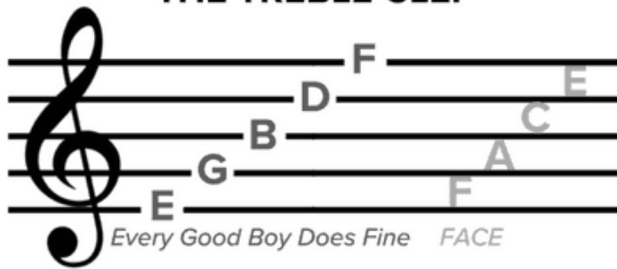
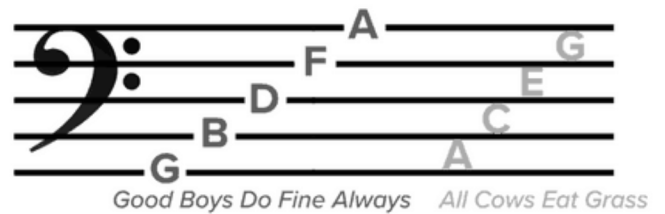


Basic Music Notation Commonly Used in Barbershop Harmony

THE TREBLE CLEF



THE BASS CLEF



NOTE VALUES

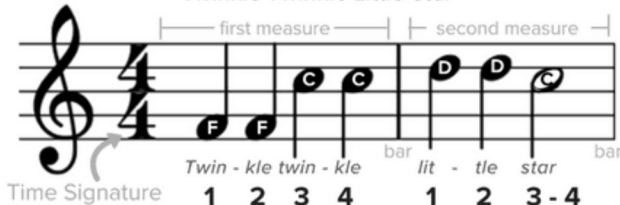


REST VALUES



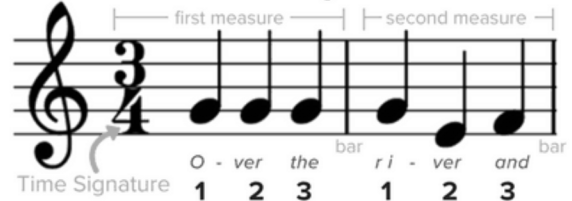
4/4 TIME SIGNATURE

"Twinkle Twinkle Little Star"

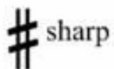


3/4 TIME SIGNATURE

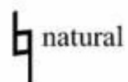
"Over The River & Through The Woods"



flat Lowers note by 1/2 step



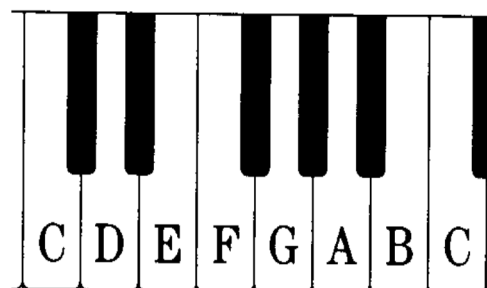
sharp Raises note by 1/2 step



natural Cancels a sharp or flat in force

C# D# F# G# A#

Db Eb Gb Ab Bb



The distance (interval) between any two adjacent notes on a piano keyboard, whether they are black or white, is 1/2 step. For example, C to C# is 1/2 step; E to F is also 1/2 step.

Scales Commonly Used in Barbershop Harmony

The MAJOR scale is the one most often used for barbershop harmony—it is the one we associate with the “Doe, a deer” song from Sound of Music. It can be identified by using the scale step number or the “solfege” name:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 1
do re mi fa sol la ti do

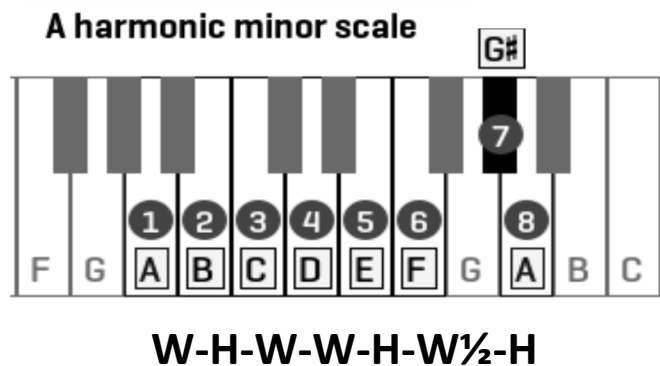
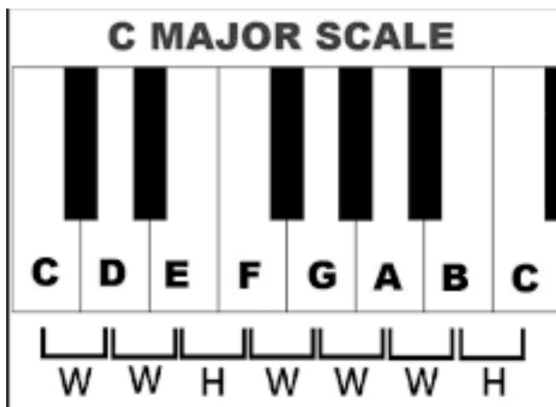
The MAJOR scale is defined by the intervals between the scale steps: W-W-H-W-W-W-H

Each MAJOR scale has a relative MINOR scale, which uses the same key signature. The relative minor scale is always built on scale step 6 (la) of the major scale. There are several kinds of MINOR scales, but in barbershop harmony, we use the HARMONIC MINOR scale.

The intervals that define the HARMONIC MINOR are W-H-W-W-H-W ½-H

How can you tell if a song is in a MAJOR or MINOR key? It can be tricky, but one of the easiest ways is to look at the first chord of the song—is it the major chord or the relative minor? The last chord is also a good clue—look at the bass note. Some songs shift between minor and major keys.

A scale can be built using any note as its “do” or first scale step, and is built using the interval definitions above.



Key signatures: major and relative minor

C major G major D major A major E major B major F# major C# major
A minor E minor B minor F# minor C# minor G# minor D# minor A# minor

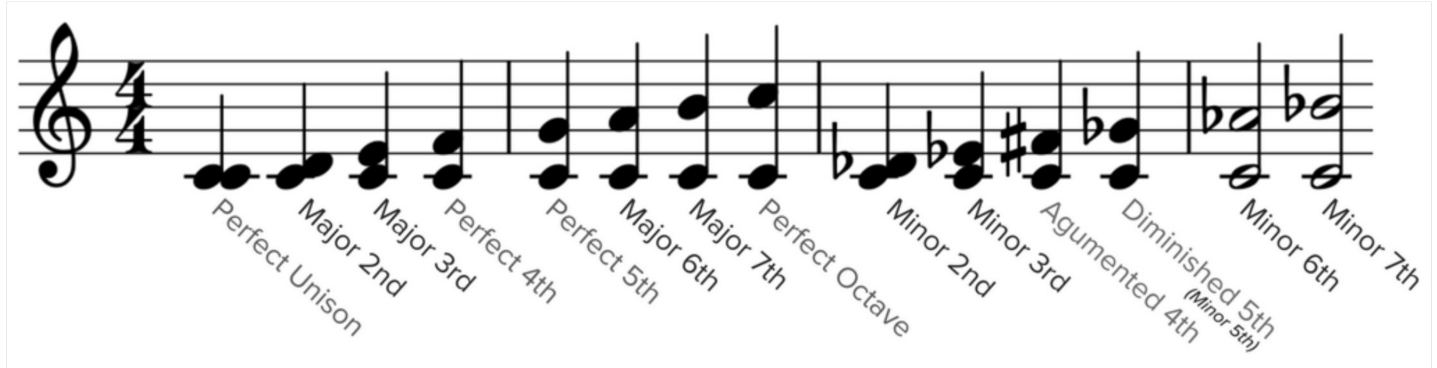
You can name the major sharp keys by looking at the last sharp—the key is the next note name higher. For example, look at the measure with one sharp—it is F#, so the key is G.

C major F major Bb major Eb major Ab major Db major Gb major Cb major
A minor D minor G minor C minor F minor Bb minor Eb minor Ab minor

You will need to memorize that one flat is F major; after that, you can name the major flat keys by looking at the next-to-last flat—that’s the key. For example, look at the measure with two flats—the next-to-last flat is Bb; the key is Bb.

INTERVALS—The distance between one note and another

Interval examples using C as the root note. (Note—Augmented 4th and Diminished 5th are essentially the same note and are generally identified as the tritone)



Intervals are not always easy to name when the bottom note is something other than a C! It helps me to identify intervals if I remember the intervals with ODD numbers (3rd, 5th, 7th) are line-to-line or space-to-space; the intervals with EVEN numbers (2nd, 4th, 6th) are line-to-space or space-to-line. Then I just have to figure out if the interval is a major/perfect or minor! It takes LOTS of practice; using a piano keyboard helps.

Pick the songs YOU know and create YOUR OWN interval song chart at:

<https://www.earmaster.com/products/free-tools/interval-song-chart-generator.html>

Here's mine:

My interval song chart

Interval	Ascending	Descending		How many 1/2 steps ?	Another way to calculate
Minor 2 nd	Jaws (Theme)	Shall We Dance (The King and I)	m2	1	1/2 step
Major 2 nd	Happy Birthday to You	Yesterday (The Beatles)	M2	2	1 whole
Minor 3 rd	Lullaby (Brahms)	This Old Man	m3	3	1W+1H
Major 3 rd	Oh, when the Saints	Swing Low Sweet Chariot	M3	4	2W
Perfect 4 th	Here comes the Bride - Wedding March (Wagner)	Born Free (Movie theme by John Barry)	P4	5	2W+ 1H
Tritone	Maria (West side story)		Tritone	6	3W
Perfect 5 th	Twinkle Twinkle Little Star (Mozart)	Flintstones theme	P5	7	3W+1H
Minor 6 th	The Entertainer (Scott Joplin)	Love Story (theme)	m6	8	4W
Major 6 th	My Bonnie Lies over the Ocean	Over There (George Cohan)	M6	9	4W+1H
Minor 7 th	Somewhere (West side story)	An American in Paris (Gershwin)	m7	10	5W
Major 7 th	Superman theme (1-1-1-7-5,1-1-1-7-5)		M7	11	5W+1H
Octave	Somewhere over the Rainbow (Wizard of Oz)	The Lonely Goatherd (The Sound of Music)	Octave	12	6W