Download the audio files here:
https://andyvozzamusic.com/master-the-art-of-rock-guitar/

Andy Vozza Music

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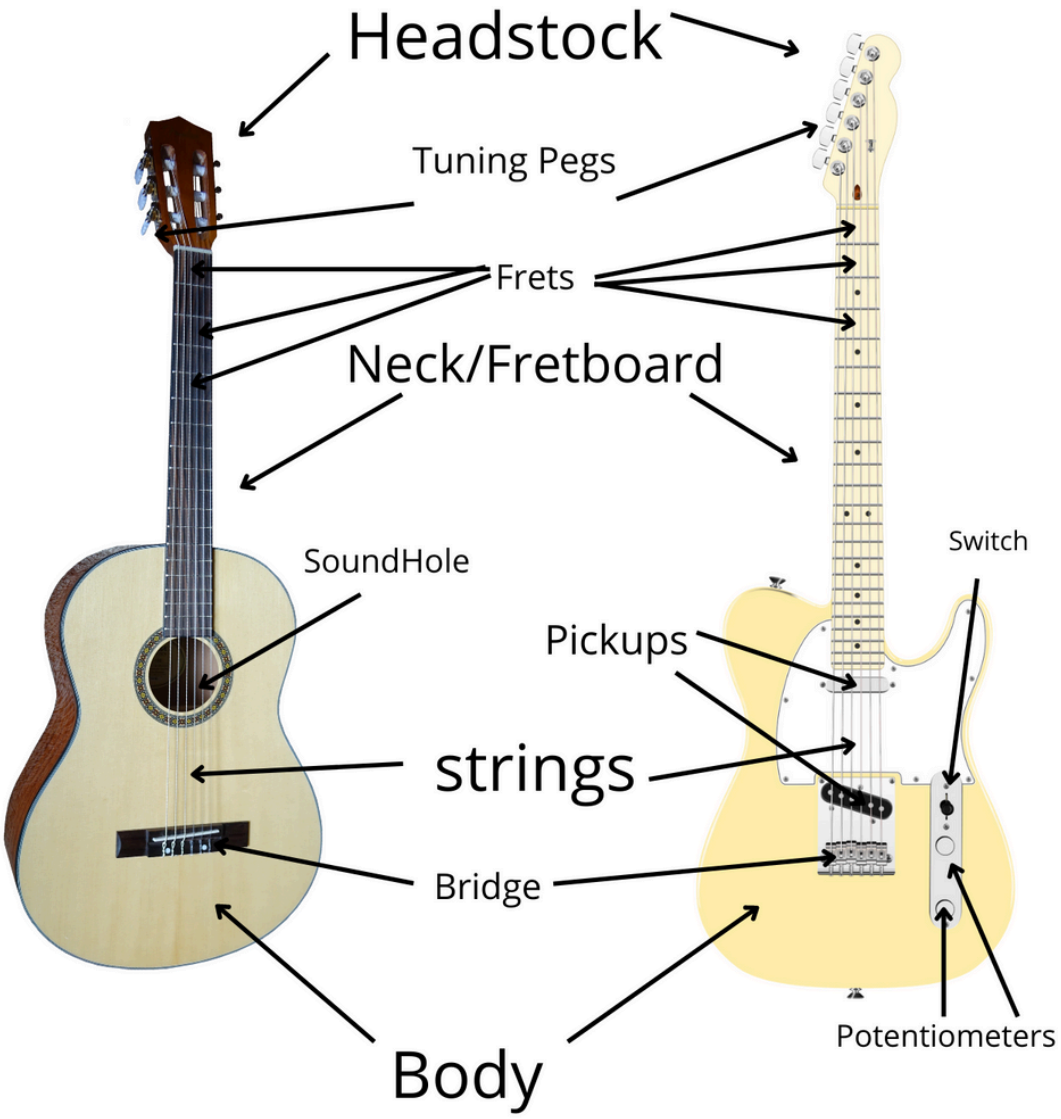
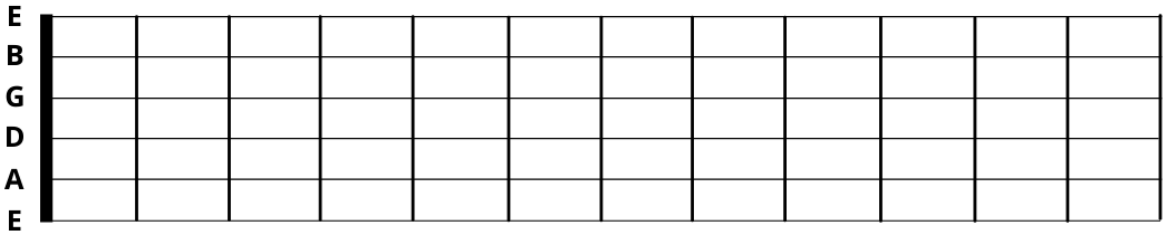
INTRODUCTION

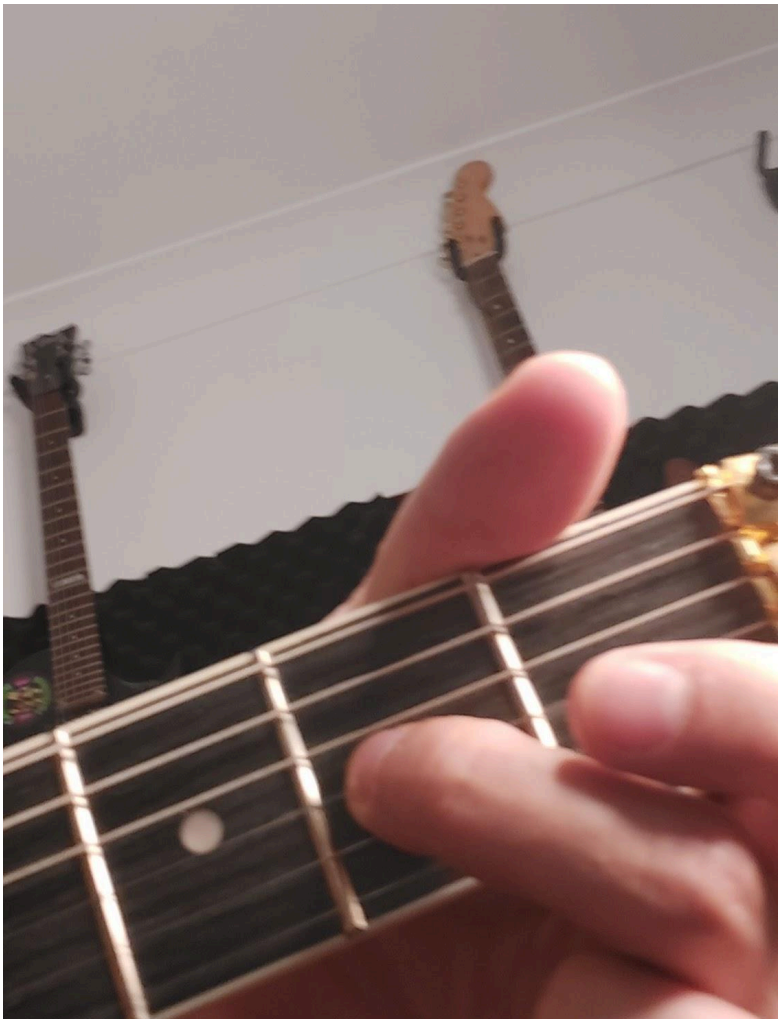
Before starting to learn how to play the guitar, we need to analyse its components and understand how the guitar works.
The picture below shows you all the acoustic and electric guitar components.



There are multiple types of guitars, however, we can fundamentally refer to three main categories: acoustic guitars with nylon strings (also known as classical or Spanish guitars), acoustic guitars with metal strings and electric guitars.
The note layout across the fretboard is the same between the 3 types, which means chord shapes and scales are the same. However, the stylistic approach and sometimes techniques are different.
In this guitar course, I will teach you how to play the electric guitar in the rock/metal style. However, the skills you will obtain will help you adventure in other styles, should you decide to learn new skills in the future.

The notes that give names to the strings are the following:

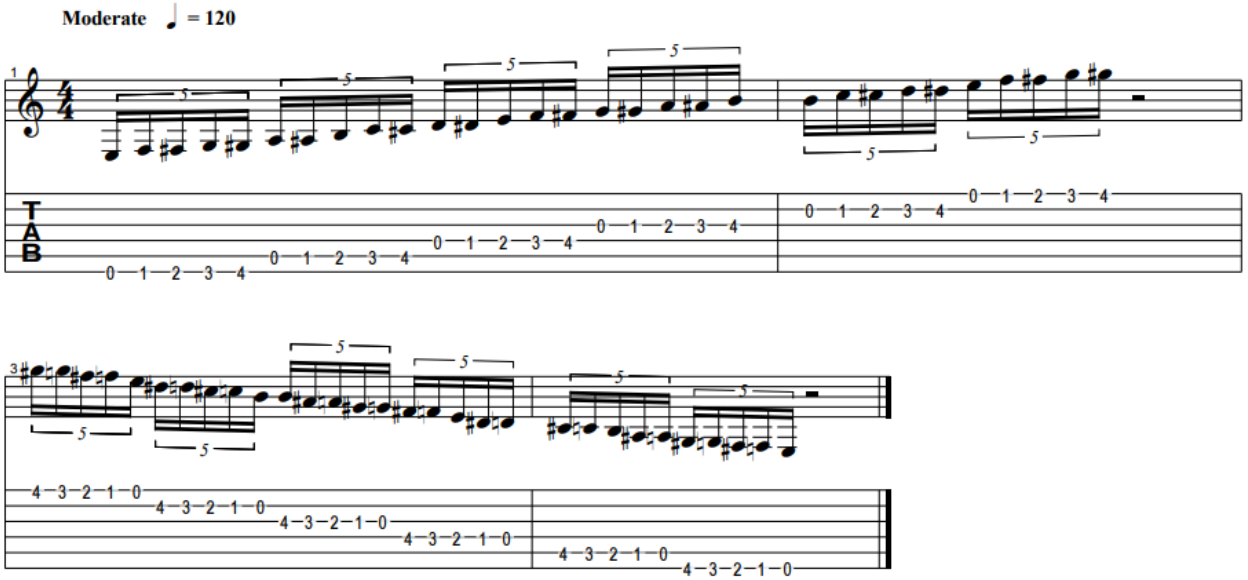




The vertical metal bars on the neck are called frets. By pressing down the string on the fret as shown in the picture above, we obtain different notes. Ensure you don't touch the metal bar when pressing the string down.
The reason why we get different notes is that by pressing the string down, we shorten the string. By shortening the string, the vibration gets faster, making the sound higher.

HOW TO READ TABS

Tabs are the music notation for guitar players. It is formed by 6 lines, which represent the 6 strings. On said lines, we write numbers. These numbers are the frets you are meant to play with your left hand. However, fret number 0 means that you play the string on its own, without the aid of the left hand.



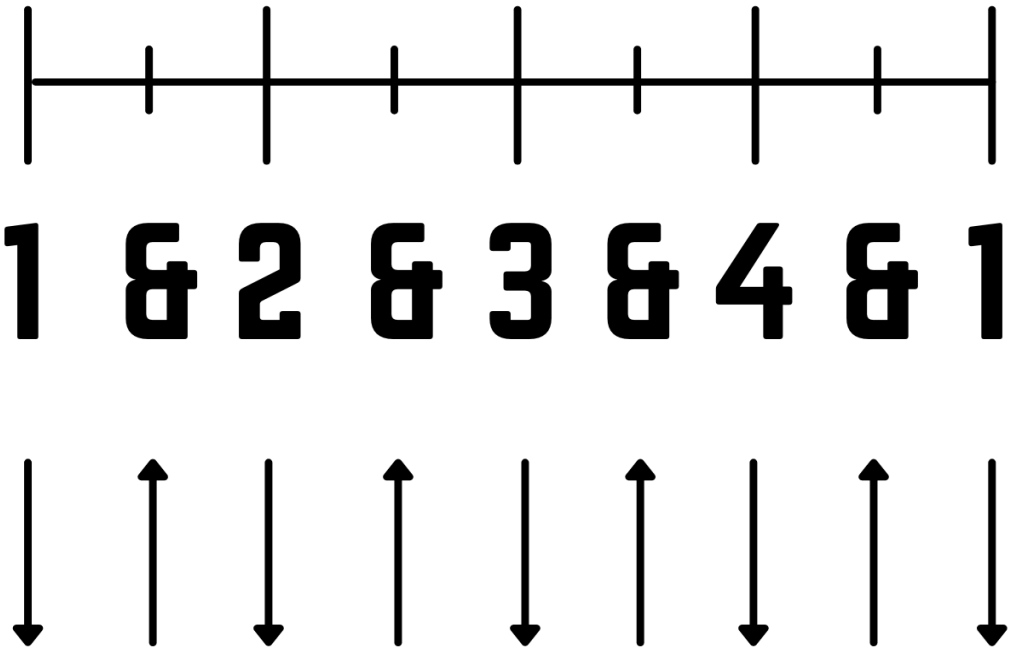
CHORDS

Open Chords

An open chord is a chord that is played with at least one open string, which means you don’t press down any fret on that string.
There are a total of five major open chords and three minor chords. The five open major chords are C, A, G, E and D, whereas the three minor open chords are Am, Em and Dm.
By combining these chords in different ways, we can play a big variety of songs.

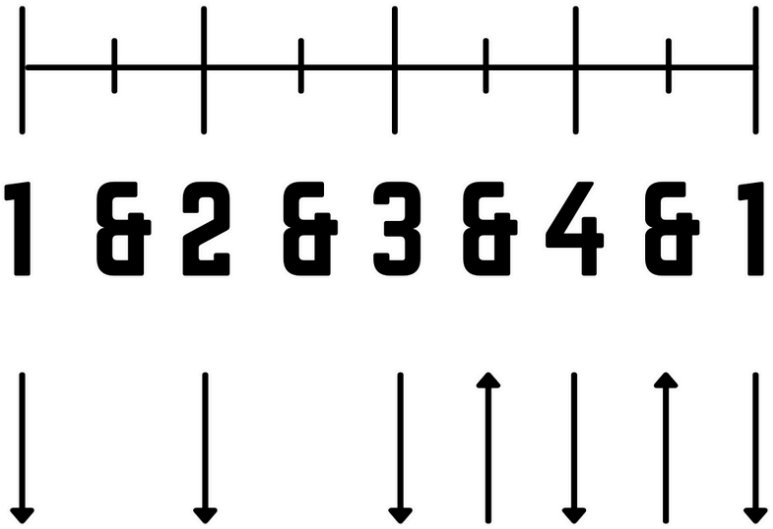
In the picture above, the numbers on the frets tell you which finger to use. The index finger is finger number 1, the middle finger is finger number 2, the ring finger is finger number 3 and the pinky finger is finger number 4.
When strumming, a good rule of thumb is to move the strumming hand up and down in constant motion, without stopping. Usually, downstrokes are on the beat, whereas upstrokes are on the half-beat.
The motion should never stop and it would look like this:

Audio 1🔊



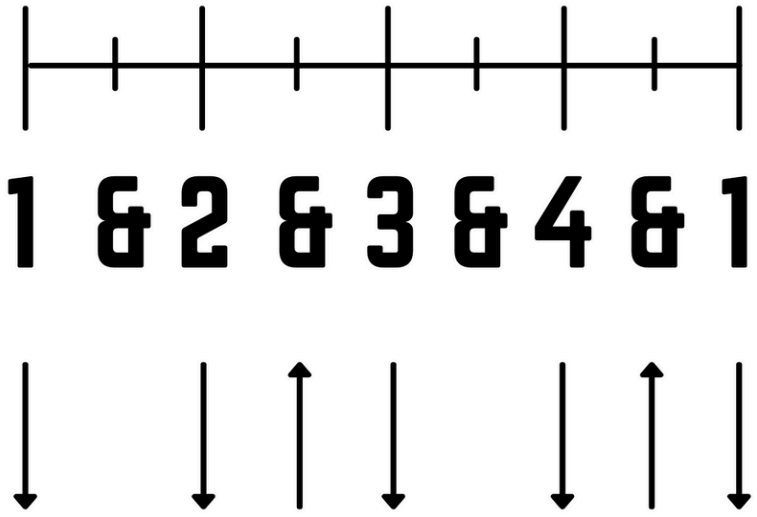
However, strumming constantly up and down wouldn't be musical. The solution to this is to avoid contact with the strings while in motion. This way, the sound of your strums is fluent and your rhythm stays tight.
Below you can see what I mean.

Audio 2 🔊



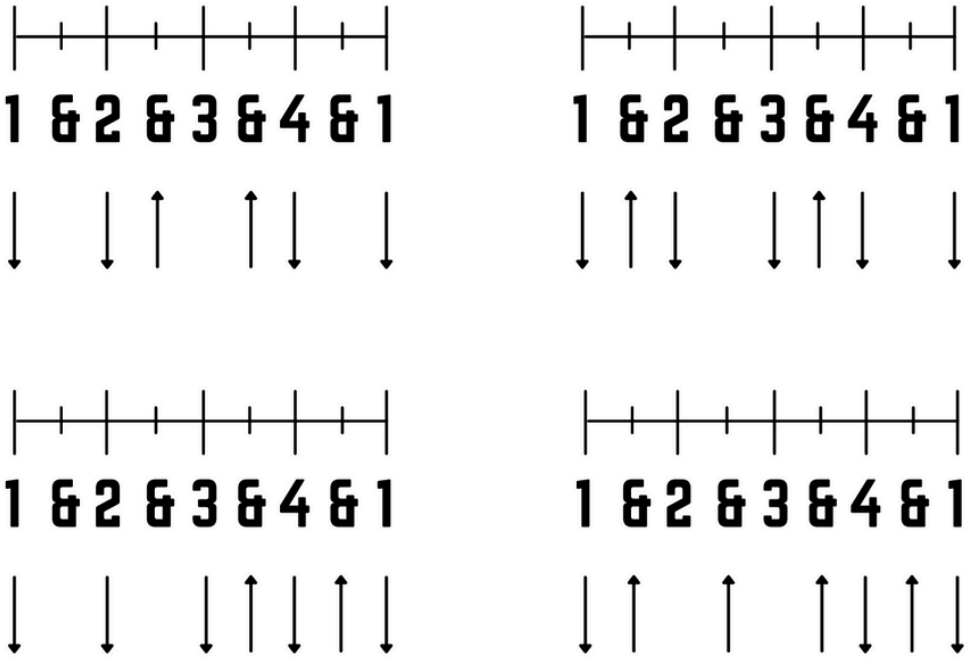
Audio 3

These exercises will help you improve your strumming technique as well as improve your dexterity while changing chords.



Pick a strumming pattern and practice it with all the chord progressions below. You can use the same strumming pattern with all chords or change them. You can also try to create your strumming patterns. Remember though, make sure that the strums down are on the numbers and the strums up are on the &s.

🔊 1. Cmaj | Amin | Gmaj | Cmaj |
🔊 2. Gmaj | Emin | Cmaj | Dmaj |
🔊 3. Amin | Dmin | Gmaj | Cmaj |
🔊 4. Amaj | Dmaj | Emaj | Amaj |

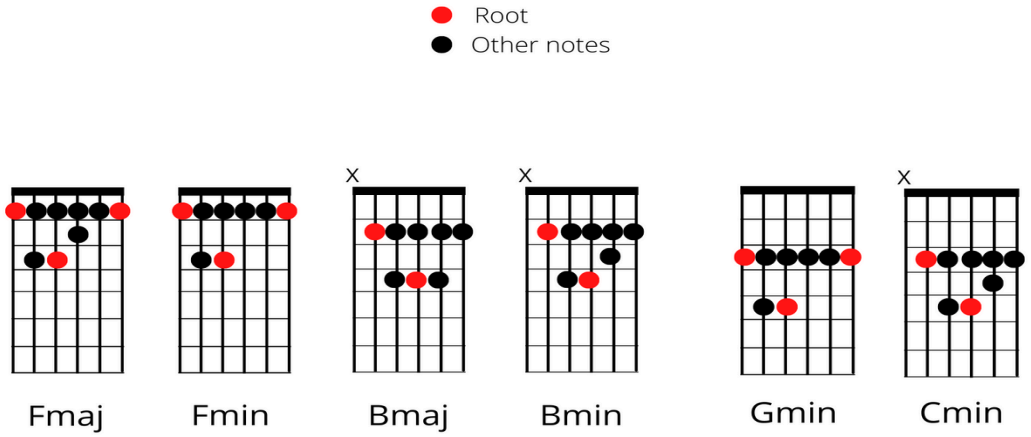


When practising, always trust your ears. If it sounds musical, you are on the right path.

Bar Chords

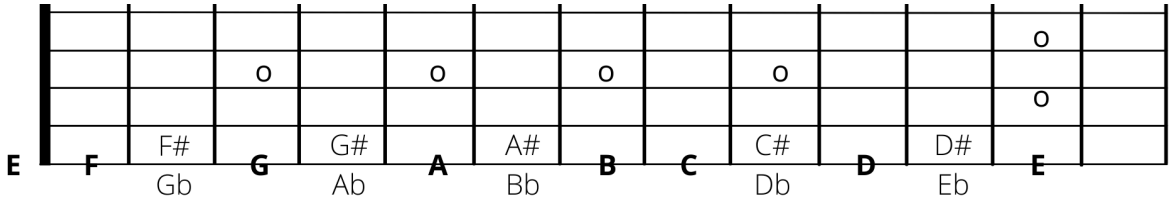
A bar chord is a chord made from the shape of one of the open chords plus your index finger pushing down all the strings on one fret, like this:

The most common shapes used for bar chords are the E shape and the A shape (both major and minor).
With bar chords, you can play all major and minor chords as well as different variations of the open chords.
Here are a few examples:



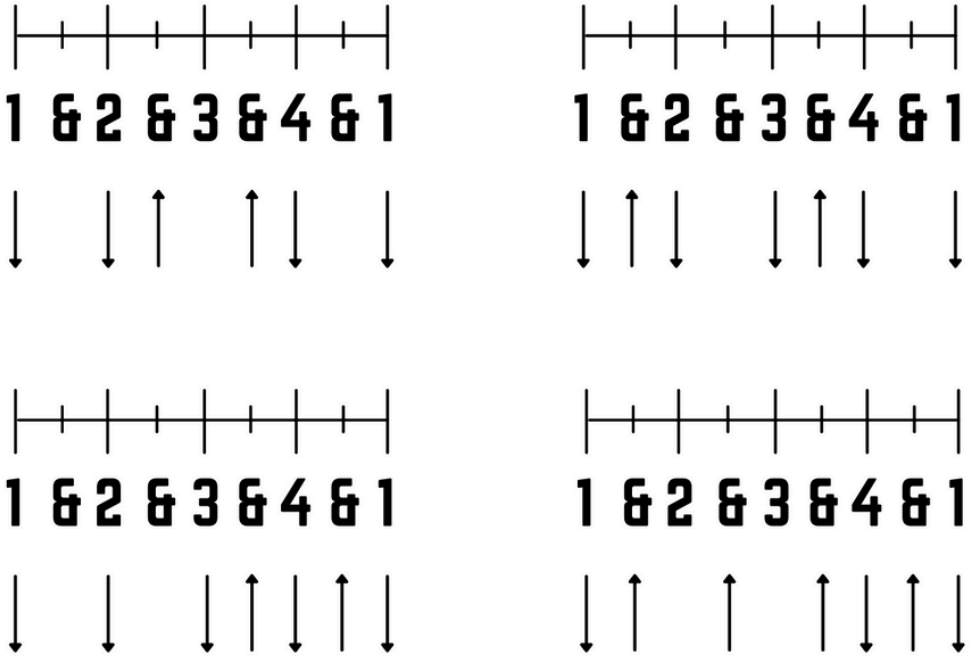
The way to find out which chord you play with the E or A shapes is simple. For the E shape, you have to find the root note, which is the note that gives the name to the chord, on the E string. Once you find it, bar down all the strings with your index finger on the fret where the root is and then play the E chord. For the A shape, the process is similar but you have to look for the root note on the A string. Once you find it, bar down all the strings on the fret where the root note is and play the A chord.

Here are all the notes on the E and A strings between the first and twelfth frets.



Same exercise as before, but this time with bar chords included.

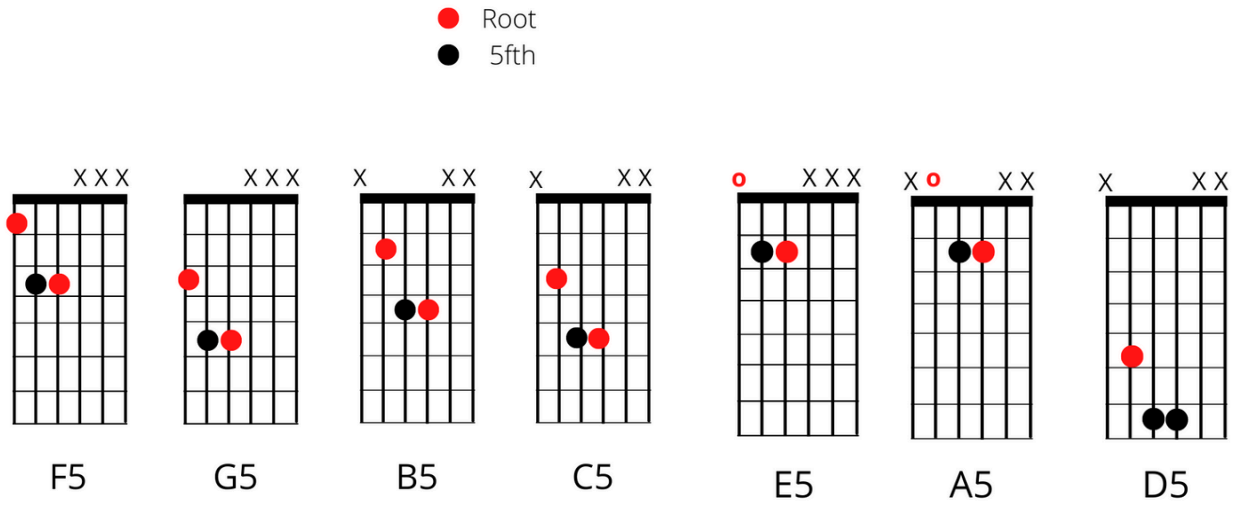
🔊 1. Cmaj | Fmaj | Gmaj | Cmaj |
🔊 2. Cmin | Gmin | Bmaj | Cmin |
🔊 3. Gmin | Cmin | Dmaj | Gmin |
🔊 4. Bmin | Dmaj | Amaj | Bmin |



Power Chords

A power chord is a chord that contains only the root and the fifth. Because of it, they are not either major or minor. The symbol for a power chord is the note followed by a five (i.e. A5. D5, F♯5)
Power chords are based on the top 3 notes of the E, and A shapes and they relate to bar chords.

Here are a few examples of Power Chords



Enharmonic

Enharmonic means different ways to call the same thing in music. For instance, D♯ and E ♭ are enharmonic, because they are two different ways to call the same note.

Intervals and Triads

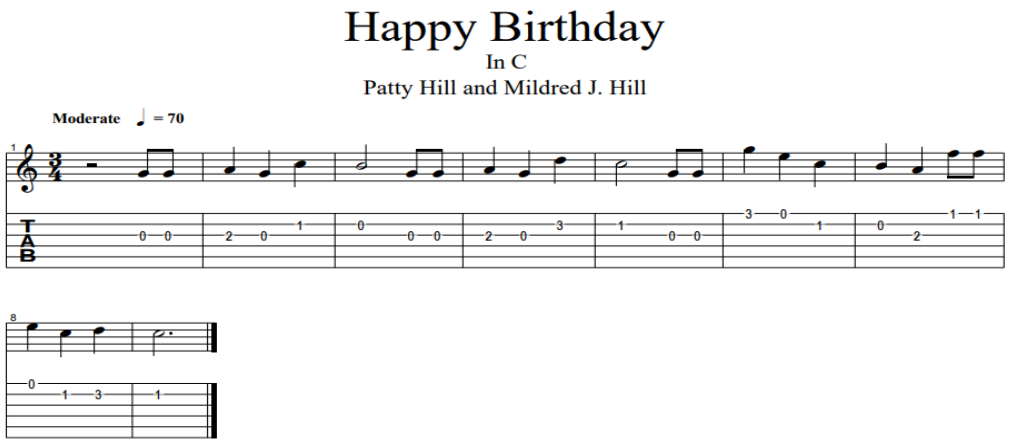
Now that we know the basics of chords, we want to know what a chord is made of.
Before that, it's important to know what an interval in music is.
The interval is the distance between two notes. It is measured in semitones and tones. Two notes a semitone away are two notes immediately close to each other, like C and C♯/D ♭ , whereas a tone is a distance between 2 semitones, like C and D.
Considering there are 12 notes in the western music system, we can obtain that there are 12 intervals as well.
The 12 intervals are the following:

- Root 🔊
- Minor 2nd (1 fret away from the root) 🔊
- Major 2nd (2 frets away from the root) 🔊

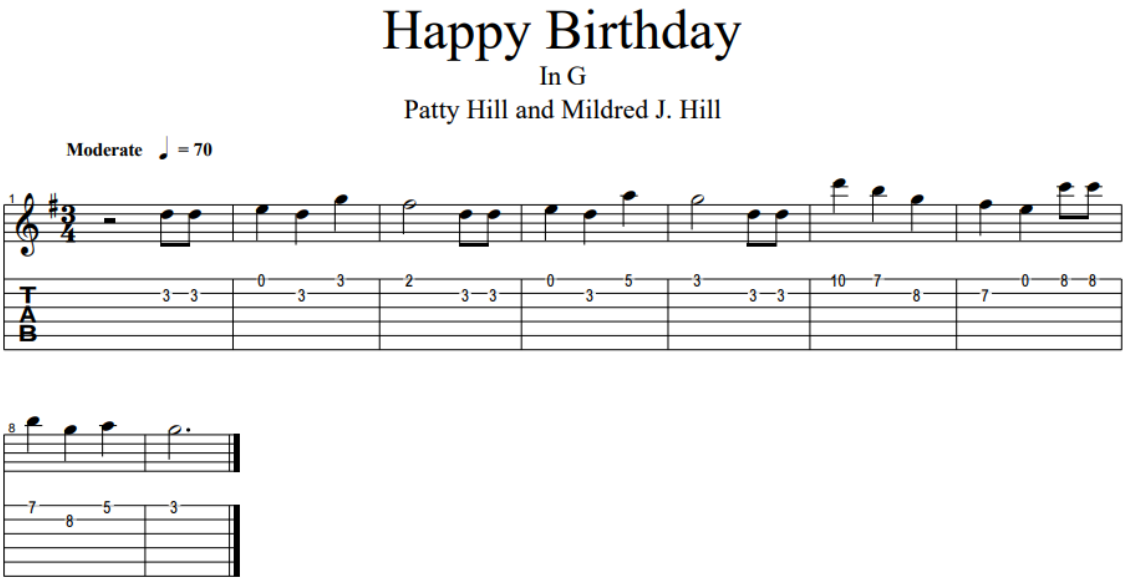
- Minor 3rd (3 frets away from the root) 🔊
- Major 3rd (4 frets away from the root) 🔊
- Perfect 4th (5 frets away from the root) 🔊
- Tritone (6 frets away from the root) 🔊
- Perfect 5th (7 frets away from the root) 🔊
- Minor 6th (8 frets away from the root) 🔊
- Major 6th (9 frets away from the root) 🔊
- Minor 7th (10 frets away from the root) 🔊
- Major 7th (11 frets away from the root) 🔊
- Octave (12 frets away from the root) 🔊

Even with different notes, intervals always give us the same emotion. What this means is that we feel a major 3rd of a C is the same as the major 3rd of an A for example. However, the pitch is not the same. One sounds higher than the other.
One of the best ways to understand this is to imagine you are playing happy birthday. If you played it in C, it would look like this:

Version 1 🔊



Whereas if you played it in G, it would look like this:
Version 2 🔊



As you can hear, what we perceive is the same thing at a different pitch. The reason why is that the intervals between notes stay the same.

As you might have realised, a chord is also made by a combination of notes.
There are different chords, but the fundamentals are *Major, Minor, Diminished, Augmented, Sus^2 and Sus^4.*
These chords are called triads because they are made of 3 notes.

- Major: Root - Major 3rd - Perfect 5th 🔊
- Minor: Root - Minor 3rd - Perfect 5th 🔊
- Diminished: Root - Minor 3rd - Diminished 5th 🔊
- Augmented: Root - Major 3rd - Augmented 5th 🔊
- Sus^2: Root - Major 2nd - Perfect 5th 🔊
- Sus^4: Root - Perfect 4th - Perfect 5th 🔊

However, the order of the triad could change. The ones we have seen before are called root positions.

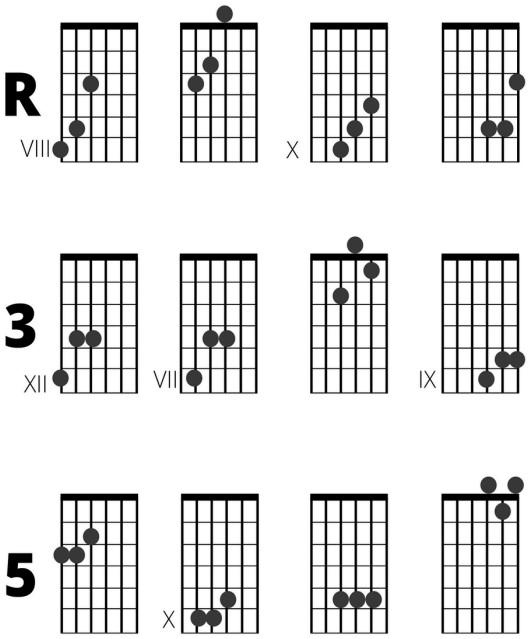
Inversions

An inversion is a triad that doesn't have the root on the bass.
There are 2 types of inversions.

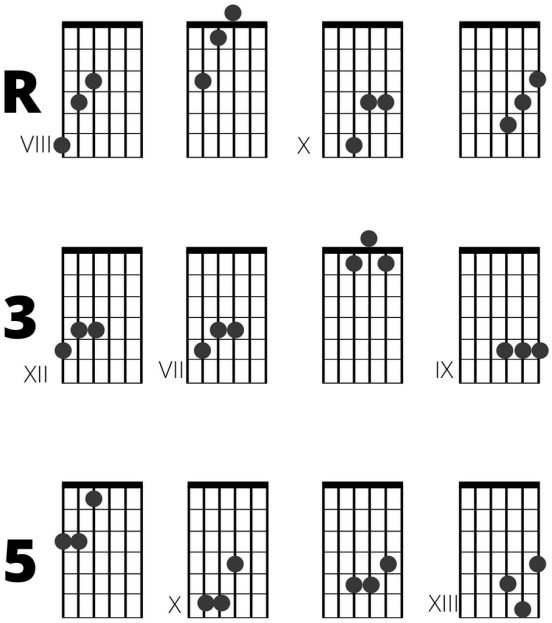
- The first inversion, when the lowest note is the third (or second and fourth for the sus chords) followed by the fifth and the root
- The second inversion, when the lowest note is the fifth followed by the root and the third (second and fourth for sus chords)

Here are all the combinations of triads on the guitar.
R stands for Root Position, 3 for the first inversion, and 5 for the second inversion, 2 for the first inversion of a sus2 chord and 4 for the second inversion of a sus4 chord.

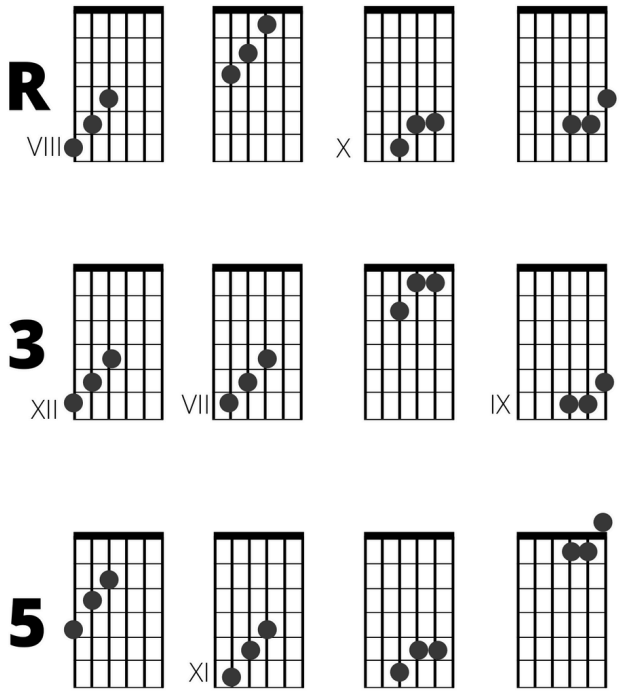
C Major Triads



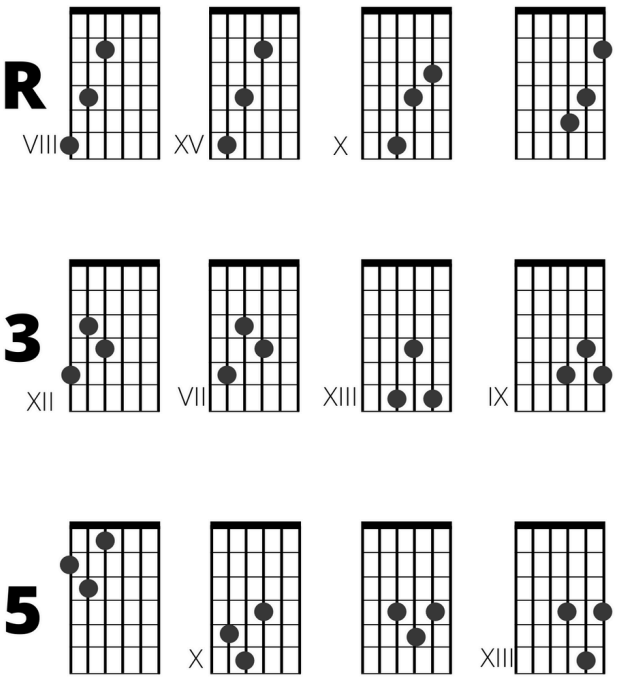
C Minor Triads



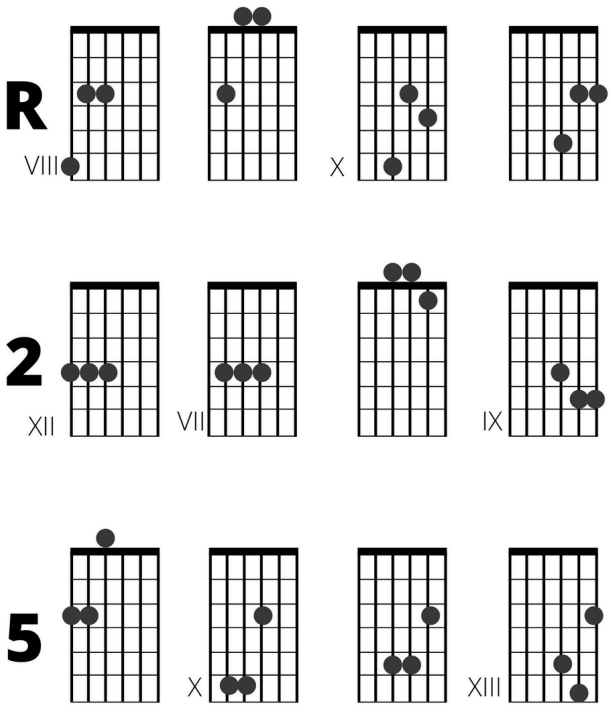
C Augmented Triads



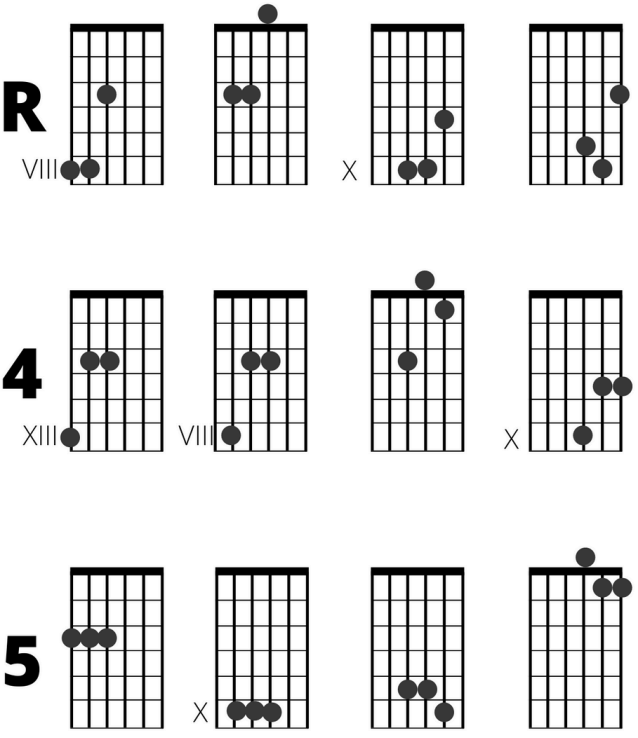
C Diminished Triads



C Sus2 Triads



C Sus4 Triads

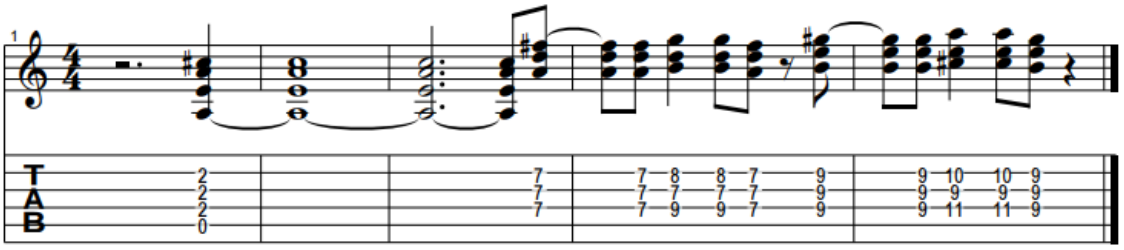


Exercise: practise these songs to familiarise yourself with the triads

Song 1 🔊

Rock N Roll All Nite

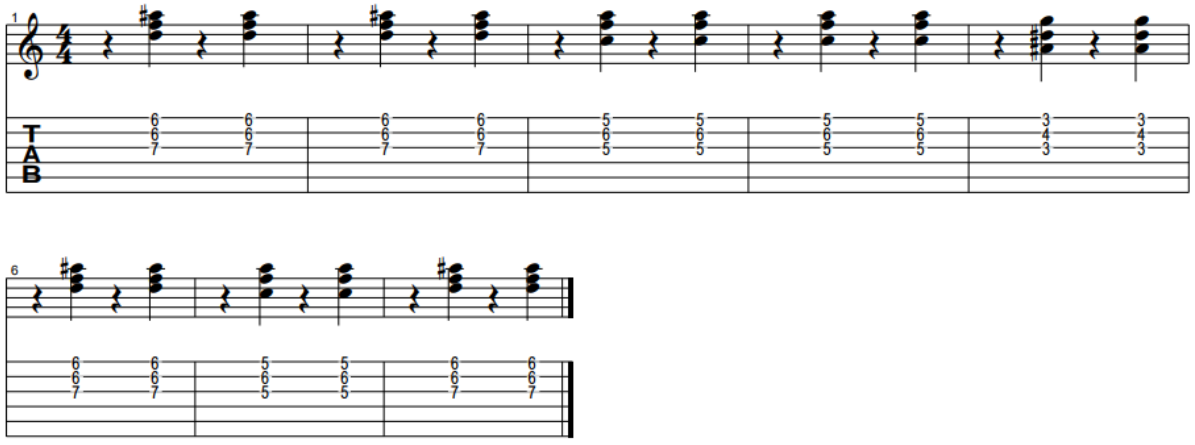
KISS



Song 2 🔊

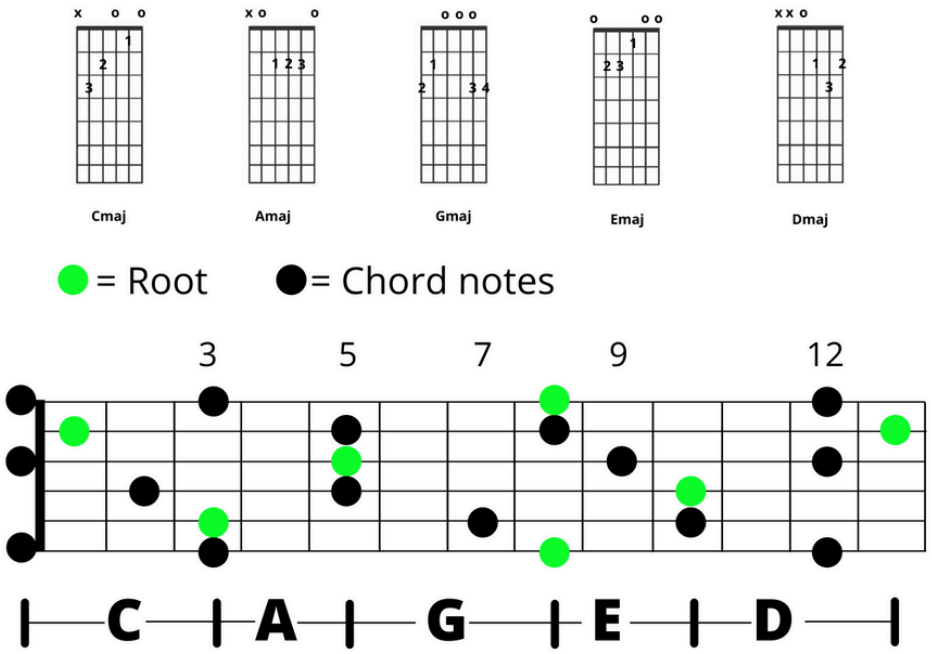
One Love

Bob Marley and the Wailers



CAGED System

The CAGED system is one of the most important systems for guitar players. It's the combination of all the triads and inversions across the neck.
The term CAGED doesn't mean inside a cage. It's the progression of the open Chords C, A, G, E and D.



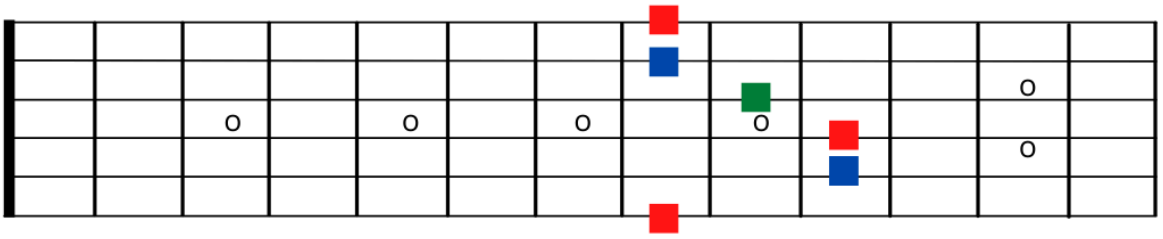
Let me explain what I mean. Let's take the Cmaj chord. The first position would be the Cmaj open chord. However, it would be fairly limited to only play it that way. So the next way down the fretboard is to play Cmaj in the Amaj Shape. The next way to play Cmaj is in the Gmaj shape. The next one is the Emaj shape and lastly the Dmaj shape.

C Major CAGED

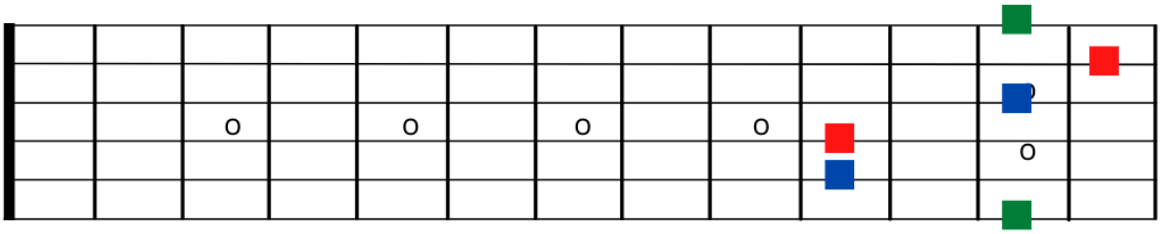
Triad Notes

Root
Maj 3rd
Perf 5th

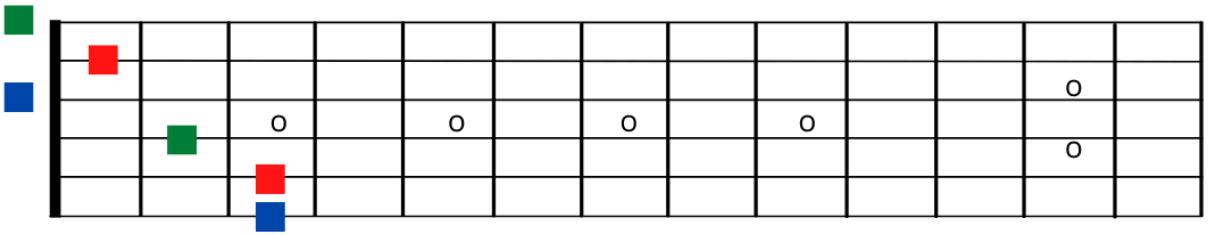
E Shape



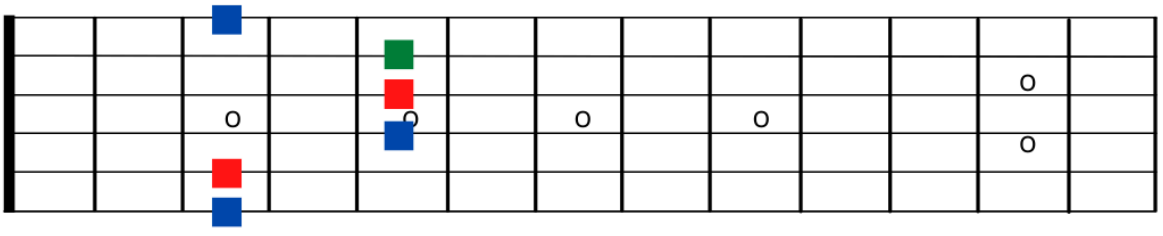
D Shape



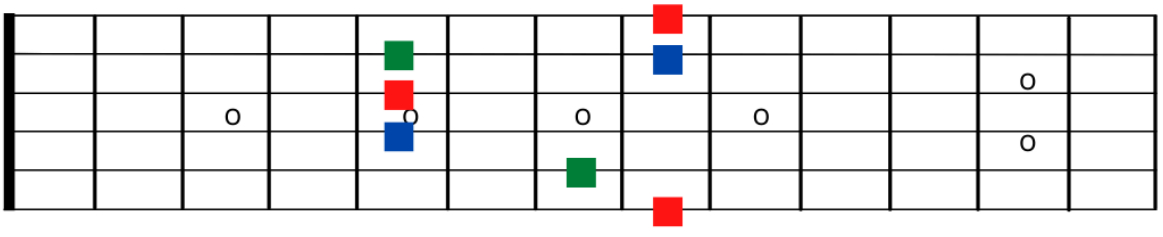
C Shape



A Shape



G Shape

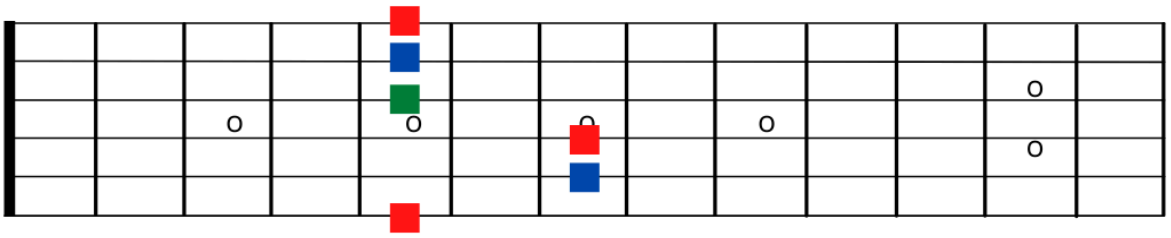


A Minor CAGED

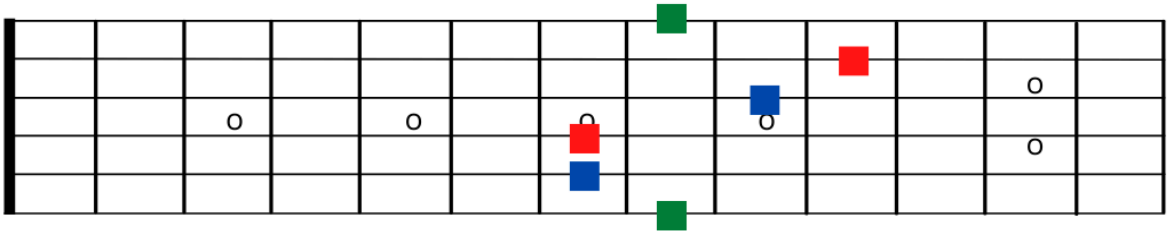
Triad Notes

Root
Min 3rd
Perf 5th

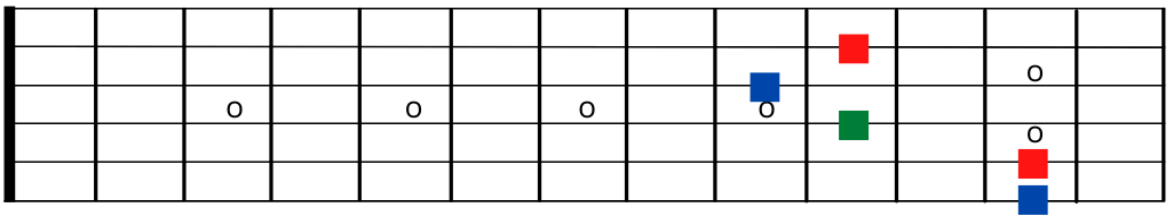
Em Shape



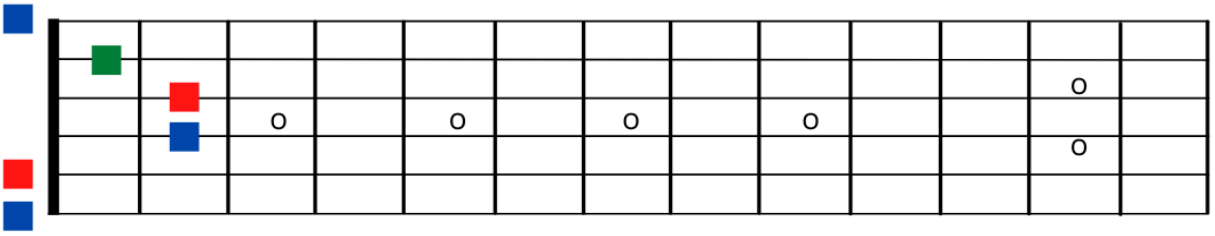
Dm Shape



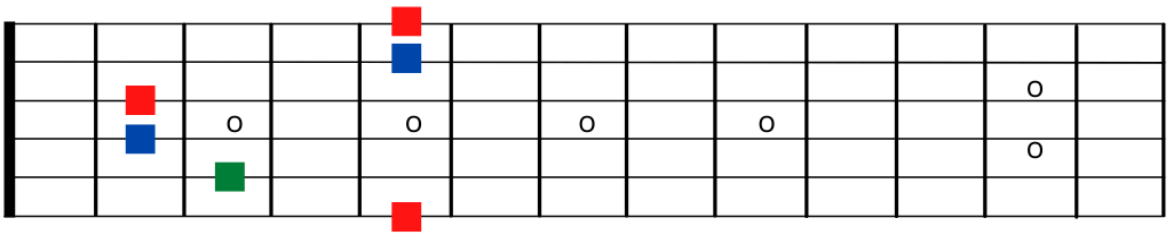
Cm Shape



Am Shape



Gm Shape



However, we usually refer to the E shape as the first shape of the system as it's the most used one. Therefore, what is shown above is how the major and minor CAGED systems look.

Thanks to the CAGED system, we can now figure out every position for every chord. Also, as we are about to see, we can base scales and extended chords around it.

Extended Chords

So far we have only looked at triads. However, there is more to know about chords.
Now, a triad can also be seen as a pile of thirds. The interval between the 3rd and the 5th is always a third (i.e. the interval between a major 3rd and a perfect 5th is a minor 3rd). So, if we stack up a note a third after the 5th, we add a 7th to the chord.
These are called 7th chords and there are many types of 7th chords:

Major 7th chords

- Maj^{7}: Root - Maj3 - P5 - Maj7 🔊
- 7: Root - Maj3 - P5 - min7 (Also known as Dominant Chord) 🔊

Minor 7th chord

- min^{7}: Root - min3 - P5 - min7 🔊
- min/Maj^{7}: Root - min3 - P5 - Maj7 🔊

Augmented

- Maj^{7}♯^{5} (or augmented with a major 7th): Root - Maj3 - ♯5 - Maj7 🔊
- Aug^{7} or ^{7}♯5: Root - Maj3 - ♯5 - min7 🔊

Diminished

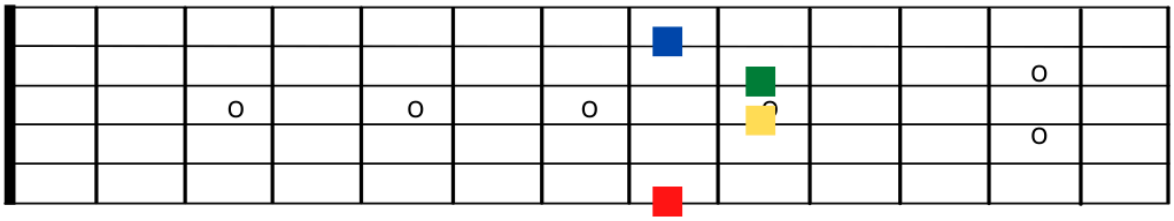
- Min^{7} ♭ ^{5} (or half-diminished): Root - min3 - ♭ 5 - min7 🔊
- Dim^{7} (or fully diminished): Root - min3 - ♭ 5 - ♭ ♭ 7 (♭ ♭ means double flat, so 2 semitones down. In this case, it's the equivalent of the maj6) 🔊

Cmaj7 CAGED

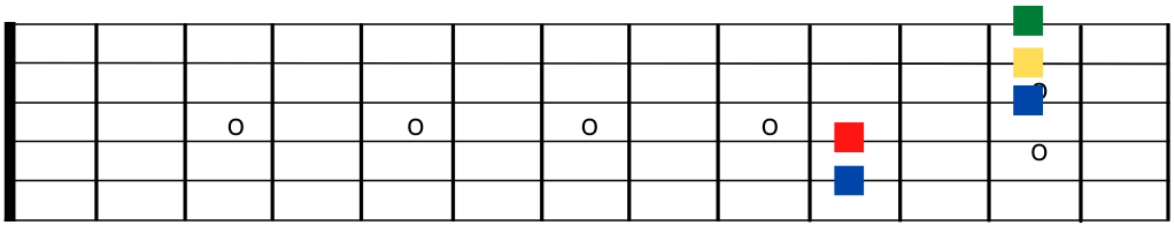
Triad Notes

- Root
- Maj 3rd
- Perf 5th
- Maj 7th

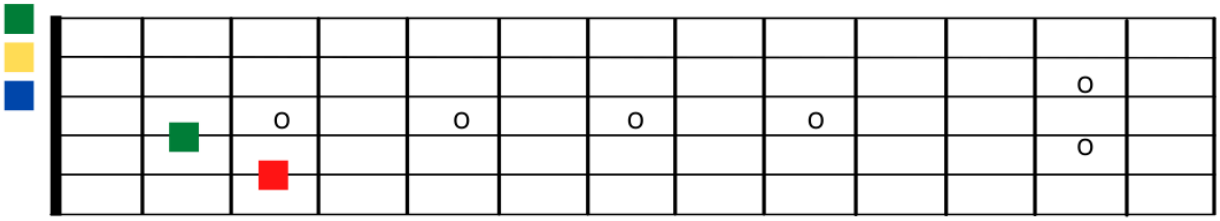
E Shape



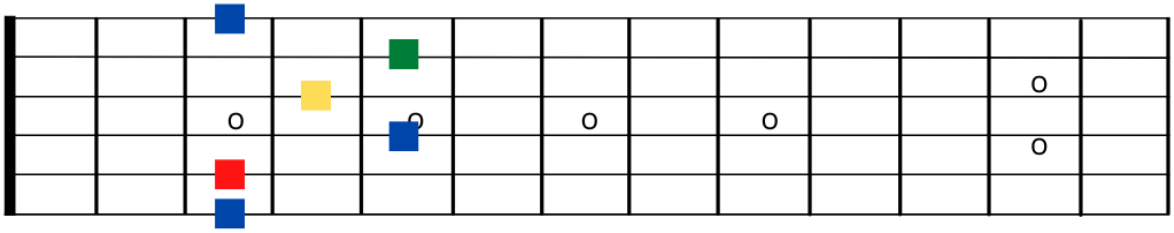
D Shape



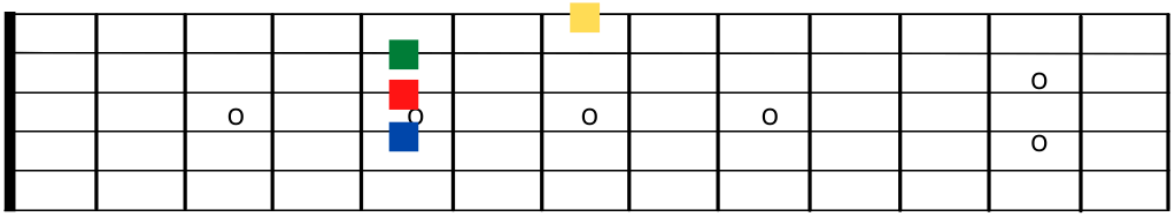
C Shape



A Shape



G Shape

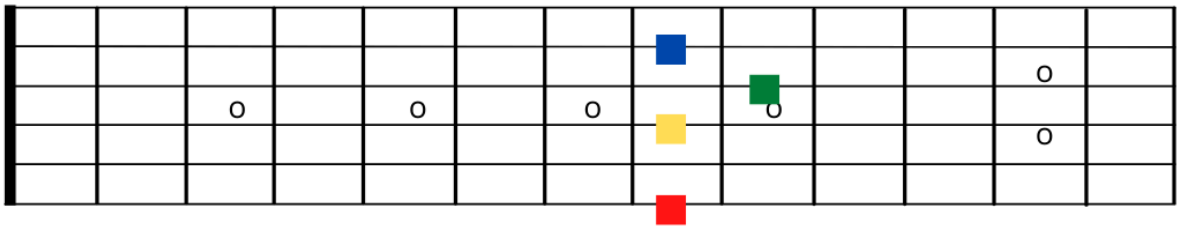


C7 CAGED

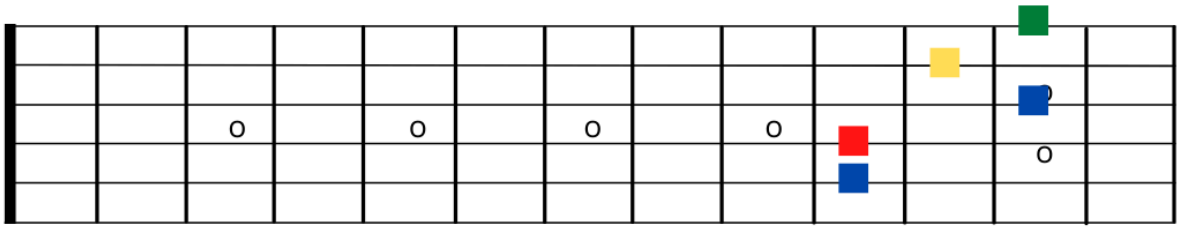
Triad Notes

- Root
- Maj 3rd
- Perf 5th
- Min 7th

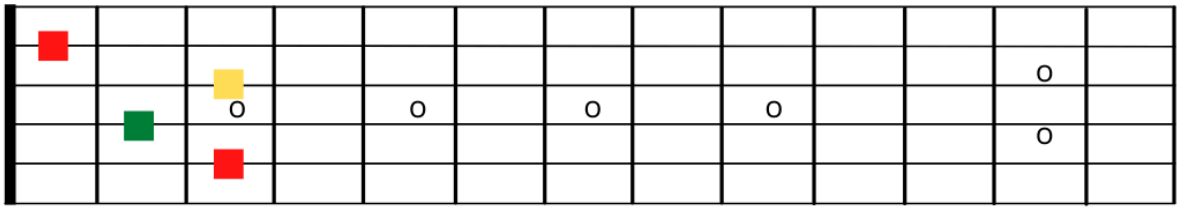
E Shape



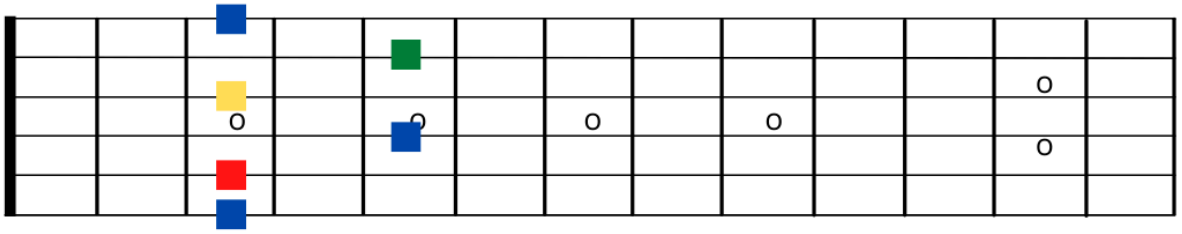
D Shape



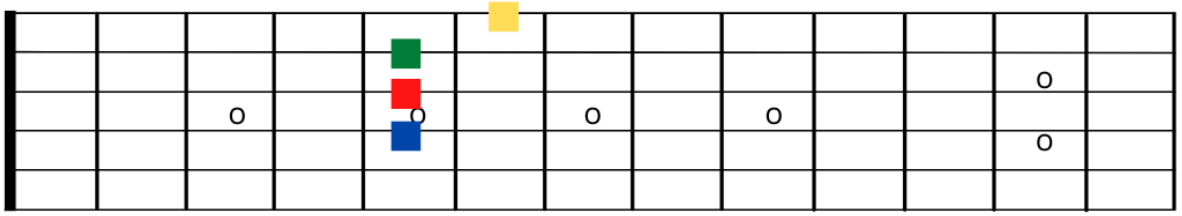
C Shape



A Shape



G Shape

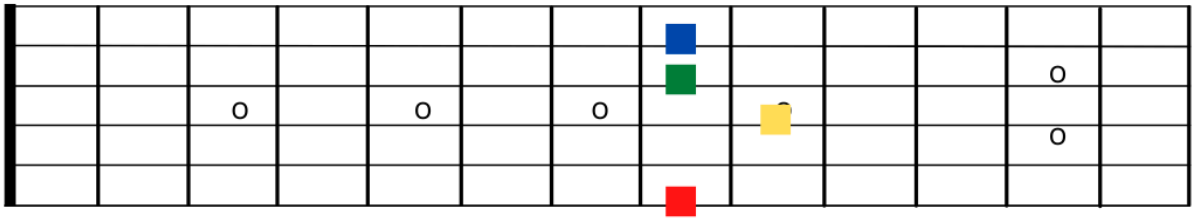


Cmin/maj7 CAGED

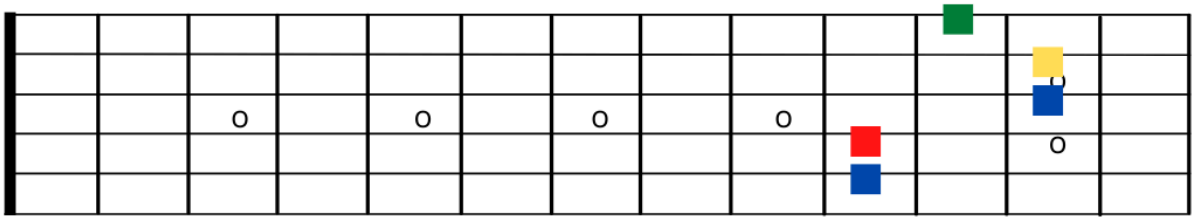
Triad Notes

- Root
- Min 3rd
- Perf 5th
- Maj 7th

Em Shape



Dm Shape



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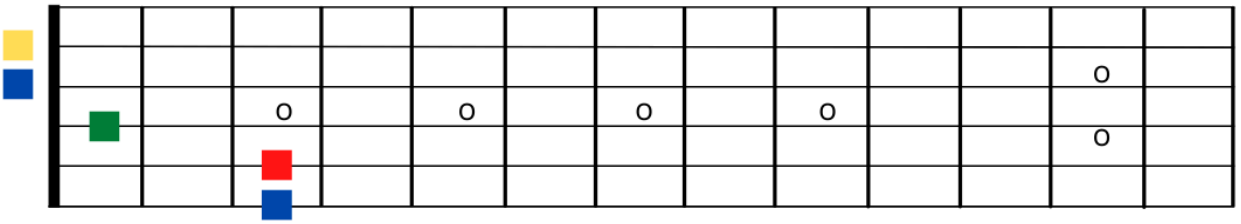

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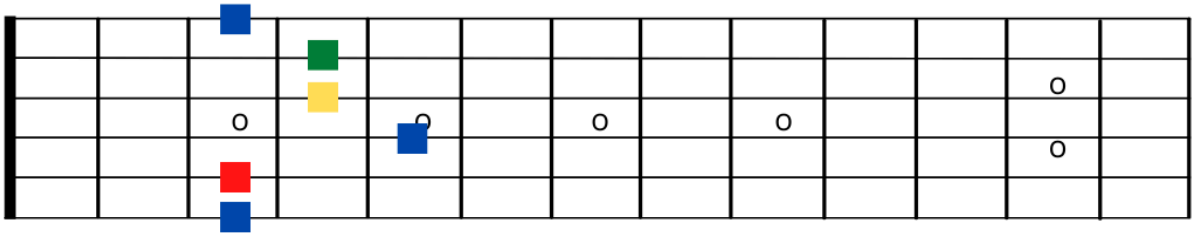

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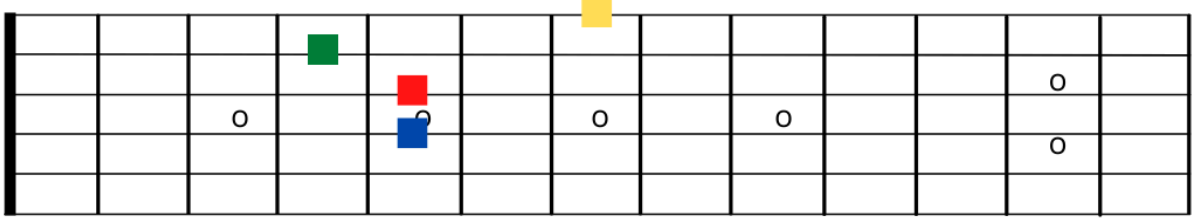
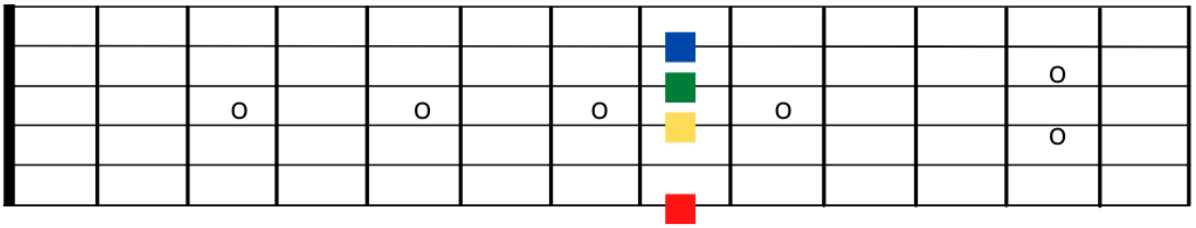


Cmin7 CAGED

Triad Notes

- Root
- Min 3rd
- Perf 5th
- Min 7th

Em Shape



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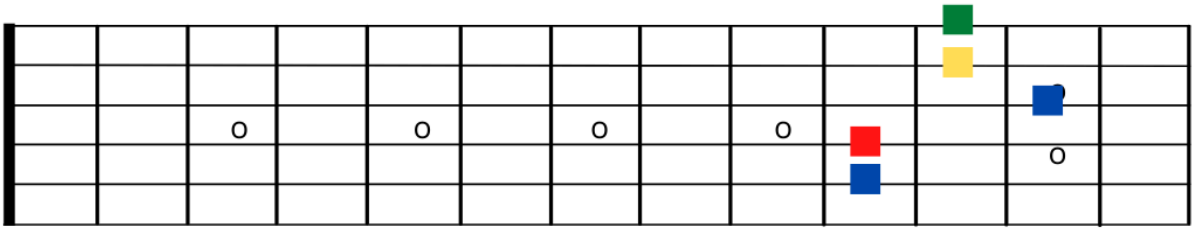
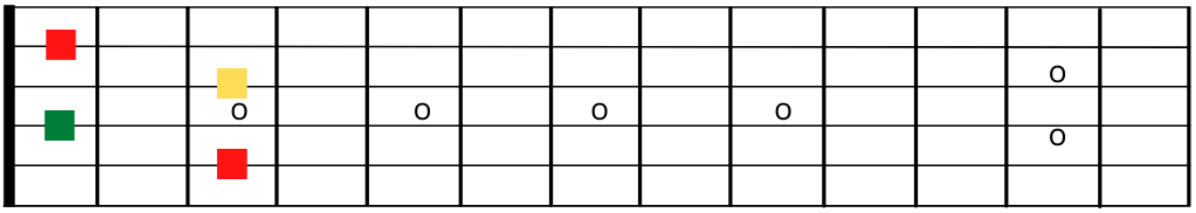
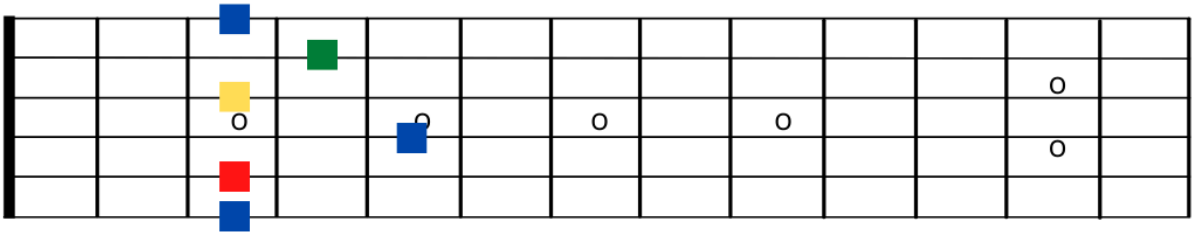


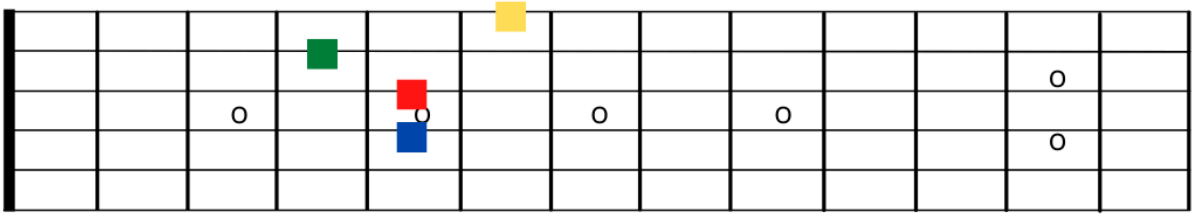
Cm Shape



Am Shape



Gm Shape

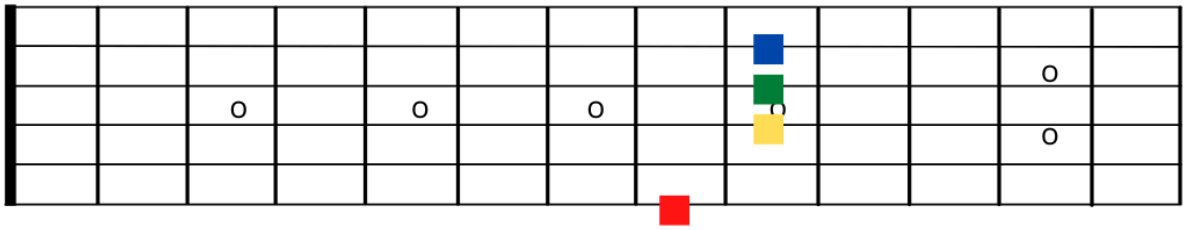


Cmaj7#5 CAGED

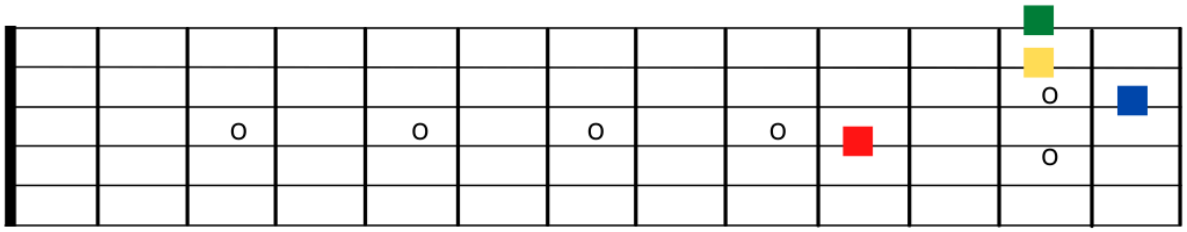
Triad Notes

- Root
- Maj 3rd
- Aug 5th
- Maj 7th

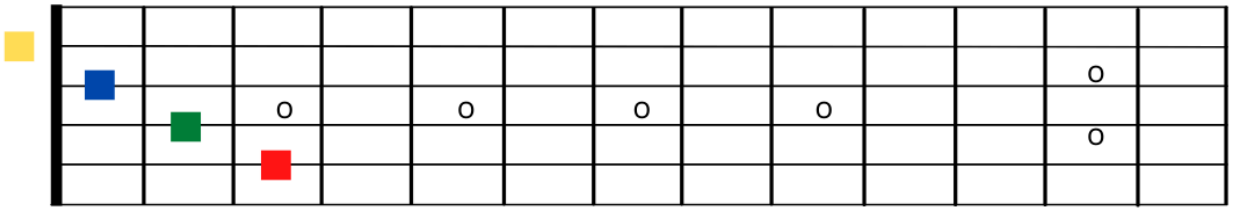
E Shape



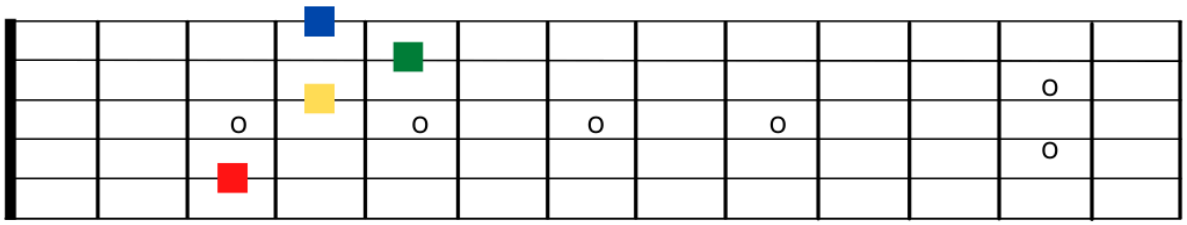
D Shape



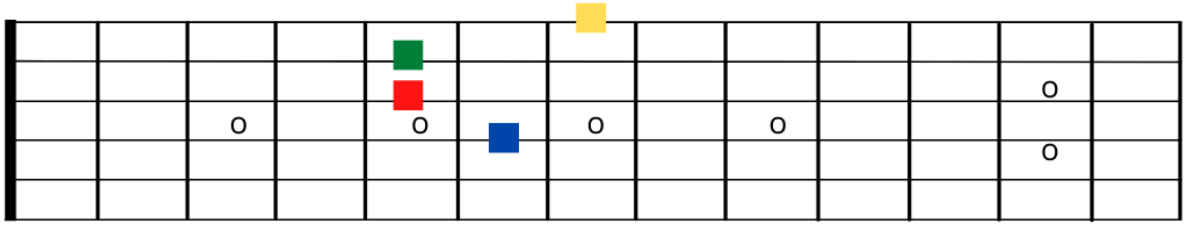
C Shape



A Shape



G Shape

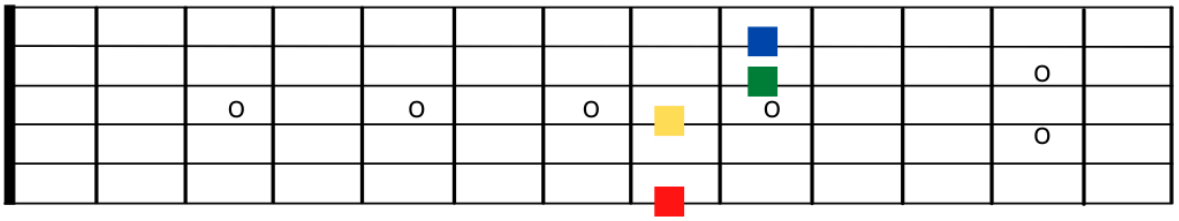


Caug7 CAGED

Triad Notes

- Root
- Maj 3rd
- Aug 5th
- Min 7th

E Shape



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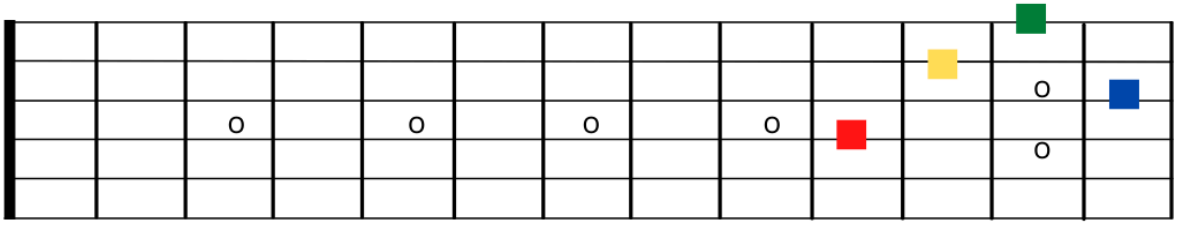
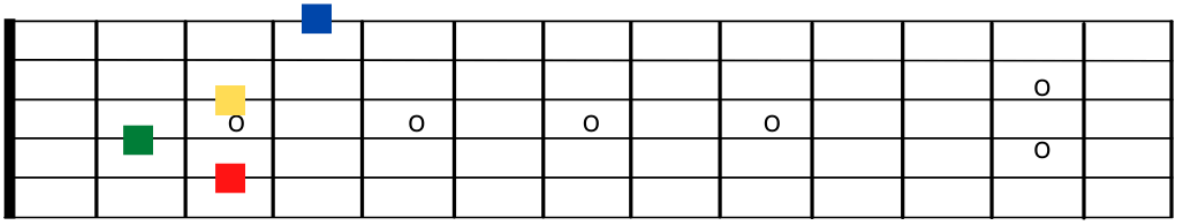


C Shape



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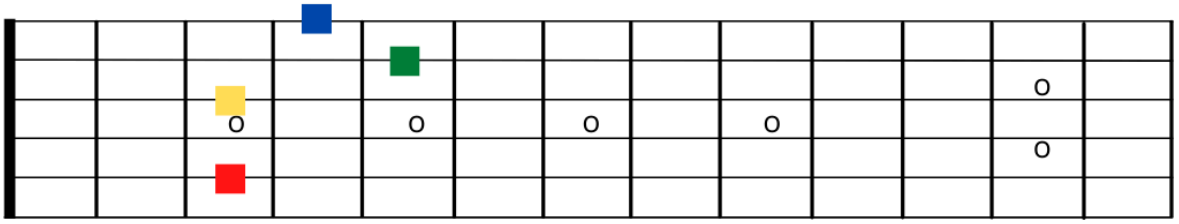
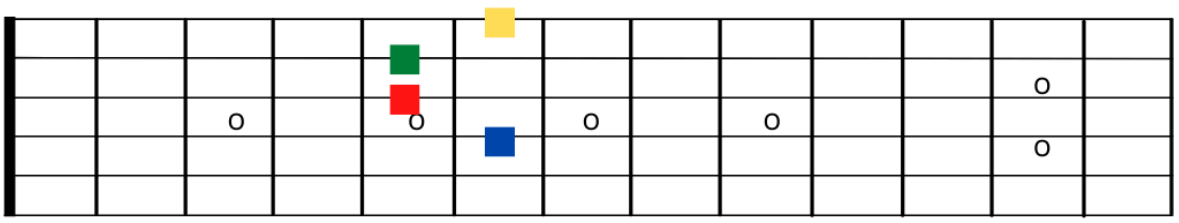


G Shape

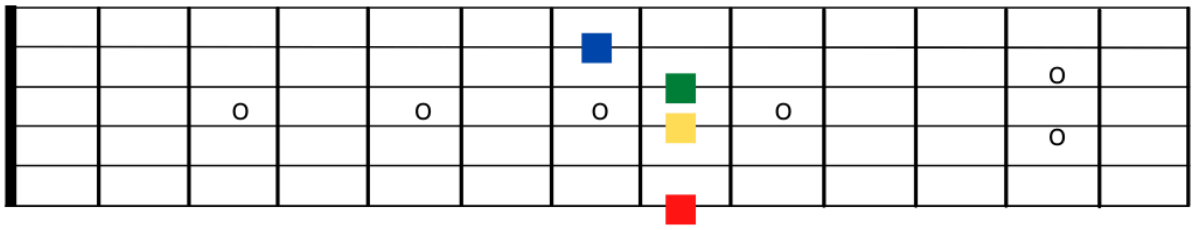


Cmin7b5 CAGED

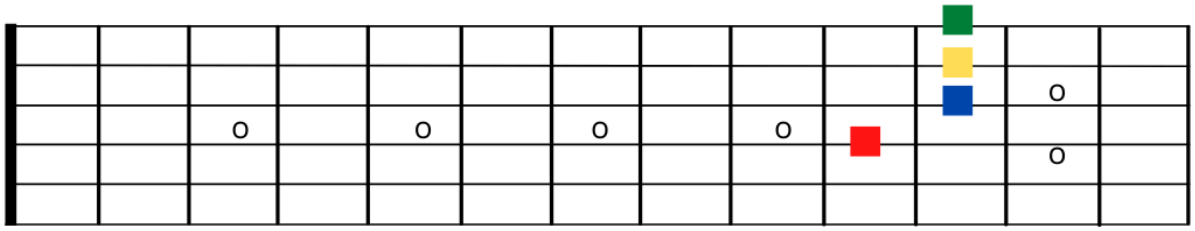
Triad Notes

- Root
- Min 3rd
- Dim 5th
- Min 7th

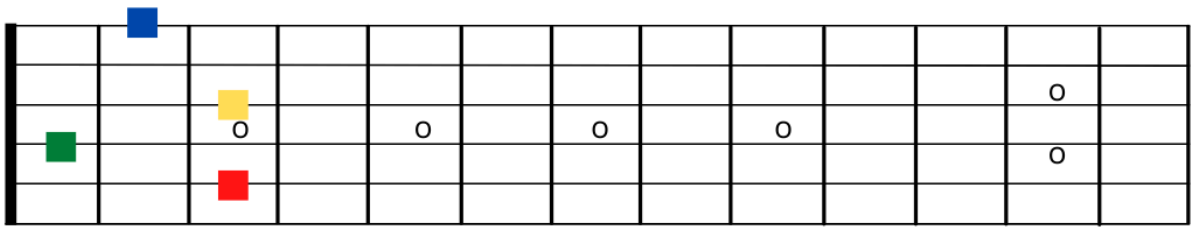
Em Shape



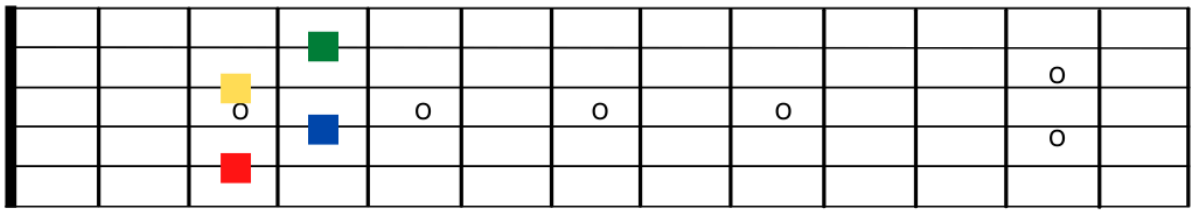
Dm Shape



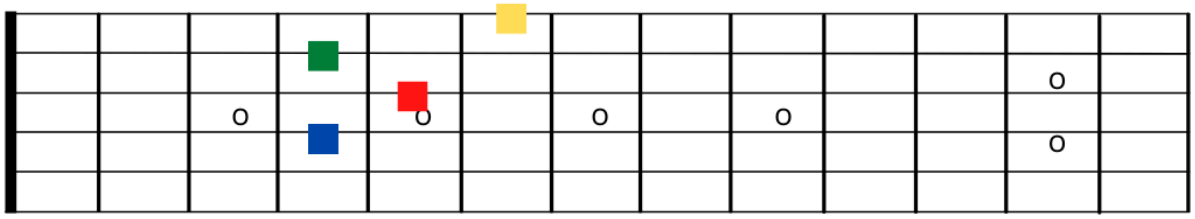
Cm Shape



Am Shape



Gm Shape

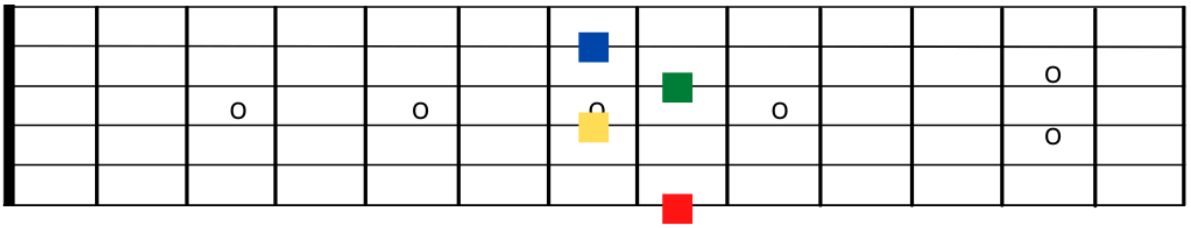


Cdim7 CAGED

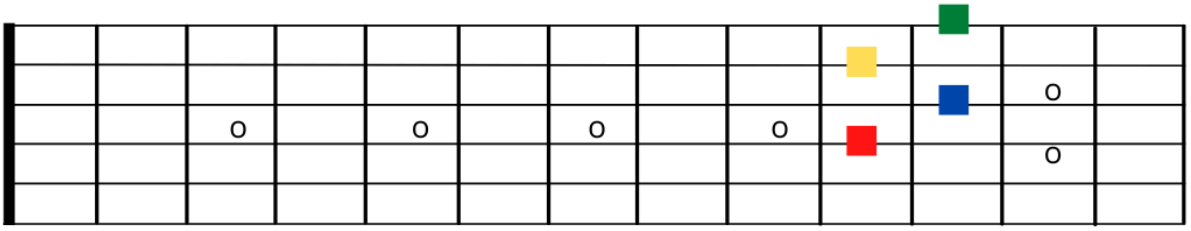
Triad Notes

- Root
- Min 3rd
- Dim 5th
- bb 7th

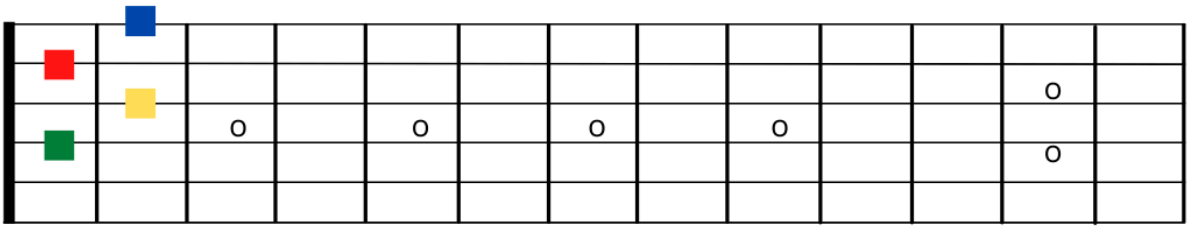
Edim Shape



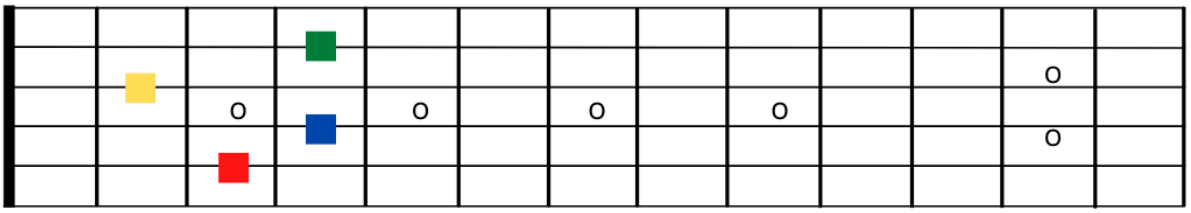
Ddim Shape



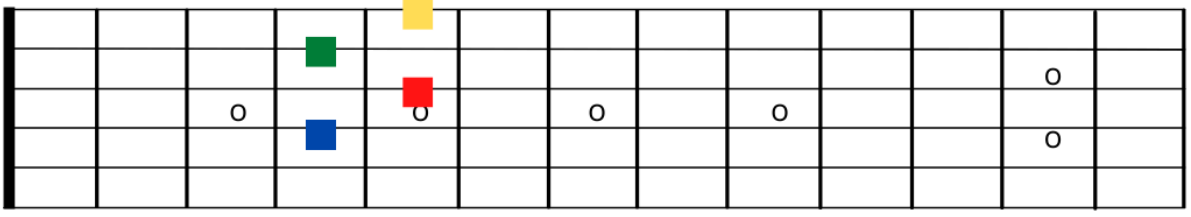
Cdim Shape



Adim Shape



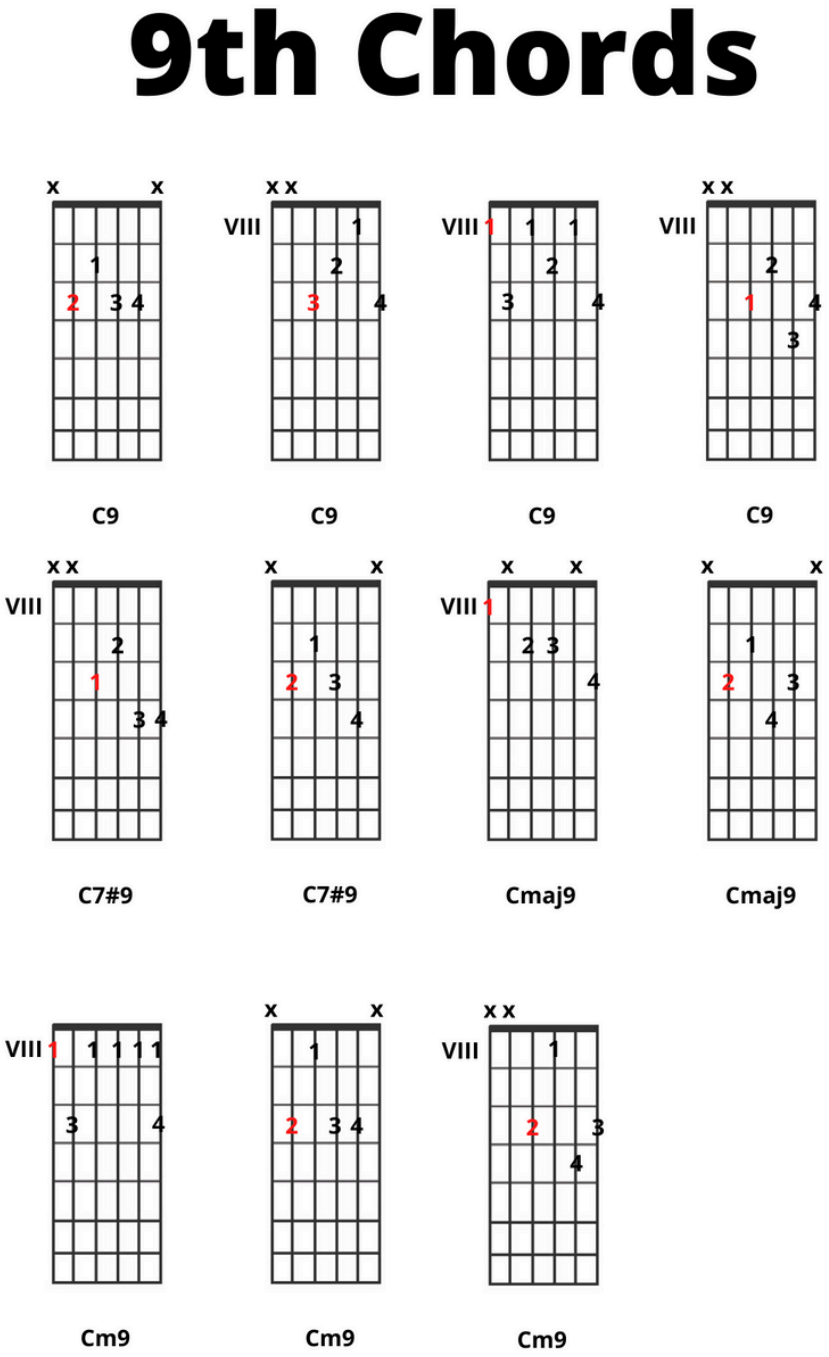
Gdim Shape



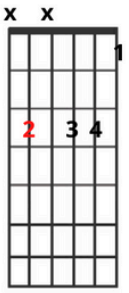
9th, 11th and 13th Chords

So far we have seen only extended chords up to the 7th. However, we can continue expanding chords by adding notes by jumping up another 3rd from the 7th. In this case, we get to the 2nd note from the root but in the following octave. For this reason, we call it a 9 chord instead of a 2.
If we jump up another third from the 9th, we get the 11th, equivalent to the 4th. If the 11 chord is major, we omit the maj3rd.
The next step would be going from the 11th to the 13th, which is also the 6th. In this case, we usually don't add the 11th to the chord.

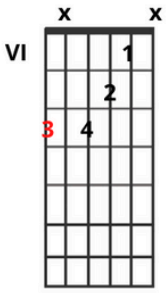
Here are a few important voicings :



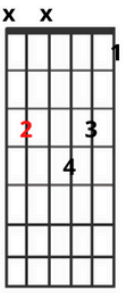
11th Chords



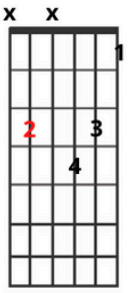
C11



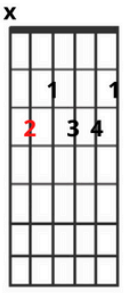
C11



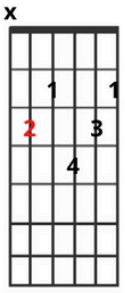
Cmaj11



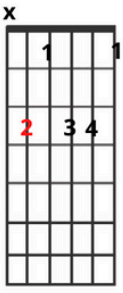
Cmaj11



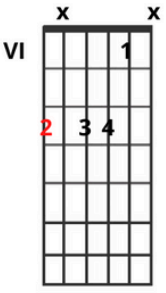
C9#11



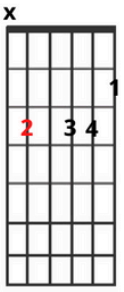
Cmaj9#11



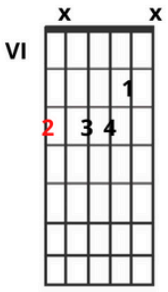
Cm11



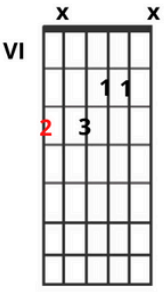
Cm11



Cm9#11

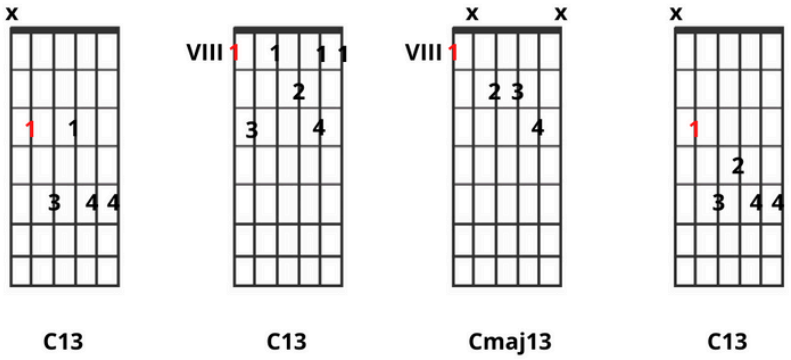


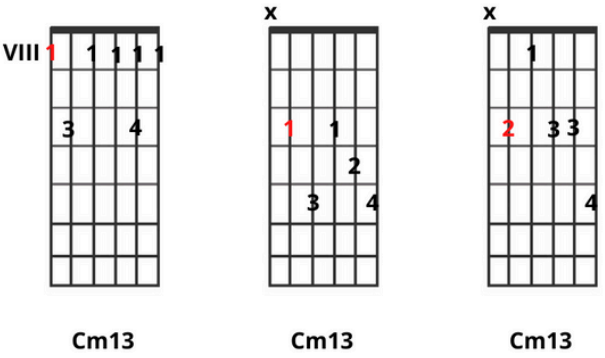
Cm7#11



Cm9#11

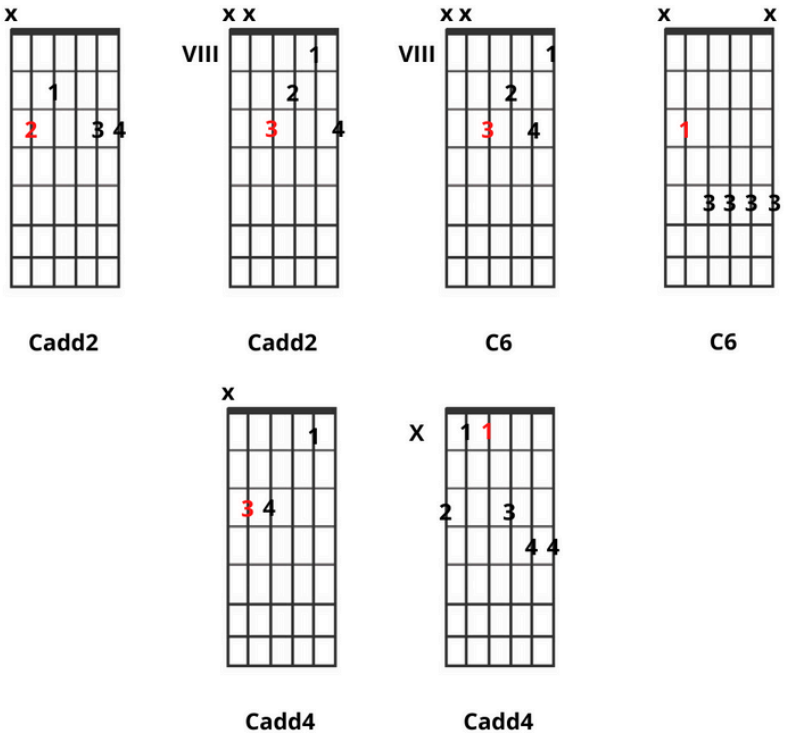
13th Chords





Add^{2}, Add^{4} and 6 Chords

Instead of going up in 3rds, we can just add another note to a triad. By doing so, we can get Add^{2}, Add^{4} and 6 chords.
In the case of the 6th interval, we don't need to include the "add" to the name as there is no "sus^{6}" chord, so we can avoid confusion.
Here are a few examples:



Slash Chords

A slash chord is a triad with a different note on the bass, for example, Cmaj/A. In this case, we have a Cmaj triad but as the lowest note, we play an A instead of a C.

SCALES

Pentatonic Scale

The pentatonic scale is a scale formed by five notes (as a matter of fact, the word Penta means 5).
There are two pentatonic scales: the MAJOR 🔊 and the MINOR 🔊 pentatonic.
The MAJOR pentatonic is formed by the Root, maj2, maj3, P5 and maj6. However, if we consider the maj6 as the root note and we keep the same notes as before, we obtain the MINOR pentatonic scale and the intervals are Root, min3, P4, P5, and min7.

But what does it all mean?

Let's take the C major pentatonic scale as an example.
By following the intervals listed above, we get C, D, E, G and A. Now, let's consider A as the root note instead of C and keep the same notes. The progression we have now is A, C, D, E and G, and the intervals of these notes, considering A as the root, are the same as the ones on the MINOR pentatonic.
So in reality, the 2 scales share the same notes, however, if we are playing in the key of C major, we call it C MAJOR pentatonic scale, whereas if we are playing in the key of A minor, we call it the A MINOR pentatonic scale.

As you might have noticed, the MAJOR pentatonic contains the Root, maj3 and P5 intervals, which compose a major chord, and the MINOR pentatonic contains the Root, min3 and P5, which compose a minor chord.

We will find out how to figure out the key in the MAJOR and MINOR scale sections.

C Major Pentatonic CAGED

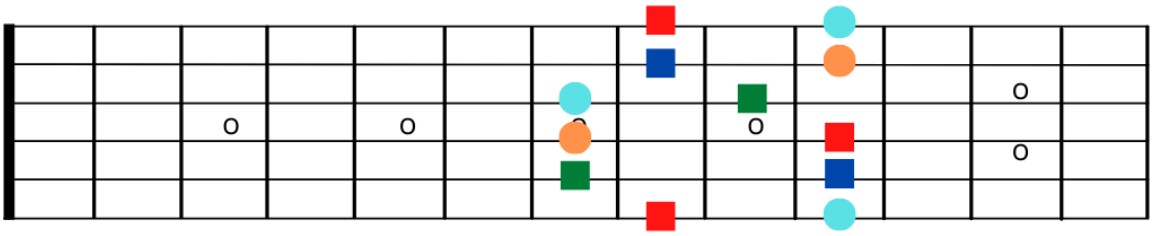
Triad Notes

- Root
- Maj 3rd
- Perf 5th

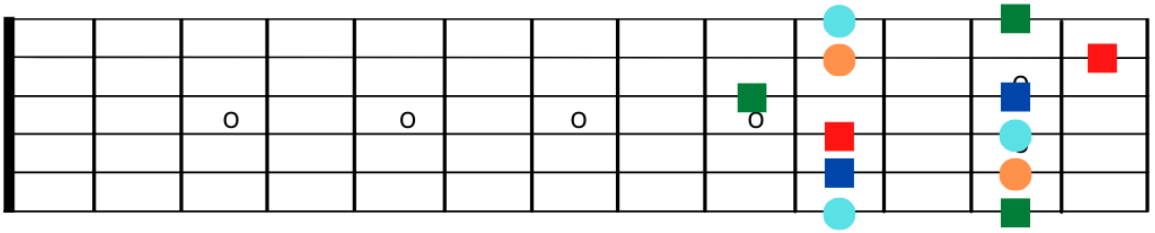
Other Pentatonic Notes

- Maj 2th
- Maj 6th

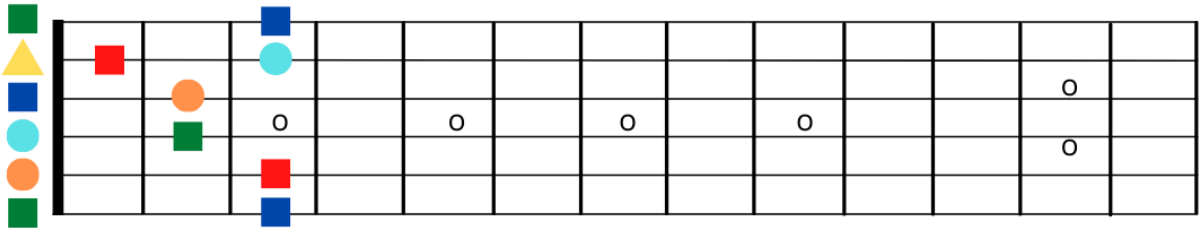
Box 1 (E Shape)



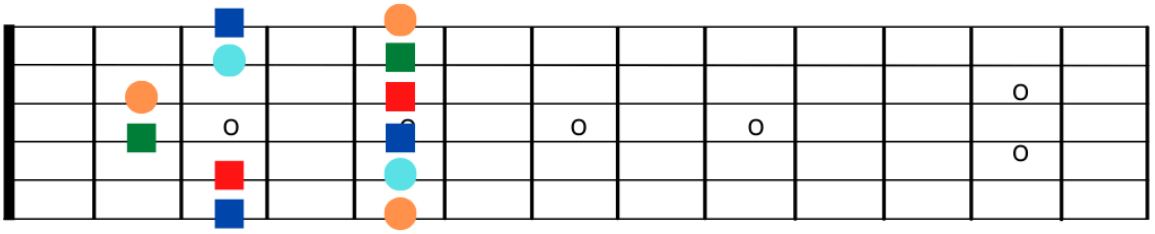
Box 2 (D Shape)



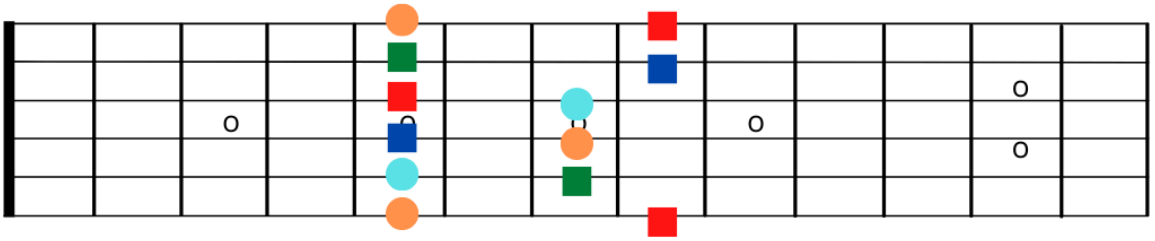
Box 3 (C Shape)



Box 4 (A Shape)



Box 5 (G Shape)

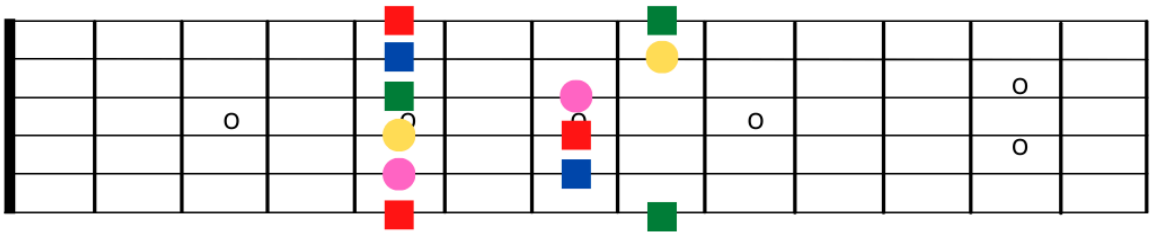


A Minor Pentatonic CAGED

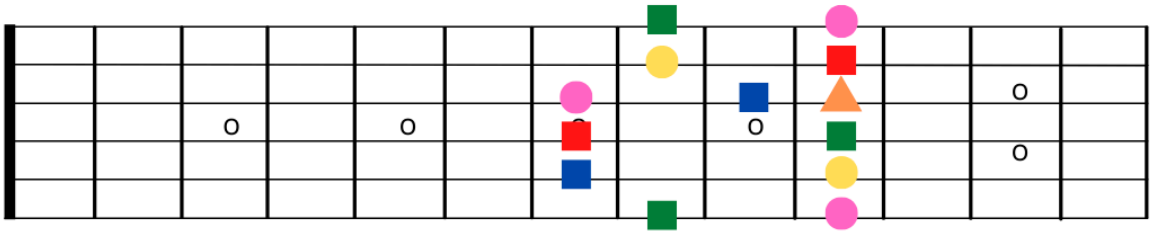
Triad Notes
- Root
- min 3rd
- Perf 5th

Other Pentatonic Notes
- Perf 4th
- Min 7th

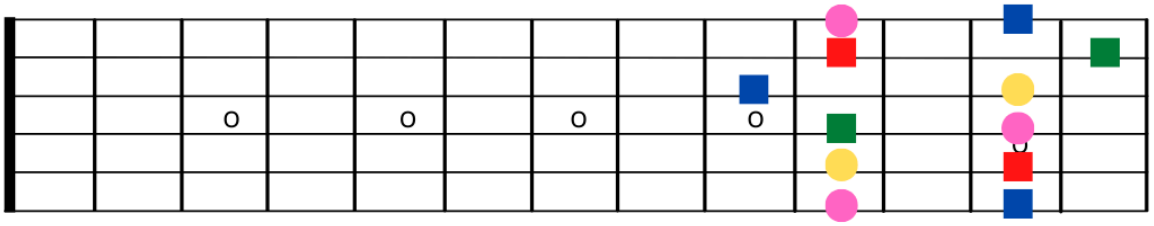
Box 1 (Em Shape)



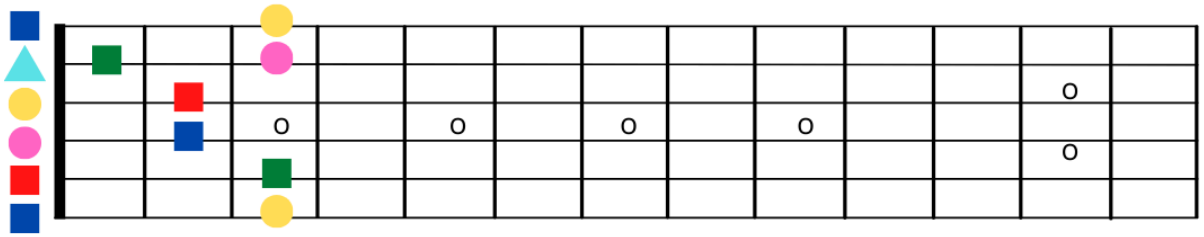
Box 2 (Dm Shape)



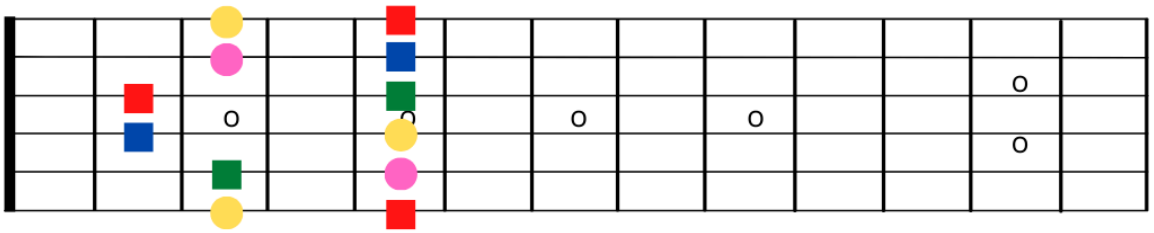
Box 3 (Cm Shape)



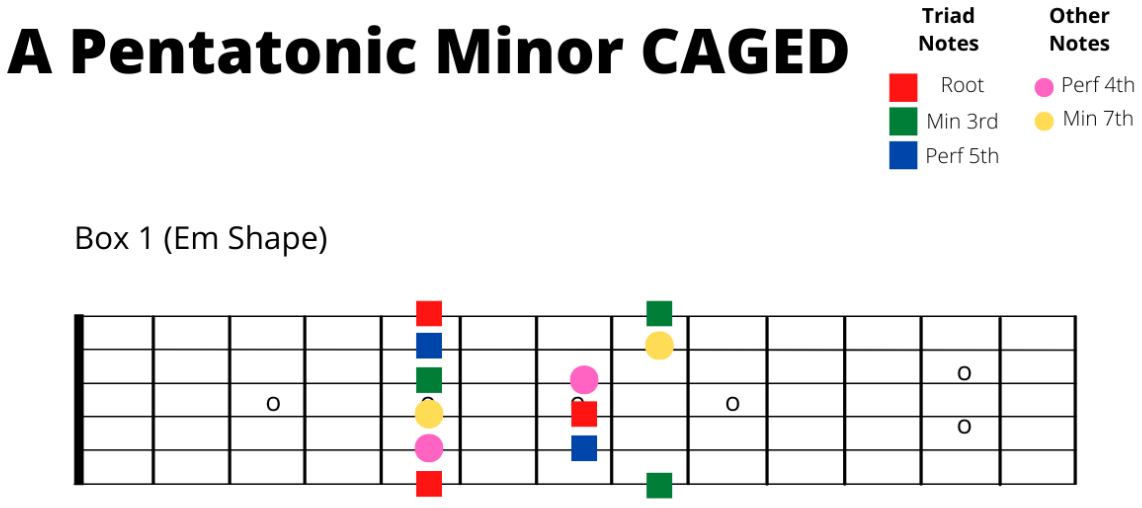
Box 4 (Am Shape)

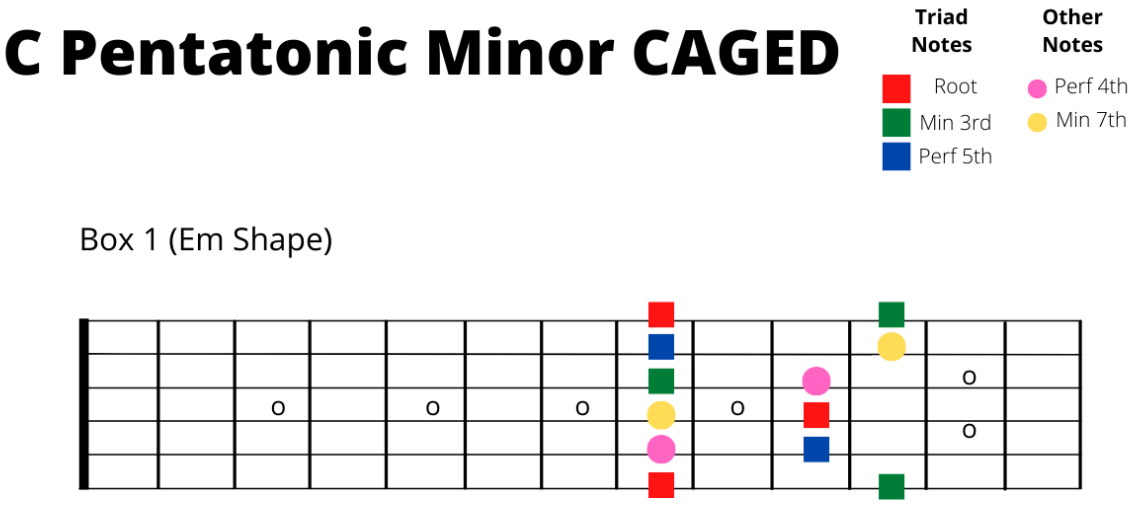


Box 5 (Gm Shape)



The red squares on the graphics above represent the root note of the scale.
So, to find out how to play a pentatonic scale in a different key, we just need to move the boxes to where the root note is. For example, if the A minor pentatonic box 1 starts on the 5th fret of the E string, the first box of the C minor pentatonic starts on the 8th fret of the E string, as that's a C. Then, we keep the same patterns.





So, because A and C are 3 frets away (A is on the 5th fret of E whereas C is on the 5th fret), to get all the other boxes of C, we need to move all the boxes of A 3 frets down the fretboard.

C Pentatonic Minor CAGED

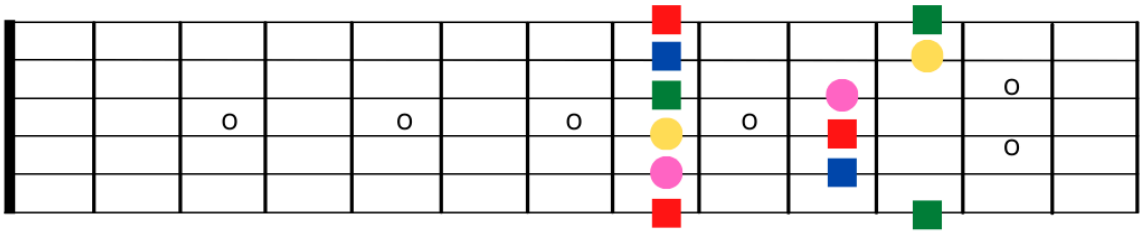
Triad Notes

- Root
- Min 3rd
- Perf 5th

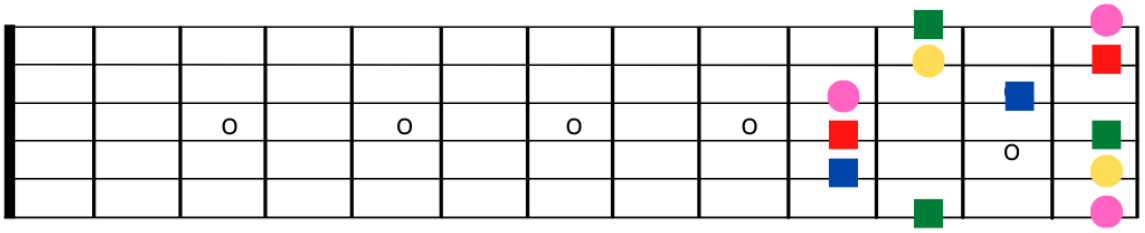
Other Notes

- Perf 4th
- Min 7th

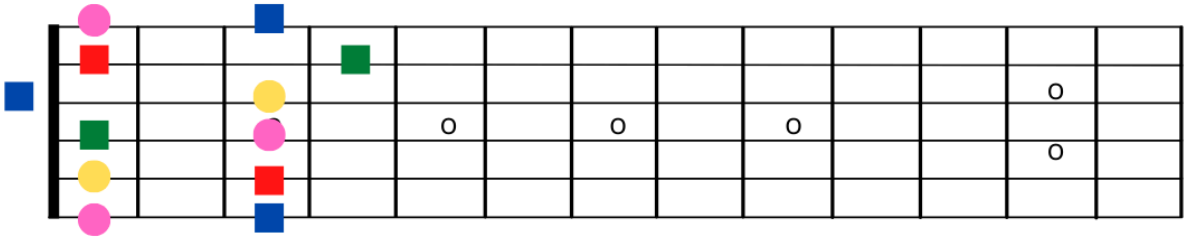
Box 1 (Em Shape)



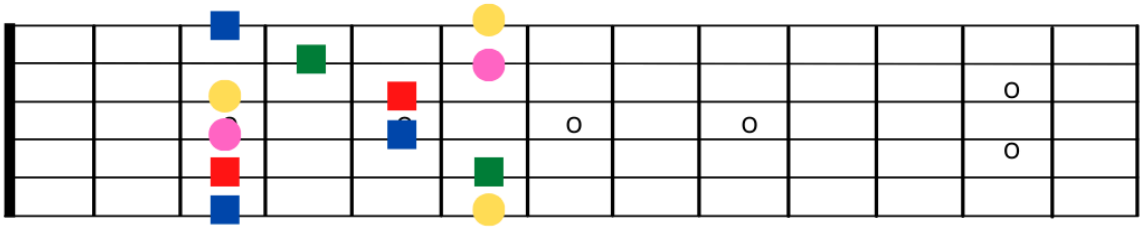
Box 2 (Dm Shape)



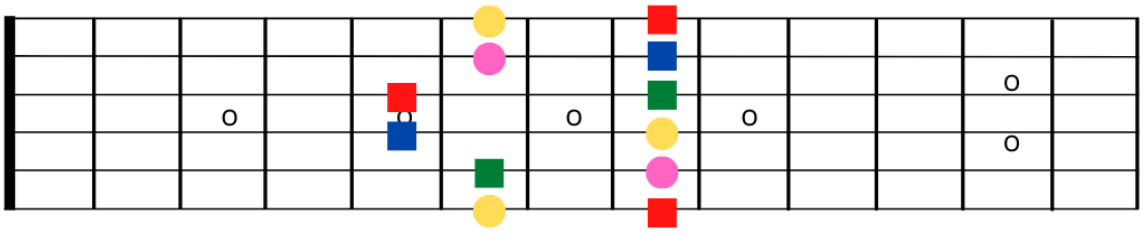
Box 3 (Cm Shape)



Box 4 (Am Shape)



Box 5 (Gm Shape)



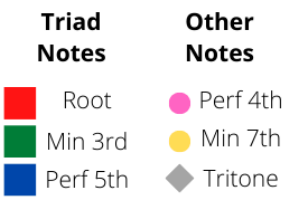
This way, you can find out both major and minor pentatonic scales in all keys. This concept is applied to all chords and scales.
Remember! As the intervals of a scale don’t change, neither do the shapes.

THE BLUES PENTATONIC

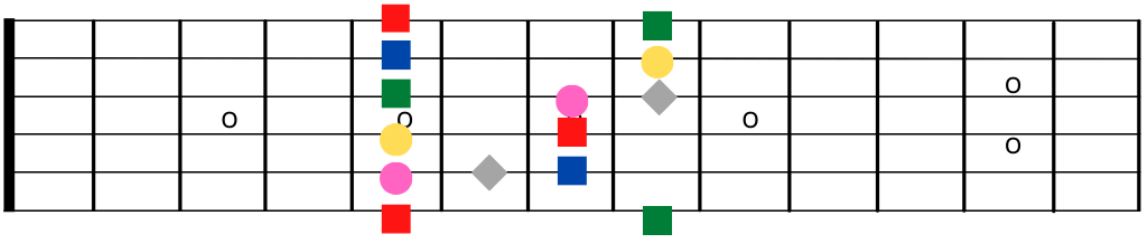
By adding the tritone to a minor pentatonic scale, we get the *Blues Minor Pentatonic* 🔊

Here is how it looks

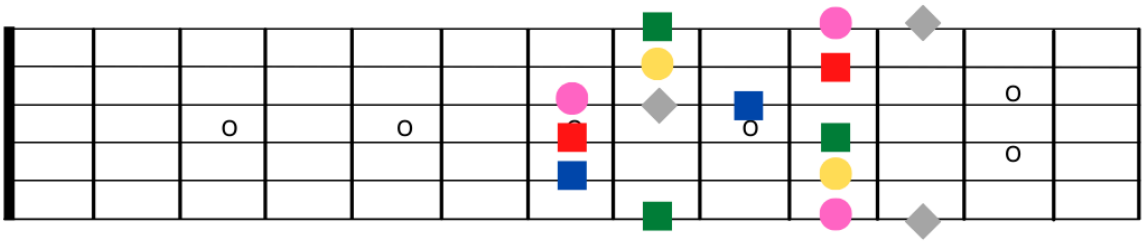
A Pentatonic Minor Blues CAGED



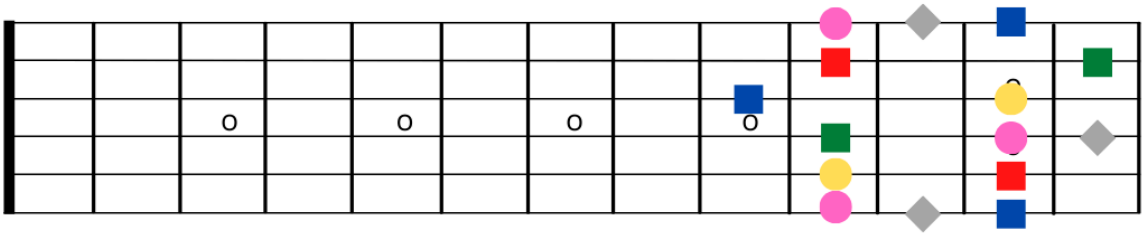
Box 1 (Em Shape)



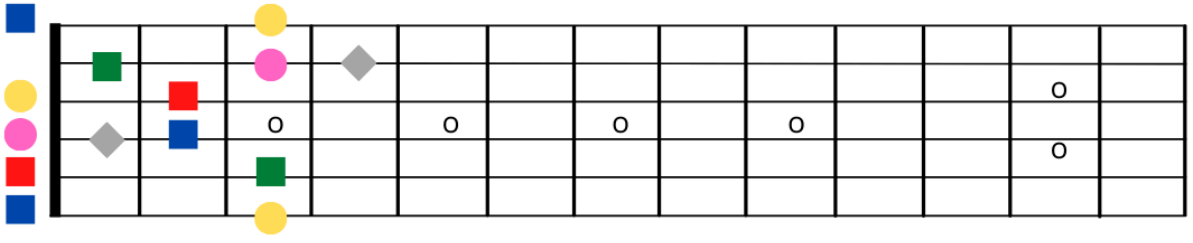
Box 2 (Dm Shape)



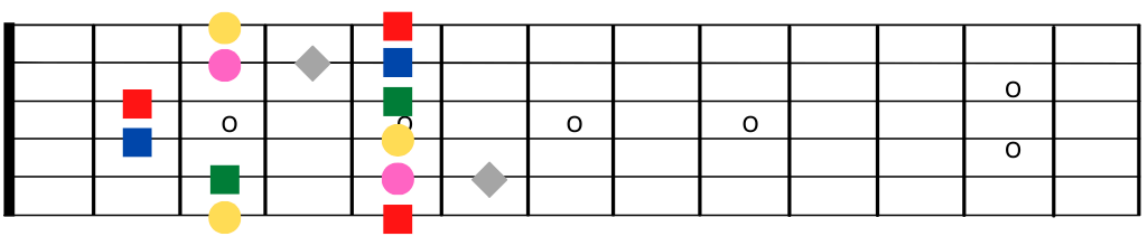
Box 3 (Cm Shape)



Box 4 (Am Shape)



Box 5 (Gm Shape)



This scale is related to Blues music, hence why its name and it's used for Blues, Rock, Funk, Fusion, and Jazz music.
Usually, when playing the blues, we can play the *Blues Pentatonic* scale of the first chord for the entire time, although that would mean playing a minor scale over a major chord, as the first chord of a blues is often a 7th chord. As we will see later on, we can also play the *Mixolydian* mode over each chord.

Major and Minor Scales

So far, we had a look at chords. As we have previously stated, triads are made by 3 notes, the Root, the 3rd and the 5th. Based on which one is which, we get different types of triads.
Now, if we get a major triad and we add the maj2 and the maj6, we get a MAJOR PENTATONIC scale, whereas if we get a minor triad and we add the P4 and the min7, we get a MINOR PENTATONIC scale.
The question now would be, can we extend them even further?
The answer is yes.

If we take a Major Pentatonic Scale and we add the P4 and the maj7, we get a MAJOR scale 🔊. The major scale consists of the Root - maj2 - maj3 - P4 - P5 - maj6 - maj7.
As you can see, all intervals in the major scale are either major or perfect.
Another way of looking at the major scale is by thinking about the intervals between each note.
The C Major scale is the major scale that consists of all the natural notes. What it means, is that on the C major scale, there are no ♯ or *b* and if you know how to play the piano, it's all the white keys.
If we analyse the C major scale from C to its octave, we find out that the intervals between the eight notes are T - T - 1/2T - T - T - T - 1/2T.

Here's how you play the C Major scale on the guitar by following the CAGED system:

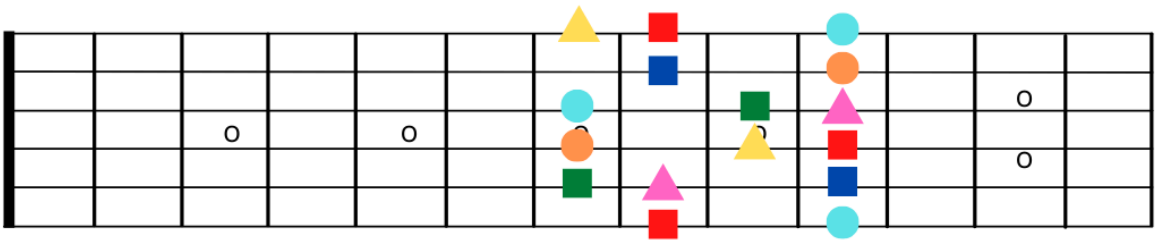
C Major CAGED

Triad Notes: Root, Maj 3rd, Perf 5th

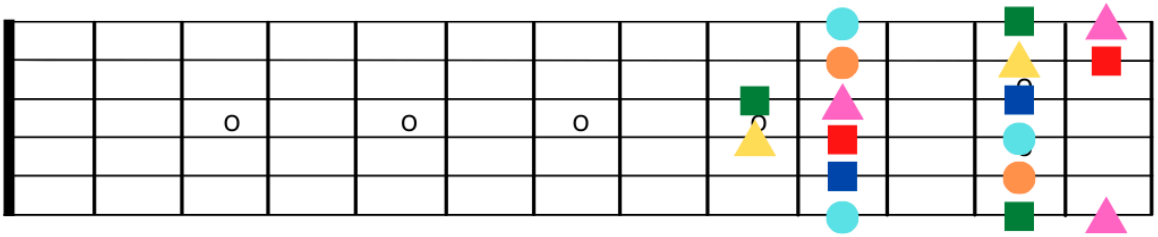
Other Pentatonic Notes: Maj 2th, Maj 6th

Other Notes: Perf 4th, Maj 7th

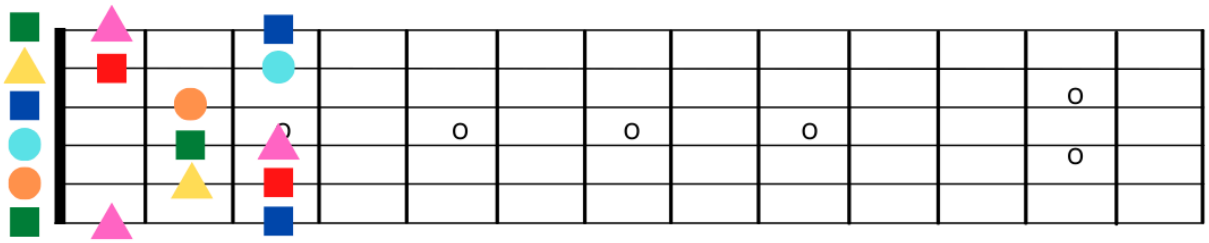
Box 1 (E Shape)



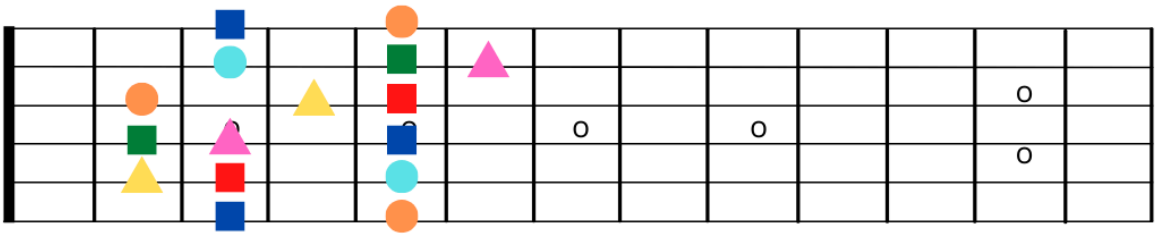
Box 2 (D Shape)



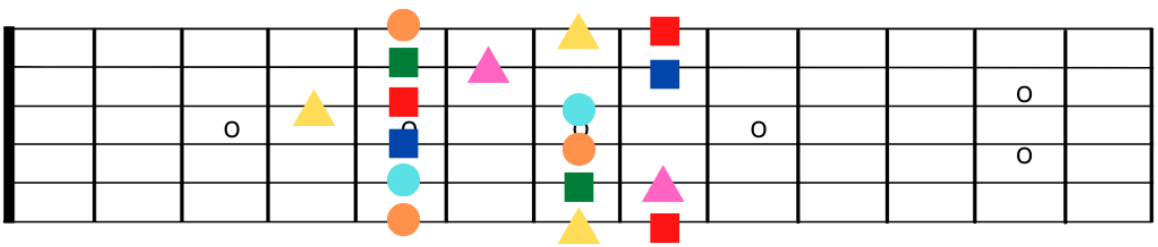
Box 3 (C Shape)



Box 4 (A Shape)



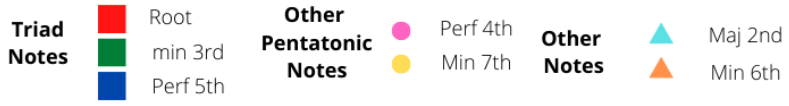
Box 5 (G Shape)



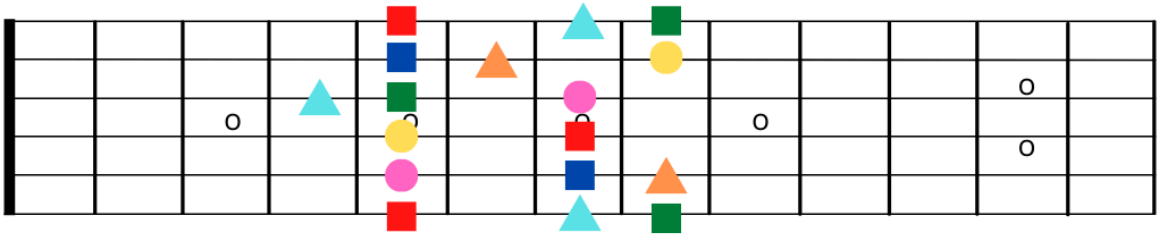
However, if we bring the Minor Pentatonic scale and we add a maj2 and min6, we get the Minor scale.
The Minor scale 🔊 consists of Root - maj2 - min3 - P4 - P5 - min6 - min7.
Same as the C Major scale, the A Minor scale consists of all the natural notes.
The interval between each note on the minor scale is T - 1/2T - T - T - 1/2T - T - T.

Here's how to play the A Minor scale on the guitar by following the CAGED system

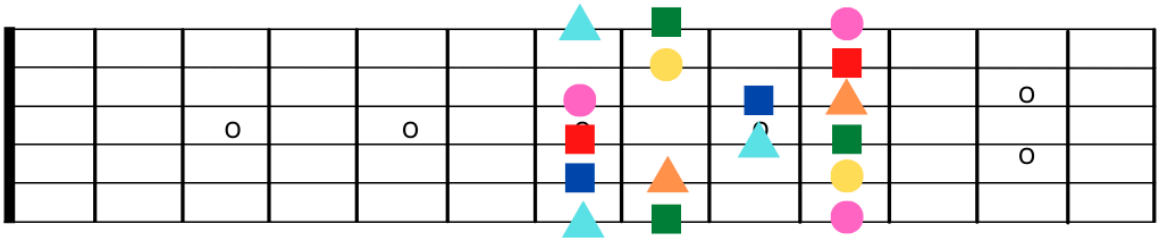
A Minor CAGED



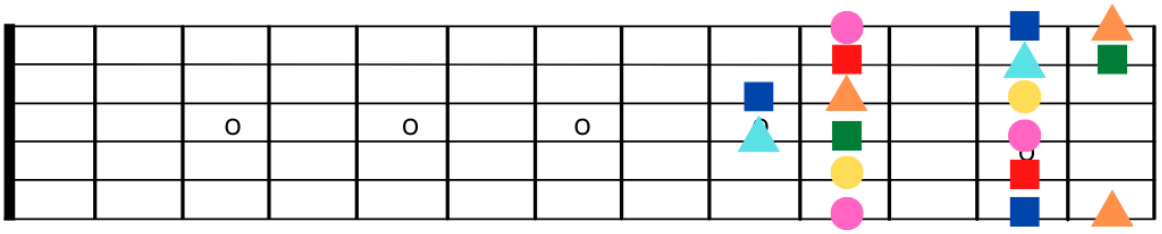
Box 1 (Em Shape)



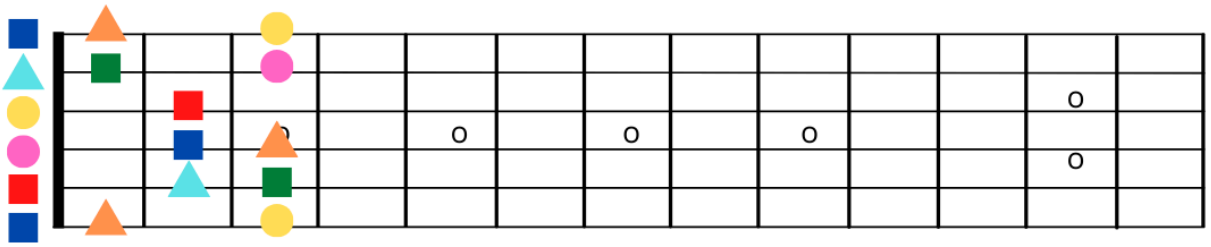
Box 2 (Dm Shape)



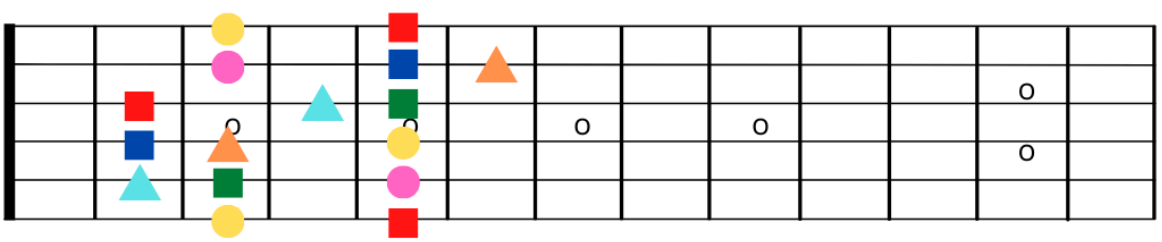
Box 3 (Cm Shape)



Box 4 (Am Shape)



Box 5 (Gm Shape)



As you might have noticed, the A Minor scale and the C Major scale are the same.
As for the Pentatonic scale, the A Minor scale is the relative minor scale of the C major scale. Finding a relative minor of each note is simple. All we have to do is go back 3 semitones, or frets if we are looking at it from a guitar perspective.
So for instance, if we want to find the relative minor of G, we move back 3 semitones and we get E.

This can be confusing if you are not familiar with the disposition of notes on the neck. It is important to learn where each note is at least in the top 2 strings, as shown in *Pic 11*.

HARMONISING THE MAJOR AND MINOR SCALES

As we have seen before if we start from the root of the scale and move up in intervals of thirds we get a chord, but we also get extended chords. What it means with the Cmaj scale is that if we take C and jump in 3rds and stop at the 5th we get a Cmaj chord. If we go up another 3rd, we get a $Cmaj^{7}$ chord. If we do it for every step until we cover all notes on the major scale, we get $Cmaj^{9}$, $Cmaj^{11}$ and $Cmaj^{13}$.
However, what about the other notes on the major scale?
Let's take D as an example, which is the second note, or second degree of the C major scale. If we go up in thirds until it's 5th, we get a Dmin. If we carry on as we did previously for C, we get $Dmin^{7}$, $Dmin^{9}$, $Dmin^{11}$ and $Dmin^{13}$.

Here's every degree of the C major scale harmonised:

- I: Cmaj - $Cmaj^{7}$ - $Cmaj^{9}$ - $Cmaj^{11}$ - $Cmaj^{13}$
- IIm: Dmin - $Dmin^{7}$ - $Dmin^{9}$ - $Dmin^{11}$ - $Dmin^{13}$
- IIIm: Emin - $Emin^{7}$ - $Emin^{7}\,♭^{9}$ - $Emin^{11}\,♭^{9}$ - $Emin^{11}\,♭^{9}\,♭^{13}$
- IV: Fmaj - $Fmaj^{7}$ - $Fmaj^{9}$ - $Fmaj^{9}♯^{11}$ - $Fmaj^{13}♯^{11}$
- V: Gmaj - G^{7} - G^{9} - G^{11} - G^{13}
- VIm: Amin - $Amin^{7}$ - $Amin^{9}$ - $Amin^{11}$ - $Amin^{11}\,♭^{13}$
- VIIdim: Bdim - $Bm^{7}\,♭^{5}$ - $Bmin^{7}\,♭^{5}\,♭^{9}$ - $Bmin^{11}\,♭^{5}\,♭^{9}$ - $Bmin^{11}\,♭^{5}\,♭^{9}\,♭^{13}$

As the C major scale and A minor scale are the same scales just over different chords on the root, the nature of the chords doesn't change. However, the degree over the root will be different.

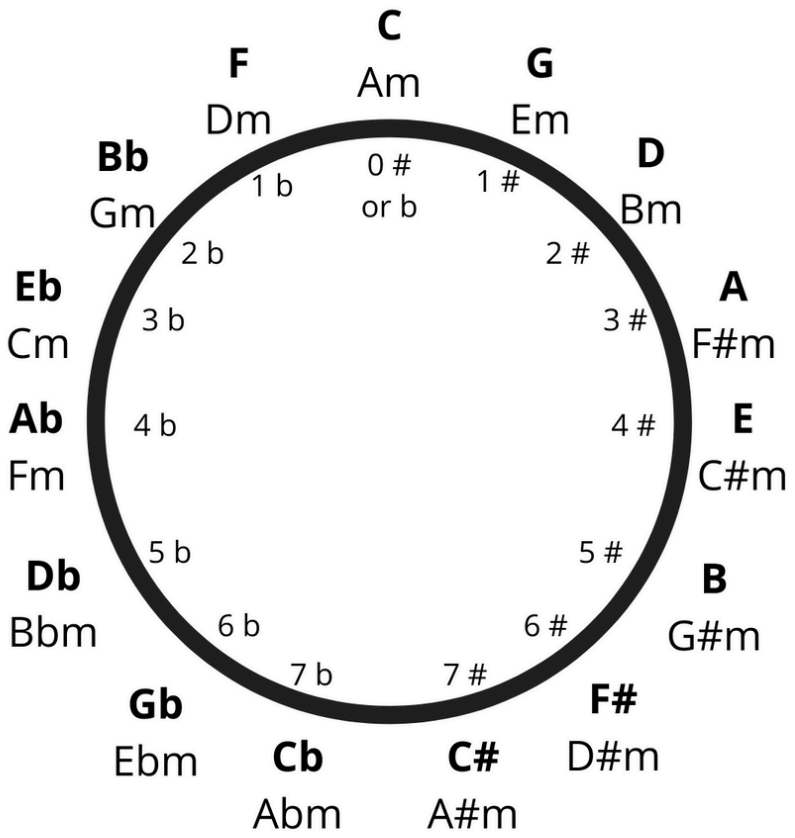
- I: Amin - $Amin^{7}$ - $Amin^{9}$ - $Amin^{11}$ - $Amin^{11}\,♭^{13}$
- IIdim: Bdim - $Bm^{7}\,♭^{5}$ - $Bmin^{7}\,♭^{5}\,♭^{9}$ - $Bmin^{11}\,♭^{5}\,♭^{9}$ - $Bmin^{11}\,♭^{5}\,♭^{9}\,♭^{13}$
- ♭ III: Cmaj - $Cmaj^{7}$ - $Cmaj^{9}$ - $Cmaj^{11}$ - $Cmaj^{13}$
- IVm: Dmin - $Dmin^{7}$ - $Dmin^{9}$ - $Dmin^{11}$ - $Dmin^{13}$
- Vm: Emin - $Emin^{7}$ - $Emin^{7}\,♭^{9}$ - $Emin^{11}\,♭^{9}$ - $Emin^{11}\,♭^{9}\,♭^{13}$
- ♭ VI: Fmaj - $Fmaj^{7}$ - $Fmaj^{9}$ - $Fmaj^{9}♯^{11}$ - $Fmaj^{13}♯^{11}$
- ♭ VII: Gmaj - G^{7} - G^{9} - G^{11} - G^{13}

These are all the harmonisations of all degrees of the Major and Minor scales. However, in rock music, it's rare to use extended chords that go beyond the 7th, although possible.

The flat symbol (♭) before the roman numeral, implies the interval to the root of the scale. For instance, ♭ VI means that between A and F there's an interval of a flat sixth (or minor sixth).

THE CIRCLE OF FIFTHS

As we have established previously, there is a minor scale that is related to a major scale. This means that there are a total of 12 major scales and 12 minor scales.
By following the circle of fifths, we find out how many sharps and flats there are in a scale and which notes are those.
The way it works is simple. We start with the C major scale or A minor scale. As we previously said, the C major scale has no alterations, meaning there are no sharps or flats. Then, if we go up a perfect fifth from C, we get the G major scale, which has only one sharp, which is F♯. Then we move up another perfect fifth from G and we get to the D major scale, which has 2 sharps, which are F♯ and C♯. We carry on this process until we get to the C♯ scale, which has all notes sharpened.
To find the scales with flat notes, we move down one perfect fifth from C and we get to the F major scale, in which the only flat note is B ♭ . Then we go down another perfect fifth and we get to the B ♭ major scale, which has B ♭ and E ♭ . We carry on until we get to the C ♭ major scale, which has all flat notes.
The graphic below shows you all the options for both the major and minor scales.



1st #	2nd #	3rd #	4th #	5th #	6th #	7th #
F	**C**	**G**	**D**	**A**	**E**	**B**
7th b	6th b	5th b	4th b	3rd b	2nd b	1st b

However, some of the options above are most likely not used. For example, there would be no point in playing with the C♯ major scale, as it's the equivalent of the D ♭ major scale, which has fewer alterations. Also, there would be no point in playing in the C ♭ major scale, as it is the equivalent of the B major scale, for the same reason as before.

Modes

As previously mentioned, the intervals between grades on a major scale are

T - T - 1/2T - T - T - T - 1/2T

However, what would happen if we started from another grade of the scale and we go up to its octave?
Surprisingly, they will sound differently, as there are different intervals between each grade of the scale.

As there are 7 notes on a scale, therefore there are 7 options. These options in music are called *Modes*.

Modes are used to obtain particular sounds. For instance, if we want to get an Arabic sound, we often use the Phrygian mode or if we want to get a blues sound, we use the Mixolydian mode.

These are the 7 modes that belong to the correlated major scale:

I. Ionian 🔊: T - T - $^{1/2}$T - T - T - T - $^{1/2}$T (Imaj7)
Root - Maj2 - Maj3 - Perf4 - Perf5 - Maj6 - Maj7 - Octave

II. Dorian 🔊: T - $^{1/2}$T / T - T - T - $^{1/2}$T - T (IImin7)
Root - Maj2 - Min3 - Perf4 - Perf5 - Maj6 - Min7 - Octave

III. Phrygian 🔊: $^{1/2}$T - T - T - T - $^{1/2}$T - T - T (IIImin7)
Root - Min2 - Min3 - Perf4 - Perf5 - Min6 - Min7 - Octave

IV. Lydian 🔊: T - T - T - $^{1/2}$T - T - T - $^{1/2}$T (IVmaj7)
Root - Maj2 - Maj3 - ♯4 - Perf5 - Maj6 - Maj7 - Octave

V. Mixolydian 🔊: T - T - $^{1/2}$T - T - T - $^{1/2}$T - T (V7)
Root - Maj2 - Maj3 - Perf4 - Perf5 - Maj6 - Min7 - Octave

VI. Aeolian 🔊: T - $^{1/2}$T - T - T - $^{1/2}$T - T - T (VIm7)
Root - Maj2 - Min3 - Perf4 - Perf5 - Min6 - Min7 - Octave

VII. Locrian 🔊: $^{1/2}$T - T - T - $^{1/2}$T - T - T - T (VIIm7 ♭ 5)
Root - Min2 - Min3 - Perf4 - b5 - Min6 - Min7 - Octave

As you can see, the Ionian mode is the equivalent of the Major scale, whereas the Aeolian mode is the equivalent of the minor scale.
The Ionian, Lydian and Mixolydian modes are major modes because they are based around a major chord; the Dorian, Phrygian and Aeolian modes are minor modes because they are based around a minor chord and the Locrian mode is a diminished mode because it's based around a diminished chord

As for the Major and Minor scales, modes can also be adapted in CAGED positions and each mode is formed by 5 boxes.

Here's every mode in C using the CAGED system.

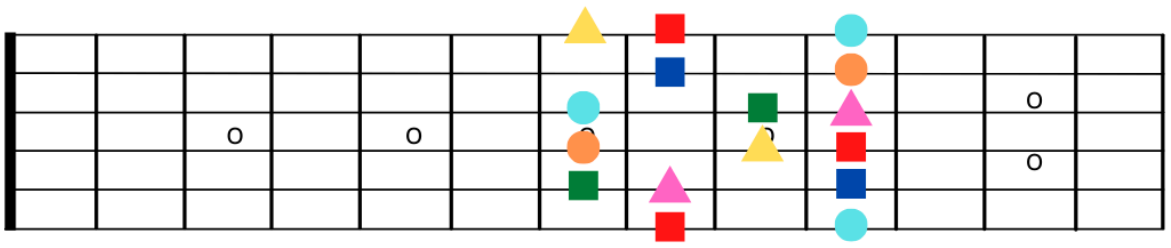
C Ionian CAGED

Triad Notes Root, Maj 3rd, Perf 5th

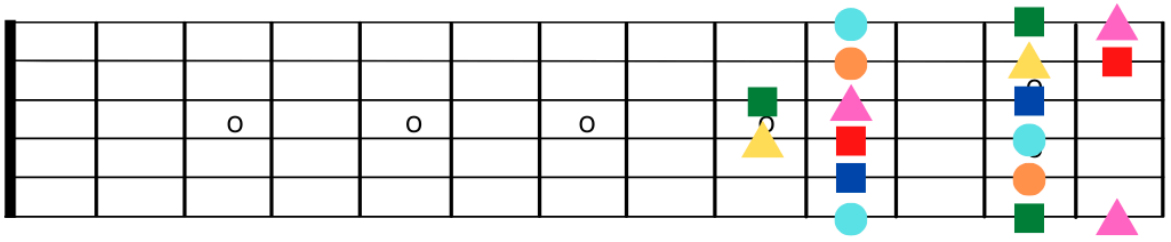
Other Pentatonic Notes Maj 2th, Maj 6th

Other Notes Perf 4th, Maj 7th

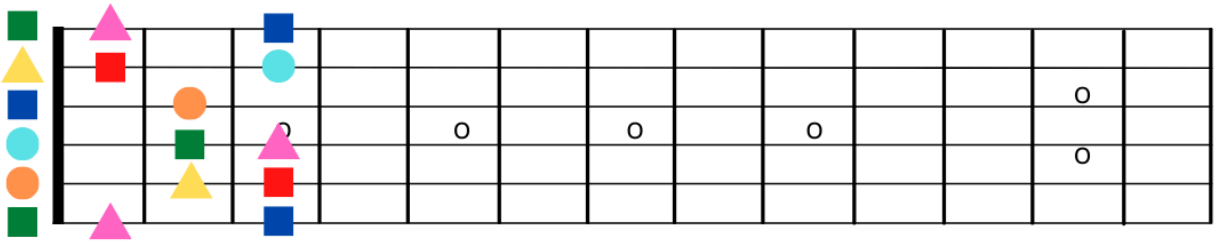
Box 1 (E Shape)



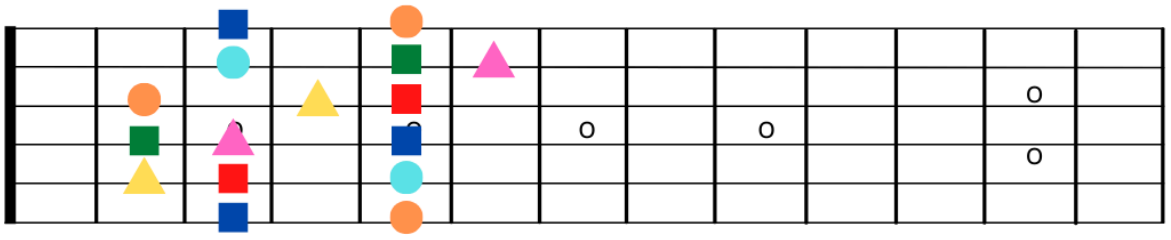
Box 2 (D Shape)



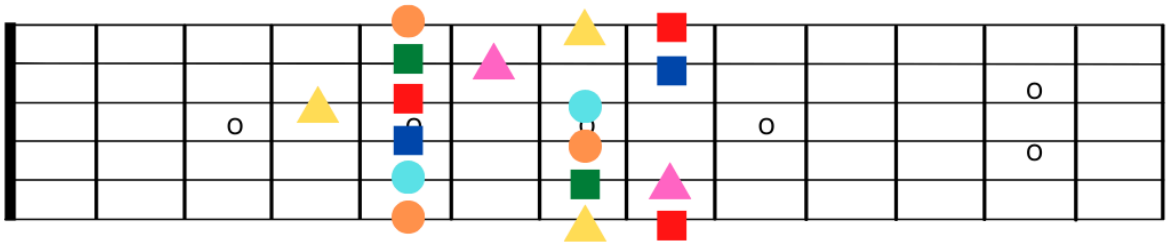
Box 3 (C Shape)



Box 4 (A Shape)



Box 5 (G Shape)



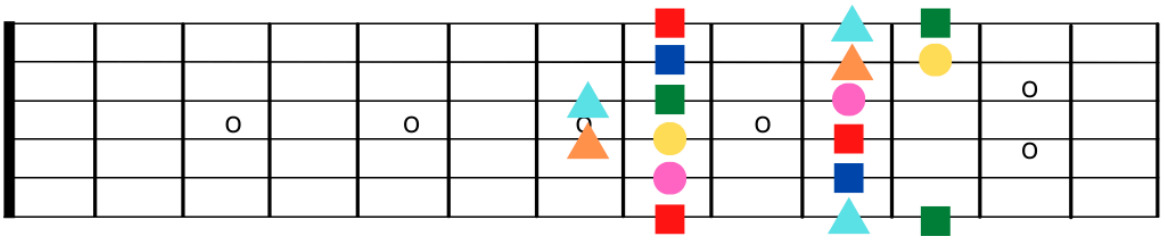
C Dorian CAGED

Triad Notes Root, min 3rd, Perf 5th

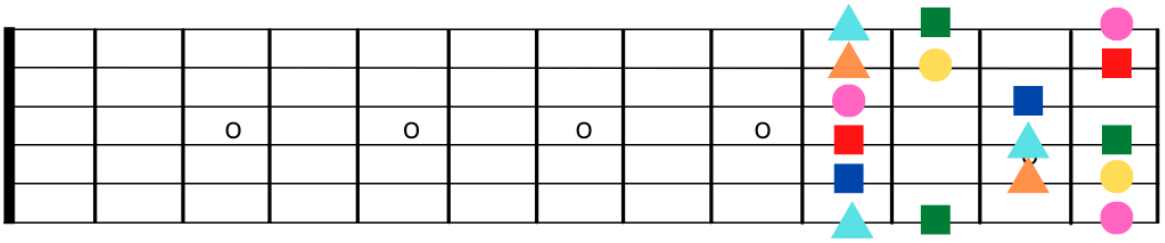
Other Pentatonic Notes Perf 4th, Min 7th

Other Notes Maj 2nd, Maj 6th

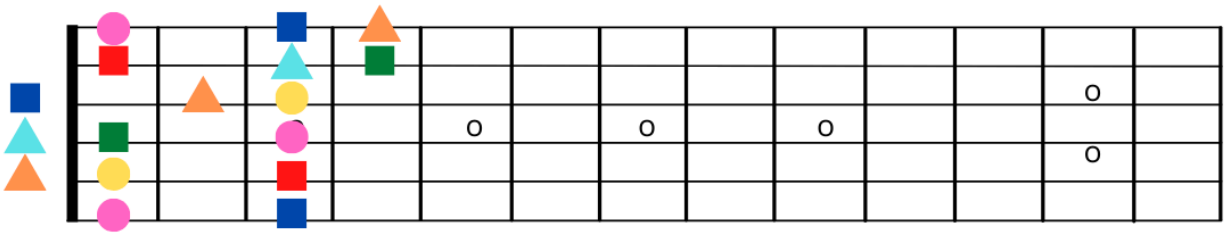
Box 1 (Em Shape)



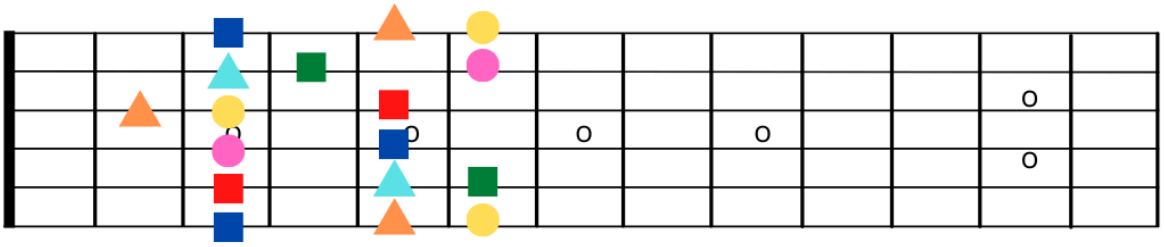
Box 2 (Dm Shape)



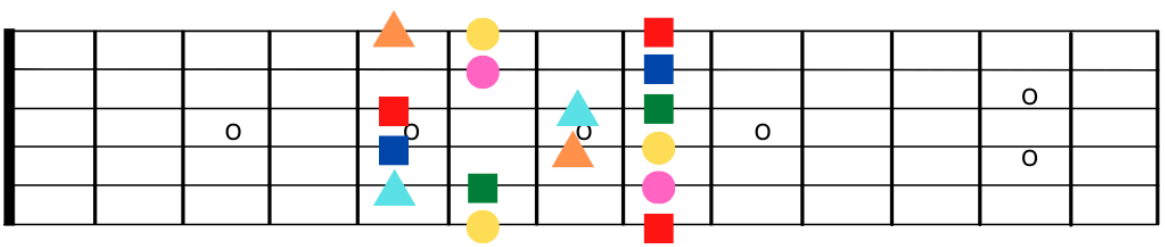
Box 3 (Cm Shape)



Box 4 (Am Shape)



Box 5 (Gm Shape)



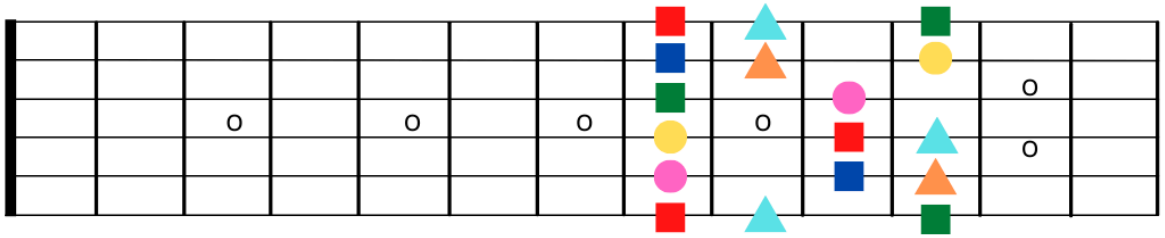
C Phrygian CAGED

Triad Notes
- Root
- min 3rd
- Perf 5th

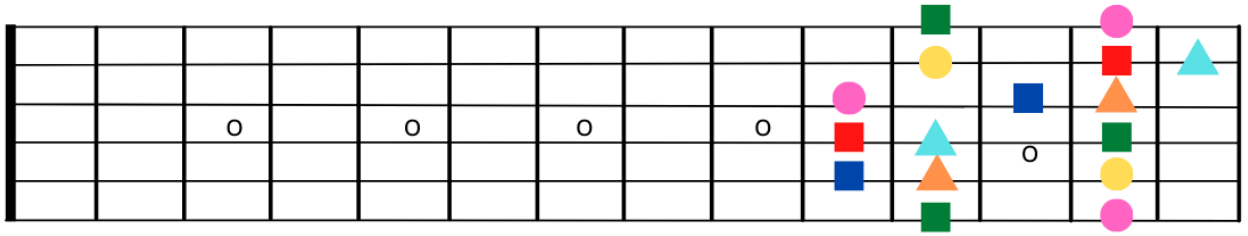
Other Pentatonic Notes
- Perf 4th
- Min 7th

Other Notes
- Min 2nd
- Min 6th

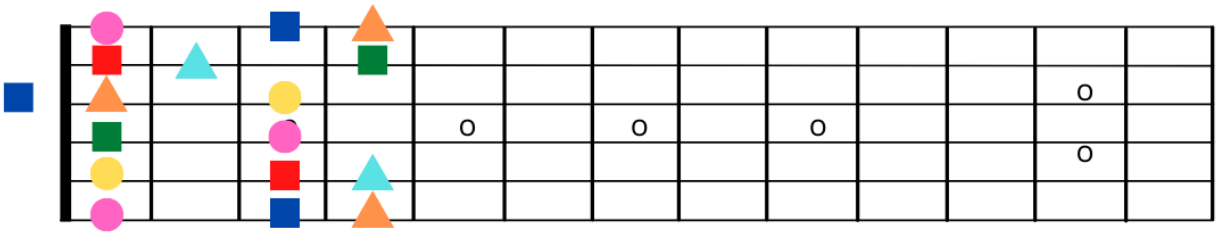
Box 1 (Em Shape)



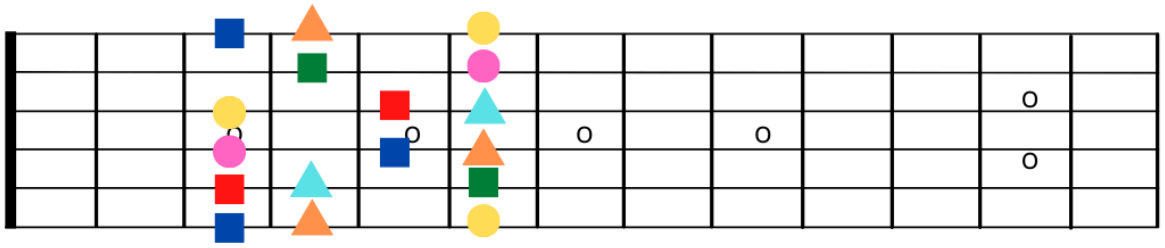
Box 2 (Dm Shape)



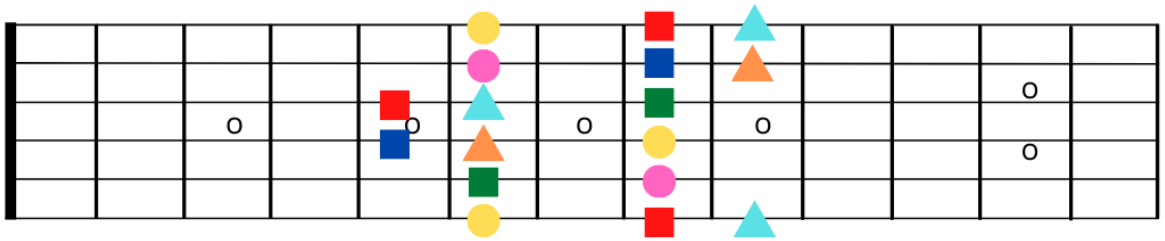
Box 3 (Cm Shape)



Box 4 (Am Shape)



Box 5 (Gm Shape)



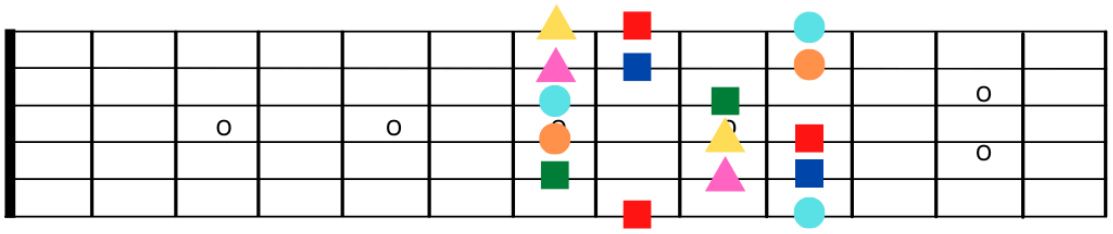
C Lydian CAGED

Triad Notes Root, Maj 3rd, Perf 5th

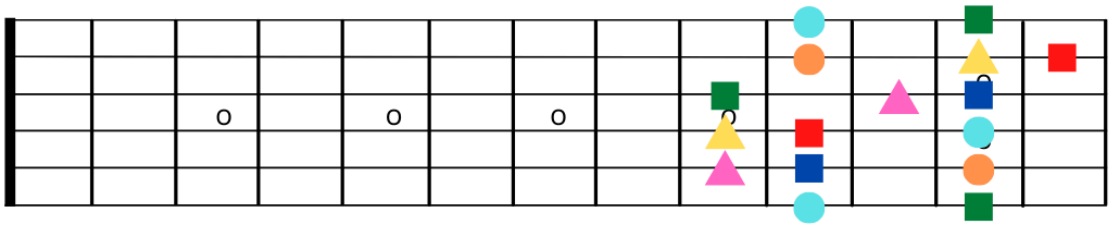
Other Pentatonic Notes Maj 2th, Maj 6th

Other Notes #4th, Maj 7th

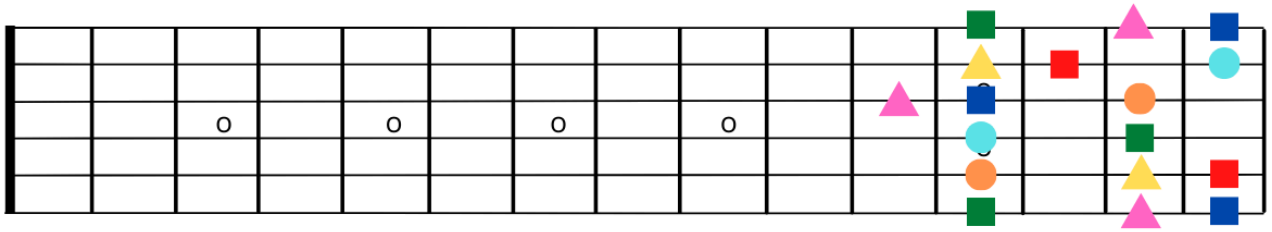
Box 1 (E Shape)



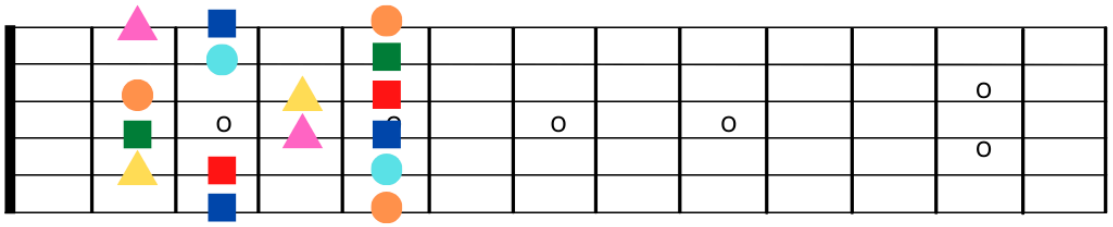
Box 2 (D Shape)



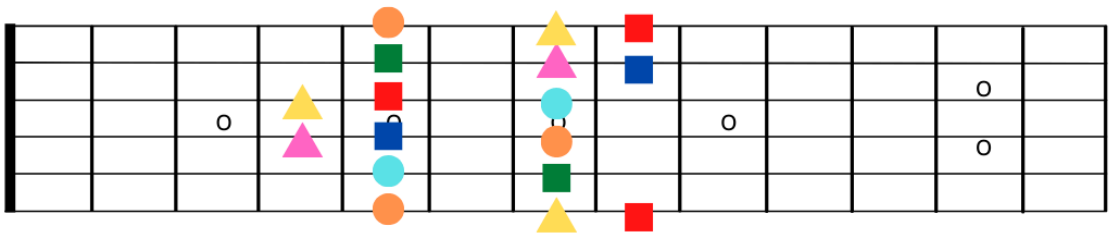
Box 3 (C Shape)



Box 4 (A Shape)



Box 5 (G Shape)



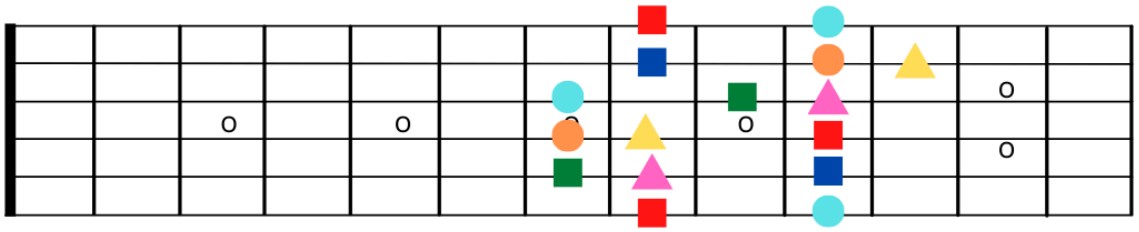
C Mixolydian CAGED

Triad Notes Root, Maj 3rd, Perf 5th

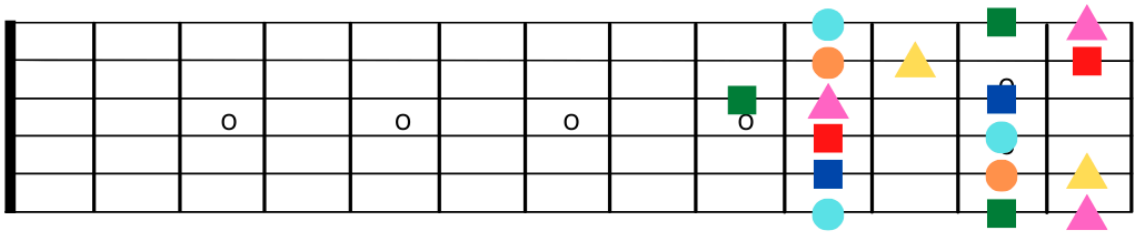
Other Pentatonic Notes Maj 2th, Maj 6th

Other Notes Perf 4th, Min 7th

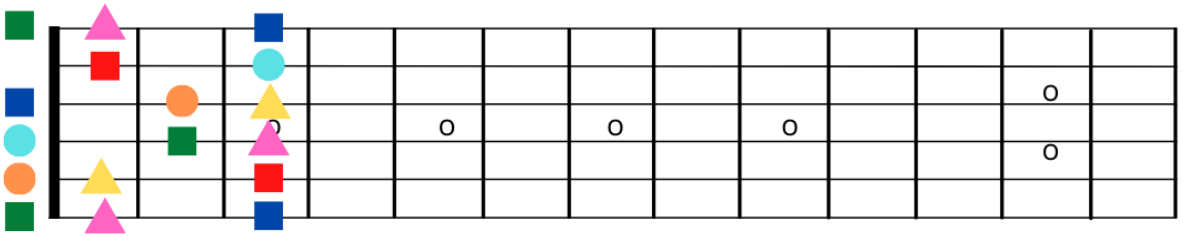
Box 1 (E Shape)



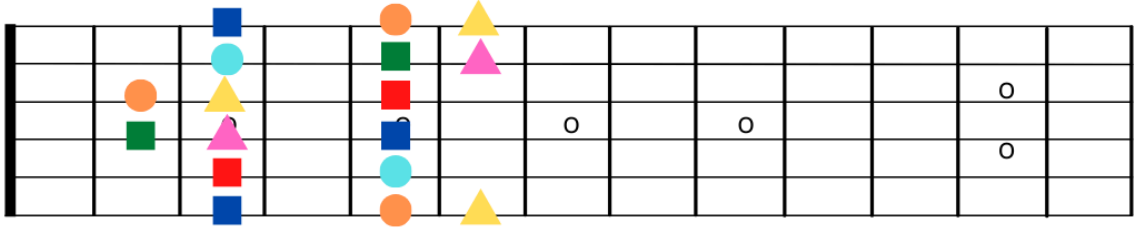
Box 2 (D Shape)



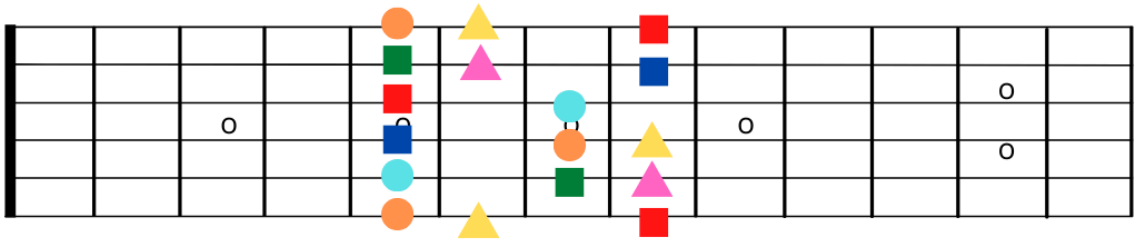
Box 3 (C Shape)



Box 4 (A Shape)



Box 5 (G Shape)



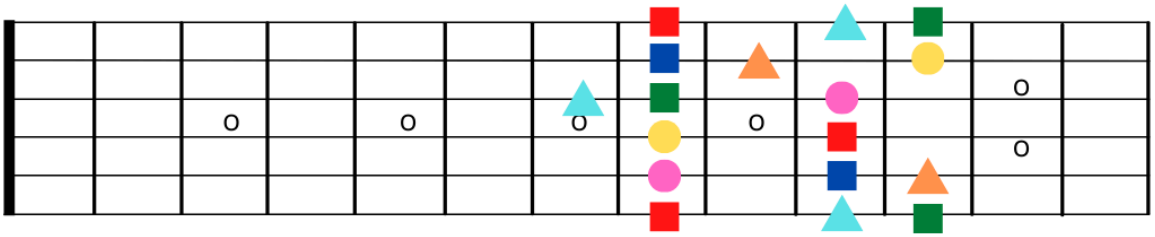
C Aeolian CAGED

Triad Notes
- Root
- min 3rd
- Perf 5th

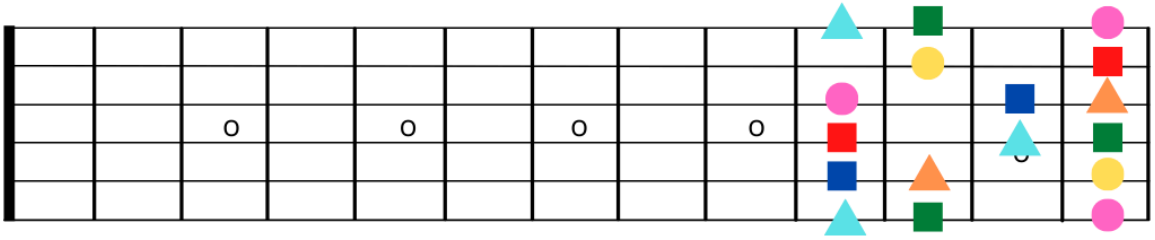
Other Pentatonic Notes
- Perf 4th
- Min 7th

Other Notes
- Maj 2nd
- Min 6th

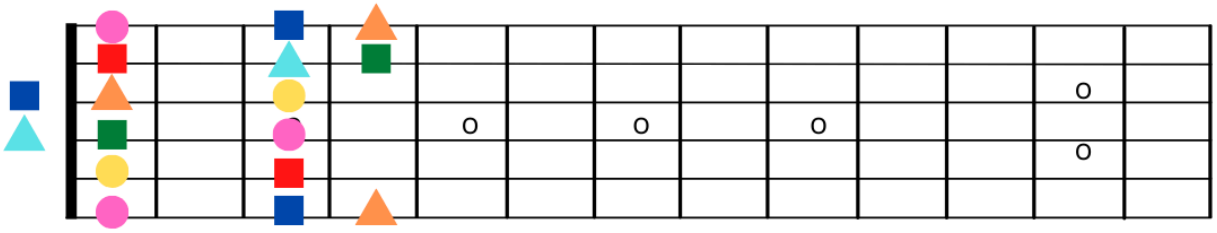
Box 1 (Em Shape)



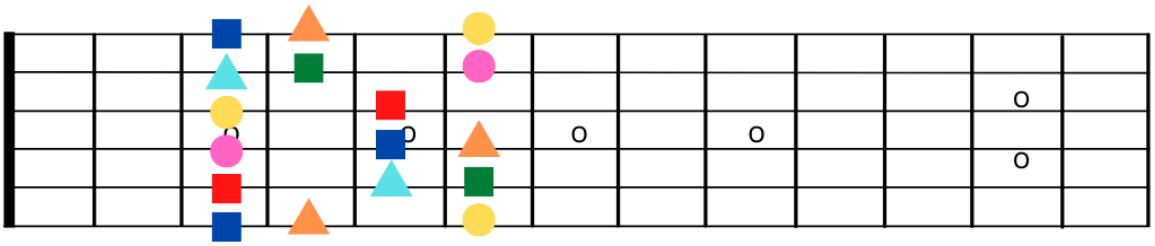
Box 2 (Dm Shape)



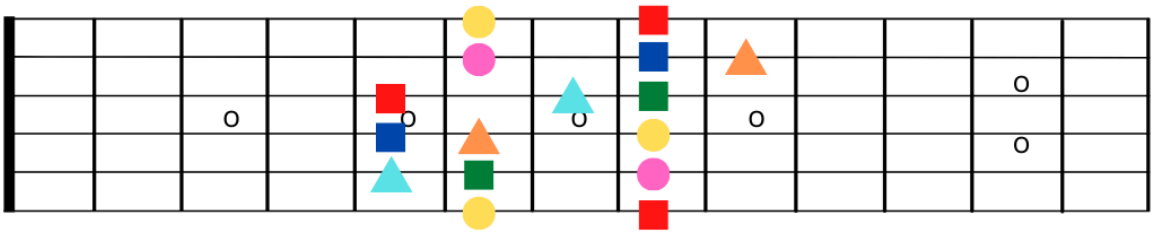
Box 3 (Cm Shape)



Box 4 (Am Shape)



Box 5 (Gm Shape)



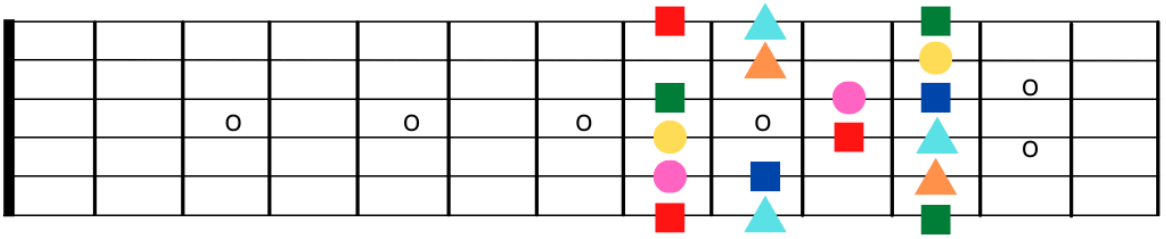
C Locrian CAGED

Triad Notes: Root, min 3rd, flat 5th

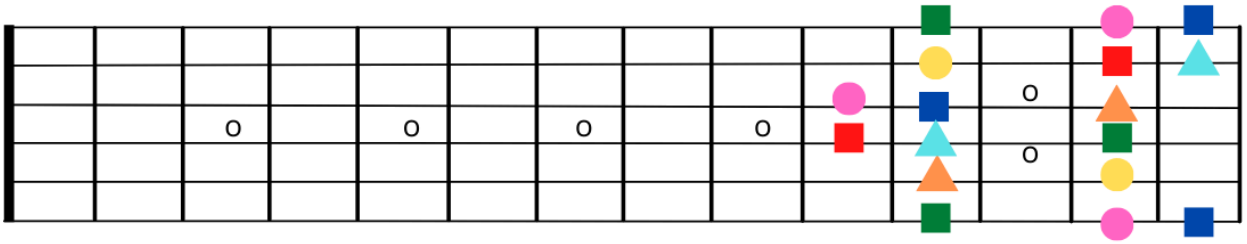
Other Pentatonic Notes: Perf 4th, Min 7th

Other Notes: Min 2nd, Min 6th

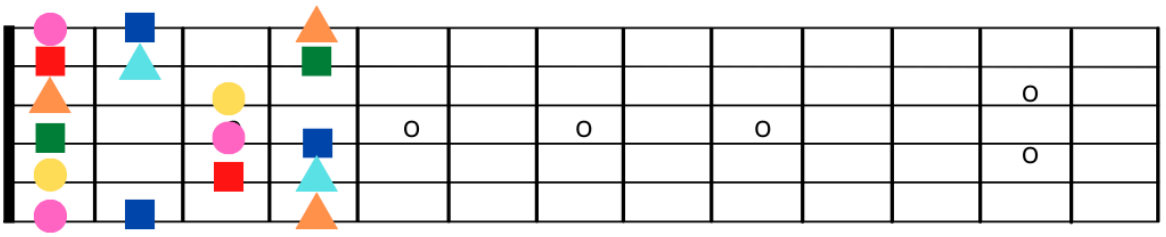
Box 1 (Em Shape)



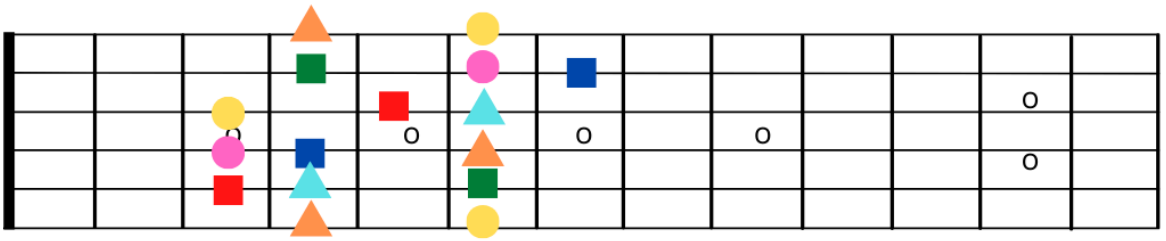
Box 2 (Dm Shape)



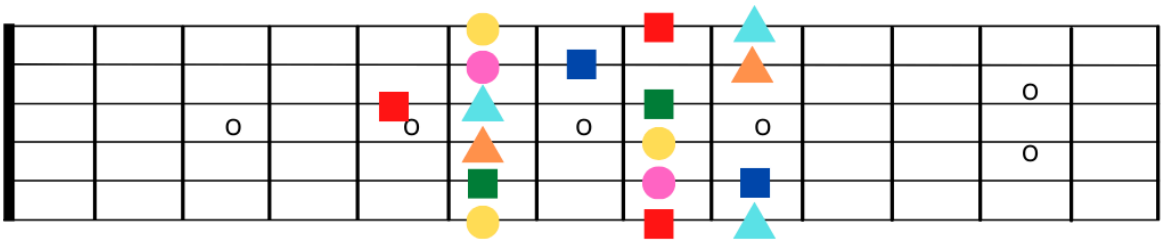
Box 3 (Cm Shape)



Box 4 (Am Shape)



Box 5 (Gm Shape)

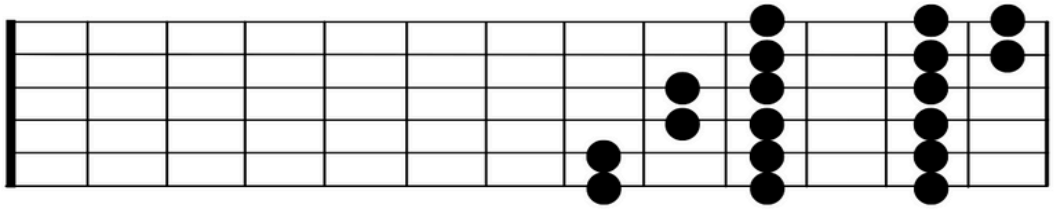


Modes 3 Notes Per String

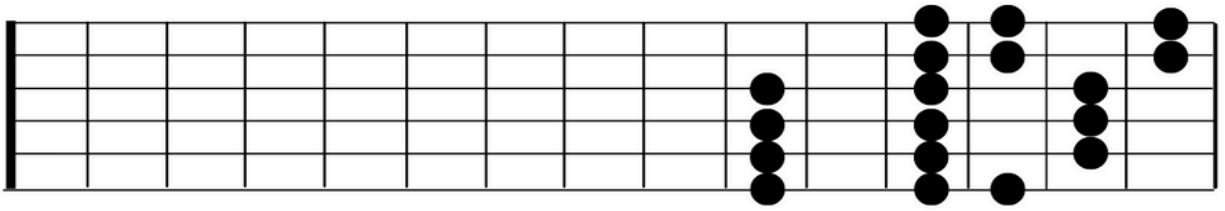
One of the most common ways of playing the Major or Minor scales is by playing 3 notes on each string.
This is often related to modes, as the starting note of each pattern is the note of the mode it's named after.
The reason why it's helpful is that, unlike the CAGED system, playing 3 notes per string is symmetrical and often easier.
Here's how you play modes 3 Notes Per String

C Major Modes 3NPS

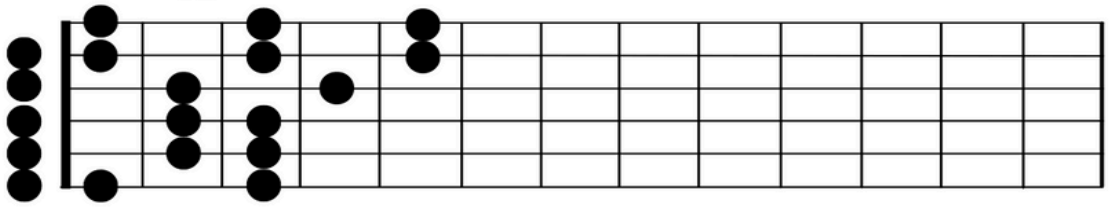
Ionian



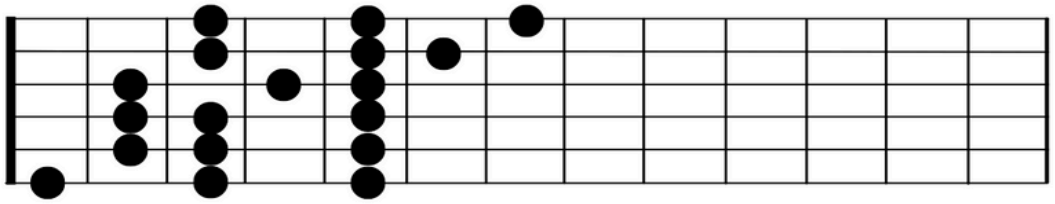
Dorian



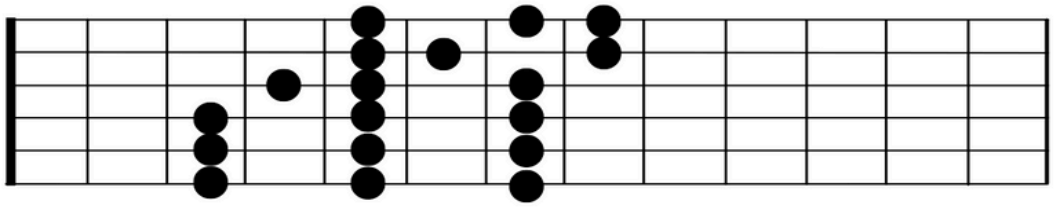
Phrygian



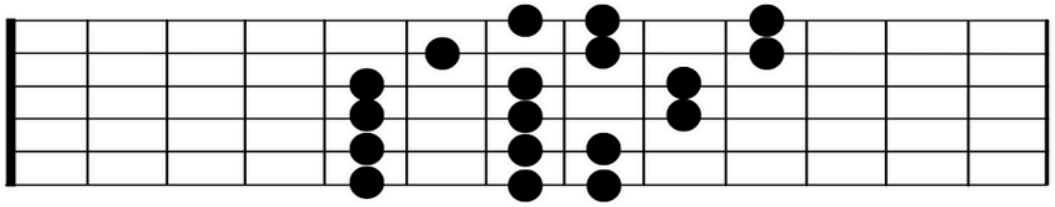
Lydian



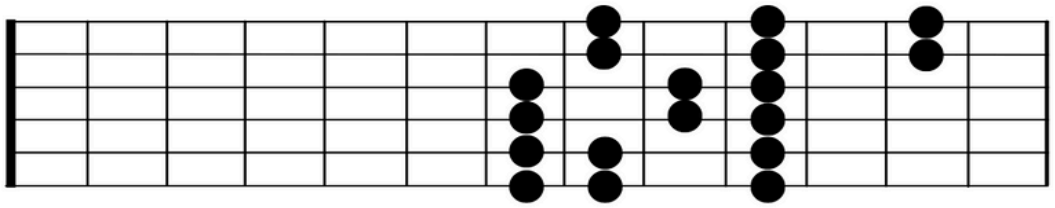
Mixolydian



Aeolian



Locrian



Harmonic Minor Scale

One of the most characteristic points of the *Major* scale is the fact that on the V degree of the scale we have a V7 chord. As mentioned before a V7 chord is also known as a dominant chord. The reason why it's so characteristic is that if we play the V7 - Imaj progression, it gives us a sense of dissonance that wants to settle to the Imaj. This is possible because the maj3 of a V7 chord is a semitone away from the Root note of an Imaj chord. When 2 notes are a min2 away from each other, they are dissonant.
Unfortunately, this doesn't happen to the *Minor* scale, as we have a Vm7 chord instead and none of the notes of a Vm7 is a semitone away from any of the notes of an Im7 chord.
So, to make this possible, we move the 7th degree of the Minor Scale from a min7 to a maj7, and thus we get the *Harmonic Minor* scale.

The progression of a *Harmonic Minor* 🔊 scale is:

T - $^{1/2}$T - T - T - $^{1/2}$T - 1$^{1/2}$T - $^{1/2}$T

And the intervals are

Root - maj2 - min3 - Perf4 - Perf5 - min6 - maj7.

As the intervals have changed, also the chords on each grade have changed. If we harmonise each grade to the 7th, we get these chords:

Imin/maj^{7} - IIm^{7} ♭ ^{5} - IIImaj^{7}♯^{5} - IVm^{7} - V^{7} - VImaj^{7} - VIIdim^{7}

Here's how you play the A *Harmonic Minor* scale in the CAGED system

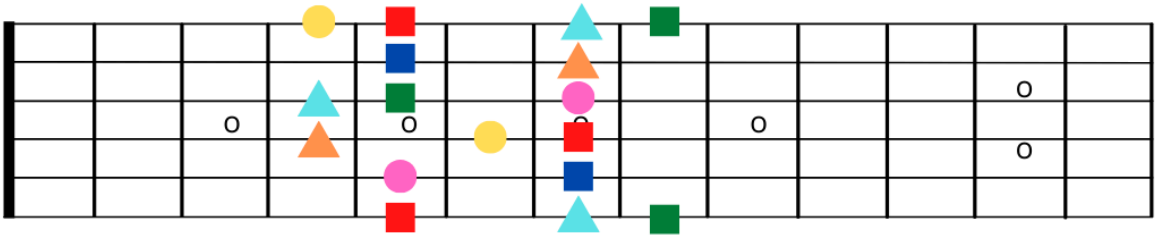
A Melodic Minor CAGED

Triad Notes Root, min 3rd, Perf 5th

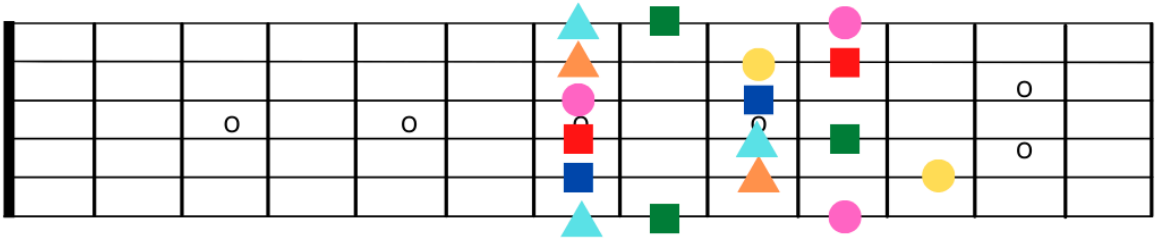
Other Pentatonic Notes Perf 4th, Maj7th

Other Notes Maj 2nd, Maj 6th

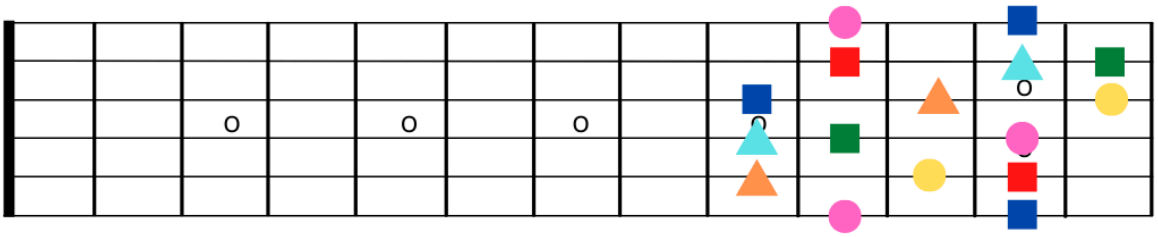
Box 1 (Em Shape)



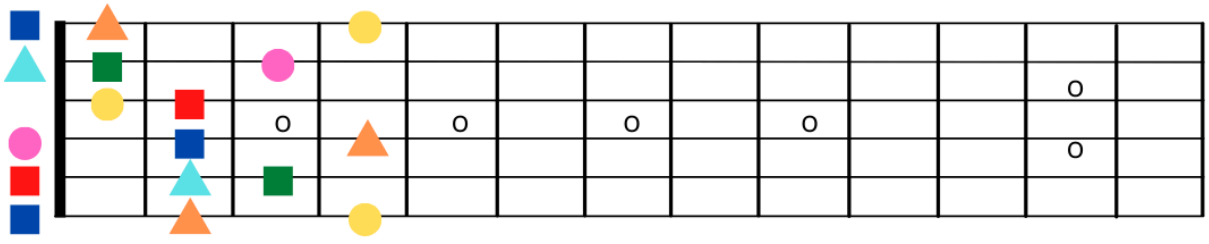
Box 2 (Dm Shape)



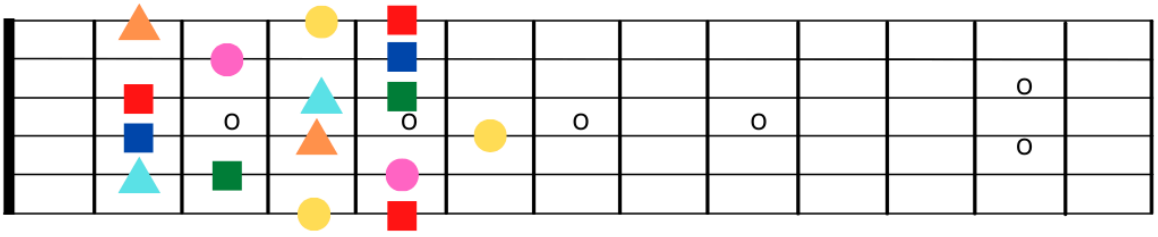
Box 3 (Cm Shape)



Box 4 (Am Shape)



Box 5 (Gm Shape)



Melodic Minor Scale

The problem with the *Harmonic Minor* scale is that between the 6th and 7th degrees of the scale, we have an interval of a min3. This can be problematic for many instruments, as it's a big interval and it's hard to play. The solution to this problem is to raise the min6 to maj6. By doing this, now the interval between the 6th and 7th degrees is a maj2 and we still keep a V7 chord on the fifth degree.
This scale is called the *Melodic Minor* 🔊 scale

The progression of a Melodic Minor scale is:

T - $^{1/2}$T - T - T - T - T - $^{1/2}$T

And the intervals are

Root - maj2 - min3 - Perf4 - Perf5 - maj6 - maj7.

As the intervals have changed yet again, also the chords on each grade have changed. If we harmonise each grade to the 7th, we get these chords:

Imin/maj^{7} - IIm^{7} - IIImaj^{7}♯^{5} - IV^{7} - V^{7} - VImin^{7} ♭ ^{5} - VIImin^{7} ♭ ^{5}

Here's how you play the A *Melodic Minor* scale in the CAGED system

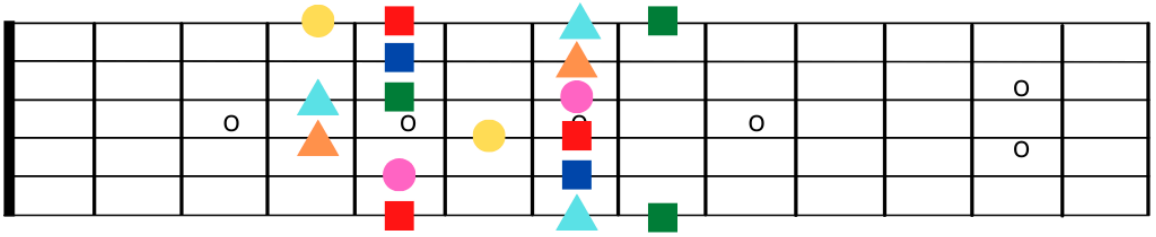
A Melodic Minor CAGED

Triad Notes
- Root
- min 3rd
- Perf 5th

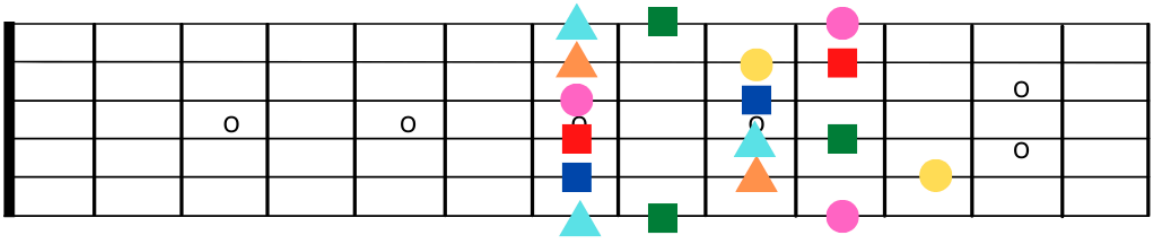
Other Pentatonic Notes
- Perf 4th
- Maj7th

Other Notes
- Maj 2nd
- Maj 6th

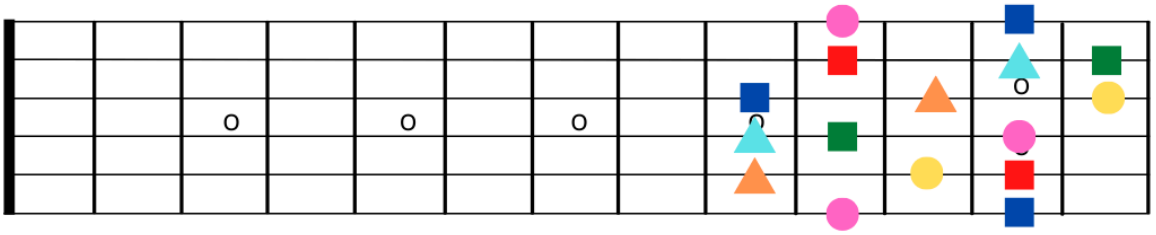
Box 1 (Em Shape)



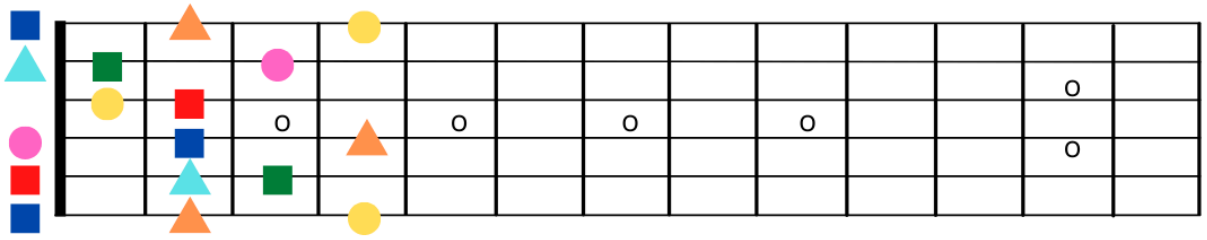
Box 2 (Dm Shape)



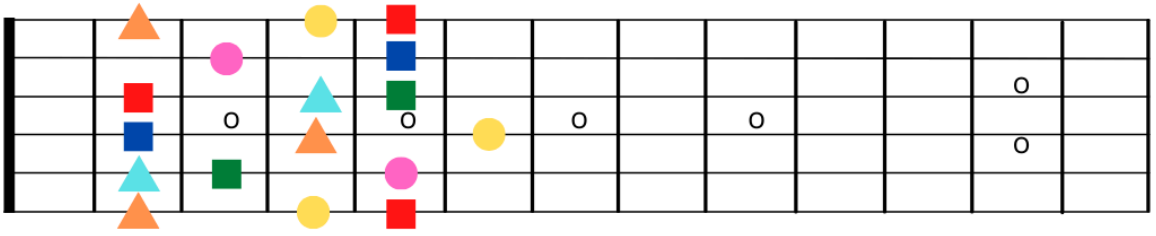
Box 3 (Cm Shape)



Box 4 (Am Shape)



Box 5 (Gm Shape)



How to apply all of this

So far we have seen the different scales and chords, however, it is time to learn how to apply all this knowledge.

The first thing to do is to analyse the chord progression.
Let's say we have a chord progression that goes Amaj - F♯m - Bm - E^7.
The first option is to play modes over each chord. For example over Amaj, we can play the Ionian mode, over F♯m we can play the Aeolian mode, over Bm we can play the Dorian mode and over E^7 we can play Mixolydian mode.
Also, We can change the modes over each chord we play. For instance, over Amaj, we could also play Lydian or Mixolydian instead. The reason why we can play all the 3 major modes is that the chord is just a simple triad and not an extended chord. The only chord in the previous example that we are most limited with is the E^7, as in this case, we can only play Mixolydian.
However, changing modes for each chord can be risky and quite tough if we are not used to it. So we need to see if there is a way to play only one scale or mode.

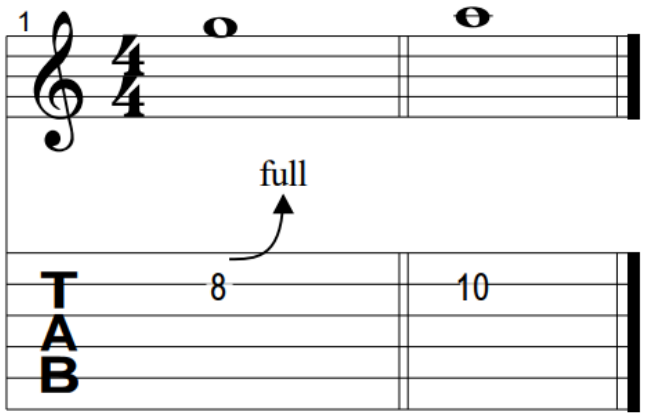
If we analyse each chord, we find out that all the chords above belong to the Amaj scale. Therefore, instead of thinking of playing different modes on each chord, we just play the A major scale the whole time.

This does not mean that you can't experiment with different options. However, the only important thing to do is to always finish your phrase with one of the notes of the chord that is playing over. This is important, otherwise, it sounds dissonant.

TECHNIQUES

The guitar is one of the most dynamic instruments there is. There are multiple ways of playing a few notes and these different approaches are what make some guitar players unique.

Example 1 🔊

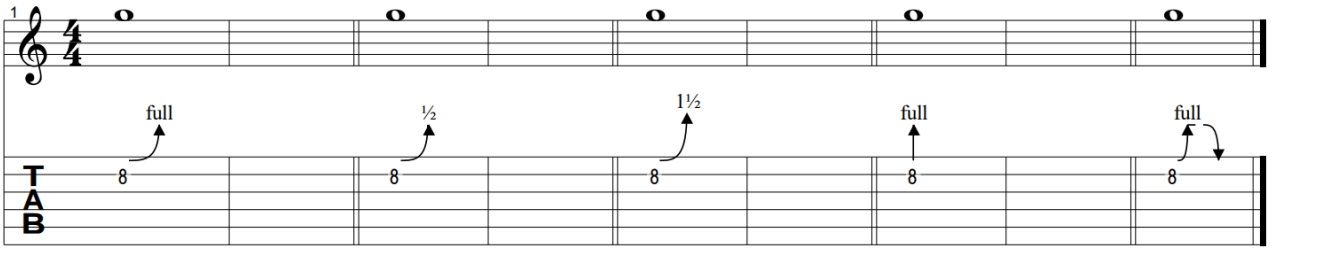


Bending **Target note of the bending**

Bending is a technique that is executed with the left hand. After you pluck a note, you can change its pitch by bending the string upwards or downwards. By doing this, the pitch of the note you are playing is going to go up. Make sure that you don't release the pressure on the fret when you go up, otherwise, the note will stop ringing.

The *Bending* can vary based on how much you want to change the pitch of the note, for example, whether you want to increase its pitch by a semitone or a whole tone, how fast you execute it and how to release it.

Example 2 🔊



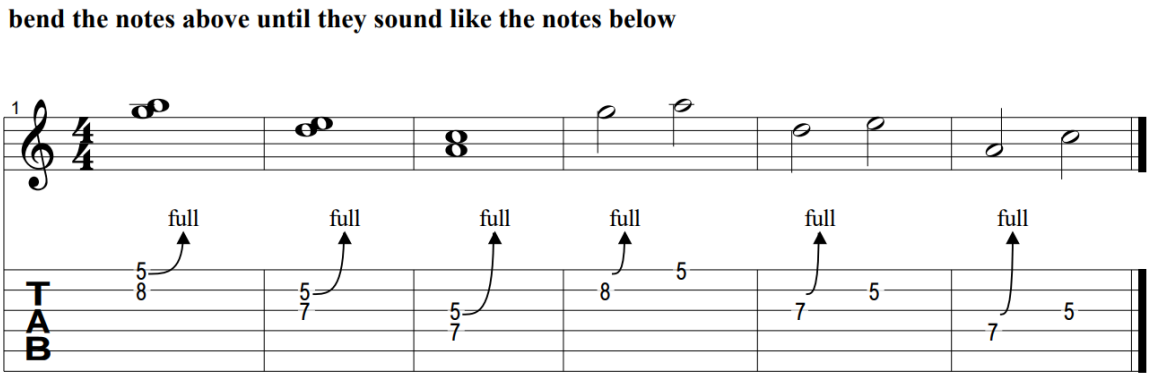
1 tone bend **1 semitone bend** **3 semitones bend** **Bend before plucking** **Bend and release**

When bending the string upwards or downwards, make sure that you use more than 1 finger to bend the string for bendings that go above the semitone, therefore, I suggest you never bend with only your index finger.
Make sure to use your wrist to help the movement.

Pic 35

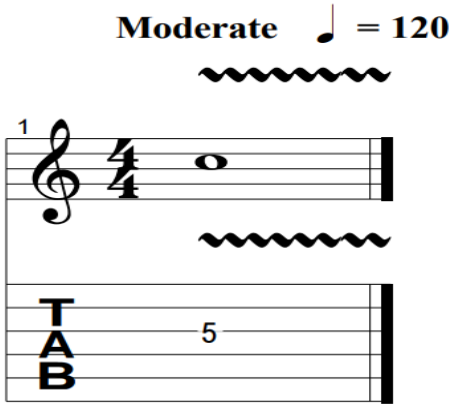
Here are a few exercises to practise the bending technique.

Example 3 🔊



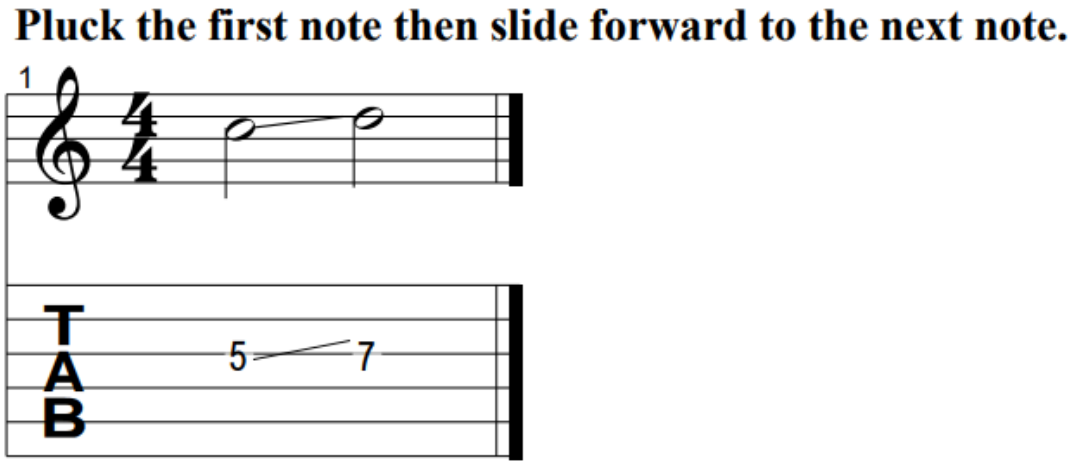
Vibrato

The *Vibrato* 🔊 is similar to the bending, with the difference that with the vibrato the change of pitch is fast and it's rarely above the semitone.
When you execute a vibrato, you want to bend the string constantly up and down, so that the change of pitch is quick.
This is how the vibrato looks in music notation.



Slide

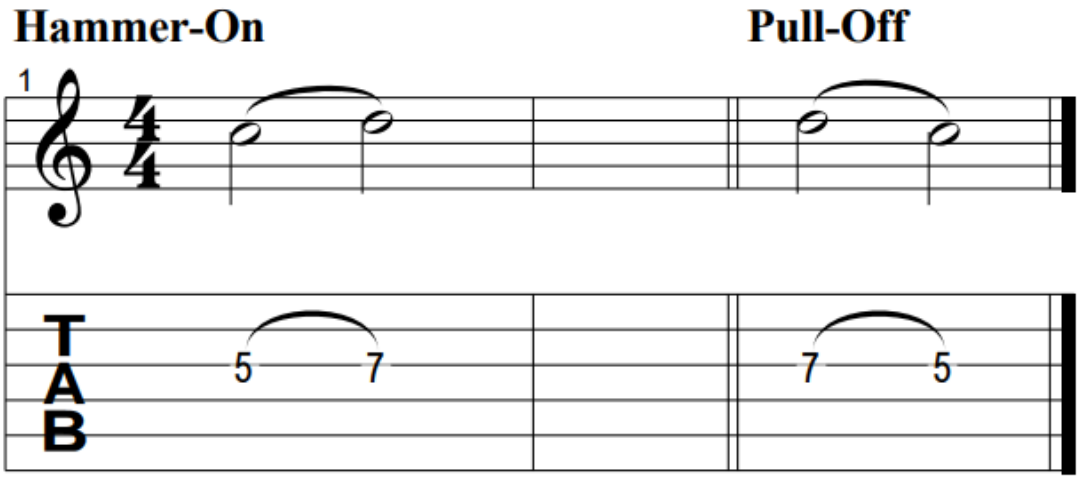
The *Slide* 🔊 is one of the easiest techniques to execute on the guitar. To apply a slide, you slide forward or backwards with the finger you play a given note, without releasing the tension on the string. By doing this, the transaction from one note to the other would be smoother than if you plucked both notes.



Legato

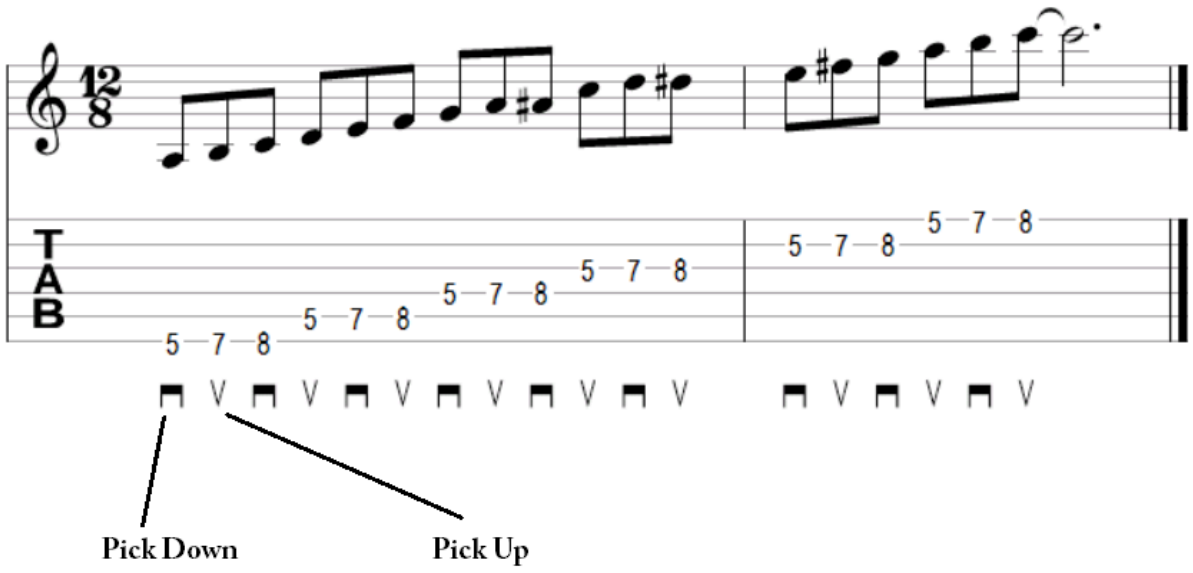
The *Legato* 🔊 is when you play two or more notes by only using the left hand, without plucking with your left hand.
The legato is based on two movements:

- The *Hammer-On*: When you go to a higher pitch note. To execute the hammer-on, you tap the string on a given fret with your finger on the left hand. Make sure to use enough force to allow the note to ring.
- The *Pull-Off*: when you go to a lower pitch note. To execute the pull-off, remove your finger after plucking the string. To do so, you want to pull the string down with the finger of your left hand and stop when you touch the string below. When doing a pull-off, you want to imagine you were plucking a string with your left hand.



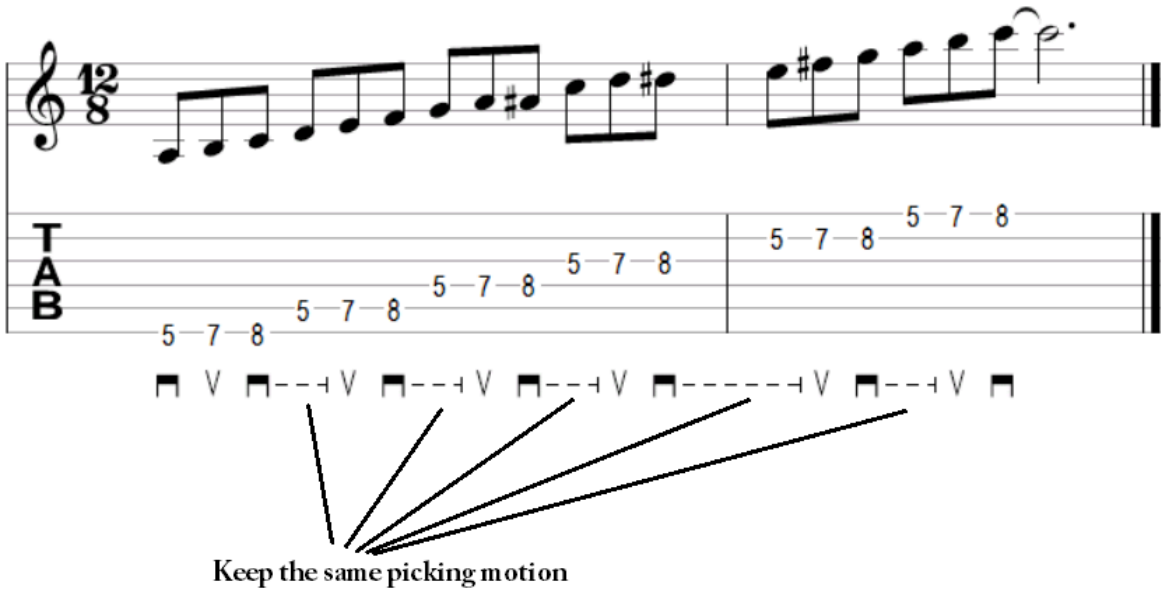
Alternate Picking

The *Alternate Picking* 🔊 technique is used when playing fast lines, as it helps you play all the notes smoothly and avoids rhythmic mistakes, especially when playing a scale.
To alternate pick, you simply constantly pick up and down, even when you change a string. When changing a string the natural tendency would be to follow the motion of the change. What it means, is that if you move downwards, you want to pick down too. However, when you alternate pick, it doesn't matter whether you move to a string below or above. What's important is that you pick the opposite way you picked before. For example, if you picked up before changing a string, the next note should be picked down and vice versa, if you picked down, the next note should be picked up.



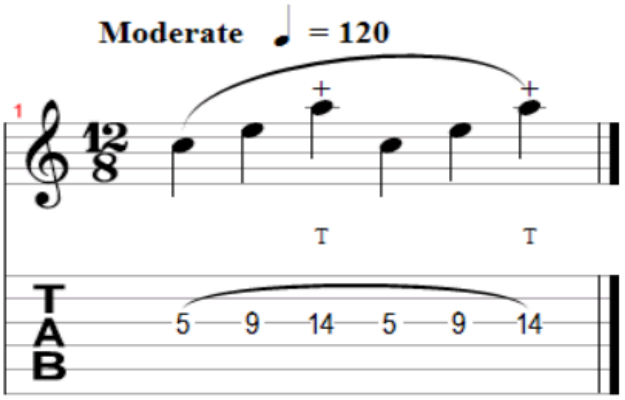
Economy Picking and Sweep Picking

Unlike alternate picking, when you apply the *Economy Picking* 🔊 technique, when you change a string, you follow the direction of the change. What it means is that if you go from a string to the string down, your picking motion will be down, whereas if you go to a string above, your picking motion will be up.
This technique is usually used to play arpeggios. When you play a fast arpeggio, this technique is also called *Sweep Picking*



Tapping

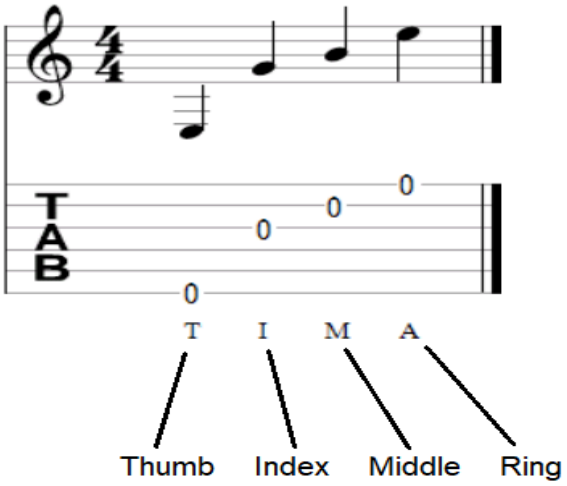
The *Tapping* 🔊 technique is when you use the right hand to tap a note on the fretboard. It's similar to the legato technique, however, the hammer-on or pull-off is executed with a finger of the right hand, usually an index or middle finger.



T means 'Tap'

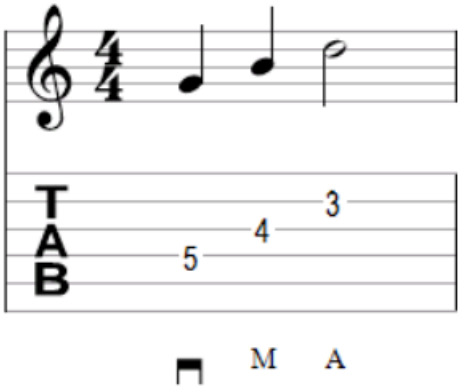
Fingerstyle

Fingerstyle 🔊 guitar is when you use the fingers on your right hand to pluck the strings instead of using a guitar pick. The fingers that are used are the thumb, Index, Middle and Ring fingers.
Sometimes, it's a personal choice whether to play with a pick or Fingerstyle. Other times, the song is designed for either of the two.



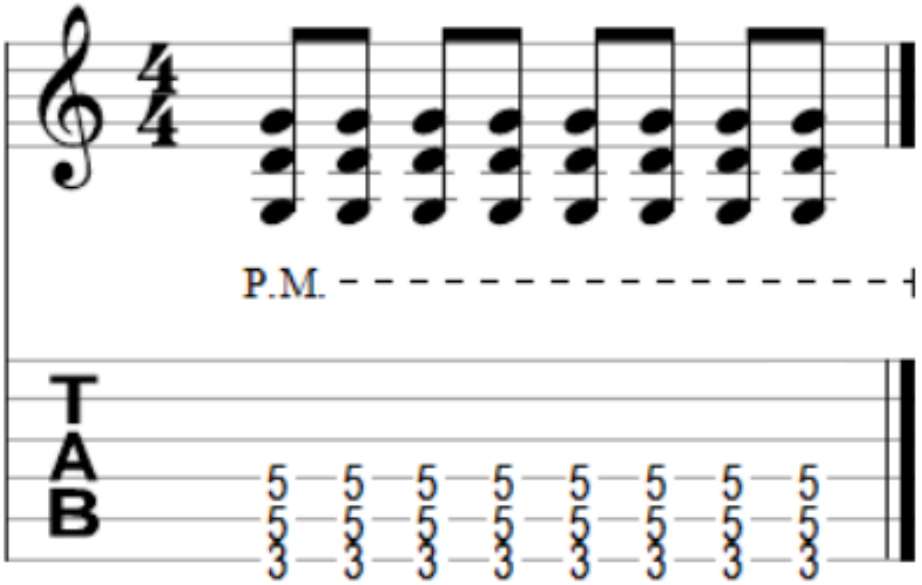
Hybrid Picking

Hybrid Picking 🔊 is when you combine the use of a pick and Fingerstyle. This technique is used a lot in the Country style and allows you to play really fast and smooth lines.



Palm-Muting

The *Palm-Muting* 🔊 technique is when you rest your right hand on the strings as close as possible to the bridge. By doing this, the sound gets quieter and it loses sustain.
This is how it looks in music notation

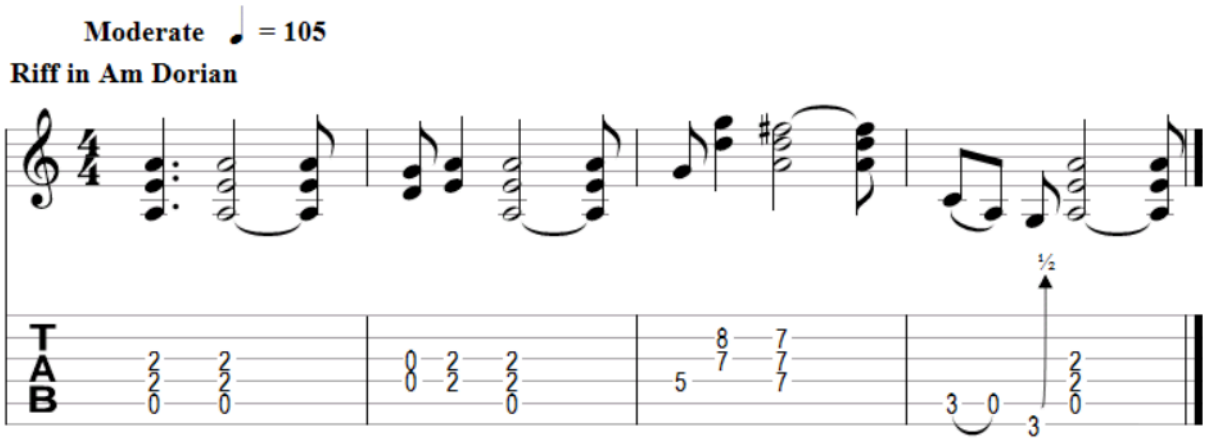


EXERCISES

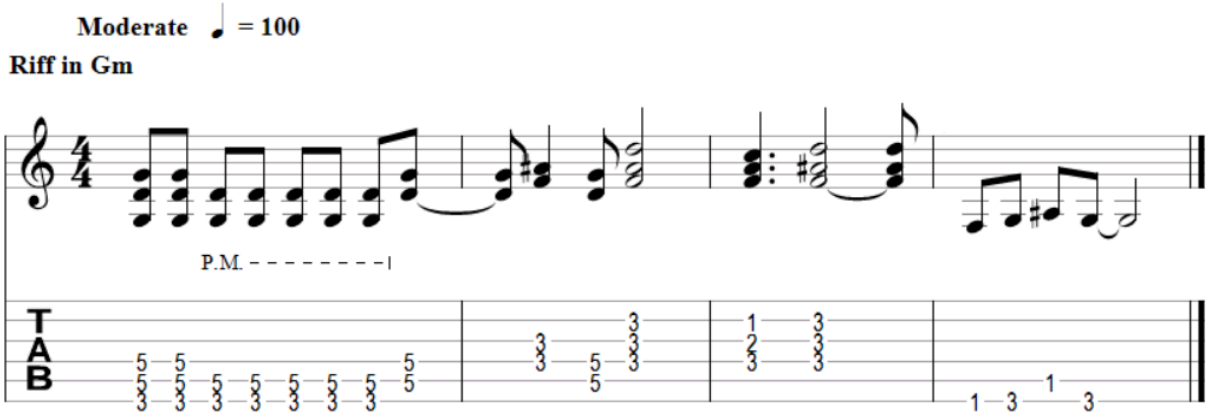
Previously, we discussed mostly music theory and techniques. However, we need to learn how to apply all of this.
This chapter is only dedicated to exercises to improve your skills for both your rhythm and your lead.
When practising these exercises, try to analyse them.

Rhythmic Exercises

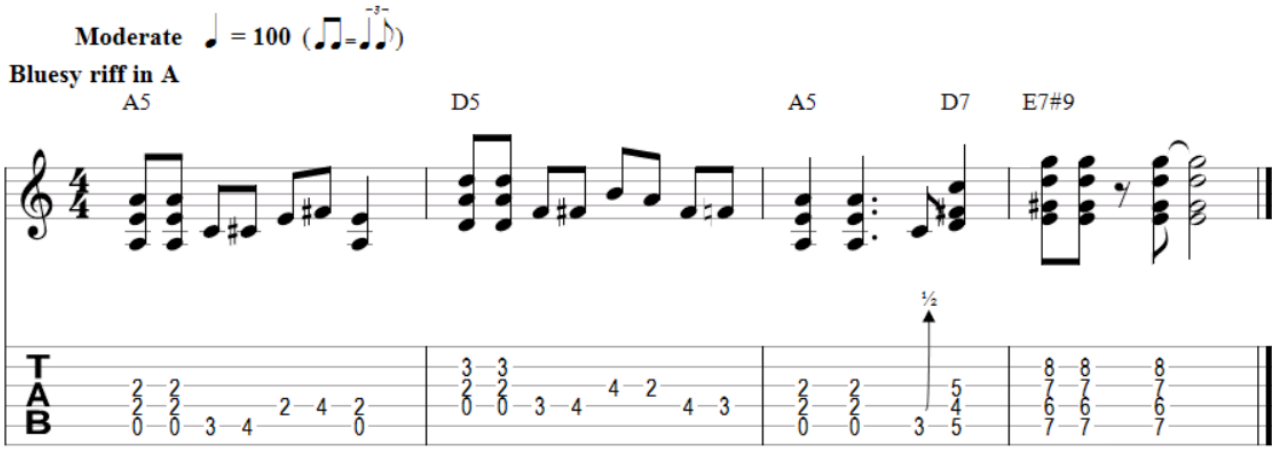
Ex 1



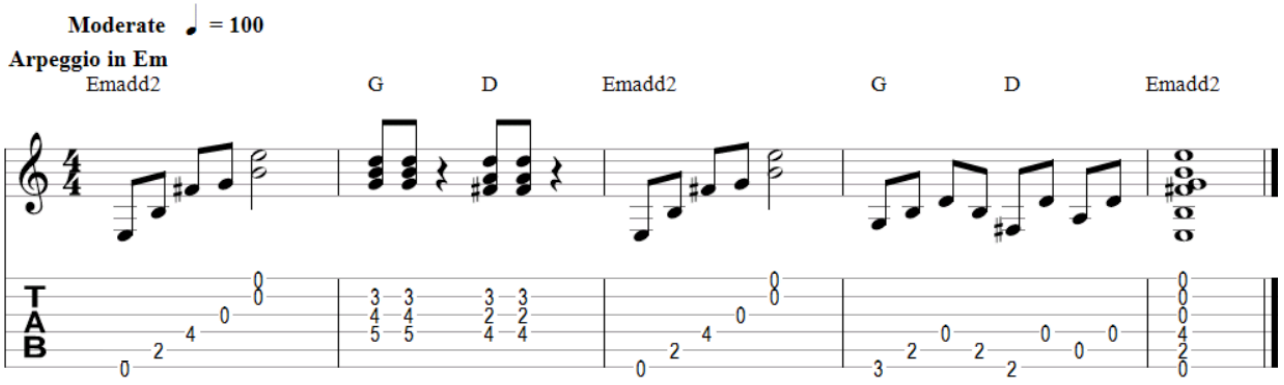
Ex 2



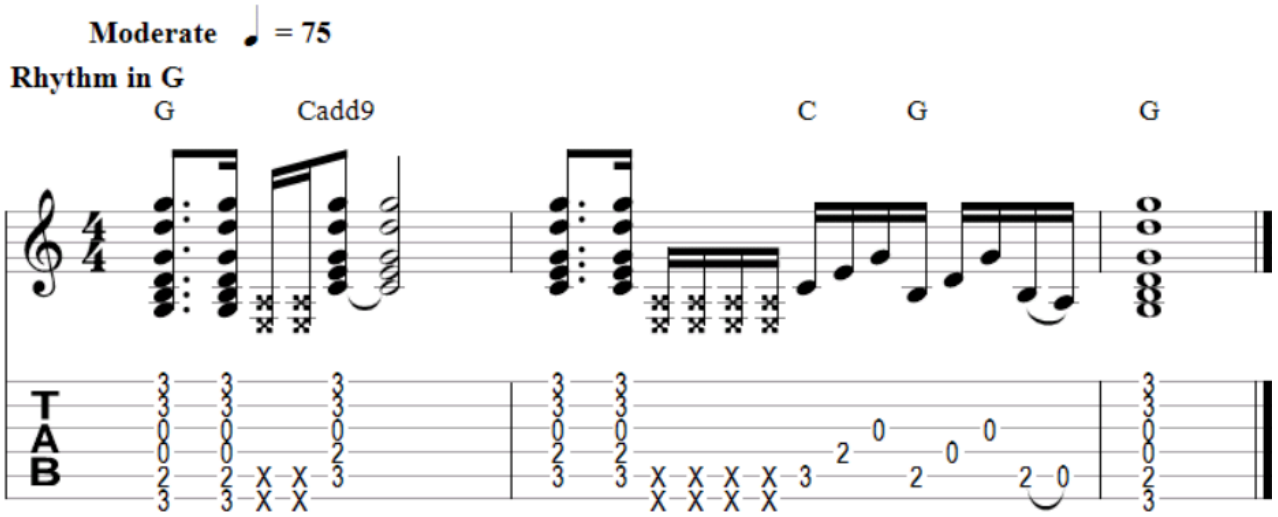
Ex 3


Moderate ♩ = 100
Bluesy riff in A
A5
D5
A5
D7
E7#9
TAB

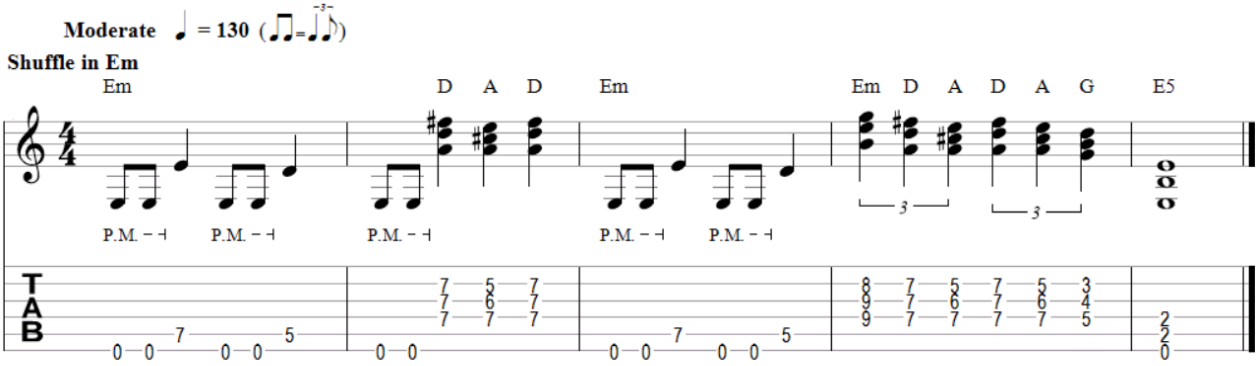
Ex 4


Moderate ♩ = 100
Arpeggio in Em
Emadd2
G
D
Emadd2
G
D
Emadd2
TAB

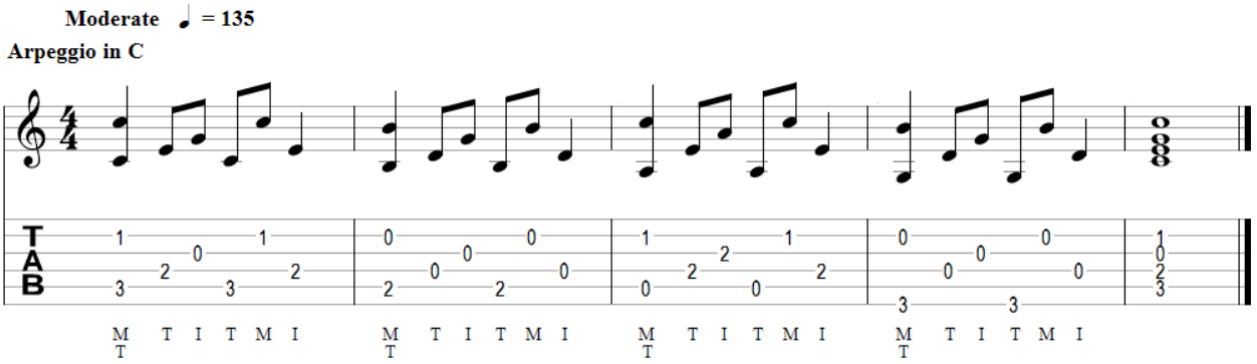
Ex 5


Moderate ♩ = 75
Rhythm in G
G
Cadd9
C
G
G
TAB

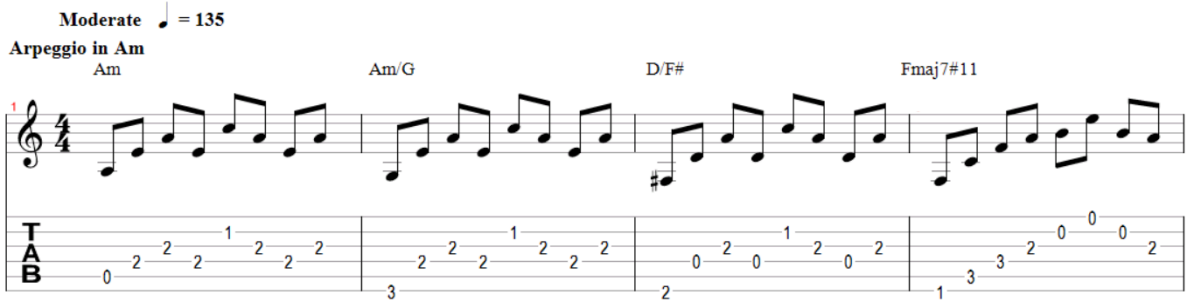
Ex 6



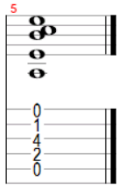
Ex 7



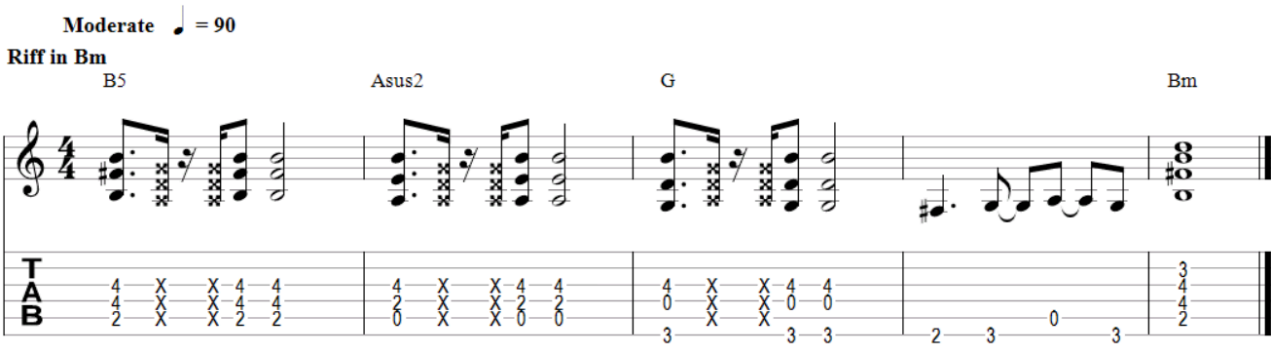
Ex 8



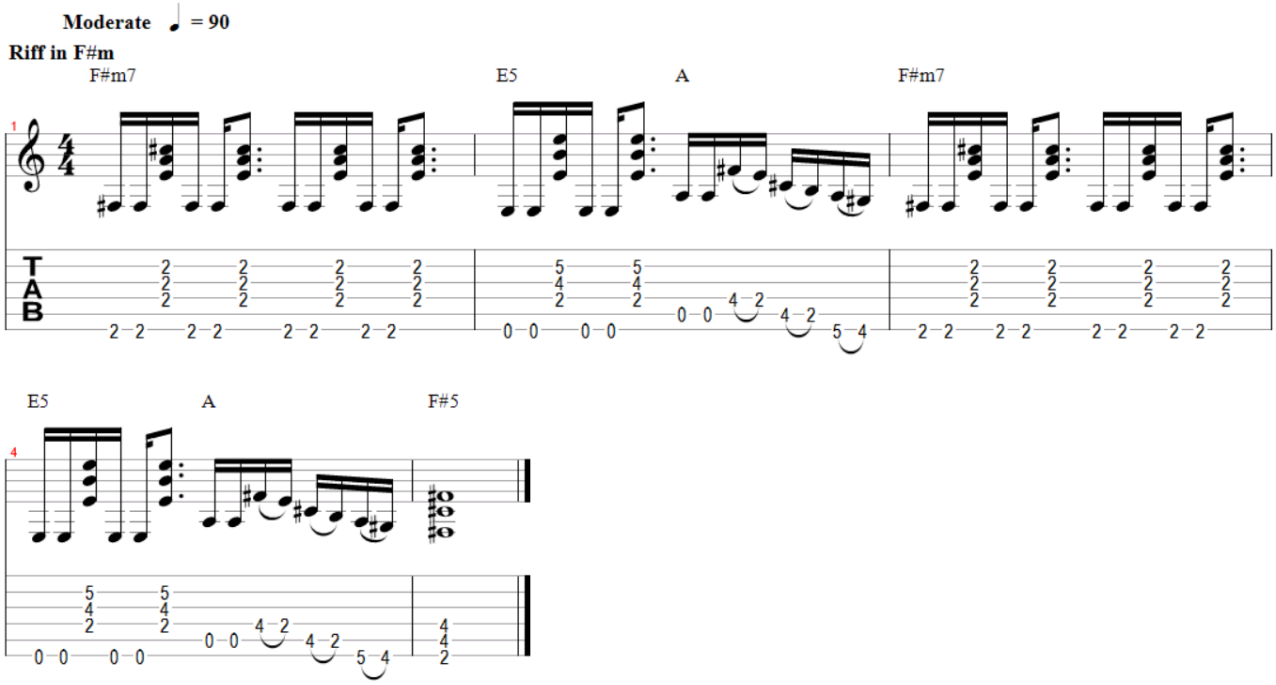
Amadd2



Ex 9

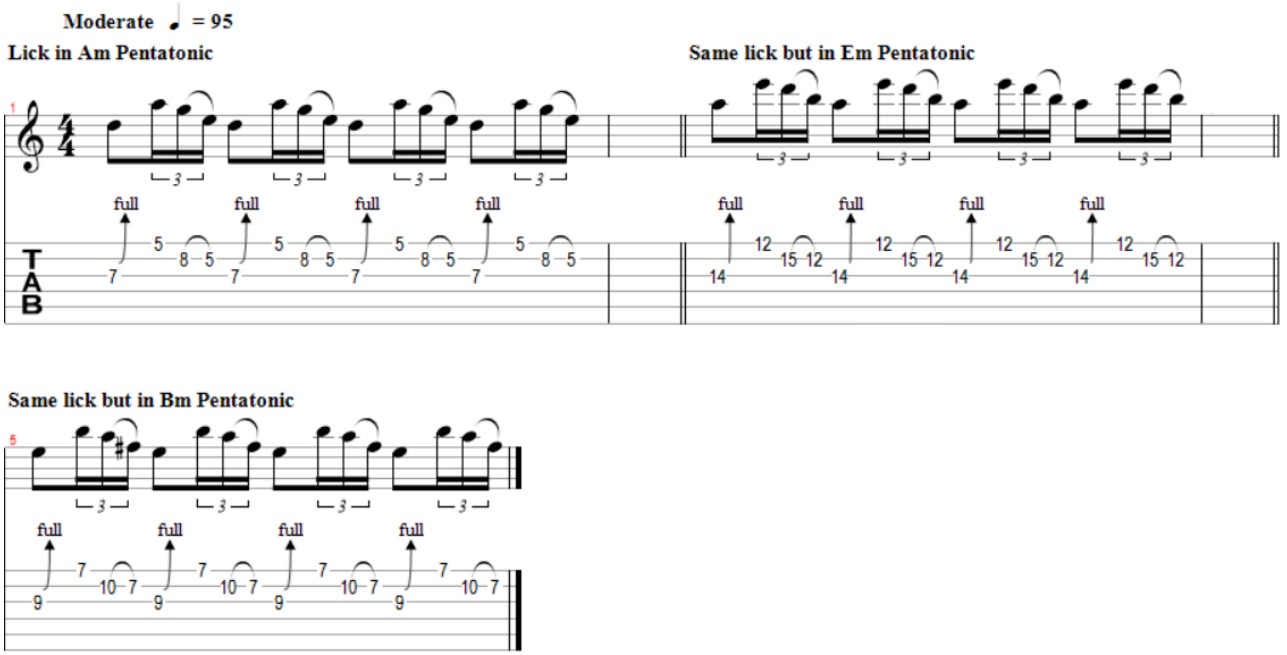

Moderate ♩ = 90
Riff in Bm
B5
Asus2
G
Bm

Ex 10

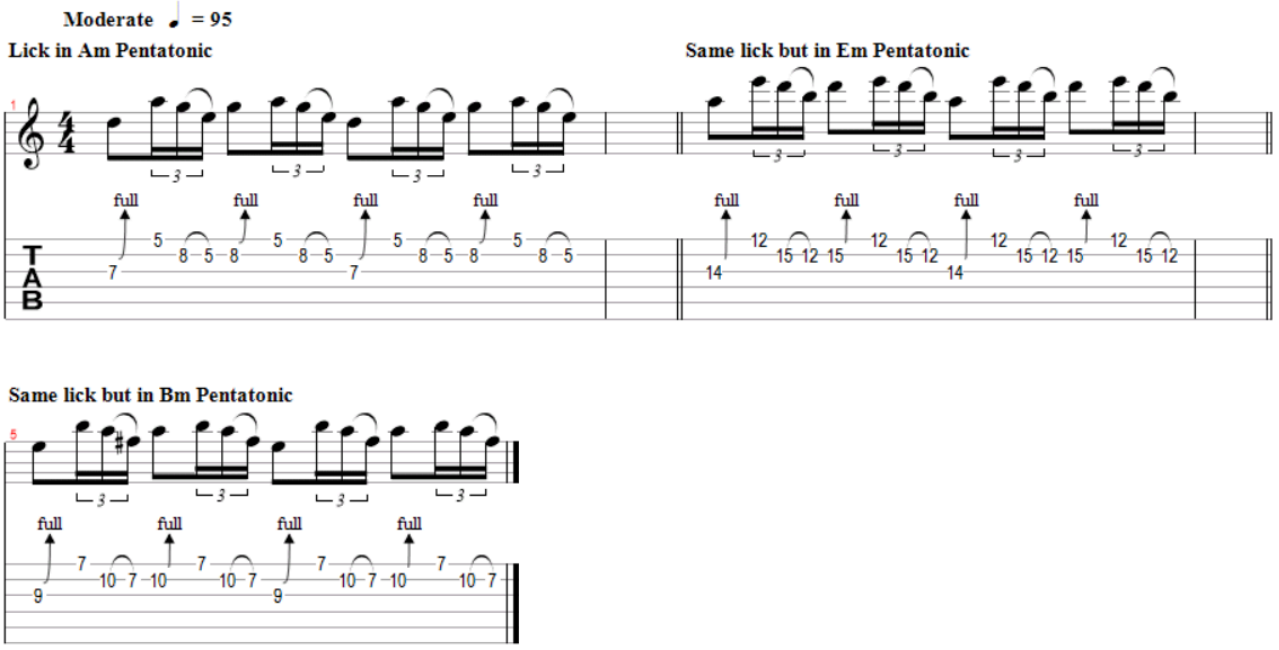

Moderate ♩ = 90
Riff in F#m
F#m7
E5
A
F#m7
E5
A
F#5

Lead Exercises

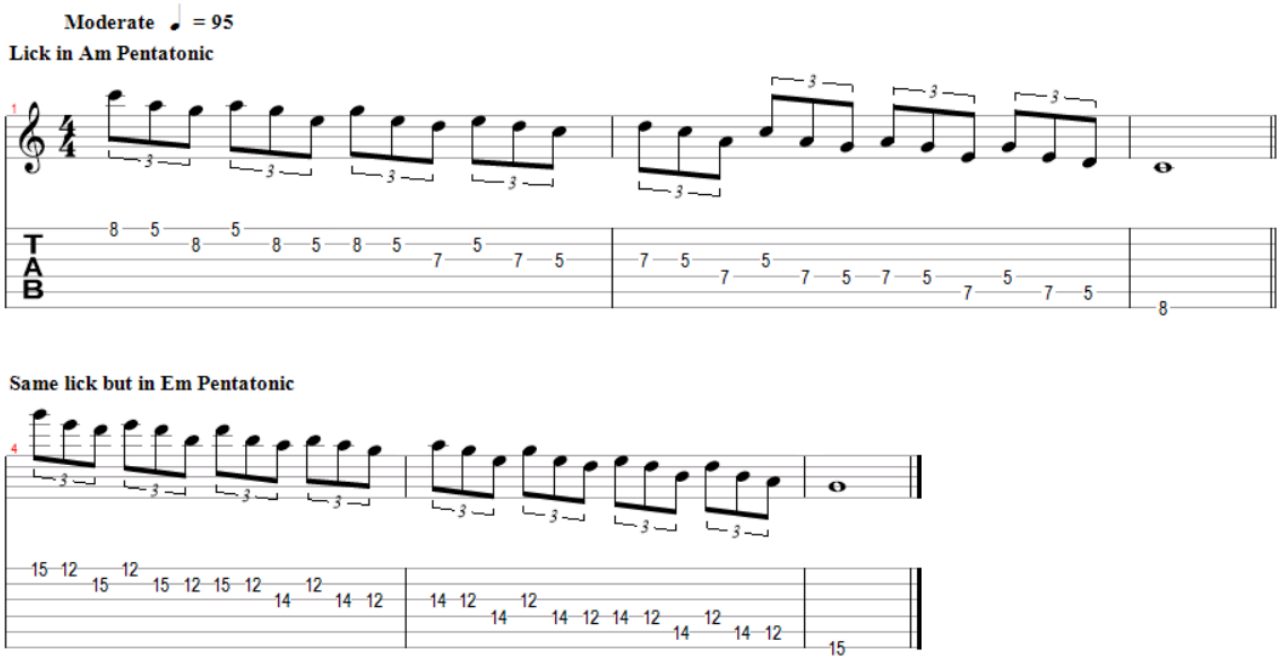
Ex 11



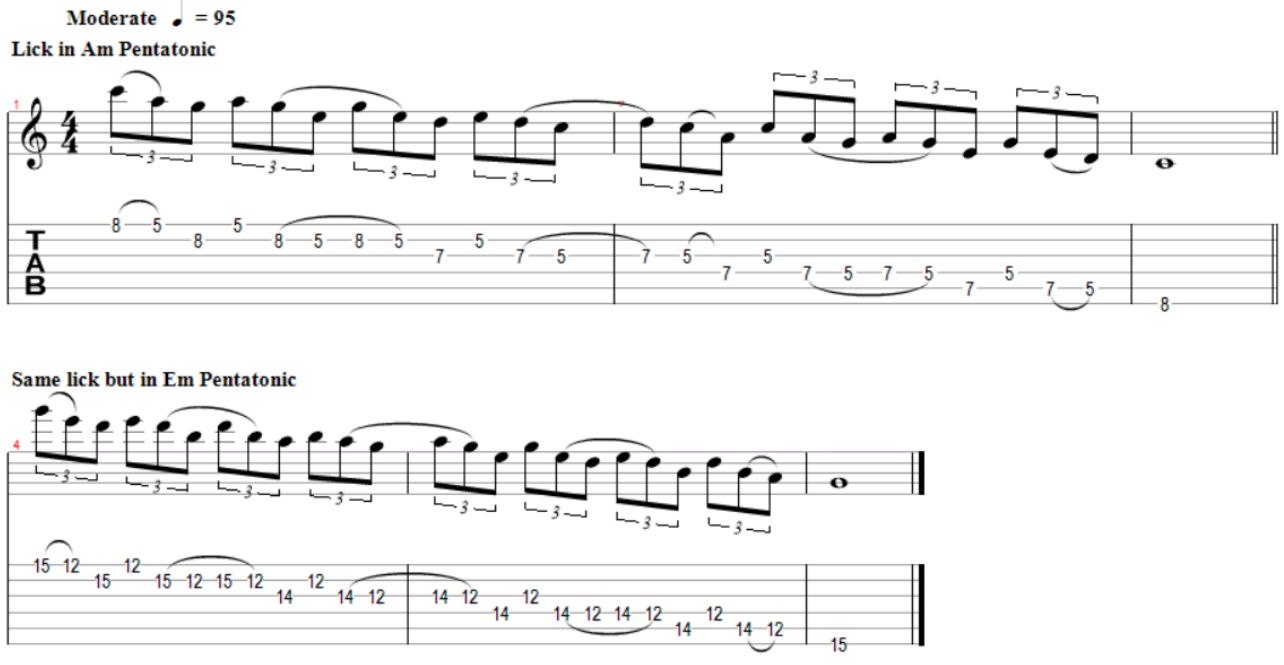
Ex 12



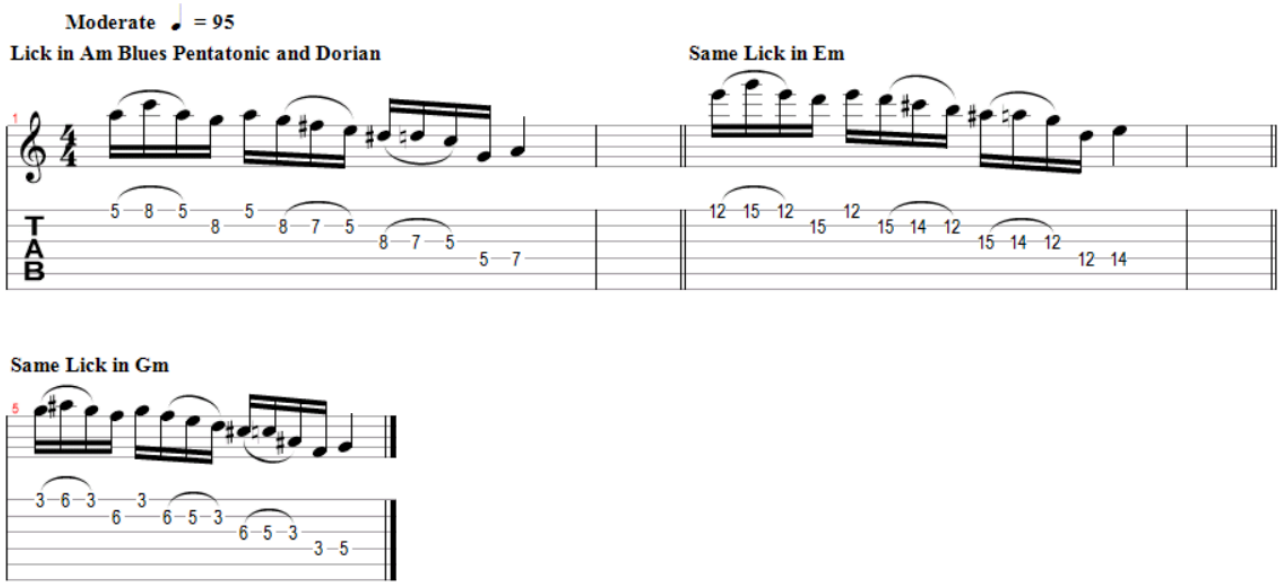
Ex 13


Moderate ♩ = 95
Lick in Am Pentatonic
Same lick but in Em Pentatonic

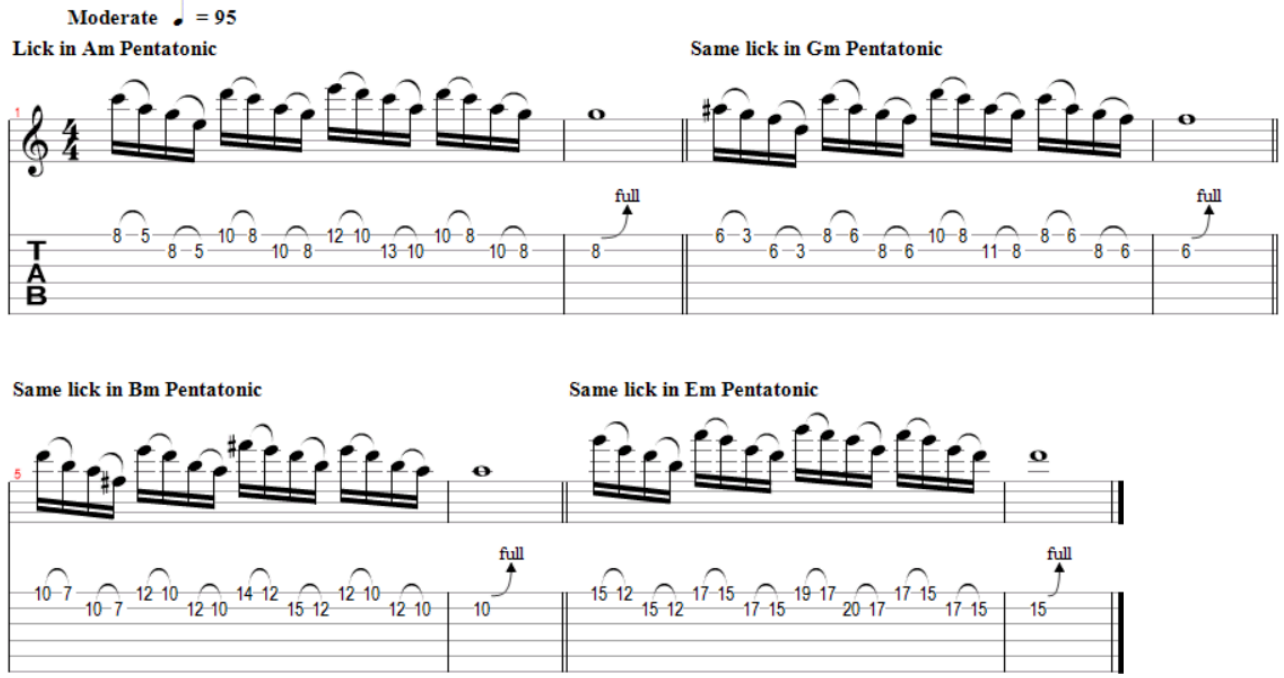
Ex14


Moderate ♩ = 95
Lick in Am Pentatonic
Same lick but in Em Pentatonic

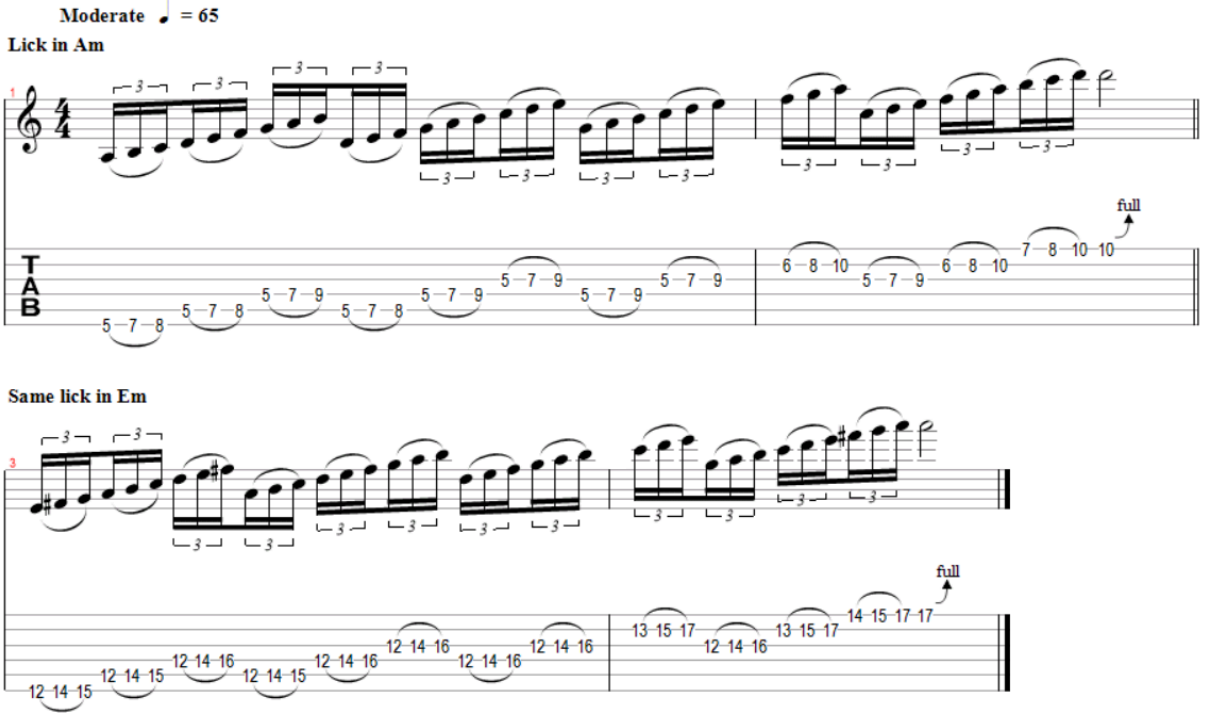
Ex 15


Moderate ♩ = 95
Lick in Am Blues Pentatonic and Dorian
Same Lick in Em
Same Lick in Gm

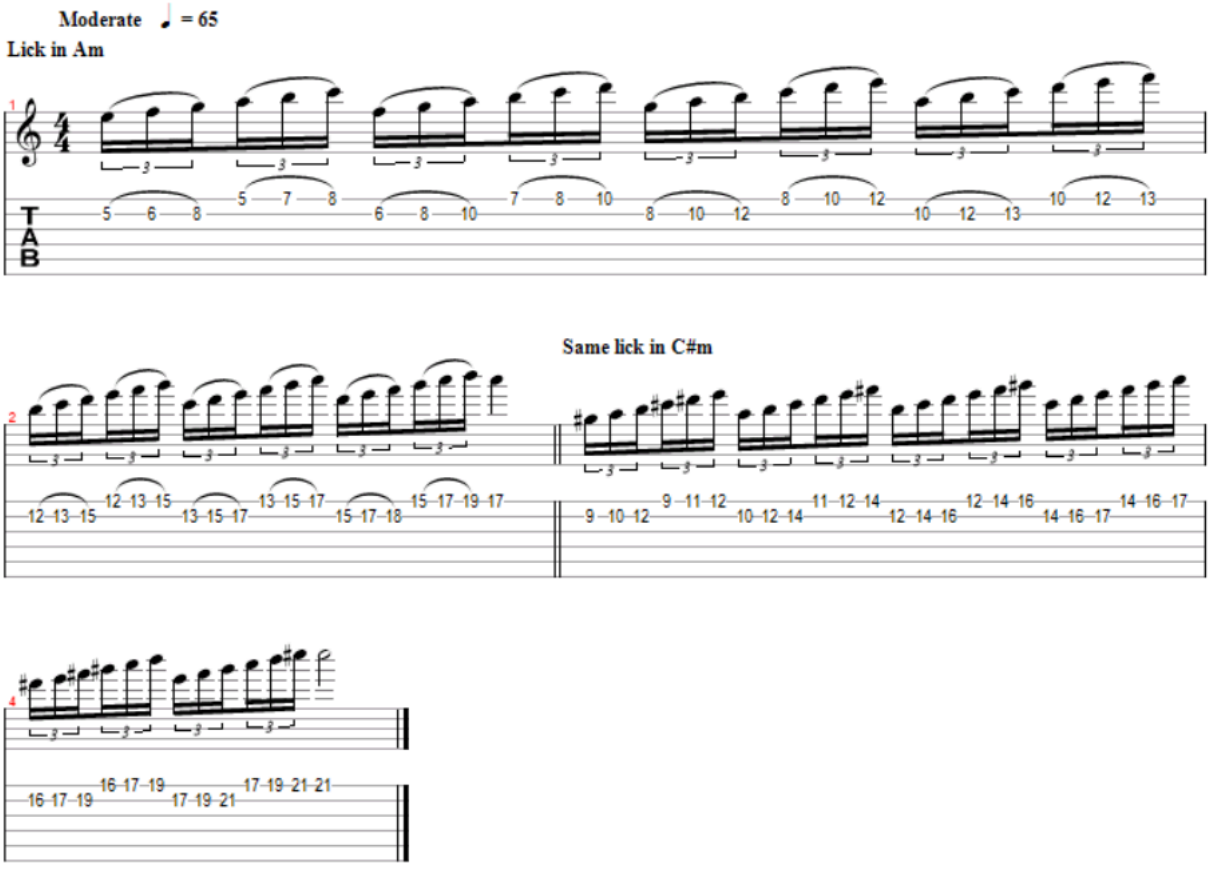
Ex 16


Moderate ♩ = 95
Lick in Am Pentatonic
Same lick in Gm Pentatonic
full
Same lick in Bm Pentatonic
Same lick in Em Pentatonic

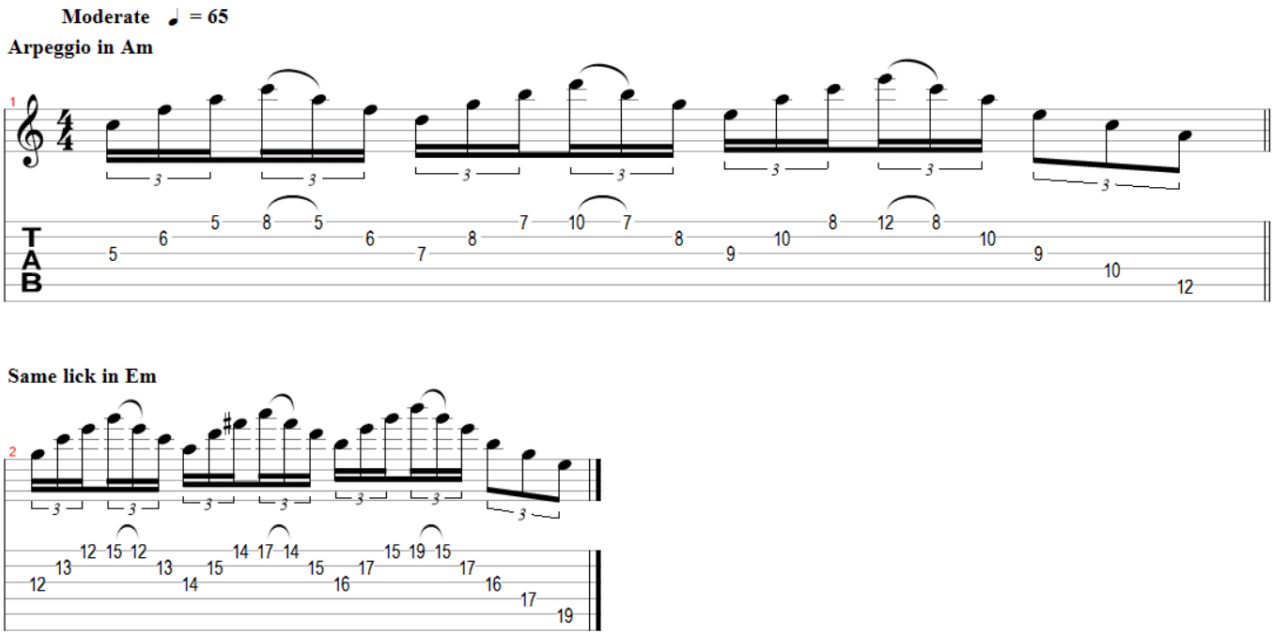
Ex 17


Moderate ♩ = 65
Lick in Am
full
Same lick in Em
full

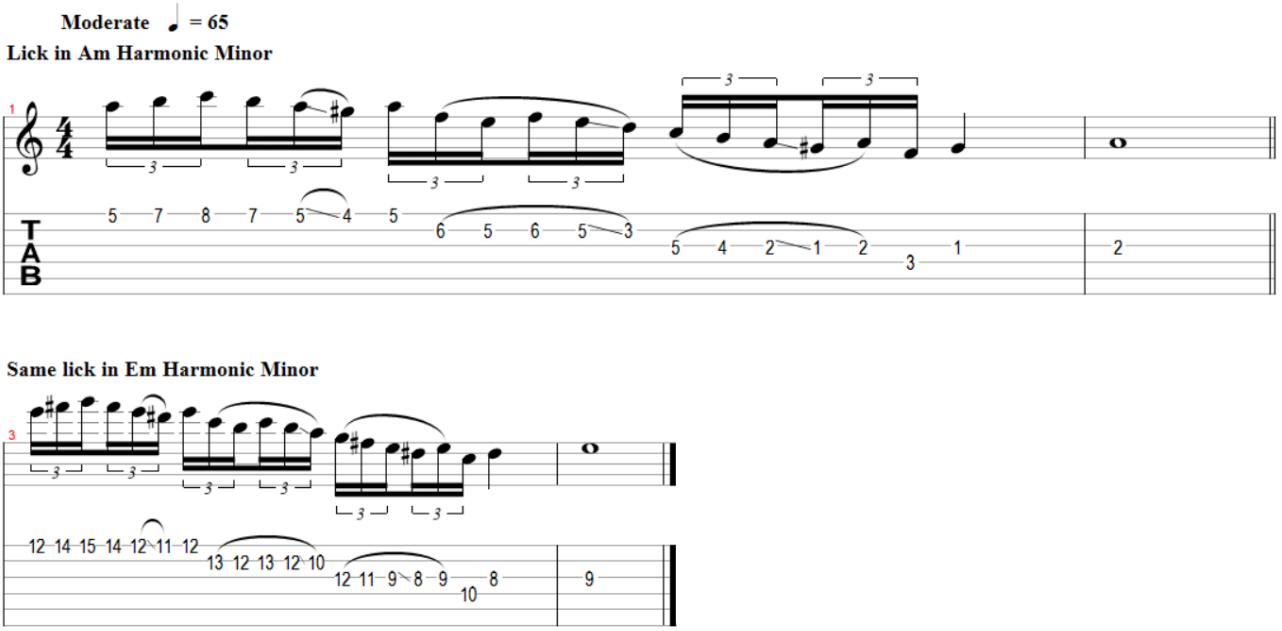
Ex 18


Moderate ♩ = 65
Lick in Am
Same lick in C#m

Ex 19


Moderate ♩ = 65
Arpeggio in Am
Same lick in Em

Ex 20


Moderate ♩ = 65
Lick in Am Harmonic Minor
Same lick in Em Harmonic Minor

Conclusions

I hope you have learned something new by reading this book.
The most important thing that you can do, however, is to keep on practising and learning new songs.
Trust your ears. Constantly listen to other guitar players and analyse what they do, and how they sound and try to imitate what they do and expand your vocabulary.
Learning how to play the guitar is a constant process and you will never stop evolving. Even after 20 years of playing the guitar, I still learn and adapt my playing to new things.
Music is a creative art and as for all arts, it's all about diving in and experimenting.
As I always tell my students, the best teacher you will ever have is yourself. I'm just here to answer your questions and organise your learning experience.
Be curious, ask yourself questions and enjoy the process.
If you find something too difficult, slow it down and make sure you embed it in your muscles. If something is too hard, it means you didn't practise it enough times to the point that you have full control. If you practise too fast, you risk memorising your mistakes instead of memorising the right thing.

Please follow my social media and engage with me. I will be there to answer your questions.

Enjoy your learning!

About The Author

Andy is a professional musician with 20 years of experience in the music business both as a performer and teacher.

Throughout the years, Andy has collaborated with numerous bands and played thousands of gigs all over the world.
As a teacher, he has taught many students, providing both private one-to-one lessons as well as group classes.

He is both a proficient singer and an amazing guitarist. He is also an outstanding composer and songwriter.
His vocal range is vast and his guitar skills are refined. He is versatile and can play a huge variety of music styles, even at extreme levels of complexity.

Andy is passionate about music. He strives to deliver the best results possible to his clients. He believes music is a powerful tool that unites people and his goal is to connect people.

Links

Website: www.andyvozzamusic.com
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Youtube: www.youtube.com/channel/UCsXasvX7hXU77A1DouPZKTA?sub_confirmation=1