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Palm-Muted Pedal-Tone Riffing

One trademark of heavy metal is a strong reliance upon the palm-muted pedal tone. Below, palm-muted tonic notes are interspersed between chord changes, giving their characteristic heavy rock feel. Most often the pedal tone utilizes open E or A strings, but fretted pedal tones may be employed as well.

N.C.(Em) G5 A5 Bb5

P.M. P.M. P.M.

T
A
B

0 0 5 0 0 7 0 8

Natural and Harmonic Minor Scales

Below are full A natural minor scale patterns in the box 1 and box 4 areas. Look inside these patterns for the pentatonic boxes you already know. The diatonic natural minor contains the minor pentatonic tones, plus adds two new tones per octave—a 2nd and \flat 6th.

A Natural Minor

3 5 7 9 12 15

T
A
B

5 7 8 5 7 8 5 7 4 5 7 5 6 8 5 7 8 12 14 15 12 14 15 12 13 15 12 13 15

fingering: 1 3 4 1 3 4 1 3 1 2 4 1 2 4 1 3 4 1 3 4 1 3 4 1 3 1 2 4 1 2 4

The harmonic minor scale is just like the natural minor except that it uses a major 7th tone. Here, instead of each 7th step being located two frets below each root, raise it up a fret to play the major 7th just one fret below each root. To wit:

A Harmonic Minor

3 5 7 9 12 15 17

T
A
B

5 7 8 5 7 8 6 7 4 5 7 5 6 4 5 7 8 12 14 15 12 14 15 13 14 12 13 15 12 13 16

fingering: 1 3 4 1 3 4 2 3 1 2 4 1 2 1 - 1 3 4 1 3 4 1 3 4 2 3 1 2 4 1 2 4