

Guitar inspiration

BLUES LICK LESSON N°10

GROOVE & LICKS IN E

FULL TAB, NOTATION & PLAYING GUIDE
for the video

<https://youtu.be/P8qeT00JSgU>

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thank you

Thank you for checking out this **BLUES LICK N°10** LESSON GUIDE



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

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Maarten

BLUES GUITAR LICK #10

In this lesson, you'll learn how to play a collection of blues **licks & riffs** over a **one chord blues groove in E**.

This lesson's **primary goal** is to teach you to play this continuous vintage blues groove while adding the licks on top. I hope you will get familiar with the feel of this groove, and the sound of the **E minor blues scale**, so you can come up with your licks and jam by yourself.

The inspiration for this blues lesson comes from early blues songs that stayed on one chord, often just a vocalist accompanied by an acoustic guitar. These licks translate very well to electric guitar and formed the basis for countless rock songs in later decades.

■ TRACK & FEEL

The track has **12-8** time signature. Every beat lasts for dotted quarter note, which equals three eighth notes (left), or one quarter note and 1 eighth note (right).

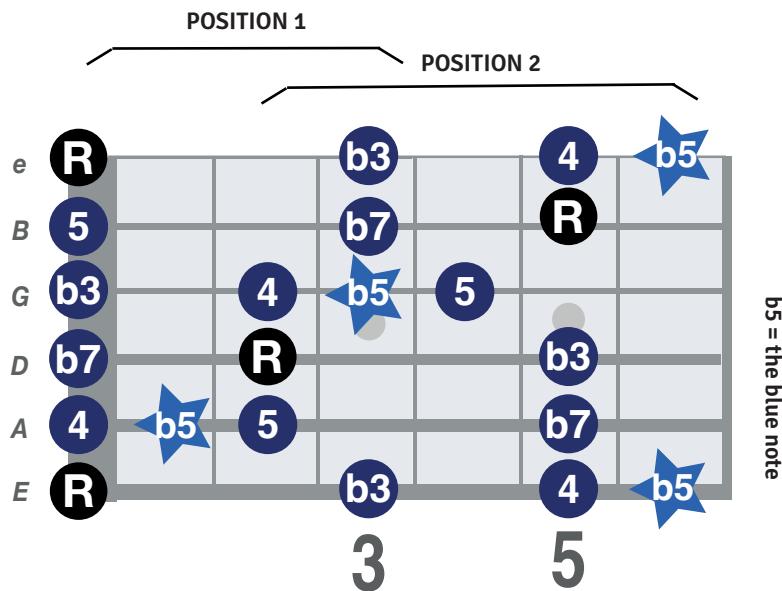
The diagram illustrates the 12-8 time signature. At the top, a 12/8 time signature is shown with a 1, 2, 3, 4 count. Below it, two examples show how this counts down to an 8th note (left) or a 16th note (right). Arrows point from the count to each example.

All the licks in this lesson fit over a one chord (E), blues groove

The diagram shows a blues groove in E and a guitar fretboard diagram. The blues groove shows a 12/8 pattern with 1, 2, 3, 4 counts. The guitar fretboard diagram shows the E minor blues scale with root notes at the 3rd, 5th, and 8th frets. The 3rd fret is highlighted in red, while the 5th and 8th frets are highlighted in blue. The 8th fret is also labeled 'R'.

This is the **scale** we'll use:

E MINOR BLUES



POSITION 1 (ascending)

POSITION 2 (descending, starting from the b5)

Yes, we're using a **minor** scale over a **major** chord. In blues, this is possible! Notice that the major 3d of the chord (the G#) isn't present in the minor blues scale (only the minor 3d). The ambiguous use of minor 3d (G) and major 3d (G#) is a cornerstone of blues improvisation.

■ THE BASIC GROOVE

The licks in this lesson are built around a basic, open E chord and the G on the lower E string. The licks are embedded into a **one chord groove**. We'll use the same groove, so let me show you how to play it:

THE GROOVE

H = HAMMER-ON P = PULL-OFF

LET RING-----

repeat start repeat end

First, position your fingers to form a basic E chord. Play the open, low E-string with a downstroke and the open high e and B-strings with an upstroke. Move your third finger to the low E-string to play the **3d** fret (G) with a downstroke. Next is the **2nd** fret on the D-string, played with an upstroke. This is the E-again, the root, but an octave higher.

Next, repeat the pattern we started the bar with, and end bar 1 with the following sequence: **2nd** fret on the A string (downstroke), open D string (upstroke) and **2nd** fret on the D string (downstroke). I'm playing these three notes with the **same fingers** I'm using to play the E-chord.

In **bar 2**, the groove continues similarly.

Only the last 3 eight notes of bar 2 are different: play the **2nd fret** on the G-string with your second finger. While hitting this fret, hit the open B-string as well. While this string rings, calmly slide to the next eight note, that is the **4th** fret on the G-string. And while this note rings, play the last eight note: this is the open high e-string, played with an upstroke.

As you can see, we're playing a lot of open strings, because we're playing in the 'open' position. This originates from acoustic blues, but it translates very nicely to the electric guitar, don't you think?

Let's not get too picky ;-)



The picking pattern of this lick is debatable. On the TAB, I mostly wrote alternate picking, although - to be honest - **since the tempo is relatively slow**, I will often let go of strict alternate picking and play more downstrokes. You will see the picking pattern I prefer notated above each tab.

This 2-bar pattern stays on the E-chord and can be repeated multiple times. Played continuously, **this creates a haunting blues groove.**

In the rest of the lesson, we'll learn more blues licks while **keeping this underlying groove going.**

■ THAT BEND

x = dead string

The underlying groove hasn't changed, so you'll notice that the beginning of bar 1 is identical. On the **3d** fret of the low E-string, play a little (**quarter step bend**), a technique I covered in blues lick lesson 2.

Bend the 2nd fret of the G-string **half a step up** with your **3d** finger. Hit the string forcefully, with a downstroke, and try to add some dead string noise (x=the sound of the muted, adjacent string). We're bending to the **b5 (flat five or blue note)**. Release the bend, back to the **2nd** fret, and - without picking - pull-off to the open G-string. End this must-know blues lick with the second fret on the D-string, played with the **2nd** finger (and I like to play a downstroke here).

f = forte = loud!



Pay special attention to your playing dynamics here. Classic blues players often played by themselves, without a band, playing rhythm and lead simultaneously. The open strings groove we're playing is the rhythm part. The licks in between are the lead part. **It's important to emphasize these licks**, hit the strings harder, and push your amplifier over the break-up point.

There are many ways to bring variation to this lick. You could, for example, bend the G string a full step instead of half a step, giving it more of a major feeling. Or - that's what I did at the end of bar 2- you could **change the timing of the lick, starting it 1/8th later.**

So in bar 2, first play, the open E-string once more, then the same lick, but since we started it an instant later, we can't rest as long on that **2nd** fret of the D-string. This means our resting point will be the first note of the next bar (in this case bar 1).

■ MUDDY'S TRILLS

Still building on the same groove, now we're getting creative with pull-offs, hammer-ons and a classic Muddy Waters style trill:

In bar 1, after that little quarter step bend, play the open E string again (downstroke), but short, assertive and slightly palm muted. Next, play a **trill**, or rapid alternating hammer-ons and pull-offs from the **2nd fret** of the D-string to the open D-string. Start with a downstroke.

You could play this trill with your 2nd finger, but I like to play it with my 3d finger. **Emphasize** the trill for maximum effect. Play it loud and with confidence.

At the end of bar 1, we find the same lick as earlier in the video, but this time with a **hammer-on** from the open D-string to the **2nd fret** of the D-string. So we're only picking the first two notes (downstroke and upstroke). Again, we're playing these three notes with the **same fingers** as we're using to play the E-chord.

In bar 2, we're adding another hammer-on from the open D-string to the **2nd fret**. At the end of bar 2 is another stylish lick in the **E minor blues** scale:

Play the open A-string with a downstroke and quickly hammer-on to the **2nd fret** (second finger). Next, do the same on the D-string (third finger). I know I'm not alternate picking here. I think there's enough time to play this part with all downstrokes. That's how I prefer picking it, and I find it gives the hammer-ons a bit more power.

Bar 2 ends with a hammer-on from the open A-string (downstroke) to the **1st fret**, played with your first finger. This note is the blue note again, played in a low register. Pull-off the **1st fret** off, back to the open A-string, and end with the quarter step bend on the **3d fret** of the E-string, played with your 3d finger.

Practice tip: ISOLATE problems



If you have trouble playing certain licks in this lesson (e.g., if the notes in the trill are too silent), isolate the problematic part and practice it slowly & by itself. After a while, start playing it in the context of the groove again!

■ CHORD HOPPING

We're going to spice things up a little bit by implying the IV-chord (the A) on top of our groove. So, we are going to 'hop' over to the A chord and back, in a syncopated blues lick that used **double stops**.

First, let's take a look at the E, A and A7-chord in the open position:

We're implying the A7 chord at the end of bar two with that little **double stop**. Place your second finger on the **2nd** fret of the B-string and your **3d** finger on the **3d** fret of the E-string. Pick these two strings together with a downstroke and bend them a quarter step up. End bar 1 with picking the open high E and B-strings with an -up and downstroke.

In bar 2, slide your third finger from the **3d** to the **5th** fret on the B-string, while at the same time, picking the open high E-string. Pick these two strings with a downstroke, and make sure you place your fretting finger quite vertical so the open string has room to vibrate. We're playing a similar, syncopated rhythm as in the end of bar 1. After the slide, pick the **3d** fret on the B-string (upstroke, 1st finger), and the **4th** fret on the G-string (second finger).

Next is a classic move to - again - outline the A-chord. Play the **2nd** fret on the B and G-string as another double stop. As you can see, I'm barring that **2nd** fret with my 3d finger, and I'm also covering the D-string, since the **2nd** fret on the D-string is what follows next.

End this group of 3 notes with another double stop, playing the open B- and G-strings. Rapidly perform a hammer-on to the **1st** fret of the G-string to play the G#, the major 3d of the E-chord. This clarifies to the listener that we're back home, on the E chord.

I'm playing this group of 3 notes with all downstrokes, although you could play it with alternate picking if you like.

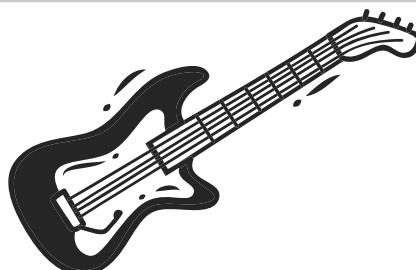
At the end of bar 2 is a simple slide from the **2nd** fret on the G-string to the **3d fret** (the blue note), and back. Those of you that watched blues lick lesson N#9 may recognize this move.

Need an extra challenge?

If you need some more challenge, try playing a **bass note on each beat** of the groove. Until now, we left out the bass notes if we were playing licks, but some blues artists kept the groove going by adding short, **slightly palm muted** bass notes under the licks. This creates a cool effect!

To make this work, you need to either **fingerpick** or use **hybrid picking** (picking with the pick and fingers) a technique I demonstrated in detail in my previous blues lick lesson (N#9). It takes a bit of practice, but it's worth it!

For example, if I would play that last lick with hybrid picking, I'd pick the bass-notes with the pick and pluck the other strings with the fingers of my right hand.



I hope you enjoyed this **10th** blues lick lesson!
Keep on playing that guitar!

Maarten
february, 2021