

Pentatonic Minor Scales

The minor pentatonic scale has five notes before it begins to repeat itself. The notes of this scale are a subset of the natural minor scale. This would be scale degrees 1, 3, 4, 5 and 7 of the natural minor. To relate this to the major scale, the scale degrees of the minor pentatonic are: Tonic, flat three, four, five and flat seven scale degrees of the major scale. As an example the C minor pentatonic scale notes are C, Eb, F, G and Bb. Then the scale begins to repeat itself with the octave note C.

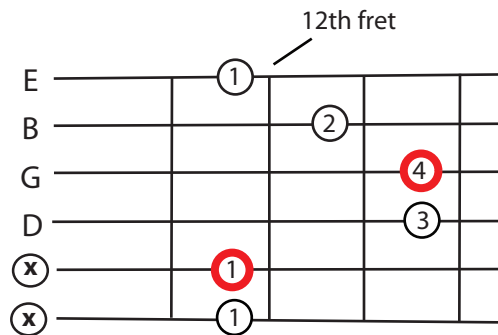
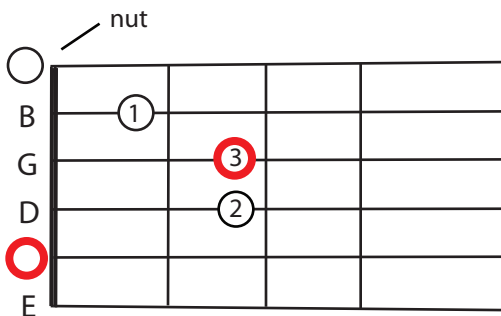
The minor pentatonic scale played over minor chords (and with some prudence over major chords) will produce a bluesy and/or rock sounding style melodic line. It is an excellent foundation and launching pad for improvisational guitar solos.

Below and on the next page are some of those scales as they can be associated with the various minor chord forms. The chord shape will be on the left and then the pentatonic scale that lays over the chord will be to the right. The scales, where possible will be presented in one octave segments and then in combination.

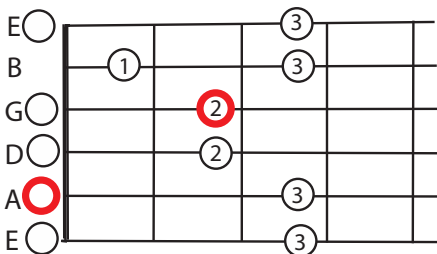
Learn the one octave forms and then the combined forms. Try to think of and relate the chord shape to the scale as you learn it.

The A minor chord is comprised of the notes A, C and E. Shown below in first position and at the 12th fret. Note the shape is the same for both these chords. The fingering is changed to accommodate the barring of the chord at the octave (12th fret).

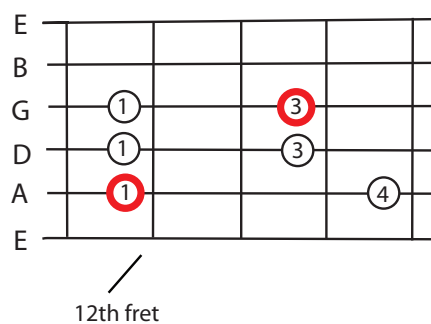
A Minor Pentatonic Scale, one octave the notes are A, C, D, E, G and A. the notes circled in red are the scale tonic (root) note A.



A minor Pentatonic scale at nut



A minor Pentatonic scale, 1 octave



A minor Pentatonic scale, with added notes

