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# GUITAR

## ESSENTIALS

FRETBOARD MASTERY

# Single String Scales

Now that you looked at the notes on the neck, and learned about key signatures, work exercises that teach you those notes on the guitar.

One of the most enjoyable, and beneficial, exercises to learn notes on the neck is playing single string scales.

Working a scale on one string at a time teaches you the notes on the neck, the key signature of that scales, and gets you solos with scales.

In this section there are three examples of this exercise in action, but first check out how to work single-string scales on guitar.

Here are the steps to working single string scales in the practice room to check out.

- Pick a scale to work on, say C major.
- Write out the notes in that scale, CDEFGAB in this case.
- Find those notes on each string, one at a time.
- Say each note as you play it on the guitar.
- Put on a C major backing track and solo one string at a time.
- Repeat with other keys for major scales.
- Repeat with other scales such as Dorian, Lydian, etc.

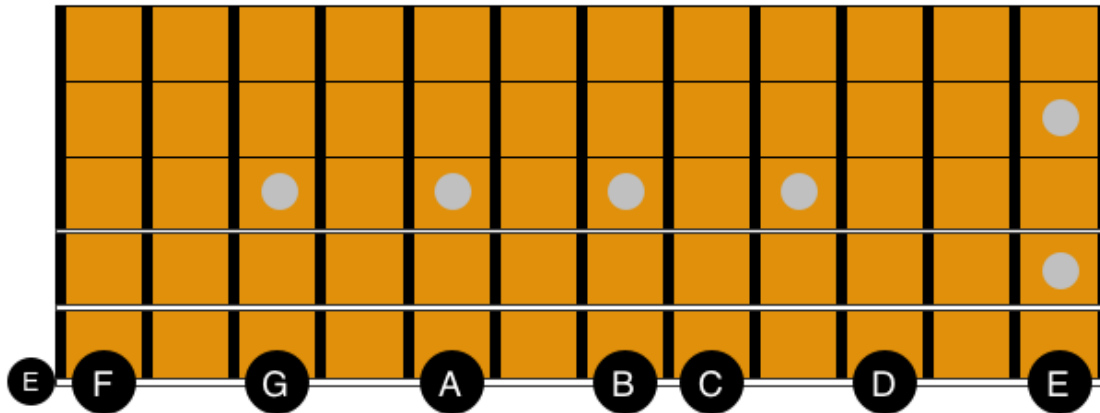
Now that you know how to work scales one string at a time, here are examples of that exercise in action.

Here's an example of a C major scale, CDEFGAB, on the 6<sup>th</sup> string.

Notice that you start on E, the lowest possible note of the scale, and move up the string from there.

After you can find these notes, repeat that exercise on other strings, and then solo with this scale over a backing track on each string.

### Audio Example 3

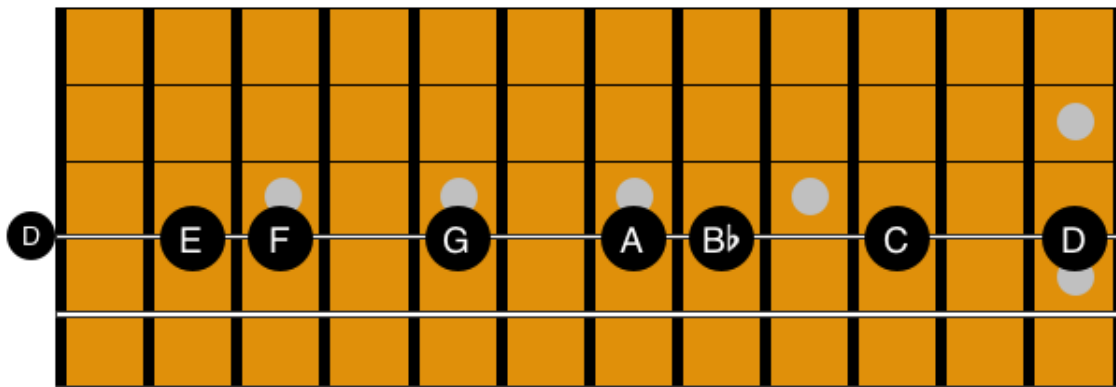


When finding the C major scale is easy, move to flat key scales, such as the F major scale below.

Adding scales that have flats in your studies teaches you where those notes are on the guitar, as well as teaches you about key signatures.

If you can't remember the notes of these scales in the moment, write the letter names down and use that as a reference with this exercise.

### Audio Example 4



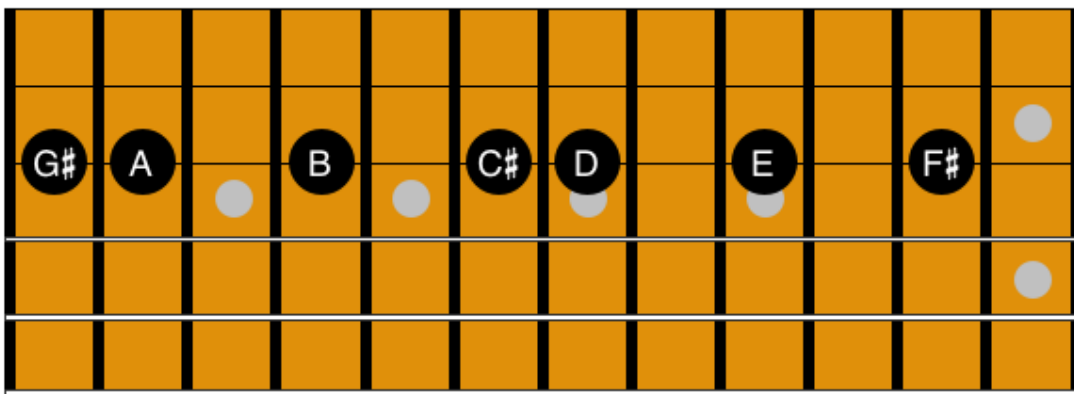
The final example adds sharps to the mix, as you find the A major scale on the 3<sup>rd</sup> string.

Again, don't forget to solo with these scales on one string at a time.

Soloing on one string teaches you those notes and does so in a creative and fun way.

It also builds your soloing chops, so it's a win-win in the practice room.

### Audio Example 5



Here are the note names for each scale with sharps as a reference.

- C = C D E F G A B
- G = G A B C D E F#
- D = D E F# G A B C#
- A = A B C# D E F# G#
- E = E F# G# A B C# D#
- B = B C# D# E F# G# A#
- F# = F# G# A# B C# D# E#
- C# = C# D# E# F# G# A# B#

Here are the note names for each scale with flats as a reference.

- C = C D E F G A B
- F = F G A B $\flat$  C D E
- B $\flat$  = B $\flat$  C D E $\flat$  F G A
- E $\flat$  = E $\flat$  F G A $\flat$  B $\flat$  C D
- A $\flat$  = A $\flat$  B $\flat$  C D $\flat$  E $\flat$  F G
- D $\flat$  = D $\flat$  E $\flat$  F G $\flat$  A $\flat$  B $\flat$  C
- G $\flat$  = G $\flat$  A $\flat$  B $\flat$  C $\flat$  D $\flat$  E $\flat$  F
- C $\flat$  = C $\flat$  D $\flat$  E $\flat$  F $\flat$  G $\flat$  A $\flat$  B $\flat$

# Interval Recognition Tritone to Octave

You now move on to intervals in the second half of the octave, ones that are a tritone or larger.

These intervals require you to stretch more when playing them on adjacent strings, or to add string skips to make them playable.

As was the case with the first group of intervals, there are other ways to visualize these intervals, but these tend to be the easiest to learn.

The first interval in the second half of the octave is called a tritone, or augmented 4<sup>th</sup>, or even diminished 5<sup>th</sup> interval.

I prefer tritone as it implies that it is built with three tones, hence the name, and it divides the octave into half.

Notice the dissonant sound that the tritone produces, which is why it was avoided in classical music for many years before being accepted.

Here are the formulae for finding tritone intervals on the guitar.

- Strings 6, 5, 4, and 2 = one fret over and one string up.
- String 3 = two frets over and one string up.

The image shows a musical staff with a treble clef and a guitar fretboard diagram below it. The staff contains five measures of music, each showing a tritone interval. The notes are: C4 (open), G4 (2nd fret), F4 (1st fret), C5 (open), and F5 (1st fret). The fretboard diagram shows the strings from 6 (top) to 1 (bottom). The fret numbers for the notes are: C4 (7th fret, string 6), G4 (8th fret, string 5), F4 (2nd fret, string 4), C5 (9th fret, string 3), and F5 (10th fret, string 2). The diagram also shows the notes for the next tritone interval: G5 (4th fret, string 6), C6 (6th fret, string 5), F6 (12th fret, string 4), and C7 (13th fret, string 3).

The next interval, the perfect 5<sup>th</sup>, is the last interval found only on adjacent strings.

From here on out, all intervals will either have two options, or only be available with a string skip between notes.

Here's the formula for finding perfect 5<sup>th</sup> intervals anywhere on the guitar, notice the "power chord" shapes down low for this interval.

Using something familiar, like a power chord, helps to recognize and memorize devices like intervals on the guitar.

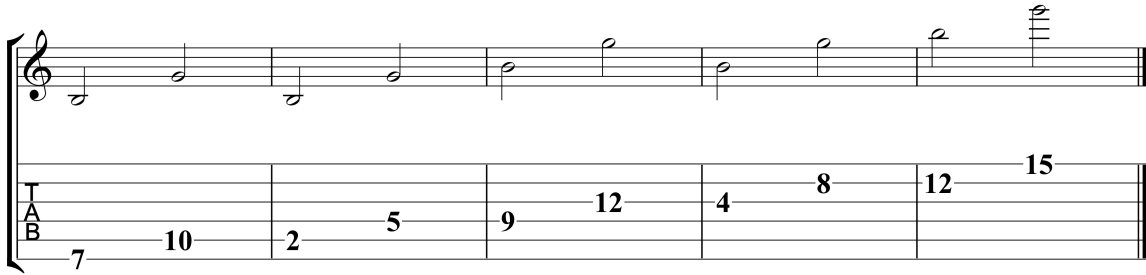
- Strings 6, 5, 4, and 2 = two frets over and one string up.
- String 3 = three frets over and one string up.

The image shows a musical staff with a treble clef and a guitar tablature below it. The staff contains five measures of music. The first measure has a quarter note on the 7th fret of the 6th string. The second measure has a quarter note on the 9th fret of the 5th string. The third measure has a half note on the 2nd fret of the 4th string. The fourth measure has a half note on the 4th fret of the 2nd string. The fifth measure has a quarter note on the 12th fret of the 3rd string. The tablature below the staff shows the fret numbers for each string: 7, 9, 2, 4, 9, 11, 4, 7, 12, 14. The letters 'T' and 'B' are written vertically on the left side of the tablature.

The next interval to learn is the minor 6<sup>th</sup>, which can be found in two places on the guitar.

The first place is on adjacent strings, such as 6-5, where you can use the following formulae to find m6<sup>th</sup> intervals anywhere on the guitar.

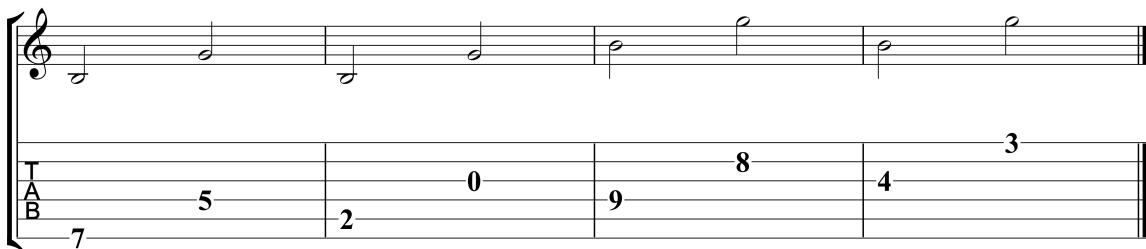
- Strings 6, 5, 4, and 2 = three frets over and one string up.
- String 3 = four frets over and one string up.



Sticking with the minor 6<sup>th</sup> interval, here it is with a string skip between the lowest and highest notes in the interval.

When working out minor 6<sup>th</sup> intervals, with a string skip, you can use the following as a guide to these notes on the fretboard.

- Strings 6 and 5 = two frets back and two strings up.
- Strings 4 and 3 = one fret back and two strings up.



The next interval to study is the major 6<sup>th</sup> interval, which you can see across the fretboard below.

To find this interval anywhere on the guitar, here are the formula to use for each string.

- Strings 6 and 5 = one fret back and two strings up.
- Strings 4 and 3 = same fret and two strings up.



Moving on, you can now find minor 7<sup>th</sup> intervals on the guitar, which are found in m7, m7b5, 7<sup>th</sup>, and other common guitar chords.

Here's the formula for finding m7 intervals on any string of the guitar.

- Strings 6 and 5 = same fret and two strings up.
- Strings 4 and 3 = one fret over and two strings up.

The next interval is the major 7<sup>th</sup> interval, which is also called the leading tone as it resolves up to the root in most instances.

This interval is also found in maj7 chords, and other harmonic devices in modern music.

Here's the formula to find major 7<sup>th</sup> intervals anywhere on the guitar.

- Strings 6 and 5 = one fret over and two strings up.
- Strings 4 and 3 = two frets over and two strings up.

The image shows a musical staff with a treble clef and a guitar tablature staff below it. The treble staff contains four measures of music with notes: C4, C#4, D4, and D#4. The guitar tablature staff shows fret numbers for each string: 7, 8, 2, 3, 9, 11, 4, 6.

The final interval to work on is the octave, which is the same note played in two spots on the guitar, one an octave higher.

Here's the formula for recognizing octave intervals on the guitar.

- Strings 6 and 5 = two frets over and two strings up.
- Strings 4 and 3 = three frets over and two strings up.

Octaves come in handy as they help you find root notes in other areas of the fretboard.

This allows you to play chords, scales, arpeggios, and other musical devices across the fretboard with ease.

The image shows a musical staff with a treble clef and a guitar tablature staff below it. The treble staff contains four measures of music with notes: C4, C5, D4, and D5. The guitar tablature staff shows fret numbers for each string: 7, 9, 2, 4, 9, 12, 4, 7.

## Exercise

- Pick a note, say D.
- Pick an interval, say perfect 5th.
- Play D then a perfect 5th above each D on the fretboard.
- Repeat with other starting notes.
- Repeat with other intervals.
- Check your work with the above examples and formula.