

Sharps and Naturals

Yellow Award – Play and hear the difference between #'s and naturals.

Up until now, your main finger pattern has been the same on each string; 1st finger – **gap** – 2nd finger – 3rd finger – **gap** – 4th finger.



Can you see that some fingers are close together and some are far apart? When they are close together, they are called **semitones** (look at the closeness of the 2nd and 3rd finger). When they are far apart, they are called **tones** (look at the gap between 1st and 2nd finger).

The gap between 1st and 2nd finger is the focus of this exercise.

Try *Hot Cross Buns* below. It just uses open D and 1st and 2nd finger on the D string.

Hot Cross Buns Hot Cross Buns one a pen-ny two a pen-ny Hot Cross Buns

F# E D F# E D D D D D E E E E F# E D
2 1 0 2 1 0 0 0 0 0 1 1 1 1 2 1 0

This time, you are going to slide your 2nd finger back towards your 1st, like this:



Your finger pattern is now 1st finger – 2nd finger – **gap** – 3rd finger – **gap** – 4th finger. This might feel like a bit of a stretch, so make sure that your thumb isn't too high and your wrist is nice and straight.

Now try this version with the new 2nd finger position:

Cold Cross Buns Cold Cross Buns one a pen-ny two a pen-ny Cold Cross Buns

F E D F E D D D D D E E E E F E D
 2 1 0 2 1 0 0 0 0 0 1 1 1 1 2 1 0

Can you hear the difference between *Hot Cross Buns* and *Cold Cross Buns*?

If you keep your 2nd finger high (close to your 3rd finger), it makes a “happy” sound. This note is an **F sharp**. A sharp (#) raises the note and makes it sound higher.

If you keep your 2nd finger low (close to your 1st finger), it makes a “sad” sound. This note is an **F natural**. A natural cancels out the sharp, making it sound lower and therefore sadder.

Try these on your different strings.

Try this out on other pieces that you are playing. Does it change the character and the emotion of the piece?