

# FOURTH GRADE THEORY

There are a number of theory books available that will cover the following points.

1. Music Theory Made Easy (for AMEB) Grade 4 – Lina Ng
2. How to Blitz Theory Grade 4 – Samantha Coates
3. Essential Music Theory Grade 4 – Gordon Spearritt
4. Master Your Theory Grade 4 – Dulcie Holland
5. Grade 4 Theory – AMEB

## KEYS AND SCALES

- Recognize and be able to write the scales listed with / without key signatures.
- All scales may be written for 1 or 2 octaves.
- Know the position of tones and semitones.
- Use of double sharps, double flats.

**Major** Sharps: C, G, D, A, E, B, F#  
Flats: F, Bb, Eb, Ab, Db, Gb

**Minor** Sharps: A, E, B, F#, C#  
Flats: C, D, G, F, Bb

- Know the technical names of the degrees of scales

i. Tonic  
ii. Supertonic  
iii. Mediant  
iv. Subdominant

v. Dominant  
vi. Submediant  
vii. Leading note  
viii. Tonic / upper tonic

## INTERVALS

- Recognize and write all diatonic intervals and inversions in the above keys.
- The above intervals will be in the treble or bass clef.
- State the quality (i.e. augmented, diminished, perfect, major or minor) as well as number.

## MODULATIONS

Recognition of melodies of modulation to the **dominant or relative** (major or minor).

## CHORDS

- Recognition of chords in piano style (3 notes in treble, 1 in bass) **and** vocal style (2 notes in treble, 2 notes in bass)
- The recognition of the following chords in piano or vocal style in keys of up to and including
 

<b>Major</b> Sharps: C, G, D, A, E, B, F# Flats: F, Bb, Eb, Ab, Db, Gb  I, II, IV, V, VI Ib, IIb, IVb, Vb, VIb	<b>Minor</b> Sharps: A, E, B, F#, C# Flats: C, D, G, F, Bb  I, IV, V, VI Ib, IVb, Vb, VIb
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- The writing and recognition of the 4 principal cadences in piano and vocal style using the above listed keys:
 

○ <b>Perfect</b> V – I	○ <b>Imperfect</b> I – V, II – V, IV – V, VI – V
○ <b>Plagal</b> IV – I	○ <b>Interrupted</b> V – VI
- Harmonisation of a melody in major or minor (up to 4 sharps or 4 flats) in **4-part vocal style**.

## TIME AND RHYTHM

### Simple Time Signatures

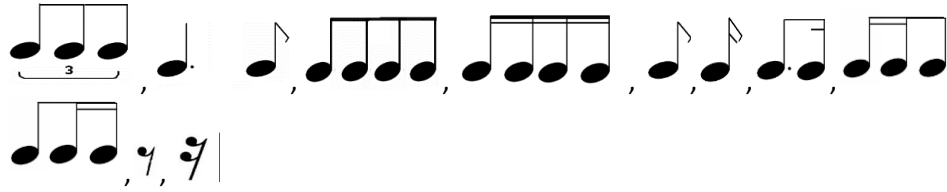
2 Simple Duple Time	3 Simple Triple Time	4 Simple Quadruple Time
4 2 crotchet beats per bar	4 3 crotchet beats per bar	4 4 crotchet beats per bar
2 Simple Duple Time	3 Simple Triple Time	C Common Time
2 2 Minim beats per bar	2 3 Minim beats per bar	
♩ Cut Common Time	3 Simple Triple Time	
	8 3 quaver beats per bar	

### Compound Time Signatures

6 Compound Duple	9 Compound Triple Time	12 Compound Quadruple
8 6 Quaver beats per bar	8 9 quaver beats per bar	8 12 quaver beats per bar
6 Compound Duple		
4 6 crotchet beats per bar		

## RHYTHM PATTERNS

### Simple Time Signatures



### Compound Time Signatures



- Demonstrate an understanding of syncopation (the accenting of a normally weak beat) using crotchet or quaver values.

## TRANSPOSITION

- A short melody in one of the keys stated and involving note values specified for this grade will be presented for the student to transpose into another of the required keys.
- Accidentals will be involved.

## GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

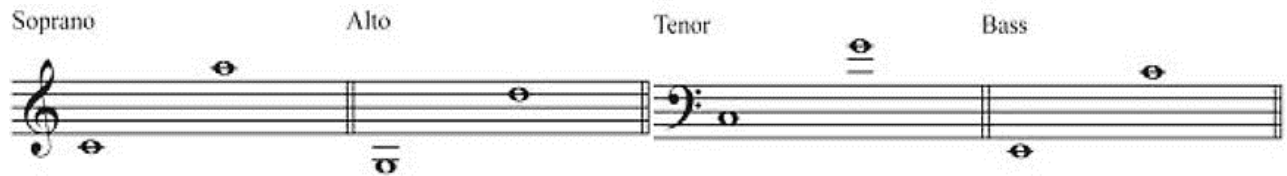
In addition to knowledge of the previous grades:

- Understand compound triple time and compound quadruple time.
- Define and recognise the difference between
  - **chromatic** - use of the same key name C to C#
  - **diatonic** – use of another key name C to Db
- Accidentals – sharp, double sharp, flat, flat double flat and naturals
- Sequences: patterns of music repeated at a higher or lower pitch.
- Anacrusis: the use of an incomplete bar at the start of the music, the value of which is added to the last bar.
- Recognize and mark divisions of a piece that may be in: binary, ternary or rondo forms
- Define **counterpoint** - A compositional technique in which two or more independent melodies are combined.
- Define **contrapuntal** - The adjective used to describe music which combines two or more independent melodies (counterpoint).
- To show on treble and bass staves the approximate compass of soprano, alto tenor and bass.
- Understand and define the form, time and character of dances included in keyboard suites of Purcell, Bach and Handel: **Allemande, Courante, Sarabande, Gigue, Minuet and Gavotte**
- Show knowledge of the stringed instruments of the symphony orchestra, their tunings using appropriate clefs: **violin, viola, violin cello, double bass**

## CREATIVE

- Write a melody to a simple verse couplet. The words must be written accurately below the notes (break up syllables).
- Major and minor keys up to 2 sharps or 2 flats are required with accurate phrasing.

## VOCAL RANGES



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## FOURTH GRADE THEORY TERMS

### SPEED

- Adagio – slowly
- Andante – at an easy walking pace
- Moderato – at a moderate speed
- Allegro – lively and fast
- Presto – very fast
- Lento – slowly
- Largo – broadly
- Allegretto – moderately fast
- Vivace – lively, spirited
- Vivo – lively, spirited
- Largamente – broadly
- Larghetto – rather broadly
- Prestissimo – very fast
- Con moto – with movement
- Tempo comodo – at a comfortable speed
- Tempo giusto – at a consistent speed
- L'istesso tempo – at the same speed
- Non troppo – not too much
- Grave – slow and solemn

### MODIFICATIONS OF SPEED

- Accelerando (*accel.*) – gradually becoming faster
- Rallentando (*rall.*) – gradually becoming slower
- Ritardando (*ritard.*) – gradually becoming slower
- Ritenuto (*riten* or *rit.*) – immediately slower or held back
- A tempo – return to former speed
- Allargando – broader
- Piu mosso – quicker (more movement)
- Meno mosso – slower (less movement)
- Rubato – with some freedom in time
- Stringendo – pressing on faster

### INTENSITY OF SOUND

- Crescendo (*cresc* or *cres*) – gradually becoming louder
- Decrescendo (*decresc* or *deces*) – gradually becoming softer
- Diminuendo (*dim.*) – gradually becoming softer
- Mezzo forte (***mf***) – moderately loud
- Forte (***f***) – loud
- Fortissimo (***ff***) – very loud
- Mezzo piano (***mp***) – moderately soft
- Piano (***p***) – soft
- Pianissimo (***pp***) – very soft
- Calando – getting softer and slower
- Morendo – dying away
- Pesante – heavily
- Forte piano (***fp***) – loud then immediately soft
- Sforzando (***sf*** / ***sfz***) – a strong accent
- Perdendosi – fading away
- Smorzando – dying away
- Rinforzando (***rfz***) or (***rf***) – reinforcing the tone

## OTHER TERMS





- Legato – smoothly and well connected
- Staccato – short and detached
- Mezzo staccato – moderately short and detached
- Maestoso – majestic
- Sostenuto – sustained
- Sempre – always
- Poco – a little
- Agitato – with agitation
- Attacca – go on at once
- Con anima – with feeling
- Con brio – with spirit
- Con grazia – with grace
- Con forza – with force
- Molto – very
- Senza – without
- Cantabile – in a singing style
- Leggiero – Lightly
- Dal segno – from the sign
- Da capo al fine – from the beginning to the word fine
- Animato – with animation
- Tranquillo – calmly
- Dolce – soft and sweet
- Cantabile – in a singing style
- Risoluto – with resolution
- Ben marcato – well marked
- Main droite (M.D.) right hand
- Main gauche (M.G.) left hand
- Una corda – with the soft pedal
- Tre corde – release the soft pedal
- Ad libitum – at pleasure
- Opus – a work or group of works
- Cantando – in a singing style
- Tenuto – hold
- Piacevole – pleasant, agreeable
- Portamento – gliding from one note to the next note smoothly
- Dolente / Doloroso – sadly, plaintively
- Sotto voce – softly in an undertone
- Giocososo – merrily
- Grazioso – gracefully
- Assai – very
- Quasi – as if it were
- Scherzando – playfully
- Subito (sub) – suddenly
- **8va** (ottava alta) – play an octave higher
- **8vb** (ottava bassa) – play an octave lower
- **MM** – Invented by Maelzel in 1816, this refers to the metronome. This device is used to indicate the exact tempo of a composition. An indication such as M.M. 60 indicates that the pendulum, with a weight at the bottom, will click at 60 beats per minute. A slider is moved up and down the pendulum to decrease and increase the tempo.
- Loco – at normal pitch (seen after the 8va sign)

## TERMS REFFERING TO STRINGS

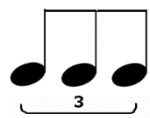
- Sul ponticello (sul. pont.) – bow on or near the bridge
- Sul tasto – bow on or near the finger board
- Arco – with the bow (used after the pizz. Sign)

## MUSICAL SIGNS

### CLEFS

Sign	Name	Meaning
	Treble Clef G Clef	Denotes all notes are at Middle C or above
	Bass Clef F Clef	Denotes all notes are at Middle C or below
	Alto Clef	The 3 <sup>rd</sup> line denotes Middle C
	Octave Clef Tenor Clef	Shows all notes pitched at the Treble are to be performed one octave lower

### RHYTHMIC DEVICES



Triplet

Play 3 notes in the time of 2 (of the same value).

Think of it as squishing an extra note into the beat.

Usually only seen in Simple Time Signatures (2/4, 3/4, 4/4)

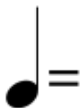


Duplet

Play 2 notes in the time of 3 (of the same value).

Think of it as dragging out the 2 notes so they can cover the missing 3<sup>rd</sup> beat.

Usually only seen in Compound Time Signatures (6/8, 9/8, 12/8, 6/4)



Metronome sign

Sometimes seen as MM = (note) (number) this indicates the tempo at which the piece is to be played per minute. For example

 92 means 92 crotchet beats per minute

## PITCH



Flat

Lowers a note by a semitone (half step)



Sharp

Raises a note by a semitone (half step)



Natural

Instructs performer to return note to normal pitch



Double Flat

Lowers note by a tone



Double Sharp

Raises note by a tone

## ARTICULATIONS



Tie

Hold the note for the combined time value



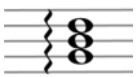
Slur

Play the notes smoothly and well connected (as in legato)



Glissando

Unbroken glide from one note to the next



Arpeggio

Roll the chord from the bottom note to the top. Sometimes there will be an arrow pointing downwards which indicates that the chord is to be played from the top note down



Mezzo Staccato

Moderately short and detached.

When covering more than one note, it will be a staccato dot covered by a slur



Staccato

Play short and detached



Staccatissimo

A longer silence after the note, think of it as a super staccato. Very short and very detached



Accent

Play the note with more force



Tenuto

Sometimes called the medium accent, the tenuto tells us to hold the note for its full value



Marcato

Play the note louder and more forcefully than the accent







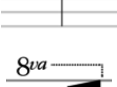





Pause or Fermata



Hold the note for longer



## ORNAMENTS

	Trill	Rapid alternation between the note written (principle note) and the note above
	Upper Mordent	Rapid performance of the principle note, the upper note and then the principle note
	Lower Mordent	Rapid performance of the principle note, the note below and then the principle note
	Turn	Rapid performance of the principle note, the note above, the principle note, the note below before returning to the principle note
	Appoggiatura	The placement of the smaller note prior to the principle note. The smaller note will be worth 2/3rds of the value of the principle note
	Acciaccatura	The 'crushing' of the smaller note into the principle note
	Ottava	To be played one octave higher (eliminates the need for leger lines)
	Quindicesima	To be played 2 octaves higher (eliminates the need for leger lines)
	Segno Literally meaning "sign"	It is used with Da Segno al Fine to mean play the music again from the sign to the end of the piece. A variation is Da Capo al fine which means play the piece again (from the beginning) until the word "fine".
	Sustained Pedal	Indication for pianists to use the sustaining pedal. The pedal is to be depressed after the note is struck, and then pumped (released and then put back down rapidly).


## DYNAMICS

<i>ppp</i>	Piano pianissimo or Pianississimo	Very very softly
<i>pp</i>	Pianissimo	Very softly
<i>p</i>	Piano	Softly
<i>mp</i>	Mezzo Piano	Moderately softly
<i>mf</i>	Mezzo forte	Moderately loudly
<i>f</i>	Forte	Loudly
<i>ff</i>	Fortissimo	Very loudly
<i>fff</i>	Forte fortissimo or Fortississimo	Very very loudly
<i>sfz</i>	Sforzando	To play with more force
<i>rfz</i>	Rinforzando	Reinforce the tone
<i>fp</i>	Forte piano	Loudly then immediately soft
	Crescendo	Gradually becoming louder
	Decrescendo or Diminuendo	Gradually becoming softer

**Please Note:** The following sections contains links to images and Youtube clips which have examples of musical elements relevant to the syllabus. All attempts have been made cite authors and creators. Where scores are present, they have been obtained through free-licence venues with links being made available. No infringement of copyright is intended, and all examples have been chosen purely for educational purposes. If you feel your copyright has been infringed, please contact us.

## COMPARISON CHART OF DANCE SUITES

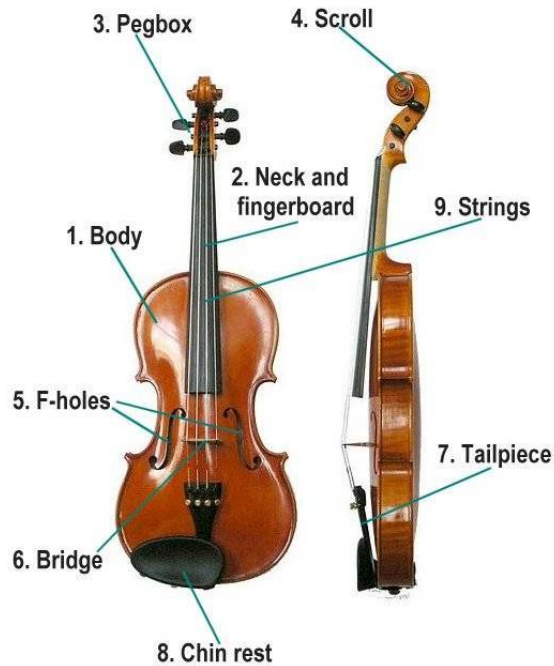
ALLEMANDE	COURANTE	SARABANDE	GIGUE
German origin	<b>2 types</b> French and Italian	Spanish origin	English, Scottish or Irish
4/4 sometimes 2/2	3/2 3/4 or 3/8 time	3/2 or 3/4 time	Usually 6/8 or 12/8 sometimes 3/8
Moderate speed	Fast speed	Slow tempo	Light and rapid
Mostly semiquavers	Running passages	Harmonic texture and ornaments	Continuous division of its beats into 3's
Serious style	French - cross accents Italian - free flowing	Dignified character	Differing styles
Feature – anacrusis semiquaver	Feature of both - Anacrusis French: dotted notes Italian: running quavers	Feature - strong emphasis on 2nd beat of bar	Feature - often fugal treatment of principle idea
1 <sup>st</sup> dance of suite	2 <sup>nd</sup> dance of suite	3 <sup>rd</sup> dance of suite	Final dance of suite
Binary form	Binary form	Binary form	Binary form



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MINUET	GAVOTTE
French origin	French origin
3/4 time	2/2 sometimes 4/4
Moderate tempo	Steady
Flowing easily	
Uncomplicated style	
Feature - commences on 1st beat of bar	
Placed between the Sarabande and Gigue	Optional movement
Binary form	

## PARTS OF A VIOLIN



### String Instruments Range



### Strings Open Tuning



## ABOUT THE STRING FAMILY

The violin, viola, cello and double bass are all members of the string family of instruments. They are constructed with a wooden body and a set of strings that are tuned by turning pegs located at the top of the instrument's neck. The strings were originally made of gut - now made from steel and are stretched over a bridge that sits on top of the instrument's body. The bridge transmits the vibrations from the strings to the body of the instrument which amplifies the sound using 'f' shaped holes on either side of the strings. The size and shape of each instrument varies slightly but they all share similar construction techniques and tuning methods.

The tunings of stringed instruments are achieved by tightening or loosening pegs at the top of the instrument (in the peg box) and fine-tuning screws towards the tail piece. The tighter the string is tensioned across the instrument, the higher in pitch. Furthermore, strings may come in a variety of thicknesses with thicker strings typically being used for lower notes.

The tone of each string may be varied by:

1. Thickness of string
2. Length of the string
3. Tension of the string

As a general rule, the thicker the string the more slowly the vibrations which results in a deeper tone.

The bow is also an important part of the stringed instruments and range from just under 74 cm long. Made of a wooden frame and about 120 horse hairs, the tension may be altered using a screw at the bottom. To make a sound, the hair is rubbed with resin to prevent the bow from slipping. Notes (other than open notes) are obtained by the left hand altering the pitch on the violin while the right-hand draws the bow across the strings.

A good work to listen to would be [Vivaldi – Four Seasons](#). This work remains popular today due to its engaging melodies and range of technique.



## Easy n Fun Piano

### VIOLIN

The string instruments make up the backbone of the orchestra and the leader of this section is the violin. Capable of a great range of pitch and dynamics, violins can be melodic soloists or support harmonies.

Some works to listen to include:

- [Paganini – Caprices](#)

Niccolo Paganini was among the first violinists to elevate the instrument to a virtuosic soloist level with his technical brilliance and speed.

- [Mendelssohn – Violin concerto in E minor op.64](#)

One of the most lyrical and flowing works of its type and one of the most frequently performed violin works.



## VIOLA



The viola is played in the same way as the violin but is one fifth larger. As a result of the increased size, the viola has a richer tone and fills the gap between the brilliant violin and the mellow cello. In the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, composers made the violas double the cello or bass parts until Stamitz liberated them, giving them greater freedom. In terms of pitch, the viola is tuned a fourth below the violin and requires its own clef – the alto clef which has middle C going through the middle line.

Some works to listen to include:

- [Hindemith – Viola concerto \*Der Schwanendreher\*](#)

This is a three-movement concerto for viola and small orchestra. The title means "The Swan Turner" in German as the concerto is based on three German folk songs that Hindemith arranged for viola and orchestra.

- [Vaughan Williams – Suite for viola and orchestra](#)

This is a three-movement work for solo viola and orchestra that premiered on October 12, 1936.



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## CELLO

Know more formally as the violincello, the cello sits between the viola and the double bass in size. Descended from the viola da gamba, the modern cello is considered the 'baritone' of the string section.

Unlike the violin and viola, the cello rests on the floor and is supported by a metal peg which slides into the instrument when not in use. To play the cello, the player needs to sit with the cello in between the player's legs. While not as agile as the violin, it has a rich and sonorous tone making it a popular instrument in Beethoven's time. The tuning of the cello is exactly one octave below the viola and is normally written with the bass clef although upper notes may be presented in the tenor clef or treble clef.



Some works to listen to include:

- [Saint-Saens – \*The Swan\*](#)

Arguably the most recognised cello work with its gliding melody and elegant phrasing perfectly capturing a gliding swan.

- [Beethoven – Cello Sonatas](#)

Beethoven’s five cello sonatas span his early, middle and late periods. Op.69, Op.102 and Op.5 No.2 are in A major, C major and G minor, respectively.

## DOUBLE BASS



The double bass is the largest member of the string family and requires the player to either sit on a high stool or stand to play. Unlike the other string instruments, the strings are much heavier and are tuned a perfect 4<sup>th</sup> apart (the others are tuned a 5<sup>th</sup> apart). The notation is also written an octave higher to eliminate the use of leger lines.

The function of the double bass is primarily to provide deep tonal colouring and rhythmic stability. It may often play the cello part an octave lower. For modern repertoire, it is often played *pizzicato* (plucked). While brilliant tones can be achieved, the repertoire for virtuosic double bass is limited.

Some works to listen to include:

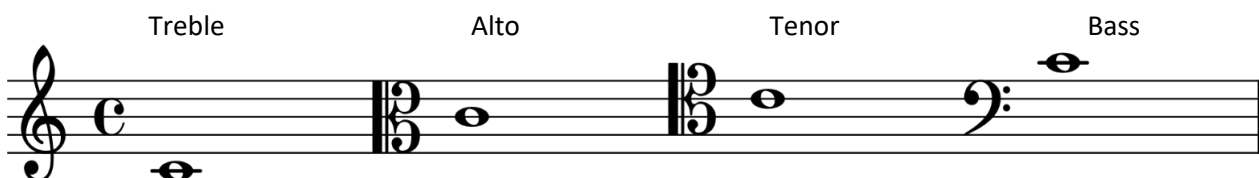
- [Dubensky – Prelude and Fugue for Double Bass Quartet](#)

Dubensky is better known for unusual chamber music combinations. This particular work is incredibly challenging and is therefore rarely heard.

- [Schubert – Octet in F Major](#)

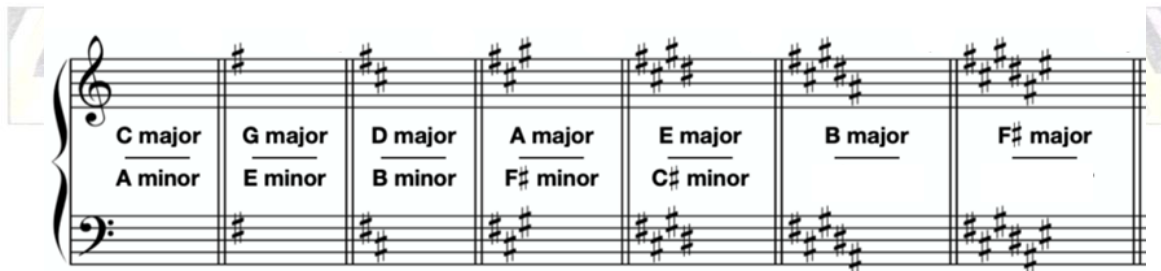
Schubert’s Octet in F Major, D 803 is an unusual chamber work for the time and was scored for clarinet, bassoon, horn, two violins, viola, cello and double bass.

## MIDDLE C SHOWN BY OTHER CLEFS



## KEY SIGNATURES - SHARPS

Count Up 5 Keys	Scale	Notes	Sharps	Key Signature
	C Major	C D E F G A B C	-	-
C D E F <b>G</b>	G Major	G A B C D E F# G	1	F#
G A B C <b>D</b>	D Major	D E F# G A B C# D	2	F#, C#
D E F# G <b>A</b>	A Major	A B C# D E F# G# A	3	F#, C#, G#
A B C# D <b>E</b>	E Major	E F# G# A B C# D# E	4	F#, C#, G#, D#
E F# G# A <b>B</b>	B Major	B C# D# E F# G# A# B	5	F#, C#, G#, D#, A#
B C# D# E <b>F#</b>	F# Major	F# G# A# B C# D# E# F#	6	F#, C#, G#, D#, A#, E#
F# G# A# B <b>C#</b>	C# Major	C# D# E# F# G# A# B# C#	7	F#, C#, G#, D#, A#, E#, B#



To help remember the **Order of Sharps** use the following saying:

**“Farmer Charlie Goes Down And Eats Berries”**

	Farmer	Charlie	Goes	Down	And	Eats	Berries
Major scale	G	D	A	E	B	F#	C#

**Don't forget that key signatures are related** – count down 3 semitones from the major to find the relative minor scale that has the same key signature. For example G major shares the same key signature as E minor



## KEY SIGNATURES – FLATS

Count Down 5 Keys	Scale	Notes	Flats	Key Signature
	C Major	C D E F G A B C	-	-
C B A G F	F Major	F G A B $\flat$ C D E F	1	B $\flat$
F E D C <b>B<math>\flat</math></b>	B $\flat$ Major	B $\flat$ C D E $\flat$ F G A B $\flat$	2	B $\flat$ E $\flat$
B $\flat$ A G F <b>E<math>\flat</math></b>	E $\flat$ Major	E $\flat$ F G A $\flat$ B $\flat$ C D E $\flat$	3	B $\flat$ E $\flat$ A $\flat$
E $\flat$ D $\flat$ C B $\flat$ <b>A<math>\flat</math></b>	A $\flat$ Major	A $\flat$ B $\flat$ C D $\flat$ E $\flat$ F G A $\flat$	4	B $\flat$ E $\flat$ A $\flat$ D $\flat$
A $\flat$ G F E $\flat$ <b>D<math>\flat</math></b>	D $\flat$ Major	D $\flat$ E $\flat$ F G A $\flat$ B $\flat$ C D $\flat$	5	B $\flat$ E $\flat$ A $\flat$ D $\flat$ G $\flat$
D $\flat$ C B $\flat$ A $\flat$ <b>G<math>\flat</math></b>	G $\flat$ Major	G $\flat$ A $\flat$ B $\flat$ C D $\flat$ E $\flat$ F G $\flat$	6	B $\flat$ E $\flat$ A $\flat$ D $\flat$ G $\flat$ C $\flat$

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To remember the order of flats go back to:

**F**ARMER **C**HARLIE **G**OES **D**OWN **A**ND **E**ATS **B**ERRIES

The order of the flats is the saying **backwards**

So instead of starting off with “F” for the “Fat”, start with the “B” for “Berries”

The new saying may be slightly edited to make more sense

**B**ERRIES **E**ATEN **A**ND **D**OWN **G**OES **C**HARLIE **F**ARMER

	Berries	Eaten	And	Down	Goes	Charlie	Farmer
Major scale	F	B $\flat$	E $\flat$	A $\flat$	D	G $\flat$	C $\flat$