

the tune's signature as much as possible.

The other interesting thing to note is that we've played the whole break in first *closed* position – no open strings were harmed in the creation of this solo! This is far more useful than it first appears. What it means, for example, is that you can shift the break up a whole-tone or two and still use *exactly* the same fingering!

The Minor Pentatonic "Shape" - First Position

In fact, this break demonstrates a very useful shape that we will use over and over again. This is the shape of the minor pentatonic scale in first position (see Figure 109). The root (G, here) is under the 3rd finger in the lower register (D string), and under the 2nd finger in the upper (E string). The 4th finger on the E string hits the minor third interval, the B^b above the G.

This (first position) shape is the basis of much bluegrass fiddling and the sooner you become comfortable with it the sooner you'll start to sound like an old bluegrass fiddler! You can even slide it up a whole-tone and use it to play a pentatonic minor scale in the key of A!

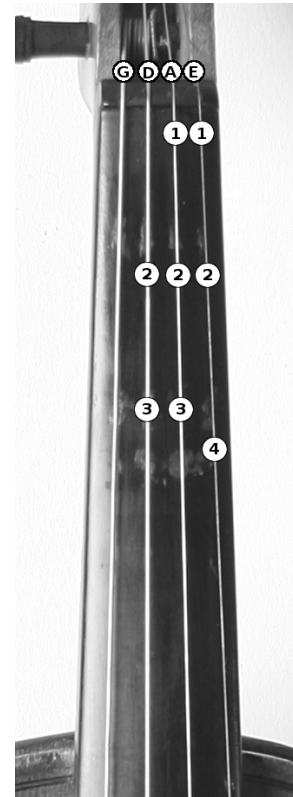


Figure 109: Minor pentatonic shape - the blues scale in first position

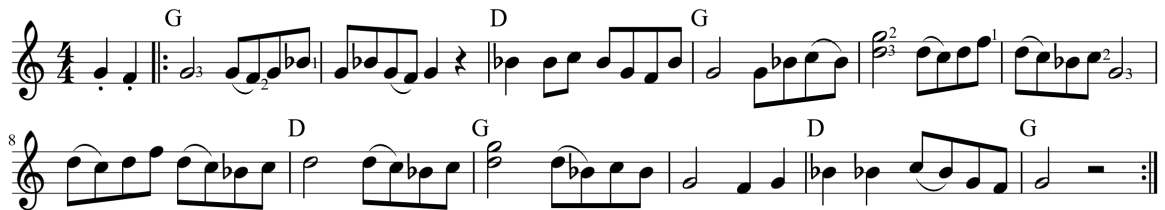


Figure 110: Pretty Polly - pentatonic minor solo