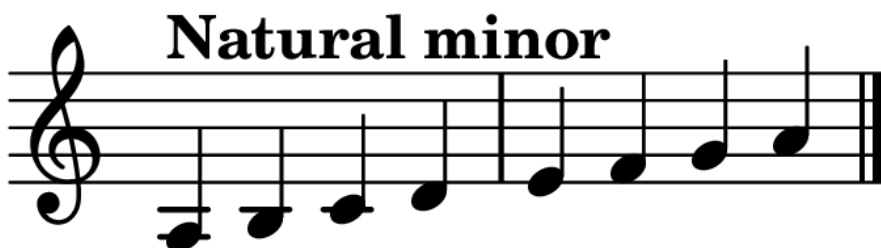


Minor Scales: Natural, Harmonic & Melodic

Music Theory Foundations — Quick Reference

Unlike the major scale, minor keys have three related versions of their scale. All three share the same key signature — they differ only in which notes get raised.

Natural Minor



Simply the notes of the key signature, straight up and down — no alterations.

Harmonic Minor



Raises the 7th degree by a semitone (both ascending and descending), creating a stronger pull back to the tonic — but leaves a distinctive gap of 3 semitones between degrees 6 and 7.

Melodic Minor



Raises both the 6th and 7th degrees ascending (to smooth out that gap), but reverts to the natural minor descending.

Key Rules to Remember

- All three minor scales share the same key signature — the differences are added as accidentals, not key signature changes.
- Harmonic minor: raise degree 7 only, both ways.
- Melodic minor: raise degrees 6 and 7 ascending; use the natural minor descending.
- The harmonic minor's raised 7th creates a distinctive augmented 2nd interval between degrees 6 and 7 — a recognisable, slightly "exotic" sound.