

Key Signatures and the Major Scale

There are 12 major keys. C F B \flat E \flat A \flat D \flat G \flat B E A D G

Step 1 *Is it a sharp key or a flat key?*

- The key of C has no sharps or flats
- All flat keys have flat next to their name besides F

Example. Key of A is a sharp key because it is not F and it doesn't have a flat next to its name

Step 2 *How many sharps or flats are in a key?*

Use the following mnemonic devices to figure out how many sharps or flats are in a key. Count how many words you say before you get the word that starts with the letter of the key.

How many sharps are in a key? **G**ood **D**ogs **A**lways **E**at **B**oneless **F**[#]ried **C**[#]hicken

How many flats are in a key? **F**or **B**^better **E**^barth **A**^blways **D**^brive **G**^breen **C**^bars

Example. A is a sharp key, so you use the ones about Fried Chicken.

Good (1) Dogs (2) **A**lways (3) The key of A has three sharps.

Step 3 *Which notes are sharped or flatted?*

To figure out which notes are sharped or flatted, use the following mnemonic device.

B E A D G C F

-Read it from left to right to see which notes are flat and from right to left to see which notes are sharp.

Example. The key of A has three sharps. Go from right left to figure out which notes are sharped in the key. F, C, and G are sharped in the key of A

Step 4 *Spell the scale without sharps or flats*

The musical alphabet restarts after G

A B C D E F G A B C D E F G

Start on the first note of the scale and go through the musical alphabet until you arrive back at the starting note

Example: Key of A: A B C D E F G A

Step 5 *Add sharps or flats to the scale*

Example:

F, C, and G are sharped in the key of A

A B C# D E F# G# A