



Play Rhythm Guitar

Like Hendrix, Frusciante and Mayer

LESSON WORKBOOK

The Tabs

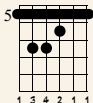
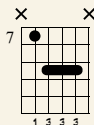
Here's the tab for the full progression - first the plain version, then the embellished one with the hammer-ons, pull-offs and double stops woven in.

Exercise 6.2.1 A simple I – V – vi – IV chord progression

♩ = 80

6.2.1

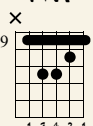
A

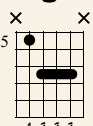
E



F#m



D

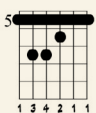



And here's the embellished version:

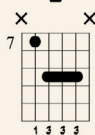
Exercise 6.2.2 An embellished I – V – vi – IV chord progression

6.2.2

A



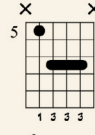
E



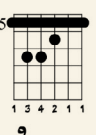
F#m



D



A



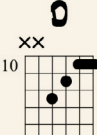
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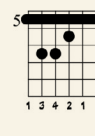
F#m



D



A



The musical score consists of four systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The first system shows a melodic line in the treble and a bass line in the bass. The second system continues the progression. The third system shows a more complex bass line with double stops. The fourth system concludes the exercise with a final A major chord.

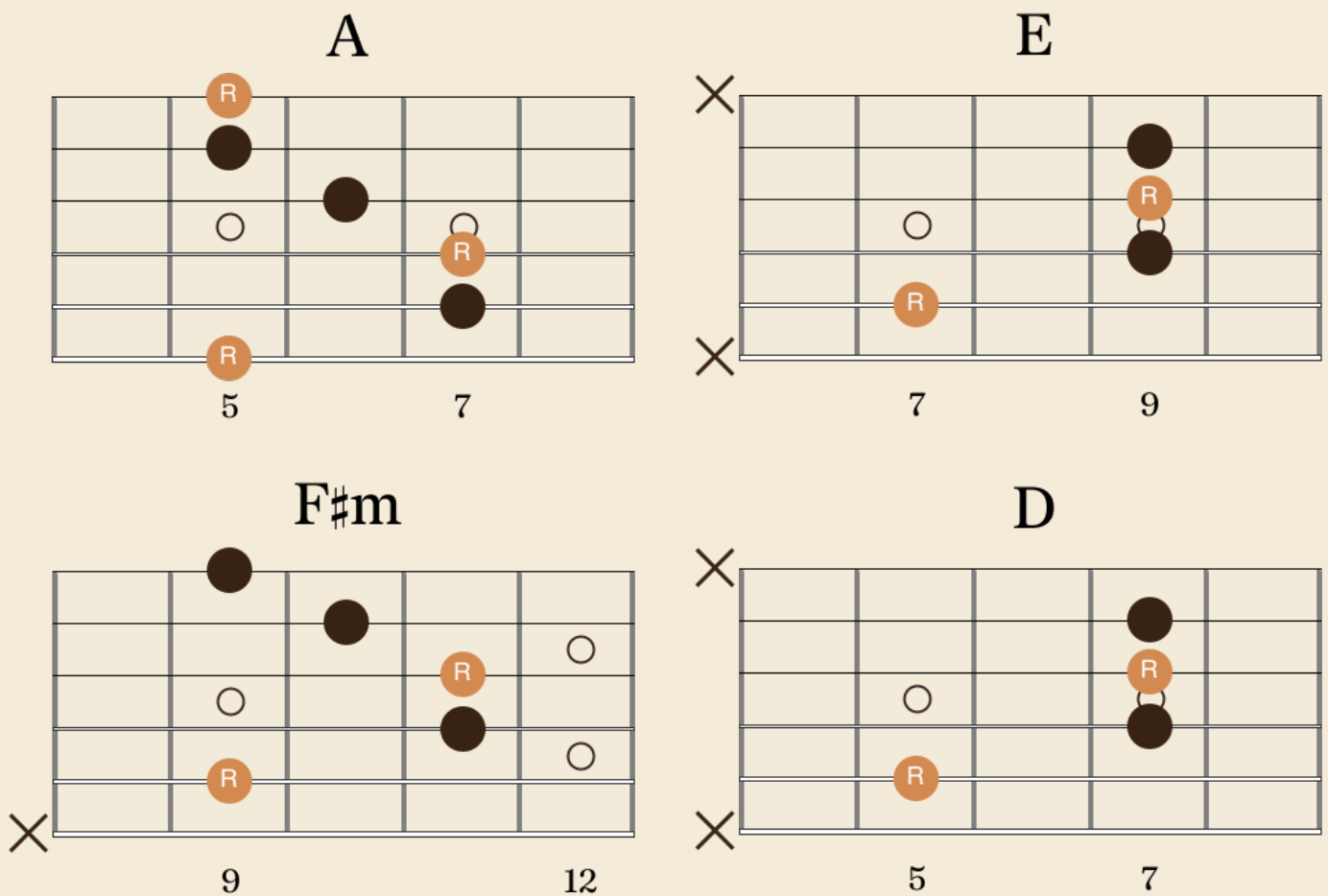
The Chord Progression

Here's what's happening harmonically.

We're playing a I-V-vi-IV progression in the key of A major. So the chords are built from the 1st, 5th, 6th and 4th degrees of the A major scale, which gives us four chords: A major (I), E major (V), F#m (vi) and D major (IV).

On their own, these are four chords you've probably played a hundred times. It's what we add around them, the embellishments from Exercise 6.2.2, that turns them into the kind of rhythm part you hear from players like Hendrix, Frusciante and Mayer.

Here are the voicings for the chords used in the lesson, with the root notes for each chord highlighted in light orange:



The Embellishments

Once we have these chord shapes, we can embellish them by targeting notes from a connected pentatonic scale.

So when you're playing a major chord, you can add embellishments using notes from the matching major pentatonic scale. When you're playing a minor chord, you can pull them from the matching minor pentatonic scale instead.

For this progression, that means:

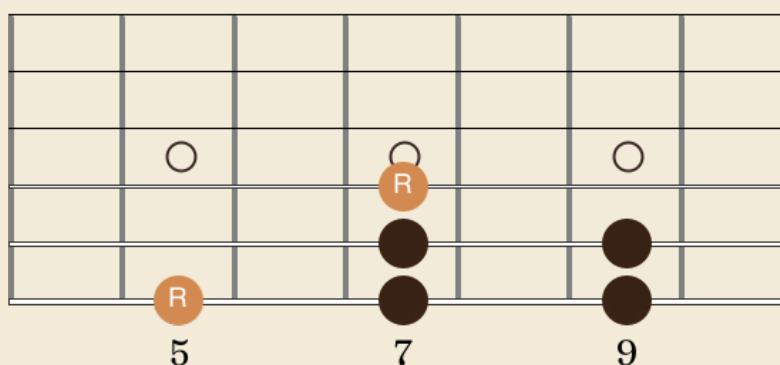
- A major chord → A major pentatonic
- E major chord → E major pentatonic
- F#m chord → F# minor pentatonic
- D major chord → D major pentatonic

It's simple in theory, but it's what separates a boring and repetitive rhythm part that just sits there from one that feels alive.

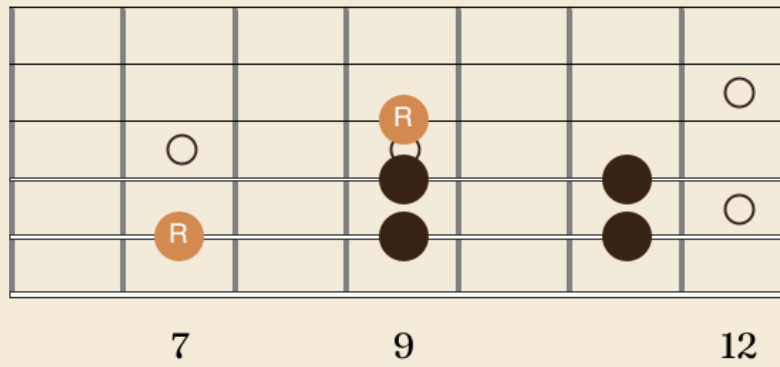
Below, you'll find fragments of each pentatonic scale that connect to the chord, with the root notes again highlighted in light orange. Match these up over the chords and you can have fun creating your own licks and fills.

And remember, this framework works for any progression, not just this one. Next time you're playing through a song, try spotting which pentatonic scale matches each chord as you go. You'll be able to take any standard chord progression and give it a bit of that Hendrix, Frusciante and Mayer magic!

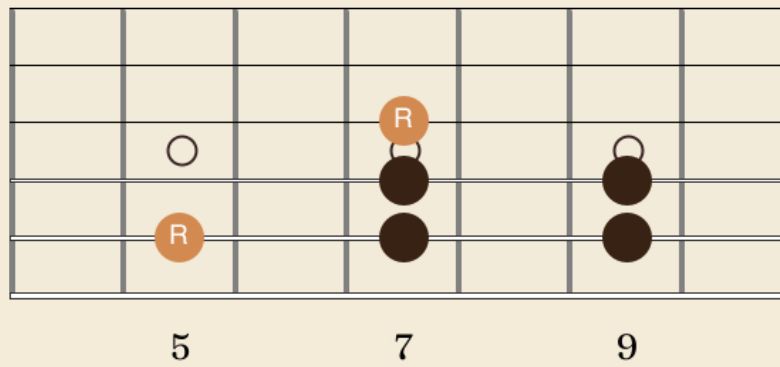
A Major Pentatonic



E Major Pentatonic



D Major Pentatonic



F# Minor Pentatonic

