

Scale Formulas

Major & minor

Every scale is built from a fixed pattern of steps. W = a whole tone (2 semitones), H = a half step / semitone, and WH = 3 semitones. Follow the steps from the tonic (1) up to the octave (8).

Major



Natural minor



Harmonic minor



Melodic minor (rising)



Relative minors

Every major scale shares its key signature with a minor scale - they are 'relatives'. The relative minor starts on the 6th degree of the major scale. For example, A minor is the relative minor of C major (both have no sharps or flats).