The Art of Looping

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1. What is LOOPING?

Looping is recording of a certain chord and/or rhythmic pattern into a seamless phrase that plays continuously over and over again. You can do, undo, and redo layer over on top of the original phrase. This technique is already used way back in the 50's. Recently, this is widely used in most of Electronic Dance Music.

Terms used:
-Metronome
-Layers/Phrase
-Do-Undo-Redo
-Loop Station

2. Basic LOOPING

Depends on the gear you're using, most of the loop stations can do multiple layers. Always remember to keep your looping clean, tempo accurate, and simple. Metronome mastery is the name of the game. Always lock in tempo before the start of anything.

Ex. in 4/4 Time Signature, 8 bars

Original Phrase   Figure 1   **C, Am, F, G, C** (chord progression)

Additional Element   Figure 2   **Rhythmic Pattern**

Now, let's try to add other elements.

a. Baseline
b. Harmony
c. Melody
d. Percussion

3. How to Build-Up – stanza to chorus.

Every song is dynamic. It's like stories told in books and movies. It makes you cry and laugh, takes you to heights or down beneath. Here, you might want to use **build up** for your loops. Build up is when you put an element/s which make/s your original phrase a bit heavier, louder, more sophisticated using either of the mentioned elements -**Baseline, Harmony, Melody, or Percussion**. Build up is layered on intros and choruses. Be sure to master *do-undo-redo*!

Stanza---------------**Chorus**--------------Stanza--------------**Chorus**--------------Bridge ----so on…

Or

Intro/Chorus---------------Stanza-------------- **Chorus**--------------and so on...

4. **Basic Looping for non-repetitive chord pattern.**

While looping is commonly used for four-chord songs, it is inevitable some songs have a little variation in choruses and stanzas. If you're playing full triad in each chord, it is impossible to dodge those unwanted notes. If you are into *singing and playing ukulele* at the same time, yes, we can do looping with a little trick!

What I do is simply *make a melodic pattern* from the key signature *triad*. You can *involve 9th and major 7th* to make it more colourful, but staying in the triad is safer.

Example: **No Woman No Cry** (Bob Marley)

Stanza **G, D, Em, C, G** 8x
Chorus **G, D, Em, C, G, C, G**

5. **How to choose LOOPING GEAR**

If you are new to looping and you decide buying the gear, there are things you should consider to avoid buying the one that doesn't fit your need and style. There bunch of brands and models of loop station pedals in the market, we'll just name few.

    a. Pure Instrumentalist
        Boss RC-1
        Boss RC-30
        Digitech JamMan Stereo Looper
        Boss VE-8 Acoustic Singer
    b. Singer/Instrumentalist
        TC Helicon Voicelive 3
        TC Helicon Voicelive Extreme
        Boss RC300

6. **Few Songs for LOOPING.**

    a. Standby Me (Ben E. King) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hwZNL7QVJjE
    b. Just The Way You Are (Bruno Mars) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LjhCEhWiKXk
    c. Love Song (The Cure) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x8MBm-jicMo
    d. Shape Of You (Ed Sheeran) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JGwWNGJdvx8
    e. Riptide (Vance Joy) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BdsdgL4_wuY