

# PENTATONIC PATTERNS

for *Improvisation* (all instruments)



- \* Master the pentatonic scale
- \* Build technique
- \* Develop improv. language
- \* 60+ patterns
- \* Audio examples
- \* Mp3 Backing Tracks in 12 keys

**Better**   
**Sax**

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The pentatonic scale is perhaps our most versatile collection of notes for improvising and playing melodically. This collection of patterns serves as a resource of practice material to improve your technique with the pentatonic scale in all keys. These patterns are also meant to be used in improvised solos as starting points, ideas, or basic pentatonic language.

## How to use this book

Always practice these exercises with a metronome or backing track. All of the exercises are written in eighth notes, but you can play them in quarter notes (half speed) to start out if that is more comfortable.

Begin at a comfortable tempo 60-70 bpm. The goal is to develop smooth and steady technique and play in sync with the metronome or backing track. Gradually increase the tempo by 2 bpm as you master the pattern over the range of your instrument. Once you are fluent in a particular pattern and can play eighth notes at a brisk tempo, say 120 bpm, try setting the metronome back to 60 and playing the same pattern in 16th notes. Gradually increase the tempo from there.

Each pattern is shown in the key of C Major/A minor. I strongly recommend that you aspire to play each pattern you learn in all 12 keys.

# Why Do We Play Patterns?

Practicing scale patterns is something that just about all musicians do and for good reason. Concentrated practice of scales and scale patterns with a metronome helps us to develop steady and solid technique, which is absolutely essential to sounding good when playing your instrument. This is equally important for players of classical, jazz, rock and any other style of music.

As improvisors, scale patterns can be used in various ways in order to build interesting solos. Played slowly, for example, a scale pattern can be used to create a melodic line that has continuity. When trying to build tension and excitement, a scale pattern played at a fast tempo can be very effective. Be careful not to overuse scale patterns when improvising however, since that can result in very uninteresting solos.

Just about all great improvisors (and classical composers) use scale patterns to some degree. I highly recommend listening to your favorite improvisors, and taking note of when they use scale patterns in their solos. The best way to learn how and when to play scale patterns when improvising is to imitate the masters.

Once you have spent some time practicing the patterns in this book, try improvising over the included backing tracks using only the pentatonic scale. Try to hear what you want to play in your head before you play it. Play musical phrases of various lengths pausing between them. Use the pauses to « hear » what you will play next.

# Relative Major & Minor Pentatonic Scales in all 12 keys

C MAJOR

1 2 3 5 6 1

F MAJOR

1 2 3 5 6 1

B $\flat$  MAJOR

1 2 3 5 6 1

E $\flat$  MAJOR

1 2 3 5 6 1

A $\flat$  MAJOR

1 2 3 5 6 1

D $\flat$  MAJOR

1 2 3 5 6 1

A MINOR

1 3 4 5 7 1

D MINOR

1 3 4 5 7 1

G MINOR

1 3 4 5 7 1

C MINOR

1 3 4 5 7 1

F MINOR

1 3 4 5 7 1

B $\flat$  MINOR

1 3 4 5 7 1

F# MAJOR

1 2 3 5 6 1

B MAJOR

1 2 3 5 6 1

E MAJOR

1 2 3 5 6 1

A MAJOR

1 2 3 5 6 1

D MAJOR

1 2 3 5 6 1

G MAJOR

1 2 3 5 6 1

D# MINOR

1 3 4 5 7 1

G# MINOR

1 3 4 5 7 1

C# MINOR

1 3 4 5 7 1

F# MINOR

1 3 4 5 7 1

B MINOR

1 3 4 5 7 1

E MINOR

1 3 4 5 7 1

# Preparatory exercises

Below is an example of what I call **Pentatonic Exercise 1** in the key of C major. In this exercise we play our major pentatonic scale over the entire range of our instrument up and back down again. Learn your major pentatonic scale and practice **Pentatonic Exercise 1** in all 12 keys.



The example below shows how to play **Pentatonic Exercise 1** in the key of F. Notice how we play down to the lowest note on our saxophone that is still in the scale, and then back up again to finish on F. Be sure to practice the other 10 keys in this manner as well.





## Pentatonic Exercise 2

In this exercise we play our major pentatonic scale one octave up and then back down. We repeat this for each different note in the scale over the entire range of our instrument. Below is what this exercise would look like in the key of C major. Practice this in all 12 keys.

The image displays four staves of musical notation in 4/4 time, illustrating the exercise in the key of C major. Each staff consists of two measures: an ascending pentatonic scale followed by a descending pentatonic scale. The scales are centered on the notes C, D, E, F, and G, moving up one octave from the first staff to the fourth. The notation uses a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The first staff starts on C4, the second on D4, the third on E4, and the fourth on F4. Each scale is played in eighth notes, with a quarter rest at the end of each measure.

# Additional Tips

While working through the patterns and exercises in this book here are some things to keep in mind.

**Sound** - always play with your best possible sound. These patterns will get you playing in the very high and very low ranges of your instrument where it is more of a challenge to play with a beautiful sound. Use this practice to improve your control and ability to play with a beautiful sound in these registers.

**Rhythm** - I cannot overestimate the importance of playing with good rhythm. I find that students can greatly improve their ability to play with solid rhythm when they stop reading sheet music and play by ear. The act of reading notes from a page often gets in the way of our natural sense of rhythm. This is why I encourage all of my students to play as much as possible by ear. Always use a metronome or backing track accompaniment, and strive to play "in the pocket."

**Memorize** - Besides helping you to play better in rhythm, memorizing the pentatonic scale in all 12 keys and the patterns themselves, will allow you to retain the information much more than if you were to read it from sheet music. You may be quite surprised at how well your brain is able to record musical information if you have been mainly reading sheet music up until this point.

# Using the Backing Tracks

There are 12 accompanying backing tracks for this book, one for each of the 12 keys. Three different "songs" or sets of chord changes have been recorded in 4 different keys each. Have a look at the track listing for the backing track album below. Notice that in the title of each song there is a number which refers to the tempo in bpm (beats per minute) as well as the key. Each song follows a 32 bar **AABA** form. The first key in the title refers to the **A** sections and the second key refers to the **B** section or bridge. We go to the relative major/minor key on the **B** section of each song. This is very common in popular songs from all styles of music and playing over these tracks will get you used to this sound. Use these tracks to practice the patterns in different



1. Groovy 100 C major/A minor
2. Funky 110 D minor/F major
3. Smooth 80 G minor/Bb major
4. Groovy 100 Eb major/C minor
5. Funky 110 F minor/Ab major
6. Smooth 80 Bb minor/Db major
7. Groovy 100 F# major/D# minor
8. Funky 110 G# minor/B major
9. Smooth 80 C# minor/E major
10. Groovy 100 A major/F# minor
11. Funky 110 B minor/D major

keys and tempos, as well as practice improvisation and having fun playing.

Here we see the versatility of the pentatonic scale. Notice that the same scale can be used equally well over the major and minor sections.

# Sample Patterns

## Pattern 1

This is as standard as it gets. The pentatonic scale in groups of 4 notes ascending. (up, up, up)



## Pattern 1.1

Our first pattern flipped around. (down, down, down)



## Pattern 1.2

Combining the first two variations of Pattern 1, otherwise known as the upside down and backwards technique (UD&B).

The musical notation for Pattern 1.2 is presented in four staves, all in 4/4 time. The first two staves form the first variation, and the last two staves form the second variation. The first variation starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (Bb). The melody begins on the middle C (C4) and moves up stepwise through D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, Bb4, C5, and D5. The second variation starts on the G4 (the second line of the staff) and moves down stepwise through F4, E4, D4, C4, Bb3, A3, G3, and F3. The notation includes stems, beams, and slurs to indicate the flow of the patterns. The first variation ends with a double bar line, and the second variation ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.



# Order the Full Version of Pentatonic Patterns for Improvisation

- ✓ - Digital download eBook over 50 pages
- ✓ - 60+ pentatonic patterns
- ✓ - Pentatonic music theory explained
- ✓ - Backing track MP3 downloads in all 12 keys



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# Take Your Playing to the Next Level

Let me introduce to you my Pentatonic Foundation Online Video course. It takes you from the beginning steps of learning the pentatonic scale, through to playing your own improvised solos. Here's what it contains...

## In depth video lessons

I go through each of the steps in this Play By Ear system starting with the basics you need to get started. Watching and listening to me go through the steps with my saxophone helps it sink in much faster and will make many of the concepts clearer and easier to understand and assimilate. There are 17 individual video chapters in the course, over 90 minutes of focused, to the point instruction. I do not believe in wasting time with a lot of filler.



## Backing Tracks

This is one of the tools used by just about all musicians that are serious about improving. You need to play with other musicians to get better and short of having a professional rehearsal band at your disposal, the right backing track is a pretty good alternative. These tracks are specifically designed to work with the Pentatonic Foundation course. The keys and tempos match the exercises and examples in the video lessons. These tracks are yours to keep and download to any device you choose for unlimited listening.

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## Sheet Music PDFs

Even though you are strongly encouraged to learn all the material by ear and memorize it. You may need some extra help from time to time. Everything played in the course is also provided in sheet music examples that you can download and view on any device.

## Solo Analysis

A recording of an improvised solo played over one of the backing tracks is provided where I play using all the concepts learned throughout the course. A detailed transcription and analysis of this solo provides a great way to more thoroughly understand the material and how to put it into practice.



## Music Theory Explained

If you're not 100% sure about what different theory terms mean, it's all covered in detail throughout the course. We learn about the difference between major and minor pentatonic scales, how to construct them, and how to find their relative partners.

## Play Along With a Pro

One of the best advantages to learning in this way, is having the chance to play through all of the exercises and examples together with me. This is a sure fire way to know if you're doing things correctly.

## Course Guide Book

The Pentatonic Foundation course also comes with a pdf guide book. This guide has all the information from the course and serves as an excellent reference if you would like to print it out or view on a tablet or computer screen.

## E-flat and B-flat versions

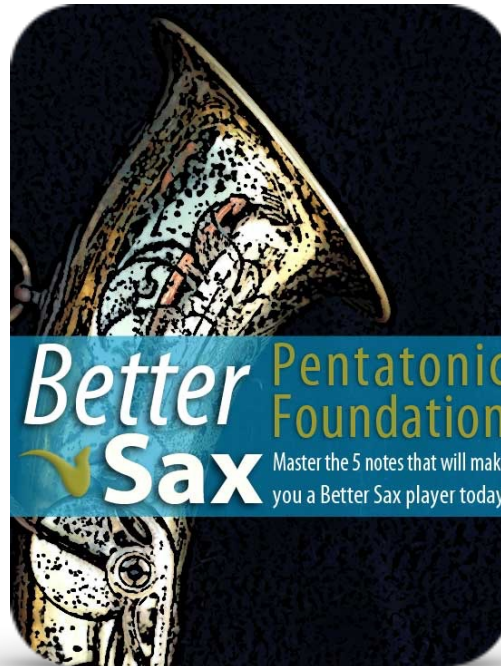
Separate versions of the course are available depending on the instrument you play. With your purchase, you get access to both.

## Unlimited Access

With a purchase of the full Pentatonic Foundation Course, you have unlimited access to the videos, backing tracks and pdf documentation. You will also get updates to the course as they are released at no extra charge.

It's all in the Pentatonic Foundation course and a whole lot more...

Get the full  
**Pentatonic Foundation**  
online video course today



[Click here to find out more about the Pentatonic Foundation course.](#)

## Conclusion

There are no shortcuts in music. You have to put the work in to get results. The key is knowing where to start and what to practice to achieve your goals.

The Pentatonic Foundation will give you loads to practice and get you playing real music quickly. If you have ever felt like your practicing has been leading you no where, perhaps you were practicing the wrong material? I've been there myself many times which is why I created this program.

Everything you learn here will be useful to you for as long as you're playing music on any instrument and in any style. As you progress, you will find yourself applying these concepts, techniques and strategies to whatever music you are learning and playing.