

## The Indian scale

There are seven notes (*svras*) in the Indian music scale, each of which has its own name and a shortened version of its name, as set out below:

<b>Svar (स्वर) name</b>	<b>Shortened Svar (स्वर) name</b>
Ṣadja (षड्ज)	Sā (सा)
Rṣabha (ऋषभ)	Re (रे)
Gandhāra (गन्धार)	Ga (ग)
Madhyama (मध्यम)	Ma (म)
Pañcama (पञ्चम)	Pa (प)
Dhaivata (धैवत)	Dha (ध)
Niṣāda (निषाद)	Nī (नी)

Each of the seven *svras* fall into one of two categories:

- *chal svar*
- *achal svar*.

*Chal svaras* are those for which there are variants. These are *re*, *ga*, *ma*, *dha* and *ni*. Of these, *re*, *ga*, *dha* and *nī* are located one semitone below, or one semitone flatter, than the original *svra*, referred to by the adjective, *komal* (meaning soft) and denoted by a horizontal line under the note: *Re*, *Ga*, *Dha* and *Nī*<sup>1</sup>. The variation of the fourth note, *ma*, is located one semitone above, or one semitone sharper, than the original *svra* and is referred to by the adjective *tīvra* (meaning sharp) and is denoted by a short horizontal line above the note name.

The *achal svaras*, for which, there are no variants are the tonic note, *sā*, and the fifth note, *pa*.

Similar to Western music, there are 12-semitones in the Indian music scale. The scale can be further divided into 22 notes (*shruti*), which are notes between the semitones – it is not necessary to know about these notes for the purposes of Indian Takeaway – *Rāg and Tāl Basics*.

There are many scales in Indian music and these have been arranged into 10 *thāt* (थाट) by the musicologist, *Viṣṇu Nārāyaṇ Bhātkhande* (1860–1936). Each *thāt* is named after the most popular *rāg* that uses the notes of that *thāt*. Let's learn the *sargam*, or notes, using the notes that belong to the *Bilāval thāt* (बिलावल थाट), which are the same as the major scale of Western music.

<sup>1</sup> Shown as R, G, D, N in notation

Using the video practice singing the Indian scale, *sargam*, practice both the *āroḥ* (ascending scale): *sā, re, ga, ma, pa, dha, ni sā* and the *avroḥ* (descending scale) *sā, ni, dha, pa, ma, ga, re sā*.