

More Minor Scales for Resonator Guitar

By Ivan Rosenberg

For the past few months, we've been working in new keys, first looking at the Key of D, and then learning about the Key of B minor, which is the "relative minor" of D major. I tabbed out the first Dobro® solo of "The Creptid Mule" as an example of a tune in B minor, and this month I've tabbed out the second solo as well. It's been several years since I've written tab of my original music, and *Guitar Sessions* readers are getting the first look at "The Creptid Mule." I hope you enjoy the tune!

First, though, I'd like to round out last month's discussion of the relative minor scale by showing you the two other minor scales: harmonic and melodic.

Review: The major scale and the relative minor, or "pure minor" scale

Please see [February's article](#) for a complete discussion of relative minor scales. We've been working in the Key of B minor, and here is the B pure minor scale, which is also the relative minor scale of D major.

B C# D E F# G A B

You can use these notes for a bluegrass or country song in the Key of B minor and your soloing will sound perfectly appropriate.

The Harmonic Minor Scale

That harmonic minor scale is identical to the pure minor scale except that the 7th degree is raised a half step on both the ascent and descent. The 7th degree of the B pure minor scale is an A note. So, working from your B pure minor scale written out above, just raise the A note to an A# note, and you have the B harmonic minor scale.

B C# D E F# G A# B

The Melodic Minor Scale

This might be a new kind of scale concept for you (as it was for me!): the notes are different on the way up than on the way down. We'll again use the pure minor scale as our foundation. To create the B melodic minor scale, raise the 6th and 7th degrees of the pure minor scale a half tone on the way up and lower them back to pure minor status on the way down. In other words, on the B melodic minor scale, your G and A notes are raised to G# and A # respectively on the ascent, and lowered back to "pure minor" status, G and A notes, on the descent.

So, on the way up, the B melodic minor scale is: **B C# D E F# G# A# B**

And on the descent, we get: **B A G F# E D C# B**

Though neither scale is especially common in bluegrass music, you can certainly find uses for the harmonic and melodic minor scales in folk songs in minor keys. Experiment with these next time you're jamming over a chord progression in a minor key, and I bet you'll come up with something new and fun to play on the resonator guitar!

The Creptid Mule – Second Solo

Let's get back to our pure minor scale, which is the most commonly used minor scale in bluegrass music and country music. Last month I started you off on a tune of mine in the Key of B minor called "The Creptid Mule." The full-length mp3 of the tune is available by visiting my [February article](#).

If you're just starting out, it was probably challenging to get through certain passages of the first solo. Because I know there are quite a few intermediate/advanced players reading this column, I thought I'd go ahead and tab out the second solo from the song as well—even though it gets even harder. Just remember, at a modest tempo, most of these licks are playable one at a time, as long as you have pretty good control of the bar and your picks.

Using a very useful software program called "The Amazing Slow-Downer," I made a slower version of this month's sound clip, which should help you get the feel of some more difficult passages, especially....

The Extended Triplet Run

Did you ever hear a Dobro® lick that was so fast and fancy, it completely blew your mind? There's a good chance it was a series of triplets that incorporated open strings as well as picked notes, hammer-ons, and pull-offs.

Jerry Douglas was definitely the first person to figure out this kind of triplet sequence on Dobro®, which can sound very impressive in the right hands. Watch out, though; the extended triplet run can easily be overdone, and once you learn it, you might be tempted to throw it in every solo you play. It's probably better to think of the triplet lick as a drop of hot sauce, not your main course. I try to only use it after a sparse, melodic phrase, and only once or twice maximum per album or set of music

In this month's tab, the triplets start on staff 1, measure 4. One more thing: if in the tab you see a fret position in parentheses before a slide, it means to immediately begin sliding from the note in parentheses to the next note.

Good luck with this arrangement! I know things are getting pretty advanced this month, so April's lesson will be especially geared for beginning and early intermediate players.

Thanks for reading! Until next time,
Ivan Rosenberg

The Creptid Mule - 2nd resonator guitar solo - (c) Ivan Rosenberg, from the album "Clawhammer and Dobro"

Bm A G A

Gtr I

7 9 9 9 4 4 5 (2) 4 2 0 0 2 0 0 2 0 0 2 0

sl. sl. sl. P H P H P

Bm A G A G

2 0 0 2 0 2 0 2 4 4 2 0 0 7 0 7 0 7 0 9 0 9 0 9 (9) 11 12 12 12

P H P sl. sl. sl. P H P H P P H P H P H sl. sl.

Bm A G A

12 7 9 4 5 4 4 4 2 0 2 4 4

sl. sl. sl. sl. sl. sl. P sl.

Bm A G A Bm

4 2 0 2 2 0 4 0 4 4 2 0 3

P sl. sl. sl. P sl.

Bridge:

G A Bm A

17

T

A

B

2 0 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 0 2 0 2 2 4 4 2 2 2 2 2 2 4

sl.

G D A

21

T

A

B

4 7 7 7 9 9 4 4 5 (2) 4 4 4 4 2 0 2 2 2 2 2

sl. sl. sl. sl. sl. P

Bm A G A

25

T

A

B

4 2 0 2 2 0 2 0 4 4 2 0 4 4 2 0 2 4

sl. sl. P sl. P sl. sl. sl. P sl.

Bm A G A Bm

29

T

A

B

4 2 0 2 2 0 4 0 4 2 0 4 2 0 4 4 2 0 3

sl. sl. P sl. P sl. sl. P sl. sl. sl. P sl.