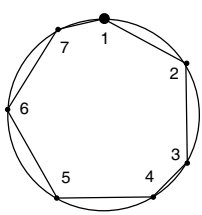


Pentatonics

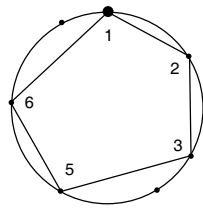
Smaller collections of notes than the heptatonic scales are very frequently used, like the pentatonic scales.

The major pentatonic scale, as its name suggests, contains 5 degrees. It is the heptatonic major scale from which 2 degrees (4 and 7) have been removed, so as to eliminate the semitone intervals. It is an anhemitonic scale, literally: without semitones.

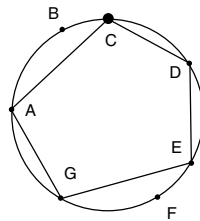
Major pentatonic scale



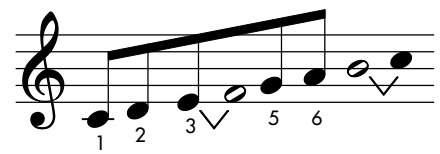
Heptatonic scale



Pentatonic scale

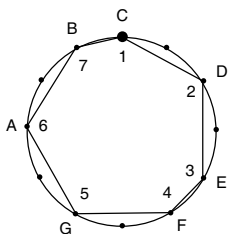


C major penta

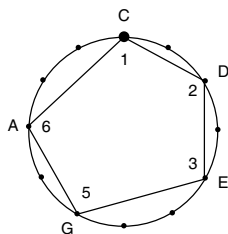


The major heptatonic scale contains 3 major pentatonic scales (abbreviated: pM) built on the I, IV and V degrees; and a melodic minor pentatonic scale (abbreviated: pmm) built on the II degree.

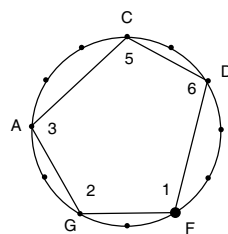
Pentatonic scales contained in the heptatonic major scale



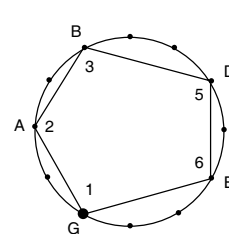
C major



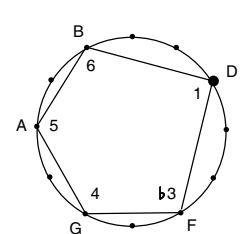
C major penta



F major penta



G major penta



D melodic minor penta

∨ : semitone

As with the heptatonic major scale, a minor pentatonic scale without semitones can be constructed from the melodic minor heptatonic scale. Degrees 2 and 7 are removed, so that the semitone intervals are eliminated.

Melodic minor pentatonic scale

Heptatonic scale Pentatonic scale C mel. minor penta

The melodic minor heptatonic scale contains 2 melodic minor pentatonic scales built on the I and II degrees; and a major pentatonic scale built on the IV degree.

Pentatonic scales contained in the melodic minor heptatonic scale

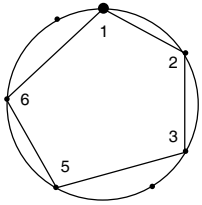
C melodic minor C melodic minor penta D melodic minor penta F major penta

✓ : semitone

Cpm Dpm FpM

As with the heptatonic scales, all the degrees of the major pentatonic scale can be polarized, producing as many different modes. Once again, all these modes are relative, i.e. have the same notes, and only the tonics vary.

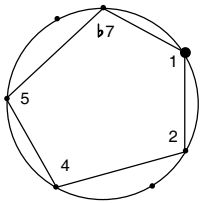
Modes of C major pentatonic scale



I

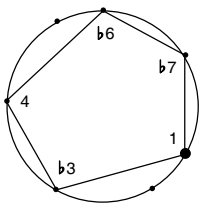
C D E G A

Musical notation for Mode I in treble clef. The notes are C (1), D (2), E (3), G (5), and A (6) on a five-line staff.



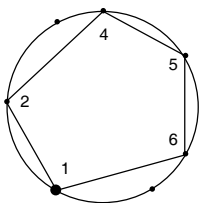
II

Musical notation for Mode II in treble clef. The notes are Bb (b7), C (1), D (2), F (4), and G (5) on a five-line staff.



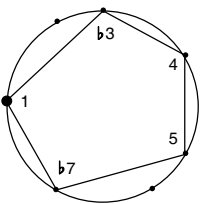
III

Musical notation for Mode III in treble clef. The notes are Fb (b6), Bb (b7), C (1), Eb (b3), and F (4) on a five-line staff.



V

Musical notation for Mode V in treble clef. The notes are F (4), G (5), A (6), C (1), and D (2) on a five-line staff.

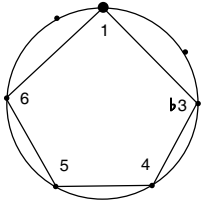


VI

Musical notation for Mode VI in treble clef. The notes are Eb (b3), F (4), G (5), Bb (b7), and C (1) on a five-line staff.

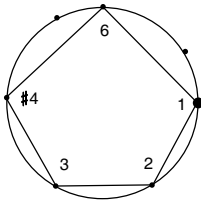
By polarizing the melodic minor pentatonic scale, we get its 5 specific modes.

Modes of C melodic minor pentatonic scale

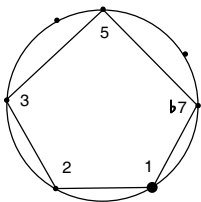


I

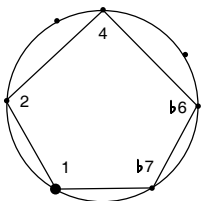
C Eb F G A



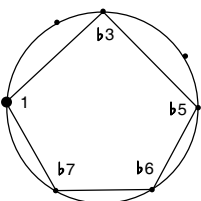
bIII



IV



V



VI

The major penta mode build on the VI degree produces the following numbering: 1 \flat 3 4 5 \flat 7, very close to the the numbering of the melodic minor penta mode built on the I degree: 1 \flat 3 5 4 6. These 2 modes constitute 2 possible collections of notes for the same context, for example a m7 chord.

In the same way, we can bring together 3 other pairs of modes from the major penta and minor melodic scales, these modes differing only by one note.

To form these pairs of modes, we take a major penta scale and the melodic minor penta scale built on its VI degree. Example CpM and Apm, GpM and Epmm, etc.

The indicated chords polarize the C major and the A melodic minor penta scales, producing the modes indicated by the numbering. In addition to these modes, one can play on these chords the close heptatonic modes:

- ▶ C7M: C Ionian or C Lydian modes,
- ▶ D7: D Mixolydian mode,
- ▶ Em7: E Aeolian mode,
- ▶ Am7: A Dorian mode.

Pairs of C major and melodic minor penta scales.

| | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| C7M | D7 | Em7 | Am7 |
| CpM | | | |
| | | | |
| Apm | | | |
| Ionian 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 1 2 3 #4 5 6 7 Lydian | Mixo 1 2 3 4 5 6 \flat 7 1 2 3 4 5 6 \flat 7 | Aeolian 1 2 \flat 3 4 5 \flat 6 \flat 7 1 2 \flat 3 4 5 \flat 6 \flat 7 | Dorian 1 2 \flat 3 4 5 6 \flat 7 1 2 \flat 3 4 5 6 \flat 7 |