



Lesson Twenty Seven Developing Pentatonics

Gigajam Bass School Lesson 27 IBS DP

Lesson Objectives

- Further develop your understanding of pentatonics.
- Introduce creative use of pentatonics in bass riffs.
- Perform major and minor pentatonic riffs including the use of dots and ties to enhance rhythmic playing.
- Understand and perform a 12 bar pattern.

Using Pentatonics

Using the notes of pentatonics is a particularly useful tool for a bass player. A pentatonic contains all three notes of a chord so it is easy to use these five pentatonic notes to create a bass riff.

This lesson concentrates on using pentatonics to create bass riffs.

Major or minor?

As discussed before it is essential to know if the chord is major or minor, so find this out firstly if you can. If not, just choose one or other and try playing your choice. Listen carefully!

If you guessed correctly you can now begin to create a riff. If not, try the other choice!

Power chords

In some cases the guitarist will be playing a power chord. A power chord has only two notes (root and fifth). It has no 3rd and is therefore neither major or minor. In this instance you may decide what sounds best. Try both before you choose.

Creating riffs

The following examples are based on pentatonics. The only difference between them is the rhythm. Go through each exercise thoroughly around and around making good use of the multimedia files, especially playing with the BassXtractor so that you become familiar with the riffs.

Exercise 1
lesson027.ibsdp.01



Our second exercise is a variation on our theme. This time we have included rests and the riff goes up and back down the G major pentatonic scale. This creates another a 2 bar riff.

Use the multimedia files as always.

Exercise 2
lesson027.ibsdp.02



Playing a 12 bar pattern

The next exercise to practise, is 12 bars long. A 12 bar pattern is often used as a structural basis for a song. It is commonly and sensibly referred to as a **12 bar** or a **12 bar blues**.

The bass riff is the same throughout with the riff simply transferred to follow the change in chords. There are three chords involved - G,C and D.

Make sure, firstly, that you understand the pentatonic pattern in each chord and that you can play the basic riff. Check also that you can transfer the riff to each of the chords before attempting to perform the exercise. If you have learned your pentatonic shape as you should have, this should be just a matter of developing fluency, changing the shape between each of the notes.

Use the multimedia files as always.

Exercise 3 lesson027.ibsdp.03



1 G 2

3

5 C

7 G

9 D C

11 G G

Minor pentatonic riffs

Develop your skills further by playing the following examples which are based on minor pentatonics. The only difference between them is the rhythm.

Our first example uses the G minor pentatonic.

Exercise 4 lesson027.ibsdp.04



Our next exercise includes a rest and goes up and back down the G minor pentatonic scale. This creates a 2 bar riff.

Exercise 5 lesson027.ibsdp.05



12 bar-using minor pentatonics

We are going to play another 12 bar pattern, this time developing our minor pentatonic shape.

As we did for **Exercise 3** the bass riff is the same throughout with the riff simply transferred to create a new chord. There are three chords involved: Gm, Cm and Dm.

First of all make sure that you understand the pentatonic pattern in each chord and that you can play the basic riff. Check also that you can transfer the riff to each of the chords before attempting to perform the exercise. If you have learned your pentatonic shape as you should have, this should be just a matter of developing fluency, changing the shape between each of the notes.

Use the multimedia files as always and practise the exercise around and around.

Exercise 6
lesson027.ibsdp.06



1 Gm 2

3

5 Cm 6

7 Gm

9 Dm 10 Cm

11 Gm 12