

Bass Lesson Article 2 * Part 2
The Major Scale

HOW TO PLAY A MAJOR SCALE IN ANY KEY

As was mentioned in Part 1, you can start on any note, and by using the major scale formula of whole steps and half steps, you can play a major scale in any "key".

What determines the "key" you are playing in, is the first note played, which is also referred to as the "tonic note" that gives the scale it's letter name.

Here are two additional examples. Example 1, shown below demonstrates how to play a G major scale.

G MAJOR DIATONIC SCALE

	G	A	B	C	D	E	F#	G	
	W	W	1/2	W	W	W		1/2	
G:	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	
D:	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	
A:	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	
E:	-3----	-5----	-7----	-8	-----	-10----	-12----	-14----	-15-----

EXAMPLE #2 * B MAJOR DIATONIC SCALE

	B	C#	D#	E	F#	G#	A#	B		
G:	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----		
D:	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----		
A:	-2----	-4----	-6----	-7	-----	-9----	-11----	-13	-----	-14-----
E:	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	

MOST COMMON POSITIONS & ENFORCING THE 1 FINGER PER FRET RULE...

It's best at first when learning the major scale and the 7 modes that will follow, to enforce using the "1 finger per fret" rule. It's also best to stick to playing the major scale in the key of C, when you're first learning the different positions, as in the key of C major diatonic, there are no notes named sharp (#) or flat (b), which makes it that much easier to memorize the names of each note.

Here are the fingering codes for your frethand.
i=index m=middle r=ring p=pinky

Shown below are the 2 most common position's for playing C major diatonic scale, which demonstrate using the "1 finger per fret" rule.

Why is this important? By using the same fingers in the correct positions each time you practice, it will eliminate you developing bad habits such as incorrect frethand fingerings, and will also help you memorize the "pattern" of each scale you play.

For this example, the names of the notes are shown top, and the frethand fingerings are shown below.

Common Position #1 * Tonic note / 3rd fret A string

```

      C D E F G      A B C
      m p i m p      i r p
G: -----| -2--4--5-----|-----|
D: -----| -2--3--5-----|-----|
A: -3--5-----|-----|-----|
E: -----|-----|-----|

```

Common Position #2 * Tonic note / 8th fret E string

```

      C D E F G      A B C
      m p i m p      i r p
G: -----|-----|-----|
D: -----| -7--9--10-----|-----|
A: -----| -7--8--10-----|-----|
E: -8--10-----|-----|-----|

```

There are also many other "alternate" positions that you can play major scales and runs in, that can be beneficial to your playing. Here are 2 additional example's.

Common Alternate Position #1 * Tonic Note / 3rd fret A string

```

      C D E F G A B C
      i r p i r p m r
G: -----| -4--5-----|-----|
D: -----| -3--5--7-----|-----|
A: -3--5--7-----|-----|-----|
E: -----|-----|-----|

```

Common Alternate Position #2 * Tonic Note / 8th fret E string

```

      C D E      F G A      B C
      i r p      i r p      m r
G: -----|-----|-----|
D: -----|-----| -9--10-----|
A: -----| -8--10--12-----|-----|
E: -8--10--12-----|-----|-----|

```