

Chapter Nine

9

In reading music, one must constantly negotiate shifting from one part of the fretboard to another in order to reach the higher or lower notes. In order to facilitate this navigation of the fretboard and to demonstrate it in the following chapters, the location of the left hand on the fretboard will be defined in two ways: *position* and *scale form*.

Position

Position refers to what fret the first finger of the left hand rests on, with the other three fingers following in a one-finger-per-fret manner. For example, the first finger on the first fret would be Position 1, the first finger on the fourth fret would be Position 4, and so on.

Scale Forms

Scale form refers to any of the five scale forms derived from the major scale. These are named according to the step of the major scale they begin with and are diagrammed below. Try to memorize them as quickly as possible and practice them in all keys; they can be tremendously helpful in navigating the fretboard.

Because there are seven steps in a major scale, there could actually be seven possible scale forms. However, the two points in the major scale at which half steps occur (between steps 3 and 4 and between steps 7 and 8) eliminate the need for separate forms at these two positions. Thus, scale forms 3 and 4 become Scale Form 3-4, and scale form 7 is effectively contained in Scale Form 1. This leaves us with just the five forms.

Scale Forms for Four-String Bass

Scale Form 1



Scale Form 2



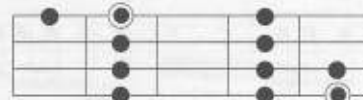
Scale Form 3-4



Scale Form 5



Scale Form 6



Scale Forms for Five-String Bass

Scale Form 1



Scale Form 2



Scale Form 3-4



Scale Form 5



Scale Form 6



● = Root