

# Scales, Transposition & Key Signatures Information Sheet

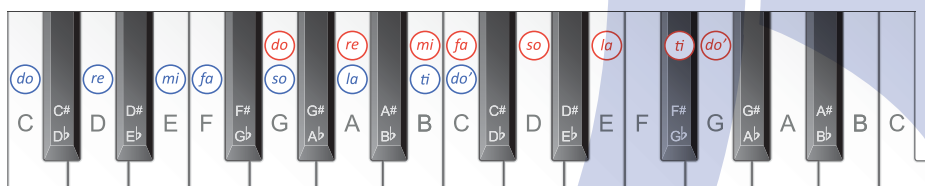
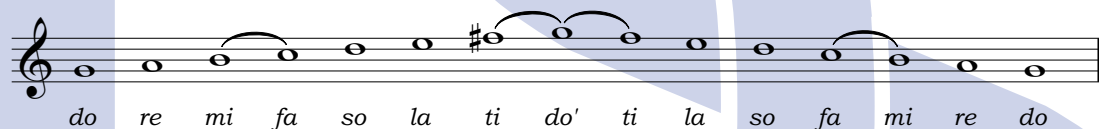
Transposition occurs when a scale or song is rewritten, beginning on a new note, but sounding the same as the original scale or song (only higher or lower). The scale or song sound the same because the **interval pattern** of this remains the same.

## Transposing the C Major Scale into the G Major Scale

If we take the interval pattern of tones and semitones in the C Major scale (note the slurs showing where the semitones are):



and, beginning on G, write notes that fit this interval pattern we will have the following scale (note the F# is needed to keep *ti* to *do'* as a semitone):

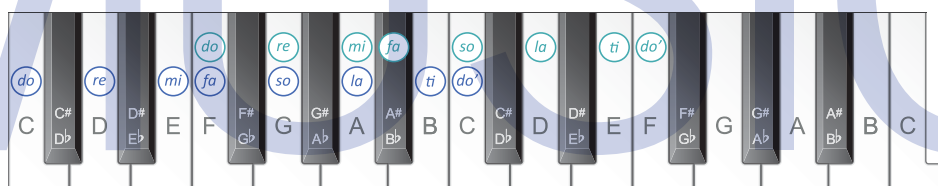
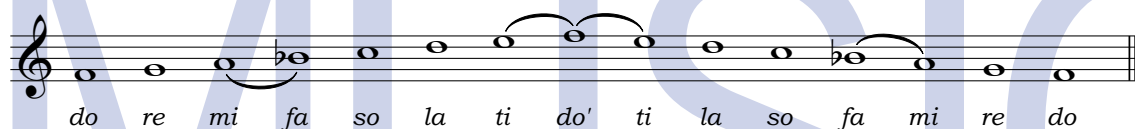


## Transposing the C Major Scale into the F Major Scale

If we again take the interval pattern of tones and semitones in the C Major scale (note the slurs showing where the semitones are):



and, beginning on F, write notes that fit this pattern we will have the following scale (note the Bb is needed to keep *mi* to *fa* as a semitone):



## Level 3 – Scales, Transposition & Key Signatures Information Sheet

This activity relates to concepts, skills and information taught in *Musicianship & Aural Training for the Secondary School*, Level 3, Section 2, page 19.

## Scales, Transposition & Key Signatures Information Sheet cont.

### G Major



As you have learned, the G Major scale requires an F# in order to have the Major scale interval pattern. Notice that we do not need a # in front of the second F. This is because an accidental lasts for a full bar (until the next barline) or until it is cancelled out by another accidental (a sharp, a flat or a natural: ♮) therefore this second F is still an F#.

### Key Signatures

If a melody is to be based on G Major, it will use the notes from the G Major scale and therefore will need to have a sharp in front of every F in the piece:



To avoid having to do this, we place the sharp (or flat) required after the clef at the beginning of each line of music. This is called the **key signature**.



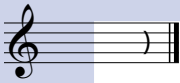
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# Scales, Transposition & Key Signatures Information Sheet cont.


## Major Key Signatures - Treble Clef


### Sharp Keys


(C Major: )


G Major: 

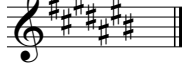
D Major: 

A Major: 


E Major: 


B Major: 


F# Major: 

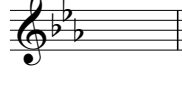
C# Major: 


### Flat Keys

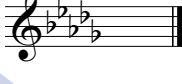
(C Major: )


F Major: 

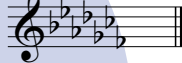
Bb Major: 

Eb Major: 

Ab Major: 


Db Major: 


Gb Major: 


Cb Major: 

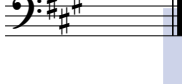
## Major Key Signatures - Bass Clef


### Sharp Keys


(C Major: )


G Major: 

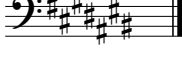
D Major: 

A Major: 

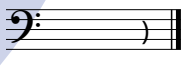
E Major: 


B Major: 


F# Major: 


C# Major: 


### Flat Keys


(C Major: )

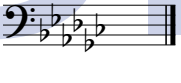
F Major: 

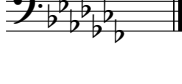
Bb Major: 

Eb Major: 

Ab Major: 

Db Major: 

Gb Major: 

Cb Major: 

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This activity relates to concepts, skills and information taught in *Musicianship & Aural Training for the Secondary School*, Level 3, Section 2, page 20.

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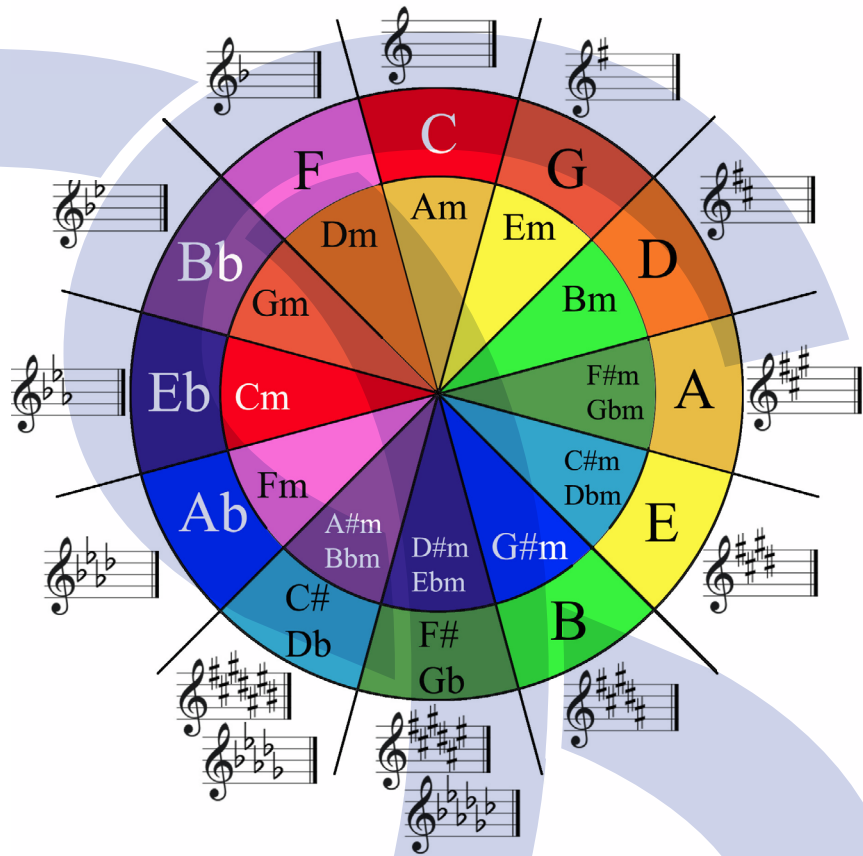
# Scales, Transposition & Key Signatures Information Sheet cont.

## The Order of Sharps in a Key Signature


The order of **sharps** in a key signature begins on F and each one is **up a 5th**: F, C, G, D, A, E and B.

Using a circle of 5ths can help remember this (see right).

As can a mnemonic such as: "**F**ather **C**harles **G**oes **D**own **A**nd **E**nds **B**attle".



Another important aspect of writing key signatures is to remember that all sharps (or flats) remain **on the staff** (i.e. no leger lines are used in key signatures). This helps you to know when a sharp no longer continues upwards.


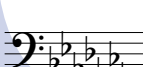
For example, in this key signature:  you can see the fifth sharp: A, and the seventh sharp: B, need to go down from each previous sharp, or they would need leger lines.

The bass clef key sharp signature requires a similar adjustment: 

## The Order of Flats in a Key Signature

The order of **flats** is simply the reverse of the order of sharps (or beginning on B and going **down a 5th**): B, E, A, D, G, C and F.

A mnemonic for the order of flats in a key signature could be: "**B**attle **E**nds **A**nd **D**own **G**oes **C**harles' **F**ather".

As per previous information, all flats within a key signature must also remain on the staff however, no alteration is required as both treble and bass clef flats remain on the staff:  

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This activity relates to concepts, skills and information taught in *Musicianship & Aural Training for the Secondary School*, Level 3, Section 2, page 21.

# Scales, Transposition & Key Signatures Information Sheet cont.

There are many ways of determining the key of a melody from its key signature. Here are some examples.

## Finding a Key from a Key Signature - Sharps Version 1

In a key signature with sharps the Major key will be the note a semitone higher than the last sharp of the key signature.

For example, if the key signature is three sharps:  the last sharp is G#. The note a semitone higher than G# is A, therefore this is the key signature belonging to A Major.

## Finding a Key from a Key Signature - Sharps Version 2

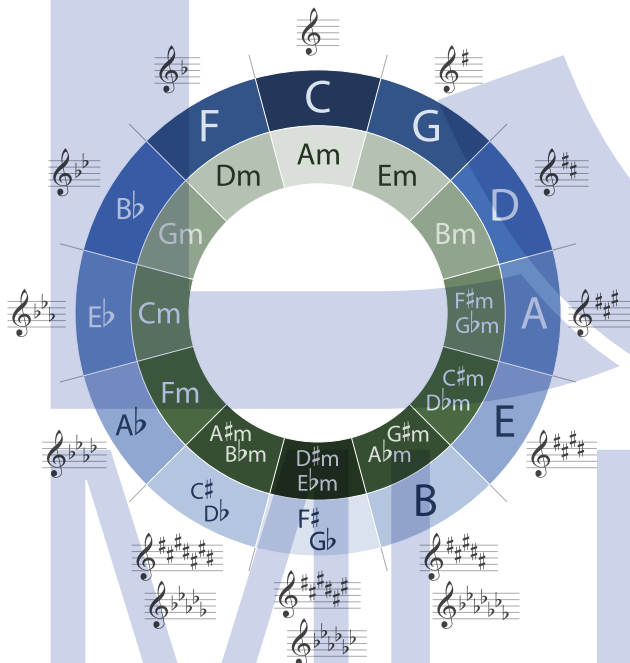
Using **solfa** is another way of determining the key from a key signature.

If the tonic note (*do*) of a key signature with sharps is the note a semitone above the last sharp then we can call that last sharp *ti*.

For example, if the key signature is five sharps:  the last sharp: A# will be *ti*. Therefore, *do* is B.

Hence the hint: when sharps you see, the last is *ti* (A# is *ti* in B Major).

## Finding a Key from a Key Signature - Sharps Version 3



A longer method, although still an accurate one if approached **very** carefully, is to use the circle of 5ths and the number of sharps.

As long as you know C Major has no sharps or flats, go up a Perfect 5th to find the scale that has one sharp: G Major.

Continue going up a Perfect 5th until you find the key belonging to the number of sharps in your key signature.

For example, to find the key belonging to this key signature: 

you will need to go up six Perfect 5ths from C:

- 1 = C to G
- 2 = G to D
- 3 = D to A
- 4 = A to E
- 5 = E to B and
- 6 = B to F# therefore this key signature belongs to the key of F# Major.

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# Scales, Transposition & Key Signatures Information Sheet cont.

## Finding a Key from a Key Signature - Flats Version 1

In a key signature with flats, the name of the Major key with that key signature will be the second last flat of the key signature.

For example, if the key signature is three flats:  the second last flat will be Eb.

Therefore this is the key signature belonging to Eb Major.

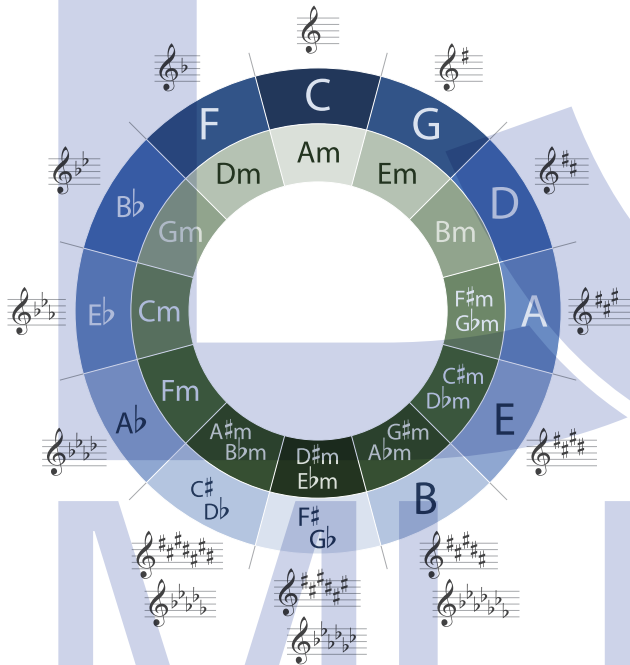
## Finding a Key from a Key Signature - Flats Version 2

As the tonic note (*do*) of a key signature with flats is the note a Perfect 5th above the last flat, then we can call that last flat *fa* (*fa* up to *do* is a Perfect 5th).

For example, if the key signature is five flats:  the last flat: Gb will be *fa*. Therefore, *do* (the note a Perfect 5th above) is Db.

Hence the hint: when flats there are, the last is *fa* (Gb is *fa* in Db Major).

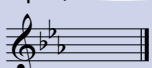
## Finding a Key from a Key Signature - Flats Version 3



Using the circle of 5ths and the number of flats to determine a key:

go **down** a Perfect 5th to find the scale that has one flat: F Major.

Continue going **down** a Perfect 5th until you find the key belonging to the number of flats in your key signature.

For example, to find the key belonging to this key signature: 

you will need to go down three Perfect 5ths from C:

1 = C down to F

2 = F down to Bb

3 = Bb down to Eb therefore this key signature belongs to the key of Eb Major.

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