

Pitch and Pitch Class

Pitches are notes that you sing, play, hear in your head, and hear in music; pitches sound. There are an infinite number of pitches in the universe; you can choose any pitch and imagine another pitch an octave higher, or lower, endlessly.

Pitch Classes on the other hand, are silent. You cannot sing, play, or hear a pitch-class. A pitch-class is an abstract reference to all octave transpositions up or down of a particular pitch. While there is an infinite number of pitches (though of course we cannot hear most of them), there are 12 pitch classes.