



## How to Transpose Using the Handy-Dandy Transposition Chart™

By: Brenda Earle Stokes, BFA, M.Mus

Does the prospect of transposing a melody or chords fill you with panic and dread? I keep wishing someone would build a capo that would work on the piano, but my piano tuner says that wouldn't quite work. Sigh.

In the meantime, I have created The Handy-Dandy Transposition Chart™ designed to make transposing your melodies and chords less painful and riddled with errors.

### The Handy-Dandy Transposition Chart™

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C
C#	D#	E#	F#	G#	A#	B#	C#
Db	Eb	F	Gb	Ab	Bb	C	Db
D	E	F#	G	A	B	C#	D
Eb	F	G	Ab	Bb	C	D	Eb
E	F#	G#	A	C	D	E	F
F	G	A	Bb	C	D	E	F
F#	G#	A#	B	C#	D#	E#	F#
Gb	Ab	Bb	Cb	Db	Eb	F	Gb
G	A	B	C	D	E	F#	G
Ab	Bb	C	Db	Eb	F	G	Ab
A	B	C#	D	E	F#	G#	A
Bb	C	D	Eb	F	G	A	Bb
B	C#	D#	E	F#	G#	A#	B

On this major scales are

horizontally, with the numbers at the top of the chart indicating the scale degree. Here's how to do it:

chart, all of the written out

#### How to Transpose Notes:

1. Choose the line that is in the same key as your song and highlight it.
2. Choose the line that is in the key you want your song to be and highlight it in a different color.
3. Write out your melody substituting the notes from the new key for the notes in the original key.

For example, if your song is in the key of C and the melody goes E, D, C and you are transposing to the key of Eb, then the melody would become G, F, Eb.

#### How to Transpose Chords:

Follow the same exact same protocol for notes, remembering to copy the chord quality exactly as it is written. For example, if you are in the key of Bb and the chords are Cmi7, F7, Bbma7, and you are transposing to the key of G, the



chords become Ami7, D7, Gma7. Just transpose the notes and copy down the rest of the chord symbol exactly as they appear.

## Simple!

Now, before you go all crazy and start transposing Stephen Sondheim and Charles Ives, I strongly recommend that you start at the shallow end of the pool – maybe a folk song or a simple jazz standard. Take it a few measures at a time and make sure to test it out on the piano every so often to make sure it sounds right. Good luck!!

***Brenda Earle Stokes** is a pianist, vocalist, composer and educator originally from Sarnia, Ontario, Canada. A seasoned performer, she has performed internationally as a leader and sideperson and has released 7 critically-acclaimed CDs on her own record label. Brenda is a dedicated educator, having taught piano and voice privately and in schools for over 20 years. Her wildly popular online courses have hundreds of students worldwide with courses in piano, improvisation and musicianship. [www.pianoandvoicewithbrenda.com](http://www.pianoandvoicewithbrenda.com)*