

# **GUITAR THEORY REVOLUTION**

## **The Major and Minor Pentatonic Scales**

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## Introduction

This is a short introduction to the Major and Minor Pentatonic scales. It shows you diagrams for both scales in all 12 keys as well as the five scale patterns that make learning the scales easy. You can start applying these patterns immediately, even if you don't understand how scales are constructed.

## What are the Major and Minor Pentatonic Scales?

The Major and Minor Pentatonic scales are some of the most common scales in pop, rock and blues music. It is used for soloing as well as to create riffs. The name Pentatonic indicates that there are only five notes in this scale ('penta' means five), unlike most other scales which have six, seven or more notes.

Each Major pentatonic scale has a relative Minor Pentatonic scale attached to it. Which you can find by taking the Major Pentatonic scale, for example the C Major Pentatonic scale, and playing the same notes but starting from the 5<sup>th</sup> note of the scale, in this case the A.

And you can find the relative Major Pentatonic scale of a Minor Pentatonic Scale by playing from the 2<sup>nd</sup> note of the Minor scale, which is C. Have a look at the information below to see how the two scales relate to each other.

Playing the same notes but from a different starting position means that the relationships between the notes (known as intervals) changes. This gives the Major and Minor scales a different sound.

### C Major Pentatonic

Notes: C, D, E, G, A

Intervals: Root, Major 2<sup>nd</sup>, Major 3<sup>rd</sup>, Perfect 5<sup>th</sup>, Major 6<sup>th</sup>

Fret distances from root note: 0, 2, 4, 7, 9

### A Minor Pentatonic

Notes: A, C, D, E, G

Intervals: Root, minor 3<sup>rd</sup>, Perfect 4<sup>th</sup>, Perfect 5<sup>th</sup>, minor 7<sup>th</sup>

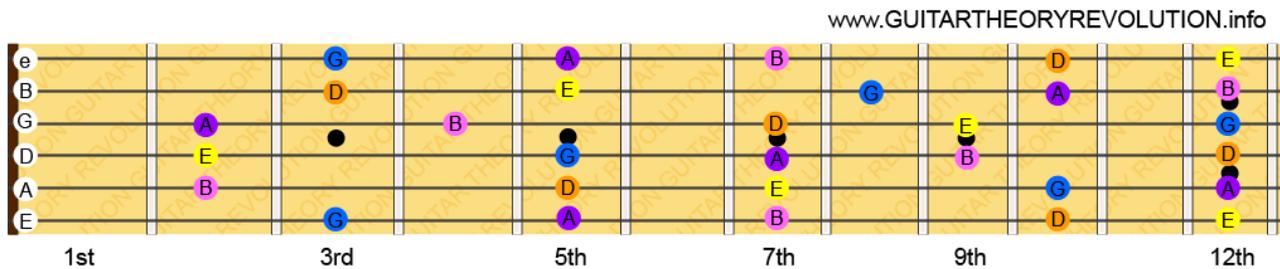
Fret distances from root note: 0, 3, 5, 7, 10

# Diagrams For All The Pentatonic Scales

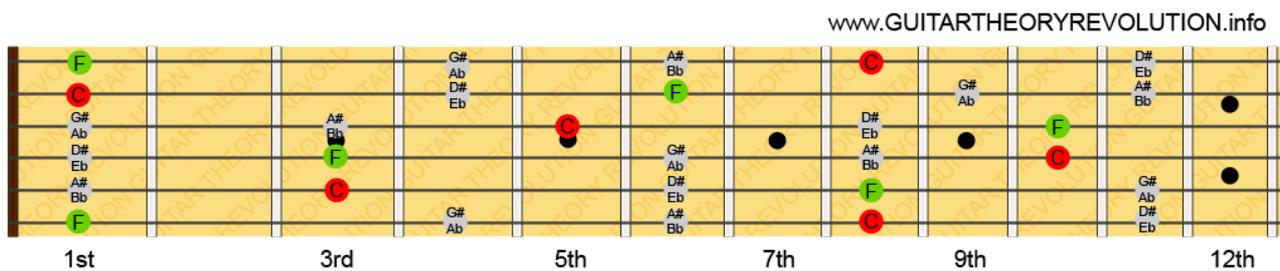
Below are diagrams for the Major and Minor Pentatonic scales in all 12 keys. As you can see each Major Pentatonic scale is also a relative Minor Pentatonic scale.

To make learning all these scales easier skip to the next section and memorise the five Pentatonic scale patterns, then come back and see if you can identify the five patterns in these 12 diagrams.

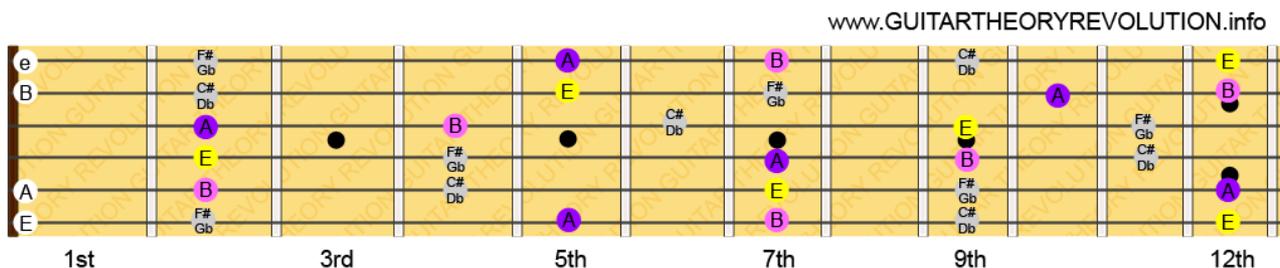
## G Major / E Minor Pentatonic



## G# Major / F# Minor Pentatonic

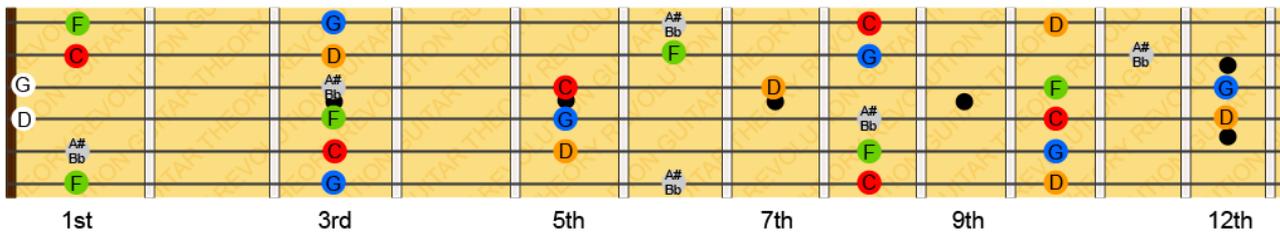


## A Major / F# Minor Pentatonic



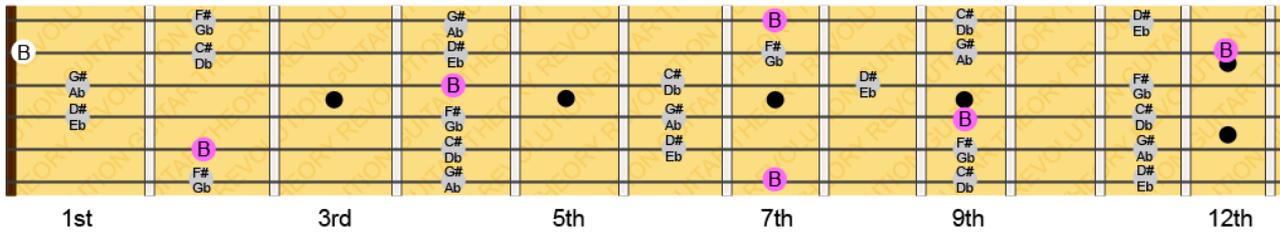
### A# Major / G Minor Pentatonic

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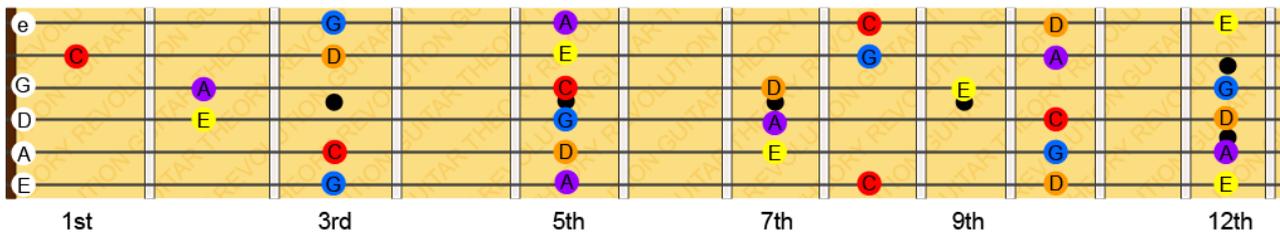
### B Major / G# Minor Pentatonic

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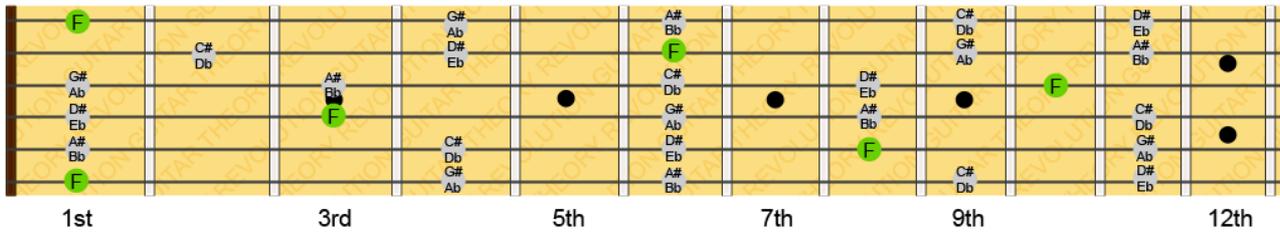
### C Major / A Minor Pentatonic

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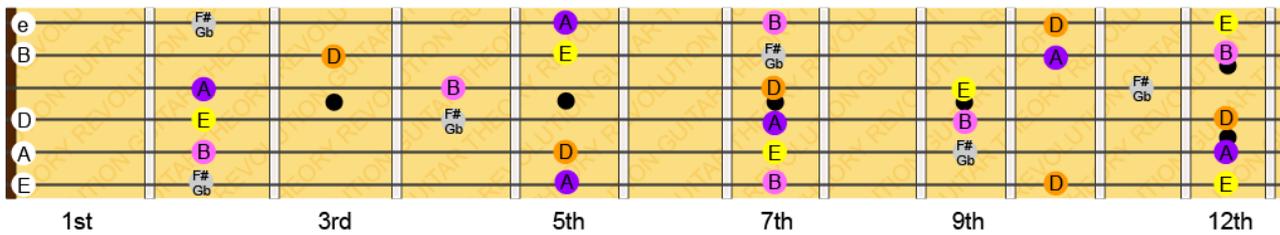
### C# Major / A# Minor Pentatonic

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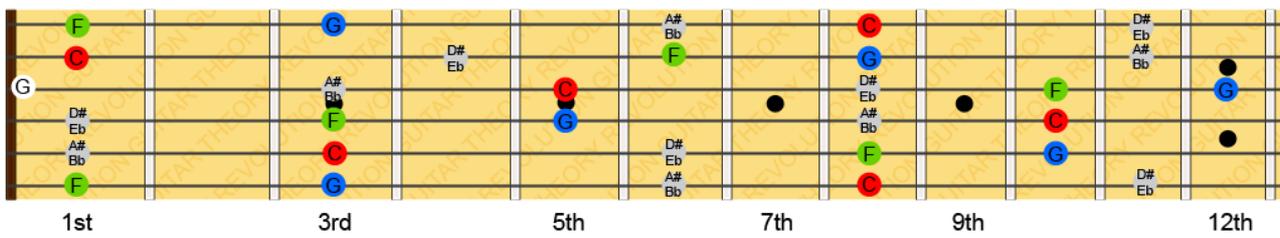
### D Major / B Minor Pentatonic

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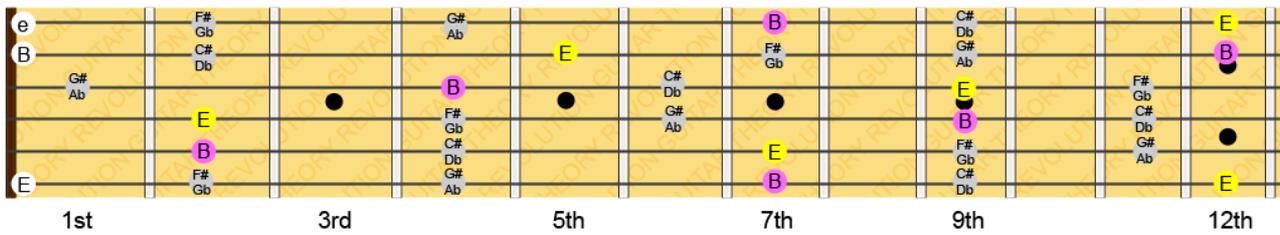
## D# Major / C Minor Pentatonic

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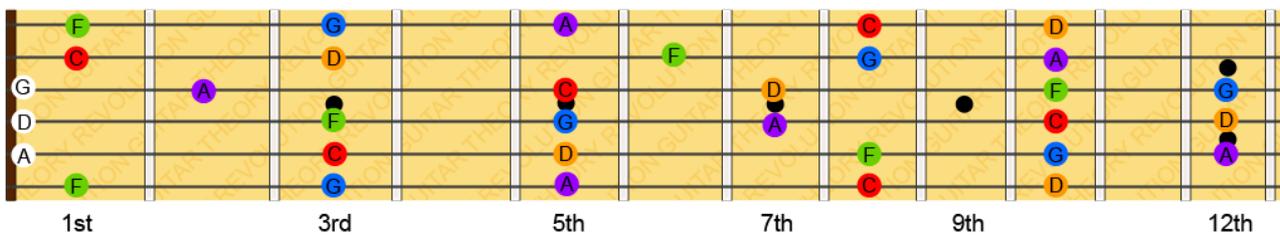
## E Major / C# Minor Pentatonic

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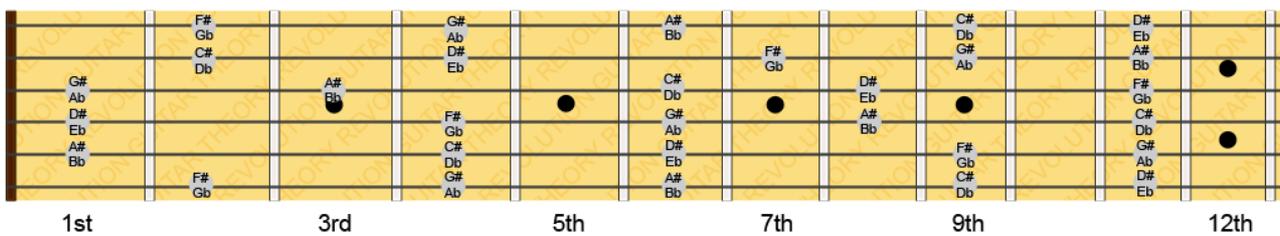
## F Major / D Minor Pentatonic

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## F# Major / D# Minor Pentatonic

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## The Five Scale Patterns

A scale pattern is simply a diagram that shows you which notes to play in which order. The great thing about scale patterns is that you can learn the finger positions and then move that exact same pattern around the guitar neck to play the scale in different keys. Learning these five scale patterns will make it much easier to apply the Pentatonic scales in your playing.

When you've learned these five patterns go back to the 12 diagrams in the last section and see if you can see each pattern. Remember the patterns continue on past the 12<sup>th</sup> fret (the first octave) to the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> fret etc. and so are also loop around and appear from the 1<sup>st</sup> onwards. The Patterns always appear in the same order and connect with each other.

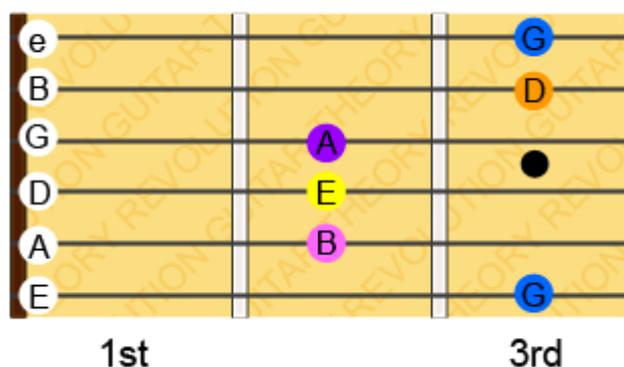
The patterns below are from the E Minor / G Major Pentatonic Scale but don't focus on the note names at this point, but instead on memorising the pattern.

In this first diagram the white notes on the left represent plucking the string without holding it down. This is also known as an open string. If you were to shift the pattern one fret to the right then you would hold down the strings at the first fret (it would then be an F Minor Pentatonic scale).

### Minor Pentatonic Pattern 1 / Major Pentatonic Pattern 5

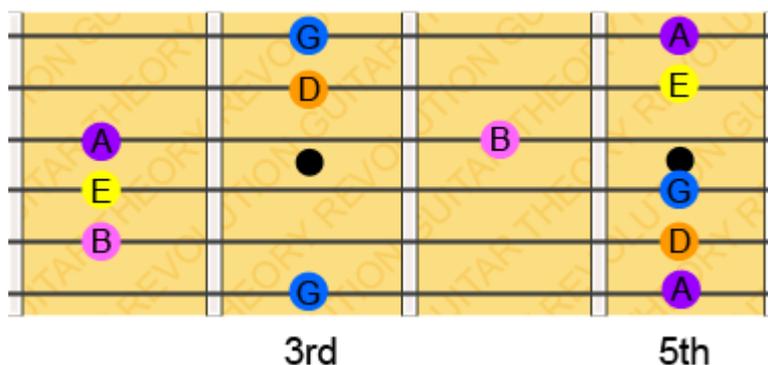
Playing this pattern from left to right and up across the strings means you will be playing the E Minor Pentatonic scale: E, G, A, B, D etc. If you start at the G on the 3<sup>rd</sup> fret of the low E string you'll get a G Major Pentatonic scale: G, A, B, D, E.

Because this pattern has an E as the first note this is pattern 1 of the E Minor Pentatonic Scale and all other Minor Pentatonic scales. To get this pattern in a different key just shift it along the fretboard. Have a look at the previous 12 diagrams to see this pattern at 12 different places on the fretboard.

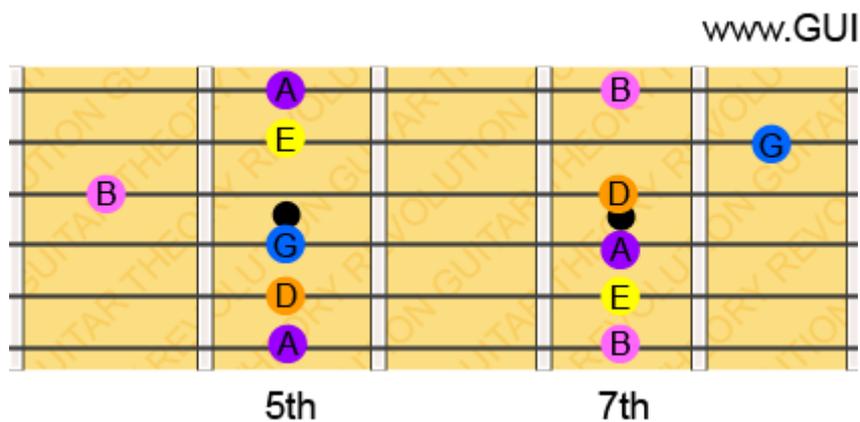


## Minor Pentatonic Pattern 2 / Major Pentatonic Pattern 1

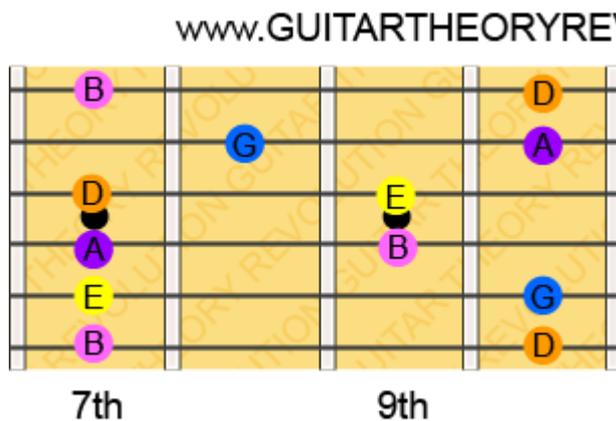
This is the second pattern of the Minor Pentatonic scale but the first pattern of the G Major Pentatonic scale because the first note you play is the G on the 3<sup>rd</sup> fret of the low E string (the thickest string).



## Minor Pentatonic Pattern 3 / Major Pentatonic Pattern 2

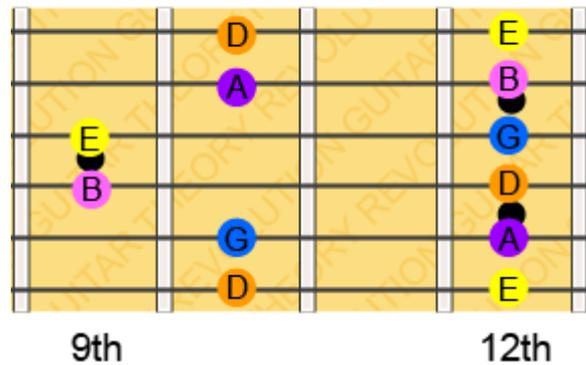


## Minor Pentatonic Pattern 4 / Major Pentatonic Pattern 3



## Minor Pentatonic Pattern 5 / Major Pentatonic Pattern 4

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Look at the full diagram for the E Minor / G Major Pentatonic scale and you should be able to see how these scale patterns link up across the fretboard.

By the way, you may notice how these patterns follow the CAGED chord pattern about which you can learn more on my site: [CAGED chord pattern](http://www.guitartheoryrevolution.info), and in more depth in the 2<sup>nd</sup> free e-book *The CAGED Chord Pattern and the Major Triads*.

## How To Use The Scales

To start using these scales pick a simple song like the Guns 'n' Roses cover of Knocking on Heaven's Door. It is in the key of G (you can usually identify the key of a song by the first chord). Play it in the background.

Now take the Minor Pentatonic Pattern 1 and start playing it from the 3<sup>rd</sup> fret (G on the low E string). First play the notes in order, then start mixing it up and playing the notes in different combinations and for different lengths of time. Congratulations you are now soloing over the song with a G Minor Pentatonic scale.

Now find the first Major Pentatonic Scale pattern and start playing it from the G on the 3<sup>rd</sup> fret. Now you're soloing over the song with a G Major Pentatonic Scale.

You should be able to hear the difference in feel and sound between the two scales. Practice the patterns until you know them off by heart and play them over all kinds of songs. Being good at soloing and improvisation gets easier with practice. One last tip, try hearing melodies in your head and then try to play them. This will improve the link between your imagination, your ear and your hands.

## What Next?

What I've provided you with so far should be more than enough to keep you occupied for a while (although I do have more exercises to make the learning process even quicker). And there is a lot more I can teach you.

I've created a comprehensive resource that will take you step by step from beginner to total fretboard mastery. Some of the topics covered include:

- How to see the notes on the fretboard like matrix code in front of your eyes.
- How to play chords all over the neck with the CAGED chords pattern.
- How to unlock the inherent strengths of the fretboard with a simple 7 note formula.
- The best way to train yourself to recognise musical intervals by ear.
- How to be able to construct chords wherever you want on the neck and not by just relying on memorising chord shapes.
- How to learn scales more quickly and efficiently and without being trapped in 'scale-boxes'. You'll understand the inner workings of Major, minor, pentatonic and other scales rather than just memorising finger positions.
- The power behind the circle of 4ths and 5ths including how to figure out which chords fit together in which key and how to transpose keys easily.

You can check out this comprehensive resource by clicking the link below:

### **[Guitar Theory Revolution E-Book and MP3s](#)**

It will teach you all the above and much more in a new and refreshing way that other teachers and resources just don't do. If you've struggled to learn music theory for the guitar in the past I guarantee that the way I teach the subject will come as a breath of fresh air and remove the pain and frustration from working with what are in my opinion methods that have been out of date for hundreds of years.

If you found the information in this book helpful then please share it with your friends and advise them to sign up for the free newsletter at <http://www.guitartheoryrevolution.info> so that they can receive more free lessons and resources straight into their inbox.

Thanks again for taking an interest in these lessons.

Until next time,

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