

Scale fingering rules and practice suggestions

See <http://musicmattersblog.com/2010/04/06/free-piano-scale-fingering-diagrams/> for more scale fingering diagrams.

I. Summary of major scale fingering rules:

Group 1: “bunny” scales – B, Db, F#

Rules:

- Bunny “ears” on 2 black keys
- 3 longest fingers (“3 Musketeers”) on 3 black keys
- Thumbs on white keys
- B – left hand starts on 4

Group 2: C, G, D, A, E

Rules:

- 4th finger goes next to tonic
- Thumbs play tonic, except for LH bottom note of scale and RH top note of scale.
- 3rd fingers play 3rd and 6th scale degrees

Group 3: F

Rule:

- Thumbs play F and C

Group 4: Bb, Eb, Ab

Rules:

- Right hand thumbs on F and C (just like F major scale)
- Left hand starts on 3, and 4th finger plays 4th scale degree

II. Summary of minor scale fingering rules:

Cm, Gm, Dm, Am, Em, Fm, Bm

Rule:

- For all 3 forms of the minor, same fingering as parallel major scale. See rules above for each parallel major scale.

HARMONIC MINOR SCALES:

- See above for white note keys
- **G#m** fingered like its enharmonic parallel major, Ab
- **F#m, C#m**: left hand “bunny” fingering, RH fingered like its *relative* minor scale
- **Bbm, Ebm**: “bunny” fingering

NATURAL MINOR SCALES:

- Follow rules above for harmonic minor scales *except G#m*, which has “bunny” fingering in both hands.

MELODIC MINOR SCALES:

- Fingerings are just like harmonic minor scales with the following exceptions:

F#m ascending: RH: 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 1 2 3 4 1 3
 Left hand “Bunny” fingering

C#m ascending: RH: 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 1 2 3 4 1 3
 Left hand “bunny” fingering

G#m descending: Left hand “bunny” fingering (RH also)

III. Ways to practice scales

- Hands separately
- Hands together, 2 octaves, then 4
- Slowly, with metronome
- Choose a “key of the week” or “key of the day” and play a scale, arpeggio, and harmonization in that key
- Set metronome. Play one octave in quarter notes, up and down. Then two octaves in eighth notes, three octaves in triplets, and four octaves in sixteenth notes.
- 2-to-1, 3-to-1, with metronome
- One hand legato, one hand staccato, then reverse
- One hand *forte*, one hand *piano*, then reverse
- Contrary motion pattern on p. 123
- Contrary/parallel motion pattern on p. 179
- Scale Cycles, see, p.99
- Play all 3 minor scale forms. On even numbered days, play each key from C to F, going up chromatically. On odd numbered days, play Gb to B.
- Play scales in 3rds, 6ths, or 10ths. Can also do this in Scale Cycles, see p. 99.
- Make up your own ways!

Natural minor scales on white note keys

➤ C natural minor scale:

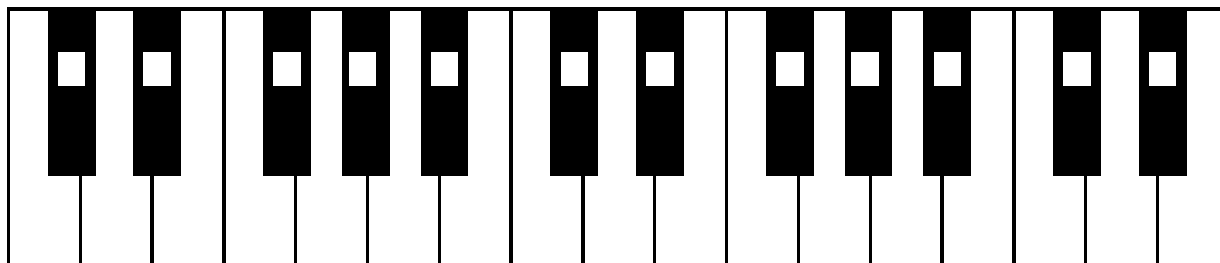
_____ In the spaces below, write out the notes and fingerings for **C natural minor scale**, two octaves HS. You do not need to repeat the top note.

Ascending, right hand:

RH: $\frac{1}{C}$ $\frac{2}{D}$ $\frac{3}{Eb}$ $\frac{1}{F}$ $\frac{2}{G}$ $\frac{3}{Ab}$ $\frac{4}{B}$ $\frac{1}{C}$ $\frac{2}{D}$ $\frac{3}{Eb}$ $\frac{1}{F}$ $\frac{2}{G}$ $\frac{3}{Ab}$ $\frac{4}{B}$ $\frac{5}{C}$

Descending, right hand:

RH: $\frac{4}{B}$ $\frac{3}{Ab}$ $\frac{2}{G}$ $\frac{1}{F}$ $\frac{3}{Eb}$ $\frac{2}{D}$ $\frac{1}{C}$ $\frac{4}{B}$ $\frac{3}{Ab}$ $\frac{2}{G}$ $\frac{1}{F}$ $\frac{3}{Eb}$ $\frac{2}{D}$ $\frac{1}{C}$

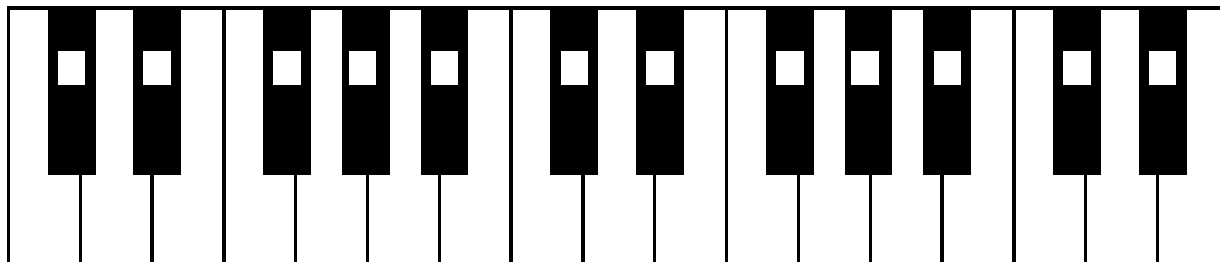


Ascending, left hand:

LH: $\frac{5}{C}$ $\frac{4}{D}$ $\frac{3}{Eb}$ $\frac{2}{F}$ $\frac{1}{G}$ $\frac{3}{Ab}$ $\frac{2}{B}$ $\frac{1}{C}$ $\frac{4}{D}$ $\frac{3}{Eb}$ $\frac{2}{F}$ $\frac{1}{G}$ $\frac{3}{Ab}$ $\frac{2}{B}$ $\frac{1}{C}$

Descending, left hand:

LH: $\frac{2}{B}$ $\frac{3}{Ab}$ $\frac{1}{G}$ $\frac{2}{F}$ $\frac{3}{Eb}$ $\frac{4}{D}$ $\frac{1}{C}$ $\frac{2}{B}$ $\frac{3}{Ab}$ $\frac{1}{G}$ $\frac{2}{F}$ $\frac{3}{Eb}$ $\frac{4}{D}$ $\frac{5}{C}$



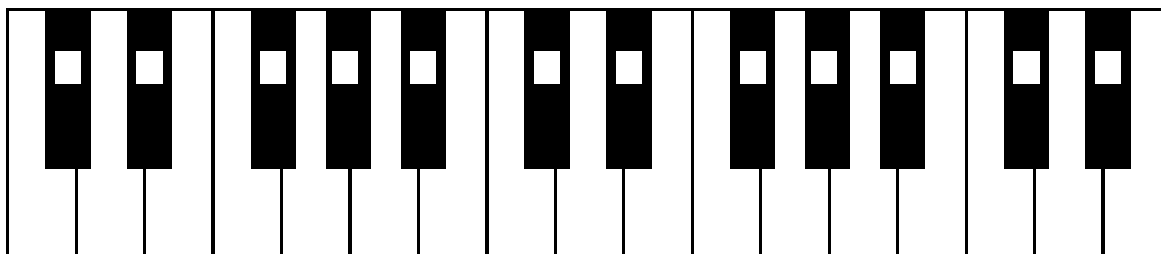
➤ **E natural minor scale:**

_____ In the spaces below, write out the notes and fingerings for **E natural minor scale**, two octaves HS.

Ascending, right hand:

Fingering														
Notes														

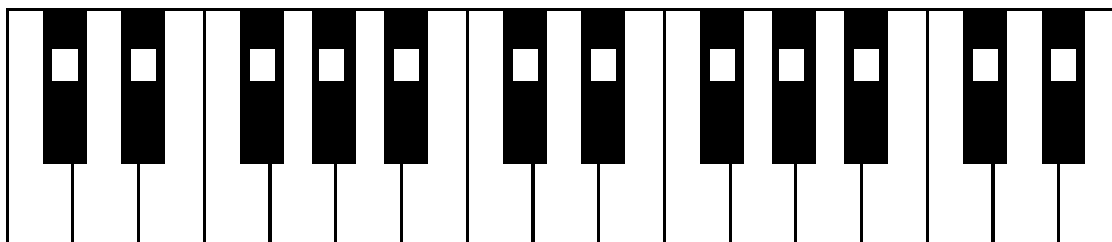
Descending, right hand:



Ascending, left hand:

Fingering														
Notes														

Descending, left hand:



➤ **G natural minor scale:**

_____ In the spaces below, write out the notes and fingerings for **G natural minor scale**, two octaves HS.

Ascending, right hand:

Fingering														
Notes														

Descending, right hand:



Ascending, left hand:

Fingering														
Notes														

Descending, left hand:



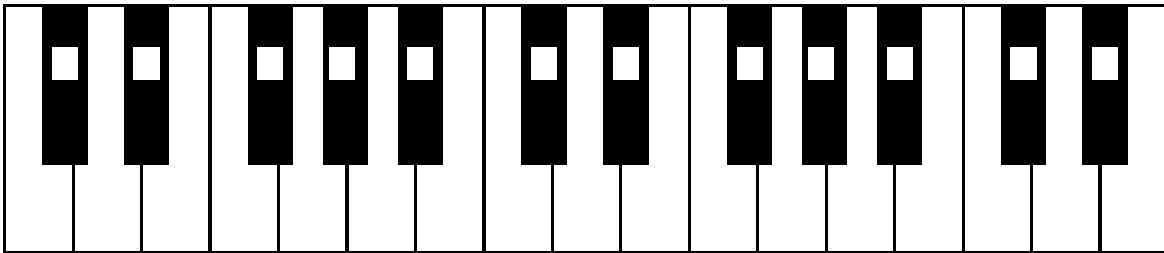
➤ **D natural minor scale:**

_____ In the spaces below, write out the notes and fingerings for **D natural minor scale**, two octaves HS.

Ascending, right hand:

Fingering														
Notes														

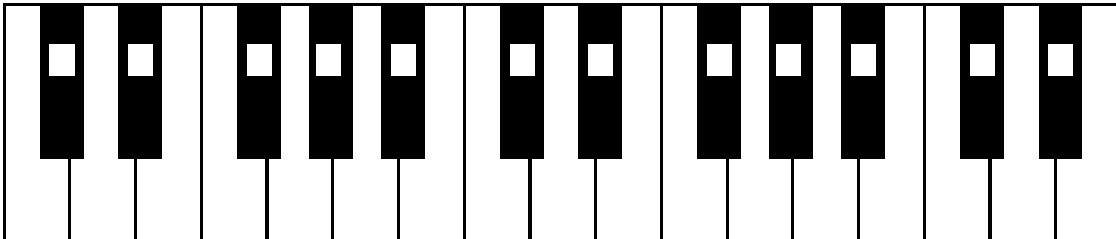
Descending, right hand:



Ascending, left hand:

Fingering														
Notes														

Descending, left hand:



➤ **A natural minor scale:**

_____ In the spaces below, write out the notes and fingerings for **A natural minor scale**, two octaves HS. Then improvise a melody based on this scale.

Ascending, right hand:

Fingering														
Notes														

Descending, right hand:



Ascending, left hand:

Fingering														
Notes														

Descending, left hand:



➤ **F natural minor scale:**

_____ In the spaces below, write out the notes and fingerings for **F natural minor scale**, two octaves HS.

Ascending, right hand:

Fingering													
Notes													

Descending, right hand:



Ascending, left hand:

Fingering													
Notes													

Descending, left hand:



➤ **B natural minor scale:**

_____ In the spaces below, write out the notes and fingerings for **B natural minor scale**, two octaves HS.

Ascending, right hand:

Fingering														
Notes														

Descending, right hand:



Ascending, left hand:

Fingering														
Notes														

Descending, left hand:



Bb natural minor scale:

_____ On the keyboard picture below, write out the fingerings for **Bb natural minor scale**, two octaves HS.

Ascending, right hand:

Fingering	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	1	2	3
Notes	Bb	C	Db	Eb	F	Gb	Ab	Bb	C	Db	Eb	F	Gb	Ab

Descending, right hand:

4	3	2	1	3	2	1	4	3	2	1	3	2	1	2
Bb	Ab	Gb	F	Eb	Db	C	Bb	Ab	Gb	F	Eb	Db	C	Bb

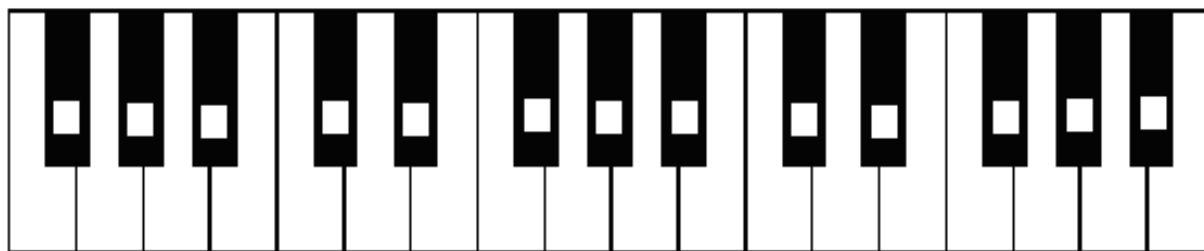


Ascending, left hand:

Fingering	2	1	3	2	1	4	3	2	1	3	2	1	4	3
Notes	Bb	C	Db	Eb	F	Gb	Ab	Bb	C	Db	Eb	F	Gb	Ab

Descending, left hand:

2	3	4	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	1	2
Bb	Ab	Gb	F	Eb	Db	C	Bb	Ab	Gb	F	Eb	Db	C	Bb



E_b natural minor scale:

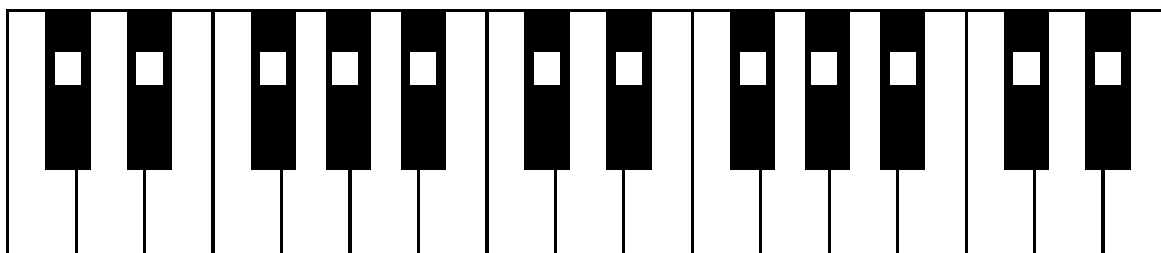
_____ On the keyboard picture below, write out the fingerings for **E_b natural minor scale**, two octaves HS.

Ascending, right hand:

Fingering	2	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	1	2
Notes	E_b	F	G_b	A_b	B_b	C_b	D_b	E_b	F	G_b	A_b	B_b	C_b	D_b

Descending, right hand:

3	2	1	4	3	2	1	3	2	1	4	3	2	1	2
E_b	D_b	C_b	B_b	A_b	G_b	F	E_b	D_b	C_b	B_b	A_b	G_b	F	E_b

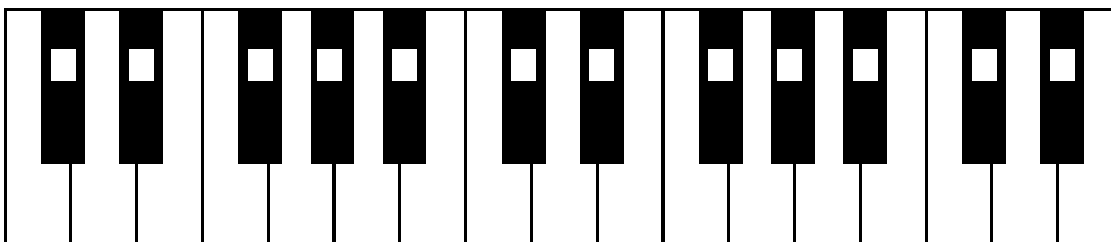


Ascending, left hand:

Fingering	2	1	4	3	2	1	3	2	1	4	3	2	1	3
Notes	E_b	F	G_b	A_b	B_b	C_b	D_b	E_b	F	G_b	A_b	B_b	C_b	D_b

Descending, left hand:

2	3	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	1	2
E_b	D_b	C_b	B_b	A_b	G_b	F	E_b	D_b	C_b	B_b	A_b	G_b	F	E_b



C# natural minor scale:

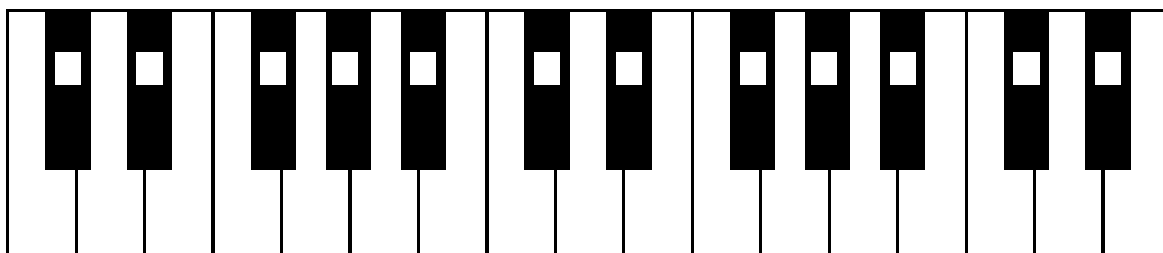
_____ On the keyboard picture below, write out the fingerings for **C# natural minor scale**, two octaves HS.

Ascending, right hand:

Fingering	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	1	2
Notes	C#	D#	E	F#	G#	A	B	C#	D#	E	F#	G#	A	B

Descending, right hand:

3	2	1	3	2	1	4	3	2	1	3	2	1	3	2
C#	B	A	G#	F#	E#	D#	C#	B	A	G#	F#	E	D#	C#

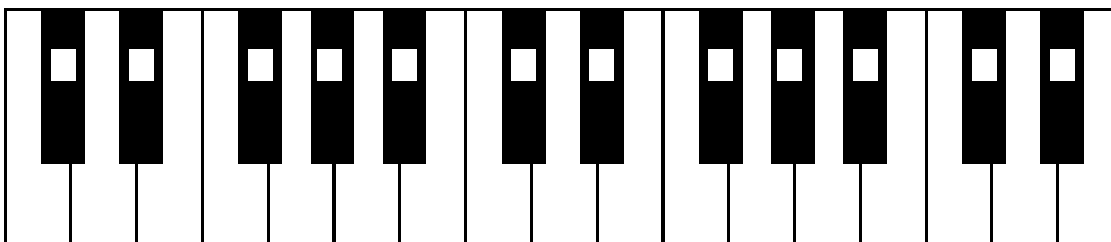


Ascending, left hand:

Fingering	3	2	1	4	3	2	1	3	2	1	4	3	2	1
Notes	C#	D#	E	F#	G#	A	B	C#	D#	E	F#	G#	A	B

Descending, left hand:

2	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	1	2	3
C#	B	A	G#	F#	E#	D#	C#	B	A	G#	F#	E	D#	C#



F# natural minor scale:

_____ On the keyboard picture below, write out the fingerings for **F# natural minor scale**, two octaves HS.

Ascending, right hand:

Fingering	3	4	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	1	2
Notes	F#	G#	A	B	C#	D	E	F#	G#	A	B	C#	D	E

Descending, right hand:

3	2	1	3	2	1	4	3	2	1	3	2	1	4	3
F#	E	D	C#	B	A	G#	F#	E	D	C#	B	A	G#	F#

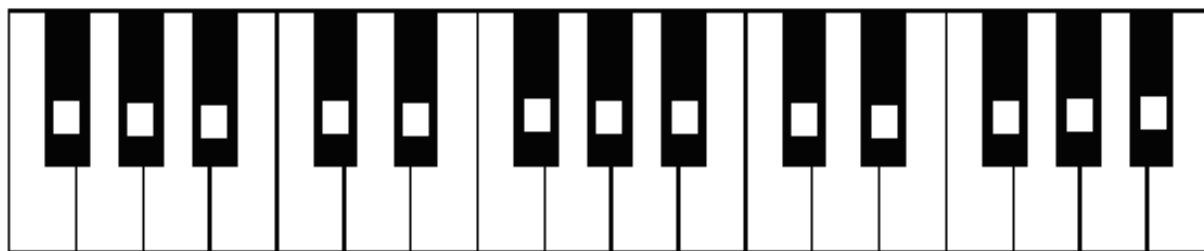


Ascending, left hand:

Fingering	4	3	2	1	3	2	1	4	3	2	1	3	2	1
Notes	F#	G#	A	B	C#	D	E	F#	G#	A	B	C#	D	E

Descending, left hand:

2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	1	2	3	4
F#	E	D	C#	B	A	G#	F#	E	D	C#	B	A	G#	F#



➤ **G# natural minor scale:**

_____ On the keyboard picture below, write out the fingerings for **G# natural minor scale**, two octaves HS.

Ascending, right hand:

Fingering	3	4	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	1	2
Notes	G#	A#	B	C#	D#	E	F#	G#	A#	B	C#	D#	E	F#

Descending, right hand:

3	2	1	3	2	1	4	3	2	1	3	2	1	4	3
G#	F#	E	D#	C#	B	A#	G#	F#	E	D#	C#	B	A#	G#



Ascending, left hand:

Fingering	3	2	1	3	2	1	4	3	2	1	3	2	1	3
Notes	G#	A#	B	C#	D#	E	F#	G#	A#	B	C#	D#	E	F#

Descending, left hand:

2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	1	2	3
G#	F#	E	D#	C#	B	A#	G#	F#	E	D#	C#	B	A#	G#



VI. Melodic minor scales on white note keys

➤ C melodic minor scale:

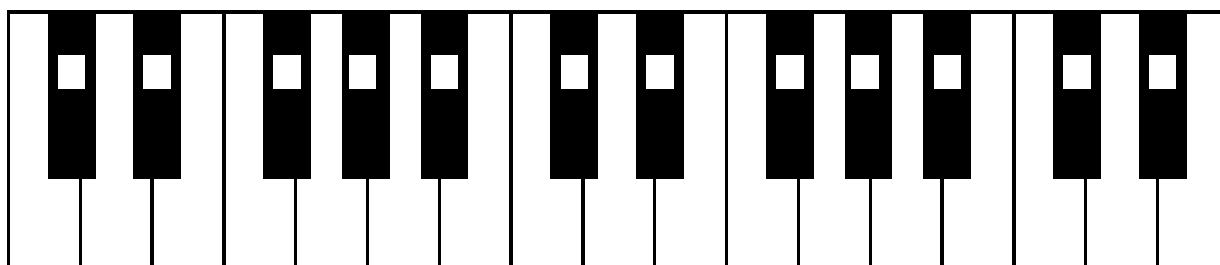
_____ In the spaces below, write out the notes and fingerings for **C melodic minor scale**, two octaves HS. Remember that the melodic minor scale is different in its ascending and descending forms. Practice HS. You do not need to repeat the top note.

Ascending, right hand:

RH: $\frac{1}{C}$ $\frac{2}{D}$ $\frac{3}{Eb}$ $\frac{1}{F}$ $\frac{2}{G}$ $\frac{3}{Ab}$ $\frac{4}{B}$ $\frac{1}{C}$ $\frac{2}{D}$ $\frac{3}{Eb}$ $\frac{1}{F}$ $\frac{2}{G}$ $\frac{3}{Ab}$ $\frac{4}{B}$ $\frac{5}{C}$

Descending, right hand:

RH: $\frac{4}{B}$ $\frac{3}{Ab}$ $\frac{2}{G}$ $\frac{1}{F}$ $\frac{3}{Eb}$ $\frac{2}{D}$ $\frac{1}{C}$ $\frac{4}{B}$ $\frac{3}{Ab}$ $\frac{2}{G}$ $\frac{1}{F}$ $\frac{3}{Eb}$ $\frac{2}{D}$ $\frac{1}{C}$

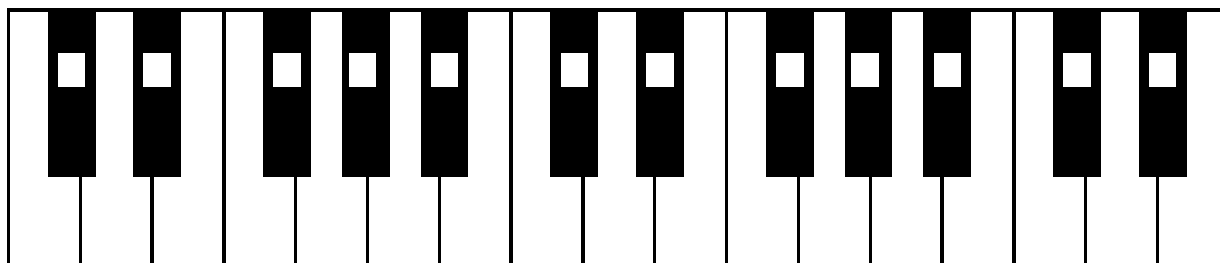


Ascending, left hand:

LH: $\frac{5}{C}$ $\frac{4}{D}$ $\frac{3}{Eb}$ $\frac{2}{F}$ $\frac{1}{G}$ $\frac{3}{Ab}$ $\frac{2}{B}$ $\frac{1}{C}$ $\frac{4}{D}$ $\frac{3}{Eb}$ $\frac{2}{F}$ $\frac{1}{G}$ $\frac{3}{Ab}$ $\frac{2}{B}$ $\frac{1}{C}$

Descending, left hand:

LH: $\frac{2}{B}$ $\frac{3}{Ab}$ $\frac{1}{G}$ $\frac{2}{F}$ $\frac{3}{Eb}$ $\frac{4}{D}$ $\frac{1}{C}$ $\frac{2}{B}$ $\frac{3}{Ab}$ $\frac{1}{G}$ $\frac{2}{F}$ $\frac{3}{Eb}$ $\frac{4}{D}$ $\frac{5}{C}$



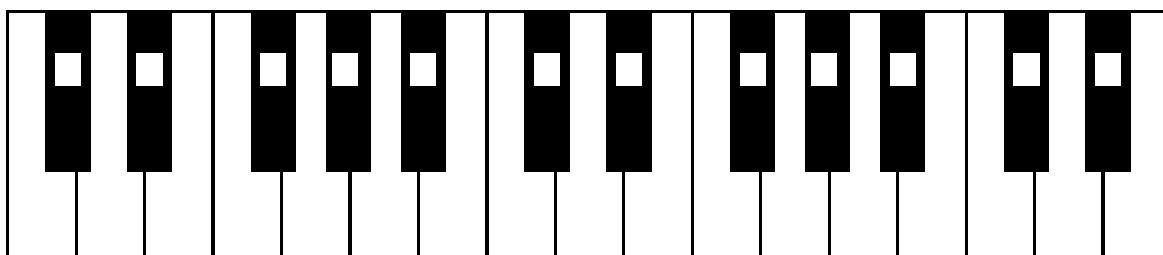
➤ **E melodic minor scale:**

_____ In the spaces below, write out the notes and fingerings for **E melodic minor scale**, two octaves HS. Remember that the melodic minor scale is different in its ascending and descending forms.

Ascending, right hand:

Fingering														
Notes														

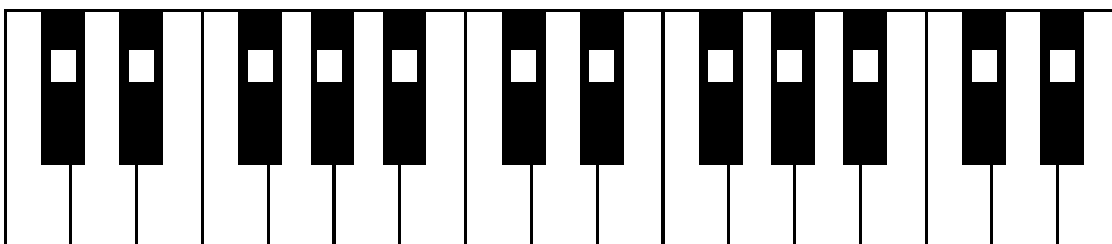
Descending, right hand:



Ascending, left hand:

Fingering														
Notes														

Descending, left hand:



➤ G melodic minor scale:

_____ In the spaces below, write out the notes and fingerings for **G melodic minor scale**, two octaves HS. Remember that the melodic minor scale is different in its ascending and descending forms.

Ascending, right hand:

Fingering														
Notes														

Descending, right hand:



Ascending, left hand:

Fingering														
Notes														

Descending, left hand:



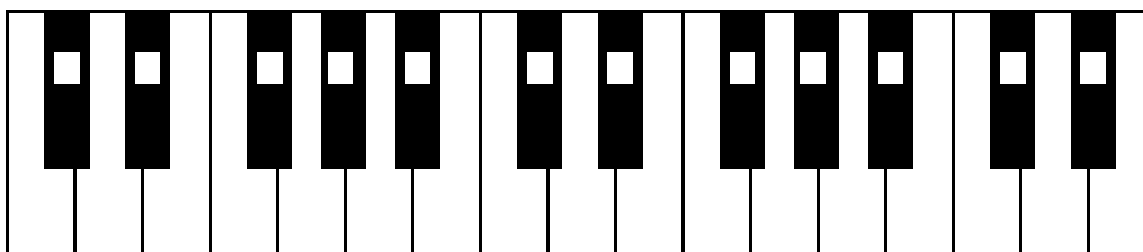
➤ **D melodic minor scale:**

_____ In the spaces below, write out the notes and fingerings for **D melodic minor scale**, two octaves HS. Remember that the melodic minor scale is different in its ascending and descending forms.

Ascending, right hand:

Fingering														
Notes														

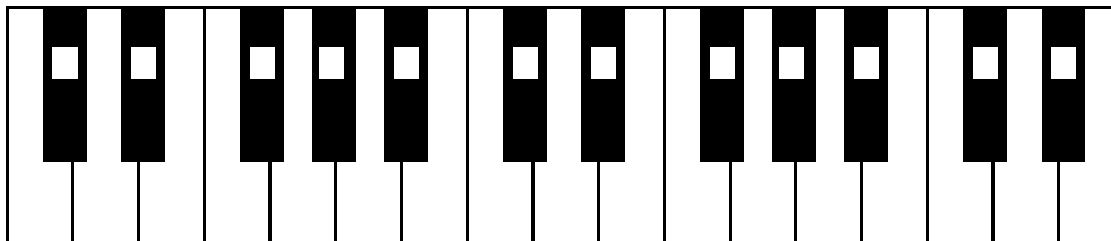
Descending, right hand:



Ascending, left hand:

Fingering														
Notes														

Descending, left hand:



➤ **A melodic minor scale:**

_____ In the spaces below, write out the notes and fingerings for **A melodic minor scale**, two octaves HS. Remember that the melodic minor scale is different in its ascending and descending forms. Then improvise a melody based on this scale.

Ascending, right hand:

Fingering														
Notes														

Descending, right hand:



Ascending, left hand:

Fingering														
Notes														

Descending, left hand:



➤ **F melodic minor scale:**

_____ In the spaces below, write out the notes and fingerings for **F melodic minor scale**, two octaves HS. Remember that the melodic minor scale is different in its ascending and descending forms.

Ascending, right hand:

Fingering														
Notes														

Descending, right hand:



Ascending, left hand:

Fingering														
Notes														

Descending, left hand:



➤ **B melodic minor scale:**

_____ In the spaces below, write out the notes and fingerings for **B melodic minor scale**, two octaves HS. Remember that the melodic minor scale is different in its ascending and descending forms.

Ascending, right hand:

Fingering														
Notes														

Descending, right hand:



Ascending, left hand:

Fingering														
Notes														

Descending, left hand:



Bb melodic minor scale:

_____ On the keyboard picture below, write out the fingerings for **Bb melodic minor scale**, two octaves HS. Remember that the melodic minor scale is different in its ascending and descending forms.

Ascending, right hand:

Fingering	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	1	2	3
Notes	Bb	C	Db	Eb	F	G	A	Bb	C	Db	Eb	F	G	A

Descending, right hand:

4	3	2	1	3	2	1	4	3	2	1	3	2	1	2
Bb	Ab	Gb	F	Eb	Db	C	Bb	Ab	Gb	F	Eb	Db	C	Bb



Ascending, left hand:

Fingering	2	1	3	2	1	4	3	2	1	3	2	1	4	3
Notes	Bb	C	Db	Eb	F	G	A	Bb	C	Db	Eb	F	G	A

Descending, left hand:

2	3	4	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	1	2
Bb	Ab	Gb	F	Eb	Db	C	Bb	Ab	Gb	F	Eb	Db	C	Bb



Eb melodic minor scale:

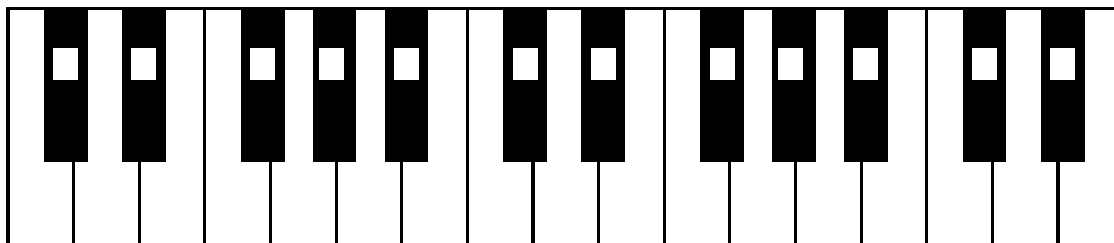
_____ On the keyboard picture below, write out the fingerings for **Eb harmonic minor scale**, two octaves HS. Remember that the melodic minor scale is different in its ascending and descending forms.

Ascending, right hand:

Fingering	2	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	1	2
Notes	Eb	F	Gb	Ab	Bb	C	D	Eb	F	Gb	Ab	Bb	C	D

Descending, right hand:

3	2	1	4	3	2	1	3	2	1	4	3	2	1	2
Eb	Db	Cb	Bb	Ab	Gb	F	Eb	Db	Cb	Bb	Ab	Gb	F	Eb

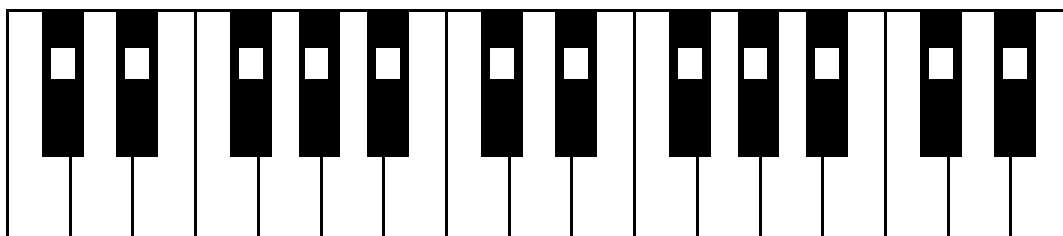


Ascending, left hand:

Fingering	2	1	4	3	2	1	3	2	1	4	3	2	1	3
Notes	Eb	F	Gb	Ab	Bb	C	D	Eb	F	Gb	Ab	Bb	C	D

Descending, left hand:

2	3	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	1	2
Eb	Db	Cb	Bb	Ab	Gb	F	Eb	Db	Cb	Bb	Ab	Gb	F	Eb



C# melodic minor scale:

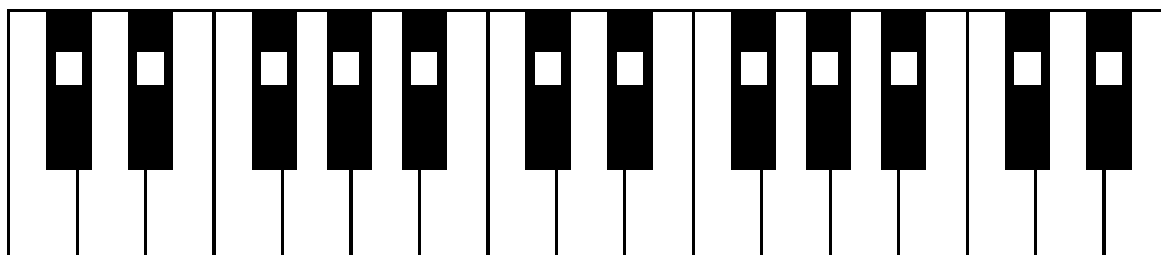
_____ On the keyboard picture below, write out the fingerings for **C# melodic minor scale**, two octaves HS. Remember that the melodic minor scale is different in its ascending and descending forms.

Ascending, right hand:

Fingering	2	3	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	1
Notes	C#	D#	E	F#	G#	A#	B#	C#	D#	E	F#	G#	A#	B#

Descending, right hand:

3	2	1	3	2	1	4	3	2	1	3	2	1	3	2
C#	B	A	G#	F#	E#	D#	C#	B	A	G#	F#	E	D#	C#

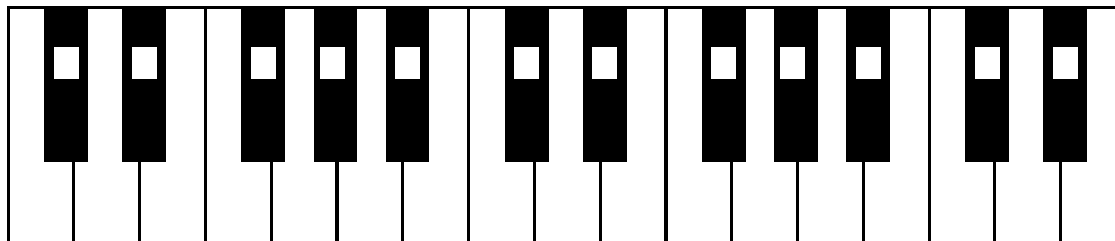


Ascending, left hand:

Fingering	3	2	1	4	3	2	1	3	2	1	4	3	2	1
Notes	C#	D#	E	F#	G#	A#	B#	C#	D#	E	F#	G#	A#	B#

Descending, left hand:

2	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	1	2	3
C#	B	A	G#	F#	E	D#	C#	B	A	G#	F#	E	D#	C#



F# melodic minor scale:

_____ On the keyboard picture below, write out the fingerings for **F# melodic minor scale**, two octaves HS. Remember that the melodic minor scale is different in its ascending and descending forms.

Ascending, right hand:

Fingering	2	3	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	1
Notes	F#	G#	A	B	C#	D#	E#	F#	G#	A	B	C#	D#	E#

Descending, right hand:

3	2	1	3	2	1	4	3	2	1	3	2	1	4	3
F#	E	D	C#	B	A	G#	F#	E	D	C#	B	A	G#	F#



Ascending, left hand:

Fingering	4	3	2	1	3	2	1	4	3	2	1	3	2	1
Notes	F#	G#	A	B	C#	D#	E#	F#	G#	A	B	C#	D#	E#

Descending, left hand:

2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	1	2	3	4
F#	E	D	C#	B	A	G#	F#	E	D	C#	B	A	G#	F#



➤ **G# melodic minor scale:**

_____ On the keyboard picture below, write out the fingerings for **G# melodic minor scale**, two octaves HS. Remember that the melodic minor scale is different in its ascending and descending forms.

Ascending, right hand:

Fingering	3	4	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	1	2
Notes	G#	A#	B	C#	D#	E#	Fx	G#	A#	B	C#	D#	E#	Fx

Descending, right hand:

3	2	1	3	2	1	4	3	2	1	3	2	1	4	3
G#	F#	E	D#	C#	B	A#	G#	F#	E	D#	C#	B	A#	G#



Ascending, left hand:

Fingering	3	2	1	4	3	2	1	3	2	1	4	3	2	1
Notes	G#	A#	B	C#	D#	E#	Fx	G#	A#	B	C#	D#	E#	Fx

Descending, left hand:

2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	1	2	3
G#	F#	E	D#	C#	B	A#	G#	F#	E	D#	C#	B	A#	G#

