

# **Lesson 1- The Four Tetra Chords of the C Major (or F Lydian)**

**Tonality:**

**Overview**

# MAJOR SCALE, MODES AND TETRACHORDS

ALL SCALES AND MODES OF THE SCALES ARE COMPOSED OF TWO TETRACHORDS. THE FIRST FOUR NOTES COMPOSING THE FIRST TETRACHORD (T1) AND THE SECOND FOUR NOTES COMPOSE THE SECOND TETRACHORD (T2). I FIND IT EASIER TO WORK WITH TETRACHORDS TO IMPROVISE WITH THEN THE SCALES THEMSELVES BECAUSE THEY ARE SHORTER AND EASIER TO REMEMBER THEN A FULL SCALE . WHAT'S MORE THE TETRACHORDS OCCUR OVER AND OVER AGAIN AND CAN BE COMBINED IN INTERESTING WAYS TO CREATE EVEN MORE EXOTIC SCALES WHICH ARE MUCH EASIER TO REMEMBER AND PLAY.

## THE MAJOR TETRACHORD



INTERVAL SEQUENCE=WHOLE TONE, WHOLE TONE, HALF TONE. (W<sub>1</sub>W<sub>2</sub>H)

NOTICE THAT THE MAJOR SCALE IS COMPOSED OF TWO IDENTICAL TETRACHORDS (W<sub>1</sub>W<sub>2</sub>H) SEPARATED BY A WHOLE TONE

## TETRACHORD ONE OR T1



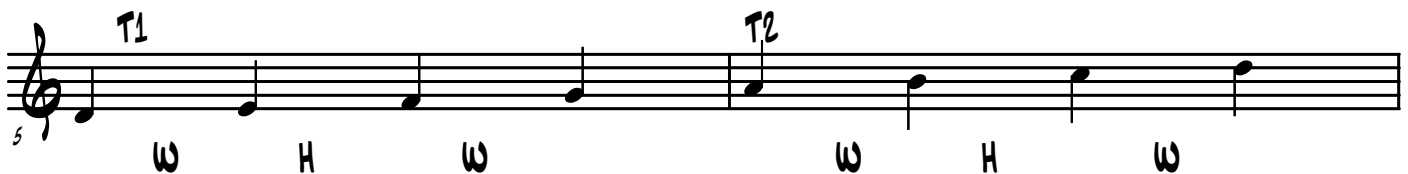
## TETRACHORD 2 OR T2



## THE MINOR TETRACHORD



IN LIKE MANNER THE DORIAN MINOR SCALE IS COMPOSED OF TWO IDENTICAL TETRACHORDS (W<sub>1</sub>H<sub>1</sub>W<sub>2</sub>)



## THE PHRYGIAN TETRACHORD



IN LIKE MANNER THE E PHRYGIAN SCALE IS COMPOSED OF TWO IDENTICAL TETRACHORDS

T1 T1

H W W H W W

THE LYDIAN TETRACHORD (W<sub>2</sub>W<sub>2</sub>)

W W W

THE F LYDIAN SCALE IS COMPOSED OF THE F LYDIAN TETRACHORD (T1) AND THE ALREADY MENTIONED C MAJOR TETRACHORD (T2)

T1 T2

W W W W W W

THE G MIXOLYDIAN SCALE IS COMPOSED OF THE ALREADY MENTIONED G MAJOR TETRACHORD (T1) AND THE D MINOR TETRACHORD (T2)

W W H W W H

THE A AEOLIAN SCALE IS COMPOSED OF THE ALREADY MENTIONED A MINOR TETRACHORD (WHW) AND THE E PHRYGIAN (HW<sub>2</sub>W<sub>2</sub>)

W H W H W W

THE LOCRIAN TETRACHORD IS COMPOSED OF A B PHRYGIAN (HW<sub>2</sub>W<sub>2</sub>) AND AN F LYDIAN (W<sub>2</sub>W<sub>2</sub>)

H W W W W W

NOTICE HOW WE CAN CONSTRUCT THE 7 MODES OF THE MAJOR SCALE WITH JUST 4 TETRACHORDS. IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO MEMORIZE 7 SCALES, EACH WITH 8 NOTES FROM OCTAVE TO OCTAVE. THAT WOULD BE  $7 \times 8 = 56$  BITS OF INFORMATION. BUT 4 TETRACHORDS, EACH ONE CONTAINING 4 NOTES IS  $4 \times 4 = 16$  BITS OF INFORMATION. JAZZ IS A COMPLEX ART AND THERE IS MUCH TO LEARN AND MEMORIZE. IT PAYS TO ECONOMIZE WHERE YOU CAN.

I WANT TO STRESS THAT THIS METHOD IS A SHIFT IN THINKING AWAY FROM SCALES TO TETRACHORDS AS THE BASIS OF IMPROVIZATION. A REAL SMART PERSON ONCE SAID THAT TO DO THINGS THE SAME WAY AND EXPECT DIFFERENT RESULTS WAS INSANITY. AS YOU WILL SEE, IN FUTURE LESSONS THE POTENTIAL USES OF THE TETRACHORDS ARE SO LIMITLESS THAT YOU WILL NEVER HAVE TO TRANSCRIBE ANOTHER GUITARIST SOLO AGAIN TO FIND INTERESTING IDEAS FOR YOU OWN PLAYING, THE DAYS OF THE JAZZ GUITAR CLONE ARE OVER!

THESE TETRACHORDS COME UP AGAIN AND AGAIN IN MANY DIFFERENT TONALITIES. THE REWARDS WILL BE GREAT IF YOU KNOW THEM IN SIDE AND OUT. THIS IS ESPECIALLY EASY FOR US GUITARISTS SINCE THE TETRACHORDS FALL AS NICE EASY PATTERNS ON THE GUITAR.

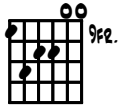
IN THE LESSONS TO FOLLOW WE WILL EXAMINE EACH TETRACHORD IN DEPTH AND HOW TO USE THE INVERSIONS AND PERMUTAIONS OF THE TETRACHORDS TO FORM INTERESTING AND LIMITLESS LINES AND MOTIFS.

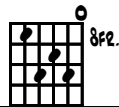
ONCE AGAIN THE FOUR TETRACHORDA OF THE MAJOR TONALITY ARE:

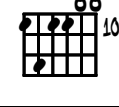
The image shows four tetrachords on a single staff in treble clef, separated by a double bar line. The first two are labeled 'MAJOR (WWh)' and 'MINOR (Whw)'. The last two are labeled 'PHRYGIAN (Hww)' and 'LYDIAN (wWw)'. The notes are: Major (C4, D4, E4, F4), Minor (C4, B3, A3, G3), Phrygian (C4, B3, A3, G3), and Lydian (C4, D4, E4, F4). The first measure of the first two tetrachords is marked with the number '19'.

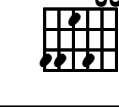
# EXAMPLES LESSON 1


THE PURPOSE OF THIS EXAMPLE IS TO INTRODUCE THE STUDENT TO THE IDEA THAT WELL KNOWN SCALES AND MODES CAN BE THOUGHT OF AS TWO TETRACHORDS. IN FUTURE LESSONS THE STUDENT WILL SEE THESE TETRA-CHORDS COME UP OVER AND OVER AGAIN. KNOWING THIS WILL ENABLE THE STUDENT TO APPROACH JAZZ IN A NEW AND INTERESTING WAY. (SEE MY LESSONS ON CHORDS AND VOICINGS IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THESE CHORDS I'VE USED IN THIS EXAMPLE)

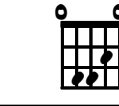
**TETRACHORD 1 = C MAJOR**      **TETRACHORD 2 = G MAJOR**      **C MAJ7**       9fr.

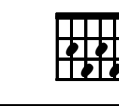
**TETRACHORD 1 = C MAJOR**      **TETRACHORD 2 = F MAJOR**      **F MAJ7**       8fr.

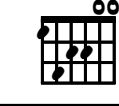
**TETRACHORD 1 = D MINOR**      **TETRACHORD 2 = A MINOR**      **D M69**       10fr.

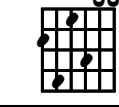
**TETRACHORD 1 = A MINOR**      **TETRACHORD 2 = E PHRYGIAN**      **A M9**       10fr.

**TETRACHORD 1 = A MINOR**      **TETRACHORD 2 = D MINOR**      **A M9**      

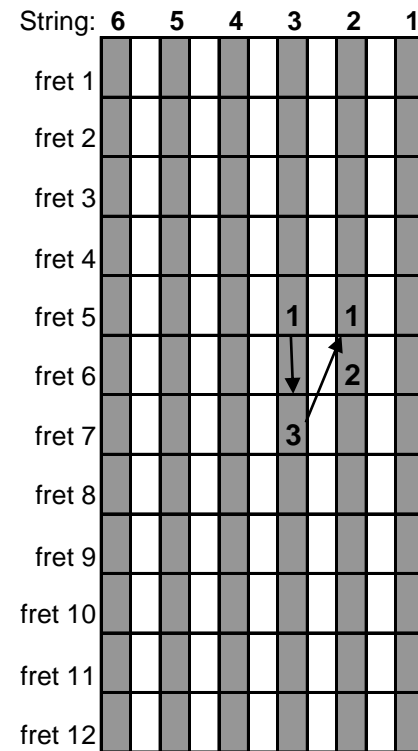
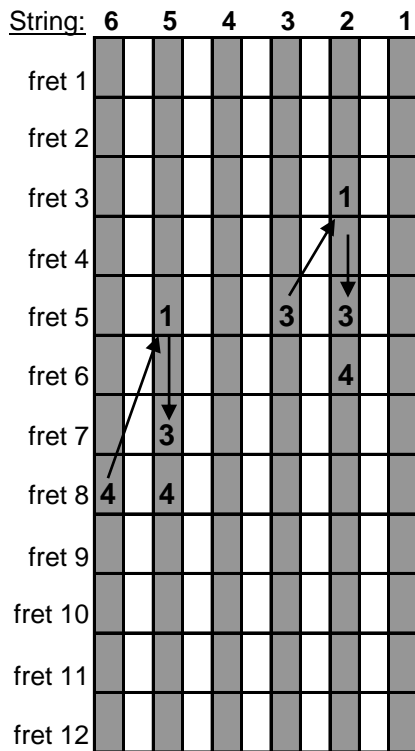
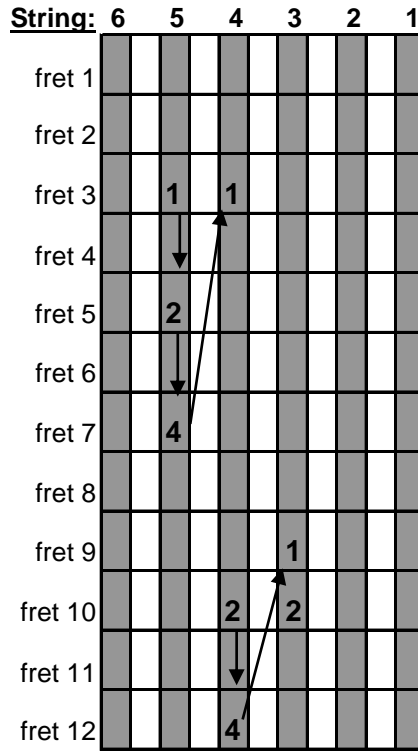
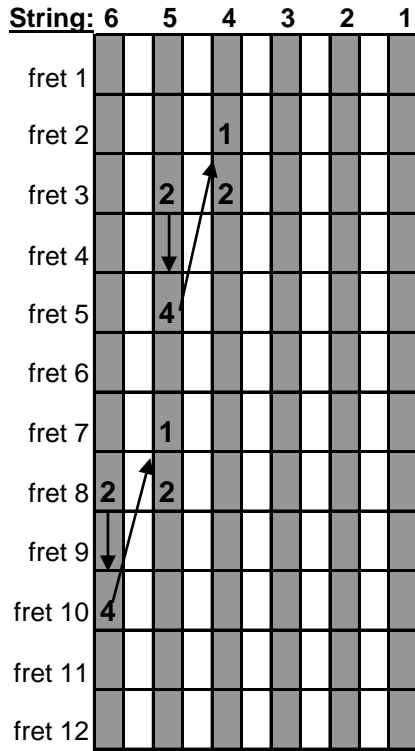
**TETRACHORD 1 = E PHRYGIAN**      **TETRACHORD 2 = B PHRYGIAN**      **F $\Delta$ 7(b5)/E**      

**TETRACHORD 1 = B PHRYGIAN**      **TETRACHORD 2 = F LYDIAN**      **B with(b5)**      

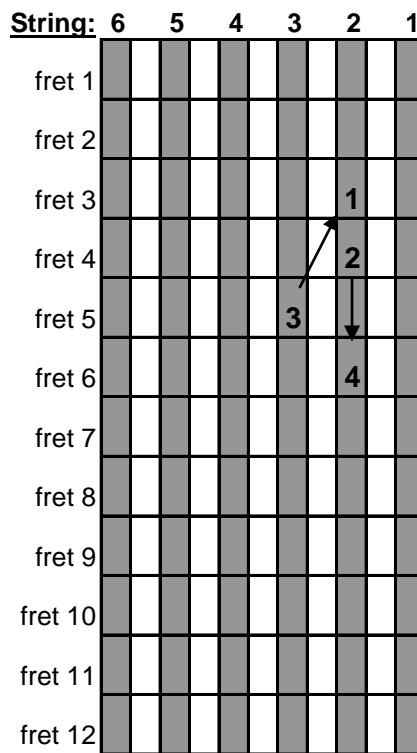
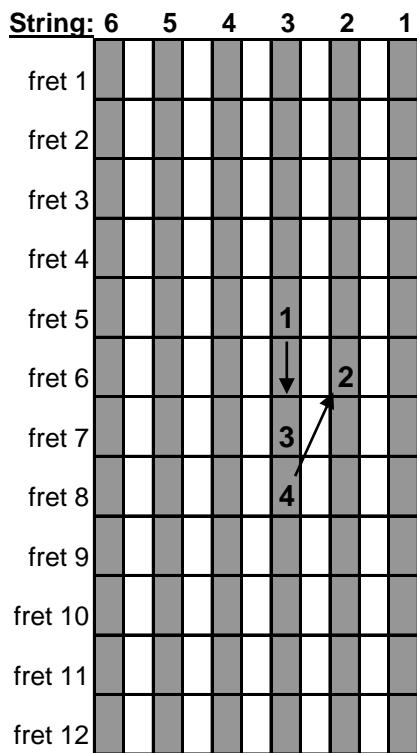
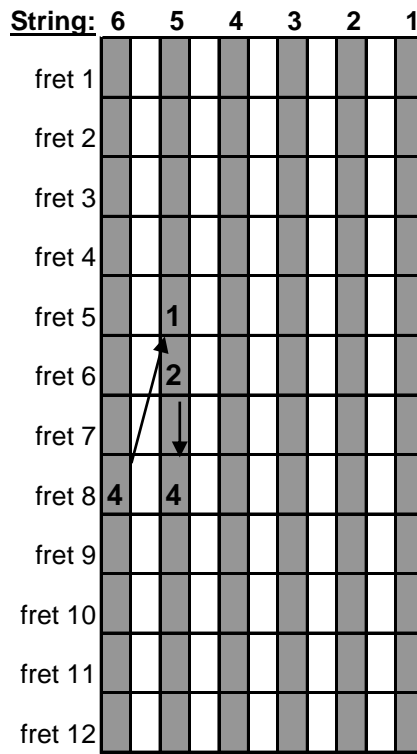
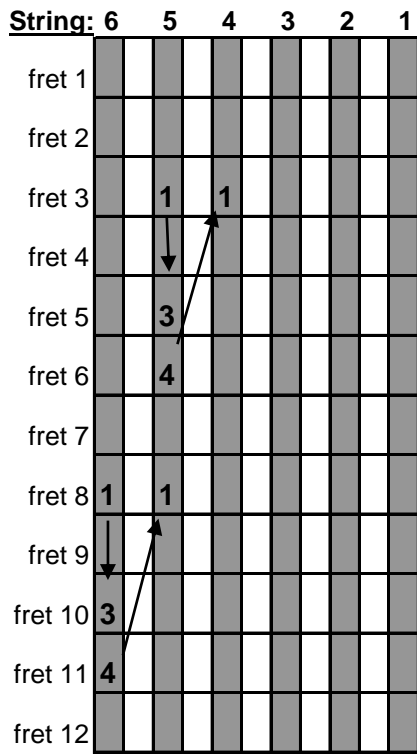
**TETRACHORD 1 = F LYDIAN**      **TETRACHORD 2 = C MAJOR**      **F $\Delta$ 7(b5)**      

**TETRACHORD 1 = C MAJOR**      **TETRACHORD 2 = F LYDIAN**      **C MAJ6**       7fr.

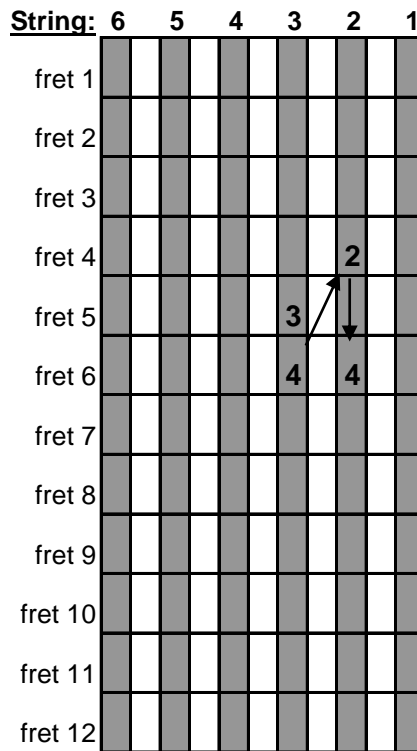
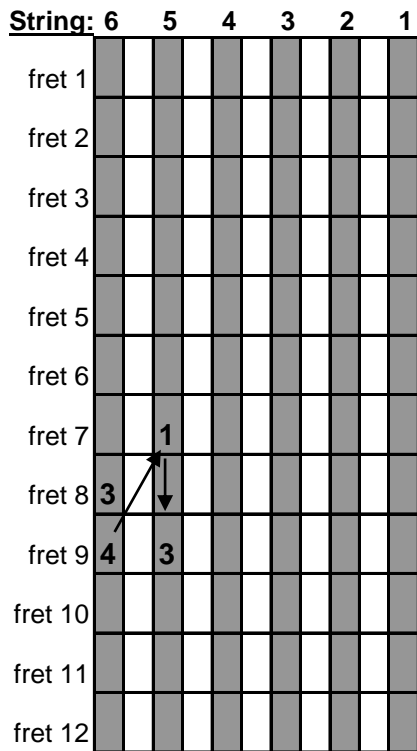
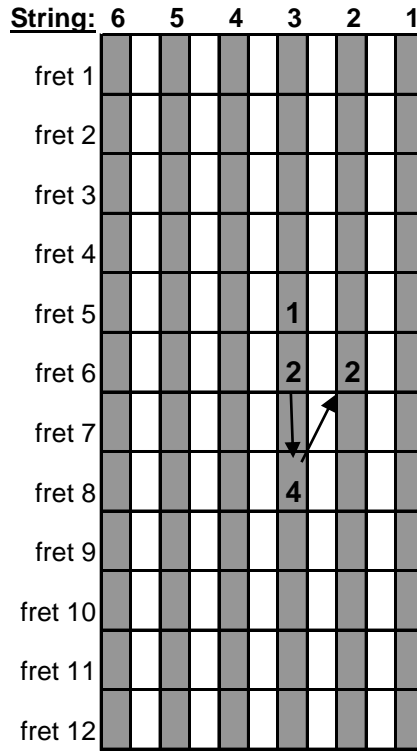
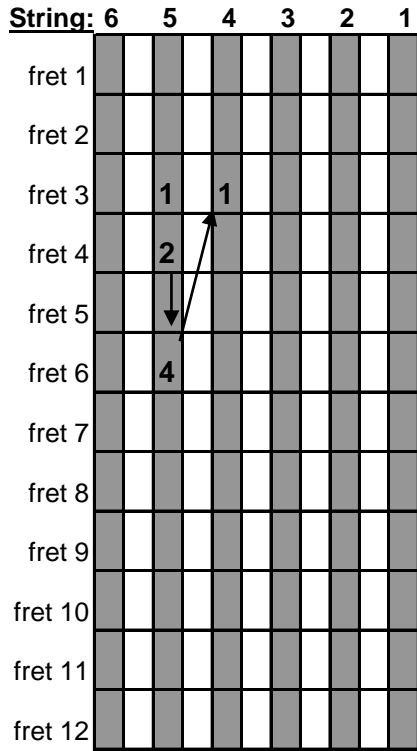
## Finger Patterns for The Major tetrachord (W W H)



## Finger Patterns for the Minor Tetrachord (W H W)

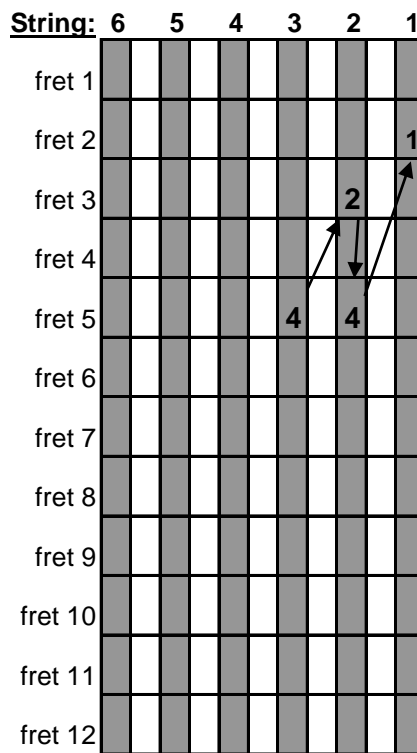
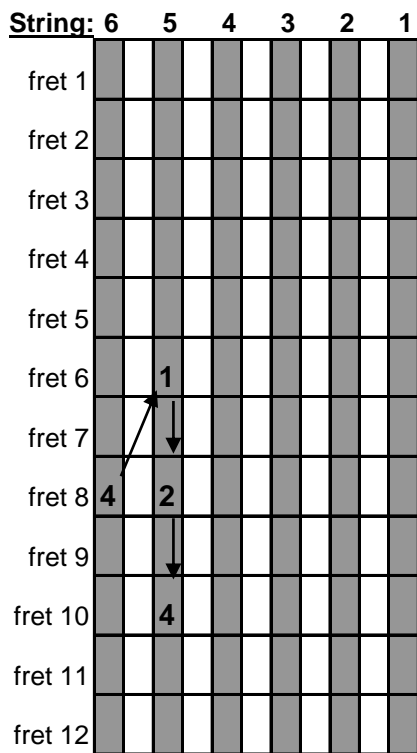
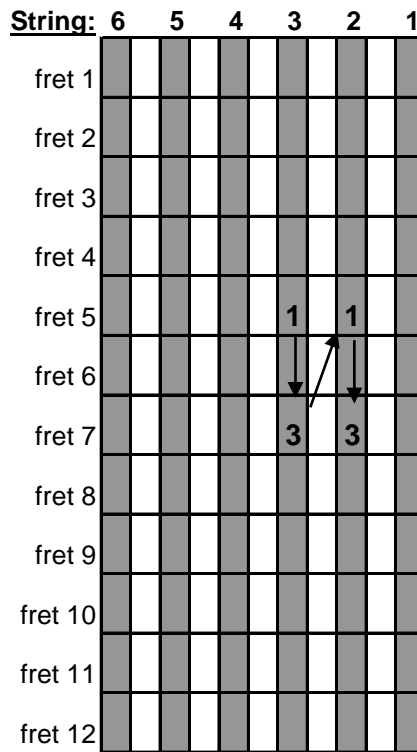
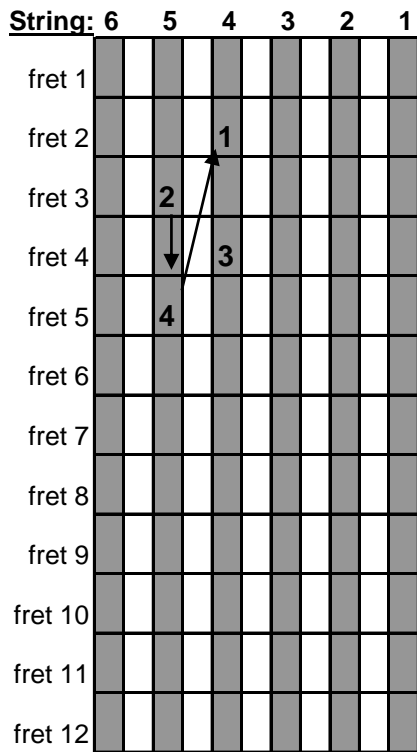


## Finger Patterns for the Phygian Tetrachord ( H W W )





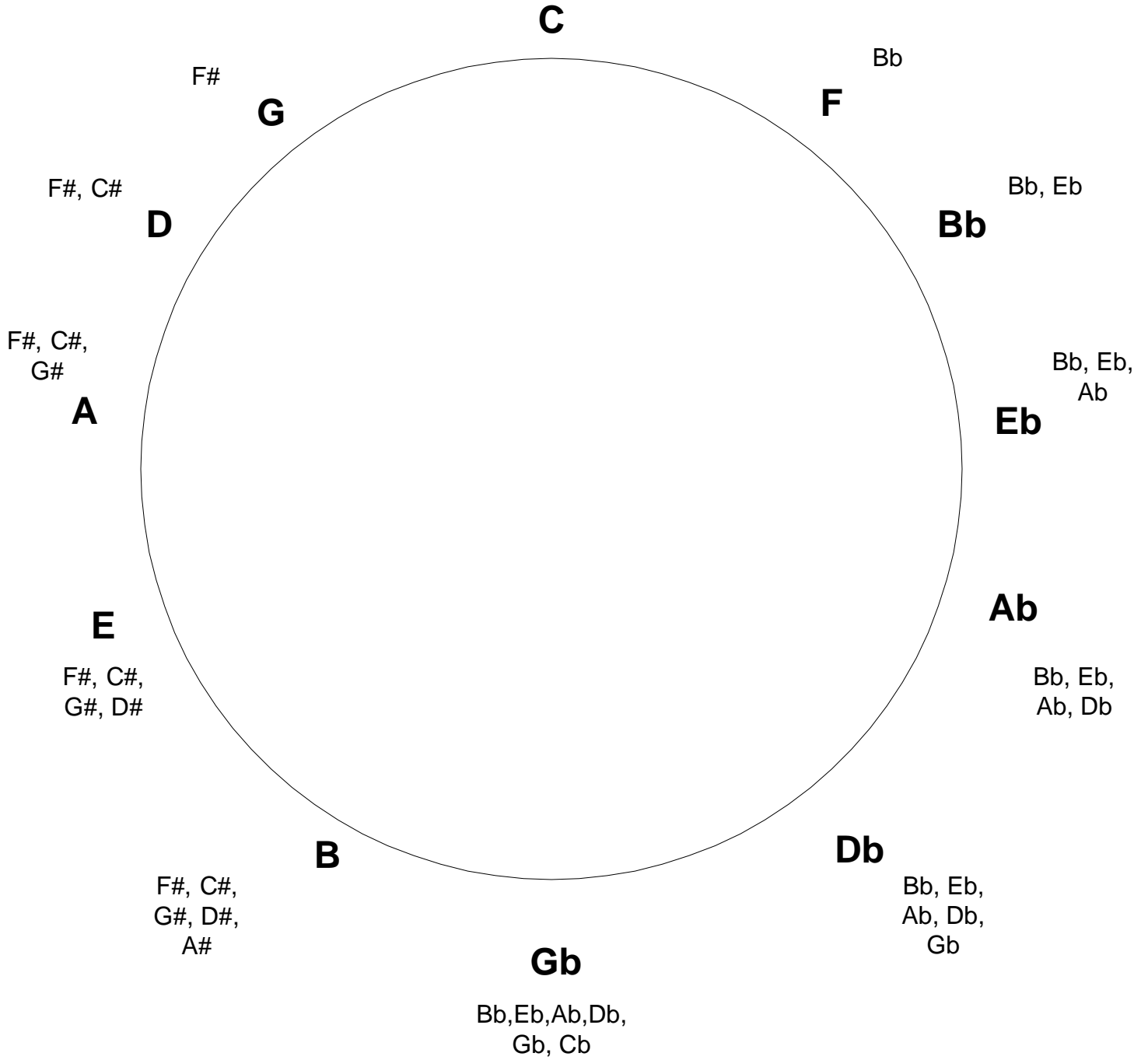
## Finger Patterns for the Lydian Tetrachord ( W W W )



Tony Cesarano  
Jazz Studies

# The Cycle of Fourths (or Fifths)

No #'s or b's



## Exercises for Lesson 1

Your goal for this lesson is to learn well the finger patterns of the four basic tetrachords of the Major tonality, namely WWH, WHW, HWW, WWW or Major, Minor, Phrygian, and Lydian tetrachords.

### Exercise 1.

In this exercise play the pattern (tetrachord) starting on low E and then successively play the pattern starting on every note going up chromatically as high as you can go on your guitar.

### Exercise 2.

Play the pattern starting on any note and play the pattern around the cycle of 5ths.

### Note

You should be able to play the tetrachord starting on any notes of the bottom 5 strings. (E,A,D,G,B)