



Focus on Phrasing

By Jason Kokoszka

Phrasing is one of the most important concepts in music, regardless of the instrument you play. In this issue of Licks and Tricks, we'll explore some practical applications of several approaches to phrasing. If you'd like to read more about this topic, check out the current issue of the Theory Corner for an excerpt of *Teach Yourself Songwriting* by Greg Horne, available through Alfred Publishing.

Complementary parts for guitar, keyboard, bass and drums are included below. As usual, the chord symbols above each bar reflect the overall harmony when all parts are taken into account. Be sure to try them out at your next jam session and have fun!

Guitar

This part contains a melody that combine sequences and question-and-answer phrasing in measures 1 through 4, and 7 through 12. These licks will scream when played with some nice distortion. You may also want to use alternate picking for those sixteenth-note phrases for maximum speed and accuracy. This piece should be played at about 100 beats per minute with a rock feel. Try using these sequences with some of your favorite songs, or create your own.

Chord symbols: F, C, B \flat , F, C, B \flat

Picking patterns: 3 1 3 1 3 2 3 1 3 4 1 3 4 1 3 4, 3 1 3 1 3 2 3 2 1 3 1 4 1 4 1 2

Tablature: T 4/4, A 4/4, B 4/4. Fret numbers: 10-8-8-10-9-10, 8-10-11-11-8-10, 10-8-8-10-9-10-9-7-9-7-10-7-10-7-8

Chord symbols: D5, G, D5, G, F, C, B \flat

Picking patterns: 3 1 3 1 3 2 3 1 3 4 3 4 3 4 1 3

Tablature: T, A, B. Fret numbers: 4, 4, 3, 1, 10-8-10-8-10-9-10, 8-10-11-10-8-10-11, 8-10

9 F C B \flat F C F

1 4 3 4 3 1 3 1 3 1 3 2 3 2 1 1 1 4 3 1 3 1 4 1 4 2 4 2 1 2 1 4 2

8 11-10 11-10 8-10 8 10 10-9 10-9 7 5 7 SL 10 9 7 9 7 7 10 10-8 10-8 7-8 7 10 8

Keyboard

The keyboard provides harmonic support for the guitar part with some licks in measures 2, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 10. Notice the two-bar phrases in the left hand; these melodic octaves act as a counterpoint to the guitar's main melody. Accent beats 1 and 3 when playing the right-hand chords for a good rock feel, and play this part at about 100 beats per minute. An accompaniment like this (alternating chords and licks) will work well with other rock songs and with other styles of music too.

F C B \flat F C B \flat

5 1 5 1 1 2 3 5 4 1 5 1 5 3 2 3 1

5 1 5 1 5 1 5 1 5 1 5 1

5 D5 G D5 G F C

5 4 3 4 3 2 3 1 4 3 2 1 2 3 4 1 5 1 5 1

5 1 5 1 5 1 5 1 5 1 5 1

Bass

This bassline focuses primarily on the root notes of chords, but there are more melodic sections in measures 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10. The bass and keyboard parts almost have a dialogue with the guitar; when the guitar is less active, the bass and keyboard fill that space. You should play this part at about 100 beats per minute with a hard rock feel. Playing this kind of part will inspire you to try adding melodic fills to other rock basslines.

9 F C B \flat F C F

Drums

This rock drum figure consists primarily of eighth notes, with a few sixteenth notes added in measures 4, 6 and 11 for fills. Play this beat at about 100 beats per minute and let the bass drum propel the music forward. Notice that the pattern changes slightly in measures 5 and 6 and includes a crash on the “and” of beat 2 in both measures. Try using this pattern the next time you need a solid eighth-note groove.

Conclusion

For more information on phrasing concepts, be sure to check out the Theory Corner section of this newsletter for more examples.

If you want to explore this topic further, order Greg Horne's book, *Teach Yourself Songwriting*, at www.ordermusictoday.com and take some of his many lessons on www.WorkshopLive.com today!

To learn more about phrasing, guitarists will want to check out "Phrasing," taught by David Boye and Scott A. Smith, "Phrase Construction III," taught by Ken Steiger and Jared Meeker, and "Phrasing IV," taught by Tobias Hurwitz. Many other lessons dealing with other topics often include phrasing tips too.

Not a guitarist? Keyboardists will enjoy the Adult Refresher lesson "Phrasing, Ties and Slurs," taught by Andrea Amos and Leo Marchildon.

Bassists will enjoy the rock bass lessons "Ties with Sixteenth Notes," "Additional Blues Scale Fingerings," "Groove with All Three Fingerings," and "Three-Chord Tune," all taught by Tracy Walton.

Many other lessons dealing with other topics often include phrasing tips too. Keep rockin' until the neighbors complain—more coming right up!