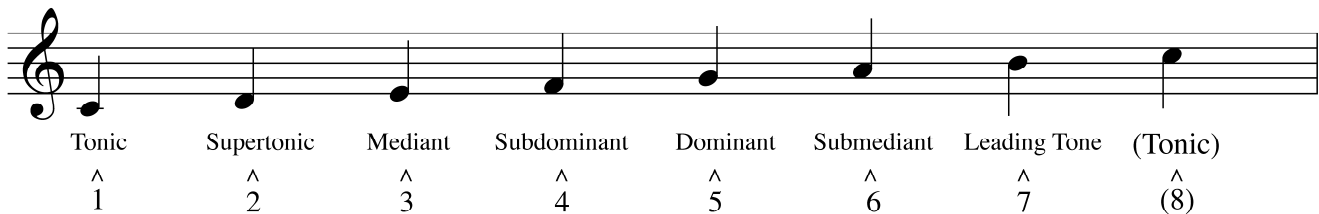


SCALE DEGREES

When discussing scales there are two ways of naming their notes. If we refer to each note in the scale as a number, we are referring to **Degrees**: going from low to high (in pitch), we count from one to eight. Also, so that we do not get confused with other numerical labels, we usually put a little carrot above the number to ensure that we are describing a scale degree. The third scale degree, for example, would be referred to as "3[^]".

NOTE NAMES

The other equally valid labeling system assigns a name to each scale degree which relates to functional aspects of the notes that we have yet to study. We have already learned the name of the first (and eighth) note: the Tonic. Here are all of them:



A musical staff in treble clef showing an ascending major scale. The notes are: C4 (Tonic), D4 (Supertonic), E4 (Mediant), F4 (Subdominant), G4 (Dominant), A4 (Submediant), B4 (Leading Tone), and C5 (Tonic). Below each note is its functional name and a numerical label with a caret (^) above it. The eighth note is labeled with (8) in parentheses.

Functional Name	Numerical Label
Tonic	1 [^]
Supertonic	2 [^]
Mediant	3 [^]
Subdominant	4 [^]
Dominant	5 [^]
Submediant	6 [^]
Leading Tone	7 [^]
(Tonic)	(8) [^]

While all these notes deserve a lengthy discussion, we can assess that the tonic is significant because it carries the name of the scale. Another very important note is the seventh scale degree—the **Leading Tone**. It "leads" the scale back to the tonic—back home. If you play an ascending major scale and pause on the leading tone without going up to the tonic, the sound will feel very unfulfilled or incomplete. It is this feeling that prescribes the seventh scale degree as a "leading" or "directing" mechanism that pushes the music back to the tonic.

The leading tone is also important as we start to explore **Minor Scales**.....