

40 rhythms to make your solo breathe

With the same three notes you can play 40 different phrases. What sets them apart is not the notes: it is the rhythm.

How to use this workbook

- **Hear the cell.** On each track, a guitar plays a one-bar rhythm, twice.
- **When the bell rings, it is your turn.** Repeat that same rhythm for two bars, with the band playing and the beat running.
- **Take it into your solo.** Use the cell over the mode or scale you are practicing.
- Each track has 5 cells from the same family: 8 tracks, 40 cells.

How to read the grid

You don't need to read staff notation. Each bar has 8 boxes: the 4 numbered ones are the beats and the 4 marked "&" are the half-beats. **Gold box = you play.** Dark box = rest.

Ex.

	1	&	2	&	3	&	4	&
	Gold box	Dark box	Gold box	Gold box	Gold box	Dark box	Gold box	Dark box

The 3 notes

Always the same three notes, in an order that repeats: A, C, E, C... (the A minor triad). The harmony underneath is Am7.

e	-0-----	E (string 1, open)
B	-1-----	C (string 2, fret 1)
G	-2-----	A (string 3, fret 2)

Every time you play a gold box, play the next note in the sequence: A, C, E, C, A, C, E, C...

THE 40 CELLS

1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &

Family 1 · Quarter notes · Track 1

Hits on the beat, without filling the gaps. The base of all phrasing.

1.1	Gold	Dark	Gold	Dark	Gold	Dark	Gold	Dark
1.2	Gold	Dark	Gold	Dark	Gold	Dark	Dark	Dark
1.3	Gold	Dark	Dark	Dark	Gold	Dark	Gold	Dark
1.4	Gold	Dark	Gold	Dark	Dark	Dark	Gold	Dark
1.5	Gold	Dark	Dark	Dark	Gold	Dark	Dark	Dark

Family 2 · Eighth notes · Track 2

Even notes, two per beat. The rhythm that sounds like a scale.

2.1	Gold	Gold	Gold	Gold	Gold	Gold	Gold	Gold
2.2	Gold	Gold	Gold	Gold	Gold	Gold	Dark	Dark
2.3	Gold	Gold	Dark	Dark	Gold	Gold	Gold	Gold
2.4	Gold	Gold	Gold	Gold	Dark	Dark	Gold	Gold
2.5	Gold	Dark	Gold	Gold	Gold	Gold	Gold	Gold

Family 3 · Offbeats · Track 3

Most hits land between the beats, on the "and". It pushes the phrase forward.

3.1	Dark	Gold	Dark	Gold	Dark	Gold	Dark	Gold
3.2	Dark	Gold	Dark	Gold	Dark	Gold	Dark	Dark
3.3	Dark	Gold	Dark	Gold	Dark	Dark	Gold	Dark
3.4	Dark	Gold	Dark	Dark	Gold	Dark	Gold	Dark
3.5	Dark	Gold	Dark	Dark	Dark	Gold	Dark	Gold

THE 40 CELLS

1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &

Family 4 · Syncopations · Track 4

The hit lands where you don't expect it and the pulse still feels steady. Instant groove.

4.1	Gold	Dark	Dark	Gold	Dark	Dark	Gold	Dark
4.2	Gold	Dark	Dark	Gold	Dark	Gold	Dark	Dark
4.3	Dark	Gold	Dark	Dark	Gold	Dark	Dark	Gold
4.4	Gold	Dark	Gold	Dark	Dark	Gold	Dark	Dark
4.5	Dark	Dark	Gold	Dark	Dark	Gold	Dark	Gold

Family 5 · Anticipations · Track 5

The note arrives half a beat before the strong beat.

5.1	Gold	Dark	Gold	Dark	Gold	Dark	Dark	Gold
5.2	Gold	Dark	Dark	Gold	Gold	Dark	Dark	Gold
5.3	Gold	Dark	Gold	Dark	Dark	Gold	Dark	Gold
5.4	Gold	Dark	Dark	Dark	Gold	Dark	Gold	Gold
5.5	Gold	Gold	Dark	Gold	Dark	Dark	Gold	Gold

Family 6 · Rests with intent · Track 6

The gap is part of the phrase: breathing is playing.

6.1	Dark	Dark	Gold	Gold	Dark	Dark	Gold	Gold
6.2	Gold	Gold	Dark	Dark	Gold	Gold	Dark	Dark
6.3	Gold	Dark	Dark	Gold	Gold	Dark	Dark	Dark
6.4	Dark	Dark	Gold	Dark	Gold	Dark	Gold	Gold
6.5	Gold	Gold	Gold	Dark	Dark	Dark	Dark	Dark

THE 40 CELLS

1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &

Family 7 · Phrase and breath · Track 7

One short idea and a long silence. Question and pause.

7.1								
7.2								
7.3								
7.4								
7.5								

Family 8 · Mix · Track 8

Combines the earlier families inside a single bar.

8.1								
8.2								
8.3								
8.4								
8.5								

2 - WEEK ROUTINE

10 minutes a day

Every day: 2 min play just the 3 notes, evenly, with the click · 5 min the track of the day (listen, bell, repeat) · 2 min use one cell over your mode · 1 min note your favorite cell of the day.

1

Quarter notes

Track 1 · Quarter notes

2

Eighth notes

Track 2 · Eighth notes

3

Offbeats

Track 3 · Offbeats

4

Syncopations

Track 4 · Syncopations

5

Anticipations

Track 5 · Anticipations

6

Rests with intent

Track 6 · Rests

7

Phrase and breath

Track 7 · Phrase and breath

8

Mix

Track 8 · Mix

9

Review

Tracks 1 and 3: repeat the two you found hardest

10

Review

Tracks 2 and 4

11

Review

Tracks 5 and 6

12

Review

Tracks 7 and 8

13

Your 5 favorites

Pick 5 cells you like and play 1 bar of each, back to back, over Am7 with the click

14

Your solo

Track 8 without looking at the PDF; then improvise 8 bars using only 2 cells