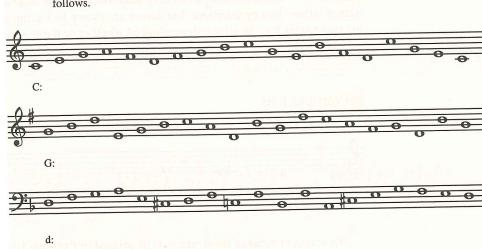2. Call out or sing the scale degree names contained in each example that that follows.

C:

G:

d:

Intervals

An **interval** is the measurement of the distance in pitch between two notes. A **harmonic interval** results when the notes are performed at the same time, whereas a **melodic interval** occurs when the notes are played successively (Ex. 1-18). The method of measuring intervals is the same for both harmonic and melodic intervals.

Example 1-18

Harmonic intervals   Melodic intervals

There are two parts to any interval name: the numerical name and the modifier that precedes the numerical name. As Example 1-19 illustrates, the numerical name is a measurement of how far apart the notes are vertically on the staff, regardless of what accidentals are involved.

Example 1-19

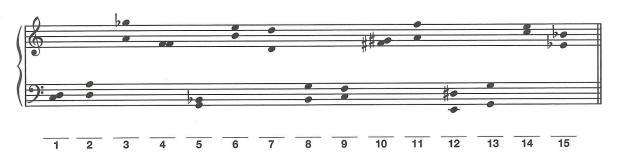
1   2   3   3   3   3   4   (etc.)

In talking about intervals, we use the terms **unison** instead of 1, and **octave** (8ve) instead of 8. We also say 2nd instead of "two," 3rd instead of "three," and so on. Intervals smaller than an 8ve are called **simple intervals,** whereas larger intervals (including the 8ve) are called **compound intervals.**

It is important to notice in Example 1-19 that the harmonic interval of a 2nd is notated with the top note offset a little to the right of the bottom note. Accidentals are offset in the same way for harmonic intervals of a 2nd, 3rd, or 4th, if both notes require an accidental.

Self-Test 1-4

(Answers begin on page 555.)

Provide the numerical names of the intervals by using the numbers 1 through 8.

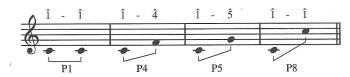1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   11   12   13   14   15

Exercise 1-4 See Workbook.

Perfect, Major, and Minor Intervals

One way to begin learning the modifiers for intervals is by relating them to the intervals contained in the major scale, specifically the intervals from Î up to the other scale degrees. This method can then be applied in any context, whether or not the major scale is actually being used.

The term **perfect** (abbreviated P) is a modifier used only in connection with unisons, 4ths, 5ths, 8ves, and their compounds (11ths, and so on). As Example 1-20 illustrates, a P1, P4, P5, and P8 can all be constructed by using Î in the major scale as the *bottom* note.
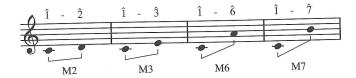
Example 1-20

Î - Î   Î - 4̂   Î - 5̂   Î - Î

P1   P4   P5   P8

If we want to spell one of these intervals above E♭, for example, we need only to think of scale steps 1̂, 4̂, and 5̂ of the E♭ major scale. If the bottom note does not commonly serve as 1̂ of a major scale (such as D♯), remove the accidental temporarily, spell the interval, and then apply the accidental to both notes (Ex. 1-21).

Example 1-21
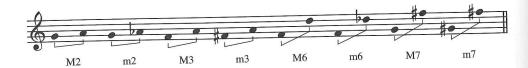

P5 above
D♯ = ?

P5 above
D♮ = A♮

P5 above
D♯ = A♯

The modifiers **major** and **minor** (abbreviated as M and m) are used only in connection with 2nds, 3rds, 6ths, and 7ths. The intervals formed by 1̂–2̂, 1̂–3̂, 1̂–6̂, and 1̂–7̂ in the major scale are all major intervals, as Example 1-22 illustrates.

Example 1-22

1̂ - 2̂   1̂ - 3̂   1̂ - 6̂   1̂ - 7̂

M2   M3   M6   M7

If a major interval is made a half step smaller without altering its numerical name, it becomes a minor interval (Ex. 1-23). Notice that you can make an interval smaller by lowering the top note or raising the bottom note.
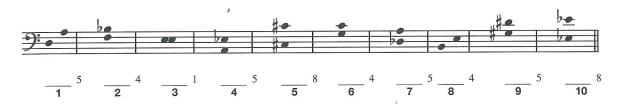
Example 1-23

M2   m2   M3   m3   M6   m6   M7   m7
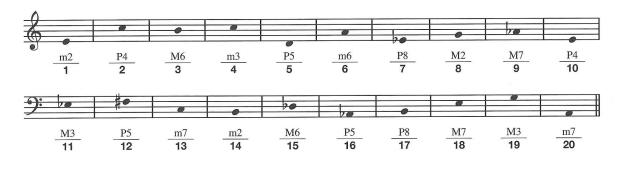
Self-Test 1-5

(Answers begin on page 555.)

A. All the intervals that follow are unisons, 4ths, 5ths, or 8ves. Put "P" in the space provided *only* if the interval is a perfect interval.

_5_   _4_   _1_   _5_   _8_   _4_   _5_   _4_   _5_   _8_
1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

B. All the intervals that follow are 2nds, 3rds, 6ths, or 7ths. Write "M" or "m" in each space, as appropriate.

_3_   _6_   _7_   _2_   _6_   _2_   _3_   _7_   _6_   _2_
1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

C. Notate the specified intervals above the given notes.

m2   P4   M6   m3   P5   m6   P8   M2   M7   P4
1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

M3   P5   m7   m2   M6   P5   P8   M7   M3   m7
11   12   13   14   15   16   17   18   19   20

Exercise 1-5 See Workbook.

Augmented and Diminished Intervals

If a perfect or a major interval is made a half step larger without changing the numerical name, the interval becomes **augmented** (abbreviated +). If a perfect or a minor interval is made a half step smaller without changing its numerical name, it becomes **diminished** (abbreviated °). These relationships are summarized as follows:

———————[larger]———————→

diminished ←——→minor ←——————→major ←——→augmented

diminished ←————————→perfect ←————————→augmented

←——————————[smaller]——————————