

I'll Tell Ya Who Needs Scales



note names: C D E F G A B C D^b E^b F G^b A^b B^b C D^b
D E F[♯] G A B C[♯] D E^b F G A^b B^b C D E^b
E F[♯] G[♯] A B C[♯] D[♯] E F G A B^b C D E F
F[♯] G[♯] A[♯] B C[♯] D[♯] E[♯] F[♯] G A B C D E F[♯] G
A^b B^b C D^b E^b F G A^b A B C[♯] D E F[♯] G[♯] A
B^b C D E^b F G A B^b B C[♯] D[♯] E F[♯] G[♯] A[♯] B



With the
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Who needs scales? You need scales. Your brother needs scales. Your mom needs scales. Your grandma needs scales. Your boss needs scales. Your dog needs scales. Your dentist needs scales. Even the annoying neighbor kid who won't take off his Batman costume that is starting to smell, needs scales.

Which scales am I speaking of? All of them, for sure! Major scales that sound happy. Melodic minor scales that change depending on direction and harmonic minor scales that sound a bit shifty at the end. Whole tone scales, both of them, to let you know magic and the supernatural are coming. Octatonic scales that alternate step size giving the music an Ethiopian feel. Klezmer scales that will get you up off your seat and circling around the room with everyone else. Pentatonic scales for when you want a simple melody. Scales with quarter tone steps, uncommon for the piano, but not for the Oud. Blues scales for when you are feeling down because your lover left you. And chromatic scales for all the notes in between.

With the right scales, anything is possible.

Chromatic Scale - Natural



Chromatic Scale - Sharp



Scales are the building blocks of music. Any piece of music ever written or performed with a melody that employs pitches used a scale of some sort to create that melody. Bach used scales to write all of his keyboard pieces. Gabrieli used scales to write all of his choral music. Chopin used scales to not only create his melodies, but to improvise around them as well. Hans Zimmer uses scales to manipulate your feelings to match what he sees on the big screen. Billy Joel uses scales to write tunes that you can't help but sing along to. The Beatles used scales to form classic tunes you hear everywhere.

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Music cannot be created without the use of a collection of pitches; music is organized sound. These sounds have been organized further and classified as scales. They have grown and even sprouted new scales over the years.

Scales are not something that can easily be ignored when learning or creating music. They may seem boring or irrelevant when your teacher says, "practice your scales." But scales are also fantastic for developing strong technique. Image a scenario where you practice a scale until you pass out, becoming extremely proficient at it all the while. When you come to, you pull out a piece of music and BOOM, there is that pesky scale you spent the better part of a day perfecting. You play through the music with no effort because these notes are undeniably familiar to you.

Now, go practice your scales.

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