

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 systems of three staves each. The first system (treble clef) shows scales for C, Db, D, Eb, E, F, Gb, and G. The second system (bass clef) shows scales for C, Db, D, Eb, E, F, Gb, and G. Each scale is represented by a sequence of notes on a five-line staff, with the root note and scale name labeled above the staff. The notes are written in a shorthand notation where stems and flags are used to indicate intervals.

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- F- Bb-
 Eb- Ab- C#- (Db-)
 F#- (Gb-) E-
 A- D- G-

The Twelve Major Scales to The 9th

C F Bb
 Eb Db (Cb)
 Gb (F#) E
 A D G

The Twelve Dominant Seventh Scales to The 9th

C7 F7 Bb7
 Eb7 Ab7 Db7 (Cb7)
 F#7 (Gb7) E7
 A7 D7 G7



BASS CLEF SCALES

The Twelve Minor (Dorian) Scales to The 9th

C- F- Bb-
 Eb- Ab- Db- (Cb-)
 Gb- (F#-) E-
 A- D- G-

The Twelve Major Scales to The 9th

C F Bb
 Eb Db
 Gb (F#) E
 A D G

The Twelve Dominant Seventh Scales to The 9th

C7 F7 Bb7
 Eb7 Ab7 Db7 (Cb7)
 F#7 (Gb7) E7
 A7 D7 G7

12 MAJOR PENTATONIC SCALES

TREBLE CLEF

Musical notation for 12 major pentatonic scales in treble clef. The scales are arranged in three rows of four. The first row contains C, F, Bb, and Eb. The second row contains Ab, Db, Gb, and B. The third row contains E, A, D, and G. Each scale is written as a five-note sequence on a staff.

12 MINOR PENTATONIC SCALES

Musical notation for 12 minor pentatonic scales in treble clef. The scales are arranged in three rows of four. The first row contains C-, F-, Bb-, and Eb-. The second row contains Ab-, Db-, Gb-, and B-. The third row contains E-, A-, D-, and G-. Each scale is written as a five-note sequence on a staff.

BASS CLEF

12 MAJOR PENTATONIC SCALES

Musical notation for 12 major pentatonic scales in bass clef. The scales are arranged in three rows of four. The first row contains C, F, Bb, and Eb. The second row contains Ab, Db, Gb, and B. The third row contains E, A, D, and G. Each scale is written as a five-note sequence on a staff.

12 MINOR PENTATONIC SCALES

Musical notation for 12 minor pentatonic scales in bass clef. The scales are arranged in three rows of four. The first row contains C-, F-, Bb-, and Eb-. The second row contains Ab-, Db-, Gb-, and B-. The third row contains E-, A-, D-, and G-. Each scale is written as a five-note sequence on a staff.