

Hey there, and welcome to the technical exercise portion of chapter 2. In this chapter, you learn how to play the minor pentatonic scale in two positions, and work on some technical exercises to help drill that scale into your fingers, your ears, and onto the fretboard.

So to begin, let's look at the six string version of the scale. And the fingering is in the PDF and I'm going to just sort of play up and down. Now you can use the fingering I wrote in the PDF, or you can experiment and try your own depending on the size of your hand and your experience. But, here's the first shape and I'll call it the finger numbers that I use 1-4-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-4-1-4. And here's the second shape with the fingering that I use off the fifth string route, and this is D minor. 1-4-1-3-1-3-2-4-1-4 and that's the scale.

The first thing you want to do, and I'll stick to this fifth string root for now, but the first thing that you want to do is just make sure that you play from the lowest note to the highest and back again. So, that's the first technical exercise to get the scale under your fingers. And you can have the page in front of you for a bit, but you want to get it memorized quickly too. So, here we go, we go up – and down. And the other way to practice it, which most people don't do, but is highly beneficial is to go down, then up. So, we started the highest note and go backwards, and the back up.

The other thing that you can do, as far as the technical challenges, you can pluck each note two, three or four times. Now I'm doing that, I'm using my fingers; so I'm just going to go index, middle, index, middle, and alternate that way, if you're using a pic, you're going to go down, up, down, up, down, up. So, if you had two plucks per note, it'd be like this – and you can continue up or down or start high and go low, etc. You can also do three plucks per notes. And the last technical variation is to do four plucks per note.

So, there you have it. So, you can work this in the different keys from the chapter. You can work in 12 keys if you'd like. It's good to use a metronome to help with timing and keeping everything nice and even. But, start by memorizing the two scale shapes separately, and then you can play them together in a key say D minor, A minor, or C minor. Then you want to start from the lowest note, got to the highest and back, but also start from the highest note, lowest and back. And then you can pluck each note two, three, or four times for a picking hand workout.