

Intervals Lesson - Finding Notes E, F, and B, C on the Piano/ Keyboard And How It Applies To The Guitar

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After learning the Major Scale Intervals on a keyboard, they are easier to learn on a guitar. Really.



On the keyboard there is a pattern of Black Keys. 2 keys, 3 keys, 2 keys, 3 keys, all the way from the lower notes to the highest notes. Are you able to see the pattern? Let's continue.

E and F are located between the pattern of 2 Black Keys and 3 Black Keys. Take a look. B and C are between the pattern of 3 Black Keys and 2 Black Keys. Take a look and make sure you can see the 2 White Keys B and C. These are the only two locations where there are no Black Keys between the White Keys. This is where E and F, and B and C are found.

The music alphabet is A, B, C, D, E, F, G. Looking at the keyboard starting with the C on the left, you will see that the 7 White Keys from C to B are the 7 notes of a C Major Scale and they repeat over and over. The Black Keys are Sharp (#) or Flat (b). The Black Key between the C and D White Keys is a Sharp or a Flat. We will consider all Black Keys to be Sharp # for this Lesson. If we look at the note before the first Black Key we find a C. The Black Key is # by what is known as a Half Step Interval. The C raised a Half Step becomes Sharp (#). The Black Key C#. More on this a little later.

It is easy to see where E and F, and B and C are on a key board. But it is not so easy to see where those E and F and B and C notes are located on a guitar fretboard. There are 7 White Key notes and 5 Black Key notes on the keyboard between C and C. A total of 12 Keys or 12 notes. On a keyboard the keys sit in front of you, repeating patterns over and over.

On the guitar those 12 notes are located on 12 Frets. There aren't any "White or Black Keys" to show where E & F and B & C are found. Plus 5 of the 6 strings are a different Open note. E, A, D, G, B, E. This is where the Major Scale Intervals are helpful.

You don't need to know Intervals to learn chords and strum or pick the strings on a guitar. But did you know each Chord is derived from its parent Major Scale? G the G Major Scale. D the D Major Scale. As a matter of fact all chords such as A, A7, Am7, A6, Am, A9, A add 9, etc. are all derived from the A Major Scale? D, D7, Dm, Dm7, D Major 7, etc. are all derived from the D Major Scale. Major Scale Intervals dictate what notes are in each Chord.

The Intervals helped me to look at my guitar in a whole new way. I finally understood why certain notes create certain Chords. To understand why certain notes create a certain chord it is a MUST to know the Major Scale Intervals. And you will know them very soon!

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How is your memory? Can you remember a phone number? Then you can learn Intervals!

The phone number is 2 2 1 - 2 2 2 1. The numbers are how many Keys or Frets.

2 = 2 Keys or 2 Frets. 1 = 1 Key or 1 Fret. These are the Intervals of “Half Steps” and “Whole Steps”. 1 key or 1 Fret = 1 Half Step. 2 Keys or 2 Frets = 2 Half Steps. But we don't call the 2 “2 Half Steps”. 2 Half Steps = 1 Whole Step. We call the 2 Keys or 2 Frets Interval a Whole Step. An Interval of 2 is always a Whole Step (2 notes).

Let's begin with the first part of our phone number 2 2 1.



The notes of the C Major Scale are all White Keys.

If we look at the starting C note on the keyboard we will notice there is a Black Key between C and D. This is a 2 Keys 2 Notes Interval. From C (the Root note of the C Major Scale) we have C, a C# Black Key, then D. A two Key interval. When you see a 2 in our phone number you know the next (Half Step) note is Sharp. A C# black key before the next note, which is D a White Key. TIP: It is fine to think of the 2 as 2 Half Steps to determine the next note.

The next numeral in our phone number is again a 2. That means the Half Step next note is Sharp. After note D is note D # , then the other Half Step note is E a 2 key Whole Step Interval.

There isn't a Black Key between E and F. This is the 1 in our phone number. A 1 note Half Step interval (no Black Sharp Key in between) the notes E and F.

Next there are three 2's in our phone number. Three Whole Step Intervals in a row before the 1 Interval of a Half Step: 2 2 2 1.

This first 2 we start with F. We know the next note in our first Half Step is the black key F# before the next Half Step brings us to G. A Whole Step from F to G.

The second 2 we start with G and already know we next have a black key G# Half Step before the Half Step to A. A Whole Step from G to A.

The third 2 we start with A. Any guess what the next note is? Correct . The Black Key A# and then B. A Whole Step from A to B.

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Then the last number of our phone number, 1. A Half Step. From B there isn't a Black Key in between C. This is a Half Step Interval, one key from B to our starting note C. From C the 221-2221 Whole Step, Half Step Interval pattern repeats on our keyboard.

Please review this Interval section again *until you have it memorized*. Intervals are what all music in the West (North America and most of Europe) is based on. Let me repeat that another way. Music as we know it is all based on the Major Scale. Every piece of sheet music ever written for a song is based on the Intervals of a Major Scale. The Key Signature (not keyboard key) could be any of the 12 notes from C to C. Tip: C is the only Key without a Sharp or Flat Interval. All other white key notes have a least 1 # all the way to 5 #'s. With the exception of the the Key of F.

The Key of F has no sharps, only one Flat, a B Flat. Why does the Key of F just have 1 Flat and why is it the note B Flat (b)? Look above at our keyboard and start with F note 1. Now use the 221-2221. Note 2 is a 2 Interval F to G. Note 3 is a 2 Interval G to A. Now we have the 1 Interval. But from A to B is an Interval of 2 (Black Key in between). So the B must become a Black Key, B Flat. It cannot be A# because we already have an A note in our F scale. After that three Intervals of 2. B flat to B 1 Half Step, and B to C 1 Half Step, which is a Whole Step from Bb to C our first 2. Then another 2 is C to D, and the last 2 D to E. Then an Interval of 1, From E to F. Are you able to see why the B note is Flat in the Key of F Major?

Let's review what we have learned. On the guitar an Interval of 2 is a Whole Step 2 Frets. An Interval of 1 is a Half Step 1 Fret. The Root is note 1, then followed by our phone number. Root 2 2 1 - 2 2 2 1.

R 2 2 1 - 2 2 2 1 = Root, 2 frets, 2 frets, 1 fret, 2 frets, 2 frets, 2 frets, 1 fret.

In Steps: from the Root. Whole, Whole, Half, Whole, Whole, Whole, Half. Seems easy enough.

Our Root is note One. The first 2 Frets Interval is note Two, the next 2 Frets is note 3, 1 Fret is note Four.

Then we have the three 2 Intervals in a row. 2 Frets note Five, 2 Frets note Six, 2 Frets note Seven, and finally ending with a 1 Interval the last numeral in our phone number 1, 1 Fret note 8 that returns you to the Root. These are the Major Scale Intervals.

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Half Steps ↓ ↓
Root 2 2 1 – 2 2 2 1 then start over with note 8 becoming Root note 1.
Note: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 (Root) Notice the Root is considered note 8 in Intervals.
Half Steps ↑ ↑

The Half Steps are always between notes 3 and 4 and 7 and 8.

Refer to the keyboard illustration of C D E F G A B C the C Major Scale. We have C the Root, then Intervals 2 D, 2 E, 1 F, 2 G, 2 A, 2 B, 1 C . We are able to skip the black keys because we know on a 2 key (2 Half Steps / 1 Whole Step) Interval the first note is the Sharp # Black Key and the second note is on a White Key. We start with C our Root note and then continue with the Intervals. Now we can forget about the keyboard! Bring on the guitar! In case you forgot the phone number it is 2 2 1 - 2 2 2 1.

We can determine where the Intervals and notes are on the guitar starting on a C note our Root. C is the First Fret note on the 2nd String. From there we count the Frets using the phone number Intervals (number of Half Steps/ Frets) and have the notes: Fret 1 is C our Root, next (2 Frets) = Fret 3 D, (2 Frets) = Fret 5 E, (1 Fret) = Fret 6 F, (2 Frets) = Fret 8 G, (2 Frets) = Fret 10 A, (2 Frets) = Fret 12 B, ending on (1 Fret) = Fret 13 C our Root note.

At Fret 12 the notes start all over again on each string. The 2nd String played Open is a B. Fret 12 is also a B. The Open string and Fret 12 are always the same note on all 6 strings.

Remember notes B and C are 1 interval apart? That is why Fret 1 is a C. A Half Step from Open B. And Fret 12 is B and a Half Step Fret 13 is C. Are you able to see how and why the C is 1 Fret from B? If not review this part again until you get it. The intervals work starting on any white key "Note" though. If other than C or F, you will have at least 1 sharp note in your "A, B, D, E, and G" Major Scales.

E and F 1 Fret apart -. B and C 1 Fret apart -. All others 2 Frets apart --.

B-C--D--E-F--G--A--B-C--D--E-F--G--A--B-C--D--E-F--G--A--B-C--D--E-F.

Commit the Intervals to memory. Remember E F & B C are a Half Step, 1 Fret apart.