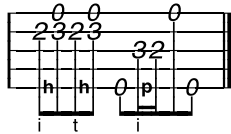


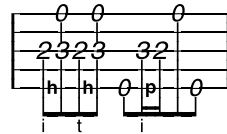
Creating New Licks

by Eddie Collins

Sometimes, all it takes to create a new lick (short phrase) is to rework an old lick. Example 1 is the final measure of a D chord phrase that Earl Scruggs played in his initial solo to “Foggy Mountain Breakdown.”



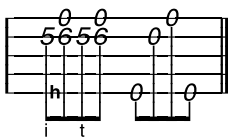
Example 1



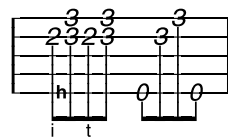
Example 2

Example 2 is the final measure of the D chord phrase he used in his solo for “Salty Dog.” It’s easy to see that he merely took the 2 - 3 hammer-ons and moved them from string 2 to string 3 to create the “new” lick.

To create your own new licks, ask yourself “What if?” What if I took the opening measure of “Foggy Mountain Breakdown” and performed the double hammer-on at different frets on the same string? You might come up with a lick such as Example 3. What if I hold a note on string 1 while I perform the opening lick from “Foggy Mountain Breakdown?” You might create a bluesy lick G like Example 4.

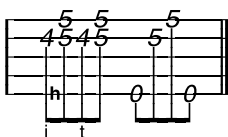


Example 3

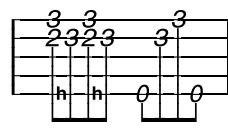


Example 4

What if you take the lick from Example 4 and move the fretted notes to frets 4 - 5 instead of 2 - 3? You’d end up with the C chord lick in Example 5. What if I were to pinch strings 1 and 2 while holding the 3rd fret on string 1 and playing a 2 - 3 hammer-on on string 2?



Example 5



Example 6

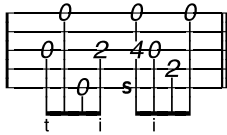
You’d get a train whistle sound that works against a G chord (Example 6). Move your fingers up to frets 7 and 8 and the lick works against a C or C7 chord (Example 7).



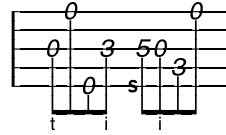
Example 7

continued on next page

Another fun lick to experiment with is the G tag phrase at the end of a solo. Example 8 is the familiar way Earl ends many of his solos. What if I moved each fretted note up one fret? The result would be the bluesy sounding lick in Example 9.

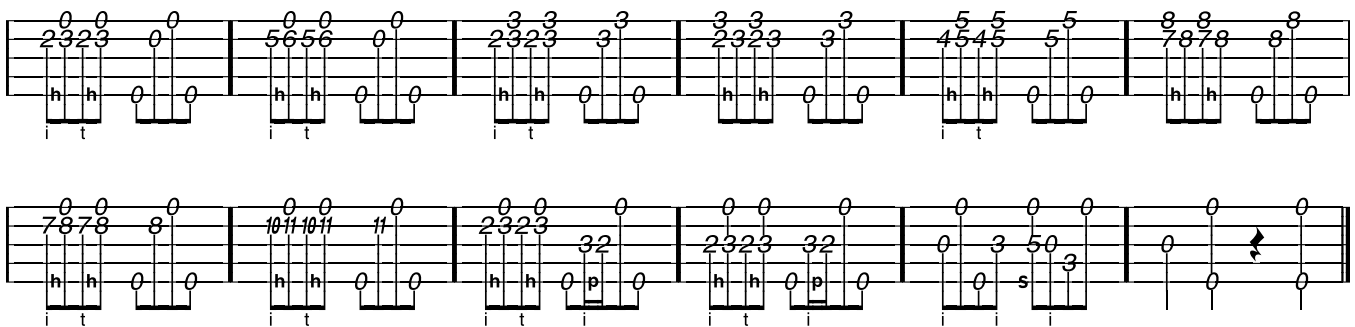


Example 8



Example 9

Hopefully, you have caught onto the idea that creating new licks is oftentimes nothing more than reworking the familiar. The “New Lick Etude” provides you the opportunity to string all our new licks together in an “improvised” solo. Happy picking!



Happy picking to All ... Eddie Collins



About Eddie Collins

Eddie Collins resides in Austin, TX, where he teaches music and performs with some of the finest musicians in Central Texas. Eddie is nationally recognized as an instructor of 5-string banjo and acoustic guitar. He writes the monthly column “Beginner’s Corner” for Banjo Newsletter and conducts music workshops throughout the U.S.

Collins was the founder of 5-String Quarterly and has authored numerous instruction books for both banjo and guitar. Magazines such as Banjo NewsLetter and Flatpicking Guitar have run features on Eddie and his career. His most recent

recording Rise & Shine and his popular instruction book, “Basics of Bluegrass Banjo...and a Whole Lot More!” have received wide acclaim. www.eddiecollins.biz