

SSPP READING CHANT - handout for WEEK 5

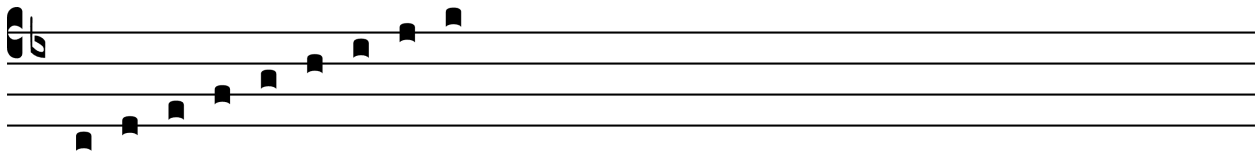
Sum-up of the previous 4 weeks:

- Music starts with melodies: our human brain recognizes melodies as music. Single notes are not perceived as music.
 - Melodies for the voice (as in Gregorian chant) typically have a maximum range of just above **one octave**.
 - In our Western culture, most melodies for the voice follow the **DIATONIC** scale (8 notes: DO-RE-MI-FA-SO-LA-TI-DO), rather than the CHROMATIC scale (12 notes between DO and DO).
 - This DIATONIC scale has 2 half steps, between TI and DO, and between MI and FA. Changing the “center” on this diatonic scale supplies different MODES (see attachment with “scale wheel” and “modal centers”).
 - TRANSPOSITION is a human gift: we can recognize a melody as identical even if heard at different pitches. Thanks to this gift, we can reduce the writing of vocal music like Gregorian Chant to a 4-line notation system.
- This GIFT of transposition is the cornerstone of the MOVABLE DO method of reading music.

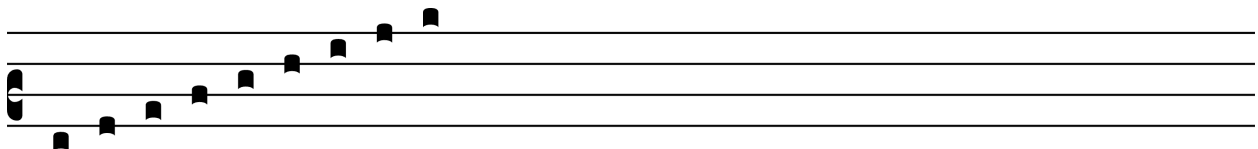
The FLAT sign is a fork in the road. We can either

- give a different name to every note that is “modified” by a flat (b), or a sharp (#), or
- use our gift of transposition to read as long as possible with the DIATONIC scale.

EXAMPLE: Is it easier to sing this scale:

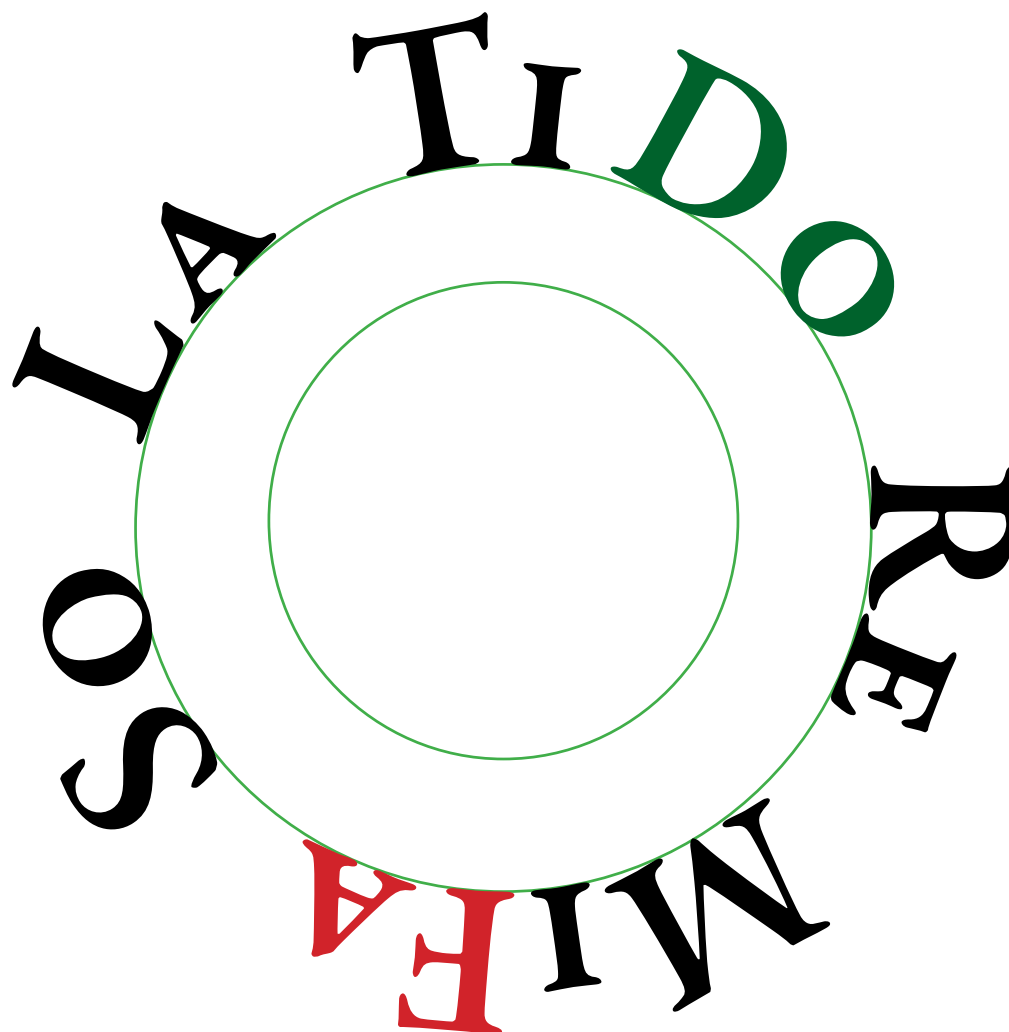


or this scale?



THE SCALE WHEEL

Composers of chant pick one of the pitches from the wheel below to begin a chant and another one to end it. The last note of the chant is used to name the MODE. Each of the 7 MODES has a different sound even though all modes use the same 8 notes.



All modern music became centered on the scale that starts and ends with DO. Some music is written using a scale starting on LA, referred to as the Minor Scale. Even when a scale begins on LA, it is often modified to sound like the Modern Scale on DO.

Do Re Mi Fa So La Ti Do

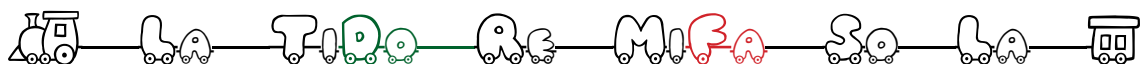
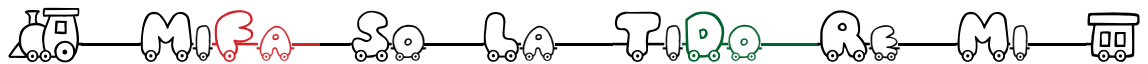
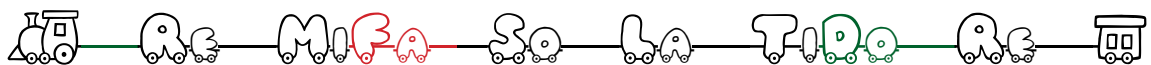
CHANT MODAL CENTERS

We've all seen adventure movies in which the bad guys chase the good guy on top of railway cars. Railway cars are not all the same length, some are shorter than the others. When jumping from rail car to rail car it is important to know where the short cars are. When you sing the modal scales of chant, it is important to know where the short intervals are. The location of these intervals gives each mode its character - always MI FA and TI DO.

The modern music scale. Music is centered on DO.
Few chants use this modal arrangement of the intervals.



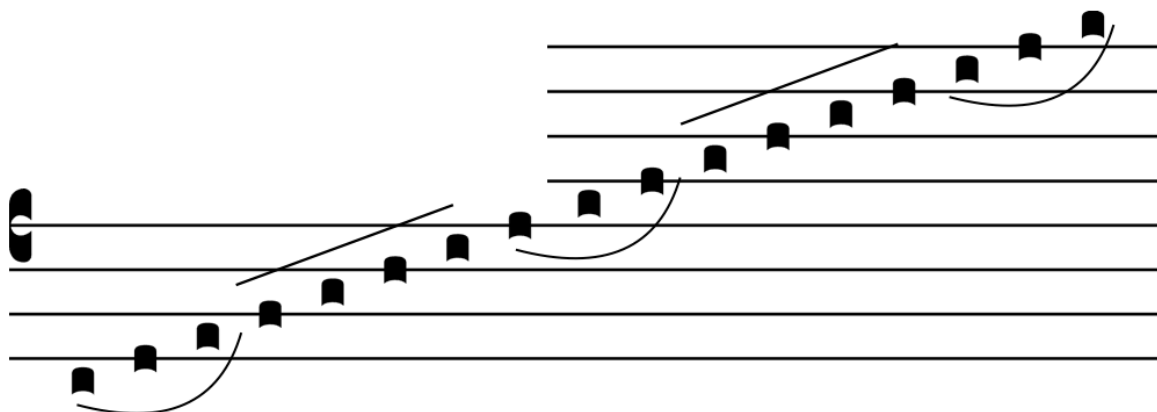
Below are the other 7 modal arrangements of pitches. The MODE name of a chant is its final note. These pitches are in the same exact order as the ones on the wheel on the opposite page, but imagine that the **FA** is the dining car and the **DO** is the baggage car. The modal trains have them in different places, giving each mode a different sound to its melodies. *The LA mode, below, is the one to which you sing Let All Mortal Flesh, giving the tune its' modal character.*



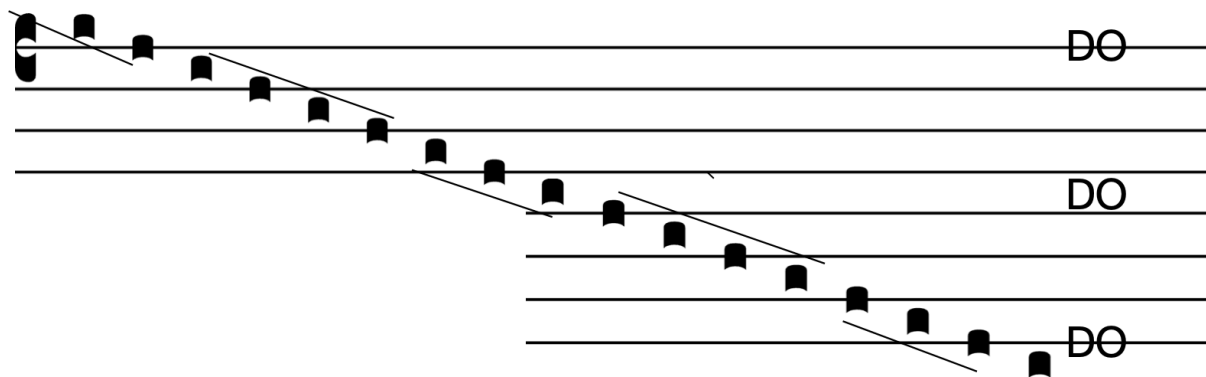
“MOVABLE DO” is a short way of describing what is more exactly “*Movable Do-re-mi-fa-so-la-ti*” (no TE needed) or

“*Movable succession of 2 full steps and 3 full steps separated by half-steps*” .

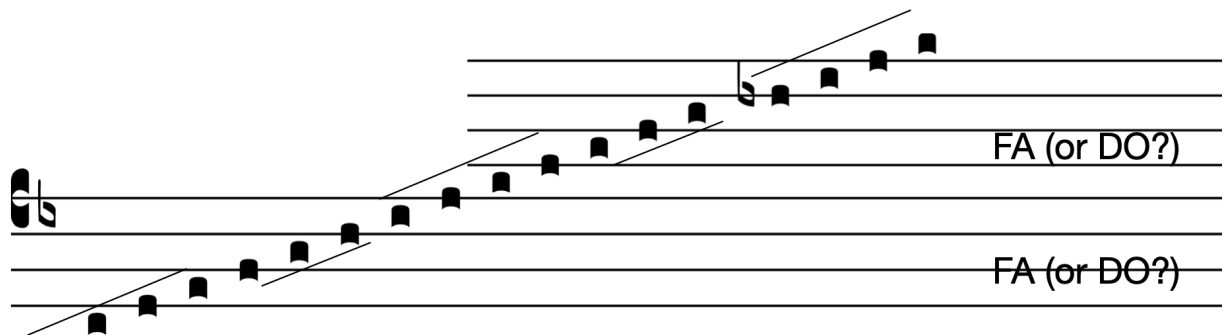
=> the only information needed by the singer (of the diatonic scale) is the position of the half steps



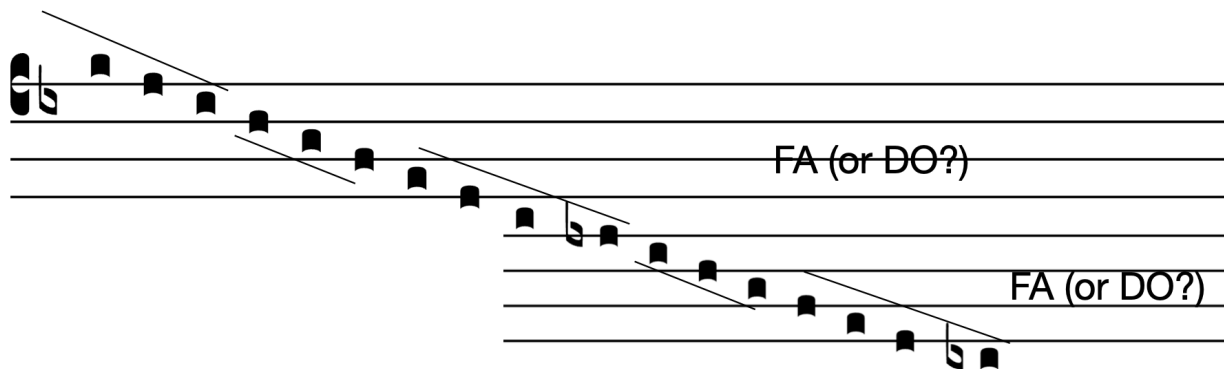
The pattern is the same ascending or descending. It covers as large a range as needed.



Introducing one FLAT :



The pattern of alternating groups of 2 full steps and 3 full steps, separated by half steps is valid for as broad a range as needed. We will call **“TONIC”** the lower note of the 2-full step group.

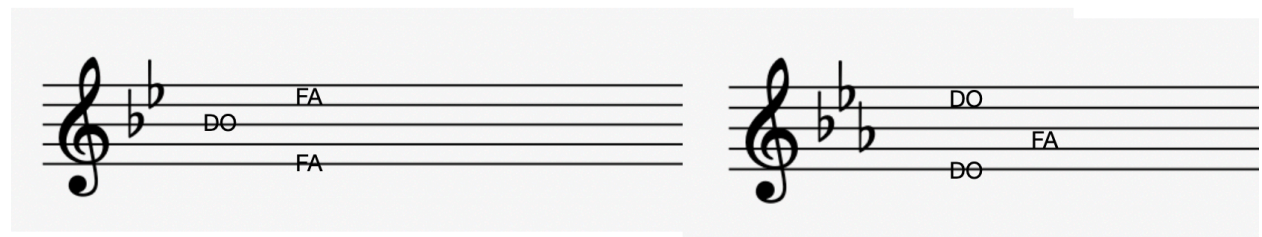
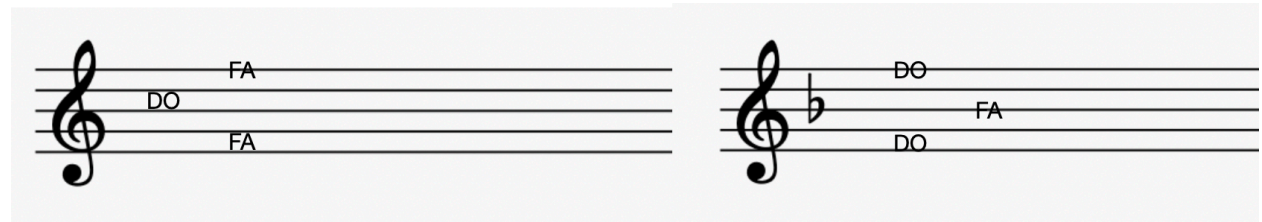


WE NOW CAN MAKE THE CHOICE OF READING

- “ABSOLUTE NOTES” (FA as tonic & TE as modified note), or
- “MOVABLE NOTES” (keep DO on the TONIC. No TE is needed. Only TI)

The payoff of the “MOVABLE” system becomes clear in reading modern notation:

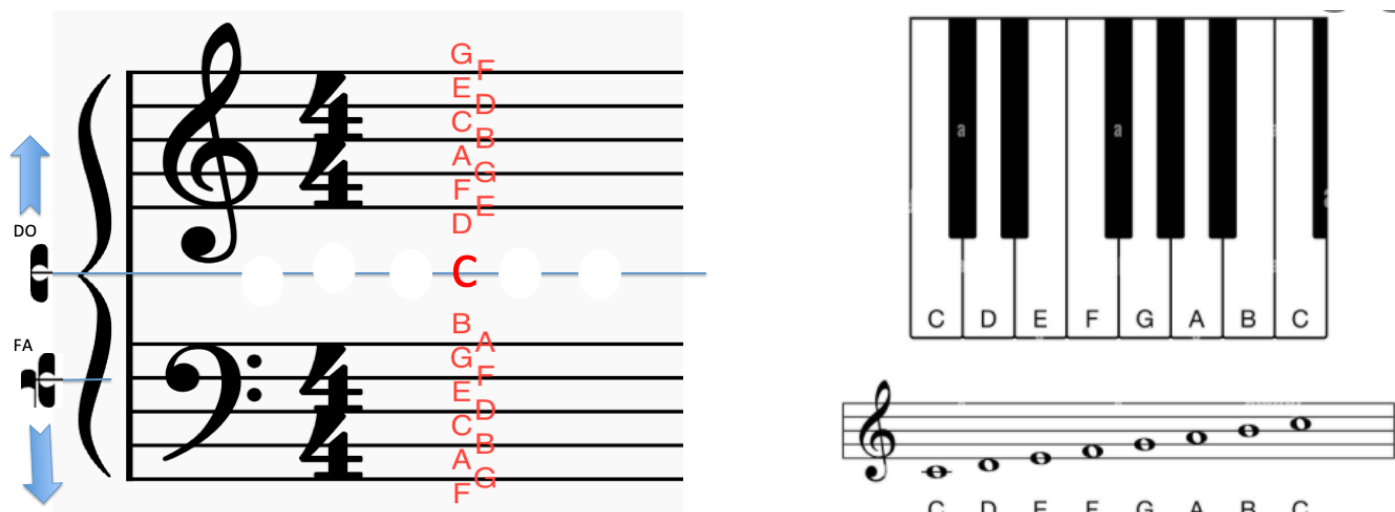
WITH EACH FLAT ADDED, THE “FA” (lower note of the 3-full-step-group) BECOMES A “DO”
(lower of the two-full-step-group)



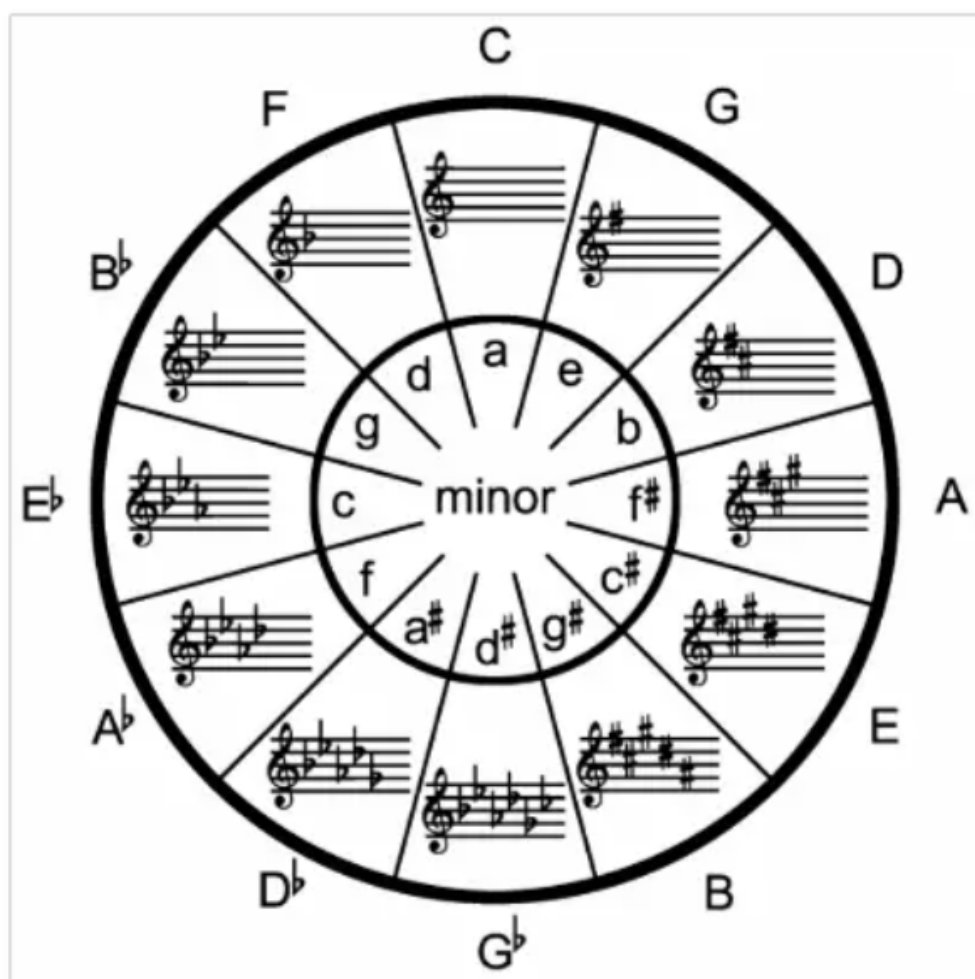
The SHARP (#) does the reverse of the FLAT (b). Thus with each SHARP added, the
“DOMINANT” (one fifth above the DO) becomes the new “DO”...



In Gregorian Notation (square notes), the DO and FA Clefs can move up and down the 4-line staff...
...Just like singers can easily “transpose” a melody up or down in pitch.
 In modern Notation (below), the G (treble) and F (Bass) clefs are fixed, always in the same position...
...just like the white and black keys on a keyboard are “fixed”.



A singer can easily find the “moveable DO” in modern notation, thanks to the “CIRCLE OF FIFTH”:



EXAMPLES: FINDING THE “MOVEABLE DO” for HYMNS ...

... and thus be able to sing them using the do-re-mi-fa-so scale

Eternal Father: no #, no b therefore, "DO" = C (Key of C Major)

1 E - ter - nal Fa - ther, strong to save, Whose arm doth bind the rest - less wave,

(Top line): DO MI MI SO SO LA LA SO SO DO RE TI SO SO FA# SO

(2nd line): do do do mi mi fa fa mi so so fa# so mi re re re

Faith of our fathers: one # therefore, "DO" = G

1 Faith of our fa - thers, liv - ing still, In spite of

(Top line): MI RE DO DO TI DO RE LA TI DO DO TI LA ...

(2nd line): SO SO SO SO so la so so la so fa ...

Panis Angelicus: two # therefore, "DO" = D

5 Pa - nis an - ge - li - cus fit pa - nis ho - mi - num; Dat pa - nis coe - li - cus

MI MI MI SO FA MI LA SO FA MI MI RE RE RE RE RE FA MI MI ...

Comfort, Comfort ye : one b therefore, "DO" = F

1 Com - fort, com - fort ye my peo - ple, Speak ye peace, thus saith our God;

(Top line): DO RE MI RE DO TI LA SO DO RE MI FA MI RE DO

(2nd line): so ti do ti la so fa mi la ti do do do ti do

O Salutaris : four b therefore, "DO" = A b

1. O sa - lu - ta - ris Ho - sti - a, Quae coe - li pan - dis o - sti - um:

(Top line): SO LA SO DO SO LA LA SO SO DO MI RE TI DO TI LA SO ...

(2nd line): mi fa mi mi mi fa fa mi mi mi so so so so fa# so

(or : so b so b)