

Spelling the Three Minor Scale Forms

This table summarizes both methods of spelling all forms of the minor scales. Remember, don't confuse the two methods. Choose the method that is easiest for you when learning the minor scales. If you prefer the Parallel Minor Method, you will discover that there are certain minor scales that don't have corresponding major scales (e.g., G-sharp minor). When this happens, you will have to resort to the Relative Minor Method. Once you have chosen a method, carefully follow the steps, being sure not to crossover to the other method in the process.

These methods are to help you *learn* the minor scales, but the goal is to *know* the minor scales!

Minor Scale Form	Relative Minor Method	Parallel Major Method
for all Minor Scale Forms	Find the relative major of the desired minor scale (go up a minor 3 rd).	Spell the parallel major scale of the desired minor scale (i.e., the scale with the same <i>letter</i> name).
for Natural Minor Scales	Spell the relative major scale beginning on $\hat{6}$. $\hat{6}$ of the major scale becomes $\hat{1}$ of the desired natural minor scale.	Lower $\hat{3}$, $\hat{6}$, and $\hat{7}$ of the parallel major scale by a half step.
for Harmonic Minor Scales	Spell the relative major scale beginning on $\hat{6}$. $\hat{6}$ of the major scale becomes $\hat{1}$ of the desired natural minor scale. Raise $\hat{7}$ of the natural minor scale by a half step. This makes the natural minor scale a harmonic minor scale.	Lower $\hat{3}$ and $\hat{6}$ of the parallel major scale by a half step.
for Melodic Minor Scales	Spell the relative major scale beginning on $\hat{6}$. $\hat{6}$ of the major scale becomes $\hat{1}$ of the desired natural minor scale. Raise $\hat{6}$ and $\hat{7}$ of the natural minor scale by a half step. This makes the natural minor scale a melodic minor scale.	Lower $\hat{3}$ of the parallel major scale by a half step.