

Music Theory

Around the circle
of 5ths in 80 days

What have we covered in the past few weeks?

- Music starts with scales made of letters A-G
- The scales are made up of whole steps and half steps
- The letters go on different lines and spaces based on which clef you are using
- Basic rhythm symbols

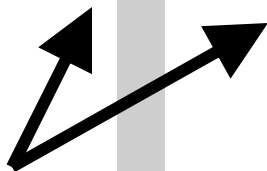
Review for making scales

- Scales are collections of letters A-G
- The letters have whole steps and half steps in between them
- Whole steps are two notes that have room for one more note in between
- Half steps have no room in between

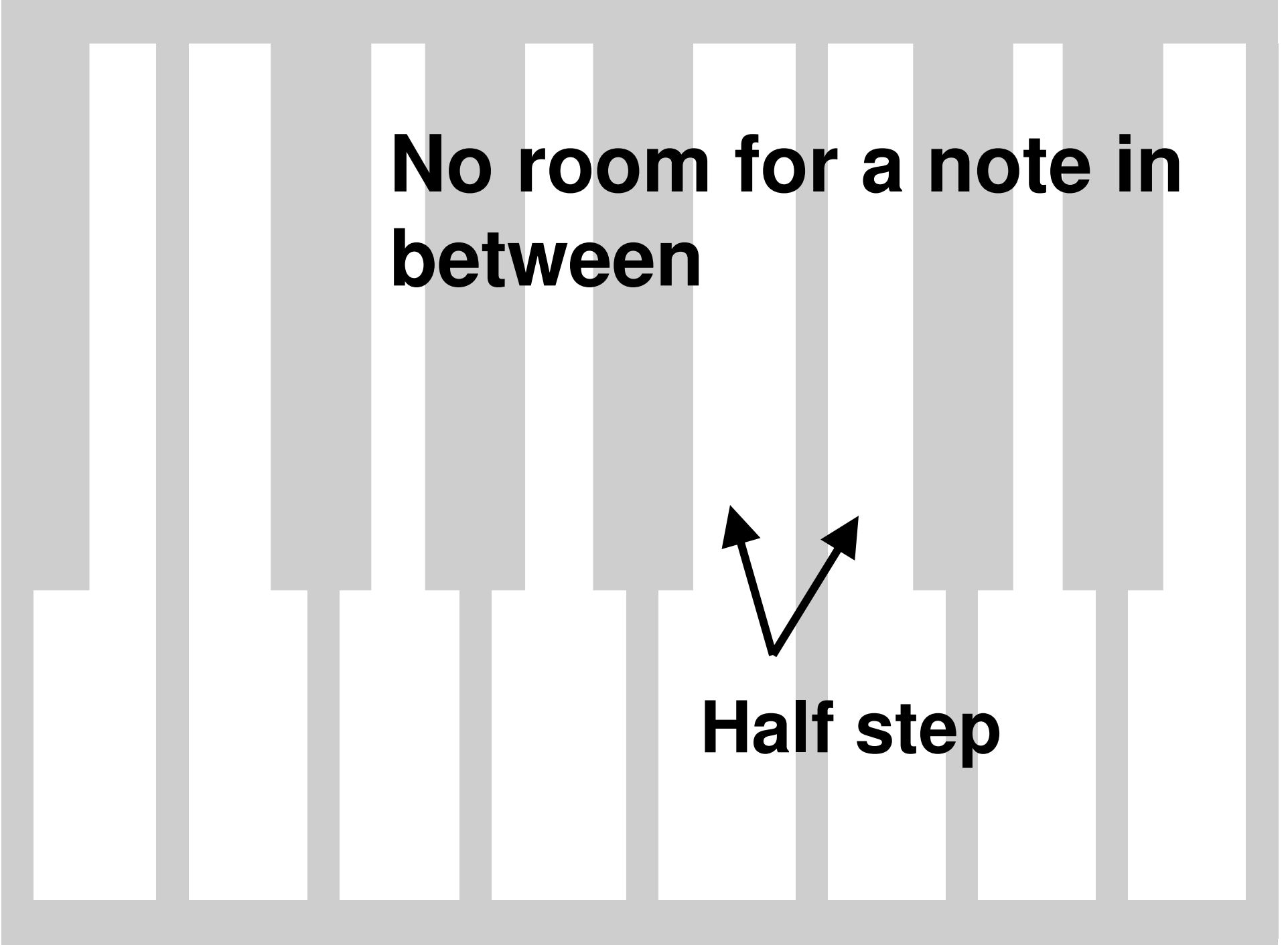
**The note in
between**



Whole Step



**No room for a note in
between**



Half step

The diagram shows a section of a piano keyboard with several white and black keys. A black arrow points to the narrow gap between two adjacent white keys, which is labeled 'Half step'.

Why are whole steps and half steps so important?

- The steps are used to create a sense of completion in a melody
- They help you know when a song is over.
- A “home base note” is the completion point for a melody.

Why are whole steps and half steps so important? (continued)

- To get this home base note, we have to put the whole steps and half steps into a specific pattern.
- This helps us get the home base note and also creates a “key”.
- The “key” is whatever letter is the home base note.

The “keys” to musical success

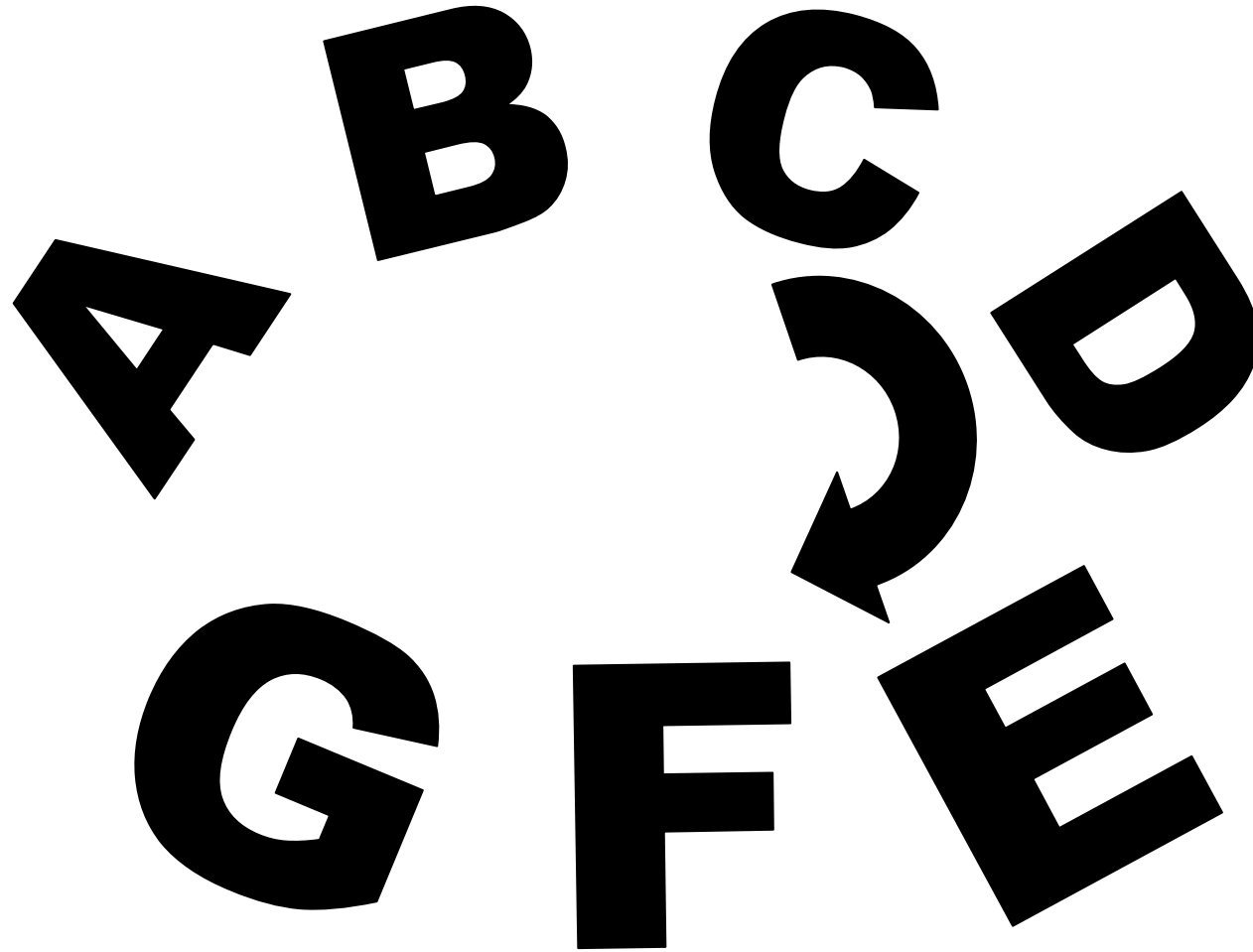
- The most common key is the major key.
- I do not know why we call it major, we just do.
- Major keys are used to make melodies that sound happy.
- The letters A-G are the different possible keys we can have and they can all be major.

Putting the steps together

- To get a major key with any letter, we must have the following pattern for whole steps and half steps.

- Whole step, Whole step
- Half step
- Whole step, whole step, whole step
- Half step
- If you do not have this pattern you do not have a major key.

When making a scale with letters,



Go around this circle clockwise

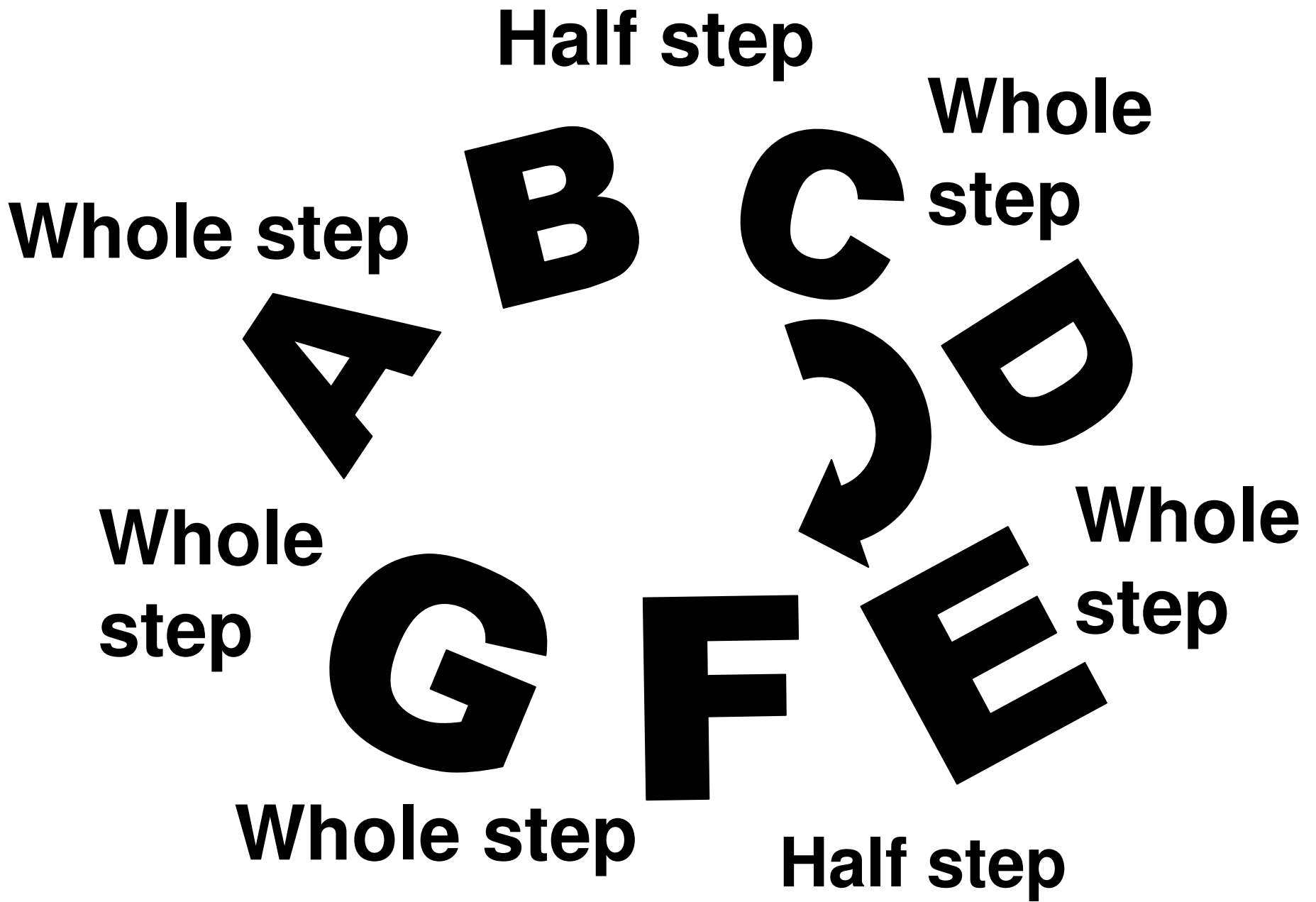
Review for making scales with letters

- Start with any letter
- Say your alphabet starting with that letter
- When you get to G, start the alphabet over with A
- End with the same letter with which you started

• C D E F G A B C

C D E F G A B C

Let's try this one in our circle, and watch where the steps happen.



Check your work

- Let's see if the scale we start with C meets the steps criteria
- C-D (whole step); D-E (whole step)
- E-F (half step)
- F-G (whole step); G-A (whole step); A-B (whole step)
- B-C (half step)

What does it all mean?

- The scale we start with the letter C has the steps in the right place for a major key.
- The C Scale is a major scale.
- Any melody we sing with the C scale will have C as the “home base note”

What does it all mean? (continued)

- If you started on any other letter, that scale would not be in a major key because the steps are in the wrong order.
- So to get the steps reordered correctly for a different letter, we must make the other letters higher or lower to compensate.
- We use sharps (#) and flats (b) to do this