

# Swift Guitar Lessons

## Top 5 Nirvana Practice Riffs For Beginners

♩ = 109

### Riff #1 - Smells Like Teen Spirit

When you think of Kurt Cobain's guitar playing, this is likely the first riff that comes to mind. For beginners, this is an excellent tune for practicing power chords and muted strums.

Musical notation for Riff #1: Smells Like Teen Spirit. The notation includes a treble clef staff and a guitar TAB staff. The key signature is three flats (B-flat major) and the time signature is 4/4. The riff consists of two measures, each repeated twice. The first measure features a sequence of chords and notes, with the guitar TAB showing fret numbers (3, 1, 3, 1, 3, 1) and 'X' marks for muted strings. The second measure features a similar sequence, with the guitar TAB showing fret numbers (6, 4, 6, 4, 6, 4) and 'X' marks for muted strings.

### Riff #2 - Come As You Are

♩ = 116

Chorus

Here we have a perfect example of Kurt's ability to create simple, but memorable riffs. As a young guitarist, learning "Come As You Are" was a right of passage, and served as an excellent rhythm and alternate picking exercise.

Musical notation for Riff #2: Come As You Are. The notation includes a treble clef staff and a guitar TAB staff. The key signature is one sharp (D major) and the time signature is 4/4. The riff consists of seven measures. The first measure features a sequence of notes, with the guitar TAB showing fret numbers (0, 0, 1) and 'X' marks for muted strings. The second measure features a similar sequence, with the guitar TAB showing fret numbers (2, 0, 2, 0, 2, 2, 1). The third measure features a similar sequence, with the guitar TAB showing fret numbers (0, 2, 0, 0, 2, 0, 1). The fourth measure features a similar sequence, with the guitar TAB showing fret numbers (2). The fifth measure features a similar sequence, with the guitar TAB showing fret numbers (0, 2, 0, 0, 2, 0, 1). The sixth measure features a similar sequence, with the guitar TAB showing fret numbers (2). The seventh measure features a similar sequence, with the guitar TAB showing fret numbers (2).

### Riff #3 - Heart Shaped Box

♩ = 90

Clean Strat

In this example, Kurt finds another ear-worm, this time using Drop-D tuning. Use this riff to develop your alternate picking accuracy across four strings.

Musical notation for Riff #3: Heart Shaped Box. The notation includes a treble clef staff and a guitar TAB staff. The key signature is one sharp (D major) and the time signature is 4/4. The riff consists of four measures. The first measure features a sequence of notes, with the guitar TAB showing fret numbers (0, 2, 2, 2, 3, 3, 3, 3). The second measure features a similar sequence, with the guitar TAB showing fret numbers (0, 0, 0, 0, 0). The third measure features a similar sequence, with the guitar TAB showing fret numbers (0, 2, 2, 2, 3, 3, 3, 3). The fourth measure features a similar sequence, with the guitar TAB showing fret numbers (0, 3, 4, 4, 0, 4, 3, 4, 0, 0). The notation includes a slur over the notes in the fourth measure, with the instruction 'sl.' above and below the staff.

## Riff #4 - All Apologies

In this example, Kurt combines another catchy melody with a hypnotic drone note in Drop-D tuning. As an exercise, this will once again challenge your alternate picking accuracy, as well as your sense of rhythm and dynamics.

13 *sl.* 14 *sl.*

let ring ----- *sl.* let ring ----- *sl.*

9 9 10 9 10 12 12 10 9 | 0 0 10 9 10 12 12 10 9

15 *sl.* 16

let ring ----- *sl.*

9 9 10 9 10 12 12 10 9 | 9 9 10 9 11 11 9 12

## Riff #5 - Lithium

♩ = 120

In this final example, we'll develop our ability to implement percussive elements, sliding power chords, and chord appregiation.

17 18

let ring

2 0 X 0 4 6 X 0 | 4 6 X 0 5 7 7 0

19 *sl.* 20 *sl.*

*sl.* let ring *sl.* let ring

5 3 5 3 5 3 5 3 7 5 7 5 0 | 4 2 4 2 4 2 4 2 7 5 7 5 0