

Key of "A" Minor (closed)

Our library of minor scale types has grown with the addition of the "gypsy minor." This rarely used scale has a musica ficta raised fourth and 7th tones resulting in a scale which contains only one full tone between the first two notes and the other intervals are either semitones or larger leaps of a tone and a half. This scale produces a particularly eastern quality. Harmonies for this scale would most likely still be drawn from the Harmonic minor. The note D# would probably be treated as an auxiliary below the note E which is the Dominant note in this key.

Natural Minor

Harmonic Minor

Melodic Minor

Gypsy Minor

or: 4 1 2 1 2 3 1 2 4---4 3 4 ext 1 3 4 (there are other possible fingering variations)

No fingering is carved in stone and do not be afraid of experimenting.

Composers and arrangers tend to intermingle the various styles of minor scales and most commonly, the harmonies tend to be on the simplistic side. The minor key has such a romantic quality that complex harmony can easily ruin the psychological effect of the key.

Any scale can be played out of any hand position on the guitar but some fingerings will be the kind that hurt your hands. If the scale seems to be calling for an excessive number of extension fingerings, one can usually alleviate these problems by shifting either up or down one position.

In many cases, it may be best to shift in one direction or the other right in the middle of the scale. There is really no compelling reason to practice some kind of "butterfly stroke" when playing the guitar. (I am assuming that no guitar player knows how to do the very demanding "butterfly stroke" in swimming and if indeed they do know how, it is more than likely that they can only do it for a few strokes rather than a hundred meters. Playing the guitar is not an Olympic event.)