

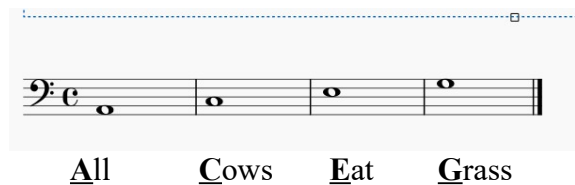
CELLO DISCOVERY

Key Signatures Part I : Sharps

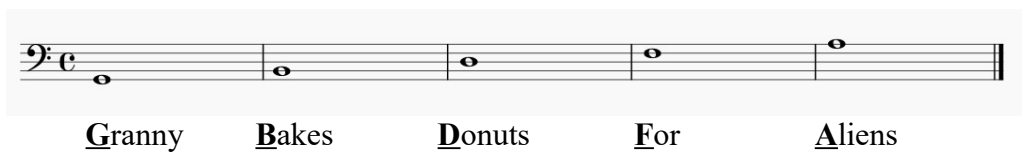


So by now we might be feeling more confident about being able to spot and name any note on the G, D and A strings. We also have learned a magic trick for working out ANY note using our lines and spaces rule. (See below for a quick reminder).

For the **SPACE** notes (the notes that live in a space) we use **All Cows Eat Grass**:

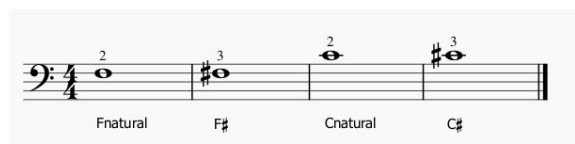


For the **LINE** notes (the notes that have a line going through them) we use **Granny Bakes Donuts For Aliens**:



Now, you may have seen some funny looking symbols in your music that look like this #. These are called SHARP signs and they indicate that the note concerned should be a half step (semi-tone) higher than it normally is. For example an 'F' (2nd finger on the D string) would become an F sharp (3rd finger on the D string.)

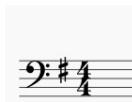
Let's take a look at how adding a sharp symbol before the note will change how we play it:



We can see that by adding a # sharp symbol before the note we make the note move one semi tone higher. In other words an F becomes and F sharp (on the piano this would be moving from the white note to the black note immediately to the right, a half step higher). Likewise on the A string, a C natural becomes a C sharp. In both cases this means changing from a second finger to a third finger.

Now, to make life more simple and to keep our music stave looking nice and tidy, there is a way we can 'store' all our sharp symbols at the beginning of a piece of music. This allows us to see clearly any sharp signs that we may need in the piece, and avoids the sharp signs having to be written next to every note. Instead the sharps are 'stored' at the beginning of the piece, next to the bass clef and then this automatically converts any of those given notes in the piece into sharps.

To work out what the sharps are, we simply use our 'lines and spaces rule' shown above to work out what line or space the sharp sign is on. For example:



F sharp



F and C sharps



F, C and G sharps



F, C, G and D sharps

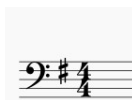
Now for another 'secret code' to help us work out the order the sharps come in:

Fnky Cats Go Dancing

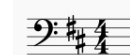
The rhyme above shows us that for example if there is just one sharp, it will be F (Funky); If there are two sharps they will be F and C (Funky Cats), three sharps would be F, C and G (Funky Cats Go etc)

And from here we can work out what KEY the piece is in (key meaning which sharps and therefore which fingers we would need to use).

To work out the KEY we simply go to the last sharp, then go up one step in our musical alphabet.



For example, here is a key signature with ONE sharp, we know it is an F sharp (by using our Funky Cats Go Dancing rhyme). So now, all we need to do is go up ONE step in our musical alphabet from F. So, this gives us G Major. So a key signature with ONE sharp = G major



Here we have TWO sharps (F and C). We go up one step from our last sharp (C) and we get, D Major. So a key signature with TWO sharps = D Major



And similarly here we have THREE sharps (F, C and G). Last sharp is G, so we go up one step in our musical alphabet, and we get A Major. So a key signature with THREE sharps = A Major.



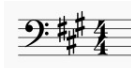
And finally, here we have FOUR sharps. (F, C, G and D). Last sharp is D, so we go up one step in our musical alphabet, and we get E Major. So a key signature with FOUR sharps = E Major

CHALLENGE

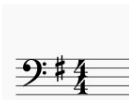
Here are some key signatures below. Can you work out what the sharps are, and then what KEY the piece is in?

Remember the rule: Funky Cats Go Dancing (the order of the sharps)

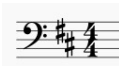
Then go to the last sharp and go up ONE step in your alphabet to find the key



1) Sharps shown: _____ Last sharp = _____ Key = _____ Major



2) Sharps shown: _____ Last sharp = _____ Key = _____ Major

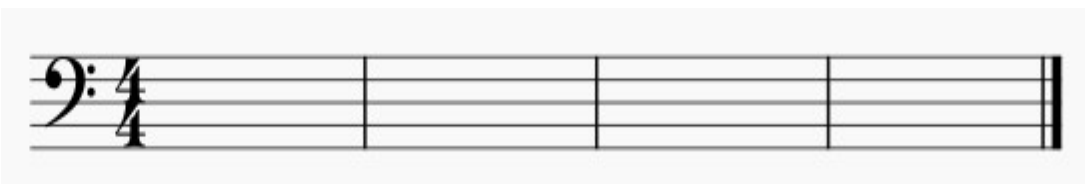


3) Sharps shown: _____ Last sharp = _____ Key = _____ Major



4) Sharps shown: _____ Last sharp = _____ Key = _____ Major

Can you write in the sharps needed to create the following key signatures?



i) G Major

ii) E major

iii) A Major

iv) D Major

Answers: 1) F, C, G sharps.

Last sharp = G sharp.

Key = A Major

2) F sharp.

Last sharp = F sharp

Key = G Major

3) F, C sharp

Last sharp = C sharp

Key = D Major

4) F, C, G, D sharps

Last sharp = D sharp

Key = E Major