

EXERCISE:

1. Choose a song in 4/4 time to start.
2. After the intro (usually 4 to 8 bars), begin by listening to the first vocal section of the song. We'll call this A.
3. Number (as in write this down!) and keep track of the beats and measures from the very beginning of the melody (e.g. 1, 2, 3, 4; 2, 2, 3, 4; 3, 2, 3, 4; 4, 2, 3, 4; and so on).
4. Keep track of your measures until you come to the next musical section (contrasting idea). We'll call this B.
5. Figure out the number of bars in this new B section.
6. Do this for each section, starting with bar one, for each section.
7. Keep track of all these various contrasting sections. They are called verses, pre-choruses, choruses, bridges, and/or instrumental solos—and I will explain each of these in more detail just a little bit more down the road here.
8. Meanwhile, while you're beginning to calculate the bars, just label each section with the letters of the alphabet, starting with A and moving through the alphabet with each contrasting section.
9. When you hear the same music play again, label that new section with the same letter you marked it as initially.