

MIKE HAYES

PRESENTS

**RIDICULOUSLY
EASY
GUITAR
SCALES**

TERMS OF USE

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**Ridiculously
EASY
Guitar Scales**

About the Author



Mike Hayes, the mind behind Express Guitar, is a guitar teacher, author, and musician boasting over 30 years of professional experience. He has been hailed as legendary among method teachers and session guitarists. Located in Queensland, Australia, Hayes is passionate about his work and dedicated to helping students achieve success quickly.

Hayes began his performing career at the age of thirteen playing concerts, parties and country dances and has shared the stage with many top international acts including legendary rock guitarist Phil Emmanuel, jazz great George Golla and world renowned Hawaiian guitarist Jerry Byrd.

Maintaining a healthy balance of '*street smarts*' and formal education, Mike studied arranging and composing from Berklee College, Boston USA, recording engineering with Peter Miller (former producer for the Beatles); and he has had the thrill of having his music officially listed in the 31st annual Grammy awards ballot "Best Instrumental" category.

Hayes' track record as an educator is equally impressive ... from #1 hit's on the UK charts to back-up guitarist's for Casey Chambers, Roxy music and Amity Affliction his students can be regularly seen and heard on NATIONAL radio and Television working side by side with successful established performers.

In the late 1970's Mike began teaching his techniques to others and opened a boutique Guitar Studio that works with guitar enthusiasts and career minded musicians in an effort to teach others how to apply the strategies he himself has developed and implemented in his own career.

About this Book

The concept of connected learning whereby each new piece of information is linked to something we already know is the basic concept behind the *Ridiculously Easy Guitar Scale system*.

Guitarists tend to learn and retain information when it is presented visually; consequently a large percentage of the information in this book is presented as 'sonic shapes' that interlock and create 'memory pegs' that enable the guitarist to always be able to instantly recall the information.

Always remember that learning the guitar is an accumulative process therefore regular review is essential.

Good luck, and have fun!

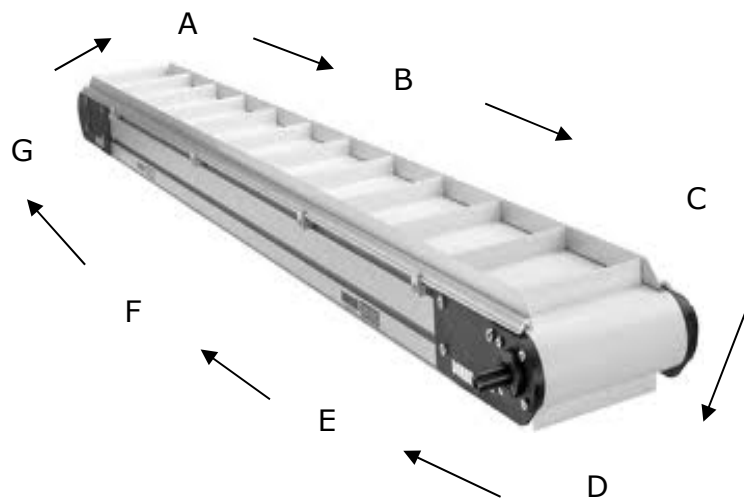
The Language Of Music

Music is a language ... a universal language and like any language it has an alphabet.

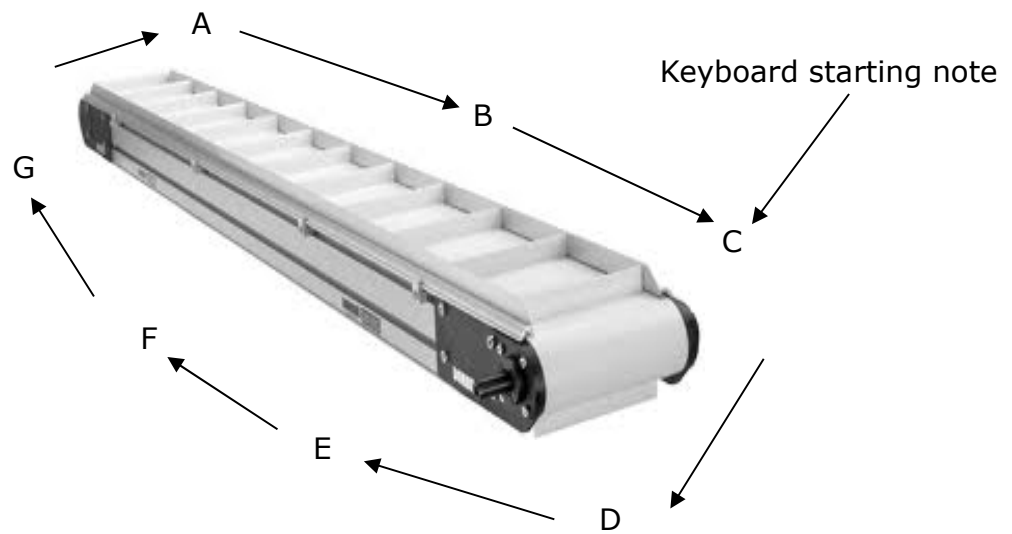
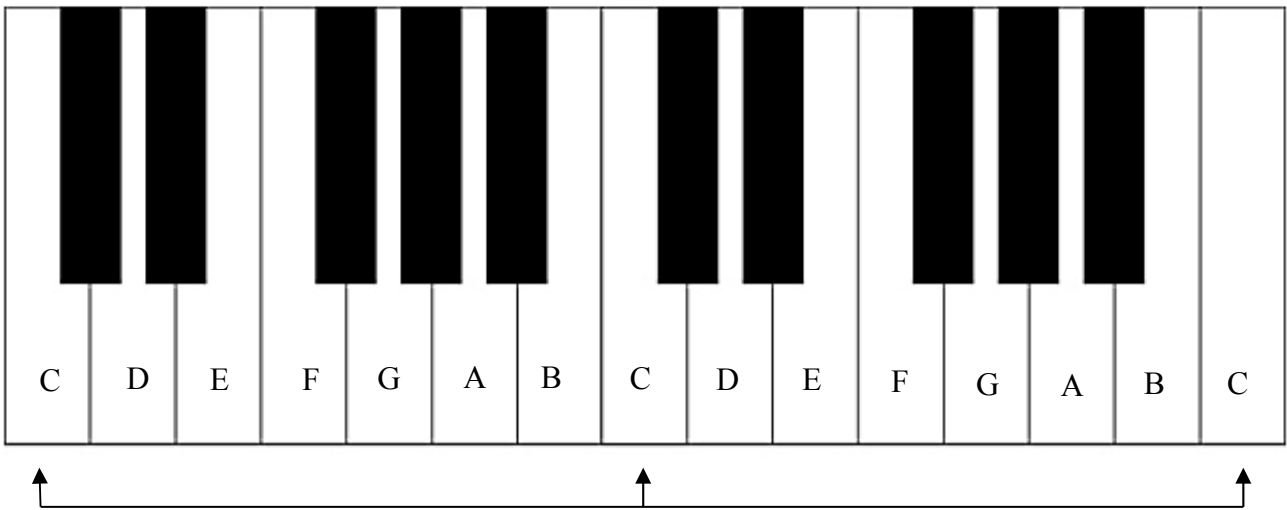
Our musical alphabet consists of the first seven letters of our English alphabet:
A-B-C-D-E-F-G

That's it! There's no other letters just these same seven letters repeated over and over.

Concept 1: Think of these seven letters as if they were on a musical conveyor belt.

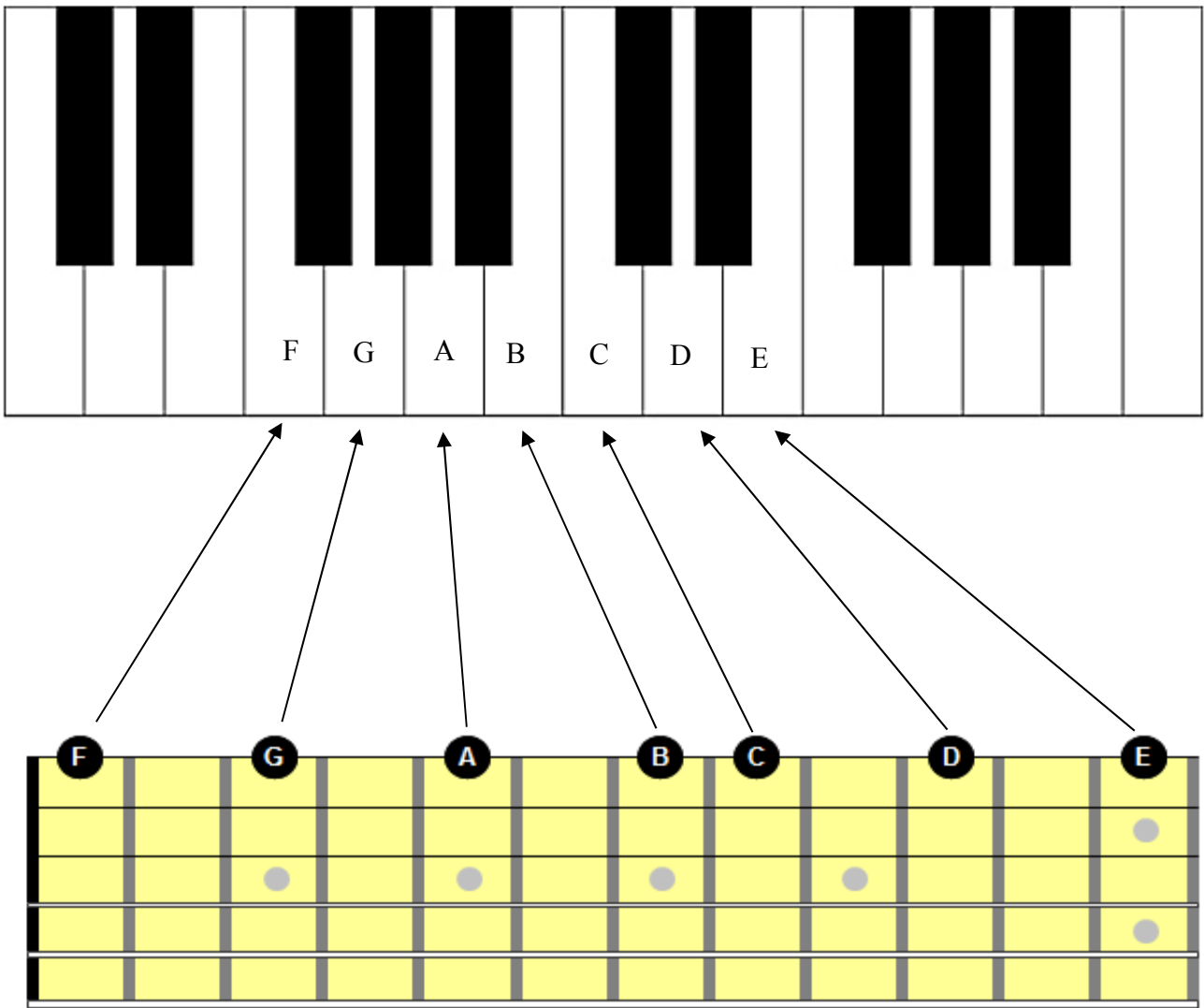


Memory Key 1 : The seven notes on our rotating conveyor belt represent the white notes on a piano keyboard.



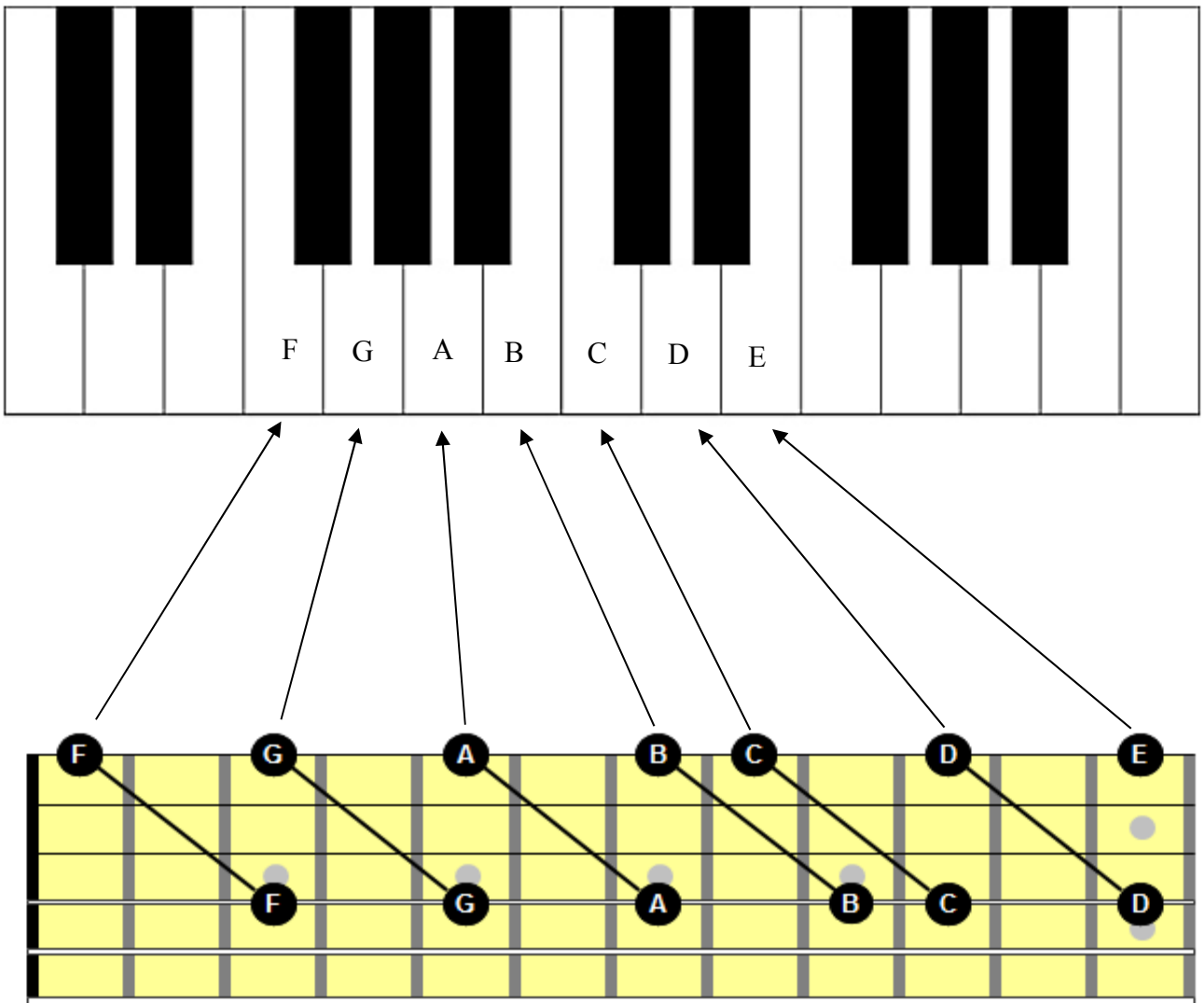
Project 1: Take 30 seconds to study the piano keyboard.

- (a) Notice how our keyboard diagram begins on the note **C**, depending on the size of the keyboard the note sequence may start on a different note.
- (b) Did you notice how the note sequence repeats over and over for the whole keyboard?
- (c) Did you notice how certain pairs of notes **B and C**; and **E and F** do not have any black note in between them?



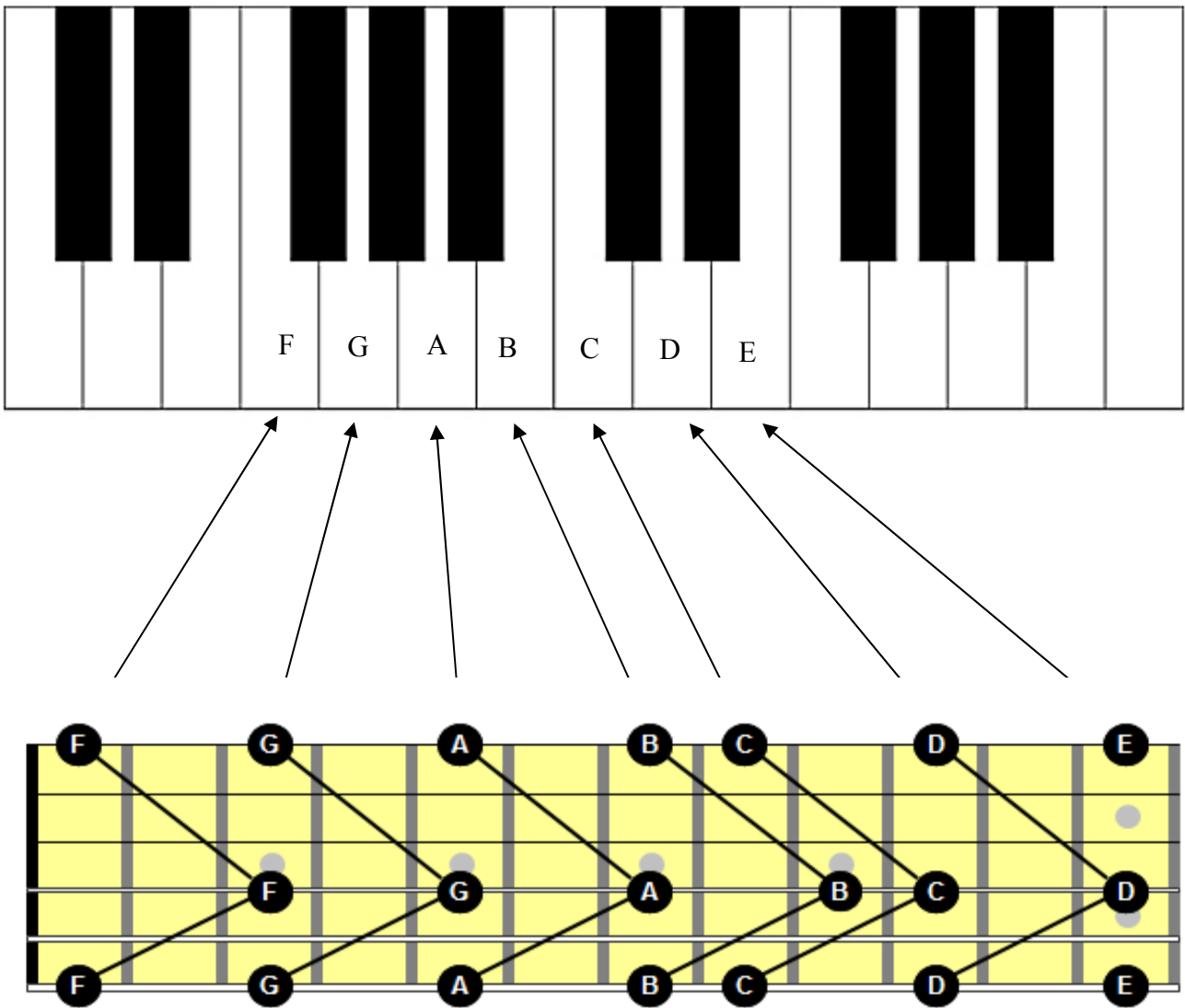
Concept 2: Think of the 1st string of the guitar as being a piano keyboard.

Memory key 2: Take 60 seconds to relate the note layout on the keyboard to the guitar fretboard



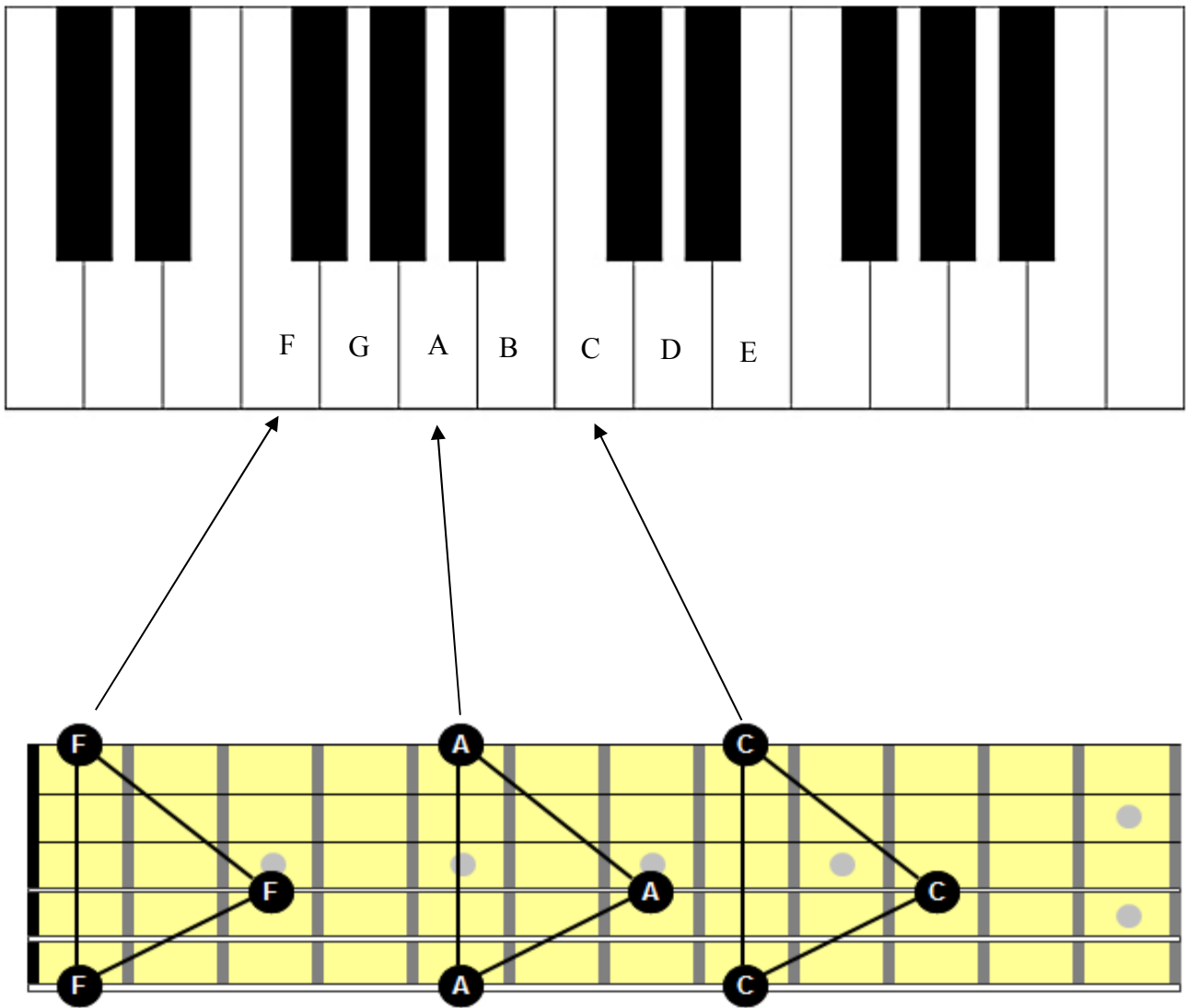
Concept 2: Learn the notes on the fourth string by linking them to the notes on the first string.

Memory key 2: To link the fourth string to the first string remember to skip two strings (the 2nd and 3rd strings) and one fret.



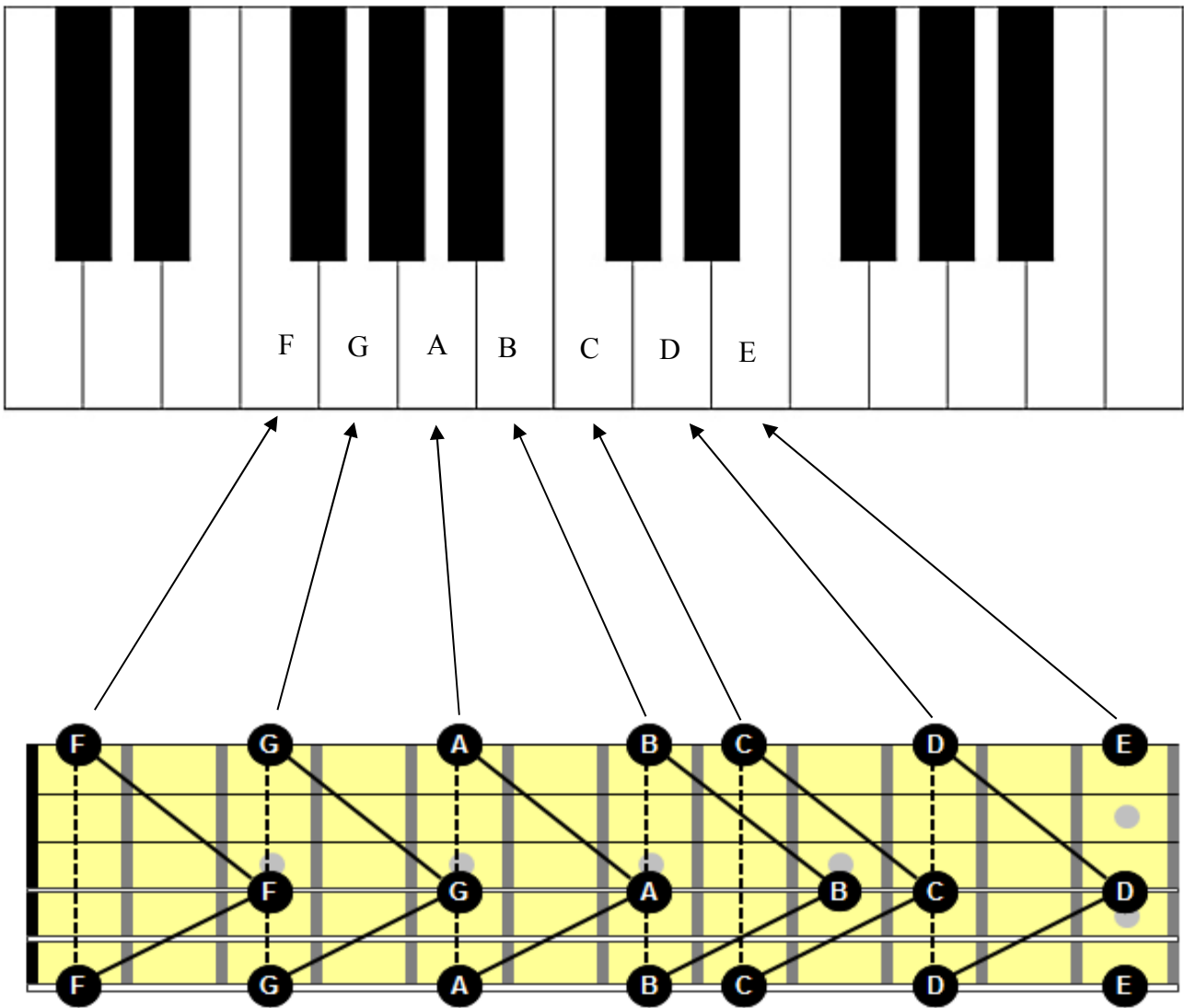
Concept 3: Learn the notes on the sixth string by linking them to the notes on the fourth string.

Memory key 3: To link the sixth string to the fourth string remember to skip one string (the 5th string) and one fret.



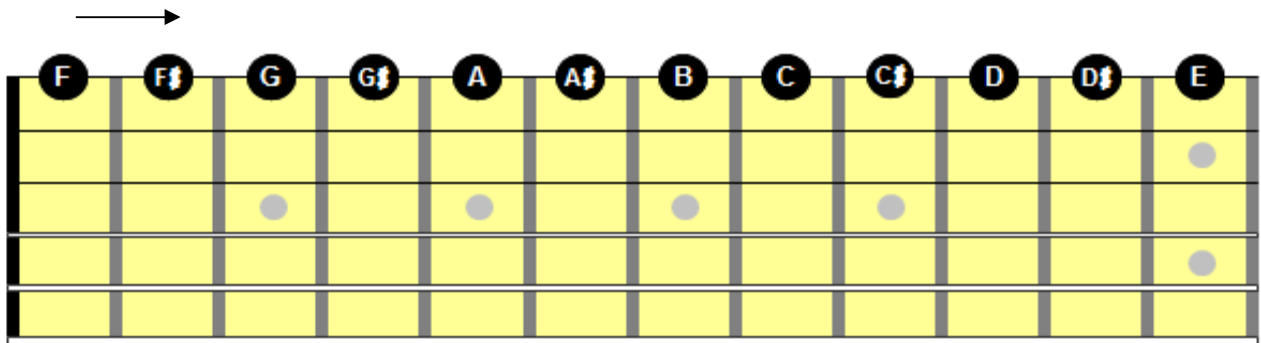
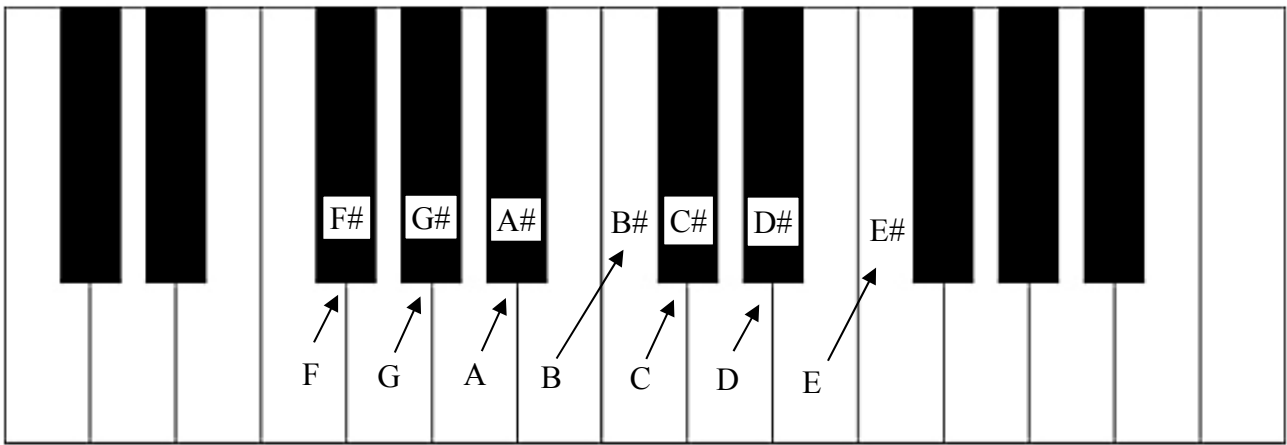
Concept 4: By connecting the sixth string note to the first string note we have a ***triangle sonic shape***.

Memory key 4: The *triangle* sonic shape is movable all over the fretboard as long as we know the names of the notes on the first string we will automatically know the notes on the fourth and sixth strings.



Concept 5: Think of the guitar as having a *rotating fingerboard* in the same way that a piano keyboard note sequence is repeated over and over for the entire length of the keyboard (page 8), the guitar fingerboard note sequence repeats again after the twelfth fret.

Memory key 5: All notes repeat after the twelfth fret e.g.,
 13th fret = F
 15th fret = G
 17th fret = A



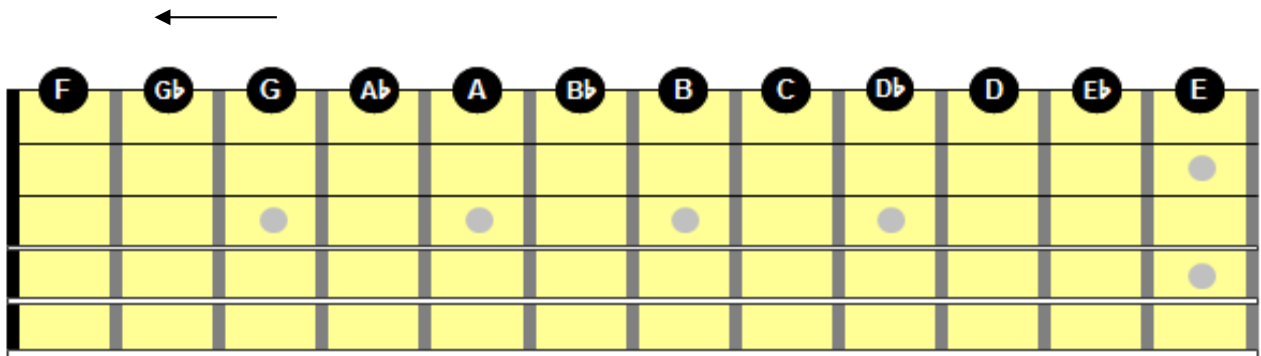
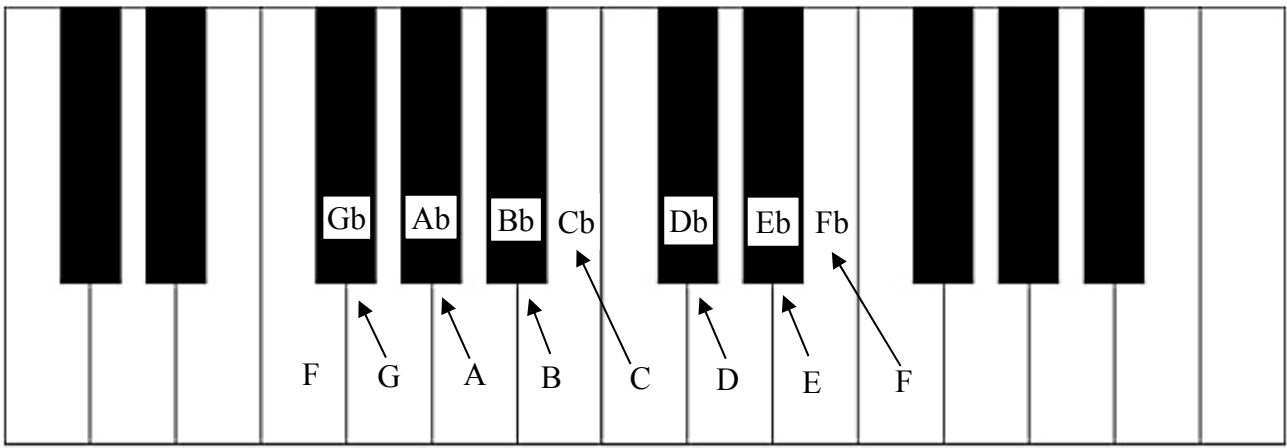
Concept 6: The sharp sign (#) placed after *any* note raises the *pitch* of that note by moving the note one key to the right on the piano and *one fret to the right on the guitar*.

To sharpen any note on the guitar move that note one fret to the right.

IMPORTANT: This is a blanket rule it *always* works in *every* situation therefore **B#** would become the note **C** and **E#** would become the note **F**.

$$\begin{aligned} B\# &= C \\ E\# &= F \end{aligned}$$

Memory key 6: Think of when you step on something sharp ... you jump *up* in the air; *when a note is sharpened the pitch of the note is raised by shortening the length of the string.*



Concept 7: The flat sign (b) placed after *any* note lowers the *pitch* of that note by moving the note one key to the left on the piano and *one fret to the left on the guitar*.

To flat any note on the guitar move that note one fret to the left.

IMPORTANT: This is a blanket rule it *always* works in *every* situation therefore **Cb** would become the note **B** and **Fb** would become the note **E**.

Cb = B
Fb = E

Memory key 7: Think of a flat tyre ... the tyre goes *down*; when a note is flattened the *pitch* of the note goes down by lengthening the string.

Enharmonics

As you can see from the previous two pages on sharps and flats with sharps moving notes one fret to the right and flats moving notes one fret to the left you are bound to have situations where a note can have two different names e.g., F# / Gb this is called an **enharmonic**.

An **enharmonic** means "looks different but sounds the same", it's like the musical equivalent of "also known as" (A.K.A)

Here is a list of musical enharmonic's:

A# = Bb
C# = Db
D# = Eb
F# = Gb
G# = Ab

Whether we call a note by it's sharp name or flat name depends on the situation e.g., if we were playing a descending passage we would label the note as a flat ...

E - Eb - D - Db - C

Whereas if the musical phrase was ascending we would identify the note as a sharp ...

C - C# - D - D# - E

Scales:

Scales are the building blocks from which all music is created, we use scales to create melodies (horizontal structures), chords (vertical structures), arpeggios (oblique structures).

Scales in themselves are not music they are simply our musical alphabet. In the hands of a skilled musician they can create music.

Where to start:

There are over 3,500 different types of scales the good news is that most of the best guitar players only use a handful of scales.

The best place to start is with the most universal scale the minor pentatonic scale.

The Pentatonic scale:

The pentatonic scale is a five note scale (penta = five), technically speaking any group of five notes would qualify to be a pentatonic scale, however the most common pentatonic scales are the **minor pentatonic** and **major pentatonic** scales.

These two scales together with the **blues scale** are the most common and useful for the working guitarist, a through knowledge of how these scales can be applied to popular music will enable the guitarist to cover most musical situations.

The focus of this book will be on two of these scales, namely the minor pentatonic and blues scale.

- 1. Minor pentatonic scale**
- 2. Blues scale**

Minor pentatonic scale:

If there was one universal scale that belonged to the whole world it would have to be the minor pentatonic scale ... this scale is found (with slight variations) everywhere throughout the world ... it is the scale everyone is familiar with and therefore it should come as no surprise to learn that many of our most famous guitar riffs have their origins in the minor pentatonic scale.

If you have ever heard ...

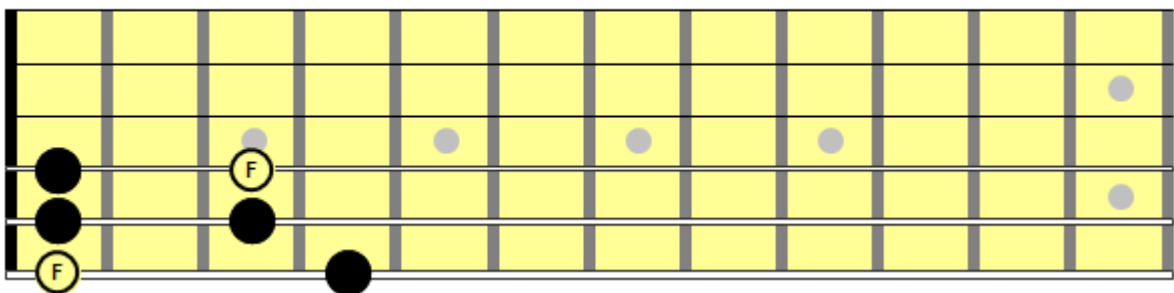
Layla – Eric Clapton
I Shot The Sheriff – Eric Clapton
Whole Lotta Love – Led Zeppelin
Paranoid – Black Sabbath
Dark Night – Deep Purple
Purple Haze – Jimi Hendrix
Voodoo Child – Jimi Hendrix
Good Golly Miss Molly – Creedence

You have heard the minor pentatonic scale sound ...

In fact it would be much easier to name bands that don't use this scale ... minor pentatonic scale show up everywhere in rock music. Top Classic songs from bands like Pink Floyd, Rolling Stones, Led Zeppelin, AC/DC, Aerosmith, Van Halen and guns N' Roses feature minor pentatonic scales again and again.

That said ... our first place to start is to learn the F minor pentatonic scale pattern.

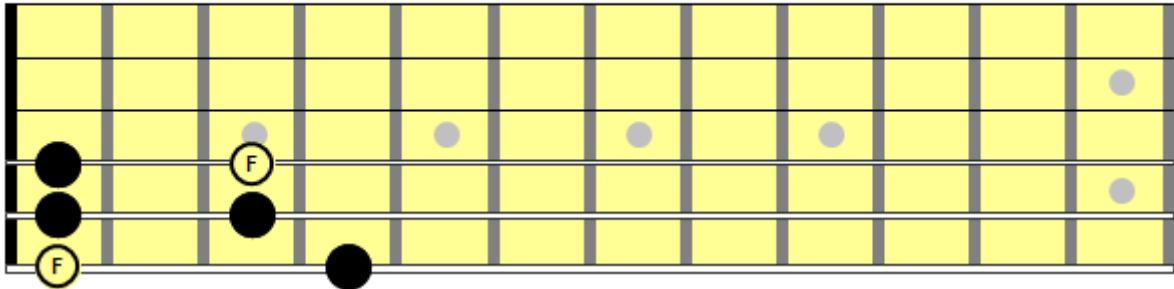
F minor pentatonic (moveable pattern - low sound)



Notice how the 'F' notes are highlighted with clear dots, these are our keynotes, they will become our reference points that will allow us to move this shape all over the guitar fingerboard and play the minor pentatonic scale in every key.

How to practice the minor pentatonic scale:

F minor pentatonic (moveable pattern - low sound)



Using the F minor pentatonic pattern illustrated above begin by ...

1. playing the "F" note on the sixth string with your first finger
2. play the note on the 6th string at the 4th fret with your 4th finger
3. play the note on the 5th string at the 1st fret with your 1st finger
4. play the note on the 5th string at the 3rd fret with your 3rd finger
5. play the note on the 4th string at the 1st fret with your 1st finger
6. play the "F" note on the 4th string at the 3rd fret with your 3rd finger

Concept 8 : Even though the pentatonic scale is a five note scale our fingering pattern contains six notes, the first and last notes having the *same letter name*.

Memory key 8: the minor pentatonic shape we are learning is a moveable pattern that takes it's name from the highlighted *keynotes*.

Practice tips:

Play each note slowly paying close attention to the *sound* of each note you play.

Sing or hum along with each note as you play.

Try creating riffs from this scale ... it's a good idea to begin on the *keynotes*; you don't always have to do this but it's a good place to start.

Use your ear ... try working out riffs by "ear" ... using notes exclusively from the minor pentatonic shape see if you can work out some riffs for songs you like.

Motor skill training: pay particular attention to the fingering ... make certain you are using the finger indicated for a particular note ... we want these patterns to be an automatic reflex action.

Review - minor pentatonic scale:

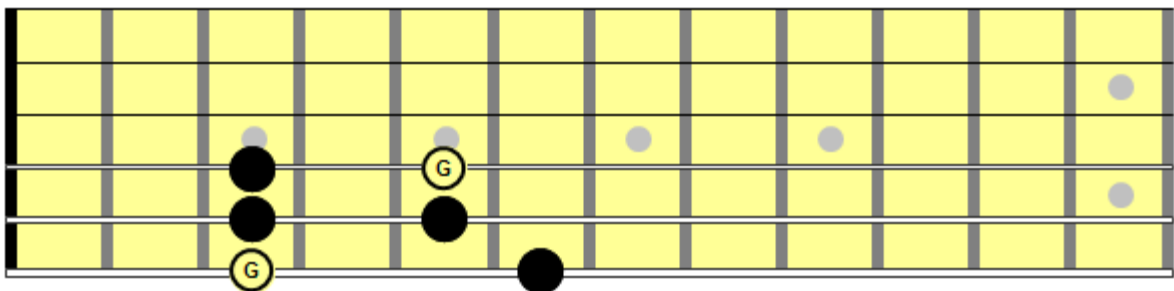
In a nutshell ...

The minor pentatonic pattern is a moveable sonic shape that can be transferred to different pitch levels (keys) all over the guitar fingerboard.

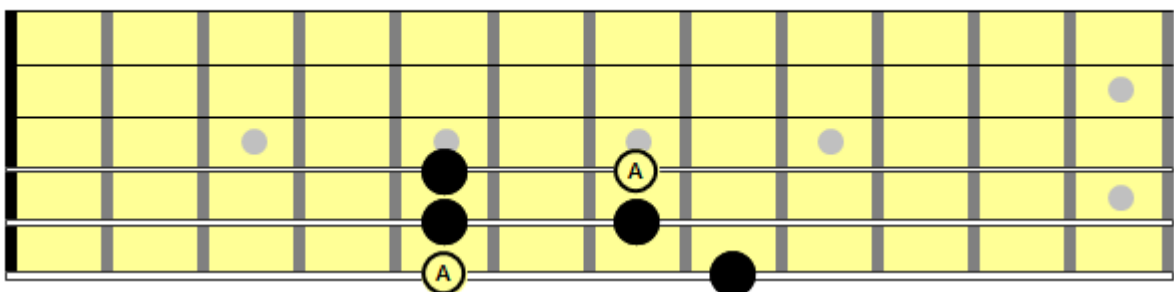
The scale pattern takes its name from the highlighted "keynotes".

See examples below ...

G minor pentatonic (moveable pattern - low sound)



A minor pentatonic (moveable pattern - low sound)



The scale pattern contains six notes, two of which have the same letter name (the keynotes).

Practice the scale *slowly* to develop *brain - hand coordination*.

Application: The minor pentatonic scale is primarily used for **rock** and **blues** music although it can be found in all styles including Latin and jazz.

Expanding the minor pentatonic pattern:

Our next project is to extend our minor pentatonic scale pattern.

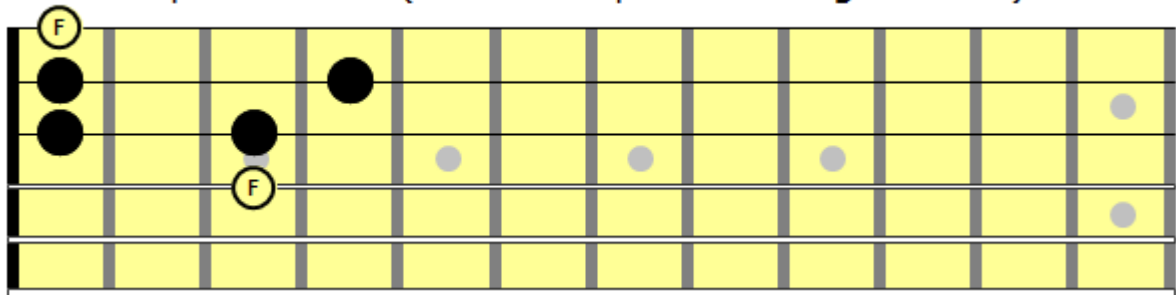
The vocal approach ...

We are now going to play the exact same notes only one octave higher in pitch; an octave is the natural distance between a adult male and female voice.

Concept 9: Think of a male and female singing the same song ... that's the difference we will hear between the minor pentatonic (low sound version) and the minor pentatonic pattern (high sound version).

Memory key 9: Our new pattern begins on the last note of the low pattern.

F minor pentatonic (moveable pattern - high sound)



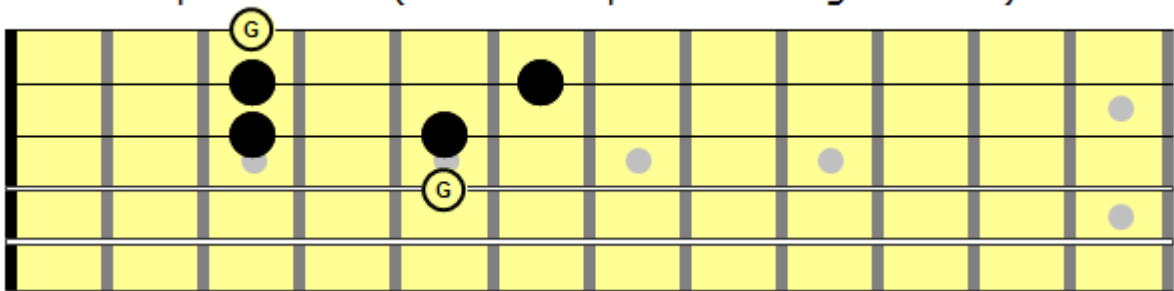
Using the new F minor pentatonic pattern illustrated above begin by ...

1. playing the "F" note on the 4th string at the 3rd fret with your 3rd finger
2. play the note on the 3rd string at the 1st fret with your 1st finger
3. play the note on the 3rd string at the 3rd fret with your 3rd finger
4. play the note on the 2nd string at the 1st fret with your 1st finger
5. play the note on the 2nd string at the 4th fret with your 4th finger
6. play the "F" note on the 1st string at the 1st fret with your 1st finger

Once you become familiar with the pattern and fingering try moving the shape around using the keynotes to name the scale you are playing.

Here's the G minor pentatonic (high sound version)

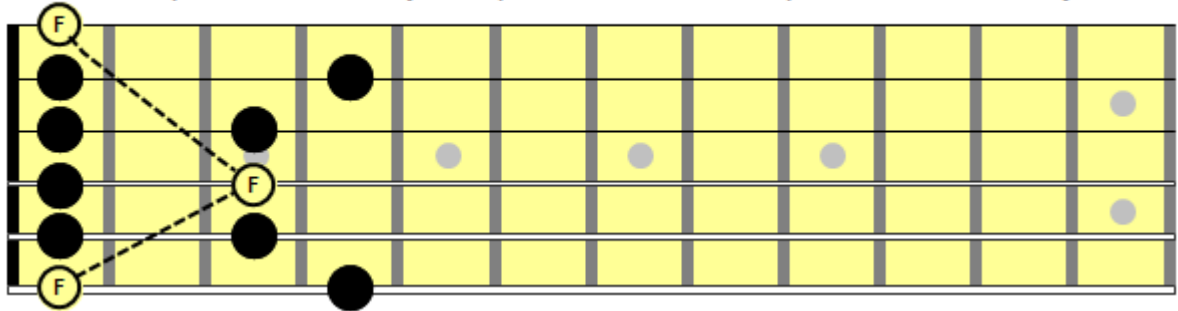
G minor pentatonic (moveable pattern - high sound)



Connecting the shapes – two octave pattern:

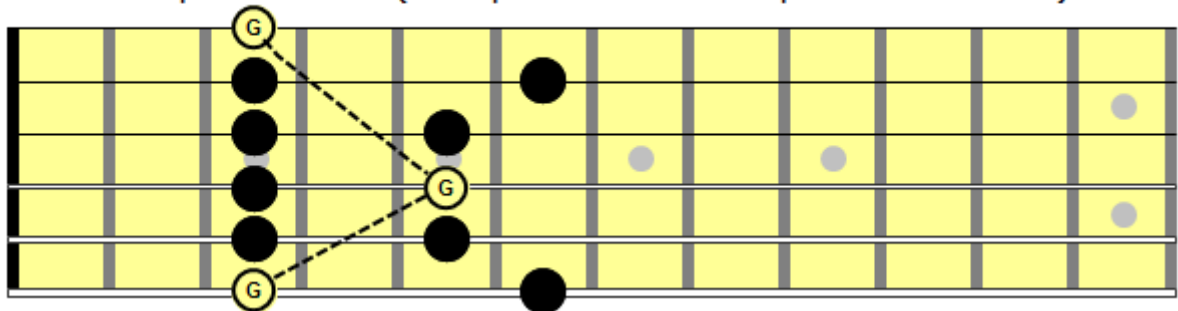
Now it's time to connect everything we have learned into a two octave minor pentatonic sonic shape complete with triangle reference points ready to be transplanted into every possible key.

F minor pentatonic (complete sonic shape - moveable)



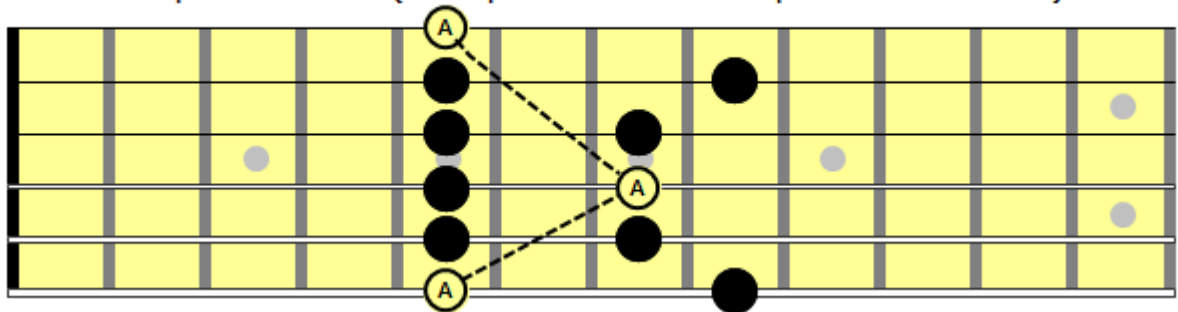
Here's the complete G minor pentatonic version ...

G minor pentatonic (complete sonic shape - moveable)



Now the complete A minor pentatonic version ...

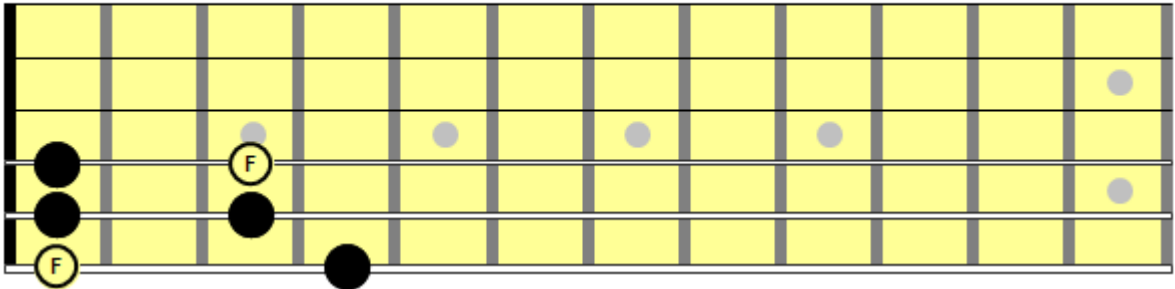
A minor pentatonic (complete sonic shape - moveable)



Ear training projects:

Play the low version of the minor pentatonic scale; play the scale ascending beginning on the "F" keynote on the 6th string and finishing in the "F" keynote on the 4th string.

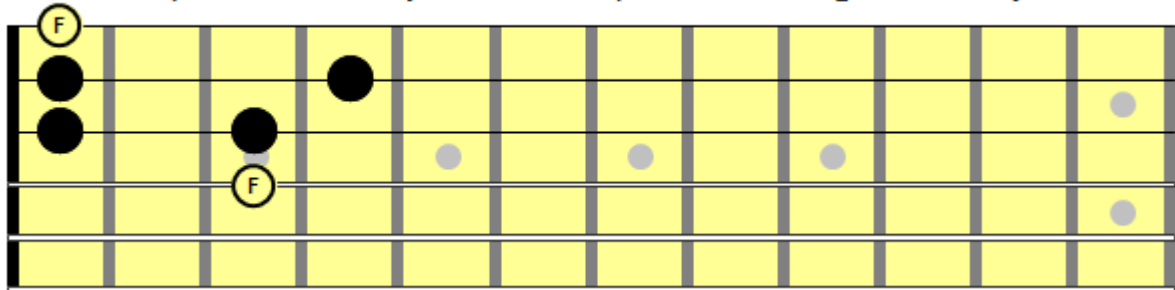
F minor pentatonic (moveable pattern - low sound)



Now play the F minor pentatonic scale (high version) beginning on the "F" keynote on the 4th string and play that scale ascending finishing on the "F" keynote on the 1st string.

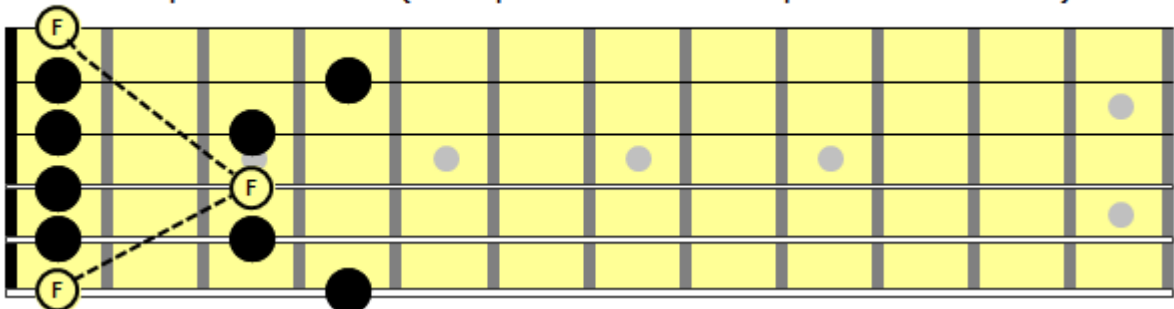
Can you hear that it's the same "tune" only higher?

F minor pentatonic (moveable pattern - high sound)



Now play through the complete pattern without stopping

F minor pentatonic (complete sonic shape - moveable)



The Blues scale:

The blues scale is one of the most unique and most frequently used scales. It is also important because it is the first *real* scale of American origin. All of the scale forms covered in traditional music lessons stem from the European musical culture. They are the backbone of 'legit' musical training.

The reason for the flexibility and FEELING inherent in the BLUE SCALE are these:

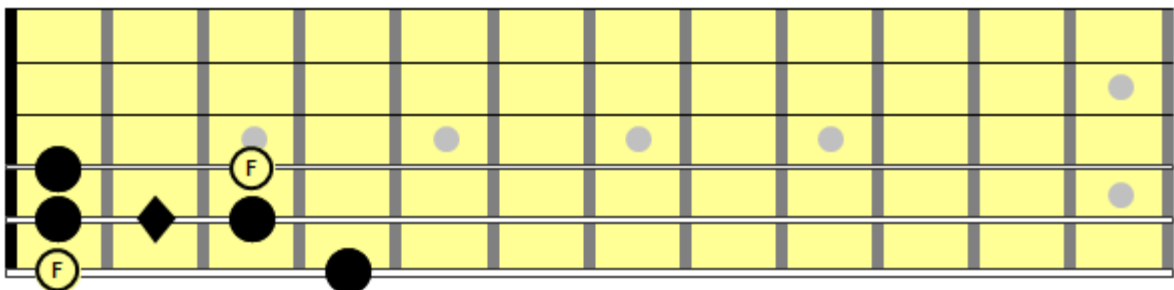
A) The European scales all began and developed in an atmosphere of disciplined conditions.

B) In contrast the BLUES SCALE had its root in an untrained, natural VOCAL origin. Most early exponents of the BLUES SCALE, for example could not read music; did not study how to develop their talent and facility; they were not technically aware of what or how they arrived at the music they produced. They HEARD and FELT their music, and that was all they needed.

Concept 10: The blues scale is a 6 note scale. Think of the blues scale as a minor pentatonic scale with one additional note (the flattened fifth of the key is the "blues" note).

Memory key 10: Use the same keynote principal as we did for the minor pentatonic scale to move the blues scale to different pitch level (keys) on the guitar fretboard.

F blues scale - (moveable pattern - low sound)



Play the F blues scale (low version) beginning with the "F" keynote on the 6th string, notice the new "blues" note indicated with a diamond marker.

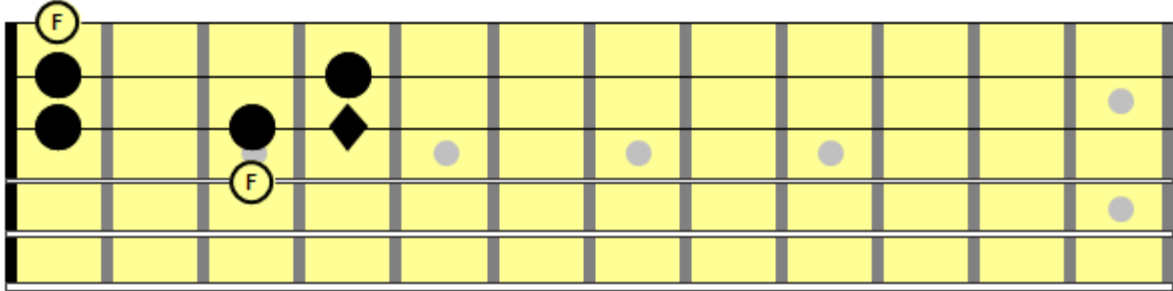
Fingering: Play the "blues note" with your 2nd finger, all other fingering remains the same as the minor pentatonic scale.

The Blues scale – octave pattern:

In the same way that we divided the minor pentatonic scale into two distinct scale patterns the blues scale can also be divided into two patterns sounding an octave apart from each other.

Here's the high sounding blues scale with the "blues" note indicated with a diamond marker.

F blues scale - (moveable pattern - high sound)

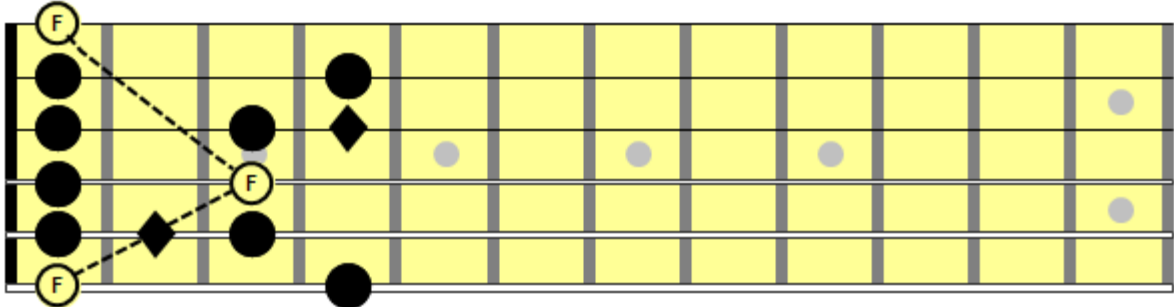


Fingering: Play the "blues" note with your 4th finger, all other fingering remains the same as the minor pentatonic scale.

The Blues scale – two octave pattern:

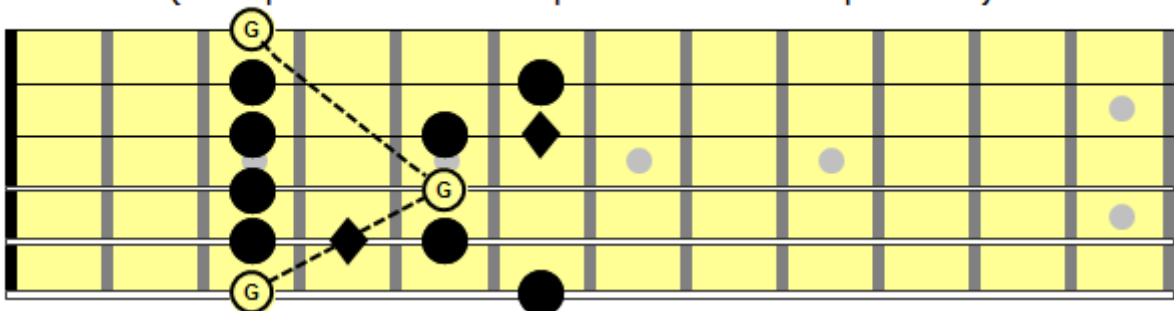
Here is the complete sonic shape for the F blues scale, notice the highlighted keynotes and “blues” notes indicated with a diamond marker and also notice the original triangle sonic shape design.

F blues (complete sonic shape - moveable pattern)



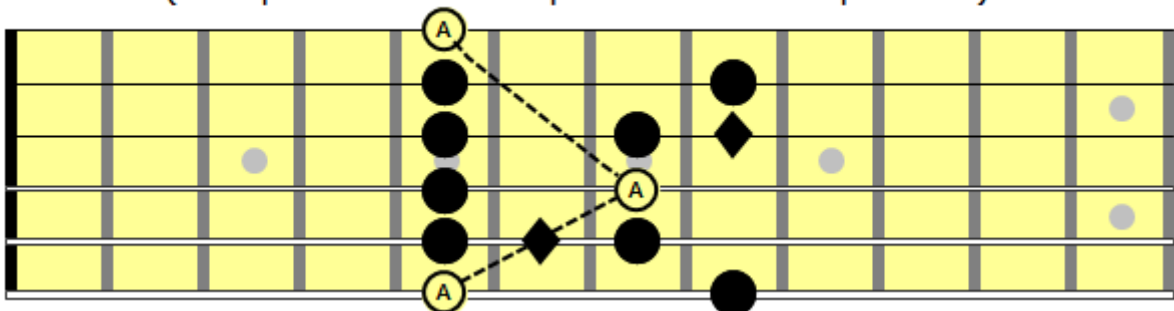
Here is a G blues ...

G blues (complete sonic shape - moveable pattern)



Blues in A ...

A blues (complete sonic shape - moveable pattern)

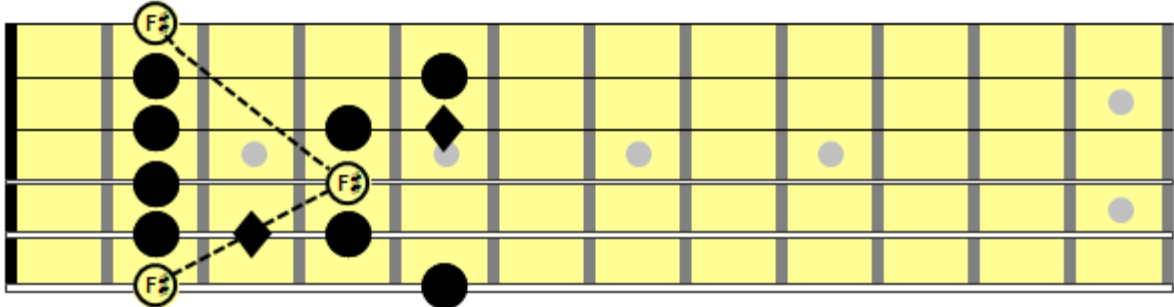


The Blues scale – in sharp and flat keys:

To make sure you are clear on what to do in the instance of sharp and flat keys here's two more examples of the blues scale.

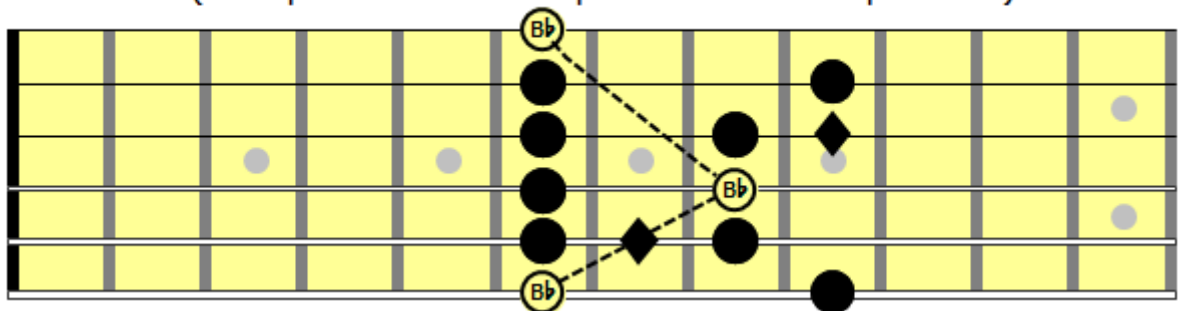
Blues in F#

F# blues (complete sonic shape - moveable pattern)



and a Bb blues ...

Bb blues (complete sonic shape - moveable pattern)



Don't forget to practice these scale ascending and descending all over the guitar fingerboard, saying the names of the keys you are in as you move from scale to scale.

Practice ideas:

A) Practice your scales in the following sequence to make certain you can play the minor pentatonic and blues scale in all keys.

Play your scales through this sequence, noodle your way through each scale and when you are ready to move to the next scale go to the next key in the sequence.

Practice sequence:

C – F – Bb – Eb

Ab – Db – F# – B

E – A – D – G ... start again

B) Record some of the following chord progressions and try playing either the minor pentatonic or blues scale over the progression. You can play the chords as power chords, bar chords or open chords (with a capo for certain keys).

The idea is to listen closely to the sound of each note and make mental notes of the notes you prefer, get to know all the nooks and crannies of these scales, be creative and most of all, enjoy your guitar playing.

| Scale | Chord progression #1 | Chord progression #2 | Chord progression #3 |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| A minor pent / A blues | : Am /// F / G / : | : Am /// G / F / : | : Am /// G / D / : |
| G minor pent / G blues | : Gm /// Eb / F / : | : Gm /// F / Eb / : | : Gm /// F / C / : |
| E minor pent / E blues | : Em /// C / D / : | : Em /// D / C / : | : Em /// D / A / : |
| D minor pent / D blues | : Dm /// Bb / C / : | : Dm /// C / Bb / : | : Dm /// C / G / : |

www.GuitarCoaching.com