

Autumn Term: September

Music Theory

Key Signatures!

Tones and Semitones

Let's begin with tones and semitones! When we take steps up and down the piano we are moving in TONES and SEMITONES. A semitone is a single step, it could be a note up or down but it describes the step to the NEXT note. It's a journey to its next door neighbour! C to C sharp is a SEMITONE. These notes are next to each other. **Who lives next door to C sharp on the other side?**

TONE is two steps, for example moving from C to D.

Is E to F a TONE or SEMITONE?

(It is a SEMITONE because it is the next note).

E to F sharp is a TONE because it is two steps.

See if you can play a scale of semitones! It sounds brilliant! We call this a CHROMATIC scale.

Key Signatures

These are always written AFTER the clef. They may contain sharps or flats.

Sharps are written on the music in a special order which I'd like you to learn:

Father

Charles

Goes

Down

And

Ends

Battle



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY](#)

The order of flats is the other way round, so B goes first e.g **Battle Ends And Down....etc.**

Regardless of their place on the staff (lines), it applies to ALL those notes not just a high F but ALL F's and in BOTH clefs.



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY](#)

These tell us the KEY of the music. **All of you should know at least one of these by learning your scales already. Here are the main MAJOR keys we use which I'd like you to learn this term.**

G major = F sharp

D major = F and C sharp

A major = C, F and G sharp

E major = F,G, C and D sharp

If you are doing grade 2 + you should be able to know key signatures for all scales starting on white notes this term. I'll send you a sheet to help you learn them.

Please take the time to do this, it will really help your sightreading later.

Did you notice that we move UP 5 steps each time (G to D for example) and every time we take that move we add another sharp? There are lots of fun patterns to learn here! Think about what else is happening. If you spot any more patterns tell me in your next lesson! 😊

Practice drawing your new key signatures on the stave here and make sure you use the correct order.

- 1. Draw 5 lines.**
- 2. Choose a Clef (Treble or Bass)**
- 3. Write out your key signature AFTER the clef**
- 4. Write out the notes for the scale! Remember we move from a space to a line, or line to a space depending on when you start. Use crotchets for your notes. If you get stuck ask me in your lesson.**

There are two reasons why this is important.

1. When we play our music with other instruments we have to know what key we are in. This helps other instruments to be in tune with us.

2. If we drew the sharps or flats on every time we needed them it would look really messy. This is why we place them at the beginning, IF we intend all those notes to be played as sharps. We try to keep our music as clean and tidy as possible so it's easier to read.