

The Nashville Number System

What, Why and How

Presented by Fett
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What We're Used To Seeing...

TREAT YOU RIGHT
MUSIC AND LYRICS BY JOY ZIMMERMAN

CHORUS

D5

GIRLFRIEND, HE'S GOTTA TREAT YOU RIGHT

G5 G#5 A5 D5 G5 D5

DAY AFTER DAY, NIGHT AFTER NIGHT

G5 G#5 A5

HE'S GOTTA MAKE YOU WANNA STAY

D5 G5 D5

NIGHT AFTER NIGHT, DAY AFTER DAY

VERSE 1

G5

F5

WE'VE HEARD YOU SING THE BLUES

D5

WE WANT SOME BETTER NEWS

A5 D5

GO GRAB YOUR PARTY SHOES

CHORUS

D5

'CAUSE GIRLFRIEND, HE'S GOTTA TREAT YOU RIGHT

What We're Used To Seeing...

OCTAGON ARBITER

RHYTHM

D. ELAINE AIG

A1

PUNK ROCK (♩ = 172)

BACKBEAT

BASS

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). It consists of three systems of staves. The first system shows the Backbeat (drum) and Bass (bass line) parts. The Backbeat part features a simple pattern of eighth notes on the snare and bass drum. The Bass part starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic and features a walking bass line with a prominent E7 #11 chord. The second system continues the Backbeat and Bass parts, with the Bass part moving to an A7 b5 chord, then back to E7 #11, and finally to a 'N.C.' (No Chord) section with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The third system shows the Backbeat and Bass parts, with the Bass part moving to a B7 #9 chord. The score is marked with a rehearsal sign (II) at the beginning of each system.

What Might Work Better...

$\frac{4}{4} \text{♩} = 108$
 Key = G I


Jupiter's Kings of Rock n Roll
S. Pasner

	1	2^{-7}	4^{+9}	5
	$b6^0$	b^-	4^{+9}	6^0
	$5 \frac{5}{4}$	$\frac{1}{3} \frac{1}{2}$		
Main 4X	1	2^{-7}	4^{+9}	5
	$b6^0$	b^-	4^{+9}	6^0
3rd round = solos	$5 \frac{5}{4}$	$\frac{1}{3} \frac{1}{2}$	$b7$	4^{+9}
	$b6$	$b3$	$b5$	$b2$
	$b7$	$b6^0$	1	$b7^0$
	2^{-7}	6^0	$5 \frac{5}{4}$	$\frac{1}{3} \frac{1}{2}$

What Might Work Better...

$\frac{4}{4}$ Key of E $\text{♩} \approx 172$ *Octagon Arbiter* D.E. Alt
 Driving, punk metal feel
 1st six bars are solo drums...

Intro: X X X X





X X  \blacktriangle
 $\flat 7$ $\sharp 1$


A Section: > >

$\flat 7/1^{7\sharp 11}$ $1^{7\sharp 11}$ $\flat 7/1^{7\sharp 11}$ $1^{7\sharp 11}$

> >

$\flat 3/4^{7\flat 5}$ $4^{7\flat 5}$ $\flat 7/1^{7\sharp 11}$ $\blacktriangle \text{♪♪}$
 $1^{7\sharp 11}$

   
 $4/\flat 3$ 1 $4/\flat 3$ 1

 \blacktriangle
 $5^{7\sharp 9}$ $5^{7\sharp 9}$

B Section: > >

$\flat 7/1^{7\sharp 11}$ $1^{7\sharp 11}$ $\flat 7/1^{7\sharp 11}$ $1^{7\sharp 11}$

What Might Work Better...

$\frac{4}{4}$ Key of B

Perfect World

Nancy Moran

Mid-tempo, intensity with groove

Intro:	1	$\frac{5}{7}$	6 ⁻	4 ^{add2}
	1	$\frac{5}{7}$	6 ⁻	4 ^{add2}
Verse 1:	1	$\frac{5}{7}$	6 ⁻	4 ^{add2} >
	1	$\frac{5}{7}$	6 ⁻	4/1
	1	$\frac{5}{7}$	6 ⁻	4 ^{add2} >
	1	$\frac{5}{7}$	6 ⁻	4/1
Chorus 1:	4	5	1	 4 ^{add2} /2 ⁻
	4	5	1/2 ⁻	(4/5) (half bar)

The Nashville Number System - Huh...?

- A new (-ish) method of music notation (“notation plus”)
 - Nothing not done before
 - Notion of numbers for chords and notes goes all the way back to classical music
 - A solid, effective conglomeration of exiting methods
 - Main intentions / goals
 - Expediency
 - Flexibility

The Nashville Number System - Huh...?

- Not actually from Nashville, but Memphis!
 - Originated with the Jordanaires (Elvis Presley's backing vocalists)
 - Started out for singers, but quick took hold with players
 - Then founds its way to Nashville
 - Has steadily spread to other music centers around the world

Nashville Number System - Fundamentals

- All chords and notes represented by numbers, not letters
- Based on fundamental triads as core
- Based on the diatonic (vs. chromatic) scale (common reference), e.g.,
 - Conventional: C Maj, D Min, E Min, F Maj, G Maj, A Min, B Dim → C Maj
 - Early classical: I, ii, iii, IV, V, vi, vii → I
 - Nashville: 1, 2⁻, 3⁻, 4, 5, 6⁻, 7^o → 1

Nashville Number System - Fundamentals

- Represents
 - Song structure - *graphically*
 - Song chords
 - Song dynamics
 - Song time signature and tempo
- Can represent song arrangement and production as well

Nashville Number System - Biggest Benefits

- Changing the song key requires NO CHANGE to the chart
 - Chart is entirely *independent* of the song's key, capo positions of guitar, etc.
- Frees up everyone's mind to not have to focus in rigid chord voicings or transposing
- REALLY frees up the mind to look at song from a higher level, rather than “in-the-weeds” mechanics
- Single chart for ALL musicians (and producer, engineer, songwriter, etc.)
 - All are literally “on the same page” together
- Makes working with the song extremely fast (live and in studio)





Nashville Number System - Biggest Benefits

- No need to “learn” the song
- No need to read intricacies of traditional notation to get the same information
- Allows musicians to focus on implementation of their parts vs. learning the song
- Actually encourages musicians to bring their skills to the process, and think in a different way
 - Musicians LOVE that!
- Side-benefit: helps *creators* of the song to understand their own songwriting, structure(s). Etc.

Nashville Number System - Essential Elements

- Numbers for all chords and notes
- Symbols for internal structure of musical measures
- Symbols for dynamics: holds, stops, pushes/pulls crescendos, climbs/descents, etc.
- Leaves room for addition of traditional music notation when applicable
 - Especially rhythmic phrasing
- Multiple styles and “dialects” exist, and are often mixed
 - But all follow the same essential structure and elements

NNS - Most Common Elements

- Numbers for all chords and notes (rests use traditional notation, e.g. / 
 - 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 - Flat and sharp (usually written BEFORE the chord): $\flat 7$ $\sharp 5$
- Chord modifiers (can be combined)
 - Minor, Minor 7th, Dominant 7th, Major 7th, Sus 4, Diminished, Augmented, etc. 
- Split bars
 - ***Potential confusion with conventional “chord over bass note notation” /
- Bass note below chord (e.g., “1 over 3”) expressed as fraction
- Dynamics: holds (aka, “diamonds” ) , stops (filled black triangle )
- Climb or descend 