

Developing Pentatonic/Blues Scale Soloing.

Lesson Objectives.

- Introducing the concept of the **Landing Note** and **Safety Notes**.
- Developing musical understanding of Licks that don't land on Root Notes.
- Consider genuine improvisation.

Use Of Lick landing on the Root Note. (Safety Note)

All the scales and runs which we have learned so far have been in the key of A minor.

All the licks and runs which we have learned so far have ended on the note A.

Safety Note A

When learning to improvise we need to experiment and play freely to discover what sounds good and what doesn't. This process will be aided by the learning of as many different licks as possible and repeatedly playing them over the backing tracks found on the media files.

It is enormously useful to find notes within the scales which always sound good when stopping on them. The best example of this is the Root Note, which I like to think of as the **Safety Note** as it's safe to assume it will sound good. All the licks learnt so far have ended on the Root Note.

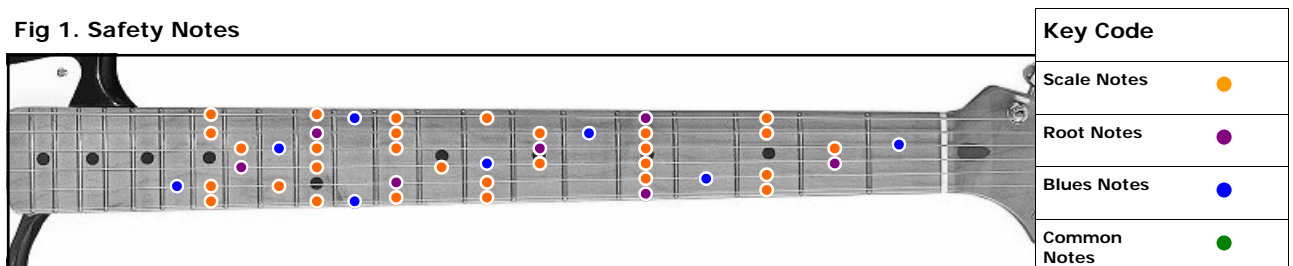
In the scale patterns in previous lessons the Root Note was marked as the Low A from which we begin and name our scales. It is essential to know these notes on the 5th and 6th string so we can play our scale patterns in any key.

From an improvisation point of view it is also important to know where the Root Notes (A's in the key of A minor) are in the rest of the scale. All the licks so far have ended on A's in different parts of the scales.

Below are all five Pentatonic Patterns in the key of A minor. All the A's have been filled in. It is essential that you know where all these A's are.

The A's are the Purple dots with the Blues Notes in Blue.

Fig 1. Safety Notes



How to Learn Them

Using the key of A as our example, you need to know where all the A's are located in terms of which fingers they fall under and in which position. It isn't so important that you know all the notes by their note names at this stage, merely where they are in context of each position and in each position the finger under which they fall.

Referring to our scale diagram in Fig. 1, you will see for example in Pattern 1 that there is an A on fret 7 on string 4. The licks I have shown you in pattern 1 all end on this note.

If you move to the top of extended pattern you will again see that the licks you have learned in this area of the neck land on the A, which is again under finger 3, but on string 2 at fret 10 and so on.

Improvising Landing on the Root Note

Take the time to go over all the licks you know and notice how they end on the Root Notes. Improvise over the media file for exercise 1 provided and play anything you like but end on a Root Note in which ever pattern you happen to be playing.

Use of Licks not landing on Root Notes

These licks are less predictable in terms of sounding good and often work or not depending on the chord being played underneath when used.

At this stage it is more important to recognise when you are or are not landing on a Root Note so that you become more aware of the various sounds within the scale patterns. This will therefore make you more aware of which licks and notes will sound good BEFORE you play them.

To practice this, jam over the media files for exercise 2 with some phrases ending on Root Notes and some not. Listen and see what you think. You can adapt the licks you already know to end on a note other than a root note.

There are five licks that follow each of which do not land on the Root Note. There is 1 lick in each Pattern.

Pattern 1 Lick 1

Exercise 1

lesson028.igsdpbs.01



The image shows a musical exercise for guitar. It consists of two staves. The top staff is a treble clef in C major, showing a melodic line with notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The bottom staff is guitar tablature for strings T, A, and B. The tablature shows fret numbers 7, 5, 7, and 5, and string numbers S and C.

