Theory of Minor Scales

A piece in a minor key may sound mysterious, sad, or dark.

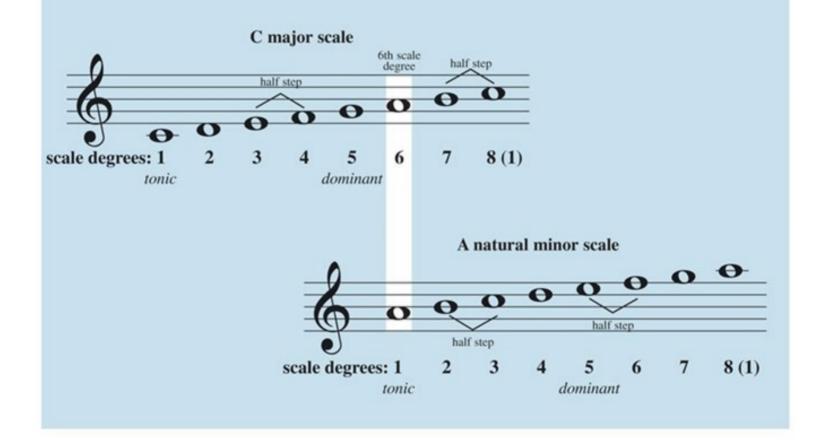
A piece in a major key generally has a brighter quality.

Relative Minor Key

Every major key also has a minor key that shares the same key signature.

This minor key is called the relative minor because it is related by key signature.

To find the relative minor scale, start on scale degree 6 of the major scale.



Playing and Listening

- Play the C major scale above and listen to the sound.
 The major scale has half steps between scale degrees 3-4 and 7-8.
- Now play the **A natural minor scale** (the relative minor scale). Listen to the difference in sound. The natural minor scale has half steps between scale degrees 2–3 and 5–6.

Notice that the natural minor scale uses only notes from the relative major scale.