

Practice Drill:

Identify triads step-by-step

Hint: The flats found in key signatures (in order) are: B | E A D | G C F

The triad with B as its root is _____ (quality).

The triads with E, A and D as their roots are _____ .

The triads with G, C and F as their roots are _____ .

1. Identify the following triads without accidentals (quickly) by root and quality (M, m, d, A):

Exercise 1 consists of two staves of music. The top staff is in treble clef and the bottom staff is in bass clef. Each staff contains ten triads. The triads are: 1. C major (C4, E4, G4), 2. D major (D4, F#4, A4), 3. E major (E4, G#4, B4), 4. F major (F4, A4, C5), 5. G major (G4, B4, D5), 6. A major (A4, C#5, E5), 7. B major (B4, D#5, F#5), 8. C minor (C4, E4, G4), 9. D minor (D4, F4, A4), 10. E minor (E4, G4, B4).

2. Identify the following triads by root and quality:

(Hint: If you raise or lower all three notes of a triad, the quality does not change)

Exercise 2 consists of two staves of music. The top staff is in treble clef and the bottom staff is in bass clef. Each staff contains ten triads with various accidentals. The triads are: 1. C major (C4, E4, G4), 2. D major (D4, F#4, A4), 3. E major (E4, G#4, B4), 4. F major (F4, A4, C5), 5. G major (G4, B4, D5), 6. A major (A4, C#5, E5), 7. B major (B4, D#5, F#5), 8. C minor (C4, E4, G4), 9. D minor (D4, F4, A4), 10. E minor (E4, G4, B4).

3. Identify the following major and minor triads by root and quality:

(Hint: A triad that is naturally minor becomes major when the 3rd of the triad is raised.

A triad that is naturally major becomes minor when the 3rd of the triad is lowered.

Include in your thought process triads with all 3 members raised or all 3 lowered when there are two accidentals in the triad--the "negative image.")

sample 1 sample 2

("negative image" of sample 1)

Exercise 3 consists of a single staff in treble clef. It contains ten triads. The first two are labeled: 1. F minor (F4, A4, C5) labeled **Fm**, 2. G major (G4, B4, D5) labeled **(M)**. The next two are labeled: 3. F# major (F#4, A#4, C#5) labeled **F#M**, 4. G minor (G4, B4, D5) labeled **(M)**. The remaining six triads are: 5. A major (A4, C#5, E5), 6. B major (B4, D#5, F#5), 7. C minor (C4, E4, G4), 8. D minor (D4, F4, A4), 9. E minor (E4, G4, B4), 10. F major (F4, A4, C5).

Exercise 3 continues with a single staff in bass clef containing ten triads: 1. C major (C3, E3, G3), 2. D major (D3, F#3, A3), 3. E major (E3, G#3, B3), 4. F major (F3, A3, C4), 5. G major (G3, B3, D4), 6. A major (A3, C#4, E4), 7. B major (B3, D#4, F#4), 8. C minor (C3, E3, G3), 9. D minor (D3, F3, A3), 10. E minor (E3, G3, B3).

4. Identify the following diminished and augmented triads by root and quality:
 (Hint: A major triad has a M3 on bottom and m3 on top. If you make the bottom 3rd smaller (m3), the triad becomes diminished. If you make the top 3rd larger (M3) the triad becomes augmented.)
 Again, when there are 2 accidentals in the triad, relate the triad to the "negative image" of having all 3 members raised or all 3 members lowered.)

By studying the charts below, you should be able to determine the quality of any triad. Always consider what the accidentals do to the size of the 3rd.

Triad quality: M m A d
 (top 3rd) m M M m
 (lower 3rd) M m M m

Natural 3rds with B E A D as *lower* note are **minor**.

Natural 3rds with G C F as *lower* note are **major**.

(d triad is minor with top 3rd made smaller)

Musical notation for exercise 4 showing various triads on a staff with accidentals. The notation includes a treble clef and a bass clef. The first staff shows a series of triads with various accidentals (sharps, flats, naturals) on the notes. The second staff shows a similar series of triads. The first triad in the first staff is labeled 'dd' below it.

5. Identify the following triads built on B, B[#] and B^b:
 (Hint: B-D-F is the only natural triad that is diminished. It has two minor 3rds.
 B^b-D-F[#] is the *only* triad with both a flat and sharp in it. What is its quality? _____)

Musical notation for exercise 5 showing triads built on B, B[#], and B^b. The notation includes a treble clef and a bass clef. The first staff shows a series of triads with various accidentals (sharps, flats, naturals) on the notes. The second staff shows a similar series of triads.

6. Now put it all together and label the following triads by root and quality:
 (Hint: Redo #1-5 repeatedly until the exercises make sense and become *easy* before doing this exercise.)

Musical notation for exercise 6 showing various triads on a staff with accidentals. The notation includes a treble clef and a bass clef. The first staff shows a series of triads with various accidentals (sharps, flats, naturals) on the notes. The second staff shows a similar series of triads.