



# CLASSICAL GUITAR CORNER

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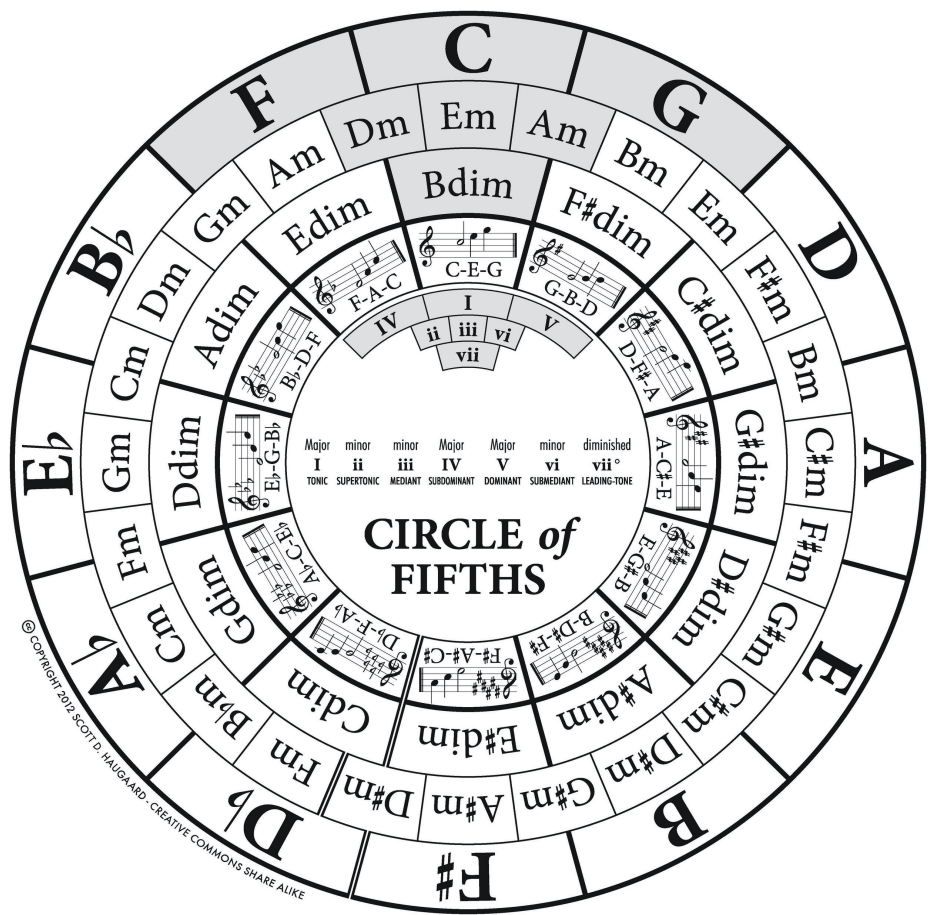
## ACADEMY



# A Practical Approach to the Circle of Fifths

*Guitoberfest 2023*

with James Erickson



# What is the Circle of Fifths?



- A visual guide to organizing the relationships between different keys in music.
- We can organize our keys in two categories: Sharps and Flats
- Further study is required to get the full resources the diagram has to offer.

# Why is it Important?



Learn major scales

Practicing scales in all keys

Order of Sharps and flats

Identify key signatures

Relative Major/Minor keys

And More...

# Quick Major Scale Review



- The Major Scale Formula
- W - W - h - W - W - W - h
- Scale Review:

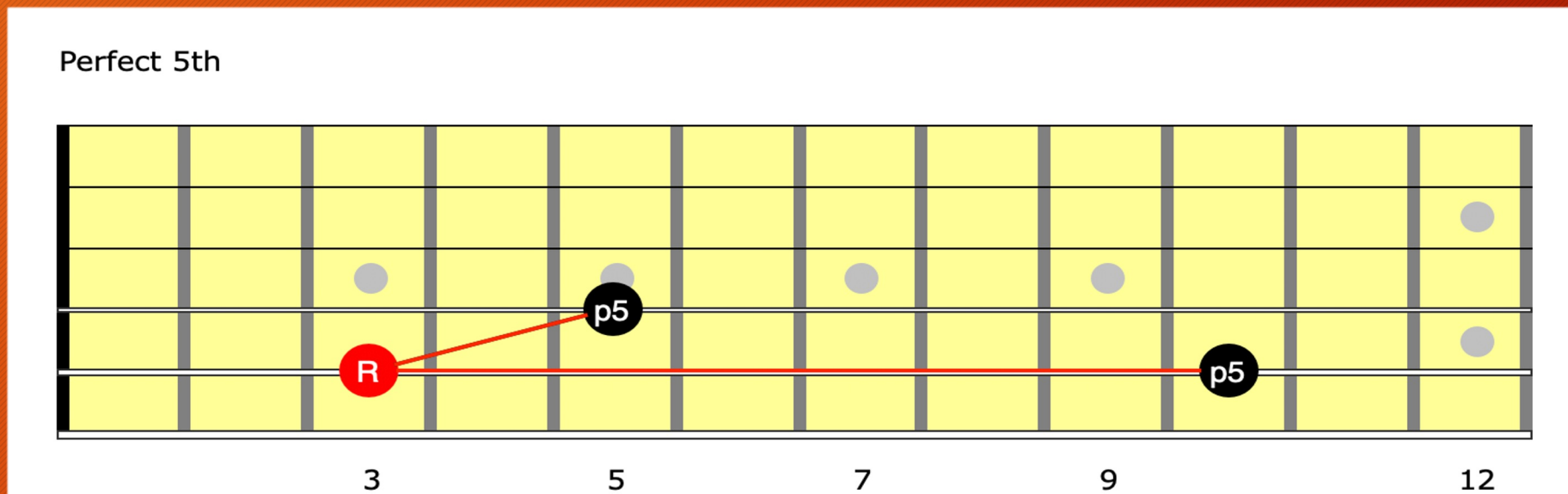
The C Major Scale with the Major Scale Formula and Scale Degrees

|          | Whole |          | Whole |          | Half |          | Whole |          | Whole |          | Whole |          | Half |          |
|----------|-------|----------|-------|----------|------|----------|-------|----------|-------|----------|-------|----------|------|----------|
| <b>R</b> | -     | 2        | -     | 3        | -    | 4        | -     | 5        | -     | 6        | -     | 7        | -    | <b>R</b> |
| <b>C</b> | -     | <b>D</b> | -     | <b>E</b> | -    | <b>F</b> | -     | <b>G</b> | -     | <b>A</b> | -     | <b>B</b> | -    | <b>C</b> |

# Perfect Fifth



- Tonic to the fifth major scale degree
- 3 whole steps plus 1 half step
- 7 fret distance on a single string
- Spans five letter names ( C - D - E - F - G )



# Organizing the Scales - Sharps vs Flats

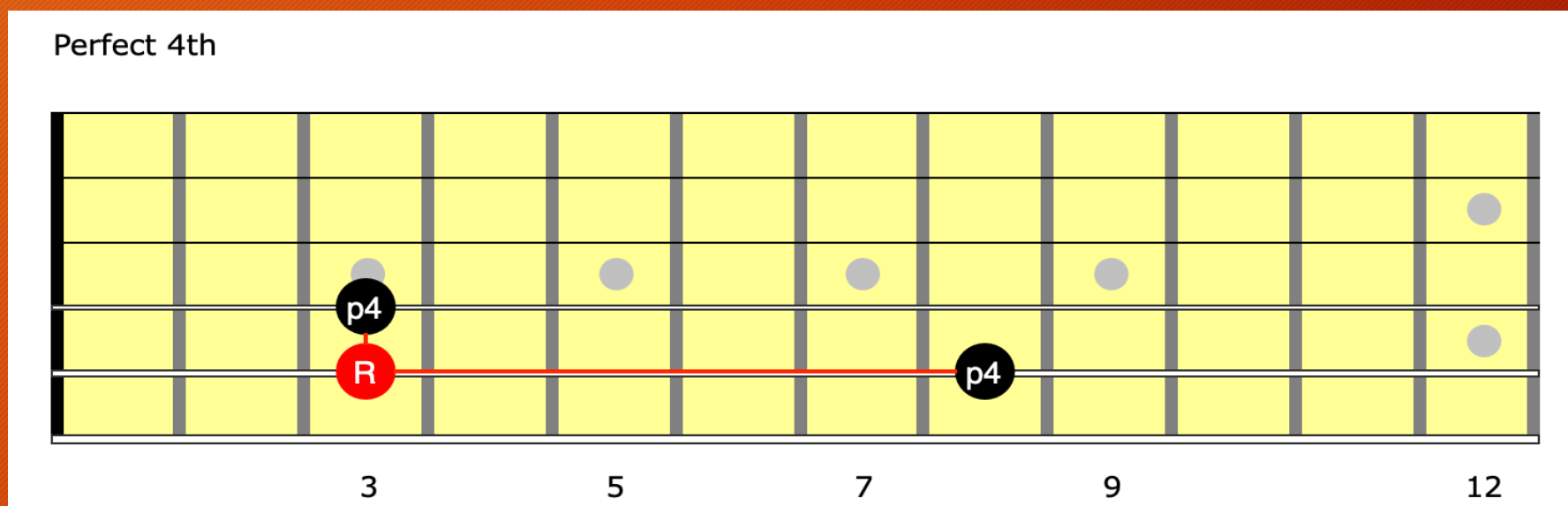


| KEY      | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | HOW MANY # | SUMMARY             |
|----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|------------|---------------------|
| C Major  | C  | D  | E  | F  | G  | A  | B  | C  | 0          |                     |
| G Major  | G  | A  | B  | C  | D  | E  | F# | G  | 1          | F#                  |
| D Major  | D  | E  | F# | G  | A  | B  | C# | D  | 2          | F# C#               |
| A Major  | A  | B  | C# | D  | E  | F# | G# | A  | 3          | F# C# G#            |
| E Major  | E  | F# | G# | A  | B  | C# | D# | E  | 4          | F# C# G#D#          |
| B Major  | B  | C# | D# | E  | F# | G# | A# | B  | 5          | F# C# G# D# A#      |
| F# Major | F# | G# | A# | B  | C# | D# | E# | F# | 6          | F# C# G# D# A# E#   |
| C# Major | C# | D# | E# | F# | G# | A# | B# | C# | 7          | F# C# G#D# A# E# B# |

# Perfect Fourth



- Tonic to the fourth major scale degree
- 2 whole steps plus 1 half step
- 5 frets on a single string
- Spans four letter names ( C - D - E - F )





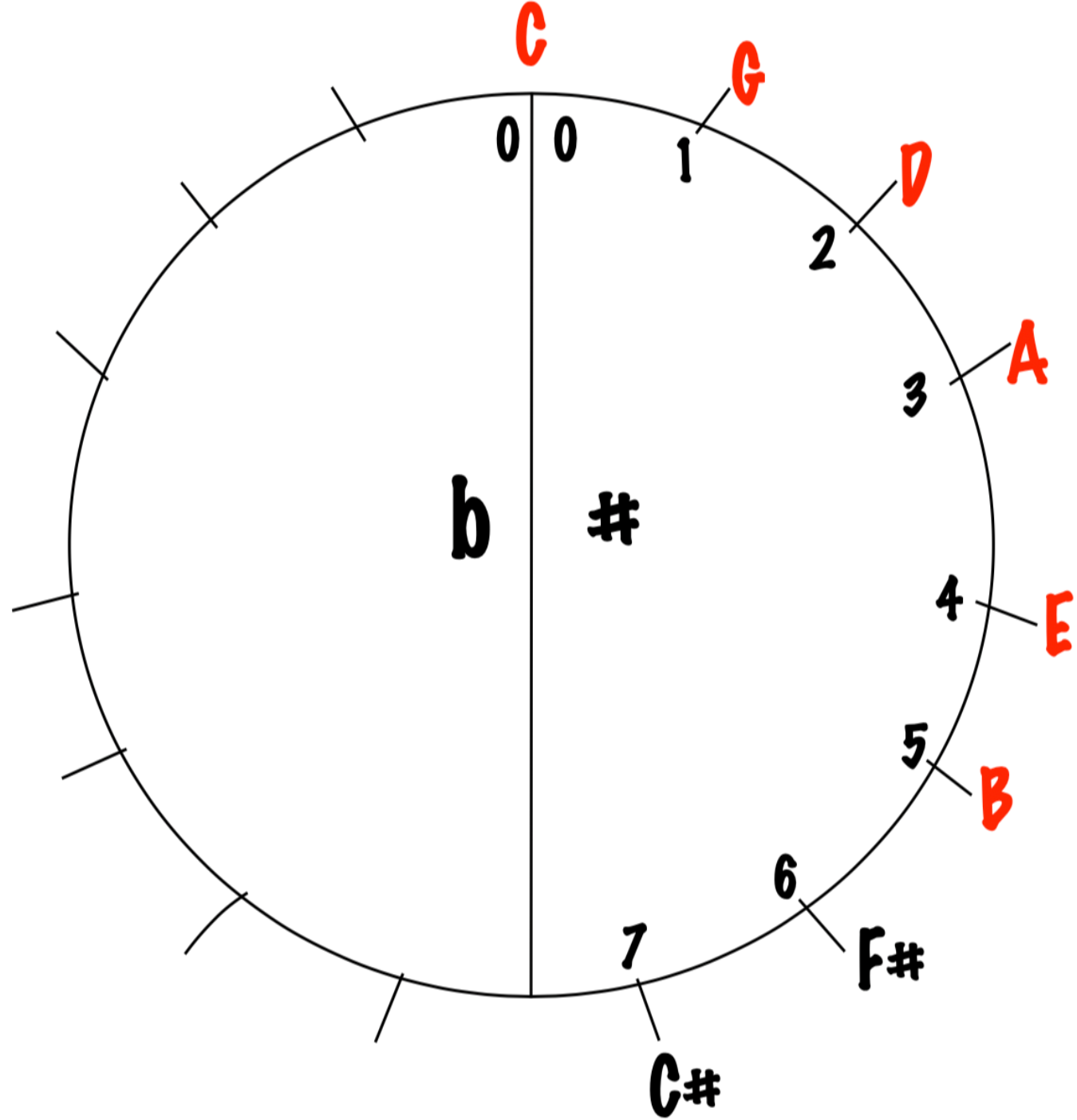
# Organizing the Scales - Sharps vs Flats



| KEY      | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | HOW MANY b | SUMMARY              |
|----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|------------|----------------------|
| C Major  | C  | D  | E  | F  | G  | A  | B  | C  | 0          |                      |
| F Major  | F  | G  | A  | Bb | C  | D  | E  | F  | 1          | Bb                   |
| Bb Major | Bb | C  | D  | Eb | F  | G  | A  | Bb | 2          | Bb Eb                |
| Eb Major | Eb | F  | G  | Ab | Bb | C  | D  | Eb | 3          | Bb Eb Ab             |
| Ab Major | Ab | Bb | C  | Db | Eb | F  | G  | Ab | 4          | Bb Eb Ab Db          |
| Db Major | Db | Eb | F  | Gb | Ab | Bb | C  | Db | 5          | Bb Eb Ab Db Gb       |
| Gb Major | Gb | Ab | Bb | Cb | Db | Eb | F  | Gb | 6          | Bb Eb Ab Db Gb Cb    |
| Cb Major | Cb | Db | Eb | Fb | Gb | Ab | Bb | Cb | 7          | Bb Eb Ab Db Gb Cb Fb |

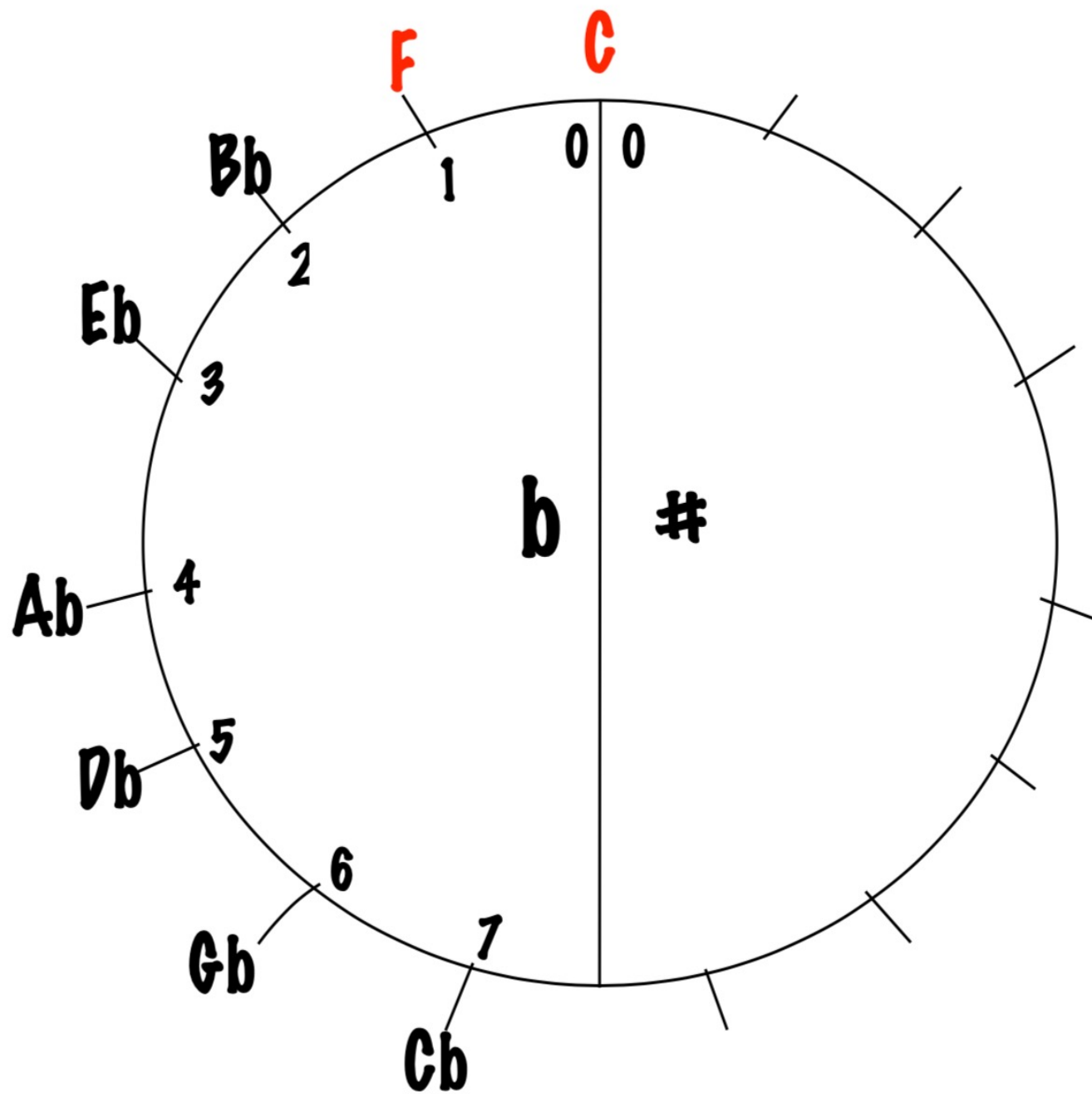
# Circle of Fifths Visualized - Sharp Keys

- Can
- Good
- Dogs
- All
- Eat
- Big
- Fat (#)
- Cat (#)



# Circle of Fifths Visualized - Flat Keys

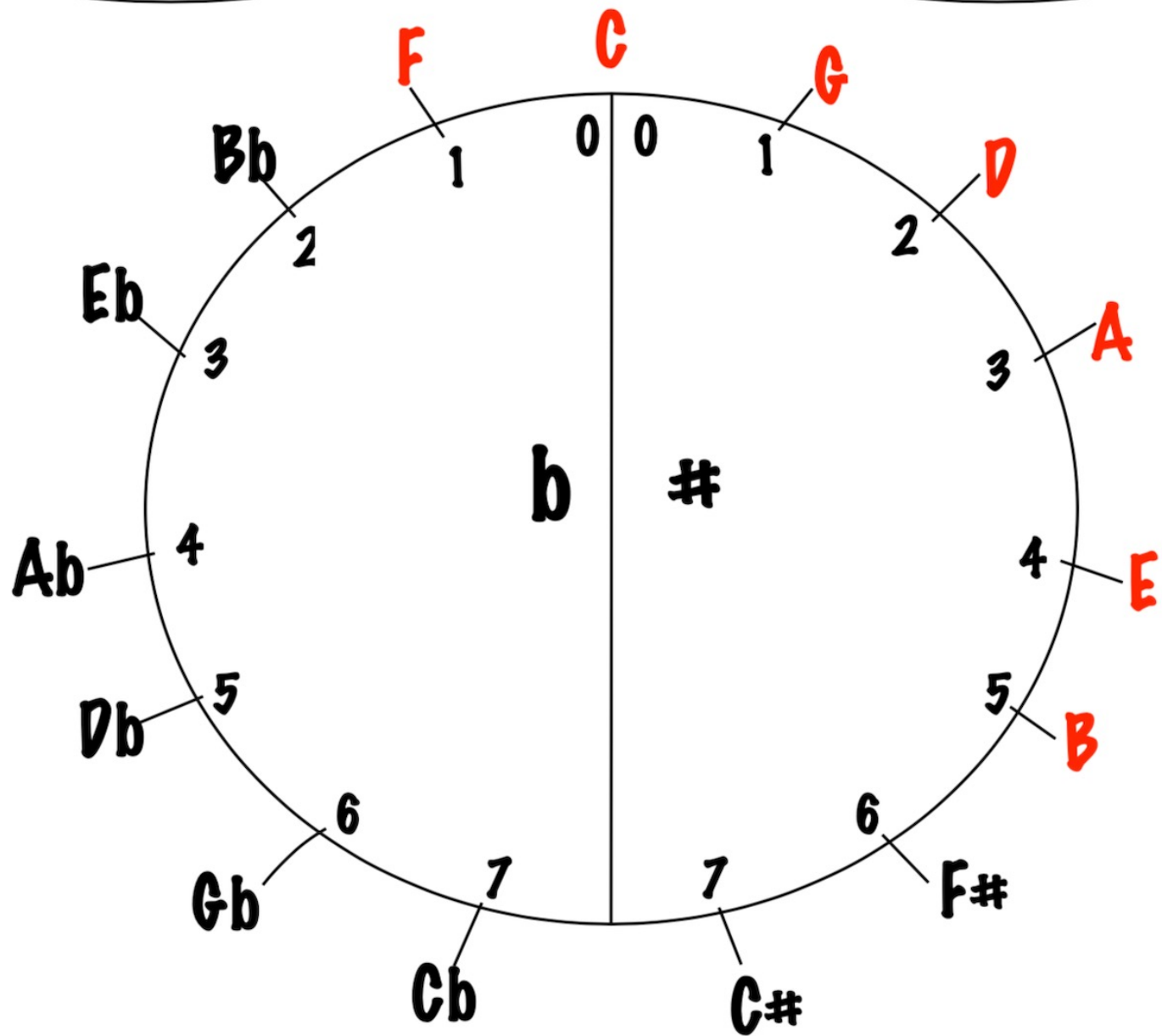
- Can
- Fred
- Buy
- Eggs
- At
- Dan's
- Grocery
- Counter



# The Full Circle

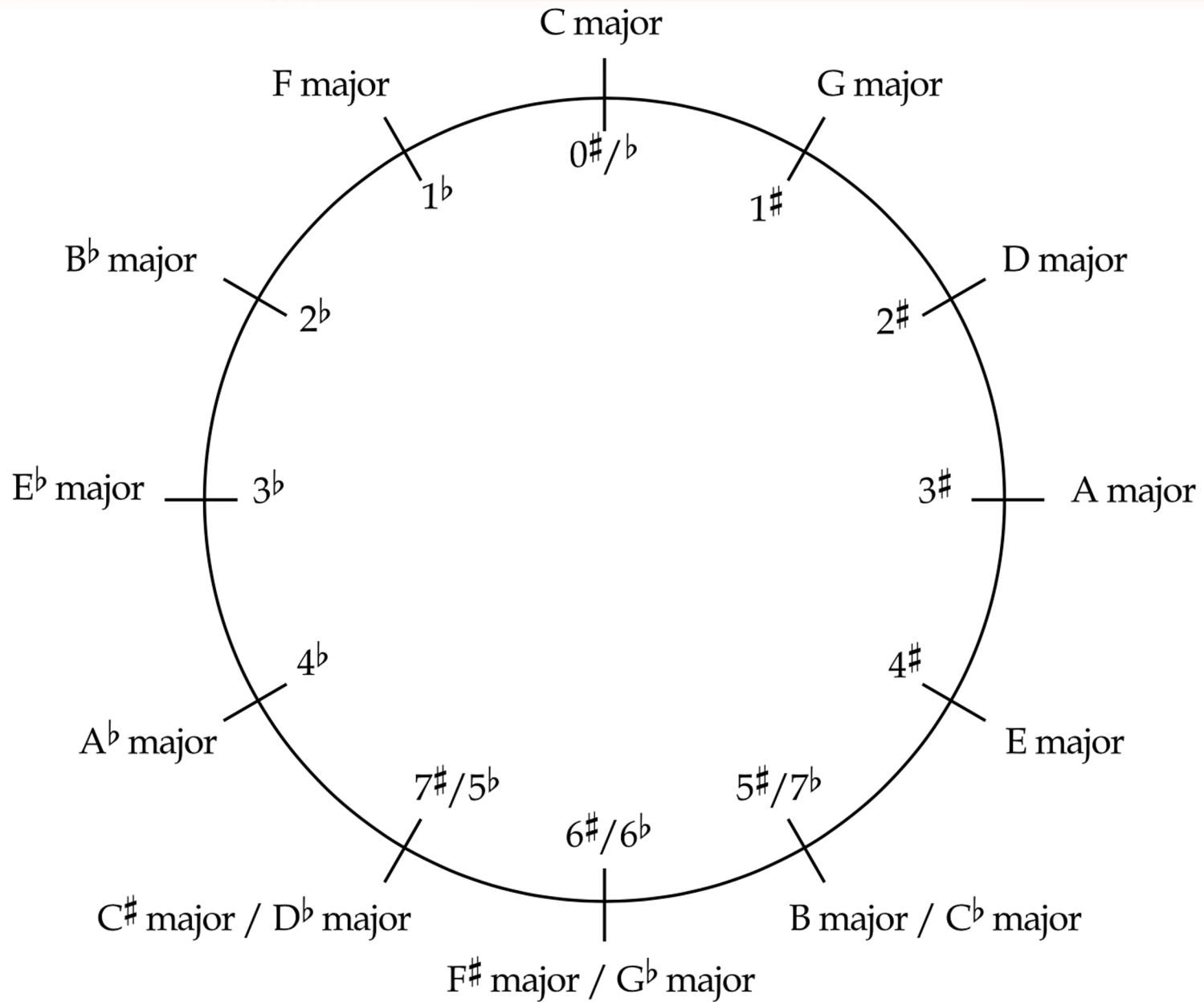
Bb Eb Ab Db Gb Cb Fb

F# C# G# D# A# E# B#



# Circle of Fifths

## Enharmonic View



# Relative Major and Minor



- Relative scales are major and minor scales that share the same notes and chords, and therefore the same key signature. Every major scale has a relative minor scale and every minor scale has a relative major scale.

C Major Scale



A Natural Minor Scale



# Finding the Relative Minor on the Fretboard

- There's a quick and easy way to find the relative minor of a major scale using the fretboard. Because the relative minor is always the 6th degree of the major scale, their intervallic relationship never changes.
- The root note of the relative minor scale is always in the same location relative to the root of the major scale.
- On the guitar, you can find the root of the relative minor down three frets from the major root.

