

THE BLUES SCALE AND ITS USE

The Blues scale consists of the following tones: Root, b3rd, 4th, #4th (b5th), 5th, and b7th. Example:

C Blues scale.... C, Eb, F, F#, G, Bb, C.

The Blues scale is used to convey a "Funky", "Bluesy", "Down-Home", or "Earthy" sound/feel. It can be played over any harmonic background - major, minor, dominant 7th, half-diminished. Be careful not to run it in the ground by overuse! Exercise good taste when playing the Blues sound. Rhythm and Blues players use this scale extensively as do Rock musicians. Experiment with the Blues scales listed below and apply them to the recorded tracks on the play-a-long recordings.

When playing in a major key use the Blues scale which is the same as the root of the major key. Example: when playing a Bb blues, use the Bb blues scale throughout. When in minor or dominant 7th keys use this same rule - choose the Blues scale which matches the key you are in. Two notes which are not part of the basic blues scale but are like first cousins are the 6th and the 2nd. Another note that is often used is the major 3rd. These added tones can help lend variety to the overall Blues phrases. Listen to the demonstration recording and the accompanying transcribed solos (in back of this book) to hear and see how this important scale can sound when played over major or minor. Use the Blues scale with other scales....use variety. Be sure to look at the page of Blues licks....see table of contents for correct page number for your instrument.

THE TWELVE BLUES SCALES (Treble & Bass Clef)

The image displays the twelve blues scales in both treble and bass clefs. The scales are arranged in two groups of six, each group containing three staves. The first group (treble clef) shows scales for C, Db, D, Eb, E, and F. The second group (bass clef) shows scales for Gb, G, Ab, A, Bb, and B. Each scale is represented by a staff with a clef, a key signature, and a sequence of notes. The notes are written in a shorthand notation where stems and beams are used to indicate intervals, and accidentals are placed above or below the notes. For example, the C blues scale in treble clef is written as C, Eb, F, F#, G, Bb, C. The scales are presented in a way that allows for easy comparison and learning of the intervals between roots.

Major, Minor and Dominant 7th Scales

Below are listed the twelve Minor (Dorian minor), Major, and Dominant 7th scales. They are written in treble and bass clef in all twelve keys. Each scale is written from the root (first note of any scale) to the 9th note of that scale. The blackened-in notes are chord tones: root, 3rd, 5th, 7th and 9th.



TREBLE CLEF SCALES

The Twelve Minor (Dorian) Scales to The 9th

C-
E_b-
F#-(6_b-)
A-
A-

The Twelve Major Scales to The 9th

C
E_b
G_b(F#)
A
A

The Twelve Dominant Seventh Scales to The 9th

C⁷
E_b⁷
F#⁷(G_b⁷)
A⁷
A⁷



BASS CLEF SCALES

The Twelve Minor (Dorian) Scales to The 9th

C-
E_b-
G_b-(F#-)
A-
A-

The Twelve Major Scales to The 9th

C
E_b
G_b(F#)
A
A

The Twelve Dominant Seventh Scales to The 9th

C⁷
E_b⁷
F#⁷(G_b⁷)
A⁷
A⁷

12 MAJOR PENTATONIC SCALES

TREBLE CLEF

Musical notation for 12 major pentatonic scales in treble clef. The scales are arranged in two rows of four. The first row contains scales for C, F, Bb, and Eb. The second row contains scales for Ab, Db, Gb, and B. The third row contains scales for E, A, D, and G. Each scale is written on a five-line staff with a treble clef and a key signature symbol above the staff. The notes are represented by circles with stems, and the scales are written in a sequence of five notes each.

12 MINOR PENTATONIC SCALES

Musical notation for 12 minor pentatonic scales in treble clef. The scales are arranged in two rows of four. The first row contains scales for C-, F-, Bb-, and Eb-. The second row contains scales for Ab-, Db-, Gb-, and B-. The third row contains scales for E-, A-, D-, and G-. Each scale is written on a five-line staff with a treble clef and a key signature symbol above the staff. The notes are represented by circles with stems, and the scales are written in a sequence of five notes each.

BASS CLEF

12 MAJOR PENTATONIC SCALES

Musical notation for 12 major pentatonic scales in bass clef. The scales are arranged in two rows of four. The first row contains scales for C, F, Bb, and Eb. The second row contains scales for Ab, Db, Gb, and B. The third row contains scales for E, A, D, and G. Each scale is written on a five-line staff with a bass clef and a key signature symbol above the staff. The notes are represented by circles with stems, and the scales are written in a sequence of five notes each.

12 MINOR PENTATONIC SCALES

Musical notation for 12 minor pentatonic scales in bass clef. The scales are arranged in two rows of four. The first row contains scales for C-, F-, Bb-, and Eb-. The second row contains scales for Ab-, Db-, Gb-, and B-. The third row contains scales for E-, A-, D-, and G-. Each scale is written on a five-line staff with a bass clef and a key signature symbol above the staff. The notes are represented by circles with stems, and the scales are written in a sequence of five notes each.