Chapter 3: Diatonic Vocabulary

Welcome to chapter 3, where you begin to develop your pentatonic soloing vocabulary with diatonic patterns.

You also explore a chromatic concept with sidestepping in the bonus exercises.

Take your time with this material, work it slowly, sing along, and get it onto the backing tracks as soon as you can.

Before you dive in, here's the checklist for this chapter. After you have completed any 6 of these items, you can proceed to the next chapter.

Chapter 3 Checklist

1. Play pattern 1 in both scale positions from memory.
2. Play pattern 2 in both scale positions from memory.
3. Play pattern 3 in both scale positions from memory.
4. Play pattern 4 in both scale positions from memory.
5. Solo with pattern 1 over slow and medium tracks in Gm, Em, and Bm.
6. Solo with pattern 2 over slow and medium tracks in Gm, Em, and Bm.
7. Solo with pattern 3 over slow and medium tracks in Gm, Em, and Bm.
8. Solo with pattern 4 over slow and medium tracks in Gm, Em, and Bm.
9. Solo with pattern 1 over fast backing tracks in Gm, Em, and Bm.
10. Solo with pattern 2 over fast backing tracks in Gm, Em, and Bm.
11. Solo with pattern 3 over fast backing tracks in Gm, Em, and Bm.
12. Solo with pattern 4 over fast backing tracks in Gm, Em, and Bm.
13. Add sidestepping to any of these exercises if ready.

Technical Details

1. Backing tracks are over Gm7, Em7 and Bm7 chords.
2. Slow backing tracks are 60 bpm.
3. Medium backing tracks are 90 bpm.
4. Fast backing tracks are 120 bpm.

Audio Examples

1. Example 3.1 = Pattern 1 over Gm pentatonic.
2. Example 3.2 = Pattern 2 over Gm pentatonic.
3. Example 3.3 = Pattern 3 over Gm pentatonic.
4. Example 3.4 = Pattern 4 over Gm pentatonic.
5. Example 3.5 = Sidestepping line 1.
6. Example 3.6 = Sidestepping line 2.
7. Example 3.7 = Sidestepping line 3.

Musical Goals

1. Learn the 4 diatonic patterns from memory.
2. Apply patterns to both positions of minor pentatonic scales.
3. Solo over backing tracks with these scales and patterns.
4. Sing along more with your technical and soloing practice.
5. Add in sidestepping to your solos when ready.

Technical Exercises

1. Play pattern 1 over 6th string minor pentatonic.
2. Repeat in 12 keys.
3. Play pattern 1 over 5th string minor pentatonic.
4. Repeat in 12 keys.
5. Repeat these exercises with other 3 patterns.
6. Start with a slow metronome increase tempo as you go.
7. Sing along for added ear training.
8. Say notes for fretboard knowledge workout.

Soloing Exercises

1. Solo over Gm7 backing track, using scale and pattern 1.
2. Start with 1 scale position and add 2nd, then mix both, when ready.
3. Repeat with patterns 2, 3, and 4.
4. Repeat with Em7 and Bm7 backing tracks.
5. Work over slow, medium, and fast backing tracks.
6. Write or memorize one line built from any pattern.
7. Add that line to your solos when ready.

Bonus Exercises – Sidestepping

Sidestepping is when you move between the diatonic scale, say Gm pentatonic, and a scale 1 fret higher, Abm pentatonic in this example.

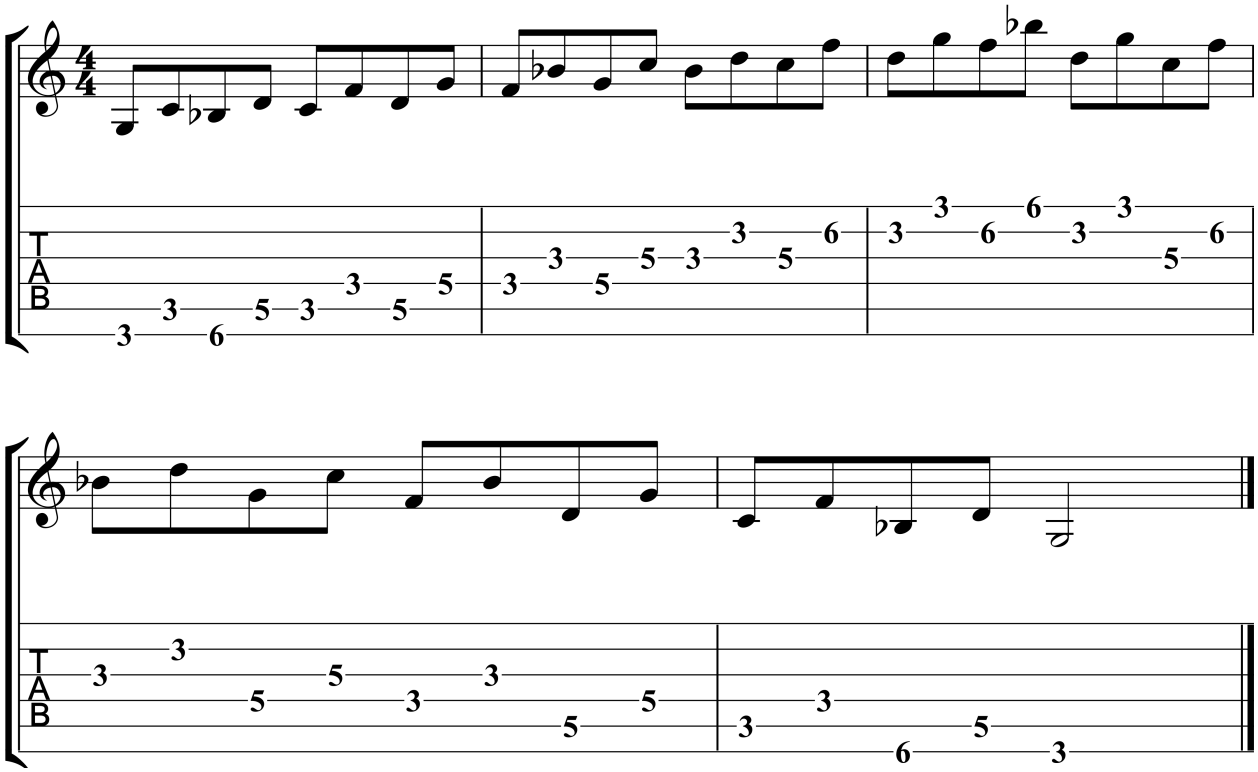
The scale a fret higher, Abm here, creates tension that you then resolve back to the Gm, diatonic, scale.

Remember, it's easy to go outside, it's tough to get back inside, so focus on resolving that tension with these exercises.

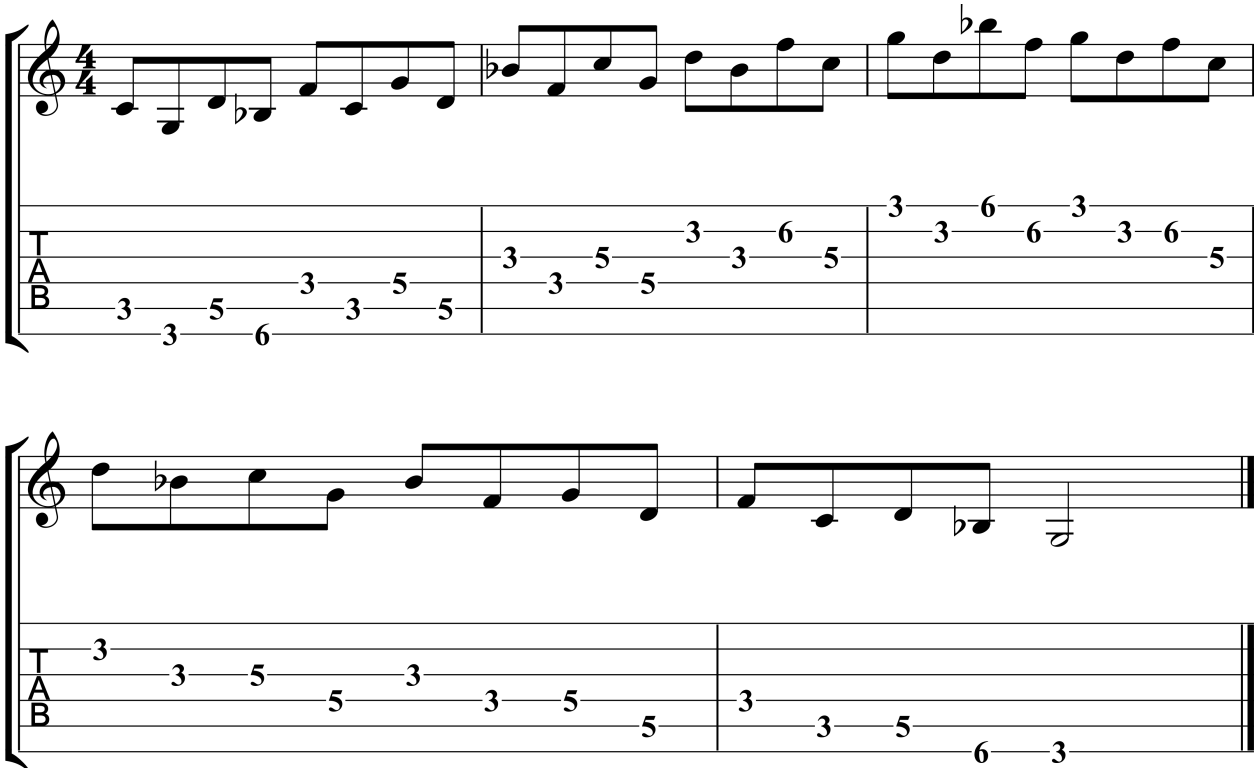
1. Solo over the Gm7 backing track using Gm pentatonic.
2. Solo over the Gm7 backing track using Gm and Abm pentatonic.
3. Work over slow, medium, and fast backing tracks.
4. Sing along to help develop your ears with sidestepping.
5. Play an idea over Gm, repeat with Abm, repeat back on Gm.
6. Repeat over Em7 and Bm7 backing tracks.

4 Diatonic Pentatonic Patterns

Audio Example 3.1



Audio Example 3.2



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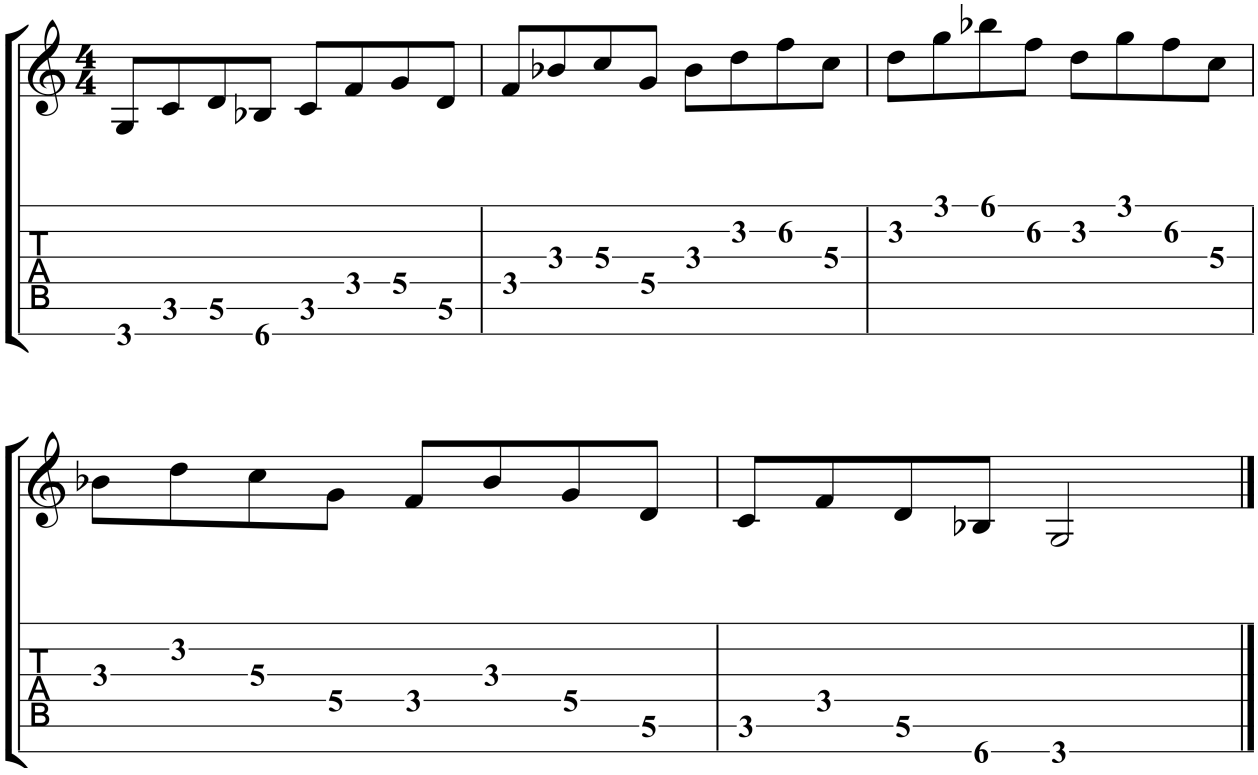

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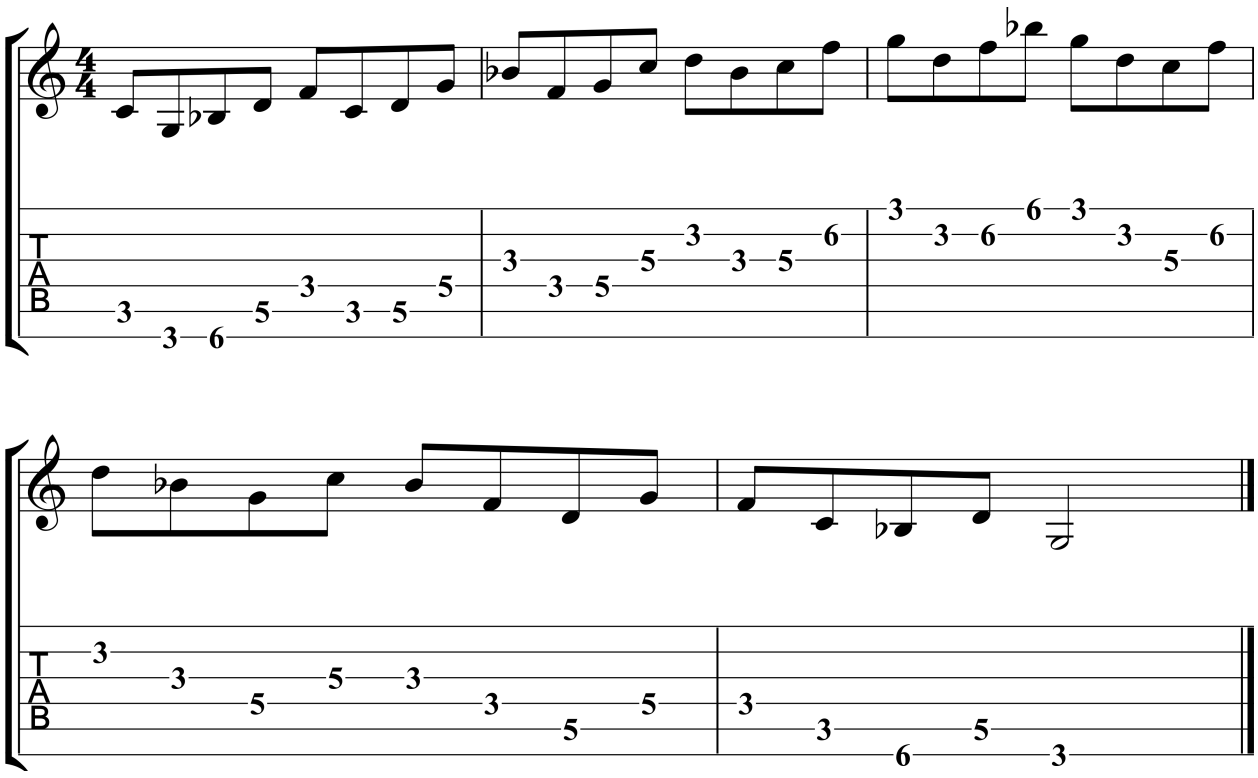
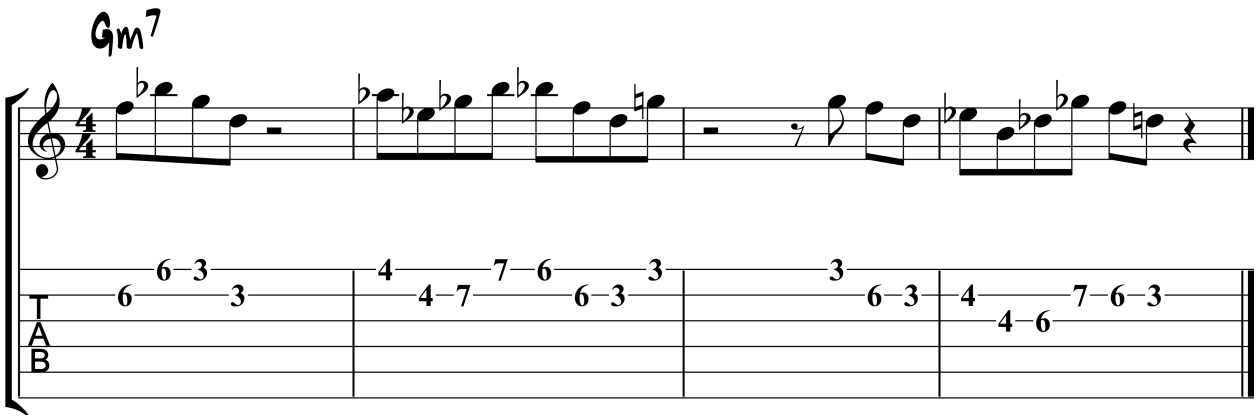
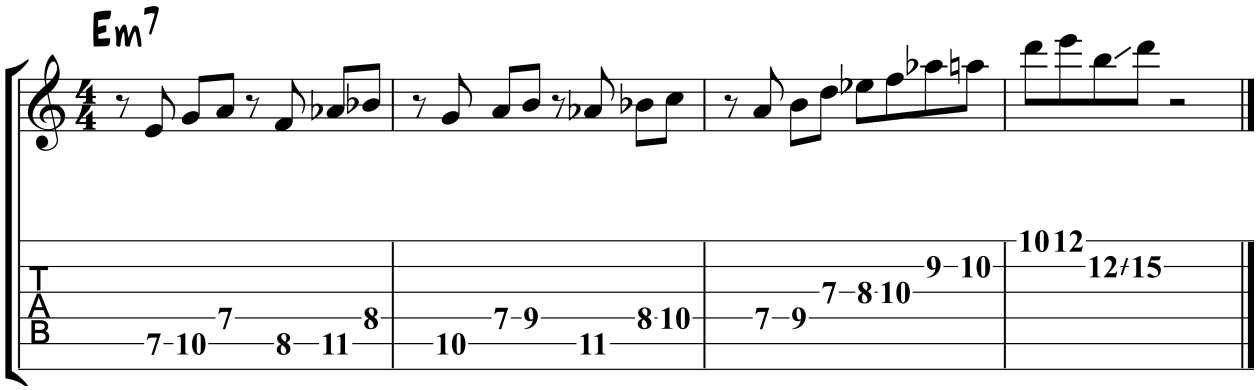
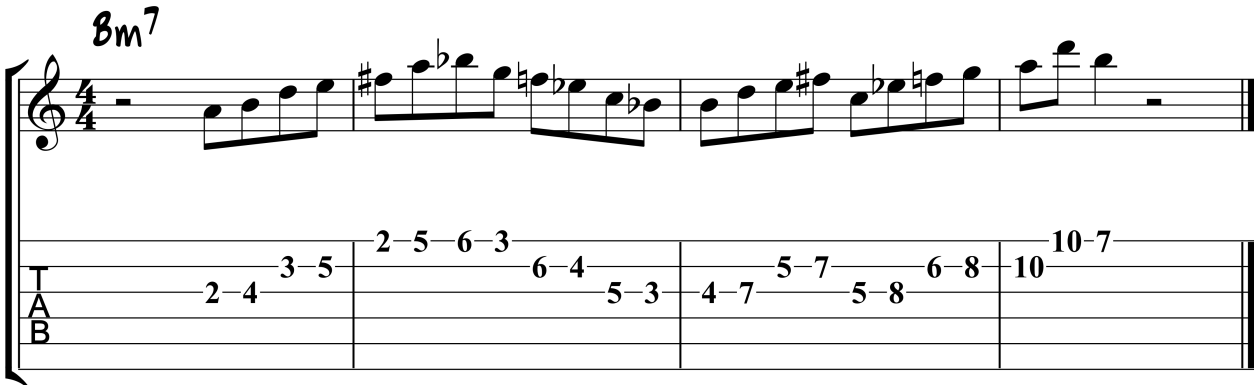


Sidestepping Examples

Audio Example 3.5



Audio Example 3.6



Audio Example 3.7