We've seen a lot so far: scope, notes, ...
It's time to see the intervals, and that's exactly what this course is about!
So let's start with some definitions related to intervals, then how to name them.

1. Some definitions

An interval is the distance between 2 notes. The unit of measure for this distance is the tone.

There are ascending intervals, and descending intervals. In the first case (ascending interval), the finish note is sharper than the start note, so it will be above the start note on the staff. In the second case (descending interval), the finish note is lower than the start note, so it will be below the start note on the staff.

We call a harmonic interval an interval where we hear the 2 notes at the same time. Otherwise, we call it a melodic interval.

An interval is said to be simple if it does not exceed the octave. Otherwise, it will be said to be repeated.
A doubled interval will have the same qualification as the single interval.

An interval is therefore named in 2 parts: its name (second, third, fourth, ...) and its qualification (major, minor, just, decreased, increased, ...).

Finally, we speak of an inverted interval when the lowest note of the starting interval becomes the highest note. For example, if the starting interval is C-F (perfect quarter), its inverted interval is F-C (perfect fifth).

2. The name and qualification of the intervals

As we can see in a table at the end of this paragraph, there are several intervals. The name of the interval depends on the notes concerned (this gives the name of the interval), as well as the number of tones between these two notes (this gives the qualification of the interval).

Let's list the main intervals:

- The second

It is the smallest of the intervals, it separates 2 joint notes from the scale.

- The third

This interval designates the distance between 2 separate notes separated by a single note.

- The fourth

This interval designates the distance between 2 separate notes separated by 2 notes.

- The fifth

This interval designates the distance between 2 separate notes separated by 3 notes.

- The sixth

This interval designates the distance between 2 separate notes separated by 4 notes.

- The seventh

This interval designates the distance between 2 separate notes separated by 5 notes.

- The octave

This interval designates the distance between 2 separate notes separated by 6 notes.

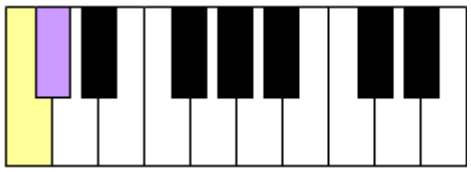
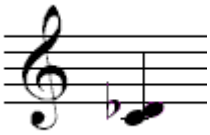
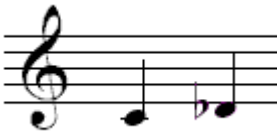
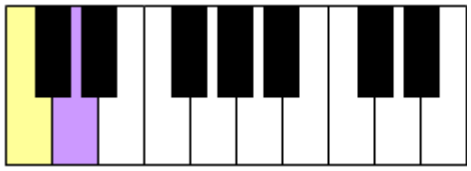
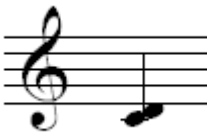
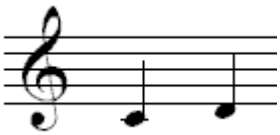
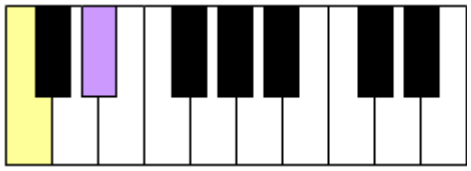
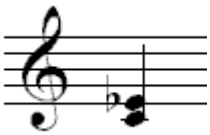
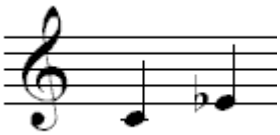
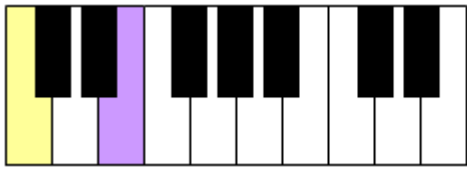
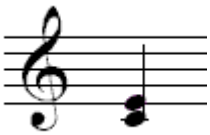
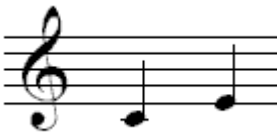
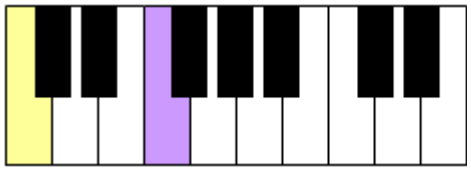
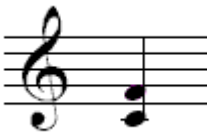
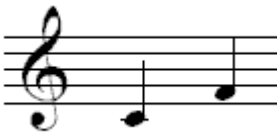
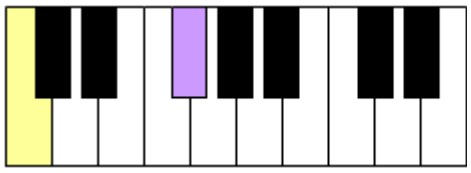
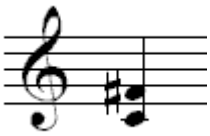
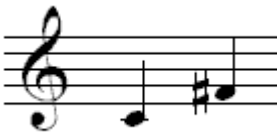
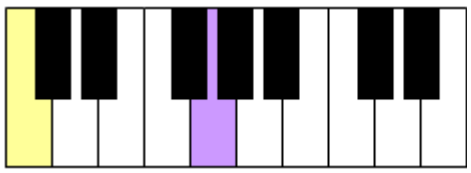
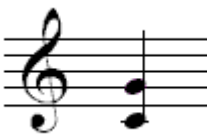
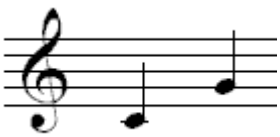
Then, with regard to the qualification, here is a small summary table giving the qualification of the interval according to its name and the number of tones (t) separating the two notes:

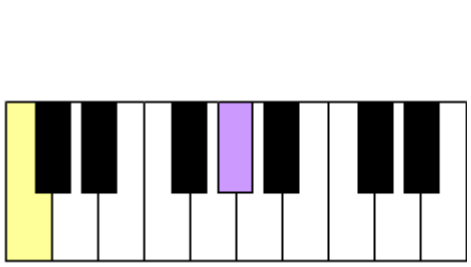
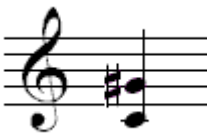
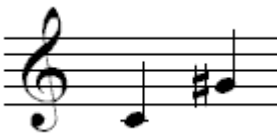
Name of the interval	Diminished	Minor	Major	Perfect	Augmented
Second	Doesn't exist *	0,5 t	1 t	Doesn't exist	1 t + 0,5 t
Third	1 t	1 t + 0,5 t	2 t	Doesn't exist	2 t + 0,5 t
Fourth	2 t	Doesn't exist	Doesn't exist	2 t + 0,5 t	3 t
Fifth	3 t	Doesn't exist	Doesn't exist	3 t + 0,5 t	4 t
Sixth	3 t + 0,5 t	3 t + (2 x 0,5) t	4 t + 0,5 t	Doesn't exist	5 t
Seventh	4 t + 0,5 t	4 t + (2 x 0,5) t	5 t + 0,5 t	Doesn't exist	Doesn't exist **
Octave	5 t + 0,5 t	Doesn't exist	Doesn't exist	5 t + (2 x 0,5) t	6 t + (2 x 0,5) t

* The diminished second does not exist, since it is a question of harmony. Harmony is the fact of playing 2 notes not having the same name but having the same pitch (<=> the same key on the piano). For example, E# and F are enharmonic notes.

** The augmented seventh could be explained theoretically, but it is absolutely not used in practice.

Here is a table summarizing all the intervals and their qualification, with examples:

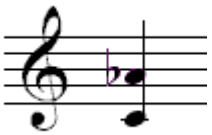
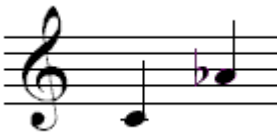
Chord on piano	Harmonic interval	Melodic interval	Number of tones	Name of the interval
			1 half tone	Minor second
			1 tone	Major second
			1 tone and a half	Minor third
			2 tones	Major third
			2 tones and a half	Perfect fourth
			3 tones	Augmented fourth or Diminished fifth
			3 tones and a half	Perfect fifth

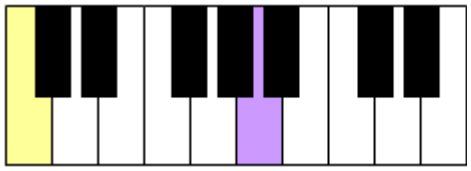
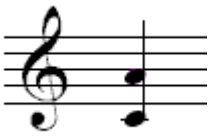
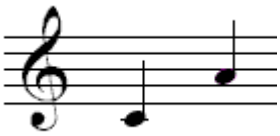
4 tones

Augmented fifth

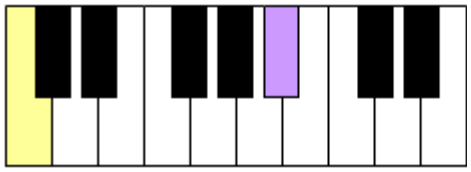
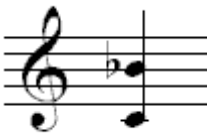
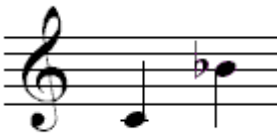
or

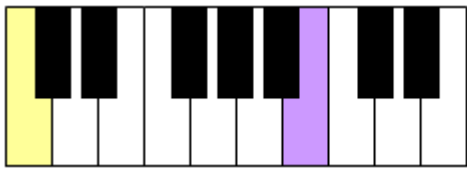
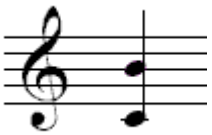
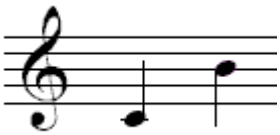
Minor sixth

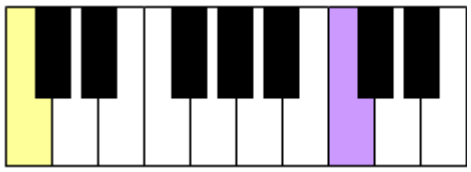
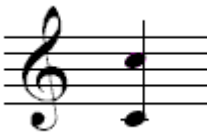
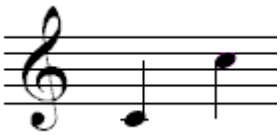
4 tones and a half Major sixth

5 tones Minor seventh

5 tones and a half Major seventh

6 tones Perfect octave

Conclusion: THE TIPS TO REMEMBER

- An interval defines the distance between two notes.
- These notes can be played at the same time.
- Definitions are important, see paragraph 1 of this course.
- An interval is named in 2 words: its name and its qualification.