

signature licks

THE BEST OF ERIC CLAPTON

A STEP-BY-STEP BREAKDOWN
OF HIS GUITAR TECHNIQUE



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FOREWORD

Probably the best way to gain insight into the art of great improvising is to study the works of the masters. Beethoven spent years studying the masterpieces of Bach. Charlie Parker copped Lester Young's tenor sax solos note for note from his records. Eric Clapton studies recordings of blues guitar master B. B. King and his contemporaries. If you want to play convincing, authentic blues-rock guitar, you should study Eric Clapton.

There are two ways of studying a famous musician. First, there is the method of figuring out solos from records by ear. I recommend this to all musicians. Your "ear-chops" improve enormously by doing this. The other way is to transcribe solos onto paper and analyze them academically. Not only does this improve your ears, but it provides you with a written record of your efforts, and allows you to critically analyze the solo with consideration to scales and arpeggios, rhythmic phrasing, melodic contour, and harmonic implications. The ability to transcribe solos, however, is a very difficult skill and can be very time consuming. That's why books such as this one are invaluable tools for the developing musician.

INTRODUCTION

Eric Clapton is one of the founding fathers of rock guitar. He established a whole dictionary of standard licks and "hooks" that are such an integral part of rock. His musical heritage comes from the "Chicago school" of blues guitarists such as B. B. King, Buddy Guy, Otis Rush, Muddy Waters, and Freddie King. From these masters Eric learned when to wail, when to burn, and most important, when to pause. From there he went on to refine his tone and intonation, thus sounding more pleasingly in tune than some of his predecessors.

Eric Clapton has had a long, successful career as a guitar player, singer, and songwriter. He came on the scene in the early sixties with such bands as John Mayall's Blues Breakers and The Yardbirds. He became quite popular in the late sixties with Cream and Blind Faith. In the early seventies he formed Derek and the Dominos, who's hit "Layla" elevated Eric to superstar status. In the mid-seventies he pursued a solo career recording such hits as "Cocaine" and "Lay Down Sally." He's been performing and recording as a solo artist ever since, also making occasional guest appearances as a sideman.

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ABOUT THE AUDIO

The one hour recording that accompanies this book amplifies the concepts and techniques highlighted in the book.

It contains further instruction on how to play Eric Clapton's licks and solos. It also has all the musical excerpts performed for you, so you can get a closer look and listen to the guitar parts.

A bonus section on the recording contains all of the solos played at a slow tempo, for those of you who feel you would benefit by this. The solos are recorded on one track, and the rhythm part is on the other, so you can play along with the tape by turning off the solo track. These "slowed down" tracks of the solos are on the last ten minutes of side two of the cassette (tracks 12-17 of the C.D.).

It is suggested that you use the audio in the following manner:

- First listen through the audio as you follow along in the book.
- When you get to the last section (the "slowed down" tracks of the solos), play through them along with the recording.
- Go back and go through the audio, following along in the book. This time take the material as it's presented and work along with the recording.

I have found this procedure to give the best results. Have fun and enjoy.

Jimmy Brown

THE CLAPTON SIGNATURE

Improvisation...

When soloing, Eric has an inexhaustible reservoir of improvisational ideas. Though he may not have the enormous melodic vocabulary of say, Charlie Christian, his phrasing is nothing less than poetic. The essence of his improvisational skill is to be found in his own use of scales and rhythm.

He is very fond of the pentatonic scale, both the major and its relative minor. Often, and with much success, he uses both forms interchangeably over the same tonality. Thus he combines the major and the parallel minor pentatonic scales. It is important to note, however, that this interchangeability only works in a major key. In a minor key, only the minor pentatonic scale sounds good. An example of such parallel use is in this excerpt from the "Badge" solo.

Eric is not a flashy player. His lines are feeling oriented, not technique oriented. I believe that when he solos, he's not out to impress anyone, but rather he's speaking to you through his guitar.

Rhythm...

One of the hallmark features of Eric's playing is his thoughtful approach to melodic rhythm when improvising. He has a superior talent for hearing his lines a split second before he plays them. When I listen to him, I can almost hear him thinking! His lines make sense, and they're very pleasing. One of the reasons for this is that he focuses on definite rhythmic subdivisions when he solos. By this I mean that he organizes his lines into nice, neat rhythmic phrases of eighth notes, eighth note triplets, or sixteenth notes, depending on what kind of "feel" the rhythm section is laying down. This is something most guitar players overlook. (Have you ever heard someone improvising, perhaps yourself, and it sounds like the solo is just ending up where the fingers take it? Usually the result is an illogical, anti-climatic solo that has breaks and pauses in all the wrong places). Rather than "locking-up" with the drummer when soloing, most of us tend to ignore the rhythm section and

Guitar Solo

B B
repeat verse
B B B

T
A
B

7 5 12(14) 12(14) 12 12(14) 12(14)(14) 12 14

A difficult technique to execute properly is the bending of two strings at once, especially if the goal is to bend them up a whole step. Eric manages to zero in on the correct pitches in his "Crosscut Saw" solo.

E7 **A7**

sl. **B B B B B** **B**
 (up ¼ step)

T
A
B

7 5 7 10 8(9) 10 8(10) 8(10) 8(10) 8(10) 10 5 8 5 7 5

COCAINE

Words and Music by
J.J. CALE

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Sound...

Eric uses a clean sound on this solo. He manages to get a throaty sound though by picking strongly. This helps bring more volume and sustain out of his guitar.

Rhythm Guitar...

This tune starts out with a punchy, rhythm guitar line that is strong enough to build a whole song around. He plays the chords E and D in a simple, eighth note pattern, anticipating the D chord in the second measure by half a beat. This makes it exciting.

Moderately
Guitar I

E D E D

T
A
B

Guitar II

T
A
B

He continues this vamp for the rest of the intro, adding tasty fills. The pattern continues during the verse until the release ("she don't lie, she don't lie, etc..."). Here again he anticipates the chords E, D, and C by a half a beat. If he didn't do this it might not sound so hip.

D E D C B

She don't lie, — she don't lie, — she don't lie, — co-caine.

TAB

7					
7					
5		4	5	4	2

Solo...

Eric uses the E minor pentatonic scale with an occasional Bb added to create a bluesy effect. This works nicely in the key of E mixolydian. The g natural in the pentatonic scale doesn't clash with the g# in the underlying E major chord because of the "blue note" phenomenon. It may also be heard as the #9 note added to the underlying E7 "color."

What transforms this E pentatonic-blues scale into a melody is the arrangement of notes and their rhythmic organization. Notice how he starts out using mostly eighth notes with occasional sixteenth notes, what I like to call "chicken clucks." As the solo develops he uses more sixteenth notes. This creates more tension, more drama.

Guitar solo

E DE D E DE D E D E D

B (up 1/4 step) B (up 1/4 step) sl. B B B B

Guitar II: cont. pattern

TAB

12	9	12	(12)	9	12	9	9	12	9	12	12	9	12	12	14(16)	12	14(16)	14(16)	14(16)
----	---	----	------	---	----	---	---	----	---	----	----	---	----	----	--------	----	--------	--------	--------

E DE D E DE D

B B B B B B (up 1/4 step)

TAB

12	14	12	14	12	14(16)	12	12	14	14	12	14	14(16)	12	15	12	14(15)	14	12	14(16)	12	14	14	12	(12)	14
----	----	----	----	----	--------	----	----	----	----	----	----	--------	----	----	----	--------	----	----	--------	----	----	----	----	------	----

E D E D E D E D

B RB B (up 1/4 step) B B B B B B (up 1/4 step)

TAB: 15 14(16)(16) 14 12 12 14 14 12 12 12(12) 14(16) 12 12 15 12 14(16) 14 12 14(16) 12 15 15 15 14(16) 15 14 12 14

E D E D

B RB B (up 1/4 step) B (up 1/4 step) H P

TAB: 12 15 14(16)(16) 14 12 12 14 12 14 12 14 12 12 14 12 14 12 14 12 14 12 14 12 14 12 14 12 14 12 14

On the last chorus a second solo voice enters the scene and converses with the first voice. This is a masterful interplay between two lines. Notice how they at times overlap but never get in each other's way. They even follow each other up and down the register.

After the solo there is one more verse. The song fades out with Eric taking another solo over the vamp. The form of the tune (Intro, verse, verse, solo, verse, solo) makes this a satisfying experience for the listener, both musician and non-musician.

Guitar I

E D E D

B B B B

TAB: 14 14 12 14(15) 14 12 14 12 15(17) 12 15(17) 12 12 15(17) 12 12 15(17) 12

Guitar II

B B B

B B B

TAB: 14(16) 14(16) 14(16) 14 12 14 12 14 14 12 14

E D E D

B B B B (up ¼ step) (up ¼ step) B B B P

12 12 12 15 15 12 12 15 12 14(16) 14 12 14 14(16) 14 12 15 12 14(16) 14 12 14

B B B B B B B B B B

12 12 15(17) 15(17) 15 12 14(16) 15 14(16) 14 12 (13) 15 14(16) 15 14(16) 15 14(16) 12 14 (15) 14 14(16)

E D E D

H B B (up ¼ step)

12 14 12 14 14(16) 14 12 14 14 12 14 12 14

B B B P B B

12 (13) 14 12 14 12 14 12 14 14(16) 14(16) 14 12 14 12 14(16) 12(13)

E D E D

If your

B B B P P

TAB
14(15) 14(15) 12 12 15 12 14(15) 14 12 14 12 14

P H H sl.

TAB
14 12 14 14 12 12 14 12 14 12 12 14 12 14 12

E A D

I went down_ to the cross - roads, fell down_on my knee,—

H

mute -----

TAB 7 5 6 5 7 | 2 0 4 0 2 0 4 0 | 2 2 4 0 2 2 4 2

A D

Down_ to the cross - roads

P H P B P P

mute -----

TAB 2 0 2 0 2 0 | 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 | 2 2 4 2 2 2 4 2

A

fell down_on my knee,—

P H P B (up 1/4 step) P

TAB 2 2 4 2 2 2 4 2 | 2 2 0 2 0 2 0 3 | 2 2 0 2 0 2 0 2

There are three vocal choruses, a guitar solo, another vocal chorus, a longer guitar solo, and a final vocal chorus to finish out the tune. Once again, here is an example of a nice arrangement. Remember, the form is the whole foundation of a tune and should be given a lot of thought when composing or performing the tune.

Let's look at an excerpt from Eric's second solo. The excerpt comprises two choruses of the blues progression. It is a very "singable" solo, with a lot of interesting rhythmic ideas such as the syncopation in the beginning of the second chorus (measures 13 and 14), and the use of hemiola in measures 17 and 18. He uses mainly the minor pentatonic scale, occasionally mixing it with the brighter major pentatonic scale, as in the last five measures of the excerpt.

Musical notation system 1:

Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). Chords: A, B, B.

Tablature: 17 19 17 | 20(22) 17 20 20(22)

Musical notation system 2:

Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). Chords: H P, B, B, B.

Tablature: 17 20 17 20 17 20 20(22) | 19(21) 17 20 17 20(22) | 17 20 17 20 19 17 19 19

Musical notation system 3:

Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). Chords: D, B, B H, H³ P, H, B (up 1/4 step), H.

Tablature: 17(19) 17 19 19(21) 17 19 | 17 19 17 19 17 18 17 19 19 17 19 | 19 17 18 17 19 17 18 17

Musical notation system 4:

Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). Chords: P, P, P, P, P, B, D, B, P.

Tablature: 19 17 19 17 19 17 17 19 20 17 | 19 20 17 19 20 17 19 20 17 19 20(22) | 17 20 17 19(21) 19 17 19 17 19 19

A

B P H H H

TAB 17(18) 19 17 19 17 17 17 17 17 19 19 17 17 19 17 19 17 17 19

A

B B B B B B B

TAB 17 17 19 19(20) 19 19(20) 19 19(20) 19 19(20) 19 19(20) 19(20) 19(20) 19(20) 19

P H H P P B

TAB 17 17 19 17 19 17 17 19 19 17 20 17 19 20 17 19 20(22)

D

B B B B B

TAB 17 20 17 20(22) 17 20 17 20(22) 17 20 17 20(22) 17 20 17 19(21) 19 17 19 17(18)

A

P H P H P, B (up $\frac{1}{4}$ step) B B B

TAB 19 17 19 17 18 17 17 20 17 19 17 17 19 17 19(21) 19(21) 17 19 19 17 19 17 17 19 19(21)

D

B H P B B P

TAB 17 20(22) 20 17 20 17 20 17 20(22) 17 20 17 19(21) 19 17 19 17 19 18 17 19 0

You loco.

FOREVER MAN

Words and Music by
JERRY LYNN WILLIAMS

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Forever Man, written by Jerry Lynn Williams, features Eric's robust, throaty voice and his equally robust and throaty guitar. His heavily distorted stratocaster has a screaming, ballsy sound that really cuts through.

I'll just focus on his guitar solo here because he doesn't play much rhythm guitar on this cut. The solo is over a progression in the key of D aeolian minor. Eric uses the D minor pentatonic scale to construct his lines. This is a short solo, but he plays some really nice stuff. The pacing of his phrases is excellent. Notice how he uses sixteenth notes. They fit in beautifully with the drummer's "feel."

Guitar Solo

The guitar solo is presented in three systems, each with a standard musical staff and a corresponding guitar tablature staff. The key signature is one flat (Bb), and the time signature is 4/4. The solo is composed of several phrases, each with specific chordal accompaniment and performance instructions.

System 1: Chords: Bb, C, Dm, Bb, C, Dm. Performance: *Sva*, *sl.*, *H P sl.*. Tab: 15, 15(17), 15(17), (17)15 13, 15(17), 13, 15, 15, 13(15), 10, 13(15), 13, 10, 13, 10(10), 12(14), 10, 12(14), 10.

System 2: Chords: Bb, C, Dm, Gm, Bb, C. Performance: *sl.*. Tab: 12(14), 10, 12(14), 10, 12(14), 10, 10, 13(15), 10, 13, 10, 12(14), 12, 10, 12, 10, 12, 10, 12, 10, 13(15), 10, 13, 13(15).

System 3: Chords: Dm, Bb, C. Performance: *Sva*. Tab: 13, 10, 10, 13, 10, (10), 15, 15(17), 15, 13, 15(17), 13, 15.

After a return to the verse, the song ends with another guitar solo. Actually, he's just squeezing out some tasty sixteenth note fills. Eric uses space very effectively. He gives you a chance to reflect on the line he just played before you hear the next one.

Guitar Solo

Musical notation for the first line of the guitar solo. The treble clef staff shows a whole note chord B, followed by a half note chord P, and another half note chord P. The guitar tablature below shows the corresponding fret numbers: 12(14) for the B chord, and 12 10 for the P chords.

Musical notation for the second line of the guitar solo. The treble clef staff features a slurred sixteenth-note run starting with a *sl.* (slide) instruction, followed by a *P* (palm mute) instruction, another *sl.*, and a *B* (bend) instruction. The guitar tablature shows fret numbers: 12, 13 10, 12 10, 12 10, 12, 13(15), 13, and a sequence of 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10.

Musical notation for the third line of the guitar solo. The treble clef staff continues with a *sl.* instruction, a *P* instruction, another *sl.*, and a *B* instruction. The guitar tablature shows fret numbers: 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10, 10 10 10 10, 13 10, 10, and 12(14) 12 10 12 10.

Musical notation for the fourth line of the guitar solo. The treble clef staff features a *sl.* instruction, a *sl.* instruction, another *sl.*, and a *fade* instruction with a dashed line. The guitar tablature shows fret numbers: 10 12, 10 10 12 12, 12 10 12 10 8 10 8, and 10 10 10.

Musical notation for the fifth and final line of the guitar solo. The treble clef staff shows a *P* instruction, another *P* instruction, a *sl.* instruction, and a *P* instruction. The guitar tablature shows fret numbers: 12 10 12 10, 12, 10 12, 12 10 12 10, and 12.

SUNSHINE OF YOUR LOVE

Words and Music by
JACK BRUCE, PETER BROWN
 and **ERIC CLAPTON**

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This tune is a great example of how much you can do with a simple riff. The introduction exposes this haunting line that is played in octaves by the bass and guitar. Also, listen to the drums. Peter Brown plays an unusual pattern, accenting beats one and three, instead of the typical emphasis on two and four.

Eric uses a real throaty, tube-amp distortion sound here. When picking, he mutes the strings with his right hand, lifting it off whenever he wants to bring out a part such as in measure seven below.

Moderately
 No Chord

sl.

D C D N.C.

D C D N.C.

sl.

It's

You can feel all the energy being held in check, waiting to be released in the guitar solo.

At the bridge, Eric plays the "power-chords" A, C, and G, voicing each chord root, fifth, and octave. It's this voicing that makes the chords sound so punchy and powerful.

Chord voicings: A, C, G

Vocal line: I've — been wait - ing so — long

Guitar TAB: 7/5, 7/5, 7/5, 7/5, 7/5, 7/5

After 2 verses, Eric plays a real slick guitar solo. He starts out, almost sarcastically, quoting an old, old standard tune "Blue Moon" in the first three measures of the solo. From there he gets more rhythmically sophisticated. He milks the blue note F by bending up to it and shaking it, as in measure four.

Eric builds this solo by starting out simple. From there he gradually goes higher while subdividing more at the same time. The solo reaches its climax during measures 17-24. It is a very satisfying solo that "tells a story." This is a great concept to think about when improvising.

Guitar Solo

Chord voicings: B, B, B, B, B

Guitar II: repeat verse

Guitar TAB: 12(14), 12(14), 12 12(14) 12, 12(14)(14) 12

Chord voicings: B, P, B, H, H, B, B

Guitar TAB: 14, 9(10), 9 7 9 7, 9 (10) (10), 7, 7 9, 9(10), 9(10) (10) (10)

RB HP B B B B B B

TAB: 9 7 9 7 | 10 (14) 10(14) 10(14) | 10(12) 10 (12) 10 7 | 9(11) 9 7 9(11)

H H HB H B B B H *sl.* *sl.*

TAB: 7 9 7 9 7 9(11) 9 | 7 9(11) 10(12) 9(11) 7 9 | 9 7 9 7 | $\frac{13}{14}$ 14 12 10 11

B H B B B B

TAB: 10(11) 12 12 10 11 | 10 10 10(11) 10 | 12(14) 13 12(14) 12 10 | 12 12(14) 13 12 10

A C G A

B RB 3 P B *sl.* H *sl.*

TAB: 12(14) 10 10 10 (14) 12 10 10(11) 12 12 | 12 12 12 12 10 12 | 14 13 13 13 15 13 14 12 10 12 10

C G A

sl. B *sl.* B *sl.* *sl.* B H

TAB: 12 14 13 14 15(17) 13 15 | 13 13 15 13 14 12 10(11) 12 12 12 10 | 14 13 13 13 14 14 14 14 12 10(11) 12 10 10 12

WHITE ROOM

Words and Music by
JACK BRUCE and PETE BROWN

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This classic tune starts out with an "orchestral-sounding" introduction. It is in E time, and tympani are used. This creates a suspenseful mood. The chord changes (Gm, F, Dm, C) have a very dark sound.

Moderately

Guitar I

Guitar II

TAB

9/15 6/13 3/10 1/8

Notice that the lead guitar is overdubbed. The two voices are parallel fifths apart. This creates an eerie, medieval sound. That's because they actually used a lot of open fifths back then.

The vocal pick-up to the verse sets up the key and the tempo. Here Eric lays down a happening rhythm guitar line in the key of D. The chord changes and the vocal melody suggest a dorian modal flavor.

Am7 D C G/B B \flat C D C

In a white room_ with black cur - tains_ near the sta - tion.

Guitar II

TAB

1/8 2 3 0 3 3 0 2 2 3 0 2 3 0 3 3 0

Notice that the open guitar chords have a very bright sound. The contrast between the G/B chord and the following B \flat chord is very effective. The G/B chord, taken from the Dorian mode, sounds "warm." The B \flat chord is from the Aeolian or pure minor mode. It casts a temporary "dark cloud" on the progression.

At the bridge, Eric kicks in the wah-wah pedal over simple whole note chords. This section offers a wonderful contrast in texture, going from a rhythmic and harmonically active section, to a more mellow, "catch your breath" kind of section and then back again.

G B \flat C G B \flat A

I'll ___ wait ___ in this place ___ where the sun ___ nev-er shines;

TAB

This bridge section leads back into another verse. This time Eric lays down some nice guitar fills in between the vocal phrases. Notice how his guitar doesn't interrupt the vocal line.

N.C. D C G/B B \flat C

You said No strings could se - cure you at the

Guitar I

Guitar II: Repeat 1st verse

TAB 7

D C G/B B \flat C

sta-tion. Plat - form

sl. *sl.* *sl.*

TAB 8 8 8 5 8 6 7 5 7 5 3 5 7

After the second bridge section, the ominous Introduction returns. This time Eric harmonizes the two lead tracks in thirds. This sounds more harmonious and less raw than the open fifths.

Gm F Dm C

Guitar I

Guitar II

T
A
B

During the third verse Eric plays some longer fills. This time they overlap with the vocals, but the two "voices" blend beautifully. This interaction though, does create suspense and drama. As mentioned in the beginning of this book, Eric uses the major and parallel minor scales interchangeably in the same key. Here he used the D minor pentatonic scale.

D C G/B B \flat C D C

par - ty she was kind-ness in the hard crowd,

Guitar I

Guitar II: Repeat 1st verse ³H P B B B

T
A
B

Here, he uses the D major pentatonic scale.

D C G/B B \flat C D F

dress - ing, good - bye win - dows _ tired _ star - lings _

B B B B B

T
A
B

G/B B \flat C D C

H H H *s/.* B

TAB 15 13 13 15 13 13 15 13 13 15 13 14 12 10 12 10 12 10 10 12 10 12 (14) 10 13

G/B B \flat C D C

B H³P H³P H³P P H P P

TAB 12(14) 12 10 12 10 12 10 12 10 12 10 12 10 12 10 10 12 10 12 10 12 10 12 10

G/B B \flat C D C

TAB 12 10 12 10 13 10 13 10 13 10 13 10 13 10 13 10 13 10 13

G/B B \flat C D C

B B

TAB 13 10 13 10 12 10 10 12 10 12 10 12 14(16) 12 (14) 14 13

G/B B \flat C D C

B 3 B 3 B B *s/.*

TAB 12(14) 12 10 12 10 12 (14) 12 10 12 10 12 (14) 10 13 10 12(14) 12 10 12 12 10 12 14 13 14

G/B B \flat C D C

B B H H *sl.*

TAB 13 14 13 14 15(18) 15(18) 15 13 15 13 15 15 13 15 13

G/B B \flat C D C

B RB B

TAB 12 10 12 10 12 10 12 10 12 10 12 10 12 10 12 10 12 10 12 10 12 13 10 13 (15) (15) 13 13 (15)

G/B B \flat C D C

H P B RB

TAB 13 10 13 10 13 10 10 13 10 10 13 12(14) (14) 12 10 12 10 12 10 12 10 10 12 10

G/B B \flat C D C

B B B B B B B B

fade

TAB 12(14) 14 (16) 12 (14) 14 (16) 12 (14) 14 (16) 12 (14) 14 (16)

AFTER MIDNIGHT

Words and Music by
JOHN J. CALE

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"After Midnight" is an up-tempo, foot-stomping number that really grooves. It has a sixteenth note, double-time feel that keeps it humming along like a locomotive. The two rhythm guitar parts are harmonically simple, but rhythmically complex. Eric starts out vamping on a C major chord, strumming a complex 16th note pattern. (See Guitar I)

Guitar I

C

Musical notation for Guitar I, showing a complex 16th note pattern in C major. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. The melody consists of a series of sixteenth notes, with some notes beamed together. Below the staff is a tablature (TAB) showing the fret numbers for each string.

Guitar II: use slide, tune to open C chord

Musical notation for Guitar II, showing a slide guitar part. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. The melody consists of a series of notes, with some notes marked with a slide bar (sl.). Below the staff is a tablature (TAB) showing the fret numbers for each string.

Musical notation for Guitar II, showing a complex 16th note pattern in C major. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. The melody consists of a series of sixteenth notes, with some notes beamed together. Below the staff is a tablature (TAB) showing the fret numbers for each string.

This harmonic simplicity lets the groove "breathe." The major emphasis is on rhythm here. Notice the Guitar II part. It is tuned to an open C major chord. This is great for slide guitar playing, because you can just move the slide bar up and down the neck and get major chords that are in tune. See (and hear) how the Guitar II part goes up to F5 and Eb5, then back down to C5? He does this just by moving the slide bar up to the fifth and third frets. This motion up to F and Eb colors the tonality of the vamp, making it bluesy. Actually, this guitar part is one of the main "hooks" in the tune. A hook is a memorable part of a tune that the listener goes around whistling it afterwards. It is what sells the song. It can be a vocal line, a guitar riff, or any thing.

One of the things that makes this particular hook so catchy is the anticipation of the Eb chord by a quarter of a beat. If it were played right smack on the down-beat, it might not sound so cool. Anticipations are commonly referred to as "kick" in the language of rock 'n' roll.

Just a reminder, as I mentioned in the introduction of this book I've used the live version of "After Midnight" because of its longer, more active guitar solo.

After two verses, Eric takes his first guitar solo (there are two solos in this performance). He begins his solo the same way that he began the studio version, using quarter notes and quarter notes triplets. The only difference is that he bends up to the note C in measures 1 and 2 instead of sliding into them as he did on the studio version. Check out the use of hemiola in measures 8-11. He's playing sixteenth notes, but he's grouping them into threes by accenting the Eb note. He doesn't have to pick this note very hard to accent it. It naturally sticks out from the other notes because of its intervallic distance from them.

In measures 12 and 13, and again in measures 18-20, Eric takes one note (g) and rides on it, toying with the rhythm. These two examples illustrate the point that you can really do something musical and interesting with just one or two notes! Measure 13 is really neat because he takes a rhythmic idea, (the first 4 notes) and immediately repeats it, but in a different metric location.

In measures 21-25, Eric gets a real abrasive effect by playing dissonant major seconds (f and g). This is very dramatic.

Throughout this solo, notice how Eric uses the C minor pentatonic scale. Once again, with the risk of repeating myself, see how musical he can be with this simple five note scale! It's in the way he phrases his lines, rhythmically.

The musical score is presented in three systems, each with three staves: a top staff with a treble clef, a middle staff with a treble clef, and a bottom staff with a guitar tablature (TAB) format. The first system covers measures 1-2, with a C chord above the first staff and Eb and F chords above the second staff. The second system covers measures 3-4, with C and B chords above the first staff and B and B chords above the second staff. The third system covers measures 5-6, with Eb, F, and C chords above the first staff and B and B chords above the second staff. The tablature staff includes fret numbers and triplet markings. The guitar I staff is labeled "Guitar I: solo with wah pedal" and the guitar II staff is labeled "Guitar II: repeat verse pattern".

F

P P P P P P P P P P

TAB

G

P P P P B B B B

TAB

C

B B B B B RB H

TAB

E^b F C

B (up 1/4 step) 11

8va ----

TAB

Musical notation for the first system. The treble clef staff contains notes: quarter notes G4, A4, B4, quarter notes B4, A4, G4, quarter notes G4, A4, B4, quarter notes B4, A4, G4, quarter notes G4, A4, B4, quarter notes B4, A4, G4, quarter notes G4, A4, B4, quarter notes B4, A4, G4. The guitar TAB staff shows fret numbers: (20), (20), (20), 18, 15, 18, 15, 15, 15, 15, 18(20), 15, 18(20), 15, 18(20). Chords B, B, B, B, B, B are indicated above the staff.

Musical notation for the second system. The treble clef staff contains notes: quarter notes G4, A4, B4, quarter notes B4, A4, G4, quarter notes G4, A4, B4, quarter notes B4, A4, G4, quarter notes G4, A4, B4, quarter notes B4, A4, G4, quarter notes G4, A4, B4, quarter notes B4, A4, G4. The guitar TAB staff shows fret numbers: 15, 18(20), 15, 15, 18(20), 15, 15, 15, 18(20), 15, 15, 18(20), 15, 18(20), 15, 18(20). Chords E7, F, C, B, B, B, B are indicated above the staff.

Musical notation for the third system. The treble clef staff contains notes: quarter notes G4, A4, B4, quarter notes B4, A4, G4, quarter notes G4, A4, B4, quarter notes B4, A4, G4, quarter notes G4, A4, B4, quarter notes B4, A4, G4, quarter notes G4, A4, B4, quarter notes B4, A4, G4. The guitar TAB staff shows fret numbers: 15, 18(20), 15, 20, 15, 18(20), 15, 18(20), 15, 18, 15, 18, 15, 18, 15, 18, 15, 18, 15, 18. Chords B, B, B, B, B are indicated above the staff.

Musical notation for the fourth system. The treble clef staff contains notes: quarter notes G4, A4, B4, quarter notes B4, A4, G4, quarter notes G4, A4, B4, quarter notes B4, A4, G4, quarter notes G4, A4, B4, quarter notes B4, A4, G4, quarter notes G4, A4, B4, quarter notes B4, A4, G4, quarter notes G4, A4, B4, quarter notes B4, A4, G4. The guitar TAB staff shows fret numbers: 18, 18. Chords Eb, F, C are indicated above the staff.

Musical notation system 1. Treble clef staff with notes and slurs. Fingering numbers 15, 18, 16, 17, 15, 13 are shown below the staff. A dashed line indicates a measure continuation. The instruction *sl.* is present at the end of the staff.

TAB: 15 15 15 15 15 15 18 16 | 17 17 17 17 17 17 15 17-15 13

Musical notation system 2. Treble clef staff with notes, slurs, and dynamic markings *P* and *sl.*. Fingering numbers 15, 13, 15, 13, 13, 15, 15, 13, 13, 15 are shown below the staff. The instruction *sl.* is present at the end of the staff.

TAB: 15 13 15 | 15 15 15 13 15 13 13 15 | 15 15 15 13 15 13 13 15 (3) (15)

Musical notation system 3. Treble clef staff with notes and slurs. Fingering numbers 10, 8, 10, 8, 6, 10 are shown below the staff. The instruction *sl.* is present at the end of the staff.

TAB: 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 | 8 8 10 8 8 10 8 6 8 10

Musical notation system 4. Treble clef staff with notes, slurs, and dynamic markings *B* (up 1/4 step). Chord symbols C, E^b, and F are shown above the staff. Fingering numbers 10, 8, 10(12), 8, 10(12), 8, 8, 8, 10(12), 10(12), 8 are shown below the staff.

TAB: 10 8 10 10 10 8 10 10 10 | 10(12) 8 8 10(12) 8 10(12) 8 8 8 10(12) 10(12) 8

Musical notation system 5. Treble clef staff with notes, slurs, and dynamic markings *B*. Chord symbol C is shown above the staff. Fingering numbers 8, 10(12), 8, 8, 8, 8, 8, 10(12), 8, 8, 8, 8, 8, 10(12), 8, 10, 8, 10, 8 are shown below the staff.

TAB: 8 10(12) 8 8 8 8 8 10(12) 8 8 8 8 8 10(12) 8 | 8 8 8 8 10(12) 8 8 8 10(12) 8 10 8 10 8

C

sl. sl.

TAB 10 10 10 10 8 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 8 10 8 8 10 8 6 8 6 6

sl. P P P

TAB 8 8 8 8 8 8 6 8 8 8 8 8 6 8 10 8 10 8 10 10 10 8 10 8 10 8

P sl.

TAB 8 8 8 8 8 8 6 8 8 8 8 6 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 6 8 10 10 10 10 5 10

E^b **F**

P P P P

TAB 8 10 8 8 10 8 8 10 8 10 10 10 10 8 10 8 10 8 10 8 10 8 10 8 10 8 10

C

B B B B B B B B B

TAB 10(12) 10(12) 10 10(12) 10 10(12) 10 10(12) 10 10(12) 10 10(12) 10 10(12) 10 10(12) 10 8 10

E^b

TAB 10

BADGE

Words and Music by
ERIC CLAPTON and
GEORGE HARRISON

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This classic song starts out in the key of A dorian. I can immediately determine this by looking at the first two chords. The emphasis is on the A minor chord, so we can easily declare it to be in the key of A. The brighter D major chord is the IV chord of the A dorian scale. The E minor chord in measure seven is also from the A dorian scale. It has a darker quality to it. Rhythmically, the progression is set to a nice, even eighth note rock feel.

Moderately

Am D Am D

mute

TAB

Am D Em

Think-in' 'bout the times you drove in my car.

TAB

TAB

Eric uses open chords here to further brighten the mood. He plays even arpeggios, picking close to the bridge for a twangy sound. Notice how he anticipates the C and G/B chords by a half a beat. These anticipations add excitement to the groove.

This second half of the song is the part that Eric chose to solo over. He uses both the D major and the D minor pentatonic scales over these changes. This solo has a very warm quality to it, going back and forth from the sweet (major pentatonic) to the melancholy (minor pentatonic).

D C

Guitar I: solo

RB RB B B

Guitar II: continue pattern

(15) 13(14) (15) 13(14) 13(15) 13(15)

TAB 0

G/B G D 8va - - - C G/B G

B RB B H RB B B RB B RB

TAB 13 10 12(14) 10 14 12 10 11 12 10 13 12 10 12 13(15) 15 14 15 14

D C G/B G D C

RB H RB P H sl. RB

TAB 10 10 13 12 10 12 10 12 10 10 12 13 12 10 12 10 10 12 10 15 13 16 15 13

G/B G D C G/B G

RB B B B B B RB sl. sl. B RB

TAB 15 15 16 15 13 15 13 15 15(17) 15(17) 15(17) 15(17) 15(17) 15(17) 15(17) 15 13 16 15 17(19) 17 19 17 15

D C G/B G D C

B B sl. sl. B B B B

17(19) 17 17(19)17 15 16 15 14/16 15 15 14/16 15 15 15 16 17(19) 19(20) 19 19(20) 19 19(20) 19

G/B loco G D

RB H P sl. sl. P H H sl. P

(20) 19 15 17 15 16 10 13 10 12 10 12 10 12 10 12 10 10 12 10 10 12 10 14 12 10 12 10 12 10

Am

chicken chicken

12

He brings the energy level and the mood back down to its original level for the final verse in A dorian minor. Notice how he does this by playing a descending stream of sixteenth notes in the last two measures of the solo. His last note is a low A. This was a slick way to end the solo and make the transition back to A dorian minor.

The final verse comes to an abrupt conclusion with the sustained Am (add 9) chord.

C

She cried a - way her

sl. chicken chicken chicken

10 10

Am Bm Am(add 9)

life since she fell off the cra - dle.

sl.

TAB

7 7 7 10 12 10 7

7 7 7 9 11 12 10 7

9 9 9

This is an ominous chord that leaves an eerie afterthought to the tune. Form wise, the tune was very well laid out, going from dark, to bright, and back to dark again. It is concepts such as this (dark, bright, dark, etc....) that great songs are born out of.

CROSSCUT SAW

Words and Music by
R.G. FORD

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In this number, you can really hear Eric's B. B. King influence. He uses a fast vibrato, he slides into and away from notes, and he uses little 16th notes, snips, or "chicken clucks." The tune is an A blues set to a rhumba beat. The rhumba gives it a light-hearted, almost humorous feel. If you check out the lyrics, you'll probably agree with me that this "feel" is appropriate. This isn't a real "serious blues" like "Have You Ever Loved A Woman." Eric takes a chorus up front before the vocals. As you will hear, he uses some recurring melodic motifs or ideas throughout the whole song. These little recurring licks tie the whole thing together. The sixteenth note run that begins at the end of measure seven and continues into measure eight is probably the song's strongest "hook." Check it out.

Moderately Fast

Guitar I

A7

Musical notation for Guitar I, measures 1-3. The staff shows a treble clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 4/4 time signature. Measure 1 contains a sixteenth-note run starting on G4, marked with a slide (sl.). Measure 2 contains a whole note chord B, marked with a slide (sl.). Measure 3 contains a whole note chord B, marked with a slide (sl.), and a sixteenth-note run starting on G4, marked with a slide (sl.). The guitar tablature below shows fret numbers: 9, 10, 10, 8(9), 10(12), 9, 10(10).

Guitar II

Musical notation for Guitar II, measures 1-3. The staff shows a treble clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 4/4 time signature. Measure 1 contains a whole note chord B, marked with a slide (sl.). Measure 2 contains a sixteenth-note run starting on G4, marked with a slide (sl.). Measure 3 contains a sixteenth-note run starting on G4, marked with a slide (sl.). The guitar tablature below shows fret numbers: 0, 2, 2, 2, 4, 2, 0, 2, 2, 4, 2, 0, 2, 2, 4, 2.

D7

B
10(12)

B
(up 1/4 step)

sl.

sl.

sl.

A7

sl.

B
(up 1/4 step)

B

B

B

B

B

sl.

sl.

sl.

D7

A7

B

B

B

sl.

B
(up 1/4 step)

I'm a

sl.

sl.

sl.

How do you like the rhythm guitar part? It almost sounds like "Green Acres." It is definitely appropriate for this funny, light-hearted tune. The whole idea of a blues progression set to a rhumba is charmingly sarcastic.

Eric uses short, sweet little licks between vocal phrases. Here's an example of this kind of B. B. King playing. It is the second vocal chorus.

call me Wood_cut-tin' Sam, some call me Wood_cut-tin' Jim, last girl_ I could work for she

D7

wants me_ back a - gain... I'm a cross - cut saw ba-by drag_ me a - cross.

A7 E7

your log. I'll cut your wood so eas-y for you.

B
(up ¼ step)

TAB

D7 A7

you can't help but say, "Hot dog,"

B
(up ¼ step)

TAB

In Eric's solo, you can hear the recurring licks that he introduced in his opening chorus. This solo is very simple, and very, very musical. Try listening to the record and singing along with the solo. Have fun with it!

B B RB B sl.

TAB

8(9) 10(12)(11) (12) 8 10 10 (10)

C

out.---

sl. sl.

E^b F

Let me tell you 'bout mid - night, _ let me tell you 'bout mid - night.---

sl. sl. sl.

C

Guitar I: solo

Guitar II: repeat previous measure

B

10(12) 8 8 8 8

HAVE YOU EVER LOVED A WOMAN

Words and Music by
BILLY MILES

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This tune was made for Eric to play on! It is a slow 12/8 blues tune in the Chicago tradition. He starts the tune off with a three note pick-up that sets the whole tempo and mood. This also cues the other musicians when to come in, and how fast. After they've come in, Eric is able to take liberties with his rhythm. He can accelerate and decelerate and be really expressive.

Slow Blues

Chords: B, B, B, P, RB P, 3, P, P sl., B

8va -----

TAB: 10(12) 8 8 | 11(13) | 11(13)11 8 | 10 8 (12)10 8 | 10 10 8 | 10 8 | 10 8 | 10 8 | 13 | 11 13 13(15)

The important thing is that he established the tempo with those first four notes. There's nothing wrong with stating the simple or the obvious.

Eric plays one solo chorus up front before the vocals enter. This really sets the mood for the tune. Throughout the next two choruses he plays some tasty little fills between the vocal phrases. With a tempo this slow, this type of "call and response" interaction works great. In a faster tempo, this kind of playing might conflict with the vocals.

Here is an excerpt from Eric's solo. It is the fourth and final chorus from his extended break. I felt this chorus was good for making my point because of its rhythmically simple, but effective structure.

Chords: B, B, B, B, B, B

sl.

TAB: 11 13 | 13(15)13(15)13(15)13(15)13(15)13(15)13(15)13(15) | 13 13 11 | 13 | 10

F

B B B B *sl.*

13 11 13 13(15) 13 11 13 13(15) 13(15) 13 11 13 11 13 13 (15) 10 8 8

C

B B B B

8 11 (15) 11 8 8 8 8 10 (12) 10 8 8 12(15) 8 8 12(15) 8 8 8

slow release after reaching pitch

F

B B B P *sl. P* 3 HB P B B P

13 (15) (15) 13(15) 13 11 13 13 11 13 11 12 10 8 10 10 10 9 10(12) 8 8 11 8 10(12) 8 10(12) 10 8

up 1/4 step

C

B B B B B B B B B B B P H

10(12) 10(12) 10(12) 10(12) 10(12) 10(12) 10(12) 10(12) 10(12) 10(12) 10(12) 10(12) 10(12) 10 8 10 10 10 8 9 8 8 8 9 8

G

B B B B H B B B P HB P

11(13) 11(13) 11(13) 11 10(12) 8 9 10 8 8 10 8 10(12) 10(12) 8 10(12) 10 8 10 8 10 8 10(12) 8 11 8

Chord symbols: F, B, B, B, B, RB, B, C, C7/E, F, F#dim

Tablature: 11(13), 11(13), 10(11) 8, 11(13), (13)11 8, 10(12)10 8, 10, 8 9 10, 8 10 8, 10 8, 10-8, 6 8 6 8

Chord symbols: C, G9, C

Lyrics: Yeah, hey__ yeah...

Tablature: 10 10 10 10 10 10, 8 8, 8

In a slow 12/8 groove such as this, sixteenth notes sound great. They make the "feel" really swing. Eric uses this subdivision sparingly, but tastefully in pacing this solo. Remember, in this context, you don't want to get too notey. The goal is to express emotion and to sing on the guitar. Eric does just that. He uses the C minor pentatonic scale for the most part. Notice how he bends up to the fifth (g) in measure six of the excerpt. In measure three he bends up to the third (e). This is a very lyrical effect. When bending, or when picking in general, you get the most volume, tone, and sustain by picking hard. This is what gives Eric his wailing sound that really cuts through.

After the solo, Eric continues with that same interplay between the vocal and lead guitar. The guitar has more of a presence now after the solo than it did before. In this short excerpt from the final chorus, you can see (and hear) him playing longer, more intricate fills than before.

Lyrics: yes, _____ and you know you can't leave her a - lone? _____

Chord symbols: B P, B, B, B, B, B P

Tablature: 10(12)10 8, 10(12), 10(12)10(12), 10(12)10(12)10 8, 10

LAY DOWN SALLY

Words and Music by
ERIC CLAPTON,
MARCY LEVY
and GEORGE TERRY

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"Lay Down Sally" is a happy, country-rock tune that features Eric soloing with a totally clean sound. The song is basically a I, IV, V progression set to a country two-beat. There are two rhythm guitar parts during the introduction and verses. One plays low, and the other plays high. Together they produce a rhythmically interesting accompaniment for the vocals. Harmonically, they define the mixolydian modality of the tune. Notice how Guitar I in the intro. plays an A chord and then does that little noodle between G and F#. These are the 7 and 6 tones of the mixolydian scale. Guitar II plays a mid-range bass line that uses the F# and G notes also.

sl. sl.

sl.

cont.

Eric sings two verses and choruses, and then takes a solo. He does some interesting things in this quiet little solo. Keep in mind that he's just playing over an A7 vamp for the entire solo. This may seem like the easiest situation in the world to solo in, but it's not. It can be the most taxing on your creativity. You have to make a melody that moves along without the help of a forward-moving set of chord changes. Eric is very skilled at doing this.

In the first two measures of his solo he combines the mixolydian scale with the minor pentatonic, plus the "blue-note" Eb. Try to think of this as combining different "colors." His canvass is the key of A, and his colors are the mixolydian scale, the minor pentatonic, the parallel major pentatonic, and whatever other notes he decided to play. In measure five he uses the dorian minor scale, another nice color.

Rhythmically, Eric's using swing eighths. His phrasing here is like a jazz musician's. This would be an excellent solo to memorize and sing along to!

Guitar solo:

Guitar II: Repeat first 2 meas.

Musical notation system 1: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The staff contains a melodic line with accents (>) over several notes. Below the staff is a guitar tablature with fret numbers: 7 5 7 7 5 7 | 7 5 7 4 7 | 7 7 5 7 5 7 5.

Musical notation system 2: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps. The staff contains a melodic line with slurs and accents. Chord markings below the staff include B, B, RB, and sl. let ring ---. The guitar tablature below shows fret numbers: 0 5 7 7(9) 5 5 8 5 | 8 (10) 5 8 5 8 (8) | 7 5 7 5 0 8.

Musical notation system 3: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps. The staff contains a melodic line with slurs and accents. Chord markings include P, sl., and B. The guitar tablature below shows fret numbers: 8 9 8 8 9 7 5 | 7 5 7 7 7 5 7 | 5 7 6 5 5 3 (4) 5.

Musical notation system 4: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps. The staff contains a melodic line with slurs and accents. Chord markings include B and B. The guitar tablature below shows fret numbers: 8 (10) 5 | 8(10) 5 8 5 5 8 | 5 5 5 8.

Musical notation system 5: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps. The staff contains a melodic line with slurs and accents. Chord markings include B, B, B RB, and B. The guitar tablature below shows fret numbers: 8 (10) 5 8 5 8 5 | 8 5 8 5 10(12) | 10(12) 10 8 | 10(12).

Musical notation system 1: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The staff contains a melodic line with slurs and accents. The guitar tablature below shows fingerings: 8 10 8 10 8 | 10 8 9-7 5 7 7 5 | 7 5 7. Slurs are placed over the 8-10-8 and 10-8-9-7-5-7-7-5 sequences. The word "sl." appears below the staff at the beginning of the second measure and above the staff at the beginning of the third measure.

Musical notation system 2: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps. The staff contains a melodic line with slurs and accents. The guitar tablature below shows fingerings: 5 7 (8) 5 5 8 5 | 7(8) 7 5 7 5 7 5 | 7 7(9) 5 8 5 (8) 7 5 | (6) 5 7 5. Chord markings B, B RB, B RB, B, and H are placed below the staff. Slurs are placed over the 5-7-(8)-5-5-8-5 and 7(8)-7-5-7-5-7-5 sequences.

Musical notation system 3: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps. The staff contains a melodic line with slurs and accents. The guitar tablature below shows fingerings: 7 7 5 (6) | 5 4 7 5 7 5 7 | 5 3 5 3 (4) 5 3 5. Chord markings B and B are placed below the staff. The instruction "D.S. al Coda" is written at the end of the staff. A first ending bracket is shown at the end of the staff.

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