

First Scales

The image shows two musical examples. The first is the A Minor Pentatonic scale, written in 4/4 time on a treble clef staff. The notes are A2, C3, E3, G3, and B3. Below the staff are three guitar strings (T, A, B) with fret numbers: T (5, 8), A (5, 7), and B (5, 8). The second is the A minor Blues scale, also in 4/4 time on a treble clef staff. The notes are A2, C3, E3, G3, B3, and D4. Below the staff are three guitar strings (T, A, B) with fret numbers: T (5, 8), A (5, 7, 8), and B (5, 6, 7, 8).

A Minor Pentatonic

A minor Blues

When playing these two scales follow these pointers to get the best results;

- keep your fingers as parallel to the frets as possible
- keep your thumb at the back of the neck between the middle and the top
- Use alternate picking throughout (down – up – down – up etc).
- don't allow your wrist to bend more than 45 degrees (half a right angle)
- Always play the scale forwards and backwards.
- Play slowly and accurately getting a good clear tone from each note

When you have become familiar with these two scales you can move on to the next two.

The image shows two musical examples. The first is the A Natural Minor scale, written in 4/4 time on a treble clef staff. The notes are A2, C3, E3, G3, B3, and D4. Below the staff are three guitar strings (T, A, B) with fret numbers: T (5, 7, 8), A (5, 7, 8), and B (5, 7, 8). The second is the A Dorian scale, also in 4/4 time on a treble clef staff. The notes are A2, C3, D3, E3, G3, B3, and D4. Below the staff are three guitar strings (T, A, B) with fret numbers: T (5, 7, 8), A (5, 7, 4, 5, 7), and B (5, 7, 4, 5, 7).

A Natural Minor

A Dorian

These two scales have a 'pivot' in the fingering. You can see that both these scales have notes on the fourth fret. The note before you move to the fourth fret should be played with the little finger; this will make the stretch much easier.

These four shapes are a great starting place for soloing & improvising on the guitar. They can be used in many different styles from folk music to 'speed metal' so once your playing them confidently we will start using them for improvising.

You can download backing tracks to play with these scales [here](#)