

9/8 Time Signature

All of the note and rest values in 9/8 time are the same as in 6/8 time. Counting numbers have been printed in red for several measures. Notice the use of the **dotted quarter rest**. In 9/8 time it gets 3 counts, the same as a dotted quarter note.

Serenade ("Ständchen") D-920 (Schubert, 1827) – see page 11

DIRECTIONS: As a preparatory, count and tap the treble clef rhythm with the right hand and simultaneously tap the bass clef rhythm with the left hand. If necessary, count and tap the rhythm for each clef separately.

At first, learn to play the notes without pedal. Add pedal after the notes and rhythm can be played with confidence.

If desired, the D minor scale on page 18 may be learned as a supplemental exercise.

Espressivo ♩ = 50-54

The musical score is presented in five systems, each with a piano (p) and treble (t) staff. The key signature is D minor (two flats). The time signature is 9/8. The tempo is marked 'Espressivo' with a quarter note equal to 50-54 beats per minute. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and ornaments. Red counting numbers (1-9) are placed above specific measures in the piano part to indicate the 9/8 time signature. Dynamics include piano (p), mezzo-piano (mp), and mezzo-forte (mf). Pedaling marks are present throughout the piano part.

The Suite

A **suite** (SWEET) is a group of excerpts from a larger musical work such as a ballet, opera or musical show. *The original "Nutcracker Suite" consists of eight sections: *Overture*, *March*, *Arabian Dance*, *Chinese Dance*, *Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy*, *Russian Dance*, *Dance of the Reed Flutes* and *Waltz of the Flowers*. It is probably the most famous suite ever written, and was featured in "Fantasia," the classic animated film by Walt Disney. Five sections from this suite are used on pages 22-25.

A suite may also be a set or group of short instrumental pieces, usually various dance forms, popular during the *baroque* period of music (approximately 1600-1750). Bach and Handel composed music during that time.

The Nutcracker Story

The "Nutcracker" is a full-length ballet in two acts with more than 25 musical pieces. It requires about two hours of performance time. The plot is based on the story *The Nutcracker and The Mouse King*, by E.T.A. Hoffman. The main character is a little girl. At Christmas time she receives many toys and gifts, but her favorite is a wooden nutcracker carved to resemble a toy soldier. She dreams that the nutcracker becomes a handsome prince who rallies the toys to victory in a furious war against the mice. After the battle he escorts her to the *Kingdom of Sweets* where she is entertained by a festival of dances. At the conclusion, all the guests participate in a graceful waltz.

Performing the Suite

It is intended that all five sections of the Nutcracker Suite (pages 22-25) be played as a unit. You probably will want to learn them one or two at a time and eventually put them all together. When playing the suite, there should be a brief pause of a few seconds between each section.

Overture (from "Nutcracker Suite") Op. 71 (Tchaikowsky, 1892)

DIRECTIONS: This piece uses the same eight measure melody two times. The second time it is *transposed* to the key of F major. Many of the fingerings are the same both times. Watch for the staccato notes, short slurs and accents; be sure to play them accurately.

Allegro giusto ♩ = 88-100

The musical score for the Overture from the Nutcracker Suite, Op. 71 by Tchaikovsky, is presented in three systems. The tempo is marked 'Allegro giusto' with a quarter note equal to 88-100 beats per minute. The time signature is 2/4. The score is written for piano (p) and mezzo-forte (mf). The key signature changes from C major to F major at measure 8. The score includes fingerings, slurs, and accents.