

Accompaniment Playing – Part 3

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Last month we looked at the first of two ways of approaching horn lines, playing **Vertically**. This month we'll conclude with playing **Horizontally**.

Playing vertically means to play a line/lick commonly without harmonization. This line acts as a counter melody and helps to add depth to a song. The line can remain the same for an entire song, or change every chorus depending on how active you want the background to be behind the soloist or singer.

When playing horizontal horn lines, the usage of Chorus Forms is paramount. As already spoken of in previous issues within this series, repetition is the key to active accompaniment. Let's take a look at an **AAA** Chorus Form horn line that's similar to that used on the famous guitar instrumental "Left Overs," by Albert Collins.

Ex. 1 – AAA Chorus Form

For the next chorus you can play the same line in octaves.

Ex. 2 – AAA Chorus Form

V7 IV7 I7

4 5+ 4 5+ 5 5+ 4 4 5+ 4 5+ 5 5+ 4
 1 2+ 1 2+ 2 2+ 1 1 2+ 1 2+ 2 2+ 1

Here's a line similar to what the horns play on the B.B. King song "Woke Up This Morning," from his *Live at the Regal* recording.

Ex. 3 – AAA Chorus Form

I7 IV7 I7 V7 IV7 I7

6+ 6+ 5+ 4 6+ 5+ 6+ 6+ 5+ 4 6+ 5+
 3+ 3+ 2+ 1 3+ 2+ 3+ 3+ 2+ 1 3+ 2+

6+ 6+ 5+ 4 6+ 5+ 6+ 6+ 5+ 4 6+ 5+
 3+ 3+ 2+ 1 3+ 2+ 3+ 3+ 2+ 1 3+ 2+

6+ 6+ 5+ 4 6+ 5+ 6+ 6+ 5+ 4 6+ 5+
 3+ 3+ 2+ 1 3+ 2+ 3+ 3+ 2+ 1 3+ 2+

It's common for a harmonica player to deviate from the line at the V chord (9th measure) and play more active. Demonstrated below is the same line as above with this deviation at the V.

Ex. 4 – AAB Chorus Form

I7 IV7 I7 V7 IV7 I7 V7

6+ 6+ 5+ 4 6+ 5+ 6+ 6+ 5+ 4 6+ 5+
 3+ 3+ 2+ 1 3+ 2+ 3+ 3+ 2+ 1 3+ 2+

6+ 6+ 5+ 4 6+ 5+ 6+ 6+ 5+ 4 6+ 5+
 3+ 3+ 2+ 1 3+ 2+ 3+ 3+ 2+ 1 3+ 2+

5 4 4 4' 3' 4+ 3' 2 2+ 1 2 2 2 2+ 2 2 3' 2" 1 1+

Sequences are very commonplace. A sequence, as you studied in the bass line portion of this series, takes a line played over the I (one) chord and transposes it up to the IV chord and sometimes up to the V chord. If you listen to the first two choruses when the horns enter on “Woke Up This Morning,” you will hear the horns sequence over all the chords.

The line below is an example of a sequence used on the I chord and IV chord, with the harmonica deviating at the V chord.

Ex. 5 – A B/A C Chorus Form

The musical notation shows a sequence of eighth notes across three staves. The first staff (I7) has four measures with fingerings: 2 2", 2" 2 3' 4+, 2 2 2" 1, 2" 2 3' 4+. The second staff (IV7, I7) has four measures with fingerings: 1+ 3+ 4+ 3', 4+ 3' 2 1+ 3+ 4+ 3', 4+ 3' 2 2 2 2" 1, 2" 2 3' 4+ 2 2 2" 1, 2" 2 3' 4+. The third staff (V7, IV7, I7, V7) has four measures with fingerings: 1 3 4 4+ 2 1, 4 4' 4 1+ 3+ 4+ 3' 2+ 1+, 4 4' 3 2 2 2 2" 1, 2" 2 3' 4+ 1 1 1 1 1 1 1+.

That’s it for this month. Next month we’ll dig into the more traditional harmonica accompaniment role of filling spaces and light chording accompaniment.

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