

Creating Lead Sheets with Noteworthy Composer 2

This is a topic that comes up every so often on the NWC forum. So, in the interests of trying to assist others, I decided to document the process that I use when preparing lead sheets (combined melody, lyrics and chord symbols) for the band at my church.

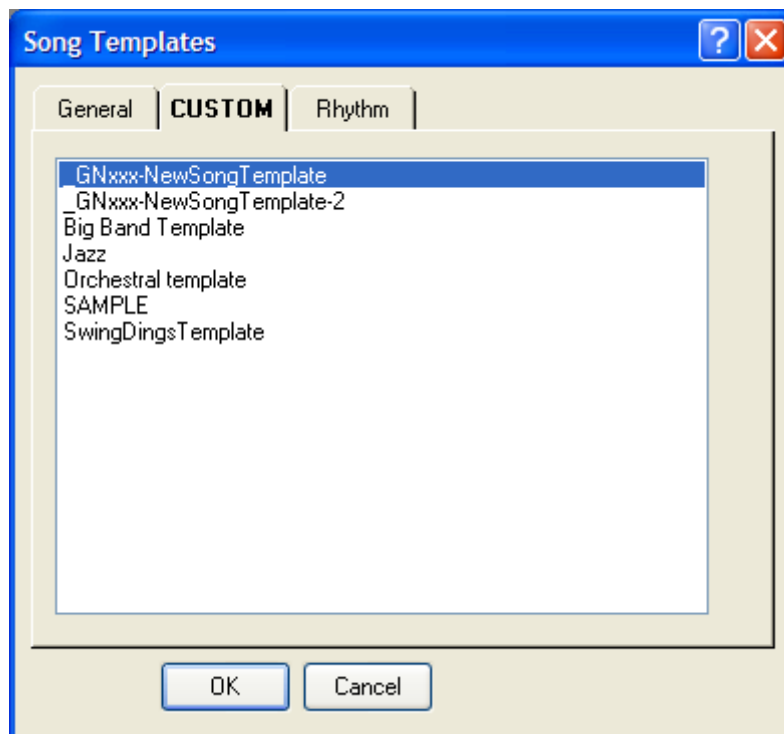
I have chosen to use a piano and vocal source for “Where'er You Walk” by G.F.Handel. Given he's been dead for a while (1759) I shouldn't run into any copyright issues. As the score I've found has no chords I'll have to work them out. You may disagree with some of the chords I choose, but hey, interpretation is a big part of music anyway.

This document uses partial screen prints combined with short explanations. It also presumes that you are familiar with the basic operations of NWC. For further details see the help file and reference material available on the Noteworthy Composer web site, forum and the Noteworthy Scriptorium (the Scripto). See the useful links on the last page for quick access.

[Useful links - access the NWC web site, the Scripto and my font suites from here](#)

OK, enough waffle. Let's get started.

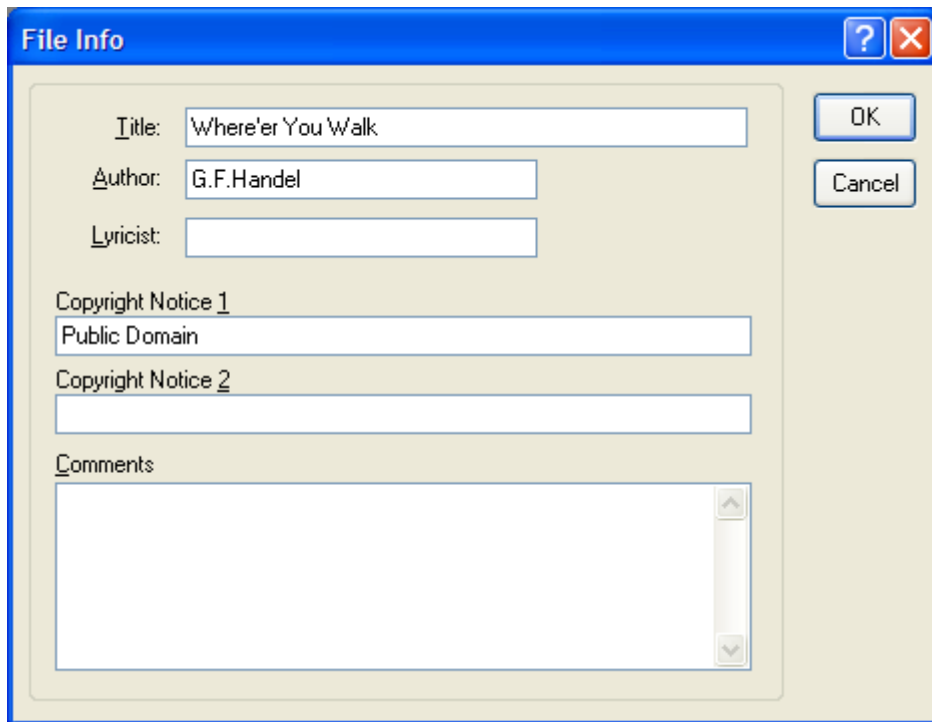
Create a new song file. Click on the the File, New menu item and the template dialogue appears. I have a template I use for my church listed under the Custom tab, so that's the one you'll see here.



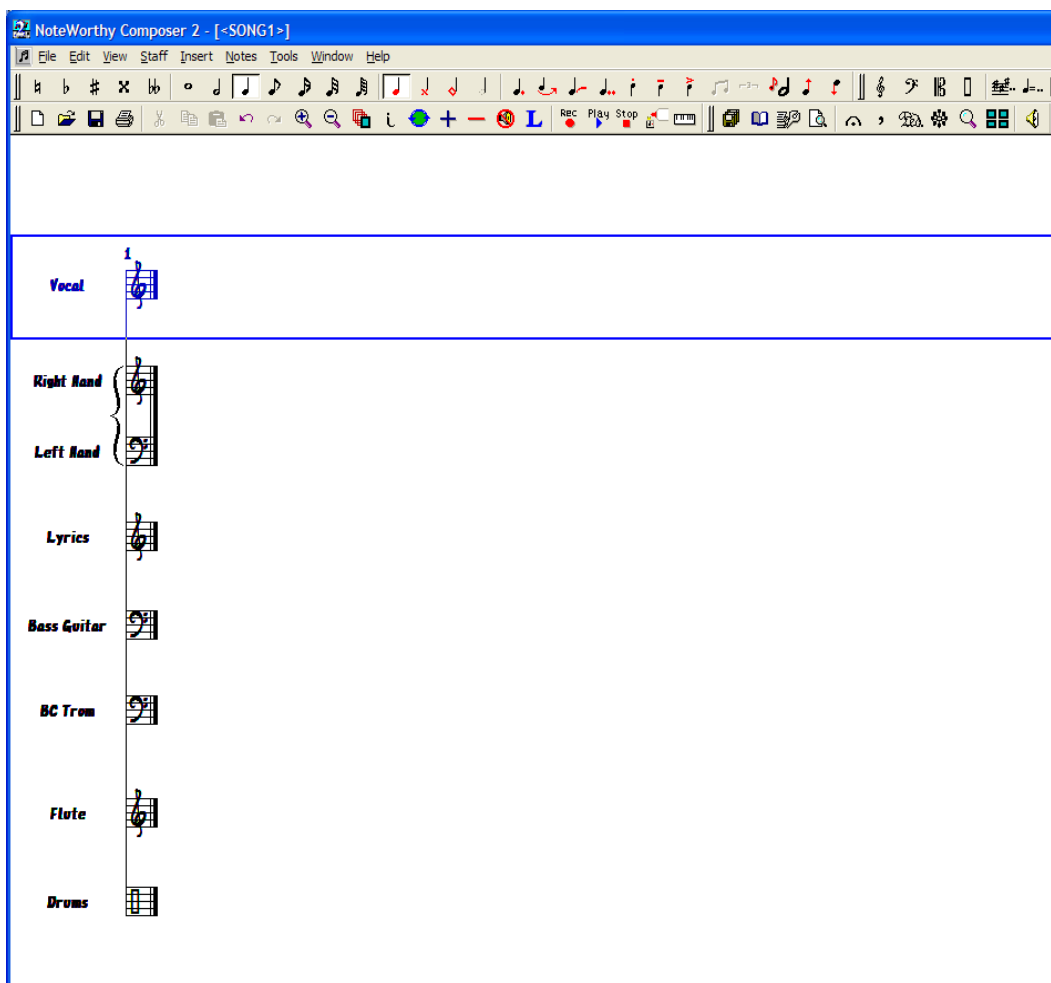
It uses my SwingDings font suite. To make creating the chord symbols easier I recommend you use one of my font suites which are available from the Scripto.

In this case I use the SwingChord font in the User6 position (Page setup - Fonts, Select User 6 and click Modify). I generally use a font size of 16 for my chords. The following examples use this font size with a staff metrics of 22. I suggest that you experiment to find which sizes best suit your needs.

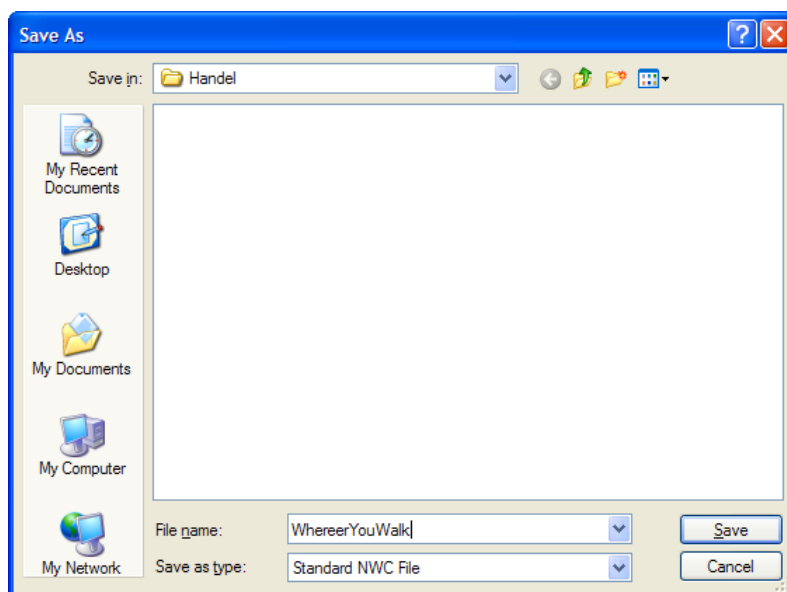
Having selected the template I want to use, the next dialogue shows up:



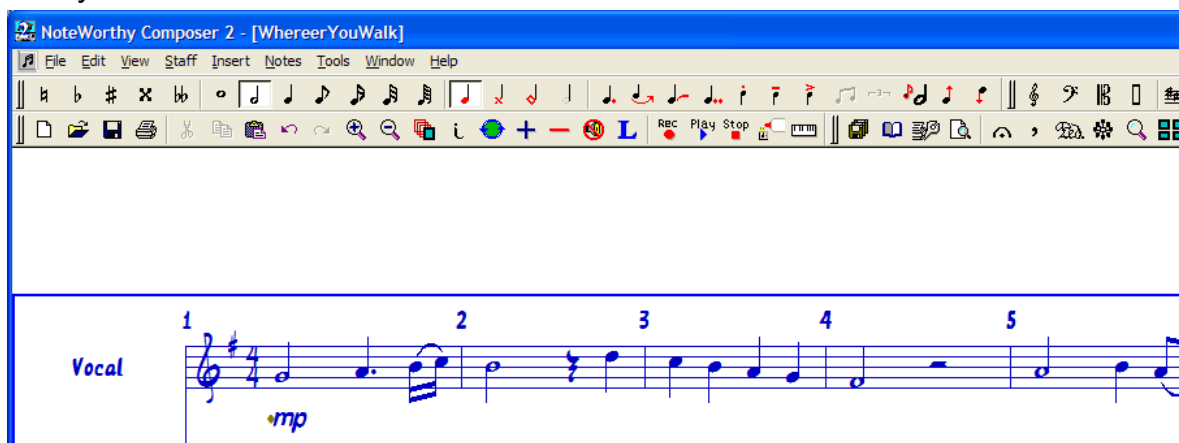
Fill it in and continue:



At this point I usually save my song file in order to give it a name and to make saving during note entry an uninterrupted process. It's better not to use apostrophes in filenames.

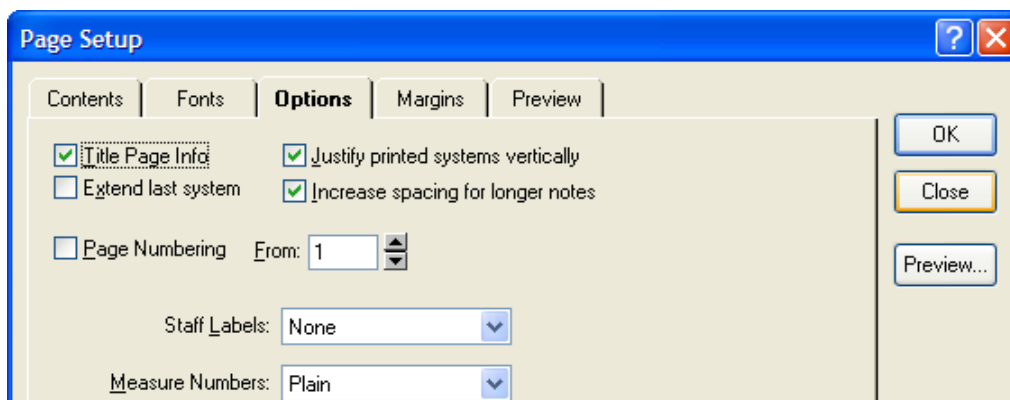


Now, commence entering your score whichever way is most comfortable for you. I generally start with the vocal line:

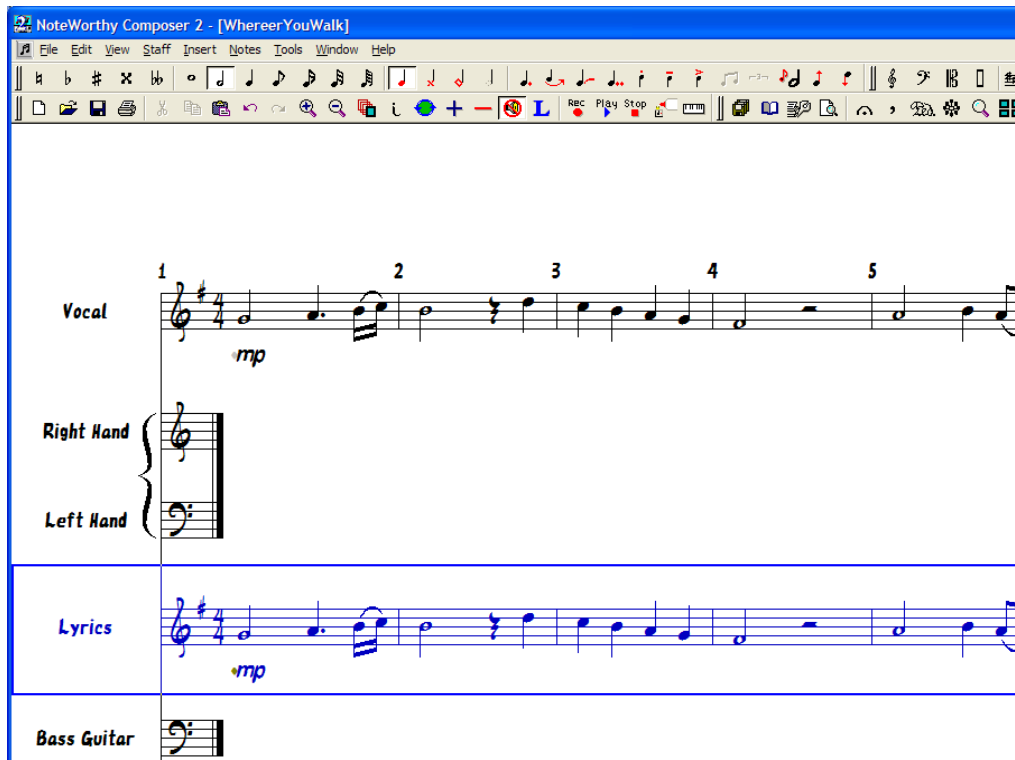


I differentiate "Vocal" and "Lyrics" thus: The Vocal staff contains the melody and plays back. The way I use it, the Lyrics staff will contain some, if not all, of the melody, does NOT play back, and contains the lyrics, chords and other common elements. I find having the melody repeated on the Lyrics staff helpful when editing but it is not mandatory, there simply needs to some kind of place holder for the lyric syllables to attach to.

You will note that I have bar (measure) numbers showing. I find this very useful when working. It is set on a song by song basis in the Page Setup, Options tab dialogue:



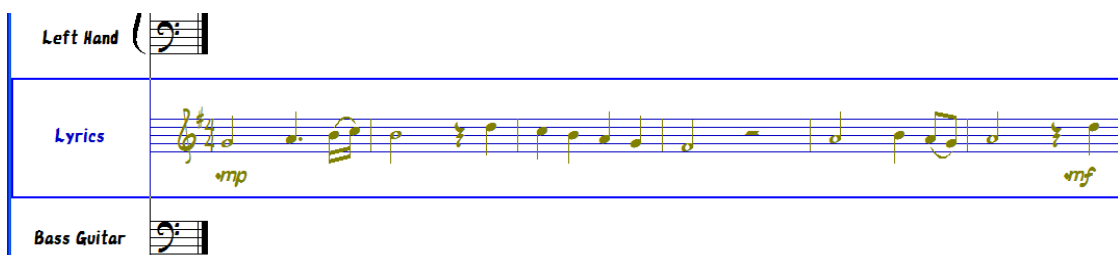
Note the lack of tempo marking - that goes on the “Lyric” staff, which I create now. First, select the entire vocal staff **<Home> <Shift+End>** and copy to the clipboard **<Ctrl+C>**. Next, select (or create) the Lyrics staff and paste the clipboard into it **<Ctrl+V>**. The Lyrics staff is ALWAYS muted:



Now, highlight the Lyrics staff **<Home> <Shift+End>** and select its properties **<Alt+Enter>**. In the Notation Properties dialogue, select the Visibility tab and choose Never from the “Show on printed page” list box.



This will “hide” the lyrics staff:

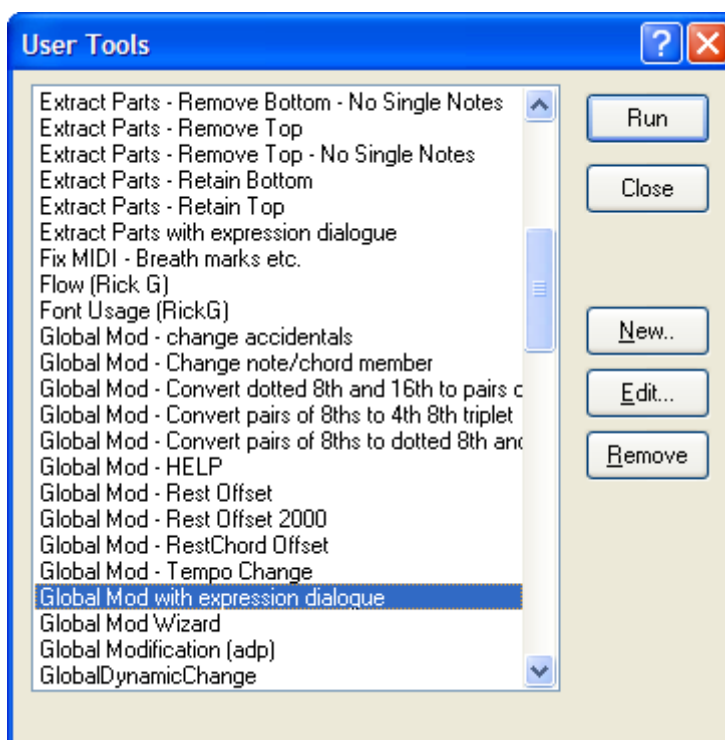


Now, because I want to use the lyric staff to “hang” my chords on, and some of them may be on rests, I need to make the rests visible again. This is important because text alignment on unprinted objects (rests or notes) when there isn't a related visible object on the layered staff is unpredictable and prone to being just plain wrong.

So, I use Andrew Purdam's “Global Modification” user tool for this task. If you haven't had any exposure to user tools yet I suggest you visit the Scripto and check the documents available there. You will also need to install the User Tool Starter Kit available from the Noteworthy site. There are links to these sites on the last page.

Here's how I use Global_Mod:

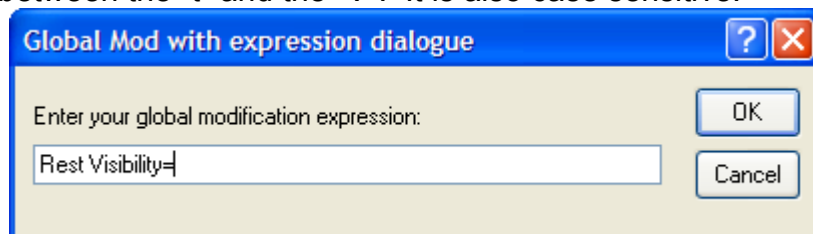
Have the Lyrics staff active, press **<Alt+F8>**, and select an appropriate Global_Mod tool from the list. I have one called “Global Mod with expression dialogue”. It's the same as the default “Global Modification (adp)” but without the default “Help” parameter.



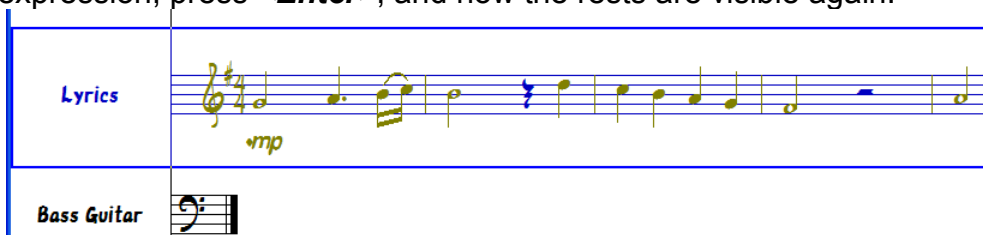
When run it prompts for a Global_Mod expression. The one we need here is:

Rest Visibility=

Note the space between the “t” and the “V”. It is also case sensitive.



Enter the expression, press **<Enter>**, and now the rests are visible again:



At this point I'll enter the piano part. We need to come back to the Lyrics staff, but as I'll need the piano part to help work out the chords it will be easier to put it in now.

In this particular work there is a chord construct in the second last bar on the piano right hand that NWC cannot do.



The real problem is getting the note positioning correct. The part that "can't" be done is the horizontal placement of the low G# on the fourth beat of the bar. So, consider a way to make it happen anyhow.

In NWC all chords have a written duration of the shortest chord member. This includes restchords.

So a solution comes to mind. What if I make the minim (half note) "E" a restchord with a crotchet (quarter) rest, and then use Global_Mod to move the rest part of the chord off the page.

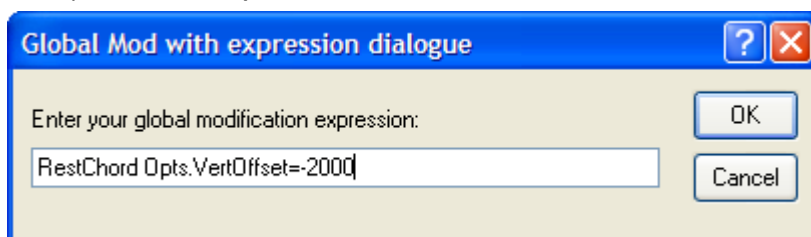
First I need to create the bar:



The spacing works. Good. Note that a rest can have a "stem direction" the same way a note can. In this case I deliberately set the rest to be "stem down" so the note can be stem up. This is set using the **<Shift+UP/DownArrow>** key combination. You can set it first then enter the note or rest, or you can highlight the note or rest and set it later. In the case of this restchord I placed the rest, highlighted it, and then set a "stem down" attribute. Next I used **<Ctrl+Enter>** to place the note which NWC kindly set to stem up automatically for me.

Now for the Global_Mod command to move the rest off the page:
Highlight the offending bar, press **<Alt+F8>**, pick Global_Mod and enter:
RestChord Opts.VertOffset=-2000
in the dialogue.

Again, note case sensitivity, the space between the "d" and the "O" and also that the offset is -2000 (minus 2000). This is important, as the rest is UNDER the note.

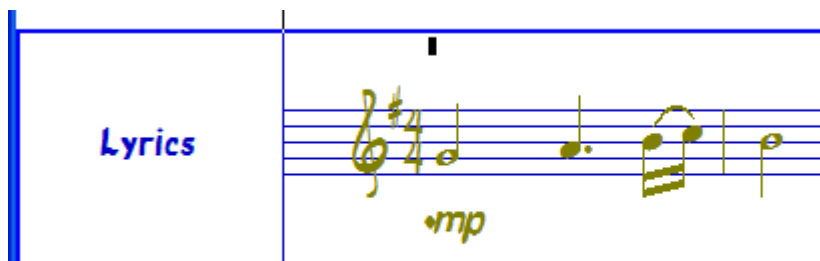




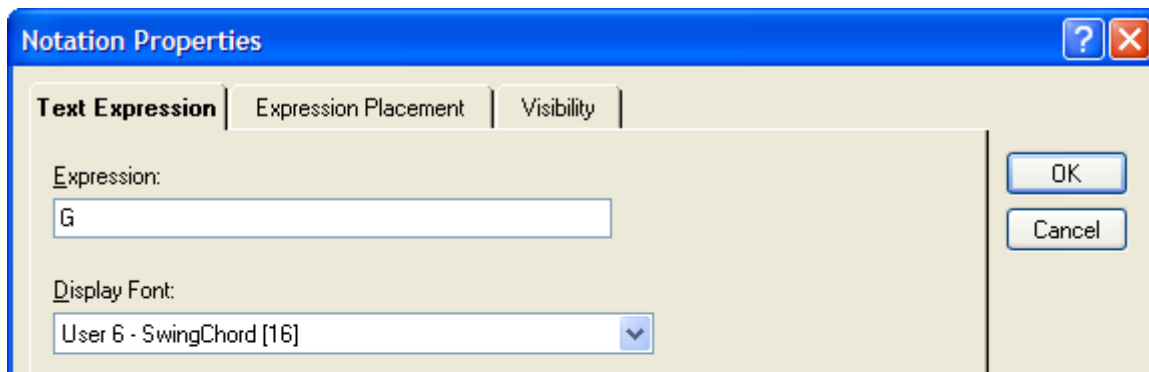
This is the result.

Right, time to continue with the left hand... Once the left hand is done it's time to complete the Lyrics staff. Select it, and position the cursor above the staff where the chords are going to be placed. As previously mentioned, in my template I have my SwingChord font set up as the User6 font.

Move the cursor horizontally until it is just BEFORE the note or rest that you want to place the first chord at:



Now press <x> to start the text dialogue:



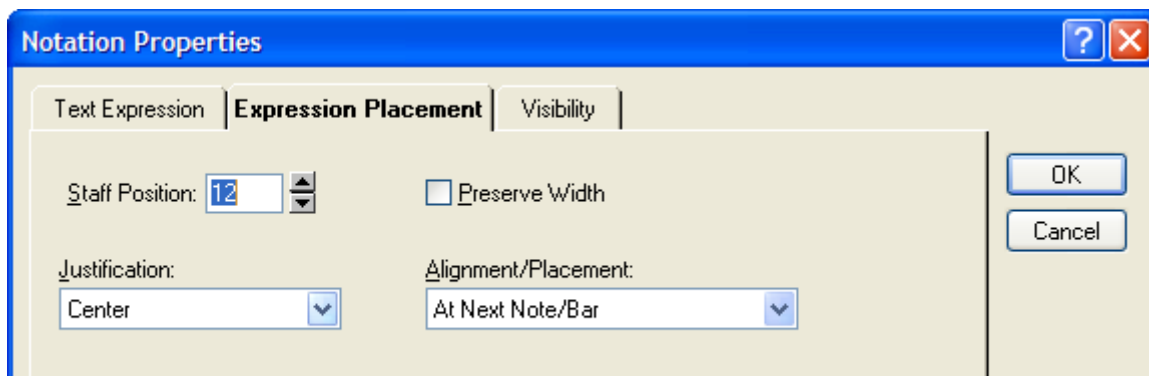
and enter relevant details on the Text tab – in this case, the chord will be a “G” and I want to use my SwingChord font which is in the User6 location.

On the Expression Placement tab of the same dialogue I want to select Justification and alignment. I normally use “Center” justified “At Next Note/Bar”. Don't preserve width.

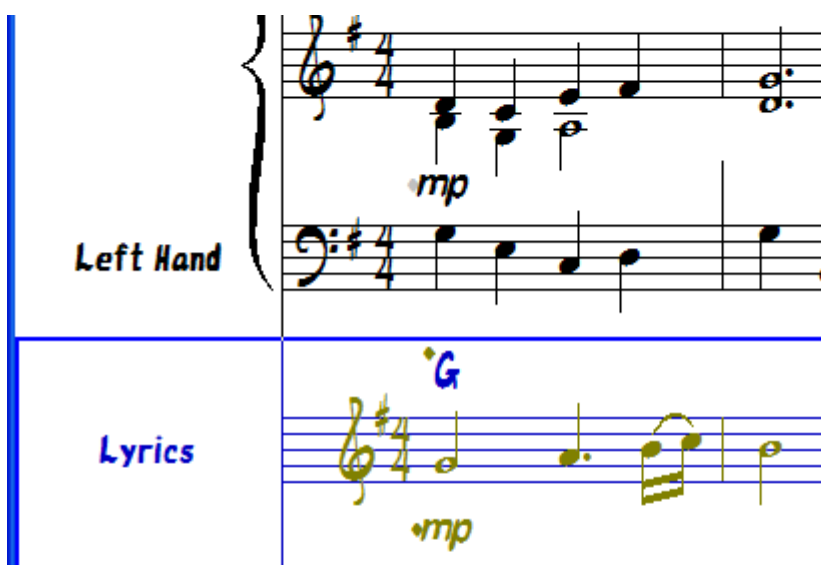
Oh yes, as an aside: I find it easier to have “Smart Properties insert” turned off so that I always have all the dialogue tabs available.

This is accessible via: Tools menu, options, Editor tab, Smart Properties insert Unchecked.

Now, back to the Expression placement tab:



Go back to the Text Expression tab and press **<Enter>** or click OK. I do this so that next time I want to enter a chord all the parameters will already be set and all I need to do is change the text expression itself.



Now, I have to make a decision. The second beat in the piano staves is a C chord on an E bass. Do I make an entry for it or not? In this case yes, especially as the third chord is an Am on a C bass and the fourth chord is a D.

Now, this poses a problem as the notes in the Lyric staff aren't positioned properly to allow it. This is why this staff is ALWAYS muted – I can move notes around and provided I keep important relationships consistent for the lyrics I can place the chords how I want:



As you can see, in this case I chose to set up some tied notes to replace the minim (half) and dotted crotchet (quarter) so I can place the next chords – remember to keep the notes hidden. The ties are there to maintain lyric alignment.

<p>Left Hand</p>	
<p>Lyrics</p>	

You'll note that at the moment things seem a little crowded. Not to worry; after all the chords are worked out we'll layer this staff with the Vocal staff and do a print preview. It is likely that the horizontal justification of the bars will stretch things out enough to space these in an acceptable fashion. If it doesn't work I'll worry about it then.

OK, check the cursor height and adjust it if necessary, then press **<Ctrl+RightArrow>** to get to the start of the next bar. Determine the next chord, looks to me like a G chord with the bass (piano left hand) moving around the chord tones, and enter it:

To place a G press: **<x> <G> <Enter>**


<p>Left Hand</p>	
<p>Lyrics</p>	

If you had the cursor at the right vertical position the chord position will be correct without any changes to the Expression Placement part of the Text entry dialogue.

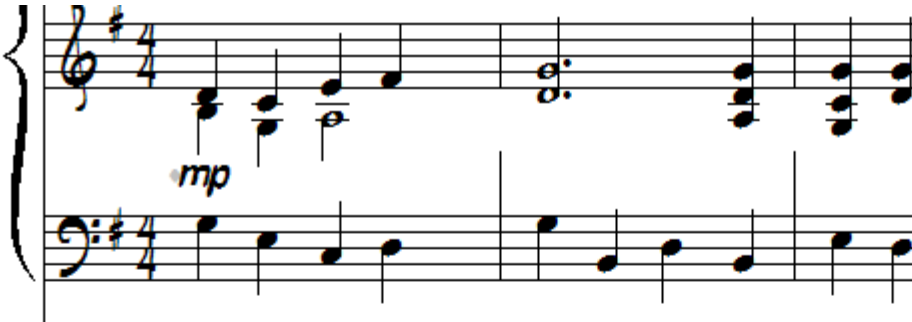

This works because, aside from the vertical position which is always updated by the current cursor position, the dialogue remembers the last settings used.

This feature makes text entry this way pretty fast. Especially if you don't have to figure out what the chords are in the first place.

The next chord is another tricky one. Do I specify the A passing tone or ignore it? For this exercise I'm going to specify it, though in real life I'd probably let it go. So, **<RightArrow>** twice, press **<x>**, **<G>** **<9>** **<Enter>** and *voila*;

<p>Left Hand</p> 	
<p>Lyrics</p> 	<p>G C/EAm/CD G G⁹</p>

<Ctrl+RightArrow> will take me to the start of the next bar (good shortcut, that one), and I can enter the next chord:

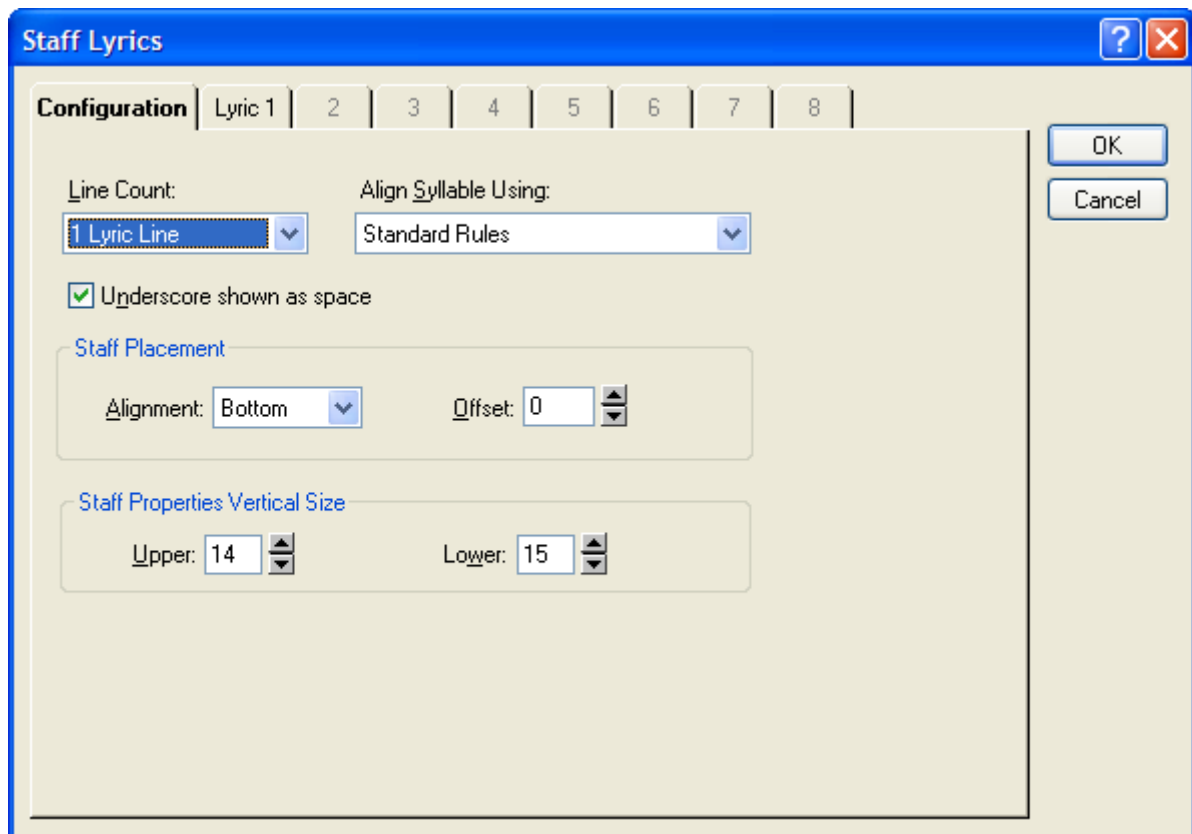
<p>Left Hand</p> 	
<p>Lyrics</p> 	<p>G C/EAm/CD G G⁹ C/E</p>

OK, I won't detail the rest of the chord entry. I'm sure you get the idea now. You will note that I'm only moving the cursor right, not up and down. Since the cursor maintains its height, if I've picked the right vertical position in the first place, all is OK.

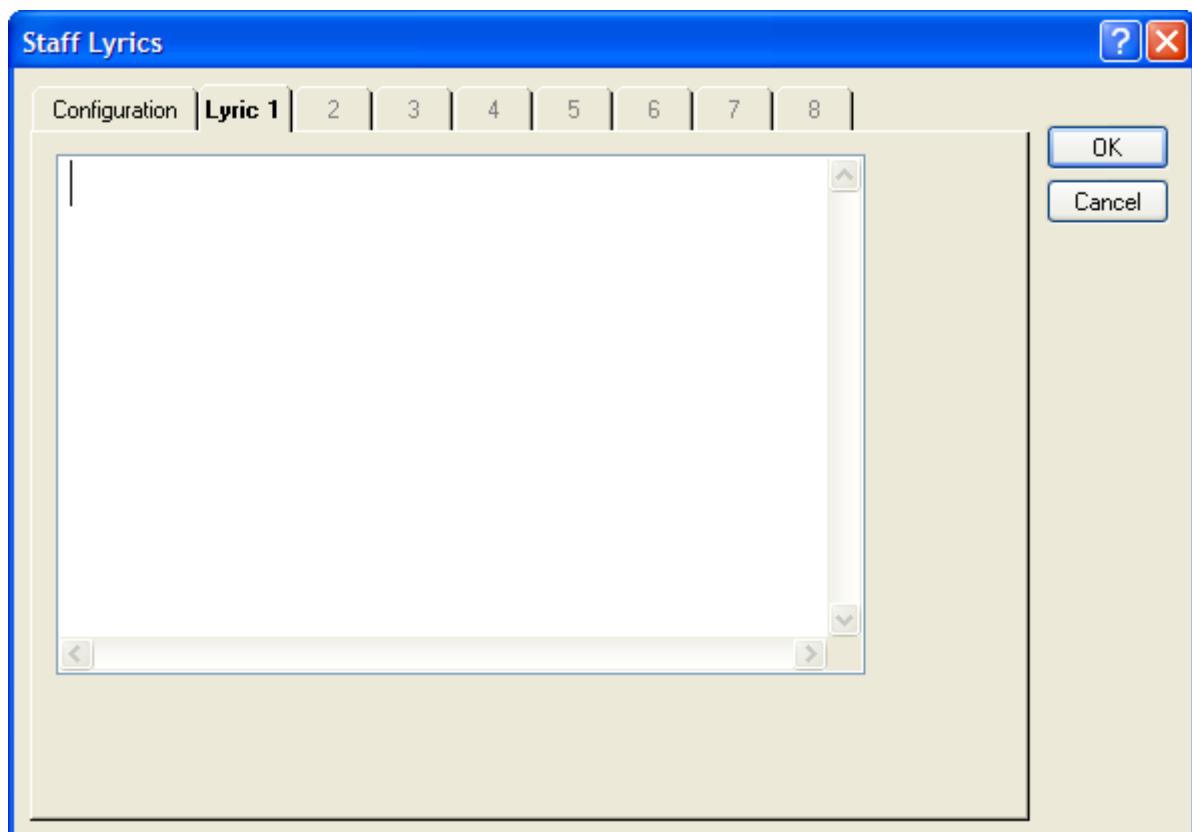
If the vertical position is wrong, select the text entry with a simple **<Shift+Left/RightArrow>** command and then use **<Shift+Ctrl+Up/DownArrow>** to move it up or down.

You will note I am relating keyboard commands in this document rather than mouse activities. This is because using the keyboard is significantly faster and more accurate than the mouse for this task.

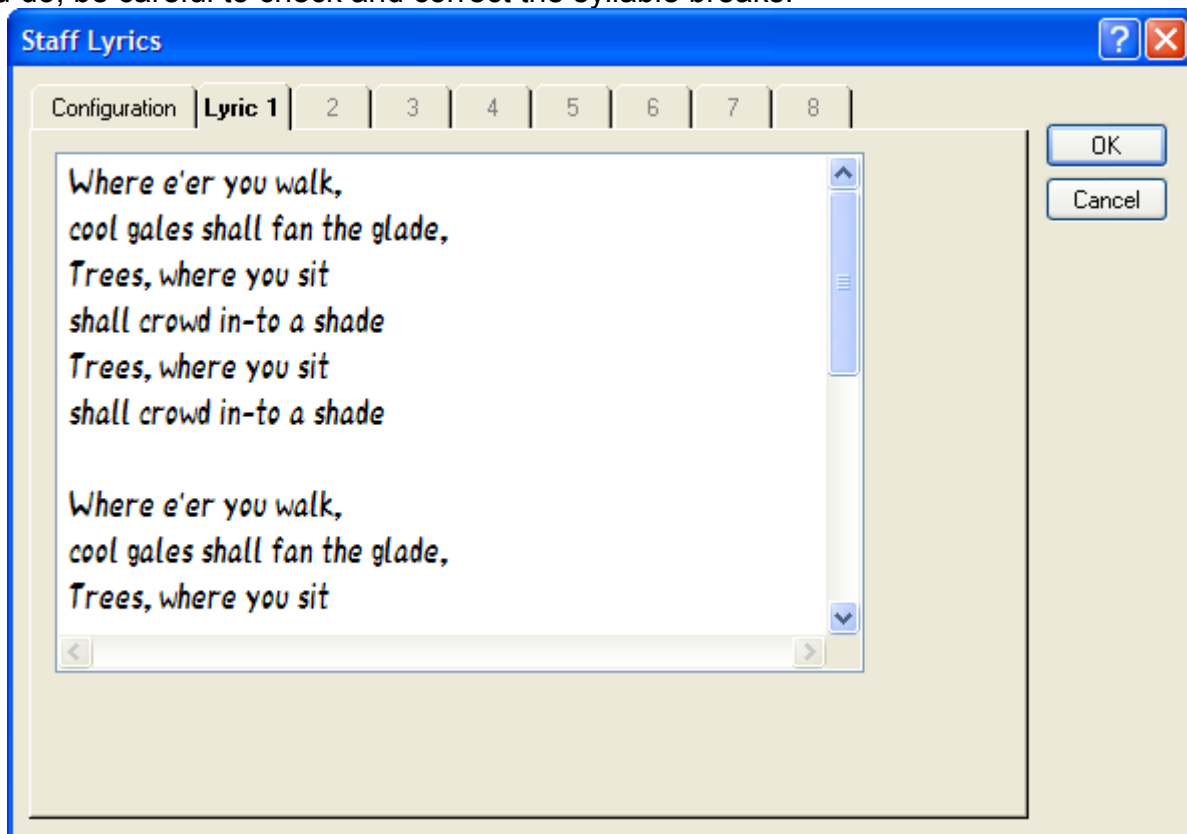
Right, the chord entry is done. Now it's time to insert the lyrics. Select the Lyrics staff, and press **<Ctrl+L>** to open the lyric entry dialogue:



We have only one lyric line, so move to the Lyric 1 tab:



Type in the lyrics. For some famous works (such as this one) you might find the lyrics available somewhere on the 'net in a form that allows you to copy and paste them in. If you do, be careful to check and correct the syllable breaks:

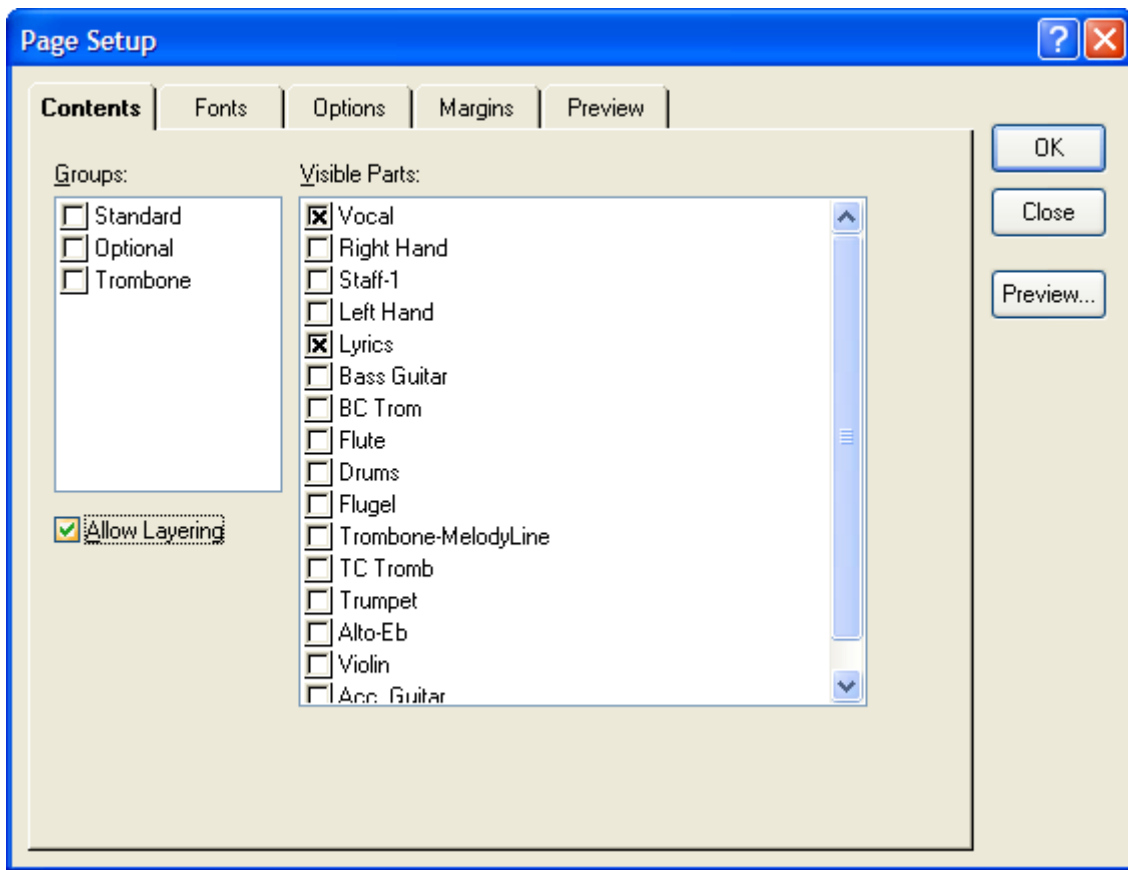


and click OK:

Starting to come together at last. Still, there are those crowded chords and it's likely the lyrics will collide with the dynamics on the Vocal staff, so my next move is to hide everything but the Lyric and Vocal staves and then layer them.

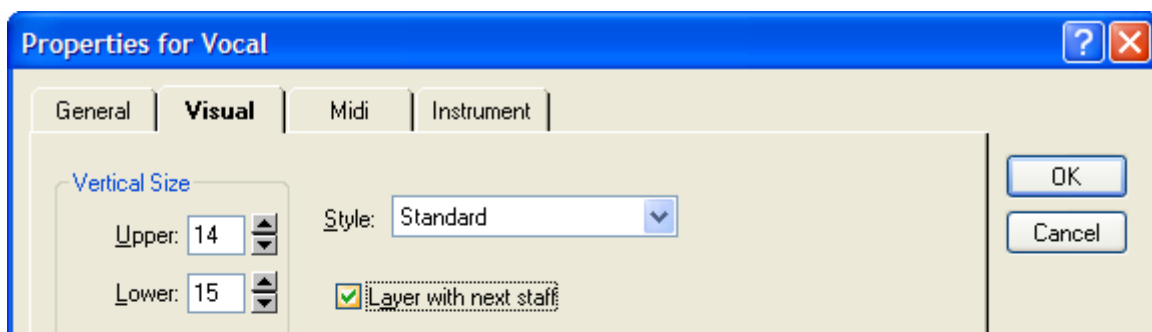
I normally have many staves with layering active, so I hide staves I'm not working on before I allow layering to avoid confusion from unexpected layers.

Go into the Contents tab of the Page Setup dialogue and select ONLY the Vocal and Lyrics staves. Also select Allow Layering:



The image shows a musical score snippet with two staves. The top staff is labeled 'Vocal' and contains a melody in G major, 4/4 time, with a dynamic marking of *mp*. The bottom staff is labeled 'Lyrics' and contains the lyrics 'Where e'er you walk, cool gales shall fan the glade,'. Above the lyrics, guitar chords are written: G, C/Bm/O, G, G⁹, C/E, G/DAm/C/E, D. The lyrics are aligned with the notes on the vocal staff.

If layering isn't set up for the Vocal staff then fix it in the staff properties for the Vocal staff:



NoteWorthy Composer 2 - [WhereerYouWalk]

File Edit View Staff Insert Notes Tools Window Help

Vocal

1 G $C/E/Am/O$ 2 G 3 G^9 4 C/E $G/DA_m/CC/E$ 4 D

mp
Where e'er you walk, cool gales shall fan the glade.

As you can see, there is some collision from the dynamics. Let's check a print preview:

Where'er You Walk

G.F. Handel

G $C/E/Am/O$ G G^9 C/E $G/DA_m/CC/E$ D

Where e'er you walk, cool gales shall fan the glade,

5 D G/D $C^{\#}Am/E$ $D/F^{\#}D$ G A Em $A/C^{\#}$

Trees, where you sit shall crowd in - to a shade Trees, where you

10 D G $D/F^{\#}G/B$ D/A $D^{\#}A$ D E $Am/E^{\flat}/E$ Am

sit shall crowd in - to a shade Where e'er you walk, cool gales

15 D G G/B C Am

shall fan the glade, Trees, where you sit shall crowd

19 $D/F^{\#}$ G C D G/B D^{\flat}/C G/B $F^{\#}dim$ $D/F^{\#}$

in - to a shade Trees, *p*

23 G/B C/E C D C G/B C G/D D^{\flat} G *Fine*

where you sit shall crowd in - to a shade

28 Em Am Em Am/C D^{\flat}/C B B B^{\flat}

Where e'er you tread, the blush-ing flow'rs shall rise *p* And all things

33 Em Em/B Em E Am E/B Am E

flour - ish *mf* And all things flour - ish where e'er you turn your

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Hmm, pretty messy. Some staves have 4 bars, others have 5. Crowded chords, lyrics

colliding with dynamics, chords colliding with slurs, it's already going over to 2 pages and it also looks like the lyrics aren't quite right anyhow.

So, first step. Fix the lyric alignment by checking for missing syllable breaks, slurs, ties and "Lyric Syllable" parameters in the properties of notes and rests. Then look at staff heights and make some more space between the staves by editing the staff properties. After that look at how to reduce the crowding for the chords and eliminating the collisions.

Where'er You Walk

G.F. Handel

Where e'er you walk, cool gales shall fan the glade,
Trees, where you sit shall crowd in - to a shade
Trees, where you sit shall crowd in - to a shade
Where e'er you walk, cool gales shall fan the glade,
Trees, where you sit shall crowd in - to a shade
Trees, where you sit shall crowd in - to a shade
Where e'er you

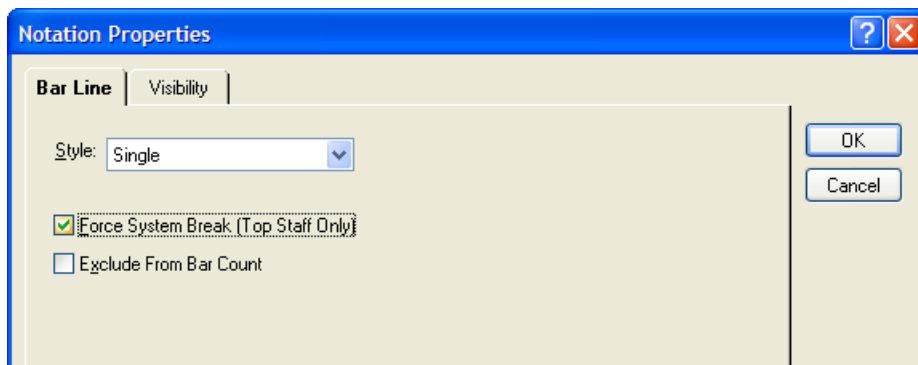
OK, I've done a few things and it's starting to look better, but still not good enough.

You'll notice in the first bar there's now a rest that doesn't belong. This is from the Lyrics staff. I needed better control over the chord placement so I replaced a hidden note that I put there earlier with a visible rest. Of course it can't stay there, neither can a few others, but I'll fix them later by moving them off the page in a similar way to the Restchord in the piano right hand on page 6.

There's also only 3 bars on the first staff now. I think I need to increase the staff heights some more. This is a bit disappointing really, because it would have been nice to have the "Fine" at the bottom of the first page, but now it'll have to be somewhere on the second.

I had hoped to have 4 bars per staff, but the crowded chords makes this undesirable. Instead I'm going to force "system breaks" every 3 bars and see how things go.

Highlight the required barline on the Vocal staff, press **<Alt+Enter>** to get to its properties page, make sure the Bar Line tab is active and check "Force System Break".



Where'er You Walk

G.F. Handel

Where e'er you walk, cool gales shall fan the
glade, Trees, where you sit shall
crowd in - to a shade Trees, where you
sit shall crowd in - to a shade
Where e'er you walk, cool gales shall fan the
glade, Trees, where you sit shall crowd in - to a
shade Trees, where you

Public Domain

Ok, this is a bit better, but I think I'll increase the staff height some more.

You'll note the staves starting at bars 16 and 20 have 4 bars. This is so I can try to improve the look of the staff starting at bar 20 with that slur over the top. First I'll try it underneath and see how it goes.

16 G G/B C Am D/F# G C
glade, Trees, where you sit shall crowd in - to a

20 D G/B D7/C G/B F#dim D/F# G/B C/E C
shaded *p* *f* Trees, where you

Ah, much better. May not need to increase staff height again after all. Let's look at the second page:

24 D C G/B C G/D D7 G Fine Em Am
sit shall crowd in - to a shade Where e'er you *mp*

29 Em Am/C D7/C B B B7 Em Em/B Em
tread, the blush-ing flow'rs shall rise *mf* And all things flour-ish *p* And *mf*

34 E Am E/B Am E Am/C E7/B Am E
all things flour-ish *f* where e'er you turn your eyes where e'er you turn your

39 Dm/F E7 Am/E E A D.C. al Fine
eyes where e'er you turn your eyes. *mf*

Right, not so good. Chord positioning in the top staff is a problem. I'll start with a system break at the section end where the *Fine* is:

24 D C G/B C G/D D D7 G Fine
sit shall crowd in - to a shade

28 Em Am Em Am/C D7/C B B B7
Where e'er you tread, the blush-ing flow'rs shall rise *mp* *mf* *p* And all things

33 Em Em/B Em E Am E/B Am E
flour-ish *mf* And all things flour-ish *f* where e'er you turn your

37 Am/C E7/B Am E Dm/F E7 Am/E E A D.C. al Fine
eyes where e'er you turn your eyes where e'er you turn your eyes. *mf*

Right, that's a bit better, but I needed to adjust the chord vertical position in bar 26 to avoid the *tr~* symbol. I also had to add visible rests on the Lyrics staff in lieu of a couple of hidden notes to improve the horizontal position of the D chord. Fortunately they were tied/slurred notes I'd added earlier so I didn't need to adjust their lyric parameters to keep the lyrics straight.

Now, I have 14 bars to try and spread evenly in 3 staves. Obviously that's not going to work, so I'll try for 4 staves. That'll be 2 of 3 bars and 2 of 4 bars.

24 *D C G/B C G/D D D7 G Fine*
sit shall crowd in - to a shade

28 *Em Am Em Am/C D7/C B*
mp Where e'er you tread, *mf* the blush - ing flow'rs shall rise *p* And

32 *B B7 Em Em/B Em E*
all things flour - ish *mf* And all things

35 *Am E/B Am E Am/C E7/B*
flour - ish *f* where e'er you turn your eyes where

38 *Am E Dm/F E7 Am/E E A D.C. al Fine*
e'er you turn your eyes where e'er you turn your eyes.

That's OK, except for the last staff. In bar 40 there's a *tr~* collision with a chord to be avoided by moving the chord up and the *tr~* down. They're both text entries, so select each in turn and use **<Ctrl+Shift+Up/DownArrow>** to adjust them

It would be nice to have the whole staff fully justified. A neat trick for that is to put a Section Close barline right at the end and force a system break on it. This causes the bars to evenly space and looks pretty good.

24 *D C G/B C G/D D D7 G Fine*
sit shall crowd in - to a shade

28 *Em Am Em Am/C D7/C B*
mp Where e'er you tread, *mf* the blush - ing flow'rs shall rise *p* And

32 *B B7 Em Em/B Em E*
all things flour - ish *mf* And all things

35 *Am E/B Am E Am/C E7/B*
flour - ish *f* where e'er you turn your eyes where

38 *Am E Dm/F E7 Am/E E A D.C. al Fine*
e'er you turn your eyes where e'er you turn your eyes.

Right, that looks OK. Apart from some "hairpins" in bars 32 and 33. I'll move them down a touch with a hidden dynamic at the start of bar 32. I'd move the "p" at bar 31 but there'd be a collision with the lyrics.

24 *D C G/B C G/D D D7 G Fine*
sit shall crowd in - to a shade

28 *Em Am Em Am/C D7/C B*
mp Where e'er you tread, *mf* the blush-ing flow'rs shall rise *p* And

32 *B B7 Em Em/B Em E*
all things flour - ish *mf* And all things

35 *Am E/B Am E Am/C E7/B*
flour - ish *f* where e'er you turn your eyes where

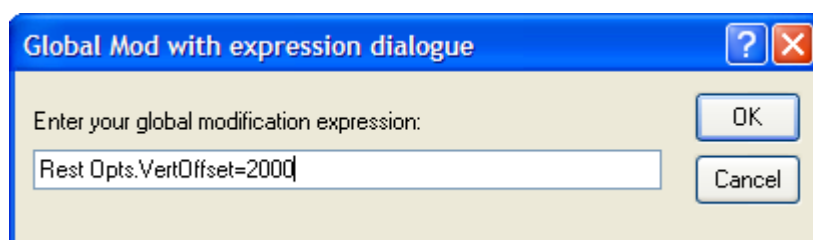
38 *Am E Dm/F E7 Am/E E D.C. al Fine*
e'er you turn your eyes where e'er you turn your eyes.

That's a bit better.

Now, looking back at the whole job, I think I'll increase the vertical spacing a bit more. I have a lot of empty space on the second page, and the score will look a little better if it is spaced out a touch more.

I still need to “disappear” the rests on the Lyrics staff. I'll use `Global_Mod` to do that because, as you will remember, I can't simply hide them. The bottom staff on page 1 where that long slur is could use a line or *melisma* on the lyric too. I'll need to create a text entry for that.

First move the rests off the page on the lyrics staff. Select the staff then press `<Alt+F8>` to get the user tools dialogue, select the `Global_Mod` tool and, enter the expression:



Next, add 2 text entries. The first is a single underscore using the lyric font right justified at next note/bar at the 3rd note (the D) in bar 20. The second is a series of underscores left justified at the same note. There needs to be enough underscores here to reach the end of the slurred section. The *melisma's* vertical position needs to match the lyric position.

One final thing I like to do is add page numbers to each page and the song title to the 2nd and later pages. I do these as text entries right justified at the last barline of the top staff on each page. Oh yeah, I forgot the tempo indicator, back to the Lyrics staff for that so it'll be the same on every printout. Note that even though this staff is muted, tempo events are still exported to MIDI and still effect playback.

There are also some trills indicated – these would need a hidden playback staff to execute audibly. I haven't done that for this example as it's not required for a lead sheet printout.

Where'er You Walk

G.F. Handel

Andante Cantabile

mp G C/E Am/C D G G⁹ C/E G/D Am/C C/E
 Where e'er you walk, cool gales shall fan the
 4 D D G/D D C^{#dim}/E D/F[#] D *mf*
 glade, Trees, where you sit shall
 7 G A Em A/C[#] *p*
 crowd in - to a shade Trees, where you
 10 D G D/F[#] G/B D/A D^{sus2}/A A D *mf*
 sit shall crowd in - to a shade
 13 E Am/E G⁶/E Am D
 Where e'er you walk, cool gales shall fan the
 16 G G/B C Am D/F[#] G C
 glade, Trees, where you sit shall crowd in - to a
 20 D G/B D⁷/C G/B F^{#dim} D/F[#] G/B C/E C *p* *f*
 shade Trees, where you

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24 D C G/B C G/D D D⁷ G *Fine*
 sit shall crowd in - to a shade
 28 Em Am Em Am/C D⁷/C B *mp* *mf* *p*
 Where e'er you tread, the blush-ing flow'rs shall rise And
 32 B B⁷ Em Em/B Em E *mf*
 all things flour - ish And all things
 35 Am E/B Am E Am/C E⁷/B *f*
 flour - ish where e'er you turn your eyes where
 38 Am E D^m/F E⁷ Am/E E A *D.C. al Fine*

In conclusion, you might be saying to yourself about now; "That's a lot of work to make 2 staves to do what could be done on one." and you'd be right. BUT, from here I would be creating an arrangement for my trombone or perhaps my trumpet and for my wife on flute.

We both like to have the chords and lyrics available to us even though we don't have anything like the melody line on our parts. By using this technique I can layer the Lyrics staff with the flute or trombone part and have the same chords and lyrics that everyone else is working to.

If I do a trumpet part that's just for me then I'll layer the Lyrics part with it too, but I need to remember to make an annotation to remind me that the chords are in concert pitch. If the trumpet part is for someone else then I copy the lyrics staff to a "Trumpet Lyrics" staff and use Andrew Purdam's "Transpose Chords" user tool to transpose the text chords that I've just copied.

This way I minimise additional effort and have a set of matching parts with identical lyrics and chords.

Please note that this is just the way I do things. It works for me, and I hope it will provide some ideas for you to help formulate your own work processes and techniques.

The piece I've just used for this demonstration as it now stands is not really to a standard for publication. It is good enough for my team to use, and I wouldn't hesitate to loan it to others, but it is not good enough for commercial publication.

The work done in preparing the score as well as writing this document has taken about seven hours, not counting proof reading by some of my friends and the corrections arising therefrom. Were I not preparing this document it would have taken around two hours. NWC is fast.

I hope this document is of benefit to you. If you wish to provide feedback or errata please contact me via the Noteworthy Composer forum:

<http://my.noteworthysoftware.com/>

Some other useful links:

The Scriptorium is accessible at:

<http://nwc-scriptorium.org/>

The Noteworthy Composer web site is:

<http://www.noteworthysoftware.com/>

User tools and starter kit at:

<http://www.noteworthysoftware.com/nwc2/usertools/>

<http://nwc-scriptorium.org/nwc2scripts.html>

User tool usage information:

<http://nwc-scriptorium.org/nwc2scripts/generaldiscussion.pdf>

<http://nwc-scriptorium.org/nwc2scripts/invocationinstructions.pdf>

My font suites are included in the NWC2 CD and are also available from:

<http://www.noteworthysoftware.com/uc/pardypack/>

or

<http://nwc-scriptorium.org/helpful.html#Fonts>

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