

# Music theory notes

Shravan Vasishth

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## 1 Scale degrees

- Scale degree 1 is known as the tonic.
- Scale degree 4 is known as the subdominant.
- Scale degree 5 is the dominant.

## 2 Modes

Mnemonic: I Don't Punch Like Muhammad A-Li

- Ionian: C
- Dorian: D
- Phrygian: E
- Lydian: F
- Mixolydian: G
- Aeolian: A
- Locrian: B

## 3 Perfect fifths

7 semitones apart (C-G).

## 4 Major third

4 semitones apart (C-E)

## 5 Triads

- Root position - if a chord has the root note as the lowest pitch, e.g. C E G.
- First inversion - if a chord has the third as the lowest sounding note, e.g. E G C.
- Second inversion - if a chord has the fifth as the lowest sounding note, e.g. G C E.

### 5.1 C major triads

I : Tonic C maj

ii : Dmin

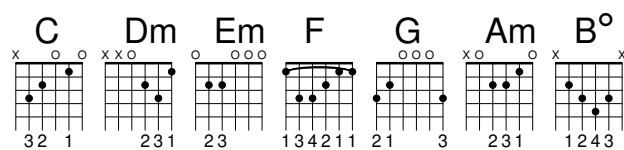
iii : Emin

IV : Subdominant Fmaj

V : Dominant: Gmaj

vi : Amin

vii : Bdim



Any diatonic melody can be harmonized with I-IV-V because every single scale degree occurs in this pool of notes.

### 5.2 A minor triads

i : Tonic Amin

ii : Bmin

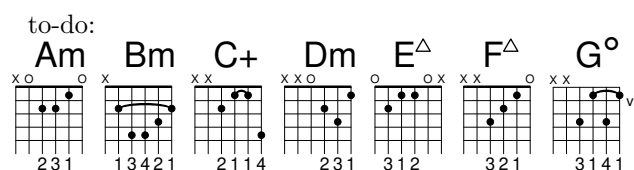
III : Caug

iv : Subdominant Dmin

V : Dominant: Emaj

VI : Fmaj

vii : Gdim



### 5.3 C Major (CEG GBD)

Major triad because it has a perfect fifth C-G, i.e., 7 semitones, and a Major third, four semitones (C-E).



### 5.4 A Minor

A-E is seven semitones but A-C has 3 semitones (=minor third), hence Minor triad.



### 5.5 D

Minor triad (D-A 7 semitones, D-F 3 semitones)



### 5.6 E

Minor triad (E-B 7 semitones, E-G 3 semitones)



### 5.7 F Major (FAC CEG)

Major triad



## 5.8 G Major (GBD DF#A )

Major triad



## 5.9 B

Diminished fifth (6 semitones) + Minor third = Diminished triad



## 6 Chords

- I. C major: Tonic triad
- IV. G major: Dominant
- V, F major: Subdominant

## 7 Minor scales

Natural, Harmonic, and Melodic (raised 6th and 7th when ascending only).

## 8 Interval

Perfect, Augmented, Diminished

2,3,6,7 Major Intervals: add one semitone to top note gives an augmented interval

2,3,6,7 Major Intervals: lower one semitone gives a minor interval

2,3,6,7 Major Intervals: lower one tone (two semitones) gives a diminished interval

## 9 Cadences

The tonic note of every scale has two closely related triads: the one a fifth above the tonic is the dominant triad, and the one a fifth below is the subdominant. So every tonic note is the center of a trio of strongly related chords, for example, F...C...G

Dominant chord to Tonic

A cadence is a melodic or harmonic progression that creates a sense of finality or a pause in the music.

Perfect cadence: A G7 followed by a C. Numerically speaking, this is chord V7 followed by chord I.

Imperfect cadence: C followed by G7. Numerically speaking this is chord I followed by chord V7, i.e. the reverse of the example above.

## 10 Seventh Chords

These are triads with a seventh degree added.

### 10.1 C major seventh chords

I : Tonic C maj7

ii : Dmin7

iii Emin 7

IV Subdominant Fmaj7

V Dominant seventh: G7

vi Amin7

vii B half-dim

A minor

i : Tonic Aminmaj7

ii : Bhalf-diminished

III Caug-maj7

iv Subdominant Dmin7

V Dominant: E7

VI Fmaj7

vii G#dim7

## 11 Common progressions