

Melodic minor

Major to melodic minor - One note change

For a scale to be called minor the necessary and sufficient condition is that it has the minor 3rd interval. Therefore, I think of the melodic minor as the 'pure' example of how to get a minor scale.

Take a major scale pattern, change the major 3rd interval in the major scale pattern to a minor 3rd interval and you have the melodic minor scale pattern.

C major scale: C D E F G A B

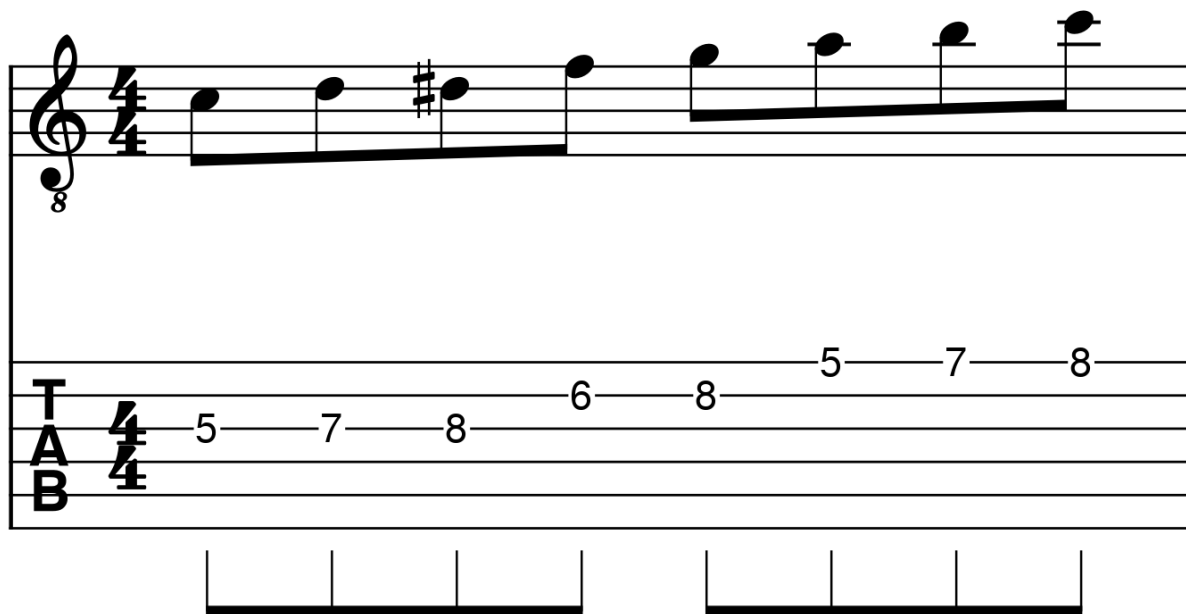
C Melodic Minor scale: C D ***E $\flat$*** F G A B

Notice the E $\flat$ note in the image below. Every other note of the melodic minor scale belongs to the C major scale also.

The image displays the C Melodic Minor scale in 4/4 time. The top staff is a treble clef with a 4/4 time signature. The scale is written as a single line of music with notes: C (quarter), D (quarter), E $\flat$ (quarter), F (quarter), G (quarter), A (quarter), and B (quarter). Below the staff is a guitar fretboard diagram with two strings shown. The fret numbers for the scale are indicated by numbers 5, 7, 8, 6, 8, 5, 7, and 8, corresponding to the notes C, D, E $\flat$, F, G, A, and B respectively. The fretboard diagram shows the first string with frets 5, 7, and 8, and the second string with frets 6, 8, 5, 7, and 8.

Fretboard pattern for the melodic minor scale

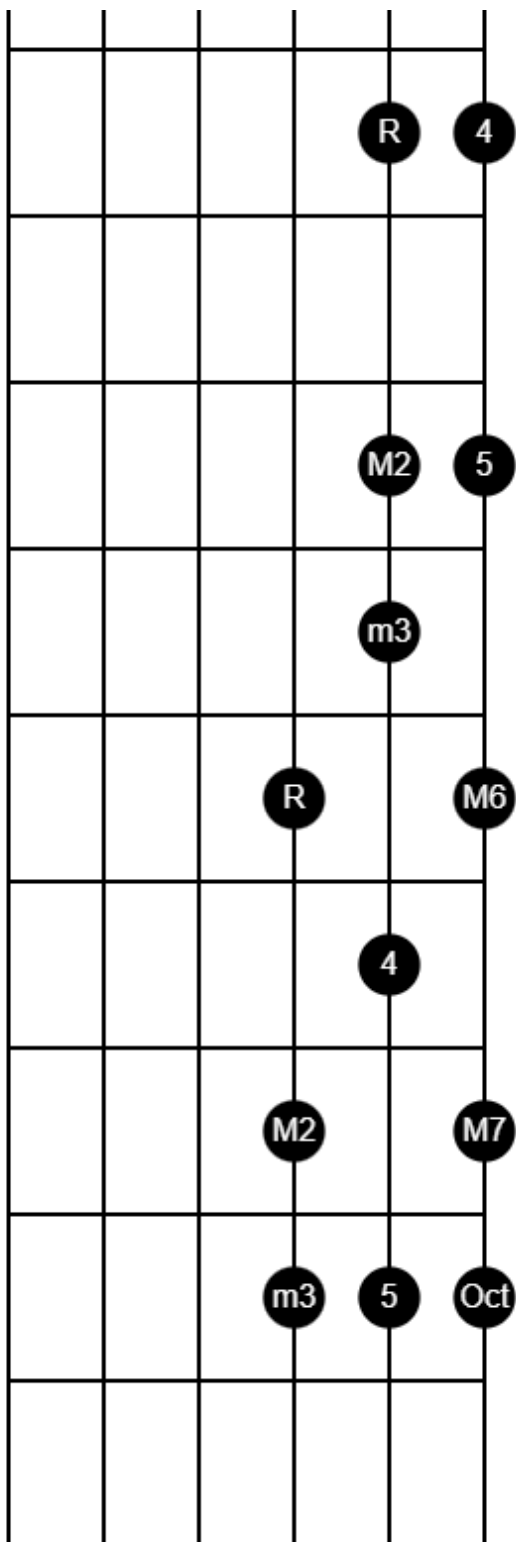
3rd string root, boxed:



Melodic minor fretboard spread

Knowing your surroundings will help you avoid getting in trouble. Knowing the approximate positions of the scale we use, in the fretboard makes us feel safer - we can avoid the notes we definitely shouldn't play.

In the image below, the thinnest string (1st string) is on the right - the same convention we use in the whole book. The R on the second or the 3rd strings is the root, from which the pattern spreads out. Notice that except for the m3 interval, the rest of the pattern is same as that of the major scale. The major scale has a M3 interval, while the melodic minor below has the m3 interval.



Melodic minor notes to Indian sounding phrase

Starting with the 2nd string 8th fret, moving down the scale till the 2nd string open (Ni or Major 7th), moving back up the scale. Instead of playing plain notes, I have added movement to the notes (6/8\6, 4/6\4 etc) by adding nearby scale notes and playing it using a rhythmic pattern.

Now it's your turn to try the phrase above, try the method of adding nearby notes to other sets of notes you can come up with, add rhythmic embellishments. There is no one way. Different patterns, learned and mixed, gives us innovative raga phrase solutions.