

Major Scales

Now that we have looked at half steps, whole steps, sharps, and flats, it is time to use the notes in the context of a scale. A scale is a series of notes that starts and ends on the same root note. The root note that we begin the scale on is also the name of scale. A scale can be played ascending (moving up in pitch), and descending (moving down in pitch).

To begin, let's look at the C major scale. The order of notes for C major is:



Notice the pattern of whole steps and half steps within the scale. This pattern will help us find the notes for the other eleven major keys we can work with.

Exercise #1

Before we begin playing the scales across the neck, try playing some one octave major scales up and down a single string. Here are a few examples:

- C major starting from C, 3rd fret, 5th string
- G major starting from G, 3rd fret, 6th string
- F major starting from F, 1st fret, 1st string

You can try this exercise with ANY scale you encounter. Be sure to say the name of each note as you play it. By doing this we can identify the pattern of whole steps and half steps as well as the notes contained within the scale.

Once you feel comfortable with the single string scale approach, try playing across the strings starting with the examples on the pages that follow.