Minor Pentatonic
Technical Exercises  Treble Clef
Exercises for developing technique and maintaining fluency

Introduction
Section 1 – C minor
Section 2 – F minor
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Section 9 – E minor
Section 10 – A minor
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Section 13 Chord Charts - Suggested harmonies for scale practice

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Introduction

The minor pentatonic, along with the blues scale, are quite likely the most used (and abused) scales in the jazz education lexicon. So why produce a book of exercises intended to develop minor pentatonic facility? It is my contention that the minor pentatonic is not overused but rather is underused effectively. The minor pentatonic is inherently ambiguous in the harmony it sounds having no tritone present and working with minimal clashes over multiple chords. It has a long-standing tradition of use as a blues progression staple. It is an invaluable tool for teaching melodic shape and phrasing. If you think of the minor pentatonic as a high-powered sports car, driven only on Sundays by the proverbial “little old lady” to church, you get the idea. The intent of these exercises is to get that car out on the Autobahn and see what it can really do.

The exercises are arranged by key moving in fourths. You may wish to find your own order for working on them. Practicing a key a day is highly recommended. Key signatures are included as the parallel major to the minor pentatonic. (ex. F minor pentatonic = key signature of F major) This is intentional and relates to how I suggest students learn scales and chord nomenclature. Additionally, I use a Bb minor pentatonic on Bb blues progressions all the time and have never seen a Bb blues with a key signature of five flats. In terms of real world applications, it did not make sense to use minor key signatures.

I highly recommend practicing with somebody if possible. All exercises are repeated. By trading, mistakes will be more likely to be corrected prior to becoming habit.

These exercises are not licks or patterns to be memorized and performed as a part of any solo. They are intended to provide enough technical facility, melodic shape and harmonic awareness to allow a student to better accomplish whatever he or she is hearing.

**Exercises 1-18 Preparatory Exercises:** These are possibly the most technically demanding of the exercises and can be practiced with any of the chord progressions at the end of the book.
Exercises 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated): Short phrases that sound complete are a means to solo development and creating long phrases of substance. Practice these over a medium tempo blues progression, swing hard and work to change them up on the repeat. (dynamics, articulation, etc.)

Exercises 41-54 2 Bar Phrases (repeated): These are a continuation and extension of the previous exercises.

Exercises 55-59 Modal with Chromatic Side-Slip: Practice these exercises with the modal harmony and with the ii-V-I progressions. No articulation is included, accent upper notes in lines.

Exercises 60-67 ii7-V7alt-Imaj7: These exercises apply a chromatic side-slip to create an altered dominant sound on a major ii-V-I. Play a minor pentatonic starting on the 5th of the ii chord, side-slip up a half-step for the V7 (effectively a tritone substitute) and resolve back down a half-step for the tonic chord.

As a general rule, it usually takes six or so months of practice for any new concept or technique to really begin to show in performance. Be patient and diligent!

Be sure to record performances and practice sessions once you begin improvise using this material. If you notice, (or someone else comments…) that it sure sounds like you are playing a lot of pentatonics, reevaluate your approach. Improvisations are melodies. Melodies can certainly contain pentatonic material but should not sound like a pentatonic exercise. Never sacrifice melody for technique.

Good luck!

Craig Fraedrich
February, 2010
Ex. 1-18 Preparatory Exercises

Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises

Chapter 1 - C Minor Pentatonic

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Chapt. I - C Minor

Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)
Chapt. I - C Minor

Ex. 55-59 Modal with Chromatic Side-slip

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Chapt. 1 - C Minor

Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-Imaj7

Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises - 9

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Chapt. 2- F Minor

Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)
Chapt. 2- F Minor

Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)

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Chapt. 2- F Minor

Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)
Chapt. 2- F Minor

Ex. 55-59 Modal with Chromatic Side-slip

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Chapt. 2 - F Minor

Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-Imaj7

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Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises

Chapter 3 - Bb Minor Pentatonic

Ex. 1-18 Preparatory Exercises

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Chapt. 3 Bb Minor

Ex. 1-18 Preparatory Exercises

Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises - 3
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Chapt. 3 Bb Minor

Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)
Chapt. 3 Bb Minor

Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)
Chapt. 3 Bb Minor

Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)
Chapt. 3 Bb Minor

Ex. 55-59 Modal with Chromatic Side-slip

143

147

151

155

159

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Chapt. 3 Bb Minor ➔

Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-Imaj7

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Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises

Chapter 4 - Eb Minor Pentatonic
Chapt. 4 - Eb Minor  

Ex. 1-18 Preparatory Exercises

Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises - 3

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Chapt. 4 - Eb Minor

Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)
Chapt. 4 - Eb Minor

Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)
Chapt. 4 - Eb Minor

Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)
Chapt. 4 - Eb Minor

Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)
Chapt. 4 - Eb Minor

Ex. 55-59 Modal with Chromatic Side-slip

Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises - 8
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Chapt. 4 - Eb Minor

Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-Imaj7

Ab Min7 (E flat min pentatonic)

Gb Maj7 (E flat min pentatonic)

Ab Min7

Gb Maj7

Ab Min7

Gb Maj7

Ab Min7

Gb Maj7

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Chapt. 4 - Eb Minor

Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-Imaj7

Abmin7

Gbma7

Abmin7

Gbma7

Abmin7

Gbma7

Abmin7

Gbma7

Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises - 10
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Chapter 5 - Ab Minor Pentatonic
Chapt. 5 - Ab Minor

Ex. 1-18 Preparatory Exercises

Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises - 2
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Chapt. 5 - Ab Minor

Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)
Chapt. 5 - Ab Minor

Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)

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Chapt. 5 - Ab Minor

Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)
Chapt. 5 - Ab Minor ▶

Ex. 55-59 Modal with Chromatic Side-slip

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Chapt. 5 - Ab Minor

Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-Imaj7

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Chapter 6 - C# Minor Pentatonic
Chapt. 6 - C# Minor

Ex. 1-18 Preparatory Exercises

Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises - 2
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Chapt. 6 - C# Minor

Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)
Chapt. 6 - C# Minor

Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)

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Chapt. 6 - C# Minor

Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)
Chapt. 6 - C# Minor

Ex. 55-59 Modal with Chromatic Side-slip

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Chapt. 6 - C# Minor

Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-Imaj7

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Ex. 1-18 Preparatory Exercises

**Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises**

**Chapter 7 - F# Minor Pentatonic**

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Chapt. 7 - F# Minor

Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)
Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)
Chapt. 7 - F# Minor

Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)
Chapt. 7 - F# Minor

Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-Imaj7

Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises - 9
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Chapt. 8 - B Minor

Ex. 1-18 Preparatory Exercises

Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises - 2
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Chapt. 8 - B Minor

Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)

Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises - 4
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Chapt. 8 - B Minor

Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)
Chapt. 8 - B Minor

Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)

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Chapt. 8 - B Minor

Ex. 55-59 Modal with Chromatic Side-slip

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Chapter 9 - E Minor Pentatonic

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Chapt. 9 - E Minor

Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)
Chapt. 9 - E Minor

Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)
Chapt. 9 - E Minor

Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)
Ex. 55-59 Modal with Chromatic Side-slip

Chapt. 9 - E Minor

E MIN

E MIN

E MIN

E MIN

E MIN

E MIN

Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises - 8
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Chapt. 9 - E Minor

Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-Imaj7

Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises - 9

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Chapt. 9 - E Minor

Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-Imaj7

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Chapter 10 - A Minor Pentatonic
Chapt. 10 - A Minor

Ex. 1-18 Preparatory Exercises

Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises - 3
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Chapt. 10 - A Minor

Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)
Chapt. 10 - A Minor

Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)

Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises - 7
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Ex. 55-59 Modal with Chromatic Side-slip

Chapt. 10 - A Minor

Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises - 8
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Chapt. 10 - A Minor

Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-Imaj7

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Chapter 11 - D Minor Pentatonic
Chapt. 11 D - Minor

Ex. 1-18 Preparatory Exercises

Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises - 2
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Chapt. 11 D - Minor

Ex. 1-18 Preparatory Exercises

Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises - 3

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Chapt. 11 D - Minor

Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)
Chapt. 11 D - Minor

Ex. 41-54 Two Bar Phrases (repeated)
Chapt. 11 D - Minor

Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-Imaj7

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Chapt. 11 D - Minor

Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-Imaj7

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Ex. 1-18 Preparatory Exercises

Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises
Chapter 12 - G Minor Pentatonic

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Chapt. 12- G Minor

Ex. 19-40 One Bar Phrases (repeated)
Chapt. 12- G Minor

Ex. 55-59 Modal with Chromatic Side-slip

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Chapt. 12 - G Minor

Ex. 60-67 ii7-V7alt-Imaj7

Min7 (Gmin pentatonic)

Bb Maj7 (Gmin pentatonic)

C Min7

Bb Maj7

C Min7

Bb Maj7

C Min7

Bb Maj7

Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises - 9

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Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises
Suggest Chord Changes for Practice

1. Modal (Works For All, Best For 1-18)
   - C Min7
   - G Min7
   - Ab Maj7
   - F7sus4
   - Bb7sus4

2. Blues (Works For All, Best For Ex. 19-54)
   - C7
   - F7
   - C7
   - G Min7
   - C7
   - A7#9
   - D Min7
   - G7
   - C7
   - D Min7
   - G7

3. II-V-I (Ex. 55-67)
   - C Min7
   - Bb7#5
   - Eb Maj7

4. II-V7sus-I (Ex. 1-54)
   - C Min7
   - Bb7sus4
   - Eb Maj7
Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises
Suggest Chord Changes for Practice

1. Modal (Works for All, Best for 1-18)
   F Min7
   Bb Min7
   C Min7
   Db Maj7
   Bb7sus4
   Eb7sus4

2. Blues (Works for All, Best for Ex. 19-54)
   F7
   Bb7
   F7
   G Min7
   F7
   D7♯9
   G Min7
   C7
   F7
   G Min7
   C7

3. II-V-I (Ex. 55-67)
   Bb Min7
   Eb7♯5
   Ab Maj7

4. II-V7sus-1 (Ex. 1-54)
   Bb Min7
   Eb7sus4
   Ab Maj7
Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises
Suggest Chord Changes for Practice

1. Modal (Works for all, Best for 1-18)
   - Bb MIN7
   - Eb MIN7
   - F MIN7
   - Gb MA7
   - Eb 7sus4
   - Ab 7sus4

2. Blues (Works for all, Best for Ex. 19-54)
   - Bb7
   - Eb7
   - Bb7
   - F MIN7
   - Bb7
   - G7#9
   - C MIN7
   - F7
   - Bb7
   - C MIN7
   - F7

3. 11-V-1 (Ex. 55-67)
   - Eb MIN7
   - Ab7#9
   - Gb MA7

4. 11-V7sus-1 (Ex. 1-54)
   - Eb MIN7
   - Ab7sus4
   - Gb MA7
Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises
Suggest Chord Changes for Practice

1. MODAL (WORKS FOR ALL, BEST FOR 1-18)
   - Eb MIN7
   - Ab MIN7
   - Bb MIN7
   - Bb MA7

2. BLUES (WORKS FOR ALL, BEST FOR EX. 19-54)
   - Eb7
   - Ab7
   - Eb7
   - Ab7
   - C7#9

3. 11-V-1 (EX. 55-67)
   - Ab MIN7
   - Db7#5
   - Gb MA7

4. 11-V7sus-1 (EX. 1-54)
   - Ab MIN7
   - Db7sus4
   - Gb MA7

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Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises
Suggest Chord Changes for Practice

1. Modal (Works for ALL, Best for 1-18)
   Abmin7  Gbm7
   Ebm7  Emaj7
   Gb7sus4  Gbm7sus4

2. Blues (Works for ALL, Best for Ex. 19-54)
   Ab7  Gb7  Ab7  Ebmin7  Ab7
   Gb7  Ab7  F7#9
   Bbm7  Eb7  Ab7  Bbm7  Eb7

3. II-V-I (Ex. 55-67)
   Gbm7  Gb7\(\flat\)\(5\)  Bbmaj7

4. II-V7sus6-I (Ex. 1-54)
   Gbm7  Gb7sus6  Bbmaj7
Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises
Suggest Chord Changes for Practice

1. MODAL (WORKS FOR ALL, BEST FOR 1-18)
   C#MIN7    F#MIN7
   G#MIN7    A MA7
   F#7SU4    B7SU4

2. BLUES (WORKS FOR ALL, BEST FOR EX. 19-54)
   C#7        F#7        C#7        G#MIN7        C#7
   F#7        C#7        A#7#9
   D#MIN7     G#7        C#7        D#MIN7        G#7

3. 11-V-1 (EX. 55-67)
   F#MIN7        B7♭9
   G#7          E MA7

4. 11-V7SU5-1 (EX. 1-54)
   F#MIN7        B7SU4
   E MA7
Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises
Suggest Chord Changes for Practice

1. MODAL (Works for All, Best for 1-18)
   - F#m7
   - Bm7
   - C#m7
   - Dm7
   - B7
   - E7

2. BLUES (Works for All, Best for Ex. 19-54)
   - F#7
   - B7
   - F#7
   - C#m7
   - F#7
   - G#m7
   - C#7
   - F#7
   - G#m7
   - C#7

3. 11-V-1 (Ex. 55-67)
   - Bm7
   - E7
   - A7

4. 11-V76US-1 (Ex. 1-54)
   - Bm7
   - E7
   - A7

Chapt. 7 - F# Minor
Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises
Suggest Chord Changes for Practice

1. **Modal (Works for All, Best for 1-18)**
   - E Min7
   - E Min7
   - E7sus4
   - A7sus4

2. **Blues (Works for All, Best for Ex. 19-54)**
   - B7
   - E7
   - B7
   - F# Min7
   - B7
   - E7
   - B7
   - G#7#9
   - B7
   - C# Min7
   - F#7
   - B7
   - C# Min7
   - F#7

3. **11-V-1 (Ex. 55-67)**
   - E Min7
   - A79
   - D Maj7

4. **11-V7sus-1 (Ex. 1-54)**
   - E Min7
   - A7sus4
   - D Maj7
Chapt. 9 - E Minor

Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises
Suggest Chord Changes for Practice

1. Modal (Works for All, Best for 1-18)
   
   Modal (Works for All, Best for 1-18)
   
   E Min7
   
   B Min7
   
   A7sus4

2. Blues (Works for All, Best for Ex. 19-54)
   
   Blues (Works for All, Best for Ex. 19-54)
   
   E7
   A7
   E7
   B Min7

3. II-V-I (Ex. 55-67)
   
   II-V-I (Ex. 55-67)
   
   A Min7
   D7
   G Maj7

4. II-V7sus-I (Ex. 1-54)
   
   II-V7sus-I (Ex. 1-54)
   
   A Min7
   D7sus4
   G Maj7
Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises
Suggest Chord Changes for Practice

1. **Modal (Works For All, Best For 1-18)**
   - Amin7
   - Dmin7

2. **Blues (Works For All, Best For Ex. 19-54)**
   - A7
   - D7
   - A7
   - Emin7
   - A7

3. **11-V-1 (Ex. 55-67)**
   - Dmin7
   - G7#9
   - Cmaj7

4. **11-V7sus-1 (Ex. 1-54)**
   - Dmin7
   - G7sus4
   - Cmaj7
Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises
Suggest Chord Changes for Practice

1 Modal (Works For All, Best For 1-18)

2 Blues (Works For All, Best For Ex. 19-54)

3 II-V-I (Ex. 55-67)

4 II-V7sus-1 (Ex. 1-54)
Chapt. 12 - G Minor

Minor Pentatonic Technical Exercises
Suggest Chord Changes for Practice

1. Modal (Works for All, Best for 1-18)
   - G Min7
   - C Min7

2. Blues (Works for All, Best for Ex. 19-54)
   - G7
   - C7
   - G7
   - D Min7

3. 11-V-1 (Ex. 55-67)
   - G Min7
   - F7#9
   - Bb Maj7

4. 11-V7sus-1 (Ex. 1-54)
   - G Min7
   - F7sus4
   - Bb Maj7