

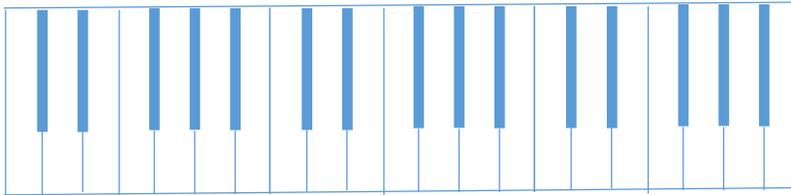
Lesson 1 NAMING the WHITE KEYS on PIANO

Although your interest is probably NOT in piano music, I am going to use the piano keyboard for this lesson because the musical patterns I want to discuss are so visually obvious on piano. These same patterns are also true on stringed instruments, but are not as neatly laid out in front of you. So let's start with some visual patterns on piano.

Notice the repeating visual pattern going left to right.

First, there is a set of 2 black keys with a white key between the pair. Then there are two adjacent white keys with no black keys between them. Next comes a set of 3 black keys alternating with white keys. Then there are two adjacent white keys with no black keys between them.

The pattern then repeats, starting again with the set of 2 black keys, then a pair of adjacent white keys, then a set of 3 black keys, and finally a pair of adjacent white keys. This pattern runs across the full width of whatever keyboard you may have. Counting both black and white keys, a full size piano has 88 keys. Some smaller electronic keyboards may have as few as 25. But, they all will have the pattern of black and white keys I have described.



Now, let's put names to the keys. In this lesson, I am going to deal with note names for the white keys only. I will deal with names for the black keys in a later lesson. The white keys are named with letters in a repeating sequence of A, B, C, D, E, F, and G. When you get to G, the next white key is called A and the pattern repeats. Here are the note names applied to my keyboard diagram.



Notice the pattern of where each letter falls

'C' is always immediately to the left of the pair of black keys

'D' is always the next white key to the right of C and there is a black key between them.

'E' is always the next white key to the right of 'D' and there is a black key between them.

'F' is always next white key to the right of 'E' and is adjacent to the 'E' (no black key between them)

alternatively, you can view F as immediately to left of three black keys

'G' is always the next white key to the right of 'F' and there is a black key between them.

'A' is always the next white key to the right of 'G' and there is a black key between them.

'B' is always the next white key to the right of 'A' and there is a black key between them.

'C' is always the next white key to the right of 'B' and is adjacent to the 'B' (no black key between them)

Although we can't see it on the diagram, the sound (pitch) of the note will be progressively higher and higher as you move from left to right.

To test your understanding of these patterns, fill in this blank keyboard diagram. Check yourself against mine AFTER you fill out yours.

