

# Note Names and Chord Qualities in C Major/A Minor

Diagram illustrating the note names and chord qualities for the C Major and A Minor scales. The C Major scale notes are labeled: Tonic (C), Supertonic (D), Mediant (E), Subdominant (F), Dominant (G), Submediant (A), and Subtonic (B). The A Minor scale notes are labeled: Tonic (A), Supertonic (B), Mediant (C), Subdominant (D), Dominant (E), Submediant (F), and Subtonic (G).

The Tonic is the principle and first *tone* of the scale.  
 The Dominant is the next most significant tone and is a fifth above the tonic.  
 The Subdominant being the next most significant is a fifth below the tonic (hence 'sub', meaning below, as in submarine).  
 The Mediant is halfway between (i.e. in the 'middle' of) the Tonic and Dominant.  
 The Submediant is halfway between the Tonic and Sub-Dominant.  
 The Supertonic is a whole step above the Tonic.  
 The Subtonic is a whole step below the Tonic. (occurs in natural minor)  
 The Leading Tone is the last scale degree in the Major scale which 'leads' back to the tonic.

When taken in order of scale degree the read as follows:

Scale degrees in order: Tonic, Supertonic, Mediant, Subdominant, Dominant, Submediant, Subtonic.

When analyzing chords, one writes the roman numeral representing the scale degree.  
 The capitalized numerals indicate major triads, the lower case numerals indicate minor triads, and the degree symbol indicates a diminished triad.  
 This type of notation is used to identify the way chords *function* within a particular key.

Chord qualities for A Minor: i, ii°, III, iv, v, VI, VII.

The major scale is much like the minor scale above in that the note names are almost entirely the same (with the exception of the last scale degree), however the *quality* of the chords (e.g. major, minor, diminished) are different.

Chord qualities for C Major: I, ii, iii, IV, V, vi, vii°.

Let's look at the two scales together. Notice how the chord qualities line up between the relative keys.

Comparison of chord qualities between C Major and A Minor:

- C Major: I (Tonic), ii (Supertonic), iii (Mediant), IV (Subdominant), V (Dominant), vi (Submediant), vii° (Leading Tone)
- A Minor: i (Tonic), ii° (Supertonic), III (Mediant), iv (Subdominant), v (Dominant), VI (Submediant), VII (Subtonic)

Now let's add the solfège syllables. Notice that the syllables match the *quality* of the scale degree rather than its *function*.

C: I ii iii IV V vi vii°  
 Tonic Supertonic Mediant Subdominant Dominant Submediant Leading Tone  
 Do Re Mi Fa Sol La Ti

a: i ii° III iv v VI VII  
 Tonic Supertonic Mediant Subdominant Dominant Submediant Subtonic  
 La Ti Do Re Mi Fa Sol