

# Scales

Now that you can comp through the form from memory, let's look at minor blues scales.

Three scales that I recommend you start with are:

1. Blues Scale
2. Harmonic Minor Scale
3. Dorian Scale

There are **two two-octave scales** to learn for each of these scales.

You should ideally learn these across the entire fingerboard, but starting with two positions is fine for now.

The minor blues is a good application for practising minor scales.

So, you can always use it to practise other minor scales that you know or might learn in the future.

The three solos in the later section all use parts of these scales.

So, make sure you can complete the checklist before moving on!

## ASSIGNMENTS:

- Play the scales ascending and descending with no stops.
- Play the scales at 140bpm with two notes per beat.
- Play the scales with straight and swung eighth notes.
- Play all the scales continuously.

# Blues Scale

## Root on 6th String

The musical notation shows the blues scale starting on the 6th string (low E) in 4/4 time. The notes are: E4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), Bb4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), E4 (quarter). The fretboard diagram below shows the following fingerings: 6th string (8, 11), 5th string (8, 9), 4th string (10, 8, 10), and 3rd string (10, 11, 8, 11).

## Root on 5th String

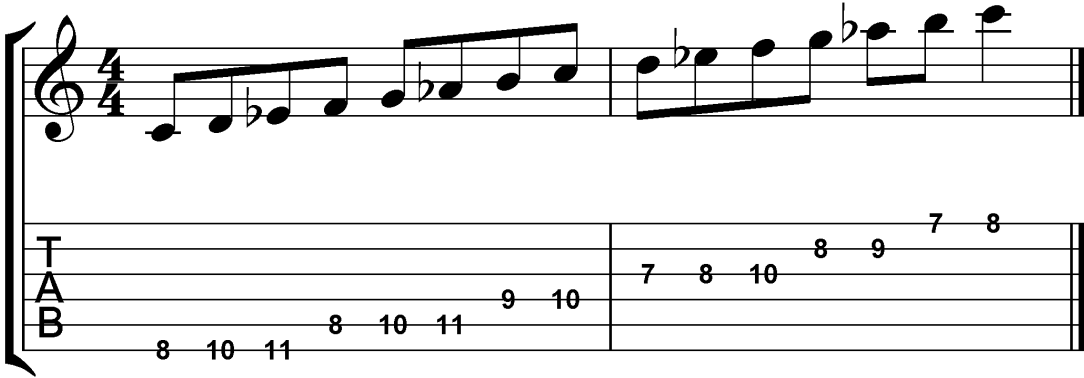
The musical notation shows the blues scale starting on the 5th string (A) in 4/4 time. The notes are: A3 (quarter), Bb3 (quarter), B3 (quarter), C4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), Eb4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (quarter), B3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), A3 (quarter). The fretboard diagram below shows the following fingerings: 5th string (3, 6), 4th string (3, 4), 3rd string (5, 3, 5), and 2nd string (6, 7, 8, 6, 8).

### When can you use the blues scale?

- To improvise over the entire 12 bar form.
- To play a minor blues theme.
- Over each tonic minor chord e.g. Cm7 and Fm7.
- Over the turnaround; check out the last four bars of John Coltrane's Mr PC for an example of this.

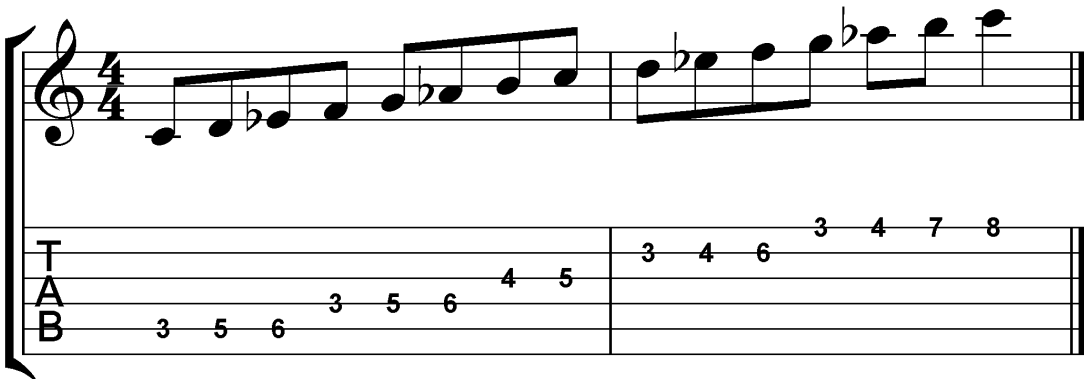
# Harmonic Minor Scale

## Root on 6th String



Musical notation for the Harmonic Minor Scale with the root on the 6th string. The notation is in 4/4 time and consists of two measures. The first measure shows the ascending scale: G2, A2, Bb2, C3, D3, E3, F3. The second measure shows the descending scale: F3, E3, D3, C3, Bb2, A2, G2. Below the staff is a guitar tablature with strings T, A, and B. The first measure has fret numbers 8, 10, 11 on the B string; 8, 10, 11 on the A string; and 9, 10 on the T string. The second measure has fret numbers 7, 8, 10 on the B string; 8, 9 on the A string; and 7, 8 on the T string.

## Root on 5th String



Musical notation for the Harmonic Minor Scale with the root on the 5th string. The notation is in 4/4 time and consists of two measures. The first measure shows the ascending scale: G2, A2, Bb2, C3, D3, E3, F3. The second measure shows the descending scale: F3, E3, D3, C3, Bb2, A2, G2. Below the staff is a guitar tablature with strings T, A, and B. The first measure has fret numbers 3, 5, 6 on the B string; 3, 5, 6 on the A string; and 4, 5 on the T string. The second measure has fret numbers 3, 4, 6 on the B string; 3, 4, 7, 8 on the A string; and 3, 4, 7, 8 on the T string.

### When can you use the Harmonic Minor Scale?

- The scale works especially well in bars 9 and 11 to address the long minor ii-V-I.
- You can also use fragments of it or just play it from the fifth degree in bars 2 and 12 to outline the short ii-V's.

# Dorian Scale

## Root on 6th String

The musical notation shows the Dorian scale starting on the 6th string in 4/4 time. The notes are: G2, A2, Bb2, C3, D3, Eb3, F3, G3, A3, Bb3, C4, D4. The guitar TAB below the staff indicates the following fret positions:

T									
A								8	10
B	8	10	11	8	10	12	13	10	12

## Root on 5th String

The musical notation shows the Dorian scale starting on the 5th string in 4/4 time. The notes are: G2, A2, Bb2, C3, D3, Eb3, F3, G3, A3, Bb3, C4, D4. The guitar TAB below the staff indicates the following fret positions:

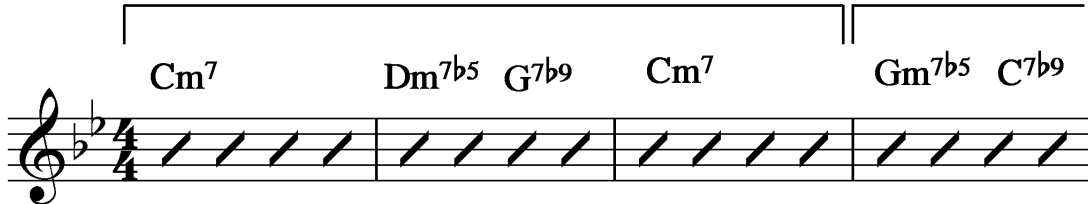
T									
A								3	5
B	3	5	6	3	5	2	3	5	3

### When can you use the dorian scale?

- To improvise over chords I and IV. This will provide you with a basis for jazzy sounding lines to contrast the blues scale.
- Even if you are playing a standard minor jazz blues you can use the tonic scale for the entire first four bars.

# Scale Road Map

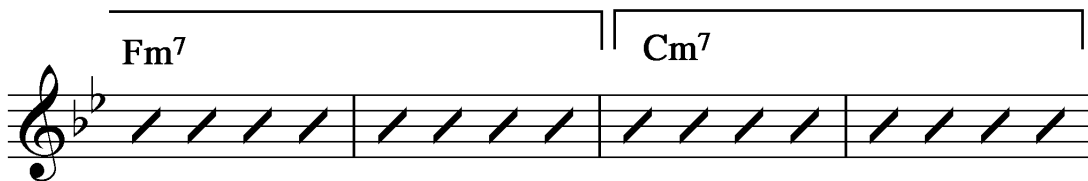
## C Blues / Dorian / Harmonic Minor



Musical staff showing a 4-measure progression in 4/4 time, C minor key. The notes are represented by slashes. Chord changes are indicated above the staff: Cm7 (measures 1-2), Dm7b5 G7b9 (measures 3-4), Cm7 (measures 5-6), and Gm7b5 C7b9 (measures 7-8).

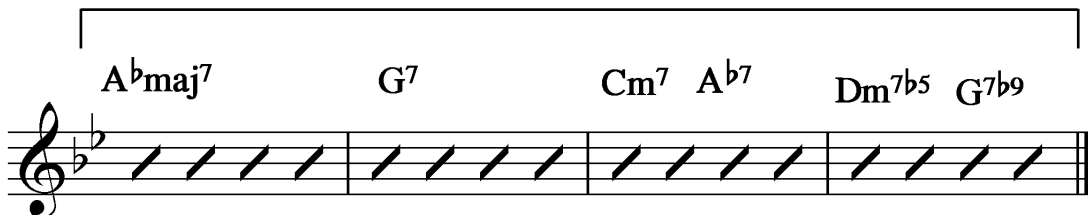
## F Blues / Dorian / Harmonic Minor

## C Blues / Dorian



Musical staff showing a 4-measure progression in 4/4 time, F minor key. The notes are represented by slashes. Chord changes are indicated above the staff: Fm7 (measures 1-4) and Cm7 (measures 5-8).

## C Blues / Harmonic Minor



Musical staff showing a 4-measure progression in 4/4 time, C minor key. The notes are represented by slashes. Chord changes are indicated above the staff: Abmaj7 (measures 1-2), G7 (measures 3-4), Cm7 Ab7 (measures 5-6), and Dm7b5 G7b9 (measures 7-8).