Timpani Ear Training

Circle of 4ths

- Tune the 29” to a C, using a reference pitch.
- A 4th up from C is F. Decide what drum F would fit and sound the best on (aim for the largest of your options, since it would put the pitch in the ideal mid-upper range).
    - DO NOT use a reference pitch nor gauges for this F. Instead, find it by singing a 4th up from the C that you just tuned.
- Continue moving through this circle of 4ths in the process until you have made it all the way back to C (without checking any reference pitches or using gauges).
    - The octaves don’t particularly matter, the goal is just to get practice finding that interval from any starting pitch, quickly deciding what drum to put it on, and tuning it accurately.
- Once you have reached C, check it once again with your reference pitch, and see if it still sounds like a C.
    - If not, try it again and see if there’s a tendency
      (I always end up a half step low, etc.)

Circle of Whatever

- Repeat the previous exercise with any intervals:
    - Circle of 5ths, major 3rds (augmented triad), minor thirds (diminished triad), whole steps (whole tone scale), half steps (chromatic scale), etc.
- Try the same exercise with descending intervals.

Random Intervals

- Check a reference for the first pitch of a line.
- For each of the following pitches, choose the best-sounding drum option, and tune that drum to the pitch.
    - DO NOT check a reference pitch nor use gauges as you tune these pitches.
- When you reach the last note of the line, check that pitch with a reference, and see if it sounds correct.
- Repeat the process on the next line.
- Try doing two lines back-to-back. Or three. Or all of them.

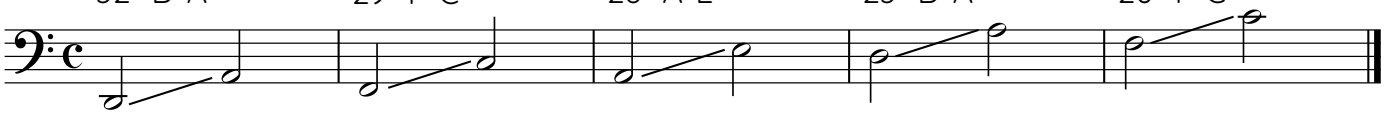
Some Extra Fun

- Try any or all of these with a piece of music on speakers in the background. The more key changes and tonal ambiguity, the better!

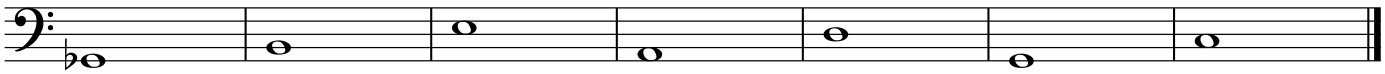
Timpani Ear Training Exercises

Ranges

32″ D-A | 29″ F-C | 26″ A-E | 23″ D-A | 20″ F-C

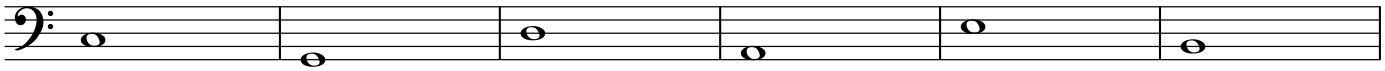


Circle of 4ths

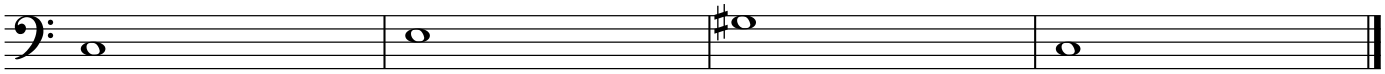


Circle of Whatever

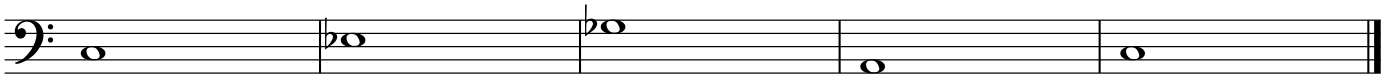
5ths



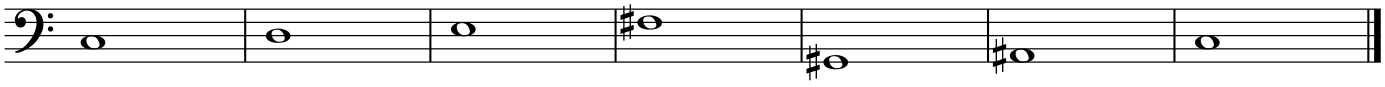
M3rds (Augmented Triad)



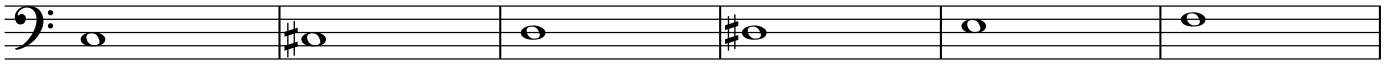
m3rds (Diminished 7th)

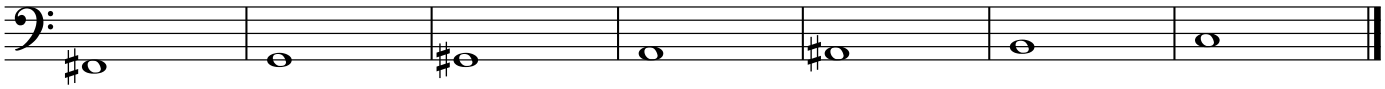


M2nds (Whole Tone)



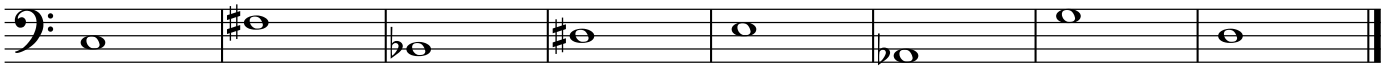
m2nds (Chromatic)





Random Intervals

Line 1



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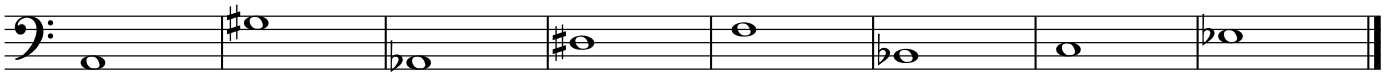

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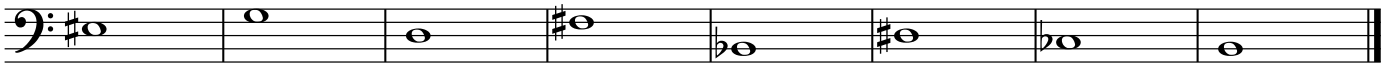
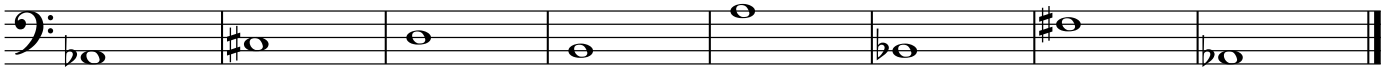
Line 4