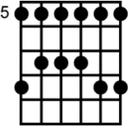
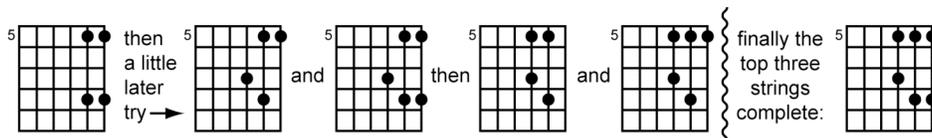


The Pentatonic Blues Scale

This is the most popular scale for Blues and Rock and Roll; more runs and licks have been played from these notes than all the other scales combined (at least in a blues or rock setting). So, a working fluency with it is something you want to acquire, at worst just to see what your predecessors have been up to.

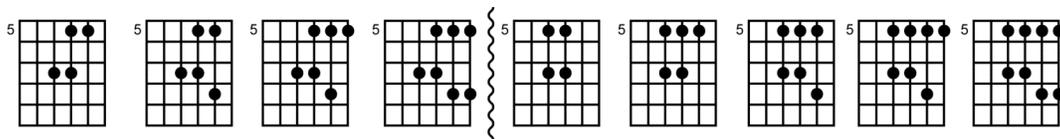
Key of A  This position of the scale has been the most favored by virtually everyone who uses the blues scale in their playing. So get acquainted, if you're not already. Once you can play it reasonably well, try tapping your foot, setting up a strong groove of one type or another, and *phrasing* the notes in little groups, mixing the notes up in different ways. *Focus* on the top strings first (the skinny ones): take a few notes at a time, gradually adding more.

Example:



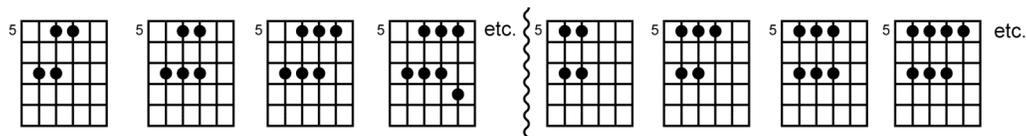
Take your time with each diagram—really explore. Try *hammer-ons*, *pull-offs*, *bends*, *slides*, and *accents* to help the *musicality* of it all (also *vibrato*). Also, when playing *adjacent* notes with one finger, you don't want to *hop*, you want to *roll*. Ask for help if need be.

Now including the fourth string:



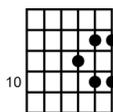
If your ears start to get bored, move all this to the key of D♭.

And bringing in the fifth string now:



And finally bring in the sixth string little by little. We'll come back to this position very soon. But first we're going to deal with another important one.

The second important area for us will be presented without all six strings (don't worry why for now, just relax and absorb it):



Learn this group of five notes gradually and when you feel comfortable, move on to the following:

Connecting Both Positions (1. Slide or shift from one to the other. 2. Use "spread or stretch" fingerings from the 5th pos. to reach up to the 9th and 10th frets.)

○ = optional

Maybe delay working this note in at first

Master each diagram before moving to the next. Work in both ascending and descending directions and of course mix the notes up in many orders and in many *phrasings* (which by the way, are *separate* concepts).

We're going to deal with a "two-strings-at-a-time" procedure for a while. Of course, some of this is kind of a review from the last page, but (1) the perspective is different and (2) we're completing the position we began before (*).

Note: 7 7 7 7 7 9 *

Key of B 7 12 7 7 7 7 9

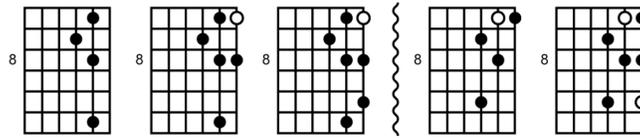
As you may have noticed, the top two (or three) strings in this position can be (and often are) played with two different sets of fingers. Now try the "two-strings-at-a-time" bit with just the new full position. Three strings at a time is also a wonderful practice discipline and can produce some fine results on a good day. Also, please notice, if you haven't, the parallel in sound, shape, and scale tone logic between:

Now we come to the third important area or position, and we're going to start with it in a new key. And as before, we'll deal with a portion rather than the whole at first, for various learning/usage-related reasons:

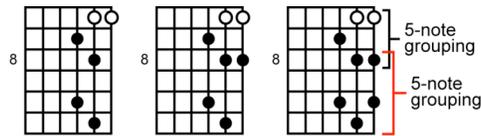
Key of G 8

Take various little groupings within this area as before, maybe two or three notes at a time. You *really* learn by doing this.

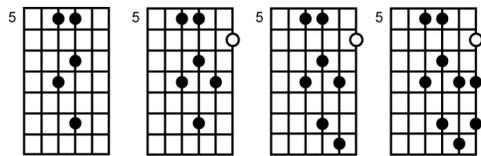
And now combining the new position with our last one:



Don't forget "spread" fingerings as well as the shifts.

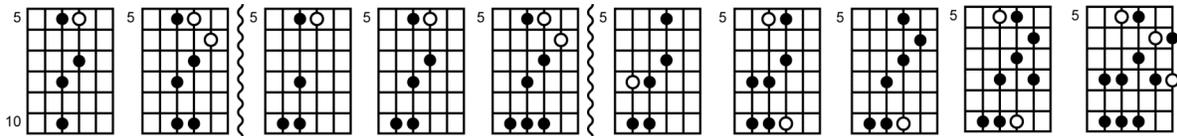


It won't hurt to try messing around also with the following:

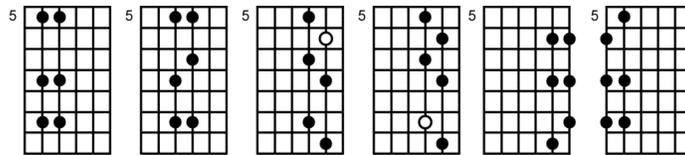


If your ears get bored, lower all this down to the key of E.

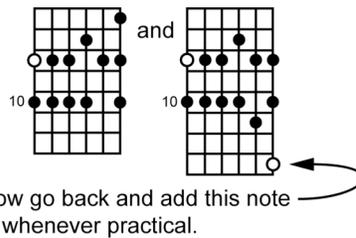
And now introducing some new notes in the new position:



Here's the two-string bit again:

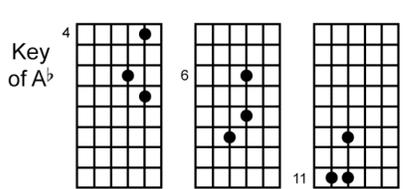
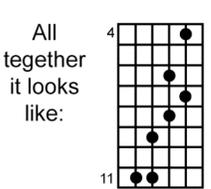
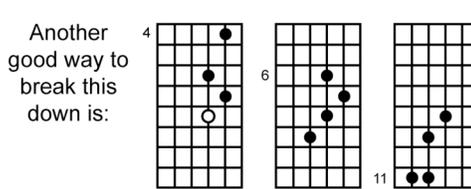


And the complete new position, finally:



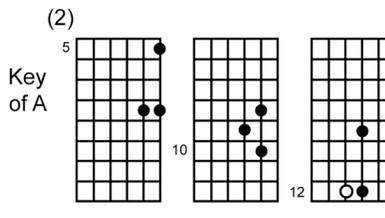
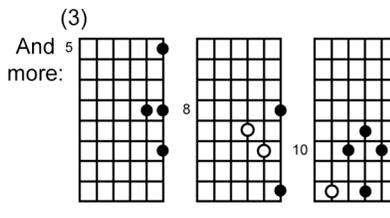
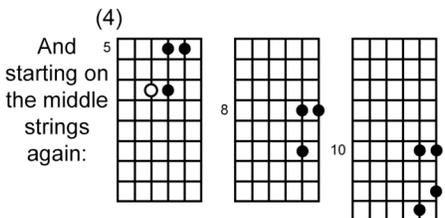
There's a lot of work on this page, but it can be a lot of fun, too, if you take it slow and easy.

How about hooking all three positions together (maybe you've tried already—if so, I hope there'll be a new idea or two here):

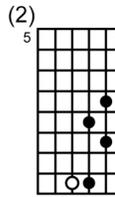
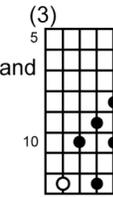
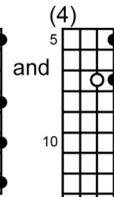
(1)    (1a)

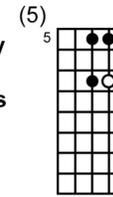
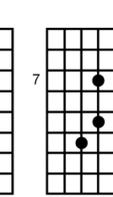
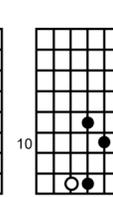
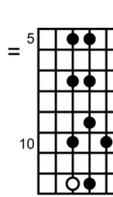
Try all these type of examples backwards, too (kind of “descending” on the neck even though the *sound* is ascending).

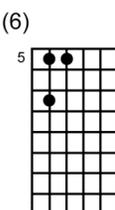
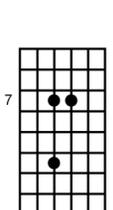
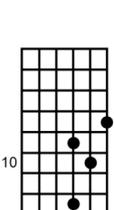
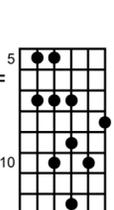
Here's another example, this time in the key of A:

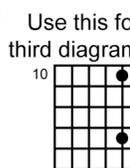
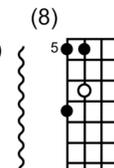
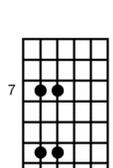
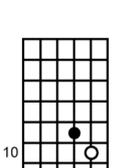
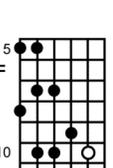
(2)    (4)

If we took everything on the preceding line and put the separate boxes together like we did in line 1, it would look like:

(2)  and (3)  and (4)  ← Study these very carefully visually as well as playing-wise

(5)    = 

(6)    = 

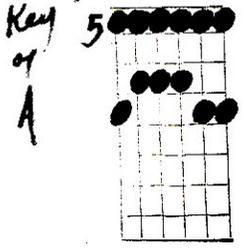
(7a) Use this for the third diagram in (7)  (8)    = 

If you're patient and diligent, this stuff can really become your friend and you'll really be “seeing the neck,” at least in this type of harmonic color. And *have fun* with it...make it be *MUSIC*.

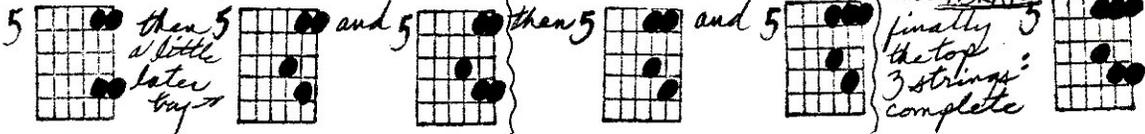
The PENTATONIC BLUES SCALE

This is the most popular scale for blues and Rock & Roll - more riffs & licks have been played from these notes than all the other scales combined (at least in a blues or rock setting). So, a working fluency with it is something you want to acquire, at worst just to see what your predecessors have been up to.

This position of the scale has been the most favored by virtually everyone who uses the blues scale in their playing. So get acquainted, if you're not already. Once you can play it reasonably well, try tapping your foot, setting up a strong groove of one type or another, and phrasing the notes in little groups, mixing the notes up in different ways. Focus on the top strings first (the skinny ones): take a few notes at a time, gradually adding more. EX: TRY HAMMER-ONS, PULL-OFFS, BENDS, SLIDES and ACCENTS to help the musicality of it all. ALSO: When playing adjacent notes with one finger, you don't want to hop, you want to roll. Ask for help if need be.

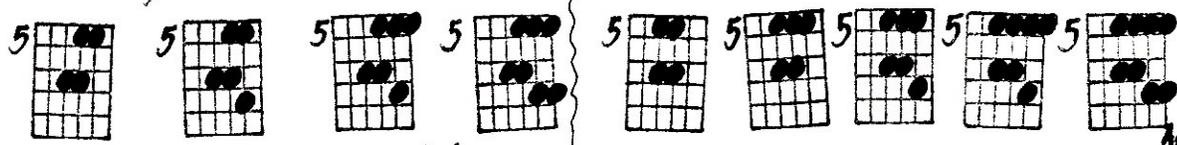


gradually adding more. EX: TAKE YOUR TIME WITH EACH DIAGRAM - REALLY EXPLORE. USE VIBRATO finally the top 3 strings complete



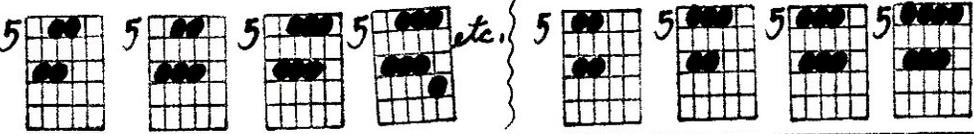
then 5 a little later try → and 5 then 5 and 5

Now including the 4th string:



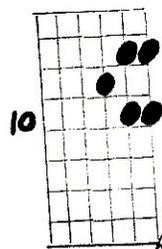
IF YOUR EARS START TO GET BORED, MOVE ALL THIS TO THE KEY OF D.

And bringing in the 5th string now:



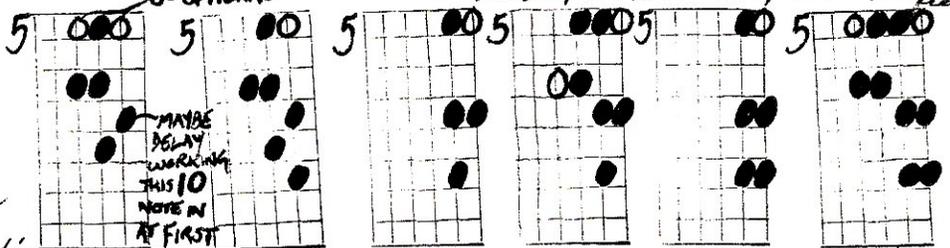
And finally bring in the 6th string little by little. We'll come back to this position very soon. But first we're going to deal with another important one.

The 2nd important area for us will be presented without all 6 strings (don't worry why for now, just relax and absorb it):



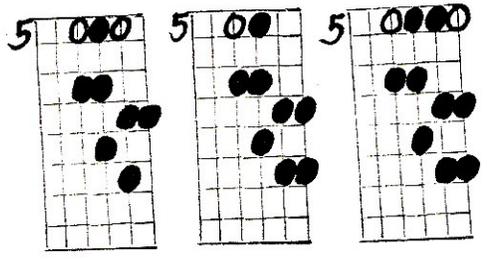
Learn this group of 5 notes gradually and when you feel comfortable, move on to the following → Master each diagram before moving to the next.

CONNECTING BOTH POSITIONS



① Slide or shift from one to the other ② Use "SPREAD OR STRETCH" fingering from the 5th pos. to reach up to the 9th & 10th frets. o = optional

Work in both ascending & descending directions and of course, mix the notes up in many orders and in many phrasings (which, by the way, are separate concepts).

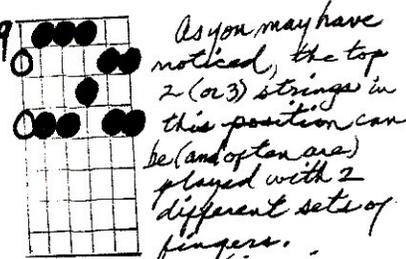
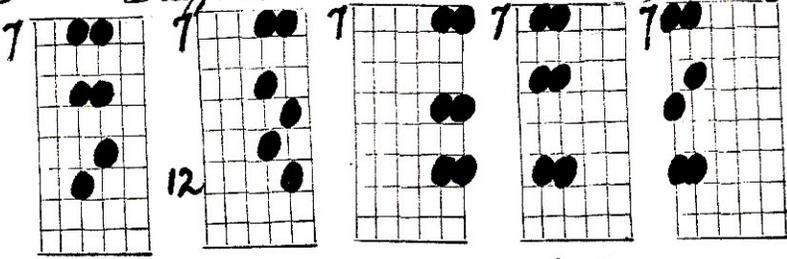


THE PENTATONIC BLUES SCALE

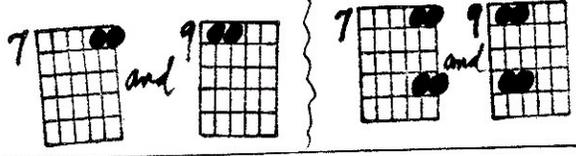
© 5-20-88
Jed Johnson

NOTE 7
KEY of B

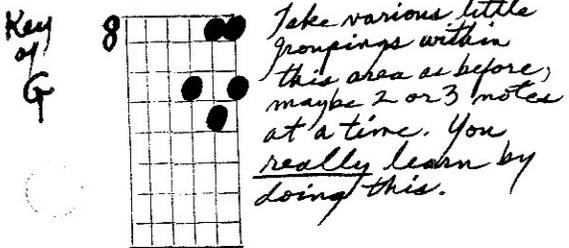
We're going to deal with a "2 strings at a time" procedure for awhile:
Of course, some of this is kind of a review from the last page, but the perspective is different and we're completing the position we began before



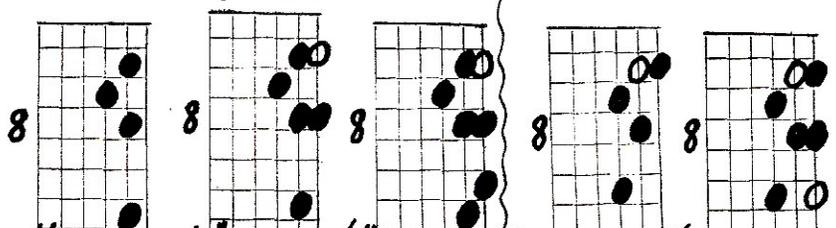
Now try the "2 strings at a time" bit with just the new full position. 3 strings at a time is also a wonderful practice discipline and can produce some fine results on a good day. Also, please notice, if you haven't, the parallel in sound, shape and scale tone logic between:



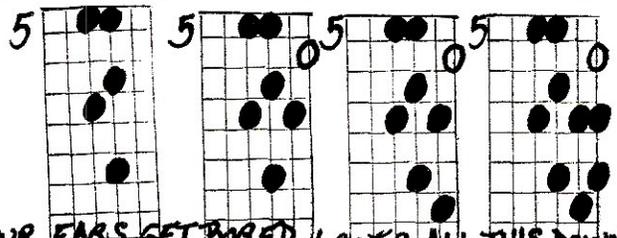
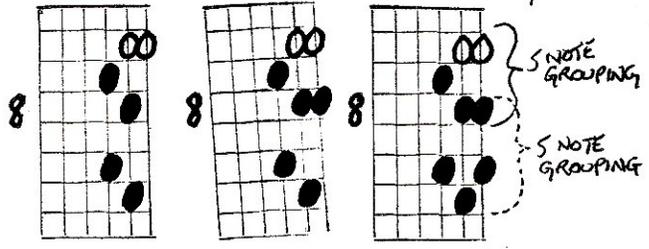
Now we come to the 3rd important area or position, and we're going to start with it in a new key. And as before, we'll deal with a portion rather than the whole at first, for various learning/usage-related reasons:



And now combining the new position with our last one:

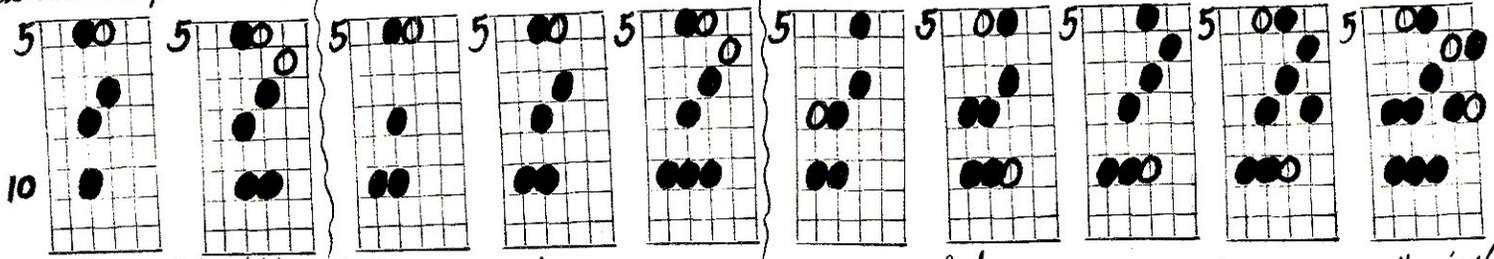


Don't forget "spread" fingering as well as the shifts
It won't hurt to try messing around also with the following:

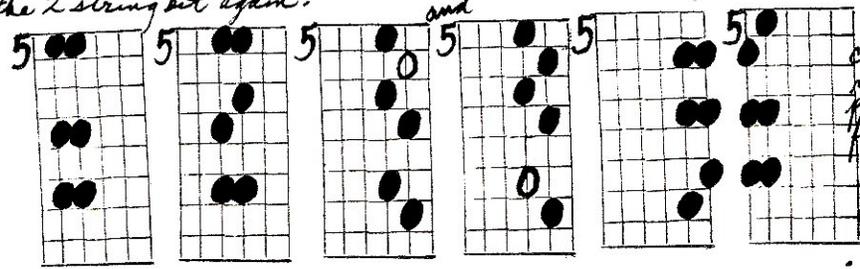


IF YOUR EARS GET BORED, LOWER ALL THIS DOWN TO THE KEY OF E.

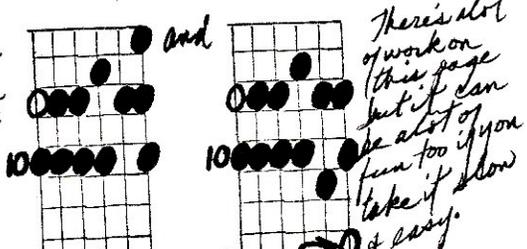
And now introducing some new notes in the new position:



Here's the 2 string bit again:



And the complete new position finally:



Now go back and add this note in wherever practical.

There's a lot of work on this page but it can be a lot of fun too if you take it slow & easy.

THE PENTATONIC BLUES SCALE

©6/2/88
Full Circle

How about hooking all 3 positions together (maybe you've tried already - if so, I hope there'll be a new idea or two here):

①

Key of Ab

All TOGETHER IT LOOKS LIKE :

Another good way to break this down is:

Try all these type of examples backwards too (kind of "descending" on the neck even though the sound is ascending).

Here's another example, this time in the key of A:

②

Key of A

And more:

And starting on the middle string again:

If we took everything on the preceding line and put the separate boxes together like we did in line 1, it would look like:

② and ③ and ④

← STUDY THESE VERY CAREFULLY VISUALLY AS WELL AS PLAYING WISE

⑥

⑦

⑦a Use this for the 3rd diagram in ⑦

⑧

If you're patient and diligent, this stuff can really become your friend and you'll really be "seeing the neck", at least in this type of harmonic color. And have fun with it..... make it be MUSIC.