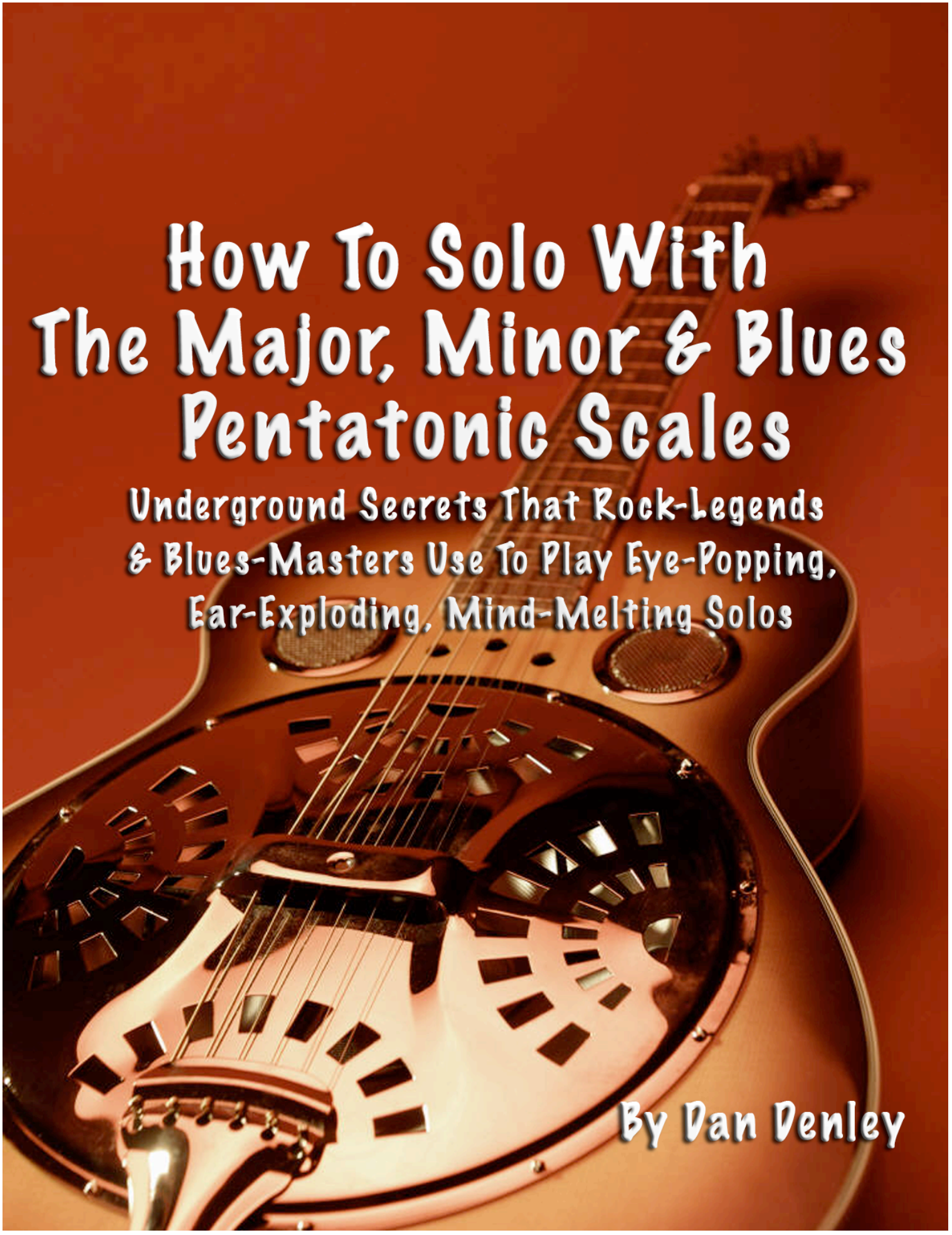

How To Solo With
The Major, Minor & Blues
Pentatonic Scales
Underground Secrets That Rock-Legends
& Blues-Masters Use To Play Eye-Popping,
Ear-Exploding, Mind-Melting Solos
By Dan Denley

Intro 4
Three Different Pentatonic Scales 5
  Pentatonic major 5
  Pentatonic minor 6
  Blues pentatonic 7
How Everybody's Related 8
A Few More Nuggets Before We Get Started 8
Time To Play! 9
A Pentatonic Major 10
  Movable Pattern 1 10
  A Pentatonic Major, 1st position 10
  Movable Pattern 2 11
  A Pentatonic Major, 2nd position 11
  Movable Pattern 3 11
  A Pentatonic Major, 3rd position 12
  Movable Pattern 5 13
  A Pentatonic Major, 5th position 13
  Movable Pattern 6 13
  A Pentatonic Major, 6th position 14
Where The Rubber Meets The Road: Practical, Real-World Ways To Use The Pentatonic Major Scale 15
  How To Use Each Example 15
    Example 1: G pentatonic major 16
    Example 2: A pentatonic major 17
    Example 3: D pentatonic major 18
F# Pentatonic Minor 18
  Movable Pattern 1 19
  F# Pentatonic Minor, 1st position 19
  Movable Pattern 3 20
  F# Pentatonic Minor, 3rd position 20
  Movable Pattern 4 20
  F# Pentatonic Minor, 4th position 21
  Movable Pattern 5 22
  F# Pentatonic Minor, 5th position 22
  Movable Pattern 7 23
  F# Pentatonic Minor, 7th position 23

Where The Rubber Meets The Road: Practical, Real-World Ways To Use The Pentatonic Minor Scale 24
How To Use Each Example 24
Example 1: A pentatonic minor 25
Example 2: D pentatonic minor 26
Example 3: E pentatonic minor 27
F# Blues Pentatonic 28
Movable Pattern 1 28
F# Blues Pentatonic, 1st position 28
Movable Pattern 3 29
F# Blues Pentatonic, 3rd position 29
Movable Pattern 4 30
F# Blues Pentatonic, 4th position 30
Movable Pattern 5 31
F# Blues Pentatonic, 5th position 31
Movable Pattern 7 32
F# Blues Pentatonic, 7th position 32
Where The Rubber Meets The Road: Practical, Real-World Ways To Use The Blues Pentatonic Scale 33
How To Use Each Example 33
Example 1: E blues pentatonic 34
Example 2: G blues minor 35
Example 3: A blues minor 36
Bonus Material: Five Classic Blues Licks 37
Classic Blues Lick #1 38
Classic Blues Lick #2 38
Classic Blues Lick #3 38
Classic Blues Lick #4 39
Classic Blues Lick #5 39
Final Thoughts 39

2005 Dan Denley. AmazingGuitarSecrets.com. All rights reserved. This book may not be published, reproduced, transmitted, emailed, photocopied, scanned or otherwise distributed or produced in any form without the prior written consent of the publisher.

Intro

The **pentatonic scales** are variations of the major and minor scale. And as the name implies, pentatonic scales have five notes (with the exception of the **blues pentatonic**, more on that later).

Pentatonic scales are used throughout blues, rock and country music. They are probably the simplest scales to play because they have fewer notes than their major and minor counterparts. So, consequently, they are more common among guitarists.

But just because they are quite common, doesn't mean they're stale sounding. No, no. In fact in the hands of a guitarist like B.B. King, Eric Johnson or Eric Clapton, they can be simply astonishing.

You will do yourself a great service but doing some serious study of the pentatonic scales. I can tell you from personal experience that they will always be with you as a guitarist.

Pentatonic scales have a delightfully "open" quality. This is due to the lack of certain notes that are found in the diatonic scales (major and minor).

Best of all, pentatonic scales are easy. Well, at least that's my opinion. I think they're easier for one simple reason: they have fewer notes! Think about it. The diatonic scales and modes have seven notes. Pentatonic scales only have five. That's almost 30% less notes!

Anyway, I have laid out everything here for you in a step-by-step manner. Make sure you do more than just learn the scales. Go the extra mile and learn how to *apply* and use the scales. I've tried to give you a ton of examples of how to do just that.

So, grab your guitar, roll up your sleeves and let's get started!

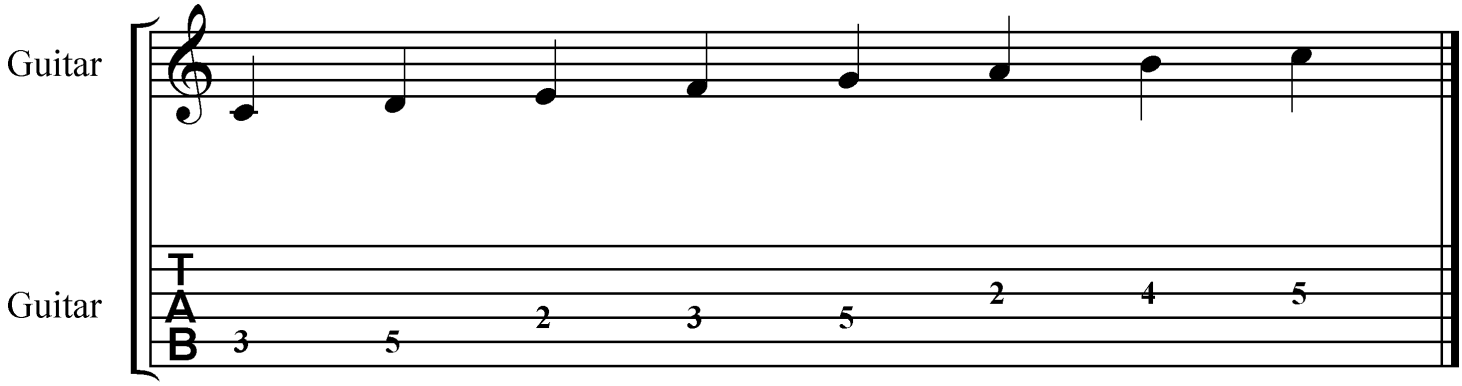
Three Different Pentatonic Scales

There are essentially three different pentatonic scales: Pentatonic Major, Pentatonic Minor and Blues Pentatonic. Each has its own unique role to play (no pun intended) in the guitar world. Here's how they compare.

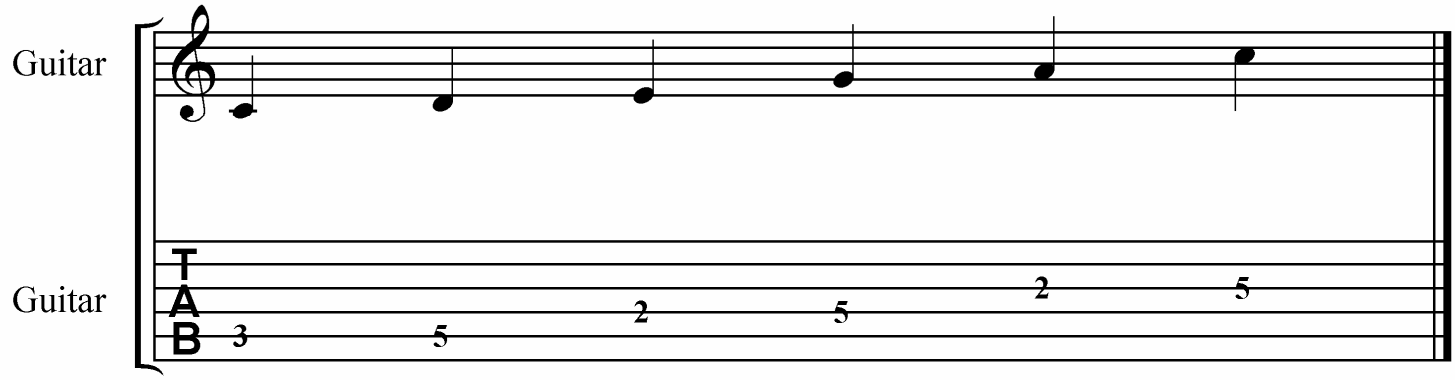
Pentatonic major

The **Pentatonic Major** is built on the major scale. But it leaves out the **4th and 7th degrees** of the major scale. Here's a side-by-side comparison of C major and C Pentatonic major:

C Major: C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C



C Pentatonic Major: C, D, E, G, A, C

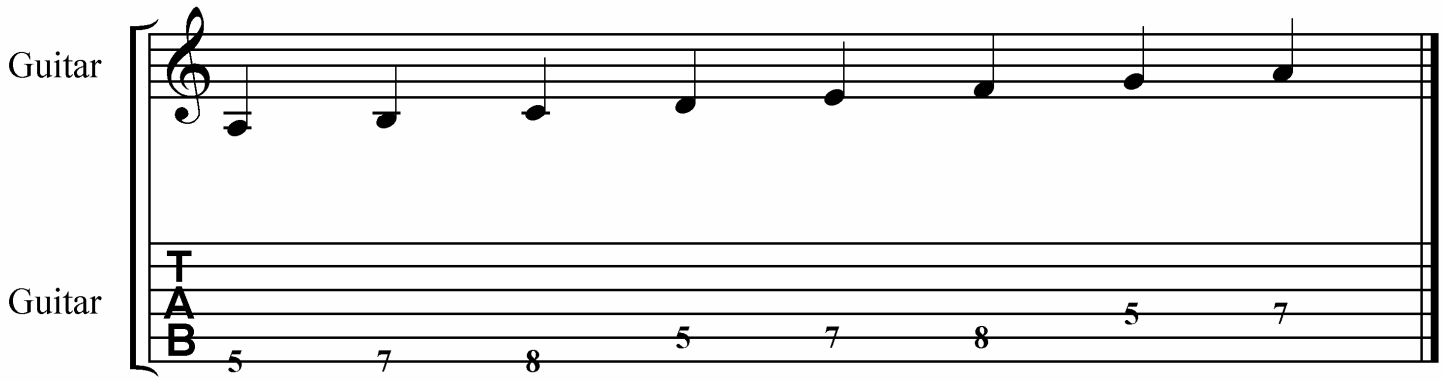


Notice that the C Pentatonic drops the F and the B from the C major scale. That's because F and B are the 4th and 7th degrees.

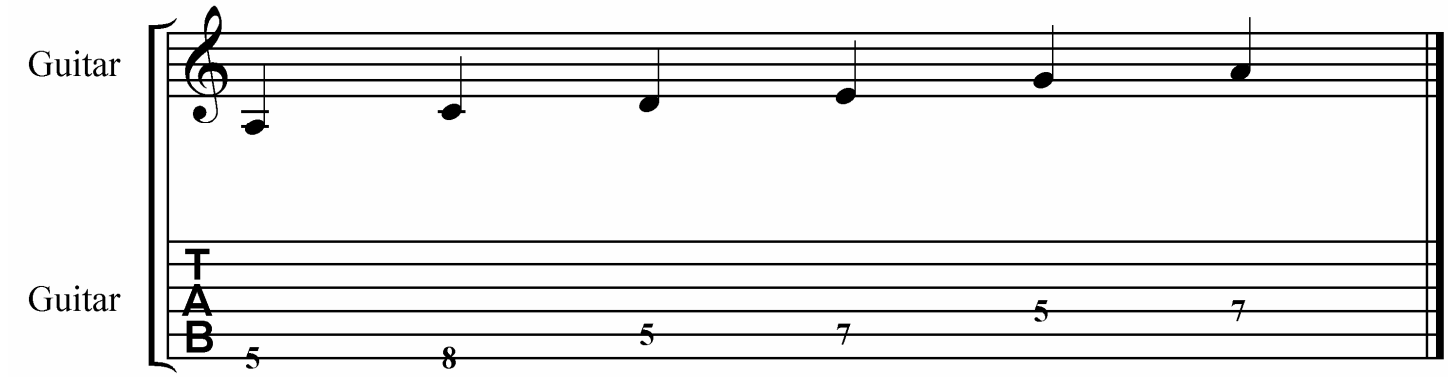
Pentatonic minor

The **Pentatonic Minor** is built on the natural minor scale. But it leaves out the 2nd and the 6th degrees. Here's a side-by-side comparison of A minor and A Pentatonic minor:

A Minor: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, A



A Pentatonic Minor: A, C, D, E, G, A



Notice that the A Pentatonic Minor drops the B and the F. That's because they are the 2nd and 6th degrees.

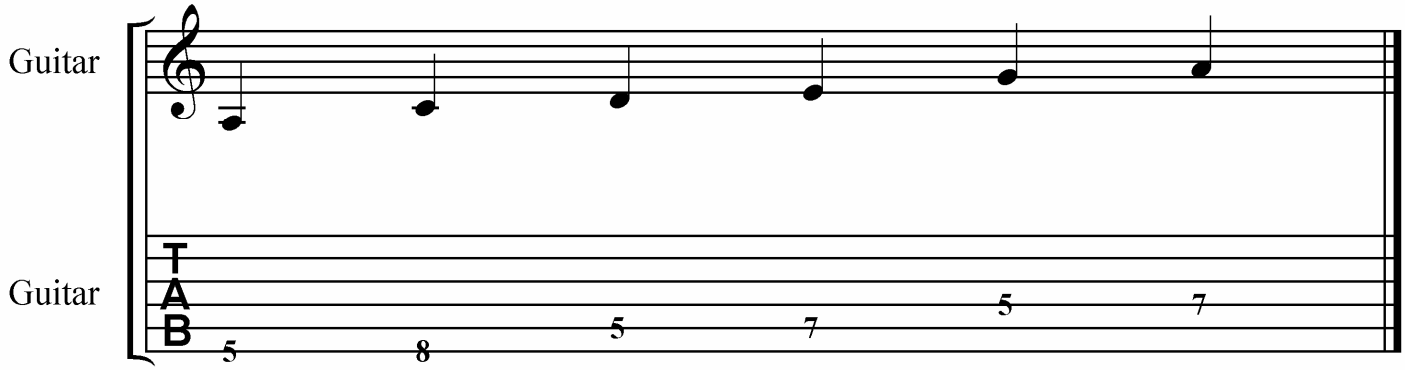
Blues pentatonic

The **Blues Pentatonic** scale is based on the Minor Pentatonic scale. There is really only one difference: a **flatted 5th**.

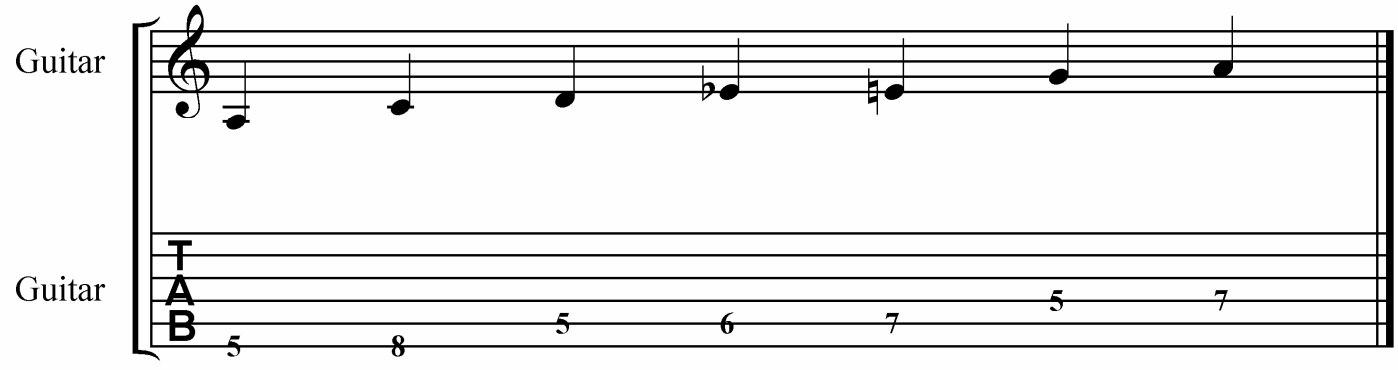
Now, there are many different variations of the Blues Pentatonic scale. Some include the 2nd. Some include a raised 7th. But for simplicity's sake, we're only going to discus the Blues Pentatonic with the flatted 5th.

Here's a side-by-side comparison of A minor and A Blues Pentatonic:

A Pentatonic Minor: A, C, D, E, G, A



A Blues Pentatonic: A, C, D, Eb, E, G, A



Notice that the only difference between these two scales is the E flat. That's because it's the flatted 5th.

How Everybody's Related

Just as there is a relative minor for every major scale, pentatonic scales have relative minors, too. To find the relative pentatonic minor of a major pentatonic scale you use the same method that you learned with the **diatonic** major scale (the one that has seven notes).

Go to the 6th degree of the major scale. That note will be the **tonic** (tonal center) of the relative minor pentatonic. In the tablature for this book, I've given you the A major pentatonic scale and its relative minor, F#. (Remember, F# is the 6th in the key of A.)

A Few More Nuggets Before We Get Started

Keep in mind that there are only five notes in major and minor pentatonic scales, and only six in the Blues Pentatonic. Therefore, you will only have to learn five different positions. Yes! (Even though the Blues Pentatonic has six pitches I've only given you five positions. That's because the flatted 5th in is really a **passing tone**. A passing tone is a note whose main function is to lead to next note. It's not a principle note in the scale, so it doesn't get its own position.) One last thing you should be aware of. Don't forget the **position** is directly related to scale degree. In other words, with pentatonic scales you will only have five positions because there are only five notes in the scale.

And because the **positions are related to the scale degree** you will not have a 4^{th} or 7^{th} position for pentatonic major because there is no 4^{th} or 7^{th} scale degree. And you won't have a 2^{nd} or 6^{th} position in pentatonic minor because there is no 2^{nd} or 6^{th} scale degrees. And since the Blues Pentatonic is based on the pentatonic minor, it won't have a 2^{nd} or 6^{th} position either.

Time To Play!

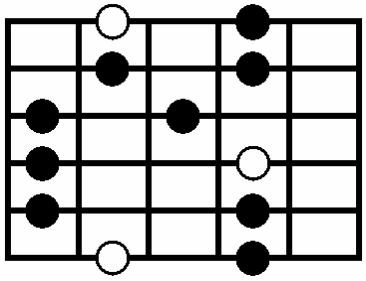
Ok, now it's time to turn your head-knowledge into heart-knowledge. Go grab your guitar and let's tackle the task of learning these three pentatonic scales.

I've given you the tab and standard notation for the A Pentatonic Major scale. Use the tab to learn the A Pentatonic Major. Use the **movable patterns** to memorize the different positions of the each scale. You'll do the same for the F# minor pentatonic tab that I've given you as well the F# Blues Pentatonic.

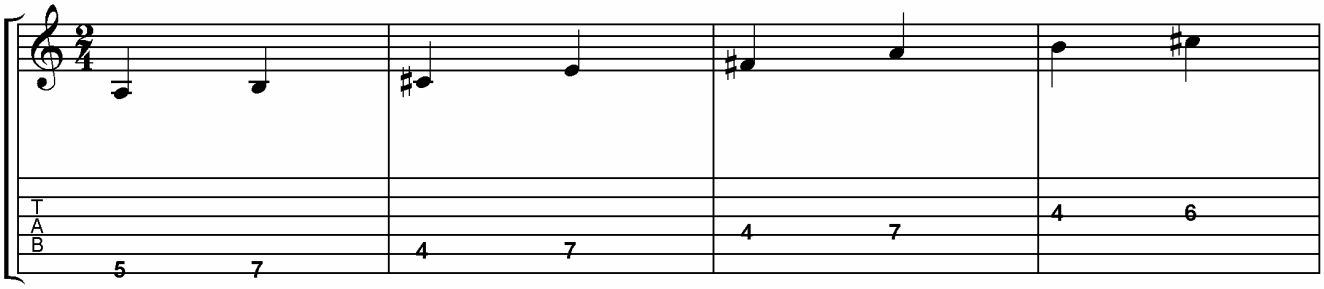
Once you feel pretty good about your progress, try to take the movable patterns and start on a note that I haven't given you the tab for. Remember, the movable patterns are meant to be transposed. So, don't be afraid to branch and try to play in some new keys!

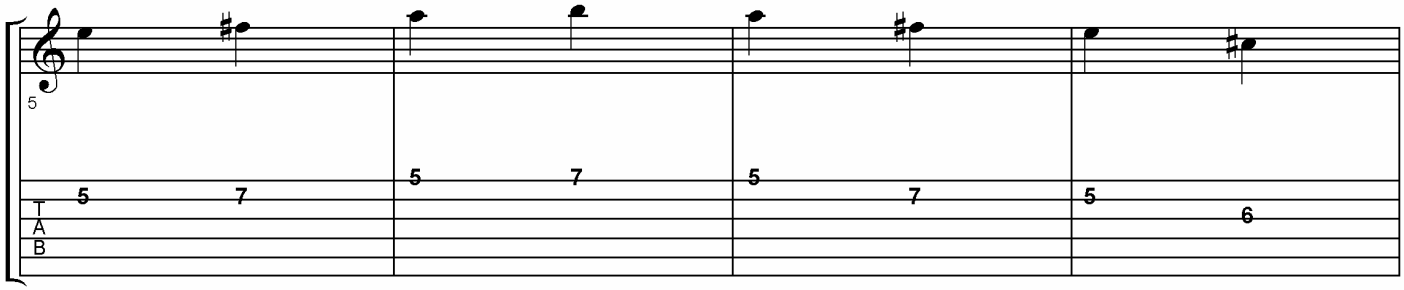
A Pentatonic Major

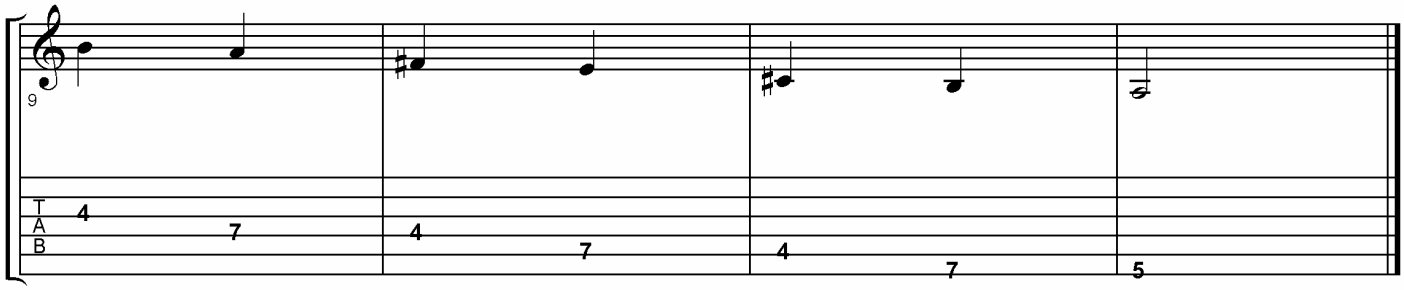
Movable Pattern 1



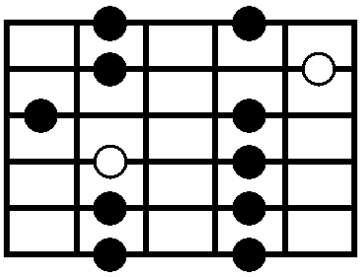
A Pentatonic Major, 1st position



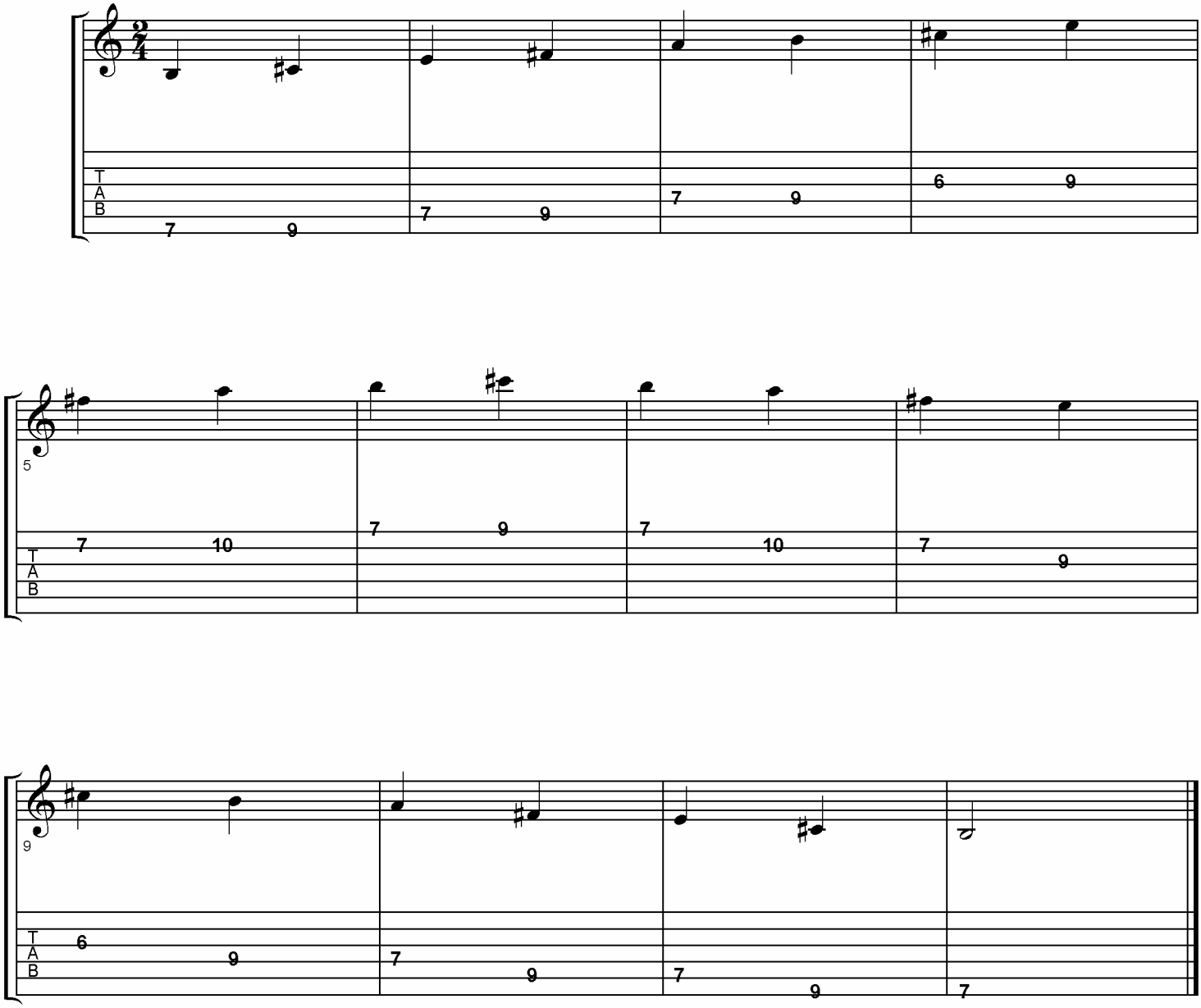




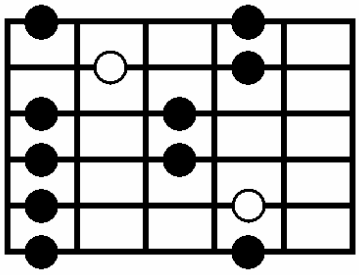
Movable Pattern 2



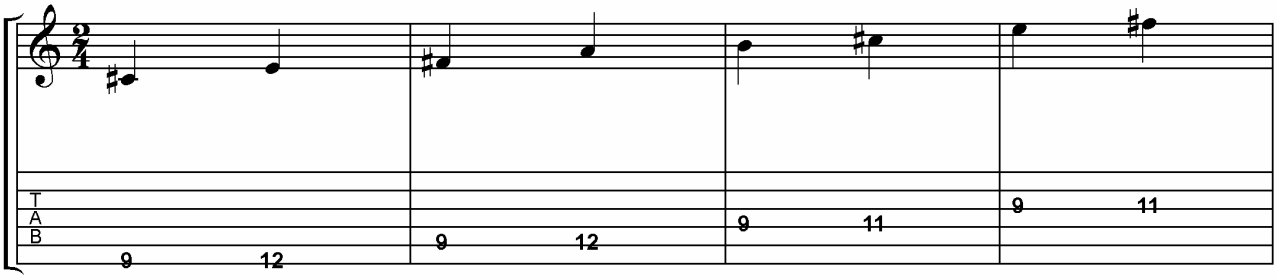
A Pentatonic Major, 2nd position

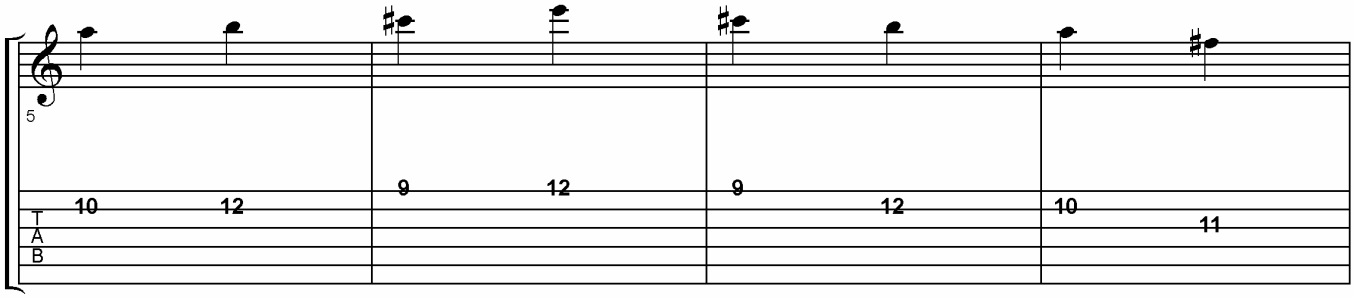


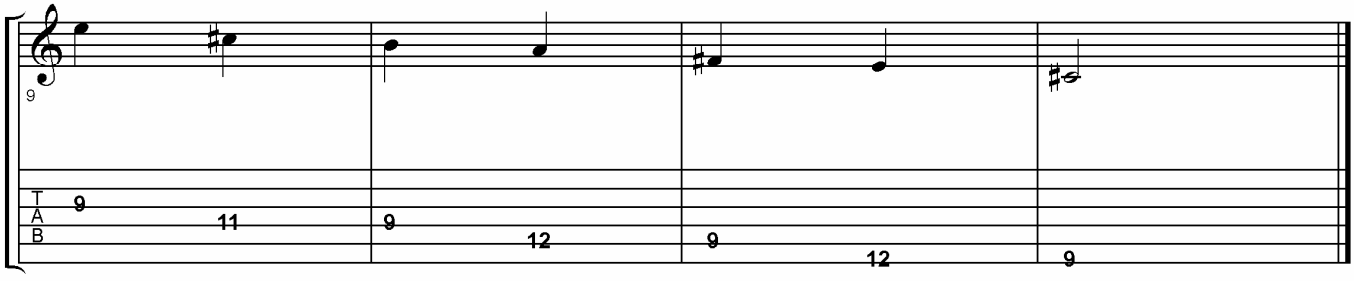
Movable Pattern 3



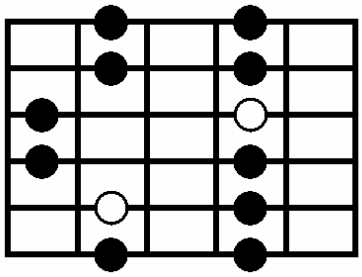
A Pentatonic Major, 3rd position



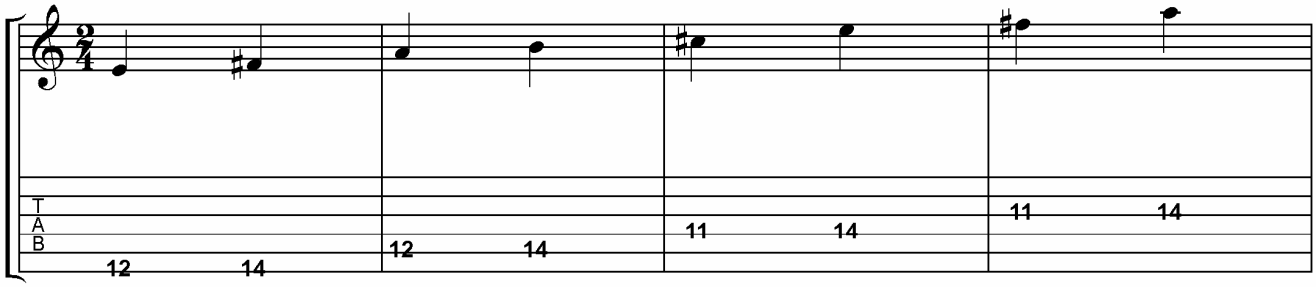


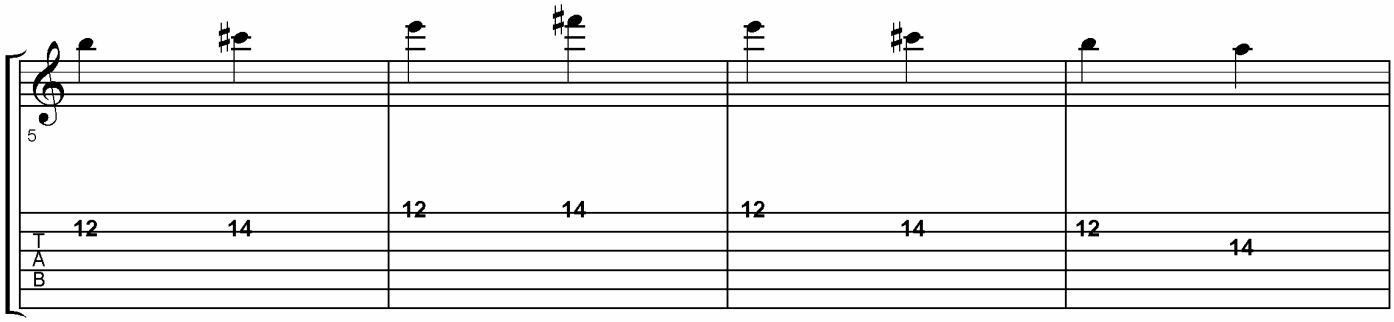


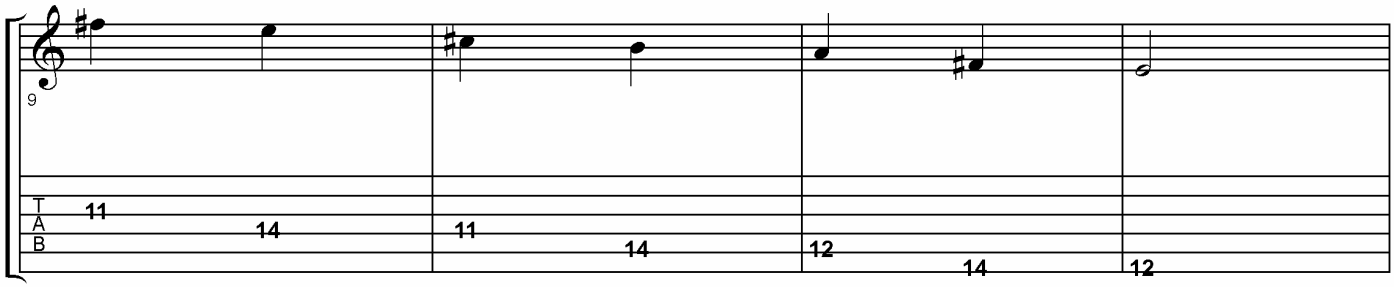
Movable Pattern 5



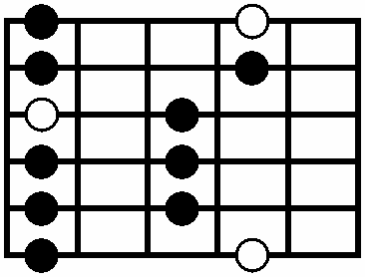
A Pentatonic Major, 5th position



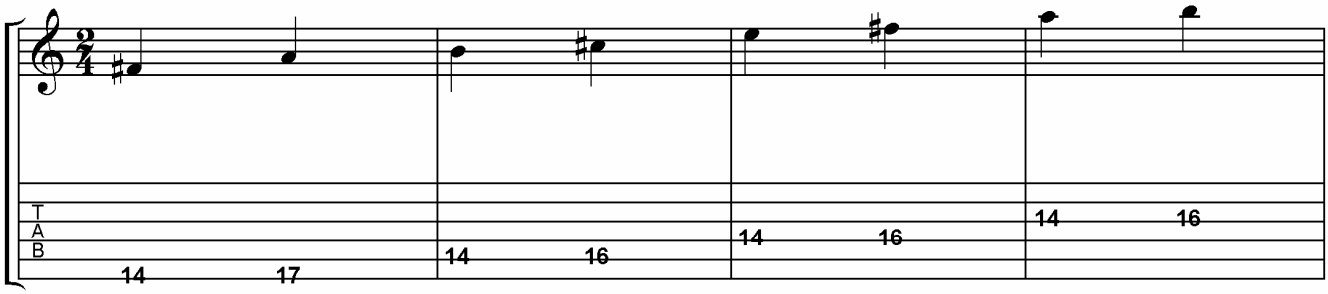


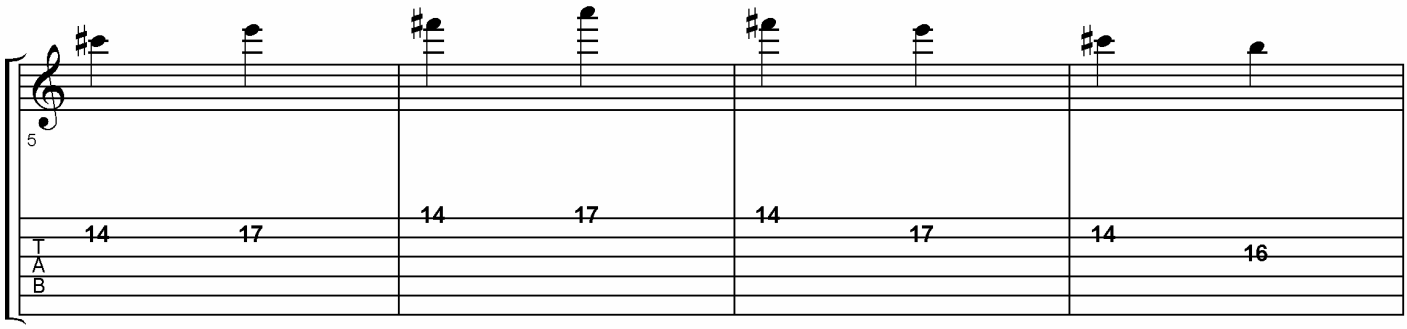


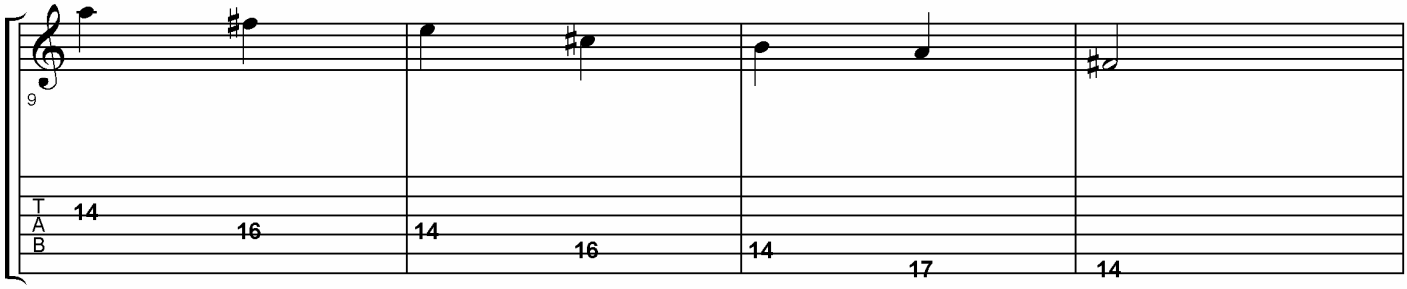
Movable Pattern 6



A Pentatonic Major, 6th position







Where The Rubber Meets The Road: Practical, Real-World Ways To Use The Pentatonic Major Scale

I never want to be accused of giving you the theory, but not enough practical examples of how to use it. So, here are three chord progressions that I've written for you to practice improvisational skills.

Each chord progression comes from the major scale. But each is in a different key. I've done the leg-work for you by matching the chord progression to the scale that you should use to improvise.

How To Use Each Example

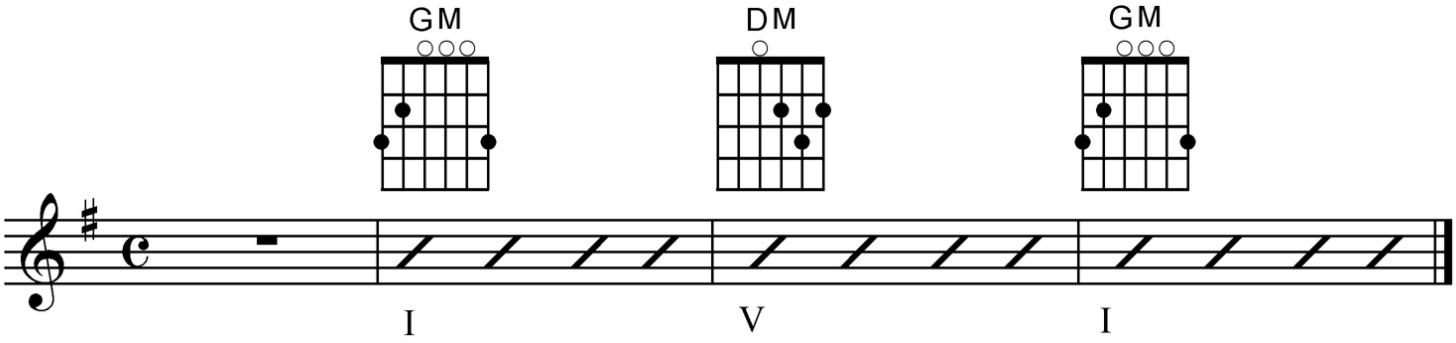
Play each chord progression. Create your own rhythmic patterns. Then, grab a friend and have him play the chord progression while you solo over the top. Or you could grab a tape recorder from Radio Shack and record the rhythm guitar part (that's the chord progression). Playback the rhythm section and play the scale over it. Improvise your own solo using bends, trills, vibrato, slides, etc.

Each scale is in that I've given you is in **1st position** (i.e., they all start on the tonic, or root note of the scale.) Try to use the moveable patterns as well. Use them to move out of the 1st position. Try to incorporate as many different positions as you can.

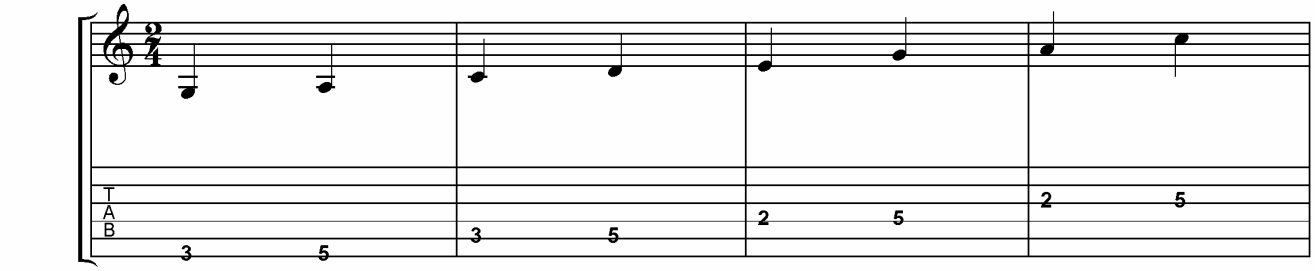
But most importantly... Have fun!

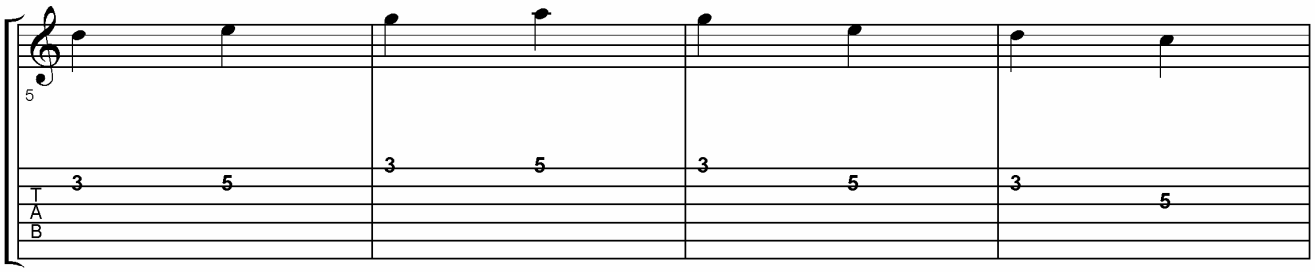
Example 1: G pentatonic major

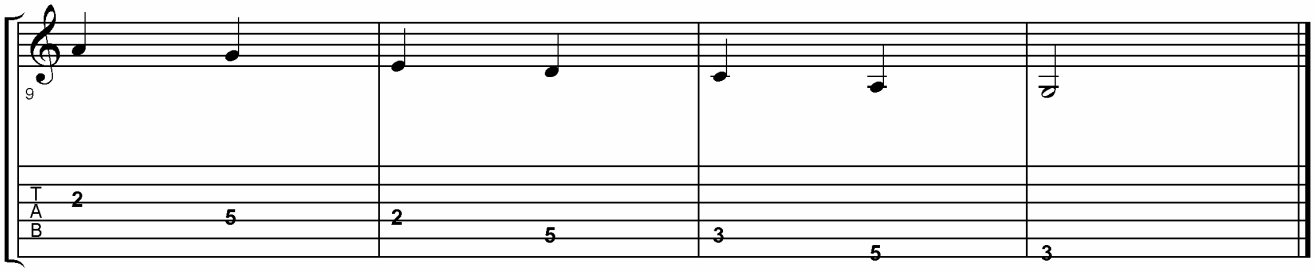
Play this chord progression:



Use this scale to improvise:

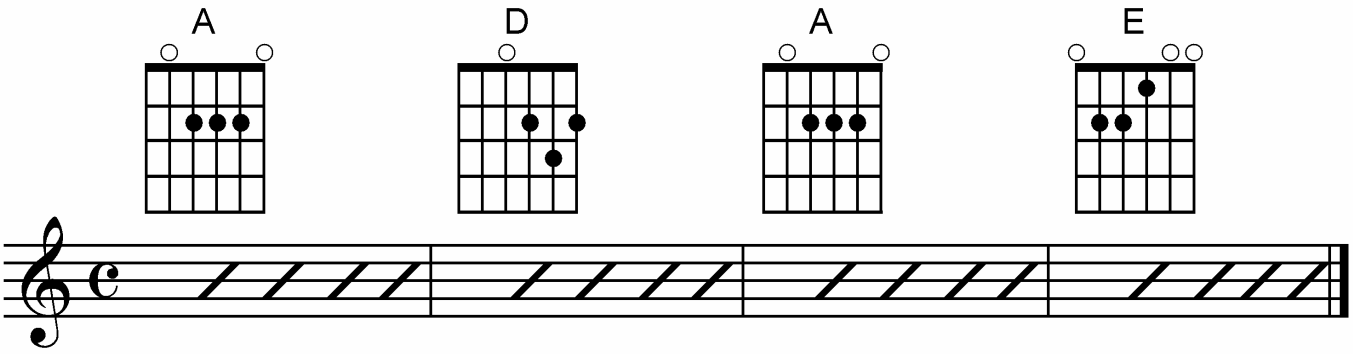




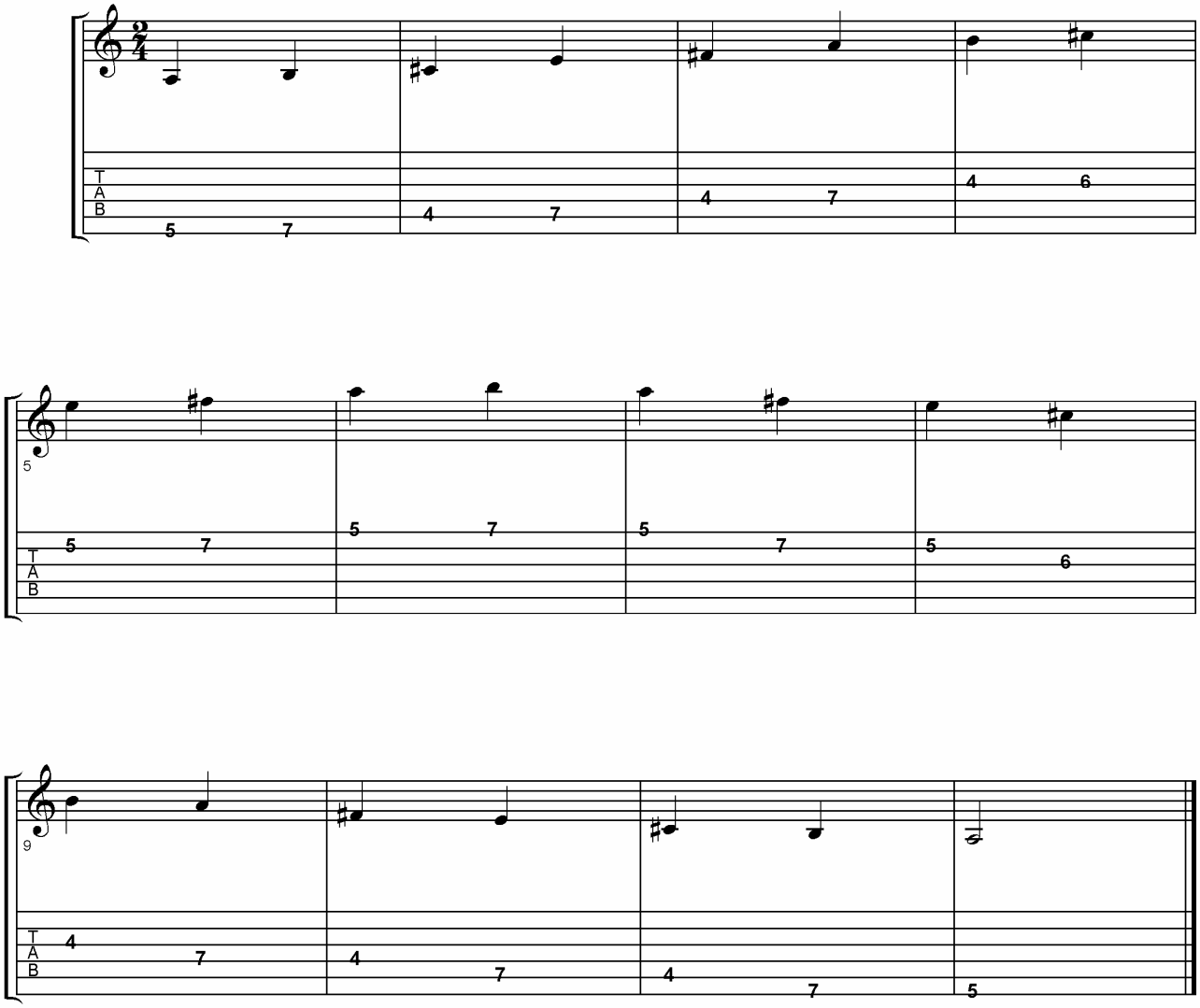


Example 2: A pentatonic major

Play this chord progression:

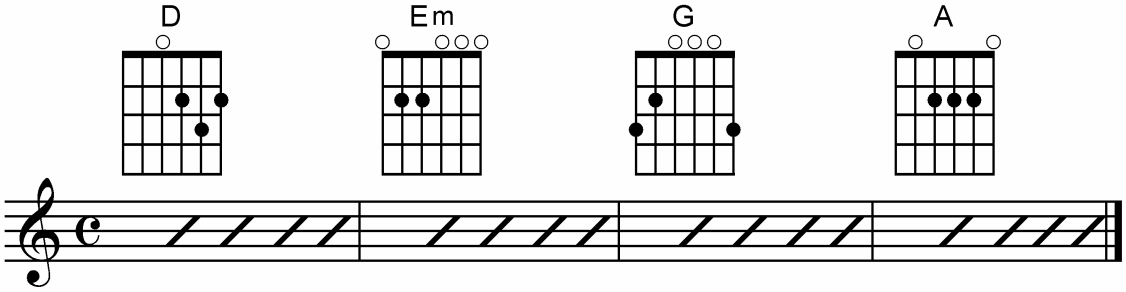


Use this scale to improvise:

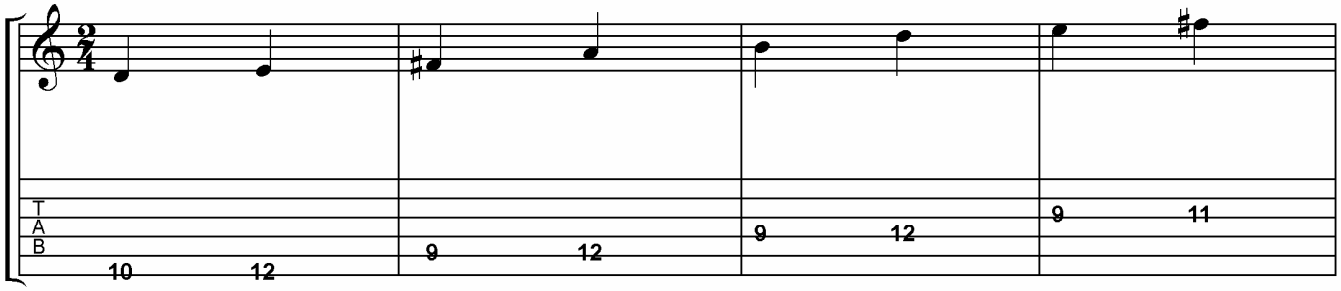


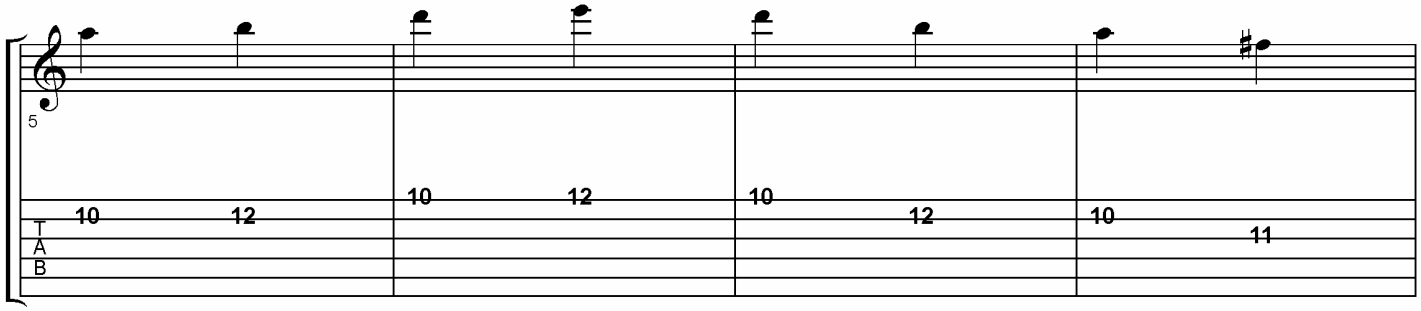
Example 3: D pentatonic major

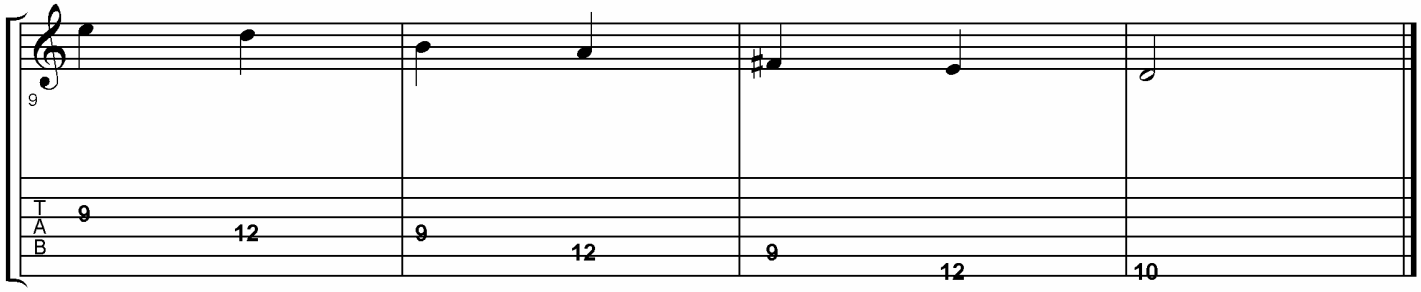
Play this chord progression:



Use this scale to improvise:

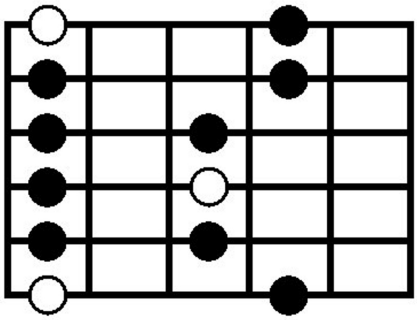




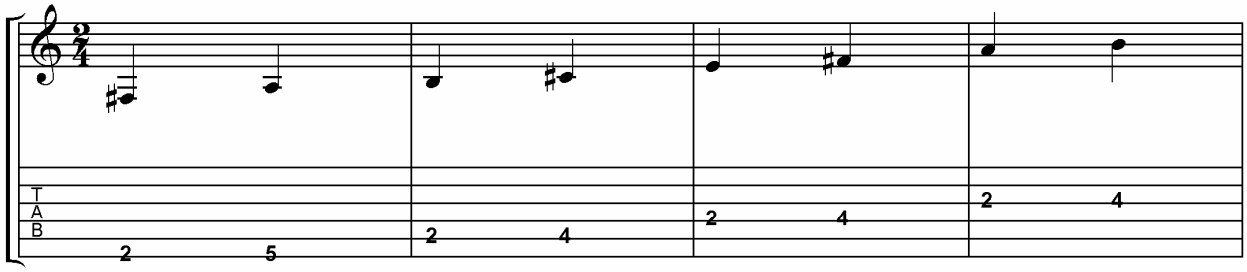


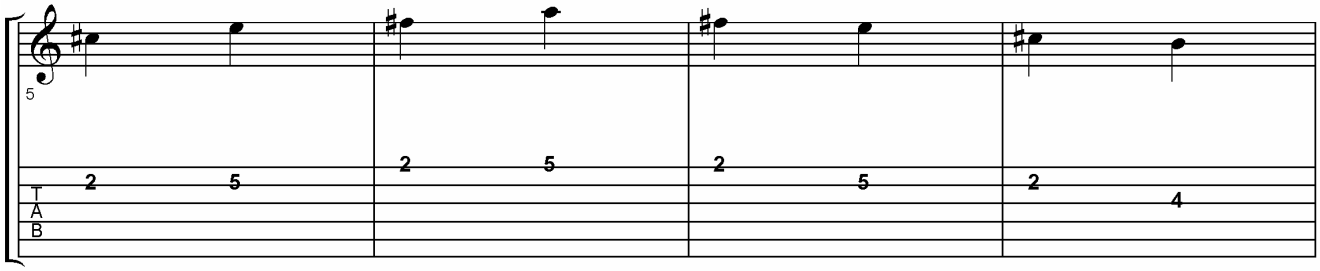
F# Pentatonic Minor

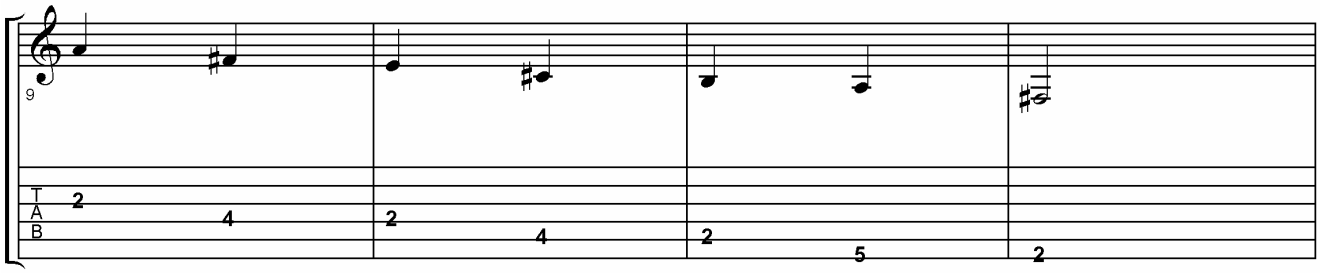
Movable Pattern 1



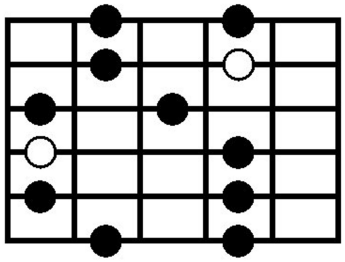
F# Pentatonic Minor, 1st position



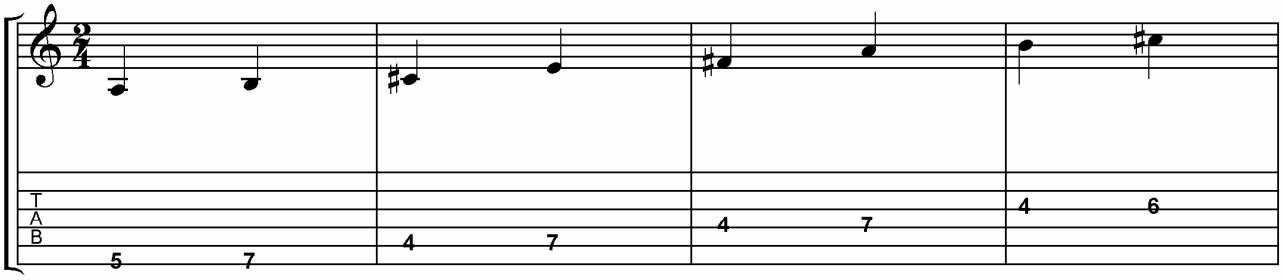


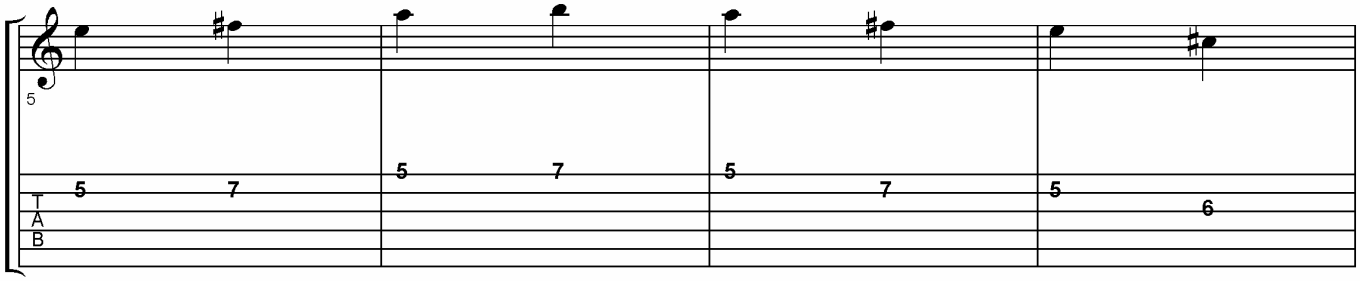


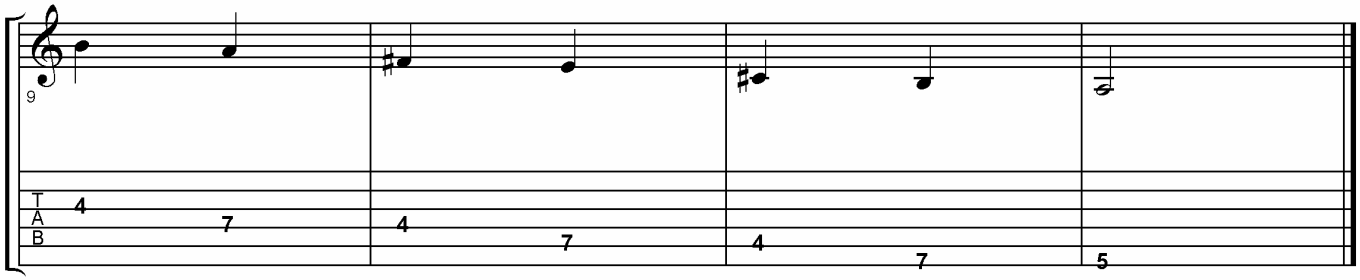
Movable Pattern 3



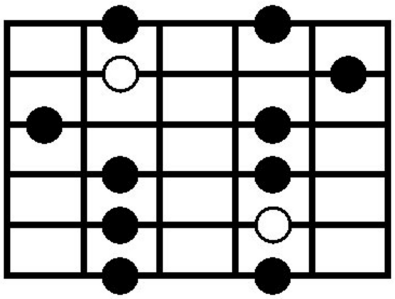
F# Pentatonic Minor, 3rd position



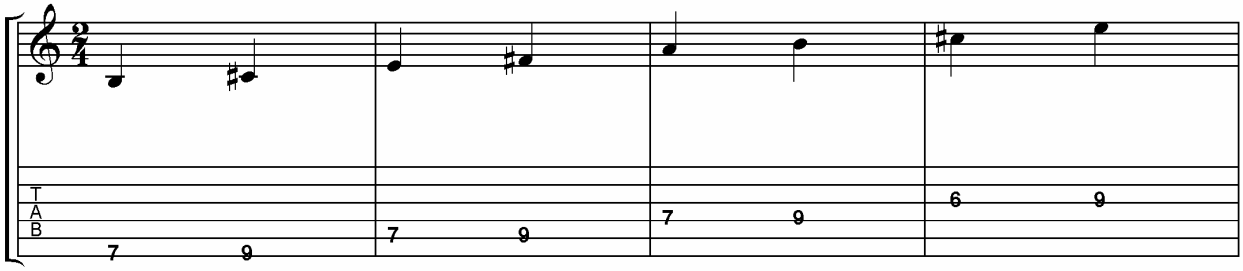


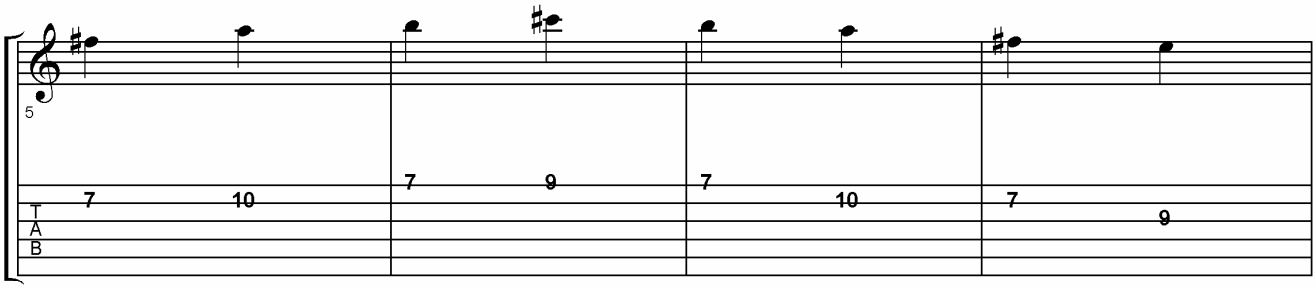


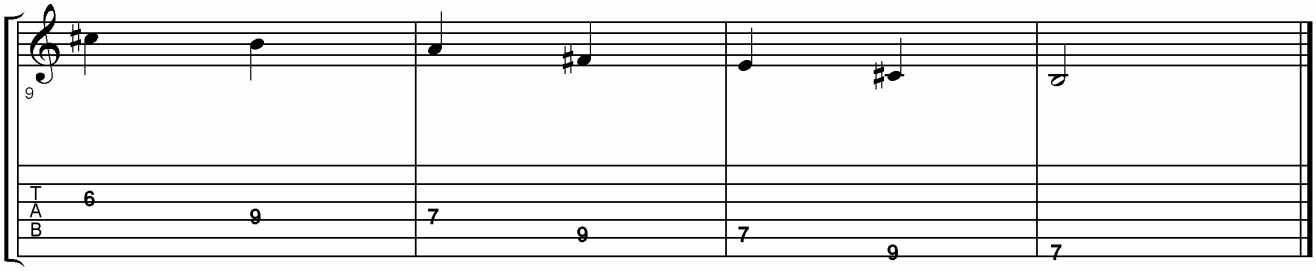
Movable Pattern 4



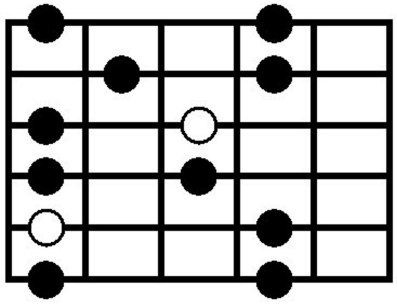
F# Pentatonic Minor, 4th position



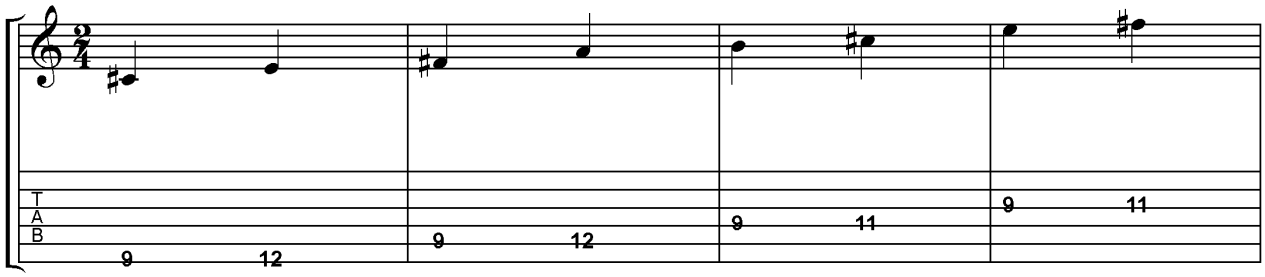


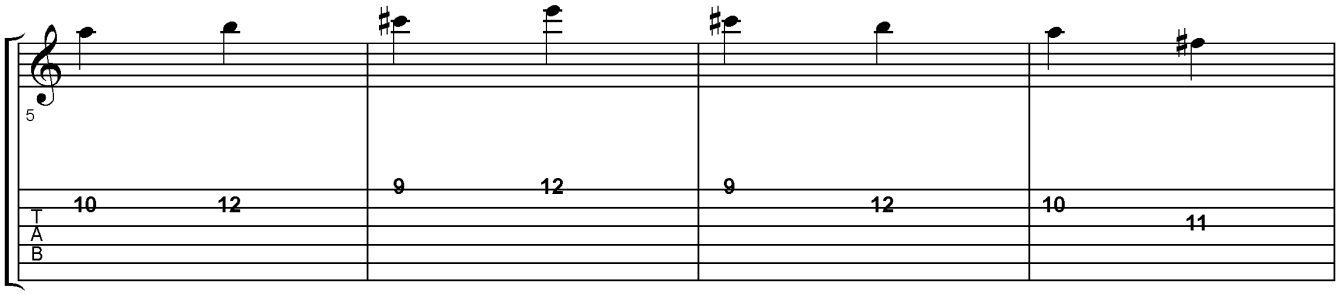


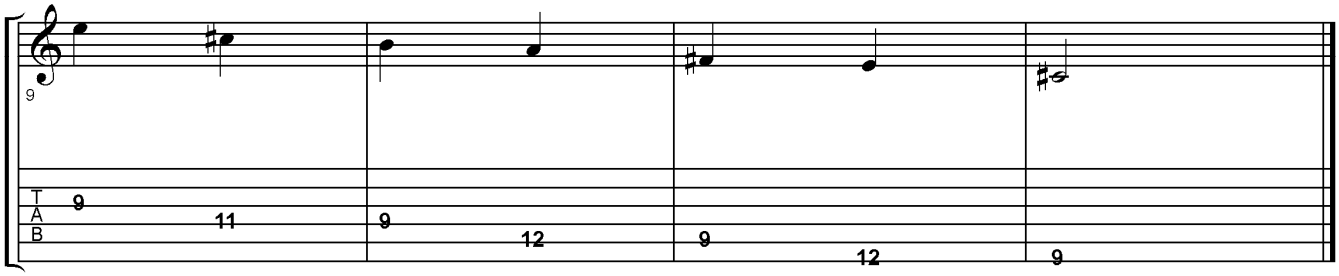
Movable Pattern 5



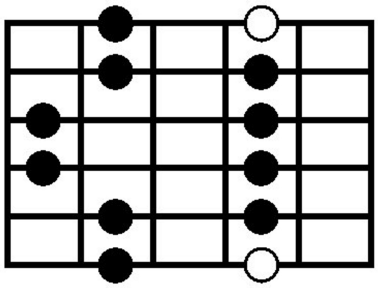
F# Pentatonic Minor, 5th position



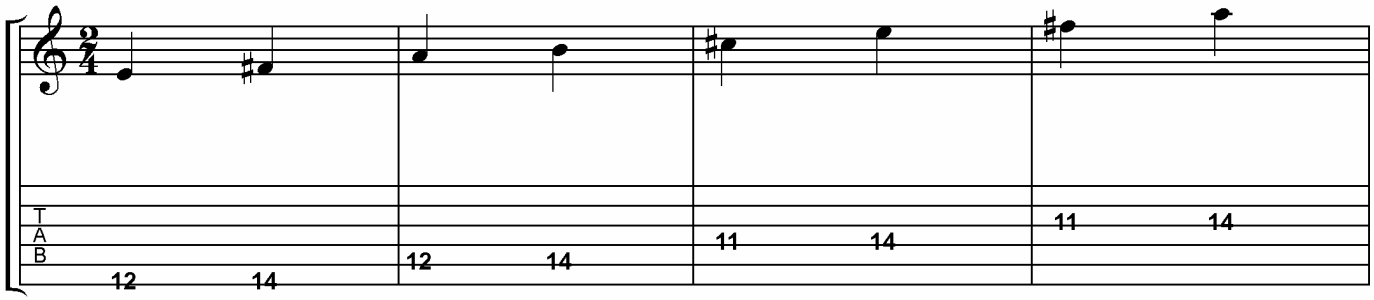


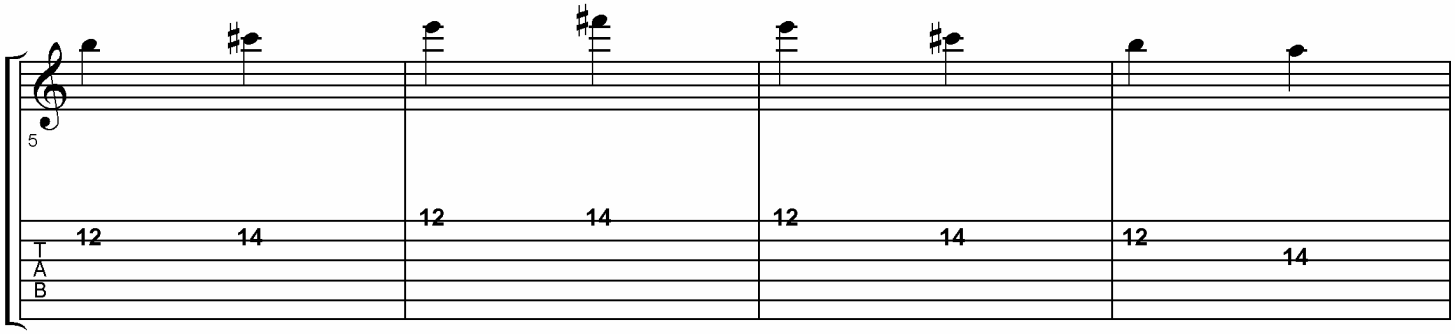


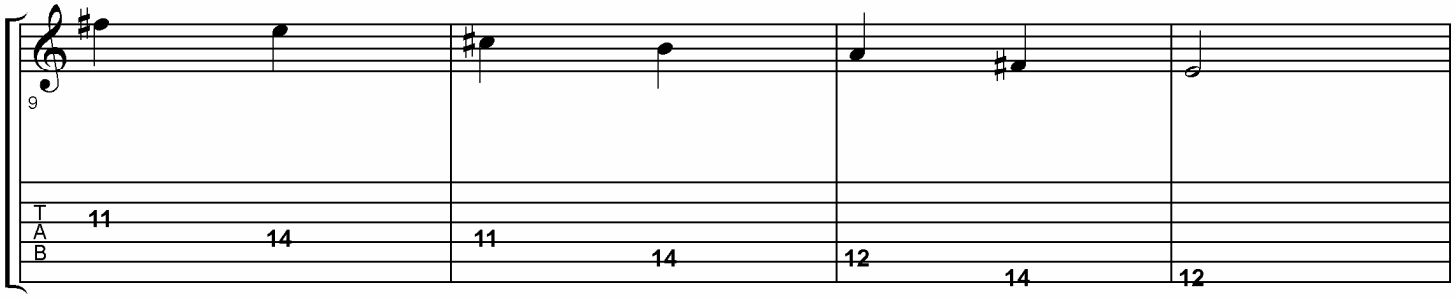
Movable Pattern 7



F# Pentatonic Minor, 7th position







Where The Rubber Meets The Road: Practical, Real-World Ways To Use The Pentatonic Minor Scale

I never want to be accused of giving you the theory, but not enough practical examples of how to use it. So, here are three chord progressions that I've written for you to practice improvisational skills.

Each chord progression comes from the major scale. But each is in a different key. I've done the leg-work for you by matching the chord progression to the scale that you should use to improvise.

How To Use Each Example

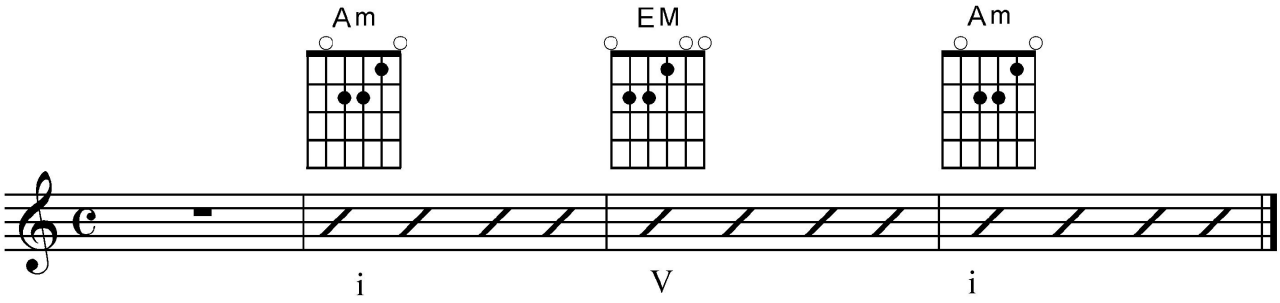
Play each chord progression. Create your own rhythmic patterns. Then, grab a friend and have him play the chord progression while you solo over the top. Or you could grab a tape recorder from Radio Shack and record the rhythm guitar part (that's the chord progression. Playback the rhythm section and play the scale over it. Improvise your own solo using bends, trills, vibrato, slides, etc.

Each scale is in that I've given you is in **1st position** (i.e., they all start on the tonic, or root note of the scale.) Try to use the moveable patterns as well. Use them to move out of the 1st position. Try to incorporate as many different positions as you can.

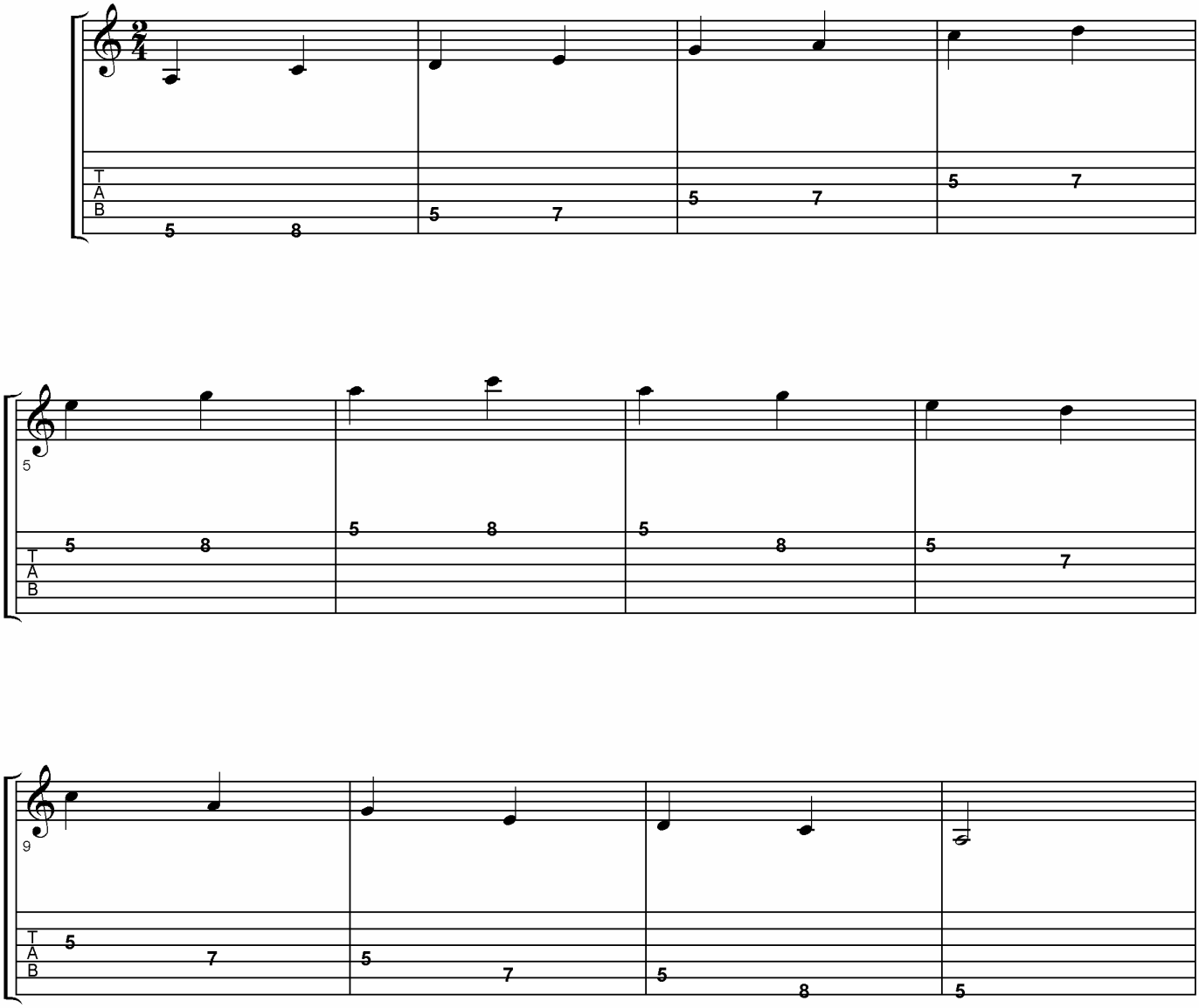
But most importantly... Have fun!

Example 1: A pentatonic minor

Play this chord progression:

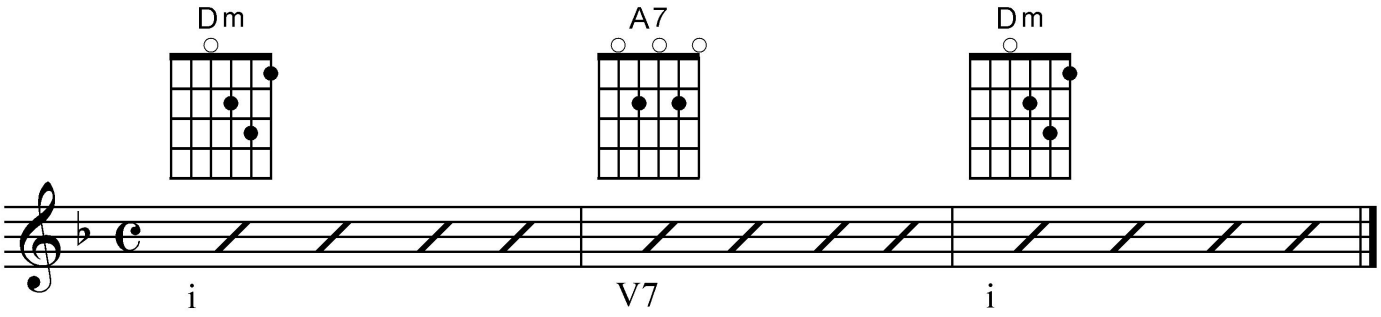


Use this scale to improvise:

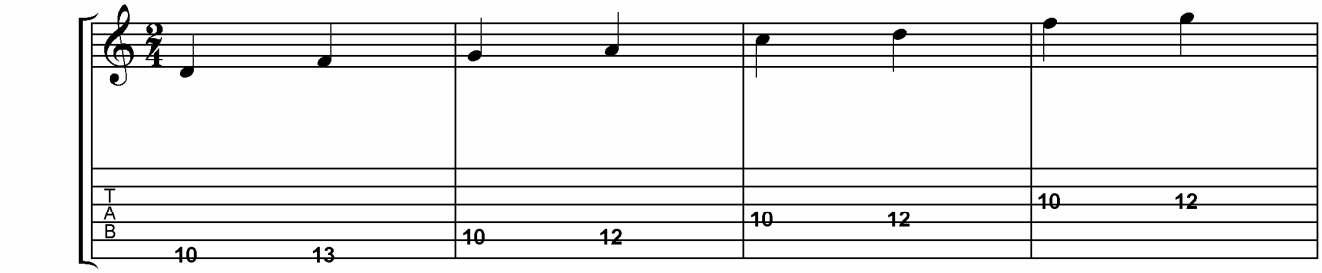


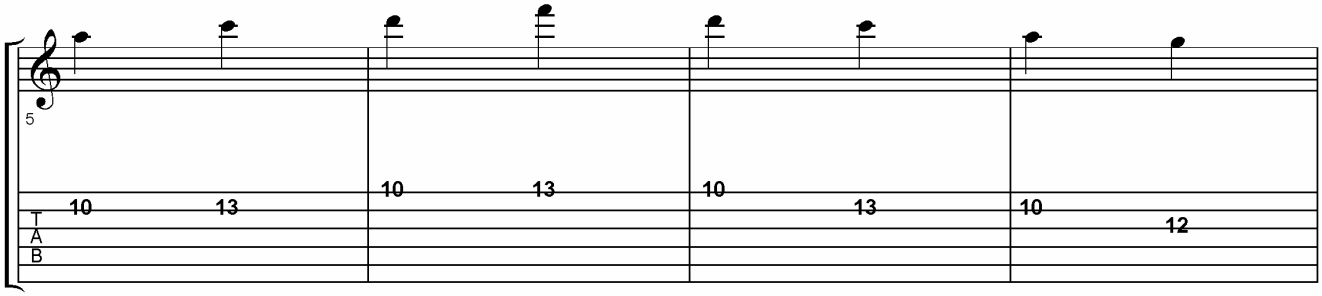
Example 2: D pentatonic minor

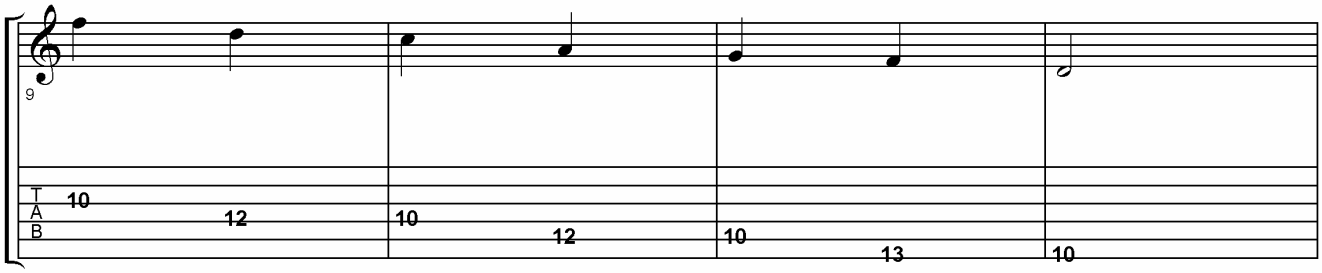
Play this chord progression:



Use this scale to improvise:

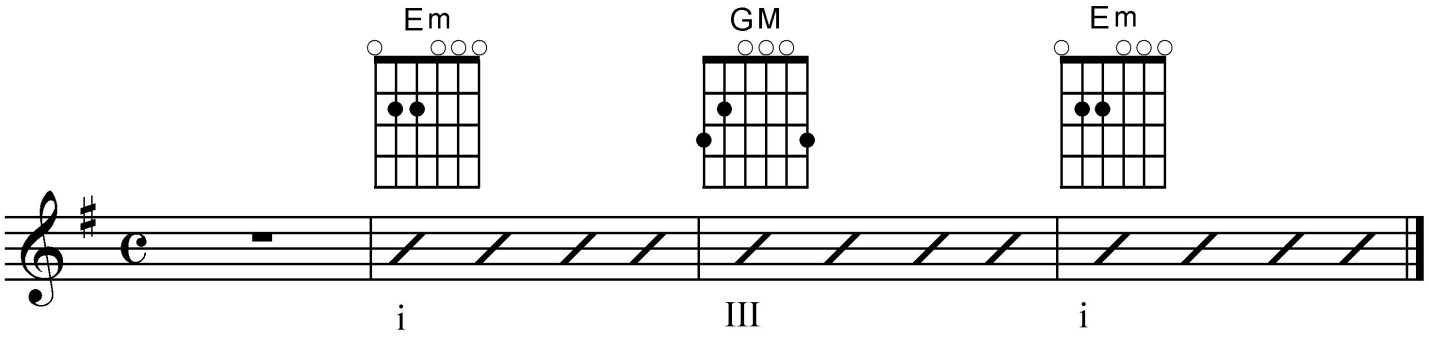




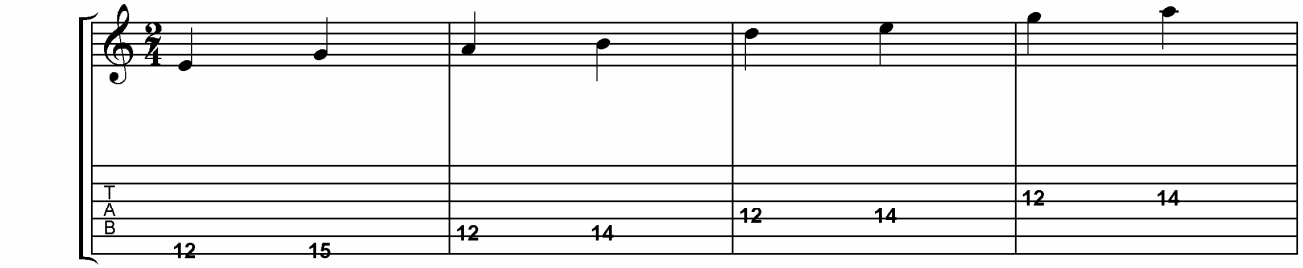


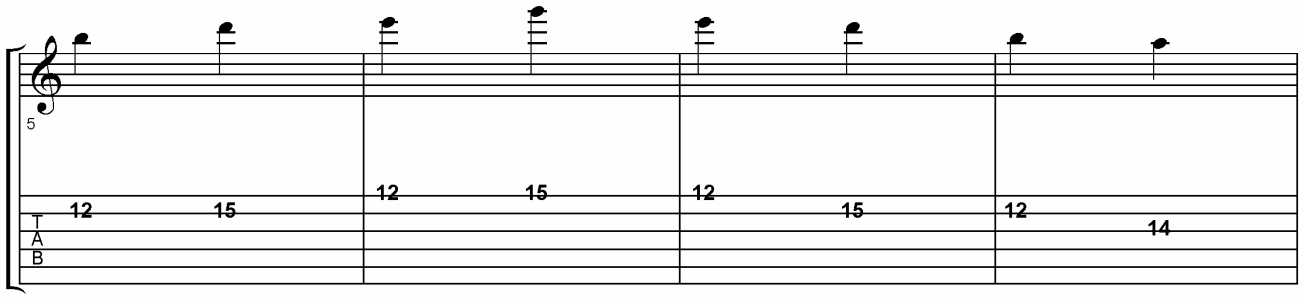
Example 3: E pentatonic minor

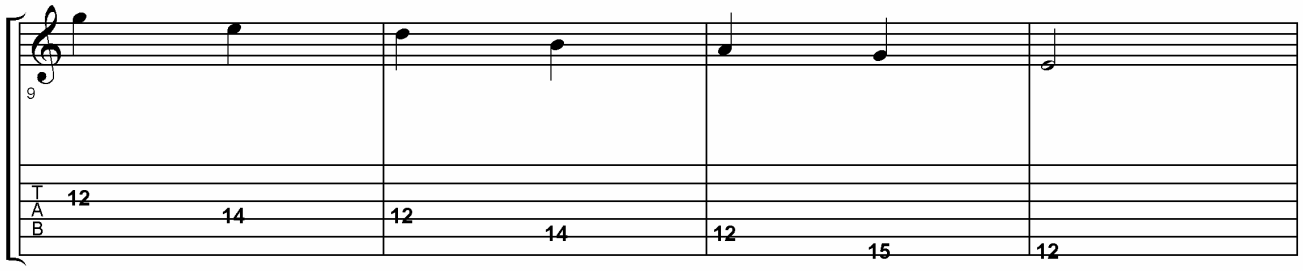
Play this chord progression:



Use this scale to improvise:

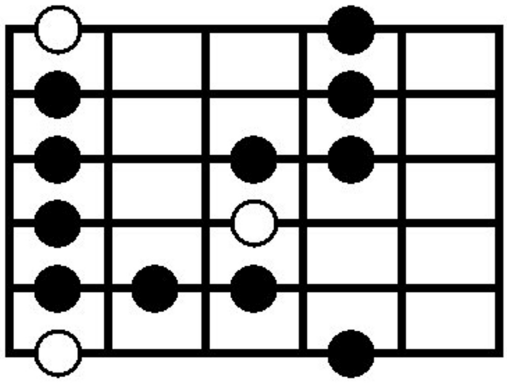




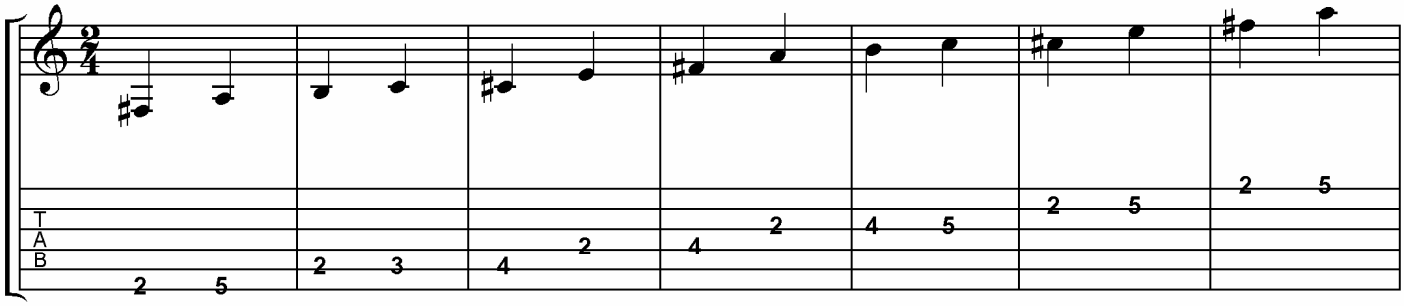


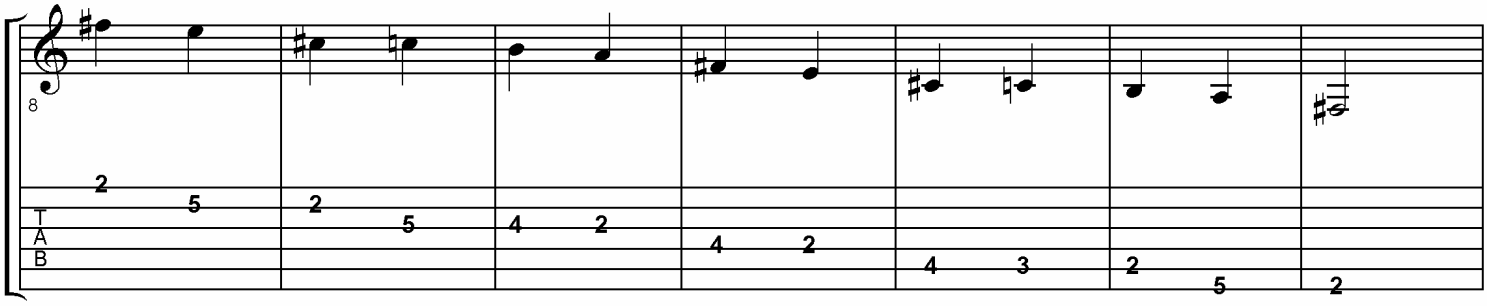
F# Blues Pentatonic

Movable Pattern 1

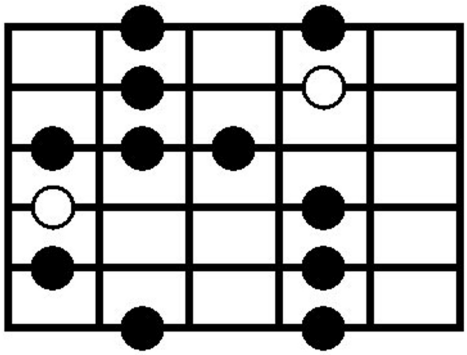


F# Blues Pentatonic, 1st position

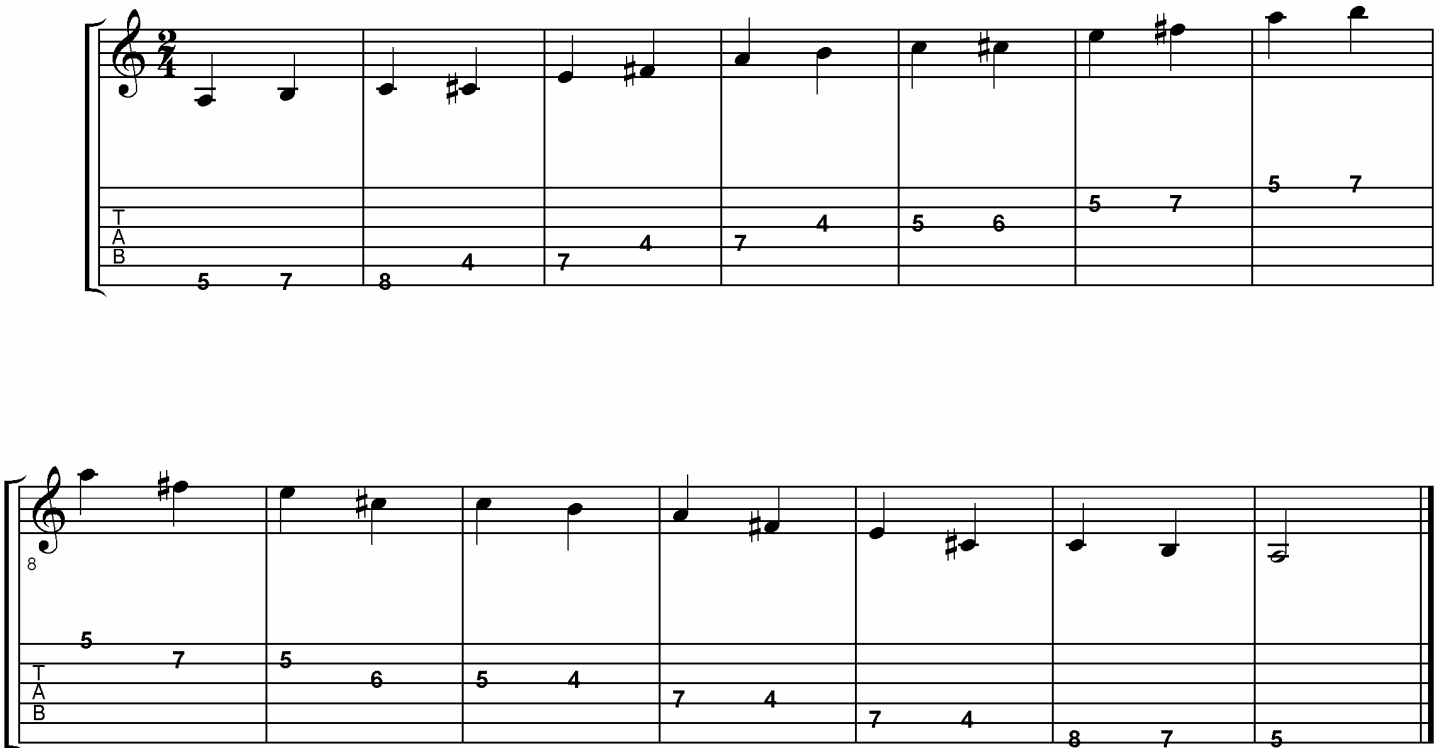




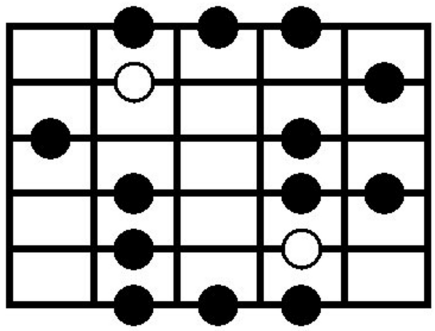
Movable Pattern 3



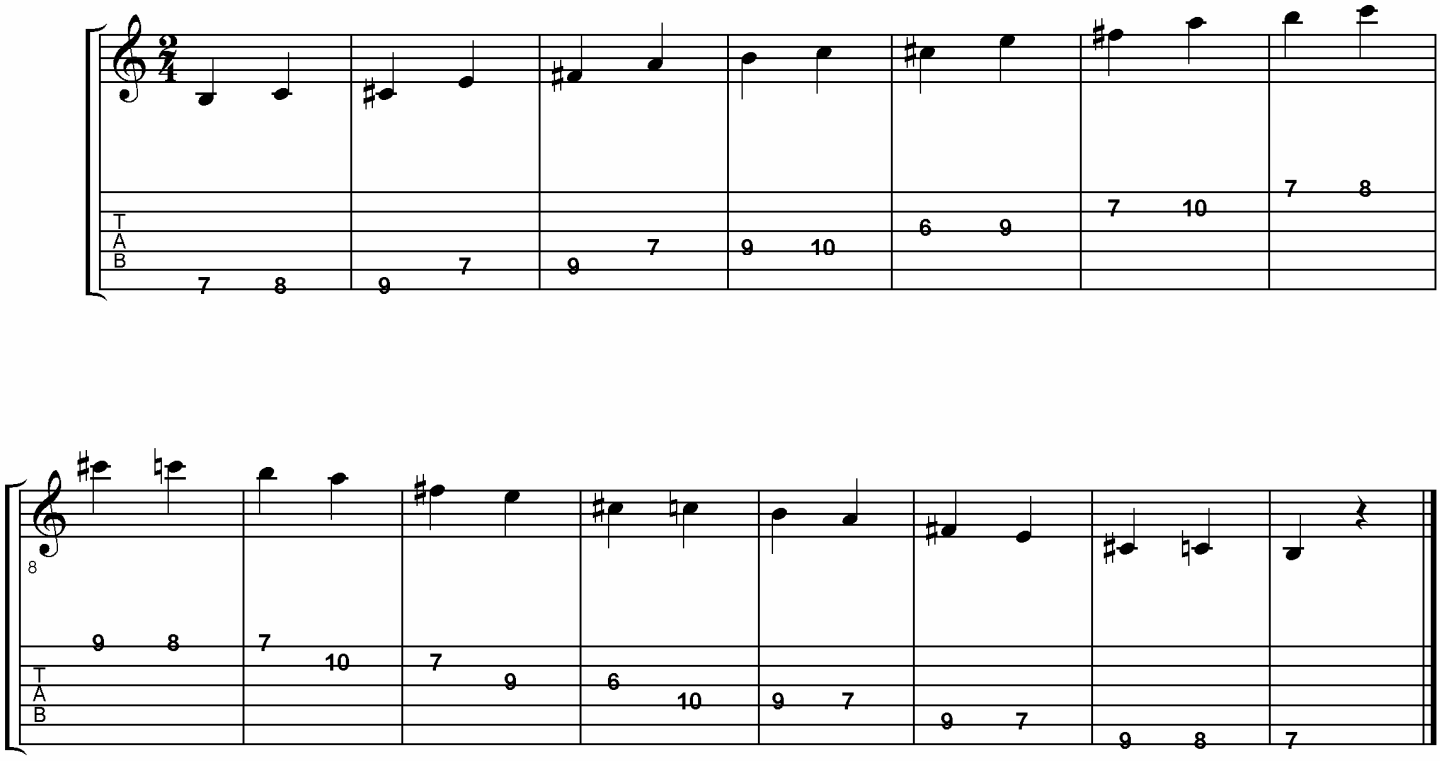
F# Blues Pentatonic, 3rd position



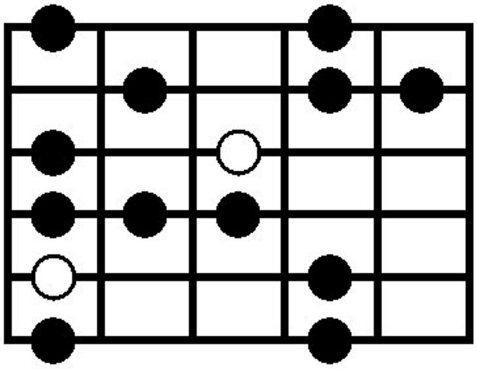
Movable Pattern 4



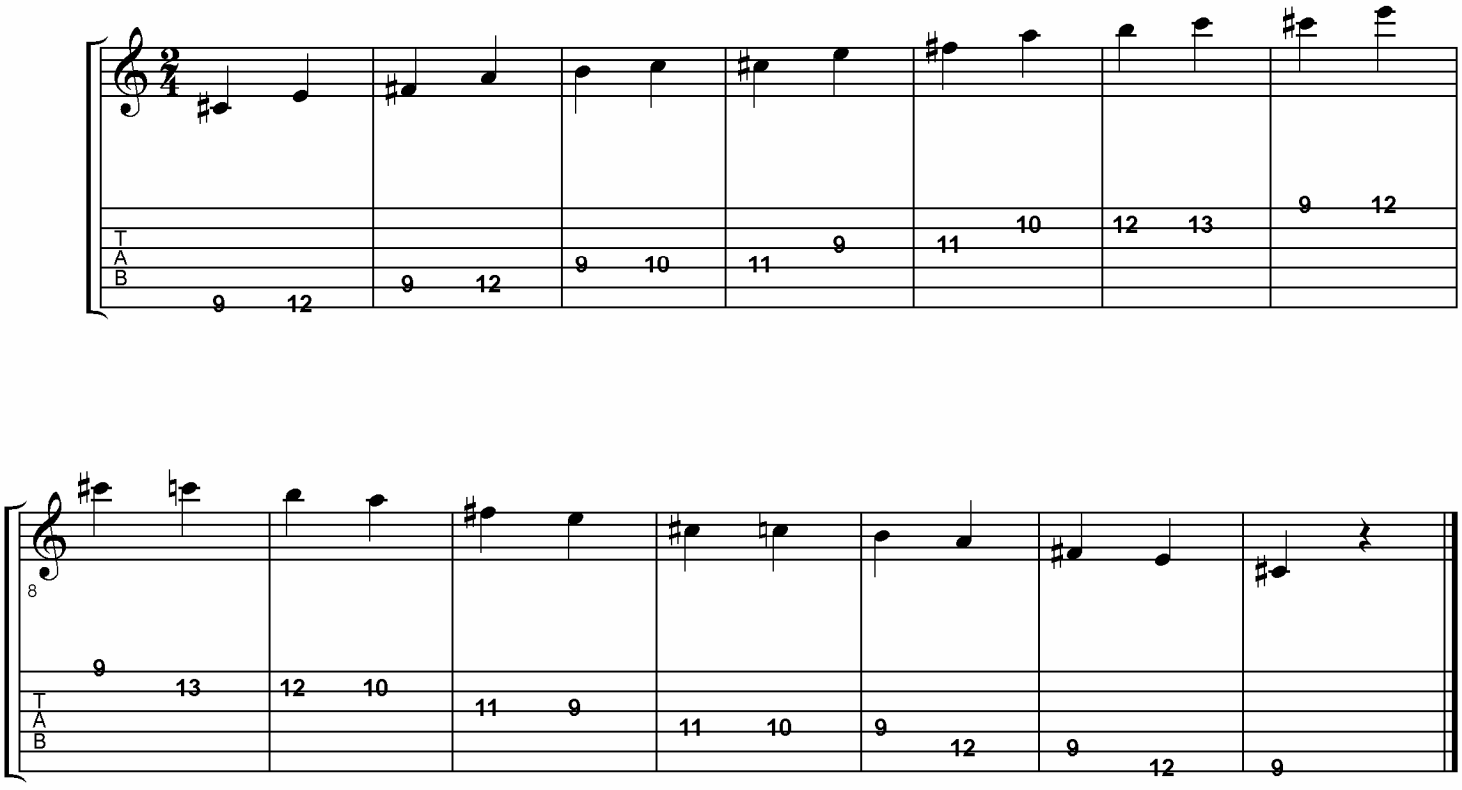
F# Blues Pentatonic, 4th position



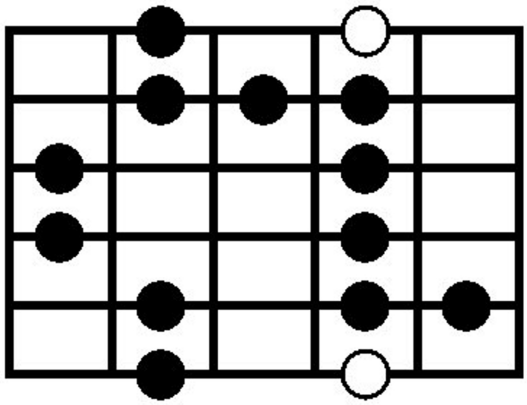
Movable Pattern 5



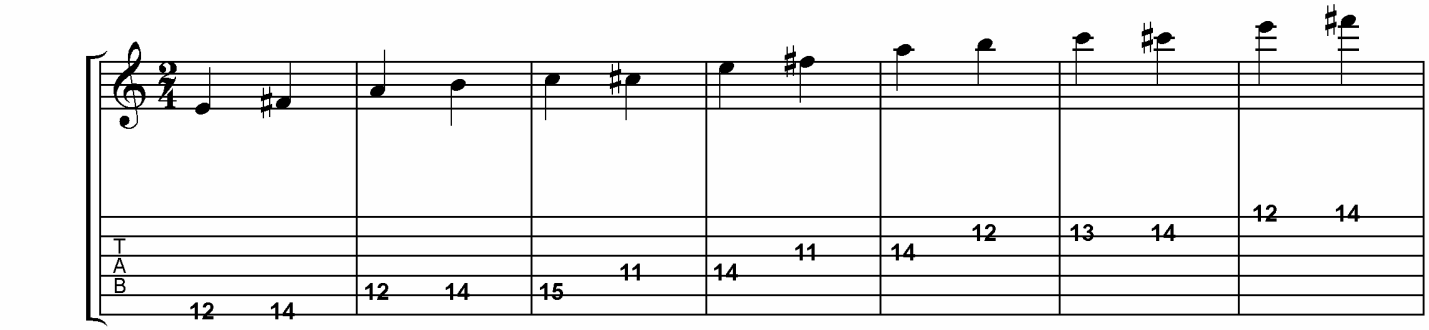
F# Blues Pentatonic, 5th position

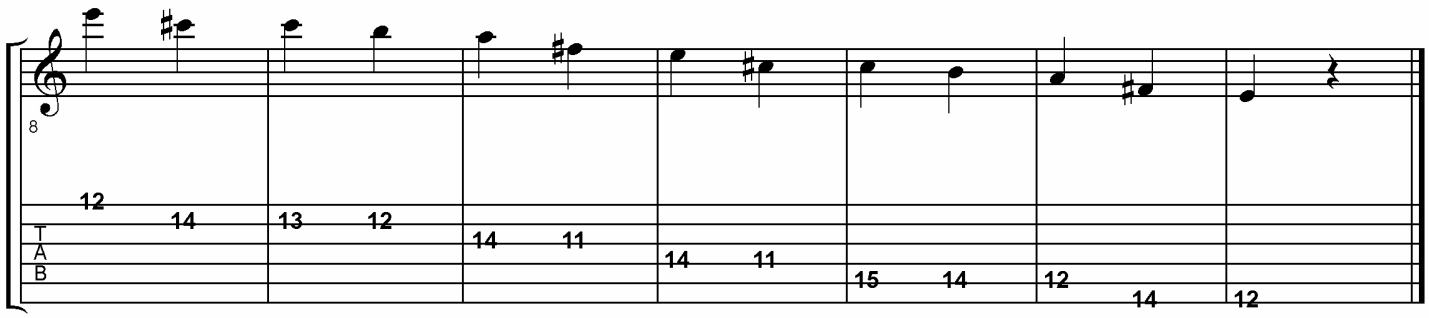


Movable Pattern 7



F# Blues Pentatonic, 7th position





Where The Rubber Meets The Road: Practical, Real-World Ways To Use The Blues Pentatonic Scale

I never want to be accused of giving you the theory, but not enough practical examples of how to use it. So, here are three chord progressions that I've written for you to practice improvisational skills.

Each chord progression comes from the major scale. But each is in a different key. I've done the leg-work for you by matching the chord progression to the scale that you should use to improvise.

How To Use Each Example

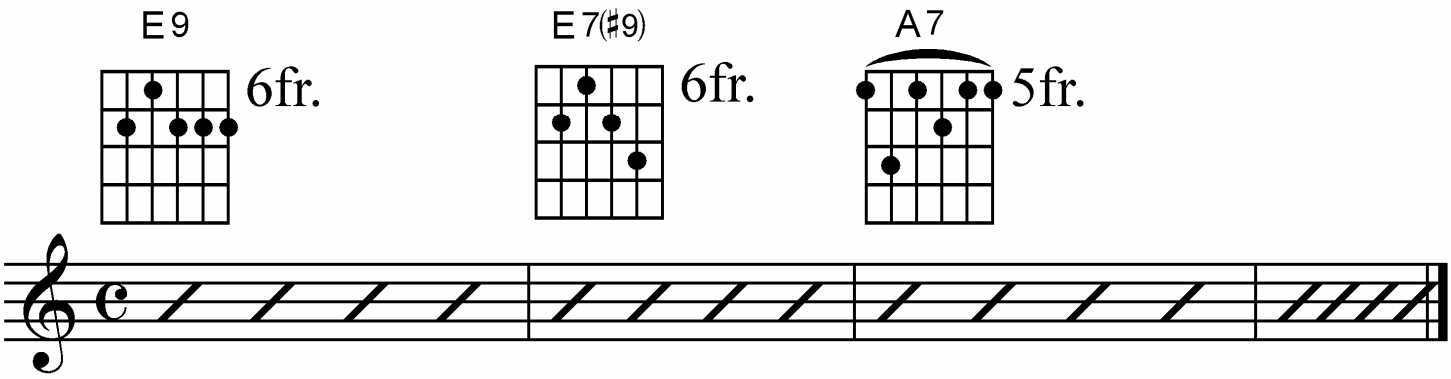
Play each chord progression. Create your own rhythmic patterns. Then, grab a friend and have him play the chord progression while you solo over the top. Or you could grab a tape recorder from Radio Shack and record the rhythm guitar part (that's the chord progression. Playback the rhythm section and play the scale over it. Improvise your own solo using bends, trills, vibrato, slides, etc.

Each scale is in that I've given you is in **1st position** (i.e., they all start on the tonic, or root note of the scale.) Try to use the moveable patterns as well. Use them to move out of the 1st position. Try to incorporate as many different positions as you can.

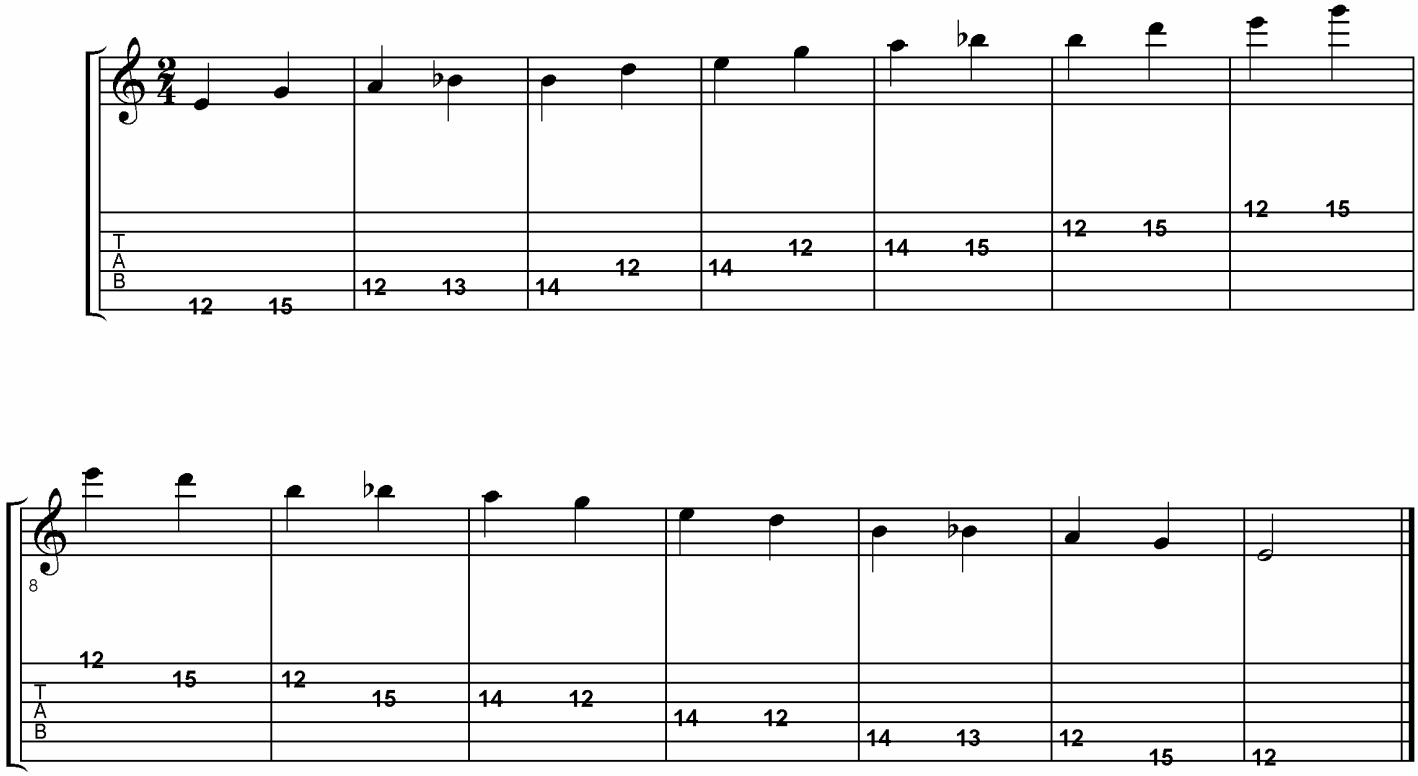
But most importantly... Have fun!

Example 1: E blues minor

Play this chord progression:

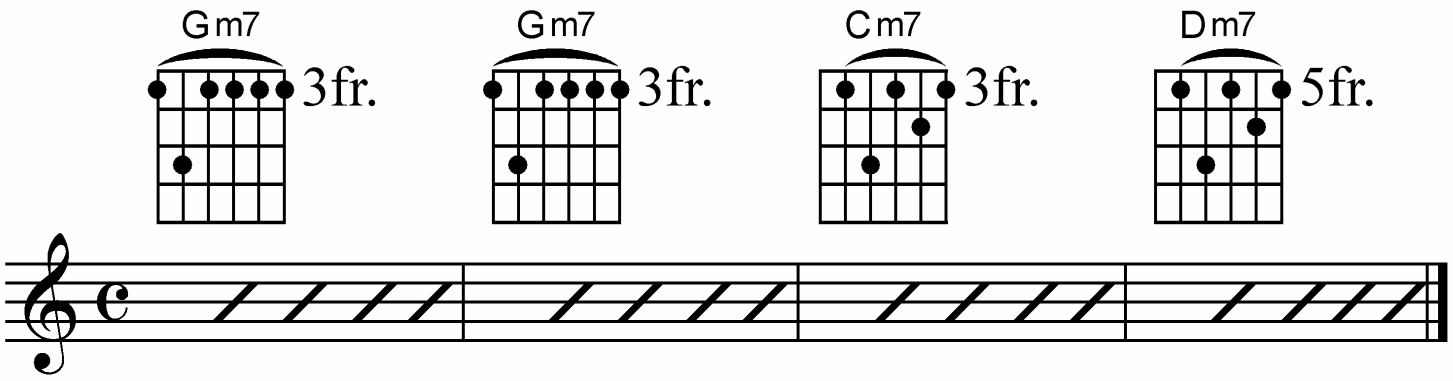


Use this scale to improvise:

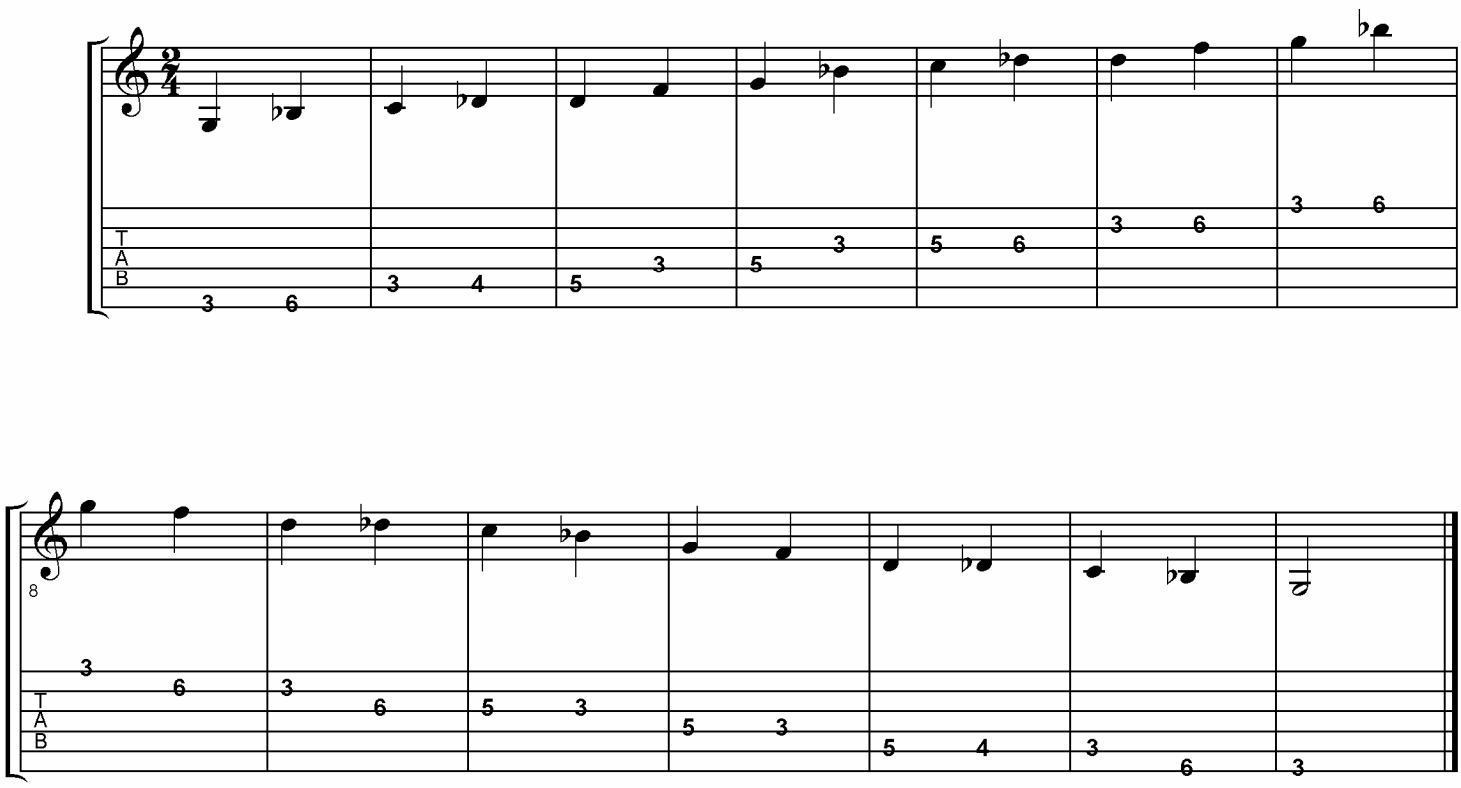


Example 2: G blues minor

Play this chord progression:

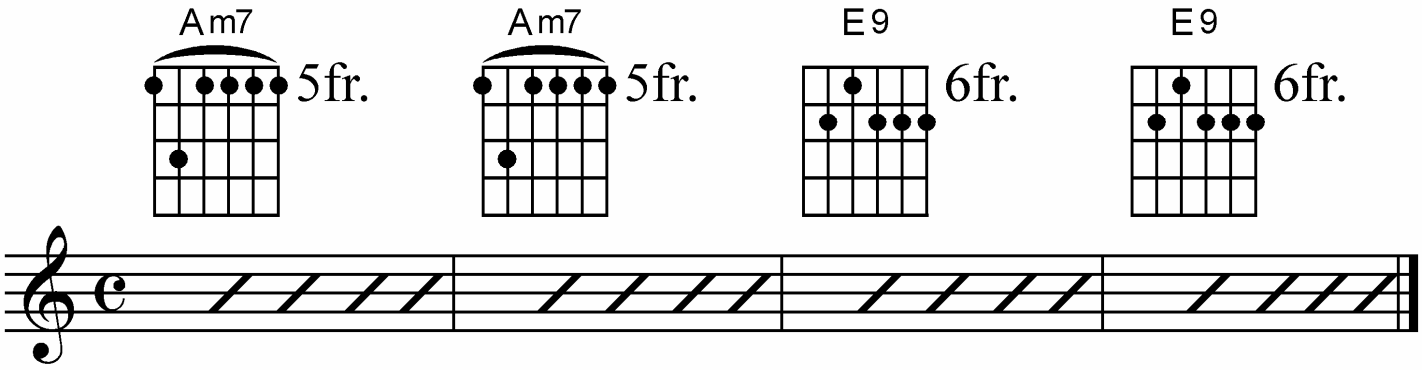


Use this scale to improvise:

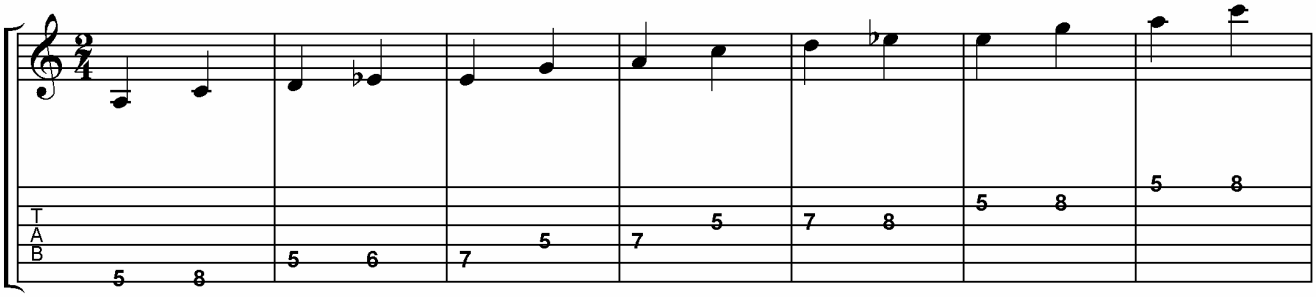


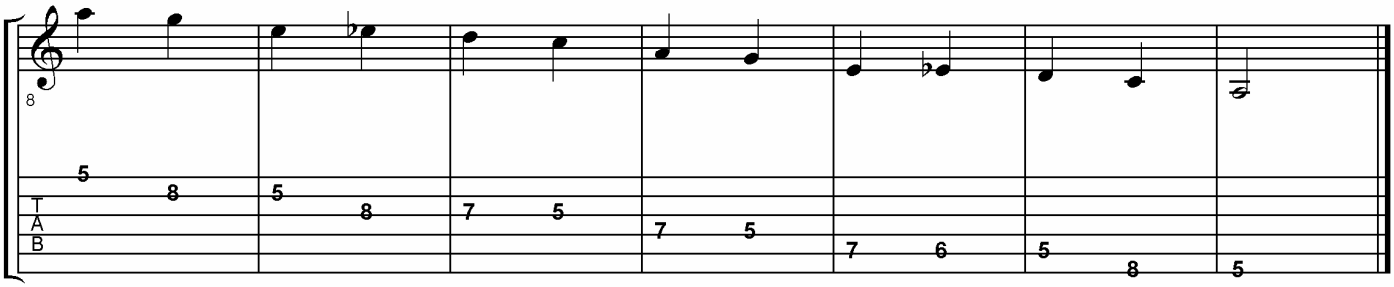
Example 3: A blues minor

Play this chord progression:



Use this scale to improvise:





Bonus Material: Five Classic Blues Licks

I've written five classic blues licks for you to add to your arsenal of solo licks. All of them are in the key of **E blues minor**. That means that all these licks will work perfectly for the previous examples.

However, they are easily transposed into other keys. Keep the lick the same, just move to a different starting note. For example, if you wanted to transpose "Classic Blues Lick #1" to the key of **G blues minor** and use it in your example two above, then here's what you do: instead of starting on the 14th fret, you'd start on the 17th. Then just add three to each of the other frets and you'll be playing the key of G blues minor!

Here's how I did that:

1. I knew that the lick was in the key of E blues minor.

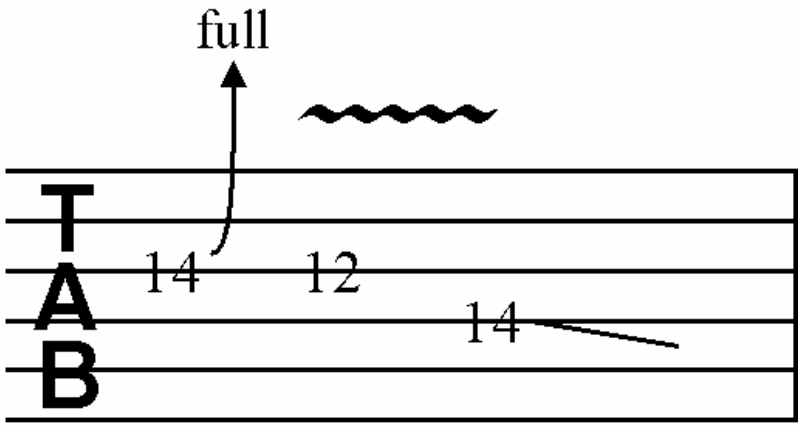
2. I knew that I was starting on the 14th fret, 3rd sting. That note is A.

3. I asked myself, "Ok, how does A relate to E?" (Because I'm in the key of E blues minor). Then, I figured out that A is the 4th in the key of E blues minor.

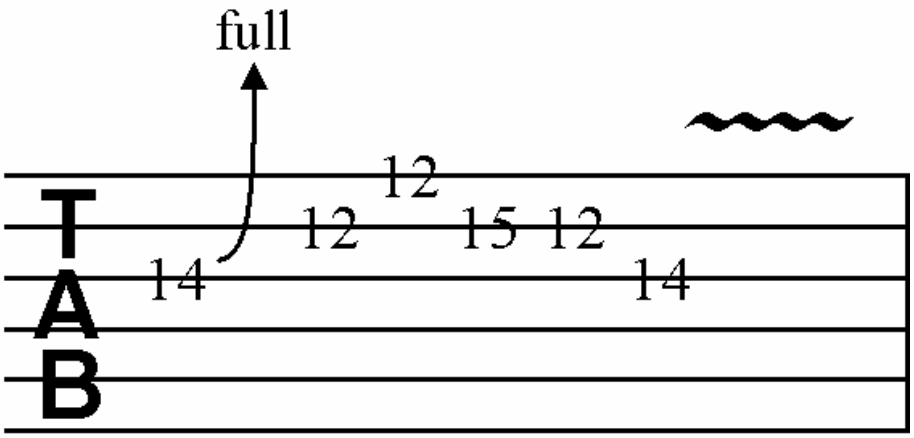
4. Then I said, "Ok, well what's the 4th in the key of G?" It's C. So all I have to do is start on C, which is 17th fret, 3rd string.

5. So, I added three to all the other fret numbers, and "Ta-dah!" I have now transposed the lick from E blues minor to G blues minor.

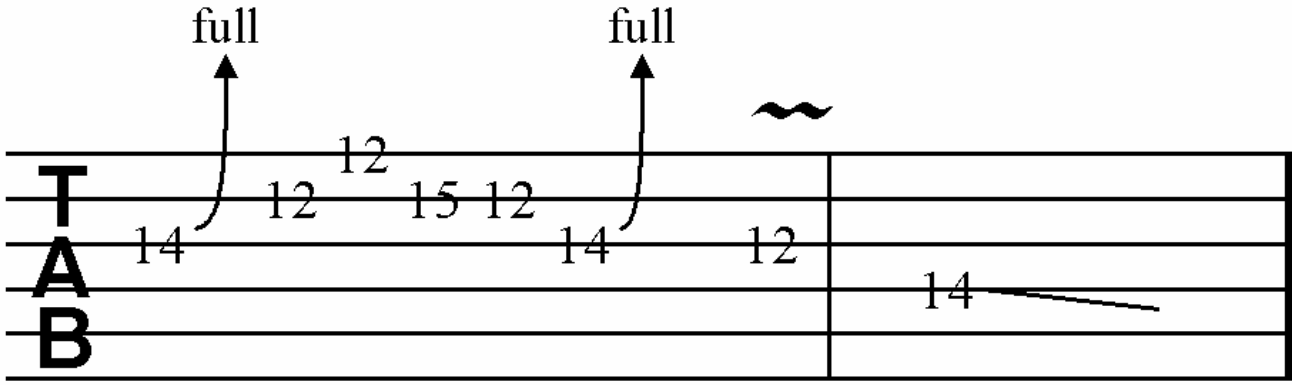
Classic Blues Lick #1



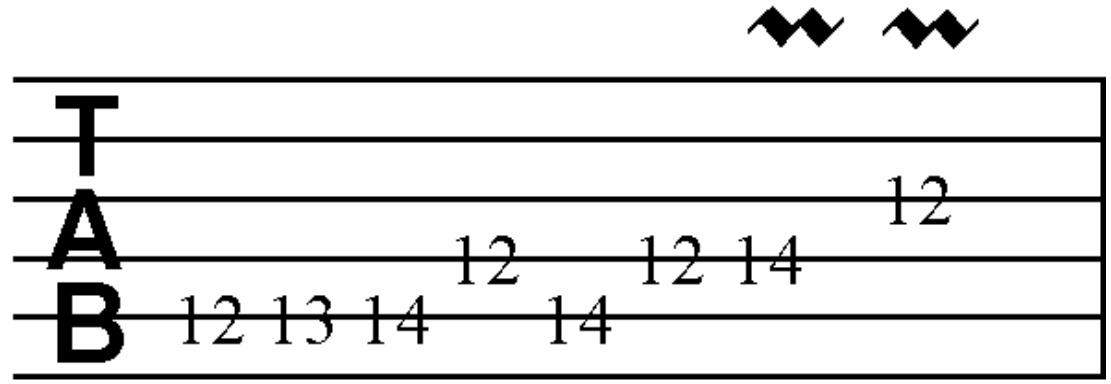
Classic Blues Lick #2



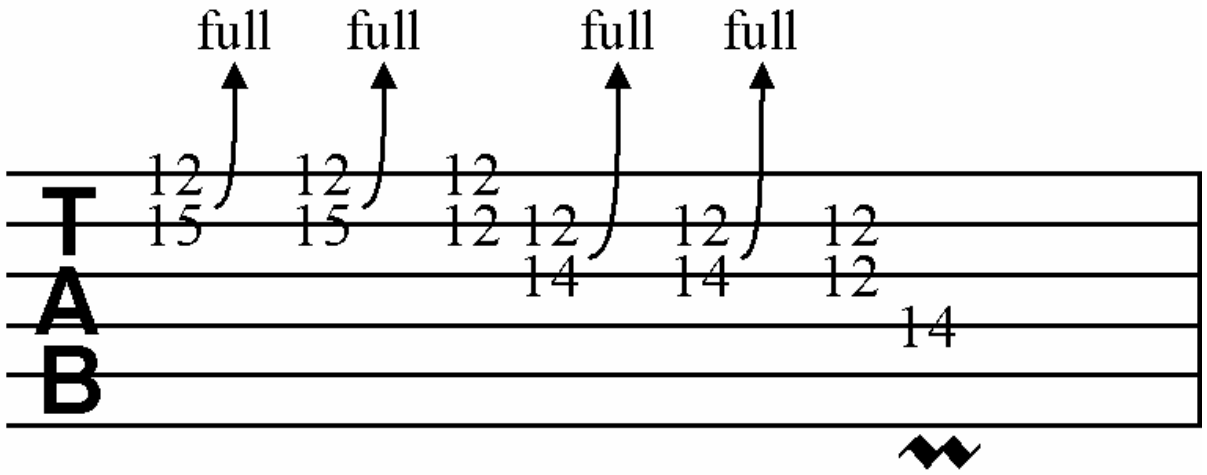
Classic Blues Lick #3



Classic Blues Lick #4



Classic Blues Lick #5



Final Thoughts

I sincerely hope this book has helped you gain a better understanding of the pentatonic scales. They are found in nearly every style of music, and they're popular for a reason: they sound great!

If you'd like to lean more about how to improve your guitar playing and about the new release of the Amazing Guitar Secrets course, then you can **sign-up for "priority nonfiction"** (see the link below).

Here's a picture of the new Amazing Guitar Secrets, gold-edition course:

Click the link below (or copy-paste) to sign-up for priority notification:

http://www.amazingguitarsecrets.com/priority.html

All the best to you and your guitar-playing future!

Cheers,

Dan Denley

Dan Denley