

# Tone degrees

Credo Theory of Music training programme

PREGRADE 1

By S. J. Cloete

T.D.p1



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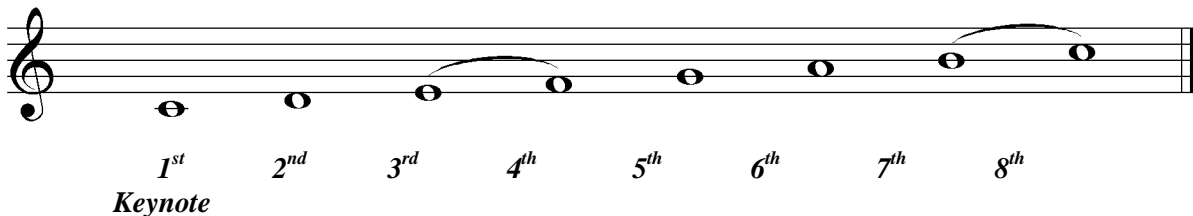
After having completed this module you will be able to write and identify the following tone degrees (scale degrees) with or without key signature, in both clefs: The **tonic**, **subdominant** and **dominant** in C, G and F major. You will also know the seven solfa syllables which indicate pitch.

### 1. TONE DEGREES / SCALE DEGREES.

You already know that the steps of a scale are called **tone degrees** or **scale degrees** and that a scale has **8 degrees**.

#### REMEMBER

- the **lowest** note is the **first** degree.
- the first degree is also called the **keynote**.
- the first degree and the eighth degree have the **same letter name**.



## 2. TECHNICAL NAMES OF TONE DEGREES.

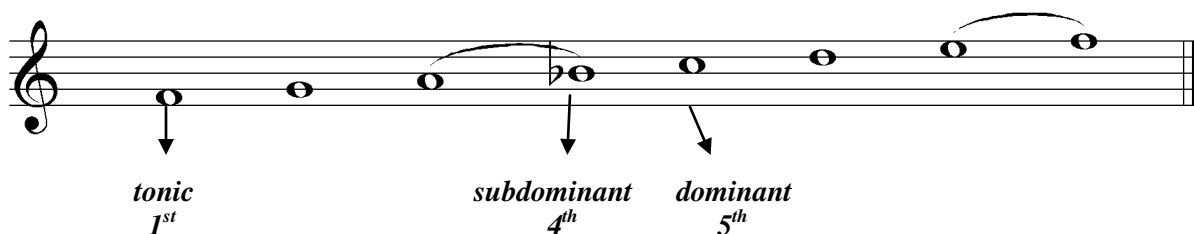
In theory of music we often use **technical names** instead of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, etc.

**LEARN:** The 1<sup>st</sup> degree is called the **tonic**.

The 4<sup>th</sup> degree is called the **subdominant**.

The 5<sup>th</sup> degree is called the **dominant**.

EXAMPLE: F major



**These three steps are important degrees** in any scale, the **tonic** (keynote) being the most important. Learn them very well. You must also be able to SPELL them correctly.

**Visualize** ("hear and see" in your mind) the three tone degrees. "Play" the scales of C major, F major and G major on the desk and **name** the different tone degrees to yourself.

### Ex. 91/1

**THE FOLLOWING TECHNICAL NAMES ARE SPELT INCORRECTLY. WRITE THE CORRECT SPELLING ON THE DOTTED LINE:**

1 Supdominant -----

2 Dominind -----

### Ex. 91/2

**ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:**

1 Give the technical name of the 4<sup>th</sup> degree of a scale:

-----

- 2 The **dominant** is the \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ degree of a scale.
- 3 Write the technical name of the **keynote**.

Ex. 92/1

**COMPLETE THE LETTER NAMES OF THE TONE DEGREES IN THE FOLLOWING TABLE:**

		<b>Tonic</b>	<b>Subdominant</b>	<b>Dominant</b>
1	C major	C		
2	G major		C	
3	F major			C

**REMEMBER!** – The subdominant in F major is **B<sup>b</sup>** and not B!

In the following exercises, we are going to use **abbreviations** of tone degrees:

**T** for tonic.

**Sd** for subdominant.

**D** for dominant.

You may, however, never use abbreviations in the exams!

Ex. 92/2

**WRITE THE REQUIRED NOTES ON THE STAVE, WITHOUT KEY SIGNATURE:**

- Hints:**
- Mind the **clef!**
  - When writing **without** key signature, place the necessary sharp or flat **in front of** the note as an **accidental**.

EXAMPLE:



*Sd of F major*

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

*Sd of F major            T of G major            D of C major            Sd of G major            T of F major*

6                      7                      8                      9                      10

*T of C major            Sd of C major            D of G major            D of F major            T of G major*

**Ex. 93/1**

**WRITE THE REQUIRED NOTES ON THE STAVE, WITH KEY SIGNATURE:**

**Hint:**        -    When writing **with** key signature, **place the key signature at the beginning**, and omit the accidentals.

EXAMPLE: *Sd of F major*

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

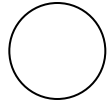
*T of C major            Sd of C major            D of G major            D of F major            T of G major*

6                      7                      8                      9                      10

*Sd of F- major            T of G major            D of C major            Sd of G major            T of F major*

**Ex. 94/1**

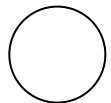
**FILL IN THE CORRECT TECHNICAL NAME:**



- 1 D is the \_\_\_\_\_ of G major.
- 2 G is the \_\_\_\_\_ of C major.
- 3 C is the \_\_\_\_\_ of G major.
- 4 B<sup>b</sup> is the \_\_\_\_\_ of F major.
- 5 G is the \_\_\_\_\_ of G major.
- 6 F is the \_\_\_\_\_ of C major.
- 7 C is the \_\_\_\_\_ of F major.

**Ex. 94/2**

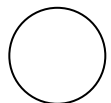
**STUDY THE FOLLOWING MELODY AND THEN ANSWER THE QUESTIONS:**



- 1 Name the **key**: \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Draw a circle around all **dominant notes**.
- 3 How many times does the **tonic note** appear? \_\_\_\_
- 4 How many times does the **subdominant note** appear? \_\_\_\_
- 5 Write the **letter names** of the notes at:  
 (a) \_\_\_\_\_ (b) \_\_\_\_\_

**Ex. 94/3**

**GIVE THE TECHNICAL NAMES OF THE FOLLOWING TONE DEGREES:**



### 3. SOLFA NOTATION.

Seven solfa syllables are used to **indicate pitch**. It is often used in singing. The first tone degree or step is “doh”, the second “ray”, etc. Each one has an abbreviation.

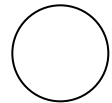
<i>Tone degrees:</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<i>Syllable:</i>	doh	ray	mi	fah	soh	lah	ti	(doh)
<i>Abbreviation:</i>	d	r	m	f	s	l	t	(d <sup>’</sup> )

(The 8<sup>th</sup> degree is indicated by <sup>1</sup> or <sup>’</sup> in **superscript**.)

In solfa notation the **key** is indicated at the beginning of a piece:

Doh is C: for C major.

**Sing** the solfa syllables when you play your scales.



#### Ex. 95/1

### WRITE THE SOLFA SYLLABLE AND ABBREVIATION UNDER EACH TONE DEGREE:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

You have now completed the module on **tone degrees**. Learn the **summary** on the next page. Cut it out and place it in your "**Summary File**" for safekeeping. Also learn the summary on **musical terms** once again. When you are ready, ask your teacher for the **module test** on **tone degrees**.

After that, you will be writing a revision test on **all** the work you have done so far. **Learn all your summaries**. When you are ready, ask your teacher for **revision test 3**.



\* \* \*



## SUMMARY

# *Tone degrees*

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PREGRADE 1

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T.D.p1



## TONE DEGREES / SCALE DEGREES:

There are **eight** degrees in a scale. The **lowest note** is the **first** degree. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> tone degrees have the same letter name.

## WITH OR WITHOUT KEY SIGNATURE:

EXAMPLES: - **with** key signature:



*4<sup>th</sup> degree of F major (accidentals omitted)*

- **without** key signature



*4<sup>th</sup> degree of F major (key signature omitted)*

## TECHNICAL NAMES:

First = tonic  
Fourth = subdominant  
Fifth = dominant

	Tonic	Subdominant	Dominant
C major	C	F	G
G major	G	C	D
F major	F	B $\flat$	C



## 8(2)

### NOTE:

- **Read the question carefully and always look at the clef first!**
- Always consider the **key signature**, and decide which key you are working in. If there is no key signature, analyse the **accidentals**.
- Never use **abbreviations** in tests or in the examination!
- Use **semitones**.
- When calculating a tone degree, begin counting from the **first degree**.  
Example: If you want to find a degree in C major, **start counting** from **C** and not from **D**.
- **Remember:** The subdominant in F major is B<sup>b</sup> and not B!

### SOLFA NOTATION:

<i>Tone degree:</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<i>Syllable:</i>	doh	ray	mi	fah	soh	lah	ti	(doh)
<i>Abbreviation:</i>	d	r	m	f	s	l	t	(d <sup>1</sup> )

\* \* \*