Major Scales

C major scale

R.H.	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
	C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C
L.H.	5	4	3	2	1	3	2	1

You should notice the pattern of whole steps and half steps that make the C major scale. It is this pattern which gives the scale its particular sound.

C		D		E		F		G		A		B		C
	W		W		H		W		W		W		H	

The C scale is the only scale where this pattern (W W H W W W H) occurs naturally with the use of only white keys. To create this pattern starting on any other note, it is necessary to add either ***sharps*** ♯ or ***flats b.*** There is a definite pattern to the way sharps and flats are added to the scales, and when you understand this pattern, it will be easy to memorize the different scales and their ***key signatures***. A key signature is the name of the sharps or flats of a particular scale.

This pattern is based on the interval of a 5th. Ex. The C scale has no flats and no sharps. The 5th note of the C scale is ___, which will have one sharp. The 5th note of this scale will have two sharps, and the 5th note of that scale will have three sharps etc…

Starting with C. List the scales and the number of sharps to the left.

Scale	# of sharps	Name of sharps
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

The sharps themselves also have a pattern. When you figure out the sharps, you will notice that they are also based on the interval of a 5th, but this is not the easiest way to remember them. Here is the rule: **The new sharp is always the next to the last note of the scale.** So, for the G scale, the sharp is F#. For the D scale, this sharp is carried over, and a new one is added. You continue this process for each new scale. Take time now

and fill in the names of the sharps in the chart above. *When you play the scales, the fingering will remain the same for all the scales except B.*

MEMORIZING THE ORDER OF SHARPS

The sharps begin with the lowest of the 3 black keys, which is ___ . They continue with the lowest of the 2 black keys, which is ____. Then the 2nd of the 3 black keys ____. Then the 2nd of the 2 black keys ____. Then you have one more left which is ____.

PRACTICING THE SCALES

When you are beginning, practice the scales in the order of sharps, beginning with C and ending with B. Recite the name of the scale, the number of sharps and the name of the sharps by memory for each scale.

RULES FOR FINGERING THE SHARP SCALES

For the scales up to 5#'s the fingering for the right hand is:

1,2,3,1,2,3,4,5. When playing more than one octave, the 1st finger is substituted for the 5th finger.

For the scales up to 4#'s the fingering for the left hand is:

5,4,3,2,1,3,2,1. When playing more than one octave, the 1st finger is substituted for the 5th finger.

The fingering for the B scale is 4,3,2,1, 4,3,2,1

FLAT SCALES

Starting with the C scale, each time you *descend* a perfect fifth, you add one flat to the scale. With the flat scales, the new flat is the note which is a fifth below the first note of the scale.

Scale	# of flats	Name of flats
C___	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

MEMORIZING THE ORDER OF FLATS

The flats begin with the highest of the 3 black keys, which is ___ . They continue with the highest of the 2 black keys, which is ____. Then the 2nd of the 3 black keys ____. Then the 2nd of the 2 black keys ____. Then you have one more left which is ____.

RULES FOR FINGERING THE FLAT SCALES

The F scale has a unique fingering for the R.H., and the left follows the typical fingering for scales beginning on a white note.

R.H.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
	F	G	A	Bb	C	D	E	F
L.H.	5	4	3	2	1	3	2	1

- The rule that governs the fingering of all the flat scales is that the flats are **never** played with the thumb
- R.H. ascending: Start with the 2nd finger and the thumb follows the black notes.
- R. H. descending: alternate 321, 4321 on black notes. (Bb is always played with the 4th finger)
- L. H. ascending: alternate 321, 4321
- L.H. descending: thumb follows the black notes.

The L.H. fingering for the ascending Gb scale is 4321,321.