MUSIC THROUGH HISTORY

3rd ESO

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LESSON 1.- FUNDAMENTALS OF MUSIC THEORY

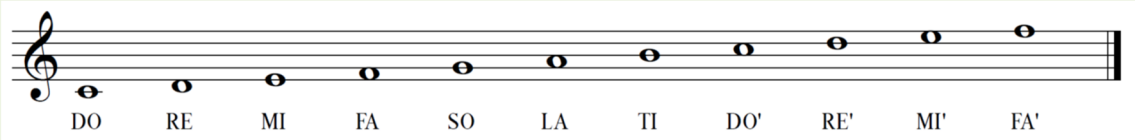
1.- PITCH AND MELODY

We have two ways of naming the different pitches:

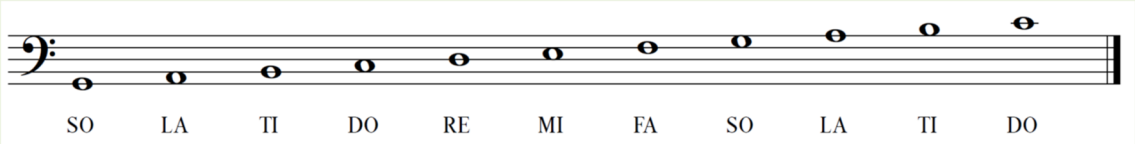
Letters	C	D	E	F	G	A	B
Syllables	do	re	mi	fa	so	la	ti

The pitches are written on the **staff**. The **clef**, at the beginning of every staff, indicates the line of a specific pitch.

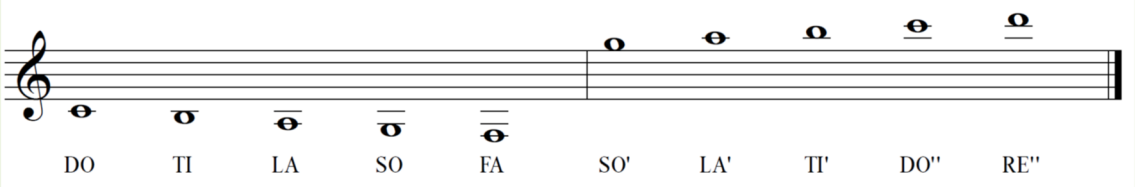
The **treble clef** indicates that *so* is on the second line.



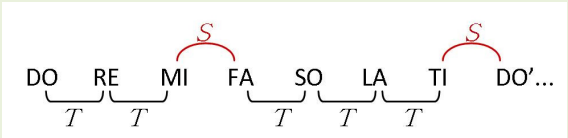
The **bass clef** indicates that *fa* (5 notes below middle C or C4) is on the fourth line. Low pitches are written with this clef.



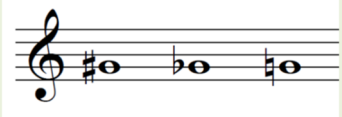
When the staff is not enough to write higher or lower pitches we add **ledger lines** above or below the staff:



The difference in pitch between two consecutive notes can be a **tone** or a **semitone** (also called whole step and half step), following this pattern:



The **accidentals** change the pitch of a note by a semitone**: the sharp** raises it a semitone, the **flat** lowers it a semitone and the **natural** cancels the effect of a sharp or a flat within the same bar.

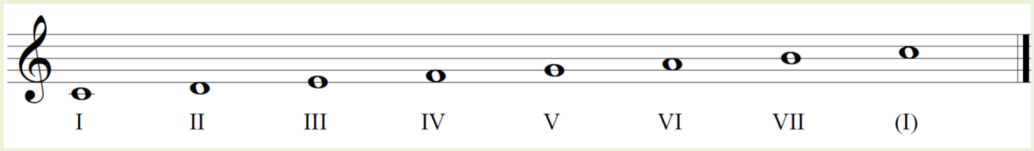


An **interval** is the difference in pitch between two notes. There are ascending and descending intervals and they are named with an ordinal number, counting the two notes and all the notes included between them:

Do-re: 2nd Do-mi: 3rd *(do-re-mi)* Do-fa: 4th *(do-re-mi-fa)* *(Etcetera)*

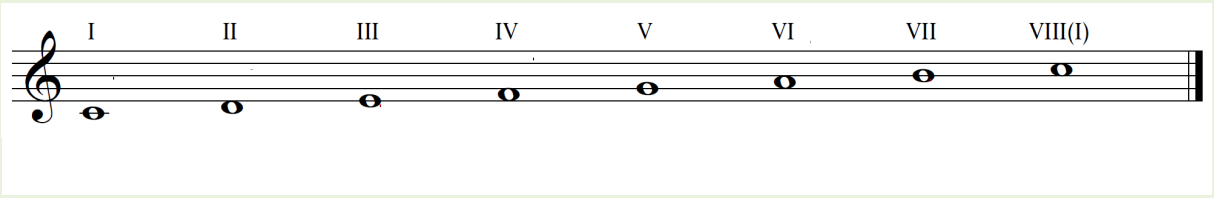
The **SCALES** are series of notes arranged according to specific intervals. There are many different scales in the world, and they have evolved over time.

The scales can start with any note, so the notes are considered like roman numerals, because the important thing is to know their position in the scale. They are called **degrees**.

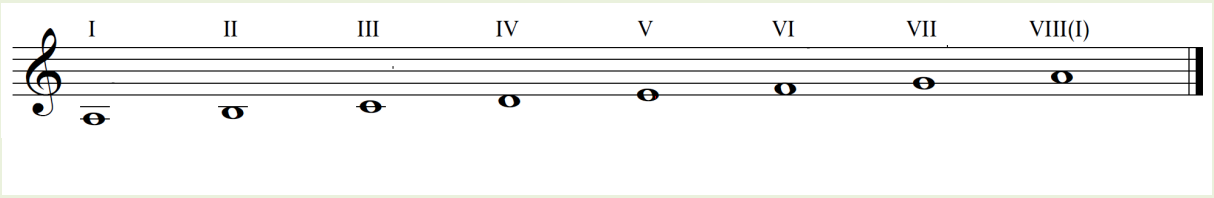


In our culture, the most common scales are the **major** and the **minor** scales. Both of them have tones and semitones. They have 8 degrees (7 different notes plus de repetition of the first one):

a) The **major scale** has its semitones between the degrees *III-IV* and *VII-VIII.*
Music based on this scale seems to us happy, relaxed...



b) The **minor scale** has its semitones between the degrees *II-III* and *VI-VI* (with several variations).
Music based on this scale seems to us sad, melancholic...



Other examples of scales are:

- **Pentatonic scale**: It has five different sounds. There aren't any semitones alone. It's the oldest kind of scale, it can be found in all the world and it's maybe the origin of the rest of scales.
- **Chromatic scale**: It has 12 different sounds, all of them with a semitone between them.
  The effect of this scale is mysterious, tense...
- **Whole tone scale**: all their notes are separated by a tone. The effect of this scale is exotic, different, old and new at the same time.

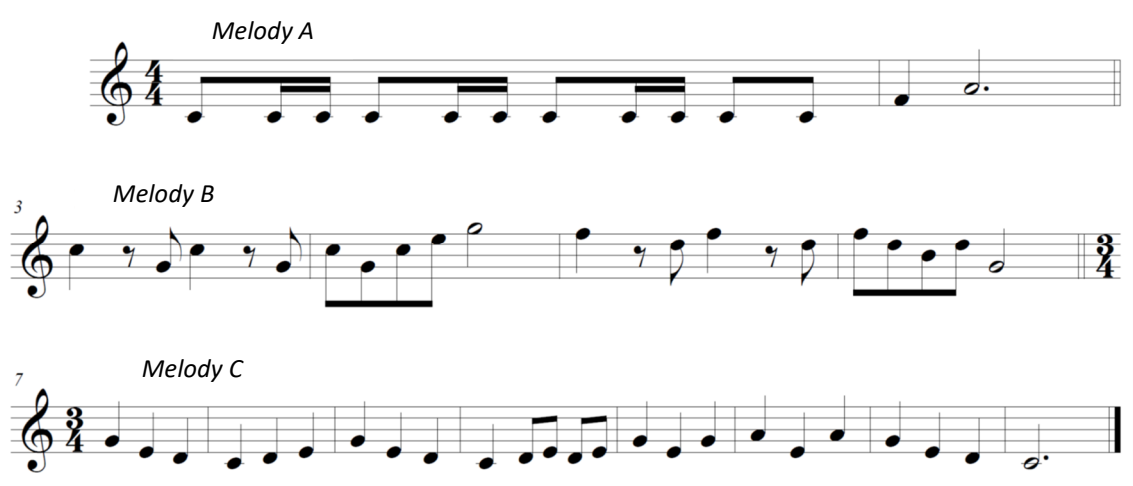
Scales	***Diatonic scales***		***Pentatonic***	***Chromatic***
	Major	Minor		
Number of sounds	7+1	7+1	5+1	12+1
Intervals	Tones and semitones	Tones and semitones	No semitones	Just semitones
Pattern	T-T-S-T-T-T-S	T-S-T-T-S-T-T	Like a major scale without the IV and VII degrees	All the semitones included in an octave

The **MELODIES** are combinations of the different notes of a specific scale with a musical meaning.

Their lines are mostly *wavy*, but sometimes they have skips or leaps. They can have at times horizontal, descending, or ascending lines.
A melody has a narrow *range* if there is not a big difference between its highest and lowest note and a *wide range* if there is a big difference between them.

Melodies can be simple or complicated and decorated. They can have few or many notes. They usually have repetitions inside them to give coherence and remember them easily.

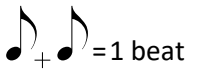
Examples of melodies:



2.-RHYTHM

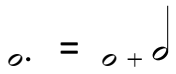
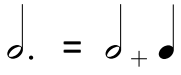
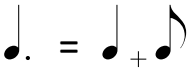
The **rhythm** is the result of combining **notes and rests** of different durations. This durations have a relationship of double and half. The **beat** is the unit of time in rhythm.

	Notes	Rests
Semibreve or whole note	 Just head	 (under the fourth line)
Minim or half note	 Head and stem	 (on the third line)
Crotchet or quarter note	 Black head and stem	
Quaver or eighth note	 Black head, stem and flag. When we write two or more quavers together we join them with a beam.	
Semiquaver or sixteenth note	 Two flags instead of one. When we join two or more semiquavers together we write two beams.	

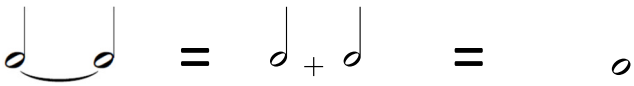
	Semibreve Whole note	Minim Half note	Crotchet Quarter note	Quaver Eighth note	Semiquaver Sixteenth note
Notes					
Beats	4	2	1	1/2 or 0.5 so:  =1 beat	1/4 or 0.25 so:  = 1 beat

DOTS AND TIES make notes and rests last longer.

- The **dot** makes a note half of its duration longer.

	4 beats + 2 beats = 6 beats
	2 beats + 1 beat = 3 beats
	1 beat + half a beat = a beat and a half

- The **tie** sums the durations of two notes with the same pitch and any duration.



The **BARS OR MEASURES** are divisions of the rhythm in units with the same number of beats.
Basically, there are duple, triple and quadruple meters (bars with two, three or four beats).

The **time signature** at the beginning of a score indicates the kind of meter with two numbers:
the *upper number* indicates the number of beats in each bar and the *bottom number* symbolizes the note that lasts a beat: 2 is the minim, 4 is the crotchet and 8 is the quaver.

Examples of the most common time signatures:

Time signature	Meaning
2/4	There are two crotchets in every bar
3/4	There are three crotchets in every bar
4/4	There are four crotchets in every bar
3/8	There are three quavers in every bar
2/2	There are two minims in every bar
3/2	There are three minims in every bar
2/8	There are two quavers in every bar