# Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises Treble Clef

Exercises for developing technique and maintaining fluency

#### Introduction

Section I – C minor

Section 2 – F minor

Section 3 – Bb minor

Section 4 – Eb minor

Section 5 – Ab minor

Section 6 – C# minor

Section 7 – F# minor

Section 8 – B minor

Section 9 – E minor

Section 10 – A minor

Section II – D minor

Section 12 G minor

Section 13 Chord Charts - Suggested harmonies for scale practice

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### Introduction

The minor pentatonic, along with the blues scale, are quite likely the most used (and abused) scales in the jazz education lexicon. So why produce a book of exercises intended to develop minor pentatonic facility? It is my contention that the minor pentatonic is not overused but rather is underused effectively. The minor pentatonic is inherently ambiguous in the harmony it sounds having no tritone present and working with minimal clashes over multiple chords. It has a long-standing tradition of use as a blues progression staple. It is an invaluable tool for teaching melodic shape and phrasing. If you think of the minor pentatonic as a high-powered sports car, driven only on Sundays by the proverbial "little old lady" to church, you get the idea. The intent of these exercises is to get that car out on the Autobahn and see what it can really do.

The exercises are arranged by key moving in fourths. You may wish to find your own order for working on them. Practicing a key a day is highly recommended. Key signatures are included as the parallel major to the minor pentatonic. (ex. F minor pentatonic = key signature of F major) This is intentional and relates to how I suggest students learn scales and chord nomenclature. Additionally, I use a Bb minor pentatonic on Bb blues progressions all the time and have never seen a Bb blues with a key signature of five flats. In terms of real world applications, it did not make sense to use minor key signatures.

I highly recommend practicing with somebody if possible. All exercises are repeated. By trading, mistakes will be more likely to be corrected prior to becoming habit.

These exercises are not licks or patterns to be memorized and performed as a part of any solo. They are intended to provide enough technical facility, melodic shape and harmonic awareness to allow a student to better accomplish whatever he or she is hearing.

**Exercises 1-18 Preparatory Exercises:** These are possibly the most technically demanding of the exercises and can be practiced with any of the chord progressions at the end of the book.

**Exercises 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated):** Short phrases that sound complete are a means to solo development and creating long phrases of substance. Practice these over a medium tempo blues progression, swing hard and work to change them up on the repeat. (dynamics, articulation, etc.)

**Exercises 41-54 2 Bar Phrases (repeated):** These are a continuation and extension of the previous exercises.

**Exercises 55-59 Modal with Chromatic Side-Slip:** Practice these exercises with the modal harmony and with the ii-V-I progressions. No articulation is included, accent upper notes in lines.

**Exercises 60-67 ii7-V7alt-lmaj7:** These exercises apply a chromatic side-slip to create an altered dominant sound on a major ii-V-I. Play a minor pentatonic starting on the  $5^{th}$  of the ii chord, side-slip up a half-step for the V7 (effectively a tritone substitute) and resolve back down a half-step for the tonic chord.

As a general rule, it usually takes six or so months of practice for any new concept or technique to really begin to show in performance. Be patient and diligent!

Be sure to record performances and practice sessions once you begin improvise using this material. If you notice, (or someone else comments...) that it sure sounds like you are playing a lot of pentatonics, reevaluate your approach. Improvisations are melodies. Melodies can certainly contain pentatonic material but should not sound like a pentatonic exercise. Never sacrifice melody for technique.

Good luck!

Craig Fraedrich February, 2010

## Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises

## Chapter I - C Minor Pentatonic



#### Chapt. I - C Minor ▶

Ex. 1-18 Preparatory Exercises



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## Chapt. I - C Minor ▶

Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)



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#### Chapt. I - C Minor >

Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)











#### Chapt. I - C Minor >

Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)



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#### Chapt. I - C Minor ▶

Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)



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## Chapt. I - C Minor ▶

Ex. 55-59 Modal with Chromatic Side-slip











#### Chapt. I - C Minor >

Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-lmaj7



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#### Chapt. I - C Minor >



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## Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises

## Chapter 2 - F Minor Pentatonic



Ex. 1-18 Preparatory Exercises

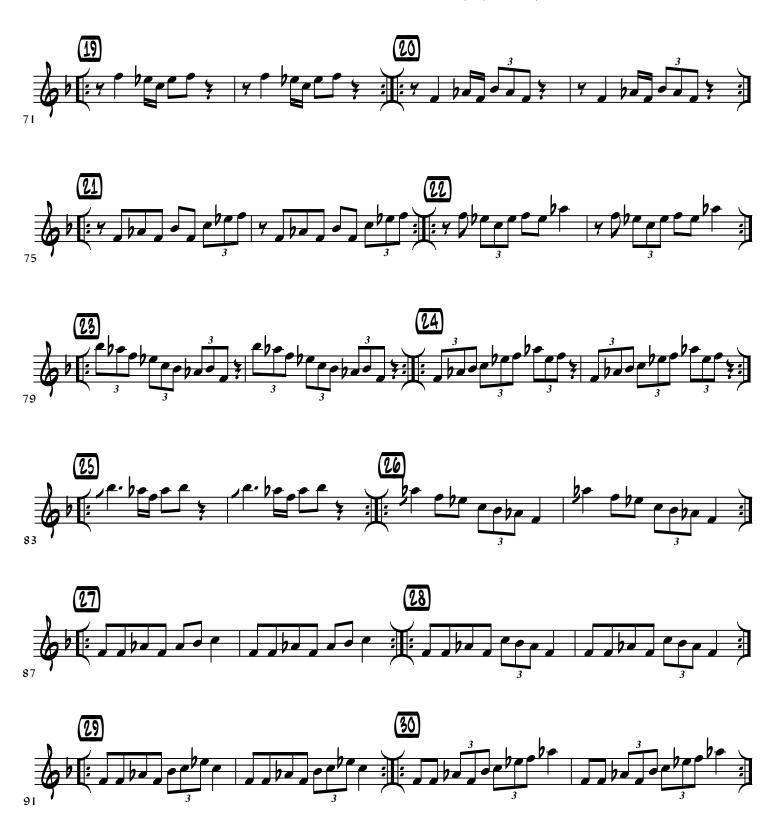


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Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)



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Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)











Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)



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Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)



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Ex. 55-59 Modal with Chromatic Side-slip



Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-lmaj7



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Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-Imaj7



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## Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises

## Chapter 3 - Bb Minor Pentatonic



Ex. 1-18 Preparatory Exercises



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Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)



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Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)











Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)



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Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)



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Ex. 55-59 Modal with Chromatic Side-slip



Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-lmaj7



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## Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises

## Chapter 4 - Eb Minor Pentatonic



#### Chapt. 4 - Eb Minor ▶

Ex. 1-18 Preparatory Exercises



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Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)



Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)











## Chapt. 4 - Eb Minor ▶

Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)



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Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)



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## Chapt. 4 - Eb Minor ▶

Ex. 55-59 Modal with Chromatic Side-slip



#### Chapt. 4 - Eb Minor ▶

Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-lmaj7



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Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-Imaj7



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# Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises

## Chapter 5 - Ab Minor Pentatonic

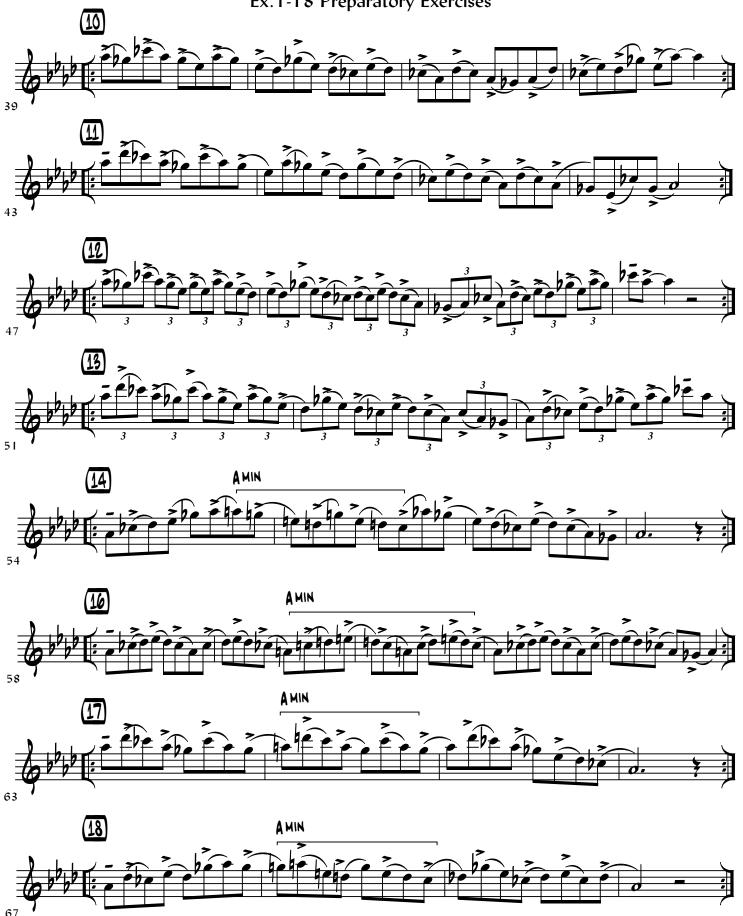


Ex. 1-18 Preparatory Exercises



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Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)



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Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)



Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)



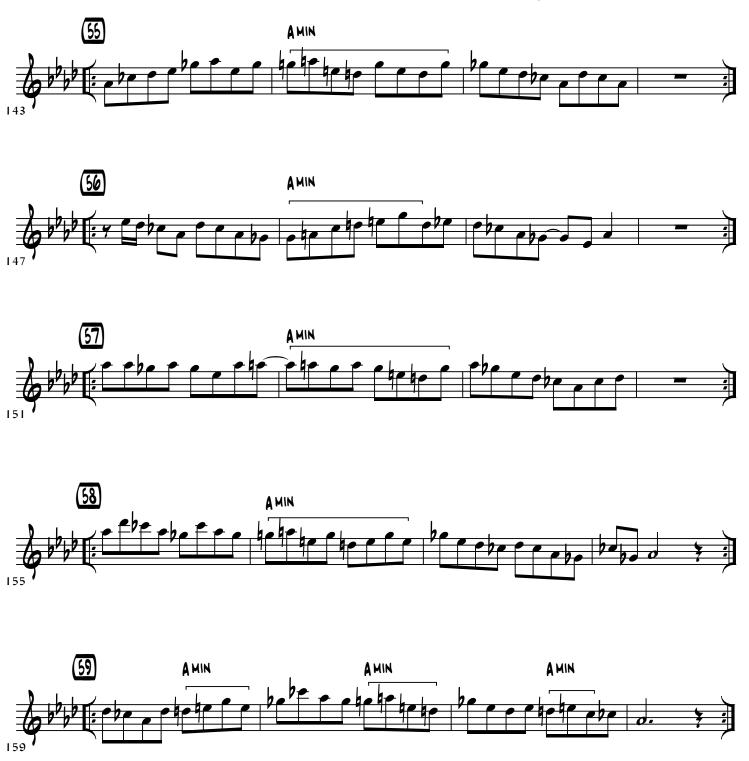
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Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)



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Ex. 55-59 Modal with Chromatic Side-slip



Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-lmaj7



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Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-lmaj7



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# Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises

## Chapter 6 - C# Minor Pentatonic





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Ex. 1-18 Preparatory Exercises



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Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)



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Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)











Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)



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Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)



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Ex. 55-59 Modal with Chromatic Side-slip



Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-lmaj7



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Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-Imaj7



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## Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises

Chapter 7 - F# Minor Pentatonic



Ex. 1-18 Preparatory Exercises



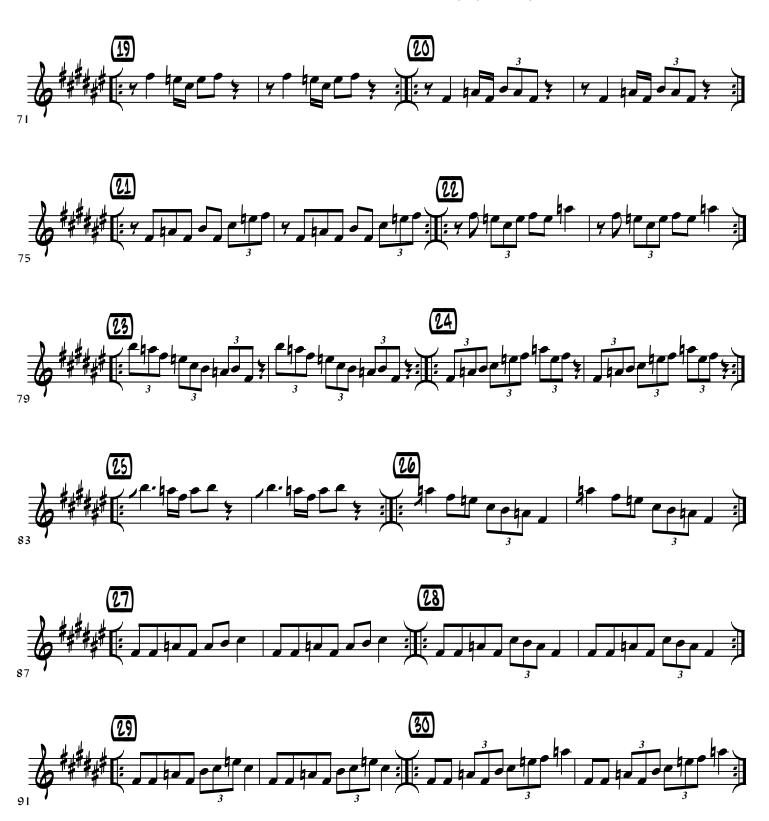
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Ex. 1-18 Preparatory Exercises



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Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)



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Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)











Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)



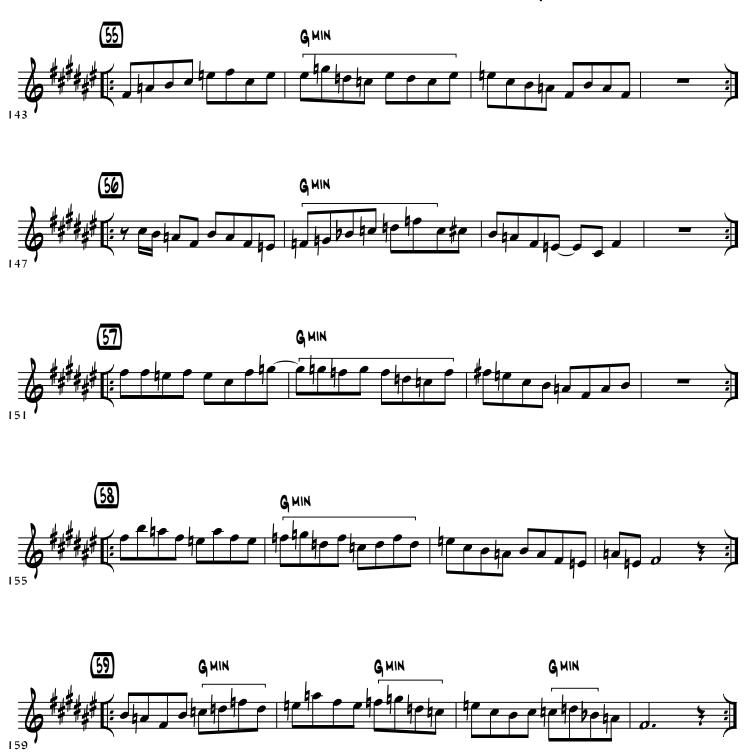
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Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)



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Ex. 55-59 Modal with Chromatic Side-slip



Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-lmaj7



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Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-Imaj7



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# Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises

# Chapter 8 - B Minor Pentatonic



Ex. 1-18 Preparatory Exercises



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Ex. 1-18 Preparatory Exercises



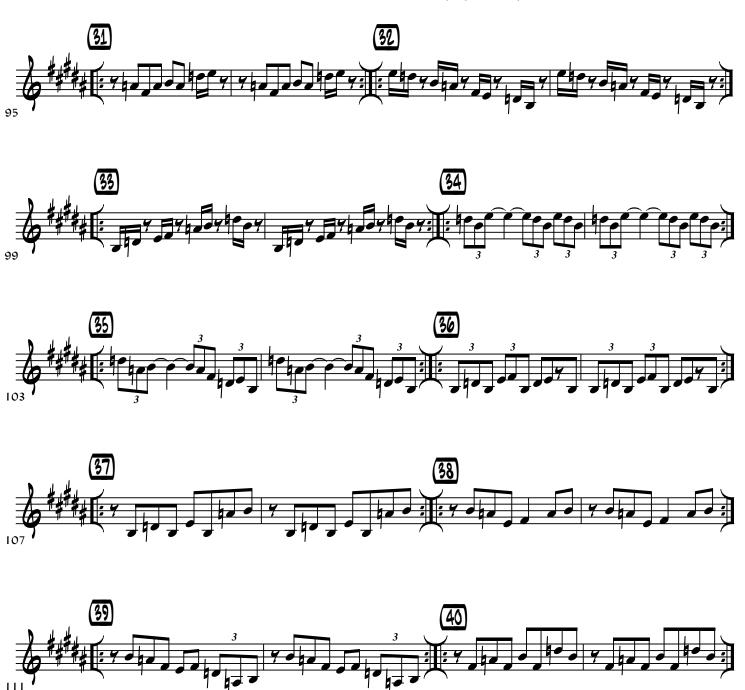
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Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)



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Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)



Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)



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Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)



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Ex. 55-59 Modal with Chromatic Side-slip



Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-lmaj7



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# Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises

# Chapter 9 - E Minor Pentatonic



# Chapt. 9 - E Minor ▶

Ex. 1-18 Preparatory Exercises



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Ex. 1-18 Preparatory Exercises



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### Chapt. 9 - E Minor >

Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)



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# Chapt. 9 - E Minor ▶

Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)









### Chapt. 9 - E Minor >

Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)



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# Chapt. 9 - E Minor ▶

Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)



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# Chapt. 9 - E Minor ▶

Ex. 55-59 Modal with Chromatic Side-slip



### Chapt. 9 - E Minor >

Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-lmaj7



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#### Chapt. 9 - E Minor >



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# Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises

# Chapter 10 - A Minor Pentatonic



### Chapt. 10 - A Minor >

Ex. 1-18 Preparatory Exercises



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### Chapt. 10 - A Minor ▶

Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)



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### Chapt. 10 - A Minor >

Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)



#### Chapt. 10 - A Minor ▶

Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)



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### Chapt. 10 - A Minor >

Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)



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# Chapt. 10 - A Minor >

Ex. 55-59 Modal with Chromatic Side-slip



#### Chapt. 10 - A Minor ▶

Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-lmaj7



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# Chapt. 10 - A Minor ▶



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# Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises

# Chapter II - D Minor Pentatonic



### Chapt. II D - Minor >

Ex. 1-18 Preparatory Exercises



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Ex. 1-18 Preparatory Exercises



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# Chapt. II D - Minor ▶

Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)



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### Chapt. II D - Minor >

Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)











Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)



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Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)



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Ex. 55-59 Modal with Chromatic Side-slip



Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-Imaj7



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Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-lmaj7



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### Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises

### Chapter 12 - G Minor Pentatonic



Ex. 1-18 Preparatory Exercises



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Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)



Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)











Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)



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Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)



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Ex. 55-59 Modal with Chromatic Side-slip



Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-lmaj7



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Chapt. 12- G Minor >



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