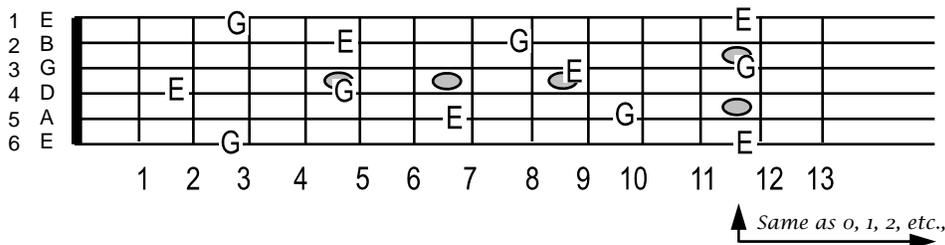


“Key” Tone Centers

The following diagrams show the most important tone centers for the most important keys in contemporary guitar music. In each case, the relative major and corresponding relative minor tone centers are shown. By looking at the diagrams you can see the available octave and unison relationships of each tone. The unisons occur on adjacent strings and are separated by the same number of frets as the tuning fret for each string.

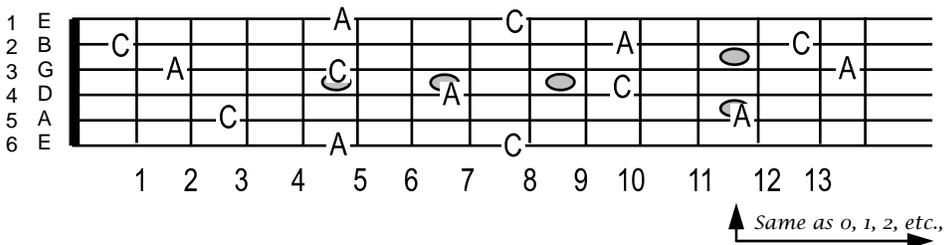
Using each of the following diagrams, practice finding the major and minor tone centers until the frets and relationships are memorized for each key.

G MAJOR/E MINOR(BLUES)



The key of “G” major and its relative minor “Em” are (arguably) the most popular keys for contemporary guitar improvisation. The same patterns are shared for each key. The basic sixth string root pattern occurs at the open fret as well as the twelfth. The basic fifth string pattern occurs at the seventh fret. The major pentatonic connectors can be used beginning with any of the “G” root notes. The minor connectors begin on any “E”. The old time blues guitarists pretty much exclusively played in this key. Later, Hendrix took these patterns to new heights with soaring bends and a multitude of immortalized riffs.

C MAJOR/A MINOR(BLUES)



The next most popular keys for contemporary guitar improvisation are “C” major and its relative minor “Am”. Again, the same basic pentatonic patterns are shared. The only difference that you have to think about is which note is the tone center and thus the one to emphasize. The basic sixth string pattern is located at fifth position which is very comfortably located in the middle of the main portion of the guitar neck. The fifth string pattern is at the twelfth fret. This key set is very popular with boogie pattern rock songs such as “Johnny B. Goode”.