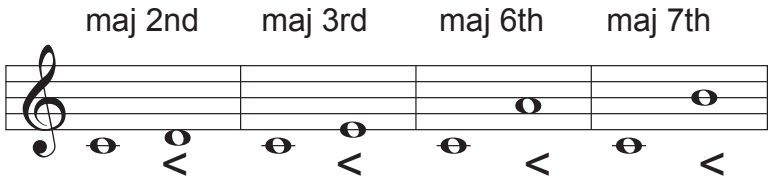
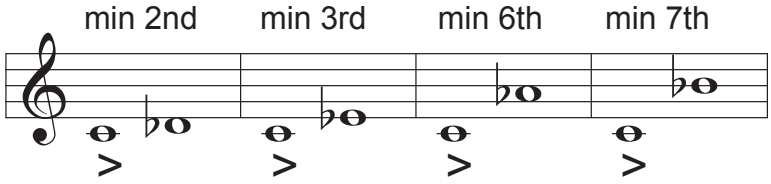
Intervals in Detail (cont'd)

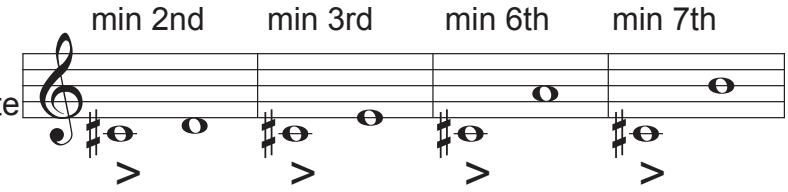
When the upper note belongs to the major scale of the lower note but not the other way around, the interval in Major. This is the case in each example on the first staff. Only 2nds, 3rds, 6th and 7ths or their compounds can ever be Major.



When the lower note belongs to the major scale of the upper note but not the opposite, the interval is now "minor." Again, only 2nds, 3rds, 6th and 7ths or their compounds can be minor.



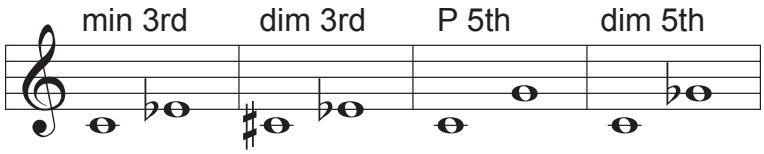
Observe the relationship between major and minor intervals. Notice that what was originally major will become minor if you either lower the upper note by a half tone or raise the lower note by a half tone.



Diminished, Augmented, Doubly Diminished and Doubly Augmented intervals fall into slightly more "difficult to define" forms. They all share at least one thing in that in all cases, neither note belongs to the major scale of the other. This is where it becomes ever so slightly tricky to distinguish one from the other.

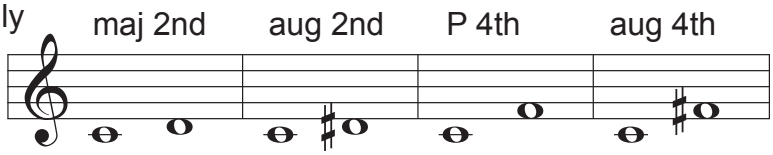
To "diminish" in music=to shorten an interval by 1/2 tone. If this is the case, one could argue that a minor interval is a diminished major interval. However, the normal term is to simply call it "minor."

A diminished interval occurs when a normally perfect or minor interval is shortened by a half tone. See the examples.



To "augment" in music=to lengthen an interval by a half tone. One could use some stupid logic here and lose the argument which says that a major interval is an augmented minor.

An augmented interval occurs when a normally major or perfect interval is lengthened by a half tone. See the examples.



The logic of doubly diminished and doubly augmented should be relatively obvious. An interval such as Db to E# would be doubly augmented. Similarly an interval such as C# to Gb would be doubly diminished. With a bit of idiot logic, one could come up with things such as: Cx to Dbb and say that this interval is "triply diminished?" C to D=maj 2nd C to Db=min 2nd C to Dbb=dim 2nd
C# to Dbb=doubly dim 2nd therefore: Cx to Dbb=triply dim 2nd
The two notes of course are a whole tone apart which is the sound of a major 2nd.