

## Musopoly Rules

by Michiko Yurko

*Musopoly* is pronounced “mu (as in music) zop-o-lee,” and means “many musicians having fun together.” In this day and age of electronic devices and busy lifestyles, enjoying the company of friends, family and students with a music board game is time well spent.

*Musopoly* has thrills and challenges like the classic American real estate trading game. Players enjoy helping each other when needed and earning *rhythm playing cards* and *gold coins*.

The variety of music theory subjects and music-reading skills reinforced in one short time period is amazing.

Teachers and parents should introduce *Musopoly* at the right time in a child's musical education so the game is viewed as fun and exciting. When students roll the dice, draw cards and answer the questions with confidence, their joy in being a musician and self-esteem flourishes. Playing the many games found on the Music Mind Games website is an excellent way to prepare. Before playing *Musopoly*, read the Music Mind Games Cornerstones found on the website or in the *Handbook*.

There are three basic ways to play *Musopoly*:

- 1. LEARN** Experience the game and learn the answers during play, gradually becoming more independent.
- 2. PLAY** Learn all things necessary to: answer the cards, read the rhythms, take dictation and perform solos with confidence. It is fun to zip around the *Musopoly* game board when the answers are easy.
- 3. STAY IN SHAPE** Playing *Musopoly* regularly is an excellent way to help reinforce what's been studied.

### TO TEACH AND/OR REINFORCE

- |  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
| 1. Grand staff note names                  | 5. Musical symbols   |
| 2. Grand staff relationship to instruments | 6. Melodic dictation |
| 3. Reading rhythms                         | 7. Tempos            |
| 4. Rhythm math                             | 8. Intervals         |
|  | 9. Performance       |



#### MUSOPOLY PACK

*Musopoly* game board  
6 colored pawns  
2 dice  
10 gold coins

A piano or student's instrument is needed

#### PUPPY PACKET

*rhythm playing cards*  
*staff slate and magic notes*  
*grand staff cards*  
*tempo cards*  
*music symbol cards*  
*do re mi or alphabet cards*  
*blue jello cards - set 1*  
*Handbook*



## SET UP

Place these cards **face up** on the game board on their corresponding color squares. Players see which cards are next and can be ready with answers.

- grand staff cards* (on blue and green squares)
- music symbol cards* (on orange square)
- do re mi cards* or *alphabet cards* (on pink square)

Placed near the game board:

- rhythm playing cards*
- staff slate and magic notes*
- tempo cards*
- blue jello cards - set 1*
- Handbook*

Each player selects a pawn and places it on a different corner. This way there isn't a race around the board.



## LET'S PLAY

**WHO GOES FIRST** Each player or small team (see pg 5) draws one *rhythm playing card*. Whoever draws the smallest value note or rest takes the first turn. Whoever drew the next smallest value will go second and so on. Players rearrange themselves around the board in the order of play and return the cards to the deck.

**TAKE A TURN** Each player has one roll of the both dice on each turn. Add the number of dots on top of both dice and move pawns that number of spaces. Players move in the direction of the arrow near the bass clef. Follow the directions on pages 3 and 4 to know what the tasks are for each space. The *rhythm playing cards* and *gold coins* earned for completing the tasks are in the right hand column.

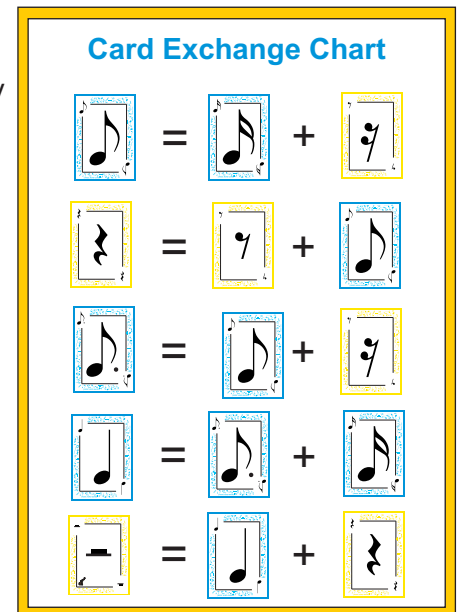
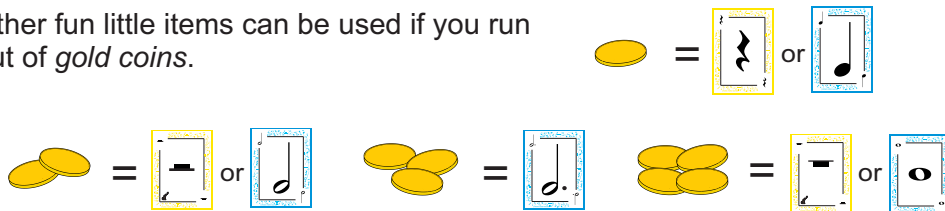
**RHYTHM PLAYING CARDS ARE THE MONEY** The deck of *rhythm playing cards* is passed from player to player during turns rather than having one person acting as banker. Equivalent notes and rests are interchangeable. Throughout the game, players trade in *rhythm playing cards* for equivalent higher values notes and rests. The goal is to keep as few cards as possible. This helps students learn note and rest values with each turn. For example: two sixteenth notes or rests are traded in for an eighth note or eighth rest .

It's best to sort the deck of *rhythm playing cards* so the sixteenth notes and rests are on top with the other notes and rests in order. The whole notes and rests will be on the bottom.

**EARNING MONEY** A correct answer to any space earns a sixteenth note or a sixteenth rest unless a rule on page 3 or 4 says otherwise. Players may earn the money even if an answer requires a little assistance from someone.

**GOLD COINS** Using *gold coins* along with *rhythm playing cards* makes the game even more fun. Once students earn a quarter value and more in *rhythm playing cards*, they can collect *gold coins*. One quarter note or rest in *rhythm playing cards* equals one *gold coin*. Throughout the game students must have *rhythm playing cards* in hand to equal the *gold coins* they have.




Other fun little items can be used if you run out of *gold coins*.



**DOUBLES** Roll the same number on both dice? Take a second turn. Two doubles? Take third turn. Three doubles? Move backwards, take that turn and then your turn is finished.

**ALPHABET SQUARES** The musical alphabet is above the spaces on the game board for reference during turns. They read left to right to show the direction players move their pawns.

**KEEP CARDS THAT ARE DRAWN FACE UP** Rather than returning cards to the bottom of the piles, players may keep them face up in front of themselves during the game. With cards in view, the learning continues.

**SPACES ON THE GAME BOARD**    These spaces have four steps. Completing the one step earns a sixteenth, two earn an eighth, three earn a dotted eighth and all four steps earns a quarter note or rest. When someone is searching in a musical score (4.), it is okay for the next player to begin playing.

## GAME SPACE

## WHAT TO DO

## EARN



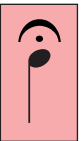
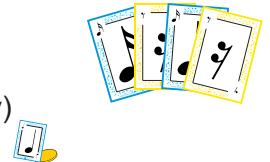
### TREBLE CLEF

1. Name the note
2. Find the note on the piano or your instrument
3. Match the pitch with your voice (if it is out of your range, you still earn the money)
4. Find the note in a music book



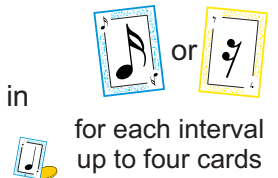
### BASS CLEF

1. Name the note
2. Find the note on the piano or your instrument
3. Match the pitch with your voice (if it is out of your range, you still earn the money)
4. Find the note in a music book



### FERMATA

*Do re mi cards:* Take two, three or four cards from the top of the pile. Arrange them in and order you prefer and sing or play them on your instrument  
 OR *alphabet cards:* Arrange two, three or four cards and name the intervals



for each interval up to four cards



### SHARP

1. Identify the symbol or word
2. Define the symbol or word
3. Demonstrate the symbol or word by singing or using your instrument
4. Find the symbol or word in a music book



Maryland

## GAME SPACE

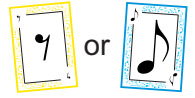
## WHAT TO DO

## EARN



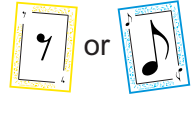
## DICTATION

Choose someone to play or sing a short melodic dictation pattern for you to write on the *staff slate* using *magic notes*. Listen to the pattern once or twice, sing it with everyone together and write it out. Ask to hear the pattern again if you need it. Whoever helped you earns a sixteenth note or rest.



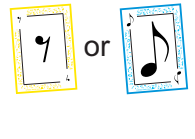
## EIGHTH NOTES

With your eyes closed draw a *blue jello card* to clap and/or hand sign as you say the Blue Jello words. Other players can help you keep a steady beat by snapping their fingers in tempo along with you. Do both sides of the card and earn double money.



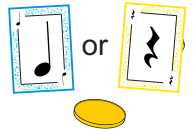
## TEMPO

With your eyes closed, draw four tempo cards from the deck. Put them in order on the rug/table from slowest to fastest. Leave spaces for the cards you didn't draw. Put all the *tempo cards* in order and earn double money.



## PLAY

Come prepared with a polished piece to play. Announce the name and composer of your piece and take a bow before and after playing. Listen for musicality, beautiful tone, and accuracy. If you feel your performance was polished you may also take an extra turn. Who decides? Think for a moment . . . (answer on pg 6). During performances, the game is paused.



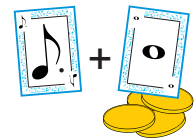
## FREE CHOICE

Choose a space on the board (except the corners) and earn whatever is appropriate for the space. Your marker will remain on the FREE CHOICE space. Each time you land on FREE CHOICE, choose a different space.



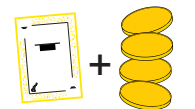
## CORNER CLEF (Treble clef or bass clef)

Ask someone to show you the pile of *treble* or *bass clef cards* one at a time. You have a few seconds to name the note on each one. If you miss, your turn is over, so think before you speak. When you finish the pile, identify cards that other players have so you name all 19 cards. Cards are returned to the pile or to other players.



## CORNER SHARP

Identify up to 16 *music symbol cards* from the pile. If you miss, your turn is over, so think before you speak. If there are less than 16 cards in the pile, identify the cards that other players have. Cards are returned to the pile or to other players.



Answer top cards

## ANSWER TOP CARDS

Pick the top card from the four piles in the center of the board and identify each one.



**END OF PLAY** The game lasts as long you'd like. When it's time to finish, players can announce, "This is the last round." The player who went last on the first round will go last on the last round. It's fun to put your pawn, cards, *rhythm playing cards* and *gold coin* in a baggy, note of the space you are on and continue another time.

## ADAPTATIONS

**GROUP PLAY** Players may prefer to be on a team of two or three. The team shares a marker, takes turns rolling the dice and drawing cards. They discuss answers together and perform the required activities as a group. When landing on PLAY, usually one team member volunteers to play.

**YOUNGER PLAYERS** It's most important to remember that the game should be encouraging, exciting and with just enough information to help players grow in their understanding of musical facts as well as reassure them of what they already know.



**1. Use a few cards** Use a few each of the *grand staff cards*, *music symbol cards* and *do re mi cards* or *alphabet cards* that students have studied. Add more cards as players become fluent.

**2. Tempo cards** These can be included even if players have not studied tempi. To create an awareness of different tempi, the player who lands on the tempo space sings or plays a piece of music. After that, the teacher or parent can help the student choose which tempo he or she played.

**3. Money** Use the five basic values of notes and save the rests and dotted notes for later. Use the *Handbook* (page 36) to compare notes and rests so players can learn relative values.

### YOUNGEST PLAYERS

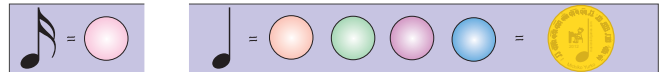
**1. Use magic notes** 1 *magic note* equals 1 sixteenth note or rest. Students receive *magic notes* as they earn *rhythm playing cards*. 4 *magic notes* equal 1 *gold coin*.

**2. Use only one die**

**3. Teacher is the banker**

**4. Grand staff cards** Identify if the card is a line or a space.

**5. Tempo** Student gives student 2 cards e.g. *presto* and *lento*. Teacher and student pronounce the names. Teacher says the meaning of the cards. Student simply guesses which card is that meaning. Teacher says "Yes!" or "Try again". Everyone stands up and moves around the game board in the tempo saying it over and over.



### ADVANCED PLAYERS

Players can draw 2-3 *rhythm playing cards* and add their beats together to determine the order of play.

#### 1. Grand staff cards

- 1) Use the note on the card as tonic, identify the key signature and name the sharps or flats
- 2) Play a scale beginning on the note (choice of major or minor). Earn a sixteenth note or sixteenth rest for each sharp or flat in the key signature
- 3) Use the note on the card as the root and spell a seventh chord (dominant, minor/minor, major/major, etc.), play it on the piano and resolve it. As an option, the *bass clef cards* can be one type of chord and the *treble clef cards* another

**2. Music symbol cards** Use the *music symbol cards* - set 2 or a combination of both set 1 and 2

**3. Cards for the pink space** *Do re mi cards* or *alphabet cards* - Come up with original ideas

**4. Tempo cards** Draw one *tempo card* and play a short piece or part of a piece in the tempo

**5. Sight-reading** Instead of drawing a *blue jello card*, clap or sight-read several lines of new music



Norway

*Musopoly* can be adapted to fit your own situation. Have fun coming up with creative ideas on your own.

#### Did you know?

- *Musopoly* was first published (1970's) as colored shapes teachers cut apart and pasted on a square of posterboard.
- The first *Musopoly* board game was sold in 1984 and was only 10 inches square. The cards were 1.5 inches.
- Between 1992 and 2005 there was a giant *Musopoly* (pictured at left) which was nearly 3 feet square. It was made with four enormous puzzle pieces.

## TIPS FOR TEACHERS

While *Musopoly* is usually easy for students to understand, some teachers may find it a little tricky. Use the following steps to help prepare, explain and play the game.

**1. Play by Yourself** Before playing with your students play the game and pretend to be several players. Roll the dice. Read through the rules as you play. Pick up the cards and everything else. Collect your earnings.

Once you understand the game, introduce it to your students.

**2. Teach and Play** It's fine to sit and play the game with your students, teaching, assisting and adapting as you need to. The game needs to be at a comfortable level for them and you are best at determining that.

**3. Learn as You Go** Rather than explaining all the rules, just start playing. As players land on spaces, teach them what the space requires and what they earn. This is a good time to assess if you want to make adaptations to make the game easier or more difficult. Students should tell each other if their answers are correct rather than you. This keeps everyone involved throughout the game.

**4. Around the Board** Continue around the board with players taking turns rolling the dice and learning how to play the game together. Most likely this first time could take an entire class session but they will remember well and be able to play more independently the next time.

**5. Students Only** Once the rules are understood, the game is best played without too much teacher participation. The players can relax, relate better to each other, respond to each other's answers and have more fun. You can be nearby and from time to time answer a question or give some guidance.

Students may need reminders to stay on task and be ready when their turn comes around. Or they may have forgotten something and need a little help figuring out the answers.



*play*

Who decides if your piece was polished so you take another turn? Your teacher or parent? It's best if you don't think of them as your judge. The other players? Same reason.

Yourself? That's right! We know best how we performed, right? There's always good things to recognize and likely a few to improve. Be kind and self-compassionate when you decide how you played. Polished doesn't mean perfect.

A team of three teens writes a dictation pattern.



Sweden

This class has three *Musopoly* games going simultaneously.



Hawaii

If you have any questions or comments about the rules or how to play *Musopoly* please contact us at [www.musicmindgames.com](http://www.musicmindgames.com).