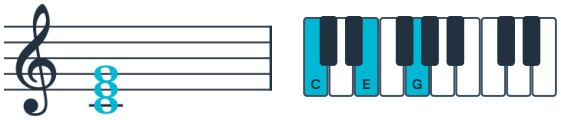
Major & minor: two colors of home

The same home note can host **two moods**. Major sounds bright and open; minor sounds darker and warmer — and the difference comes down to a few lowered notes.

ONE NOTE CHANGES THE WEATHER

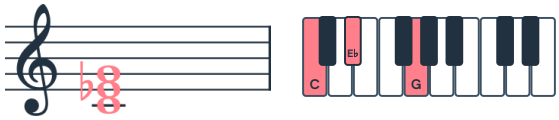
C major

C · E · G — bright, open, sunny
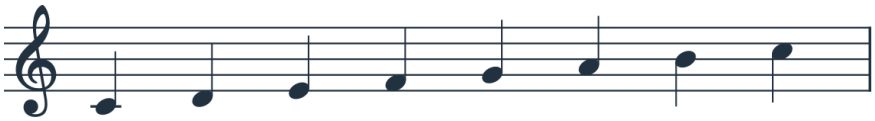


C minor

C · E♭ · G — darker, warmer, inward
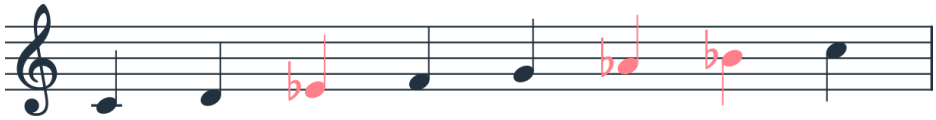


Lower the third a half step and major turns minor. Same home, different light.

WHOLE KEYS HAVE MOODS TOO



C major — all white keys
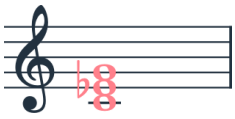


C minor — same home note, with the **3rd, 6th and 7th lowered**: E♭, A♭, B♭

A whole piece can live in either world. Lower three notes of the scale and **every melody and chord built from it turns minor** — candlelight instead of sunshine. Nothing is broken: minor isn't "wrong major," it's a second color of home.

THE PRIMARY CHORDS CHANGE CLOTHES

i — now minor
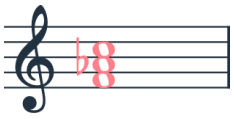
C · E♭ · G



small numeral = minor chord

iv — now minor

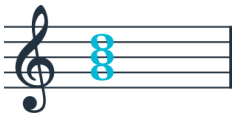
F · A♭ · C



the 6th degree's flat lives here

V — still major!

G · B♮ · D



B stays natural — the pull home is too good to give up

Try it Play a tune you know in C position — then play it again with every E turned to E♭. Hear the light change? Then loop the minor chords: i → iv → V → i. Notice V still shines bright in the middle of the shadows — that contrast is what makes minor keys so dramatic.

LISTEN
Scan to hear every example
tissimo.co/worksheets/major-and-minor

© 2026 Tissimo. All rights reserved.