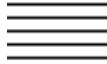


**Music Theory Basics**

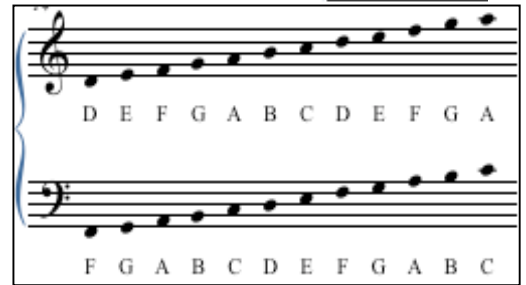
**A. Staff, Clefs, and Notes**

1. Staff: playing field
  - a. Five horizontal lines, equally spaced, with four spaces in-between 
  - b. Vertical dimension: pitch – how high or how low the note sounds
  - c. Horizontal dimension: time – how long each note lasts, how many notes in a measure, etc.

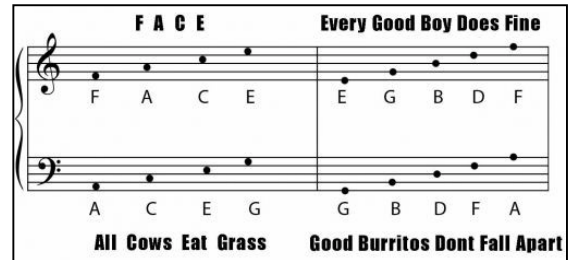
2. Clefs: tell us what pitches go where
  - a. Treble Clef/G-Clef: Identifies the note G
    - i. Wraps around the G note (second line from bottom)
  - b. Bass Clef/F-Clef: Identifies the note F
    - i. Two dots sit on either side of the F note (fourth line)
  - c. Grand Staff
  - d. Other clefs (Alto, Tenor, etc.)



3. Note Names: Every line and space has a letter name
  - a. Identified by the first seven letters of the alphabet
    - i. A, B, C, D, E, F, G, A...
  - b. Denotes the pitch
  - c. Mnemonics



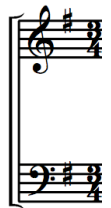
4. Key Signature
  - a. Indicates the key
  - b. Shown in sharps or flats (or none)



5. Time Signature
  - a. Indicates how many beats in one measure
  - b. Indicates what type of note gets one beat
  - c. Measure bars – vertical lines that separate each measure

6. Ledger Lines
  - a. Placed above or below the staff to extend the staff
  - b. Just long enough for one note
  - c. Need enough to continue the lines to your note
  - d. Special Leger Line: Middle C

7. Accidentals -- change the note for the duration of that measure
  - a. ♯ = sharp: raises the note a half-step
  - b. ♭ = flat: lowers the note a half-step
  - c. ♮ = natural: negates either a previous accidental or a sharp or flat in the key
  - d. x = double sharp
  - e. ♭♭ = double flat





4. Measure or Bar
  - a. Divides up the music based on time signature
  - b. Suggests common stresses
    - i. 4/4, 3/4, 2/4, 6/8
5. Rhythm: the arrangement of note durations
  - a. Common rhythmic patterns
6. Other components of time
  - a. Slurs – indicate a smooth connection between two or more different notes
  - b. Ties – indicate combining two or more notes of the same pitch across bar lines
7. Meter
  - a. Simple – can be subdivided into 2 or 4
  - b. Compound – can be subdivided into 3



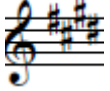







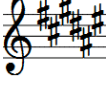

### **Scales, Chords and Key Signatures**

- A. Scales
  1. Combination of whole and half steps from a pitch to the same pitch an octave above
  2. Major – whole, whole, half, whole, whole, whole, half
  3. Minor
    - a. Natural– whole, half, whole, whole, half, whole, whole
    - b. Melodic Ascending – whole, half, whole, whole, whole, whole, half
    - c. Melodic Descending – like Natural Minor
    - d. Harmonic – whole, half, whole, whole, half, augmented 2<sup>nd</sup>, half
  4. Chromatic – all half steps
  5. Whole Tone – all whole steps
  6. Pentatonic – five-note scale
  7. Flat keys
- B. Chords
  1. Typically the 1, 3, 5 of the scale
    - a. Major
    - b. Minor
    - c. Augmented & Diminished
    - d. Seventh Chords
  2. Inversions – the chord is built on a note other than the tonic

Root Position	Built on the Root or Tonic
First Position	Built on the Third of the chord
Second Position	Built on the Fifth of the chord
Third Position	Built on the Seventh (if any) of the chord

### C. Key Signatures



1. Collection of sharps or flats that indicate the key of a piece of music
2. Used at the beginning of a piece so we don't have to put a sharp or flat symbol in front of every note that would need to be sharp or flat

 C Major No flats or sharps a minor	 D Major Two sharps b minor	 E Major Four sharps c# minor	 F Major One flat d minor
 G Major One sharp e minor	 A Major Three sharps f# minor	 B Major Five sharps g# minor	 B Flat Major Two flats g minor
 E Flat Major Three flats c minor	 A Flat Major Four flats f Minor	 F Sharp Major Six sharps d# minor	 G Flat Major Six flats e flat minor





3. Key Signature Tricks for Major keys
  - a. No key signature = Key of C Major
  - b. Sharps: To find the key, go up a half step from the last sharp in the key signature
  - c. Flat keys: Look at the second to last flat – that is the key
    - i. Key of F has one flat
4. Major or minor – How do I know?
  - a. Relative Major and minor keys have the same key signature
  - b. Look at the Key Signature
  - c. Look at the starting and ending chords
    - i. If the starting/ending chord matches the Major key, it's probably Major
    - ii. If the starting/ending chord matches the minor key, it's probably minor
  - d. The "relative" minor is a minor third below its relative major key

## Tempo, Dynamics, Articulation


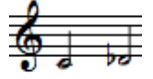
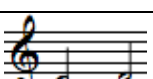
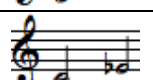
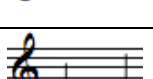
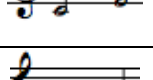
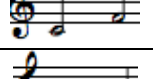
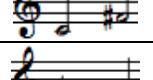
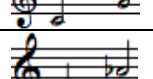
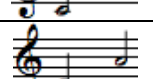
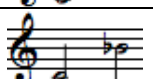
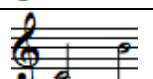

Tempo	
Grave	Very, very slow
Largo	Very slow
Lento	Slow
Adagio	Slow
Andante	Walking speed
Moderato	Moderate
Allegretto	Somewhat quick
Allegro	Fast
Vivace	Lively
Presto	Very fast
Ritardando	Slow down
Accelerando	Speed up

dynamics		
Term:	Symbol:	Effect:
piano	<i>p</i>	soft
pianissimo	<i>pp</i>	very soft
mezzo piano	<i>mp</i>	slightly soft
forte	<i>f</i>	loud
fortissimo	<i>ff</i>	very loud
mezzo forte	<i>mf</i>	slightly loud
fortepiano	<i>fp</i>	loud then soft
sforzando	<i>sfz</i>	sudden accent
crescendo		gradually louder
diminuendo		gradually softer

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<i>staccato</i>	
<i>accent</i>	
<i>tenuto</i>	
<i>fermata</i>	

**Intervals** – Distance between two pitches

Interval name	What it looks like in key of C	Tips & Tricks
Unison		Twinkle (Twinkle)
Half step		I Left My Heart in San Francisco Jaws O Little Town of Bethlehem
Whole step		Happy Birthday Yesterday
Minor Third		To Dream the Impossible Dream Greensleeves (What Child Is This?) Frosty the Snowman
Major Third		Kumbaya Oh When the Saints Go Marching In Beethoven's Fifth Symphony
Perfect Fourth		Here comes the Bride O Come All Ye Faithful
Augmented Fourth, Diminished Fifth, Tritone		Maria (West Side Story)
Perfect Fifth		Twinkle, Twinkle Flintstones Theme
Minor Sixth		The Entertainer
Major Sixth		My Bonnie Lies Over... Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen
Minor 7 <sup>th</sup>		There's a Place for Us (Somewhere)
Major 7 <sup>th</sup>		Take On Me
Octave		Somewhere Over the Rainbow No Business Like Show Business

Examples for Interval and Key Signature Practice

<p>1</p> <p>Lord, have</p>	<p>2</p> <p>O un-dis</p>	<p>3</p> <p><i>mf</i> Al-le-lu</p>
<p>4</p> <p><i>Allegro</i> BLES-SED BE THE</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Lord, have</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Mas-ter, bless. (Fa-ther, bless.)</p>
<p>7</p> <p>Lord, now</p>	<p>8</p> <p>A - men.</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Re-joice.</p>
<p>10</p> <p>Lord, now</p>		

## **Sight Reading Tips**

1. Look over the music first
2. What is the clef?
3. What is the key?
  - a. Look at key signature
  - b. Look at the starting & ending notes
4. Sing the tonic triad to establish the key in your ear
5. What is the time signature?
6. What is the first note? Is it the tonic, third, fifth, or something else?
7. Look over the structure
  - a. Are there repeated passages?
  - b. Does the key stay the same, or does it change?
  - c. Are there accidentals?
  - d. Does the time signature stay the same, or does it change?
8. Sing the starting pitch
9. Establish a beat – start out slowly
10. Sing it on Loo, Loo, Loo
11. Say the words in rhythm without notes
12. Put it all together!

## **Music Theory Online Resources**

1. [www.musictheory.net](http://www.musictheory.net)
  - a. Free Online lessons & exercises
  - b. Apps for iPhone, iPad, iPod Touch - \$2.99
2. [www.Teoria.com](http://www.Teoria.com)
  - a. Free, more advanced content than musictheory.net
3. Apps for Phone or Tablet
  - a. Piano apps
  - b. Pitching apps
  - c. Tuning apps
  - d. Metronome apps