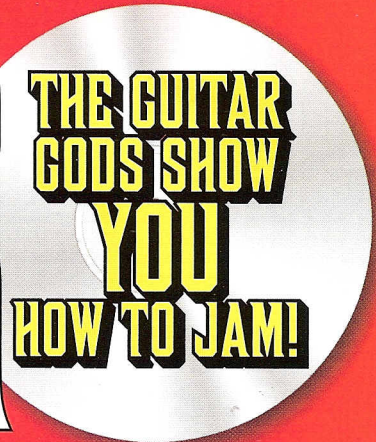


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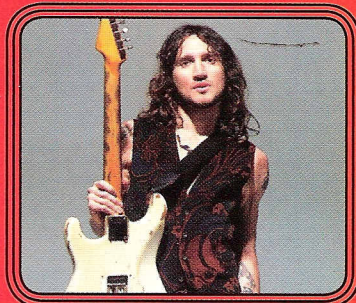
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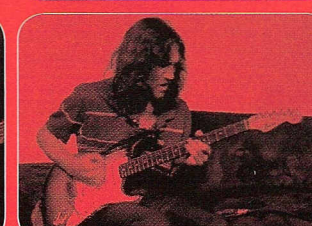
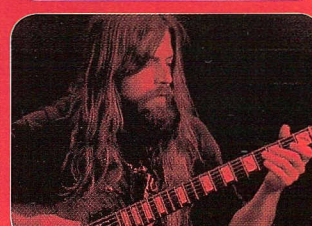
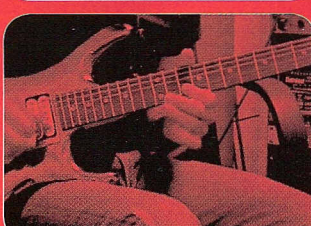
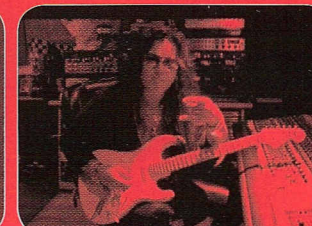
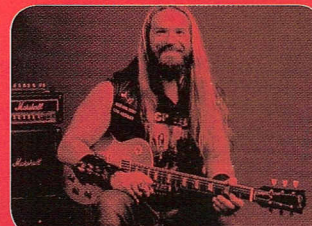
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# YNGWIE MALMSTEEN HOW TO PLAY FAST



**MUCH OF THE MUSIC I** write and play is based on three musical forms: Phrygian and natural minor scales; the harmonic minor scale and its fifth mode, Phrygian-dominant; and the diminished-seven arpeggio. When you examine these forms, you discover how closely related they are to each other, and how easy it is to link them together.

Let's start with E Phrygian (E F G A B C D), which can also be thought of as A natural minor (A B C D E F G) (**FIGURE 1a**). Primarily using alternate picking, I descend through the scale in four-note groups, with each subsequent group starting one scale degree lower than the previous group. For example, I begin (in bar 1) by playing C B A G, and then I begin the



next group by starting one note lower, on B, and play B A G F. Played this way, you can clearly hear the scale being broken up into even groups of four notes (**FIGURE 1b**) that descend the length of the fretboard.

If we think of this scale as E Phrygian, the intervallic structure is 1 b2 ("flat two") b3 4 5 b6 b7, and the chord that goes with the scale is Em. If we think of the scale as A natural minor, the intervallic structure is 1 2 b3 4 5 b6 b7, and the chord that goes with the scale is Am. Notice that the only difference between the two scales is the second scale degree: in E Phrygian it's b2, and in A natural minor it's 2 ("natural two").

This type of sound is exactly what I was going for from very early on. The whole reason I play the way I do is that I wanted to move away from the typical things most guitar players did and had been doing for a long time. I wanted to challenge myself, mainly, by trying to play some crazy stuff that was originally done on the violin, which of course is a completely different instrument. For one thing, the violin is tuned in fifths (low to high, G D A E), while the guitar is tuned mostly in fourths. In addition, the violin's scale—the "speaking length" of its strings—is much shorter than the

**FIGURE 1a** E Phrygian/A natural minor

Freely

fingering: 3 2 1 3 2 1\ 3 2 1\ 3 2 1\ 4 2 1\ 3 2 1 3 2 1 3 2 1 3 2 1 3 2 1 1

**FIGURE 1b** E Phrygian/A natural minor

**FIGURE 2a** A harmonic minor

**FIGURE 2b** E Phrygian-dominant

**FIGURE 3** E diminished-seven arpeggios

\*sweep

**FIGURE 4a** A harmonic minor w/major seventh throughout



guitar's. Combining the short scale with the tuning in fifths allows the violin to have a lot more notes available within a given position. On violin, you can move your fingers less than you do playing guitar and yet cover a wider pitch range.

It's a bit of a challenge to apply this approach to the guitar, but that's what I dug, and I still do. As much as I love the blues, the main reason I ventured away from it was that I felt it was a "boxed-in" approach to the guitar and music, and I wanted to break out of the box.

The natural progression for me was to move into incorporating scales like harmonic minor (FIGURE 2a), played here in the key of A (A B C D E F G#); intervallically, A harmonic minor is spelled 1 2 b3 4 5 b6 7. This scale is nearly identical to A natural minor, the only difference being the seventh degree, which in harmonic minor is major, or natural. Now, if you take these same set of notes and invert your frame of reference from A minor to E, you get E Phrygian-dominant (E F G# A B C D) (FIGURE 2b), which is intervallically spelled 1 b2 3 4 5 b6 b7. This scale is nearly identical to Phrygian, the only difference being that the third degree in Phrygian-dominant is major and not minor or "flatted." E Phrygian-dominant is the fifth mode of A harmonic minor and comprises the same seven notes. What makes it sound like E Phrygian-dominant (instead of A harmonic minor) is its orientation around E as being the root note instead of A. This scale sounds beautifully exotic when played over an E major chord.

The presence of the major third in Phrygian-dominant links this scale perfectly with the diminished-seven arpeggio. Here's a shape I like to use to play diminished-seven arpeggios up and down the neck (FIGURE 3). If one were to play an F diminished-seven arpeggio (F G# B D), the notes would also be found residing within the E Phrygian-dominant scale. So, in the key of A minor, you can mix and match and throw together these three resources—the A harmonic minor and E Phrygian-dominant scales and the F diminished-seven arpeggio—anyway you like.

A good way to acquaint yourself with the two aforementioned scales is to play them back-to-back (FIGURE 4a), being aware of changing the tonic, or root note, from one point of reference to the other (A to E in this case).

Doing this across all of the strings might seem complicated, so it's useful to practice the scale on just one string (FIGURE 4b); if you learn that "form," you can come up with different patterns, such as this (FIGURE 4c). Sticking with the high E string, E Phrygian-dominant is played like this (FIGURE 5a) and A harmonic minor is played like this (FIGURE 5b). Relative to an A root note, G# is the major seventh; relative to an E root, G# is the major third. And here's how the F diminished-seven arpeggio links the

E Phrygian-dominant

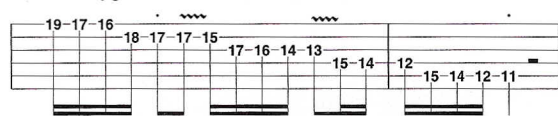


FIGURE 4c

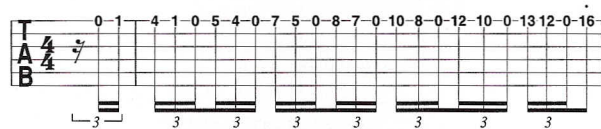


FIGURE 5b A harmonic minor

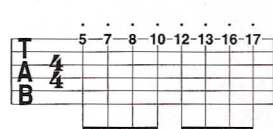


FIGURE 6 E diminished-seven arpeggios

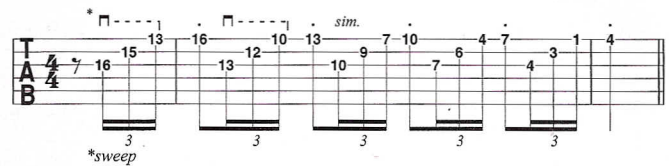


FIGURE 7a E7b9

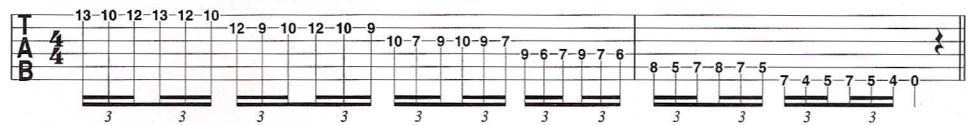


FIGURE 7b E7b9

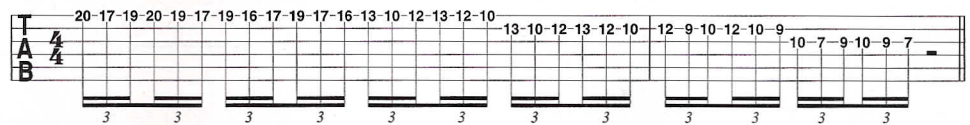


FIGURE 8a

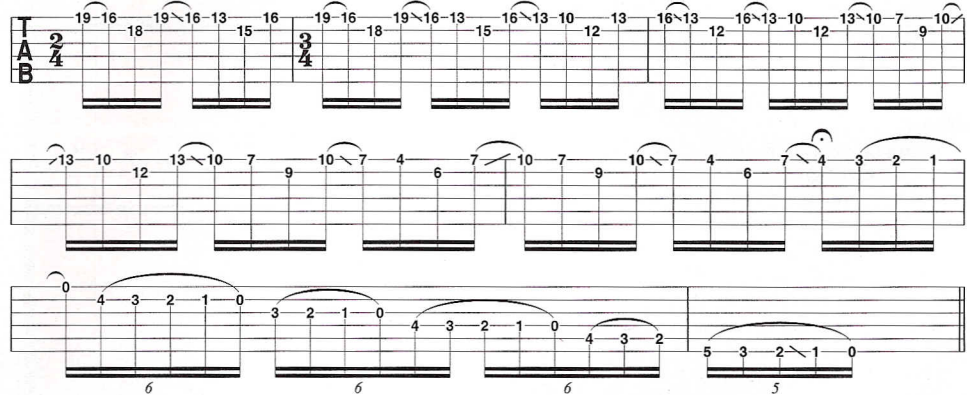


FIGURE 8b

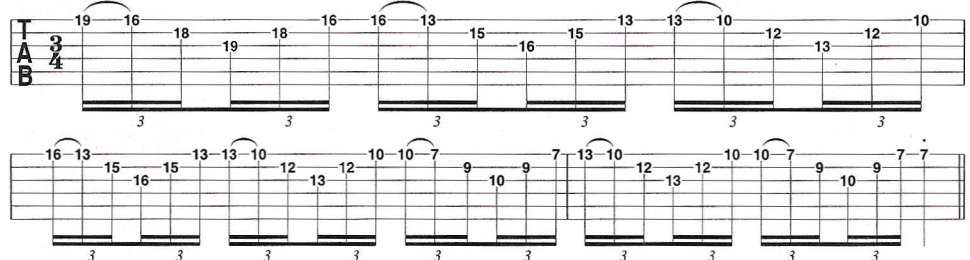


FIGURE 9a legato

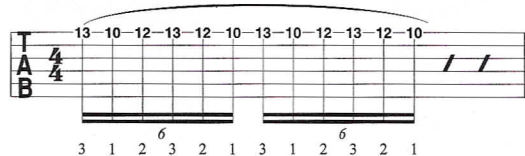


FIGURE 4b E Phrygian-dominant/ A harmonic minor

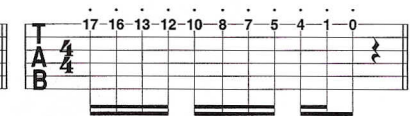


FIGURE 5a E Phrygian-dominant

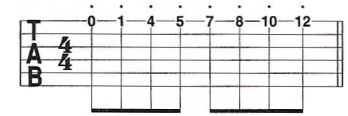
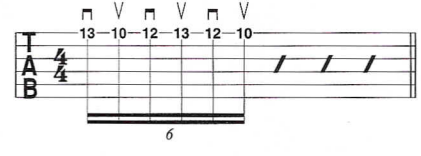


FIGURE 9b alternate picking





two scales together (FIGURE 6). When played over an E chord or an E bass note, the notes of F diminished-seven (F G# B D) outline an E7b9 arpeggio (E G# B D F), minus the E root, with the F note functioning as the b9 ("flat-nine"). This approach is very much the "bread and butter" of what I like to do in my own music.

Once you are familiar with these forms, you can use them to create all sorts of different patterns. For instance, you can play "shapes" that traverse the strings, selectively leaving out specific scale degrees (FIGURE 7a). Then you can try starting higher up on the fretboard and including more scale tones (FIGURE 7b). Link these shapes together with diminished-seven arpeggio shapes played up and down two strings (FIGURE 8a). You can also apply the same idea to a three-string diminished-seven lick (FIGURE 8b).

People always ask me about my playing technique, and I'll never forget the first time I went to Japan, back in the early Eighties. They asked me, "How do you do this?" and "How do you do that?" and I said, "I don't know, man!" Everyone thinks I'm full of it when I say this, but it's the truth. When I'm asked for advice, I always say, "Play with your ears. When it sounds good, it's good." If you have good ears, you'll know when it's good. When I started, I knew that I wanted my playing to be note-for-note clean. I wasn't thinking about what I was doing, but I knew what I wanted to hear. And I worked very hard on it until I got what I wanted.

## COMBINING LEGATO AND PICKING

**LEGATO, THE ARTICULATION** technique wherein the majority of the notes are sounded with hammer-ons and pull-offs, is a beautiful thing. My favorite legato player is Allan Holdsworth; I think he's amazing. Legato is great because you can play something like this (FIGURE 9a) without picking at all. That gives you a certain tone that is very smooth and flowing, and then you can pick all the notes to get a different kind of tone that's more percussive (FIGURE 9b). Here are two choices, and it's great to combine them to get a balance between *staccato*, which is picking every note, and legato (FIGURE 9c). A more *staccato* style sounds great on the low strings, and I like how it sounds when balanced by fast legato playing. What I like about arpeggios is that they sound powerful, impressive and very dramatic.

When picking fast passages, I usually break up the straight alternate-picking approach when I move from string to string, sometimes using two downstrokes, or two upstrokes, in a row. The truth is that I don't know what I do; I have never really analyzed it. My picking technique is natural for me, so the variables are whatever they are, and they've been

FIGURE 9c Am/E7b9

Freely

FIGURE 10 pizzicato

FIGURE 11 fret hand only

FIGURE 11 fret hand only

that way for a long time. I used to have a bass player a long time ago that looked at my picking hand and said, "It looks like you're knitting!"

## PIZZICATO

**THIS IS A VIOLIN TECHNIQUE** called *pizzicato*, wherein you sound some of the notes by pulling off to the open string with the fingering hand (FIGURE

10). If you use that hand only, you get this (FIGURE 11, bars 1-5). Then I switch to the *pizzicato* technique (bar 6) and finish the idea with a combination of alternate picking and pull-offs. All of the different elements work well together and offer you some choices while you are improvising, which can help you keep your solos exciting and spontaneous. □







kind of record this time. But after having been on tour for 15 months and finishing up with the *G3 Live in Tokyo* CD/DVD, I said, 'I'm not going to. I've had enough of that!'

Instead, Satch decided to make his new record sound even more distinct by finding a way "more quirky" way to play. "That's the word I came up with—'quirky.' It's not the best adjective," he says, laughing, "but it suggests something that's unusual, charismatic and imaginative, something that's not didactic or methodical sounding. That became the strain that ran through the entire recording process for *Super Colossal*."

One might say that strain runs through all of Satriani's virtuoso recordings. In this rare one-on-one interview, Satch reveals the method to his madness and demonstrates how you can improve your chops and technique to get the most out of every guitar-soloing opportunity that comes your way.

\*\*\*\*\*

**GUITAR WORLD** What is the best way for guitarists to begin developing a vocabulary of soloing licks and techniques?

**JOE SATRIANI** I started learning about soloing by trying to play over simple blues shuffle rhythms like this [FIGURE 1] and seeing how slowly I could play different licks. For a while, I couldn't figure out how other guitar players could play slow, simple licks and make them sound really great; this is because at a slow tempo there are many places to play a simple lick over the course of a beat. The question is, "Where"—meaning "when"—"is the right time to do it?"

One approach that helps you find the answer is to play a given lick several different ways [FIGURE 2], in terms of where along the string you position the pick, what notes you "pinch," what notes you don't and so on. And that guided me toward the kinds of picks, strings, guitars and amps that I chose to use, because I was looking for tools that would allow me to speak in that sort of language.

**GW** What gear is in your standard signal chain?

**SATRIANI** These days I'm mostly using three different JS model Ibanez guitars: a JS-1000, JS-1200 and a couple new Chrome Boys. The main difference between the guitars has to do with the pickups: the 1200 has a DiMarzio PAF Joe in the neck position, which is like a PAF Pro with a tighter low end. The other guitars have PAF Pros in the neck and DiMarzio Freds in the bridge, although one of the new Chrome Boys has a new DiMarzio in the bridge that we haven't named yet. I also used a vintage Fender Electric 12-string all over the record.

The strings are D'Addario .009-.042, though I used .011s quite often on the new record, like in the solo

**FIGURE 5** bending to the fifth

Free time  
N.C.(C7)

**FIGURE 6a** articulation

Free time  
N.C.(B7)

**FIGURE 6b**

Free time  
N.C.(B7)

**FIGURE 7**

Freely ♩ = ca. 76  
N.C.(D7)

fingerstyle      let ring slightly

section on "A Cool New Way." And the picks are Planet Waves JS heavies.

Here in the studio, most of the time the guitar is plugged into a Peavey JSX, which is routed to a Palmer speaker simulator. From the Palmer, the signal goes into a Millennia Media Origin, which is a mic preamp that has a parametric EQ, a de-esser and a compressor, plus the ability to go without a transformer or with a transformer, then choose whether that will be solid-state or tube

**GW** One of the earmarks of blues phrasing on the guitar is the use of string bending, a technique that plays a major role in your style.

**SATRIANI** That's true. One technique I like to employ is to add different degrees of bending to a minor third, like this lick in the key of C [FIGURE 3, bar 2, beats one and four, and bar 3, beat one], so that each third is not really a minor or a major third but something in between. Here's an example where I bend the minor third up one half step to a major third [FIGURE 4, bar 1, beat one and bar 2, beat four] and then end the phrase by hammering on from the minor third, E<sub>b</sub>, to the major third, E. And when you finally do hit that "true" major third, it has such an impact as a finishing this statement.

**GW** You'll also often bend the fourth up a half step to the flatted fifth.

**SATRIANI** Right, like this [FIGURE 5]:

the first note in the phrase, F, is the fourth, and I bend it up one half step to G<sub>b</sub> to start the lick, followed by fretted G<sub>b</sub> notes later on. Incorporating bends up to the fifth and the flatted fifth, along with the subtle minor third bends, make the lines sound even a little stranger.

**GW** How do the great blues guitar players like Albert King and B.B. King get such a great "speaking" quality to the lines they play?

**SATRIANI** That has a lot to do with articulation, which is affected by both the way you fret a note and the way you pick it. If you pick every note identically in an absolutely plain way, the succession of notes will not sound very interesting. But if I play licks like these [FIGURES 6a and 6b], I'm picking some of the notes hard and barely touching others in order to get variances in the way the notes "speak" and the way they relate to one another within the melodic line. That's what creates a dynamic sound, and it's what I hear when I listen to all the great old blues solos.

**GW** You also occasionally use hybrid picking, which is a combination of fingerpicking and flatpicking.

**SATRIANI** I like to use as many picking variables as I can: I'll play a lick like this using fingerpicking exclusively [FIGURE 7], but I can also fingerpick only the high E string with my middle finger and flatpick everything else. □





## JOHN PETRUCCI PLAYING SEQUENCES



**I'D LIKE TO SHOW YOU** how to take repeated melodic ideas—sequences—and expand them by moving across octaves in ways other than staying

in one fretboard position. This could be done by ascending diagonally from lower strings in one position to higher strings in higher positions, or descending from lower strings to higher strings in a lower fretboard position. What I like about this approach is that you can cover a lot of range on the fretboard, and it allows you to explore different areas instead of being locked into one position.

The first sequence is just four notes—B, E, F $\sharp$  and G (**FIGURE 1a**). It could represent part of an E minor scale with some cool notes emphasized, or it could outline an Em(add9) chord; it could also be played against a C chord for a Lydian- $\sharp 4$  type of sound.

Let's move this melodic phrase through three octaves, ascending the neck diagonally (**FIGURE 1b**): in each octave, the phrase falls on pairs of adjacent strings. The guitar is laid out perfectly for this type of approach in that, as the riff progresses, you don't have to change fingerings at all.

There are different ways to incorporate this approach into your playing; you can use it as an "area" for moving into different melodic ideas,

**FIGURE 1a**

Em      Em(add9)      C

**FIGURE 1b**

Em

**FIGURE 1c**

Free time

E5      D5      E5



as in this example (FIGURE 1c), where in I play “around” the melodic idea in all three octaves. You can also use it as a long run, linking the lower notes to the higher notes by playing the melodic shape through each octave (FIGURE 1d). At the end of this phrase, I incorporate the notes of a D major triad, D, F# and A, before finishing the line with an E minor pentatonic (E G A B D) idea. It always sounds good to *imply* different chords when playing over a static pedal tone accompaniment.

Now let’s expand the idea by adding one more note, C, to our melodic shape (FIGURE 2a); incorporating hammer-ons and finger slides in the sequence makes it more conducive to playing faster licks, like this (FIGURE 2b). In order to get the line to flow smoothly, I use an alternate-picking approach, but the hammer-ons and slides take the place of some of the pick attacks, which creates a “skipping” feeling. Whether ascending or descending, the picking pattern is down-down-up.

Additionally, you can create faster licks by staying in one spot and *cycling* a melodic pattern repeatedly, using alternate picking, like this (FIGURE 3a). This is fun to do when you want to build a lot of melodic tension. Practice this phrase slowly, making sure each note sounds clearly, and then gradually build up speed while economizing your movements. Then try playing the idea through three octaves (FIGURE 3b). When phrased this way (FIGURES 3b and 3c), it has a 16th-note triplet feel.

I might practice a run like this by playing the first part by itself, and then methodically move on to each successive shape (FIGURE 3d). Next, I might try different combinations (FIGURE 3e).

I also like to apply a concept similar to a modal structure; this approach spans a larger range of the fretboard. Here (FIGURE 4a), I use a rhythmic scheme of 16th-note triplets applied to fragments of the E Aeolian mode (E F# G A B C D) on adjacent pairs of strings, playing three notes per string. In progressing from one shape to the next, pay attention to where your pinkie is at the end of the first group of six notes; you will start the next phrase by fretting the preceding note with the index finger. This run spans three octaves and ends at the beginning of a fourth octave.

When playing this run backward (FIGURE 4b), the opposite fingering takes place: since each six-note group ends with the index finger, the next phrase begins one note higher in the pattern and is fretted with the pinkie.

To me, the best way to utilize this concept is to play passages that start from a low note and ascend, and there are so many different patterns that can emerge. One approach that works well is to play each shape twice in each position, like this (FIGURE 4c). □

**FIGURE 1d**  
Em

**FIGURE 2a**  
Em

**FIGURE 2b**  
Em

**FIGURE 3a**  
Em

gradually increase speed  
□ V □ V □ V □ V (repeat prev. beat)

**FIGURE 3b**  
Em

(alternate pick)

**FIGURE 3c**  
Em

**FIGURE 3d**  
Em

**FIGURE 3e**  
Free time  
Em

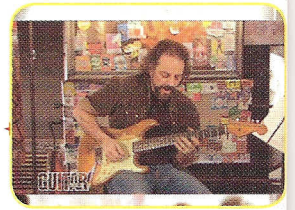
**FIGURE 4a**  
Em

**FIGURE 4b**

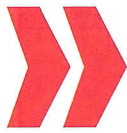
**FIGURE 4c**



# ANDY ALBERT GUITAR HERO TIPS



## FAST E BLUES-SCALE LICKS USING OPEN STRINGS



**JIMI HENDRIX, STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN, Jimmy Page and Johnny Winter** are known for playing super-fast E blues-scale (E G A B $\flat$  B D) licks

that are fingered within the first five frets and incorporate open strings. **FIGURE 1** is in E and is played with very unusual phrasing, in that it moves freely between 32nd notes, 32nd-note quintuplets and 32nd-note sextuplets. The idea is for the lick to sound like a freely cascading sequence of notes. Stevie Ray Vaughan's "Scuttle Buttin'" is based on this technique, as are many of the licks Jimi Hendrix plays on "Voodoo Child (Slight Return)."

## ESSENTIAL ROCK LICKS: MINOR PENTATONIC

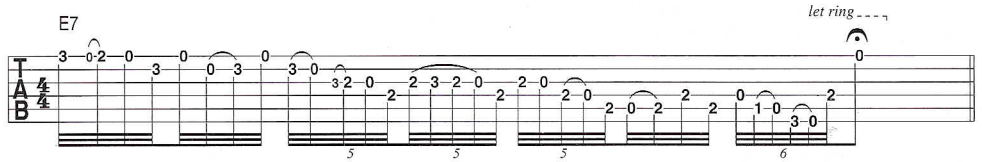
WHAT GOOD WOULD a guitar hero be if he or she couldn't whip out classic minor pentatonic riffs in the style of Jimmy Page, Alvin Lee and Joe Perry? **FIGURES 2a-c** are essential licks that every aspiring guitar hero should be able to perform effortlessly on every area of the fretboard. All three licks are shown in the key of A and based on the A minor pentatonic scale (A C D E G) in fifth position: in **FIGURE 2a**, the fret-hand index finger is barred across the B and high E strings throughout, while the ring (or middle) finger is used to bend the D note at the seventh fret on the G string up one whole step to E. I sweep the pick in a downstroke across the G and B strings for the first two notes, then pick the high E string with an upstroke followed by a downstroke and then a pull-off on the B string, executed with either the ring finger or pinkie.

In **FIGURE 2b**, the fret-hand index finger is barred across the top two strings at the fifth fret, and the lick initiates with a pull-off from the eighth fret to the fifth on the high E string. This is played as a 16th-note triplet and is repeated many times. Jimmy Page ends his "Stairway to Heaven" solo with a similar phrase. **FIGURE 2c** takes the concept a step further by using the technique to gradually descend through the notes of A minor pentatonic.

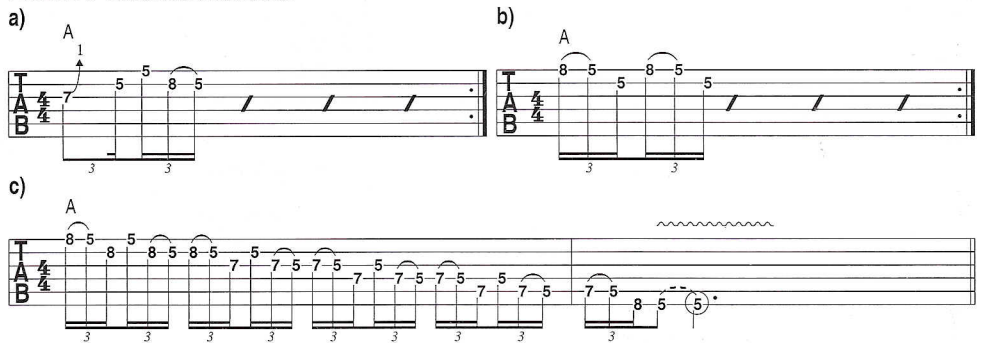
## WHAMMY TRILLS

A "WHAMMY TRILL" combines a trill, which is executed by quickly alternating between two notes, with whammy bar usage, such as depressing, pulling up or shaking the bar. In **FIGURE 3a**, the pitch of a trill between the open G string and

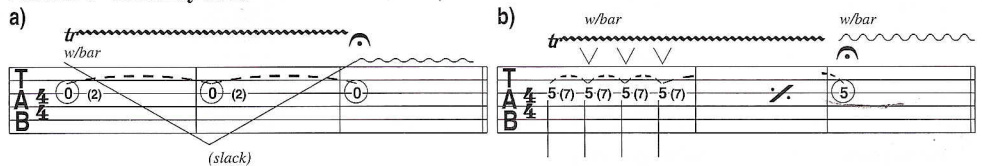
**FIGURE 1** fast E blues scale licks



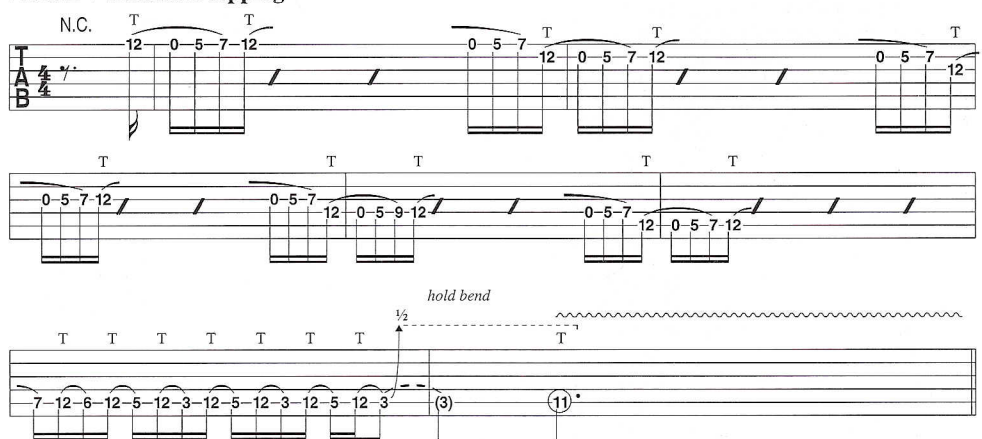
**FIGURE 2** essential rock licks



**FIGURE 3** whammy trills



**FIGURE 4** fretboard tapping



A note at the second fret is altered by depressing the bar and then returning it to equilibrium. **FIGURE 3b** illustrates the same technique using fretted notes.

## FRETBOARD TAPPING

THE FRETBOARD TAPPING virtuosity of Eddie Van Halen and Randy Rhoads turned the rock world on its ear and sent many an aspiring guitar hero back to the woodshed. **FIGURE 4** is a tapping lick based on a symmetrical fretboard pattern that moves from the first string to the fifth, beginning with

a silent tap/pull-off from the high E string's 12th fret to the open string, followed by hammer-ons to the fifth and seventh frets. This "shape" outlines an Esus4 arpeggio (E A B) and is repeated through the bar until the very last 16th note, at which point the pattern shifts over to the B string. The lick ends with repeated pull-offs from a tapped A (fifth string/12th fret) to lower notes on the A string. After the C (third fret) is bent up one half step, a tap is applied to the 11th fret to sound a high A, which is vibratoed with the fret-hand. □



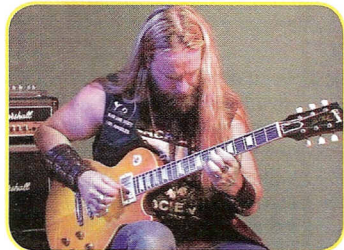
# ZAKK WYLDE SHREDDING



**HE'S NOT EVEN 40 YEARS OLD** yet, but Zakk Wylde has been a guitar hero for nearly two decades. While scores of other guitar-

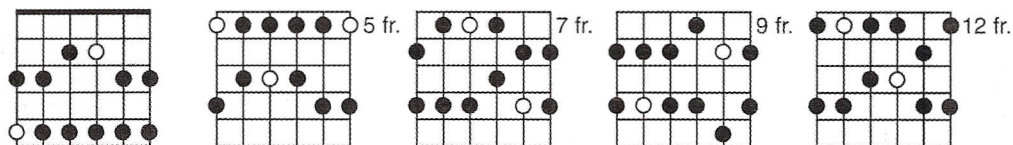
ists have come and gone, Wylde has persevered, and a big reason why is his attitude and approach to his craft. "I still practice every day, and I'm watching John McLaughlin videotapes trying to learn something new every day," says Wylde, sitting in our studio and warming up on his '58 Gibson Les Paul reissue. "If you're doing it for the right reason, that's all that matters. All the guys who got into it because they wanted to get chicks—where are they now? Game over."

Yes, Zakk Wylde knows a thing or two about surviving in this business. Besides his 20 years as Ozzy Osbourne's right-hand man, his latest album, *Shot to Hell* (Roadrunner), is his eighth—and arguably his best—with Black Label Society. In particular, it's his best-sounding BLS album to date. Credit that to Zakk's attitude in the studio (sense a theme here?). "You can be Salvador Dali in the studio," says Wylde. "The studio is forever, so if you want to double a track, double it. Take Def Leppard, for example: say what you want about them, but production-wise, their records are masterpieces! Or look at Led Zeppelin's 'Rain Song': Jimmy Page could've played it with just one guitar, but why? A splash of this, a splash of that, and it sounds amazing."



While he's willing to experiment with multitracking, mic placements, and other studio tricks, one thing that doesn't change is Zakk's basic rig. "If it ain't broke, don't fix it," he says. On the new record, Wylde pulled out the old favorites: his EMG-loaded Gibson Les Paul Customs—particularly the Rebel and his Bullseye—and his Jackson Rhoads Vs. There were a couple of surprises, though. "For the clean parts, I used a Roland JC-

**FIGURES 1a-e** Practice using either your ring or pinky finger to cover the three-fret stretches.



**FIGURE 2** Use your ring finger on the slide down to the 7th fret on beat 3 of the third bar.

Freely

**FIGURE 3** Use a metronome to help you perform the position shifts in time. Start slowly, then gradually increase the tempo.

Moderately 8va -----

**FIGURES 4a and 4b** Use your pick to attack the lowest note of each chord, with your ring finger hitting the top note and your middle finger handling the middle note of the chord.

Fast

w/ pick & fingers







# STEVE VAI "FREAK SHOW EXCESS"



**IN THIS LESSON**, I'm going to explore my over-the-top guitar playing on "Freak Show Excess," one of the tracks from my new record, *Real Illusions: Reflections*.

This song grew from my enjoyment of Bulgarian wedding music. If you listen to this music, you'll find the players are *completely* out of their minds. One band I enjoy in particular is called Ivo Papasov & His Bulgarian Wedding Band. The musicians' frame of mind with respect to playing, using time signatures, and creating melodies and phrasing them is completely foreign to most Western musicians. These guys can play comfortably in odd time signatures because, to them, the rhythms aren't unusual. They're also comfortable playing in different and unusual modes that bear no resemblance at all to Western music. And, importantly, the way they make the notes sound—their *articulation*, especially on the guitar—is different from what many of us would consider "normal."

Studying this music, I was inspired to apply some of these unusual approaches to the guitar. The result is "Freak Show Excess." The tune itself is a seven-minute *fiasco*, so I'm going to dissect the track to reveal elements that are interesting and unique to my style of music.

The song begins with a percussion-driven intro, over which I play a sitar-like single-note lick. I like to make loops from short melodic/percussive figures like this one and improvise over them to create melodic themes. For this song, I improvised over the intro and came up with parts like the one in **FIGURE 1**. You can discover all kinds of new things by playing freely over a vamp like this one.

The main part of the song follows the intro and introduces the initial melody. To create this melody, I focused intently on the *phrasing*. Phrasing is the way in which a melody is presented, and it is dictated by how the melody is performed on the given instrument. As I mentioned earlier, phrasing is a major element in the unique sound of this type of Bulgarian music.

To me, the phrasing of this melody is one of the most interesting things about it. We all know guitar players like to shred and play scales up and down the neck as fast as possible, for hours on end.

**FIGURE 1**

Moderately ♩ = 132

The musical notation for Figure 1 is presented in four systems, each with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The notation includes fret numbers (e.g., 7, 8, 10, 12, 14) and rhythmic values (e.g., 3, 1/2, 2/2, 1, 3, 1, 1/1, 1, 1, 3, 1, 3, 1). The notation is a mix of single notes and chords, with some notes marked with an asterisk (\*). The first system is labeled 'A' and 'Moderately ♩ = 132'. The notation is a mix of single notes and chords, with some notes marked with an asterisk (\*). The first system is labeled 'A' and 'Moderately ♩ = 132'. The notation is a mix of single notes and chords, with some notes marked with an asterisk (\*). The first system is labeled 'A' and 'Moderately ♩ = 132'.





While that's a great practice to get into, it's different than making a melodic idea speak with carefully devised articulation. I spent a great deal of time making this melodic phrase "fit" in my fingers, and getting every nuance—every slide, every hammer-on, every pull-off—in place so I could phrase this melody the way I wanted it to sound.

To me, phrasings like these are not natural on the guitar; you have to work to make them sound just right. But this type of experimentation will lead to new sounds and ideas, and after a while you'll become inspired to find new ways to phrase your melodic ideas.

As I stated earlier, "Freak Show Excess" is an ode to my fascination with the intricacies of Bulgarian wedding music. The level of virtuosity required to play this type of music is truly extraordinary, and listening to it has inspired me immensely. The way these musicians approach playing music—in regard to their masterful articulation, use of odd meters, and creation and phrasing of complex melodic themes—has taught me a great deal about pushing the limits of my own creativity.

There's a section in "Freak Show Excess," beginning at 1:28, in which a clean electric guitar comes in with a single-note riff that implies a D minor tonal center and is very characteristic of Bulgarian wedding music. The riff is in 7/16 time, which is an unusual meter in Western music. I use hammer-ons and pull-offs throughout to make the riff sound fluid and roll nicely off the fingers. Any picked notes are articulated with a downstroke. If one were to pick every single note in the line, it would sound less natural and more mechanical, which is not the desired effect. Once you get a groove going with this riff, it will start to sound like music rather than a series of hammer-ons and pull-offs played in an odd meter.

At 1:35, I begin a guitar solo over this repeating line, and its "feel" changes to 7/8. When playing in an odd meter such as this, I strive to make the rhythm sound smooth and natural; I like the music to flow effortlessly. To accomplish this, familiarize yourself with odd meters and practice them to the point that they become second nature to you. If you do this, they will sound completely natural to the audience.

Soloing over an odd-meter vamp like this also requires a different approach and feel than playing in an even meter, such as 4/4. You could solo as if the vamp were in 4/4 and let the notes fall where they may, but that doesn't really make the most of the musical situation. I like to set up a vamp in an odd meter so I can work out different soloing ideas and become accustomed to playing freely over the odd meter, so that it won't sound as if I'm thinking about how

FIGURE 2 soloing in 7/8

to make the phrases fit. The goal is for the phrasing to sound natural, as opposed to regimented and restricted by the confines of the time signature. **FIGURE 2** shows an improvised example of how I would approach soloing over this kind of vamp in 7/8 meter. Notice how I play "over the bar line" throughout; in other words, I do not begin each phrase on the downbeat of each bar (on "one") or end phrases at the end of each bar. The melodic phrases float freely through and around the meter, conveying a "liquid," natural-sounding feel. I like to experiment by playing over vamps like this until I come up with some ideas, and then I'll try to develop those ideas.

For the solo I played on the record, I made a conscious effort to employ Bulgarian-sounding, melodic phrasing devices, such as quick, ornamental half-step finger slides and bends. It takes a bit of time and patience to get a grip on applying these very unusual phrasing techniques to your playing, so start with simple

ideas before moving on to longer and more complex lines.

Once you've gotten the physical techniques down, try combining and incorporating these types of unusual phrases and melodies into longer ideas; that's where the fun really begins. As you listen to the many other weird, out-of-control-sounding sections in this tune, you'll hear similar peculiar types of phrases and melodies.

It's okay if you immediately gravitate toward the things you're most comfortable with. But by venturing outside of the box—by seeking out unusual ways to approach your music—you can grow as a player. As you become inspired to try new and different ideas on your instrument, you'll discover ways to incorporate them into your playing. Eventually, these new approaches will feel normal and become second nature to you while they retain their unique character. You must be willing to listen for those things and afford yourself the time and patience to work them out on your instrument. □







hand, which makes your rhythm part sounds very powerful.

**FRUSCIANTE** I've never really thought much about how I play, but now that you've mentioned it, I think the sound has more to do with which strings the fretting hand allows to ring clearly and which ones are blocked. By muting certain strings with my fretting hand, I can strike all of them freely with the pick and still have control over the notes that are heard. If I don't want a certain note to ring, I just loosen my grip on that string slightly without taking the finger completely off the string. At this point, this technique has become second nature to me, and I think it's a great one for guitarists to learn to use.

**GW** Another defining element of your style is your use of hard, staccato funk rhythm guitar riffs [*à la James Brown guitarists "Chank" Nolen and "Catfish" Collins*] on songs like "Give It Away" and "Can't Stop" [*from By the Way*].

**FRUSCIANTE** Here's an example [FIGURE 1]. When playing in this style, I get a real percussive, funky sound by barely pressing down on the strings. The idea with James Brown's music is to make the guitar more like a time-keeping percussion instrument. That kind of playing places the emphasis on being very precise with the picking hand and staying deep in the groove. On a Strat, it's also good to use the bridge pickup in order to get a sharper sound and attack.

**GW** On "Around the World" [*from Californication*], you use a similar approach but play single-note riffs instead of chords.

**FRUSCIANTE** Right. Here's an example of playing in kind of that style [FIGURE 2]. It's all about getting your rhythmic feel really tight, like a machine, and picking the string as hard as possible without moving the picking hand around too much. I made up the riff to "Around the World" while playing along with a Beastie Boys song, and when I took it to Flea and Chad they played something behind it that was completely different from the Beastie Boys, and that turned my guitar part into something different again.

**GW** Another signature element of your style is the use of two-note, chord/melody-type parts, whereby you'll pick bass notes on a low string with your thumb while fingerpicking a syncopated melodic figure above it on higher strings. Two good examples are the main licks in "Scar Tissue" and "Murderers" [*from Frusciante's solo album To Record Only Water for Ten Days*].

**FRUSCIANTE** I've noticed examples of that technique in different styles of music from different eras, but I was mainly influenced in that way by Eric

**FIGURE 2 Single-note funk**

Moderately Slow ♩ = 84  
N.C.(G7#9)  
pick hard . . . . . sim. > ~~~

**FIGURE 3 two-note chord/melody idea**

Moderately Slow ♩ = 82  
F#m C#m D A F#m C#m D(#11)  
let ring throughout  
fingerstyle ~~~

**FIGURE 4 extended two-note chord melody improvisation**

Moderately Slow ♩ = 82  
F#m C#m D  
let ring throughout  
fingerstyle ~~~



Avery's bass playing in Jane's Addiction. I first made that a part of my style in 1991 when I was influenced by his bass lines on "Summertime Rolls" and "I Would for You." So I took that idea and did my own thing with it, like this [FIGURE 3]. The idea is that when you subtract all of the space between the lowest and highest notes it creates space and dimension, because now you have a high part and a low part—two distinct things—instead of just playing a chord, which is one thing. It was a good way to play acoustic guitar and improvise with myself, because I could send my head in two directions at once.

Here's an example of improvising with this technique [FIGURE 4]. You can sit there and have fun with yourself, acting as the guitar player and bass player at the same time.

**GW** You also have a distinct approach to soloing in that you usually place the emphasis on melody over any flashy technical playing.

**FRUSCIANTE** Well, you can't forget that it's all about playing music. It's not about what you can show people you can do with a piece of wood with strings on it; the idea is to make sounds that are good, and in music, that has everything to do with the relationships between the different elements. If I'm sitting at home studying a guitar solo, it's not enough to learn the solo; I have to make sure I understand the relationship between the notes in the solo and the chords or the bass line that's played behind it. The fact that I take that approach is apparent in my soloing because I'm often absorbed in what the bass and the drums are doing and am thinking about trying to create dimension in relationship to that. I'm not thinking, Oh, good—they're giving me a blank canvas that I can go crazy over. It's more about the constant interaction with your fellow musicians.

On the new album, *Stadium Arcadium*, it was very important to me to do a lot of speeding up and slowing down within my solo phrases. A lot of people play in a very straight up-and-down manner, as if they have to adhere to some sort of invisible 16th-note grid. It's like they're in jail: they don't go outside of it; they don't play slower or faster and speed up or slow down.

The idea for me, especially on this record, was to go outside of that and not pay any attention to strict rhythms at all. Even when I'm playing things that sit right on the 16th notes, I try to lay back or push forward on the beat, and if I'm doubling a guitar part, I try not to double the phrasing exactly. On "Dani California," for example, I double some parts where, in one speaker, the part is right on the beat, while the overdub in the other

**FIGURE 5** soloing: stretching and compressing time

Free time ♩ = ca. 100  
N.C.(D)  
(w/wah)

The tablature for Figure 5 is written on a six-string guitar staff with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. It includes various fret numbers (e.g., 10, 12, 13, 14, 15) and techniques such as triplets (indicated by a '3' under a group of notes), bends (indicated by a curved arrow and a number like 1/2 or 1), and a 'w/wah' section. The piece is in a non-chordal (N.C.) mode with a D root. The tempo is marked as 'Free time' with a quarter note equal to approximately 100 beats per minute. The notation includes a 'w/wah' section and a 'w/bar' section with a '-3 1/2 -1' marking. The piece concludes with a 5/4 time signature change.

**FIGURE 6**

Free time  
N.C.(D)  
w/wah

The tablature for Figure 6 is written on a six-string guitar staff with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. It includes various fret numbers (e.g., 10, 12, 13) and techniques such as triplets (indicated by a '3' under a group of notes) and a 'w/wah' section. The piece is in a non-chordal (N.C.) mode with a D root. The tempo is marked as 'Free time'. The notation includes a 'w/wah' section and a 'slower' section indicated by a dashed line. The piece concludes with a 5/4 time signature change.

speaker is a laid-back version of that, which creates a cool stereo effect.

Chad and Flea did a lot of experimentation with me in the studio, and I tried to solo in a style wherein the guitar is "talking" over the music, finding its own groove other than what the bass and drums are laying down.

Here's an example of soloing

in this way [FIGURE 5]. Or like this [FIGURE 6]. I'm just trying to bend and twist the time around, stretching time by slowing down and compressing it by speeding up, and playing games with it all of the time. It's about trying to bend the fabric of reality, because for me it's easier to do that with a guitar than it is to do when talking to someone in conversation. □



# "THE ART OF SHREDDING" ROUNDTABLE

LAMB OF GOD'S **MARK MORTON** & **WILLIE ADLER** ★ MEGADETH'S **DAVE MUSTAINE** & **GLEN DROVER**  
 TRIVIUM'S **MATT HEAFY** & **COREY BEAULIEU** ★ ARCH ENEMY'S **MICHAEL AMOTT** & **FREDRIK ÅKESSON**



**THE EIGHTIES WERE A** time of gloriously unashamed soloing and shredding excess. The metal world was dominated by players who were

only too happy to stretch out in virtuoso efforts that not only took guitar playing to new realms but also inspired others to reach for a higher level of musicianship.

Then came the Nineties, a decade that was, for the most part, a lead-deprived wasteland. While the likes of Kirk Hammett, Zakk Wylde, Joe Satriani, Steve Vai, Marty Friedman, Dave Mustaine and Zakk Wylde were fighting to keep the sacred art of shred alive, most everyone else was doing their best to bury it. *Not* playing lead guitar became a badge of honor.

In truth, the Nineties were such a bad time for guitar solos that just one true metal guitar hero emerged in that decade: Dimebag Darrell. At an Ozzfest several years ago, Zakk Wylde surveyed the names of bands on the tour and, turning to his pal Dime, said, "It looks like you and me are the only ones on this bill that can safely go from the low E string to the high E and back again, bro." His comment speaks volumes about the state of shred in the post-Eighties music world.

Rhythm chops suffered in the Nineties, as well, as many bands opted for the one-fingered simplicity of drop-D tunings. While simple riffs make up the majority of metal's most memorable, crushing motifs—from "Smoke on the Water" and "Paranoid" to "Walk" and "Man in the Box"—it's nice to come across a challenging riff from time to time. Well, my friends, we're glad to say that thanks to a new breed of bands—including Arch Enemy, Lamb of God, Trivium, Nevermore, Children of Bodom, Dragonforce, Shadows Fall, Mastodon, Opeth and Avenged Sevenfold—as well as seminal metal icons like Slayer and Megadeth, shredding is very much alive and kicking ass in 2007.

In this *Guitar World* exclusive, we've gathered together Dave Mustaine and his Megadeth coguitarist, Glen Drover, Lamb of God's Mark Morton and Willie Adler, Arch Enemy's Michael Amott and Fredrik Åkesson, and Trivium's Matt Heafy and Corey Beaulieu to teach you the essential skills of modern shred. So grab your guitar and get ready for the ultimate lesson in shredding—21st century style.

## MODERN RHYTHM METHODS

**ALL THE GUITARISTS** involved in this lesson have one thing in common: they are passionate and dedicated players who write great riffs, many of which are

**FIGURE 1** Mark Morton: "The Hangover Riff" played "old-school style"  
 drop-D tuning (low to high: D A D G B E)

**FIGURE 2** Mark Morton: "The Hangover Riff" played "contemporary style"  
 drop-D tuning (low to high: D A D G B E)

**FIGURE 3** Dave Mustaine

**FIGURE 4** Dave Mustaine: "spider chord" fingering

**FIGURE 5** Dave Mustaine: regular fingering

**FIGURE 6** Willie Adler

\*Use index finger second and fourth times.

quite challenging to play. In fact, Arch Enemy's Michael Amott described this type of playing as "sport metal."

"Michael's right: it is sport metal," says Willie Adler. "There's a real finesse to a lot of the riffs, and they're physically

challenging every time you play them. With the new songs we're playing from *Sacramento*, I've got to warm up for at least an hour before we go onstage."

We asked Adler's co-axman, the always eloquent Mark Morton, to explain



some of the rhythm playing differences between metal's "old-school" and "nu-school." Despite a brutal hangover, Morton not only stepped up to the plate but also came up with "the hangover riff" to illustrate his point.

"Here's an example of what I would consider more of a late-Eighties, Bay Area-thrash take on the riff. And here's a more contemporary style of doing the same riff," Morton says as he performs **FIGURE 1** then **FIGURE 2**. "As you can see, they're the same pattern, the same note choices, but with a different and faster right-hand cadence, giving it a more modern, 'deathy' feel." As you can see and hear, the "right hand cadences" Morton is referring to involve "gallop" and "reverse gallop" picking patterns plus double picking a lot of the notes.

We asked all our guest teachers to name a few albums that they consider vital references to great metal rhythm work. In addition to Metallica's seminal *Master of Puppets* and Pantera's *Vulgar Display of Power*, Megadeth's classic *Rust in Peace* topped the tally. Says Amott, "That album definitely set the bar pretty high for music like this. It's full of 'Hall of Fame' riffs."

Glen Drover, Megadeth's lead guitarist, has a pretty challenging role—not only does he have to perform leads by his virtuoso predecessors Chris Poland and Marty Friedman; he also has to double Mustaine's vast repertoire of "Hall of Fame" riffs. "Some of the rhythm patterns are equally demanding to play as the solos," says Drover. "Take a song like 'Holy Wars'—it's incredibly busy, and there's so much stuff in there that you've really got to be on top of your game."

Mustaine is the master of rhythmic nuance. "One thing I'll often do with my rhythm playing is slide into a chord," the guitarist says as he plays **FIGURE 3**. "That makes the chords really growl, like in 'Ashes in My Mouth.'" Another must-know Mustaine technique is his "spider finger" chord-grabbing technique, which he demonstrates in **FIGURE 4**. "Alternating pairs of fingers like this is definitely easier than having to move your entire hand back and forth [see **FIGURE 5**]. If you have to move your hand, your timing is gonna be off and there will be string noise. Plus, you'll be relying too much on guesswork."

Like all metal masters, Mustaine uses *palm muting* (P.M.) to great effect. Palm muting is the technique of rolling the fleshy part of your palm forward from the bridge to dampen the strings. But as Mustaine points out, there is another way to stop notes from ringing, and you can do it with your pick. "So many people think picking is just about moving the pick up and down," he says. "But you've also got to think about how to kill the string's vibration to give the line articulation. On a riff like the one from 'Hanger 18,' I'm not really palm-muting the D string with my right hand; I do it all with pick articulation."

Mustaine explains that this involves playing in a strict staccato fashion. "The

**FIGURE 7 Willie Adler**  
drop-D tuning (low to high: D A D G B E)

**FIGURE 8 Willie Adler**  
drop-D tuning

**FIGURE 9 Willie Adler**  
drop-D tuning

**FIGURE 10 Matt Heafy**

**FIGURE 11 Corey Beaulieu**

**FIGURE 12 Fredrik Akesson**







or employ the necessary rules.

"Most guitarists have a general idea of how to approximate the technique, but only a few do it correctly," Malmsteen says. "The rest of them let the notes ring too long or try to play too fast and sacrifice precision and clarity. Either way, it sounds like shit." As the guitarist explains, the only way to correct these errors is to separate the right- and left-hand components of sweep picking, master them separately and then coordinate them with one another.

To get a feel for the right-hand picking technique, says Yngwie, "You have to let the pick 'fall' from string to string, as if you were strumming a chord. It's important that you don't separate the pick strokes. When executing an upward sweep, drag the pick upward over the strings in one fluid motion. Again, it's imperative that you don't use individual upstrokes."

The fret-hand component is equally important. "You need to mute each string with the fret-hand immediately after picking it by lightly lifting or 'rolling' your fretting finger to keep the notes from 'bleeding' into one another and sounding like a strummed chord."

Heeding Yngwie's words, work on **FIGURE 19**, a three-string A minor arpeggio from Trivium's Matt Heafy. Once you've mastered that, check out the more challenging five-string version he offers in **FIGURE 20**. As Heafy says, "It's all a matter of starting them off really slow and working your way up." When you have those under your belt, try **FIGURE 21**, Fredrik Akesson's slippery Bm7<sup>b</sup>5 diminished arpeggio (B D F A) that continually goes back on itself and repeats.

## LEGATO LEADS

"LEGATO" IS A fancy Italian musical term for "smooth." For shred guitarists, playing legato requires using numerous hammer-on and pull-off combinations to make lines sound as smooth as possible.

When pulling off, pull the string slightly in toward the palm. This will help keep the string vibrating and prevent the note from dying. When you're ready, check out the molten-lava example from Glen Drover in the key of F<sup>♯</sup> minor shown in **FIGURE 22** and the demented, diminished-flavored **FIGURE 24**, a lick inspired by what Glen calls the "Randy Rhoads diminished run" (**FIGURE 23**) And don't be afraid to break these phrases into "bite-size chunks" and chew them slowly.

## PENTATONIC POWER

WITH SWEEP ARPEGGIOS, diminished licks and Hungarian scales being tossed about, let's not forget the almighty minor pentatonic and blues scales. Sure, they're simple and ubiquitous, but these five- and six-note scales are responsible for more great metal riffs and leads than all other scales combined. Sometimes, the best way to break up all the sweep-picking, legato and speed-picked madness is with a burst of pentatonic purity or ballsy blues. Check out Michael Amott's simple

**FIGURE 22** Glen Drover

**FIGURE 23** Glen Drover: "Randy Rhoads diminished run"

**FIGURE 24** Glen Drover

**FIGURE 25** Michael Amott  
Gtr. tuned down two whole steps  
(low to high: C F B<sup>b</sup> E<sup>b</sup> G C)

**FIGURE 26** Michael Amott

**FIGURE 27** Dave Mustaine

but effective E minor blues scale (E G A B<sup>b</sup> B D) wide-stretch burst in **FIGURE 25**. As he correctly points out, it's merely an extension of the more common E minor pentatonic (E G A B D) cliché shown in the first half of **FIGURE 26**.

The undeniable impact of pentatonic and blues scales is illustrated perfectly in **FIGURE 27**, a brilliant blast from Dave

Mustaine. Similar to a lead he plays in "Holy Wars," this is a textbook example of "less is more." As he points out, his wide-stretch, six-bar chromatic climb is made even more climactic by the fact that there's an "almost subliminal overtone from the high E string because that string is also fretted while I'm fretting the G and B strings." □



# SLASH "THE CAT IN THE HAT" COLUMNS



January '08



**IN THIS MONTH'S** column I'd like to talk about my pre-show warm-up routine. Making sure I'm properly prepared

to play before I go onstage helps me turn in a solid and convincing performance. This is especially true if I have to play something really fast in one of the first few songs, because it helps me play the notes cleanly and at the proper speed. Prepping before a show loosens me up, increases my coordination and my control over my instrument, and raises my confidence so that the guitar doesn't feel like a foreign object in my hands.

I usually warm up for 30 to 60 minutes before a gig. While my comfort level onstage is determined by a lot of things, such as the sound in the room and the vibe of the venue and crowd, everything seems to fall together under any circumstances when I'm relaxed and ready to play.

Having said that, I can't just sit in the dressing room and mindlessly practice scales or technique as a way of warming up. Those things have nothing to do with helping me get ready for a show. Besides, playing scales just doesn't work for me, because I get distracted quickly. I'm much better off warming up with a riff or something that actually engages me.

So most of the time, I'll noodle around with a new riff I'm working on or take an idea and expand on it. Other times I'll try to play a lick that I hear in my head. Whatever I do, it has to be musically worthwhile. There isn't one particular pattern or technique that I focus on every time, since my mindset on any given day is pretty different. I like playing more than practicing, so if I can find something to play that is a good warm-up and also entertaining to me, that's what I'll go with.

For example, lately I've been warming up with a run I play at the end of "Do It for the Kids," from Velvet Revolver's *Contraband*. **FIGURE 1** is along the lines of the run I'm talking about. I'm not exactly sure what scale it's based on [*D harmonic minor* (*D E*

FIGURE 1

FIGURE 2

*F G A B♭ C♯*]), but it's got an East Indian kind of vibe and fits the song really well. When I play it fast I'll use a lot of pull-offs and only pick every third or fourth note, but when I feel up to the task or am practicing it slowly, I'll try to pick every note. Generally, I don't like a run like this to have a staccato pick attack on every single note. It sounds good if it's done precisely, but I'm not the best picker in the world, and I know my limitations, so if I don't think I can smoothly pick every note, I'll use hammer-ons and pull-offs. Having said that, if I practice picking every note of the run for a couple of minutes, my picking tends to become smoother and more precise, and that gives me an incentive and goal to shoot for.

Although I generally find running scales boring because there's no emotional content, I'll do it occasionally, for lack of anything better to do. **FIGURE 2** is a technically challenging two-octave chromatic scale exercise I came up with to keep both hands busy. If I can



think of something more creative to do, I will, but in a pinch, I'll fall back on a scale exercise like this one.

Another thing I've realized is that it's important to spend a few minutes before a show standing up while you play, because when you sit down, your posture is completely different. The guitar is at a different height relative to your hands and body when you're sitting, and so you have to adjust once you get out onstage, especially if you perform with your guitar hanging low, like I do. □







# March '08

**I'M WRITING THIS** column the day before the final date of Velvet Revolver's tour with Alice in Chains. The show was originally supposed to take place at the end of October but it got postponed due to the wildfires in Southern California. We're going to include "American Man" in the set, which we've never played live before. We rehearsed it last night, and it sounded good, so we're going to throw that in between "Big Machine" and "Vaseline."

For this month's column, I'd like to talk about some of the scales I use—or, as the case may be, don't use. You can sit around and practice scales all day long, but if you don't—or can't—in some way apply them to music, then they're of no real use. I always find that whenever I start to play something that sounds like a real song, I tend to take off and forget all about scales.

I have a lot of guitarist friends who are what you might call "technically evolved," and are amazing at incorporating scales into their playing. But that's just not me. One of these friends, Steve Lukather, is effectively my technical guitar mentor. Steve's always giving me lessons and tips on how to use different scales in weird positions and over various chords. He knows all these tricks about starting on different notes and using certain scales in certain keys. As fascinating as that stuff is, I have a hard time applying it because melodically it doesn't appeal to me. I just can't seem to play that technical stuff with any real feeling or emotion. Ultimately, the most important thing for me is to make sure what I play has some sort of melodic significance. For that reason, in any given song there are only a couple of different types of scales that work for me.

Obviously, my main thing is the rock sound, which revolves around what I think is the simplest scale, the minor pentatonic. I'll play this scale in different positions up and down the neck. Let's say, for example, I'm playing over a I-IV-V progression in C (C-F-G).

**FIGURES 1-4** show four different positions, or "boxes," of the very basic C minor rock scale [C E $\flat$  F G B $\flat$ ]. I would use as a framework to build a lead around. The other fairly standard scale you can use is the major pentatonic (**FIGURE 5**).

FIGURE 1

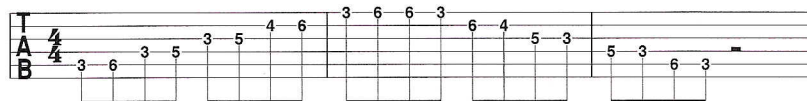


FIGURE 2

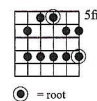
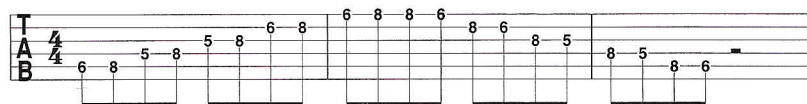


FIGURE 3

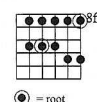
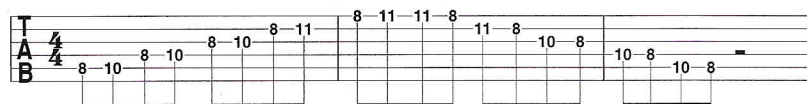


FIGURE 4

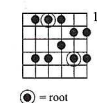
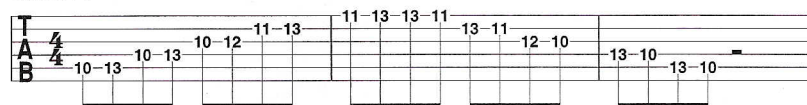


FIGURE 5

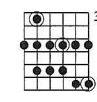
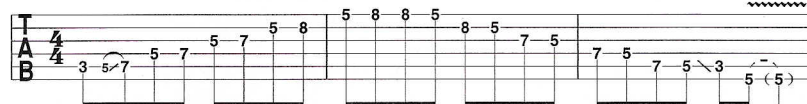
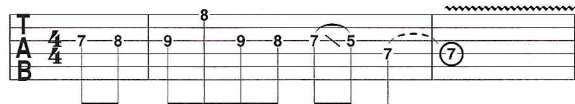


FIGURE 6



FIGURE 7



You can use any one of these positions or boxes at any given time, and you can also throw in passing tones or mix up the minor and major notes. The lick in **FIGURE 6** is a good example of a major run that ends on the minor seventh note [B $\flat$ ], while **FIGURE 7** is major with a minor third [E $\flat$ ] thrown

in as a passing tone, which gives the lick a chromatic flavor. I would like to add, however, that it's also important to think outside the scale box. There are countless combinations of notes on the neck of your guitar, so the possibilities are virtually endless. Basically, whatever sounds good "works" for me, so use the boxes or shapes as a rough framework and let your ears dictate what other notes also work within the context of a particular song.

As you can see in **FIGURES 5-7**, I invariably transition between these different positions by going up or down a single string—kind of like "Chutes and Ladders." If you're just getting into playing rock lead guitar and are interested in learning some of the really basic but useful minor and major rock scale positions, check out Eric Clapton's playing. He uses them very well and usually at a speed you can follow! Clapton has used these scale patterns throughout his career, but the period I'm into mostly is his work with Cream and Derek and the Dominos. Cream's *Disraeli Gears* is a great album for that. □







» FIGURE 5a "The second most important thing is to learn your I and V [Gibbons is referring to playing sixth intervals—Ed.]. In the key of A, it sounds like this"

Moderately (♩ =  $\overset{\frown}{\underset{\frown}{\text{J}}}$ )

w/ pick & fingers etc.

» FIGURE 5b "Here's another example of that incorporated into a rhythm pattern."

Moderately (♩ =  $\overset{\frown}{\underset{\frown}{\text{J}}}$ )

A

w/ pick & fingers etc.

» FIGURE 6 "Now, one of my favorite cornerstone licks of the blues comes from B.B. King, and that is sliding up to the I [root], from the I. That's my all-time favorite—the I on I!"

Freely

etc.

» FIGURE 7 "Now, we're starting to get into the real, real finite side of things with harmonics. You don't necessarily have to use a pick, either [plays pinch harmonics with his pick-hand fingers]"

Freely

P.H. -----| P.H. -----|

1/4

etc.



# STEVE MORSE "MORSE CODE" COLUMN



**IN THIS LESSON**, I'm going to demonstrate some tasteful ways to incorporate scale sequences into improvised guitar solos

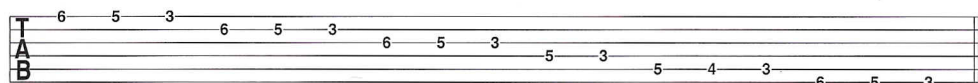
and create compelling, memorable solo lines that strike a satisfying balance between slow or short phrases with longer or faster ones.

One surefire way to improve one's dexterity and speed is to routinely practice playing specific scales in ascending or descending groups of three, four, five or six notes (or more). A problem arises, however, when a guitarist repeats these sequences verbatim when soloing and ends up sounding more like he's practicing than playing something that should ideally sound spontaneous, inspired and conversational.

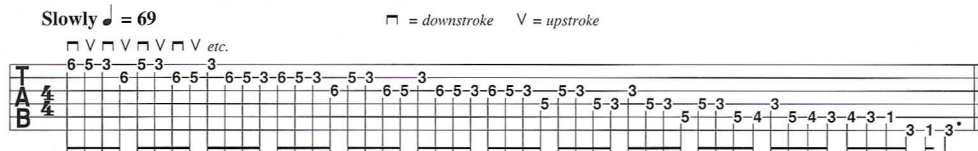
**FIGURE 1** illustrates what I call the G "hybrid" scale: G A B $\flat$  C D $\flat$  D E F. It's essentially a combination of the G minor blues scale (G B $\flat$  C D $\flat$  D F) and the G Dorian mode (G A B $\flat$  C D E F). I specifically chose this group of notes because, as a unit, they fall very comfortably on the neck. **FIGURE 2a** Shows this scale played in a descending pattern of four-note groups. Notice that I alternate (down-up-down-up) pick the entire passage. Once you've gotten it under your fingers, gradually increase the tempo until you can play it fast while maintaining clarity in your articulation. **FIGURE 2b** illustrates a similar sequence, with a slight variation at the end, played at a moderately fast tempo.

Now let's break the sequence into smaller "bites" and use them to build solo phrases. In **FIGURE 3**, the first phrase begins with two descending four-note groups and ends with a sustained bend; in bar 2 this same approach is applied to a different segment of the scale. These short phrases are then balanced against the longer descending scale sequence that goes across bars 3 and 4. To me, the contrast and melodic development that is achieved with this approach is much more interesting and

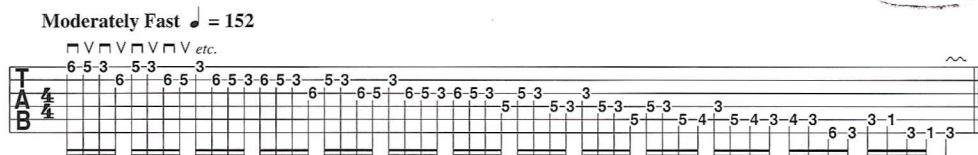
**FIGURE 1** G "hybrid" scale, descending



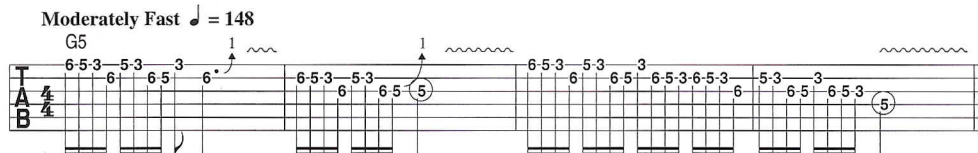
**FIGURE 2a** four-note groups, descending



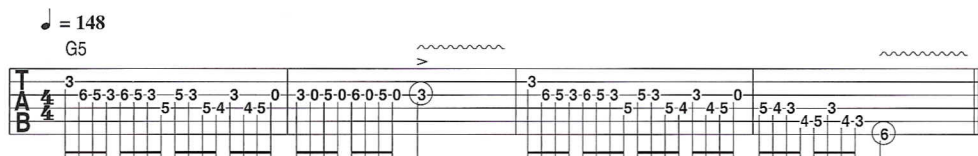
**FIGURE 2b**



**FIGURE 3**



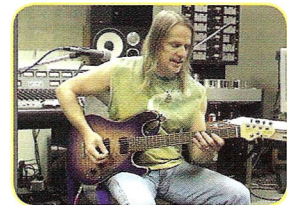
**FIGURE 4**




engaging than simply playing fast, continuous scale sequences.

A great way to create variation within a scale pattern is to add a *passing tone*—any note that's outside of the scale—and quickly *resolve* it to a scale tone. In **FIGURE 4**, I add one note that falls outside the G hybrid scale, F $\sharp$ , in order to create a solo phrase that's melodically smooth and interesting. Notice also that I use the open G string, which has a different timbre than the fretted notes.

It's beneficial to practice technique, scales and theory and memorize patterns and passages, but it's ultimately more important to learn how to create musically satisfying phrases using the materials one has acquired. Anytime you learn a new riff or scale, try breaking it into bits and spinning new phrases out of them. The goal is to make music out of what we hear in our minds. Use scales to make melodies, and keep in mind that musical phrases always have an end.  $\square$

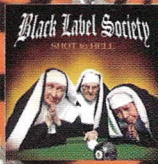




A photograph of Zakk Wylde, a heavy metal guitarist, sitting and playing two Epiphone guitars. He has a long beard and is wearing a plaid vest over a white tank top, a black bandana with a skull logo, and black wristbands. He is holding a tiger-stripe Les Paul guitar in his right hand and a bullseye Les Paul guitar in his left hand. The background is a dark, textured wall with a skull and the words 'Black Label Society' visible. The Epiphone logo is on the headstocks of the guitars.

"Since the 1800's till the present day, Epiphone has made kickass instruments. Play Epiphone and play a part of history."  
Zakk Wylde

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Check out Black Label Society and Zakk on their latest Roadrunner records release, *Shot To Hell*. Also visit: [www.zakkwylde.com](http://www.zakkwylde.com)

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