

MAJOR SCALES

A scale is composed of a selection of the 12 possible notes.

C C# D D# E F F# G G# A A# B

Here, the 12 possibilities have been arranged to highlight the **C Major Scale**.

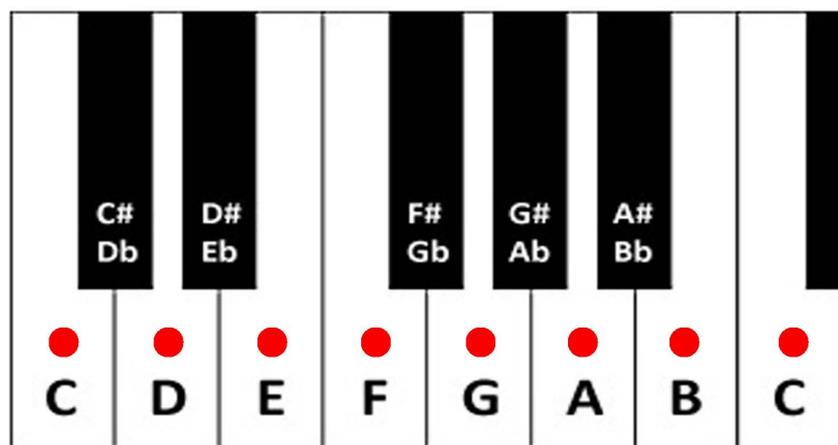
The notes selected for the **Major Scale**, when played together, tend to inspire *feelings of happiness*, though the exact nature of this feeling will vary from individual to individual.

While the **C Major Scale** is easy to identify visually on a piano keyboard (it uses only white keys), it is important to understand it is not essentially different from any other **Major Scale**. This *feeling of happiness* is not determined by the scale's location on C, but instead, by the intervals - or distance - between the notes. We measure this distance in **half steps** and **whole steps**, and call the position of each note in this sequence its **degree**.

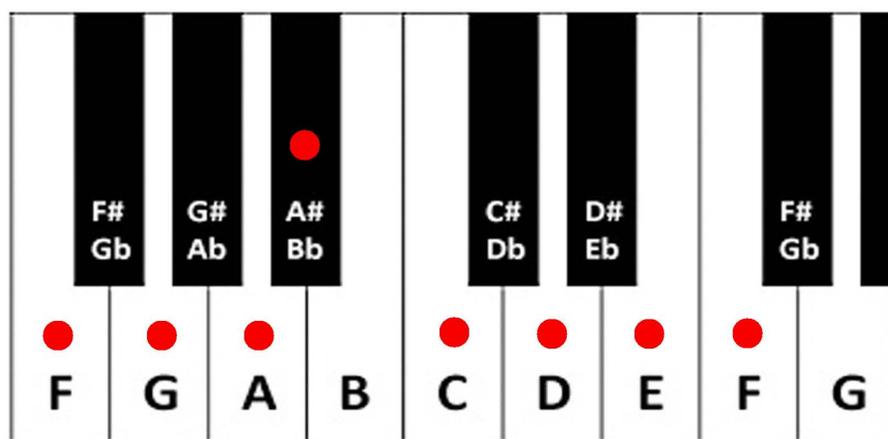
Both the **C Major Scale** and the **F Major Scale** have an equivalent *emotional connotation*, and we call this its **function: Major**.

The intervals between the notes have remained the same.

Instead of using the letters of the notes, which are fixed, it is often helpful to refer to the **degrees** of the scale by more functional names. Singers often use something called solfege, in which each degree is given its own unique syllable.



whole whole half whole whole whole half



DEGREE: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (1)
SOLFEGE: do re mi fa sol la ti do

The major scale or **Ionian scale** is one of the most commonly used scales. It is one of the **diatonic scales**. Like many musical scales it is made up of seven notes: the eighth duplicates the first at double its frequency so that it is called a higher **octave** of the same note (from Latin "octavus", the eighth).

The simplest major scale to write is **C major**, the only major scale not to require sharps or flats:

C-D-E-F-G-A-B-C (🔊 [C major scale \(help·info\)](#))

The major scale had a central importance in European music, particularly in the **common practice period** and in **popular music**, owing to the large number of **chords** that can be formed from it. In **Hindustani classical music** it is known as **Bilaval**.

Wikipedia: "Major scale."