

A Gregorian Chant Coloring Book For Children & Adults

Gregorian Chant is simple
and easy to learn.

SAMPLE

learn and remember
how to read Gregorian Chant!

Colors you need:
Black Green Red Blue Yellow
Any others for coloring words!

Noel Jones, AAGO • Author

Alan Dash • Illustrator

Ellen Doll Jones, CAGO • Lauren Gadd
Editors

www.sacredmusiclibrary.com

Frog Music Press
636 Old 19
Augusta, KY 41002

info@sacredmusiclibrary.com

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The Modes

When talking about chant you will hear people talking about the necessity to be able to recognize and sing the modes. This sounds complicated and modes can be difficult to understand.

But in singing it is actually very easy. Using a piano, find middle C. (C's are all white keys to the left of groups of two black keys and middle C is in the middle of the keyboard.) Now, play this C, then one by one each of the next 6 white keys to the right of it, which puts you on a higher pitched C.

Except for one more note, you have played all the notes you need to know to be able to sing in all the chant modes.

Repeat the exercise but pause on the highest key. Now play the black key to the left of it. This is the final note you need to know to sing chant.

It's that simple. So why do people think it is hard? It is because songs written in modes can start and end on almost any note.

Modern music notes are arranged like a maze, but one that has clues, like a well-worn path from people who have gone before you, easy to follow. Modern music falls into one pattern with but one minor variation. This is a maze with a predictable beginning and ending.

Chant music notes are also arranged like a maze, but one in which the maze is not predictable as it is in modern music. Modern music almost always begins with one of three notes and always ends on one of three notes, so modern music is always headed to a predictable ending.

Chant can, once again, begin on almost any note and end on almost any note and that is why chant sounds different than modern music. But this does not mean that you are stuck in a maze without any clues. There are clues and we call them modes. The modes are specific patterns of notes that move to the end of the chant and they stay within certain parameters.

It is helpful when learning to sing chants to sing a few at first which are very close to modern music in their mode. In the final pages of this coloring book you will find examples of chants in each of the modes, starting with *Godhead Here In Hiding*. Each of the examples is in a different mode, Godhead is the mode that is closest to modern music. Learning to sing in each mode is learning to find and follow the clues, the bread crumbs left behind to guide you. The Custos note at the end of each line is silent, but helps you find the next note to sing.

English

One stumbling block to getting chant alive in your church is Latin.

Latin is very important for choirs to be able to sing, as it uses pure vowels and dramatically improves choral tone. However, trying to teach people the tones of chant AND to sing in Latin at the same time may not be the best approach for you to make chant part of your program.

Chant has been sung in English for centuries, that has been done for centuries. Singing chant in English at first eases the process for your choir and congregation of making the move to putting chant back into your church.

All teacher's notes will be enclosed in boxes.

The student books have illustrations to color in place of these boxes in their books.

The Creation of Written Music.

Sing this sentence on one pitch:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

Now sing it, but sing just "Fa" of Father one note higher. We will draw a line above "Fa" to remind you to sing it a note higher:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

Now sing it, and now sing the "A" of Amen one note lower. We will underline the "A".

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

So we can sing 3 different notes, marking them using lines. And that's how sung music works:



In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

This is how music notes are written.

This page may be presented on a blackboard as an introduction by the teacher, having the students singing the line, first in monotone and then with the raised and lowered notes, before the coloring books are opened for the first time.

Pitches...Any pitches may be sung, but Do Re Do Do work nicely.
Ti

On the piano that can be C D C B C or F G F E F.

Table of Contents

Staff	6-7
Ledger Lines	8
Neumes	9
Punctum	10-12
Do Clef	13
Clefs	15-7
Staff Lines	18-20
Scale	21-8
Connections	30
Clivis	31-32
Virga	31
Inclinatorum	33-34, 36
Podatus	35, 36
Torculus	37
Porrectus	38-39
Fa Clef	41-43
Flat	44
Natural	44
Liquescent	45
Held Notes	46-47
Punctum Mora	46
Quilisma	47
Horizontal Episema	48
Vertical Episema	49
Salicus	49
Stropha	50
Bar Lines	51
Custos	52
Illuminated Text	53

Chant Hymns

Godhead Here I Hiding	58
Hail, O Star That Pointest	60
Creator of the Stars Of Night	62
At The Cross	64
Bright Torches	66
Jesus Thou Joy	68
O Come, Redeemer	70



Four lines were chosen because they make it possible to write music for 9 notes - 4 on the lines, 3 on the spaces between the lines as well as 1 below and 1 above the 4 lines.

9 notes is a range that most human voices can easily sing. So four lines works fine for Gregorian Chant.



Color these 4 lines black and answer this question:

How many spaces are there between the lines?

Color the correct number with a black crayon,
Color the others red.

1 2 3 4

Black is the common color of ink used to print chant books. However, when chant was handwritten, some staff lines were in colors to help singers .

The reason is that chant can start on any note and end on any note, Modern music always ends on one of three notes. The order of notes in chant are the same Do, Re, Mi - 8 notes we sing all the time. The difference is that chant melodies are not confined to ending and centering on the same notes all the time. For that reason clefs are used and moved up and down the staff to center chant melodies.

When singing chant you need to be able to find the first note and trace the melody to the end.

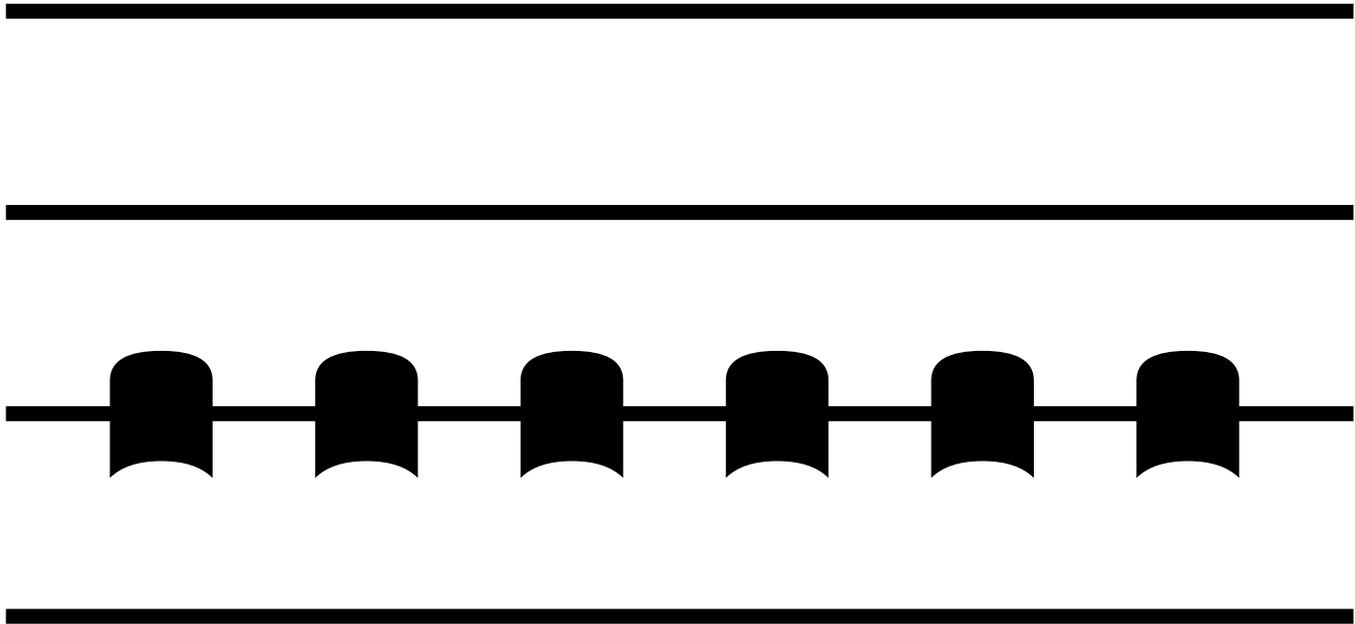


Sometimes chant notes are drawn above and below the four lines of the staff.

Little short lines are used if a line is needed and they are called ledger lines.

Color the little short lines with a black crayon just like the staff lines.

These little extra lines are called “Ledger Lines” but are pretty rare. The reason is that melodies tend to stay within a limited range and the two clefs are moved up and down to keep the melody centered on the staff.



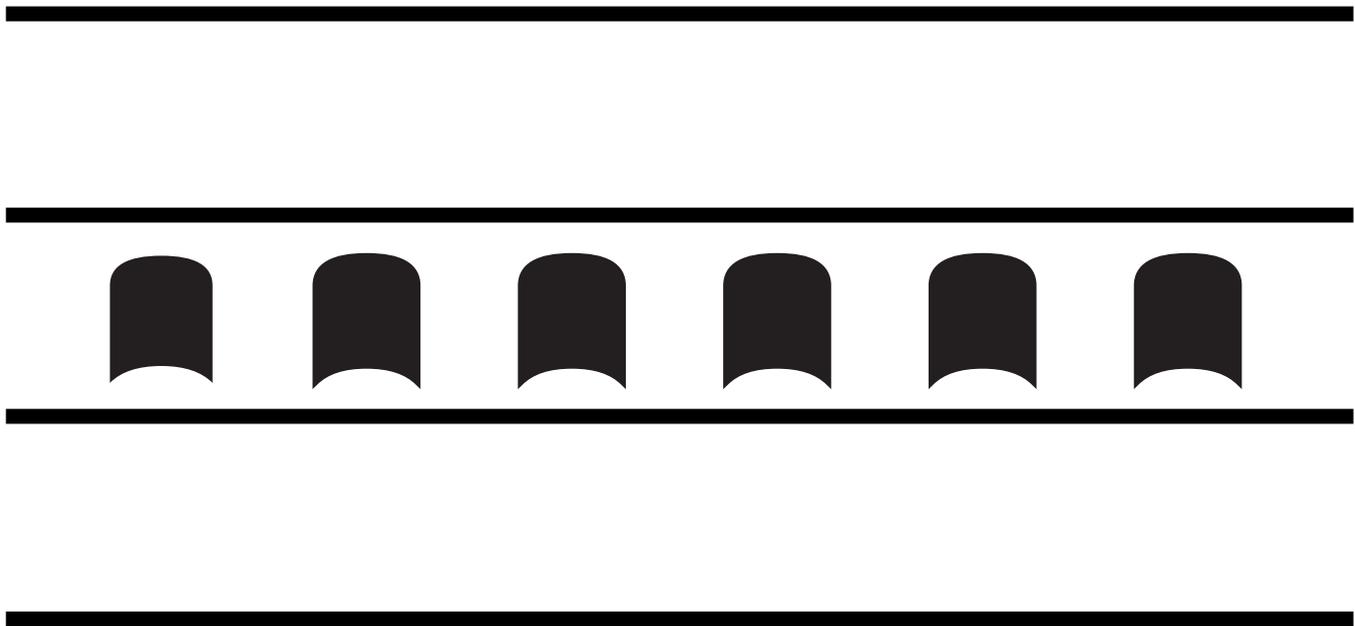
Neumes

The marks the pitches you sing are called neumes. The first neume to learn is named Punctum. It looks like an eraser on a pencil.

Color the 4 staff lines black. Color all the punctum neumes black.

All chant melodies can be written using nothing but these simple notes.

Groupings of neumes that we are going to learn make it easier to recognize and sing common melodic elements. The groupings help you see which vowels of words are sung to each note or group of notes on the staff.

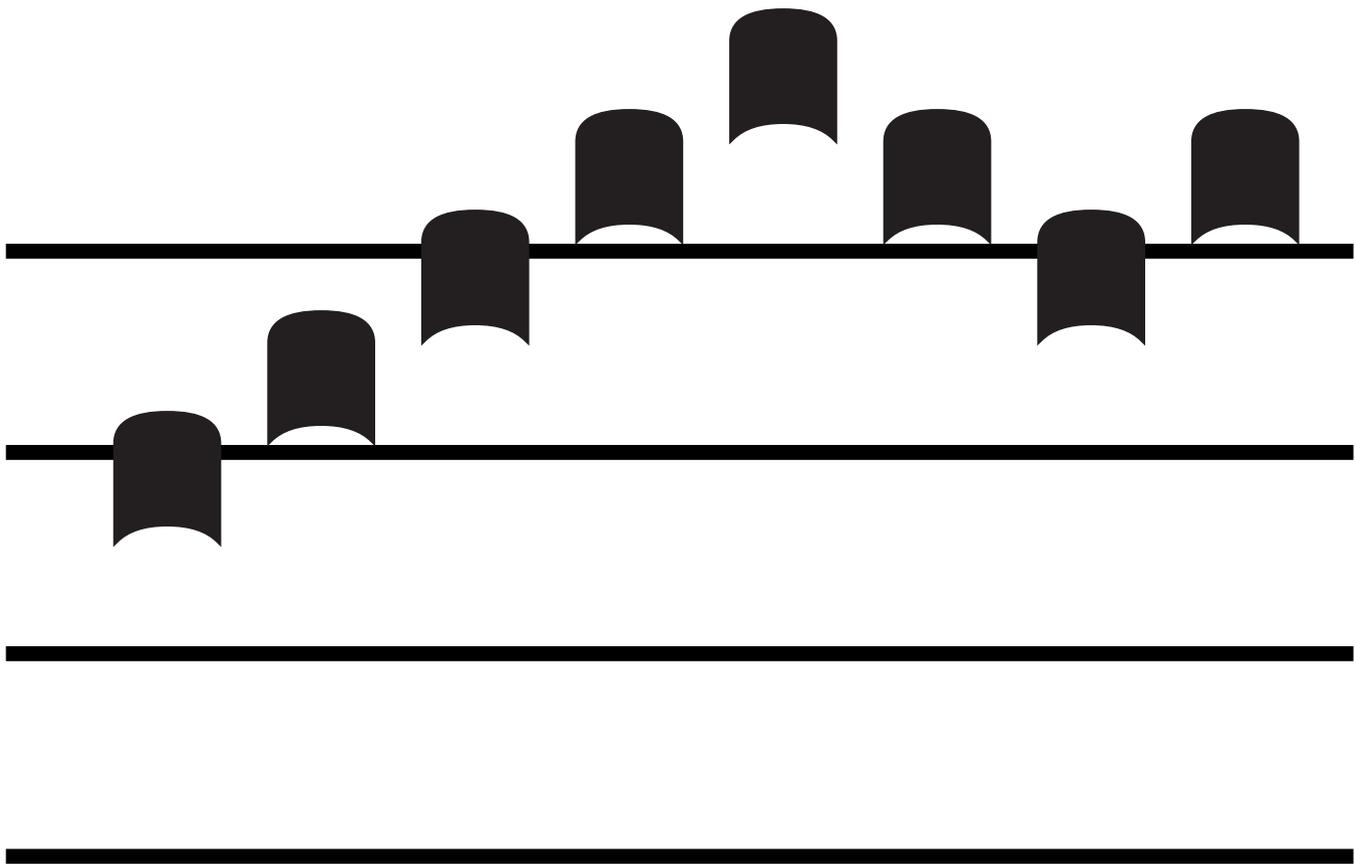


The Punctum - Dot

It may be on a space or on a line.

Color the 4 staff lines black. Color all the punctum neumes black.

When singing chant every note has the same length. There are only four exceptions to this rule and we will cover them later on. We will teach you to recognize them.

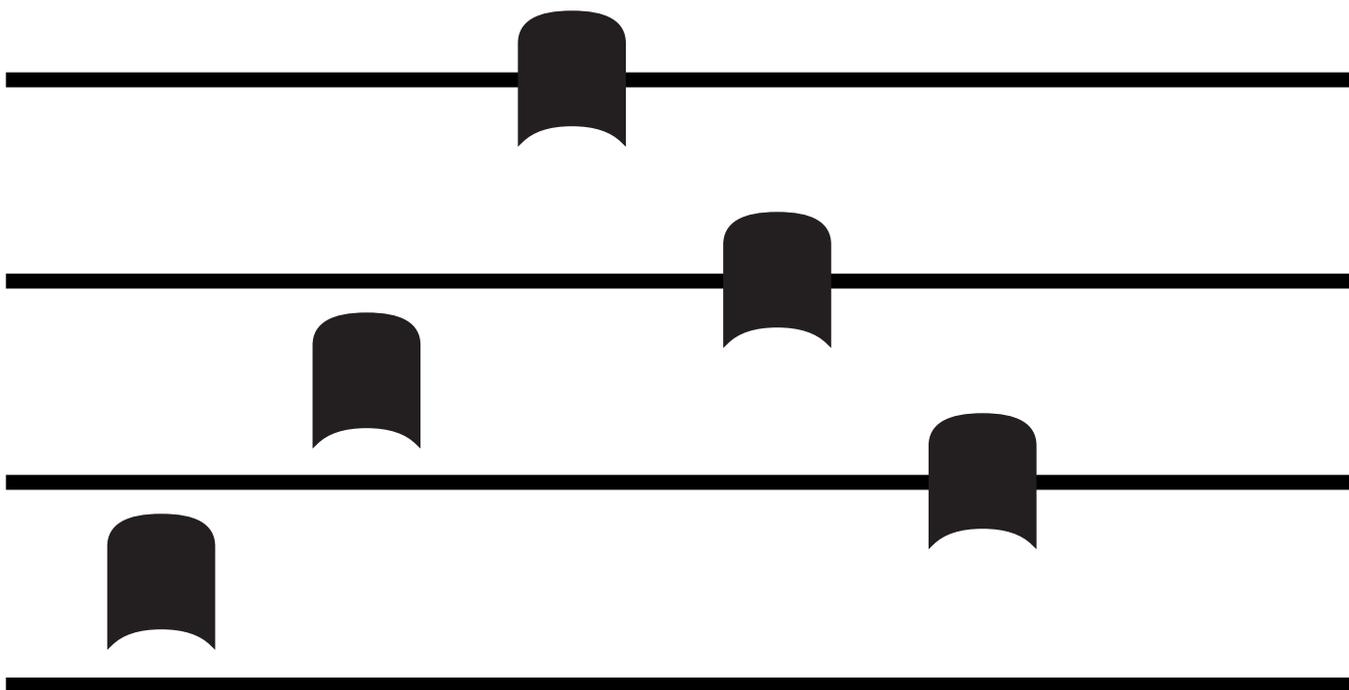


The Punctum - Dot

On spaces and lines. Color the lines black. Color the punctum black on this page. Today people use calligraphic pens or markers to draw these curved neumes. Originally they were drawn with a wide quill pen with a thin edge so the scribe could draw thin or wide lines without lifting the quill point from the page.

These notes move up the scale evenly, what we call step-wise movement.

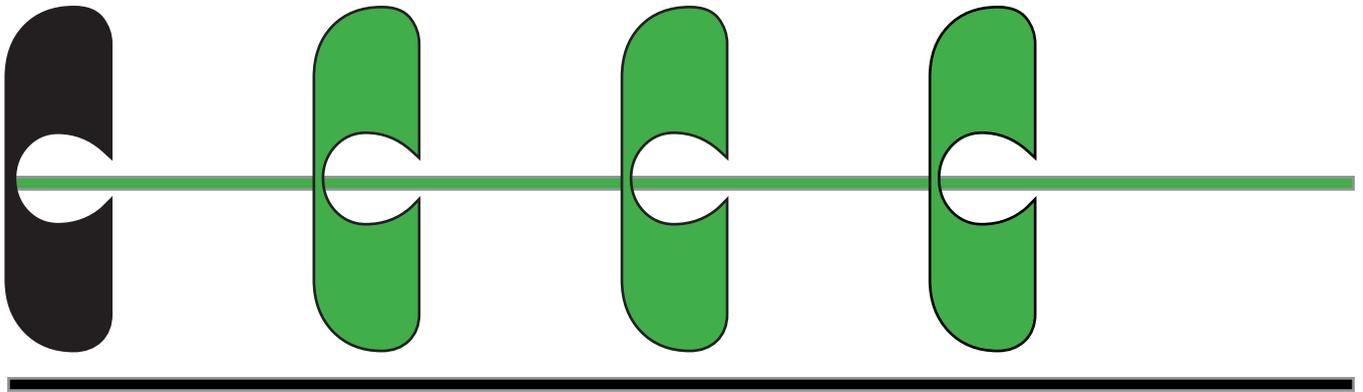
Music notes in scale move in whole steps and half steps.



These notes skip notes, singing what are called intervals. The interval is named by the number of lines and spaces are involved. Here we have:

From the lowest note on the left to the one above it is a 3rd (two spaces + one line) followed by a 4th, a 3rd and another 3rd. In Gregorian Chant the largest interval sung is a 6th, but it is rare, most intervals are 2nd, 3rd, 4th and occasional 5th intervals.

Intervals count the lines and spaces between two notes and add that number to 2 to get the name of the interval.

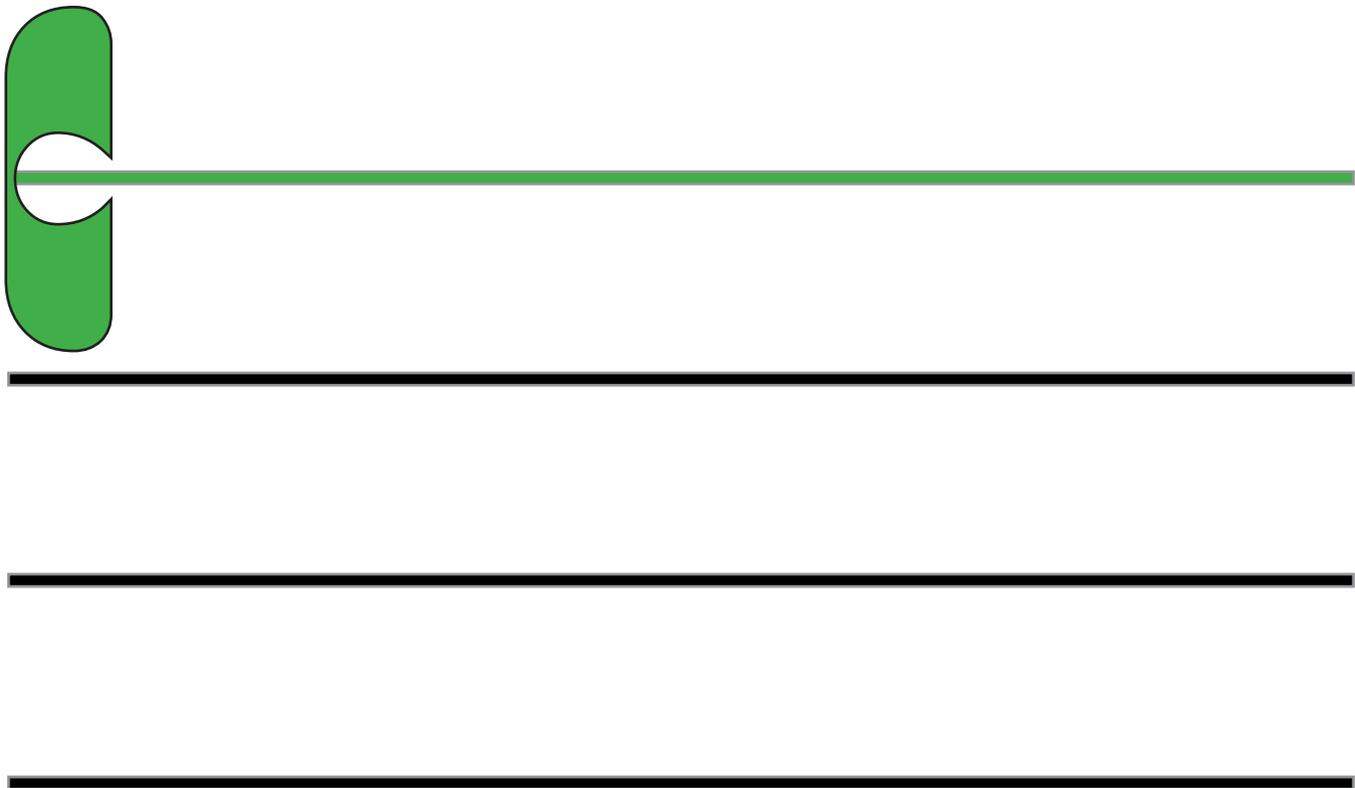


The Do Clef

The Do clef looks like a turtle about to take a bite of the Do line.

Color the Do Clef green and the line it is on green, the other lines black. The spaces in between are not colored.

Clefs tell which pitches are sung on each line and space. Monks used to scribe chant with a green line for Do and a red line for Fa, two important landmarks since the lower note next to them is not as wide as all the others. You will hear the difference as we sing.

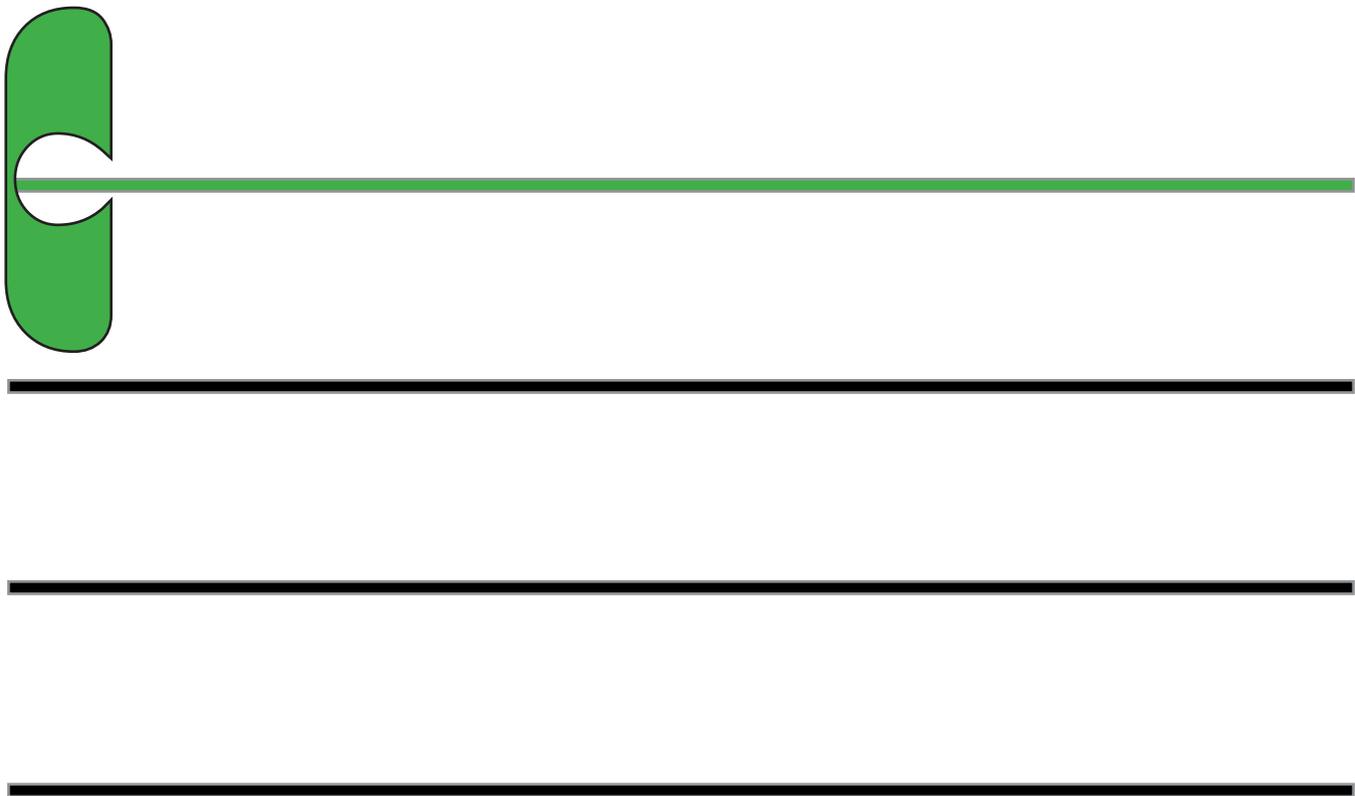


The Do Clef - It looks like it is getting ready to take a bite out of the Do pitch line.

It can move from line to line to center a melody on the staff.

Color the Do Clef green and the line it is on green, the other lines black.

The clefs are points that all notes are calculated from, sort of like corner pins driven by surveyors. When you see a clef you know immediately that the line it is on is either Do, as above, or Fa, which you will soon learn.



Clefs

A Clef is always on the far left side of each staff.

Color the Do Clef green and the line it is on green, the other line black.

Later on we will show that a change of clef can happen on a line, but there is still always a clef at the left side of the staff.



Clefs - Coloring the Fa line red.

Colors: Do clef line green and the line green too.
 Second line from top Black
 Third line from top Red,
 Fourth line from top Black

Remember to count down from the clef line to know what the notes are. Since we are highlighting the Do and Fa lines, be sure to memorize (and teach your students to memorize):

Do Ti La So
and
Fa Mi Re Do

These are the notes starting from the clef lines and going down the staff.



Clefs

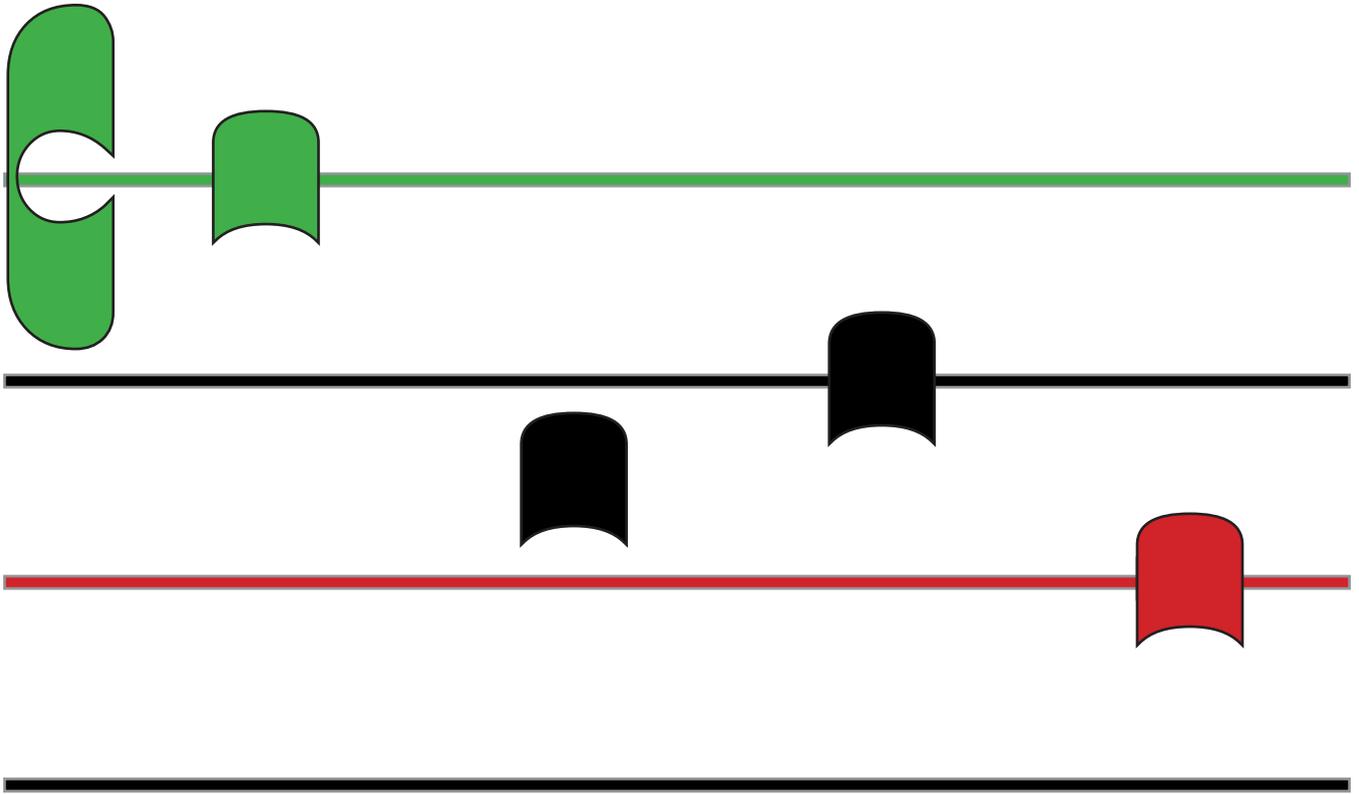
Always color neumes the same color as their line when they are on the Fa or Do line. Here color the clef and its line green then color the Fa line red and the others black.

Do can move to different lines and Fa moves too when that happens. Fa is always two spaces and two lines below Do.

We concentrate on teaching singers to learn the staff notes from the top down to help them to free themselves from the very tight constraints that modern music has put on their ears.

Modern music rules of harmony force a composer to write music that always ends in the same cadence, that is, sequence of notes. This and other harmony rules over other cadences inform the ear when a music line finishes.

Chant has a timeless character because you rarely sing these cadences in chant music, since chant can and will begin on any note and end on any note, which is impossible with modern music.



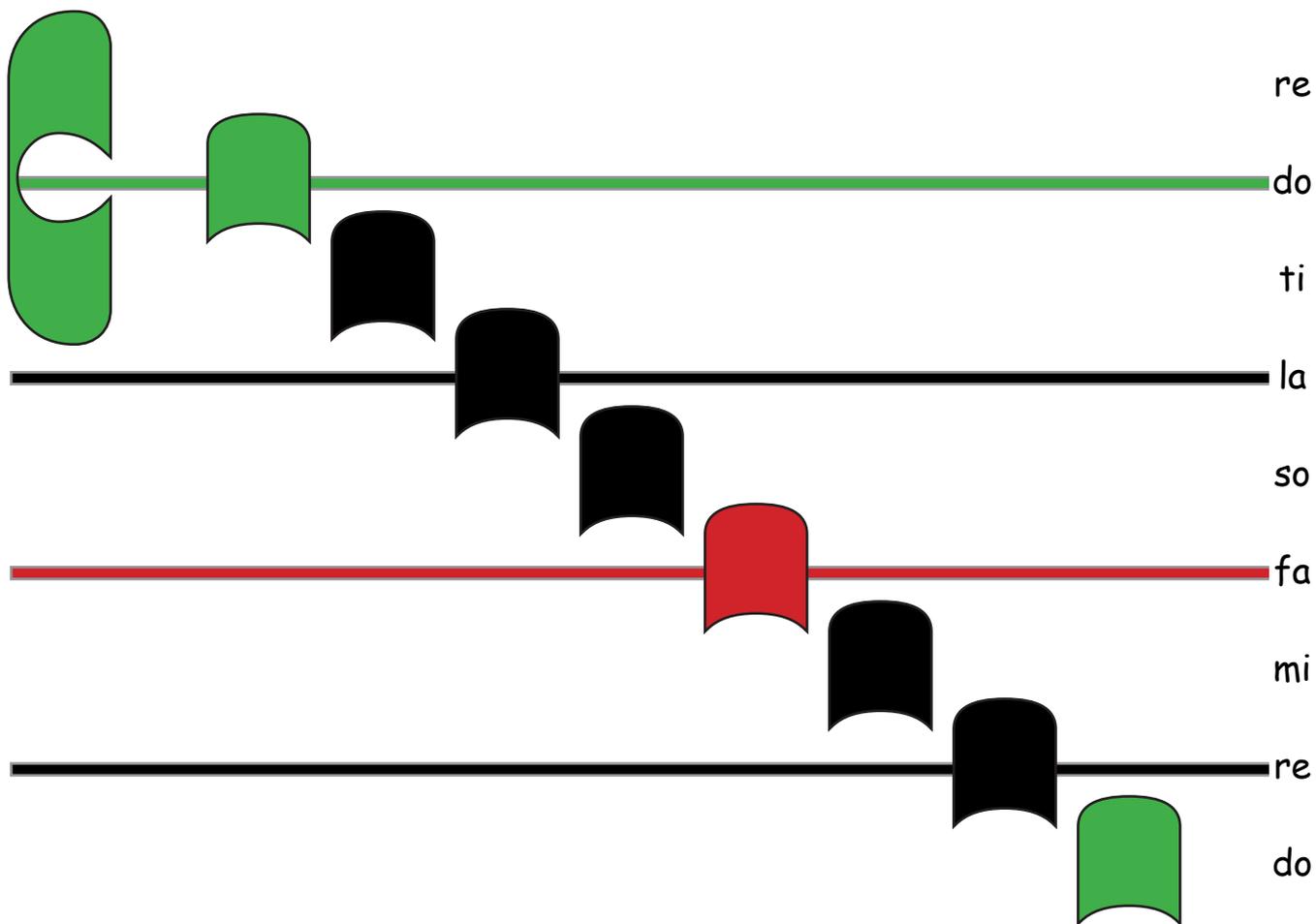
Staff Lines

Coloring neumes green and red when they are on spaces and lines for Do & Fa helps us learn and remember where pitches are on the staff.

We are approaching the teaching of chant by starting at the top and working down.

You may listen to the notes on your website, choose the audio file by page number.

When you teach this page, sing the notes to your students and have them echo them back, one by one and then as a group. Sing “Nu” at first, then “Nah”. Later you can come back and sing the actual note names, Do So La Fa as an exercise. Nu and Nah help place the voice and improve the tone of the singing.

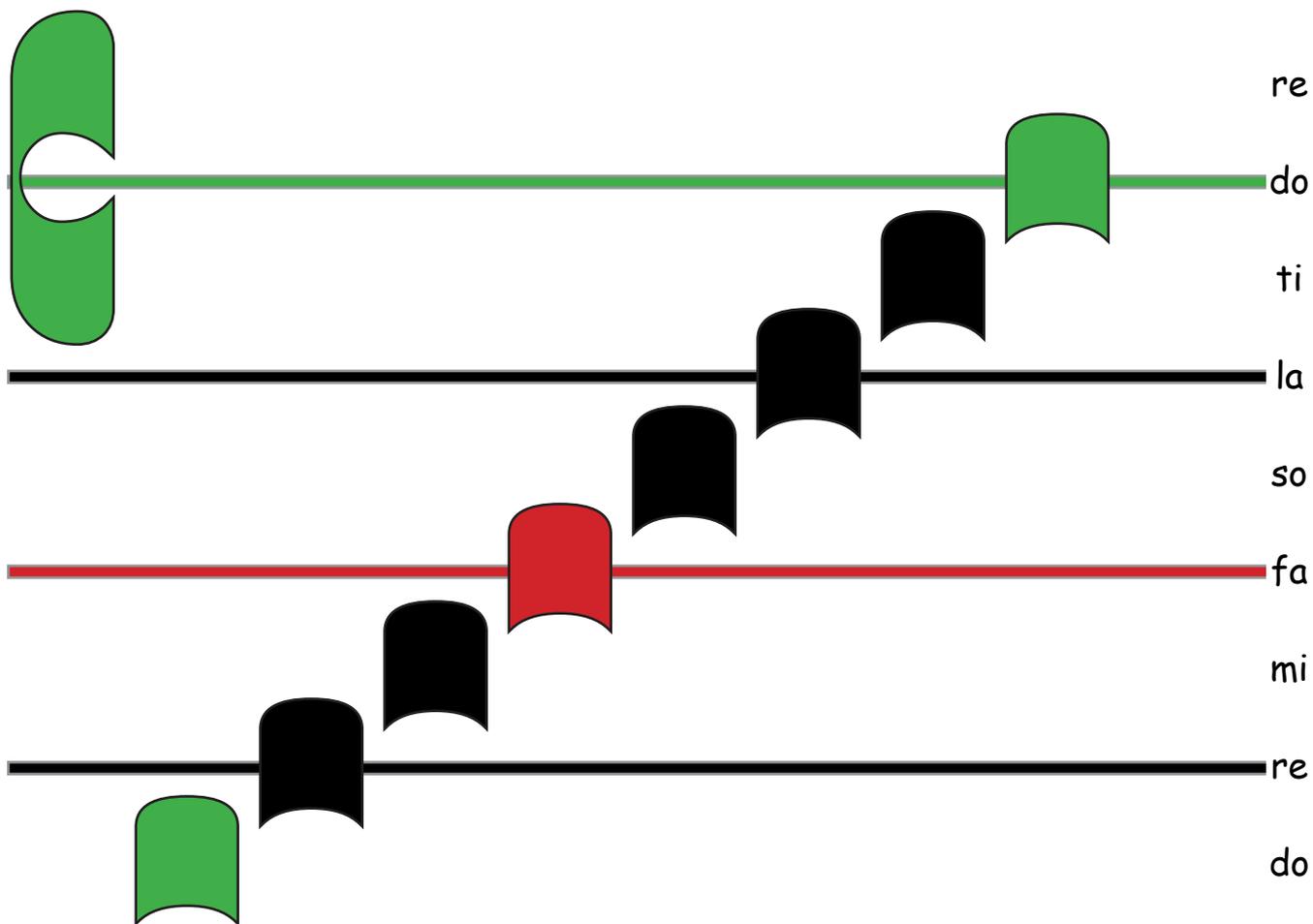


Staff Lines

Do, the green line and notes and Fa, the red line and notes, are special. Always color the lines first and then the notes, making sure that you color all notes black except for Do and Fa.

Teach your class to sing the scale from top to bottom. Do Ti La So Fa Mi Re Do.

Most people are familiar with it and can sing it up the scale, but down is hard for most. An easy way to do this is to sing “Joy to the word, the Lord is come!” and then sing the same melody using the Solfeggio note names instead, Do Ti...



Staff Lines

Do and Fa are like bases in Baseball. You need to know where they are all the time when you sing chant. And they can move!

All intervals in the scale are the same size except for those just before Do and Fa.

Learning where Do and Fa are and being able to recognize them is especially important because they can be moved to different lines to make melodies fit on the staff.

Sing these notes: So La Ti Do using Nu and Nah...