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Chapter 1  
Melodic Considerations  
Interval Patterns

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## Interval Patterns

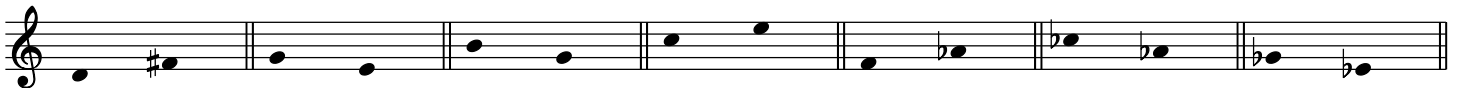
A thorough study of melody writing produces certain observations about how composers connect notes together to form melodies. The scales listed above contain an almost unlimited number of potential interval patterns, any of which can be used to create a musical idea at any given moment. Nevertheless, the patterns that most composers use most of the time can be described in general terms in order to help you get started.

First, some definitions:

**Step:** Melodic movement up or down by a major or minor second (i.e. a whole step or a half step).



**Skip:** Melodic movement up or down by a major or minor third (i.e. “skipping” over a scale note).



**Leap:** Melodic movement up or down by a perfect fourth or more.



(Note: Some theory texts define a leap as any interval larger than a major second.)

Most scales are made up of combinations of whole and half steps (see above). Notice, however, that the pentatonic scale contains two minor-third skips. Notice also that the harmonic minor scale contains an augmented second interval between the sixth and seventh step.

Chord arpeggios are made up of a combination of skips, with occasional steps or leaps depending on the chord type and whether an arpeggio happens for more than one octave.





