

Order of Sharps and Flats



Mnemonic Devices

BEAD - Greatest Common Factor

Before Eating A Doughnut,
Get Coffee First

Bass clef
Order of flats



STAVE'N'TABS

Mnemonic Devices

Father Christmas Gave Dad An Electric Blanket

Fat Cats Go Down Alleys
Eating Birds

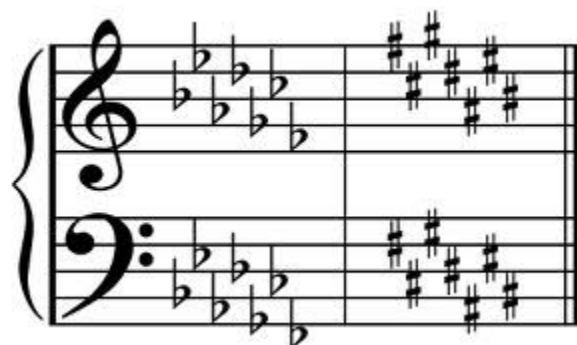
Fat Chicks Go Dancing At Ed's Bar

Treble clef
Order of sharps

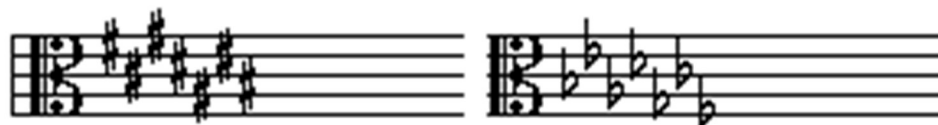


STAVE'N'TABS

Flats and sharps are always in the same order. They always sit on the same line and space. You will never see a sharp of flat without the ones before it. Example: If you have C# you will also have F#.



This is where the sharps and flats are placed on the staff for treble and bass clef.



This is where the sharps and flats are placed on the staff for alto clef.



This is where the sharps and flats are placed on the staff for tenor clef.

TRICKS TO REMEMBER KEY SIGNATURES

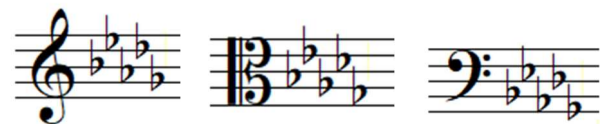
FLATS

For key signatures with flats, the key signature is the name of the second to last flat.

This is the key of E flat major because E flat is the second to last (rightmost) flat in the key signature.



This is the key of D flat major because D flat is the second to last flat in the key signature. It is not the key of D because there is a D flat in the key. Therefore, it is the key of D flat.



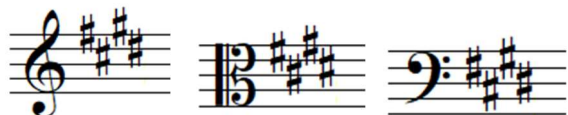
SHARPS

For key signatures with sharps, the key signature is the note name half step above the last (rightmost) sharp.

This is the key of G major because F# is the last sharp in the key signature. G is half step above F#.



This is the key of E major because E is half step above D#, which is the last sharp in the key signature. It is not the key of E# because there is no E# in this key signature.



This is the key of C# major. Why? The last sharp in this key signature is B#. Half step above that is C#. Remember that there is a naturally occurring half step between B and C, which means B# is the same pitch as C. This means that half step above B# is C#. The quicker way to determine this is to look at the sharps already in the key signature. In this case, there is already a C# in the key signature, so this is the key of C#.



WHAT ABOUT THE KEY OF C OR THE KEY OF F?

These trick will help you quickly determine the name of the key signature when there are multiple sharps or flats in the key signature, but you may have noticed that this trick doesn't work for the key of F or the key of C. Memorize: 1 flat is F major, and no flats or sharps is C major.