

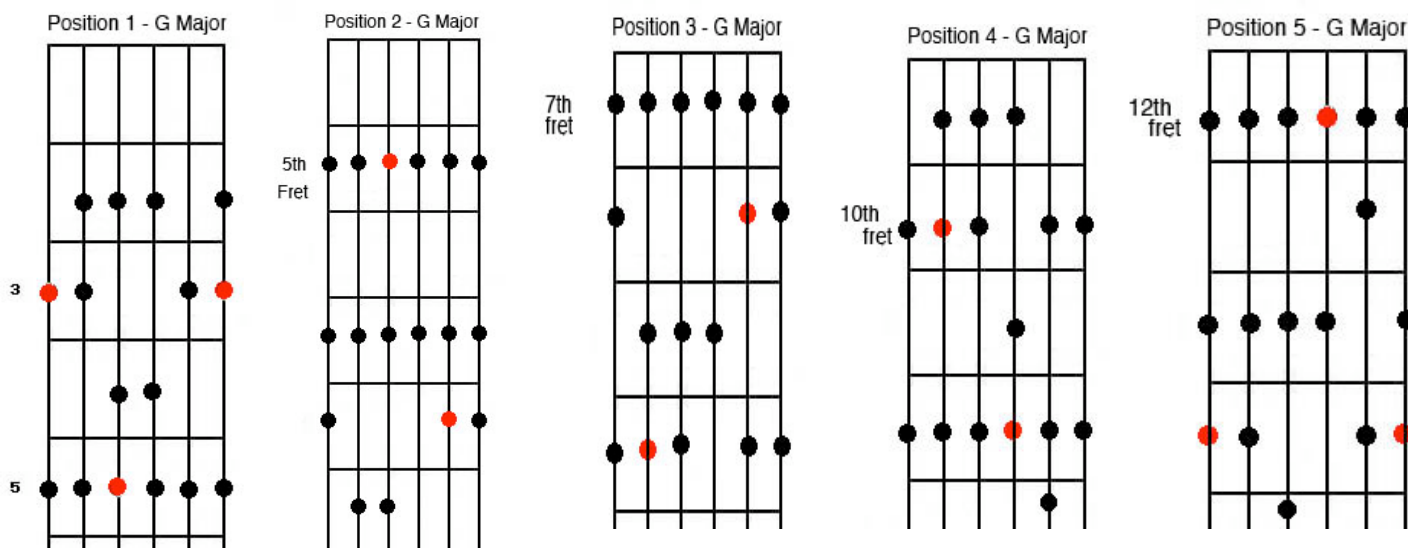
PLAYING AND UNDERSTANDING THE MAJOR SCALE



There are many different ways to play the major scale. Each style of music almost has their own primary method of playing a major scale on the guitar. The classical method tends to want to get familiar with the scales climbing up the neck covering little pieces of a few different positions. The jazz method likes to try to cover as much of the major scale in one position, stretching their fingers further than a 4 fret stretch. Although these also are fantastic ways of learning the major scale, I am going to touch on a different way of ensuring that you will not miss any notes from the major scale up and down the neck staying in a position for each one.

I am assuming that you have read our article on the pentatonic scale and understand the concept of the fact that you are just playing the same 5 notes all over the neck. I would highly suggest you get the pentatonic scale down before you take on the major scale. As I mentioned the pentatonic scale has 5 different notes, whereas the major scale has 7. Fortunately for you we are going to just be learning 5 different positions for the major scale too and will not miss a single note! Below I will list the 5 patterns and assume that you understand how they fit together seeing as it works the same as the pentatonic scale.

G Major Scale – G, A, B, C, D, E, F#,



A short description of each position is listed on the next page.

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Position 1 – Starts on the root of the scale, which in this case is G. Watch that you start with your 2nd finger so that your first finger is ready for the 2nd fret for the 5th string. Always designate a finger for its own fret.

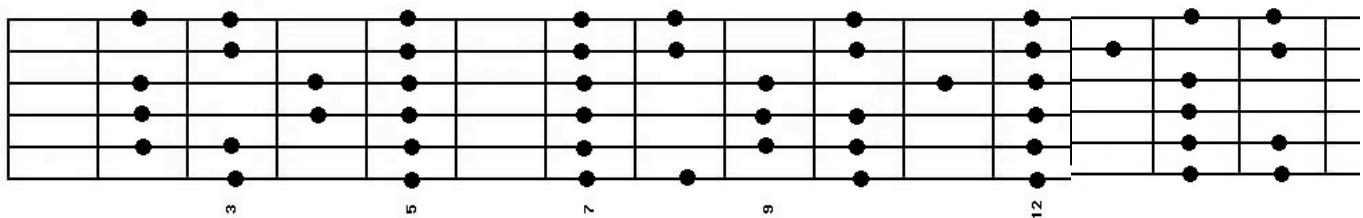
Position 2 – Starts on the 2nd note of the scale with your 1st finger. Notice that there is more than a 4 fret stretch going from 5th fret eventually to the 9th. Just stretch your 4th finger the extra fret to reach the notes on the 5th and 4th string.

Position 3 – Since the 3rd and 4th note of the major scale are only a semi-tone away (1 fret) this position is sort of a two in one! It starts on the 3rd note of the major scale, but we won't need to memorize another one starting on the 4th note of the scale. Start with your 1st finger again.

Position 4 - As I mentioned above, there is no need to have a position start on the 4th note because the scale would essentially look the same, so this position starts on the 5th note of the major scale. Start with your 2nd finger. Watch the big stretch on the 2nd string, use your 4th finger.

Position 5 – Like the 3rd position, this pattern will cover two notes from the scale. It starts on the 6th degree of the scale with your first finger.

G Major – All Positions



Similar to the Pentatonic Scale, all these following scales you just learned are connected to each other. Remember, they are only one scale, and only 7 different notes that are played all over the neck. Practice these scales the same way you practiced the pentatonic scales. First separate, then linking them together ascending and descending. See a further article explaining how you can use these patterns to play the natural minor scale. After you have memorized these patterns not only do you know the major scale, but you know the natural minor scale too. Both of which are great for writing and making up solos! Good Luck!