

Beginners' Thoughts for Scales on the Uke



A note is a note. (Laaaa!!!)

A **chord** is a bunch of notes that sound good played simultaneously.

A **scale** is a bunch of 8 notes played one after the other.

On fretted instruments (like the uke), notes played one fret apart are one **semitone** apart. A note one semitone lower is said to be flat (written 'b' - so one semitone down from A is Ab); a note one semitone up is said to be 'sharp' (# - so A#). Notes that are two frets apart are one **tone** apart.

Julie Andrews taught most of us Do-Re-Mi-Fa-So-La-Ti-Do. That's 8 notes, although notice that there are two Do's. The Do's are the same note except they are an octave apart. Like an octopus – 8 notes. This is the **Major** scale, which is the building block of Western music. There are other sorts of scales but the Major scale has the following pattern between notes (it is useful to repeat this out loud).

Tone Tone Semitone Tone Tone Tone Semitone

Any Major scale does this pattern from the first note. For example, with a C Major scale, it goes like this.

C (Tone) D (Tone) E (Semitone) F (Tone) G (Tone) A (Tone) B (Semitone) C

The two diagrams show fingering patterns and notes for two Major scales. The one on the left is a C major scale (starts on C), the one on the right is a D major scale. And, on the right diagram, if we keep moving the finger patterns up the neck, we get E, F, G, etc. etc. major scales. Enough talking. Let's play it together.

