



GUIDE TO ADDING DRONE NOTES OR CREATING DOUBLE STOPS AS EMBELLISHMENT NOTES

When playing the melody, one can fill out the sound of the basic melody by ringing out other open strings along with the melody. This begs the question, “How do I know which open string to add to the melody notes?”.

As a general rule, it is important that any open string or other fretted note added to the melody be part of the chord being played at that time in the melody. You can do this successfully if you know what notes are in each chord. In music theory, these notes are referred to as “chord tones.” Every chord has a root, a third and a fifth as its fundamental chord tones.

I won't go into why that is or how that works here in this guide. For now, I will simply list the chords you will need to know for this workshop series and their chord tones.

CHORD: 1, 3, 5

A MAJ: A, C#, E

D MAJ: D, F#, A

E MAJ: E, G#, B

G MAJ: G, B, D

C MAJ: C, E, G

F MAJ: F, A, C

A minor: A, C, E

D minor: D, F, A

E minor: E, G, B

The chart above is a comprehensive list of notes that are considered “legal” to add to your melody notes as long as the note you chose to add to the melody is the 1, 3 or 5 of the chord corresponding to the melody at that time.



COMMON PLACES TO FIND THESE CHORD TONES IN FIRST POSITION

To break this down a little further, here are a few places in first position you are likely to find the chord tones listed in the previous chart. These are some of the most common notes to add on to melodies so you definitely want to know these!:

On these chords, these open strings work:

G chord: ok to use open G and D

D chord: ok to use open D and A

A chord: ok to use open A & E

E Chord: ok to use open E

C Chord: ok to use open E or G

2nd fret - we can often find chord tones at the 2nd fret. Notice these notes are simply the same notes as your open strings. They offer you a lower voicing of those same notes.

G string 2nd fret is an A note

D string 2nd fret = E note

A string 2nd fret = B note (works well on the G Major Chord and E Major and/or E minor chord)

E string 2nd fret = F# (works well on the D Major Chord)

5th frets - the 5th note is the same note as the open-string below it, only it sounds one octave higher than open-string. These notes offer us a closed version as well as a higher pitched version of our open strings and allow for some great note choices when playing double stops as embellishments.

G string 5th fret = C

(we don't have a low open C - string, but this is a great note to know and use. It works well added to melodies whenever the corresponding chord change at the time is either C Maj/min Chords or F Maj/ min Chords.)

D string 5th fret = G

A string 5th fret = D

E string 5th fret = A

If you are wondering when to use open strings, 2nd frets or 5th frets as embellish melodies, refer back to the chart on the previous page to see which notes correspond to certain chords. Be sure your embellishment notes are either the 1, 3 or 5 of the chord corresponding to (or being played at the same time of) the melody notes you are adding them to and you will be good to go!