

## 5 Coltrane Lines for So What

In this section you study five lines inspired by John Coltrane's solo on the original recording of So What.

Work these lines over Dm7 and Ebm7 as you build your soloing vocabulary over So What in the woodshed.

The first line uses only notes from the Dm pentatonic scale, and runs up and down that scale in a repeated fashion.

Notice that even though Trane plays similar ideas in each bar, the rhythms change to give those ideas variety.

Work this line in both Dm and Ebm so you can add it to both sections of So What in your solos.

### Audio Example 34

**Dm<sup>7</sup>**

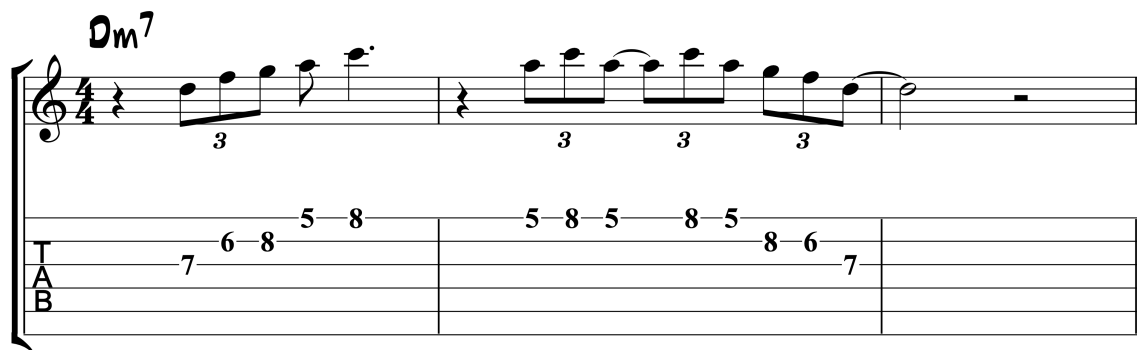
7 6 8 5 5 8 5 8 6 7 6 8 5 8 5 8 5 8 6 7

Here's a line built almost entirely of triplets, and all of the notes coming from the D minor pentatonic scale.

Triplets are a nice bridge rhythm between 8<sup>th</sup> notes, which can sound slow depending on the tempo, and the much faster 16<sup>th</sup> notes.

Make sure to count these triplets at 1-trip-let, 2-trip-let, to make sure you're nailing the rhythm of this line in your solos.

### Audio Example 35



The next Coltrane line uses a Bb passing note in bar two, second note, and the melodic minor scale in bar 3, C#, of the line.

Mixing Dorian and melodic minor is something Coltrane does often in this solo, and it's something you can explore in your playing as well.

Lastly, if you like the sound of the passing note, add more passing notes to your lines over So What.

To do so, look for 1 fret open between any two scale-notes, then fill it in going up or down.

So, if you have C-D in the scale, you can play C-C#-D, or D-Db-C, to add a passing note to those diatonic notes.

### Audio Example 36

**Dm<sup>7</sup>**

The image shows a musical score for a Dm7 chord in 4/4 time. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The melody consists of three measures: the first measure has a quarter rest followed by a quarter note D4, an eighth note E4, a quarter note F#4, a quarter note G4, and a quarter note A4; the second measure has a quarter note Bb4, an eighth note A4, a quarter note G4, a quarter note F4, a quarter note E4, and a quarter note D4; the third measure has a quarter note E4, an eighth note F#4, a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note A4. The bottom staff is a guitar fretboard diagram with three strings (T, A, B) and fret numbers: Measure 1 (T: 10-12, A: 9-10, B: 9), Measure 2 (T: 12-11-10, A: 10-9, B: 12), and Measure 3 (T: 10-12, A: 9-10-12, B: 9-10).

The next line is over Ebm7 and uses 16<sup>th</sup> notes, 4 notes per beat, which is a common Coltrane rhythm over So What.

To count 16<sup>th</sup> notes, you say “1 e & a, 2 e & a,” etc. over each beat.

The only non-scale note here is the B passing note on the 3<sup>rd</sup> 16<sup>th</sup> note of the first beat.

After you work this line over Ebm7, transpose it to Dm7 so that you can add this line to both chords in your solos.

### Audio Example 37

**Ebm<sup>7</sup>**

The image shows a musical score for an Ebm7 chord in 4/4 time. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb, Eb). The melody consists of three measures: the first measure has a quarter note Eb4, an eighth note Fb4, a quarter note Gb4, a quarter note Ab4, and a quarter note Bb4; the second measure has a quarter note Cb5, an eighth note Bb4, a quarter note Ab4, a quarter note Gb4, and a quarter note Fb4; the third measure has a quarter note Eb4, an eighth note Fb4, a quarter note Gb4, a quarter note Ab4, and a quarter note Bb4. The bottom staff is a guitar fretboard diagram with three strings (T, A, B) and fret numbers: Measure 1 (T: 11, A: 8, B: 11), Measure 2 (T: 8, A: 9, B: 10), and Measure 3 (T: 8, A: 11, B: 8).

The last line also uses 16<sup>th</sup> notes in an ascending run that goes up the Eb Dorian mode slowly, before ending with 8<sup>th</sup> notes in bar 2.

Again, go slow, count along as much as needed, and when ready, add this line to your solos.

After you can play this line with confidence, practice soloing over the backing tracks with as many 16<sup>th</sup> notes as possible.

Then, over time, blend in 16<sup>th</sup> notes here and there to build energy and rhythmic interest in your solos over So What.

### Audio Example 38

The musical notation for Audio Example 38 is presented in two staves. The top staff is a treble clef in 4/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a mode indicator of **Ebm<sup>7</sup>**. The melody consists of two measures. The first measure contains a quarter rest followed by an eighth-note ascending run: Bb4, Bb4, Bb4, Bb4, Bb4, Bb4, Bb4, Bb4. The second measure contains a quarter rest followed by an eighth-note descending run: Bb4, Bb4, Bb4, Bb4, Bb4, Bb4, Bb4, Bb4. The bottom staff is a guitar/bass line with two staves labeled 'T' (Treble) and 'B' (Bass). The fret numbers for the first measure are: T (3, 6, 4, 6) and B (3, 5, 6, 4). The fret numbers for the second measure are: T (4, 6, 7, 4, 6) and B (3).