Fundamentals

Ted Greene
1977-08-17

Our musical alphabet is called the *Chromatic Scale*:

A A♯ B♭ B C C♯ D♭ D D♯ E♭ E F F♯ G♭ G G♯ A♭ (A A♯ B♭ B etc.)

Enharmonics

Basic Intervals

Whole step: non-adjacent notes, such as A – B, or Eb – F.
Half step: adjacent notes such as A – B♭, or D♭ – D.
An octave is the distance between the 1st and 8th tones of the scale.

The Foundation of musical theory is the *Major Scale*.
(Scale: a fixed group of notes, usually constructed in an ascending direction, from a given starting note.)

A major scale has, starting from any given note, the following intervals:

whole step	whole step	1/2 step	whole step	whole step	whole step	1/2 step

A major scale starting from an A note:

A (whole) **B** (whole) **C#** (1/2) **D** (whole) **E** (whole) **F#** (whole) **G#** (1/2) **A**

As you might suspect, this is called the A major scale. The 1st and 8th tones are called the root(s) of the scale. The other tones are numbered according to the order of their appearance — for instance B is called the 2nd, C# is called the 3rd, D is the 4th of the A scale, and so on.

Here is a list of the commonly used major scales:

C D E F G A B C

G A B C D E F♯ G

D E F♯ G A B C♯ D

A B C♯ E D F♯ G♯ A

E F♯ G♯ A B C♯ D♯ E

B C♯ D♯ E F♯ G♯ A♯ B

F♯ G♯ A♯ B C♯ D♯ E♯ F♯

C♯ D♯ E♯ F♯ G♯ A♯ B♯ C♯

F G A B♭ C D E F

B♭ C D E♭ F G A B♭

E♭ F G A♭ B♭ C D E♭

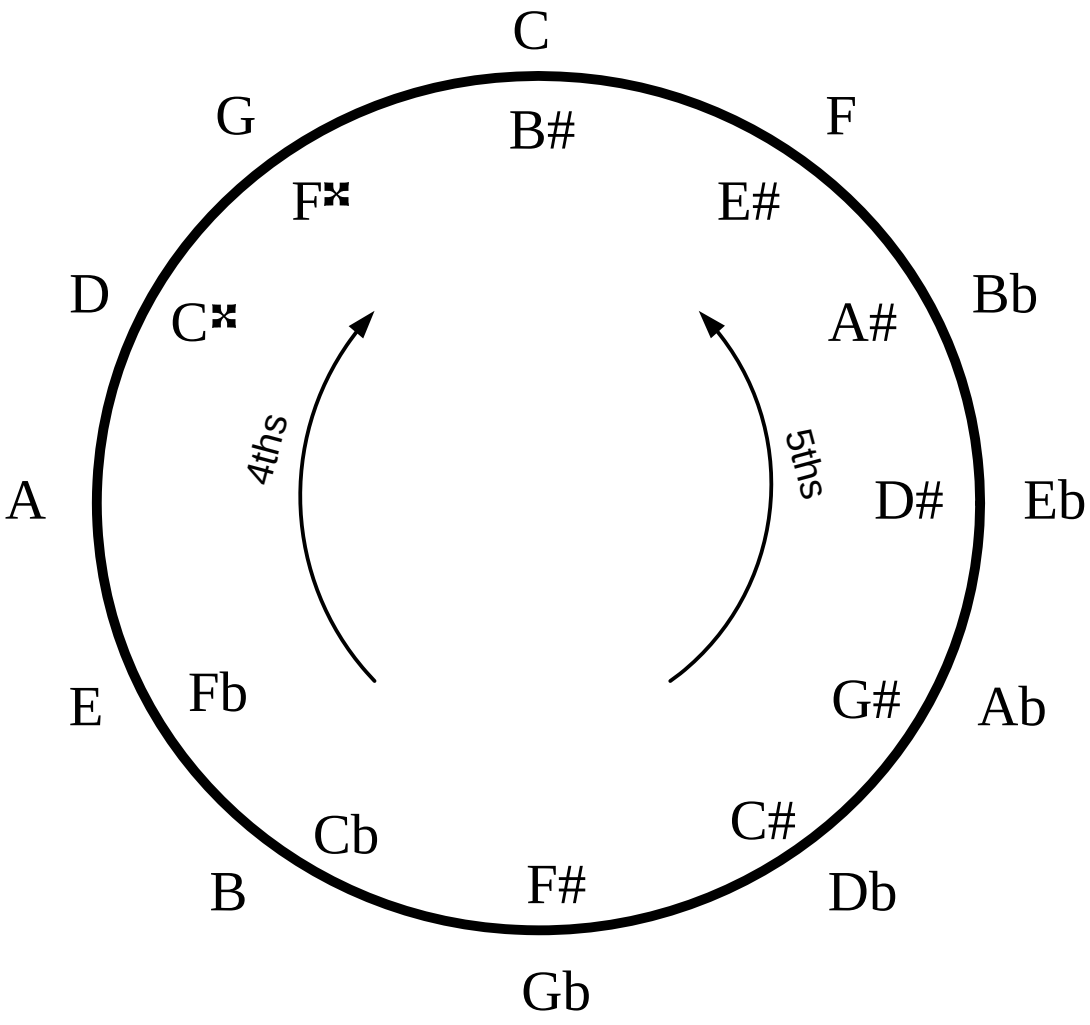
A♭ B♭ C D♭ E♭ F G A♭

D♭ E♭ F G♭ A♭ B♭ C D♭

G♭ A♭ B♭ C♭ D♭ E♭ F G♭

C♭ D♭ E♭ F♭ G♭ A♭ B♭ C♭

Cycle (circle) of 4ths and 5ths



𝄪 = double sharp

FUNDAMENTALS

Our musical alphabet is called the CHROMATIC SCALE:

A / B♭ B C D♭ D E♭ E F G♭ G A♭ (A B♭ B etc.

ENHARMONICS: A♯ C♯ D♯ F♯ G♯ A♯

BASIC INTERVALS

WHOLE STEP: non-adjacent notes, such as A-B or E♭-F

HALF STEP: adjacent notes such as A-B♭ or D♭-D

The foundation of musical theory is the MAJOR SCALE

(scale: a fixed group of notes, usually constructed in an ascending direction, from a given starting note).

A major scale has, starting from any given note, the following intervals:

WHOLE STEP, WHOLE STEP, ½ STEP, WHOLE STEP, WHOLE STEP, WHOLE STEP, ½ STEP

Here is an example of a major scale starting from an A note:

A (WHOLE) B (WHOLE) C♯ (½) D (WHOLE) E (WHOLE) F♯ (WHOLE) G♯ (½) A

As you might suspect, this is called the A major scale. The 1st and 8th tones are called the ROOT(S) of the scale. The other tones are numbered according to the order of their appearance — for instance B is called the 2nd, C♯ is the 3rd, D is the 4th of the A scale and so on.

Here is a list of the commonly used major scales:

C D E F G A B C

G A B C D E F♯ G

D E F♯ G A B C♯ D

A B C♯ D E F♯ G♯ A

E F♯ G♯ A B C♯ D♯ E

B C♯ D♯ E F♯ G♯ A♯ B

F♯ G♯ A♯ B C♯ D♯ E♯ F♯

C♯ D♯ E♯ F♯ G♯ A♯ B♯ C♯

F G A B♭ C D E F

B♭ C D E♭ F G A B♭

E♭ F G A♭ B♭ C D E♭

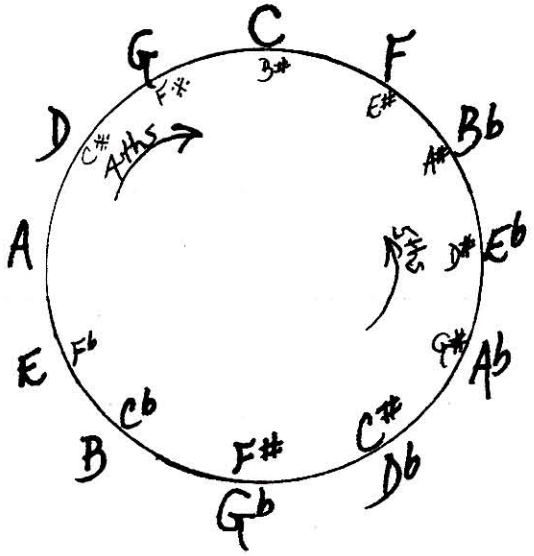
A♭ B♭ C D♭ E♭ F G A♭

D♭ E♭ F G♭ A♭ B♭ C D♭

G♭ A♭ B♭ C♭ D♭ E♭ F G♭

C♭ D♭ E♭ F♭ G♭ A♭ B♭ C♭

(CIRCLE) CYCLE OF 4ths + 5ths



An octave is the distance between the 1st & 8th tones of the scale.