The MAJOR and NATURAL MINOR scales are of course not the only scales we use in Western Music. The Harmonic Minor scale was created when composers wanted to create minor sounds but still retain the powerful resolution that comes from the Major V - I cadence (a natural minor scale has a minor V chord). It is identical to the NATURAL MINOR scale, but with a Major 7th. This large interval, between the b6 and the major 7, is what gives the harmonic minor scale and its modes their special sound. Its INTERVALLIC STRUCTURE looks like this:

ROOT - WHOLE STEP - HALF STEP - WHOLE STEP - WHOLE STEP - HALF STEP - ONE & A HALF STEPS - HALF STEP - OCTAVE

which produces a scale that, on paper, looks like this:

![Harmonic Minor Scale Diagram](image)

THE HARMONIC MINOR scale is different from other, major-based scales in that it has a large interval of ONE and a HALF STEPS between the sixth and seventh notes. This large interval creates a sound which is exotic to the ear that is accustomed to hearing the major scale and its derivative scales and chords. Thus, with the HARMONIC MINOR SCALE, we can create unusual melodies and harmonies which are unavailable to us using the MAJOR or NATURAL MINOR scales.

Here is a picture of the HARMONIC MINOR SCALE played up the neck on one string, illustrating the pattern of whole and half steps.

![Harmonic Minor Scale Neck Diagram](image)

Here is a simple, movable, fingering pattern which we can use to play the HARMONIC MINOR SCALE in one position. See how the HARMONIC MINOR SCALE is just like the NATURAL MINOR SCALE but with the 7th note from the MAJOR SCALE?:

![Harmonic Minor Scale Fingering Pattern](image)

Using these scale tones, we can create interesting sounding chords that offer great tension and release. The harmony we can create using the HARMONIC MINOR SCALE and its MODES can convey feelings which other scales cannot, because of its unusual structure.
The Harmonic Minor scale has modes just like the major scale; however, because of the unusual intervallic structure of the Harmonic Minor scale, the resulting modes have different functions than the Major modes, and can create some very exotic sounds. PHRYGIAN DOMINANT is commonly used over dominant harmony; many of these other modes have limited, though interesting, applications.

**HARMONIC MINOR**
- Formula: 1 2 b3 4 5 b6 major7 octave
- Quality: Minor with Major 7th

**LOCRIAN NATURAL 6**
- Formula: 1 B2 b3 4 b5 6 b7 octave
- Quality: diminished

**HARMONIC MAJOR**
- Formula: 1 2 3 4 #5 6 7 octave
- Quality: major/augmented

**DORIAN #4**
- Formula: 1 2 b3 #4 5 6 b7 octave
- Quality: minor

**PHRYGIAN DOMINANT**
- Formula: 1 b2 3 4 5 b6 b7 octave
- Quality: Altered Dominant

**LYDIAN b3**
- Formula: 1 #2 3 #4 5 6 7 octave
- Quality: Major, lydian

**SUPER LOCRIAN**
- Formula: 1 b2 b3 b4 b5 b6 bb7 octave
- Quality: diminished, altered

**Use:**
- PHRYGIAN DOMINANT: over a V chord, or any dominant situation
- LYDIAN b3: twisted major sound
- SUPER LOCRIAN: dark sound, to get altered or “out” sounds
DIATONIC HARMONIC MINOR CHORDS: SEVENTHS

Here are the 7th chords built from the 7 notes of the Harmonic Minor scale. The large interval between the b6 and the major 7 in the Harmonic Minor scale creates an unusual harmonic environment; many of these chords are very tense and strange-sounding. Because the Harmonic Minor scale is usually used as a “transitional” scale within a Natural Minor environment, we do not often see many of these chords in practical use. However, were we to build a harmonic environment strictly from the Harmonic Minor scale, here are the diatonic chords.

I min/maj 7 (F)
ii minor 7b5 (G)
III MAJOR 7 #5 (A)
iv minor 7 (Bb)
IV DOM 7 (C)
VI MAJOR 7 (D)
vii diminished 7 (E)
OCT min/maj 7 (F)
DIATONIC HARMONIC MINOR CHORDS : SEVENTHS II

Here is an alternate fingering pattern for the Diatonic Chords of the Harmonic Minor scale, beginning with the i chord as a ROOT5 fingering.

I min/maj 7 (C)
ii minor 7b5 (D)
III MAJOR 7 #5 (E)
iv minor 7 (F)

IV DOM 7 (G)
VI MAJOR 7 (A)
vii diminished 7 (B)

OCT min/maj 7 (C)