

Major Scales Using The CAGED Format

- This works the way as the CAGED chords.
- Each of these scales is built off of the chords of the same name.
- Many of these use the same basic form – note how the G and C forms are very similar.
- Start with the E form using the G Major Scale.
- Do each scale slowly and don't pick up speed until each scale is perfect. Even then make sure that you play them smoothly and evenly.

Pattern of the major scale

- Background – a $\frac{1}{2}$ step is 1 fret and a whole step is $2 - \frac{1}{2}$ steps.
- For a major scale the pattern is as follows – whole, whole, $\frac{1}{2}$, whole, whole, whole, $\frac{1}{2}$
- Each of the following scales cover the position and cover approximately 2 octaves.
- Do one scale at a time. Use your ear to hear the sound. Best if you sing what you are playing.
- All scales have patterns but they can all be related or derived from the major scale.

Watch the fingering

- While there are a couple of ways to play some of the scales, most have only one fingering that works. If there are more than one fingering pick one and stick with it until it is mastered.
- Keep your thumb in back of the neck and do not move it when playing a scale.
- Don't press the frets too hard – it makes the notes play out of tune. Play close to the frets without being on the frets, do it with just enough pressure.
- Try to minimize your finger movements.

Be sure to master the chords also!

- For each of the scales make sure that you can also do the chord that goes with it.
- By doing that you will be able to relate the scale to the chord.
- It takes some time to really master these scales. There are a number of ways to accomplish this.
- First do the Scales up and down the fingerboard.
- Next do each key with all five scale forms. Start with G major.

The Caged system of Scale Movement

To understand this system it is important to know where all of the notes are on the guitar fingerboard. If you don't already know where all of the notes are then you must first learn how to find all of the notes, particularly the notes on the 6th and 5th strings. When you know the 6th string notes than you will also know the 1st string notes as they are the same letter names.

Start with learning the 5 major scale forms in 2nd position. They are the C form, the A, form, the G form, the E form and the D form. Shown below are these five forms in 2nd position.

C Major Scale

A Major Scale

G Major Scale

E Major Scale

D Major Scale

● = Root of chord or scale
○ = Notes before root when playing scale

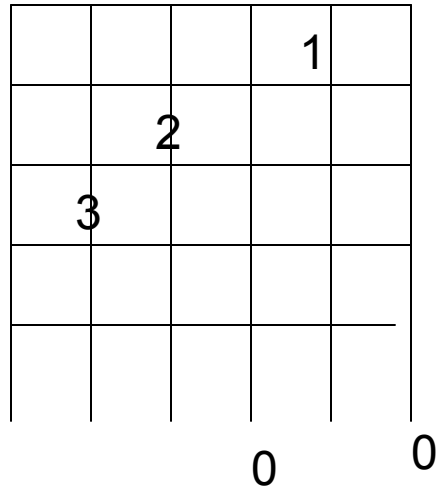
Each of the forms is moveable and the form is referred to by the name of the scale you would play with that form in 2nd position. Take the C Major form as an example, it is a 5th string root, so when played in 2nd position it is a C major scale with the C major form. In the 4th position the note played as a root is the 5th fret of the 5th string (one higher than the position). That would make the scale a D major scale (D is the note on the 5th fret of the 5th string), and it would be the C major form. This idea of form is key to the understanding of this concept. Take the G major form. In the second position the G major form is at the 2nd fret and the starting note is the 3rd fret of the 6th string (the G note), therefore the scale is the G major scale, G major form. If you moved that scale up the fingerboard two frets it would be the A major scale, with the G major form. It would be A major since the 6th string 5th fret is an A. Try this with all of the scales. Fill in the following:

G form at the 7th fret, is a _____ major scale G form at the 9th fret is a _____ major scale.
G form at the 11th fret is a _____ major scale. A form at the 5th fret is a _____ major scale.
A form at the 7th fret, is a _____ major scale A form at the 9th fret is a _____ major scale.
A form at the 11th fret is a _____ major scale. C form at the 5th fret is a _____ major scale.
C form at the 7th fret, is a _____ major scale C form at the 9th fret is a _____ major scale.
C form at the 11th fret is a _____ major scale. D form at the 5th fret is a _____ major scale.

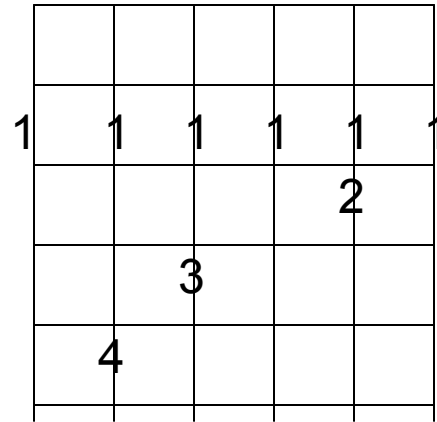
You could do this with all of the forms. Now let's use CAGED to find the order of major scales up the fingerboard. To start let's use the C major form.

C major form would be in 2nd position for a C major scale.
A major form would be in 5th position for a C major scale.
G major form would be in 7th position for a C major scale.
E major form would be in 10th position for a C major scale.
D major form would be in 12th position for a C major scale.

C Major Chord



C Moveable Chord (D Major)



Use this as a visual basis for the chords and the scales.
It is one method that can excel you learning of the scales.

Notice how the notes in the chord are all in the following Major scale. In fact, 3 of the 7 notes in a major scale are in the chord. Try to visualize that on all of the chords and Scales. It will also help you with doing chord extensions.

C Form of the Major Scale

D Major

1	1	1	1	1	1
		2	2		
3	3	3			
4	4		4	4	

C form of the Major Scale
In 2nd Position (D major)

1

5 2 4 5 2 4 2 3 5 2 3 5 3 2 5 3 2 4 2 5 4 2 5 4 2 5 2 4 5

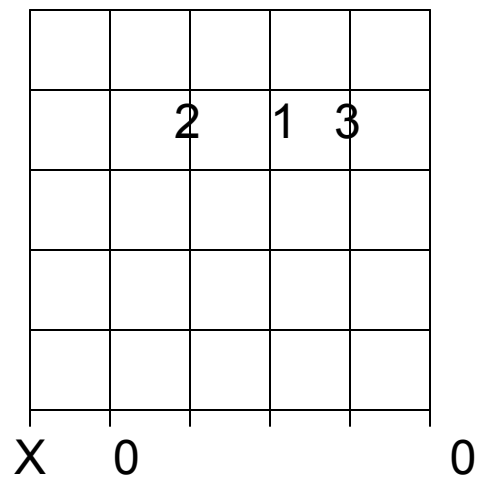
Left Hand Fingering unless noted otherwise

2nd fret = 1st finger, 3rd fret = 2nd finger

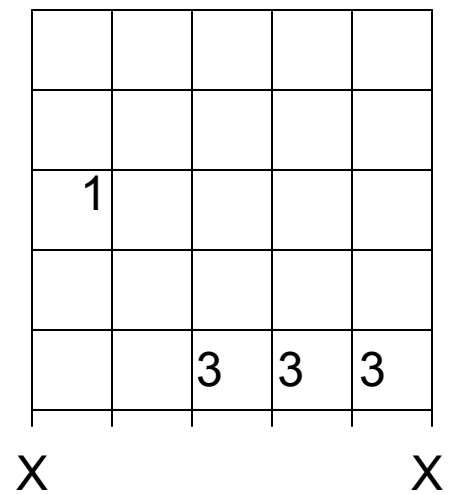
4th fret = 3rd finger, 5th fret = 4th finger

You can also play this by going all the way down to the 6th string 2nd fret – that would fully cover the position. The pattern above is more of the standard way to play the scale.

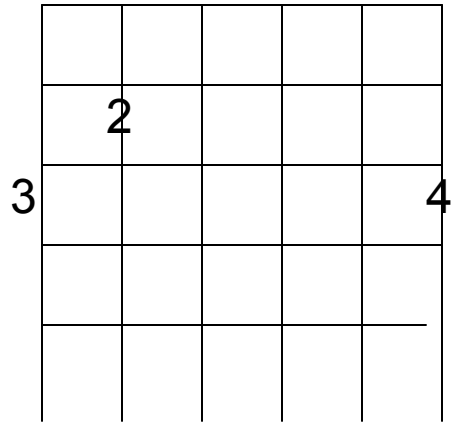
A Major



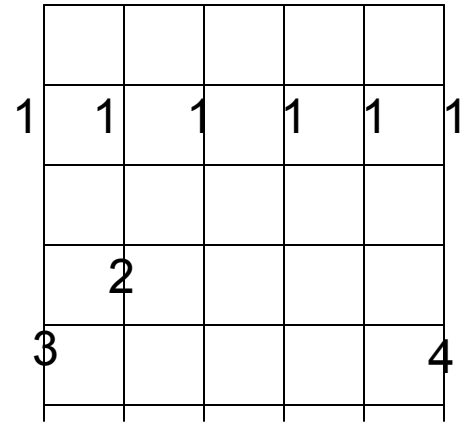
A Form (C Major)



G Major

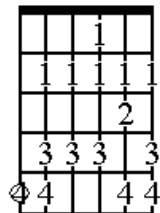


G Form (A Major Chord)



G Form of the Major Scale

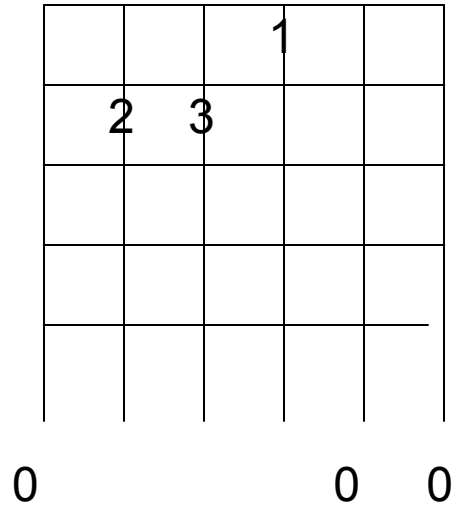
A Major



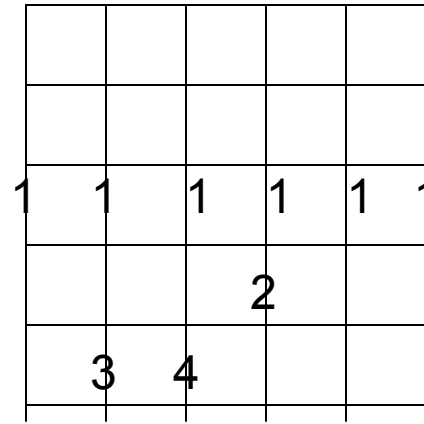
**G Form of Major Scale
In 2nd Position the A Major Scale**

Musical notation for the G form of the major scale in 2nd position. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a common time signature (C). The scale is written as a single melodic line with a final double bar line. Below the staff, the fret numbers for each string are indicated: 5, 2, 4, 5, 2, 4, 1, 2, 4, 2, 3, 5, 2, 4, 5, 4, 2, 5, 3, 2, 4, 2, 1, 4, 2, 5, 4, 2, 5.

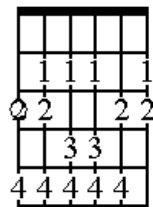
E Major



E Form (G Major Chord)



E Form Major Scales



G Major

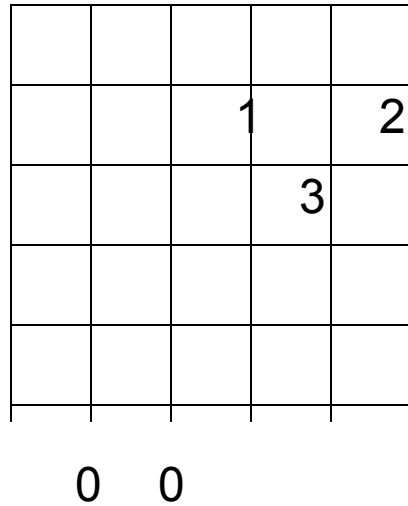
E form of the Major Scale,
the G major scale in 2nd position

C Major Scale

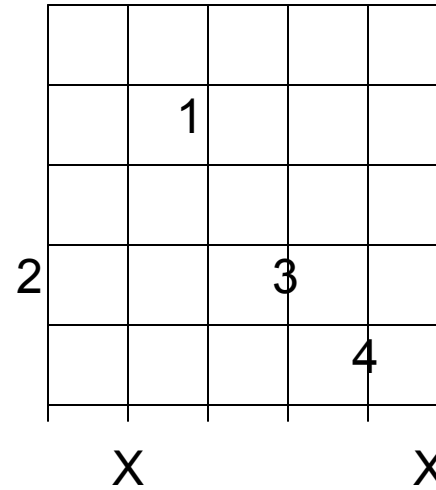
Left Hand Fingering unless noted otherwise

2nd fret = 1st finger, 3rd fret = 2nd finger

D Major



D Form (E Major)



Note you can move the F# on the 1st string 2nd fret to
The 6th string 2nd fret (both strings are the same letter
Name – it works out better for most cases).

D Form of the Major Scale

E Major

	1	1	1	1	1
1	1	2	2	1	1
3	3	4	4	3	3
4				4	4

The D Form of the Major Scale In 2nd Position

1

0 2 4 5 2 4 1 2 4 1 2 4 2 4 5 2 4 5 4 2 5 4 2 4

7

2 1 4 2 1 4 2 5 4 2 0

Take your time and master each form! Do every day until you have it down.

- Play each form at each fret. Say the scale as you do it.
- For example, doing the E form starting at G major (2nd position but first note starts on the 3rd fret of the 6th string). Then move up one fret to Ab then another fret to A Major, etc. Say each scale as you play it.
- Then practice them saying the name of the scale degree. So for the E form it would be 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 1, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 – always remember to just play the top note once.

Do it to all of the 5 forms

- When you can do this smoothly then try just one key. You should do the order of keys as follows:
 - C, G, D, A, E, B, F#, C#, (Sharp keys – except C Major).
 - F, Bb, Eb, Ab, Db, Gb, Cb (Flat Scales)
- Once you can do all of the above you have mastered the major scales and the CAGED form. Again visualization will really help you to master this.

Next Steps

- After this is mastered you can work on the other scale forms.
- For minor (usually Dorian Mode) you lower the 2nd and 7th degrees of the scale – that is why you need to know the degree of the scales.
- For a dominant chord (such as G7) the scale is the Mixolydian mode. For that you lower the 7th degree of the scale.
- You will find that you can do that with all scale forms. It makes it very easy to learn new scales. You just have to know which degree('s) to alter (raise or lower).

Summary

- Scales are derived from the chord forms. You should know the forms before the chords. The scales all have the same whole – ½ step form.
- The scales always go up the neck in the same order (CAGED).
- Learn all the scale forms in every key.
- Once they are mastered try the other scales. They are all derived from the major scale.
- Take them slowly – speed comes with time and practice.