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Instant Bass

Danny Morris

Lesson 5

Riffs

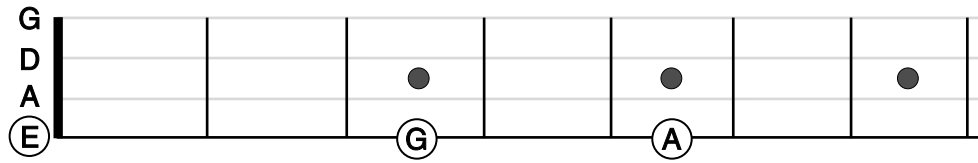
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Lesson Five Riffs

Riffs are repeated patterns of notes. This next bass line is a riff that uses three notes on the E string: open E, G first dot (third fret), and A second dot (fifth fret).



Duck's Riff

23 1. Listen

Follow the music as you listen to this tune. The bass plays *quarter notes*. Quarter notes (♩) get one beat.

24 2. Play

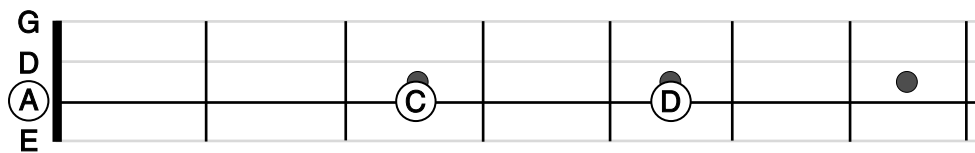
DUCK'S RIFF

RHYTHM 'N' BLUES

Musical notation for "Duck's Riff" in 4/4 time. The top staff is a bass clef with a 4/4 time signature. It contains four quarter notes: E, E, G, and A. The bottom staff is a TAB line with fret numbers 0, 0, 3, and 5 corresponding to the notes above.

Moving the Pattern

This riff is the same pattern used in “Duck’s Riff,” but it is on the A string.



Al's Riff

25 1. Listen

Listen to the steady quarter notes.

26 2. Play

AL'S RIFF

RHYTHM 'N' BLUES

Musical notation for Al's Riff in 4/4 time. The top staff is a bass clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a 4/4 time signature. The notes are A (2nd fret), A (2nd fret), C (3rd fret), and D (5th fret). The bottom staff is a guitar tablature with strings T, A, and B labeled. The fret numbers are 0, 0, 3, and 5.

Stax Riff

27 1. Listen

This tune uses the same riff.

28 2. Play

First, play “Duck’s Riff.” Then play “Al’s Riff.” Keep this eight-bar pattern repeating and WALK THAT BASS!

STAX RIFF

RHYTHM 'N' BLUES

The image shows two systems of musical notation for the Stax Riff. Each system consists of a bass clef staff and a guitar tablature staff. The first system is in 4/4 time and contains four measures. The notes in the bass staff are E, E, G, A, and the corresponding fret numbers in the tablature are 0, 0, 3, 5. The second system also contains four measures with notes A, A, C, D and fret numbers 0, 0, 3, 5. The tablature staff is labeled 'TAB' and 'B'.

On the Scene

Bassist Duck Dunn and drummer Al Jackson played on many hit recordings for the Stax label. Bass/drum grooves like this one serve as the foundation for many songs.