Noodlecafé

The circle of fifths

A map of every key, on one page.

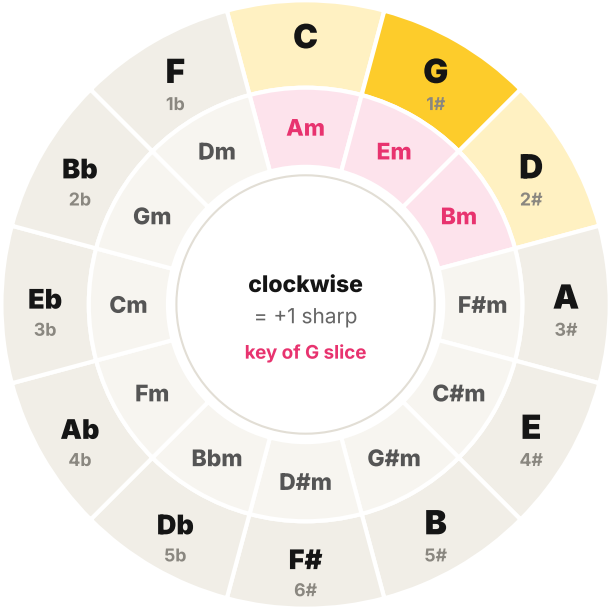
C G D A E B F# → +1 sharp each

How to read it

- **Clockwise** = up a fifth (5 notes up). Each step adds one sharp.
- **Counter-clockwise** = down a fifth. Each step adds one flat.
- **Inside** = the relative minor: same notes, sadder home.
- **A key's neighbours** are its IV and V chords. The 3 minors under them are its vi, ii and iii.
- **Next-door keys** share 6 of their 7 notes, so songs move easily between them.

find the chords of any key	example: D
1 · find the key on the outside	D
2 · add both neighbours	G and A
3 · add the 3 minors inside	Bm, Em, F#m

The circle · majors outside, their relative minors inside



The 6-chord slice · 5 guitar-friendly keys

key	majors · I IV V	minors · vi ii iii
C	C F G	Am Dm Em
G	G C D	Em Am Bm
D	D G A	Bm Em F#m
A	A D E	F#m Bm C#m
E	E A B	C#m F#m G#m

Relative minor on guitar

- **3 frets down** from the major root.
- G → E · C → A · D → B
- Low E: G at fret 3 → E open. A string: C at fret 3 → A open.
- Same notes, same chords, a different home.

Sharps and flats per key

key	count	which	key	count	which
G	1 #	F#	F	1 b	Bb
D	2 #	F# C#	Bb	2 b	Bb Eb
A	3 #	F# C# G#	Eb	3 b	Bb Eb Ab
E	4 #	+ D#	Ab	4 b	+ Db
B	5 #	+ A#	Db	5 b	+ Gb

Order of sharps: F C G D A E B. Order of flats: B E A D G C F.

Try it now · 2 minutes

Play G, C, D, then Em, Am, Bm: the whole G slice. Move one step clockwise and do it in D: D, G, A, Bm, Em, F#m.

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