

Teaching for Transfer: “Rules” of Expressive Singing

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ROBERTS
WESLEYAN COLLEGE

Resources for Today



Available at www.AdamPotterMusic.com





Introduction

Getting acquainted

Teaching for Transfer



- **What is “transfer”?**
- **Why should we practice transfer in rehearsals?**
 - Why should we teach our students to transfer?



26 “Rules” of Expressive Singing

“Rules” of Expressive Singing



Rule of the Breath: Breathe in the shape of the first/next vowel you sing



Rule of Phrase Shape: Most phrases begin softer within the dynamic, then *crescendo* before a *decrescendo* at the end of the phrase



Rule of Melodic Contour: When the melody ascends, *crescendo*; when it descends, *decrescendo*



Rule of Dynamic Contrast: When going from a softer dynamic to a louder one, think even louder than the dynamic written; when going from a louder dynamic to a softer one, think even softer than the dynamic written



Rule of Punctuation: *Usually* add a half-beat rest wherever there is a mark of punctuation in the text to define phrasing; *always* look at the conductor for sustain or release gestures to make sure!

“Rules” of Expressive Singing



Rule of the Steady Beat: Note values longer than the steady beat crescendo or decrescendo (*watch!*)



Rule of Word Stress: Underline the most important words/syllables—emphasize the same syllables within words (micro) and words within phrases (macro) while singing as you would in speech



Rule of the Dot: A rhythmic dot almost always indicates a momentary “swell”



Rule of *Chiaroscuro*: The higher you sing, the more *oscuro* you must think (open/space); the lower you sing, the more *chiaro* you must think (focus/place)



Rule of Crossing the *Passaggio*: As you ascend, create more space but don’t think louder unless it’s indicated

“Rules” of Expressive Singing



Rule of the Slur: Implied tenuto on the first note of any two-note phrase (“sing, shut up!”)



Rule of Dissonances: Lean into the dissonant notes (tension) and lift off resolutions (release)



Rule of the Diphthong: Sustain the primary vowel; the second vowel sounds just before the next consonant or syllable



Rule of “R” Pollution: Sustain the vowel before any *r* as if it weren’t there; let it color the vowel only at the last possible moment



Rule of the Consonant Onset: Consonants are articulated before the beat, vowels are articulated on the beat (heel-to-floor exercise)

“Rules” of Expressive Singing



Rule of the Consonant Release: Sound the consonant release on the next beat



Rule of the Shadow Vowel: If the final consonant before a breath/rest is voiced, add a shadow vowel after it



Rule of the Vowel: Make every vowel as long as possible; the consonant that follows should be as short as possible



Rule of the Final Syllable: In no way accent “clip” or “slap” the final syllable of the phrase



Rule of the Glottal Stroke: In English, if the word begins with a vowel and is lyrically important, initiate it with a gentle glottal onset

“Rules” of Expressive Singing



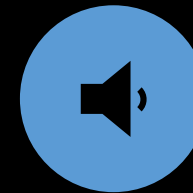
Rule of “The”: If followed by a vowel, pronounce [ði] (“thee” earth); if followed by a consonant, pronounce [ðʌ] (“thuh” world)



Rule of Doubled Consonants: If a word ends with the same consonant sound as the beginning of the next word, elide the two consonants into one (“not to” = [na.tu]) but if they are different sounds, clearly enunciate both (“not do” = [nat du])



Rule of Voicing: In polyphonic music, “mic” the important motives and “shush” everything else



Rule of Unison: Whenever the texture changes from harmony to unison, it automatically amplifies and brightens the sound, so sing slightly *softer* and considerably *richer*



Rules of Articulation: Depends on the style period of the piece—consult Ruth Whitlock, *Choral Insights* (various editions, published by Neil A. Kjos Music Company) and Robert L. Garretson, *Choral Music: History, Style, and Performance Practice* (published by Prentice Hall)



“Rules” of Expressive Singing



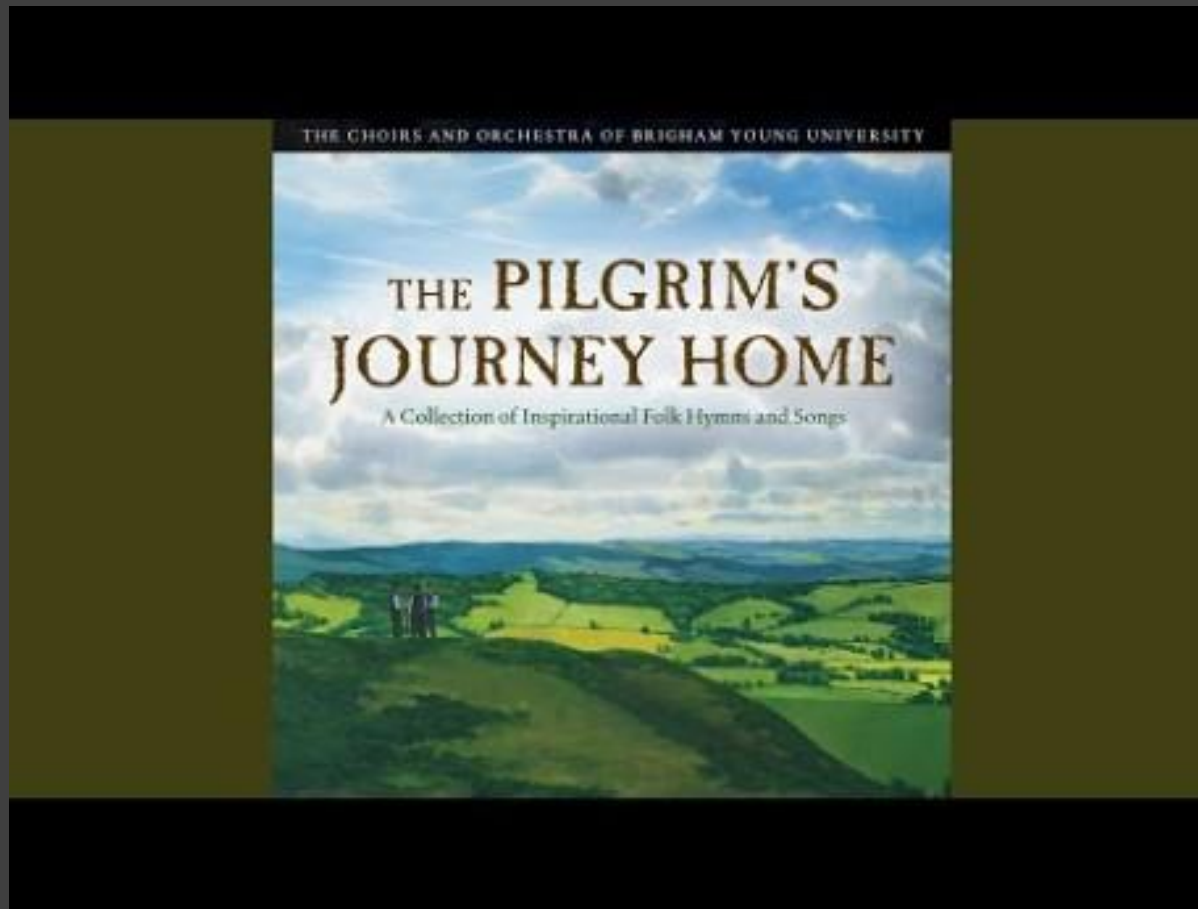
Rule of the Director: The director overrides any rule they decide!





The Rules in Action

“Homeward Bound”



“Homeward
Bound”

- **Marta Keen**
- ***arr.* Jay Althouse**
- **© 1991 by Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.**



First, an aside...

Using Rhythm & Tonal Patterns to Introduce a Piece

A black and white portrait of Edwin E. Gordon, a man with short hair, looking thoughtfully to the right. His hands are clasped in front of his chin, and he is wearing a ring on his left hand. The background is dark.

Music Learning Theory (MLT)

Edwin E. Gordon (1927–2015)

**Gordon Institute for Music Learning
(GIML)**



Music Learning Theory (MLT)

01

Inference Learning

- Generalization
- Creativity/improvisation
- Theoretical understanding

02

Discrimination Learning

- Aural/oral
- Verbal association
- Partial synthesis
- Symbolic association
- Composite synthesis

Music Learning Theory (MLT)

Rhythm Patterns

- Teacher (neutral) → student (neutral)
- Teacher (syllable) → student (syllable)
- Teacher (neutral) → student (syllable)
- Teacher (reading) → student (reading)
- Independent/group reading

Tonal Patterns

- Teacher (neutral) → student (neutral)
- Teacher (syllable) → student (syllable)
- Teacher (neutral) → student (syllable)
- Teacher (reading) → student (reading)
- Independent/group reading

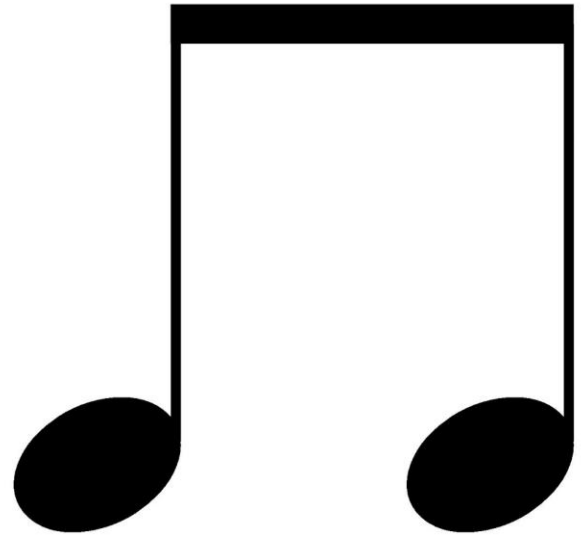
Coordination Skills



Rhythm Patterns

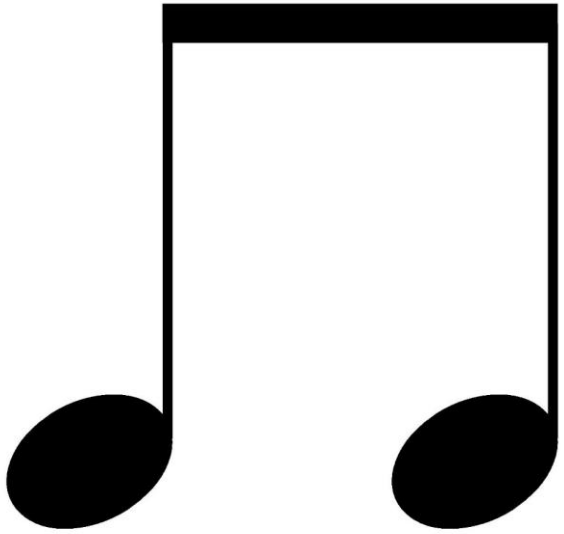


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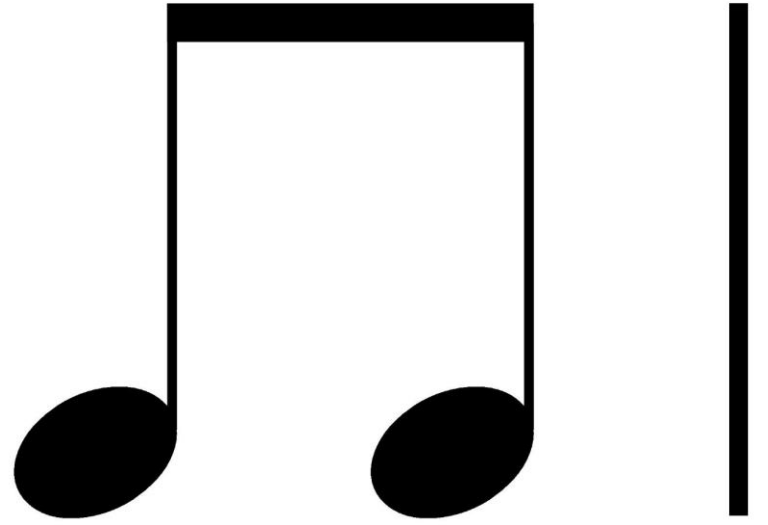
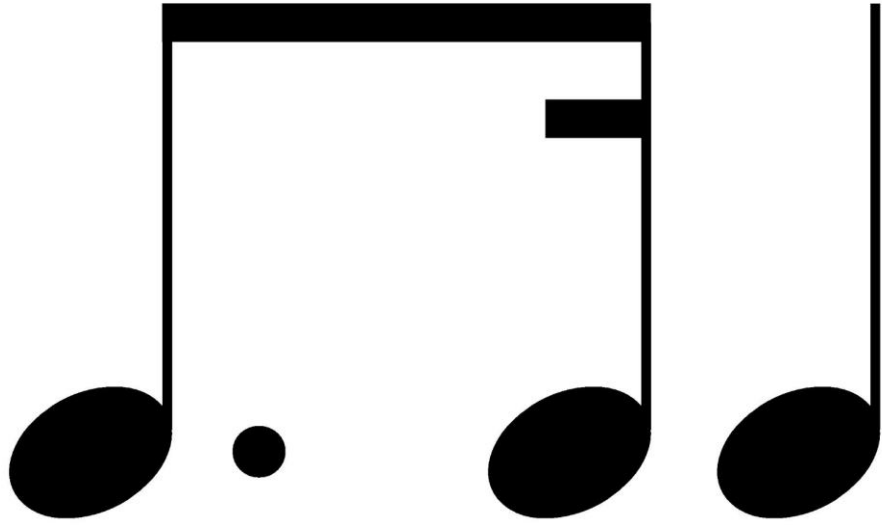


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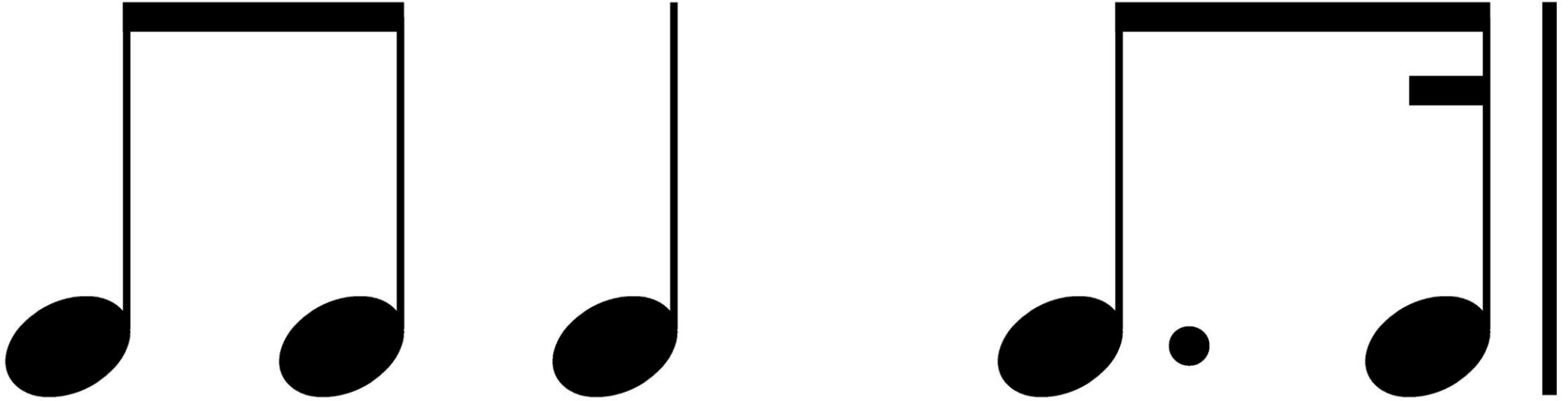


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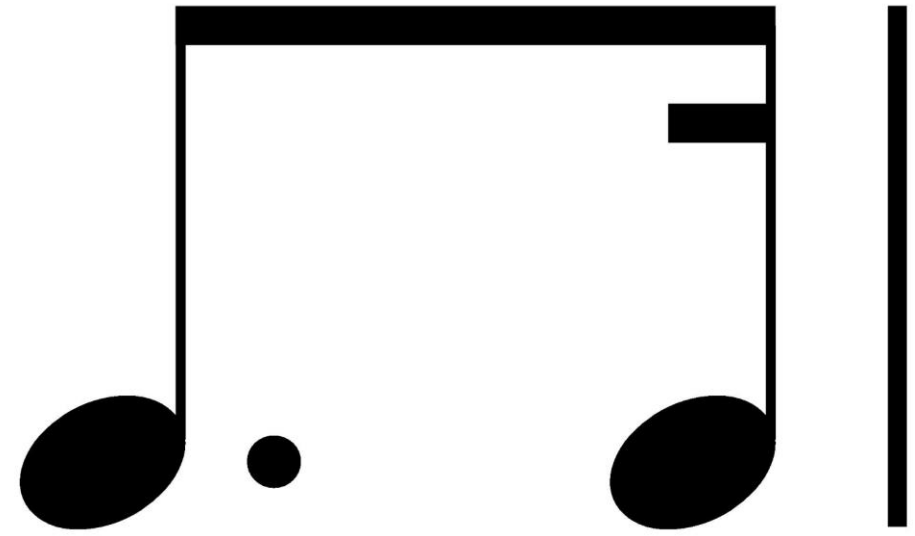


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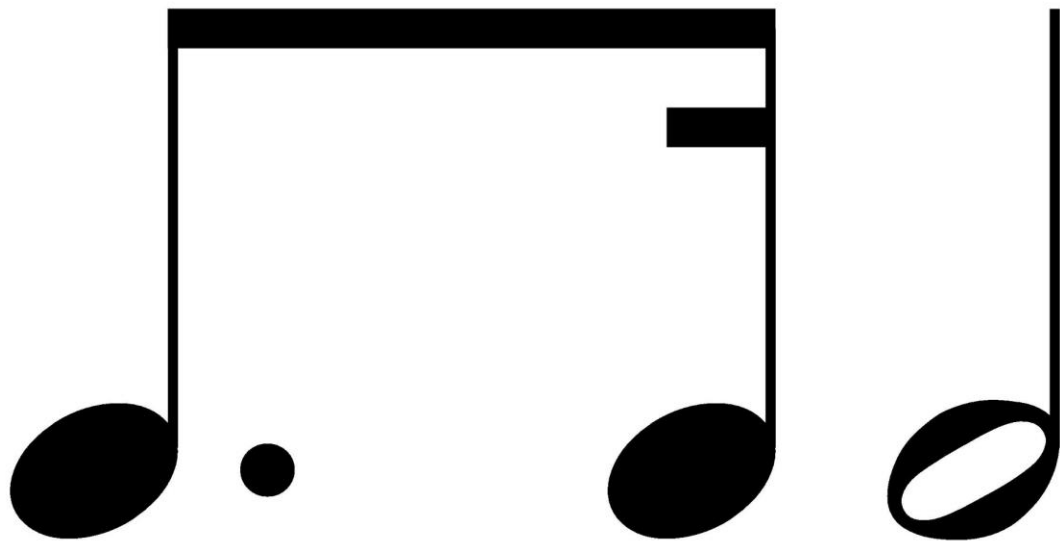


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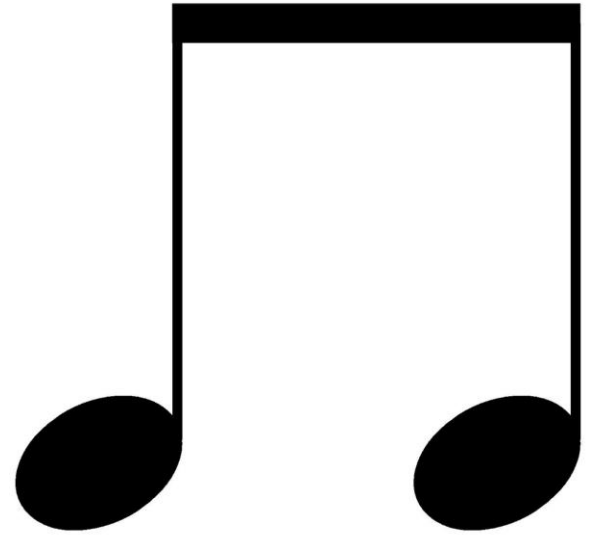
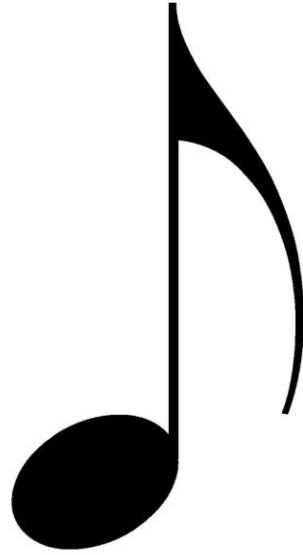
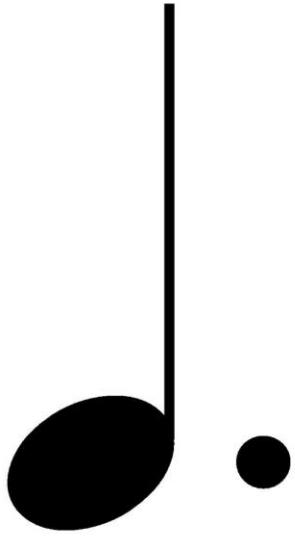


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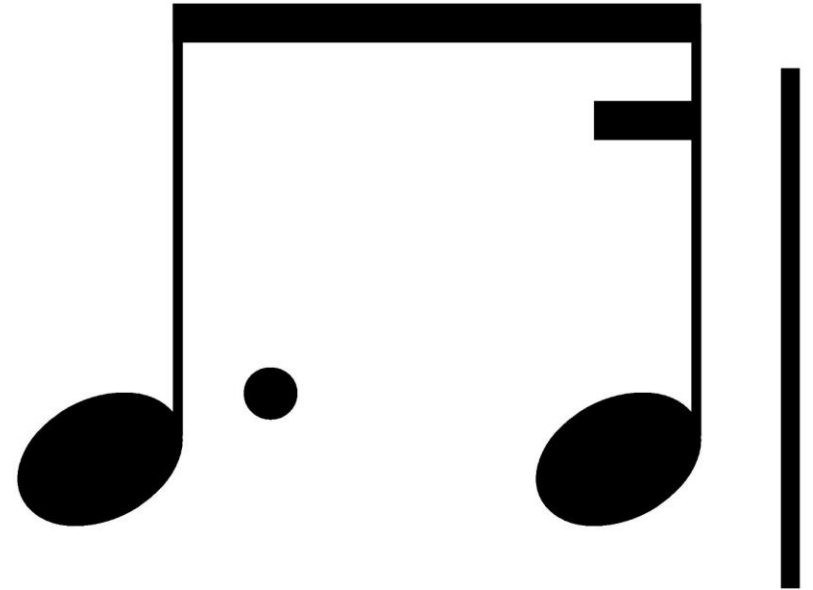


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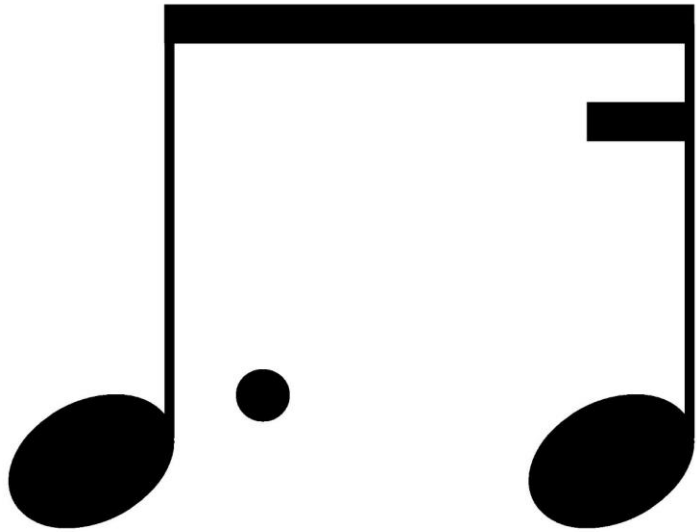


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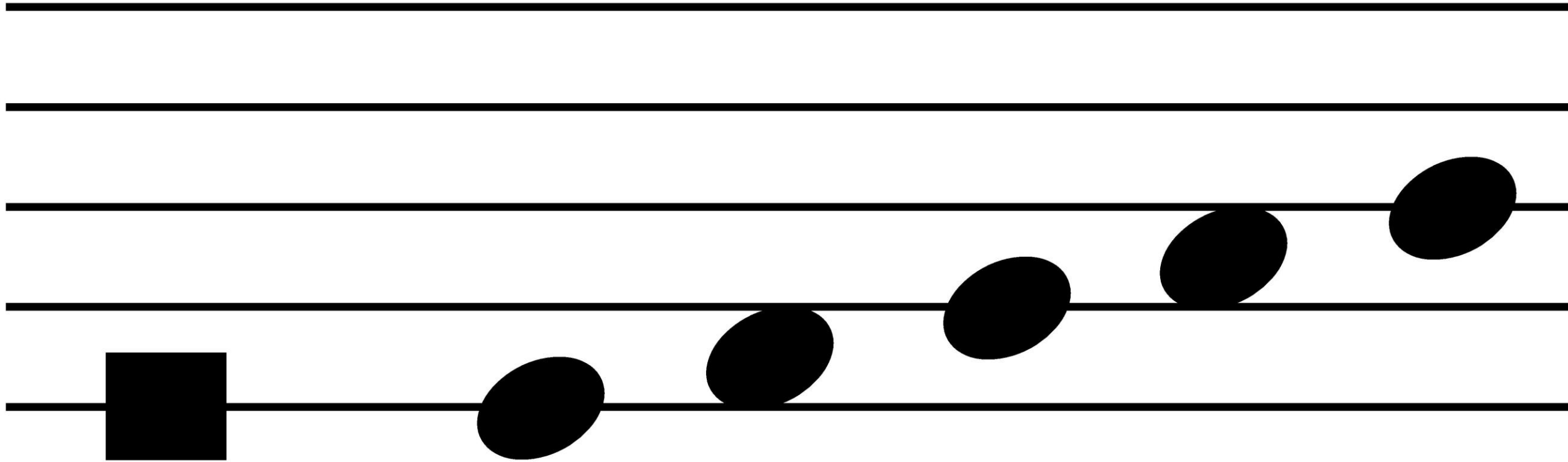


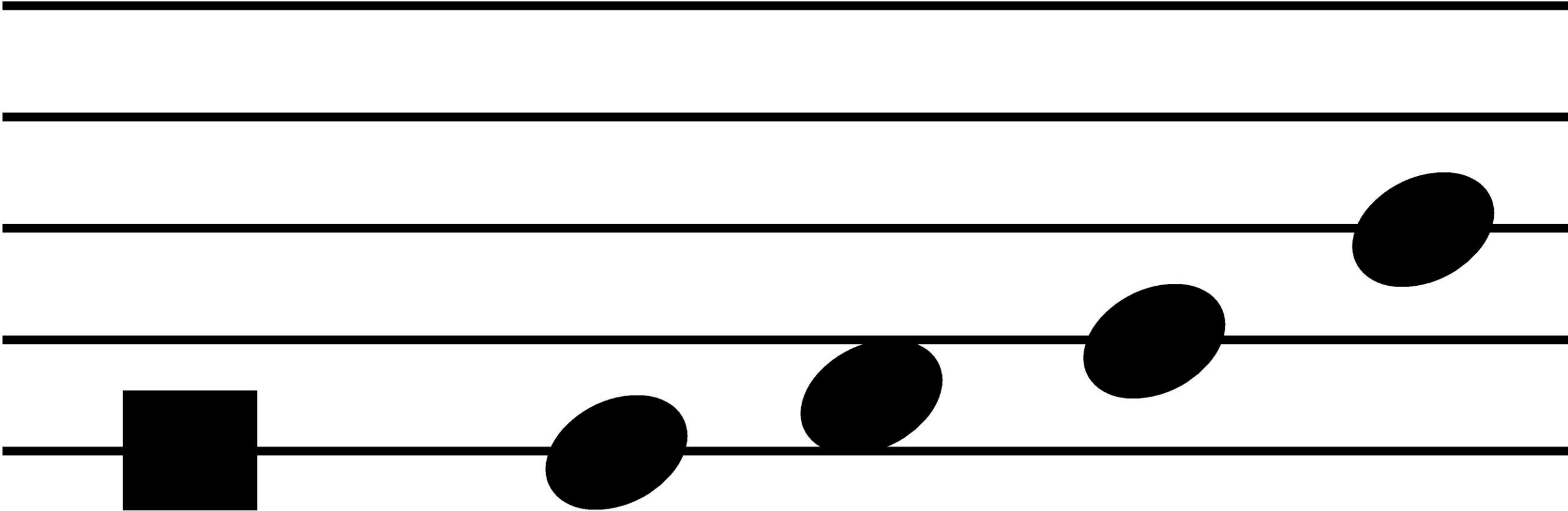
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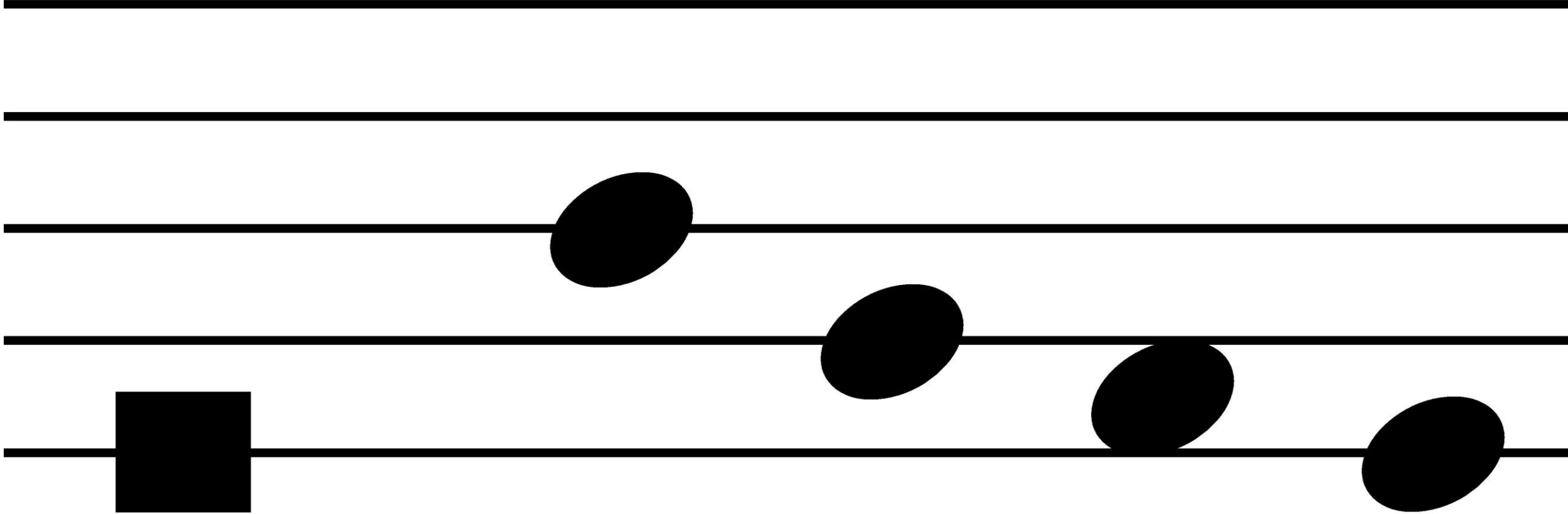


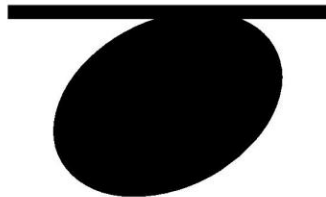
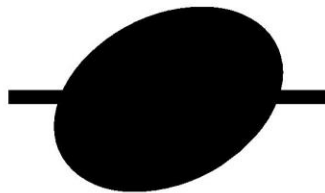
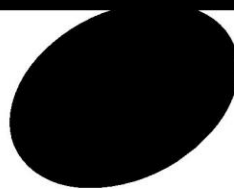
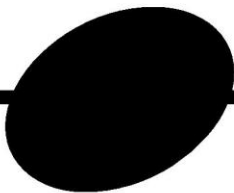


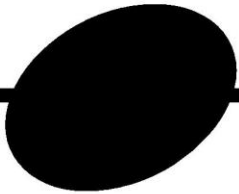
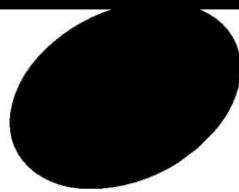
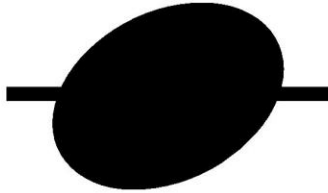
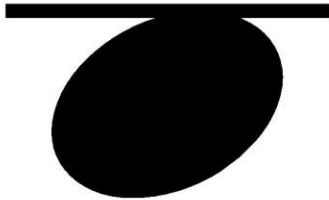
Tonal/Melodic Patterns

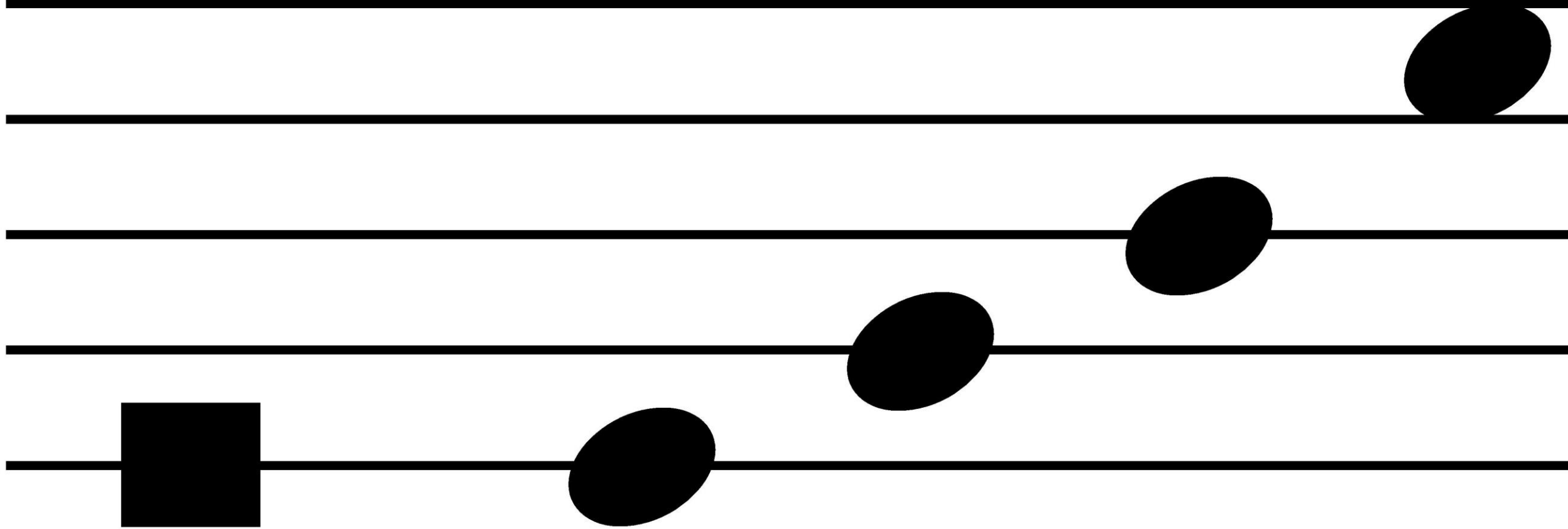


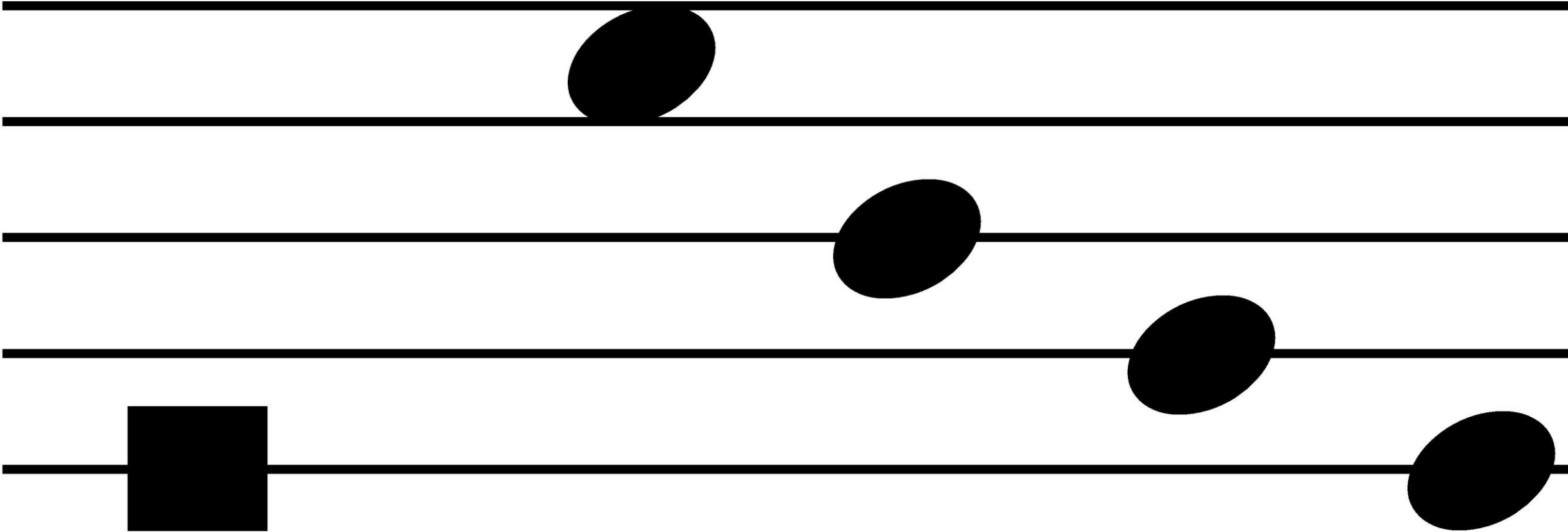


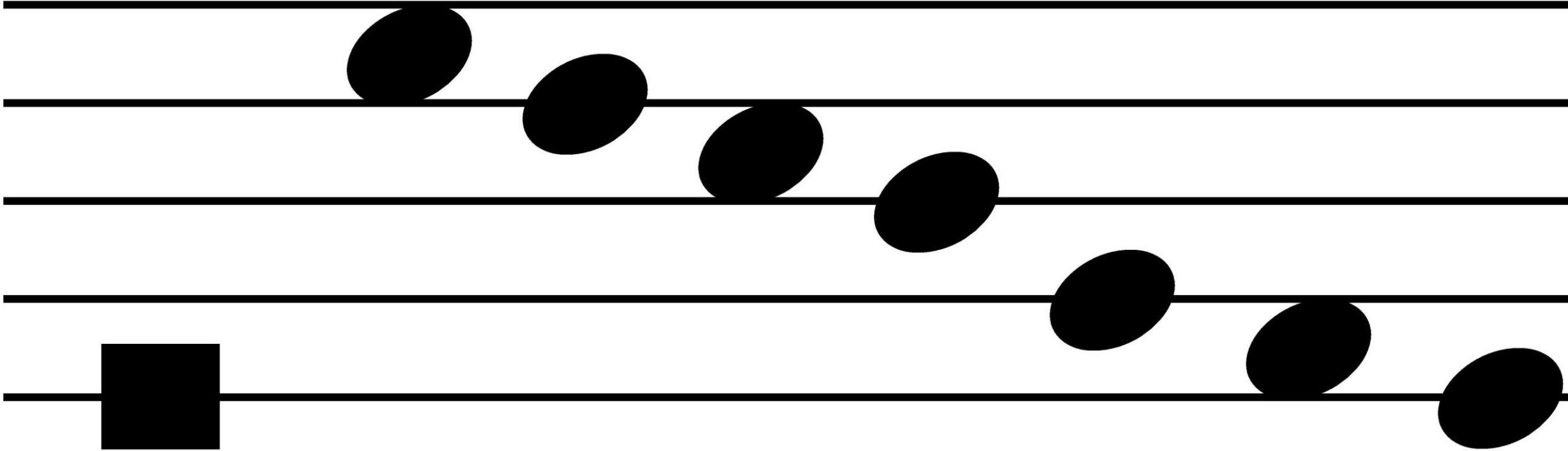


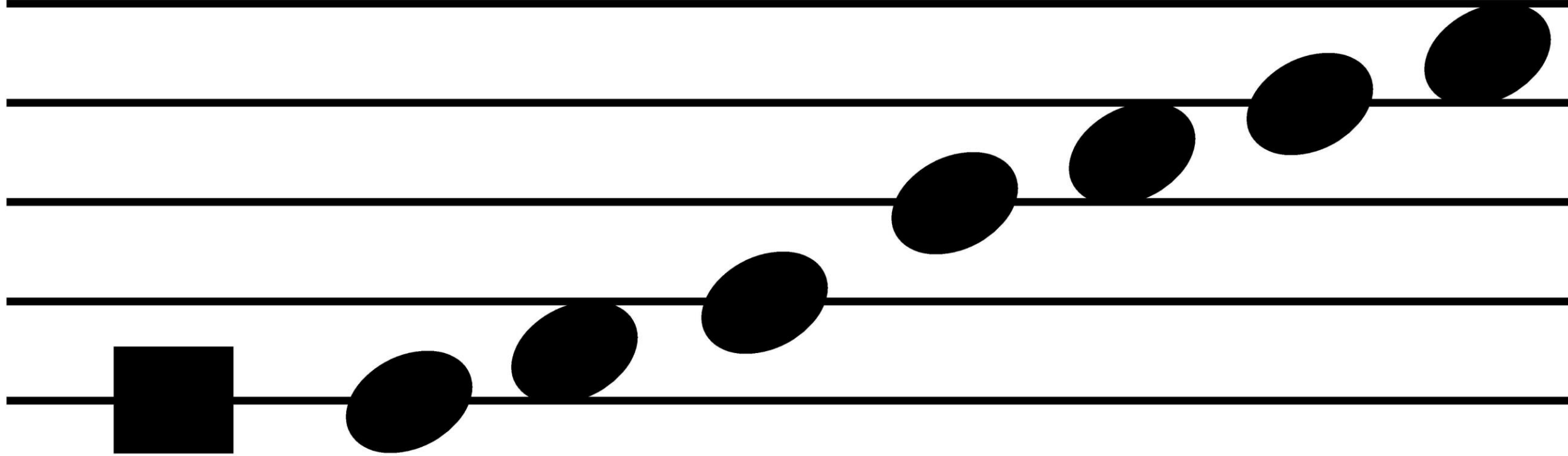


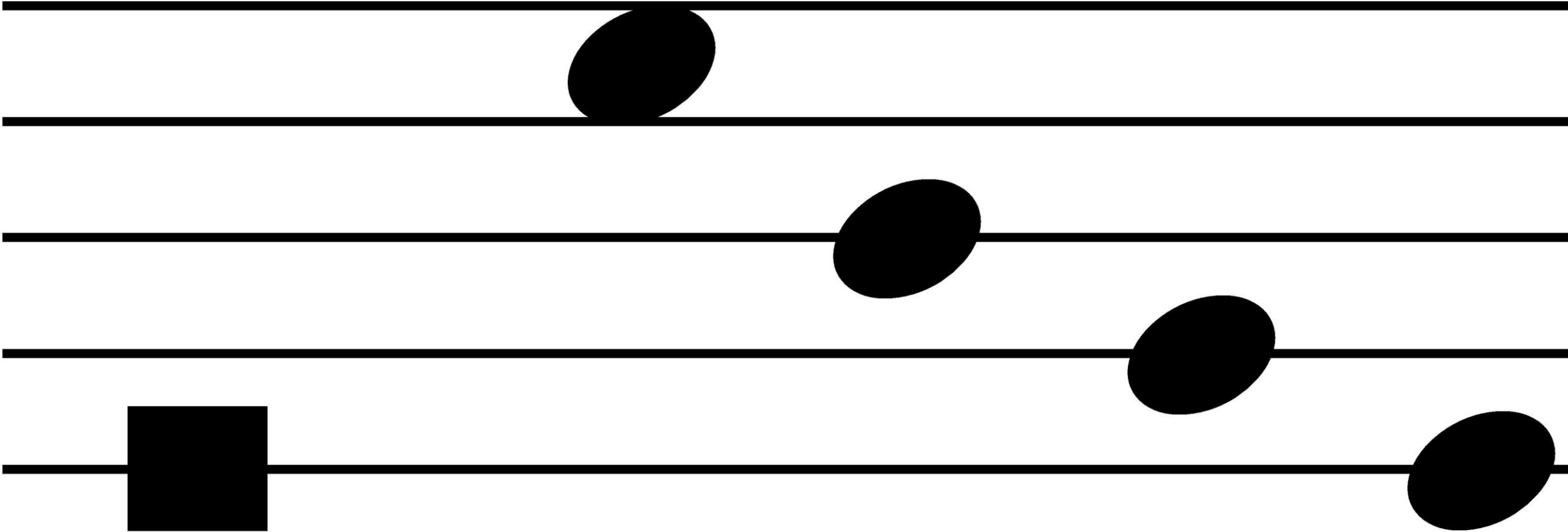


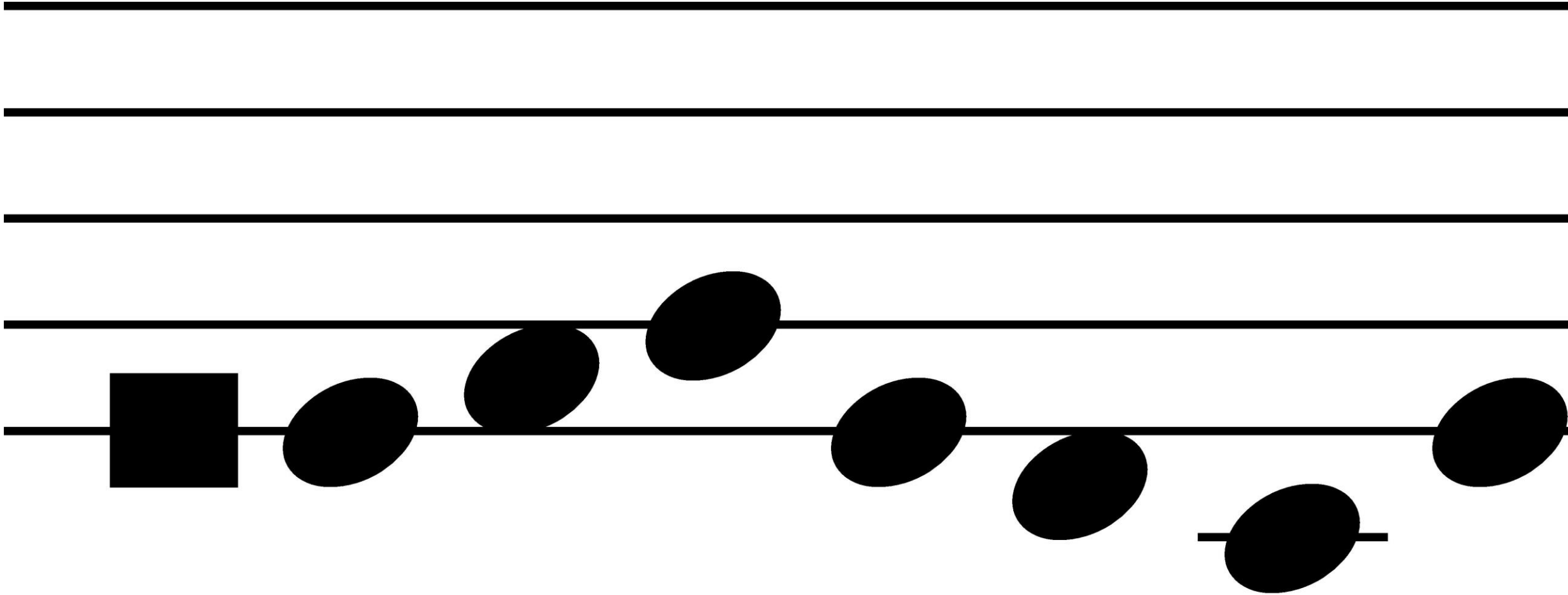


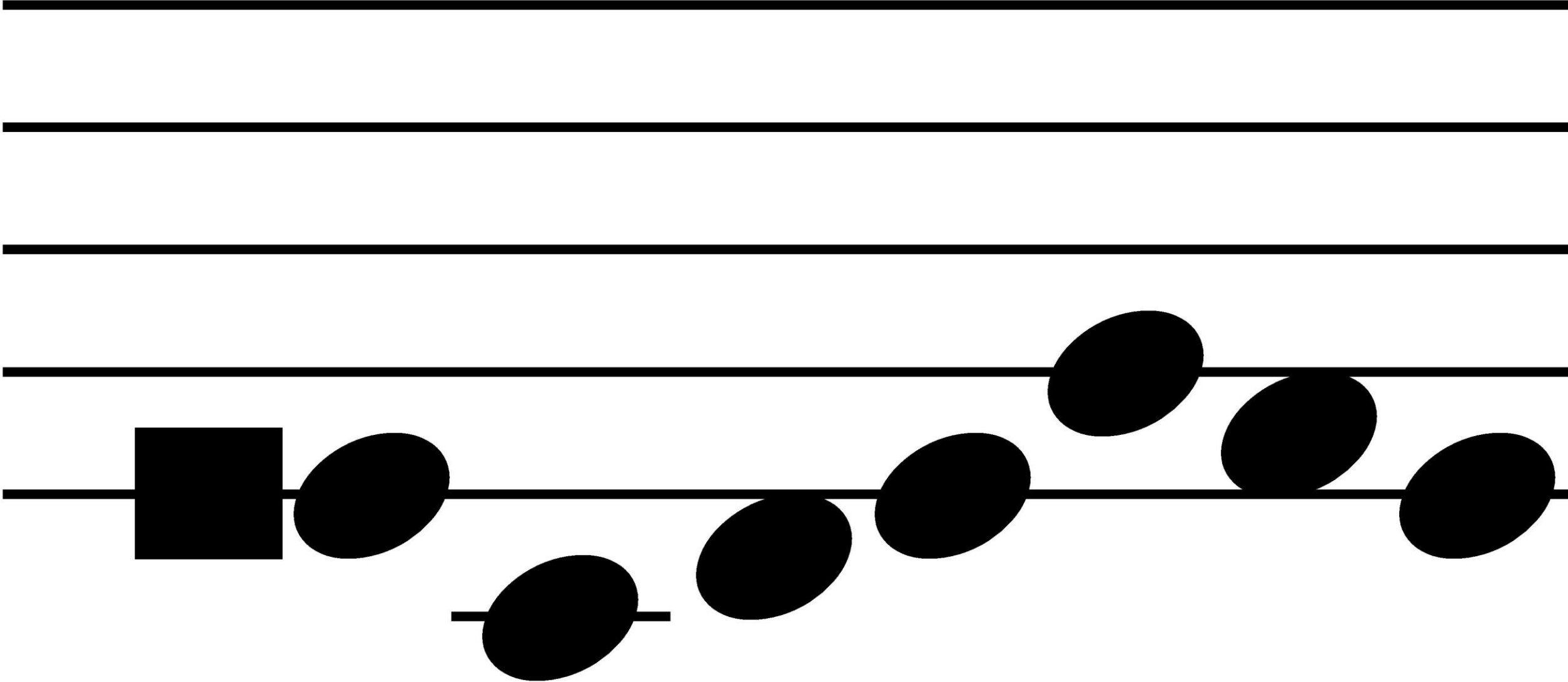


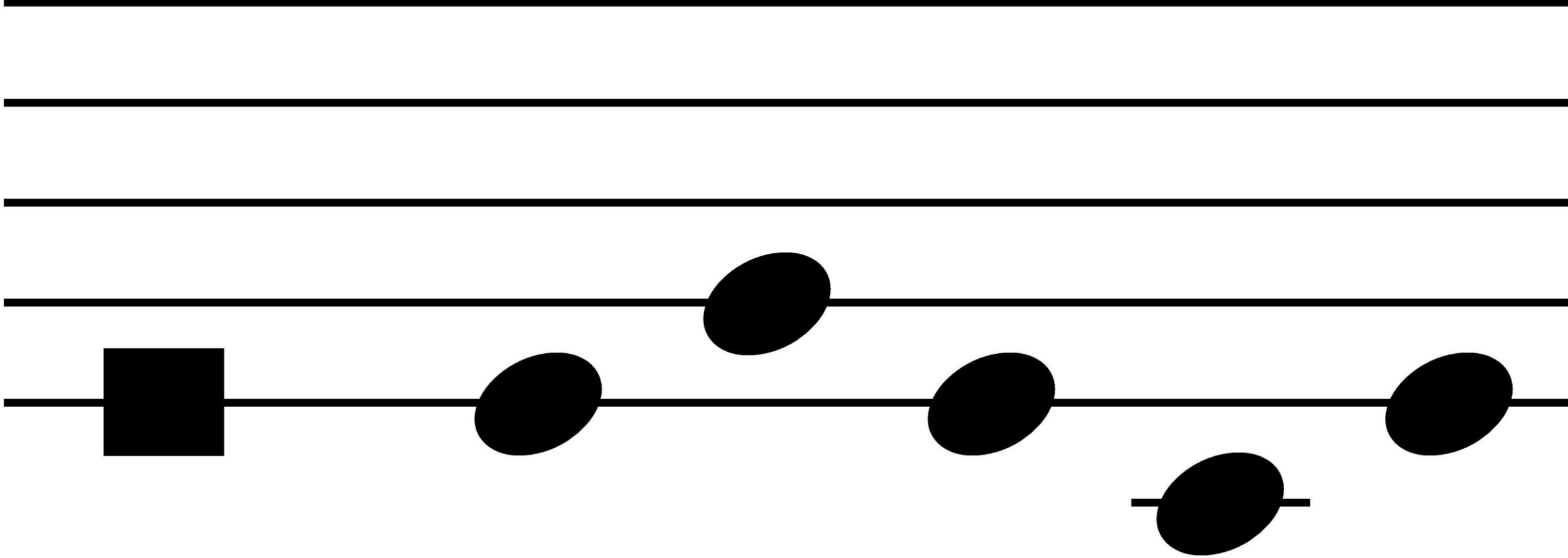


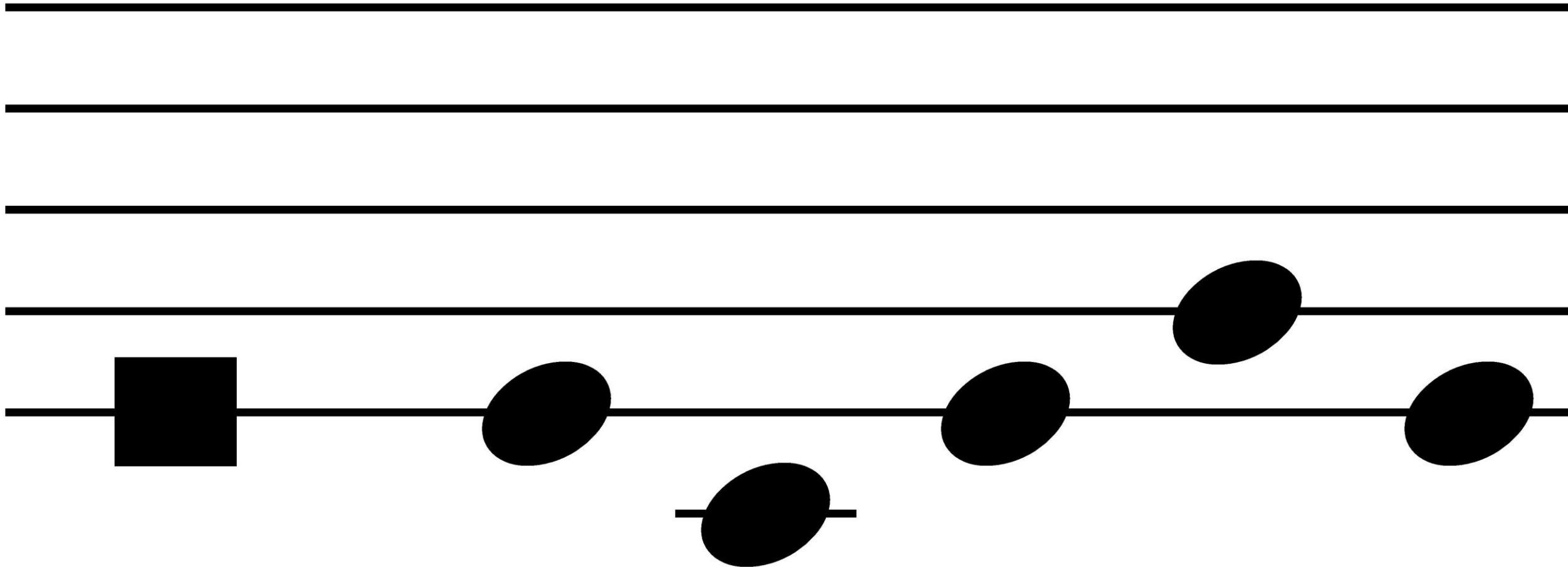














The Rules in Action

How do we proceed after rhythms and pitches are learned?

Tenderly (♩ = 69-76)

SOPRANO OR TENOR SOLO *mp*
(or Sop. section)

In the qui - et mist - y morn - ing when the

The first vocal line is written in a soprano or tenor clef, 3/4 time signature, and B-flat major key signature. It begins with a whole rest, followed by a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note Bb4, a quarter note C5, a quarter note Bb4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note G4, a quarter note F4, a quarter note E4, and a quarter note D4. The lyrics are: "In the qui - et mist - y morn - ing when the".

Tenderly (♩ = 69-76)

PIANO

mp (bell-like)

The piano accompaniment for the first system consists of two staves. The right hand plays a series of chords in the treble clef, while the left hand has whole rests in the bass clef. The chords are: G4-Bb4, A4-Bb4, Bb4-C5, Bb4-A4, A4-G4, G4-F4, F4-E4, E4-D4, D4-C4, and C4-B3. The dynamic marking is *mp* (bell-like).

5
moon has gone to bed, when the spar - rows stop their sing - ing and the

The second vocal line begins with a fermata over the first measure, marked with a '5'. The melody continues with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note Bb4, a quarter note C5, a quarter note Bb4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note G4, a quarter note F4, a quarter note E4, and a quarter note D4. The lyrics are: "moon has gone to bed, when the spar - rows stop their sing - ing and the".

The piano accompaniment for the second system consists of two staves. The right hand plays a series of chords in the treble clef, while the left hand has whole rests in the bass clef. The chords are: G4-Bb4, A4-Bb4, Bb4-C5, Bb4-A4, A4-G4, G4-F4, F4-E4, E4-D4, D4-C4, and C4-B3.





9 (end solo) 11

sky is clear and red,

TENOR *unis. mp*

BASS *unis.*

When the sum - mer's ceased its gleam - ing, when the

13

SOP. *mf*

ALTO *mf*

unis.

When ad - ven - ture's lost its mean - ing, I'll be

corn is past its prime,



17 *unis.* *f* 19

home - ward bound in time. — Bind me not to the pas - ture; chain me

21

not to the plow. ——— Set me free to find my

This system contains the vocal line and piano accompaniment for measures 21 through 23. The vocal line is in a soprano or alto clef, and the piano accompaniment is in a grand staff. The lyrics are: "not to the plow. ——— Set me free to find my". A dashed line above the vocal line indicates a melisma over the word "plow".

This system shows the piano accompaniment for measures 21 through 23, consisting of a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The music is in a minor key and features a steady accompaniment pattern.

24

decresc. (*) *mp*

call - ing and I'll re - turn to you some - how.

decresc. (*) *mp*

This system contains the vocal line and piano accompaniment for measures 24 through 26. The vocal line is in a soprano or alto clef, and the piano accompaniment is in a grand staff. The lyrics are: "call - ing and I'll re - turn to you some - how.". The music includes dynamic markings: *decresc.* (*) and *mp*.

decresc. *mp*

This system shows the piano accompaniment for measures 24 through 26, consisting of a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The music includes dynamic markings: *decresc.* and *mp*.





27 *unis. mp* 29

If you find it's me you're miss - ing, if you're

unis. mp



31 *cresc.* hop - ing I'll re - turn, *decresc.* To your thoughts I'll soon be list - 'ning,

cresc. *mp* in the

cresc. *decresc.* *mp*

35 *unis. mp* 37 *cresc.* Then the wind will set me rac - ing as my

road I'll stop and turn. *cresc.*



39

mf *decresc. unis.*

jour - ney nears its end, — and the path I'll be re - trac - ing when I'm

mf *unis. decresc.*

mf *decresc.*

43 *mp* *unis.* , *f* 45

home - ward bound a - gain. — Bind me not to the pas - ture; chain me

mp *unis. f*

Detailed description: This system contains the first two staves of music. The top staff is a vocal line in treble clef, and the bottom staff is a piano accompaniment in bass clef. Both are in the key of B-flat major (two flats). The music starts at measure 43. The vocal line has lyrics: "home - ward bound a - gain. — Bind me not to the pas - ture; chain me". The piano accompaniment provides harmonic support. Dynamic markings include *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *f* (forte). The instruction *unis.* (unison) is present above the vocal line in measures 44 and 45. A box containing the number 45 is located at the top right of the system.

Detailed description: This system shows the piano accompaniment for measures 43-45. It consists of two staves: a right-hand part in treble clef and a left-hand part in bass clef. The music is in B-flat major. The right hand features chords and moving lines, while the left hand provides a steady bass line. Dynamic markings *mp* and *f* are visible.

47

not to the plow. Set me free to find my

Detailed description: This system contains the third and fourth staves of music. The top staff is a vocal line in treble clef, and the bottom staff is a piano accompaniment in bass clef. The music continues from the previous system. The vocal line has lyrics: "not to the plow. Set me free to find my". The piano accompaniment continues with chords and moving lines. A dashed line above the vocal line indicates a phrase that spans across the two staves. Measure 47 is marked at the beginning of the system.

Detailed description: This system shows the piano accompaniment for measures 47-49. It consists of two staves: a right-hand part in treble clef and a left-hand part in bass clef. The music is in B-flat major. The right hand features chords and moving lines, while the left hand provides a steady bass line.





50 *decresc.* (9) *mp*

call - ing and I'll re - turn to you some - how.

decresc. (9) *mp*

decresc. *mp*

53

SOP. OR TENOR SOLO
(or section) *mp* 54

In the qui - et mist - y morn - ing when the moon has gone to

57

(end solo)

bed, when the spar - rows stop their sing - ing,





60 *rit.* S.A. *pp* Slowly (opt. Sop. div.)* *ppp*

I'll be home - ward bound a - gain.

T.B. *pp* (9) *ppp*

p rit. Slowly *pp*

* One or two voices only.



Questions?



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