

Musicianship Placement Exam

Written Music Theory Skills - Resources

What is on the written music theory skills portion of the musicianship placement exam?

Note Reading (treble and bass clef)	<i>Sample:</i> A written note is written on the staff in treble or bass clef. Identify the letter name of the note, including sharps and flats.
Major & Minor Key Signatures	<i>Sample:</i> Name the minor key that has four sharps.
Major & Minor (Natural, Harmonic, and Melodic) Scales	<i>Sample:</i> A scale is written on the staff in treble or bass clef. Identify the root, and the type of scale.
Key Relationships between Major and Minor Keys	<i>Sample:</i> What is the relative minor key of Eb major?
Interval Spelling (up to an octave; including quality)	<i>Sample:</i> A note is written on the staff in treble or bass clef. Spell a Perfect 5 th above this note. <i>Sample:</i> Two notes are written on the staff in treble or bass clef. Identify the interval (both the distance and the quality) formed from these two notes.
Triad Spelling (Major, Minor, Diminished, Augmented)	<i>Sample:</i> Spell the following triad using letter names: F minor
Triad Identification (Major, Minor, Diminished, Augmented. May or may not be in Root Position)	<i>Sample:</i> A triad is written on the staff in treble or bass clef. Identify the root and quality of the triad.
Rhythmic Notation in both Simple and Compound Meter	<i>Sample:</i> A rhythm is written on the staff in 3/4, or other common time signatures. Indicate if the rhythmic notation is correct or incorrect.

Resources and materials listed on page 2.

Selected iPhone apps for written theory skills:

- Music Theory: ScaleNet (free)
- Theory Lessons (\$2.99)
- Music Theory Pro (\$3.99)
- Learn Music Theory – Basic Rudiments by UMT (free)
- Hooktheory I (\$14.99)

Online resources:

<https://www.teoria.com/>

- Short tutorials with soundclips covering music fundamentals & more advanced concepts; Customizable practice exercises.

<https://www.musictheory.net/>

- Short lessons and practice exercises. Interactive lessons have accompanying visuals.

<https://www.openmusictheory.com/>

- Open source music theory textbook. Includes extensive video links to “hear” concepts.

<http://tobyrush.com/>

- Visually clear and beautiful charts summarizing music theory concepts

Sample Textbooks:

- *Scales, Intervals, Keys, Triads, Rhythm, and Meter* by John Clough and Joyce Conley, published by Norton
- *Basic Materials in Music Theory: A Programmed Approach* by Greg Steinke and Paul Harder, currently published by Pearson
- *A Creative Approach to Music Fundamentals* by William Duckworth, currently published by Schirmer
- *Elements of Music* by Joseph Straus, currently published by Pearson

Preparing for the Aural Skills placement exam

What is on the aural skills placement exam?

Skill	Sample questions
Melodic contour	Is the second pitch higher or lower than the first?
Scales	What type of scale is this? (major, natural minor, harmonic minor, melodic minor)
Intervals	What kind of interval do you hear?
Triads	What kind of triad do you hear (only root position triads)
Rhythm	You hear a rhythm; determine the correct rhythm from a list of five choices.
Melody	You hear a melody; determine the correct melody from a list of five choices.

iPhone apps for aural skills drill, tutoring

* = recommended or promising

Name of app	Description	Cost
* Earmaster – Music Theory	For iPad. More comprehensive course. Will play a note or pattern, and then have you sing it back. It analyzes your singing and tells you if you're right or wrong. Often works! More advanced skills require in-app purchase.	Free (in-app purchases range from \$5.99 to \$14.99)
Notes Teacher	Puts notes on a staff and has you sing them back. Clunky interface. Would be best if you had a teacher walk you through the exercises first.	Free (in-app purchase to upgrade to "premium" version, \$1.99)
Ultimate Music Theory	Sign in using Facebook or Gmail. Asks a lot of questions before it lets you do anything. Extensive flash-card interface.	Free (in-app purchase to unlock app, \$29.99)
* ABRSM Aural Trainer (Royal Conservatory, UK)	Like Earmaster, analyzes some of your singing through a microphone. Comprehensive, but you have to buy packs.	Free (in-app purchases to upgrade to particular grades range from £4.99 to £7.99)
Aural Wiz Plus	Drills intervals, scales, some chords, and four types of scale. Has "learn" and "quiz" area.	Up-front cost of \$4.99
* The Piano	Standard piano keyboard with octave designations on each key. Keys are resizable. Various sounds (piano, xylophone, etc) possible.	Free
(*) Ear Training	Contains several different tasks such as higher/lower, pitch ID, interval ID, chord ID and scale ID. Drawback: clunky interface, annoying ads if you don't buy the pro version.	Basic version free, upgrade to pro version,