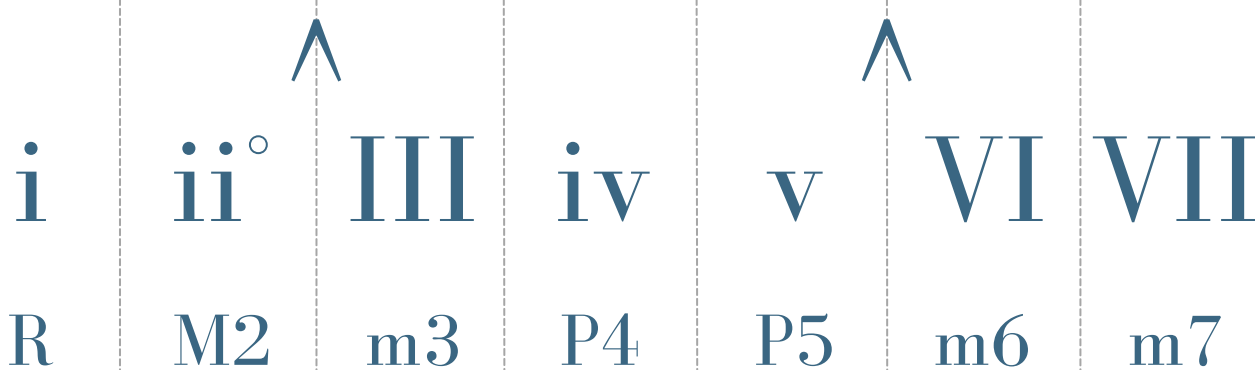
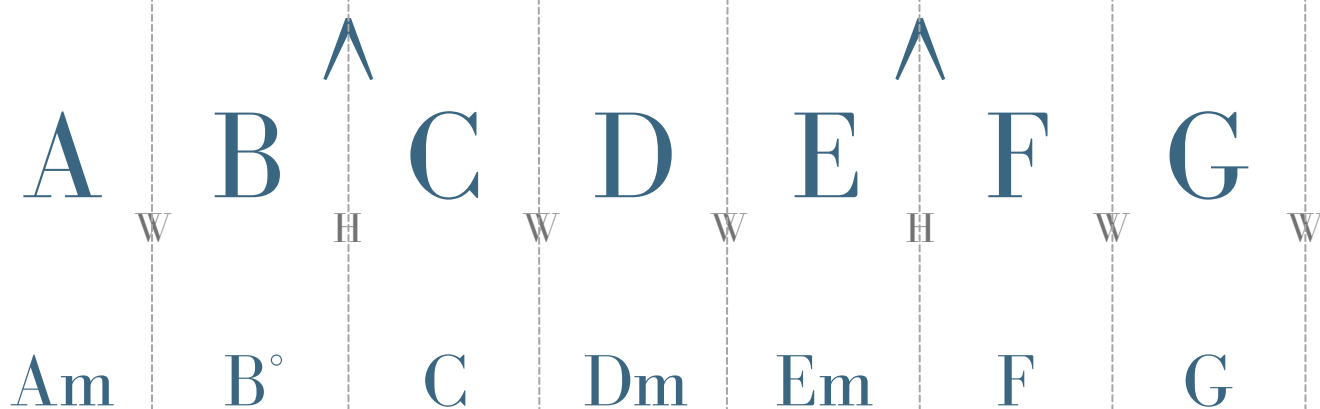


Minor Scale



A Minor Scale



How to read the Minor Scale sheet

This document contains a lot of information about the **Natural Minor Scale** (or Minor Scale for short) ! However at first sight it might seem confusing, let's explain everything.

The first thing to notice is the second line, it is written : R, M2, m3, P4, P5, m6 and m7. They represent the **intervals contained within the Minor Scale** from the root. They inform how to build the Minor Scale from any note.

The first line gives the **scale degrees**. A capital letters represent major chords whereas minuscule letters represent minor chords. For example, in the Minor Scale, the chord built based on the third note will always be a minor chord. The chord built based on the fifth note will always be a minor chord. The second chord is a diminished chord noted ii°.

The second part of the sheet provides an example of a given Minor Scale for a particular root note predefined, here A. It shows the notes in the **A Minor Scale**. You can see W and H between notes, they indicate whether a Whole tone or Half tone separate the notes.

The last line shows the chords material for the given A Minor Scale.

Why does the Minor Scale matter ?

To put it shortly for four reasons :

- The Minor Scale is overused in Western harmony. If you have to learn one scale, this is the one : **the Minor Scale is used everywhere**. You will need to master it in order to understand more advanced topics such as modes
- To **understand how most Western songs are built** and how to create your first own songs
- To **understand how to improvise** solos for lead guitar
- In the end, **get the bigger picture** of the music you hear everyday

Minor Scale - Harmony

Let us decompose the learning of Harmony of the Minor Scale with different exercises.

1 - Understanding the chords material within the Minor Scale would be a great first step. Understanding why these chords are of this quality and the distance that separate each of them is the first thing to learn. In order to practice the understand of that, I would suggest you pick any note. Try to construct the Minor Scale where the root is the chosen note. Deduce the seven notes contained in this Minor Scale and the chords in it by writing them down. Play the chords on your instrument.

2 - Select a song you like that uses the Minor Scale. If you don't know how to find one, just choose one where the first chord is a Minor Chord. Start for example with *I shot the sheriff from Bob Marley* which is in G Minor. **Construct the Minor Scale** doing the steps from the exercise 1 and apply it on the song. Determine the Minor Scale degree of each chord in the song.

If there are chords that do not belong to the Minor Scale it is ok. Try to understand, feel and research why it sounds good in that context.

3 - You can **start creating your first music**. Try respecting some rules at the beginning using what you know about the scale degrees and their roles. Generally we even say that chords in each degree have a function ; in music theory we call this approach **Functional Harmony**.

For example, you can create a 4 chords progression song, this is the most common pattern. You can explore these scale degrees on top of a metronome :

i - VI - III - VII

i - ? - iv - v

i - ? - VI - VII

A ? means you can put any degree here.

4 - I recommend you learn the CAGED system and apply it on the minor scale chords. There is a course on the CAGED system in the advanced courses.

Minor Scale - Melody

Let us decompose the learning of Melody of the Minor Scale with different exercises.

1 - Learn and understand the **pentatonic minor scale**. See the pentatonic PDF lesson in the intermediate courses. Discover the scale and spend time understanding the role of each note in one position of the pentatonic minor scale. The role is defined by the interval from the tonic.

2 - Choose **one scale pattern** that you can play up and down. You can put a minor backing track and play on top of it.

3 - Learn the two other pentatonic minor scale patterns that as next to the one you have already learned. Put a minor backing track and play on top of it. Learn some **embellishments** (pull-off, hammer-on, slide, bends etc...). There is a course on that topic in the intermediate courses.

4 - Learn all the patterns. Put a minor backing track and play on top of it using all the pattern. Try exploring the ways of playing the scale on the whole neck. Horizontally and vertically. Now that you know all the patterns and can play the scale on the whole neck, it is time to **learn licks**. Spend time looking for licks or learn solos from your favorite guitarists.

5 - Now you are familiar with the pentatonic minor scale you can use the whole **diatonic minor scale**. This will add two notes to the pentatonic minor scale. Those two notes are the 2nd and 6th notes. Play on top of a minor backing track. Spend some time focusing on the two news notes compared to the pentatonic minor scale.

6 - Play along chord changes. The idea is that instead of just playing random notes from the scale, try playing notes that are in each chords as the chords changes. Highlight the colors of each chords (emphasize the root and the third). Make the connection between the melodic way of seeing the minor scale and the harmonic way of seeing it. Understand that chords are hidden behind every scale patterns.

Minor Scale

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i	ii [°]	III	iv	v	VI	VII
R	M2	m3	P4	P5	m6	m7
<i>A Minor Scale</i>						
Am	B [°]	C	Dm	Em	F	G
Am7	Bm7b5	CΔ	Dm7	Em7	FΔ	G7
Acolian	Locrian	Ionian	Dorian	Phrygian	Lydian	Mixolydian