

**Playing the Native American Flute
Part 2 – The Next Step
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In the Spring 2010 issue of the *Cherokee Talking Leaves* I introduced you to the basic techniques of playing the Native American Flute (NAF) in Part 1 of this series. I hope you have been using that lesson to get started with your NAF. If you missed it, go check the *Talking Leaves* archive on the SeCCI website and look up pages 13 and 14 of the Spring 2010 issue, or send me a request at john@turtlemoundflutes.com and I'll e-mail you the article. In this installment I'll build on the concepts that I introduced in Part 1.

There are generally two styles of Native American Flute: those with 5 holes and those with 6. I alluded to the difference between these two styles in Part 1, but will talk a bit more about it here. The most common tuning of the NAF is the *de facto* "pentatonic minor tuning" popularized by Michael Graham Allen (aka Coyote Oldman) a couple decades ago and used on both 5- and 6-hole flutes. The 5-hole NAF is sometimes called a "mode 1" flute because it's native scale is called the "mode 1" scale (you can research various scales if music theory interests you). The 6-hole NAF also plays the "mode 1" scale by keeping hole 4, counting from the bottom, covered. In fact, you can turn a 6-hole flute into a "mode 1" 5-hole flute by covering this hole with a deerskin wrap (or a piece of tape). Figure 1 illustrates the fingering for the "mode 1" pentatonic minor scale.

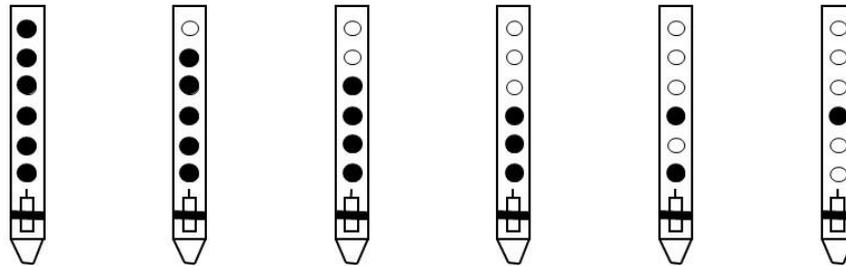


Figure 1 The 5- and 6-Hole NAF "Mode 1" Scale

If you need help in interpreting these symbols, check back to Part 1 where they are fully explained.

The advantage of the 6-hole flute is that it can also play the "mode 4" pentatonic scale. While the "mode 1" scale is played by keeping the 4th hole covered, the "mode 4" scale is played on the 6-hole NAF by keeping the 3rd hole covered, as illustrated in Figure 2.

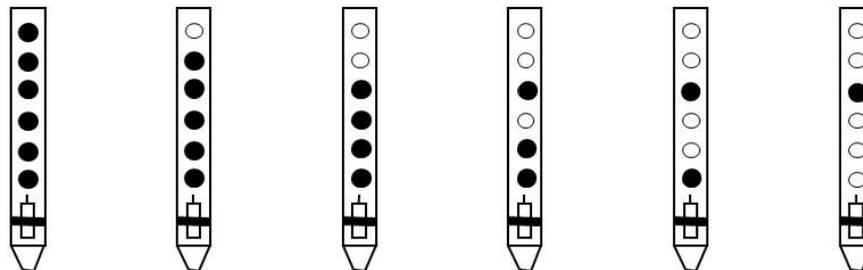


Figure 2 The 6-Hole NAF "Mode 4" Scale