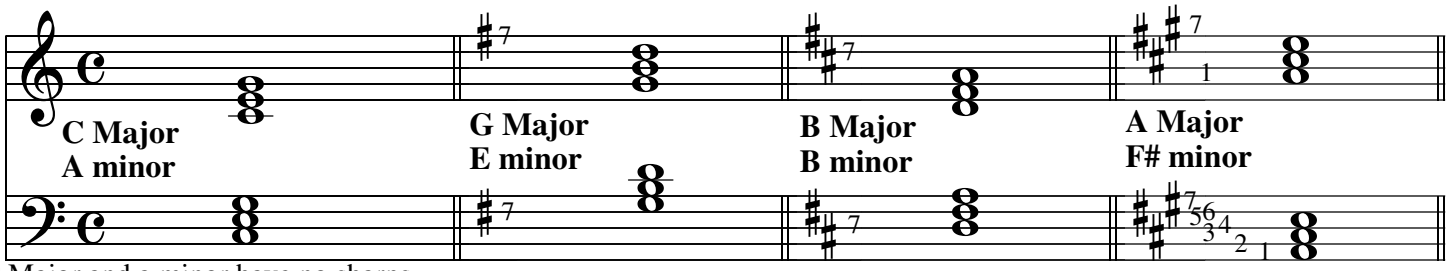
Key Signatures: Go Figure.....

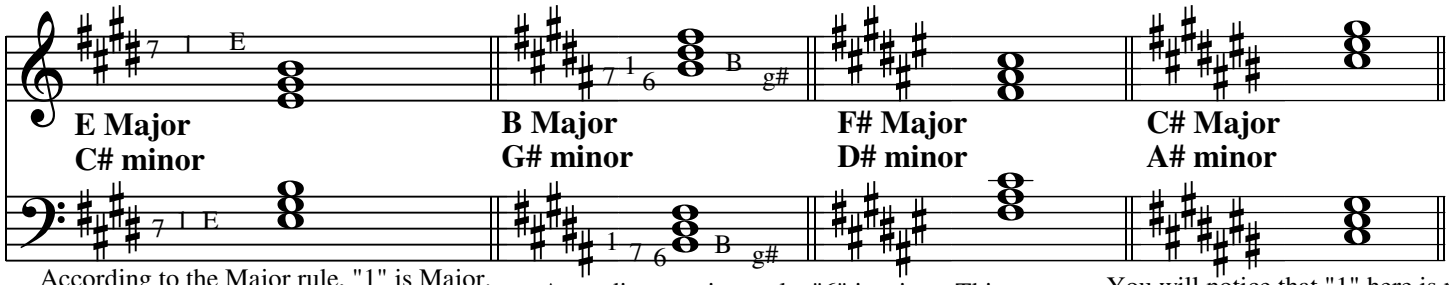
Here are some methods to figure key signatures. It is imperative that you know the names of the lines and spaces of the bass and treble staves before you attempt these procedures to figure keys. There are 4 rules to figuring key signatures. They are listed at the bottom of the page. Memorize them now or memorize the key signatures without using a crutch!



C Major and a minor have no sharps or flats. This is the only signature that you have to memorize where 1 is on both staves.

As you can see above I have placed a sharp on the line or space of the first (and only) sharp of the key signatures of both staves. REMEMBER, THE LAST # IS "7".

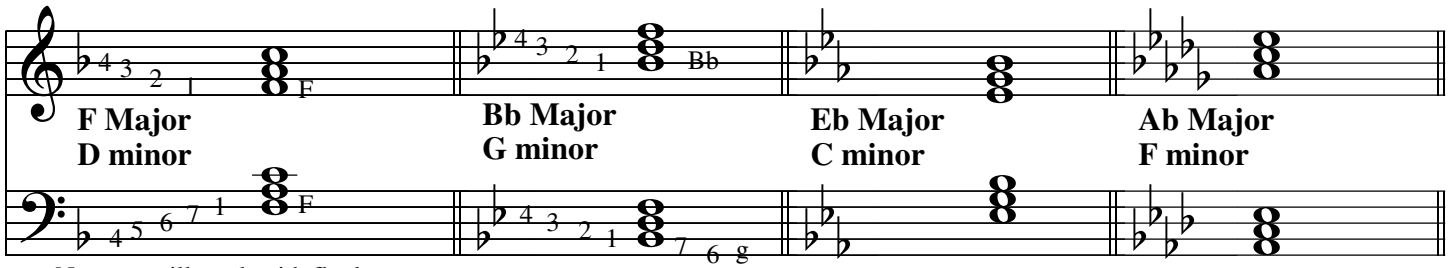
Here I have counted up or down to find "1" after finding "7", my last #.



According to the Major rule, "1" is Major. This means that the name of the line or space where "1" is for this key will be the name of the Major key signature.

According to minor rule, "6" is minor. This means that the line or space where "6" is found will be the name of the minor key signature.

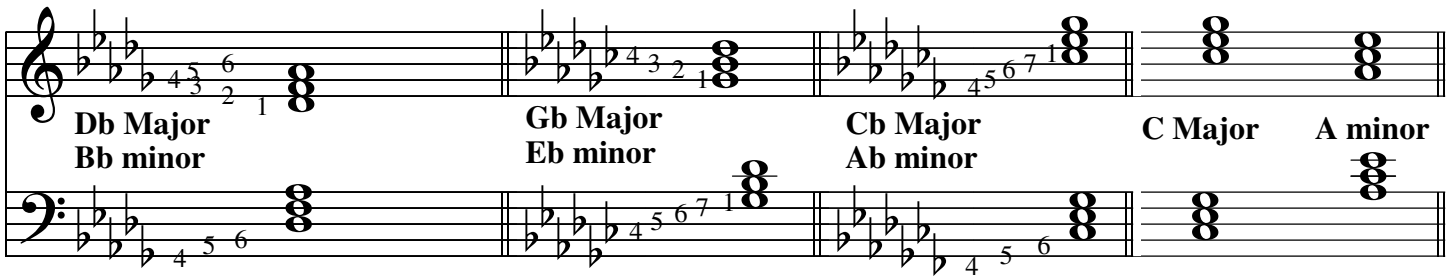
You will notice that "1" here is not simply C. There is a # in the key signature for the C spaces. So, those spaces become "#'s".



Now we will work with flat key signatures. Find the last flat. It is "4".

Now you can count up or down to find the Major key just as you did with the # keys. Remember: "1" is Major.

What is the last flat. Place a "4" there. What is the Major key? Minor key?



The rule for finding the minor key for flat keys is the same as it is for # keys. After finding the last flat, "4", you simply count up or down to "6". The letter name of the note on the "6th" line or space is the name of the minor key. Remember to look for flats in the key signature. Almost every flat key signature is called "something" flat.

FOUR RULES YOU MUST KNOW TO FIGURE KEY SIGNATURES:

1 is the name of the Major key. **6 is the name of the minor key.**

The last sharp is 7. **The last flat is 4.**