



Dario Cortese



20 ROCK LICKS



as appeared on GT175

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by Dario Cortese

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Ex 01: Chuck Berry / Angus Young

This lick is one of those 'must know' rock lick. It's easy and it sounds great. From Chuck Berry to Slash, from Angus Young to Paul Gilbert they all played this line. All down-strokes and lots of energy! [back to index](#)

♩ = 120 C⁵

T A B

□ □ □

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Ex 02: Jimmy Page / Jeff Beck

This is another classic lick that has been used many times. Mr Jimmy Page put it in 'Stairway to Heaven' solo as well. You can decide whether you want all the notes ringing out (using a mini barre') or not (rolling the index finger). [back to index](#)

♩ = 90 C⁵

T A B

□ □ ∇ □ ∇ □ ∇ □ ∇ □ ∇ □

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Ex 03: Jimmy Page / Slash

Another 'repertoire' lick that you can't live without if you wanna be a rock player. This one has been played countless times and very often is association with a wah pedal (Kirk Hammet anyone?). [back to index](#)

♩ = 90 C⁵

T A B

□ ∇ □ ∇

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Ex 04: Jimmy Page / Slash 2

This is a variation of Ex 03. Slash used it in 'Sweet Child of Mine' with a wah pedal. If you're struggling to get the fast triplet up to speed you can easily play a pull off on the 2nd string (between the 11th and the 8th). That should make it easier. [back to index](#)

♩ = 90 C⁵

full 8 11 8 10 11 8 11 8 10 11 8 11 8 10 11 8

□ V □ V □ V □ V

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Ex 05: Jimmy Page / Slash 3

Probably one of the most common rock licks ever. I used alternate picking but some players prefer to play the first 3 notes using all down strokes (three consecutive downstrokes). Try both and see which one you feel more natural. [back to index](#)

♩ = 90 C⁵

full 8 11 8 10 8 11 8 10 8 11 8 10 8 11 8 11

□ □ V □

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Ex 06: Lynyrd Skynyrd

This lick has been played by many guitarists. Lynyrd Skynyrd have it on the famous 'Free Bird' solo, Iron Maiden put it everywhere and even Nuno Bettencourt used it in his 'Get The Funk Out'. You can also use the blues scale instead of the minor pentatonic. To do that just play the 11 fret on the G string instead of the 10th. [back to index](#)

♩ = 140 C⁵

11 8 10 8 11 8 10 8 11 8 10 8 11 8 10 8 11

□ □ V □ □ V

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Ex 07: Jimi Hendrix

This is very common rock/blues lick in the style of Jimi Hendrix. Bend the 11th fret on the 2nd string using your 3rd finger. Whilst still bending try to catch the 3rd string with your 2nd finger (this will result in a pre bend on the 10) and release it down. If done properly this should sound like a bend that goes up followed by another that goes down (release). [back to index](#)

♩ = 90 C⁵

T
A
B

10 8 8 11 10 (10) 8 11

full full full 1/4 full

□ ∇ □ □ □ □ □

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Ex 08: Jimmy Page

Wide bends are a trademark of blues and rock but not many people use them frequently most likely for the lack of confidence with such a physical technique. Make sure the motion for any bend comes from the wrist without any movement coming from the fingers. [back to index](#)

♩ = 90 C⁵

T
A
B

10 8 8 11 8 12 8 8 10

full 1 1/2 full 1/4

∇ □ ∇ □ ∇ □ ∇ ∇ □

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Ex 11: Ritchie Blackmore

This is a very typical lick for Mr Deep Purple. Note the grace note on beat 3 of the 3rd bar. That is a very famous Blackmore embellishment which is like a tiny trademark. [back to index](#)

♩ = 110 C⁵

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Ex 12: Mark Knopfler

This lick is played with just index and thumb of the picking hand (thumb is 'p' whereas index is 'i'). Mark Knopfler played this lick everywhere on the first few Dire Straits records. Such an awesome lick! [back to index](#)

♩ = 140 C⁵

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Ex 13: Andy Timmons

Andy Timmons is a very modern but also very traditional guitarist. This line shows a very traditional technical approach but the notes choice shows a much modern edge. This is recorded over a C power chord but sounds fantastic also on Cm or Cm9. [back to index](#)

♩ = 140 C⁵

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Ex 14: Steve Lukather

This is quite a modern line from Mr. Session Man. It's based around a Cm7 arpeggio but the chromaticism makes it sound quite fusiony. Make sure you follow the picking directions and legato marks accurately. [back to index](#)

♩ = 120 C⁵ 8^{va}

T
A
B

15 17 16 15 18 17 16 15 18 16 18 15 16 17 17

V ∩ ∩ ∩ V ∩ V ∩ V ∩ V ∩ V ∩ V

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Ex 15: Eric Johnson

This is a typical pentatonic line inspired by Eric Johnson. He often plays this kind of cascading pentatonics (this one is built using group of 6 notes but he often uses irregular groups such as 3, 5 or 7 notes) at the speed of light. Approach this one slowly and build the speed over a period of time. [back to index](#)

♩ = 120 C⁵ 8^{va}

T
A
B

18 15 17 15 16 15 17 15 17 15 17 15 17 15 18 15

∩ V ∩ V ∩ V ∩ V ∩ V ∩ V ∩ V ∩ V ∩ V ∩ V ∩

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Ex 16: Andy Timmons 2

This is quite a modern line inspired by Andy Timmons. Note the heavy use of legato techniques such as slide, hammer on and pull off often combined with bending. [back to index](#)

♩ = 120 C⁵

T
A
B

10 8 8 10 8 6 8 6 4 5 4 6 11 8

∩ V ∩ V ∩ V ∩ V ∩ V ∩

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Ex 17: Dann Huff

This line seems to be very common amongst session players. Dann Huff, Mike Landau, Carl Verheyen and many others have used it extensively. It features lots of bendings, legato and slides. Can be used over a power chord or a Cm/Cm9 chord. [back to index](#)

♩ = 90 C⁵ All content is © Dario Cortese - www.dariocortese.com

15 (1/2) 13 (1/2) 15\13 (full) 11 (full) 10 (1/2) 11 10\8 7 (7) 10 8 10 8 10

□ □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V V V □ V □

Ex 18: Jimmy Page riff style

Example 18 is built in the style of Led Zeppelin's guitarist Jimmy Page. Especially in the first few albums Jimmy would often play riff based around the blues or pentatonic scale. [back to index](#)

♩ = 105 A⁵ All content is © Dario Cortese - www.dariocortese.com

0 3 0 4 0 5 0 6 7

□ V V □ V □ V □ □ □

Ex 19: Ritchie Blackmore riff style

This is Ritchie Blackmore style riff. He would have probably played something similar in the '80s. Note that every power chord (double stop) is played with an up stroke to get a much more aggressive tone. It's very strange at first but once you get use to it you'll love the sound! [back to index](#)

♩ = 120 A⁵ E⁵ All content is © Dario Cortese - www.dariocortese.com

1. 2. E⁵

P.M.----- P.M.-----

0 0 0 2 0 0 5 4 0 0 0 2 7 5 0 2 0 2 3 2 0 2 0 2 1 0 3 2 2 0

□ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □

Ex 20: Slash riff style

We all know that Slash is a fantastic riff maker. This one is based around the A blues scale and uses a similar picking style as the previous example. Once more, give yourself a little time to get familiar with the picking directions. [back to index](#)

♩ = 160 A⁵

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