

# Lesson 1

Created for Brooklyn United Sr. Alumni Drum & Bugle Corps.

Written by Rich Wardlow

In this lesson you will learn and work on three major scales, rhythmic timing, note duration value and key signatures. As you work through each of these lessons you need to pay particular attention to reading. As many of you are use to playing with the valving notations on the music there are other symbols in music that tell us other information. Note values, key signatures, which note to play and so forth. Most “hard core” old time drum corps people look at only what valve is to be played and follow the person next to them. This is simply mimicry and is, in no way, a form of musicianship. Your eyes have to start to pay attention to, and associate the note with the valving. In other words if you play a C in the scale, you need to know the C is always played in the open position. No matter when, where, or what octave you play that C note, it is always played with open valves. Once you associate the note with the sound and the valves you are half way to becoming a true musician. These lessons are designed to take you step by step learning to read music and working your eyes so you can start to see the music and not simply what valve to use. Again, I must reiterate the need to exercise your eyes so you are not only looking at the valving for a particular note but at the note and any notations associated with that note. I.e. staccato, marcato, legato, soft, loud, vibrato, dead tone and so forth. Every single note played in a piece of music should have its own identity.

## C Scale

As you approach this scale you will notice the second note is a D and is played with the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> valves. This is only played with this valving in the lower register of the instrument. When you go up an octave you will play the second note in the scale, which is the D, with the first valve. The reason we are able to play the D with the first valve in this octave and only with the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> valve in the lower octave have to do with the physics and harmonics of the instrument itself. This we will discuss further in future lessons. Try to follow along reading the notes and associating the notes with the valves, with the exception of the lower D note. If you are playing on a G bugle two valve then you will not be able to play the lower D and when playing this particular scale you will have to omit the 2<sup>nd</sup> note of the scale which is the D note. If you have a three valve instrument then you should be able to hit every note in the scale in that register.

## F Scale

The F scale is a very unique scale because it does not follow the regular pattern for the key signature. We will discuss key signatures in more detail in the key signature section of this lesson and future lessons. For now it is simply important for you to pay particular attention to the fourth note in the scale. The fourth note is a B but if you look to the far left of the staff you will see that the B line on the staff has a flat (b) accidental. This denotes that ALL B NOTES are flatted. This saves the writer from having to write accidentals every time the writer writes the B note. It also helps the reader or musician from having to read a flat accidental every time he reads a B note. So for the F scale all notes with the exception of the B are natural and the B is a Bb. Compare the notes from

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the C scale and the F scale. Be aware that all of the notes are valved exactly the same with the exception of the B. The B is played 2<sup>nd</sup> valve in the C scale because it is a B natural. The B in the F scale is played with the 1<sup>st</sup> valve because the B is flatted (b). All other notes in both scales are played with the same exact valving. Again, let me reiterate the need to train your eyes and mind to associate the notes with the valving and not simply look at the valving.

## G Scale

The G scale has, like the F scale, only one accidental. That accidental is F # (F Sharp). Which, as in the F scale, simply means, unless otherwise written, all F notes are played as F#'s. Again, compare the notes from the C scale to the G scale and you will see all the notes are valved exactly the same with the exception of the F note. In the C scale the F is a natural and is played with the 1<sup>st</sup> valve. In the G scale the F is a sharp and is played with the 2<sup>nd</sup> valve. Again, let me reiterate the need to train your eyes and mind to associate the notes with the valving and not simply look at the valving.

## Overview of the C, G & F scales

In each of these scales, all scales for that matter, all notes are assigned a numeric value. The first note of the scale is the scale named note. C scale will start on a C note, F scale will start on an F, a G scale the first note of the scale is a G. This beginning note of the scale can be associated with a few names it is the number 1 note of the scale, the root (note) of the scale or the scale name note. It is always the same note. If we play the root note of a C scale you will simply play the named note of the scale or a C. This note has the numeric value of 1. The next note in a C scale is a D and has a numeric value of 2. The next note is an E and has a numeric value of 3 and so forth through the scale. In all scales there will be 8 numeric values associated with each note in the scale. Below are the numeric values of the C, G, & F scales

C Scale

C=1, D=2, E=3, F=4, G=5, A= 6, B=7, C=8

F Scale

F=1, G=2, A=3, Bb=4, C=5, D=6, E=7, F=8

G Scale

G=1, A=2, B=3, C=4, D=5, E=6, F#, 7, G=8

Notice the root note or scale named note has a value of 1 and also a value of 8. Notice the numeric values for the same note are different in each scale. I.e. the E note in the C scale has a numeric value of 3, in the F scale the E has a numeric value of 7 and in the G scale the E has a numeric value of 6. This simply means that within each scale the E note has a different musical meaning or color of sound. We will get into more depth of this

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concept in future lessons. For now, it is important that you simply associate the numeric value through the scale. A chord is comprised of multiple tones or notes within a scale or key signature. The chords can be written either with the notes or the numeric value of the notes. A basic C chord starts on a C and adds the 3<sup>rd</sup> of the scale or the E note and the 5<sup>th</sup> of the scale or the G note and then tops off again with an octave root note or the numeric value of 8. This C chord can be written in English like this:

C, E, G, C or 1, 3, 5, 8. By combining multiple chords you create a chord progression.

The Beatles did very well for themselves using simply the 1, 4, 5 progression of chords.

This simply means that if they were to play a song in C with this simple chord progression they would have the C chord or root chord the 4th chord or the F chord and the 5<sup>th</sup> chord or the G chord. Again through simple mathematics we can decipher which notes to play for a major chord within any scale if we understand the numeric value associate with each note within that particular scale. In a C scale the 1, 3, 5, and 8 notes are C, E, G, C in the F scale the F chord is played with the 1, 3, 5, 8 notes of the F scale or F, A, C, F and in the G scale the 1, 3, 5, 8 notes to create a G major chord are G, B, D, G.. With this information you should be able to write the 1 3 5 chord in any scale.

## Key Signatures

The key signatures have a pattern to them. In the flat scales, that is when the accidentals are flat (b) the name of the scale goes down and also has the flat verbalized in the name such as a Bb scale or Eb or Ab. The pattern of accidentals visually goes down the stave. It is the opposite for the sharp (#) scales. The scale names go up the scale and are usually associated with their major scale note name G scale, B scale, E scale. Along with the sharp (#) accidentals, look at the key signature page of this lesson and see if you can decipher the pattern within both sections the flattened and sharp key signatures.

## Note Values or Duration of time

This section is pretty self explanatory. Each note value is visually represented by the note symbol. All we do to change the value of a note is add or take away an image on the note. A stem or flag is how we denote what time value the note has within the time signature. Time signature will be discussed in future lessons. For now simply study the note values and correlate what has changed in the symbol of the note to change it's time value.

## Rhythmic Pattern

This is the advanced self exam section for you to test yourself on how well you understand the above material. Each lesson will have rhythmic passages that you will need to break down the time value of each note and then simply try to tap out the rhythmic pattern. Use the time note duration value sheet along with the rhythmic music to try to associate what time value each note in this section gets and try to create the

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rhythm that is written in the music. Start slowly on this exercise with a tempo of about 75 BPM and gradually get faster and faster. Try to change some of the notes and then try to play the different notes you inputted with the same rhythm. You are now creating your own music. 😊

## **Conclusion for lesson 1**

This lesson is designed to give you a basic understanding of the foundation of music, reading, writing and creating. Remember to keep the metal to the mouth and the eyes to the music (Not the Valve notations)

# Scales

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## C Scale

C D E F G A B C C B A G F E D C C

0 1/3 1/2 1 0 1/2 2 0 0 2 1/2 0 1 1/2 1/3 0 0

## F Scale

F G A B $\flat$  C D E F F E D C B $\flat$  A G F F

1 0 1/2 1 0 1 0 1 1 0 1 0 1 1/2 0 1 1

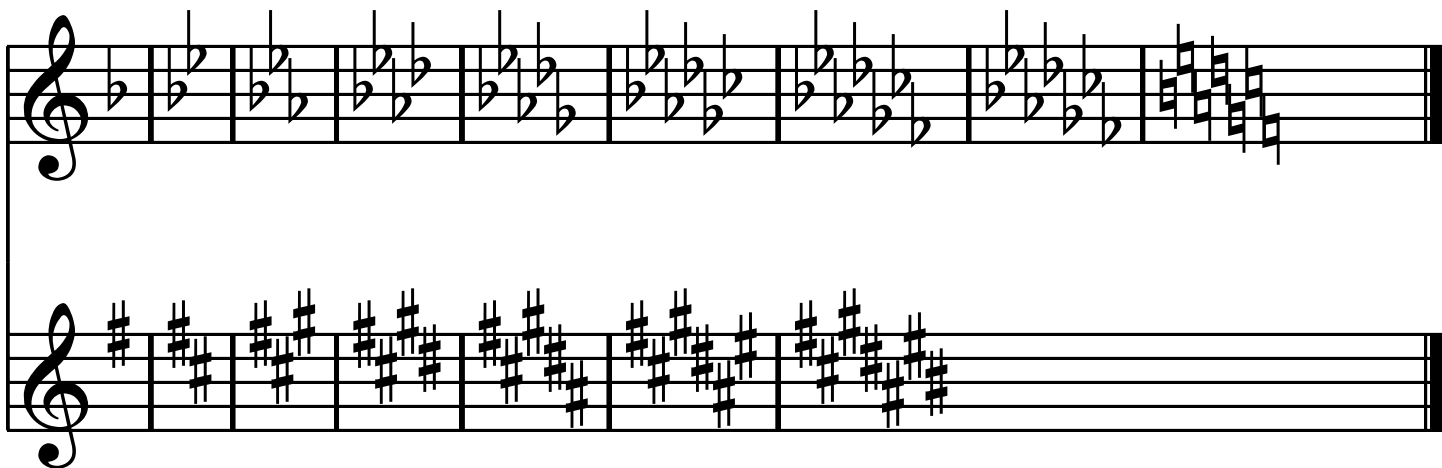
## G Scale

G A B C D E F $\sharp$  G G F $\sharp$  E D C B A G G

0 1/2 2 0 1 0 2 0 0 2 0 1 0 2 1/2 0 0

# Key Signatures

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# Note Duration Value

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Whole Note = 4 Beats

Half Note = 2 Beats



Whole Rest = 4 Beats

Half Note Rest = 2 Beats

Quarter Note = 1 Beat

Eighth Note = 1/2 Beat



Quarter Note Rest = 1 Beat

Eighth Note Rest = 1/2 Beat

Sixteenth Note = 1/4 Beat



Sixteenth Note Rest = 1/4 Beat

# Rythmic

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