



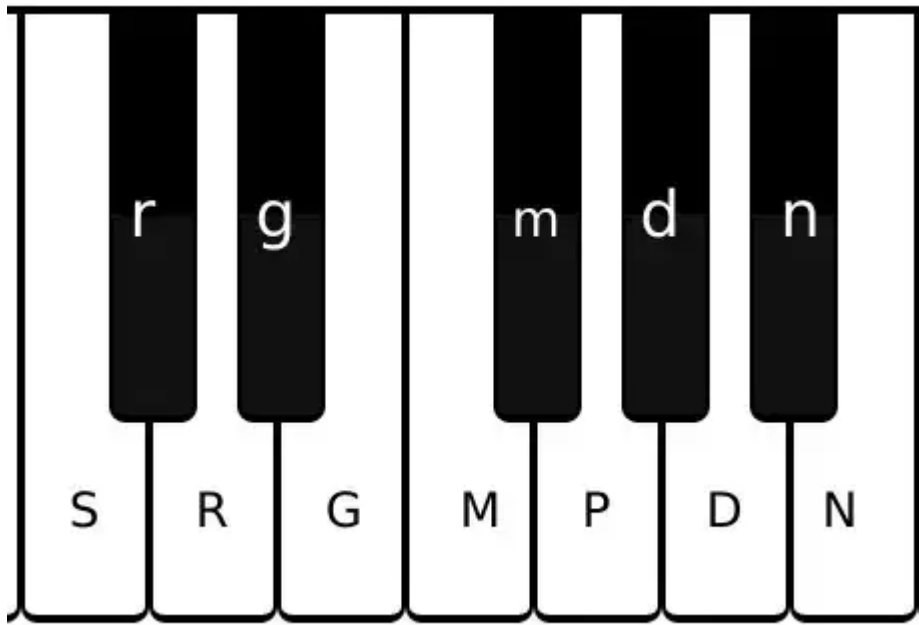
Piano / Keyboard Notations Guide in Classical Indian System

by Gurudev | Dec 17, 2009 | Articles | 1 comment



This article describes the keyboard / piano notations used in the music sheets of this website in classical Indian Notations format. If you are looking for western notations format , please visit the [HitXP Western Notations Guide](#).

Indian Notations Labels of an Octave



HitXP.com Carnatic Music Notations Guide

Carnatic / Hindustani Indian Music Notations Guide

As seen above, each key of an octave is represented by a letter. All 7 white keys are represented by upper case letter S,R,G,M,P,D,N. All 5 black keys are represented by lower case letters r,g,m,d and n.

So in the song notations, in every place you see a S you need to press the first key of the octave. If you see g, you need to press the second black key of the octave and so on.

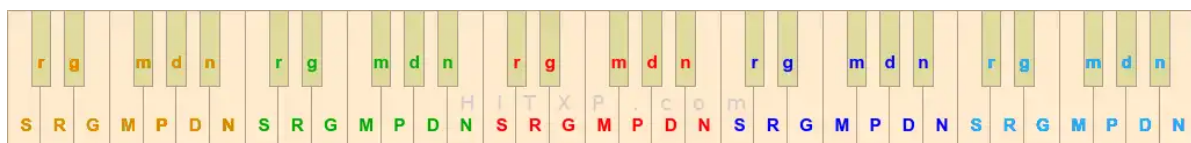
Octave Number Recognition using Note Color

Now that we know which letter represents which note in an octave, we need a mechanism to understand which octave the note should be played in. As we can see in the above image, an octave has 12 keys (7 white keys and 5 black keys).

An electronic keyboard (synthesizer) will usually have anywhere between three to seven octaves. A piano will usually have 88 keys (7 octaves + 4 additional keys).

In HitXP.com we use color coded notations to represent octave numbers. In other words, the color of the notation text tells us which octave to play that note in.

Usually for most songs, 3 octaves are more than enough to play them. So we call them, the lower octave, the middle octave and the upper octave. Very rarely, two more octaves might be required. One below the lower octave, and one above the upper octave.



As you can see above, in the notations of HitXP.com, each octave is represented by a color as follows:

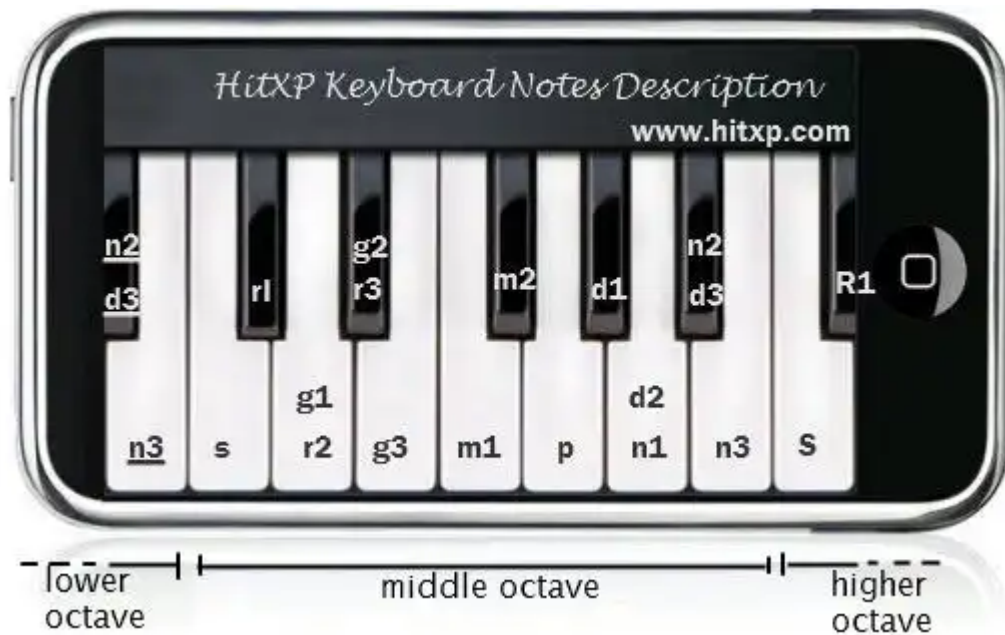
- **SrRgGMmPdDnN** for Lower Octave
- **SrRgGMmPdDnN** for Middle Octave
- **SrRgGMmPdDnN** for Upper Octave
- **SrRgGMmPdDnN** for Lower Lower Octave ie one octave below lower octave
- **SrRgGMmPdDnN** for Upper Upper Octave ie one octave above upper octave

Below is an alternate method to represent the notes that was used earlier in this site, but is not used anymore. So you can as well ignore the below notation format as far as this site is concerned.

Alternative Carnatic Music Notations

In the carnatic music system we distribute the 12 keys of an octave among the 7 swaras of a raga. The seven swaras are sa,re,ga,ma,pa,dha,ni.

Sa and **Pa** have one key associated with them each ie the first and fifth white key respectively, **Ma** can take any of the two keys i.e either third black key or fourth white key. **Ri** and **Ga** can share any two of the four keys between **Sa** (First white key) and **Ma** (Fourth white key). Similarly **Dha** and **Ni** can share any two of the four keys after **Pa** (Fifth white key).



HitXP Music Notations Guide for Classical Carnatic / Hindustani Music Sheets

Middle Octave – Keyboard / Piano Notation Symbols in Indian Carnatic System

Below are the middle octave notations in classical Indian system. The corresponding Western Notations are also given. See below table.

Swara	Swara Name	Octave Position	Carnatic Notation	Western Notation
Sa	Shadjama	1st white key	s	C
Ri	Shuddha Rishaba	1st black key	r1	C#
	Chatushruthi Rishaba	2nd white key	r2	D
	Satsruthi Rishaba	2nd black key	r3	D#
Ga	Shuddha Gaandhaara	2nd white key	g1	D
	Saadhaarana Gaandhaara	2nd black key	g2	D#
	Anthara Gaandhaara	3rd white key	g3	E
Ma	Shuddha Madhyama	4th white key	m1	F
	Prathi Madhyama	3rd black key	m2	F#
Pa	Panchama	5th white key	p	G
Da	Sudhdha Dhaivatha	4th black key	d1	G#
	Chatusruthi Dhaivatha	6th white key	d2	A
	Shatsruthi Dhaivatha	5th black key	d3	A#
Ni	Sudhdha Nishaadha	6th white key	n1	A

	Kaisiki Nishaadha	5th black key	n2	A#
	Kaakali Nishaadha	7th white key	n3	B

Higher Octave – Keyboard / Piano Notation Symbols in Indian Carnatic System

Higher octave (octave immediately above the middle octave) notations will also be the same as above except that they will be in upper case. Corresponding Western Notations will have a + after the note to indicate upper octave. See below table.

Swara	Swara Name	Octave Position	Carnatic Notation	Western Notation
Sa	Shadjama	1st white key	S	C+
Ri	Shuddha Rishaba	1st black key	R1	C#+
	Chatushruthi Rishaba	2nd white key	R2	D+
	Satsruthi Rishaba	2nd black key	R3	D#+
Ga	Shuddha Gaandhaara	2nd white key	G1	D+
	Saadhaarana Gaandhaara	2nd black key	G2	D#+
	Anthara Gaandhaara	3rd white key	G3	E+
Ma	Shuddha Madhyama	4th white key	M1	F+
	Prathi Madhyama	3rd black key	M2	F#+
Pa	Panchama	5th white key	P	G+

Da	Sudhdha Dhaivatha	4th black key	D1	G#+
	Chatusruthi Dhaivatha	6th white key	D2	A+
	Shatsruthi Dhaivatha	5th black key	D3	A#+
Ni	Sudhdha Nishaadha	6th white key	N1	A+
	Kaisiki Nishaadha	5th black key	N2	A#+
	Kaakali Nishaadha	7th white key	N3	B+

Lower Octave – Keyboard / Piano Notation Symbols in Indian Carnatic System

Lower octave (octave immediately below the middle octave) notations will also be same as above except that they will be underlined. Corresponding Western Notations will have a – after the note to indicate lower octave. See below table.

Swara	Swara Name	Octave Position	Carnatic Notation	Western Notation
Sa	Shadjama	1st white key	<u>s</u>	C-
Ri	Shuddha Rishaba	1st black key	<u>r1</u>	C#-
	Chatushruthi Rishaba	2nd white key	<u>r2</u>	D-
	Satsruthi Rishaba	2nd black key	<u>r3</u>	D#-
Ga	Shuddha Gaandhaara	2nd white key	<u>g1</u>	D-
	Saadhaarana Gaandhaara	2nd black key	<u>g2</u>	D#-

	Anthara Gaandhaara	3rd white key	<u>g3</u>	E-
Ma	Shuddha Madhyama	4th white key	<u>m1</u>	F-
	Prathi Madhyama	3rd black key	<u>m2</u>	F#-
Pa	Panchama	5th white key	<u>p</u>	G-
Da	Sudhdha Dhaivatha	4th black key	<u>d1</u>	G#-
	Chatusruthi Dhaivatha	6th white key	<u>d2</u>	A-
	Shatsruthi Dhaivatha	5th black key	<u>d3</u>	A#-
Ni	Sudhdha Nishaadha	6th white key	<u>n1</u>	A-
	Kaisiki Nishaadha	5th black key	<u>n2</u>	A#-
	Kaakali Nishaadha	7th white key	<u>n3</u>	B-

NOTE: The above descriptions are with respect to the base key being set to the first white key in the middle octave. You can transpose the scale accordingly once you understand the notations written here.

Transposing the scale is moving the scale a few notes higher or lower. For instance, consider the third white key in the middle octave as sa and reposition all other notes accordingly.

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1 Comment



Ajay on January 19, 2021 at 6:18 AM

Please write an article on selection of chords as to when and where chords are to be added , Chord selection process and for how long a chord is to be played

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