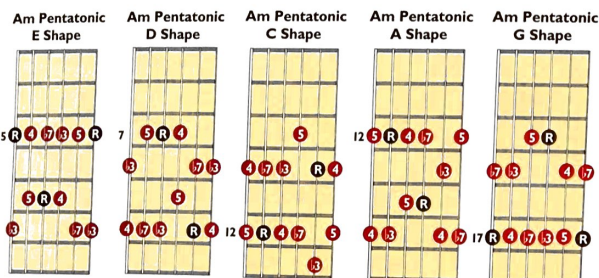


8 Blues Scales... ...you need to know!

R=A

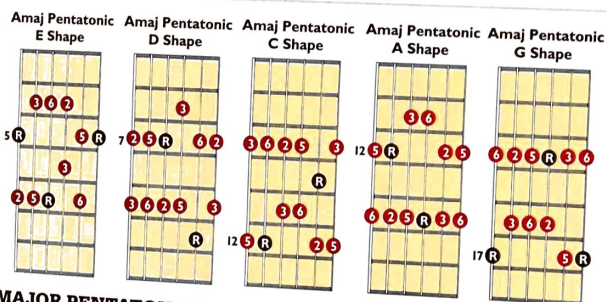


1 MINOR PENTATONIC SCALE

A	C	D	E	G
R	b3	4	5	b7

The minor pentatonic scale's five notes have shaped blues, rock and beyond. It sounds great and is easy

to use, but many players curse the fact that their fingers fall into the same place every time they play. Please learn all the shapes and aim to come up with a new lick each time you play them. This scale is perfect for soloing over minor blues or chord progressions featuring 7th chords.

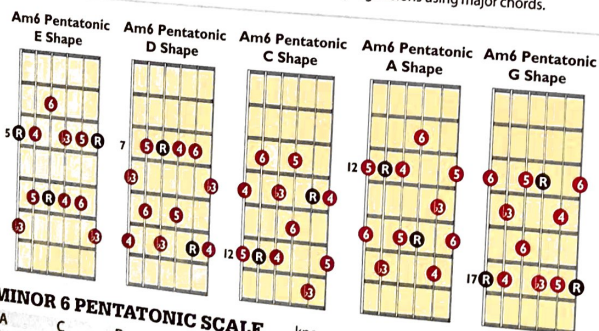


2 MAJOR PENTATONIC SCALE

A	B	C#	E	F#
R	2	3	5	6

If you've heard Slash and BB King then you are acquainted with this one. It's simply the major scale

with the 4th and 7th removed, and fluency with this scale is essential, particularly if you want to become adept at mixing major and minor sounds in your solos – this is one of the most important aspects of blues. This is perfect for soloing over common blues or rock progressions using major chords.

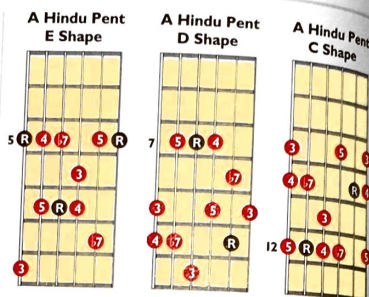


3 MINOR 6 PENTATONIC SCALE

A	C	D	E	F#
R	b3	4	5	6

A close cousin of the minor pentatonic, this is also

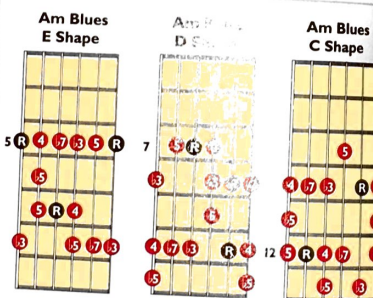
known as the Dorian pentatonic. This scale has the b7 replaced by a major 6 (in the key of Am the G becomes F#). It's a jazzy sound beloved of players like Robben Ford and Larry Carlton, but also of blues men like BB King. Use it over a minor blues or m7 chords.



4 HINDU PENTATONIC SCALE

A	C#	D	E	G
R	3	4	5	b7

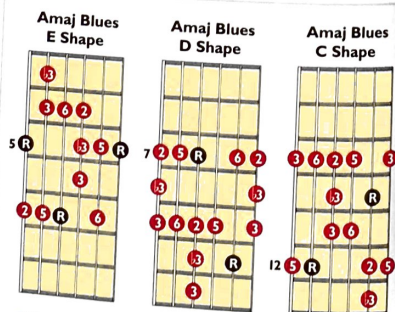
Used by players like Jeff Beck and Eric Johnson this exotic sounding scale creates a really powerful



5 BLUES SCALES: MINOR BLUES SCALE

A	C	D	E ^b	E	G
R	b3	4	b5	5	b7

As their name implies you can't go wrong with



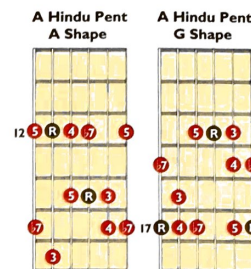
5 BLUES SCALES: MAJOR BLUES SCALE

A	B	C	C#	E	F#
R	2	b3	3	5	6

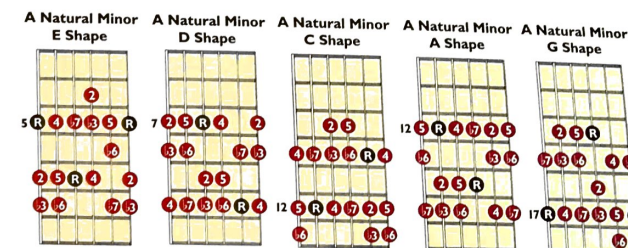
The range of scales you can use in blues is almost endless, so here are some of the most important; play them on their own or in combination, but always aim to use them to make music, and not to sound like exercises...

BLUES SCALES LESSON

Learn all five shapes of each scale. This unlocks the fretboard and lets you see the neck as a single entity, allowing you to connect notes and phrases at will. This makes you sound fluent, leading to longer, flowing solos; it also stops you getting stuck in ruts. A good idea is to practise up one shape then down another.



sound and is a great means of sounding more sophisticated. You'll find it perfect for soloing over a dominant 7th chord or a progression of dominant 7ths.

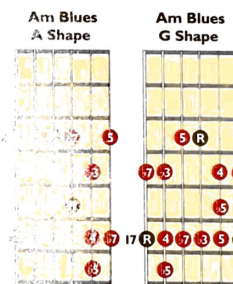


6 NATURAL MINOR SCALE

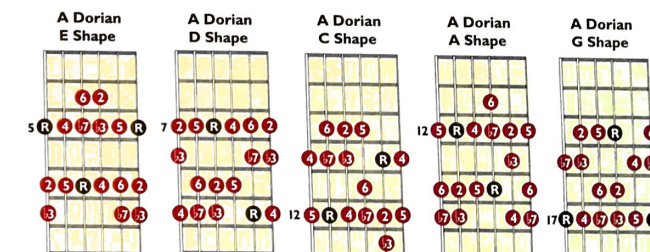
A	B	C	D	E	F	G
R	2	b3	4	5	b6	b7

Also referred to as the Aeolian mode the natural minor scale is perfect for getting those emotive

Santana-esque Latin sounds into your playing. The minor 6 (F in the key of Am) helps give it this quality. Perfect for soloing over minor blues, for Latin influenced songs or of course for getting that mystical Santana sound into your playing. Players like Peter Green and Rory Gallagher used it too.



these when playing blues. Think of the minor blues scale as a minor pentatonic with an added b5th (in the key of A this would be Eb). Great for soloing over minor or major (also called dominant 7) blues.

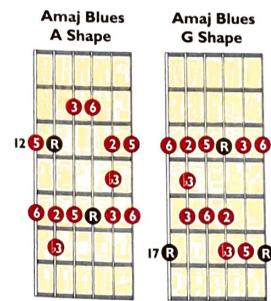


7 DORIAN MODE

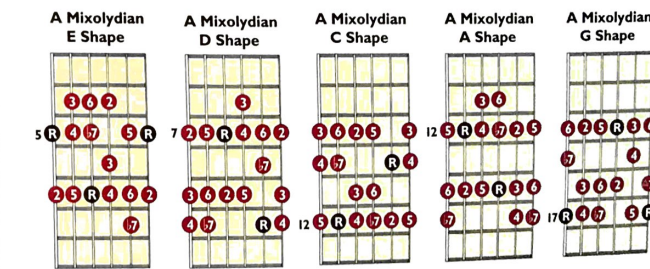
A	B	C	D	E	F#	G
R	2	b3	4	5	6	b7

Ideal for jazzy blues licks, the Dorian is a great way to get those modern blues sounds – the major 6 (F# in

the key of Am) really adds some spice. The Dorian is perfect for jazzing up a minor blues progression or songs featuring m7 chords – compare this to the similar minor 6 pentatonic. Sophisticated players and some traditional blues men, such as Albert Collins, have employed this scale.



The major blues scale is a major pentatonic that has a minor 3rd as well as a major 3rd. Again, this scale is perfect for weaving between major and minor sounds.



8 MIXOLYDIAN MODE

A	B	C	D	E	F#	G
R	2	3	4	5	6	b7

You could think of this as the major scale with its 7th

flattened. The inclusion of a major 3rd and a minor 7th (b7) make this the perfect choice for soloing over progressions featuring 7th (dominant 7) chords. Check out how Gary Moore used the Mixolydian in an up-tempo, rock-blues context.