

The Major Scale Formula

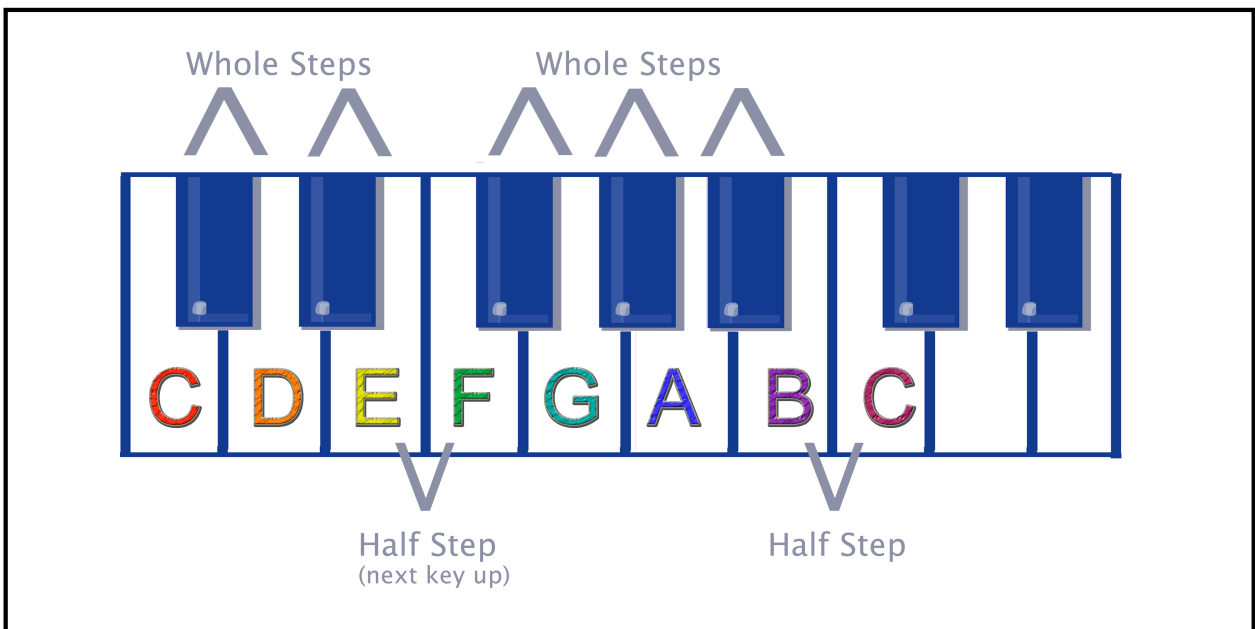
Major scales are made out of a series of intervals (distances between notes) consisting of whole steps (two notes with an unused note inbetween), and half steps (notes right next to each other), in a specific order.

- The first step of a scale is called the root.
- It is also the name of scale and note # 1 of the scale.

On the piano, a major scale starting on “C” has no black notes (no sharps or flats).

Look at the keyboard below and see how the C Major scale is built on:

ROOT (C)	Whole Step	Whole Step	Half Step
Whole step	Whole Step	Whole Step	Half Step



Or, think of it numerically (by note numbers):

Note #	1	whole step	2	whole step	3	half step	4	whole step
	5	whole step	6	whole step	7	half step	8	

OR, think of it as the Root note followed by all whole steps EXCEPT between notes 3 & 4, and 7 & 8.

Note: On a fretted instrument (such as a guitar, violin, bass, mandolin or cello), a half step is the next fret up or down; a whole step is 2 frets away.

Ready to try building some major scales? If so, check out the next page!

