



## E-Books voor muziektheorie en praktijk



### **BLUES Masterclasses • Bootcamps • Solo's & Licks**

Samengesteld uit artikelen ontleend aan het "Guitarist" Magazine 2015-2021  
(Engelstalig)

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# Soloing Essentials

*In our race towards blues soloing perfection, it's easy to overlook some of the style's basic principles, not least the fact that understanding how to connect simple but powerful phrases over classic changes forms the foundation upon which everything else is built*

## Lick 1

We're keeping to the key of A for this series of licks – in this one, watch the bend at the 12th fret and aim for a smooth, even sound.

## Lick 2

The key here is to make sure that all the bends are controlled, especially the quarter-tone bend on beat 3.

## Lick 3

Another tricky bend to get right. Take your time and watch that first finger bend at the 8th fret. Keep it bluesy!

**Lick 1**  
A 13  
BU  
12 (13) 10 12 10  
11

**Lick 2**  
BU BU BD 1/4  
12 (13) 12 13 (15) (13) 10

**Lick 3**  
BU BD 1/4  
10 (12) (10) 8 10

## Lick 4

Probably the most fundamental sound of blues – the blue 3rd descending back to the root. Listen to the audio: your ears can tell you how far to push the bend.

## Lick 5

This BB King-inspired lick might look simple, but it can be a hard one to phrase correctly. Let the video be your guide.

**Lick 4**  
BU BD 1/4  
8 (10) (8) 5

**Lick 5**  
BU BD  
14 (15) (14) 12 14

## Lick 6

Here's a masterclass in bending control wrapped up in a single phrase. Once launched from the 13th fret, you need to take care to hit all the correct pitches.

## Lick 7

You'll have almost certainly heard this lick from players like Robert Cray in the past. Hear how it traces the pentatonic scale, ending with a bluesy quarter-tone bend.

Lick 6

Lick 7

Lick 8

Lick 9

Lick 10

Trills can add a lot of tension to a phrase. If this rapid hammer-on and pull-off combo technique is new to you, take it slow and gradually build up speed.

Another lick that could easily feature in a BB King, Albert King or Robert Cray solo and would make a great opening statement in any blues tune.

Straight from the pentatonic heartland, it's this kind of phrasing that will help breathe some fresh life into your playing.

Lick 8

Lick 9

Lick 10

Solo

Here's a chance to hear some of these licks - and quite a few more - played against a standard 12-bar blues format. The best advice here is to work through the solo in three- or four-bar chunks, taking care to observe the phrasing and general feel as you go.

**A13** **E9**

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

7

**D9** **A13**

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

10

**A13**

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

13

**D9**

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

16

**A13** **E9**

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

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# Turnaround Sounds

When you're looking to refresh your blues vocabulary, you can turn things around with these characteristic and enduring motifs

One of the staples of blues playing, both ancient and modern, is the turnaround – and it offers a great opportunity to add some real authenticity to what might otherwise be just another pentatonic solo. It's easy to be cynical and call some of these ideas clichés, when in fact a small twist on a classic formula can remind us why these motifs became

so popular and deserve instead to be called 'essential vocabulary'. We have five examples here, which are based around an eight-bar gospel-style 12/8 blues, many of them incorporating a hybrid picking approach, as so many old blues licks do. We've tried to put each idea in a musical context – the aural equivalent of a 'serving suggestion', if you like. **[RB]**

## Lick 1

Perhaps more usually heard descending in a lower register, this example reverses those conventions, keeping a traditional feel but treading slightly newer ground. It mixes in really well with the C blues scale, which, of course, we've kept in mind all along!

## Lick 2

Using these chromatic shifting triads, keeping the C on top is another classic move, often used in blues piano. It's worth taking the time to choose the most comfortable fingering for you, but at this tempo it shouldn't present too many problems.

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## Lick 3

This example takes a more fragmented approach, borrowing the moving 6ths motif from many a classic turnaround, mixing in some blues scale and a 'piano' lick to finish. Robin Trower certainly makes ideas like this sound fresh and dynamic.

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100

## Lick 4

These *Red House* style descending dominant 7th triads are a really traditional device, going all the way back to Robert Johnson and probably before. As with the other examples, we've changed the pickup selection around to put a different slant on this. A bit of a wobble with the bar makes things more contemporary, too.

1

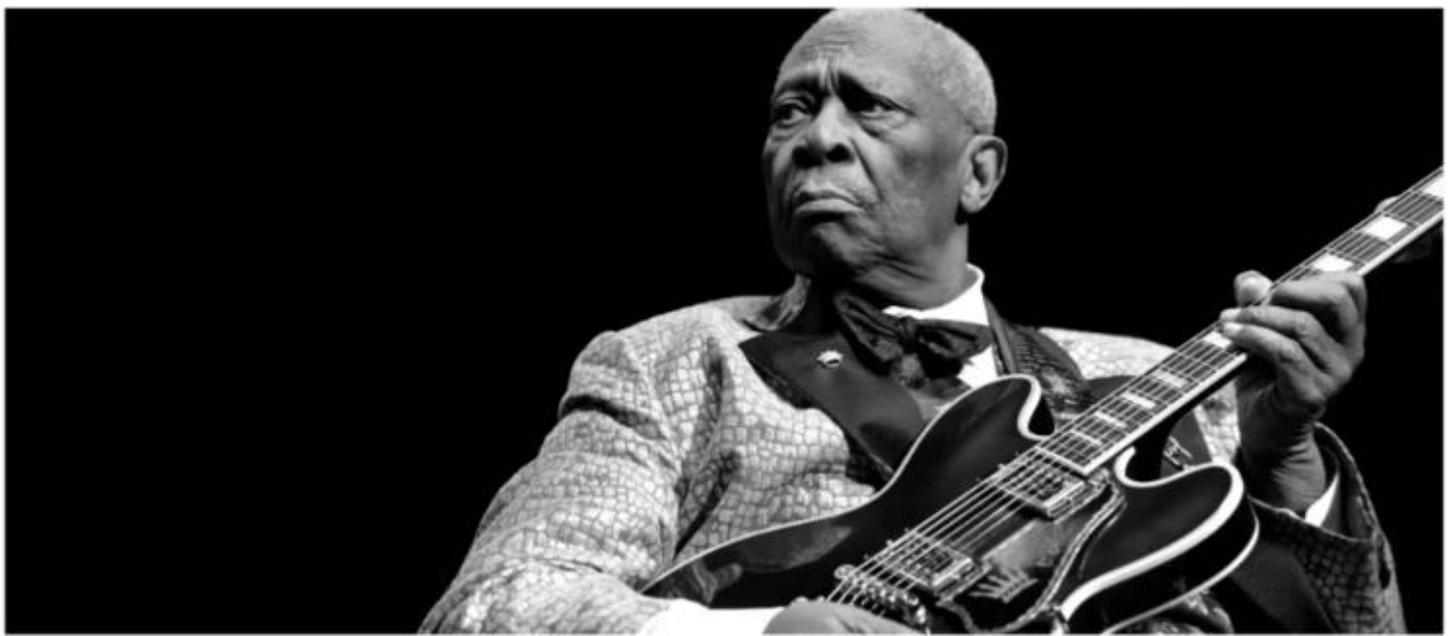
3

## Lick 5

Moving to the often misunderstood bridge pickup, this is probably the simplest of all the examples, but brings in a couple of 6ths as a nod to more traditional turnarounds. The tone is more aggressive, too, but the sound is slightly crunchy rather than dirty, so it still sits happily in this context.

1

3



# Licks Of The Legends

If you could choose your own personal trainers for learning the blues, then you couldn't do better than these gentlemen – look, listen and learn from the masters!

## T-Bone Walker

T-Bone was perhaps the first player to be a recognisably modern bluesman, relying on pattern-based licks that he played through – rather than in response to – the song's changes. Try this lick to introduce an old-school 1940s blues feel to your solos. Listen to the accompanying audio to navigate the notes in this Mixolydian lick (R 2 3 4 5 6 ,7). Note how it turns into the IV chord (D9) with the perfect note of D.

## Eric Clapton

It's hard to overstate Clapton's importance to the 60s blues explosion that detonated in Britain. Here, we've picked out a steady rollin' unplugged lick in Eric's style. In this example, we find ourselves combining A minor and A major pentatonic shapes. The semitone hammer-on and pull-off move highlights the ♭5th of the blues scale and is actually a move that Stevie Ray Vaughan also used.

## BB King

If T-Bone Walker was the father of modern electric blues guitar, BB King was arguably its greatest ever exponent. With one foot in the sweet radio melodies of the jazz era and the other in the raw folk-blues of the Mississippi Delta, BB blended sophistication and sincerity perfectly in his licks – which, for all their simplicity, pack truckloads of emotional punch. Our first lick here is very typical of his style, beginning with a bend up to the  $\flat 7$  –  $B\flat$  in this case, as we're in C. You could do a straight  $\flat 3$ rd bend (like Jimmy Page) starting at the 15th fret (G), but try it by bending up a tone from G# (16th fret), then on the let-down, land on G, a fret down. The bend up needs to be quite vague and you don't want to hear the let-down – hold the top note, shut it off, let down silently and then sound the G.

## BB King Example 2

Our second lick in the style of BB King is a gorgeous phrase and, apart from the first semitone bend (D to E $\flat$  on the first string), is pure minor pentatonic shape 1. But it's all about how it's played – hear how the notes spill out, each one picked to sound almost frantic. Add a typical fluttering BB vibrato and you're there.

## Muddy Waters

Without Muddy Waters, we probably wouldn't have Jimi's *Voodoo Child (Slight Return)*, which is steeped in Muddy's grinding, grooving style. Senior music editor Jason Sidwell reckons Muddy's "not so dissimilar to John Lee Hooker, because he's got a rhythmic, groove thing – whereas other players are more 'high note'-oriented". This percussive lick typifies that approach. Muddy would play the low notes of similar licks with either his bare thumb or a thumbpick, but you could try hybrid picking this example.

# Finesse & Flair

With the essentials of blues under your fingers, the next step is to bring some flourishes of virtuosity to your solos – not shredding the blues, but classy jazz-infused touches. We join four modern masters for a few of their top-drawer licks

## Matt Schofield

In this example, Matt stretches the 12-bar format to show some of the lines he might play over the V chord (E7) and then the progression through D and back to A. He's using E Mixolydian (E F# G# A B C# D). Notice how he smoothly shifts between positions. These positions are all based around the chord shapes outlined in the CAGED system.

The first system of notation shows a solo line over an E7 chord. The treble clef staff contains a melodic line with triplets and slurs. The bass clef staff shows the corresponding fretboard positions with fingerings. The second system shows a solo line over D7 and A chords, continuing the melodic line with similar techniques. The bass clef staff shows the fretboard positions for these chords.

## Matt Schofield Example 2

Here's a great line for the I chord (A) showing some of the characteristic features of the Mixolydian mode (A B C# D E F# G). The G major triad (GBD) at the start of bars 1 and 3 is part of the scale's signature sound. Matt ends the line on a D, showing how you could lead into the IV chord at bar 5 in the 12-bar sequence.

The first system of notation shows a solo line over an A13 chord. The treble clef staff contains a melodic line with slurs and ties. The bass clef staff shows the fretboard positions for the A13 chord and the Gmaj7 chord. The second system shows a solo line over a D chord, continuing the melodic line. The bass clef staff shows the fretboard positions for the D chord.



# Martin Taylor

*Adding a little jazz flavour to your blues licks can open up a wealth of new possibilities in your playing*

## Blues A La Mode

Difficulty ★★★★★ 30 mins per example

Tutor: Martin Taylor Gear used: Mike Vanden Martin Taylor Artistry Caprice



Jazz fingerstyle guitarist Martin Taylor joins us for a new series of lessons

**WELCOME TO** the first in a new series of technique columns for *Guitarist*. The theme of this series is to introduce a little bit of jazz into a standard blues chord progression with a few moves that will fit into many different playing contexts. You could easily apply this sort of thinking to acoustic playing, rock playing – realistically, anywhere that the blues is your foundation stone.

I've always thought that blues is a common denominator for guitar players, as we come across the familiar pentatonic scale positions pretty early on. Hands up everyone who discovered their first bluesy lines emanating from the Am shape based around the 5th fret? What's more, the language of the blues runs through so much music, from the more obvious rock 'n' roll right up to bebop and modern jazz stylings. A lot of players

are fearful of taking their first steps into the realms of jazz, but I've found that if I give them as much common ground to begin with, they find that it's really not too far to stretch. After all, music is music: all we're exploring is a slightly different dialect.

So, having said all that, where do we start? I've found before that it's best to begin with something that every guitar player will have played at one time or another – a 12-bar blues in A. Believe it or not, this basic progression doesn't change much when we first begin to add a little jazz flavour into the mix. You might have seen some scary-looking chord charts in the past and wondered how on earth these are in any way related to the blues, but somewhere buried in there, I can guarantee that the format hasn't changed. It's just that we've redecorated it a little!

### Example

**HERE'S** where it all begins – a standard blues in A. If you watch the video you'll see the chord shapes I'm using, but first of all I want you to get the sound of this progression well and truly embedded in your ear. Take a look at what I'm doing and try to play along: it's very important to get this under your fingers, because it's fundamental to what we'll be doing in future columns.

1 A D9 A

5 D9 A

9 E7 D7 A E7

# Example

**NOW**, I realise that this looks a little scary, but that's what happens when we write music down: it takes on a life of its own! As long as you study the video carefully – you can probably learn as much from watching what I'm doing as you can from studying the music and tab – and take things in slow, measured steps, everything will be fine. Good luck!

♩ = 108

Chords: A7, D<sup>♯</sup>7, D7, G7, A<sup>♭</sup>7, A7, Bm7, Cm7, C<sup>♯</sup>m7, Bm7, A7, D7, D<sup>♭</sup>7, D7, G<sup>♯</sup>7, A7, A<sup>♭</sup>7, G7, F<sup>♯</sup>7, Bm7, D, E7, E7/B, A7, F<sup>♯</sup>7, Bm7, E7

1

5

9

E B G D A E

E B G D A E

E B G D A E

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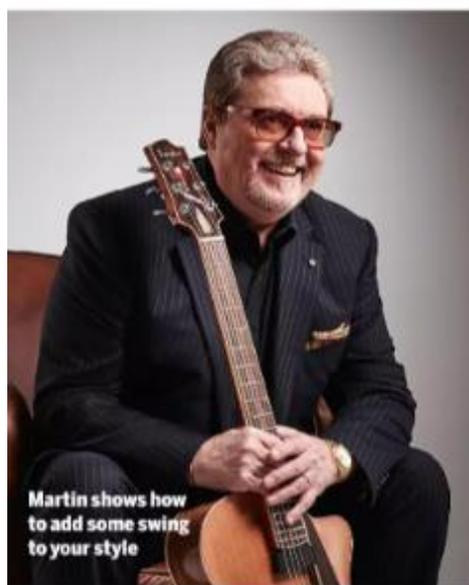
# Martin Taylor

*Adding a little jazz flavour to your blues licks can open up a wealth of new possibilities in your playing*

## Beginning To Swing

Difficulty ★★☆☆☆ 20 mins per example

Tutor: Martin Taylor | Gear used: Mike Vanden Custom Martin Taylor Caprice



**HELLO AND WELCOME** to the second instalment of this series. This time, I'm looking at ways you can transform a simple blues into something that sounds altogether more jazzy. A sort of 'back door' into jazz, if you like. In the last issue, we looked at how a few straightforward manoeuvres can make a I-IV-V blues chord arrangement take on some of the trappings of jazz. You might not have got this completely under your fingers yet, but keep at it, because it's an important factor in giving the blues a few jazzier overtones.

Meanwhile, we'll begin to look at the other side of the business and consider what has to happen melodically when you play over the top. For these examples, I'm going to take what I think must be the most common scale type on the guitar – the minor pentatonic. What's more, we're going to look at it in its

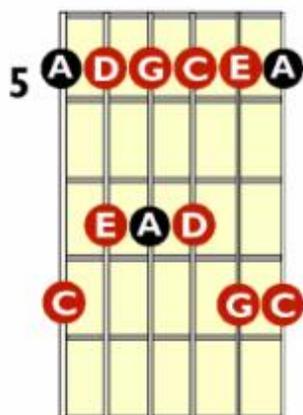
most familiar key, A minor. I'm sure this will be familiar to you and it's a good starting point for us to begin to explore the language of jazz.

The pentatonic scale – a five-note sequence – is a sort of cut-down version of a full seven-note scale, so the major pentatonic is an abbreviated major scale and the minor has undergone the same treatment. What happens when we take the pentatonic scale as a framework and begin to colour it in with a few extra notes? In this instance, I'm talking about the 6th and the 9th – both very sweet-sounding melodic notes that can add a distinctly jazzy flavour to your melodic playing. Just making these two easy steps is all it takes to begin the transformation, so study the diagrams, work your way through the transcription and I'll see you for more next month.

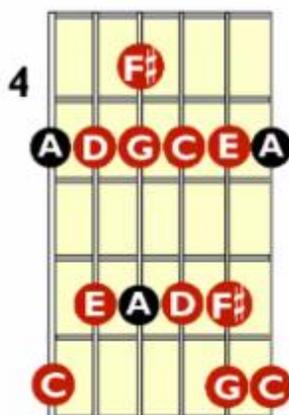
### Example 1

I'VE presented the notes as both fretboard diagrams and standard notation, so we're clear on what's happening. With the former, you can see how the 'new' notes fit into the familiar pentatonic scale shape, but I also want you to play through the notation examples so you can hear how they fit, too. Spend time with both – this orientation will serve you well in later lessons.

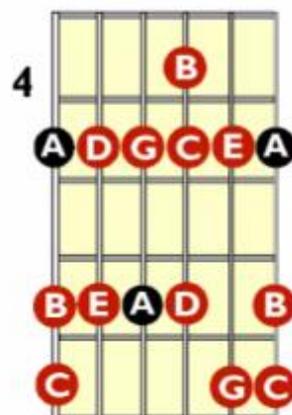
A minor pentatonic



...with added 6th (F#)



...with added 9th (B)



# Example 1 (cont.)

A minor pentatonic

1 5 8 5 7 5 7 5 8 5 8

With add 6th (F#)

4 5 8 5 7 4 5 7 5 7 5 8 5 8

With add 9th (B)

8 5 7 8 5 7 5 7 4 5 7 5 8 5 7 8

# Example 2

**HERE'S** a little solo I've put together using the two notes we've added into the pentatonic scale. It's simple to play and I'm sure it won't take you long before you hear how they add a jazz flavour along the way. But another important thing is the feel going on here; watch the video and listen to how I phrase the notes. Remember, it don't mean a thing if it ain't got that swing!

♩ = 120

A7 D7 G7 A7 Bm7 Cm7 C#m7 Bm7 A7

D7 G7 A7 A7 G7 F#7

1 5

Bm7 E7 A7 F#7 Bm7 E7

9

A7 D7 G7 A7 Bm7 Cm7 C#m7 Bm7 A7

13

D7 A7 A#7 G7 F#7

17

Bm7 E7 A7 F#7 Bm7 E7

21

# Martin Taylor

*Adding a little jazz flavour to your blues licks can open up a wealth of new possibilities in your playing*

## Three's Company

Difficulty ★★☆☆ | 10 mins per example

Tutor: Martin Taylor | Gear used: Mike Vanden Martin Taylor Artistry Caprice

Martin examines the pivotal role of the 3rd



**NOT ONLY** is this the third instalment of my column, the major 3rd is also the interval we're going to add into the framework of the minor pentatonic. I hope you're managing to keep track of the notes we've inserted into the scale. The trick is to keep a mental image of the minor pentatonic shape in your mind – it's your master document here – and look at the 'extras' we're putting in as mere visitors to an old, familiar framework. As you make use of them more and more, it won't matter what they're called, you'll call on them automatically, by thinking what colour or nuance you want to add to a melodic line. It's worth coming up with your own definition for each of the added intervals: if you think a 6th sounds 'majestic' or if it reminds you of the colour red, that's fine. How you internalise and process this information is up to your own preference. After all, it's your own voice we want to hear playing over the changes and not someone else's. The basis of style is your character and your uniqueness as an individual making itself known.

### Sweet 'n' Sour

Let's look at the role of the 3rd in music generally. To begin with, it's the principal determining factor that denotes whether a chord or scale is a major or minor and so it has an important job to perform. But what happens when the music being played uses a form of both major and minor 3rd? This is what happens in blues and it doesn't matter if it's music from the Mississippi Delta or New Orleans, the same rule applies. It's just that we use it slightly differently. In straight electric blues, it's common practice to bend the minor 3rd slightly sharp so that the pitch produced sits on the fence between major and minor. We don't do that quite as much in jazz blues. Here, we tend to take a lesson from piano players and play the minor, immediately hammering on the major 3rd afterwards. That's not to say that the 3rd is never bent in jazz guitar playing, it's just that it's not quite as common. One thing's for sure, though; the 3rd in blues adds that important 'sweet 'n' sour' element to your melodic lines and so integrating it is an important step.

The chances are you're already familiar with this particular interval and have been using it in solos for ages. In which case, it still might be worth checking the music examples to ensure you know all the places in which you can find it in this pentatonic shape and not just on the 3rd string. When you're sure, move on to studying this month's solo example. I've played two choruses of the 12-bar format and then left enough space for you to play along with the video and experiment by using what you've learned. Next month, we'll take another step towards true jazz blues, but until then, good luck!

# Example 1

**HERE'S** the major 3rd placed within the framework of the minor pentatonic shape for A minor at the 5th fret. Note how the position on the 6th and 1st strings makes for a difficult reach for the fingers, but don't concern yourself with this for now. All we want to do at this stage is fix the presence of the major 3rd in your head – we can fine-tune things later on!

# Example 2

**HERE** are two choruses of the 12-bar blues format. I've kept things as clear as possible, but it'd be a good idea to look through the tab and note where the 6th, 9th and 3rd make their presence known, just for reference. The most important thing is to hear the effect these added notes have on the music and to experiment with them yourself over the bars I've left free on the video.

13

A7 D7 G7 A $\flat$ 7 A7 Bm7 Cm7 C $\sharp$ m7 A7

E B G D A E

17

D7 G7 A $\flat$ 7 A7 A $\flat$ 7 G7 F $\sharp$ 7

E B G D A E

21

Bm7 E7 A7 F $\sharp$ 7 Bm7 E7

E B G D A E

# Martin Taylor

*Adding a little jazz flavour to your blues licks can open up a wealth of new possibilities in your playing*

## 7th Heaven

Difficulty ★★☆☆ 15 mins per example

Tutor: Martin Taylor Gear used: Martin Taylor Vanden Caprice archtop



Used carefully, the major 7th can produce some sweet-sounding results

**HELLO AND WELCOME** to the fourth instalment of my series on jazz blues. We've been looking at filling in some of the 'missing notes' from the minor pentatonic scale – the 6th, 9th and major 3rd – and seeing how they work against the backdrop of the well-known I IV V blues progression. I hope you've been experimenting with these added notes and finding out how they can embellish a straightforward blues and begin to make it sound altogether more jazzy.

This month, we're going to look at another note that we can add to the assembly, the major 7th. This note is a little bit different to the ones we've looked at so far in that it has to be handled sensitively, otherwise things can go very wrong indeed. In order to illustrate what I mean, try this simple experiment: in the key of A major, the major 7th is G#, right next door to our root note – and herein lies all manner of woes. If you play an open A string

and then play the G# over the top, you'll hear what I mean about it needing careful handling. Isolated like this, it sounds pretty bad! But strangely, when the major 7th is placed in a phrase correctly, it sounds really sweet. In fact, if you play any major 7th chord on the guitar (don't confuse them with dominant 7ths, they're as different from one another as chalk and cheese), you'll hear how sweet the interval can be. It really helps turn an ordinary major chord into something richer and more harmonically pleasing. We just have to remember to handle it with care.

In this month's solo example, you'll hear how I sometimes use the G# as a passing note – in other words, I use it to slide into another scale tone – but other times, it's present as a fully paid up member of the scale in its own right. As usual, the thing to do is to work through the examples and discover how you can use it in your own solos. Happy hunting!

### Example 1

**WE'LL START**, as usual, with the familiar territory of the A major scale. This should fall under your fingers now, although you might still have some work to do before you can picture the transformation between this and the embellished pentatonic scale. These things take time and so don't panic, you'll soon begin to be able to map both scales out without any trouble.

Musical notation for Example 1. The top staff shows the A major scale in treble clef, starting on the open A string (A4) and ending on the open A string (A5). The notes are A, B, C#, D, E, F#, G#, A. The bottom staff shows the fretboard with strings E, B, G, D, A, E from top to bottom. Fingering numbers are indicated below the notes: 7 for A (open), 4 for B (4th fret), 6 for C# (5th fret), 7 for D (7th fret), 5 for E (7th fret), 7 for F# (9th fret), 4 for G# (10th fret), and 5 for A (12th fret).

## Example 2

**HERE'S THE** minor pentatonic scale with the G# – A major's major 7th – in situ. If you play all of these notes over an open A string, you'll hear how most of them sound perfectly fine against the root. But when we get to the G# the game changes and we produce a dissonance. As such, this interval carries a health warning – learn to use it well otherwise your audience may turn against you!

Example 2 shows a single-string scale on the A string. The notes are A, C, D, E, G, G#, and A. The guitar fretboard below indicates the following fingerings: 7, 5, 7, 5, 8, 4, 5.

## Example 3

**I'VE PLAYED** two choruses of our 12-bar sequence, making sure that I use all the intervals we've looked at so far, but with special emphasis on the major 7th. Note how I sometimes use it to move into the root note, sliding into place on either the top E or D strings. On other occasions, I use it as a scale tone in its own right. Work on the solo in small sections and keep your ears open – you'll soon pick it up!

Example 3, first system. Tempo:  $\text{♩} = 120$ . Chords: A7, D7, G7, A $\flat$ 7, A7, Bm7, Cm7, C $\sharp$ m7, Bm7, A7. The notation includes a triplet of eighth notes and a 'major 7th' annotation pointing to a specific interval.

Example 3, second system. Chords: D7, G7, A $\flat$ 7, A7, A $\flat$ 7, G7, F $\sharp$ 7. The notation includes a triplet of eighth notes and annotations for '6th', '9th', and 'minor & major 3rds'.

Example 3, third system. Chords: Bm7, E7, A7, F $\sharp$ 7, Bm7, E7.

A7 D7 G7 A $\flat$ 7 A7 Bm7 Cm7 C $\sharp$ m7 Bm7 A7

E B G D A E  
 5 7 8 7 5 4 7 5 5 8 7 5 6 5 7 5 6 7 5 6 7 6 5

13

D7 G7 A $\flat$ 7 A7 A $\flat$ 7 G7 F $\sharp$ 7

E B G D A E  
 7 6 5 7 5 7 5 7 5 4 5 7 4 5 5 7 8 7 5 7

17

Bm7 E7 A7 F $\sharp$ 7 Bm E7

E B G D A E  
 5 9 5 5 5 7 5 5 7 5 6 5 7 5 8 9 8 9 8 9 5 5 7 5

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# Martin Taylor

*Adding a little jazz flavour to your blues licks can open up a wealth of new possibilities in your playing*

## The Inbetweeners

Difficulty ★★★★★ 30 mins per example

Tutor: Martin Taylor Gear used: Martin Taylor Vanden Caprice archtop



**WELCOME TO** the penultimate lesson of this six-part series where we've been transforming the minor pentatonic scale into something that will give you a distinctly jazzy edge when playing over blues changes. We've done this by taking the basic framework of the minor pentatonic – one of the most well-known shapes on anyone's fretboard – and literally filling in the blanks. We've added notes from the A major scale and I've demonstrated how these 'extra' notes can help create a jazzier feel. We've also seen how some notes work better than others. An E, A major's 5th, for example, is going to sit nicely over a root note of A for as long as you like, but try the same trick with the major 7th – in A major's case, G# – and you're headed for melodic doomsday! Practice and experience will sort the dependable notes from the ones that take more careful handling and in the end your ear will guide your fingers to all the right places on the fretboard.

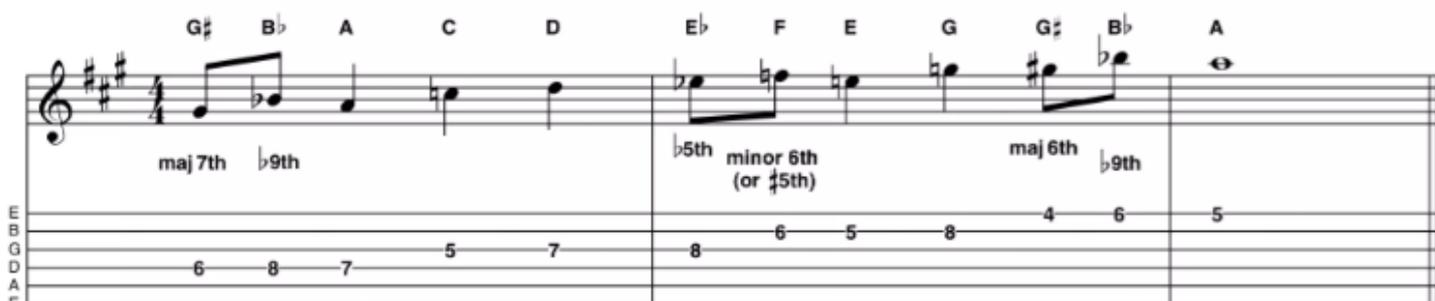
Now we're going to deal with the stragglers and, in doing so, we'll end this series with the

whole of the chromatic scale at our disposal. These notes have some pretty scary jazz names such as ♭2nd, #5th and ♭5th, but as I explain in the video, they can be categorised as 'travelling notes' in that we mainly use them to move into a scale tone. Another name for them is 'passing notes' – it's the same thing. If you think of all the notes in the chromatic scale as being like a paintbox, there are some colours that you'll use a lot of the time and others you'll use far more scarcely. So whereas with colour it's the eye that makes the choice, with musical colours it's all down to the ear. A lot of the time, it's down to personal taste as to how you use your musical colours and that forms the basis of your style. Some players like to keep things sweet and stay with the consonant, good-sounding notes, while others like to introduce darkness and tension into their playing, and these players will use the more dissonant intervals.

In any case, study the solo I've put together; next month I'll play a graduation piece – a fully blown jazz blues solo. Until then, good luck!

### Example 1

**THIS EXERCISE** isn't going to sound particularly good – and it's certainly not going to sound like jazz on its own! But everything you need is here and so the task is to familiarise yourself with all the 'in-between notes' that will be cropping up in the solo.



Chord changes: G# (maj 7th), Bb (b9th), A, C, D, Eb (b5th), F (minor 6th or #5th), E, G (maj 6th), G# (b9th), A.

Fretboard diagrams (E, B, G, D, A, E strings):

6	8	7	5	7	8	6	5	8	4	6	5
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# Example 2

**HERE'S THIS** month's solo. I've tried not to make it too dense, but at the same time, it has a fair portion of chromatic 'travelling notes'. If your ear has latched onto the scale notes we've added so far, these extra notes should be quite easy to spot. Take it slowly and keep those ears open!

$\text{♩} = 120$

A7 D7 G7 A $\flat$ 7 A7 Bm7 Cm7 C $\sharp$ m7 Bm7 A7

D7 G7 A $\flat$ 7 A7 A $\flat$ 7 G7 F $\sharp$ 7

Bm7 E7 A7 F $\sharp$ 7 Bm7 E7

A7 D7 G7 A $\flat$ 7 A7 Bm7 Cm C $\sharp$ m7 Bm7 A7

17

D7 G7 A<sup>b</sup>7 A7 A<sup>b</sup>7

E B G D A E

20

G7 F#7 Bm7 E7

E B G D A E

23

A7 F#7 Bm7 E7 A7

E B G D A E

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*Adding a little jazz flavour to your blues licks can open up a wealth of new possibilities in your playing*

## The Final Countdown

Difficulty ★★★★★ 30 mins per example

Tutor: Martin Taylor Gear used: Martin Taylor Vanden Caprice archtop



**THIS IS** the final column of our series of six. There's no more left to learn, no more intervals to insert into the pentatonic scale – we've covered them all. What's left for you to do now is to consolidate everything we've looked at so far. I realise that it's bewildering to try to take all of this information in at once, but if you find yourself floundering or suddenly out of your depth, go right back to where we started and revise the work we've covered thus far. The chances are that your fingers know the basic pentatonic shape really well and so they'll struggle and resist a bit when you direct them towards intervals such as the 6th and 9th and so on.

Furthermore, your ear is going to take a little bit of reconditioning, too. Whereas it might have been used to just those five notes that are covered by the pentatonic scale,

we've introduced some strangers in there.

The answer is, as always, practice. The more you work with this information, the more you will find your ear encouraging your fingers to incorporate it into your playing. Gradually, it will become second nature and all the hard work will have been worthwhile.

Of course, as we all know, there are more pentatonic positions to explore after you feel yourself on firmer ground with this one. My advice is to take a similar approach: move to another position and find where, say, the 6th is within it. All the while, make sure that you practise with a backing track so that your ear gets the best possible chance to hear the intervals in their proper context. That way, you're learning the language of jazz not only with your fingers and eyes, but with your ears as well. Good luck!

### Example 1

**FOR** this final example, we have all of the intervals we've looked at in play. I've improvised over all the choruses in the video example, but space constraints in the mag mean that we've only had room for the first two. The way to proceed is the same as before: take things slowly and work on a few bars at a time. Study the video and practise, practise, practise!

♩ = 120 

The musical notation for Example 1 is presented in a 4/4 time signature with a tempo of 120 beats per minute. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#). The notation includes a treble clef staff with a key signature change from two sharps to one sharp (F#) in the second measure. The guitar part is shown on a six-string staff with fret numbers indicated by numbers below the lines. Chord changes are indicated above the staff: A7, D7, G7, A7, Bm7, Cm7, C#m7, Bm7, and A7. The first measure contains a melodic line starting on the 7th fret of the E string, moving to the 5th fret of the D string, then the 7th fret of the G string, and finally the 5th fret of the A string. The second measure is a whole rest. The third measure features a triplet of eighth notes on the D string (6th, 7th, 5th frets) and a triplet of eighth notes on the G string (5th, 5th, 7th frets). The fourth measure contains a melodic line starting on the 7th fret of the E string, moving to the 4th fret of the D string, then the 4th fret of the G string, and finally the 4th fret of the A string.

5

D7 G7 A $\flat$ 7 A7 A $\flat$ 7 G7 F $\sharp$ 7

9

Bm7 E7 A7 F $\sharp$ 7

12

Bm7 E7 A7 D7 G7 A $\flat$ 7 A7 Bm7 Cm7

16

C $\sharp$ m7 Bm7 A7 D7 G7 A $\flat$ 7

19

A7                      A $\flat$ 7                      G7                      F $\sharp$ 7                      Bm7

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

20

E7                      A7                      F $\sharp$ 7                      Bm7                      E7

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E



# MR SIMPSON'S BLUES

Tutor Martin Simpson

Difficulty ★★★★★ | 40 mins

Gear used: Paul Reed Smith Martin Simpson signature acoustics



acknowledging that there's no division between folk and blues during his formative years means that Martin Simpson's guitar style is a rich blend of diverse elements. In this tutorial, he shares with us his amazing arrangement of *Duncan & Brady*, plus offers us a general insight

into playing in a blues style in drop tunings – a device used by many of the forefathers of the genre.

Look out for some unusual chord voicings and a chance to break free from the accustomed pentatonic man traps along the way. Watch the accompanying video for a masterclass on acoustic blues technique par excellence!

# EXAMPLE 1

'DUNCAN & BRADY' is a traditional tune that has been covered by many different artists, including Lead Belly, Dave Van Ronk, Bob Dylan and James Taylor – but Martin's guitar arrangement in Gsus4 tuning is definitely the most athletic! Fortunately, he plays the tune at a slower tempo on the video so that it's possible to see exactly what's going on. And if you needed any more encouragement, take a look at all the open strings involved in the tune. As ever, work through the transcription in small steps and when you've got it down, start at a slow tempo and gradually work it up to speed.

$\text{♩} = 255$  G

Open Gsus4 tuning

D7

1, 21

6, 26

G

11, 31

1 16, 36 17

C7 G

2 37

C7 G7 (no 3rd)

Let ring

## EXAMPLE 2

**THIS EXAMPLE** is used to illustrate Martin's use of a thumbpick, but we thought that it provides such a good overview of his style – most significantly his use of hammers and pulls in combination with open strings – we just had to include it here. It's a perfect example of blues-infused acoustic playing with some original flourishes.

Moderate  $\text{♩} = 120$

G

Open Gaus4 tuning

1

3

5

8



## EXAMPLE 3

**WE SWITCH TUNING** here to Csus4 add9 for a 25-bar blues (see if you can spot the extra bar on the video!) that represents a fresh take on a very well-known chord sequence. Martin uses a capo on the 2nd fret, which puts the tuning up a tone to D, but we've transcribed it in C to leave the choice of using a capo or not up to you. This is a great opportunity to study a blues in a drop tuning or merely cherry pick some great sounding licks!

$\text{♩} = 88$   $\text{♩} = \text{♩}^{\text{3}}$

Capo Fret 2

Altered tuning

1

4

7

10

13

Chords: C, F7, G7

Fingering: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4



Musical notation for measures 16-19. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The time signature is 3/4. The guitar part includes a triplet of eighth notes in measure 17 and a triplet of eighth notes in measure 18. The bass line consists of eighth notes and rests.

Chord: F7

Measure 16: Bass line: 3/4 0 5-3 0 1. Fingering: 3, 4, 0, 5-3, 0, 1.

Measure 17: Bass line: 0 0 0 0 3 3 0 3 0 3. Fingering: 0, 0, 0, 0, 3, 3, 0, 3, 0, 3.

Measure 18: Bass line: 3 3 0 0 0 3. Fingering: 3, 3, 0, 0, 0, 3.

Measure 19: Bass line: 3 3 0 0 0 3. Fingering: 3, 3, 0, 0, 0, 3.

Musical notation for measures 20-22. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The time signature is 3/4. The guitar part includes a triplet of eighth notes in measure 21 and a triplet of eighth notes in measure 22. The bass line consists of eighth notes and rests.

Chords: C, G7

Measure 20: Bass line: 0 0 0 0 3/4 0 2. Fingering: 0, 0, 0, 0, 3/4, 0, 2.

Measure 21: Bass line: 0 0 0 3 4 0 2. Fingering: 0, 0, 0, 3, 4, 0, 2.

Measure 22: Bass line: 4 0 5/4 5 0 1. Fingering: 4, 0, 5/4, 5, 0, 1.

Musical notation for measures 23-25. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The time signature is 3/4. The guitar part includes a triplet of eighth notes in measure 23 and a triplet of eighth notes in measure 24. The bass line consists of eighth notes and rests.

Chords: F7, C, F7, C, C7

Measure 23: Bass line: 0 2 3 1 3 0. Fingering: 0, 2, 3, 1, 3, 0.

Measure 24: Bass line: 0 2 1 0 1 0. Fingering: 0, 2, 1, 0, 1, 0.

Measure 25: Bass line: 0 2 3 4 2 5. Fingering: 0, 2, 3, 4, 2, 5.

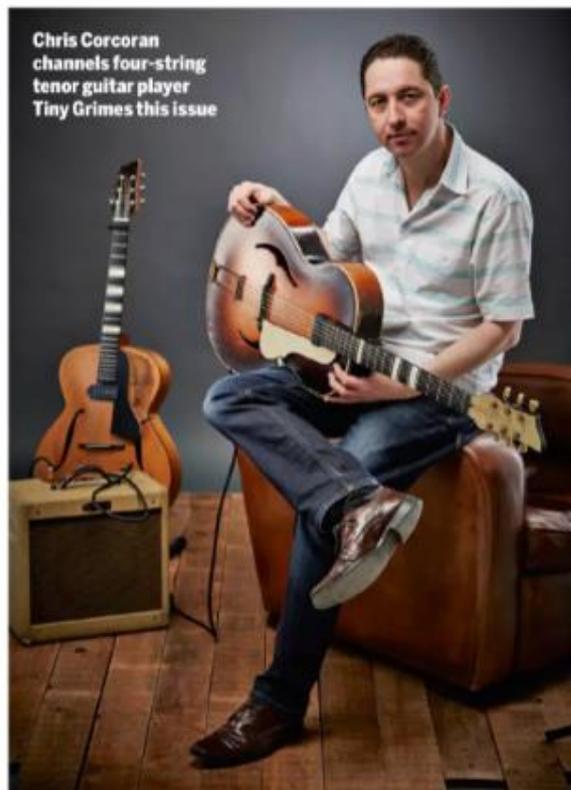
# Jump Blues Bootcamp

Continuing our journey back to the 1940s and 50s, we look at where jazz and blues collide to produce one of music's most exciting formulae!

## The Tenor Of Tiny Grimes

Difficulty ★★★★★ 10 mins per example

Tutor: Chris Corcoran | Gear used: Framus Broadway archtop (with flatwound strings) through a Honeyboy 5 amp



Chris Corcoran channels four-string tenor guitar player Tiny Grimes this issue

**LLOYD 'TINY' GRIMES** was an important figure in the jazz and R&B worlds. Born in Virginia in 1916, he began playing during the 1930s, adopting the four-stringed tenor guitar as his main instrument after an initial foray into the world of music playing drums and piano. His career in jazz saw him playing with Art Tatum, Billie Holiday, Charlie Parker and Coleman Hawkins, to name but a few. In fact, we recommend that you rummage through YouTube to find the rare footage of Tiny duetting with Art Tatum in order to give you more of an

insight into his style. Grimes remained musically active up to the time of his death in 1989 and is regarded as one of the true unsung heroes of the jazz age.

As Chris mentions here in the accompanying video, Tiny's choice of tenor guitar means that we regular six-stringers might need to keep a careful eye on the positions in which Tiny plays on the fingerboard, owing to the two bass strings – the E and A – not being available in the mix. Naturally, this won't affect the actual pitches so much, but the timbre could be different if you're aiming for 100 per cent accuracy.

### Chris Corcoran Band Blues Guitar Grooves



Hear Chris's guitar work on his latest album, *Blues Guitar Grooves*, which sees him performing evocative swing-blues instrumentals in fine style, backed by a horn section.

[www.chriscorcoranmusic.com](http://www.chriscorcoranmusic.com)

## Example 1

**WE'RE IN** the default jazz key of B $\flat$  for all of these examples. Despite Tiny's preference for four-string tenor guitars, we've transcribed it in a six-string-friendly fashion. A good exercise might be to work out the notes in the alternative 3rd position. Otherwise, this is a great example of a jump blues lead line and would make a good starting place for a fully fledged 12-bar solo.

$\text{♩} = 180$   $\text{♩} = \text{♩}^3$   $\text{B}\flat$

E B G D A E

8-10 8-8 10-8-8 8-11 8-10 8-8 10-8-10 8 9-10

## Example 2

**THIS IS** another workout in the key of B $\flat$  – which might not be particularly guitar-friendly, but is essential to feel comfortable with if you ever find yourself playing with a horn section! There are a number of techniques to watch out for: accurate bending, including a couple of pre-bends in bars 3 and 6, plus some string slides which all form a signature part of the jump blues style.

Example 2 is a 4-measure phrase in the key of B $\flat$  major, 4/4 time. The notation includes a treble clef and a key signature of two flats. The guitar part is shown in standard notation with fret numbers and techniques like pre-bends (PB) and bends (BD). The first measure starts with a pre-bend on the 6th string, 6th fret, followed by a bend to the 7th fret. The second measure continues with a pre-bend on the 6th string, 6th fret, followed by a bend to the 7th fret. The third measure features a pre-bend on the 6th string, 6th fret, followed by a bend to the 7th fret. The fourth measure concludes with a pre-bend on the 6th string, 6th fret, followed by a bend to the 7th fret.

## Example 3

**HERE'S A** look at the chords from a turnaround sequence in a jump blues. Essentially, it follows the cycle of 4ths in that it traces G – C – F – B $\flat$ , with that A $\flat$ 6/9 chord acting as a chromatic 'bridge' back into the home key. Don't be too alarmed at the jazz nature of the chords; take a look at the tab and you'll see we're dealing with some fairly straightforward shapes!

Example 3 is a 4-measure chord sequence in the key of B $\flat$  major, 4/4 time. The notation includes a treble clef and a key signature of two flats. The guitar part is shown in standard notation with fret numbers and chord diagrams. The sequence of chords is B $\flat$ 6, G7 $\flat$ 9, C $\flat$ m, F7, A $\flat$ 6/9, and B $\flat$ 6/9. The first measure contains B $\flat$ 6, the second G7 $\flat$ 9, the third C $\flat$ m, the fourth F7, and the fifth A $\flat$ 6/9, and the sixth B $\flat$ 6/9.

# Jump Blues Bootcamp

*Continuing our journey back through the decades to look at when jazz and blues collided to produce one of music's most exciting formulae!*

Chris shows how to take the best from a player's style and make it your own



## Barney Kessel's Bluesy Bop

Difficulty ★★☆☆☆

10 mins per example

Tutor: Chris Corcoran | Gear used: Framus Broadway archtop (with flatwound strings) through a Honeyboy 5 amp



**BARNEY KESSEL** (1923-2004) was known as a jazz guitarist, but, as the saying goes, you can't play jazz without knowing the blues! Barney was also a first call session player during the 1960s and a member of the LA studio scene's infamous Wrecking Crew, playing on countless hit singles of the day. He

was also an educator and exponent of the jazz guitar style nicknamed 'chord melody'.

Surely this level of sophistication is miles away from the raucous jump blues style we're looking at here? In fact, no. There is a close relationship between the stylings of jazz – especially in its big-band manifestation – and jump blues guitar playing, more so, in fact,

than some of the Delta-inspired, quasi-minor key stylings emanating from the Deep South.

Barney's playing was at once melodic and locked into the harmony of whatever he was called upon to play over. Here, Chris demonstrates how it's possible to cherry-pick from a player's style, taking fragments and enriching them with ideas of your own.



## Example 4

**MOVING** to the key of Ab now – remember that flat keys are common in jazz thanks to the horn section's relatively easy ride with them – Chris demonstrates a six-bar solo fragment, moulded on another of Barney's recorded ideas, beginning with an arpeggiated idea once again that flows from the I chord (Ab) into the IV (Db).

First system of musical notation (bars 1-3). The key signature is Ab major (three flats). The time signature is 4/4. The first staff is a treble clef. The second staff is a bass clef with a vertical label 'E B B G D A E' on the left. A chord symbol 'Ab' is placed above the first measure. The first measure contains a whole rest. The second measure contains a dotted quarter note G4, an eighth note A4, a quarter note Bb4, and a quarter note C5. The third measure contains an eighth note Bb4, an eighth note C5, a quarter note D5, and a quarter note Eb5. The fourth measure contains an eighth note Eb5, an eighth note F6, a quarter note G6, and a quarter note Ab6. The bass staff contains the following fret numbers: Bar 1: 1. Bar 2: 3, 4, 5, 6. Bar 3: 5, 4, 4, 6, 4, 7, 9, 8, 6, 7, 8.

Second system of musical notation (bars 4-6). The key signature is Ab major (three flats). The time signature is 4/4. The first staff is a treble clef. The second staff is a bass clef with a vertical label 'E B B G D A E' on the left. A chord symbol 'Db' is placed above the second measure. The first measure contains an eighth note G4, an eighth note Ab4, a quarter note Bb4, a quarter note C5, an eighth note Bb4, an eighth note C5, a quarter note D5, and a quarter note Eb5. The second measure contains a dotted quarter note Eb5, an eighth note F6, a quarter note G6, and a quarter note Ab6. The third measure contains a dotted quarter note Ab6, an eighth note Bb7, a quarter note C8, and a quarter note Db8. The fourth measure contains a dotted quarter note Db8, an eighth note Eb9, a quarter note F9, and a quarter note G9. The bass staff contains the following fret numbers: Bar 4: 7, 6, 5, 6, 5, 4, 6, 6. Bar 5: 4, 4, 6, 6, 4, 6, 4, 3. Bar 6: 4. The text 'Let ring - - -' is written above the bass staff in the third measure.

# Jump Blues Bootcamp

*This issue we're going back to a long gone era of bluesy jazz and showing you how to add its influence to your own playing*



Chris takes a classic jazz recording and extracts some bluesy ideas

## Arv Garrison's Sonny Side Up

Difficulty ★★☆☆☆ | 10 mins per example

Tutor: Chris Corcoran | Gear used: Framus Broadway archtop (with flatwound strings) through a Honeyboy 5 amp



**ARV GARRISON** was a jazz guitarist, born in Toledo, Ohio in 1922. A prodigious talent, he was already playing guitar at local dances aged 12, having begun his musical journey on the ukulele three years previously. Moving to New York in the early 1940s, he formed his own trio with his bass-playing wife

Vivien, releasing a single album, and in 1946 went on to record with jazz legends Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie and Miles Davis in LA.

But here, we're looking at Arv's work with pianist Sonny Thompson, in particular his guitar playing on the tune *Long Gone*, which was a hit in the R&B charts upon its release in 1948. A medium tempo riff-based blues, *Long*

*Gone Pts I & II* is typical of the bluesy jazz of the day, when be-bop was quickly beginning to dominate the scene. Arv provides a slinky solo and, as with last issue's column where we looked at Barney Kessel's licks, Chris details how you can take an idea and adapt it to your own music and playing style, especially if that style happens to be jump blues!



## Example 4

**ANOTHER CHARACTERISTIC OF JAZZ** blues playing from this era is the little rhythmic fill like the one here. It's both dissonant and bluesy at the same time and relies on a modicum of dexterity in handling double-stops. If you encounter any problems, just slow everything down, take your time and gradually work up to speed.

Musical notation for Example 4, showing a rhythmic fill in 4/4 time. The notation consists of a treble clef staff and a guitar staff. The treble staff shows a sequence of double-stops (two notes beamed together) in the key of G major, starting with a flat sign (Bb) and ending with a whole note G. The guitar staff shows the corresponding fretting: 6-5, 3-3, 6-5, 3-3, 6-5, 3-3, 6-5, 3-3, 6-5, 3-3, 6-5, 3-3, and 6-5.

## Example 5

**THIS IS A GREAT EXAMPLE** of how something really simple can be used over all the chords in a jazz blues and remain effective. Made up from little chromatic triplets, the initial idea is featured in bar one. Then, Chris shows how the sequence can be moved over the fretboard, turned into a lick which lands athletically back on the G13.

Musical notation for Example 5, showing a chromatic triplet lick in 4/4 time. The notation consists of a treble clef staff and a guitar staff. The treble staff shows a sequence of chromatic triplets (three notes beamed together) in the key of G major, starting with a flat sign (Bb) and ending with a whole note G. The guitar staff shows the corresponding fretting: 7-6-5-7-6-5, 7-6-5-5-4-3, 5-4-3-5-4-3, 7-6-5, 7-6-5, 3-4, 3-5, 3-4, 5-4-5, 5-4-5, 5-4-5, and 3-4-5-3. The final note is labeled G13.

# Jump Blues Bootcamp

*This issue we're taking a peek over the jazz players' fence to see how less can be a whole lot more when it comes down to chord work...*



Add the flavour of some jazzy three note chords to your blues repertoire

## Joining The Rhythm Section

Difficulty ★★☆☆

10-15 mins per example

Tutor: Chris Corcoran Gear used: Framus Broadway archtop (with flatwound strings) through a Honeyboy 5 amp



**THIS** issue we're looking at how it's possible to play an effective chord progression using three note chords. We can learn a lot here from jazz guitarists who will trim their chord voicings down in such a way that they don't interfere with the other instruments in the band. This is particularly effective if you're playing with a keyboard player or horn

section, for instance. The guitar is obviously a harmony instrument, but we have a comparatively limited musical range when compared to a piano, so playing economically is a good way of staying out of everyone's way, but still keeping up an effective role.

The key here is to utilise the 6th, 4th and 3rd strings – with the occasional exception – while muting the 5th string. This might take a

little practice, but it's a technique that is well worth exploring – you'll be surprised at how much ground we can cover using just three notes at a time. Don't be put off by the jazz nature of the chord types, it's more important to note their effect – and you will hear this type of chord work in a lot of jazz-influenced blues players like Robben Ford and Larry Carlton, both old hands at this kind of thing!

# Example 1

HERE ARE SOME CHORD VOICINGS that we might use in a turnaround sequence in the key of Bb presented in arpeggio form. The way these chords blend together is the thing to take note of here; there's a nice chromatic flow achieved with minimal finger movement. The theory isn't too important, basically a II V I sequence with the final F7 all set to resolve into Bb.

# Example 2

THIS IS an expanded version of Ex 1, with the chords put into more workmanlike surroundings, rhythmically speaking. Look at how the chords fall chromatically along the bass string once again. To achieve this, Chris is using a couple of passing chords (the Dbdim7 and B6) to fill in the gaps and make the whole sequence work. Take some time to work out the fingerings – they're a lot easier than they look!

# Example 3

THIS IS A SORT OF GRADUATION PIECE, if you like. We've swapped over to the key of G major in order to demonstrate the three note chord idea over a 12-bar blues sequence. If you study the tab, you'll see all the basic landmarks of a 12-bar in G – look out for all the references to G7, C7 and D7 throughout. Virtually all the other chords are there to make things hang together with chromatic passing chords aplenty. As before, don't obsess about the theory here, just listen to how everything blends together.

# Example 3 continued

Chord progression: C7, C<sup>♯</sup>dim7, G7/D, C<sup>♯</sup>m7, Cm7, Bm7, E7/D, B<sup>♭</sup>m7, Am9

Chord progression: D7/A, G/B, B<sup>♭</sup>dim7, Am7, D7/A, A<sup>♭</sup>6, G6

# Dan Patlansky Rhapsody In Blues...

*A private lesson in progressive,  
contemporary blues guitar*



**A**fter our chat about his new album, *Perfection Kills*, we switched on the video camera for a guided tour around Dan's amp, pedalboard and guitar. While we were there, we thought we'd ask for some insights into his approach to playing. He rewarded us with a treasure trove of licks and riffs, as well as his 'slap' technique – more often heard on the bass guitar, this is a thing that more guitar players are incorporating into their style. We also asked Dan to play a 12-bar blues with enough licks to keep your practice schedule full for weeks! **G**

## Example 1-1a

**IN** these examples, Dan demonstrates how you can take major and minor pentatonic shapes and begin to build chords around them in the way that Hendrix used to in his rhythm playing on songs like *Little Wing*.

### EX1 Major and minor pentatonic positions

**A** **G**

### EX2 Continued

### EX3 Slap technique primer

## Example 3

**IT'S** not often that we find ourselves borrowing ideas from bass players, but it's amazing how well slap technique transfers onto guitar. It's cropping up all over the place, most notably, perhaps, on the intro to Guthrie Govan's *Wonderful Slippery Thing*. Here Dan slows everything right down and shows us how the technique works up close.

### EX4 Drop-tuned slap guitar

## Example 4

**DROPPING** his bass E string down to D, Dan demonstrates how slap technique can be used in practice. It's not an easy thing to master and the best approach is to stick with the ground rules in Ex 3 for a while and make sure that the basic actions are fully coordinated before you attempt to speed them up.

# Example 5

FOR this final example, we put Dan on the spot and asked him to play an unaccompanied 12-bar blues solo – not the easiest thing to do under any circumstances! Alas, space restrictions meant that we could only notate the first 12 bars, but there’s enough here to give you an insight into the man’s style.

## EX5 12-bar blues... with a bit of love!

The musical score for Example 5 is a 12-bar blues solo in G major. It is written in standard notation with a guitar tablature below. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The 12 bars are divided into four systems of three bars each. Chords are indicated by letters (F, A7, D9, E9) and guitar-specific techniques like bends (BU), slides (SL), and vibrato (VIB) are marked. The tablature shows fret numbers and techniques like hammer-ons (H) and pull-offs (P).



## Bluesbreakers masterclass

# CLAPTON & GREEN

Jon Bishop explores the soloing style of two blues heroes during their John Mayall eras

**W**e're focusing on the soloing style of Bluesbreakers-era Eric Clapton and Peter Green. Aiming to identify some key soloing innovations from this furtive period with a view to incorporating these ideas into your own vocabulary. There are 10 licks to learn (five per guitarist). Each lick is followed by a four-bar instrumental break in the audio to give you a chance to take a breath, have a sneaky practice or change pickup, etc.

All the ideas are in the key of A, and the chord progression is an aptly-chosen 12-bar dominant blues, so there will be plenty of scope to try out a variety of new ideas. We

are using a simple major 12-bar blues so the progression will look like this: || A7 | 1/2, 1/2, 1/2, 1/2 | D7 | 1/2, 1/2 | A7 | 1/2, 1/2 | E7 | D7 | A7 | E7 || We can refer to each of the three chords as a Roman numeral. A7 is the I chord, D7 the IV and E7 is the V chord. This numbering allows us to label the ideas that fit each of the three chords and then transfer them to other situations such as playing in a different key. For each guitarist there are three licks that fit over A7; then one lick for D7; and one final lick to fit over the E7 turnaround section.

During their time in the Bluesbreakers, Clapton and Green were masters of mixing the major and the minor Pentatonic scales

to fit the underlying chords. It is possible to play a perfectly acceptable solo using A minor Pentatonic (A-C-D-E-G) exclusively. However, for some extra sophistication we can add notes from A major Pentatonic (A-B-C#-E-F#) over the A7 (I chord). A top trick to help make our A minor Pentatonic scale work over the A7 chord is to bend the C natural slightly sharp. With some care, A minor Pentatonic works nicely over the D7 (watch the G note) and E7 chords (watch the C note, especially).

Switching between the major and minor Pentatonic scales over chord I helps the lead phrases to describe the underlying chords and adds an extra level of sophistication. **E**

### LICK 1 Eric Clapton

Swing 8ths Bridge Pickup Tone Control 7 with Overdrive  
♩ = 170 A7

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

1

This first lick contains some simple-to-play ideas that are embellished by a few EC trademarks. In addition to the finger slides and string bends, the minor 3rd (C natural) is bent a quarter tone sharp. This kind of phrasing using shape 1 of the minor Pentatonic is a cornerstone of this era of EC's playing.

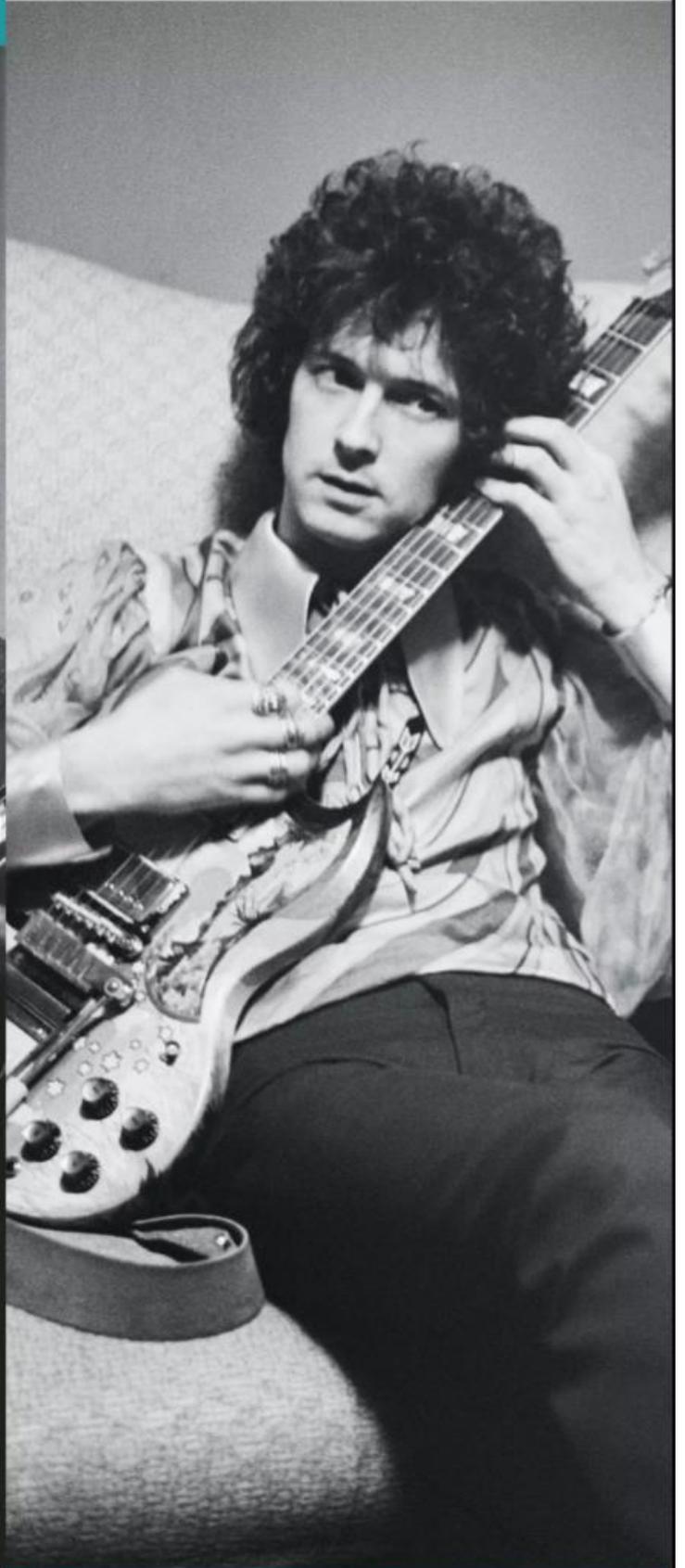
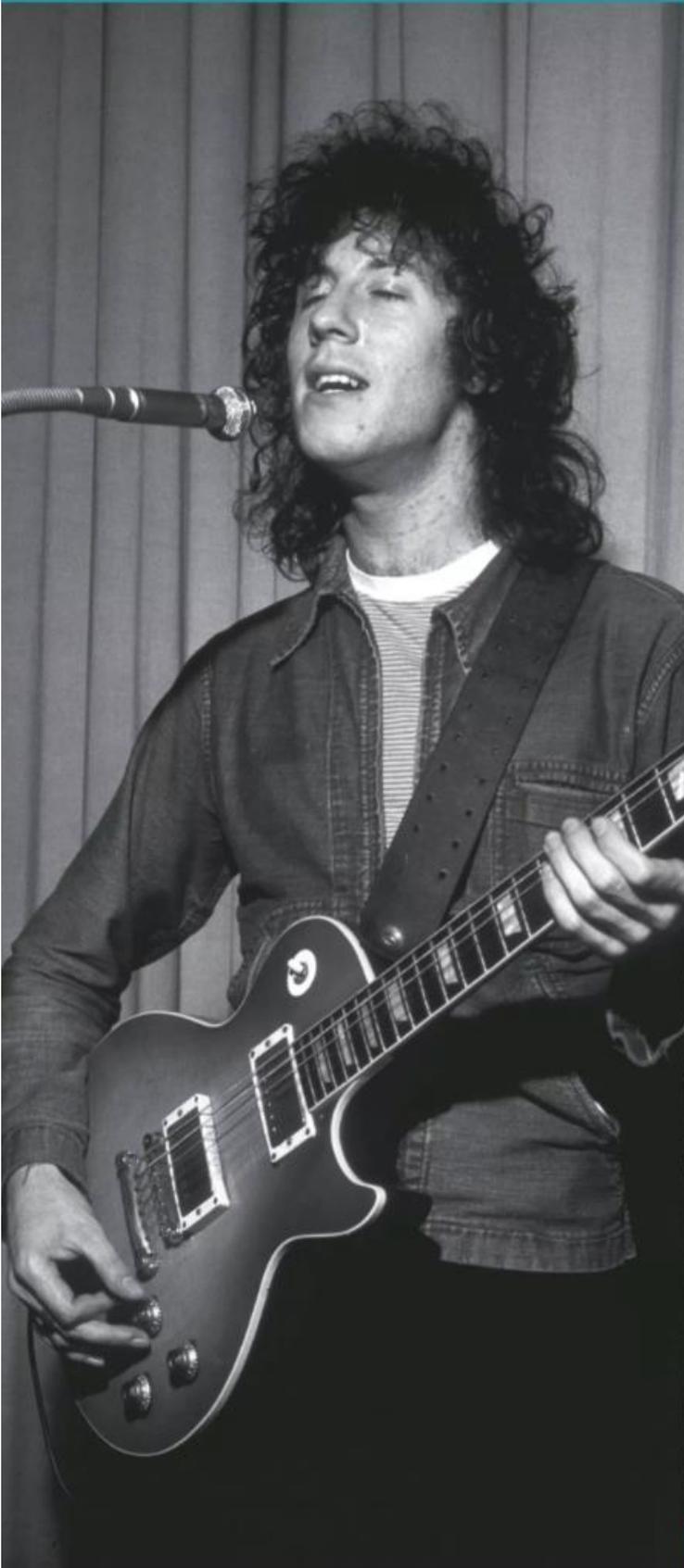
### LICK 2 Eric Clapton

A7

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

9

The second lick exploits some T-Bone walker-style bends on the third string. These bends are easy to play, but sound very effective. Clapton also often recycles the idea in the first bar over chord V. The idea in the third bar is pure rock 'n' roll and fits in nicely with the blues-rock aesthetic.



### LICK 3 Eric Clapton

Using doublestops (two notes at the same time) is a great way to fill out the sound and is another component influenced by rock'n' roll. The opening doublestop is classic Clapton and is an idea he still uses to this day. Adding finger vibrato to these notes really brings the idea to life.

### LICK 4 Eric Clapton

This lick demonstrates how effective it can be to shift between the minor and major Pentatonic scales. We start off playing A minor Pentatonic over the D7 chord and then change to A major Pentatonic when shifting to A7. This releases the tension and describes the tonality of the chords nicely.

### LICK 5 Eric Clapton

Big string bends are another EC trademark and this lick opens with a three-fret bend. It's well worth memorising a few phrases that navigate the turnaround section. This one combines hammer-ons and pull-offs, and lands neatly on the E note, which is, of course, the root of E7 and particularly strong.

### LICK 1 Peter Green

Swing 8ths Bridge & Middle Pickup Out of Phase with Overdrive

♩ = 170 A7

The 'out of phase' pickup sound was a key part of Peter Green's later, Fleetwood Mac sound but I've used it here to help separate the three guitarists tonally. This first example demonstrates how some simple minor Pentatonic ideas can be brought to life. Again string bending and pull offs are key elements.

## LICK 2 Peter Green

For this lick we switch to the A major Pentatonic. This makes the phrases sound sweet and the notes fit the chord perfectly. This type of phrase would have been inspired by players like BB King, as much of the British blues vocabulary would have originated from listening to records from America.

## LICK 3 Peter Green

This lick demonstrates how effective moving between the minor and major Pentatonic scales can be over the A7 chord (the major Pentatonic can also lead you to strong tones such as the 3rd (F#) and fifth (A) in the upcoming IV chord of D. Bend the opening double-stop up slightly as you pick it.

## LICK 4 Peter Green

This lick demonstrates how effective the root note can be. Over the D7 chord we bend from C to D and repeat this, thus hammering home the idea. We then resolve to A major Pentatonic, which fits the A7 chord perfectly.

## LICK 5 Peter Green

This lick is a cool way to navigate the turnaround – Peter was great at underlining the chords beneath the soloing – and features a big bend to open with. It's worth making sure your bending intonation is sound by playing this slowly to start with – and checking it against the same note (G) fretted.



# JOSH SMITH'S BLUES FUSION

A masterclass on progressive contemporary blues guitar

Words: David Mead Photography: Olly Curtis

Anyone who has witnessed one of Josh Smith's live performances comes away in awe of the man's ability to fuse jazz, blues and country into one neat package – with a technical ability

that has to be seen to be believed. Armed with a T-style guitar strung with a set of 13s, his playing is both fluid and seemingly effortless. Whatever your style of choice is, there's something to learn in the following pages... **G**

## Example 1

**THE FIRST TWO EXAMPLES** both came from the idea of taking melodic lines from the underlying accompaniment. Virtually all blues rhythm parts use the idea of momentarily moving a chord up a semitone on the fretboard for a bit of extra colour – so why not use that very same technique melodically?

Example 1 musical notation. The staff shows a melodic line in 4/4 time with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The first measure is marked with a chord of A7 and a dynamic of *f*. The second measure is marked with a chord of D7. The third measure is marked with a chord of A7 and a dynamic of *mf*. The melodic line consists of eighth and quarter notes, with a triplet of eighth notes in the first measure and a triplet of eighth notes in the third measure. The guitar fretboard is shown below the staff, with strings labeled E, B, G, D, A, E from top to bottom. The fretboard shows the following fret numbers: 5, 6, 6, 9, 8, 6, 5 for the first measure; and 6, 6, 6, 5, 8, 7 for the third measure. Annotations include "E $\flat$ 11 tritone arpeggio away from A7" and "→ (D7)".

## Example 2

**ANOTHER DEVICE** extracted from basic rhythm-guitar lore, here Josh makes use of referencing the diminished chord, moving up a semitone from the D7. As he explains in the video, at the time he discovered this he didn't know a diminished scale, but his teacher was able to show him a few ideas based around it that formed the basis for the sort of 'outside playing', employed by players like Robben Ford, later on.

Example 2 musical notation. The staff shows a melodic line in 4/4 time with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The first measure is marked with a chord of D7. The second measure is marked with a chord of D $\sharp$ dim7. The third measure is marked with a chord of A7. The melodic line consists of eighth and quarter notes, with a triplet of eighth notes in the second measure and a triplet of eighth notes in the third measure. The guitar fretboard is shown below the staff, with strings labeled E, B, G, D, A, E from top to bottom. The fretboard shows the following fret numbers: 5, 4, 7, 5, 4, 7, 5 for the first measure; 6, 4, 7, 5, 6, 4, 7, 4, 5, 7 for the second measure; and 5, 6, 7, 7, 6, 5, 4, 7 for the third measure.

## Example 3

**CONTINUING THE THEME** of looking over the rhythm guitarist's shoulder, here's another melodic idea that springs from a common device in many popular songs. In a basic I-IV-V arrangement – it doesn't necessarily have to be a blues – you often hear the IV chord going from major to minor (once you experiment with this change, you'll hear it everywhere). So why not use it in your solo?

1

## Example 4

**NOW WE TAKE A LOOK** at what the accompaniment can teach us about approaching the V chord. Here, Josh borrows another idea from the jazz world that entails placing a II minor (Bm7) chord before the V (E7) for a smooth-sounding chord change – and a great jazzy lick!

1

## Example 5

**WE REALLY OPENED PANDORA'S BOX** by asking Josh to demonstrate how he fuses these jazz ideas into his blues playing! Citing players like Robben Ford, he delivers a full 12-bar tour de force outlining how a basic blues can be transformed into a far richer landscape by employing chromatic ideas and substitutions. Perhaps not for the faint-hearted, but working though it slowly will add some lines to your blues arsenal.

1

5

## Example 5 Continued

Example 5 Continued continues with measures 7 through 12. The notation includes a treble clef staff with a key signature of two flats and a 4/4 time signature. The guitar part is shown in a six-string format with fret numbers and fingerings. Chord changes are indicated above the staff: B $\flat$ 7 (measures 7-9), F7 (measure 10), and E $\flat$ 7 $\flat$ 9 (measures 10-11). Measure 12 returns to B $\flat$ 7. The fretboard diagrams show various techniques such as triplets, bends, and slurs.

## Example 6

A FURTHER EXAMPLE of how jazz can live on your blues fretboard, this time losing none of the aggression that can sometimes typify the music. Josh says, "It's okay to mix it up..." before unleashing a mix of the dirty blues and edgy jazz which runs through his own guitar style.

Example 6 begins with measures 1 through 4. The notation includes a treble clef staff with a key signature of two flats and a 4/4 time signature. The guitar part is shown in a six-string format with fret numbers and fingerings. Chord changes are indicated above the staff: B $\flat$ 7 (measures 1-2), BU (measures 2-3), and E $\flat$ 9 (measure 4). The fretboard diagrams show various techniques such as bends, slurs, and triplets.

## Example 7

**ANOTHER SIDE TO JOSH'S PLAYING** is his distinct country influence, which made its way into his style by discovering the legendary Danny Gatton. It's necessary to employ hybrid picking – pick and fingers – to make some of these licks work, but it's a technique worth mastering if the end result is going to sound as fluent as this example.

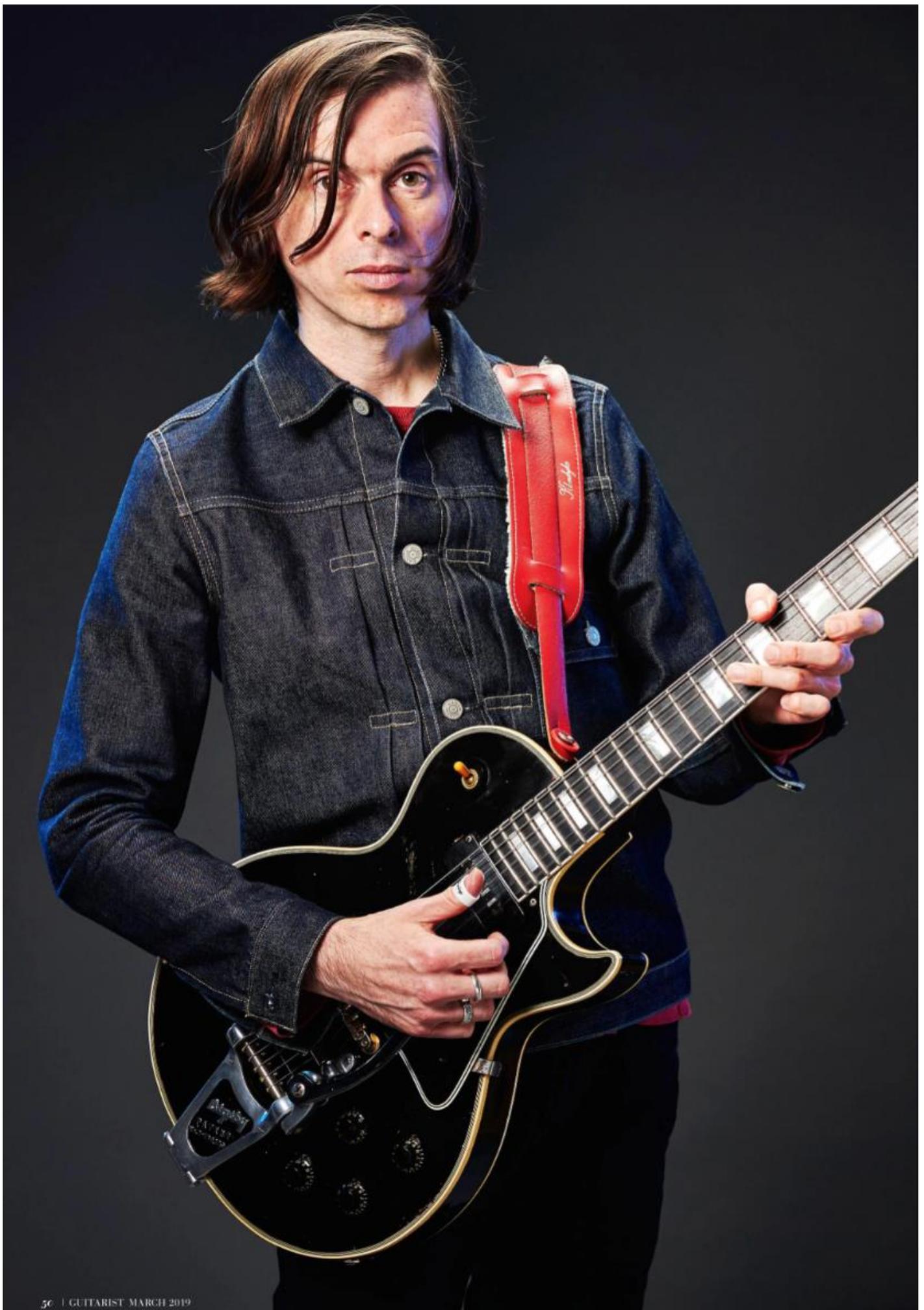
Example 7 consists of three systems of musical notation, each with a standard staff and a guitar tablature staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4.

- System 1:** The first system shows a sequence of eighth-note chords and single notes. The tablature includes fret numbers 0, 3, and X, with a measure containing a slash and the number 2.
- System 2:** The second system continues the sequence with more complex phrasing. The tablature includes fret numbers 0, 2, 3, 5, and X, with various slash and triplet markings.
- System 3:** The third system features a more intricate line with many slurs and accents. The tablature includes fret numbers 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 12, along with specific techniques like 'BU hold', 'RP', 'BD', and 'Let ring--'. The final measure of the system has a slash and the number 7.

## Example 8

**HAVING TAKEN HYBRID PICKING** and some country-guitar influence into his playing, Josh says that it's become a regular feature of his style and part of his own unique voice on the instrument. He demonstrates here how blues can sit shoulder to shoulder with country on the fretboard, adding up to a wild take on contemporary blues guitar!







## Example 2 continued

Example 2 continued shows a guitar solo in treble clef and a bass line in six-string guitar notation. The solo features eighth notes and quarter notes with accents. The bass line includes fret numbers and 'X' marks for muted strings.

## Example 3

**MOVING ON TO** players such as Lightnin' Hopkins and RL Burnside, Barrie demonstrates how the humble E major chord can provide a blues rhythm idea on its own. It's all down to being selective with the pick and honing your muting skills to perfect the driving pulse on display here.

Example 3 features a treble clef staff with a tempo marking of quarter note = 213 and a bass line with fret numbers and 'X' marks. The bass line is a driving eighth-note pulse.

## Example 4

**THIS EXAMPLE DEMONSTRATES** the influence of blues on the early funk players. Barrie cites Jimmy Nolen from James Brown's band, as well as Freddie Stone from Sly And The Family Stone, as players who pioneered this style of rhythm work.

Example 4 shows two systems of guitar rhythm. Each system has a treble clef staff with chords G and G9sus4, and a bass line with fret numbers and 'X' marks. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 134.



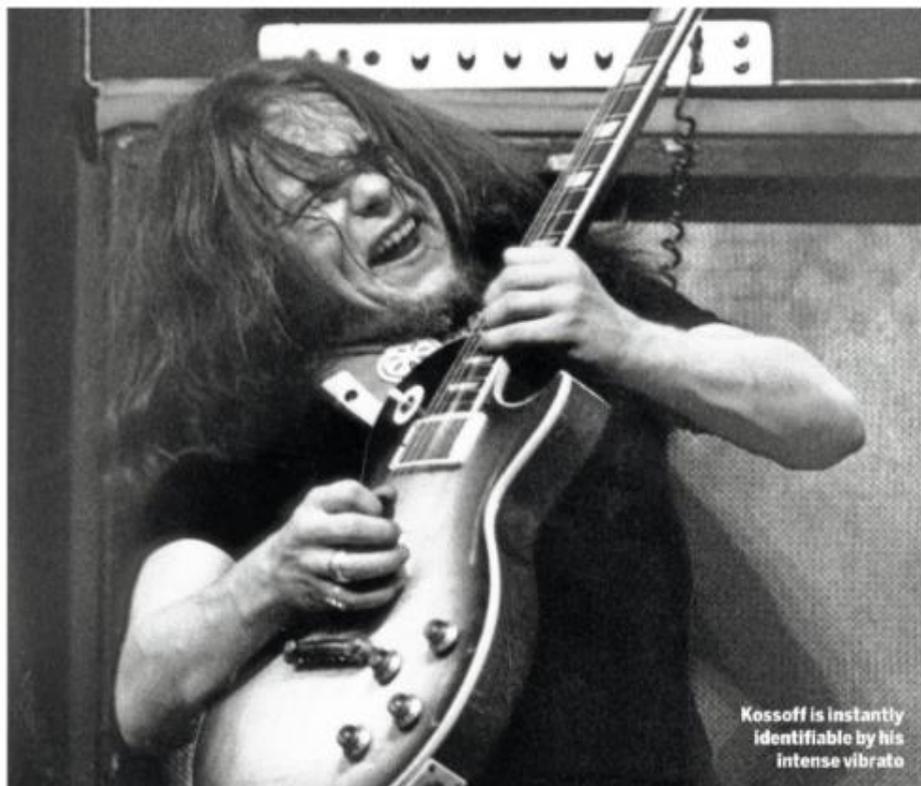
# Things You Can Learn From...

## Paul Kossoff

*This issue, Phil Hilborne goes Free-style in honour of the late bluesman*

Difficulty ★★★★★ At least 10-15 mins per section

Tutor Phil Hilborne | Gear used: Gibson Les Paul (right-hand channel); PRS Custom 24 (left-hand channel); Cornford Harlequin (left); Marshall JCM800/Two-Notes Torpedo load box, 4x12 Celestion Greenback Impulse Response (right, including solo)



Kossoff is instantly identifiable by his intense vibrato



**THE LATE BRITISH** guitarist Paul Kossoff had a style so distinctive that you could identify his playing after hearing just one note. This is mainly due to his use of an intense, fast and wide fretting-hand vibrato, which became something of a trademark. In his early days, he briefly studied classical guitar, but the lure of blues-rock soon came calling and he absorbed as much as he could from BB King, Freddie King, Albert King, Clapton and Hendrix – and he never looked back.

His first 'proper' band was Black Cat Bones, who were then followed by The Wildflowers. After these came the two bands he is best known for: Free and Back Street Crawler. Free achieved a great deal in their five-year career, which included six studio albums and a live album. Two highlights were their performance at the Isle Of Wight Festival and, of course, the hit song with the guitar riff to die for – *All Right Now*. There were also many other great songs such as *Fire And Water*, *The Stealer*, *Mr Big*, *I'm A Mover* and *Little Bit Of Love*.

There's a lot to be learned from Kossoff. Here is a breakdown of the examples and ideas contained in my demo piece.

### Example 1 Ringing Open-String Riffs

**THE TRACK BEGINS** with an open-string riff idea that works well as a device, particularly in a three-piece instrument format where they help fill things out. Aim to let the notes on beats 1, 3 and 4 of each

bar ring into each other. The notes on beat 2 should be played in a staccato manner as indicated (with a little palm muting if desired). The Free track *The Stealer* was the obvious influence here.

#### Ex 1 Ringing Open String Riffs

♩ = 85 N.C. Riff (Am7)

## Example 2-3 Example 2: Doubled Bass Chord Voicings

**ONE OF THE** things I love about Kossoff's playing is his rhythm work and, in particular, some of the chord voicings he used. In this example you can see how there are two unison bass A notes at the bottom of each chord shape. These are fairly unusual and help fill out

the sound. If you play the second one of these, combined with the two additional shapes that can be seen later in bar 11, you will have the classic *All Right Now* changes. I wouldn't be surprised if this style of voicing came about due to his early classical guitar influences.

## Example 3: Typical Chord Voicings

**IN THIS EXAMPLE** we see a few more typical chord voicings, such as the *Fire And Water*-style G5 – D(no5)/F# – D5/A. These particular shapes, again, are fairly unusual and work really well as substitutes for conventional G – D rock/blues changes. Try them! Open strings

also abound in these shapes. Notice the voicings that contain both open Gs and open As. These are extremely 'guitaristic' and can be reapplied in many other situations. I should also mention the A5 chord in bar 6 – it's without doubt a must-use rock chord.

**Ex 2 Doubled Bass Chord Voicings**      **Ex 3 Typical Chord Voicings**

**Ex 2 Chord Diagrams:**

- E5:** 0 0 2 2 0 0
- A7 (no 3):** 5 0 5 4 0 5
- Dadd11/A:** 3 0 4 0 5 5

**Ex 3 Chord Diagrams:**

- A5:** 2 5 2 0 0 0
- G5/D:** 12 0 10 0 0 0
- D:** 11 0 9 0 0 0
- D5:** 14 0 12 0 0 0

**Ex 2 Chord Diagrams (continued):**

- Asus4:** 7 7 0 0 0 0
- A5:** 9 9 0 0 0 0
- A7 (no 3):** 8 5 7 5 0 0
- Gmaj7sus2/A:** 7 0 7 0 0 0
- Dadd11/A:** 3 0 4 0 0 0
- A:** 2 2 2 0 0 5
- D/A:** 3 2 4 0 0 5
- Esus4:** 0 2 2 2 0 0
- E:** 0 0 0 0 0 0

## Example 4 Typical Soloing Ideas

**THIS SECTION CENTRES** on some sparse phrasing ideas that hopefully illustrate that it's the overall feel, width and speed of the vibrato, and the rhythmic phrasing (as opposed to the quantity of notes) that matters. The idea is to commit yourself to playing the notes and make them speak in an appropriate way. This isn't as easy as you might think. If you jam over the supplied backing track, using both major and minor pentatonic scale ideas would be the norm. In my solo, elements of both are used, as well as a touch of the A blues scale in bar 15. For an appropriate vibrato on the bent notes you

should always try and support whichever finger is bending, where possible. Make sure you listen closely to this aspect of Paul's playing.

One last point here is in regard to the 'sympathetic ringing' that occurs in bar 16. If you watch the video at this point, you can see how my hand moves and yet both the E and D notes can still be heard. This is due to the ringing on an open string and the D note that was on the B string now being picked up as a sympathetic vibration/harmonic on the open D string! This is a cool idiosyncrasy. Play it with the D string unmuted and then muted, to see what I mean.

Ex 4 Soloing/Vibrato Ideas

**Ex 4 Chord Diagrams:**

- A:** 0 2
- D:** 0 3 5

**Ex 4 Chord Diagrams (continued):**

- Triplet:** 8 7 5 7

## Example 4 (Continued)

17

## Example 5 'Three Against Four Phrasing' / Solo Ending

**THIS FINAL FIVE-BAR** section kicks off in bar 22 with some 'three against four' phrasing of a repeating three-note major pentatonic scale lick. The obvious influence for this comes from Paul's solo in *All Right Now*. All that is happening here is that a repeating three-note lick is played in groups of four, and, by doing so, the notes become displaced on each repetition. This makes the idea sound far more interesting than had the same three notes been repeated in straight

triplets, for instance. Aim to keep the underlying 16th-note grouping in mind and also try not to rush and all should be fine. In this case, you will need to repeat the three-note lick eight times before entering the closing series of string bends (bar 23, beat 3 until the end). After playing this lick as written, it would also be a good idea to try it beginning on all the remaining down- and off-beats. This varying placement will feel different and is well worth becoming familiar with.

Ex 5 "3 Against 4" Rhythmic Phrasing

21

24





## Example 2 Jeff Healey-Style Turnaround

**THIS EXAMPLE COMES FROM A TIME** when Philip was playing with the late, great Jeff Healey. Jeff was playing rhythm and delivered this turnaround underneath Philip's solo. Beginning on the V chord, Jeff employed 6ths to work his way down to the I chord, before using a similar musical device to the previous Hendrix example to return to the V chord. Approach these ideas in a low gear to begin with until everything falls naturally under the fingers.

V Chord D9 I Chord G5 D

Resonator tuned down one tone on all strings

(E9) (A5)

## Example 3 SRV-Style Turnaround

**TWO OF PHILIP'S FAVOURITE PLAYERS** are brothers Stevie Ray and Jimmie Lee Vaughan, and he plays Jimmie Lee's song *Don't Cha Know* in his live set. He also recalls SRV's song *Honey Bee* from the 1984 album *Couldn't Stand The Weather* and melds the two together to deliver this turnaround idea. As with the Hendrix example, the licks in the first two bars sit firmly in the prevailing harmony, ending on an variation of the staple lick in the last two bars.

A7 G7

(B7) (A7)

Resonator tuned down one tone on all strings

BU BD BU BD

## Example 4 I-VI-II-V Turnaround

**VEERING AWAY FROM THE I-IV-V NORM** for a blues, Philip references Freddie King's *Ain't Nobody's Business* as an example of a jazzier I-VI-II-V turnaround. Don't be put off by the chord names here: take a listen to the video and you're sure to have heard this sort of thing before. As usual, patience will prevail if you find it difficult to assimilate at first.

Resonator tuned down one tone on all strings

18

20

## Example 5 Embellished I-VI-II-V Turnaround

**THIS EXAMPLE GOES WAY BEYOND** the standard blues turnaround, but demonstrates what you can do if you go beyond Example 4. Once again, don't sweat the chord shapes, they're easier than they look. Philip has given us a couple of licks to accompany this turnaround – take them slowly at first and gradually build up speed.

Resonator tuned down one tone on all strings

22

24

26

# BLUES

SHADES  
OF

*Try out Tora's interpretation of the archetypal genre with these dynamic licks*

Words Adrian Clark

"BLUES IS BLUES," says Tora Dähle Aagård in our interview, and while that opens one of the biggest cans of worms in music history, she's got a point. We can all learn something from the many strands of blues, whether it's the rawest Delta slide playing or the hippest New York fusion. Every generation adds a novel slant to what has gone before, so let's learn some new takes on classic licks from this expressive Norwegian guitar-slinger...



## Example 1 Playing Through Changes

**THERE'S SOMETHING VERY SATISFYING** about finding a symmetrical pattern that works across chord changes. Tora's use of approach notes here is interesting: she uses the minor 3rd (G over E major) on two different strings, first to target the major 3rd (G#) and then to target the 9th (F#). The pattern then repeats for the D major chord.

Musical notation for Example 1, showing a melodic line and guitar fretboard for chords E, D, and A. The tempo is marked as ♩ = 72. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#). The melodic line consists of eighth and quarter notes with slurs and accents. The guitar fretboard shows fingerings for the E, D, and A chords, with specific notes and fret numbers indicated.

## Example 2 Fingerstyle Flair

**THIS IS A SIMPLE CLASSIC LINE** built around A minor pentatonic (A C D E G) including the ,5th 'blue note' (E-) and adding the major 3rd (C#) to resolve to the usual Mixolydian tonality of blues. Most importantly, though, Tora's bare-fingers approach gives her lots of funky dynamic control. It's all about those muted ghost notes!

Musical notation for Example 2, showing a melodic line and guitar fretboard for N.C. (No Chords). The tempo is marked as ♩ = 112. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#). The melodic line features a mix of eighth and quarter notes, including a 'blue note' (E-) and a major 3rd (C#). The guitar fretboard shows fingerings for the N.C. line, with specific notes and fret numbers indicated, and includes 'PM' (palm mute) markings.

## Example 3 Slip Slidin' Away

**THIS IS A GRACEFUL BENDING LICK**, using slides to smoothly link multiple bends. You really need to be confident of your intonation here, so work slowly at first, listening carefully to each bend in isolation and checking the pitch against the 'normal' fretted version of the note.

Musical notation for Example 3, showing a melodic line and guitar fretboard for a bending lick. The tempo is marked as 'Free tempo'. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#). The melodic line features a series of bends and slides, with a triplet of eighth notes. The guitar fretboard shows fingerings for the bending lick, with specific notes and fret numbers indicated, and includes 'BU' (bend) markings.

## Example 4 Triads Rule...

**ALTHOUGH TORA** would probably play this lick in a bluesy context, it'll work in lots of styles. We're basically outlining an A major triad (A C# E), with a couple of extra notes added from the Mixolydian scale (A B C# D E F# G). The C note near the end adds a touch of bluesy major/minor tension.

Free tempo N.C. Asus2

E B G D A E

9 (10) 10 9 10 9 7 6 7 6 4 2 4 5 4 2

## Example 5 Rockin' In Rhythm

**DON'T BE PUT OFF** by the apparent complexity of the tab! Most of those muted notes (the X note-heads) are infinitely variable. Listen for the strongest sound in each bar: it's usually beat 1 and then the fourth 16th note of beats 1, 2 and 3. Bar 2 is the perfect illustration of this.

$\text{♩} = 98$  B F#m7 E5

E B G D A E

7 7 X 7 X 7 2 X 2 2 X X X 9 X X 9 X X 9 X 9

9 9 X 9 X 9 2 X 2 2 X X X 9 X X 9 X X 9 X 9

7 X X X 2 2 2 2 X X X 0 0

D#7 B F#m7

E B G D A E

5 6 X 14 7 5 X X X 7 X 7 X 2 2 X 2 X 2 X X X

6 6 9 X X 9 X X 9 X X 2 2 X 2 X 2 X X X

X 7 9 9 9 2 X 2 X X

E5 Em7 F#7 B

E B G D A E

9 9 X 8 7 9 7 9 7

0 X 0 0 0 9 8 9 7

# Example 6 Texas Hold 'Em

**THERE'S A STRONG TEXAN BLUES VIBE HERE!** The key to this line is varying the dynamics and also the palm muting. Every other bar, there's a 'push', which you need to hit harder, and briefly release the palm muting. Listen to how Tora plays it and then try to copy her phrasing. The second part is a little E major pentatonic (E F# G# B C#) phrase.

$\text{♩} = 212$   $\text{♩} = \overset{\sim}{\text{♩}} \overset{\sim}{\text{♩}}$  **E**

**E** **A** **E** **B**

**E** **B7** **E**

**E** **B7** **E**

**E** **B7** **E**

1 15 X 0 0 3 4 2 2 4 4 2 2 3 4 2 2 4 2 0 0 3 4 2 2 4 4

5 2 2 3 4 2 2 4 0 0 3 4 2 2 4 4 2 2 3 4 2 2 4 2 2 3 4 2 2 4 4 2 2 3 4 2 2 4 2

10 2 4 4 5 5 4 4 2 2 0 0 4 4 2 0 0 3 4 0 0 1 1 2 2 2 X 9 2 2 2 X 0

14 9 11 9 9 9 11 9 9 9 11 12 11 9 11 9 9 9 11 9 9 11 9 11 9 11 9 7 7



# Example

**THERE ARE A COUPLE OF RAKED TRIADS** and an arpeggio here, based around the underlying pentatonic framework. Bar 2 is an exception, spelling out an A minor chord, then a bit of A Dorian – or could it be that I've simply returned briefly to the E minor pentatonic? In any case, this shifts swiftly to a raked B minor arpeggio to finish. Keep this from ringing together by releasing the fret-hand pressure (but not lifting the fingers!) just after playing each note.

♩ = 105

1

2

3

4

# Example

**THE SLIDE DOWN THE LOW E STRING** is a statement in itself, but starting low, with some selective palm muting, this example also asserts itself early on by taking up a lot of sonic space in the bass register. It subsequently moves up through a sequence of sliding intervals, which are taken directly from the five minor pentatonic shapes. This allows you to 'walk' up the fretboard to a position that allows the final flurry up to the held string bend.

♩ = 76

1

2

3

## Example

**PLAYED IN GROUPS OF SIX**, this example moves quickly through two octaves across the strings, superimposing both F and G major arpeggios/triads over the G chord on the backing track, mixing this with a short scale run (G Mixolydian) to finish. Starting on C over a G chord like this is counterintuitive. Moving swiftly to the rest of an F arpeggio then G in this way allows you to superimpose this as a 'passing chord' type movement.

## Example

**WE'RE USING GROUPS OF SIX AGAIN**, but this time descending through the D blues scale across the beat, set up with a held bend at the beginning. There are lots of alternative ideas hidden away in this phrase, which you may only wish to use a part of, rather than continue all the way across the strings, but that's an artistic choice I'll leave to you! You could try reversing this whole idea, too...

## Example

**THIS FINAL EXAMPLE** builds more of a musical context in, with some repeated high-register bends setting us up for the G Mixolydian run starting in bar 2. Note that while this is Mixolydian, you can also view it as a G minor pentatonic with every B, raised to B... Taking an angular intervallic approach to ascending back for a final held note, we're dabbling with superimposed harmony again: root/5th root on F, G and C. A final touch is to use C# rather than C before that final bend. C probably could have worked just as well, but I wanted to acknowledge the 'major' feel and be unpredictable!

# Example

**THIS FIRST PHRASE** establishes a few of the ideas used (some repeatedly) to take these four notes and turn them into music. It's all about the inflections, via rhythmic phrasing and the manipulation of pitch with string bends. This solo was actually more difficult to get on paper accurately than more traditionally 'difficult' phrases, which I guess means we're dealing with musical content rather than scales – which is a good thing!

Swung ♩ = 60  
B5

E B G D A E

# Example

**ALTHOUGH THERE'S NOTHING WRONG** with simplicity or repetition, this phrase avoids too much of either by employing loud and soft dynamics, long held and short staccato notes, whole-tone and quarter-tone bends – which themselves vary. A quarter-tone bend rarely means exactly that; it would probably be more accurate to say "slightly sharp"; but that's not a very practical system when writing music down. Other bends fluctuate between being as accurate as possible, sharp or flat.

B5

E B G D A E

# Example

**IF EVER THERE WERE A DEMONSTRATION** of the quarter-tone bend in context, this is it! As with the previous examples, I've gone with string bends on both the 7th and 9th fret of the G string. This seems more expressive than simply hitting D and E in sequence, though in the spirit of keeping things simple this does happen briefly at the end of the second bar, before heading into a sextuplet phrase similar to that in the last example.

**B5**

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

1

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

3

# Example

**THIS EXAMPLE BRINGS SOME VARIATION** to the sextuplet phrase, which I've leaned on fairly heavily in this solo to give a sense of dynamics, along with playing louder and softer. There are many more variants hidden away in this idea, of course. And don't forget the all-important space between phrases. This isn't something I've featured too heavily here but it's still an essential ingredient of a well-rounded and confident solo.

**B5**

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

1

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

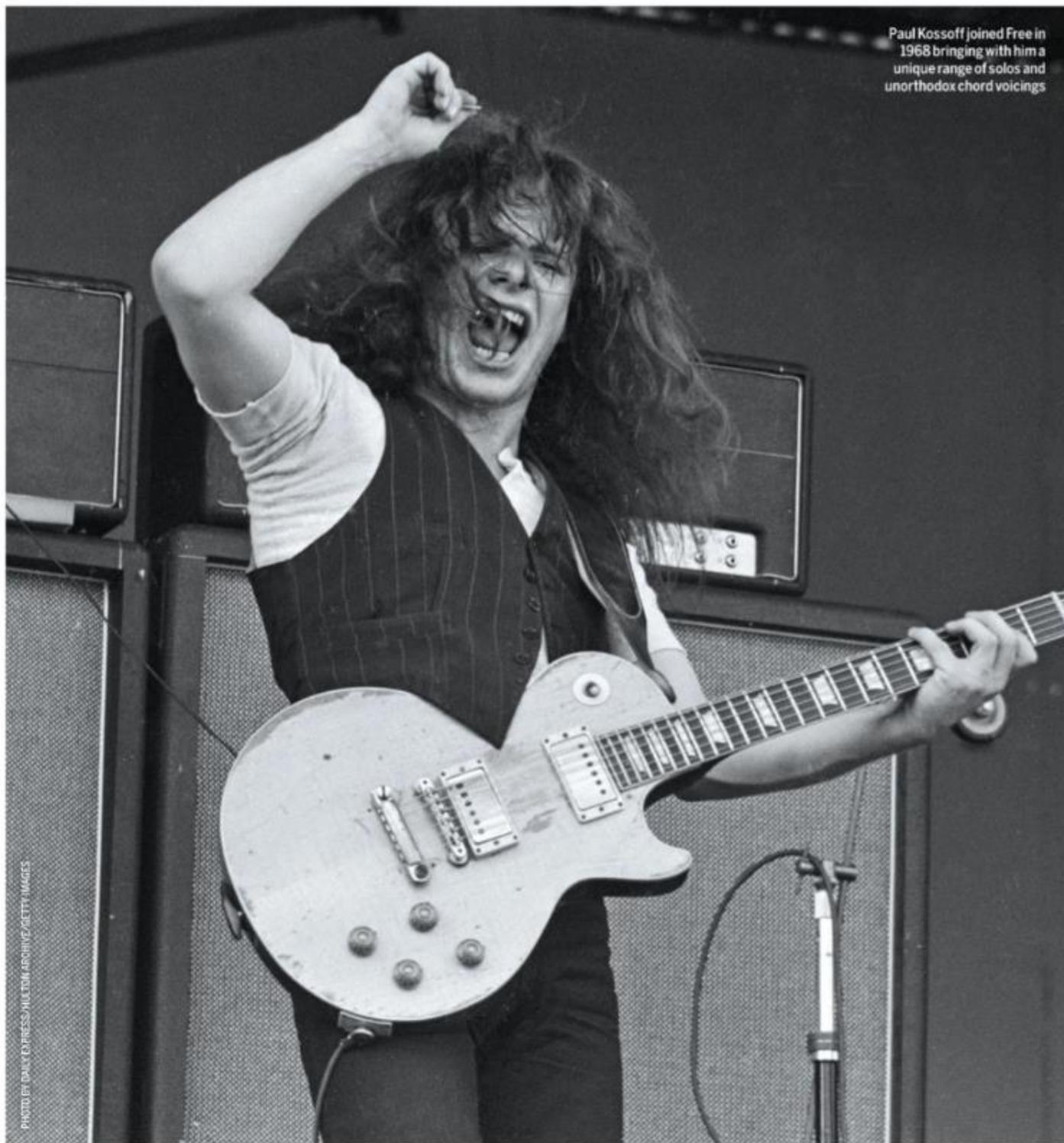
3

# Blues Headlines

*Richard Barrett is on a mission to make you a better blues player – with full audio examples and backing tracks*

Difficulty ★★★★★ | 10 mins per example

Tutor: Richard Barrett | Gear used: Knaggs SSC, Vox AC15 C1



Paul Kossoff joined Free in 1968 bringing with him a unique range of solos and unorthodox chord voicings

# Paul Kossoff



**SIX YEARS** into his training as a classical guitarist, Paul Kossoff witnessed Eric Clapton with John Mayall's Bluesbreakers. Soon afterwards, Paul bought his own Gibson Les Paul – which, in the mid 1960s, had already been out of production for five years or so! Stints with Black Cat Bones and Champion Jack Dupree led to Paul joining Free in the spring of 1968.

Paul's style encompassed elements of blues and soul, using unorthodox chord voicings, which filled out Free's 'power trio' format and set him apart from many of

his peers – along with his heartfelt solos, featuring an inimitable vibrato (I should know, I tried very hard in the example solo!).

Playing a solo 'in the style of' any guitarist is a tricky thing to do. How are we to second-guess how a player might react to a chord progression or dynamic? My approach has been to take an overview of some of Paul's best-known solos, mixing open strings with fretted notes like his solo in *All Right Now*, expanding this into arpeggiated type patterns as heard in *Mr Big*, and sustained string bends with vibrato reminiscent of *Fire And Water* (though not sustained quite as

Paul's – I couldn't get away with quite that volume in the studio!). Paul was not a keen user of effects pedals, not that there were many available during Free's heyday. He would usually plug into Marshall heads and cabinets, though he was also seen using Orange amps, and there are rumours of him having used a Selmer Treble-N-Bass 50 for the recording of *All Right Now*.

Whatever he used, the key is a driven, rather than distorted, tone. Paul was going for melody in his playing, not rippling scale or arpeggio runs – and that vibrato is deservedly infamous. Enjoy and I'll see you next time.

## Example 1

**THIS FIRST EXAMPLE** is inspired by the *All Right Now* solo, with sustained notes, vibrato and open strings left to ring against fretted ones, which really helps fill out the sound. Paul would often overdub over his own rhythm guitar in the studio, but this approach may have originated from live shows where he wouldn't have had this luxury. Keep the feel relaxed – allow things to drift late, rather than anticipating the beat.

♩ = 110 Swung B5

E B G D A E

2/4 4 2 0 2 4 3 4 4 3 5/7 0 7 5

## Example 2

**CONTINUING THE THEME**, this phrase travels up the second string, keeping the open top E ringing before adopting a more traditional blues scale approach. It's important to put yourself in a melodic frame of mind, rather than diving into habitual licks here – Paul certainly did have his favourite phrases but he never played 'by numbers'. Another way of putting this is that it's all about the delivery, not the amount of notes!

Swung E5 B5

E B G D A E

7/9 0 9 (10) 0 (10) (9) 7 7 9 7 7 9 7 7 10 7 9 (11)

BU RP BD BU BU

## Example 3

**WE'RE MOVING UP A GEAR** in this example, quite literally in terms of the fretboard but also with a few more comparatively rapid-fire ideas. Paul loved phrases like that in bar 1, though we finish up in a slightly less typical style. His solo in *Mr Big* featured an extended section similar to the last bar – this isn't fully transcribed here but take what we have in the last bar and check out the video, and there should be no great mystery if you want to recreate this.

Example 3 musical notation showing a guitar solo in 4/4 time. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The notation includes a treble clef staff and a six-string guitar staff. The solo starts with a triplet in the first bar. Chord symbols above the staff are B5, A5, B5, D5 A5 B5, E5, and D/E. The guitar staff includes fret numbers (7, 10, 12, 9, 11) and techniques like 'BU' (bend up) and 'Let ring'. A vertical label 'E B G D A E' is on the left side of the guitar staff.

## Example 4

**PAUL KNEW HOW TO CREATE DYNAMICS** by building to the final soaring high notes of a solo, and that's what I was going for here. We finish in a similar way to how we started, playing melodic ideas along a single string rather than from scale shapes or patterns. This is a great way to develop melodies without falling into the habits scales can tie us up in.

Example 4 musical notation showing a guitar solo in 4/4 time. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The notation includes a treble clef staff and a six-string guitar staff. The solo starts with a triplet in the first bar. Chord symbols above the staff are B5, A5, B5, D5, A5, B5, E5, and D/E. The guitar staff includes fret numbers (14, 17, 19, 15, 16, 12, 13) and techniques like 'BU' (bend up) and 'BD' (bend down). A dashed line labeled '8va' is above the staff. A vertical label 'E B G D A E' is on the left side of the guitar staff.

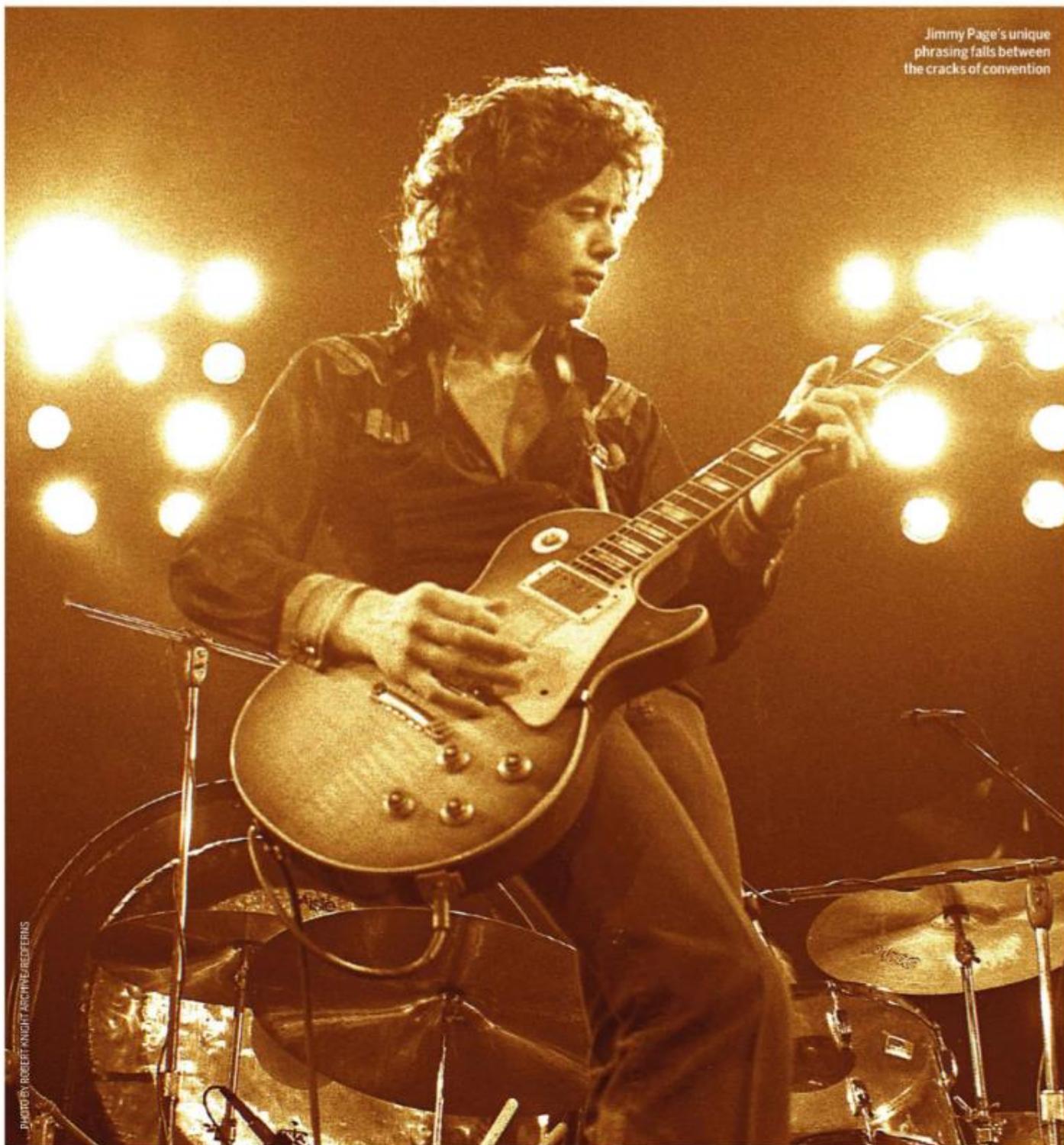
# Blues Headlines

*Richard Barrett is on a mission to make you a better blues player – with full audio examples and backing tracks*

Difficulty ★★★★★ | 10 mins per example

Tutor: Richard Barrett | Gear used: Knaggs SSC, Vox AC15 C1

Jimmy Page's unique phrasing falls between the cracks of convention



# Practising Page-isms



**COMING UP THROUGH SKIFFLE, BLUES, ROCK 'N' ROLL, FOLK,** then a fairly well-known rock band that

encompassed all of this and more, Jimmy Page has never been afraid to take radically different approaches to both his playing and composition. However, he always manages to put his stamp on everything he does.

I've transcribed a lot of Jimmy's playing over the years, and it's always a challenge to reduce it to strokes of the pen on manuscript paper. His phrasing, timing and pitching is uniquely expressive, and often falls 'between

the cracks' of standard musical notation. Usually, I tend to rationalise/quantise the timing but include instructions to lay back or push forward against the beat. Capturing every nuance would be virtually impossible to write or read, and I believe would take us further from the essence of Jimmy's playing. Trying to encapsulate his style in a single solo is a tall order but by stealing choice phrases from some of his classic solos (leaning towards the early days) and incorporating them into one of my own, I hope to give a starting point to those who would like to emulate his flamboyant style.

Having said that, listening back to my own solo I seem to have played things a little cautiously, so once you have these ideas under the fingers, I would suggest a more devil-may-care approach! It isn't a disaster if you miss a note or two, or allow the timing to drift here and there – as long as you can recover. There are a couple of wide string bends, so don't be discouraged if these are little uncomfortable when you're practising the phrases repeatedly, and be aware that Jimmy used very light strings during Led Zeppelin's heyday. I hope you enjoy the solo and see you next time.

## Example 1

**THIS FIRST EXAMPLE** begins with a no-holds-barred Chuck Berry-type repeated phrase. Though the transcription shows six identical repeats, don't take this too literally. If you play this in a spirited enough fashion, small irregularities are bound to creep in and this brings us closer to challenging 1968 to '70 Jimmy Page more closely than earnestly playing through perfectly. In bar 3, we shift abruptly down three frets to change to E major pentatonic while playing the same scale pattern – this is also classic early Page.

♩ = 76

1

2

3

## Example 2

**THERE ARE ESSENTIALLY THREE COMPONENTS** to this idea, all of which have been heavily favoured by the man himself. Firstly, the chromatic runs mix in with string bends using the major pentatonic scale. This is followed by a shift down to open position and the E minor pentatonic, where a staggered descending sextuplet pattern leads to an ascending chromatic line mixing alternate picking and legato styles. Check out the solos from *Communication Breakdown* and *Heartbreaker* to hear their origin.

Example 2 musical notation showing two systems of guitar tablature and staff notation. The first system starts at measure 1 and the second at measure 3. Chords E5, D5, and A5 are indicated above the staff. Techniques like BU (bend) and BU BD (bend and double) are noted above the strings. The tablature shows fret numbers and string numbers (E, B, G, D, A, E).

## Example 3

**THE FIRST LICK** here is frequently heard on the early albums but also appears at the climax of Jimmy's solo in *Stairway To Heaven*. We segue straight into a further descending sextuplet run in the manner of *Good Times Bad Times* then switch gears to some screaming high-register E major pentatonic, which is meant as a tip of the hat to *Whole Lotta Love* (as is the backing track).

Example 3 musical notation showing two systems of guitar tablature and staff notation. The first system starts at measure 1 and the second at measure 3. Chords E5, D5, and A5 are indicated above the staff. Techniques like (Loco) and (8va) are noted. The tablature shows fret numbers and string numbers (E, B, G, D, A, E).

# Example 4

**THE OPENING BARS** of this closing section of the solo start to hint at the more unusual note groupings that Jimmy began to incorporate in his solos by 1972 and '73. *No Quarter* is one of the finest examples of this but *Since I've Been Loving You* and *In The Light* are also worth checking out. We then finish, as we should, with a final descending run and a flourish. Hopefully Jimmy would approve!

8va  
E5

D5 A5  $\frac{1}{4}$  D5

BU  $\frac{1}{4}$  PB 15 PB 14 BD

E B G D A E

1

E5 D5 A5

PB 14 BD

E B G D A E

3

# Blues Headlines



**Neville Marten** is on a mission to make you a better blues player

**ALTHOUGH** I reference this as vaguely Hendrix-like, it's not really, but as Jimi played blues with a mostly conventional and largely pentatonic approach, there's a degree of him in here. But you could equally say T-Bone Walker or Robert Cray. Note how the G minor pentatonic (G B $\flat$  C D F) gets 'filled in' by chromatic notes, and how the major 3rd's appearance (B) homes in to nail the upcoming song's tonality. The way it ends on the  $\flat 7$  (F) lends an air of tension, waiting for resolution.

$\text{♩} = 165$

**D7**

BU BU BU RP RP RP BD BU

5 (7) 3 3 6 (8) 6 (8) (7) (8) (7) (8) (6) 3 5 (6) 3

**C7** **G7** **C7**

BU BU BU BU BU

5 (7) 5 (7) 5 (7) 5 3 5 3 5 3 5 3 1 2 3/5 5 (6) 3 5 X 5 (6) 5 3 5 3 5

**G7** **D7** **G7**

3 2 5 3 5 4 5 3 5 4 3 2 3

E B G D A E

**ALBERT** King and SRV played with such conviction that their notes could override the underlying harmony, to such an extent that you'd never realise that sometimes things were technically 'wrong'. The key facet to this lick is its insistence on maintaining a single sonic imprint – those few notes on the top three strings of shape 2; the key technique is the secondary bend that comes from a fret below the initial bend (fret 7). This lends an almost 'out-of-tuneness' that I love. You could start the secondary bend from the B $\flat$  note (fret 6), but this would require a semitone pre-bend with the first finger, which is tough! The classic SRV ending line hints at an absent D7#9 V chord, and sounds great!

G7 C7 G7 D7  
 BU BU BD  
 8 6 8 8 8 (10) 6 (8) (6) 8 7 8 6 8 6 8 7 6

**JIMMY** Page would often climax a solo in shape 3 minor pentatonic. This is also BB King's favoured area of the neck, hence my referencing of both players. Using the first finger as a pivot on the second string (in this case 8th fret) gives a lot of harmonic scope, since the intervals of the scale and underlying chord lie in convenient places under the fingers. The first top-string bend takes us from root (D) to 2nd/9th (E) of the V chord (D); can you locate the intervals in all three chords?

BU PB PB BU RP RP BU  
 10 10 10 10 6 6 6 6 10  
 (12) (12) (12) (10) 8 5 3 3 5 6 (8) (8) 6 6 3 6 3 10 (13)

G7 C7 G7 D7  
 BU BU BD  
 10 8 11 8 10 (11) 8 10 8 9 10 (11) (10) 8 9 10 8 8 6 6 7

**THE** doublestop that opens this lick features the root (D) of the V chord (D) on the top string, plus an edgy #5 with a blues 'curl' beneath. This musically pre-empts the I chord (G), as it's the 3rd and 5th thereof. Note the Clapton-esque root-maj7-root move that occurs later over both I and V chords (G-F#-G and D-C#-D).

D7  
 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10  
 11 11 11 11 11 11 11 11

C7 G7 C7

BU BU BU 1/4 BU RP - - - - BD BU RP

13-15 13-13 13-15 13-13 13-15 13-11 12-11 12 13-15 15-15 15-15 15-13 10 13-15 15

3

G7 D7 G7

BU BD 1/4 1/4 1/4 1/4

13-15 13-11 12-10 12-11-12 10 12-10 8 10

5

**HERE**, our target note is the root of our two chords of G and C. The trick, of course, is to land on the correct note just as the chord changes; or even to pre-empt it, which can sound even more sophisticated. As we guitarists know, there are many ways to create notes – slides, bends, hammer-ons and the like – so add these permutations to those of note choice and there'll never be any reason to sound predictable.

♩. = 55 D7 G7 4:3

BU BD

5 3-4 3 5 3-4 5 5 5 5 5 5 (6) (5) 3

1

C7

BU BD BU

5 3 5 (6) (5) 3 5 3 5 6 (8) 3 3

3

**G7** **A $\flat$ 7** **G7**

BU RP BD BU BD

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

6 (8) (8) (6) 3 5 (6) (5) 3 5 3 3 5 5

4

**HERE**, we are looking at nailing the 3rd in the two chords. A great help is to mentally envisage the chord on the fingerboard so that you know exactly what frets to target. There are three obvious and very strong positions of the major 3rd in an E shape chord, and I target them all here – on the first, third and fifth strings.

**D7** **G7**

BU BD BU BD BU

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

4 3 5 3 5 (7) (5) (7) (5) 3 5 3 5 (7)

1

**C7** **G7** **A $\flat$ 7**

BU BD

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

5 3 3 5 3 3 5 (6) (5) 3 5 3 5 3 3 5 5 5 3 4 5 5 5 3 3

3

**G7**

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

5 3 4 3 5 4 3 2

5

**THE** 5th is potentially our most awkward interval, as it can sound tense and unsettled unless used deliberately for a specific sound – Albert King and Jimi Hendrix were great 5th fans, so listen to them to see how they employ it. In fact, here I use the old Hendrix trick of the unison bend; another great trick is to use the  $\flat 7$  to root bend on your V chord, and leave it for the change so it becomes the 5th of your IV chord.

**D7** **G7**

E B G D A E

1

**C7** **G7** **A $\flat$ 7**

E B G D A E

3

**G7**

E B G D A E

5

**THE**  $\flat 7$  is perhaps the most evocative interval in a blues, as it stamps bluesiness all over a piece. A major 6th to  $\flat 7$ th semitone bend is one of my favourites; also notice how the  $\flat 3$ rd of our I chord (played via a pull-off from the 4th) neatly becomes the  $\flat 7$  of our IV chord. Musical tricks such as this are always great to employ.

$\text{♩} = 55$  **D7** **G7**

E B G D A E

1

3

5

**NO** technique sounds great in isolation – it will tend to sound exactly like that: a technique. So here I've incorporated pre-bends with regular bends, which I think sounds more natural and hence more musical. Notice how cool the semitone bends sound at the front of each phrase and how naturally the regular bends blend in with these – one seems to accentuate the other.

**THIS** is sort of similar, but we've moved from shape 1 to shape 4 minor pentatonic (with an added 9 in the first lick). This has two pre-bends and let-downs following directly behind each other, and then finishes with a first-finger pre-bend to the 4th let down to the 3rd (D to C). I accidentally catch a tiny bit of the bend up and I think it sounds rather cool – yet more permutations on the theme.

**MOVING** up again to shape 1, but this time at the 15th fret, here's a country-style repetitive pre-bend and let-down sequence on the top two strings. But notice how the phrase ends with a regular-style tone bend from the  $\flat 7$  to the root (G to A).

**OUR** final bend is sometimes referred to as a 'mew' and for obvious reasons. It sounds somewhere between a strangled cat and a rampant herring gull and is the kind of phrase that works great towards the end of a Southern boogie track – think of The Allmans or Lynyrd Skynyrd and it's right in that ballpark. Don't over-use this one, though, or you'll outstay your musical welcome!

**AS** with last issue's pre-bends, I've incorporated semitone bends alongside other types in this shape 1 idea, so it sounds more real-world and less like exercises. I've always loved big interval leaps, and this one from the 5th to the 3rd via a semitone bend from the fret below is particularly striking. This is followed by another favourite, where the 5th of the I chord (F# here) is bent up a semitone and becomes the  $\flat 3$ rd (G) of the next chord (Em here). I also love the 2nd-, 3rd-2nd bend and let-down that follows.

**STAYING** in shape 1, this time those two most common whole-tone bends are broken up into semitone let-downs and sound really cool. The first takes us from root (B) through the A# and down to A – again, notice how the A is now neatly the root of the A chord we land on. The second step bend mirrors this on the next strings down, here going through F#, F and E (now the 7th of the V chord, F#7). The final bend is much like that in the first lick, only an octave down.

Release bends in two steps

BU BD BD BU BD BD BU BD

7-10 7-10(12)-(11) (10) 9(11) 11-(10) (9) 6-(7)-[7]-(6) 9-7 9-7 7

BU BD BU BD

9 9-7 4-(5) (4) (5) (4) 7-5 7 [7]

**A BIT** of chromaticism creeps in here with the use of a 2nd (C) semitone bend to the 2nd (C#) let-down back to the C and then resolving to the root (B), all on the first string. Dropping down to the second string, the move is mirrored with a bend from F to F#, let-down to F and finishes on the E (root of Em). We finish with another variation on our 9th (or 2nd) bend to the 3rd, let-down and finishing on the root (B).

BU BD BU BD BU BD

8 (9) 9 (8) 7 [7] 6 (7) [7]-(6)-(7) (6)

BU BD PB 6 BD BU BU BD

9 6-(7) [7]-(6) (7)-(6) 9 8 (9) 6 (9) (9) (8) 7 [7]

**THIS** is the type of thing you'd hear a jazz pianist play. It's a bit Django-ish, too. Essentially, it's a standard four-note 'pick, hammer-on, pull-off, hammer-on' move, but converted into relevant shapes to follow the scale down the neck. It's not hard to do, but you need to make sure your fingers are off one shape and on to the next in a way that doesn't sound rushed or lumpy.

**THIS** is one that I got from Gary Moore. Unless you're a great alternate picker (which I seriously am not!), this is hard to play across the neck, since changing strings can throw up obstacles that make accuracy a real problem. Going down a single string sounds just as good and is a whole lot easier. Within the context of a solo, it would be a great way of shifting from one area of the neck to another.

**HERE'S** the fabled Les Paul/Django/Beck/Moore lick. This is such a statement that you might find you can use it only once in its full form (unless you gig all over the country to different audiences every night), but again you could shorten it and use it as a means to connect licks in different areas of the neck. To stay in rhythm, I found it best to count the two-fret 'cells' two at a time - 'one-two, two-two, three-two, four-two', etc, rather than 'one-two-three-four-five-six-seven-eight', etc.



**THIS** lick combines two common four-note cell ideas and puts them together for something rather more standout. It's easy to play, since, apart from the second bend in each cell pair (the first being on the second string and the second on the third), the notes are identical. Stamina and keeping in time might be your main worries, but tie the underlying pulse of the lick to the backing's rhythm and you'll be okay.

Em D A

BU BU BU BU

12 15-12 15-17 12 15-12 14-16 12 15-12 15-17 12 15-12 14-16 12 15-12

BU BU BU BU

15-17 12 15-12 14-16 12 15-12 15-17 12 15-12 14-16 12 14-12 14

**WHILE** the previous ideas were all shape 1, here, we move up to shape 2 for a tricky cluster at the 15th to 17th frets. It starts off in time, but then becomes syncopated. This is all about hammer-ons and pull-offs with a single pick stroke for the start of each four-note cell. I found this the hardest to play of all, and my main tip is to barre the top two strings with your first finger and pivot the remaining notes off that.

Em D A B7 Em

8<sup>th</sup>

15 17-15 16 15 17-15 16 15 17-15 16 15 17-15 16 15 17-15 16 15 17-15 16 17

## Example

**THIS** doesn't sound like modern BB at all! But he'd often play repetitive, 'shape 1' licks like this in his early 50s songs. You really can hear T-Bone in all of this issue's examples – none of which will present problems, although there might be a few moves you haven't tried. If that's the case, make sure that once you've learned mine you tweak them – just as BB did with T-Bone's.

$\text{♩} = 115$   $\text{♩} = \text{♩}^3$

E7 A7 <sup>1/4</sup>

BU BU BU BU

7 5 7 (8) 7 5 7 (8) 7 5 7 7 (8) 7 5 7 (8) 7 5 7 5 7

1/4 5 7





## Example

**HERE'S** my bendy lick. It's very straightforward and simply bends from one minor pentatonic interval to another in shapes 2, 1 and 5. It's a good little bending exercise on its own, because it utilises semitone, tone and minor 3rd bends all in the one lick. Try the same type of idea with the major pentatonic and other scales you know – it's a great way of making a bigger statement than the initial idea suggests.

Musical notation for Example lick. The piece is in 4/4 time and G major. The first measure is marked with a *Solo* and a dashed line above it. The chord progression is Em, D, A, B7, Em, D, A. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of eighth notes with various bends (BU, BD) and triplets. The guitar part is shown on a six-string staff with fret numbers: 17 (19) (17) 15 15, 17 17 (19) (17) 15 15, 15 (17) (15) 12, 14 16 14 (16) (14) 12 12, 11 (12) (11) 9 9, and 12. The strings are labeled E, B, G, D, A, E.

## Lick

**THIS** is entirely rooted in position one of our old friend, the minor pentatonic scale, and features plenty of microtonal bends.

Musical notation for Lick 1. The piece is in 4/4 time and D minor. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of two flats (Bb, Eb), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of eighth notes with various bends (BU, BD) and triplets. The guitar part is shown on a six-string staff with fret numbers: 8 5 5 8 5 5, 8 7 5 7 7 5, 7 7 5, 7 7 5, and 7. The strings are labeled E, B, G, D, A, E.

## Lick

**HERE**, we venture into Albert King territory – ie, position two – and bring in some more melodic bends. Note that the fourth note represents a way of cheating; it's easier than bending up all the way from the 8th fret, while sounding sufficiently similar.

Musical notation for Lick 2. The piece is in 4/4 time and D minor. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of two flats (Bb, Eb), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of eighth notes with various bends (BU, BD) and triplets. The guitar part is shown on a six-string staff with fret numbers: 8 10 10 (12) 9 (10) 8 10 8 8 10 8, 10 8, 10, 8, 10, and 10. The strings are labeled E, B, G, D, A, E.

## Lick

**THIS** lick illustrates how positions one and two can be connected within a single lick, using some slides.

4:23

BU BD

## Lick

**NOW** for some fun in position three. Don't be alarmed by the illegal-looking  $E_b$  at the start of beat 2: this is a .5, a note that is commonly added to blues licks for added flavouring.

4:33

BU BD

## Lick

**THIS** lick mostly dwells in position four, but the bending/sliding combination in between the first and second bars offers a brief visit to the realms of position five. In a future column, we'll be examining the potential of bend/slide combinations in a little more detail, so you can think of this merely as a taster!

4:48

BU PB 15 BD BU

## Example

OUR first lick also happens to be the solo's opener. We did a few takes and I pretty much kept this lick the same for every one, only improvising the rest until something sounded like I wanted. The lick comes over the opening turnaround chords of Fmaj7 and Em7, and the first bent notes target E, the maj7 note of F; the next target note is D, the ♭7 of Em7 – both great 'colour' tones.

Example 1: Musical notation for a guitar lick. The tempo is 135. The key signature has one flat (Bb). The time signature is 12/8. The lick is over Fmaj7 and Em7 chords. The notation includes a treble clef, a 12/8 time signature, and a tempo of 135. The guitar part is shown on a six-string staff with fret numbers and techniques like BU, RP, and PB.

## Example

THIS is so simple, yet so effective as a means of climbing up from the low notes into middle of the neck and beyond. It's typical of early Clapton; it's dark and brooding and feels like we're building up to something more intense higher up the neck. It's all A minor pentatonic, with the first phrase echoed almost note-for-note an octave up. Simple sometimes just works!

Example 2: Musical notation for a guitar lick. The tempo is 135. The key signature has one flat (Bb). The time signature is 12/8. The lick is over Am and Dm chords. The notation includes a treble clef, a 12/8 time signature, and a tempo of 135. The guitar part is shown on a six-string staff with fret numbers and techniques like BU and BD.

## Example

THIS begins in Gary mode, with a three-fret bend from the 5th to the 7th on the first string; this is milked for all it's worth before the lick snakes its way along the neck into shape 2 of Am pentatonic, where it ends up sounding more like Eric. Notice at the beginning of the lick how the first bend has no vibrato; there's vib on the second for some impact; then none again as the lick moves on. This really helps expression.

Example 3: Musical notation for a guitar lick. The tempo is 135. The key signature has one flat (Bb). The time signature is 12/8. The lick is over Dm and Am chords. The notation includes a treble clef, a 12/8 time signature, and a tempo of 135. The guitar part is shown on a six-string staff with fret numbers and techniques like BU, BD, and PB.

# Example

I'D SAY this is Gary, meets Eric, meets *A Hard Road*-era Peter. Again, it's all A minor pentatonic, but shows how a little expression from hammer-ons and pull-offs, repeated bends, vibrato and of course, the ubiquitous minor 3rd pushed pretty sharp, all contribute to a solo that sounds relatively wholesome – and very British!

♩ = 135

Dm Am

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

BU BU BU BU BU BD BU BU

8-(10) 5 8-(10) 5 8-5 7-(8) 5 8-5-8 8-5 7-(8)(7)5 7-(9)7-5 5

E7 Am

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

7 5 7 5 6 5 3 5 3 3 5

## Example

**EACH** group of notes comprises the starting pitch, the target pitch, and the bent note, all within the seven-note major-scale shape.

1:32

BU BU BU BU BU BU BU

E B G D A E

7-9-7-(9) 9-6-9-(11) 6-7-6-(7) 7-9-7-(9) 9-6-9-(11) 6-8-6-(8) 8-9-8-(9)

## Example

**HERE**, you'll work on your accuracy by pre-bending strings to the target note before sounding it and releasing the bend.

3:08

PB<sub>7</sub> BD PB<sub>9</sub> BD PB<sub>6</sub> BD PB<sub>7</sub> BD PB<sub>9</sub> BD PB<sub>6</sub> BD PB<sub>8</sub> BD PB<sub>9</sub> BD

E B G D A E

(9)-(7) (11)-(9) (7)-(6) (9)-(7) (11)-(9) (8)-(6) (9)-(8) (11)-(9)

## Example

**STAYING** on one string and bending to the target notes of your scale opens up the possibilities for more 'vocal' techniques.

3:56

BU BD BU BD BU BD BU BD BU BD BU BD

E B G D A E

5-(7)-(5) 7-(9)-(7) 9-(10)-(9) 10-(12)-(10) 12-(14)-(12) 14-(16)-(14) 16-(17)-(16) 17-(19)-(17)

## Example

**INCORPORATING** slides and bends can create sophisticated effects. Make sure you let your target notes ring out loud and clear.

4:14

BU BD etc

5 (7) (5) / 7 (9) (7) / 9 (10) (9) 9 (10) (9) / 10 (12) (10) 10 (12) (10) / 12 (14) (12)

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

## Example

**THIS** quirky effect involves an initial bend to a target note followed by a quick slide to it, in rapid succession – instant Jeff Beck!

4:58

BU BD

5 (7) (5) / 7

1/4  
5

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

## Example

**QUICKLY** following an upward bend with a downward slide creates an effect that's akin to the whammy-bar trickery of Steve Vai.

5:18

BU BU BU BU BU

17 (19) \ 16 16 (17) \ 14 14 (16) \ 12 12 (14) \ 10 10 (12) \ 9

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

## Example

**FOR** this Jan Hammer-esque, pitch-wheel-bend-style lick, focus on the hammer-on and trust the release will happen naturally.

6:43

BU BD BU BD BU BD BU

5 (7) (5) (7) (5) (7) (5) (7)

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E



## Example

**THE** A chord in the background gets a Queen or Stones-like treatment with the double suspension moving over it – D over the C# note and F# over the E note, picked then pulled-off a couple of times. Did ‘tripping’ major-scale licks like this influence Brian, too?

## Example

**ESSENTIALLY**, you’re playing the same pitch on two adjacent strings, but while one string remains static, the other bends up to the target note from a tone below.

## Example

**HERE**, you’re separating the two strings of the bend, picking them individually (as in the first bar) and then over-bending the second string.

## Example

**THE** first four notes basically outline the opening motif from *Frère Jacques*, and they’re all played at the 15th fret.

BU BU RP BU BU RP BU BU RP BU BU RP

8 (10) (12) (8) 7 (8) (10) (7) 5 (7) (8) (5) 3 (5) (7) (3)

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

2

## Example

**EXECUTING** that fourth note might feel confusing at first: your wrist is aiming to release the bend down to the halfway point, but your fingers still think they're bending the string upwards!

7:58 BU BU RP RP BU BU RP RP BU BU RP RP BU BU RP RP

15 (17) (19) (17) (15) 14 (15) (17) (15) (14) 12 (14) (15) (14) (12) 10 (12) (14) (12) (10)

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

1

BU BU RP RP BU BU RP RP BU BU RP RP BU BU RP RP

8 (10)(12)(10) 8 7 (8)(10)(8) (7) 5 (7) (8) (7) (5) 3 (5) (7) (5) (3)

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

3

## Example

**NOW**, we're trying to disguise the bends altogether and make all of the notes sound like they're being fretted conventionally.

PB15 - - - - ' PB14 - - - - ' PB12 - - - - ' PB10 - - - - ' etc

15 (17) (19) (17) 15 14 (15) (17) (15) 14 12 (14) (15) (14) 12 10 (12) (14) (12) 10

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

# Example

THE chromatic scale – an invitation for us to take things to extremes in terms of how many scale tones we can coax from a single fret!

11:05

(Sw)

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

12 13 12 | 12 (13) 12 | 12 13 14 13 12 | 12 (13) (14) (13) 12

PB12 PB12

(Sw)

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

12 13 14 15 14 13 12 | 12 (13)(14)(15)(14)(13) 12 | 12 13 14 15 16 15 14 13 12 | 12 13 14 15 16 15 14 13 12

PB12 PB12

(Sw)

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

12 13 14 15 16 17 16 15 14 13 12 | 12 (13) (14) (15) (16) (17) (16) (15) (14) (13) 12

PB12

# Example

THIS example illustrates how you might apply some of those chromatic bending ideas in a 'real-life' situation.

12:06

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

9 (12) (11) (10) (9) 7 9 7 (8) (7) 5 | 7 5 (7) (6) (5) (5) 2 4 2 2 2

BD RP RP RP | BD RP | BD RP RP

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

7 9 7 7 9 12 9 12 9 12 (13) (14) (15) (16) | (12) 9 11 9 12 16 (21)

BU BU BU BU RP | BU

## Example

**THIS** lick uses Peter's lovely trait of letting down and bending the same note back up again. It's only done once here (over the intro-turnaround), but in the main solo's opening line you'll hear it repeatedly – it's a simple ,7 to root bend (C to D in our key of D) but it's very effective. When Aerosmith and Gary Moore covered *Stop Messin' Round*, they both adopted the lick, as it's just so catchy.

$\text{♩} = 140$   $\text{♩} = \overset{\sim}{\text{♩}} \overset{\sim}{\text{♩}}$

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

## Example

A very typical Greeny lick, this. One could think of it as being Dorian, since it contains both the 6th (B) and 9th (E), or simply as D minor pentatonic with those extra tones added. The final landing note of B is the 6th of our I chord of D, but the major 3rd of the IV chord (G) over which it's played. Finding each scale tone's relation to the underlying chords is vital to creative soloing.

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

## Example

**HERE'S** a great question-and-answer phrase. These don't need to be echoes, or even mirrors of one another; if they work as rhythmic counterparts, or even the same thing an octave apart, one can still be an answer to the other's question provided they are timed to be so. Thus the two licks put together here are clearly a pair, one answering the other, even though they're not remotely the same shape.

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

# Example

**THIS** one's over the stops in the second chorus, and it has to be said, veers somewhat into Gary Moore territory. Still, there's a clear relationship between them as players and it's nice to beef things up a bit. This uses the classic ploy of beginning a phrase in minor pentatonic shape 2 and using a third-string slide to deftly move into shape 3. Notice the final bend targets that 6th again (B), which helps to keep the overall voice of the solo coherent.

Example 1: Musical notation for a guitar solo. The key signature is D major (two sharps). The solo is in 4/4 time. It starts with a D chord and moves to a G chord. The notation includes a melodic line in the treble clef and guitar tabs in the bass clef. The tabs show fret numbers and techniques such as BU (bend up), PB (pick bend), BD (bend down), and slides (8<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>). The solo begins with a slide from the 8th fret to the 14th fret on the third string, then continues with various bends and slides across the strings.

# Example

**THIS IS** a typical doublestop idea that moves through three different mini-shapes on the neck, outlining the notes of a C7 chord.

Example 2: Musical notation for a C7 chord doublestop pattern. The key signature is C major. The pattern is in 4/4 time. It features a melodic line in the treble clef and guitar tabs in the bass clef. The tabs show fret numbers and techniques such as BU (bend up), BD (bend down), and RP (rhythm pick). The pattern moves through three different mini-shapes on the neck, outlining the notes of a C7 chord.

# Example

**THIS** example works over a D7 chord: throughout the first bar, try using the pick for all the second string notes and your second finger for everything on the first string. For the latter half of bar 2, use your third and second fingers of your picking hand to the first and second string, leaving your pick free to handle the third string.

Example 3: Musical notation for a D7 chord doublestop pattern. The key signature is D major. The pattern is in 4/4 time. It features a melodic line in the treble clef and guitar tabs in the bass clef. The tabs show fret numbers and techniques such as BU (bend up), RP (rhythm pick), and BD (bend down). The pattern works over a D7 chord and involves holding notes on the first and second strings while picking the third string.

## Example

**WE'RE** taking inspiration from some pedal-steel clichés here. For the last chord, your fretting hand should barre the top two strings at the 8th fret whilst bending the third string up a whole tone from the 7th fret.

Example 1: Musical notation for a four-measure lick. The first measure is C major, the second is D7, the third is G7#5, and the fourth is C major. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The guitar part is shown on a six-string staff with fret numbers and picking directions (BU, BD, RP).

## Example

**HERE**, we introduce the idea of playing three-string shapes to outline a chord progression, bending the lowest string up to a chord tone from one scale degree below. For the bulk of this lick, the best picking hand approach is similar to that which we encountered at the end of Ex. 2 – ie, assigning your pick, second and third fingers to the third, second and first strings respectively.

Example 2: Musical notation for a four-measure lick. The first measure is A7, the second is D7, the third is G7, and the fourth is C major. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F#, C#), and a 4/4 time signature. The guitar part is shown on a six-string staff with fret numbers and picking directions (BU, RP, hold).

## Example

**A NEW** kind of doublestop bend here: both strings are being bent simultaneously! For the first, you should be able to keep the distance between the first and second strings pretty constant as you bend, but you may need to push the higher string a little harder when executing the following doublestop in beats 3 to 4. Note the 'stepped' release: ensure that you pause the bend halfway through.

Example 3: Musical notation for a four-measure lick. The first measure is B major, the second is B major, the third is B major, and the fourth is E major. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#), and a 4/4 time signature. The guitar part is shown on a six-string staff with fret numbers and picking directions (BU, BD, partial).

## Example

**IN THE** first half of this example, experiment with using various parts of your fingertip to execute the bend: your goal is to be able to bend that third string note up a whole tone without muting the first-string note that follows it. The last few notes of this lick consist of natural harmonics at the 7th fret and the final bend is executed behind the nut, using whichever hand feels more natural.

## Example

**USING** the neck pickup with the volume rolled back (how far depends on the gain setting and impedance of your guitar; just roll it back until you like the sound), this begins with a Peter Green-style motif, moving to a 'piano style' lick in the same position. This is done using hybrid picking: middle finger handling the first string 'pedal tone' C, while the pick is used for the underlying pentatonic phrase.

## Example

**MOSTLY** using the often neglected position-three pentatonic shape, the volume gain is a little higher for this hybrid between the Clapton/Page side of Joe's playing. This is a mixture of picked and legato phrases, with no particular thinking behind it apart from keeping things varied, so it's worth experimenting. As with Example 1, keep your eye on what's going on with E and E<sub>2</sub> when they appear.

## Example

**I KNOW** the timing is a little bit raggedy here, but we wanted to keep this take, as it demonstrates something of the 'Gary Moore' presence in Joe's style. Combining legato with slides, economy and alternate picking, we're definitely on the rock side of the blues-rock camp here. Phrases like this can seem daunting at first, but a little slow, methodical rehearsal of the finger movements gives surprisingly quick results.

Musical notation for Example 1. The top staff shows a guitar solo in 12/8 time, starting with an F7 chord. The solo consists of a series of eighth notes with slides and a triplet. The bottom staff shows a bass line with BU (bend up) and BD (bend down) techniques. The bass line starts with a BU on the 11th fret and a BD on the 11th fret, followed by a series of eighth notes with slides. The bass line ends with a C chord.

## Example

**THIS** is an extended version of the Jan Hammer-esque lick we explored last issue, with a three-note pattern at its core.

Musical notation for Example 2. The top staff shows a guitar solo in 4/4 time, starting with an Em chord. The solo consists of a series of eighth notes with bends and a three-note pattern. The bottom staff shows a bass line with BU (bend up) and RP (release pick) techniques. The bass line starts with a BU on the 12th fret and a RP on the 7th fret, followed by a series of eighth notes with bends. The bass line ends with a BU on the 9th fret and a RP on the 14th fret.

## Example

**THIS** lick depends on a clear note as you change strings. Hammer on with conviction, or flick each string with your tapping finger.

Musical notation for Example 3. The top staff shows a guitar solo in 4/4 time, starting with a G chord. The solo consists of a series of eighth notes with bends and a three-note pattern. The bottom staff shows a bass line with BU (bend up) and tap techniques. The bass line starts with a BU on the 15th fret and a tap on the 17th fret, followed by a series of eighth notes with bends. The bass line ends with a BU on the 14th fret and a tap on the 17th fret.

## Example

THIS tapped run throws in a few bends and brings two fingers of the tapping hand into play, for a keyboard-pitch-wheel effect.

Musical notation for Example 1. The top staff is in treble clef, 4/4 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The chord is Em. The notation features a series of eighth notes with various bends (marked 'c' and 'm') and a tapping hand (marked '6'). The bottom staff is in bass clef, showing fret numbers: 7, 9, 14, 7, 9, 16, 9, 7, 9, 12, 14, 16, 14, 16, 14, 12, 9, 12, 14, 16, 10, 12, 15, 17, 15, 17. The notation includes labels 'BU RP' and 'BU'.

## Example

TAPPED trills in conjunction with bent notes recreates the sound of a howling blues-harmonica riff in this lick.

Musical notation for Example 2. The top staff is in treble clef, 4/4 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The chord is Em. The notation features a series of eighth notes with bends (marked 'tr') and a tapping hand (marked '3'). The bottom staff is in bass clef, showing fret numbers: 12, 11, 12, 15, 12, 14, 10, 8, 9, 10, 12. The notation includes labels 'PB 11 RP BU', 'Hold bend, tap trill at 14th', 'Release bend, tap/trill at 14th', and 'BU 10-12'.

## Example

THIS pedal-steel-style lick centres around using two picking-hand fingers to tap and then pull off from a doublestop shape.

Musical notation for Example 3. The top staff is in treble clef, 4/4 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The chord is G. The notation features a series of eighth notes with doublestop shapes and a tapping hand (marked '3'). The bottom staff is in bass clef, showing fret numbers: 15, 17, 15, 10, 10, 12, 10, 8, 15, 15, 15, 15, 15, 7, 12, 14, 16, 14, 16, 14. The notation includes labels 'BU RP BU RP BU RP'.

## Example

THIS fireworks-display finalé lick incorporates many techniques we've covered in the series into a quirky pedal-steel bend.

Musical notation for Example 4. The top staff is in treble clef, 4/4 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The chord is G. The notation features a series of eighth notes with various bends (marked 'm') and a tapping hand (marked '3'). The bottom staff is in bass clef, showing fret numbers: 15, 17, 15, 10, 12, 10, 8, 9, 14, 16, 15, 8, 9, 7, 12, 14, 12, 14, 7, 9, 7, 5. The notation includes labels 'BU (hold) RP BU (hold) RP BU (hold) RP'.

## Example

**THIS** cheeky little intro phrase is essentially a stretched pentatonic shape, giving an F and F# (minor/major 3rd respectively) rather than the E and F you would normally play when using this shape 1 pentatonic. Just a simple alteration like this can be enough to freshen up what might otherwise feel like a 'standard' blues lick. There's another F/F# bookending this in bar 2.

Swung  
♩ = 104

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

## Example

**ONE** of Larry Carlton's favourite approaches is to superimpose a triad over a different, but related chord. Here, the first phrase employs a C major triad (Cmaj7 if you want to include those Bs at either end) over A minor, the relative minor. For the second half of bar 2, we outline a D triad, ending on a  $\dot{7}$ , which could be described as a D7 arpeggio, this time over its 'home' chord of D7.

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

## Example

**THIS** D blues scale line over the descending chords really pulls us back into blues territory, from what could easily have gone very jazzy. I've basically gone for the blues scale in the 'home' key (D) and been careful to avoid too many clashing notes. F natural and A $\flat$  are very effective as fleeting/passing tones, but don't get caught out pausing for thought on them!

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

## Example

**OKAY**, this is partly lifted from Robben Ford's solo on *Help The Poor*. What looks a bit like A7(#5) jazz trickery could also be seen as a modified D blues scale with a little imagination. This approach might help you assimilate other scales and arpeggios into your playing more naturally.

## Example

**PLAYED** with a swung feel, this phrase attempts to emulate some of Jeff's eccentricity and exploit the different tones that using thumb or finger on the strings can give. A little restraint may be required; unless you're using hefty strings, it's easy to 'ping' them back against the 'board. A great technique, but not what we want here. The presence of an F natural gives what we might call a 'Mixolydian' feel.

## Example

**CONTINUING** in the same vein, the vibrato bar comes into play for a series of 'swoops' and 'scoops' similar to the way Jeff emulates bluesy bottleneck licks. Expect to spend some time getting the desired result, but don't get too caught up in the desire to duplicate this type of phrasing with 100-per-cent consistency. That's not really the spirit here...

## Example

**THE** opening notes are played with alternating thumb and finger – a technique often used by Jeff to articulate rapid 'trill' type effects. Moving on, here is a useful pentatonic style pattern with more of that 'psychedelic' Mixolydian feel, pulling up as well as down on the bar to shape the melody. Starting out with short bursts, it's possible to build dexterity for some of these unusual bar techniques.

Example 1 musical notation. Chords: F/G, G. Techniques: BU, BD, scoop, w/bar. Fret numbers: 15, 13, 15, 13, X-13, 15-(18), (15)-13-15, 14-(15)-14-12, 15-14-(15)-(14)-12, 15-14, 15.

## Example

**TIME** for a modulation! Jumping straight in on the 9th from the underlying B $\flat$ m9 chord (C), there is more whammy trickery, raising an already bent string briefly by a further semitone, then releasing the bar to its original position, followed by releasing the bend. Not as complicated as it sounds, though you may find it sounds different each and every time you play it. I feel sure Jeff would approve!

Example 2 musical notation. Chords: B $\flat$ m9, B $\flat$ m. Techniques: BU, BD, w/bar, 1/4. Fret numbers: 8, 11-(13), (14)(13)(11)-9, 11-9, 10-8, 6-8-(9)(8), 6, 8-6, 7-6-4, 6.

## Example

**COPYING** the blues-harp style of leaning heavily on the 5 (C# in this case), this makes a confident, attention-grabbing start, setting the scene for a few more melodic licks to follow. Be sure to exaggerate the staccato markings and dotted rhythms – this is all about the character.

Example 3 musical notation. Tuning: Open G. Technique: All slides with bottleneck. Fret numbers: 12, 12, 12, 11/12, 11, [11], 12, 11/12.

## Example

**MIXING** slides with static notes, this phrase is based largely between the 13th and 15th frets – there are so many possibilities here alone – finishing with a position change, moving between the 12th and 10th. This doesn't need to be pitch-perfect. In fact, some irregularities can really bring some life!

## Example

**LET** me say this straight away – I know I’m a little flat heading into the C chord in bar 1, but I liked the feel of the take too much to want to mess with it. Feel free to improve on this, but remember it’s more about the attitude than anything else. Check bar 3 and you’ll see what I mean!

## Example

**GETTING** a little more technique-conscious, this example features lots of semitone moves that are articulated with the slide, but not slid! By the end of bar 2, things have loosened up and we finish with a long, slow slide down. This one might take a little more practice, but is well worth the effort.

## Example

**THE** centrepiece of this phrase is the wobbly E6/9 chord, in the context of the E major pentatonic. I often prefer to think in terms of the relative minor in these 'major blues' situations, which means we're looking at a C# minor 'shape 1' blues scale – the '5' being G natural in this case. I've chosen to slide in and out of this, but a hammer-on/pull-off would work, too. Ending on the C# really nails the 6 from the 6/9 chord!

## Example

**MAKING** a real feature of the swung feel, this phrase stays mostly in the same territory, with momentary shifts down and up, using the most convenient intervals that fall on adjacent strings within each blues scale shape. This results in an interesting variety of 2nds, 3rds and 4ths, implying all sorts of chord movement without fully stating a single one! To be honest, this is more about sliding convenient shapes around than advanced chord theory, but the results can be very pleasing.

## Example

**CHANGING** briefly to the neck pickup, these quick descending triplets are articulated by brushing upwards across adjacent strings, combined with a pull-off here and there. This can take a little time to get working, so don't be discouraged if it doesn't come tumbling out on the first (or first few!) attempts. Changing back to the doublestop approach similar to Example 3, but exploring the higher strings this time.

N.C.

Swung Neck pickup

Change to Middle/Neck pickup

## Example

**A SPREAD** A13 chord sets us up for a descending blues lick that traces the change back to E. Loosely based around a shape 3 E minor pentatonic/blues scale, this pattern manages to incorporate a really bluesy feel without feeling like you've heard it dozens of times before – at least, I hope so. It's one of my personal favourites!

A13

## Example

**CHRIS STARTS** with two short licks that'll work in a C dominant (C7, C9), blues or Mixolydian situation. As he mentions on the video, he's visualising a framework of notes around the 3rd position C9 and C6 shapes. Note how he connects the chord notes with chromatic passing notes.

♩ = 160 C7

## Example

**MANY OF** these notes are from the Mixolydian scale (C D E F G A B $\flat$ ), which also contains the C9 and C6 chords. Remember, though, swing and swing-era jazz are all about the chord progressions, and solos are generally built around the chord notes.

C7

## Example

**NOW CHRIS** shows how to use imitation and variation to build a cool sequence over a full 12-bar blues progression in G. The first and second lines are identical, with the contrast provided by the underlying C7 chord, and the third line fits the jazzier Am7-D7-G7 turnaround. Note how each phrase starts with a chord note.

$\text{♩} = 177$  G7

C7 G7

Am7 D7 G7

## Example

**ANOTHER LINE** in G, and this one builds on a similar concept to Ex 1 and Ex 2. The first bar outlines most of a G9 arpeggio, giving a standard dominant sound, but then bar 2 is a partial G6 with the typically 'sweeter' sound of that chord.

$\text{♩} = 162$  G7

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

## Example

**CHRIS DOES** something similar here, but in the key of B $\flat$  major. Bar 1 works around a B $\flat$ 9 arpeggio, but the G note in bar 2 takes us into B $\flat$ 6 or B $\flat$ 13 territory.

B $\flat$ 7

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

## Example

**IT** doesn't take too much to trace the development of licks like this from *Smokestack Lightning* all the way through to Lenny Kravitz and *Are You Gonna Go My Way*. What makes this rock 'n' roll (apart from the Tele and slapback delay) are the quarter-tone bends and 6th (C sharp) in bar 1. Later, the short chromatic run borrows more from the jazz era than blues, but adds a bit of harmonic interest to round the phrase off.

Swung E

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

## Example

**USING** slides and major chord tones (A major, to be precise), a bluesy pentatonic phrase paves the way for a rapid triplet figure in bar 3. Though I've flatpicked this (complete with a slip on beat 2... I was going for a G# at the 9th fret), it's possible to play most rapidly and fluently using hybrid picking or fingerstyle – including with a thumbpick, in the style of Chet Atkins.

A

Let ring - - - - -

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

## Example

**MAKING** maximum use of the bluesy 7ths, this simple, sliding idea could, with minimal reworking, get you through a whole 12-bar solo without sounding over-used. Towards the end of bar 2, the C# makes the transition from being the major 3rd of A to the 6th of E major. Though that sounds complicated set out in words, try playing C# over the two chords and you'll see what I mean.

## Example

**USING** a shape 1 pentatonic/blues scale, this example could easily be a Clapton phrase if you imagine it through a more distorted amp. The picking is optional, though it does add some nice definition in contrast to the more legato elements. Details like this can often be a stumbling block, so be prepared to invest some time in them to make sure your playing comes across as clear and in control!

## Example

**THIS** phrase comes screaming in with these bent doublestops at the 15th fret. This is about attitude, rather than fluid phrasing. Use the bridge pickup with medium gain and really dig in with your pick. This type of sound is more 'driven amp' than 'distortion pedal', so attack is crucial.

## Example

**SHIFTING** down to a shape 1 A minor pentatonic, this example is essentially a repeated idea that changes slightly each time as it builds. Note some of the bends are whole tone and others are just a quarter tone. This isn't written in stone, it's just a guide. It's best not to be too tidy or rehearsed about this; your ears will tell you what sounds right.

## Example

**THIS** ascending arpeggiated figure is reminiscent of Jimmy's playing on *Private Life*. Using ringing triads (C major-based triads over the E chord may seem odd, but it works okay here!) and the odd carefully placed slide, this might not seem awfully 'bluesy' on the first listen – but check out the intro to any version of *Red House* and see if you agree that this is basically an update of that idea...

## Example

**CONTINUING** the ascending arpeggio idea, this example shows how you might come out the other end, back into a more traditional 'lead' style, using shape 4 of the A minor pentatonic. It's incredibly useful to be aware of how the 'CAGED' position chords occupy the same territory when looking at combining ideas like this.

## Example

**JOE** starts with a smooth line using A minor pentatonic (A C D E G) based largely around the 12th fret position. This kind of line, with the smooth position change via that E-D slide, is very reminiscent of Eric Clapton's 'Beano' period.

All licks are played free-time, so rhythm values are approximate

1

3

## Example

**EXPANDING** on that theme, Joe extends the line down into the 5th position box shape. To create melodic variety in your solos, it's important not only to learn multiple scale shapes, but also to move smoothly between them.

1

4

## Example

**WITH** Cream, Eric Clapton's style evolved beyond his original Chicago blues influences. The band had much more of an improvisational style, and Eric's phrases became longer, freer and typical of the 'raga' flavour that was predominant in so much rock music of the time.

1

4

## Example

**LIKE** Example 3, this one is based largely around E minor pentatonic (E G A B D), but it will also work in an E major blues tonality. Note the G to G# bend at the start of bar 3 – Eric frequently mixed minor pentatonic and Mixolydian (E F# G# A B C# D).

1

3



## Example

**THIS** example borrows a little from Jimmy Page's playing on the first Led Zeppelin album and a little from Eric Clapton's soloing on *Crossroads*, in turn influenced by the Chuck Berry school of rock 'n' roll licks. Don't feel you need to duplicate each and every semiquaver faithfully; this is about creating excitement and grabbing attention, rather than precision.

$\text{♩} = 130$   $8^{\text{va}}$  **E5** **G5/E** **A5/E** **G5/E**

BU BU BU BU

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

## Example

**CONTINUING** along similar lines to Example 1, we again have a traditional-style blues motif supercharged with more distortion and attack. The finger vibrato would also be a relatively recent invention, given that the use of lighter strings was only just beginning to become popular – so bear this in mind and give the vibrato special attention, rather than wobbling by default.

**E5** **G5/E** **A5/E** **G5/E** **E5**

PB 15 BD PB 14

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

## Example

**AS** well as developing on traditional ideas, the tactile nature of a loud electric guitar with lighter strings made phrases like these possible for the first time. Jeff Beck was quick to explore this with The Yardbirds. This descending E Dorian style line is played solely on the B string with as much of a legato feel as possible.

**E5** **G5/E** **A5/E** **G5/E**

3 3 3 3 3 3

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E





1

4

## Example

**HERE'S** a little phrase that Robben says he likes using to kick off a solo. We're in E, and this is the E minor pentatonic (E G A B D). Robben bends the G note (minor 3rd) slightly sharp to approach the G# that's in the underlying chord.

## Example

**APPROACHING** the change to the IV chord (A), Robben uses almost exactly the same line again, but this time he ends it with the A and E notes to fit the new A chord.



**B**

**E**

**B7#9#5** **E9**

## Example

**WALTER** starts by showing us a typical lick that he'd play in the 3rd fret position in G. He's using minor pentatonic (G B, C D F) with the addition of the flat 5th (D $\flat$ ).

**N.C.**

**BU**

## Example

**HERE**, the root (G) is under his first finger on the B string. Many classic BB King licks work around this position, and Walter starts with a BB-influenced line using major pentatonic (G A B D E), shifting down to the 3rd-fret minor pentatonic shape we saw in Ex1.

**N.C.**

**BU BU**

## Example

**HERE'S** another interesting way to blend major and minor pentatonic ideas. Walter starts at the 8th fret again, and his three-note pattern is major pentatonic. He then simply moves the whole shape up three frets, and all the notes are from G minor pentatonic.

N.C.

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

1

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

2

## Example

**ONE** way Gary would add thickness and attack to a single-note line is to 'rake' into bends. You'll hear I've done that several times in this example, most pointedly on the first note. I haven't added this to the transcription, as I feel this is something that should be assimilated into one's style rather than consciously thought about – as soon as possible anyway! I'm using the bridge pickup and heavy overdrive.

Swung  $\text{♩} = 117$   $8^{\text{va}}$  E5

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

## Example

**APPROACH** the vibrato on the first note carefully, allowing it to be heard clearly before adding any 'wobble'. Gary would use alternate, economy and legato picking on phrases like this, depending on the effect he wanted – I've opted for a legato, leaning towards an economy picking approach here, but it's simple (if not easy!) to 'convert' this into an alternate-picked frenzy. Check out the solo on Thin Lizzy's *Toughest Street In Town* and you'll hear what I mean.

Swung  $8^{\text{va}}$

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

## Example

**TAKING** a more traditional blues approach, displaying a little of his Clapton side, Gary would often add little details such as the rapid triplet in beat 3 of bar. This isn't a particularly taxing phrase technically, but Gary had a way of making each note punch through with a sense of importance. This isn't easy to explain, but if you start by playing through the second bar with an exaggerated pick attack, keeping as much clarity on each note as possible, you'll be well on the way.

Swung E5

BU

15-(17) 12 15 12 14/15 14 12 14 14 12 12 13 14 12 14 13 12 11

## Example

**MOVING** to a lower register, this example showcases how Gary would often approach a 'shape 3' minor pentatonic/blues scale. Wade straight in with a wide vibrato on the first string bend – lower register notes seem to respond so much better to this than high ones – and keep things as smooth as possible with legato and slides as you descend. It's not imperative that you emulate this exactly, as long as the overall effect is fluid.

Swung B5 A5

BU

7-(9) 5 8 5 7 6 5 8 5 8 7 5 7 5 7 6 4 7 5 6

## Example

**FOR** a fun, flashy finish, I've gone with this series of trills, descending down the 5th string, ready to jump back into the rhythm part (in the context of a live performance at least). If you're not used to this type of playing, it can take a while to get brain and fingers playing nicely, but if you're patient and don't put your fingers under too much strain repeating this endlessly, you'll find it becomes second nature!

*tr* *tr* *tr* *tr*

*tr* *tr* *tr* *tr*

7 7 5 (7 5) 4 (5 4) 3 (5 3) 2 3 2

# Example

**PHIL HILBORNE:** This exercise can be tackled at different levels.

**1.** Play through the arpeggios (Fm7, Fm7 $\flat$ 5, Fmaj7) including repeats to get used to the fingerings of three common arpeggio types and shapes. Take note of the differences and the similarities between them. **2.** Look at how they relate to the chord progression – the Fm7 is the notes of the accompanying harmony, but the Fm7 $\flat$ 5 functions as D $\flat$ 9 and the Fmaj7 functions as Dm9. This shows how you could play over a set of changes using arpeggios without moving position.

**3.** Play all the arpeggios in a rhythmically free manner – repeat some of the notes, use interval leaps and generally aim to make them sound like music and not an exercise. **4.** Play chromatic approach notes from either above or below all of the chord tones, placing them on strong beats. Play chromatic connections between all the tone and minor 3rd intervals and, finally, (see Ex2 below) experiment with enclosures by perhaps using a scale note above each chord tone, chromatic note below followed by the chord tone itself.

$\text{♩} = 126$  Fm7

E B G D A E  
1, 3

D $\flat$ 7  
Fm7 $\flat$ 5 implying D $\flat$ 9

E B G D A E  
5, 7

Dm7  
Fmaj7 implying Dm9

E B G D A E  
9, 11

Ex 2 Fm7

Try similar idea and variations on all arpeggios

E B G D A E

# Example

**DENNY ILETT:** One of the biggest 'ruts' for guitarists to fall into is getting stuck in the standard 'box' shapes. I try to encourage students to look at the guitar in a more linear fashion to help facilitate longer, more melodic, lines. Here's a simple example...

Cmaj7

## Example

**GEOFF LEA:** This exercise works on several levels: firstly, you are learning the blues scale – the scale that all the cool riffs ever were born from. Secondly, it is an alternate picking exercise including string skipping. Thirdly, it is an ear-training exercise; play the exercise then try singing the ascending notes before playing them. Fourthly, experiment moving the ascending notes into different orders and see if you come up with any cool riffs yourself.

$\text{♩} = 120$

*mf*

## Example

**JOHN WHEATCROFT:** All you need is a guitar and some way to record yourself, even your smartphone memo function will do. We're going to divide the 12-bar sequence into three four-bar chunks. Pick a tempo and groove and start the recorder. The aim is to alternate between four bars rhythm, four bars solo, four bars rhythm and so on. As the progression takes three groups of four to complete and this is an odd number, the order of rhythm/solo/rhythm will flip each alternate cycle of 12 to solo/rhythm/solo. Try this without a metronome if you can, keeping time with your rhythmic choices and

try your very best to not speed up or slow down. Keep this going for at least a minute or so. Now, here comes the fun part: play back your recording and jam along, choosing the alternate role each time, so you're now soloing for four bars against the rhythm you've just recorded and then comping behind your solo, and so on. Not only is this a lot of fun, feeling much more like playing than practising, but you'll soon figure out what your timekeeping is like. Can you tell what chords you're playing over when you hear the solo, and how does it feel to play over your own backing?

1st time Rhythm, 2nd time Lead

1st time Lead, 2nd time Rhythm

1st time Rhythm, 2nd time Lead

## Example

**THE** three-note intro lick is simple enough, but to capture that bluesy feel, try pulling the first note ever so slightly sharp – perhaps not even as much as a quarter tone. You'll notice how much more personality this has than if you just play a simple pull-off. Moving onto bars 2 and 3, pay close attention to the staccato markings and muted percussive strokes. Feel free to make these more flamboyant than the notation suggests, but don't 'overcook' it!

Musical notation for Example 1. The piece is in 4/4 time with a tempo of 96 bpm. The key signature has two flats (Bb and Eb). The notation includes a treble clef staff and a guitar staff with strings E, B, G, D, A, E labeled. The first bar features a three-note lick with a quarter note (1/4) and a pull-off (PO) marking. The second bar has a Bb minor chord (Bbm) and a BU (bend) marking. The third bar contains BU and BD (bend and drop) markings. The fourth bar includes a 1/4 note, a BU marking, and a muted percussive stroke (X) on the strings.

## Example

**THE** small rake leading into the beginning of this lick is an easy way to add a classy flourish to a phrase. It can be addictive, so use sparingly! As this pentatonic lick heads down to the lower strings, a harder pick attack gives extra drive and definition to what is quite a lightly distorted tone. Watch for quarter-tone bends, staccato notes and the pre-bend in bar 2.

Musical notation for Example 2. The piece is in 4/4 time. The key signature has two flats (Bb and Eb). The notation includes a treble clef staff and a guitar staff with strings E, B, G, D, A, E labeled. The first bar features a rake technique (rake - - - -) and a BU marking. The second bar has an Eb minor chord (Ebm) and a BU marking. The third bar contains a PB (pre-bend) and BD (bend and drop) marking. The fourth bar includes a 1/4 note and a BU marking. The fifth bar has a 1/4 note and a BU marking. The sixth bar contains a 1/4 note and a BU marking.

## Example

**STARTING** by spelling out an F minor triad. This idea takes more of a melodic than rhythmic approach, then devoting much of bar 2 to the bold crotchet triplet phrase that leads into bar 3. This is definitely about the precision and delivery. Sell that line!

## Example

**THOUGH** this phrase is short, it's heavy on detail. The quarter-tone bend at the beginning of the pick-up bar needs to be just right, but 'thrown in' casually, immediately pulling off to that staccato E. Use a subtle vibrato at the beginning of bar, then opening up to the muted string noises and Gilmour-approved doublestops. Again, the slight bend/pull sharp may need some practice at first, but it's not technically difficult – it just needs to be 'right'! You'll know when it is.

## Example

**STARTING** with a Hendrix-style flourish, this example demonstrates one of the ways Eric steps outside the standard pentatonic 'boxes'. In this case, it's subtly, by using the third string to get the E at the beginning of the second beat of bar 2. Playing in groups of four, we graduate by step to the bottom of shape 1, then finish off by skipping up an octave to the 4th string. You'll often hear Joe Bonamassa using this move, too!

## Example

**EXPLORING** a less bluesy, more 'diatonic' approach, this example implies triads of D, E min, D7, G and A minor before outlining a D major arpeggio over the last three beats of bar 2. It sounds complicated until you feel the shape under your fingers. Though Eric sometimes uses hybrid picking for this kind of phrase, I've opted for 'flatpicking'. Check the video and you'll see the 'down-down-up' approach.

## Example

**SLIDING** from a bluesy doublestop phrase to an E minor arpeggio in bar 3, this shouldn't present too many issues – apart from the final pinch harmonic... Eric is fond of extending the guitar's natural range by completing arpeggio-based licks with these. The best advice is to work your way along the string to find the right harmonic, then make a mental note and keep doing it until your success rate improves!

## Example

**THE** most challenging of the four exercises, this phrase graduates through a combination of pentatonic shapes (mostly shape 4) in groups of five. Each time you change string at the beginning of each group/beat, use one downstroke across the strings for the fifth note leading to the first note of the next group (watch the video to see this happening). The first three beats of bar 1 are played in this way, leading to a sextuplet in beat 4. Bar 2 is relatively simple, though details like the quarter-tone bends are essential.

## Example

**COMBINING** a smattering of doublestops with some minor (as opposed to pentatonic) scale runs puts us in unfamiliar territory very quickly. There is a certain logic to where thumb and/or fingers should be used, but it pays to experiment. Do check out the video footage for some hints, though. Rhythm is also critically important: don't feel you have to be 'on the button' with timing. Pulling back a little bit sometimes can add a pleasing gravitas!

♩ = 126 Dm

## Example

**THE** raked G minor chord on beat 1 uses thumb, index, middle and ring fingers (p, i, m, a) in quick succession. Keeping your fingers together and executing the rake with your whole hand seems to get the most uniform result. In bar 2, I've managed (somehow) to use slides and hammer-ons to work up towards the 10th fret at the beginning of bar 3 with my index finger, making the following minor/pentatonic phrase fairly logical and easy. Again, check the video closely for hints.

## Example

**ALTERNATING** between thumb and index finger, this *Sultans*-type phrase is probably the trickiest, especially the moving top notes. Running through these slowly – just rehearsing the movements with no concern for time or melody – is usually the best approach for quicker phrases such as this. Keep it relaxed and don't allow the tempo to creep up until you can play it without looking. The trade-off is that you get a little desensitised to the excitement of 'nailing it', but it is worth the effort!

## Example

**SKIPPING** across a shape 1 pentatonic in a way that would be far trickier and less characterful with a pick, this example finishes the solo off nicely. Like Example 3, it's pretty much exclusively thumb and index finger; your middle finger would be great for adding in an extra voice for any doublestop phrases you might like to continue with.

## Example

**THE** pick-up bar is a good example of how little your fretting hand needs to be doing at times. We're painting with big bold strokes here, using different triads the way that a piano player (or SRV) might. The bold upstrokes on the open strings add rhythmic interest and cover our track, while changing to the next chord shape. We finish with a Chuck Berry-style doublestop phrase, adding some melodic detail but keeping things nice and dense – for now...

## Example

**SHIFTING** the moving triads into higher inversions, we link to what is basically a melody harmonised in 3rds. Don't be disappointed in yourself if this takes a little while to get under your fingers – having initially improvised the idea quite messily, it took me several takes to clean it up, too. The trick is to rehearse the movements slowly until you no longer have to think about it. Then you can relax and let them do their stuff while you think about phrasing/dynamics and so on.

## Example

**THE CLOSEST** you'll find to a straight pentatonic here, this example borrows from Jimi Hendrix, as well as Chuck Berry in the first bar, with those quarter-tone bends and doublestops, moving into a slightly more 'guitar solo' style run on the lower strings. These sound fuller, so we can afford to do this without the overall sound becoming empty. The triplet feel also keeps things moving along nicely.



## Example

**NOTE** the symmetrical pattern that leads into the first beat of bar 1. It's generated by brushing the pick down from the third to the second string, then using upstrokes from the first to second string as it reverses back to the final F#. Don't be surprised if this is trickier than it appears at first, though once you've mastered this, you'll find most of the ideas here fall into place quite quickly.

Example 1 musical notation showing a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The first two measures contain a symmetrical pattern of eighth notes with triplets. The third measure features a Bm7 chord with a wavy line above it. The bass clef staff shows fret numbers: 11, 10, 12, 10, 12, 10, 11 for the first two measures, and 12, 10 for the third measure.

## Example

**THE** big deal with this example is the inclusion of a 15 (F), but not where you would usually expect to find it in this shape of blues scale, at the 10th fret of the third string. Instead, to make this pattern work, we're stretching momentarily down to the 6th fret of the second string, before resuming the more 'regular' pentatonic shape. We finish with a similar lick to Ex 1, this time an octave lower.

Example 2 musical notation showing a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The first two measures contain a symmetrical pattern of eighth notes with triplets. The third measure features a Bm7 chord with a wavy line above it. The bass clef staff shows fret numbers: 9, 7, 10, 10, (12), (10), 7, 10, 7, 9, 7, 10, 6, 9, 7, 9, 9. The notation includes 'BU' and 'BD' markings above the fret numbers.

Example 3 musical notation showing a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The first two measures contain a symmetrical pattern of eighth notes with triplets. The third measure features a Bm7 chord with a wavy line above it. The bass clef staff shows fret numbers: 7, 9, 9, 7, 9, 7, 9, 7, 9.



**C7**  
(8<sup>va</sup>)

## Example

IF you're into the pentatonic 'shape' system, you'll see this starts with shape 4, then slides down to shape 3 in bar 2. Though not the most technical of the examples, this shape can present challenges, such as keeping clarity between the third and fourth strings at the 12th fret during bar 1, while being on top of details such as the quarter-tone bends leading into it. Routine it slowly and it will all fall into place.

**G7** **C#7**

Swung

## Example

**USING** doublestops is a great way to add a blues edge and thickness to a solo line – useful if you're playing in a trio format. This example doesn't shift at all, staying with shape 1 C minor pentatonic, though avoiding the E<sub>1</sub> on the 11th fret of the top E/first string, which wouldn't be a great idea over the C7 backing chord... Note the Clapton-style flourish at the beginning of bar 2, followed by more quarter-tone bends.

**C7**

## Example

**USING** a shape 1 G minor pentatonic isn't the first thing I'd normally recommend over an E7 chord, but sometimes you can 'force' these things and make it work in context. In this case, it implies an E7#9 (yep, the 'Hendrix' chord) tonality, while sitting unusually across the beat in a way often done by Robin Trower and Gary Moore. This means you could solo over this whole backing with just the one shape!

## Example

**THIS** first example uses deliberately contrasting smooth and staccato phrasing, as you'll see in that first bar. The vibrato in bars 2 and 4 is fairly rapid and shallow, which is a detail worth spending time on – it complements this style so well. The second half of the phrase picks up the pace a little, while shifting position. This needs to be accurate but sound as effortless as possible, so be prepared to give this attention.

## Example

**GREAT** improvisation often features the development of phrases and themes, so this second example starts in a similar manner to the first, though reflects the change to D minor in bar 2 by landing on that F natural. The rhythm has also followed a similar structure, though this changes in bars 3 and 4. We're shifting to a higher register again with this hybrid of E minor pentatonic shape 1 and A minor pentatonic shape 3.

## Example

**APPROACHING** the end of the solo, we're building to a peak here, with some higher register playing and wider string bends. Note that vibrato is not added as a 'default' as can happen so often in this style of playing: it's saved for special moments such as the beginning of bars 3 and 4. It's worth recording your own soloing to check out how often you really want to apply vibrato. It can be very enlightening!



## Example

**STRUMMED** using only the pick (or 'flatpick' in some circles), this example uses that classic descending turnaround, followed by a bit of interplay between major and minor – such a staple of any blues music. Ideally, the feel will be nice and loose, but not involve too much extra noise from surplus open strings. The best way to develop this? You guessed right – practise slowly until it's second nature!

Musical notation for Example 1, showing a descending turnaround. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 4/4. The notation includes a treble clef and a guitar staff with fret numbers. Chords are indicated above the staff: E7, A7dim, Am/E, and N.C. (Natural Chord). The guitar staff shows fret numbers for each string (E, B, G, D, A, E) and includes a 'PM' (palm mute) symbol over the first two bars.

## Example

**CHANGING** from B7 to another type of A7 chord shows the possibility of arranging chord voicings to play arrangements that might not be possible purely with open-position chords. Using an open string can help facilitate a seamless change between different positions on the fretboard for the solo-style licks at the end – great when you just need that extra nanosecond to get your fret hand in position.

Musical notation for Example 2, showing a sequence of chords: B7, A7, A6, A7, and N.C. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 4/4. The notation includes a treble clef and a guitar staff with fret numbers. A 'PM' (palm mute) symbol is shown over the first two bars. The guitar staff shows fret numbers for each string (E, B, G, D, A, E) and includes a 'PM' (palm mute) symbol over the first two bars.

Musical notation for Example 3, showing a sequence of chords: B7, A7, A6, A7, and N.C. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 4/4. The notation includes a treble clef and a guitar staff with fret numbers. A 'PM' (palm mute) symbol is shown over the first two bars. The guitar staff shows fret numbers for each string (E, B, G, D, A, E) and includes a 'PM' (palm mute) symbol over the first two bars.

## Example 1

**IT'S** clear what inspired this lick! I've added some drive and a modern twist with some selective palm muting to keep things defined in the last two bars. Chuck would have used fairly heavy flatwound strings originally, and this was arguably a key factor in the development of his early style. The slides and hammer-ons from minor to major (rather than any string bends) are a homage to that.

♩ = 150

A5

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

1

D5

A5

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

3

## Example 2

**THOUGH** this idea isn't lifted from any particular solo, it demonstrates how modern blues and rock players take similar pentatonic note groupings, though this is expanded to include the distinctive 6th – in this case, F#. With a cleaner tone, this would benefit from alternate picking, giving more of a *Heartbreaker*-era Jimmy Page effect, but I went for this smoother-sounding approach in the heat of the moment.

♩ = 150

D5

A5

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

## Example 3

**AGAIN,** we're looking at how players took the style of what Chuck invented and seeing where they went with it. This grouping of notes takes from his rhythmic approach to phrasing, which is as important as note choice. Sometimes it's interesting to choose a small group of notes and explore the possibilities. This can facilitate melodic and rhythmic development – and makes the 'duck-walk' easier to perform...



## Example

**HERE WE ADD** a little bit of harmony with a solo passage played using mainly doublestops along the D and G strings. There are a few triads that punctuate the proceedings, adding a bit of harmonic contrast, plus the occasional slide to deal with along the way. The key is to get into the spirit of early R&B guitar and cut the doublestops short, but aim to get them spot on, rhythmically speaking, for the best effect.

$\text{♩} = 149$   $A\flat 7$

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

1

6

$Cm7$   $Bm7$   $A\flat 9$

## Example

**THIS** angular idea nails the dominant 7th of the underlying  $G7$  (F) at the beginning of the first full bar, then wastes no time heading for a  $B\flat$  in bar 2. This happens to be the dominant  $\flat 7$ th, which gives the  $C7$  chord its name. As you can hear, this isn't about constructing complex lines unless you want it to be; these ideas are all easily found in the regular pentatonic scale shapes.

$\text{♩} = 101$

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

$G7$   $C7$   $G7$

## Example

**THIS** example seems a lot more complex, but if you break it down, you'll see it's pretty logical where the fretting hand fingers should fall. While this is hardly novice level, it does put your fingers in places that create melodic patterns that give a real alternative to the regular pentatonic licks. As your ears may have already told you,  $B\flat$  is the dominant 7th for the first two bars of  $C$ .

$C7$   $G7$

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

$B\flat$

## Example

**RECYCLING** the string-skipping idea that opened the solo, this phrase opens with the F that appears in a G7 chord. You'll hear it occur again in the next bar, and looking at the shapes your fingers are tracing, I hope you see this as mostly pentatonic with a couple of added notes here and there. Remember, these examples are designed to demonstrate as much as possible in a few bars. Silence is a valid option sometimes!

## Example

**YOU** may recognise this arpeggio-like shape as similar to some of the ideas in Example 2. The sound is similar. Starting on the root note (C in this case), this shape can be used all over the fretboard (access permitting) and integrates well with the pentatonic/blues scale. Like any new shape, it won't necessarily fall into place straight away. Run through it patiently, rehearsing the movements and it will eventually stick.

## Example

**GOING** in with a combined minor 3rd and 6th (both given the characteristic quarter-tone bend), this example sets up the funky feel with some swung semiquavers, which aren't that fast at this tempo. Elsewhere, we stay within the bounds of the shape 1 pentatonic. A challenge is making it 'sit' nicely over the backing. The semiquavers can be loose in feel, but the more strident bends need to be on the nail, timing-wise.



# Example

**THIS EXAMPLE** is all about the sustain. It might not get into 'go for a bite' territory, but in 1966 it must have seemed almost supernatural (excuse the pun). This isn't super distorted, it's more about volume and proximity to the amp. Subtle compression can help if you're restricted to lower volumes. Look out for the quarter tone bends – and if you want a bit more 'Clapton', substitute the F natural in bar 2 with an F sharp.

# Example

**MOVING AWAY** from pentatonic, this idea combines fragments of C major arpeggio (play a C barre chord at the 8th fret then check how the notes line up) and Mixolydian mode – basically a version of the C major scale with Bb replacing the B natural. It uses a strong pick attack to generate enough energy for those hammer-ons and pull-offs. The Bb is heavy in bar 3, before resolving in bar 4 as part of the descending run.

## Example

**ALMOST** completely pentatonic-derived, but with a little twist in its tail, this example makes pretty obvious use of the shape 1 G minor pentatonic, then chiming in with that E in the second bar. A small detail perhaps, but this is the kind of thinking that can freshen up what may approach becoming a generic lick if only ever used in its 'pure pentatonic' state. These scales are only a starting point, after all.

## Example

**FOLLOWING** a more linear approach along the fretboard, this final phrase plays with some major/minor ambiguity with the move between Bb and B natural, then a succession of sliding intervals on the 1st and 3rd strings – omitting the 2nd until the middle of bar 2. The ending lick stays linear on the 1st string (mostly because that's what happened on the day), but it fits with the concept of avoiding too many scale 'boxes'.

## Example

**USING** the neck pickup, this example starts with a simple melodic figure, then moves away from the standard shape 1 pentatonic by adding in the odd F sharp from bar 3. This makes for a more melodic sound, similar to the E natural minor scale, but taking the approach of adding notes to a familiar scale, rather than learning a 'new' one and starting from square one.

# Example

**MAKING** further use of the F sharp and straddling pentatonic shapes 2 and 3, this idea gives the impression of a D major arpeggio in bar 3 by quoting F sharp, D and A in quick succession. Though this isn't necessarily the most natural lick in the world under your fingertips, the slides and legato make for quite a smooth sound. Look at these carefully, they are the key to this lick.

# Example

**THIS** alternate picked phrase seems to leave the pentatonic scale behind completely, but it's a three-note-per-string sequence that can be traced directly back to shapes 4, 5, 1 and 2 in that order ascending the fretboard. The F sharp and C natural mean that we are playing a version of the E natural minor scale – but if, like many players, you prefer to think in terms of shapes this can be viewed as an enhanced pentatonic.

## Example

**RAMPING** down from the full-on approach of Ex 3, this example stays true to the pentatonic shapes, but makes full use of the interlinked patterns, featuring 3, 4, 5, 1 and 2 in that order. Not many classic blues devices like quarter tone bends or vibrato here, ascending through the pentatonic shapes melodically until that wide tone and a half bend finishes things off.

## Example

**SLIDING** triads played on the top three strings with a percussive attack and plenty of muted string hits characterise this example. You'll find ideas like this can be rehased in an almost unlimited amount of variations, though it may take time to develop the right touch with the picking/strumming hand.

## Example

**STARTING** with a similar 'small chord' approach to Example 1, this example goes on to demonstrate more of a 'solo' approach. Nevertheless, single notes are kept to a minimum to keep the sound as full as possible. While there isn't the same pressure to fill space as in more rock-based styles, the guitar is frequently accompanied only by drums in this piece.

## Example

**HAVING** established the basic groove, the guitar moves further into solo territory as the piece progresses. The Hendrix style double stops have become such a staple that it's hard to imagine hearing this kind of playing for the first time. It's interesting to think that most of these ideas could be transposed to a Chicago style blues with relatively little effort. We finish by joining in with the backing riff, albeit up an octave.





## Example Continued

B7 $\sharp$ 5 Em/maj9

8va

E B G D A E

14 15 14 12 16 14 16 12 14 16 12 14 12 16 12 14 16 13 14 12 10 12 10 12 14

3

## Example

**JUST A SHORT** run to finish things off with a flourish! It doesn't contain any non-pentatonic notes, but if I were to play this again, I'd sharpen both those Ds. Let's call this an example of how the straighter blues feel will sit over some of those more unusual chords.

Em/maj9

8va

E B G D A E

14 12 14 12 14 12 15 12 15 17 17 (19)

1

## Example

**AFTER THE LITTLE PICKUP BAR**, the example makes a feature of longer sustained notes contrasted with short bursts of snappier phrasing. Keep the vibrato subtle – if you decide to use it at all. Sometimes it's nice to hold a note still for a while before phrasing it in. There is a slightly swung feel to a couple of moments here, but don't feel tied to any specifics, as this will stifle your interpretation of the phrase.

$\text{♩} = \text{♪♪♪} = 57$

Cm Fm

E B G D A E

10 (12) 8 11 (13) 11 8 10 (12) (10) 8 10 10 8 10 8 10 8

1

## Example

**AS THE BACKING MOMENTARILY SHIFTS** to C major, the solo follows suit, using this C major pentatonic pattern, which is then subtly altered to become the 6th then 7th (D and Eb) of the F minor chord in the next bar. From here, you could look at playing in the context of a shape 1 F minor pentatonic – for now...

1

## Example

**GETTING A LITTLE MORE FLAMBOYANT** over the two bars of C minor, this example uses lots of slides to move between positions, and just to add a slinky feel that differs from the more usual string bends. Watch out for the little grace notes that signal some of these – though once you actually apply this to the fretboard, there is a certain logic to it, which makes it simpler than the transcription looks. Watch particularly for the quarter tone bends and pickup change!

1

2

## Example

**THOUGH THERE IS UNDENIABLY** a handful of notes in this example, glancing through it reveals that much of it is repetition using the relatively friendly shape 1 minor pentatonic. There are shades of Clapton and Page here, though sometimes it's best to just let it fly and see what comes out. Sometimes what seemed like a mistake while you were playing can become a new favourite lick! It's well worth recording yourself now and again to see what you hear back...

12/8

Cm

BU

This 12/8 bar continues below

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

1 2

Gm

BU BD

2 continued

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

Gm

Change to Bridge Pickup

BU BD

BU BD

2

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

## Example

**THOUGH THERE IS UNDENIABLY** a handful of notes in this example, glancing through it reveals that much of it is repetition using the relatively friendly shape 1 minor pentatonic. There are shades of Clapton and Page here, though sometimes it's best to just let it fly and see what comes out. Sometimes what seemed like a mistake while you were playing can become a new favourite lick! It's well worth recording yourself now and again to see what you hear back...

12/8

Cm

BU

This 12/8 bar continues below

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

1 2

Gm

BU BD

2 continued

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

# Example

**WE'RE GOING IN** on a laid-back note, D in this case. We have the space and time to call attention to very minimal, melodic playing that attracts more attention by not blasting us with volleys of notes! A few choice phrases from a shape 3/4 G minor pentatonic. Pay close attention to details like the occasional contrasting staccato note and those quick slides.

♩ = 90

Gm

BU

13-(15)

BU BD BU BD

11-(13) (11) 10-(11)-(10) 8

E B G D A E

1

E B G D A E

10/12 10 12 10 10/11 10 8 10 8 8 8 10 8

14

E B G D A E

3

# Example

**WE SWITCH REGISTER** to a shape 1 minor pentatonic down at the 3rd fret, though we also shift down to a shape 5 next door at the 1st/3rd frets. The dynamics don't just encompass loud and quiet – there are short and long notes, indicated by the staccato markings that occur (as well as most of the other examples). Again, there are a few little slides – these are interchangeable with bends if you prefer.

Cm

BU BD BU BU

5 5-(7)-(5)-3 5 5-3 6-(8) 3 6-3 5-(7) 3 3 6 5/6 5-3 5-3

E B G D A E

1

Gm

E B G D A E

4

5 3 3/5 3 5/3 1 3 1 3 1

# Example

**COVERING A WIDE REGISTER** on the fretboard within four bars, pay close attention to where the slides lead to position changes, as this is key to making the transitions smoothly. The semiquavers at the end of bar 3 are potentially tricky, but going through the movements slowly half a dozen times will work wonders. If it takes a few more slow repetitions, so be it – you will get there!

Example 1: Musical notation for a guitar solo in G minor. The piece is in 4/4 time. The first system (measures 1-2) features a Gm chord and a Dm chord. The second system (measures 3-4) features a Gm chord and a BU (bend up) instruction. The fretboard diagrams show the following fret numbers:   
 System 1: 3/5, 3, 5/7, 5, 7, 5, 6/5, 3, 5/7, 6, 8.   
 System 2: 11, 8, 11/13, 10, 13/15, 15, 15, 13, 15/18, 15, 18 (20).

# Example

**PLAYED EXCLUSIVELY** within the shape 1 G minor pentatonic that lives up between the 15th and 18th frets, this example could almost be from a Thin Lizzy solo! There is a lick very similar to this at the end of Junior Marvin's solo in *Waiting In Vain*. Take your time and pay attention to where notes are picked/legato and there shouldn't be too many problems. The wide bend at the end happens as I realise I don't really want to end on C, so try for a two tone bend to D!

Example 2: Musical notation for a guitar solo in G minor. The piece is in 4/4 time. The first system (measures 1-2) features a Gm chord and a BU (bend up) instruction. The second system (measures 3-4) features a Gm chord and a BU (bend up) instruction. The fretboard diagrams show the following fret numbers:   
 System 1: 15, 18, 15, 17, 15, 17, 15, 17, 15, 17, 15, 17, 15, 17, 15.   
 System 2: 17, 15, 17, 15, 17, 15, 17, 15, 17, 15, 18, 15, 18, 15, 18, 15, 18, BU (22).

# Example

**TAKING AN OLD SCHOOL PENTATONIC IDEA** on the open strings and applying it to this 7/4 time signature gives an interesting twist. Let the notes ring together as messily as you like, while keeping an ear open for beat 1 of the next bar. Be ready for a wide position shift!

Em

Let ring

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

# Example

**IN THE FIRST HALF OF THIS EXAMPLE**, the more melodic phrasing switches register and acts as a set-up to the second half. Targeting, or accenting certain beats over the backing track can lead to interesting cross rhythms between the lead line and the backing track, while bursts of rapid alternate picking draw from Steve's Les Paul influence.

Em

8va

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

1

# Example

**THE MOST TECHNICALLY DEMANDING** of the four exercises, this example makes a real feature of alternate picking. This isn't 'shred' playing and has little imperfections and dynamics, but the idea is to keep the unbroken line pretty consistent until the respite at the beginning of Ex 4. Slow, methodical practice is the only way you'll get there, so remember the old 'more haste, less speed' axiom...

Em

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

1

## Example

**THIS HARMONISED THREE NOTE SHIFTING CHORD PATTERN** is a real departure from pentatonic blues licks, but comes from a pentatonic based melody on the low E and A strings. Like some of the other ideas, it's tricky at first, but once your fingers are 'programmed' to fall in the right places it's very effective. Ideas like this tend to work better with lower gain settings like this, but your experience may vary!

1

## Example

**THIS SUSTAINED E9TH CHORD**, is a strong base to improvise a few licks that imply the same harmony for the next few beats. I've also stated the A chord in bar 2 before having a play with the G and D major triads close by. Pulling out a couple of more traditional licks for the return to E in the next two bars allows a ringing, full sound. The double stops leading from bar 3 to 4 are played using pick and fingers.

1

3

## Example

**THE LONG A7** at the start sets the stage for the first bar, changing to A minor 7th in the second, introducing a bit of minor pentatonic before this *The Wind Cries Mary*-style E major. This is where we stay for the next two bars, using the convenient doublestop hammer-ons between the 9th and 11th frets that give implied harmony. We're not playing chord melodies but it's filling a lot of space melodically!

## Example

**SKIPPING TO THE BEGINNING** of the next 12 bar progression, here we see how the solo has progressed a lot further into traditional 'lead' guitar territory. Theoretically, the ground has been laid during the first time round the chords, and now we can play a little more comfortably. This is an improvisation, so the notation is a little quantized, but with the audio as a guide it should work fine.

## Example

**TACKLING THE B OR V CHORD**, I've started by outlining a B major triad (actually, hammering on from the D natural that would imply a B minor one in a typical blues style) then playing with some slides, before transposing a very similar approach down two frets to A and extending the lick across to the lower strings. We finish by reiterating some traditional open string ringing licks and marking the turnaround to the B chord – this time with a minor feel.

**TACKLING THE B OR V CHORD,** I've started by outlining a B major triad (actually, hammering on from the D natural that would imply a B minor one in a typical blues style) then playing with some slides, before transposing a very similar approach down two frets to A and extending the lick across to the lower strings. We finish by reiterating some traditional open string ringing licks and marking the turnaround to the B chord – this time with a minor feel.

**B implied** **A implied**

Let ring

Let ring BU BD

**E** **A** **E** **Bm7 w / bar**

Let ring

Let ring w / bar

## Example

**AS YOU CAN SEE,** this is basically a series of intervals, played in harmony starting with an E7 chord in the first position. As a rule, I'm lightly muting the bass notes to give extra clarity and punch. I'm using the pick for these and middle finger for the top notes, though there's no particular convention being followed here – just whatever feels most practical and comfortable.

$\text{♩} = 95$  Swung

**E7** **A** **E7** **A** **D** **A** **E7** **A7** **E**

\*PM

\*Lightly mute bass notes

**E6** **E#6** **E9**

Let ring

# Example

**AT THE BEGINNING** of this example, take care to avoid the unused open 3rd string – not so much of a problem over the chord of A7 here, but not desirable in many other instances. Having stated the harmony pretty strongly at this point, we're free to take a brief major pentatonic interlude, switching to E for the last two bars with minimal adjustment.

Example 1: Musical notation for guitar and piano. The guitar part (top) shows a sequence of chords: A7sus4, D, A5, D, and A. The piano part (bottom) includes a Pedal Marking (PM) and a 'Let ring' instruction. The guitar part features a major pentatonic interlude in the key of A major, with fret numbers 0, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 7, 5, 6. The piano part features a major pentatonic interlude in the key of E major, with fret numbers 0, 0, 6, 7, 6, 4, 7, 4, 5, 6, 7, 5, 7, 6, 5, 4, 7, 4, 5, 4, 4, 4.

# Example

**THE FIRST TWO BARS** make use of a similar idea, shifting position to frame the underlying change from B7 to A7, reverting to a ringing pentatonic blues lick. This gives a little variety, though if you wanted to stay chordal, why not recycle parts of Ex 1 over the E chord here? By taking the various licks and swapping their positions (over the correct chord) in the progression, countless possibilities are available.

Example 2: Musical notation for guitar and piano. The guitar part (top) shows a sequence of chords: B7, E, B, A7, D, A7#5. The piano part (bottom) includes a 'Let ring' instruction. The guitar part features a major pentatonic interlude in the key of B major, with fret numbers 7, 7, 7, 9, 7, 8, 9, 9, 0, 8, 7, 7, 5, 6, 5, 7, 8, 7, 5, 7. The piano part features a major pentatonic interlude in the key of E major, with fret numbers 0, 2, 4, 3, 0, 3, 2, 0, 3, 2, 0, 2, 0, 1, 2, 2, 2, 3, 3, 3, 2, 2, 2, 2.



# Example

**MOVING UP TO C** (the V chord) this idea involves transposing virtually the same set of possibilities up to the 5th fret, albeit limited by the necessity of the bar across the top five strings. Two bars later, we're back to the open G shape exploring some further single note ideas. We're not using the open 6th string for the low D anywhere here, but it's easy to incorporate and is well worth a try.

Open G tuning – DGDGBD

C C7 C

G

# Example

**THIS EXAMPLE SHOWCASES** a moving set of chord inversions that your fretting hand fingers may recognise as the A minor 7th and A7th shapes from standard tuning at various locations along the board. The chord names here are an attempt at outlining the specifics of the harmony, though it's also acceptable to view these as moving implied chords in the overall context of G major, courtesy of the open G tuning.

Open G tuning – DGDGBD

G C6/G G

F#sus2/G G7 C/G G

## Example

**AN ALTERNATE TAKE** over the C chord leads to a more intricate, bluegrass style pattern – though you could just as easily find this kind of pattern in folk music too. Try varying the strength of your strumming attack to emphasise the melodic sense given by the moving chords. This may be worth practising slowly to avoid tripping over the more fiddly parts, before playing along with the backing track.

**Cadd9**

Open G tuning – DGDGBD

**G** **Cadd9/C** **G7sus4** **Cadd9/G** **G**

## Example

**THOUGH THERE ARE** rhythm guitars on the backing track, I've opted for a strong start by playing an A5 chord, jumping straight into some A major pentatonic ideas in the same position. Over an A5 chord, there is the freedom to change between major and minor, so I've taken advantage of this in bar 2, shifting to shape 1 of the A minor pentatonic. In both cases the second finger is brought in for a percussive attack and simultaneous notes.

$\text{♩} = 82$  **Swung**

**A5**

**PB**  
4  
**BD**

**BU** **BD**

## Example

**STAYING WITH THE** A minor pentatonic until almost the end, I'm demonstrating a couple of different ideas here, often using fingers two and three. There's a lot going on here (with potential for lots more), so it's worth spending some time on this example. Don't miss details, such as the occasional staccato note – and accent the rhythm of the phrasing by digging in with the pick and/or fingers, too.





## Example

**THIS BLUES-INFLUENCED B MINOR** pentatonic phrase jumps from shape 1 to 2 in the second bar, milking those repeated string bends. Don't worry if there is a little extraneous noise from the B string here; it adds a little gravitas and thickness to what might otherwise become rather shrill at volume.

Musical notation for Example 1, featuring a blues-influenced B minor pentatonic phrase. The tempo is marked as  $\text{♩} = 103$ . The notation includes a treble clef staff and a guitar staff with six strings (E, B, G, D, A, E). The phrase starts with a rest in the first bar, followed by a melodic line in the second bar. The guitar staff shows fretting positions: 7, 9, 7, 9, (11), 7, 7, 10, (12). The melodic line includes string bends (BU) and a triplet (3). The tempo is marked as  $\text{♩} = 103$ .

## Example

**THIS FLURRY OF SEMIQUAVERS** – including a sneaky little triplet – forces you to choose your fretting hand fingers carefully. Run through slowly and carefully, and check out the video for hints, too. Remember, it may feel odd changing old habits, even when it's for the better, so be prepared to spend a little more time on this one than you may have expected to at first listen.

Musical notation for Example 2, featuring a flurry of semiquavers. The tempo is marked as  $\text{♩} = 103$ . The notation includes a treble clef staff and a guitar staff with six strings (E, B, G, D, A, E). The phrase starts with a rest in the first bar, followed by a melodic line in the second bar. The guitar staff shows fretting positions: 12, 10, 12, 10, 11, 11, 11, 9, 11, 9, 7, 9, 7, 9, 7, 9, 7, 9. The melodic line includes a triplet (3) and string bends (BU). The tempo is marked as  $\text{♩} = 103$ .

## Example

**THIS FINAL PHRASE** is less about perfection and more about creating an exciting crescendo. Mixing tremolo picking and slides, mute the unwanted strings around (and between) the G and top E and dig in! If you find yourself being concerned about playing this tidily, you've probably missed the point...

Musical notation for Example 3, featuring a final phrase with tremolo picking. The tempo is marked as  $\text{♩} = 103$ . The notation includes a treble clef staff and a guitar staff with six strings (E, B, G, D, A, E). The phrase starts with a rest in the first bar, followed by a melodic line in the second bar. The guitar staff shows fretting positions: 14, 14, 14, 14, 14, 14, 16, 16, 16, 16, 18, 18, 18, 18, 18. The melodic line includes tremolo picking (Tremolo picked) and string bends (BU). The tempo is marked as  $\text{♩} = 103$ .

## Example

**PICKING UP WITH** this simple three-note pattern, see how each of the three notes is given a different treatment: first, sliding up; second, adding a quarter-tone bend; and then finally making a short staccato hit before heading into beat 1 of bar 1. This micro-management of fine details may feel like a bit of a chore at first, but you'll soon internalise this kind of process and adding these details will become a genuine form of expression.

*J = 98*

## Example

**ADDING A PERCUSSIVE**, rhythmic touch by hitting a couple of muted notes at the beginning sets this phrase up for a slide to a higher register for some second-string bends. In the first bar, the bend is released then immediately returned to the previous pitch. Watch in the following bar for some adjacent downstrokes, which help give ease and fluidity to the legato phrasing. Avoid using vibrato by default and hold some of those bends steady!

## Example

**USING A MIXTURE** of slides and bends, this idea works its way up to the higher reaches of the fretboard, because we're getting near to the end of the solo here. Again, don't feel that all of those held bends need vibrato – by recording yourself playing and listening back, you can sometimes get a better outside perspective. If you like what you hear, then great! If not, mentally list the changes you'd like to hear, or you could write them down if that helps.

## Example

**JUST A SHORT** ending phrase, but it contains a couple of tricky moments if you're not used to incorporating slides into your phrasing. Taking the shape of short triplets, the idea is to slide up one fret to a higher note, then back to the original one. This gives a little bit of rapid movement, which makes a nice alternative to bends and can even give your playing a jazz blues feel, if that appeals to you.

## Example

**ALTHOUGH THIS ISN'T A FAST PHRASE**, the slide down the bottom string and heavily distorted tone tell us it is as much rock as it is blues. We're firmly in the pentatonic camp here, with lots of sustained notes and string bends. The last alternate-picked sextuplet phrases come as a little bit of a surprise (they're meant to, though I'm afraid I sound a bit surprised by them, too, on the video!), but should fall under the fingers if practised slowly and regularly.

## Example

**TAKING UP** from where Example 1 left off, this phrase takes a similar tack of combining contrasting slow and fast ideas. Bar 2 makes a point of emphasising those triplets, before a rapid sextuplet finish. This is not alternate-picked, but a similar effect is obtained by brushing across adjacent strings with an up or downstroke as appropriate. Not sweep picking, but the principle is the same.

1

3

## Example

**LINKING DIRECTLY** from Example 2, this phrase features a wide held bend linking bars 2 and 3, before playing a descending pentatonic pattern in groups of four, using various slides and pull-offs. There are quite a few useful ideas in different styles that can come from this approach, so it's worth keeping this pattern in mind when you're improvising.

1

## Example

**AGAIN, THIS IDEA CONTINUES** directly from the previous one, so it gives us the final phrase of the complete solo. Playing it relatively 'straight', with a group of semiquavers in bar 1, we now finish with a more classic/bluesy pentatonic lick with held bend and vibrato. A definite 'ending' phrase like this is extremely important when handing the spotlight back over to the vocalist, leaving a good impression on your audience!

Example 1: Musical notation for a guitar solo. The key signature is two sharps (F#m7, C2m7). The notation includes a treble clef staff with a 4/4 time signature. The guitar staff shows fret numbers and techniques like BU (bend up) and PB (pick bend).

## Example

**TAKING A VERY** major pentatonic/melodic approach, this opening phrase wastes no time in getting to a device that will probably forever be associated with Steve due to his solo in *Rosanna*. Taking an already bent note, I'm adding my fourth finger on a fret above to get a semitone higher for just a moment. Getting your fourth finger to comply can be a test of patience at first, but is well worth it!

Example 2: Musical notation for a guitar solo. The key signature is two sharps (118 Swung). The notation includes a treble clef staff with a 4/4 time signature. The guitar staff shows fret numbers and techniques like BU, PB, and BD.

Example 3: Musical notation for a guitar solo. The key signature is two sharps (G/A). The notation includes a treble clef staff with a 4/4 time signature. The guitar staff shows fret numbers and techniques like BU and BD.

## Example

**TAKING A SIMILAR** approach to Example 1, you can hear that I'm digging in pretty hard on those lower strings. This can help give definition, especially when using the neck pickup with drive like this. In fact, the drive setting here is crucial – you need enough to give the sustain, but avoiding the fizz and mush that results with higher settings, especially at volume. Tones like this live in the midrange, so try adding a little more than you might usually, especially for solos.

Example 4: Musical notation for a guitar solo. The key signature is two sharps (D/A). The notation includes a treble clef staff with a 4/4 time signature. The guitar staff shows fret numbers and techniques like BU and PB.

Example 5: Musical notation for a guitar solo. The key signature is two sharps (A). The notation includes a treble clef staff with a 4/4 time signature. The guitar staff shows fret numbers and techniques like PB, BD, and BU.

## Example 3

**THOUGH MOST OF** these examples can be traced back to pentatonic origins, this idea has more in common with the D major arpeggio. Some strategically placed slides enable a shift of position that frees us from the usual 'box' constraints, with a melodic line formed mostly from triplets, which fit over the shuffle backbeat. Note the skipped string when jumping the octave in the final bar, something Steve is very comfy with.

Example 3 is a guitar solo in D major, 4/4 time. The melody consists of triplets of eighth notes. The fretboard diagram shows the following fingerings and techniques:

- Bar 1: Chord D (8<sup>va</sup>). Fretting: 12/14 (E), 14 (A), 15-14 (G). Technique: slide from 14 to 15.
- Bar 2: Chord D. Fretting: 15 (A), 14-12 (G), 16-14/16 (F#), 14-12 (G). Technique: slide from 14 to 15.
- Bar 3: Chord G/D. Fretting: 14 (G), 12-14/16 (F#), 14 (G), 15-17 (A), 14-14 (G), 15-14 (G). Technique: slide from 14 to 15.
- Bar 4: Chord D (8<sup>va</sup>). Fretting: 17 (A). Technique: skip string when jumping the octave.

## Example 4

**BEFORE WE GET** into more triplets, check out the slides and arpeggio-style melodic device (hint: this could also be viewed as a shape 3 A major pentatonic). Steve seems to enjoy using swooping bends and slides to give his playing a flamboyant character, much like the man himself. Though these ideas may take a little while to assimilate, it's worth persevering, as the potential melodic invention is greatly increased.

Example 4 is a guitar solo in D major, 4/4 time. The melody features arpeggio-style melodic devices and slides. The fretboard diagram shows the following fingerings and techniques:

- Bar 1: Chord A. Fretting: 14 (A), 15-(17) (B), 12 (C#), 12/14 (C#). Technique: slide from 14 to 15.
- Bar 2: Chord BU. Fretting: 12 (C#), 14 (D), 12-9 (B), 10 (A), 10-9 (A), 10 (A), 11-9 (A), 11-9 (A). Technique: slide from 12 to 14.
- Bar 3: Chord E. Fretting: 11-9 (A), 7 (G), 5 (F#), 7 (G), 5 (F#), 7 (G), 9-11 (A), 9 (A). Technique: slide from 11 to 9.
- Bar 4: Chord E. Fretting: 12 (C#). Technique: slide from 12 to 14.

## Example

**THIS INTRODUCTORY PHRASE** establishes the harmony and mood with a couple of chords, which break down into doublestops briefly before giving way to a single-note line. This is alternate-picked and, though it begins with a chromatically descending line that becomes a G Mixolydian by the time it reaches the third string, try viewing it as an embellished shape 3 G major pentatonic pattern and see how it all fits together!

Swung ♩ = 130 G13

## Example

**THE NEXT THREE BARS** use the same position to move between implied C7, D<sub>7</sub> Diminished and G major chords. Starting with a C dominant 7 arpeggio (play the shape 1 C major pentatonic pattern here and compare the similarities), we then imply the diminished chord by simply continuing in the same vein over the D<sub>7</sub> in the bass until we get to the D<sub>7</sub> melody note on beat four of the second bar, which leads us up to the G chord, over which we play the B and D.

C7 G7

## Example 3

**SHORT BUT SWEET**, this idea takes the doublestops set up at the end of Example 2 and slides them down fret by fret chromatically, then expands to an E7 (#5 #9) chord – basically an extended version of the famous 'Hendrix' shape, then adding further harmonic information in the shape of this three-string A minor 9th. This is more of a challenge in terms of fretboard knowledge than technique, so these shapes will prove useful.

E7#9#5 Am9

## Example 4

**THIS IS A GREAT LICK** for pulling out a flurry of notes without needing to alternate-pick, and is a very popular technique with jazz players, because crossing the strings is often necessary to articulate chordal ideas in solos. The first phrase starts with a hammer-on, then raking/sweeping across the top three strings. However, the second note played on the top string (D) is played with an upstroke – tricky at first, but much more efficient technically. This then slides up to the 13th fret, where a series of arpeggiated ideas demonstrates how you might routine the harmony of B minor 7, E7 (#9), A minor 7th and A $\flat$  major 7th.

## Example

**IN THE FIRST MOMENTS** of this lick, we're jumping from the third to first string, then jumping back to the 10th fret for that held bend. This was a lick that came from thinking up the melody, then adding bends and position-jumps to make it work on the guitar. While not technically demanding in the 'shred' sense, it may take a few tries until it falls under the fingers.

## Example

**THIS EXAMPLE MAKES** use of the G major pentatonic scale but fleshes it out with C and G major triads before shifting to C in the final bar. Though this, too, stays close to the major pentatonic, the emphasis is on melody, without the traditional quarter-tone bends that characterise much blues playing – not that this would be a bad thing, we're just looking to vary from the 'norm'.

## Example

**PLAYING THE SAME** 'almost pentatonic' game, this phrase starts conventionally enough, but by halfway through the first bar, we're stringing together less orthodox lines and bringing in fragments of C major arpeggio before sliding down with some major and minor 6ths (skipping the fourth string), keeping the root note of the G, D and E minor chords underneath – very *Freebird* of me! The final slides are taken from the G major pentatonic, but by this point I wasn't really looking at it as a 'shape', just a melody line.

## Example

**FLICKING TO THE BRIDGE PICKUP** gives a gain boost compared to the previous out-of-phase setting and enhances a slightly more aggressive start, though we quickly change tack by following a regular melodic pattern through the B, F and C chords, using a few wider stretches and slides before revisiting the sliding 6ths idea in a higher octave. It is this idea that calls Slash to mind most of all.

(8<sup>th</sup>) **G** **D**

## Example

**AFTER AN APPARENTLY CLASSIC** pentatonic pick-up phrase, we're going straight for a minor 3rd (C) to reinforce the melodic intent. You could say that we're simply playing from the natural minor scale, which would be absolutely correct, but the idea here is to use the minor pentatonic as a basis for further experimentation. The same can be said about the 9th (B) that appears during the next phrase.

$\text{♩} = 95$  Swung **Am7**

## Example

**SHIFTING TO D MINOR**, this shape 1 pentatonic idea incorporates E and B, essentially adding in notes we would expect to find in the D Dorian scale. In the context of the solo, I was simply looking to resolve back to A for the next phrase, so while this was a calculated move, it came from a more intuitive place than analysing this would suggest.

**Dm7** **Am7**

## Example

**STAYING EXCLUSIVELY WITHIN SHAPE 1** of the A minor pentatonic until the very last moment, this idea makes use of some selective palm muting, wide vibrato and occasional non-adjacent strings (string skipping). The F# in bar 3 is another nod to the Dorian mode (A Dorian, in this case), but is, again, more about melodic context than thinking in scale patterns, so you should take that on board, but don't think that detailed modal knowledge is necessary here!

Example 1: Musical notation for a guitar solo. The key signature is one flat (Dm7). The time signature is 4/4. The notation includes a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a guitar staff with fret numbers and bending instructions (PM, BU, BD). The melody consists of a triplet of eighth notes, followed by a bend to B, and then a triplet of eighth notes. The guitar staff shows fret numbers and bending instructions (PM, BU, BD).

## Example

**THE TONE AND A HALF BEND** is manipulated here in the way David Gilmour might, outlining A, B and C for an A natural minor type ascending pattern before shifting down to the shape 1 pentatonic for a moment. Round about here, I remembered that Ritchie Blackmore often adds in a bit of unpredictable whammy vibrato, so here's some, too! Ending much as we began, the triplet lick is followed by a bend to B, which ties in nicely with the E minor chord.

Example 2: Musical notation for a guitar solo. The key signature is one flat (Em). The time signature is 4/4. The notation includes a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a guitar staff with fret numbers and bending instructions (BU, BD). The melody consists of a triplet of eighth notes, followed by a bend to B, and then a triplet of eighth notes. The guitar staff shows fret numbers and bending instructions (BU, BD).

## Example

**ESSENTIALLY TWO TAKES ON THE SAME IDEA**, this phrase combines staccato and longer notes, plus adding in blues trademarks such as quarter-tone bends, slides and triplets. Like all of the examples, it is played in a swung or 'shuffle' feel. You'll notice the tone isn't all that distorted, so try adding plenty of midrange to keep the sound nice and thick – though there is no shortage of top-end and pick attack, either!

Example 3: Musical notation for a guitar solo. The key signature is one sharp (G5). The time signature is 4/4. The notation includes a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a guitar staff with fret numbers and bending instructions (BU). The melody consists of a triplet of eighth notes, followed by a bend to B, and then a triplet of eighth notes. The guitar staff shows fret numbers and bending instructions (BU).

## Example

**AFTER AN EXTRAVAGANT SLIDE** up to that first E, we're balancing between major and minor and adding in a ♭5 (D<sub>b</sub>) to this combination of a C major arpeggio and a shape 3 G minor pentatonic. Note the quick triplet slides. These can be replaced with hammer-ons/pull-offs, but this can feel like rather a handful compared with the quick flick of the wrist needed here.

## Example

**USING LESS GAIN** and attempting alternate-picked semiquaver sextuplets at 121bpm is not a pursuit guaranteed to bring deep satisfaction, as this little phrase has taught me... Though it is completely possible with a bit of practice, don't expect to incorporate it seamlessly without a few trying moments. It is meant as a little bit of fun to spice up this solo with a modern edge. In a perfect world, the last notes of bar 2 would be B, G (rather than A, G), but you get the idea. We follow up by getting a little more traditional again.

## Example

**FOLLOWING THE DESCENDING CHORDS** with a selection of similar ideas, this ending phrase breaks out into some semi chordal ideas at the very end. Before we get there, notice how the D major type lick switches to C major with a little variation but essentially the same pattern. This leads to a run using a pattern based around the shape 3 G minor pentatonic, though sliding conspicuously up to the major 3rd (B) to acknowledge the underlying major feel.

D5 C5  
 BU BD BU  
 G5 D5 G5  
 BD

## Example

**RIGHT FROM THE PICK-UP** phrase at the start, this example is based around shape 1 of the C major pentatonic scale, using doublestops and hammer-ons to imply a C major chord. In fact, after a passing F triad at the end of bar 2, we go to a full C major triad in bar 3, culminating in another pentatonic doublestop run. Though we go to a few different places here, it's basically all C major.

♩ = 65  
 C  
 PM --

## Example

**TACKED ON THE END** of the first phrase is this link, preparing us for the change to the F major. Rather than using string bends (though these wouldn't be stylistically out of place), I'm using slides to add embellishments and move positions. Choice of fingers is key so that you don't 'play yourself into a corner' and end up having to jump from one register to another too drastically; check out the video for hints on this.

C

## Example

**THIS TIME WE START MOVING IDEAS** around quite rapidly. After the embellished F triad in bar 1, we move through A<sub>7</sub> and B<sub>7</sub> triads, adding little flourishes to each, before sliding up another two frets to C. Here, we change tack to a more doublestop-based idea like the beginning of Example 1, quickly moving to a widespread pentatonic idea, encompassing A minor, A minor 7th and A minor 9th.

## Example

**STAYING WITH THE RAPID CHORD CHANGES**, we now move to G. The first root note (G) is fretted with the left-hand thumb, leaving the other fingers free to move through the sliding intervals. Bar 2 moves from E<sub>b</sub> to B<sub>b</sub> to F, spelling out the triads without very much embellishment (this is where the CAGED chord knowledge comes in handy) before returning to the C major pentatonic for what should now seem like a familiar pattern of doublestops. We finish with a brief spelling out of G, F and C.

## Example

**STARTING WITH THIS HELD B5 BEND** is a pretty bold statement. You need to be sure it comes over as a deliberate move, so work on your pitching until you can head straight to the desired note without wavering. There are lots of fun details moving on, like the slides, quarter-tone bends and quick little triplets that appear here and there. I've gone with a medium/low-gain tone to help with articulation.

♩ = 96

G5

BU BD BU RP BD

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

B $\flat$ 5 C5 G5

BU

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

## Example

**SHIFTING TO A MAJOR PENTATONIC PATTERN.** this phrase works up to a string bend, which is held while shifting between C and D on the first string. This gives a pedal-steel type of effect, which brings us even further into country territory. Sliding to the 11th fret on the B string sets you up to frame the B $\flat$  major arpeggio, which rakes downwards using an upstroke, but note the first F pulling off to D is a downstroke.

G5

BU RP RP BD

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

B $\flat$ 5 C5 G5

6 rake - - - - -

BU BD

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

## Example

**THIS HYBRID MAJOR/MINOR PENTATONIC PHRASE** owes a lot to Jimmy Page, whose diverse range of stylistic interests includes this kind of country-rock phrasing. Check out some of his Tele playing on the latter-day Zeppelin albums! Ideas like this exemplify the importance of not becoming too tied to shapes or scales in their basic forms – mixing them up like this is not a choice made at that level of thinking. Just give it a blast and see what comes out!

8va ----- G5

BU BD BU BU BD

E B G D A E

1

(8va) Bb5 C5 G5

BU BD BU BU BU BD

E B G D A E

4

## Example

**BRINGING A BIT OF ROCK 'N' ROLL** to the party in the form of these doublestops, this ending phrase mixes in a fair bit of country and blues, too. It's quite tricky to nail every note in every doublestop, but the timing and feel is arguably more important than absolute perfection elsewhere – or I would have wiped this take and tried for another!

8va -----

E B G D A E

1

Bb5 C5 G5

BU BD

E B G D A E

3

## Example

**THIS OPENING PHRASE** is as much about the rhythm as any melodic content. Triads with widely spaced voicings like this are great for giving a 'bigger' sound when you're looking to fill harmonic space. I'm using pick and fingers to enable shifting to more conventional flatpicked linking phrases, but fingerstyle is a completely valid option here, too. Why not try both and see how it influences the tone?

*♩ = 118 Swung*

D G C<sup>6/9</sup> G C<sup>sus2</sup> G D

## Example

**TAKING THE BASIC HARMONY** of a G major chord suggested by the bass, I've started out there, too, but superimposed the neighbouring F major, which uses the same shape, simply moved down two frets. This implies a G11 chord, but came from experimentation, rather than a theory-based approach... The C major triad at the 5th fret links further to the G7 triad with a trill between the major/minor 3rd (B/B<sub>b</sub>). Like using a scale but with triads.

G F C G7 C F C D Am G D G D G D

## Example

**THESE 7SUS4 CHORDS** are a nod to Robben Ford, though you'll hear similar on Eric Clapton's version of *Hideaway*. They follow the implied chords from D to G, then back to D, where I've (just about!) managed to get a chromatic line in on the B string to make a doublestop lick on the top two strings. Wherever there is more than one note in play, it's worth experimenting with moving one of the voices around.

*8va* C<sup>sus2</sup> D/C F<sup>sus2</sup> G D7 G5 D E7 D5



## Example 3

**A CENTRAL FEATURE** of this idea is the use of the pickup selector as a kill switch. By turning the neck-pickup volume to zero, then flicking the selector up and down, you can switch the sound in and out to create special effects. If your guitar has a single master volume like most Fenders, try switching between neck and bridge pickups as you release the bend as an alternative.

## Example 4

**WINDING UP THE SOLO** with a few strident low notes is an effective way to lead back into chord accompaniment, especially in a single-guitar/bass/drums line-up. As there is a rhythm guitar on the backing track, the held low E can be left to ring for dramatic effect. As I said earlier, this isn't super-technical stuff, but there is a rawness and excitement I hope to capture – as if these ideas were being played for the first time!

## Example

**IN THIS FIRST SECTION**, we're establishing the chord structure over the drum backing. You may find a 'down, down, up' picking pattern works well for these arpeggiated chords, as the final upstroke facilitates crossing the strings ready to get back to the root note. Practise slowly, keeping an eye on all aspects of hand posture, pick angle and keeping movements to a minimum. This will allow a far greater speed with far less effort in the end!

$\text{♩} = 120$  E7

E7

## Example

**THIS SECTION BEGINS** to develop on the ideas established in the last, with some higher inversions and ringing open strings coming into play. An alternate 'down, up, down, up' will probably serve you better here for articulating the notes in these moving triads. Wherever possible, let notes ring together – the open strings are particularly helpful for covering any position shifts or chord changes. There is a logic to the way this all fits together, it just takes a little time.

E7

E7

## Example

**MORE ALTERNATE PICKING HERE**, supported by the regular bass notes, which form the first downstroke of each phrase. It may be worth experimenting with a 'down, down, up' pattern on the top three strings if this falls under your pick more easily, but chances are you'll be needing to work through a period where none of this feels all that natural... Keep rehearsing the movements slowly, then break out the metronome and gradually turn up the speed.

E7

E7

A7

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

3

## Example

**A LITTLE BIT OF FLASH** to finish off the phrase, this alternate-picked run is essentially the same pattern repeated over three octaves, with a bit of descending scale timed to jump out into the long descending run down the D string. This is played using a 'down, down, up' pattern, but there are no rules here. Having said that, what feels more comfortable and familiar at a slow tempo may not stand up when the heat is on, so bear this in mind!

N.C.

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

1

A7

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

3

## Example

**THIS OPENING PHRASE** forms the basis of the first half of the solo, albeit moved to different positions with the I, IV and V chords. It's based around the C minor pentatonic, but you'll see wherever there is an E, it's always pushed slightly sharp to fit over the C major (I) chord underneath. The A is an 'outside' note, but appears often in the phrasing of players like BB and Albert King.

$\text{♩} = 110$

C7

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

4

## Example

**THIS EXAMPLE COVERS** how the initial idea in Example 1 is moved to fit with the IV chord, then moving back to chord I. There are little variations, but the central theme is the same. Note particularly the  $A_b$  to A natural at the beginning of bar 2 – this minor 3rd to major 3rd movement is absolutely key to nailing major chords without switching to the major pentatonic scale, which is great, but far less bluesy!

1

4

## Example

**FOR THE SECOND TIME ROUND** the chord progression, rather than shifting position to fit with each chord, I've acknowledged each from within the C minor pentatonic scale. First, the  $E_b$  is always raised either by a quarter-tone, or fully up to E natural. The A contained in the doublestops in bar 1 functions as a 6th, but this idea will work great over the F/IV chord – not so much over the G/V, though, so be prepared to hit some wrong notes as you try these out!

1

## Example

**THERE ISN'T MUCH TIME** to fit ideas in over the V chord in a standard 12-bar, but I've opted for the root note (G), then used this as an anchor to build the C minor pentatonic phrase that finishes the solo. This is pure *Crossroads*-era Clapton, mixing the E<sub>3</sub> and E natural – more play between the major and minor 3rd, then landing on the root note for the V (G) chord at the turnaround.

## Example

**WHEN APPROACHING THIS INTRODUCTORY PHRASE**, get the patterns under your fingers first, then turn your attention to the finer details. The rhythms are notated as faithfully as possible, but you should definitely allow some wiggle room, rather than trying to be absolutely metronomic. The rhythmic muted strings (played in swung 16th notes) add an awful lot of movement without you having to break into a sweat, too. There are just a couple of bits using the whammy, though no reason at all why there couldn't be more if you're feeling it.



# Example

**SWITCHING TO THE BRIDGE** pickup can give a bit more focus if you're planning to use a few lower notes like this. It's nice to have a bit of tonal variety, too. The pentatonic run towards the end of this example picks up the pace with a mixture of slides, hammer-ons and bends. There are lots of ideas that can be developed from this approach, so do experiment with this lick, rather than feeling this is in any way 'definitive'.

Example 1: Musical notation for guitar licks. The first system shows Cmaj7 and Dadd11 chords. The second system shows Em and G chords. The notation includes a treble clef, a 12/8 time signature, and a fretboard diagram with strings E, B, G, D, A, E. The fretboard diagram shows fret numbers and pickup notation (BU, BD) for bends and double bends. The licks are marked with accents and slurs, and include a 3/4 note triplet.

# Example

**WE'RE ABOUT TO WIND THIS SOLO DOWN**, but not before having some fun with this pentatonic pattern descending in patterns of six. These ideas are really useful for turning up the heat, but keep them fairly short rather than getting too carried away – we're looking to stay melodic here. Jumping back down to the open-position pentatonic brings things to a close here, giving a change from the higher register stuff!

Example 2: Musical notation for guitar licks. The first system shows Cmaj7 and Dadd11 chords. The second system shows Em chords. The notation includes a treble clef, a 12/8 time signature, and a fretboard diagram with strings E, B, G, D, A, E. The fretboard diagram shows fret numbers and pickup notation (BU, BD) for bends and double bends. The licks are marked with accents and slurs, and include a 3/4 note triplet.

Example 1: Musical notation for a guitar solo in G major. The treble clef staff shows a melodic line starting on G4, with a vibrato mark. The bass clef staff shows fret numbers: 10, 0, 2, (4), 0, 0, 3, 2/4, 3, 4/2, 0, 2. Techniques include BU (bend up) and w/bar (with bar). Chords G and Cmaj7 are indicated.

## Example

**THE OPENING PHRASE BEGINS IN A PRETTY TRADITIONAL WAY**, leading to a held E with slow vibrato. Whammy and finger vibrato are freely mixed throughout, so feel free to vary according to taste. We swap positions in bar 2, giving similar note groupings, but a different tone and the ability to move to a higher register smoothly. The first hint of Dorian mode comes in bar 3 with the bend to F#.

Example 2: Musical notation for a guitar solo in D major. The treble clef staff has a tempo marking of 67 Swung and a melodic line with vibrato. The bass clef staff shows fret numbers: 0, 2/4, 3, 0, 3/5, X, X, 7/9, 7, 8/10, (11)-(10). Techniques include BU (bend up) and BD (bend down). Chords G and Cmaj7 are indicated.

## Example 2

**THE DORIAN FLAVOUR CONTINUES INTO THIS SECOND PHRASE**, but it really is treated more like a 'deluxe' E blues scale than a three-note-per-string pattern. Bar 3 into 4 really stresses the C# but only in the context of a bend up to D, so it is a passing note more than anything else. It could also be effective to try it as a held note at the end of a phrase.

Example 3: Musical notation for a guitar solo in D major. The treble clef staff has a melodic line with vibrato. The bass clef staff shows fret numbers: 8, 9, (11), (9), (11), (9), 7, 9, 11, 9, 12, (14), 10, 12, (12)(11). Techniques include BU (bend up) and BD (bend down). Chords G and Cmaj7 are indicated.

## Example 3

**NOTE THAT THE FIRST E IS REUSED** from the end of the last phrase if you're joining this all together to play the whole solo. Things are becoming more complex, with vibrato from both fingers and bar (held ready for use during most of this phrase), plus some staccato accents. These are subtle, but you really miss them if they aren't there. No Dorian flavour here, just pure blues scale with the B $\flat$  highlighted for a bit of dramatic dissonance.

Example 3 musical notation details:

- System 1 (Measures 1-2):** Treble clef staff shows a melodic line with triplets and vibrato. Guitar staff shows fret numbers: 14, 12, 14, 12, 12, 15-17, 12, 15-12, (15)-(14), 12, 14, 12, 12. Techniques: w/bar, 1/4, BU, PB, BD, BU.
- System 2 (Measures 3-4):** Treble clef staff continues the melodic line. Guitar staff shows fret numbers: (13), 14, 15, 14, 12, 14, 15, 14, 12, 14, 14, 12, 14, 14, 12, 10, 12, 14. Techniques: w/bar, 1/4, 3, w/bar.

## Example 4

**ENDING IN A SIMILAR WAY TO HOW WE BEGAN**, this example reintroduces the F# and C# to bring back that Dorian feel. The whammy is used fairly unpredictably for vibrato, or just to 'scoop' into certain notes. It felt like a way to make the phrases more quirky and interesting, but is by no means essential. On an instrument without a whammy you could experiment with sliding up and down into phrases, or use more quarter-/half-tone bends to shake things up.

Example 4 musical notation details:

- System 1 (Measures 1-3):** Treble clef staff shows a melodic line with triplets and vibrato. Guitar staff shows fret numbers: 2/4, 3, 0, 3/5, 7-(8), 7, 7, 5, 7, 9. Techniques: w/bar, BU.
- System 2 (Measures 4-6):** Treble clef staff continues the melodic line with triplets and scoops. Guitar staff shows fret numbers: 7, x, 6-(7), (6), (7)-(6), 4, 7, 4, 5, 7, 7, 5, 7. Techniques: BU, BD, scoop, w/bar.

# Example

**MAKING A REAL FEATURE OF THE 6TH (F#)** then sliding down a position to C natural (bent slightly sharp), this lick features some hybrid picking to give the piano-style voicings in the last two bars. There are also a couple of trills between the major and minor 3rd (C and C#), plus a quarter-tone bend that does a similar job of blurring the lines between the two. Lots of  $\flat 5$  (E $\flat$ ), too!

Swung ♩ = 135

1

4

# Example

**GOING IN A SLIGHTLY JAZZIER DIRECTION** with the ascending chromatic line at the beginning, this idea brings in the doublestopped F# and C#, though in this case 'resolves' this rather dissonant interval by sliding up a semitone to imply an A7 chord. This can be a useful device, or you can keep the tension by staying put! Another trill between major and minor leads to some single-note lines taking a more conventional approach for the moment.

1

4

# Example

**BUILDING A PHRASE** around the 6th (F#) gives a different slant to pentatonic licks like this, and is further extended by using a chromatic descending line once we work our way down to the bottom E string. A series of doublestops then goes across the strings, further demonstrating the F#/C idea, also sliding up to imply an A7 chord as before. This works well in reverse, too!

Ex 3

# Example

**STARTING WITH A MORE CONVENTIONAL PENTATONIC PATTERN**, this example uses a sliding interval pattern to work its way down in preparation for the next phrase. This is a very intuitive thing: sometimes you want to hear some cutting high notes, other times you may want some twanging bass! In this case, I've gone for the middle ground, ready for a final burst.

# Example

**AND HERE IT IS!** Using chromatic passing notes (including the minor and major 3rd), this line works its way down across the strings before combining the last few notes as a doublestop pattern in a similar way to what we have done previously. The slide from A<sub>b</sub>13 to A13 puts a decisive full stop at the end – the silence following a strident chord hit like this is also an effective device.

# Example

**THE REPEATED PHRASE** and subtle development of the idea is a traditional blues technique but used in a slightly different context here. Note the strings are attacked quite emphatically with the fingers, twanging them back against the fretboard. Some heavy compression gives a bit more sustain to play with, plus evening out the volume between heavily picked and quieter notes. It's surprisingly expressive! To finish off the phrase, I've 'dive-bombed' the final note of the phrase using the whammy.



# Example

**WE END IN A SIMILAR MANNER** to the beginning phrase but staying with the pick rather than reverting to fingers. The chord fragments are inspired by Nile Rodgers' playing with Chic and Sister Sledge, using a maximum of three strings to facilitate moving shapes around quickly and rhythmically. A short pentatonic run leads to a divebomb on the final F#. In the absence of a whammy bar, perhaps a slide upwards would be equally quirky/effective?

Example 1 musical notation. The guitar part (top staff) is in F#m and A. The bass part (bottom staff) is in F#m and F#m. The notation includes a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The guitar part features a melodic line with a short pentatonic run leading to a divebomb on the final F#. The bass part features a rhythmic line with a whammy bar effect indicated by a wavy line and the text 'w/bar'. Fret numbers are provided for both parts.

# Example

**TO KICK OFF PROCEEDINGS** I've gone with a rhythm and fills-based approach, as there is only bass and drums at this point on the backing track – more instruments join in later. Establishing a foundation of the two pentatonic/chord shapes of B<sub>b</sub> minor and D<sub>b</sub> minor is also helpful before branching out into alternative positions and scales. This feel and tempo also requires accurate timing, so that's another benefit of this example!

Example 2 musical notation. The tempo is 133 Swung. The guitar part (top staff) is in B<sub>b</sub> minor and D<sub>b</sub> minor. The bass part (bottom staff) is in B<sub>b</sub> minor and D<sub>b</sub> minor. The notation includes a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a key signature of three flats (B<sub>b</sub>, E<sub>b</sub>, and A<sub>b</sub>). The guitar part features a melodic line with a triplet and a wavy line. The bass part features a rhythmic line with a wavy line. Fret numbers are provided for both parts.

## Example

**SHIFTING UP** to D<sub>b</sub> (yes, in fretboard terms the same as C sharp, if that helps!), I'm basically using the same pattern with a couple of extra embellishments. As well as changing key in this way, it's worth considering how you want to integrate the rhythm and 'lead' playing in this situation. Having implied the chords a few times, I'm feeling more free to venture into single notes – and the cheeky minor 6th (implied by the B<sub>b</sub>) in the last bar!

Example 1 musical notation showing a guitar solo in 4/4 time. The first system (measures 1-2) features a melodic line with triplets and a fretboard diagram below. The second system (measures 3-4) continues the melodic line with triplets and includes a wavy line indicating a vibrato effect. The fretboard diagrams show fingerings for strings E, B, G, D, A, E.

## Example

**AFTER REVISITING** the B<sub>b</sub> minor pentatonic for eight bars in a similar vein to Ex 2, we now change approach by switching briefly to D<sub>b</sub> dorian, before sliding up to the relatively safe haven of the D<sub>b</sub> minor pentatonic. A fairly subtle move, but enough to give some harmonic variety – and to feel totally justified in relapsing to a favourite blues lick or two!

Example 2 musical notation showing a guitar solo in 4/4 time. The first system (measures 1-2) features a melodic line with triplets and a fretboard diagram below. The second system (measures 3-4) continues the melodic line with triplets and includes a wavy line indicating a vibrato effect. The fretboard diagrams show fingerings for strings E, B, G, D, A, E.

# Example

**THIS PHRASE** comes straight off the back of a D<sub>7</sub> minor pentatonic run, so is a neat solution to the problem of how to switch seamlessly into the final four chords of the progression. All of these fit over the B<sub>7</sub> minor pentatonic, but to create a bit of a crescendo I've used slides to ascend to a couple of higher registers/different shapes of the scale.

# Example

**THOUGH THERE ARE SOME WORKOUTS** for the picking hand coming up shortly, this first part of the solo is more about correct pitching and control over bends and vibrato. The second bar features some slow 'John Sykes' type wobble, which leads to a series of semitone bends. In turn, this progresses to the first of our 'flash' sections. Working through slowly, you'll see it is alternate-picked in a couple of descending groups of four, changing on the final note to ascending groups of six.

# Example

**BEGINNING WITH THE CLIMACTIC NOTE** at the end of the first ascending run, this section takes a melodic turn via a fragment of E major scale and B major arpeggio (superimposed over the E chord), before building towards a classic Gary Moore/John Sykes style phrase. We'll be staying with this for a while, exploring various possibilities as we build towards another flurry at the end of the next example.

Example 1 musical notation. The guitar staff (top) shows a melodic line in 4/4 time, starting with a *Solo* marking. Chords *G#m*, *E*, and *F#* are indicated above the staff. The bass staff (bottom) shows a bass line with fret numbers and techniques: BU (bump up), BD (bump down), and Bridge pickup. Fret numbers include 12-(14), 12-11-(12)-(11), 12, 11-9, 11/13, 12, 14-11, 12, 14, 16, 16-18, 16-19, 16. The bass staff is labeled with strings E, B, G, D, A, E and measure number 1.

# Example

**THE FIRST HALF OF THIS EXAMPLE** builds on the momentum established towards the end of the last phrase and accelerates further. A lot of the picking here is not alternate but what you call 'economy picking'. I'm brushing across adjacent strings, mixed with hammer-ons and pull-offs, with a couple of the notes sounded only by the hammer-on. It would be worth taking a close look at the video of this section, which may explain better than words what is happening.

Example 2 musical notation. The guitar staff (top) shows a melodic line in 4/4 time, starting with a *Solo* marking. Chords *G#m* and *E* are indicated above the staff. The bass staff (bottom) shows a bass line with fret numbers and techniques: BU (bump up), BD (bump down), and Bridge pickup. Fret numbers include 19-(21), 16, 19, 18-(20), 16, 19, 18, 16, 21, 16, 18, 16, 19, 16, 18, 16, 19, 16, 18. The bass staff is labeled with strings E, B, G, D, A, E and measure number 1.

## Example

**THIS TAKES A LITTLE AFTER ZAKK WYLDE**, with some held bends contrasting with rapid-fire palm-muted lower notes. Though it's the final phrase, this may make a good starting point if you're hesitant about tackling some of the more flashy stuff. Some light palm-muting helps to control the articulation of a high-gain sound like this, even if you don't make an obvious feature of it like Zakk. The slide down the E string at the end makes as though joining in with the rhythm guitar after the solo!

## Lick Descending line resolving to A

**THE OPENING LINE** to our 16-bar solo starts with a picking 'rake' across the strings before reaching the target tone of G. You'll notice that I really accent the bend from the D to the E, of the A blues scale and fully utilise the chromatic move from E down to D before resolving finally to A. A is the root of the Am7 chord and the 5th of the D9, so it's a perfect resolution tone over both chords.

## Lick Ascending line resolving to C

**SLIDING INTO SCALE TONES** will expand your palette when improvising – think of these notes as chromatic passing tones that add movement to your lines. The major 3rd doublestop lick nails the D9 chord right on the change to outline the 1<sup>st</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> of that chord. Those two notes also work perfectly if used over the Am7 chord.

## Lick Descending line resolving to E

**THIS LINE IS SIMILAR TO PHRASE ONE** with a different resolution point. I always repeat lines and develop them slightly in order to create motif-based melodies. Note the slow bend from D up to E<sub>1</sub> before resolving to the E one string higher... Timing is everything!

## Lick Ascending line resolving to G

**LISTEN CAREFULLY** for the opening two notes on the open A string: subtle rhythmic pulses like this are really nice dynamic accents within a phrase. You'll hear me use this technique on the upper strings in the second half of the solo. Sliding into the minor 3rd doublestop adds a nice punch to the phrase and the *glissando* between the doublestop 4ths outlines the D9 with three of its chord tones nicely.

## Lick Descending line resolving to G

**SHIFTING INTO ADJOINING SCALE PATTERNS** is a great way to develop your solos. Here I utilise the 16th note rhythmic accent again to define the start of my line. I also take full advantage of flowing through the chromatic notes in the blues scale before targeting the doublestop minor 3rd.

Am7 D9

E B G D A E

10 10 10 8 10 9 8 10 8 9 8 7 10 7 5 9 9

## Lick Ascending line resolving to E

**THE SEMI-TONE glissandi** into scale tones is a really nice way to add movement to your lines. The smooth flow of movement down and up through the chromatic tones before resolving to the 9th (E) of the D9 chord is one of my favourites. Target extensions for those exotic chord-tone resolution points!

Am7 D9

E B G D A E

9 7 9 10 7 8 9 8 10 8 9 8 7 10 7 8 9

## Lick Descending line resolving to C

**I BORROWED THE HIGH E NOTE** from the next scale pattern up in order to widen the interval skip between tones. The legato flair of pull-offs in this line is a cool way to descend through the chromatics before hitting the doublestop minor 3rd resolution points of A and C.

Am7 D9

E B G D A E

10 10 10 8 10 9 8 10 8 9 8 7 10 7 8 9 8 9 14 13

Let ring - - - - Let ring - -

## Lick Ascending line resolving to A

**DON'T BE AFRAID** to repeat and develop ideas that you've already used – the listener appreciates familiar and pleasing phrases. This phrase borrows ideas from previous licks and then resolves nicely to the root of the D9 chord before the pattern shift and bluesy crescendo line over the Am7.

Am7 D9

BU BU

Am7 D9

BU

## Example

**THIS INTRODUCTORY PHRASE** looks to grab attention with the flamboyant slide down the low E followed by the open string itself. Many of the notes are deliberately allowed to ring together, giving a much more aggressive effect than if everything was carefully separated/muted. You'll see this is mostly shape 1 E minor pentatonic but towards the end of the phrase we connect with some slides to shape 2. This isn't particularly conscious – and that is our aim!

♩ = 76

Em Am Em

BU BD BU BD BU BD Let ring

## Example

**HEADING FOR THE FIRST CHORD** change to A minor, I've exploited the common notes from the E minor pentatonic/open strings that fit, plus the pointed use of an F#, which is the 6th in A minor and the 9th over the rapidly approaching change back to E minor. This was as much a conscious move as it was a comfortable pattern of notes to play when experimenting with open strings and slides. Sometimes risks like this can pay off.

Am C D

Let ring BU RP BD

## Example

**YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED** the hint at shape 4 of the E minor pentatonic at the end of the last phrase. Well, here it becomes a bit more obvious, though the bend to F# (the 9th) works over the E minor to imply an Emin9, and quickly bends up a further semitone to G to give us the minor 3rd. Jeff Beck, David Gilmour and Slash are just three of the players who regularly employ this device. Watch for the sneaky change of scale at the end.

Example 1: Musical notation showing a guitar solo in 4/4 time. The solo starts with an E minor pentatonic shape 4 (10-12) and moves through various bends and slides. The fretboard diagram shows the following notes: 10-12, 7-9, 9-11, 12, 9, 7-9, 8-10, 12, 10-12, 10, 12-10, 8, 9, 10, 9-11, 9-11, 11-9, 7, 9. The solo ends with a B minor pentatonic shape 4 (9-11, 11-9, 7-9).

## Example

**MOVING ON IN THE B MINOR** pentatonic (shape 1), I changed to the neck pickup on a whim. This isn't a super-high-gain sound and I didn't want the higher notes I was working towards to sound shrill, as can sometimes happen. The position changes pick up speed here, using slides to work their way up to a shape 4 B minor pentatonic. To reiterate, these positions were not something I was consciously looking to demonstrate; they become second nature when you play them enough!

Example 2: Musical notation showing a guitar solo in 4/4 time. The solo starts with an Am pentatonic shape 1 (7-9) and moves through various bends and slides. The fretboard diagram shows the following notes: 7-9, 8-9, 8-10, 12, 12-15, 15-12, 14-16, 14-12, 14, 15-17, 12-15, 12-15-17, 19-19, 17-15, 16. The solo ends with a B minor pentatonic shape 4 (19-19, 17-15, 16).

## Lick Starting on D

**I'M A STRONG BELIEVER** in 'easing into' a solo with a simple melodic phrase and building momentum and pace from there. You'll notice the micro-bend from F# to G and my resolution tone of E over the second chord (A).

Lick Starting on D: Musical notation showing a guitar solo in 4/4 time. The solo starts with a D pentatonic shape 1 (7-9) and moves through various bends and slides. The fretboard diagram shows the following notes: 7-9, 7, 8, 8/10, 7, 8, 7. The solo ends with an A pentatonic shape 1 (8-7, 9).

## Lick Starting on E

I'M SLIDING INTO 7TH POSITION and my target tone of E to paraphrase lick 1. I then descend through a series of hammer-ons and pull-offs within the D major scale pattern resolving to A over the D chord on the downbeat of 1. Your next line starts quickly after this resolution, so stay sharp!

## Lick Starting on F#

I WANTED TO USE THE IMPLIED MICRO-BEND from F# to G to start this phrase, so I shifted into 5th position to facilitate that with my third finger. The wider interval skips are a series of major and minor 6th intervals – this is a really nice way to open up the melodic content without them sounding like doublestops.

## Lick Starting on G

ANOTHER SIMPLE DESCENDING PULL-OFF IDEA within the major scale pattern. The trick here is to intentionally target the upbeat of two for each of these phrases. Remember, you decide where these lines are placed! This phrase culminates with a position shift to target the minor 3rd (F# and A) and a choked B note over the G major chord.

## Lick Starting on A

**YOU MAY WANT TO PRACTISE** some simple string-skipping ideas like this one to start opening up your melodies. I'll be covering intervallic approaches in more detail in another column but there are a couple of easy ones in this month's phrases to get you started.

Musical notation for a lick starting on A. The notation is in 4/4 time and G major. The first measure is marked with a 'D' chord and the second with an 'A' chord. The melody consists of eighth notes and quarter notes. The guitar fretboard diagram shows the following fingerings: Measure 1: E (10), B (7), G (8), D (7), A (8), E (8). Measure 2: A (10), G (8), F# (7), E (7), D (9).

## Lick Starting on B

**A CLASSICALLY INSPIRED LEGATO** line that descends and ascends through the scale pattern to resolve on B over the G major chord. If you're struggling to keep track of the beats and tones in the chord sequence, take a moment to count the eighth-note subdivisions and name the chords in the sequence. Now place each note of the scale, in order over the track, placing them on the upbeat of 2 at the beginning of the progression.

Musical notation for a lick starting on B. The notation is in 4/4 time and G major. The first measure is marked with a 'Bm' chord and the second with a 'G' chord. The melody is a legato line of eighth notes. The guitar fretboard diagram shows the following fingerings: Measure 1: B (7), A (10), G (7), F# (10), E (9), D (10), C# (9), B (7). Measure 2: B (10), A (9), G (7), F# (10), E (9), D (7), C# (10), B (9), A (6), G (9), F# (6), E (7), D (7), C# (9), B (9).

## Lick Starting on C#

**SEASONED PLAYERS** will recognise this line as a D major 7 arpeggio. I needed to shift out of 7th position to target this line but I think it gives you a great example of how musical arpeggios can sound, even in rock 'n' roll.

Musical notation for a lick starting on C#. The notation is in 4/4 time and D major. The first measure is marked with a 'D' chord. The melody is an arpeggiated line of eighth notes. The guitar fretboard diagram shows the following fingerings: Measure 1: D (9), C# (10), B (9), A (12), G (10), F# (11), E (9), D (11). Measure 2: D (9), C# (12), B (9), A (11), G (10), F# (12), E (15), D (10).

## Lick Starting on D (octave)

**AS PROMISED I'VE CYCLED THROUGH THE SEVEN D MAJOR SCALE** tones to start my last two-bar phrase on the octave of D. Take a moment to isolate the wide interval skips at the end of this phrase and really nail that doublestop major 6th crescendo by adding vibrato to both notes. If you'd like to extend your solo into 32 measures, simply reverse the sequence and descend through each of the scale tones.

## Example

**TAKING AN E MAJOR PENTATONIC** approach and using the middle pickup, this first section of the solo leans heavily on the major 6th, something Rory may have picked up from his blues heroes. Note that the beginning of the phrase is also anticipated, complementing the bass and drums, which do the same. The repeated triplet bends make a bold statement, followed up with a more conventional approach, staying within the same pentatonic 'box' until the first natural pause in bar 4.

## Example

**SHIFTING TO THE E MINOR PENTATONIC** (shape 4), the same rhythmic approach is maintained, though this time we work in reverse order and graduate to some triplets to finish. These are accented with some random pinch harmonics generated by moving the picking hand along the string, with a healthy dose of vibrato from the fretting hand. Don't get too hung up on perfect harmonics; Rory certainly was a perfectionist but the feel was always paramount.

## Example

**FLICKING TO THE BRIDGE PICKUP** and shifting position (just) in time for the up-beat of the next bar, this phrase is based around the classic shape 1 E minor pentatonic. Bar 2 going into bar 3 and pretty much to the end of this example is taken up with a repetitive semiquaver pattern, played across the beat due to this being a three-note pattern. The result is that it moves forward a note in each group of semiquavers.

## Example

**MORE PLAY WITH 6THS HERE**, plus the classic blues interplay between the major and minor 3rd (G and G#). Bar 2 sees a slide to an A major arpeggio, which could also be seen as part of an A major pentatonic scale. This shifting between keys continues to the final phrase – it's based around the B minor pentatonic, even though the chord underneath is B major. That's rock 'n' roll for you!



## Lick Prepare To Attack!

**HOW YOU ATTACK** the strings on this example will make all the difference. Check out how I use the back of my nails on the right hand to pull out the two notes of the doublestop major 6ths. Don't be afraid to repeat ideas that sound good, either. The single-note line ascends through two patterns of the A major pentatonic scale to resolve on the root note A.

The notation for 'Prepare To Attack!' consists of two systems. The first system starts with a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 4/4 time signature. The first measure is marked with an 'A' chord and contains a single-note line and a doublestop. The second measure is marked with a 'G' chord and contains a doublestop. The second system continues with an 'A' chord in the first measure and a 'G' chord in the second. The final measure of the second system is marked with a 'BU' (bend) and contains a doublestop. The bass staff shows fret numbers and string numbers (E, B, G, D, A, E) for each note.

## Lick Blues Attitude

**THE COMBINATION OF DOUBLESTOPS** in this example are centred around the A major triad inversions found within the A major pentatonic scale. Licks don't get much more resolute than this! The single-note lines switch gears into a minor tonality with a little blues attitude and a saucy quart of doublestop minor 3rds.

The notation for 'Blues Attitude' consists of two systems. The first system starts with a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 4/4 time signature. The first measure is marked with an 'A' chord and contains a single-note line and a doublestop. The second measure is marked with a 'G' chord and contains a doublestop. The third measure is marked with a 'BU' (bend) and contains a doublestop. The second system continues with an 'A' chord in the first measure and contains a single-note line and a doublestop. The second measure is marked with 'Let ring' and contains a doublestop. The third measure is marked with 'Let ring' and contains a doublestop. The bass staff shows fret numbers and string numbers (E, B, G, D, A, E) for each note.

# Lick Drone Wars

**THE OPENING MINOR 3RDS** invert to become major 6ths and both shapes utilise the open G string in the process as a drone of the  $\flat 7$ th. This effectively makes these triple-stop ideas. The single-notes almost ring together as doublestops and that major 7th interval is just so sweet before resolving this line on the A5 chord!

The notation for 'Lick Drone Wars' consists of two systems of guitar tabs and staff notation. The first system covers measures 1-3, and the second system covers measure 4. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The guitar strings are labeled E, B, G, D, A, E from top to bottom. Measure 1 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. The first system of tabs includes fret numbers and slurs, with chord labels 'A' and 'G' above the staff. The second system of tabs continues the lick, ending with a chord label 'A' above the staff. The final measure (measure 4) shows a resolution to an A5 chord, indicated by the label 'BU' above the staff.

# Example

**WE GET STRAIGHT** down to business right from the beginning here with the held, slow quarter-tone bend on the D. These subtle bends are not an optional extra in phrases like this, they are an essential part of the style. There is a short, sharp version at the beginning of bar 2 and the following bend reverses the whole approach by only releasing part of the way before returning up to B.

The notation for 'Example' consists of two systems of guitar tabs and staff notation. The first system covers measures 1-2, and the second system covers measure 3. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The guitar strings are labeled E, B, G, D, A, E from top to bottom. Measure 1 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. The first system of tabs includes fret numbers, slurs, and quarter-tone bend markings (1/4). The second system of tabs continues the lick, ending with a chord label 'BU BD' above the staff. The final measure (measure 3) shows a resolution to an A5 chord, indicated by the label 'BU BD' above the staff.



# Example

**THE DOMINANT 7TH (D)** features prominently again here, pushed slightly sharp and contrasted against the root two frets above. Next, you'll hear a slightly lazy bend from A up to B, at the 2nd fret of the G string – worth bearing in mind as an alternative to an 'absolute pitch' bend, or going for the 3rd fret B, here. As with all ideas like this, try it out and see.

$\text{♩} = 80$  N.C.

BU BU

Let ring w/bar

3

12

# Lick Setting the modal mood

**THE OPENING PHRASE** to my solo starts on the characteristic note of G# and ascends and descends through my favourite Amaj9 arpeggio shape. I'm targeting the chord tones of the tonal-centre chord to solidify the Ionian modal sound. The second half of the solo resolves nicely to C#, the major 3rd of the A6 / Amaj9 chord.

$\text{♩} = 100$  Amaj9

BU BD

C#m7 Dmaj7 F#m7 E

3

## Lick Skipping intervals breaks up linear runs

**I'M DELIBERATELY TARGETING** the G# characteristic note of the Ionian mode and also resolving there for a moment or two. You'll also notice the simple intervallic aspect of this line – wider interval skips add space between scale tones and break up linear runs. The second half of this lick is derived from a Dmaj9 arpeggio and outlines the Dmaj7 chord perfectly, while the 9th (E) is a chord tone within all four chords in bars 3 and 4.

## Lick Descending in major and minor 6ths

**I LOVE THESE DESCENDING** intervallic phrases. This idea is based on descending, diatonic major and minor 6ths. You'll notice that the first two-bar phrase resolves to G# and the second phrase resolves to A – a nice way to add tension with the major 7th and then release that tension by concluding the phrase with the tonic tone of the Ionian mode.

# Lick Adding legato and pedal-tone ideas

**THE FIRST HALF** of this phrase is a pseudo-classical guitar line that starts on the G# and descends through the A major scale to resolve to A. Try to make this line as *legato* as possible. The second two-bar phrase features a couple of pedal-tone ideas: the first pedal tone is B and descends through the notes A, G# and F#. The second pedal tone is F# and descends through the notes E, D and C#. The intervallic nature of this lick may be tricky to articulate at first when using a pick. Slow the idea down and build up to speed, or simply use your thumb and fingers!

## Example

**WHILE RECOGNISABLY PENTATONIC** (not necessarily a norm for Jeff, even in the 60s), this opening phrase demonstrates his rhythmic approach: picked hard and emphasised through a series of pre-bends and releases. The release from the 5th to 5th (C# to C) in bar 4 is an example of how Jeff would take what might sound like standard blues (or just plain wrong) in other hands to create a twist on what was still a very new style in 1968!

# Example

**MOVING UP THE** fretboard, these doublestops arrive at a stuttering series of bends and releases similar to Example 1, but this time combining that idea with the 5th and .5. This is a bold move, which may have been inspired by the psychedelic sounds that would have been everywhere at the time, or perhaps the way blues harp players would bend a note. Who knows, but it is certainly worth trying out to add an exotic edge to your solos.

$\text{♩} = 97$  **B7**

Let ring

BU PB 12 PB 12 PB 12 PB 12

14 12 (14) (12) 10 11 11 10

4

# Example

**A SLIGHTLY LONGER** phrase here, incorporating some of the same devices (including a particularly unsubtle released bend to the .5 in the final bar!). I've also added in a more rapid-fire section over the pause in the backing track. Jeff has never made fast playing a goal in itself, but there's no doubt he can go there if he feels the song calls for it.

$\text{♩} = 97$  **C#7#9**

BU BD PB 17 PB 17 PB 17 PB 17

17 (19) 12 17 (19) 14 14 17 (19) (17) (19) 17 (19) 17 (19) 17 (19)

17 (19) 17-16-14 14 17-16 14 17-16-14 14 14 17-16-14 14 14 14-17-14 14 17-14 14(18) (17) 14 14 14 16 16

4



**F#m7** **Dmaj7** **E5**

## Lick Groups of three

**I'M ARTICULATING NOTES** in groups of three and descending through the first half of the phrase with an intervallic string-skipping idea that favours an F#m7 arpeggio (the relative minor to our key centre of A). Notice how the second half of the phrase outlines the Bm(add2) chord with another intervallic line that ascends in groups of three notes.

**Bm7** **A5** **E/G#** **F#m7** **Dmaj7** **E5**

$\text{♩} = 96$

## Lick Pentatonics for modal playing?!

**I'M COMBINING B MINOR, C# minor and F# minor pentatonic scales** for this example. All three of these minor pentatonic scales are derived from the A major scale and work perfectly over this B Dorian progression. I find that my phrasing changes when I play pentatonic lines – so this is a nice way to add variation within the context of the A major scale.

**Bm7** **A5** **E/G#** **F#m7** **Dmaj7** **E5** **Bm7** **A5** **E/G#**

$\text{♩} = 96$

# Example

**INITIALLY TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE D, G AND B STRINGS** to slide up to an E major triad at the 9th fret, this first section of the solo then moves into single-note territory. I'm keeping within a relatively narrow area of the fretboard, but venturing to add the D natural/7th on the first string as part of a melodic line, which acknowledges the chord movement underneath. This phrase finishes where it started in fretboard terms but using only the D and G strings, omitting the major 3rd on the B string.

Example 1 musical notation. The first system shows a treble clef staff with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 4/4 time signature. The solo begins with an E major triad at the 9th fret, indicated by an 'E' above the staff. The guitar staff shows fretting on the 7th, 9th, and 10th frets of the D, G, and B strings respectively. A note on the first string (D natural) is shown with a slide up to the 9th fret. The second system continues the melodic line with notes on the D and G strings, including a 'Lift slide' instruction. The guitar staff shows fretting on the 9th and 7th frets of the D and G strings. A 'Let ring' instruction is shown with a dashed line over the notes.

# Example

**SHIFTING TO THE A CHORD**, I could have moved the same pattern as seen in Example 1 to the 12th to 14th frets. But, in this case, I opted for a riskier single-note approach, with some major pentatonic lines roughly framing where an A major chord would be around the 5th and 6th frets, before sliding down to incorporate some conventional fretted notes, roughly outlining the change back to E major. In the final phrase I've headed back for the 7th to 9th frets, incorporating the major 6th (C#), which makes a nice alternative to the 7th and is frequently referenced in the backing chords.

Example 2 musical notation. The first system shows a treble clef staff with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 4/4 time signature. The solo begins with an A major triad at the 5th fret, indicated by an 'A' above the staff. The guitar staff shows fretting on the 4th, 6th, and 5th frets of the D, G, and B strings respectively. A note on the first string (D natural) is shown with a slide up to the 6th fret. The second system continues the melodic line with notes on the D and G strings, including a 'Lift slide' instruction. The guitar staff shows fretting on the 6th, 8th, 7th, and 5th frets of the D and G strings. A 'Lift slide' instruction is shown with a dashed line over the notes. The third system shows a melodic line with notes on the D and G strings, including a 'Regular fretting' instruction. The guitar staff shows fretting on the 4th, 2nd, 0th, 1st, 2nd, 0th, 4th, and 6th frets of the D and G strings. A 'Lift slide' instruction is shown with a dashed line over the notes.

## Example

**TAKEN FROM LATER IN THE SOLO**, this example is like an alternate take on Example 2. It outlines the A major with pointed inclusion of the 7th (G) and a more daring approach with the slide, travelling up to the 10th fret (root) then all the way down to the open second string, before bringing in some conventional fretting and a final lick back around E major chord at the 7th to 9th frets.

Example 2 musical notation showing a melodic line in treble clef and guitar fretboard in bass clef. The key signature is C# major (F# and C#). The time signature is 4/4. The first system is labeled 'A' and the second 'E'. The fretboard shows a slide from the 4th fret to the 10th fret, then down to the open string, followed by conventional fretting and a final lick.

## Example

**THIS FINAL PHRASE STAYS WITH THE CHORD CHANGES**, while acknowledging some of the movement in the different version of A heard in the second bar. Like Example 3, there are a couple of jumps in position – something it's easy to take for granted in conventional playing but quite risky when using a slide because of the mechanical noise and distinct possibility of 'landing' in an exceptionally out-of-tune spot! The long upward slide at the end could perhaps be viewed as 'stagecraft'!

Example 3 musical notation showing a melodic line in treble clef and guitar fretboard in bass clef. The key signature is C# major (F# and C#). The time signature is 4/4. The first system is labeled 'B', 'A', 'E', and 'B'. The fretboard shows a slide from the 7th fret to the 12th fret, then down to the 9th fret, followed by a long upward slide to the 12th fret.

## Lick Introducing the Phrygian sound

**MY OPENING LINE** heads straight towards the characteristic note of D to establish the Phrygian sound of that tasty minor 2nd from the tonic tone of C#. The second half of this phrase utilises an A major 7th arpeggio, which can be seen as a chord substitution for the C#m7 chord. This works well because both chords contain three of the same chord tones (C#, E, G#). More on chord substitution melodies in another article.

Lick musical notation showing a melodic line in treble clef and guitar fretboard in bass clef. The key signature is C# major (F# and C#). The time signature is 4/4. The tempo is 96. The first system is labeled 'C#m7', 'F#m7', 'Dadd9', 'E', 'D', 'F#m7', 'Esus4', and 'E'. The fretboard shows a slide from the 3rd fret to the 5th fret, then down to the 2nd fret, followed by a long upward slide to the 12th fret.

## Lick Outlining the C# minor chord tones

**THE MUTED RAKE** starts on the characteristic note and then targets the minor 7th (B) on the top string.

The following tones on the high E string outline the chord tones of C# minor and also integrate the minor 2nd of D.

The D major 7th arpeggio sounds super sweet and is a nice nod to one of the previous melodic phrases. It also contains the C# and D tones to further evoke the Phrygian tonality.

## Lick Opening up the sound

**TRY ADDING VIBRATO** to both notes within the doublestop major 6th at the end of the first phrase and let those chord tones sustain and ring together for a solid resolution over the C#m7 chords. I'm using F# as a pivot tone to ascend through the F# minor pentatonic scale, opening up those intervals for a wider melodic sound before resolving to C#.

## Lick Ups and downs

**THE DESCENDING AND ASCENDING ASPECTS** of this phrase can both be seen as diatonic doublestop major and minor 6ths that I'm playing as staccato single-note lines. This is a great way to widen your melodic phrases without having to play both tones at the same time. You'll also notice that each two-bar phrase resolves on the same melodic idea, only an octave apart.

## Example

**THIS FIRST SECTION** establishes the rhythm and basic harmony, with little embellishment. Having said that, note the swung up-beat before we start – this establishes the swung feel right from the word go. The brief fill in bar 2 takes from shapes 1 and 2 of the E minor pentatonic/blues scale, but there's no further 'lead' guitar playing here. Try to play this so that it could also function without the backing track.

♩ = 137 E5

Swung

Let ring

Let ring

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

1

## Example

**THE SECOND FOUR-BAR SECTION** becomes slightly more expansive, adding a fill in bars 2 and 4. It's essential to get cleanly in and out of these, just as a drummer must not lose the beat when adding a fill. The doublestop in bar 2 is given a slight push sharp in the 'blues bend' tradition, before sneaking in a triplet, complementing the swung feel.

E5

Let ring

Let ring

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

1

## Example

**GETTING SLIGHTLY MORE RISKY HERE**, with a few quick position shifts between the rhythm part and shape 4/ shape 1 of the E minor pentatonic. A sense of continuity is given by allowing open strings to ring, covering these position changes. The fills in bars 2 and 4 both start with a quarter-tone bend on a doublestop from shape 4. However, the first fill takes a simpler melodic approach, while the second builds things with a flashier triplet pattern.

E5

Let ring

Let ring

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

1

## Example

**THE FINAL SECTION CONTINUES** the jump between the rhythm part and shape 4 of the E minor pentatonic, sliding out then back into position at bar 2. Conscious that we are coming to a close, the final lick plays a descending pattern based around the E minor pentatonic. In a perfect world, I might have played a C# rather than the C natural in bar 4, but I resisted the urge to strive for 'perfection' and do another take, as I didn't want to lose the feel!

The musical notation for Example consists of two systems. The first system shows a guitar part in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The guitar staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. The bass staff has a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp. The guitar part starts with an E5 chord and a melodic line that slides out and back into position. The bass part provides a simple accompaniment. The second system shows a continuation of the guitar part, ending with a final lick and a double bar line.

## Lick Introducing the Lydian sound

**I ALWAYS LIKE TO EASE INTO A SOLO** with a simple melodic phrase. This allows me to build dynamics and pace as I develop the solo. You'll also notice that I'm establishing the D Lydian sound by specifically targeting the G# note on the second and fourth strings. Locate the G# characteristic note within your major scale patterns before creating a solo and you'll be able to target those exotic tones on the fly.

The musical notation for Lick consists of a guitar part in 4/4 time with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The guitar staff has a treble clef and a key signature of two sharps. The bass staff has a bass clef and a key signature of two sharps. The guitar part starts with a melodic phrase that targets the G# note. The bass part provides a simple accompaniment. The notation includes chord symbols: Dmaj7, E/D, Dmaj7, E/D, A, E, F#m7, D, F#m7, E. The guitar part ends with a double bar line.

## Lick Triplet phrasing

**THIS FINGER-TWISTING INTERVALLIC LINE** should keep you busy for a while. Each of the two-bar phrases starts with the exact same contour and triplet rhythmic phrasing yet sounds completely different played in different fretboard locations. Lots of these kinds of contours exist within your major scale patterns. Try to locate a few new ideas for yourself this month and integrate them into your major scale repertoire.

## Lick Intervallic width

**CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT THE INTERVALLIC TRIPLET LINE** is the C# minor pentatonic scale? Opening up the interval widths within your scale patterns will make them sound completely different. This idea can be articulated with a pick, but I'd advocate playing it with your fingers for a smoother, more consistent sound. Slow this idea down and build it back up to tempo over time. Speed is a byproduct of accuracy!

## Lick Swapping pentatonics

**THE 'RAKE' INTO THE SEMITONE BEND** at the start of Lick 4 really makes the characteristic note bend to A stand out and make a statement. You'll notice that I'm using the same intervallic line from Lick 3, only instead of playing a C# minor pentatonic scale, I'm playing an F# minor pentatonic scale at the 14th fret. The closing phrase employs a pedal tone idea from the F# minor pentatonic scale that culminates in another semitone bend from G# to A (the 5th of Dmaj7).

# Example

**THIS OPENING PHRASE** really hits the ground running, establishing the D minor as a default in the first bar, then moving triads around rhythmically, outlining C, G and F major (in a couple of inversions) before linking with some D minor pentatonic. Keep a close eye on the relationships between the triads and pentatonic lines, as these frequently coincide. Over time, this will give you greater vocabulary in both chord and solo playing.

$\text{♩} = 83$

Chords: Dm, C/D, Dm7, G/D, Dm7, G/D, G/D, Dm7

# Example

**HAVING MADE THE JUMP** from 'rhythm' to 'solo' playing in Example 1, I'm continuing that feel with this single-note passage. After the opening 'pick-up' phrase, this moves through shapes 4 and 5 of the D minor pentatonic (briefly) before reaching shape 1 halfway through bar 2. Here we stay until the end! However, check back over bar 2 and notice how the shape 4 pentatonic outlines an F/Dm7 triad, then shifting to shape 5, where we 'let ring' with a C major triad!

Instructions: Let ring, Vol, to bridge pickup

# Example

**THIS STAYS WITH THE SHAPE 1** D minor pentatonic until beat 2, where we slide to shape 2, facilitating the Fmaj/Dm7 triad, then shifting up again to make a G major triad. We're still in shape 2 really, apart from the B natural, but at this point I'm thinking in terms of (fairly random) triads rather than strict scales. Another piece in the puzzle in terms of fretboard knowledge!

1

3

# Example

**CONTINUING WITH THE MIXTURE** of pentatonic and chord fragments, here we have a mixture of doublestops (including the deliberately dissonant major 2nd in bar 1) leading to a few more rhythmic moving triads, now descending back down the fretboard before ending on the root (D). Experiment with looking at each triad as part of a pentatonic shape, with the chance to 'branch out' into single notes/embellishments and you'll really be expanding your horizons in any style!

1

4

## Lick Slide intro...

**I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE NICE** to show that modal playing is not restricted to single-note lines. The slide intro is highlighting the 'rock tonality' of the piece and also outlining the chord tones of the E chord. You'll notice that I resolve all of my slide phrases on the chord tones of E, plus I intentionally target the characteristic note of D within the lines and final resolution point.

Musical notation for a 4-bar lick in E major (key signature: two sharps, 4/4 time, tempo 96). The notation includes a treble clef staff and a guitar staff with fret numbers. Chord symbols above the staff are E, D/E, A5, E, D/E, A5. The first bar is marked 'w/slide'. The second bar has a 'Let ring' instruction. The guitar staff shows fret numbers: 7, 7/9, 7, 9, 9, 9/10, 9-12, 9/7, 9, 9, 9, 7.

## Lick Using doublestops

**THIS FOUR-BAR PHRASE** can be seen as the E major pentatonic scale played in two fretboard locations. The E major pentatonic scale is derived from the A major scale and is therefore perfect for outlining the chord tones of an E chord. The second half of this phrase utilises doublestop 3rds, 4ths and 5ths that are centred around the E triad shape at the 4th fret. I recommend you use your fingers, or pick and fingers to articulate this line.

Musical notation for a 4-bar lick in E major (key signature: two sharps, 4/4 time, tempo 96). The notation includes a treble clef staff and a guitar staff with fret numbers. Chord symbols above the staff are E, D/E, A5, E, D/E, A5. The guitar staff shows fret numbers: 3/4, 2-4, 2-4/6, 4, 5/7, 5, 7, 7, 7, 4-5-4, 5, 5, 6-4, 6-4, 7, 4, 7, 4, 5, 5, 4-4.

## Lick Adding chromatic tones

**I'M A HUGE FAN OF IMPROVISING WITH ARPEGGIOS.** In this example I'm using an E9 arpeggio with a few chromatic tones thrown in for good measure. Adding the 9th to these dominant 7th arpeggios gives us a more pentatonic-like, two-notes-per-string shape to work with. The chromatic tones are giving me colour and movement within the phrases. The doublestop major and minor 6ths are also chord tones of E7, and I think they sound stylistically 'correct' on this kind of rhythm and blues progression.

Musical notation for a 4-bar lick in E major (key signature: two sharps, 4/4 time, tempo 96). The notation includes a treble clef staff and a guitar staff with fret numbers. Chord symbols above the staff are E, D/E, A5, BU, BU, A5. The guitar staff shows fret numbers: 7, 4, 5, 6, 4, 6/7, 5, 7, (8), 7, (9), 4, 7, 4, 5, 7, 4, 7, 4, 7, 4, 6.

## Lick Arpeggiated movement

**YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED** that I like to package my solos in two- or four-bar phrases that migrate up the fretboard through a series of scale or arpeggio patterns. This example combines two E9 arpeggio shapes that I articulate in a very bluesy fashion, the semi-tone bends and chromatics adding subtle nuance between the chord tones. Just make sure you don't end a phrase on any of the chromatic tones!

*♩ = 96*

1

3

## Lick The complete melodic toolkit

**IN THIS EXAMPLE** I'm combining doublestop major 3rds, an E9 arpeggio and the E major pentatonic scale – all of which outline the E major tonal centre chord and are all found within the A major scale. Those tasty chromatics are a great way to make your lines flow between chord tones. Combining melodic tools like this will open up the sound of your improvisations and keep your phrases sounding fresh and inspired.

*♩ = 96*

1

4

## Example

**THIS FIRST EXAMPLE** demonstrates how Ritchie would construct his solos, setting the scene and building rather than bursting in with indecent haste! After the long sustained root in bar 1, you can clearly see and hear the G blues scale at work throughout. Bar 2 sees the beginning of a series of repeated bends, before taking a more Clapton-inspired direction in the last two bars – particularly highlighted with the use of quarter-tone bends.

♩ = 171 Swung

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

1

## Example

**STARTING WITH A REITERATION** of the repeated bends idea, this example then moves on to some rapid hammer-on/pull-offs on the third string, making use of the open G as a root note. If you're quick, you'll catch a hint of this in Ritchie's solo at the end of *Since You've Been Gone*. We're moving between positions here, switching between a G minor pentatonic (or blues scale) and G natural minor approach; watch out for this throughout the solo.

♩ = 171 Swung

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

1

G5

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

4

## Example

**REJOINING THE ACTION** later in the solo, we have a shape 3 blues scale run, incorporating the ♭5 by playing chromatically through three frets on the top E before descending down through the pattern, referencing an F from what might be considered G Dorian then incorporating a G minor arpeggio right at the end. These considerations don't need to be at the forefront of your mind while playing, but it's really beneficial to piece together and understand for future ideas.

$\text{♩} = 171$  Swung

C5

BU RP RP BU

E B G D A E

8 8 11-13 13-13 11-13 8 10-9-8 11 11-10-8 10 8 9/10

1

G5

E B G D A E

10-7-9-10-9-7 10-7 8 10-8 10 8-10-12 10-12-10

4

## Example

**ANOTHER FUSION OF APPROACHES HERE**, starting with a *Child In Time*-style repeated arpeggio, we move on to a descending G Dorian (within the 'framework' of a shape 4 G minor pentatonic) in groups of six, a couple of four, then a group of five. This wasn't deliberate – it was more about where I wanted the run to land at the next bar – but this does demonstrate the way Ritchie incorporates 'tricky' phrases into his solos and lines.

$\text{♩} = 171$  Swung

B $\flat$ 5 C5 B $\flat$ 5

E B G D A E

11 12-10 12 10-12 11 12 10-13-12-10 13-11-10 11-10 12-10 10 12-10 12

1

E B G D A E

12-10 12-10 10 12-10-8 10 10-8 10 w/bar w/bar

4

## Lick Establishing the mode

**I'M INTENTIONALLY STARTING THIS PHRASE** on the characteristic note of D to establish the Aeolian tonality. I wanted to create a distinctive line that could be repeated as a motif, so you'll hear this phrase again in Example 2. Don't 'throw away' great lines – develop and repackage those motifs to reinforce the melodic recognition of your style.

♩ = 100

F#madd9 Dmaj7#11 F#madd9 A E Dmaj7#11

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

## Lick Developing a theme

**THE MELODIC MOTIF** from Example 1 is repeated here to develop a theme within my solo. The second half of this phrase is a nice descending line on the top two strings. I added a harmony part a diatonic '3rd above' the melody for a little surprise feature that will highlight the last two bars.

♩ = 100

F#madd9 Dmaj7#11 F#madd9 A E Dmaj7#11

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

## Lick Show some emotion

**I'M A BIG FAN OF EMOTIVE SEMITONE BENDS.** I'm intentionally letting this bend up to C# really sing over the F#m add9 and Dmaj7#11. I call this 'letting the chords do the work'. I'll repeat this phrase in the next lick to continue motif development. The second half of this phrase utilises a nice R&B-flavoured doublestop idea, another signature device that you'll hear me use to add harmonic impact to the melody.

♩ = 100

F#madd9 Dmaj7#11

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

PB  
13 BD BU

BD

F#madd9 A E Dmaj7#11

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

## Lick Letting the melody breathe

**HERE'S THAT NICE SEMITONE BEND AGAIN**, echoing the motif from the previous example. I like how the sustained note allows this melody to 'breathe' a little before my *crescendo* line. I'm now more adding pace to my solo with a 16th-note descending and ascending line. My phrase culminates in a *glissandi* slide into a doublestop minor 3rd (C# and E) resolution point over the F#m add9 chord. Try adding vibrato to the note E with your first finger, while keeping your second finger static.

The musical notation for this lick is presented in two systems. The first system (measures 1-3) features a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 4/4 time signature. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 100. The melody is written in a 4/4 rhythm with eighth notes and quarter notes. Chords indicated above the staff are F#madd9, Dmaj7#11, F#madd9, A, and E. The guitar part is shown on a six-string staff with fret numbers (12-14, 14, 13-12, 12, 13, 14, 16/17-16, 17-16-14, 17, 14, 17-14) and techniques like palm bends (PB), bends down (BD), and bends up (BU). The second system (measures 4-6) continues the melody with a *glissandi* slide indicated by a dashed line and a 'G' symbol. Chords indicated are Dmaj7#11, F#madd9, and Dmaj7#11. The guitar part continues with fret numbers (15-14, 16, 14-16-14, 16, 14-16, 14, 16/18, 17-17, 18) and techniques like bends down (BD) and bends up (BU).

## Example

**THIS FIRST SECTION** sets up a melodic sustained line, but not before the palm-muted intervallic skips implying D major before beat 1 of bar 1 starts over E. Vibrato is sparse and sparing – I could've gone with none at all, but this wasn't about eradicating such things as much as consciously choosing a melodic line rather than overt blues vocabulary. Even so, it could be said that this is quite major pentatonic overall.

The musical notation for this example is presented in a single system (measures 1-4) with a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 4/4 time signature. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 110. The melody is written in a 4/4 rhythm with eighth notes and quarter notes. Chords indicated above the staff are E5 and E5. The guitar part is shown on a six-string staff with fret numbers (7, 9, 10, 9, 10-12, 11-(13)-(11)-(13), (11)-9, 9-11-9) and techniques like palm muting (PM) and bends down (BD) and bends up (BU). The notation includes wavy lines indicating vibrato on the sustained notes.

## Example

**STARTING OUT** with a hint of E Mixolydian (b7 or D natural rather than the D# of an E major scale), the following G# was chosen to create a little bit of 'tension' and give an alternative to the bluesy/pentatonic feel. You could call this Lydian, but I was thinking more of an implied E/D chord, though we quickly move up through some ascending 6ths and a hybrid of D major scale and shapes 2 and 3 of the D major pentatonic. Ultimately, think of this as melodic lines first and check out the scales later!

♩ = 110

D5

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

1

8<sup>va</sup>

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

4

## Example

**JUST AT THE POINT** before the chord progression resumes, this unashamedly blues-rock-based lick mixes shape 1 E minor pentatonic with E Mixolydian, before shifting positions via a chromatic burst along the fifth string. This is written more tidily than it was played for ease of reading – feel free to make it as off kilter as you want or need to, as long as you land on the final E for beat 1 of the next bar.

♩ = 110

E5

BU

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

1

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

3

## Example

**MIXING THE BLUES/PENTATONIC**-based approach with some major pentatonic lines in the same position, you'll notice a couple of the moves from Example 3 reappearing. This is not conscious, but it does highlight a useful lick for combining major and minor pentatonics with melodic ideas. Note that vibrato is kept restrained here, though it wouldn't be a problem to have more of a 'wobble' – just don't add it to every single note unless you really mean to!

1

## Example

**USING THE C MINOR PENTATONIC**, we start by bending up to the root then targeting G with another bend at the beginning of bar 2. I'm sure we've all seen phrases like this before, but this is done with the knowledge that the G is outlining the major 7th of the chord underneath. The piano-style doublestops in bar 4 also stay within the C minor pentatonic, but the beginning of the final bar acknowledges that C major by hammering on pointedly from E<sub>b</sub> to E natural.

1

## Example

**STICKING WITH THE C MINOR PENTATONIC**, this example shows how the chord progression changes on the first repeat. Through the F<sub>min</sub>9 and D<sub>♯</sub>maj7 I'm simply holding an F, in the knowledge (or more like hope at the time!) that its relationship to each chord will be pleasing in a different context: root then 3rd. Bar 3 flurries up the minor pentatonic to begin a variation on Example 1, though by momentarily including a D, this implies a fragment of the C natural minor scale in that same position. This came more from a 'playing licks' perspective than anything deliberate, but it's helpful to work out later.

Musical notation for Example 1. The piece is in 4/4 time with a tempo of 116. The guitar part is shown on a six-string staff with fret numbers. The chord progression is: A<sup>b</sup>maj7, Fm9, D<sup>b</sup>maj7, C, A<sup>b</sup>maj7. The notation includes various techniques such as bends (BU, BD), slides (w/bar), and triplets. The guitar part starts with a 'rake' in the first bar.

## Example

**ANOTHER FLURRY**, this time using the A minor pentatonic into the 'B' section. This is less challenging than the first section, but in bar 2 I've deliberately targeted notes from the E7 chord to give another dimension and add some melodic interest. We return fairly swiftly to the A minor pentatonic/blues scale, though some slides between shapes 1 and 2 add a more melodic/less 'linear' feel.

Musical notation for Example 2. The piece is in 4/4 time with a tempo of 116. The guitar part is shown on a six-string staff with fret numbers. The chord progression is: Am, E7/G<sup>♯</sup>, Am7/G, D/F<sup>♯</sup>. The notation includes various techniques such as bends (BU), slides (w/bar), and triplets. The guitar part starts with a 'rake' in the first bar.

## Example

**STAYING WITH THE A MINOR PENTATONIC**, I'm combining some favourite blues licks with deliberately targeted notes – namely, the bend to G<sup>♯</sup> at beginning of bar 2, the C at the beginning of bar 3, then finally it was too much to resist the final G<sup>♯</sup> over the final E chord. It would be correct to say this contains elements of the A harmonic minor scale, but like the end of Example 2, I only fully realised this afterwards!

Musical notation for Example 3. The piece is in 4/4 time with a tempo of 116. The guitar part is shown on a six-string staff with fret numbers. The chord progression is: Am, E7/G<sup>♯</sup>, F6, E. The notation includes various techniques such as bends (BU, PB, BD), slides (w/bar), and triplets. The guitar part starts with a 'rake' in the first bar.

## Lick The opening line

**I'M TARGETING** the root note (G#) and diminished 5th (D) characteristic note specifically with this opening line. I'm also employing implied bluesy bends to add a bit of sauce over the Bm chord. I'm utilising the G# Locrian scale tones to create additional melodic lines, making sure I get back 'home' to the D and G# chord tones for the final resolution.

Musical notation for 'Lick The opening line'. The piece is in 12/8 time with a tempo of 67. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The chord progression is G#m7b5, Bm, G#m7b5, Bm, A6add9, E, and Dsus#4/G#. The notation includes a treble clef and a guitar staff with fret numbers (4, 5, 6, 7, 4, 7, 4, 5, 6, 7, 4, 4, 6/7, 6, 4, 6/7, 6, 7, 5) and a 1/4 note bend over the Bm chords.

## Lick Stacking 5ths & 4ths

**YOU'LL NOTICE** that I'm stacking 5ths and 4ths in a triplet motion that follows the diatonic scale tones from G#. You could also see this as a root/5th/root (an octave above). This line sounds dissonant, but it actually follows the chord progression nicely. This phrase culminates with a simple intervallic line derived from an F#m7 arpeggio, and resolves to the note B, the minor 3rd of the G#m7(5) chord.

Musical notation for 'Lick Stacking 5ths & 4ths'. The piece is in 12/8 time with a tempo of 67. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The chord progression is G#m7b5, Bm, G#m7b5, Bm, A6add9, E, and Dsus#4/G#. The notation includes a treble clef and a guitar staff with fret numbers (6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 10, 12, 7, 9, 11, 13, 12, 15, 12, 14, 12, 14, 11, 13, 9, 10, 9, 12, 11, 9, 11, 9) and a 1/4 note bend over the Bm chord.

## Lick Using motifs

**THIS LICK IS DERIVED** from an F#m7 arpeggio. I'm playing a simple motif-based idea twice, which resolves to the minor 3rd (B) of G#m7(5). The first phrase resolves to B on the fourth string, and the second time the phrase resolves to a doublestop 4th F# and B an octave higher. The final lick is a smooth descending *glissandi* line from B down to G# (the root) and characteristic note, the diminished 5th (D).

Musical notation for 'Lick Using motifs'. The piece is in 12/8 time with a tempo of 67. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The chord progression is G#m7b5, Bm, G#m7b5, Bm, A6add9, E, and Dsus#4/G#. The notation includes a treble clef and a guitar staff with fret numbers (10, 9, 11, 11, 9, 10, 9, 12, 11, 9, 10, 12, 7, 9, 7, 6, 7) and doublestop markings 'BU BU' over the A6add9 chord.

# Lick E major arpeggio

**YOU'LL NOTICE THE SHAPE** of an E major arpeggio at the 12th fret for the first two licks. I'm also bending the note C# up a half-step to the note D, making this an E7 arpeggio. E7 is the diatonic chord substitution for G#m7(,5), which is why it works so well. My crescendo line is a nice intervallic line of 6ths and 5ths descending towards the G# root note on the 9th fret, second string. I also harmonised this line a 3rd above for dramatic effect.

## Example

**THIS OPENING PHRASE** is very much pentatonic based, but using the pattern as a basis for a more 'vocal' approach, rather than trying to create licks or patterns. I'm departing from the shape to bend up to that F at the start of bar 2 – and the B shortly afterwards is counterintuitive, though Clapton has often referred to a major 7th like this as a passing note. Jumping position briefly down to the A minor pentatonic, there is a shift back up to C via a little reference to the F# diminished chord in bar 4.

## Example

**WE'RE TREADING A FINE LINE** in the first couple of bars, playing the C minor pentatonic over the A major chord with the only acknowledgement being the quarter-tone bend on the E, in bar 1. The timing is also hesitant, which is inspired by the way blues vocals are often sung behind the beat. The second half is more fluent, taking a pentatonic blues lick before sliding between positions to find a melodic line to wind up this half of the solo.

*J* = 60 8<sup>va</sup> C D7

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

1

C F Fm C G

Swung

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

4

## Example

**AS THE CHORD PROGRESSION REPEATS**, this alternative take on the first half deliberately avoids any overtly scale-type lines, then relenting in bar 3 to a classic blues scale run before a couple of Mayer-style doublestops, followed with a reverse rake across the strings. I then realise, because the chord underneath is diminished, I can move this up three frets and still be in key, which paves the way nicely for a return to the home chord at the beginning of the final phrase.

*J* = 60 8<sup>va</sup> C C7

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

1

F F#dim

Swung

E  
B  
G  
D  
A  
E

4

## Example

**COMING STRAIGHT FROM THE DOUBLESTOPS** over the diminished chord, I target a major 3rd (C and E) over the return to the home chord. The C natural is pushed sharp as a token nod to the C# in the A major chord, but then we move on to the D and G major chords, where I play the dangerous game of sliding around a hybrid of the D minor and G major pentatonic, before returning to 'home turf' again with a phrase similar to Example 1.

Example 1 (Measures 1-2): Melody in 4/4, tempo 60. Chords: C, A7, D7, G7. Fretboard diagrams show fingerings for the first and third strings.

Example 1 (Measures 3-4): Melody in 4/4, tempo 60. Chords: C, F, Fm, C, G, C. Fretboard diagrams show fingerings for the first and third strings.

## Example

**THIS OPENING PHRASE** uses a series of major and minor 6th intervals, played on the first and third strings, in a way you'll often hear in country music. The descending sequence follows the pattern of the E minor scale, starting with B then adding the (min6) above. Notice the F# at the cross into bar 2 and the C chord. This potential dissonance is 'resolved' by continuing the descent, landing on E, the major 3rd. It's worth knowing these details, but don't feel you have to be hyper-aware in the moment. Is the final phrase a bit of pentatonic sneaking in?

Example 2 (Measures 1-4): Melody in 4/4, tempo 110. Fretboard diagrams show fingerings for the first and third strings.

## Example

**THIS DESCENDING PHRASE** using the E minor scale keeps moving, so the risk of clashes from passing notes is reduced, particularly when playing C, as mentioned earlier. Having landed on G nicely to coincide with the G chord on the backing track, we switch to a G major arpeggio pattern to ascend again, using the CAGED C major shape in the same position. The F# comes into its own at the end (sliding from the 9th to the 11th fret on the third string), also happily fitting over the underlying chord (D major) as the 3rd.

Example 3 (Measures 1-4): Melody in 4/4, tempo 110. Chords: Em, Cadd9, G, D. Fretboard diagrams show fingerings for the first and third strings.

## Example

HERE, WE'RE USING A FRAGMENT of the E minor scale to lead up to a slightly over-enthusiastic bend to B at the 17th fret (no auto-tune here!). The resulting frustration leads me to try some rapid alternate picking. Essentially, this descends then ascends the E minor scale, switching to a D major arpeggio idea as that chord comes around again in the backing track. F# is the point where the switch happens at beat 1 of bar 4.

Example 1: Musical score for guitar in 4/4 time, tempo 110. The score is divided into two systems. The first system covers measures 1-3, and the second system covers measures 4-5. The key signature is one sharp (F#).

**System 1 (Measures 1-3):**

- Measure 1:** Treble clef, 4/4 time, tempo 110. Chord: *Em*. Fretboard: 10/12, 12-14-15.
- Measure 2:** Chord: *Em*. Fretboard: 17-(19), 17-(19). Picking: BU, BU, BD.
- Measure 3:** Chord: *Cadd9*. Fretboard: (17)-15-17, 15-17-15. Picking: 3.

**System 2 (Measures 4-5):**

- Measure 4:** Chord: *G*. Fretboard: 15-19-17-15, 17-16-14, 17-16-14, 17-15-14, 17-15-14-15-17. Picking: 6, 6, 6.
- Measure 5:** Chord: *D*. Fretboard: 14-17, 15, 14-17, 14-17, 16-17, 14-17, 14-17.

## Example

RETURNING TO THE DESCENDING 6THS idea we came in with, using triplets like this breaks up the phrasing to make a more unexpected and melodic pattern than straight eighth notes would give. Note the pointed inclusion of C as the melody note (over the C chord) in bar 2. The rest is pure E minor scale, though this, of course, fits over the G major chords as the relative minor, so the two are pretty much interchangeable.

Example 2: Musical score for guitar in 4/4 time, tempo 110. The score is divided into four measures. The key signature is one sharp (F#).

**Measure 1:** Chord: *Em*. Fretboard: 15, 14, 12, 12. Picking: 3, 3.

**Measure 2:** Chord: *Cadd9*. Fretboard: 10, 8, 7, 8, 7, 10, 8. Picking: 3, 3.

**Measure 3:** Chord: *G*. Fretboard: 7, 10, 9, 10, 9, 7, 10. Picking: 3.

**Measure 4:** Chord: *D*. Fretboard: 10, 9.