

The cornerstone of music is the concept of theme and variation. A song, in general, is not 27 things played once, but a handful of musical motifs that are repeated and expanded upon with variations of differing degrees. By stating a musical idea and adding subsequent variations, the listener has a common thread to follow (main motif or idea) which will hold the section of music together compositionally. Yet, stating the same theme repeatedly would become tiresome. By adding variations to the main motif or theme the listener is provided with enough diversity to continue providing interest for the listener to want to continue to follow the song or composition.

Since we as human beings are typically binary in nature (even pairs of 2 and multiples thereof - 4, 8, etc.) we like to hear things in pairs of two. Today's riff does just that by stating a theme or motif in the first two beats of measure one. This motif will be repeated in the first two beats of measure two but we will change the last two beats of measure two to provide the variation with the last two beats of measure one.

Measure three will be identical to measure one as we fully repeat our theme. Measure four though will be completely different altogether from the prior measures. This allows us to have measures three and four act as a theme and variation with measures one and two as a whole. Thus we have two smaller phrases acting as a theme and variation (measure one with measure two) and two pairs of measures acting as a theme and variation (measures one and two with measures three and four.) By writing riffs in this manner your songs will take on a more cohesive form, have greater compositional depth and be more memorable.

C#m or C#7

L.h. fingers: 1 2 3 1 3 1 2 3 1 3 1 3 4 3 1 3 1 2 3 1 3 1 2 3 4 2 3 2 1

1 2 3 1 3 1 2 3 1 3 1 3 4 3 1 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 1 3

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**Trivia of the Day:** Did you know...The wah-wah pedal was originally named after jazz trumpeter Clyde McCoy. Made by Vox in 1967, the pedal was initially named the Vox Clyde McCoy Wah-Wah pedal. One of McCoy's trademarks as a trumpeter was his use of a mute in the bell of his horn which produced a vocal-like wah sound. Early Vox wah-wah pedals even had an image of McCoy on the bottom of the pedal. Eventually the name of the pedal was changed to the Cry Baby.