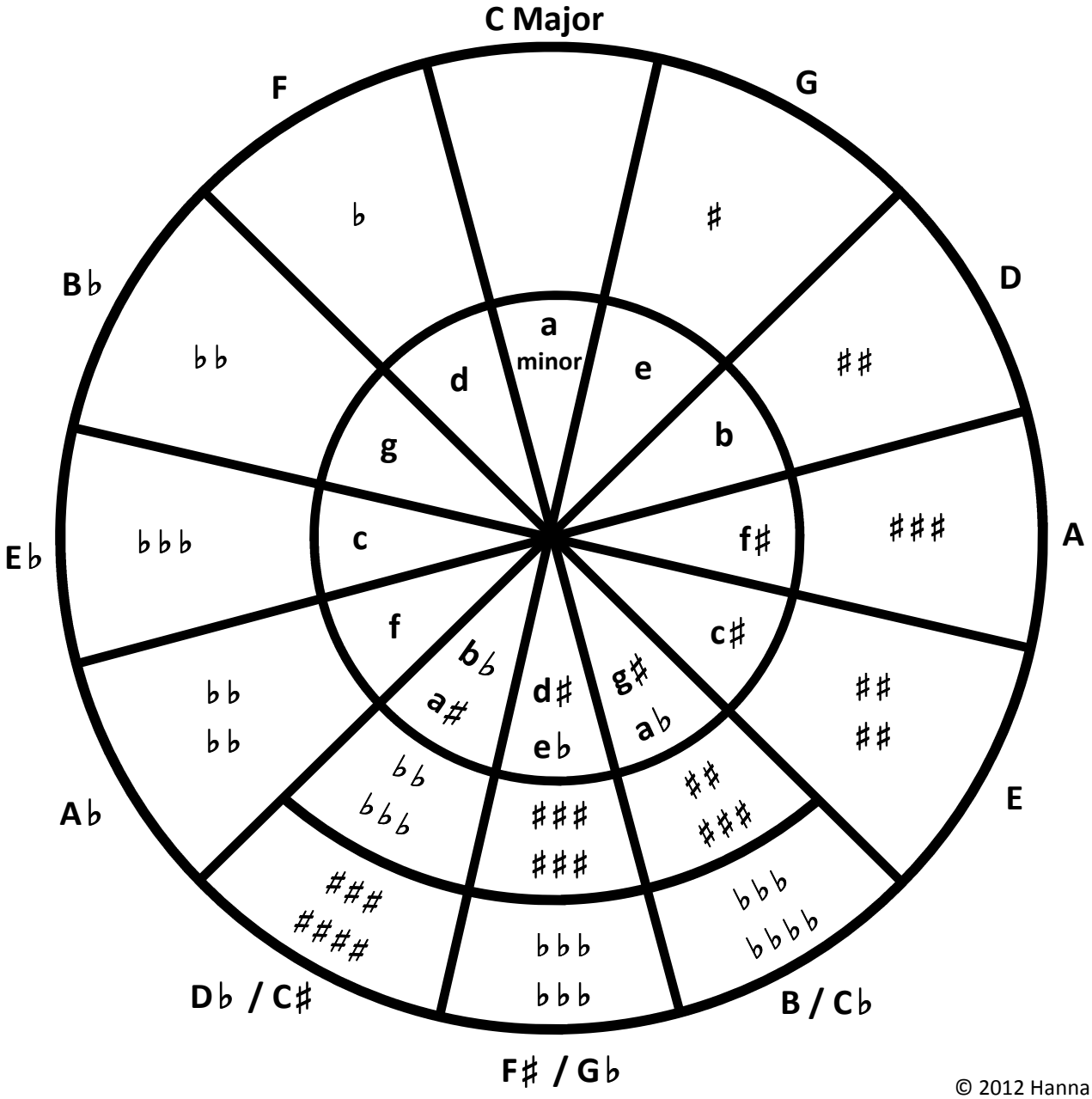
Circle of Fifths

We call this chart the Circle of Fifths because when moving clockwise around the circle, the musical distance between one key to the next is always the interval of a fifth. For example, the distance from C to G is a fifth, the distance from G to D is a fifth, and so on until we come right back to C from where we started.

Use this chart to learn your key signatures, and refer to it often. The major keys are listed around the outside of the circle, while the minor keys are on the inside. You will notice that each major key shares a key signature with a minor key. These are called relative keys.



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The Order of Sharps: F♯ C♯ G♯ D♯ A♯ E♯ B♯ **The Order of Flats:** B♭ E♭ A♭ D♭ G♭ C♭ F♭

Learning the order of sharps and flats is important to understanding the Circle of Fifths. For example, in A Major, three sharps are listed on the chart. Now look at the order of sharps above. The first three sharps are F, C, and G. Therefore, these are the sharps in the key signature for A Major.