

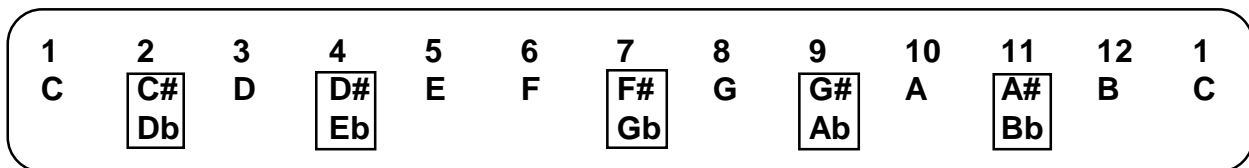
Chromatic Scale on Each String:

The Chromatic scale is called “chromatic” because the word "chroma" means color. All the colors of the tonal rainbow are available when using the Chromatic scale in composing a melody, improvising and in chord progressions. After many decades of musical study, one always goes back to the practice and implementation of the Chromatic scale due to its ability to “color” or embellish any musical idea effectively. A musician or composer’s ability to think in halfsteps or “chromatically”

The Chromatic scale consists of one octave divided equally into 12 tones. Since the octave is divided equally into 12 tones, the chromatic scale is considered to be a “symmetric” scale. Each tone in the chromatic scale is exactly the same tonal distance to the next tone. The distance between each tone of the chromatic scale is one half step.

The distance of one half step on the guitar fingerboard is exactly one fret. One Halfstep is always the closest distance from one note to the next, or on the guitar, one fret to the next.

Each note in the chromatic scale is one fret to the next. There are no 2 fret distances in the chromatic scale. The chromatic scale can be easily represented by what we call the chromatic number line:



The tones in the boxes are called *Enharmonic Equivalents*. This means there are actually TWO names for the same tone. The reason for this is for continuity and organization of keys and key signatures.

The Chromatic scale was originally designed with the idea of a logical organization of keys. Scales are usually played with all sharps or all flats, with the exception of certain minor scales and symmetric modes, which contain both sharps and flats.

Almost all scales are derived from the chromatic scale. The chromatic scale serves as the basis and foundation of all Western music theory.

The Chromatic scale is played with all four fingers exclusively. The correct technique for playing the Chromatic scale is as follows:

- 1.) Place the first finger on the first string at the first fret
- 2.) Place each successive finger on the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th fret.
- 3.) When you place the 4th finger on the 4th fret, visually look at the 5th fret and pick up the entire hand and place the first finger on the 6th fret, starting the ascending process all over again.
- 4.) Keep all four fingers curved evenly.
- 5.) Place the thumb behind the neck directly behind the 2nd finger.
- 6.) Do not lift the fingers more than 1/2 inch away from the fingerboard.
- 7.) Keep the fingers as close to the strings as possible.
- 8.) Never straighten the fingers, especially the 4th finger.
- 9.) Keep the back of the hand in a straight parallel line with the forearm.
- 10.) The hand and the arm should be in a flat straight line without bending the wrist.

This technique applies not only to the chromatic scale, but to all scales and all guitar and bass playing in general.

When descending with the Chromatic scale, place all four fingers simultaneously on the string and “pull” the fingers down towards the floor, one at a time while simultaneously keeping the other fingers planted on the string until you play the note. Each finger is pulled down away from the string, one at a time while keeping the the other fingers on the sting and not lifting them off until necessary.

The chromatic scale is easily played by an equal succession of downstrokes and upstrokes. Start by playing the chromatic scale slowly with all downstrokes, gradually increasing speed. After you get used to the fret hand positions, switch to alternate picking. The chromatic scale easily lends itself to quarter notes and eighth notes. For added dexterity and skill, play the chromatic scale in triplets and 5/8 patterns.