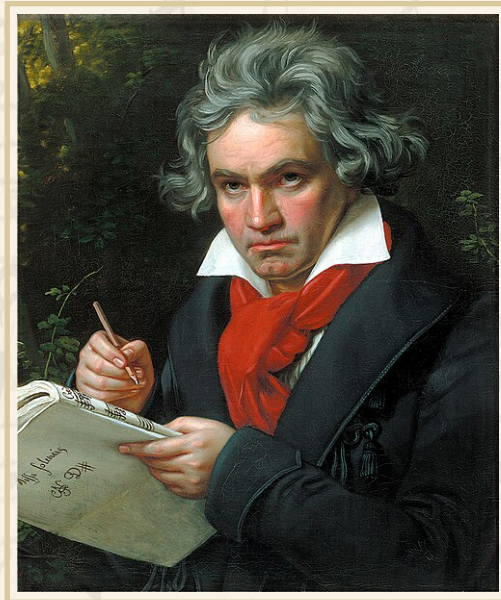


THE YOUNG COMPOSER

Grade 2

Theory Pack

Intermediate



Ludwig van Beethoven

Beethoven filled whole notebooks reworking a single tune. Great music takes practice - and it grows from exactly these skills.

Welcome, young composer! This pack is yours to print, write on and keep. Work through it at your own pace, try every worksheet, and remember - there are no wrong notes, only surprising ones. Happy composing.

- The Young Composer

What to expect

Grade 2 builds on your Grade 1 foundations: more key signatures, tidier note grouping and beaming, simple transposition, a wider range of intervals, and your very first composing tasks - completing a rhythm or a melody.

In this pack

Cover & welcome

The Circle of Fifths (keep this one handy!)

1 More Key Signatures

Reference sheet + worksheet

2 Note Grouping & Beaming

Reference sheet + worksheet

3 Simple Transposition

Reference sheet + worksheet

4 Building on Intervals

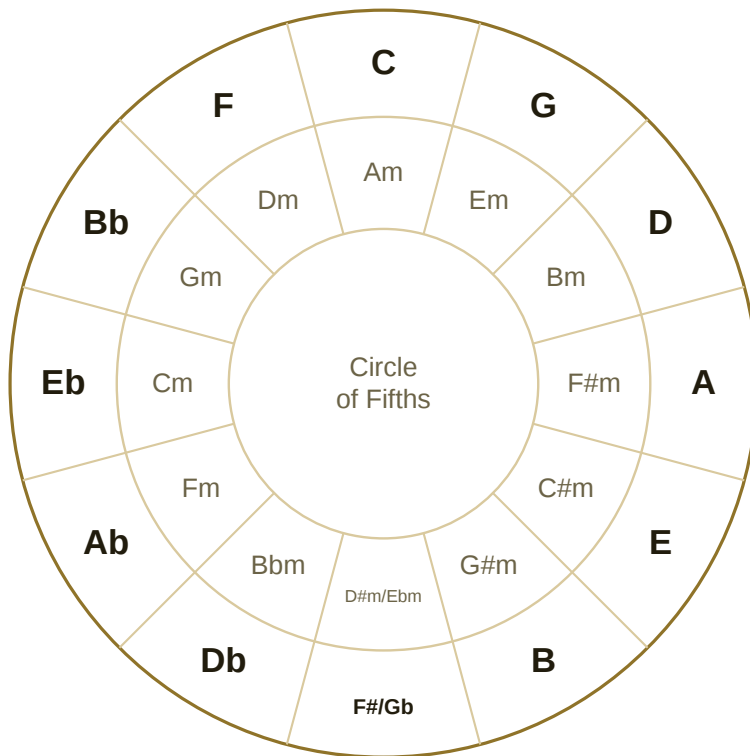
Reference sheet + worksheet

5 Completing a Rhythm or Melody

Reference sheet + worksheet

How to use this pack: read each reference sheet, then try its worksheet on paper. Tick off chapters as you go, and keep the Circle of Fifths beside you whenever you compose.

The Circle of Fifths



How it works

Clockwise from C, each key adds one sharp: C, G, D, A, E, B, F#.

Anticlockwise from C, each key adds one flat: C, F, Bb, Eb, Ab, Db.

The inner ring is each key's relative minor - it shares the very same key signature.

Keys next to each other share nearly all their notes, so moving between them sounds smooth.

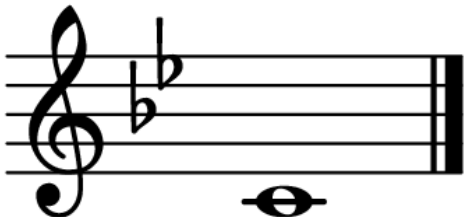
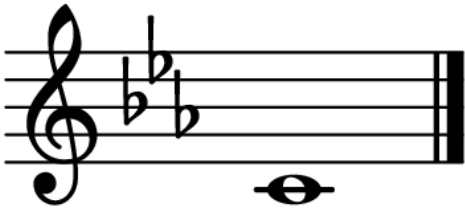
Using it while composing

- Find a key signature fast - count the steps around the circle from C.
- Change key smoothly - modulate to a neighbouring key, which shares the most notes.
- Pick a relative minor (inner ring) for a darker version of a major-key idea.
- Build chord progressions (like I - IV - V) from chords that sit close together.

More Key Signatures

Music Theory Foundations — Quick Reference

Building on Grade 1, this chapter adds keys with two or three sharps or flats. The pattern is the same as before — you're just extending further around the same system.

D major (2 sharps) 	A major (3 sharps) 
Bb major (2 flats) 	Eb major (3 flats) 

The Pattern

Sharp keys add one new sharp at a time, always in the same order: F# – C# – G# – D# – A# – E# – B#. Flat keys add one new flat at a time, in the reverse order: Bb – Eb – Ab – Db – Gb – Cb – Fb.

Key Rules to Remember

- Sharps are always added in this order: F#, C#, G#, D#, A#, E#, B#.
- Flats are always added in this order: Bb, Eb, Ab, Db, Gb, Cb, Fb.
- To name a sharp key from its key signature: go up a semitone from the last sharp (e.g. 2 sharps = F# and C# → last sharp is C# → up a semitone = D major).
- To name a flat key from its key signature: the second-last flat names the key (e.g. 3 flats = Bb, Eb, Ab → second-last is Eb → Eb major). For one flat only, it's F major.

More Key Signatures

Try these on paper. Use the staves where you need them.

1. How many sharps are in D major? In A major?
2. Write the order in which the first three sharps appear.
3. Draw the key signatures for D major and for B-flat major.
4. Name a major key that has two flats.

Your working:

The image shows ten blank musical staves, each consisting of five horizontal lines, arranged vertically for student use.

Note Grouping & Beaming

Music Theory Foundations — Quick Reference

Beams (the thick lines joining quavers and shorter notes) should make the beat structure of a bar easy to see at a glance. Good beaming groups notes by beat — it should never hide where the beats fall.

Avoid: Beaming That Crosses the Beat



Here the beaming groups notes awkwardly across beat 2, making the rhythm harder to read at a glance.

Better: Beaming That Shows the Beat



The same rhythm, now beamed in clear beat-sized groups — two quavers for beat 1, a crotchet for beat 2, and four semiquavers for beat 3.

Key Rules to Remember

- In simple time (2/4, 3/4, 4/4), beam notes in groups that add up to one full beat at a time.
- Never let a beam obscure the beat — a reader should be able to see where each beat starts just from the beaming.
- A single note on its own beat (like a crotchet) is not beamed to anything either side.
- This becomes especially important in compound time (Grade 3), where notes are grouped in 3s rather than 2s or 4s.

Note Grouping & Beaming

Try these on paper. Use the staves where you need them.

1. Re-write four separate quavers as two beamed groups.
2. In 4/4, how many beamed quavers make up one beat?
3. Copy the rhythm below, beaming the quavers by the beat.
4. Write a one-bar rhythm using beamed quavers in 4/4.

Your working:

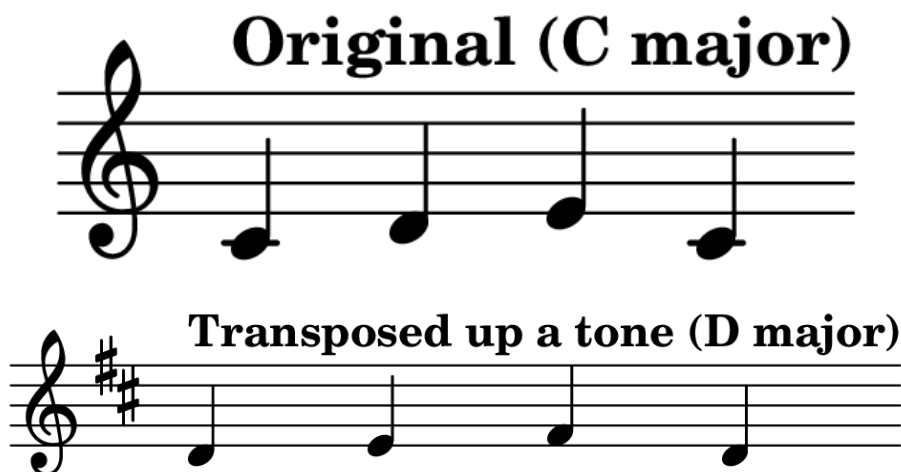
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Simple Transposition

Music Theory Foundations — Quick Reference

Transposing means moving a melody to a different pitch level while keeping the pattern of intervals between the notes exactly the same — every note shifts by the same distance.

Example: Transposing Up a Tone



Every note has moved up by exactly the same distance (a tone), and the key signature has changed to match — but the shape of the melody is identical.

How to Transpose a Melody

- Decide the interval you're transposing by (e.g. up a tone, down a 3rd).
- Move every single note by that same interval — no exceptions.
- Update the key signature to match the new key.
- Double-check that the pattern of steps and leaps between notes is unchanged from the original.

Key Rules to Remember

- Transposition preserves the melodic shape exactly — only the starting pitch (and therefore the key) changes.
- At Grade 2, transposition is usually asked by a simple interval like a tone or a 3rd, not into a distant key.
- A common mistake is moving most notes correctly but missing one — always check every note against the original.

Simple Transposition

Try these on paper. Use the staves where you need them.

1. Transpose the two-note idea C-D up a major 2nd.
2. Transpose a short melody up a perfect 4th.
3. Write C-D-E starting on G instead (keep the same shape).
4. Transpose your melody back down a major 2nd.

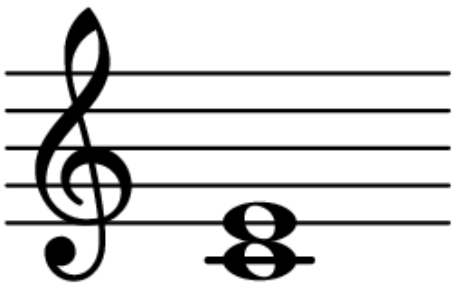
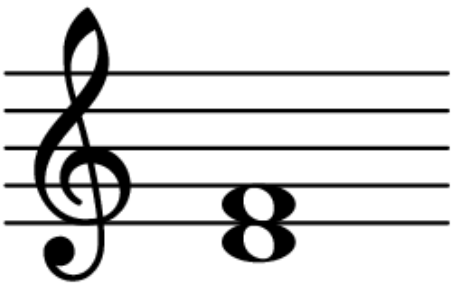
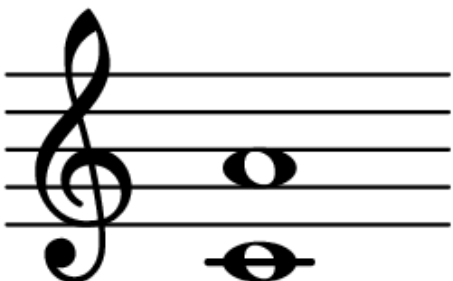
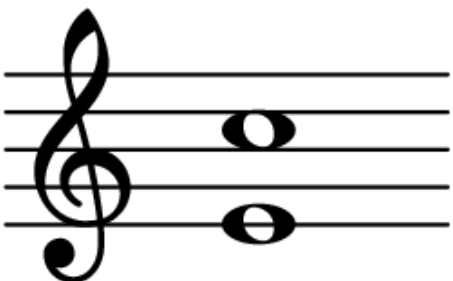
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Building on Intervals

Music Theory Foundations — Quick Reference

Grade 1 covered counting intervals by number only. Grade 2 introduces quality — recognising whether a common interval sounds "major" or "minor," which is the first step toward the full interval quality system in Grade 3.

Major 3rd (C–E) 	Minor 3rd (D–F) 
Major 6th (C–A) 	Minor 6th (E–C) 

Listening for the Difference

A major 3rd sounds bright and open; a minor 3rd sounds darker and more closed-in. Training your ear to hear this difference is just as useful as counting semitones on paper.

Key Rules to Remember

- A major 3rd spans 4 semitones; a minor 3rd spans 3 semitones.
- A major 6th spans 9 semitones; a minor 6th spans 8 semitones.
- The number (3rd, 6th, etc.) comes from counting letter names, as in Grade 1 — quality (major/minor) comes from counting semitones.
- This groundwork leads directly into full interval quality — including perfect, diminished, and augmented intervals — in Grade 3.

Building on Intervals

Try these on paper. Use the staves where you need them.

1. Name these intervals above the note: a 6th above C, a 7th above D.
2. Which is larger, a 5th or a 6th? By how many steps?
3. Label the number of each interval marked on the stave.
4. Write a pair of notes forming a 6th, and another forming a 7th.

Your working:

The image shows ten blank musical staves, each consisting of five horizontal lines, arranged vertically for student use.

Completing a Given Rhythm or Melody

Music Theory Foundations — Quick Reference

This is the first taste of composition in the AMEB syllabus — given the opening of a rhythm or melody, continue it in a way that makes musical sense. It's less about being "correct" and more about being consistent.

Given Opening



A simple two-bar idea using only notes of the tonic triad.

Task: Complete the Second Bar



Given only the first beat of each bar, continue the pattern in a way that feels balanced and complete — here, a natural answer mirrors the opening in reverse.

A Simple Approach

- Look at what's already there: which key, which notes, which rhythm pattern?
- Keep using notes from the same key signature, unless the task asks for something chromatic.
- Match the rhythm style already established — don't introduce a new note value out of nowhere.
- Aim for a sense of "arrival" by the end — often by stepping back toward the tonic note.

Key Rules to Remember

- Consistency matters more than originality in this exercise — stay within the established key and rhythm.
- A common, safe choice is to answer a rising phrase with a falling one, or vice versa, for a balanced shape.
- Ending on the tonic note (or the tonic triad) usually gives the strongest sense of completion.

Completing a Rhythm or Melody

Try these on paper. Use the staves where you need them.

1. Complete the final bar so the rhythm balances to four beats.
2. Finish the melody so that it ends on the tonic.
3. Add a final note so the phrase ends on beat one.
4. Compose a four-bar answering phrase to the question given.

Your working:

Ten blank musical staves, each consisting of five horizontal lines, provided for the student to write their answers to the four tasks listed above.