

The A minor Pentatonic Scale

The **Minor Pentatonic Scale** is by far the most common scale used by rock lead guitarists. The notes played by the lead guitarist must fit the chords they are being played over. In many rock tunes, one minor pentatonic scale fits all of the chords.

A minor pentatonic scale construction

A Major Scale: A B C# D E F# G# A
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8



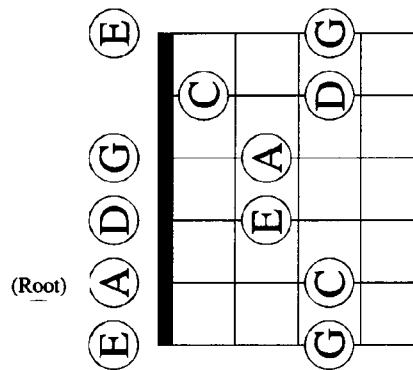
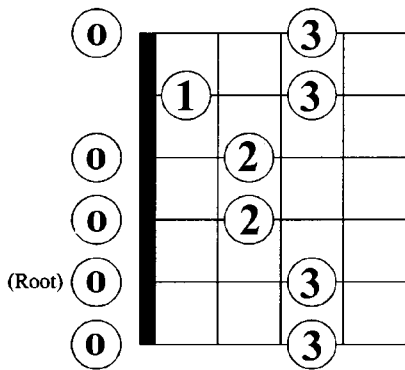
A Minor Pentatonic:

A C D E G
 1 b3 4 5 b7



A Minor Pentatonic, Root = string ⑤

Left hand fingering visual ...



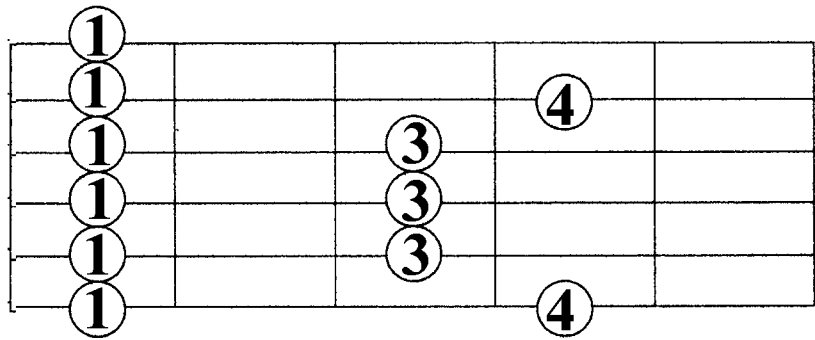
C Major Pentatonic Scale 

A Minor Pentatonic Scale 

The major and minor pentatonic scales belong to the same modal family. Notice that the minor pentatonic scale has the same notes as the major pentatonic scale a minor 3rd above. You may think of the minor pentatonic scale as the relative minor of the major pentatonic scale, just as the aeolian scale is the relative minor of the major scale.

A minor Pentatonic and C Blues

A minor Pentatonic....Two Octaves.... Fifth Position

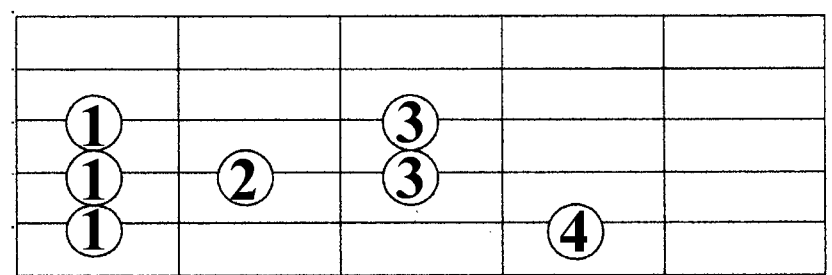


Visualization

Notice the similarity of the shape of the A minor pentatonic to the C major pentatonic scale.

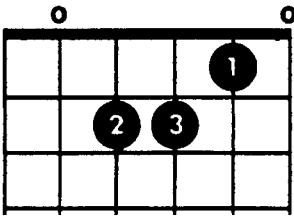

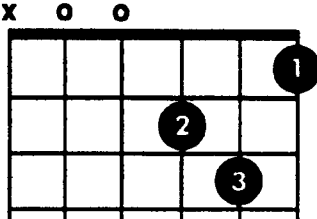

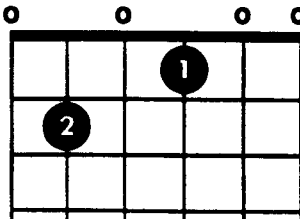

C Blues Scale ... Third Position

The *blues scale* is a six-note scale consisting of the ascending pattern: minor 3rd, whole step, half step, half step, minor 3rd, whole step.

The Key of A minor

- *A minor is the relative minor of C major. It is built on the sixth tone or "degree" of the parent C major scale.
- *Every major key has a relative minor key.
- *The key signature of both keys will be the same.
- *The minor key has the same number of tones as the major key (7).
- *The difference between the two scales are the arrangement of the half and whole steps.
- *There are three forms of the minor scale ;
the natural, the harmonic, and the melodic.

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Am I</p>  <p>5 String Chord</p>  | <p>Dm IV</p>  <p>5 String Chord</p>  | <p>E7 V7</p>  <p>6 String Chord</p>  |
|---|--|--|

Natural



Harmonic



Melodic



Alternate Strumming Continued

The next song uses the alternating (up/down stroke) strum technique. It is an eighth note rhythm pattern with variations. Use an up stroke to strum on the "and" beat. *Remember to swing your pick hand loosely from the wrist when strumming the up and down stroke.*

Practice the following rhythm.

C Am Dm G7 C

In the following song practice the alternating rhythm.

Battle of Aghrim

Dm C

Dm Am

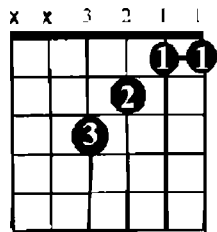
Dm Am

C Dm Am C Dm

Introduction to Bar Chords

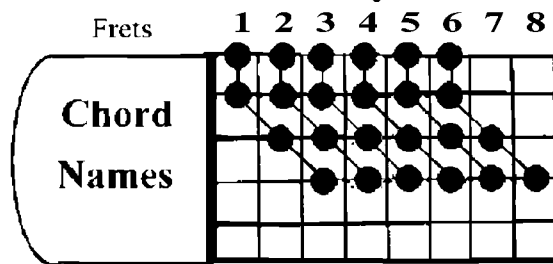
(Movable chord formations)

Bar chords are movable chords that can be played up and down the fingerboard since they do not have any "open" strings. Generally speaking, bar chord types consist of four, five and six string movable formations or "shapes" in which the index finger depresses some or all of the strings. In the five string version the third finger depresses three strings while the index depresses the other two, or the second, third and fourth finger may be used as well.



Half Bar or Small Bar

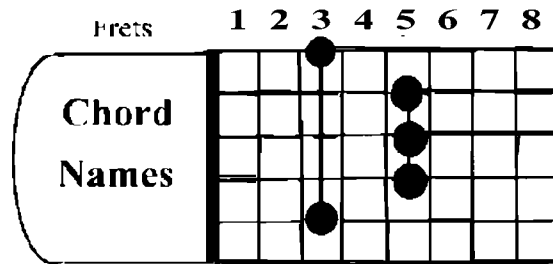
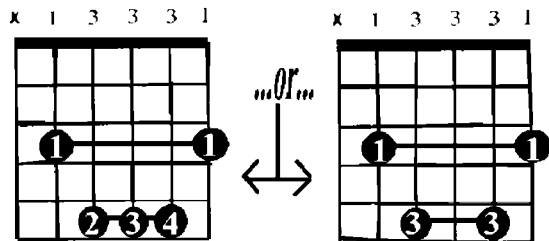
4 String Bar



Chord Names

F F# G G# A A# B C

5 string bar

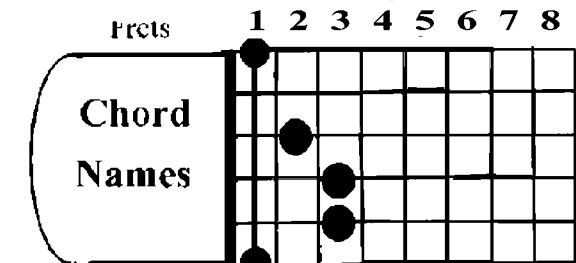
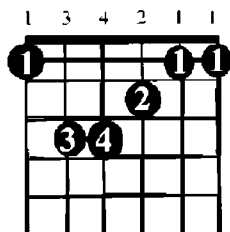


Chord Names

F F# G G# A A# B C

Full Bar

(6 String Bar)



Chord Names

F F# G G# A A# B C

Often a song is transposed to a different key to suit a singer's vocal range. In this case we are transposing down a fourth, from D major (first example) down to G major (second example). The song remains the same except the range.

Aura Lee

D E- A⁷ D

As the black-bird in the spring, 'neath the wil-low tree.

E- A⁷ D

Sat and piped I heard him sing, sing of Au-ra Lee.

Written in 1861, Aura Lee became a favorite of soldiers during the Civil War. The song has such a beautiful melody that it was adapted and recorded by Elvis Presley. The new version of Aura Lee became the title song from Elvis' first movie, *Love Me Tender*.

Aura Lee

Civil War Era Folk Song

G Am D7 G

As the black-bird in the spring, 'neath the wil-low tree.

Am D7 G

Sat and piped I heard him sing, sing of Au-ra Lee.

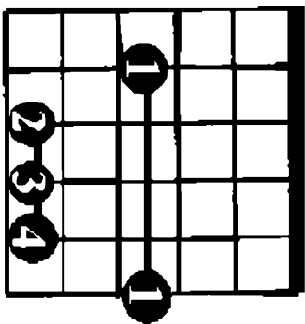
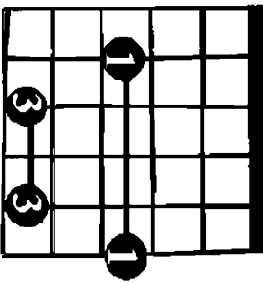
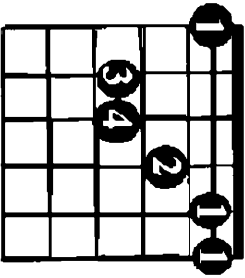
B7 Em C G

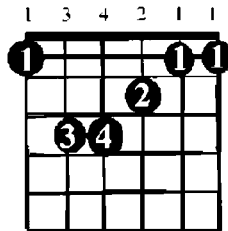
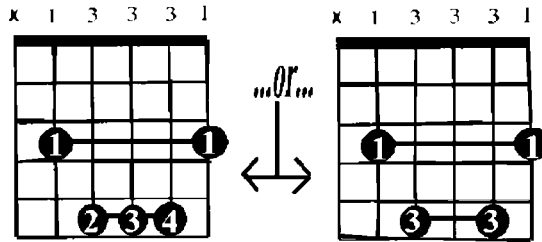
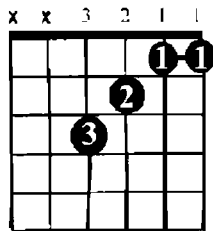
Au-ra Lee, Au-ra Lee, maid of gol-den hair;

Am D7 G

sun-shine came a-long with thee and swal-lows in the air.

Bar Chord Illustrations



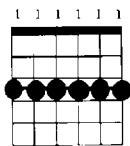


Bar Technique

To develop bar technique :

1. Place the index finger on the guitar at the third fret.
2. The index finger should be rigid (not bent) from the tip to the knuckle.
3. Place the thumb opposite the index finger behind the neck.
4. Do not allow the palm to touch the guitar neck.
5. Apply enough finger pressure to eliminate string buzz.
6. Use a downstroke with either your thumb, index finger or a flatpick, and check to see that all the strings are sounding.

Do the following exercises on the third fret, then move up or down to other frets.



4
4



rest



Note : Being able to play the small bar chord does little towards developing the full bar.

Note Of course another important method to practice bar chords and strengthen the left hand fingers is to apply the above technique the the bar chords themselves !

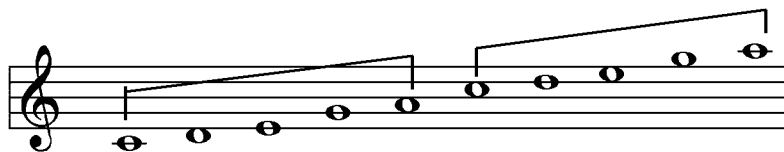
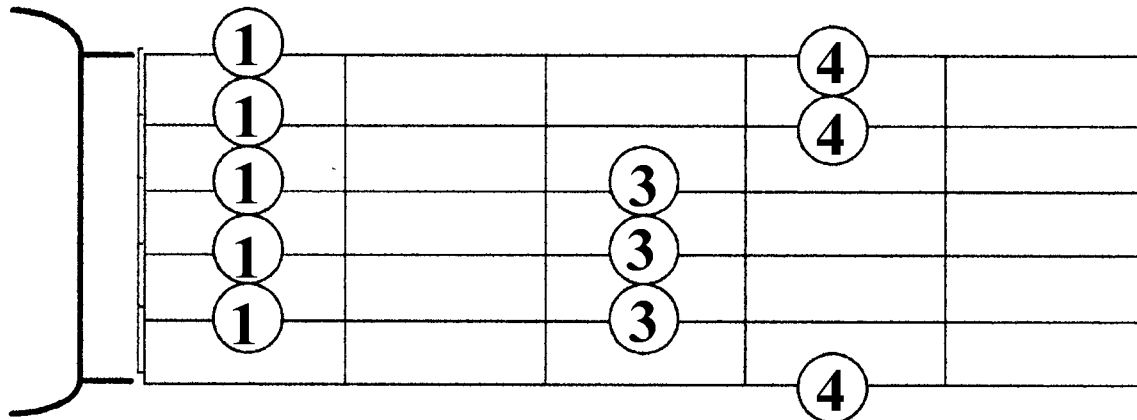
Introductory Scales

C Major Pentatonic

The Pentatonic Scale

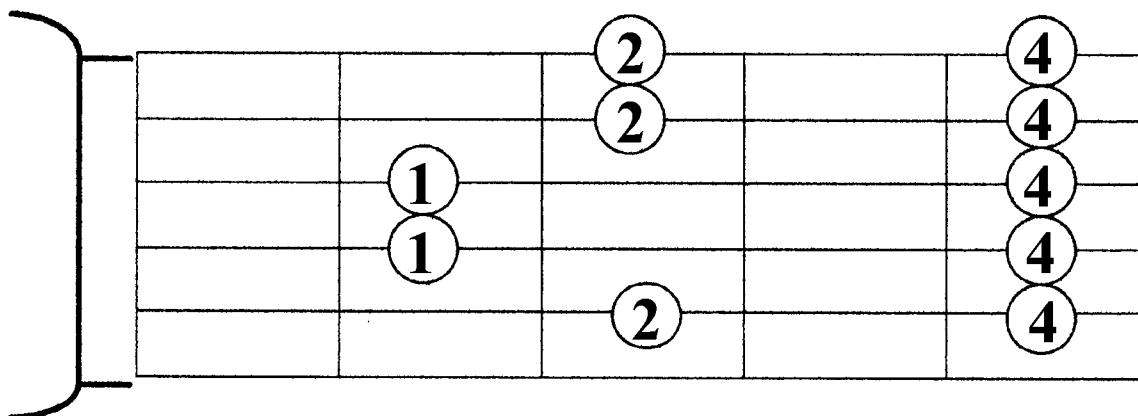
The pentatonic scale is a five note scale. By definition it can be made up of any five notes, but the most common form is the one I refer to here.

C major pentatonic.....Two octaves.....Fifth position



Scale degrees = 1 2 3 5 6

C Major Pentatonic...Second Position



This scale is a popular pattern for use as a "blues-rock" scale. If the chord progression were the blues in A (A7, D7, A7, E7, A7, D7), we could play the C Pentatonic Scale throughout the entire progression (a minor third higher than the key center A) without any objectionable notes resulting. It also works over a C major chord or progression.

Why is this ? It is because any notes in this scale played against any of the chords of the blues progression in A produce notes that sound good in the blues-rock context.