

Key Signatures — The Sharp Keys

When writing the scales on page 44, you added sharp signs before the appropriate notes.

In the **G** scale, you added a sharp sign before each F; in the **D** scale, you added sharp signs before each F and C.

To make writing and reading music easier, you can place all of the sharps used in a scale or piece immediately after the clef sign. This is called the **KEY SIGNATURE**. It indicates the notes that will be sharped each time they appear for the *entire* piece.



In this case, any F will always be played sharp (unless there is a natural sign before the F).

Sharps written in the key signature always appear in a specific order. Here are the sharp key signatures of the scales you know:

Key of G — 1 sharp:



Key of D — 2 sharps:



The order of sharps in the key signature for up to two sharps is **F C**.

Important!

To figure out the name of a major key from the key signature, go up a half step from the last sharp.
As an example: a key signature of F# would be the key of G major;
a key signature of F# and C# would be the key of D major.

Exercises

- 1** Write the order of the first two sharps in a key signature. _____

- 2** If C# is the last sharp in the key signature, the major key name would be _____.

- 3** Name the following major key signatures.



a. _____ b. _____ c. _____ d. _____

- 4** Write the following major key signatures.



a. D major b. G major c. G major d. D major

Key Signatures — The Flat Keys

When writing the scales on page 45, you added flat signs before the appropriate notes.

In the F scale, you added a flat sign before each B; in the B \flat scale, you added flat signs before each B and E.

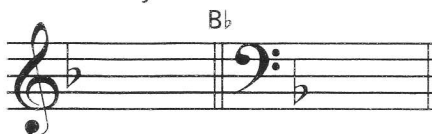
Just like sharp signs, you can place all of the flats used in a scale or piece in the KEY SIGNATURE. It indicates the notes that will be flattened each time they appear for the *entire* piece.



In this case, any B will always be played flat (unless there is a natural sign before the B).

Flats written in the key signature always appear in a specific order. Here are the flat key signatures of the scales you know:

Key of F — 1 flat:



Key of B \flat — 2 flats:



The order of flats in the key signature for up to two flats is **B E**.

Important!

To figure out the name of a major key from the key signature, remember that one flat is the key of F; for two or more flats, the next-to-last flat is the name of the key. As an example, a key signature of B \flat and E \flat would be the key of B \flat major.

Exercises

1 Write the order of the first two flats in a key signature. _____

2 If B \flat is the next-to-last flat in the key signature, the major key name would be _____.

3 Name the following major key signatures.



a. _____ b. _____ c. _____ d. _____

4 Write the following major key signatures.



a. F major b. B \flat major c. B \flat major d. F major