

The Anatomy of Minor Scales

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A minor scale is just like a major scale except that the order of whole steps and half steps within the scale is different. This means that certain notes will be flattened or sharpened from the major scale to adjust for those different steps. There are three types of minor scales; natural minor, harmonic minor (the most common), and melodic minor (the least common). These can be seen in the examples in the key of “F” below:



F Major Scale

F: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8/1



F Natural Minor Scale ($\flat 3 \ \flat 6 \ \flat 7$)

f: 1 2 $\flat 3$ 4 5 $\flat 6$ $\flat 7$ 8/1



F Harmonic Minor Scale ($\flat 3 \ \flat 6$)

f: 1 2 $\flat 3$ 4 5 $\flat 6$ 7 8/1



f: 1 2 $\flat 3$ 4 5 6 7 8/1 $\flat 7$ $\flat 6$ 5 4 $\flat 3$ 2 1

F Melodic Minor Scale

($\flat 3 \ \flat 6 \ \flat 7$ Ascending and $\flat 3 \ \flat 6 \ \flat 7$ Descending)