

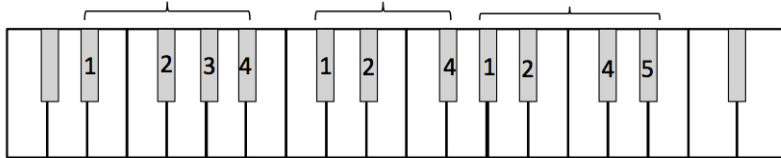
Chapter 5 - The Eb Minor, “Black Key” Pentatonic

As you begin to read through all the scales, you should always practice them hands separately. In fact, if you consider yourself to be a “one handed” piano player, you might skip the left hand exercises entirely. That’s not recommended though, because the byproduct of involving yourself with two hands is that your playing will benefit in ways that you can’t foresee. A central theme in this book is that the hands feed the brain as much as the other way around. Think of how athletic ability or lack thereof shaped the styles of jazz greats such as Charlie Parker and Art Tatum versus Bill Evans, Paul Desmond or John Lewis. And also consider the special case of Ahmad Jamal who had great hands but rarely played fast!

Eb MINOR PENTATONIC

We begin with the Eb minor scale because it’s a fingering template for six out of the twelve minor pentatonics.

EX. 3A



The keyboard diagram above shows how the Eb minor scale divides into three separate fingering-groups or “handfuls” of notes. Each group is indicated with a bracket and requires you to make a new hand shape.

These handfuls of notes (as shown in Ex. 3B) will place the hand directly over several keys at once and avoid you having to make micro-adjustments at the last instant. Realize that as you play each chord, you’ve just played the notes infinitely fast. Later you can just slow them down when you play the scale...ha!

EX. 3B