

How To Use The Pentatonic Scale



By Bob Murnahan

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About **BOB MURNAHAN**

After receiving his first guitar at the age of 8, Bob began his now 42 year quest to learn as much as possible about playing the guitar. He has studied privately and at the collegiate level in the jazz studies program at the Ohio State University.

His career highlights include a tour of Europe with performances at the North Sea Jazz festival and the Montreux Jazz Festival. He has also done a stint in Vegas and played in the pit orchestra for the musicals Grease and Jesus Christ Superstar. Bob is also a veteran of the recording studio on group recordings and doing session work.

He stopped counting the number of students that come to him for private lessons at 1200. He has also toured the country as a clinician for Peavey Guitars. He is currently endorsed by Godin Guitars.

A few of his best selling products include:

Pentatonic Power
The Pentatonic Power Insider
Clapton Torn Down

Bob currently lives in Colorado with his wife Lynn and his 2 teenage sons (twin boys and budding musicians).

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Introduction

Have you ever wondered how players like Page, Clapton and Beck use the pentatonic scale to play lead guitar? How about guitarists like Van Halen and Vai? Or how jazz guitarists like Pat Metheny and George Benson use the pentatonic scale?

If so, then you've come to the right place. In the series of lessons to follow you will be guided through a step by step sequence of instruction to help you play lead guitar.

Take Your Lead Guitar Playing To The Next Level! In The lessons That Follow You Will Learn

- The most commonly used fingerings of the pentatonic scale.
- Guitar licks that you can use as a starting point to develop your own solos.
- Exercises to help you improve your technique.
- How to use passing tones to give your playing that extra spice that sound great.

The goal of these lessons is not just to memorize a bunch of guitar licks, although this is recommended and will help you improve. The goal is to give you a starting point that you can use to learn how to improvise and make up your own solos.

The fun and joy that comes from being able to improvise is worth all the effort and practice that it takes to get there. Be patient and you will improve. Try to set aside a consistent time each day to practice and you will reach your goals.

To your guitar playing success,

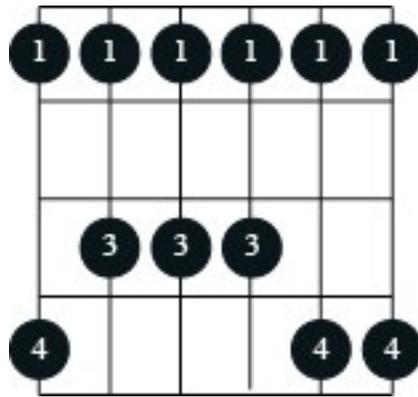
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Lesson 1. How To Play The Pentatonic Scale

Welcome to lesson 1 of the pentatonic scale. In this lesson you will learn how to read scale diagrams and tablature. You will also learn the most commonly used fingering for this scale.

Let's start by looking at a pentatonic scale diagram.



Here is a very important concept. Notice that this diagram of the pentatonic scale has no open strings. This means you can play it anywhere on the guitar. The fret does not matter. Just make sure you keep the spacing between your fingers the same as you move the scale around the neck.

When you move to a different fret, you are changing the key. Don't worry if you don't know what this means, more on this in a later lesson.

When reading this diagram of the pentatonic scale, start on the left hand side of the diagram.

This is the low E string (6th string). Play all of the notes on this string from top to bottom before moving on to the next string. In this example you would play 2 notes on the 6th string. The 1st finger followed by the 4th finger.

On the 5th string you would play 1st finger followed by the 3rd finger. The 4th string would be 1st finger and 3rd finger again. Continue in this manner until you play the entire pentatonic scale.

When you arrive at the end of the scale, turn around and go back down the scale. In reverse, you would start on the 1st string and play 4th finger followed by the 1st finger.

The 2nd string would also be 4th finger, 1st finger. The 3rd string would be 3rd finger, 1st finger.

Here are some other things to keep in mind as you play the scale on your guitar.

1. Most of the scales that you will learn in these lessons cover a span of 4 frets. Follow the recommended fingerings using one finger per fret. If you have to stretch beyond that, it is no big deal to reach back with your 1st finger or stretch out with your 4th finger.
2. To get your fingers in the proper playing position, allow your left hand to hang by your side completely relaxed. Turn your palm forward and without moving the upper arm, raise your forearm until your hand touches the edge of the fret board at the point where your fingers meet your palm.
3. Place the thumb in the center of the neck behind your 1st finger. Arch your fingers over until they press down on the 3rd string. The tips of the fingers should be at a 90 degree angle to the fret board. The string should make a mark in the center of the fingers.
4. As you spread your fingers to cover the 4 fret distance, they should be well separated at their middle joints. Your 1st finger should lean towards the head stock and your little finger will lean towards the bridge.
5. When playing a note with the 1st finger, the string mark should be more on the side of your finger towards your thumb and the mark on your little finger will be out by the side of your hand.
6. The palm of your hand should be parallel to the bottom of the neck.
7. These are general guidelines. This will vary depending on where you are at on the neck as you play. I would recommend that you find a good teacher in your area if you are just starting out. Learning proper technique from the beginning is a great way to avoid headaches later on.

Lesson 2. Pentatonic Scale Patterns

Welcome to lesson 2. In this lesson on the pentatonic scale you will learn about patterns and their importance as you continue on the path to learn guitar.

Pentatonic scale patterns, sometimes referred to as sequences, are one of the best things you can practice to gain more command of the pentatonic scale. In my experience, they are a must if you are even half way serious about learning the guitar. I will be the first to admit that they can be tedious to practice, but the long term rewards are definitely worth it.

What is a pattern? Look at this example using words. Red, green, blue, red, green, blue. What would be the next word in this pattern? Red is the obvious answer. A pattern is simply a sequence that gets repeated over and over. Look at the diagram of the pentatonic scale below as an example.



The scale is shown with each note numbered from 1-12. Now the numbers can be sequenced as follows.

(1 2 3) (2 3 4) (3 4 5) (4 5 6) (5 6 7) (6 7 8) (7 8 9) (8 9 10) (9 10 11) (10 11 12)

To play this sequence of the scale, start on number 1 and play 1, 2, 3. Then go back to number 2 and play 2, 3, 4. Next would be 3, 4, 5. etc. Play this until you go through the entire pattern.

To play it in reverse simply read from right to left. In reverse this pentatonic scale pattern would be 12, 11, 10. Then play 11, 10 , 9, and continue in this manner until you get back to the beginning.

Here is the same pentatonic scale pattern written in tablature.

Example 2

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a pentatonic scale pattern. Each system consists of a treble clef staff and a three-line guitar tablature staff. The first system shows the scale ascending and then descending, with triplets of three notes indicated by a '3' above the notes. The second system shows the scale ascending and then descending, also with triplets. The tablature uses numbers 5, 7, 8, and 5 to represent fret positions on the strings. The first system's tablature starts with 5 8 5 8 5 7 5 7 7 5 7 5 7 5 7 5 7 5 8 5 8 5 8. The second system's tablature starts with 8 5 8 5 8 5 8 5 7 5 7 5 7 5 7 5 7 5 7 5 7 5 7 5 7 5 7 5 7 5 8 5 8 5.

As always, play each example at a speed that is easy for you to manage. Since this example breaks up the pentatonic scale into 3 note chunks or triplets, keep a steady 1 2 3 count going as you practice this pattern. The use of a metronome is highly recommended.

That's it for lesson 2. Be sure to practice the scale daily. It is the only way to reach your musical goals.

Lesson 3. Typical Pentatonic Blues Licks

Welcome to lesson 3 of the pentatonic scale, pentatonic blues licks. In this lesson you will be learning some ways to use the pentatonic scale in a solo. Several typical pentatonic blues licks will be used as a starting point to develop your knowledge of the pentatonic scale. Grab your guitar and get tuned up and let's go.

Take a look at example 3. This lick will be used as a springboard for all of the licks to follow, so make sure you nail this one.

Example 3.



The first thing to notice about this lick is a bend at the 7th fret, 3rd string. This type of bend is very common in pentatonic blues licks. If you are not used to bending here are some guidelines for this lick and those to follow.

This bend needs to raise the note one whole step. This is equal to 2 frets on the guitar. A good way to practice bends of this type is to listen to a target note and try to match it. In this case, play the note at the 9th fret on the 3rd string. This is your target note. Really get the sound in your ear.

Now put your 3rd finger on the 7th fret 3rd string and your 2nd finger on the 6th fret 3rd string. Use both fingers to push the string up until it matches the pitch of your target note. You will find that bending is much easier if you use two fingers to bend the note. Your thumb should be over the top of the neck for added stability.

After you bend the note, then play the 2nd string 5th fret followed by the 1st string 5th fret. There is no time signature for these licks. The idea is to play them as quarter notes and to loop them. It is typical of these pentatonic blues licks to be played over and over in a loop. As you play this lick just count 1-2-3 over and over and keep it steady.

Example 4.

The image shows a musical example for a guitar lick. It consists of a treble clef staff with a common time signature (C) and a fretboard diagram below it. The fretboard diagram shows the 7th, 5th, 8th, and 5th frets on the second string. The lick is repeated twice, with a 'full' arrow pointing to the 7th fret note in each instance. The fretboard diagram is labeled with 'T', 'A', and 'B' on the left side.

This lick and all of the pentatonic blues licks to follow all start with the lick from example 3. A pull off has been added to expand the lick from example 3. The pull off is on the second string going from the 8th fret to the 5th fret. You should use your 4th finger and first finger to play these two notes. If you do not know how to do a pull off the following guidelines should help.

The idea of a pull off is to get two or more notes to sound by only picking the the string one time. In this example and the pentatonic blues licks to follow, you will be getting two notes to sound but you will only pick the string they are on once.

First, pick the note at the 8th fret, second string, then pull your little finger down towards the first string. I often tell people that a pull off should be called a pull down. If you pull your finger up off the string the second note (the one you are pulling off to) will not be loud enough or not heard at all. By pulling down towards the 1st string your little finger will be snapping off the 2nd string creating a strong pull off. Be sure to listen for this snapping sound as you pull off.

The note you pull off to should be as loud as the note you pick. I try to pull my little finger into the 1st string and use the first string to stop the downward motion of the pull off. By allowing the little finger to come to rest on the 1st string also prevents any unwanted noise.

Example 5.

Musical notation for Example 5, showing a guitar lick in treble clef with a 3/4 time signature. The lick consists of two measures. The first measure has a triplet of eighth notes (F5, G5, A5) followed by a quarter note (B5). The second measure has a quarter note (B5) followed by a triplet of eighth notes (A5, G5, F5). The bass line starts on the 7th fret of the 1st string, with a 'full' pull-off arrow pointing to the 5th fret. The notes are 7, 5, 8, 5, 7, 5, 8, 5.

This example in our study of pentatonic blues licks is a lot like example 4. The only difference is that the pull off has been moved over to the 1st string. When pulling off of the 1st string you still want to pull down and get that snap. Be careful not to pull the string off the edge of the fret board. Again, keep it steady.

Example 6.

Musical notation for Example 6, showing a guitar lick in treble clef with a 3/4 time signature. The lick consists of two measures. The first measure has a triplet of eighth notes (F5, G5, A5) followed by a quarter note (B5). The second measure has a quarter note (B5) followed by a triplet of eighth notes (A5, G5, F5). The bass line starts on the 7th fret of the 1st string, with a 'full' pull-off arrow pointing to the 5th fret. The notes are 7, 5, 5, 8, 5, 8, 5.

This lick is a variation on the previous 2 pentatonic blues licks, combining the pull offs and putting them both in the same lick. This is an example of how you can really create a lot of different ideas with just a few different notes. You can combine and recombine same pieces of what you know to get a lot of different ideas to use in your playing.

Example 7.

Musical notation for Example 7. The top staff is a treble clef staff showing a melodic line. The bottom staff is a guitar tablature staff. The tablature shows a triplet of eighth notes on the 4th string at the 7th fret, followed by quarter notes on the 3rd, 2nd, and 1st strings at the 5th fret. A 'full' pull-off is indicated on the 4th string at the 7th fret.

Here the pull offs are reversed from the previous example. You can really start to learn how easy it is to create variations and form many pentatonic blues licks by playing around with these ideas. I really encourage you to play around and create some of your own.

Example 8.

Musical notation for Example 8. The top staff is a treble clef staff showing a melodic line. The bottom staff is a guitar tablature staff. The tablature shows a triplet of eighth notes on the 4th string at the 7th fret, followed by quarter notes on the 3rd, 2nd, and 1st strings at the 5th fret. A 'full' pull-off is indicated on the 4th string at the 7th fret.

This lesson on pentatonic blues licks concludes with the pull offs going down the scale and ending on the 4th string, 7th fret. Try using the concept from the previous examples and change the string order of the pull offs. You can also delete a note here or there and see what you come up with. The main thing is to just experiment and have fun. You never know what you might discover.

If you would like to see some of these ideas on video along with some more great FREE lessons, then follow this link , <http://leadguitartactics.com>. Get instant access to more tab, jam tracks and other cool stuff.

Lesson 4. More Typical Blues Licks

Welcome to lesson 4 of the pentatonic scale. In this lesson you will be learning more ways to use the scale in a solo. Additional typical blues licks will be used to develop your knowledge of the pentatonic scale. Grab your guitar, get tuned up and let's go.

Take a look at example 9. In this lick we see our old friend from lesson 3 as our starting point. The lick then descends in the pentatonic scale with a slight twist at the end of the lick going from the 5th fret 3rd string to the 5th fret 4th string. The lick then resolves to 7th fret, 4th string.

This example begins to show how to use the pentatonic scale in a more drawn out fashion.

This lick is also written using all eighth notes in the first measure and ends with a whole note at the beginning of the second measure. Be sure to keep the eighth notes evenly spaced.

Play slowly at first and the speed will follow naturally.

Example 9.



The image shows a musical example for a guitar lick. It consists of a treble clef staff with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a common time signature (C). The melody is written in eighth notes for the first measure and a whole note for the second measure. Below the staff is a guitar tablature with six lines labeled T (top), A, and B (bottom). The fret numbers are: 7, 5, 5, 8, 5, 7, 5, 5, 7. An arrow labeled "full" points to the first note (7th fret, 3rd string).

Example 10 uses part of the pattern learned in lesson 2 on the pentatonic scale. It starts with the descending pattern in triplets and on the last triplet of measure 1 you will find our springboard lick from lesson 3. Hopefully you can see how you can combine parts of what you already know to create pentatonic blues licks like these.

This lick ends up with a bend on the 8th fret, second string. If you want to get more power in your bend, use your 3rd finger to play and bend that note instead of your 4th finger. In playing this pattern of the pentatonic scale, your 4th finger naturally lands on this note, but it is ok to change fingerings to make playing easier.

Example 10.

Musical notation for Example 10, showing a guitar lick with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is written on a single staff with a treble clef. The fretboard is shown below with strings T, A, and B labeled. The lick consists of four measures of eighth notes, each with a triplet '3' above it. The notes are G4 (5th fret), A4 (7th fret), B4 (8th fret), and C5 (10th fret). The first measure has frets 5, 8, 5, 8. The second measure has frets 5, 7, 5, 7. The third measure has frets 5, 7, 5, 7. The fourth measure has frets 5, 7, 5, 7. The fifth measure has a single note G4 (5th fret) with a 'full' bend arrow. The sixth measure has a single note G4 (8th fret) with a 'full' bend arrow.

In example 11 the lick is a little longer and expands our use of the pentatonic scale even more. Take your time and let your fingers learn where they are supposed to go. Use these examples to create your own pentatonic licks. Experiment and see what you can create on your own.

Example 11.

Musical notation for Example 11, showing a guitar lick with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is written on a single staff with a treble clef. The fretboard is shown below with strings T, A, and B labeled. The lick consists of three measures of eighth notes. The first measure has frets 7, 5, 7, 7. The second measure has frets 5, 7, 5, 8. The third measure has frets 7, 5, 5, 8. The fourth measure has frets 5, 8, 5, 8. The fifth measure has a single note G4 (5th fret) with a 'full' bend arrow. The sixth measure has a single note G4 (8th fret) with a 'full' bend arrow.

Example 12 uses triplets again and covers two measures. This lick is pretty much just down the pentatonic scale and back up again. There is just a little twist right at the end of the lick and our old favorite to start this lick off. See how many ways we have been able to use this same idea over and over again.

Example 12.

Musical notation for Example 12. The top staff is in treble clef, showing a sequence of eighth notes with triplets. The bottom staff is guitar tablature, showing fret numbers: 7, 5, 5, 8, 5, 7, 5, 7, 5, 7, 5, 7, 5, 8, 5, 8, 5, 8, 5, 5, 8. A 'full' instruction with an upward arrow is placed above the first note (fret 7).

The last lick of this lesson on the pentatonic scale begins with...you guessed it, our favorite 3 notes from the pentatonic scale. Listen to Whole Lotta Love to hear these notes played by Jimmy Page. You can hear them in the 1st and 3rd licks of that solo.

Example 13.

Musical notation for Example 13. The top staff is in treble clef, showing a sequence of eighth notes. The bottom staff is guitar tablature, showing fret numbers: 7, 5, 5, 5, 8, 5, 8, 8, 8. A 'full' instruction with an upward arrow is placed above the first note (fret 7) and another above the eighth note (fret 8).

I hope you are enjoying these lessons on the pentatonic scale. My goal is to inspire you to create your own music and solos using these tools.

For extra help be sure to visit www.leadguitartactics.com. You will discover lots of extra resources there including video, tab and jam tracks.

Lesson 5. More Patterns

Welcome to lesson 5 on the pentatonic scale. In this lesson you will learn a second pattern. In my opinion, practicing patterns is the quickest way to develop your ability to play lead guitar. You learn flexibility and receive great ear training from practicing patterns. These are both essential ingredients in creating your own guitar riffs from the pentatonic scale, or any other scale for that matter.

This pattern is broken up into 4 note fragments that repeat on successive steps of the scale. As always, play with a steady tempo and if you have a metronome, use it! Use alternate picking and pay attention to your tone.

It is written in the key of A minor and when your comfortable with it at the 5th fret, move it around the and play it in different frets.

Example 14.

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a guitar exercise. Each system consists of a standard musical staff with a treble clef and a common time signature (C), and a corresponding guitar tablature staff below it. The tablature staff is labeled with 'T', 'A', and 'B' for the treble, middle, and bass strings respectively. The first system shows a descending melodic line starting on the 8th fret of the treble string, moving down to the 5th fret of the bass string. The second system shows an ascending melodic line starting on the 5th fret of the bass string, moving up to the 8th fret of the treble string. The tablature includes fret numbers and rhythmic markings such as '8 5 8 5 5 8 5 7' and '5 8 5 7 8 5 7 5 7 5 7 5 7 5 7 5 7 5 8 7 5 8 5'.

That wraps it up for lesson 5. See you in the next lesson.

Lesson 6. Guitar Riffs

Welcome to lesson 6. In this lesson I would like to share a few licks that are based on patterns

This first lick is very similar to a run that Slash played at the end of Sweet Child O Mine. Pay attention here and recognize the pattern. Remember, that's the focus of this lesson, using patterns to create guitar riffs

Example 15.

Example 15 is a guitar riff in standard tuning (EADGBE) with a treble clef and a common time signature (C). The riff consists of four measures. The first measure contains the notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The second measure contains the notes F#4, G4, A4, B4, A4, G4, F#4. The third measure contains the notes E4, F#4, G4, A4, G4, F#4, E4. The fourth measure contains the notes D4, E4, F#4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. The guitar tablature below the staff shows the fret numbers for each note: 12 12 14 12 14 12 14 12 12 12 15 15 12 15 12 15 12 15 12 12.

Example 16 makes use of the pattern from lesson 5. It starts with a bend and then descends using the pattern, changes direction and ends with another bend. When using patterns to create your own guitar riffs it's the changes in direction and the unexpected twists that make patterns effective. If you go on too long with a pattern, your licks will become predictable and boring.

Example 16.

Example 16 is a guitar riff in standard tuning (EADGBE) with a treble clef and a common time signature (C). The riff consists of four measures. The first measure contains the notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The second measure contains the notes F#4, G4, A4, B4, A4, G4, F#4. The third measure contains the notes E4, F#4, G4, A4, G4, F#4, E4. The fourth measure contains the notes D4, E4, F#4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. The guitar tablature below the staff shows the fret numbers for each note: 14 (with a 'full' bend arrow), 12 15 12 14 15 12 14 12 12 14 12 14 12 14 12 14 12 15 15 (with a 'full' bend arrow).

Example 17 demonstrates another pentatonic scale pattern. As always, take your time and play with a steady tempo. Remember to use your metronome if you have one.

Example 17.

The image shows a musical score for a guitar exercise. The top staff is a treble clef staff with a C-clef, containing a pentatonic scale in the key of C major. The scale is written in a single line, starting on the first line (C4) and ending on the first space (G4). The scale is: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4. The bottom staff is a guitar tablature with three lines labeled T (Treble), A (Middle), and B (Bass). The tablature shows the fret numbers for each string in four measures. The first measure has fret numbers 12, 14, 14, 12, 14. The second measure has fret numbers 12, 14, 14, 12, 14. The third measure has fret numbers 12, 14, 15, 14, 12, 15. The fourth measure has fret numbers 12, 15, 12.

That's it for lesson 6. In lesson 7 we will continue our study of the pentatonic scale. Thanks for reading and keep practicing. Stay focused and you will reach your goals.

Lesson 7. More Guitar Riffs

In this lesson on guitar riffs I would like to share a few ideas to help you come up with your own licks. Although there is no magic formula, I hope these tips will be useful for you. Have an open attitude and experiment. Above all, let your ear be your guide.

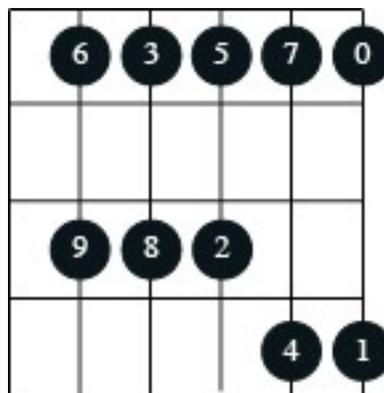
Some of these ideas may seem a little crazy at first but you never know what you might come up with. This is where the open attitude and a willingness to try things can come in handy.

Tip number 1...limit yourself. What do I mean by this. Try to create little melodies and guitar riffs by only playing the notes of the pentatonic scale on the first 2 strings, or the 2nd and 3rd strings. You get the idea. By limiting yourself in this way you will be surprised at what you can discover. Try it and see.

Tip number 2...this is a variation on tip number 1. Play with wide string skips. In other words, play on only the 1st and 3rd strings or 2nd and 4th strings. These big skips and wide intervals can really produce some interesting sounds.

Tip number 3...combine portions of licks you already know.

Tip number 4...Pick 10 notes from the pentatonic scale and number them 0-9. You will have something like the following. I picked the order of these notes at random. You can do as many of these as you like.



Now get out your phone book. You read that right, get out your phone book. Open it to any page and start getting phone numbers. Here are a couple out of mine.

475-1389, 228-7860, 258-3685, 863-0652

This should give you endless ways to create guitar riffs. Try combining 2 or 3 phone number to create longer licks. Some of these will be totally ridiculous but I guarantee you will find some cool note combinations to use in your own solos.

Tip number 5...this one is similar to the last one. Pick 6 notes at random out of the pentatonic scale. Number them 1-6. Now get some dice and roll them. Use the numbers that come up to create even more guitar riffs.

Tip number 6...this one has nothing to do initially with making up your own solos, but ultimately it will. Commit to learning a lick a day by one of your favorite guitarists. Keep adding to your vocabulary. The more you have to draw from, the better you will be able to play.

I hope you like these ideas. I know they seem a little crazy but if you give them a chance you will make some interesting discoveries.

That does it for lesson 7. Keep practicing and prepare for lesson 8.

Lesson 8. Still More Guitar Riffs

Welcome to lesson 8 and more guitar riffs. In this lesson you will learn a series of short little repeating licks that sound great when you get them up to speed.

Now take a look at example 18. I learned this lick years ago in a Larry Carlton solo. If you do not know about Larry I highly recommend that you check him out. He is a great guitarist and one of my personal favorites.

Example 18.

Musical notation for Example 18. The notation is written on a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff shows a triplet of eighth notes. The bass staff shows the fretting: 15 (with "full" above), 12, 15, 12, 5, 12, 15, 12, 15 (with "full" above), 12, 15, 12.

Example 19 is a variation of example of example 18. You can hear guitar riffs like this in the playing of Jimmy Page, Clapton and a host of others.

Example 19

Musical notation for Example 19. The notation is written on a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff shows a triplet of eighth notes. The bass staff shows the fretting: 14 (with "full" above), 12, 15, 12, 14 (with "full" above), 12, 15, 12, 14 (with "full" above), 12, 15, 12.

Notice that there is a pull off in the triplet figure. Using pull offs is a great way to increase your speed. Also try playing this example without the pull offs.

Example 20 is similar to a lick that is in the end of the solo from Freebird. That song is full of just about every pentatonic scale lick you can think of. It is guitar riffs to the max. Get a complete transcription to that one and you can really keep yourself busy for a while.

Example 20.

The image displays a musical example consisting of two staves. The top staff is a treble clef staff with a common time signature (C). It contains four measures of music. Each measure features a triplet of eighth notes, with a '3' written below the first note of the triplet. The notes in the first two measures are G4, A4, and B4. The notes in the last two measures are A4, B4, and C5. The bottom staff is a guitar tablature staff with three lines labeled T (top), A (middle), and B (bottom). It shows the fret numbers for the notes in the top staff: 14 for G4, 12 for A4, and 14 for B4. The fret numbers are arranged in a sequence that corresponds to the notes in the top staff: 14 12 14 12 14 12 14 12 14 12 14 12.

I play this lick in my Lessons From Freebird video. You can see that lesson and more by visiting www.leadguitartactics.com. What are you waiting for? Head over there right now while you are thinking about it.

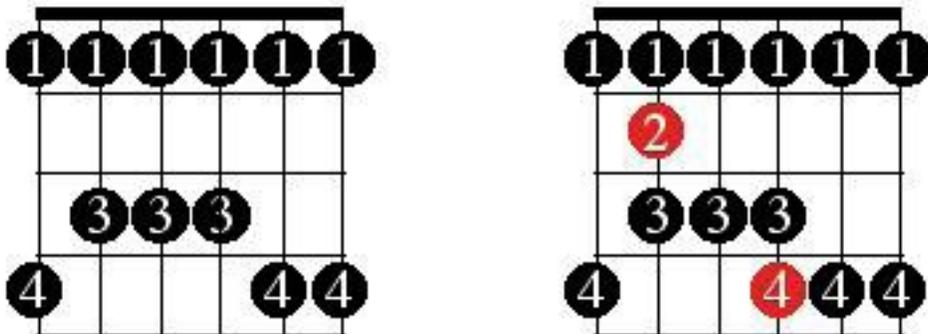
That wraps up lesson number 8 on the pentatonic scale. It is my hope that these lessons have been of great value to you. Thanks for reading.

Lesson 9. The Blues Scale

Hi and welcome to lesson 9. In this lesson I would like to talk how by adding one note to the pentatonic scale, referred to as a passing tone, you get an entirely new scale called the blues scale.

I mentioned the term passing tone. What is a passing tone and how are passing tones used in guitar scales? Good question. A passing tone is simply a note that is added between two notes of a scale that are a whole step apart (2 frets on the guitar). By adding passing tones to a scale your playing will be a lot more interesting.

Take a look at the following diagram. The first one is the pentatonic scale and the second one is the blues scale. Notice the passing tone highlighted in red. Wait you might be saying, there are 2 notes highlighted in red. That is correct but it is the same note in different octaves, hence only one note.



Play the 2 different guitar scales now. Listen to the differences between the two. Most importantly, experience the bluesy flavor of the blues scale. I am sure that this is a sound that you recognize in many classic guitar solos. The one that immediately comes to mind for me is the opening lick that Jimmy Page played in the solo to Whole Lotta Love.

Your goal for this lesson is to memorize the blues scale and to make up some licks of your own. Look at some guitar tab of solos by Jimmy page, Clapton, Stevie Ray Vaughn and a host of others and find examples of how they used the blues scale.

Lesson 10. The Pentatonic Scale Fingerings

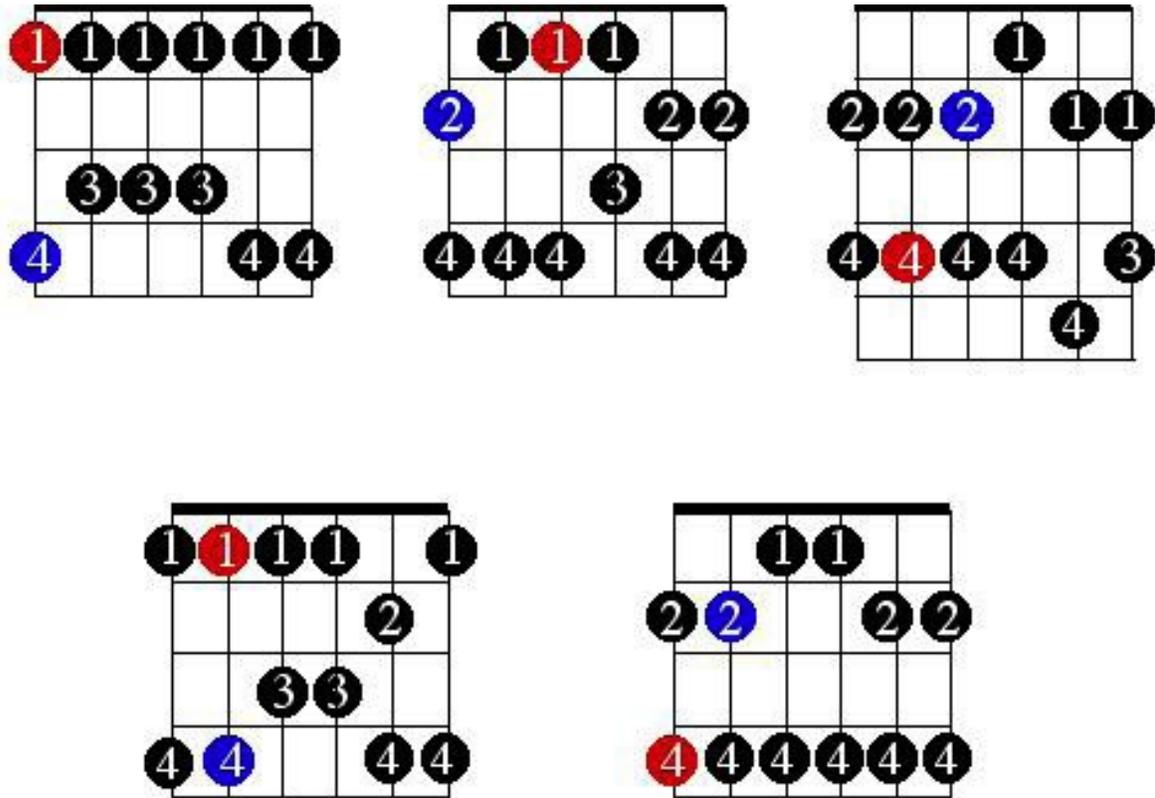
Here we go with lessons 10. In this lesson you will learn the remaining fingerings for the pentatonic scale. When you know all 5 of these it makes it possible for you to play up and down the entire length of the fretboard, greatly expanding your range.

It also makes it possible to switch keys and keep your hand in one general area of the fretboard. This is a big advantage to have in your playing as you progress. As a matter of fact, this is one of the most important reasons to learn many different guitar scales, not just the pentatonic scale.

As you learn these fingerings here are a few essential points to keep in mind.

1. Memorize one position at a time. When learning guitar scales, or anything else for that matter it is easier to digest in small pieces. There is a joke that goes; How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time.
2. As always use a metronome. Practice with a slow steady tempo and gradually increase your speed.
3. Apply the patterns from previous lessons to these fingerings of the pentatonic scale. Practicing patterns is the best way that I know to really learn and absorb guitar scales.
4. Create your own licks out of these new fingerings and seek out the licks of your favorite players. Always try to expand your vocabulary. The internet is full of tab sites full of things to practice.
5. Find other musicians and friends to jam with. Put any new material that you learn to use right away, whether it is guitar chords, guitar scales, arpeggios, etc. The sooner and the more you apply your learning the quicker it becomes part of who you are.
6. This is the most important thing to know about the following diagrams. The pentatonic scale can be either major or minor depending on which note you consider to be the tonic. In the following scale diagrams, the red dots are the minor tonic and the blue dots are the major tonics.

Pentatonic Scale Diagrams And Fingerings



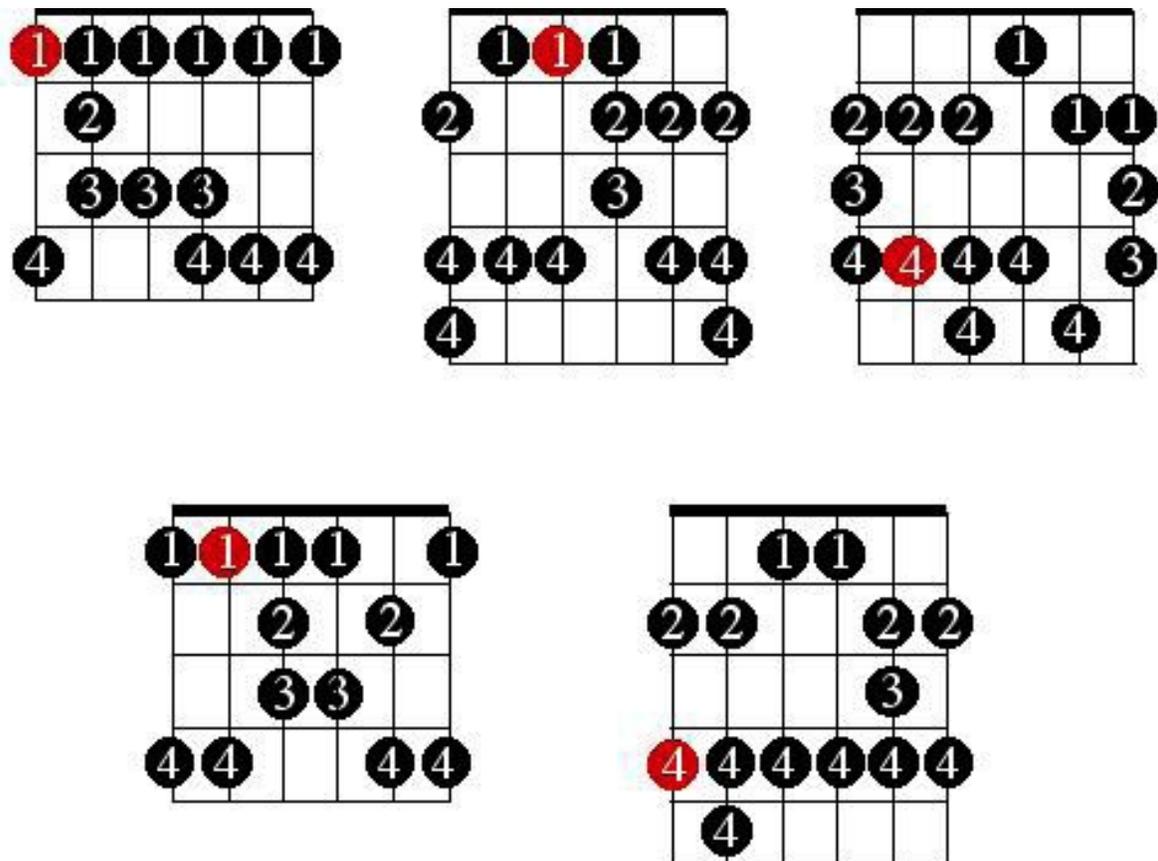
That wraps up lesson 10. I'll see you in the next one.

Lesson 11. The Blues Scale Fingerings

Welcome to lesson 11. This lesson picks up where the last lesson left off and has all of the fingerings for the blues scale. I would like to say that none of these fingerings are set in stone. Anytime you are working with guitar scales you have to be flexible. The music will dictate any necessary changes in fingering you might encounter.

These fingerings were given in the hope that you will develop your 4th finger. With that said, as you work through the following guitar scales, feel free to change and experiment with the fingerings.

The blues scale is typically thought of as a minor scale. In the diagrams of the guitar scales that follow the tonic is designated by the red dot.

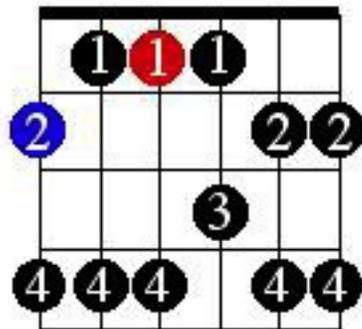
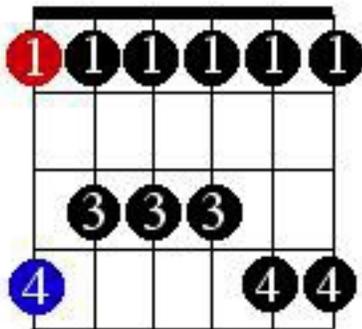


That wraps up lesson 11. Thanks for reading and I will see you in lesson 12.

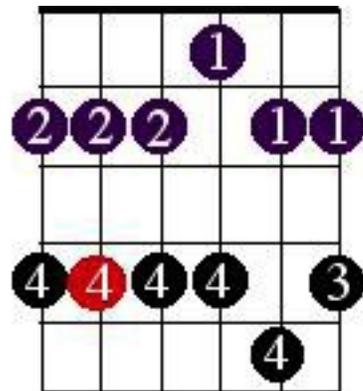
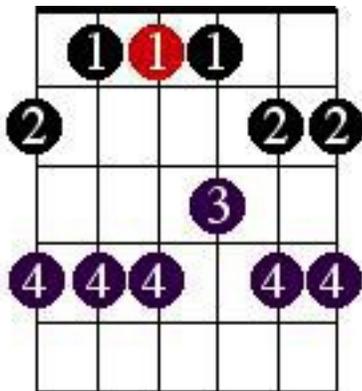
Lesson 12. How To Play The Entire Fretboard

Welcome to lesson 12. If you recall, in lesson 10 you learned the 5 most commonly used fingerings of the pentatonic scale. In this lesson you will learn how they hook together to cover the entire length of the fretboard.

We will start by reviewing the first two fingerings of the pentatonic scale. As stated in lesson 10, each pentatonic scale can be thought of as 2 different guitar scales, either major or minor depending on which note we consider as the tonic. The minor tonics are shown in red and the major tonics are shown in blue.



Now here are the same two scales.

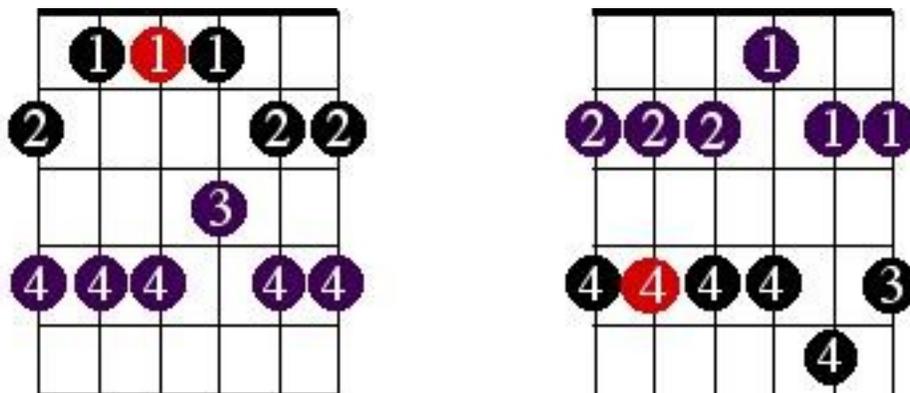


Notice the notes of each scale that are highlighted in purple. This is where these two fingerings of the pentatonic scale overlap. They fit together like pieces of a puzzle. Where the first one ends, the second one begins.

For example, if you are playing in A minor, the first two notes of fingering one will be at the 5th fret and 8th fret on the 6th string. The second fingerings first note would be located at the 8th fret, 6th string at the point where the two guitar scales overlap.

By connecting the scales in this manner you will be able to shift positions and move higher or lower on the neck, depending on which way you are going of course.

This example shows the overlap of the second and third fingerings of the pentatonic scale.



Now go back to lesson 10 and figure out the overlap point of the remaining guitar scales. When you know all of the fingerings well and how they connect, you will have the ability to play up and down the entire length of the fretboard.

If you would like to learn more about connecting positions and a little trick called the “common finger technique,” visit www.leadguitartactics.com and check out the FREE lessons there.

That wraps up lesson 12. Let’s move onto to lucky lesson 13.

Lesson 13. Passing Tones

Welcome to lesson 13. In lesson 9 you learned how to change the pentatonic scale into the blues scale by adding a passing tone (the b5). In this lesson you will learn a few blues licks that incorporate this new note.

Take a look at example 21. As you play this example really listen to the sound of the blue note (15th fret, 3rd string). Hear how it adds extra color and spice to the pentatonic scale. Adding passing tones to guitar scales is a great and simple way to make your playing more interesting.

Example 21.

Example 21 is a blues scale lick in the key of A. The notation is presented in two parts: a standard musical staff and a guitar fretboard diagram. The musical staff shows a sequence of notes: A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A5. The fretboard diagram shows the following fret numbers for strings T, A, and B: T (15, 12, 15, 12, 15, 12, 15, 14), A (12, 14, 15, 14, 12, 14, 12, 12), and B (14, 14, 12, 14).

Example 22 utilizes triplets and ends with a bend. This type of blues lick works great in shuffles.

Example 22.

Example 22 is a blues scale lick in the key of A, featuring triplets and a bend. The notation is presented in two parts: a standard musical staff and a guitar fretboard diagram. The musical staff shows a sequence of notes: A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A5. The fretboard diagram shows the following fret numbers for strings T, A, and B: T (5, 8, 5, 8, 7, 5, 7, 5, 5, 7, 5, 7), A (5, 7, 5, 7, 8, 5, 8), and B (7, 5, 7, 8). The lick ends with a bend on the 8th fret of the B string, indicated by an upward arrow and the word "full".

Example 23 in this lesson dips down into the lower notes. I recommend you really take time to work in the lower registers. I find this to be an often-overlooked aspect of guitar playing.

Example 23.



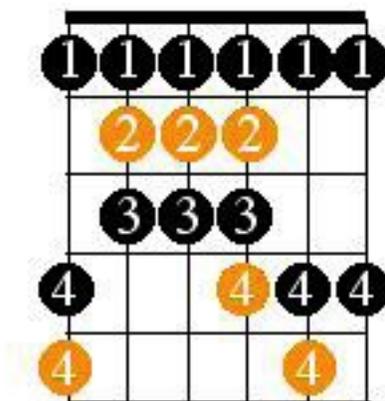
The image shows a musical example consisting of two staves. The top staff is a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). It contains a melodic line with the following notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4, B3, A3, G3, F#3, E3, D3, C3, B2, A2, G2, F#2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1, F#1, E1, D1, C1, B0, A0, G0, F#0, E0, D0, C0, B-1, A-1, G-1, F#-1, E-1, D-1, C-1, B-2, A-2, G-2, F#-2, E-2, D-2, C-2, B-3, A-3, G-3, F#-3, E-3, D-3, C-3, B-4, A-4, G-4, F#-4, E-4, D-4, C-4, B-5, A-5, G-5, F#-5, E-5, D-5, C-5, B-6, A-6, G-6, F#-6, E-6, D-6, C-6, B-7, A-7, G-7, F#-7, E-7, D-7, C-7, B-8, A-8, G-8, F#-8, E-8, D-8, C-8, B-9, A-9, G-9, F#-9, E-9, D-9, C-9, B-10, A-10, G-10, F#-10, E-10, D-10, C-10, B-11, A-11, G-11, F#-11, E-11, D-11, C-11, B-12, A-12, G-12, F#-12, E-12, D-12, C-12, B-13, A-13, G-13, F#-13, E-13, D-13, C-13, B-14, A-14, G-14, F#-14, E-14, D-14, C-14, B-15, A-15, G-15, F#-15, E-15, D-15, C-15, B-16, A-16, G-16, F#-16, E-16, D-16, C-16, B-17, A-17, G-17, F#-17, E-17, D-17, C-17, B-18, A-18, G-18, F#-18, E-18, D-18, C-18, B-19, A-19, G-19, F#-19, E-19, D-19, C-19, B-20, A-20, G-20, F#-20, E-20, 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Lesson 14. How To Use Passing Tones

Hi and welcome to lesson 14 on guitar scales. In this lesson we will add more passing tones to the pentatonic scale to create jazzier licks that you might hear in the playing of George Benson and other great jazz guitarists.

In lesson 9 we added the flatted fifth to the pentatonic scale and came up with the blues scale. In that lesson we defined a passing tone as a note that connects two scale tones that are a whole step apart. There are several other spots in the pentatonic scale that passing tones can be added.

Take a look at the diagram below. This shows the pentatonic scale and the location of the passing tones. The passing tones are shown an orange.



When you are comfortable with this idea, go back to lesson 10 on guitar scales and add passing tones into all of the fingerings of the pentatonic scale.

In the next few examples I have put together a few licks that utilize these passing tones. Analyze these ideas and take note of the passing tone locations. Then take some time to create a few of your own.

Example 24.

Example 24 shows a musical exercise in treble clef, 4/4 time. The melody consists of three measures. The first measure contains the notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The second measure contains the notes F#4, G4, A4, B4, A4, G4, F#4. The third measure contains the notes E4, D4, C4, B3, A3, G3, F3. The guitar tablature below the staff shows the following fret numbers: Measure 1: 7, 5, 6, 7, 8, 5, 8, 5. Measure 2: 9, 8, 5, 8, 7, 5, 7, 5. Measure 3: 7.

Example 25.

Example 25 shows a musical exercise in treble clef, 4/4 time. The melody consists of three measures. The first measure contains the notes G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4, B3, A3. The second measure contains the notes G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4, B3, A3. The third measure contains the notes G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4, B3, A3. The guitar tablature below the staff shows the following fret numbers: Measure 1: 5, 8, 7, 5, 7, 6, 5, 7. Measure 2: 7, 5, 7, 6, 5, 5, 7, 8. Measure 3: 5.

Example 26.

Example 26 shows a musical exercise in treble clef, 4/4 time. The melody consists of three measures. The first measure contains the notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The second measure contains the notes F#4, G4, A4, B4, A4, G4, F#4. The third measure contains the notes E4, D4, C4, B3, A3, G3, F3. The guitar tablature below the staff shows the following fret numbers: Measure 1: 5, 8, 5, 9, 8, 5, 8, 7. Measure 2: 6, 5, 7, 5, 5, 7, 5, 8. Measure 3: 5.

Hear how the passing tones add extra spice to the sound. This simple device is a great way to spice up your playing and works with all guitar scales.

Lesson 15. Putting It All Together

Welcome to lesson 15 on how to use the pentatonic scale. Congratulations on your drive and determination to get this far. In this final lesson on the pentatonic scale I would like to share some final thoughts on where to go from here.

As you continue to learn and practice guitar scales keep in mind the following. Be patient and practice at a comfortable tempo. Learn as many licks as you can by your favorite guitarist. Experiment constantly and make up your own licks. If it sounds good to you, then it is.

Take the licks from these lessons and break them up into different rhythms. Rhythmic variety is a great way to create new ideas from material that you know.

Get together with friends and other musicians. Jam and share ideas. Playing with others is one of the best ways to improve. Seek out players that are better than you and steal what you can from them. Bug them to show you as much as you can learn from them.

I hope you have enjoyed these lessons on guitar scales as much as I have enjoyed writing them. I sure have learned a lot along the way and I hope you have too. Be persistent in your continuing studies and have fun.

Don't forget to grab your video lessons, more tab and jam tracks at <http://leadguitartactics.com> . You will be glad you did.

Good Luck!

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