



## Melodic Minor Workout

**M**any guitar students wonder why they have to learn scales. You hear mutterings that they are boring to practice, or they would rather play songs, and the like. With the right attitude knowing your scales can get you to the next skill level very quickly. Practising scales can improve two hand co-ordination, speed picking, tone, and even improve your ear. Of course there are many more benefits of learning scales too numerous to mention here.

The Melodic Minor scale is simply an E minor scale with the sixth and seventh degree raised a half step ascending, while descending the sixth and seventh degrees return to their natural state. So ascending the scale looks like this E, F#, G, A, B, C#, D#, E. Descending the notes are E, D, C, B, A, G, F#, E. Another way to look at it is it is just an E major scale with a flatted third ascending, and a normal minor scale descending.

If you look at the music for the E Minor melodic scale you can see I have notated a two octave scale in the open position. It would pay to play it without any time to begin to get the notes under your fingers, and in your brain first.

Then it would be best to play through this scale very slowly, keeping in mind the fingering is one finger per fret. So all the notes at the first fret are first finger, second fret is second finger, third fret is third finger, and fourth fret is your little finger.

When practising this scale strive for a smooth flow of notes, no buzzes or scratches, and listen to the sound the scale produces. This is what many guitar players miss, they don't use their ears. Many players can't hear a melodic minor scale at all. It is called the Melodic Minor because it is very melodic, and because of that, many of the world's greatest composers have used it in their compositions.

You need to have this scale memorised. Once you have done that, then it is best to learn a song or tune that uses it. J. S. Bach was one fairly successful composer who used this scale. His famous suite *Bouree in E Minor* was written for lute and this portion is taken from the fifth movement of the suite. This tune has been covered by many people including Jethro Tull, who made it famous in the 1970s, and is a must learn tune for many guitarists.

Classical music is sometimes dismissed by beginner guitarists, but I can tell you there are many cool things to learn in that genre. Classical music sounds great played on an electric guitar with a bit of overdrive on. Do be careful of the open strings as sometimes they can ring on and clash with other notes, so you need to be mindful of your open string muting.

The music I have written for you here is only the A section of the tune to demonstrate the use of the E melodic minor scale. There is also a B section which you can get from my website if you want it. Classical music is fun to play, turn on the overdrive, turn up the volume, and go for it.

You can hear the mp3 for this music at <http://www.guitar.co.nz/category/resources/freelessons/>

Kevin Downing is a professional guitarist, teacher and author. His contact details, along with many freebies are on his website at [www.guitar.co.nz](http://www.guitar.co.nz)

### E Melodic Minor Scale



### Bouree in E Minor - J.S. Bach

