

Guide to Music Theory and Ear Training



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Call it the global language or lovers' best companion, and you won't be far from the truth. From Europe, North or South America, Asia, Africa, or elsewhere, a good piece of music communicates a common language. And this is almost always true because you don't need to understand the lyrics to enjoy a good song. It's a rule of thumb: true for all. This is not to say that lyrical content is irrelevant. Once the rhythm, harmony, and melody are appealing, it can win hearts over, irrespective of demography, age, sex, or religion.

Music theory is the practice, methods, techniques or any form of creativity musicians employ to produce or communicate music. You can use it to examine the basics of music and provide a system to interpret musical compositions. The basic theory defines the elements that makeup harmony, melody, and rhythm.

Reasons to study music theory and develop your ears

In order to develop your listening skills well, you need to understand the basic theory behind music. If you do, you'll easily know when an element is missing, or not necessary. Here's why you should study the theory and develop your ears:

- **Creativity:** the theory will help you get creative. Many people erroneously believe that learning music theory is unnecessary. Wrong! If you know the rules, tricks, or techniques, you can apply them when necessary. As a result, you will be in full control and have much greater freedom with your instruments. With such knowledge, you can make some variations or add some special touches that give your piece a flare of creativity.
- **It helps us communicate better with others:** If you are not knowledgeable about the terms, jargon, or industry standards, you may find it hard to communicate well with your peers. What's the key? What's the chord sequence? What is and isn't possible? All of these are questions that you may not be aware of if you are unfamiliar with the subject.
- **It is a time-saver:** You could tell a pianist to put a C in a Dm chord. Or ask if an instrument has such a note. If you have the knowledge, you tend to communicate more easily and faster.
- **It helps when choosing a new handpan;** appropriate knowledge would guide you in picking the right instruments required to provide the desired sound.

When and where to improve your hearing and learn music theory

There's no specific time or location where you can improve your hearing and learn music theory. The good news is that you don't need an instrument to practice. You can do it by listening to and watching experts on YouTube channels. The house, office, or school are all good places to improve your skills. Mornings, afternoons, or evenings are all good times to improve your music skills. The bathroom seems like a common location for everyone to practice singing without music. However, for professional reasons, the music studio is a better place to practice and refine your art. There could also be a professional music training center near you that you can start with.

In what way you can practice ear training?

- **Focus on the frequency:** instead of practicing for ten hours a day, two days a week, you should do it for four hours a day. Regular practice is better than doing it for

long hours. Also, avoid jumping into harder tasks. Rather, take it in progression. This will help boost your confidence.

- Start and practice progressively; ear training is a skill that you should make sure to practice from a bottom-up approach. Make sure you don't skip any steps. Jumping on any stage would get you overwhelmed.
- Train to recognize notes: [note ear training](#) is about humming or singing while playing a note over and again. This will help you get better at identifying the various notes.
- Keep a record of your progress: to be able to track your improvement, you need to keep a record of every achievement. This will serve as encouragement and inspire you to work harder.
- Use your instruments to transcribe music: you can practice by using your favorite songs. Start with the melody and gradually figure out the chords, or vice-versa. Always practice in both ways.

Techniques for learning music theory



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When you hear the word "ear," please don't take it literally. In this context, it is not about the two fleshy lobes on the two sides of your head. It's rather more to do with the ability to listen to the sound, digest it, and replicate what you hear. An effective way to improve listening skills is by employing ear training techniques. By dedicating regular time to learning these skills per day, you can become better:

- Practice singing and playing scales by playing the first note of the scale, then the second, third, and so on, while singing along until you have completed all of the scales. The better you can hear a note in your head, the better you'll become at identifying pitches.
- Interval ear training technique: the number of notes between the first and the last is what is known as intervals. You may create sets of chords that are attractive to the ear by having a solid understanding of the spacing between pitches.
- Chord ear training technique: if you play three or more notes at a time, you have formed a chord. You may create better-sounding chords in your music by training your ear to recognize the type of chord you're hearing or which notes fit well together. It will also help you create certain emotional effects.
- Chord progression technique: Learning to identify the chord characteristics that make up a certain chord progression is the first step. The next step is to determine if a song is in either a major key or a minor key. It helps in setting the components for a musical piece.
- Functional ear training: the moment you can identify patterns between different kinds of music, the easier it will become to know more music over time.
- Melodic dictation: Transcribing or playing music improves melodic dictation and learning skills.

In conclusion

Music is great food for your soul. You can win hearts easily with great musical skills. Whether you want to become a lead chorister in your choir or a lead vocalist in your professional singing group, maybe you just want to do it for your sweetheart. It's always nice to learn the theories and get better at the hearing. A perfect point to start is music theory for beginners. Adhering to the principles and practicing the appropriate techniques will keep your career on track. And soon, you may just be seen at the Grammys or the O2 Arena. Wouldn't that be nice?