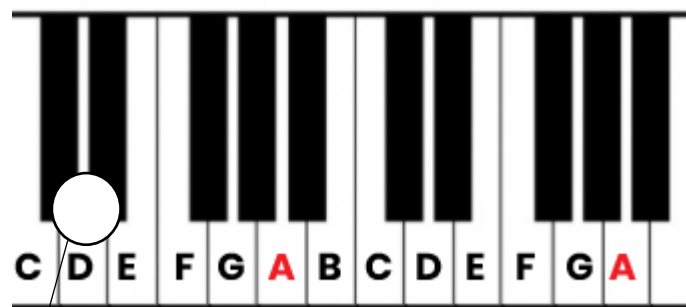


MUSIC THEORY COURSE – Module 1

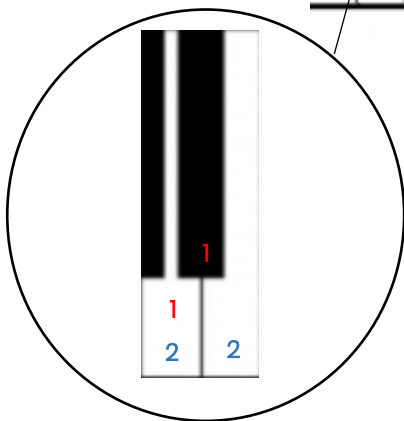
Introduction to Music Theory

Music, besides of being a form of art we all enjoy, is a system that organizes the sound in absolute frequencies measured in Hertz (Hz). Nowadays, we name those musical sounds using the letters of the alphabet - A, B, C, D, E, F, G (in Germany, B is actually H) – or using the solmization for latin countries (do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, si). These letters are the white keys of the piano.

According to the western music system, used in Europe and America, the interval of an octave (for instance, from A to A) is divided in twelve equal parts (the semitones or half steps).



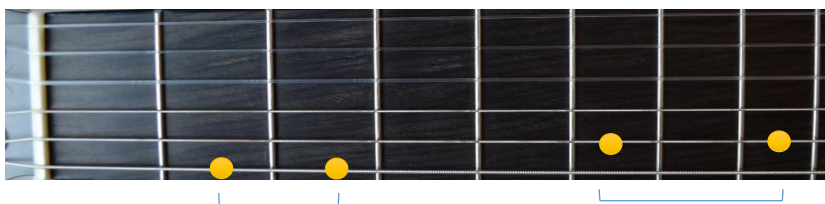
From A until the next A, you can count 12 white and blacks keys.



The interval between two consecutive keys (1) is called semitone or half step.

The interval between two keys with another key in between (2) is called whole tone or whole step.

On the guitar, the distance between two frets is also a semitone or half step.



Two notes a half step distance from each other

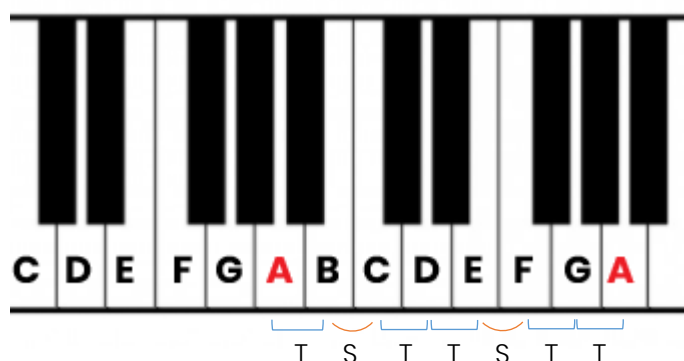
Two notes a whole step or tone apart (mind the empty fret in between)

The Structure of the Tonal System

The interval or distance between the letters of a scale is not always the same. If you look again at the keyboard you will notice that sometimes you miss a black key.



This is where things get complicated. The tonal system is not a regular organization of the notes. In order to memorize it well, we need to understand that whenever we have two white keys together, those two notes are only a half step or semitone apart.



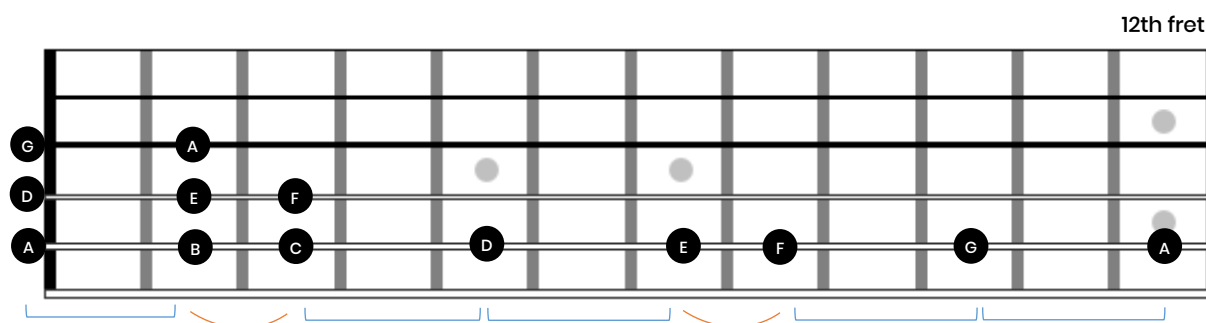
So the structure of the intervals between the notes of the tonal system consists in:

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	A
La	Si	Do	Re	Mi	Fa	Sol	La

Tone⁽¹⁾
Semitone⁽²⁾
Tone
Tone
Semitone
Tone
Tone

1. As mentioned earlier, a whole step between notes has a key/fret in between.
2. There are no keys or frets in between both notes.

How it works on the guitar



Although we haven't got any coloured frets to help us find the location of the letters, such as the white and black keys of the piano, the guitar has the advantage of playing exactly the same scale horizontally and vertically. As soon as you learn the semitones of the tonal system, you will be able to find all the notes necessary to play any given scale throughout the fretboard.