

# Nashville Numbers

## STN Worship

Numbers are a way to learn a song that does not have a home key. In worship music, we often play the same songs in a variety of different keys depending upon the Worship Leaders vocal range, the context, and the place in the set. Learning a song in a single key can mean that when (not if!) a song's key is changed, you'll have to either load up a completely new chart and sight read it, or you'll be left flustered and stressed!

As most worship music is written in the major scale you'll only need to learn 1 set of numbers to play most songs. The first thing to remember when it comes to the major scale is the intervals. Below is a G Chromatic Scale with the notes of the G major scale in bold, then below that is the C Chromatic with the C major scale notes in bold. You'll see that the intervals between each note in these scales is exactly the same each time.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<b>G</b>	G#	<b>A</b>	Bb	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	C#	<b>D</b>	Eb	<b>E</b>	F	<b>F#</b>
<b>C</b>	C#	<b>D</b>	Eb	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	F#	<b>G</b>	G#	<b>A</b>	Bb	<b>B</b>

All major scales operate in the same way. Similarly within the Major scale itself there is even more regularity. Each note in the Major scale has a **Triad Chord** that can be built from it, this is what we play as a band together, some of us playing the full chord (keys, guitar), and some simply one note (Bass, Electric). These chords change mode (Major or Minor) following the same pattern each time.

Below you will see the notes of an E major scale and the type of triad that is built from each.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>E</b>	F#	G#	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	C#	D#
<b>Major</b>	Minor	Minor	<b>Major</b>	<b>Major</b>	Minor	<i>Half-Diminished</i>

Using the number system each of these triads are given a number based upon their place in the scale and key you are playing in. So if we were playing a song in the key of E and the verse progression was 1, 4, 6, 5. You would play an E major triad, A major triad, C# minor triad, and a B major triad. But if you had to play it in another key knowing the verse in E major wouldn't do you much good, but knowing it in numbers allows you to simply find the first note in the key and work from there.

C# Major with the same progression would mean starting with C# Major Triad, then F# Major, Bb Minor, and G# Major to finish.

On a piano and even guitar you can easily visualise this using the chromatic intervals shown in the first table.

As we don't often play in strange keys (like C#) you've got an even easier job, learning only a select bunch of keys of the 12.

With numbers it also means you can have just one chart for every key, making memorising songs a dream.

Number charts are written using a dash (-) to indicate a minor chord. So 6- would be the minor 6 chord. You may also see slash chords (i.e. 1/3 or 5/7 ) these should be played in the following way.

Keys: Play the 1 chord with your right hand and the 3 chord with your left, or 5 right, 7 left

Bass: Play the 3 or the 7

Acoustic: Play either chord, if possible play a shape that involves both

If you see a 1sus, 4s2, 5sus4 or other variations of this written out, this simply means adding (or suspending) the second number **note** to the first numbers triad. So a 1sus4 in the key of C would be a C triad whilst adding the F note. Or a 5sus2 in C is a G triad with an added A.