

hey, it's  
kids!

# SPARKY THE MUSIC THEORY DOG!



**Q:** Dear Sparky:  
Since we are supposed to use different approaches for identifying perfect and imperfect intervals, can you summarize them all into one system?

--I.M., Staten Island, NY

**A: WOOF!\***

**\*TRANSLATION:** THE FOLLOWING CHART SHOWS AN APPROACH FOR *IDENTIFYING ANY INTERVAL*. A SIMILAR APPROACH CAN BE USED WHEN YOU NEED TO *WRITE* A PARTICULAR INTERVAL ABOVE OR BELOW A **GIVEN NOTE**: FIRST, ADD A NOTE ABOVE OR BELOW THE GIVEN NOTE AT THE CORRECT **DISTANCE**, THEN FOLLOW STEPS 2 THROUGH 4 OF THIS CHART TO **IDENTIFY** IT. THEN, IF NECESSARY, **ALTER** THE NOTE YOU ADDED WITH AN **ACCIDENTAL** TO CREATE THE INTERVAL CALLED FOR.

**STEP 1:** DETERMINE THE **DISTANCE** OF THE INTERVAL BY COUNTING **LINES AND SPACES**.



COUNT THE **BOTTOM NOTE** AS **ONE**, AND CONTINUE UNTIL YOU REACH THE **TOP NOTE**.

**STEP 2:** COVER UP ALL **ACCIDENTALS**.



**STEP 3:** DETERMINE THE **INFLECTION** OF THE INTERVAL IN FRONT OF YOU (THE ONE WITHOUT ACCIDENTALS!) AS FOLLOWS:

IF IT IS A  
**UNISON OR OCTAVE:**

THE INTERVAL SHOWN  
IS A  
**PERFECT UNISON**  
OR  
**PERFECT OCTAVE**.

REALLY.  
IT **JUST IS**.

IF IT IS A  
**FOURTH OR FIFTH:**

IF THE INTERVAL USES  
THE NOTES **F** AND **B**,  
IT IS EITHER AN  
**AUGMENTED FOURTH**  
OR A  
**DIMINISHED FIFTH**.

OTHERWISE, THE  
INTERVAL IS  
**PERFECT**.

IF IT IS A  
**SECOND, THIRD,  
SIXTH OR SEVENTH:**

IF THE **TOP NOTE** IS  
IN THE **MAJOR** KEY OF  
THE **BOTTOM NOTE**,  
THE INTERVAL IS  
**MAJOR**.

IF THE **BOTTOM NOTE** IS  
IN THE **MAJOR** KEY OF  
THE **TOP NOTE**,  
THE INTERVAL IS  
**MINOR**.

**STEP 4:** ADD THE **ORIGINAL ACCIDENTALS** BACK, **ONE AT A TIME**, AND TRACK HOW THE INTERVAL CHANGES INFLECTION.



**REMEMBER:** ACCIDENTALS CAN **NEVER** AFFECT THE **DISTANCE** OF AN INTERVAL... ALL THEY CAN EVER DO IS CHANGE THE **INFLECTION**!

THIS METHOD MAY SEEM **COMPLICATED** AT FIRST, BUT IT BECOMES **EASIER** AND **FASTER** WITH **PRACTICE**... AND IT GIVES YOU THE **CORRECT ANSWER EVERY TIME**!

**DOING STUFF THE SPARKY WAY IS ALWAYS FUN!**