Introduction to MC Musiceditor

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by

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1. Making scores with MC Musiceditor: simple and professional!

MC Musiceditor was developed with only one purpose: to make life of musicians easier when making scores. Result is a very user friendly editor which makes professional scores without requiring specific knowledge (other than musical basics)!

MC Musiceditor uses a modification of the ABC-language – which was invented by Chris Walshaw. The ABC language is simple to use and can create music scores from basic melodies to a symphony score. Our modification of this language -let's name it MCM-language- makes it all easier.

2. Why you should use MC Musiceditor?

> ➢ It is very easy to use
> ➢ It has a very fast note-entry: you can make a score very quick (well, at least as fast as typing a text in your texteditor)
> ➢ Your sheet music (PDF) is of a high quality
> ➢ The software is donateware, so free to use and free of charge. But users are encouraged to make a small monetary donation (about 1,50 euro?).

3. MC Musiceditor and the MCM language

The MCM language works as follows: typing a C on your PC-keyboard will correspond with the note C as the A will correspond with the note A and the B with the note B etc.. It really is as simple as that!

3a. Notes and pitch

Notes however differ in pitch (i.e. register or octave), so the notation of notes must contain some more information. The methods to connect a note to a pitch are: lower case, upper case, apostroph or comma.

3b. Notes and duration

Notes differ in duration, they have a different length. Although the ABC language is simple, it could be more intuitive with respect to duration. We all know that a crotchet (= quarter note) can be represented as 1/4. So the crotchet C could be represented as C * 1/4 (as in the Guido notation and Lilypond). However, we don't like too much work...so a shorthand such as C4 is enough! Study the next table:

Notation	American	British	Our value	Our short cut
	Whole note	Semibreve	1	ALT + 1
	Half note	Minim	2	ALT + 2
	Quarter note	Crotchet	4	ALT + 4
	Eighth note	Quaver	8	ALT + 8
	Sixteenth note	Semiquaver	16	ALT + 6
	Thirty-second note	Demisemiquaver	32	ALT + 3
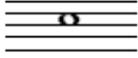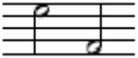
The next examples show the syntax used for duration by MC Musiceditor.

Note: *The standard ABC format relates duration to some variable value: it's not complicated, but it can be done so much easier.*

3c. Rests and duration

For the rests it is the same story: a rest with the duration of a minim (= half note) is coded as z2, a rest with the duration of a crotchet (= quarter note) as z4 etc.

A dotted rest is of course coded in the same way: a rest with the duration of a dotted minim (= half note) is coded as z2. and a rest with the duration of a dotted crotchet (quarter note) as z4. etc.

Study the next examples carefully:

4. How to make a MCM file

4a. First steps

As said before, we don't make ABC-files but MCM-files, files with the extension .mcm and a different softwarecode which is the fastest and easiest way to make scores!

Start MC Musiceditor. You will see this:
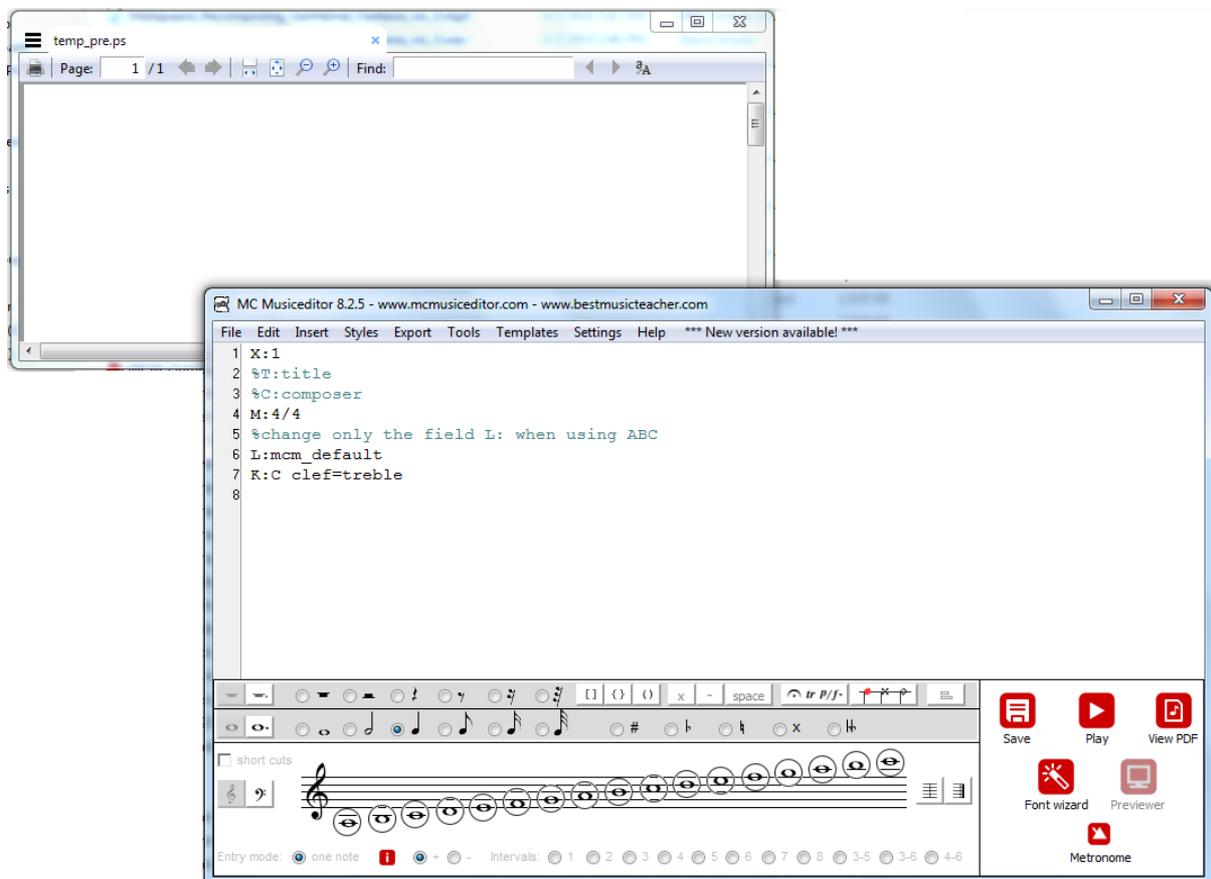
Looking at this image, you can see the menu above (with menu-items: File, Edit etc.), in the middle the default header of the mcm-file in the workarea (i.e. a simple texteditor with several standard options such as Copy, Cut, Replace: see Menu > Edit) and below a set of (radio)buttons which are mostly related to processing notes, barlines, accidentals, changing rhythmic values (dotted / undotted) and for saving and viewing the results. Some remarks:

> ➢ The default entry %T: title doesn't show the title; you have to remove the 'comment'-character %. Do this and replace 'title' with 'Minuet'.
> So: T: Minuet.

> ➢ The default entry %C: composer doesn't show the name of the composer. Remove the 'comment'-character % and replace 'composer' with 'John the composer'. So C: John the composer.

> ➢ With M: 4/4 you give the measure. Change the value 4/4 to 3/4 for our exercise.

> ➢ Don't change the entry L:mcm_default.

> ➢ K:C defines the key C major in a loose way: it is only a softwarecode to show the right accidentals. So K: will show no accidentals, because C major has no accidentals. For a piece in the key a minor (again a key without accidentals) you can use K: C too. K:Bb defines B flat major (and of course g minor) and K:F# Fis major etc. More information: Menu > Help

> ➢ clef = treble defines the clef. clef=bass and clef=alto] in the same way.

> ➢ The entry mode is default 'notes' (more information below); you can change this to text mode, which enables you to type in the workarea.

4b. On entering notes
Underneath a simple melody:

The MCM-code of this melody is:

```
c4 A4 A4 | B4 E4 E4 | A4. B8 c8 d8 | e2. |]
```

or with sticky rhythm:

```
(c A A)4 | (B E E)4 | A4. (B c d)8 | e2. |]
```

There are three ways to enter notes:

1. **Method 1**: typing in text-mode which is rather timeconsuming (think of typing)

    `_A,,4 D,4 =E,4. ^F,8 | G,2 ^C2 |]` etc.

    OR

2. **Method 2**: by clicking the buttons; more or less a bad option, think of RSI-problems, (but I use it sometimes)

    OR

3. **Method 3**: using short cuts which is really fast; your computer has to do some work, so it takes a little time, but it is obviously the best option): check the checkbox above the clefs.
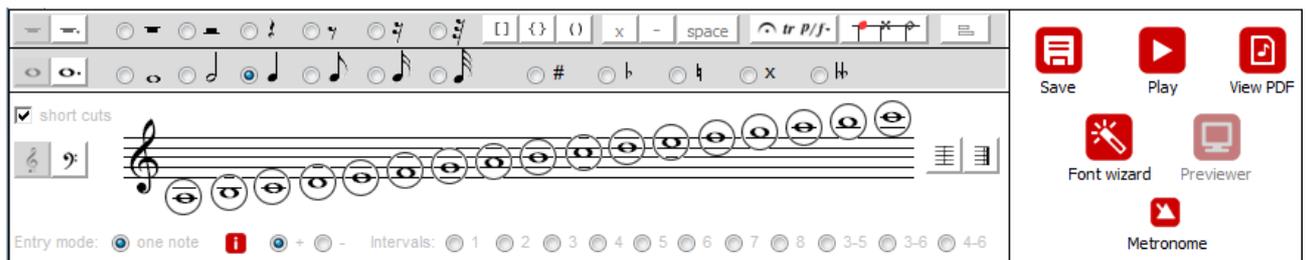
Let's enter the notes with method 3. Notice that the default rhythmic value is the quarter note.

4c. Notes and short cuts.
Move your cursor over a button and you find the short cut, if defined. If no short cut has
been defined for a note, then simply type the note you like to enter (see second item below)

1) c4 corresponds with the keys ALT + C

2) A4 corresponds with key A

3) Click the bar-icon for a barline (short cut: CTRL + B)

4) B4 corresponds with key B etc.

5) Click the radiobutton dotted (or click F2): A4. corresponds with key A !

6) Click the radiobutton undotted (or click F2), click the rhythmic value of an eighth (or
short cut ALT+4): B8 corresponds with key B, c8 with the keys ALT + C etc.

7) Click the radiobutton dotted (or click F2), click the rhythmic value of an halve (or
short ALT + 2): e2. corresponds then with the keys ALT + E

8) Click the closing bar-icon

9) Click the 'View PDF'-button (short cut F4). You will see this:

Minuet

John the composer

Close the window and remove the spaces between the eighth notes: B8c8d8
and click the 'View PDF'-button again. Now you will see beams, instead of separate notes.

Minuet

John the composer

Nice isn't it? Print your PDF and you will get a high quality print!

First follow up:

➢ save this code: File > Save (or button Save) to Minuet (the filename will be Minuet.mcm)
➢ select this code: CTRL + A
➢ delete this code: menu Edit > Delete or simple short cut Del
➢ import the file: File > Open and select the file Minuet.mcm
➢ now you can change the imported code and finish your minuet...


Second follow up:

➢ export this music to midi: Menu > Export > Current code to midi...
➢ listen finally to the midi file...
➢ or click the Play button

Note: I wrote a separate tutorial on the implemented Midi Player.

5. Music for two or more voices

Suppose you would like compose some music for two voices. You only have to add some small codes (see Template > Two-part). Like this!

```
X: 1
%T: title
%C: composer
M: 4/4
L: mcm_default
K: C
V: 1 clef=treble
V: 2 clef=bass
%%staves [1 2]
V: 1
[K: treble]
C2 D2 | C1 |]
V: 2
[K: bass]
C,2 G,2 | C,1 |]
```
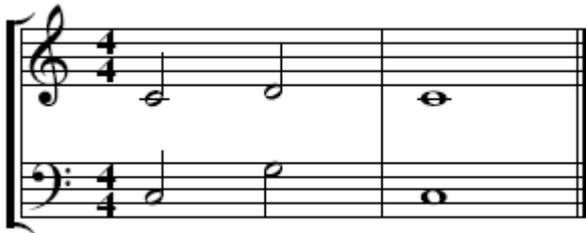
How to enter notes in the bass-clef?

Simply, click F1; then you will see a staff with a bass-clef. You can enter notes with short cuts; again, move your cursor over a button and you find the short cut, if defined. See below: you will see that the code clef=treble has been overruled by the following code [K: bass].

```
X:1
%T:title
%C:composer
M:4/4
L:mcm_default
K:C clef=treble
[K:bass]
 C,4  D,4  E,4  F,4  |  G,2  G,,2  |  C,1  |]
```
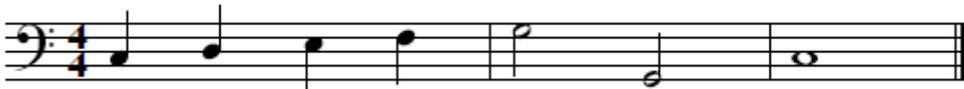
Of course, you could have written also

```
X:1
%T:title
%C:composer
M:4/4
L:mcm_default
K:C clef=bass
 C,4  D,4  E,4  F,4  |  G,2  G,,2  |  C,1  |]
```

6. Save/Export your notes !
You can save/export (see menu: 'File > Save as' and menu: 'Export')

- ➢ mcm (for modifying your code etc. later when you've time...)
- ➢ PDF
- ➢ midi (for a sound file).
  N.B. the results of converting mcm to midi are not always perfect.

7. Just a few more things to say...
There is a complete new world to discover for you. So, experiment with MC Musiceditor, study the Helpfile (Menu > Help) and you will create nearly all you want with music scores... This introduction and of course our MC Musiceditor will be extended and updated in the future. For now, happy composing!

A frequently asked question: I like to have note-examples for my paper, can MCM-files be exported to BMP, JPG etc.? In an earlier version of the MC Musiceditor we had this option, but now it is not necessary:

- ➢ Enter some code
- ➢ Export MCM to PDF: press button 'View PDF' (or F4)
- ➢ Make an image of the screen (Alt + PrtScr or use the snapshot-tool in Acrobat Reader: Tools > Select & Zoom > Snapshot tool)
- ➢ Paste this screendump to an image-editor (such as Irfanview -www.irfanview.com, which is an excellent freeware multimedia viewer, browser and converter. A great alternative: XnView - www.xnview.org)
- ➢ Edit this image
- ➢ Save it to the fileformat you like (jpg, png etc.).

If you have any comments or questions, please send me an email: info@mcmusiceditor.com

```
Study the user guide:

 - online: www.mcmusiceditor.com > User Guide

 - offline: menu Help > User Guide
```

8. Thanks

MC Musiceditor is free/open source (GPLv2 or above) music notation software (Windows/Linux under Wine). It is developed by Reinier Maliepaard, psychologist, software engineer, musician and teacher at the ArtEZ Conservatorium Netherlands, music theory, music history and composition.

The following programs, plugin and postscript extensions, which are independent components, are included in the package and used by MC Musiceditor. They are subject to the following licenses:

1. Development Software (NeoSoft Corporation): Neobook Runtime License
2. abcm2ps (Michael Methfessel/Jef Moine): GPLv2
3. gswin32c (Aladdin Enterprises): GPLv3
4. abc2midi, abc2abc (James Allwright/Seymour Shlien): GPLv2
5. abc2xml (Wim Vree): GPLv2
6. MCMsumatrapdf based on SumatraPDF (Krzysztof Kowalczyk et. al.): GPLv3
7. MCMmetronome based on Open Metronome (openmetronome.sourceforge.net): GPLv3
8. Midi Player, soundfont inclusive (Zoltán Bacskó): freeware
9. hpwPlusMemo (Hans-Peter Wickern): license v1.03
10. OpenNbNewLISP (Hans-Peter Wickern): GPL2 or above
11. newLisp.dll (Lutz Mueller): GPLv2
12. postscript extensions (Hudson Flávio Meneses Lacerda): GPLv2
13. Icons (Axialis Software): Creative Commons BY 2.5

Without these great contributions, MC Musiceditor couldn't have been built!

Note

1. All license files are included in the package.

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