

Major Scale In Couplets

10h

Ascending

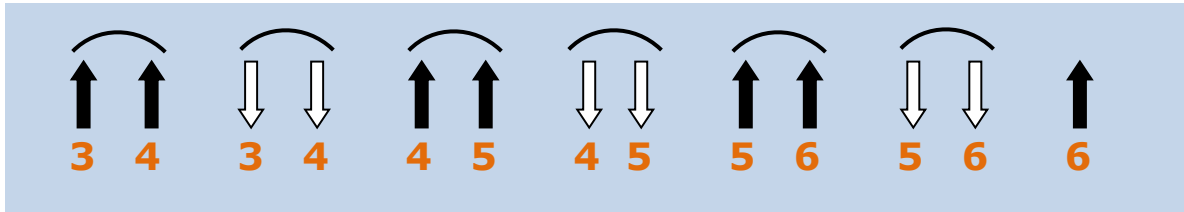


Diagram A shows the ascending major scale exercise. It consists of seven pairs of notes connected by slurs, followed by a final single note. The notes are: 3 4, 3 4, 4 5, 4 5, 5 6, 5 6, and 6. Arrows indicate the direction of the notes: up for 3 4, down for 3 4, up for 4 5, down for 4 5, up for 5 6, down for 5 6, and up for 6.

Descending

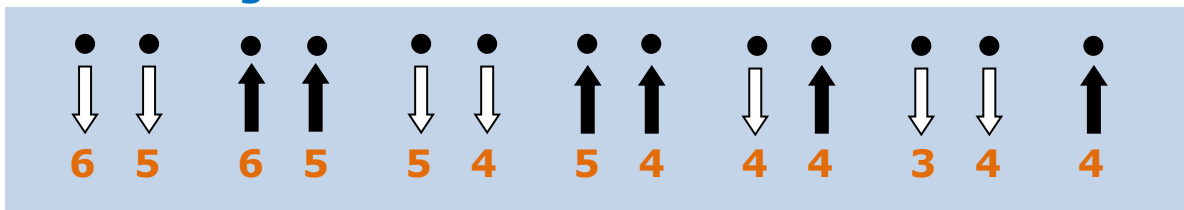


Diagram B shows the descending major scale exercise. It consists of seven pairs of notes connected by slurs, followed by a final single note. The notes are: 6 5, 6 5, 5 4, 5 4, 4 4, 3 4, and 4. Arrows indicate the direction of the notes: down for 6 5, up for 6 5, down for 5 4, up for 5 4, down for 4 4, down for 3 4, and up for 4.

Notes

Using the major scale, we're connecting pairs of notes. This is a great way of developing breath control, slide technique and controlled movement across the harmonica. It's also closely linked to playing trills. When the exercise is played right through, it becomes a fun melody.

Legato and Staccato

Using slide technique, play each couplet *legato* (smoothly and softly). Try not to split the couplets into single notes. We have added slurs to the first line to help you. Notice how your diaphragm provides the support needed. Ensure you also adopt the right hand position when you play. Now try playing the couplets *staccato* (short and sharp). We have added dots to the second line to help you. Try to keep your lips on the harmonica and use short bursts of air.

Phrasing and Jigging

Now play the couplets naturally, but emphasise the first note by adding weight each time. The result should be a OH-he, OH-he, OH-he effect. Now *jig* each couplet by lengthening and emphasising the first note each time, and shortening and lightening the second note. This should give you an Irish *skip* to the exercise. Try to keep your head still and use the weight of the harmonica to move through the pattern. The action of twitching the harp from the wrists will help.

Trills

Pick pairs of neighbouring notes and use them to play trills. Start and end on the lower of the two notes and try not to catch other holes. Keep the delivery even in both holes and feel the divider as your breath crosses it. See if you can speed up and down, while keeping control in the two holes.