

Pentatonic Worksheet

The pentatonic scales are often the first scales guitar players learn. These scales are the backbone of rock and blues. If you've heard much Led Zeppelin then you've heard these scales. Pentatonics are five tone scales. This worksheet includes major and minor. The patterns are the same but with different starting points and scale degree references.

In the tables, strings are listed vertically. The top label refers to the scale degree. The bottom label is the full chord for the pattern. The + denotes an augmented chord. The X is the root of each pattern. Emboldened notes show the chord shape for the pattern. Below the tables are an explanation of how the patterns overlap and more chord information.

Major Pentatonic (Five tones of Ionian or Major scale)

Tonic	Supertonic	Mediant	Dominant	Submediant
I	ii sus4	iii +	v sus4	vi
e - - X - o -	e - - X - o -	e - X - - o -	e - - X - o -	e - X - - o -
B - - o - o -	B - - o - - o	B - - o - o -	B - - o - o -	B - o - - o -
G - o - o - -	G - o - - o -	G - o - o - -	G - o - - o -	G - o - o - -
D - o - - o -	D - - o - o -	D - o - o - -	D - o - - o -	D - o - o - -
A - o - - o -	A - - o - o -	A - o - - o -	A - - o - o -	A - o - o - -
E - - X - o -	E - - X - o -	E - X - - o -	E - - X - o -	E - X - - o -

Minor Pentatonic (Five tones of Aeolian or Minor scale)

Tonic	Mediant	Subdominant	Dominant	Subtonic
i	III	iv sus4	v +	vii sus4
e - X - - o -	e - - X - o -	e - - X - o -	e - X - - o -	e - - X - o -
B - o - - o -	B - - o - o -	B - - o - - o	B - - o - o -	B - - o - o -
G - o - o - -	G - o - o - -	G - o - - o -	G - o - o - -	G - o - - o -
D - o - o - -	D - o - - o -	D - - o - o -	D - o - o - -	D - o - - o -
A - o - o - -	A - o - - o -	A - - o - o -	A - o - - o -	A - - o - o -
E - X - - o -	E - - X - o -	E - - X - o -	E - X - - o -	E - - X - o -

Both major and minor overlap each other. Major's tonic is minor's mediant. Minor's tonic is major's submediant. Look at the chord labels to more easily tell which patterns are similar.

Many of the chords above are not simple. For all but the augmented add7 chord, you can play the common shape of a power chord. For the augmented, you can play an augmented. For each type, you can play the three strings or just the bottom (as in lower notes) two. The bottom two strings are in bold.

Power Chord	Augmented Power Chord
D - - - o -	D - - - o - -
A - - - o -	A - - - - o -
E - X - - -	E - X - - - -

When writing songs, use chords to create a progression and use notes from the scales to create the melody. You can also use scales notes for bass lines too. The table below shows some keys and chord choices for major and minor modes of the key.

KEYS	MAJOR	MINOR
A	A, Bsus4, C+, Esus4, F#m	Am, C, Dsus4, E+, Gsus4
D	D, Esus4, F#+, Asus4, Bm	Dm, F, Gsus4, A+, Csus4
E	E, F#sus4, G+, Bsus4, C#m	Em, G, Asus4, B+, Dsus4
G	G, Asus4, B+, Dsus4, Em	Gm, A#, Csus4, D+, Fsus4

Remember that power chords can be used in place of the chords above. Also, remember the + is for augmented chords.