AP Music Theory: Unit 2

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Music Fundamentals II: Minor Scales and Key Signatures, Melody, Timbre, and Texture

Minor Scales

- Natural Minor
    - No accidentals are changed from the relative minor's key signature
    - Scale Pattern: W H W W H W W (W=whole note; H=half note)
    - Solfege: Do Re Mi Fa Sol La Ti Do
    - Scale Degrees: 1 2 b3 4 5 b6 b7 8
- Harmonic Minor
    - The seventh scale degree is raised (it becomes the leading tone)
    - Scale Pattern: W H W W H m3 H
    - Solfege: Do Re Mi Fa Sol La Ti Do
    - Scale Degrees: 1 2 b3 4 5 b6 7 8
- Melodic Minor
    - Ascending: the sixth and seventh degrees are raised
    - Descending: it becomes natural minor (meaning that the sixth and seventh degrees are no longer raised)
    - Scale Pattern (Ascending): W H W W W W H
    - Solfege (Ascending): Do Re Mi Fa Sol La Ti Do
    - Solfege (Descending): Do Te Le Sol Fa Mi Re Do
    - Scale Degrees (Ascending): 1 2 b3 4 5 6 7 8
- Minor Pentatonic Scale
    - 5-note minor scale (made of the 5 diatonic pitches)
    - Scale Pattern: m3 W W m3 W
    - Solfege: Do Mi Fa Sol Te Do

- Scale Degrees 1 b3 4 5 b7 8

Key Relationships

- Parallel Keys
  - Keys that share a tonic
  - One major and one minor
    - Example: d minor and D major are parallel keys because they share the same tonic (D)
- Relative Keys
  - Keys that share a key signature (but have different tonics)
    - Example: a minor and C major are relative keys (since they both don't have any sharps or flats)
- Closely Related Keys
  - Keys that differ from each other by at most one sharp or one flat
  - Every key has 5 closely related keys
  - There are 2 ways to find closely related keys

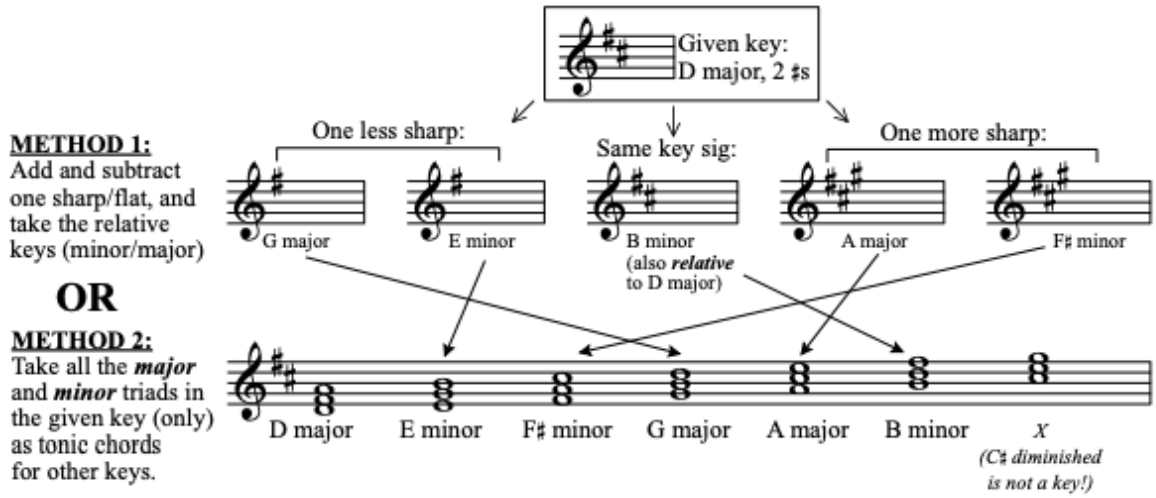


Image is from LearnMusicTheory.net

- Distantly Related Keys
  - Any key that is not enharmonic, parallel, relative or closely-related
    - Example: E minor and Bb major are distantly related keys

Other Scales

- Chromatic Scale
    - 12 note scale (in other words, this scale covers all 12 available pitches)
    - Each note is a semitone away from each other
        - Example: The C chromatic scale has the following notes: C, C#, D, D#, E, F, F#, G, G#, A, A#, B, C
- Whole-Tone Scale
    - Each note on this scale is one whole note away
        - Example: The C whole-tone scale has the following notes: C, D, E, F#, G#, A#, C
- Pentatonic Scale
    - 5 note scale (for major pentatonic - the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 5th, and 6th notes in a major scale)
        - Example: The C pentatonic scale has the following notes: C, D, E, G, A
    - For minor pentatonic, see above under “Minor Scales”

Major Intervals

- “Major” and “Perfect” are used to label an interval’s quality.
    - Seconds, thirds, sixths, and sevenths have a major quality.
    - Fourths, fifths, and eighths have perfect quality.
- Major Second
    - Made up of two half steps
    - Example: C to D
- Major Third
    - Made up of four half steps
    - Example: C to E
- Perfect Fourth
    - Made up of five half steps
    - Example: C to F
- Perfect Fifth
    - Made up of seven half steps

    - Example: C to G
- Major Sixth
    - Made up of nine half steps
    - Example: C to A
- Major Seventh
    - Made up of eleven half steps
    - Example: C to B
- Perfect Eighth (Perfect Octave)
    - Made up of twelve half steps
    - Example: C to C

Minor Intervals

Minor intervals are one less half step than major intervals.

- Example: C to E is a major third (4 half steps), making C to Eb is a minor third (3 half steps).

Augmented Intervals

Augmented intervals are one more half step than perfect intervals/major intervals.

- Example: C to F is a perfect fourth (5 half steps), making C to F# an augmented fourth (6 half steps).

Diminished Intervals

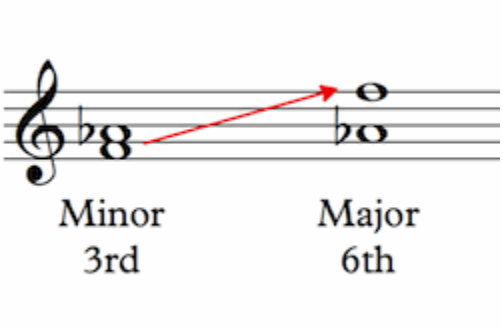
Diminished Intervals are one less half step than perfect intervals/minor intervals.

- Example: C to G is a perfect fifth (7 half steps), making C to Gb a diminished fifth (6 half steps).

Interval Inversions

Inverting intervals is reversing the positions of the two notes (i.e. raise the lower note an octave OR lower the upper note an octave).

- Example (from The Essentials of Music Theory)



- The lower note (F) on the minor third was raised an octave and now becomes the higher note for the major 6th.
- Naming the Inverted Interval (taken from colby.edu):

When you invert an interval
the general name of the interval and its inversion always add up to 9.
The specific name will always be the "opposite" (major becomes minor; minor becomes major; augmented becomes diminished; diminished becomes augmented; **but** perfect intervals retain their perfect quality under inversion).

Major 3rd	»	Minor 6th
Aug. 2nd	»	Dim. 7th
Minor 7th	»	Major 2nd
Dbl. Aug 4th	»	Dbl. Dim. 5th
Perfect 4th	»	Perfect 5th

Compound Intervals

Any interval that is larger than an octave is a compound interval.

- Examples (from colby.edu):

Transposing Instruments

Transposing instruments are instruments that have different notated pitches from the actual pitches that are played.

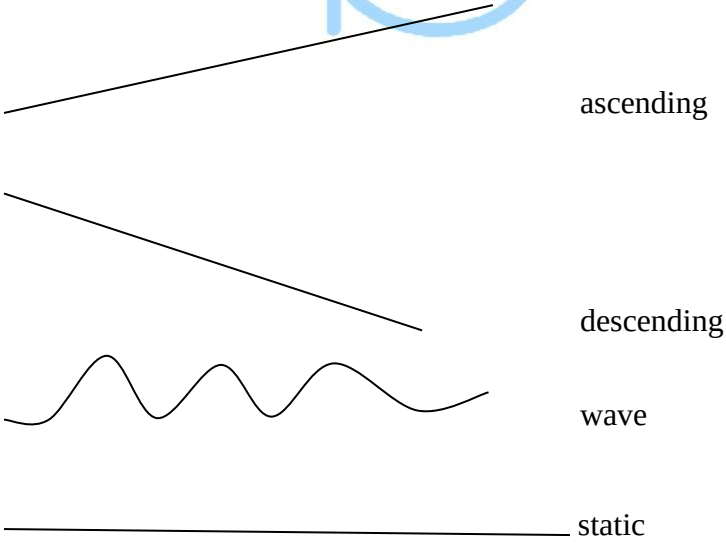
- Examples of these instruments are a Bb Clarinet and a Bb Trumpet. This means that when they read a note and play the note, the sound of the note will play differently. If they read and play a C, a Bb sound will come out.
- The AP Music Theory exam might have musical scores that will usually contain instrumental parts that should be converted from the notated pitches to the actual sounding pitches. This will help before analyzing the piece for the exam.

Timbre

- The quality of the sound based on how the sound is produced
    - Example: different instrument sounds played together

Melodic Features

- Contour
    - The shape of the melody overall
    - Described as either:



- Melodic Movement
    - Relationship between the pitch and the pitches before or after it

        - Conjunct: moving in stepwise motion
        - Disjunct: moving in leaps or skips
- Range
    - Distance between the lowest and the highest notes
        - Narrow: less than an octave
        - Medium: about an octave
        - Wise: more than an octave

Melodic Transposition

For the sight-singing portion of the AP Music Theory exam, the piece that is provided can be transposed to a range that is more comfortable for you.

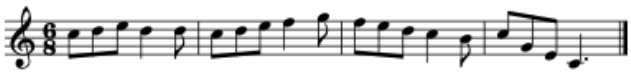
Some tips for how to make sure that you are transposing correctly:

- Label the solfege of the piece. Choose a key that is comfortable for you. Use the solfege of the piece to find the respective notes in the new key.
- Label the scale degrees of the piece. Choose a key that is comfortable for you. Use the scale degrees of the piece to find the respective notes in the new key.

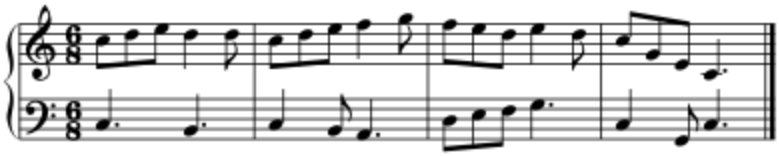
Texture

Texture is the way the harmonies, melodies, rhythms and timbres are used together for a piece of music. There are four common texture types: (examples are from learnmusictheory.net)

- Monophonic Texture
    - Has only one melody line
    - If multiple instruments play this same melody, that means they are *playing in unison*
    - Example:



- Polyphonic Texture
    - Has at least two melody lines
    - Example:



- Homophonic Texture
    - Has one melody line with accompaniment
    - Accompaniment can come in various forms such as chords or bass
- Heterophonic Texture
    - Different instruments playing the same melody at once but each add their own (subtle) variations
    - This texture is common in jazz and some music of India and Africa

Rhythmic Devices

Rhythmic devices are often used to “spice up” a musical piece by sometimes breaking rhythm rules. Some examples of these devices are:

- Syncopation: an accent on weak beats
- Cross-rhythm: at least two rhythmic patterns happening at the same time
- Hemiola: any arrangement of rhythm & meter in a 3 to 2 ratio