



Blues Rock Soloing

An important part of being a guitar player is to have some great solos ideas that you can pull out at any time you need to. It is a common occurrence that unexpectedly someone in the band will turn to you and say, "Guitar solo!" What will you do if that happens to you?

Maybe it already has, so how did you respond? Pull out your favourite pentatonic scale and play up and down it? Well that will work, but sounds very boring and amateurish. It's wise to have some pre-planned licks that you can use immediately – a lick approach is much better than a scale approach for playing solos.

if you spend the time learning them and putting them into your playing.

Lick 1 is minor pentatonic with the added C#, which is a chord tone from A7.

Lick 2 is from the major pentatonic scale, but has a chromatic entry from the note below the F#, which is also a chord tone.

Lick 3 is a common country sounding lick made up mainly of a chromatic scale.

Lick 4 is what is known as a turnaround lick. You can pick this lick with a hybrid style if you want – that is pick with the lower notes and finger tips

for the higher notes. The brackets with the numbers 1 and 2 in them are called 1st and 2nd endings, which mean that you play the 1st ending the first time through and on the second time through skip the first ending and jump over to the 2nd ending.

Learn these one by one so you have them well known – memorised is even better. Then we put them together to make a solo. After a while you will be able to mix them up with some of the licks you already know to make up longer solos.

Having these four simple little licks in your bag of solo tricks will serve you well into the future. It is a great idea to learn those licks you can get by ear from your favourite players and keep adding them to your repertoire.

A word of warning though. We tend to play rhythm guitar parts around 95% of the time and solos only 5% of

The image displays four guitar licks, each with a musical staff and a corresponding guitar tablature. Lick 1 is marked with A7 and D7 chords. Lick 2 is marked with A7 and E7. Lick 3 is marked with E7. Lick 4 is marked with D7, A7, F7, E7, Bb7, and A7. Each lick is shown on a treble and bass staff with a guitar tablature below it. The tablature includes fret numbers and pick-up/drop-down indicators.

From a theoretical point of view, many guitarists argue that solos are made up of scales. Well they are to a point right, but many of the licks here have other tones in them that are not in a pentatonic scale, like chord tones, chromatics, etc, included within the lick. Two important things happen when you have a good command of some great licks you enjoy playing – the first is you sound more professional, and second is you don't have to know any complicated theory or scales, you only need to know what chord that particular lick goes over.

If you look at the diagram you can see there are four licks for our 12-bar blues rock solo. The end of each lick I have sectioned off with a bracket. These types of licks are common in a lot of rock music so will serve you well

the time. Don't neglect your rhythm guitar practice, there is a real shortage of really great rhythm guitar players.

"If you don't know the blues, then there is no point in picking up your guitar, playing rock and roll or any other form of music." – Keith Richards

To hear this solo, visit my website at <http://www.guitar.co.nz/category/resources/freelessons/>

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