

Harmonizing Riffs

As well as licks and melodies



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Key: C

Scale Used: C Major Pentatonic

BPM: 70 BPM

Video Tutorial: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ML5H6gRda2c>

Base Riff

♩ = 70

The Base Riff is shown in 4/4 time with a tempo of 70 BPM. It consists of four measures. The first measure starts with a first finger (1) on the C string. The notes are C4, D4, E4, G4, A4, G4, E4, D4, C4. The second measure starts with a second finger (2) on the C string. The notes are C4, D4, E4, G4, A4, G4, E4, D4, C4. The third measure starts with a third finger (3) on the C string. The notes are C4, D4, E4, G4, A4, G4, E4, D4, C4. The fourth measure starts with a fourth finger (4) on the C string. The notes are C4, D4, E4, G4, A4, G4, E4, D4, C4. The fretboard diagram below shows the fingerings for each measure: Measure 1: 0-5-4-3-2; Measure 2: 0-5-4-3-2; Measure 3: 0-5-4-3-2; Measure 4: 0-5-4-3-4-5.

- This is the foundation for what we are going to harmonize
- It is made from the C major pentatonic scale
- It contains the notes C, D, E, G, A, all the notes of the C major pentatonic scale
- Take the time to be able to play this cleanly first.

Harmonizing the Riff with 3rds

The Harmonizing the Riff with 3rds section shows two staves of music. The top staff is the base riff, and the bottom staff is the riff harmonized in 3rds. The notes in the bottom staff are E4, G4, A4, G4, E4, D4, C4, E4, G4, A4, G4, E4, D4, C4. The fretboard diagram below shows the fingerings for each measure: Measure 5: 4-3-3-2-1; Measure 6: 4-3-3-2-1; Measure 7: 4-3-3-2-1; Measure 8: 4-3-3-2-3-3.

- To play 3rds you skip one note in the scale
- The Riff on bottom is the riff harmonized in 3rds, note the riff is playing the E note on the 4th fret of the C string you can play the open E string as well.
- 3rds and 5ths are the most common harmonies

- The C scale will be stretched out over two octaves for intervals that go past the root
- Two types of 3^{rds} occur when playing, the b3rd and the 3rd interval in the major scale. The b3rd is used in minor chords, the 3rd in major chords.

- Blue represents root, red represents 3rd

- C
 - C D E F G A B C D E F G A B
- A
 - C D E F G A B C D E F G A B
- E
 - C D E F G A B C D E F G A B
- G
 - C D E F G A B C D E F G A B
- D
 - C D E F G A B C D E F G A B

Harmonizing the riff with 5ths

The image shows a musical score for a guitar riff. The top staff is a treble clef with notes on the 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th frets. Below it are two bass clef staves with fret numbers 3, 7, 5, and 5. The notation includes a large watermark 'TenthNotes'.

- To harmonize with 5ths you will write the scale out, pick your root note, skip three notes and then play the 4th.
- There is only one type of 5th interval that occurs in the major scale
- 5th is the most common interval used with the root while playing bass

- Blue represents root, red represents 5th

- C
 - C D E F G A B C D E F G A B
- A
 - C D E F G A B C D E F G A B
- E
 - C D E F G A B C D E F G A B
- G
 - C D E F G A B C D E F G A B
- D
 - C D E F G A B C D E F G A B

Harmonizing the riff with 4ths

- The 4ths have a slightly more dissonant sound than the 5ths and the 3rds
- There is only one type of 4th that occurs in the major scale
- To identify the 4th play your note, skip the notes two and then play the 3rd note.

- Blue represents root, red represents 4th

- C

○ C D E F G A B C D E F G A B

- A

○ C D E F G A B C D E F G A B

- E

○ C D E F G A B C D E F G A B

- G

○ C D E F G A B C D E F G A B

- D

○ C D E F G A B C D E F G A B

Harmonizing the riff with Octaves

- Octaves are fun because they are just the same note just 12 notes above, so if they note is C you play another C, just the one that is a full octave above the root.

- C
 - o C D E F G A B C D E F G A B

Homework

- You have to harmonize the riff with 2nds, 6ths and 7ths, to help I will give you the C note of each
- 2nds - the next note in the scale
- C
 - o C D E F G A B
- 6ths - Here you skip 4 notes and play the 5th
- C
 - o C D E F G A B
- 7ths - skip 5 notes and play the 6th, the easier way with this one thought is to just look at it the other way, what is the note that is below in pitch, that makes it much faster.
- C
 - o C D E F G A B

Apply these ideas next time you are jamming with a friend or if you are recording home and want to give your lick, riff, or melody some extra power and size.



en Thumbs