Ch. 6: Intervals

Sight-Singing: 2.18-2.31

Major Key Melodies that don’t begin on Tonic. In Bass Clef

In this chapter, we combine pitches to form intervals. We also examine how composers use intervals to write music in different styles.

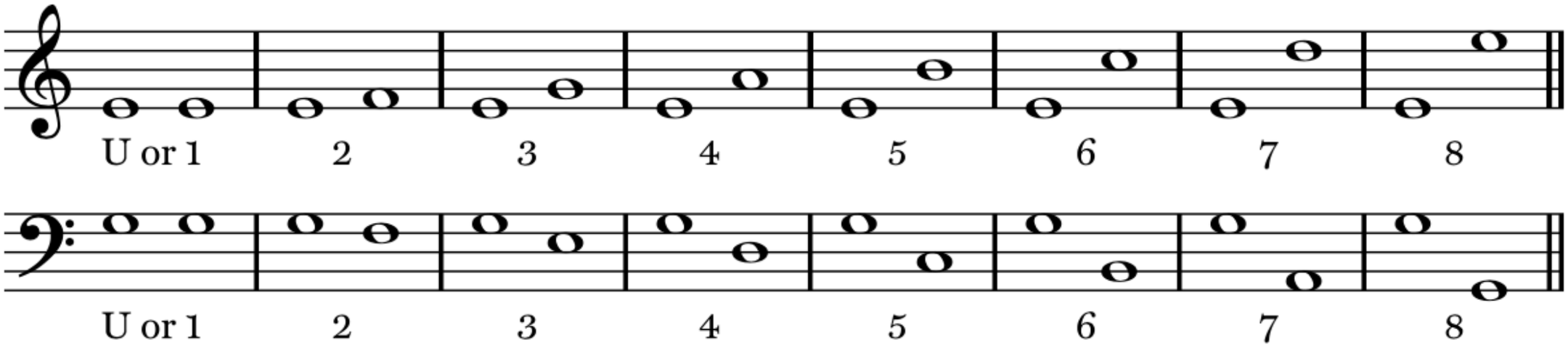
Key Concept

An INTERVAL measures the musical space between pitches. Intervals are identified by their size (typically a number between 1 and 8) and quality (such as major or minor).

When naming intervals, always count the first and last letter names. For example, A to D is a fourth (A-B-C-D); ANY A up to ANY D is some kind of fourth, no matter what the accidental. Similarly, from A down to D is a fifth (A-G-F-E-D)

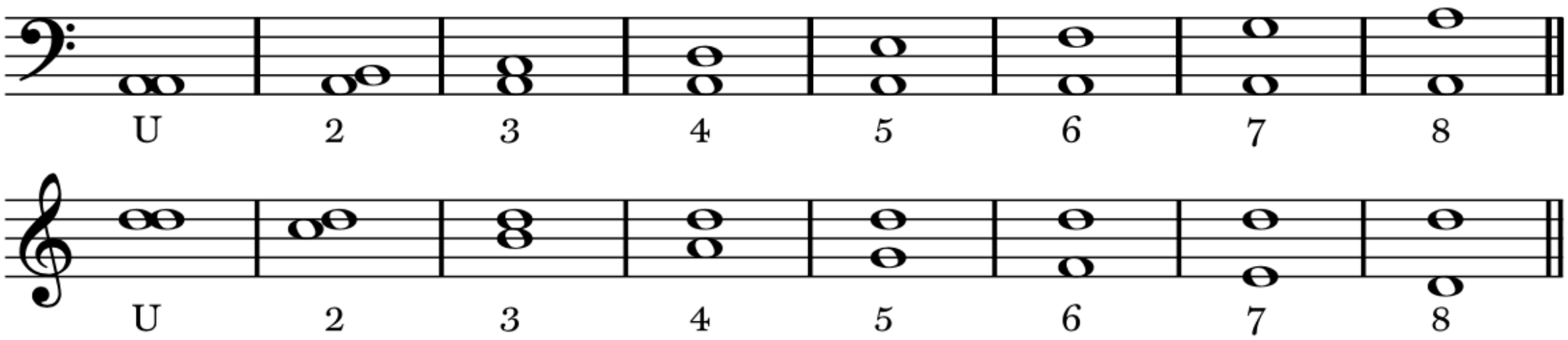
Melodic Intervals

Formed between to successive pitches in a melodic line



Harmonic Intervals

Formed between to pitches sounding at the same time

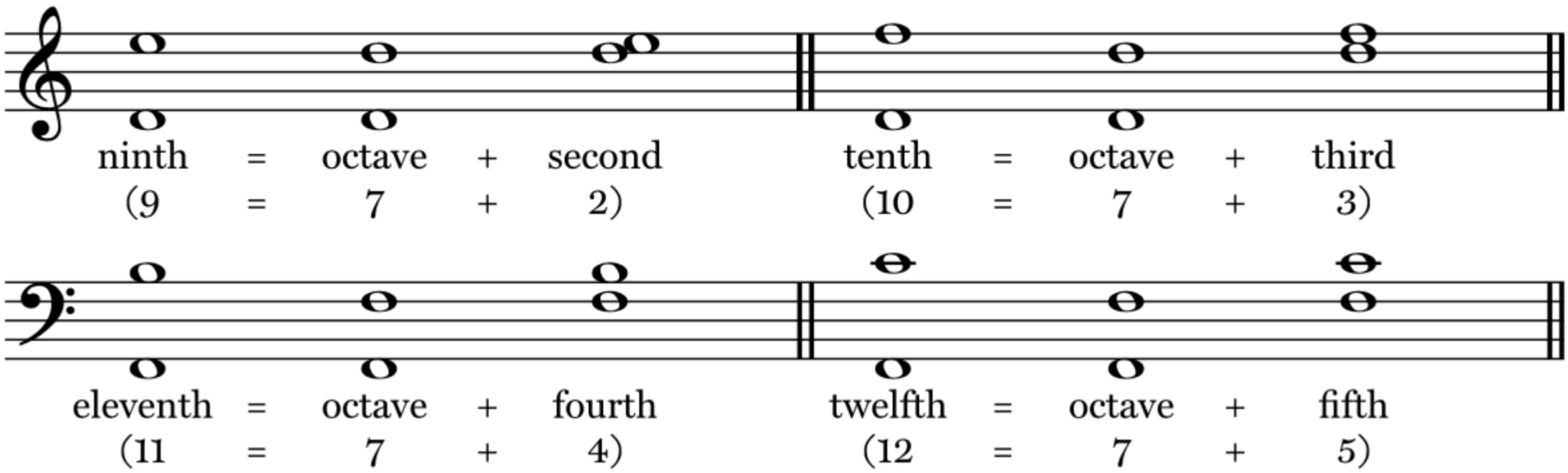


Compound Intervals

All the intervals in previous slides are SIMPLE INTERVALS: they are an octave or smaller in size. Intervals larger than an octave are COMPOUND INTERVALS.

To name compound intervals, add 7 to the simple interval. For example, a second plus an octave equals a ninth, and a fourth plus an octave equals an eleventh. (Add 7 rather than 8 because we number the unison as 1 rather than 0)

EXAMPLE 6.3: Naming compound intervals



Step 1) Find the octave above bottom note

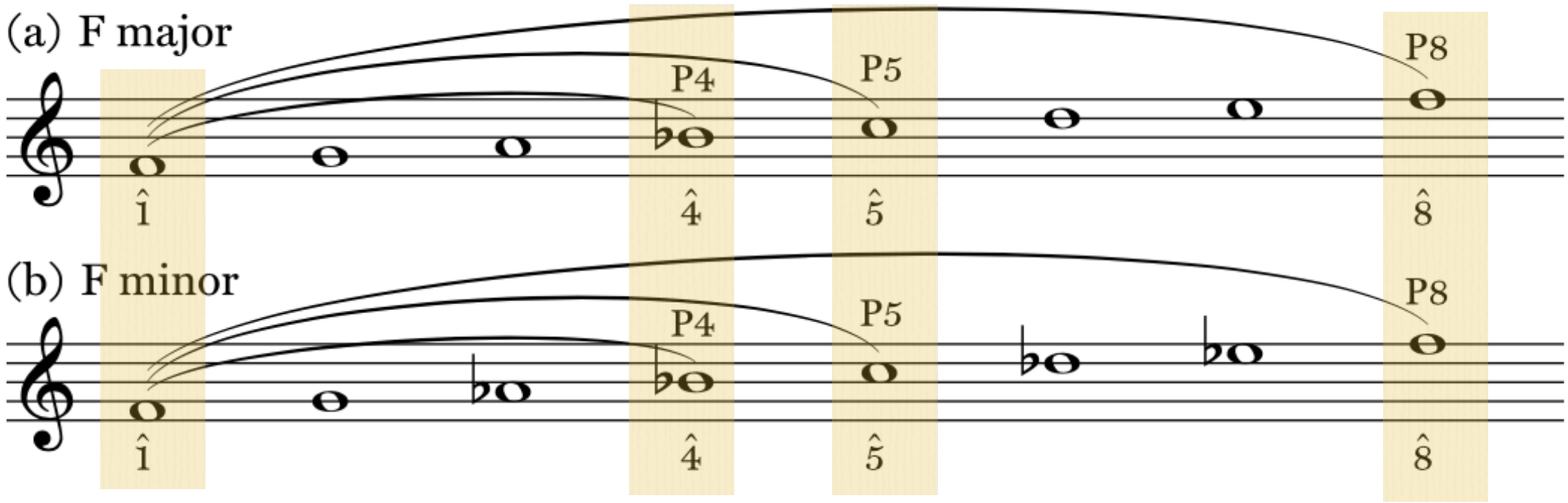
Step 2) Figure out how many steps above (interval)

You now have the knowledge to complete assignment 6.1 DUE THURSDAY 9/20/18

Interval Quality

While an interval's size - Second, third, fourth, and so on - indicates roughly how large the interval is, its quality provides a more precise description.

EXAMPLE 6.6: Perfect intervals in major and minor scales



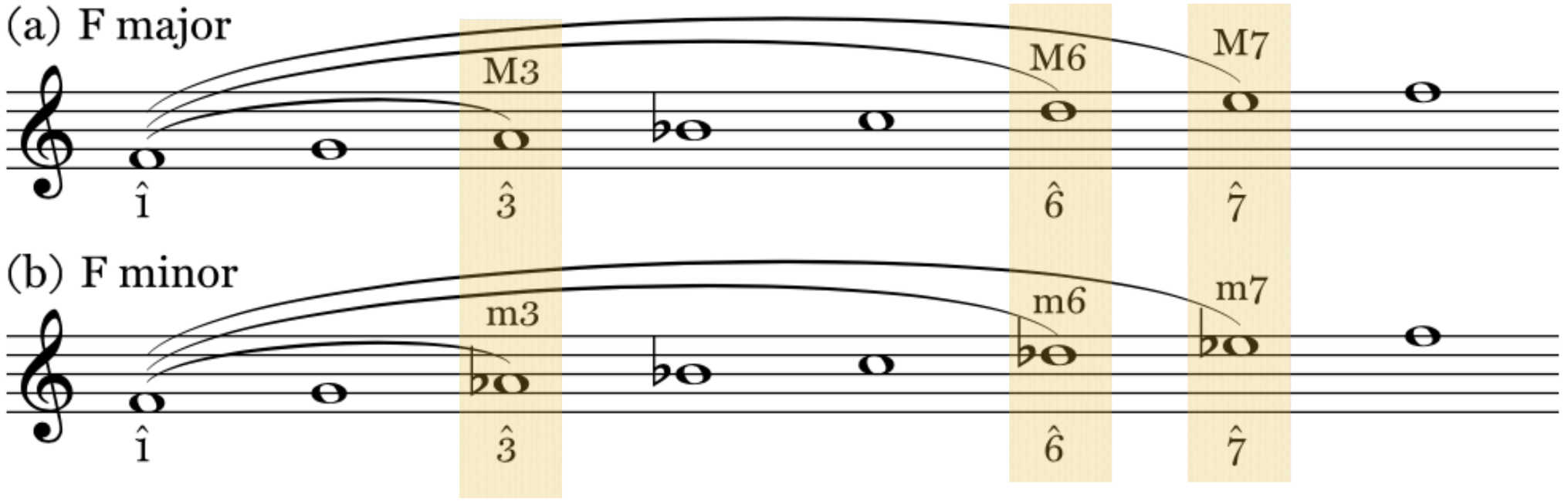
Above you'll find the F Major Scale and its parallel, the F Minor Scale. You'll see that scale degrees 1,4,5, and 8 in the two scales are exactly the same. The Interval from 1 to 4 is a PERFECT FOURTH (abbreviated P4), from 1 to 5 is a PERFECT FIFTH (P5) and from 1 to 8 is a PERFECT OCTAVE (P8). The interval from 1 to itself is a PERFECT UNISON (PU). From the time of the earliest writings about music, around 5th century BCE, these intervals were considered the purest, hence the term "perfect."

Key Concept

Perfect Intervals, which share identical pitches in parallel major and minor keys, are never major or minor. Memorize these labels:

PU, P4, P5, P8

EXAMPLE 6.7: Major and minor intervals within scales



Now take a look at the same scales. Compare the intervals between 1 and 3, 1 and 6, and 1 and 7. In the major scale these form a MAJOR THIRD (M3), MAJOR SIXTH (M6), and MAJOR SEVENTH (M7), respectively. In the minor scale they are MINOR THIRD (m3), MINOR SIXTH (m6), and MINOR SEVENTH (m7). These are the intervals that give major and minor scale keys their characteristic sound.

Key Concept

Major intervals 3, 6 and 7 (built above the tonic of a major scale) are a half step larger than the corresponding minor intervals 3, 6, and 7 (built above the tonic in a minor scale). The interval between 1 and 2 is always a M2.

SUMMARY

Intervals may be

- Melodic: Measured between successive notes
- Harmonic: Measured between pitches sounding at the same time
- Simple: Spanning an Octave or less
- Compound: Spanning more than an octave

Intervals are labeled by their size and quality

- Size measures the number of letter names spanned: U, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
- Intervals 2, 3, 6, 7 may be major or minor, but not perfect
- Intervals U, 4, 5, and 8 may be perfect, but not major or minor

You now have the knowledge to complete assignment 6.2 and 6.3 DUE MONDAY 9/24/18

How to find quality of an Interval

STEP 1) Look at the bottom note of an interval

STEP 2) Is top note in the MAJOR KEY of bottom note?