

SCALES

SCALE (from L. *scala*, ladder): A progression of notes in a specific order.

Scales are very important to know, especially when it comes to playing a solo. This section is an easy reference for constructing, locating and playing all the essential scales on your guitar.

ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS ...

We've given you three ways to build (or "spell") each scale:

1. STEP PATTERN (EX. W-H-W-W-H-W+H-H)

This pattern tells you how many steps to move from one scale tone to the next, using abbreviations for whole step (W), half step (H) and 1 1/2 steps (W+H). Simply start on any note and move up accordingly.

Here's an example starting on the root note C:

step pattern = W-W-H-W-W-W-H

result = A-B-C#-D-E-F#-G#-A

2. FORMULA (EX. 1-2-b3-4-5-b6-b7-8)

Take the numbers in the formula (which correspond to a particular major scale tone) and alter them as indicated by the flats and/or sharps. Try this one...

A major scale = A-B-C#-D-E-F#-G#-A

formula = 1-2-b3-4-5-b6-b7-8

result = A-B-C-D-E-F-G-A

IMPORTANT: These formulas are always based on the **MAJOR SCALE** (including any sharps or flats) not just the letter names of the notes. That is, 3 for the key of E major is actually G# (not G). So, if the formula calls for b3, play G (one half-step lower than G#) not Gb.

3. NOTE NAME (EX. A-B-C-D-E-F-G-A)

Although we don't have room to show all the scales on all twelve root notes (actually seventeen if you count the enharmonics!), the note names shown are relative to the root note used. Of course, a scale built on a different root note will have a different list of note names.

LET'S GET ORGANIZED ...

Several fretboard locations are given for each scale. Use the one that feels the most comfortable for you. (Or, heck, memorize all of them!)

CAGED SYSTEM

The fingerings in this system generally apply the one-finger-per-fret rule, staying within a specific four-fret position. In some cases, you may have to reach out of position one fret above or below this basic position. (Try not to hurt yourself!)

Two moveable patterns are given for each scale one with its root on the sixth string, the other with its root on the fifth string.

THREE-NOTES-PER-STRING SYSTEM

These require a bit more of a stretch but generally span a full 2 1/2 octaves. Two moveable fingerings are given for each scale. Again, one with a sixth string root and one with a fifth string root.

HORIZONTAL SYSTEM

Depending on the scale, these are found as either sliding scales, or four-notes-per-string patterns. The fingerings in this system spread up to 16 frets (Ouch!), but they're handy in trying to connect distant areas of the fretboard or to smoothly transfer from one position to another.

Like the **CAGED** and **THREE-NOTES-PER-STRING** systems, two moveable patterns also accompany each scale in the **HORIZONTAL** system.

GET IN SYNC!

Practicing scales requires both hands to work together in perfect synchronization. Strike each note clearly and precisely, making sure you pick and finger the note at exactly the same time. Remember to always use alternate picking (successive downstroke and upstroke attacks) to avoid excessive hand strain.

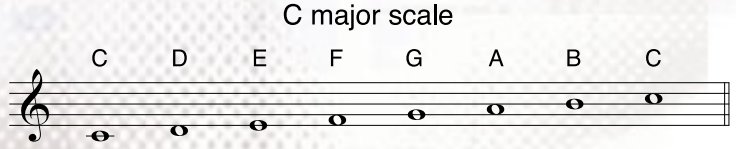
PRACTICE TIP: Make sure you play each scale forward and then backward. And, as always, start out slow and gradually build up speed as you build up confidence.

FENDER PLAYERS CLUB SCALES

MAJOR

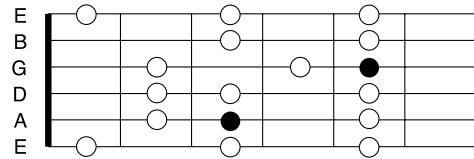
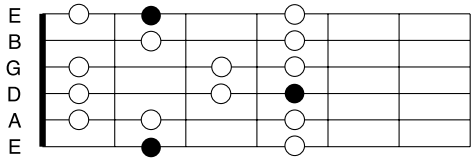
The most common scale used in music is the major scale, so learn it well! It consists of eight consecutive notes ascending or descending.

STEP PATTERN: W-W-H-W-W-W-H
FORMULA: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-1
NOTES: C-D-E-F-G-A-B-C

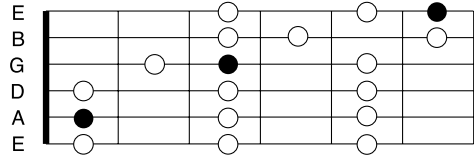
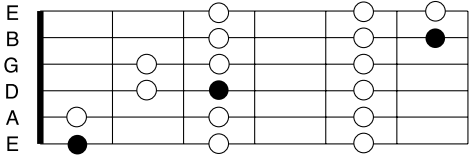


IMPORTANT: Scale patterns played on the guitar cover all of the notes within a certain fretboard area. In other words, the notes in the scale are repeated in different octaves for a more complete and practical fingering.

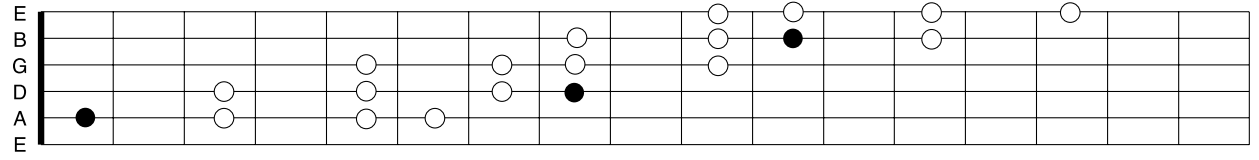
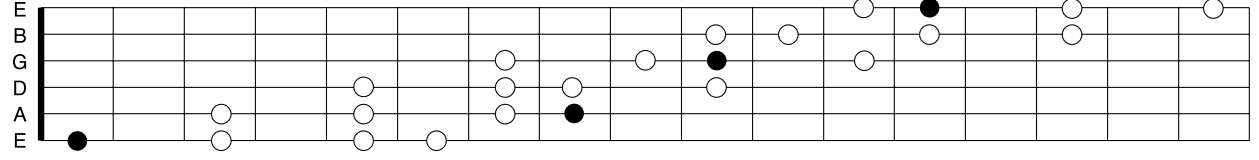
CAGED SYSTEM



THREE-NOTES-PER-STRING SYSTEM



HORIZONTAL SYSTEM



MINOR

This scale is used in nearly all styles of Western music. It's sometimes referred to as the "pure minor," "relative minor," or "Aeolian mode."

STEP PATTERN: W-H-W-W-H-W-W
FORMULA: 1-2-b3-4-5-b6-b7-1
NOTES: C-D-Eb-F-G-Ab-Bb-C

C natural minor scale

C D Eb F G Ab Bb C

CAGED SYSTEM

THREE-NOTES-PER-STRING SYSTEM

HORIZONTAL SYSTEM

FENDER PLAYERS CLUB SCALES



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