

## Monteverdi's Gloria for 8 voices M 7

### Learn the structure of a major scale

It's good to have access to the keyboard, and the keyboard diagram on Activity Sheet 2 for reference

1. If you want to understand even just a bit about keys and chords, you need to get to grips with how a major scale works. It isn't a big learn, and as long as you know about tones and semitones it will make sense.

The music keyboard was designed to make it easy to play a C major scale. You've already done that in Activity 1. Just start on a C and play each white note in turn, moving to the right.

2. To find the generic structure of any major scale, you need to work out the space between each of the notes – the tones and semitones.

Work out the space between each note of the C major scale - each space is a tone or a semitone

C            D            E            F            G            A            B            C

Check your answer at the bottom of the page. If you have not got it right, spend time working out where you've made a slip, and don't go onto the next step unless you are sure it makes sense.

3. Every major scale has the same pattern of tones and semitones. That's what makes it a major scale. Here's the recipe for making a major scale starting on another note – try D major:

1. write out the letter names from D to D:

D            E            F            G            A            B            C            D

2. starting from the D on the left (the low D), work your way along (going up in pitch), checking that each gap is the right size for a major scale. If it is right, check the next gap. If you find a gap that isn't the right size, adjust the higher note with a sharp or flat to make it right. Carry on, checking and adjusting as necessary. You end up with:

D            E            F#            G            A            B            C#            D

It is worth spending a bit of time making sure you really understand this. Sometimes, if people try to do it too quickly, they can get in a muddle and start adjusting the note to the left. You can get into a real muddle that way.

4. This set of materials isn't trying to take you through all the major keys. It's useful, though to know for engaging with any music that:

1. any major scale has one note of each letter name (and of course you end on the starting note)
2. no major scale has a mixture of sharps and flats – either one or the other or none (C major)
3. there is one major scale with one sharp, one with one flat, one with two sharps and so on

5. Rule 1 in the box above links with why we use accidentals to adjust notes, and only need 5 lines on the staff. If you mainly only need 7 different letter names, you can fit them onto 5 lines and 4 spaces with room to go a bit higher and lower. You don't need a separate line or space for every white and black note – you write in the accidentals to modify the letter name note.

6. If you are interested, have a go at working out major scales on these notes: G, F, Bb, Eb, A. Follow the steps in box 3, and stick to the rules in box 4. Play them.

7. The major scale pattern is Tone Tone Semitone Tone Tone Semitone

We always work it from bottom to top, left to right