

CHAPTER 4

MINOR SCALES

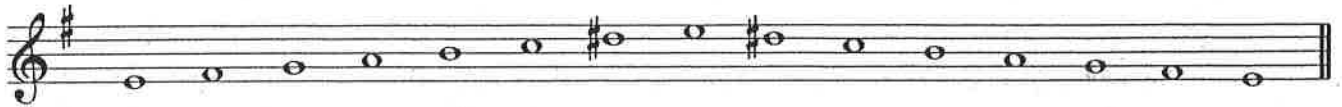
Like the major scale, a minor scale can start on any note and has eight notes in alphabetical order. These notes are numbered just like the major scale starting at the bottom.

The first note is the tonic, the fourth note is the subdominant and the fifth note is the dominant.

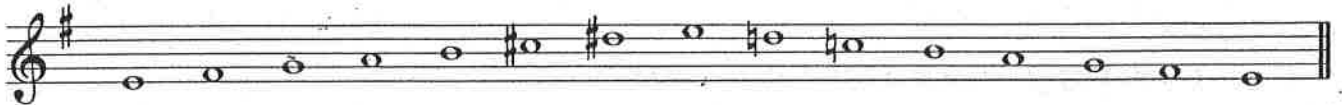
There are two kinds of minor scales – HARMONIC MINOR and MELODIC MINOR.

Play these two scales listening carefully to the differences between them.

The scale of E minor HARMONIC:



The scale of E minor MELODIC:



Notice that each of these scales has the same key signature as G major.

G major is called the RELATIVE MAJOR of E minor.

E minor is called the RELATIVE MINOR of G major.

Every minor scale shares the key signature of one of the major scales and is then 'related' to it.

In order to know the key signature of a minor scale you must know how to find its relative major.

TO FIND THE RELATIVE MAJOR OF ANY MINOR KEY:

1. Go up from I to III, that is to the third letter name of the minor scale.
2. Use the kind of III that is three semitones up from I.

Example: To find the relative major of C minor:—

1. From I up to III is C to E. So E is the letter name.
2. The kind of E that is three semitones up from C is E \flat .

Therefore the relative major is E \flat major. C minor and E \flat major will use the same key signature of three flats.

TO FIND THE RELATIVE MINOR OF ANY MAJOR KEY:

1. Go down from I to VI, that is to the sixth letter name of the major scale.
2. Use the kind of VI that is three semitones down from I.

Example: To find the relative minor of F major:—

1. From I down to VI is F to D. So D is the letter name.
2. The kind of D that is three semitones down from F is D \flat .

Therefore the relative minor of F major is D minor. D minor and F major will use the same key signature of one flat.

Perhaps this will help you remember whether to go up or down to find the relative major or minor. There are two friends. One is a Major in the army and the other is a coal miner. If the major wants to see the miner he has to go DOWN into the mine, and if the miner wants to see the major he has to go UP out of the mine.

EXERCISES

1. Name the relative minor of these major keys.

D major _____

B \flat major _____

E \flat major _____

C major _____

G major _____

F major _____

E major _____

A \flat major _____

2. Name the relative major of these minor keys.

E minor _____

C \sharp minor _____

G minor _____

F minor _____

F \sharp minor _____

B minor _____

C minor _____

D minor _____

3. Write the key signature of each of these minor keys.

G- C \sharp - F- B- E- D- C- F \sharp -

4. Name the major and minor keys that have these key signatures.

major: _____

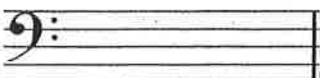
minor: _____

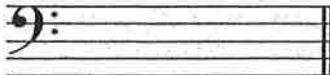
When a major scale and a minor scale share the SAME TONIC they are called the TONIC MAJOR and TONIC MINOR. C major is the tonic major of C minor. G minor is the tonic minor of G major and so on.

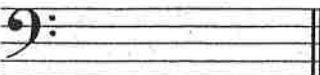
EXERCISES

1. Name the tonic minor of each of these keys and write the minor key signature.

E major — minor 

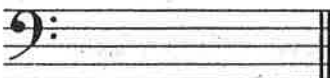
D major — minor 

F major — minor 

G major — minor 

C major — minor 

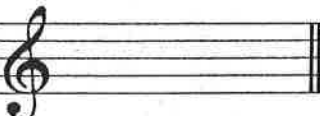
B \flat major — minor 

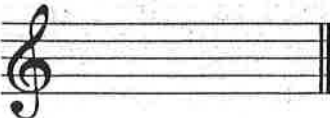
F \sharp major — minor 

A major — minor 

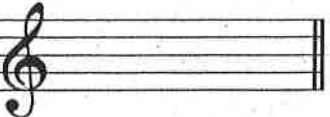
2. Name the tonic major of each of these keys and write the major key signature.

G minor — major 

D minor — major 

C \sharp minor — major 

F minor — major 

A minor — major 

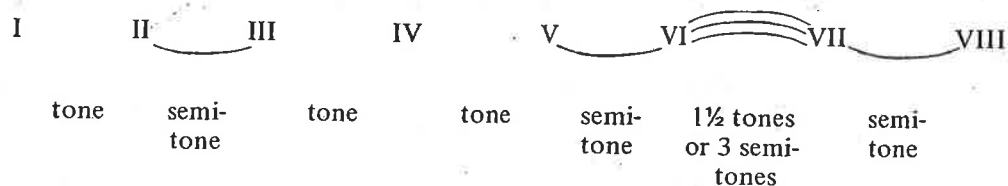
C minor — major 

E minor — major 

B minor — major 

HARMONIC MINOR SCALES.

The HARMONIC MINOR scale has this pattern:

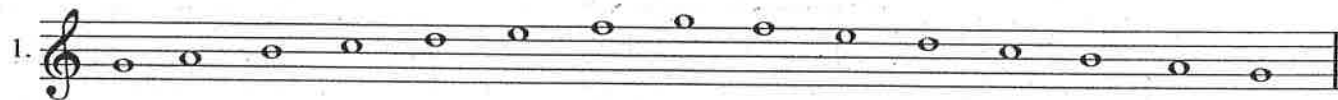


In other words there are semitones between II and III, V and VI, and VII and VIII, with a tone and a half between VI and VII, and whole tones between I and II, III and IV, and IV and V.

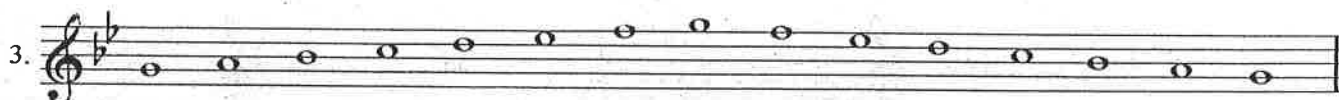
To write a harmonic minor scale using a key signature —

1. Write a series of notes from tonic up to tonic and down again.
2. Find the relative major and its key signature.
3. Add this key signature.
4. RAISE THE SEVENTH NOTE one semitone by adding the proper accidental.

Example: the scale of G minor harmonic, following the above four steps.



2. The relative major of G minor is Bb major, so G minor has 2 flats.

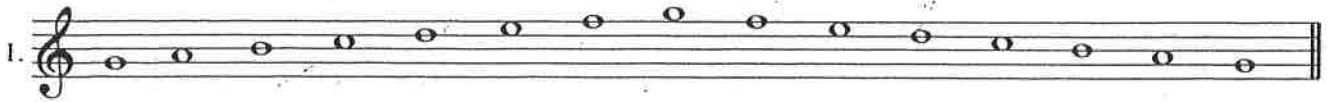


Notice that the notes of the harmonic minor scale are exactly the same ascending and descending.

To write a harmonic minor scale using accidentals instead of a key signature: —

1. Write the series of notes from tonic up to tonic and down again.
2. Find the relative major and its key signature.
3. Using the sharps or flats in this key signature change the notes that would have been affected by this key signature.
4. RAISE THE SEVENTH NOTE one semitone by adding the proper accidental.

Example: the scale of G minor harmonic, following the above four steps.



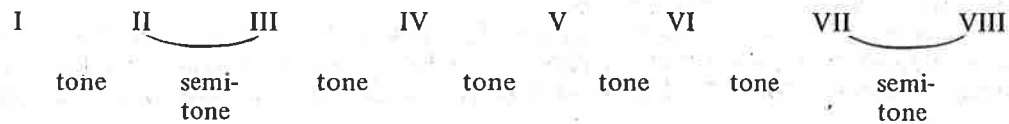
2. The relative major of G minor is B \flat major so G minor has two flats.



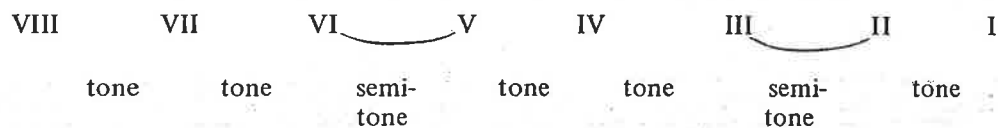
MELODIC MINOR SCALES

The MELODIC MINOR scale has this pattern:

Ascending:



Descending:



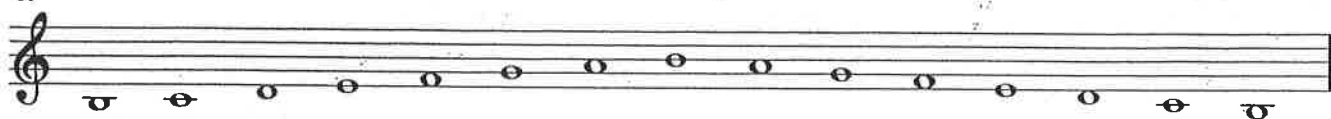
In the ascending scale the semitones are between II and III, and VII and VIII; in the descending scale the semitones are between VI and V, and III and II, so the scale does not sound the same coming down as it did going up.

To write a melodic minor scale using a key signature: —

1. Write a series of eight notes from tonic up to tonic and down again.
2. Find the relative major and its key signature.
3. Add this key signature.
4. Ascending: RAISE THE SIXTH AND SEVENTH NOTES one semitone each.
Descending: RETURN THEM TO THEIR ORIGINAL PITCH according to the key signature by lowering them one semitone each.

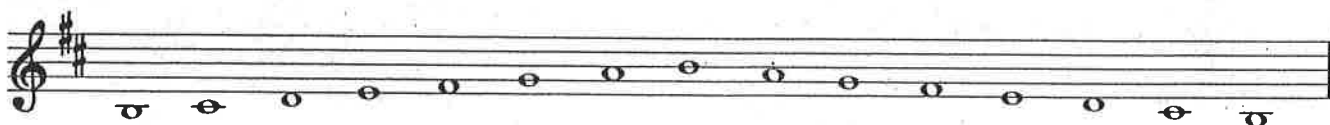
Example: the scale of B minor melodic, following the above four steps.

1.



2. The relative of B minor is D major so B minor has two sharps.

3.



4.

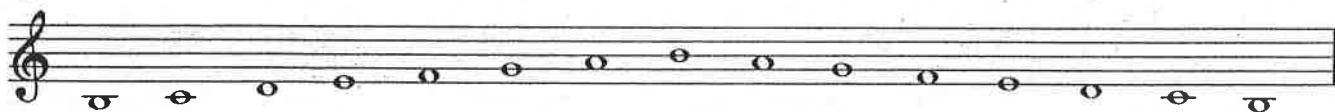


To write a melodic minor scale using accidentals instead of a key signature.

1. Write a series of notes from tonic up to tonic and down again.
2. Find the relative major and its key signature.
3. Using the sharps or flats in this signature change the notes that would have been affected by this key signature.
4. Ascending: RAISE THE SIXTH AND SEVENTH NOTES one semitone each by adding the proper accidentals.
Descending: RETURN THEM TO THEIR ORIGINAL PITCH by adding the proper accidentals to lower them one semitone each.

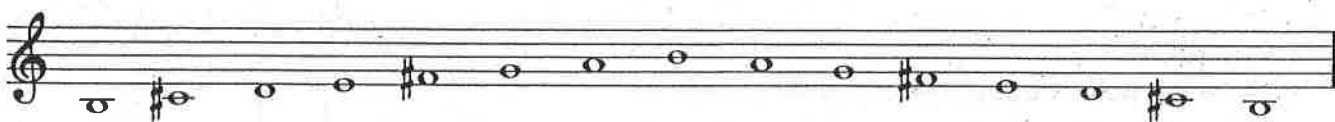
Example: the scale of B minor melodic, following the above four steps.

1.

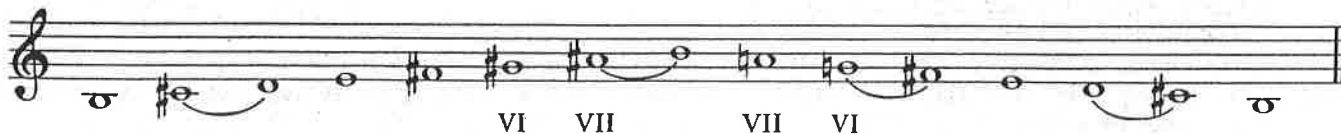


2. The relative major of B minor is D major so B minor has two sharps.

3.



4.



THE SCALE OF A MINOR.

The relative major of A minor is C major because

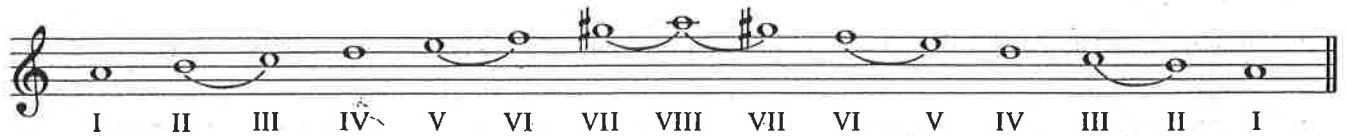
1. I to III is A to C.
2. three semitones up from A is C \sharp .

So the key signature of A minor is the same as that of C major: no sharps or flats.

The tonic of A minor is A. The dominant of A minor is E. The subdominant of A minor is D.

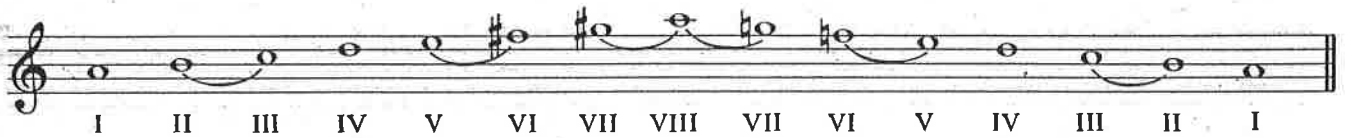
To write the scale of A minor harmonic –

1. Write the notes from A up to A and down again.
2. Raise the seventh note G one semitone by adding a sharp both ascending and descending.



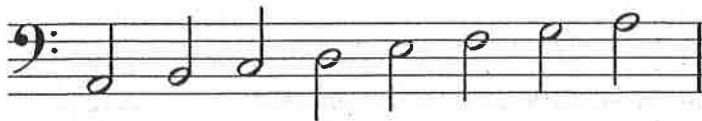
To write the scale of A minor melodic –

1. Write the notes from A up to A and down again.
2. Ascending: Raise the sixth note F one semitone to F \sharp and the seventh note G one semitone to G \sharp .
Descending: Lower the same two notes by adding naturals.



EXERCISES

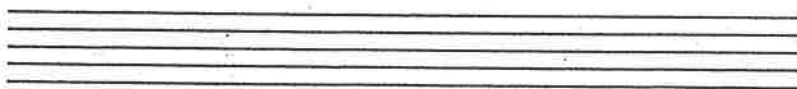
1. Add the correct accidental to make the scale of A minor harmonic.



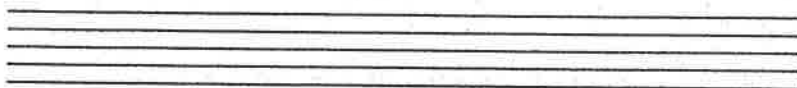
2. Add the correct accidentals to make the scale of A minor melodic.



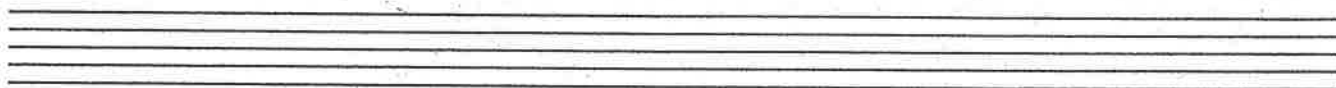
3. Write the scale of A minor harmonic ascending in the treble clef in half notes. Mark each semitone with a slur and label the tonic, subdominant and dominant notes.



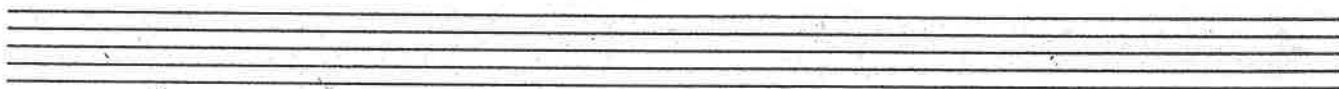
4. Write the scale of A minor harmonic descending in the bass clef in whole notes. Mark each semitone with a slur and label the tonic, subdominant and dominant notes.



5. Write the scale of A minor harmonic ascending and descending in the treble clef in eighth notes.



6. Write the scale of A minor melodic ascending and descending in the bass clef in quarter notes. Mark each semitone with a slur and label each tonic, subdominant and dominant note.



7. (a) What is the relative major of A minor? _____
- (b) What is the tonic note of A minor? _____
- (c) What is the key signature of A minor? _____
- (d) Which degree of the scale do you raise in A minor Harmonic? _____
- (e) What is the dominant note of A minor? _____
- (f) Which two notes do you raise in the ascending scale of A minor melodic? _____
- (g) What do the two notes in (f) become? _____
- (h) What accidentals do you use in the descending scale of A minor melodic? _____
- (i) What is the subdominant note of A minor? _____