Lick #20

By Emil Ernebro

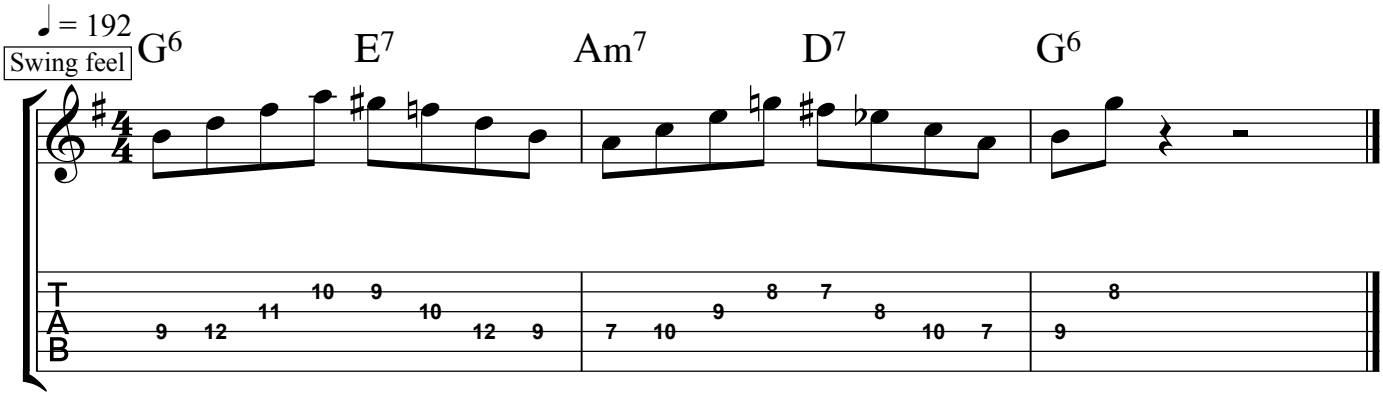
This is a simple turnaround-lick that I heard Brent Mason play. It's a I VI7 II V7 I progression in G, and we play it with a swing feel.
The diminished arpeggio is a great tool to use over any dominant 7th chord. If you're not sure how to play a diminished arpeggio, it's easy to learn! Just play minor thirds on top of each other. Say you're starting on the note G, the next note would Bb three frets up, the next note, Db, the next note E (or Fb). After you've learned how to find the notes, you should find a good way to organize the notes. Everyone has their own way of playing the arpeggios.

Now... how do we use the diminished arpeggio over a dominant 7th chord? It's actually not that hard to understand at all.
As you know, a dominant 7th chord wants to go home. In other words, when we play a G7 chord, the 3rd and 7th in the chord creates tension and it resolves when we land on some kind of a C chord. (If the C chord is a major chord, the B note of the G chord resolves to C, and the F note resolves to E.) If we alter the G7 chord, and put a b9 note on top, (G7b9) we create even more tension.

Now... name the b9 note of the G7b9 chord! ..... yes.. it's Ab. If we would play a diminished arpeggio starting on Ab, we would get the notes: Ab, B, D and F. These notes are all the notes of the G7b9 chord, exept the root! So, since the diminished arpeggio is symmetrical, you can play a diminished arpeggio starting on any of the notes of the G7b9 chord expept the root (G), and you will get the dominant b9 sound.
Pretty cool huh?!

In this lick, Brent Mason plays a diminished arpeggio over the E7 chord leading in to Am7, and also over the D7 chord leading back to G. On both dominant chords, he's starting on the third, and plays the arpeggio down like this:
on the E7; G#, F, D and B
on the D7; F#, Eb, C and A

Have fun with the diminished arpeggios!
/Emil



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