

Scales

There are many different types of scales. They are the backbone of music.

A major scale is a series of 8 consecutive notes that use the following pattern of half and whole steps:

A musical staff in 4/4 time showing an ascending major scale. The notes are G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5. Below the staff, seven downward-pointing chevrons indicate the intervals between notes: W, W, 1/2, W, W, W, 1/2.

Minor Scales come in three forms: Natural, Melodic, and Harmonic.

Natural Minor scales use the following pattern of half and whole steps:

A musical staff in 4/4 time showing an ascending natural minor scale. The notes are G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5. Below the staff, seven downward-pointing chevrons indicate the intervals: W, 1/2, W, W, 1/2, W, W.

Melodic Minor scales ascend and use the following pattern of half and whole steps. When descending, they do so in the natural minor form.

A musical staff in 4/4 time showing an ascending melodic minor scale. The notes are G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5. Below the staff, seven downward-pointing chevrons indicate the intervals: W, 1/2, W, W, W, W, 1/2.

A musical staff in 4/4 time showing a descending melodic minor scale. The notes are G5, F5, E5, D5, C5, Bb4, A4, G4. Below the staff, seven downward-pointing chevrons indicate the intervals: W, W, 1/2, W, W, 1/2, W.

Harmonic Minor scales use the following pattern of half and whole steps:

∇ ∇ ∇ ∇ ∇ ∇ ∇
 W $\frac{1}{2}$ W W $\frac{1}{2}$ W+ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$

Chromatic Scales are made up entirely of half steps. When ascending, the scale uses sharps, when descending it uses flats.

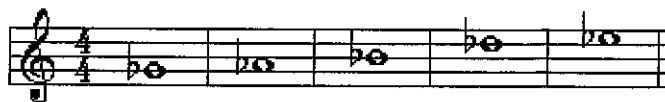
Whole Tone Scales differ from the other scales because it only has 6 tones. It uses the following pattern:

∇ ∇ ∇ ∇ ∇
 W W W W W

A pentatonic Scale is a five-tone scale, which has its beginning in antiquity. There are traces of this scale in Oriental and American Indian music. This scale does not have a leading tone, which gives the scale its unique sound. The scale has two forms. The first one uses the group of two black keys followed by three black keys. The pattern is as follows:

∇ ∇ ∇ ∇
 W W+ $\frac{1}{2}$ W W

The second one used the group of three black keys followed by two black keys. The pattern is as follows:

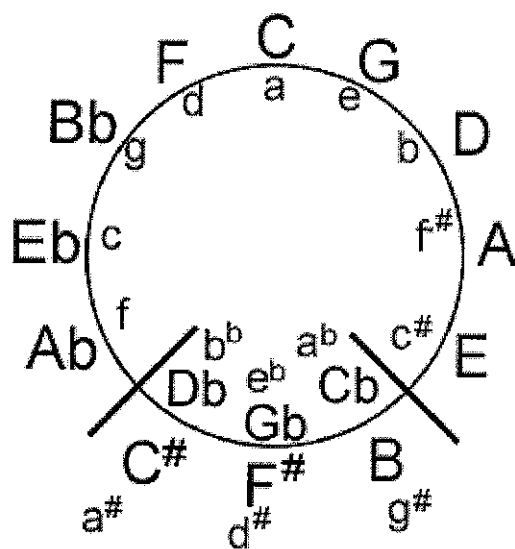


√ √ √ √
 W W W+½ W

Key Signatures

There are 15 major and 15 minor key signatures. The sharps or flats at the beginning of the staff indicate the main tone (diatonic) to which other tones are related.

Circle of 5^{ths}



Db-C#, Gb-F#, Cb-B, are enharmonic keys, meaning that they are written differently, but sound the same.

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C Major G Major D Major A Major E Major B Major F# Major C# Major

This system shows the chord progressions for major chords from C to C#. Each chord is represented by a treble and bass clef staff with a central label. The notes are indicated by sharp signs (#) on the staff lines.

F Major Bb Major Eb Major Ab Major Db Major Gb Major Cb Major

This system shows the chord progressions for major chords from F to Cb. Each chord is represented by a treble and bass clef staff with a central label. The notes are indicated by flat signs (b) on the staff lines.

a minor e minor b minor f# minor c# minor g# minor d# minor a# minor

This system shows the chord progressions for minor chords from a to a#. Each chord is represented by a treble and bass clef staff with a central label. The notes are indicated by sharp signs (#) on the staff lines.

d minor g minor c minor f minor b^b minor e^b minor a^b minor

This system shows the chord progressions for minor chords from d to a^b. Each chord is represented by a treble and bass clef staff with a central label. The notes are indicated by flat signs (b) on the staff lines.