

Accidentals: Sharps and Flats

For Guitar

In this lesson

- *What is an accidental?*
- *How do we use it to make music?*
- *What is a Key Signature?*
- *How do we use them to make music?*

Task 1

Not all notes sound *good* together

To show this, try playing fret **3** of your **A** string and fret **5** of your **D** string together.

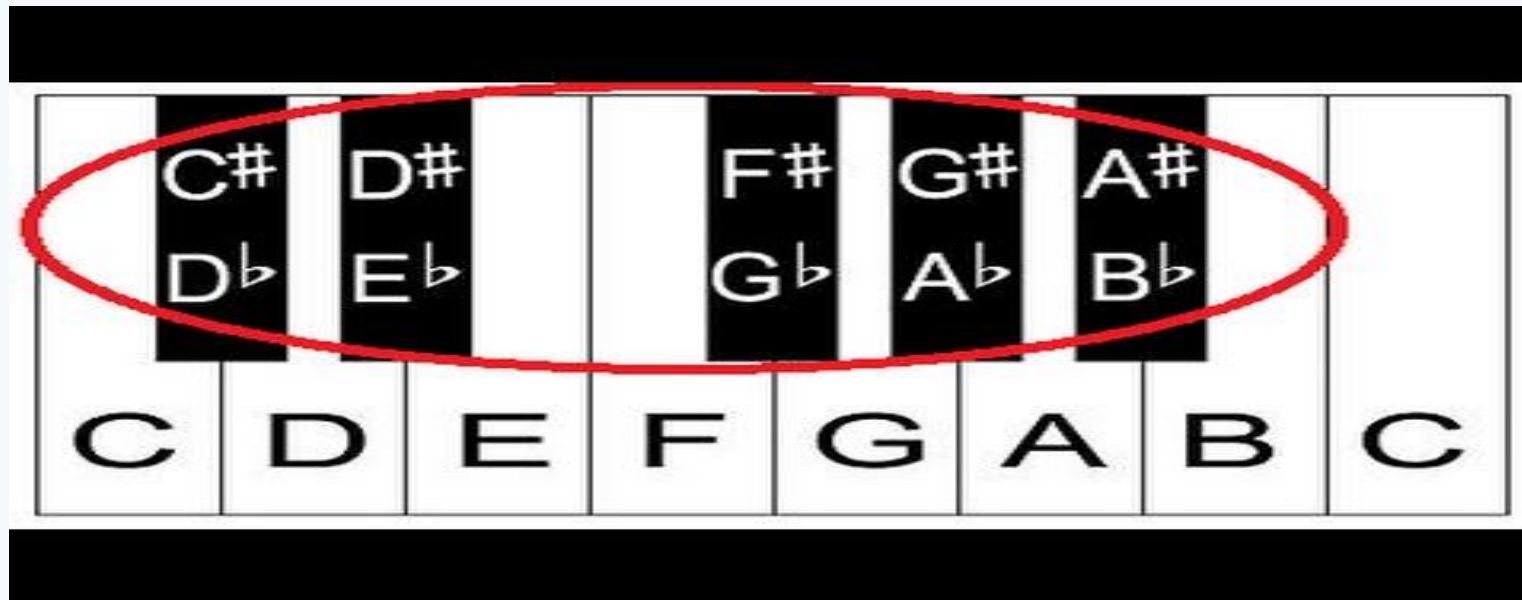
Then try playing fret **3** of your **A** string and fret **4** of your **D** string

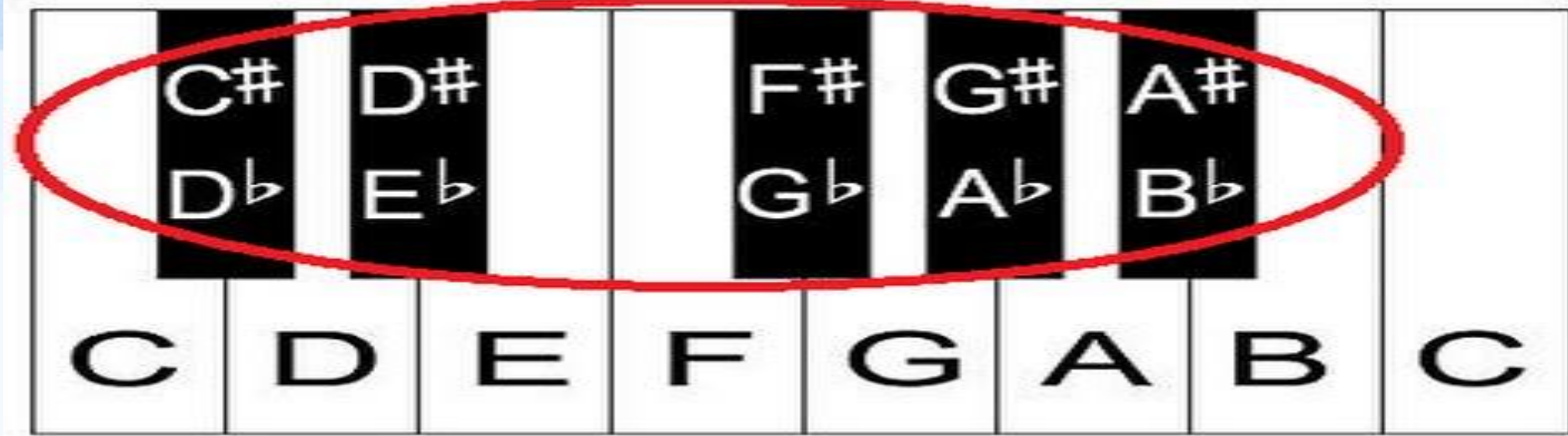
How do they sound different? Which one do you like more?

Experiment with other notes together on other strings.

How do we understand music?

- There are 12 notes in music, which we give letters to.
- Unfortunately for us guitarists, these notes are best looked at on piano:

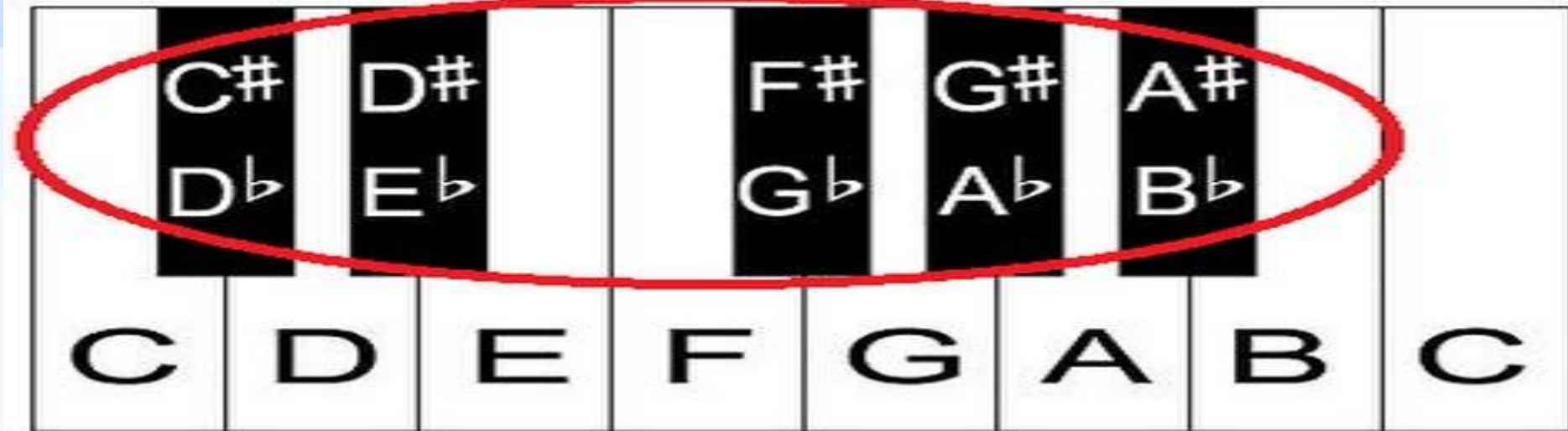




We can separate the notes here into two groups- White and black.

White are given the names **C D E F G A B C**

The black notes are more complicated though:



These notes are called Sharp (#) and Flat (b) notes.

Can you see a pattern in the sharp and flat notes on the piano?

Task 2a: Using accidentals in music

Use the notes below to create a short piece of music—experiment with different notes and rhythms to find a sound that you like:

The image shows a musical score with two staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a 4/4 time signature. It contains three measures of music, each with a measure rest at the beginning. The notes are: Measure 1: quarter note G4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5; Measure 2: quarter note B4, quarter note A4, quarter note G4, quarter note F4; Measure 3: quarter note E4, quarter note D4, quarter note C4, quarter note B3. Above the staff are the fret numbers: 0 3 0 2 0 2 1 3, 0 3 0 3 1 2 0 2, and 0 3 0 3 0 3 0. The bottom staff is a guitar tablature labeled 'TAB' on the left. It shows the fret numbers for each string: 0-3, 0-2, 0-2, 1-3, 0-3, 0-3, 1-2, 0-2, 0-3, 0-3, 0-3, 0.

Task 2b: Using accidentals in music

There is one new note in this example. Write a new short piece and try to add this note. How does it **feel** when you use it? When does it sound **good**? When does it sound **bad**?

The image displays a musical example for guitar. It consists of two staves. The top staff is a treble clef staff with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a 4/4 time signature. The notes are: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (quarter). The bottom staff is a guitar tablature staff with three strings labeled T (Treble), A (Middle), and B (Bass). The fret numbers are: 0, 3, 0, 1, 2, 0, 2, 0, 2, 1, 0, 3, 0. A watermark 'www.GuitarCommand.com' is visible in the background of the notation.

Using accidentals in music

Sharp and Flat notes can also be used to choose a **key** to play your music in.

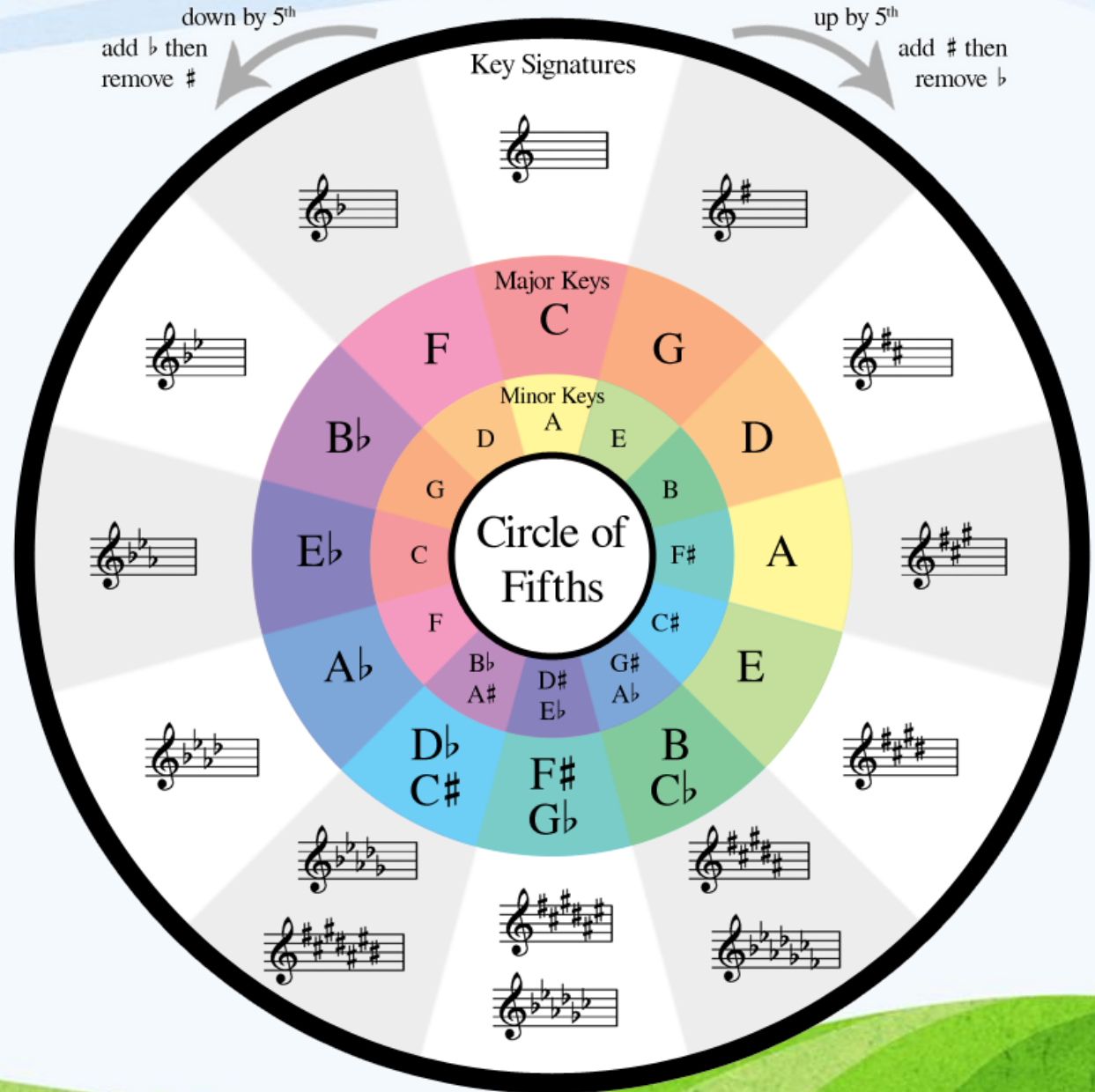
Each musical key is a map to show you what notes can be played with other notes to make sure it sounds good.

Different keys have different amounts of sharps and flats.

In music we have arranged this into something called the '**Circle of Fifths**'

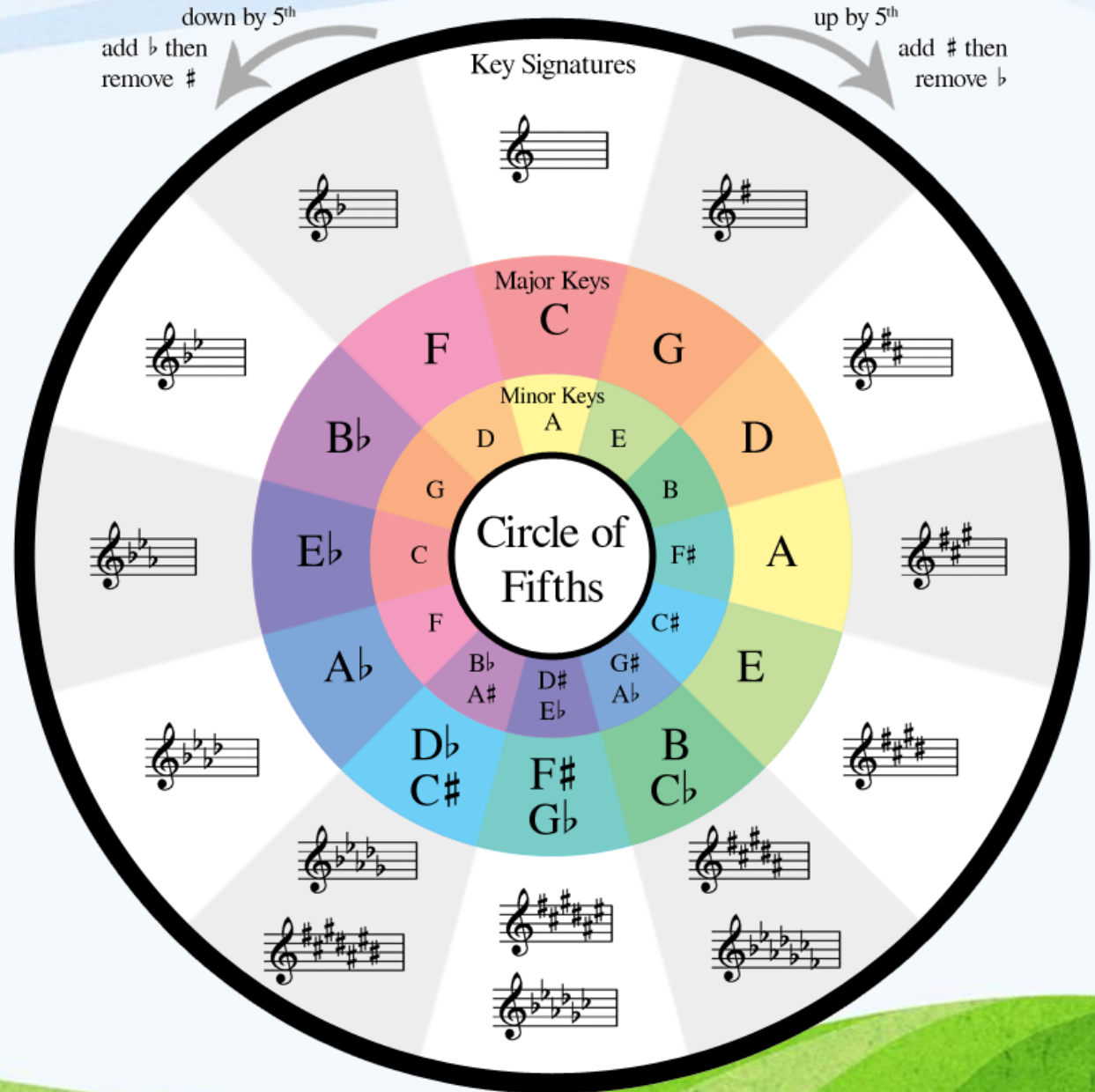
The Circle of Fifths

- The Circle of Fifths is **AMAZING**.
- It tells you which notes will sound good together so you can make music with them.



The Circle of Fifths

- Each musical key has in this sequence will have one more sharp note than the last (e.g. D will have 2 sharps, F# and C#)
- D E F# G A B C#
D



Task 3: Using accidentals in music

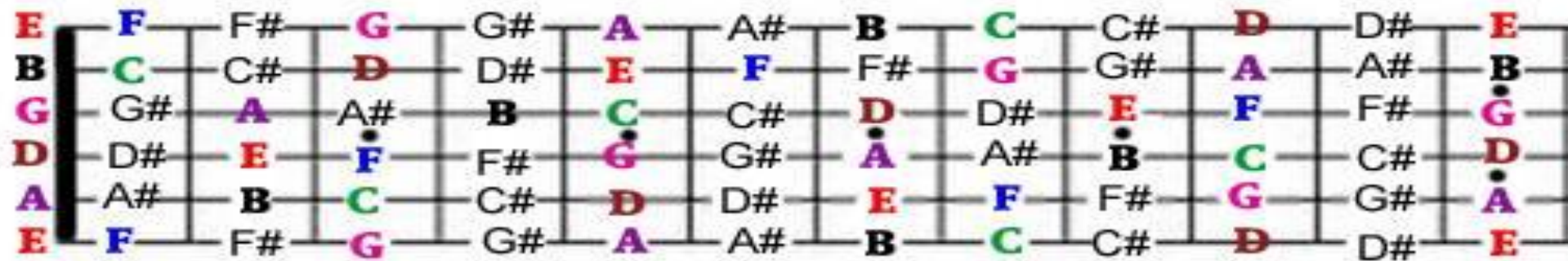
Here is a diagram of where all of the notes happen on the fretboard. Fret 0 is on the left.

Try to find all of the notes from D major and play them in order:

D E F# G A B C# D

Then, write a short song with them. How does it make you feel? Happy? Sad?

Guitar Fretboard



Task 4: Remembering all of the keys

It sounds like it would be hard to remember all of the keys, but actually it is easy.

Every Key has one of each note A B C D E F G

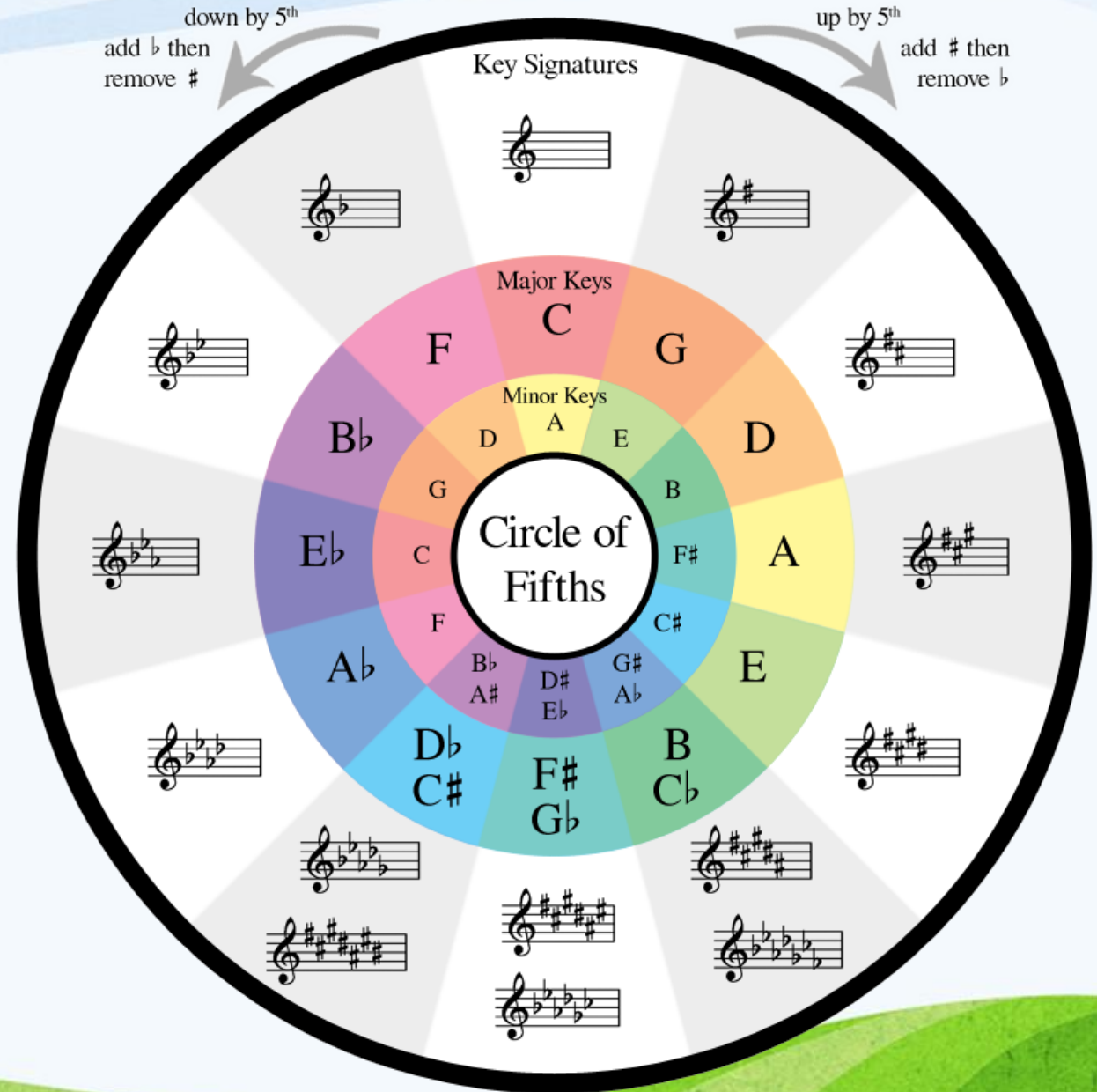
Every Key starts on the note it is named for (The key of a starts with an A, B Starts with a B etc)

We can use this to remember the keys in order

Father Charles Goes Down And Ends Battle

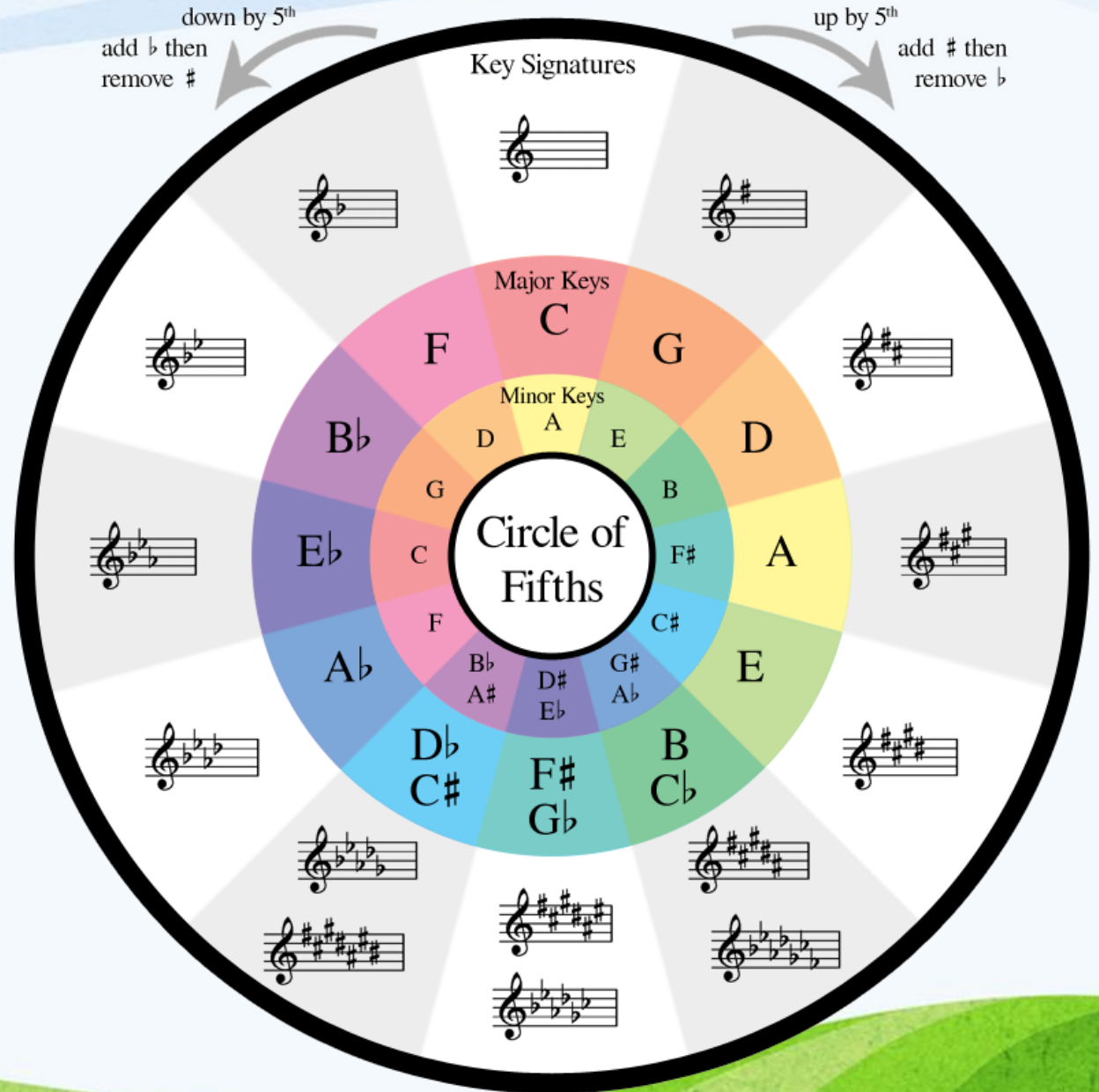
The Circle of Fifths

- Look at the circle again. Can you spot the pattern from the last slide?
- **F C G D A E B**



The Circle of Fifths

- This pattern also tells us how many sharps each key has, and what sharps they are.
- This makes it SUPER useful to remember



Task 4: Memorise

- Father
- Charles
- Goes
- Down
- And
- Ends
- Battle

