

“SUMMERTIME”

Ted Greene Comping Lesson Walk-Through (June 7, 1990)

By Nick Stasinos

When you strip the song down into its absolute basics, “Summertime” is fundamentally a blues with a little bit extra. I divided the lesson into two parts on the recording:

1. “Rehearsed Accompaniment” - Ted scouts out what to play (0:00 – 0:51), and
2. “Accompaniment” - what he settled on. (1:02 – End).

I didn’t stick to a strict adherence to Ted’s symbology (dot, X, box, triangle) he used on many other chord grid sheets since Ted arpeggiated most of the chords. This was done so I could hear the individual notes of the chords for transcription purposes. Ted started out in the key of A minor, vamping between Am6 and E9, still a challenging six fret spread for your fingers, but I feel these are more approachable than the V-1 comping sheets that Ted developed for this song only a few months later in 1990 (available for download at www.tedgreene.com in the “Comping” section).

The “Accompaniment” Chords are added to this song’s lead sheet with exception to the first measure, which chords are inserted from the “Rehearsed Accompaniment,” Ted inadvertently started late in the song the second round. Give special attention to your 2nd finger for E9sus to E+/b5. It is your “guide finger,” do not lift it as it glides down to C, while your 1st finger bars the 5th and 3rd strings. This makes the transition between chords smooth.

Measure 4 is a shoutout to Dan Sawyer “circa 1970” for Ted’s two-hand tapping, the side of his right-hand index finger to be exact, as it taps out an A note, 6th string! For A7#9+, double-stop both the 2nd and 3rd strings with the 3rd finger. You can experiment with fingering for alternatives here.

In measure 5, the Dm6/9 chord shape (the same shape for Cm6/9 twice on page 3) has become my lifetime goal, to flatten down my 4th finger over strings 1 and 2. Next is BbA9 ala George Van Epps “5th finger” technique. That is where one finger, the index, gets two notes on both sides of a fret. This is even more challenging since Ted adds the 9th on the 4th string, 10th fret. All that on a long-scale Tele neck!

My favorite part of this lesson is the ascending/descending Am6 chord stream played in intervals that begins in measure 11, page 1. Ted creates this dramatic crescendo before launching into the last “major” section of the stanza. First practice these 4-note chords up and down the neck, giving each chord one beat. Once familiarized, play the two intervals in each chord, dividing that beat in half. Experiment with moving this chord stream to a different set of strings, creating a new path.

Ted’s “interlude” played at measure 15, page 2, consists of a chromatic voice ascending and descending quickly, mostly involving two notes, and then holds briefly as Ted whistles the melody pickup notes to the next stanza in the new key of C minor.

The end tag beginning in measure 31 has the same descending chromatic inner voice, restated again in measure 32 with a barred Cm7 chord which you will need to quickly shift to the 2nd and 3rd fingers to free up the 1st finger, which plays the chromatic line from Bb note down to the Ab note. The Cm6 in measure 33 is an 8th note arpeggio in which you will need to move your 2nd finger from the 5th string over to the 1st string, to play G. Then the D harmonic note on the 4th string, 12th fret, is struck while holding this chord shape. The last chord is a simple bar at the 12th fret. I called out, “#11?” which I labelled as a ‘Ted tag’ from bygone days, but he just stuck to the Cm6.

Fun Fact: Fingerstylist Adrian Legg installed “Keith Banjo Tuners” on his guitar for precise, instantaneous pitch drops.

SUMMERTIME

BLEVINS DAVIS & ROBERT BREEN PRESENT

PORGY and BESS

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SUMMERTIME

Ted Greene Comping
from private lesson for Nick Stasinos, 1990, June 7

Am⁶/₉ E⁹_{sus} E⁺/_{b5} Am⁶ E⁹ Am⁶ E⁷_{b9}⁺

BASIC CHANGES: E⁺ Am⁶ E⁷ Am⁶ E⁷ Am⁶ E⁷

1. Sum - mer time _____ and the liv - in' is ea - sy, _____

Am⁶/₉ A⁷_{#9}⁺ Dm⁶/₉ B^b₉^Δ₉ Am F B⁷₉

Dan Sawyer Tap George Van Eps 5th Finger

Am⁶ E⁷ Am⁶ Dm F B⁷₉

4 _____ fish are jump - in' _____ and the cot - ton is

E B⁷_{#9} E⁷/₆ B^b₉^{#11}_{no3} Am⁶/₉ E⁷

1st SLIDE Hammer-on

E B⁷ E E⁷ Am⁶ E⁷

7 high. _____ Your _____ dad - dy's rich _____

Am⁶/₉ E⁷₊ Am⁶ D⁹_{#11} Am⁶_Δ⁷

Am⁶ E⁷ Am⁶ E⁷ Am D⁷

10 and your mam - my's good look - in', _____ so

Chord diagrams for measures 13-14:

- Measure 13: C (3rd fret, 3rd string)
- Measure 14: Am⁹ (5th fret, 4th string)
- Measure 15: D/9 (2nd fret, 2nd string)
- Measure 16: G¹¹ (3rd fret, 1st string)
- Measure 17: E7⁺ (3rd fret, 1st string, Slide into chord)

Melody line (treble clef):

13 hush lit - tle ba - by don't _____ you

Chord diagrams for measures 15-16:

- Measure 15: Am
- Measure 16: F, D7, A(m)7-6, A(m)b6, Am, A(m)b6, Am6-7, A(m)6

Melody line (treble clef):

15 cry. _____ 2. One of these

Chord diagrams for measures 17-18:

- Measure 17: Cm, G7, Cm, G7, G7b5, Cm6, C(m)6, G7 (2x)
- Measure 18: Cm6, G7, Cm6, G7, Cm6, G7

Melody line (treble clef):

17 morn - in's _____ you goin' to rise up sing - in', _____

Chord diagrams for measures 19-20:

- Measure 19: Am7b5, C7b9+, Fm7, Bb9, Bbm7/11, Eb7
- Measure 20: Cm6, G7, Cm6, Fm, Ab, D7b9

Melody line (treble clef):

20 _____ then you'll spread your wings and you'll take to the

Am7/11 D7 Abm7/11 Db7 G7+ Cm6/9 G7

G D7 G G7 Cm6 G7

23 sky. _____ But till that morn - in' _____

Cm6/9 Db9#11 Cm6 G7#9 Cm B7

Cm6 G7 Cm6 G7 Cm F7

26 there a no - thin' can harm you _____ with

Eb/Bb Cm7 F9 Bb11 Abm6

Eb/Bb Cm F Bb11

29 dad - dy and mam - my stand - - in' _____

Cm C(m)7 Cm6 Cmb6 Cm7 C(m)7-6 Cmb6 Cm6 Cmb6

Cm

31 by. _____

Harmonic

Tap and slide down, then tune 6th string down to low C.

A minor "SUMMERTIME" (REHEARSED ACCOMP.) 0:00 - 0:51

Handwritten guitar chord diagrams for the song "SUMMERTIME" in A minor. The diagrams are arranged in three rows, showing fret numbers (0-12) and fingerings (1-4) for each chord. Some diagrams include additional markings like "Hammer-on" or "Faint".

Row 1:

- Am⁶ (Fret 4)
- Am⁶ (Fret 5)
- E⁹ (Fret 7)
- Am⁶ (Fret 5)
- E^{7b9+} (Fret 8)
- Am⁶ (Fret 5)
- E^{9sus} (Fret 2)
- E^{+/b5} (Fret 2)

Row 2:

- Am⁶ (Fret 4)
- A^{7b9+} (Fret 2)
- Dm⁶ (Fret 2)
- B^b (Fret 6)
- Dm (Fret 5)
- B^b (Fret 6)
- Am (Fret 2)
- F (Fret 2)

Row 3:

- D[#]o⁷ (Fret 2)
- E (Fret 2)
- Faint (Fret 2)
- B^{7#9} (Fret 2)
- E^{7/6} (Fret 3)
- B^{b9#11} no3 (Fret 3)

Additional markings include "Hammer-on" and "Faint".