

# Melodic Minor Scale

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i	ii	III <sup>+</sup>	IV	V	vi <sup>°</sup>	vii <sup>°</sup>	
R	M2	m3	P4	P5	M6	M7	

## *A Melodic Minor Scale*

Am	Bm	C <sup>+</sup>	D	E	F <sup>°</sup>	G <sup>°</sup>
AmΔ	Bm7	CΔ <sup>#5</sup>	D7	E7	Fm7b5	Gm7b5
Melodic Minor	Dorian b2	Lydian <sup>#5</sup>	Lydian Dominant	Mixolydian b6	Aeolian b5	Superlocrian
Jazz Minor	Phrygian Natural 6		Overtone Scale	Melodic Major	Locrian Natural 2	Altered Scale
			Lydian b7	Hindu Scale		Alt. Dominant
			Mixolydian <sup>#4</sup>	Spanish Phrygian		
			Acoustic Scale			

# How to read the Melodic Minor Scale sheet

This document contains a lot of information ! 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 Melodic Minor Scale** from the root. They inform how to build the Melodic 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 Melodic 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 Melodic Minor Scale for a particular root note predefined, here A. It shows the notes in the **A Melodic Minor Scale**.

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

## Why does the Melodic Minor Scale matter ?

To put it shortly for three reasons :

- To **create your first own minor songs** with more interesting sounds you would not be able to produce if you only used the Natural Minor Scale chords.
- In the end, **get the bigger picture** of the music you hear everyday
- **The Harmonic Minor Scale is not that used in Western harmony on its own.** However it is a great complement to the natural minor scale that composers use to make great songs
- **Create great jazzy sounding music**

# About the Melodic Minor Scale

The Melodic Minor Scale is named this way because it is used a lot for melodic construction as a complement to the Natural Minor Scale.

In music theory, there are three minor scales :

- **Natural Minor Scale** – or Minor Scale for short as this is the most common. It is overused everywhere and you can hear it in most of the Western songs.
- **Harmonic Minor Scale** – it provides great harmonic or chord materials to support the Natural Minor Scale.
- **Melodic Minor Scale** – it provides great melodic extensions and it typically used in jazz because of its jazzy sound. This is the one we are interested in here.

Remember that the **Harmonic Minor Scale was created to remove a flaw** of the Natural Minor Scale : it does not have a leading tone compared to the Major Scale. Thus, the Natural Minor Scale lacks a leading tone and a dominant chord : the Harmonic Minor Scale corrects these flaws. This is why a Harmonic Minor Scale is a Natural Minor Scale with a raised 7th degree.

However, introducing the leading tone this way in the Natural Minor Scale creates a new flaw : we create a weird interval, a 1.5 tone interval between the 6th and 7th notes.

We can comprehend the Melodic Minor Scale as a Harmonic Minor Scale with a raised 6th degree. This way we dilute the strong oriental sound created by the 1.5 tone interval. We make the scale more like a Minor or Major Scale with only single and semi tone intervals.

Another way of seeing this scale, is by considering it as a **Major Scale with a minor third**. This vision is really helpful.

It is good to have both ideas in mind. Knowing from where a scale comes from is useful to get some insights of how musicians use it and why it exists in the first place.