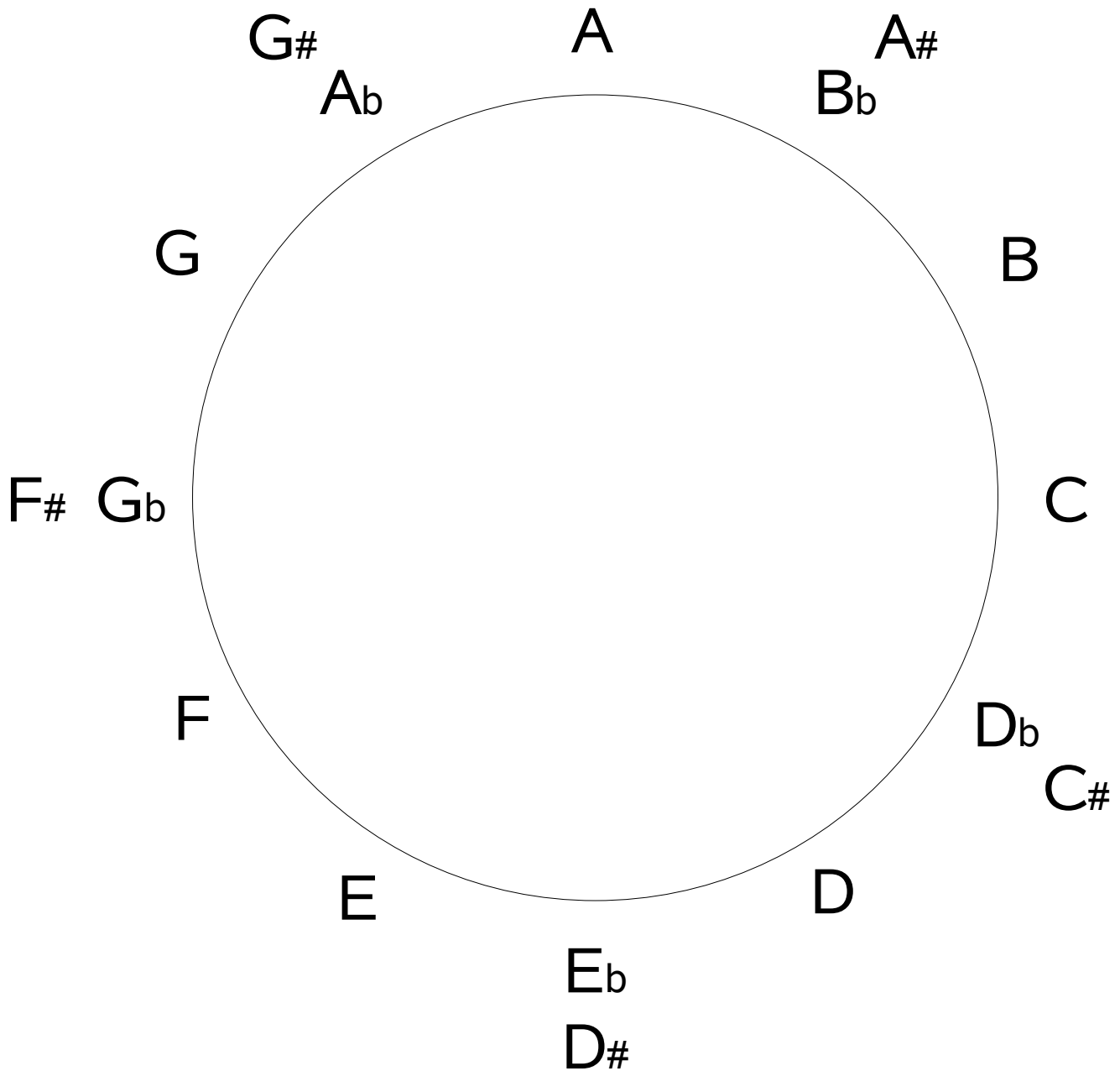


# Music Theory

# Music Terms

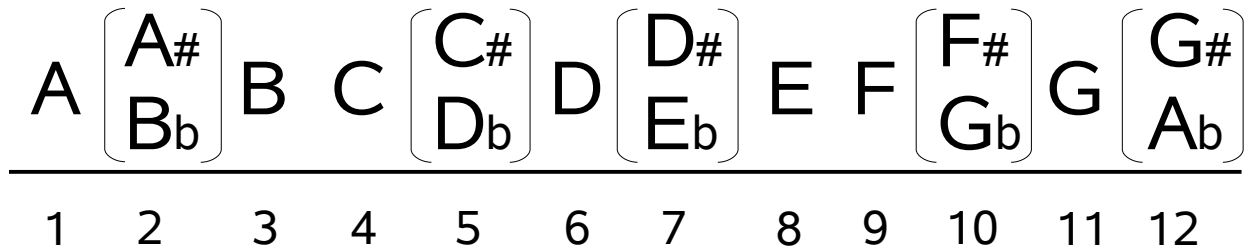
<b>Note</b>	A unit of fixed pitch that has a given name. Notes are combined to create scales and chords.
<b>Scale</b>	A set of musical notes used to create a piece of music. The notes are usually ordered by pitch.
<b>Chord</b>	Three or more notes played simultaneously.
<b>Whole Step</b>	Two notes higher or lower than the current note.
<b>Half Step</b>	One note higher or lower than the current note.
<b>#</b>	Sharp, means to raise a note a half step.
<b>b</b>	Flat, means to lower a note a half step.
<b>Key</b>	A key is the tone center of a piece of music that is established by the chord progression. A key is identified by the chord that is the focal point of the song.
<b>Mode</b>	A mode is an ordered set of chords that create the mood of the song. The tone center of a chord progression determines the mode of the song, not the order of individual notes. Just about all modes used in popular music are created from the major scale.

# Chromatic Cycle



There are twelve notes you can use on the guitar (or any other common instrument.) The diagram above shows the twelve notes in the “Chromatic Cycle.” The reason that the diagram is a circle is to show that the twelve note cycle repeats after the 12<sup>th</sup> note.

# Chromatic Scale



The Chromatic Scale includes all twelve notes. The notes grouped in parentheses are counted as one note because they are two different names for the same note.

For example:

- A# and Bb are the same note.
- C# and Db are the same note.
- D# and Eb are the same note.
- G# and Ab are the same note.

Each note up or down from a given note is called a “half step”. Each note two notes up or down from a given note is called a “whole step”.

For example:

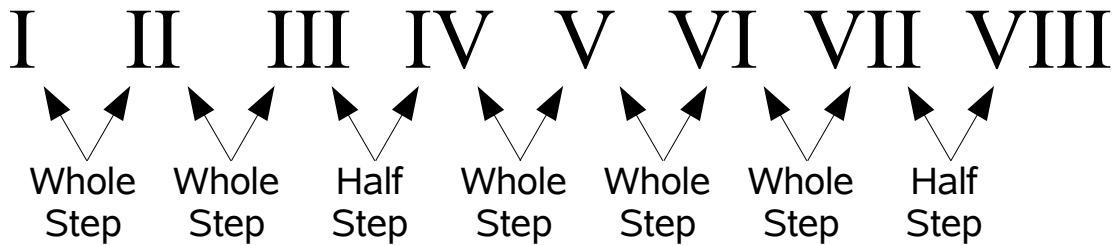
- A to Bb(or A#) is a half step.
- A to B is a whole step.
- B to C is a half step.
- F to E is a half step.
- E to F#(or Gb) is a whole step.
- Bb to Ab is a whole step.

The chromatic scale is made up of 12 half steps – the twelfth half step takes you back to the beginning of the 12 note cycle. In this case, the twelfth half step would take you back to the A note because we started with A. But, you can start at any note and the twelfth half step will take you back to the note from which you started.

To translate the “half step” and “whole step” into guitar terms, a half step is equal to one fret up or down from a given fret, and a whole step is equal to two frets up or down from a given fret.

A sharp(#) means to raise a note a half step. A flat(b) means to lower a note a half step. A# is one half step up from A and Bb is one half step down from B.

# Major Scale



The Major scale is a seven note scale that is the basis for just about all popular music. All of your popular “modes” are derived from the Major scale. There are seven modes because there are seven notes in a Major scale.

The chart above shows the intervals between the notes in the Major scale. The eighth note in the chart is the same as the first note; the pattern of whole steps and half steps just repeat after the eighth note. This pattern of intervals used to build the Major scale is called the “Diatonic Formula.”

There are twelve Major scales because there are twelve notes in the Chromatic Cycle. The first note in the Major scale gives you the name of the Major key. To keep things simple, we will refer to Major keys as “keys” from now on. The twelve major scales are shown below.

<u>I</u>	<u>II</u>	<u>III</u>	<u>IV</u>	<u>V</u>	<u>VI</u>	<u>VII</u>	<u>VIII</u>
A	B	C#	D	D	F#	G#	A
B	C#	D#	E	F#	G#	A#	B
C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C
D	E	F#	G	A	B	C#	D
E	F#	G#	A	B	C#	D#	E
F	G	A	Bb	C	D	E	F
Ab	Bb	C	Db	Eb	F	G	Ab
Bb	C	D	Eb	F	G	A	Bb
Db	Eb	F	Gb	Ab	Bb	C	Db
Eb	F	G	Ab	Bb	C	D	Eb
Gb	Ab	Bb	Cb	Db	Eb	F	Gb

There are seven natural keys, meaning that the first note in the Major scale is not a sharp or flat, and there are five flat keys. There are no sharp keys since the flat keys cover the rest of the notes in the chromatic cycle.

Notice in the key of Gb that there is a Cb. Normally, there is no such thing as a Cb because B and C are only a half step apart. This is an exception to the rule because when you write the notes out in a scale, you want to use the next note in the alphabet (from A to G) as the notes name.