

## **Alternative ways to remember key signatures**

Have you ever had difficulty remembering the key signatures of the scales and keys? Try one or both of the following ideas; see if it helps!

### **1. PARALLEL DIATONIC SCALES** (example: C major and C minor)

The key signature of the parallel minor scale/key contains **THREE MORE FLATS**, or **THREE LESS SHARPS**.

|                                       |                                       |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| A major = 3 #                         | A minor = 0 #                         |
| A <sup>b</sup> major = 4 <sup>b</sup> | A <sup>b</sup> minor = 7 <sup>b</sup> |
| B major = 5 #                         | B minor = 2 #                         |
| B <sup>b</sup> major = 2 <sup>b</sup> | B <sup>b</sup> minor = 5 <sup>b</sup> |
| C major = 0 <sup>b</sup>              | C minor = 3 <sup>b</sup>              |
| C# major = 7 #                        | C# minor = 4 #                        |
| * D major = 2 #                       | D minor = 1 <sup>b</sup>              |
| E major = 4 #                         | E minor = 1 #                         |
| E <sup>b</sup> major = 3 <sup>b</sup> | E <sup>b</sup> minor = 6 <sup>b</sup> |
| F major = 1 <sup>b</sup>              | F minor = 4 <sup>b</sup>              |
| F# major = 6 #                        | F# minor = 3 #                        |
| * G major = 1 #                       | G minor = 2 <sup>b</sup>              |

\* In the case of G major and D major, the ‘#’ and ‘<sup>b</sup>’ signs work as positive (#) and negative (<sup>b</sup>) in order to maintain the organization explained above.

The keys of D<sup>b</sup>, G<sup>b</sup> and C<sup>b</sup> minor cannot be included in these examples as they are not in the diatonic system; they do not appear in the standard “circle of 5<sup>th</sup>’s”

### **2. The total number of sharps and flats contained in the key signatures on any given letter equal SEVEN.**

|  |
|--|
| A major (3 #) + A <sup>b</sup> major (4 <sup>b</sup> ) |
| A minor (0) + A# minor (7#)                            |
| A minor (0) + A <sup>b</sup> minor (7 <sup>b</sup> )   |
| B major (5#) + B <sup>b</sup> major (2 <sup>b</sup> )  |
| B minor (2#) = B <sup>b</sup> minor (5 <sup>b</sup> )  |
| C major (0) + C# major (7#)                            |
| C major (0) + C <sup>b</sup> major (7 <sup>b</sup> )   |
| C minor (3 <sup>b</sup> ) + C# minor (4#)              |
| D major (2#) + D <sup>b</sup> major (5 <sup>b</sup> )  |
| D minor (1 <sup>b</sup> ) + D# minor (6#)              |
| E major (4#) + E <sup>b</sup> major (3 <sup>b</sup> )  |
| E minor (1#) + E <sup>b</sup> minor (6 <sup>b</sup> )  |
| F major (1 <sup>b</sup> ) + F# major (6#)              |
| F# minor (3#) + F minor (4 <sup>b</sup> )              |
| G major (1#) + G <sup>b</sup> major (6 <sup>b</sup> )  |
| G minor (2 <sup>b</sup> ) + G# minor (5#)              |