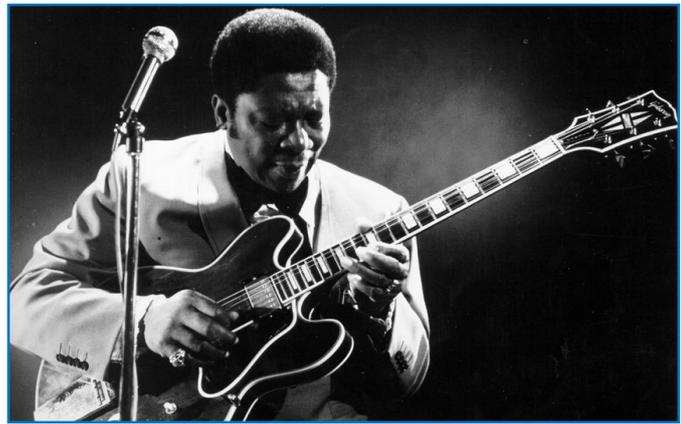


# Mastering the Pentatonic

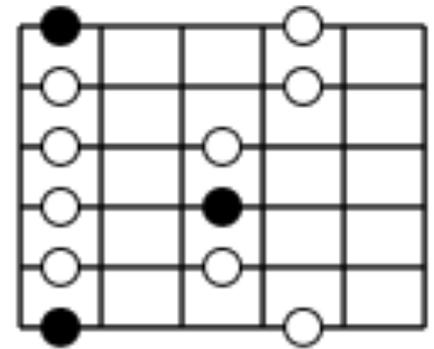
## Article 3 - BB King; 6th and the "BB Box".

The Pentatonic Scale is the holy grail for guitarists. It's easy to play and it sounds amazing.

This series will show you how to get the most out of our favourite scale, and how making small modifications will get you sounding like the pros and their signature sound.



In this article we will look at BB King's unique note choice when soloing, and articulation techniques synonymous with the blues legend. Below is the A minor pentatonic scale.

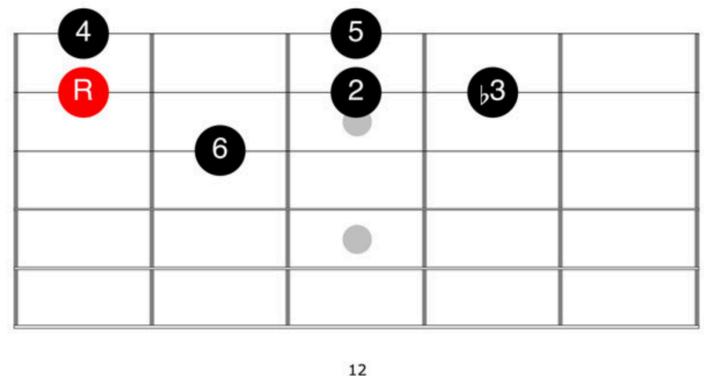


Here are the notes and intervals of the scale:

**A** (root) **C** (m3) **D** (4) **E** (5) **G** (m7)

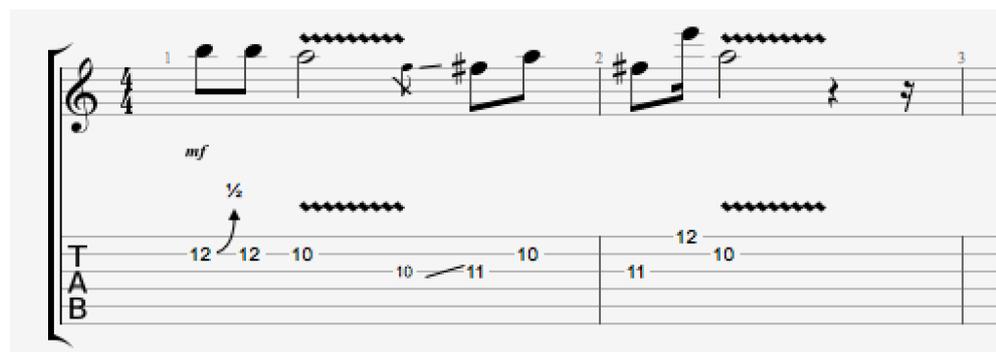
BB played these notes to great effect. But he also added different ones and incorporated them into an incredibly user-friendly "box" to solo over dominant blues progressions. It's called the "BB Box" (see right).

On the B & E strings, you can see familiar Minor Pentatonic notes (plus the 2nd). What gives this box the specific BB "flavour" is the use of the 6th on the G string, a note not found in the Minor Pentatonic. This box is also very versatile as you can play the Major 3rd as well with just a small half bend on fret 13. The **blue note** (b5) can also be added in between fret 10 and 12 on the E string.



This box will give you a brand new set of licks, as this formation of notes isn't found in your usual pentatonic shapes.

On the right is a BB styled lick using the "BB Box" in A.



## Articulation

BB had his own way of bending notes and using vibrato. His vibrato is incredibly fast and achieved by almost hanging your whole hand off the neck. BB would also make these huge leaps up to the tonic note of the key. These ideas are demonstrated below.

Musical score for a guitar lick in 4/4 time. The score includes a treble staff with a 3-measure phrase and a corresponding TAB staff with fret numbers 11, 10, 10, 11, 12, 12, 10, 12, 10, 11, 10, and 17. Arrows labeled "full" point to the 12th fret notes in measures 2 and 3. A vibrato symbol is present above the final note in measure 3.

These ideas can also be seen in the opening lick of "Lucille".

Musical score for the opening lick of "Lucille" in 4/4 time. The score includes a treble staff with a 3-measure phrase and a corresponding TAB staff with fret numbers 10, 12, 10, 12, and 10. An arrow labeled "full" points to the 12th fret note in measure 2. A vibrato symbol is present above the final note in measure 3.