

READING 3

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BASS READING 3

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Objective

Bass Reading 3 will continue with the fundamental to intermediate process of reading music and the basic terminology used in writing traditional music notation. Upon completion of this course the student will have increased experience in basic chart navigation, full recognition of notes up to the fourteenth fret on the neck of the bass, enhanced ability to read written bass clef notation, and familiarity with reading and playing in the appropriate position for a given piece of written music.

Longer-form examples of bass clef charts will be introduced that will prepare the student for many different real-world work situations. There will be examples of sheet music typically found in recording sessions, theatre pits, jazz and big bands, orchestral scores, cover bands, function bands, Latin bands, on cruise ships, etc.

Recurring Subjects in Bass Reading 3:

- Exploring the Fingerboard.
- Reading Rhythms.
- Reading Harmony/Polyphony.
- Symbols and Terms.
- Charts/Real-World Reading.
- Concepts/Exercises/Lectures.

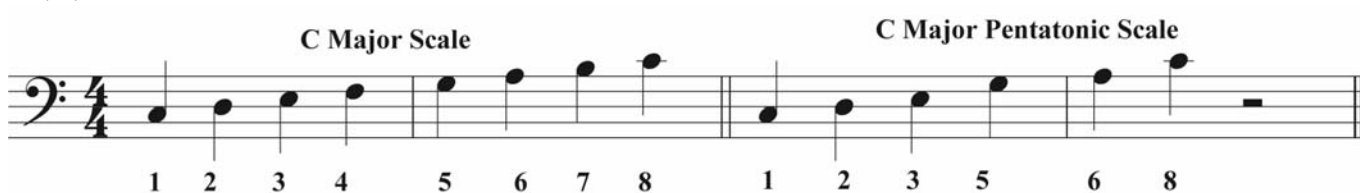
Chapter 1:

Exploring the Fingerboard: Seventh Position Key of C Major, Ninth Position Key of G Major, and Their Pentatonic Scales.

Pentatonic Scale: "Penta" is the Greek word for "five." "Tonic" simply means "tone." "Pentatonic" is therefore a five-tone scale that is the most globally recognized organization of musical notes. There is a pentatonic scale in almost every musical tradition in the world.

The major pentatonic scale uses five tones that are a subset of the seven notes that make up the normal major scale. A major scale is constructed like so: 1-do, 2-re, 3-mi, 4-fa, 5-sol, 6-la, 7-ti, and 8-do.

Ex. 1.1

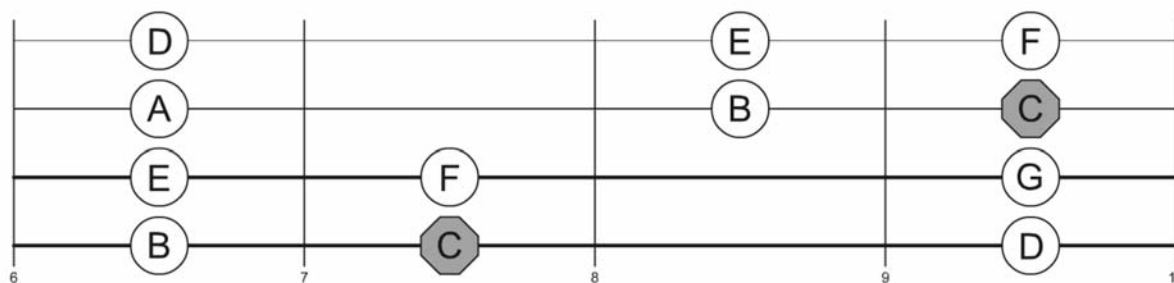


The pentatonic scale leaves out the fourth and seventh degrees of the major scale and is constructed: 1-do, 2-re, 3-mi, 5-sol, 6-la, and 8-do.

Here are all of the available notes in the C major scale in seventh position from frets seven through ten.

Ex. 1.2

Fingerboard Diagram, C Major Scale, Seventh Position.



Using one finger per fret, the full range of available notes in the key of C in seventh position with no shifts is written on the staff below. Note that the available notes in the key extend above and below the root C as indicated. Play a C major scale in this position to get the sound of the key in your ear before beginning the exercises. Always resolve back to a root C note to establish the home key tonality.

Recall that the use of ledger lines above the staff merely increases the range of the staff. All intervals between lines and spaces above the staff remain consistent with those occurring within the staff. It is quite common to see up to three or occasionally four ledger lines above the staff in bass notation.

If a significant portion of a melody is higher than the third ledger line above, which is the pitch G at the twelfth fret of the G string, it is usually preferable to write the part within the staff an octave lower than it sounds. The symbol “8va” is written under these passages to indicate that the part is to be played up an octave from where it is written.

Ex. 1.3

Staff, C Major Scale, Seventh Position.

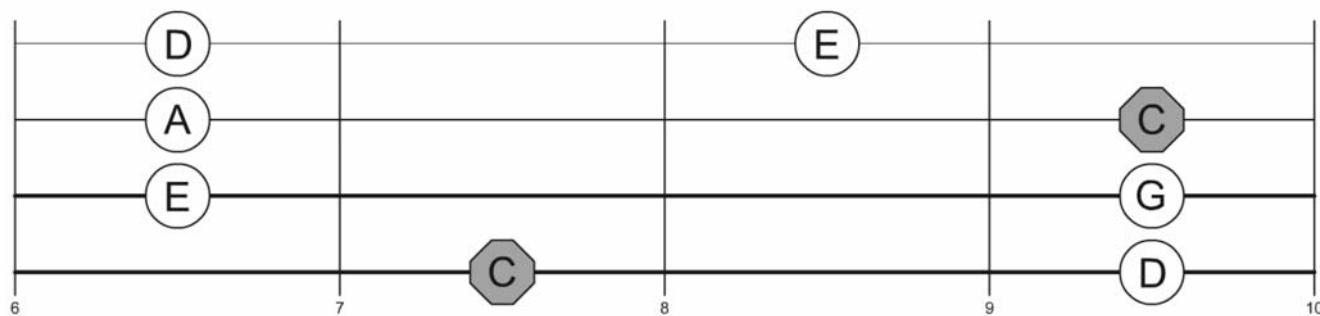


The C major fingering pattern above is transposable to any major key once a root note has been established on the E string.

The C Major Pentatonic scale is derived by eliminating the fourth and seventh degrees from the C major scale. Here are all of the available notes of the C major pentatonic scale in seventh position.

Ex. 1.4

Fingerboard Diagram, C Major Pentatonic Scale, Seventh Position.



These notes are written on the staff like this.

Ex. 1.5

Staff, C Major Pentatonic Scale, Seventh Position.

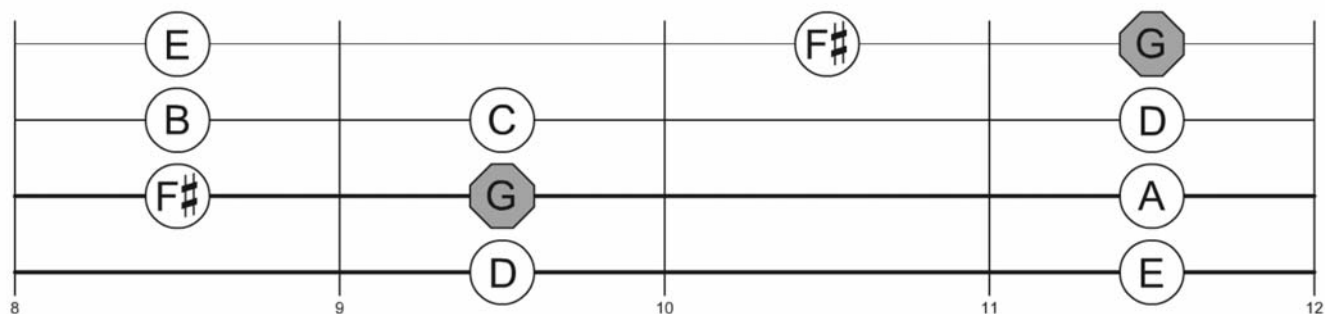


The C major pentatonic fingering pattern above is transposable to any major key once a root note has been established on the E string.

Here are all of the available notes in the G Major scale in ninth position.

Ex. 1.6

Fingerboard Diagram, G Major Scale, Ninth Position.



Using one finger per fret, the full range of available notes in the key of G in ninth position with no shifts is written on the staff below. Note that the available notes in the key extend below the root G as indicated. Play a G major scale in this position to get the sound of the key in your ear before beginning the exercises. Always resolve back to a root G note to establish the home key tonality.

Ex. 1.7

Staff, G Major Scale, Ninth Position.



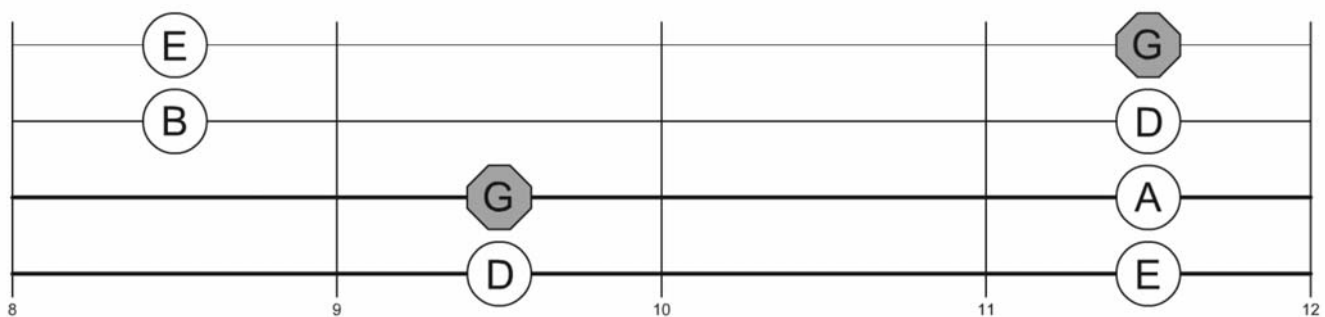
Note the use of the G major key signature indicating that all F notes are to be read as F# notes.

The G major fingering pattern above is transposable to any major key once a root note has been established on the A string.

The G major pentatonic scale is derived by eliminating the fourth and seventh degrees from the G major scale. Here are all of the available notes of the G major pentatonic scale in ninth position.

Ex. 1.8

Fingerboard Diagram, G Major Pentatonic Scale, Ninth Position.



These notes are written on the staff like this.

Ex. 1.9

Staff, G Major Pentatonic Scale, Ninth Position.



The G major pentatonic fingering pattern above is transposable to any major key once a root note has been established on the A string.

The exercises in this chapter will all use the C major and C major pentatonic scales in seventh position or the G major and G major pentatonic scales in ninth position. Initially the use of the major scale versus the use of the pentatonic scale will be identified in the title of each example. After the first couple of units this determination will be left to the student.

Examine the key signature of each example to determine which position is appropriate. Once in position the entire exercise should be playable with no shifts using one finger per fret.

Set the metronome to a slow tempo initially, increasing speed only as each example is played accurately.

Ex. 1.10

C Major Reading Exercise 1.



Ex. 1.11

C Major Pentatonic Reading Exercise 2.



Ex. 1.12

G Major Reading Exercise 3.

Musical notation for Ex. 1.12, G Major Reading Exercise 3. The exercise is written in bass clef, G major (one sharp), and 4/4 time. It consists of three staves of music. The first staff contains 8 measures of eighth-note patterns with slurs. The second staff contains 8 measures, including a measure with a fermata. The third staff contains 8 measures, ending with a double bar line.

Ex. 1.13

G Major Pentatonic Reading Exercise 4.

Musical notation for Ex. 1.13, G Major Pentatonic Reading Exercise 4. The exercise is written in bass clef, G major (one sharp), and 4/4 time. It consists of two staves of music. The first staff contains 8 measures of eighth-note patterns with slurs. The second staff contains 8 measures, including a measure with a fermata.

Ex. 1.14

C Major Reading Exercise 5.

Musical notation for Ex. 1.14, C Major Reading Exercise 5. The exercise is written in bass clef, C major (no sharps or flats), and 4/4 time. It consists of two staves of music. The first staff contains 8 measures of eighth-note patterns with slurs. The second staff contains 8 measures, including a measure with a fermata.

