

Important Concepts for Unit 1: Pitch

Pitch – a sound vibrating at a steady frequency; the faster the vibration, the higher the pitch.

Interval – the distance between two pitches.

Octave – the interval between two pitches when one is vibrating twice as fast as the other. Pitches that are an octave apart share the same name.

Half Step – the smallest interval on the keyboard, equal in size to one twelfth of an octave.

Whole Step – an interval equal in size to two half steps.

Natural – any pitch played by one of the white keys on the piano, named after one of the first seven letters of the alphabet: A, B, C, D, E, F, or G.

Accidental – a pitch that has been altered by a sharp or flat.

Sharp – a musical designation, indicated by the symbol “#”, which raises a pitch one half step. For example, the pitch “C sharp” (C#) is one half step higher than the pitch “C”.

Flat – a musical designation, indicated by the symbol “b”, which lowers a pitch one half step. For example, the pitch “C flat” (Cb) is one half step lower than the pitch “C”.

Enharmonic Tones – two different names for the same pitch.

Chromatic Scale – a scale that goes up or down exclusively by half steps.