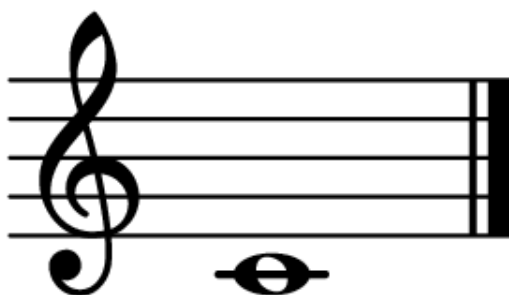


Key Signatures: Up to One Sharp or Flat

Music Theory Foundations — Quick Reference

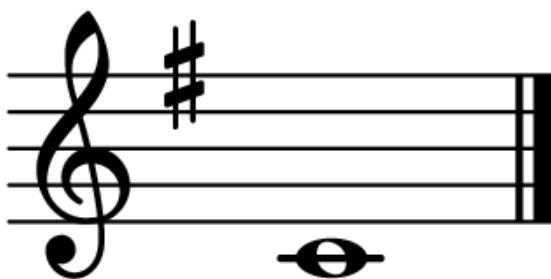
A key signature is a set of sharps or flats placed right after the clef, telling you which notes to raise or lower for the whole piece — so you don't need to write an accidental every time.

C Major — No Sharps or Flats



The simplest key — every note is played exactly as written on the staff, with no sharps or flats.

G Major — One Sharp (F#)



Every F in the piece is played as F#, unless cancelled by a natural sign.

F Major — One Flat (Bb)



Every B in the piece is played as Bb, unless cancelled by a natural sign.

Key Rules to Remember

- A key signature applies to every octave of that note, not just the one it's drawn on.
- Sharps and flats in a key signature are always written in a fixed order and position — they're not random.

- An accidental (a sharp, flat, or natural written next to a note) overrides the key signature, but only for the rest of that bar.
- You can identify G major vs F major at a glance: one sharp means G major, one flat means F major, and no sharps or flats means C major.