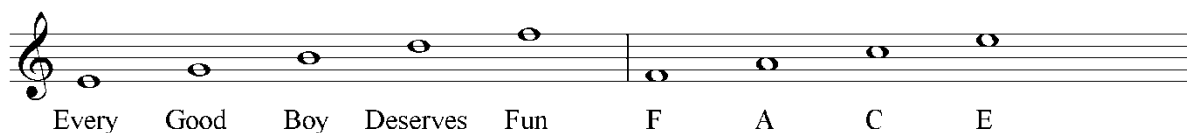


## Basic Music Theory

### Reading Different Clefs

The most commonly used clefs are the treble and bass. The ability to read both of these clefs proficiently is *essential* for Leaving Cert. Music. Clef reading exercises are available online on sites such as [www.teoria.com](http://www.teoria.com).

#### Treble Clef



#### Bass Clef



**Alto and Tenor Clef** are used by orchestral instruments as they are more suited to their range e.g. Viola always uses the alto clef.

Alto Clef:

Tenor Clef:

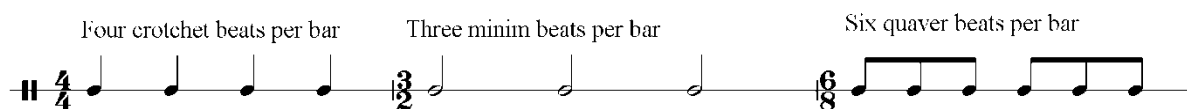


### Time Signatures

The number at the top of a time signature tells you how many beats are in a bar, the number on the bottom refers to the type of beats.

1	Semibreve
2	Minim
4	Crotchet
8	Quaver
16	Semi-quaver

E.G:



**C** stands for common time which is 4/4 time.

## Anacrusis/Upbeat

Some melodies don't begin on the first beat of the bar. When this happens it is known as an anacrusis (or an upbeat). The final bar of the melody must make up for this anacrusis, as shown below:



Usually, if a melody begins with an anacrusis, each phrase within the melody also has an anacrusis, as shown below:



## Scales and Key Signature

Scales are made of eight notes. A major scale goes as follows: do, re, mi, fa, so, la, ti, do'. Each scale has a different number of sharps or flats. Sharps and flats are placed on the staff in a particular order, the following helps to remember what that order is:

For sharps(#): Father Charlie Goes Down And Ends Battle

For Flats(*b*): Battle Ends and Down Goes Charlie's Father

For Leaving Cert. Music you must learn the key signatures of major or minor scales with up to four sharps or flats.

	C major	-	-
#	Gmajor	<i>b</i>	F major
##	Dmajor	<i>bb</i>	Bb Major
###	A major	<i>bbb</i>	Eb Major
####	Emajor	<i>bbbb</i>	Ab major

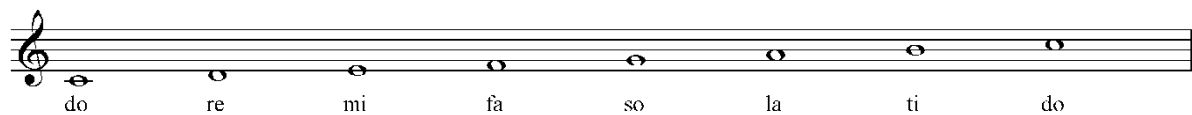
There are a number of techniques and tricks people use to help them remember how many sharps or flats in each scale. E.g. the circle of fifths:



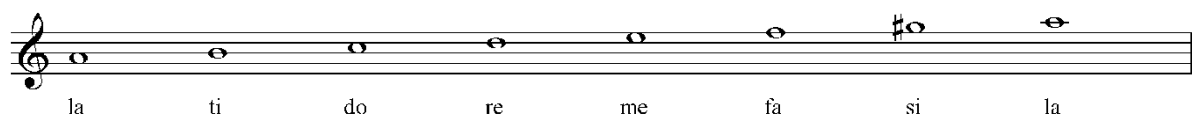
## Minor Scales

Minor scales begin on la: la, ti, do, re, mi, fa, si, la. Minor scales are related to a major scale and share the same key signature. A minor scale starts on la and shares a key signature with do. For example, a minor is related to C major and shares its key signature:

C major:

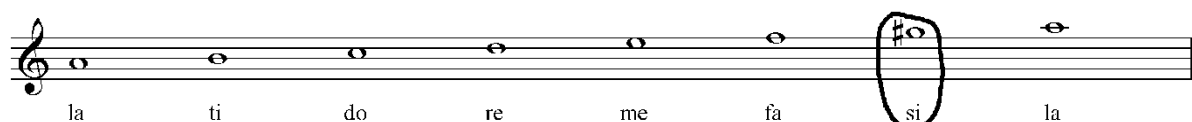


a minor:



So a minor is the **relative minor** of C major.

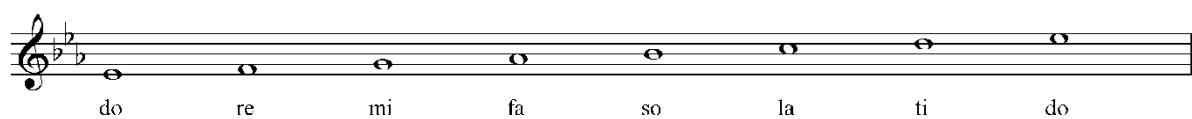
Once you've worked out what major key signature your minor scales shares, you have to do one more thing – raise the 7<sup>th</sup> note:



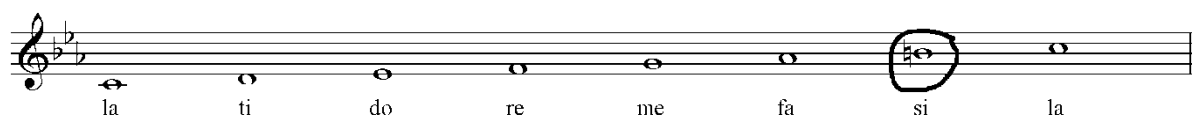
This note belongs in the minor scale but is not included in the major key signature. When writing a melody in a minor key, you must add in your raised 7<sup>th</sup> in the melody every time it appears.



Be careful, raising the 7<sup>th</sup> doesn't always mean sharpening it. E.g: c minor. It is the relative minor of Eb major and share's its key signature of three flats.



The 7<sup>th</sup> note of c minor is Bb which needs to be raised to B natural:

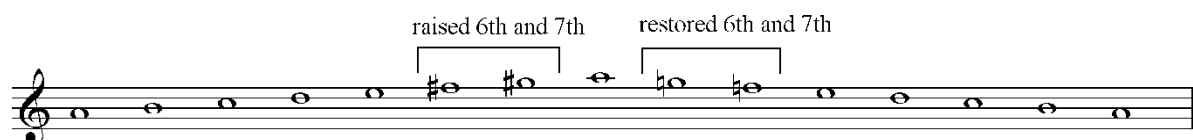


Major keys and their relative minors:

Major (do)	Minor (la)
C	a
G	e
D	b
A	f#
E	c#
F	d
Bb	g
Eb	c
Ab	f

### Melodic minors

The minor scale above is known as the harmonic minor scale. There is another type of minor scale called the melodic minor scale, so-called because it is often used within a melody. Melodic minor scales are related to a major scale in the exact same way as the harmonic. In melodic minor scales the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> notes are raised when ascending, and restored when descending. E.g:



How is this scale used in a melody? If your melody line is ascending stepwise and includes the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>, raise both. E.g:



### Chords and triads

A chord is two or more notes sounded together. Triads are made up of three notes: root, third and fifth. Of these the root is most important. Second most important is the third, as it tells us whether the chord is major or minor. If you build a triad on each note of the scale of C major some chords turn out major, some turn out minor.

G	A	B	C	D	E	F
E	F	G	A	B	C	D
C	dm	em	F	G	am	bdim
I	ii	iii	IV	V	vi	vii°

This pattern (major, minor, minor, major, major, minor, diminished) is the same for every major scale. For HL Music you are expected to be able to use chords I, ii, IV, V and vi in a major key.

N.B. always indicate minor chords by using lower case letters and following each name with a small m e.g. dm for d minor. Similarly, when using roman numerals capitals are for majors and lower case for minors.

The pattern of major/minor chords is different for minor scales. For HL you are expected to be able to use chords i, iv, V and VI in a minor key. Below is a chord box for g minor:

d	E $\flat$	F $\sharp$	G	A	B $\flat$	C
B $\flat$	C	D	E $\flat$	F $\sharp$	G	A
G	adim	B $\flat$ aug	cm	D	E $\flat$	F $\sharp$
i	ii $^\circ$	iii $^+$	iv	V	VI	vii $^\circ$

### Cadences

A cadence is a musical full stop – it marks the end of a phrase. A cadence is made up of a sequence of two chords. There are four types of cadences:

Perfect	V-I
Plagal	IV-I
Imperfect	Anything-V
Interrupted	V-vi

Only cadences ending on I (i.e. Perfect and Plagal) can be used at the very end of a piece. You should be able to identify cadences visually and aurally for HL Leaving Cert. Try naming these cadences:

### **Inversions**

When a chord is built on top of its root we say it is in root position. If a chord is built on top of its third it is a first inversion chord. If it is built on top of its fifth it is a second inversion chord.

A chord of C in root position is called C, in first inversion it is called C/E, and in second inversion, C/G. For HL you should be able to use chords in root position and first inversion. You may also use second inversion at a cadence e.g. Ic-V-I

### **Seventh Chords**

A seventh chord is made up of root, third, fifth and seventh. Any chord can include the seventh. For HL you are expected to be able to use V7.