Harmonizing Riffs

As well as licks and melodies



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Key: C

Scale Used: C Major Pentatonic

BPM: 70 BPM

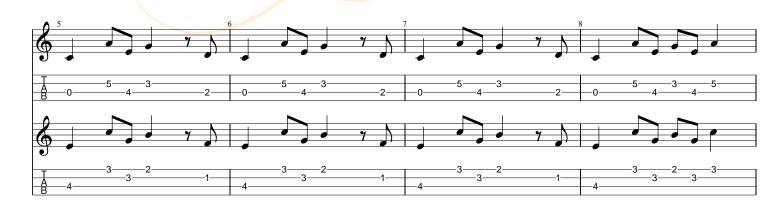
Video Tutorial: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ML5H6gRda2c

Base Riff



- 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 note so the C major pentatonic scale
- Take the time to be able to play this cleanly first.

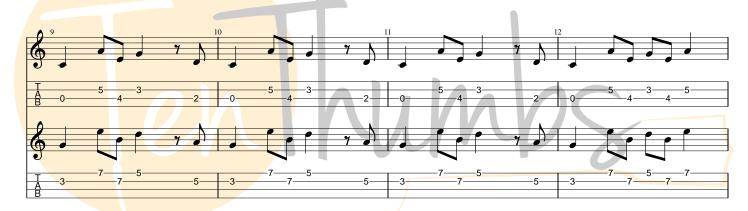
Harmonizing the Riff with 3rds



- 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 $4^{\rm th}$ fret of the C string you can play the open E sting as well.
- 3rds and 5ths are the most common harmonies

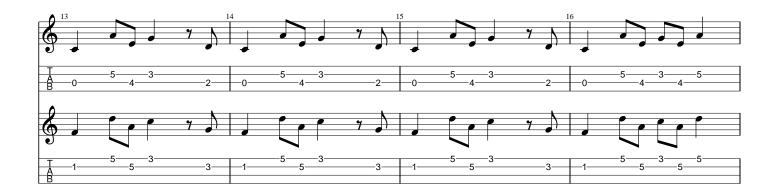
- The C scale will be stretched out over two octaves for intervals that go past the root
- Two types of 3^{rds} occur when playing, the $b3^{rd}$ and the 3^{rd} interval in the major scale. The $b3^{rd}$ is used in minor chords, the 3^{rd} in major chords.

Harmonizing the riff with 5ths



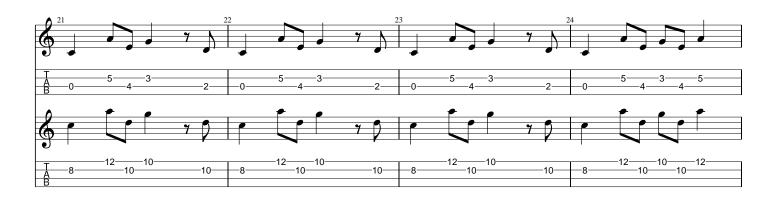
- To harmonize with 5ths you will write the scale out, pick your root note, skip three notes and then play the $4^{\rm th}$.
- There is only one type of 5th interval that occurs in the major scale
- 5th is the most common interval used with the root while playing bass

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
 - O C D E F G A B C D E F G A B
- Z
- O C D E F G A B C D E F G A B
- E
 - O C D E F G A B C D E F G A B
- 0
 - O C DEFGABC DEFGAB
- D
- O 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.

O CDEFGABCDEFGAB

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
- (
- 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
- OCDEFGAB

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.