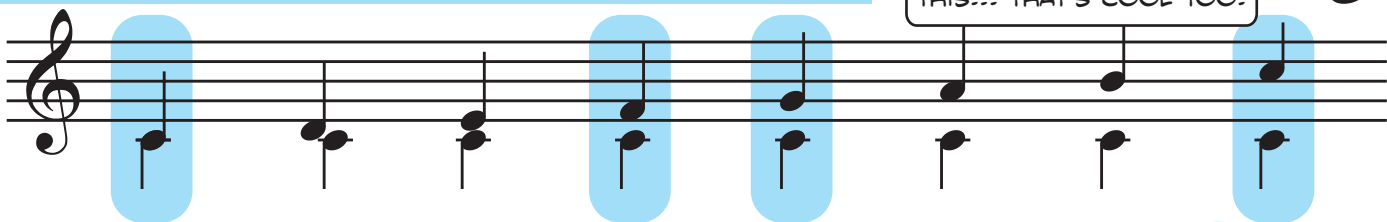


# Perfect Intervals

THE **DISTANCE** OF AN INTERVAL IS **ONE** PART OF ITS NAME, BUT THERE'S **MORE**: EVERY INTERVAL HAS ANOTHER QUALITY TO IT, WHICH WE'LL CALL **INFLECTION**.

INFLECTION IS A BIT **HARDER** TO UNDERSTAND, PARTLY BECAUSE IT DEPENDS ON THE **TYPE** OF INTERVAL. SO LET'S START BY LOOKING AT **UNISONS, FOURTHS, FIFTHS** AND **OCTAVES**.

SOME THEORISTS USE THE TERM **QUALITY** FOR THIS... THAT'S COOL TOO.



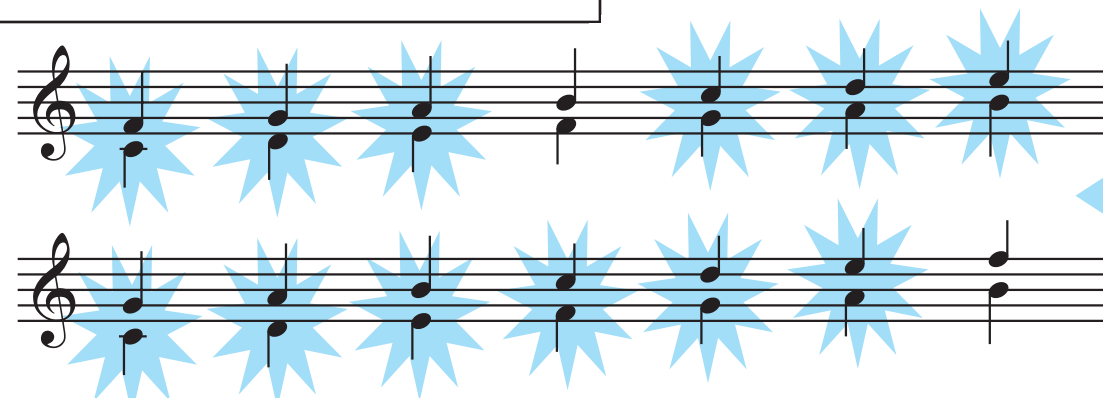
## UNISONS AND OCTAVES

ARE THE EASIEST TO LABEL: IF THE TWO NOTES ARE THE **SAME** (FOR EXAMPLE, **B FLAT** AND **B FLAT**), THEN THE INFLECTION IS **PERFECT**: SUCH AN INTERVAL IS CALLED A **PERFECT UNISON** OR A **PERFECT OCTAVE**.

## FOURTHS AND FIFTHS

REQUIRE A LITTLE MORE EXPLAINING.

IF YOU LOOK AT ALL THE FOURTHS AND FIFTHS YOU CAN CREATE USING ONLY THE **WHITE NOTES** ON THE PIANO KEYBOARD (IN OTHER WORDS, USING ONLY NOTES **WITHOUT ACCIDENTALS**):



EACH ONE IS **PERFECT** EXCEPT FOR THOSE WHICH USE **F** AND **B**!

WAIT...  
WHY ARE THE **B TO F** INTERVALS **DIFFERENT**?

WELL, IF YOU WERE TO COUNT THE **SEMITONES** THAT MAKE UP EACH INTERVAL, YOU'D NOTICE THAT ALL THE OTHER ONES ARE **EQUAL IN SIZE**, BUT THE **B TO F** INTERVALS ARE NOT: **F TO B** IS A SEMITONE **LARGER** THAN A PERFECT FOURTH, AND **B TO F** IS A SEMITONE **SMALLER** THAN A PERFECT FIFTH.

WHICH RAISES THE **QUESTION**: IF THE INTERVAL IS NOT **PERFECT**, THAN WHAT **IS** IT?

AN INTERVAL THAT IS A SEMITONE **LARGER** THAN PERFECT IS CALLED AN **AUGMENTED** INTERVAL.



YOU CAN GO **FURTHER**, TO **DOUBLY AUGMENTED** AND **DOUBLY DIMINISHED** INTERVALS, BUT... DO YOU REALLY WANT TO?



AND THERE'S **NO SUCH THING** AS A **DIMINISHED UNISON**...

JUST LIKE TWO THINGS CAN'T BE **NEGATIVE TWO FEET** AWAY FROM EACH OTHER!

AN INTERVAL THAT IS A SEMITONE **SMALLER** THAN PERFECT IS CALLED A **DIMINISHED** INTERVAL.