



# Notes on Music

Produced by Palomar College  
26, 30-minute programs  
Closed Captioned

## Textbook

**Foundations of Music - A Computer-Assisted Introduction (with CD-ROM)**, 5th Edition  
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This course provides training in the fundamentals of music, primarily for the non-music major. The course of study includes a thorough acquaintance with scales, intervals, keys and triads, as well as development in ability to sight read simple melodic material and take simple melodic dictation.

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

### **1) Introduction: Music Symbols**

The benefits from this course of study and course content is addressed in the introduction, including suggestions as to how to work with the lessons. Some of the important musical symbols and how to write them in neat, hand manuscript is demonstrated.

### **2) Notation of Pitch**

The grand staff and the system of clefs used to notate sound are introduced. Accidentals and their function are demonstrated as well as the ability to recognize adjacent notes on the piano keyboard. Recognition of note names on the grand staff is emphasized.

### **3) Semi-tones and Whole Tones**

This lesson is about learning about up and down in music, that is, how the sharp, flat, and natural symbols are used to effect whether pitch ascends or descends. Notes on the staff are related to the keyboard, and then, writing chromatic semi-tones, diatonic semi-tones, and whole tones is demonstrated.

### **4) Major Scales**

Writing major scales is the subject of this lesson. One learns how to write a series of eight notes in a particular pattern of half and whole steps that constitute the major scale. The use of good manuscript habits is stressed.

### **5) Key Signatures**

Each of the notes of the scale has a name, and each tone has a natural tendency to move in regard to consonance and dissonance, which is discussed in this lesson. Scales are placed in an order called the circle of fifths. This lesson shows how to accurately write key signatures on the staff, using the circle of fifths to find the signature quickly.

### **6) Circle of Fifths - Major**

The circle of fifths is presented in graphic form. Some of the scales are enharmonic, which means they sound the same, but are written differently. A few tips are given on how to find the key by looking at the signature. We begin to look at some examples of actual music and see how the key signature looks in real music.

### **7) Minor Scales**

In this lesson we write the three forms of each minor scale, always paying attention to good hand writing manuscript.

### **8) Circle of Fifths - Minor**

Just like the major scales, the minor scales are organized into a circle of fifths. The ability to recognize the key signature for a minor key and to write signatures for minor scales is the object of this lesson.

### **9) Intervals**

A musical interval is the relationship between two tones. In lessons 2 and 3, we learned about CSTs, DSTs and WTs, which will now be called major and minor seconds, and we will add to them the entire spectrum of interval relationships, including all twelve tones within the octave in this lesson. In this lesson one learns to identify and write simple major, minor, diminished, augmented and perfect intervals.

### **10) Inversion of Intervals, part 1**

Intervals may be turned over, or inverted, and we will find that after it is inverted, it retains its relationship to the original. In this lesson, after a review of how to write intervals we will learn a quicker way of thinking about intervals through their inversions, without having to count semi-tones.

### **11) Inversion of Intervals, part 2**

This lesson is a continuation of interval writing, explaining ways to think of the intervals more quickly. We begin to explore how to write more complex intervals that are not on the “simple” semi-tone chart.

### **12) Relative and Parallel Keys**

Keys in music are related to one another. In this lesson the difference between relative keys and parallel keys will be explained. You will gain speed in thinking and writing thirds and Perfect fifths. The ability to physically identify the Perfect fifth on the keyboard will be demonstrated.

### **13) Intervals, with Personality**

Like the members of the major scale that have their own tendencies of motion, intervals also have their own “personality”. Intervals may be either consonant or dissonant, and thus are either static or wanting to move, or resolve. The understanding of this “personality” of each interval is an important step in learning why music moves through time. More practice on the inversion of intervals is included.

### **14) Rhythmic Values**

Rhythm is the horizontal aspect of music that generates motion in music. In this lesson we learn the simple division into time units called whole, half, quarter, eighth and sixteenth notes. After reviewing how to clearly write the note values in good, clear manuscript, simple rhythmic examples are demonstrated and counted out with the class. This lesson concludes by the introduction of dotted and tied notes.

### **15) Rhythm Dots and Ties**

Continuing the study of dots and ties, we learn how to figure the subdivided value of dotted notes by finding a rhythmic common denominator. We then put rhythmic values into units called measures. Rhythmic examples are practiced by vocalizing the examples together, with particular attention given to the exact duration of notes.

### **16) Conducting Music**

Dr Steven Gray joins us at the piano for this lesson. We learn to conduct as he plays music in 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, and 6/8 meter. He plays brief examples of music by Bach, Brahms, Beethoven, and Chopin. Hand and arm movements are demonstrated. The student can imitate instructor Stanford since he is conducting left handed—thus, hand movements of the students are the same on the other side of the camera.

### **17) Simple and Compound Meter**

The most commonly used simple and compound meters are displayed on a chart, and much time is spent speaking simple exercises together. It is shown that a simple rhythmic example can be notated in more than one way. The upbeat in music is explained.

### **18) Rhythmic Syncopation**

Syncopation is defined and illustrated as a very common musical device, then, simple syncopated musical examples are vocalized by the class. The metronome is introduced as a device to aid in practicing rhythms. The session ends with Stanford singing an old and very syncopated spiritual “Down by the Riverside”.

### **19) Writing Triads**

When three tones are played together they constitute a chord, which is called a triad. There are four kinds of triads and each kind is said to have a distinct quality. This lesson begins writing and understanding of how to write chords of different quality.

### **20) Inversion of Triads**

Like an interval, a triad may be turned upside down, or inverted. In the process it retains the same quality. In this lesson one will learn how to move notes of a triad to put it in what musicians call an inversion.

### **21) Triads in a Key - Major**

After learning to write triads in four different qualities, we will begin to construct triads in a major key. The first step is to learn how to find the scale degree on which the triad is built, and then to build the triad in the context of the scale. Key signatures are not used yet, so all accidentals are written beside the notes.

### **22) Triads in a Key - Minor**

After learning how to write Major triads in a particular key, we now learn how to write triads in minor keys. Because there are three forms of minor scales, it gets a little more complicated, but for simplicity we will write triads using the harmonic scale form only. By learning to interpret the symbols we will now have facility in constructing triads in any of the major or minor keys.

### **23) Four Note Triads**

Writing a triad on the grand staff for four voices, soprano, alto, tenor and bass, requires four tones instead of three, thus one note of the triad will be doubled, giving us a "four note triad". We now have the information to begin part writing. We spend this lesson finding four pieces of information about each chord: the root, the quality, the inversion, and the note doubled.

### **24) What Key Is This In?**

We continue to analyze chords using a key signature to understand how one chord moves to another. The ability to look at a chord on the grand staff and be able to describe it in terms of quality and inversion is the object of this lesson.

### **25) Looking at Melody**

We take a few minutes of this lesson to review finding key signatures. Andy, one of our students shows his method of organizing the circle of fifths for finding key signatures quickly. Then we begin looking at melodies, determining the key of different melodies. Learning how to develop a case for key recognition through clues in the music is explored. Rhythmic motives are found that bind the melody into a coherent expression.

### **26) Summary**

To summarize, we look at and hear examples of music in which clues that establish the tonal center are apparent. Pianist Daniel Greenbush assists Dr. Stanford in the performance and discussion of aspects of the music fundamentals. The students see the musical score as it is performed. Two beautiful art songs by Johannes Brahms entitled "Sonntag" and "Vergebliche Stndchen" are sung by baritone Stanford.

As you have discovered the study of music fundamentals consists of many details of the organization of notated music. A study and mastery of the details makes the art more keenly heard and appreciated. Best wishes as you continue to unfold the inner workings of music. The journey is a pleasant one.