

# MELODIC NOTATION

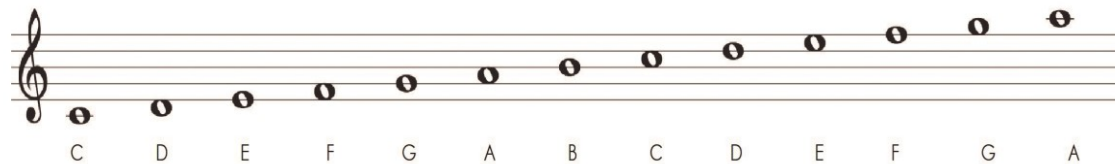
## UNIT TWO

This is the equivalence between Latin and English notation:

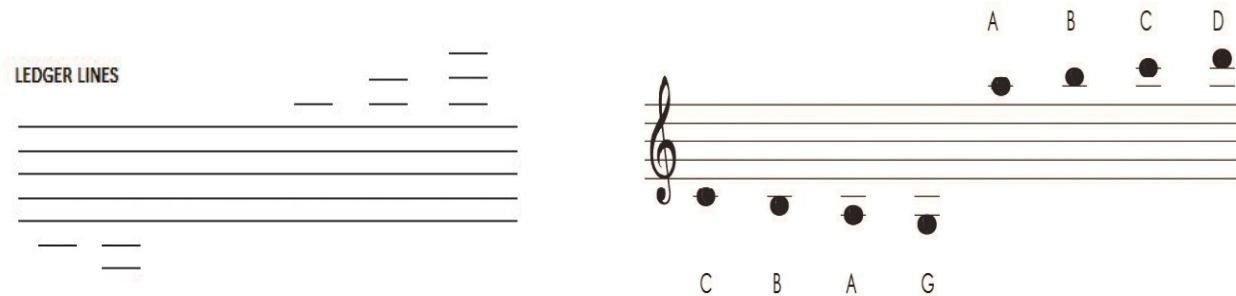
C - D - E - F - G - A - B

DO - RE - MI - FA - SOL - LA - SI

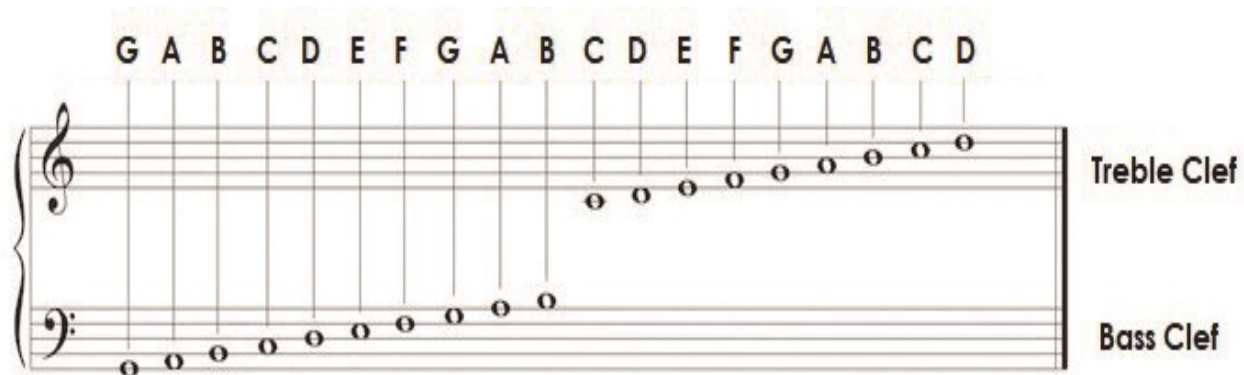
Music is written in a graph of five lines and four spaces called a staff:



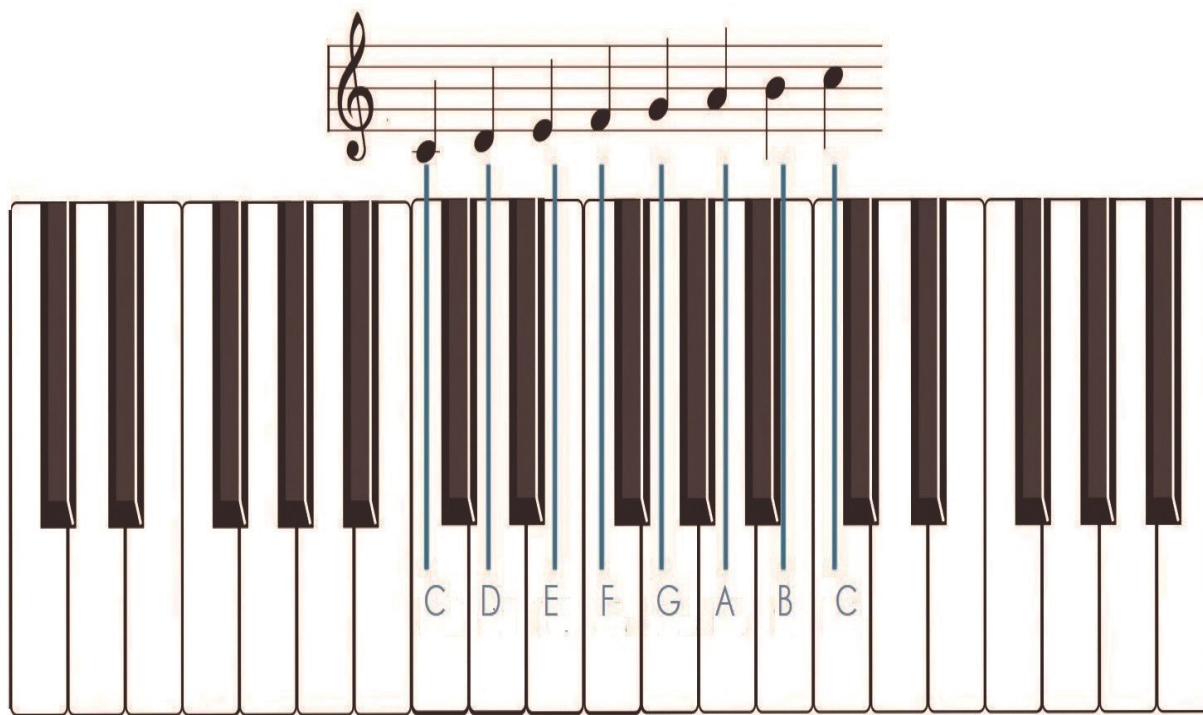
Notes that extend above or below the staff use ledger lines:



Normally, notes of lower pitch are written in bass clef. The clef changes the pitch of the notes, this is its function.



These are the names of the notes on a keyboard in treble clef:

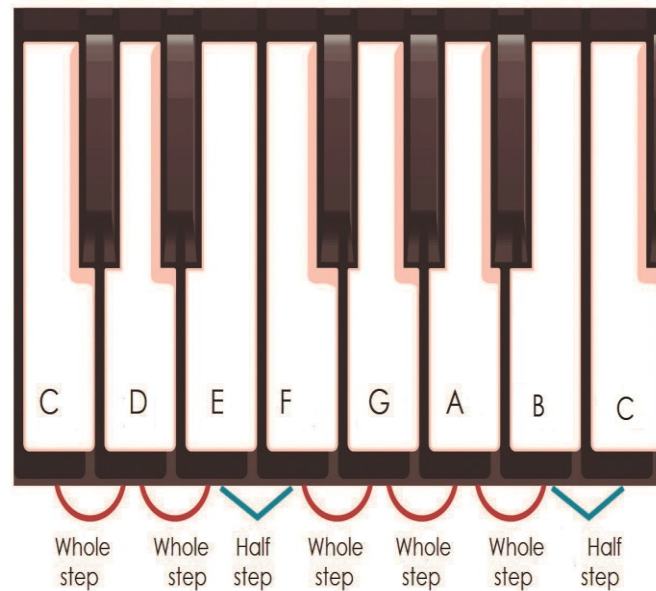


# INTERVALS I

An interval in music is the distance between two notes.

A *half step* is the smallest distance between two keys on the piano. It is also the smallest interval commonly used in western music.

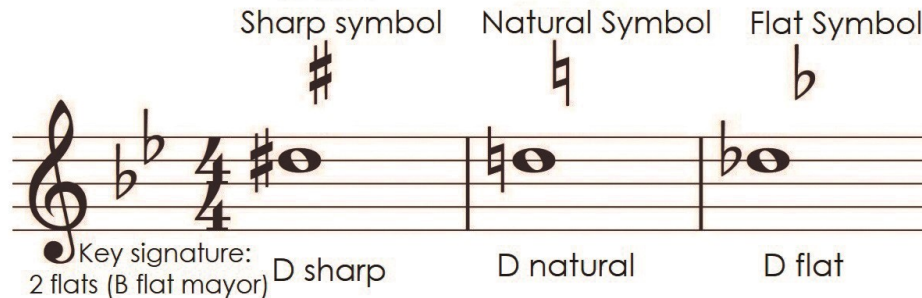
A *whole step* is a combination of two half steps side by side on the keyboard. A whole step on the piano can be between two white keys, two black keys or a black and white key.



Notate that half steps are always located between E-F and B-C

# SHARPS, FLATS AND NATURALS

Placing a sharp in front of a note raises the pitch a half step.

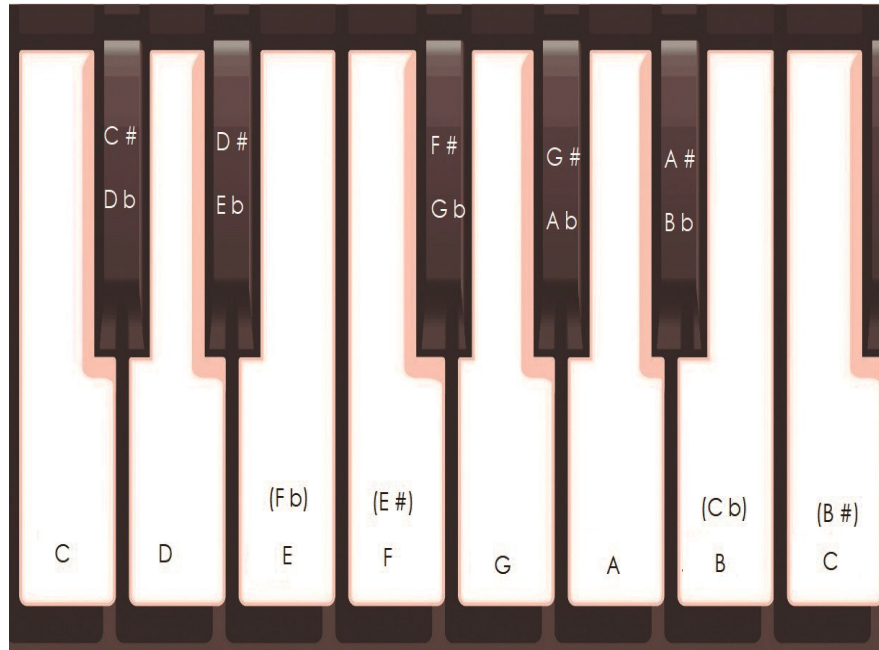


Placing a flat in front of a note lowers the pitch a half step.

A natural placed before a note cancels the effect a flat or a sharp has until the next bar.

Sharps or flats placed immediately to the right of the clef sign are called the *Key signature*. They indicate the scale we are in. These symbols affect every note named by the sharps or flats for the entire song. When sharps or flats appear in a key signature it is no longer necessary to place them next to each individual note.

Keyboards are tuned in a way that there is half step between each key.



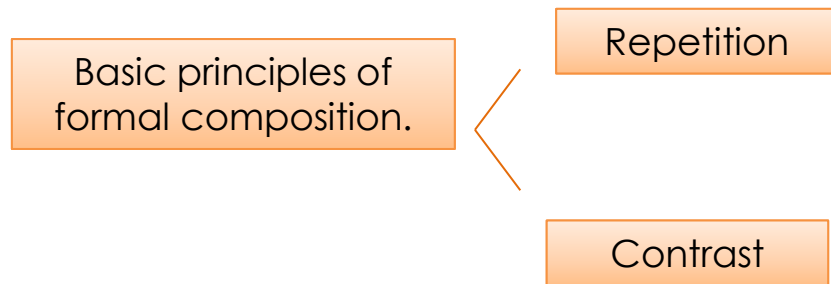
Enharmonic notes: Notes that sound the same but have different names.  
For example: C# and Db.

# MUSICAL FORM

## UNIT EIGHT




The musical form is the structure or time frame upon which music is developed.




Music needs repetition to be understood and remembered, but too much repetition could lead to boredom or tiredness. Therefore, music also needs to combine different things or add new stuff. It needs to create contrast. The beauty comes from finding the balance between repetition and contrast.

Musical form is normally based on the melodies of a composition and the connections between them.

To analyse musical form we assign each melody a letter. If the same melody appears again we repeat it, and if we hear something new we assign it a new letter.

Melody 1  A

Melody 2  B

Etc.

You'll see the diagrams of the most common forms of western music.

Later on you'll have an explanation of each of them.

# COMMON FORMS

## Strophic form or Ballad

The same section of music is repeated over and over again with virtually no changes.



## Binary form

Consists of two different musical phrases or sections that are usually repeated.



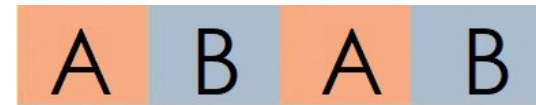
## 12-bars blues

It repeats the same melody twice (the call) with slight variations, followed by a new melody (the response).



## Verse-Chorus Structure

The structure goes verse-chorus-verse-chorus and so on.



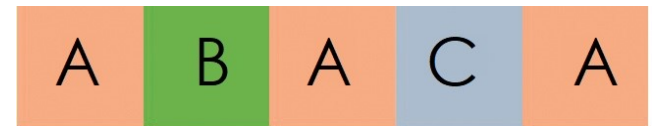
## Ternary form

Consists of three phrases or sections in which the third one is usually the repetition of the first one.



## Rondo

A piece of music in which a refrain is repeated between new musical ideas.



## Theme and variations

A piece that starts with one tune and then change it in different ways.



## STROPHIC FORM

In a strophic song each verse has the same tune; the same section of music is repeated over and over again with virtually no changes.



Strophic form is used in Classical, folk, blues and pop music.

The music for each verse is the same but the lyrics change in every verse.

Hymns or romances are good examples of this.

## BINARY FORM

Binary form has two sections, and each one is repeated twice.



It's usually used for Baroque dances, e.g. *borrée*, *menuet*, *gavotte*, *sarabande* and *gigue*.

The two sections should sound different (to contrast).

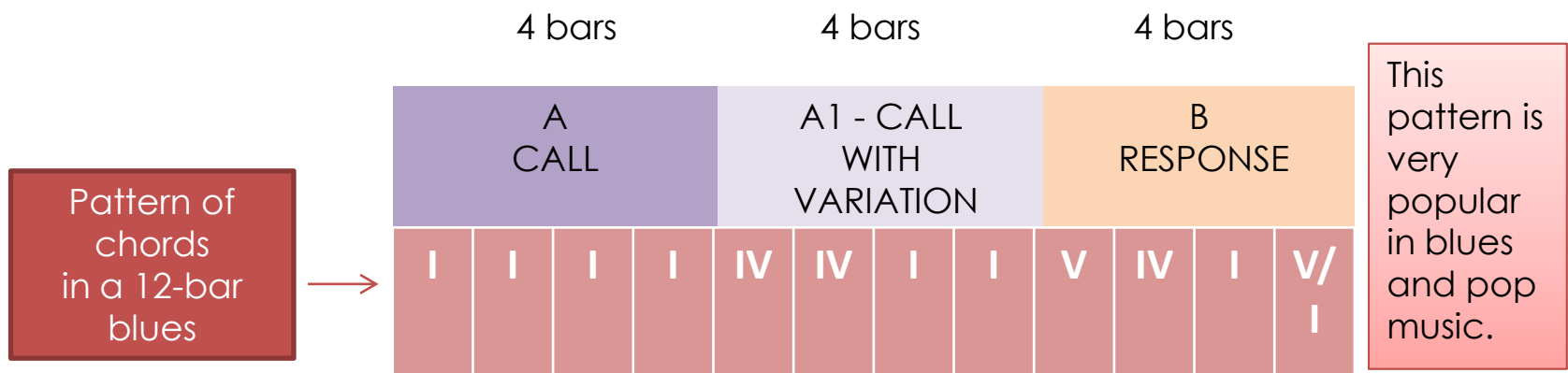
The contrast is often made by modulating to related keys:

- Pieces in a minor key usually modulate to the relative major, e.g. A minor to C major.
- Pieces in a major key usually modulate to the dominant key (V), e.g. C major to G major.

# 12-BAR BLUES STRUCTURE (CALL AND RESPONSE )

*Call and response* is an old, simple musical structure. It takes place between either two groups of musicians or between a leader and the rest of the group. One group (or the leader) plays or sings a short phrase, this is the *call*. It's answered by the other group, this is the *response*.

In a 12-bar blues structure the usual pattern of a call and response is slightly modified by adding a variation of A. The result is this: A- A1- B:



# STRING INSTRUMENTS AND THEIR ENSEMBLES

UNIT NINE

Every culture has some type of string instrument in which the sound is produced by vibration of a stretched strings.

To learn about the most important string instruments of western society we'll break them in:

**Plucked string instruments**

Strings are plucked by fingers or a plectrum



**Struck string instruments**

Strings are struck by hammers inside the box



**Bowed string instruments**

They are mainly played with a bow





# PLUCKED STRING INSTRUMENTS

## TYPES OF GUITARS



**HOLLOW  
BODY**

The **classical or Spanish guitar** has nylon strings and a thick neck.



The **acoustic guitar** has steel strings and can be played with or without amplifier. Its neck is thinner and stronger than a classical guitar to support the higher tension created by the steel strings.



**SOLID  
BODY**

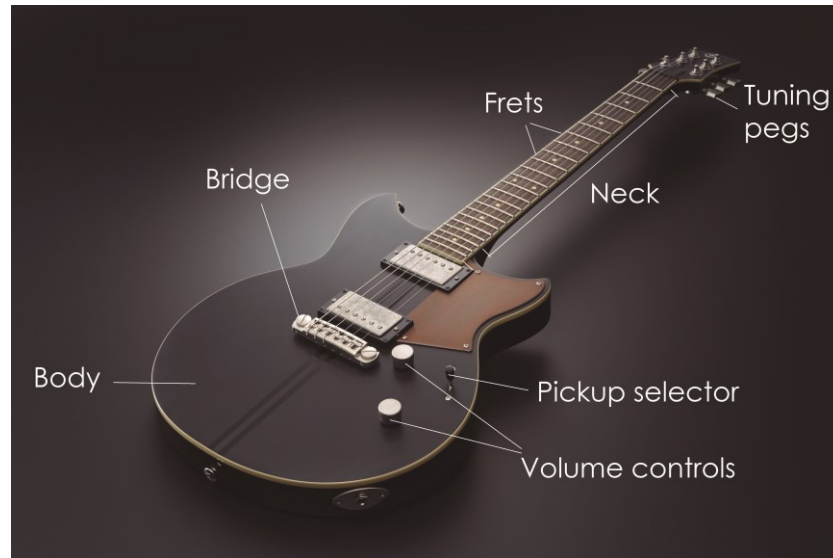
The **Electric guitar** also has six steel strings but it needs an amplifier and a loudspeaker to create the sound. Guitarists often use a *combo*, which is an amplifier and loudspeaker *all in one*.

**AMPLIFIER**



The **Bass guitar** has four long, thick steel strings that create the lowest sounds. It also needs electric amplification.

## PARTS OF A GUITAR



Guitars have six strings tuned to the notes E(low)-A-D-G-B-E(high). Low E is the nearest to your head as you're playing.

The acoustic and electric guitars can be played with fingers or a plectrum (a small flat piece of plastic- also called a guitar pick).

Plucking one string at a time is called picking; playing two or more strings at a time in a sweeping movement is called strumming.

Strumming is how chords are usually played. Pop and folk guitarists tend to play accompaniments rather than tunes so they do more strumming than picking.

Here you have some antique instruments similar to the guitar. You might have the chance to listen to them if you attend a concert of Renaissance or Baroque music (music from fifteenth to eighteenth century). They have smooth sonorities.

### LAÚD



"The musicians". Carvaggio.1597

### VIHUELA



"Woman playing a vihuela"  
Simon Vouet.1618

### TIORBA



"A woman playing the Theorbo-lute  
and a Cavalier". Gerard ter Borch.  
1658

# THE HARP



The harp is always plucked.  
Most have 47 strings.

Plucking each string in order on a concert harp is like playing up the white notes in a piano.

It has seven pedals.

Pressing and releasing these lets you play sharp and flat notes.

You can play one note at a time or play chords by plucking a few strings together.



# BOWED STRING INSTRUMENTS

Bowed string instruments are the nucleus of the orchestra.

Violin



Viola



Cello



The bigger the instrument is,  
the lower it sounds.

**They can be bowed or plucked:**

**Bowing:** drawing a bow (made with horse hair) across the string.

**Plucking:** picking the string with the tip of your finger. The technical term is *pizzicato*.



Double Bass