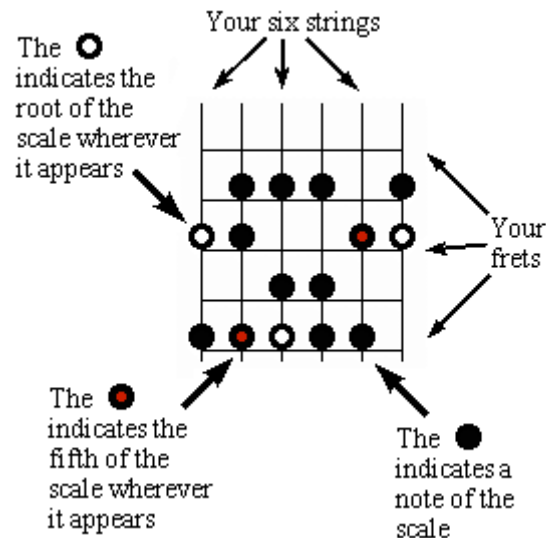


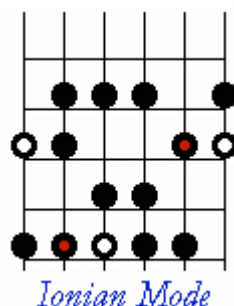
Reading Scale Charts

My scale charts will be presented as a box shown below. All the symbols I have used to make the box easy to read and use are explained here:



The root shown is always the root of the major scale. Therefore, if you are playing the A dorian mode (which is in the key of G), the root shown is G and the fifth shown is D. This is done because these notes are going to be the most important ones played in a solo so you must know where they are in every mode box.

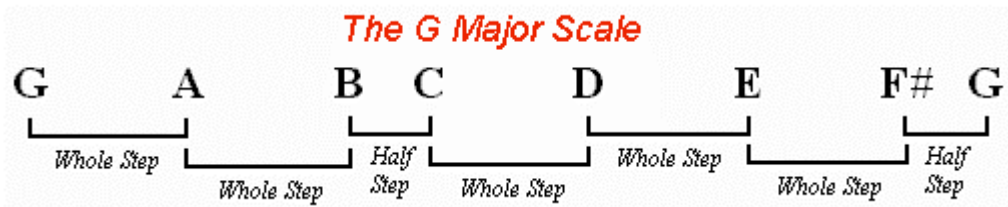
This box, as shown, represents the F# major scale. However, these boxes are designed so you can move them to any key simply by moving the root of the scale on the sixth string. To play the box as the G major scale, you play this (indicated in standard notation and tab notation):



The Major Scale

The major scale is the most used scale in popular music. This page will tell you what the major scale looks like. From there, I will teach you the seven modes of the major scale. So pick up your guitar and get ready to play some scales!

The major scale is made up of the following pattern of half and whole steps:



On standard musical notation, the G major scale looks like the diagram below. Shown below that is the G major scale played on one string. Notice the pattern of half and whole steps while you play this:

The Ionian Mode

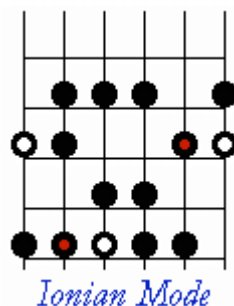
the first note of the major scale

The ionian mode is the mode based on the first note of the major scale.
The G ionian scale looks like this (standard notation and one-string tab):

**T
A
B**

e:
B:
G: 0 2 4 5 7 9 11 12
D:
A:
E:

The scale box for the ionian mode looks like this:



To play this scale as the G ionian mode, play the box with the first note at the third fret. Since this is the first mode of the major scale, this is also the major scale, played from root to root. If someone asks you to play the major scale, this is what you play.

The Dorian Mode

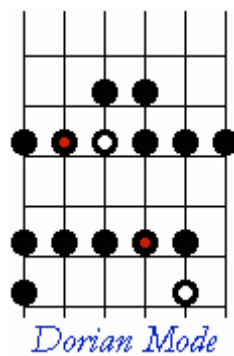
the second note of the major scale

The dorian mode is the mode based on the second note of the major scale.
In the key of G, the dorian mode starts on A.
The A dorian scale looks like this (standard notation and one-string tab):

TAB

e:
B:
G: 2 4 5 7 9 11 12 14
D:
A:
E:

The scale box for the dorian mode looks like this:



To play this scale as the A dorian mode, play the box with the first note at the fifth fret.

The Phrygian Mode

the third note of the major scale

The phrygian mode is the mode based on the third note of the major scale.

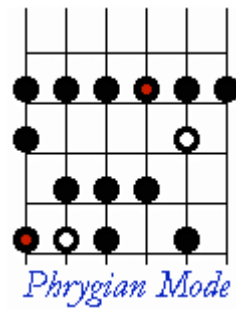
In the key of G, the phrygian mode starts on B.

The B phrygian scale looks like this (standard notation and one-string tab):

TAB

e:
B:
G: 4 5 7 9 11 12 14 16
D:
A:
E:

The scale box for the phrygian mode looks like this:



To play this scale as the B phrygian mode, play the box with the first note at the seventh fret.

The Lydian Mode

the fourth note of the major scale

The lydian mode is the mode based on the fourth note of the major scale.

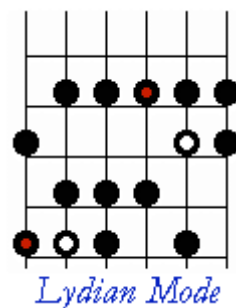
In the key of G, the lydian mode starts on C.

The C lydian scale looks like this (standard notation and one-string tab):

**T
A
B**

e:
B:
G:
D:
A: 3 5 7 9 10 12 14 15
E:

The scale box for the lydian mode looks like this:



To play this scale as the C lydian mode, play the box with the first note at the eighth fret.

The Mixolydian Mode

the fifth note of the major scale

The mixolydian mode is the mode based on the fifth note of the major scale.

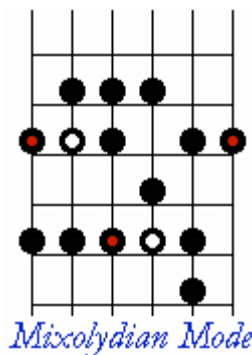
In the key of G, the mixolydian mode starts on D.

The D mixolydian scale looks like this (standard notation and one-string tab):

**T
A
B**

e:
B:
G:
D:
A: 5 7 9 10 12 14 15 17
E:

The scale box for the mixolydian mode looks like this:



To play this scale as the D mixolydian mode, play the box with the first note at the tenth fret.

The Aeolian Mode

the sixth note of the major scale

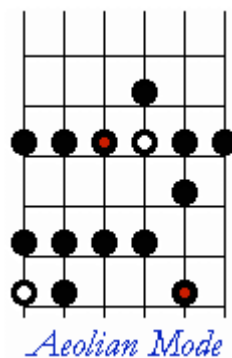
The aeolian mode is the mode based on the sixth note of the major scale.

In the key of G, the aeolian mode starts on E.

The aeolian mode is the same as the relative minor scale (in the case of G: E minor)

The E aeolian scale looks like this (standard notation and one-string tab):

The scale box for the aeolian mode looks like this:



To play this scale as the E aeolian mode, play the box with the first note at the twelfth fret.

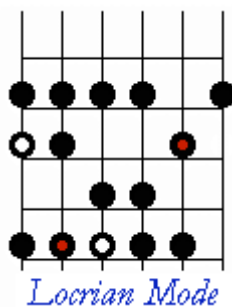
The Locrian Mode

The locrian mode is the mode based on the seventh note of the major scale.

In the key of G, the locrian mode starts on F#.

The F# locrian scale looks like this (standard notation and one-string tab):

The scale box for the locrian mode looks like this:

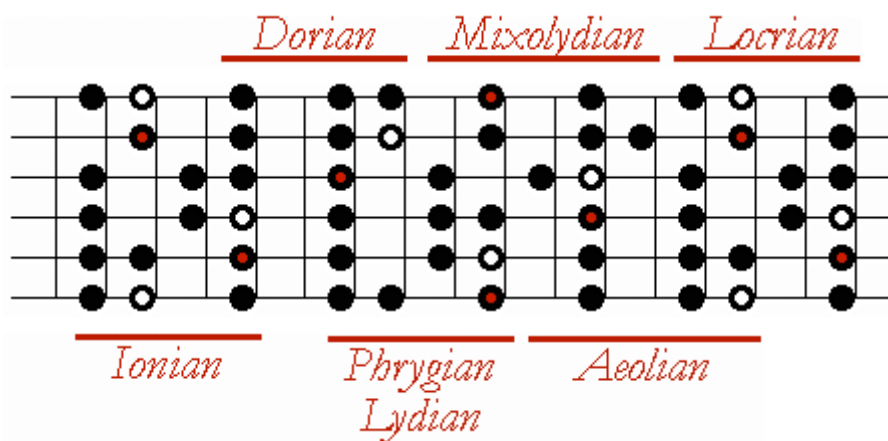


To play this scale as the F# locrian mode, play the box with the first note at the fourteenth fret or the second fret.

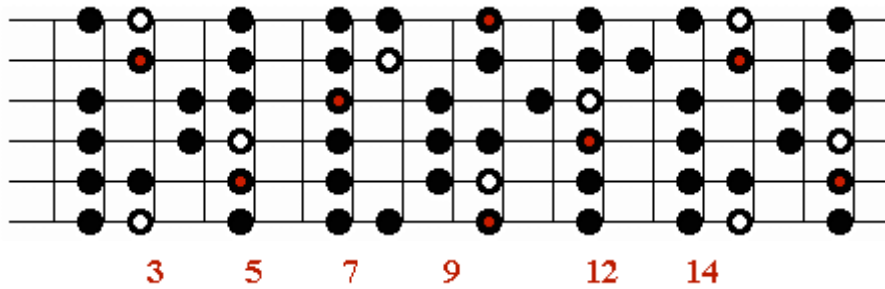
The Major Key

the major scale covering the entire fretboard

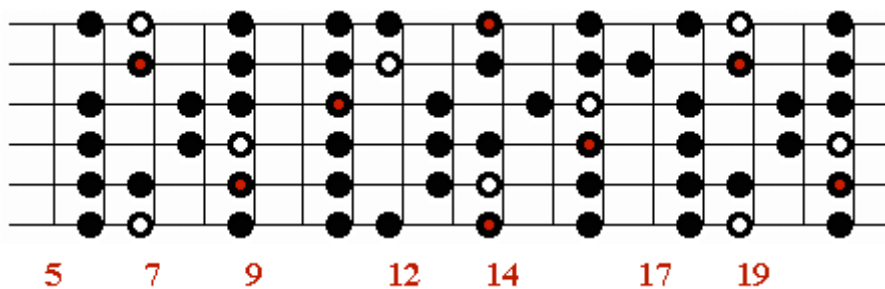
Once you have learned all the modes, you can put them together so you know every note in the key. The basis of soloing is this: start in a box, and stay in your box when you are doing fast stuff, but change boxes and move up and down the fretboard for more interesting solos. This is the pattern you use to move around the fretboard. You have seen all these patterns before, in each mode box, but now they are bunched together and extend over the entire fretboard. The diagram below shows all twelve frets and all the notes contained in the key you are playing in:



When using this pattern to play in a certain key, simply find which fret to start on by identifying the key. Since you know where the root is on the diagram, just line that up with the root of the key you are playing in. For example, in the key of G, you would play this pattern so the root on the sixth string was at the third fret:



This example is in the key of B:

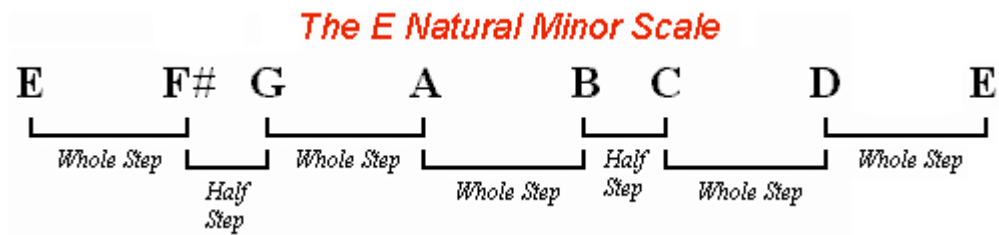


Now, don't go about memorizing this whole chart. Simply memorize the small mode boxes, paying special attention to the root and fifth in each, and when you are playing the entire fretboard try to remember how the modes go together. Concentrate on a small area at one time, not the whole thing. This will make your life much easier, and will free your mind for spontaneity during soloing. Good luck, and have fun with this!

The Natural Minor Scale

The natural minor scale is not very common in rock music. It is not going to give you much use, though understanding how the natural minor scale [relates to the major scale](#) is very useful. If you will focus on minor keys a lot, I recommend the other minor scales. This page will tell you what the natural minor scale looks like. From there, I will teach you the seven modes of the natural minor scale. So

The natural minor scale contains seven different pitches. The natural minor scale is made up of the following pattern of half and whole steps:



On standard musical notation, the E natural minor scale looks like the diagram below. Shown below that is the E natural minor scale played on one string. Notice the pattern of half and whole steps while you play this:

T
A
B

e:
E:
G:
D:
A:
E:

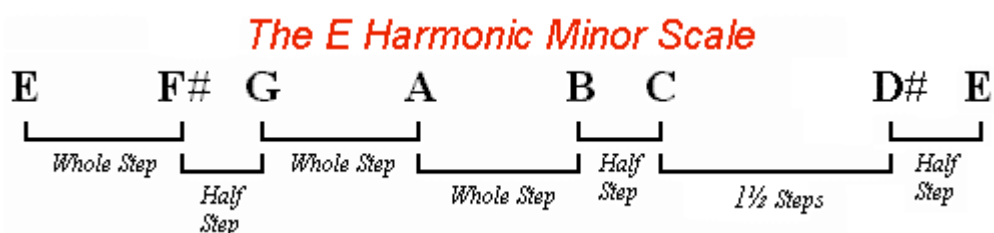
0 2 3 5 7 8 10 12

This pattern of half and whole steps will be important for the rest of the natural minor scale lessons. Try to get an understanding of how it sounds and how it feels to your ears. Don't necessarily memorize the pattern; memorizing will not help you learn. Get a feeling of how it sounds and remember it that way. Everything from here on will be in the key of E minor, just to provide continuity. Move on to the [aeolian mode](#) once you understand the pattern.

The Harmonic Minor Scale

The harmonic minor scale is somewhat common in rock music. This page will tell you what the harmonic minor scale looks like. From there, I will teach you the seven modes of the harmonic minor scale. So pick up your guitar and get ready to play some scales!

The harmonic minor scale contains seven different pitches. The harmonic minor scale is made up of the following pattern of half, whole, and 1½ steps:



Notice that the E harmonic minor scale has the exact same notes as the [natural minor scale](#), except the seventh is raised a half step: from D to D#. This leaves a half step leading tone between the D# and E, which sounds better than the whole step that appears in the natural minor scale. On standard musical notation, the E harmonic minor scale looks like the diagram below. Shown below that is the E harmonic minor scale played on one string. Notice the pattern of half, whole, and 1½ steps while you play this:

This pattern of half, whole, and 1½ steps will be important for the rest of the harmonic minor scale lessons. Try to get an understanding of how it sounds and how it feels to your ears. Don't necessarily memorize the pattern; memorizing will not help you learn. Get a feeling of how it sounds and remember it that way. Everything from here on will be in the key of E minor, just to provide continuity. Move on to the [first mode](#) once you understand the pattern.

The Melodic Minor Scale

The melodic minor scale is common in rock music. This page will tell you what the melodic minor scale looks like. From there, I will teach you the seven modes of the melodic minor scale. So pick up your guitar and get ready to play some scales!

The melodic minor scale contains seven different pitches. The melodic minor scale is made up of the following pattern of half and whole steps:

The E Melodic Minor Scale

E	F#	G	A	B	C#	D#	E
<i>Whole Step</i>		<i>Half Step</i>		<i>Whole Step</i>		<i>Whole Step</i>	
<i>Whole Step</i>		<i>Whole Step</i>		<i>Whole Step</i>		<i>Half Step</i>	

Notice that the E melodic minor scale has the exact same notes as the [harmonic minor scale](#), except the sixth is raised a half step: from C to C#. This maintains the half step leading tone between the seventh and the tonic, which sounds a lot better than the whole step which appears in the natural minor scale, but avoids the awkward 1½ step between the sixth and seventh which appears in the harmonic minor scale. On standard musical notation, the E melodic minor scale looks like the diagram below. Shown below that is the E melodic minor scale played on one string. Notice the pattern of half and whole steps while you play this:

The image shows the E melodic minor scale on a single guitar string. The top staff is a treble clef with a C-clef (soprano clef) on the first line, indicating the string is E. The notes are: E (open), F# (2nd fret), G (3rd fret), A (5th fret), B (7th fret), C# (9th fret), D (11th fret), and E (12th fret). Below the staff is a guitar tablature with six lines labeled e, B, G, D, A, and E from top to bottom. The fret numbers 0, 2, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, and 12 are written under the corresponding frets on the E string.

This pattern of half and whole steps will be important for the rest of the melodic minor scale lessons. Try to get an understanding of how it sounds and how it feels to your ears. Don't necessarily memorize the pattern; memorizing will not help you learn. Get a feeling of how it sounds and remember it that way. Everything from here on will be in the key of E minor, just to provide continuity. Move on to the [first mode](#) once you understand the pattern.