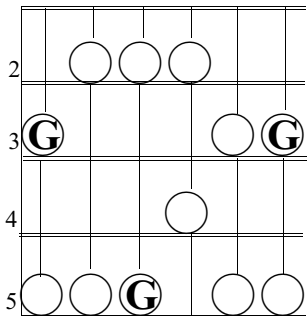


Phrasing/Root Notes

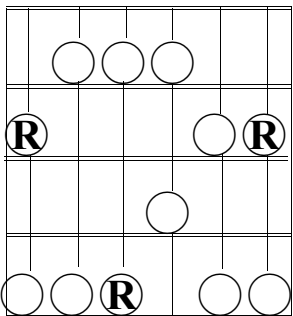
After learning a few standard riffs, the next step will be to focus on *phrasing* these riffs. If a riff can be compared to a ‘musical sentence’, then phrasing is how ‘punctuation’ can be applied to a guitar solo. Without phrasing, a guitar solo will sound rambling and disorganized in very much the same way as a ‘run-on sentence’ does with language. This lesson will focus on the foundation of phrasing technique: the *root note*.

Root Notes

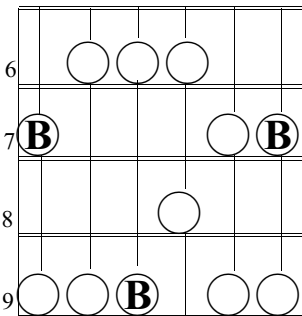
In the Key of ‘G’ Major, ‘G’ would be considered the *root note* of that key. Within the standard ‘G’ Pentatonic Major box pattern, there are three ‘G’ root notes located on the first, fourth, and sixth strings (*below left*). These *fundamental root note positions* on the first, fourth, and sixth strings (*below center*) remain the same for any key. In the Key of ‘B’ for example, the three ‘B’ root notes would be located in the same root note positions, only four frets higher from the Key of ‘G’ (*below right*).



‘G’ Root Notes
(Pentatonic Major Scale)



Root/Octave Pattern
(Any Fret Position)

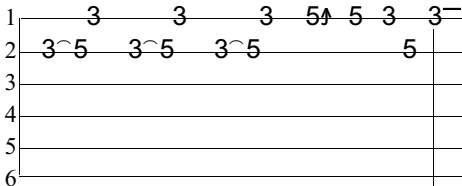


‘B’ Root Notes
(Pentatonic Major Scale)

Root Note Focus - Standard Blues Riffs

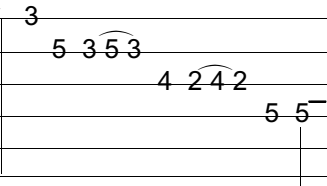
A *root note focus* establishes the mood or tone of a scale. ‘The Country Riff’ and the ‘Descending Riff’ both have a root note focus, with ‘G’ being the last sustained note played in each riff (*below*). The ascending and descending riffs using the ‘G’ Pentatonic Major box pattern (*Pentatonic Major Scale-1*) also begin and end on ‘G’ root notes. When combining these riffs, sustaining the root notes provides more space or ‘breathing room’ between riffs, which is essential to developing phrasing technique.

‘The Country Riff’



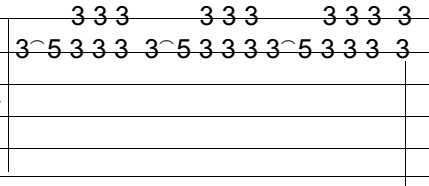
Root

‘The Descending Riff’



Root

‘Doubletop Riff’



Root

Summary

So far, the foundation for building a music vocabulary has been set by learning some standard riffs (‘*musical sentences*’), knowing how to phrase these riffs (‘*musical punctuation*’), and then combining riffs (‘*musical paragraphs*’).

Riffs	=	‘Sentences’
Root Notes	=	‘Punctuation’
Combined Riffs	=	‘Paragraphs’