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Berklee Music Theory: Book 1

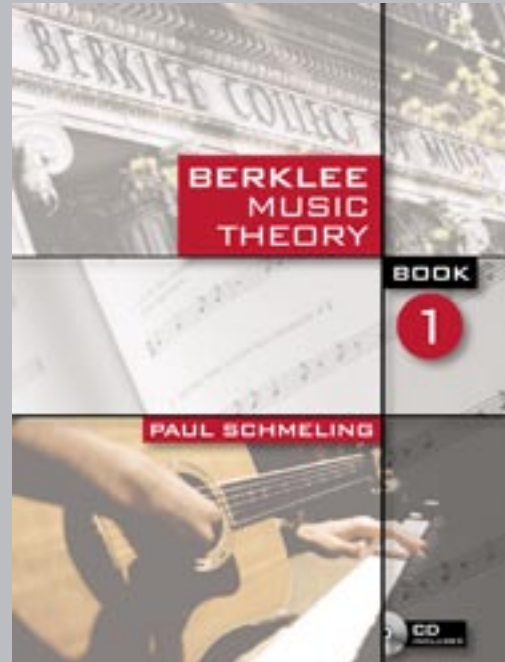
Paul Schmeling

Lesson 14

Accidentals

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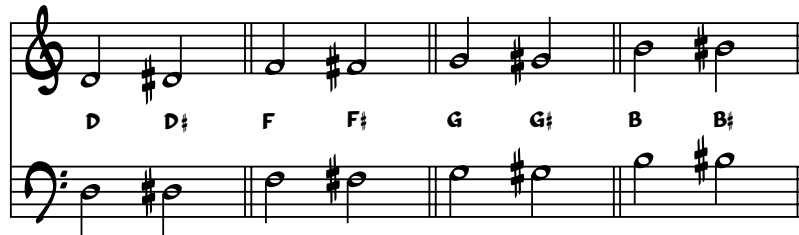
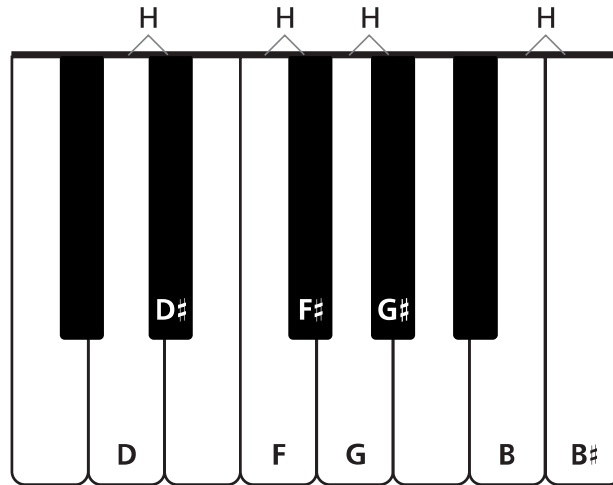


Lesson 14. Accidentals

Accidentals are symbols that alter a note's pitch.

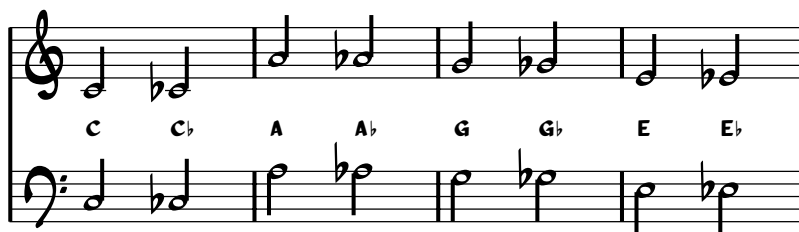
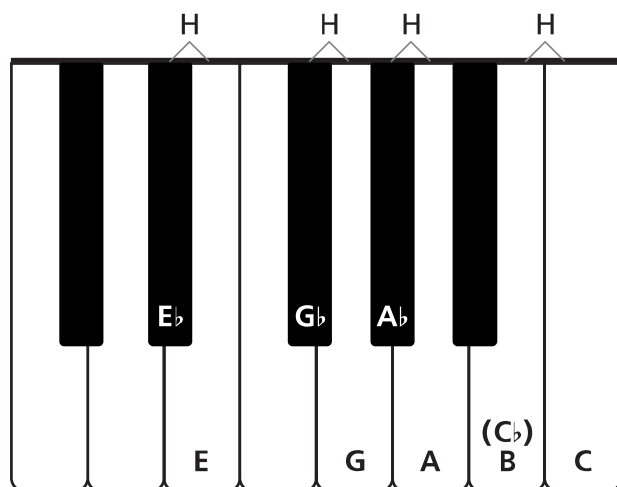
Sharps

- 23** The sharp sign # raises a note's pitch by a half step, the next higher note on the keyboard. This note may be a white or a black key. (H = half step)



Flats

- 24 The flat sign ♭ lowers a note's pitch by a half step, the next lower note on the keyboard. This note could be a white or a black key.



Naturals

The natural sign ♮ indicates that a note is neither sharp nor flat. On a staff, the appearance of a natural sign cancels out a sharp or flat that has been previously applied to a note.



Rules for Accidentals

Once introduced into a measure, accidentals are in effect for the entire measure but are cancelled out by the bar line. In the following example, every E in the first measure is flat because of the introduced flat sign. The E in the second measure is an E natural, with no natural sign needed.

The image shows a two-staff musical example. The top staff is in treble clef and the bottom staff is in bass clef. The music consists of four measures. In the first measure, a flat accidental (E \flat) is placed above the first E note in both staves. In the second measure, the E notes are natural. In the third measure, a flat accidental (E \flat) is placed above the first E note in both staves. In the fourth measure, the E notes are natural. This demonstrates that an accidental introduced in a measure applies to all instances of that note in that measure, and is cancelled out by the bar line.

Practice

1. Use the appropriate note and accidental to raise each note by a half step. The first one is done for you.

The image shows a two-staff musical exercise. The top staff is in treble clef and the bottom staff is in bass clef. The music consists of four measures. In the first measure, the notes are G4 (treble) and G3 (bass), with a sharp accidental (#) above the G4 note. In the second measure, the notes are A4 (treble) and A3 (bass), with a sharp accidental (#) above the A4 note. In the third measure, the notes are B4 (treble) and B3 (bass), with a flat accidental (b) above the B4 note. In the fourth measure, the notes are C5 (treble) and C4 (bass), with a flat accidental (b) above the C5 note.

2. Use the appropriate note and accidental to lower each note by a half step.

The image shows a two-staff musical exercise. The top staff is in treble clef and the bottom staff is in bass clef. The music consists of four measures. In the first measure, the notes are G4 (treble) and G3 (bass). In the second measure, the notes are A4 (treble) and A3 (bass), with a sharp accidental (#) above the A4 note. In the third measure, the notes are B4 (treble) and B3 (bass). In the fourth measure, the notes are C5 (treble) and C4 (bass), with a sharp accidental (#) above the C5 note.

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