

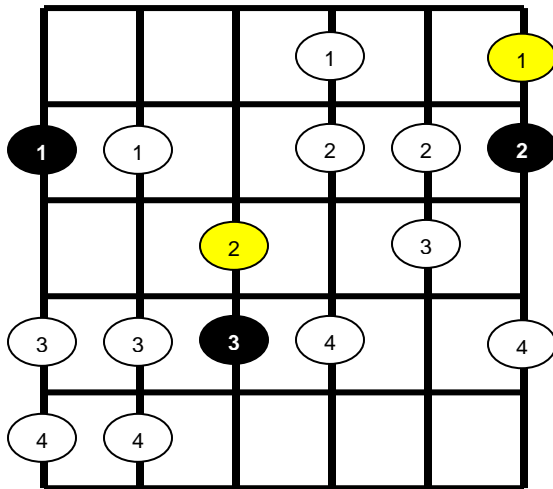
THE HARMONIC MINOR SCALE -written by David Taub

There are basically three types of minor scales – natural minor, harmonic minor, and melodic minor. The harmonic minor scale is a very interesting sounding scale that will add color and depth to your sound – it is a very exotic sounding scale. It has a very distinctive color to its sound – almost Spanish sounding. It is a natural minor scale with a raised seventh. The scale degrees are 1, 2, b3, 4, 5, b6, 7. The natural minor scale is the same scale except the last degree is a flatted seventh, (b7). This form of minor scale is called "harmonic minor" because when harmonies are constructed in minor-key music, it often tends to utilize the raised 7th, especially in dominant harmony. In the key of C the harmonic minor scale would consist of the notes C, D, Eb, F, G, G#, and B. In the table below you can see how the harmonic minor scale intervals relate to some of the other scales and modes that we have discussed in previous lessons. This scale sounds great when played over a major V chord in a minor key progression or over minor plus seven chords. Try laying down a rhythm of Am7 – E7. Play A Aeolian over the Am chord and when the E7 chord comes up play the A Harmonic Minor scale over that chord and listen to the sound – WOW. Try resolving the 7th degree to the root for a nice tension and release feel. You can play the scale over straight minor chords – but it will sound a bit exotic – try it and experiment. Remember the keynote in the scale is that 7th – it is always a half step behind the root note.

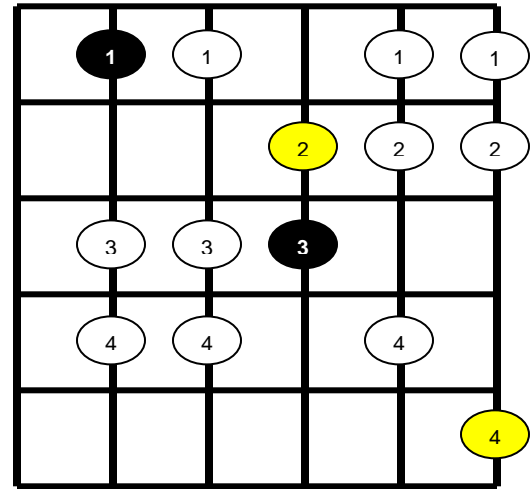
Major scale, (Ionian mode)	1 (root)	2	3	4	5	6	7
Natural Minor scale, (Aeolian mode)	1 (root)	2	b3	4	5	b6	b7
Harmonic Minor scale	1 (root)	2	b3	4	5	b6	7
Dorian mode	1 (root)	2	b3	4	5	6	b7
Pentatonic Minor scale	1 (root)	-	b3	4	5	-	b7
Blues scale	1 (root)	-	b3	4	b5	5	b7

Just to get you started below are two scale shapes. You can grab these easily in any key as you grab the root note with your first finger on the 6th string root in the one shape and the 5th string root in the other. These will get you started but over time learn the scale over the entire neck and practice in all keys.

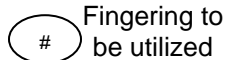
Harmonic Minor Scale off the 6th string root



Harmonic Minor Scale off the 5th string root



root note



Fingering to be utilized



7th degree of scale

THE HARMONIC MINOR SCALE LINK -written by David Taub

Below is a three-octave Harmonic Minor scale link that will take you over half the neck. This will start to get you attaching the shapes and playing across the neck. You can play all three octaves utilizing a 1-3-4 fingering. Practice this link in all keys and memorize the root notes and that 7th. Slide up with that 1st finger to play the strings with the 1-1-3-4 fingerings.

