



PHIL

MAVIN

MINOR TONALITY

A BASS PLAYER'S
GUIDE TO MINOR
HARMONY

SBL Course Workbook



MINOR TONALITY

A BASS PLAYER'S GUIDE
TO MINOR HARMONY

WITH

PHIL MANN

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Ever feel like your understanding of minor harmony is missing something? In this course, Phil Mann is at hand to demystify this seemingly complex subject!

Compared to the music theory surrounding major harmony, a lot of musicians seem to get lost when it comes to the world of minor. To begin with, there are three minor scales to deal with –the natural, harmonic and melodic minor– while major harmony deals with only one.

In this course, we're going to start from the very beginning and give you a solid introduction of how minor harmony for all these scales works.

You'll learn about cadences, how different chords function in a minor key, the three minor scales and their various roles, plus how to harmonize them all.

LESSON 1

CHORDS & CADENCES

Cadence (05:30): A cadence is a harmonic movement from dissonance to resolution.

Major Scale Cadence - G7 to Cmaj7 (09:08)

Diagram illustrating the Major Scale Cadence (G7 to Cmaj7). The top staff shows the G7 chord (Bb, D, F, Ab) and the Cmaj7 chord (C, Eb, G, Bb). The bottom staff shows the fret positions for the Treble (T) and Bass (B) staves, indicating the resolution of the 4th degree (F) to the 3rd (E) and the 7th (B) to the root (C).

Perfect (Authentic) Cadence (09:45): Considered to be the strongest cadence, it goes from the dominant chord (V) to the tonic (I). If we are in the key of C major, the dominant chord would be G7 (V) and it should resolve to the tonic, C major 7 (I).

Diagram illustrating the Perfect (Authentic) Cadence (G7 to Cmaj7). The top staff shows the G7 chord (Bb, D, F, Ab) and the Cmaj7 chord (C, Eb, G, Bb). The bottom staff shows the fret positions for the Treble (T) and Bass (B) staves. An orange arrow points from the G7 chord to the Cmaj7 chord, indicating the resolution of the dominant chord to the tonic.

Major Scale Formula (10:58): There are certain intervals within the major scale that create tension. Specifically, the 4th degree wants to resolve to the 3rd and the 7th wants to resolve to the root (octave).

Root - Second - Third - Fourth - Fifth - Sixth - Seventh - Octave
 T T ST T T T ST

In the case of C major, the F (4th) wants to resolve to the E (3rd) and the B (7th) wants to resolve to the C (root, octave).

C - D - E - F - G - A - B - C



LESSON 1

Plagal Cadence (15:30): This type of cadence is not as strong or definitive as the Perfect Cadence. Also known as the “Amen” cadence, the Plagal goes from the IV chord to the Tonic (I). In the key of G major, the C major chord resolves to G major.

Diagram illustrating a Plagal Cadence in G major. The top staff shows the Cmaj7 chord (IV) resolving to the Gmaj7 chord (Tonic). The bottom staff shows the fret positions for the T (16), A (14), and B (15) strings for both chords.

Deceptive Cadence (16:55): When a dominant chord doesn't resolve to its target chord (tonic). For example, if you are in the key of G major and you're playing a D7 (dominant V) chord, instead of resolving to the G major (perfect cadence) you resolve to E minor (VI chord).

Diagram illustrating a Deceptive Cadence in G major. The top staff shows the D7 chord (Dominant V) resolving to the Em7 chord (VI). The bottom staff shows the fret positions for the T (17), A (16), and B (17) strings for the Dominant V chord, and the T (19), A (17), and B (19) strings for the VI chord.



LESSON 1

Harmonization of the C Major Scale (19:00)

I - Ionian	C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C	= Maj7
II - Dorian	D	E	F	G	A	B	C	D	= Min7
III - Phrygian	E	F	G	A	B	C	D	E	= Min7
IV - Lydian	F	G	A	B	C	D	E	F	= Maj7
V - Mixolydian	G	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	= Dom7
VI - Aeolian	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	A	= Min7
VII - Locrian	B	C	D	E	F	G	A	B	= Min7 (^b 5)
	ROOT		3RD		5TH		7TH		

New starting point to create the Natural Minor (Aeolian) scale

Harmonization of the A Natural Minor Scale (20:21)

I - Aeolian	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	A	= Min7
II - Locrian	B	C	D	E	F	G	A	B	= Min7 (^b 5)
III - Ionian	C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C	= Maj7
IV - Dorian	D	E	F	G	A	B	C	D	= Min7
V - Phrygian	E	F	G	A	B	C	D	E	= Min7
VI - Lydian	F	G	A	B	C	D	E	F	= Maj7
VII - Mixolydian	G	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	= Dom7
	ROOT		3RD		5TH		7TH		



LESSON 1

Alterations (23:12): Since the V chord of the natural minor scale is a minor 7th chord (Phrygian), we lose the perfect cadence we previously had in major scale harmony. However, it's desirable to have a dominant V-I relationship to establish the tonic.

This is why we alter certain notes of the natural minor V chord in order to create a perfect cadence (V7 to I minor).

In the upcoming lessons, we will dive deeper into the harmonic minor and melodic minor scales to explore how the new chords derived from these scales can expand our harmonic possibilities.



LESSON 2

HARMONIC MINOR

C Major Scale (04:08)

C (Root) D (2nd) E (3rd) F (4th) G (5th) A (6th) B (7th) C (Octave)

C Melodic Minor Scale (04:12): If we alter the major 3rd (E) of C major to a minor 3rd (E^b) we'll end up with the Melodic Minor Scale.

C (Root) D (2nd) E^b (b3rd) F (4th) G (5th) A (6th) B (7th) C (Octave)

C Harmonic Minor Scale (05:45): If we alter the major 3rd (E) of C major to a minor 3rd (E^b) and also alter the major 6th (A) to a minor 6th (A^b) we'll end up with the Harmonic Minor Scale.

C (Root) D (2nd) E^b (b3rd) F (4th) G (5th) A^b (b6th) B (7th) C (Octave)

C Natural Minor Scale (07:50): If we alter the major 3rd (E) of C major to a minor 3rd (E^b), alter the major 6th (A) to a minor 6th (A^b), and also alter the 7th (B) to a minor 7th (B^b) we'll end up with the Natural Minor Scale.

C (Root) D (2nd) E^b (b3rd) F (4th) G (5th) A^b (b6th) B^b (b7th) C (Octave)



LESSON 2

G Harmonic Minor Scale as a Formula (15:21)

Tone Semi-tone Tone Tone Semi-tone Minor 3rd Semi-tone

Two-Octave G Harmonic Minor Scale (19:48)

Fingering: 1 3 4 1 3 4 1* 1 3 4 1 3 4 3 4 3 4 3 1 4 3 1* 1 4 3 1 4 3 1

G Harmonic Minor Scale in Four-Note Groupings (20:45)

Fingering: 1 3 4 1 3 4 1 3 4 1 3 4 1 2 3 1 2 3 1* 1 3 1* 1 3 4 1 3 4 1 3 4 1 3 4 1 2 4* 4

Experiment with different fingerings, groupings, and intervals to get familiar with the harmonic minor scale in various keys.



LESSON 3

MELODIC MINOR

C Melodic Minor Scale - Ascending and Descending (08:28): In classical theory, this scale is played differently when ascending vs. descending.

Intervals: R 2 **b3** 4 5 6 7 8 8 **b7** **b6** 5 4 **b3** 2 R

T 4/4 3 5 6 3 5 2 4 5 5 3 6 5 3 6 5 3

B 4/4

C Melodic Minor Scale - Jazz Minor Scale (10:15): When this scale is played the same way both ascending and descending, it is sometimes referred to as the "Jazz Minor Scale."

Intervals: R 2 **b3** 4 5 6 7 8 2 **b3** 4 5 6 7 8

T 4/4 3 5 1 3 5 2 4 5 5 2 4 5 3 5 1 3

B 4/4

G Melodic Minor Scale as a Formula (13:23)

Tone Semi-tone Tone Tone Tone Tone Semi-tone

T 4/4 3 5 6 3 5 2 4 5 5 2 4 5 3 5 6 3

B 4/4

2 Octave G Melodic Minor Scale (15:44)

Fingering: 1 3 4 1 4 1 2 1 3 4 1 3 1 3 4 4 3 1 3 1 4 3 4 3 1 4 1 4 3 1

T 4/4 3 5 6 3 5 2 4 5 7 8 5 7 9 11 12 12 11 9 7 5 8 7 5 4 2 5 3 6 5 3

B 4/4

Experiment with different fingerings, groupings, and intervals to get familiar with the melodic minor scale in various keys.



LESSON 4

HARMONIC MINOR ARPEGGIOS

A Minor/Major 7th Chord Arpeggio (03:41) – chord symbol: Am(maj7)

Root b3 5th 7th

ROOT POSITION FIRST INVERSION SECOND INVERSION THIRD INVERSION

A Augmented Major 7th Chord Arpeggio (06:05) – chord symbol: Amaj7(#5)

Root 3 #5 7th

ROOT POSITION FIRST INVERSION SECOND INVERSION THIRD INVERSION

A Diminished 7th Chord Arpeggio (07:50) – chord symbol: Adim7 or A°7

Root b3 b5 bb7

ROOT POSITION FIRST INVERSION SECOND INVERSION THIRD INVERSION

Cycle of Fourths starting on A (11:14): For practicing the above arpeggios, start on A and play all inversions. Then move to the next root (D) and play the same arpeggios from that point, and so on, moving through all keys until you're back to A.

KEYS IN THE CYCLE: **A - D - G - C - F - B^b - E^b - A^b - D^b(C[#]) - G^b(F[#]) - B - E - A**



LESSON 5

HARMONIC MINOR HARMONY

Arpeggios Derived from the A Harmonic Minor Scale (01:09)

Am(maj7) Bm7(b5) Cmaj7(#5)

4 Dm7 E7 Fmaj7 G#o7

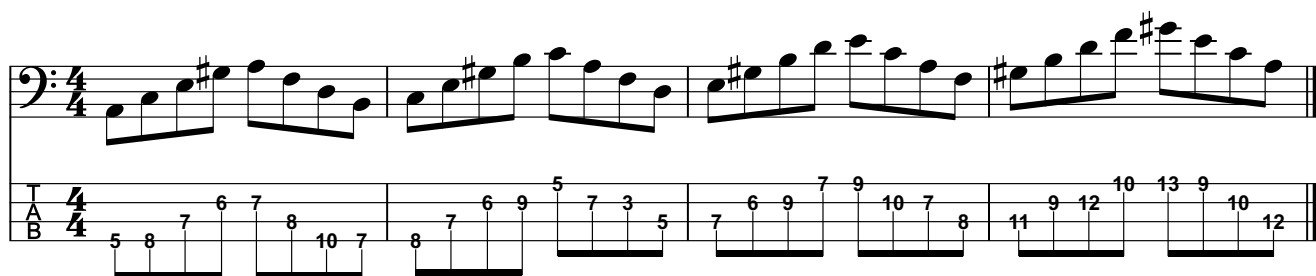
Arpeggios Derived from the A Harmonic Minor Scale (05:32)

I	A	B	C	D	E	F	G#	= Min(Maj7)
II	B	C	D	E	F	G#	A	= Min7(b5)
III	C	D	E	F	G#	A	B	= Maj7(#5)
IV	D	E	F	G#	A	B	C	= Min7
V	E	F	G#	A	B	C	D	= Dom7
VI	F	G#	A	B	C	D	E	= Maj7
VII	G#	A	B	C	D	E	F	= Dim7
	ROOT		3RD		5TH		7TH	

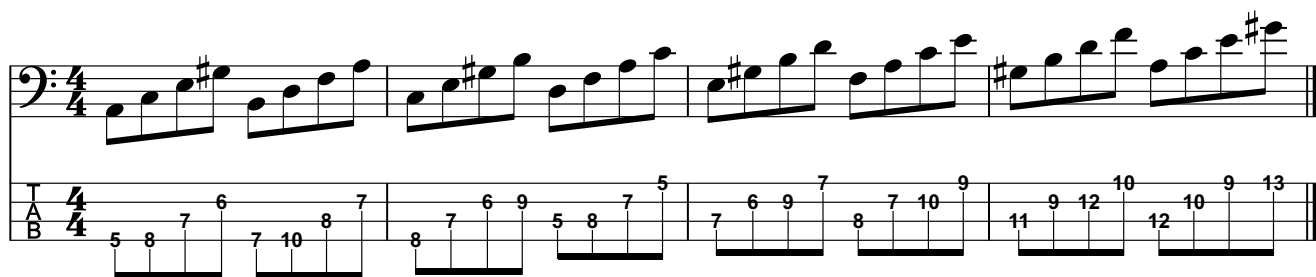


LESSON 5

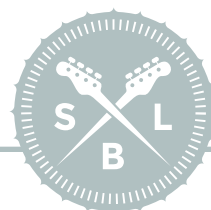
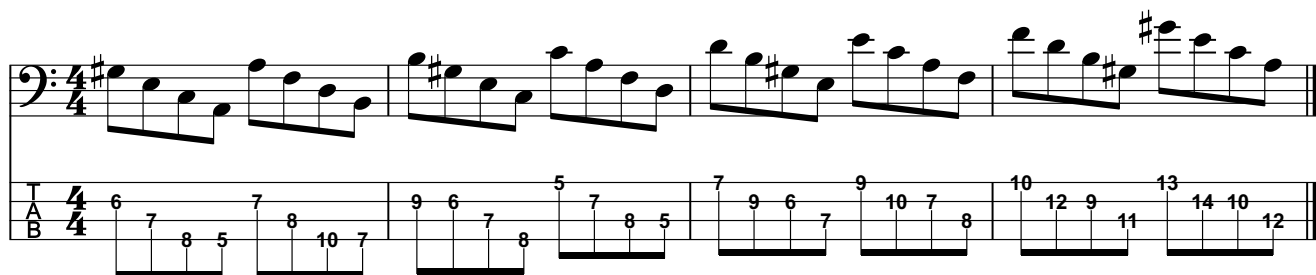
Ascending/Descending Harmonic Minor Arpeggio Exercise (06:04)



Ascending Harmonic Minor Arpeggio Exercise (06:10)



Descending Harmonic Minor Arpeggio Exercise (06:16)



LESSON 6

MELODIC MINOR HARMONY

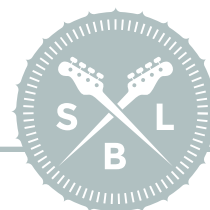
Arpeggios Derived from the A Melodic Minor Scale (05:02)

Am(maj7) Bm7 Cmaj7(#5)

4 D7 E7 F#m7(b5) G#m7(b5)

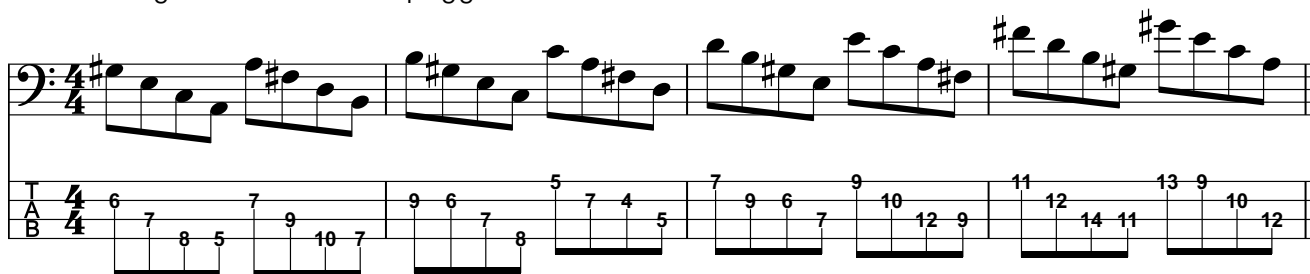
Ascending/Descending Melodic Minor Arpeggio Exercise (10:30)

Ascending Melodic Minor Arpeggio Exercise



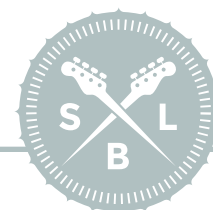
LESSON 6

Descending Melodic Minor Arpeggio Exercise



All Possible Chord Tone Permutations (11:00)

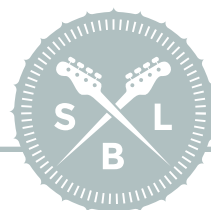
R357	3R57
R375	3R75
R537	35R7
R573	357R
R735	37R5
R753	375R
5R37	7R35
5R73	7R53
53R7	73R5
537R	735R
57R3	75R3
573R	753R



LESSON 6

Arpeggios Derived from the A Melodic Minor Scale (12:14)

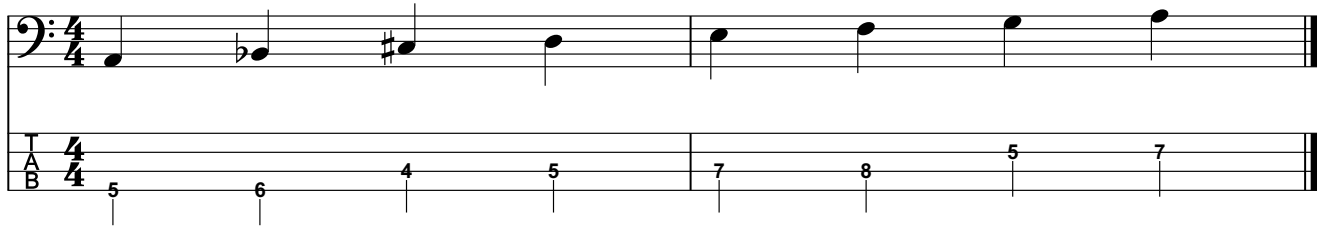
I	A	B	C	D	E	F#	G#	= Min(Maj7)
II	B	C	D	E	F#	G#	A	= Min7
III	C	D	E	F#	G#	A	B	= Maj7(#5)
IV	D	E	F#	G#	A	B	C	= Dom7
V	E	F#	G#	A	B	C	D	= Dom7
VI	F#	G#	A	B	C	D	E	= Min7(b5)
VII	G#	A	B	C	D	E	F#	= Min7(b5)
	<i>ROOT</i>		<i>3RD</i>		<i>5TH</i>		<i>7TH</i>	



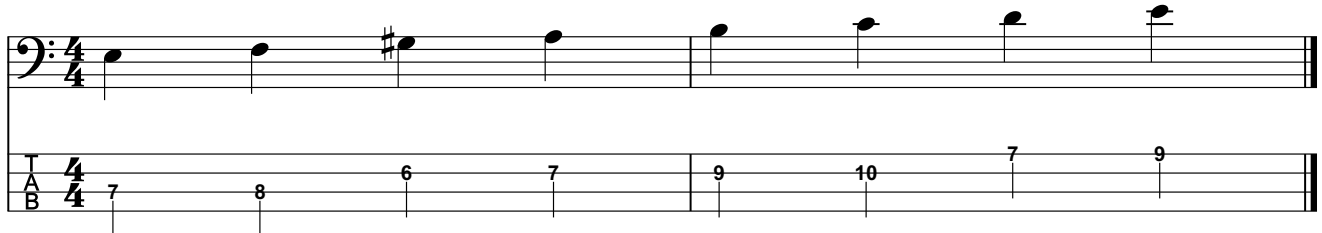
LESSON 7

MINOR MODES

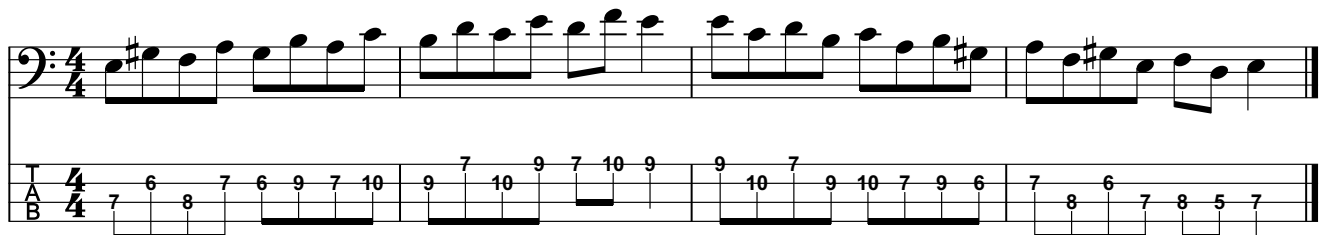
A Phrygian Dominant Scale (08:05)



E Phrygian Dominant Scale (08:58)



E Phrygian Dominant Scale in Broken Thirds (10:04)



LESSON 7

E Phrygian Dominant Scale in Groupings of 4 Notes (10:08)

The first system shows the ascending scale in bass clef (4/4 time). The notes are E, F#, G, A, B, C, D, E. The guitar staff shows fret numbers: 7, 8, 6, 7, 8, 6, 7, 9, 6, 7, 9, 10, 7, 9, 10, 7, 9, 10, 7, 9, 10, 9.

The second system shows the descending scale in bass clef (4/4 time). The notes are E, D, C, B, A, G, F#, E. The guitar staff shows fret numbers: 9, 7, 10, 9, 7, 10, 9, 7, 10, 9, 7, 6, 9, 7, 6, 8, 7, 6, 8, 7, 6, 8, 7, 5, 7.

A Super-Locrian (Altered) Scale (18:13)

The scale is shown in bass clef (4/4 time). The notes are A, Bb, C#, D#, Eb, F#, G, A. The guitar staff shows fret numbers: 5, 6, 8, 9, 6, 8, 5, 7.

Intervals: Root, b2, #2, 3rd, b5, #5, b7, Root (octave)

Key Lesson Takeaways (21:15)

HARMONIC MINOR

Phrygian Dominant: Great to access the tonality and color of the Harmonic Minor scale.

MELODIC MINOR

Lydian Dominant: Great for dominant chords with a #11 (raised 4th).

Super-Locrian (Altered): Great for dominant chords with altered 9th and/or altered 5th (b9, #9, b5, and #5).



LESSON 8

MINOR II-V-I PROGRESSIONS

Major ii-V-I in the Key of C major (03:20)

Diagram illustrating the Major ii-V-I progression in the Key of C major (03:20). The progression is shown in 4/4 time, spanning three measures. The first measure contains a Dm7 chord (labeled II), the second measure contains a G7 chord (labeled V7), and the third measure contains a Cmaj7 chord (labeled I). The notation includes a bass staff with a whole note in each measure and a guitar staff with fret numbers (10, 9, 8) indicated for the Dm7, G7, and Cmaj7 chords respectively.

Minor ii-V-i in the Key of C minor - Harmonic Minor (07:00)

Diagram illustrating the Minor ii-V-i progression in the Key of C minor - Harmonic Minor (07:00). The progression is shown in 4/4 time, spanning three measures. The first measure contains a Dm7(b5) chord (labeled II), the second measure contains a G7(b9) chord (labeled V7), and the third measure contains a Cm7 chord (labeled I). The notation includes a bass staff with a whole note in each measure and a guitar staff with fret numbers (13, 12, 15 for II; 13, 15, 14, 15 for V7; 15, 13, 15 for I) indicated for the Dm7(b5), G7(b9), and Cm7 chords respectively.

The b5 of the II minor chord and the b9 of the V7 chord suggest Harmonic Minor

Minor ii-V-i in the Key of C minor - Melodic Minor (08:48)

Diagram illustrating the Minor ii-V-i progression in the Key of C minor - Melodic Minor (08:48). The progression is shown in 4/4 time, spanning three measures. The first measure contains a Dm7 chord (labeled II), the second measure contains a G7 chord (labeled V7), and the third measure contains a Cm7 chord (labeled I). The notation includes a bass staff with a whole note in each measure and a guitar staff with fret numbers (10, 10, 10 for II; 10, 9, 10 for V7; 8, 8, 8 for I) indicated for the Dm7, G7, and Cm7 chords respectively.

A natural II minor chord and a V7 chord (may include natural 9 or b13) suggests Melodic Minor

