

# Major Keys (Ionian Mode): 1

## Organizing Principle for Tonal Music

(Use this page as a template/reference for all 15 keys)

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1. Begin with the scale. Here is the standard C major scale.  
Note-names and fingering suggestions for R.H. and L.H.

2. The half-step (1) whole-step (2) formula. Tonic-2-2-1-2-2-2-1.  
Notice the slightly uneven pattern of the notes.

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The "Do-Re-Mi" notes are called Solfege. See how they form the tones of the major scale.

3. We now have 4 ways to describe the major scale: 1. Note-Names of a given key.  
2. Simple numbers (1-8) 3. The Half-step/Whole-step formula and 4. Solfege  
moveable "Do" system.

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4. Each of these learning/numbering/naming systems are used by musicians for various purposes. They help us "pick-out" the scales on the piano. The numbers are used in chord building and harmonizing. Solfege is used in voice-training. The half-whole math formula helps explain the underlying structure of our basic reference scale for Western tonal Music. Whew!!! Lots of words!

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5. Starting with the "Tonic" or "Keytone" place an ascending scale next to a Tonic "partner." These are the "Tonal Dyads" for the key. That means they are "in the key" or "Diatonic" Notice the different names.\*

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Unison    Maj2    Min3    Perfect4    Perfect5    Maj6    Maj7    Per.Octave

Tonic/Root    M2    m3    4th    5th    M6    M7    Octave

\*(In standard useage we use "M" for major, "m" for minor, and just refer to the Octaves, Unisons and Perfect intervals by number.)

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6. By reversing the direction we find 4 more Dyads/Intervals: the minor 2nd, 3rd, 6th and 7th.

Min2    Min3    P4    P5    Min6    Min7    P8

m2    m3    P4    P5    m6    m7    P8

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7. Now, take 3rds and 5ths and build TRIAD chords up the scale. We name them by NUMBERS and CHORD-TYPES.

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    1

I    ii    iii    IV    V    vi    vii    I

C(Maj)\*    Dm    Em    F(Maj)    G(Maj)    Am    Bdim    C(Maj)

\*(Major chords are simply represented by a Capital letter. Lower case letters are used for minor chords.)

8. By placing 5ths in the L.H. and running 3rds in the R.H., called an OPEN voicing, a strong sound results. Take them for a spin. This is a traditional sound used in Classical, church and pop music.

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C    Dm    Em    F    G    Am    Bdim    C

I    IIIm    IIIIm    IV    V    VIIm    VIIIdim    I