

"Sunshine of Your Love" Cream



By Lorne Behrman

In 1966, guitarist Eric Clapton, bassist Jack Bruce, and drummer Ginger Baker formed an exploratory trio called Cream. With an adventurous spirit and a dash of arrogance, the trio liberated itself from shackling fundamentals like rhythm/lead instrumental distinctions, functioning instead as a malleable improvising unit. A proto-jam band with a discriminating compositional sense, it's no surprise that almost 40 years later Cream lives on in tracks like "Sunshine of Your Love," that are not only classic-rock radio fixtures but also woodshed standards for a new generation of aspiring blues-rockers.

THE INTRO/VERSE RIFF

Clapton opens the tune with a single-note distillation of the "Sunshine" riff. By looking at this abbreviated version, you can glean the riff's compositional origins. Lay the notes out in an ascending, linear fashion, and you get the D blues scale (D-F-G-A^b-A-C [Fig. 1]). If this scale is new to you, 'shed the hell out of it, as it's essential to that '60s blues-rock sound. Once you have command of the scale, try playing the riff, locking in with the metronome's tick. And when you've mastered that, move onto the beefy variation that Clapton favors for the verses. There, he develops the intro's motif, fattening the line's melodic contour

with hip dyads and hefty barre chords. He sticks to this basic riff structure for the remainder of the song. Use D7 and C7 grips—both of which can be formed with the shape in Fig. 2A—for the single notes in the first two beats. In the verse riff's second measure, note that the melody (except for that first G note) is placed up an octave. Also, dig how Clapton transforms the D on the "and" of beat 2 into a funky 4th—adding that G above the D makes for a pungent, bluesy dyad. Here, bar your 3rd finger over the D and G strings, and use your 1st finger for a touch of vibrato on beat 3's bluesy F note.

Later in the verse, Clapton moves the riff up a 4th, to G, and then back down; the I-IV (D-G) move has "blues changes" written all over it. For the G and F chords, use the shape shown in Fig. 2B. Clapton seals the deal by adding the V chord (A) during the chorus. The lesson here is that if you're stuck with a riff that needs developing, put it through the blues changes. Move the riff up a 4th so that you get the IV feel and use the V chord as a jumping-off point for the chorus. You'll find a lot of your favorite classic-rock tunes have this structure. Led Zeppelin's "Rock and Roll" is a memorable example.

THE SOLO

They say first impressions are lasting impressions, and Clap-

ton's "Blue Moon" quote in the opening four bars is definitely an attention grabber—and a hip way make to make an entrance. Plus, if you hook the listener with a familiar melody, they'll definitely stay tuned for your next few licks!

Clapton sustains interest by following up his playful entrance with lyrical bends and an emotive vibrato. He then toys with the solo's tonality, bending up to the major 3rd (F[#]) and minor 3rd (F) from the 3rd string's 9th-fret E. Much of the blues' yearning feeling comes from this sort of happy/sad ambiguity. Clapton eventually settles into the D

blues box—bar 19 of the solo boasts an essential Albert King-flavored blues lick. Clapton then continues with a pattern of hammered-on dyads straight out of the Jimi Hendrix and Curtis Mayfield soul-blues book. Overall, this is an elegantly simple solo, with lots of space and a relaxed, medium tempo. The true work for you lies not in mastering the notes Clapton plays but, rather, in sweating his deft phrasing. Pay close attention to wide vibrato and precisely intonated bends. ♪

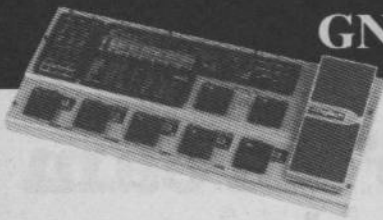


TONE ZONE

GUITARS 1 & 2: Solidbody
PICKUP/POSITION: Humbucker/Neck (roll off your guitar's tone control)
GAIN: 8
EQ: Bass/Mid/Treble: 7/6/5

Fig. 1

Figs. 2A-B



SUNSHINE OF YOUR LOVE

As Recorded by Cream
 (From the Polydor Recording DISRAELI GEARS)



Words and Music by Eric Clapton,
 Jack Bruce and Peter Brown

Lyrics

Verse 1

It's getting near dawn,
 When lights close their tired eyes.
 I'll soon be with you my love,
 To give you my dawn surprise.
 I'll be with you darling soon,
 I'll be with you when the stars start falling.

Verses 2 & 3

I'm with you my love,
 The light's shining through on you.
 Yes, I'm with you my love,
 It's the morning and just we two.
 I'll stay with you darling now,
 I'll stay with you till my seas are dried up.

Chorus

I've been waiting so long
 To be where I'm going.
 In the sunshine of your love.

Intro

Moderate Rock ♩ = 114

Gtr. 1 (dist.) D7

mf

T
A
B

12-12-10-12 12-11-10-8-10-10 12-12-10-12 12-11-10-8-10

C7 D7 D7 C7 D7

Riff A End Riff A

11-11-9-11 12-10-12 11-11-9-11 12-10-12

10-10-8-10 12-11-10 10-10-8-10 12-10-12

12-12-10-12 12-11-10 12-12-10-12 12-11-10-12

10-10-8-10 10-10-8-10 12-11-10 12-10-12

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Sunshine of Your Love

Verses 1-3

Gtr. 1: w/ Riff A (4 times)

8

G Riff A1 F G

1/4

12 12 10 12 12 12 10 12 12 12 10 12 12 12 10 12 12 12 10 12 10 10 8 10 10 10

2nd & 3rd times, Gtr. 1: w/ Fill 1

End Riff A1 Riff A2 C7 D7

End Riff A2

10 10 8 8 8 10 10 11 11 9 11 10 10 8 10 12 12 10 12 10 10 12 11 10 10 8 10 10 10

To Coda 2 ⊕ Chorus

D7 C7 D7

A Rhy. Fig. 1 C G play 3 times End Rhy. Fig. 1

11 11 9 11 10 10 8 10 12 12 11 10 10 10 12 12 0 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 0 0 0 0 0

D.S. al Coda 1
(take repeats)

A Rhy. Fig. 1A To Coda 1 ⊕ End Rhy. Fig. 1A D7 C7 D7

2 11 11 9 11 10 10 8 10 12 12 10 12 10 10 12 11 10 10 12 12 0

Fill 1
Gtr. 1

12 10 11 11 9 11 12 10 12 12 0

Sunshine of Your Love

⊕ Coda 1

Guitar Solo

Gr. 1: w/ Rhy. Fig. 1A (last bar)

Gr. 1: w/ Riff A2 (4 times)

D7 C7 D7

D7 C7 D7

Gr. 2 (dist.)

Sunshine of Your Love





Gr. 1: w/ Rhy. Fig. 1A

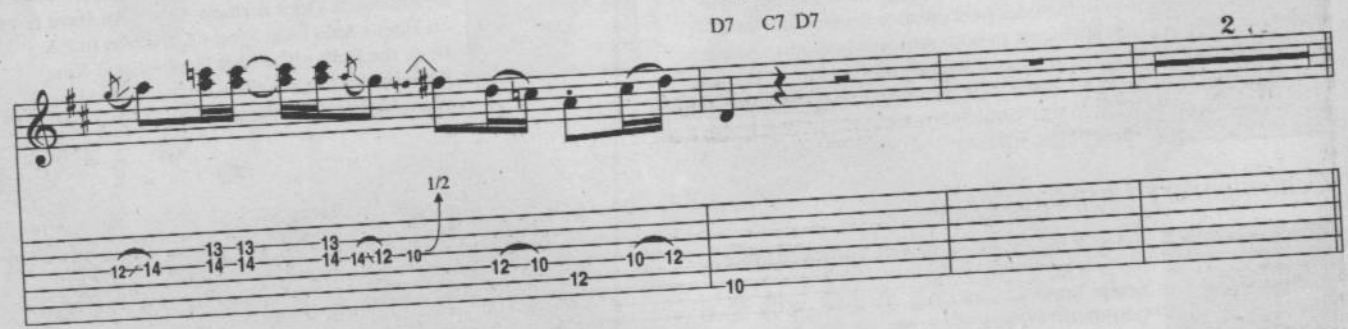


D.S. al Coda 2

Gr. 1: w/ Riff A2
D7 C7 D7

Gr. 2 tacet

Gr. 1: w/ Riff A



⊕ Coda 2

Outro-Chorus

Gr. 1: w/ Rhy. Fig. 1 (5 times)



Repeat and Fade