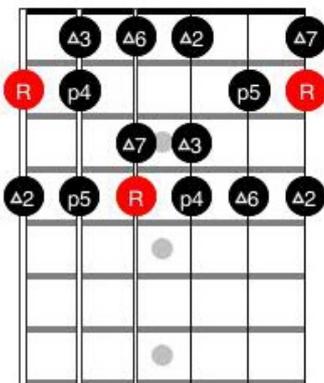


Practising Major Scales

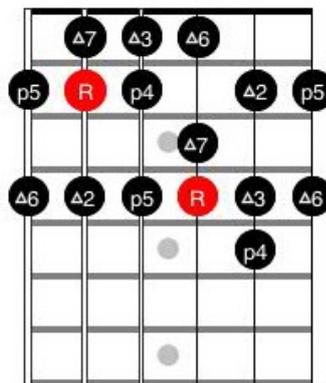
Major scales form the basis of most western music and to be technically and musically proficient, it is a good idea to know how to play them in as many different positions as you can. I personally think you should be able to play **any** major scale in all positions on the guitar's fingerboard.

Here are seven shapes. I personally don't think of them as *position 1, 2, 3 and 4* etc, I think of them purely from their root notes. The labelling was devised for this article.

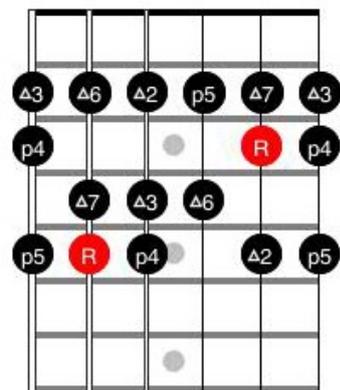
position 1



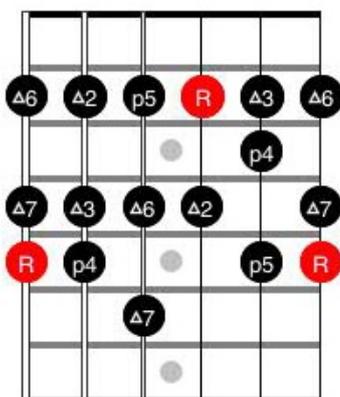
position 2



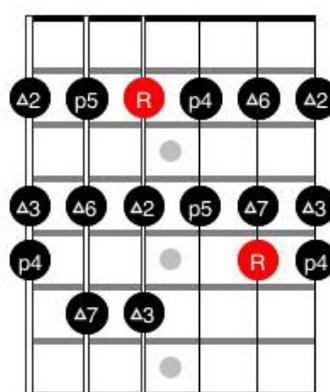
position 3



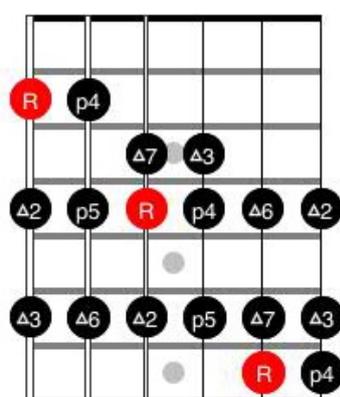
position 4



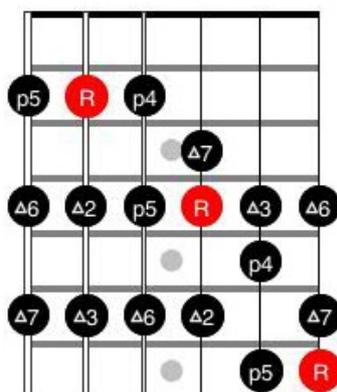
position 5



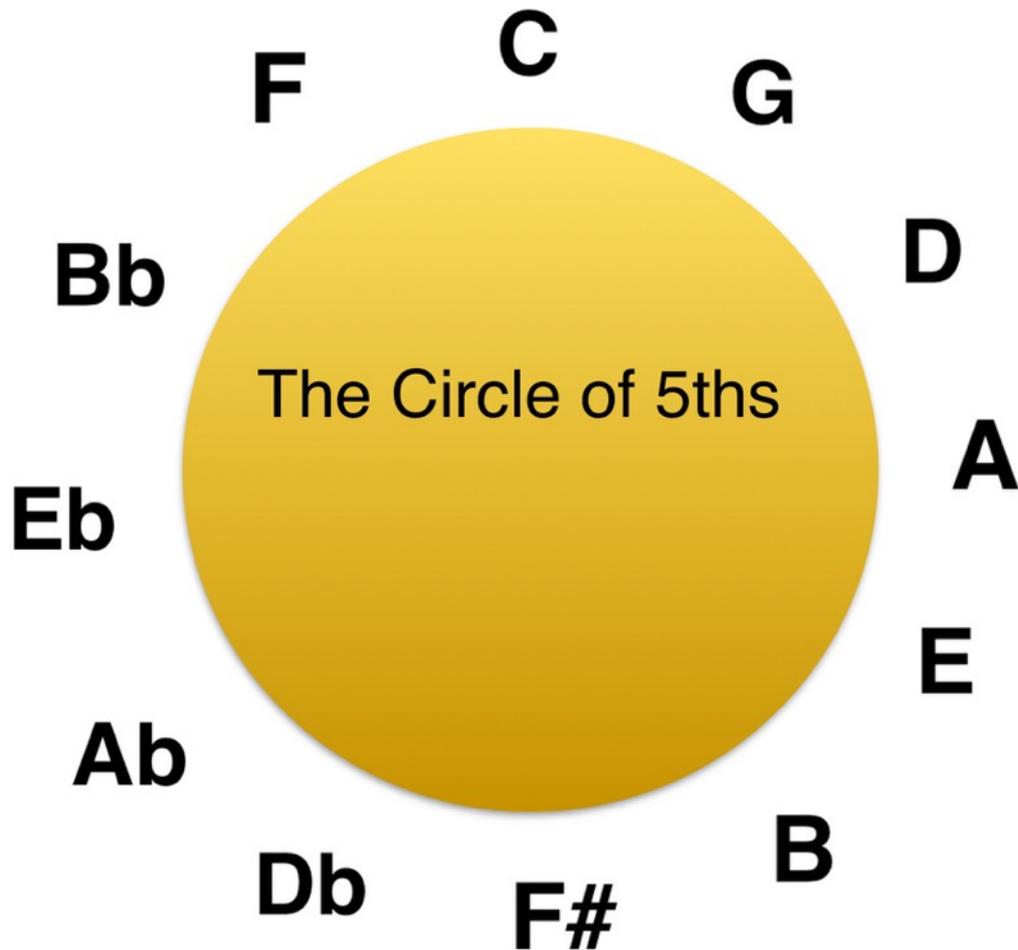
position 6



position 7



A very useful and challenging exercise is to play through **all** the major scales around the keys of the *circle of 5ths* without moving from the area from where you begin. It should be possible (and a goal) to do this in virtually every position on the guitar.



For example starting on the C major scale using *position 1* with the root note on the 8th fret on the E string.

C major scale position 1

The musical notation shows the C major scale in position 1. The treble clef and 4/4 time signature are indicated. The notes and their fingerings are: C (1), D (2), E (3), F (4), G (2), A (3), B (4), C (1), B (4), A (3), G (2), F (4), E (3), D (2), C (1). Below the staff, the strings T, A, and B are labeled, and the fret numbers for each note are provided: T (8, 10), A (7, 8, 10), B (7, 9, 10).

G major could then be played using shape 3 in the same position.

5 G major scale position 3

The diagram shows the G major scale in position 3, starting at fret 5. The treble clef staff contains the scale notes: G4, A4, B4, C#5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, F#5, E5, D5, C#5, B4, A4, G4. The guitar staff shows strings T, A, B and fretboard positions. Fingerings are: T (8, 10), A (7, 9, 10), B (7, 9, 10). The scale is divided into four measures: Measure 1 (5-7 frets), Measure 2 (7-9 frets), Measure 3 (9-11 frets), and Measure 4 (11-13 frets).

D major could be played with *position 4*

9 D major scale position 4

The diagram shows the D major scale in position 4, starting at fret 9. The treble clef staff contains the scale notes: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C#5, D5, C#5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. The guitar staff shows strings T, A, B and fretboard positions. Fingerings are: T (9, 10), A (7, 9, 10), B (7, 9, 11). The scale is divided into four measures: Measure 1 (9-11 frets), Measure 2 (11-13 frets), Measure 3 (13-15 frets), and Measure 4 (15-17 frets).

A major could be played using *position 5*.

13 A major scale position 5 etc.

The diagram shows the A major scale in position 5, starting at fret 13. The treble clef staff contains the scale notes: A4, B4, C#5, D5, E5, F#5, G#5, A5, G#5, F#5, E5, D5, C#5, B4, A4. The guitar staff shows strings T, A, B and fretboard positions. Fingerings are: T (9, 10), A (7, 9, 11), B (7, 9, 11). The scale is divided into four measures: Measure 1 (13-15 frets), Measure 2 (15-17 frets), Measure 3 (17-19 frets), and Measure 4 (19-21 frets).

Continue with E major, B major, F# major, Db major etc until you get back to C major again. It is possible to play all these scales without moving out of that particular area of the fingerboard. Do

this as a continuous exercise in quavers (1/8th notes). I like to do this with a metronome. Try the same playing C major in position 4 with the root note on the 8th fret of the E string played with the little finger and continue with G, D, A, E etc in the same position.

Run this exercise in as many different positions as you can, after a few weeks I guarantee you'll notice a big difference in your playing.

Darren Dutson Bromley