

MASTER THE GUITAR

Level 2

FRETBOARD THEORY, CHORD PROGRESSIONS, AND SCALE SYSTEMS



- Scale and Chord Construction
- Relative Major and Natural Minor
- Roman-Numeral Progressions and Transposition
 - Movable Chord Groups
 - Harmonic Rhythm
- Fretboard Navigation
- The Diatonic Scale Five-Shape System
- Rhythmic Development and Syncopation
- Movable Major and Natural Minor Scale Patterns

Brian Hayes

MASTER THE GUITAR

Level 2

by Brian Hayes

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BRIAN HAYES

Master the Guitar (Level 2)

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ABOUT THE METHOD

Method Book Level 2 continues the approach established in Level 1 while gradually asking more of the student. Concepts are introduced step by step, revisited throughout the book, and eventually brought together so students can see how the different skills they have learned relate to one another.

Rather than presenting all related material at once, this method deliberately alternates between different areas of study. The five diatonic scale shapes, for example, are introduced individually and interspersed with theory, chord, rhythm, and strumming exercises. This allows time for each new shape to become familiar before another is introduced. Once all five shapes have been learned individually, they are brought together as a complete system and revisited throughout the book in different keys and contexts.

A similar progression occurs throughout the rhythm and harmony sections. Rhythmic counts that are initially provided are eventually replaced by blank lines on which students must write the count themselves. Chord progressions that initially include chord names gradually give way to Roman numerals alone, requiring students to determine the chords from the key. Students are increasingly expected to locate chord roots, home notes, chord shapes, and scale patterns independently. In this way, the training wheels are gradually removed as familiarity and confidence develop.

Fretboard knowledge is treated as an essential part of understanding music rather than as a separate memorization exercise. Movable chord groupings are used as a visual means of understanding keys, transposition, and the relationships between major and natural minor. Likewise, movable scale patterns are connected to home notes on both the 6th and 5th strings so that scales can be located through knowledge of the fretboard rather than memorized as isolated diagrams.

Relative major and natural minor are explored through scales, chord construction, movable chord groups, and chord progressions. Rather than treating relativity simply as a relationship to memorize, the method shows how the same notes and chords can be organized around different home notes and home chords, allowing the relationship to be understood visually, theoretically, and aurally.

The Five-Shape System is also explored as part of a larger repeating structure. A 10-string guitar tuned entirely in fourths is used as a visual model to temporarily remove the irregularity created by the tuning relationship between the 3rd and 2nd strings on a standard guitar. This reveals the repeating cells and segments underlying the diatonic scale system and demonstrates how the familiar five shapes emerge when that continuous system is adapted to the standard six-string guitar.

Rhythm receives the same practical treatment. Harmonic rhythm is explored independently from strumming rhythm, ranging from long stretches on a single chord to progressions in which chords change on every beat. Students learn to count increasingly varied rhythms and combine partial and full strums to create accents naturally.

The final section, *Putting It All Together*, brings these areas of study into a single musical context. Students apply previously learned rhythmic techniques to the I–vi–IV–V progression in major and the i–VI–III–VII progression in the relative natural minor, transpose from Roman numerals, work in multiple keys, experiment with different harmonic rhythms, apply accents in strumming, incorporate movable dominant seventh chords in major keys, and create or use backing tracks for each progression. Those same tracks are then revisited for scale practice and improvisation, requiring students to locate the appropriate major or natural minor scale from home notes on both the 6th and 5th strings.

WHAT THIS BOOK COVERS

Method Book Level 2 builds upon the foundation established in Level 1 while expanding the student's understanding of the fretboard, rhythm, harmony, scales, and music theory. Topics and skills include:

- Beginning improvisation using one-octave patterns and the Five-Shape System
- Alternate-picking eighth-note scale exercises with tempo tracking
- Harmonic rhythm and its relationship to strumming patterns
- Reading, counting, and writing rhythms
- Visualizing I–IV–V and i–iv–v chord groups
- Moving between barre-chord and open-position progressions
- Movable dominant seventh chords
- Reading and transposing chord progressions from Roman numerals
- The 10-String Guitar Visualization System for navigating the diatonic scale across the fretboard
- Accents in rhythm and strumming
- Major and natural minor scale construction
- Relative major and natural minor
- Whole- and half-step interval patterns
- Constructing triads from scales
- Common and additional chords in major and natural minor
- The chromatic scale, accidentals, and key signatures
- Movable major and natural minor scale patterns
- Fretboard Visualization of Chord Relationships
- Navigating I–vi–IV–V progressions in major
- Navigating i–VI–III–VII progressions in natural-minor
- Open and closed chord-progression loops
- Applying scales over chord progressions

FOR THE INSTRUCTOR

Method Book Level 2 is designed to continue directly from the foundation established in Level 1 while gradually increasing the student's independence. Although some concepts introduced in Level 1 are revisited, they are generally presented with less assistance and used as foundations for more advanced applications.

The five diatonic scale shapes are intentionally distributed throughout the first section rather than presented all at once. In my experience, introducing an entire fretboard system at one time can easily overwhelm a student. Spacing the shapes throughout the section allows time for each one to become familiar before another is introduced and eventually brings all five together as a complete system.

Early rhythm exercises provide the count beneath the staff, while later exercises require the student to write it in. Writing in the count is not merely an academic exercise; it provides a practical means of analyzing and understanding unfamiliar rhythms before attempting to perform them.

Movable chord groups serve several purposes throughout the method. One of the most important is to provide a visual framework for locating the I, IV, and V chords and, later, for understanding relative major and natural minor chord relationships across the fretboard. Exercises that alternate between barre chords and open-position chords reinforce the idea that a particular harmonic function is not tied to only one physical chord shape. The ability to name movable chords and locate their roots is crucial to this process.

The *N.C.* notation used in the rhythm exercises is instructional. The open strings produced by releasing a chord for the final upstroke before a change are normally not written this way in published rhythm-guitar notation. Here, the notation is used to make an often-intuitive guitar technique explicit so that the student can practice it deliberately.

The accent exercises are similarly designed to approach accents as a combination of stronger and weaker strokes rather than simply striking accented strums harder. Partial strums can be used on weaker beats, while fuller strums naturally create stronger accents. This develops both dynamic control and a more musical approach to rhythm-guitar accompaniment.

The 10-string guitar illustrations are intended as a conceptual model rather than an instrument the student is expected to own or play. By extending the fretboard and tuning every string in fourths, the diagrams reveal a repeating structure that is partially obscured on the standard guitar by the tuning relationship

between the 3rd and 2nd strings. The purpose is to help students see the five diatonic shapes as portions of one continuous system rather than five unrelated patterns.

Similarly, the early presentation of i, iv, and v as the common chords of natural minor is intended as a useful starting framework rather than a statement about which chords are most typical in natural-minor progressions. Later sections deliberately revisit this model and demonstrate the importance of III, VI, and VII in commonly encountered natural-minor loops.

Finally, the exercises in *Putting It All Together* are intended as a culmination rather than simply another set of rhythm and scale exercises. The same backing tracks or recorded loops used for the chord-progression exercises are revisited for scale practice and improvisation, while tempo tracking, transposition from Roman numerals, rhythmic interpretation, and fretboard knowledge are incorporated into the process. The value of these exercises lies in bringing together skills that were previously developed separately.

TEACHING NOTES BY TOPIC

SECTION I: PLAYING ACROSS THE FRETBOARD: SCALES, CHORDS, AND RHYTHM

Position Playing (p. 12) and the Diatonic Scale Shapes (p. 14)

The scale shapes used throughout this method are derived from CAGED fingerings, although the CAGED system itself is not being taught. These fingerings incorporate frequent position changes, making it important for the student to understand *position playing* and to recognize when a change of position occurs.

Here, *position* is used in the traditional classical-guitar sense: the fret assigned to the first finger determines the position. For example, when the first finger is assigned to the 5th fret, the hand is in 5th position. This should not be confused with the looser use of *position* to describe a general area of the fretboard or to refer to a particular scale shape.

Position changes are marked particularly clearly when Diatonic Scale Shape #1 is introduced and become less explicit as the student progresses. Throughout the method, a circled left-hand fingering number indicates where a position change occurs. The intention is for students to gradually recognize these changes rather than viewing the scale shapes simply as sequences of fret numbers.

The five diatonic scale shapes are deliberately introduced separately throughout the first section rather than all at once. This allows each shape to become familiar before another is added. Each shape is first presented visually, followed by notation and tablature in quarter notes and then eighth notes with alternate picking.

Strumming Patterns: Harmonic Rhythm (p. 16)

The purpose of this section is to establish a clear distinction between the rhythm being strummed and the rate at which the chords themselves change. The examples range deliberately from very slow harmonic rhythm to chord changes occurring on every beat, allowing this distinction to be experienced across a wide range of musical contexts.

N.C. and Chord Changes (pp. 21–26)

The use of *N.C.* on the final upstroke before a chord change is intended to teach a physical technique that experienced guitarists often perform without consciously thinking about it. The technique is first isolated by releasing and returning to a single chord before being applied to progressions.

Several different ways that *N.C.* can appear on the TAB staff are introduced in this section. This is partly due to the way certain chord changes were introduced in Level 1, such as keeping the 3rd finger in place when moving from an open-position C chord to the F barre chord. Although showing these variations may initially seem unnecessary, leaving out this distinction has caused confusion for some students. For this reason, the examples show more specifically which fingers remain in place during various chord changes while the other fingers are released for the final upstroke.

Movable I–IV–V and i–iv–v Chord Groups (pp. 32, 57, 65 & 99)

Students learn two ways of visualizing these chord groups: one with the home chord rooted on the 6th string and another with the home chord rooted on the 5th string. Both are important. The second configuration allows progressions to remain practical in keys where the first would otherwise move unnecessarily high on the fretboard.

The exercises are designed to reinforce the ability to identify chord names and roots rather than allowing the diagrams to become purely physical patterns. Alternating between movable and open-position versions reinforces the idea that the harmonic identity of a chord is independent of a particular voicing.

Understanding and Counting Rhythms (p. 45)

Early exercises systematically alter a continuous eighth-note pattern so that students can see how familiar rhythmic figures are created by removing individual attacks. Once blank lines replace supplied counts, students are expected to write the count before playing. This analytical step is essential for understanding and accurately counting rhythms and becomes increasingly valuable as syncopation increases.

Dominant Seventh Chord Shapes (p. 73)

The movable dominant seventh shapes expand the I–IV–V vocabulary introduced in Level 1. The 6th-string-root dominant seventh is presented using a compact voicing containing one root, 3rd, 5th, and 7th. This also begins preparing students to understand later chord types through intervallic construction rather than memorizing each chord as an unrelated shape.

The 10-String Guitar and the Diatonic Scale System (pp. 86–96)

The 10-string guitar is a visualization tool. The all-fourths tuning removes the interruption created by the standard guitar's 3rd-to-2nd-string tuning relationship and allows the underlying sequence to be viewed

continuously. The repeating half–whole, whole–half, and whole-step cells reveal how the larger system divides into repeating segments.

The later illustrations connect this uninterrupted structure back to the standard six-string guitar and show how each of the five familiar diatonic shapes is altered by standard tuning. The goal is conceptual understanding, not memorization of a 10-string instrument.

Accents, Partial Strums, and Full Strums (pp. 107–113)

The accent exercises are designed to demonstrate that accents can be created not only by striking accented beats more strongly but also by reducing the intensity and number of strings used on surrounding strokes. Moving between partial and full strums is not only a commonly used technique but can also produce accents naturally while developing greater control over the strumming hand.

SECTION 2: RELATIVE MAJOR AND MINOR

Relative Major and Natural Minor Scales (p. 122)

This section establishes that relative major and natural minor scales share the same note collection while establishing different home notes and different interval patterns in relation to those home notes. The keyboard illustrations are used initially to make this relationship visually transparent before the concept is transferred back to the guitar fretboard.

As additional relative scales are introduced, the same relationship is transferred to different areas of the fretboard. The goal is for relative major and natural minor to become a recognizable fretboard relationship.

Where Chords Come From (p. 126)

The primary purpose of constructing chords from the scale is to demonstrate the relationship between melody and harmony. The notes used to create melodies and scales also provide the building blocks from which chords are constructed. Understanding this relationship establishes an important foundation for improvisation, as students begin to recognize how melodic material relates to the chords over which it is played.

The construction of triads also provides a foundation for understanding more advanced chord types. As additional chord tones and alterations are introduced in later studies—including seventh chords, sixth

chords, suspended chords, and other extended or modified voicings—the same principles used here to construct basic triads can be expanded to understand how those chords are built.

The chord diagrams connect this underlying construction to familiar guitar shapes. Repeated notes within guitar chord voicings demonstrate that a six-string chord shape does not necessarily contain six different chord tones; the larger voicing may simply contain repetitions of the notes found within the underlying chord.

Once chords are constructed from the C major and A natural minor scales, the relative relationship can also be extended from scales to harmony. Students can see that the same collection of chords belongs to both relative keys, while the roles and perceived importance of those chords change according to which note and chord are established as home. The common/additional chord diagrams are intended to make this inverse relationship visually apparent.

Home Note (p. 149) and Home Chord (p. 218)

The terms *home note* and *home chord* are used deliberately throughout this method in place of *tonic* when discussing the perceived center of a scale or progression. This keeps the language applicable across both major and natural-minor contexts without implying functional-harmony behavior where it may not be present. As students progress, the term *tonic* can be introduced more formally in contexts where its theoretical meaning is useful but *home* provides a clear and intuitive description of the perceptual center being established.

Movable Major and Natural Minor Scale Patterns (p. 190)

The home-note patterns on the 6th and 5th strings provide a practical way to locate scales in any key. The initial emphasis is on locating the correct home note and accurately playing the one-octave pattern. Connections to the complete Five-Shape System can develop gradually.

Visualizing Relative Major and Natural Minor Chord Groups (p. 204)

The movable chord-group diagrams extend the relative major and natural minor relationship across the fretboard. The same six chords can be interpreted in two ways: as the common chords of relative major and natural minor, or as the common and additional chords within a single key. The purpose is for both interpretations to become recognizable as different ways of understanding the same chord relationships rather than as separate formations to be memorized.

These diagrams also reinforce the spatial relationship between relative major and natural minor. Once one chord group has been located, its relative group can be found three frets away, allowing students to visualize the relationship directly on the fretboard.

I–vi–IV–V Major Chord Progressions (p. 207)

These exercises combine Roman-numeral reading, fretboard knowledge, transposition, rhythm reading, and harmonic rhythm. Because only the key and Roman numerals are supplied, the exercises require students to determine the actual chords using their knowledge of the fretboard rather than relying on written chord names. Experimenting with different fretboard locations and open-position substitutions where practical further develops the connection between chord identity and its possible locations and voicings.

Common Chords in Natural Minor Revisited (p. 220)

This section intentionally modifies the simplified framework established earlier in the method. Although iv, and v remain available, III, VI, and VII play an especially prominent role in many natural-minor loops. The purpose is not to invalidate the earlier framework but to expand it as the student's understanding of natural-minor harmony develops.

i–VI–III–VII and Natural Minor Progressions (p. 222)

These exercises continue the process of determining chord names from Roman numerals and transposing progressions through different keys. They also demonstrate how repetition itself can help establish i as home when VII does not provide the strong pull associated with V in major.

Comparing Major and Natural Minor Progressions (p. 230)

The I–vi–IV–V progression in major and the i–VI–III–VII progression in its relative natural minor contain exactly the same chords, yet organize those chords differently, with each progression establishing a different sense of home. The comparison is intended to make these differences audible rather than allowing relative major and natural minor to remain simply a memorized relationship between two scales.

The comparison also demonstrates an important difference in harmonic behavior between the two progressions. In the major progression, V or V7 creates a strong pull back toward I, producing a clear sense of release when the loop repeats. In the natural minor progression, VII does not create the same pull toward

i; instead, the sense of home is established largely through the organization and repetition of the loop and its recurring return to i.

Putting It All Together (p. 234)

Exercises 136–142 are designed as an integrated final project. The six rhythm-and-strumming exercises produce 18 different tracks across major and relative natural-minor keys, with different strumming patterns and harmonic rhythms. These exercises bring together writing rhythmic counts, determining chords from Roman numerals, applying accents and partial/full strums, using *N.C.* where appropriate, incorporating movable dominant sevenths, and recording practice tempos.

Exercise 142 then returns to those same tracks for scale practice and improvisation. Students locate the corresponding major or natural minor home note on both the 6th and 5th strings and use the *Scale Progress Chart* to document their work. This final stage is intended to connect rhythm, harmony, fretboard knowledge, scales, transposition, and improvisation within the same musical contexts.

About the Author



Brian Hayes has been teaching guitar professionally since 1996 and has worked with students of all ages, backgrounds, and musical interests. Throughout his career, he has helped thousands of players develop their skills, from beginners taking their first steps on the instrument to advanced students seeking a deeper understanding of music.

His playing experience spans more than three decades across electric, acoustic, and nylon-string guitar, including rock, metal, blues, classical, flamenco, and jazz styles. Brian earned his degree as a classical guitar major with a piano minor, followed by studies in flamenco guitar with renowned guitarist Juan Serrano.

While his primary performance work is in classical guitar, he continues to maintain an interest in a wide range of musical styles.

As both a performer and educator, Brian has developed a teaching approach that emphasizes practical musicianship, strong fundamentals, and the ability to apply musical concepts directly on the guitar. His experience has shown that students make the greatest progress when technique, rhythm, theory, ear training, fretboard knowledge, and repertoire are developed as connected skills rather than isolated subjects.

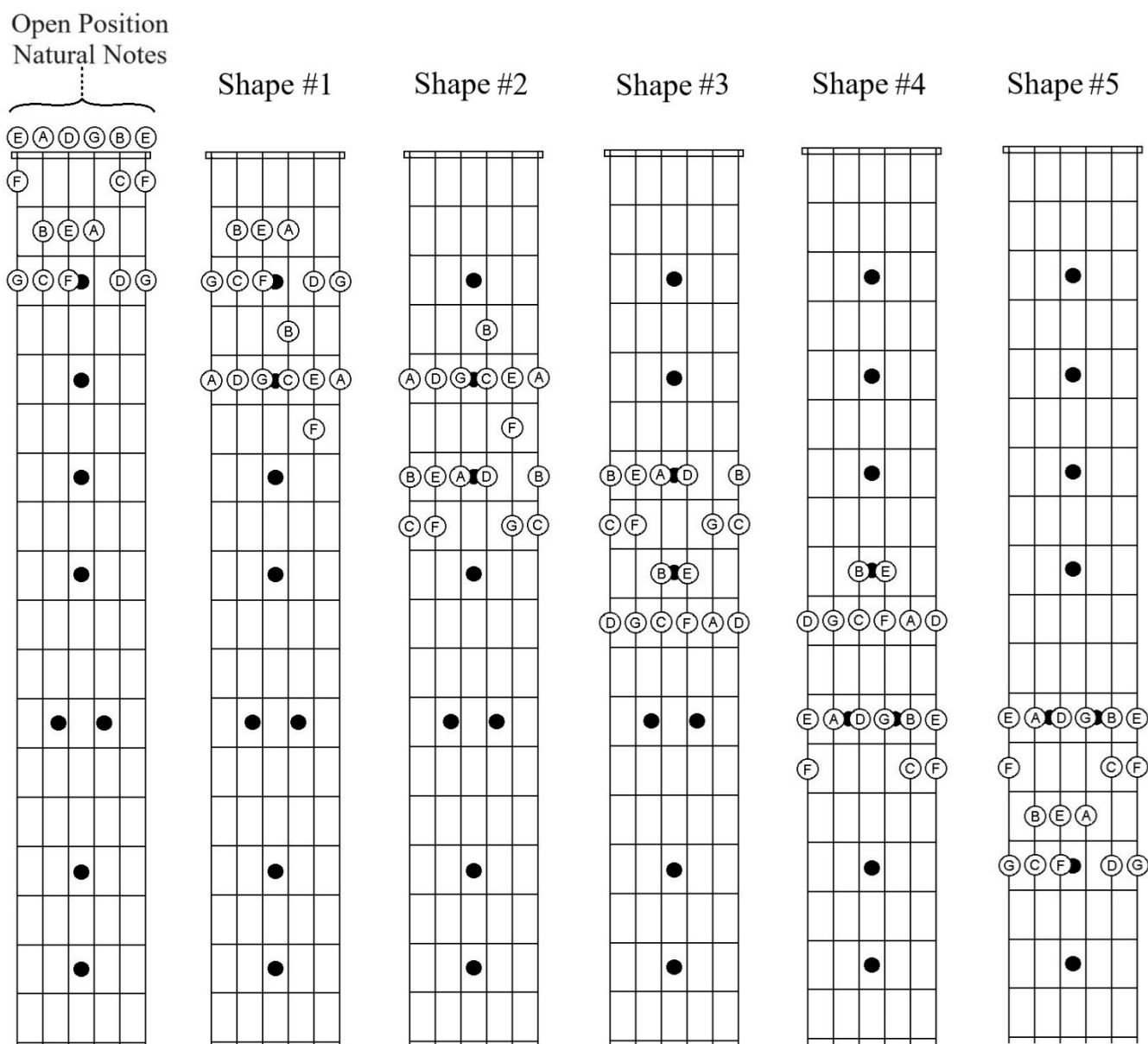
The exercises and concepts presented throughout this method are drawn from decades of teaching experience and are designed to build upon one another gradually. In Level 2, particular emphasis is placed on connecting scale shapes, chord relationships, rhythm, harmony, and fretboard knowledge so that students begin to see the guitar as an interconnected musical system rather than a collection of unrelated patterns.

Brian's goal is not simply to help students learn guitar, but to help them become independent musicians who can understand what they are playing, apply that knowledge in new musical situations, and continue developing long after completing a method book. In addition to his teaching materials, Brian has published books and sheet music for solo guitar, available at:

SoloGuitarArrangements.com

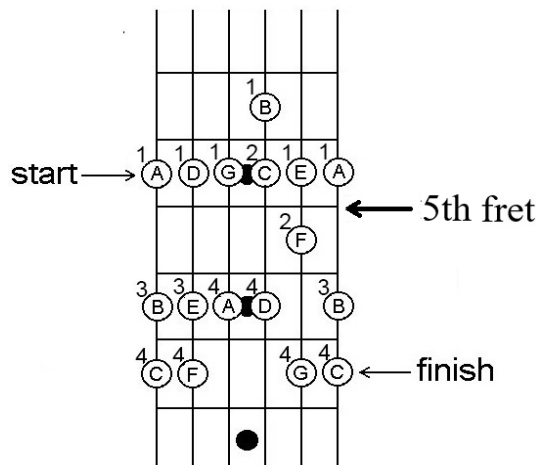
The Five Diatonic Scale Shapes

When playing scales, guitarists often divide the fretboard into overlapping sections called **shapes** (sometimes called *boxes*, *regions*, or *zones*). Unlike the open position natural notes introduced in Level 1, Shapes 1 through 5 contain no open strings. Together, these five shapes make up the diatonic scale across the entire fretboard.



#15

Diatonic Scale Shape #2



T _____

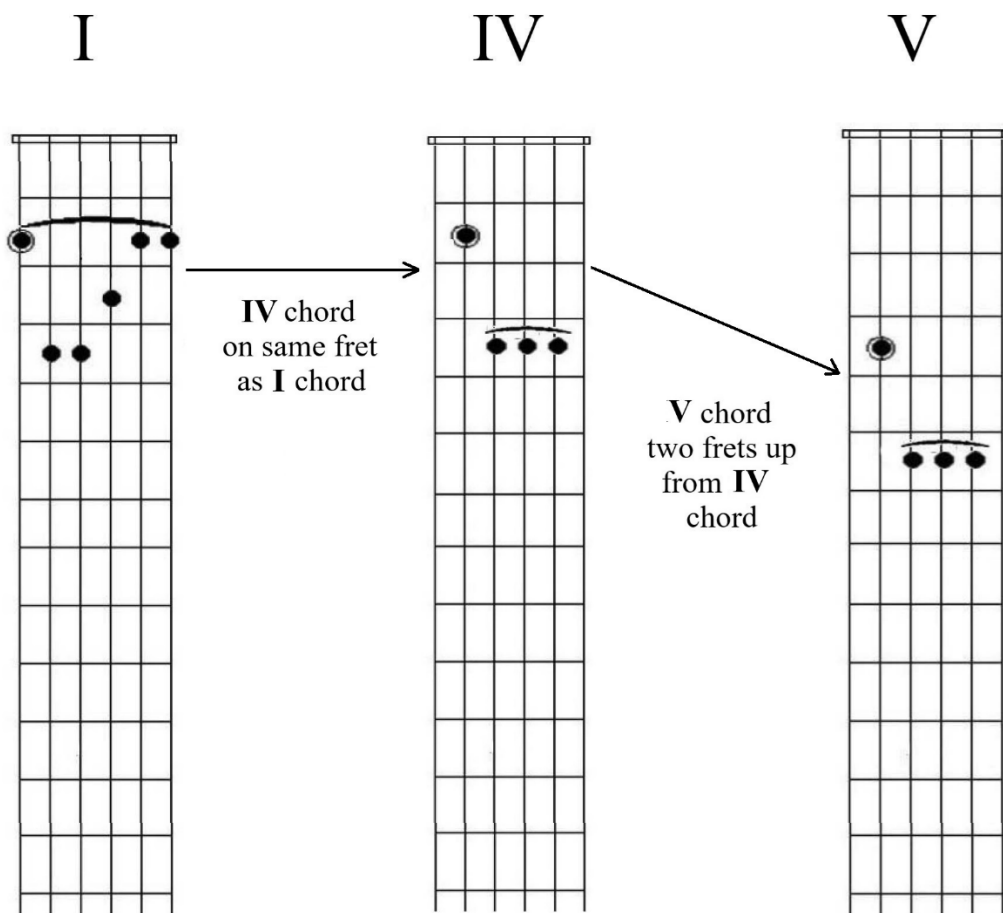
Shift to 4th position

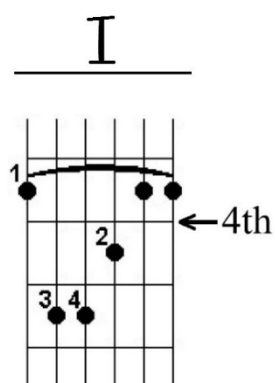
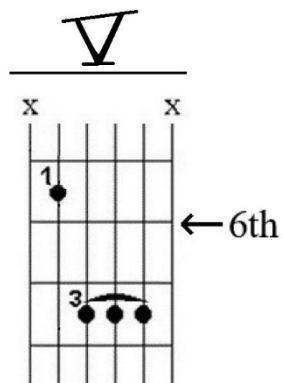
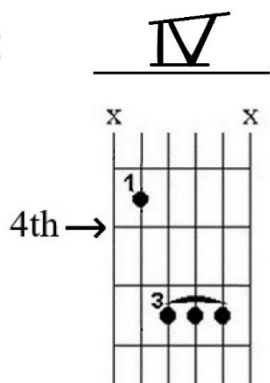
Shift back to 5th position

Shift to 4th position

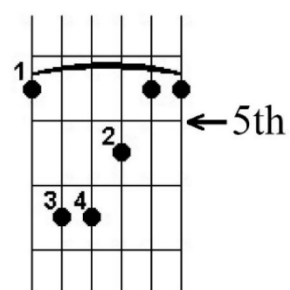
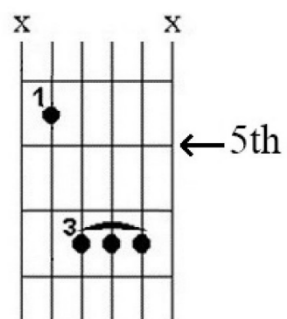
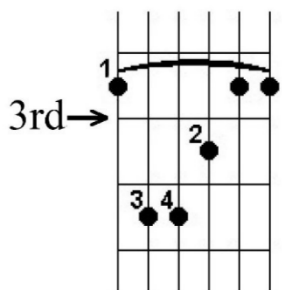
Shift back to 5th position

Since the key of F# has no open-position chords, what we wind up with is an entire chord progression that is movable. Knowing the notes along the fretboard and using these movable barre chord placements enables us to determine the I, IV and V chords of any major key simply by moving up or down the fretboard. The IV chord is always on the same fret as the I chord, and the V chord is two frets up from the IV.

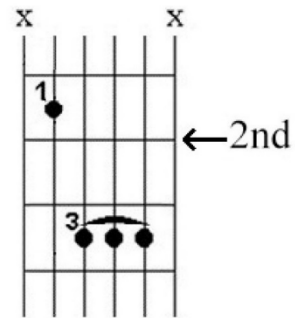
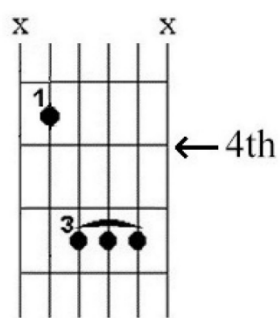
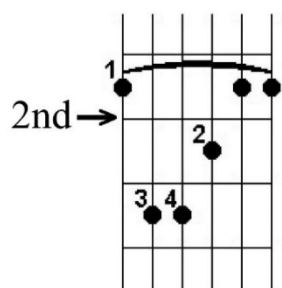


Example:Key of Ab:**#55**

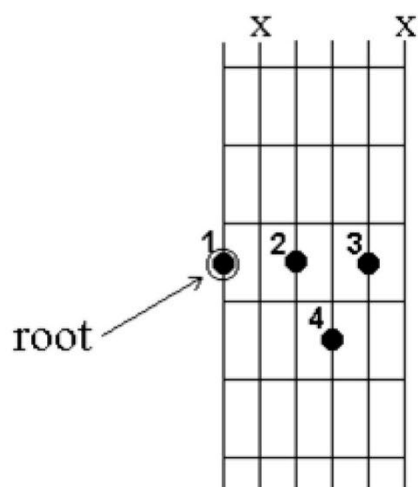
Key of ____:

**#56**

Key of ____:

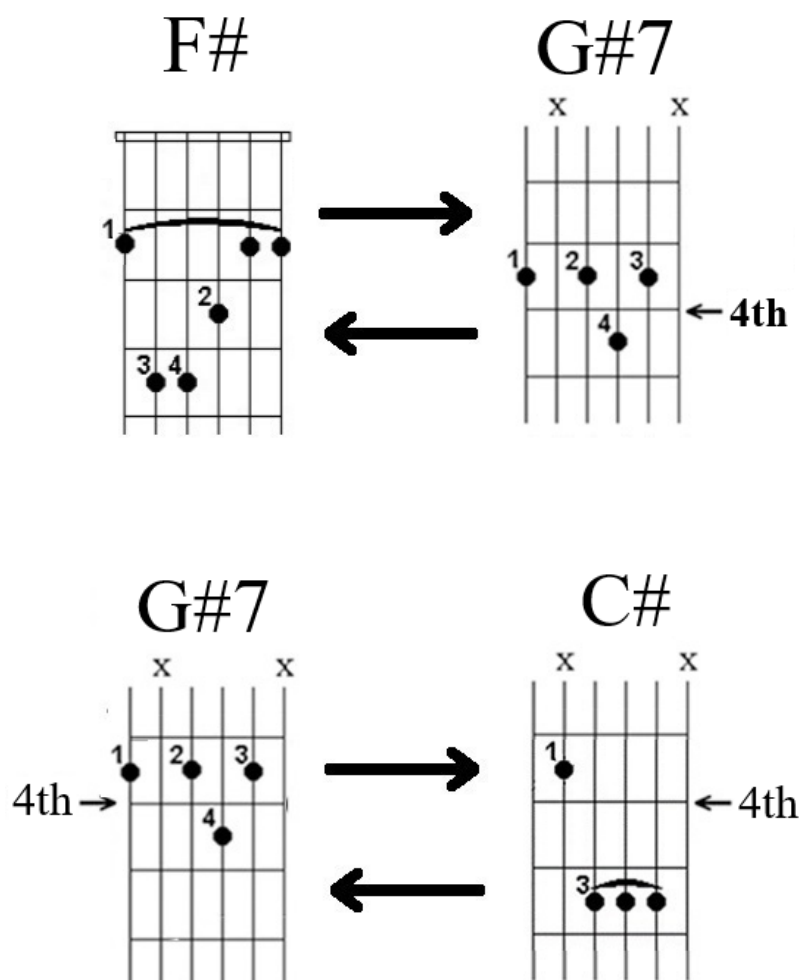


Moveable Dominant 7th Chord (Root on 6th String)

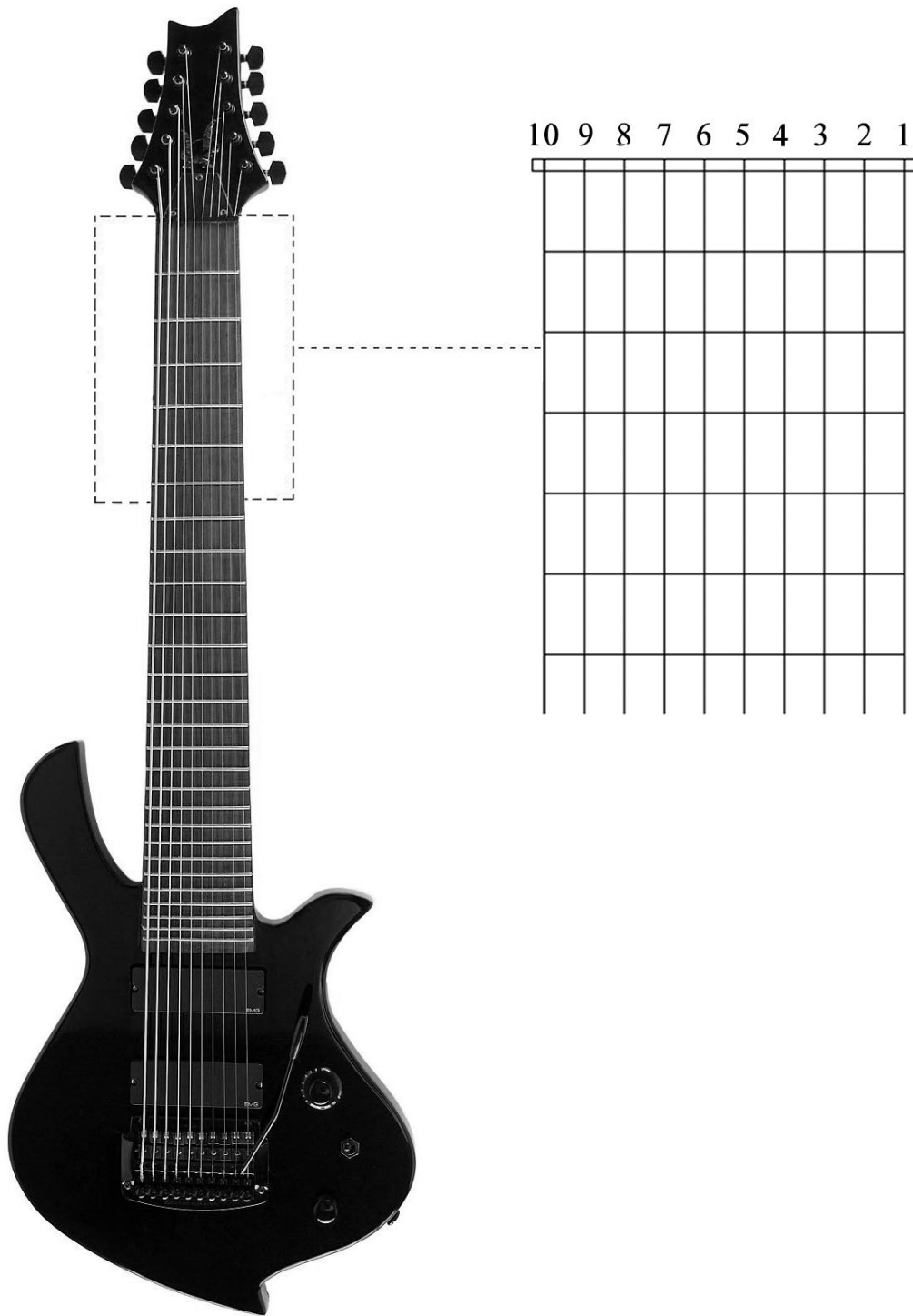


Left Hand Training

#60



Using a 10-String Guitar to Visualize Scale Systems



Ten-string guitars are either custom-made or produced in relatively small quantities because they serve a niche market. They are introduced here only as a tool for better understanding scale systems. Although we could simply have said, "*Imagine if a guitar had 10 strings,*" these instruments do exist and provide a real-world illustration.

A 10-string guitar adds four lower bass strings to the six strings of a standard guitar. Depending on the tuning, it can function as something of a hybrid between a standard 6-string guitar and a 4-string bass guitar. The upper six strings (strings 1 through 6) are often—but not always—tuned the same as a standard guitar (see Tunings 1–5 below).

In Method Book Level 1, we briefly discussed the 12-string guitar, which has six pairs of strings. Each pair is grouped closely together so that the instrument is played much like a standard 6-string guitar. Each pair of strings is called a *course*, so a 12-string guitar has 12 strings arranged in 6 courses.

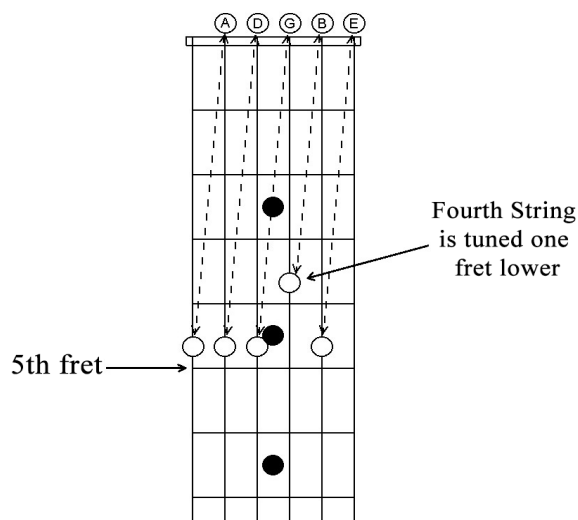
A 10-string guitar is different. Its 10 strings are all individual strings rather than paired courses.

Below are several common 10-string guitar tunings:

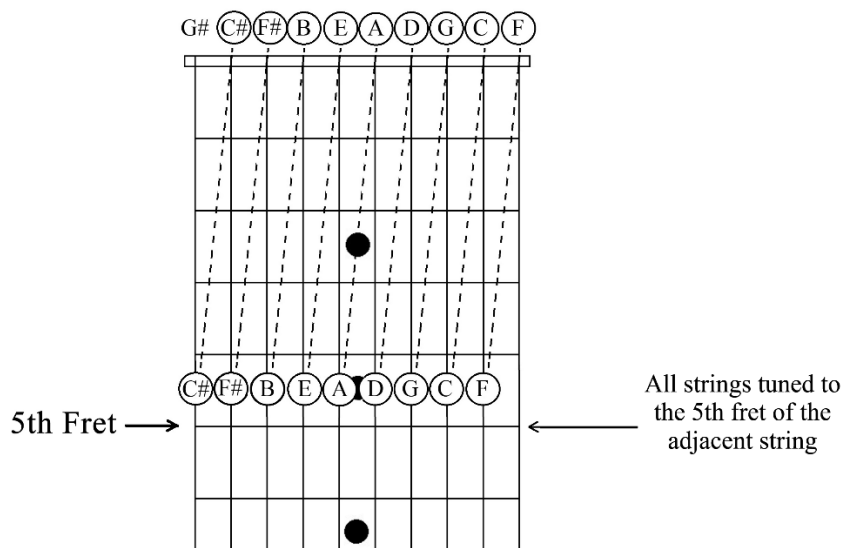
Common 10-string Guitar Tunings:

- 1) E A G D E A D G B E
- 2) G# C# F# B E A D G B E ← *Tuning used throughout this chapter*
- 3) F# C# F# B E A D G B E
- 4) C G C B E A D G B E
- 5) F# G# A# C E A D G B E
- 6) B F# B E G# E A D G B
- 7) G C F A# D# G# C# F# A# D#
- 8) C# F# B E A D G B E A
- 9) C F# G E F B C G# C# D

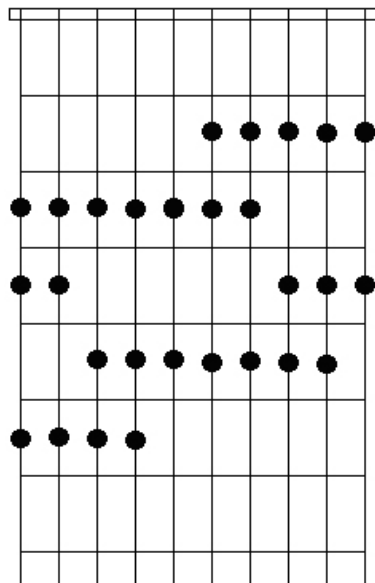
Remember that when tuning a standard 6-string guitar, the B string is the exception to the usual tuning pattern. Instead of being tuned to the 5th fret of the adjacent string, it is tuned to the 4th fret of the G string:



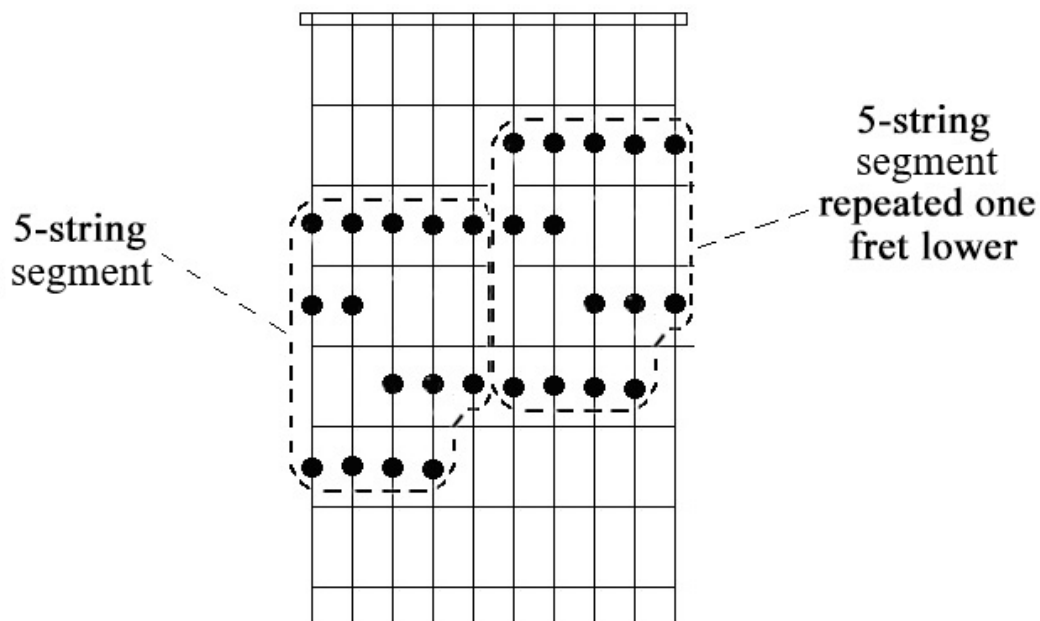
Remember that when tuning a standard 6-string guitar, the B string is the exception to the usual tuning pattern. Instead of being tuned to the 5th fret of the adjacent string, it is tuned to the 4th fret of the G string. For our purposes, however, we will tune every string of the 10-string guitar to the 5th fret of the adjacent string, with no exceptions. This is identical to Tuning #2 shown on page 86 and provides a simpler way to visualize the repeating scale system along the fretboard.



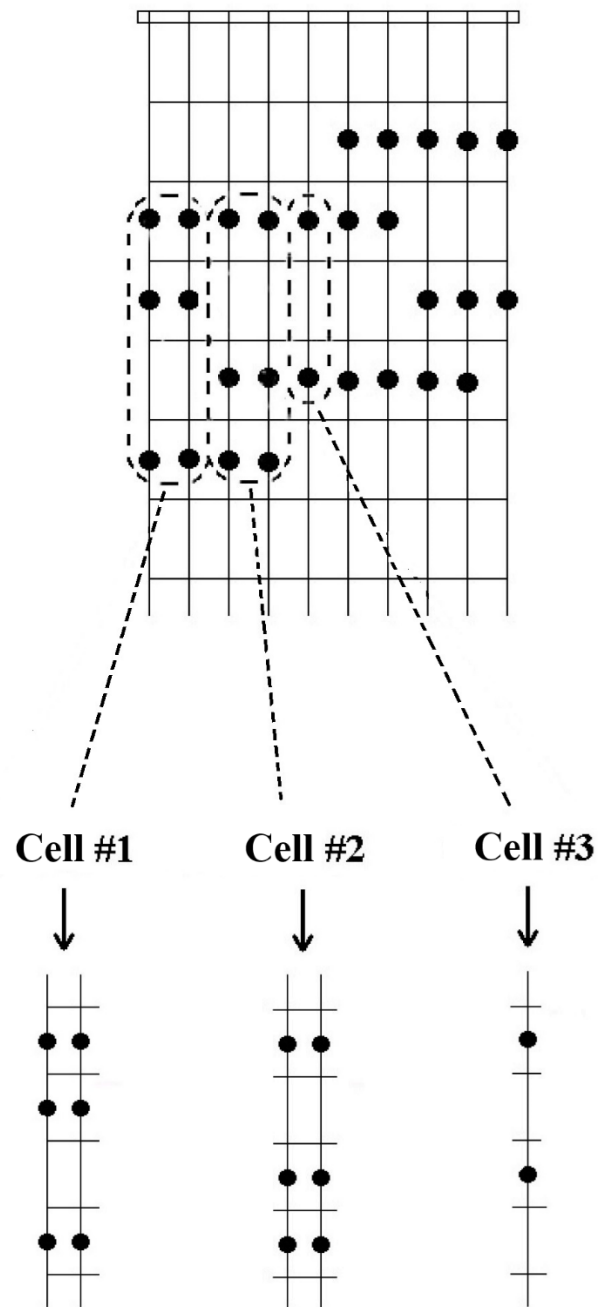
Extending Scale Shape #1 across all 10 strings reveals something that is difficult to see on a standard 6-string guitar—the repeating nature of the guitar's scale system.



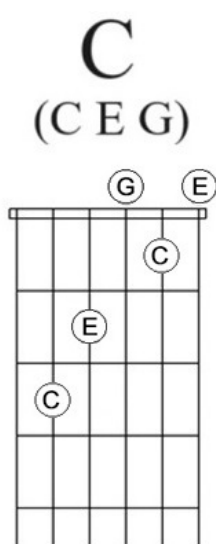
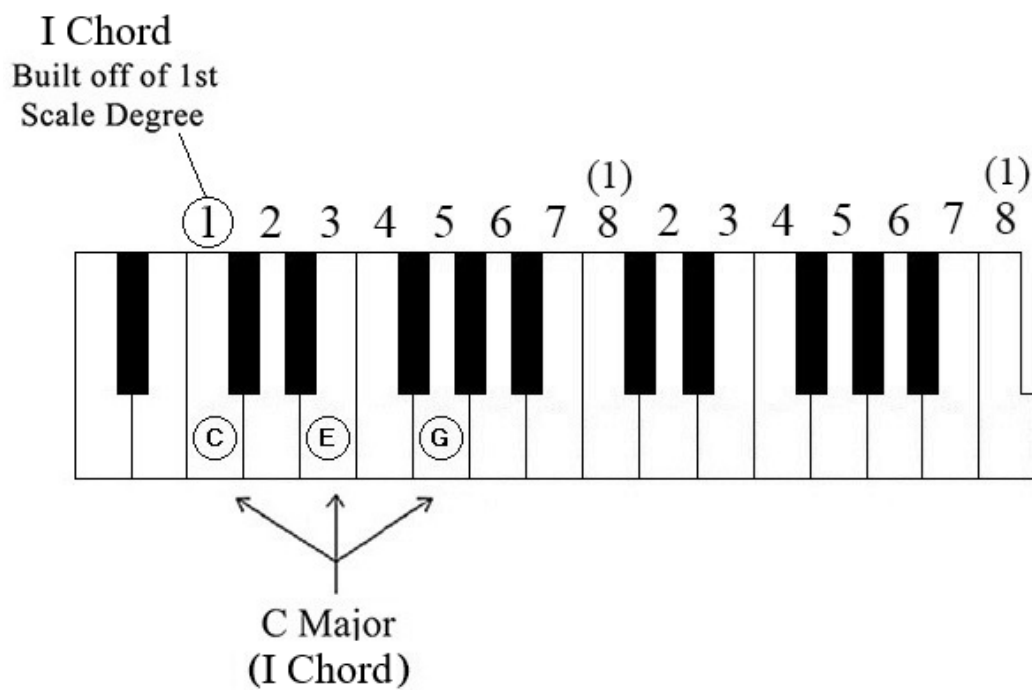
Notice that as we ascend through the scale, we encounter a 5-string segment that repeats one fret lower each time. If the guitar had 15 or even 20 strings, this repeating segment would simply continue indefinitely.

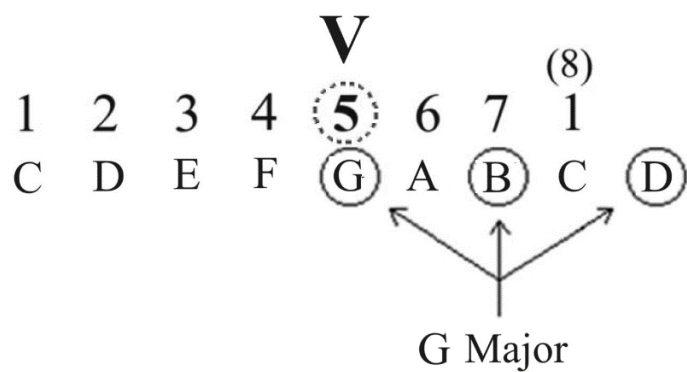
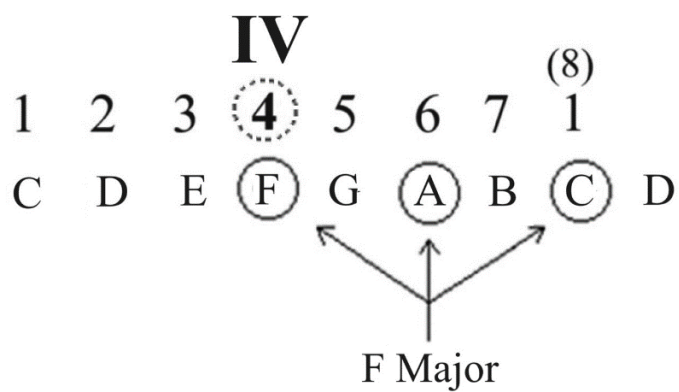
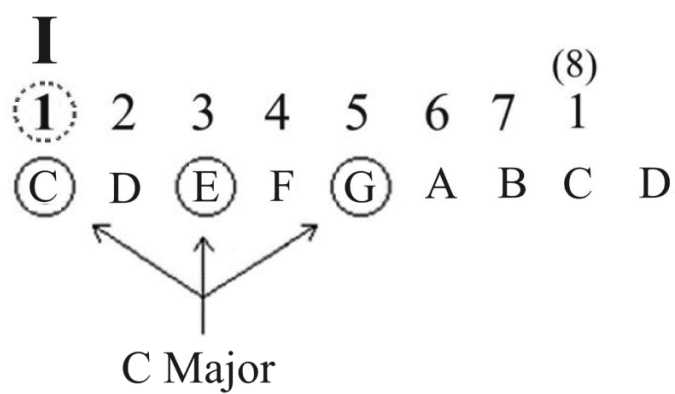


This 5-string segment, itself, can be broken down into three smaller cells, 1, 2 & 3.



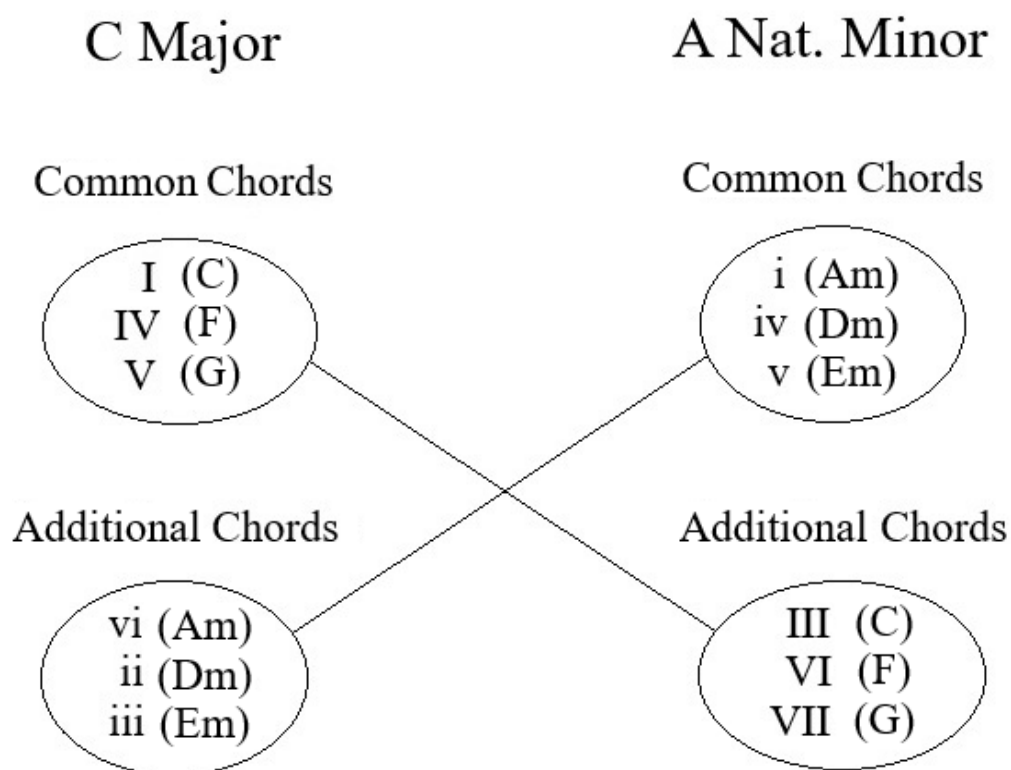
The I Chord Built from the C Major Scale





Because C major and A natural minor are *relative* scales, they contain exactly the same notes. As a result, every chord built from one scale also belongs to the other.

In the key of C major, the C, F, and G chords (I, IV, and V) are the common chords, while Am, Dm, and Em (vi, ii, and iii) can be used as additional chords. Conversely, in A natural minor, the Am, Dm, and Em chords (i, iv, and v) are the common chords, while C, F, and G (III, VI, and VII) can be used as additional chords.



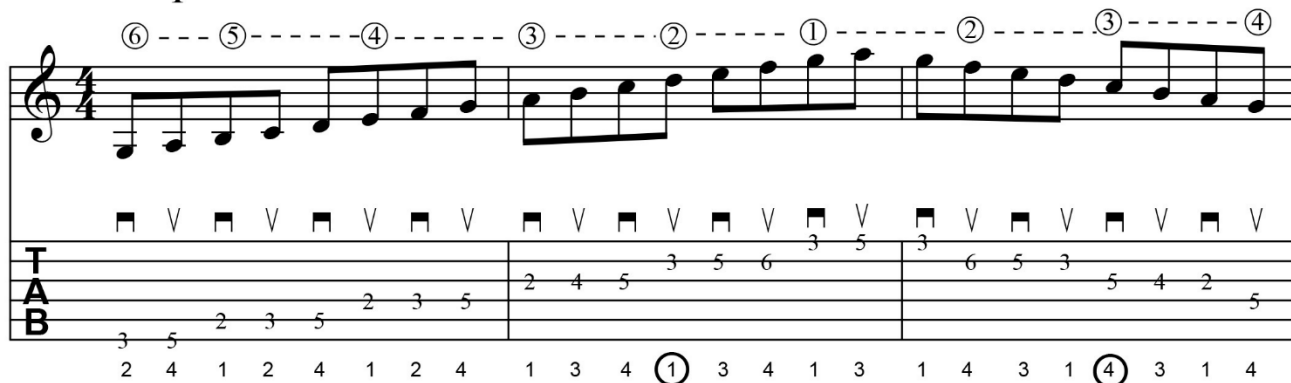
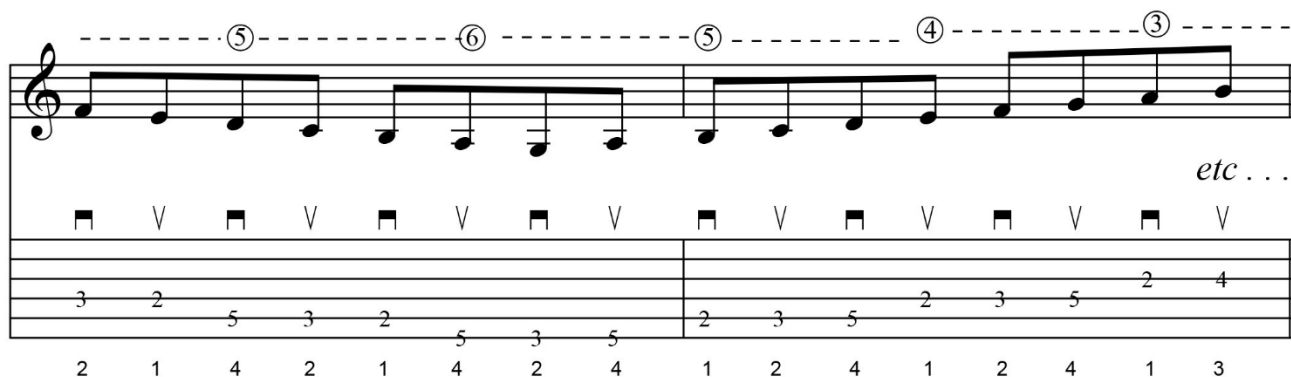
The Diatonic Scale Five-Shape System

(Key of C Major and A Natural Minor)

#100 (#67)

Shape #1:

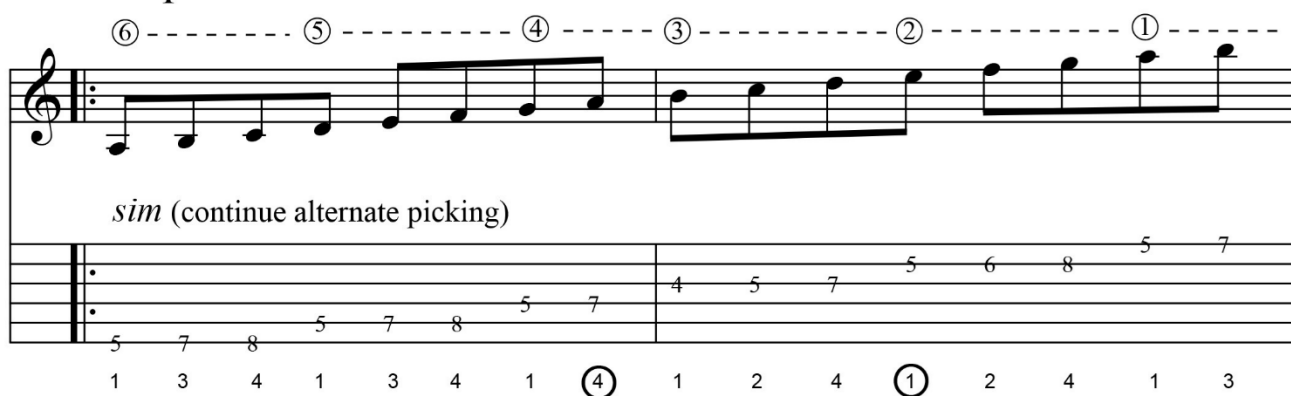
Tempo _____

etc . . .

Shape #2:

T _____



sim (continue alternate picking)

Accidentals

The sharps required for the G major and D major scales, along with their relative minors, have so far been written throughout the music using **accidentals**. An *accidental* is a sharp (#) or flat (b) sign that temporarily changes a note. It remains in effect only for the rest of the measure, so any repetition of the sharp or flat in later measures must be written again. If the same note appears more than once in the same measure, only the first accidental is required, provided both notes are on the same line or space.

G Major and Its Relative E Natural Minor Scale (Written with Accidentals)

G Major:

F# Must Be Written Again in Each New Measure

etc..

E Natural Minor:

F# Accidental Required for New measure

No Additional Accidental Required When Within the Same Measure (Also F#)

etc..

Key Signatures

Whenever a note is consistently sharpened or flattened throughout a piece of music, a key signature can be used instead of repeatedly writing accidentals. Placed at the beginning of each staff, the key signature applies to every instance of that note in every measure, regardless of octave. Since music in the key of G major or E natural minor always contains F#, a single sharp in the key signature indicates that every F is to be played as F#.

Since every major key has a relative minor that shares the same notes, each key signature is shared by both keys. For this reason, a key signature alone does not tell you whether the music is in the major key or its relative minor.

Key Signature

G Major:

etc..

E Natural Minor:

etc..

Key of A Major (Relative to F# Minor)

I
A

IV
D

V
E

I chord of Major key on 5th fret

F# Natural Minor (Relative to A Major)

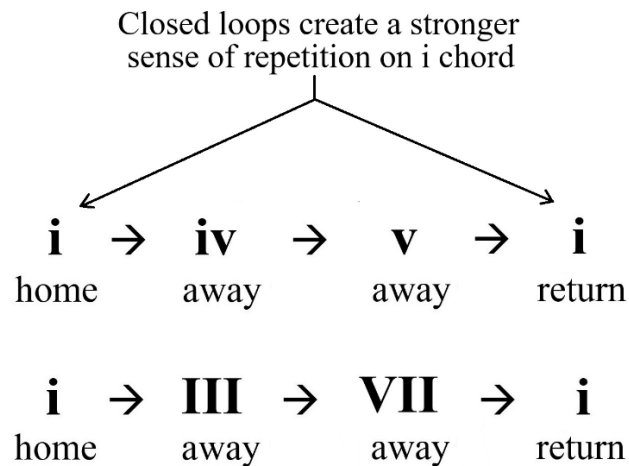
i
F#m

iv
Bm

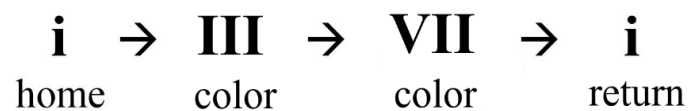
v
C#m

i chord of relative minor, down three frets (2nd fret)

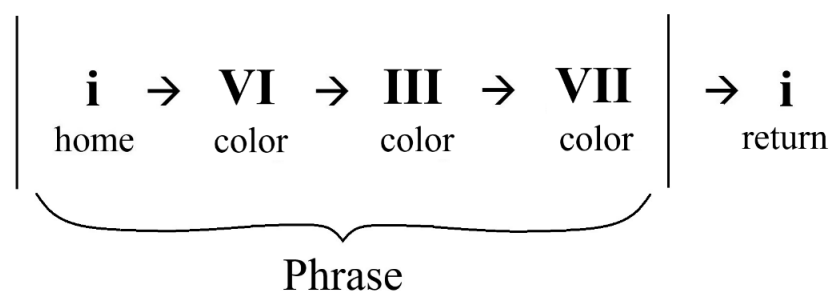
The fact that both progressions are closed loops reinforces the feeling of home, since each phrase both begins and ends on the i chord.



Color refers to a change in emotional or harmonic flavor. The III and VII, being major chords, bring a sense of *color*, contrast and emotional variety as compared to the more subdued, less dramatic feeling of the i–iv–v–i progression. This feeling of color does not bring with it any strong sense of directional pull, it merely adds harmonic flavor. We could describe the i–III–VII–i progression in this way:



Since it is unusual for there to be five chords in a phrase, adding the VI chord to this progression brings us back to the same open loop progression you learned in Exercises 131–134. We lose some sense of repetition of the i chord but the tradeoff is that the VI chord also acts as another source of color.

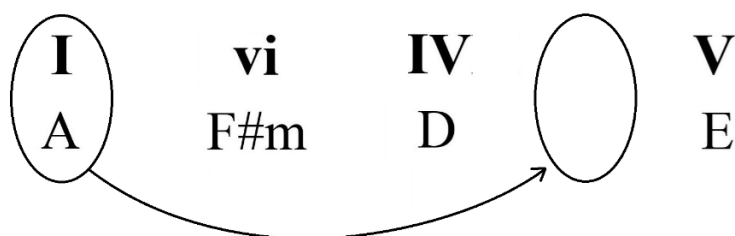


Shared Chord Structure

Here is the same I–vi–IV–V chord progression from the previous page:

I	vi	IV	V
A	F#m	D	E

If we move the A chord (I) to a different position within the progression...



...we arrive at the following:

vi	IV	I	V
F#m	D	A	E

This same progression can now be understood in F# natural minor, with F#m functioning as the i chord:

i	VI	III	VII
F#m	D	A	E

Scale Progress Chart

The first row of the chart has been completed as an example. The *Track #* field identifies the backing track or recorded loop used for each key. I typically name my iReal Pro tracks according to the exercise number and key in this method book. For example, in my naming system, *Track 136 (A)* corresponds to Exercise 136 in the key of A. If you are using a loop station or another backing-track system, simply enter whatever track name or number is most useful for your own organization.

Use the *Tempo* field to record the tempo used for each track and the *6th String Home* and *5th String Home* fields to mark your progress with each scale location. As your speed and confidence improve, you can reuse the chart by erasing the previous tempo markings and entering new values, gradually increasing the tempo with each pass. A duplicate chart is also provided on page 242 for this purpose.

#142

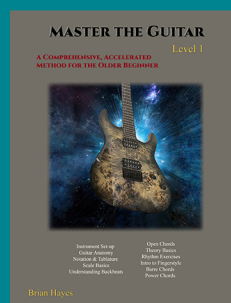
KEY	TRACK #	TEMPO	6TH STRING HOME	5TH STRING HOME
A	136 (A)	60	✓	✓
A				
E				
B				
F				
C				
G				
D				
Bb				
Eb				
F#m				
C#m				
G#m				
Dm				
Am				
Em				
Bm				
Gm				
Cm				



Hi, I'm Brian Hayes. I've been teaching guitar to students of all ages since 1996, helping thousands of players develop their skills, confidence, and love for music. My background began in rock and metal and later expanded into classical and flamenco guitar. While performance has always been important to me, teaching has been an equally strong passion.

Over the years, I've found that real progress comes from learning how the different elements of music connect. My goal is not simply to teach scales, chords, rhythms, and songs, but to help students understand how these skills work together as part of becoming a well-rounded musician. Every lesson is an opportunity to build that understanding and help students become more confident, capable, and independent musicians.

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