

NEXT LEVEL GUITAR - BEGINNER BLUES ROCK SOLOING DVD SET 1 – 4 WRITTEN LESSON BOOKLET

INTRODUCTION:

Hello good people! David Taub here and I just wanted to take a second to thank you for purchasing our instructional products. I think you will find that our teaching methods here at Next Level Guitar are of the best available on the market today. We will get your playing to the next level in the fastest and most efficient manner. This booklet was designed to coincide with the video lessons on the Beginner Blues Rock Soloing DVD 1-4 series. As you are watching the video lessons I will make references to this booklet. Just flip to the corresponding page in this booklet as per the video lessons. Throughout my teaching career I have found that the fastest and most efficient way for students to learn guitar is to have the combination of seeing lessons visually combined with having written reference materials to read and study. So by having all the learning tools at your disposal you will be amazed at how fast you can get your playing to the next level.

With guitar it is so important that you build a solid foundation, as techniques and principles are stacked on top of one another. So in this DVD series we will start with proper lead guitar techniques. Remember that learning lead guitar is like a staircase and you have to learn step one before traversing step two, step two before step three, and so on. By following these DVDs and practicing the principles and techniques you will continue to acquire that solid foundation to build on as you move forward on your guitar journey.

Print out this booklet of written lessons and keep all your reference materials in a three ring binder with your practice log. Keep these items handy so you can refer to them when practicing and watching the DVDs. Add filler paper to your binder and keep accurate records in your practice log of the items you are working on, what needs work, chord changes, progressions, songs, scales learning etc. Date the entries and keep track of your progress as you move forward.

Remember to follow our structured curriculum, practice the right things, and keep developing your ear. I wish you the best in all your musical endeavors. Stay positive and remember that your playing is an evolution. Please let us know if you have any questions or feedback - you can email us at thenextlevelguitar@yahoo.com and also please check out our website at www.nextlevelguitar.com

Thanks again, enjoy the journey, and.....ROCK ON!
David Taub
www.nextlevelguitar.com

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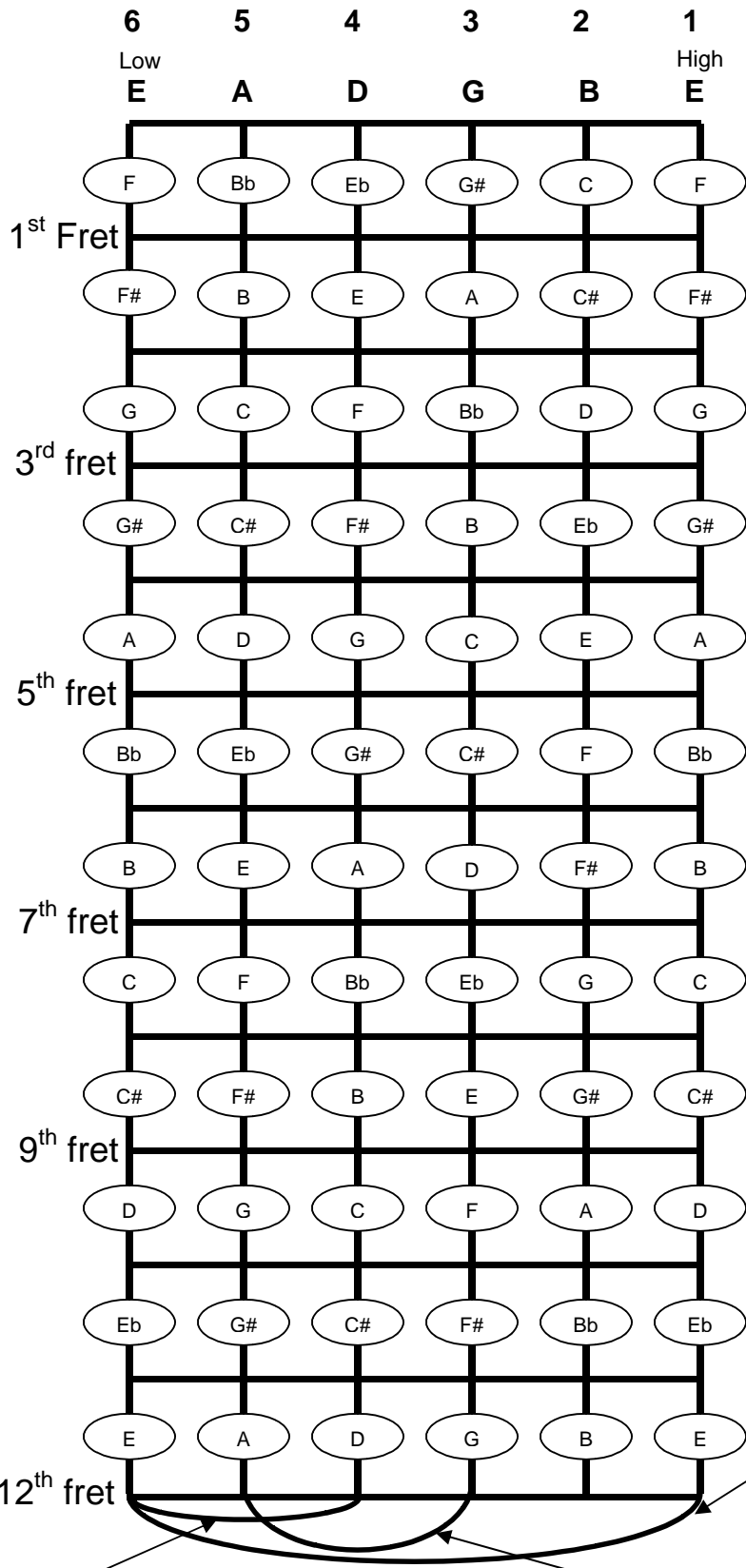
Guitar primer – 17 essential points to remember

-written by David Taub

1. Always start with a warm up to get your fingers, wrist, and picking hand warm and loose. If you have come in from the cold, warm up your hands with warm water. Also do the finger stretches and warm ups – they really help.
2. Wash and thoroughly dry your hands before picking up the guitar. It will keep oily residues and dirt off the fingerboard and your hands will be clean to pick and finger notes.
3. Keep the fingernails on your fret hand short. If not your nails will interfere with the fretting of notes on the fingerboard. If you press straight down with one finger on a solid surface, like a tabletop, and you feel the nail hitting the table before your fingertip, your nails are too long and will need to be cut.
4. Keep your guitar neck and fret board clean. Wipe it down after playing – this keeps the neck clean and prolongs string life.
5. A small degree of fingertip soreness and wrist discomfort is normal for the beginning guitarist. This will get less and less and eventually disappear. But if you feel big pain in the wrist or arm, STOP. Check that you are utilizing proper technique. Check that your fret hand is always close to the fret board, fingers not flying out of position, wrist is down, fingers cupped and on your fingertips when fretting notes and chords. Ensure your thumb does not slide out of position.
6. Big pain is your bodies' way of telling you something may be wrong. Give it a little rest and go back to it later and make sure you always use the proper techniques.
7. Many of the concepts and applications we are going to study may take a little while to master. Even the fingering of certain chords can take quite some time to master. This is normal so please do not get discouraged. Remember, YOU CAN DO IT! It takes time to get your fingers, tendons, and muscles used to bending in the way that is necessary to play guitar. Take your time, be patient and it will come – I guarantee it!
8. Playing slow and in time is ALWAYS better than playing fast and sloppy. Always master a concept at slow speeds before trying to play it faster. Speed will come in time.
9. Practice the right things with a structured plan. You just can't be practicing any old thing. Follow the practice regimens and routines that I have set up and you will be rocking out in no time. Remember there is a difference between playing and practicing.
10. You don't necessarily have to set aside one or two hour chunks of time to play each day. I find a few 15 or 20-minute blocks of time throughout the day works real well. Or if you have a spare ten minutes pick up the guitar and practice. You will be amazed how all those ten-minute sessions really add up. Don't think that you HAVE to have an hour block for practice to have value.
11. For the most part keep your thumb anchored firmly on the back of the guitar neck about even with your second finger or between your first and second fingers, (except when needed to mute strings – a very important concept to playing chords and notes cleanly that we will study later).
12. Eventually you want to try and always memorize the notes that make up a chord or a scale, not just the fingering or shapes. It will make you a much better guitarist in the long run and you will be able to speak "the language" of music when conversing with other musicians, writing songs, playing with your friends, or in a band situation.
13. Always try to utilize the proper fingering when playing chords or single notes. This will assist you greatly as you move onto advanced concepts and lead guitar playing.
14. Whether you are picking notes individually or playing chords make sure the volume of you're down strokes and up-strokes are equal. You don't want nice crisp down-strokes and then wimpy upstrokes.
15. Develop your ear – I say that often as I feel it is one of the most important things you can do as a guitarist.
16. A little theory is a good thing – learning some will move your playing forward faster and you will be able to see better how all the musical concepts overlap and can be connected. I think it gives a guitar player a lot more vision and I think it's important to know some theory and how to apply it on the instrument.
17. HAVE FUN AND STAY POSITIVE – practice does not have to be drudgery!

NOTES ON THE FRETBOARD

-written by David Taub



Eddie Ate Dynamite Good Bye Eddie

= SHARP
b = FLAT

E and D strings are related – from any note on the E string go 2 strings down and 2 frets over and you have the same note an octave higher on the D string

Low E and High E strings have same note names on each fret – just two octaves apart

A and G strings are related – from any note on the A string go 2 strings down and 2 frets over and you have the same note an octave higher on the G string

The twelve-note scale consists of:
A, Bb, B, C, C#, D, Eb, E, F, F#, G, G#

The 6Ks for guitarists -written by David Taub

There are certain principles that every guitar player should consider tackling to help get their playing to the next level. Some are harder than others, and some take quite a bit of work to get proficient. However, in the end you will be glad you took the extra time to learn the principles outlined below, as they will make you a better guitarist and a better musician. There are no real shortcuts here, it will be more work, and quite difficult at first, but in the end you will be a better musician if you take the time to nail these down. Go slowly at first and don't overwhelm yourself – these are processes that take time – your playing is an evolution. Take stock in your playing and see if you are deficient in one or more of these areas and then really work hard on getting them up to speed. Keep honing your skills and refining your art!

1. Know the notes on the neck – there is just no way around this one. Guitar players want to strive to learn the notes on the neck cold. The problem with tablature and just learning shapes is that you don't learn the notes that make up the chords, or the scales - you are just learning finger position, fret numbers, and shapes. You will always be a better musician and be able to better speak the language of music if you take the extra time to learn the notes that make up each chord, scale, and the notes on the fretboard. This will also allow you to grab a needed note quickly at any time. Try not to become too dependent on tablature. Tablature only tells you what fret number to play, it does not tell you the note that you are playing. Tablature is a fun way to learn songs if you don't read music so certainly use it, but not exclusively. Along with tablature learn the notes on the neck and what notes and what intervals make up each chord. Knowing the notes on the neck is a huge undertaking, so make it a process which you learn them over a period of time. Don't overwhelm yourself and try to get them all down in a week, learn one string at a time. Then go to the next string. Utilize octaves to make the learning process a bit easier. Refer to the handout illustrating the notes on the fretboard.

2. Know a large catalogue of chords - As a musician having a big vocabulary of chords is very important, unless you want to be stuck playing A, D, and E all day long! Being able to play a lot of different chords proficiently is a difficult task, but so worthwhile. Knowing a good number of chords will open many doors and allow you to embellish and decorate your playing with all kinds of new musical melodies and rhythms, as well as an endless stream of song writing possibilities. Why play a stock, sterile, every day Am chord when you can play a much more interesting and harmonically rich Asus2, Am7 chord, or Am9 chord. Embellishing chords is a great way to spark new ideas and infuse new life into old songs. Having chordal options makes it fun and exciting not only for the guitarist but also more fun and interesting for the listener.

3. Know how to play solid rhythm - Knowing a large catalog of chords is the first step. Next is being able to play solid rhythm. Music is more than just notes and chords, it is also about rhythm and meter. As a guitarist you will be playing rhythm 90% of the time. So the misinformed guitarist who thinks they can just concentrate on soloing and improvisation are in for a huge surprise first time they start playing with a band or jamming with someone else. Your lead playing will pretty much only ever be as good as your rhythm playing. Know how to strum well in many patterns using quarter, 8th and 16th notes as well as being able to switch chords in time and on the fly and eventually comp chords. Be able to make your own strum patterns and be able to arpeggiate chords in time. Know how to embellish chords and how to add suspensions, and add chords as well as being able to embellish your strumming with chucking on both open and bar chords. It will add so much interest and richness to your playing. Know how to play good rhythm with good meter, its invaluable.

4. Know and analyze the chords you are playing over - For lead playing and improvisation the chords that you are playing over will provide the roadmap to what you can play solo wise. Just knowing the key signature of the song is not enough on its own. You want to know exactly what chords are in the progression and then analyze them to determine what scales, modes, and landing notes to utilize. In many instances you need to look at if there is a IV chord or V chord in a progression and are the chords major or minor. You need to know which notes make up the chords that you are playing over so you can use their respective chord tones as strong landing or emphasis notes. You will need to know the chords and their structure to fully understand and apply which mode you want to solo with.

5. Know the major scales cold in addition to the Pentatonics – This is invaluable for the lead guitar player. Knowing your major scales will help give you the tools to quite a bit of lead playing and improvisation. Knowing when to utilize the scales and over which keys and chord changes is just as important as knowing the scales themselves. Knowing all the scales ever created will do you absolutely no good unless you know how to utilize them and when to apply them into your playing. Knowing the major scales up and down the neck in all keys will be the springboard to knowing the modes of the major scale, relative major and minor, and many other important concepts. So learn those major scales in all keys!

6. Develop your EAR - I always say, and will keep saying and repeating, one of the most important things that you can do as a musician is to DEVELOP YOUR EAR. This opens the door to amazing musical applications. Once your ear starts developing you will be able to hear strum patterns and play them by ear without the worry of learning the strum patterns ups and downstrokes. You will hear the color of chords and be able to discern major from minor from 7th and so on. You will be able to grab chords that give off a certain color or emotion that you may need for a given song when songwriting. Your ear will take you to those sweet sounding landing notes. I can go on and on – develop that ear – its HUGE!

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FINGER EXERCISES

-written by David Taub

Finger exercises are a very important element of a guitar players practice regimen. They can be utilized as warm up exercises when practicing or before live gigs. When finger exercises are done properly, and consistently integrated into your practice regimen, they build strength, dexterity, picking accuracy, finger mobility and speed, they tie the pick and fret hands together and help clean up your playing. They may seem boring, but they work, and work fast. Add these to your practice regimen every day and your playing with greatly benefit.

The various practice patterns are written out below and they will increase in difficulty with each new set. Remember, Rome was not built in a day, so it will take some time to master each one. Play each exercise slow, clean, with no overtones, dinks, sloppiness, or missed notes. Play them slow at first to get used to the patterns. Then slowly bring up the speed. When you are ready you can play to the click of a metronome to ensure that you are playing in time. Set the metronome at a comfortable speed. Then slowly bring up the speed of the metronome. I cannot emphasize enough to always play slow, clean, and in time rather than fast and sloppy.

Working these exercises ten minutes daily will increase your picking accuracy, speed, finger strength and overall finger dexterity. They can also be done while watching television, or waiting for something to download on your computer. Whenever you have a spare five minutes pick up the guitar and blast a few down the neck a few times.

The exercises below are written out in tablature. The numbers are the fret numbers that you will play. The finger pattern is the order of your fingers that you will be using during the entire exercise. Start each exercise on the low E string at the fret indicated and play every note on the fretboard with the given finger pattern. Keep your fingers as close to the fretboard as possible. Do not let your fret hand come way off the fretboard and out of position. Utilize strict alternate picking – up, down, up, down, etc. Remember to keep your thumb anchored on the back of the neck and not have it slide up and out of position. Continue with the finger pattern up the fretboard utilizing all six strings all the way until your first finger hits the 12th fret on the high E string and then go back and repeat the exercise 2-4 more times if possible. When you get to the end of a given exercise it is important to repeat it. To build strength the exercise must be played over and over again, multiple times. You will feel the burn the more you implement these exercises. If you feel pain, stop, shake your hand out, give it a rest, and confirm that you are utilizing the proper technique. Then start again after a little rest period

Exercise I – finger pattern 1,2,3,4

At this point shift up one fret and start with 1st finger on the 2nd fret on the high E string

At this point shift up one fret and start with 1st finger on the 3rd fret on the low E string

Exercise II – finger pattern 4,3,2,1

Practice each pair of patterns below every day for 2 weeks or until down cold before moving on to the next pair. Remember to do each one 2-4 times each up and back on the neck. Try to master one set before moving on the next set, but keep doing the previous sets as you move forward. Keep at it every day!

- | | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Set 1 - 1,2,3,4 and 4,3,2,1 | Set 2 - 2,3,4,1 and 3,2,1,4 | Set 3 - 1,4,3,2 and 4,1,2,3 |
| Set 4 - 2,1,4,3 and 3,4,1,2 | Set 5 - 1,2,4,3 and 4,3,1,2 | Set 6 - 2,1,3,4 and 3,4,2,1 |
| Set 7 - 1,3,4,2 and 4,1,3,2 | Set 8 - 2,3,1,4 and 3,2,4,1 | Set 9 - 1,4,2,3 and 4,2,1,3 |
| Set 10 - 2,4,1,3 and 3,1,2,4 | Set 11 - 1,3,2,4 and 4,2,3,1 | Set 12 - 2,4,1,3 and 3,1,4,2 |

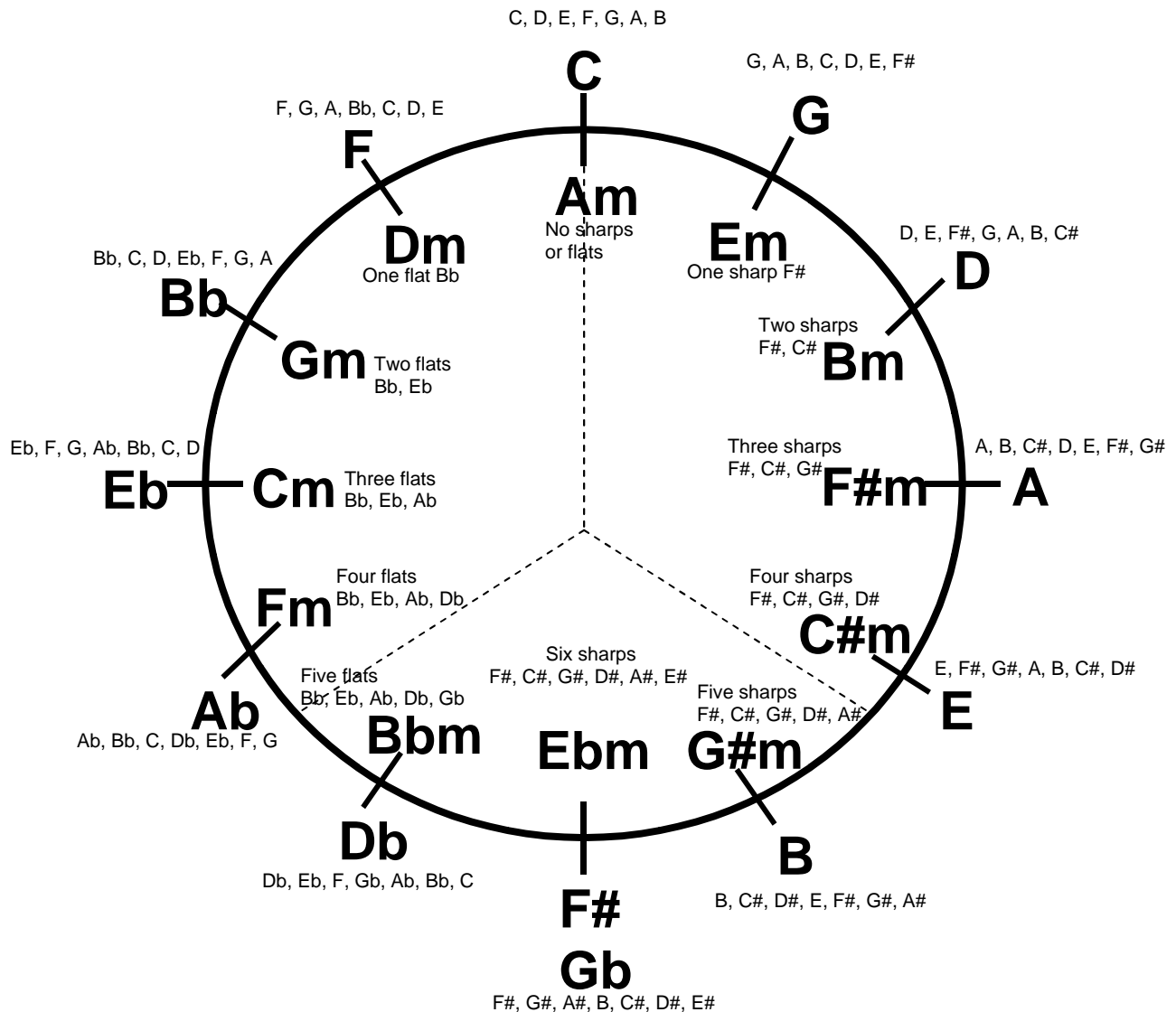
Circle of fifths

-written by David Taub

The circle of fifths is a great visualization and reference tool to illustrate the relationships between major and relative minor keys, chords, and sharps and flats. As per the circle illustration below, there are 12 notes corresponding to the 12 numbers on a clock. Perfect fifths separate each key – hence the name “CIRCLE OF FIFTHS”. The fifth note in a C major scale is G. The fifth note in a G major scale is D, and so on around the circle. Each time you move one step clockwise you go up a perfect fifth.

Along the outside of the circle are major keys and their corresponding RELATIVE MINOR keys are illustrated on the inside of the circle. As per the circle – C major has Am as its relative minor, G major has Em as its relative minor. This means the notes in C major - C,D,E,F,G,A,B are the same notes as in Am - A,B,C,D,E,F,G. And so on around the circle.

C major is at the 12 o'clock position and has no sharps or flats. G major is at the one o'clock position and has one sharp, F#. D major is in the 2 o'clock position and has two sharps, F# and C#. A major is in the three o'clock position and has the F#, C#, and now adds the G#. Notice the sharps and flats are added in a sequential order. This is the “order of sharps and flats” which will be discussed on the next page. Moving counterclockwise to the next neighboring key you go down a perfect fifth. Looking at each key you have the dominant chord to its right and its subdominant to its left. For example in the key of C major you have the subdominant F chord directly to the left of C, and the dominant G chord directly to the right – 1, 4, 5 or the C, F, and G chords in the key of C major. In other words, in the circle of fifths you always have the three primary chords next to one another – the tonic or root in the center, the subdominant on the left, and the dominant on the right. Moving clockwise you either add one sharp or deduct one flat as you move from key to key. Moving counter clockwise you either deduct one sharp or add one flat. This illustrates that there is only one note difference between a key and the next key a fifth away. Notice how the illustration displays only a one-note difference as you move from key to key on the circle. For example, going from C major with no sharps or flats, clockwise a fifth away to its neighbor G major, which has one sharp. The F note is raised a half step to an F# - one half step difference between the two keys. Going counterclockwise you would just flatten the B note – B to Bb. Follow this same formula around the circle.

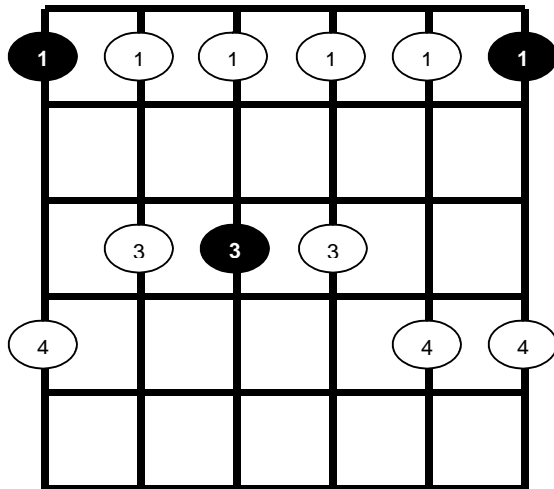


THE MINOR PENTATONIC SCALE

-written by David Taub

The pentatonic scale is one of the most commonly utilized scales in most music genres of music. Penta, is Latin for five, much like a penta-gram has five sides - pentatonic scales are constructed from five notes. The Minor Pentatonic scale is constructed from five notes from the Natural Minor Scale, or Aeolian mode. The minor pentatonic scale is built from the five scale degrees of root, b3rd, 4th, 5th, and b7th. The scale illustrated below is what many call the basic "box" position and has its low root played with the first finger on the low E string. The root notes are illustrated with black circles and the numbers inside the circles indicates the fingering to be utilized when playing this scale. It's important to learn this basic scale first, as we are going to build upon this scale in coming lessons and eventually you will need to learn this scale in all positions all over the neck and in all keys – the other shapes are diagrammed out in the coming pages.

Minor Pentatonic Scale Basic Box Shape



● = root notes
○ # = Fingering to be utilized

This shape is also referred to as a "box" pattern. Take your time and play the scale slow and in time, speed will come. 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, (illustrated with the black circles).

The key signature is determined by which root note is played. For example if you play this scale starting at the fifth fret on the low E string it is an **A** minor pentatonic scale consisting of the five notes A, C, D, E, and G. If you were to play this scale on the 8th fret it would be a **C** minor pentatonic scale consisting of the five 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 as we are going to build on it extensively, spicing it up and expanding it, making it a more fluid sounding scale that you can move laterally across the neck and not get stuck in the box.

Hip string bends when utilizing the above Minor Pentatonic scale: – bending strings is one of the most expressive things you can do on the guitar. So you will want to really get proficient at string bending. Bending strings is an art and always bend to a target note. When bending strings it is imperative that you are bending the notes in pitch. You don't want to over bend the note or it will be sharp. You also do not want to under bend the note or it will be flat. Bend the note and check the pitch by sounding the note you are attempting to bend to – that's a good self-check to ensure you are bending in pitch. Practice string bending by plugging directly into an electronic tuner and watch the needle as you bend a note – keep doing it over and over till you feel the bend and hear the bend in pitch.

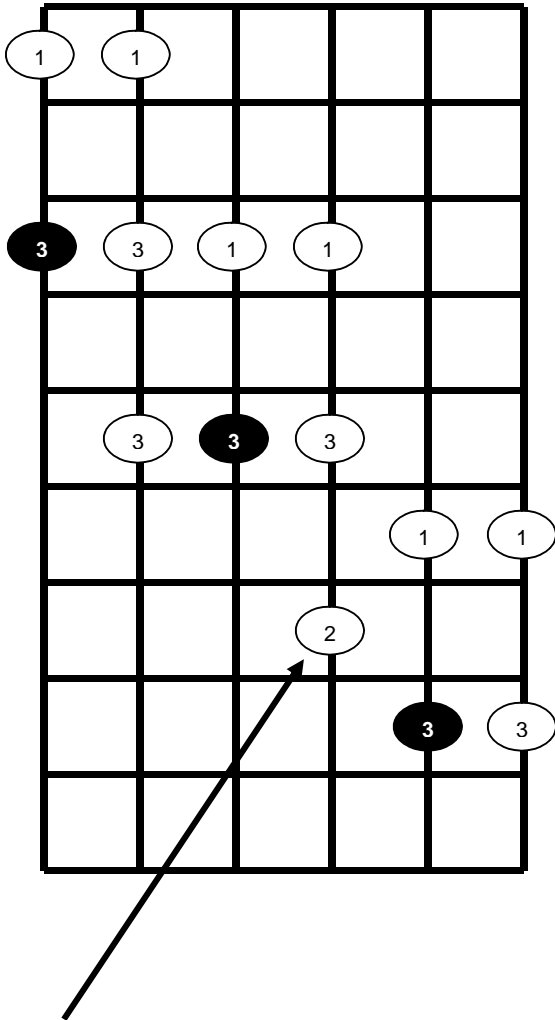
For purposes of this string bending exercise play the scale with a fifth fret root or A minor pentatonic scale, but once learned, practice the bends and scale in all keys.

1. Bend the b7th a whole step to the root – bend the G note at the 8th fret of the 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 bend up one whole step to the A root note.
2. Bend the 4th a half step to the blue note - bend the D note on the 7th fret of the G string up one half step to the Eb note.
3. Bend the 4th degree a whole step to the fifth - bend the D note on the 7th fret of the 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 b3rd a full step to the 4th – bend the C note at the 8th fret of the high E string one whole step to the D note.
5. Unison bend – Utilize your 4th finger to bend the G note on the 8th fret of the B string a whole step to an A note while playing the A note at the 5th fret of the high E string with your 1st finger.
6. Unison bend – Utilize your 3rd finger to bend the D note on the 7th fret of the G string a whole step to an E note while playing the E note at the 5th fret of the B string with your 1st finger.
7. Double stop bend – bend two strings a half step each with your 3rd finger. Bend the D note at the 7th fret of the G string one half step while also bending the F# note at the 7th fret of the B string one half step.
8. Double stop bend – with your 3rd finger bend the D note at the 7th fret of the G string a whole step while playing the G note on the B string with your 4th finger.
9. b3rd to major 3rd bend – bend the b3rd or C notes 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 like when playing over a 7th chord. So 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 it all the time.

THE MINOR PENTATONIC EXPANDED I SCALE -written by David Taub

Let's build on the minor pentatonic basic box shape scale that you learned in the above page. We are now going to expand the scale two frets in each direction combining three of the box shapes. We are still going to play the same five-note scale. However, the expanded scale exudes a much more fluid sound and sets up many additional and different combination runs and licks than staying solely in the "box" shape. You certainly want to have all the pentatonic scales in the box patterns in your arsenal, but this expanded scale you will find really opens the pathways to possibilities a lot further. Commit it to memory and learn it in all keys.

Expanded I Minor Pentatonic Scale



For the G string pivot with your **second finger** for the 1,3,2 fingering combination

Analyzing this expanded scale you can see part of the basic box pattern you learned in the above page encapsulated in the middle of the shape. The shape is then expanded two frets in each direction using two other boxes. Now you have a Pentatonic Minor shape that **doubles** the fret span of the basic box pattern.

As always when learning a new scale, take your time and play the scale slow and in time. 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, (illustrated with the black circles). Practice the scale utilizing the fingerings illustrated. Notice the shift in fingering when you get to the G-string. There is a one – three – two finger combination. Utilize your second finger when playing the third note on the G-string as that will set you up for the two and three note combinations and licks to be played with the G, B, and high E strings. As always, you want to utilize the proper fingerings that set you up for your next lick, run, or chord.

Much like the first minor pentatonic in the basic box pattern the key signature for the expanded scale is determined by which root note is played on the 6th string. Play that note with your third finger. For example if you play this shape starting at the fifth fret on the low E string it is the expanded I **A** minor pentatonic scale consisting of the five notes A, C, D, E, and G. If you were to play this scale starting with your 3rd finger on the 10th fret it would be the expanded I **D** minor pentatonic scale consisting of the five notes D, F, G, A, and C. Practice this scale in all keys up and down the fret board.

Remember you can grab these above two scale shapes fast if you memorize the two above scales as:

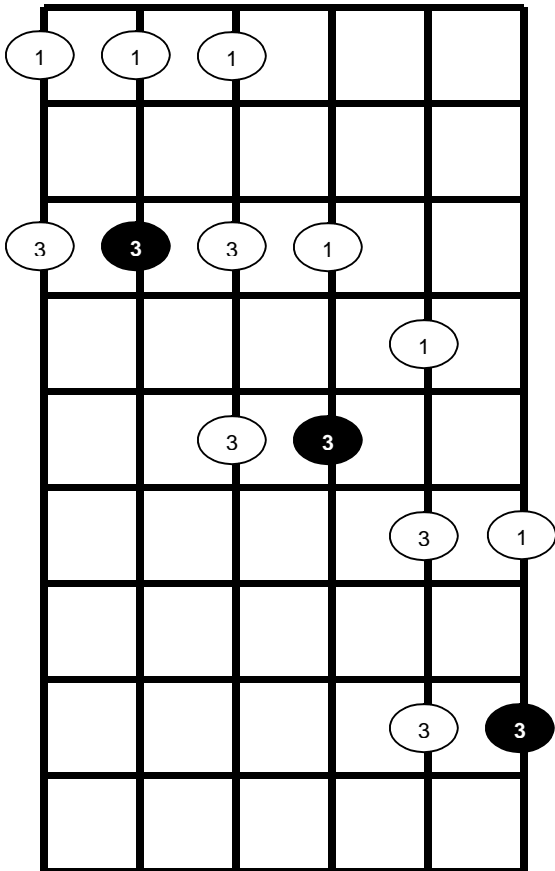
1. Basic Box Position Minor Pentatonic Scale – 1st finger low root on the E string
2. Expanded I Minor Pentatonic Scale – 3rd finger low root on the E string

THE MINOR PENTATONIC EXPANDED II SCALE

-written by David Taub

Now that you are familiar with the minor pentatonic scale in the basic box position and in an expanded I form, lets learn the minor pentatonic expanded II scale. This scale will have its root note on the 5th or A string and you can start with your 3rd finger. Illustrated below is the expanded II minor pentatonic scale. With both expanded scales and the basic “box” shape you can cover just about the entire fretboard. Practice these scales in all keys up and down the fret board.

Expanded II Minor Pentatonic Scale



Take your time when first learning this scale pattern, and play the scale slow and in time. 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, (illustrated with the three black circles). Practice the scale utilizing the fingerings illustrated and work up this expanded scale in all keys. Just use the first and third fingers to play the entire scale.

In this expanded 2 scale the key signature is determined by which root note is played with the third finger on the on the 5th or A string. That is how you can find all the different scales quickly, by identifying the root notes. For example if you play this shape starting at the tenth fret on the low E string it is the expanded II **A** minor pentatonic scale consisting of the five notes A, C, D, E, and G. This is due to the root note being played on the 12th fret of the A string – an “A” note. If you were to start this scale on the 12th fret of the low E string it would be the expanded II **B** minor pentatonic scale.

Remember you can grab the above scales fast if you memorize the three above scales as:

1. Box Position Minor Pentatonic Scale – 1st finger low root on the E string
2. Expanded I Minor Pentatonic Scale – 3rd finger low root on the E string
3. Expanded II Minor Pentatonic Scale – 3rd finger low root on the A string

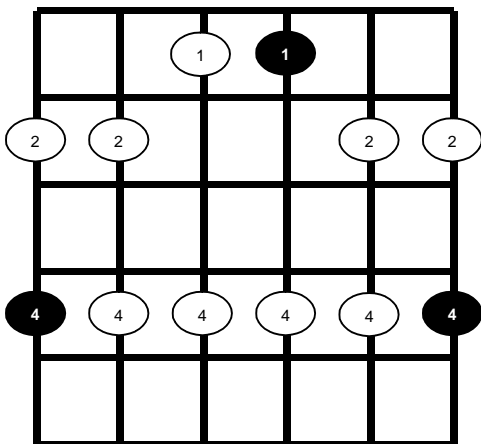
THE MINOR PENTATONIC SCALE – the 5 box scales

-written by David Taub

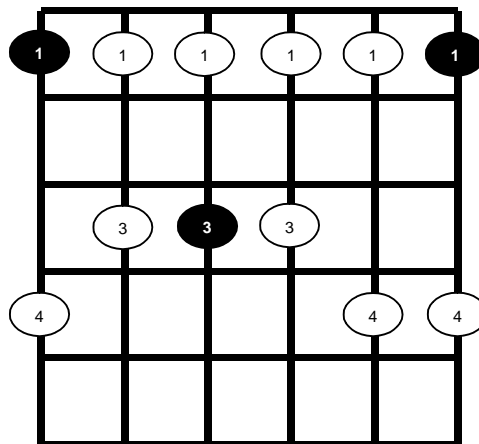
Illustrated below are all five common box shapes for the Minor Pentatonic scale. I usually find myself playing the expanded I and expanded II scales more often, but you should know all 5 box positions so you can utilize the entire neck. Practice these in all keys and remember to make mental notes where the root notes lie. Start learning the scales below in the key of Am as they line up across the fretboard nicely and you can start the number 1 box with your 4th finger on the 5th fret of the Low E string on the A note.

Commit all the shapes and notes to memory and you will soon be gliding across the neck in minor pentatonic heaven. Remember, it is critical to memorize what notes you are playing, not just the shapes. You want to be able to pick out and land on any given note depending on what chord changes you are playing over. Too many times guitarists just memorize shapes and forget what notes they are actually playing. So spend time learning the notes in all keys and you will benefit greatly with this extra work. These box shapes will give you many different riff ideas and runs. You will find them to be quite useful. Remember to practice and learn these scales in all keys and practice linking them together. Soon you will be able to see the entire fretboard mapped out as one large pentatonic scale that travels up and down the entire neck.

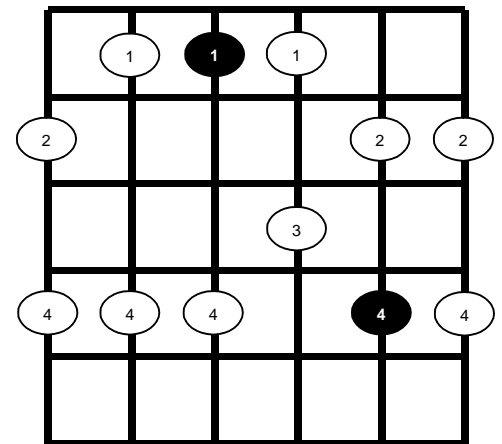
#1 box – in Am start with 4th finger on the 5th fret, low E string on the A note.



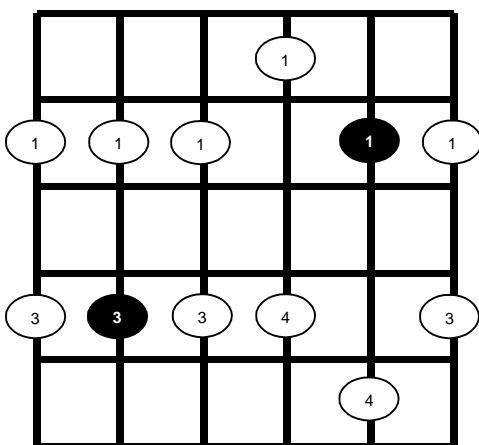
#2 box – in Am start with 1st finger on the 5th fret, low E string on the A note. (the basic box shape)



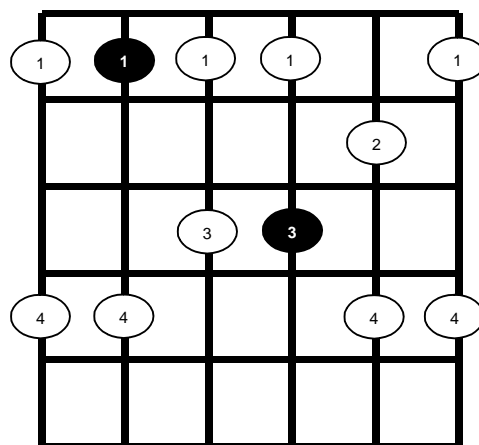
#3 box – in Am start with 2nd finger on the 8th fret, low E string on the C note. (these first three boxes make the Expanded 1)



#4 box – in Am start with 1st finger on the 10th fret, low E string on the D note.



#5 box – in Am start with 1st finger on the 12th fret, low E string on the E note. (these last two boxes and the first one combine to form the Expanded 2 shape)



THE MINOR PENTATONIC BLUES SCALE

-written by David Taub

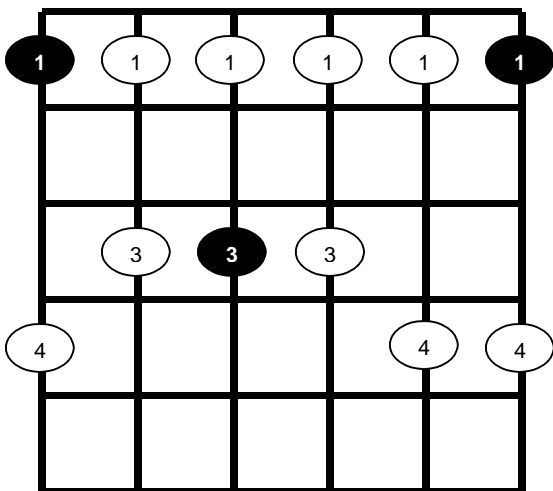
Lets think of the blues scale as basically a Minor Pentatonic scale, with one added note, the flatted 5th, or blue note. The b5 creates a certain amount of color and tension that is extremely useful. The blues scale is not solely utilized in blues music but rather has pretty much unlimited potential. Because it is I, IV, V based the blues scale is utilized is just about every other music genre from rock, pop, country, alternative, metal, jazz, swing, reggae – just about everything. Adding this scale to your bag of tricks will definitely add a little “bluesy” color and texture to your playing. Use it pretty much whenever you play minor pentatonic scales – so now make it the minor pentatonic blues scale. This is the scale when you hear the term “blues scale” tossed around.

By adding the b5 note we now get the six-note minor pentatonic blues scale constructed from the degrees of root, b3rd, 4th, b5th, 5th, and b7th. The first illustration below on the left is the basic box shape minor pentatonic scale. Directly below that we add the b5th and have the minor pentatonic blues scale – you can see they only differ by one note, the b5th or blue note, illustrated in blue. The illustration below to the right is the Expanded I Minor Pentatonic Blues scale.

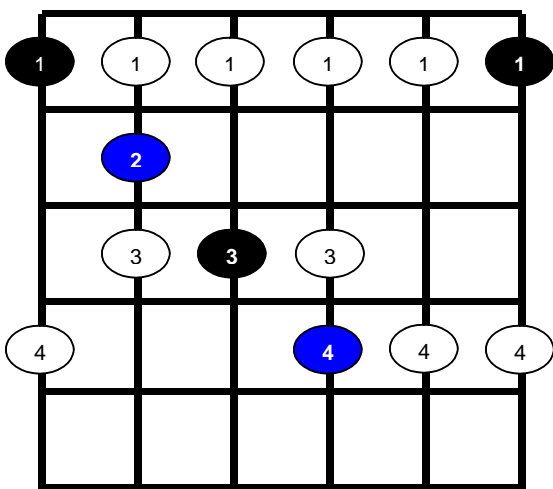
A common challenge with many students is that they always play and think of scales in box patterns and they stay in one box, then stop, move to the next box, then stop, and so on. This has a real boxy and fragmented sound with lines that have no continuity. What I have found is students benefit greatly by learning to play **ACROSS** the neck by playing laterally, not just vertically. The ultimate goal is to see the entire neck as one big inter-connected scale. Then just leave them all connected and just move the whole chunk back and forth as one chunk, to change key. These expanded scales will pull you out of the traditional boxes that can have a boxy sound that many players cant seem to leave behind.

As always, utilize consistent fingering and practice these scales in all keys and learn all the scales up and down the neck. Then apply them by practicing your soloing over the jam tracks. Make strong solo statements by emphasizing strong chord tones and the root notes, employ good phrasing and continuity, and play laterally across the neck. Rock on!

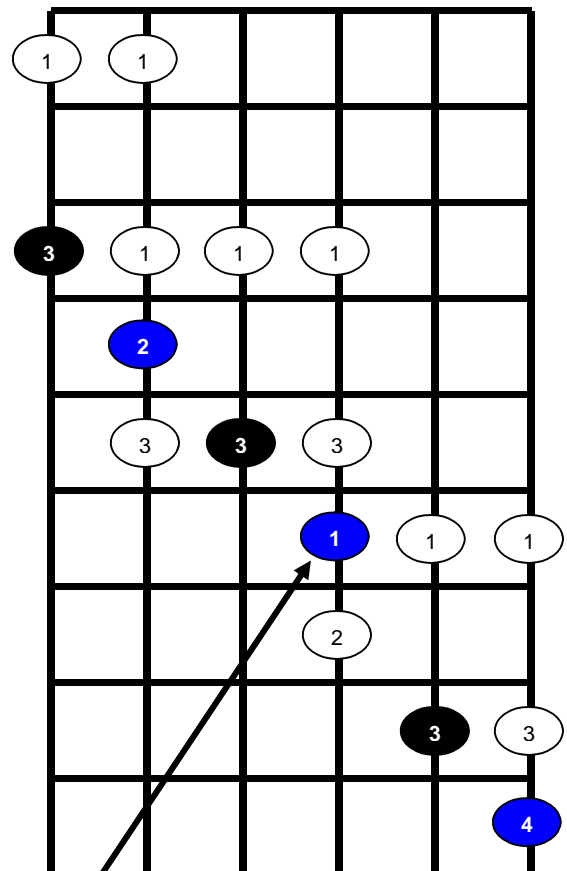
Basic Box Minor Pentatonic Scale



Minor Pentatonic Blues Scale



Expanded I Minor Pentatonic Blues Scale



When ascending the scale at the G-string pivot with your 1st finger playing 1,3 then 1,2. Then descending use a 3,2,1,1 finger combination on the G strings

● = root note

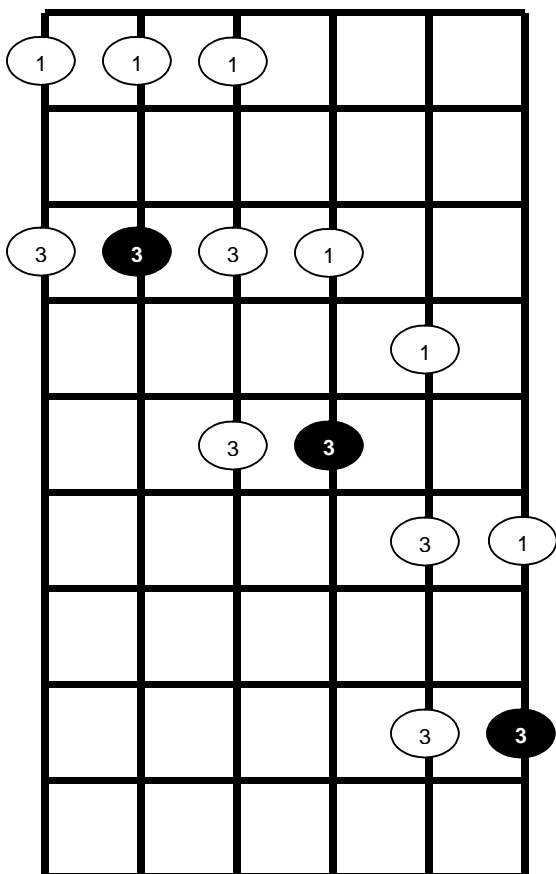
● = blue note (b5)

THE MINOR PENTATONIC BLUES EXPANDED II SCALE

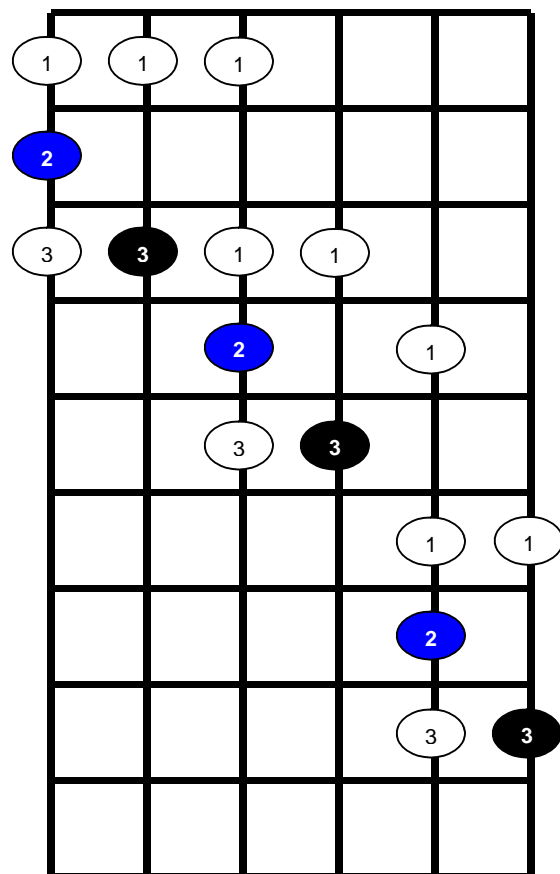
Let's continue to add the b5th, or blue note, to the minor pentatonic scale in the Expanded II scale. Below on the left is the expanded II minor pentatonic scale. By adding the blue note we now get the expanded II minor pentatonic blues scale, as shown below on the right. There is only one note added to make the blues scale. Examine the fingering carefully as it varies slightly between the two scales. The fingering shown below puts your fingers in the proper place on the fretboard to set up for the next part of the scale, or if playing a solo, the next lick. Remember it is crucial to always have your fingers in the right position setting yourself up for the next lick or run. Practice the scales below in all keys.

When playing through these scales remember to make mental notes when hitting the root notes and the blue notes, as you may want to emphasize these notes in your lead lines - its all about emphasis! Also remember, as I always state, just don't memorize the fingering for scales or just the scale shapes. Take the extra time to learn the notes and intervals that you are playing in a given key. Taking a little extra time to do this will make you a much better musician in the long run.

Expanded II Minor Pentatonic Scale



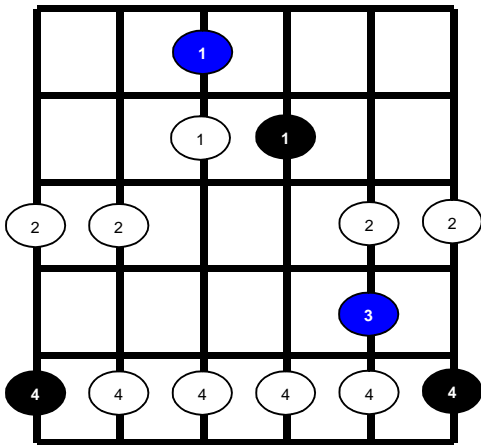
Expanded II Minor Pentatonic Blues Scale



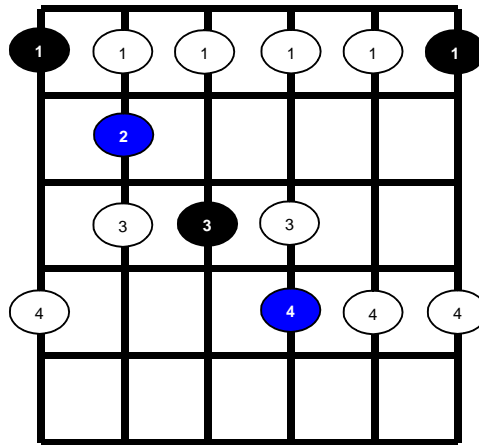
THE MINOR PENTATONIC BLUES SCALE – ALL FIVE BLOCK SCALES

Below are the five box shape minor pentatonic blues scales. This now completes the entire neck in minor pentatonic blues scales. All the holes and gaps are now filled and you want to work towards playing the minor pentatonic blues scale over the entire neck. Practice the blues scales in all keys and try and connect them with the rest of the shapes so you can play up and down the entire neck. Connect them in with the Expanded I and II blues scales. Remember, try to see the connection points and the neck as one big scale and play laterally across it – not as all individual boxes.

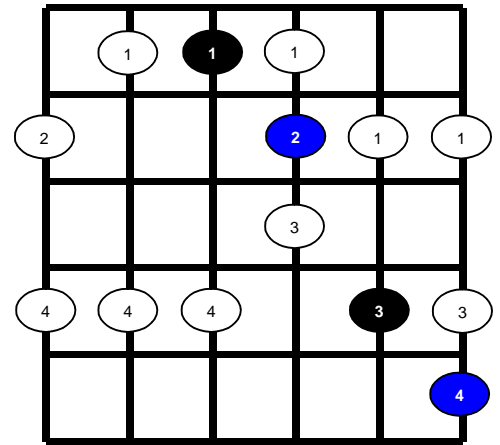
#1 box – in Am start with 4th finger on the 5th fret, low E string on the A note. Go outside for the blue note on the D string



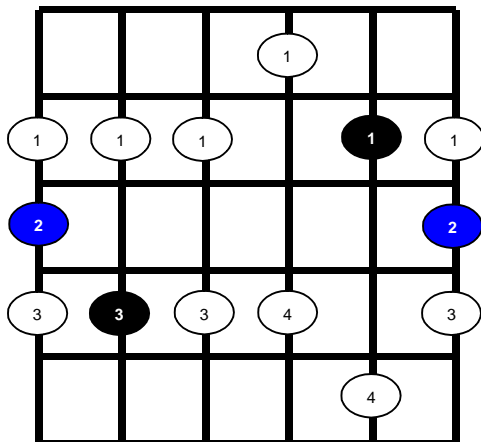
#2 “basic box” shape – in Am start with 1st finger on the 5th fret, low E string on the A note. Use 2nd and 4th fingers for blue notes



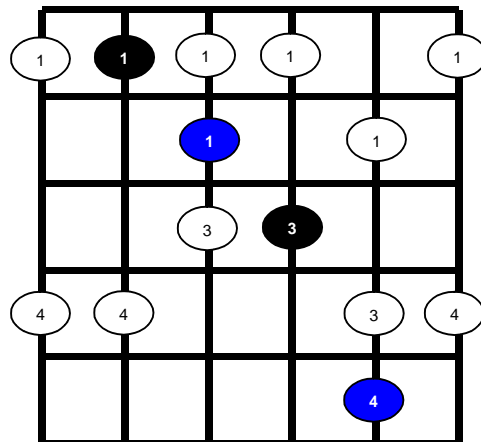
#3 box – in Am start with 2nd finger on the 8th fret, low E string on the C note. (the lower part of this box is that mini box in the expanded I scale)



#4 box – in Am start with 1st finger on the 10th fret, low E string on the D note. First three strings are first part of expanded II scale



#5 box – in Am start with 1st finger on 12th fret, low E string on E note. (last two boxes and the first one combine to form expanded II scale)



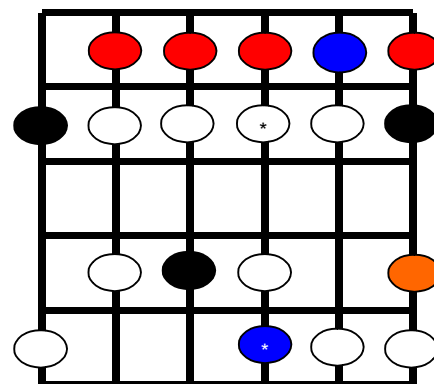
SPICING UP THE MINOR PENTATONIC BLUES SCALE

-written by David Taub

Now that you have learned some pentatonic scales lets look at how we can spice things up a bit to add some more color and texture to your playing. Its not enough just to know the scale but you will need to take the notes and do musically interesting things with them. Think of guitar playing as speaking a language. We are going to turn our notes, or words, into sentences. This is what some refer to as phrasing - the way we connect and play our thoughts musically on the guitar. What's so important in great lead playing and improvisation is engaging your audience and drawing them into your playing. You want to speak to your audience musically in a way that is engaging and that they can comprehend. So it's so important that your musical thoughts and phrases make "sense". For instructional purposes we are going to use the minor pentatonic basic box shape to illustrate these techniques. In the illustration below the black ovals are the root notes, the white ovals are the other notes in the scale, and the colored ovals are the various notes we will discuss below.

1. Spice it up by doubling and tripling up on your notes. Don't always go from one note to the next to the next in straight eighth or quarter notes. You have to bust them up a bit to make them more interesting. Play the same note in rhythmic combinations. Ba.Ba.Ba...Ba...Bow – remember, if you can say it, you can play it! Feel the rhythm of the line, don't just play it straight – and say the phrase out loud if you need to. Then change around the rhythm. Get into an idea that you like and keep repeating it, perhaps playing it a little different rhythmically each time. Learn a rhythm or rhythmic phrase and then apply it to some of your favorite licks across all the strings. So when you are noodling around and get into a little cool idea – keep it – keep playing it – turn the rhythm around and exploit it and keep repeating the phrase. Remember rhythm, repetition, and melody are the keys!

2. Spice it up by slurring your notes with passing tones. Slide into your notes utilizing half steps passing tones. It is a great sound as you get the inference of the passing tone and then the target note. Do not hang on passing tones and don't try and bend or vibrato them – get on and off them quickly, just use them in passing. Bookend your passing tones with two strong scalar notes. For example, if you are playing a five note pentatonic scale, you can utilize the other seven notes as passing tones. Just remember to get and off them quickly and bookend them with strong notes that are in the scale. Try utilizing the passing tones in the diagram to the right. Slide from any note in red to the scale note one half step higher. The note in blue is the blue note, or b5, and makes a great note to use as a passing slide tone. Double and triple up on these slides. These slurs will add some great color to your minor pentatonic playing.



3. Spice it up by adding the ninth scale degree to the minor pentatonic scale, (the ninth is illustrated above as the orange oval). This note sounds great and will work most of the time when using minor pentatonic adding much color to the scale. It is a great note to slide off, bend a half step, use in triplet patterns, and use in pull off and hammer licks. The outside sounding note will give you a little jazzy sound. So bend it a half step or slide from the ninth to the next note, the b3rd. It's a great sounding note!

4. Spice it up by slightly bending the b3rd on the G-string, (the b3rd is a white oval with an asterisk, “*”). The b3rd is a very ambiguous note, especially when playing the blues. It sometimes sounds best when played as a natural tone and sometimes sounds great bent up a quarter or half step depending on what chord its being played over or that you go to next in the progression. Pull that b3rd note down in a nice bend and really feel it. Slur in and out of it and you will find it will add a lot of texture to your playing. If you are playing in the box shape it is one of the few times where I like to bend with my first finger. It's an easy bend as you are only going up a quarter or half step so you don't need multiple finger strength to reach and hold the pitch. You can bend it slow or fast, but put a lot of feeling and passion into this bend and you will absolutely love the sound!

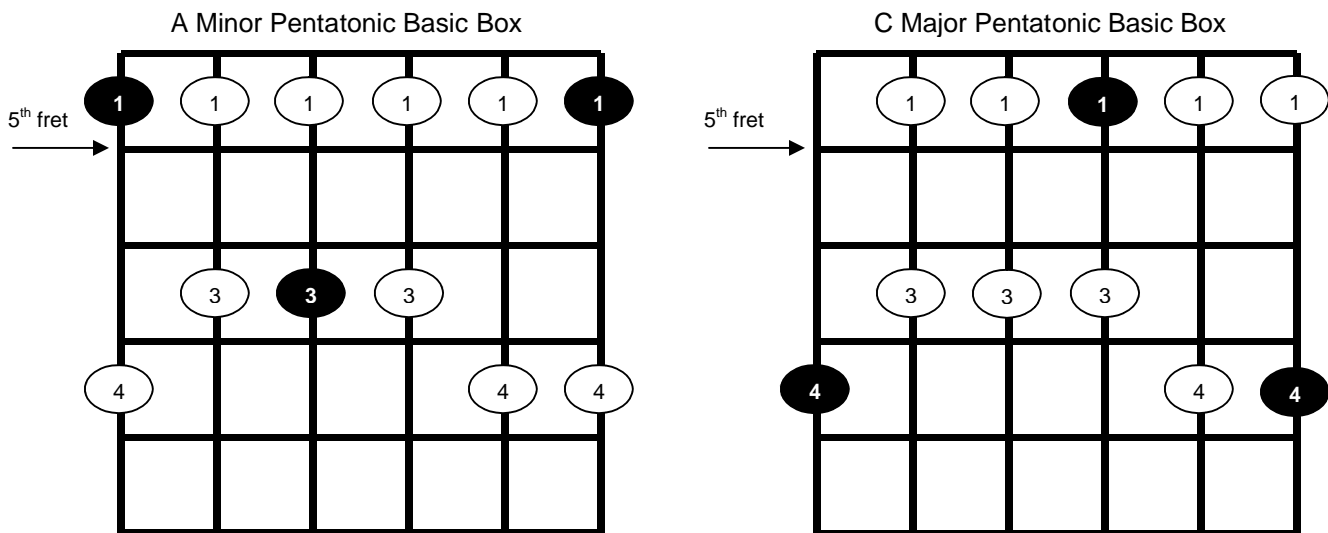
5. Spice it up with reverse slides – instead of always sliding a note up the fretboard try sliding down the fretboard. A real nice reverse slide is to slide the blue note one-half step back to the fourth. In the diagram above reverse slide from the blue oval with the asterisk back one half step. Really feel the slide and hear both notes. Repeat the slide two or three times in succession for a real cool riff.

THE MAJOR PENTATONIC SCALE

The major pentatonic scale is a five-note scale consisting of five notes from the major scale. It is an extremely useful scale as you get a more happy major sound. At times full major scales may be inappropriate to play over a given progression, as they may sound a bit stiff. The major seventh note is a very “ifly” note, especially in rock music as sometimes it works and many times it doesn’t. Defaulting to the major pentatonic scale for that major sound in many of these instances is a great idea and will give you a killer sound.

The five-note major pentatonic scale is derived from five notes from the major scale similar to how the minor pentatonic scale is derived from five notes from the natural minor scale. The intervals of the major pentatonic are 1,2,3,5,6. Basically you do not play the 4th and 7th degrees of the major scale. For many guitarists, there’s confusion surrounding this major pentatonic and it’s relative minor, the minor pentatonic scale. The minor pentatonic is the relative minor of the major pentatonic and lives a minor 3rd, or three frets away, below the major pentatonic. For every major key there is a relative minor key. Both keys will have exactly the same notes. Refer to the handout on the circle of fifths for a complete listing of every major key and its relative minor key. C major’s relative minor is A minor. D major’s relative minor is B minor. G major’s relative is E minor.

Illustrated below we will utilize the “basic box shape” C major pentatonic and its relative minor, A minor pentatonic. C major pentatonic scales can also be viewed as A minor pentatonic scales. Both scales consist of the same notes C, D, E, G, and A. Your starting and emphasis notes determines the key you are playing. The confusion often comes because of the multiple names. C major pentatonic and A minor pentatonic are the same scale, just different start-on and emphasis notes. Just like when playing utilizing the modes, it all comes down to what notes you are emphasizing, emphasis is so important! Play both scales starting with the root and listen to how the pentatonic major sounds very happy and major sounding while the minor pentatonic sounds so much more dark and minor. Same notes, just different start and emphasis points. One scale gives you the happy, major, Allman Brothers/BB King type of sound while the other gives you a darker, bluesy type sound. Remember that you can get to all the major pentatonics by going through the relative minor pentatonic scale – so you don’t have to learn any new shapes or scales if you already know the minor pentatonics.



Since you probably already know your Minor Pentatonic scales across the entire fretboard there is no need to learn any new shapes to play Major Pentatonic. You can get to those shapes from the relative major and minor as discussed above. Learning more shapes would be redundant as you can think of the major pentatonic scales from the relative minor pentatonic scales. So for that real sweet major pentatonic sound utilize all of your Minor Pentatonic shapes just focus on emphasizing the root of the mode – the major. For example when playing in C major Pentatonic think of the relative minor - A Minor Pentatonic shapes that you have learned previously – just start and emphasize on the C notes – not the A notes. You want to sound major so you have to emphasize the major root notes – not the minor ones. Try to think of it this way and practice in all keys and all positions up and down the neck. Remember that you can’t use minor pentatonic over all progressions and chords. At first try using the major pentatonic scales over major chords and real major sounding progressions.

GET STARTED PLAYING ARPEGGIOS

-written by David Taub

Lets get started with a few basic arpeggios. Arpeggios are notes of a certain chord or scale played one after another instead of strummed all at once. Arpeggios are the notes that make up chords, but played individually, or one at a time. Many times they are played from the lowest sounding note to the highest sounding note. Arpeggios are quite useful as they can be utilized throughout your soloing and improvisational lead lines, you can build riffs out of them, or create melody lines with them - the sky is the limit!

I have found the key to being able to phrase your arpeggios fluidly into your playing is being able to grab them quickly – knowing where they are at and what scales they live in so to speak. So in this lesson we will examine arpeggios that have first finger roots or pinky roots on the 6th or 5th strings. I have found students are able to grasp these the fastest and insert them fluidly into their playing. You certainly want to learn the arpeggio in all positions, much like your scales, but to get started these are what I have found students grab the fastest.

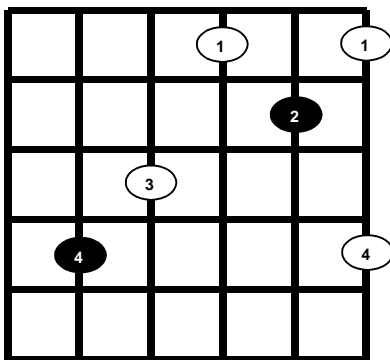
Another key to good arpeggio playing is mixing them in with your scales, modes, and riffs – not necessarily just playing a certain arpeggio up and back as that can get very sterile sounding. So try and mix them together with your modal or other scalar lead lines, that's how they sound best in my opinion – mixed in. Another key when playing arpeggios is that you want to be sure you are playing one note at a time. You don't want the arpeggio to sound like a chord strummed all at once – you want to kind of infer the color of the chord with the arpeggio. So kill each successive note after it is played. Do this by muting the strings.

Sometimes when playing certain arpeggios you will have to utilize the same finger for two or more strings as you move down or up the arpeggio. This is crucial especially if you want to eventually get into sweep picking. You want to try and "roll" your finger down the strings from one string to the next. The rolling motion of the finger works the best as opposed to barring your finger when playing arpeggios. This rolling of the finger technique produces a much smoother sound and the notes don't bleed into each other and contaminate the pure arpeggiated sound. This technique takes a little while to get the motion down, but keep practicing and it will come in time. The examples below are a basic major, minor, and minor 7th arpeggio. You can grab them in any key by grabbing the root note off the 5th string, (A string), with your pinky finger or first finger for the minor 7th.

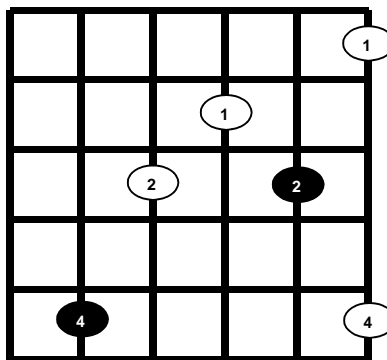
A major chord is constructed from the intervals of root or 1, 3rd, and 5th degrees of the major scale. To play a major arpeggio just play those three notes, 1,3,5, one at a time and then repeat as per the illustration below. A minor chord is constructed from the intervals of 1, b3, 5. Play these three notes one at a time and you have a minor arpeggio. Then add the b7 to the minor for a minor 7th. Once familiar with the fingerings, practice the examples below in different keys all over the neck utilizing the shapes below just move the root note along the 5th string and find the root with your pinky.

Now apply these by playing the major arpeggio over a major family chord and the minor arpeggio and minor 7th over a minor family chord. Arpeggios add so much color over their corresponding chords. ROCK ON!

major arpeggio - 1,3,5



minor arpeggio - 1,b3,5



m7th arpeggio - 1,b3,5,b7

