

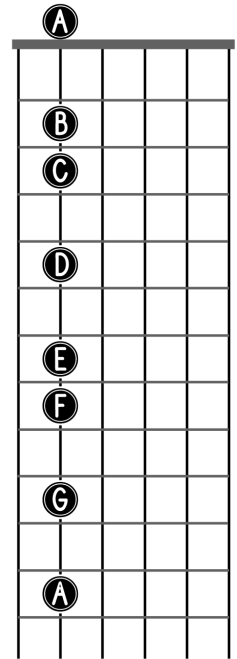
Sharps & Flats: The In-Between Notes

As you know, the musical alphabet is made up of 7 letters:

A B C D E F G

After 'G' the alphabet starts again at 'A'. The distance between one 'A' and the next (or between any letter and the same letter in the next round of the alphabet) is called an **octave**.

The fretboard on the right shows a full octave on the A-string. You'll notice, though that there are 5 blank frets in the octave. This is because there aren't only 7 notes in an octave. There are actually **12!**



Back when notes were given letter names, these in-between notes weren't used. Because of this, we have to use special symbols for them. The special symbols are:

and **b**

These symbols may look like a hashtag and an odd-looking letter 'b', but they are actually a **sharp** and a **flat**.

The sharp (#) is the note 1 semitone higher than the letter note

The flat (b) is the note 1 semitone lower than the letter note

This means that all the in-between notes can be referred to as either a sharp of the note below, or a flat of the note above. For example, the note between A and B can be called A# or Bb. The full musical alphabet of all 12 notes is as follows (in-between notes in red):

A A#/B^b B C C#/D^b D D#/E^b E
F F#/G^b G G#/A^b