

# **LIVE LOOPING 101**

-by Joe Deninzon

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## **WHY SHOULD I GET A LOOP PEDAL?**

-It is the BEST tool for creating your own play-along tracks for learning improvisation, Instead of relying on pre-recorded music, You create the bass line, harmonies, and rhythm track. You learn more about music when you have to build your own tracks!

-It is a great tool for songwriting and developing new ideas.

-It is a wonderful teaching tool when used to create vamps to practice with.

-It is a great way to develop your time and work on your intonation, because any wrong note or out of tune/out of time riff is played back to you over and over again!

-It is perfect for solo performances, one-man/woman shows, etc.

## **WHAT LOOPING PEDALS SHOULD YOU GET?**

1. **Basic 1-loop with memory** (Boss RC-3, Digitech Solo XT) Basic 1-phrase looping, plus you can save your loops! \$100-\$200. BEST ENTRY-LEVEL LOOPER TO GET!



2. **Intermediate 2-phrase** loop with memory (Boss RC-30, TC Electronics DITTO X4,). You can create songs with 2 sections and toggle between sections. \$250-\$300



3. **Advanced multi-phrase** (BOSS RC-300, Boomerang). For the virtuoso looper. Records up to 300 minutes of music, create songs with different sections, live effects (recording in reverse, etc...), save songs in memory & back up on computer. \$500 and up



4. **Looping software (Ableton Live).** Allows you to create sophisticated live and pre-recorded loops through your laptop and control them with a pad or footswitch. \$600-\$2000 with footswitch.

## 5. **Looping Apps:** Loopy HD, Everyday Looper, Loopstack

### **HOW DO I PRACTICE LOOPING?**

**-Create your own backing track!** Take any chord. For example, a D min7. Record the root (D), overdub the 3rd (F), overdub the 5th (A), overdub the 7th (C). Stop recording and let the chord ring. Explore the harmonic texture by practicing a D Dorian or blues scale and improvising against the looping chord. This is a great ear training exercise.

The image shows musical notation for a Dmin7 chord and three scales. The first staff is titled "Dmin7 chord" and shows the root (D), 3rd (F), 5th (A), 7th (C), and the full Dmin7 chord. The second staff is titled "6 D DORIAN SCALE" and shows the scale notes: D, E, F, G, A, B, C, D. The third staff is titled "10 D min PENTATONIC SCALE" and shows the scale notes: D, E, F, A, C, D. The fourth staff is titled "13 D BLUES SCALE" and shows the scale notes: D, E, F, G, A, Bb, C, D. The fifth staff is titled "UPPER EXTENSIONS" and shows the root (D), 3rd (F), 5th (A), 7th (C), 9th (E), 11th (G), and the full Dmin11 chord.

### **LOOPING A POP SONG**

-Fortunately (or unfortunately), most pop songs on the radio these days today are comprised of 4-chord loops (or less). This is great for solo looping gigs because you can easily loop a pop song at a solo performance and impress everyone! Here's an example:

# JUICE

By Sean Small, Eric Frederic, Theron Thomas, Sam Sumser, Lizzo  
Arrangement by Joe Deninzon

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Dm7 F sus F7 B $\flat$ Maj7 C7

Dm7 F sus F7 B $\flat$ Maj7 C7

Dm7 F sus F7 B $\flat$ Maj7 C7

Dm7 F sus F7 B $\flat$ Maj7 C7

## STEP 1: CREATE THE “CANVAS”

The bass line and harmonic structure of this song DOES NOT CHANGE. Record the bass line (cello part), overdub the viola rhythm part, overdub the violin II rhythm part, overdub a percussive “chopping” part, if you wish.

## STEP 2: TURN OFF RECORD MODE & PLAY THE MELODY, THEN IMPROV OVER THE TUNE.

You can also take any song you like to play. Any fiddle song, for example and ask yourself, “Can I loop this?” Even if it’s a song with an AABA form with a bridge. You can lay down a loop that is longer than 4-bars, it just takes a little practice to get it right!

Happy Looping!