

THE NEOSOUL GUITAR BOOK

A Complete Guide to Neo-Soul Guitar Style with Mark Lettieri

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Special thanks to Mark Lettieri for providing the tracks *Coastin'* and *Sunday Brunch* © Mark Lettieri

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Introduction

When we discovered Neo-Soul we instantly fell in love. The combination of gospel, RnB, funk, jazz and hip hop, seamlessly blended all our favourite styles of guitar playing into one glorious sound. Now, several years on, being asked to write a book on the subject is a true honour. We've looked at the most important guitar techniques, approaches and concepts and broken them down for you into a journey of over 100 musical examples, exercises and songs.

We're honoured to have worked with Neo-Soul legend and Snarky Puppy guitarist Mark Lettieri in the making of this book, and we're thrilled that he's written two exclusive tracks that you can learn in full. Not only that, Mark's recorded videos for each one so you can jam along with him.

If you've not heard much Neo-Soul before, it's essential to get its sound in your ears by doing some serious listening. Check out the following players who we reference throughout this book:

- Todd Pritchard
- Kerry "2Smooth" Marshall
- Landon Jordan
- Magnus Klausen
- Beau Diakowicz
- Isaiah Sharkey
- Curt Henderson
- Justus West

If you want to hear just three tracks that truly define the genre, make sure to go and listen to *Montreal* by Mark Lettieri, *Movie* by Tom Misch, and *Nakamarra* by Hiatus Kaiyote.

These tracks will lead you down a rabbit hole of musical discovery and get you well versed in the stylistic approaches of the genre. There are plenty of playlists on YouTube and time spent listening will massively improve your knowledge and understanding of Neo-Soul, and hopefully inspire you to give your all to the lessons in this book. Plus, it's fun and funky so you'll have a great time. You can thank us later!

This book is divided into two parts, the first dives straight in and breaks down the technical, chordal and single note approaches used by the greatest Neo-Soul players and condenses them into musical examples that you can use right away. When you apply these techniques to your own chord sequences and riffs, you'll quickly find your own unique style on the guitar.

All the techniques are taught around actual chord progressions you can use in your music instantly, so please feel free to steal our ideas.

The second part of this book begins in Chapter Seven and consists of four original Neo-Soul guitar tunes that have been specially commissioned for this book. Two pieces are by Mark Lettieri, along with a couple of pieces from us (Simon and Kristof). These tunes are designed to build your performance skills and teach you more musical applications of the techniques in Part One.

If you're new to Neo-Soul, we recommend that you work your way through this book from start to finish, so that you learn and develop the techniques in a logical fashion. If you've been playing Neo-Soul for a while and are just looking for some fresh ideas, feel free to jump in anywhere you like!

We believe in the value of having a "jam buddy" or a band to practise with, but fully understand this isn't possible for everyone. To help, we have included drum tracks and backing tracks to make the process of learning Neo-Soul as practical as possible. Refer to the end of the book, just before the conclusion, for more details on how to use these tracks.

Our hope for this book is that it will give you valuable tools to develop your Neo-Soul guitar skills or bust out of any ruts you may be in. It will definitely provide new challenges and insight as you seek to improve your playing.

It's also worth pointing out that, although highly suited to electric guitar playing, Neo-Soul also works well on acoustic guitar. We trust that you'll enjoy the book and expand your playing skills.

Happy Playing!

Simon and Kristof

Get the Audio

The audio files for this book are available to download for free from www.fundamental-changes.com and the link is in the top right corner of the site. Simply select this book title from the drop-down menu and follow the instructions to get the audio.

We recommend that you download the files directly to your computer, not to your tablet, and extract them there before adding them to your media library. You can then put them on your tablet, iPod or burn them to CD. There is a help PDF on the download page, and we provide technical support via the contact form.

Get the Videos

We've many tuition videos to go with this book, not least the two exclusive tracks by Mark Lettieri. Sometimes the limits of music notation doesn't quite do justice to the nuance of the music, so you should grab the videos for free from

<https://www.fundamental-changes.com/neo-soul-videos/>

Kindle / eReaders

To get the most out of this book, remember that you can double tap any image to enlarge it. Turn off 'column viewing' and hold your kindle in landscape mode.

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Chapter One – Chord Voicings and Embellishment

Artist spotlight: Todd Pritchard

One of the biggest misconceptions we've come across when teaching people Neo-Soul, is the belief that you need to be able to play complex chord voicings and extremely fast runs to sound authentic to the genre. In this chapter we dismantle this idea by showing you some fundamental voicings and grooves that encompass the Neo-Soul vibe, but are simple to grasp.

We first came across the concepts featured in this chapter while listening to Todd Pritchard. Todd is one of the most musical, grooviest players around. Check out his brilliant Instagram channel on the link below:

<https://www.instagram.com/toddpritch/>

After completing this chapter, you will not only have a strong grasp of essential chord shapes, but also understand how to apply them to a groove – a skill that is fundamental to the Neo-Soul sound. At the end of this chapter is an original piece by Simon entitled *Penguin Suit*, which features all the techniques illustrated in the examples.

A big part of the Neo-Soul sound is the use of 6th and 7th type chord voicings. Strum the three-note Emaj6 and Emaj7 voicings and hold them for four beats. Make sure you only play the designated strings.

Example 1a

Guitar tablature for Example 1a. The key signature is F# (three sharps). The time signature is 4/4. The first measure shows an Emaj6 chord (T-A-B) followed by a bar line. The second measure shows an Emaj7 chord (T-A-B) followed by a repeat sign and a bar line. The strings are labeled T (Top), A, and B (Bottom).

Often, fingerings are used whereby a 7th chord can easily be played with a hammer-on from a 6th chord. In Example 1b, barre the 6th fret and hammer-on your fourth finger at the 8th fret of the G string. Even by adding this simple hammer-on embellishment, you can instantly hear the basis of Neo-Soul patterns forming.

Example 1b

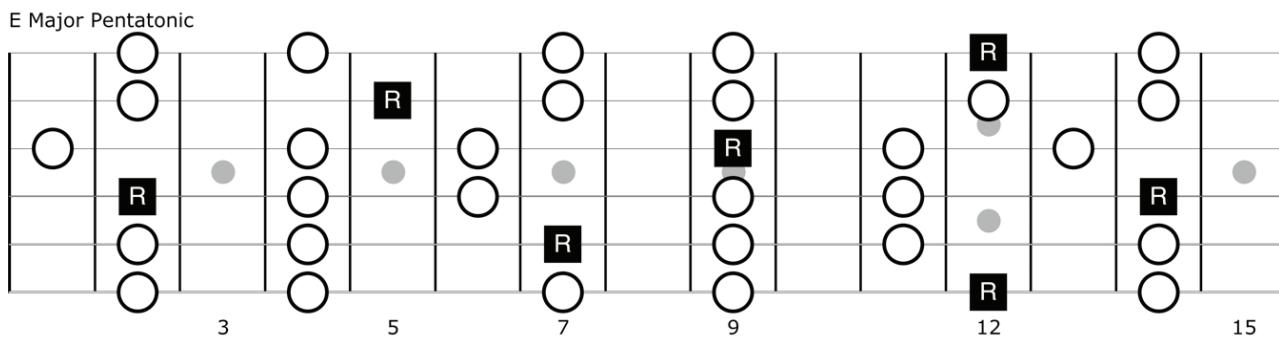
Guitar tablature for Example 1b. The key signature is F# (three sharps). The time signature is 4/4. The first measure shows an Emaj6 chord (T-A-B) followed by an Emaj7 chord (T-A-B). The second measure shows an Emaj6 chord (T-A-B) followed by an Emaj7 chord (T-A-B). The third measure shows an Emaj6 chord (T-A-B) followed by an Emaj7 chord (T-A-B). The fourth measure shows an Emaj6 chord (T-A-B) followed by an Emaj7 chord (T-A-B). The strings are labeled T (Top), A, and B (Bottom). Hammer-on markings are shown above the 6th and 8th frets of the G string.

The combination of the movable Major 7 chord shape and the rhythmic pattern shown below is foundational to Neo-Soul. This concept is the backbone of many classic Neo-Soul tunes and will be built upon throughout this book.

Example 1c

Emaj7 Dmaj7 Fmaj7 Emaj7

Neo-Soul relies heavily on the Major pentatonic scale. Example 1d adds a four-note E Major Pentatonic (E F# G# B C#) run to the end of a chord sequence. Use the E Major Pentatonic diagram below and play through Example 1d several times, using four different notes to end each time. Don't worry about which ones at first – experimentation is crucial. Write down your favourites in your practice journal.



Example 1d

Emaj7 Dmaj7 Fmaj7 Emaj7

Combining small chord voicings with single-note melodic fills is a signature Neo-Soul sound, and vital to the construction of authentic sounding guitar parts. There are many ways to articulate single-note melodies, and adding a few slides will really liven up your playing. Example 1e adds a common slide to the Major 7 chord shape and moves the idea between EMaj7 and AMaj7. Example 1e is characteristic of Todd Pritchard's sound.

Example 1e

When you feel comfortable playing chord shapes on strings with the root note on the A string, let's dive into some ideas with the root note on the low E string. Play the three-note A6/9 and A6 chord shapes and hold them for four beats. If you are struggling to mute the A string, play the example using fingerpicking, or hybrid-picking (pick and fingers).

Example 1f

In Example 1g, play a hammer-on from the B to C# note on the G string while holding down the chord. By doing this you will alternate between an A6/9 chord and an A6 chord. Neo-Soul guitar parts often utilise a hammer-on or a pull-off to alternate chord shapes. Make sure the hammered-on note rings out as clearly as the notes of the E and D strings.

Example 1g

Guitar tablature for Example 1g. The top staff shows a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps, and a 4/4 time signature. The bottom staff shows a bass clef and a 4/4 time signature. The tab indicates four measures of A6/9 followed by four measures of A6. The strings are labeled T, A, B from top to bottom. Fingerings are shown above the strings: 4-4-6 for the first measure of A6/9, 4-4-6 for the second, 4-4-6 for the third, and 4-4-6 for the fourth.

Example 1h combines the chord shapes learnt in the previous examples and includes Major 7th hammer-ons with a root on the A string, and Major 6 hammer-ons with a root on the E string. This is a fun mini-vamp to practise over example drum track 1.

Example 1h

Guitar tablature for Example 1h. The top staff shows a treble clef, a key signature of three sharps, and a 4/4 time signature. The bottom staff shows a bass clef and a 4/4 time signature. The tab indicates a measure of Emaj7 followed by a measure of A6 and a measure of B6. The strings are labeled T, A, B from top to bottom. Fingerings are shown above the strings: 6-8-6-8 for the first measure of Emaj7, 6-8-6-8 for the second, 4-6-4-6 for the first measure of A6, 6-8-6-8 for the second.

These three-note Cmaj7 and Am7 chord shapes, with a root note on the low E string, are extremely popular in Neo-Soul. You may be used to playing larger five- or six-note voicings for these shapes, but the voicings shown in Example 1i free up a finger for adding fills.

Example 1i

Guitar tablature for Example 1i. The top staff shows a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a 4/4 time signature. The bottom staff shows a bass clef and a 4/4 time signature. The tab indicates a measure of Cmaj7 followed by a measure of Am7. The strings are labeled T, A, B from top to bottom. Fingerings are shown above the strings: 9-9 for the first measure of Cmaj7, 5-5 for the second.

Example 1j introduces the chords and groove that will be used in the next few examples. Make sure you listen to how we phrase the examples by downloading the audio from www.fundamental-changes.com

Example 1j

Chords: Cmaj7, Bm7, Am7, Bm7.

Fingerings: Bar 1: T9, A9, B8. Bar 2: 7. Bar 3: 5, 5. Bar 4: 7.

Example 1k adds hammer-ons and slides to the chords of the previous example, with double-stops (two-notes played at the same time) on the D and G strings. The double-stop notes played between each chord come from the G Major Pentatonic scale (G A B D E).

G Major Pentatonic

Fingerings: 3, 5, 7, 9, 12, 15.

Example 1k

Chords: Cmaj7, Bm7, Am7, Bm7.

Fingerings: Bar 1: 7-9, 7-9. Bar 2: 9-7. Bar 3: 5, 5. Bar 4: 5-7, 5-7.

Let's extend the previous two-bar progression to make a four-bar progression that resolves to the key centre of G Major. Before moving on to the next examples, make sure you can play this progression by memory.

Example 1l

Guitar tab for Example 1l. The chords shown are Cmaj7, Bm7, Am7, and Bm7. The tab includes a staff with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a 4/4 time signature. Below the staff is a six-string guitar neck with fret numbers 9, 8, 7, 5, 5, and 7 from top to bottom. Fingerings are indicated above the strings: 9, 9, 7, 5, 5, 7 for the first chord; 9, 9, 7, 5, 5, 7 for the second; 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 7 for the third; and 5, 5, 5, 4, 3, 7 for the fourth.

Guitar tab for Example 1l, continuing from the previous page. The chords shown are Cmaj7, Bm7, Am7, and Gmaj7. The tab includes a staff with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a 4/4 time signature. Below the staff is a six-string guitar neck with fret numbers 9, 8, 7, 5, 5, and 4 from top to bottom. Fingerings are indicated above the strings: 9, 9, 7, 5, 5, 4 for the first chord; 9, 9, 7, 5, 5, 4 for the second; 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 3 for the third; and 5, 5, 5, 4, 3, 4 for the fourth.

By adding in double-stops on the D and G strings from the G Major Pentatonic scale, the transitions between the chords begin to sound fluid and have that all-important Neo-Soul flavour. If you are looking for an extra challenge, experiment with adding percussive muted slaps where the rests appear in this example. To create a percussive mute, hit the strings lightly with the knuckles of your picking hand.

Example 1m

Guitar tab for Example 1m. The chords shown are Cmaj7, Bm7, Am7, and Bm7. The tab includes a staff with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a 4/4 time signature. Below the staff is a six-string guitar neck with fret numbers 7, 9, 7, 9, 7, 5 from top to bottom. Fingerings are indicated above the strings: 7, 9, 7, 9, 9, 7, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 7 for the first chord; 7, 9, 7, 9, 9, 7, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 7 for the second; 7, 5, 7, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 7 for the third; and 7, 5, 7, 5, 5, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 7 for the fourth.

Guitar tab for Example 1m, continuing from the previous page. The chords shown are Cmaj7, Bm7, Am7, and Gmaj7. The tab includes a staff with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a 4/4 time signature. Below the staff is a six-string guitar neck with fret numbers 7, 9, 7, 9, 7, 5 from top to bottom. Fingerings are indicated above the strings: 7, 9, 7, 9, 9, 7, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 7 for the first chord; 7, 9, 7, 9, 9, 7, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 7 for the second; 7, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 7 for the third; and 7, 5, 5, 5, 5, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 7 for the fourth.

In this book, we want to give you as many ideas as possible to steal for your own playing, so along with the shorter examples, we have included some longer pieces for you to learn. The first of these tunes is by Simon and called *Penguin Suit*.

Before diving into the full piece, we have broken some of the main sections into bite-sized chunks. We recommend working through these examples before playing the piece in its entirety.

To master the specific fingerings, watch the *Penguin Suit* video (<https://www.fundamental-changes.com/neo-soul-videos/>). You will notice that Simon fingerpicks this piece, but it works just as well when played with a pick.

Example 1n features the main “hook” of *Penguin Suit*. It is based around the D Major Scale (D E F# G A B C#). Practise each chord on its own before adding in the fills.

Example 1n

The tablature shows a guitar neck with six strings (T, A, B) and a treble clef. The chords and their fingerings are:

- Dmaj7:** 4-6, 5-4, 2-2, 4-2, 2-2
- Asus2:** 4-5, 2-0, 2-2
- Dmaj7:** 4-6, 5-4, 2-2
- Bm7:** 7-7, X-X, 6-6
- Amaj7:** X-X, 6-6
- G#m7 F#m7:** 4-4, 2-2

The B section of *Penguin Suit* uses chords voiced primarily with a sixth string root and adds slides and legato patterns between each one.

The double-stop sliding pattern at the end of bar two will require some extra attention to sound clean. There are a few ways to fret this, but we suggest using a first finger barre across the 2nd fret, and fretting the 4th and 5th frets with the third and fourth fingers respectively.

Example 1o

The tablature shows a guitar neck with six strings (T, A, B) and a treble clef. The chords and their fingerings are:

- D6:** 9-11, 11-9, 7-7
- C#m7:** 9-9, 7-6, 7-7
- Bm7:** (7)-9, 7-7
- Amaj7:** 4-6, 5-4, 2-2, 4-4, 5-4, 2-2

Example 1p teaches you the A Major scale lick that appears near the end of *Penguin Suit*. Notice how the combination of legato and slides give this lick its smooth, flowing sound.

Example 1p

Musical notation for Example 1p. The top staff shows a melodic line with grace notes and slurs. The bottom staff is a tablature for the bass strings (T, A, B) with note numbers below each string.

Notes from left to right: T (5), A (7), B (5), T (5), A (6), B (4), T (2), A (4), B (4), T (2), A (4), B (6), T (5), A (6), B (4), T (2), A (4).

The final run in the piece uses the E Major scale in multiple positions on the neck. If this type of run is new to you, we recommend learning it in bite-sized chunks before combining them. Learning just four notes of an unfamiliar pattern is a good place to start and you'll be surprised how much less daunting a longer phrase becomes if you break it up in this way.

Example 1q

Musical notation for Example 1q. The top staff shows a melodic line with grace notes and slurs. The bottom staff is a tablature for the bass strings (T, A, B) with note numbers below each string.

Notes from left to right: T (2), A (2), B (2), T (2), A (4), B (2), T (0), A (1), B (4), T (X), A (X), B (X), T (2), A (2), B (4), T (2), A (4), B (6), T (4).

Musical notation for Example 1q. The top staff shows a melodic line with grace notes and slurs. The bottom staff is a tablature for the bass strings (T, A, B) with note numbers below each string.

Notes from left to right: T (5), A (10), B (8), T (9), A (11), B (12), T (11), A (12), B (11), T (9), A (11), B (9), T (11), A (9), B (7), T (9), A (11), B (9).

Now that you have completed the individual licks that make up this track, let's put them all together in the full version of *Penguin Suit*. Watch the video several times and listen closely to the phrasing of each part of the piece.

<https://www.fundamental-changes.com/neo-soul-videos/>

Penguin Suit - Full Piece

Dmaj7 Asus2 Dmaj7 Bm7 Amaj7 G♯m7 F♯m7

mf

T A B

7 4-7 4 4-6 5-4-2-2-4 2 2 2-4 2 | 4-6 5-4-2 7 X-6 4-2

Dmaj7 Asus2 F♯m7 Eadd9

4-6 5-4-2-2-4 2 2-4 2 | 2-4 2 X-1 4 X-7-8-7-5 7

T A B

Dmaj7 Asus2 Dmaj7 Bm7 Amaj7 F♯m7

4-6 5-4-2-2-4 2 2-4 2 | 4-6 5-4-2 7 X-6 4-5-4-2

T A B

Dmaj7 Asus2 F♯m7 Eadd9

4-6 5-4-2-2-4 2 2-4 2 | 2-4 2 0 11 X-9-11 9 11-9 7

T A B

D6 **C♯m7** **Bm7** **Amaj7**

T A B
9 11 11~9 7 9 7~6 7 | {7} 9 7 4 6 5 4 2 4 5 4 2
10 9 7 7 5

D6 **C♯m7** **Bm7** **E11** **E13**

T A B
9 11 11~9 7 9 7~6 7 | (7) 9 7 5 9 7 5 7 6 | 5~7~5~4 5 6~4~2 4 2~4~6 5~6~4~2 4
10 9 7 7 5 7 6 7 5 6 4 2 4 2~4~6 5~6~4~2 4

Dmaj7 **Asus2** **Dmaj7** **Bm7** **Amaj7** **G♯m7 F♯m7**

T A B
4 6 5~4 2 2~4 2 | 4 6 5~4 2 7 X 6 4~2
4 5 0 2 4 2 | 5 7 X 5 4~2

Dmaj7 **Asus2** **F♯m7** **Eadd9**

T A B
4 6 5~4 2 2~4 2 | 2~4 2 X 0 X 5~7~5~4 X 5
4 5 0 2 4 2 | 2 2~4 2 X 0 X 5~7~5~4 X 5

Dmaj7 **Asus2**

Dmaj7 **Bm7** **Amaj7** **G#m7** **F#m7**

TAB notation for strings T, A, and B:

4-6	5-4	2-2	4	2	2	4	2
4	4	2	2	2	2	4	2
5	0						

Dmaj7 **Asus2** **F#m7** **Eadd9**

Dmaj7 **Asus2** **F#m7** **Eadd9**

TAB notation for strings T, A, and B:

4-6	5-4	2-2	4	2	2	4	2
4	4	2	2	2	2	4	2
5	0						

Amaj7

Amaj7

TAB notation for strings T, A, and B:

5-10-8-9	11-12-11-9	11-9	11-9	7	9-11	9

Chapter Two – RnB Chord Tricks

Artist Spotlight: Kerry “2Smooth” Marshall

Applying hammer-ons and pull-offs to barre chord shapes is a big part of the Neo-Soul guitar sound. These *legato* techniques have been borrowed from RnB, so we’ve named this chapter RnB Chord Tricks.

As teachers, we have both been asked countless times how to train the fourth finger to act independently while holding down barre chords, so in this chapter we’ve compiled our most effective exercises to help you develop the strength and independence needed in that finger. The first examples in this chapter are designed to teach you the essential techniques, but they will get more musical as you progress through the exercises.

If you are new to playing legato fills while holding down barre chord shapes, work through this chapter methodically and learn each example at 50 beats per minute. Don’t be tempted to skip over the early examples in favour of applying this technique to chord shapes right away. Work through them methodically, as each example builds on the previous one in a structured fashion.

In Example 2a, hammer on between your first and fourth fingers on the B string. It is vital you use these specific fingers as this example is the foundation for all that follows.

Example 2a

Now add a simple barre at the 3rd fret with your first finger and hammer-on to the 5th fret of the B string with your fourth finger. Make sure you push the barre shape down firmly and continue to hold the shape as you complete the hammer-on.

Example 2b

C11

The next couple of examples use the more complex C Major 7th voicing shown in Example 2c.

Example 2c

Guitar tablature for a Cmaj7 chord. The top line shows a treble clef, a '4' for common time, and a '8' for eighth note duration. The bottom line shows a bass clef, a '2' for common time, and a '4' for quarter note duration. The tab shows a standard C major chord (E-B-G) followed by a seventh chord (E-B-D). The strings are numbered 1 through 6 from left to right. The first three strings have '3' above them, indicating they are muted or dead notes.

Now that you have trained your fourth finger to act independently while holding a simple barre chord, let's apply that technique to the C Major 7. In Example 2d, play the Cmaj7 barre chord without the fourth finger, then hammer-on from the 3rd to the 5th fret on the B string.

Example 2d

Musical score for Cmaj7 chord progression. The top staff shows a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and the chord name 'Cmaj7'. It consists of four measures of a repeating pattern: a vertical bar with three dots, followed by a horizontal bar with a dot at the end. The bottom staff is a tablature for a guitar, showing the strings T, A, and B. The first measure has a vertical bar with a dot above it, followed by a horizontal bar with a dot at the end. The second measure has a vertical bar with a dot above it, followed by a horizontal bar with a dot at the end. The third measure has a vertical bar with a dot above it, followed by a horizontal bar with a dot at the end. The fourth measure has a vertical bar with a dot above it, followed by a horizontal bar with a dot at the end.

Example 2e introduces another common embellishment used in RnB chords. Complete the hammer-on pattern in exactly the same way as the previous example, but this time pick the note on the high E string afterwards.

As you progress through the examples in this chapter, take some time to listen to some examples of Kerry “2 Smooth” Marshall’s playing. His approach to RnB chordal playing sums up everything you’ll learn in this chapter. Here is a link to his awesome Instagram page:

<https://www.instagram.com/kerry2smooth/>

Example 2e

Cmaj7

This guitar tab shows a C major 7 chord (root position) followed by two hammer-on patterns on the high E string. The first hammer-on starts from the 3rd fret and goes to the 5th fret. The second hammer-on starts from the 3rd fret and goes to the 5th fret. The tab includes a staff with a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a key signature of one sharp. The strings are labeled T (Thick), A, and B. Fingerings are indicated below the strings: 3, 4, 5 for the first hammer-on, and 3, 4, 5 for the second.

Another common adaption to the Major 7 barre chord shape in RnB is to create a hammer-on pattern on the high E string. In this case, it creates a Cmaj13 sound.

Example 2f

Cmaj13(no3rd)

This guitar tab shows a C major 13 chord (no 3rd) followed by four hammer-on patterns on the high E string. Each hammer-on starts from the 3rd fret and goes to the 5th fret. The tab includes a staff with a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a key signature of one sharp. The strings are labeled T, A, and B. Fingerings are indicated below the strings: 3, 4, 5 for each hammer-on.

One of the many joys of the RnB chordal sound is the fluidity of the fills played around each chord. This is easily achieved by applying legato patterns on multiple strings. Example 2g combines the previously learnt legato patterns on the B and high E strings into one example. It really highlights the sound we are looking to create in this chapter.

To play Example 2g, use your fourth finger to complete the hammer-ons on both the B and high E strings while continuing to hold the chord shape. Allow the chords to ring out as you complete each hammer-on.

Example 2g

Cmaj7

This guitar tab shows a C major 7 chord followed by two legato patterns. The first pattern consists of a hammer-on from the 3rd fret to the 5th fret on the high E string, followed by a release note on the 3rd fret. The second pattern is similar. The tab includes a staff with a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a key signature of one sharp. The strings are labeled T, A, and B. Fingerings are indicated below the strings: 3, 4, 5 for the first hammer-on, and 3, 4, 5 for the second. The text "let ring" is written above the first and second patterns.

Now that you're comfortable hammering-on while holding down the Major 7 chord shape, it's time to add a pull-off. Play the pull-off from the fourth finger to the first finger, while still holding the barre. Make sure that all the notes sound clean and none are muted. This movement creates a Cmaj9 chord.

Example 2h

Cmaj9

In Example 2i, pull off from the 5th to the 3rd fret of the high E string, from the fourth finger to the barred first finger. You may find the next couple of pull-off exercises trickier than the previous hammer-ons. This is perfectly normal! In time, with practice, they will feel just as comfortable as the hammer-ons.

Example 2i

Cmaj13(no3rd)

Until now we have concentrated on using 1/8th note patterns for each of the RnB style chordal licks. Example 2j features hammer-ons using the Major 7 chord shape, but this time uses 1/16th notes instead of 1/8th notes.

Example 2j

Cmaj7

Practising hammer-ons and pull-offs separately is necessary to develop coordination, stamina and strength. The following example combines the hammer-on and pull-off patterns seen in previous examples into a commonly RnB chordal lick.

Example 2k

Cmaj7

4

T A B

Now you have mastered common additions to the Major 7 shape, it's time to examine hammer-on and pull-off patterns around the Minor 7 chord shape.

Before completing the following examples, have a listen to this beautiful track by Kerry "2 Smooth" Marshall. See if you can recognise the chord shapes he is playing.

<http://bit.ly/2REffFn>

In Example 2l, hammer-on from the 6th to the 8th fret of the B string using your second and fourth fingers. Make sure you stick to only using these fingers when completing this exercise, as they will be the only ones available when you apply it to the barre chord shape in the following examples.

Example 2l

4

T A B

Now add this hammer-on pattern to a Dm7 chord shape with a root on the A string. Aim to make the hammered-on note ring out as clearly as possible by pressing the hammer-on firmly to the fretboard after you have strummed the chord shape.

Example 2m

Dm7

This guitar tablature shows four identical hammer-on patterns on the high E string. Each pattern consists of a vertical bar at the 5th fret followed by a horizontal line connecting to a vertical bar at the 8th fret. The strings are labeled T, A, B from bottom to top. The tab is in common time (4/4) and has a key signature of one flat.

Another common adaption of the Minor 7 chord shape is to create a hammer-on pattern on the high E string. In this case we are in the key of D Minor, so we can use any of the notes of the D Minor Pentatonic scale (D F G A C) alongside the chord shape of Dm7. In Example 2n, hammer on from the 5th fret to the 8th fret of the high E string using your first and fourth fingers.

Example 2n

This guitar tablature shows four hammer-on patterns on the high E string, similar to Example 2m but with a slight variation in the hammer-on point. Instead of a vertical bar at the 5th fret, there is a curved line starting from the 5th fret and ending at the 8th fret, indicating a smooth hammer-on. The strings are labeled T, A, B from bottom to top. The tab is in common time (4/4) and has a key signature of one flat.

Now add the Dm7 chord shape to the previous hammer-on pattern.

Example 2o

Dm7

This guitar tablature shows four hammer-on patterns on the high E string, similar to Examples 2m and 2n but with the addition of a Dm7 chord shape. The first note of each pattern is a vertical bar at the 5th fret, followed by a horizontal line connecting to a vertical bar at the 8th fret. The strings are labeled T, A, B from bottom to top. The tab is in common time (4/4) and has a key signature of one flat.

Combine the 6th to the 8th fret hammer-on pattern on the B string with the 5th to the 8th fret hammer-on pattern on the high E string. This is a brilliant warm-up exercise, as it combines both a barre chord shape and legato hammer-ons.

Example 2p

Dm7

The musical notation shows four measures of a Dm7 chord. Each measure consists of a vertical stack of three notes: the bottom note is on the 5th fret of the B string, the middle note is on the 5th fret of the E string, and the top note is on the 5th fret of the A string. Measure 1: Hammer-on from the 6th fret of the B string to the 8th fret. Measure 2: Hammer-on from the 5th fret of the E string to the 8th fret. Measure 3: Hammer-on from the 6th fret of the B string to the 8th fret. Measure 4: Hammer-on from the 5th fret of the E string to the 8th fret. Below the staff is a tablature (TAB) system with three horizontal lines. The first line represents the B string, the second the E string, and the third the A string. Fret numbers 5, 6, and 7 are marked above the strings, corresponding to the notes in the chords. The TAB shows the same hammer-on patterns as the musical notation.

Once you have completed the hammer-on patterns around the Minor 7 chord shape, the next step is to practise pull-offs and hammer-ons together. If this kind of legato pattern is new to you, practise the pull-offs on their own before attempting Example 2q.

Example 2q

Dm7

The musical notation shows two measures of a Dm7 chord. Each measure consists of a vertical stack of three notes: the bottom note is on the 5th fret of the B string, the middle note is on the 5th fret of the E string, and the top note is on the 5th fret of the A string. The pattern involves a hammer-on from the 6th fret of the B string to the 8th fret, followed by a pull-off from the 8th fret back to the 6th fret. This is repeated in the second measure. Below the staff is a tablature (TAB) system with three horizontal lines. The first line represents the B string, the second the E string, and the third the A string. Fret numbers 5, 6, and 7 are marked above the strings, corresponding to the notes in the chords. The TAB shows the hammer-on and pull-off patterns.

Now alternate between a Cmaj7 chord and a Dm7 chord using the legato patterns shown throughout this chapter. Things quickly start to get a bit more musical after all those exercises.

As you move through the next examples, be inspired by another Kerry “2 Smooth” piece from his Instagram.

<http://bit.ly/2CaMww1>

Example 2r

Guitar tablature for Example 2r. The top staff shows a C major 9 chord (C, E, G, B, D, F#) followed by a D minor 7 chord (D, F#, A, C). The bottom staff shows the guitar neck with fingerings: T3, A4, B3 for the first measure, and T3, A4, B5 for the second measure. The tab uses standard notation with dots for note heads and horizontal lines for stems.

Example 2s is another great musical warm-up that combines multiple barre chords and legato. Start off slowly when learning this example, around 50 bpm, and make sure everything sounds clean before raising the tempo.

Example 2s

Guitar tablature for Example 2s. The top staff shows a C major 9 chord (C, E, G, B, D, F#) followed by a D minor 7 chord (D, F#, A, C). The bottom staff shows the guitar neck with fingerings: T3, A4, B3 for the first measure, and T3, A4, B5 for the second measure. The tab uses standard notation with dots for note heads and horizontal lines for stems.

Guitar tablature for Example 2s. The top staff shows an E minor 7 chord (E, G, B, D) followed by an F major 9 chord (F, A, C, E, G, B). The bottom staff shows the guitar neck with fingerings: T7, A8, B7 for the first measure, and T7, A8, B9 for the second measure. The tab uses standard notation with dots for note heads and horizontal lines for stems.

Chords with a root on the A string tend to be the most commonly used shapes in Neo-Soul, but it's important to play chord shapes in many positions on the neck. Example 2t shows a Minor 7 chord shape in the key of A Minor with the root on the E string. This is followed by a flurry of legato notes using the first and fourth fingers. To make learning these examples more fun, be sure to spend time playing them along with the backing tracks provided.

Example 2t

Am7

This guitar tab shows a three-bar example. The first bar contains a Am7 chord (root position). The second bar features a legato fill consisting of a C major scale (A-C-D-E-G-B) with grace notes, indicated by a bracket labeled "3". The third bar contains another Am7 chord. The tab includes a staff for the neck and a standard staff for the strings. A note "let ring" is placed above the first bar. The neck staff has markers T, A, B on the left and 5, 5, 5, 7 on the right.

Now let's look at a Major 7 chord shape with the root note on the low E string and a frequently-used C Major scale legato fill.

Example 2u

Cmaj7

This guitar tab shows a three-bar example. The first bar contains a C major 7 chord (root position). The second bar features a legato fill consisting of a C major scale (C-D-E-G-A-B-C) with grace notes, indicated by a bracket labeled "3". The third bar contains another C major 7 chord. The tab includes a staff for the neck and a standard staff for the strings. The neck staff has markers T, A, B on the left and 8, 9, 9, 8 on the right.

The final example of this chapter combines Major 7 and Minor 7 chord shapes on the low E and A strings with a variety of legato fills. As always, start off slowly and listen to the audio examples to see how each bar should be phrased.

Example 2v

The image shows four measures of guitar sheet music. The first measure is labeled **Am7** and the second is **Bm7**. Both measures include a "let ring" instruction above the TAB. The third measure is labeled **Cmaj7** and the fourth is **Em7**. The TAB notation below each measure shows the fingerings for each chord.

Am7 TAB: T 5, A 5, B 5 (with a 7 below the 5)

Bm7 TAB: T 5, A 5, B 5 (with a 7 below the 5), followed by T 7, A 7, B 7 (with a 9 above the 7) and T 7, A 7, B 7 (with a 9 above the 7)

Cmaj7 TAB: T 8, A 9, B 9 (with an 8 below the 9), followed by T 8, A 7, B 7 (with a 10 above the 8) and T 7, A 7, B 7 (with a 9 above the 7)

Em7 TAB: T 7, A 8, B 9 (with a 7 below the 8), followed by T 7, A 7, B 7 (with a 10 above the 7) and T 7, A 8, B 8 (with a 7 below the 8), ending with T 7, A 7, B 9

Chapter Three – Single Note Lines

Artist Spotlight: Landon Jordan, Magnus Klausen, Beau Diakowicz

Before we dive into this chapter, we want to introduce you to Landon Jordan. This young session player, based in Atlanta, demos products for companies such as Fender guitars. With his skills it's easy to see why he is one of the most sought after players around. Watch these magical eighteen seconds and enjoy the flow of single note lines with fluidity that is off the scale!

<http://bit.ly/2NDSRCf>

Another artist to check out is Magnus Klausen – a young Neo-Soul pioneer based in the UK. He has built a large Instagram following based on him blazing the way with fresh technical and melodic Neo-Soul ideas. Here is one of our favourite tracks of his. Note the crossover of jazz, blues, rock, gospel and other genres highlighted in this video.

<http://bit.ly/2ITyWi2>

By now you'll understand that a prominent feature of Neo-Soul guitar is the blend of beautiful jazz chord voicings and single note fills in between the chords. In this chapter we will break down some commonly used Neo-Soul fills – including pentatonic licks, arpeggios, chromatic passing tones and “outside” lines. Once you have absorbed the ideas in this chapter, use the concepts to create your own personalised approach.

Pentatonic ideas

The Major and Minor pentatonic scales are both popular choices among Neo-Soul guitarists. Using just five notes, these scales easily outline chord sounds and can fit into almost any playing situation. Legato techniques, such as slides, hammer-ons, pull-offs and grace notes are used to get the most out of each scale. Pay attention to how the techniques used influence the phrasing of each line and work to incorporate these ideas into your playing.

Example 3a uses the C Major Pentatonic scale (C D E G A) and has a gospel feel to it. This lick would work perfectly between the chords in any C Major progression, but is commonly played between Cmaj7 and Cmaj9 chords in Neo-Soul.

Example 3a

Example 3b contains three notes from the C Major Pentatonic scale played in three different octaves, and emphasises the importance of vibrato and slides. In the audio example you will hear this line played with a fast, subtle vibrato, but be sure to experiment with different speeds and amounts of vibrato.

This example shows how you can use different areas of the neck to create fills between your chords. For example, if you have three different Cmaj7 chords in a song you are creating, you could aim to write a fill in each of the different octaves shown in this example.

Example 3b

Guitar tablature for Example 3b. The first measure consists of eighth-note patterns on the 6th string (fret 10-12), 5th string (fret 8), and 4th string (fret 5). The second measure consists of eighth-note patterns on the 5th string (fret 7) and 4th string (fret 5). The third measure consists of sixteenth-note patterns on the 4th string (fret 7), 3rd string (fret 5), and 2nd string (fret 3).

Example 3c uses the C Major Pentatonic scale to highlight the importance of short slides and hammer-ons.

Example 3c

Guitar tablature for Example 3c. The first measure shows a sequence of eighth-note patterns with slides (e.g., 8-10-X-12, 8-10) and hammer-ons. The second measure shows a sequence of eighth-note patterns with slides (e.g., 8-10-X-7, 5-7) and hammer-ons. The third measure shows a sequence of eighth-note patterns with slides (e.g., 7-5-X-9, 5-7) and hammer-ons.

One of the main differences between Neo-Soul and standard rock and blues is the heavy focus on Major chord progressions. In this chapter we've prioritised demonstrating Major pentatonic licks, as these will likely feel less familiar to you than their Minor counterparts.

The final Major Pentatonic lick moves away from C Major to the A Major Pentatonic scale (A B C# E F#).

Example 3d

Guitar tablature for Example 3d. The first measure shows a sequence of eighth-note patterns with slides (e.g., 9-11-X-12, 12-X-10) and hammer-ons. The second measure shows a sequence of eighth-note patterns with slides (e.g., 9-11-X-9, 11-X-9) and hammer-ons. The third measure shows a sequence of eighth-note patterns with slides (e.g., 9-7-X-11, 11-X-11) and hammer-ons.

Arpeggio ideas

Neo-Soul single note lines rely on being smooth and fluid, and often use a lot of the fretboard to accomplish this. Arpeggios are a great navigational tool to move around the neck and in this section we'll look at the three most commonly used arpeggios used in Neo-Soul – Major 9, Minor 9 and Dominant 9.

When playing these lines, although you can pick each note separately, we have included specific legato passages which will help you create a flowing sound. These arpeggios are commonly played between chords and as fills when a longer run is required.

Before you play the arpeggios, we want to introduce you the phenomenon that is Beau Diakowicz. Truly, when we first came across him we were literally blown away. Check out this Soundslice lick from him and see how he uses arpeggios in bars five and seven to effortlessly move around the neck.

<http://bit.ly/2A6zDSv>

The most important thing you can do with the arpeggio patterns that follow is commit them to memory, not just read them off the page. This will take time, but the effort invested will be richly rewarded with long, beautiful lines that stun an audience.

At the end of each arpeggio we have included a chord voicing that you can play the arpeggio shape over. Use a loop pedal, a sequencer, or your phone to record the chord, then play the corresponding arpeggio shape over it.

Example 3e – Amaj9 Arpeggio

Amaj9

Amaj9

Amaj9

8

Example 3f – A9 Arpeggio

A9

A9

A9

A9

A9

A9

Example 3g – Am9 Arpeggio

Am9

TAB

5 3 7 5 4-5 3 7-3 5 5-4 5 7-3 5 0 5 5

Am9

TAB

5 8 7 5-9 5-9 8 7 8 9-5 9-5 7 8-5 0 7 8 5 7

Am9

TAB

12 15 14 12-16 13-17 15 19-15 17-13 16-12 14 15 12 12 10 12

Example 3h demonstrates an Asus2 chord followed by an Amaj9 arpeggio (A C# E G# B) played with the notes re-arranged to create a lick. Make sure the arpeggio sounds smooth and let the notes ring to outline the Amaj9 chord. You can use this lick on any A Major chord, but in Neo-Soul that will commonly be Amaj7, Amaj9 or Aadd9.

Example 3h

Musical notation for Example 3h in Asus2 chord. The top staff shows a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps, and a 4/4 time signature. The bottom staff shows a bass clef and a 4/4 time signature. The notation includes three measures of sixteenth-note patterns and a measure of eighth notes. A 'let ring' instruction is present. The bass staff has fingerings: 5, 4, 2; 5, 7, 9; 7, 9, 11; 9, 10.

Building on the previous example, Example 3i demonstrates an Em9 arpeggio (E G B D F#) that includes slides to help move position. Complete the slides with your first finger throughout this exercise. A fun way to get double the value from these licks is to start at the end and play the lick in reverse.

Example 3i

Musical notation for Example 3i in Em7 chord. The top staff shows a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a 4/4 time signature. The bottom staff shows a bass clef and a 4/4 time signature. The notation includes three measures of sixteenth-note patterns and a measure of eighth notes. A 'let ring' instruction is present. The bass staff has fingerings: 0, 2, 3, 7, 5; 4, 5, 9; 7, 5.

Example 3j demonstrates a nice way of connecting a Cmaj7 arpeggio (C E G B) to an Fmaj7 arpeggio (F A C E). These arpeggio shapes are formed into fills that can be used between chords. Pay special attention to the use of slides and hammer-ons throughout this example as they give it its unique sound.

Example 3j

Musical notation for Example 3j connecting Cmaj7 and Fmaj7 arpeggios. The top staff shows a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a 4/4 time signature. The bottom staff shows a bass clef and a 4/4 time signature. The notation includes two measures of sixteenth-note patterns. A 'let ring' instruction is present. The bass staff has fingerings: 3, 7, 5; 4, 7, 9, 8, 5, 7; 8, 10, 9, 12, 14, 13, 10, 12.

So far we have concentrated on ascending fills and licks. Example 3k demonstrates a descending lick that uses the B Natural Minor scale (B C# D E F# G A) and ends with a popular Neo-Soul chord voicing. The flowing nature of this lick means it would work well after a B Minor chord voicing, such as Bm7 or Bm9. It could also work very well as the ending to a Neo-Soul piece.

Example 3k

Musical notation for Example 3k. The key signature is B major (two sharps). The time signature is 4/4. The lick starts with a descending eighth-note pattern (B, A, G, F#, E, D, C#) followed by a sixteenth-note run. It concludes with a Bm7#5 chord (B, D, F#, G, B) played with a hammer-on from the 8th string and a pull-off to the 5th string. The neck diagram shows the strings T (Top), A, and B.

One of the main aims of this book is to teach you to be able to combine fills, licks and chords in a confident manner. As the Major 9 chord shape is so common in Neo-Soul, it is a good place to start when getting used to adding fills to your chord voicings. Example 3l starts off with a Bmaj9 voicing with the root on the A string, then uses the B Major scale with tiny slides, hammer-ons and pull-offs to define the feel of the lick.

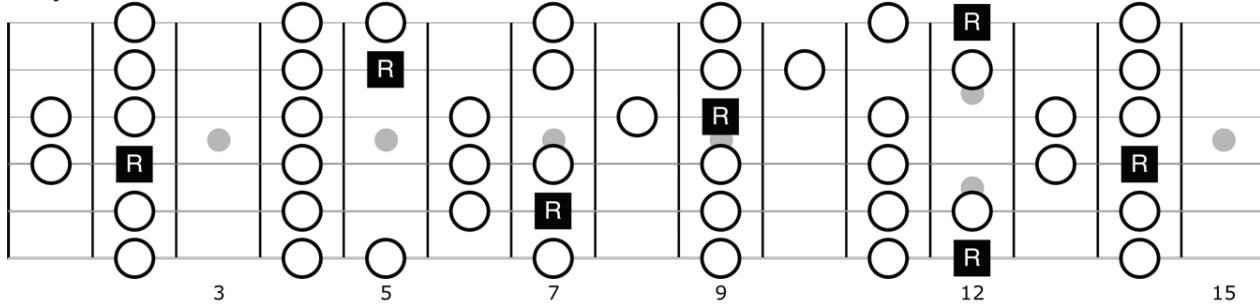
Example 3l

Musical notation for Example 3l. The key signature is B major (two sharps). The time signature is 4/4. The lick begins with a Bmaj9 chord (B, D, F#, G, B) on the A string. It then transitions into a B Major scale lick with various slides, hammer-ons, and pull-offs. The neck diagram shows the strings T (Top), A, and B.

Example 3m uses the E Major Scale (E F# G# A B C# D#) to create a slippery fill that would work well over an E Major type chord, such as Emaj7 or Emaj9.

Take a look at the E Major Scale neck diagram below. When you are learning this example, pay special attention to the notes used in the lick that *do not* appear in the diagram. These passing notes have been added to create a sense of tension and release, and are not held for long.

E Major Scale



Example 3m

Musical notation for Example 3m, featuring a treble clef staff and a tab staff below it. The tab staff shows fingerings for the lick, such as 10-11, 8-9, 9-12-14, 14-12, 12-11-13, 13-9, 9, 11-11-9, 9, 9-11-9, and 7.

Practise the following E Natural Minor (E F# G A B C D) lick extremely slowly at first, *without* a metronome. The first two bars loop perfectly and work well as an all-finger legato warm-up. This lick works as a longer fill over any E Minor chord type. In Neo-Soul that will commonly be either Em7 or Em9.

When learning this example we recommend that you break the lick up into small chunks of three to four notes at a time. This will help you learn the lick quickly, but you can also use the mini phrases as licks in their own right, to use for shorter fills.

Example 3n

Musical notation for Example 3n, featuring a treble clef staff and a tab staff below it. The tab staff shows fingerings for the lick, such as 7, 9, 10, 9, 10, 11, 8, 10, 7, 8-7-5, and 8.

Em9

Musical notation for the Em9 chord, featuring a treble clef staff and a tab staff below it. The tab staff shows fingerings for the Em9 chord, such as 5, 7, 9, 10-9-7, 9-7-5, 7, 5, 0, 7, 5, and 7.

We call this next E Natural Minor lick the “slip and slide” as it really demonstrates the power of multiple slides joined together in a Neo-Soul context. This lick works fantastically over any E Minor chord. The Em11 chord featured in the second half of bar two should be held down as a full chord shape before applying the necessary hammer-on and slide.

Example 3o

A common way to create single note lines is to play using only one string. This can help you to break out of the conventional guitar box shapes and patterns. It also creates a vocal-like sound. In Example 3p the Db Major scale (Db Eb F Gb Ab Bb C) forms the basis of the lick and combines multiple legato and slide phrases to create its sound. Pick any string and challenge yourself to play the Minor Pentatonic scale and the Major scale using only that string.

Example 3p

Applying bends to the one-string technique mentioned above can also create a melodic vocal-like line. Practise to achieve precise bends and, once you feel comfortable, add some vibrato to them.

Example 3q

Musical notation for Example 3q. The top staff shows a melodic line with various bends and a trill (tr). The bottom staff shows the corresponding fingerings on a guitar neck diagram (T, A, B strings). The fingerings include 12, 11, 13, 15, 15(13), 13, 15, 11, and (11). A half bend (1/2) is indicated above the 15(13) and 13 positions. A full bend is indicated above the (11) position.

Chromatic ideas

The concept of adding chromatic passing tones to a scale is a huge one, so we will only touch on it briefly here. (For more information on how to use chromatics in your playing, check out Jens Larsen's *Modern Jazz Guitar Concepts* and Tim Pettingale's *Jazz Bebop Blues Guitar*).

Example 3r uses a repetitive pattern of chromatic notes (notes a semi-tone/one fret apart) and works well over both a B Major chord and an E Major chord.

Example 3r

Musical notation for Example 3r. The top staff shows a repetitive pattern of chromatic notes with a three-fret interval. The bottom staff shows the corresponding fingerings on a guitar neck diagram (T, A, B strings). The fingerings include 11, 10, 9, 12, 14, 15, 14, 12, 8, 7, 6, 4, 6, 7, 6, and 4.

Playing standard scale shapes is all well and good, but in Neo-Soul, passing tones or chromatic notes are often added to create extra tension and release. This idea is borrowed from jazz players and is commonly seen in the style of players such as Pat Martino. Check out this YouTube video of Pat Martino and John Scofield, in which they both use a ton of chromatic lines!

<http://bit.ly/2OnoF3q>

In Example 3s the E Major scale is combined with passing tones to create a slippery Neo-Soul lick that would work perfectly over any E Major chord, but frequently sits alongside an Emaj7 or Emaj9.

Refer to the neck diagram of the E Major scale in Example 3l if you need a reminder of this shape across the neck.

Example 3s

The musical notation shows a slurred sixteenth-note line on a treble clef staff. Below it is a guitar neck diagram with the strings labeled T, A, and B. Fingerings are indicated above the neck: 14, 13-12, 11-10-11, 12, 13-11, 9, 11, 8-4, 5, 4-7-4, 5, 7-4-6, and 0. The neck diagram shows the frets from 0 to 14.

The next example sounds great over a IVmMaj7 to Imaj7 chord progression. In this case it's AmMaj7 to Emaj7. Slurred lines like these sound best when played freely and loosely as demonstrated in the audio example.

Example 3t

The musical notation shows a slurred sixteenth-note line on a treble clef staff. Below it is a guitar neck diagram with the strings labeled T, A, and B. Fingerings are indicated above the neck: 7, 6, 5, 4, 5, 5-4-2-1, and 0. The neck diagram shows the frets from 0 to 7.

Having a certain level of dissonance is a common theme in Neo-Soul. This is usually achieved by using different types of altered dominant chords such as 7b5, 7#5, b9, #9 and b13. You will see voicings of these chords as you progress through this book, but keep in mind that their primary function is to add tension and they want to resolve, usually to a Major or Minor chord voicing.

In the next three examples we will show you some commonly used fills that can be applied to the chord at the end of each example. Once again, the concept of altered chords is a big one, so check out Joseph Alexander's book, *Chord Tone Soloing for Jazz Guitar* for more information.

Example 3u demonstrates the type of lick often played over altered chords in Neo-Soul. This line comes from the A Super Locrian scale (A B C C# Eb F G) – the seventh mode of the Melodic Minor scale.

Example 3u

Musical notation for Example 3u. The top staff shows a melodic line with various note heads and stems. The bottom staff is a tablature (T-A-B) showing fingerings for each string. The tablature includes numbers (6, 8, 5, etc.) and slurs indicating specific fingerings and phrasing. The notation ends with a chord labeled "Aalt" and a instruction "let ring".

Example 3v features the B Half-Whole Diminished scale (B C D D# E# F# G# A) and ends with a popular 13b9 voicing. The Half-Whole Diminished scale is frequently used to play over the 13b9 chord voicing shown in bar three and is a very popular scale choice among modern jazz, fusion and Neo-Soul guitarists.

Check out the popular Instagram guitarist Curt Henderson mixing modes of the Major scale with the Half-Whole Diminished scale in this video.

<http://bit.ly/2QMyipf>

Example 3v

Musical notation for Example 3v. The top staff shows a melodic line with various note heads and stems. The bottom staff is a tablature (T-A-B) showing fingerings for each string. The tablature includes numbers (10, 8, 7, etc.) and slurs indicating specific fingerings and phrasing. The notation ends with a chord labeled "B13b9".

Example 3w uses a fluid legato line based around the E Super Locrian scale (E F G Ab Bb C D). This line was inspired by the great Robben Ford and his track *Talk To Your Daughter*. The great thing about Neo-Soul guitar parts is that they combine so many different genres into a “super genre”!

Example 3w

A musical score for a guitar lick. The top staff shows a melodic line with various note heads and stems. The bottom staff shows a tablature with fingerings: 8-5-6-8-4-8-6-5-7-5-6-5-8-7. To the right, a vertical bar labeled "Ealt" is followed by a chord progression: B major 9 (B-D-G-B) - A major 9 (A-C-E-A) - G major 9 (G-B-D-G). The time signature is 4/4.

The final example in this chapter uses the B Major scale with an added G chromatic passing tone for extra tension, which resolves nicely to a Bmaj9 chord. The audio demonstrates this lick played both staccato (first time) and legato (second time). We recommend you practise it both ways.

Example 3x

A musical score for a guitar lick. The top staff shows a melodic line with various note heads and stems. The bottom staff shows a tablature with fingerings: 5-7-4-5-4-6-4-5-4-7-6-4-2. To the right, a vertical bar labeled "Bmaj9" is followed by a chord progression: B major 9 (B-D-G-B) - A major 9 (A-C-E-A) - G major 9 (G-B-D-G). The time signature is 4/4.

Chapter Four – Double-Stop Lines

Artist Spotlight: Isaiah Sharkey

In terms of Neo-Soul, RnB and Gospel chops there are few better players to draw inspiration from than Isaiah Sharkey. Before making your way through this chapter, watch the YouTube video in the link below.

<http://bit.ly/2PudPFx>

A very recognisable sound in Neo-Soul guitar is the use of double-stops. Double-stops can be played in a number of ways: with a pick, hybrid picking (pick and fingers) or only fingers. All of these approaches have a different sound, so experiment with these possibilities to see what works best for you. Incorporate the licks into your playing and transpose them to different keys, or just use them for inspiration to write your own.

To play the double-stop licks featured in this chapter with a pick, you have two main options:

Option number one is to use all down strokes. This is easier if you are new to this technique.

Option number two is to use alternate picking. It will take some practice to play the double-stops cleanly with alternate picking, but this approach will ultimately allow you to reach speeds you couldn't reach just using down strokes. As Isaiah Sharkey says with a smile on his face as he effortlessly alternate picks two strings at a time, "It's only two notes bro".

Exercises 4a to 4e use the A Minor Pentatonic scale (A C D E G) played simultaneously on two adjacent strings, and move through all five CAGED positions. If you are new to CAGED positions and would like more information on how they are formed and how to use them, check out Joseph Alexander's book *The CAGED System and 100 Licks for Blues Guitar*.

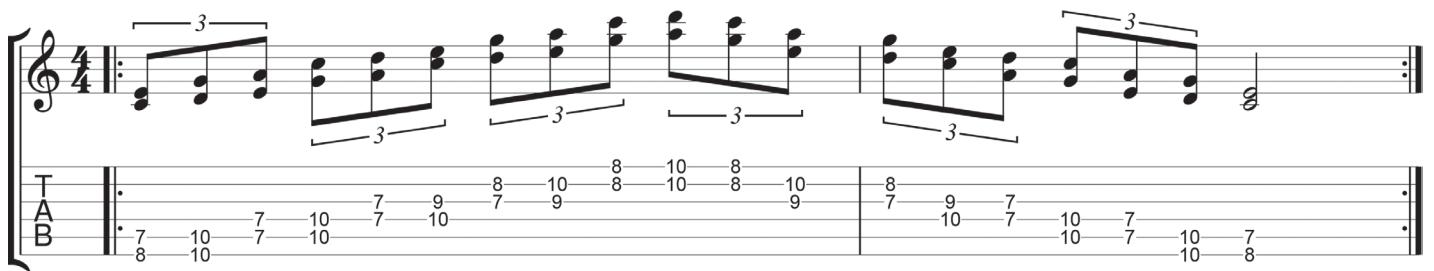
As you play these exercises, aim to keep both notes equal in both volume and duration. As always, start slowly, increase the tempo, and aim to play as cleanly as possible.

Check out this amazing Instagram video to see this technique in action!

<http://bit.ly/2CdEZNe>

Example 4a

Example 4b



Guitar tablature for Example 4b. The top staff shows a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a melodic line with sixteenth-note patterns. The bottom staff shows the A and B strings with fingerings: T (thumb), A (index), and B (middle). The tab includes measure numbers and a repeat sign.

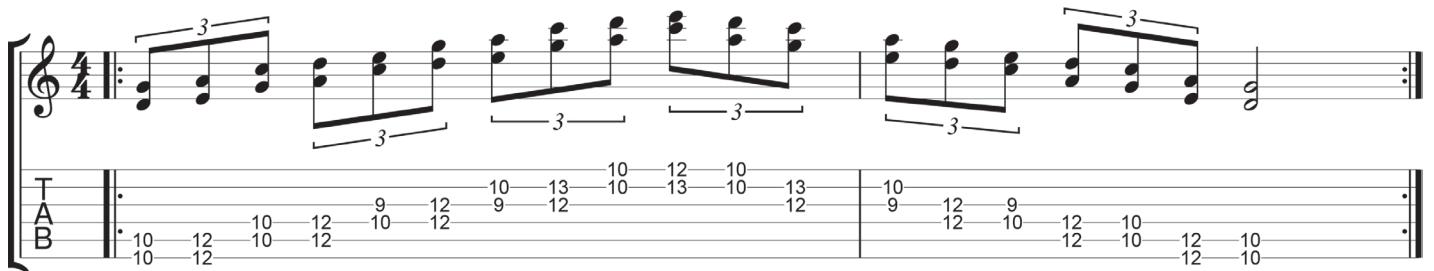
Fret positions for the A string (T-A-B):

7	10	7	10	7	10	8	10	8	10	8	10	8	10	7	10	7	10	7	10	7	8
---	----	---	----	---	----	---	----	---	----	---	----	---	----	---	----	---	----	---	----	---	---

Fret positions for the B string (T-A-B):

8	10	7	10	7	10	7	10	7	10	7	10	7	10	7	10	7	10	7	10	7
---	----	---	----	---	----	---	----	---	----	---	----	---	----	---	----	---	----	---	----	---

Example 4c



Guitar tablature for Example 4c. The top staff shows a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a melodic line with sixteenth-note patterns. The bottom staff shows the A and B strings with fingerings: T (thumb), A (index), and B (middle). The tab includes measure numbers and a repeat sign.

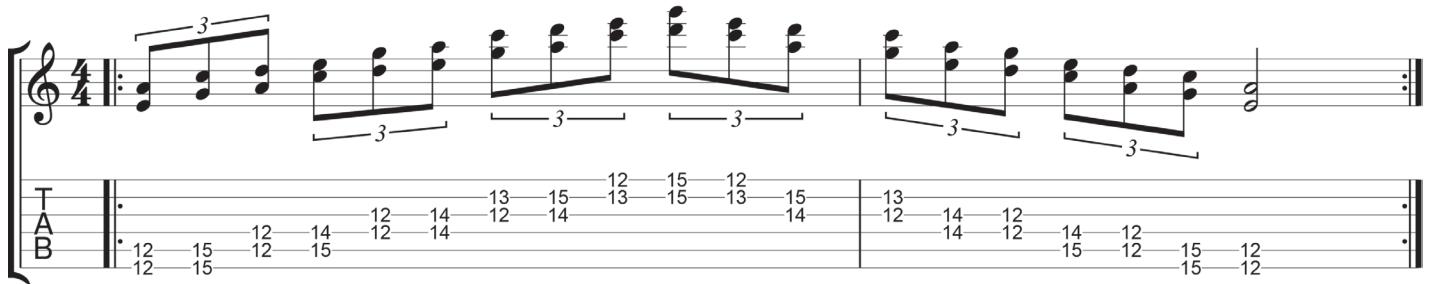
Fret positions for the A string (T-A-B):

10	12	10	12	9	12	10	13	10	13	10	12	10	13	10	12	9	12	10	12	10	12
----	----	----	----	---	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	---	----	----	----	----	----

Fret positions for the B string (T-A-B):

10	12	10	12	10	12	9	12	10	12	9	12	10	12	9	12	10	12	10	12	10	12
----	----	----	----	----	----	---	----	----	----	---	----	----	----	---	----	----	----	----	----	----	----

Example 4d



Guitar tablature for Example 4d. The top staff shows a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a melodic line with sixteenth-note patterns. The bottom staff shows the A and B strings with fingerings: T (thumb), A (index), and B (middle). The tab includes measure numbers and a repeat sign.

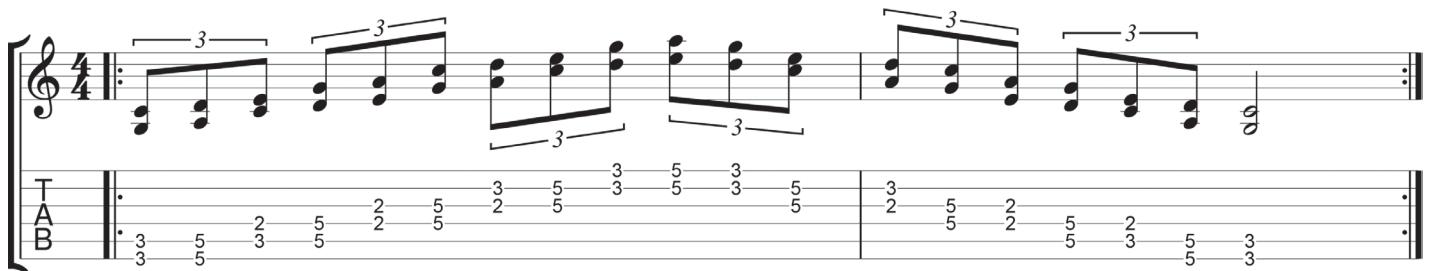
Fret positions for the A string (T-A-B):

12	15	12	14	12	14	13	15	12	15	13	15	12	15	13	14	12	14	12	15	12	15
----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----

Fret positions for the B string (T-A-B):

12	15	12	15	12	14	12	14	13	14	12	14	13	14	12	14	12	15	12	15	12	15
----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----

Example 4e



Guitar tablature for Example 4e. The top staff shows a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a melodic line with sixteenth-note patterns. The bottom staff shows the A and B strings with fingerings: T (thumb), A (index), and B (middle). The tab includes measure numbers and a repeat sign.

Fret positions for the A string (T-A-B):

3	5	2	5	2	5	3	5	3	5	3	5	3	5	2	5	2	5	3	5	3	5
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Fret positions for the B string (T-A-B):

3	5	2	5	2	5	3	5	3	5	3	5	2	5	3	5	2	5	3	5	3	5
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Now that you feel comfortable with the Pentatonic shapes, it's time to break out of the boxes. The next example moves up through the Pentatonic scale on two adjacent strings at a time.

The great thing about Neo-Soul is you can borrow from so many different genres. Check out Landon Jordan's playing on this super funky Prince track and pay attention his use of double-stop riffs.

<http://bit.ly/2yjwAF3>

Example 4f

Example 4g shows an A Minor Pentatonic scale double-stop pattern that skips between shapes to produce different intervals. It's amazing how many fresh ideas can be created using only the familiar box shapes. Commit these shapes to memory before moving on to the next examples.

Example 4g

The image shows a musical score for a guitar. The top staff is a treble clef staff with a 4/4 time signature. It features a continuous melodic line consisting of eighth-note pairs. The bottom staff is a bass clef staff with a 4/4 time signature, showing harmonic chords. The bass notes correspond to the eighth-note pairs in the treble staff. The bass staff has labels below it indicating specific notes: '5' at the beginning, followed by '8', '5', '7', '5', '7', '5', '7', '5', '7', '5', '8'. The labels 'T', 'A', and 'B' are positioned vertically on the left side of the bass staff.

Example 4h shows another double-stop exercise using the A Minor Pentatonic scale and string skipping. Remember to practise the licks demonstrated in this chapter along with the backing tracks provided with this book.

Example 4h

Now that you are familiar with the patterns, the following examples demonstrate musical licks and phrases using pentatonic double-stops. Example 4i once again uses the A Minor Pentatonic scale.

Example 4i

Musical score and TAB for guitar, measures 11-12.

Score:

Treble clef, 4/4 time, one sharp key signature.

TAB:

String 6:
 String 5:
 String 4:
 String 3:
 String 2:
 String 1:

Fingerings and picking pattern:

- Measure 11: 8 10 12 / 10 8 5 7 5 7 5 7 5 7 4/5 4/5 8 7 5 5
- Measure 12: 8 10 13 / 10 8 5 7 5 7 5 7 5 7 4/5 4/5 8 7 5 5

Example 4j demonstrates an A Minor Pentatonic scale double-stop phrase that uses multiple positions of the neck and has a memorable rhythmic pattern. Make sure you listen to the audio of this example before you play it yourself, so you can hear the subtleties in the phrasing.

Example 4j

Example 4k is based around the C# Minor Pentatonic scale (C# E F# G# B) and has a funky syncopated groove. Make sure you complete the final sliding lick with your first finger only.

This idea was the basis for Kristof's Instagram video below.

<http://bit.ly/2EiMIMu>

Example 4k

Musical Score:

Tablature:

Until now, the exercises in this chapter have focused on the Pentatonic scale. The next few examples use all seven notes of the Major scale. Example 41 uses 3rds from the C Major scale (C D E F G A B). Record a little loop of a Cmaj7 chord and practise this lick as demonstrated below, then jam your own ideas as well. Remember that a quick way to get double the mileage out of all of these licks is to reverse them and play them from the end to the beginning too!

If the concept of intervals is new to you and you would like to learn more, check out Joseph Alexander's book *The Practical Guide To Modern Music Theory For Guitarists*.

Example 4l

Example 4m demonstrates playing the E Major scale (E F# G# A B C# D#) in 3rd intervals using only the D and G strings. Using the interval of a 3rd is a great way to outline chords and this lick would work brilliantly over an Emaj7 or an Emaj9 chord.

Example 4m

Musical notation for Example 4m. The top staff shows a treble clef, a key signature of three sharps, and a 4/4 time signature. The bottom staff shows a bass clef and a 4/4 time signature. The notation consists of two measures of double-stops. The first measure starts with a double-stop between the 2nd and 4th strings. The second measure starts with a double-stop between the 6th and 8th strings. The third measure starts with a double-stop between the 9th and 11th strings. The fourth measure ends with a single note on the 13th string. The tablature below shows the fingerings: 2-4, 4-6, 6-8, 7-9, 9-11, 11-13, 13-14, and 0. A note above the tablature says "let ring".

A popular double-stop device in Neo-Soul is to use an interval of a 4th. In this example, the C Major scale (C D E F G A B) is the basis for a commonly used double-stop lick. Play this lick as smoothly as possible.

Example 4n

Musical notation for Example 4n. The top staff shows a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The bottom staff shows a bass clef and a 4/4 time signature. The notation consists of four measures of double-stops. The first measure starts with a double-stop between the 5th and 7th strings. The second measure starts with a double-stop between the 5th and 7th strings, followed by a palm mute indicated by a wavy line. The third measure starts with a double-stop between the 5th and 7th strings, followed by a palm mute. The fourth measure starts with a double-stop between the 5th and 7th strings, followed by a palm mute. The tablature below shows the fingerings: 5-7, 5-7, 5-7-9-7-5, 7-5-7-10-9, and 7-5-5. The first two measures have palm muting indicated by wavy lines above the strings.

Example 4o is built around the A Major scale (A B C# D E F# G#). This lick introduces the “palm mute” (resting your hand gently near the bridge to deaden the strings slightly, so they don’t ring out) and shows how it can be used with double-stops to evoke the Neo-Soul sound. We recommend you practise this technique by palm-muting all the early examples in this book.

Example 4o

Musical notation for Example 4o. The top staff shows a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a 4/4 time signature. The bottom staff shows a bass clef and a 4/4 time signature. The notation consists of three measures. The first measure starts with a double-stop between the 5th and 7th strings, followed by a palm mute indicated by a dash. The second measure starts with a double-stop between the 9th and 12th strings, followed by a palm mute indicated by a dash. The third measure starts with a double-stop between the 7th and 5th strings, followed by a palm mute indicated by a dash. The tablature below shows the fingerings: 5-7, 7-5, 9-12-7-9-5, 7-6-4-6, and 4-7. The first two measures have palm muting indicated by dashes above the strings.

The next examples uses double-stops in 5ths. Example 4p shows a sliding pattern on the D and G strings using the E Major scale. The double-stop element of this lick works well over an Emaj7 or Emaj9 chord.

Example 4p

Musical notation for Example 4p. The top staff shows a treble clef, a key signature of four sharps, and a 4/4 time signature. The bottom staff shows a standard six-string guitar tablature with strings A (top) and B (bottom). The tablature includes a 'let ring' instruction above the strings. The tablature shows various fingerings and string skipping patterns.

It is important when learning any new techniques on the guitar to play it in multiple ways. In the previous example we demonstrated the use of 5ths on two adjacent strings. Example 4q uses 5ths from E Major on different string sets. This may be more challenging to play at first, but is well worth the effort as this sound really captures the Neo-Soul flavour.

Example 4q

Musical notation for Example 4q. The top staff shows a treble clef, a key signature of four sharps, and a 4/4 time signature. The bottom staff shows a standard six-string guitar tablature with strings A (top) and B (bottom). The tablature includes a 'let ring' instruction above the strings. The tablature shows various fingerings and string skipping patterns.

Another popular interval choice for double-stop licks in Neo-Soul is the 6th. Example 4r is a rhythmic idea that uses triplets, 1/16th notes and 1/8th notes and is based around the G Major scale (G A B C D E F#). The sound of the 6th interval will likely be quite familiar to you, as it is extremely popular in blues, country, folk and pop as well as Neo-Soul.

Example 4r

Musical notation for Example 4r. The top staff shows a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a 4/4 time signature. The bottom staff shows a standard six-string guitar tablature with strings A (top) and B (bottom). The tablature includes 'tr' (trill) markings above the strings. The tablature shows various fingerings and string skipping patterns.

Example 4s demonstrates a double-stop lick created using the interval of a 6th and is based around the E Major scale. The second bar has a chromatic movement that is popular in blues as well as Neo-Soul.

Example 4s

Tablature for Example 4s (A string):

T	8	9	10	12	10	9	8	7	8	7	5
A	8	9	11	13	11	9	8	7	8	7	6
B											

Tablature for Example 4s (A string):

T	1	2	4	3	2	2	0	0	(0)	(1)	(4)
A	2	4	6	5	4	3	0	0	(2)	(0)	
B											

Although the examples above illustrate the most commonly used intervals when playing double-stop licks, the examples below are well worth investigating to explore some fresh new sounds. Example 4t is based around the A Major Scale and centres around the interval of a 2nd.

Example 4t

Tablature for Example 4t (A string):

T	5	7	5	2	4	6	3	4	0	2	2
A											
B											

The interval of a 7th is somewhat dissonant, but can be a fun extra element to add into your Neo-Soul lick bag. Example 4u demonstrates how to use the interval of a 7th with a Neo-Soul flavour based around the E Major scale. Try this lick out over an Emaj7 or an Emaj9 chord.

Example 4u

Now let's put all these interval ideas together. This is where things get really interesting. Example 4v uses a mixture of 3rds and 4ths using the D Natural Minor scale (D E F G A Bb C). This idea would work well over a Dm7 or a Dm9 chord.

Example 4v

Musical score and tablature for guitar. The score shows a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a 4/4 time signature. The tablature below shows the corresponding fingerings and string numbers for each note.

Score:

Tablature:

```

T 5 7 10 12 10 12 10 11-13 12-14 11 10 12 10
A . 5 7 10 12 10 12 10 11-13 12-14 11 10 12 10
B   7 10 12 10 12 10 11-13 12-14 11 10 12 10 .
  
```

Example 4w shows a lick we both love to play. It is based around the C Major scale and starts off with a combination of 4ths and 3rds in bar one. Bar two is a Cmaj7 chord, but between each note of the chord a note from the C Major scale is added. This is a technique we both learnt from Beau Diakowicz. Make sure the Cmaj7 chord in the last bar rings out.

Example 4w

The last three examples of this chapter go beyond double-stops by incorporating them into chord sequences and phrases. Example 4x is based around the D Major scale (D E F# G A B C#) and combines chord shapes, a single note line, and a multiple double-stops to create a beautiful two-bar D Major phrase.

Example 4x

Musical notation for Example 4x in D Major (4 sharps). The top staff shows a single note line with a double-stop at the end labeled "Dmaj7". The bottom staff is a tablature (T, A, B) with fingerings: 7, 5, 7, 9, 7, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 9, 11, 10, 12, 14, 10, 12, 14, 14, 14, 12. Two "let ring" markings with a dashed line are present between the 11th and 12th frets, and between the 12th and 14th frets.

A lot of the content in this book may feel somewhat removed from more traditional blues and rock licks, but Example 4y shows how you can bring some Hendrix-esque vibe to your Neo-Soul playing. Based around the E Major Pentatonic scale (E F# G# B C#), the patterns in this lick are reminiscent of tracks such as *The Wind Cries Mary*.

Example 4y

Musical notation for Example 4y in E Major (3 sharps). The top staff shows a single note line. The bottom staff is a tablature (T, A, B) with fingerings: 9, 7, 9, 11, 9, 11, 9, 11, 9, 11, 9, 11, 9, 11, 9, 11, 9.

Musical notation continuation for Example 4y. The top staff shows a single note line with double-stops labeled "A", "Am(maj7)", and "E/G#". The bottom staff is a tablature (T, A, B) with fingerings: 12, 11, 9, 10, 9, 11, 12, 10, 9, 9, 9, 10, 9, 9, 9, 11.

Example 4z uses the C Major scale and is once again rooted in early Hendrix-style double-stops. It has been modernised with position shifts to give it a more Neo-Soul sound. The main aim with this lick is to let all the notes ring out as much as possible.

Example 4z

The first section of the tablature consists of three measures of a C major scale. The first measure starts at the 8th fret of the A string. The second measure starts at the 10th fret of the A string. The third measure starts at the 12th fret of the A string. Each measure contains three notes, indicated by a bracket below each group of three. The instruction "let ring" is placed above the third measure, followed by a dashed line and a "4" to indicate a sustained note.

The second section of the tablature consists of three measures. The first measure is labeled "Fmaj13" and starts at the 12th fret of the A string. The second measure is labeled "Ddim/F" and starts at the 15th fret of the A string. The third measure is labeled "Cmaj7" and starts at the 10th fret of the A string. Each measure contains three notes, indicated by a bracket below each group of three. The instruction "let ring" is placed above each of the first two measures, followed by a dashed line and a "4" to indicate a sustained note.

Check out Curt Henderson and Alexander Coombs, who use a variety of techniques including double-stops. Have a look at Curt's video on Instagram in the link below.

<http://bit.ly/2Pvbr1g>

Chapter Five – Grooves

Artist Spotlight: Curt Henderson, Todd Pritchard, Kerry “2 Smooth” Marshall, Mark Lettieri

In this chapter we aim to provide you with a wealth of chord voicings and melodic fills. More importantly, we will show you how to blend them together into Neo-Soul groove patterns. As you learn the examples featured throughout this chapter, experiment and create your own grooves based on each one. Remember, when it comes to music you cannot steal enough!

The inspiration for the grooves in this chapter came from a wide variety of players including Curt Henderson, Todd Pritchard, Kerry “2 Smooth” Marshall, Mark Lettieri and many others. Before you start playing through these grooves, check out these four short Instagram videos packed with so much groove it will be tough to stop your foot tapping and head nodding!

<http://bit.ly/2yynh3n>

<http://bit.ly/2QKIHSsh>

<http://bit.ly/2CEksCh>

<http://bit.ly/2RIAEGZ>

Example 5a demonstrates a Major 9 chord groove. A common feature of Neo-Soul is to disregard conventional chord theory and move a shape that sounds fantastic through multiple keys. This example demonstrates the concept by moving a Major 9 chord shape through the keys of A, E, G and D.

For bonus points, play this example using fingerpicking, picking, and hybrid-picking (pick and fingers). The same groove can sound quite different when played in these three different ways.

Example 5a

Guitar tablature for Example 5a. The first two measures show an Amaj9 chord (T: 11, A: 12, B: 11) followed by an Emaj9 chord (T: 11, A: 12, B: 11). The tab includes fingerings (11, 13), (12), (11, 12, 11, 9), (6, 6), (7), (4, 6), and (6, 4).

Guitar tablature for Example 5a. The next two measures show a Gmaj9 chord (T: 9, A: 11, B: 10) followed by a Dmaj9 chord (T: 9, A: 10, B: 9). The tab includes fingerings (9, 11), (10), (9, 10, 9, 7), (4, 4), (6), (5), (2, 4), and (4, 2).

A super cool trick used in Neo-Soul guitar parts is the “chord quake” or “slip and slide”. In Example 5b, play a Major 9 chord shape and slide from each chord tone to one fret below and back again. You can apply this technique to any chord shape, not just the Major 9 chords shown in this example.

Example 5b

Emaj9

Amaj9

T A B T A B

7~6~7 6~5~6 8~7~8 7~6~7 0
12~11~12 11~10~11 13~12~13 12~11~12 0

We've seen that a common trick used in Neo-Soul is to palm-mute chord shapes. Gently rest your picking hand across the strings near the bridge and don't push too hard on the strings. A soft palm mute works really well for this style of chordal work.

In the groove below there is a “call and response” pattern: two bars are palm muted and two bars are played with the chords allowed to ring out.

Example 5c

Amaj7

Emaj7

Eadd9

C#m7

P.M. let ring

T A B T A B

11~13 14 11~13 9 6~8 9 6~8 4 0 0
11 12 11 12 7 6 7 11 9 11 0 0
11 12 11 12 7 6 7 11 9 11 0 0

Amaj7

Am(maj7)

P.M.

T A B T A B

(0) (0) 4~5~6~7 11~13 14 11~13 9 9 10 9 9
4 2 4 11 12 11 12 10 12 10 12

Chord progression: C[#]m7, F[#]m11, Eadd9.

Guitar tablature (T: Treble, A: A string, B: Bass):

- C[#]m7: T0, A0, B9
- F[#]m11: T0, A0, B2
- Eadd9: T0, A0, B4 (with fingerings (0), (1), (4), (2), (0))
- Final notes: T9, A10, B12, G10, B11, A9, G9

One of our favourite sounds in Neo-Soul is the IVm cadence. Although the trick of converting the IV chord of a key from major to minor goes back beyond The Beatles, it is still prominent today. In this example the chord progression alternates between Dmaj7 and Gmaj7, and adds the Gm9 chord (IVm) to create a stronger pull back to the home chord of Dmaj7.

Example 5d

Chord progression: Dmaj7, G, Gm9.

Guitar tablature (T: Treble, A: A string, B: Bass):

- Dmaj7: T5, A6, B7
- G: T5, A3, B5
- Gm9: T3, A4, B5 (with fingerings (3), (4), (5))
- Final notes: T3, A5, B3, G3, B3, A5

Chord progression: Dmaj7, Gmaj7, Gm7.

Guitar tablature (T: Treble, A: A string, B: Bass):

- Dmaj7: T5, A6, B7
- Gmaj7: T5, A7, B10 (with fingerings (5), (7), (10), (12))
- Gm7: T10, A12, B10 (with fingerings (10), (12), (10))
- Final notes: T10, A11, B10, G10, B12, A8, G10

Example 5e illustrates commonly used Maj9 and Maj7 voicings in E and A, and introduces a popular altered dominant chord in Neo-Soul in the form of G#7#5#9. The addition of double-stops at the end of bar two make this E Major groove distinctly Neo-Soul.

Example 5e

Emaj9

Amaj7

let ring

G#7#5#9

Emaj7

Incorporating open strings into licks is another device used frequently in Neo-Soul. E Major is a great place to write licks on the guitar that include open strings, since they really suit this key, as demonstrated in Example 5f. Aim to let the open B and high E strings ring out as you move the chords in the first three bars of this example. The A/B to B13b9 movement in bar four is a really cool Neo-Soul chord progression. Take note of this one!

Example 5f

F#m7

G#m7#5

C#m7

Badd11

F#m7

G#m7#5

A/B

B13b9

Emaj7