of score playback *once* from the point at which they are applied. Tempo change lines work with the *existing* tempo and vary it over a range of notes.

If required, you can override the written tempo temporarily using the Playback panel.

A tempo mark is a form of system text; it appears above the top stave but applies to all staves in the system.

Adding a tempo mark to your score

To add a metronome mark, tempo text or metric modulation to the score, use one of the following methods:

> Select one or more notes/rests and click on a tempo symbol in a palette.
> Drag a tempo symbol from a palette onto a note/rest.
> From the menu bar, select **Add→Text**, and click on **Tempo marking**.

To add a tempo change line, use the same method as for lines.

Using metronome markings

A metronome mark consists of a musical note indicating the duration of the beat, an equals sign, then a number showing the beats per minute (bpm). So the following mark

♩ = 80

indicates a tempo of 80 quarter notes (crotchets) per minute, and so on.

Using text markings

The **Tempo** palette also contains text markings, such as Andante, Allegro etc. The background tempo can be read off in the **Tempo** section of the Properties palette.

Changing appearance of tempo markings

Tempo markings can be edited just like any other text object: see Entering and editing text.

To edit the appearance of **Tempo change lines**, see line properties.

Changing playback of tempo markings

Metronome marks

You are free to change the tempo number as required.

Tempo text

You can override the written tempo by unchecking "Follow written tempo" in the **Tempo** section of the **Properties** panel, and setting a new tempo in the "Override written tempo" box.

Metric modulations

If the note value relationship you require is not part of an existing metric modulation, you can customise the note values as follows:

    Add a metric modulation to the score from the **Tempo** palette
    Highlight the note in the metric modulation that you wish to change
    Open the Special characters palette
    Click on the note/dot in the "Common symbols" tab that you wish to insert.

Tempo change lines

You can set the Tempo "Change amount" and "Easing method" in the **Playback: General** section of the **Properties** panel.
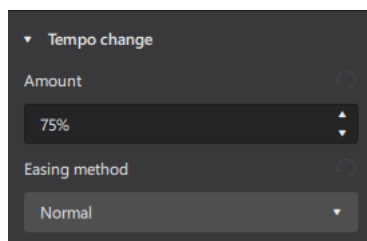
Repeating tempo markings on other staves

Tempo text always appears on the top staff of the system. If you need to see it on lower staves as well, use staff text and insert the beat note as a special character.

Tempo properties

See above—Changing playback of tempo markings.

Tempo style

Default positioning properties of tempo markings can be set in `Format→Style→Tempo text`.
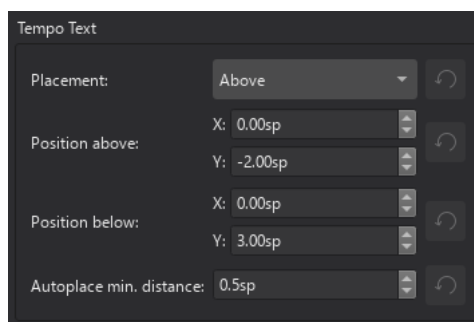
Lyrics

Overview

Lyrics are a form of text associated with melody lines on staves. e.g.

As you can see in the example above, lyrics are entered syllable by syllable, those within words being connected by hyphens. Underscore lines or hyphens (depending on the context) are used to indicate melismas, where a syllable extends over several notes (see below).

Lyrics are organized into *verses*, with verse 1 at the top and subsequent verses in order below.
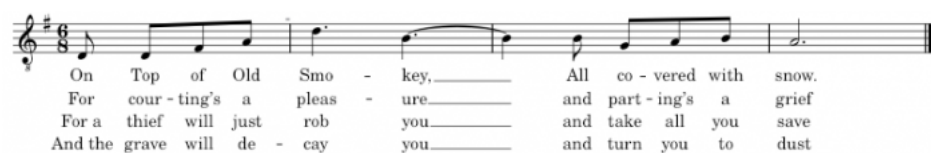
Adding lyrics to your score

In order to enter new lyrics, or to edit/format existing ones, you need to be in **lyrics mode**.

There are two ways to enter **lyrics mode**:

Start from a selected note—see Entering syllables (below).
Start from an existing lyric syllable—see Editing existing lyrics.

Entering syllables

Select the desired start note, and enter lyrics mode by pressing the keyboard shortcut `Ctrl+L` (Mac & Linux: `Cmd+L`). This will create a bounding box ready for text input.
Type the syllable;
To enter a connected syllable, press – (hyphen), then enter the new syllable.
To move forward to a new word (from any point in a syllable), press `Space`, Alternatively, and only if you are at the *end* of a word, press → (right arrow).
To enter a non-breaking space, type `Ctrl+Space`.
To enter a melisma, see below.
To move forward or backwards one character at a time, jumping between syllables, press →/← (right/left arrows).
To move backwards one syllable, press `Shift+Space`.

Entering a melisma

A melisma is a syllable that extends over more than one note.

If the melisma is at the end of a word it should be notated by an underscore line:

Starting from the end of the previous syllable, press _ (underscore) for as many notes as the melisma extends.

If a melisma occurs in the middle of a word it *may* be notated by hyphens instead:

Starting from the end of the previous syllable press – (hyphen) for as many notes as the melisma extends.
For long melismata, instead of repeated typing of hyphens, select the last note in the melisma and press – (hyphen). The intermediate hyphens will automatically be inserted between the previous typed syllable and that final note.

Entering multiple verses

To enter subsequent verses, simply repeat the steps shown under Entering syllables. Lyrics entry automatically starts in the space beneath the last entered verse.

In lyrics mode you can move up and down between verses using the keyboard arrows, ↑ and ↓.

Entering lyrics onto rests

By default, the cursor skips over rests in lyrics mode. However, It is possible to enter a syllable on a rest by selecting the rest, (re-)entering lyrics mode and typing the syllable. Then you can continue entering lyrics as above.

Special characters within lyrics

Characters not available from the computer keyboard may be entered in lyrics mode using the Special characters palette. A special case is highlighted below:

Elision slur

An **Elision slur** (lyric slur or synalepha) is a symbol used to join two syllables together under one note.

For example, to create the lyrics text below, starting with the syllable text "te":

mi   -   te_A-gnel   -
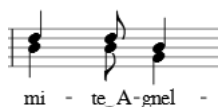
    Type `te`;
    Open the <u>Special Characters</u> palette;
    Click one of the elision slurs in the "Common Symbols" tab
    Type `A`.

Escaping characters (that cannot be normally typed while entering Lyrics)

In most cases, lyrics can be <u>edited</u> just like normal text. However, special keyboard shortcuts are required to enter the following characters:

    Space character: `Ctrl+Space` (Mac & Linux: `Alt+Space`).

    - (hyphen): `Ctrl+−` (Mac & Linux: `Alt+−`).

    _ (underscore): `Ctrl+Shift+_` (Mac & Linux: `Alt+Shift_`).

    Line feed: `Ctrl+↵` (Mac & Linux: `Alt+Return`) or `Enter` (from the numeric keypad).

Editing existing lyrics

To make additions or changes to existing lyrics, click on a syllable and use a <u>text edit mode</u> shortcut to enter **lyrics mode**.

Delete lyrics

Lyrics are automatically deleted with their parent notes. You can also delete lyrics while leaving the notes intact, by <u>selecting</u> the lyrics and pressing `Delete`.

Entering lyrics above the staff

If you wish to position all lyrics *above*, instead of below, the staff:

    From the menu bar, select `Format`→`Style`→`Lyrics`;
    Set **Placement** to "Above".

You can of course do the same thing by selecting all lyrics in the score and changing **Position** to "Above" in the **text** section of the <u>Properties</u> panel.

Changing verse number of lyrics

Each verse attached to the staff is allocated a **verse number**—with the lowest positioned at the top and highest at the bottom. (You can of course prepend a number to the beginning of each verse, but this is a visual indication only.)

To change the verse number, select the verse and adjust "Set to verse" in the **Lyrics** section of the **Properties** panel.

Copying lyrics

Copying lyrics within MuseScore

Lyrics are automatically copied with their parent notes, but you can also copy lyrics on their own without the notes.

Copy to the same verse

    <u>Select</u> a range or list of lyrics syllables;
    Apply <u>cut/copy</u>;
    Select a destination note in the same verse
    Paste the lyrics.

Note that the destination range should be clear of existing lyrics, otherwise the clipboard contents will be pasted on top of them.

Copy to a different verse

    <u>Select</u> a range or list of lyrics syllables;
    Apply <u>Copy</u>;
    Assign the selected lyrics a <u>new verse number</u> (see above);
    Click on the first *note* of the lyrics selection;
    Paste. This will replace the missing lyrics.

Note: Lyrics always paste into the same verse they were copied from.

Copying lyrics to other programs

All lyrics attached to staves can be copied to the clipboard from the menu using `Tools`→`Copy lyrics to clipboard`.

Lyrics properties

See Changing verse number of lyrics.

Lyrics style

You can adjust global lyrics properties from `Format`→`Style`→`Lyrics`.

Lyrics text

Placement / **Position above** / **Position below**: Sets the default positioning of lyrics in relation to the music staff.
Line height: The space between verse lines.
Min top/**bottom margin**: The distance above and below the lyrics block to the staves above and below.
Min. distance: The minimum distance allowed between syllables. Increase this if the lyrics are too squashed.
Align verse number:

Lyrics dash

Here you will find a number pf properties which allow you to control how hyphens between syllables are displayed:

Min./Max. dash length: Sets the minimum and maximum length of inter-syllable dashes.
Max. dash distance: Maximum distance allowed between dashes. Reducing this value allows more dashes to form between syllables where possible—and vice versa.
Dash thickness: The (vertical) thickness of the dash.
Dash pad: The distance between the – and the syllable
Dash Y position ratio: Affects the vertical placement of the dash.
Always force dash: Tick to ensure that a dash is always visible between syllables.

Lyrics melisma

Melisma thickness: The (vertical) thickness of the melisma.
Melisma pad: The distance between the melisma and the syllable
Align:

Fingering

Types of fingering

Fingering symbols for various instruments are found in the **Fingerings** palette; some of these are duplicated in the **Guitar** palette.
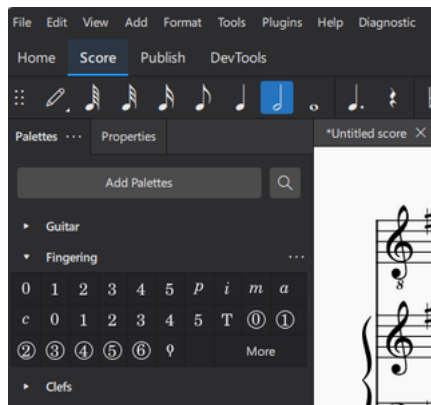
Mouse over the palette icons to reveal the names of the symbols.

The different types of fingerings are as follows:

Fingering; In keyboard notation, used to indicate left and right hand fingering. Also used in guitar music for left hand fingering.
LH guitar fingering: In guitar notation, 1–4, indicates the left-hand fingers. 0 (zero), an open string. T, the left hand thumb. Can also be used in keyboard music.
RH guitar fingering: In guitar notation, used to indicate the right hand fingers, namely: p = thumb, i = index, m = middle, a = ring/annular, c = little.
String number (circled): In guitar notation, used to indicate the strings (1–6, top to bottom). 0 (zero) is used for the open string.
Other fingering: Lute fingerings may be found by clicking "More" in the **Fingerings** palette.

Adding fingering to your score

Note: If you want fingering to be displayed in tablature, right-click on the TAB, and select `Staff/Part Properties…`→`Advanced Style Properties`; then check the box labelled "Show fingering in tablature"

Adding fingering from a palette

To add fingering to a selection of notes:

Select one or more notes;
Click on the desired fingering symbol in a palette.

Alternatively, you can drag and drop a fingering symbol from a palette onto a single note.

When fingering is added to a note, the focus immediately shifts to the symbol, so you can adjust it right away.
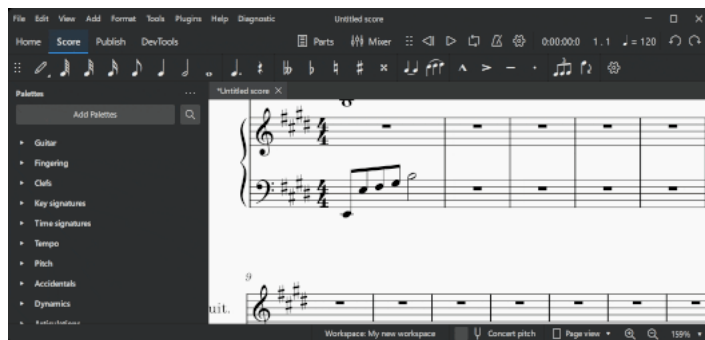
Adding fingering using a keyboard shortcut

Select a start note;
Choose one of the following options:
        (for any fingering) Add the desired fingering symbol from a palette (as shown above);
        (for **Fingering** only) Enter the custom keyboard shortcut for "Add Fingering," then type the desired number.
        (**Note**: you can create this shortcut from the menu **Edit**→**Preferences**→**Shortcuts**
Choose one of the following options:
        To move the cursor to the **next note**: Press `Space`, or `Alt+→`;
        To move the cursor to the **previous note**: `Shift+Space`, or `Alt+←`;
Type the desired number; a fingering is added of the same type as the initial one .
Repeat steps 3 and 4 as required;
Press `Esc`, or click on an empty space in the document window, to exit.
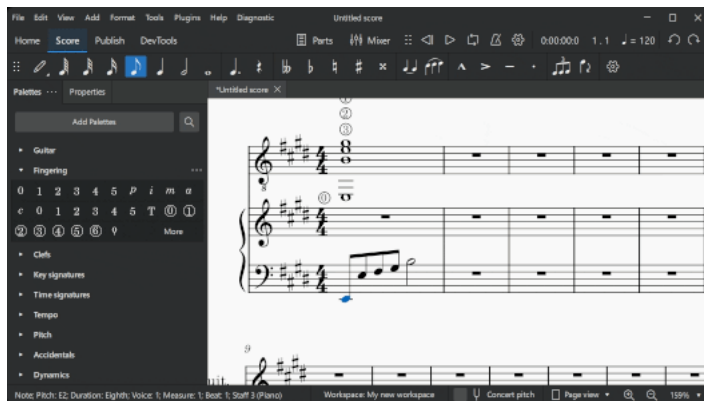
Adding fingering using the menu

> Select the start note;
> From the menu bar, select **Add**→**Text**→**Fingering**;
> Type the fingering number of the first note;
> Press space to move to the next note; and so on.

Adjusting position

To edit fingering position, see Changing position of elements.

Some fingerings can be flipped to the other side of the staff using the X shortcut, or the **Flip direction** icon on the note input toolbar.

Changing the appearance of fingering

The text formatting of fingering elements can be adjusted in the **Text** section of the Properties panel. See Formatting text for details.

Fingering properties

General and text properties for fingering can be edited from the Properties panel.

For **General** properties see General settings.

For **Text** properties, see Formatting text.

Fingering style

Each of the different classes of fingering have their own text style. These can be viewed and edited from the menu: **Format**→**Style**→**Text styles**.

See also

> Drum sticking

Chord symbols

Overview

A **chord symbol** is an abbreviated way of representing a musical chord and its harmony.

MuseScore supports the following notations:

> **Chord symbol**: Alphabetical chord name plus chord quality. e.g. Am,
> Nashville Number System (NNS): Arabic numeral plus chord quality. e.g. 6m,
> Roman Numeral Analysis (RNA): Roman numeral plus chord quality. e.g. vi.

Adding chord symbols to your score

Entering a chord symbol

> Select a start note, note slash, or rest;
> Press Ctrl+K (Mac: Cmd+K). The cursor is now positioned above the staff ready for input.
> Enter the chord symbol using the following characters:
>> **Root note**: a, b, c, d, e, f, g. (the lower case will automatically change to upper-case when you exit the chord symbol)
>> **Sharp**: # (hash).
>> **Flat**: b (small letter "b").
>> **Double sharp**: x (small letter "x") or ## (two hash symbols).
>> **Double flat**: bb (small letter "b" twice).
>> **Natural**: Ctrl+Shift+H.

Space: `Ctrl+Space` (Mac: `Alt+Space`);
For other symbols, see Chord symbol syntax (below).
To move the cursor forward to the next chord/rest/beat, press `Space`. For other ways of moving the cursor, see navigation commands (below);
Exit chord symbol mode by pressing `Esc`.

Chord names and accidentals

When you exit a chord symbol, any characters entered are automatically converted to the correct format. A **root note** typed in lower case turns into upper case (for alternative options, see Automatic Capitalization). And characters entered for **accidentals** are automatically converted into professional glyphs. For example, a "**#**" (hash character) automatically becomes a sharp sign (♯). Don't input, or copy and paste, unicode characters, such as U+266F (sharp sign, ♯), or U+266D (flat sign, ♭) etc, as MuseScore will not render them correctly in chord notation.

Navigation commands

The following is a summary of keyboard shortcuts used to move the cursor in chord symbol entry mode:

Action	Command (Windows)	Command (macOS)
Move cursor to next note, rest, or beat	`Space`	`Space`
Move cursor to next beat	`;` (semicolon)	`;`
Move cursor to previous note, rest, or beat	`Shift+Space`	
Move cursor to previous beat	`:` (colon)	`:`
Move cursor to next measure	`Ctrl+→`	`Cmd+→`
Move cursor to previous measure	`Ctrl+←`	`Cmd+←`
Move cursor by duration number	`Ctrl+1–9`	`Cmd+1–9`
Exit chord symbol entry	`Esc`	`Esc`

Chord symbol syntax

MuseScore understands most of the abbreviations used in chord symbols:

Major: M, Ma, Maj, ma, maj, Δ (type t or ˆ for the triangle)
Minor: m, mi, min, -
Diminished: dim, ° (entered with lowercase letter o, shows as ° if using the Jazz style, as o, the Greek omicron, otherwise)
Half-diminished: ø (entered with ø, number zero, shows as ø if using the Jazz style, as 0 (zero) otherwise). Alternatively, you can, of course, choose abbreviations such as mi7b5 etc.
Augmented: aug, +
The following abbreviations are also valid: *extensions* and *alterations* like b9 or #5, sus, alt, and no3; *inversions* and *slash chords*, such as C7/E; *commas*; *parentheses*, which can enclose part, or even all, of a chord symbol.

Editing a chord symbol

An existing chord symbol can be edited in a similar way to ordinary text: See Text editing for details.

Entering Roman numeral analysis

Not to be confused with Figured bass.

The **Roman Numeral Analysis** (RNA) system is a type of musical analysis where chords are represented by upper- and lower-case Roman numerals (I, ii, III, iv etc.), superscripts, subscripts and other modifying symbols. It is used to notate and analyze the harmony of a composition independent of its key.

Note: MuseScore uses a specialist font, Campania   , to provide the correct formatting for RNA. This is free and open source.

Enter RNA

Select a start note;
From the menu, select **Add→Text→Roman Numeral Analysis**. Alternatively, set up a keyboard shortcut to do the same thing in Preferences   ;
Input the RNA symbols for the chord just like normal text, as follows;
Major chord: Upper case roman numerals
Minor chord: Lower case roman numerals
Diminished chord: o (lower case)
Half-diminished chord: 0 (zero)
Augmented chord: +
Chord inversions: Enter up to 3 single-digit numbers, top note first
Accidentals: enter # for a sharp, **b** for a flat or **h** for natural. These turn into a proper (and superscripted) ♯ , ♭ or ♮ right away, see entering accidentals above.
To prevent *any* character from being interpreted or superscripted, prefix the character with a backslash, "****". This could be used, for example, to add a literal letter "**b**", "**h**", a hash symbol "**#**", or a non-superscripted number etc.
Inversion notation using alphabet a,b,c,d can be created with the method described above.
Inversion notation using vertically aligned arabic numerals without accidentals such as 64 can be created with the method described below.
[TO DO: This is from MS3, pls check if this is correct for MS4] Inversion notation using vertically aligned arabic numerals with accidentals such as 6#3, ie altered chord, is **unsupported**, workaround : create Figured bass text instead; or create separate text objects and manually nudge them into place.
For other symbols, see the images below.
Move the cursor forward or backwards to continue entering or editing symbols for other chords;
When RNA is completed, exit by pressing `Esc`, or by clicking on a blank section of the score.

RNA input offers the same keyboard shortcuts for navigation as in chord symbols (see above).

Examples of RNA

Type this:

To get:
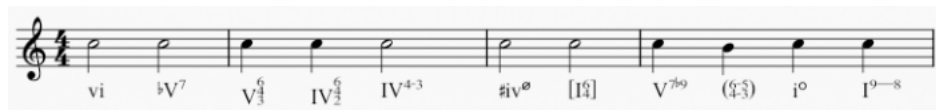
Entering a Nashville number

The Nashville Number System (NNS), is a shorthand way of representing chords based on scale degrees rather than chord letters. This allows an accompaniment to be played in any key from the same chord chart.

To start entering Nashville notation:

Select a start note;
From the menu, select **Add→Text→Nashville Number**.

Just as with standard chord symbols, you can type Nashville notation normally and MuseScore will do its best to recognize and format the symbols appropriately. The same shortcuts used for navigation when entering standard chord symbols (e.g. Space, see above) are available for Nashville notation as well.
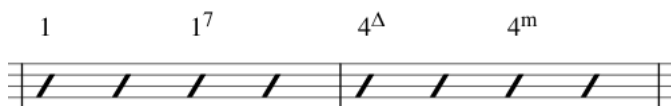
Aligning chord symbols

Using the Style menu

The default vertical alignment of *all* **Chord Symbols** can be set from the style menu, **Format→ Style→Text styles→Chord Symbol**.

Or you can do the same thing from the Appearance section of the **Properties** panel (refer to Saving and restoring default settings).

If this results in an irregular line of chord symbols, try varying **Max shift above/below** (**Format→ Style→Chord symbols**) to bring the symbols into line.

Using the Properties panel

You can align a selection of chord symbols by pressing Appearance, and changing the "Offset" values; and/or by changing the "Alignment" or "Position" properties in the **Text** section of the Properties panel.

Transposition of chord symbols

Transposing instruments

Chord symbols copied to a transposing instrument staff are automatically transposed in equal measure. For example, an A7 chord copied from a Flute part (non-transposing) to a B♭ Clarinet part (sounds a tone lower than written) will be transposed to a B7 chord.

Note that chords associated with guitar fretboard diagrams are not transposed automatically.

Transpose dialog

Chord symbols are automatically transposed by default when using the Transpose dialog. If this is not required, you can untick the "Transpose chord symbols" option in the same dialog.

Capo fret position

The **Capo fret position** property automatically transposes chord symbols in the score (without affecting playback) and puts them in brackets after the existing chord symbols. The aim is to provide an alternative accompaniment on a capoed instrument.

To apply, select **Format→Style→Chord symbols**, and enter a number in the **Capo fret position** spin box.

Changing Spelling of Chord Symbols

By default, MuseScore uses letter names for chord symbols. For users in regions where other note naming schemes are used, all **chord symbols** in the score can be changed.

Chord Spelling Systems

From the main menu, choose **Format→ Style→Chord symbols**. Then choose one of the following radio buttons in the spelling section:

> **Standard**: A, B♭, B, C, C♯,…
> **German**: A, B♭, H, C, C♯,…
> **Full German**: A, B, H, C, Cis,…
> **Solfeggio**: Do, Do♯, Re♭, Re,…
> **French**: Do, Do♯, Ré♭, Ré,...

Automatic Capitalization

By default, MuseScore automatically capitalizes all note names on exit, regardless of whether you entered them in upper or lower case. From the main menu, choose **Format→ Style→Chord symbols**. Then choose from of the following options:

> **Lower case minor chords**: c, cm, cm7,...
> **Lower case bass notes**: C/e,...
> **All caps note names**: DO, RE, MI,...

You can also turn off the automatic capitalization completely, in which case note names are simply rendered the way you type them.

Changing appearance of chord symbols

[To do]

> Font settings
> Style settings for appearance, scaling/offset

Changing Playback of Chord Symbols

Enabling and disabling playback

You can disable/enable playback of all chord symbols in the score by clicking on the cog icon to the right of the playback controls and deselecting/selecting `Play chord symbols`.

You can also disable/enable playback of a selection of chord symbols, by unchecking/checking **Play** in the **General** section of the Properties panel .

Customizing playback

Default playback settings for all chord symbols in a score are available in the **Playback** section of **Format→ Style→Chord symbols**.
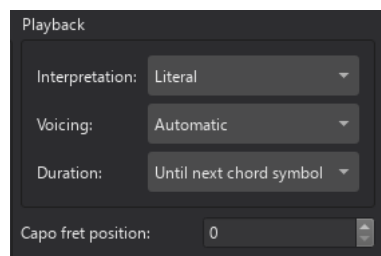
You can also customize the playback of selected chord symbols in the **Chord symbol** section of the **properties** panel.

> **Interpretation**: Literal or Jazz.
> **Voicing**: Automatic, Root Only, Close, Drop two, Six note, Four note, three note
> **Duration**: Until next chord symbol, Until end of measure, Chord/rest duration

Generating chord voicings onto a staff

MuseScore allows you to generate chords on the staff from selected chord symbols. The voicing of these chords depends on the playback settings (above) for these chords.

To realize a selection of chord symbols:

> Make a selection of chord symbols;
> Right click on any chord in the selection;
> Click **Realize chord symbols**;
> Optional. Check "Override with custom options" and set the options as required;
> Click `OK`.

Chord symbol properties

Properties specific to chord symbols (i.e. playback) are covered in Changing Playback of Chord Symbols (above)

Other non-specific properties are detailed in Properties.

Chord symbol style

Default properties for all **chord symbols** in a score can be edited from **Format→Style→Chord symbols**.

The Chord symbols style menu contains the following headings:

Appearance

> **Style**: Three options are available— **Standard**, **Jazz** or **Custom**.

In the **Standard** style, chords are rendered simply, with the font determined by your chord symbol text style.
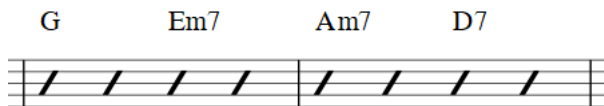
In the **Jazz** style, the MuseJazz font is used for a handwritten look, with distinctive superscript and other formatting characteristics. The Jazz style is selected by default if you use any of the Jazz templates.
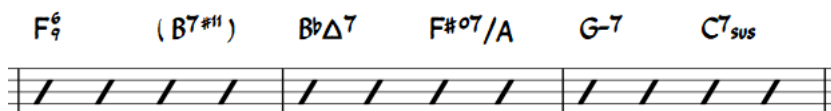
The **Custom** style option allows you to use your own customized chord symbols style file (advanced users only).

> **Extension/Modifier scaling**: This affects the size of the chord extension or of the modifier.
> **Extension/Modified vertical offset**: This affects the vertical position of the chord symbol extension or of the modifier.

Spelling

See Changing Spelling of Chord Symbols (above).

Positioning

Distance to fretboard diagram: Affects the distance between fretboard diagrams and any chord symbols above.
Minimum chord spacing: The minimum distance allowed between chords.
Maximum barline distance:
Maximum shift above/below: This is used to line up chord symbols whose vertical alignment is irregular. Experiment until you get the apperance you want.

Playback

See Customizing playback (above).

Figured bass

Overview

Figured bass is a shorthand notation for representing chords on a *continuo* instrument (such as a keyboard), using a series of numbers and other symbols written underneath the notes of the bass line.

Adding figured bass to your score

Entering a figure

> Select the note to which the figured bass applies;
> Press the **Figured Bass** shortcut. The default is `Ctrl+G` (Mac: `Cmd+G`); this can be changed in Preferences: Shortcuts if desired;
> Enter the text in the "edit box" which appears.

Text format

For the relevant substitutions and shape combinations to take effect and for proper alignment, the figured bass mechanism expects input texts to follow some rules (which are in any case, the rules for a syntactical figured bass indication):

> There can be only one accidental (before or after), or only one combining suffix per figure;
> There cannot be both an accidental **and** a combining suffix;
> There can be an accidental without a digit (altered third), but not a combining suffix without a digit.
> Any other character not listed above is not expected.

If a text entered does not follow these rules, it will not be processed: it will be stored and displayed as it is, without any layout.

Digits

Digits are entered directly. Groups of several digits stacked one above the other are also entered directly in a single text, stacking them with `Enter`:

Accidentals

Accidentals can be entered using regular keys:

To enter:	type:
double flat	bb
flat	b
natural	h
sharp	#
double sharp	##

These characters will automatically turn into the proper signs when you leave the editor. Accidentals can be entered before, or after a digit (and of course, in place of a digit, for altered thirds), according to the required style; both styles are properly aligned, with the accidental 'hanging' at the left, or the right.

Combined shapes

Slashed digits or digits with a cross can be entered by adding \, / or + after the digit (combining suffixes); the proper combined shape will be substituted when leaving the editor:
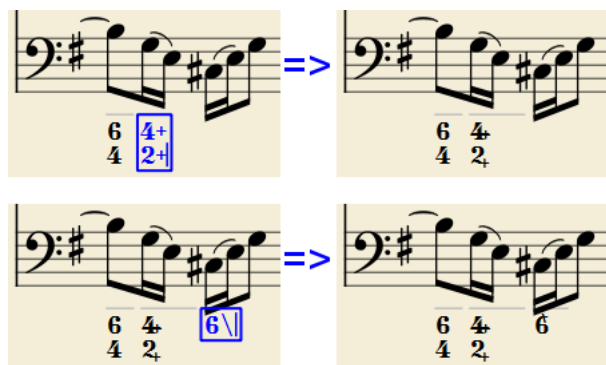
The built-in font can manage combination equivalence, favoring the more common substitution:

1+, 2+, 3+, 4+ result in (or)

and 5\, 6\, 7\, 8\, 9\ result in (or)

Please remember that / can only by combined with 5; any other 'slashed' figure is rendered with a question mark.

+ can also be used before a digit; in this case it is not combined, but it is properly aligned ('+' hanging at the left side).

Parentheses

Open and closed parentheses, both round: '(', ')' and square: '[', ']', can be inserted before and after accidentals, before and after a digit, before and after a continuation line; added parentheses will not disturb the proper alignment of the main character.

Notes: (1) The editor does not check that parentheses, open and closed, round or square, are properly balanced. (2) Several parentheses in a row are non-syntactical and prevent proper recognition of the entered text. (3) A parenthesis between a digit and a combining suffix ('+', '\', '/') is accepted, but prevents shape combination.

Editing existing figured basses

To edit a figured bass indication already entered use one of the following options:

- Select it, or the note it belongs to and press the same *Figured Bass* shortcut used to create a new one.
- Double-click it.

The usual text editor box will open with the text converted back to plain characters ('b', '#' and 'h' for accidentals, separate combining suffixes, underscores, etc.) for simpler editing.

Once done, press `Space` to move to a next note, or click outside the editor box to exit it, as for newly created figured basses.

Navigating by note, beat, or measure

The duration of a **Figured Bass** indication often lasts until the next bass note or the end of a bar. Such **Figured Bass** can be entered consecutively using the keyboard. (To move to a point in between, or to extend a figured bass group for a longer duration, see Duration).

Press Space to move to the next note ready for another figured bass indication (or click outside the editor box to exit it). The editor advances to the next note, or to the rest of the staff to which figured bass is being added.

Shift+Space moves the editing box to the previous staff note or rest.
Tab advances the editing box to the beginning of the next measure.
Shift+Tab moves the editing box to the beginning of the previous measure.

Duration

Each figured bass group has a duration, which is indicated by a light gray line above it (of course, this line is for information only and it is not printed or exported to PDF).

Initially, a group has the same duration of the note to which it is attached. A different duration may be required to fit several groups under a single note or to extend a group to span several notes.

To achieve this, each key combination in the table below can be used to (1) advance the editing box by the indicated duration, and (2) set the duration of the previous group up to the new editing box position.

Pressing several of them in sequence without entering any figured bass text repeatedly extends the previous group.

Type:	to get:
Ctrl+1	1/64
Ctrl+2	1/32
Ctrl+3	1/16
Ctrl+4	1/8 (*quaver*)
Ctrl+5	1/4 (*crochet*)
Ctrl+6	half note (*minim*)
Ctrl+7	whole note (*semibreve*)
Ctrl+8	2 whole notes (*breve*)

(The digits are the same as are used to set the note durations)

Setting the exact figured bass group duration is only mandatory in two cases:

When several groups are fit under a single staff note (there is no other way).
When continuation lines are used, as line length depends on the group duration.

However, it is a good practice to always set the duration to the intended value for the purposes of plugins and MusicXML.

Entering continuation lines

Continuation lines are input by adding an '_' (underscore) at the end of the line. Each digit of a group can have its own continuation line:
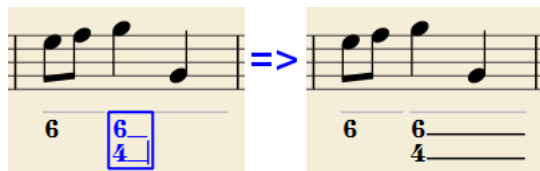
Continuation lines are drawn for the whole duration of the figured bass group.

'Extended' continuation lines

Occasionally, a continuation line has to connect with the continuation line of a following group, when a chord degree has to be kept across two groups. Examples (both from J. Boismortier, *Pièces de viole*, op. 31, Paris 1730):

In the# first case, each group has its own continuation line; in the second, the continuation line of the first group is carried 'into' the second.

This can be obtained by entering several (two or more) underscores "__" at the end of the text line of the first group.

Figured bass properties

The text formatting of figured bass symbols is handled automatically by the program, based on style settings (see below). Only **General** and **Appearance** properties can be adjusted from the **Properties** panel..

Figured bass style

Properties of all figured bass symbols in the score can be set from **Format→Style…→Figured Bass**.
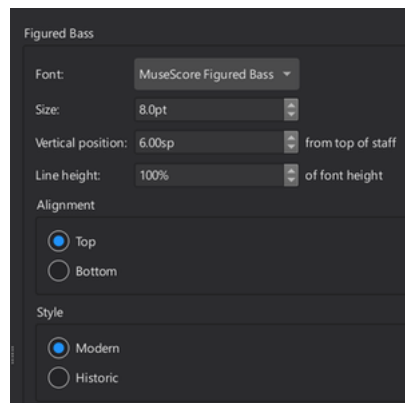
Font: This is the preset "MuseScore Figured Bass," which is specially designed to realize figured bass notation.
Size: Select a font-size in points.
Vertical Position: The distance (in spaces) from the top of the staff to the top margin of the figured bass text. Negative values go up (figured bass above the staff) and positive values go down (figured bass below the staff: a value greater than 4 is needed to step over the staff itself).

Line Height: The distance between the base line of each figured bass line, as a percentage of font size.

The following picture visualizes each numeric parameter:
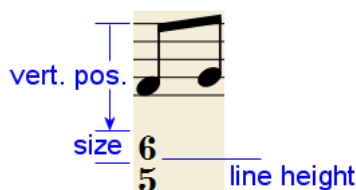
Alignment: Select the vertical alignment: with *Top*, the top line of each group is aligned with the main vertical position and the group 'hangs' from it (this is normally used with figured bass notation and is the default); with *Bottom*, the bottom line is aligned with the main vertical position and the group 'sits' on it (this is sometimes used in some kinds of harmonic analysis notations):
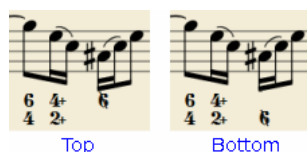
Style: Choose between "Modern" or "Historic." The difference between the two styles is shown below:

Figured bass keyboard shortcuts

Type:	to get:
Ctrl+G	Adds a new figured bass group to the selected note.
Space	Advances the editing box to the next note.
Shift+Space	Moves the editing box to the previous note.
Tab	Advances the editing box to the next measure.
Shift+Tab	Moves the editing box to the previous measure.
	Advances the editing box by 1/64, setting the duration of the previous

`Ctrl+1`	group.
`Ctrl+2`	Advances the editing box by 1/32, setting the duration of the previous group.
`Ctrl+3`	Advances the editing box by 1/16, setting the duration of the previous group.
`Ctrl+4`	Advances the editing box by 1/8 (*quaver*), setting the duration of the previous group.
`Ctrl+5`	Advances the editing box by 1/4 (*crochet*), setting the duration of the previous group.
`Ctrl+6`	Advances the editing box by a half note (*minim*), setting the duration of the previous group.
`Ctrl+7`	Advances the editing box by a whole note (*semibreve*), setting the duration of the previous group.
`Ctrl+8`	Advances the editing box by two whole notes (*breve*), setting the duration of the previous group.
`Ctrl+Space`	Enters an actual space; useful when figure appears "on the second line" (e.g., 5 4 -> 3).
BB	Enters a double flat.
B	Enters a flat.
H	Enters a natural.
#	Enters a sharp.
##	Enters a double sharp.
_	Enters a continuation line.
——	Enters an extended continuation line.

Note: For Mac commands, `Ctrl` is replaced with `Cmd`.

Rehearsal marks

Overview

Rehearsal marks (sometimes called Rehearsal Letters) can be used in a number of ways. e.g.

To identify specific points in a score to facilitate rehearsing.
As bookmarks in the score to which you can instantly navigate—using the Find/Search command.
To mark the various sections in the score.

Rehearsal marks are a type of system text. In a full score they show only above the top staff of a system, but appear in all instrument parts.

Rehearsal marks can be added to the score in two ways: (1) *manually*, allowing you to name them as you wish, or (2) *automatically*, which ensures that they are named in sequence

Adding a rehearsal mark to your score

Manual placement and naming

To create a rehearsal mark manually and give it a name of your own choosing:

Click on a note (or rest) at the desired location;
Select one of the following options:
    Press `Ctrl+M` (Mac: `Cmd+M`);
    From the menu, choose **Add→Text →Rehearsal Mark**;
Enter the desired text.

Automatic placement and naming

MuseScore can name the **Rehearsal Marks** automatically. Do either:

Click on a note (or rest) at the desired location, then click the [B1] rehearsal mark icon in the "Text" palette
Drag and drop the rehearsal mark from the "Text" palette onto the score.

Notes: (1) By default, marks are added in the sequence, A, B, C etc. (2) To change the format of subsequently-added marks (to lower case letters, or numbers), edit the previous rehearsal mark accordingly. (3) Marks added between existing rehearsal marks append a number or letter to the previous mark: it is a good idea to apply the Resequence command afterwards (see below).

Using measure numbers in rehearsal marks

If you want the rehearsal marks to be displayed as measure numbers:

Add the first rehearsal mark, then edit it to read the *same* as the number of the measure it is attached to;
Add subsequent marks as shown in Automatic placement and naming (above). They will automatically adopt the measure-number format.

Resequencing rehearsal marks

MuseScore allows the user to automatically re-order a series of rehearsal marks if they have got out of sequence for any reason. Use the following method:

Before making a selection, you can, if desired, establish a new format for the rehearsal marks (lower/upper case, number, or measure number) by manually altering the first mark in the range accordingly.
Select the range of measures you wish to apply the **Resequence** command to (if there is no selection then the program assumes you wish to resequence all measures).
From the menu, select **Tools→Resequence Rehearsal Marks**.

MuseScore automatically detects the sequence based on the *first rehearsal mark* in the selection—all rehearsal marks in the selection are then altered accordingly. The following sequences are possible:

A, B, C etc.
a, b, c etc.
Numerical: 1, 2, 3 etc.
Numerical: according to measure numbers.

Finding rehearsal marks

See Find / Go to (Navigating your score).

Repeating rehearsal marks on other staves

In most full scores any **Rehearsal marks** are shown only above the topmost staff of a system, but appear in all the generated instrument parts. If duplicate marks are required on lower staves they should be added as staff text.

However, some templates (e.g. *Symphony Orchestra* or *Classical Orchestra*), have an additional feature; when you create a rehearsal mark above the top staff, an identical one is automatically added just above the string section. If either instance of the mark is edited the content of both is updated.

Changing appearance of rehearsal marks

By default, rehearsal marks appear in a large bold font, enclosed in frames, and aligned to the center of the start barline of the measure. You can edit the *default* text properties from **Format→Style→Text style**   .

Rehearsal mark properties

The properties of selected **rehearsal marks** can be changed in the Properties Panel.

Rehearsal mark style

Default positional properties for all rehearsal marks in the score can be edited from **Format→Style… →Rehearsal Marks**.

External links

Rehearsal letter   (Wikipedia article)

Header and footer

Overview

The **header** and **footer** areas are at the top and bottom of a page respectively. They often display useful information about the score such as the title, file name, page number, copyright details etc.

Adding a header or footer to your score

From the main menu, select **Format→Style→Header, Footer**:

:

The top half of the dialog is where you define **Header** text;
The bottom half of the dialog is where you define **Footer text**.
Both **Header** and **Footer** subsections are divided into two rows, labelled **Odd**, and **Even**. This allows you to define odd and even pages separately if required.
The whole dialog is divided into three columns, labelled **Left**, **Middle**, and **Right**, representing the corresponding areas of the header or footer.

To turn off/on the display of headers/footers, uncheck/check the "Header text" and/or "Footer text" boxes as required.

Hover the cursor over the control area in which you wish to specify text. A popup box appears displaying a list of text options, and which codes to enter to realize them.

Enter the code for the desired text in the control area. A new line should be used for each code snippet.

To create a header or footer for an instrument part, that part should be the active tab.

Note: When you create a new score, any copyright details entered on the Additional score information page of the **New score dialog** will appear in the footer area of the the first page. Page numbers are also displayed on subsequent pages of newly-created scores. These are default settings only, and can be changed later from the **Header, Footer style** dialog (above).

Using metadata

Metadata is information *about* your score file—such as the title, copyright info, file name, number of pages and so on. Each of these snippets is called a **metadata tag**.

Headers and footers can display metadata tags such as page number, file name etc., as well as tags whose content is shown in Project properties.

If you hover the cursor over any control area in the **Header, Footer** dialog (see image above) you will see a list of the metadata tags available for entry, and the (two-letter) codes to enter them.

You will notice that code entry for tags is case-sensitive. For example,

$p enters a page number, but skips page 1.
$P enters a page number on all pages.
$C enters the copyright info on the first page only.
$c enters the copyright info on all pages.
$i enters the Part name, except on first page.
$I enters the Part name, on all pages.

If you want to display content from the Project properties window not covered by a two-letter code, you need to enter it in the relevant control area using the format:

$:<tag name>:

Enter the tag name in lower-case letters, unless the name of the meta tag in Project properties consists of two words, in which case the second word should start with an upper-case letter, and there should be no spaces between words.

Changing how headers and footers are displayed

In the **header, footer** dialog there are two check boxes for both header and footer:

Show on first page: When checked, header/footer text is enabled for page 1.
Different odd/even pages: When checked, the header/footer text of odd pages may be different in content from that of even ones. If unchecked, the content of both is identical in form.

To fine tune the placement of *all* header and footer text:

Click on an instance of a header/footer in the score
Click on the **Appearance** button in the **Properties** panel
Edit the horizontal and vertical **Offsets**.
Click on the ellipsis symbol (three dots) for **Offset** and select "Save as default style for this score".

In the same way you can adjust other text properties (font, font-size etc.) from the **Text** section of the **Properties** panel.

The same adjustment can be made directly in the "Header" and "Footer" entries at **Format→Style→Text styles**.

Header and footer properties

Unlike other types of text, you cannot change the text properties of a single header or footer element wthout affecting all the elements in the score of the same style. This makes sense as you usually want all footer/header elements to have the same text properties.

Header and footer style

Style properties of **headers** and **footers** are covered in Adding a header or footer to your score (above).

Text style properties are covered in Changing how headers and footers are displayed (above).

Text blocks

Overview

A **text block** is a text object entered within a frame.

Text blocks in frames have numerous uses:

Display the title, subtitle composer, arranger, lyricist etc at the beginning of a score.
Display details of individual pieces within a suite.
Display lyrics at the end of a song/hymn.

and so on.

Adding text blocks to your score

To add a text block to a frame:

Add the appropriate frame to the desired location in the score if needed (see Using frames for additional content)
Right-click on the frame and select **Add**; alternatively, from the menu bar select **Add→Text**
Choose from the text types offered: *Text*, *Title*, *Subtitle*, *Composer*, *Lyricist*, *Part name*
In the bounding box that appears, enter the desired text.

Note: When you enter details of a new score (such as Title, Composer etc) on the Additional score information page of the **New score dialog**, these appear automatically as text blocks in a frame at the top of the first page.

Changing the appearance of text blocks

The **general** and **text** properties of a selected text block can be changed in the Properties panel. In particular, you may want to

change default horizontal/vertical alignment in the **Text** section.
adjust position by dragging, using the keyboard arrows, or adjusting the horizontal/vertical offsets in the **Appearance** section.
check "Match staff size" in the **Text** section, to ensure that the text block scales up and down with the **Scaling** set in Page Settings.

Remember to make the new setting the style default (where appropriate) by clicking on the relevant ellipsis (three dots) icon and selecting ""Save as default style for this score".

Text block text properties

The text properties of a selected text block can be changed in the **Text** section of the Properties panel.

Alternatively you may wish to choose a different text style altogether from the dropdown list under "Text style" (in **Properties**: **Text→More**)

Text block text style

The default properties of any text block can be edited from **Format→Styles→Text Styles**. Alternatively you can make changes to individual style properties from the **Properties** panel; see Saving and restoring default settings.

See also

Using frames for additional content

Formatting

Page layout concepts

MuseScore generally does an excellent job of arranging music and text on the page, but there are situations where you may need to adjust things—to make music larger or smaller, to add space between staves, to change the number of measures on a page, to move text closer to or further away from the staff, etc. In order to make these types of changes, it helps to understand how MuseScore works with respect to page layout.

Definitions

There are a number of terms used throughout this chapter that you will need to be familiar with.

Staff

A **staff** is the set of lines and spaces on which notes are written. When the term is used in MuseScore, it refers to that set of lines and spaces for a given instrument throughout an entire score. In the following score for voice and piano, everything marked in yellow constitutes a single staff—the staff for the voice:

Grand staff

In music for piano and certain other instruments, two staves are used—one primarily for the right hand, the other for the left. This set of two staves is normally connected by curly braces and is referred to as a **grand staff**. In the following excerpt, the portion marked in yellow is a grand staff:

System

Like text, music is read left to right, top to bottom. Each line of music read across the page is called a **system**, and it contains the staves and grand staves for all instruments. In the following example, the yellow highlighted region represents a single system:
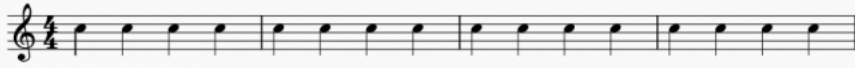
Even if a score has only a single staff for a single instrument, we still refer to a line of music read across the page as a system. In the following lead sheet, there is only a single staff but three systems:

Frame

Most text in notated music is associated with specific notes or measures. However, you may also need to place text that is not associated with a specific note or measure—the title at the beginning of a score, lyric verses placed at the end of a score, explanatory information placed between systems or even between measures. MuseScore uses elements called **frames** for this. There are vertical, text, and horizontal frames—each optimized for a particular type of use. Horizontal frames can also be used to create separation between measures on a system, with or without associated text.
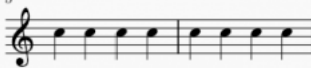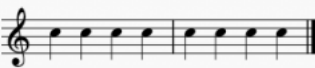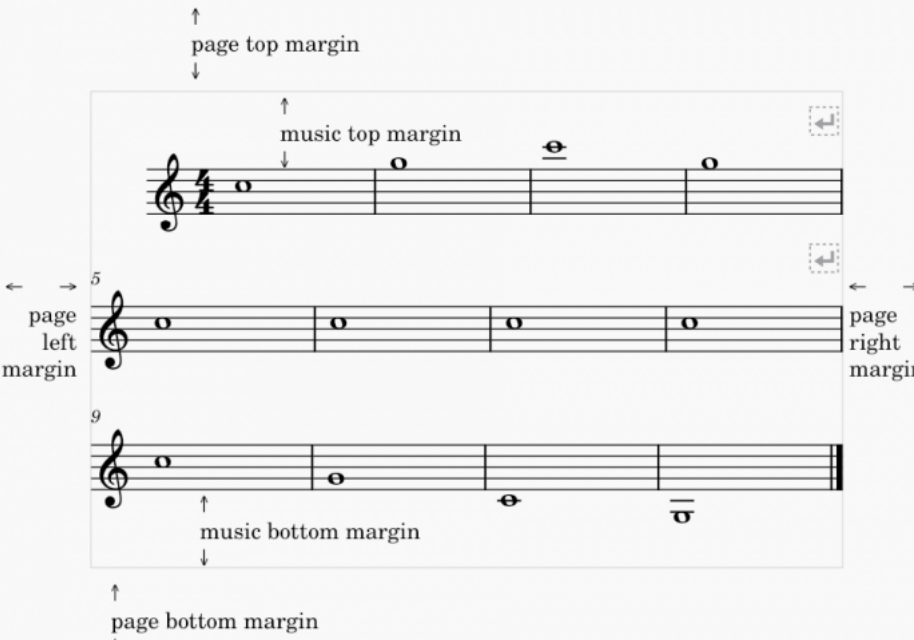
Margin

A margin is an area in which MuseScore will not normally place music or other elements. The page margin is the area around all four edges of the page where no elements are placed. The music margin is the area between the top and bottom margin and the first and last staff. The staves themselves will not be placed in those margins, but notes and other markings above or below the staves may be.

Positioning of elements

MuseScore places elements in your score automatically according to a set of rules and style settings. These are designed to produce excellent results by default in most cases‐elements positioned according to standard engraving practices while avoiding collisions between elements. MuseScore also provides the ability to customize these defaults and also to override the defaults for any given element.

Default position

Most elements in MuseScore have a default position that is determined by a style setting that can be customized via the **Properties** panel or the **Format**→**Style** dialog. For elements that are placed above the staff, the position is specified as an offset from the top line of the staff; for elements that are placed below the staff, the position is specified as an offset from the bottom line of the staff. These offsets, like most measurements in MuseScore, are expressed in *staff spaces*—abbreviated **sp**. For many element types, you can specify an offset to be used when placed above as well as a separate offset to be used when placed below, and also which of these placements should be applied by default.

For example, for dynamics, the default placement is below the staff, and the default offset below the bottom staff line is 2.5 sp. If you flip a dynamic marking above the staff, it defaults to 1.5 sp above the top staff line staff (expressed as a negative offset: -1.5 sp). These settings are all found in **Format**→**Style**→**Dynamics**.
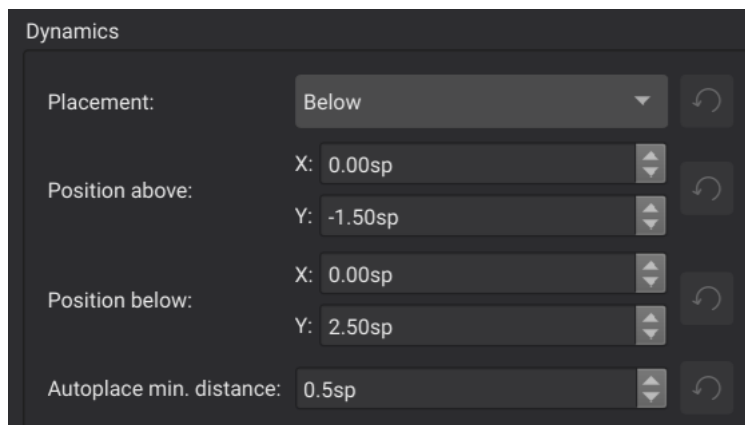
Note that the default offset is larger for dynamics placed below the staff than above only because the offset is measured from the baseline of the text.

Auto-place

Auto-place is the term MuseScore uses for a set of algorithms used to avoid collisions as well as to align certain elements automatically. A basic understanding of how auto-place works can be useful when making adjustments.

Vertical collision avoidance

For most elements placed above or below the staff, collision avoidance works vertically. When an element is being positioned, MuseScore first tries to place it according to the default offset for that element type. If that would result in a collision with another element, then one of the two elements will be moved further from the staff to avoid the overlap. MuseScore follows standard engraving rules in determining which elements to move. For example, tempo markings will be moved further above the staff to trill lines, rather than vice versa.
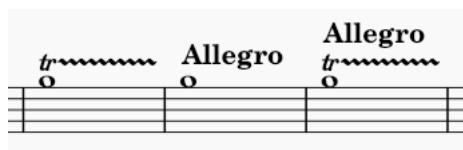
The **Minimum distance** style setting found determines how much distance MuseScore places between elements when avoiding collisions in this manner. The corresponding setting in the **Properties** panel allows you to override this for individual elements where necessary. But MuseScore adjusts this value automatically when positioning elements manually, as seen below in the section on manual adjustment.

Horizontal collision avoidance

For certain elements such as lyrics or chord symbols, MuseScore will widen measures to avoid collisions rather than displace these elements vertically.
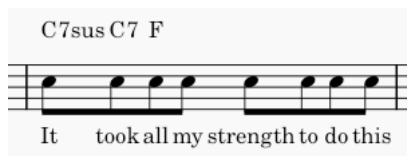
Vertical alignment

MuseScore will also try to align certain elements vertically, so that if one element of that type needs to be adjusted vertically to avoid a collision, other elements of that same type on the same system will automatically be adjusted as well. Elements that are always aligned vertically include lyrics and pedal markings. Dynamics and hairpins will be aligned if they are directly adjacent, as will pedal markings.

Chord symbols can also be aligned vertically if you enable this in the chord symbol style settings, by setting a **Maximum shift** value. See Chord symbols for more information.

Disabling auto-place

Auto-place normally does a good job of avoiding collisions and of aligning elements. And in cases where you wish to position an element manually, you can normally do so directly, without the need to disable auto-place (see manual adjustment below). However, there can be some situations in which you may still wish to disable auto-place. For example, rehearsal markings default to displaying above voltas, but you may wish to reverse this for some specific case where the volta was already displaced higher and there is then room for the rehearsal mark underneath.
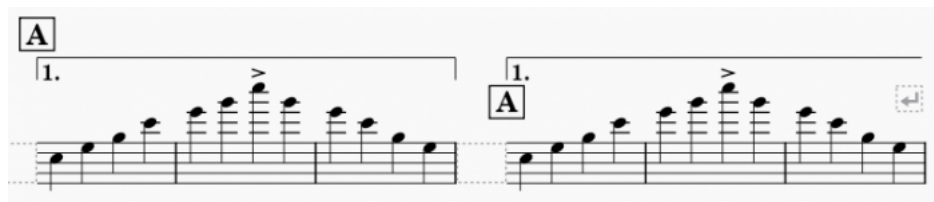
In this case, disabling auto-place for the rehearsal mark allows it to display underneath the volta, while still allowing the volta to automatically avoid collisions with the notes.

To disable auto-place for an element, select it and then disable the **Auto-place** setting in the **Properties** panel.
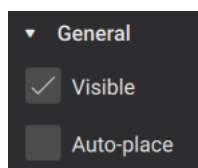
The element will be returned to its default position (as determined by its style settings) and it will not be included in the detection of collisions with other elements. Disabling auto-place for an element also causes it to be excluded from any vertical alignment that would otherwise have applied.

Manual adjustment

Whether auto-place has displayed an element from its default or not, the position of elements can be adjusted manually, such as by dragging, using the cursor keys, or the **Offset** fields in the **Properties** panel. See Adjusting elements directly for more information.

MuseScore even allows you to perform manual adjustments that would result in collisions. In the example above, if you drag the rehearsal letter below the volta, MuseScore will allow this and will automatically set the **Minimum distance** for that element to a negative value, thus effectively allowing the collision without disabling auto-place.

Manual alignment

Elements of the same type will normally be aligned by default simply because they have the same style settings and therefore the same offset. However, auto-place can result in some of the elements being moved further from the staff than others. As described above under Vertical alignment, MuseScore will automatically align some types of elements. For other elements types, you can align them manually by assigning them the same vertical offset.

To do this, simply select the elements you wish to align (e.g., click the first, Shift+click the last), then gradually increase or decrease the vertical offset in the **Properties** panel. For example, to align a series of tempo markings above the staff, you will need to set their vertical offsets to the same value. To make sure they are aligned and also avoid the collisions that cause auto-place to display one or more of them to begin with, you will need to set the offset to a sufficiently large negative value.
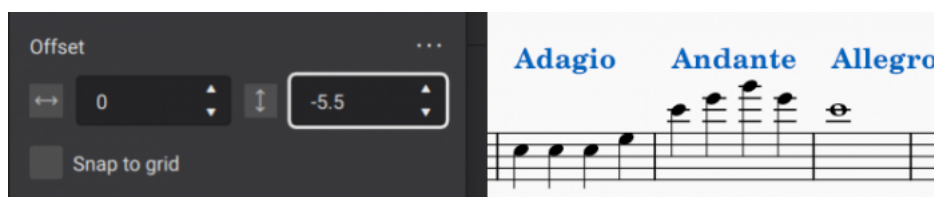
Score size and spacing

MuseScore provides a number of score-wide settings to control the overall size and spacing of your music, and below we will cover these settings. There are also a variety of ways to override these defaults to change the horizontal or vertical spacing of individual systems pages, and these are covered in Systems and horizontal spacing and Pages and vertical spacing.

Page settings

The settings that control the overall size of your music are found in **Format**→**Page Settings**.
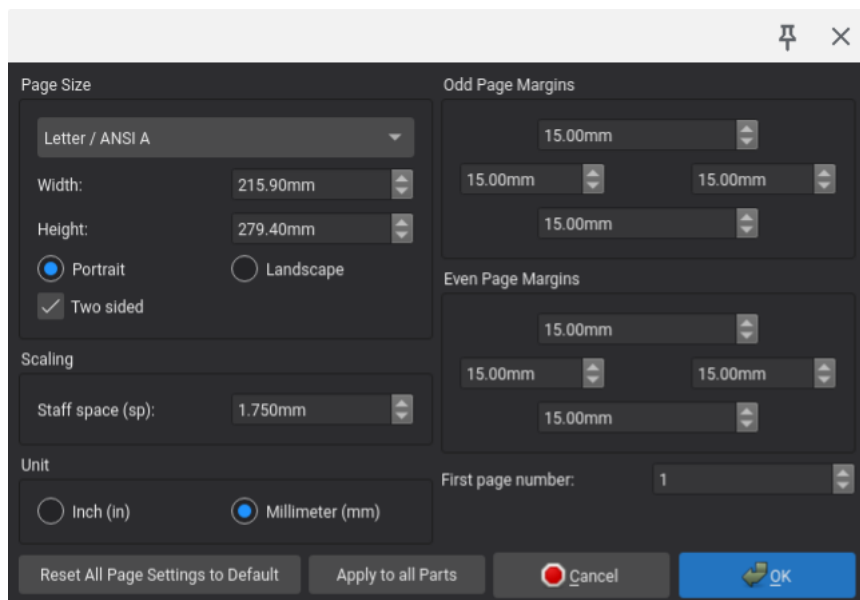
Note that units in this dialog default to millimeters, but you can change to inches using the control provided.

Page and margin sizes

> **Page Size**: select from predefined pages sizes
> **Width**: set a custom width
> **Height**: set a custom height
> **Portrait** / **Landscape**: set the page orientation
> **Two sided**: determines whether margins as well as Header and footer can be set independently for odd and even pages

The default page size is Letter in North and Central America, and A4 in most of the rest of the world.

> Odd Page Margins: set the top, bottom, left, and right page margins for odd-numbered pages
> Even Page Margins: set the top, bottom, left, and right page margins for even-numbered pages

The margins default to 15 mm regardless of the page size. If **Two sided** is not enabled, then only the **Odd Page Margins** settings are applicable.

Staff size

> **Staff space**: set the distance between two adjacent staff lines

The staff size is determined by the size of the staff space—a five-line staff is four staff spaces high. Almost all measurements elsewhere in MuseScore are expressed in units of staff spaces (abbreviated **sp**), so this setting affects the scaling of your entire score.

The default **sp** value of 1.75 mm results in a staff height of 7 mm, which is a good staff height for most solo music, choral music, small ensemble scores, and individual parts. Lead sheets and children's music may benefit from a larger staff size. Large ensemble scores may often require a smaller staff size in order to fit all instruments on the page. MuseScore will adjust the staff space automatically when creating a score for many instruments, so that the staves all fit on the page initially. You may need to adjust this value further as you add music, if auto-place results in additional space being added between staves in order to avoid collisions.

Other settings

> **First page number**: Set the number on which page numbering starts (useful if your score has a title page, for example)
> **Unit**: select between inches and millimeters for values in this dialog

Actions

In addition to the standard **OK** and **Cancel** buttons, this dialog also contains:

> **Reset All Page Settings to Default**: reset all settings in this dialog to their default values
> **Apply to all Parts**: apply the current page settings to all individual parts

Note that in large ensemble scores where MuseScore has automatically reduced the staff size in order to fit all instruments on a single page, resetting page settings will revert to the standard staff space default of 1.75 mm.

Style settings

The horizontal spacing of notes and the vertical spacing of staves and systems are controlled by style settings.

Horizontal spacing

MuseScore determines an initial width for each measure based on the music it contains, then calculates how many measures can fit on each system, and then stretches those measures out so that all systems (except possibly the last) are filled to the right margin. The initial width for a measure is

determined by the music within it as well as a group of style settings that control the spacing between notes and other symbols. Most of the settings affecting the horizontal spacing for a score are found in **Format→Style→Measure**. The most important are:

Minimum measure width: set the minimum width for a measure
Spacing ratio: set the ratio of space allocated for one note value compared to the next shorter value
Minimum note distance: set the minimum distance between two notes

The default spacing ratio value of 1.5 means that each note value takes 1.5 times as much space as the next shorter value. So, a half note takes 1.5 times as much space as a quarter note, etc. The minimum note distance specifies the smallest distance MuseScore will allow between two notes, and this sets the initial distance for the shortest note values. Longer note values will always receive more space as per the spacing ratio, and by the time measures are stretched to fill the page width, it is likely that even the shortest notes will not actually be as close as the minimum. The minimum note distance and spacing ratio settings together determine how tight or loose the spacing is.

Note: a value of 1.0 for **Spacing ratio** will result in all notes taking equal space. A ratio of 2.0 will result in direct proportional spacing, where a half note takes twice as much space as a quarter. Either of these extreme values can be useful in certain types of scores, but values closer to the default of 1.5 are best for most cases. To achieve tighter spacing, a slightly smaller value such as 1.4 can be used, or 1.6 for looser spacing. Decreasing or increasing the minimum note distance will also result in tighter or looser spacing.

If the spacing calculation results in some measures (those containing relatively few notes) working out to less than the minimum measure width, extra space is added to enforce the minimum.

There are also many individual settings in this same dialog to control specific details such as the padding from **Clef to time signature** or **Barline to grace note**. More such settings are added over time, and these are meant to be self-explanatory.

Additional relevant style settings can be found in :

Format→Style→Score
    Enable indentation on first system: set to indent the first system of the score
    First system indentation: set the amount of indentation
Format→Style→Page
    Last system fill threshold: determines whether to fill the last system of the score to the right margin

These settings are discussed further under Systems and horizontal spacing.

Vertical spacing

MuseScore provides a choice of two different vertical spacing algorithms.

In both algorithms, MuseScore fills pages with systems in a similar manner to how it fills systems with measures. First, it determines an initial size for each system, then it determines how many systems can fit on each page, and then it spreads those systems out so that all pages are filled well. Depending on your style settings, MuseScore may literally fill each page to the bottom margin, or it may leave additional space on the bottom of some pages if trying to fill the page completely would spread things out too widely.

The difference between the two algorithms has to do with how the spreading to fill the page occurs.

If you select **Disable vertical justification of staves**, the distance between the staves within a system is fixed, unless that would result in collisions. In this algorithm, if MuseScore needs to spread systems to fill a page, it will always do so by adding space *between* systems rather than *within* systems. This yields consistent spacing between staves from one system to the next, but it can result in spacing between systems being much larger than spacing within them, and it will usually result in ragged bottom margins on pages with only a single system (since the staves within the system won't be spread to fill the page).

The default, however, is to **Enable vertical justification of staves**. With this method selected, the distance between staves within systems is also subject to spreading. This results in more even spacing overall—the spacing between systems will still be larger than the spacing within them but not to the same extreme—and it mostly avoids ragged bottom margins on pages with only a single system (since the staves within the system can be spread to fill the page).

Most of the settings controlling the vertical spacing for a score are found in **Format→Style→Page**. There is, however, one relevant setting in **Format→Style→Score**.

Minimum vertical distance: set the minimum amount of space that MuseScore will allow between symbols below one staff or system and symbols above the next staff or system below

Music margins

Regardless of whether vertical justification is enabled or disabled, MuseScore will add space above the top staff and below the bottom staff of each page:

Music top margin: set the minimum amount of space between the page top margin and the top staff
Music bottom margin: set the minimum amount of space between the page bottom margin and the bottom staff

Distance between staves within systems

If you select **Disable vertical justification of staves**, then there are two settings that control spacing within systems:

Staff distance: set the distance between the staves of adjacent instruments
Grand staff distance: set the distance between the staves of a grand staff (e.g., for piano)

Note: even with **Disable vertical justification of staves** selected, MuseScore will still add more space between staves as necessary to avoid collisions. To force a completely consistent distance between staves (and accept the resulting collisions), set the **Minimum vertical distance** to a large negative number.

If you select **Enable vertical justification within staves**, then there is not a single setting for staff or grand staff distance. Instead, you select a range

of acceptable distances and values that control how much of the available space MuseScore will fill by spreading systems versus spreading staves (and how much extra space to add between bracketed and braced groups of staves). The relevant settings include:

Minimum staff distance: set the minimum distance between adjacent staves
Maximum staff distance: set the maximum distance between adjacent staves
Maximum grand staff distance: set the maximum distance between adjacent staves of a grand staff
Factor for distance above/below bracket: set the extra amount to spread between bracketed staff groups
Factor for distance above/below brace: set the extra amount to spread between braced staff groups

Distance between systems

Whether vertical justifications of staves is enabled or disabled, you specify the distance between systems as a range:

Minimum system distance: set the minimum distance between adjacent systems
Maximum system distance: set the maximum distance between adjacent systems

In addition, if you select **Enable vertical justification of staves**, there are two more settings:

Factor for distance between systems: set the extra amount to spread between systems
Maximum page fill distance: the total maximum amount of spread

Staff/part properties

There are also a couple of staff-specific settings that affect size and spacing. To access these, right-click (`Ctrl`+click) a staff and then select **Staff/Part properties**. The relevant settings are:

Small staff: set staff size to percentage specified in **Format→Style→Sizes**
Scaling: set staff size to a custom percentage
Extra distance above staff: set an extra distance between this staff and the staff above

Systems and horizontal spacing

The horizontal spacing algorithm in MuseScore determines the width of each measure, which in turn determines how many measures will fit on each system. While this will produce good results in many cases, there are also situations where you may wish to override this and have fewer or more measures on a system, or to have them spaced differently within the system.

Features

The main tools used to control systems and horizontal spacing are described below.

System breaks

A system break causes MuseScore to end a system after a specific measure or horizontal frame, even if more measures would fit. To add a system break, select a measure (or any element within it) or a frame, and then click the **System break** icon in the **Layout** palette:
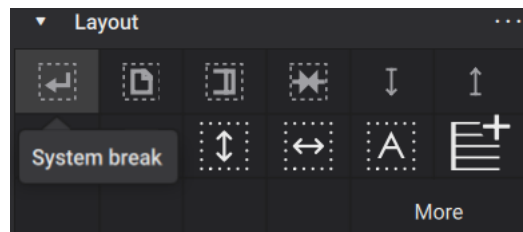
You can also use the keyboard shortcut `Enter`. Both methods of adding breaks also work while in note input mode.

After adding a break, the icon will appear above the measure you added it to:

As with other formatting elements, system breaks appear in gray and will not print, and their on-screen display can be disabled via the Properties panel.

Layout stretch

You can increase or decrease the width of measures, and their contents will stretch accordingly. The calculated width of a measure is multiplied by a *layout stretch* factor that you can set numerically for selected measures, but you can also use commands to increase or decrease the stretch of selected measures directly without needing to set a specific number.

To change the layout stretch directly, you can select one or more measures, then use one of the commands in **Format→Stretch**:

Increase layout stretch: increase the width of the measure (shortcut })
Decrease layout stretch: decrease the width of the measure (shortcut {)
Reset layout stretch: reset the width of the measure

To set the layout stretch value numerically, you can select one or more measures and then set the **Measure width** in the **Appearance** section of the **Properties** panel.

As you can see if you watch this setting, each press of } or { increments or decrements this value by 0.1.

You can also set this value for a single measure by right-clicking it, selecting **Measure properties**, and setting **Layout stretch** in the resulting dialog.

Horizontal frames

A horizontal frame is a container for empty space, text, or images, that can be placed between measures in a score. Although you can place text or images within horizontal frames (see Using frames for additional content), one of their main purposes is to create empty space within systems, as shown below.

To add a horizontal frame to your score, select a measure and then click the **Insert horizontal frame** icon in the **Layout** palette:
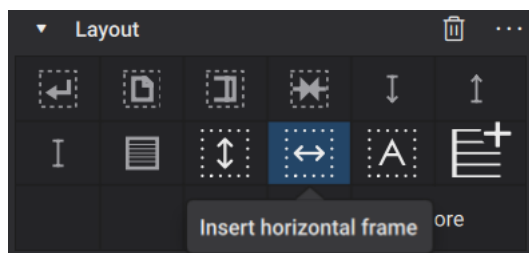
The frame will be inserted in front of the selected measure. If the measure is at the beginning of a system, the frame may actually appear at the end of the previous system, if there is room.

You can also use the commands in the **Add→Frames** menu.

You can then change the width of the frame using the **Width** setting in the **Properties** panel, or by selecting the frame and dragging its handle or using the `Left` and `Right` cursor keys to change the width. Keyboard adjustment occurs in steps of 0.5 sp, or 1.0 sp if you hold `Ctrl` (`Cmd` on Mac).

Insert horizontal frame: insert a horizontal frame before the selected measure
Append horizontal frame: append a horizontal frame to the end of the score

Keep measures on the same system

To keep measures together for the purpose of determining if they fit on a given system or not, you can select them and then click the **Keep measures on the same system** icon on the Layout palette:
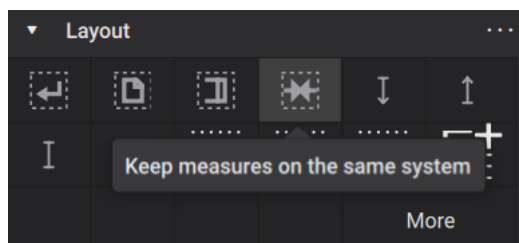
When MuseScore is deciding how measures to place on a given system, and it encounters such a group and determines that they do not all fit, MuseScore will move the entire group to the next system.

Tasks

These features can be used in a variety of ways, but there are a handful of tasks that are especially common.

Placing fewer measures on a system

It is always possible to get fewer measures on a system than what MuseScore places by default. To end a system on a particular measure or horizontal frame, select it and add a system break.

Placing more measures on a system

While it is not always physically possible to fit more measures onto a given system at the current page and staff size and spacing settings—there may simply be "too many notes" to fit without overlapping—you can reduce the widths of selected measures.

To place more measures on a system:

> Select and delete any system break that might be present already
> Select the measures you wish to combine onto one system
> Reduce stretch for the selected measures until they fit (e.g., by pressing {)

Depending on how close it was to fitting before, it might take multiple **Decrease layout stretch** operations before the stretch is reduced enough for them all to fit. But it may also be the case that it just is not possible without reducing your overall page or staff size, or spacing settings. See Score size and spacing for more information.

Changing the relative spacing of measures within a system

The default spacing is designed to make sure that all notes of a given duration on the same system take the same amount of space, unless more space is required to make room for markings between specific notes. But there can be cases where it might make sense to increase the spacing in one or more measures, thus correspondingly decreasing the spacing in the others (or vice versa).

To change the spacing in one or more measure, simply select them and increase or decrease the layout stretch as described above.

Creating space between measures

To create space between two measures, select the second measure, then insert and adjust a horizontal frame as described above.

Creating space at the beginning or end of a system

To add space at the beginning of a system, select the first measure of the system then insert and adjust a horizontal frame as described above. You may also need to place a system break on the last measure of the previous system to ensure that the horizontal frame does not appear there instead.

Note that for the first system of a score, the **First system indent** style setting (in **Format→Style→Score**) automatically creates space. See Score size and spacing for more information.

To add space at the end of a system, first make sure there is no system break on the last measure, then select the next measure and insert a horizontal frame. Then add a system break to the horizontal frame itself if needed.

Adjusting the width of the final system

The last system of a score will normally be right-justified (stretched to fill the width of the page) if its default width exceeds the **Last system fill threshold** as set in **Format→Style→Score**. See Score size and spacing for more information. This normally produces good results, but there may be cases where the last system is filled but would look better if it were not, or vice versa.

For cases where the system is filled but you would prefer it not to be, you can increase the threshold. A value of 100% will mean the last system is never filled (since its width will never exceed that threshold). Conversely, if the last system is *not* filled but you want it to be, then decrease the threshold. A value of 0% will mean the last system will always stretch (because its width will always exceed that threshold).

Normally, however, you should select a threshold value that will accommodate future changes to the score that might result in more or fewer measures ending up on the last system. For instance, if your last system currently has several measures and you force it to be filled by setting the threshold to 0%, this might look bad if the layout changes in the future and the last system has only one measure. Or if the last system has only one measure and you force it not to be filled by setting the threshold to 100%, this might look bad if the layout changes in the future and the last system ends up with several measures. This is why a more middle-of-the-road value usually makes sense.

It is usually even better, however, to plan system breaks to avoid having the last system being less full than others.

Grouping measures

As discussed in Score size and spacing, MuseScore normally fits as many measures as it can on each system. This can sometimes result in two or more musically-related measures being split across a system break, when it might be easier to read if they were kept together on the next system. While you could add a system break to the measure before the group, this could easily turn out to be counterproductive if the layout changes later and all the measures could have fitted on that system. What you really want is to be able to specify that a group of measures should be kept together if possible, whether that means keeping them on the original system or moving them all together to the next.

In a word processor, a "non-breaking space" character can be used to keep two words together. If the words both fit on the current line, then the non-breaking space acts like a regular space. But if the two words cannot both fit on a line, word wrap will move them both together to the next line rather than split them apart at the non-breaking space.

In MuseScore, you can use the **Keep measures on the same system** icon in the **Layout** palette to group selected measures in the same way. These measures will be treated as a single block for the purpose of deciding whether to place them on one system or the next.

Note that this will not allow you to fit more measures on a system than your current settings would normally allow. It simply tells MuseScore that it should keep them all together *if possible*.

Pages and vertical spacing

Features

As described in <u>Vertical spacing</u>, MuseScore fills each page with as many systems as can fit given the current score settings, and then adjusts the spacing within each page according to one of two different algorithms. You can also adjust the number of systems on a page, or the spacing between specific staves or systems, manually.

Page breaks

A page break causes MuseScore to end a page after a given system, even if more systems would fit. To add a page break, select a measure or frame and then either press `Ctrl+Enter` (`Cmd+Enter` on Mac) or click the **Page break** icon in the **Layout** palette:
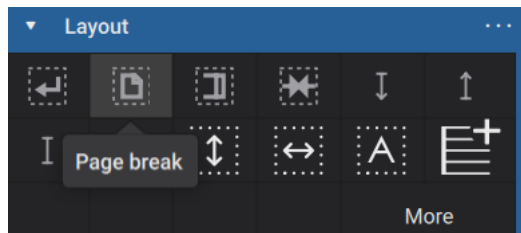
Spacers

A spacer is a formatting element you can add to a measure to control the amount of space above or below that particular staff. Spacers can work to either add or remove space, and they can operate either within or between systems.

To add a spacer to your score, select a measure and then click the appropriate icon in the **Layout** palette:
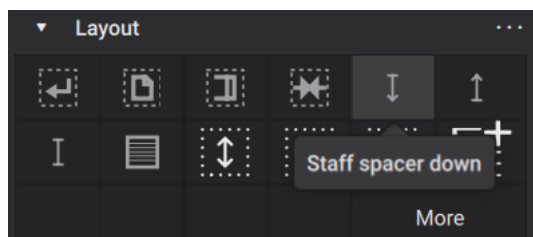
You can also drag and drop a spacer from the palette to a measure in your score.

Once you have added a spacer, you can adjust its height by selecting it and dragging its handle, or by using the **Height** setting in the **Properties** panel. There are three different types of spacers, and the height setting affects the score differently according to the spacer type:

   Staff spacer down: ensure there is at least the specified given amount of space below this staff
   Staff spacer up: ensure there is at least the specified amount of space above this staff
   Staff spacer fixed down: ensure there is exactly the specified amount of space below this staff

In all cases, the spacer works within a system when added between staves of a system. In addition, a **Staff spacer down** or **Staff spacer fixed down** works between systems when added to the bottom staff of a system, and a **Staff spacer up** works between systems when added to the top staff of a system.

Vertical frames

A vertical frame is a container for empty space, text, or images, that can be placed between systems in a score. Although vertical frames can be left empty and thus function in a manner similar to spacers, the primary purpose of vertical frames is to add text or images. For more information, see <u>Using frames for additional content</u>.
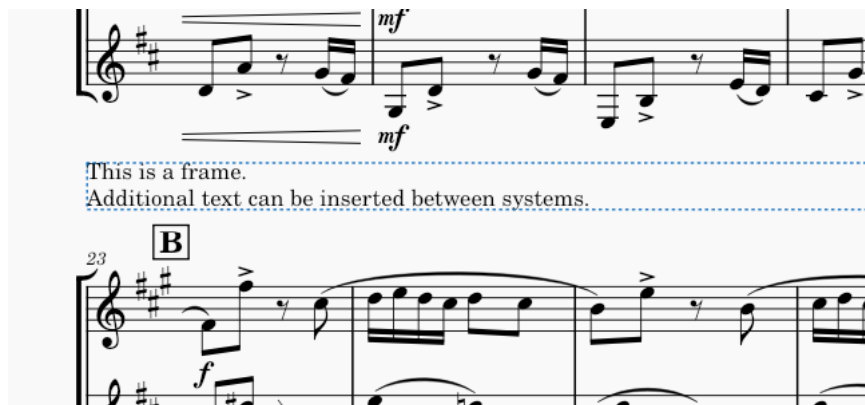
System dividers

In ensemble music in which multiple systems fit on a single page of music, it is common to use a pair of diagonal strokes to help clarify the division between the systems.

MuseScore can add these automatically via the settings in **Format→Style→System**. You can enable **Left** and **Right** dividers independently. For each, you can customize a number of settings:

> **Symbol**: select between **System divider**, **Long system divider**, or **Extra long system divider**
> **Horizontal offset**: distance from default position (aligned with the page margin)
> **Vertical offset**: distance from default position (midway between systems)

Tasks

The feature listed above can be used to achieve a number of common tasks.

Placing fewer systems on a page

To place fewer systems on a page, simply add a page break to the system or frame you wish to appear last on the page.

Placing more systems on a page

As with horizontal spacing, in some cases it might not be possible to fit more systems onto a page than your current settings permit. So you may also want to consider a smaller staff size, or reducing the minimum system distance score-wide, or other style changes. However, in some cases you may be able to fit more systems on a page by manually reducing the distance between specific systems.

To reduce the distance between two specific systems, add a **Staff spacer fixed down** to the bottom staff of the upper system, then set its height as desired. If this reduction allows another system to fit on the page, then it will happen automatically.

Adjusting the spacing on sparse pages

MuseScore normally spreads systems and staves out to fill a page (see Vertical spacing for more information). Whether you enable or disable vertical justification, however, pages that are especially sparse may still look awkward. This is especially common for the last page of a score, where it is possible more systems could have fit.

In many cases, the best results would be obtained by planning the system and/or page breaks throughout the score to avoid these overly sparse pages. But in cases where this is unavoidable, you will need to decide where you want the extra space—all at the bottom of the page, equally divided between the top and bottom, dispersed between systems, or dispersed between staves within systems as well as between systems.

To force all extra space to the bottom of the page, once solution is to add a **Staff spacer down** below the last system, and adjust its height as appropriate

to take the space you wish to leave below. Another is to reduce either the **Maximum system distance** or **Maximum page fill distance** (see Vertical spacing). These settings may affect other pages as well, but in most cases, they will only be relevant for especially sparse pages.

To force some space at the top of the page, you can add a **Staff spacer up** above the first system.

To change the distribution of space between systems and staves within systems, be sure **Enable vertical justification of staves** is enabled in **Format→Style→Page**, then adjust **Factor for distance between systems**. A value of 1.0 means that space is equally distributed within and between systems. Larger values mean that more of the available space will be allocated between systems as opposed to within them.

Adjusting space between specific systems

To add space between two specific systems, add a **Staff spacer down** to the bottom staff of the upper system, or a **Staff spacer up** to the top staff of the lower system.

Adjusting space between specific staves

To add space between specific staves within a single system, add a **Staff spacer down** to the upper staff, or a **Staff spacer up** to the lower staff.

To add space between specific staves across all systems—such as to separate piano accompaniment from the vocal staves in a choral score—right-click the lower staff, select **Staff/Part properties**, and increase the **Extra distance above staff** setting.

Using frames for additional content

Overview

A **frame** is a rectangular space in the score into which one or more text objects or images may be inserted. In the score window the sides of the frame are marked by dotted lines (these do not show up in the printed score).

A frame may be one of three types:

> **Vertical frame**: A full-width rectangle inserted before the first system, after the last system, or between systems. It may contain several text objects and/or images.
> **Text frame**: A full-width rectangle inserted before the first system, after the last system, or between systems. It may contain one text object only.
> **Horizontal frame**: A rectangle between two measures which may contain several text objects and/or images.

Note: Although you *can* use frames to create extra space between systems, it is best to use spacers for this purpose.

Uses of frames

Frames may be used to

> Display the title, subtitle, composer, arranger, lyricist etc., at the top of a score. This is done automatically for new scores if you have completed the relevant details on page 2 of the New Score dialog.
> Display details of movements within a score.
> Display lyrics at the end of a song.
> Create a blank space before a coda

and so on.

Adding frames between or before/after systems

Text frames

A **text frame** is a full-width rectangle placed either before the first system or after the last one, or between systems. One text block (only) may be added to the frame. The height of the frame is automatically adjusted to the height of any text block contained within it.

Adding a text frame

> Select a measure, or a frame
> Apply one of the following methods:
> > From the **menu bar** select **Add→Frames→Insert text frame**
> > In the **Layout** palette click on the "Insert text frame" icon
> > Use an "Insert text frame" custom keyboard shortcut (you can set this up in the Preferences: Shortcuts dialog).

If the measure selected is the first one in the system, the frame will simply be inserted above the system. If the selected measure is any one but the first, it will start a new system and the frame will appear above it.

Adding text

To add a text block to the text frame:

> Double-click the frame; or right-click on the frame and choose **Edit element**; or select the frame and use the shortcut F2, or Alt+Shift+E.
> Type the desired text.

The text has the "Frame" style by default but you can change this using "Text style" in the **Text** tab of the **Properties** panel. You can also apply character formatting in the usual way.

Vertical frames

A **vertical frame** is a full-width rectangle placed either before the first system or after the last one, or between systems. Several text blocks and/or images may be added to the frame.

Adding a vertical frame

> Select a measure, or a frame
> Apply one of the following methods:
> > From the **menu bar** select **Add→Frames→Insert vertical frame**
> > In the **Layout** palette click on the "Insert vertical frame" icon
> > Use an "Insert vertical frame" custom keyboard shortcut (you can set this up in the Preferences: Shortcuts dialog).

If the measure selected is the first one in the system, the frame will simply be inserted above the system. If the selected measure is any one but the first, it will start a new system and the frame will appear above it.

Adding text

To add a text block to the vertical frame apply one of the following methods:

> Right-click on the frame, select **Add**, then choose one of the options (Text, Title, Subtitle, Composer, Lyricist, Part name).
> Select the frame, and from the menu bar choose **Add→Text**. Then choose one of the first five options (Title, Subtitle, Composer, Lyricist, Part name).
> Select the frame and use keyboard shortcuts to add applicable text blocks (you can set these up in the Preferences: Shortcuts dialog).

Adding an image

> Right-click on the vertical frame
> Select **Add→Image**
> Search for and add the image from the "Insert image" window.

Size

The height of the vertical frame is automatically adjusted to the height of any text block contained within it. But you can override this using "Height" in the **Vertical frame** tab of the **Properties** toolbar.

Position and alignment of content

The position of a text object which abuts directly onto the border of a vertical/text frame can be altered by adjusting the relevant **margin** (Top/Bottom/Left/Right) in the **Vertical frame** tab of the **Properties** panel.

For example, a left- and top-aligned text object will be pushed away from the respective border by increasing the "Left margin" and/or "Top margin", and so on.

Spacing

In the **Vertical frame** or **Text frame** tab of the **Properties** panel, adjust "Gap above" and "Gap below" to create extra space above/below the frame.

Adding frames between measures

Horizontal frames

A **horizontal frame** is used to create space between the measures of a particular system with optional text and/or image content.

Adding a horizontal frame

> Select a measure.
> Apply one of the following methods:
> > From the **menu bar** select **Add→Frames→Insert horizontal frame**
> > In the **Layout** palette click on the "Insert horizontal frame" icon
> > Use an "Insert horizontal frame" keyboard shortcut (you can set this up in the **Preferences: Shortcuts** dialog).

The frame is inserted between the selected measure and the following one.

Adding text

To add a text block to a horizontal frame, right-click on the frame and select **Add→Text**.

Adding an image

> Right-click on the horizontal frame
> Select **Add→Image**
> Search for and add the image from the "Insert image" window.

Size

You can adjust the width of the frame in the **Horizontal frame** tab of the **Properties** panel.

Spacing

You can adjust the space on either side of the horizontal frame using "Left gap" and "Right gap" in the **Horizontal frame** tab of the **Properties** panel.

Other horizontal frame properties

> **Display brackets, clefs and key signatures in the next measure**

See also

> [Add measures to a frame](#)

Working with images

Adding images

> supported formats

Frames

Other elements

Image properties

Using sections for multiple movements or songs

Overview

A **section break** is used to divide a score into separate sections, such as might be required in a musical suite, for example.

In the following score example, there is a section break at the end of the first system, followed by a text [frame](#) providing the title of the next movement.

Features

A section break has the following features:

> The measure after the point of application is forced to start a new system (like a [system break](#))
> An adjustable playback pause between movements
> An option to restart measure numbering
> An option to display long instrument names (as you might at the start of a piece).

These options are detailed in [Section break properties](#) (below).

Time and key signatures

If the beginning of a new section is accompanied by a change of time or key signatures, there will be no courtesy signature at the end of the previous section.

Adding section breaks

To add a section break, select a measure, barline (or any element within the measure), then click the **Section break** icon in the **Layout** palette. You can substitute the latter action with a custom shortcut if desired (see [Preferences: Shortcuts](#)).

Section break properties

The following properties of section breaks are adjustable from the **Section** break part of the **Properties** panel:

Pause

To adjust the playback **pause** after a section break: select the break and edit "Pause before new section starts".

Instrument names

To display the **long intrument names** on the first system after a section break: select the break and make sure that "Start new section with long instrument names" is checked.

Bar numbers

To **restart measure numbering** after a section break: select the break and make sure that "Reset bar numbers for new section" is checked.

Additional settings for measure number display are available in the Measure properties dialog.

Sound and playback

Playback controls

Overview

Basic playback functions are accessed from the **Play toolbar** at the top right of the program window:

From left to right, the icons are:

Rewind to start position: Playback returns to the beginning of the score, or to the start of the loop (if one is set).
Start or stop playback: See Start/stop playback.
Toggle loop playback: See Loop playback.
Play metronome: Toggles metronome ON and OFF.
Playback settings: Opens the playback settings dialog (see below).

To the right of the playback controls are counters showing

Time elapsed from the start of score to the cursor position.
Bar number and beat at the cursor position.
Tempo in 1/4 notes (crotchets) per min.

This panel can also be undocked giving you access to additional controls—see play position and tempo, (below). To redock the Playback Panel: click and hold down the "6 dots", then drag the Playback Panel to the top right of the MuseScore screen and release.

Playback commands

Start/stop

To play back *all* the instrument parts

Click on a note or rest to establish the starting point.
Press the **Play** button, or press Space.

To play back selected instrument parts only

Select a measure that you want to start from (by clicking on a blank space within that measure);
To play back more than one instrument part, extend the selection up or down as required.
Press the **Play** button, or press Space.

Notes: (1) If no selection is made before activating Play, playback returns to the place it stopped at previously; or, if no previous playback, to the start of the score. (2) The **Play** button changes to a "stop" icon while music is playing.

To stop playback

Press the **Play** button; or press Space.

Rewind

To rewind playback click on the **Rewind** icon on the **Play toolbar**. Rewind returns the playback to the beginning of the score or, if a loop is set, to the beginning of the loop.

Loop

To loop playback over a section of music:

Stop playback (if it is on);
Ensure that the **loop playback** button is "off" (i.e. not colored blue);
Select a range in the score, encompassing the instrument staves you want to play back;
Click on the **loop playback** button in the **Play toolbar**. Flags will appear around the selection and the button change color.
Click on the **Play** button.

In the example below, playback will cycle over the selected two bars of Violin 2 and Viola, the region marked by the blue flags. Use the "Loop playback" button to toggle the loop on or off.
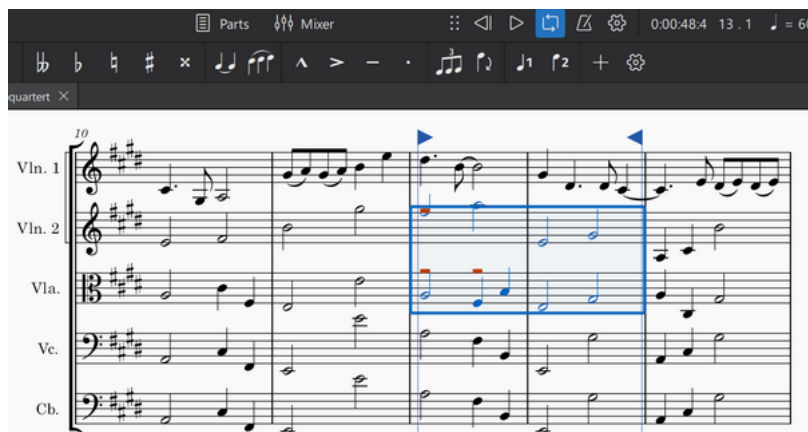
Metronome

If you want to hear a metronome tick during the performance, click on the **metronome** button. Click again to turn it off.

Play position and tempo

The current playback position is shown by counters to the right of the playback controls. One shows the position in terms of time elapsed, the other in measures and beats (see image in overview).

The numbers in the time and measure counters can be edited after clicking on them; playback will be resumed from the edited position.

When the **Play toolbar** is undocked from the toolbar area, it automatically expands to include two slider controls. By dragging the sliders you can adjust the **playback position** and **tempo** of playback. Note that tempo overrides are only temporary, and do not affect the actual written tempo(s); returning the slider to "100%" restores normal playback.

In the following example the position of playback is about one third of the way through the score, and the playback tempo slider is set to 78 quarter note beats per minute (bpm); or 130% of the nominal metronome mark, 60 bpm, displayed in the score.
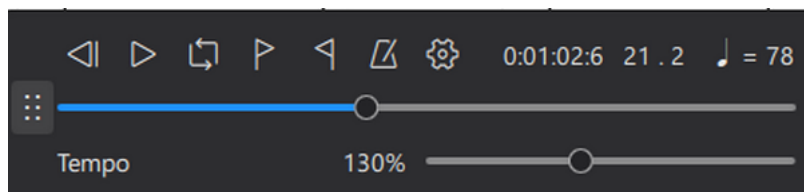
Other commands

Click the settings button (cogged gear) on the **Play toolbar** to show the following controls:
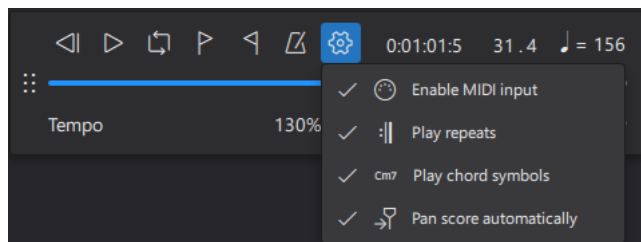
You can uncheck or check these options as desired.

Enable MIDI input

Enable MIDI input to write music to your score with a linked MIDI device (such as a keyboard or drum machine) during playback. See Working with Midi for details.

Play repeats

Uncheck this option if you want playback to ignore any repeat indications in the score.

Play chord symbols

Uncheck this option if you want playback to ignore chord symbols in the score.

Pan score automatically

When checked, this option pans the score during playback; uncheck if you want the view to remain stationary.

Mixer

Overview

The **mixer** allows you to

change instrument sounds (without affecting the staff notation).
load virtual instruments and effects.

adjust volume and panning, and make other adjustments to the playback for each stave.
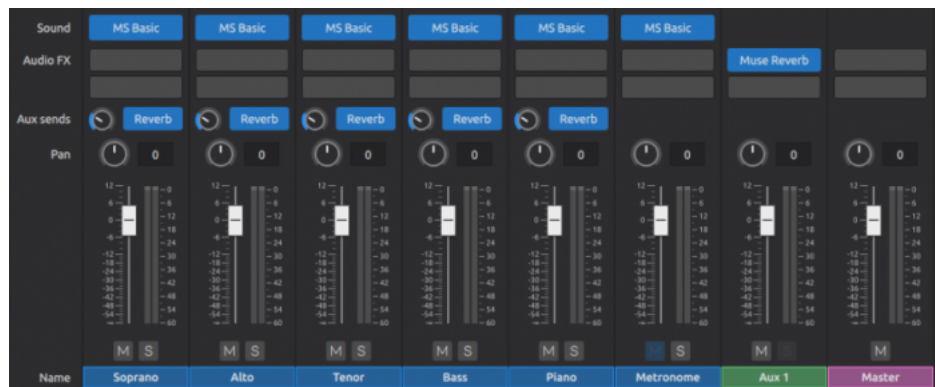
The mixer is divided into a number of color-coded **channel** strips:

Instrument: Each staff instrument in the score has its own channel, with the name of the instrument, labelled blue, at the bottom. An instrument channel is also created for each mid-score instrument change applied to a staff.
Metronome: This channel, also labelled blue, allows control of metronome volume and panning.
Aux 1/Aux 2: These are the auxiliary channels, labelled green, and may be used to house VST effects units. **Aux 1** by default contains Muse Reverb (see below).
Master: The master fader, labelled red.

Opening the mixer

You can display/hide the mixer by:

Clicking on the **Mixer** button in the **Note input** toolbar.
Clicking **View**→**Mixer**.
Using the shortcut `F10`.

Note: If the instrument channel strips are not in the same order as the instruments in the score, try closing and reopening the Mixer again.

Mixer controls

A channel strip contains the following controls (from top to bottom):
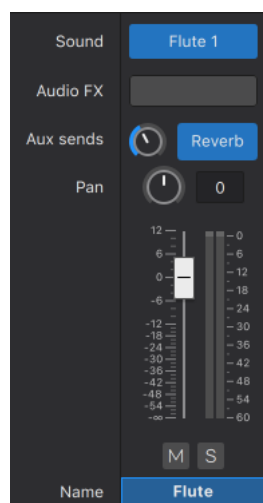
Sound: See below.
Audio FX: See below.
Aux sends: See below.
Pan: Click and drag on the Pan knob to move the audio track to the left or right in the stereo sound field. Double click on the knob to return Pan to the center position.
Volume: Click and drag the fader to increase or decrease playback volume. Double click on the fader to return it to the default level, **0 dB**.

Mute and **Solo**: Click on the Mute button to silence the track; click again to unmute it—and so on. The Solo button silences all other tracks allowing you to hear only the soloed track. Multiple selection of Solo and Mute buttons is possible, allowing you to conveniently isolate any combination of instruments.
Name: Note that this name is not affected by any changes made to the instrument name in the score.

Click the three dot icon in the upper right corner of the Mixer panel to show / hide a control. For example, you can hide the Volume faders to save up vertical screen space for score viewing.

Sound

The row labelled **Sound** shows the virtual instrument set used in each track. This can be either a SoundFont (.sf2,.sf3), VST instruments (VSTi) or MuseSounds.

To change the instrument of a channel:

Mouse over the name of the virtual instrument set (in the row marked "Sound")
Click the dropdown button that appears
Locate and click on an item from the dropdown menu.

Note: This changes the staff instrument, but has no effect on staff notation. If you want the staff to be updated as well, say, with correct transposition and clef changes, see Choose instruments.

MS4 does not yet support bank selection of sounds from a single SoundFont file (as MS3 did). This is planned for a future version, but for now, use the workaround detailed in SoundFonts.

SFZ files are supported but only by using a VST sampler; see SoundFonts.

Audio FX

Each row (slot) under the **Audio FX** allows you to add an extra VST effect or Muse Reverb (a native effect). Audio is processed through the Audio FX from top to bottom.

Find VSTi inside **Sound** drop-downs, and find VST effects inside **Audio FX** drop-downs.
To apply Audio FX(s) to one instrument, add Audio FX to the corresponding instrument strip.
To easily apply the same Audio FX(s) to multiple instruments, use Aux sends.

To add an Audio FX plugin

Hover over an empty Audio FX slot
Click the dropdown button that appears
Locate and click on a plugin from the dropdown menu .
The plugin will load as a separate window on top of the Musescore window.
When you add one effect, a new empty row (slot) is created automatically to allow adding further effect. Repeat these steps to add more effect.
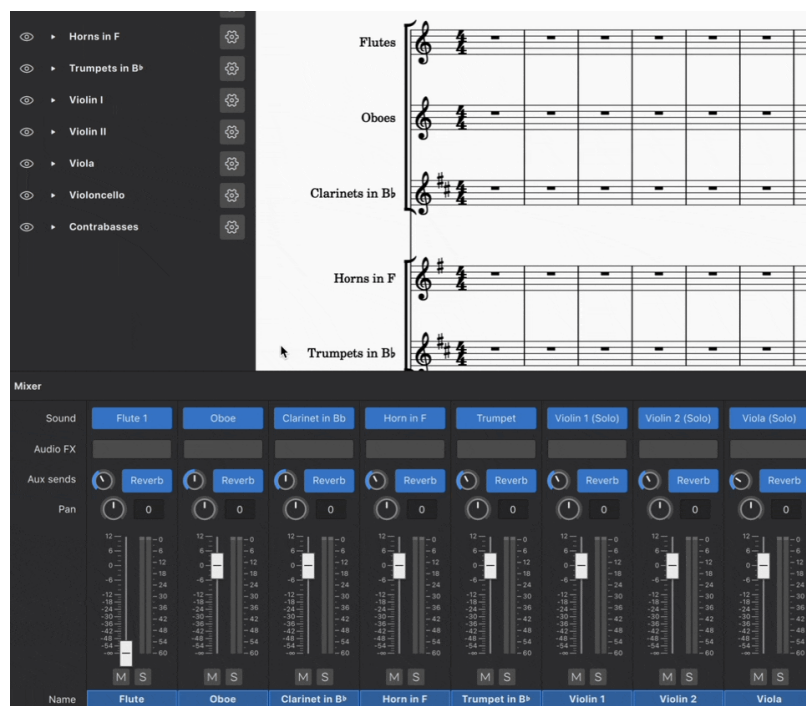
To disable an Audio FX plugin

Hover over an Audio FX slot
Click on the power icon that appears.

This deactivates the plugin without removing it from the mixer.
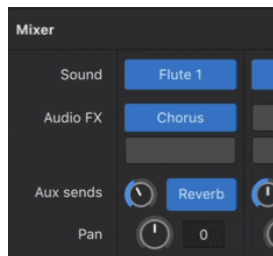
To remove an Audio FX plugin

> Hover over an Audio FX slot
> Click the dropdown button that appears
> Click **No effect**.
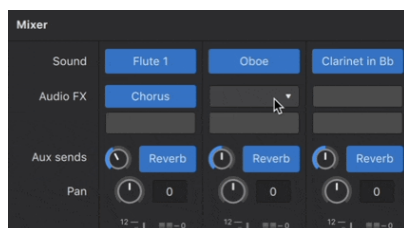
Muse Reverb

Muse Reverb is MuseScore's native reverb unit. A fixed amount of reverb is added by default to each instrument—you can adjust the amount for each channel using the Aux send knobs next to the blue buttons labelled "Reverb". The effect can be toggled on/off for each channel by clicking on the same buttons. You can also adjust the Muse Reverb output volume using the **Aux** 1 fader.

Aux sends

Each row (slot) under the **Aux sends** adjusts how much of a corresponding Aux channel effect(s) is added to the audio created for an instrument.

There are two Aux sends, corresponding to the two aux channels:

> The first row adjusts how much of Aux channel 1 **Aux 1** is added onto the current instrument, it is shown as **Reverb** by default, because **Aux 1** contains **Muse Reverb** by default.
> The second row adjusts how much of Aux channel 2 **Aux 2** is added onto the current instrument, **Aux 2** does not contain any Audio FX by default. Both of the two aux sends are enabled by default for each instrument, and can be disabled individually. Audio is processed with Aux 1 then Aux 2. You can also apply audio effect(s) to one instrument only by adding Audio FX.
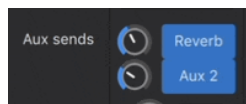
To show/hide an Aux send row (slot)

> Click the three dot icon in the upper right corner of the **Mixer** panel
> Hover over **View**
> Click **Aux send 1** and/or **Aux send 2**.
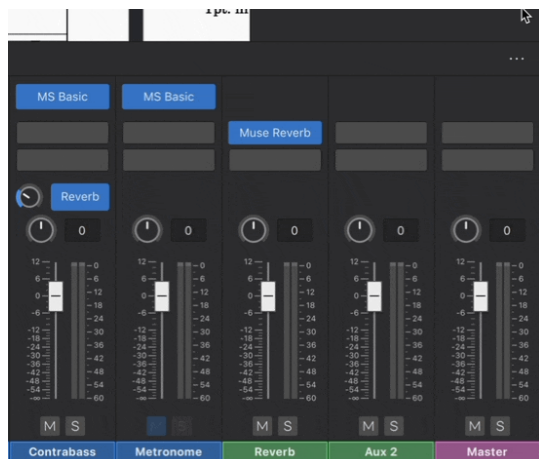
To disable an Aux send row (slot)

Make sure the Aux send is visible
Click **Reverb** to turn off Aux send 1 OR Click **Aux 2** to turn off Aux send 2.
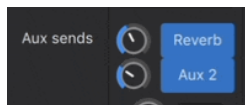
Aux channels

Aux channels are special channels to simplify audio FX application. You can set up audio FX(s) in one **Aux channel** and then apply them to multiple instruments.

There are up to two Aux channels in each score:

Aux 1: contains the **Muse Reverb** by default, but you can remove this and replace it with any Audio FX(s) you like.
Aux 2: is empty by default.

To show/hide Aux channels

By default, aux channels are hidden. To show/hide a aux channel:

Click the three dot icon in the upper right corner of the **Mixer** panel
Hover over **View**
Click **Aux channel 1** and/or **Aux channel 2**.
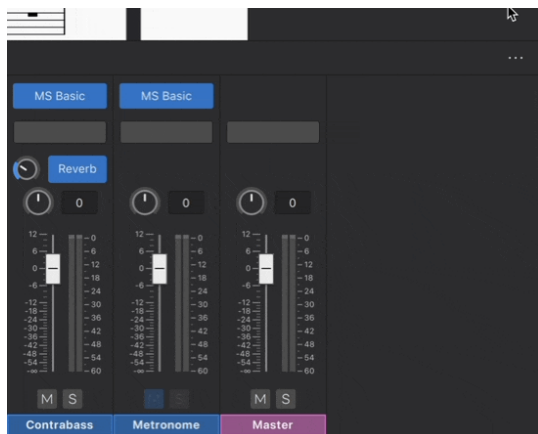
To add Audio FX to an Aux channel

The process is the same as adding Audio FX(s) to an instrument channel, see To add an Audio FX.

If there is only one Audio FXin an Aux Channel, the channel strip and its corresponding aux send are labelled by the name of the Audio FX. If there is more than one, they are labelled **Aux 1** and **Aux 2**. You may need to save and reopen the score to see the labels update.

To adjust an Aux channel's level

Aux channel strips have volume faders. This changes the volume of the effect across all channel strips with the corresponding aux send turned on. Think of this as setting the maximum volume of the effect(s) that an instrument channel can receive.

To apply the effect(s) of an Aux channel to an instrument

To adjust how much effect of an Aux channel come through on each instrument, use the knob in the corresponding **Aux sends** row (slot) on that instrument channel strip, see Aux Sends.

See also

Installing Muse Sounds

SoundFonts

MuseScore uses virtual instruments to create audio for playback. **SoundFont** files (.sf2, .sf3) are one of the supported formats . An sf2 or sf3 file contains all the audio data for one or more virtual instruments.

MuseScore comes packaged with its own native SoundFont, **MS Basic**, which contains most of the instrument sounds you need for score playback.

You can also add and use custom SoundFonts—many are available free online. See also the list in SoundFonts and SFZ files   (MS3 handbook).

Install a SoundFont

Once you've downloaded a SoundFont to your computer, there are two ways to install a SoundFont in MuseScore 4:

Drag and drop the SoundFont file into MuseScore 4.
Place the SoundFont file in the MS4 user directory named "SoundFonts".

Drag and drop installation

[Content on its way]

File directory installation

By default, MuseScore looks for SoundFonts at the location **[MuseScore4 Installation Folder]\SoundFonts**. So, by OS, the default locations are as follows:

Windows: **C:\Users*username*\Documents\MuseScore4\SoundFonts**.
macOS:
Linux: **~/Documents/MuseScore4/SoundFonts**.

You can also specify in which folder(s) on your computer MuseScore looks to find SoundFonts. If a SoundFont is installed in a recognized folder/directory, it will automatically be available in MuseScore.

First, specify the SoundFont directory in MuseScore 4:

Open Preferences (Mac: **MuseScore** > **Preferences** or shortcut `Cmd+;`. Windows: **Edit** > **Preferences**)
Select **Folders** (under **General**)
Click the **SoundFonts** folder icon
Click **Add directory** in the dialog that appears
Choose and **Open** the folder location where you want MuseScore to look for SoundFont files
Repeat steps 1-5 to add further directories (optional)
Click **OK** to finish. The specified directory (or directories) will appear in the **SoundFonts** text field.
Click **OK** in the **Preferences** dialog to confirm your selection.
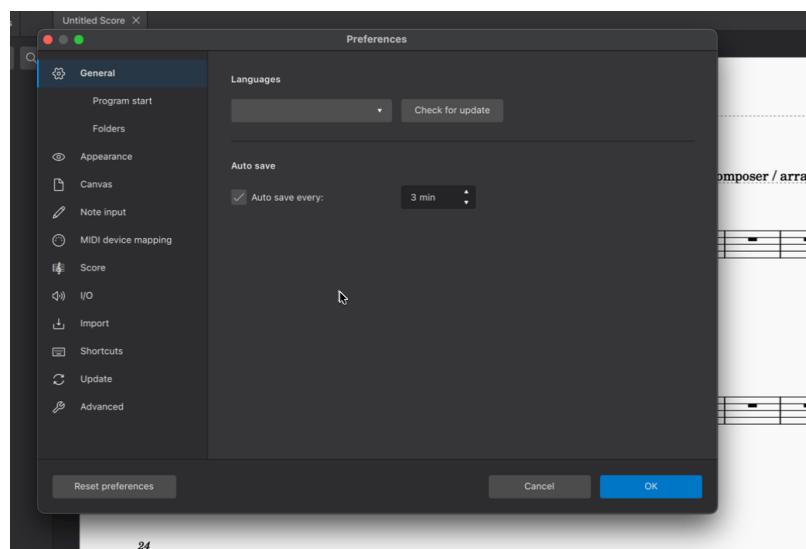
Once a SoundFont is installed, all you'll need to do is choose the SoundFont you want for each instrument in your score. To do this:

Open the Mixer
Hover over the plugin slot next to **Sound**
Click the dropdown arrow that appears
Hover over **SoundFonts**
Select the SoundFont you wish to assign to that particular instrument
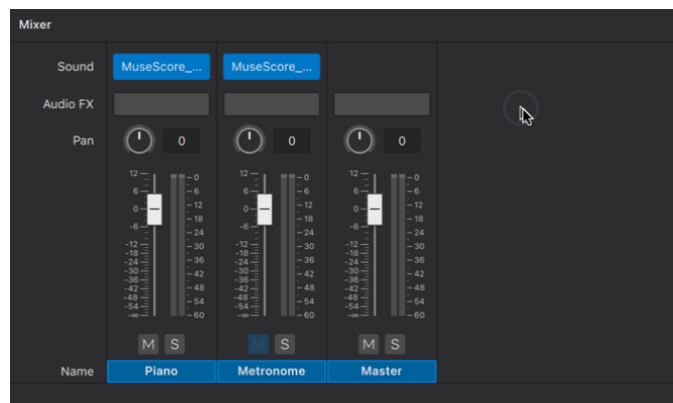
Repeat this process for each instrument. In most cases, MuseScore will automatically map instruments to their correct sounds in the specified SoundFont, as long as that SoundFont is using the correct MIDI instrument definitions.

Uninstall a SoundFont

To uninstall a SoundFont, simply open the folder where its file is installed and delete it.

Selecting sounds with a SoundFont

When you select a SoundFont for a given instrument, MuseScore uses the General MIDI   standard to automatically select the corresponding sound from within the SoundFont. However, this may not always be sufficient. The SoundFont in question might not be GM-compatible, or there might be multiple variants of a sound you wish to choose between, like fingered versus picked for electric bass.

When you select a SoundFont with only a single sound or only a single drum kit, MuseScore will use that. But for SoundFonts that represent collections of sounds, manual selection of individual sounds within a given SoundFont is currently not supported (as of Musescore 4.0   ). Therefore, if you need to select a sound for an instrument other than the one specified by General MIDI, you will need to employ a workaround:

You can use this special version of MS Basic   that provides all of the individual sounds and drum kits as separate soundfont files.

For other soundfonts, you can split them into individual sound files using a free tool such as sf2-split   or SF2 Splitter   . You can edit the individual files as needed—see Editing, below.

You can use a a VST sampler such as Sforzando   , FluidSynthVST   , or juicysfplugin

Editing Soundfonts

This is possible using 3rd party software such as Polyphone   . For more information, see also Soundfont, MIDI velocity and instruments.xml (Developer's Handbook).

A note on the Zerberus player and SFZs

Users of MuseScore 3.6 and earlier may be accustomed to using the Zerberus player, which supports the .sfz file format. In building a new system that now supports VST instruments, changes were required that necessitated the removal of the Zerberus player, as well as the Synthesizer   found in previous versions of MuseScore. Consequently, some functionality has been lost in this process, including the ability to map specific instrument sounds like *pizzicato* and *tremolo* to specific MIDI channels. Our highest priority in future releases of MuseScore 4 is to again support this functionality for VST, SoundFont and the *Muse Sounds* libraries. Users who rely extensively on mapping .sfz sounds to specific performance directions are advised to continue using earlier versions of MuseScore until we re-enable this capability in MuseScore 4. It is worth mentioning that the new systems we are planning will be much more flexible, easy to use and powerful than those found in MuseScore 3.

For those who wish to still use SFZ sounds in MuseScore 4, good alternatives would be the open source VST samplers, Sfizz   (Windows, Mac & Linux) or Sforzando   (Windows & Mac), both of which support SFZ playback.

See also

SoundFonts and SFZ files   (MS3 handbook)

Alternatives to soundfonts:

Muse Sounds
VSTi

Installing Muse Sounds

MuseScore 4 - Installing Our FREE Orchestral Plugin: Muse ...

Installation via Muse Hub

Muse Sounds is a library of sophisticated plugins that provide realistic playback for MuseScore.

Muse Sounds are installed using the Muse Hub application, which can be downloaded here on musescore.org   .

Once installed, Muse Hub can be opened by clicking the application icon in the menu bar (macOS) or system tray (Windows). Click **Get** under any sound you'd like to have in your library, and it will begin downloading and installing right away.

Muse Hub also contains a range of effects plugins. Download and install these from the **Effects** tab.

Once a plugin is fully downloaded, it will appear in the Mixer the next time you launch MuseScore.

Using Muse Sounds in MuseScore

Any Muse Sounds plugins you've downloaded will be automatically assigned to the appropriate instruments in your score.

You can tell MuseScore to always use available Muse Sounds plugins via the Playback Setup dialog.

> Go to **view → Playback setup**
> Select **Muse Sounds** in the **Profiles** section
> Leave **Set as default for new scores** checked if you want all future scores to also use Muse Sounds
> Click **OK**

The Muse Sounds playback profile will ensure that all Muse Sounds plugins will be assigned to every available instrument in your score. You can also manually assign a Muse Sounds plugin to a single instrument via the Mixer. This can be helpful for scores with more than one instrument, where you may wish to combine Muse Sounds plugins with other VSTs or Soundfonts.

> Go to **View → Mixer** to show the Mixer (Shortcut: `F10`)
> Hover over a plugin slot next to **Sound**
> Click the dropdown button that appears
> Navigate to **Muse Sounds** and select a sound from the desired library

Available sounds in Muse Sounds

Muse Sounds currently supports the following instruments:

Choir

> Sopranos
> Altos
> Tenors
> Basses

Strings

> Violins 1
> Violin 1 (Solo)
> Violins 2
> Violin 2 (Solo)
> Violas
> Viola (Solo)
> Violoncellos
> Violoncello (Solo)
> Contrabasses

Woodwinds

> Alto Flute
> Alto Sax
> Baritone Sax
> Bass Clarinet
> Bass Flute
> Bassoon
> Clarinet in Bb
> Clarinet in Eb
> Contrabass Flute
> Contrabassoon
> English Horn
> Flute 1
> Flute 2
> Oboe
> Piccolo
> Soprano Sax
> Tenor Sax

Brass

> French Horns a6
> French Horn
> Trumpets a4
> Trumpet
> Trombones a3
> Trombone
> Bass Trombone
> Cimbasso
> Tuba

Percussion

    Bass Drum
    Bell Tree
    Bongos
    Cabasa
    Castanets
    Claves
    Cowbell
    Crotales
    Field Drum
    Glockenspiel
    Gong
    Marimba
    Mark Tree
    Piatti
    Shaker
    Sleigh Bells
    Snare Drum
    Suspended Cymbal
    Taikos
    Tam-Tam
    Tambourine
    Timbales
    Timpani
    Toms
    Triangle
    Tubular Bells
    Vibraphone
    Wood Blocks
    Xylophone
    Metronome

Keys

    Celesta
    Grand Piano
    Harpsichord
    Soft Piano
    Upright Piano
    Hammond Organ
    Suitcase Piano
    Wurly 200A
    Dream Piano

Harp

    Harp

Any instruments not supported by Muse Sounds will remain assigned to MS Basic by default.

Capo playback (MS 4.0.2 and before)

This page shows you how to apply Capo markings in MuseScore versions prior to MuseScore 4.1. See Applying capos for the new method of applying capos in MuseScore 4.1 and above.

Adding a capo marking to your score (before MuseScore 4.1)

MuseScore allows you to transpose the playback of a staff without changing the music notation (written pitch). This simulates the effect of a capo on a guitar (or other stringed instrument).

Adding a capo to a single staff

    Add staff text to the note/rest from which you want capo playback to start;
    Open the Staff text properties dialog.
    Click on the **Capo Settings** tab;
    Check the "Capo Settings" checkbox, and set "Capo fret" to the fret number you wish to apply the capo at (each fret increases the pitch by a semitone);
    Click OK to apply your changes;
    Edit the wording of the text as desired.

Adding a capo to a staff / tablature pair

Use one of the following:

    If linked, add the capo to the standard staff—not the tablature.
    If unlinked, add the capo to both staves.

Note: Any capo playback settings apply until overridden by a subsequent Staff text with "Capo Settings" enabled.

See also

Swing playback

Overview

Music in "straight" time is performed strictly as written in the score. By contrast, music in **swing** time interpets straight eigth and sixteenth notes as triplet pairs, with the first of the pair being roughly twice as long as the second. This gives the rhythm a characteristic bouncy feel—often asssociated with Jazz music. e.g.

Swung eighths:

Swung sixteenths:

Rather than notate swung music exactly as performed, it is accepted convention to write it in straight time and simply provide the written indications "Swing and "Straight" at appropriate points in the score.

Swing markings have a playback effect on the score. The default swing ratio is 60% (3:2) but you can vary this to suit the feel of the piece if required.

Adding a swing or straight marking to your score

To add a swing marking

    Click on the destination note or rest
    Click on the **Swing** text in the **Tempo** palette.

Alternatively, you can drag and drop the **Swing** text from the palette onto the note or rest in question.

You can, if desired, add a [visual swing marking](#)   as well.

To add a straight marking

    Click on the destination note or rest
    Click on the **Straight** text in the **Tempo** palette.

Note that the above markings are a form of [System text](#) and therefore the playback effect is applied to all staves in the system. If you want swing to apply to only one staff you can use [Staff text](#) instead: see below.

Changing swing playback

Adjust the type and degree of swing

    Right-click on the **Swing** text in the score and select **System text properties**.

    In the **Swing settings** tab edit the "Swing" and "Swing ratio" as required.
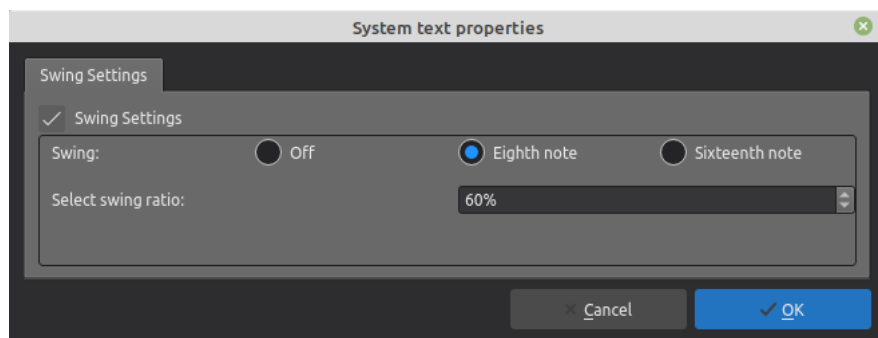
Note: Swing settings are found in both system and staff text.

Apply swing to one staff only

If you want swing to apply to only one staff in the system, use staff text instead:

Select the destination note or rest.
Click on the **Staff text** indication in the **Text** palette.
Edit the text to create the desired performance indication
Right-click on the text and select **Staff text properties**. Alternatively select the text object and in the **Properties** panel, click on the **Staff text properties** button.
In the **Swing settings** tab edit the "Swing" and "Swing ratio" as required.

Working with MIDI

This section needs to be organized / written by someone with an understanding of how to use MIDI input/output in MuseScore 4. If JACK is still supported, it could be discussed here too, or in a new page.

Working with VST and VSTi

Introduction to VST

Virtual Studio Technology (**VST**) is an audio plug-in software interface licensed under Steinberg that integrates software synthesizers and effects units into digital audio workstations. Most VST plugins are either instruments (VSTi) or effects (VSTfx); VSTi includes software simulation emulations of well-known hardware synthesizers and samplers.

Installing VSTs

In MuseScore 4, any compatible VST plugins installed on a **Windows** or **MacOS** computer will automatically be made available in the Mixer, where you can easily configure playback settings for all instruments in a score. Note that **Linux** is not yet supported (but see Linux VST3   ).

After installing new VSTs on your computer, you may to restart Musescore 4 to make them visible in the mixer. If this doesn't work, you can *force* a re-scan of VSTs by deleting previous cache settings before restarting. On Windows 10 the relevant file can be found at

C:\Users\ [your user] \AppData\Local\MuseScore\MuseScore4\known_audio_plugins.json

MuseScore 4 directly supports VST3 plugins *only* (not VST1 or VST2) because of licensing restrictions. If you are using VST1 or VST2, see How to use older, non-VST3 plugins in MuseScore 4   .

Note: Sound settings in the Mixer are saved with the score, but not to the program.

Enabling, disabling, removing and replacing VST plugins

See Mixer: Audio FX and Sounds.

See also

Alternatives to VST instruments:

Muse Sounds
SoundFonts

File management

Opening and saving scores

MuseScore in Minutes: Publishing and Saving to the Cloud

[▶]

Overview

You can store your files either locally on your computer, or online ("in the cloud") to your musescore.com account. If you don't have an account yet, you can create one for free here   .

In the case of scores saved online, MuseScore also keeps local copies on your computer (in a folder called **Cloud Scores** in your user "MuseScore 4" folder), so you can work on them even without an active internet connection. Every time you save a score that was opened from the **Cloud Scores** folder, the online copy at musescore.com is also updated. This system protects both the integrity of your local cloud scores while offering all the advantages of

online storage, including backup, viewing and playback across multiple devices, ease of sharing, commenting, and much more.

Please note that, if you download one of your cloud scores from musescore.com and open it in MuseScore, the file you download and open will be a new, locally-stored file, separate from the file in the cloud.

Opening a score

There are a few ways to open a score in MuseScore 4.

File → Open

This triggers your file browser, allowing you to select and open scores stored on your computer or storage device (dialog will vary according to operating system).
Windows/Linux: `Ctrl+O`. MacOS: `Cmd+O`

File → Open recent

This option allows you to choose from a list of recently-opened scores.

Home tab → Scores

This window displays your most recently modified scores. Double-click on any score thumbnail to open it. You can also click **Open other…** to access locally-stored scores from your file browser.

Scores that have been saved to the cloud are indicated with a cloud icon. Unlike local scores, it is not possible to rename or otherwise modify a cloud file from your computer's file browser. You can, however, do this from the score manager on musescore.com. Go directly to your score manager by clicking the **Score manager (online)** button in the Scores window.

It is possible to open multiple scores simultaneously. In this case, MuseScore opens each score in a separate window.

Import file formats

Apart from its <u>native format files</u>   (*.mscz and *.mscx), MuseScore can also open <u>MusicXML</u>   , <u>compressed MusicXML</u>   and <u>MIDI</u>   files, as well as a variety of files in other <u>formats</u>   . You can customize various import settings by going to **Preferences → Import**.

Saving a score

To save a score:

1. Go to **File**
2. Choose any of the following options:

Option	What it does	Shortcut
Save	Saves current score to new file, or saves changes to a previously saved file	Windows/Linux: `Ctrl+S`, MacOS: `Cmd+S`
Save As...	Saves current score to new file	Windows/Linux: `Shift+Ctrl+S`, MacOS: `Shift+Cmd+S`
Save a copy...	Saves current score to new file, but allows you to continue editing the original file	None
Save selection...	Saves selected measures to new file	None
Save to cloud...	Saves score as a new file on musescore.com	None

The first time you use any of the above **save** options, a dialog opens asking you "How would you like to save", then offering you the options of "Save to the cloud" or "Save to computer".

To disable this window, click **Don't show again** to ensure you only see your operating system's native save dialog for future saves.

Save to computer

The **Save to computer** option triggers your operating system's "Save" dialog, allowing you to save the score as a (compressed) MuseScore file, **.mscx**.

There is also an option in your "Save" dialog to save files in an uncompressed format ("Uncompressed MuseScore folder"). This option creates a new folder on your computer that contains a MuseScore (.mscx) file, as well as a thumbnail image file (.png) and any relevant .json, .mss, and .xml files.

Save to the cloud

Scores saved online (to the cloud) appear in the program's **Home: Scores** tab with a cloud symbol at the corner of the file icon. A copy is also automatically saved on your computer in the **Cloud scores** folder in your user "MuseScore 4" folder.

To save a score to the cloud, choose **Save to the cloud**. This triggers a dialog with the following options:

Name

This is the name under which your score will be identifiable on musescore.com

Visibility

Private allows you to save changes to your score without others seeing your work online.
Public makes your score visible to everyone on musescore.com.

When you're ready, click **Save**. The first time you do this, MuseScore will ask whether you also want to upload your audio to musescore.com. You can choose from the following options:

Never

Each time you press **Save**, only the score itself will be uploaded to musescore.com. Online playback will use the MS Basic soundfont.

Always

Each time you press **Save**, MuseScore will generate an .mp3 file to upload together with your score. Score playback on musescore.com will sound the same as it does in your desktop app (including audio from the *Muse Sounds* library, if installed, or any VST instruments and effects you've added)

Every *x* **saves**

MuseScore will only generate and upload an .mp3 file at a save interval you specify.

These settings only affect your private cloud scores. You will only be asked to specify this setting once, however you can change this setting at any time by going to **Preferences → Cloud**. Once you click **OK**, MuseScore will confirm your score has been saved. Your file will be accessible from both the **Home** tab as well as the score manager on musescore.com.

File export

Overview

This chapter covers the saving of MuseScore scores in formats other than the native ones (*.mscz and *.mscx), such as MusicXML, MIDI, MP3, PDF, PNG etc.

Exporting your score

To export a score:

Select **File→Export**
Choose a **Format** from the dropdown list
Select the **parts to export** by checking/unchecking the appropriate boxes on the left of the dialog
If you want to combine all parts in one file click on the radio button titled **All parts combined in one file**
Click **Export...**

File formats

Graphical formats

PDF is a universal format for text, pictures, music and so on. Virtually every computer will have a dedicated PDF reader; if not a PDF can also be opened using web browsers such as Firefox etc.

Use this format when you want to generate music scores for other musicians to read from. PDF scores can also be printed to hard copy if desired.

PNG is a compressed graphical format suitable for embedding in all kinds of documents. **SVG** enables you to preserve a higher graphical resolution and allows you to resize in situ.

Audio formats

MuseScore enables you to export audio files in a number of compressed formats: **MP3** is the most well-known, but **OGG** and **FLAC** also have their advantages. These formats combine the benefit of relatively small size with high audio quality.

If you want uncompressed audio go for the **WAV** option. File size will be considerably larger than the uncompressed audio options.

MIDI format

MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface), a well-established music industry standard, encodes the notes and instrumentation of the original score and can be played back using a PC's media player, or other suitable computer app, as long as the right software (or hardware) instruments are available to realize it.

You should be aware that the sound generated by a MIDI file is dependent on the virtual instruments used to play it back, so it is likely to differ in sound quality from the original. Also it does not preserve score formatting, voicing etc.

Score formats

MusicXML is a universal standard which aims to preserve as much of the original score formatting as possible. It can be opened in any modern score writer. MuseScore 4 uses MusicXML 4.0.

Braille is a plain text format used by musicians who are blind, either on a electronic braille display, or embossed onto paper as raised dots. MuseScore's braille files are bar-over-bar format, conforming to the North American Music Braille Code 2015. The files use ASCII rather than Unicode characters, meaning that sighted users who open these files in a text editor will just see ordinary font symbols; you would need to install a braille font in order to see the braille as dots.

Customizing export settings

{To be added]

MIDI import

> MIDI import panel not currently implemented, making this section largely moot

Working with MusicXML files

Overview

Cleaning up an imported score

> resetting stems
> removing breaks
> resetting text
> import settings

Preparing a score for export

> gotchas - manual adjustments, misuse of element types, images, ...
> export settings

Backup and recovered files

> TBD

Project properties

Overview

The **Project Properties** dialog contains *meta tags*. Meta tags are snippets of descriptive text that can be used by Musescore, such as "Work title," "Composer," "Copyright" etc.

Changing score properties

To change a score property

> From the menu, choose **File→Project Properties...**
> Click in the required field
> Enter text or edit existing text

When you create a score, a title block is generated on the first page, and the value of some metatags is genearted automatically (see Setting up your score). After the score is created, the text in the title block is no longer linked to the value of the metatags in **Project Properties**.

Every score is created with the following predefined metatags. The third column shows the code to use the meta tag in Headers and Footers.

Property	Value when Score is created	Code to access from headers and footers
Work title	Same text as "Title" on the first page of the score (see Setting up your score).	$:workTitle:
Arranger		$:arranger:
Composer	Same text as "Composer" on the first page of the score(see Setting up your score).	$:composer:
Copyright	Same text as "Copyright" on the first page of the score(see Setting up your score). (if you need a copyright symbols, copy/paste this: ©).	$C
Creation Date	Date of the score creation. This could be empty, if the score was saved in test mode (see Command line usage). Edit manually if you are Beethoven's ghost.	$D
Lyricist	Same text as "Lyricist" on the first page of the score(see Setting up your score).fragment="title"]).	$:lyricist:
Translator	Empty	$:translator:
Platform	The computing platform the score was created on. This might be empty if the score was saved in test mode.	
Source	May contain a URL if the score was downloaded from or Publish to MuseScore.com.	
Musescore Version	The version of MuseScore the score was last saved with	
File Path	The score file's location on your Computer.	

Adding new properties

To add another metatag, click on the New button. Fill in the "New tag name" field and press OK;
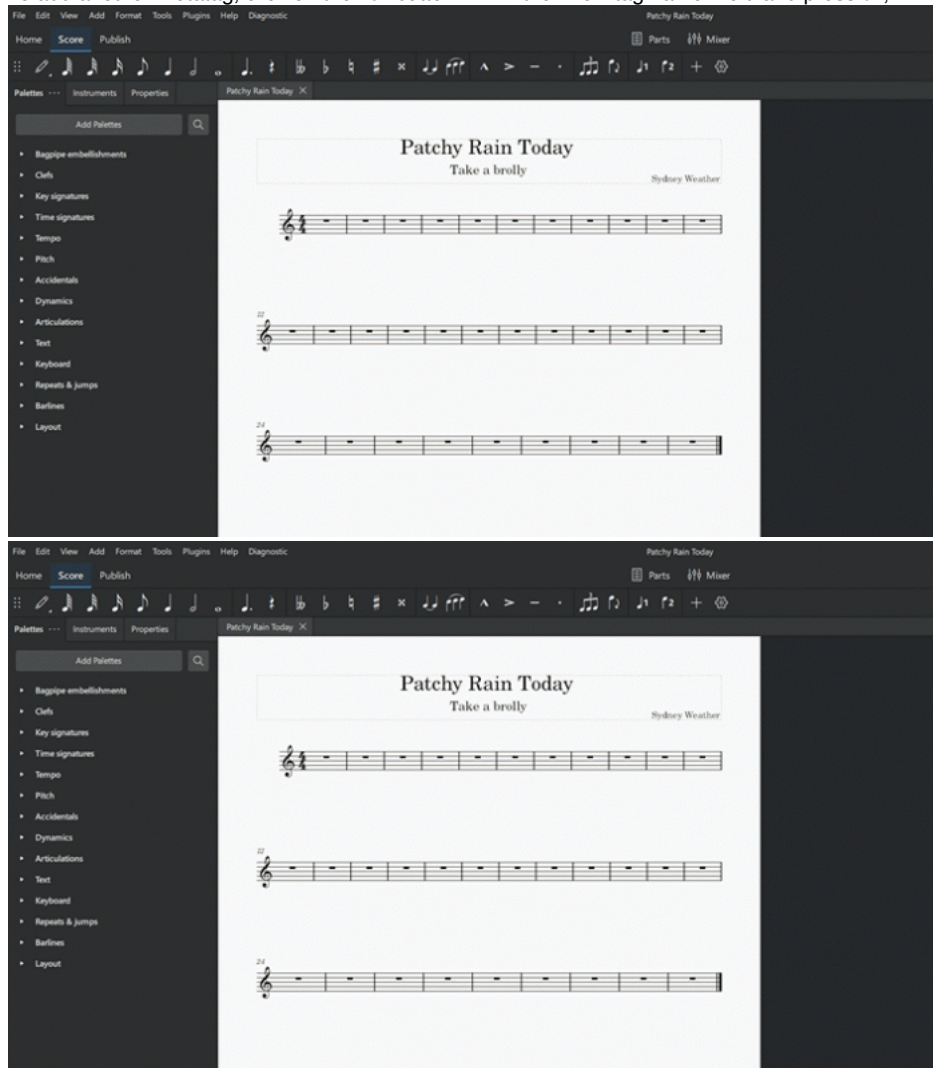
Any tag name can be used. For example, the following metatags were used in previous versions of Musescore:

> **movementNumber**:
> **movementTitle**:
> **originalFormat**:
> **poet**:
> **workNumber**:

To delete a tag click on the trashcan symbol. The predefined *meta tags* cannot be deleted.

Accessing project properties in your score

To show the content of one or more metatags in a header or footer for your score or part:

> Make sure that the correct score or instrument part is the active tab;
> From the menu, select **Format→Style...→Header, Footer**
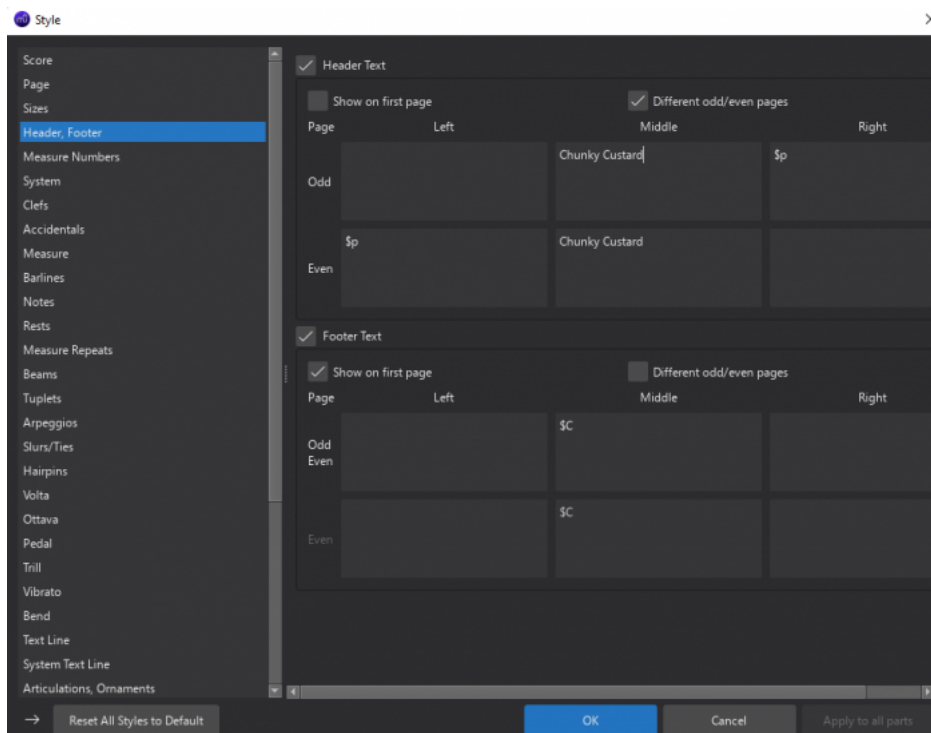
If you hover with your mouse over the Header or Footer text region, a list of macros will appear, showing their meaning, as well as the existing meta tags and their content.

Add tags (e.g. `$:workTitle:`, note the leading and trailing colons) and macros (e.g. `$M`, no colons) to the appropriate boxes, as required;
Changes are directly visible in the score window. Make corrections to the dialog if required;
If an instrument part is in the active tab, click `Apply to all parts`, if you want to apply these settings to all the score parts;
Click `OK` to assign the header or footer and exit the dialog.

In this list **$I** and **$i** are only available in parts, because the **partName** score property is only defined there, unless, as described above, it got manually added to the main score properties. Not shown in this tooltip, but available likewise, is the `$:partName:` meta tag.

Metatags for parts

Every **part** additionally has the following meta tag, generated and filled on <u>Parts</u>:

> **partName**: The name of the part as given on part creation (which is also used to fill the corresponding part name text in the top vertical frame—*be aware that later changes to one are not reflected in the other*). It can be accessed for use in Headers and Footers using $l, $i, or S:partName:.

To change a part name:

> click on parts
> double click on the part name or click on the "..." menu to the right of the part and choose *Rename*
> edit the part name

This meta tag is not present in the main score and thus is not available for use in its header/footer or in an added part name box in the top vertical frame, unless manually added as a new tag to its score properties.

Score comparison

> not currently implemented

Publish to musescore.com

Overview

Scores can be saved online using a free or subscription account with Musescore.com. This allows you to access your scores from anywhere; you also have the option of whether to keep them private or allow them to be shared. You can choose to save scores *only* online, or publish any of your locally saved files online.

When saving online Musescore creates an MP3 file of the audio of your score which may take a long time. To modify this behaviour see <u>Managing publishing preferences</u>.

Creating a MuseScore account

> Go to <u>www.musescore.com</u>
> Click "Log in" - it's at the top right of the window
> On the dialog that pops up click "Create an account" - it's at the bottom right of the dialog that popped up
> If your browser is already logged in to a Google, Facebook or Apple account you can sign up with any of those services by clicking on the appropriate button
> If you prefer to sign in with your email address, fill in the remaining fields, check "I'm not a robot"
> Click "Create new account"

Saving only to Musescore.com

The first time you save a score you will be asked if you want to publish the score to Musescore.com.
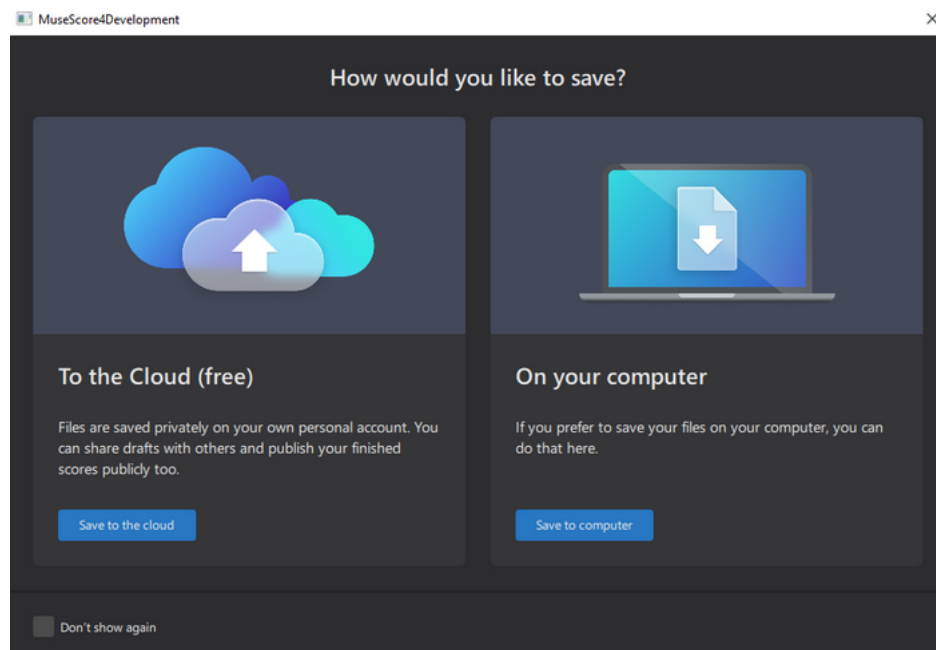
If you are not already logged in to Musescore.com, or you do not have an account, you will need to login.
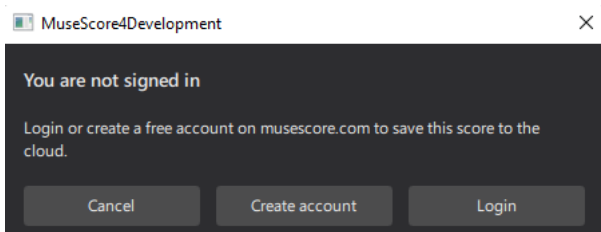
You will be asked if the score should be Public, Unlisted, or Private.
* **Public** scores are visible to everyone on the internet.
* **Unlisted** scores are visible to everyone on the internet, but do not show up in search results. Only people with the link will be able to find an unlisted score.
* **Private** scores are visible only to you. You must be logged in to your musescore.com account to view.

If you're publishing a score that you've already published at least once, you can choose to replace the existing online score or to publish as a new online score.
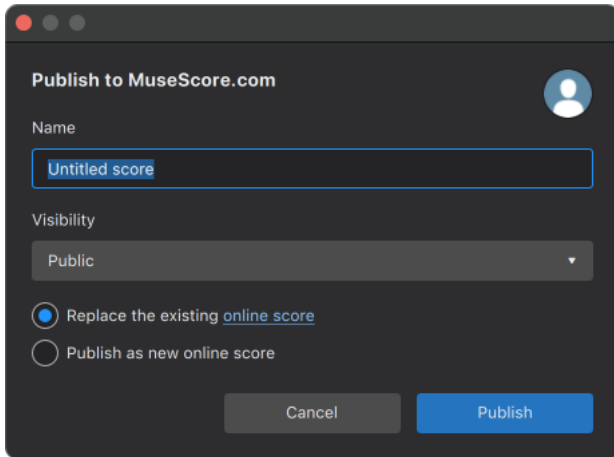
You will be asked whether you also want to upload your audio to musescore.com. See Managing publishing preferences
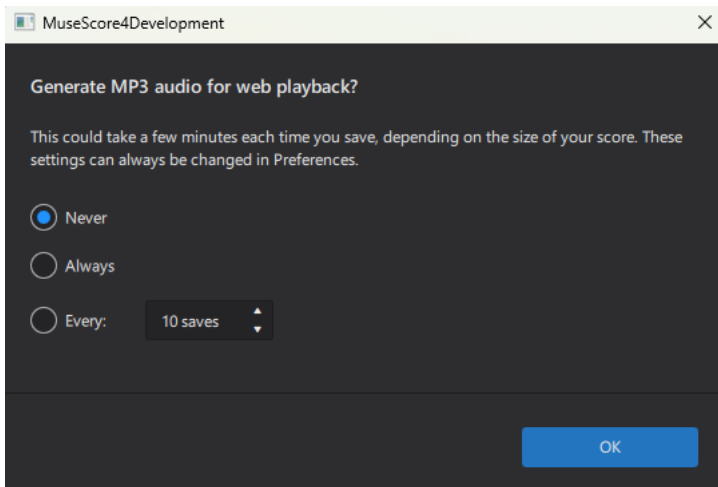
Musescore will tell you when it is ready. Large scores may take some time to generate the MP3 file.
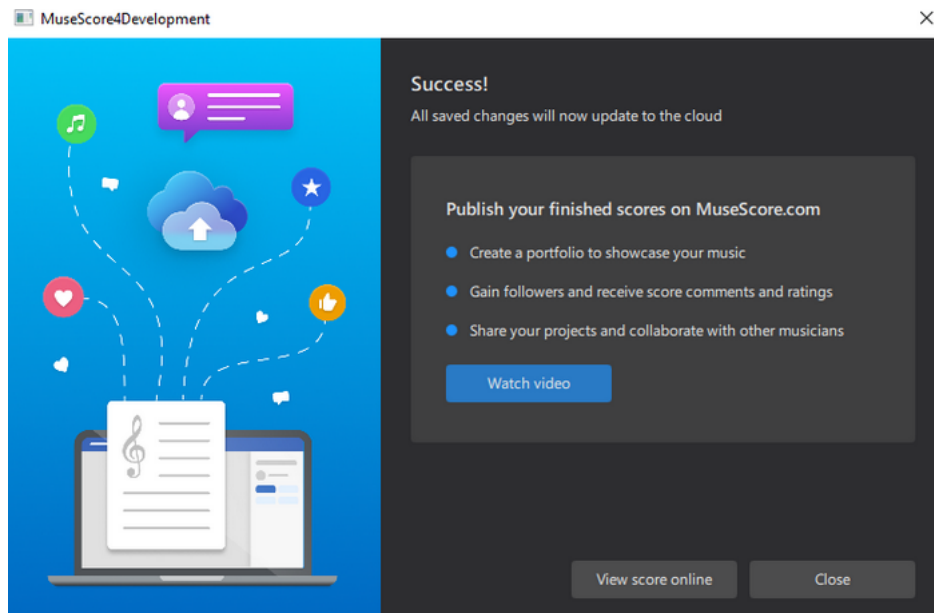
Publish locally saved scores

Scores saved on your computer can also be published at Musescore.com but are not automatically updated.

To publish a score at Musescore.com
* Click the Publish Tab (below the menu bar)
* Click Publish to Musescore.com
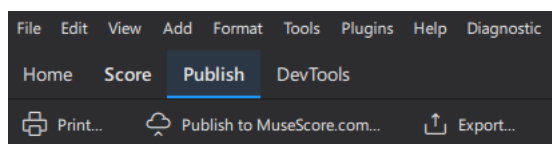
Visibility in score manager

Scores published only at Musescore.com are marked with a "cloud" symbol in the Musescore score manager.
MuseScore also keeps local copies on your computer (in a folder called **Cloud Scores** in your user "MuseScore 4" folder), so you can work on them even without an active internet connection.
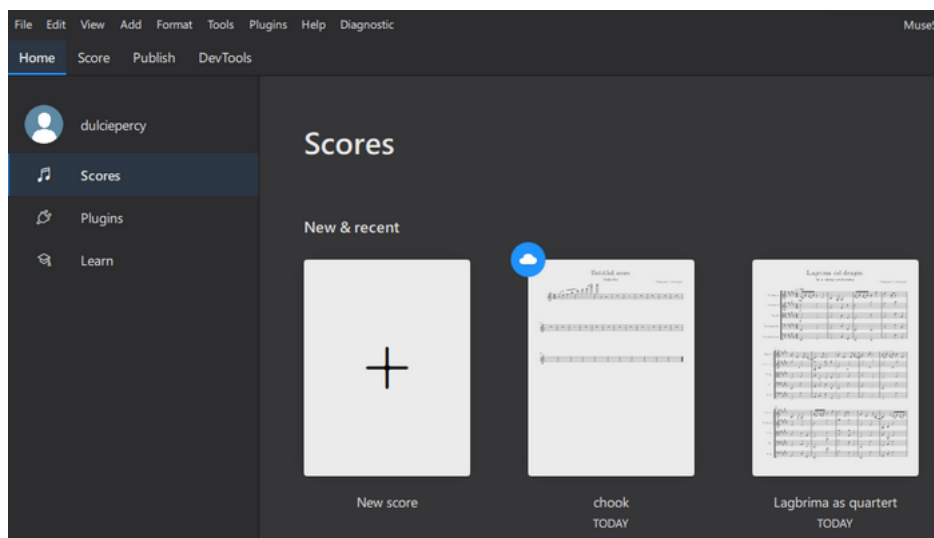
Manage generation of mp3 during upload

When saving online Musescore creates an MP3 file of the audio of your score. Depending on the score length, and number of instruments in the score, this might take a long time. To control when this happens:

From the menu, choose **Edit→Preferences...→Cloud**

Under "Generate MP3 audio for private cloud scores" choose **Never**, **Always**, or **Every** (X saves)

Never

Each time you press **Save**, only the score itself will be uploaded to musescore.com. Online playback will use the MS Basic soundfont.

Always

Each time you press **Save**, MuseScore will generate an .mp3 file to upload together with your score. Score playback on musescore.com will sound the same as it does in your desktop app (including audio from the *Muse Sounds* library, if installed, or any VST instruments and effects you've added)

Every *x* saves

MuseScore will only generate and upload an .mp3 file at a save interval you specify.

If you chose "Every X saves" choose the number of saves
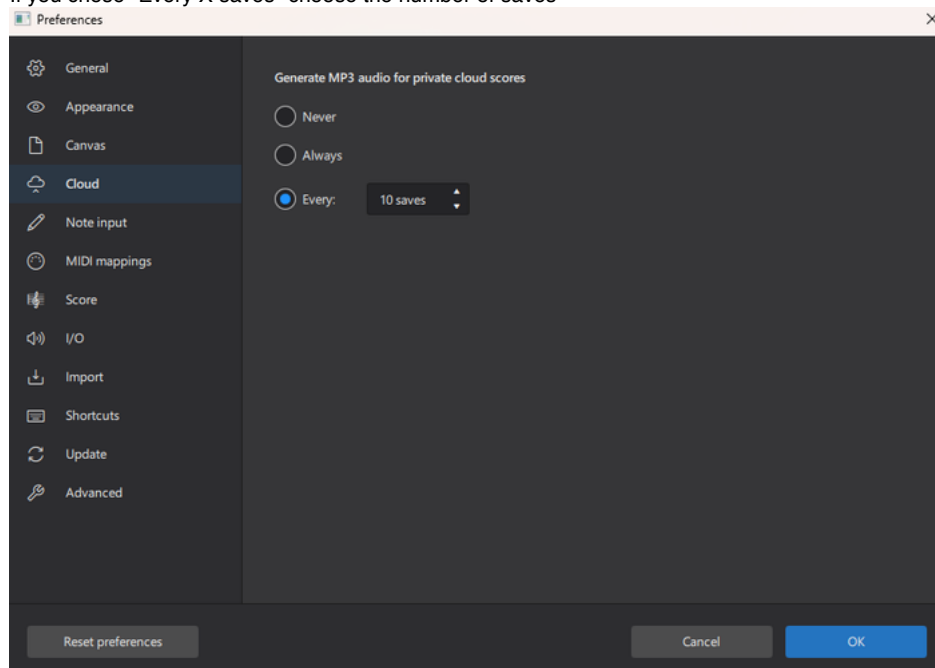
Share on Audio.com

Overview

As of MuseScore 4.1 in addition to publishing your score on musescore.com , you can share the MP3 audio generated by MuseScore to audio.com , a free service from Muse Group. On audio.com, you can keep your uploads private, share them publicly, and make your tracks available to download.

To share audio from your score on Audio.com:

In MuseScore, click the **Publish** tab
Click the **Share on Audio.com…** button in the toolbar
You will be prompted to sign in to your audio.com account or create one if you're not already signed in
Enter a title, choose whether the score should be Public or Unlisted, then click **Share**
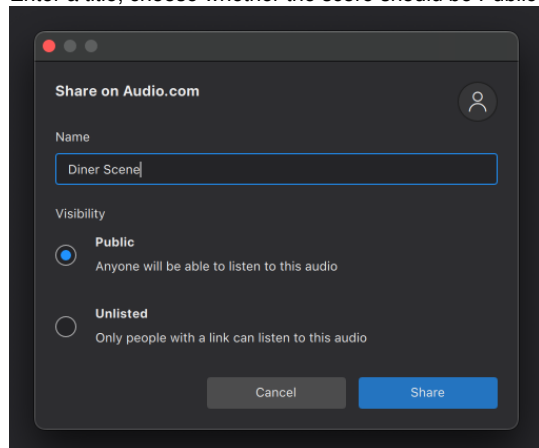
The audio will export and audio.com will open in your browser.
From here, you can change the title, URL, category, tags, description, sharing permissions, and downloading permissions of your track.

Customization

Language

Overview

MuseScore works with your "System" language (the one used for most programs, and generally depending on your country and the language settings of the PC, or account).

Change language

From the menu, select **Edit→Preferences...** (Mac: **MuseScore→Preferences...**);

In the General tab, select the desired language from the drop-down list in the Language section:
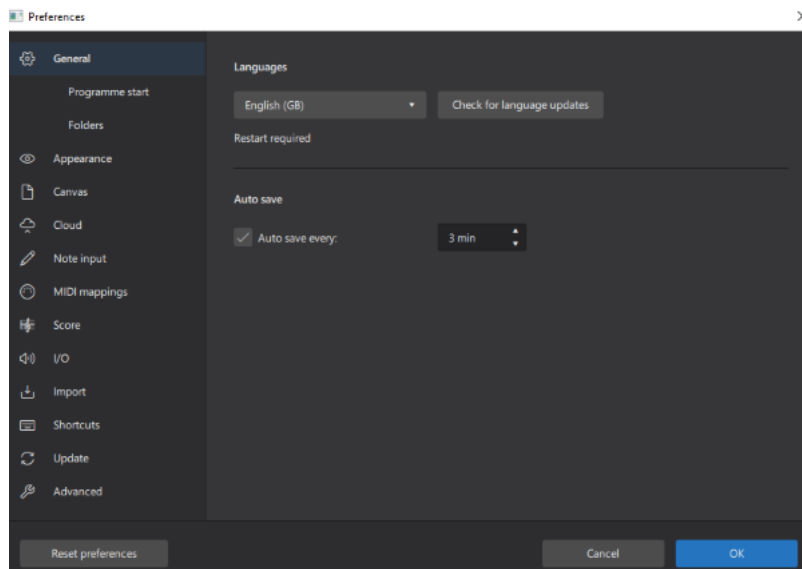
Update translations

To update translation(s):

From the menu, select **Edit→Preferences...** (Mac: **MuseScore→Preferences...**);
In the General tab, click on the Check for language updates button;

A message which displayed if the version of your language is already up to date, if not then the update will be downloaded.

To complete this step, a restart of the application is required.

See also

Helping with translations

Appearance

Overview

To change the appearance of MuseScore

From the menu, select **Edit→Preferences...** (Mac: **MuseScore→Preferences...**);

In the Appearance tab, select the desired option described below.
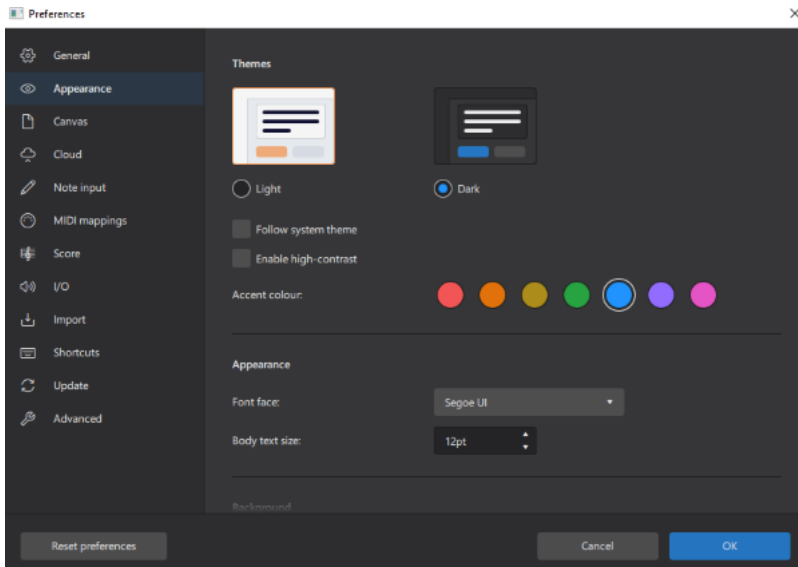
Theme and Colors

The following options are available to change the colors of MuseScore. The display changes immediately so options can be tested without closing the dialog. The changes apply to all open instances of MuseScore (see Windows)

Light or Dark Theme
Select "Follow system theme" if you want MuseScore to change themes from light to dark, or dark to light, when the system theme changes
Enable high-contrast
Accent color options
Background - the color behind the score (not the color of palettes and other program items) can be changed to a solid color or a Wallpaper image.
Paper - the color of the score itself can be changed to a solid color or a Wallpaper image.
Invert Score - swaps the color of score elements with the Paper color

Fonts

To change the font face and text size for Menu and Palette elements:

From the menu, select **Edit→Preferences...** (Mac: **MuseScore→Preferences...**);
In the `Appearance` tab, select the font options.

This does not affect and text elements in the score.

Toolbars and windows

Overview

Windows, toolbars and panels within MuseScore can be repositioned, and you can choose which elements you want to see displayed in them.

The default appearance of MuseScore is shown below:
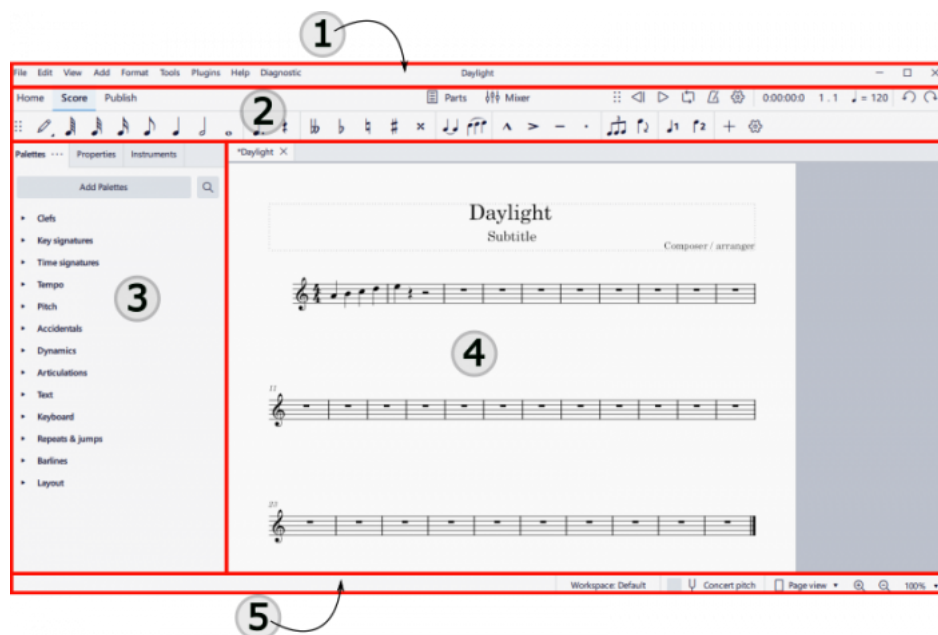
The Menu bar
Toolbars
Palette, Property and Instrument Panels
The Score Window
The Status Bar

Toolbars

Showing and hiding toolbars

To show or hide the playback controls, note input toolbar, or the **status bar**:

> Select **View→Toolbars...** and check/uncheck the applicable element.

Rearranging toolbars

To change the position of either the **note input** or **playback** toolbars, click on and hold the six dots at the left of the toolbar, then drag and drop it to the desired location. The toolbar *can* be left free floating, but in the case of the **note input** toolbar, you can also drag and drop it either to the left or the bottom edge of the program window—a blue rectange then appears to show you that you can drop the toolbar at that location to **redock** it. The **playback** toolbar can only be redocked in its *default* position.

Customizing contents of toolbars

To select the icons that you want on view in the **note input** or **playback** toolbars, click on the gear icon to the right of the toolbar:

⚙

In the case of the **note input** toolbar, this reveals a dropdown list from which you can hide or display the various icons by clicking on the eye symbol to the left of each one (closed=hidden, open=displayed).

In the case of the **playback toolbar**, uncheck or check the various options in the gear menu to hide or display the corresponding elements.

Windows and Panels

Docking and undocking panels

To undock and move one of the **side panels** (Palette, Instruments, Properties, or Selection filter), click on the three dots on the tab, select the **Undock** option, then drag the undocked panel to the desired position.

You *can* leave the panel free-standing but there are also dock positions at the top and right hand edges of the document window—a blue rectangle appears to show that you can drop the panel to redock it at that location.

In a similar way, you can redock the free panel back to the sidebar:

> To display half-length at the top of the sidebar, drag and drop the free panel to the top left of the sidebar.
> To display half-length at the bottom of the sidebar, drag and drop the free panel to the bottom left of the sidebar.
> To display full-length in the sidebar, drag and drop the free panel to the center left of the side.

You can also redock the free panel in its original position by clicking on the three dots on the tab, and selecting **Dock**.

Panels such as the Mixer or virtual Piano can be undocked if desired, by dragging them into position or clicking on the three dots icon and selecting **Undock**. To redock, click on the three dots icon and select **Dock**.

The undocked **mixer** can be resized by dragging the edges inwards or outwards.

Customizing contents of panels

To choose which elements to display within the mixer or the virtual Piano, click on the three dots, select **View** and uncheck or check the applicable options.

To customize the palettes area, see Customization: Palettes.

Templates and styles

Overview

Templates

A template is simply a standard MuseScore file (*.mscz) stored in a dedicated "Templates" folder.

There are two kinds of templates:

> **System templates**. These are supplied with the installed version of MuseScore and cover a wide variety of solo instruments and ensembles of all genres. When you open the New Score dialog, these template files appear under various categories in the **Create from Template** tab.

> **User templates**. These are created by the user and stored in the folder marked **Templates** in the **MuseScore4** folder of your **Documents** directory. When you open the **New score** dialog, user templates are displayed in the **My Templates** section of the **Create from template** tab.

Style files

A **style** file is a file containing customized style settings for all musical and text objects in a score. You can save an existing set of styles or import one using the **Format** menu (see below).

Templates

Saving your score as a template

> Create a specimen score containing the style settings, workspace, and title text that you wish to use in the template.
> Make sure that the **Title** text of the score describes the template accurately, as this is the wording that will appear in the **My templates** section of the New score dialog.
> Save the score in the "Template" folder of your MuseScore 4 user directory.

Creating a score from your template

> Open the New Score dialog
> Choose a template file in the "My templates" section of the **Create from template** tab.
> Complete the rest of the New Score dialog and exit.

Style files

Saving style settings for your score to a file

> Create a score with the style settings that you wish to save and reuse in future scores
> Select **Format→Save style**, and save the Style file in the "Styles" folder of your MuseScore 4 user directory.

Loading style settings into your score from a file

> Open the score to which you want to apply the saved style settings
> Select **Format→Load style**, and select the applicable style file.

Setting a default style for your score

[to be added]

Palettes

This chapter shows you how to customize the palettes and their contents; the application of palette items is already covered in Using the palettes (Basics).

Adding palettes

To add a preset or a custom palette, see Using the palettes: Adding more palettes.

Hiding and deleting palettes

To hide a *preset* palette, right click on it and select **Hide palette**. The palette is returned to the **Add Palettes** list (see above). Note that preset palettes cannot be deleted.

To hide or delete a *custom* palette you have created earlier, right click on it and select **Hide/Delete palette**. Then follow the instructions in the dialog.

Changing the order of palettes

To change the order of a palette simply drag it up or down and drop it onto the desired position in the palettes list.

Customizing palette contents

Palettes can be populated with items from the **Master Palette** (Shift+F9 or **View**→**Master palette**), or from an opened score.

Score items, when added to a palette, are saved with their custom properties.

To enable/disable editing for a particular palette:

> Right-click on the palette name; or click on the ellipsis symbol (three dots) to the right of the palette name
> Check/uncheck **Enable editing**.

Adding elements from the Master Palette window

To add a symbol from the **Master Palette** to a palette in the **Palettes** panel:

> Open the desired palette, make sure editing is enabled (see <u>Customizing palette contents</u>).
> Open the **Master Palette** (Shift+F9 or **View**→**Master palette**)
> Drag and drop symbols from the relevant section(s) of the Master palette to the ordinary palette as required.

If you have created a **custom palette**, there is another way to access the **Master Palette**:

> Open the custom palette
> Click on the **More** button
> Use the arrow buttons to navigate through the various sections of the Master Palette window
> Select on a symbol
> Press **Add to my custom** to add it to the custom palette
> To exit the dialog, click once more on the **More** button, or press Escape, or click outside the **More** section.

Adding elements from an opened score

To add score elements to a palette:

> Open the desired palette
> Press Ctrl+Shift, then drag and drop the score element to the open palette.

Moving elements between palettes

Symbols can be moved from one open palette to another simply by dragging and dropping them.

Deleting elements from palettes

To delete an element in a palette, right-click on it and select **Delete**. In the case of *preset* palettes, the element will be moved to the **More** section. For *custom* palettes you are offered a choice of **Hide** (send element to the More section) or **Delete permanently**.

Resetting a palette

To reset a palette to its default state, right-click on the palette name, or click on the ellipsis symbol (three dots) to the right of the palette name; then select **Reset palette**.

Note: A custom palette will be reset to an empty palette when this function is applied.

Saving and loading palettes

To *save* a palette, right-click on the palette name, or click on the ellipsis symbol (three dots) to the right of the palette name; then select **Save palette**.

To *load* a previously-saved palette, right-click on a palette name, or click on the ellipsis symbol (three dots) to the right of the palette name; then navigate to the desired palette, select it and click **Open**.

Palettes menu

To access display options for the palettes area, click on the ellipsis symbol (three dots) to the right of the **Palettes** title at the top of the palettes area.
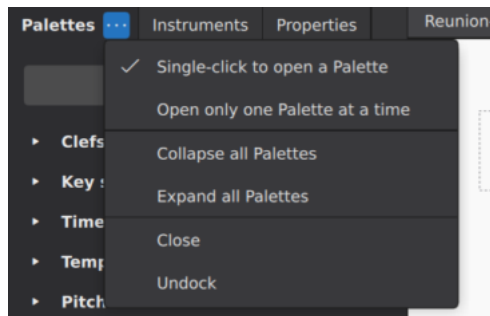
Single-click to open a Palette: Uncheck this if you want to open a palette by double-clicking.
Open only one Palette at a time: if this option is checked, when you open a palette other palettes automatically close.
Collapse all Palettes: Closes all open palettes.
Expand all Palettes: Opens all palettes.
Close: Palettes panel closes.
Undock: Undocks the palettes panel. See also Windows and panels.

Palette properties

To access *Palette properties* for individual palettes, right-click on the palette name, or click on the ellipsis symbol (three dots) to the right of the palette name; then select **Palette properties**.

This allows you to rename the palette, create a visible grid to separate elements, adjust width and height of cells, and change the scale and offset of the symbols.

See also

Using the palettes for info about how to apply palette items.
Other symbols for more info about the **Symbols palette**.

Workspaces

Overview

A **workspace** includes the visible palettes, toolbars and assorted open panels. You can customize the appearance of all aspects of a workspace, and create new ones.

Creating a new workspace

To create a new workspace:

Click on the current **workspace name** in the **status bar** below the document window. Alternatively, select **View→Workspaces→Configure workspace**
Click on **Create new workspace**
Fill in the name of the workspace, and uncheck any elements in the list below whose present arrangement you do not wish to be remembered.
Click **Select** to close the dialog.

To customize the palettes display and contents, see palettes.
To customize the display of toolbars and panels, see Toolbars and panels.

Deleting a workspace

Click on the current **workspace name** in the **status bar** below the document window. Alternatively, select **View→Workspaces→Configure workspace**
Select the workspace to be deleted
Click on the **trash** icon at the top of the dialog.

Switching between workspaces

Click on the current **workspace name** in the **status bar** below the document window.
In the resulting dialog box, click on the desired workspace
Press **Select**.

Alternatively

Select **View→Workspaces→Configure workspace**
Click on the desired workspace in the menu.

Keyboard shortcuts

Overview

MuseScore commands can be accessed via the main menus, toolbars, Properties panel or context menus, or by using **keyboard shortcuts**.

Pre-existing keyboard shortcut are shown alongside the commands in the **main menus** or **context** (right-click) **menus**, or by hovering the mouse pointer over an icon in a **toolbar**.

Alternatively, you can view a list of commands and their shortcuts in **Edit→Preferences→Shortcuts**. This is also the place where you can create a shortcut or change an existing one. To locate a command in the list either scroll down the alphabetical order, or enter an appropriate keyword in the "Search shortcut" box.

Defining a shortcut

To define a new shortcut, or change an existing one:

> From the menu bar, select **Edit→Preferences→Shortcuts**
> Find the relevant command in the alphabetical list; use the **Search** box if needed.
> Either double-click the relevant entry, or select the entry and click **Define…**
> With the **Enter shortcut sequence** dialog open, press and hold the sequence of keys on your keyboard to use as the new shortcut.
> Press **Save** (or **Cancel** to exit the dialog without changing anything).

Resetting and clearing shortcuts

To reset a shortcut to its default:

> From the menu bar, select **Edit→Preferences→Shortcuts**
> Find the relevant command in the alphabetical list; use the **Search** box if needed.
> Select the entry and press **Reset to default**.

To clear (i.e. delete) a shortcut:

> From the menu bar, select **Edit→Preferences→Shortcuts**
> Find the relevant command in the alphabetical list; use the **Search** box if needed.
> Select the entry and press **Clear**.

Note: You can select more than one shortcut if needed. Press the Shift key to establish a continuous range, or the Ctrl key for a list.

Importing and exporting shortcuts

To save the existing shortcuts or import a list of your own:

> From the menu bar, select **Edit→Preferences→Shortcuts**
> Press **Export** to save the list; or **Import** to load a new shortcut list.

Preferences

To edit **Preferences** (the appearance and general behavior of MuseScore), go to **Edit→Preferences**.

These are divided logically into sections (see below); notice also the three buttons at the bottom of the window:

> **Reset preferences**: Click on this to reset all preferences to their default values.
> **Cancel**: Exit preferences without changing anything.
> **OK**: Exit preferences and apply any user changes.

General

You can specify your language, and autosave interval in "General". See also Language.

"Program start" allow you to choose what, if any, score you want displayed in the edit window after launching.

"Folders" allows you to customize locations for any user folders (though it's a good idea to leave them at default to start with if you are a new user).

Appearance

Choose between light and dark options, and specify the accent color; there is also a high contrast option for visually impaired users.

The system font is also the default for the MuseScore UI, but you can alter this if desired—and the font-size.

You can set the score paper/color option and the background. For visually impaired there is an "Invert score" option which inverts the score colors (white to black and vice versa)

Canvas

Specify the default zoom level of the score, and the mouse zoom precision. Also how you want your score pages to scroll, and the degree of precision of mouse selection.

Note input

Here you can choose how MuseScore sounds when you click on or advance to a note. And whether you want notes outside the playback range of an instrument to be colored.

MIDI device mapping

Here you can map certain keys of your external MIDI keyboard to certain actions. For example to start or stops score playback, set note-entry duration, and so on.

Score

Customize the default order of instruments in your score.

I/O

Specify your audio and MIDI input devices.

Import

Specify the way that MuseScore handles the import of MusicXML and MIDI files. You can supply a style file covering every aspect of the score.

Shortcuts

See Keyboard shortcuts for more information.

Update

By default MuseScore automatically checks for updates when online. You can turn this off by unchecking the box.

Advanced

A number of specialized options can be accessed here, such as voice color, and palette behavior.

Plugins

Overview

A MuseScore **plugin** is a small piece of software that adds extra functionality to the program. A range of plugins is installed automatically with the program: you can view these in the **Home: Plugins** tab.

Additional plugins can be downloaded from the MuseScore website at musescore.org→Download→Plugins   . See Installing a plugin (below) for further details.

N. B.: No warranty of any kind is provided for plugins. Either download from a trusted author or double-check the code yourself.

(How to create a plugin - to be added)

Installing a new plugin

> Download the necessary plugin files and move them to MuseScore's plugins folder.
> Open MuseScore and go to Home/Plugins
> Find the name of the plugin, select it, and click 'Enable'

Updating existing plugins

Updating works the same way as installing, but remember to remove the files from the previous version to avoid duplicate plugins!

Enabling and disabling plugins

In order to not overcrowd the plugins tab, you can enable/disable specific plugins as you please.

Running a plugin

You can run enabled plugins in the **Score** tab, from the 'Plugins menu. You can also set shortcuts to run specific plugins, in the **Home: Plugins** tab.

Pre-installed plugins

> brief info on each

See also

> Plugins
> MuseScore 3 features not implemented in MuseScore 4

Support

Getting help

See https://musescore.org/support

Overview

documentation
support questions
bug reports
See https://github.com/musescore/MuseScore/issues
feature requests

Learn

tutorials
classes

Forums

Issue tracker

?

GitHub

?

Mastering MuseScore

Revert to factory settings

Overview

why to do this
what it does
disclaimers

Reverting to factory settings from the menu

Reverting to factory settings from the command line

Windows

macOS

Linux

Troubleshooting

Installation issues

Score issues

Display issues

Sound issues

Printing issues

Known incompatibilities

Appendix

Command line usage

PLEASE NOTE: This page was copied from the <u>equivalent page</u>   in the MuseScore 3 Handbook. If you find an option that no longer works in MuseScore 4, please report it on GitHub and add a note next to that option on this page. If the option was intentionally removed from MuseScore 4 then please delete it from this page.

MSCORE(1) — General Commands Manual Page

NAME

mscore, **MuseScore4** — MuseScore 4 sheet music editor

SYNOPSIS

You can launch MuseScore from the command line by typing

```
mscore [options] [filename …] (Mac and Linux/BSD/Unix)
musescore [options] [filename …] (Linux/BSD/Unix)
mscore4portable [options] [filename …] (Linux AppImage)
MuseScore4.exe [options] [filename …] (Windows)
```

[*options*] and [*filename*] are optional. For this to work the MuseScore executable must be in %PATH% (Windows) resp. $PATH (Mac and Linux). If it is not, see <u>Revert to factory settings</u>   for detailed instructions on how and where to find and execute the MuseScore executable from the command line on the various supported platforms.

A more detailed synopsis follows:

mscore [**-deFfhliLmnOPRstvw**]
[**-a** | **--use-audio** *driver*]
[**-b** | **--bitrate** *bitrate*]
[**-c** | **--config-folder** *pathname*]
[**-D** | **--monitor-resolution** *DPI*]
[**-d** | **--debug**]
[**-E** | **--install-extension** *extension file*]
[**-e** | **--experimental**]
[**-F** | **--factory-settings**]
[**-f** | **--force**]
[**-h** | **-?** | **--help**]
[**-I** | **--dump-midi-in**]
[**-i** | **--load-icons**]
[**-j** | **--job** *file.json*]
[**-L** | **--layout-debug**]
[**-M** | **--midi-operations** *file*]
[**-m** | **--no-midi**]
[**-n** | **--new-score**]
[**-O** | **--dump-midi-out**]
[**-o** | **--export-to** *file*]
[**-P** | **--export-score-parts**]
[**-p** | **--plugin** *name*]
[**-R** | **--revert-settings**]
[**-r** | **--image-resolution** *DPI*]
[**-S** | **--style** *style*]
[**-s** | **--no-synthesizer**]
[**-T** | **--trim-image** *margin*]
[**-t** | **--test-mode**]
[**-v** | **--version**]
[**-w** | **--no-webview**]
[**-x** | **--gui-scaling** *factor*]
[**--diff**]
[**--long-version**]
[**--no-fallback-font**]
[**--raw-diff**]
[**--run-test-script**]
[**--score-media**]
[**--score-meta**]
[**--highlight-config**]
[**--score-parts**]
[**--score-parts-pdf**]
[**--score-transpose**]
[**--source-update**]
[**--template-mode**]
[*file ...*]

DESCRIPTION

MuseScore is a Free and Open Source WYSIWYG cross-platform multi-lingual music composition and notation software, released under the GNU General Public Licence (GPLv3).

Running **mscore** without any extra options launches the full graphical MuseScore program and opens any files specified on the command line.

The options are as follows:

-a | **--use-audio** *driver*

Use audio driver: one of **jack**, **alsa**, **portaudio**, **pulse**

-b | **--bitrate** *bitrate*

Set MP3 output bitrate in kbit/s

-c | **--config-folder** *pathname*

Override configuration and settings directory

-D | **--monitor-resolution** *DPI*

Specify monitor resolution (override autodetection)

-d | **--debug**

Start MuseScore in debug mode

-E | **--install-extension** *extension file*

Install an extension file; soundfonts are loaded by default unless **-e** is also specified

-e | **--experimental**

Enable experimental features, such as layers

-F | **--factory-settings**

Use only the standard built-in presets ("factory settings") and delete user preferences; compare with the **-R** option (see also Revert to factory settings   )

-f | **--force**

Ignore score corruption and version mismatch warnings in "converter mode"

-h | **-?** | **--help**

Display an overview of invocation instructions (doesn't work on Windows)

-I | **--dump-midi-in**

Display all MIDI input on the console

-i | **--load-icons**

Load icons from the filesystem; useful if you want to edit the MuseScore icons and preview the changes

-j | **--job** *file.json*

Process a conversion job (see *EXAMPLES* below)

-L | **--layout-debug**

Start MuseScore in layout debug mode

-M | **--midi-operations** *file*

Specify MIDI import operations file (see *EXAMPLES* below)

-m | **--no-midi**

Disable MIDI input

-n | **--new-score**

Start with the New Score wizard regardless whether it's enabled or disabled in the user preferences

-O | **--dump-midi-out**

Display all MIDI output on the console

-o | **--export-to** *file*

Export the given (or currently opened) file to the specified output *file*. The file type depends on the extension of the filename given. This option switches to "converter mode" and avoids the graphical user interface.

-P | **--export-score-parts**

When converting to PDF with the **-o** option, append each part's pages to the created PDF file. If the score has no parts, all default parts will temporarily be generated automatically.

-p | **--plugin** *name*

Execute the named plugin

-R | **--revert-settings**

Use only the standard built-in presets ("factory settings") but do not delete user preferences; compare with the **-F** option

-r | **--image-resolution** *DPI*

Set image resolution for conversion to PNG files. Default: 300 DPI (actually, the value of "Resolution" of the PNG option group in the <u>Export tab of the preferences</u>)

-S | **--style** *style*

Load a style file first; useful for use with the **-o** option

-s | **--no-synthesizer**

Disable the integrated software synthesizer

-T | **--trim-image** *margin*

Trim exported PNG and SVG images to remove whitespace surrounding the score. The specified *margin*, in pixels, will be retained (use 0 for a tightly cropped image). When exporting to SVG, this option only works with single-page scores.

-t | **--test-mode**

Set test mode flag for all files, includes **--template-mode**

-v | **--version**

Display the name and version of the application without starting the graphical user interface (doesn't work on Windows)

-w | **--no-webview**

Disable the web view component in the Start Center

-x | **--gui-scaling** *factor*

Scale the score display and other GUI elements by the specified *factor*; intended for use with high-resolution displays

--diff

Print a conditioned diff between the given scores

--long-version

Display the full name, version and git revision of the application without starting the graphical user interface (doesn't work on Windows)

--no-fallback-font

Don't use Bravura as fallback musical font

--raw-diff

Print a raw diff between the given scores

--run-test-script

Run script tests listed in the command line arguments

--score-media

Export all media (except MP3) for a given score as a single JSON document to stdout

--highlight-config

Set highlight to svg, generated from a given score

--score-meta

Export score metadata to JSON document and print it to stdout

--score-parts

Generate parts data for the given score and save them to separate mscz files

--score-parts-pdf

Generate parts data for the given score and export it as a single JSON document to stdout

--score-transpose

Transpose the given score and export the data to a single JSON file, print it to stdout

--source-update

Update the source in the given score

--template-mode

Save files in template mode (e.g. without page sizes)

MuseScore also supports the automatic Qt command line options .

Batch conversion job JSON format

The argument to the **-j** option must be the pathname of a file comprised of a valid JSON document honoring the following specification:

The top-level element must be a JSONArray, which may be empty.

Each array element must be a JSONObject with the following keys:

`in`: Value is the name of the input file (score to convert), as JSONString.
`plugin`: Value is the filename of a plugin (with the `.qml` extension), which will be read from either the global or per-user plugin path and executed before the conversion output happens, as JSONString. Optional, but at least one of `plugin` and `out` *must* be given.
`out`: Value is the conversion output target, as defined below. Optional, but at least one of `plugin` and `out` *must* be given.

The conversion output target may be a filename (with extension, which decided the format to convert to), as JSONString.

The conversion output target may be a JSONArray of filenames as JSONString, as above, which will cause the score to be written to multiple output files (in multiple output formats) sequentially, without being closed, re-opened and re-processed in between.

If the conversion output target is a JSONArray, one or more of its elements may also be, each, a JSONArray of two JSONStrings (called first and second half in the following description). This will cause part extraction: for each such two-tuple, all extant parts of the score will be saved *individually*, with filenames being composed by concatenating the first half, the name (title) of the part, and the second half. The resulting string must be a valid filename (with extension, determining the output format). If a score has no parts (excerpts) defined, this will be silently ignored without error.

Valid file extensions for output are:

`flac`
    Free Lossless Audio Codec (compressed audio)
`metajson`
    various score metadata (JSON)
`mid`
    standard MIDI file
`midi`
    standard MIDI file
`mlog`
    internal file sanity check log (JSON)
`mp3`
    MPEG Layer III (lossy compressed audio)
`mpos`
    measure positions (XML)
`mscx`
    uncompressed MuseScore file
`mscz`
    compressed MuseScore file
`musicxml`
    uncompressed MusicXML file
`mxl`
    compressed MusicXML file
`ogg`
    OGG Vorbis (lossy compressed audio)
`pdf`
    portable document file (print)
`png`
    portable network graphics (image) — Individual files, one per score page, with a hyphen-minus followed by the page number placed before the file extension, will be generated.
`spos`
    segment positions (XML)
`svg`
    scalable vector graphics (image)
`wav`
    RIFF Waveform (uncompressed audio)
`xml`
    uncompressed MusicXML file

See below for an example.

ENVIRONMENT

`SKIP_LIBJACK`
    Set this (the value does not matter) to skip initialization of the JACK Audio Connection Kit library, in case it causes trouble.
`XDG_CONFIG_HOME`
    User configuration location; defaults to `~/.config` if unset.
`XDG_DATA_HOME`
    User data location; defaults to `~/.local/share` if unset.

Note that MuseScore also supports the normal Qt environment variables such as `QT_QPA_GENERIC_PLUGINS`, `QT_QPA_PLATFORM`, `QT_QPA_PLATFORMTHEME`, `QT_QPA_PLATFORM_PLUGIN_PATH`, `QT_STYLE_OVERRIDE`, `DISPLAY`, etc.

FILES

`/usr/share/mscore-4.0/` contains the application support data (demos, instruments, localization, system-wide plugins, soundfonts, styles, chords, templates and wallpapers). In the Debian packages, system-wide soundfonts are installed into `/usr/share/sounds/sf2/`, `/usr/share/sounds/sf3/` or `/usr/share/sounds/sfz/`, respectively, instead.

The per-user data (extensions, plugins, soundfonts, styles, templates) and files (images, scores) are normally installed into subdirectories under `~/MuseScore4/` but may be changed in the configuration. Note that snapshot, alpha and beta versions use `MuseScore4Development` instead of `MuseScore4` in all of these paths.

`$XDG_CONFIG_HOME/MuseScore/MuseScore4.ini` contains the user preferences, list of recently used files and their locations, window sizes and positions, etc. See above for development version paths.

`$XDG_DATA_HOME/data/MuseScore/MuseScore4/` contains updated localization files downloaded from within the program, plugin information, cached scores, credentials for the *musescore.com* community site, session information, synthesizer settings, custom key and time signatures and shortcuts. See above for development version paths.

EXAMPLES

Convert a score to PDF from the command line

```
mscore -o 'My Score.pdf' 'My Score.mscz'
```

Run a batch job converting multiple documents

```
mscore -j job.json
```

This requires assumes a file `job.json` exists in the current working directory with content similar to the following:

```
[
    {
        "in": "MyScore1.mscz",
        "out": "MyScore1.pdf"
    },
    {
        "in": "MyScore2.mscz",
        "plugin": "colornotes.qml",
        "out": [
            "MyScore2-notecolors.pdf",
            "MyScore2-notecolors.svg"
        ]
    },
    {
        "in": "MyScore3.mscz",
        "out": [
            "MyScore3.pdf",
            "MyScore3.musicxml",
            "MyScore3.mid",
            [
                "MyScore3 (",
                " part).pdf"
            ]
        ]
    }
]
```

If `MyScore3.mscz` contains excerpts (instrumental parts) then the syntax above would cause files like "`MyScore3 (Violin part).pdf`" to be generated alongside the conductor's PDF and MusicXML files, as well as a MIDI file with the full orchestral sound. If `MyScore3.mscz` has no excerpts defined then only the conductor's PDF, MusicXML, and orchestral MIDI files will be generated, while the request for part PDFs is silently ignored.

MIDI import operations

The attached `midi_import_options.xml` is a sample MIDI import operations file for the **-M** option.

DIAGNOSTICS

The **mscore** utility exits 0 on success, and >0 if an error occurs.

SEE ALSO

fluidsynth(1), midicsv(1), timidity(1), qtoptions(7)

https://musescore.org/handbook

      Online Handbook, full user manual

https://musescore.org/forum

      Support Forum

https://musescore.org/en/node/278582

      Reverting to factory settings (troubleshooting)

https://github.com/musescore/MuseScore/issues

Project Issue Tracker — Please check first to if the bug you're encountering has already been reported. If you just need help with something, then please use the support forum   instead.

http://doc.qt.io/qt-5/qguiapplication.html#supported-command-line-optio…

Documentation of automatic Qt command line options

STANDARDS

MuseScore attempts to implement the following standards:

MusicXML 3.1 (score interchange format)
SF2 (SoundFont 2.01)
SF3 (SoundFont with OGG Vorbis-compressed samples)
SFZ (Sforzato soundfont)
SMuFL (Standard Music Font Layout 1.20)

HISTORY

MuseScore was split off the MusE sequencer in 2002 and has since become the foremost Open Source notation software.

AUTHORS

MuseScore is developed by **MuseScore BVBA** and others.

This manual page was written by *mirabilos* <tg@debian.org   >.

CAVEATS

The automatic Qt command line options are removed from the argument vector before the application has a chance at option processing; this means that an invocation like `mscore -S -reverse` has no chance at working because the `-reverse` is removed by Qt first.

BUGS

MuseScore does not honor */etc/papersize*.

Probably some more; check the project's bug tracker (cf. *SEE ALSO*).

All keyboard shortcuts

On macOS, make the following substitutions:

Replace `Ctrl` with `Cmd` (or ⌘)
Replace `Alt` with `Option` (or ⌥)
Replace `Home` with `Fn+Left`
Replace `End` with `Fn+Right`
Replace `PgUp` with `Fn+Up`
Replace `PgDn` with `Fn+Down`
Add `Fn` with function keys

Keyboard Map

Click for full resolution. Print Friendly PDF version
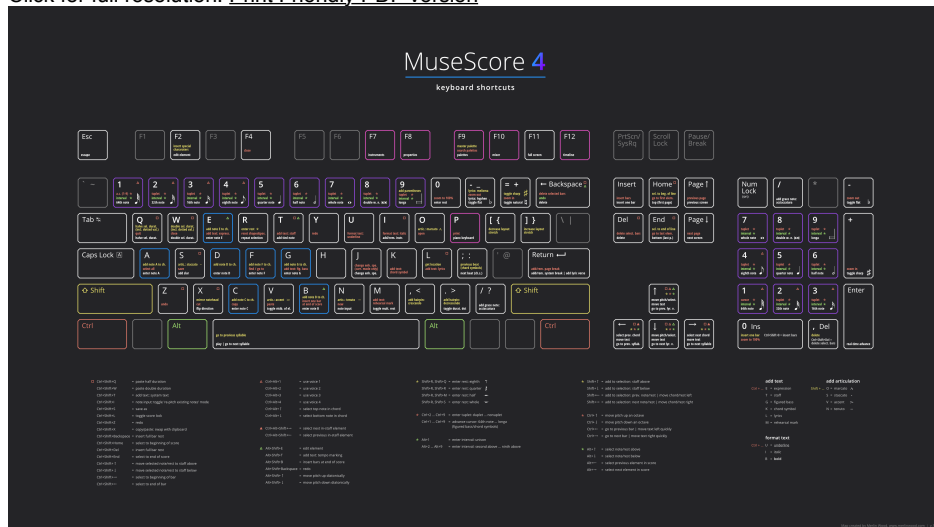
Navigation

Page navigation

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Zoom in	Ctrl+=	Cmd+=
Zoom out	Ctrl+–	Cmd+–
Zoom to 100%	Ctrl+0	Cmd+0
Go to first element in score	Ctrl+Home	Cmd+Fn+Left
Go to last element in score	Ctrl+End	Cmd+Fn+Right
Jump to next screen	PgUp	Fn+Up
Jump to previous screen	PgDn	Fn+Down
Jump to top of first page	Home	Fn+Left
Jump to bottom of last page	End	Fn+Right
Jump to next page	Ctrl+PgUp	Cmd+Fn+Up
Jump to previous page	Ctrl+PgDn	Cmd+Fn+Down
Find / Go to	Ctrl+F	Cmd+F
Accessibility: get location	Shift+L	Shift+L
Show/hide timeline	F12	Fn+F12

Score navigation

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Select next chord	Right	Right
Select previous chord	Left	Left
Go to next measure	Ctrl+Right	Cmd+Right
Go to previous measure	Ctrl+Left	Cmd+Left
Select next element in score	Alt+Right	Option+Right
Select previous element in score	Alt+Left	Option+Left
Select next in-staff element	Ctrl+Alt+Shift+Right	Cmd+Option+Shift+Right
Select previous in-staff element	Ctrl+Alt+Shift+Left	Cmd+Option+Shift+Left
Select note/rest above	Alt+Up	Option+Up
Select note/rest below	Alt+Down	Option+Down
Select top note in chord	Ctrl+Alt+Up	Cmd+Option+Up
Select bottom note in chord	Ctrl+Alt+Down	Cmd+Option+Down
Go to top staff	Alt+Shift+Up	Option+Shift+Up
Go to bottom staff	Alt+Shift+Down	Option+Shift+Down

Note input

General

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Note input: toggle note input mode	N	N
Note input: toggle 're-pitch existing notes' mode	Ctrl+Shift+I	Cmd+Shift+I
Note input: toggle 'insert' mode	Ctrl+I	Cmd+I
Show/hide piano keyboard	P	P
Use voice 1	Ctrl+Alt+1	Cmd+Option+1
Use voice 2	Ctrl+Alt+2	Cmd+Option+2
Use voice 3	Ctrl+Alt+3	Cmd+Option+3
Use voice 4	Ctrl+Alt+4	Cmd+Option+4

Duration

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Set duration	1 − 9	1 − 9
Set duration: 64th note	1	1
Set duration: 32nd note	2	2
Set duration: 16th note	3	3
Set duration: 8th note	4	4
Set duration: quarter note	5	5
Set duration: half note	6	6
Set duration: whole note	7	7
Set duration: double whole note	8	8
Set duration: longa	9	9
Toggle duration dot	.	.
Enter tuplet	Ctrl+2 − Ctrl+9	Cmd+2 − Cmd+9
Enter tuplet: duplet	Ctrl+2	Cmd+2
Enter tuplet: triplet	Ctrl+3	Cmd+3
Enter tuplet: quadruplet	Ctrl+4	Cmd+4

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Enter tuplet: quintuplet	Ctrl+5	Cmd+5
Enter tuplet: sextuplet	Ctrl+6	Cmd+6
Enter tuplet: septuplet	Ctrl+7	Cmd+7
Enter tuplet: octuplet	Ctrl+8	Cmd+8
Enter tuplet: nonuplet	Ctrl+9	Cmd+9
Add tied note	T	T
Halve selected duration	Q	Q
Double selected duration	W	W
Halve selected duration (includes dotted values)	Shift+Q	Shift+Q
Double select duration (includes dotted values)	Shift+W	Shift+W
Insert full measure rest	Ctrl+Shift+Del	Cmd+Shift+Del

Pitch

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Enter note	A — G	A — G
Enter note A	A	A
Enter note B	B	B
Enter note C	C	C
Enter note D	D	D
Enter note E	E	E
Enter note F	F	F
Enter note G	G	G
Add note to chord	Shift+A — Shift+G	Shift+A — Shift+G
Add note A to chord	Shift+A	Shift+A
Add note B to chord	Shift+B	Shift+B
Add note C to chord	Shift+C	Shift+C
Add note D to chord	Shift+D	Shift+D
Add note E to chord	Shift+E	Shift+E
Add note F to chord	Shift+F	Shift+F
Add note G to chord	Shift+G	Shift+G
Enter interval	Alt+1 — Alt+9	Option+1 — Option+9
Enter interval: unison	Alt+1	Option+1
Enter interval: second above	Alt+2	Option+2
Enter interval: third above	Alt+3	Option+3
Enter interval: fourth above	Alt+4	Option+4
Enter interval: fifth above	Alt+5	Option+5
Enter interval: sixth above	Alt+6	Option+6
Enter interval: seventh above	Alt+7	Option+7
Enter interval: octave above	Alt+8	Option+8
Enter interval: ninth above	Alt+9	Option+9
Toggle accidental: flat	–	–
Toggle accidental: natural	=	=
Toggle accidental: sharp	+	+
Enter rest	0	0
Add grace note: acciaccatura	/	/

Tablature

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Set duration (TAB)	Shift+0 — Shift+9	Shift+0 — Shift+9
Set duration: 128th note (TAB)	Shift+0	Shift+0
Set duration: 64th note (TAB)	Shift+1	Shift+1
Set duration: 32nd note (TAB)	Shift+2	Shift+2
Set duration: 16th note (TAB)	Shift+3	Shift+3
Set duration: 8th note (TAB)	Shift+4	Shift+4
Set duration: quarter note (TAB)	Shift+5	Shift+5
Set duration: half note (TAB)	Shift+6	Shift+6
Set duration: whole note (TAB)	Shift+7	Shift+7
Enter TAB: fret	0 — 9	0 — 9
Enter TAB: fret	A — K	A — K
Enter TAB: fret 0	0	0
Enter TAB: fret 1	1	1
Enter TAB: fret 2	2	2
Enter TAB: fret 3	3	3
Enter TAB: fret 4	4	4

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Enter TAB: fret 5	5	5
Enter TAB: fret 6	6	6
Enter TAB: fret 7	7	7
Enter TAB: fret 8	8	8
Enter TAB: fret 9	9	9
Enter TAB: fret 0	A	A
Enter TAB: fret 1	B	B
Enter TAB: fret 2	C	C
Enter TAB: fret 3	D	D
Enter TAB: fret 4	E	E
Enter TAB: fret 5	F	F
Enter TAB: fret 6	G	G
Enter TAB: fret 7	H	H
Enter TAB: fret 8	J	J
Enter TAB: fret 9	K	K
Go to string above (TAB)	Up	Up
Go to string below (TAB)	Down	Down
Toggle ghost note	Shift+X	Shift+X

Selecting

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Select all	Ctrl+A	Cmd+A
Add to selection: previous note/rest	Shift+Left	Shift+Left
Add to selection: next note/rest	Shift+Right	Shift+Right
Add to selection: staff above	Shift+Up	Shift+Up
Add to selection: staff below	Shift+Down	Shift+Down
Select to beginning of measure	Ctrl+Shift+Left	Cmd+Shift+Left
Select to end of measure	Ctrl+Shift+Right	Cmd+Shift+Right
Select to beginning of line	Shift+Home	Shift+Fn+Left
Select to end of line	Shift+End	Shift+Fn+Right
Select to beginning of score	Ctrl+Shift+Home	Cmd+Shift+Fn+Left
Select to end of score	Ctrl+Shift+End	Cmd+Shift+Fn+Right

Editing

General

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Escape	Esc	Esc
Undo	Ctrl+Z	Cmd+Z
Redo	Ctrl+Shift+Z	Cmd+Shift+Z
Copy	Ctrl+C	Cmd+C
Cut	Ctrl+X	Cmd+X
Paste	Ctrl+V	Cmd+V
Copy/paste: swap with clipboard	Ctrl+Shift+X	Cmd+Shift+X
Repeat selection	R	R
Insert one measure before selection	Ins	Ins
Insert measures before selection	Ctrl+Ins	Cmd+Ins
Insert one measure at end of score	Ctrl+B	Cmd+B
Insert measures at end of score	Alt+Shift+B	Option+Shift+B
Delete	Del	Del
Delete selected measures	Ctrl+Del	Cmd+Del
Show/hide properties	F8	Fn+F8
Edit element	F2	Fn+F2
Move chord/rest left	Shift+Left	Shift+Left
Move chord/rest right	Shift+Right	Shift+Right

Duration

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Set duration	1 — 9	1 — 9
Enter tuplet	Ctrl+2 — Ctrl+9	Cmd+2 — Cmd+9
Add tied note	T	T
Halve selected duration	Q	Q
Double select duration	W	W
Halve selected duration (includes dotted values)	Shift+Q	Shift+Q

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Double selected duration (includes dotted values)	Shift+W	Shift+W
Paste half duration	Ctrl+Shift+Q	Cmd+Shift+Q
Paste double duration	Ctrl+Shift+W	Cmd+Shift+W
Insert full measure rest	Ctrl+Shift+Del	Cmd+Shift+Del

Pitch

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Toggle accidental: flat	−	−
Toggle accidental: natural	=	=
Toggle accidental: sharp	+	+
Move pitch/selection up	Up	Up
Move pitch/selection down	Down	Down
Move pitch up an octave	Ctrl+Up	Cmd+Up
Move pitch down an octave	Ctrl+Down	Cmd+Down
Move pitch up diatonically	Alt+Shift+Up	Option+Shift+Up
Move pitch down diatonically	Alt+Shift+Down	Option+Shift+Down
Change enharmonic spelling (concert and written pitch)	J	J
Change enharmonic spelling (current pitch only)	Ctrl+J	Cmd+J
Move note to higher string (TAB)	Ctrl+Up	Cmd+Up
Move note to lower string (TAB)	Ctrl+Down	Cmd+Down
Toggle ghost note (TAB)	Shift+X	Shift+X

Notation

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Flip direction	X	X
Mirror notehead	Shift+X	Shift+X
Use voice 1	Ctrl+Alt+1	Cmd+Option+1
Use voice 2	Ctrl+Alt+2	Cmd+Option+2
Use voice 3	Ctrl+Alt+3	Cmd+Option+3
Use voice 4	Ctrl+Alt+4	Cmd+Option+4
Move selected note/rest to staff above	Ctrl+Shift+Up	Cmd+Shift+Up
Move selected note/rest to staff below	Ctrl+Shift+Down	Cmd+Shift+Down
Toggle multimeasure rest	M	M

Manual adjustment

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Move text left	Left	Left
Move text right	Right	Right
Move text left quickly	Ctrl+Left	Cmd+Left
Move text right quickly	Ctrl+Right	Cmd+Right
Move selection up	Up	Up
Move selection down	Down	Down
Move selection up quickly	Ctrl+Up	Cmd+Up
Move selection down quickly	Ctrl+Down	Cmd+Down

Text

General

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Add text: staff text	Ctrl+T	Cmd+T
Add text: expression text	Ctrl+E	Cmd+E
Add text: system text	Ctrl+Shift+T	Cmd+Shift+T
Add text: tempo marking	Alt+Shift+T	Option+Shift+T
Add text: rehearsal mark	Ctrl+M	Cmd+M
Insert special characters	Shift+F2	Shift+Fn+F2

Formatting

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Format text: bold face	Ctrl+B	Cmd+B
Format text: italic	Ctrl+I	Cmd+I
Format text: underline	Ctrl+U	Cmd+U

Insert flat	Ctrl+Shift+B	Cmd+Shift+B
Insert natural	Ctrl+Shift+H	Cmd+Shift+H
Insert sharp	Ctrl+Shift+#	Cmd+Shift+#
Insert dynamics p	Ctrl+Shift+P	Cmd+Shift+P
Insert dynamics m	Ctrl+Shift+M	Cmd+Shift+M
Insert dynamics f	Ctrl+Shift+F	Cmd+Shift+F
Insert dynamics n	Ctrl+Shift+N	Cmd+Shift+N
Insert dynamics r	Ctrl+Shift+R	Cmd+Shift+R
Insert dynamics s	Ctrl+Shift+S	Cmd+Shift+S
Insert dynamics z	Ctrl+Shift+Z	Cmd+Shift+Z

Lyrics

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Add text: lyrics	Ctrl+L	Cmd+L
Go to next syllable	Space	Space
Go to previous syllable	Shift+Space	Shift+Space
Lyrics: enter hyphen	–	–
Lyrics: enter melisma	_	_
Add lyric verse	Return	Return
Go to next lyric verse	Down	Down
Go to previous lyric verse	Up	Up

Chord symbols, Roman numeral analysis, Nashville numbers, figured bass

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Add text: chord symbol	Ctrl+K	Cmd+K
Add text: figured bass	Ctrl+G	Cmd+G
Next text element	Space	Space
Previous text element	Shift+Space	Shift+Space
Advance cursor: next beat	;	;
Advance cursor: previous beat	Shift+;	Shift+;
Advance cursor: duration	Ctrl+1 – Ctrl+9	Cmd+1 – Cmd+9

Other score elements

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Show/hide palettes	F9	Fn+F9
Search palettes	Ctrl+F9	Cmd+Fn+F9
Open master palette	Shift+F9	Shift+Fn+F9
Add slur	S	S
Add articulation: accent	Shift+V	Shift+V
Add articulation: marcato	Shift+O	Shift+O
Add articulation: staccato	Shift+S	Shift+S
Add articulation: tenuto	Shift+N	Shift+N
Add hairpin: crescendo	<	<
Add hairpin: decrescendo	>	>
Add parentheses to element	(	(

Score setup and formatting

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Add/remove instruments	I	I
Open instruments dialog	F7	Fn+F7
Toggle visibility of elements	V	V
Decrease layout stretch	{	{
Increase layout stretch	}	}
Add/remove system break	Return	Return
Add/remove page break	Ctrl+Return	Cmd+Return
Reset shapes and positions	Ctrl+R	Cmd+R

File Operations

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
New	Ctrl+N	Cmd+N
Open	Ctrl+O	Cmd+O
Close	Ctrl+W	Cmd+W

Save	Ctrl+S	Cmd+S
Save as	Ctrl+Shift+S	Cmd+Shift+S
Print	Ctrl+P	Cmd+P
Quit	Ctrl+Q	Cmd+Q

User interface

Playback

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Play	Space	Space
Show/hide mixer	F10	Fn+F10

Accessibility

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Next UI group	Tab	Tab
Previous UI group	Shift+Tab	Shift+Tab
Next UI pane/window	F6	Fn+F6
Previous UI pane/window	Shift+F6	Shift+Fn+F6

Other

Action	Windows/Linux	macOS
Multiinstances	Ctrl+F3	Cmd+Fn+F3
Full screen	F11	Fn+F11

Known incompatibilities

Upgrade from MuseScore 3.x

Overview

Important Differences Between MuseScore 3 & MuseScore 4

Keyboard Shortcuts

See All keyboard shortcuts for MuseScore 4. Here are the common ones that have changed or are entirely new:

Action	MuseScore 3	MuseScore 4
Add tied note	+	T
Next Measure (Chord Symbol Entry)	Tab	Ctrl/Cmd+→
Previous Measure (Chord Symbol Entry)	Shift+Tab	Ctrl/Cmd+←
Toggle accidental: flat	None	−
Toggle accidental: natural	None	=
Toggle accidental: sharp	None	+
Edit element	Alt+Shift+E	F2 or Alt+Shift+E
Insert special characters...	F2	Shift+F2
Jump to next UI pane	None	F6 or ` (backtick / grave accent)
Jump to previous UI pane	None	Shift+F6 or Shift+`
Show / hide selection filter	F6	None

Other changes

What used to be the Inspector   in MuseScore 3 is the Properties tab in MuseScore 4.
The tool to switch between page view and continuous view is now at the bottom right of the MuseScore window.
Same for the Zoom control.
Same for the Concert pitch toggle.
To (temporarily) change the playback speed you now need to undock the Play Panel.
The "Toggle MIDI" button now is behind the Play Panel's cog wheel.
Fermata is now in the Breaths & Pauses palette
Hiding an instrument now mutes it by default. However, you can now hide the individual staves of the instrument, which is more flexible.
The Text tool   is now in the Text Properties, partly 'hidden' behind the __More__ botton.

Missing Features

Due to the nature of the upgrade some features previously present in MuseScore 3 have not (yet) been included. See this page   in the developers' handbook   for a listing of those items.

Upgrade from MuseScore 2.x or 1.x

Handbook for MuseScore 3.x

Handbook for MuseScore 2.x

Handbook for MuseScore 1.x

Glossary

The list below is a glossary of frequently used terms in MuseScore as well as their meaning. The differences between American English and British English are marked with "(AE)" and "(BE)", respectively.

A

Acciaccatura

A short grace note which appears as a small note with a stroke through the stem. It is quickly executed and technically takes no value from its associated note.

Accidental

A sign appearing in front of a note that raises or lowers its pitch. The most common accidentals are sharps, flats or naturals, but double sharps and double flats are also used. Also koron, and sori and other quarter tone or microtonal accidentals. Accidentals affect all notes on the same staff position only for the remainder of the measure in which they occur, but they can be canceled by another accidental. In notes tied across a barline, the accidental continues across the barline to the tied note, but not to later untied notes on the same staff position in that measure.

Ambitus

Note (or vocal) range used in a staff. Used particularly in early music.

Anacrusis (mostly BE)

See Pickup measure.

Anchor

The point of attachment to the score of objects such as Text and Lines: When the object is dragged, the anchor appears as small brown circle connected to the object by a dotted line. Depending on the object selected, its anchor may be attached to either (a) a note (e.g. fingering), (b) a staff line (e.g. staff text), or (c) a barline (e.g. repeats).

Appoggiatura

A long grace note which takes value from its associated note. Its functions include: passing tone, anticipation, struck suspension, and escape tone.

Arpeggio

An **arpeggio** tells the performer to break up the chord into the constituent notes, playing them separately and one after the other. An arrow on the arpeggio indicates the direction in which the player should play the notes of the chord.

Articulation

A marking or symbol indicating how a note should be played, usually by altering the length of a note or shaping its attack and decay.

B

Bar (BE)

See measure.

Barline

Vertical line through a staff, staves, or a full system that separates measures.

Beam

Notes with a duration of an eighth or shorter either carry a flag or a beam. Beams are used for grouping notes.

BPM

Beats Per Minute is the unit for measuring tempo, traditionally counted in quarter note durations. See metronome mark

Breve

Brevis

A **double whole note** or **breve** is a note that has the duration of two whole notes.

C

Caesura

A **caesura** (//) is a brief, silent pause. Time is not counted for this period, and music resumes when the director signals.

Cent
>	An interval equal to one hundredth of a semitone.

Chord
>	A group of two or more notes sounding together. To select a chord in MuseScore, press `Shift` and click on a note.

Clef
>	Sign at the beginning of a staff](#staff), used to tell which are the musical notes on the lines and in the spaces.
>	Some transposing instruments make use of octave transposing clefs or have different clefs in concert pitch vs. transposing pitch.
>	See also Courtesy clef.

Concert pitch
>	1. The sounding, or real pitch of a note—as opposed to the written pitch. See Working with transposing instruments.
>	2. A score viewing mode in Musescore, see Concert pitch box in the status bar.
>	3. The frequency of A4.

Courtesy clef
>	A reduced-size clef applied to the end of a system indicating a clef change at the start of the next system.

Cross-staff notation
>	A musical phrase extending across two neighboring staffs: e.g. bass staff and treble staff.

>	To notate , see Cross-staff notation.

>	To notate , see How to span a chord or stem over two staves .

Crotchet (BE)
>	See Quarter note.

D

Double Flat
>	A **double flat** (♭ ♭ or ♭♭) is a sign that indicates that the pitch of a note has to be lowered two semitones.

Double Sharp
>	A **double sharp** (♯ ♯ or *) is a sign that indicates that the pitch of a note has to be raised two semitones.

Demisemiquaver (BE)
>	A thirty-second note.

Duplet
>	See tuplet.

Dynamic
>	A symbol indicating the relative loudness of a note or phrase of music—such as *mf* (mezzoforte), *p* (piano), *f* (forte) etc., starting at that note.

E

Edit mode
>	The program mode in which you can either edit text in text objects; or which allows you to move non-text objects with the keyboard arrows (where this is disallowed in normal mode). There are a number of ways to enter this mode, after clicking on the desired object: (1) Double-click (text only); (2) Press `F2` or `Alt+Shift+E`; (3) Right-click and choose "Edit element".

Eighth note
>	A note whose duration is an eighth of a whole note (semibreve). Same as a **quaver** (BE).

Endecalineo

>	Endecalineo or endecagram, the stave for Solfège. See Solmisation (tutorial for MuseScore 3, pending update)

Endings
>	See volta.

Enharmonic notes
>	Notes that sound the same pitch but are written differently. Example: G♯ and A♭ are enharmonic notes. To quickly switch between enharmonic spellings, press `J`.

Explode

A feature that allows the user to split (or explode) the chords in a passage of music in a single staff into their constituent notes or voices. See Implode and explode.
See also, Implode

F

Flag
    See beam.
Flat
    Sign (♭) that indicates that the pitch of a note has to be lowered one semitone.
French Beam

    Beams where the stems only extend to the first beam, but don't intersect all the way through. To create use the French Beams   plugin.

G

Grace note
    Grace notes appear as small notes in front of a normal-sized main note. See acciaccatura and appoggiatura.
Grand Staff (AE)
Great Stave (BE)
    An instrument or part with two or more staves, featuring treble and bass clefs, used to notate music for keyboard instruments and the harp.

H

Half Note
    A note whose duration is half of a whole note (semibreve). Same as a **minim** (BE).
Hemidemisemiquaver (BE)
    A sixty-fourth note.

I

Implode

    A feature allowing the user to combine voices from separate staves onto one staff. See Implode and explode. This is similar to, but not exactly, score reduction (wikipedia   ).
    See also, Explode
Interval
    The difference in pitch between two notes, expressed in terms of the scale degree (e.g. major second, minor third, perfect fifth etc.). See Degree (Music)   (Wikipedia).
Interleaved

                A term used to describe two interlocking, oppositely-beamed sets of notes. To create, use the voice function and the beam palette. See Interleaved beam directions

J

Jump

In MuseScore, "jumps" are notations such as "D.S. al Coda", found in the "Repeats & Jumps" palette.

K

Key Signature
>	Set of sharps or flats at the beginning of the staves. It gives an idea about the tonality and avoids repeating those signs all along the staff.
>	A key signature with B flat means F major or D minor tonality.
Koron
>	An Iranian accidental which lowers the pitch of a note by a quarter tone (in comparison to the flat which lowers a note by a semitone). It is possible to use this accidental in a key signature.
>	See also Sori.

L

Legato
>	Legato is a play style which involves playing the notes in a slurred manner. Legato may be written as text or shown through the use of slurs.
Local time signature

>	The time signature on a single staff when different from the overall score time signature. See Adding a local time signature for a single staff.
Longa
>	A **longa** is a **quadruple whole note**.
Ledger Line (AE)
Leger Line (BE)
>	Line(s) that are added with and for notes above or below the staff.

M

Measure (AE)
>	A segment of time defined by a given number of beats. Dividing music into measures provides regular reference points to pinpoint locations within a piece of music. Same as bar (BE).
Metronome mark
>	Metronome marks are usually given by a note length equaling a certain playback speed in BPM. In MuseScore, metronome marks are used in Tempo markings.
Minim (BE)
>	See Half note.

N

Natural
>	A natural (♮) is a sign that cancels a previous alteration on notes of the same pitch.
Normal mode
>	The operating mode of MuseScore *outside* note input mode or edit mode: press Esc to enter it. In **Normal mode** you can navigate through the score, select and move elements, adjust Inspector properties, and alter the pitches of existing notes.
Note input mode
>	The program mode used for entering music notation. Enter it by pressing N or clicking on the pen icon in the note input toolbar.

O

Operating System (OS)
>	Underlying software that controls and manages the hardware and other software on a computer. Popular OSes are Microsoft Windows, macOS, and GNU/Linux.
Ossia

>	An alternative passage which may be played instead of the original passage (from the Italian for "alternatively", meaning "or be it").

P

Part
>	1. In MuseScore, the music notation for an individual instrument staff extracted from the main score. See Parts.
>	2. A single melody line in a polyphonic musical composition. MuseScore 4 **never** uses this definition, but there is a similar feature Voice.
>	3. Instrument(s) or their staves. MuseScore 4 **never** uses this definition.
Pickup Measure (mostly AE, also known as an Anacrusis (mostly BE) or Upbeat)
>	Incomplete first measure of a piece or a section of a piece of music. See Measure duration and Create new score: Pickup measure and also Exclude from measure count. May or may not be compensated for at the end of the score or section.

Q

Quadruplet
>	See tuplet.
Quarter note

A note whose duration is a quarter of a whole note (semibreve). Same as a **crotchet** (BE).

Quaver (BE)
See eighth note.

Quintuplet
See tuplet.

R

Respell Pitches
Tries to guess the right accidentals for the whole score (see Accidental).

Rest
Interval of silence of a specified duration.

Re-pitch mode
Allows you to rewrite an existing passage of music by changing the note pitches without altering the rhythm.

S

Section
In MuseScore, a region of the score between section breaks; also from the start of a score to the first section break, and from the last section break to the end of the score.

Semibreve (BE)
A **whole note** (AE). It lasts a whole measure in 4/4 time.

Semiquaver (BE)
A sixteenth note.

Semihemidemisemiquaver (Quasihemidemisemiquaver) (BE)
A hundred and twenty eighth note.

Sextuplet
See tuplet.

SF2
A virtual instrument format developed by E-mu Systems and Creative Labs. See SoundFonts.

SF3
An invention of Werner Schweer, the Musescore developer (source   ). This format supports sound sample compression. See SoundFonts.

Shared note head

A single notehead with two beams—one up, one down. Especially common in guitar music, for example. See Noteheads

Sharp
Sign (♯) that indicates that the pitch of a note has to be raised one semitone.

Slash chord
See Slash chord   (Wikipedia).

Slash notation
A form of music notation using slash marks placed on or above/below the staff to indicate the rhythm of an accompaniment: often found in association with chord symbols. There are two types: (1) *Slash notation* consists of a rhythm slash on each beat: the exact interpretation is left to the player (see Fill with slashes); (2) *Rhythmic slash notation* indicates the precise rhythm for the accompaniment (see Toggle rhythmic slash notation).

Slur
A curved line over or under two or more notes, meaning that the notes will be played smooth and connected (*legato*).
See also tie.

Solmisation
see Endecalineo

Sori
An Iranian accidental which raises the pitch of a note by a quarter tone (in comparison to the sharp which raises it by a semitone). It is possible to use this accidental in a key signature.
See also Koron.

SoundFont
A virtual instrument format supported by MuseScore. A **SoundFont** is a special type of file (extension .sf2, or .sf3 if compressed) containing sound samples of one or more musical instruments. In effect, a virtual synthesizer which acts as a sound source for MIDI files. MuseScore 4 comes with its own native soundfont, *MS Basic*.

Spatium (plural: Spatia) / Space / Staff Space / sp. (abbr./unit)
The distance between the midpoints of two lines of a music staff (or one-quarter the size of the full five-line staff, assuming a hypothetical staff line thickness of 0). The sizes of most elements in the score are based on this setting (see Page settings).

Staff / Staffs
A set of lines and spaces, each representing a pitch, on which music is written. In period music notation (before 11th century) the staff may have any number of lines.

Staff Space
See Spatium (above).

Stave / Staves (BE)
See Staff (above).

Step-time input
MuseScore's default note input mode, allowing you to enter music notation one note (or rest) at a time.

System
Set of staves to be read simultaneously in a score.
See also Operating System (OS).

T

Tie

A curved line between two adjacent notes of the same pitch to indicate a single note of combined duration:

Quarter note + Tie + Quarter note = Half note
Quarter note + Tie + Eighth note = Dotted Quarter note
Quarter note + Tie + Eighth note + Tie + 16th note = Double Dotted Quarter note
See also slur.

Transposition

The act of moving the pitches of one or more notes up or down by a constant interval. There may be several reasons for transposing a piece, for example:

The tune is too low or too high for a singer. In this case the whole orchestra will have to be transposed as well—easily done using MuseScore.
The part is written for a particular instrument but needs to be played by a different one.
The score is written for an orchestra and you want to hear what the individual instruments sound like. This requires changing the transposing instrument parts to concert pitch.
A darker or a more brilliant sound is desired.

Triplet
See tuplet.
Tuplet
A tuplet divides its next higher note value by a number of notes other than given by the time signature. For example a triplet divides the next higher note value into three parts, rather than two. Tuplets may be: triplets, duplets, quintuplets, and other.

U

Upbeat
See pickup measure.

V

Velocity
The velocity property controls how loudly the note is played, from 0 (silent) to 127 (maximum). This usage of the term comes from MIDI Velocity: on a keyboard instrument, it is the speed with which a key is pressed that controls its volume.
Voice
1. In Musescore, voice is a software feature, you can use up to 4 voices per staff, see Working with multiple voices, also see staff.
2. The musical term "voice" refers to a musical line or part which can have its own rhythm. MuseScore does not have a feature to implement the exact same idea, if the voice feature does not suit your need, try adding separate instruments instead.
Volta
In a repeated section of music, it is common for the last few measures of the section to differ. Markings called voltas are used to indicate how the section is to be ended each time. These markings are often referred to simply as endings.

W

Written pitch
Transposing instruments (such as the clarinet, French horn, trumpet etc.) are notated at a different pitch (and key signature) to how they sound. The notated pitch is called the written pitch,

External links

http://www.robertcarney.net/musical-terms-definitions.htm
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_musical_symbols

Full Table of Contents

Editing the Handbook

Introduction to MuseScore

Download and installation

Windows

macOS

Linux

AppImage

New features in MuseScore 4

New user interface

Instruments and parts

Inspector

New playback and VSTi support

Engraving improvements

Cloud storage

Other changes

Create your first score

Entering score information

Entering notes

Adding items from the palettes

Making adjustments in Properties

Inserting and deleting measures

Exporting your score

Saving your score

Viewing and navigation

Accessibility

Setup

>   Windows
>   NVDA
>   JAWS
>   Narrator
>   macOS
>   Linux

Working with the user interface

Working with your score

The user interface

Menu bar

Home tab

>   My account
>   Scores
>   Plugins
>   Learn

Score tab

Publish tab

Navigating your score

Scrolling

>   Mouse wheel
>   Scrollbars
>   Keyboard

Element navigation

Navigator

Timeline

Views

>   Page view
>   Continuous view (horizontal)
>   Continuous view (vertical)

Zoom

>   Zoom in

Basics

Notation: Instruments, staves, and systems

<u>Working with instruments</u>

Overview

    Accessing the panel
    Adding instruments
    Deleting instruments
    Changing the order of instruments

Instrument settings

    Hiding/showing instruments
    Renaming instruments
    Replacing instruments

Adding and configuring staves

    To add a staff to an existing instrument
    To add a linked staff to an existing instrument
    Configuring a staff

<u>Showing staves only where needed</u>

Hiding empty staves

    Hiding all empty staves
    Excluding specific staves from being hidden

Temporary staves

Cutaway staves

Ossia

Other invisible measures

<u>Implode and explode</u>

Implode

Combine notes from multiple voices in a single staff into one voice
Combine notes from multiple staves into multiple voices on a single staff

Explode

Copy passage of single notes to multiple staves
Separate passage of chords into constituent notes

<u>Mid-score instrument changes</u>

Adding an instrument change

Working with instrument changes

Removing an instrument change
Re-labelling an instrument change
Instrument changes in the mixer
Changing staff type

<u>Staff type change</u>

Adding a staff type change

Setting staff properties

<u>Staff/Part properties</u>

Overview

Staff properties

Advanced style properties

Template (all staves)
Standard and Percussion staff options only
Tablature options only
    Fret Marks tab
    Note Values tab

Part properties

Instrument
Names
Usable pitch range
Transposition
Strings and frets

<u>Brackets</u>

Adding brackets

Editing brackets

Changing bracket type
Changing bracket span

Deleting brackets

Customizing bracket appearance

Notation: Rhythm, meter, and measures

<u>Time signatures</u>

Overview

Setting the initial time signature for your score

Adding a time signature change to your score

Deleting a time signature

Notation: Expressive markings