



An interval is the distance between two pitches.

To work out the interval, count the distance in notes from the BOTTOM to the TOP.

The bottom note is no 1 and the interval is the number of the note you stop on

Major intervals are those which are part of the major scale. The major scale should always be your starting point when working out intervals

The examples below show a major 6th in the key of C major and a major 3rd in the key of E major.

Intervals larger than an octave are called compound intervals.

Compound intervals are functionally the same as the corresponding intervals :

A 9th is a compound 2nd, a 10th is a compound 3rd,



Minor intervals are one semitone smaller than major intervals. Even minor intervals should always be worked out from the major scale;

Find the major interval and lower the top note by one semitone to give the minor interval.



There are two types of question about intervals.

1. In the first you are asked to identify an interval, either as a stand-alone question or as part of a phrase of music. Even if the higher note comes first. Always count from low to high.

2. In the 2nd, you are given a note and asked to add the note that is a given interval higher.

Only certain intervals will come with a major/minor prefix:

- 2nd
- 3rd
- 6th
- 7th

Remember: a minor interval is always a semitone smaller than the major interval.