

Essentials Of
Modern Guitar
Supplemental
Teaching Text

By

Joe Craig

©jacmuse2012

Essentials Of Modern Guitar

Supplemental Teaching Text

By

Joe Craig

Lesson one: Examining the core loop of pitches.

Lesson two: Pentatonic scales / major and minor.

Lesson three: Aural purity of musical sounds.

Lesson four: Cycle of 5th's.

Lesson five: History.

Lesson six: Major / minor tonality.

Lesson seven: Evolution of melodic resources.

Lesson eight: Relative major / minor.

Lesson nine: Evolving scales into arpeggios.

Lesson ten: Evolving arpeggios into chords.

Lesson eleven: Musical styles / musical elements.

Lesson twelve: Music intervals.

Lesson thirteen: Chord progressions.

Lesson fourteen: Musical sequence.

Lesson fifteen: Musical suspensions.

Lesson sixteen: Rhythm.

Lesson seventeen: Improvisation.

Lesson eighteen: Bass lines.

Lesson nineteen: Five scale shapes.

Lesson twenty: Interval studies.

Syllabus: Outline of melodic and harmonic resources.

Chart of fingerboard pitches.

Full text soon @ www.jacmuse.com

Lesson one: Examining the core loop of pitches we find within all of the American sounds and styles we dig.

At the core of the American sound, and in music in general, lives the five note pentatonic scale. From this one select group we gain pitches and intervals to create both the major and minor tonalities. Here are the pitches configured to form the minor tonality. Using the pitch A as our starting point, we create our first perfectly closed loop of pitches.

A C D E G A

The image shows a guitar fretboard diagram and a musical score for the A minor pentatonic scale. The fretboard diagram is a 6x6 grid representing the first six frets and six strings. The notes are: 1st fret, 2nd string (C); 1st fret, 3rd string (D); 2nd fret, 4th string (E); 3rd fret, 5th string (G); 3rd fret, 6th string (A). The musical score is in 4/4 time, starting on a treble clef. The melody is: A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), D5 (quarter), E5 (quarter), G5 (quarter), F#5 (quarter), E5 (quarter), D5 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (half). The bass line is: A3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), F#3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), D3 (quarter), C3 (quarter), B2 (quarter), A2 (half). The fret numbers for the bass line are: 7, 5, 7, 5, 8, 5, 8, 5, 8, 5, 7, 5, 7, 5, 7.

Work to get this scale shape under your fingers. We can move it anywhere we need so as to have good pitches in all 12 keys. We'll soon add one pitch to this melodic core and play some Blues. Here is a classic AmerEuro melody created with the minor pentatonic pitches.

Lesson two: Finding the pentatonic major tonality from the same group of pitches as the pentatonic minor.

Turns out that there is a Yin for every Yang and our music is true to this principle. In this next idea we rearrange the pitches of the A minor pentatonic to create the C major pentatonic color, so essential to earlier American melodies. In re-arranging the pitches we now center our group on the pitch C, changing our musical intervals and thus our overall character of sound.

C D E G A C

The image shows a guitar fretboard diagram and a musical score for the C major pentatonic scale. The fretboard diagram is a 6x4 grid representing strings 1-6 and frets 1-4. Fingering is indicated by circled numbers: 1 on string 1, 2 on string 2, 3 on string 3, 2 on string 4, 1 on string 5, and 3 on string 6. The musical score is in 4/4 time, starting on a treble clef. The melody consists of quarter notes: C4, D4, E4, G4, A4, C5, G4, E4, D4, C4. The bass line consists of quarter notes: C3, A2, G2, E2, C3, G2, E2, D2, C2.

We already have this scale shape under our fingers yes? Just one of the magical things of our guitars. As with the minor pentatonic shape, we can move this major scale shape up and down the fingerboard so as to have good pitches in all 12 keys.

2 We'll soon add two pitches to these core five and create the diatonic major scale. Here is a classic oldtime American melody from created with the major pentatonic pitches.

SHORT'NIN BREAD

TRADITIONAL

The image displays a musical score for the traditional piece "Short'nin Bread". It is presented in three systems, each consisting of a melody line in treble clef and a guitar tablature line. The melody is written in 4/4 time with a common time signature (C). The key signature is one flat (B-flat major). The melody line includes a first ending bracket over the final two measures. The guitar tablature uses numbers 5, 7, 8, and 9 to indicate fret positions. Chord symbols C and G7 are placed above the melody line. The score is numbered 1, 5, and 9 at the beginning of each system.

WWW.TACMUSE.COM

Probably as happy go lucky as it gets eh? Look to the melodies section for additional classic American major pentatonic melodies.

Lesson three: The core basis of our musical system is the aural purity of our musical sound, i.e., our pitches.

Our purest interval, the octave, is created by dividing our entire string length perfectly in half. On our guitars, our open strings are divided perfectly in half at the 12th fret, most often designated by two dots. We call this a 2 to 1 ratio (2:1). This ratio states that our higher pitch of the octave interval is vibrating twice as fast as our lower one. Our remaining 11 pitches all live within this octave span.

So how many eggs in a dozen? How many pitches in the chromatic scale? 12. And just what is the chromatic scale? A 12 pitch perfectly closed loop of pitches exclusively created by the half step interval. Sound out and sing this line.

The image shows a musical staff in treble clef with a 4/4 time signature. The notes are: C (quarter), C# (quarter), D (quarter), D# (quarter), E (quarter), F (quarter), F# (quarter), G (quarter), G# (quarter), A (quarter), Bb (quarter), B (quarter), and C (half). Below the staff is a fretboard diagram with strings T, A, B and frets 1-13.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|----|---|----|---|---|----|---|----|---|----|---|---|
| C | C# | D | D# | E | F | F# | G | G# | A | Bb | B | C |
|---|----|---|----|---|---|----|---|----|---|----|---|---|

In all of the American music we love all of our lettered pitches are created equal. Each will have their day in our musical Sun. Equality empowers us with the ability to project any of our scales, arpeggios, chords and licks equally from each pitch.

3 / Shed this classic line that opens with the octave interval.

TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALLGAME

TRADITIONAL

1

C F G C G

5 8 5 8 5 8 7 5 8 5 8 8

This system contains the first six measures of the piece. The melody is written in treble clef with a common time signature (C). Chords C, F, G, C, and G are indicated above the notes. The guitar tab below shows the fretting for each measure, starting with an octave interval between the 5th and 8th frets.

9

A7 D- D7 G7

5 9 5 5 6 8 5 6 7 5 5 5 7 8 10 7 5 8 5 7

This system contains measures 7 through 12. Chords A7, D-, D7, and G7 are indicated above the notes. The guitar tab continues the fretting pattern, including a 10th fret in measure 11.

17

C G C7 F

5 8 5 8 5 8 7 7 5 7 5 6 8 5 5 5 7

This system contains measures 13 through 18. Chords C, G, C7, and F are indicated above the notes. The guitar tab continues the fretting pattern.

25

C F G C

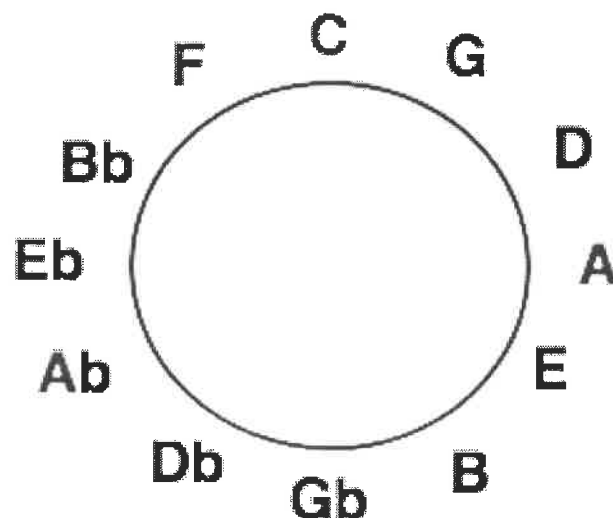
8 8 8 7 5 8 7 8 5 7 8 8

This system contains the final four measures of the piece, ending with a double bar line. Chords C, F, G, and C are indicated above the notes. The guitar tab continues the fretting pattern.

Lesson four: Organizing the 12 pitches of our chromatic scale into the cycle of 5th's. We create the interval of a perfect 5th by dividing our total string length into three equal parts. Designated by a 3:2 ratio of numbers, whereby our upper pitch vibrates three times for every two of our lower fundamental pitch. We have historically used the interval of a perfect 5th to create the 12 pitches of the chromatic scale. We do this simply by moving up from pitch to pitch by an interval of a perfect 5th.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---|---|
| C | G | D | A | E | B | G ^b | D ^b | A ^b | E ^b | B ^b | F | C |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---|---|

Here is a common graphic illustration of the cycle of 5th's, read clockwise for the interval of the p5th's and counterclockwise for the p4th, its inverse interval.



Shed the following classic line, in a minor key that starts with the interval of the perfect 5th.

Lesson five: Music history. We modern theorists today credit the mighty Pythagoras, here pictured playing Trane's beloved "Giant Steps" @ 300 (note his visionary expression) on his trusty multi-stringed monochord, which when electrified becomes our modern day pedal steel guitars,



... for figuring out the core music theory for us and passing the good word forever forward to inspire all who would hear.

Everyone into the wayback to check out when the gig was the communal campfire and we all were drummers. All drummers? Yes, unless you sang the melodies and danced. Either way, their pitches then are our pitches now.

Animal bones became flutes that sounded these pitches. Add today's electric and you get the eleven-ed 59 Burst / Marshall stack tone monster producing roughly the same pitches. Pythagoras comes along, does the math on these pitches, discovers their ratios and organizes the 12 note cycle and chromatic scale for us.

Forward 2000 years or so, a true piano forte begins to emerge which dramatically expands our pitch range, it also demands to be equal temper tuned, and wuala ... a perfectly closed and tuned loop of our 12 pitches original pitches.

Of course, we fretted string players have been tuning this way all along. The rule of 18 built lutes became six string guitars, so it has been that way for us basically forever.

Thanks to Mr. Louis Armstrong , the original 12 pitches now rhythmically Swing and bend to the Blues, that essential spice of all American musical testimony. So forever Blues-ify when you testify with a deep reverence and love for all things Louis and pass your words of musical truth to all who may hear.