

Theory and Application



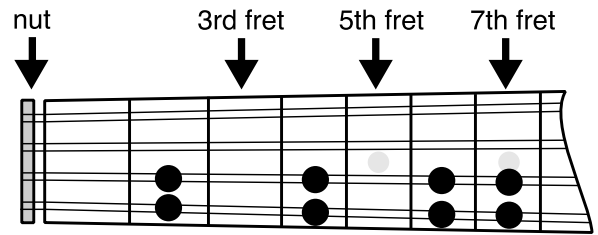
Pinkie Swear: Fourth Finger Exercises

ONE OF THE (many?) bugbears of the learning mandolin player is the use - or lack of - the pinkie, or fourth finger. No matter how you look at it, you have to bring it into play at some point, sooner or later. One method of getting used to and strengthening the pinkie is to employ "closed" patterns; i.e. avoiding playing any open strings.



Exercise 1: Closed A Scale

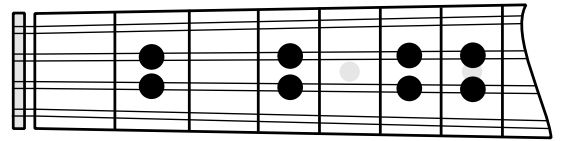
Another way of thinking about closed scales is to visualise the finger pattern. Wherever you place your index finger, the pattern of the scale is going to be the same: a two-fret gap, another two-fret gap, a one-fret gap, then up to the next string, same pattern again.



Closed A Scale

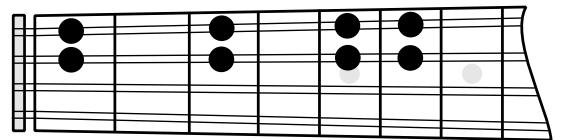
Exercise 2: Closed E and Bb Scales

Closed E Scale



Closed E Scale

Closed Bb Scale

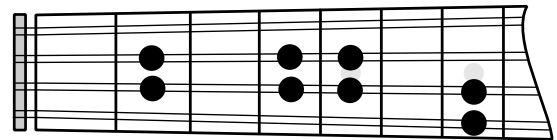


Closed Bb Scale

If you start the scale with any finger other than your index finger, it's not quite as straightforward, but you still use the same frets on adjacent strings, and it's still a great exercise for getting your fourth finger into action.

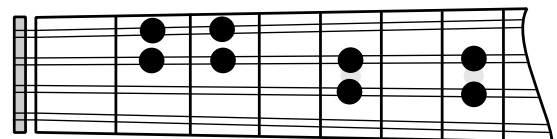
Exercise 3: Closed D and G Scales

Closed D Scale



Closed D Scale

Closed G Scale



Closed G Scale