



STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN

Inspired Lesson Series



-written by David Taub

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The materials discussed throughout this eBook are guidelines , not rules forged in stone. Often you have to use your discretion when jamming and let your ear guide you. Remember, if it sounds good....it is good.

Remember to experiment, stay creative, and continually challenge yourself on the guitar. Be bold and try new things and eventually come up with other lead guitar avenues that work within your playing style.

Keep in mind that after the theory, and the “why” things work, there needs to come a point when you take a break from learning theory and scales and just play music. Music is so much more than just the logical application of theories and melodies. There is a human emotional element to music that you want to get across in your playing. So yes, practice and study up, but strike a balance, be inspired, and then just get out there and have fun.

You know what I always say, “If it’s not fun.....why do it?”

NEXT LEVEL GUITAR.com

Hello, David Taub here from Next Level Guitar and I want to thank you for purchasing this instructional product. I am so excited to have you join us as we dive into the techniques, tone, and playing style of Stevie Ray Vaughan.

With his aggressive style and accomplished playing SRV ignited the blues revival of the '80s and is often considered one of the greatest blues rock guitarists of all time. His music was rooted in blues, rock, and jazz and he developed a uniquely eclectic and fiery aggressive style that sounded like no other.

Stevie Ray Vaughan synthesized his unique style from many of his influences - Jimi Hendrix, Albert King, B.B. King, Freddie King, T-Bone Walker, Muddy Waters, Albert Collins, Buddy Guy, Lonnie Mack, Howlin' Wolf, Otis Rush, Guitar Slim, Chuck Berry. He was also influenced by jazz guitarists Django Reinhardt, Wes Montgomery, and Kenny Burrell.

However, he conveyed their messages in his own unique way. He bent strings in a way where no one had gone before and he infused ferocity into the blues, which was uniquely him. All coupled with his fantastic rhythm playing, awesome vocal chops, and tremendously killer songs.

Throughout his career he revived blues-rock music and paved the way for many other artists. His tragic death in 1990 at age 35 cut short a brilliant career just as he was on the brink of superstardom. His work continues to influence many artists across multiple musical genres.

SRV's unique brand of Texas blues coupled with his fiery style is a must learn for any guitarist and this course will guide you through it. We will study his aggressive lead playing, his rhythm playing, his tone and gear, and his clean style guitar.

We will also study his favorite scale choices, tons of licks in the style, and we will take you through the techniques, devices and concepts that went into his playing. We'll teach you how to bring all these elements together alongside a variety of blues backing tracks so you can practice these techniques, devices, and concepts in a musical context.

We make playing along easy as we tab out all licks with our on-screen tablature. Plus close up shots of the pick and fret hand takes you right in close to all the action. And we demonstrate the licks at slow and regular speed.

This course consists of this reference eBook, 14 video lessons and ten jam tracks. The included jam tracks are the same ones we utilize throughout the video lessons. This course also includes two song DVDs in the style of SRV, *Cold Shot* and *The Sky Is Crying*.

These song lessons are great vehicles to practice the concepts you learn throughout this lesson series. Add comes with the bonus that at the end...you learned a song that you can add to your song catalog.

Enjoy this course and please feel free to email us any questions. Keep up all that hard work on that guitar and keep on rocking! Take care,

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Things to keep in mind:

Keep in mind our teachings focus on giving students a well rounded musical education. This does not mean you have to master every lead guitar avenue or scale before moving on to the next. You will want to work on multiple things at once by dividing up your practice time.

Throughout this eBook I teach many lead guitar avenues so feel free to hop around. Some are more challenging than others and take more time to learn and apply. Over time you will find the principles and techniques sink in and eventually become automatic. Then you can let your ear take you to all the right notes. You won't have to think about techniques and application so much but rather focus on emotion and feel.

It can be overwhelming with so much to learn and so many learning materials readily available. Try not to take on too much at once as you may become overwhelmed and frustrated. You don't want to rush things and then end up skimming over important topics leaving voids in your playing.

It's critical to take the extra time to learn the "why" things work. Learning the "whys" will give you the musical knowledge to blast these principles and techniques across all your playing. It will give you the lead guitar confidence to be able to instantly know what avenues are possible when soloing and improvising.

Use these lessons as "templates" to learn the "whys" and then develop them into your guitar arsenal through practical application. Then you will have the tools and confidence to blast these playing techniques across all your playing at any given time, in any given jam, and in any given song.

As you further develop your lead guitar skills you want to keep developing your rhythm skills. Your rhythm and groove are critical elements to your overall abilities on the guitar. Your lead playing will really only ever be as good as your rhythm playing. No matter how good a solo is, it's the song that will always be remembered.

Because many blues and rock progressions are built off a I-IV-V chord structure you will often be utilizing Minor Pentatonic & Blues and/or Major Pentatonic Scales. Pentatonic scales are killer scales to play over blues and rock jams.

Many big name players have made careers using pentatonic scales. However, try some of the other suggestions in this eBook in addition to Pentatonics. Try the modes of the major scale like Dorian, Aeolian, and Mixolydian as they can sound awesome over blues and rock progressions.

KEY POINT: Keep in mind that there is just no substitute for practicing the right things, learning scales, studying the sounds and relationships between chords and scales, developing your ear, practicing and honing your skills using jam tracks, and continually pushing yourself.

KEY POINTS:

Keep in mind not to neglect your rhythm playing. Your lead playing will only ever be as good as your rhythm playing.

Keep in mind that no matter how good a solo is.....in the end it's the song that will be remembered.

"I use heavy strings, tune low, play hard, and floor it. Floor it - that's technical talk". -Stevie Ray Vaughan

"Music really is a way to reach out and hold on to each other in a healthy way". -Stevie Ray Vaughan

Practice Items & Tips:

Below are some general study avenues for blues and rock guitar. Because students of various levels will be reading this eBook these are broad jump off points for consideration. Work down the list and see which you are comfortable with and which needs work. Remember your guitar playing is an evolution. Use some of the items on the below list to set some musical goals and then chip away at them a little each day.

- **Learn the notes on the neck** cold. No way around this one, it is super critical.

-As you study lead guitar, **continue to learn chords and work on your rhythm playing**. You will be playing rhythm often so your lead playing will really only ever be as good as your rhythm playing.

-**Learn some music theory**. It will help propel you faster along in your guitar journey as well as you will be able to better communicate the language of music.

-**Don't just learn scales alone**. Learn the scale but also learn how to apply it. Learn when it works, over what chords, and how to play it in all keys. Knowing the scale itself is only half the battle.

-Kick off your lead guitar journey by **learning the Minor Pentatonic scale**. Start with the basic box shape and then learn all five boxes and expanded scales. Pentatonic scales are the cornerstone for blues rock soloing.

-**Learn how to convert minor pentatonic scales into major pentatonic scales** by using the concept of major to relative minor. This is a huge help as you won't have to learn another full neck of scales.

-**Don't just learn shapes**. Take the extra time to learn the notes of the scales you are playing and the notes that are in chords. This will help you immensely in so many ways along your guitar journey.

-Be sure to know how to solo comfortably in **both minor AND major key**.

-**Always try to compliment the song with your lead lines**. Remember, no matter how good a solo is, in the end it's the song that will be remembered. Play for the song, not for yourself.

-**Learn some triads and arpeggios**. They really open up your playing, add color and variety, and get you out of playing straight scales. They are super useful and can be super melody builders.

-After you have a firm grasp on pentatonic scales and how to apply them start to **learn Major and Natural Minor Scales**. These are the building blocks to learn the modes of the major scale.

-**Learn the modes of the major scale**. For blues rock playing start with Aeolian, Dorian, and Mixolydian.

-**Study and learn the leads of some of your favorite players**. Learn why their leads work and what you like about them. Then make their licks your own, put your own spin on them. Also try imitating the melody of a vocal line on your guitar. This really helps to understand and build melodies on the instrument.

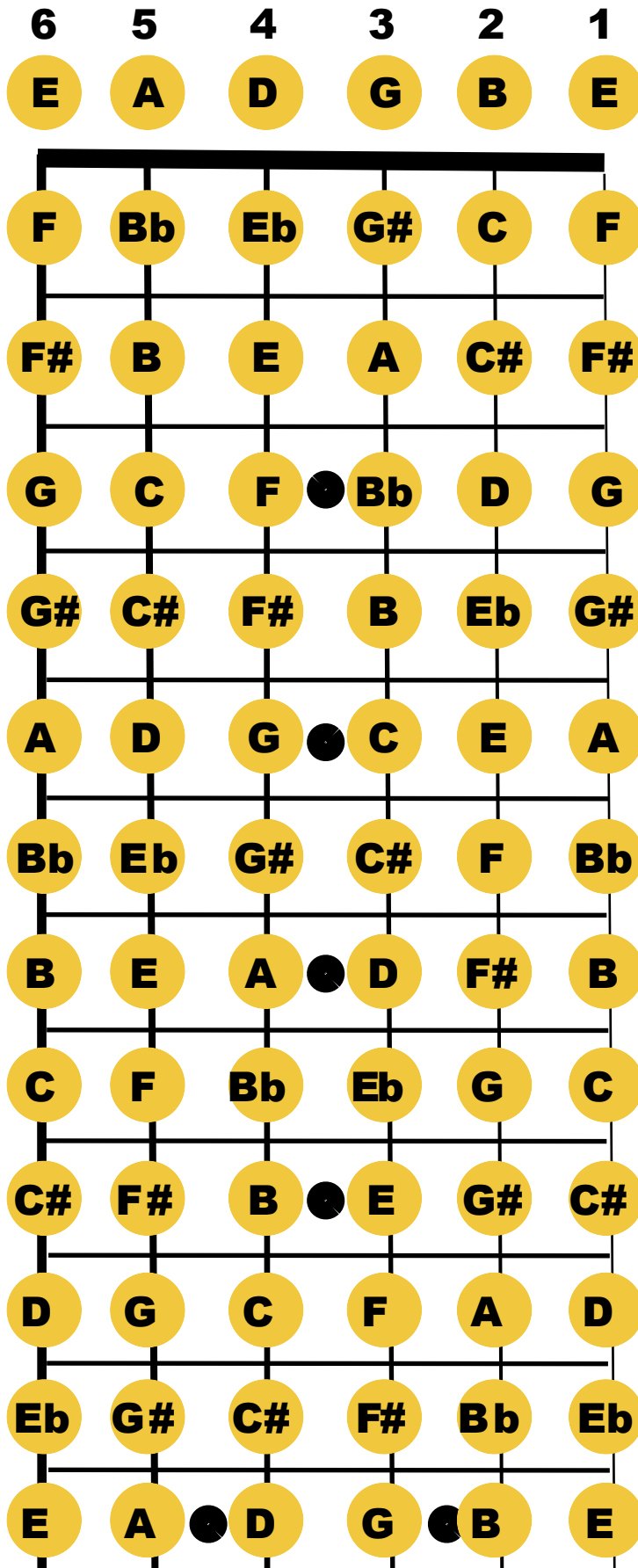
-**Practice soloing and improvising over jam tracks**. Know the chords of the rhythm track and just get lost in it. It's critical to practice and apply what you are learning in a musical context, and jam tracks are awesome practice.

-**Develop your ear**, don't rely solely on tablature. Try to learn songs and licks by ear and listen for the color of chords and try any ear training that you can get your hands on. It's hard work, but well worth it.

-Keep in mind that at this stage of your lead guitar journey there is just no substitute for practicing the right things, learning scales, studying the sounds and relationships between chords and scales, developing your ear, practicing and honing your skills using jam tracks, and continually pushing yourself and refining your art.

-**Remember, you can't learn less!**

Notes On The Fretboard



Open Strings

Eddie Ate Dynamite Good Bye Eddie

= Sharp

b = Flat

The twelve-note scale consists of:
A, B^b, B, C, C[#], D, E^b, E, F, F[#], G, G[#]

Memorize the order of the 12-note scale as the notes always appear on the guitar neck in the above order.

Examine the notes along one string vertically. Notice how the notes always repeat in this same order. The notes then repeat every 12 frets.

Once you have the 12-note scale memorized start applying it to the frets on the guitar and memorizing where the notes live on the fretboard.

Take it slow and work on one string at a time. Start with the low E string. Once you memorize that string you will also know the note names on the high E string as the note names on those two strings are the same.

Once you have the E strings memorized then move on to the A string, then the D string, and so on. Chip away at getting each string down a little each day. Add learning the notes to your practice log - you can do it!

Gear & Goals

Lead guitar playing is something that can identify a player like a signature or fingerprint. Players like Stevie Ray Vaughan, Eddie Van Halen, David Gilmour, Joe Satriani, BB King, Eric Clapton, Eric Johnson, Steve Vai, and Carlos Santana can be identified with a single note. They have a very signature tone.

As you continue your lead guitar studies and practicing, you will find your playing will evolve over time, your playing is an evolution. An element of lead playing which may seem simple, like vibrato or string bending, can take months and months to develop into a signature statement in your technique.

GEAR/EQUIPMENT – Sometimes guitarists think that if they purchase the same guitar, amp, and effects of their favorite player that they will copy their signature sound and replicate their tone. You will find that this is not the case. Here is a quick story to illustrate this point.

When Van Halen was first starting out they opened for some name acts of the time. Eddie Van Halen was so revolutionary with his guitar playing that he virtually floored the guitar community. One show Van Halen was opening for Ted Nugent and Ted watched in amazement as Eddie played during sound check. Ted couldn't believe the sounds he was hearing. After Eddie left the stage Ted then talked Eddie's guitar tech into letting him plug into Eddie's rig. Ted Nugent started playing through Eddie's gear and guess what..... he sounded like Ted Nugent.

The point is that your tone comes mainly from your fingers, your technique, and your heart, not the amp or effect. Tone is truly in your hands and in your heart. Also how you attack the strings and what you do to the notes plays a huge part in your tone.

Gear can surely be motivating and empowering and point you in a certain direction, but ultimately your tone is in your hands.

Eddie Van Halen can play any guitar through any amp and will still sound like Eddie Van Halen. You want to play through the best gear that you can afford, but spend time developing your own technique and sound and don't get too lost trying to copy someone else's.

Accomplish two things when soloing and improvising:

1. Complement the song – it all comes back to the song and how the guitar lines complement it and help to get its musical statement and emotions across. As great as a guitar solo can be,.....in the end,.....it's the song that will be remembered. Play for the song, not for yourself.

2. Draw people in to your solo – you want the listener to latch onto what you are playing. You want to keep the listener on the edge of their seat wondering, "what is he going to play next"? You want to have the power to take the listener on a musical journey with ups and downs and great emotion and passion. You want your leads to tell a story.

Be aware of melody happening within in your guitar lines. At times many guitarists forget the above two items and are off soloing in their own "little world". They forget about the song, the chord changes, melody, and what the other musicians behind them are doing. Then the song suffers and the band has to "reel" the guitarist back into the groove.

Lead Guitar - The Big Four

Below are four critical parts to great lead playing. Work on all four of these aspects by studying each individually, and then apply them in a musical context by practicing over the jam tracks.

1. Rhythm – the rhythm of your notes and licks. The way we take the notes we choose and do musically interesting things with them. This quite possibly could be one of the most important elements of lead guitar. Within the rhythm of your soloing, repetition is one key component and melody is another.

Repetition is a key to good melody and phrasing. You don't have to play your licks verbatim every time in a lead line, but rather the same in concept. Noodle around on the guitar till you find a killer sounding riff or lick. Then dig into that idea and keep repeating it. Repeat it, but try playing it a little different rhythmically each time or maybe hit the same note a different number of times, or slide into the notes, or do a bend one time, vary it, change the notes a little. These variations give you tons of licks and ideas born from the same musical theme.

Learn to vary your licks both note wise and rhythm wise. Learn a rhythm or rhythmic phrase and then apply it to some of your favorite licks across all the strings. So when you noodle around and get into a little cool idea, keep it.....keep playing it and turn the rhythm around and exploit it. Remember rhythm and melody are key!

2. The Ride – the musical ups and downs. The peaks and valleys, the highs and lows and dynamics in your soloing. It's the way your lines move up and down the neck and get loud and soft. You just don't want to be rambling on and on with straight across the board flat line playing of nothing but streams and streams of notes.....blah, blah, blah. Remember that nobody likes the guy that talks too much.

You want to move your listeners and draw them into your solo. Your solo should have ups and downs, peaks and valleys, and twists and turns. You don't want just flat straight lines with no dynamics, emphasis, different rhythms, or sans any musical events or melody.

3. Note choice – this may seem pretty obvious but which notes you play are equally as important as which notes you don't play. For example, if you are playing the blues you have only have five or six main notes to choose from so note choices are limited. So you better have a very big rhythm and ride bag of tricks because that is what is going to make your lead lines sound interesting.

4. Phrasing – Basically a phrase is a group of notes that compose a musical thought. Phrasing is all about how you connect your notes, scales, ideas, and licks into musical sounding lines. You want to connect your groups of phrases in a manner that makes good musical sense.

When you don't have a lot of note choices then you really have to concentrate on your phrasing to keep things interesting. Some players really excel at phrasing and it's very clear when someone is good at it as the music just flows out of them effortlessly.

Listen to the playing of Stevie Ray Vaughan, the music just flowed out of him. It's almost like he had a direct channel between his brain, heart, and fingers. His playing was smooth and fluid with his musical thoughts and ideas phrasing effortlessly into one another.

Work on your own personal channel and musical connections. Think melodically and vary your lick ideas. Practice over jam tracks and keep refining your art.

Key signature & chord analyzing

In blues and rock you will often solo over progressions that are in either major key or minor key. In blues usually its major key and often using dominant chords. But you want to have the tools to be able to solo over both major and minor key.

Knowing the key is important, and a good place to start. But to go deeper you have to analyze the chords that make up the progression to get the complete roadmap for soloing options.

In the examples on the coming pages we shall study a major key and minor key example of I-IV-V blues progressions and how to systematically analyze the chords to determine soloing options. Use these examples as templates when examining chords and progressions to determine soloing options. Always start with what are the chords and what is the key.

Soon these techniques will become more automatic. But at first doing it in a very systematic and methodical way will get you used to these principles. Remember there are many lead avenues to choose from, so explore them all and see what sounds best to your ears.

KEY POINT: Analyze the chords to determine what solo avenues to take – it's the chords that give the complete roadmap to the various soloing avenues – the key signature is only part of the equation.

It's important to understand why these principles and techniques work so that you can solo and improvise over any progression. Armed with this knowledge and practicing in a musical context will give you the lead guitar confidence to solo over any progression.

KEY POINT: Remember that as soon as you hear that very identifiable I-IV-V blues, swing, or shuffle, it is wide open as there will be many different soloing avenues to try.

Key Points To Determine Soloing Avenues:

1. Determine the key signature - often you will be soloing in minor key or major key. Knowing the key is the first step. Even when you are noodling on the guitar, always know in what key you are playing.

2. Analyze the chord progression – it's the chords that will give you the complete roadmap to what you can utilize for soloing and improvisation. Analyzing the chords is critical to get the full lead guitar picture.

Minor Pentatonic & Blues Scales - four great applications:

- 1. Over all chords in minor key (except a major V chord).**
- 2. Over any minor type chord when treating each chord as a separate event.**
- 3. Over all the chords in major key I-IV-V blues jams, swings, and shuffles.**
- 4. Over all the chords in rock jams or jams using power or 5th chords, (except major sounding jams and ballads).**

Soloing in minor key:

When playing over all the chords in minor key, what “relates to all”, you can always use Natural Minor Scales, (Aeolian Mode), **UNLESS** there is a major IV chord or a minor ii chord, in those cases use the Dorian Mode.

The Choices When Soloing

When soloing/improvising there are **TWO CHOICES**:

1. Solo with what “relates to all” – use the same scale or mode over all the chords. No matter what chord is sounding, play the same scale over each chord. You play what works over *ALL* the chords.

This is the most common choice and definitely what most players do when first developing their soloing skills. Start with what “relates to all”. Get proficient at this before moving on to the next choice described below.

Or you can:

2. Treat each chord like a “separate event” - this choice is more challenging but yields a very sophisticated sound. By treating each chord as a separate event you solo with a different scale or mode over each chord and change the scale or mode with each chord change. This technique does not stay within the confines of the same scale as with what “relates to all”.

With this approach you must listen to what is going on underneath the soloing. You have to listen to which chords are sounding and also for the changes. Then time your playing and change scales as the chords change.

Employ this technique whenever there is enough time on a given chord. If the chords are flying by fast, there won't be enough time to treat each chord as a “separate event”.

This technique takes practice but it will skyrocket your playing to the next level. Practice this technique with slow tempo progressions where there is lots of time on each chord and remember to listen for the changes.

Remember, at first practice with jam tracks with slow moving changes to perfect this technique. You want lots of time on each chord.

KEY POINT: The above two choices are **NOT** mutually exclusive, you can mix them both together. Treat each chord as a “separate event”, then switch it up and play what “relates to all”. Toggle back and forth and get lost in the jam track while practicing.

KEY POINTS:

There is no substitute for learning scales and studying the sounds and relationships between chords and scales.

Keep developing your ear and practice using jam tracks. Continually push yourself to the next level. Stay positive and remember..... YOU CAN DO IT!

Minor Key Soloing

You want to be comfortable soloing in both minor key and major key. If a progression is in minor key you can usually solo with Minor Pentatonic & Blues Scales over ALL the chords, (with a few exceptions).

So minor pentatonic over minor key should be a default setting. As soon as you hear minor key, you know one option is to solo over all the chords with Minor Pentatonic & Blues Scales as they “relate to all”.

Also if it’s a major key bluesy I-IV-V, one option is to solo over all the chords with Minor Pentatonic & Blues scales. An exception to this rule is if it’s a minor key progression with a major V chord. You have to be careful over that major V, one option is to use Harmonic Minor Scale over just that V chord.

A minor mode will also work over all the chords in minor key. Usually it’s Aeolian or Dorian. To determine which one you have to analyze the chords. For now just memorize the below key point for soloing in minor key over all the chords:

KEY POINT: When playing over all the chords in minor key you can always use the AEOLIAN mode, UNLESS there is a IV major chord or II minor chord, then use the DORIAN mode. (Exception - If there is a V major chord then use Harmonic Minor over just that V chord).

Aeolian mode is the same thing as Natural Minor or Pure Minor.

Use Minor Pentatonic & Blues Scales (4 applications):

1. Over all the chords in a minor key, (few exceptions).
2. Over all chords in major key I-IV-V blues, shuffles, and swings.
3. Over any minor type chord when treating each chord as a “*separate event*”.
4. Over all the chords in rock type jams, or jams using power or 5th chords, (as long as the jam is not ballad/major sounding, if so then use major pentatonic or possibly full major scales).
5. Use the same key Pentatonic Scale over different chords. Know for now that at times you can play different key pentatonic scales over the same chord, not just the root scale.

Minor Pentatonic & Blues Scales - four great applications:

1. Over all chords in minor key (except a major V chord).
2. Over any minor type chord when treating each chord as a separate event.
3. Over all the chords in major key I-IV-V blues jams, swings, and shuffles.
4. Over all the chords in rock jams or jams using power or 5th chords, (except major sounding jams and ballads).

Soloing in minor key:

When playing over all the chords in minor key, what “*relates to all*”, you can always use Natural Minor Scales, (Aeolian Mode), UNLESS there is a major IV chord or a minor ii chord, in those cases use the Dorian Mode.

Minor Key Example: Bm-Em-F#m

Let's examine this minor key chord progressions to determine soloing options. Use the lessons below as templates as you practice these techniques and practice your soloing skills over jam tracks. Remember to get the complete soloing picture, you have to analyze the chords.

At first try what you know as all the choices below will be taught in detail in the coming pages of this eBook. So don't worry if you don't understand every option at this point - go with what you know for now, and build more as you go through the eBook and continue practicing.

This is a minor blues I-IV-V progression in the key of Key of B minor. Once choice is we can solo over what "*relates to all*". And since this is a 12-bar progression there is plenty of time to solo over each chord independently, or treat each chord as a "*separate event*". Let's examine both soloing options.

1. What relates to all the chords:

Since we are in minor key, with no major V chord, we can solo with Minor Pentatonic & Blues scales over all the chords. Memorize the four key minor pentatonic application points listed on the previous page.

-Try B Minor Pentatonic & Blues over all the chords. We instantly know since we are in minor key, with no major V chord, we can solo with Minor Pentatonic & Blues scales over all the chords as those scales relates to all. So whether we are playing over the Bm chord, the Em chord, or the F#m chord one option is we can play B minor Pentatonic & Blues scales over all the chords.

-Try B Aeolian over all the chords. Usually in minor key we can play a minor mode over all the chords. In minor key a minor mode usually relates to all. We are in minor key and when analyzing the chords the IV chord is minor, (Em), this tells us we can also play B Aeolian mode, (B Natural Minor), over all the chords. So whether we are playing over the Bm chord, the Em chord, or the F#m chord we can play B Aeolian scales over all the chords as it "*relates to all*". B minor is the relative minor of D major. So play all your D major scales but start on and emphasize the B notes making it B Aeolian (B Aeolian = D major).

-Mix B Aeolian and B Minor Pentatonic & Blues over all the chords for some killer sounds.

2. Treat each chord like a separate event:

What this means is you treat each chord independently. With a 12-bar progression you have a lot of time on each chord. This is perfect for treating each chord as a separate event.

-Over the Bm chord try B Minor Pentatonic & Blues, B Aeolian, B Dorian, or B minor arpeggios. (But then when the chords change to Em you then abandon all the B minor lead work and switch to scales, modes, or arpeggios that relate to the Em chord.)

-Over the Em chord try E Minor Pentatonic & Blues, E Aeolian, E Dorian, or E Minor arpeggios. (Then when the chord changes again to F#m you abandon all the Em work and switch to what relates to the F#m chord.)

-Over the F#m chord try F# Minor Pentatonic & Blues, F# Aeolian, F# Dorian, or F# minor arpeggios.

-Listen for the changes and time your scale changes so you don't get caught playing the wrong scale over the wrong chord. This technique takes time to get proficient. Chip away at it - start off slow with small phrases over each chord and build from there.

Minor Key Soloing Theory

In rock and blues you will often be soloing in minor key. So let's take a little extra time to dig deeper into some minor key soloing theory.

Let's first discuss minor key soloing with what "*relates to all*". When soloing in minor key, minor pentatonic and blues should be your default setting. In a minor key progression, you can utilize minor pentatonic and blues over all the chords as it "*relates to all*", (unless there is a major V chord).

When soloing in minor key usually a minor mode also "*relates to all*", usually Aeolian or Dorian. To know which one to play over all the chords there is one principle that you need to memorize:

****When playing over all the chords in minor key, use the AEOLIAN mode...UNLESS the IV chord is major or the ii chord is minor, then use the DORIAN mode.**

So in minor key over all the chords think minor pentatonic & blues as well as Aeolian unless you see a major IV or minor ii chord. An exception to this rule is if there is a major V chord, then you can try using the Harmonic Minor Scale over just the major V chord.

There is only a one note difference between the Dorian and Aeolian modes - the sixth. Aeolian has a b6 while Dorian has a major 6th:

AEOLIAN MODE: 1, 2, b3, 4, 5, b6, b7

DORIAN MODE: 1, 2, b3, 4, 5, 6, b7

If you hit the wrong sixth note over the corresponding chord it will sound sour, so it's super important you play the right mode over all the chords.

Remember we are talking about playing over all the chords in a minor key progression, playing what "*relates to all*".

One critical key in unlocking all the potential of these scales and modes is in learning their interval structure and memorizing the key points listed throughout this eBook. This way you will know when it is appropriate to apply each in a given soloing or improvisation scenario.

Another key is listening and studying the relationships between chords and scales and understanding which mood or emotion you want to apply.

Its all about the sounds and what emotion and mood you want to get across in your playing. Thats the beauty of the modes, each have their own unique mood.

KEY POINTS:

When soloing in minor key you can often use a minor mode over all the chords. Use Aeolian Mode UNLESS the IV chord is major or the ii chord is minor, then use the Dorian Mode.

Analyze the chords to determine the soloing avenues. Its the CHORDS that give the full roadmap to the various soloing options.

Major Key Soloing

You want to get comfortable soloing in both minor key and major key. If a progression is in major key one choice is you can usually solo using Major Pentatonic Scales over ALL the chords.

So major pentatonic over major key should be a default setting just like minor pentatonic over minor key. As soon as you hear major key, you know one option is to solo over all the chords with Major Pentatonic, as it “relates to all” the chords.

Major pentatonic produces that sweet, major sound. Be sure to play the scale and listen to the sounds created. Its a very different sound than the bluesy Minor Pentatonic Scale. It’s all about the sounds and mood.

MAJOR KEY I-IV-V blues, shuffles, and swings:

You will hear these rhythms all the time in blues music. If a progression is a major key I-IV-V blues, swing, or shuffle there are MANY avenues to utilize when soloing and improvising, it’s wide open.

You can solo with what “relates to all” and also by treating each chord as a “separate event”. Here are some suggestions to try over these type very common progressions:

1. Try **Minor Pentatonic & Blues** scales over all the chords in the key of the progression. This yields that dark, bluesy, minor sound. (Minor Pentatonic & Blues – 1,b3,4,b5,5,b7)

2. Try **Major Pentatonic** scales over all the chords in the key of the progression. This produces that sweet major sound ala BB King/Allman Brothers. This will be a totally different sound than Minor Pentatonic. (Major Pentatonic – 1,2,3,5,6)

3. **Mix Minor Pentatonic & Blues and Major Pentatonic.** You will hear this a lot in the lead playing of Eric Clapton and BB King. The switching and mixing of Minor and Major Pentatonic is an awesome sound. (Minor & Major Pentatonic 1,2,b3,3,4,5,6,b7)

4. Try the **Dorian Mode** over all the chords. Dorian is the second mode of the major scale and is considered more of a minor mode but it’s intervals have elements of both minor, (b3, b7), and major (2nd, 6th).

Dorian works great in any situation where you know both Minor Pentatonic and Major Pentatonic will work. Give it a try over I-IV-V blues progressions and you will be surprised how killer it can sound. (Dorian Mode – 1,2,b3,4,5,6,b7)

5. Try the **Mixolydian Mode** as it works great over dominant chords like 7th and 9th chords. Try to play this mode over each chord independently in the key of the chord. (Mixolydian Mode is the fifth mode of the major scale – 1,2,3,4,5,6,b7).

Major Pentatonic Scale applications:

1. Over all chords when in a major key.

2. Over any major type chord when treating each chord as a separate event. (especially dominant 7th chords in blues jams - very popular choice).

3. Over all the chords in major key I-IV-V blues jams, swings, and shuffles.

4. Over all the chords in rock major sounding jams and especially major ballads.

Soloing in major key:

Be careful as there is not as much room for error in major key and “sour” notes will really stick out. You can at times combine major pentatonic with minor pentatonic to produce hybrid scales with elements of both minor and major.

Major Key Example

Let's examine chord progressions to determine soloing options. Use the lessons below as templates as you practice these techniques and work on your soloing skills over jam tracks.

Example Progression: E7 - A7 - B7

This common blues progression is a 12-bar I-IV-V major key blues in the key of E Major. Once key signature is determined, next examine what relates to all the chords. Remember, with I-IV-V major key blues progression they are totally wide open, so a lot will depend on your playing style and what type of mood you want to create.

-Try E Minor Pentatonic & Blues scales over all the chords for that bluesy minor sound (E,G,A,Bb,B,D)

-Try E Major Pentatonic scales over all the chords for that sweet major sound (E,F#,G#,B,C#). Remember that for any major key jam you can use Major Pentatonic over all the chords. Major Pentatonic relates to all in this jam. E Major Pentatonic is the same as C# Minor Pentatonic. E Major and C# Minor are relative major and minor. If you think more in terms of Minor Pentatonic or just know those shapes then play all your C# Minor Pentatonic scales, but start on and emphasize the E notes and it will be E Major Pentatonic and have that real sweet major sound.

-Mix E Minor Pentatonic and E Major Pentatonic over all the chords (E,F#,G,G#,A,B,C#,D)

-Try the E Dorian over all the chords (E,F#,G,A,B,C#,D). Because we know that both Major Pentatonic & Minor Pentatonic will work we then know that the Dorian mode will also work. Dorian is considered more of a minor mode, (1,2,b3,4,5,6,b7), but works great over major key I-IV-V blues, swing, and shuffle progressions.

Dorian has minor elements, (b3, b7) but also has major elements, (2nd, 6th). The Dorian mode produces a hybrid sound as it combines the elements of both minor and major. Dorian is the 2nd mode in any major key and E Dorian is the same as D major, (E Dorian=D major). So play all your D major scales but emphasize and start on the E notes – really resolve to and focus on those D notes.

-Treat each chord like a separate event: Remember to always listen to the rhythm and time your changes so you change scales or landing notes as the chords change.

-Try moving Minor Pentatonic & Blues over each chord. Play E Minor Pentatonic & Blues over the E7 chord, A Minor Pentatonic & Blues over the A7 chord and B Minor Pentatonic & Blues over the B7 chord.

Try moving Major Pentatonic over each chord. Play E Major Pentatonic over the E7 chord, A Major Pentatonic over the A7 chord and B Major Pentatonic over the B7 chord.

-Try mixing up the above Minor Pentatonic and Major Pentatonic over each chord. This is a very cool technique that many blues players often utilize.

-Play E Major Pentatonic over the E7 chord. Then switch to E Minor Pentatonic over the A7 chord. Then try E Major Pentatonic over the B7 chord. Listen to how well this technique outlines and implies the chord changes. Mix this up a bit, maybe the next time around the progression try E Minor Pentatonic over the B7 chord.

-Try Mixolydian mode over each chord: Mixolydian works great over 7th chords as there is that b7 in the chord, (1,3,5,b7), as well as in the Mixolydian mode (1,2,3,4,5,6,b7). Mixolydian mode is the 5th mode of the major scale.

-Over the E7 chord try E Mixolydian (=A Major, start on and emphasize the E notes). Over the A7 chord try A Mixolydian (=D Major, start on and emphasize the A notes). Over the B7 chord try B Mixolydian (=E Major, start on and emphasize the B notes)

Note - Use the same key Pentatonic Scale over different chords, at times you can play different key pentatonic scales over the same chord - not just the root scale.

Scales Defined

Understanding and learning scales is a critical element in your guitar journey. Scales are the building blocks to creating licks and the roadmap to the fretboard. Pentatonic Scales are the most common scales used in most genres of music so they are a great place to start, especially for blues and rock.

Scales are a group or collection of notes in ascending or descending order that we use in music. Scale notes are listed out in order and usually sound from low to high.

The order of the notes used in a scale is crucial as that order provides a measure of musical distance. The distance between notes is called an interval. How scale notes line up, or the intervals, will give the scale not only its name but also its mood or musical color. Just like certain chords have a mood to them, scales also produce a certain sound or mood.

One critical aspect of a scale is its root note. The root note is the starting note and note which all the other scale notes gravitate toward. I like to call the root note “home base”. Most other notes seem to want to resolve to the root as it’s the tonic center for the scale. Often you can determine the key of a given progression by just listening for what sounds like home base, what are all the chords are pulling toward.

When learning scales, always make mental notes as to where the root notes are in that scale. In this eBook the root notes are illustrated with black ovals. It’s critical to know your root note locations.

The successive notes in a scale are divided by steps, or tones. A half step is also called a semi-tone and is one fret on the guitar. A whole step is also called a whole tone and is two frets. A minor third is three frets and a major third is four frets.

The table below illustrates some common scales and their intervals. Scales titled in blues are the modes of the major scale. When learning scales also learn their application and how to play them in all keys.

Major Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Natural Minor Scale	1	2	b3	4	5	b6	b7
Minor Pentatonic Scale	1		b3	4	5		b7
Blues Scale	1		b3	4	b5	5	b7
Major Pentatonic Scale	1	2	3		5	6	
Major Pentatonic Sus4	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Ionian Mode (Major Scale)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Dorian Mode	1	2	b3	4	5	6	b7
Phrygian Mode	1	b2	b3	4	5	b6	b7
Lydian Mode	1	2	3	#4	5	6	7
Mixolydian Mode	1	2	3	4	5	6	b7
Aeolian Mode	1	2	b3	4	5	b6	b7
Locrian Mode	1	b2	b3	4	b5	b6	b7
Harmonic Minor Scale	1	2	b3	4	5	b6	7

The Jam Tracks - Practice Suggestions

1. C 12-Bar Blues - this is a traditional I-IV-V 12-bar blues progression in the key of C. It has that unmistakable 12-bar rhythmic pattern. As soon as you hear the 12-bar pattern, know that there will be many soloing options.

Like many blues jams this one starts off on the V chord. That is a very common blues device, “let’s take it from the V”. This jam features a pinky embellishment on each chord that adds the 6th interval. That is a very common traditional embellishment in blues rhythms.

What Relates to all the chords:

-C Minor Pentatonic & Blues over all the chords. Since this is a major I-IV-V blues progression Minor Pentatonic & Blues will produce killer bluesy sounds and is probably the first choice for many players.

C Minor Pentatonic & Blues = C, Eb, F, Gb, G, Bb

-C Major Pentatonic over all the chords. Major Pentatonic produces that sweet major sound. Remember that for most major key jams you can use Major Pentatonic over all the chords. Major Pentatonic relates to all in this jam.

C Major Pentatonic is the same as A-minor Pentatonic. C major and A minor are relative major and minor. If you think more in terms of Minor Pentatonic or just know those shapes then play A Minor Pentatonic scales, but start on and emphasize the C notes and it will be C Major Pentatonic and have that sweet major sound. Remember that it all comes down to the sounds, moods, and textures that you want to create with the music.

C Major Pentatonic – C, D, E, G, A

A Minor Pentatonic – A, C, D, E, G

(Same notes – just emphasize the root of the mode, C.)

-C Dorian over all the chords. Because we know that both major pentatonic & minor pentatonic will work we then know that the Dorian mode will also work. Dorian is considered more of a minor mode but works great over major key I-IV-V blues, swings, and shuffle progressions.

The Dorian Mode is a seven-note scale often used in blues, rock, and many other musical genres. Dorian is considered a minor mode and is always the 2nd mode in any major key. Since Dorian is the second mode in any major key, to play C Dorian ask what major scales 2nd note is a C note. The answer is Bb. Bb Major has the same notes as C Dorian:

C Dorian = C, D, Eb, F, G, A, Bb

Bb Major = Bb, C, D, Eb, F, G, A

(Same notes – just emphasize the root of the mode, C.)

C Dorian is the same as Bb major, (C Dorian=Bb major). So play all your Bb major scales but start on and emphasize the C notes for that killer Dorian tonality.

-Mix C Minor Pentatonic & Blues, Major Pentatonic, and C Dorian over all the chords. Note the cool differences between the major versus the minor and also the five-note pentatonics versus the seven-note diatonic scales. Cool sounds - mix it up!

The Jam Tracks - Practice Suggestions

1. C 12—Bar Blues (continued):

Treat each chord like a separate event:

With this 12-bar blues jam there is enough time on each chord to treat each chord as a separate event. Be sure to time your changes over each chord and really listen to the rhythm to ensure you don't get caught playing the wrong scale over a given chord.

-Minor Pentatonic & Blues over each chord. Play C Minor Pentatonic & Blues over the C chord, F Minor Pentatonic & Blues over the F chord, and G Minor Pentatonic & Blues over the G chord.

-Major Pentatonic over each chord. Play C Major Pentatonic over the C chord, F Major Pentatonic over the F chord, and G Major Pentatonic over the G chord.

-Dorian mode over each chord. Because the rhythm of this jam is embellished with the 6th, Dorian again is a perfect choice as that is a key interval in the mode:

Dorian Mode = 1, 2, b3, 4, 5, 6, b7

Play C Dorian, (=Bb major), over the C chord. Then play F Dorian, (=Eb major), over the F chord. And then try G Dorian, (=F major), over the G chord.

Listen for the chord changes and change your mode as the chords change. Experiment and remember that this device takes time to get proficient. It will get better and quicker over time. Keep practicing the technique with jam tracks and in different keys.

2. 12-Bar Shuffle in G - This jam is a traditional I-IV-V 12-bar blues in the key of G, starts on the V chord, and has many soloing options. This jam features a common blues device pinky embellishment on each chord adding the 6th to each chord. As with most jams, first become familiar with the rhythm pattern and play the rhythm a few times around to feel the groove.

What Relates to all the chords:

-G Minor Pentatonic & Blues over all the chords. Since this is a major I-IV-V blues progression Minor Pentatonic & Blues produces a bluesy sound and will often be the first choice for many blues players. Try G Minor Pentatonic & Blues over all the chords as those scales relate to all.

G Minor Pentatonic & Blues = G, Bb, C, Db, D, F

-G Major Pentatonic over all the chords. Major Pentatonic produces the sweet major bluesy sound. For most major key jams you can use Major Pentatonic over all the chords.

G Major Pentatonic = G, A, B, D, E

G Major Pentatonic is the same as E Minor Pentatonic. G major and E minor are relative major and minor. If you think more in terms of Minor Pentatonic or just know those shapes then play E Minor Pentatonic scales, but start on and emphasize the G notes and it will be G Major Pentatonic. By shifting those scales to the root, G, they take on that major happy sweet sound as opposed to the darker, bluesy minor sound.

G Major Pentatonic – G, A, B, D, E

E Minor Pentatonic – E, G, A, B, D

(Same notes – just emphasize the root of the mode, G.)

The Jam Tracks - Practice Suggestions

2. 12-Bar Shuffle in G (continued):

-G Dorian over all the chords. Because we know that both major pentatonic & minor pentatonic will work we then know that the Dorian mode will also work.

Dorian is considered more of a minor mode but works great over major key I-IV-V blues, swings, and shuffle progressions. The Dorian mode also sounds great over minor chords.

The Dorian Mode is a seven-note scale often used in blues, rock, and many other musical genres. Dorian is considered a minor mode and is always the 2nd mode in any major key. Because the rhythm of this jam is embellished with the 6th, Dorian again is a perfect choice as that is a key interval in the mode:

Dorian Mode = 1, 2, b3, 4, 5, 6, b7

Since Dorian is the second mode in any major key, to play G Dorian ask what major scales 2nd note is a G note. The answer is F. F Major has the same notes as G Dorian:

G Dorian = G, A, Bb, C, D, E, F
F Major = F, G, A, Bb, C, D, E
(Same notes – just emphasize the root of the mode, G.)

G Dorian is the same as F major, (G Dorian=F major). So play all your F major scales but start on and emphasize the G notes for that killer Dorian tonality.

-Mix G Minor Pentatonic & Blues, G Major Pentatonic, and G Dorian over all the chords. Notice the cool differences between the major versus the minor and also the five-note pentatonics versus the seven-note diatonic scale. Cool stuff!

Treat each chord like a separate event:

With this 12-bar pattern there is not as much time on each chord as the other 12-bar patterns in this group of jam tracks. But there is enough time on each chord to quickly treat each chord as a separate event.

Be sure and time your changes over each chord and really listen to the rhythm to ensure you don't get caught playing the wrong scale over the wrong chord.

-Move Pentatonics over each chord. Over the G chord play G Minor Pentatonic & Blues or G Major Pentatonic. Over the C chord play C Minor Pentatonic & Blues or C Major Pentatonic. Over the D chord play D Minor Pentatonic & Blues or D Major Pentatonic.

-Move the Dorian mode over each chord. Because the rhythm of this jam is embellished with the 6th, Dorian again is a perfect choice for each chord as that is a key interval in the mode,

Dorian intervals = 1,2,b3,4,5,6,b7

Play G Dorian, (=F major), over the G chord. Play C Dorian, (=Bb major), over the C chord. Play D Dorian, (=C major) over the D chord. Time your changes and experiment and see what sounds you like over the chord changes. Rock it out and enjoy!

The Jam Tracks - Practice Suggestions

3. Slow Blues in A - This track is a major key I-IV-V 12-bar slow blues with the fast change to the IV chord. This jam utilizes 9th chords. Dominant 7th and 9th chords are very common in the blues.

This slow tempo blues features a long time on each chord. This is a perfect track for treating each chord as a separate event. You should hear that identifiable major key 12-bar I-IV-V pattern that alerts you to a wide-open jam. As well when you hear 9th chords, consider using the Mixolydian mode over each chord.

What Relates to all the chords:

Since this is a major key I-IV-V blues jam its wide open and there are many options to consider. Much depends on what type of sounds you prefer or what emotions and moods you want to create. Are you feeling the sweet major sounds, or the minor bluesy sounds, or a combination of both?

Remember that with major key I-IV-V blues, swings, and shuffles you can usually use Minor Pentatonic, Major Pentatonic, and The Dorian Mode over all the chords. These types of blues jam are wide open for many possible soloing opportunities.

-A Minor Pentatonic & Blues over all the chords for that minor bluesy vibe:

A Minor Pentatonic & Blues – A, C, D, Eb, E, G

-A Major Pentatonic over all the chords for that sweet major sound. A Major Pentatonic is the same as F# Minor Pentatonic, major and relative minor:

A Major Pentatonic – A, B, C#, E, F#

F# Minor Pentatonic – F#, A, B, C#, E

(Same notes – just emphasize the root of the mode, A.)

Play all your F# Minor Pentatonic scales, but start on and emphasize the A notes and it will be A Major Pentatonic and will exude that sweet major sound.

-A Dorian over all the chords. Dorian works great over major key I-IV-V blues, swings, and shuffles. A Dorian is the same as G major, (A-Dorian=G major).

A Dorian = A, B, C, D, E, F#, G

G Major = G, A, B, C, D, E, F#

(Same notes – just emphasize the root of the mode, A.)

Play all your G major scales but emphasize and start on the A notes and you have A Dorian.

-Mix A Minor Pentatonic, A Major Pentatonic, and A Dorian over all the chords. Explore and see which sound best to your ears.

Treat each chord like a separate event:

-Switch Pentatonic scales over each chord. Over the A chord try A Minor Pentatonic & Blues or A Major Pentatonic. Then over the D chord try D Minor Pentatonic & Blues or D Major Pentatonic. And over the E chord try E Minor Pentatonic & Blues or E Major Pentatonic.

-Mixolydian mode over each chord. Mixolydian is the fifth mode of the major scale and is only one note different than the major scale. Mixolydian adds the b7th:

Mixolydian Mode – 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, b7

Major Scale – 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

(Very similar scales – just one note difference)

The Jam Tracks - Practice Suggestions

3. Slow Blues in A - (continued):

Mixolydian works great over 9th chords as there is the b7 interval in the 9th chord, (1,3,5,b7,9). That b7 interval is also in the Mixolydian mode (1,2,3,4,5,6,b7).

Over the A9 chord try A Mixolydian (=D Major).

Over the D9 chord try D Mixolydian (=G Major).

Over the E9 chord try E Mixolydian (=A Major).

Try mixing Minor Pentatonic and Major Pentatonic over each chord. Play A Major Pentatonic over the A9 chord, then switch to A Minor Pentatonic & Blues over the D9 chord. Then try A Major Pentatonic again when you get to the E9 chord. Listen to how well this technique outlines and implies the chord changes. Mix this up a bit, maybe the next time around the progression try A Minor Pentatonic & Blues over the E9 chord instead of the Major, or maybe Dorian – get creative and have fun with the jam!

4. B Minor Blues - This is a minor key i-iv-v 12-bar blues. With 12-bar progressions you have a lot of time on each chord. This is a perfect scenario for treating each chord as a separate event. This jam is in the key of B minor using all minor chords, Bm-Em-F#m, and an F#7#9 chord used in the turnaround. Treat the 7#9 chord like a minor chord if soloing over just that chord.

What Relates to all the chords:

-B Minor Pentatonic & Blues over all the chords. We instantly know since we are in minor key, with no major V chord, we can solo with Minor Pentatonic & Blues scales over all the chords. Those scales relate to all. So whether we are playing over the Bm chord, the Em chord, or the F#m chord we can play B minor Pentatonic & Blues scales all day long over all the chords. B Minor Pentatonic & Blues: B, D, E, F, F#, A

You can also solo with a minor mode over all the chords when soloing in minor key. That mode is usually Aeolian or Dorian, and to find which you analyze the chords. If we analyze the chords there is no major IV chord and no minor ii chord so we can use B Natural Minor over the chords as those scales “relate to all”.

If you are not familiar with Natural Minor you can use the concept of major vs. relative minor and play major scales. Every major key has a relative minor key that has exactly the same notes in it. The relative major of B minor is D major. B Natural Minor scales have the exact same notes as D Major scales:

B Natural Minor = B, C#, D, E, F#, G, A

D Major = D, E, F#, G, A, B, C#

(Same notes – just emphasize the root of the mode, B.)

Play all your D Major scales but focus on and emphasize the B notes for B Natural Minor, (B Aeolian). Start on and resolve licks to the B notes as well as other strong chord tones within both chords.

Mix B Aeolian and B Minor Pentatonic & Blues over all the chords for some killer sounds. Go between both and notice the difference in sound between the five-note minor pentatonic and the seven-note Dorian.

Treat each chord like a separate event:

-Over just the Bm chord try B Minor Pentatonic & Blues, B Aeolian, B Dorian, or B minor type arpeggios.

-Over just the Em chord try E Minor Pentatonic & Blues, E Aeolian, E Dorian or E Minor type arpeggios.

-Over just the F#m chord try F# Minor Pentatonic & Blues, F# Aeolian, F# Dorian or F# minor type arpeggios.

The Jam Tracks - Practice Suggestions

5. E Walking Blues - This jam is in the key of E and it's a I-IV-V 12-Bar blues progression. E is the I chord, A is the IV chord, and B is the V chord. The turnaround is on the V chord, B. Know the sounds of these rhythms, as when you hear them it will automatically trigger certain soloing avenues.

The first thing to note about this jam is that it is a major I-IV-V blues progression. Even though the chords used are 5th chords, which only have roots and fifths, they are still considered major in this progression. They are embellished with the 6th intervals. These common blues progressions, shuffles, and swings will point you toward very definite lead guitar avenues. These are wide open for many different soloing options.

What Relates to all the chords:

-E Minor Pentatonic & Blues over all the chords. Minor Pentatonic & Blues sounds great over major key blues progressions and produces the dark, minor, bluesy sounds:

E Minor Pentatonic = E, G, A, B, D

-E Major Pentatonic over all the chords. Major Pentatonic produces that sweet, major, bluesy sound that is quite different than the minor sound: E Major Pentatonic = E, F#, G#, B, C#. E Major Pentatonic is the same as C# Minor Pentatonic. E Major and C# Minor are relative major and minor and contain the same notes:

E Major Pentatonic = E, F#, G#, B, C#

C# Minor Pentatonic = C#, E, F#, G#, B

(Same notes – just emphasize the root of the mode, E.)

If you think more in terms of Minor Pentatonic or just know those shapes then play all your C# Minor Pentatonic scales, but start on and emphasize the E notes and it will be E Major Pentatonic.

-E Dorian over all the chords. Because we know that both Major Pentatonic & Minor Pentatonic will work, we then know that the Dorian mode will also work. Dorian is considered more of a minor mode, but works great over major key I-IV-V blues, swings, and shuffle progressions. Dorian has the minor elements in it (b3, b7) but also has some major elements, (2nd, 6th). So in these blues progressions the Dorian mode will give you that hybrid kind of minor/major sounds as it combines the elements of both minor and major.

Dorian Mode = 1, 2, b3, 4, 5, 6, b7

Dorian is the 2nd mode in any major key. To determine E Dorian ask what major scales' 2nd note is an E? The answer is D. So E Dorian is the same as D major:

E Dorian = E, F#, G, A, B, C#, D

D major = D, E, F#, G, A, B, C#

(Same notes – just emphasize the root of the mode, E.)

To play in E Dorian just play all your D major scales but start on and emphasize the E notes. Try resolving your licks focusing on those D notes to bring out that minor Dorian tonality.

-Mix E Minor Pentatonic & Blues, E Major Pentatonic, as well as E Dorian over all the chords. Note how going back and forth from the five-note pentatonics to the seven-note diatonic scales can be quite refreshing.

The Jam Tracks - Practice Suggestions

5. E Walking Blues - (continued):

Treat each chord like a separate event:

In this jam the chords are moving pretty slow so you have a lot of time on each chord. This is perfect for treating each chord as a separate event. Remember to listen to the rhythm and time your changes so you change your scale or landing notes as the chords change.

-Move Minor Pentatonic & Blues over each chord. Play E Minor Pentatonic & Blues over the E chord and then try A Minor Pentatonic & Blues over the A chord, and then B Minor Pentatonic & Blues over the B chord.

-Move Major Pentatonic scales over each chord. Play E Major Pentatonic over the E chord, and then try A Major Pentatonic over the A chord and B Major Pentatonic over the B chord.

-Mix Minor Pentatonic and Major Pentatonic over each chord. This is a very cool technique that many blues players like BB King often utilize. Play E Major Pentatonic over the E chord and then switch to E Minor Pentatonic & Blues over the A chord. Then try Major Pentatonic over the B chord. Listen to how well this technique outlines and implies the chord changes. Mix this up a bit, maybe the next time around the progression try Minor Pentatonic & Blues over the B chord. Try it out and get creative with it!

-Move the Dorian mode over each chord. Because the rhythm of this jam is embellished with the 6th and b7th off the E and A chords, Dorian again is a perfect choice as those intervals are in the Dorian mode, (1,2,b3,4,5,6,b7). Play E Dorian, (=D major), over the E chord, A Dorian, (=G major), over the A chord and B Dorian, (=A major), over the B chord. Get creative and get lost in the track!

6. D Slow Blues - This track is a slow tempo 12-bar blues i-iv-v progression. This one is in minor key, or leans toward minor key as the chords do not have 3rds in them. Each chord here is played with the root or 1, 5th, and b7th. But put all together in this progression there is more of a minor sound than major. We must study the chords to get the complete solo picture.

What Relates to all the chords:

As stated above, we lean more toward minor key in this jam and in fact if you try some Major Pentatonic or Mixolydian mode you will hear a few notes clash as those solo avenues are just too “sweet” sounding over these chord changes. Again, you must use your discretion. Try some of these and experiment:

-D Minor Pentatonic & Blues over all the chords. Since this is a i-iv-v blues progression Minor Pentatonic & Blues exudes the bluesy sounds. D Minor Pentatonic & Blues = D, F, G, Ab, A, C

-D Dorian over all the chords. I like the Dorian mode here more than the Aeolian mode because each chord slides up a whole step to the 6th of each chord. For example on the D chord when it slides up, the high note slides up to a B note. That change is very prominent. The B note is in the D Dorian scale as it is the 6th. The corresponding note in the D Aeolian scale would be a Bb or flat 6th. Because it is a prominent note, you could use Aeolian and steer around it, but I suggest going with Dorian to be safe.

Dorian is the second mode in any major key. To play D Dorian in this jam we have to ask what major scales 2nd note is a D note. The answer is C. C major has the same notes as D Dorian:

The Jam Tracks - Practice Suggestions

6. D Slow Blues - (continued):

D Dorian = D, E, F, G, A, B, C

C Major = C, D, E, F, G, A, B

(Same notes – just emphasize the root of the mode, D.)

So play C Major scales but start on and emphasize the D notes and you will be playing in D Dorian. Give it a try and get creative.

-Mix D Minor Pentatonic & Blues as well as D Dorian over all the chords. Cool sounds can be created by switching from the 5-note pentatonic scales to the 7-note Dorian scales. Fun stuff, give it a try!

Treat each chord like a separate event:

Slow tempo jams like this one are excellent to play over each chord independently. You have a lot of time on each chord before the change happens. Try some of these suggestions and remember that this technique of treating each chord as a separate event takes some time to develop. So be patient and it will come with time and practice.

-Move Minor Pentatonic & Blues scales over each chord. Play D Minor Pentatonic & Blues over the D chord. Then play G Minor Pentatonic & Blues over the G chord. And then try A Minor Pentatonic & Blues over the A chord. Listen how each pentatonic outlines the chordal movements.

-Move the Dorian mode over each chord. Because the rhythm of this jam is embellished with slides to the 6th of each chord, Dorian again is a perfect choice as that interval is in the Dorian mode: The Dorian Mode = 1,2,b3,4,5,6,b7. Play D Dorian, (=C major), over the D chord. Then play G Dorian, (=F major), over the G chord. And finally try A Dorian, (=G major), over the A chord.

7. A Gritty Blues - Here we have a I-IV-V 12-bar blues rocker in the key of A. It has a very minor sound to it because the pull-off embellishing notes on each chord are the b3rd and b7th of each chord.

It is so important to analyze the chords to get the full solo opportunity roadmap. This is important because here it steers us more toward minor type soloing avenues. You can certainly try some Major Pentatonic avenues but to my ear the minor avenues sound better as the major is just a little too sweet sounding.

What Relates to all the chords:

-A Minor Pentatonic & Blues over all the chords. This would be the first choice for most players as the minor notes over the major type chords give that real bluesy sound. A Minor Pentatonic & Blues – A, C, D, Eb, E, G

-A Dorian over all the chords. Dorian works great in I-IV-V major key blues jams. It produces a hybrid minor/major sound by combining elements of both. Where Major Pentatonic may be too sweet sounding, Dorian works.

The Jam Tracks - Practice Suggestions

7. A Gritty Blues - (continued): The Dorian Mode is a seven-note scale often used in blues, rock, and many other musical genres. Dorian is considered a minor mode and is the 2nd mode in any major key. Dorian produces a mystical, minor sound that is a bit sweeter than Aeolian. There is only one note difference between Dorian and Aeolian – the 6th note.

Dorian Mode = 1, 2, b3, 4, 5, 6, b7
Aeolian Mode = 1, 2, b3, 4, 5, b6, b7

Remember that Dorian is the second mode in any major key. So to play A Dorian ask what major scales 2nd note is an A note. The answer is G. G major has the same notes as A Dorian:

A Dorian = A, B, C, D, E, F#, G
G Major = G, A, B, C, D, E, F#
(Same notes – just emphasize the root of the mode, A.)

A Dorian is the same as G major, (A Dorian=G major). So play all your G major scales but start on and emphasize the A notes. Resolve to and focus on those A notes and you have A Dorian. Remember to keep going to back those A notes and make that the tonal center.

-Mix A Minor Pentatonic and A Dorian over all the chords. Notice the refreshing sounds going back and fourth between the five-note pentatonic scale and the seven-note Dorian mode.

Treat each chord like a separate event:

This jam is a 12-bar blues so you have ample time on each chord to treat each chord as a separate event.

-Move Minor Pentatonic & Blues over each chord. Play A Minor Pentatonic & Blues over the A chord. Play D Minor Pentatonic & Blues over the D chord. Play E Minor Pentatonic & Blues over the E chord.

-Move the Dorian mode over each chord. Play A Dorian, (=G major), over the A chord. Play D Dorian, (=C major), over the D chord. Play E Dorian, (=D major) over the E chord.

8. Delta Shuffle in C - This is a major key I-IV-V blues jam in the key of C. The C chord is the I chord, F is the IV chord, and G is the V chord. This jam is what's called a "slow change" to the IV chord. So you are staying on the I chord at first for four bars before it switches to the IV chord for two bars. It's a major key I-IV-V blues progression, so it is wide open for soloing options.

What Relates to all the chords:

-C Minor Pentatonic & Blues over all the chords. Since this is a major key I-IV-V blues progression Minor Pentatonic & Blues will give killer bluesy sounds. C Minor Pentatonic & Blues = C, Eb, F, Gb, G, Bb

-C Major Pentatonic over all the chords. Major Pentatonic relates to all in this jam. This will give you the sweet major sound that is quite different than the minor sound. C Major Pentatonic – C, D, E, G, A

C Major Pentatonic is the same as A Minor Pentatonic. C major and A minor are relative major and minor. If you think more in terms of Minor Pentatonic or just know those shapes then play A Minor Pentatonic scales, but start on and emphasize the C notes and it will be C Major Pentatonic. By shifting those scales to the root, C, they take on that major happy sweet sound as opposed to the darker, bluesy, minor sound.

C Major Pentatonic – C, D, E, G, A
A Minor Pentatonic – A, C, D, E, G

The Jam Tracks - Practice Suggestions

8. Delta Shuffle in C - (continued):

-C Dorian over all the chords. Because both major pentatonic & minor pentatonic will work, we know that the Dorian mode will also work. Remember Dorian is considered more of a minor mode but works great over major key I-IV-V blues, swings, and shuffle progressions. Dorian is the second mode in any major key. To play C Dorian ask what major scales 2nd note is a C. The answer is Bb. Bb Major has the same notes as C Dorian:

C Dorian = C, D, Eb, F, G, A, Bb

Bb Major = Bb, C, D, Eb, F, G, A

C Dorian is the same as Bb major, (C Dorian=Bb major). So play all your Bb major scales but start on and emphasize the C notes for that killer Dorian tonality.

-Mix C Minor Pentatonic & Blues, C Major Pentatonic, and C Dorian over all the chords. Notice the cool differences between the major versus the minor.

Treat each chord like a separate event:

Listen to the rhythm and time your changes so you change your scale or landing notes as the chords change. Be careful not to get caught on the wrong chord.

-Move Minor Pentatonic & Blues over each chord. Play C Minor Pentatonic & Blues over the C chord. Play F Minor Pentatonic & Blues over the F chord. Play G Minor Pentatonic & Blues over the G chord

-Move Major Pentatonic over each chord. Play C Major Pentatonic over the C chord, (C Major Pentatonic = A Minor Pentatonic). Play F Major Pentatonic over the F chord, (F Major Pentatonic = D Minor Pentatonic). Play G Major Pentatonic over the G chord, (G Major Pentatonic = E Minor Pentatonic).

-Mix up the Minor Pentatonic and Major Pentatonic over each chord. Play C Major Pentatonic over the C chord then switch to C Minor Pentatonic over the F chord. Then try C Major Pentatonic over the G chord. Listen to how well this technique outlines and implies the chord changes. Maybe the next time around the progression try C Minor Pentatonic & Blues over the G chord. Try it out and see what sounds best to your ears

-Move the Mixolydian mode over each chord. Because the chords used in this jam are 9th chords, Mixolydian would be a great mode to utilize. Whenever you see 7th or 9th chords you'll want to consider the Mixolydian mode as a possibility. This is an incredibly useful mode, especially for blues and jazz playing. Dominant 7th and 9th chords have a b7 in them so Mixolydian is a perfect modal choice as it is considered more a major mode and has that b7 interval in the mode: Mixolydian Mode = 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, b7

The Mixolydian Mode is a seven-note scale often used in blues and rock. Mixolydian is considered a major mode and is always the 5th mode in any major key. Often it's the mode of choice played over dominant chords. Mixolydian Mode = 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, b7

Try this mode over dominant chords like 7th and 9th chords. Mixolydian is the 5th mode in any major key. To determine the parent major scale for C Mixolydian, ask what major scales' fifth note is a C. The answer is F. The 5th note of an F major scale is C. So to play C Mixolydian play all your F major scales but just start on and emphasize the C notes and its C Mixolydian. Follow the same formula for the F and G chords.

C Mixolydian = C, D, E, F, G, A, Bb

F Major = F, G, A, Bb, C, D, E

Play C Mixolydian, (= Fmajor), over the C9 chord. Play F Mixolydian, (= Bb major), over the F9 chord. Play G Mixolydian, (= C major), over the G9 chord.

Remember, it's all about MOOD and EMPHASIS. Which note you start on and emphasize produces the different moods and sound textures of each mode. So be sure to shift emphasis to the root of the mode.

The Jam Tracks - Practice Suggestions

9. Slow Blues in E - This progression is a I-IV-V 12-Bar progression with a slow change to the IV chord. This is a slow tempo track so you have lots of time on each chord. Since this is a major key I-IV-V blues jam its wide open and there are many options to consider. Much depends on what type of sounds you prefer or what emotions and moods you want to create.

Remember that with major key I-IV-V blues, swings, and shuffles you can usually use Minor Pentatonic, Major Pentatonic, and The Dorian Mode over all the chords.

What Relates to all the chords:

-E Minor Pentatonic & Blues over all the chords: E Minor Pentatonic & Blues = E, G, A, B \flat , B, D

-E Major Pentatonic over all the chords: E Major Pentatonic = E, F \sharp , G \sharp , B, C \sharp - E Major Pentatonic is the same as C \sharp Minor Pentatonic. E Major and C \sharp Minor are relative major and minor so both are constructed from exactly the same notes:

E Major Pentatonic = E, F \sharp , G \sharp , B, C \sharp
C \sharp Minor Pentatonic = C \sharp , E, F \sharp , G \sharp , B
(Same notes – just emphasize the root of the mode, E.)

If you think more in terms of Minor Pentatonic or just know those shapes then play all your C \sharp Minor Pentatonic scales, but start on and emphasize the E notes and it will be E Major Pentatonic. By focusing on those E notes it will exude those sweet, happy, major sounds.

-E Dorian over all the chords. Dorian is the 2nd mode in any major key. To determine E Dorian ask what major scales 2nd note is an E note. The answer is D. So E Dorian is the same as D major:

E Dorian = E, F \sharp , G, A, B, C \sharp , D
D major = D, E, F \sharp , G, A, B, C \sharp

Try playing D major scales but start on and emphasize the E notes. Resolve to and focus on those E notes and you are playing in E Dorian.

-Mix E Minor Pentatonic, E Major Pentatonic, and E Dorian over all the chords for some killer sounds.

Treat each chord like a separate event:

The chords are moving pretty slow so you have a lot of time on each chord. Listen to the rhythm and time your changes so you change your scale or landing notes as the chords change.

-Move Minor Pentatonic & Blues scales over each chord. Play E Minor Pentatonic & Blues over the E chord and then play A Minor Pentatonic & Blues over the A chord and then B Minor Pentatonic & Blues over the B7 chord. Listen to how each pentatonic scale sounds as it outlines it's corresponding chord.

-Move Major Pentatonic scales over each chord. Play E Major Pentatonic over the E chord,, and then play A Major Pentatonic over the A chord and then B Major Pentatonic over the B7 chord. Again, listen to the sounds of each scale and how they sound over each corresponding chord. It's all about the sounds.

The Jam Tracks - Practice Suggestions

9. Slow Blues in E - (continued):

-Mix Minor Pentatonic and Major Pentatonic over each chord. Play E Major Pentatonic over the E chord and then switch to E Minor Pentatonic & Blues over the A chord. Then try E Major Pentatonic over the B7 chord. Listen to how well this technique outlines and implies the chord changes.

-Play B Mixolydian over the B7 chord. Remember that Mixolydian is one of the modes of choice when soloing over 7th and 9th chords. Mixolydian is the 5th mode in any major scale. So to find the corresponding parent major scale for B Mixolydian ask what major scales 5th note is a B note. The answer is E, so B Mixolydian = E major:

B Mixolydian = B, C#, D#, E, F#, G#, A
E Major = E, F#, G#, A, B, C#, D#
(Same notes – just emphasize the root of the mode, B.)

Play E major scales and licks but start on and emphasize the B notes and you are now playing in B Mixolydian. Keep coming back to and resolving to those B notes while playing E major scales and you get the mood of B Mixolydian.

10. Grinder in D - This is a standard major key 12-bar blues progression known as a Grinder. It's one of the more common rhythmic grooves that you will find in the blues. Lots of time on each chord and this groove is often played as it is here with 5th chords and embellished with 6th chords.

What Relates to all the chords:

-D Minor Pentatonic & Blues over all the chords for that minor bluesy vibe. Minor Pentatonic & Blues produces that killer bluesy sound - D Minor Pentatonic & Blues = D, F, G, Ab, A, C

-D Major Pentatonic over all the chords. This produces a sweet major bluesy sound that is quite different than the minor sound. Major Pentatonic takes five notes from the Major Scale. Leaves out the 4th and 7th intervals: Major Pentatonic = 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 Major Scale – 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 D Major Pentatonic = D, E, F#, A, B. D Major Pentatonic is the same as B Minor Pentatonic. D Major and B Minor are relative major and minor. Play all your B Minor Pentatonic scales, but start on and emphasize the D notes and it will be D Major Pentatonic.

D Major Pentatonic = D, E, F#, A, B
B Minor Pentatonic = B, D, E, F#, A
(Same notes – just emphasize the root of the mode, D.).

-D Dorian over all the chords. Dorian is considered more of a minor mode but works great over major key I-IV-V blues, swing, and shuffle progressions. The Dorian Mode is a seven-note scale often used in blues, rock, and many other musical genres. Dorian is considered a minor mode and is always the 2nd mode in any major key. Dorian Mode = 1, 2, b3, 4, 5, 6, b7.

So to play D Dorian, ask what major scales 2nd note is a D note. The answer is C. C major has the same notes as D Dorian. So play C major scales but start on and emphasize the D notes and you have D Dorian.

D Dorian = D, E, F, G, A, B, C
C Major = C, D, E, F, G, A, B
(Same notes – just emphasize the root of the mode, D)

The Jam Tracks - Practice Suggestions

10. Grinder in D - (continued):

-Mix D Minor Pentatonic & Blues, D Major Pentatonic, as well as D Dorian over all the chords for some cool tones. Killer sounds can be created by switching back and forth from the pentatonic scales to Dorian scales. Fun stuff, give it a try.

Treat each chord like a separate event:

Be sure to time your changes over each chord and listen closely to the rhythm to ensure you don't get caught playing the wrong scale over a given chord.

-Move Minor Pentatonic & Blues over each chord. Play D Minor Pentatonic & Blues over the D chord. Play G Minor Pentatonic & Blues over the G chord. Play A Minor Pentatonic & Blues over the A chord.

-Move Major Pentatonic over each chord. Play D Major Pentatonic over the D chord. Play G Major Pentatonic over the G chord. Play A Major Pentatonic over the A chord.

-Move the Dorian mode over each chord. Because the rhythm of this jam is embellished with 6th chords, Dorian is a great choice as that is a key interval in the Dorian mode - 1,2,b3,4,5,6,b7. Play D Dorian, (=C major), over the D chord. Play G Dorian, (=F major), over the G chord. Play A Dorian, (=G major), over the A chord.

Mix these techniques up and put your own spin on them. Remember that you want to develop your own sound. And give yourself plenty of fun time on that guitar in addition to your studies. Learn a song, try writing a song, or just put on a jam track and get lost in the fun - enjoy!

Minor Pentatonic - The Basic Box Shape

Pentatonic scales are the most commonly used scales in most genres of music so you will want to get very comfortable with them. Often they are the first scales students learn on their lead guitar journey.

Penta is Latin for five. Like a penta-gram has five sides and a pentagon has five sides, pentatonic scales are constructed from five notes.

The minor pentatonic scale is constructed of five notes of the natural minor scale. The intervals in minor pentatonic are root or 1, b3rd, 4th, 5th, and b7th.

The scale illustrated on the right is the most common basic “box” position. This scale has its low root played with the first finger on the low E string. The root notes are illustrated with black ovals and the numbers inside the circles indicate the fingering to be utilized when playing this scale. At first try utilizing one finger per fret.

We are going to build upon this scale in coming lessons. Eventually you will need to learn this scale in all positions all over the neck, and in all keys.

Start with this basic box, then on to the Expanded I, and eventually all five box shapes as illustrated in the coming pages of this eBook.

Practice the scale utilizing the fingerings illustrated. Sound each note clean, with no string buzzes or overtones. As you move through the scale make a mental note of when you hit the three root notes.

The key signature is determined by which root note is played. If you play this scale starting at the fifth fret on the low E string it is an A minor pentatonic scale consisting of notes A, C, D, E, and G.

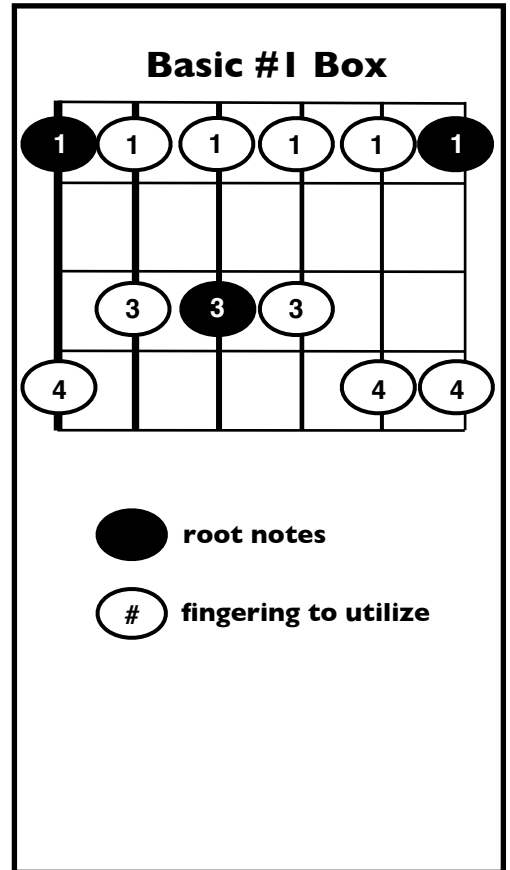
If you were to play this scale starting on the 8th fret, it would be a C minor pentatonic scale consisting of notes C, Eb, F, G, and Bb.

Much like moveable bar chords this scale can be moved up and down the guitar neck and the root note will determine the key you are playing. Practice the scale in all keys.

This scale will form the building block of many concepts to come. You want to be very familiar with this scale pattern, but do not rely on it exclusively.

We are going to build on this scale extensively. Next we will be expanding it across the fretboard. This will make it a more fluid sounding scale that you can move laterally across the neck combining multiple box positions.

Minor Pentatonic



String Bending in Minor Pentatonic

Bending strings is one of the most expressive things you can do on the guitar. You will want to get very proficient and accurate with string bending, it's an art.

When bending strings, it is imperative that you are bending notes in pitch to the proper target note. You don't want to over bend or under bend notes, as they will then sound sharp or flat. Practice bending strings and then check the pitch by sounding the note you are attempting to bend to, your target note. This is a good self-check to ensure you are bending in pitch.

You can also practice string bending in pitch by plugging into an electronic tuner that has a needle and watching the needle as you bend a note and watch it hit pitch. Keep doing it over and over until you feel the bend strength and string tension-wise, as well as hear the bend in pitch matching to the target note.

For purposes of learning some hip string bending, play the box pattern scale illustrated on the right with a fifth fret root, or A minor pentatonic scale. Once you learn the bends, practice them using different shapes and in all keys. For now try the below string bends in A minor pentatonic using the basic box shape.

1. b3rd to major 3rd bend. Bend the b3rd or C note a quarter to a half step to the major 3rd. This is a very cool bend as the b3rd is a very ambiguous note in this scale. It sometimes will sound great as the b3rd but also as a major 3rd. This note has some play in it and you don't have to be exact with the bend, play with it and you will soon be utilizing this bend all the time.

2. Bend the 4th a half step to the blue note. Bend the D note 7th fret G string up one half step to the Eb note. Hugely popular blues bend.

3. Bend the 4th degree a whole step to the fifth. Bend the D note 7th fret G-string up one whole step to the E note. The 4th or D note can be bent either a whole or a half step.

4. Bend the b7th a whole step up to the root. Bend the G note 8th fret B string up one whole step to the A root note. You can also bend the same note an octave lower at the G note at the 5th fret on the D string up one whole step.

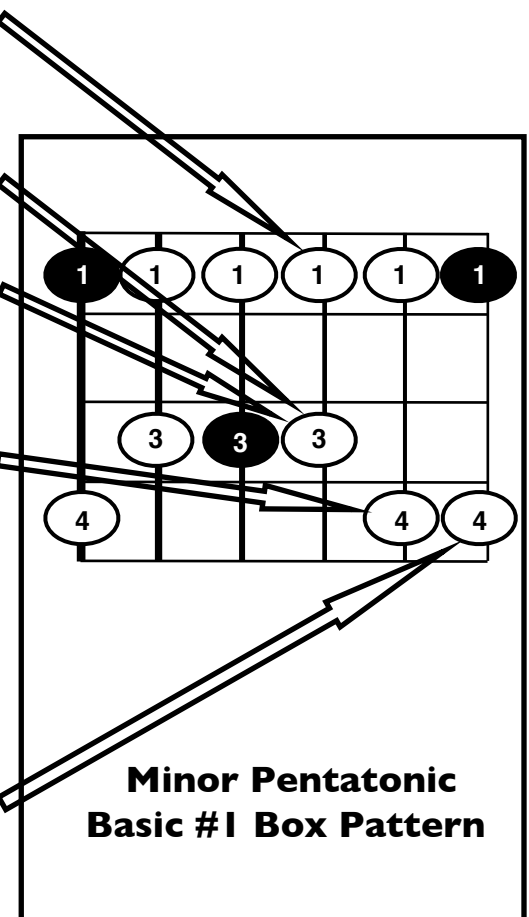
5. Unison bend. Use your 4th finger to bend the G note 8th fret B string a whole step to an A note while playing the A note 5th fret high E string with your 1st finger.

6. Unison bend. Use your 3rd finger to bend the D note 7th fret G string a whole step to an E note while playing the E note 5th fret B string with your 1st finger.

7. Bend the b3rd a full step to the 4th. Bend the C note 8th fret high E string one whole step to the D note.

8. Double stop bend. Bend two strings a half step each with your 3rd finger by barring across the 7th fret with one finger. Bend the D note 7th fret G string one half step while also bending the F# note 7th fret B string one half step.

8. Double stop bend. Use your 3rd finger to bend the D note 7th fret G string a whole step while playing the G note on the B string 8th fret with your 4th finger.



Minor Pentatonic - The Five Box Shapes

The five minor pentatonic box shapes below cover the entire guitar neck. These are “must-know” scales, especially for blues and rock. Chip away at all five a little each day. As you move through each scale make a mental note of when pass through a root note, which are illustrated in black ovals.

These five positions are the architecture to build endless licks and runs. They also connect into longer expanded scales that you will learn in the coming pages. To avoid getting stuck in one position be sure to learn ALL the positions and practice them in different keys over jam tracks.

These scale shapes are moveable and the key is determined by the low root note. For example, if you want to solo with Box #1 in A minor pentatonic use your first finger starting at the 5h fret on the low E-string and play the shape. Fifth fret low-E string is an A note. That makes the scale an A minor pentatonic scale with the notes A, C, D, E, G.

To try another pentatonic box in A minor play box #3 using your 3rd finger at the 12th fret A-string. Fret twelve on the A-string is an A note. You are playing the same five notes as in the above example, A, C, D, E, G, just in a different position on the guitar neck.

Along with memorizing the scale shapes it is also critical to know what notes you are playing and how to apply these scales. Too often, guitarists memorize only shapes. Don't just learn scale shapes, take the time to also learn the notes and how to musically apply the scale, in the end it will make you a better musician.

Another critical element when learning scales is to not only memorize the scale but also learn it's application. Learn how to apply it in a musical context - over what chords, in what key. Start by memorizing and practicing the four applications for minor pentatonic as listed in this eBook on page eleven.

The diagram illustrates five distinct box shapes for the minor pentatonic scale on a guitar fretboard. Each box is shown as a grid of strings and frets. Fingerings are indicated by numbers in circles, and root notes are indicated by black ovals. A legend at the bottom right explains the symbols: a black oval for 'root notes' and a circle with a '#' for 'fingering to utilize'.

- #1 Box:** Root note on the 5th fret of the low E-string. Fingering: 1 (5th fret E), 1 (6th fret F), 1 (7th fret G), 1 (8th fret A), 1 (9th fret B), 1 (10th fret C).
- #2 Box:** Root note on the 12th fret of the A-string. Fingering: 1 (12th fret A), 1 (13th fret B), 1 (14th fret C), 2 (15th fret D), 1 (16th fret E), 1 (17th fret F).
- #3 Box:** Root note on the 19th fret of the D-string. Fingering: 1 (19th fret D), 1 (20th fret E), 1 (21st fret F), 1 (22nd fret G), 1 (23rd fret A), 1 (24th fret B).
- #4 Box:** Root note on the 5th fret of the A-string. Fingering: 1 (5th fret A), 1 (6th fret B), 1 (7th fret C), 1 (8th fret D), 1 (9th fret E), 1 (10th fret F).
- #5 Box:** Root note on the 12th fret of the low E-string. Fingering: 1 (12th fret E), 1 (13th fret F), 1 (14th fret G), 1 (15th fret A), 1 (16th fret B), 1 (17th fret C).

Minor Pentatonic - The Expanded Shapes

Let's build on the minor pentatonic scales that you learned in the previous lesson. We will expand the scale two frets in each direction combining three box shapes to double the playing area. These expanded scales will get you playing ACROSS the neck and eliminate the "stuck in the box" scenario.

We are still going to play the same five-note pentatonic scale but these expanded scale produce a more fluid sound as opposed to staying in just one vertical box. You certainly want to have all the box patterns in your playing arsenal, but these expanded scales open the pathways and lead guitar avenues. You will utilize these expanded scales all the time, they are invaluable.

illustrated below you can see part of three box patterns encapsulated within each of the longer shapes. The expanded shapes are stretched two frets in each direction combining three adjacent boxes. The expanded I scale combines boxes 5, 1, and 2 while the expanded II scale combines boxes 3, 4, and 5.

These expanded pentatonic scales double the fret span of the single box patterns. Practice these expanded scales in different keys and add them to your playing arsenal.

Just like the box patterns these expanded scales are moveable and the root note determines the key. Same principle applies to finding them in the proper key as with the individual box shapes.

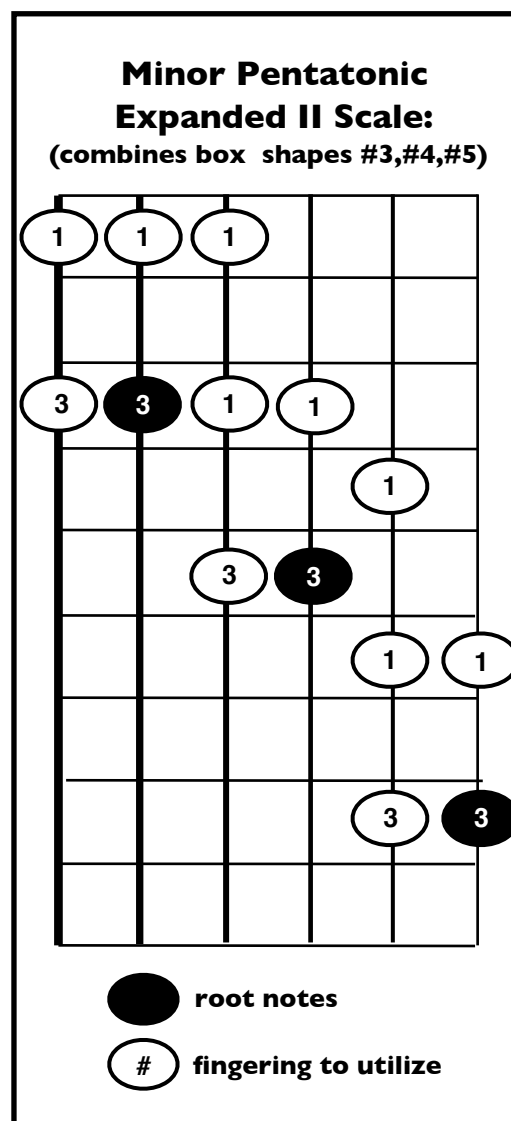
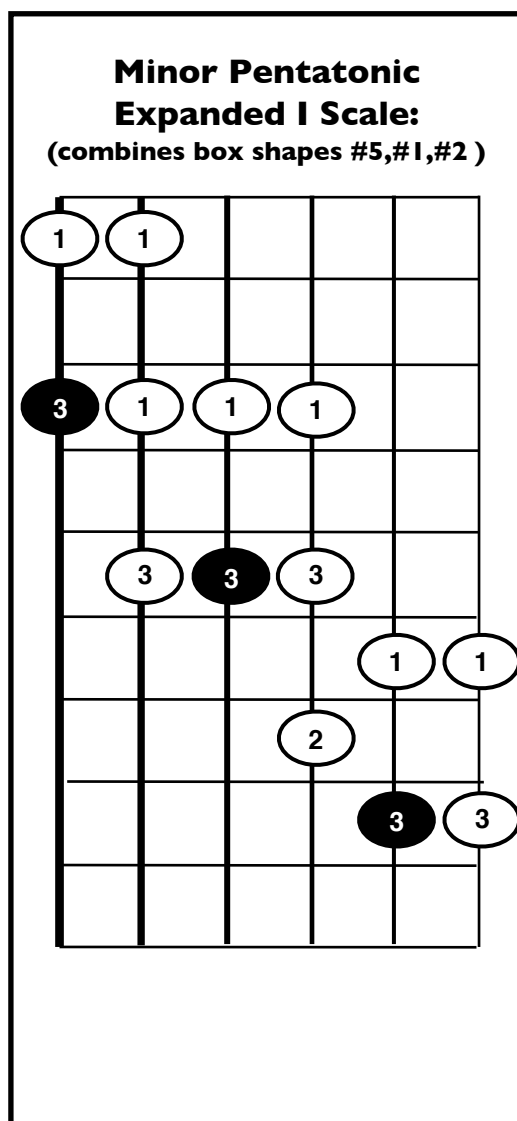
To play these expanded scales in A minor first find the A notes.

To play the expanded I scale in A minor, start with your third finger on the 5th fret of the low E-string and play the shape. Fifth fret low E-string is an A note.

To play the expanded II scale in A minor, start with your third finger on the 12th fret of the A-string and play the shape. Twelfth fret A-string is an A note.

To locate these scales fast just find the low root note. The expanded I uses 3rd finger root on the low E-string and the expanded II uses 3rd finger root on the A-string. Find the root notes and blast away from there!

Practice in all keys and over jam tracks - keep on rocking!



Minor Pentatonic & Blues- The Five Box Shapes

Now we will add one note to the minor pentatonic scale and turn it into the six-note blues scale. Pentatonic & blues scales are the most commonly used scales in most genres of music.

We can add the flat 5, (b5), or blue note to the pentatonic scale, making it a six-note scale called the Blues Scale. That b5, or blue note, adds a lot of tension and color to the scale. These are “must-know” scales especially for blues and rock so be sure to memorize them add them to your playing arsenal.

Most of the time when soloing with minor pentatonic scales you can also use the blues scale. To be safe, at first, use the blue note more in passing for color, don't hang on it too long. Hanging on that flat five too long can sound a bit dissonant. It's a great note to add color, so experiment with it and let your ear guide you.

The five box shapes illustrated below cover the entire neck. These five positions are the architecture to build licks and runs as well as to connect into longer expanded scales. To work freely across the entire neck you will want to memorize all five positions as well as the two expanded scales illustrated on the next page.

These scale shapes are moveable. The key is determined by the root notes illustrated in black. For example, if you want to solo in A minor pentatonic play box #1 using your first finger starting at the 5th fret on the low E-string and play the shape from there. Fifth fret low-E string is an A note. That makes the scale an A minor pentatonic & blues scale consisting of the notes A, C, D, Eb, E, G.

Remember that along with memorizing the scale shapes it is also critical to know what notes you are playing. Too often, guitarists memorize only shapes and forget what notes they are actually playing. Don't just learn scale shapes, take the time to also learn the notes. In the end it will make you a better musician.

To avoid getting stuck in one position be sure to learn ALL the positions and practice them in different keys. Use the blue notes in passing, resolve often to the root notes and land on strong chord tones.

#1 Box

#2 Box

#3 Box

#4 Box

#5 Box

- root notes
- blue notes (b5)
- # fingering to utilize

Minor Pentatonic & Blues- The Expanded Shapes

Let's build on the minor pentatonic & blues scale that you learned in the previous lesson. Now we will expand the scale two frets in each direction thus combining three box shapes and doubling the playing area. These expanded scales will get you playing ACROSS the neck and eliminate being "stuck in the box".

We are still going to play the same six-note scale. However, the expanded scales exude a much more fluid sound that set up additional lick opportunities. You certainly want to have all the box patterns in your playing arsenal, but these expanded scales really open the pathways and lead guitar avenues. You will utilize these expanded scales all the time, they are invaluable.

Illustrated below you can see part of three box patterns encapsulated within each longer shape. The shape is expanded two frets in each direction combining three adjacent boxes. The expanded I scale combines boxes 5, 1, and 2 while the expanded II scale combines boxes 3, 4, and 5.

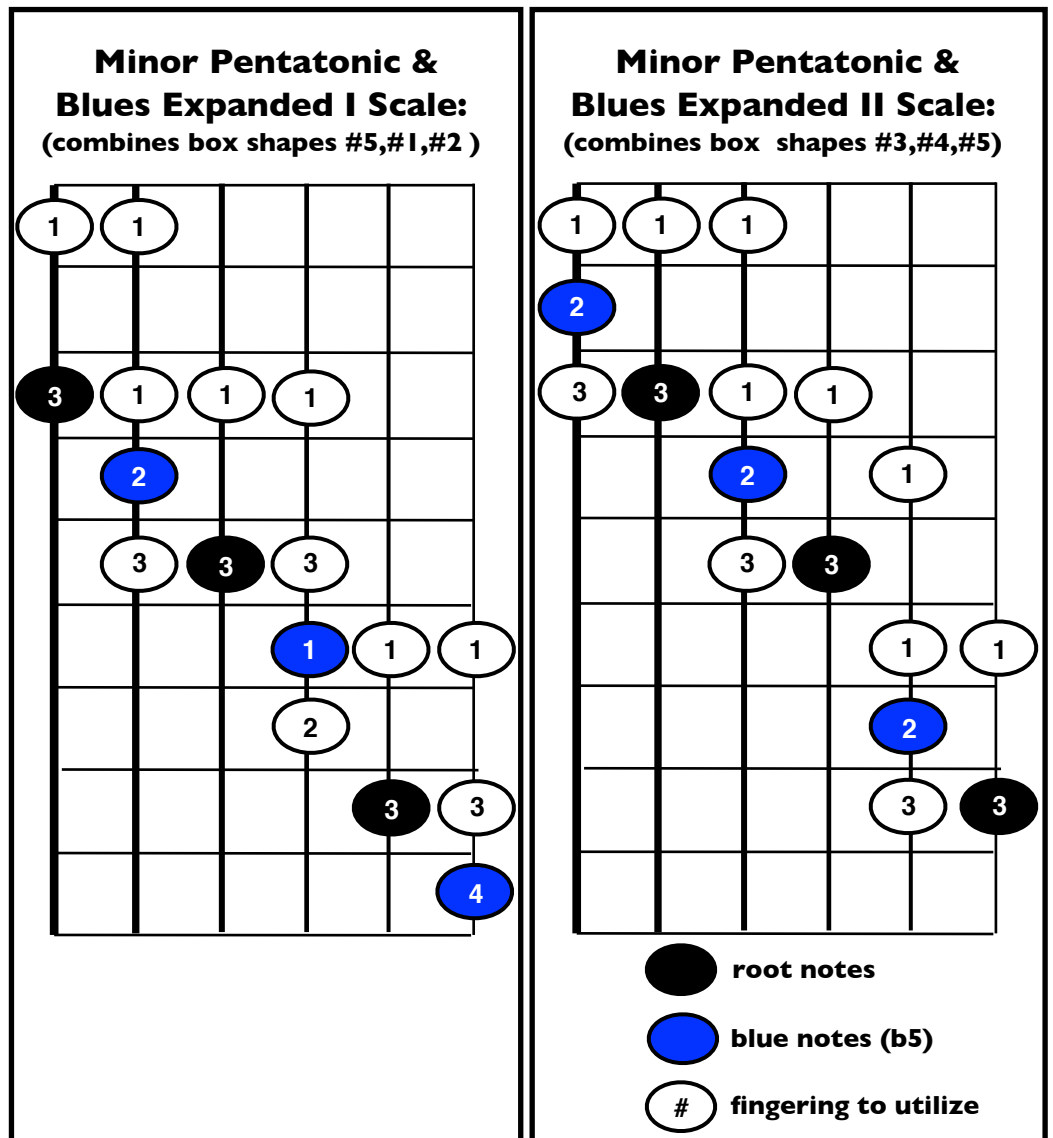
These expanded blues scales double the fret span of the box patterns. Practice these in different keys over jam tracks and add them to your playing arsenal.

Same principle applies to finding the expanded scales in the proper key. To play these in A minor over all the chords in the Moore inspired A minor jam, first find the A notes.

To play the expanded I scale in A minor, start with your third finger on the 5th fret of the low E-string and play the shape. Fifth fret low E-string is an A note.

To play the expanded II scale in A minor, start with your third finger on the 12th fret of the A-string and play the shape. Fret twelve on the A-string is an A note.

To locate these scales fast find the low root note. The expanded I uses 3rd finger root on the low E-string and the expanded II uses 3rd finger root on the A-string. Find the root notes and blast away from there - enjoy!



The Major Pentatonic Scale

The major pentatonic scale is a five-note scale consisting of five notes from the major scale. The intervals are 1, 2, 3, 5, 6. You do not play the 4th and 7th degrees of the major scale. This incredibly useful scale produces a sweet, happy, major sound and is utilized often in blues, rock, and other musical genres.

Major pentatonic often works over all the chords in major key when playing what “relates to all”. Also, utilize major pentatonic over most major type chords when treating each chord as a “separate event”.

You can locate the major pentatonic scale all over the neck by going through the minor pentatonic. You won't have to memorize a whole new batch of scale shapes for major pentatonic. We will use the concept of major and relative minor to easily tackle major pentatonic scales across the neck.

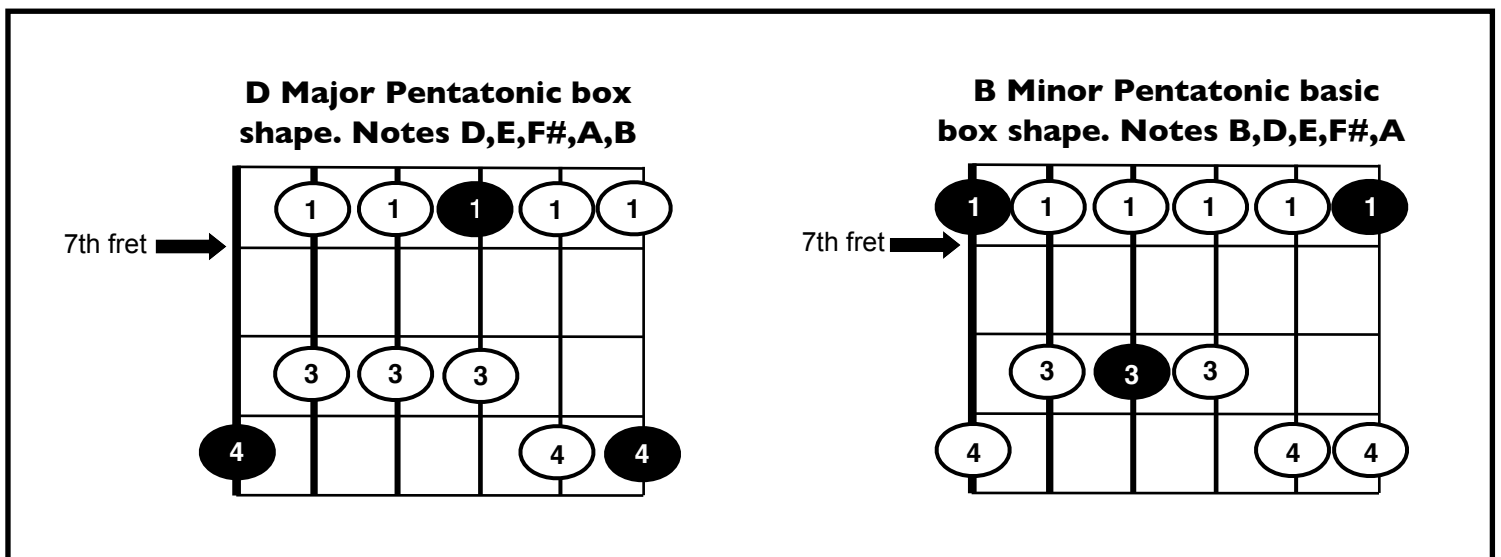
For every major key there is a relative minor key with exactly the same notes. We will use this to help find where these major pentatonic scales “live” on the fretboard. Minor pentatonic lives a minor 3rd, or three frets away, below the major pentatonic.

Illustrated below is the “basic box shape” D major pentatonic. Find it easily by using your fourth finger on the root note low E-string. It's relative minor, B minor pentatonic is illustrated on the right. D major pentatonic scales can also be viewed as B minor pentatonic scales. Both scales consist of the same notes D,E,F#,A, and B. There are lots of ways to look at these, personally I think of pentatonics more in terms of minor.

The starting and emphasis notes determine which scale you will be playing. D major pentatonic and B minor pentatonic consist of the same notes, just different starting and emphasis notes. It all comes down to what notes you are emphasizing, emphasis is critical.

Play both scales starting and ending with the roots. Listen how the major pentatonic is sweet and happy sounding when starting on and emphasizing the D notes. Play the same shape but start and end on the B notes and you get the darker, bluesy, minor pentatonic scale. Same notes, just different start and emphasis points, and you have two very different sounding scales.

One scale gives you the sweet, bright, major sound while the other gives you the dark, bluesy, minor sound. Try playing minor pentatonic over minor chords and major pentatonic over major chords within the same jam track. Be sure to change scales as the chords change and listen for the sound differences between the major and minor, and get lost in the fun.



The Major Pentatonic Scale - Key Points

The major pentatonic scale is constructed from five notes of the major scale. This is similar to how the minor pentatonic scale is constructed from five notes of the natural minor scale, (see below table).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	= major scale
1	2	3		5	6		= major pentatonic scale
1	2	b3	4	5	b6	b7	= natural minor scale
1		b3	4	5		b7	= minor pentatonic scale

Remember that you can find all the major pentatonics by going through the relative minor pentatonic scales. Just flip the minor pentatonic shapes to their relative major pentatonic and change emphasis notes. Here are all the major keys and their corresponding relative minors:

A major = F# minor	Bb major = G minor	B major = G# minor
C major = A minor	C# major = Bb minor	D major = B minor
Ebmajor = C minor	E major = C# minor	F major = D minor
F# major = Eb minor	G major = E minor	G# major = F minor

For that sweet major pentatonic sound utilize all of your minor pentatonic scales, but emphasize the root major. For example, when playing in D major pentatonic think of the relative minor B minor pentatonic. Just start and emphasize on the D notes, not the B notes, to sound major.

The blue note does not always apply to major pentatonic and, at times, can sound sour. Experiment with it and see how it sounds to your ears.

The major pentatonic lives three frets ahead of the minor pentatonic. For example, if you want to play in D major pentatonic put your pinky finger on the D note 10th fret low E-string. Using one finger per fret the relative minor will always be three frets back.

Your first finger will always fall on the relative minor. In this case the B note at the 7th fret of the low E-string. Find the relative minor of any major using this device.

There is not much room for error when soloing in major key as sour notes can really stick out. You also can't slur passing tones like when using minor pentatonic.

Be careful with your note choices and let your ear help guide you. Practice these scales in all keys and listen for the sound differences between minor and major, its all about the mood, emphasis notes, and the sounds and moods the scales produce.

KEY POINTS:

For every major key there is a relative minor key with exactly the same notes.

When soloing in major key use major pentatonic over all the chords when playing what “relates to all”. Also use it over any major type chord when treating each chord as a “separate event”.

Find major pentatonic scales by going through the relative minor pentatonic scales. Memorize majors and their corresponding relative minors.

The Major Scale

All music theory compares back to the major scale. You are probably familiar with the sound of the major scale – doe, re, me, fa, so, la, ti, doe. We all sang that song endless times in elementary school. There are many different fingerings and ways to play major scales all over the guitar neck.

Below is a system of six major scales. With all six memorized, you can utilize the entire guitar neck. The scales overlap each other and on the next page you will learn to link these scales together.

The major scale is constructed from seven notes built from the scale degrees of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Memorize the scales one at a time. Take your time learning them, perhaps chipping away a little each day. As you move through each scale make a mental note of when you hit the root notes, illustrated in black.

The key signature for each scale is determined by its root note. First learn the scales below in the key of G major. The scales line up nicely in G, so G major is a good place to start. To play the #1 scale in G major put your 2nd finger on the 3rd fret on the low E string, G note, and play the shape. You will now be playing a G major scale which consists of the seven notes G, A, B, C, D, E, and F#.

To play scale #2 in G put your first finger on the G note on the low E string at the 3rd fret and play the shape. These scales can be moved up and down the guitar neck and should be practiced in all keys. Know your major scales cold and then you will also know all the modes of the major scale. .

The diagram shows six guitar scale patterns on a fretboard grid. Each pattern is labeled with a number (#1 through #6). Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4 inside circles. Root notes are indicated by black circles. The legend at the bottom shows a black circle for 'root notes' and a white circle with a '#' for 'fingering to utilize'.

- #1:** Root note on E string, 3rd fret. Fingering: 1-2-3-4-2-1.
- #2:** Root note on E string, 3rd fret. Fingering: 1-2-3-4-2-1.
- #3 Box:** Root note on E string, 3rd fret. Fingering: 1-2-3-4-2-1.
- #4:** Root note on E string, 3rd fret. Fingering: 1-2-3-4-2-1.
- #5:** Root note on E string, 3rd fret. Fingering: 1-2-3-4-2-1.
- #6:** Root note on E string, 3rd fret. Fingering: 1-2-3-4-2-1.

Major Scale Links

Now that you know six major scales from the previous lesson let's link them together and play them across the neck. These links help view the entire neck as one big scale.

Below are two examples of three octave major scale links that combine three shapes. These are incredibly useful and are easy to play. Both utilize easy to remember repeated fingerings. These scale links help you to practice playing laterally across the neck. Shift with your first finger for both these examples when you get to the D and the B strings. Shift up a whole step, two frets, with the first finger for the 1-1 finger combination. Practice these links in all keys, they are super useful.

Link 1 utilizes 1-2-4 fingering to play the entire scale link. Shift up with the first finger as indicated. Link 2 utilizes 1-3-4 fingering to play the entire scale link. Again, shift up with the first finger as indicated. Be sure to always make mental notes when passing through root notes. Just like the other scales we have discussed in the eBook, these scale links are moveable with the root note determining the key.

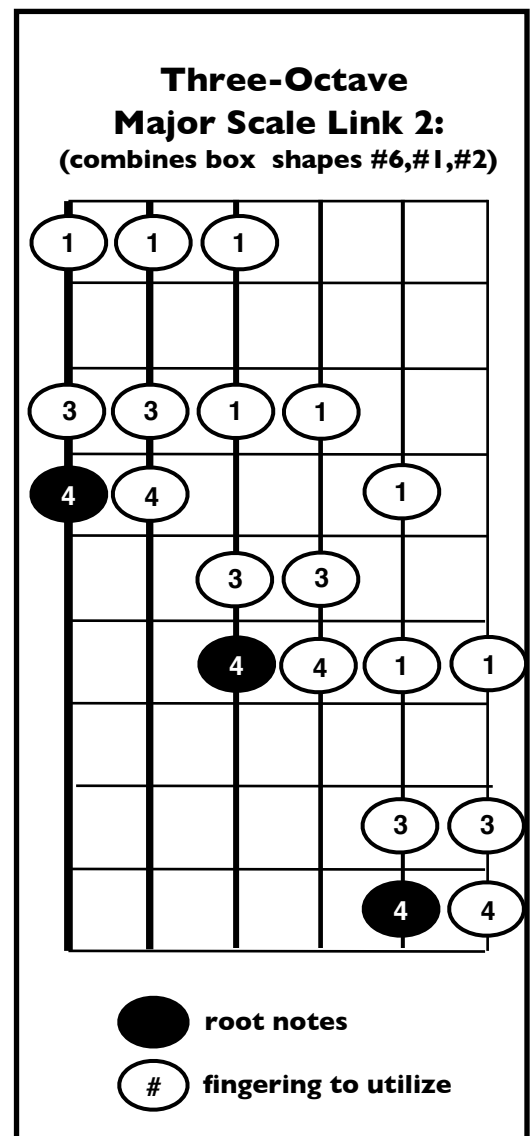
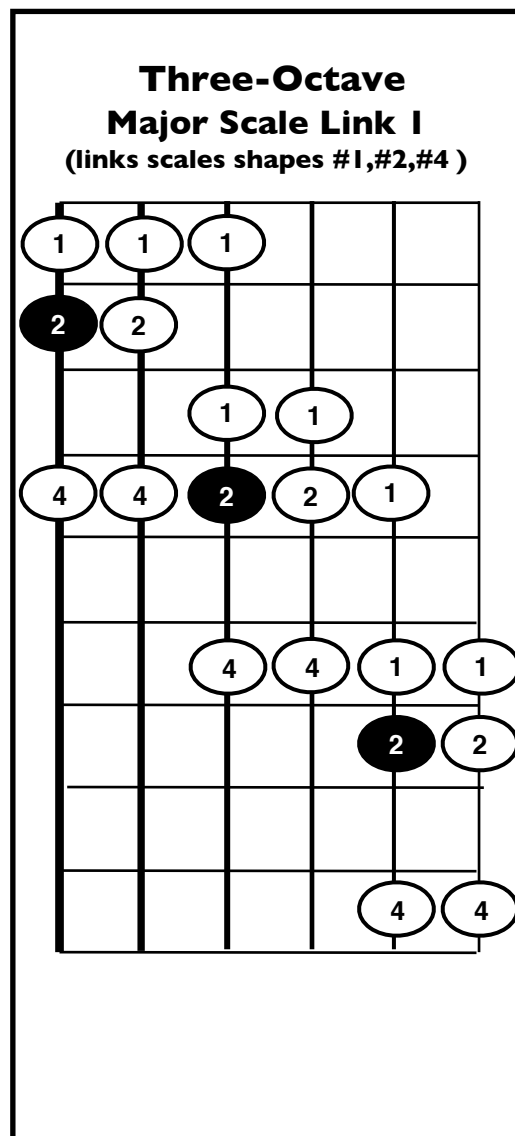
To locate these scales fast, first find the low root note. To play these links in G major, first find the G notes. To play the Link 1 in G major, start with your 2nd finger on the 3rd fret of the low E-string and play the shape. Third fret low E-string is a G note.

To play Link 2 in G major, start with your 4th finger on the 15th fret of the low E-string and play the shape. The 15th fret low E-string is a G note.

Find the root notes and blast away from there!

If you have a minor key jam, for example, a jam in the key of A minor you can still utilize these major scales in the parent scale of C major. C major's relative minor is A minor. Use major and relative minor as discussed a previous lesson.

Convert both of these shapes back to the parent scale of C major and start on and emphasize the A notes for A Aeolian, (A natural minor). Remember, its all about emphasis and mood.



Soloing Review Tips

KEY POINTS TO DETERMINE SOLOING AVENUES:

1. Determine the key signature - Most of the time you will be soloing in minor key or major key. Knowing the key is the first step. Even when you are noodling around on the guitar, always know what key you are playing. Many guitarists make the mistake of just looking solely at the key – that won't give you all the needed information.

2. Analyze the chord progression - It's the chords that give you the complete roadmap to what you can utilize for soloing and improvisation. Analyzing the chords is critical to get the full lead guitar picture. Knowing the key is only part of the equation. The chords provide the road map for what scales, modes, and arpeggios you will want to utilize. The chords also point to the strong notes to land on, resolve to, and emphasize.

Remember that you can mix soloing techniques. Mix what *“relates to all”* with treating each chord as a *“separate event”*. Treat each chord as a *“separate event”*, then switch it up and play what *“relates to all”*.

At times you can also use both major and minor scale elements as well as modal playing. In those examples you can throw a bunch of different soloing applications into the soup.

A critical key in unlocking all the potential of these scales and modes is in learning their interval structure and listening to the mood of each one and how it sounds over a given chord. This way you will know when it is appropriate to apply each in a given soloing or improvisation scenario.

Two goals of lead guitar playing:

1. Compliment the song – in the end, no matter how great a solo is, it's the song that will be remembered. Play for the song, not for yourself.

2. Draw people into your solo – you want the listener to latch onto what you are playing and to be on the edge of their seat wondering, “what will they play next?”

Take the listener on a musical journey with ups and downs, great emotion, and passion. Play from the heart while telling a story, and always be aware of melody.

Remember to experiment, its okay to bend and break the “rules”. Nothing is etched in stone. Work on developing your own style and pulling from all your musical influences.

Keep up all that hard work on that guitar and keep honing your skills and refining your art - YOU CAN DO IT!

KEY POINTS:

It's the the chords that give the complete roadmap to all the soloing and improvisation options.

Take the listener on a musical journey - draw them into your solo and have them latch onto what you are playing.

Even when you are just noodling around on the guitar, always know what key you are playing in.



I hope this eBook helps you along in your guitar journey. As a teacher my goal is to educate, empower, and inspire students to help them reach their guitar and musical goals.

I wish you the best in all your musical endeavors. Please feel free to email me any questions. Keep up all the hard work on that guitar and remember that your guitar playing is an evolution. It takes time, patience, and dedication. Go after your dreams like your life depends on it.....because it does! Take care, rock on, and swing for the fences!

David Taub

Next Level Guitar Inc.

“Rock On Good People” - on Youtube

“Epic Guitar Instruction” - on YouTube

Check out our full-on video instructional website at:

<http://www.nextlevelguitar.com>

The site has over 2300 video lessons, written lessons, jam tracks, and much more! It's a complete structured guitar curriculum for all level players and all genres of music - check it out today!

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