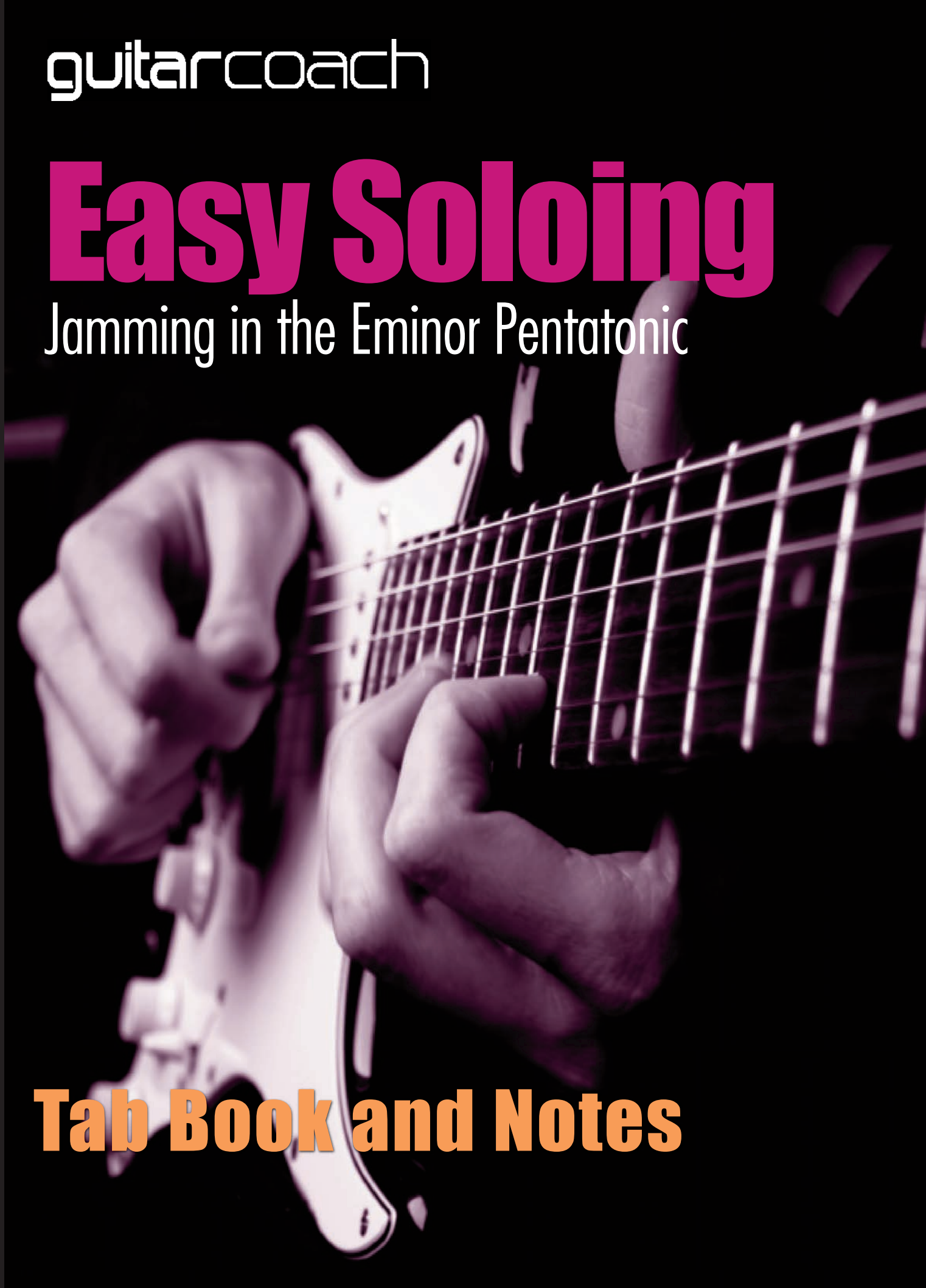
guitarcoach

Easy Soloing

Jamming in the Eminor Pentatonic



Tab Book and Notes

Easy Soloing

Jamming in the Eminor Pentatonic

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to contact us, please email:
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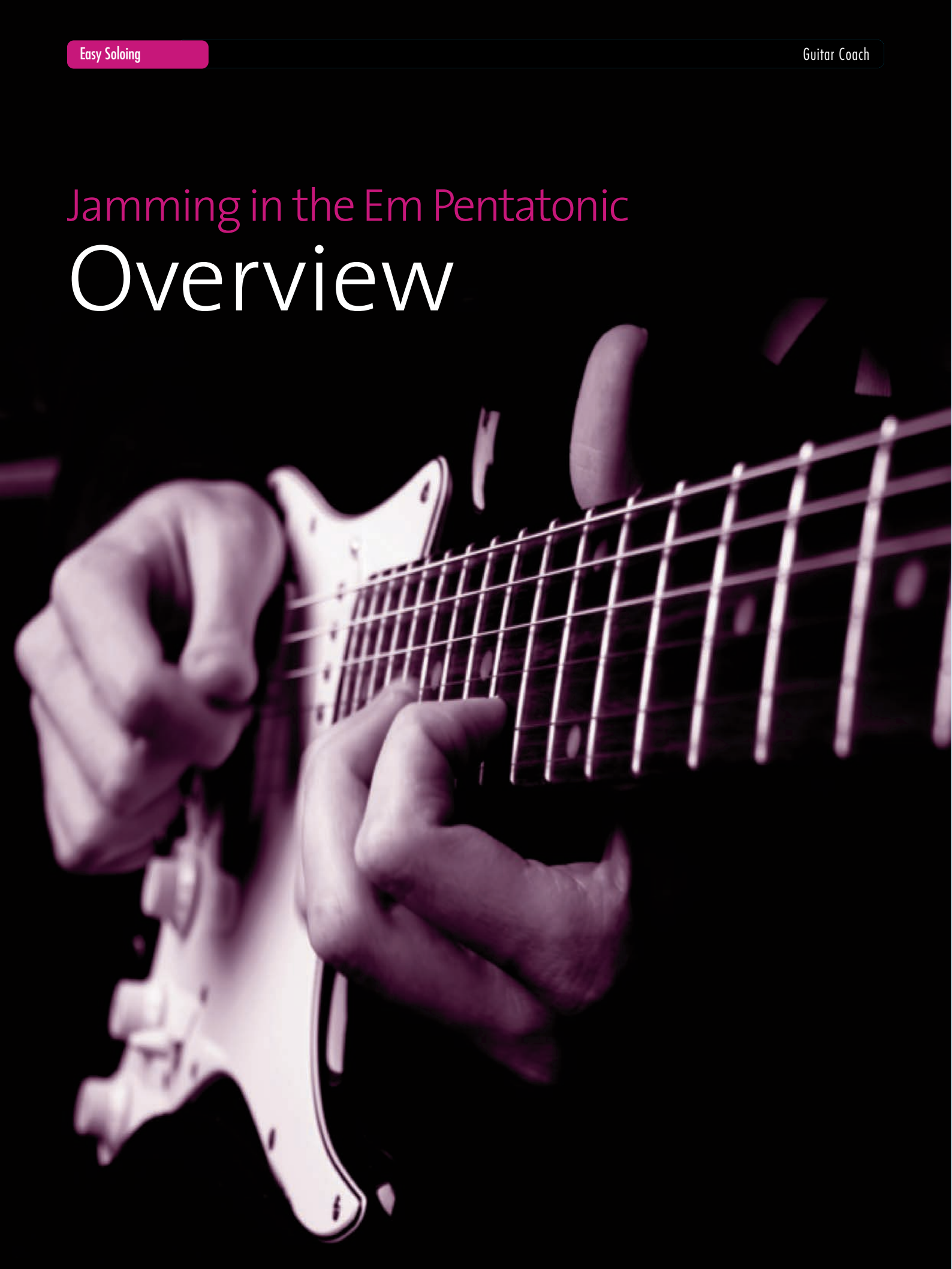
Jamming in the Em Pentatonic

Overview



Overview

Welcome to Easy Soloing from Guitar Coach magazine.

All guitarists aspire to be able to improvise and effortlessly join jam sessions or, even better, play live by creating "on the spot" solos, maybe as a guest guitarist or as a "dep", with the minimum of, or no, rehearsal. This where the ability to improvise and create your own solos is an essential tool to your guitar-playing armoury.

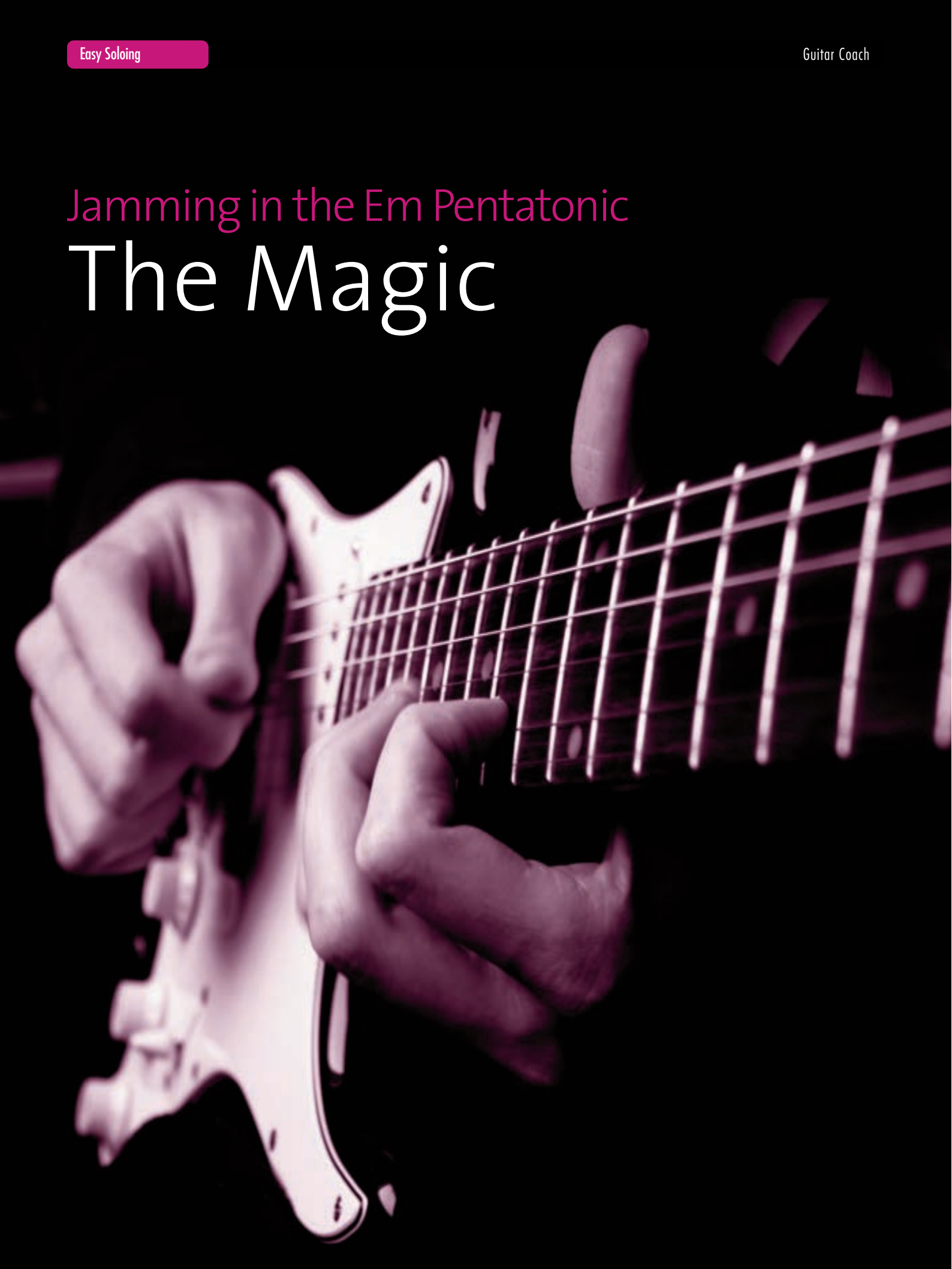
This series of easy soloing video lessons gives you the opportunity to learn the E minor pentatonic scale in all 5 positions on the fretboard, practice it effectively and efficiently, and also learn some cool, but simple riffs and licks that will enable you to develop your own style at a pace that suits you.

You will learn how to incorporate core skills and techniques that will make you sound impressive. There are 4 backing tracks for you to jam along to, all in different styles, where you can experiment with the suggested licks and riffs that we teach. These will become your own as you put your own personal mark on them and, once committed to your muscle memory, you will find yourself playing variations without thought as you weave your mastery within the scale.

This is your first step to improvisation and these series of easy soloing lessons will allow you to have fun whilst learning loads of new stuff and keeping your motivation high!

Jamming in the Em Pentatonic

The Magic



The Magic Of Improvisation

In this series of videos, we'll be starting from the absolute basics. So, if you're new to improvisation, or for that matter, new to lead guitar, this is the place to start.

Over the course of these videos, I'll share with you an approach that I use when teaching improvisation to my students.

It all starts with the three core elements; The Ingredients, The Recipe and finally, The Magic!

The art of improvisation can take time, but by learning the most common scale, the E minor pentatonic, with clear and concise guidance this will become reality in no time at all. There are pointers on tips and techniques and 4 backing tracks, all in different styles, to help you on your way.

So where do we start? Essentially the basics; in other words, what notes comprise the E minor pentatonic scale, where are the notes on the fretboard situated, and how do we move from one position on the fretboard to another.

The Scale

Jamming in the Em Pentatonic

Positions & Licks

Open Position / Position 1

Notes

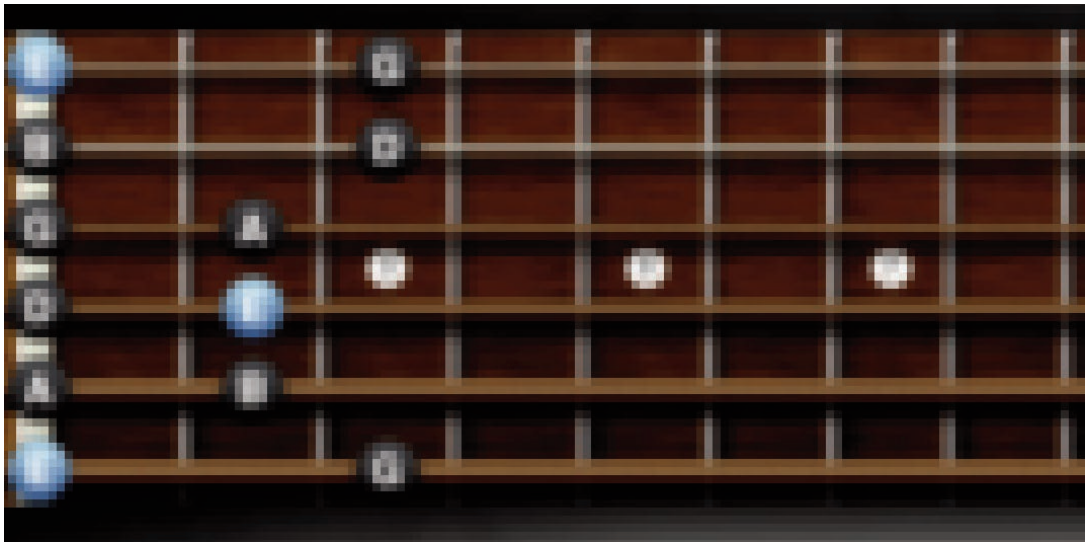
Right then....let's start by looking at position 1 where we are using the open strings, as well as fretted notes, to play the scale.

Without a doubt, this is where everyone should start, because you are using open strings you will only need to actually fret 6 notes – one per string. If you are a real beginner, you can also use just 1 finger to play the fretted notes!!!!

The notes and positions are easy to remember and you can easily construct some great solos and riffs using position one. Additionally, you can employ some techniques such as hammer ons and pull offs relatively easily and also allow two open strings to be played together (double stops) to create notes that can ring out together, either softly or aggressively, depending on the style of solo you are playing. This is basic, but essential and will allow you to start to understand the way you want to play and the sounds you want to create.

You can play quickly or slowly, but the open position of the E minor pentatonic scale (position 1) is a must before you progress further. There are 3 simple licks for you to learn that will give you a taster of what is to come.

The Scale



Open Position / Position 1

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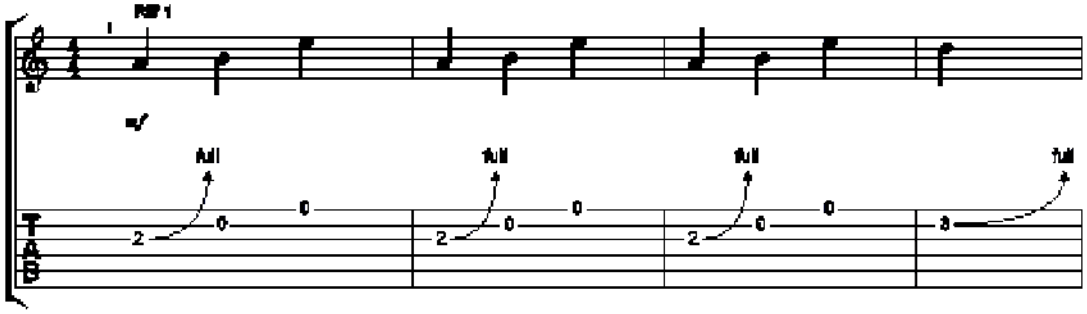

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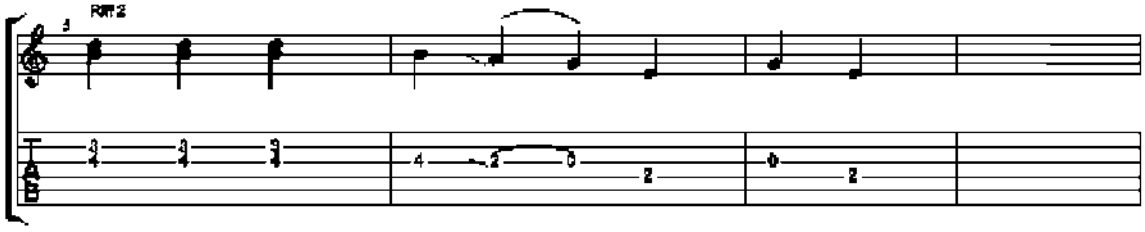

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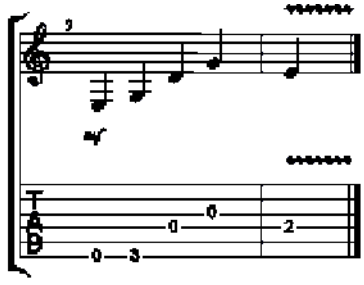


Position 2.

Notes

Position 2 is based mainly around the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th frets, but, unlike position there are no open strings. This means the level of difficulty has increased and your knowledge will be rapidly growing.

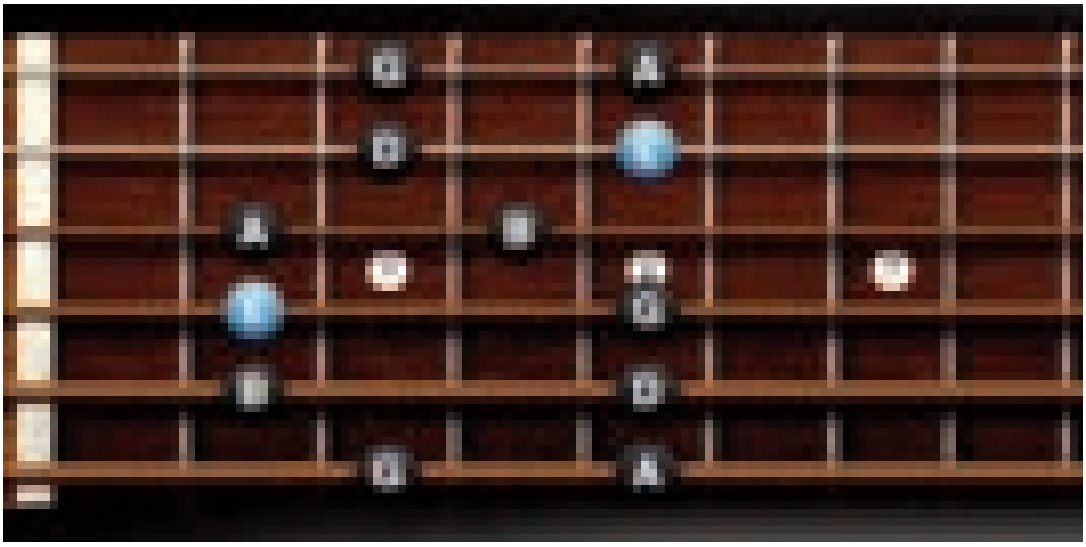
This is where you can start employing sides and start to use double stops in a different way to the open strings,for example by adding some vibrato. You will also be able to execute slides, notably on the 3rd fret and 5th fret of the B and E strings.

Once you have learned position 2, combine the notes with position 1 and practice moving from one to the other, looking to employ slides, hammer-ons and pull-offs as you do this.

Because we are still playing near the bottom of the fretboard, remember, when jamming, that this is where you can use the lower strings (E, A and D) to create a low, rich and full sound. Some solos, depending on the style, will benefit having this sound, so install this in your muscle memory for future use.

As before, there are a couple of simple licks for you to learn to start your create juices flowing.

The Scale



Position 2

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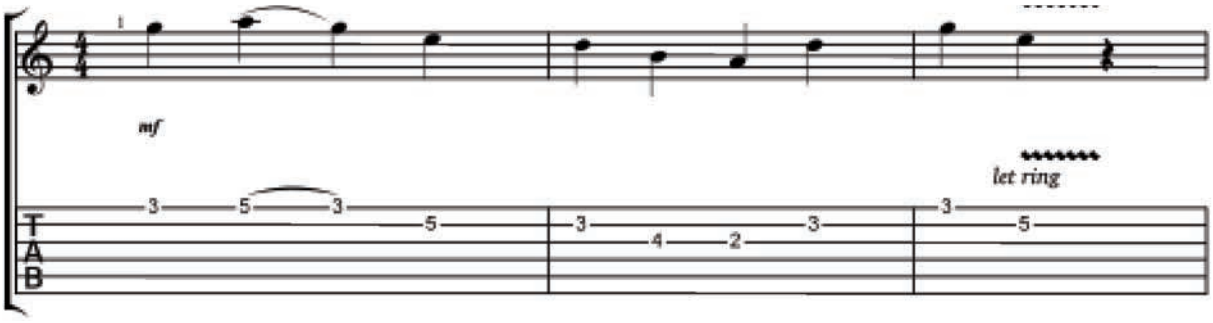

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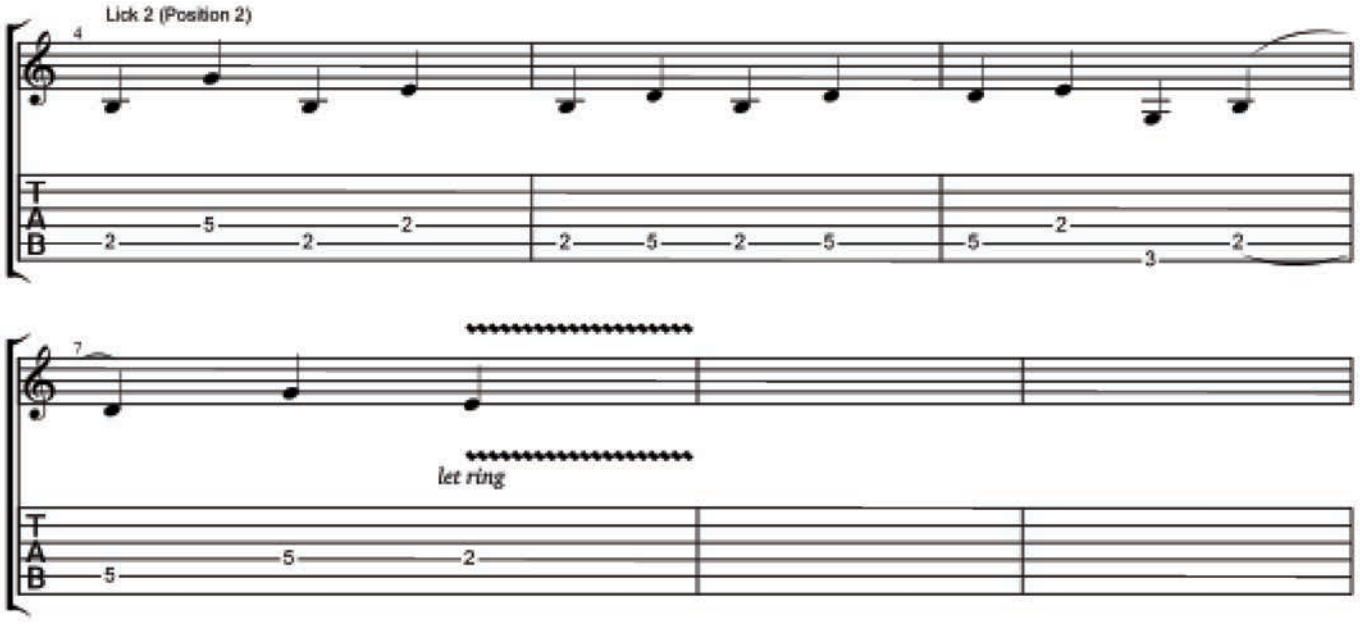
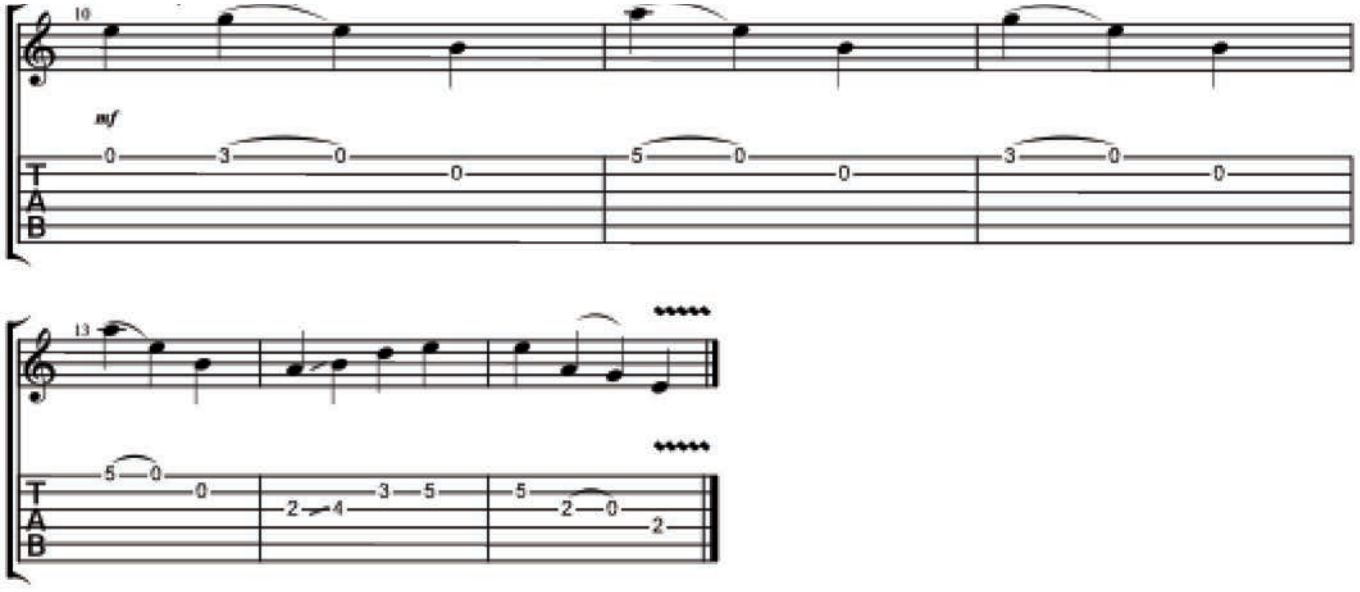


Positions 1 & 2

Lick 1 Tab



Position 3.

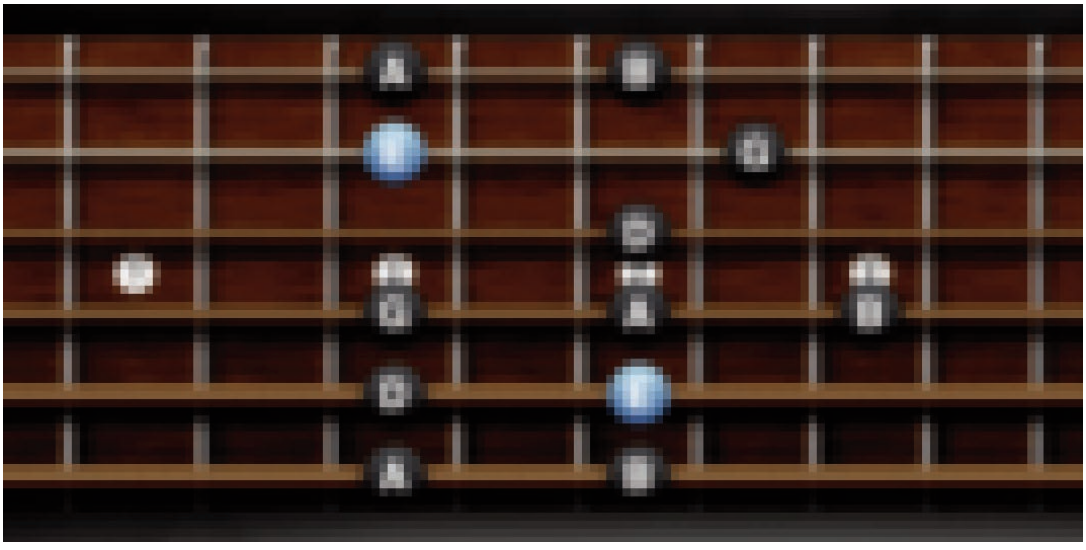
Notes

The video provided demonstrates 1 simple lick using frets 4,5, 7, and 8, but this is one of the more difficult positions to commit to memory.

Position 3 is the scale where it may help to make extra effort to learn where the E notes are, mainly because, when you first start out, you may find yourself losing your way and a return to an E note is a safe bet to ensure you are playing accurately within the scale. It will also give you extra time to compose yourself and quickly plan your next move.

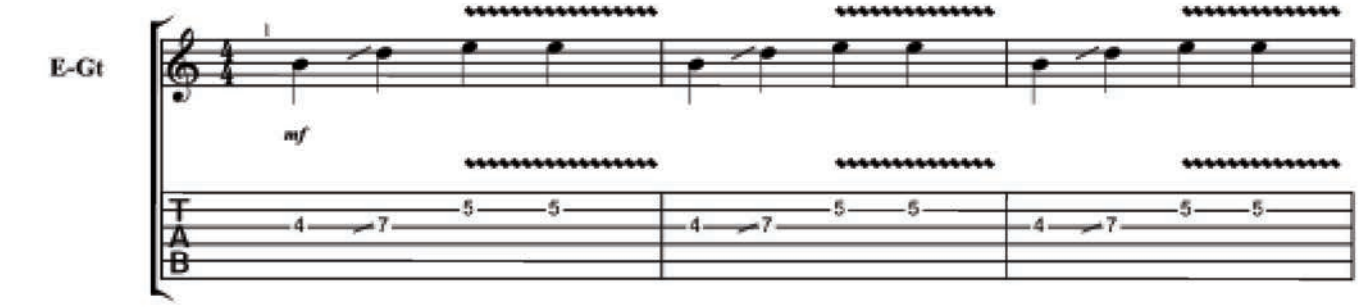
The suggested lick will certainly help you with this. Before progressing to position 4, why don't you create and tab your own lick, making an effort to include a slide, a bend and a hammer-on.

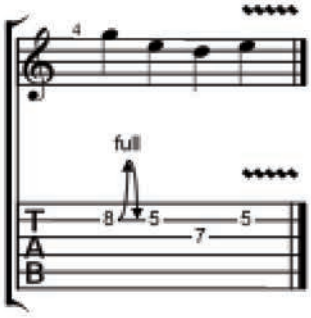
The Scale



Position 3

Lick 1 Tab





Position 4.

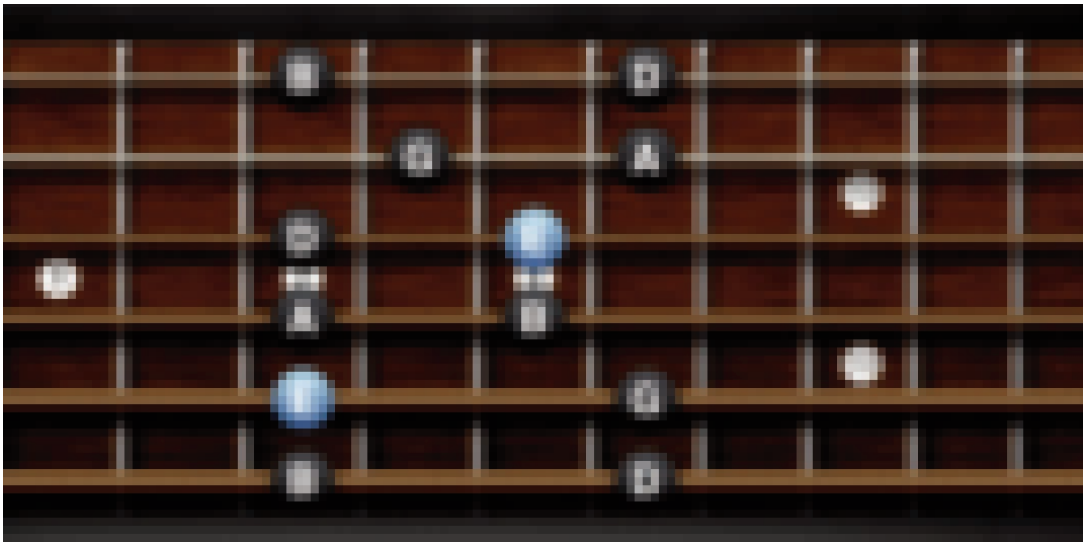
Notes

We're now starting to progress our way up the fretboard towards position 1 (on the octave) where the higher "screaming" notes come into play more and more. Just think Gary Moore.

But before we reach these dizzy heights, you should master the E minor pentatonic notes in this position, Like position 3, it will take a bit more time to learn, but will be very beneficial in the end because it gives you another stepping stone to work your way up and down the different positions. Believe you me, a large percentage of lead guitarists never progress beyond position 1.

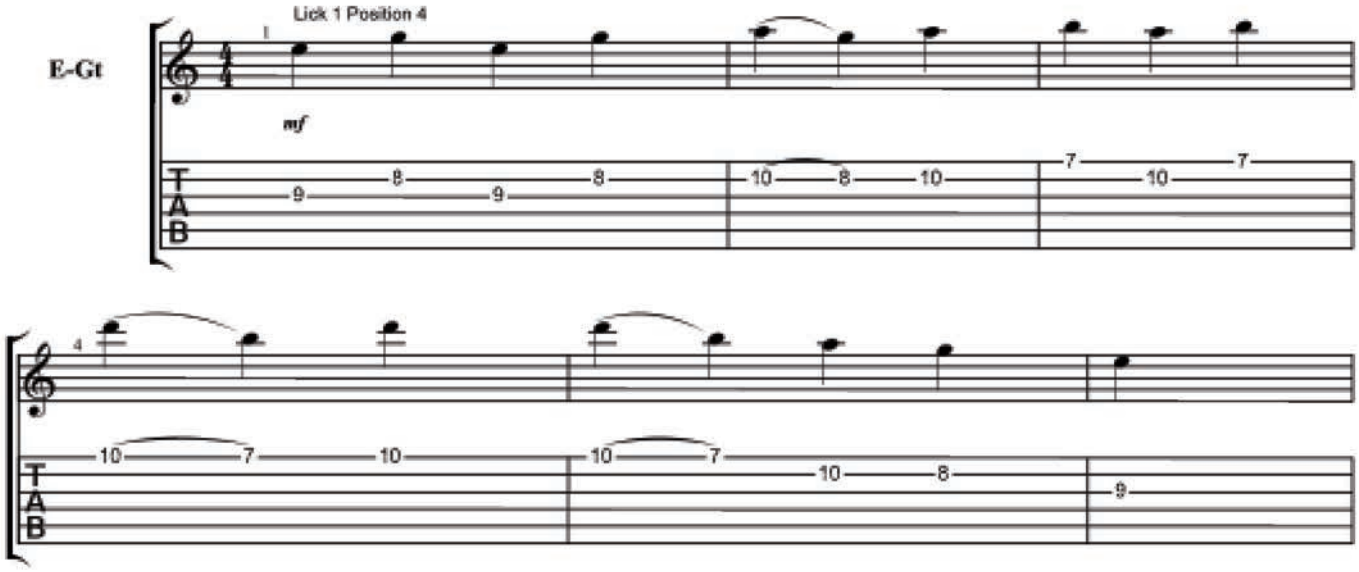
The lick that has been included that demonstrates how to move between positions 3 and 4 includes a couple of bends to assist you in developing some real screamers in the future – just like Gary Moore!!!!!

The Scale



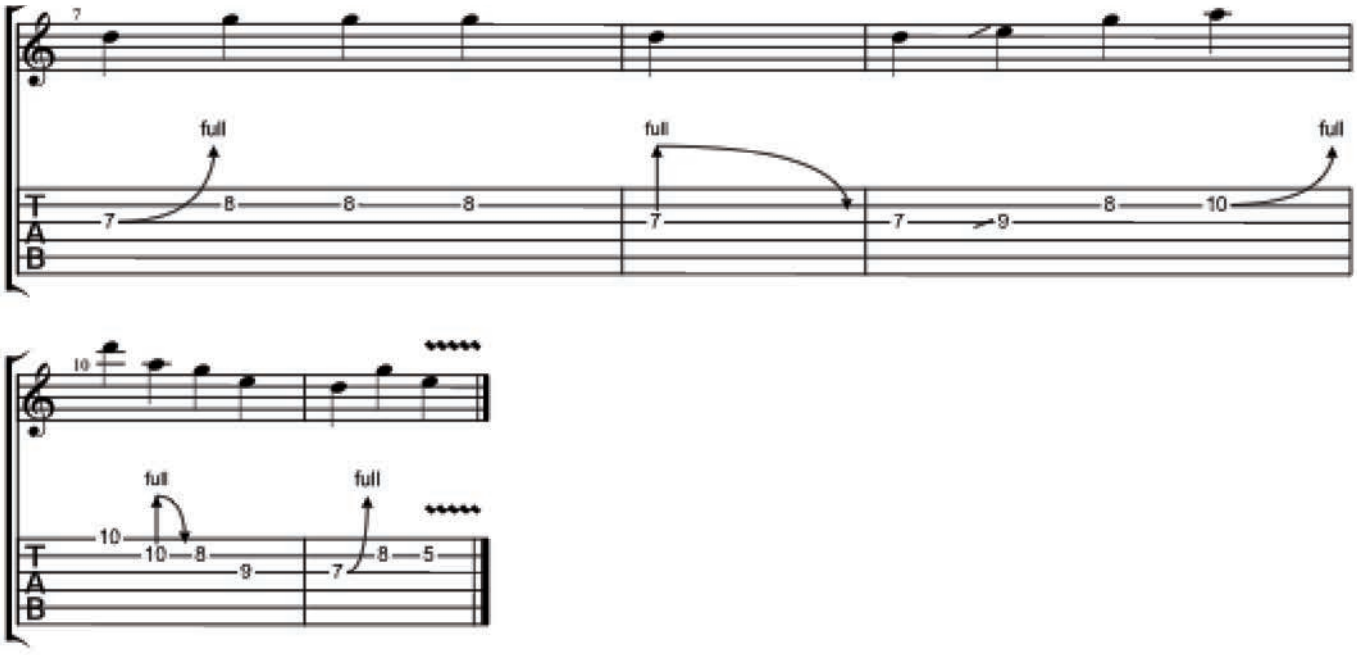
Position 4

Lick 1 Tab



Position 3 & 4

Lick 1 Tab



Position 5.

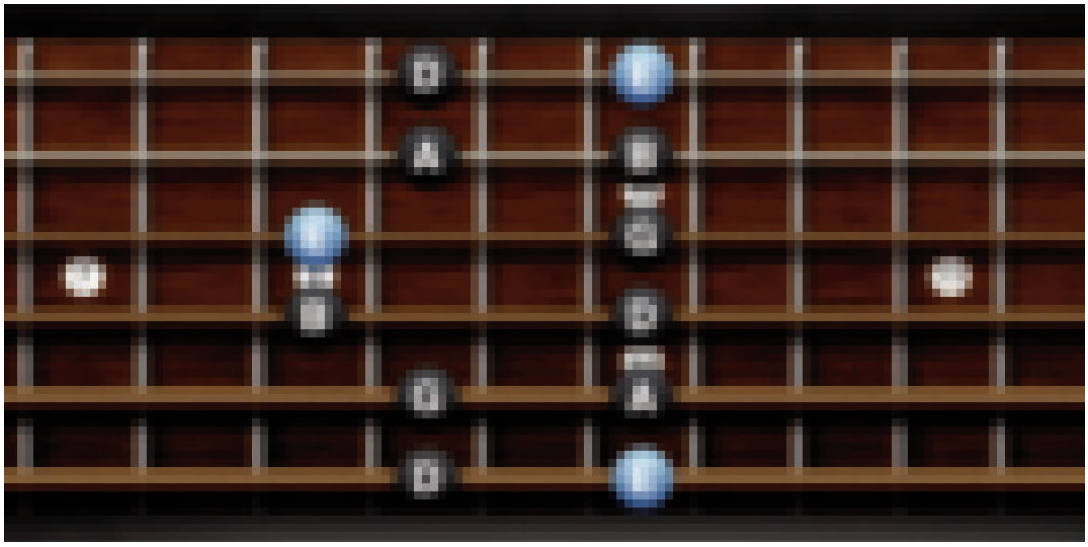
Notes

If you are desperate to be able to move between positions with fluidity (once you have learned all of them) and let's face it, we all do, this is a great place to start.

It is adjacent to position 1 on the octave, which all lead guitarists commit to memory very early on, so your thinking time does not need to be as long when you are improvising. Position 5 is also one of the easier ones to install to your memory bank.

Although not included in our licks, yet again, position 5 gives you a great opportunity to use double stops (especially on the 12th fret). Learn these licks and add in some double stops to start creating your own style.

The Scale



Position 5

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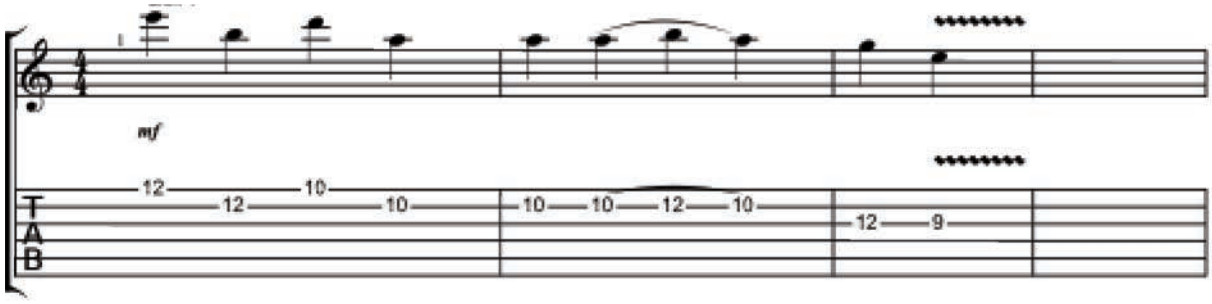

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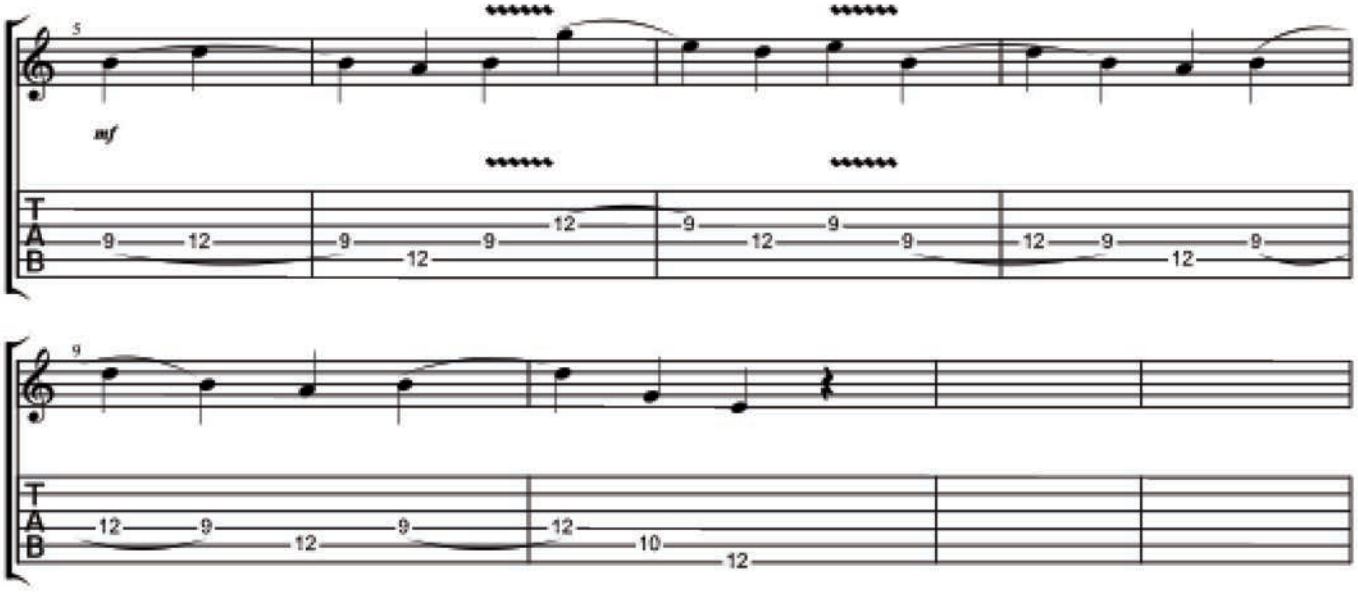
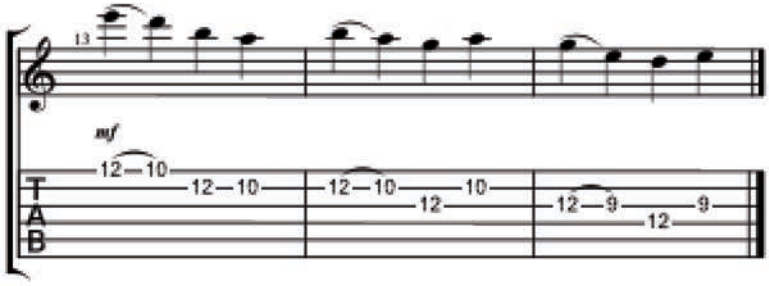


Lick 3

Lick 3 Tab



Position 1, On The Octave

Notes

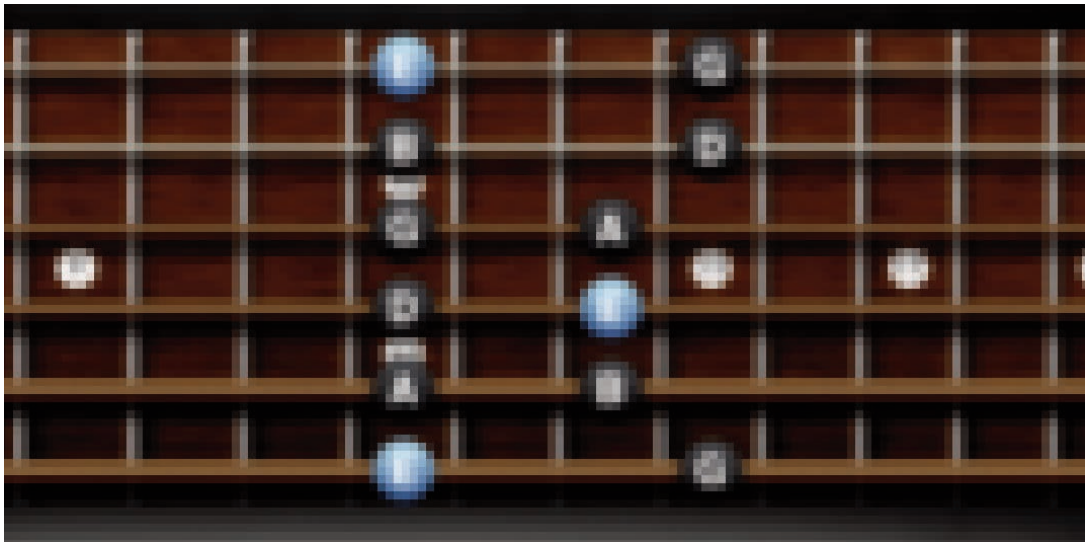
Yes – we're here at last. Along with position 1 using open strings, an octave below, this is the most commonly used, easiest to master and most pleasurable to play as a beginner.

Using this position allows you to start to create "screaming" and "passionate" solos. This is where you will find it easiest to bend and hold notes, start to play a little faster and create some meaningful and satisfying solos. OK it will take time, but I bet you are now thinking "I want more."

The licks include both double stops and bends and show a couple of ways to move from position 1 to position 5, using slides, pull-offs and hammer-ons. This is where your own ideas and experimentation should take over.

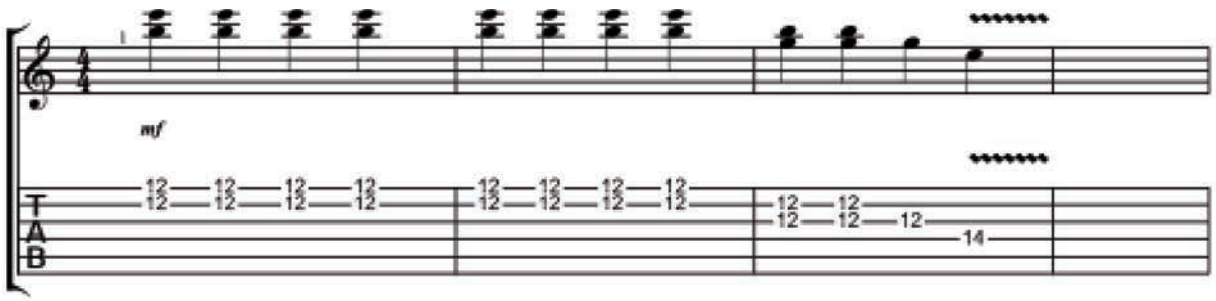
When moving from one position to another, use a pull off or hammer-on instead of a slide, or simply play both notes without any of these. Perhaps employ a pre-bend or bend. Make each move your own and use the licks as an idea – and expand them to suit your own style, or that of the song or people you are jamming with.

The Scale



Position 1, On The Octave

Lick 1 Tab



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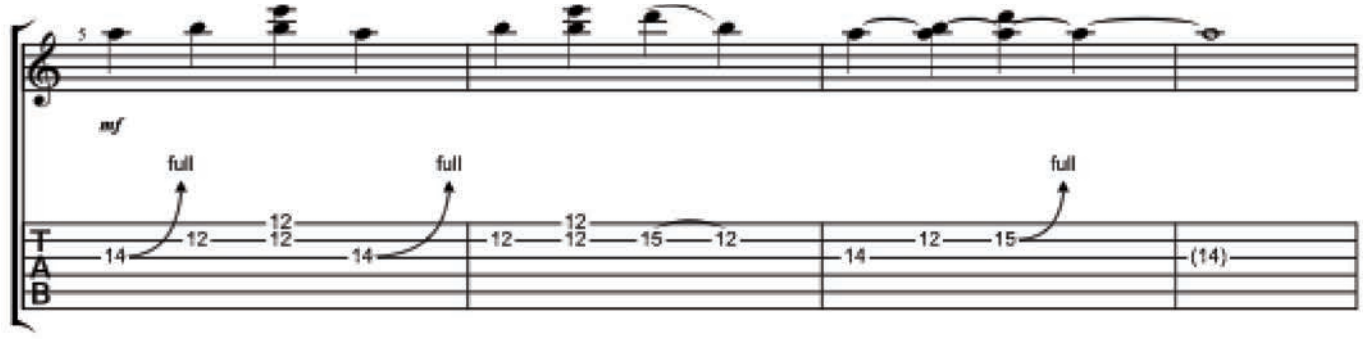

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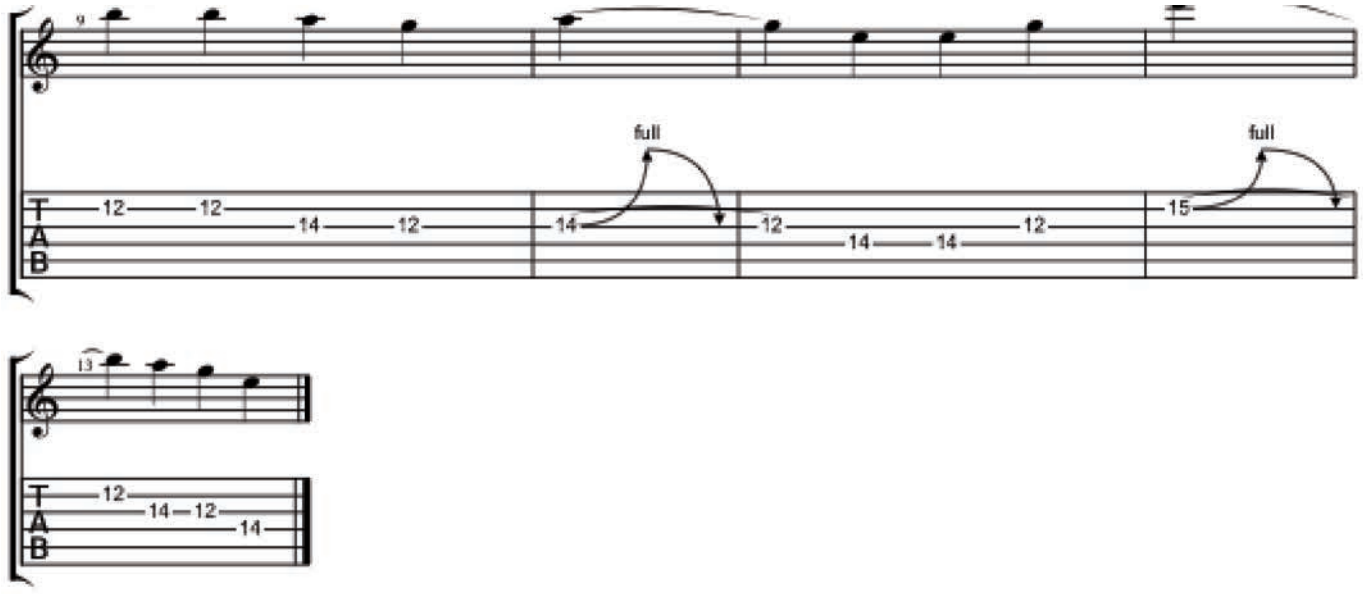
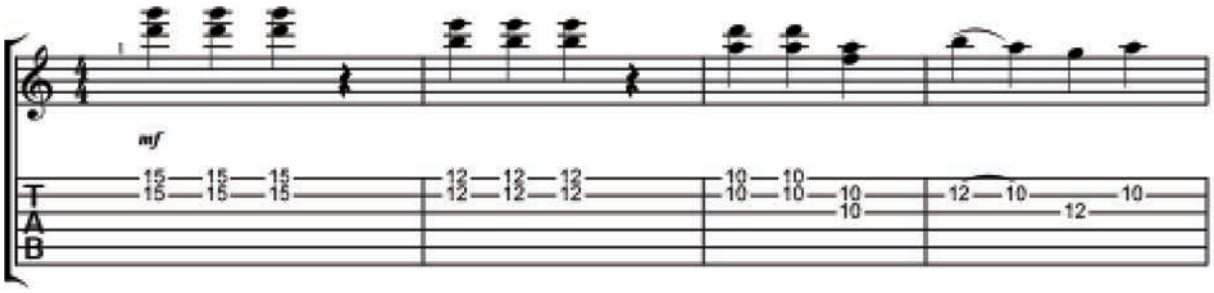


Position 5 & 1

Lick 1 Tab



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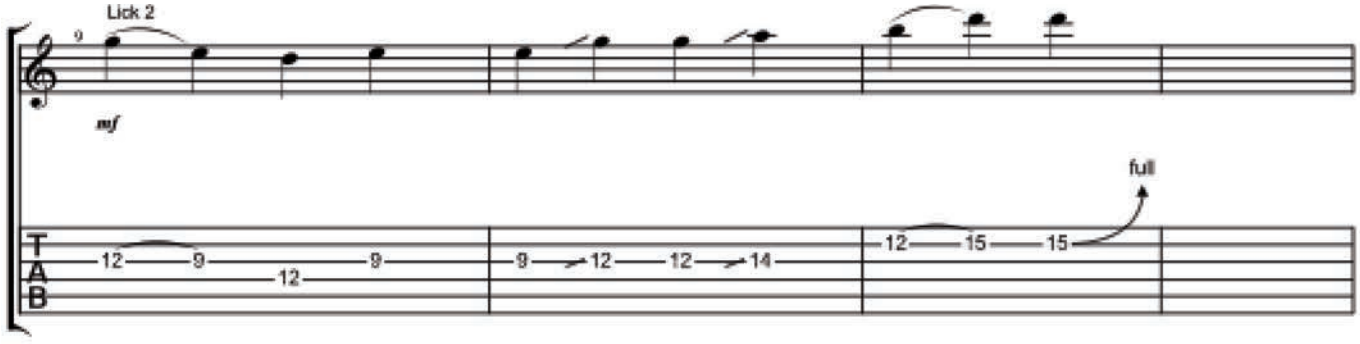

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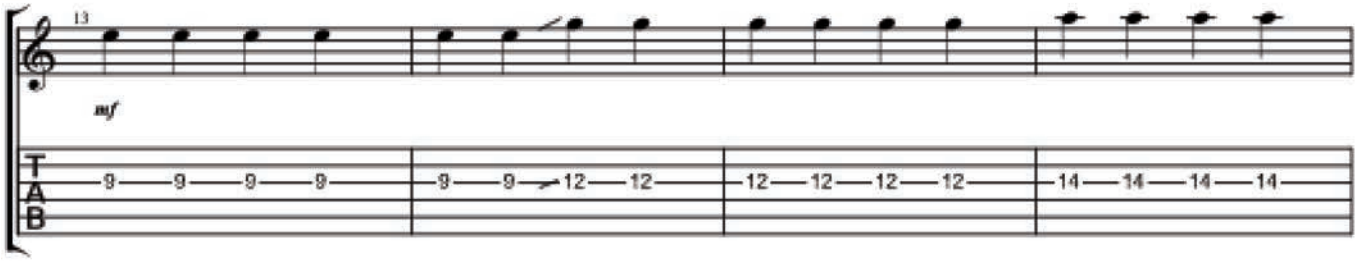
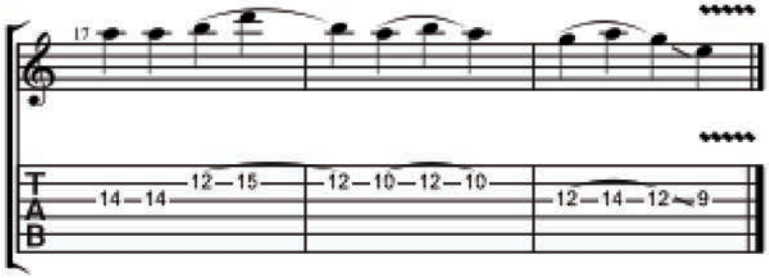




Practice Techniques

Notes

This is really an individualistic thing, because what works for some, may not work for others.

Some things that keep practicing fun are:

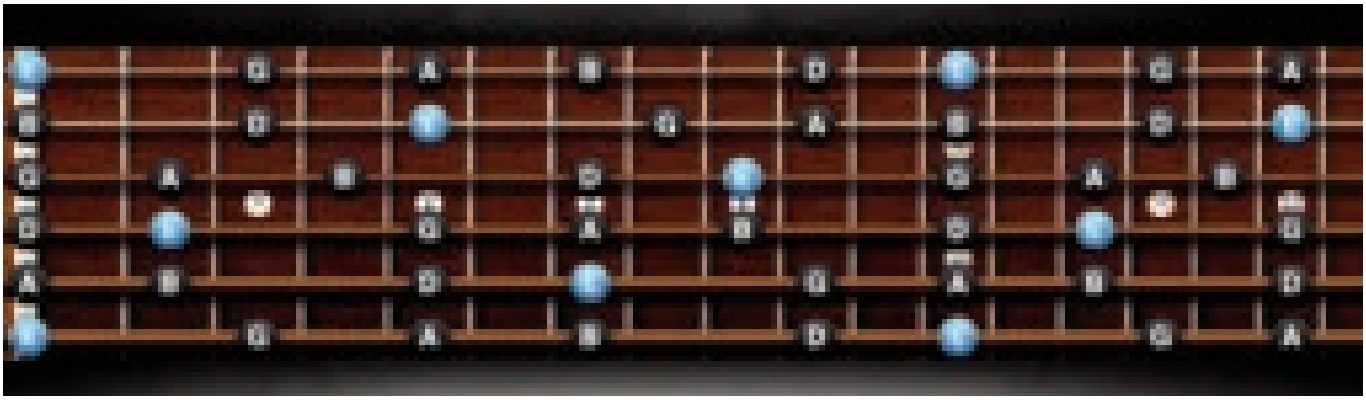
Whenever you finish a riff, lick or solo, play the notes of the scale on the string you finished on, starting with your last note. You will then become familiar with positions on that one string, and this will considerably aid your muscle memory.

Whilst practicing the scale on one string, memorise the notes and the number of frets between each note and play them in a different order, perhaps using the open string in between each other note played.

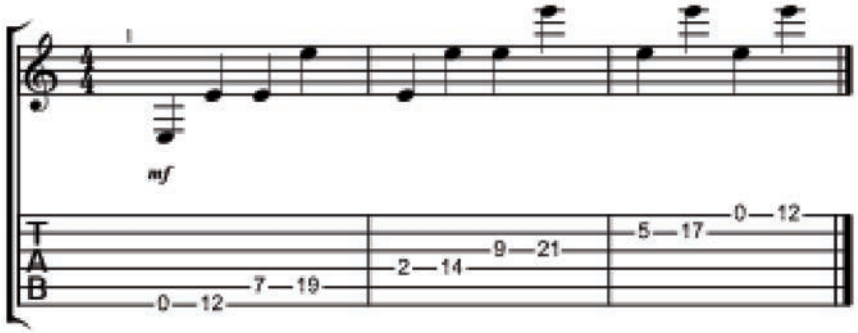
Give yourself a little test on where the E notes are in each position. Once you have done this, use the first 2 practice tips mentioned above. It is just a variation on a theme, but nevertheless useful and still fun.

Starting at the lowest E (the bottom open E string) work your way up to the E on the 12th fret of the top E string, using parts of all the scale positions. You can also do this is reverse. Perhaps use slides and hammer-ons on the way up and slides and pull-offs on the way down.

The full scale

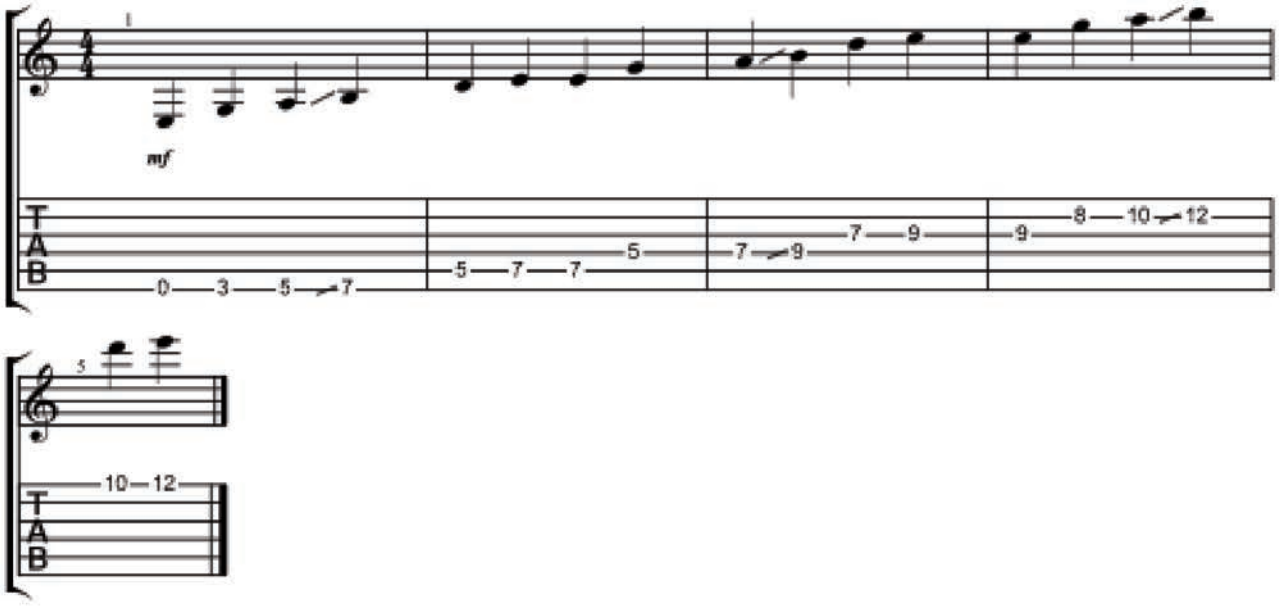


The E Notes



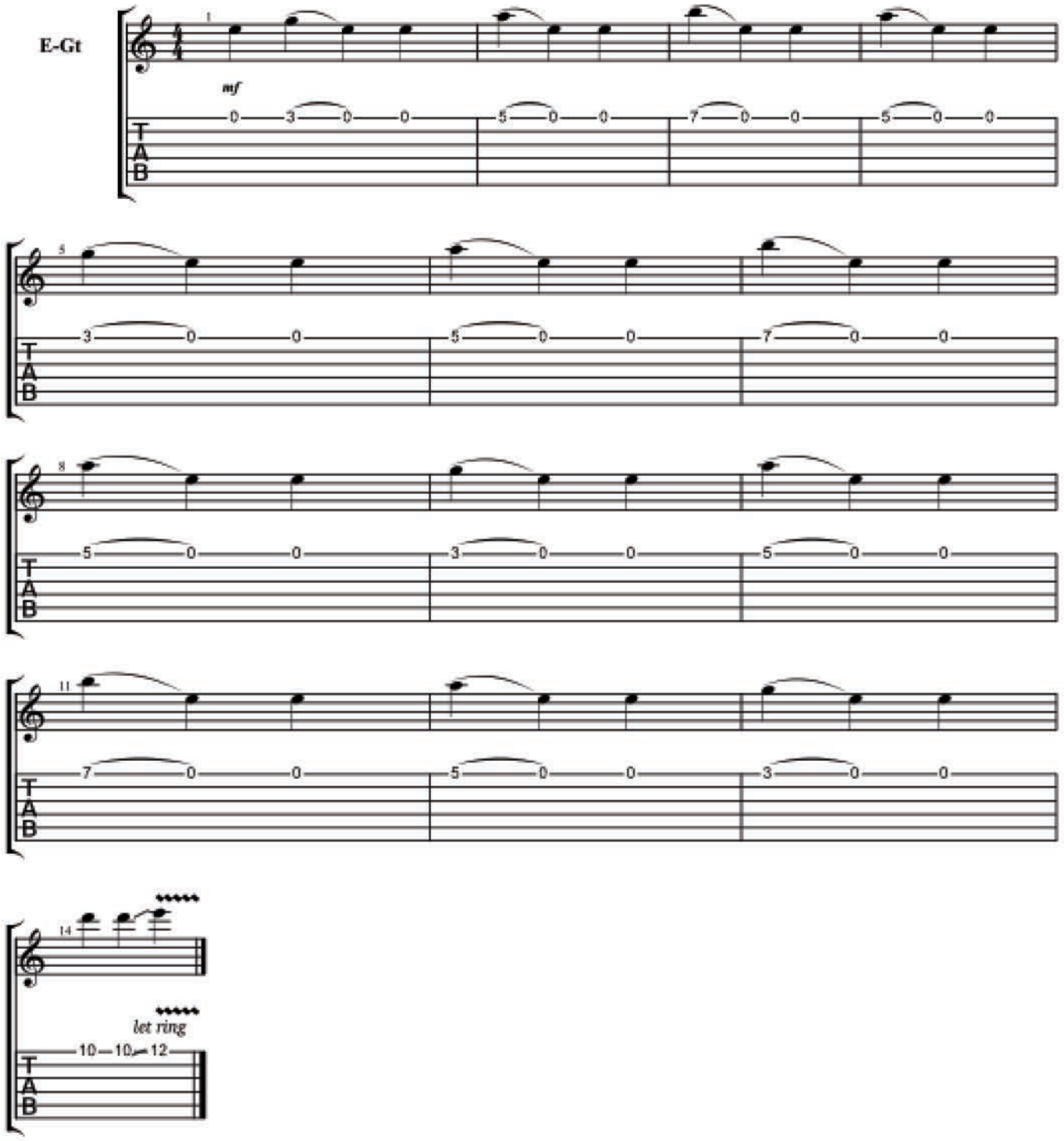
Practice Techniques

E scale Riff



Practice Techniques

Scale on a string Riff



Improvising in the Em Pentatonic

Styles & Phrasing

Country Blues

Notes

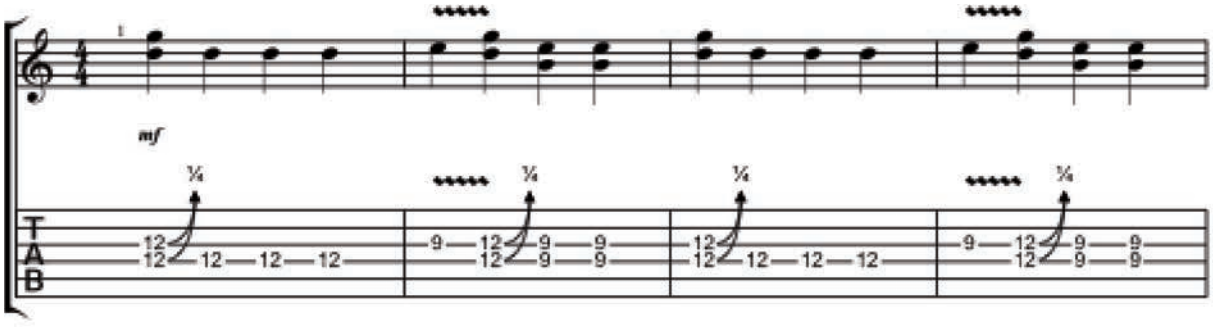
This backing track has a country feel to it (the clue is in the title) and, although you would need to learn some more scales to play a wider range of more "countrified" licks using the Eminor pentatonic scale is a great place to start.

As a beginner, it would be good to play the usual array of bends and slides, because keeping the notes and bends shorter will help you achieve a country feel. Also, the use of double stops and the addition of slight bends i.e. less than one step, will put you on the right track – so to speak.

Lick 2 includes a classic quarter bend from the G note on the bottom E string to an open E and, as soon as you play it, you will think Johnny Cash.

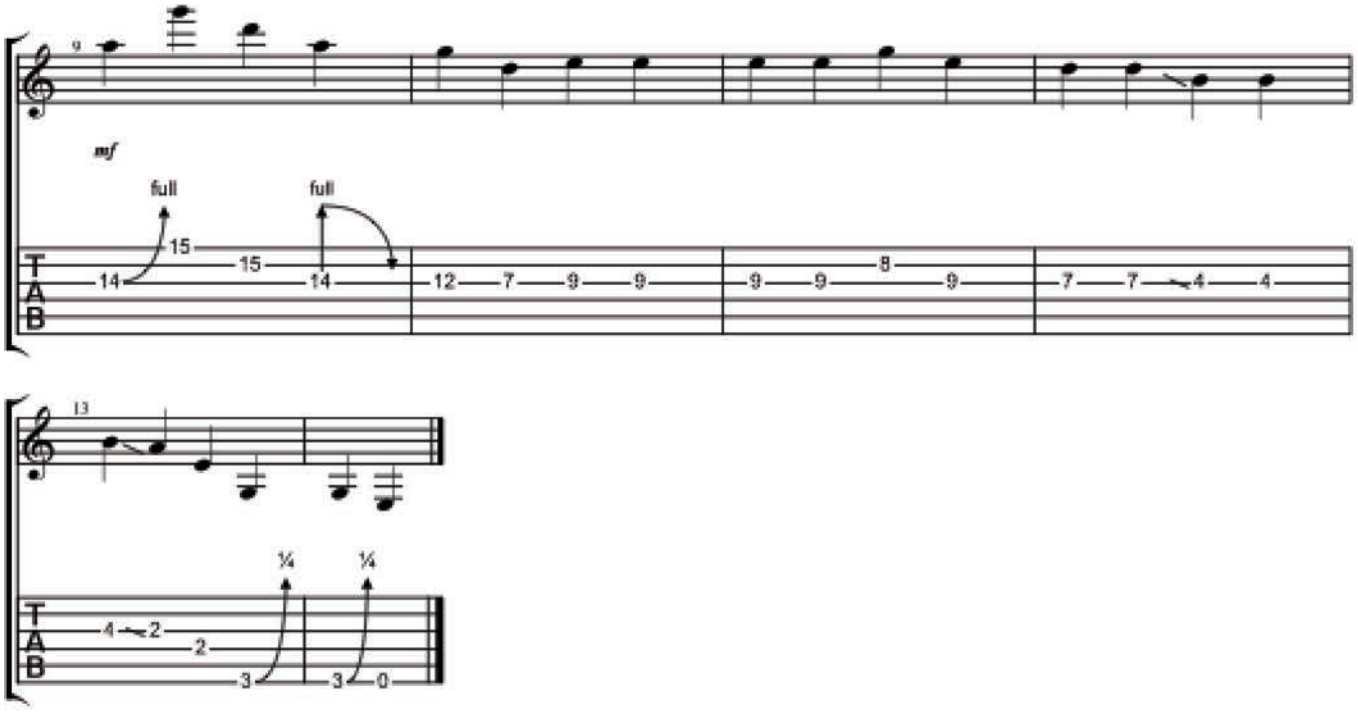
That's not to say you can not use full bends and hold notes for a longer time, it's just that adding the couple of things mentioned above, will give you a head start.

Lick 1 Tab



Country Blues

Lick 2 Tab



12 Bar Blues

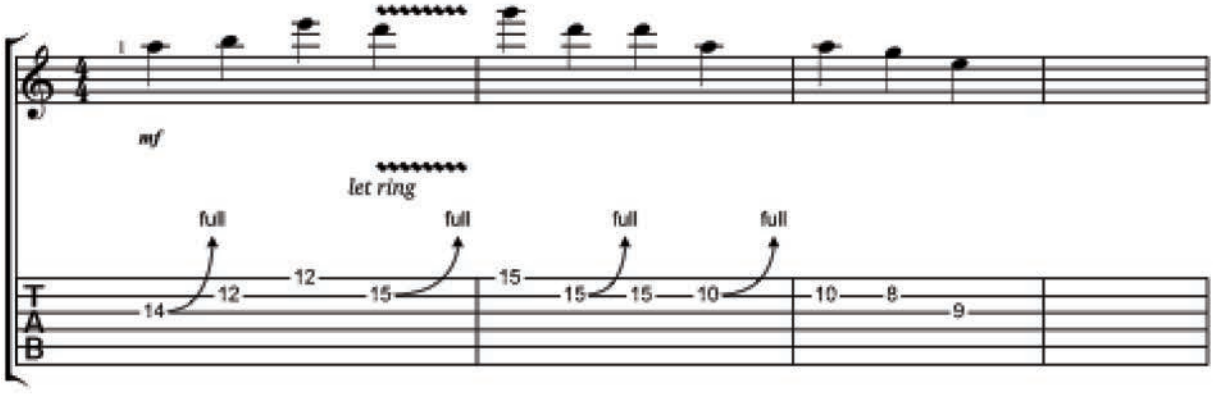
Notes

This improvisation session wouldn't be complete without teaching you a riff that could easily feature in all the backing tracks – this is lick one.

It is something you will return to time and time again, so, if there was one definitive lick – this would be it. Granted, there are more common and more recognisable ones, but starting off bending the G string on the 14th fret up 2 steps, followed by the 12th fret on the B and top E strings is a classic move. You can repeat this part over and over again and also play the B and E strings together to create extra volume and thickness of sound.

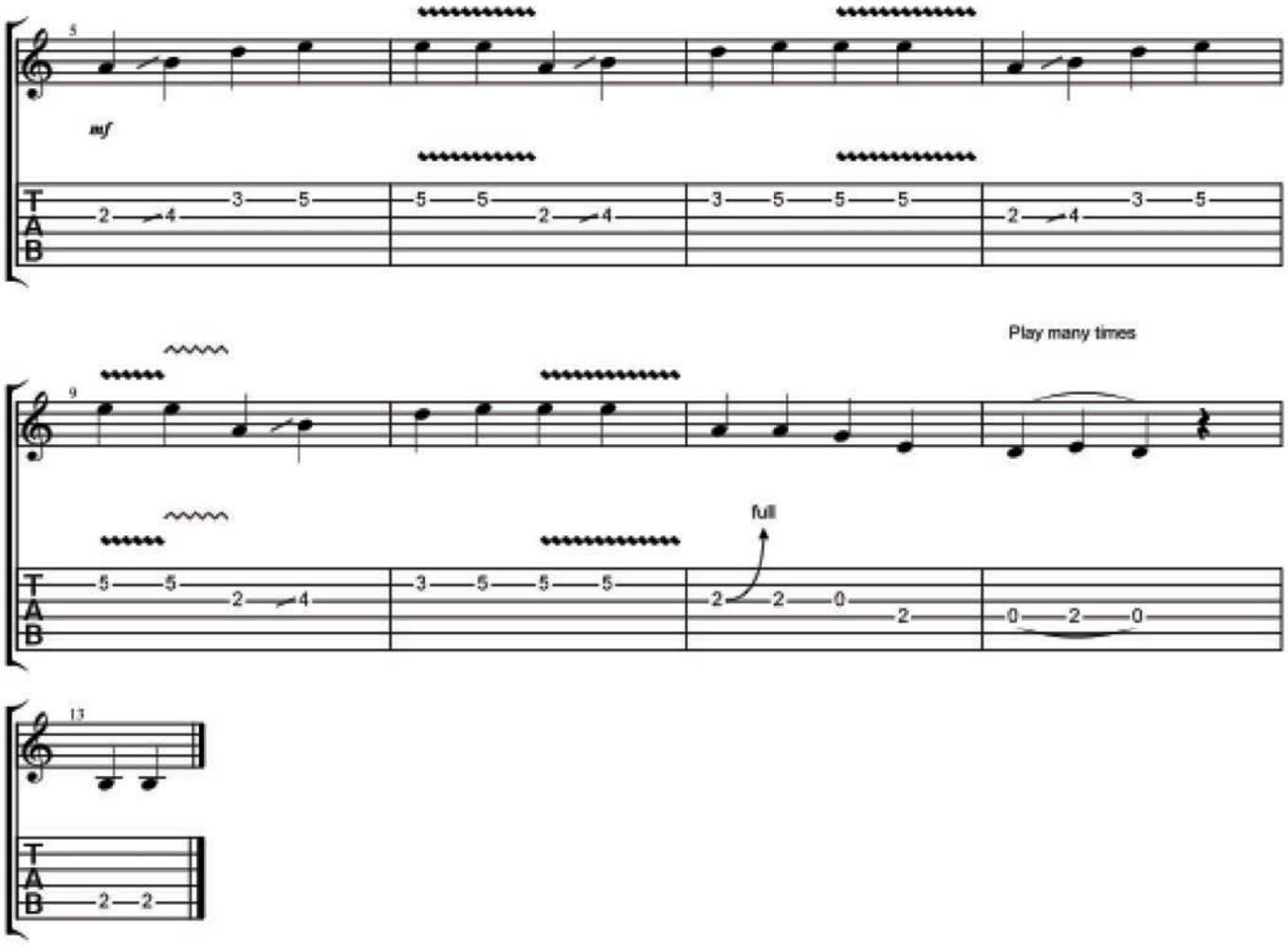
One tip for this and all the other styles - do not be afraid to leave gaps, play more slowly and also repeat a series of notes, with different phrasing. It is easier to do this when there are fewer beats per minute, but try to think space, melody and variation. Speed of playing isn't everything!

Lick 1 Tab



12 Bar Blues

Lick 2 Tab



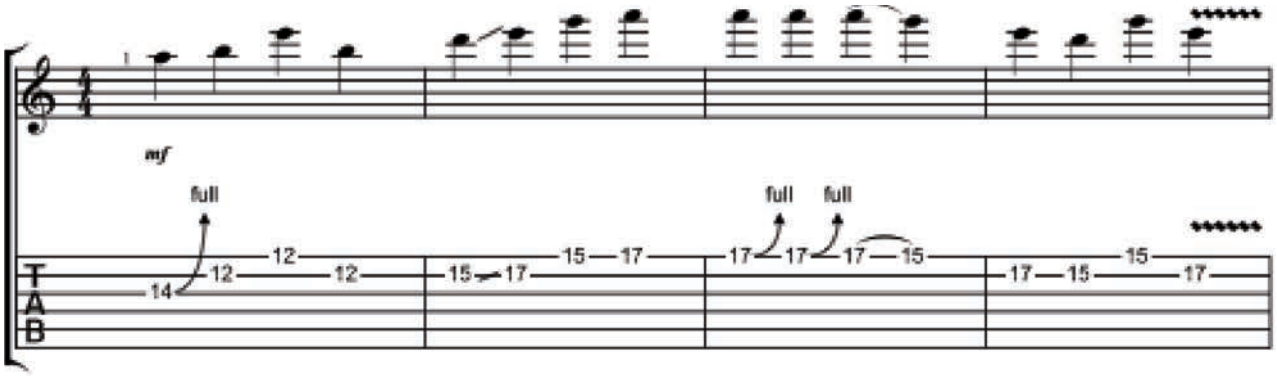
Blues Rock

Notes

Yup – speed isn't everything and this track will allow you to use your sense of timing to play at a slower pace. This track maybe faster and the licks not necessarily at a slow pace...so there lies the challenge ahead.

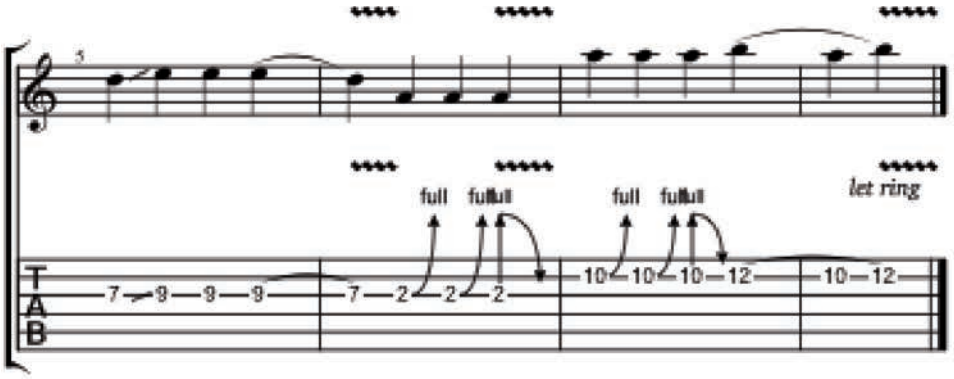
See if you can play notes provided in each of the licks at a slower pace to give yourself some extra thinking time and breathing space. Once you have jammed around for a while, you will find yourself creating melody lines as opposed to just a series of notes. Obviously you can change the mood and pace, but being able to create slower solos over faster backing tracks is an art. Think J.J. Cale and you'll know what I mean.

Lick 1 Tab



Blues Rock

Lick 2 Tab



And to finish with...

Some Tips

- Learn where the E notes are in each of the scale positions
- Learn the scale on one string
- Combine the learning aspects but keep jamming, so you keep it fun and remain motivated
- Start by keeping it simple. (Don't walk before you can run).
- Don't try and play too fast
- Learn some sample licks and commit them to memory
- Use these licks and extend them to help create your own playing style
- After every practice session, think about what you have learned – you are progressing
- Impress everyone
- Keep smiling and keep enjoying

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