

BASS TIPS

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RIFFIN' A SOLO

What is a riff?

A short melodic or rhythmic phrase that it is repeated. A riff can be a chord pattern too. You can use a riff for an accompaniment and for soloing, especially the one that it is repeated in improvisation. Riffing is a very common approach for solos. It can be applied to all styles of music. You can play a series of riffs for a solo, but don't misuse it. Remember! Everything in excess is not good. Furthermore, you can make variations to your riffs for a more melodic improvisation.

Fig. 1a

Is a cool riff based on Ab major. The rhythmic motif is challenging. Here you have to play accurately the hammer-on and the pull-off technique in the downbeats.

The musical notation for Fig. 1a is a bass line in 2/4 time, key of Ab major. It features a repeating melodic phrase: G2 (quarter), A2 (quarter), B2 (quarter), C3 (quarter), D3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), F3 (quarter), G3 (quarter). The rhythm is 2/4. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a 2/4 time signature. The riff is written in a single staff. Below the staff, there are four measures of fret numbers: 12 15 13, 16 13, 13 15 13, 16 13. Below the fret numbers, there are four pairs of 'H P' (Hammer-on/Pull-off) markings, corresponding to the downbeats of each measure. The fret numbers are: 12 15 13, 16 13, 13 15 13, 16 13. The 'H P' markings are: H P, H P, H P, H P.

Fig. 1b

Is a good example of a rhythmic variation of the riff while you're still using the same notes. Now the riff sounds more like a phrase instead of a repetitive pattern.

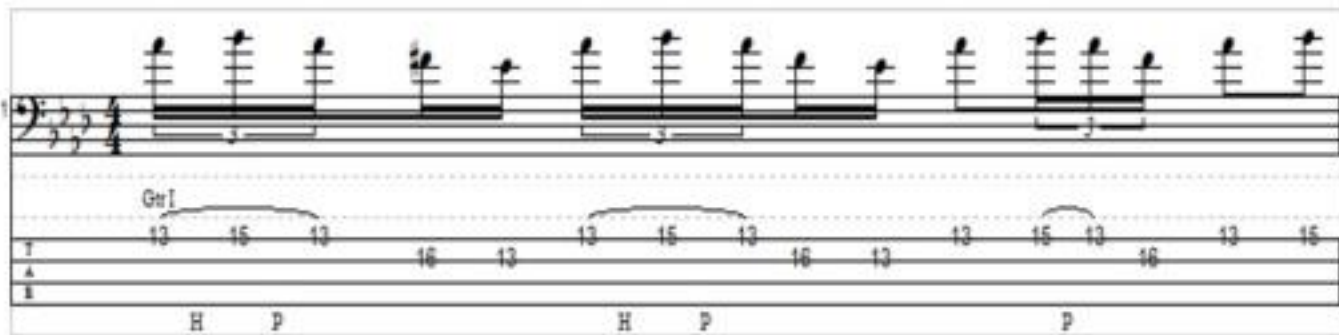


Fig. 2a

Is a simple riff based on C minor. This is a good example of a motif and is great for playing fast.

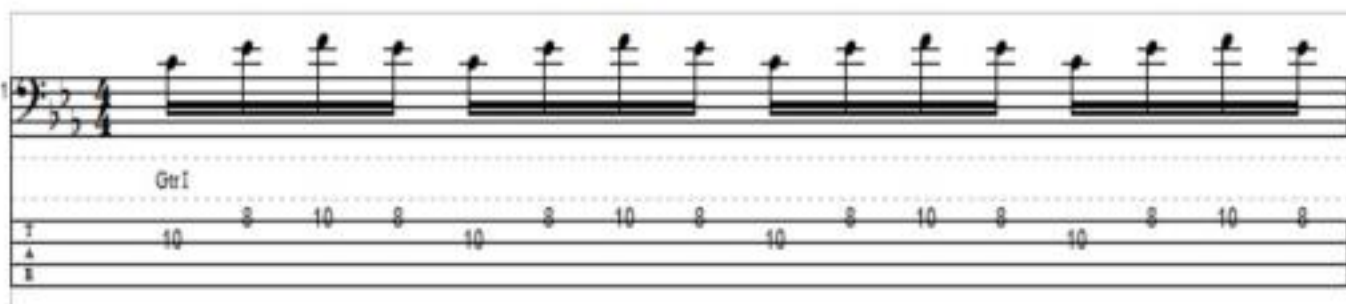


Fig. 2b

Is the same pattern but it is played in a more interesting way. Rhythmically is the same and the variation is on the melody.

