

# Phrasing

Phrasing is the thing that separates one musical idea from another and adds spice. It is of particular importance to shredders, because without it one just plays a perpetual barrage of notes. While that may be cool a time or two, it ultimately makes all your solos sound alike. Guys like Tony MacAlpine, Eddie Van Halen, Randy Rhoads, Scott Henderson, and Jeff Beck are absolute masters of phrasing, so if you like any of them, I'd suggest throwing one of their discs on and really listening to how their solos are constructed.

In the example below, you'll make use of the A pentatonic minor scale. Notice how it plays a theme, then a counter, then repeats the theme, and then a variation on the counter. Notice also that the variation alters both melodically and rhythmically.

Gtr I

7 5 7 5 7 5 8 5 0 7 5 0 7 5 0 7 8

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

8 5 0 7 5 0 7 5 0 7 8

s.l.

7 5 7 5 7 5 8 7 5 7 5 8 5 14 13 12 17

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

8 5 7 5 8 5 14 13 12 17

s.l.

Grok the implications of the example, and consider (while remembering that "phrasing" is creating distinct musical sections within a piece [in this case, a solo within a song] in a dynamic and fluid way) concepts like theme & variation, melodic & harmonic & rhythmic variation, dynamics, composition vs improvisation, overall structure of the song and solo, and the like. Try mapping out a practice solo over a basic progression and try to include fast passages, slow passages, rhythmic variations, and expressive flairs by using vibrato and bends.

# Percussion Concepts for Acoustic Guitar

To my knowledge, it started way back in the 1920s & 1930s with acoustic blues players - players who not only sang and strummed, but also smacked the strings and the guitar body to get percussive effects. Unfortunately, the recordings of those days are of poor quality, so hearing more than the vocal and the basic guitar line is difficult. Flamenco players also occasionally add "guitar body drum" to their playing, though mostly as sparse effects for a bit of spice. In the 1980s, Michael Hedges began popularizing the use of percussive effects along with extensive use of hammered ostinato, slides, and super-articulate finger-picking. Today, great acoustic players like Peppino D'Agostino and Laurence Juber have taken things to a whole new height, with Preston Reed being (in my opinion) the undisputed king of tap-n-slap.

Example 1 has you playing a hammered fret-hand pattern of straight 8ths, with a tapped open-3 pattern on the 5th (A) string. Add to that a pick-hand tap on the guitar body on the second and fourth beats OR, for the more adventurous, tap straight 2s with your elbow on the body. Unfortunately, PowerTab doesn't allow for body slaps, but I've used a 2nd fret tapped harmonic to denote the body slap to help get the timing down.

The image shows musical notation for Example 1. The top staff is a standard musical staff in 4/4 time, featuring a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The melody consists of eighth notes, with a repeat sign and a 3x multiplier at the end. The bottom part of the image is a PowerTab for guitar, with strings T, A, and B labeled. The first section (mf) has fret numbers 2, 0, 2, 0, 2, 0, 2, 0 on the A string and 2, 0 on the B string. The second section (ff) has fret numbers 2, 0, 2, 0, 2, 0, 2, 0 on the A string, and 0(2), 3, 0(2) on the B string. The final measure shows a 2nd fret tapped harmonic on the A string. The notation includes dynamic markings 'mf' and 'ff', and a '3x' multiplier.

Example 2 has a free-er fret-hand pattern while the pick-hand accents with a body slap and then taps a harmonic at the 12th fret. Be sure to practice this with a metronome so that your timing is perfect. Again, we'll use the 2nd fret tapped harmonic to indicate the body slap

# Tapping Into Mastery

The first example is designed to break into multi-string tapping by using a familiar form. Try this not only using your primary tapping finger, but with several fingers of your pick hand.

$\text{♩} = 240$

Gtr I

T 12 5 8 5 12 5 8 5

A 12 5 7 5 12 5 7 5

B 12 5 8 5 12 5 8 5

T T T T T T

T 12 5 7 2 12 5 7 5

A 12 5 7 5 12 5 7 5

B 12 5 7 5 12 5 7 5

T T T T T T

$\text{♩} = 240$

T 12 5 7 5 12 5 7 5

A 12 5 8 5 12 5 8 5

B 8 4 5 5(10) 5(17)

T T T T T T



## Exotic Scales (part 1)

The term "exotic scale" generally refers to scales outside of the standard Major Scale (& it's modes), the Harmonic Minor, and the Melodic Minor...plus a few others (depending on which text you're reading). Essentially, exoticism is the use of musical devices (melodies, harmonies, rhythms, instrumentation, etc.) to evoke the atmosphere of ancient or distant places, so the easiest way to gather such scales are to take them from non-western cultures.

Rather than breaking each scale down myself as I have in the past, I urge you to pull each one apart yourself and experiment with them. Note that all scales herein are in the key of "A".

The first scale we'll look at is the Enigmatic Scale. This scale was said to be invented by Verdi and he used it in his *Ava Maria* of 1897. Guitar players, however, probably heard it first via Joe Satriani on his album, "Not of this Earth". The scale is:

Gtr I

T

A

B 5 6 4 6 8 5 6 7

Breaking this scale down into it's modes is a great exercise and yields some very interesting fodder for future use (note all the chromatics), so be sure to spend a good week examining this one and it's possibilities - through the use of not only analysis, but composing brief etudes and general jamming - before moving to the next scale...which is another 7-note scale, the so-called "Over-tone Scale". It is:

Gtr I

T

A

B 5 7 9 6 7 9 5 7

You'll definitely want to break this one down into modes, too! Again, spend an entire week examining the sonic possibilities afforded by this scale and even write a few practice pieces.

The last scale we'll look at today is a 5-note (pentatonic) Japanese scale called "Hirajoshi".

Gtr I

T  
A  
B 5 7 8 7 8 7

Gtr I

T  
A  
B 5 0 2 0 2 0 0 2 0 2 0 0 0 2 0 0 0(5)

T T T T T

For example 3, think of a straight rock percussion pattern. Experiment with this, playing the dark melodic sequence with the 12th & fifth fret tapped harmonics (as is notated), and then by replacing the harmonic with a body slap, and finally by tapping out the entire rhythm on the guitar's body. Notice the 6th string (low E) is tuned down to an A for that super-bass effect! Mix up the slaps, taps, melodic sequences, and maybe even add some hammered chords like in the examples above. Stay loose and have fun with it!

Gtr I

T  
A  
B 0(12) 9 7 0(12) 0(12) 0(12) 0(12) 9 7 0(12) 0(12) 0(12) 0(12) 0(12) 0(5)

T T T T T

It's worth noting that some players use just their hands while others use fingers or forearms and the like. Peppino, for example, tends to use a lot of rocking palm to finger patterns, while Preston Reed tends to combine fret board taps (both single note lines and full chords) with arms and palm shots to the body (watch his alteration of palm and forearm body shots on his track "Blasting Cap")

But explore these ideas and see what YOU come up with. Also, be sure to visit the sites of the players mentioned herein (which will often lead you to the sites of other great players in a never-ending maze!!!), especially Preston Reed.

## Exotic Scales (part 2)

As we mentioned last time (in "Exotic Scales [part 1]"), the term "exotic scale" generally refers to scales outside of the standard Major Scale (& it's modes), the Harmonic Minor, and the Melodic Minor...plus a few others (depending on which text you're reading). Essentially, exoticism is the use of musical devices (melodies, harmonies, rhythms, instrumentation, etc.) to evoke the atmosphere of ancient or distant places, so the easiest way to gather such scales are to take them from non-western cultures.

This article will assume a knowledge of modes. Rather than breaking each scale down myself as I have in the past, I urge you to pull each one apart yourself and experiment with them. Note that all scales herein are in the key of "A".

The first scale we'll look at is sometimes called the Lydian Minor Scale (you'll note the first half of the scale is identical to the Lydian Mode, with the major 3rd and raised 4th). Several of it's modes are extremely interesting, too, and be sure to note that chromatic bit as you go from the 4th to 5th to 6th.

Gtr I

T									
A								5	7
B	5	7	9		6	7	8		

The second is another cool 5-note Oriental scale, called the Kokinjoshi (similar to last month's Hirajoshi Scale).

Musical notation for the Kokinjoshi scale in 4/4 time. The scale is shown on a treble clef staff with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The notes are: G2, Ab2, Bb2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3. Below the staff, the guitar fretboard is shown for strings T, A, and B. The B string has frets 5 and 6. The A string has frets 5 and 7. The T string has frets 5 and 7.

The last one we'll look at this month has several names, but I recently saw it called the Prometheus Scale - a very interesting pentatonic scale which is essentially a whole-tone scale minus one note (making all of it's modes sound similar). Check it out:

Musical notation for the Prometheus Scale in 4/4 time. The scale is shown on a treble clef staff with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The notes are: G2, Ab2, Bb2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3. Below the staff, the guitar fretboard is shown for strings T, A, and B. The B string has frets 5 and 7. The A string has frets 4 and 6. The T string has frets 5 and 7.

## Modes of the Harmonic Minor

This article will assume the reader already has a grasp on modes. If not, a modal primer will be available via my site very soon.

The Harmonic Minor is a fairly common scale, familiar to most intermediate musicians. However, one seldom sees a complete modal breakdown of this scale, though the 5th mode (sometimes called the Harmonic Phrygian) is used often in Flamenco and Metal music. The other modes of this scale offer just as rich a potential as the two common modes; while not technically "exotic scales"

(exoticism in music is essentially a western term meaning music - or scales - designed to evoke the sounds & images of "far-away lands"), many of these modes blur the lines between exoticism and standard scales. Immerse yourself in these for a while - one at a time - and see what you come up with.

Note the notation is in the key of A so the listener can hear the differences between the modes properly.

The Harmonic Minor (A-A) is "A-B-C-D-E-F-G#-A"

Gtr I

T
A
B

5 7 8 5 7 8 6 7

The second mode (B-B) spells "A-Bb-C-D-Eb-F#-G-A"

Gtr I

T
A
B

5 6 8 5 6 9 5 7

The third mode (C-C) spells "A-B-C#-D-E#-F#-G#-A"

Gtr I

T
A
B

5 7 9 5 6 9 7 8

The fourth mode (D-D) spells "A-B-C-D#-E-F#-G-A"

Gtr I

T									
A								5	7
B	5	7	8	6	7	9			

The fifth mode (E-E) spells "A-Bb-C#-D-E-F-G-A"

Gtr I

T									
A								5	7
B	5	6	9	5	7	8			

The sixth mode (F-F) spells "A-B#-C#-D#-E-F#-G#-A"

Gtr I

T									
A								6	7
B	5	8	9	6	7	9			

The seventh mode (G#-G#) spells "A-Bb-C-Db-Eb-F-Gb-A"



Gtr I

