

Knowing the Notes

Firstly, let's play the major scale, it's really important to memorise the finger pattern used as it's the same in all keys: 2 4 1 2 4 1 3 4

Speak it out loud multiple times before playing it, when that becomes easy have a go at the C major scale:

The image shows the C major scale on guitar. The top staff is a treble clef with a 4/4 time signature. The notes are C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, and C5. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4 above the notes: 1 (C), 2 (D), 4 (E), 1 (F), 2 (G), 4 (A), 1 (B), 2 (C). The bottom staff is a guitar TAB with strings labeled T, A, B. The fret numbers are: 8-10 (E), 7-8-10 (D), 7-9-10 (C).

Let's play the same scale but in the key of G

The image shows the G major scale on guitar. The top staff is a treble clef with a 4/4 time signature. The notes are G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, and G6. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4 above the notes: 1 (G), 2 (A), 4 (B), 1 (C), 2 (D), 4 (E), 1 (F#), 2 (G). The bottom staff is a guitar TAB with strings labeled T, A, B. The fret numbers are: 3-5 (B), 2-3-5 (A), 2-4-5 (G).

And now the D Major Scale

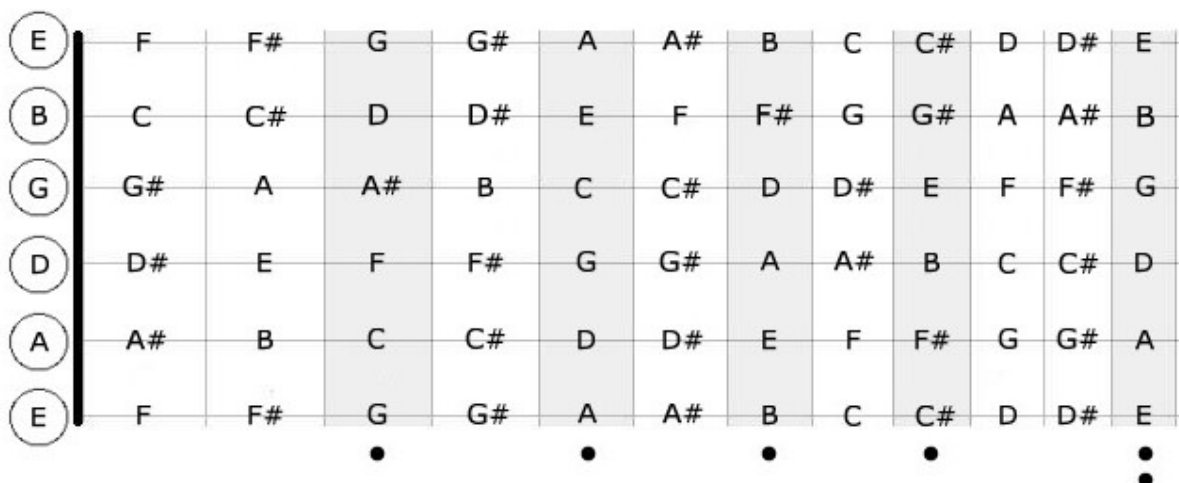
The image shows the D major scale on guitar. The top staff is a treble clef with a 4/4 time signature. The notes are D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C#5, and D5. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4 above the notes: 1 (D), 2 (E), 4 (F#), 1 (G), 2 (A), 4 (B), 1 (C#), 2 (D). The bottom staff is a guitar TAB with strings labeled T, A, B. The fret numbers are: 5-7 (B), 4-5-7 (A), 4-6-7 (D).

Notice, the pattern is always the same regardless of key: 2 4 1 2 4 1 3 4

Time to memories the fretboard

Have a look at the diagram before reading the paragraph below it..

Guitar Fretboard



The # symbol means sharp:

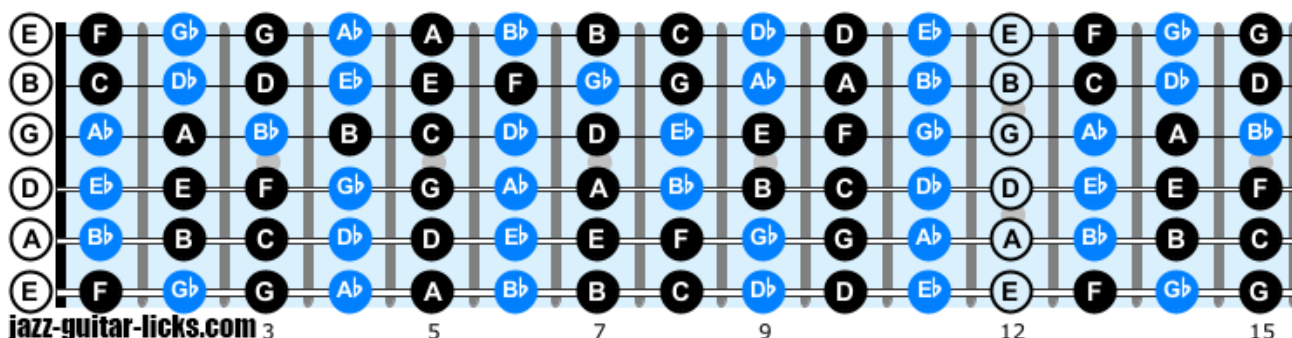
A term for the note/fret between two notes: for example after A you don't go immediately to B, you play A#, which is the fret between, also known as a half step, 2 frets being a whole step. Let me simplify this..

Imagine walking up the stairs, going up one stair is counted as a half step, whereas fully extending your leg and climbing two stairs is a whole step. Got it? Cool.

Notice there's no sharps between B and C, and E and F

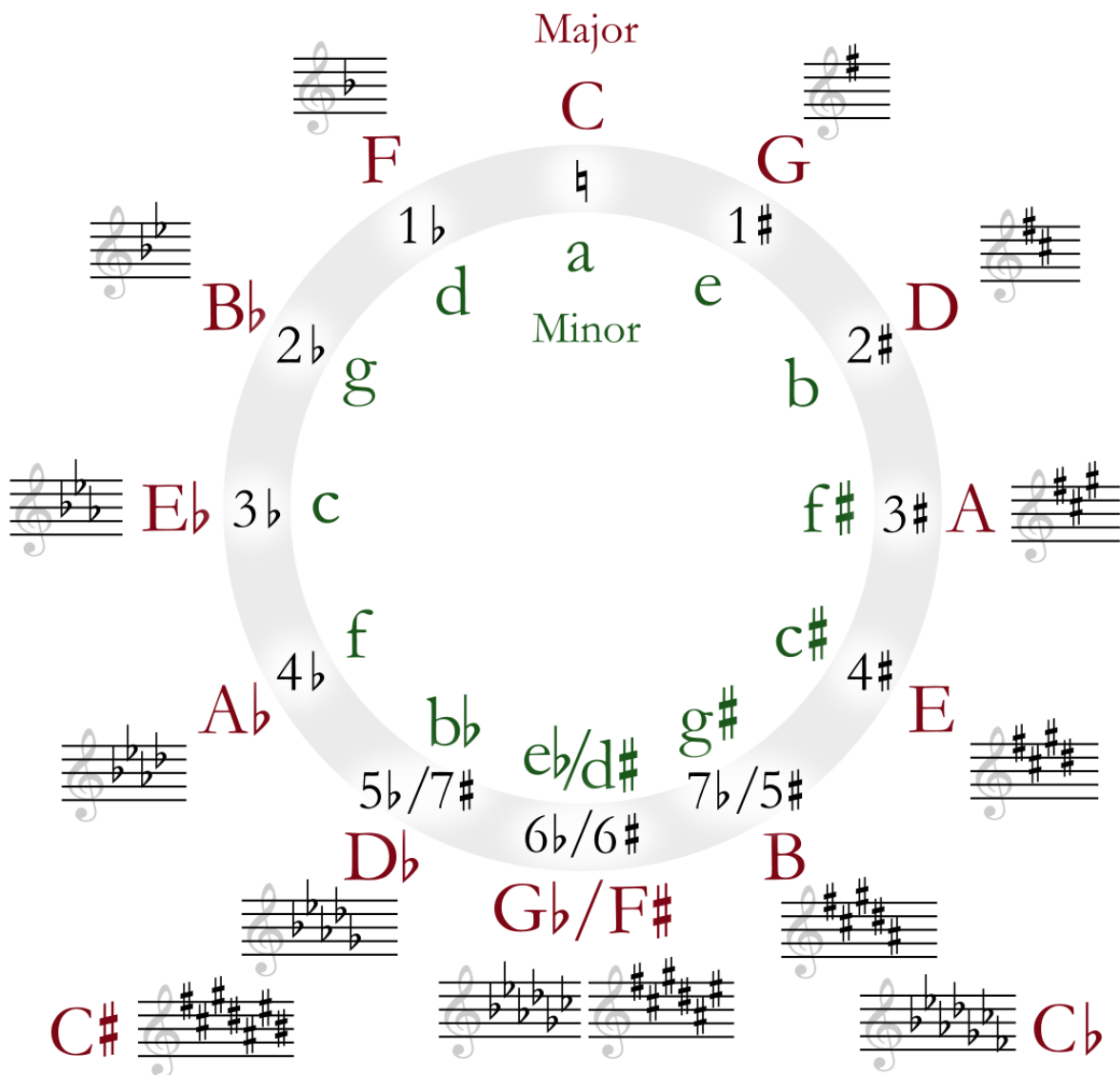
Now look at it again

This time using flats: the flat symbol that looks like this b. Flats mean the same thing as sharps, only you're looking at it as the half step below instead of above, so F sharp would now become G flat. Make sense? If not, stay with sharps for now



The Circle of Fifths

Look at it then read the paragraph below:



The **circle of fifths** is a diagram that shows the relationship between different keys in music. The keys that include sharps appear on the right of the circle, while the keys that include flats appear on the left. The key of C major, which doesn't include any sharps or flats, sits at the centre.

If you follow the chart clockwise, you'll see that a sharp is added with each key: C major contains no sharps, G major contains one sharp, D major contains two sharps, and so on. Additionally, you may have noticed that the pitches that correspond with each key are a **fifth** higher than the previous pitch that followed in the circle

(the distance between C and G is five notes, the distance between G and D is a fifth, and so on). This is why the chart is known as the circle of fifths.

On the other hand, if you follow the chart counterclockwise, you'll see that a flat is added with each key: C major contains no flats, F major contains one flat, B \flat major contains two flats, and so on. And this time, each pitch is a **fourth** higher than the last (the distance between C and F is a fourth, the distance between F and B \flat is a fourth, and so on).

To remember the sharps simply say:

Father Charles Goes Down And Ends Battle (F# C# G# D# A# E# B#)

The Flats:

Battle Ends And Down Goes Charles's Father: (B \flat E \flat A \flat D \flat G \flat C \flat F \flat)

Now play the major keys using the Major scale pattern, and your knowledge of the fretboard to find the starting note, then speak the notes out loud as you play to internalise the keys

The circle of fifths with relative minor keys

The circle of fifths can be seamlessly applied to minor keys as well. Each major key has a **relative minor key**, which is a key with the same number of sharps and flats. For example, the relative minor key of C major is A minor (both have no sharps or flats), and the relative minor key of E \flat major is C minor (both have three flats). The relative minor key is always three semitones below its corresponding major key.

In the chart above, you can see the minor keys located below their relative major keys. The relationships between them are equivalent to their major counterparts.

Now try the A minor scale,

s. guit.

The image shows the A minor scale on guitar. The top staff is a treble clef in 4/4 time, starting on A4 (open A string). The notes are A, B, C, D, E, F, G, A. Fingerings are: 1 (A), 3 (B), 4 (C), 1 (D), 3 (E), 4 (F), 1 (G), 3 (A). The bottom staff shows the fretboard for strings T, A, and B. Fingerings are: 5 (A), 7 (B), 8 (C), 5 (D), 7 (E), 8 (F), 5 (G), 7 (A).

Now use the exact same principles you used with the major scale to play the relative minor keys, using the minor scale pattern on the E and A string: 1 3 4 1 3 4 1 3