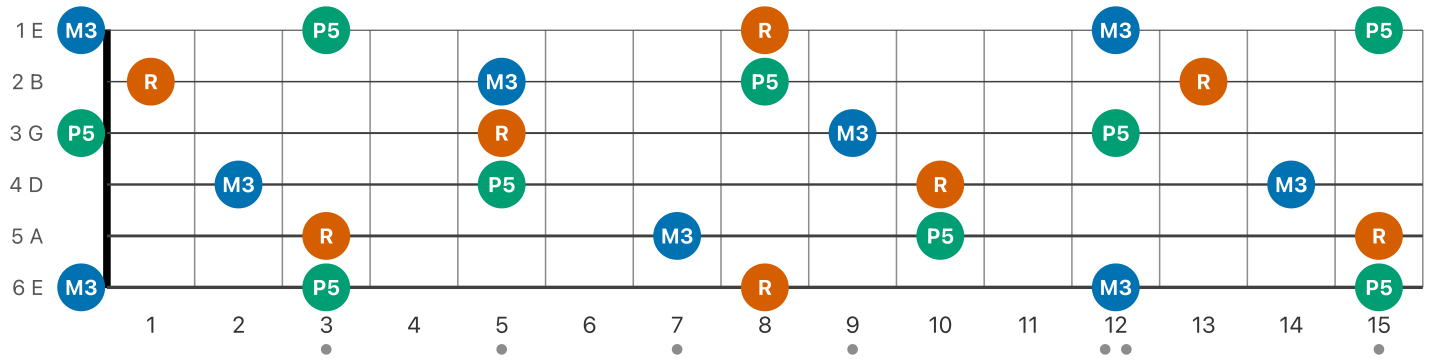
CAGED · the five shapes in C

Every C major chord tone on the neck. The five shapes are slices of this map.

Going up the neck the shapes come in the order C, A, G, E, D, then C again.

C major chord tones (R, M3, P5), frets 0 to 15



WHERE EACH SHAPE SITS IN C

- C shape: open position, frets 0-3. Root on 5th string, like an open C chord.
- A shape: frets 3-5. Root on 5th string, like an open A chord (the A barre chord).
- G shape: frets 5-8. Root on 6th string, like an open G chord.
- E shape: frets 8-10. Root on 6th string, like an open E chord (the E barre chord).
- D shape: frets 10-13. Root on 4th string, like an open D chord.

Neighbouring shapes share notes; that is how they link together.

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CAGED · the five chord shapes

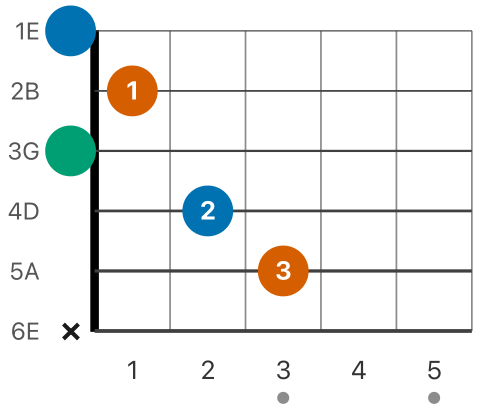
Each shape on its own: just the chord, no scale notes.

Formula Major R M3 P5

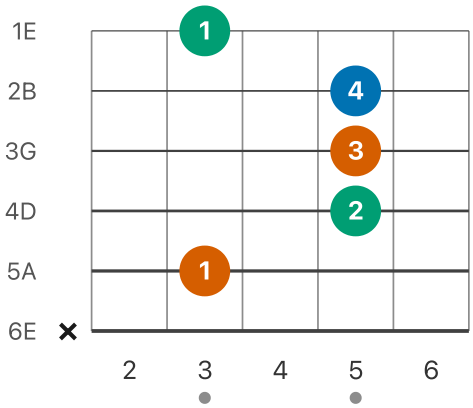
× = don't play that string.

The same C chord five ways. Going up the neck: C, A, G, E, D.

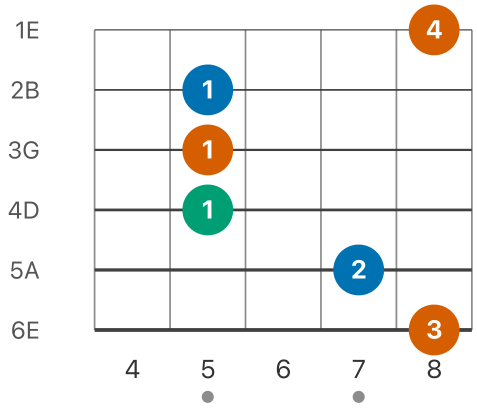
C shape · root on 5th string



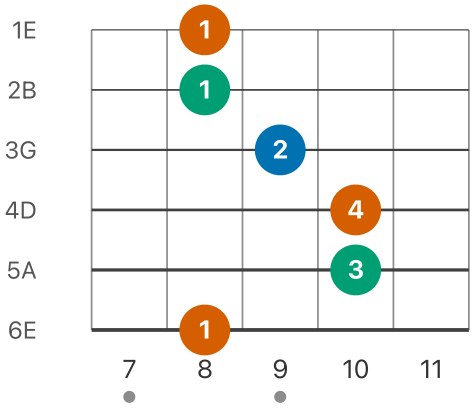
A shape · root on 5th string



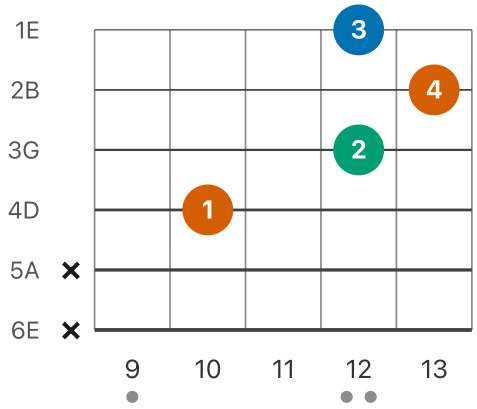
G shape · root on 6th string



E shape · root on 6th string



D shape · root on 4th string



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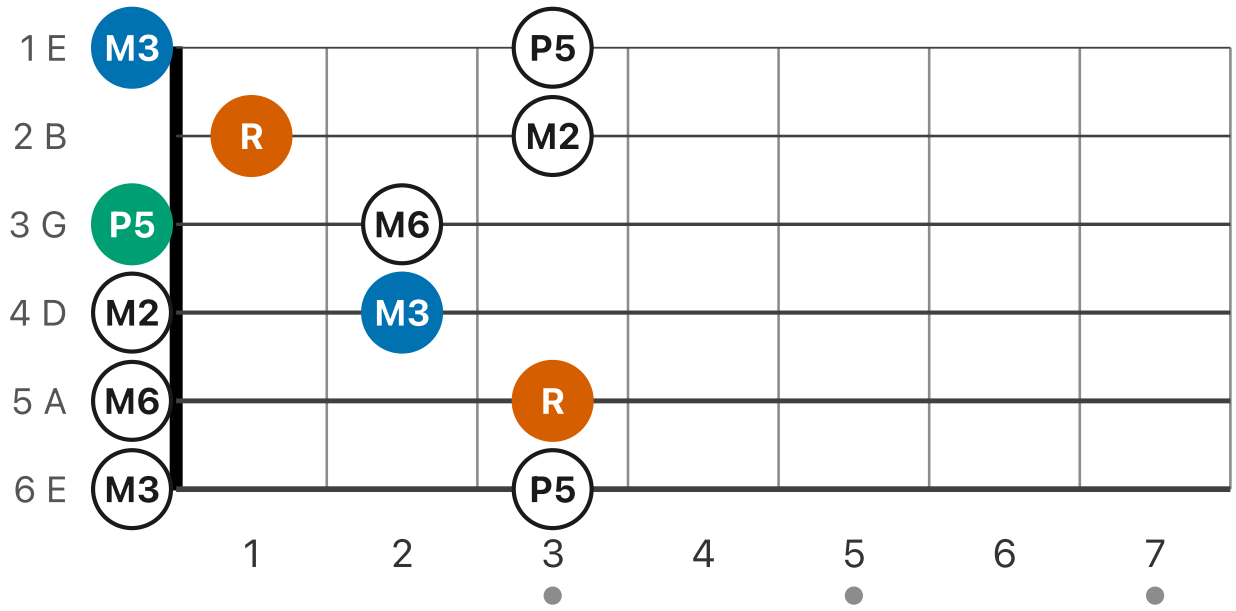
CAGED · C shape and A shape

Colored = the chord shape. White = the rest of the major pentatonic around it.

Formula Major pentatonic R M2 M3 P5 M6

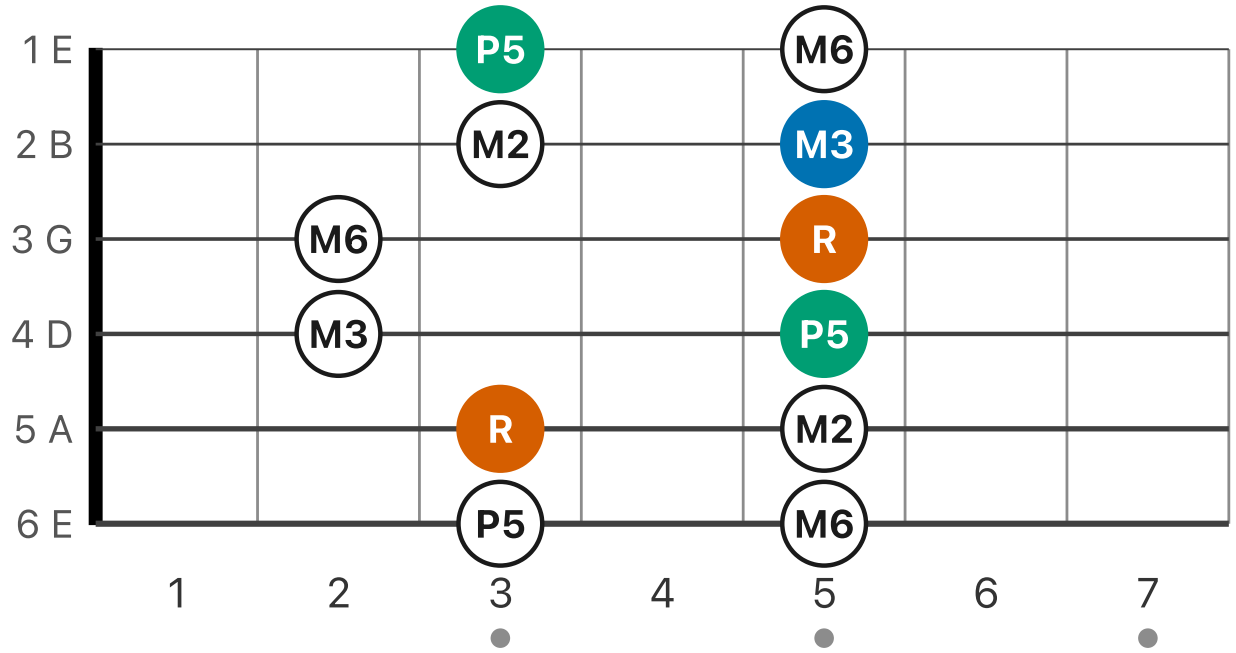
Play the chord, then the scale around it, so your solos stay on the chord.

C shape · pentatonic position 3



Root on 5th string, like an open C chord.

A shape · pentatonic position 4



Root on 5th string, like an open A chord (the A barre chord).

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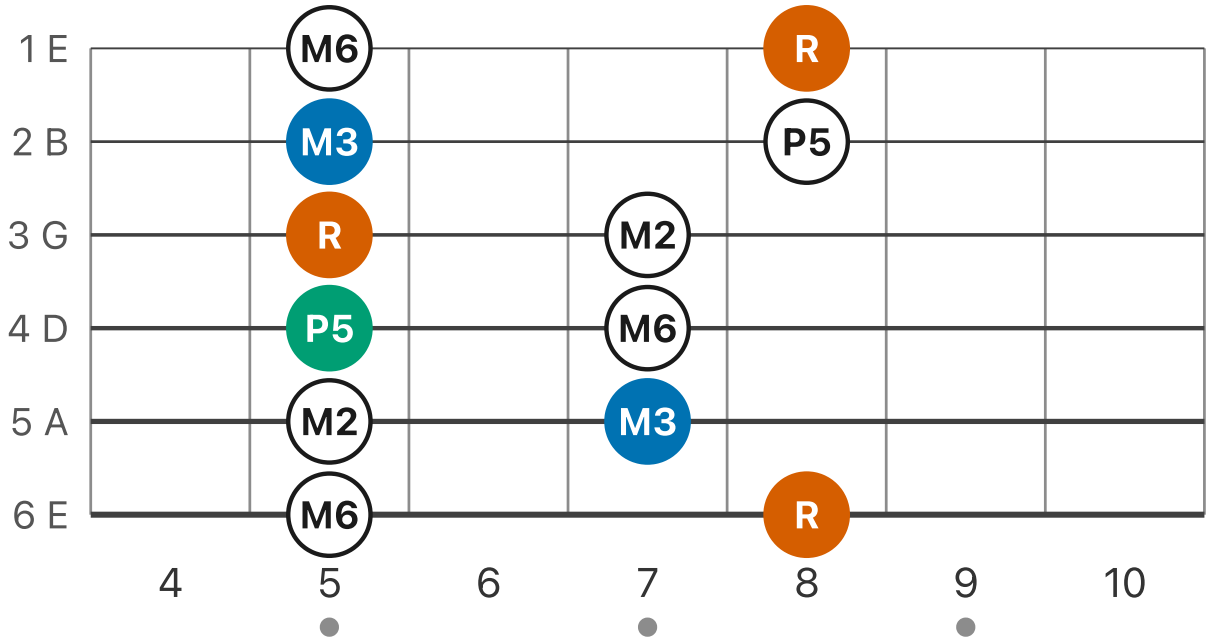
CAGED · G shape and E shape

Colored = the chord shape. White = the rest of the major pentatonic around it.

Formula Major pentatonic R M2 M3 P5 M6

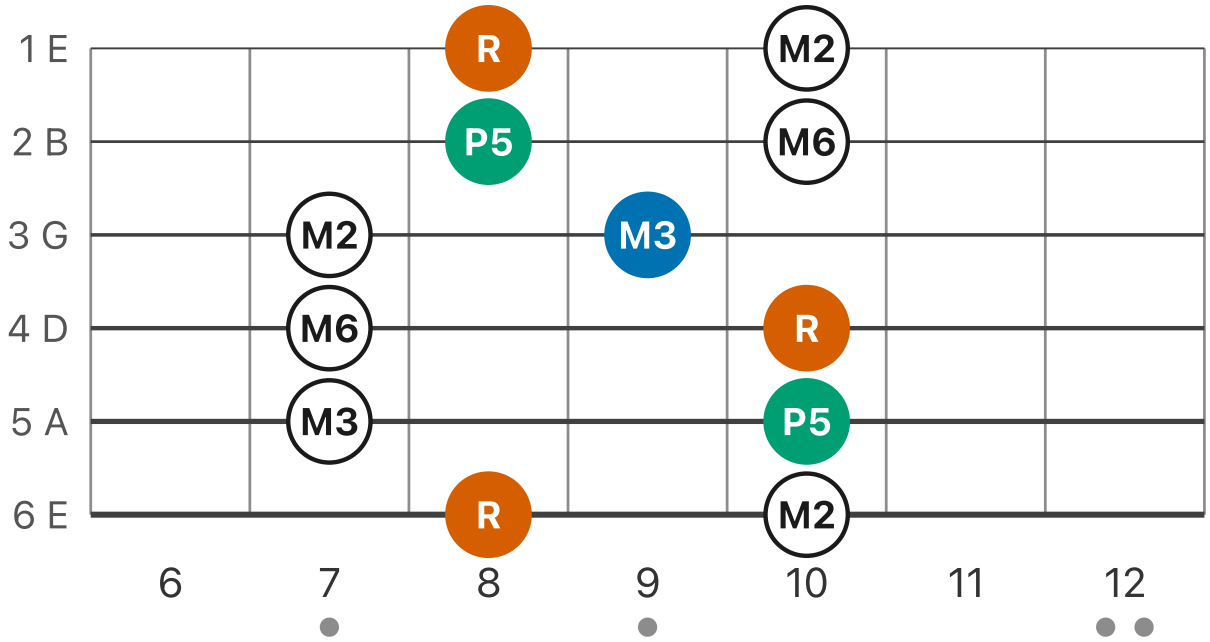
Play the chord, then the scale around it, so your solos stay on the chord.

G shape · pentatonic position 5



Root on 6th string, like an open G chord.

E shape · pentatonic position 1



Root on 6th string, like an open E chord (the E barre chord).

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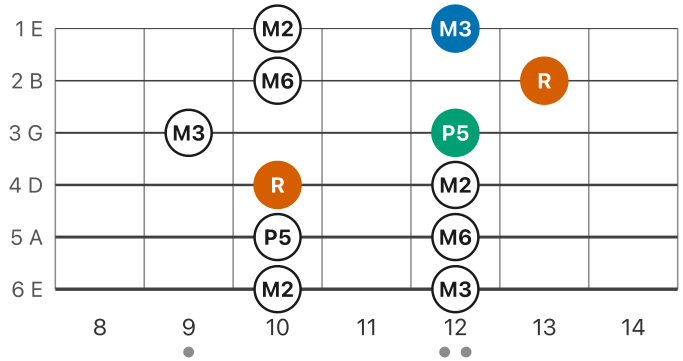
CAGED · D shape

Colored = the chord shape. White = the rest of the major pentatonic around it.

Formula Major pentatonic R M2 M3 P5 M6

Play the chord, then the scale around it, so your solos stay on the chord.

D shape · pentatonic position 2



Root on 4th string, like an open D chord.

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