

ANATOMY OF A SEVEN NOTE SCALE pt.1

Ok, not the sexiest title but bear with with me. This lesson deals with a hierarchical approach for any 7 note scale. This is a great way of extracting loads of goodies that you may not have considered or realised were there in the first place.

THE BREAKDOWN

1. SCALE 7 note structure
2. SEXATONICS 6 note structure
3. PENTATONICS 5 note structure
4. ARPEGGIOS 4 note structure
5. TRIADS 3 note structure
6. DYADS 2 note structure

Our candidate - the A dorian, why dorian? it's sounds cool, it's versatile and there's no avoid notes.

A dorian = $\overset{1}{A} \overset{2}{B} \overset{\flat 3}{C} \overset{4}{D} \overset{5}{E} \overset{6}{F\#} \overset{\flat 7}{G} \overset{1}{A}$

$\underbrace{\hspace{1.5em}}_{\text{tone}} \underbrace{\hspace{1.5em}}_{\text{semi-tone}} \underbrace{\hspace{1.5em}}_{\text{tone}} \underbrace{\hspace{1.5em}}_{\text{tone}} \underbrace{\hspace{1.5em}}_{\text{tone}} \underbrace{\hspace{1.5em}}_{\text{semi-tone}} \underbrace{\hspace{1.5em}}_{\text{tone}}$

The 7 note scale itself is typically separated into 7 positions via the CAGED system or the 3 note per string system. Hopefully that shouldn't be news to you (if it is - check lesson 27- **THE CAGED SYSTEM FOR SCALES** and lesson 28 -**THE 3 NOTE PER STRING SCALE SYSTEM**).

PENTATONICS

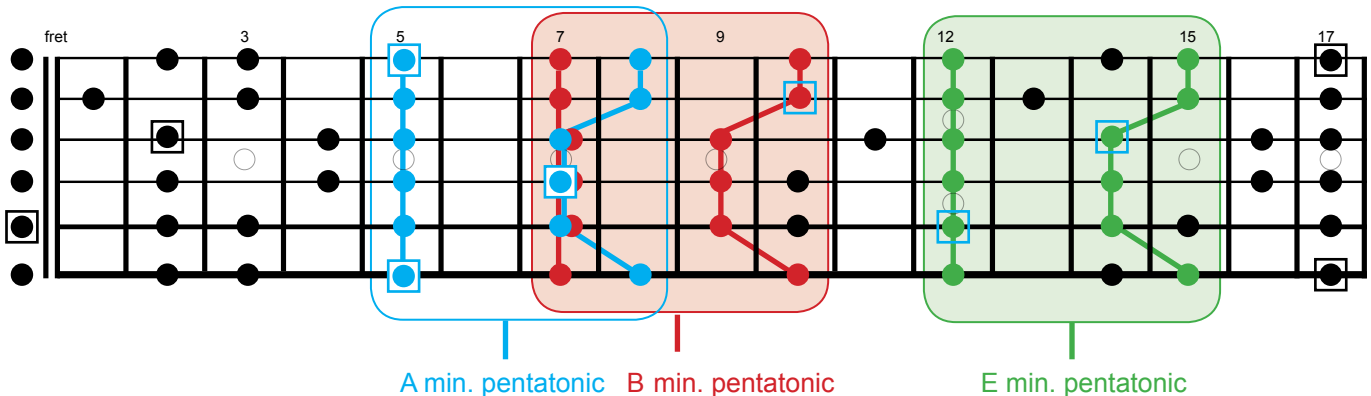
The A dorian contains 3 distinct minor pentatonics. All work over an A min 7 (dorian).

A dorian = $\overset{\square}{A} B C D E F\# G \overset{\square}{A}$

A minor pentatonic = $A C D E G$

B minor pentatonic = $B D E F\# A$

E minor pentatonic = $E G A B D$



SEXATONICS

We kicked off with the familiar root position minor pent. patterns. The blues scale variants (simply the min pentatonics with the $\#4/\flat 5$ added) offer some non - scale tone chromatic passing notes.

A dorian = $\overset{\square}{A} B C D E F\# G \overset{\square}{A}$

A blues scale = $A C \underline{D\#} E G$

B blues scale = $B D \underline{E\flat} F\# A$

E blues scale = $E G \underline{A\#} B D$

LESSON 71

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A dorian shares the same notes as any G major mode derivative - therefore each of these 3 minor pentatonics are embedded in all of them. Please note I'm being 'minorcentric' feel free to name as major pentatonic where indicated.

The numbers above each min. pent. indicate the root of the scale relative to the chord root.

		THINK OFF	THINK OFF	THINK OFF
G^{M7}	G MAJOR	2 A min. pent. (C maj pent)	3 B min. pent. (D maj pent)	6 E min. pent. (G maj pent)
A⁻⁷	A DORIAN	1 A min. pent.	2 B min. pent.	5 E min. pent.
B⁻⁷	B PHRYGIAN	1 B min. pent.	4 E min. pent.	^b 7 A min. pent.
C^{M7}	C LYDIAN	7 B min. pent. (D maj pent)	3 E min. pent. (G maj pent)	6 A min. pent. (C maj pent)
D⁷	D MIXOLYDIAN	6 B min. pent. (D maj pent)	2 E min. pent. (G maj pent)	5 A min. pent. (C maj pent)
E⁻⁷	E AEOLIAN	1 E min. pent.	4 A min. pent.	5 B min. pent.
F[#]-⁷^b5	F [#] LOCRIAN	^b 3 A min. pent.	4 B min. pent.	^b 7 E min. pent.

Remember all of these minor pentatonics can be converted to their blues scale equivalents - thus creating sextonic structures.

There are more possibilities for pentatonics (and sextatonics) within the major mode system. I've opted for the conventional minor pentatonic.

You may like to consider how pentatonics can work over the melodic minor, harmonic minor and even the melodic major mode systems.

Hint - for melodic minor - try minor 6 pentatonic 1 ^b3 4 5 6
for harmonic minor - try min maj7 pentatonic 1 ^b3 4 5 7

Don't use these options indiscriminately you do need to choose the right framework, for instance jazz players may find themselves in situations where these can be applied more readily than metal players, it totally depends on the style.