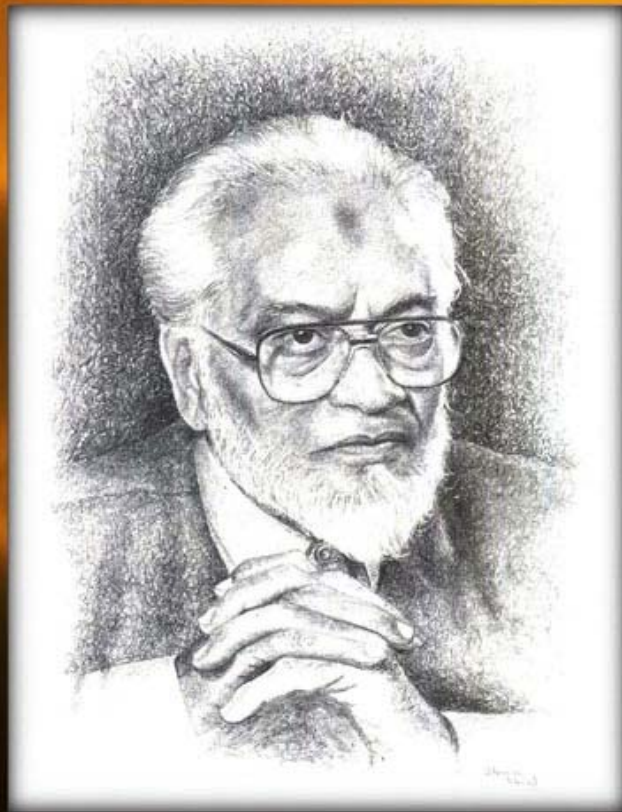


# **Keyboard Harmonium**

## **Lessons In Desi Style**



**Edited By Music Composer  
Nisar Bazmi**

**ID-3366**

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# Keyboard Harmonium In Desi Style e.Book

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## DESI STYLE MUSIC LESSONS

Desi Style assumes you have no prior knowledge of music or playing the keyboard or harmonium or you play without correct approach. This book will show you:

How to play keyboard in desi style?  
 Difference between tiver, komal & achal swar.  
 About Thaats/Scales & Ragas formation.  
 How Raga based film songs are formed?  
 What is taal/rhythm?  
 How to play music notations & Vocal Training

The book also features about thaats, ragas and raga based songs. All music players should know all of the information contained in this book. The best and fastest way to learn is to use this book in conjunction with: Buying midi music of your favorite songs from the website [www.ragatracks.com](http://www.ragatracks.com) Practicing and playing with other musicians. Learning by listening your favorite Indian Pakistani midi music provided in the Internet and ragatracks. Be practical in the early stages, it is helpful to have the guidance of an experienced teacher. This will also help you keep a schedule and obtain weekly goals.


### CORRECT APPROACH TO PRACTICE

From the beginning you should set yourself a goal. Many people learn keyboard or harmonium because of a desire to play old songs of sub-continent. It is important to have a correct approach to practice from beginning. You will benefit more from short practices (15-30 minutes per day) than one or two long sessions per week. Correct approach is learning with the thaats and raga concept in which melodious film songs are being composed. First learn octaves/saptak, names of notes that is achal, komal and tiver notes, and then learn thaats/scale and practice few days with thaats sargam. After learning thaats sargam its fingering practice in all three octaves is also necessary. In the beginning try to play songs in a particular thaats and after that listen and learn Ragas and play songs with ragas. Listen and play raga based film songs with notations provided with the book. Do, not try to play raga-based songs in the early stage of your learning. While practice, try to take help from the book repeatedly. I am sure within few weeks you will be able to play your favorite tunes yourself without any help but ragas require additional practice. In the end do not forget to learn taal or rhythm theory along with melody. Gradually you will become master. If you want to become a singalong singer then practice sargam. Sargam lesson book of 80 pages with exercises and diagrams of notes is also available from ragatracks.

### USING THE COMPACT DISK

It is recommended that you have a copy of the accompanying compact disk that includes all the ragas and their khyals. Midi music will sound identical to keyboard instruments in your computers if you play it in Yamaha XG Player with windows 98 only. Midi music can also be played with a floppy or in USB equipped keyboards. In the keyboard you will listen real voice of Yamaha XG. Windows XP does not support Yamaha XG Player that produces real voice of midi instruments in your computer. Midi music is a digital music with 16 individual recorded tracks that you can edit or change in your own computer using cubase or cakewalk. You may sing-along with midi music in your computers and record your own compact disk of your favorite songs using suitable computer recording players.

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## Chapter 1

### About Musical Instruments

Harmonium is a keyboard, and so these lessons apply equally to the harmonium as well as to the electronic synthesizer keyboard. The important difference is that you can - and do play the keys with your left hand also; but for harmonium, your left hand is used in pumping the bellow to force air under pressure into the inside of the harmonium. In keyboard our left hand is used for chords. An ordinary keyboard is sufficient to master all the lessons that will follow. If you already have a keyboard, you do not need to buy anything else as of now. For solo performances, you may use a synthesizer keyboard or a harmonium, depending upon your taste, convenience and availability. Harmonium traditionally suits better for accompaniment during performance of Ghazals, Thumri, Indian Pakistani classical music, and some other types of Indian music.

For accompaniment to movie songs, and all varieties of songs, the synthesizer keyboard is the preferred choice. Keyboard offers a wide variety of instrumental sounds. The instrumental sound you choose is called a voice. Before you play a song, choose a voice that you like. Practice selecting different voices, and remember the setting for the ones you prefer. Look your keyboard owner's manual to help you. When you play the songs you can use any sound you wish. The rhythm controls provide drumbeats to play along with. These rhythm beats are also called styles. The drum rhythms can be changed to suit the kind of song you are playing. Moreover you will find tabla styles like kehrva, dadra, teentaal, rupak and jhaptal in ragatracks website. If you have a keyboard equipped with floppy drive or USB memory then you may copy these styles in your keyboard user memory to play along music. Melody keys are used to play the tune of the song with your right hand. The chord keys are used to play chords with your left hand. This makes the song sound full and beautiful. If you do not know how to play chords then you may use auto chord along with the melody.

### Harmonium Playing Positions

There are two common sitting positions, a standard position and one used by qawwali singers. The standard position is simple. One simply places the harmonium on the ground. The right hand plays the keys while the left hand pumps the bellows. This is the most common position used in India and Pakistan today. There is also a position used by qawwali singers and folk musicians. For this position one end of the harmonium rests on the ground while the other end rest partially in the lap. The position is reversed

for left handed musicians. In such cases the right hand pumps the bellows while the left hand plays the melody.

## Learning Music in Desi Style

Harmonium and keyboard are similar for Indian music. For harmonium we have to blow air all the time when we play. For Keyboard it is not required. For keyboard we have to select the best sound out of 100 or more available. The sound should be pleasing and continuous. Suggested sounds are Flute, Synthetic Reed etc. Every keyboard is different; therefore select sounds or voice yourself. For harmonium first open at least 3 big knobs and then Blower (dhokni). In some there is straight dhokni, which is to be opened from both sides and in other it should be opened only from left, for right handed people from right. In all lessons we have shown lessons for right handed persons. In harmonium never press dhokni (or blow air) until any note - black or white is pressed, otherwise air will not be able to go out from anywhere and the harmonium will start leaking air from sides or anywhere. Use right hand thumb to play white keys only and adjacent three fingers on black and white keys both. Thumb is very rarely used on black keys. For harmonium you need to use right hand only and all lessons are same for harmonium and keyboard.

By learning keyboard in desi style you will be able to play Indian and Pakistani film songs. Harmonium, keyboard and synthesizer keyboard are taken to mean the same thing, and are called simply the "keyboard". The notations are used to describe the keys on the keyboard: For convenience, the reference note, called the tonic or the key or the Sa, is assumed to be the first black key, indicated in the diagram by the letter "S". If you want to sing you may assign any key as "Sa", according to your voice scale. The techniques how to assign any key as "Sa" will be defined later in detail. In this book the fingering of keyboard and harmonium is kept same. We will assign same fingers for playing keyboard as well as harmonium so, that we will not face any difficulty if we play both instruments. Most people who play harmonium are not able to play keyboard perfectly. But now you will be able to play both instruments with no difficulty.

## Keyboard or Computer Music

Music can be defined as collection of small pieces of regular sound played at predefined time interval. It is the small water droplets that make the ocean, like wise music is also an ocean that is made up of small parts; it is called "note". An ingenious collection of these notes played over a period of time results in a melody that could be R.D. Burman or Nisar Bazmi song. Hence both western and Indian or for that matter any form of regular music has a set of basic notes from which they grow, something like alphabets. There is a new concept evolving called "computer music" where a musician explores beyond the basic notes that is defined in music. In cakewalk studio it is possible to explore beyond basics. Today almost all the keyboards are computerized and produce midi music. Midi means musical instruments digital interface. Midi music can be edited in a computer or in a midi keyboard.

Let us see more on notes. "Notes" what are they? Note can be technically explained as a sound frequency. Actually the sound that is produced when you press a key on musical keyboard is called as "note". It does not matter if you press the white key or the black key. Each key plays a predefined frequency. A frequency is number of cycles per second. The note gets its shape by the amount of time you hold down the key and release it. This is called the note length or duration. Hence to make a "tune" or a "melody" or "song" you should play a bunch of these notes at proper duration and length.

## Western Music Notes Verses Indian

Before we can learn how to play scales it is vital that we learn the notes on keyboard and how they relate to each other. The best way to describe the notes on the keyboard is by comparing them to the notes of the alphabets. The first seven notes of the keyboard are ( A - B - C - D - E - F - G ). Each note differs with each other in sound. Notice that the seven notes of keyboard repeat themselves over and over again. The notes sound the same but the pitch differs. For example if you play C and move to the right until you find the next C, you will notice that if you play them simultaneously, both notes sounds the same but one is higher than the other.

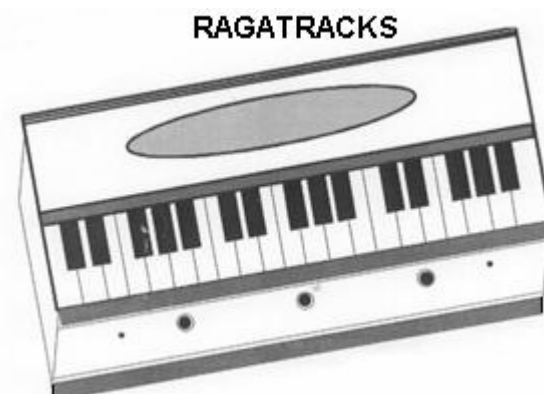
Middle C marks the center of the keyboard. As you will notice the western C major scale is the easiest and simplest scale of the twelve. In C major scale you may play the song "Ik pyar kaa nagma hai". In western system it consists all the white keys from any starting C to the next octave C.

A standard semi professional music keyboard has 48 keys. You will see 4 sets of 12 keys. This 12 set of notes is technically called an octave. Why 12, why not 13?, Good question. The aim of this issue is to keep it simple; Western is based on logarithmic division. In Indian system of music you can start playing Indian or Pakistani songs from any note and starting note will always become our reference note or Sa. Remaining notes will be arranged according to achal komal and tiver system. It is recommended that you select first black key for learning keyboard or harmonium. In western music, Fifth note from C is as 5<sup>th</sup>. In Indian music "Sa" note is based on our reference note or the key we selected for starting point as Sa. We can further go in deep by playing songs in raga of that particular thaat. To play song in ragas need practice and concept of raga must be clear. In the western music system the "C note" itself does not change and "scales" denotes the pitch changes. Western music system has an "absolute" naming for the keys whereas in Indian the notation is "relative. Desi music has combined both by adding chords with melody. In the seven tone-scale the second, third, fourth, sixth, and seventh notes can be sharp or flat, making up the twelve notes in the western scale. However, ragas can specify microtonal changes to this scale: a flatter second, a sharper seventh, and so forth. Furthermore, such variations can occur between styles, performers or simply follow the mood of the performer. There is no absolute pitch; instead, each performance simply picks a ground note, and the other scale degrees follow relative to the ground note.

Note: "Sa" does not "map" always onto "C". It could start at F and still form S R G M P D N scale in which case the corresponding notes also changes. You may temporarily relate the "Sa" of Indian to "C#" of Western that is fortunately identical to each other. A Scale is a set of 7 notes in a proper order and interval. Or a scale is a set of 7 notes with predefined intervals. The distance between each note is called as interval. It is true that scales and ragas are not same. Apart from having seven different notes, there are not many similarities. There is a huge difference between a scale and raga in tonal quality or the sound density.

Melody and rhythm are the common grounds for music, be it western or Indian. Indian music is essentially monophonic (single melody format or homophonic) while Western music can be polyphonic (multiple notes played or sung in harmonized arrangement), monophonic or a combination of both. Western classical music is based upon the equal tempered scale, and rests upon melody, harmony and counterpart while swars and taalas are the two basic components of Indian classical music. Swars are the twelve notes and the intervening semitones, while a taal is a cycle of beats, starting with a stress point called the sam and ending with a release point called the khali. It is this (sam & khali) that brings life to a taal.

## HARMONIUM & KEYBOARD



Harmonium came to India through missionaries. The original form was that of a pedal organ. The harmonium is a reed organ, with bellows that are operated by hand. Over the years many vocalists preferred to be accompanied by the harmonium. The role of the Harmonium is to provide a backup for the main melodic line, thus endowing it with a sort of strength and an added dimension. Before playing the harmonium instrument it should be placed on a stool alongside of which the vocalist may sit or on a chair of equal height. Or if the gathering of listeners is organized on a carpeted floor, the instrument may be put in front of the vocalist. Now we will again present a brief summary of our lessons as given below:

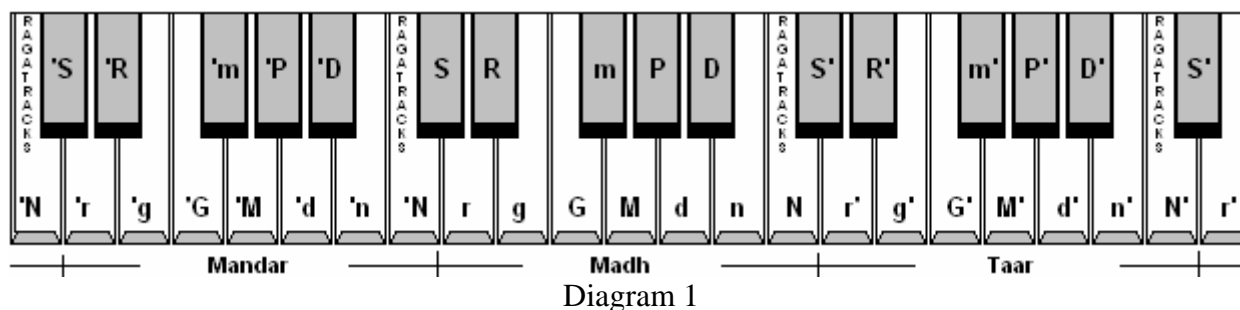
1. Harmonium and Keyboard are similar for Indian music so these lessons are equally suitable for both instruments. For Harmonium we have to blow air all the time when we play. For Keyboard it is not required.
2. For Keyboard we have to select the best sound out of 100 or more available. The sound should be pleasing and continuous. Suggested sounds are Flute, organ, Clarinet, Reed etc. Every Keyboard is different; therefore please select your sound of Keyboard yourself.
3. For Harmonium first open at least 3 big knobs and then blower. In some there is straight blower, which is to be opened from both sides, and in other it should be opened only from left.
4. In Harmonium never blow air until any note black or white is pressed, otherwise air will not be able to go out from anywhere and the Harmonium will start leaking air from sides or anywhere.
5. Use left hand to blow air and right hand to play keys. Use right hand thumb to play white keys only and adjoining three fingers on black and white keys both. In Harmonium or keyboard thumb is very rarely used on black keys.
6. For Keyboard you need to use right hand only. In these lessons fingering position is same for Harmonium as well as Keyboard. After a little basic knowledge of how to play on the harmonium, it should not be difficult for a vocalist to find the tonic (Sa) key, suitable for his singing gamut (entire range seven notes) of notes on the harmonium/keyboard. In keyboards as a general rule, an area of about two octaves can do the job of self-accompaniment. What you need is really four notes in the lower octave from your chosen tonic note, and another four notes farther from the upper tonic note (taar).
7. With the key of the tonic note (Sa) pressed, pull the bellow gently toward yourself, with the left to get the sound of this note.
8. Along with the sound of this tonic (Sa) note try to sing your song at this moment, by aligning the tune with the tonic note. Make a judgment of the pitch of the song in high as well as low places on the keyboard.
9. Feel your way while singing; by touching the suitable keys on the harmonium with those notes, which are related to the song, you want to sing. At this point, the touching of fingers will produce two kinds of

sounds. One kind, which resemble the elements of your song and the second kind, which do not resemble. In fact second kind tones will sound boring, so you should avoid and pass over them.

10. As with solo (alone) playing of the keyboard, the fingers are made to skip over the notes besides other techniques, with self-accompaniment. The same fingering is done by a method called legato in modern musical terminology which implies constantly keeping pressed one of the appropriate keys along with singing, like a continuous flow of sound tones, exactly as a church organ. In this way you will produce sound effect of a harmonium in your keyboard while practicing sargam.

With a little practice, the fingers will get accustomed, to synchronize with the vocal sounds controlled by the mind. You get better knowledge of the technique of playing harmonium, before the actual accompaniment. Also a teacher, if available in the neighborhood, can help a lot to give a fairly good start or watch video lessons. In Indian Classical music 3 saptaks (Octaves) are usually utilized.

## SHRUTI AND SAPTAK



**Saptak:** When the set of seven notes is played in the order it is called a Saptak (i.e. Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni)

**Madh Saptak:** The normal tone of human voice, which is neither high nor low. It is called Madh saptak (middle octave). This has got no symbol in the notation system and is notated as simple (S).

**Taar Saptak:** The one higher than Madh Saptak is a taar saptak (high octave). The notes are high and sharp. Taar saptak is in right side of middle saptak and with a sign of apostrophe on right side

**Mandr Saptak:** The one below the Madh Saptak is called Mandr (low). Notes of this octave are sung or played in a low deep tone. This comprises of the saptak that is below the lower Sa. Notes of this saptak are indicated by a sign of apostrophe on left side e.g. ('S). In these saptak (octave) the Sa gets repeated after the Ni. The Frequency of the second Sa is twice the frequency of the first Sa. The second Sa is termed as Taar. In some keyboards from this Taar the same saptak gets repeated (But this time at twice the frequency of the respective swar)

The Indian musical scale is said to have evolved from 3 notes to a scale of 7 primary notes, on the basis of 22 intervals. A scale is divided into 22 shrutis or intervals, and these are the basis of the musical notes. Musicians as Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha and Ni know the 7 notes of the scale. These 7 notes of the scale do not have equal intervals between them. A Saptak is a group of 7 notes, divided by the intervals as given below:

Sa	Re	Ga	Ma	Pa	Dha	Ni
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22						

The first and fifth notes (Sa and Pa) do not alter their positions on this interval. The other 5 notes can change their positions in the interval, leading to different ragas.

## NOTES OF INDIAN SCALE

The notes of the Indian gamut (seven notes range) are known as sargam. Just as the English word "alphabet" is derived from the Greek letters "alpha, beta", in the same way the word "Sargam" is derived from "Sa-Re-Ga-Ma". Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, is simply the initial notes (swar) of the Indian musical gamut. These swar are Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, and Ni.

Musical notes are chosen by certain names. However, the names do not refer to notes of fixed absolute pitch. Having decided on the schedule and key in which the performance is to take place, the singer or musician determines the pitch, which will be the fundamental pitch, and designates it as the first note of the octave, calling it by the label " Sa ". The succeeding notes of the octave are then given the following names:

Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni,

The full names of the notes are given as under:

**Sa**    **Shudh (Khraj)**  
**Re**    **Rekhab**  
**Ga**    **Gandhar**  
**Ma**    **Madhyam**  
**Pa**    **Pancham**  
**Dha**   **Dhaivat**  
**Ni**    **Nikhad**

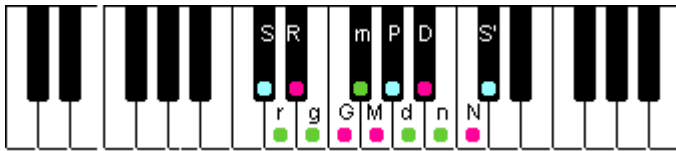
The intervals between these notes can be regarded as the same as those of the standard C# scale of just temperament, and we will denote these notes by S, R, G, M, P, D, N. In addition there are of course certain notes that are komal (flat) or tiver (sharp) versions of some of these.

## TWELVE NOTES OF A SAPTAK

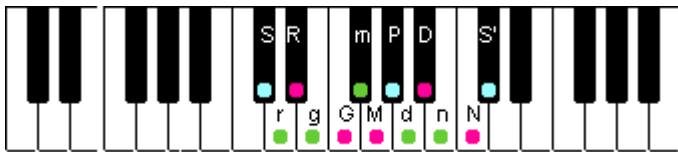
No	Notes Detail	Notes	Notes Properties	Key Color
1	Sa, which will be denoted by S	S	Khraj/Shadj, Sa	Blue
2	Komal Re, which will be denoted by r	r	Komal Re	Green
3	Tiver Re, which will be denoted by R	R	Shuddh Re	Red
4	Komal Ga, which will be denoted by g	g	Komal Ga	Green
5	Tiver Ga, which will be denoted by G	G	Shuddh Ga	Red
6	Komal Ma, which will be denoted by m	m	Shuddh Ma	Green
7	Tiver Ma, which will be denoted by M	M	Tiver Ma	Red
8	Pa, will be denoted by P; (immovable note)	P	Fixed (constant), Pa	Blue
9	Komal Dha, which will be denoted by d	d	Komal Dha	Green
10	Tiver Dha, which will be denoted by D	D	Shuddh Dha	Red
11	Komal Ni, which will be denoted by n	n	Komal Ni	Green
1	Tiver Ni, which will be denoted by N	N	Shuddh Ni	Red
Shuddh Notes are called natural notes				

We can fix any note as khraj (first) note that is “Sa” and corresponding attached notes of scale will be arranged according to the given arrangement. E.g. S, r, R, g, G, m, M, P, d, D, n, N

Sa and Pa are immovable or constant. Thus the full twelve-tone scale arrangement of notes is labeled as: S, r, R, g, G, m, M, P, d, D, n, N, S'

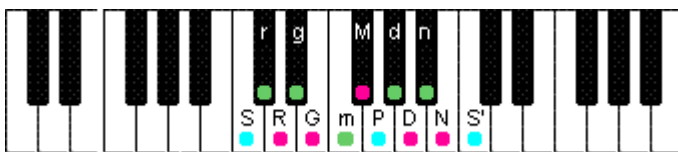


Pic.1a Full twelve-tone scale in madh saptak



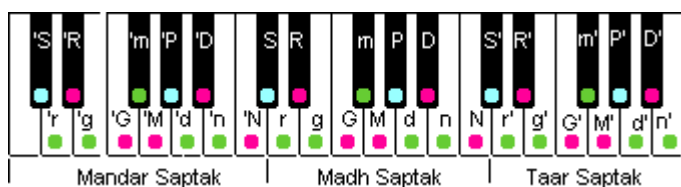
Pic.2a, Selecting Khraj note (Sa) from first black key

Each time we change our Khraj note (Sa) the position of notes in scale will also be changed according to below given arrangement where our Khraj note is first white key.



Pic.3a, Selecting Khraj note (Sa) from first white key

So, how do you distinguish between octaves? Mandr saptak is situated in extreme left of harmonium or keyboard and notes of mandr saptak have a sign of apostrophe on left side e.g. 'S. Middle saptak is without any sign and taar saptak is in extreme right. Notes written in taar saptak are shown by a sign of apostrophe on right e.g. S'.



Full twelve tone scale in all three saptak

We will use as the fundamental note the C<sup>#</sup> which lies in middle octave in western system. This will correspond to Sa in madh saptak of Indian system. So by combining both systems the other notes will correspond as follows:

$$\begin{array}{cccccccccccc} S, & r, & R, & g, & G, & m, & M, & P, & d, & D, & n, & N, & S' \\ C^\#, & D, & D^\#, & E, & F, & F^\#, & G, & G^\#, & A, & A^\#, & B, & C, & C^\# \end{array}$$

Most of the singers sing in the particular scale according to their sound pitch. Many male vocalists will use C<sup>#</sup> or D<sup>#</sup> as their fundamental starting note. Female vocalists tend to place their fundamental somewhere in the range from F<sup>#</sup> to A<sup>#</sup>. Female sound pitch is higher than male. Lowercase (small) letters

are shown as "komal" or flat notes, and the uppercase (capital) letters are shown as "tiver" or sharp. All notes except for Sa and Pa have an alter ego, whose nature is either komal or tiver.

## Identifying notes and their position:

Shuddh (natural) notes are notated as S, R, G, M, P, D, N,

Komal (flat) notes are notated as r, g, d, n

All Tiver (sharp) notes are notated as R, G, D, N and Tiver Ma is also notated as M

(S R G M P D N) = notes in middle octave (madh)

**Apostrophe + Note ('S' 'R' 'G' 'M' 'P' 'D' 'N) = notes in lower octave (mandr)**

**Note + apostrophe (S' R' G' M' P' D' N') = notes in upper octave (taar)**

The lower case letters indicate komal or flat notes, the upper case, Shuddh or pure, natural notes. Sa and Pa are never sharp or flat. As tiver or "bright" Ma is written with an upper case M. Shuddh Ma, however, is written with a lower case m. It is the only note ever referred to as sharp.

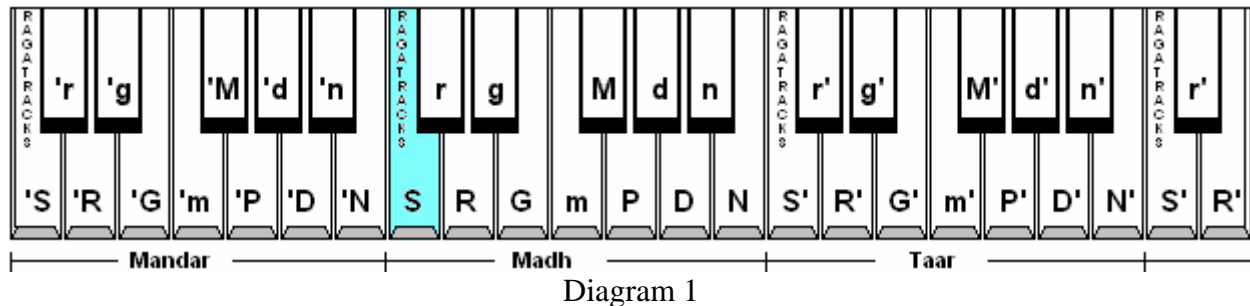
However, Shuddh (natural) notes are notated as S, R, G, m, P, D, N, Sa of Indian is equivalent to C# of the western system. This need not be the case, since in Indian music 'Sa' is not only the most important note (also called the "tonic" note), it is modal, e.g. it can be anything you wish and the other corresponding notes will offset from there as shown in above picture 1a and 2a. However, C, C# are commonly used as Sa. Most persons prefer to play music from the western C# as their starting point. In other words, they select Sa from C#, which is a common expression which is easy to remember. It is suggested to use C# if you are beginning to play harmonium or keyboard as a student of music for simplicity and ease. After learning you may start playing from any note and corresponding notes will change according to our chosen khraj note. Indian classical music is principally based on melody and rhythm, not on harmony, counterpoint, chords, and modulation. Before you begin your first lesson, you must go through the initial lessons above. When you have a basic understanding of the notes of a sargam, it will help you sing and play better.

## You will need the following

A good teacher is essential because this person will correct your mistakes and set a good example to follow. Your teacher should be someone capable of performing and have a good reputation for teaching. Treat your teacher with respect and consideration at all times, even when you are no longer learning from him. Instrumentalists must be sure to learn from both a vocal and instrumental teacher. From the instrumental teacher you will learn techniques and from the vocal teacher to implement these techniques as though your instrument is singing the words. It is not enough to just attend a class once a week. Practice everyday, even for as little as half an hour. For those who wish to be performers, weekday practice should be 2-3 hours. You must be ready to listen carefully to your teacher and to other performers. Listening to great recordings of old semi-classical will help you learn faster. Attend concerts as well.



## HARMONIUM/KEYBOARD NOTES



### Selecting First White Key as Sa

Now we are again revising our lesson. On the keyboard, the area S through N is called a saptak (an octave). There are three octaves: the madh (middle), the mandr (lower), and the taar (higher/upper). The lower octave

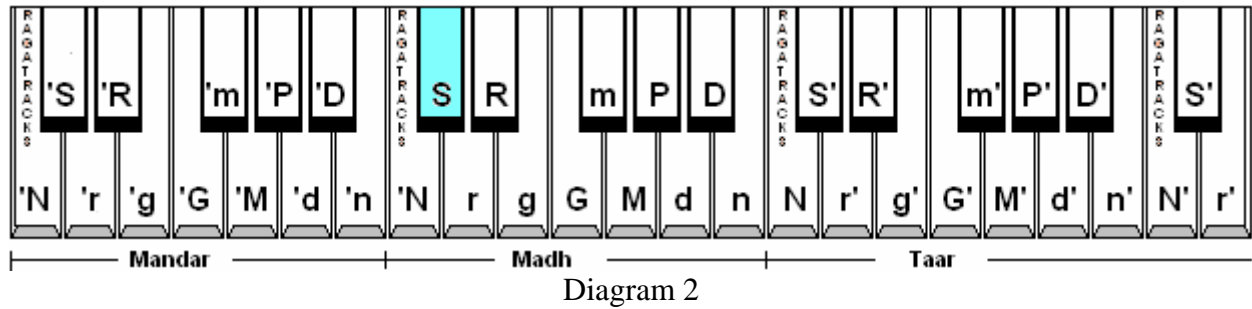
is situated to the left of the middle; the upper octave is situated to the right of the middle octave. Again, this is clearly shown in the diagram above. A note belonging to the middle octave has no sign when represented on the paper; for example, the Pa of the middle octave is represented simply as: P. The note belonging to the lower octave has an apostrophe to its left. Thus, for example, the Pa in the lower octave is represented as: 'P. The note belonging to the higher octave has an apostrophe to its right. Thus, for example, the P in the higher octave is represented as: P'. The 36 keys of harmonium represent the notes in all three octaves. In keyboards there could be additional higher saptak or additional lower saptak that cannot be used in singing a song due to their higher or lower pitch of sound.

\*In the following statement 'S means lower saptak note ( left side of middle octave) and S' means higher octave or saptak note of harmonium or keyboard ( right side of middle octave). The rule of achal, (fixed) tiver and komal will apply to all three octaves as given below.

(Lower octave or Mandar)    'S, 'r, 'R, 'g, 'G, 'm, 'M, 'P, 'd, 'D, 'n, 'N  
 (Middle octave or Madh)        S, r, R, g, G, m, M, P, d, D, n, N  
 (Higher octave or Taar)        S', r', R', g', G', m', M', P', d', D', n', N'

### First Black Key Selected As Our Sa Throughout In This Book

Notes shown in all three saptak of Harmonium/Keyboard													
Mandar Octave Notes	'S	'r	'R	'g	'G	'm	'M	'P	'd	'D	'n	'N	S
Madh Octave Notes	S	r	R	g	G	m	M	P	d	D	n	N	S'
Taar Octave Notes	S'	r'	R'	g'	G'	m'	M'	P'	d'	D'	n'	N'	S''



Achal - Komal -Tiver - Komal - Tiver Komal - Tiver –Achal – Komal – Tiver – Komal – Tiver - Achal  
S r R g G m M P d D n N S'

There are three saptak in a standard harmonium. There may be five saptaks in a keyboard. The saptak to the extreme left of the keyboard is for playing chords and to the extreme right is one additional taar saptak but with very sharp voice. We can also play melody in chords saptak or rhythm section of a keyboard but the sound of melody will produce base sound. The chords saptak and extra taar saptak is not perfect for playing melody of a song due to its higher and lower pitches of sound. In a complete saptak there are 12 notes, which are seven white keys and five black keys. In a harmonium there are three saptak and 36 keys but in a professional keyboard there are commonly five or four saptak and 60-48 notes. It should be noted that while playing songs you will only deal with three saptaks and for chords you will use chords saptak that is located to the extreme left of keyboard. Most of the songs start in madh or middle saptak.



## To summarize:

### Achal or Qyme Swar:

These notes are notated as S and P and shown in capital letters. Achal means fixed notes without saathi notes.

### Tiver (sharp):

These notes are noted as R,G,M,D,N and also shown in capital.

### Komal (flat):

These notes are notated as r, g, m, d, n & are shown in small letters. All notes belong to madh saptak by default; they have no sign of apostrophe. Notes of mandr saptak are preceded by ' sign of apostrophe e.g ('S) and notes of taar-saptak are succeeded by ' sign of apostrophe e.g (S'). Lastly, a comma ( , ) represents a pause between notes. Learn saptak notes system e.g. achal, komal and tiver for beginning your song from a suitable scale.

## The Scales & The Finger Number

In music, a scale is an ascending or descending series of notes or pitches, as opposed to a series of intervals, which is a musical mode. Each note in a scale is referred to as a scale degree. Though the scales from musical traditions around the world are often quite different, the pitches of the notes in any given scale are usually related by a mathematical rule. Scales are theoretical constructs that may be used to control a composition, but much music is written without any scale in mind. Scales may be described as tonal, modal, diatonic, derived or synthetic, and by the number of tones included. The C major scale of

western music system is one of the most important scales to start learning because it has no sharps or flats, and is very easy to play on most instruments like piano (simply play all the white keys). The official name of the major scale is Ionian, and belongs to the group of the church scales.



Natural white keys of western scale

The scale in diagram above, illustrates only "white" keys that are natural notes. As mentioned earlier we have assumed the first white key to be the Sa (S). But from now we will use first black key as khraj note for starting point for convenience. You will find that there are 5 sets of black keys in a keyboard. Each set of 5 black keys is made up of 2 + 3 black keys. The first white key is that white key which lies immediately to the left of the first black key. Since there are several sets of 5 black keys, there will also be several "first white" keys.

**You are going to use only your right hand to play the harmonium. The right hand fingers are numbered as follows:**

The thumb is numbered 1

The index finger is 2

The middle finger is 3

The ring finger is 4

The little finger is numbered 5.

## Showing Western & Indian Notes Together

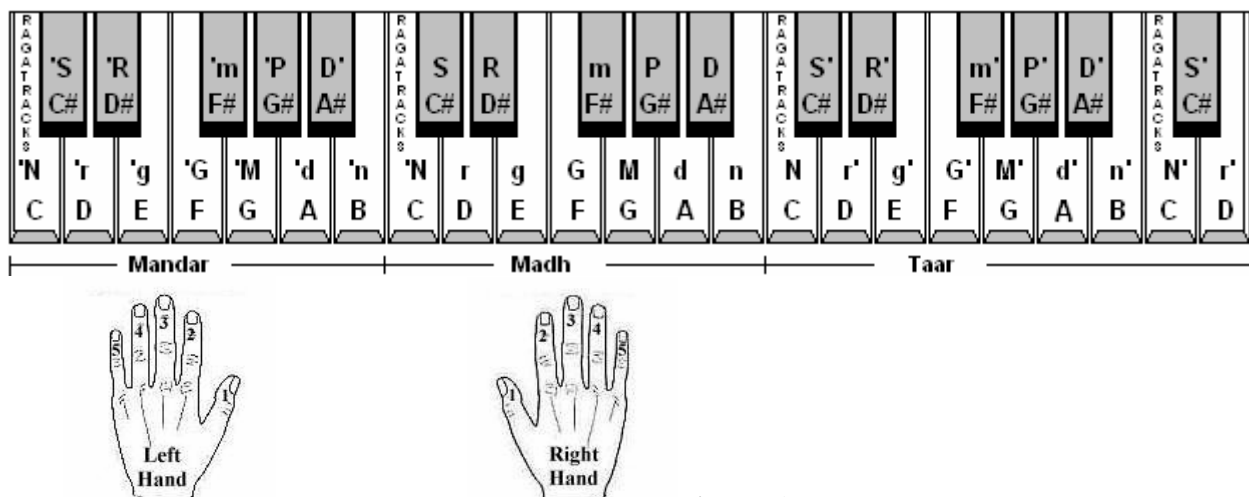


Diagram 3

## Knowing Your Swar

There are seven swars/notes in a sargam that is Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, and Ni. There are total twelve notes in one saptak because five notes also have their saathi notes. Only two notes are called achal notes because they do not have any saathi. The Achal notes are Sa and Pa.

## The following five swar have their saathi swars:

1. Re
2. Ga
3. Ma
4. Dha
5. Ni

Sa and Pa are not included in the above-mentioned five swar. The reason is this that their saathi swar do not exist. Sa and Pa are called achal swar and these achal swars are neither komal nor tiver. Komal swar are written with the initial small letters and tiver swar are written in capital letters as given below:

### List of Komal Saathi Swar which are written in small letters:

Komal Re -----r  
 Komal Ga -----g  
 Komal Ma -----m  
 Komal Dha -----d  
 Komal Ni -----n

### List of Tiver Saathi Swar which are written in capital letters:

Tiver Re -----R  
 Tiver Ga -----G  
 Tiver Ma -----M  
 Tiver Dha ----- D  
 Tiver Ni -----N

### Achal or Qyme Swars:

**Achal Swar** ----- S and P (Achal swars are also written in capital letters)

We can write the whole sargam by combining achal komal and tiver as S r R g G m M P d D n N S'. (Here S and P are called achal or qyme swar which are without komal and tiver saathi swar). When all the swar are tiver in a sargam then it will become the sargam of raga kalyan. In the Sargam of Raga kalyan all swar will be tiver along with Sa and Pa, which are achal swar. These tiver and achal swar are represented here as under: -

**Tiver swar or sharp swar:** R, G, M, D, N  
**Achal swar** S, P,

There are total 12 notes: 5 komal + 5 tiver + 2 achal = 12 in one saptak.  
 This rule will apply to all three saptak. Below we have shown notes from three saptak.

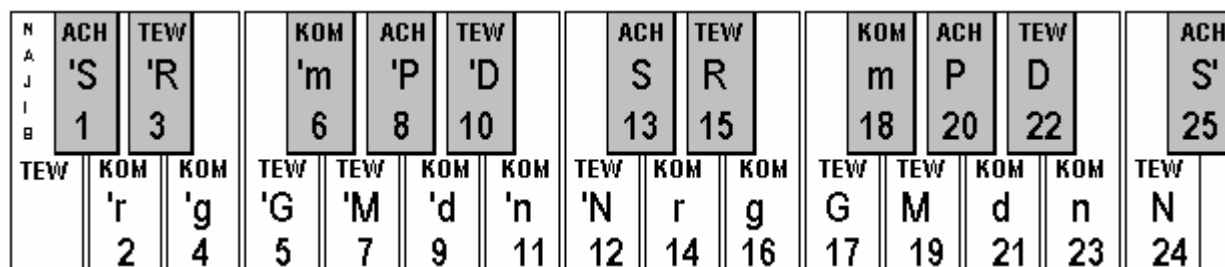


Diagram 4

Here ACH = Achal Swar, TEW = Tiver Swar, KOM = Komal Swar

Here starting from first black key as our khraj note, which is Sa, the arrangement of notes will be as mentioned below: -

Or we can write whole sargam as **S r R g G m M P d D n N S'**

Important Note: The first swar or key attached just after Sa is always komal ray then tiver ray, komal Ga then tiver Ga, Komal Ma then tiver Ma, achal Pa then komal Dha, tiver Dha, Komal Ni tiver Ni, then achal Sa. In the Diagram 5 we are beginning from left side. The immediate key just attached to Sa is (r) with key number 2. With r the next immediate key attached is (R) with key number 3. The next key just attached to (R) is (g) with key number 4 and so on . . . . The keys attached with each other are shown by numbering 1,2,3,4,5.....24. In each saptak the specified sequence will be repeated.

We can also explain in another way: After Achal Sa there will be Komal Swar, Then Tiver, and so on..... Pa is also Achal and after Pa then there is Komal Dha, Tiver Dha and so on. If you will recognize komal and tiver swar sequence then you will be able to understand that and in the end ragas. Saptak is the complete set of five-komal and five-tiver swar along with two achal swars that are Sa and Pa. So there are total twelve swar in a complete Sargam.

## Transpose Option:

Transposing keyboards such as transposing harmoniums or electronic keyboards with a transpose function can have a similar effect, but are now usually called transposing instruments. These instruments allow the player to change the instrument's transposition electronically or mechanically. Scale changer harmoniums are called transposing instruments.

Singers can change scale with transpose option of keyboard while sing-along music. With transpose option singers can perform with convenience. If the scale of your voice is higher than first black key, you may press transpose button in keyboard one-step higher. In this way your voice will synchronize with the scale of keyboard. We can fix any key as our own starting point for singing and playing simultaneously. In harmonium use scale changing option that is available in scale changing harmoniums. If you have taken proper music training and learned your scales well, then you won't need a scale-changing harmonium, as you already know how to play things in different keys. If, however, you don't know how to play with different scales then a scale changer is a definite asset.

## Transposing Or Scale Changing

(Notes with cross is not to be played)

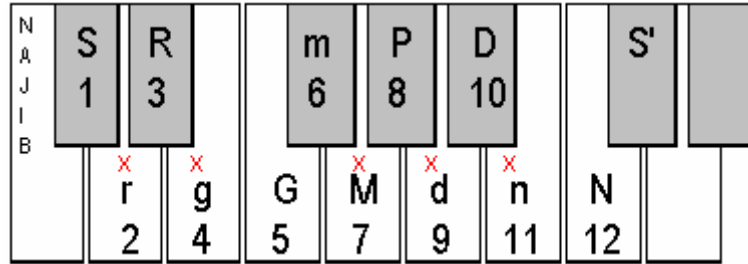


Diagram 5 That Bilawal

Note: - We can select any key as our khraj note that is Sa and from that position of Sa our key combination will change in each figure as shown in diagram 5, 7, 8, 9. Some person cannot sing in loud scale so; the musician will select suitable scale for them. Selecting scale means selecting first note elsewhere on a harmonium or keyboard. The name of first note from where we start playing will become the name of the scale. Notes with cross sign XXXX shown here are not for playing and will not be shown in future diagrams of that.

Tiver Komal Notes	S	r	R	g	G	m	M	P	d	D	n	N	S'
No. of Notes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Scale/That Notes	S	x	R	x	G	m	x	P	x	D	x	N	S'
<b>That Bilawal Sargam</b>	<b>S</b>		<b>R</b>		<b>G</b>	<b>m</b>		<b>P</b>		<b>D</b>		<b>N</b>	<b>S'</b>

Sa is always achal or qyme which has no saathi swar. The first swar or key attached just after Sa is always komal (r) shown with cross and with note no. 2. After tiver (R) komal (g) is attached then tiver (G), komal (m) then tiver (M), Achal Pa then komal (d), tiver (D), komal (n) tiver (N), then achal Sa as S'. If we do not play notes with cross sign then it will become sargam of that bilawal with notes S, R, G, m, P, D, N, S' as shown in diagram 5 above.

Or we can write whole sargam as: **S, R, G, m, P, D, N, S'**



(Notes with sign of cross is not to be played)

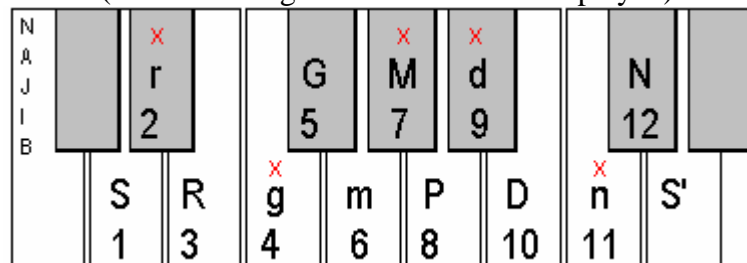


Diagram 6

We can select any key as our Sa and from that position of Sa our key combination will change in each diagram.

Tiver Komal Notes	S	r	R	g	G	m	M	P	d	D	n	N	S'
No. of Notes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Scale/Thaat Notes	S	x	R	x	G	m	x	P	x	D	x	N	S'
<b>Thaat/Scale Sargam</b>	<b>S</b>		<b>R</b>		<b>G</b>	<b>m</b>		<b>P</b>		<b>D</b>		<b>N</b>	<b>S'</b>

Note : Here we will start playing from second white key as Sa which is always achal or qyme swar. The first swar or key attached just after Sa is always komal (r) shown with cross and with note no. 2 then tiver (R) with capital R, komal (g) then tiver (G), komal (m) then tiver (M), achal Pa then komal (d), tiver (D), komal (n) tiver (N), then achal Sa as S'. See diagram 6 above. By ignoring notes with cross sign following sargam will be formed again.

From 2<sup>nd</sup> white note we can again write whole sargam as **S, R, G, m, P, D, N, S'**

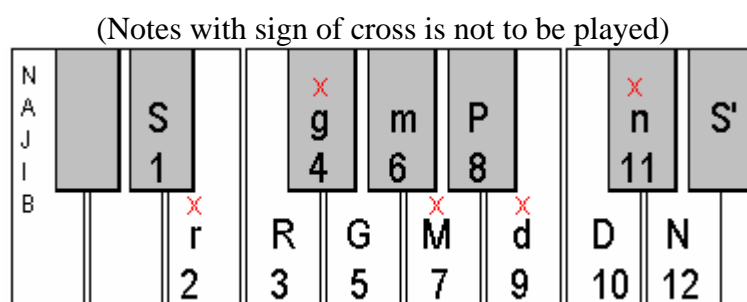


Diagram 7

We can select any key as our Sa and from that position of Sa our key combination will change.

Tiver Komal Notes	S	r	R	g	G	m	M	P	d	D	n	N	S'
No. of Notes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Scale/Thaat Notes	S	x	R	x	G	m	x	P	x	D	x	N	S'
<b>Thaat/Scale Sargam</b>	<b>S</b>		<b>R</b>		<b>G</b>	<b>m</b>		<b>P</b>		<b>D</b>		<b>N</b>	<b>S'</b>

Note : Here we selected second black key as our khraj note which is (Sa). First swar or key attached just after Sa is always komal (r) shown with cross and with note no. 2 then tiver ray with capital (R), komal (g) then tiver (G), komal (m) then tiver (M), achal Pa then komal (d), tiver (D), komal (n) tiver (N), then achal Sa as S'. See diagram 7 above.

From 2<sup>nd</sup> black note we can again write whole sargam as **S, R, G, m, P, D, N, S'**  
(Notes with cross are not played)



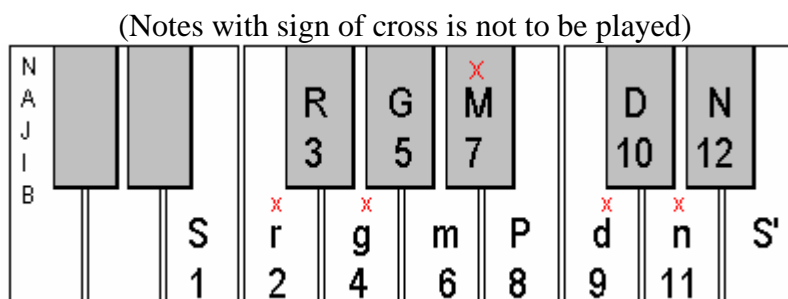


Diagram 8

Tiver Komal Notes	S	r	R	g	G	m	M	P	d	D	n	N	S'
No. of Notes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Scale/Thaat Notes	S	x	R	x	G	m	x	P	x	D	x	N	S'
<b>Thaat/Scale Sargam</b>	<b>S</b>		<b>R</b>		<b>G</b>	<b>m</b>		<b>P</b>		<b>D</b>		<b>N</b>	<b>S'</b>

Note : Here we selected 3rd white key as Sa or starting note which is always achal or qyme swar. First swar or key attached just after Sa is always komal (r) shown with cross and with note no. 2 then tiver (R), komal (g) then tiver (G), komal (m) then tiver (M), achal Pa then komal (d), tiver (D), komal (n) tiver (N), then achal Sa as S'. From 3rd white key note we can again write whole sargam as S, R, G, m, P, D, N, S' (Notes with cross are not played) In the above four examples of transposing it is proved that in Indian system we can fix any note as khraj (first) note that is "Sa" and corresponding attached notes of scale will be arranged according to the prearranged arrangement which is always achal, komal, tiver and so on.

## Chapter 2

### Thaat/Desi Scales

A scale in western system of music is the ascending and descending movements from C, D,E,F,G,A,B,C' and back that is, C' B, A, G, F, E,D C. In a scale all 8 notes are always included, in that order and eighth note is always added in a scale or sargam. The set of eight notes ascending and descending is called a thaat and thaats produce ragas. The system of classification for the raga in different groups is called a thaat. Thaats system is an "artificial" way to classifying ragas. Classification in thaats system is purely for academic purpose. It is not necessary that Ragas from the same thaats might have same or similar personality. The idea behind thaats is pretty simple. There are 12 notes in an octave - 7 pure notes and 5 flat/augmented notes. If one makes various variations of these notes, one can think of 72 different combinations. Hindustani system, however, adds further restrictions on the way these notes are used. It is usually not allowed to use both pure and corresponding flat notes one after the other (and since this is an evolved art form and not science, there are always exceptions to such rules). When such restrictions are factored in, the numbers of thaats reduce to ten. It is important for beginners to practice Kalyan thaats to begin practice with. As they get comfortable with it, they may switch to bhairavi thaats. I also find from my own experience that Bhairav thaats too presents some interesting fingering challenges. If one gets command on these three, the other thaats usually follow pretty easily. If you learn thaats then you can easily learn ragas and can play many songs in keyboard or harmonium. You can play few songs with thaats but unlimited songs can be produced with ragas and ragas produce beauty. It is easy to play songs in a thaats that contain fixed number of ascending and descending notes. In a raga there may not be fixed number of notes in ascending and descending order so, it is not easy to play songs in the first instance. There are certain rules for representation of thaats.



## These rules of classification of thaata are defined as under:

1. A thaata must have seven notes out of the twelve notes placed in an ascending or descending order. Both the forms of the notes can be used.
2. Thaata has only one arohi and one amrohi.
3. Thaata is not to be sung and is for only playing music songs but the ragas produced from the thaata are sung.
4. Thaata is named after the popular raga of that thaata. For example bhairavi is a popular raga and the thaata of the raga bhairavi is named after the raga.

It is worth noting that almost all the ten thaata are also Ragas; and yet a thaata is a very different musical entity from a raga, and in this difference may lie, crucially, a definition of what a raga is or is not. A thaata is a musical scale, conceived of as a Western musical scale might be, with the seven notes presented in their order of ascent (Arohi). For instance, Asavari is presented, and notated, as Sa Re Ga (flat or komal) Ma Pa Dha (flat) Ni (flat) in ascent, or Arohi. Out of ten thaata about 80 ragas are developed and performed these days. But for beginner 30 popular ragas or less are sufficient to bring perfection in learning.

There are again several systems of classification of the raga. Presently in Indian classical music the 10-thaata classifications of ragas is commonly known. It is important to point out that Bhatkande's thaata-raga theory is hardly infallible, but it is yet an important classificatory device with which to order, and make sense of, a confusing group of Ragas; and it is also a useful tool in the transmission of music to the students.

## 10 Thaats & Their Notes

Name of Thaata	Ascending Notes	Descending Notes	Notes Properties
Bilawal	↗S, R, G, m, P, D, N, S'	↖S', N, D, P, m, G, R, S	All Shuddh or Natural Notes
Kafi	↗S, R, g, m, P, D, n, S'	↖S', n, D, P, m, g, R, S	Ga, Ni, Komal
Asavari	↗S, R, g, m, P, d, n, S'	↖S', n, d, P, m, g, R, S	Ga, Dha, Ni Komal
Khamaj	↗S, R, G, m, P, D, n, S'	↖S', n, D, P, m, G, R, S	Ni Komal
Kalyan	↗S, R, G, M, P, D, N, S'	↖S', N, D, P, M, G, R, S	No Komal, Only Tiver M
Bhairav/Behro	↗S, r, G, m, P, d, N, S'	↖S', N, d, P, m, G, r, S	Re, Dha Komal
Bhairavi	↗S, r, g, m, P, d, n, S'	↖S', n, d, P, m, g, r, S	Re, Ga, Dha, Ni Komal
Marwa	↗S, r, G, M, P, D, N, S'	↖S', N, D, P, M, G, r, S	Re Komal, Ma Tiver
Poorvi	↗S, r, G, M, P, d, N, S'	↖S', N, d, P, M, G, r, S	Re, Dha Komal, Ma Tiver
Todi	↗S, r, g, M, P, d, N, S'	↖S', N, d, P, M, g, r, S	Re, Ga, Dha Komal, Ma Tiver

## RULES FOR PLAYING THAATA AND SONGS

Play one thaata at a time, repeatedly. Practice all ten thaata unless you are very comfortable playing each of them correctly, without looking at the keyboard. Playing a thaata require particular fingering but playing a song of any kind, does not necessarily demand any specific finger placements. So, a particular finger does not play a particular note of the song. After you get familiar with the thaata sargam you may use your fingers according to the ease while playing a song. However, there is a big, very big difference here. The difference is this: In the thaata, shown above, our playing was restricted to only to middle octave. But the

song may take us beyond one octave. So, now, we need to practice in the three octaves, namely, the middle, the higher, and the lower octaves.

For playing a song, the rules are: For ease and convenience of playing you should not run out of fingers whether you are playing to go up (right), or to go down (left). Try using the first three fingers more frequently, try to reserve the fourth finger and especially the fifth finger for playing the last notes before you have to go descending. This requires that you keep moving your wrist, to the left or to the right as required, so that the fingers get re-arranged conveniently and you always have a finger to reach and play the note required by the song. By practice, you will formulate your own fingering rules, in addition to given rules.

## History of Classical Music & Raga

According to Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande (1860-1936), one of the most influential musicologists in the field of North Indian classical music, each one of the several traditional Ragas is based on, or is a variation of, ten basic thaats, or musical scales or frameworks. Each Raga has its own scale consisting of minimum five and maximum seven notes (swars). In today's Indian classical music raga is the backbone. The word raga comes from Sanskrit word which means to delight or to make happy and to satisfy. Here it's necessary to clarify that not all ragas project a happy mood. The raga can produce various moods. Raga is neither a scale, nor a mode. It is, however, a scientific, precise and melodic form with its own peculiar ascending and descending movement that consists of either a full octave, or a series of six or five notes. Raga has its own principal mood such as tranquility, devotion, eroticism, loneliness, pathos, heroism, etc. Each raga is associated, according to its mood, with a particular time of the day, night or a season.

A music, which follows the characteristics of this tradition, is called classical - in opposition to western classical music, where classical means belonging to a period of time (approximately from 16th to 17th century). All classical music follows this rule even if some completely different styles exist side by side.

Indian classical music is based on the ragas ("colors"), which are scales and melodies that provide the foundation for a performance. Unlike western classical music, that is deterministic, where Indian classical music allows for a much greater degree of "personalization" of the performance, almost to the level of jazz-like improvisation. Thus, each performance of a raga is different. The goal of the raga is to create a mood of delight. The main differences with western classical music are that the Indian ragas are not "composed" by a composer, but were created via a lengthy evolutionary process over the centuries. Thus they do not represent mind of the composer but a universal idea of the world. They transmit not personal but impersonal emotion. Another difference is that Indian music is monophonic, not polyphonic. Hindustani (North Indian) ragas are assigned to specific times of the day (or night) and to specific seasons. Many ragas share the same scale, and many ragas share the same melodic theme. There are hundreds of ragas, but thirty are considered fundamental. A raga is not necessarily instrumental and if vocal, it is not necessarily accompanied. But when it is accompanied by percussion (such as tablas), the rhythm is often rather complex because it is constructed from a combination of fundamental rhythmic patterns (or talas). The main instrument of the ragas is the sitar.

To develop precisely a raga, the musician needs the presence of a drone, whatever the music. Singers are always accompanied with the taanpura or the harmoniums, which produce the singer's tonic and dominant (Sa and Pa). Classical music is mainly divided into two branches, North and South. North Indian Classical music (some people know as Indian) in reference of the Hindi speaking region going to Northwest and to the East. Many styles and genres have been developed and encouraged by a family

system now called Gharana. These numerous Gharanas all over North India have developed very different styles of music, genres and instruments.

## What is a Raga?

The combination of several notes woven into a composition in a way, which is pleasing to the ear, is called a Raga. The raga is an Indian scale that utilizes varying ascending and descending patterns – certain notes on the way up and certain notes on the way down – but always in the set sequence. The raga never has less than five notes that is the minimum requirement for a tune. Each raga creates an atmosphere, which is associated with feelings and sentiments. Any stray combination of notes cannot be called a Raga. At a more academic level, it is a musical composition that functions within a structure and follows certain rules with relation to the kind of notes used in it.

We can assign to a raga certain meta-characteristics. Every raga is said to be born of a Thaata that is its parent. Every raga is composed of notes. A simple combination of notes is not a raga unless it sounds good. It is also difficult to accurately define what sounds good. Later we will attempt to describe what this means in terms of harmonies and melodies.

Minimum of five notes are necessary in a Raga. Therefore a Raga can have five, six or seven notes. There cannot be two notes that are adjacent on the octave in the same raga. But this is not strictly true, as we shall see in case of certain ragas like Lalit where there are two Madhyams together. Every Raga has an Arohi and an Amrohi. The base note (Sa) cannot be absent from a Raga. The notes Ma and Pa cannot be absent from a Raga at the same time.

A raga is also identified by a Vadi (main note) and a Samvadi (second note). The Vadi is a note that is stressed the most in the raga. The Samvadi is stressed after that. Two Ragas can have the same set of notes but differing vadis and samvadis that then make them different ragas. For instance both the ragas Bhupali and Deshkar have the same set of notes and the same arohi and amrohi but they have differing pakads and also different vadis and samvadis that make them different ragas. Bhupali has a vadi ga and samvadi dha but deshkar has a vadi dha and samvadi ga.

Every Raga has a Pakad that is a set of notes that uniquely identify that Raga. It has been said earlier that a Raga can have five, six or seven notes in the arohi and the amrohi. Based upon this a raga can be classified into categories. A Raga sequence (arohi or amrohi) with five notes is said to be Odho (five). A Raga sequence with six notes is called Shadav or Khado (six) and a raga sequence with seven notes is called Sampurn since seven notes is the maximum number that the raga sequence can have. In a raga, notes can repeat. There are twelve notes in the chromatic scale. The seven notes that make up the thaata are picked from these twelve notes.

Raga is the basis of classical music. A raga is based on the principle of a combination of notes selected out the 22 note intervals of the octave. A performer with sufficient training and knowledge alone can create the desired emotions, through the combination of notes. Raga' belong to certain classes or categories called thaata. A thaata is defined as that set of seven notes from which a Raga can be made. Ten thaata and their main ragas are given below:

## Ten Thaats & Their Main Ragas

Thaat	Some Well Known Ragas
Kalyan	Yaman, Shuddh Kalyan, Bhupali, Maru Bihag, Nand, Kamod
Bilawal	Bilawal, Bihag, Durga, Hansdhwani
Khamaj	Khamaj, Jhinjhoti, Desh
Kafi	Kafi, Pilu, Bageshri, Miyan Ki Malhar
Asavari	Asavari, Jaunpuri, Darbari Kanada
Behravi	Behravi, Bilaskhani Todi, Malkaus
Bhairav	Bhairav, Gauri, Lalit, Jogiya, Ramkali
Todi	Todi, Multani, Gurjari Todi
Purvi	Purvi, Puriya Dhanashree, Shree, Basant
Marwa	Marwa, Jait, Vibhas, Bhatiyar, Puriya, Sohni

### **Raga is placed in three categories according to number of notes.**

1. Odho or pentatonic, a composition of five notes,
2. Shadav Or Khado is hexatonic, a composition of six notes,
3. Sampoomn is heptatonic, a composition of seven notes,

The principal note, “King” is the note on which the raga is built. It is emphasized in various ways, such as stopping for some time on the note, or stressing it. The second important note or the “Queen” corresponds to the “King” as the fourth or fifth note in relation to it. The ascent and descent of the notes in every raga is very important. Some ragas in the same scale differ in ascent and descent. In every raga, there is an important cluster of notes by which the raga is identified. There are certain ragas that move in a certain pitch and if the pitch is changed, the raga fails to produce the mood and sentiment peculiar to it.

According to Indo Pak ancient theory, the musician's task in exploring mood is made easier if the performance takes place at the time and in the atmosphere appropriate to the raga. So if a raga that embodies the atmosphere of spring is played in spring it will be more effective than if it were played in winter. Play some classical sounding music and try to see if any particular Raga thrills you. Anything that turns you off completely? Play instrumental or light classical music at first before embarking on a heavy-duty vocal piece. Is there a piece that moves you? Puts you in a sublime or inspiring mood. Another aspect of the raga is the appropriate distribution in time during the 24 hours of the day for its performance, i.e. the time of the day denotes the raga sung at a particular time. Ragas are also allotted a particular time space in the cycle of the day.

### **Time based ragas are divided into four types:**

1. Twilight raga when the notes re and da are used such as Raga Marwa and Poorvi.
2. Mid-day and Mid-night ragas that include the notes ga and ni (komal).
3. Ragas for the first quarter of the morning and night that include the notes re, ga, da and ni (komal).
4. For the last quarter of the day and night, the raga includes the notes Sa, ma and Pa.

### **The entire ragas are divided into two groups:**

1. Poorvi Ragas
2. Uttar Ragas

The Poorvi Raga is sung between 12 noon and 12 midnight. The Uttar Raga is sung between 12 midnights and 12 noons. The variations on the dominant or “King” note helps a person to find out why certain raga are being sung at certain times. This raga classification is about 500 years old and it takes us to Mughals era. The beauty of the raga will not be spoiled by the time of the day it is sung. It is the psychological association with the time that goes with the mood of the raga. The object of a raga is to express a certain emotional mood and sentiment without any reference to time and season. For a student of classical music, this classification may give an idea as to how to base his reasons for the traditional usage of raga.

### **Classification of ragas under five principals:**

1. Hindol, (There are also five ragnis for each class)
2. Deepak,
3. Megh,
4. Shri,
5. Maulkauns,

From these five ragas, other ragas are derived. The first derivatives of the ragas are called raganis, and each of the five ragas has five raganis under them. There are 25 raganis for the above five ragas. Raganis are female and raga is male. You can guess raganis and raga from the name of the ragas. Further derivatives from these raga and raganis resulted in attaching to each principal raga 16 secondary derivatives known as upa-raga and upa-raganis. Every raga has a fixed number of komal (soft) or tiver (sharp) notes, from which the thaata can be recognized. In other words, a certain arrangement of the 7 notes with the change of komal and tiver is called a thaata.

### **Facts About Ragas:**

It took a long time for music to come to the form found in present-day India. The most important advance in music was made between the 14<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. During this period, the music sung in the north came in contact with Persian music and absorbed it, through the Pathans and the Mughals. It is then that two schools of music resulted, the Hindustani and the Carnatic. Hindustani music adopted a scale of natural notes and Carnatic music retained the traditional octave. During this period, different styles of classical compositions such as Dhrupad, Dhamar, Khayal, etc. were contributed to Hindustani music.

Detailed melodic modes are used in Ragas. Traditionally, ragas are based on a complex Vedic philosophy of sound. A raga is also basically a set of Vedic-rooted rules for how to build a melody. It specifies rules for movements up (arohi) and down (amrohi) the scale, which notes should figure more and which notes should be used more cautiously. Which phrases to be used and which phrases to be avoided, and so on. The result is a framework that can be used to compose or improvise melodies, allowing for endless variation within the set of notes.

There is no absolute pitch; instead, each performance simply picks a ground note, and the other scale degrees follow relative to the ground note. As ragas were never codified but transmitted orally from teacher to student, some ragas can vary greatly across regions, traditions and styles. Indian classical music is always set in raga, but all raga music is not necessarily classical. Many popular Indian film songs are themselves based on ragas. In today's Indian classical music raga is the backbone.

The outstanding feature of Indian classical music is the “raga” concept. Raga is the essential concept of Indian classical music. Each raga is a distinct musical entity or unit by itself and possesses well-defined characteristics. The concept of raga is proud contribution to the world music. It is defined as melody mould or melody style. The goal of absolute music is reached in the concept of raga. Ragas are the artistic facts that can be recognized by a trained ear. Ragas are acoustic facts and every musician is aware of them. They are the creative talents of a musician. The ragas form the basis of all melodies in India. Raga is the soul of Indian classical music. If two songs sound strikingly similar the chances are based on the same set of notes and thus in the same raga. Raga is also identified typically by pattern recognition, if you are not willing to do detailed decomposition into the basic keys of their scale. Thus, a raga is described as the unmeasured music and it has a rich variety of classifications. A Raga may also be characterized by a series of melodic notes pattern called challan, which means movement or by a key set of notes called pakad. These form the melodic outlines of a raga and include consecutive ascending and descending phrases. The challan discloses the basic grammar and the progression of a raga. Every raga has a note that is frequently used or held for a long duration and is called vadi or a sonant note. Similarly there is another note from vadi that is called samvadi or the consonant. This note is usually the fourth or the fifth note from the vadi.

## Identify Raga From Raga Based Film Songs

Pakaad or bandish are the most dominating notes of a given raga. Each raga has its own bandish. Whenever a music director composes a song based upon a given raga, he makes sure that he uses the bandish of that raga. This is the precise reason why two songs composed on the same raga sound similar. In a way, bandish is a common factor within all the tunes composed on a given raga.

While rendering a raga, one should be vary careful of not using varjya swar. Varjya swars in a raga are the notes; those are strictly excluded in rendition. Varjya swar is the enemy of the raga. If a varjya swar is accidentally used during performance of a particular raga, it will spoil the atmosphere that a particular raga is supposed to create. So great artists do a lot of practice of a given raga so that they will never make the mistake of using varjya swar. Actually, to understand the bandish of any raga, it is better to listen and grasp the instrumental classical music played on a musical instrument or midi music. Since musical instruments

do not utter words, the listener can concentrate and grasp the raga very accurately after repeatedly listening to the notes of the tune. Of course, if you are very well versed in classical music, then you can easily recognize a raga with ease even if you are listening to a vocal piece. Also, in order to grasp any given raga, one should listen to the same raga presented by different artists.

If you listen to a vocal song based on a raga, say on radio or a in a computer, and you want to identify the raga of this song, then you should listen to it while you are farther away, say about 30 to 50 feet away from the player. It has been observed that you can recognize the raga of a song while listening to it from a farther distance rather than by listening to it closer. This is because as you go farther from the source of vocal sound, you do not listen to any words from the song, but you only hear the dominating notes or bandish of the song. Once you hear the bandish, you can easily recognize the raga of the song. Of course, one has to have prior knowledge of ragas before attempting to recognize it using this technique. Also note that within any raga or a melody there is a definite relationship among the notes. A song based on a given raga can be composed in any one of 3 octaves. This sometimes makes it difficult to identify the raga of the song, although the progression of notes follows the same rules of raga in any octave.

The way some people have it easy, and can directly see the patterns and recognize a raga. Some others learn by going to a guru, but for a casual listener, it might take some practice and some intuitive thinking.

If you listen too much film music, then there is a really good and easy way to try and learn ragas. Listen to a song and get someone to identify the raga initially for you. Learn this raga, by listening to the song and try humming along with it. Then turn off the song, and try humming along the same tune, but with variations. Let me name some songs for you. Let us take for instance, any song of Raga Kalyan e.g. Ranjish hi sahi, composed by Nisar Bazmi Sahib. If you know the name of the raga, play this song in your cd player. Play it a couple of times, continuously, and then turn your cd player off. Sing the song, but use your imagination to sing it. And then slowly hum and let it loose. If you are finding trouble nailing the notes, get its lyrics.

Once you've done this for a few songs, you will have some of it down. If you want to get theoretical however, and already have a decent ear, then learn the notes. It really and really helps if you can play an instrument, something visual. Harmonium is perfect, some persons learn on electronic keyboard, so the possibility is obviously endless. If you know theory and are just finding it hard identifying the ragas, then just stick with it and practice. You should try and improve your memory and memory association skills. Watch patterns, solve pattern puzzles, they all help.

### **There are certain clues to look for; here is a short suggestion on how to identify raga notes:**

First listen to how the raga alaap starts off or the song, it must always begin with the raga identification. Its not like you can just sing without telling the audience what the raga of the song is. Listen closer to each note sang. Listen very carefully, and note down which notes are higher and lower, then slowly approximate the scale. Make it thorough first. For example if you are listening a song you just try to sing-along with the song. Slowly try to get what are the swars inside that song. Ok you just think that you got the swars.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Sargam**

In this book we will practice sargam of Raga Yaman and detailed sargam lessons are provided separately in 80 pages of Sargam e-book. We can learn how to play music with keyboard or harmonium but without practice of sargam we cannot sing-along while playing harmonium or keyboard. Practice of sargam is very important for a harmonium or keyboard singer.

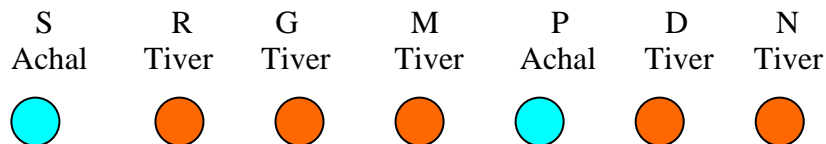
### **Raga Yaman Sargam**

Every that is also a Raga and Raga Yaman is derived from that Kalyan. In raga Yaman Madhyam is Tiver and all other notes are Shuddh (full). Raga Yaman is an evening raga. It is also denominated variously by Iman, Eman and Aiman. It is to be noted that there is only a slight difference of notes between that kalyan ragas. Although the Raga is as old as the hills, its historical background is not easy to pin down. Traditionally rendered in the first quarter of night, Yaman achieves its strong effect with tiver madhyam and shuddh nikhad forming a graceful symmetry amidst the other five-shuddh swars of the saptak, and shuddh gandhar serving as the vaadi and nikhad as samvaadi. The derivative ragas out of this structure are grouped under the broad head of Kalyan Thaat. Arohi and Amrohi of Raga Yaman is given below for practice:

**Arohi: S-R-G-M-P-D-N-S'**  
**Amrohi: S'-N-D-P-M-G-R-S**

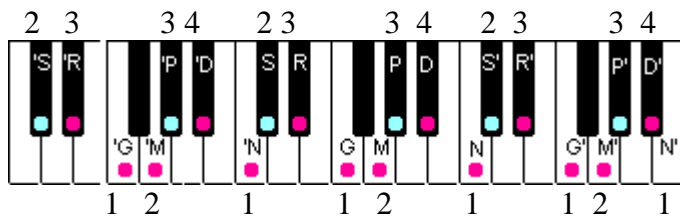
## Exercise 1 (Raga Yaman Sargam)

In this exercise we will practice Raga Yaman notes in madh saptak. The Raga Yaman, among the ten recognized by the great musician, composer, theorist and scholar, Pandit Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande, takes for its basis the following set: **S R G M P D N**. In our notation system tiver notes are shown in capital letters and with red dot. Achal (fixed) notes are also shown with capital letters but with blue dot.



Sit beside harmonium/keyboard properly as explained earlier. First you have to practice Arohi of raga yaman sargam, which is ascending order as (S, R, G, M, P, D, N, S'). The arohi of sargam will be taught in ten stages. After completing ten stages of Arohi you will practice Amrohi, which is descending order of a Sargam as (S, N, D, P, M, G, R, S). You have to spend five to ten minutes on each stage for practice. Our practice of arohi and amrohi will be in madh or middle saptak.

Below given diagram is showing Raga Yaman notes in all three saptak. Raga Yaman is the best that to start with. Raga Yaman notes are shown in all three saptak with finger numbers.



That Yaman notes shown in all three octaves

## FINGERS & ITS NUMBERS



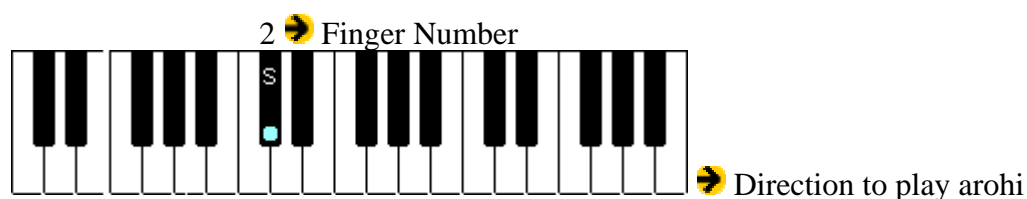
Thumb 1, Index finger 2, middle finger 3, ring finger 4, little finger 5

### First Stage – Sa (index finger 2)

We will begin our practice in middle saptak that is best for beginners. Press note of Khraj, which is 'Sa' with right hand index finger number 2. With the voice of harmonium note try to synchronize your voice with it by saying 'Sa' for at least five seconds. Keep pressure on the note while pressing bellow of harmonium with your left hand. You have to practice at least 5-10 minutes on this first note of Sargam. In the beginning you may feel difficulty in synchronizing your voice with harmonium but gradually you will



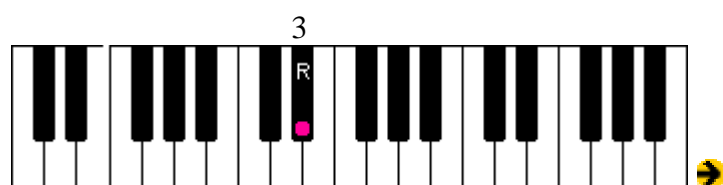
overcome this difficulty. Khraj note that is 'Sa' is shown in the diagram with a blue dot. All our basic lessons in Raga Yaman will begin from middle or madh saptak.



Yaman.1

### Second Stage - Re (middle finger 3)

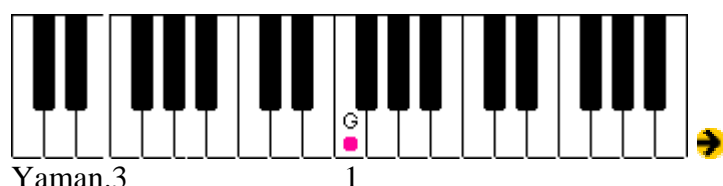
Press note of Rekhav, which is 'Re' with right hand middle finger and do not displace your finger from Khraj note and only decrease its pressure from the note. By pressing note of Rekhav say 'Re' and try to synchronize your voice with the voice of harmonium as explained in the first stage. Say 'Re' again and again until your voice is fully synchronizes with harmonium. Your index finger and middle fingers must remain over the notes. In the picture below Rekhav note is mentioned with red circle. You should keep in mind that all above stages are linked and only one note is added in each stage.



Yaman.2

### Third Stage - Ga (thumb 1)

Raising your finger from Rekhav note press note of Gandhar (G), with your thumb by twisting your thumb beneath your hand. Do not raise your second finger much higher over Rekhav note and only decrease its pressure while approaching Gandhar. Now again try to synchronize your voice with Gandhar note and repeat this practice again and again at least 10 minutes. In the picture below Gandhar note is mentioned with red circle.

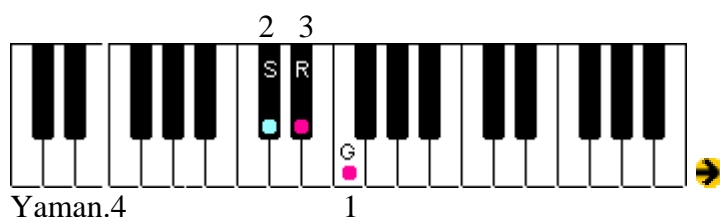


Yaman.3

### Fourth Stage - (Yaman Arohi) Sa, Re, Ga (fingers 2,3,1)

2 3 1  
Sa, Re, Ga →

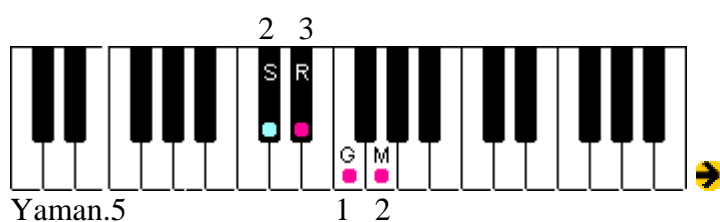
In this stage we will practice all three notes together, which we have already practiced. Press Khraj note 'Sa' with index finger and say this note for about five seconds. Then by pressing note of Rekhav say 'Re' for about five seconds and try to synchronize your voice with the voice of harmonium. Raising your finger from Rekhav note press note of Gandhar, with your thumb and say 'Ga' for five seconds.



**Fifth Stage** - Sa, Re, Ga, Ma (fingers 2,3,1,2)

2 3 1 2  
Sa, Re, Ga Ma ➔

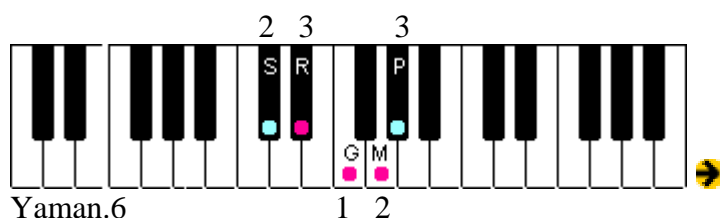
Now we have to learn four swars together and fourth swar is 'Ma'. Saying note 'Ga' from previous stage bring your index finger on Madhyam note and say 'Ma' for about five seconds. Now again bring your index finger back on Khraj note 'Sa' and after five seconds of vocal synchronizing press note 'Re' and keep practicing these four notes again and again with your particular fingers. This repeated exercise from Sa to Ma should not be less than ten minutes of duration. It should be remembered that we would stay on each note for about five seconds.



**Sixth Stage** – Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa (fingers 2,3,1,2,3)

2 3 1 2 3  
Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa ➔

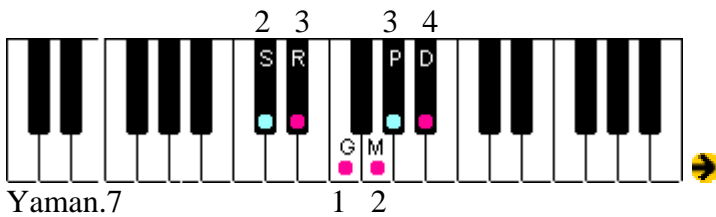
Keeping in view fifth stage add Pancham note 'Pa' in your exercise. By raising your finger from Madhyam note press Pancham note 'Pa' with your middle finger and say 'Pa' for about five seconds. Keep on practicing Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa again and again for about 10 minutes. Do not forget to stay for five seconds on each note in each exercise while synchronizing your voice with swars.



**Seventh Stage** – Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha (fingers 2,3,1,2,3,4)

2 3 1 2 3 4  
Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, D ➔

Connecting your link from sixth stage add note 'Dha' in your exercise. By pressing 'Dha' say this note by synchronizing your voice with it. Now you have to practice Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha for about ten minutes.

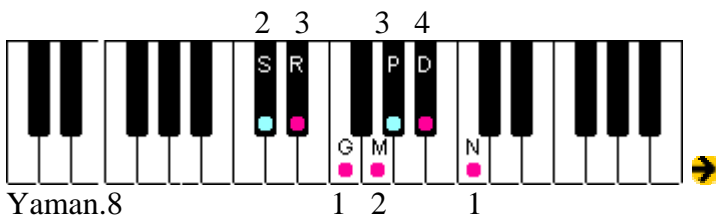


**Eighth Stage** – Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni (fingers 2,3,1,2,3,4,1)

2 3 1 2 3 4 1

Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, D, Ni ➔

Press Note 'Ni' with your thumb by turning your thumb under your hand and say this note for about five seconds. Soon after that position place your index finger No.2 again on the Khraj note 'Sa' and practice Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni for about ten minutes like previous exercises of Sargam.

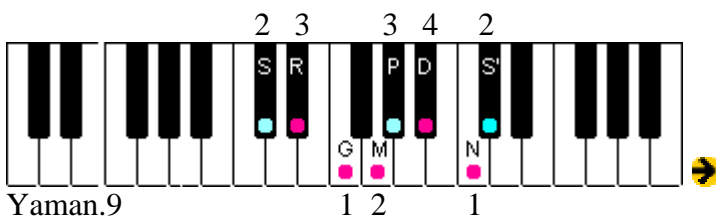


**Ninth Stage** - Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni, Sa' (fingers 2,3,1,2,3,4,1,2)

2 3 1 2 3 4 1 2

Sa, Re, Ga Ma Pa, D, Ni, Sa' ➔

Continuing your lessons from previous stage bring your index finger on Khraj note 'Sa' in the third octave and try to synchronize your voice with the Khraj note while note is pressed. Duration of pressing each note in all above stages is not less five seconds. You should keep in mind that all above stages are linked and only one note is added in each stage.

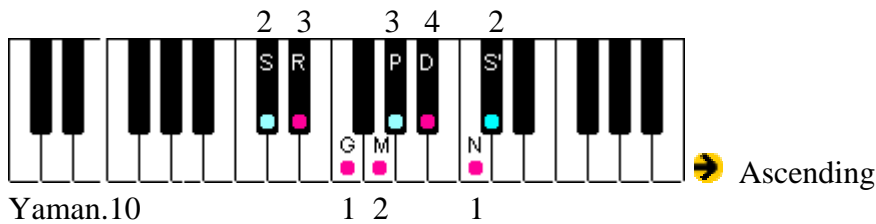


**Tenth Stage** - Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni, Sa' (fingers 2,3,1,2,3,4,1,2) ➔

Now you have to practice all these eight swars, which are given below:

**Arohi:** S, R, G, M, P, D, N, S' ➔ Play left to right

Arohi of Sargam is ascending order of Sargam notes. The above sargam initiates from 'Sa' note of middle saptak and ends to 'Sa' note of third saptak. You should practice arohi of sargam until your fingers are not used to play notes without hesitation and confidence. One should try to practice Arohi without time limitation until perfection arises. Proper synchronizing of voice with swar is very important.



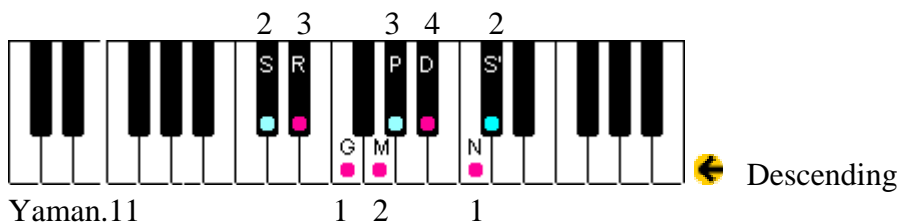
### Sargam Exercise 2 (Raga Yaman Amrohi)

S', N, D, P, M, G, R, S (fingers 2,1,4,3,2,1,3,2) ←

After getting proficiency in Arohi you have to practice Amrohi, which is descending notes of a Sargam. You also have to practice Amrohi in stages as you already did in Arohi of Sargam but now in descending order from Taar (upper) Saptak towards Madh (middle) Saptak.

**Amrohi:** S', N, D, P, M, G, R, S ← Play right to left  
2, 1, 4, 3, 2, 1, 3, 2

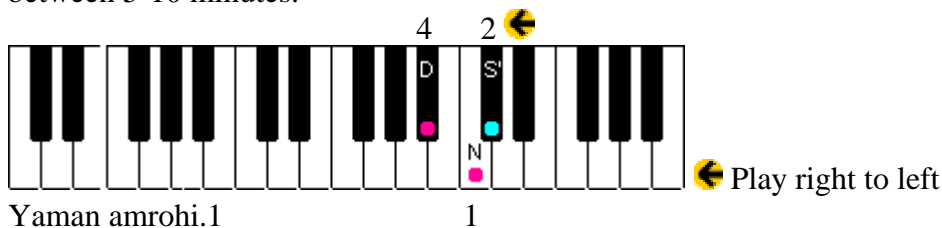
Do not forget to stay for five seconds on each note in each exercise while synchronizing your voice with swars. There is also no time limitation for Amrohi practice but it should be continued until you get acquainted with the voice of notes. Fingering will be same as selected in Arohi practice but in reverse order. There must be a gap of one and half second between swars to breath.



**First Stage** – S', N, D, ← (fingers 2,1,4)

2 1 4  
Sa, Ni, Dha ← Play right to left

In all these six stages you will have to practice as explained in earlier exercises of Sargam. You have to remain for five seconds on each note while saying relevant swars and by synchronizing your voice. The gap between each note must be one and half second in this initial stage. Total time of practice must be between 5-10 minutes.

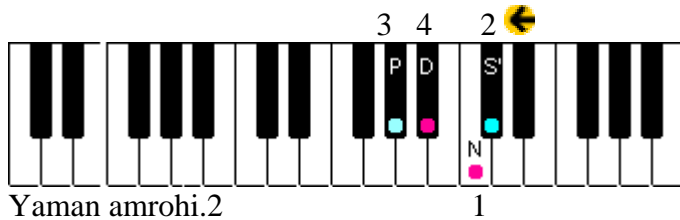


### Second Stage – S', N, D, P (fingers 2,1,4,3)

2 1 4 3

Sa, Ni, Dha, Pa (Play right to left)

By adding note 'Pa' practice all four notes all over again and again for ten minutes and synchronize your voice with swars.

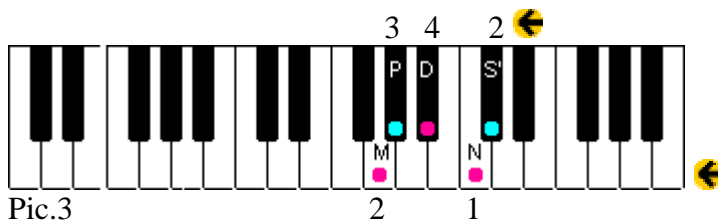


### Third Stage - S', N, D, P, M (fingers 2,1,4,3,2)

2 1 4 3 2

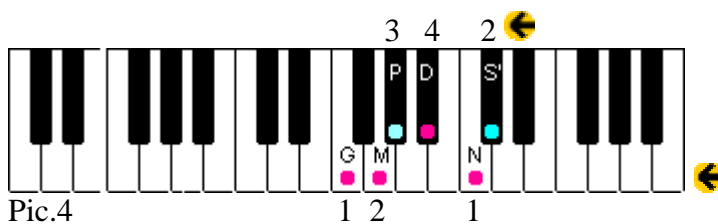
Sa, Ni, Dha, Pa, Ma (Play right to left)

By adding note 'Ma' practice all four notes all over again and again for five to ten minutes and synchronize your voice with swars.



### Fourth Stage – S', N, D, P, M, G (fingers 2,1,4,3,2,1)

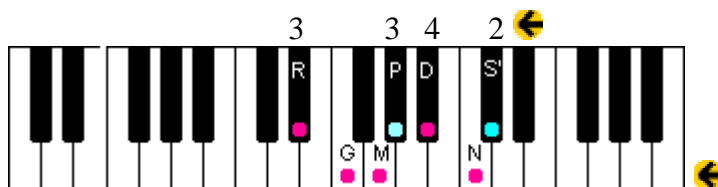
2 1 4 3 2 1



### Fifth Stage: S', N, D, P, M, G, R (fingers 2,1,4,3,2,1,3)

2 1 4 3 2 1 3

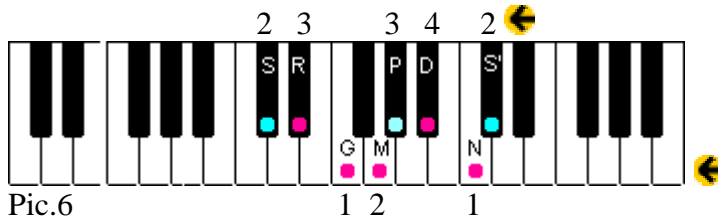
Sa, Ni, Dha, Pa, Ma, Ga, Re (Play right to left)



Pic.5

1 2 1

**Sixth Stage** – S', N, D, P, M, G, R, S' ← (fingers 2,1,4,3,2,1,3,2)



Pic.6

Now it is the stage of Amrohi, add Khraj note 'Sa' in your practice. In the sixth stage there is no fixed time period for practice of swars. You may increase your time if you feel you are not perfect in fingering or vocal.

### Sargam Exercise 3 – Arohi Amrohi

It is the time when we will practice complete sargam in ascending and descending order. This exercise is very important for harmonium students for basic music learning. Proper synchronizing of voice with swar is very important in this lesson. It is better to stay on each swar for five seconds and gradually decrease your time to four seconds and in the end half second. At least half an hour continuous practice is important but you can increase your practice time according to your capability. Now you got familiar with Sargam notes in ascending and descending order so, we are going to write arohi and amrohi of sargam in normal style. Now notations of Raga Kalyan sargam will be written from left to right but will be played according to direction of arrow.

2 3 1 2 3 4 1 2  
**Arohi:** S, R, G, M, P, D, N, S' → ascending order

2 1 4 3 2 1 3 2  
**Amrohi:** S', N, D, P, M, G, R, S' ← descending order

Try to remain on each note for half a second, which is the perfect speed for practice of Sargam. If you get bored then take rest and divide your practice time in parts or play in front of friends or family members.

### Notations Of Raga Yaman Songs:

Here we are using first white key to play the song ranjish hi sahi only for getting idea but we can also play this song from first black key. In the initial stage we will use first black key for playing song notations and after mastering we may use any key to begin our song according to scale of our voice or according to scale of original song. No matter what is our khraj note or initial note but the achal, komal and tiver scheme will remain as defined in detail in our earlier lessons.

**Song 1 :** Ranjish hi sahi

**Music Director:** Nisar Bazmi

**Singer:** Mehdi Hassan

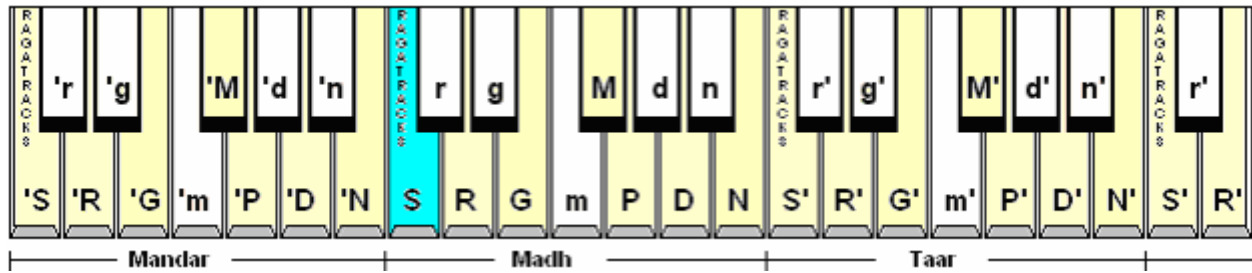
**Taal:** Dadra

**Poet:** Ahmed Faraz

**Raga:** Yaman

**Thaat:** Kalyan

**Khraj Note:** First white shown as blue



**Arohi:** 'N-R-G-M-D-N-S'  
**Amrohi:** S'-N-D-P-M-G-R-S

### Asthayee

ranjish hi sahi dil hi dukhaane ke liye aa  
 S' N' S' P' R' G' P' M' D' P' G' R' R' G' M' P' G' R' S'

aa phir se muJhe choD ke jaane ke liye aa  
 D' N' S' S' S' S' N' R' S' N' D' P' G' R' G' M' P' G' R' S'

### Antra 1

pehle se maraasim na sahee phir bhi kabhi to  
 'D' N' S' S' S' S' N' R' R' R' N' R' P' G' R' P'

rasmO rahe duniya hi nibhaane ke liye aa  
 N' S' S' S' S' N' D' S' N' D' P' G' M' P' R' S'

ranjish hi sahi dil hi dukhaane ke liye aa  
 S' N' S' P' R' G' P' M' D' P' G' R' R' G' M' P' G' R' S'  
 aa phir se muJhe choD ke jaane ke liye aa  
 D' N' S' S' S' S' N' R' S' N' D' P' G' R' G' M' P' G' R' S'

### Antra 2

kis kis ko bataayenge judaai ka sabab hum  
 tu muJh se khafa hai to zamaane ke liye aa

### Antra 3

ab tak dil-e-khush feham ko tujh se hain ummeedeN  
 ye aakhri shamme bhi buJhaane ke liye aa

**Song 2 :** dil deta hai ro ro duhaii

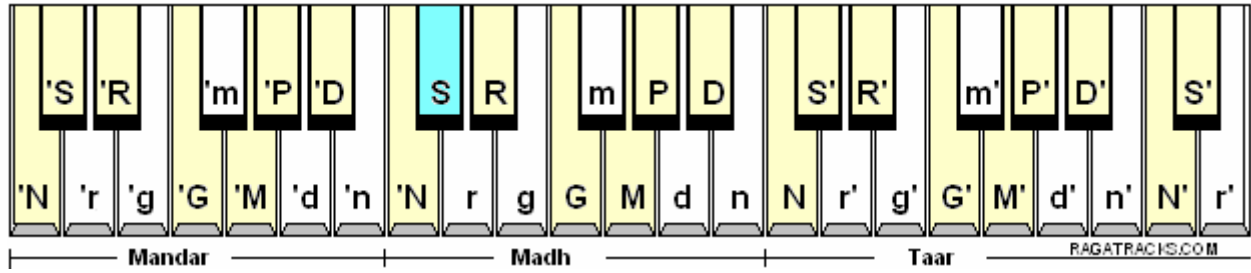
**Film :** Ishq per zoor nehi

**Singer:** Noor Jehan

**Raga:** Yaman

**Thaat:** Kalyan (beginning from first black note)

**Khraj note:** First black shown as blue



**Arohi:** 'N-R-G-M-D-N-S'  
**Amrohi:** S'-N-D-P-M-G-R-S

### Asthayee

dil deta hai ro ro duhaii kisi se koi pyaar na kere  
 'NS RG G RGR SRG PP M GS RS R SS

badi menghi pare gi judaii kisi se koi pyaar na kere  
 'NS RG G RGR SRG PP M GS RS R SS

### Antra 1

koi samjhe kisi ko na apna  
 GM PP MP G M PP

jhoota nikle ga jewan ka sapna  
 MP DD P DN' D MPMGR

gaon gaon pukare shahnaii kisi se koi pyaar na kere  
 S SRG GRG SSRG PP M GS RS R SS

### Antra 2 (same as above)

sage per bethi roee dulhnya basee pretam ke man me sotanya  
 hye nikla sanam harjaee kisi se koi pyar na kere  
 koi soya hai maati ke neeche koi bhage hawaon ke peche

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