Section 1.8
REPEAT SIGNS AND REPEATED SECTIONS

Simple repeats
The end repeat sign tells the performer to go back one time to the start repeat sign, or, if there is no start repeat, the beginning of the movement.

First and second endings indicate different music to be played the first and second times. “2x only” (not shown below) means play that music the second time only. Third and higher endings are also possible.

D.C. (da capo, “from the head”) means repeat back to the start of the piece. Al fine means after repeating back, play to the fine marking. Traditionally, musicians skip over any first endings after they go back for a D.C. (or D.S.) repeat. The numbers in the example below indicate: (1) play through the first ending; (2) repeat back to measure 1; (3) jump to the second ending; (4) play to the last written measure; 5) D.C. to the “head” (start); and (6)/(7)/(8) play through to the Fine, skipping any first endings and stopping at the end of the measure with the Fine marking.
D.S. al coda means repeat back to a special sign (see example below; segno means sign) and al coda means after repeating back, play to the coda mark, then jump to the coda (coda means tail). The numbers in the example below indicate: (1) play from the start to the D.S. al coda break; (2) repeat back to the sign (dal segno); (3) play until the “jump to coda” symbol; and (4)/(5) jump to the coda and play to the end. D.S. al fine (not al coda) and D.C. al coda (not al fine) are also common possibilities.

Repeats are used only in handwritten music and parts for rhythm instruments such as guitar, drums, or sometimes piano.

Repeated beat symbol is used only in handwritten music and parts for rhythm instruments such as guitar, drums, or sometimes piano.

Repeated measure is used only for drums, piano, or guitar.

Two-measure repeat is used only for drums, piano, or guitar. Four-measure repeats are also possible; they use four slashes and the number four, not two. To repeat more than four measures, use a simple repeat sign.