



Modal Licks

By Jason Kokoszka

In this installment of Licks and Tricks, we will be looking at modal licks and phrases. If you're not sure what modes are, be sure to check out this issue's Theory Corner. Although each of the examples below are in the key of F Major, each measure focuses on a different mode: G Dorian, D Aeolian, C Mixolydian and F Ionian. The chords given for each bar reflect the overall harmonic structure (when the examples for guitar, keyboard and bass are taken into account).

Try these ideas out with your friends; complimentary parts for guitar, keyboard, bass and drums are included below.

Dig in, and enjoy!

Guitar

This example is full of cool legato licks involving string skipping. Measures 1 and 3 are harmonized in 3rds by the keyboard. Watch the picking indications and slow down if those sixteenth notes are giving you trouble. Keep it loose and smooth, and rock on!

G min7 D min7

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

H H P P 5 (5) 10 8 10

C7 F C7/F F

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

P P H H H 6 (6) 6 5 5 6

Keyboard

Time for some quick right-hand runs! As stated in the guitar section, the right hand harmonizes with the guitar in measures 1 and 3, with a bit of a fill in measure 2. The left hand provides simple harmonic reinforcement along with the bass. What are you waiting for? Let's jam!

The musical score is written in 4/4 time and consists of two systems of music. The first system covers measures 1 through 4, and the second system covers measures 5 through 8. The right hand (RH) features melodic runs, while the left hand (LH) provides harmonic support with chords and bass notes. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5.

System 1 (Measures 1-4):

- Measure 1:** RH: G4 (2), A4 (1), B4 (2), C5 (3), B4 (2), A4 (1), G4 (2). LH: G2 (2), B2 (5).
- Measure 2:** RH: A4 (2), B4 (1), C5 (2), B4 (1), A4 (2), G4 (1), F4 (5), E4 (4), D4 (3), C4 (4). LH: G2 (2), B2 (5), D3 (1), E3 (3), F3 (5).
- Measure 3:** RH: G4 (5), F4 (4), E4 (2), D4 (4), C4 (5), B3 (1), A3 (5), G3 (4), F3 (5), E3 (4), D3 (5), C3 (4), B2 (2), A2 (4). LH: G2 (1), B2 (3), D3 (5).
- Measure 4:** RH: G4 (1), F4 (3), E4 (5), D4 (4), C4 (5), B3 (1), A3 (3), G3 (5), F3 (4), E3 (5), D3 (4), C3 (5), B2 (1), A2 (3), G2 (5). LH: G2 (1), B2 (3), D3 (5).

System 2 (Measures 5-8):

- Measure 5:** RH: G4 (3), F4 (5), E4 (4), D4 (3), C4 (1), B3 (2), A3 (3), G3 (1), F3 (2), E3 (3), D3 (1), C3 (2). LH: G2 (2), B2 (4).
- Measure 6:** RH: G4 (5), F4 (4), E4 (3), D4 (2), C4 (1), B3 (2), A3 (3), G3 (1), F3 (2), E3 (3), D3 (1), C3 (2). LH: G2 (1), B2 (5), D3 (2).
- Measure 7:** RH: G4 (2), F4 (1), E4 (3), D4 (4), C4 (5), B3 (1), A3 (3), G3 (5), F3 (4), E3 (5), D3 (4), C3 (5), B2 (1), A2 (3), G2 (5). LH: G2 (1), B2 (5), D3 (2), E3 (7).
- Measure 8:** RH: G4 (1), F4 (3), E4 (5), D4 (4), C4 (5), B3 (1), A3 (3), G3 (5), F3 (4), E3 (5), D3 (4), C3 (5), B2 (1), A2 (3), G2 (5). LH: G2 (1), B2 (5), D3 (2), E3 (7), F3 (2), G3 (3).

Bass

Want a rock solid groove and some tasty fills? Look no further. Although we're focusing on four specific chords below, these rhythms can be applied to any number of harmonic situations. Measures 1 and 3 give us the meat of our groove, while measures 2 and 4 give us some off-kilter fills to mix things up a bit. Work those sixteenth notes up slowly and be sure to keep the beat grounded. You rock like no other!

Chords: Gmin7, Dmin7

Measure 1: 1 3 1 3

Measure 2: 0 1 1 3 1 2 1 3 1 3 1 4

Measure 3: 3 1 3 5 3 3 3

Measure 4: 0 2 3 (3) 5 2 3 3 5 3 5 3 6

Tab: 4 4 5 3 5 0 2 3 (3) 5 2 3 3 5 3 5 3 6

Chords: C7, F, C7/F, F

Measure 1: 3 1 3 1 3

Measure 2: 3 1 1 4 1 3 1 2 0 1

Measure 3: 3 3 3 5 3 3

Measure 4: 3 2 0 1 (1)

Tab: 3 3 3 5 3 3 3 2 0 1 (1)

Drums

Here's a pattern that relies heavily on the kick drum with accents on the ride bell. Measures 2 and 4 also show you two new fills you can add to your collection. You'll have a blast banging this groove out with your buddies!

Measure 1: Kick, Snare, Kick, Snare, Kick, Snare, Kick, Snare

Measure 2: Kick, Snare, Kick, Snare, Kick, Snare, Kick, Snare, Kick, Snare, Kick, Snare

Measure 3: Kick, Snare, Kick, Snare, Kick, Snare, Kick, Snare, Kick, Snare, Kick, Snare

Measure 4: Kick, Snare, Kick, Snare, Kick, Snare, Kick, Snare, Kick, Snare, Kick, Snare

For a discussion of modes and how they are constructed, be sure to see our Theory Corner column in this issue. This is a complex topic, so check out some of our lessons to get a better understanding.

Guitarists will want to view intermediate lessons in jazz (taught by Tom Dempsey, Amanda Monaco, Mark Dziuba and Jody Fisher) and rock (taught by Jeff Peretz, Glenn Riley, Tim Quick, Joel Gregoire, Jared Meeker, Ralph Agresta, Dave Martone, Ken Steiger and Tobias Hurwitz). If you get comfortable with these lessons, there are many advanced mode-related lessons on our site to discover!

Not a guitar player? Don't fret! (pun intended). Keyboard players will want to check out Andrea Amos and Leo Marchildon's Adult Refresher lesson "In Other Modes." Bassists will enjoy lessons on modes taught by Matt Scharfglass and Chris Kuffner.