

B. DEGREES AND CHORDS

Sometimes we need to refer to the different notes of a particular scale. They are called *degrees*. So the first degree of G major is G, the seventh degree of D major is C sharp, the fourth degree of C major is F. The first degree of a scale is often called the *key note*, or *tonic*. Most tunes end on the tonic of the key they are written in.

1. Name these degrees of these scales:

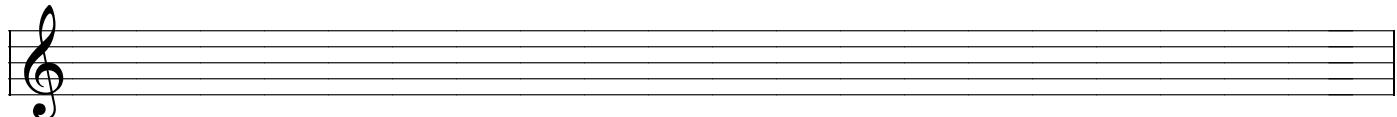
The sixth degree of C major:

The fourth degree of D major:

The sixth degree of G major:

The fifth degree of B flat major:

2. Write out the scale of B flat major, descending (going down). Start at the seventh degree and finish at the second degree.



Degrees of the scale can be referred to as numbers (the second degree in D major, the fourth degree in G minor.) There are also words used to describe the various degrees of a scale. Some (like tonic, dominant and leading note) you may already be familiar with. Here is the complete list:

1. Tonic the note that gives the key its "tone"
2. Supertonic the note above ("super") the tonic
3. Mediant the note in the middle ("medium") between tonic and dominant
4. Subdominant the note under ("sub") the dominant
5. Dominant the note that "dominates" the key
6. Submediant the note in the middle between upper tonic and subdominant
7. Leading note the note that "leads onto" the upper tonic.

3. Write in the missing degrees in the scale of D major. Write sharps beside notes that need them.

Supertonic Dominant Mediant Subdominant Submediant Subdominant Tonic Leading note

The first, third and fifth degrees of a scale make up what is called the **tonic triad** of that key. The tonic triad of C major (often called the *C major chord*) is CEG. The tonic triad of G major (often called the *G major chord*) is GBD. The three notes are written above each other to form a chord.

4. Write in the tonic triads of the keys named. The first one has been done for you.

C major G major F major D major B flat major

A minor chord is the first, third and fifth degrees of the minor scale based on the key note. (So the B minor chord is BDF#.) The middle note of a minor chord is one semitone lower than the middle note of the major chord on the same key-note. (So the D major chord is DF#A, the D minor chord is DFA.)

5. Write in the minor chords named. The first one has been done for you.

A minor G minor D minor E minor B minor