



On the original, the trademark "Bo Diddley beat" is played most explicitly by the bass drum. Diddley's guitar accompaniment features some slightly more-complicated patterns, but he usually takes care to emphasize the most important beats (marked

by asterisks in the strumming example shown here). Each of Diddley's vocal lines stretch over individual two-bar phrases, and are then typically answered by another two-bar phrase (with one exception, the second line of verse three). I've placed a (G) above the lyrics at the approximate place where each two-bar phrase begins. Playing the barre G chord throughout will give you the greatest control over the song's syncopation, but if your fretting hand starts to feel fatigued, regular open-position G chords can also sound great with some careful palm-muting. The two interlude sections are your chance to rock this song out with some riffage—two of Diddley's original tremolo-drenched leads are transcribed below. Also, as Diddley's vocals run the gamut between crystal clarity and downright incomprehensibility, the lyrics below are best considered an approximation.

—DAN APCZYNSKI

Lead Examples

Chords

[illegible]

1. Bo Diddley'll buy his baby a diamond ring
(G) (G)
If that diamond ring don't shine
(G) (G)
He gonna take it to a private eye
(G) (G)
If that private eye can't see
(G) (G)
He'd better not take the ring-a-from me

Interlude 1

2. Bo Diddley caught a nanny goat
To make his pretty baby a Sunday coat
Bo Diddley caught a bear cat
To make his pretty baby a Sunday hat

Interlude 2

3. Won't you come to my house and rack that bone (G)
- (G) (G)
Take my baby away from home
- (G) (G)
Look at that Bo-jo, where has he been
- (G) (G)
Up to your house and gone again
- (G) (G)
Bo Diddley, Bo Diddley have you heard?
- (G) (G)
My pretty baby said she was a bird

The "Bo Diddley beat"

1 (&) (2) & (3) (&) 4 (&) (1) (&) 2 (&) 3 (&) (4) (&)