Building Block No. 4: Finding the Fast Way to Double What You Already Know

How to Form a Minor Triad

The Major Triad:
In the last lesson, you learned that the major triad is a chord made up of three (3) specific notes that are in the major scale.

The Minor Triad:
The fastest and easiest way to figure out the notes in a minor chord is to take the same three notes from the major scale and lower the 3rd note of the scale by one half step.

```
1st  b3rd   5th
C     skip D  Eb  skip F  G
```

What if you don’t know how to form the major triad or the major scale that has the same letter names as the chord?
There’s a simple solution: use the step method
(see Building Block No. 1: Unlocking the Secret System of the Black & White Keys: Half Steps & Whole Steps).

```
5th
Cmin
b3rd
```

Here’s the exciting news!
You now have a fast and easy way to double what you already know.

Here are the rules:
To change a major chord into a minor chord, you lower the 3rd by one half step.
Example:
D major = D F# A
D minor = D F A

To change a minor chord into a major chord, you raise the 3rd by one half step.
Example:
Eb minor = Eb G Bb
Eb major = Eb G Bb

Tip: There are several ways minor chords are identified in sheet music, but they all mean the same thing. (Note: Chords with flat names can be major, minor or something else. Flat in a chord name does not mean that it is minor.)

Here are three examples:
Cminor = Cm = Cmin = C- 
Bb minor = Bbm = Bbmin = Bb-
F# minor = F#m = F#min = F#-