

Monteverdi's Gloria for 8 voices M 3

Learn that the sharps, flats and naturals that turn up as you go through the music are called accidentals, and what the rules are so you read accidentals confidently

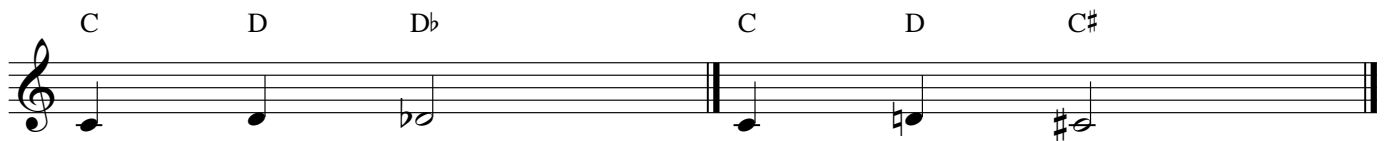
When you did Activity 1 you played up a major scale. Here it is written in music notation in the treble clef:



Of course when you played it you didn't necessarily start at the particular C written here, but when you are trying to understand how music works it doesn't matter which octave you pick.

There are no sharp or flat signs before any of the notes because all of them are "naturals". That's what we call notes that are neither sharpened nor flattened. (See the next bit to find a natural sign). If you were sufficiently pedantic, you could write a natural sign in before every non-sharp and non-flat note, but we assume it is natural unless there **is** another sign.

The next thing you did was play C then D and then the black note between them. Here's that written in music notation. There are 2 versions, each for one of the note's 2 names. You'll notice that although we say F sharp, and we write F#, in music notation, the accidental comes before the note, so you are able to prepare yourself to sing or play it.



The second example has got a natural sign in it - before the D. That's because of the software I'm using. It's been programmed to stick to the convention that you must be very clear whether a note is flat, sharp or natural. There's a rule that if a note was flattened or sharpened in one bar and you want it to be a natural in the next, you must put a natural sign in front of it. You can't just take it for granted. The software I use won't allow me not to have that natural sign in.

Some programmes do allow it. Look at example 1, below, bars 4 and 5 in the Gloria, Alto 2 and compare it with the score we've got at Bridge Singers.

Cheryl's software allows her to write the G in bar 5 without a natural. Mine doesn't.

(This isn't a contest between software, just an explanation so you are alert to accidentals)

Now look at example 2. This uses the other rule of accidentals - that once an accidental appears in a bar it goes on applying until the next bar or until the note has been given a different accidental. In this case, Monteverdi wanted G# the first two times, but then G natural for the semiquaver bit.

Example 3 is a test. It is from Bass 2, bar 124. It's written here in the treble clef. Look at the last note. Is it an F natural or an F#?

It could be worthwhile looking through bits of the Monteverdi score to check out the accidentals.



Glo - ri-a in ex-cel-sis De mi-ni-bus bo - mun - di, pec-ca-ta