

Monteverdi's Gloria for 8 voices M 2 Naming the Black Notes

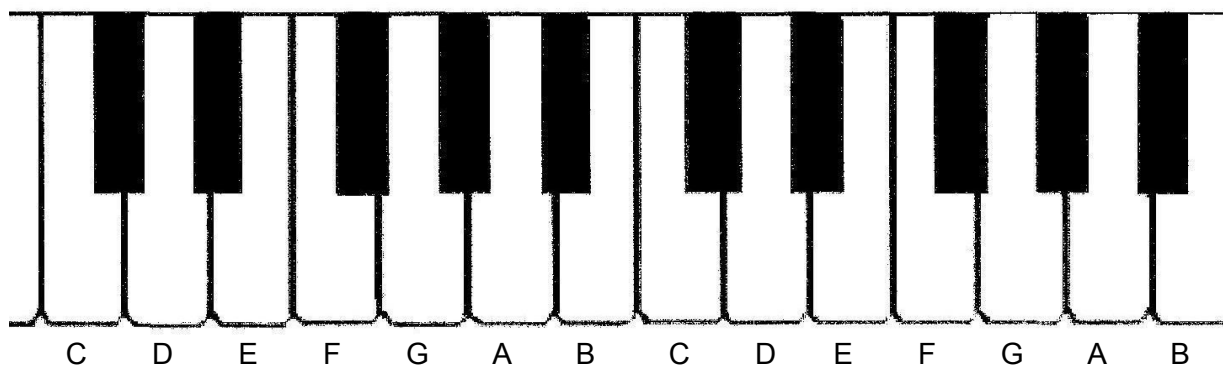
Learn how to name the black notes and what “enharmonic” means You just need this sheet

1. So why do you need to know what the notes are called on a keyboard when you are a singer? Singing came first. We don't know when the first keyboard with the layout we use today was made. But it was certainly a technological solution to providing all the pitches needed within a sensible length, putting the notes most often used at the time into a front row and those less used into a back one. It has the advantage of giving each note a unique position relative to the other white and black notes. Musicians all round the world use the keyboard layout as a reference point for naming notes. It makes all that sharp and flat business really clear.

2. Understand how the names of the black notes work

This diagram has the black notes named as well as the white ones

C#	D#	F#	G#	A#	C#	D#	F#	G#	A#
Db	Eb	Gb	Ab	Bb	Db	Eb	Gb	Ab	Bb



The # sign stands for sharp, and the *b* sign for flat. Most of us find it logical that “flat” relates to lowering and “sharp” for raising.

To help you absorb how the black notes get their names, answer the questions. Answers in box 4.

- a. how many names does each black note have?
- b. Which white notes does a black note borrow its names from?
- c. Which sign is used to show that a note is a semitone higher than an adjacent white note?
- d. Which sign is used to show it's semitone lower than an adjacent white note?

3. Naming the black notes – test yourself Answers are in box 4

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| a. the white note to the left of G# | b. the white note to the right of Eb |
| c. the white note to the left of Eb | d. the white note to the right of A# |
| e. the 2 names for the black note between F and G | f. the other name for Db |

4. Answers

- | | | | |
|-------|------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| 2a. 2 | 2b. the ones each side of it | 2c. # | 2d. <i>b</i> |
| 3a. G | 3b. E | 3c. D | 3d. B |
| | | 3e. F# and Gb | 3f. C# |

5. We usually use just one of a black note's names. The context dictates which. You may have heard the term **enharmonic**. C# and Db are enharmonic notes – same sound, different names.