

Cut Capo Try This:

Hammer-ons and Pull-offs in rhythm

In playing open chords, you're able to use a hammer-on or pull within several different chords, but it's generally limited to one or two notes within that chord. Because of the chord shapes and voicings related to the cut capo, most every chord played is a six-string chord. Meaning you are free to strum all six strings all the time. This allows for a much more full sounding chord. And with the cut capo, you can H-O and P-O the entire chord shape (all fingers) on most all chords. The use of H-O's and P-O's add 'flavor' or 'color' to your rhythm, and when timed right, can increase the 'speed' of your rhythm to give you a triplet-like effect.

Simply put, to do a hammer-on, strum the strings (all open) and then *snap* all fingers needed for a particular chord into place. To do a pull-off, strum the strings (with chord fingered) and then *snap* your fingers off the strings – in a way you're re-striking the strings with your left hand.

Obviously, you wouldn't want to H-O every chord in every song. I often use these during intros, instrumental sections, and musical segues into another song. Here's a pattern to try: (use the "E" or "A2" chords) *Down strum, hammer on chord, Up strum, PALM MUTE, Down strum (open strings), hammer on.*

Palm muting is simply stopping the strings with your right hand (strumming hand) before strumming again. With a pick in my hand most of the time, my 'palm mute' is usually with my hand closed. I stop the strings with the heel of my hand. Over time I've become less afraid that I will damage my guitar and will mute the strings with more force. In doing this, I get a nice percussive sound that helps keep the rhythm.

Using a P-O in rhythm can easily create that triplet-like effect. Within a rhythm, strike the open string(s) and hammer-on. Then pull-off as fast as you hammered-on. When you pull-off, pull your fingers away in a *downward* motion – the same direction the pick travels. If you simply lift your fingers from the fret board, the strings will just stop ringing. A more difficult, but very useful and effective use of the P-O to create a triplet is to strike a chord (i.e. the "B" chord) and pull-off in between your down-strum and up-strum. The up-strum becomes the third part of the triplet.