

# Scale and Chord Related Theory

A scale is a series of single notes which ascend or descend in a stepwise manner within the range of an octave. Because scales are arranged in a stepwise manner, the note names will always be in alphabetical order. The notes within scales have a specific whole step/half step intervallic relationship with each other.

**C major scale** (half steps are between scale degrees 3 - 4 and 7 - 8).

Intervals: W W H W W W H

Scale Degrees: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

C D E F G A B C

Tonic Dominant Leading Tone

**C natural minor scale** (lower the 3rd, 6th, and 7th scale degrees a half step).

Intervals: W H W W H W W

Scale Degrees: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

C D E<sup>b</sup> F G A<sup>b</sup> B<sup>b</sup> C

**C harmonic minor scale** (lower the 3rd and 6th scale degrees a half step).

Intervals: W H W W H W+H H

Scale Degrees: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

C D E<sup>b</sup> F G A<sup>b</sup> B C

**C melodic minor scale** (ascending lower the 3rd and descending lower the 7th, 6th, and 3rd scale degrees a half step).

Intervals: W H W W W W H W W H W W H W

Scale Degrees: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

C D E<sup>b</sup> F G A B C B<sup>b</sup> A<sup>b</sup> G F E<sup>b</sup> D C

## Augmented & Diminished Intervals from C

Augmented 4th (tritone)

Diminished 5th (tritone)

Augmented 5th

## Intervals of the C major scale:

Major 2nd Major 3rd Perfect 4th Perfect 5th Major 6th Major 7th Perfect Octave

## Minor Intervals from C

minor 2nd

minor 3rd

minor 6th

minor 7th

## C major triad (three note chord) in root position and inversions.

Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

From Bottom: root-third-fifth From Bottom: third-fifth-root From Bottom: fifth-root-third

## Basic chord types constructed from C:

Major Minor (lower third) Diminished (lower third & fifth)

Augmented (raise fifth) Sus 4 (fourth replaces third)

## Essential Vocabulary:

- Interval - the distance between two notes
- Half Step - the closest interval between two notes
- Whole Step - an interval of two half steps
- Third - the distance of two adjacent lines or two adjacent spaces
- Scale Degree - a note's classification according to its position in the scale
- Tonic - the first note of a scale, the "key-note" from which the scale takes its name
- Dominant - the fifth scale degree, chords built on this note are "dominant" and normally resolve to the tonic
- Leading Tone - the seventh scale degree, it is one half step below tonic and its tendency is to "lead" or rise to the tonic