



Lesson Thirteen

Gigajam Bass School Lesson 13 IBS MRG

Minor Rock Grooves

Lesson Objectives

- Introduce the creative use of a minor scale.
- Introduce rhythmic development.
- Introduce mixing combinations to create a rock groove.
- Introduce the technique of *Hammer On*.

Using a Minor Scale

A minor scale is a very useful tool for the bass player, particularly when it comes to creating a bass line for a rock groove.

Simply playing up and down the scale is not the purpose of learning minor scales.

It is a bass players knowledge of the notes within the minor scale, their position on the fingerboard and the ability to then combine notes and rhythm into interesting rhythmic and harmonic patterns that creates the best sounding bass lines. This is what we are going to try and begin to develop in this lesson.

Introducing Rhythm

The following group of exercises again use only the notes of the A minor scale.

Instead of playing straight up and down the scale, as we do for practising, each exercise breaks up the rhythm to create a *minor rock groove*.

In our first exercise you run up the A minor scale from the Root (A) to the 5th (E) using a combination of quarter notes and eighth notes. Then it runs back down the scale using the same rhythm.

Use the multimedia files to practise this first exercise.

Exercise 1 Quarter and Eighth Notes

1 2



L.H Finger 1 1 1 3 4 1 3 3 3 1 4 3

Rhythmic Development

It is easily possible to create other versions of this minor rock groove by changing the rhythm. In our next exercise we replace the first two quarter notes with eighth notes. When you play the exercise notice how this groove seems to move forwards more. It isn't better, just different. Pay attention to the fingering, it will ensure that don't have to move your hands more than you need to.

As usual watch the video clip carefully, then play along with the Xtractor to develop your performance.

Exercise 2 All Eighth Notes lesson013.ibsmrg.02



L.H Finger 1 1 1 3 4 1 3 3 3 1 4 3

Creating a Bass Part

A bass player is expected to be able to invent a bass line and then develop it. This makes the music more varied and interesting and can be used to change the intensity level of the song.

Usually this happens at a **Jam Session** when the band gets together to play, either rehearsing or when writing songs together. It is a great opportunity to try things out. It is very much like having a conversation with someone-you never know where it'll end up. The ideas though are all related to each other.

Repeating a note

As A is the root note of the scale and the chord, why not repeat this note. Over the next couple of exercises we are going to make small variations to our first 2 exercises.

In this next exercise, number 3, we have changed the last eighth note in bar one from D, to A. Use the multimedia files to check your understanding and then practise along with.

Exercise 3 Variation 1 lesson013.ibsmrg.03



L.H Finger 1 1 1 3 4 1 3 3 3 1 4 3

In our next exercise, number 4, we have varied exercise 2, which are all eighth notes, and again, dropped the D to A.

Exercise 4 Variation 2
 lesson013.ibsmrg.04



L.H Finger 1 1 1 3 4 1 3 3 3 1 4 3

Reversing Notes

Swapping notes around is another option to try. In our next exercise the last two notes in the second bar are C and B. Reverse them so that it becomes B and C.

Use the multimedia files as always.

Exercise 5 Reversing notes
 lesson013.ibsmrg.05



L.H Finger 1 1 1 3 4 1 3 3 3 1 3 4

Technique Store-Hammer On

Often it is not only what you play, but the way you play it that makes it sound interesting. In the next exercise we play the same notes, but we change the way we play B and C.

Look at Fig 1 below and you will see that the last two eighth notes have a short curved line between them. This signifies a technique known as a **Hammer-on**.

Fig 1 Hammer-On

L.H Finger 1 1 1 3 4 1 3 3 3 1 3 4

The effect of a Hammer-on is that you play the first note as normal, but when you play the second note you do not pluck the string again with your right hand, you simply fret the note with your left hand finger only.

Before you have a go at the full exercise, you should practise the technique on its own. Use the multimedia files in the technique store example below to listen and compare the effect this has on the sound of the exercise. Then try yourself.

Exercise 6 Technique Store Hammer-on
 lesson013.ibsmrg.techstore.01



Applying Hammer On Exercises

Now that you have an idea of how to play Hammer-ons the best way to develop your new technique is by applying it to musical examples.

Use the multimedia files for exercises 7 and 8 to complete this lessons studies by developing your ability to play bass lines using the A minor scale with the Hammer-on technique.

Exercise 7 lesson013.ibsmrg.06



1 2

Exercise 8 lesson013.ibsmrg.07



1 2