

"Don't play with your fingers; play with your ears. Although I play fast sometimes, I don't believe speed and technique are as important as a lot of people say. As far as I'm concerned, music is ultimately about creating melodic ideas and making sure that the stuff you're playing is musical and fits over a chord progression."

— Yngwie Malmsteen

Minor Pentatonic Licks

Now that you've learned the minor pentatonic scale, the next step will be to learn licks based on that scale. Licks are simply short musical fragments. Learning licks will allow you to see the relationship between the lick and the scale. For instance, licks 1 - 5 on this page are based on pattern 1 of the G minor pentatonic scale. Also, learning licks will help you to get comfortable with the whole idea of soloing without actually having to create anything. When it is time to create, these licks will give you some ideas to use, allowing you to draw upon them. You can use the whole lick or take portions of a few and splice them together to create something that is your own. Don't worry, this is how everyone starts out. Every beginning artist needs to first imitate others before they find their own creative voice. Even when your own voice does manifest itself, it will still reflect its influence from other artists. We are *all* influenced by the music we listen to. It's unavoidable.

1.  3fr. Swing the notes 




2.



3.



4.



5.



6.  5fr.



"To get fast on guitar, you just have to play everything a million times. It's a matter of repetition and practice." —Zakk Wyld

Classic Rock Licks

This Zakk Wyld lick is nothing more than a minor pentatonic scale which dovetails itself. Initially, use alternate picking. Then, use pull-off's going down the scale, and hammer-on's going up.

These next two licks are by Jimmy Page of Led Zeppelin. In both licks, Page uses a note which is outside the minor pentatonic scale, but within the key the song is in. Notice how these notes give the lick flavor and poignancy. The first is from *The Ocean*.

This next lick's from *Black Dog*. Notice the passing note, G# (3rd note on 6th fret).

These next two licks are looped. They're easy to play, not the most creative, but they sound impressive at quick tempos.

Chuck Berry's opening motif in "Johnny B. Goode" is one of the greatest and most-copped rock licks of all time.