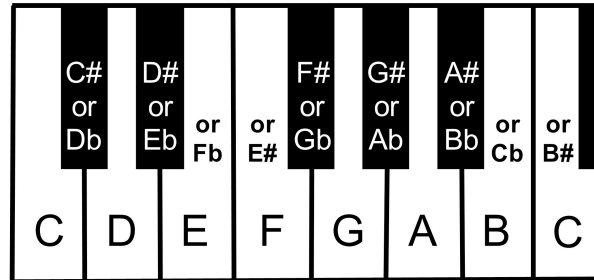


# W o r s h i p M u s i c M i n i s t r y T R A I N I N G C O U R S E

Dan Ryker, © 2005 Ryker Studio, www.danryker.com

## Music Theory

### Basics



#### Why learn music theory?

- ◇ To understand what you're playing.
- ◇ To understand how to create, add to, or change music instead of having to just use what has already been done by others.
- ◇ To build vocabulary and understanding to communicate with other musicians.

#### Repeating pattern of notes

The above pattern of 12 notes repeats over and over. The 'C' note at the top of the keyboard diagram is the beginning of this same pattern happening again.

- ◇ Music theory has many other patterns as well.
- ◇ Ex: Chord progressions, chord structures, rhythmic patterns, etc.

#### Half steps & whole steps

- ◇ Distances between notes are measured in half steps and whole steps.
- ◇ 2 half steps = 1 whole step.
- ◇ One octave of half steps = C, C#, D, D#, E, F, F#, G, G#, A, A#, B
- ◇ Notice that 'E' to 'F' & 'B' to 'C' are only a half step apart.

#### Scales

Scales are made up of a sequence of half steps and whole steps. A scale is named by the note that it starts on. There are different kinds of scales, but the most common scale is the major scale. In the key of C, it just happens to be all white notes on a piano, but different scales will use some black notes to make them sound right. Refer to 'Figuring out the Scale for a Key' & 'Scales' for information on how to create different scales.

#### Intervals

- ◇ The distance between 2 notes, measured by counting the note letters starting from one note through to the other note. Include both of the notes as you count. E.g. C to D is a 2<sup>nd</sup>, C to E is a 3<sup>rd</sup>, etc..
- ◇ There can be major or minor intervals. A minor interval is a half step smaller than a major interval. Ex:
  - ◇ From C to D is a major 2<sup>nd</sup> / From C to Db is a minor 2<sup>nd</sup>
  - ◇ From C to E is a major 3<sup>rd</sup> / From C to Eb is a minor 3<sup>rd</sup>
  - ◇ From C to A is a major 6<sup>th</sup> / From C to Ab is a minor 6<sup>th</sup>

- ◇ From C to B is a major 7<sup>th</sup> / From C to B $\flat$  is a minor 7<sup>th</sup>
- ◇ Two intervals are referred to as 'perfect'; the 'perfect 4<sup>th</sup>' & 'perfect 5<sup>th</sup>'.
  - ◇ The 5<sup>th</sup> interval can be raised or lowered by a half step. A diminished 5<sup>th</sup> interval is a perfect 5<sup>th</sup> lowered by a half step. An augmented 5<sup>th</sup> interval is a perfect 5<sup>th</sup> raised by a half step.
  - ◇ The symbol used for 'diminished' is 'b', '-', 'dim' or '°', and it is sometimes referred to as a 'flat 5'.
  - ◇ The symbol used for 'augmented' is '#', '+' or 'aug', and it is sometimes referred to as a 'sharp 5'.
- Ex: A perfect 5<sup>th</sup> from C is G, so a lowered (diminished) 5<sup>th</sup> would be G $\flat$ , and a raised (augmented) 5<sup>th</sup> would be G#.

## Chords

- ◇ A chord is a group of notes played at the same time.
- ◇ Whatever the name of the chord is, is the note where you start building the chord.
- ◇ The most basic type of chord is a triad, made up of the root note, the 3<sup>rd</sup> above the root, and the 5<sup>th</sup> above the root.
- ◇ The various notes in a chord are named by what scale tone they are on.
  - ◇ Ex. The 'C' major chord is built around a C major scale.
    - ◇ The tonic of a 'C' major scale is 'C', so the root of a 'C' chord is 'C'.
    - ◇ The 3<sup>rd</sup> note in the 'C' major scale is 'E', so the 3<sup>rd</sup> of a 'C' chord is 'E'.
    - ◇ The 5<sup>th</sup> note in the 'C' major scale is 'G', so the 5<sup>th</sup> of a 'C' chord is 'G'.
    - ◇ The 3<sup>rd</sup> note in the 'G' major scale is 'B', so the 3<sup>rd</sup> of a 'G' chord is 'B'.
    - ◇ The 5<sup>th</sup> note in the 'G' major scale is 'D', so the 5<sup>th</sup> of a 'G' chord is 'D'.
    - ◇ This also works for the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, & 13<sup>th</sup>.
  - ◇ Just as the notes of a major chord are taken from it's major scale, so also the notes for a minor chord are taken from it's minor scale, a diminished chord from it's diminished scale, & an augmented chord from it's augmented scale.
  - ◇ After you have learned what notes make a particular chord, you can play them in a different order, but the chord still keeps the same name. This is called inverting the chord.
    - ◇ Ex: A 'C' chord in root position is < C, E, G >. But < E, G, C > is still a 'C' chord because it has the same notes in it, just in a different order.
  - ◇ See 'Chord Spelling' for the abbreviations used in chord symbols
    - ◇ Notice that the letter by itself ('C') mean you assume it is a major chord.
      - ◇ If it's supposed to be a minor chord there is an 'm' after the chord letter ('Cm').
      - ◇ Notice that a '7' added to a chord symbol ('C7') means that you assume it is a minor 7<sup>th</sup> added.
        - ◇ If it's supposed to be a major 7<sup>th</sup>, there is a 'MA' or 'maj' before the '7' ('Cmaj7')
    - ◇ Normally, the bass note played either by the bass guitar, keyboard, or guitar should be the same as the chord name. (A 'C' chord has a 'C' note in the bass)
    - ◇ A 'slash chord' or 'altered root note chord' means that the lowest note played should be whatever note is on the bottom or in the denominator of the chord symbol.
      - ◇ The name of the chord is the first or top letter (the numerator).
      - ◇ Ex. 'C/E' = a 'C' chord with the 'E' note in the bass

## Numbers

- ◇ Numbers are used to refer to functions and patterns in music.
- ◇ Usually, roman numerals are used.