

# Ten Minute Tech

## The Minor Pentatonic and Blues Scales

Musical notation for the A minor Pentatonic scale. The top staff shows the scale in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notes are A2, C3, D3, E3, G3, and A3. The bottom staff shows the fretboard with fingerings: 5-8 on the low E string, 5-7 on the A string, 5-7 on the D string, and 5-8-5 on the high E string.

### A minor Pentatonic

Here is the same scale as the E Minor pentatonic we started with but now in the key of A instead of E.

This is a moveable scale. I.E. if we move the whole thing up 1 fret (so starting on the 6th fret) we get A sharp Minor Pentatonic. If we move it up yet another fret we get B Minor Pentatonic and so on.

Musical notation for a warm-up exercise. The top staff shows a sequence of notes with fingerings: 1-4-1-3, 1-3-1-3, 1-4-1-4, 1-4-1-4, 3-1-3-1, 3-1-4-1, 3-1-4-1, 3-1-3-1, 3-1-4-1, 3-1-4-1. The bottom staff shows the fretboard with fingerings: 5-8, 5-7, 5-7, 5-7, 5-8, 5-8, 8-5, 8-5, 7-5, 7-5, 7-5, 7-5, 8-5.

Above is the pattern we have been using in class as a warm-up, playing to the metronome and using alternate picking all the way up and down.

### The Blues Scale

Above is the Blues scale in A. As you will see, it is almost identical to the A minor Pentatonic. The only difference is the extra note known as the "blues note". It is highlighted here in blue.

This note sounds very cool, but is better used as a "passing note".

A passing note is a note that we use between two other notes. Landing on the blues note can sound good but nearly always sounds better when it is resolved by playing a "nicer" note afterwards. Experiment and find where it sounds good- music is subjective after all!

In theory, any chromatic notes (from the chromatic exercise we learned before) could work as passing notes. But you must have a destination in mind- I.E. don't just play chromatic notes at random, use them to get to a desired note in the scale (also know as a "target" note). Here is a quick example using the A blues scale above. Remember it's pretty much just the A Minor Pentatonic scale anyway!

The Blues Note is in blue, the chromatic passing notes are in red. As always, don't throw notes in for the sake of it, use them sparingly and tastefully!

15

T  
A  
B

### G Major Pentatonic

This sound is fun over major chords. It is less "dark" or "moody" than the blues/minor pentatonic scales. It is used a lot in country music too.