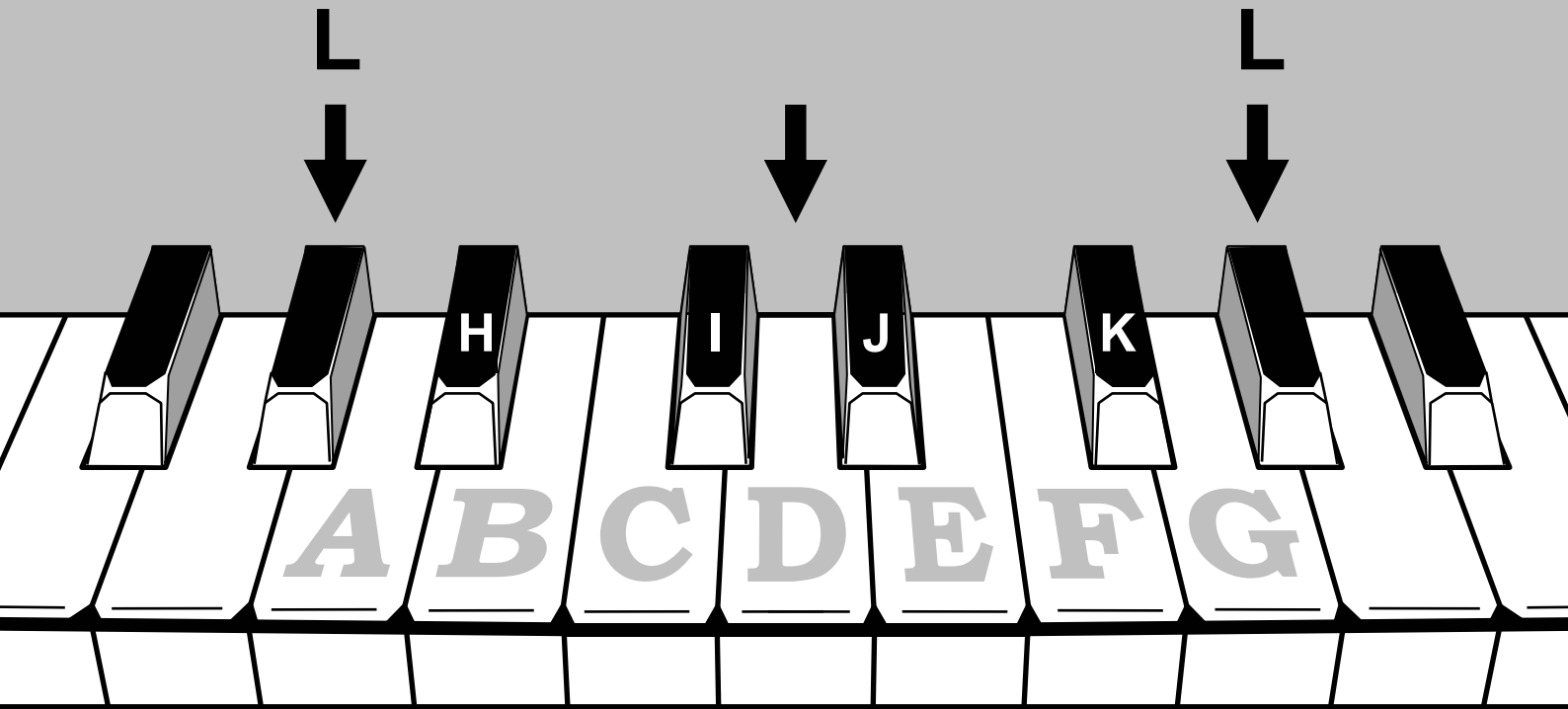
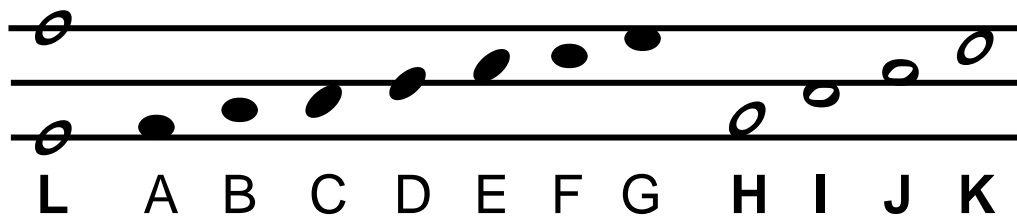


Express Stave by John Keller



Express Stave music notation is based on the symmetrical way the naturals (white keys) are named on the piano keyboard.

The Express Stave has 3 lines, and the music alphabet ABCDEFG simply fits inside.



Notehead Colour:

The naturals ABCDEFG always have solid (black) noteheads.

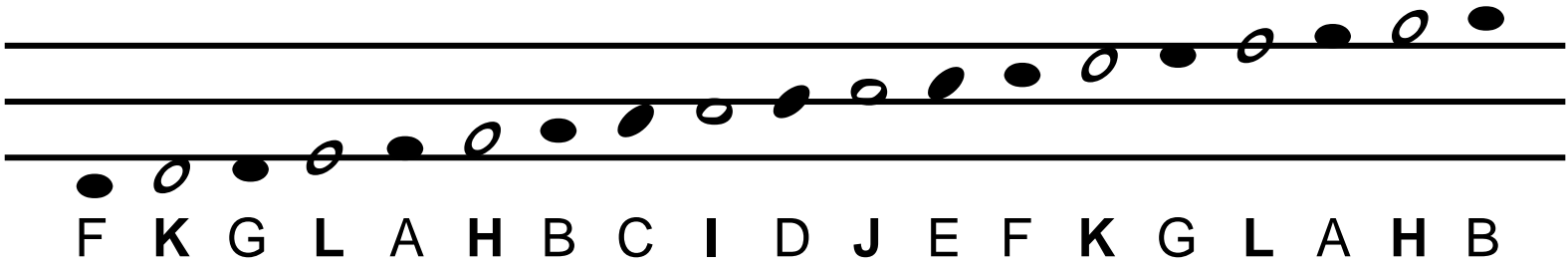
Extra letters **H I J K** and **L** are used for the accidentals (black keys), which are written as white (unfilled) noteheads.

This is the preferred "reverse colour" version of ES.

Time values for half- and whole-notes are indicated by double and triple stems, not by changing notehead colour.

Sharps, flats and key signatures are not used.

The Chromatic Scale:



Notehead Shape:

Express Stave uses two notehead "shapes":

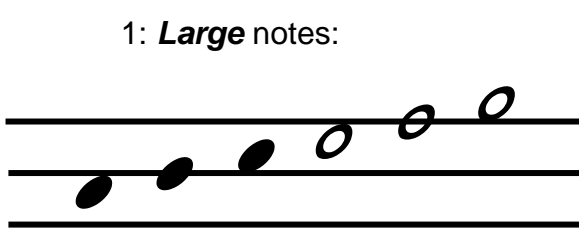
The **small** or non-sloping noteheads are for the 6 notes AB, I J and FG.

The **large** or sloping noteheads are for the 6 notes C D E and K L H.

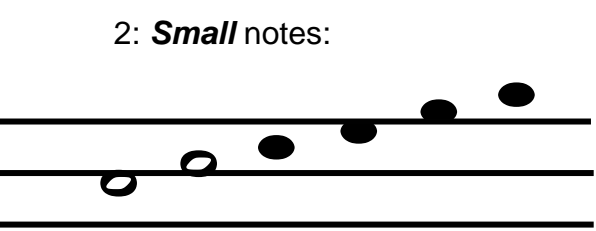
In the **chromatic scale**, these two shapes alternate.

The Two Wholetone Scales:

1: **Large** notes:



2: **Small** notes:

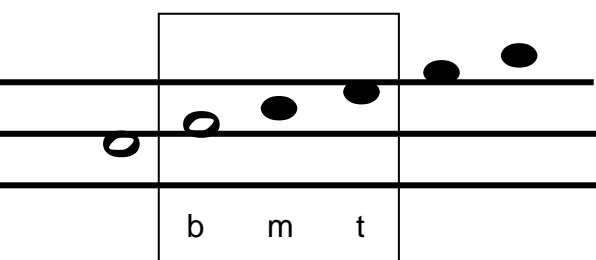
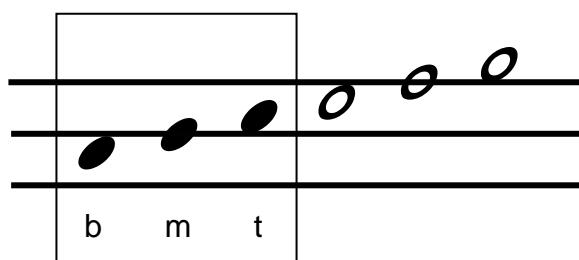


Think of the **Large** notes as each being associated with a **Line**.

They are bottom, middle and top of the line.

Think of the **Small** notes as each being associated with a **Space**.

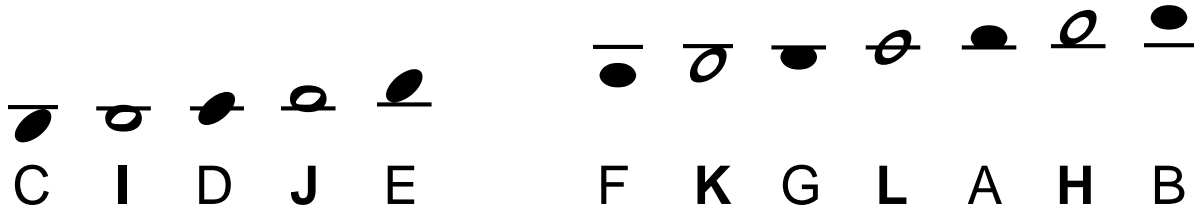
They are bottom, middle and top of the space.



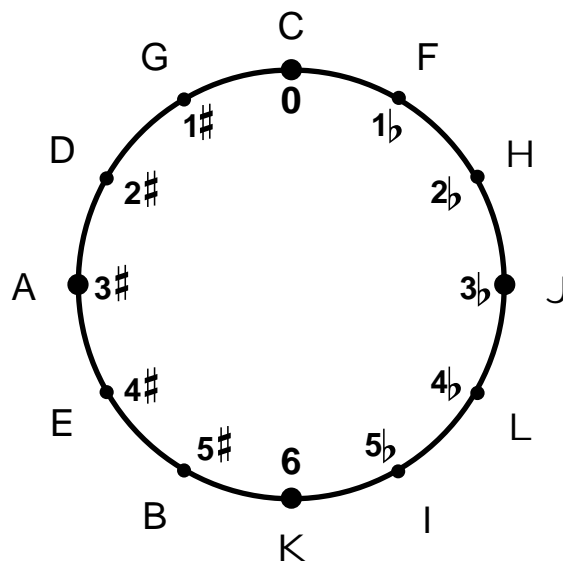
Stand-alone Note Symbols:

In Express Stave all noteheads are distinct except B and F.

For the stand alone symbols, the B and F notes are drawn relative to the L line, rather than to the D line.



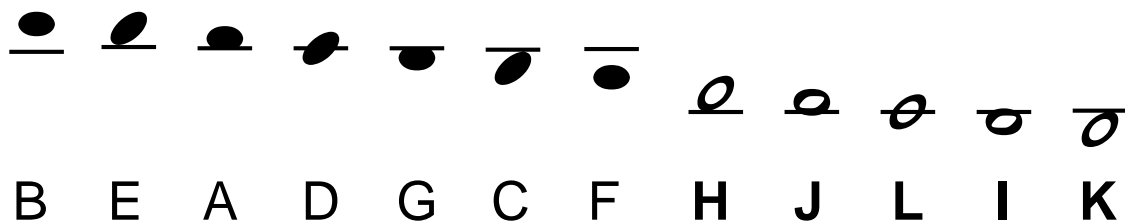
Key Circle Order:



The Key Circle, "Key Clock" or "Cycle of 4ths" shows the traditional notation key signatures (major keys shown above), or how closely related one key is to another.

Chords often progress around this circle in the clockwise direction (as time flows).

The noteheads for this clockwise progression form a descending sequence, cycling through all the natural notes then all the accidentals (like day following night).



(Descending perfect 5ths or ascending perfect 4ths)

Lines and Spaces:

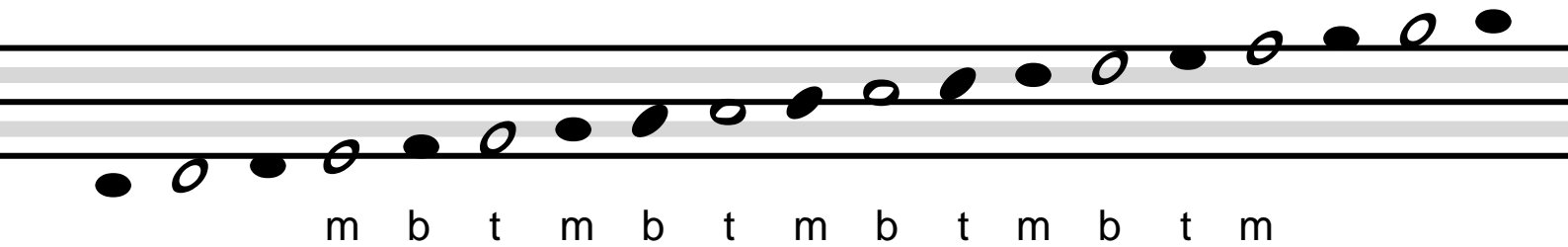
In Express Stave (as in traditional notation), notes can be classified as **lines** or **spaces**.

The **line** notes are **L** and **D**, but (surprisingly) we can also classify the two non-touching notes **B** and **F** as "lines".

The **B** and **F** lines are usually invisible, but they can be made visible to show the similarity of Express Stave to the traditional 5-line stave. The 5 ES lines are then **L**, **B**, **D**, **F** and **L**.

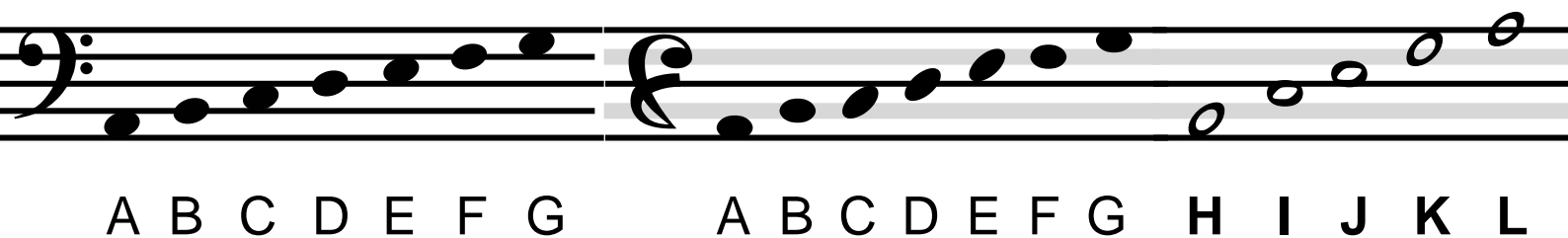
The **space** notes are **A C E G** (black) as well as **H I J K** (white). Space notes all touch a (real) line. There is a natural as well as an accidental in each "space". Additionally, within each space, one note is **bottom**, and one is **top**, eg **A** is "bottom" (**b**) and **H** is "top" (**t**).

Line notes are all classified as "middle" (**m**), meaning midline or midspace. In chromatic order ascending, the notes cycle through the three forms middle, bottom, top (**m, b, t**).

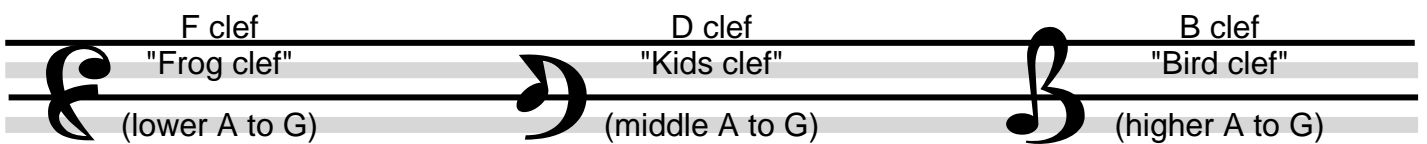


Similarity with Traditional Notation:

Express Stave's notation of the naturals (white keys) shows a close similarity with the traditional Bass Stave. Both are "alphabet staves", spanning the natural notes **A** to **G**. The accidentals (black keys) simply use the five additional letters **H** to **L**.



Three Express Stave Clefs:



As with traditional music theory, each clef also defines the lettername of one stave line.