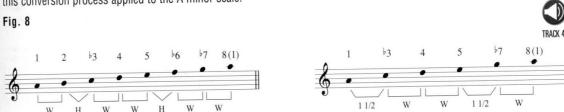
Blues music occasionally draws from diatonic harmony, most often in minor keys. A *minor blues* typically follows the 12-bar format, but utilizes minor scale changes (i–iv–v), rather than dominant seventh chords. Minor seventh voicings are often used, and it's not uncommon to include ^b VImaj7, as well as altered V7 chords (Fig. 7).

Fig. 7 TRACK 41 i7 iv7 i7 Cm7 Fm7 Cm7 i7 iv7 Cm7 Fm7 i7 V7alt VImaj7 Cm7 G+7 Abmaj7

MINOR PENTATONIC AND BLUES SCALE

Blues melodies and solos rely heavily on the *minor pentatonic scale*. The minor pentatonic scale is a five-note scale (the word pentatonic has Greek origins: *penta* meaning five, and *tonos* meaning tone) derived from the natural minor scale. (Note: The term *natural minor* scale simply refers to the minor scale, or relative minor scale of the major scale. It is used mainly when being compared to other minor-scale types, which will be discussed later.) Specifically, it is made up of the root, $^{\downarrow}$ 3rd, 4th, 5th, and $^{\downarrow}$ 7th scale degrees of the minor scale (minor pentatonic formula: $1 - ^{\downarrow}$ 3-4-5- $^{\downarrow}$ 7). This essentially omits the "awkward" half-step intervals, which are normally located between the 2nd and the $^{\downarrow}$ 3rd, and the 5th and $^{\downarrow}$ 6th scale tones. Fig. 8 depicts this conversion process applied to the A minor scale.



Removing the half-step intervals creates minor 3rd scale gaps between the root and $^{\downarrow}$ 3rd, and the 5th and $^{\downarrow}$ 7th. This actually transfers to finger-friendly, two-note-per-string patterns on the fretboard—small wonder it is so popular among guitarists of all styles, from rock to jazz. Fig. 9 shows six patterns of the A minor pentatonic scale. The sixth pattern is actually the same as the open-position pattern, just an octave up.

Fig. 9

