

Lesson 18

Common Notation

Every major key has a relative minor key that has the same key signature.
For every key signature, the minor scale starts three half-steps below the major scale.

← C major
A minor →

← F major
D minor →

← G major
E minor →

The image displays three pairs of musical staves in 4/4 time. Each pair shows a major scale on the left and its relative minor scale on the right. The scales are: C major and A minor, F major and D minor, and G major and E minor. Arrows point from the labels to the corresponding staves.

Music Theory for Guitar

All **minor chords** are made of 3 notes:

The note that names the chord (called the "root" of the chord)

The third note of the minor scale that starts on the root (the "third" of the chord)

The fifth note of the minor scale that starts on the root (the "fifth" of the chord).

A minor

D minor

E minor

1 3 5

1 3 5

1 3 5

The image shows three musical staves in 4/4 time, each representing a minor scale. Below the first three notes of each scale are the fret numbers 1, 3, and 5, indicating the positions on a guitar string.

Notice that
the third is the only difference
between major and minor chords

E Em E (power)

The image shows three chords on a single staff in 4/4 time. From left to right: E major (E-G-B), E minor (E-G-Bb), and E power chord (E-G-B). The E major chord has a sharp sign above the G note, and the E minor chord has a flat sign above the B note.

An accompaniment that avoids thirds
(so that it's hard to tell if you're playing
major or minor)
is called **power chords**.