



# Advanced & Unusual Pentatonic Scale Applications

## LESSON SUMMARY

### Pentatonic Chemistry Set



This lesson is really about one thing: working with tensions, upper harmonies and uncommon or slightly unconventional note choices. Every chord has a series of tensions, or altered tensions that it will accept, that it will harmonize with. The finding and selection of interesting notes and scale sounds can be made easier on the guitar by playing pentatonic scale box patterns normally associated with other keys. This concept is illustrated by the charts below:

## Two Octave Major Scale With Numerical Analysis

Root  
**1st** 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th 7th 1st 9th 10th 11th 5th 13th 7th 1st

**C D E F G A B C D E F G A B C**

## C Major Chord With Extensions

CHORD TONES TENSIONS

**1 3 5 6 7 9 #11 13**

**C E G A B D F# A**

## C Minor Chord With Extensions

CHORD TONES TENSIONS

**1 b3 5 6 b7 9 11**

**C Eb G A Bb D F**

## C Dominant 7 Chord With Extensions

Chord tones TENSIONS

**1 3 b5 5 #5 b7 b9 9 #9 11 13**

**C E Gb G G# Bb Db D D# F A**

The melodic devices you've been studying are merely a method of working with tensions. You're not: (1) changing the key of the song, (2) actually playing in the wrong key or (3) 'superimposing' a new key on top of the existing harmony. What you are doing is playing interesting structures with and different groups of these tensions and altered tensions to shed a new light on the chord progression on which you're soloing. The interesting thing for you as a guitarist is that different minor pentatonic scale box patterns will easily achieve these startling and beautiful effects.

# A Melodic Device For The Major Tonality

Below is a chord chart for a rock type song which uses the C major tonality as its main sound.

## Rock Song Clearly Establishing The C Major Tonality



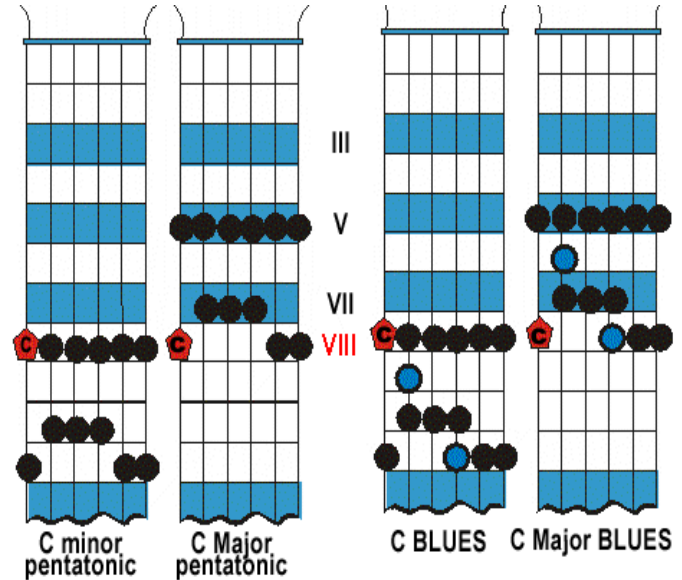
The diagrams to the left outline and illustrate 4 scales which from which you can choose to use as the basis for a solo. Each one of the scales has its own sound and character:

The C Minor Pentatonic for a funky, Rock And Roll solo.

The C Major Pentatonic for a sweet and melodic sounding solo.

The C Blues Scale for a smoother yet still funky, Rock And Roll solo.

The C Major Blues Scale for a smoother melodic sounding solo with just a touch of Blues.



The example below is a I to Vi minor rock ballad type of song type song which uses a C Major chord as its main sound. However, alternating this C Major chord with the A minor chord gives the music a soothing, pretty and major sound. In this case a C minor pentatonic or blues scale would not be appropriate because they're too funky and earthy for mellow, beautiful, major sounding music. The scale choices you've studied in this lesson are

The C Major Pentatonic for a sweet and melodic sounding solo.

The C Major Blues Scale for a smoother melodic sounding solo with just a touch of Blues.

The B Minor Pentatonic for a light, sophisticated and beautiful sound.

*The Professor Says*

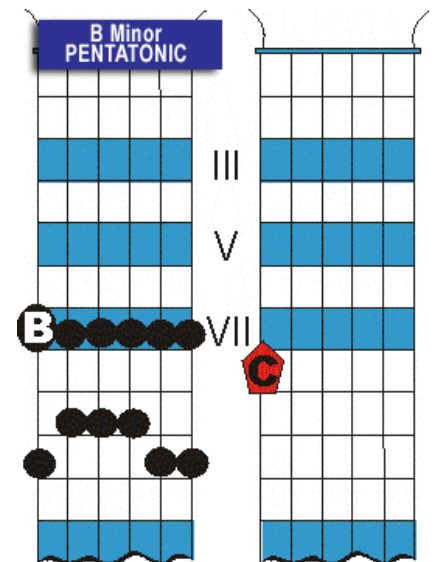
This works because all of the notes in the B MINOR PENTATONIC SCALE:

**B D E F# A**

Are also CHORD TONES or TENSIONS in the Key Of C

7th 9th 3rd #11th 6th

## Rhythm & Blues Or Rock Ballad Establishing The Tonality Of C Major



## Melodic Devices For The Minor Tonality



Below is an example of a modern chord progression centered around the C Minor chord sound.



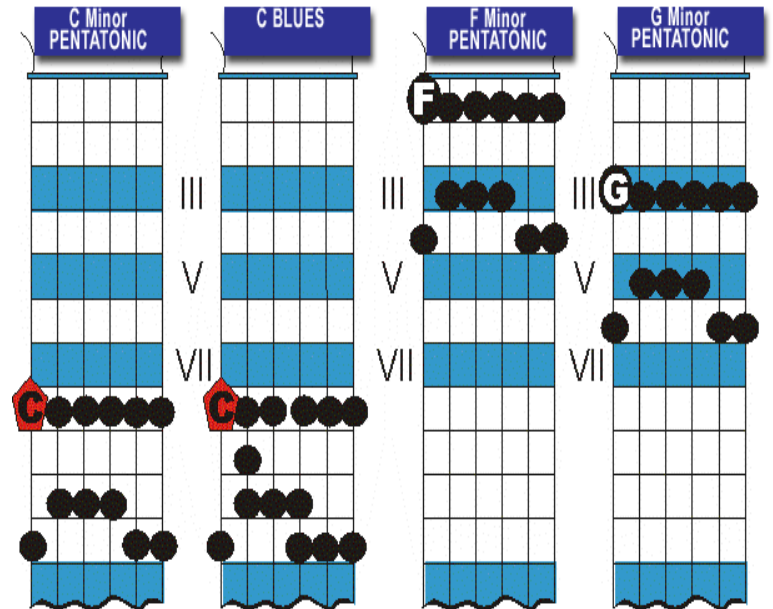
The scale choices we discussed in this lesson are outlined to the left.

The C Minor Pentatonic for a funky and stinging sounding solo.

The C Blues Scale for a smoother melodic yet funky or bluesy sound.

The G Minor Pentatonic for a glassy, sophisticated and singing sound.

The F Minor Pentatonic also for a melodic singing sound yet one that is slightly outside and pleasingly



## Melodic Devices For The Dominant Tonality

Below is an example of a modern chord progression centered around the C Minor chord sound.

### Funky Vamp Establishing The C 7 Tonality.



The scale choices we discussed for such a situation are:



The C Minor Pentatonic for a funky and stinging sounding solo.

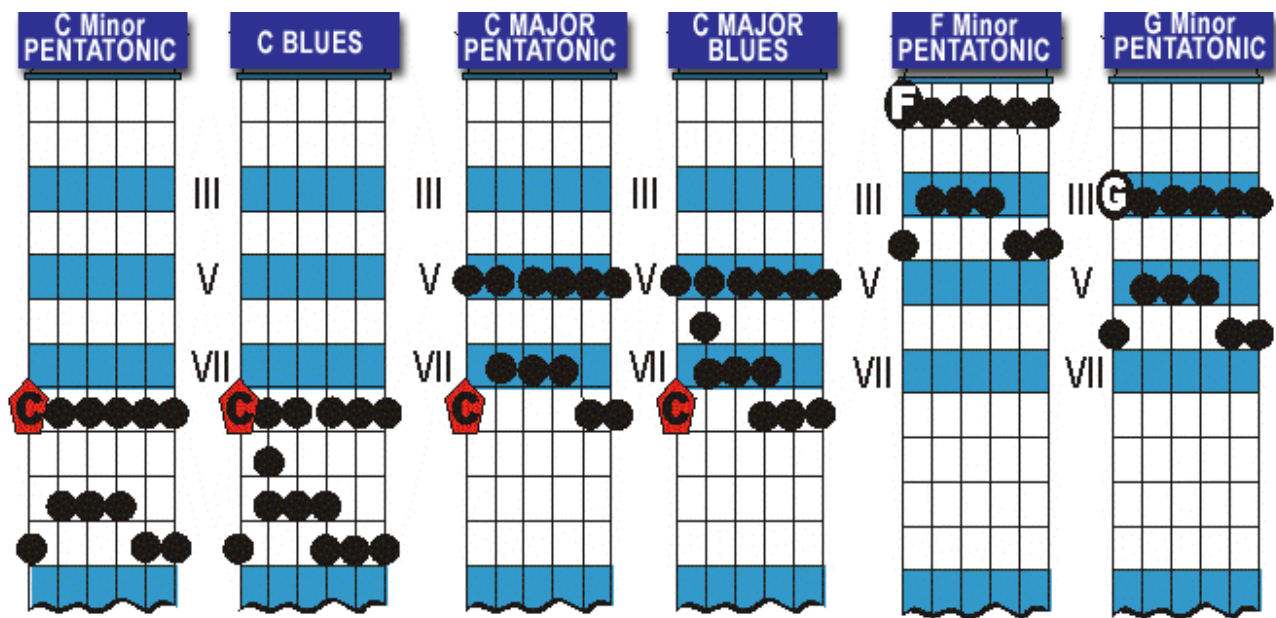
The C Blues Scale for a smoother melodic yet funky or bluesy sound.

The C Major Pentatonic for a sweet and melodic sounding solo.

The C Major Blues Scale for a smoother melodic sounding solo with just a touch of Blues.

The G Minor Pentatonic for a glassy, sophisticated and singing sound.

The F Minor Pentatonic also for a melodic singing sound yet one that is slightly outside and pleasingly dissonant.



As you practice the art of playing these unorthodox scale choices be aware that some of them are very forgiving and are easy to get a good sound with a good amount of the time. In certain situations however a scale may not be as forgiving but will still yield wonderful fruits with a careful and detail oriented attitude towards phrasing and note selection. Finally, these play-a-long examples are either 8 or 16 bars in length. This is to encourage you to learn how to make a musical statement -a melodic, balanced, shaped and complete improvisation, in an allotted time frame. It's a good way to develop a keen, quick melodic sense and learn to think like a working lead player.