



CGU

Classical Guitar University

Harmony

III: The Harmonized Scale

The Harmonized Scale

If you take a scale and harmonize each scale degree with a triad, then you will get the following. This harmonized scale forms the basis for common practice harmony in western classical music.

Harmonized Major Scale

The image shows the Harmonized Major Scale in C major. It consists of two staves of music. The top staff contains seven triads: C major (C-E-G), D major (D-F-A), E major (E-G-B), F major (F-A-C), G major (G-B-D), A major (A-C-E), and B major (B-D-F). The bottom staff contains seven triads: C major (C-E-G), D minor (D-F-A), E minor (E-G-B), F major (F-A-C), G major (G-B-D), A minor (A-C-E), and B minor (B-D-F).

Harmonized Minor Scale (harmonic minor)

The image shows the Harmonized Minor Scale in C minor. It consists of two staves of music. The top staff contains seven triads: C minor (C-Eb-G), D minor (D-F-A), Eb major (Eb-G-Bb), F minor (F-Ab-Cb), G minor (G-Bb-Db), Ab major (Ab-Cb-Eb), and Bb major (Bb-Db-Fb). The bottom staff contains seven triads: C minor (C-Eb-G), D minor (D-F-A), Eb major (Eb-G-Bb), F minor (F-Ab-Cb), G minor (G-Bb-Db), Ab major (Ab-Cb-Eb), and Bb major (Bb-Db-Fb).

Each scale degree is assigned a name, number, and thus a function.

- The names marked in blue are the **primary triads**. These chords form the main basis of tonal music.
- The remaining chords marked in grey are called **secondary triads**. They will act as substitutes of the primary triads.

Major: **I** **ii** **iii** **IV** **V** **vi** **vii°** **I**

Tonic Supertonic Mediant Subdominant Dominant Submediant Leading Tone Tonic

Minor: **i** **ii°** **III** **iv** **V** **VI** **vii°** **i**

Legend
Upper case = Major triad
Lower Case = Minor triad
° = Diminished triad

Task 1

Write out the harmonized scale in the following keys. Label each chord and its function (primary or secondary):

C Major and A Minor

G Major and E Minor

D Major and B Minor

A Major and F# Minor

E Major and C# Minor

F Major and D Minor

Task 2

Sing through the harmonized scale using solfege (do, re, mi, etc.). Use the guitar as an aid if necessary.

Record yourself singing through one harmonized scale in major and one in minor.