

(I've been using my Thumb to play the 3rd string and my 1st finger for the others.)

The 1st bar stayed the same. In the 2nd bar, we doubled the high **3** (playing 2 Eighth notes instead of 1 Quarter note) while **syncopating** the low **3**. *This* means that we played that note a half beat *earlier* than in the 1st line, starting it on **Count 3+** and letting it ride over **Count 4**.

The 3rd bar doubles the high **3** again, but otherwise stays the same, and the 4th bar has another syncopated note, the **1** that starts on **Count 2+** and rides over **Count 3**.

Interesting how altering just one or two notes in a bar can make such a difference. I think you can see that the possibilities are endless. Let's amp it up a little bit more:

3 1 3	3 3 1	1 3 1 3	
0 0	3	3	0
1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +	1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +	1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +	1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

Now, the first two bars retain the same basic character as in the previous two lines. You know, this solo is starting to sound more like a bass **riff**, despite the high-pitched notes. Riffs are "rhythm figures" normally played by guitars and basses. They are often repetitive phrases that have a more rhythmic function (keeping the beat) than a melodic one.

Blues solos should be more *melodic* than what we've been playing.

In fact, the final two bars above are a departure from that riffy feeling we established, and this seems more like a destination, like the climax of a story, or a punchline, or a twist.

So let's re-imagine this solo by making it a touch less riffy (over 8 bars of **C** chord comping):

3 1 3	3 3 1	3 1 1	
0 0	3	3 3	0 3 1 3
1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +	1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +	1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +	1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

3 1 3	1 3 1 1	1 3 1	
0 0	3	3 3	1 3 3 0
1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +	1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +	1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +	1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

You still get the feeling of riffy repetition, but it's balance out by visiting other notes in the scale. That's the trick: You need a **hook**, but you temper it with melodic variety.

Another thing. It's so easy to fall into the habit of picking notes simply because you happen to have some finger free at the moment, but you'll miss some interesting sounds this way. *The 3rd bar in the line at the top and the very last bar at the bottom of the page force you to fumble around for the right finger.* It's good for you. (I use the 2nd finger.)