

Practice Drill Key:

Identify triads step-by-step

d m M

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 d (quality).

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

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

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

Treble staff: em, GM, CM, am, FM, bd, dm, bd, em, dm
 Bass staff: em, GM, bd, dm, GM, CM, am, bd, FM, GM

2. Identify the following triads:

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

Treble staff: d#m, FbM, GM, Bbd, e#m, am, ebm, G#M, CbM, F#M
 Bass staff: abm, FM, b#d, dbm, GbM, a#m, em, d#m, bd, e#m

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)

Treble staff: (3 ↓) Fm, (3 ↓) (M) F#m, (3 ↑) (M) EM, (3 ↓) c#m, (3 ↑) AbM, (3 ↑) DM, (3 ↑) A#M, (3 ↓) cm, gm, gbm
 Bass staff: (3 ↑) EbM, (3 ↑) AM, (3 ↑) DbM, (3 ↓) cm, (3 ↓) f#m, (3 ↑) EM, (3 ↓) g#m, (3 ↑) DM, (3 ↓) Fm, (3 ↓) c#m

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**.

Triads shown in exercise 4:

- dd
- CA
- E \flat A
- GA
- a \sharp d
- F \flat A
- cd
- ad
- ed
- A \sharp A

5. Identify the following triads built on B, B \sharp and B \flat :

(Hint: B-D-F is the only natural triad that is diminished. It has two minor 3rds.

B \flat -D-F \sharp is the *only* triad with both a flat and sharp in it. What is its quality? Aug.

Triads shown in exercise 5:

- m
- M
- M
- A
- d
- m
- d
- M
- d
- M

6. Now put it all together and label the following triads by root and quality:

(Hint: Redo #1-5 repeatedly until they make sense and become *easy* before doing this exercise.)

Triads shown in exercise 6:

- f \flat m
- D \sharp M
- E \flat M
- c \sharp d
- GA
- b \flat m
- e \flat m
- F \flat A
- c \flat m
- a \sharp d