

SOLFEGE GUIDELINES

Melodies will be sung using *Solfège* syllables with a movable Do. In the movable Do system, Do always represents the tonic or the first degree of the scale, regardless of key. The purpose of the system is to emphasize the relationship between the degrees of the scale and the similarities between melodies in different keys. In this way, melodic patterns using the same sequence of scale degrees will be sung with the same syllables in every key.

All major scales are read as follows:

Scale Degree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Syllable	Do	Re	Mi	Fa	So	La	Ti	Do
Interval from tonic		(ray)	(mee)				(tee)	
	P1	M2	M3	P4	P5	M6	M7	P8

Natural Minor scales are read as follows:

Syllable		Do	Re	Mé	Fa	So	Lé	Té	Do
Interval		P1	M2	(may)	P4	P5	(lay)	(tay)	P8
		P1	M2	m3	P4	P5	m6	m7	P8

The syllables indicate both the scale degree and the quality of the interval formed from a given note to the tonic of the scale. Thus, a minor third above the tonic, for example--regardless of whether the note uses a sharp, flat, or natural--is always 'Me' (may). Other intervals are accounted for by changing the vowels of the syllable.

	A1	A2		A4		A5		A6	
	Di	Ri		Fi		Si		Li	
Do	Re	Mi	Fa	So	La	Ti	Do		
	Ra	Mé		Sé		Lé		Té	
	m2	m3		d5		m6		m7	

You will notice that when the note is raised, the vowel is changed to "i" (ee) and when it is lowered, it becomes "e" (ay). The only exception is scale degree 2, which becomes Ra when chromatically lowered. When a melody modulates to a new key, the new tonic is called Do. The other notes of the scale are renamed accordingly.

When practicing singing with solfège syllables do not get into the habit of writing the syllables underneath the notes. Of course this makes it easier to say the syllables, but it does not help you learn them. If you need some visual aid in the beginning you could try marking the line or space on the staff that corresponds to 'Do' with a highlighter or writing in 'Do' and 'So' at the beginning of the line like this:



This provides a visual frame of reference to assist you in determining the proper syllables without actually writing in the words. You can easily tell which line or space corresponds to a particular syllable and learn to judge what musical intervals look like on the staff.