

Soul Rhythm Ideas

To Play like a Stax, Motown or Muscle Shoals and Other Legends of Soul Session Musicians



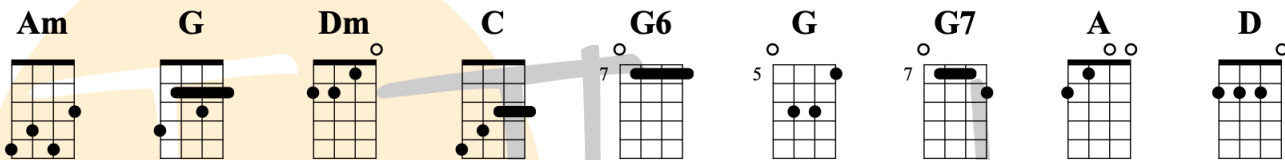
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Key:

Chords:

Video Tutorial:

Chord Shapes:



Lick 1: I-V in the key of C

This rhythm would replace a strum pattern like this example

1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & | 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & |
C | G |
D D D DUD D D DU | D D D DUD D D DU |

- We are playing a I-V in the key of C
- The C chord is based on the A shape
- The G chord is based on the D shape
- The fingerpicking on the second beat is just plucking notes from the chord
- The 4th beat uses a lick that is from the G7 arpeggio
 - o F note (flat 7) hammered into the G root
 - o Followed by the 5th interval, a D note

- Even though the harmony is still C by playing a G7 arpeggio idea we anticipate the change, or "push" the change, making it very nice when the G harmony lands on the first beat
- The pull off idea is going from an E note
 - o the 6th interval of G
 - o The 6th is considered semi stable
- Back to a D note
- You can learn a lot of these harmonic ideas from chord melody and singing what are common color tones that artist sing over the chord
 - o Color tones are notes that are not in the chord but sound nice when played with the chord
 - o Two lovely sounding color tones you can just over major chords are the 2nd and the 6th
- The end that runs through the G6 and G7 is inspired from blues shuffles.
 - o Anytime you are doing an shuffle rhythm lesson pay attention to the way the lesson makes the chords "move" as these movements can be applied in many styles outside of the blues

Lick 2: I-ii in the key of C

This rhythm would replace a strum pattern like this example

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1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & | 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & |
C                | Dm                |
D D D DUD D D DU|D D D DUD D D DU|

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- These starts out with the same C shape used in the last example
 - o Over the shape we play a 16th note fingerpicking idea followed by strumming the full chord
 - o Before the 3rd beat we do a hammer on from the 2nd to the 3rd a fun and easy way to give the major chord movement.
 - o The next ideas are inspired by Jimi Hendrix rhythmic ideas where he over lays
- Hendrix Style Chord Fills - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dbl3cgIbsRQ>
- After that we walk from the E note to the D note connecting them with a passing tone, the Eb, that is used just to connect the notes
 - o E note is the 3rd of the C major
 - o D is the Root
- Over the Dm we layer licks using the D minor pentatonic, shape 4

Lick 3: i - bVII - iv in Am

This rhythm would replace a strum pattern like this example

1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & | 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & |
Am **G** | **Dm** |
 D D D DUD D D DU | D D D DUD D D DU |

- The A minor shape on the first beat is tricky, you can play it with the open G string if it makes it easier
- The slide used there from shape 2 of the minor pentatonic which combines perfectly with that shape, the G minor shape. This is something that you can use in both rhythm and soloing
- The G chord is based on the F shape and is mixing in the 4th shape of the G major pentatonic scale, the F shape and the 4th shape of the pentatonic work perfectly together.
- The Dm is also mixing the 4th shape of the D minor pentatonic, which it works perfectly with as well
- All 3 of these chords are just being modified by the pentatonic shape that they sit in

Lick 4: I - IV in A

This rhythm would replace a strum pattern like this example

1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & | 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & | 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & | 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & |
A | **D** | **A** | **D** |
 D D D DUD D D DU | D D D DUD D D DU | D D D DUD D D DU | D D D DUD D D DU |

- The first measure is mixing the A major pentatonic shape 2 in, fairly basic but the note choice of playing the C# to the D was very deliberate as it is only a half step, one fret apart.

- When you can identify a note in each chord that is only one fret apart they make a great transition note to switch from one chord to the next as we did the with C# and D
- D major is mixing in the D major pentatonic (starting to see a theme?) as the 2nd interval, E, and the 6th interval, the B, work really great at giving the chord movement.
- The last measure we see the C# played over the D, this isn't in the major pentatonic but it implies the Dmaj7 giving it a jazzier feel. This is something you can do on the I and the IV chords.

Lick 5: I - V lick in C

This rhythm would replace a strum pattern like this example

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1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & | 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & |
C                | C                G                |
D D D DUD D D DU|D D D DUD D D DU|

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- I thought this one was the hardest to play
- The Bb over the C implies a mixolydian sound
- The 3 hammer to 4 is a minor to major 3rd sound that is classic in the blues and by landing on it on the downbeat of the measure it gives the riff a lot of movement.
- When using the F shape for the G chord you can experiment with hammering on the 3rd fret of the E string and 4th fret of the G string and any sounds you get from those two hammer ons. Because you have the 2nd fret barred these sounds are readily available and give a Keith Richards rhythm vibe