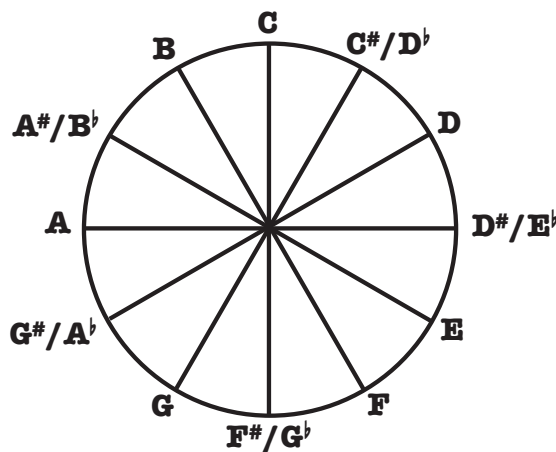


Dan's Music Theory 101 Cheat Sheet

All the basics you need to know about music theory on one sheet of paper

The Chromatic Wheel



Definitions

Chord - A combination of three or more notes played together.

Chord tone - A note that's part of the current chord.

Chromatic scale - A scale consisting of every note.

Diatonic - A note or notes in the current scale/key.

Downbeat - The first beat in a measure.

Flat - Lowers the note a half step.

Half step - The distance of one notch on the wheel, or one fret on a bass/guitar. Also called a semitone.

Key - Reference to the scale of notes on which a song is based.

Root - The note in which a chord is based on. e.g. C is the root of a Cm7.

Scale - Subset of notes in order, usually consisting of whole and half steps over the course of an octave.

Sharp - Raises the note a half step.

Whole step - Two notches on the wheel. Also called a tone.

1-4-5 - Since the 3 major chords diatonic to a major key are the 1, the 4, and the 5. It's very common to use those 3 chords in a song. Songs, or parts of songs, that only use those three chords are called "One Four Five".

Times

Quarter note - The standard beat of a song. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Eighth note - The off beat of a song. "+" (pronounced "and").

Sixteenth note - Divisions in between eighth notes. "e" and "a" (pronounced "uh").

One measure - 1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a

Intervals (in relation to steps on the chromatic wheel)

- 0- Unison. Same note. 1.
- 1- Minor second. Half step. Semitone. m2.
- 2- Major second. Second. Whole step. 2.
- 3- Minor third. m3.
- 4- Major third. 3.
- 5- Fourth. Perfect fourth. 4.
- 6- Minor fifth. Tritone. Diminished fifth. m5.
- 7- Fifth. Perfect fifth. 5.
- 8- Minor sixth. m6.
- 9- Major sixth. 6.
- 10- Minor seventh. Dominant seventh. m7.
- 11- Major seventh. M7.
- 12- Eighth. Octave. 8.
- 13- Flat ninth. m9.
- 14- Ninth. 9.
- 15- Sharp Nine. #9.

Scales (with samples in G)

Each note in a scale is represented by its position, 1-8.

Major scale - Whole-Whole-Half-Whole-Whole-Whole-Half.
(G A B C D E F# G)

Minor scale - Whole-Half-Whole-Whole-Half-Whole-Whole.
(G A Bb C D Eb F G)

Chords (with samples in G)

Major - 1-3-5. G-B-D. "G"

Minor - 1-m3-5. G-Bb-D. "Gm"

Seven - 1-3-5-m7. G-B-D-F. "G7"

Major seven - 1-3-5-M7. G-B-D-F#. "Gmaj7"

Minor seven - 1-m3-5-m7. G-Bb-D-F. "Gm7"

Nine - 1-3-5-m7-9. G-B-D-F-A. "G9"

Diminished - 1-m3-m5. G-Bb-Db. "Gdim"

Augmented - 1-3-m6. G-B-Eb. "Gaug"

Suspended "Sus" - 1-4-5. G-C-D. "Gsus" or "Gsus4"

Sus2 - 1-2-5. G-A-D. "Gsus2"

add9 - 1-3-5-9. G-B-D-A. "Gadd9"

Five - 1-5. G-D. "G5"

Six - 1-3-5-6. G-B-D-E. "G6"

/- When writing a chord that has a note other than the root to be played by the bass, it's marked with a "/".

For example "G7/C" is a G7 chord with the bass playing a C. Pronounced "G Seven Over C".

Some of the information may require further explanation...

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