

Peter Yarensky's abc 2.2 Reference Card

Use this for a reference/reminder; for details go to the *Help File*.

To learn abc notation: [How to get started with abc notation](#) on the [abc Notation Home Page](#).

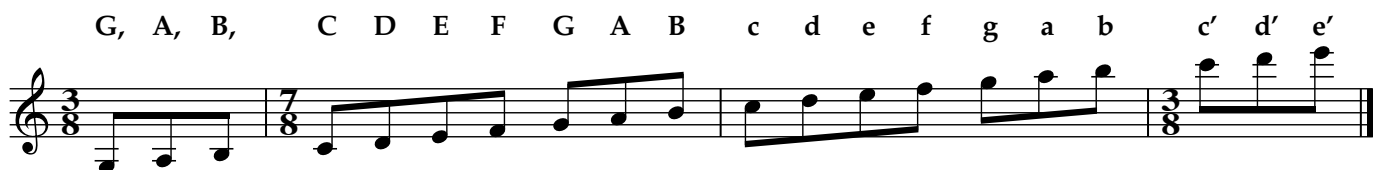
Tune Header: Begin tune: %abc-2.2 (or 2.1; optional but recommended); use extension .abc (all lower-case).

- ▶ Important information fields: see *Help File*.

The Default Print Settings: %%writefields TCOpQwW; subsequent writefields combine with this rather than replace it.

Pitch Notation

Notating Pitch



Accidentals: ^, = and _ (sharp, natural, flat)

Changing Meter, Key, or Default Note Length within a line of music: | [K:A] <notes of measure>.

Parts Notation: In Tune Header, specify order (e.g. Chorus Jig, P: ABCB); in body identify parts (e.g. P:C).

- ▶ **Repeats** may be handled with numbers & parentheses (nested OK); dots may be inserted for legibility: e.g. Les Cinq Jumelles: P: (A.B)2.C.D2.E2 — equivalent to ABABCDDEE
- ▶ **Endings.** Same idea: specify order, number parts in Header; in body number the endings.
 - ★ Suppose tune has four repeats. The Tune Header would be P: A4B4

This abc help file was written by Peter Yarensky <peter@pyarensky.com>. This version is © 2018. You may download a PDF version. It may be printed, and it may be distributed as long as it is unchanged. I hope you find it useful. ~ Peter

- ★ **Different ending with each repeat:** P:A, then <A-part> | [1 <first ending> :| [2 <second ending> :| [3 <3rd ending> :| [4 <4th ending> |]

For 8 repetitions: [1,3,5-6 <notes> :| [2,4,7 <notes> :| [8 <notes> |]

Modifying Notes: Ties & Slurs, Grace Notes & Triplets: See *abc Help File*.

Some Commonly Used Accents & Decorations:

P	Uppermordent (e.g. Pa: play aba)	v	Downbow
T	Trill	!0!-!5!	Fingerings
.	Stacatto (period)	!+!	Left-hand Pizzicato
u	Upbow	!slide!	Slide up to a note

Redefinable Symbols. Use H-W and h-w, and the symbol ~: e.g. U: S = !slide!.

Special Characters: See *abc Help File*.

Using Voice Overlays with Unison Drones: To get one note head with upward, downward stems: (& "Em" e2>x2 x4 & e2>e2 efed &) |. Note: (& Upward stems & Downward &)

Text Annotations:

- ▶ "[^] text", "_ text": prints "text" above, below the staff; "< text", "> text": L, R of note. So "<(" ">)" e would put parentheses around an "e" note.
- ▶ "@<x>,<y> text" (<x>, <y> are numbers): prints "text" offset by <x> and <y> points from the *position of the symbol* being annotated.

Blank Space: Horizontal — 1 or more "y", or "y" + number; e.g. "y40" = add 40 pixels of space.

Vertical space: %%vskip ##: e.g. %%vskip 20 gives twenty pixels of vertical space.

Staffbreaks: %%staffbreak 2cm gives a break in the staff two centimeters wide.

Fonts: See *abc Help File* for details. Note that %%historyfont controls not only History (H:) but also Source (S:), Notes (N:) & Transcription (Z:).

- ▶ To change fonts within a string: in header, %%setfont-1 ; in body, \$1 to change font, \$0 to return to base font.