



What is the Major Scale and How to Use it

Hello friends,

In today's six part lesson I'll be teaching you about the origins of the major scale, how to perform it, and how to apply it to your lead guitar work. Once we understand the technical and theoretical aspects, we'll move on to learning some beginner friendly phrases, and a more complex phrase for your lick of the week. Let's get started!

1) What is the Major Scale?

The major scale is easily the most important element of music theory because it is used to create melodies, harmonies and common chord progressions. There are many scales in music, each is formed by performing a set series of whole steps (two frets distance) and half steps (one fret). The major scale runs on the pattern **W, W, H, W, W, W, H**.

[Click here for an in-depth video tutorial on music theory.](#)

2) The A Major Scale - Common E Position:

A, B, C#, D, E, F#, G#, A (Red = Root Notes)

E		-----4-5-	
B		-----5-7----	
G		-----4-6-7-----	
D		-----4-6-7-----	
A		-----4-5-7-----	
E		-----5-7-----	

3) The Major Scale in thirds:

Next we will practice a powerful exercise that will increase your agility and dexterity, but also help you to visualize the chord harmonies inside the scale pattern:

	Amaj	Bm	C#m	Dmaj	Emaj	F#m	G#m	Amaj	Bm	C#m	Dmaj	Emaj	F#m	G#m	Amaj
E		-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
B		-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
G		-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
D		-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
A		-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
E		-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

[Click here for a tutorial dedicated to this technique.](#)





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4) Chord Arpeggios Inside the Scale

In this section of our lesson, we will pick out three note arpeggios for each of the chords in our backing track. Visualizing these chord shapes will help you find the notes that work best over a given chord.

Amaj, C#m, Dmaj, Emaj.

E	-----4-----5-----4-
B	-----5-----5-----7-----5---
G	---6---6---7---4---
D	7-----
A	-----
E	-----

5) Three Beginner Friendly Phrases

Next let's learn a few easy licks that beginner lead players can use to class up there playing.

#1 (over A)	#2 (Leads into Dmaj)	#3 (We add in the bluesy effect of a b3)
E -----5v----- -5-7p5/4----- -----5-7--7/9--5-7h8p7p5--5v-		
B -----5-7----- -----5----- -/7-----7-		
G -----/6----- -----6-4-7- -----		
D ---4-7- ----- -----		
A 7- ----- ----- -----		
E ----- ----- ----- -----		

6) Our Lick of the Week

Let's apply some of our new tools to create a run that last the entire duration of our main chord progression Amaj, C#, D, A.

Amaj	C#m	Dmaj	Amaj
E ---5-7/9---5-7---5---5-4-----5---5-----			
B 5h7-----7-5-7-----5-----5-5h7--7p5--5-----			
G -----6--4h6-----7---4h6--			
D -----			
A -----			
E -----			

[Click here for a full list of every lick of the week](#)

[Click here to access the R&B style-backing track.](#)



7) The A Major Scale - G Position

This position of the major scale is very popular because it can be reduced down to a very easy to comfortable pentatonic (five note) version.

Full Scale	Pentatonic Version
E -----2-4-5-----	E -----2-5-----
B -----2-3-5-----	B -----2-5-----
G -----1-2-4-----	G -----2-4-----
D -----2-4-----	D -----2-4-----
A -----2-4-5-----	A -----2-4-----
E -5-----	E -5-----

8) Bonus Licks

Now let's learn two additional licks that combine both positions of our major scale in A.

#1	#2
E -----	E -----/4-----
B -----5-----	B -----5-7-/5--5-5-3-2--
G -----2--4/6--6/4p2-2v--	G -----2--4/6--5-6-4-2--
D -2h4-----4-----	D -2h4-----
A -----	A -----
E -----	E -----