

Guitar inspiration

5 CREATIVE BENDING TECHNIQUES

FULL TAB, NOTATION & PLAYING GUIDE
for the video

<https://youtu.be/Cud98E1EwzY>

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thank you

Thank you for checking out this **bending techniques** lesson!



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I sincerely hope this detailed guide & TAB will inspire you to continue to develop your guitar playing!

If you have any questions, you can leave a comment on my YouTube channel or e-mail me at maarten@guitar-inspiration.com

Maarten

5 CREATIVE BENDING TECHNIQUES

In this lesson, you'll learn **five** creative bending techniques for melodic rock soloing.

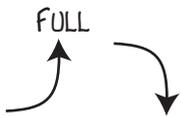
■ Bend notation



bend
arched line with arrow pointing upward. 'full' of '1' = bend a whole step up



release
arrow pointing downward



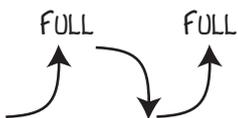
bend & release



PRE-bend
vertical arrow pointing upward. 'full' of '1' = bend a whole step up

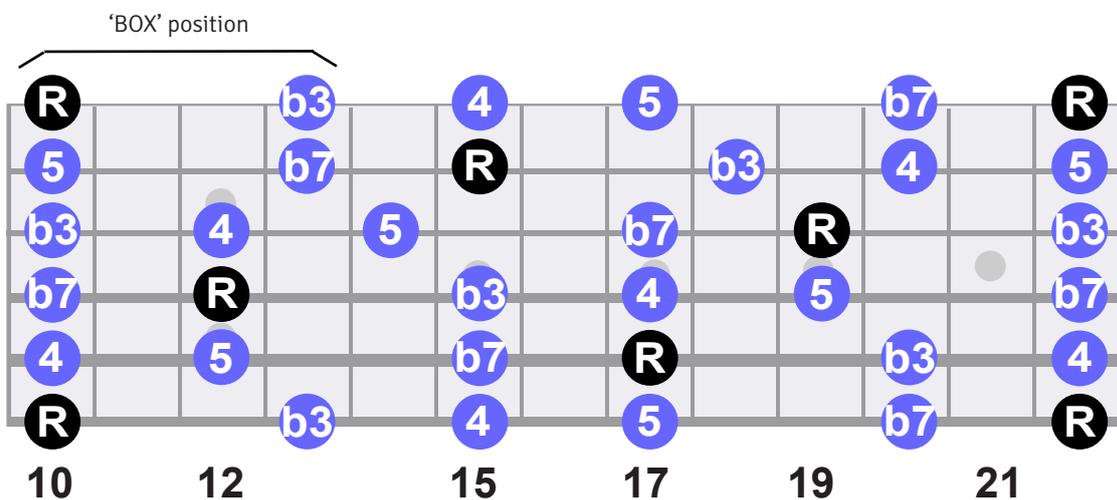


hold bend
dashed line, indicating to delay the release of the bend



bend, release, bend

■ D minor pentatonic This is the scale we'll use:



■ BAR 1 'warm up'

Bar 1 starts with a standard pentatonic, bending lick Bend the **13th** fret on the B-string a full step up. Pick the string with a downstroke. (And by the way, it's all downstrokes in this lesson, so don't worry too much about the picking). Play this bend with three fingers, supporting the 3d finger of your fretting hand with the 1st and second finger.

Make sure you're **firmly grasping the string** with the pad of your 3d finger, thus dragging the string up along the **13th** fret. Also, don't slip under the G & B strings, but bend against them, rendering them muted.

Fill the entire bar with that first note, and give it some vibrato.

■ TECHNIQUE 1: PRE-BEND

Bend the **15th** fret of the e-string a full step up, **WITHOUT PICKING THE STRING**. This is called a **PRE-BEND** since we're bending before hitting the string.

PRO TIP: I like to mute the strings with my right hand during this 'silent bend', to avoid unwanted noises. Only when the bend is complete, pick the string.

What usually follows a pre-bend is a release, bringing back the string to its original pitch. The downward, longer arrow on the tab points to the target note after the release (in this case, the **15th** fret)

How do you know how much force to apply to a pre-bend?



The answer is you must **guess** and rely on your experience & the muscle memory in your left hand. This varies depending on the type of guitar you're playing & the string gauge you're using. If you're not on pitch, try to correct yourself quickly by listening and adjusting force. Pre-bending is not 100% failproof, but it's very cool if you hit the correct pitch immediately!

After the release to the **15th** fret, pull off to the **13th** fret by lifting your 3d and 2nd fingers. And then pick the **15th** fret on the B-string with your 3d finger.

So that's a PRE-bend, an essential soloing technique of bending the string before picking it. The cool thing about it is that it can emphasize the release of bend without playing the actual bend, making the release sound fresh and surprising

■ TECHNIQUE 2: BEND 'n TAP

After that long **15th** fret note in bar 3, we're playing a lick that combines bending, holding a bend while tapping with the picking hand:

This is a technique I first heard Rory Gallagher use in a live version of his song Calling Card and later in Eddie Van Halen's playing (listen to his fantastic solo in Panama, for example).

Bend the **13th** fret on the B-string a full step up just like we did in the warming-up. Pick the string and **HOLD THE BEND** for as long as indicated by the dashed line on the tab.

While holding the bend, tap the **20th** fret with the second finger of your picking hand, pull-off back to the **15th** fret and then tap again on the **18th** fret with your picking hand.

These 2 notes (18th and 20th fret) are notes of the pentatonic scale, taken into account that the string is bent:

To make it sure, make sure you're tapping forcefully, since we're not picking the string for this note. While I'm tapping, the palm of my right hand is on the lower strings of the guitar, to help avoid unwanted noises. Finish this technique of with some vibrato from your left hand.

So that's our BEND n TAP, maybe a less common technique, but a vert cool one that makes these **giant, intervallic jumps possible**. Also, it's always a bit of a spectacle to see a guitar player tapping, isn't it?

TECHNIQUE 3: BEND ON BEND

In Bars 5 & 6, we're playing a half-step bend on top of a full step bend, creating a very melodic bend lick.

This bending technique is very blues-inspired, and I think I got it from John Mayer (I also used it in my *Lost in Thought* video).

Bend the **15th** fret on the e-string. This is a quarter note. Now, instead of releasing the bend, hold the bend, mute the string shortly with your right hand AND THEN bend **ANOTHER HALF STEP UP**.

So we're bending from the G to the A, and then to the Bb. (This Bb is not part of the D minor pentatonic, but the D aeolian scale, creating a more melodic sound).

Don't let it slip!



Make sure you're not prematurely letting go of that first bend. You must have a **firm grasp** of that e-string before bending it another half step up. Also, that little mute in between helps to **separate** both notes from each other (and making a delay effect more audible). (I demonstrate this in the video)

The second note in bar 5 is a bit shorter than the first one. Follow it up with another right hand mute, a little pause or note separation, this time clearly indicated by the comma (',') on the tab. Next play the full step bend from the **15th** fret once more. Release it very slowly (without picking), back to the **15th** fret. Give it some vibrato when you reach the target pitch.

Playing bends on bends is an excellent way of **expressing emotion** in a guitar solo! Compare how the same melody in bar 5 sounds **with** (left) and **without** (right) the bend-on-bend technique:

Learning this technique does require some practice as it demands a great deal of control over the strings you're bending. Practice it slow and **give yourself some time** to learn it.

■ TECHNIQUE 4: UNISON BEND

In Bar 7, there are **3** unison bends. These are **double stops**, meaning we're playing 2 strings simultaneously, bending one of them to reach the same pitch as the other one.

The first time I heard this technique, I thought the sound was made by an effect pedal. Turns out, the vibrating sound is a result of 2 different pitches that move ever closer together until they become one. You'll find the technique in the chorus of the Roadside Blues track I published last summer.

Place your first finger on the **10th** fret of the E-string and your 3d finger on the **13th** fret of the B-string. So we're playing the D (**10th fret**) and the C (**13th fret**, or the flat seven in D, that note is a full step lower than the D). Pick both strings with a powerful downstroke at the same time, and then - **leaving your first finger in place** - bend the B-string a full step up, thus moving the C towards the D.

So, in the end, both pitches become identical (unison), but the rubbing of the bent note against the unbent note creates a cool pulsating effect, that suddenly disappears.

In my teaching experience, **the most common mistake** is to also bend the first finger. That spoils the effect, so it's essential to leave your first finger firmly in place!

In the rest of bar 7, I repeat this technique twice, once with the first finger on the **12th** fret and finally with the first finger on the **13th** fret. Separated by little mutes. That way, you can create little melodies. In this case I'm just following the D minor scale upwards..

■ TECHNIQUE 5: BEND-RELEASE-BEND

In bar 8, we find another one of my favorites, which is bend-release-bend:

First, bend the **15th** fret on the E-string a full step up.

This time, release the bend quickly and perform the same bend again, but slower. You can see on the tab that the bending arrow is longer, indicating this is a slow bend.

Next, release the bend back to the **15th** fret, pull off to the **13th** fret (just like we did in the beginning of this lesson) and end on the **15th** fret on the B-string.

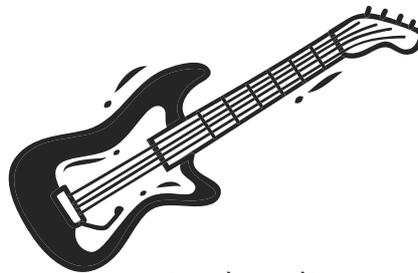
I like how this bend-release-bend pattern can be played in different ways. Experiment yourself with different ways of playing these bend-release-bends (fast or slow bends, fast or slow release, full step bends, half step bends etc..). There are a million ways to play this bend-release-bend-pattern!

CONCLUSION

This concludes my first lesson playing bends. Most of the techniques I showed you today are big part of my playing style, so that's why I wanted to talk a bit about these bending techniques and show you different examples in the context of a short solo.

If you found this lesson valuable, please consider supporting my channel on buymeacoffee.com/gtrinspiration

That really helps me to keep building content for the channel. Let's keep going !



I hope you enjoyed this 5 creative bending techniques lesson!
Keep on playing that guitar!

Maarten
june, 2022

5 CREATIVE BENDING TECHNIQUES

♩ = 129

1

Dm

8^{va}

1

13

(15)

(15)

13

p

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(15)

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HOLD BEND

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12

15

13

16

8

(13)

(18)

15

(15)

(15)

13

15

FAST BEND

SLOW BEND

p

SL.