

Modal Fingerings

There are seven modal fingerings. Why seven? If you remember from the theory lesson, there are seven notes in a major scale (or key). There is one modal fingering for each note in the major scale. The seven modal fingerings are seven different ways to play the same major scale across a 12 fret (one octave) area on the fretboard.

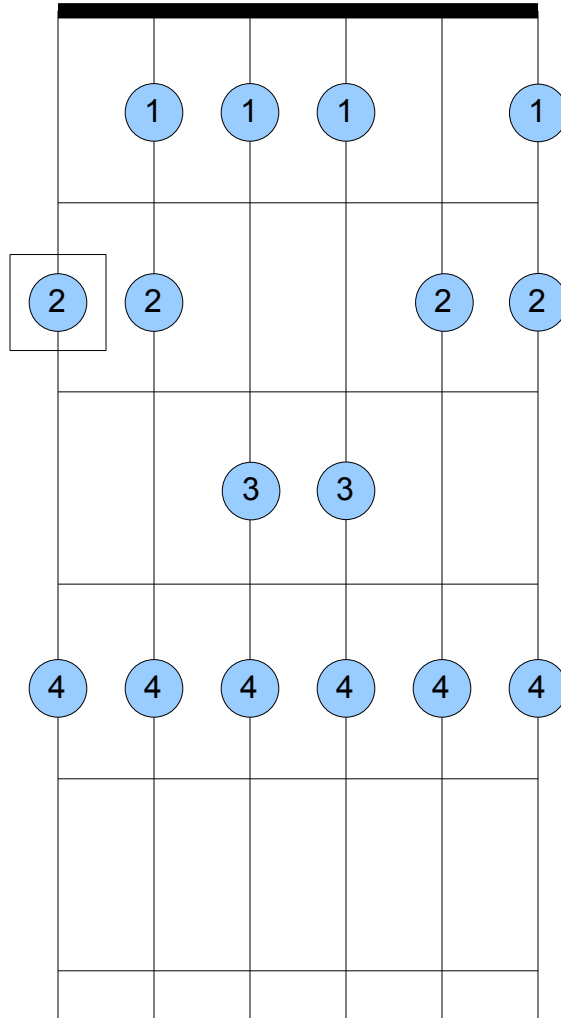
If we are in the key of C, the first modal fingering will be played from the C note on the low E strings 8th fret. The second modal fingering will be played from the second note in the key of C, which is D on the 10th fret of the E string. The third fingering will be played starting on the E on the 12th fret and so on.

Remember our formula for building a major scale. The first note is what key you're in. Then use the formula to go up the low E string to place your modal fingerings. Fingering one on the first note, second fingering on the second note, etc.

Whole Step = 2 frets	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
Half Step = 1 fret		V	V	V	V	V	V	V
		Whole	Whole	Half	Whole	Whole	Whole	Half

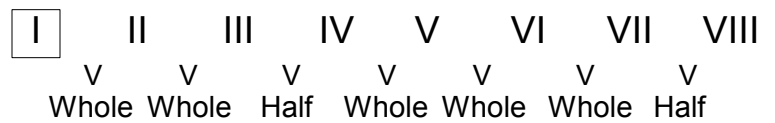
This is it. This is the hardest part of learning the guitar. Once you learn these seven scale fingerings and know how to build a major scale to place these seven fingerings on your fretboard, you've learned half of what you need to know about playing guitar and writing your own music.

Fingering I

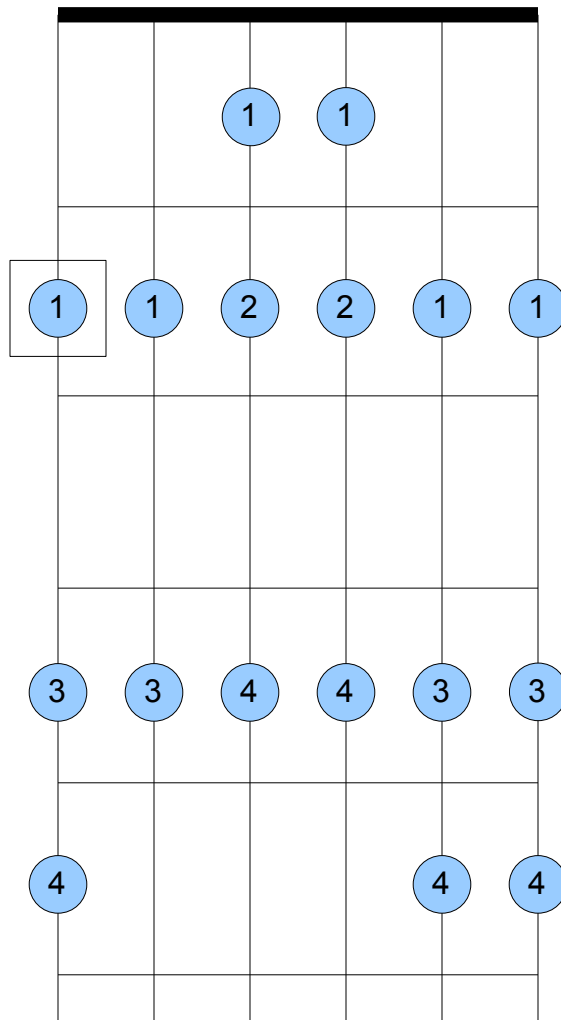


= Root

Whole Step = 2 frets
Half Step = 1 fret

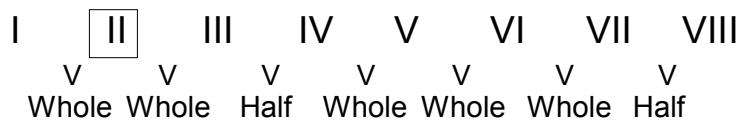


Fingering II

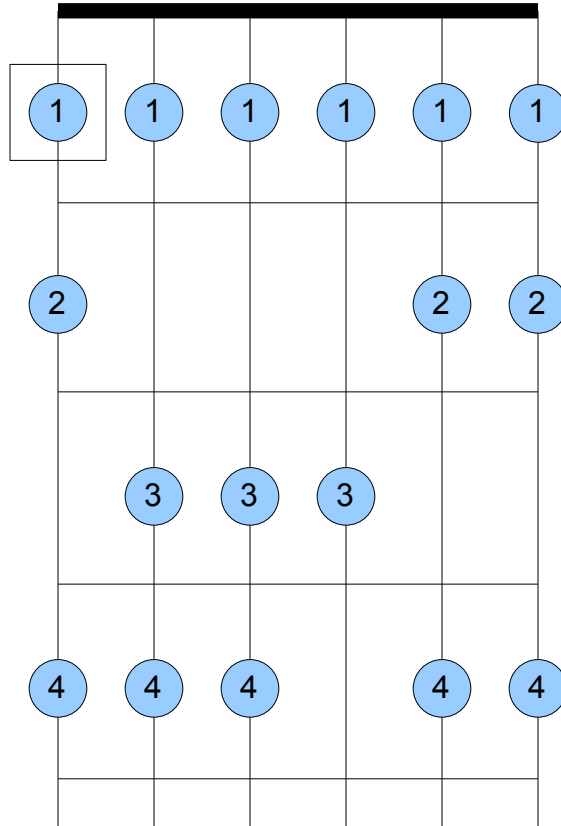


= Root

Whole Step = 2 frets
Half Step = 1 fret



Fingering III

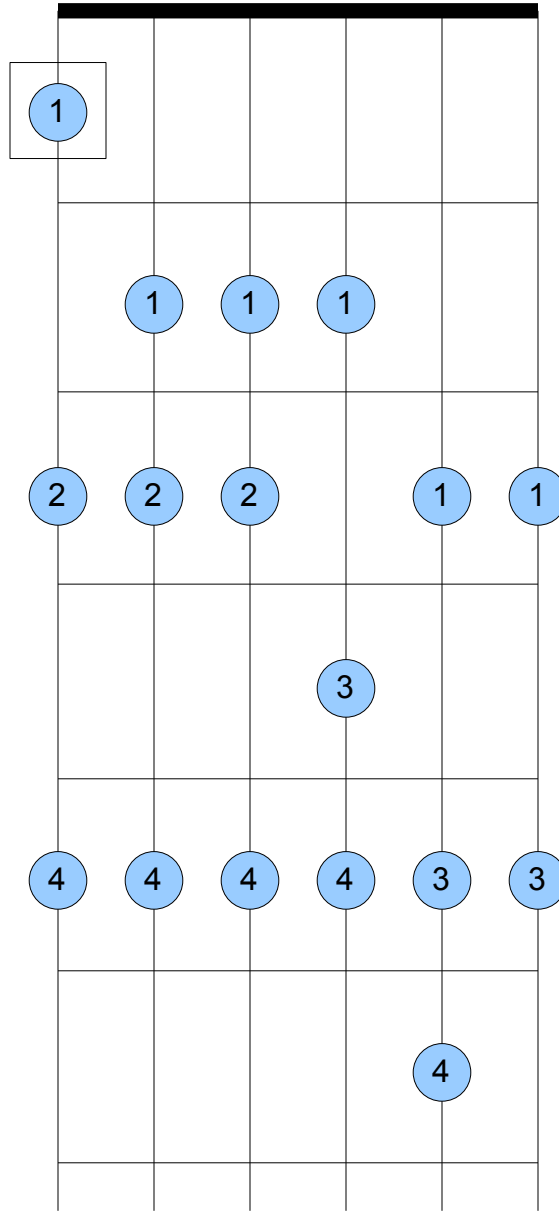


= Root

Whole Step = 2 frets
Half Step = 1 fret

I II III IV V VI VII VIII
 v v v v v v v
 Whole Whole Half Whole Whole Whole Half

Fingering IV

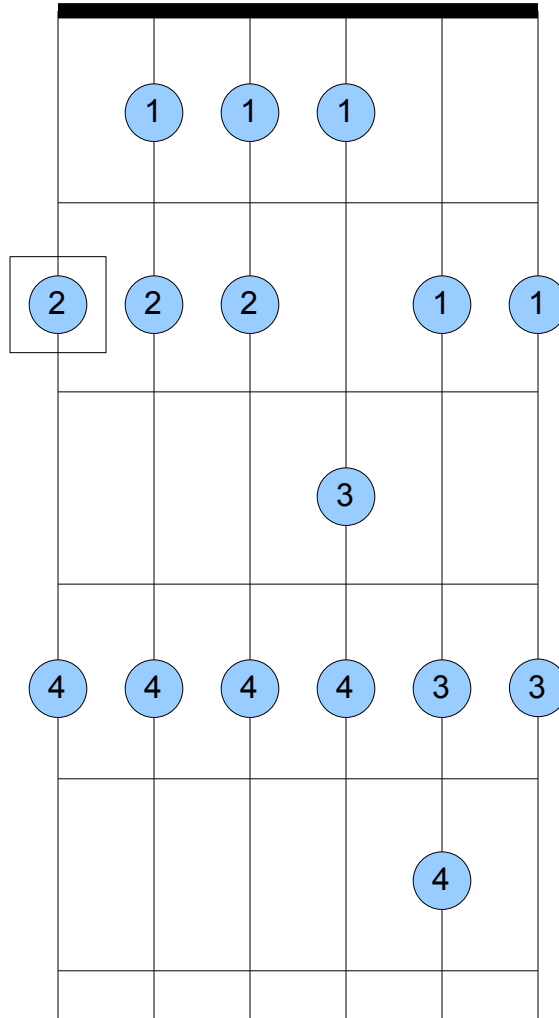


= Root

Whole Step = 2 frets
Half Step = 1 fret

I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
	v	v	v	v	v	v	v
Whole	Whole	Half	Whole	Whole	Whole	Whole	Half

Fingering V

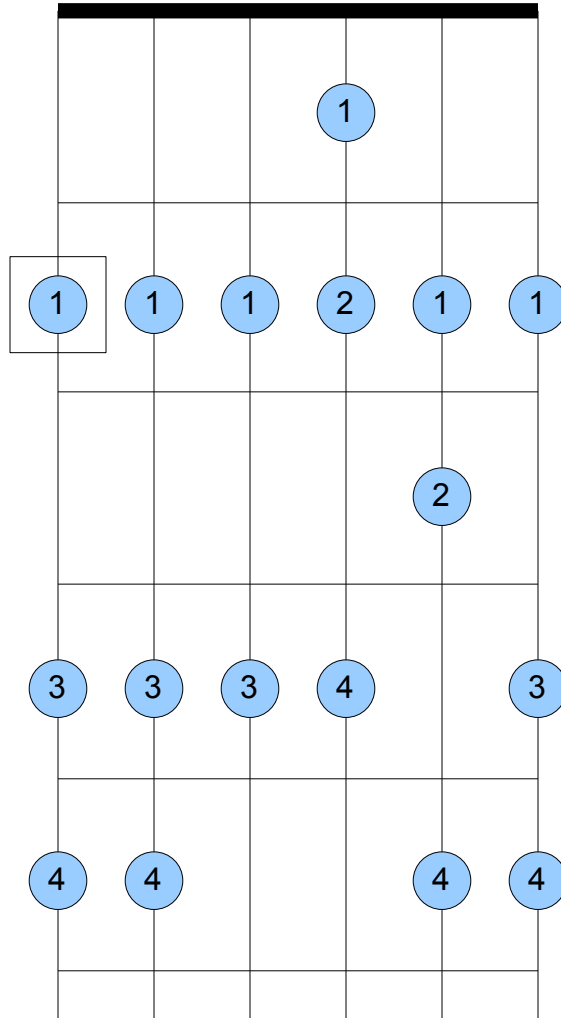


= Root

Whole Step = 2 frets
Half Step = 1 fret

I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
∨	∨	∨	∨	∨	∨	∨	∨
Whole	Whole	Half	Whole	Whole	Whole	Half	

Fingering VI

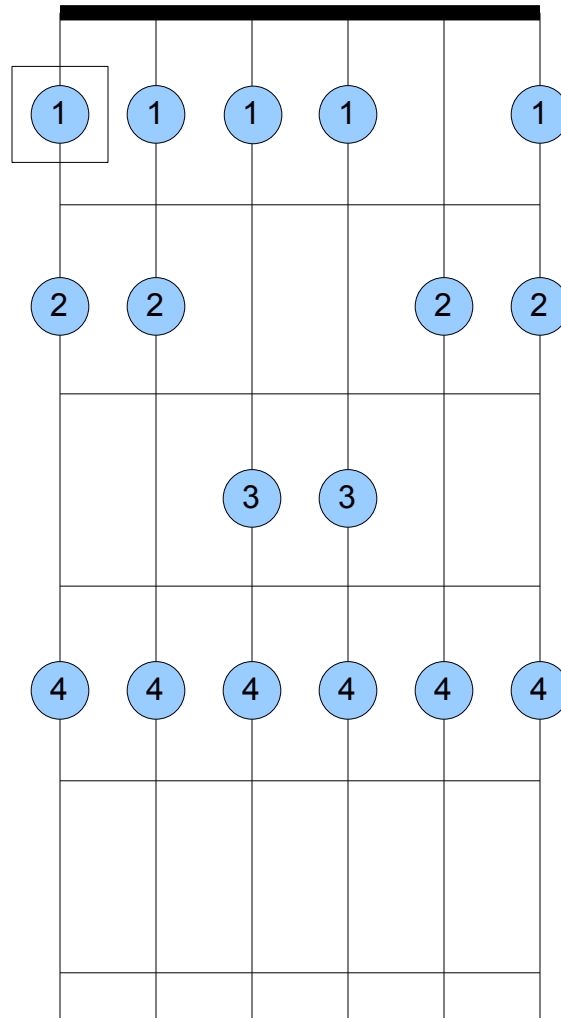


= Root

Whole Step = 2 frets
Half Step = 1 fret

I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V
Whole	Whole	Half	Whole	Whole	Whole	Half	

Fingering VII



= Root

Whole Step = 2 frets
Half Step = 1 fret

I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
	v	v	v	v	v	v	v
	Whole	Whole	Half	Whole	Whole	Whole	Half

The fingerings follow the same pattern after the seventh fingering. The eighth note in the scale is the same as the first note. It is just one octave (12 frets) higher in pitch. Start your first fingering on the eighth note and start your whole-whole-half-whole-whole-whole-half step formula over again.