

# Music Theory Study Guide

All music pitch notation is based on the layout of notes on the piano keyboard. What note is the piano keyboard based on? C

Western tonal music theory can be defined as music that has Pitches, scales and chords with defined relationships.

Western tonal music theory is based on the C major scale.

A single key signature can contain both sharps and flats. True False

Notes that are marked with sharps, flats or naturals that **are not** in the key signature are called accidentals

What is rule for accidentals? Accidentals are carried through the measure they are in.

What might indicate that the tonal center or key of a piece is changing?  
Accidentals start to appear consistently or the composer writes in a key change

Minor scales have up to 3 lowered pitches as compared to major scales. What is the scale degree that **must be** lowered for a piece to sound minor? 3 or 3rd

Because our ears hear major keys as a default, what two pitches determine whether a passage sounds minor? How are these pitches changed?  
The 3<sup>rd</sup> must be lowered and 7<sup>th</sup> is natural or raised from the minor 7<sup>th</sup>.

What is the 7<sup>th</sup> degree of a major scale called? The leading tone

Between what scale degrees do half steps appear in a major scale? Between 3-4 and 7-8

Between what scale degrees do half steps appear in a minor scale? Between 2-3 and 5-6

A harmonic minor scale is performed by raising which pitch of the natural minor? 7<sup>th</sup>

The vertical distances between notes are called intervals

The horizontal distances between notes are called steps

What are the steps between notes of a major scale? WWHWWWH

What are the steps between notes of a natural minor scale? WHWWHWW

What is the minimum amount of notes needed to make a chord? 2

What is the most commonly used minor scale form in composition? Natural or Harmonic

The home key, note, or chord that a piece of music is based upon is called the Tonic

The fourth note of the tonic scale is called the Subdominant

The fifth note of the tonic scale is called the **Dominant**

The bottom note of a chord or first note of a scale that a chord is based on is called the **Root**

Three note chords are called **Triads** and are built using a **Root, third, fifth.**

A tonic chord is built using the **Root, third and fifth of the tonic scale.**

Tonic chords are labeled with **uppercase Roman numeral I**

Chords are most commonly built using what intervals? **major and minor thirds**

How a chord or a scale sounds is defined as **quality**

There are five qualities of chords and scales: Major, Minor, Half Diminished, Diminished, and Augmented. What two common chord qualities have we discussed? **Major and Minor**

The dominant V chord is built from which scale degrees of the tonic scale? **5, 7, 2**

The subdominant IV chord is built from which scale degrees of the tonic scale? **4, 6, 8(I)**

Subdominant chords are labeled with **IV**

Dominant chords are labeled with **V**

When we play our chord warm-ups in class, what chord progression are we using? **IV-V-I**

**Be sure to study Scale and Chord Related Theory on the back page of your band book. This information will be included on the quiz.**

Use the staff below to practice writing out a C Major and a C harmonic minor scale using the appropriate clef for your instrument. Write out the tonic, subdominant and dominant chords after the scales. Use quarter notes for the scale and whole notes for the chords. Label all scale degrees with numbers and all chords with appropriate case roman numerals. Be sure to use the correct key signature and appropriate accidentals for the minor scales and chords.

