# Music Theory Essentials

IN THE BAND

## Terms

**Note:** A pitched sound. A single musical tone.
**Pitch:** How high or low a musical note is. The sound of the frequency of a specific soundwave.
**Melody:** A linear sequence of musical notes. A tune, comprised of pitch and rhythm.
**Scale:** A set of musical notes ordered by pitch.
**Interval:** The difference between two pitches or notes.
**Chord:** Three or more notes played at the same time.
**Chord Progression:** A series of chords, played one after another.
**Arpeggio:** The notes of a chord played one at a time rather than all together.
**Harmony:** The use of simultaneous (usually complimentary) notes (or chords) in a piece of music.
**Key:** The note/chord around which a piece of music focuses or resolves.
**Rhythm:** The *beat**, or pulse, in a piece of music.
**Beat:** Can mean the same as *rhythm**, but can also refer to a *single rhythmic unit*****, or the rhythmic quality of a single note.
**Tempo:** The pace, or speed, of a piece of music.
**Meter:** The rhythmic structure of a piece of music. The number of *beats*** per measure.
**Bar/Measure:** A segment of time corresponding to a specific number of *beats***.
**Time Signature:** The notation of meter.
**Dynamics:** The properties (or changes) of volume in a piece of music.

## Rhythmic Notation

In Music Notation (written music), different symbols are used to indicate the rhythmic value (how many beats) of individual music Notes. These symbols are divided into two primary types: Notes and Rests. Rests are basically the inverse of Notes, indicating the negative space in which no note is to be played.

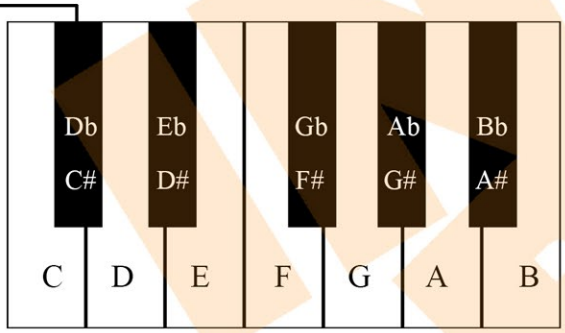
| Notes | Value | Rests |
|---|---|---|
| Whole Note | 4 beats | Whole Rest |
| Dotted Half Note | 3 beats | Dotted Half Rest |
| Half Note | 2 beats | Half Rest |
| Quarter Note | 1 beat | Quarter Rest |
| Eighth Note | 1/2 beat | Eighth Rest |
| Dotted Quarter Note | 1 1/2 beats | Dotted Quarter Rest |
| Sixteenth Note | 1/4 beat | Sixteenth Rest |


1 Quarter Note = 2 Eighth Notes = 4 Sixteenth Notes

** Whenever a dot is added to the right of a note (or rest), that note is 1.5x as long.
***Multiple eighth notes are written with a bar connecting them on top, as shown above. Multiple sixteenth notes have two connecting bars. The same does not apply for eighth and sixteenth rests.

## The Notes

There are *twelve* distinct Notes in music. They are named and can be found on the keyboard as follows:




## Naturals and Accidentals

-The white keys on the keyboard are called "naturals" and are named by the letters of the alphabet, "A" through "G"
-The black keys on the keyboard are called "accidentals" and are named by the same letters followed by the demonination of "sharp" or "flat", indicated by the following symbols:

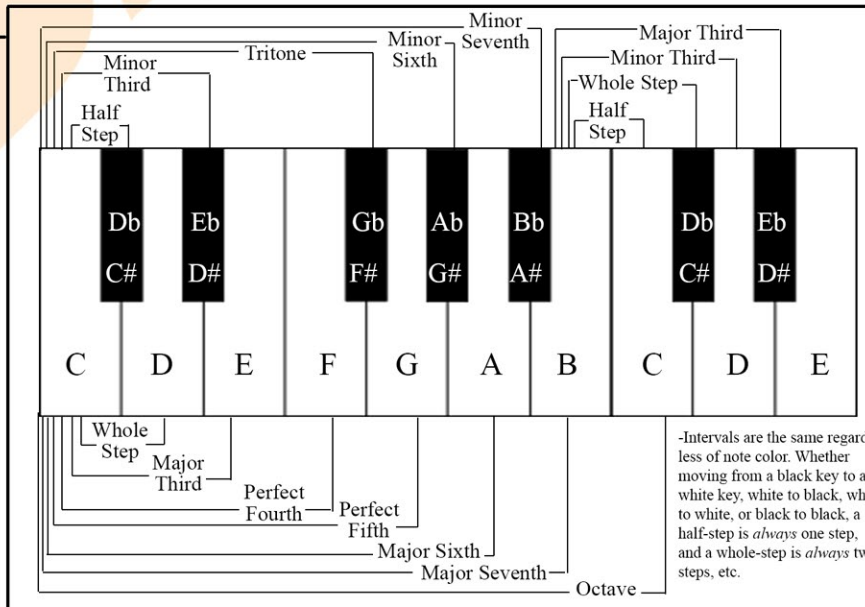
♯ (sharp) ♭ (flat)

-"Sharp" means the black key right above a given white key, while "flat" means the black key immediately below a given white key. However, since each black key is in *between* two white keys, each one has two names. For example, the black key between "C" and "D" may be called "C#" since it is right above "C" or "Db" since it is right below "D". Both names are correct and indicate the same note. C# = Db

## Intervals

The difference, or distance, between two notes is called an Interval. Just like the Notes themselves, each Interval has a name which describes *how far apart* any two Notes are. These names and corresponding distances (on the keyboard) are as follows:

Half Step (Semitone/Minor Second): 1 Step
Whole Step (Whole Tone/Major Second): 2 Steps
Minor Third: 3 Steps
Major Third: 4 Steps
Perfect Fourth (Fourth): 5 Steps
Tritone (Augmented Fourth/Diminished Fifth): 6 Steps
Perfect Fifth (Fifth): 7 Steps
Minor Sixth: 8 Steps
Major Sixth (Sixth): 9 Steps
Minor Seventh: 10 Steps
Major Seventh (Seventh): 11 Steps
Octave: 12 Steps




-Intervals are the same regardless of note color. Whether moving from a black key to a white key, white to black, white to white, or black to black, a half-step is *always* one step, and a whole-step is *always* two steps, etc.