

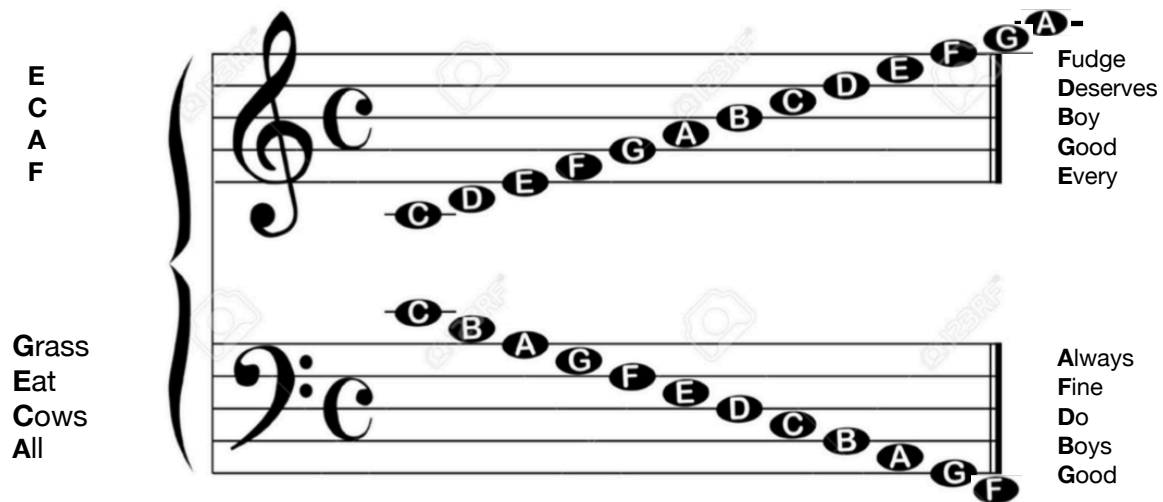
Finding The Interval

A Note By Any Other Name

Notes have names. Actually, as you probably know, they have letters. A through G and then they repeat. For those of us who do not read music, there are still important reasons to know what to call a note, as we will demonstrate in a second.

One way to determine the name of any note is to locate the note in question on the following chart.

FIGURE 1: Name of Notes



Another method to name a note, is to use mnemonic devices (memory aids) to determine the letters for the notes:

For the **treble clef** (upper) used by the Tenors and Leads:

- The spaces, starting at the bottom, spell **FACE**
- The lines, again starting at the bottom, can be labeled **Every Good Boy Deserves Fudge**

For the **bass clef** (bottom) used by Baritones and Basses:

- The mnemonic for the spaces, starting at the bottom, is **All Cows Eat Grass**
- The lines, from the bottom, can be labeled **Good Boys Do Fine Always**

The Key to Understanding

It is important to be able to identify the musical key in which the song is written. Why you ask? Because the tone played by the pitch pipe to begin a song matches the keynote. That is, if the music is written in the key of B, the note sounded by the pitch pipe will be a B.

The icons, symbols and numbers that appear at the beginning of each line of music tell us a lot about the song. For our efforts to identify the key, we will only concentrate on the flats (\flat) or sharps (#) associated with the piece. The number of the flats or sharps identify the key of the song:

FIGURE 2: Name of Keys

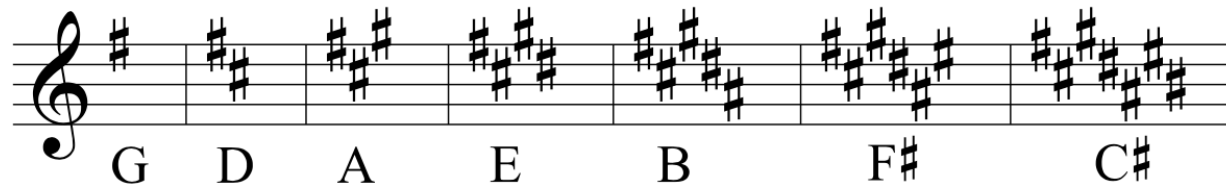


Figure 2.3.2. Major Key Signatures using Sharps

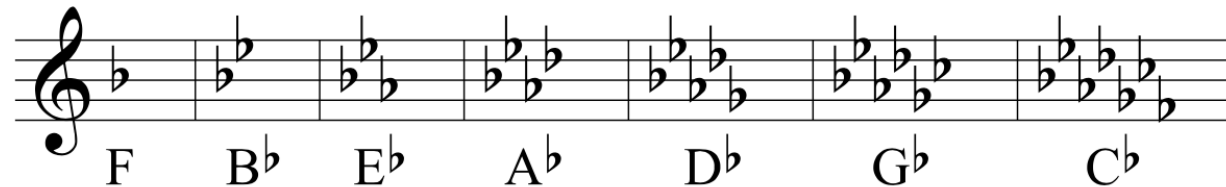


Figure 2.3.3. Major Key Signatures using Flats

Of course, there always has to be an exception. That would be sheet music that has no sharps and flats indicated. In that case, the key is C and just has to be remembered.

But Where Do I Start

Now you know the key of the song. But since barbershop harmony is sung a cappella, and has no accompaniment, you need to know the name of the note that you will start singing. To do so, there are two things to be considered

1. What is the name of the line or space your note falls on? Remember to look on the appropriate staff for your part.
2. Does your note have a flat or a sharp icon at the beginning of the staff?

FIGURE 3: Name Your Note

E flat major scale



In this example the notes **A**, **B** and **E** have the flat symbol in the key signature.

Spoiler Alert: This means that every A, B and E note in the piece is to be recognized as a flat, even if it is an octave higher or lower than the note with the flat icon in the key signature. Above you will notice that both E notes are to be read as E-flat.

And the Answer Is....

Be honest, you didn't expect a quiz, did you. Well....in the following examples, determine the key and the starting notes for all four parts. When you're done, continue to *Singing The Interval* in Song Craft

Chorus 1

Tenor Lead

O beau - ti - ful for spa - cious skies,

Bari Bass

ANSWERS

AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL

Key: C
Tenor: E
Lead: G
Bari: C
Bass: C

Tenor Lead

By the light By the light,

Bari Bass

BY THE LIGHT OF THE SILVERY MOON

Key: B-Flat
Tenor: D
Lead: D
Bari: B-Flat
Bass: B-Flat

This one's tricky. Did you catch the starting note for the Bari was a B-Flat?