

ACCIDENTALS

Accidentals are signs written in front of a musical note to change its pitch. We have five accidentals.

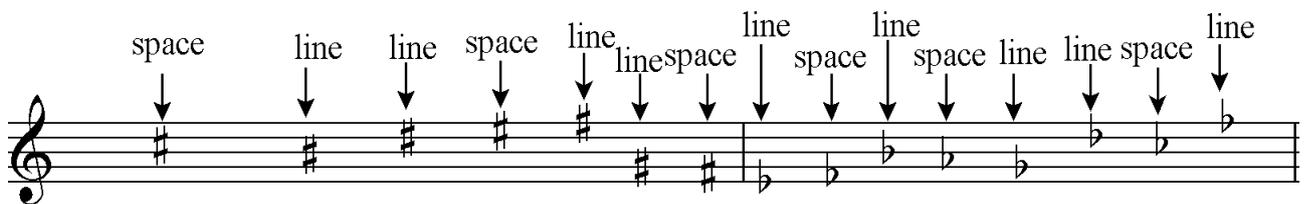
ACCIDENTALS	NAMES	MEANING
♭	Flat	Lowers the pitch of a given musical note by one semitone
♭♭	Double flat	Lowers the pitch of a given musical note by two semitones(a tone)
♯	Sharp	Raises the pitch of a given musical note by one semitone
×	Double sharp	Raises the pitch of a given musical note by two semitones(a tone)
♮	Natural	Restore back to the original pitch

A semitone is the shortest distance in pitch between any two musical notes on the keyboard.

From C to C[♯] for instance is a semitone. From C[♯] to D on the keyboard is a semitone. Hence, a semitone is the distance in pitch between a white key and the nearest key to it whether black or white OR the distance in pitch between a black key and the nearest key to it. Semitones can be counted backwards or forward. Two semitones make a tone just like two semicircles make a circle. A letter name with a natural means you play just that note. Hence, F[♮] is the same as F itself. An accidental last for only one bar except otherwise indicated. Look at the illustration below



To see how accidentals appear when written on the line or space, see the illustration below



MORE ON ACCIDENTALS

Whenever you encounter a letter name with a sharp or flat, play the key immediately ahead or behind it respectively. So E[♯] is actually F, B[♯] is actually C just like C[♭] is B and F[♭] indicates E. They are all enharmonically equivalent.