

1 Scales

NOTE: Due to the expansion of the ABCs of Vocal Harmony, the page numbers mentioned on the accompanying CDs do not apply.

The Staff

Scales: Track 1

Musical notes are written on a *staff*. A staff consists of 5 lines and 4 spaces. Each line and space has the name of a letter: A, B, C, D, E, F, or G.

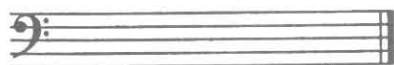
There are two kinds of *staves* commonly used. These are identified by a *clef* sign placed at the beginning of the staff. One is called the *treble clef* or *G clef*. The curlique encircling the 2nd line from the bottom identifies that line as G (above middle C), thereby creating a point of reference for the notes of the entire staff.

Treble Clef



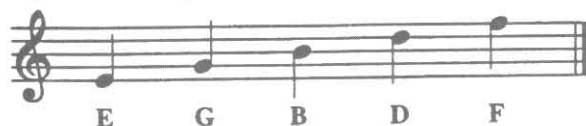
The other clef is called the *bass clef* or *F clef*. It encircles the 2nd line from the top, identifying that line as F (below middle C), and creating a point of reference for the notes of the entire staff.

Bass Clef



The lines of the treble clef are traditionally memorized using the phrase:

Every Good Boy Does Fine



The spaces of the treble clef are memorized using the word:

F A C E



3 Chords and Harmony

NOTE: Due to the expansion of the ABCs of Vocal Harmony, the page numbers mentioned on the accompanying CDs do not apply.

Chords - Track 1

Vocal harmony is built on combinations of notes called *chords*. A chord is any combination of three or more notes. If the notes are played individually, it is a *broken chord* or an *arpeggio*. If the notes are sounded together (simultaneously), it is called a *block chord*.

Only a chordal instrument such as the piano or guitar is capable of playing a block chord. When singers sing together, each on a different note of a chord, the result is *harmony*.

The image shows two musical staves. The top staff is in treble clef and the bottom staff is in bass clef. Both are in 3/4 time. The first part shows a broken chord with notes C, E, and G played sequentially. The second part shows a block chord with notes C, E, and G played simultaneously. A 'C' chord symbol is placed above the treble staff and below the bass staff for the block chord.

Broken Chord

Block Chord

Some combinations of notes seem to be more compatible, or *harmonious*, than others. For example, the 1st and 3rd degrees of the scale played together sound harmonious, while, to most ears, the 1st and 2nd degrees of the scale played together sound *dissonant* (not harmonious). However, in the context of singing or playing, for example, jazz and classical style, two consecutive notes sung or played together can produce a full and rich sound.

Whether or not some chords sound harmonious or dissonant depends on the musical taste of the listener.

Chords - Track 2

The Major Triad

The *major triad* is a three note chord built on the 1st, 3rd and 5th degrees of a major scale. It may be thought of as a major 3rd plus a minor 3rd. The interval between the 1st degree and the 5th degree of the chord is a perfect 5th.