

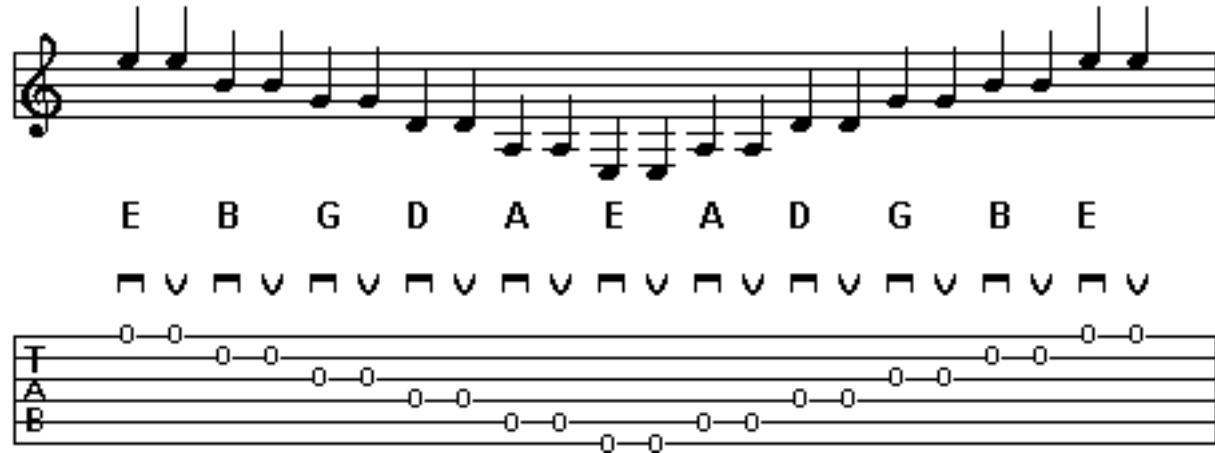
# MINOR PENTATONIC LEAD - LESSON 1

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## Minor Pentatonic Lead 1

What we will look at in this lesson is how to hold the guitar, hold the pick and deal with right hand picking techniques. We will also learn a scale we will use for our improvisation and soloing called the pentatonic scale.

### Alternate Picking Exercises



Musical notation for Alternate Picking Exercises. The exercise is written on a single treble clef staff. The notes are: E4, B4, G4, D4, A3, E3, A3, D3, G3, B3, E4. The notes are grouped into pairs: (E, B), (G, D), (A, E), (A, D), (G, B), (E). The notes are picked in an alternating pattern: down, up, down, up, down, up, down, up, down, up, down, up. The guitar fretboard diagram shows the notes on the strings: Treble (T), Middle (A), and Bass (B) strings. The fret numbers are: 0-0, 0-0, 0-0, 0-0, 0-0, 0-0, 0-0, 0-0, 0-0, 0-0, 0-0.

### Pentatonic Scale Version 1



Musical notation for Pentatonic Scale Version 1. The exercise is written on a single treble clef staff. The notes are: C4, A3, G3, E3, D3, C3, A2, G2, E2, D2, C2, A2. The notes are grouped into pairs: (C, A), (G, E), (D, C), (A, G), (E, D), (C, A). The notes are picked in an alternating pattern: down, up, down, up, down, up, down, up, down, up, down, up. The guitar fretboard diagram shows the notes on the strings: Treble (T), Middle (A), and Bass (B) strings. The fret numbers are: 8-5, 8-5, 7-5, 7-5, 7-5, 7-5, 7-5, 8-5.

### Pentatonic Scale Version 2



Musical notation for Pentatonic Scale Version 2. The exercise is written on a single treble clef staff. The notes are: C4, A3, G3, E3, D3, C3, A2, G2, E2, D2, C2, A2, G2. The notes are grouped into pairs: (C, A), (G, E), (D, C), (A, G), (E, D), (C, A), (G). The notes are picked in an alternating pattern: down, up, down, up, down, up, down, up, down, up, down, up, down. The guitar fretboard diagram shows the notes on the strings: Treble (T), Middle (A), and Bass (B) strings. The fret numbers are: 8-5, 8-5, 7-5, 7-5, 7-5, 7-5, 7-5, 5-3, 5-3.

Left Hand Fingering  
L 1 L 1 3 1 3 1 3 1 1 3 1

# MINOR PENTATONIC LEAD - LESSON 2

## Minor Pentatonic Lead 2

In this lesson we will be looking in more detail at the pentatonic scale. We will be learning a three-note pattern and the proper technique for bending.

### Pentatonic Scale Version 1

A C D E G A C D E G A C

T  
A  
B

5-8 5-7 5-8

### Pentatonic Scale 3 Note Pattern

A C D

A C D A C D

T  
A  
B

7-5-7 7-5-7

Left 2nd 1st 3rd Hand Fingering

Left 2nd 1st 3rd 2nd 1st 3rd Hand Fingering

### Bending Strings

Full

Full

T  
A  
B

7-5-7 7-5-7

# MINOR PENTATONIC LEAD - LESSON 3

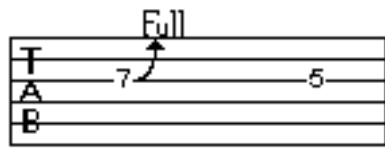
## Minor Pentatonic Lead 3

In this lesson we will build on the bend and the three-note pattern from the last lesson. There are four ways to bend a string. Last time we covered a simple bend and hold. Now we will look at bending up and down, bending and muting and pre-bending a string.

Bend Up and Down



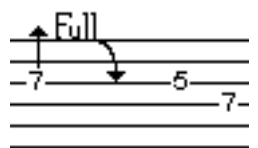
Bend Up and Mute



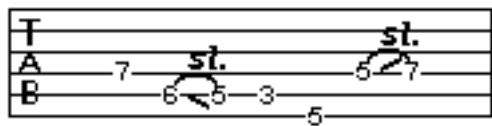
Pre-Bend



Example



Octave Jump Example



Bend and Octave Jump Exercises

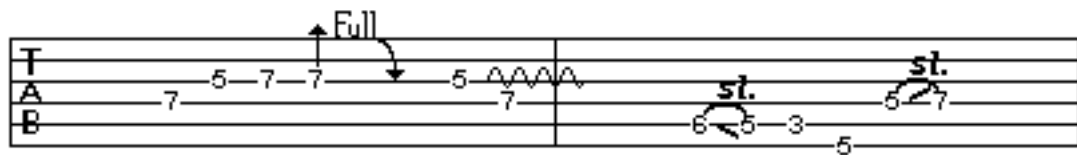
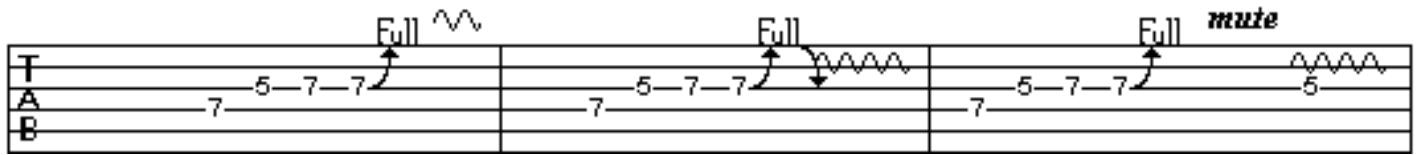


# MINOR PENTATONIC LEAD - LESSON 4

## Minor Pentatonic Lead 4

In this lesson we will look at four types of vibrato. Vibrato is very difficult to master but adds a nice touch to your phrases when doing a solo. Vibrato consists of repeatedly varying the pitch of a note up and down and gives your playing a vocal quality.

Vibrato exercises combined with bends. This example exercise combines the bends and vibrato from the previous lessons.



# MINOR PENTATONIC LEAD - LESSON 4

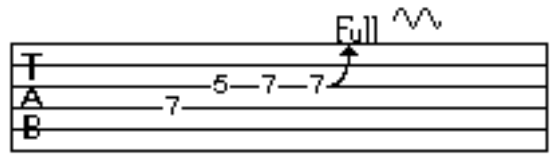
## Minor Pentatonic Lead 4

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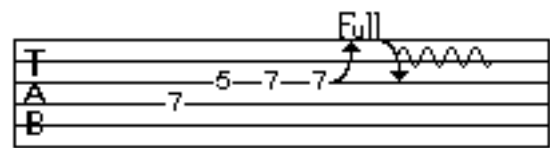
### Vibrato Exercises Combined with Bends

We will now play the three-note pattern followed by each of the bends from last lesson and add vibrato.

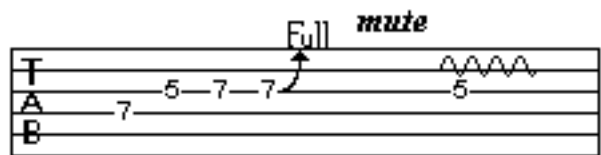
Three-note pattern with bend and vibrato.



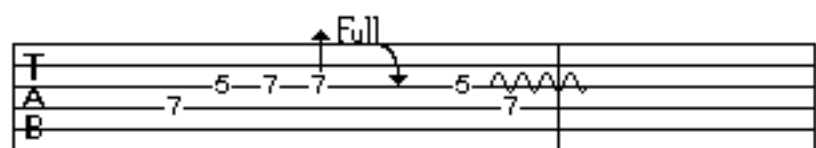
Three-note pattern followed by a bend up and down with vibrato at the 7th fret.



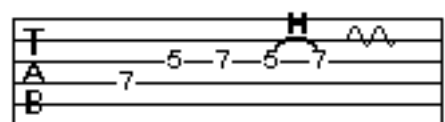
Bend and mute going to the 5th fret with first finger vibrato



Silent bend rounded off to the root on the 4th string. Use the same vibrato as we did on the 3rd string,



Three-note pattern followed by a hammer on to practice the vertical vibrato.

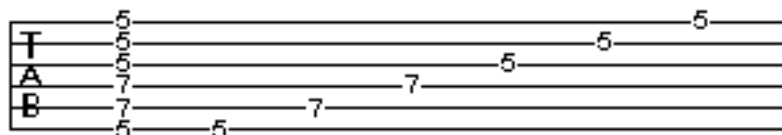
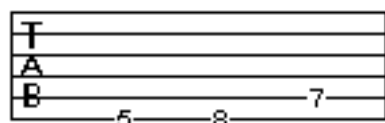
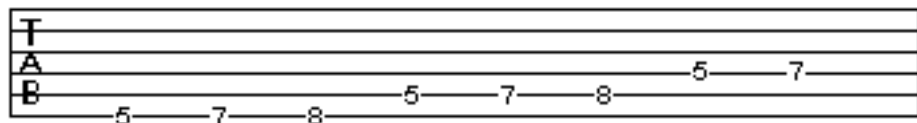
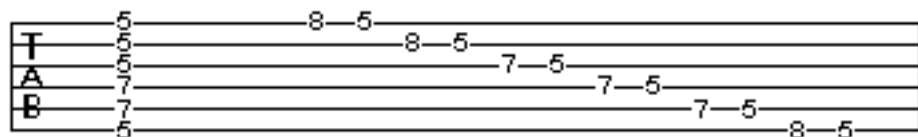
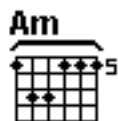


# MINOR PENTATONIC LEAD - LESSON 5

## Minor Pentatonic Lead 5

In this lesson we are going to begin learning how to solo or jam with others. We will be looking at chord notes and passing notes and considering how they relate to the chord being played.

### Pentatonic Minor Scale

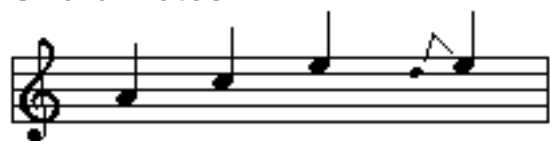


# MINOR PENTATONIC LEAD - LESSON 5

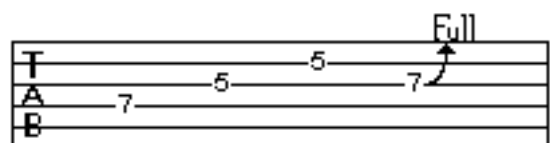
## Minor Pentatonic Lead 5

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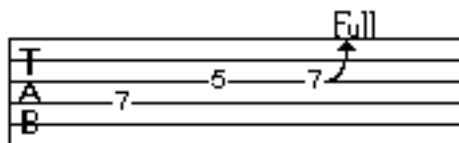
### Chord Notes



A C E E



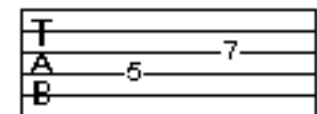
A C E



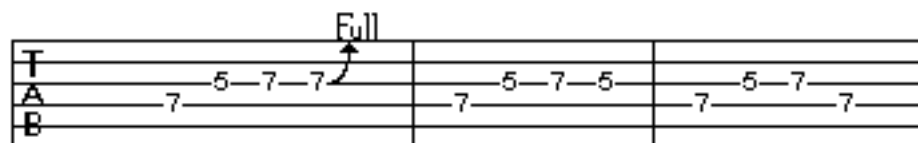
### Passing Notes



G D



Solo Exercise. Use the backing track in the looper widget to practice.



# MINOR PENTATONIC LEAD - LESSON 6

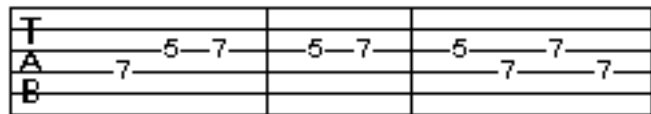
## Minor Pentatonic Lead 6

In this lesson we will be looking at some of the elements that make up a lead solo.

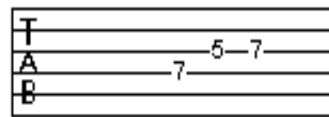
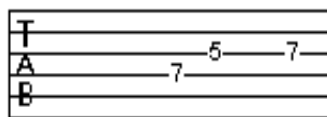
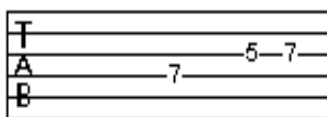
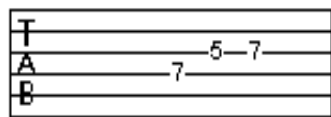
A three-note pattern is a good building block for a melodic phrase but, of course, you could use a two-note pattern or even a four-note pattern.



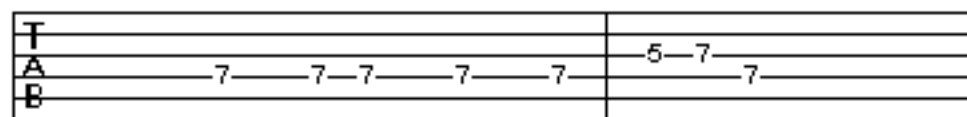
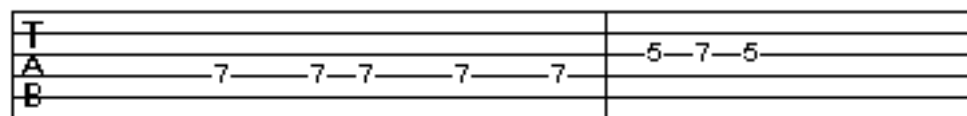
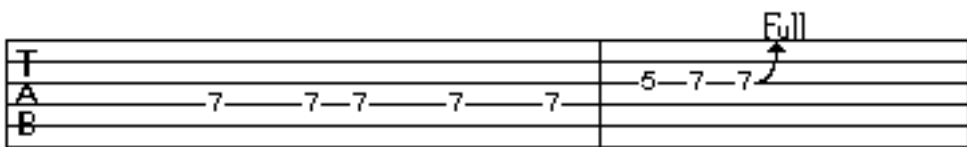
3-Note    2-note    4-note



Example timing, you can take the three notes and play them straight. Or you can hold the first note back a little bit. Or hold the second note. Or hold the last note and put a slight emphasis on it.



What you need to do for this lesson is sit down and pedal away on one note. Get the feel for the groove then introduce the three-note pattern and round off to a chord note. Try this with backing track in the looper widget. This is a good way to develop the ability to get the feel of the music and it provides a good starting point for playing a lead.





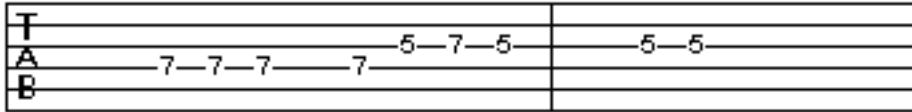
# MINOR PENTATONIC LEAD - LESSON 7

## Minor Pentatonic Lead 7

In this lesson we will continue with pedaling and the three-note pattern from last lesson and we will introduce a two-note and a four-note pattern. We will also look at getting around some of the problems that present themselves when you end a phrase on a bend.

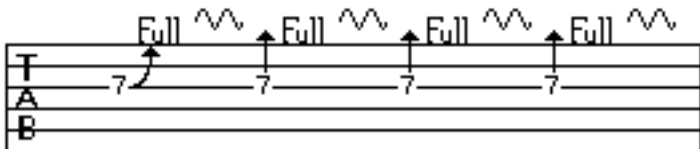
### PEDALING

Recall the three-note pattern ending on a note other than the bend, as below.



Pedaling is very useful at the beginning of a phrase to get a sense of timing. It is also very effective for continuity, to pedal at the end of a phrase as well. Apart from anything else, it gives you a certain amount of time to decide where to go to next. Try beginning a melodic lead by pedaling on a single note in rhythm with the music. This can help get you into the "groove" of the music and let the lead flow with the rhythm. After pedaling a while, add an extra note and return to pedaling. Try to see a structure of melody arising to be part of the rhythm.

If you are ending a phrase on the bend it is quite difficult to pedal while propping the bent note up in pitch. This is especially difficult if pedaling on a bend while using vibrato but can be very effective and is well worth mastering.



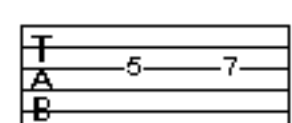
# MINOR PENTATONIC LEAD - LESSON 7

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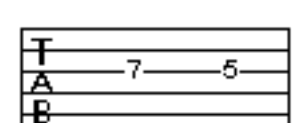
### TWO-NOTE PATTERN

We will now look at a two-note pattern to use for creating phrases. The pattern uses the notes on the 3rd string going from the 5th fret to the 7th fret.

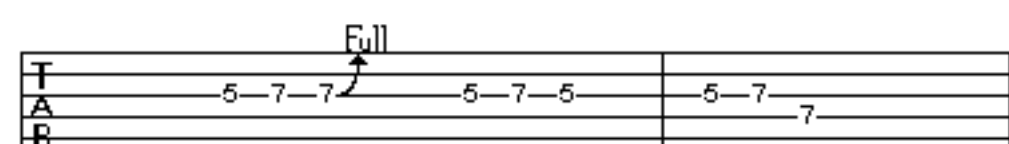


We could play these two notes over and over again, cycle them around or loop them, but as a soloing device it might sound somewhat dull.

We could also create a two-note pattern from the same two notes, but going from the 7th fret to the 5th fret.

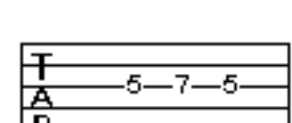


Begin with the two-note pattern and round it off to each of the three chord notes.



Note that, in the first bar, you play the same note twice before the bend.

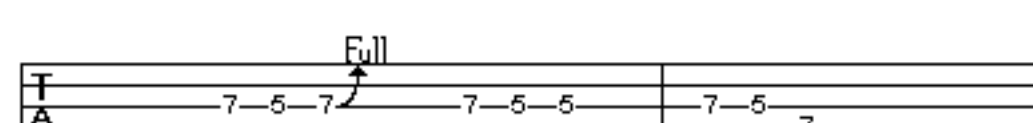
You could play each note separately as in the following example.



For effect you may want to consider using a hammer on, and then pick the last note when going to the chord note at the 5th fret on the 3rd string.



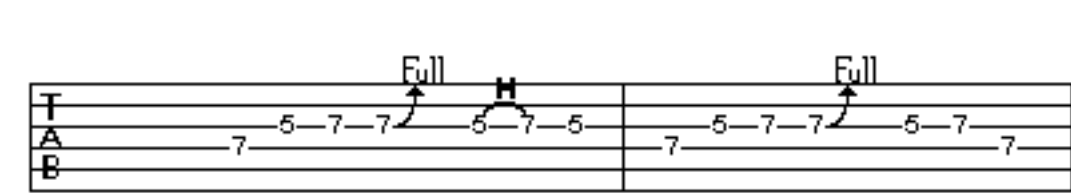
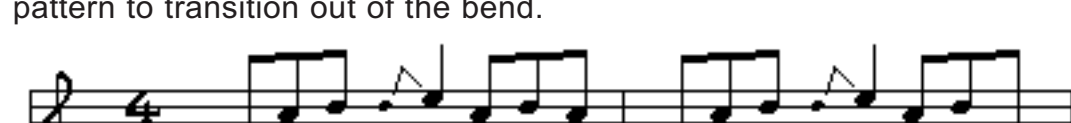
Now use the other two-note pattern and round off to each chord note.



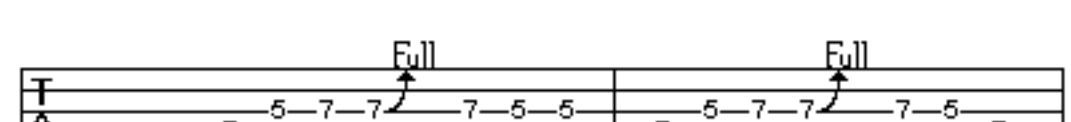
In the final bar we can use either the third finger or the second finger on the 4th string as we are not getting any staccato effect or chopped off notes coming from the 5th fret of the 3rd string.

### TRANSITION FROM BEND

Let's look at the three-note pattern with a bend again and see how we can use this two-note pattern to transition out of the bend.



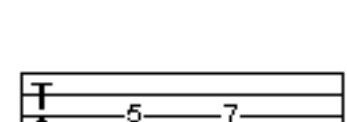
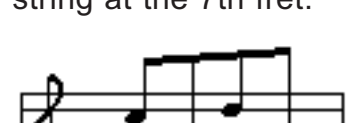
Or we could do the bend, then the other two-note pattern.



### FOUR-NOTE PATTERN

We will now learn a four-note pattern. This is a little longer than the other patterns but it is very effective.

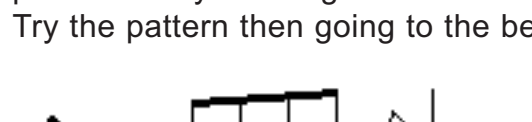
We start with the first finger on the 3rd string at the 5th fret. Go from there to the 4th string at the 7th fret using the middle finger. Then go to the 3rd string at the 7th fret and back to the 4th string at the 7th fret.



It is important to lift your finger off after playing, in order to articulate each note. Otherwise, if using distortion, effects or if playing at high volume, the notes will blur together and create an ugly sound. This is the general rule when playing on adjacent strings, to remove the finger of the previous note.

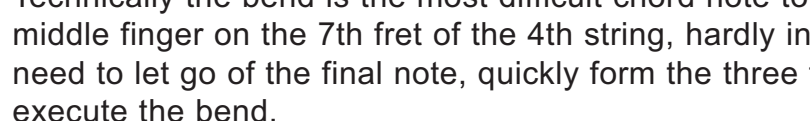
Once again, a melodic phrase is usually short, so this pattern is getting to the long end of a phrase. But you can get some nice melodies out of the four-note pattern.

Try the pattern then going to the bend.



Technically the bend is the most difficult chord note to end on, as the pattern ends with the middle finger on the 7th fret of the 4th string, hardly in a good position to begin a bend. You need to let go of the final note, quickly form the three fingers in the proper bend formation and execute the bend.

Then, end on the other chord notes.



Again, when playing you can pedal on the first note at the 5th fret on the 3rd string to set the rhythm.

### RIGHT HAND PICKING

Lets look at the right hand picking for the four-note pattern.

Ideally it is nice to pick inside the strings for this type of pattern, as there is less pick travel, picking inside the strings, compared to picking outside the strings. Of course, with alternate picking, there is no guarantee you will be able to begin the pattern with a down stroke. But if you are starting with the four-note pattern you may want to work inside the strings.

# MINOR PENTATONIC LEAD - LESSON 8

## Minor Pentatonic Lead 8

In this lesson, we will be looking once more at phrasing using melodic concepts. We will be looking at some more two-note combinations as well as some general tips on how to phrase and get the most out of your soloing.

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Once again let's take a look at the two-note pattern and some of the phrases we had last time.

A musical staff in treble clef showing a sequence of eighth notes on the 3rd string. The notes are G5, A5, B5, A5, G5, F5, E5, D5. The fret numbers 5-7 and 7-5 are written below the staff. A 'Full' bend is indicated above the final note (D5).

We mentioned that when you do end on a bend, because you are stuck propping the string in the air, it could be quite difficult to know what to do next. A two-note pattern can give you a rather nice phrase to follow through.

Two musical staves in treble clef, 4/4 time. The first staff shows a sequence of eighth notes: G5, A5, B5, A5, G5, F5, E5, D5. The second staff shows a similar sequence but with a 'Full' bend and a wavy line above the final note. Below the staves are two guitar diagrams showing fret numbers 5-7-7-5 and 7-5-5-7, with a 'Full' bend indicated above the final note.

### DOUBLE TWO-NOTE PATTERN

If you want to get a little bit more complicated, you can do what we call a double two-note pattern. This stretches your phrase out while still utilizing the same two notes.

We will take the two patterns, which went from frets 5 to 7 and frets 7 to 5 on the 3rd string, and we will join them together with a technique which involves hitting the same note twice. If you play it rather fast you get quite a nice filled-out phrase, especially if you round it off again to a chord note.

Two musical staves in treble clef, 4/4 time. The first staff shows a sequence of eighth notes: G5, A5, B5, A5, G5, F5, E5, D5. The second staff shows a similar sequence but with a 'Full' bend and a wavy line above the final note. Below the staves are two guitar diagrams showing fret numbers 5-7-7-5 and 7-5-5-7, with a 'Full' bend indicated above the final note.

Usually this particular double note phrase tends to want to come in on the beat. It is a little tricky to pedal on the first note as we did with the other patterns.

We can also take the same two notes again but begin at the 7th fret and double the note at the 5th fret. Really, it is just a reversal of the above. And again, round off to the chord notes, as in the following example.

Two musical staves in treble clef, 4/4 time. The first staff shows a sequence of eighth notes: G5, A5, B5, A5, G5, F5, E5, D5. The second staff shows a similar sequence but with a 'Full' bend and a wavy line above the final note. Below the staves are two guitar diagrams showing fret numbers 7-5-5-7 and 7-5-5-7-5, with a 'Full' bend indicated above the final note.

Try these and see how they fit in with some of the other patterns, particularly following the phrases that wound up on the bend. For example.

A musical staff in treble clef, 4/4 time, showing a sequence of eighth notes: G5, A5, B5, A5, G5, F5, E5, D5. Below the staff is a guitar diagram showing fret numbers 5-7-7-5 and 7-5, with a 'Full' bend indicated above the final note.

These can be used to make very nice phrases in terms of melodic composition.

# MINOR PENTATONIC LEAD - LESSON 8

## Minor Pentatonic Lead 8

In this lesson, we will be looking once more at phrasing using melodic concepts. We will be looking at some more two-note combinations as well as some general tips on how to phrase and get the most out of your soloing.

### PHRASING TIPS

Let's now look at a few more phrasing tips to help you with soloing.

Let's go back to our first three-note pattern. Recall that the note at the 7th fret on the 3rd string is a passing note, while an A-minor chord is being played.

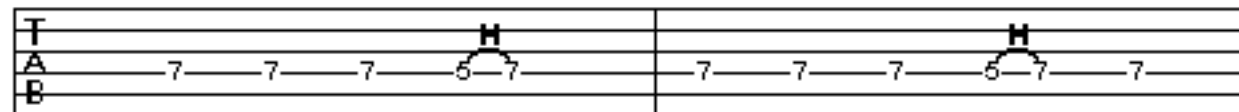
But you do not want to be too worried about hitting this note and always gravitating to a chord note. You can even start some solos on this note.

You just have to get a feel, especially if you are pedaling on the note, to know intuitively how long that note can be played for before wanting to move on.

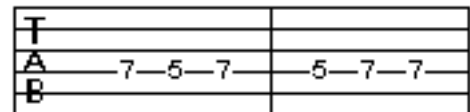
There is another note in the scale that we should look at, on the 5th fret of the 4th string. Again, this note should not be avoided like the plague. It is a passing note and it does want to resolve to the 7th fret of the 4th string but there are several ways we can treat this note.

Recall that pedaling on the note at the 7th fret of the 4th string works well for setting the timing, pushing the note around with different rhythms to the backing music.

The note at the 5th fret can be used to reinforce some of the pedaling on the note at the 7th fret.



This can be very effective, especially at higher tempos. It is also quite difficult, as you need to get a feel for the pedal on the main chord note and know when to slip in the passing note at the 5th fret. This requires some experimentation. Try the following examples.

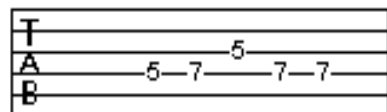
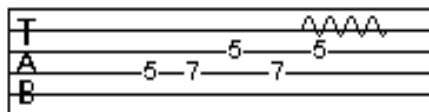
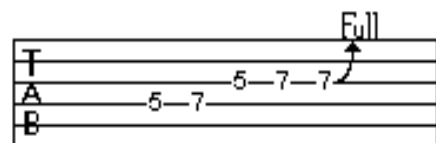


The ratio of chord notes to passing notes will be heavy in favor of the chord note at the 7th fret. Use the note at the 5th fret simply as reinforcement to give some added energy.

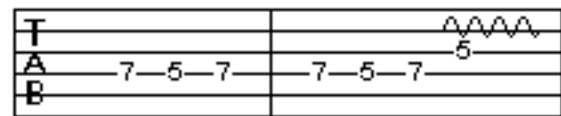
The more quickly you play, the more you are moving away from melodic phrases and into dynamic playing, which will be covered later.

Let's look at another way of treating this passing note without so much pedaling involved.

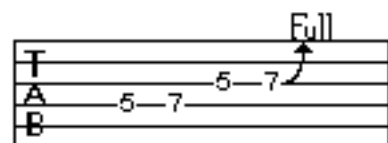
We can start on this note and treat it like a slip note to begin a phrase with.



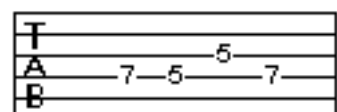
We are almost treating the notes on the 4th string at the 5th and 7th frets like a two-note pattern.



We could go from here straight to a bend.



Or go up to the 5th fret on the 3rd string and back.



# MINOR PENTATONIC LEAD - LESSON 9

## Minor Pentatonic Lead 9

So far, we have dealt with the pentatonic scale moving across the neck. In this lesson, we will be looking at how to continue the pentatonic scale by moving up the neck.

Before we learn how to move along the neck let's review the pentatonic scale going across the neck. The pentatonic scale is made up of five notes and the pattern we have been using so far begins with the first root note, A, on the 6th string at the 5th fret.

Notice the root note A appears three times in this pattern. The A on the 1st string the 5th fret is an octave higher than the A on the 4th string at the 7th fret, which is in turn an octave higher than the A on the 6th string at the 5th fret.

If we look at the top half of the scale starting with A at the 7th fret of the 4th string, we can count up five notes A, C, D, E and G. The next note is A again, an octave higher. Now, instead of playing across the neck we play these same notes moving along the neck.

Let's begin with our original three-note pattern

Instead of playing the 2nd string at the 5th fret, we can play the same note at the 9th fret of the 2nd string. Hit the D again at the 7th fret and slide up to E at the 9th fret.

Then, with the first finger, play the note G on the 2nd string at the 8th fret. Then, using the third finger, play the note at the 10th fret.

This note at the 10th fret is A and is the same note we had on the 1st string at the 5th fret. If you play the two, they sound the same.

We can complete the scale with the notes on the 1st string at the 8th and 10th frets. Once in this higher position, we can go on to the 1st string and bend the note D at the 10th fret up to an E.

We have the three-note pattern in this new position, all the same notes now an octave higher. Compare the notes in the mid-range position with the same notes in this new position.

We have the two-note, double two-note and four-note patterns in this higher position.

And we have the same chord notes over the A-minor chord. You can hear all of the same phrases we used in the mid-range position, now an octave higher.

There are two alternate fingering patterns we can use to go back down the scale. Starting at the root note on the 9th fret of the 2nd string and going the 8th fret with the first finger, we can use the third finger to go from the 9th fret to the 7th fret, with or without a slide.

Or another fingering possibility is to use the first finger to go from the 7th fret to the 5th fret, again with or without a slide.

The following are some common problems to watch out for when changing position.

Try and avoid having your fingers trip over themselves. If you are playing fast it is quite easy to make a slip when your fingers cross over from the 2nd string to the 3rd string.

Another common problem when starting out is in doing the slide on the 3rd string up to the 9th fret; be careful not to over shoot to the 10th fret.

Let's now look at the two ways to go to the bass strings, across and partially down in the pentatonic.

Starting on the 7th fret of the 4th string, we can simply run down the box pattern.

Or we can use the other scale pattern we had in this position. Here there are two fingering possibilities on the 5th string. You can use the first finger to go from the 5th fret to the 3rd fret, or use the third finger to go from the 7th fret to the 5th fret.

We again have the same three-note pattern in this position now an octave lower than the mid-range.

You can play the note G on the 6th string at the 3rd fret, which would be an extra note still in the pentatonic scale. This G would be an octave lower than the passing note G we used at the 5th fret on the 4th string.

### CHANGING POSITION

Let's now look at when it is time to switch positions.

As a general rule, after three or four melodic phrases, the listener will usually want to hear a shift in pitch, either up or down.

A tip to keep in mind when you are soloing: Do not fill every single blank space with a note, a phrase, or constant pedaling. When you round your phrases off, do not be afraid to just let your solo breathe. Do not be in too much of a rush to fill every space with notes.



# MINOR PENTATONIC LEAD - LESSON 10

## Minor Pentatonic Lead 10

In this lesson, we will look at soloing in general over different chords.

For illustration we will examine which notes to end a phrase on and which notes to pass over when playing lead over a typical 12-bar blues chord progression in A.

If you are just soloing over one chord, you will use the same set of chord and passing notes throughout. This will be easy to keep track of for playing, but may sound rather dull.

Generally when you solo, you play over at least two chords and sometimes there can be three, four, or even five different chords in a song. As each chord changes, the scale and its chord and passing notes change in relation to that chord.

A typical chord progression found in blues, rock and general song structures is a one, four, five progression. For example, in the key of A-minor, the chord A is the first chord. Then climb up four letter names to D, the fourth chord, and another letter name to E, the fifth chord.

Let's look at a standard blues progression to help illustrate where the chord and passing notes are.

### 12 BAR BLUES

Becoming familiar with this progression will help you develop a feel for the chords you are playing over and which notes fit with the different chords.

We will use two-note chords, the combination of an open string and a fretted note played at the same time. When playing the chords, use all down strokes with the pick.

The following is the sequence of the chords and the number of bars each chord is repeated:

1st	A	4 Bars
4th	D	2 Bars
1st	A	2 Bars
5th	E	1 Bar
4th	D	1 Bar
1st	A	1 Bar
Turn-around		1 Bar

*Shuffle* ♩ =

**A-4X                      D-2X                      A-2X**

T	2-2-4-4-5-5-4-4	2-2-4-4-5-5-4-4	2-2-4-4-5-5-4-4
A	0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0	0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0	0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0
E	0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0	0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0	0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0

*Shuffle*

**E-1X                      D-1X                      A-1X**

T	2-2-4-4-5-5-4-4	2-2-4-4-5-5-4-4
A	0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0	0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0
E	0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0	0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0

### CHORD NOTES

The chords that we used for the blues progression were two-note chords, starting at the root note for the chord. As there is no third note, they can be considered either major or minor chords. However, the mood implies a major key. A major or a minor scale can be used to play over the progression.

We will play using the pentatonic scale in A-minor. Recall the notes in this scale are A, C, D, E and G. Our discussion will apply to any first, fourth, and fifth chord progression.

### THE FIRST CHORD,

A:  
The first chord in the progression is A. We will use the chord notes A, C and E. All of these notes are in the A-minor pentatonic scale and can be used to end a phrase on. The notes D and G are in the scale but not in the chord; they are passing notes and would not be used to sit on or to end a phrase.

In the 1st position do NOT end on:

The 3rd string 7th fret, D

The 4th string 5th fret, G

You can use these notes if you play through, i.e. play the note on the way to other notes.

Over chord one, A, the chord notes are:

A at the 7th fret on the 4th string

C at the 5th fret on the 3rd string

E at the bend up from the 7th fret on the 3rd string

### THE FOURTH CHORD,

D:  
Over D, or chord four, the chord notes in the pentatonic scale are D and A.

The note F# from the chord is not in the pentatonic scale, leaving D and A as chord notes in the scale. The C note is the seventh for this chord and could be used, but generally D and A would be the notes to end a phrase on. The G, located as above, would be treated as a passing note.

Over chord four, D, the chord notes are:

A at the 7th fret on the 4th string is still a chord note

D at the 7th fret on the 3rd string, which was a passing note over the first chord, is now a chord note. When you return to chord one, this will become a passing note again.

C at the 5th fret on the 3rd string is a passing note but does not sound too bad.

### THE FIFTH CHORD, E:

At some point you will need to solo over the fifth chord, E. The problem with soloing over chord five is that there is only one chord note that will fit in the pentatonic scale over this chord.

The E chord has two chord notes in the pentatonic scale, E and G. Generally you would try to end a phrase on an E note over this chord.

In the 1st position to end on E:

The 2nd string 5th fret

The 3rd string 7th fret bent up a full tone

The 5th string 7th fret

You can stop on any of the locations above, to pedal or end a phrase, or you can play right through the 5th chord using any of the other notes in the scale.

Over chord five, E, all the notes you are used to falling on are now passing notes. The only chord note used is the bend up to E from the 7th fret on the 3rd string, or at the 7th fret on the 5th string.

You need to anticipate chord five and go to the bend and stay there until chord four comes around.

### TURN-AROUND

At the end of the progression we get what is called a turnaround, which takes you to chord five, E, an octave higher.

Over chords one and four more or less anything goes; you can tell by feel if you are staying too long on a passing note and quickly resolve it.

Over chord five, the notes you are used to playing at the 7th fret on the 4th string and the 5th fret on the 3rd string are now drastic passing notes that want resolving and really do not sound effective. The solid bend is the only note that fits.

To complicate things, you need to keep one ear open for when the fifth chord is going to arrive.

Try to sustain the bend over chord five. This can be preceded by a three-note or two-note pattern, but these should be completed before the E chord comes up or it will not sound very effective.

At chord four you get a reprieve and things are OK at chord one. But again, you will need to get to the bend for the turnaround.

Let's now look at a few things you can try for a turnaround.

Turnaround

*Shuffle*

T	7-5-7	7-5-7-7	7-7-5
A	0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0	0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0	0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0
E	0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0	0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0	0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0

In the final example go from the 5th fret on the 3rd string directly to the 7th fret on the 5th string, an E an octave lower than the bend.

### TIPS

When soloing over different chords it is not necessary to move out of the pentatonic scale for the key. All of the chord and passing notes in that scale cover the chord progression quite nicely.

Some guitarists try to chase the actual chord structure by shifting the box pattern to suit the chord. For example, shifting the box pattern from the 5th fret up to the 10th fret for the D chord and to the 12th fret for the E chord; this is not necessary, as one position will provide the chord and passing notes to cover the chord progression nicely.

Try playing over tracks in the looper Widget

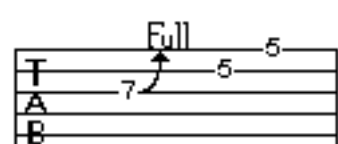
# MINOR PENTATONIC LEAD - LESSON 11

## Minor Pentatonic Lead 11

In this lesson we are going to be looking at our first dynamic pattern, created with three notes. We will then look at how to incorporate this dynamic pattern with our melodic phrasing.

### DYNAMIC THREE-NOTE PHRASE

This dynamic phrase is based on a three-note pattern as illustrated below.



This is quite difficult to do, but with practice it gets easier.

To begin, place the thumb over the edge of the neck for support, as we will be rotating the wrist for the bend. Next we need to set up a "mini-bar" with the first finger to cover the 1st and 2nd strings only. The first finger should be on a slight diagonal to the neck.

For the bend we will use the second and third fingers slightly apart on the 3rd string. Normally we squash the fingers together when doing a bend but here the bend is very rapid.

Bend the string up with two fingers and let go right away. Just as in the previous bends we do not want the two fingers vertical, but rather, leaning over somewhat. While we push up we will be collecting the 4th and possibly the 5th strings. We only stay at the top of the bend for a very brief period of time, then the fingers release the bend at the same angle used for the bend up.

It is important to ensure the bend is up to pitch, which is the same note as the 5th fret on the 3rd string.

Play the 3rd string, bend the note up and let go, then hit the 2nd string then the 1st string. The timing is "1,2,3" and there is no pause between the bend and the rest of the notes; it should sound like a steady stream of notes.

When you bend the 3rd string and let it go, make sure you do not flip it up in the air, as this will create an ugly sound. Right after the bend, let it go by moving the fingers out from the fret board and then hit the 2nd string. Before going on, you may want to practice just the bend followed by the note on the 2nd string.



Then build up and add all three notes.



If you repeat the pattern over and over, you can keep the first finger pressed down or you can slightly lift off the first finger each time you go to the bend. There is not really a right or wrong way; experiment and see which you prefer.

The difficulty with this phrase is that, being dynamic, we want it played fast and explosive to generate a lot of energy, so we need to develop the necessary speed with the right hand picking. Three notes being an odd number always present a problem. If we start a cycle with a down stroke and pick down, up, down the next cycle will begin with an up stroke and go up, down, up.

### RIGHT HAND PICKING

Let's now look at the proper alternate picking with the right hand.

Start with a down stroke on the 3rd string, then an up stroke on the 2nd string and down on the 1st string.

The next cycle will be an up stroke on the 3rd string, down on the 2nd and up on the 1st.

When doing an up stroke on the 1st string make sure that you swing your wrist upwards so that you stop above the 3rd string, which you will be playing with a down stroke. Do not stop prematurely or you will be tempted to do another up stroke on the 3rd string.

Most people get very frustrated at this point in the learning process because they want to play the dynamic phrase fast and want to use all down strokes. You will get greater speed if you use alternate picking as compared to all down strokes.

Make sure that the left-hand sound is perfect before concentrating on alternate picking with the right hand, that way you will only be concentrating on one thing at a time. Get the technique for one hand down then work on the other hand.

### THINGS TO AVOID

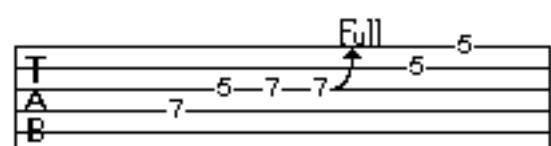
If starting with a down stroke do not go down, down, up, this is a common problem for students.

Also after starting with an up stroke and going up, down, up, be careful not to do another up stroke on the 3rd string.

Every single pick stroke should alternate.

### COMBINING MELODIC AND DYNAMIC

Let's now look at how to combine our melodic phrases with this dynamic phrase while soloing.

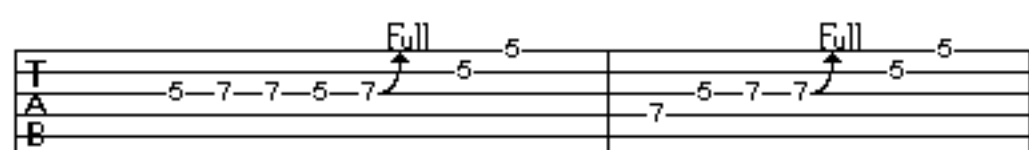


When you get to the third note at the 7th fret on the 3rd string your fingers are apart.

Quickly move to get your two fingers ready for the bend and the first finger ready for the mini-bar.

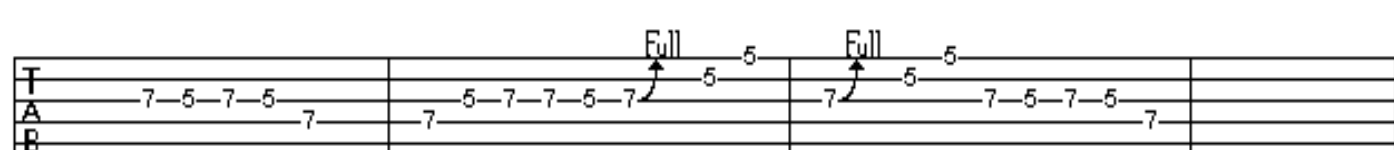
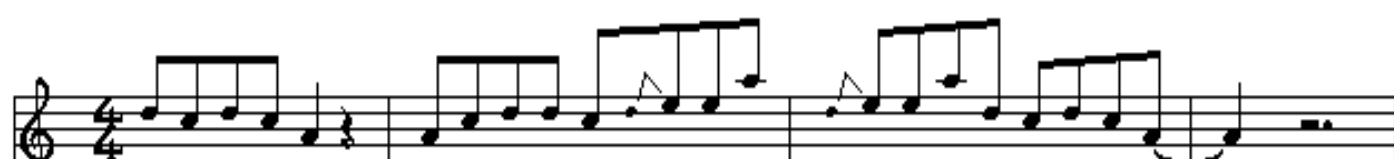
It may take a bit of practice time to play this transition smoothly but it is well worth persevering so that when soloing you can throw in the dynamic phrase to add a bit of excitement.

Consider going to the dynamic phrase after a double two-note pattern or the three-note pattern.



With the dynamic phrase you are also providing a shift in pitch because you are going to the high A note at the 5th fret on the 1st string.

From this dynamic phrase you can, if you wish, come back to the 3rd string at the 7th fret and play all of the patterns in the mid-range.

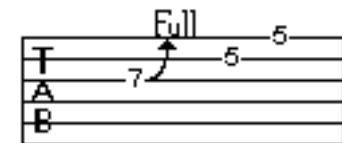


# MINOR PENTATONIC LEAD - LESSON 12

## Minor Pentatonic Lead 12

In this lesson we will build on to the three-note dynamic pattern and round off to a new bend on the 2nd string.

Recall the three-note pattern.

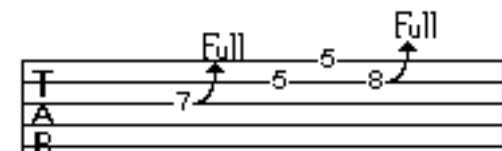


### BEND ON 2ND STRING

Last lesson we looked at doing the three-note pattern then coming back to the 3rd string 7th fret to complete some melodic phrases. As an alternate, we can go to a bend on the 2nd string at the 8th fret. Start with the three-note dynamic pattern, when you finish the last note on the 1st string, let go and quickly form the fingers appropriately for a bend and then bend up a full tone at the 8th fret on the 2nd string.

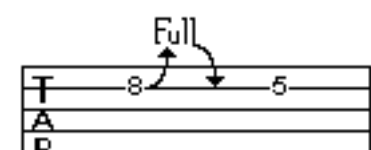
It is important to get all of the fingers together for the bend, as it is quite hard to bend this note with one or even two fingers. Also make sure the first finger is in a muting role as well as assisting in the bend.

Notice that the pitch of the note when bent up a tone is the same as the note at the 5th fret on the 1st string played at the end of the three-note dynamic pattern. Practice the three-note pattern followed by the bend.



### THREE-NOTE CONNECTOR

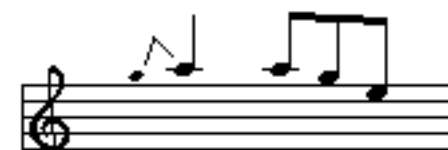
As was the case with the bend on the 3rd string, it can be difficult to know where to go next while propping up the bend on the 2nd string. A lot of players will drop the bend down and end on the 5th fret of the 2nd string.



This is OK but the problem is that, when starting out playing leads, your fingers tend to follow the same patterns and habits develop. You can get stuck in a rut and every time you play a phrase you wonder why you keep doing the same thing over and over. If you always drop the bend down and end on the 5th fret it can become a habit.

We suggest that after the bend, go back to the mini-bar at the 5th fret and reinforce the bend note by playing the 1st string. Muting the bend and going to the same note on a higher string adds an unexpected twist.

Then hit the 2nd string at the 8th fret followed by the 2nd string at the 5th fret.



These three notes connect us back into the mid-range position where we can complete some melodic phrases.

Do not let the bend sag when going to the 1st string 5th fret for the connector. Cut the bend off while still in pitch and provide a clean transition by muting the string with the thumb of the right hand.

This connector is used as a transition after playing dynamic note repetitions or as an entry into dynamic note repetitions. Using a mini-bar allows the option of going back into three-, four-, five- and six-note repetitions after the connector.

### OTHER DYNAMIC PATTERNS

In addition to the three-note pattern we also have four-, five- and six-note dynamic patterns. If you have mastered the three-note pattern these should not be too difficult.

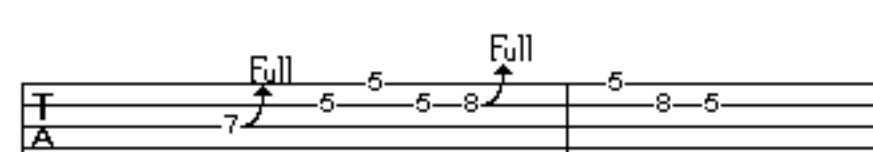
#### FOUR-NOTE DYNAMIC PATTERN

The four-note pattern is played the same way as the three-note pattern but the pick comes back to hit the second string while the mini bar is still at the 5th fret.



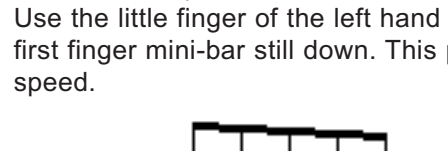
This repetition is fastest if inside picking is used for the 1st and 2nd strings i.e. if you start with a down-stroke on the bend. As there are an even number of notes in the repetition, all cycles will begin with the same stroke direction, i.e. if you begin with a down stroke all the following cycles will begin with a down stroke. Practice beginning with both a down stroke and an up stroke.

Try the four-note pattern and round it off to the bend at the 2nd string followed by the connector.



#### FIVE-NOTE DYNAMIC PATTERN

The five-note pattern consists of the three-note pattern followed by a pull off on the 2nd string. Use the little finger of the left hand at the 8th fret on the 1st string, pick the note and pull off to the 5th fret with the first finger mini-bar still down. This pattern in particular is very useful if you want to generate a lot of energy and speed.

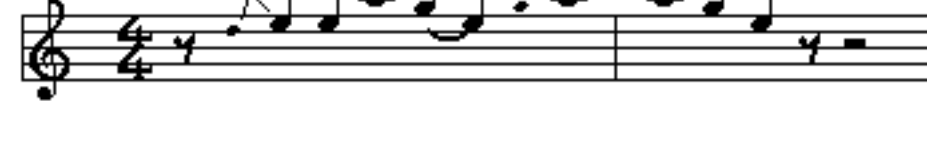
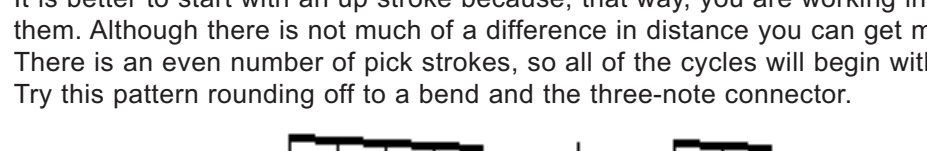


Let's look at the picking for this pattern. Although there are five notes, there is a pull off between notes four and five and the string is only picked once. So the right hand picking consists of four strokes and the same sequence is repeated over and over.

It is better to start with an up stroke because, that way, you are working inside the strings rather than outside them. Although there is not much of a difference in distance you can get more speed working inside the strings.

There is an even number of pick strokes, so all of the cycles will begin with the same stroke direction.

Try this pattern rounding off to a bend and the three-note connector.



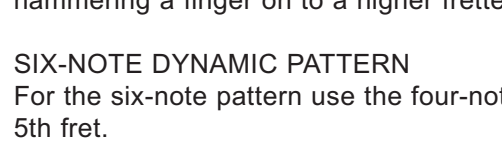
#### PULL OFF

A pull off is where a note is fretted below, the finger pressure is kept on the string and the finger is pulled off to the note to sound the note fretted below.

This is really the opposite of a hammer on, which consists of playing the lower note and producing a new tone by hammering a finger on to a higher fretted note.

#### SIX-NOTE DYNAMIC PATTERN

For the six-note pattern use the four-note pattern followed by a pull off on the 2nd string from the 8th fret to the 5th fret.

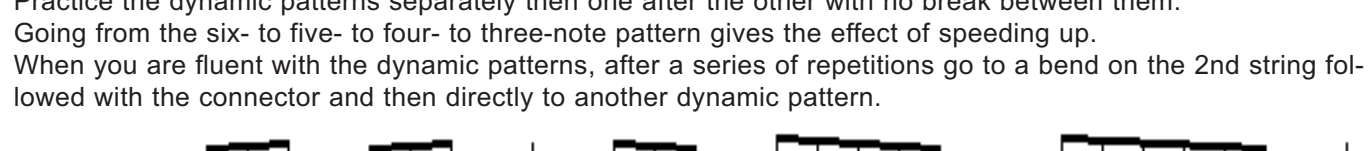


Again do the pattern and follow it with a bend on the 2nd string at the 8th fret and the three-note connector.

Practice the dynamic patterns separately then one after the other with no break between them.

Going from the six- to five- to four- to three-note pattern gives the effect of speeding up.

When you are fluent with the dynamic patterns, after a series of repetitions go to a bend on the 2nd string followed with the connector and then directly to another dynamic pattern.



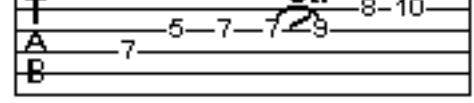


# MINOR PENTATONIC LEAD - LESSON 13

## Minor Pentatonic Lead 13

In this lesson we will look at new positions along the neck in the pentatonic scale.

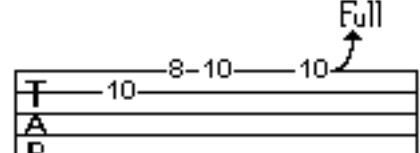
Previously we looked at going from the mid-range position to the position at the 10th fret on the 2nd string.



Here we had our three-note pattern and the bend.



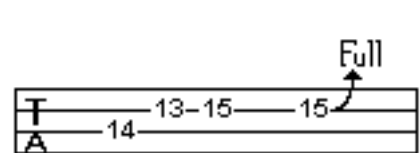
A C D (E)



Another position, which uses the same three notes, is to go along the 3rd string up to the 14th fret. This note is A and is identical to the note A at the 10th fret on the 2nd string. We have the same three-note pattern and bend in this new higher position.



A C D (E)



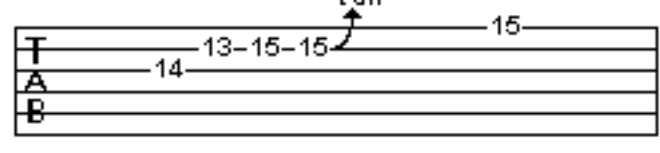
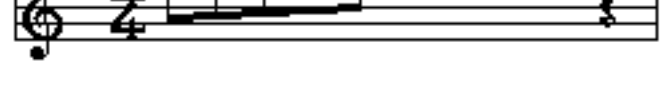
The advantage of playing leads here is that you have extra notes you can play on the 1st string which are not available in the position at the 10th fret. You can only go as high as the bend on the 1st string at the 10th fret in that position.

In this new higher position at the 14th fret you can bend the note at the 15th fret on the 2nd string and play the note on the 1st string at the 15th fret, a G.

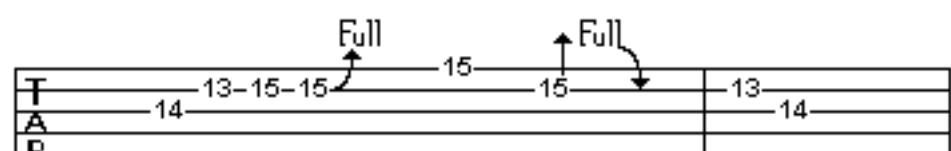
There are a few familiar lead phrases in this higher position which we will look at now.

Start with the three-note pattern, squash the fingers together, with the thumb over the neck and the little finger out, and bend up at the 15th fret on the 2nd string.

Hold the bend and while the note is ringing, tuck the little finger in at the same fret on the 1st string and pick the note. This produces two sounds at once, the bend note and the note from the little finger.

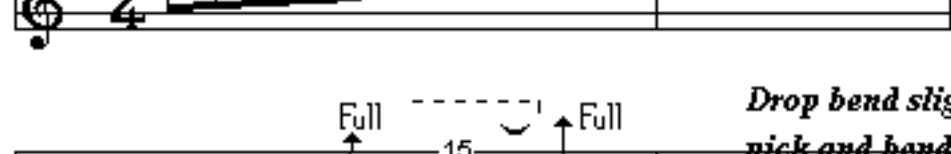
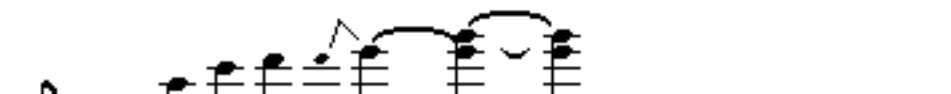


After putting in the extra note at the 15th fret on the 1st string, hit the 2nd string again and lower the bend. Follow with the 2nd string note at the 13th fret and round off to the root note at the 14th fret on the 3rd string.



This produces a very effective melodic phrase.

Using this same idea, but technically a little more difficult, we can play the three notes and the bend then hit the 1st string at the 15th fret. Then drop the 2nd string bend just slightly, pick the note and bend up again while the note on the 1st string is still ringing.



**Drop bend slightly, pick and bend back to pitch**

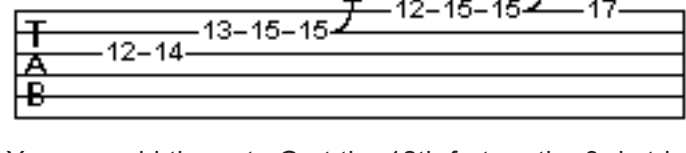
The difficulty in doing this is that, while the bend is up and the little finger is on the 1st string, it is hard to drop the bend down because the little finger is occupying the same space on the same fret.

So, just drop the bend ever so slightly and make sure the 1st string does not die out. You should still hear two notes ringing at the end of the phrase.

Let's now take a look at the structure of the pentatonic scale on these three strings in this position.

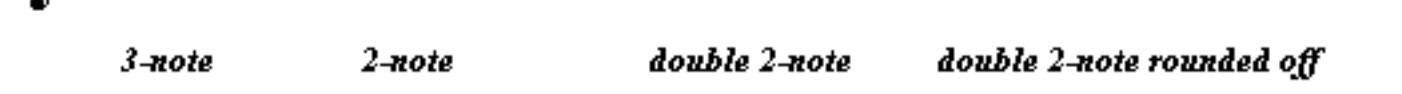


G A C D (E) E G (A) A

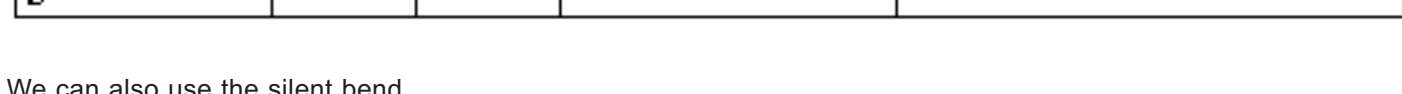


You can add the note G at the 12th fret on the 3rd string. Also note that the bend on the 2nd string at the 15th fret pitches the same note E as on the 1st string at the 12th fret.

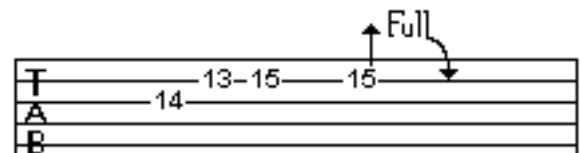
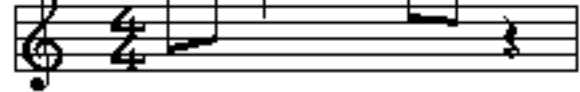
All of the ideas we used for melodic phrases in the mid-range position can be used here; the three-note pattern, two-note pattern and the double two-note pattern rounded off.



**3-note      2-note      double 2-note      double 2-note rounded off**



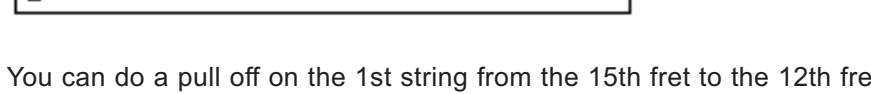
We can also use the silent bend.



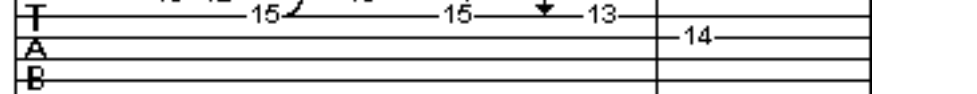
After rounding off the bend you can go straight to the high bend on the 1st string.



You can do a pull off on the 1st string from the 15th fret to the 12th fret.



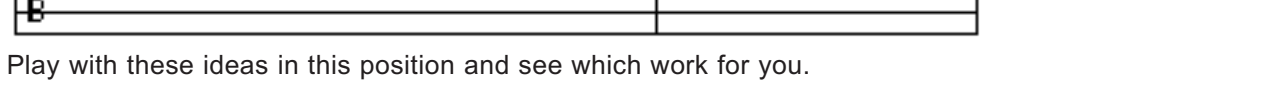
Or



Play with these ideas in this position and see which work for you.

### HIGH BOX POSITION

Let's now look at sliding from this position all the way to the 17th fret where the pentatonic scale box pattern we had at the 5th fret is duplicated.



C A G E D C A G E D C A

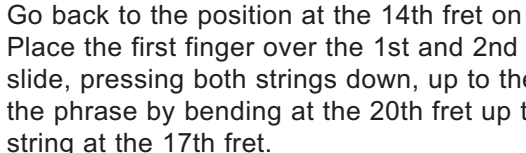
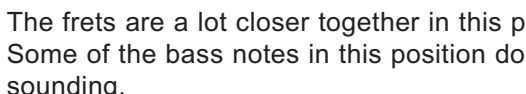


The frets are a lot closer together in this position and a bit awkward to work your way around.

Some of the bass notes in this position do not produce the nicest of tones and they can be a bit wooden sounding.

Go back to the position at the 14th fret on the 3rd string to look at the "high slide."

Place the first finger over the 1st and 2nd strings at the 12th fret in the form of a mini-bar. Hit the 2nd string, slide, pressing both strings down, up to the 17th fret. Then hit the 1st string and back to the 2nd string. Complete the phrase by bending at the 20th fret up to a high A on the 2nd string. This is the same note as the A on the 1st string at the 17th fret.



This is quite a useful phrase to shift position.

# MINOR PENTATONIC LEAD - LESSON 14

## Minor Pentatonic Lead 14

In this lesson we will take a look at a few more positions in the A-minor pentatonic scale and how to move between them.

Put your third finger on the 1st string at the 5th fret to begin a new pentatonic scale still within A-minor.

A G E D C A G E D C A G

Playing in this position allows you to do things a bit differently than in the standard box above the 5th fret. For example, going from the 7th fret on the 3rd string to the 5th fret on the 2nd string, the notes D and E in the typical box pattern are on separate strings, whereas in the new lower position the notes are both on the 2nd string and that lends itself very nicely to phrases involving a pull off or hammer on.

In the previous box position this would be played as follows.

Let's look at a few phrases that sound quite nice in this position.

Be sure to lift your fingertips off when going from one string to the next in order to avoid getting a blurring of the notes together. The next example is a variation of the phrase above. Here we end the phrase with a slide up to the typical box pattern where we can go into melodic phrases.

Also in the lower position we can now bend the note at the 5th fret on the 3rd string using a proper bend. This note is awkward to bend with the first finger when in the typical box position. Another phrase in the lower position is as follows.

And again, with a slide up to the typical box position.

Incorporating these phrases in your playing will help familiarize you with another position as well as add a different sound to your leads.

### SHIFTING POSITIONS

Let's now look at some problems in moving positions along the neck as we are soloing.

Start with our first three-note pattern and a slide to get to the position at the 10th fret.

When soloing in this position recall we mentioned earlier to be careful you do not trip over your fingers going back down the scale. The fingers seem to cross over and if you are playing fast you can sometimes wind up making little errors.

Here is one way out of this position, which avoids this problem.

End the phrase at the 10th fret of the 2nd string and instead of working your way down the scale go straight to the 5th fret on the 2nd string.

After landing on the 5th fret 2nd string, you can go to any of the melodic building blocks we have done so far. The above example uses a quick bend up and down on the 3rd string followed by a pull off to the 5th fret.

Another problem is getting from the typical box position directly to the 14th fret on the 3rd string without having to work your way up the scale.

Suppose you end a phrase on the 3rd string at the 5th fret. You can take the middle finger, place it anywhere nearby on the 3rd string, hit it very fast and slide to the 14th fret. The slide is so quick you do not actually hear the start note. This will get you to the upper position instantly and you are then free to solo at will in the new position.

If you end on a bend at the 7th fret on the 3rd string, you will have to mute the string with the right hand, drop the bend then pick and do the slide.

There is one common problem in phrasing when shifting from the lower position to the higher position. Once your mind has decided to shift position there is a tendency to suddenly panic and move without finishing the phrase in the lower position. Always complete what you are doing musically in the lower position, give yourself time to breathe and then slide.

It is a little harder to go from the root note at the 7th fret on the 4th string to the slide. You may want to end with your 3rd finger on the root note and use your middle finger on the 3rd string.

Let's revisit the position at the 14th fret on the 3rd string. Recall we had the following, with the bend note being the same as the note at the 12th fret on the 1st string.

We could also use the following pattern to climb up the scale.

And coming back down the scale.

Last lesson we discussed the typical box pattern, which repeats itself at the 17th fret. The notes at the 15th and 17th frets on the 1st and 2nd strings are in the pattern below the box, discussed above, which also repeats itself in this position.

By now you are probably noticing there is a lot of overlap in the shapes we are using to connect the scale patterns.

Consider the pattern going from the position at the 14th fret on the 3rd string up to the position below the box pattern at the 17th fret.

An alternate is to climb up the first string; the note at the 12th fret on the 1st string is the same note as the 17th fret on the 2nd string.

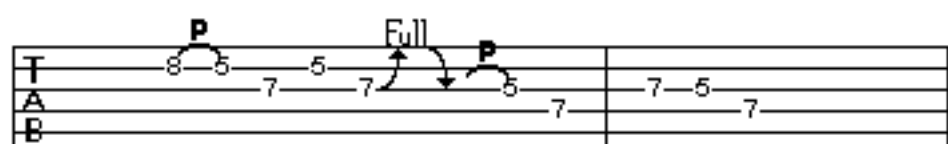
Practice the transitions to become familiar with the different ways of moving between positions.

# MINOR PENTATONIC LEAD - LESSON 15

## Minor Pentatonic Lead 15

In this lesson we are going to take a look at some more dynamic leads which will add a lot of color to your playing.

As pointed out earlier, the pentatonic scale is made up of five notes. Most scales are made up of seven notes so the pentatonic is a rather short scale. Sometimes when doing dynamic runs it is very easy to go from the high A at the 5th fret on the 1st string down to the mid-range A quite quickly. Let's look at a nice dynamic phrase to extend the run. It effectively allows you to drop down the scale a few notes at a time, go back up, emphasize certain bends for effect and extend and stretch the scale out.



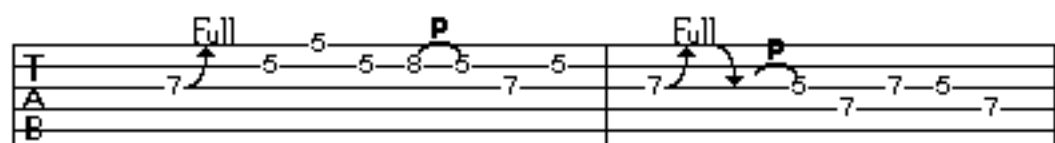
Start with the little finger at the 8th fret on the 2nd string. Keep the thumb on the top of the neck and the fingers at an angle to the neck.

Begin by playing the note on the 2nd string and pulling off.

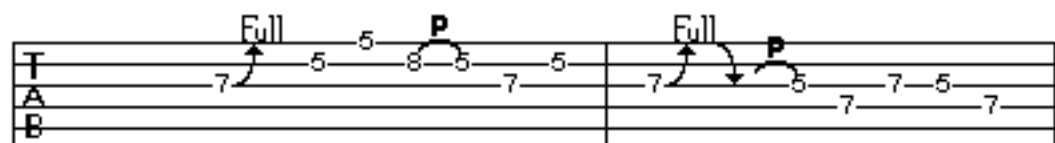
Then go to the 7th fret on the 3rd string, lift the first finger off the 2nd string when playing this note then go back to the note on the 2nd string. Again, at higher volumes or with overdrive, if you keep your finger down you will get the blurring of notes, so get in the habit of lifting your finger off when you go back and forth between two strings. Follow with a quick bend up and down on the 3rd string; recall the bend note here is the same note as at the 5th fret on the 2nd string. As you drop the bend down, your fingers part and the first finger positions itself on the 5th fret for a pull off, this adds a nice, smooth effect.

Go to the 7th fret on the 4th string with the third finger, then flatten it to play the note at the 7th fret on the 3rd string and complete the phrase.

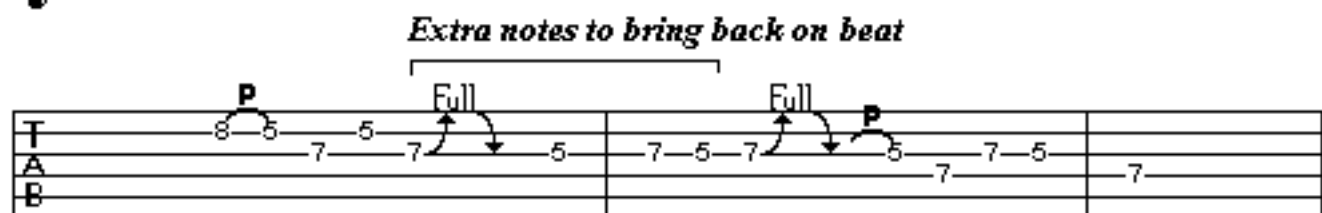
By now, if you have got that down, you may be interested to see how we can combine this particular lead with one of our dynamic patterns we covered earlier. We will use the four-note pattern first.



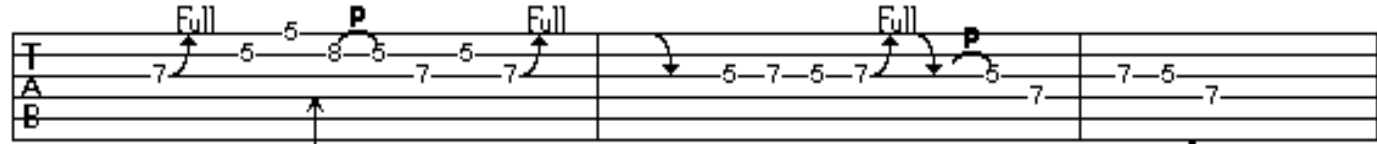
We could also use the three-note dynamic pattern as follows.



We have to be very careful because this new phrase tends to want to fall on the beat. So, sometimes beginning with a dynamic pattern does not fit with the music. If you feel that something is not quite working out, you can add a couple of extra notes to make everything "line up, tempo-wise."

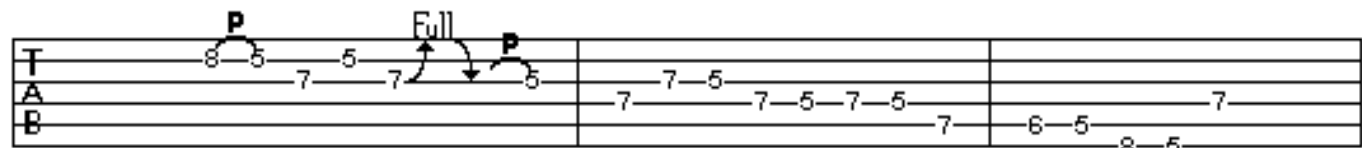


We can add the extra notes shown above and then proceed with the bend up and down. This is illustrated below beginning with the three-note pattern.



With the four-note pattern, you do not need to put in the extra notes because it lines up with the beat. These phrases are played quite fast and will take a lot of practice to master.

Let's now extend the notes we already have in the original phrase over to the bass strings.



Start with the original phrase ending at the root note at the 7th fret on the 4th string. After working down to the lower root note at the 5th fret on the 6th string we go to an octave jump back to the 7th fret on the 4th string.

These leads are difficult to master, so do not get discouraged when practicing. They are also quite dependent on the background groove or tempo you are jamming along to.

Practice these phrases, striving to play them fluidly; they will help to smooth out your playing.

Try practicing over backing tracks in the Looper Widget.



# MINOR PENTATONIC LEAD - LESSON 16

## Minor Pentatonic Lead 16

In this lesson we are going to look at the blues scale and some two-note chord fills.

Recall that the pentatonic scale is made up of five tones. The blues scale is really the pentatonic with an extra note thrown in for color. We have already used this extra note in previous lessons; for example, the octave jump in the third lesson and the run off in the last lesson where we played an extra note at the 6th fret on the 5th string. This is the extra note used in the blues scale.

You can also play this note on the 3rd string at the 8th fret. Let's look at the blues scale going across the neck.

C A G E E-flat D C A G E E-flat D C A

If we take an A-minor scale, which is eight notes, beginning with the note A at the 5th fret on the 6th string our fifth tone is at the 7th fret on the 5th string. We use the fifth note flatted, or down one fret, for the extra note in the blues scale. The correct term for this note is a flatted fifth and it really does add some nice blues coloration to your playing.

### TWO NOTE CHORDS

Now, for a bit of a break, we are going to look at some two-note chords which can be used while you are playing leads and add a lot of color. They also break up the monotony of constantly playing single notes. These are usually quite dynamic-sounding and most are fairly easy to do.

Let's start off with the toughest one. Begin with a mini-bar using the first finger on the 1st and 2nd strings at the 4th fret. Hit both strings with a down stroke and slide up to the 5th fret. You need to slide almost instantaneously, otherwise there is a bit of a lag between the notes on the 4th and 5th frets. If we do repeated rhythms with the slide we get a familiar late 50's rock/blues sound.

It is easy to lapse into a time lag between the notes on the 4th fret and the slide to sound the notes at the 5th fret; the action is a real flick of the finger. You can couple in the three-note dynamic patterns as illustrated below.

Let's look at some other fills that are a little easier. With the first finger at the 5th fret on the 2nd string, extend the little finger to the 8th fret on the 1st string and strike both strings with the pick. We can create a nice effect with the flatted fifth at the 4th fret on the 2nd string. This is the same note we played on the 3rd string at the 8th fret in the blues scale. Start with the first finger at the 4th fret, hit both strings and slide up to the 5th fret.

This creates a nice effect when you are jamming.

Next, with a first finger mini-bar at the 5th fret on the 3rd and 2nd strings, hit both strings. This is often followed through by landing on the root note at the 7th fret on the 4th string.

These can be combined as in the following example.

Remember, when changing position, where you did the slide on the 3rd string to the 9th fret with the third finger. That will be the first note for this next chord. Add the middle finger to the other pentatonic note at the 8th fret on the 2nd string. It makes a nice effect if you slide up to this chord.

# MINOR PENTATONIC LEAD - LESSON 16

## Minor Pentatonic Lead 16

In this lesson we are going to look at the blues scale and some two-note chord fills.

In blues you can sometimes play a two-note chord at the 7th fret on the 3rd and 2nd strings using the second and third fingers and do a little bend. A half tone (or one fret) bend pitches our color note, which is the flatted fifth. This works nicely with the other chords we looked at. From the high chord at the 8th and 9th frets you may wish to just bar this chord with the first finger at the 7th fret.

Experiment with combining these together.

We now look at a nice one that is quite tricky to do.

Use the first finger to bar the 1st, 2nd and 3rd strings at the 5th fret.

Put the third finger on the 4th string at the 7th fret.

The pick hits the 4th string and the right hand finger plucks the 1st string to produce a chord.

Then lift off the third finger and hit the 3rd and 1st strings. Next place the third finger on the 7th fret 3rd string and

hit the 3rd and 1st strings again.

Once again hit the 3rd and 1st strings and this time do a hammer on and pull off combined on the 3rd string using

the little finger at the 8th fret.

Then back to the bar at the 5th fret, strike the 3rd and 1st strings and end on the 7th fret 4th string.

It is optional which notes you play as single and which you play as double.

You can also pull off to the 5th fret after the combined hammer on and pull off to extend the phrase.

When played fairly fast, this phrase has the effect of sounding like two guitars.

We now look at a few easier two-note chords that can be done on the 1st and 2nd strings.

Do a mini-bar on the 8th fret and slide up to the 10th fret and back.

We can get the same effect on the 2nd and 3rd strings.

Put the third finger on the 10th fret of the 2nd string and the second finger on the 9th fret of the 3rd string.

Slide down two frets and back up again.

On the 3rd and 4th strings do a mini-bar at the 5th fret, pick both strings and slide up to the 7th fret and back.

You can throw in a note from the scale at the 7th fret on the 5th string to precede the slide up and down on the 3rd and 4th strings.

Finally, you can hit the 5th string at the 7th fret followed by a mini-bar on the 3rd and 4th strings at the 5th fret, hit the two strings, then do a hammer on and pull off only on the 4th string to the 7th fret and back.

Practice different combinations of these two-note fills and include them in your lead playing, to break things up a bit. Try playing these over backing tracks in the Looper Widgets.

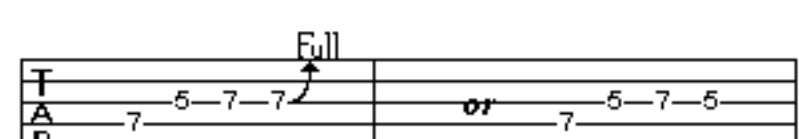
# MINOR PENTATONIC LEAD - LESSON 17

## Minor Pentatonic Lead 17

In this lesson we will go back to the melodic phrases and look at how we can add on some new dynamic phrases called run-offs.

As pointed out earlier, adding some fast runs to your phrasing can generate a lot of excitement and we looked at a few that went from the high portion of the scale down to the low portion. A lot of the dynamic phrases we looked at were confined to the three high strings. We had the three-, four-, five- and six-note patterns as well as the blues lick, which allowed us to drop down from the high notes to the low notes very gradually.

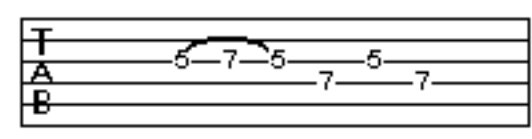
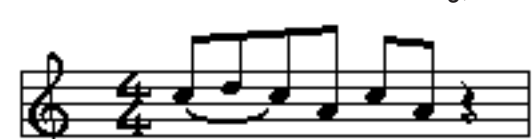
Now, using only our first and third fingers, we are going to take a look at some runs, which can come out of some of our mid-range melodic phrases. Consider the following from our early melodic patterns.



The runs we will add are called run-offs, where you hear the phrase followed by a little flourish of notes.

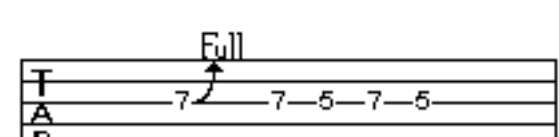
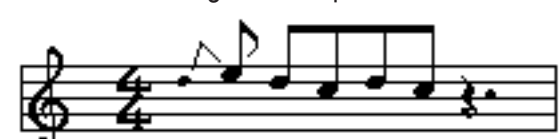
Let's learn a dynamic run-off first then tie it into a few melodic phrases.

Begin with the first finger at the 5th fret on the 3rd string and a third finger hammer on and pull off to the 7th fret. Follow this with the 7th fret 4th string, the 5th fret 3rd string and back to the 7th fret 4th string.

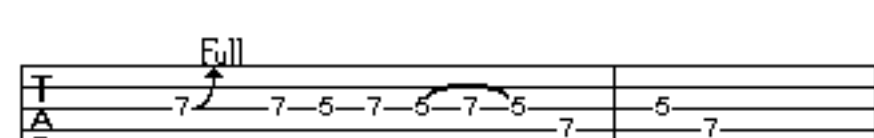


In order to make it dynamic and generate energy we need to play it fast.

Let's take a brief melodic phrase and use this as a short run-off without continuing all the way across the neck. Start with the following melodic phrase.

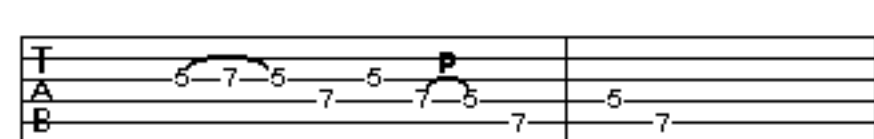


Then use the last note of the melodic phrase as the beginning of our short run-off.



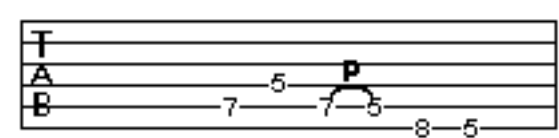
Let's continue with our dynamic run-off going across the neck. After hitting the 7th fret 4th string, do a pull off to the note at the 5th fret.

There is one thing to watch out for here. At the same moment that you hit the 4th string at the 7th fret make sure your first finger tip hops across into position at the 5th fret on the 4th string. It must be right behind the third finger and ready for the pull off to take effect.

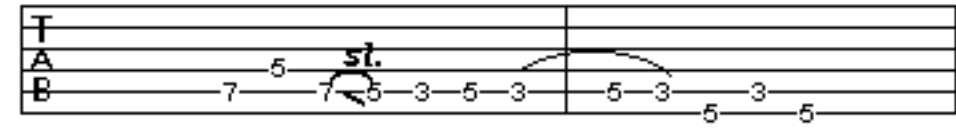


Instead of doubling up the pattern with another hammer on, which might sound a little predictable, we go back and forth from the 7th fret on the 5th string to the 5th fret on the 4th string.

At this juncture we have two areas we can go to. We can pull off and continue down the scale, as in the following example.

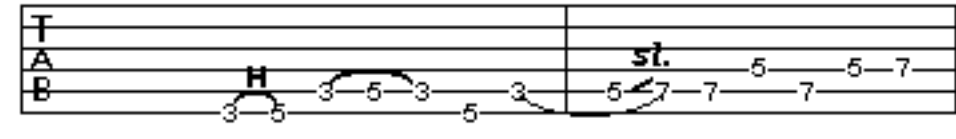


Another option is to slide back to the 5th fret with the third finger and use the notes in the lower pentatonic position.

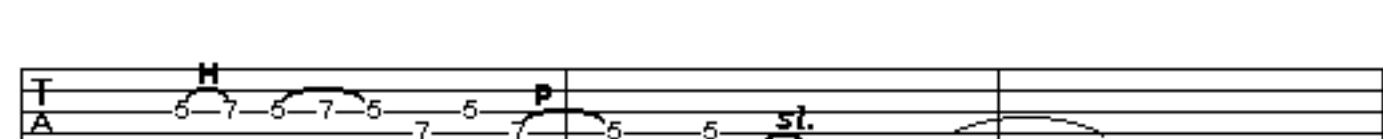


The timing of these phrases is really not that important. Of course, you have to feel out the groove of the backing music that you are jamming to, but the main thing is to get a certain amount of fluidity without stopping.

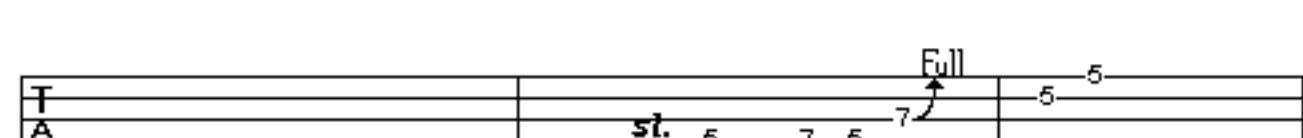
From the bottom, you can do the same type of run coming back up to the root note on the 4th string.



Once again, let's take a look at some melodic phrases. Take a simple two-note pattern as follows and then add a run off.



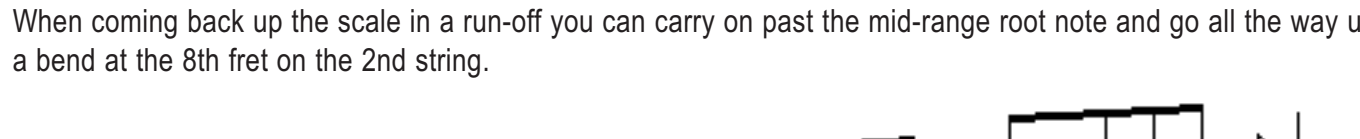
It is good to push yourself a bit on how far you can go with the run-off. For example, if you get all the way down the scale, make an effort to come back up.



The mechanism for this type of phrase is really the two fingers, the first and third, going back and forth with little two-note patterns between the strings and adding hammer-ons and pull-offs. The little finger is not used for these phrases. These are a combination of fast ripple little runs, which can add a lot of dynamic coloration to your playing.

Conceptually, it is important that where the melodic phrase leaves off the dynamic phrase begins and there needs to be a smooth transition. For example after a three-note dynamic repetition and a bend, it may not work to go directly into a flurry of notes in a dynamic run across the neck. This may cause a dislocation in the phrasing. After the three-note repetition and bend you could go to a two-note pattern and gradually speed into a run-off, almost as if falling down the scale gradually. There is a fine line between where the melodic phrase ends and the dynamic ones begin.

When coming back up the scale in a run-off you can carry on past the mid-range root note and go all the way up to a bend at the 8th fret on the 2nd string.



It can be more effective if you vary the speed as you work your way up the fret board.

Try taking a mid-range melodic phrase on the 3rd and 4th strings and then tumble down the scale with a run-off.

Then work back up the scale with barely a break and go into dynamic three-, four-, five-, and 6-note repetitions on the top three strings. End up at a bend on the 2nd string at the 8th fret.

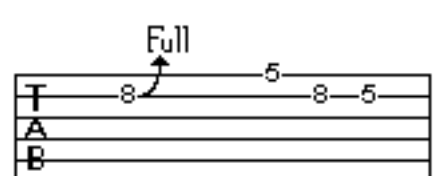
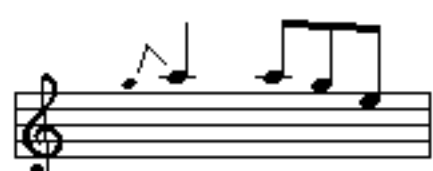
# MINOR PENTATONIC LEAD - LESSON 18

## Minor Pentatonic Lead 18

In this lesson we will take a look at a new bend on the 1st string and where to go after the bend on the 2nd string.

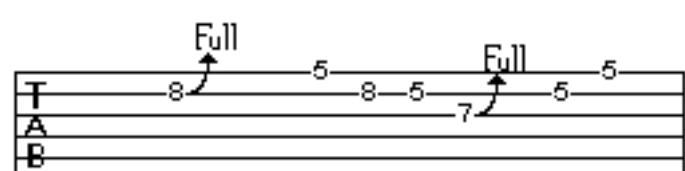
### SECOND STRING BEND

As mentioned in a previous lesson, when bending the note at the 8th fret on the 2nd string, it is a good idea not to simply drop the bend down and fall back to the note at the 5th fret on the 2nd string. Rather, do a three-note connector as illustrated below.



The bend pitches the note on the 1st string at the 5th fret and the connector runs down the scale to tie back into the mid-range and the melodic patterns available there.

If you are doing some fast runs, particularly the run-offs from the last lesson all the way down the scale and all the way back to the bend at the 8th fret on the 2nd string, you may want to continue from the bend. You can go from this bend straight into a three-note connector and then throw in some dynamic three-, four-, five- and six-note patterns. This way you do not have to stop for too long on the 2nd string and can keep things running along with the music.



For the connector, we recommend using a mini-bar on the 5th fret rather than using the first finger tip on the 1st string and crossing it over to the 2nd string. This will help provide smoothness going down the three-note connector and into the dynamic leads.

### FIRST STRING BEND

Let's now look at a new bend on the 1st string at the 8th fret up a full tone to sound the same note as on the 10th fret of the 1st string. Bending this note can be rather difficult if you have heavy gauge strings. The next concern is where to go after playing this bend note.

If you are soloing over a chord progression, when you bend the 1st string over the A-minor chord, this is a very high passing note, D. When the D chord comes up, the bend becomes a chord note. So one way of treating this high bend is to bend the note up and hold it with some pedaling notes.

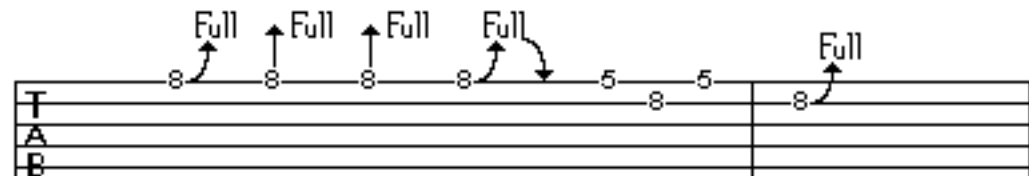
You can get to this bend directly from the connector, as in the following example.



It is optional whether you bend using three fingers with the third finger sitting on the 8th fret or with the little finger on the 8th fret using all four fingers for the bend. It is a matter of taste. There are some benefits to using the little finger in that if you come down the scale, that is the finger you usually associate with playing notes at the 8th fret. This is particularly true if you do some very fast dynamic leads on the 1st and 2nd strings, which we will be covering later.

### WHERE TO GO AFTER BEND

Bend the 1st string 8th fret and pedal on the bend. After pedaling you can do another bend up and down then drop to the 5th fret. Next go to the 8th fret 2nd string, back to the 5th fret 1st string and finally to a bend at the 8th fret on the 2nd string.



Another way out of this bend is to pedal then bend and mute the string to drop the bend silently. Next, hit the 1st string at the 8th fret then at the 5th fret followed by a hammer on and pull off to the 8th fret. Go to the 2nd string 8th fret, back to the 1st string 5th fret and end with a pull off on the 2nd string from the 8th fret to the 5th fret.

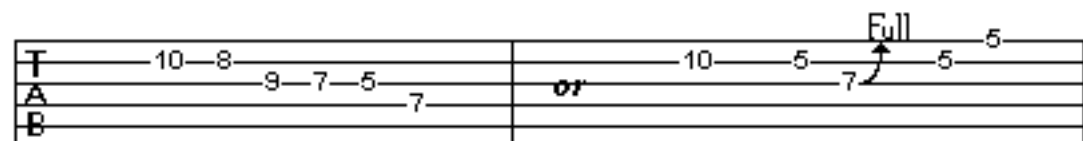


Keep the first finger mini-bar down at the 5th fret and use the little finger on the 1st string and the third finger on the 2nd string.

When you get to the end of either phrase above, with the mini-bar in place at the 5th fret you can run off a sequence of dynamic three-, four-, five- and six-note patterns.

Another option to consider after the 1st string bend is instead of coming back down the scale, using the ideas discussed above, bend then mute the string with the right hand and move up to the 10th fret. If you are moving up, you can do the bend with the third finger so it is ready for the notes in the new pentatonic position. If using the little finger for the bend, simply move your hand up the neck until the third finger is at the 10th fret.

So, you pedal on the high bend at the 8th fret on the 1st string then move up to the 10th fret position. To get out of this upper position, you can go down the scale slowly as discussed in an earlier lesson, or go straight to the 5th fret on the 2nd string and into dynamic leads and combinations.



Keep in mind which bends are chord notes and passing tones over the Am chord.

The bend at the 1st string 8th fret is a passing tone, D, so pedal on the bend.

The bend at the 1st string 10th fret is a chord note, E.

The bend at the 2nd string 8th fret is a chord note, A.



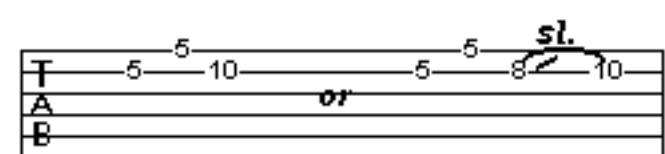
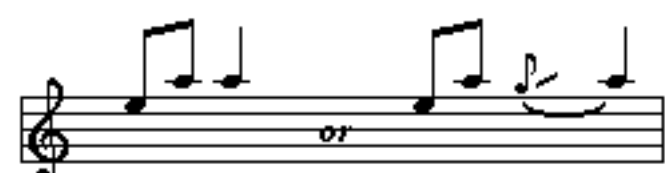
# MINOR PENTATONIC LEAD - LESSON 19

## Minor Pentatonic Lead 19

In this lesson we are going to look at some melodic phrases on the 1st and 2nd strings and how they tie in to the previous dynamic phrases..

Let's start with a very punchy-sounding blues phrase that gives us the option of moving to a higher position on the 1st string to play some nice melodic phrases.

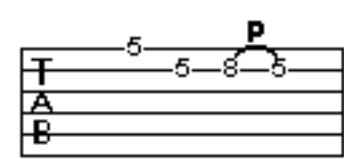
Use a first finger mini-bar on the 5th fret of the 1st and 2nd strings. Play the 2nd string then the 1st and then move position to the 10th fret on the 2nd string. An alternate is to play the two notes on the mini-bar and then slide up to the 10th fret.



If you prefer not to do melodic phrases in the higher position at the 10th fret, you can go directly to the 5th fret on the 2nd string and do mid-range dynamic patterns or a run-off.



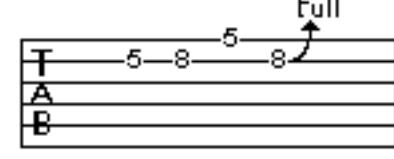
Let's look at another similar phrase.



This can be extended with a slide up to the higher position, a jump directly to the 10th fret on the 2nd string, or a bend at the 8th fret on the 2nd string.



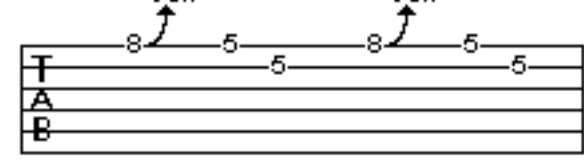
Here is another example, again using a mini-bar at the 5th fret and ending with a quick bend on the 2nd string.



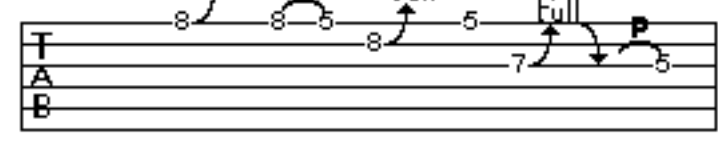
Try running some of these phrases together then using a connector to go into dynamic phrases.



The following is quite a bluesy sounding three-note pattern.



Now it is time for a more difficult one. Bend the 1st string at the 8th fret, mute with the right hand so you can drop the string down and then hit the 8th fret and pull off to the 5th fret. Keep the mini-bar down and do a quick bend up and down on the 3rd string followed by a pull off to the 5th fret.



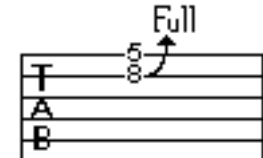
This lick works extremely well when chord four, D, is being played and moving to chord one, A.

### UNISON BENDS

Next we look at unison bends which are heard quite frequently in rock and blues.

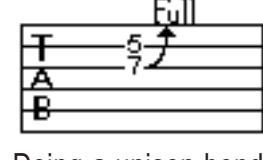
Unison bends involve striking two notes at once, then bending the lower note up to pitch with the higher note.

Use the first finger on the high A note of the pentatonic at the 5th fret on the 1st string. With the thumb over the edge of the neck and the little finger out, bend the 2nd string at the 8th fret using the third finger reinforced with the second finger.



Strike the 2nd and 1st strings together but only bend the 2nd string. When the 2nd string is bent sufficiently up to pitch it resonates in unison with the 1st string.

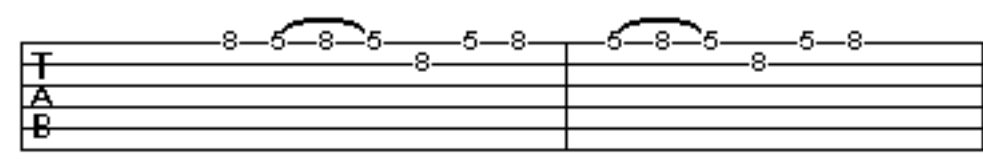
A bit easier but the same idea is to go to the 2nd string at the 5th fret and bend the 3rd string at the 7th fret.



Doing a unison bend adds quite a bit of emphasis to your phrasing. It is also very effective if you can add vibrato on the bend as well.

Again using the mini-bar at the 5th fret, here is a dynamic lead, which is effective but rather difficult to execute.

Keep the mini-bar down on the 5th fret and play the note at the 8th fret on the 1st string using the little finger. Then, again with the little finger, do a hammer on and pull off and go to the 2nd string using the third finger.



Basically just run these notes together. It is difficult to coordinate the little finger on the 1st string and the third finger on the 2nd string. If you find it too difficult a stretch for your fingers, you can practice this phrase higher up the neck, at the 12th to the 15th frets, where the frets are closer together. Then, as you get more comfortable with the fingering, gradually shift to play it lower down the neck, where the frets are farther apart.



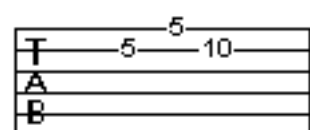
# MINOR PENTATONIC LEAD - LESSON 20

## Minor Pentatonic Lead 20

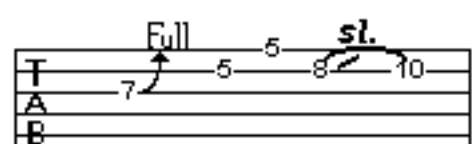
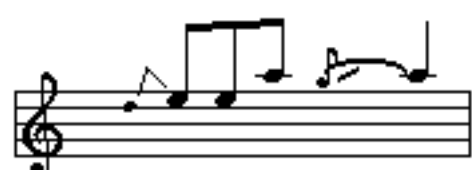
In this lesson we are going to continue with the fast dynamic leads on the 1st and 2nd strings that we have been doing, but further along the neck. We will also look at how to play on one string to get the most out of phrasing without having to move too far. It is critical to develop the ability to play with a few notes and avoid repeating the same patterns. This will allow you to play faster and add more feeling to your playing while training yourself to move in different tonal directions and break out of habitual finger patterns.

### DYNAMIC LEADS

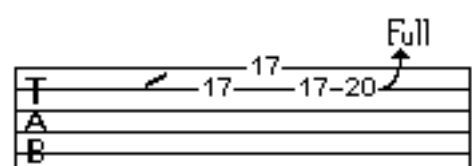
Let's go back to the first lick in the last lesson.



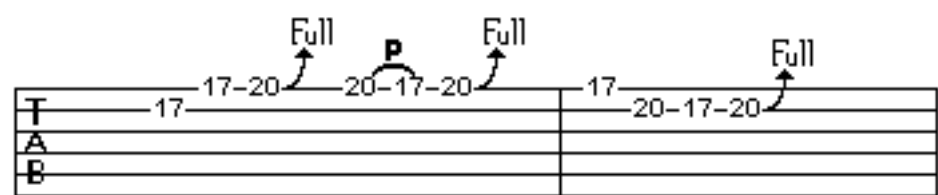
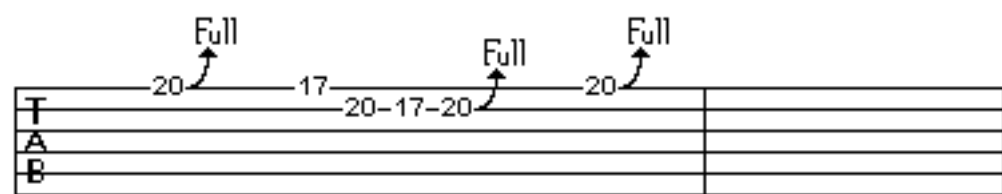
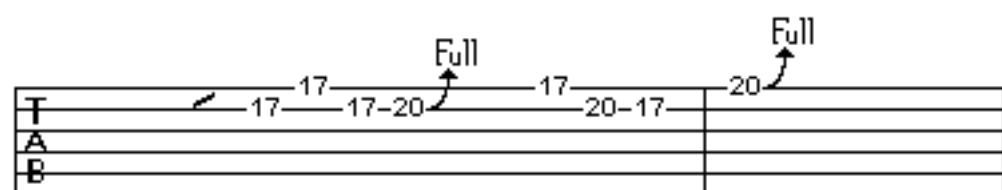
We can do a similar-sounding phrase by doing a three-note dynamic pattern and then sliding from the 8th fret up to the 10th fret on the 2nd string.



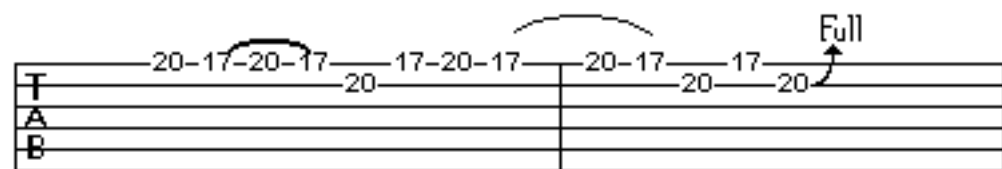
Recall the high slide to the upper pentatonic box position at the 17th fret, a duplicate of the typical box pattern at the 5th fret.



We can do a high slide into the pattern then go down the three-note connector to some of the nice, wailing, high melodic phrases that we looked at last lesson in the lower positions.



Some of the very fast phrases, where we suggested assigning the little finger to the 1st string and the third finger to the 2nd string, may be a bit awkward as the body of the guitar is joining the neck up at this position. You may want to try using only the third finger on both strings.



When you are playing up in this position you may want to stretch out some of these notes, particularly the bends, and really make the notes cry and sing.

Reserve the fast dynamic runs for playing in the lower position, as they are a lot easier to perform down where the frets are farther apart. They can be played in the higher position but everything is squashed together, the frets are closer and the guitar body is in the way.

# MINOR PENTATONIC LEAD - LESSON 20

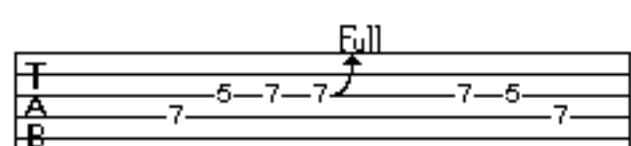
## Minor Pentatonic Lead 20

In this lesson we are going to continue with the fast dynamic leads on the 1st and 2nd strings that we have been doing, but further along the neck. We will also look at how to play on one string to get the most out of phrasing without having to move too far. It is critical to develop the ability to play with a few notes and avoid repeating the same patterns. This will allow you to play faster and add more feeling to your playing while training yourself to move in different tonal directions and break out of habitual finger patterns.

### PLAYING ON ONE STRING

At this stage of musical development, a lot of students feel frustrated when soloing; they feel they are stuck in a rut. By that we mean they form habitual finger patterns and follow the same routes over and over again and find it difficult to break out of them.

One effective way to break this is to focus on just one string and try and make up as many phrases as you can without having to think about going to the next string. Let's look again at our first three-note pattern in the mid-range.



An example of being stuck in a rut: You are on the 7th fret 4th string and think, "well I can go to the 5th fret 3rd string, then the 7th fret and bend." You then make your way back and next thing you know you are at the 7th fret 4th string again wondering where to go next.

We talked about pedaling breaking things up by staying on one string and playing rhythmically.

We will now look at playing on one string to find combinations you can stay on and explore as long as you can before resolving to the chord note on the 4th string at the 7th fret.

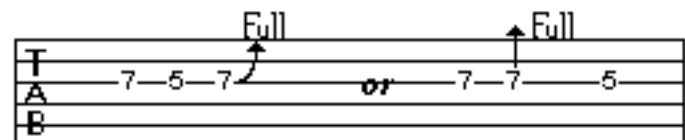
We will use three notes on the third string, at the 5th fret, the 7th fret and the bend up a full tone from the 7th fret. We can either bend the string or mute before we bend and pitch the note at the 9th fret as opposed to bending up to it. The significance of muting the string with the right hand is that it gives us the option of dropping a bend down or throwing a bend up when we are doing some of these combinations.

There are six three-note patterns available to us on this one string.

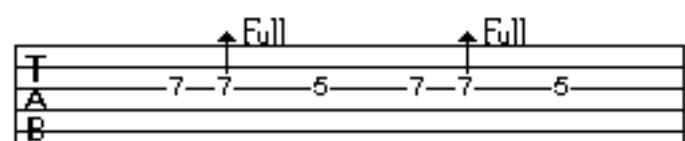


Each of these creates rather a nice three-note phrase. To stay on this one string for as long as you can means trying to avoid rounding your phrases off to the chord note at the 7th fret on the 4th string. We still have the 5th fret on the 3rd string and the bend as our main chord notes.

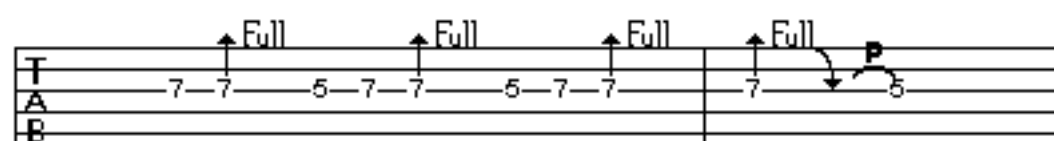
If you are used to going from the 5th fret to the 7th and then a bend, it is good to jog your memory and remind yourself that in fact you can start at the 5th fret, miss out the 7th and go directly to the bend. Or, instead of always starting with the note at the 5th fret on the 3rd string, or the 7th fret on the 4th string, you can start at the 7th fret on the 3rd string and get lead phrases such as the following.



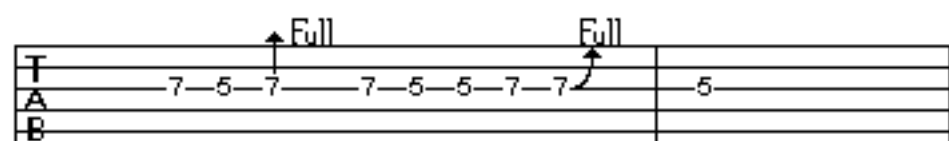
These are combinations that you probably would not ordinarily think of and it is possible, while you are jamming along, to stay on this one string. We would not recommend playing any of these notes fast, but you should try to string them together without stopping.



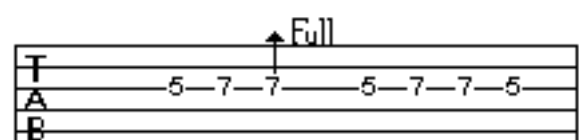
Notice the notes create a loop. To do a direction change and break out of the pattern hit the same note twice, rather like the double two-note pattern we did earlier. In the first example the bend is doubled.



This can be done with any of the three-note combinations. In this example we double the 5th fret note.



And here we double the note at the 7th fret.



It is important to be able to move smoothly between the notes in any of these combinations. This will take practice, especially going to and from the muted bend.

Practice all six combinations for the three notes and concentrate on sounding each note clearly.

You really have to experiment with these. Start out by learning and practicing the six three-note combinations and then try taking one combination and doubling up on one of the notes to change direction. Try to stretch things out before resolving to the root note.

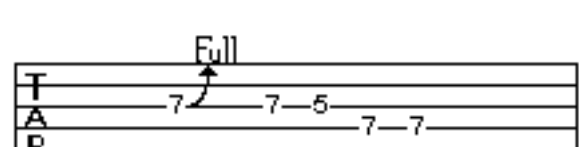
# MINOR PENTATONIC LEAD - LESSON 21

## Minor Pentatonic Lead 21

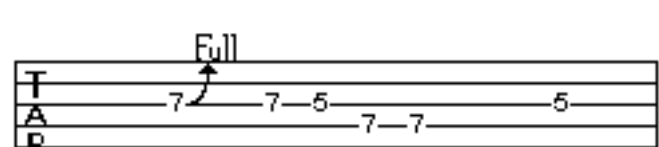
In this lesson we will look at "surprise endings." This is a very effective, quite advanced form of phrasing.

### SURPRISE ENDINGS

An example of a surprise ending would be something like this. You are just rounding off a melodic phrase to the nearest chord note.



The phrase obviously ends there. Then you throw in one extra note when the listener least expects it. In this case, the note at the 5th fret on the 3rd string.

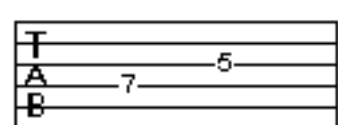


In order for it to really be a surprise, you have to hold the last note and when the listener thinks you have finished your phrase you trick him or her with this extra little note.

What this does is really help round your phrases off. So, unlike where you simply stop and wonder where to go next, you now have another set of notes to continue along with.

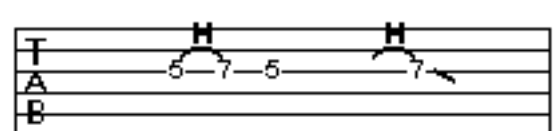
Now we take a look at several surprise endings in the mid-range.

Start with the chord note at the 7th fret on the 4th string. After giving it time you can play the note at the 5th fret on the 3rd string.



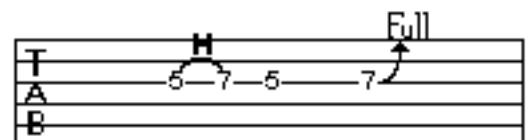
Notice the surprise note is shut down quite quickly; do not let it ring, but mute it with the right hand.

If the phrase ends on the note at the 5th fret on the 3rd string, say a two-note pattern, we can hammer on to the 7th fret of the 3rd string and do a slide down.



After the hammer on, as you slide down the neck, the right hand mutes the string to avoid an end note from sounding lower down. If you do not shut the note off, the left-hand finger will produce a tone at the lower frets where the finger stops, which we do not want to hear. It may well not even be in the pentatonic scale.

We have another surprise ending from this same end note at the 5th fret on the 3rd string. Using the same phrase, but instead of a slide, we can do a bend that gets shut off quickly.



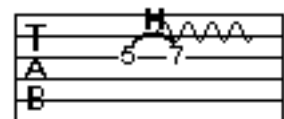
This is a very effective surprise ending, which is often used by blues players. When you get to the top of the bend, you must mute it out right away, otherwise it loses its impact.

Now, suppose you end on the bend at the 7th fret on the 3rd string. Drop the bend down, pull off to the 5th fret and shut the note off.

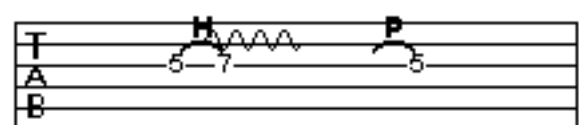


After the bend, rotate the wrist downward to drop the bend, and separate the fingers to get the first finger down to the 5th fret for the pull off and mute.

There is another one you can do. The 7th fret on the 3rd string we associate with a passing note, but you can use this note effectively, as with the vertical vibrato.

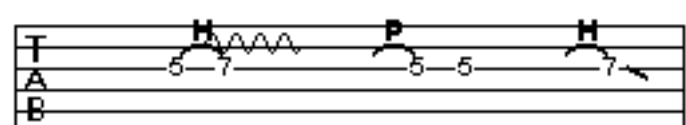
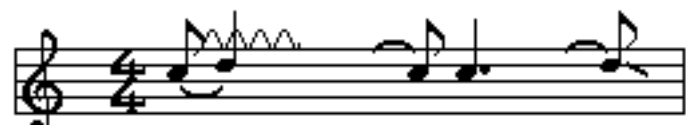


Even if it is a passing note, you can end on it for a while as long as you do not stay there too long. Suppose you want to end on the passing note; for the surprise ending, we pull off to the note at the 5th fret on the 3rd string and shut it down with a right hand mute.



### COMBINING SURPRISE ENDINGS

To really sound interesting we can do two surprise endings in a row. Starting with the hammer on and vertical vibrato, pull off to the 5th fret. Pick the 5th fret note again and, just when you think everything is finished, hammer on to the 7th fret, slide down the string and mute.



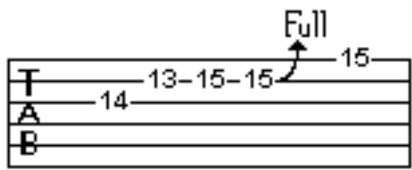
# MINOR PENTATONIC LEAD - LESSON 21

## Minor Pentatonic Lead 21

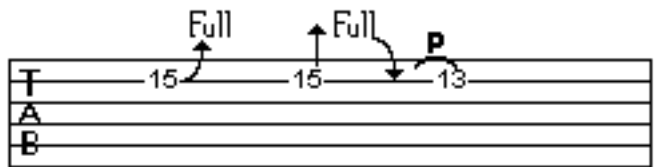
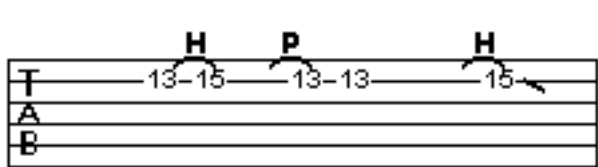
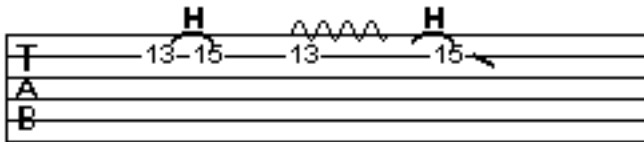
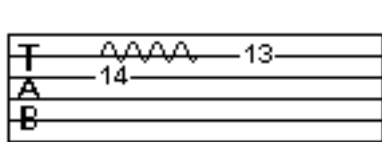
In this lesson we will look at "surprise endings." This is a very effective, quite advanced form of phrasing.

### HIGHER POSITIONS

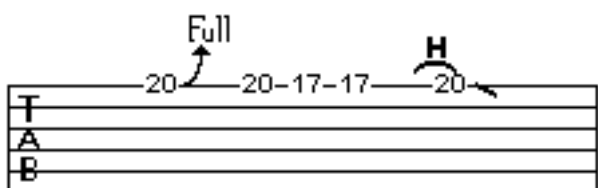
Let's move up to the higher pentatonic position with the third finger at the 14th fret on the 3rd string. Recall the cluster of notes in this position.



We can use surprise endings here as well.



And in the high pentatonic box position at the 17th fret, if you are playing some of the high melodic phrases, you can also throw in some of these surprise endings.



Slide off the 20th fret and mute the string.

# MINOR PENTATONIC LEAD - LESSON 22

## Minor Pentatonic Lead 22

In this lesson we will be taking a look at some new concepts for phrasing.

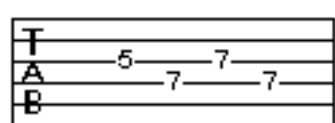
First we will deal with off beat pedaling. Off beat pedaling sounds like the pedaling we talked about earlier, there is a slight difference, however.

With pedaling you play the first note generally on the beat, which would be on the "one" when counting out the beats. Then there is usually a gap and you basically drive the note through time, playing in and around the beat while you are jamming with the music.

Off beat pedaling is slightly different. We do not come in where the beat begins, which is usually on the first beat of the bar. For example, if counting "1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 1 +" etc. the beat begins on the count of one. We come in on the "and" in between the 1 and 2, or off the beat. Then once we come in on the "and" we keep a steady stream of notes happening. With backing music, this sounds very effective.

On beat pedaling, as pointed out, can be a forerunner to a nice melodic phrase. Off beat pedaling sets up a very nice counter rhythm, very laid back, very cool.

Most people have an awful problem getting the timing down for off beat pedaling. One approach is to use the four-note pattern we covered earlier.



This pattern runs counter to the rhythm you are jamming with and if you choose say the note at the 5th fret on the 3rd string as the off beat pedal note, leading in with this pattern helps to set the timing.

Doing off beat pedaling can help you buy a bit of time when playing lead.

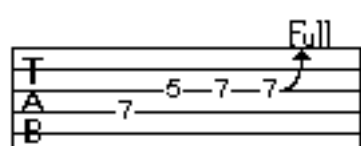
Also, using the note at the 5th fret on the 4th string, which is a nice passing note, can be effective for pedaling and can be resolved to the note at the 7th fret on the 4th string.

Try practicing on and off beat pedaling to track three on the C.D.

### PHRASING, DOUBLING NOTE

Another effective technique to use in phrasing is to begin a new phrase with the last note in the previous phrase.

Take the following phrase as an example.



Now double the bend note and continue the phrase. For each extension to the phrase, use the last note in the previous phrase as a starting note. Try the example below.



When you double a note it serves as a break and you can increase the speed of your playing by a factor of two from that point on or you can slow down.

This may seem a little bit simple and almost like paint by numbers, but it really does draw the listener in and add continuity to your phrases.

### DOUBLING A PHRASE

Another very cool phrasing tip is to repeat the same melodic phrase twice. If you come across a good combination, try repeating it instead of going off somewhere else. In some cases, if you can determine whether the phrase began for example on the beat, when you repeat that phrase try playing the same phrase off the beat. You will create slightly different inflections of the same phrase.

What tends to happen is that when you repeat a phrase with slightly different timing it often suggests a new direction to continue. So doubling up on some of these phrases helps you think of where to go next.

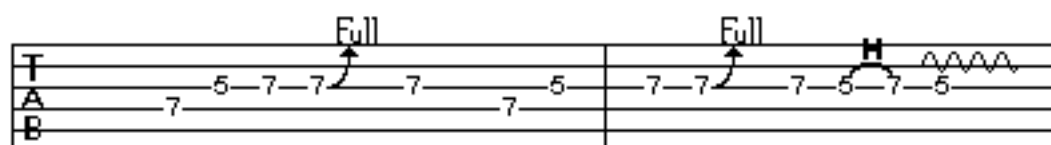
### SPLIT LEVEL PHRASING

This can be thought of as a form of what is often referred to as "question and answer" phrasing. That is where you take one phrase which seems to ask a question then play another phrase which is in response and resolves.

Play a set of notes as if asking a question and hold the final note.

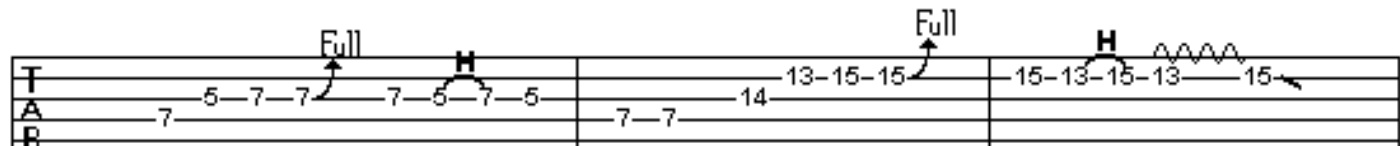
The question comes from holding on a note; it could be either a chord note or a passing note. Then play a series of notes answering the question. You reply to the initial question by ending on a different chord note to round the phrase off.

The following would be an example of question and answer phrasing.



Let's now look at split level phrasing.

In this case you take a phrase in one position then shift position to respond.



When using split-level phrasing, be careful not to just repeat the same phrase over and over in different positions. Keep a mental track of what you just played and vary it in the different positions.

As a final tip, when you are playing do not be afraid to really hit the strings hard. Play with as much authority and confidence as you can rather than playing very timidly and quietly to yourself.

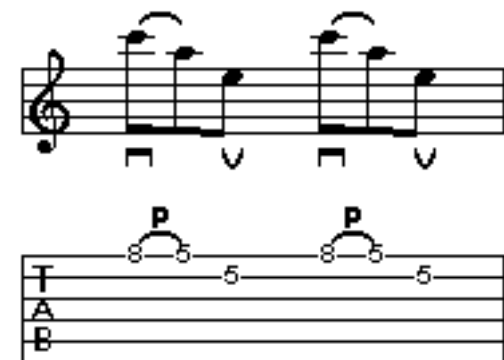


# MINOR PENTATONIC LEAD - LESSON 23

## Minor Pentatonic Lead 23

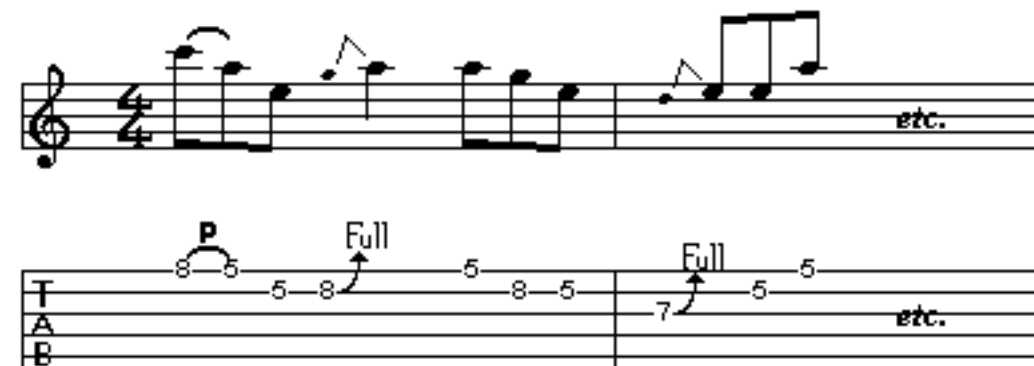
In this lesson we are going to look at some more very fast dynamic phrases on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd strings.

Start with a down stroke on the 1st string at the 8th fret and pull off to the 5th fret. Then use an up stroke on the 2nd string 5th fret.

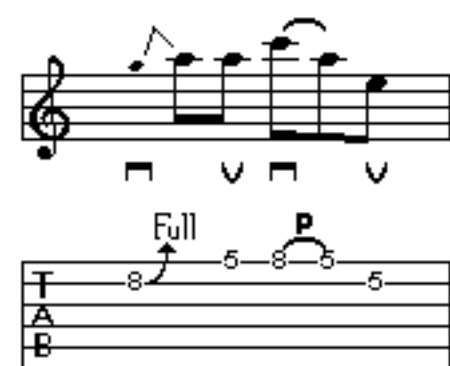


After the down stroke, the pick stays down while the pull off is being sounded. So the pattern is down stroke, pull off, up stroke, down stroke, pull off, up stroke.

As a reminder from previous lessons, this can be followed by a bend on the 2nd string, a three-note connector and dynamic phrases.



We will now combine the new dynamic phrase with a bend on the 2nd string. Start with a two-finger bend on the 2nd string with the third finger at the 8th fret and the middle finger behind it on the same string but slightly apart.



Do a down stroke and push up the bend; when it gets to the top (i.e. pitches the A note) we let go, form a mini-bar and hit the 1st string with an up stroke. We are then ready for a down stroke on the 1st string at the 8th fret and the pull off phrase covered above.

This is a very exciting dynamic phrase. It takes a bit of practice but once you get it you will be happy that you did.

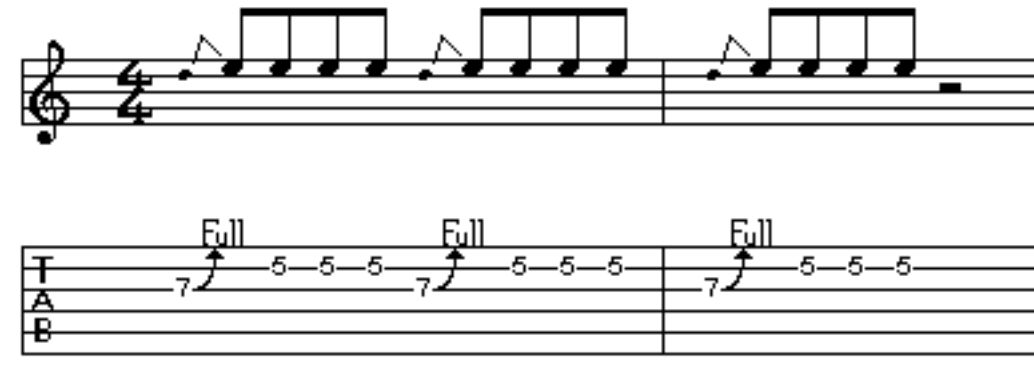
We are now going to take a look at some very difficult dynamic phrases on the three high strings.

If we take the 7th fret of the 3rd string, use two fingers and bend upwards then hit the 2nd string at the 5th fret, we can play repeated notes on the 2nd string after the bend.

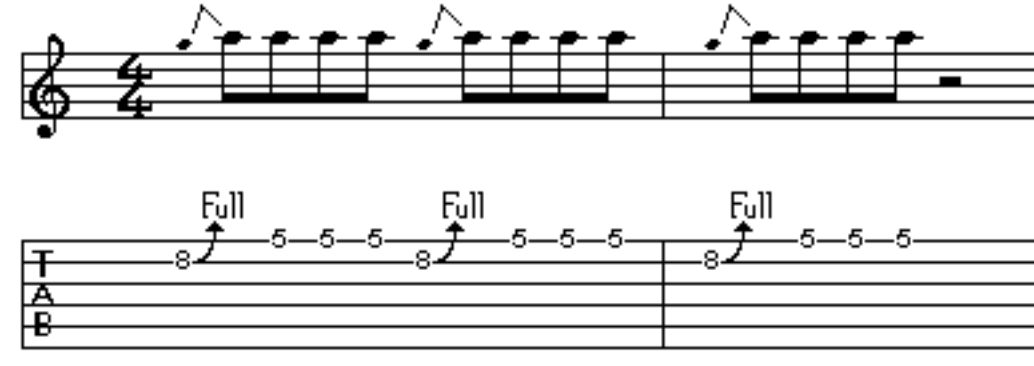


This particular move forms the basis of some very complicated dynamic phrases that can extend to the 2nd and 1st strings as well.

Let's start off on the 3rd and 2nd strings with a grouping of four notes, the bend followed by three notes on the 2nd string. Pick with a down stroke on the bend then an up stroke on the 2nd string; it is critical to maintain alternate picking. This grouping of four notes can run together continuously.



Now try the same thing on the 1st and 2nd strings. Bend the 2nd string at the 8th fret and use a mini-bar at the 5th fret playing only the 1st string.



You may notice that after successfully bending the 2nd string the first finger goes to the mini-bar, but when going back to the bend the first finger lifts off. Even though it happens very quickly, usually at high speed as opposed to leaving your first finger down, it is actually easier to lift your mini-bar off slightly and then place it back again.

We can also set up repeated notes on the 1st string at the 5th fret and add a pull off followed by a bend on the 2nd string.

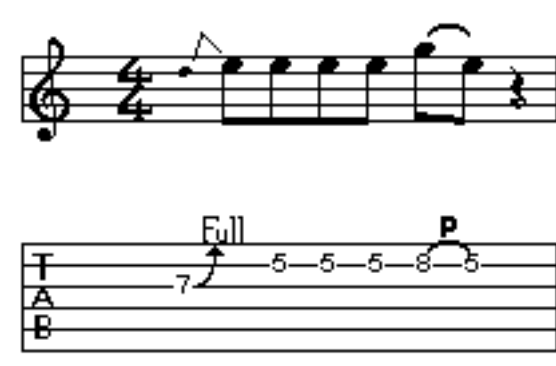


You can have any number of notes repeated and more or less ad lib with the pull off and bend as you go along. Set up a nice, dynamic, energized series of notes on the 1st string and on the down stroke of any given note you can begin the pull off on the 8th fret of the 1st string.

We can do the same thing with the 3rd and 2nd strings.



Or we can start with the bend.



One cool effect is to set up a group of four so that the bend, when counting, is on the one. After several patterns of four, on the next count of one, play the 2nd string instead of the bend. You get the following effect.



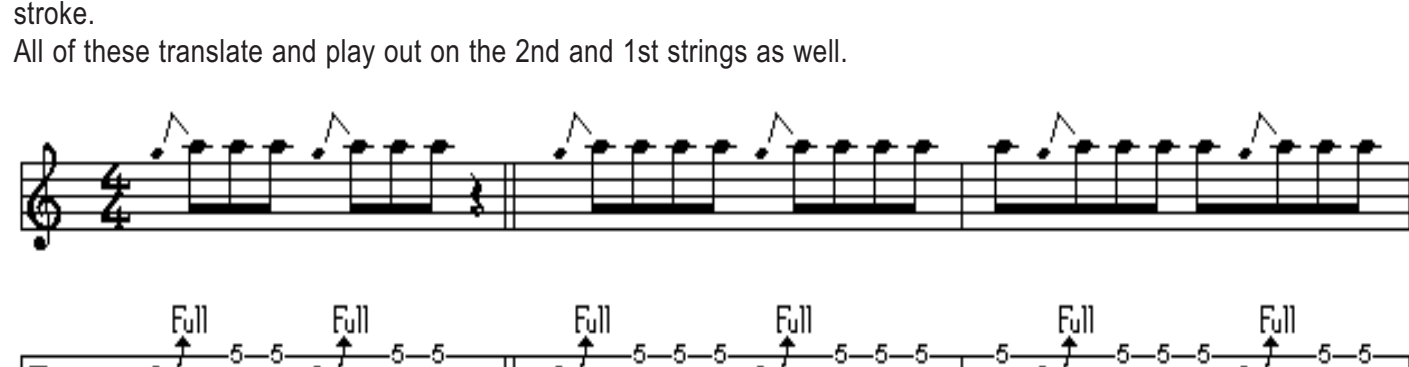
Now the bend occurs on the two, and the effect that gives is one of the bend coming in at different accent points within the dynamic phrase itself.

Another pattern to try is a triplet pattern starting with a bend.



The picking will change each time with a triplet. If the first begins with a down stroke, the next will begin with an up stroke.

All of these translate and play out on the 2nd and 1st strings as well.



These are some of the most demanding dynamic phrases. The left-hand fingering and the right-hand picking are difficult to coordinate to allow everything to flow. When you do master these, they can be very exciting, very fast and really add a lot to your playing.

# MINOR PENTATONIC LEAD - LESSON 24

## Minor Pentatonic Lead 24

In this lesson we will be using over-drive.

Over-drive is created by using a specific effects pedal to do the job or by cranking the amplifier very loud. We will learn how to do split harmonics and look at some phrasing techniques.

### SPLIT HARMONICS

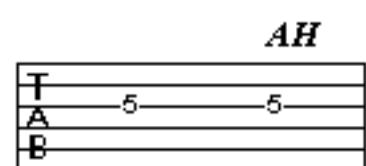
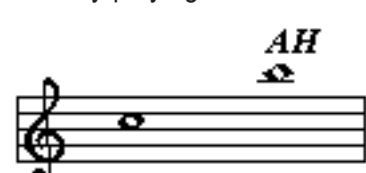
Using split harmonics can add an interesting effect to your lead playing. This technique works well when pedaling on a note. It changes the pitch of the note by introducing a string harmonic.

Split harmonics work best on the 3rd string but can be done on any string. You will need to use some overdrive to be effective.

It will often work best if you strike the string at either side of a pick-up.

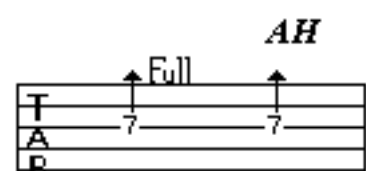
To begin with we have to hold the pick correctly. Normally the end of the pick pokes out underneath where the thumb is, but in this case we draw the edge of the pick up level with the thumb. We need to get the pick in such a position that there are two surface areas striking the string at the same time, the thumb and the pick.

Let's try playing at the 5th fret of the 3rd string.



The best place for the pick in order to get this split harmonic sound is usually around the neck pickup. You will need to experiment a bit for the correct spot.

Try this on a bend at the 7th fret of the 3rd string.



The best thing to do is play around with different positions using over-drive.

### OVER-DRIVE

When you are playing with over-drive it introduces a different tonal element but apart from that, some of the notes and features of your phrases will change quite a bit compared to when you are playing clean.

For example, when you end a phrase with over-drive the note will sustain almost indefinitely. When you are clean the note will die away and fall off quite quickly.

That raises the question, when you end a phrase with over-drive should you let the note sustain or shut it down?

For example, when we looked at surprise endings earlier on, most surprise endings involved shutting down a note. Be aware that when playing with over-drive your right hand very often has to shut down the strings by muting them, by putting your palm on the strings.

Whether it is a surprise ending or a sustained note, you have to decide how long you want a specific note to ring for.

### VIBRATO

Now just a word about vibrato. If you are playing some very fast phrases, the dynamic phrases, you may want to end on a note and play vibrato at the speed of the phrase.

For example, if you play something fast and stop dead on a note with no vibrato, it sounds like you have come to an abrupt stop. But if you play the last note with vibrato at about the speed of the notes you were playing in the dynamic phrase, it adds continuity and sounds more natural.

### PLAYING THE SPACES

We now look at a concept of phrasing called "playing the spaces." Instead of always filling every spare moment with guitar sounds and creating phrases at every opportunity, try to hold back and create a space. Doing this actually draws the audience or listener in. Of course, it is not easy to do because if you are a bit anxious when you are performing, there is a temptation to play all the time.

What you have to do is take a deep breath and tell yourself, "I want to play now but I am going to hold back." Then at the last minute when you are just bursting to play, you finally play a phrase.

This can help create some interesting phrasing and help you develop your own style.

Each phrase is accompanied by a slight gap. You try as best you can at the beginning of the solo to create as many gaps as you can but as the solo progresses the distance between the gaps and the spaces becomes less and less.

Otherwise people will wonder why you are not playing. You have to play it by feel but, generally, the beginning of a solo is a good place to play the spaces.

### DYNAMIC VS MELODIC PHRASES

Let's now consider dynamic versus melodic phrases. You need to realize that the types of phrases you choose are not written in stone. There is no law; you have to go by feel. For example, if you have a very fast groove taking place just before you solo and you only have a short solo, and a few bars to play it in, you may want to do no melodic phrases at all just a huge burst of fast notes.

If you have a slow groove or a situation where you have lots of room to play the spaces and some nice melodic phrases, then at that point you may find you are doing more melodic than dynamic soloing.

So you just have to feel what is going on and generate the appropriate mood using the two types of phrases to fit the music.

### NEW MELODIC/DYNAMIC PHRASE

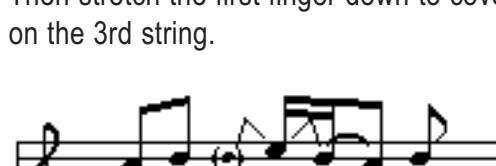
Let's now look at a few phrases in the mid-range on the 3rd string.

This is a semi-melodic, semi-dynamic phrase.

It begins at the 5th fret on the 3rd string and goes to the 7th fret.

You mute the string with the thumb of the right hand, bend it up silently, play the note and drop it down.

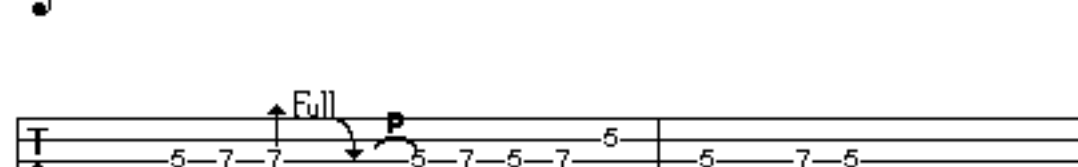
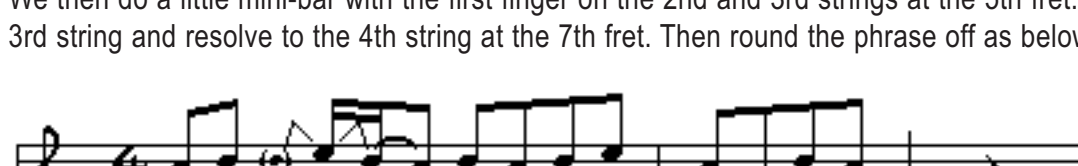
Then stretch the first finger down to cover the 5th fret and pull off, this is followed by playing the note at the 7th fret on the 3rd string.



Now we will look at the second half of the phrase.

Play the 3rd string at the 5th fret then the 7th fret.

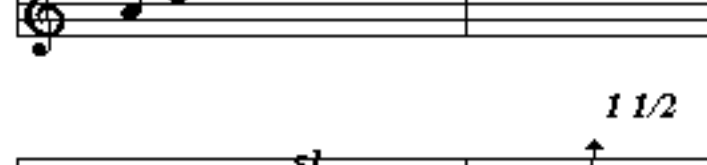
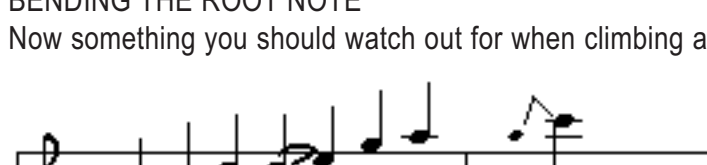
We then do a little mini-bar with the first finger on the 2nd and 3rd strings at the 5th fret. Hit the 2nd string then the 3rd string and resolve to the 4th string at the 7th fret. Then round the phrase off as below.



This is a nice phrase to fit in whenever the groove permits.

### BENDING THE ROOT NOTE

Now something you should watch out for when climbing along the neck in the pentatonic scale.



When starting out, many players feel tempted to bend the note at the 10th fret on the 2nd string. Remember this note is the main key note, A, and if you bend it, it can easily sound quite awful.

If you must bend this note at all, you will need to bend up three semi-tones, or the equivalent of three frets. This will pitch the note at the 13th fret, which is one of the notes in the pentatonic scale. A typical single tone bend will pitch the 12th fret, which is not in the pentatonic scale.