

Chapter 10 Triads

In this chapter you will:

1. Identify major and minor triads
2. Write major and minor triads
3. Identify all four types of triads
4. Identify triads by sound and write triads given the root

5. Identify triads with key signatures
6. Write triads given the third or fifth
7. Review the four triads

10.1 Identify major and minor triads

	type of triad	
	major	minor
top 3rd	minor	major
bottom 3rd	major	minor
5th	perfect	perfect

- A chord is three or more notes played together.
- A triad is a three note chord which is written in thirds.
- There are four types of triads. This worksheet presents two of these:
- A major triad has a major third on the bottom and a minor third on top.
- A minor triad has a minor third on the bottom and a major third on top.

The 5ths, from the bottom notes to the top notes, in both triads are perfect, so 5ths cannot be used to distinguish these two triads.

“Major” and “minor” are used to describe both intervals and triads. Major and minor triads are named after their bottom thirds.

1. IDENTIFY the bottom third of the triad as major or minor.

2. IDENTIFY the top third of the triad as major or minor.

3. IDENTIFY the triad as major or minor.

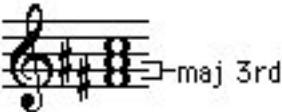
10.2 Write major and minor triads

Problem: Write a major triad above this root.

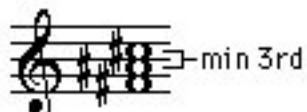
Step 1



Step 2



Step 3



- The bottom note of a triad is called the root.
- To write major and minor triads given the root:
 - First write two noteheads above the root in thirds.
 - Alter the middle note if necessary to make the bottom third major (for a major triad), or minor (for a minor triad).
 - Alter the top note if necessary to make the top third minor (for a major triad), or major (for a minor triad).

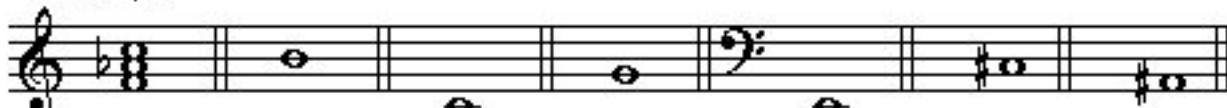
1. WRITE major triads above these roots.

Example



2. WRITE minor triads above these roots.

Example



3. WRITE triads on the bottom staff as indicated.

When Johnny comes marching home again, Hurrah, Hurrah.

min maj maj maj min

This phrase can be played as a duet.

10.3 Identify all four types of triads

		TYPE OF TRIAD (with distances in half-steps)			
		Major	Minor	Diminished	Augmented
Interval:	Top 3rd	minor (3)	major (4)	minor (3)	major (4)
	Bottom 3rd	major (4)	minor (3)	minor (3)	major (4)
	5th	perfect	perfect	diminished	augmented

- Diminished triads have two minor thirds and a diminished fifth.
 - Augmented triads have two major thirds and an augmented fifth.
 - Diminished and augmented triads are named after their fifth. (Recall that major and minor triads are named after their bottom third.)
 - All four types of triads can be distinguished by their thirds alone. Recall that minor thirds are 3 half-steps and major thirds are 4 half-steps.
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1. MEMORIZE the chart above.

2. IDENTIFY these triads BY COUNTING half-steps on the keyboard below.

Example

Aug — — — — —

— — — — — —

3. IDENTIFY the triads on the bottom staff.

— — — — — —

10.4 Identify triads by sound and write triads given the root

- To identify triad types by their sound, these associations might be helpful:
Major: Birthday party Diminished: Halloween
Minor: Funeral Augmented: Science Fiction Film
 - Recall from worksheet 10.2 to write the noteheads in thirds before altering notes.
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1. IDENTIFY triad types played by your teacher or friend.

2. WRITE triads above these roots.

Example

A musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of six measures separated by double bar lines. Each measure contains a single note: an open circle in the first, third, and fifth measures, and a circle with a vertical line through it in the second, fourth, and sixth measures. Below the staff, the word "maj" is repeated three times under the first three notes, and "maj" is repeated three times under the last three notes.

Example

A musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It consists of six measures separated by double bar lines. Each measure contains a single note: an open circle in the first, third, and fifth measures, and a circle with a vertical line through it in the second, fourth, and sixth measures. Below the staff, the word "min" is repeated three times under the first three notes, and "min" is repeated three times under the last three notes.

Example

A musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It consists of six measures separated by double bar lines. Each measure contains a single note: an open circle in the first, third, and fifth measures, and a circle with a vertical line through it in the second, fourth, and sixth measures. Below the staff, the word "dim" is repeated three times under the first three notes, and "dim" is repeated three times under the last three notes.

Example

A musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It consists of six measures separated by double bar lines. Each measure contains a single note: an open circle in the first, third, and fifth measures, and a circle with a vertical line through it in the second, fourth, and sixth measures. Below the staff, the word "aug" is repeated three times under the first three notes, and "aug" is repeated three times under the last three notes.

10.5 Identify types of triads with key signatures

The image shows two musical staves. The left staff has a treble clef and a key signature of four flats. It contains a diminished triad (B-flat, D-flat, F) with a bracket labeled "diminished". The right staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. It contains an augmented triad (E-flat, G, C) with a bracket labeled "augmented". Both staves have a brace under them labeled "min" and "maj" respectively.

- Recall that the key signature will affect some notes on the staff.

IDENTIFY these triads.

A treble clef staff with a key signature of four flats and a 3/4 time signature. The first measure contains a diminished triad (B-flat, D-flat, F). There are five blank measures below it for identification.

A bass clef staff with a key signature of four flats. It contains three measures of a diminished triad (B-flat, D-flat, F). There are four blank measures below it for identification.

A treble clef staff with a key signature of one flat. It contains four measures of different triads: a diminished triad (B-flat, D-flat, F), a major triad (C, E, G), a minor triad (A-flat, C, E), and another major triad (D, F, A). There are four blank measures below it for identification.

This keyboard is not the same as that on page 23.



10.6 Write triads given the 3rd or 5th

Problem: Complete this triad

Step 1 Step 2a Step 2b

5th 5th 5th 5th
dim dim min min

- The middle note of a triad is called the 3rd. It is a 3rd above the root.
- The top note of a triad is called the 5th. It is a 5th above the root.
- To write a triad given the 3rd or 5th:
 - Write the noteheads in 3rds. At least one notehead will be below the given note.
 - Figure out major and minor thirds starting from the given note, not the root. Do not change the given note.

COMPLETE these triads. The given notes are either 3rds and 5ths.

3rd 3rd 3rd 5th 5th

major major major major major

3rd 3rd 5th 5th 5th

minor minor minor minor minor

3rd 3rd 3rd 5th 5th

diminished diminished diminished diminished diminished

3rd 3rd 5th 5th 5th

augmented augmented augmented augmented augmented

10.7 Review triad types

1. COMPLETE this chart.

	type of triad			
	major	minor	diminished	augmented
interval	top 3rd			minor
	bottom 3rd			
	5th			

2. IDENTIFY these triads.

3. WRITE triads above these roots.

4. WRITE these triads given the 3rd or 5th.

5. IDENTIFY these triads.

