The Art of Improvisation

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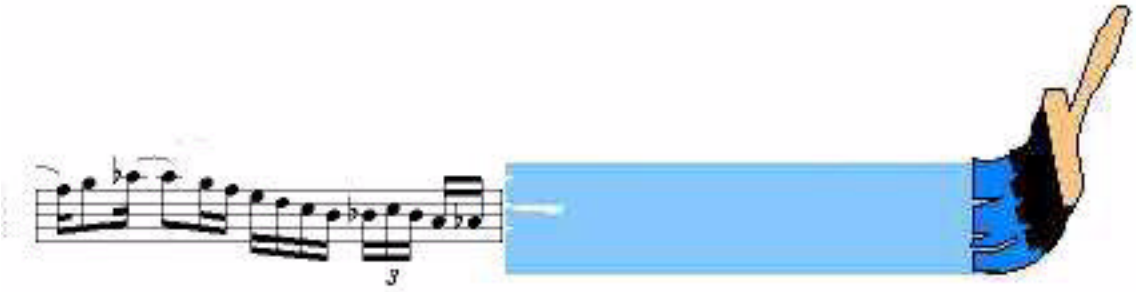
… Creating real-time music through jazz improvisation …

Introduction



by *Bob Taylor*

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About This Book

Welcome to *The Art of Improvisation* ! This section is about:

- Why I Wrote *The Art of Improvisation*
- Highlights of *The Art of Improvisation*
- Acknowledgements and BRIDJJ
- Listening to Jazz

Why I Wrote The Art of Improvisation

So how do they do it?

How do the great improvisers create musical tales of suspense and wonder? Can we improvise like they do by copying what they play? I used to think so, but now I'm convinced it's better to *visualize* and *understand* their ideas, not just copy them. Great players know and use *seven elements of improvisation*; I wrote *The Art of Improvisation* to help you learn and use these elements like they do. It's not a wizard's apprenticeship; it's a real process you can learn a step at a time.

You can include the principles in *The Art of Improvisation* in your daily practice to greatly speed up your progress in improvisation. You'll recognize these principles when you listen to the solos of great jazz improvisers.

What This Book *Is* and *Isn't* About …

In this book you'll use the "Yes" concepts below, not the typical "No" methods.

✔ *Yes*: Learn a variety of flexible scales that help you create musical ideas.

X No: Start with the blues scale, stay with the blues scale, and eventually become trapped by the blues scale.

✔ *Yes*: Create, develop, and express your own musical ideas and phrases.

X No: Memorize jazz patterns and try to turn them into improvisation.

✔ *Yes*: Learn to create and develop melodies first, then use changing chords.

X No: Study chord progressions first (get on the freeway, then learn to drive).

✔ *Yes*: Create melodies that sometimes fit, sometimes transcend the chords.

X No: Play arpeggios so much that your listener is sure what chord you're playing against, but not sure if you know much else about improvising.

About the Author

My early music background was classical; I started playing jazz as a freshman in college. At first I learned to improvise by copying patterns and by transcribing solos. But after extensive listening, I discovered solid principles in the solos of great improvisers. I used them, adapted them, and shared them with students. This book gathers what I learned in years of playing, teaching, and research.

Some of my credits:

- Master's Degree in Music Education, California State Univ., Los Angeles
- Jazz faculty member at Cal. State L.A., Pasadena City College, and BYU
- Member of BYU Faculty Jazz Quintet and BRIDJJ jazz/fusion group
- Author of *Sightreading Jazz* and *Sightreading Chord Progressions*

Highlights of *The Art of Improvisation*

The Art of Improvisation is a two-volume set that includes the features listed below, and more, to help you learn and master jazz improvisation:

- Easy-to-read explanations of 7 elements of improvisation, in 5 skill levels.
- Over 350 concise musical examples to illustrate what you're learning.
- Over 200 exercises to help you try out what you've learned. Most exercises have three levels of difficulty: Basic, Medium, and Challenge.
- Chords for 130 standard jazz tunes in a clear, easy-to-read format.
- Transcribed jazz solos from the BRIDJJ CD "Beat the Rats."
- Ideas for teaching with *The Art of Improvisation*.

Other Books I've Written

Sightreading Jazz, a complete method for reading pitches, rhythms, and melodies, for all instruments in treble or bass clef. Exercises can be recycled and varied, creating thousands of new sightreading examples. Also available are transposed exercises (Bb and Eb) for ensemble practice along with the concert key exercises.

Acknowledgments and BRIDJJ

I'd like to especially thank those who have helped to bring this book to light:

- My wife, Jennifer, for her constant support and writing insights.
- My daughters, Jamie, Jessica, and Johanna, for sharing me with the computer.
- My parents, Harold and Jean, for the musical legacy they left me.
- John, for his love of jazz and art.
- Mick, for his love of engineering, and Rosie, for her love of the classics.
- Jay Lawrence, for his research and insights into latin and fusion rhythms.
- Rich Dixon, for his ideas on the art of playing "outside."
- Members of BRIDJJ (Rich Dixon, Dan Waldis, Jim Stout, and Jay Lawrence).
- Steve Richins, Lars Yorgason, and Newell Dayley for their ideas and support.
- All the musicians who tested this book and provided valuable feedback.

Listening to Jazz

As you study from *The Art of Improvisation* and practice its exercises, it's essential that you keep listening to recordings of great jazz artists. As you listen, you should constantly try to:

1) Find the form of the tune so you can clearly identify the start and end of each solo chorus.

2) Switch your focus back and forth between the improvised solos and the rhythm section accompaniment, noticing how the players interact and support each other.

3) Identify interesting ideas and match them with concepts from the Art of Improvisation, so you can adapt them in your own improvisation.

Some Famous Jazz Improvisers

The artists and recordings below can serve as a basic listening guide for your improv study (dates are approximate). Be sure to branch out and try new artists and recordings as you develop your own styles and tastes. For artists and recordings in fusion and latin styles, see Chapter 3C: *Fusion and Latin Styles*.

Style	Instrum.	Artist
Early jazz	Trumpet	Louis Armstrong, Bix Beiderbecke
(1900-30)	Woodwinds	Sidney Bechet, Johnny Dodds
	Trombone	Kid Ory, Jack Teagarden
	Piano	Scott Joplin, Jelly Roll Morton, Earl Hines, Fats Waller, James Johnson
Guitar	Eddie Lang	
Vocalists	Bessie Smith	
Swing	Trumpet	Roy Eldridge, "Sweets" Edison, Cootie Williams
(1930-45)	Tenor Sax	Lester Young, Coleman Hawkins, Ben Webster
	Alto Sax	Johnny Hodges, Benny Carter
	Clarinet	Benny Goodman, Jimmy Dorsey, Artie Shaw
	Trombone	Tommy Dorsey
	Piano	Art Tatum, Duke Ellington, Count Basie
	Guitar	Charlie Christian, Django Reinhardt
	Bass	Jimmy Blanton, Oscar Pettiford
	Vibes	Lionel Hampton
	Violin	Stuff Smith, Stephane Grappelli
	Drums	Gene Krupa
	Vocalists	Billie Holiday
Bebop	Trumpet	Dizzy Gillespie, Fats Navarro
(1945-55)	Alto Sax	Charlie Parker, Sonny Stitt
	Tenor Sax	Don Byas
	Trombone	J. J. Johnson
	Piano	Bud Powell, Thelonious Monk
	Drums	Kenny Clarke, Max Roach, Buddy Rich
	Vocalists	Ella Fitzgerald
Cool	Trumpet	Miles Davis, Chet Baker
(1950-65)	Alto Sax	Paul Desmond, Lee Konitz, Art Pepper
	Tenor Sax	Stan Getz
	Bari Sax	Gerry Mulligan
	Trombone	Bob Brookmeyer

	Piano	Dave Brubeck, Lennie Tristano
	Drums	Shelley Manne, Joe Morello
Hard Bop	Trumpet	Clifford Brown, Kenny Dorham, Lee Morgan, Freddie Hubbard
(1955-70)	Alto Sax	Cannonball Adderley
	Tenor Sax	Sonny Rollins, Dexter Gordon, Joe Henderson
	Trombone	Slide Hampton
	Piano	Oscar Peterson
	Guitar	Wes Montgomery, Joe Pass
	Organ	Jimmy Smith
	Vibes	Milt Jackson
	Bass	Ray Brown
	Drums	Shelley Manne, Joe Morello
	Vocalists	Jon Hendricks
Modal Jazz	Trumpet	Miles Davis
(1960-70)	Tenor Sax	John Coltrane, Wayne Shorter
	Piano	McCoy Tyner
	Bass	Paul Chambers, Ron Carter
	Drums	Elvin Jones
Free Jazz	Trumpet	Don Cherry, Lester Bowie, Don Ellis
(1960-75)	Alto Sax	Ornette Coleman
	Tenor Sax	John Coltrane, Albert Ayler
	Woodwinds	Eric Dolphy
	Trombone	Roswell Rudd, Albert Manglesdorff
	Piano	Cecil Taylor
	Guitar	John McLaughlin
	Bass	Charles Mingus, Charlie Haden
Recent	Trumpet	Woody Shaw, Wynton Marsalis, Arturo Sandoval,
(1975-)		Terence Blanchard, Wallace Roney
	Alto Sax	Phil Woods
	Tenor Sax	Michael Brecker, Branford Marsalis, Joshua Redman
	Clarinet	Buddy DeFranco, Eddie Daniels
	Flute	Hubert Laws
	Trombone	Bill Watrous, Frank Rosolino, Carl Fontana
	Piano	Chick Corea, Herbie Hancock, Joe Zawinul, Keith Jarrett, Clare Fischer, Marcus Roberts, Gonzalo Rubalcava, Joanne Brackeen
	Guitar	John McLaughlin, John Scofield, Allan Holdsworth, Jim Hall, Pat Metheny, Mike Stern
	Vibes	Gary Burton
	Harmonica	Toots Thielemans
	Violin	Jean-Luc Ponty
	Bass	Niels Henning Orsted-Pedersen, John Pattitucci, Eddie Gomez, Dave Holland, Christian McBride
	Drums	Tony Williams, Jack DeJohnette, Jeff Watts
	Vocalists	Sarah Vaughn, Betty Carter, Bobby McFerrin

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Level 1 - Starting

Louis Armstrong Bix Beiderbecke Sidney Bechet

Johnny Dodds Kid Ory Jack Teagarden Scott Joplin

Jelly Roll Morton Earl Hines Fats Waller James Johnson Eddie Lang Bessie Smith Roy Eldridge “Sweets” Edison

Introduction

- *Improvisation Levels and Elements*
- *Values and Creativity*
- *About the Exercises*

Cootie Williams Lester Young Coleman Hawkins

Ben Webster Johnny Hodges Benny Carter Benny Goodman Jimmy Dorsey Artie Shaw Tommy Dorsey Art Tatum

Duke Ellington Count Basie Charlie Christian

Improvisation Levels and Elements

The topics for this chapter are:

- About the Five Levels
- The Seven Elements of Improvisation
- Skills You Need
- Jazz Improvisation Myths
- Definitions of Improvisation
- Jazz Improvisation and Other Arts

About the Five Levels

This book is based on *Five Levels* of improvisation skills, from starting to advanced. The sections in this book guide you through these levels.

- *Level 1 - Starting*. This is where it all begins. You'll learn basic keys, scales and chords, and how to create and develop imaginative improv ideas.
- *Level 2 - Apprentice*. In this level, you'll learn the tools for improvising in basic jazz tunes, including swing rhythms and melodic shapes.
- *Level 3 - Intermediate*. Here you'll deepen your skills of development, patterns, and rhythmic variety to create more solid improvisations.
- *Level 4 - Strong*. In this level you'll use musical tools with confidence and ingenuity to build fine solos. You learn to interact strongly, execute cleanly, and develop creatively, from subtle ideas to flights of fancy.
- *Level 5 - Advanced*. As an advanced improviser you'll master more difficult approaches, including rhythmic freedom and outside playing, and integrate them successfully in your solos.

The chapters and topics for the five levels are listed in the Table of Contents.

Starting at the Beginning

Looking at the Five Levels, you probably have a feeling for which level applies to you. But regardless of your current level, there are definite advantages to reading this book from the *beginning*. For example, few improvisers at any level are familiar with the Virtual Practice Method, and that's explained in Level 1. So by starting at the beginning, you can pick up new ideas and skills and skip over material you already know.

"Sneaking Ahead"

If you skip on to later topics in the book, remember:

- Most topics in higher levels assume you've learned the topics and skills from previous levels.
- Although you can *read* through this book quickly enough, it takes *time and practice* to really master the concepts and use them in your solos.

Exercises

The *Exercises* section at the end of each volume is a complete, practical study guide for improvisation. You can use the exercises to track your own progress, or you can share them with your improv students as a lesson plan to follow. For study convenience, each exercise is numbered to match a corresponding spot in the book. For example:

✔ ***Exercise 1.1 Virtual Practice for the C Major Scale***

For instructions on how to use the exercises, see About the Exercises at the end of this Introduction and read the *Exercises* section at the end of each Level.

The Seven Elements of Improvisation

The *Seven Elements* of jazz improvisation have initials that conveniently spell out "MR. ED, CPA:"

1) **M** elody
2) **R** hythm
3) **E** xpression
4) **D** evelopment
5) **C** hord progressions
6) **P** erformance
7) **A** nalysis

These initials should be pretty easy to remember. As you work on the seven elements in your daily practice, you'll create exciting, artistic solos. *These Seven Elements are the foundation of each of the Five Levels of improvisation.*

Making the Seven Elements Work for You

Just skimming through this book won't help you progress to new levels. You must also use the 3 "E's":

1) *Explanations*: Carefully read and understand the paragraphs that explain each concept and skill.
2) *Examples*: Study and try the musical examples in each chapter and transpose them to other keys.
3) *Exercises*: Try each exercise. There are usually three versions of each exercise: Basic, Medium, and Challenge. Do all three versions, then vary them.

Skills You Need

This book is for improvisers of all skill levels, beginning to advanced. To get the most from this book, you should start by having or developing these skills:

- *Music reading* – Read music in one or more clefs, including pitches and basic rhythms. From a pitch, accurately sing up or down a whole- or half-step.
- *Scales and arpeggios* – Have a basic mastery of them, at least the major scales and arpeggios in the easier keys.
- *Sound and technique* – Work on your sound and technique so your improv ideas can flow.
- *Intervals* – Recognize, hear, sing, and play intervals, at least major and minor seconds.

- *Desire* – Have the desire to understand and create better improvisation, with new tools and ideas.

Now we'll discuss what jazz improvisation *is* and what it *isn't*. It's no mystery, but it's magically fun.

Jazz Improvisation Myths

Let's begin by discussing what jazz improvisation *isn't*. Here are four common myths about jazz improv:

1) "Jazz improv is something you're born with, not something you learn."
2) "Jazz improv requires perfect pitch."
3) "You can't practice without an instrument."
4) "Classical and jazz have little in common."

Myth #1: You're Born With It

Although jazz improv is a universal language, we're *not* born with it. But *almost anyone* can learn basic improv skills (listening, ear training, theory, instrumental or voice techniques); some people learn faster than others.

Some very good improvisers start later in life, but all good improvisers pay their dues by studying the works of the great jazz soloists. You need to constantly develop your listening skills, your sound and technique, and your desire to create better solos, or your progress will be blocked from time to time.

Myth #2: You Need Perfect Pitch

You don't need perfect pitch (although it usually doesn't hurt). But you do need good *relative* pitch, to recognize and remember intervals you hear. Accurately hearing intervals is one of the keys to improvisation; it's a skill you *can* gain and develop. It can be as simple as matching pitches with a keyboard or recording, or as involved as a full-fledged ear-training course. Unfortunately, many improvisers don't spend adequate time developing relative pitch, so they hit roadblocks in hearing and creating ideas. The Art of Improvisation gives you plenty of material for developing good relative pitch.

Myth #3: You Can't Practice Without Your Instrument

So what's your instrument? The most neglected but perhaps most powerful jazz instrument is the human voice. Jazz instrumentalists who know how to practice *vocally* can practice longer hours (such as in the car, in the shower, etc.) and can try new melodies and rhythms that are difficult at first on an instrument. Vocal practice can include humming, whistling, or just mentally hearing the notes you want to improvise.

It's important to know how to practice improv vocally, even if you're a "bad" singer. (You may even improve your voice in the process.) Singing or humming improv lines lets you concentrate on capturing pitches and rhythms without fighting an instrument; then you can transfer the vocal ideas to your instrument later. This book shows you how to use the Virtual Practice Method to help you practice improvisation vocally *and* instrumentally.

Myth #4: Classical and Jazz Don't Mix

Actually, they do mix; jazz and classical music have some similar elements. There are some very interesting parallels in the histories of classical and jazz musics. Understanding these parallels enriches your improv skills, helps you play the right styles for the right tunes, and helps you appreciate music of great jazz improvisers. *This is a strong hint for the importance of studying jazz history*. Here are the historical parallels, with times and composers:

Classical Era	**Jazz Era**
Baroque -------1600-1750	Dixieland -------1900-1930
(Bach, Handel)	(Armstrong, Morton)
Classical ------1700-1820	Swing/Big Band 1930-1950
(Haydn, Mozart)	(Ellington, Goodman)
Romantic -----1820-1900	Bebop ----------1945-1960
(Beethoven, Wagner)	(Parker, Gillespie)
Impressionist --1890-1920	Cool ---------- 1955-1965
(Debussy, Ravel)	(Davis, Brubeck)
Expressionist ----1920-	Avant-Garde ----1965-
(Schoenberg, Webern)	(Coleman, Coltrane)

Here are some *similarities* between classical music and jazz improvisation:

1) Basic form and structure of compositions
2) Melodic and rhythmic development
3) Expression
4) Major and minor keys and scales
5) Chord progressions
6) Solos and accompaniment

Here are some *differences* between most classical music and jazz improvisation:

1) Literal rhythms in classical, swing rhythms in jazz
2) Improvised solos in jazz pieces
3) More freedom for the jazz performer to alter the original melody
4) Different combinations of instruments used in classical vs. jazz

Definitions of Improvisation

Musicians have been improvising jazz for a long time. Below are some typical definitions of jazz improv, with some common questions raised by each definition.

Definition A: *Jazz improv is making up music as you go.*

Question 1: So how do you make it up?

Question 2: What makes it sound good or bad?

Definition B: *Jazz improv is choosing notes to fit chords.*

Question 3: What are notes?

Question 4: What are wrong notes?

Definition C: *Jazz improv is musical communication.*

Question 5: Who communicates?

Question 6: What do you communicate and how?

Q1: How Do You Make It Up?

Improvising is creating music on the spot, but you don't improvise out of thin air. With the 12 chromatic pitches (C, C#, D, Eb, etc.) you can get unlimited combinations by changing:

- The *order* of the pitches
- The *range* of the pitches (higher or lower octaves)
- The *rhythms* and *expressions* used
- The way pitches are *repeated* or *varied*

Remember: creativity is more a matter of *organization* and *expression* than finding "newness." This is discussed in more detail in the *Values and Creativity* chapter.

Q2: What Makes It Good or Bad?

Your definition of bad, good, or great solos will change and mature as you learn more about the art of improvisation. When you discover how and why musical ideas fit together, solos that at first sound too simple may reveal their hidden beauty, while solos that seem too complicated may actually be a wonderful collection of smaller ideas. On the other hand, solos that sound impressive at first may be long on technique and short on creative ideas.

When you recognize the Seven Elements of improvisation in your own solos and in recordings, you can make significant progress in your improvisation.

Bad Habits of Improvisation

You should *avoid* common bad habits of weak improvisation:

- Continually trying to play higher, faster, and louder, leading down a dead-end street.
- Playing too many new ideas instead of building on some of the musical ideas you have already played.
- Getting locked into the same ideas, same pitches, same rhythms, and same expression (or lack of it).

Q3: What Are Notes?

Dumb question. Or is it? A note is more than just a pitch: it also has *rhythmic placement* and *musical expression.* A note can be played many different ways, and a group of notes can have countless variations. Sadly, many improvisers get wrapped up in finding the next "golden pitch," thinking little about the rhythms, expression, and development that would turn those pitches into artistic improvisation.

Q4: What about Wrong Notes?

Is a wrong note one you didn't intend to play? Often you can build a musical idea around an unintended note so it *sounds* intended. If that doesn't work, at least you can go on with the rest of your idea (instead of moaning after a "wrong" note).

Is a wrong note one that doesn't fit the current chord symbol? Actually, any of the 12 pitches can be played against any chord; each pitch is either a chord tone (consonant), a chord extension (somewhat dissonant), or a non-harmonic tone (dissonant). The real issue is handling those notes so they sound like they belong. That way, there aren't right and wrong pitches, just better or worse ones for the current chord and idea.

A "wrong" note could simply be a *boring* one. This book help you choose pitches, rhythms, expressions, and musical ideas to make your solos more interesting.

Q5: Who Communicates?

As you improvise, you first communicate with *yourself*. You hear chords, select and play notes, and decide whether to build upon what you just played or try something new. This takes practice, concentration, and quick reflexes so your solo can be *what* you want and *how* you want it, without slowing the music down.

Next, you communicate with the other members of your group. Your improv decisions are affected by what they play, and vice versa. This book contains many helpful ideas on how you can establish good communication in your jazz group (Chapter 4G: *Group Interaction*).

Finally, you communicate with your listener. Usually, this works well if you're communicating with yourself and with your group members. But don't try to guess what your audience wants to hear. Tell them your own story from your heart and mind. (For more about live performance psychology, see Chapter 3H: *Soloing Live*.)

Q6: What Do You Communicate and How?

You communicate by how you play and develop your musical ideas. Just like conversation, you have to balance *what* you say with *how much* you say and *when* you say it, so you can communicate something truly interesting. Remember: *quantity* doesn't equal *quality*. The economy of your melodies and the context of your musical ideas make a huge difference in your improvisation.

Jazz Improvisation and Other Arts

Jazz improvisation is like other art forms, such as painting, classical composition, language, and standup comedy.

Painting and Jazz Improvisation

Improvising is much like painting with sound, but without erasing, touch-ups, or corrections; what you paint the first time is what you get.

Painting

1) Organize lines, shapes, colors in a space (canvas).
2) Balance and contrast filled and empty spaces.
3) Use foreground and background objects.
4) Balance unity and variety.
5) Contrast dark and light, thick and thin textures.
6) Use artistic tools and skills wisely.
7) Combine acute vision and imagination.

Jazz Improvisation

1) Arrange sounds (melodies and rhythms) in the space of *time.*
2) Balance sound and silence.
3) Solo in the foreground, accompany in the background.
4) Develop with repetition and contrast.
5) Contrast high/loud/fast with low/soft/slow, use group or individual solos.
6) Use musical tools and skills wisely.
7) Combine acute musical hearing and imagination.

Classical Composition and Improvisation

Traditional ("classical") musical composition and jazz improv have interesting similarities and contrasts.

Classical Composition

1) Write pitches and rhythms *before* a performance.
2) Use chromatic scale pitches and duple- and triple-meter rhythms.
3) Develop melodies using specific techniques.
4) Have the musical skills to hear and perform the written notes.
5) Use common forms, structures (4-bar, 8-bar, etc.).

Jazz Improvisation

1) Select pitches and rhythms *during* a performance.
2) Use chromatic scale pitches and triple- and duple-meter rhythms.
3) Develop melodies using specific techniques.
4) Have the musical skills to hear and perform the notes you imagine.
5) Use common forms, structures (4-bar, 8-bar, etc.).

Language and Improvisation

Jazz improv is like impromptu speaking, so improv and spoken language have many similarities:

Language

1) Learn grammar and syntax.
2) Build a strong vocabulary.
3) Develop thoughts to a logical conclusion.
4) Communicate with the listener through words.
5) Use good conversational skills.
6) Balance talking vs. listening.

Jazz Improvisation

1) Learn scales, chords, music theory (music syntax).
2) Store up musical ideas (music vocabulary).
3) Develop musical ideas to a conclusion.
4) Communicate with the listener via musical ideas.
5) Interact musically with your performing group.
6) Balance playing vs. listening.

Standup Comedy and Improvisation

Standup comedy and improvisation are similar, except that comedy isn't pretty and improvisation isn't funny.

Comedy

1) Prepare material that *might* be used on stage.
2) Keep up on current events.
3) Know the audience.
4) Make creative decisions quickly.
5) Switch gears or continue the same idea depending on how well it's working.
6) Timing is everything.

Jazz Improvisation

1) Practice musical ideas that *might* be used in a concert.
2) Listen to current improvisers and jazz trends.
3) Know the audience.
4) Make creative decisions quickly.
5) Develop or change musical motifs depending on how well they are working.
6) Timing is everything.

As you learn to improvise, remember that jazz improvisation is like many other art forms. You can find many comparisons and insights in other art forms to help you build strong improv skills.

Chapter Review

1) Common improvisation myths: You have to be born with it; you need perfect pitch; you can't practice without your instrument; classical music and jazz aren't related.
2) Classical and jazz music history have these parallels: Baroque and Dixieland, Classical and Swing, Romantic and Bebop, Impressionist and Cool, and Expressionist and Avant Garde.
3) Jazz improvisation is making up music as you perform, choosing notes to fit chords, and communicating through the music you create.
4) To improvise, you change the order and range of pitches, use different rhythms and expressions, and repeat or vary groups of notes.
5) Weak improvisation can result from playing too high, fast, or loud; or playing too many new ideas too soon; or repeating the same ideas too often.
6) Notes = pitches + rhythm + musical expression.
7) When you improvise you communicate with yourself, your group, and your audience.
8) Jazz improv is like other art forms, such as painting, classical composition, language, standup comedy.

Expressions

*After silence, that which comes nearest to expressing the inexpressible is music. *Aldous Huxley*

*Architecture is frozen music. *De Stael*

*Nature does nothing uselessly. *Aristotle*

*Imagination is as good as many voyages -- and how much cheaper. *George William Curtis*

* A great many people think they are thinking when they are merely rearranging their prejudices. *William James*

Values and Creativity

In this chapter you'll learn about:

- Why Learn to Improvise?
- Learning Values through Improvisation
- About Creativity
- The Creative Process
- Five Barriers to Creativity
- Creative Improvisation

Improvisation is not only an art form, it's also a great way to discover values and creativity in yourself and others. This chapter explores the "inner side" of jazz improvisation.

Why Learn to Improvise?

This book discusses *how* to improvise, but some people may also wonder *why* to improvise. Here are several good reasons for learning how to improvise jazz:

- It allows *self-expression.*
- It develops your *creativity*.
- It promotes *teamwork* with other musicians.
- It helps you learn and strengthen positive *values*.

Self-Expression

Improvisation helps you express your thoughts and insights through music. It also teaches you about your strengths and weaknesses, and it helps you develop a "musical personality" as well. This is like an audible pathway to your inner self.

When you practice alone, you express your ideas to yourself; when you play in a concert, your ideas may be heard by handfuls or hundreds; when you record, your ideas might spread to thousands of listeners. That places a lot of responsibility on treating your art form and your audience with care and respect. This is discussed in more detail in *#2: Integrity* in *Learning Values through Improvisation* below.

Creativity

Improvisation is a great vehicle for learning and using the creative process – you get to hear your ideas unfold before you in real time. Creativity is one of life's best pursuits. For more on creativity, see the following sections in this chapter:

- *About Creativity*
- *The Creative Process*
- *Five Barriers to Creativity*
- *Creative Improvisation*

Teamwork

Playing in a jazz group is a great way to learn teamwork. Leader and follower roles constantly change, and there are many split-second decisions to make about unity and

variety in the music. The music of a strong jazz team is magical in its interaction and adventure; the whole result is much greater than the individual parts.

Values

As we learn to improvise, we can discover some important values in life. There's also a dark side to the jazz scene, one of selfishness, ego, and abuse that some players unfortunately fall into. But choosing the positive elements of jazz can enrich the lives of jazz improvisers and listeners alike. Let's explore how values and improvisation relate in life.

Learning Values through Improvisation

Learning to improvise and interact musically can build rich experiences and positive values in your daily life. Here are five of life's values that the art of improvisation can strengthen:

1) Discernment and wisdom
2) Integrity
3) Leadership
4) Informed risks
5) Diversity

#1: Discernment and Wisdom

Improvising opens up a potential floodgate of notes and ideas. Exploring and controlling these musical ideas requires discernment and wisdom. First, you use *discernment* to recognize chords, rhythms, melodic shapes, and other elements as they emerge in the music. Then you develop *wisdom* as you learn:

- When to speak up musically and when to be silent
- When and how to copy, change, or support the ideas of other players
- How to fully develop musical ideas to interesting conclusions

#2: Integrity

As you learn to improvise, you're faced with issues of musical integrity such as these:

- Do I pursue musical excellence and new territories, or do I stay in a comfortable rut?
- Do I keep my ego in perspective, or do I inflate my self-importance or get paralyzed in self-criticism?
- Do I treat others with honesty and compassion, or do I walk on them to get to the top?

Music and the music business often seem at odds with each other, but they're both great places to practice musical and personal integrity.

#3: Leadership

In improvisation you sometimes lead with musical ideas, and you sometimes follow by supporting the ideas of other players. In accomplished groups, this interplay of teamwork can be astonishingly good. In basketball you feed the hot shooter on the team, whoever it is; in a company, you promote good ideas from any employee; in jazz you let good ideas roll.

To lead, you need to *connect the past and the present*. In the immediate past, you need to analyze what's been going on in a tune and how it shapes present and future ideas. Farther back, the recordings of jazz greats can provide you with new insights in your own playing.

#4: Informed Risks

In the high-wire act of improvisation there are sometimes spills, but there are also breathtaking moments of adventure. Improvisation helps you weigh issues of courage vs. safety and risk vs. restraint. When you come to a workable balance, the rewards are high!

The key to success is taking *informed*, not blind risks. The Virtual Practice Method (Chapter 1A) helps you see, hear, and play musical ideas more effectively.

#5: Diversity

As you improvise in a jazz group, you learn:

- How to appreciate and value others' viewpoints
- When to specialize or diversify your skills
- How to learn from others' strengths and mistakes.

A boring world is one where everyone thinks as we do. We can learn something from everyone, even if it's just what *not* to do in music or life. Each new player we perform with is an opportunity to appreciate diversity.

About Creativity

The principles of creativity and improvisation can be *understood*, *learned*, and *applied*. Some people think you're either born creative or you're not, and that you can't really develop creativity. I firmly believe otherwise: if you want to develop creativity and you learn the creative process, you can definitely be more creative. The issue isn't whether you'll become a creative genius, but how well you'll develop your own creative gift. *As you read this chapter, think of how the creative process can apply to your own jazz improvisation.*

The Creative Process

Creativity is the art of organizing things or ideas in a useful or unusual way. You can use the creative process to do the following things, for example:

- Make one or more objects from available materials, such as a musical phrase from individual notes.
- Enhance or improve an object or situation, such as doing an extra take on a recorded solo.
- Solve a problem, such as finding notes to play with a given chord.

Notice that these tasks involve *making something out of something*. It's not a question of pulling a creation out of "thin air;" it's a question of organizing and combining existing materials to create what you want.

Steps in the Creative Process

Whether you build something practical, artistic, or both, you can follow these steps in the creative process:

1) Visualize what you want to create.
2) Plan and design your creation.
3) Understand *what* your building materials and tools are and *how* to use them.
4) Solve problems that arise in the planning, designing, and building steps.
5) Analyze what you create to find improvements.

Depending on the art form or project, you may execute these steps slowly or quickly, but you should use them in the above order to get the best results.

Five Barriers to Creativity

Sometimes we stifle our creativity by limiting the way we think. Here are five common barriers to creativity:

1) "There's just one way to solve a problem."
2) "I need a new and unique solution, not one that's borrowed or adapted."
3) "I don't really understand the tools and materials."
4) "I just build, without planning or visualizing."
5) "My fears or ego interfere with creativity."

Below are some ways to overcome these five barriers.

Barrier 1: Only One Way to Solve a Problem

When we try to solve a problem, sometimes our solution clicks and sometimes it doesn't. When it doesn't work, we should ask ourselves:

- *Are we trying to solving the right problem*? We often try to solve the first problem we see or the easiest first.
- *Are we solving this problem in the right order compared with other problems*? Often the right solution out of sequence is just bad as the wrong solution.
- *Are we using the correct tools*? If not, the solution may take much longer, or it may not be smooth or effective. You might use another tool in an unusual way to solve a problem.

Barrier 2: Our Creation Must Be All "New"

We often think our creation must be totally new. Granted, we shouldn't violate copyrights or patents, but our work can have small pieces or qualities that have been used many times in many other works. For example, artists use and reuse the same colors and media; musicians use and reuse the same 12 notes of the chromatic scale. So, much of the creative essence lies in how elements are combined, not in finding completely "new" elements.

In each art form there are countless ways to combine elements and materials. Some combinations make no sense, some are very obvious, and some fit somewhere in between, with a wide range of meanings and beauty. Our task is to find the "beautiful" combinations to build our creation.

Barrier 3: We Don't Know Materials/Tools

If we don't know how to use our materials or tools, we can't be creative in the art form. (We can still *appreciate* how someone else uses materials and tools. I appreciate painting, but I don't paint well.) But using tools and materials doesn't *make* us creative. It opens possibilities and removes barriers, but we're still responsible to use tools and materials wisely, with imagination. Our knowledge unlocks creativity; our wisdom unleashes it.

In every art form, some artists have limited technical skills, while others have great technical mastery. There are also art works that are:

- *Not technically sound and not creative*. This is the weakest kind of art.
- *Technically sound but not creative*. This kind of art is usually produced with much attention to detail but not enough attention to vision. The artist needs to see and try other combinations and possibilities, perhaps outside the traditional boundaries.
- *Creative but not technically sound*. This is typical of younger artists who see possibilities but haven't mastered materials and tools yet. I would rather be in this situation than in the "technically sound but not creative" one.
- *Creative and technically sound*. This is what we strive for, remembering that technique serves creativity, not the other way around.

As artists, we strive to reach the level where we produce creative and technically sound art.

Barrier 4: We Don't Plan or Visualize

Some think creativity is blocking out all conscious thinking and "letting it fly." On the contrary, logical thinking *is* an important part in creativity. The trick is to get your brain's logical (left) side and creative (right) side to *cooperate* in the creative process. When the right side says "What if we try this?" the left side can say "Here's some stuff to help you do that ..." or maybe "I don't think our ship can handle Warp 9, Captain."

Before you start creating, it's important to:

- Get a basic idea of what you are creating.
- Know your audience's expectations and your own.
- Know space/time limitations on your creation.

The amount of planning may depend on how complex the creation is and what the art form is. Usually, static art forms such as painting and sculpture need more *specific* planning, where you visualize details before you begin. A real-time art form such as jazz improv or impromptu speaking requires more *general* planning. This means you collect details about what you *can* do, but you make most creative decisions *as you are create*.

Barrier 5: We Let Fear and Ego Defeat Us

We often *fear* these things when we try to create:

- *New or unexplored territory*. Remember: new areas bring new adventure. If you're prepared, new is good; if you're not, new can be intimidating.
- *Thoughts of failure*. Small mistakes *don't* cancel out the rest of our creation. Most finished works still have small imperfections; many have even suffered through corrections of major mistakes. If we err, it should be in technique, not in the ideas we convey.
- *Criticism from our audience*. What will the audience think? Actually, you must be solidly in touch with art, *without* an audience; then be ready for positive *or* negative feedback. Some of what they say may be wrong; some may be true but harsh; and some may be true and helpful. Screen and use audience feedback to improve your creations.

Our own egos can also block creativity. Competing for awards can focus us on arbitrary opinions instead of art. Or we can get into safe ruts, where we feel accepted and competent but where there's no room for growth. Where art is a team effort, as in a musical group, the ego of one artist can cancel out contributions of others. To me, the truly great artist is the one who also realizes how much *more* could be done, then improves the creation next time.

Creative Improvisation

Improvisation is the art of creating something quickly, with limited time to plan and with limited materials. To improvise, you need to make quick decisions and see relationships quickly, *while you're creating*.

Can Improvisation Be Pre-Determined?

By definition, improvisation is *not* pre-determined. For example, if you plan out all the notes of a solo and then play them, it's a *composition*, not an improvisation. (In some cases that may be OK, such as for very short solos or recordings where a specific result is needed.) Here's what you *should* study and plan ahead of time:

- The elements of the song to improvise to (chords, scales, rhythmic style, etc.)
- The basic mood and feeling of the song

- Song organization and chords (where the chords repeat or change)

Here's a common improvisation question: "Why can't I plan ahead to use my best stuff?" The answer comes back as another question: "Am I trying to impress someone, or am I really trying to create musical ideas that capture each moment?" Focusing on "your best stuff" limits your vision so it's harder to see ideas that may work *better* than your best stuff.

Improvisation and the Creative Process

Improvisation follows the steps of the basic creative process. However, you *greatly speed up* the creative steps and execute them in seconds or split-seconds. This is really the fun and scary foundation of improvisation; you make important decisions in each second of time, so the creation evolves and takes shape before your eyes. *The Art of Improvisation* helps you make your own improvisation decisions, quickly and successfully.

Here's how the 5 creative steps are handled in improv:

Creative Step	**Jazz Improv Approach**
1. Visualize what you want to create.	Picture the chord symbol; see a melodic shape.
2. Plan & design it.	Choose the starting pitch for the melody; add rhythm.
3. Understand your tools & materials.	Pay attention to how the melody takes shape on your instrument; watch for technical challenges in fingering, air, positions, etc.
4. Solve problems that arise.	Work your way around technical/creative obstacles; use mistakes as new ideas when possible.
5. Analyze and improve the creation	Picture and remember what you just played so you can develop it or go on to something else.

Chapter Review

1) Improvisation can strengthen the values of discernment, wisdom, integrity, leadership, informed risk-taking, and diversity.
2) Improvisation promotes self-expression, creativity, teamwork, and values in life.
3) Principles of creativity and improvisation can be understood, learned, and applied.
4) Creativity is the art of organizing things or ideas in a useful or unusual way.
5) Five steps in the creative process are:
   A) Visualize what you want to create.
   B) Plan and design it.
   C) Understand *what* your building materials and tools are and *how* to use them.
   D) Solve problems (planning, designing, building).
   E) Analyze what you create to find improvements.
6) Five barriers to creativity include:
   A) We think there's one way to solve a problem.
   B) We think our solution must be new and unique, not borrowed or adapted.
   C) We don't know our materials or tools.
   D) We build without planning or visualizing.
   E) Fear and ego interfere in the creative process.
7) Improvisation is creating something quickly, with limited planning and materials.
8) Improvisation *greatly speeds up* the creative steps so they are executed in seconds or split-seconds, as opposed to minutes or hours.

About the Exercises

In this chapter you'll learn about:

- Using the Exercises
- Variety in Exercises
- Reviewing Exercises

The exercises in *The Art of Improvisation* help you learn the vital skills you need for improvisation. Be sure to make them a part of your regular improvisation practice, and remember that you can do most of these exercises *away from your instrument*, wherever you are. The exercises are grouped by skill level (1 through 3) and by element (MR ED, CPA). Each exercises has a Basic difficulty version; most also have Medium and Challenge levels of difficulty. Some exercises skip numbers to match the numbered topics in the books.

Remember: These exercises provide you with ongoing practice material. Don't hurry through them just to move on to the next level; use them, vary them and review them to strengthen your improv skills.

The sections below explain how to use, vary, and review exercises; the actual exercises are the end of each volume of *The Art of Improvisation*.

Using the Exercises

Here are some suggestions for getting the most from the exercises in your practice sessions:

1) Photocopy the exercise pages for your personal use (non-commercial only). That way you can quickly refer to them as you practice or as you look up text in *The Art of Improvisation*.
2) Establish your current skill level (1 through 3).
3) If you are past Level 1, first take some time to review the exercises for previous levels. Mark all exercises in previous levels that you need to spend time with.
4) For each exercise, select the Basic, Medium, or Challenge version, depending on your current abilities for that exercise. For some exercises you may already be at the Challenge version, while for others you should start at Basic.
5) When you master an exercise version, check its box with a pencil. You can also write in the date you completed the exercise version.
6) Try to keep a balance between the seven elements as you work on exercises. For example, work on the first exercise in Level 1 Melody (1.6), then the first one in Level 1 Rhythm (1.23), etc., until you cover one exercise for each of the seven elements at your level.
7) For humming exercises, occasionally check your pitch against a keyboard or other instrument. For exercises that can be hummed or played, try to alternate practice between humming (singing) and playing.

8) Some exercises have time goals, such as naming the pitches for all major 7 arpeggios in 60 seconds or less. At first, you may want to ignore the time goal until the skill is somewhat comfortable; then you can try for your best time in the exercise.

9) Above each exercise fill in the date (__/__/__) you worked on each exercise version, and give yourself a score ( ) for each version. Score ideas (highest is best): 1 to 3, 1 to 5, or 1 to 10. You can also use grades of A B C D and E.

If you already have the skills mentioned in the Challenge version of the exercise, skip on to the next exercise or find new ways to practice that exercise. Try to keep your practice flexible, challenging, and enjoyable.

Variety in Exercises

By using a variety of approaches, you can recycle and customize each exercise for your continued use. Here are some suggestions for getting variety in the exercises:

1) Wherever possible, practice the exercise in all 12 major or minor keys.

2) Use alternate rhythms instead of only eighth-notes.

3) Use a different metronome marking for each exercise, without going too fast.

4) For scale practice use alternate contours, such as two octaves per scale or descending scales.

5) Practice with a recorded rhythm section.

6) Practice with one or more friends.

7) Make up your own variations of the exercises.

Reviewing Exercises

Here are some suggestions for reviewing exercises you've already mastered:

1) As you master an exercise, mark the date next to it. At a later date, go back and review exercises you marked over a month ago, or over two or three months ago.

2) Decide how much benefit you'll get from reviewing an exercise. Then do one of the following things: a) practice it just as you did before; b) practice it with variety so it becomes new to you; or c) skip over the exercise and go on to the next one.

As you review exercises, you'll not only strengthen your skills but you'll also see new ways to apply things you're learning in later exercises. Enjoy!

Expressions

* Compared to what we ought to be, we are only half awake. We are making use of only a small part of our physical and mental resources. Stating the thing broadly, the human individual thus lives far within his limits. He possesses power of various sorts which he habitually fails to use. *William James*

* If any man wishes to write a clear style, let him first be clear in his thoughts. *Johann W. von Goethe*

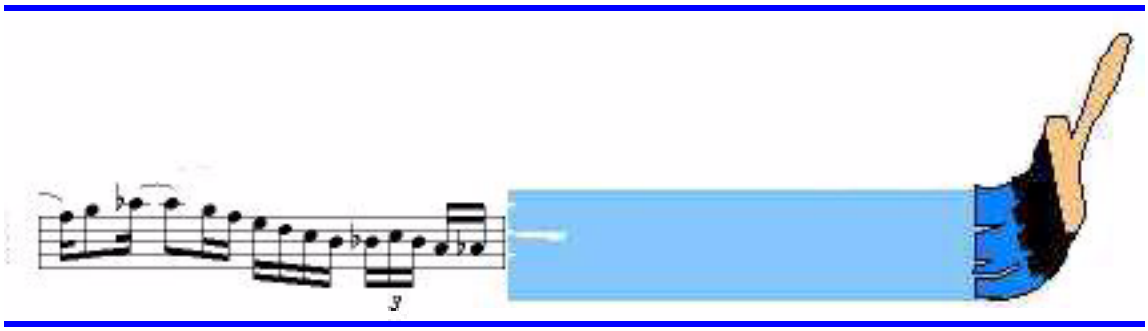
* They talk most who have the least to say. *Matthew Prior*

*We put up with being surpassed more easily than with being equalled. *A. Vinet*

The Art of Improvisation

… Creating real-time music through jazz improvisation …

Level 1: Starting



by *Bob Taylor*

Author of *Sightreading Jazz*, *Sightreading Chord Progressions*

Django Reinhardt Jimmy Blanton Oscar Pettiford
Lionel Hampton Stuff Smith Stephane Grappelli Gene Krupa Billie Holiday
Dizzy Gillespie Fats Navarro Charlie Parker

Level 1 — Starting

As a *Starting Improviser*, you may be new to improvisation, or your solos might be "trapped" in blues scales or rote playing. What you learn in Level 1 isn't complicated, but it *is essential*. Here you get a basic foundation in improvisation that will help you *create* instead of *react*. Even players who have been improvising for years can take advantage of skills taught in Level 1. Enjoy the journey! And remember to be patient with your progress ... you're laying the foundation for some great work ahead.

Sonny Stitt Don Byas J. J. Johnson Bud Powell
Thelonious Monk Kenny Clarke Max Roach Buddy Rich
Ella Fitzgerald Miles Davis Chet Baker Paul Desmond

1A: The Virtual Practice Method

In this chapter you'll learn about:

- Using the Virtual Practice Method
- Using Flexible Scales
- SHAPE: See, Hear, And Play Expressively
- Improvising with a Background

It all starts here – finding out what to practice and how to practice so you can improvise well. But you don't have to lock yourself in a practice room all day to learn chords and scales in all keys. Instead, you can use the Virtual Practice Method (described below) to:

1. Learn how to practice *away* from your instrument, so you can learn scales and chords almost anywhere you go, while avoiding "instrument fatigue."
2. Practice each scale and chord in many different ways, so they come alive with improvisation possibilities.

You can use the Virtual Practice Method on almost any exercise in this book. Eventually (in Level Three) you'll use the Virtual Practice Method to memorize chord progressions and actually hear a rhythm section playing in your head while you hum or sing your solos. Sounds amazing? I've done it; it works, and it's fun!

Using the Virtual Practice Method

The Virtual Practice Method for melody works like this:

***Hum (or whistle or sing) each note you hear while moving your fingers or hands just as if you were playing the notes on your instrument.**

While humming notes, trumpeters can wiggle three fingers onto the thumb for fingerings; saxophonists can move fingers on a pencil for fingerings; trombonists can move the wrist to each slide position; guitarists or bassists can finger imaginary frets; vocalists can picture notes on a staff; and pianists can touch imaginary keys. The important thing is to *accurately hum each note as you finger it cleanly*, just as if you were playing it or singing it.

1.1 Steps for Virtual Practice

To use the Virtual Practice Method,

1 Choose the scale or arpeggio you want to practice, such as a C Major scale.

2 Choose a comfortable tempo for eighth-notes. Use a metronome if you like.

3 Hum any medium-low starting pitch and think of it as the starting note, such as C. (If you have perfect pitch or have an instrument near, you can find the actual C.)

4 Hum each new pitch in the scale, going up to the octave and back down to the starting pitch. As you hum each pitch, "finger" the notes for your instrument (without your instrument, of course). Keep the tempo as steady as possible. If a scale or arpeggio is difficult, slow it down until the pitches and fingerings lock in well.

Now turn to *Exercise 1.1* at the end of this book to try virtual practice with a C Major scale. (**Note**: In the electronic version, click the check mark to jump to the exercise.)

✔ ***Exercise 1.1 Virtual Practice for the C Major Scale***

Practicing with the Circle of Fourths

The *circle of fourths* is all 12 keys arranged in a circle (or line), with each new key starting a 4th higher than the previous one. Many basic jazz chord progressions are based on the circle of 4ths, making it a vital tool to learn. The chord roots (#1 tones) for the circle of 4ths are:

C F Bb Eb Ab Db (C#) Gb (F#) B E A D G C

Notice that C# Major and Db Major are *enharmonically* the same: they contain the same pitches but are spelled differently (C# = Db, D# = Eb, E# = F, etc.). The keys of F# and Gb are enharmonic, as are Cb and B.

1.2 Practicing Major Scales

You can use the Virtual Practice Method to practice major scales around the circle of 4ths. First, start on a low pitch for your C, and then follow these steps:

1 Hum or finger the scale up and down (start on any low pitch), pausing on the last note.

2 To *connect* to the first note (root) of the next scale in the circle of fourths (such as from C to F), sing *up 2 whole steps and a half step*. You can check the new root on your instrument at first, but as you get more familiar with connections it won't be necessary.

3 Repeat steps 1 and 2 for the other keys (Bb through G) in the circle of 4ths. If the pitches get too high, drop an octave before starting the next scale.

✔ ***Exercise 1.2 Humming the Major Scales***

Using Flexible Scales

So far you've practiced scales by starting at the bottom, going directly to the top and then coming directly back down. You can discover a new world of possibilities by using *flexible scales.* Flexible scales help you create your own ideas for improv melodies. Flexible scales:

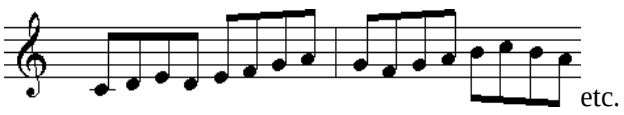
- Can start on *any* note in the scale, not just the first note.
- Go up and down randomly, changing directions whenever *you* want to.

1.3 Using Flexible Major Scales

To use flexible major scales in your virtual practice,

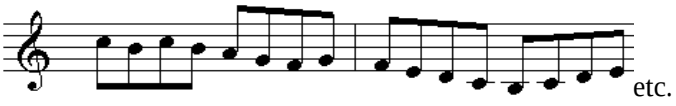
1 Choose a starting pitch, as explained above, such as a C.

2 Go up and down only a *few* notes at a time, instead of the whole scale. Make the up-and-down movement somewhat random and play the scale pattern as long as you want. For example:



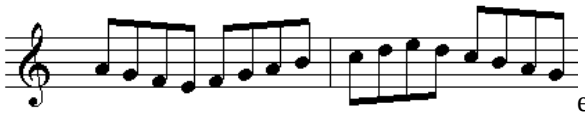
Example 1.3 - A flexible C Major scale

This next example starts at the top and winds its way down:



Example 1.3a - Another flexible C Major scale

And this example starts on a note other than C:


etc.

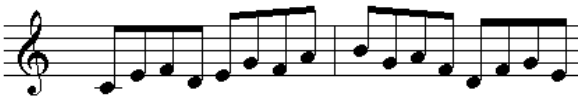
Example 1.3b - Flexible C Major scale that doesn't start on C

You can create *many* useful versions of flexible scales; they're "food for thought" for your solos. Be sure to practice flexible scales in *all* keys, not just C. And remember: whenever you play a flexible scale, you are *actually improvising*!

✔ *Exercise 1.3 Humming Flexible Scales*

1.4 Using Thirds in Flexible Scales

You can also use intervals of thirds (two whole-steps, or a whole-step + half-step) in flexible scales for variety. You can randomly mix thirds and seconds (whole-steps or half-steps) in flexible scales. You can go as long as you want, and you can start on a note other than the root. This gives you a lot of variety in your flexible scale approaches.



Example 1.4 - Flexible C Major scale using seconds and thirds

✔ *Exercise 1.4 Humming Flexible Scales with Thirds*

More Practice

As you practice flexible scales in all keys, you'll find that some keys may be a lot harder to work with. Here's a suggestion: "live" in each key, practicing and playing flexible scales in that key so much that it feels like home. Try spending a whole day of practice in one key.

If you'd like more ways to practice flexible scales, see *More Practice with Flexible Scales and Arpeggios* in Chapter 1B: *Building Chords and Scales.* (If you're feeling overwhelmed with scales at this point, you can try these methods later.)

SHAPE: See, Hear, And Play Expressively

As you work with flexible scales, you'll find many creative ways to shape a melody. But how do you accurately improvise a melody without missing notes or getting stuck?

Using SHAPE

To create an improvisation melody, you need to find its shape. Think of it this way: SHAPE stands for "See, Hear, And Play Expressively." This means you need to *see* the shape of the flexible scale first, then *hear* how it sounds, then *play* what you see and hear. You don't see a long ways ahead of where you are – you just see enough to get you going in the right direction. It's as if the vision part of your brain sees where to go next and the computer part of your brain turns that vision into notes. That's a terrific and satisfying experience! As you practice this skill over time, your vision-brain and computer-brain will cooperate ever faster and more accurately.

When you "see" a musical idea first, it becomes easier to hear it correctly, because you can sense (see) the right notes to attack. And when you hear a note in your mind, it's a lot easier to play it accurately. Then when you play the note, especially if you hold on to it a while, you can add some interesting and personal expression to it. A melody based on SHAPE can be powerful or subtle; it works because it's secure without being pre-memorized. The more you work on SHAPE, the better your ideas will flow and the better you'll play the melodies you see and hear.

Avoiding PHASE

The *wrong* approach is to use SHAPE backwards, which is PHASE – "Play, Hear, And See Errors." Improvisers who use PHASE will play something, hear it after they play it, and then see (focus on) their errors. This is approach is very limiting – it almost guarantees that the soloist will fall back on familiar or memorized material to avoid mistakes. You can almost always tell whether a soloist is using SHAPE or PHASE. *Always use SHAPE for all your improvisations*. SHAPE helps your creativity soar and expand. In time, you'll truly *see it, hear it, and play it*.

Improvising with a Background

Now that you've learned how to use flexible scales, you can start improvising with a rhythm section background. Start with a background tune that has a single chord for at least eight bars. Here are several ways to use a background:

- Practice with a live rhythm section.
- Use a play-along CD or tape, such as Aebersold's *Vol. 24: Major and Minor* or Vol. 1: *A New Approach to Improvisation*. These CDs have several tunes that stay in one key at a time so you can work on flexible scales.
- Have a friend record a piano or guitar background for your accompaniment.

As you improvise with a background, remember to use SHAPE, and always keep your ideas steadily in tempo so they fit the background.

Chapter Review

1) The Virtual Practice Method helps you practice away from your instrument.
2) You can use the circle of 4ths (C F Bb Eb Ab Db F# B E A D G C) to practice scales.
3) Flexible scales can start on any scale note and go up and down at will.
4) You can mix intervals of 3rds and seconds in flexible scales.
5) Use SHAPE - "See, Hear, And Play Expressively."
6) Don't use PHASE – "Play, Hear, and See Errors."
7) "Living in a key" means practicing and playing in that key so much that it feels like home to you.
8) You can practice flexible scales with a live rhythm section or with play-along recordings.

Expressions

*Imagination is more important than knowledge, for knowledge is limited to all we now know and understand, while imagination embraces the entire world, and all there ever will be to know and understand. *Albert Einstein*

*See some good picture -- in nature; if possible; or on canvas hear a page of the best music; or read a great poem every day. You will always find a free half hour for one or the other; and at the end of the year your mind will shine with such an accumulation of jewels as will astonish even yourself. *Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*

1B: Building Chords and Scales

In this chapter you'll learn about:

- Understanding Chord Symbols
- Building Major Chords
- Building Lydian Scales
- Building Dominant Chords and Scales
- Building Minor Chords and Scales
- More Practice with Flexible Scales and Arpeggios

Here's where you learn basic chords and scales for improvisation. Learning chords and scales is an *ongoing process* you can use every day, long after you finish this chapter.

Important: This chapter assumes you already know key signatures for all major and minor keys. If you need help with key signatures, you should review a basic music theory book.

Understanding Chord Symbols

To improvise in jazz tunes, you need to see chord symbols (on the page or in your mind) and decide which arpeggios or scales fit them.

Basic Elements of Chord Symbols

A *chord symbol*, such as CMa7, usually contains three parts:

- A pitch-letter (such as C) to indicate the key
- The chord type of a major (Ma) or minor (m) key
- The number that indicates the top note of the chord (6, 7, 9, 11, or 13)

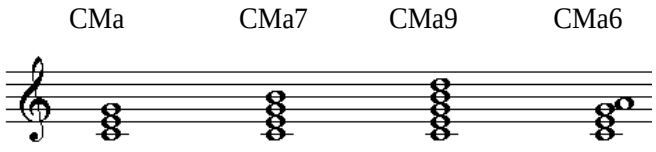
Normally, a chord contains the 1, 3, and 5 notes of the key plus one or more extensions (higher notes in the chord). For example, CMa7 contains the 1, 3, 5, and 7 of C Major (C, E, G, and B), while a CMa9 chord contains the 1, 3, 5, 7, and 9 of C Major (C, E, G, B, and D). A chord symbol can indicate any of the 12 keys, such as C#, D, Eb, E, etc.

Building Major Chords

A major chord has the 1, 3, and 5 degrees of a major scale. A major 7 chord has the 1, 3, 5, and 7; a major 9 chord has the 1, 3, 5, 7, and 9; and a major 6 chord has the 1, 3, 5, and 6.

1.5 Spelling the 12 Major Chords

The examples below show common major chord symbols you'll see in chord progressions, along with their chord tones, or *arpeggios*. C is the example key used here.



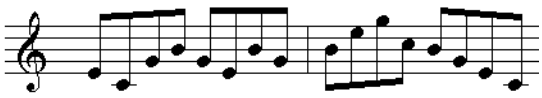
Example 1.5 - C Major chord types (arpeggios)

Now try Exercise 1.5 below, using correct key signatures. As you learn arpeggios and scales in *all* 12 keys, you can use them in chord progressions you'll learn.

✔ ***Exercise 1.5 Spelling Major Chords (Arpeggios)***

1.6 Practicing Major 7 Arpeggios

Here's an example of a flexible C Major 7 arpeggio:



Example 1.6 - Flexible C Major arpeggio

To practice flexible major 7 arpeggios around the circle of 4ths, use the Virtual Practice Method you learned in Chapter 1A. Review it if you need to, then try Exercise 1.6.

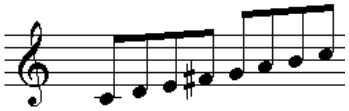
✔ ***Exercise 1.6 Humming Major 7 Arpeggios***

Building Lydian Scales

The Lydian scale is just like a major scale, except the 4th note is sharped. The Lydian scale is a good alternate choice for soloing on a major chord; the sharp 4th adds melodic "color."

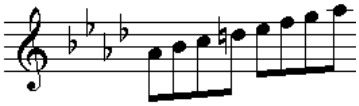
1.7 Spelling The 12 Lydian Scales

The C and Ab Lydian scales are shown below. In some keys, sharping the 4 changes a natural to a sharp; in other keys it changes a flat to a natural.



1 2 3 #4 5 6 7 8

Example 1.7 - C Lydian scale



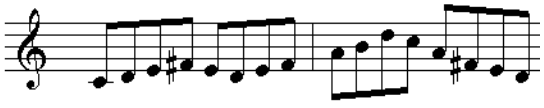
1 2 3 #4 5 6 7 8

Example 1.7a - Ab Lydian scale

✔ ***Exercise 1.7 Spelling Lydian Scales***

1.8 Practicing Flexible Lydian Scales

You can practice flexible Lydian scales around the circle of 4ths, using the Virtual Practice Method. Here's one of the many possible flexible Lydian scales you could create:



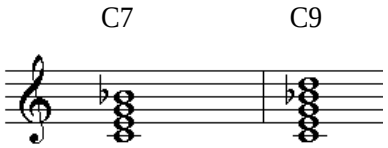
Example 1.8 - Flexible C Lydian scale

✔ ***Exercise 1.8 Humming Flexible Lydian Scales***

A dominant chord has the same 1, 3, and 5 as a major chord, but its 7 is *flatted*. Dominant chord symbols always have a pitch letter *directly followed* by a number, such as C7 instead of CMa7. (The major 6 chords are exceptions: for example, C6 is actually CMa6, a major chord.) Dominant chords usually resolve to major or minor chords.

1.9 Spelling the 12 Dominant 7 Chords

The examples below show some common *dominant* chord symbols you'll see in chord progressions, along with their chord tones, or arpeggios (C is the example key.)



Example 1.9 - C Dominant chord symbols and arpeggios

✔ ***Exercise 1.9 Spelling Dominant 7 Arpeggios***

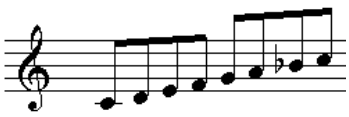
1.10 Practicing Dominant 7 Chords

You can practice dominant 7 arpeggios around the circle of 4ths, using the Virtual Practice Method. For more ideas, see *Even More Practice* later in this chapter.

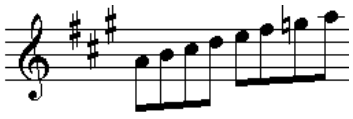
✔ ***Exercise 1.10 Humming Dominant 7 Chords***

1.11 Spelling the 12 Mixolydian Scales

A basic scale to use with a dominant chord is the Mixolydian scale (from the Greek Mixolydian mode). It's just like major except it has a flatted 7. The C Mixolydian and A Mixolydian scales are shown below.



Example 1.11 - C Mixolydian scale (b7)



Example 1.11a - A Mixolydian scale (b7)

✔ ***Exercise 1.11 Spelling Mixolydian Scales***

1.12 Practicing Flexible Mixolydian Scales

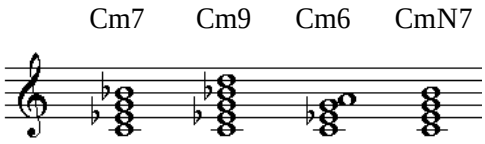
You can practice flexible Mixolydian scales around the circle of fourths, using the Virtual Practice Method. See also *More Practice with Flexible Scales and Arpeggios* later in this chapter.

✔ ***Exercise 1.12 Humming Mixolydian Scales***

A minor chord is like a major chord but with a flatted third. In minor chords that contain a 7, the 7 is also usually flatted. A minor chord can use “min” or “mi” or “m” or even a minus sign; in this book we use “m” (such as Cm7).

1.13 Spelling the 12 Minor 7 Chords

The examples below show common *minor* chord symbols you’ll see in chord progressions, along with their chord tones (C is the example key).



Example 1.13 - Minor chords and arpeggios

In Exercise 1.13 below, be sure to flat both the 3 and 7 in each minor arpeggio.

✔ ***Exercise 1.13 Spelling Minor 7 Arpeggios***

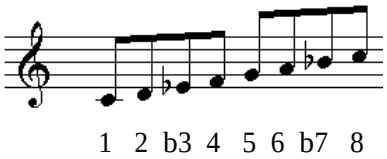
1.14 Practicing Minor 7 Chords

You can practice minor 7 chords with the circle of 4ths, using the Virtual Practice Method. For additional ideas, see *More Practice with Flexible Scales and Arpeggios* later in this chapter.

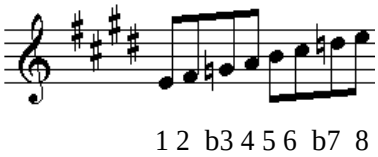
✔ ***Exercise 1.14 Humming Minor 7 Chords***

1.15 Spelling the 12 Dorian Scales

The Dorian scale is a basic minor scale. It comes from the Greek Dorian mode. Its pitches are the same as major, except for a b3 and a b7.



Example 1.15 - C Dorian scale



Example 1.15a - E Dorian scale

✔ ***Exercise 1.15 Spelling Dorian Scales***

1.16 Practicing Flexible Dorian Scales

You can practice flexible Dorian scales around the circle of 4ths, using the Virtual Practice Method. For more ideas, see *More Practice with Flexible Scales and Arpeggios* below.

✔ ***Exercise 1.16 Humming Dorian Scales***

More Practice with Flexible Scales and Arpeggios

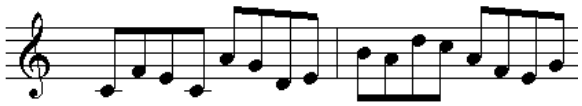
Here are more ways to practice the arpeggios and scales you learned in this chapter:

- For flexible scales, use *wider intervals* (4ths, 5ths, 6ths, or 7ths). This gives you a lot of practice material in each key. As you use these wider intervals, you'll need to slow down somewhat so you can hear, hum, and finger (position) the notes accurately.
- For flexible scales and arpeggios, use some *alternate rhythms*, such as triplets, rests, quarter notes, and dotted quarters mixed with eighth-notes. You'll learn more about interesting rhythms, including tied notes, in Chapter 1D: *Rhythmic Variety*.

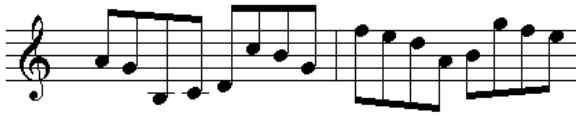
Examples of these practice methods are shown below. You can try them in your daily practice now, or wait until you're more comfortable with the regular versions of the scales. Using these practice methods helps you create material for good improvisation melodies.

1.17 Flexible Scales with Wide Intervals

Practicing wider intervals in your flexible scales helps you hear new pitches more accurately. The author's book *Sightreading Jazz* has thousands of written flexible-scale exercises, many with wider intervals. Here are some sample C Major flexible scales with wider intervals:



Ex 1.17a (-4th -6th -4th -5th -4th)



Ex 1.17b (-6th -7th -7th -4th -6th)

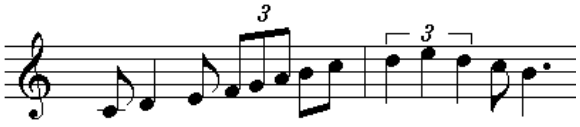
✔ ***Exercise 1.17 Practicing Flexible Scales with Wide Intervals***

1.18 Flexible Scales with Alternate Rhythms

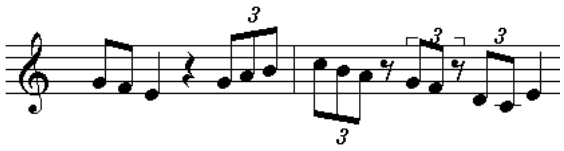
Up to now you've used only eighth-notes in flexible scales. To explore different rhythms, you can use any of these ideas:

1) Use one or more fermatas in each bar, in random spots.
2) Change some eighth-notes to quarter-notes or rests.
3) Change some eighth-notes to dotted quarter-notes.
4) Change some eighth-notes to eighth-rests.
5) Insert quarter-note triplets occasionally.
6) Insert eighth-note triplets occasionally.

Here are some sample C Major flexible scales with alternate rhythms:



Example 1.18 – C Major flexible scale with alternate rhythms

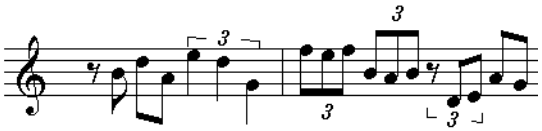


Example 1.18b – Another C Major flexible scale with alternate rhythms

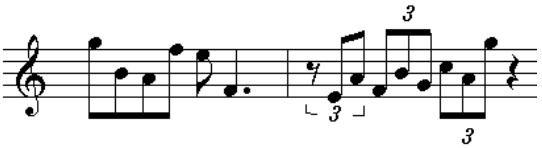
✔ ***Exercise 1.18 Practicing Flexible Scales with Alternate Rhythms***

1.19 Flexible Scales: Wider Intervals, Alternate Rhythms

Here are some C Major flexible scales with wider intervals *and* alternate rhythms:



Example 1.19a – C Major flexible scale with wider intervals and alternate rhythms



Example 1.19b – Another C Major flexible scale with wider intervals and alternate rhythms

There are thousands of possibilities – be creative! Using SHAPE, you'll see many new ideas as you practice flexible scales and chords.

✔ ***Exercise 1.19 Practicing Flexible Scales w/ Wide Intervals, Alternate Rhythms***

Chapter Review

1) A chord symbol indicates the key and type of the chord, as well as the top note used in the chord.
2) Common major chords are the major 7, major 6, and major 9.
3) The Lydian scale is like a major scale with a sharp 4th.
4) Common dominant chords are the dominant 7 (C7) and dominant 9 (C9).
5) The Mixolydian scale, used with a dominant chord, is like a major scale with a flat 7.
6) Common minor chords are minor 7 (Cm7), minor 6 (Cm6), and minor 9 (Cm9).
7) The Dorian scale, used with minor chords, is like a major scale with a flat 3 and a flat 7.

Expressions

*Good habits are as easy to form as bad ones. *Tim McCarver*

*Produce great pumpkins, the pies will follow later. *Anon*

*'Tis the mind that makes the body rich. *William Shakespeare*

*I light my candle from their torches. *Robert Burton*

1C: Melodic Color

In this chapter you'll learn about:

- Color Tones
- Handling the Fourth Degree
- Finding Color Tones in Written Music
- Soloing with Color Tones

Inside the scales and chords you've been learning are notes that can add color and interest to your improvisation. In this chapter you'll discover those notes and learn how and when to use them. Once you master color notes in C Major, you can apply them in all other major and minor keys.

Note: The examples in this book assume that a CMa7 chord is sounding unless otherwise indicated.

Color Tones

Each scale has *resting* tones (1, 3, and 5) that sound relaxing, and *color* tones that sound more tense. In major, dominant, and minor scales, color tones are always 2, 4, 6, and 7.

1.20 Naming the Color Tones

Color tones for a C Major scale are shown below (bold-underlined):

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

C **D** E **F** G **A** **B** C

The color tones for a C dominant (Mixolydian) scale are:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

C **D** E **F** G **A** **Bb** C

The color tones for a C minor (Dorian) scale are:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

C **D** Eb **F** G **A** **Bb** C

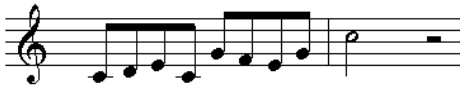
In classical and other types of music, you emphasize the resting tones and pass over the color tones to reach the resting tones. But in jazz you often do the reverse: you emphasize color tones to prolong musical tension.

✔ ***Exercise 1.20 Naming Color Tones***

1.21 Emphasizing Color Tones

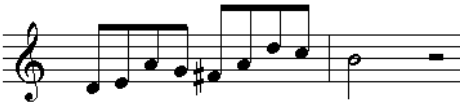
To emphasize a note, you can play it on a downbeat or hold it longer. The first example below emphasizes resting tones; the second example emphasizes color tones. (The second

example uses a sharp 4; see *Handling the 4th in Major and Dominant* below.) The second example is much more colorful than the first:



1 2 3 1 5 4 3 5 1

Example 1.21 - Melody: resting tones emphasized - not colorful



2 3 6 5 #4 6 2 1 7

Example 1.21a - Melody: color tones emphasized - more colorful

It's generally good to emphasize color tones in solos. You may have to "unlearn" the natural tendency to rely on resting tones in solo melodies. If you play 1, 3, 5 arpeggios too often in solos, you over-emphasize resting tones, and your solos may sound boring.

Exception: On faster tunes where chords and keys change quickly, emphasizing the resting (chord) tones makes the chord structure easier to hear.

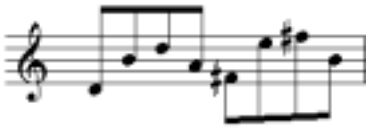
✔ ***Exercise 1.21 Emphasizing Color Tones***

1.22 Using Color Intervals

In a *color interval* both notes are color tones, sometimes with a fairly wide skip. For emphasis, you can hold the second note of the color skip. Here are the color intervals in C Major (upward skips):

D–F# (2-#4); F#–A or B (#4-6 or 7); B–D (7-2); A–D (6-2); D–A or B (2-6 or 7).

You can transpose these intervals to all other keys in major, minor, and dominant, and reverse the skips. Here's an example of several color intervals:



2--7 2--6 #4--3 #4--7

Example 1.22 - Melody: color tone skips

✔ ***Exercise 1.22 Using Color Intervals***

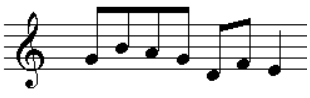
Handling the Fourth Degree

The natural 4th degree is a color tone that needs to be treated specially.

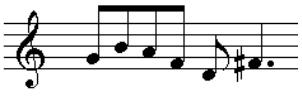
1.23 Handling the 4th in Major and Dominant

When you emphasize the natural fourth degree of a major or dominant scale, it doesn't sound very good; the 4 conflicts with the 3 of the current major chord. The fourth sounds like the root of next chord in the circle of fourths (a dominant resolution). To fix this

problem, you can play the fourth and then the third, such as F to E in C Major. Or, you can *sharp* the fourth (as in the Lydian scale) so the fourth doesn't need to resolve. For example:

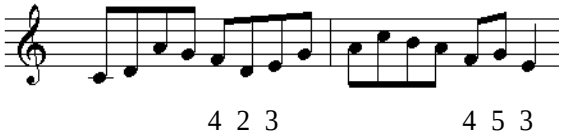


Ex 1.23 - Resolving the 4 to the 3



Ex 1.23a - Sharp 4, not resolved

You can also *delay* the resolution of the natural fourth, such as 4 to 2 to 3, or 4 to 5 to 3.



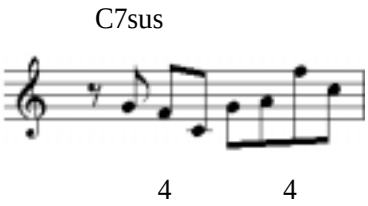
Example 1.23b - Delayed resolutions of 4 to 3

But if the natural 4 in a major or dominant key is part of a minor arpeggio (such as D F A C), you don't need to resolve the 4 to 3; in that case the 4 helps to outline a minor chord.

✔ *Exercise 1.23 Resolving 4ths in Major, Dominant*

Suspended Chords

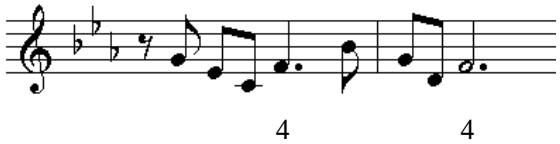
A suspended chord (sus) is usually one where the 4th is substituted for the 3rd, such as Csus (major) or C7sus (dominant). On these chords you emphasize the natural 4th, not the 3rd. Unlike classical, jazz often prolongs suspended chords or leaves them unresolved. An example of a suspended chord melody is shown below. For examples of flexible scales to play over suspended chords, see *Pentatonic Scales* in Chapter 2A: *More Scales*.



Example 1.23c: Suspended chord melody

Handling the 4th Degree in Minor

In minor, the natural 4th degree is *fine* to emphasize, unlike major or dominant. Some players avoid the fourth in minor, mistakenly thinking it's like the fourth in major. Don't neglect the fourth in your minor-key solos; use it to add welcome color. The example below emphasizes the natural 4th in minor:



Example 1.23c: Emphasizing the 4th degree in minor

Finding Color Tones in Written Music

In written jazz tunes you can look for color tones and see how the 4th degree is handled. You can also study these elements in a *transcribed solo*, which is the written version of an improvised solo.

1.24 Color Tones in Transcribed Solos

The Art of Improvisation has transcribed solos from the BRIDJJ CD "Beat the Rats" in Chapter 2J, Chapter 3J, and Chapter 4H. Exercise 1.24 below helps you study some of these solos for color tones; you can also look for color tones in any other transcribed solos.

✔ ***Exercise 1.24 Color Tones in Transcribed Solos***

Soloing with Color Tones

Now that you've learned about color tones in major, dominant, and minor scales, you can work on emphasizing those color tones in your solos.

Soloing with Color Tones and Flexible Scales

Here are the steps to follow to emphasize color tones in flexible scales:

1 Choose a practice progression to play along with (see Improvising with a Background in Chapter 1A).

2 Study the chords and decide which flexible scale works with each chord.

3 Play a flexible scale on each chord.

4 To emphasize color tones, play them as longer values (quarter-note, dotted quarter, half-note), or use color intervals.

With practice you'll be able to find and emphasize color tones to add interest to your solos.

Chapter Review

1) Use color tones (2, #4 or 4, 6, and 7) to increase tension and resting tones (1, 3 or b3, and 5) to create relaxation.
2) Color tones are the same places (2, 4, 6, and 7) for major, dominant, and minor chords.
3) In color intervals, both notes are color notes, and the skip is usually a wide one.
4) In major or dominant keys, the 4th degree should usually be resolved to the 3rd, or sharped (#4th). The resolution can also be delayed.
5) In minor keys (or in minor arpeggios that occur in major or dominant keys), the 4th degree doesn't need to be resolved.
6) You can study written music, including transcribed solos, to see how color tones are used and how the 4th degree is handled.

1D: Rhythmic Variety

In this chapter you'll learn about:

- Latin, Fusion, and Swing Styles
- Using Offbeats
- Mixing Offbeats and Downbeats
- Playing Interesting Rhythms
- Using Rhythmic Combinations
- Virtual Practice Method for Rhythms

For many improvisers, rhythms and rhythmic styles are undeveloped country. That's a tragedy, because rhythm is really at the heart of jazz and improvisation. Rhythms don't have to be complicated to be effective. You can make rhythmic progress in your solos just by learning to handle simple combinations of offbeats and triplets. Listening to the basic rhythmic styles in jazz gives you a solid foundation for solos.

Latin, Fusion, and Swing Styles

The essential jazz styles are *latin*, *fusion*, and *swing*.

Latin Style

Latin rhythms usually have even (straight) 8th-notes, and most consecutive notes are legato. Examples of latin styles are bossa nova, samba, and guajira. Some of the outstanding latin style players include Tito Puente, Clare Fischer, Poncho Sanchez, Chick Corea, and Gonzalo Rubalcava. For more on latin rhythms and styles, see Chapter 3C: *Latin and Fusion Styles*. On the BRIDJJ CD, listen to "Where's Waldis?" (samba).

Fusion Style

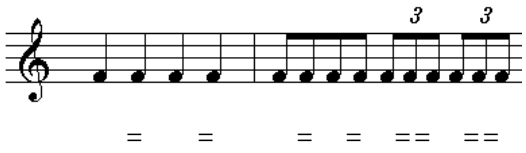
Fusion is a combination of styles, such as jazz, rock, blues, latin, swing, etc. There are many outstanding fusion players, such as Michael Brecker, John McLaughlin, Miles Davis, Allan Holdsworth, and Chick Corea. See also Chapter 3C: *Latin and Fusion Styles*. On the BRIDJJ CD, listen to "Beat the Rats" (fusion of latin and rock), "Barney Meets Godzilla" (alternate swing and rock), and "Tastes Like Chicken" (fusion of country, swing, rock, and classical).

Swing Style

Swing is a rhythmic style where eighth-notes are played *unevenly*, and legato and staccato notes are varied. Experts in the swing style include many of the greats of jazz, such as Louis Armstrong, Coleman Hawkins, Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, John Coltrane, Bill Evans, and Wynton Marsalis. Swing rhythms and styles are discussed in Chapter 2C: *Swing Rhythms*. On the BRIDJJ CD, listen to "Deja Blue" and "Precious Caboose."

Using Offbeats

Offbeats add tension to a rhythm, just as color tones add tension to a melody. In 4/4 time, the offbeat quarter-note beats are 2 and 4. Offbeat eighth-notes are *between* the quarter-note beats. With triplets, the offbeat notes are the second and third notes of each triplet group. In the example below, offbeat quarters, eighths, and triplets are double-underlined.

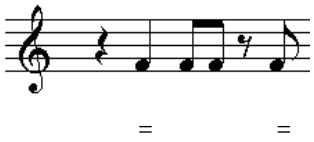


Offbeat quarters; offbeat 8ths; offbeat 8th triplets

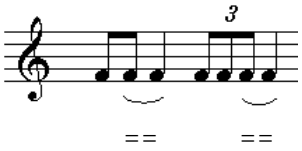
1.25 Emphasizing Offbeats

It's not enough just to *play* an offbeat; you also need to make it *stand out*. Besides accenting an offbeat, you can emphasize it in these ways:

1) Rest just before the offbeat you want to emphasize (first example below).
2) Tie the offbeat into the next downbeat. This eliminates the attack on the next downbeat.



Example 1.25 - Offbeat notes after rests



Example 1.25a - Ties into downbeats

Learn to emphasize offbeats. Some soloists *always* start their solo phrases on beat 1, the most "boring" beat. When you enjoy and master offbeats, your solos become more colorful and interesting.

✔ ***Exercise 1.25 Emphasizing Offbeats***

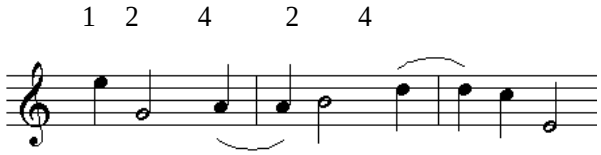
Mixing Offbeats and Downbeats

Playing *consecutive offbeats* adds even more rhythmic tension. Consecutive offbeats include:

- Half-notes (tied quarter-notes) on beats 2 and 4, or beats 1½ and 3½.
- Quarter-note values (tied 8th-notes) *between* beats.

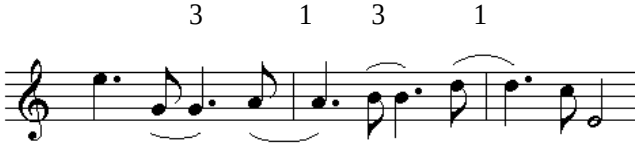
1.26 Consecutive Offbeats: Half-Notes

Offbeat half-note values can be used in faster tunes for variety. The example below uses consecutive offbeat half-notes on beats 2 and 4, with ties across bars.



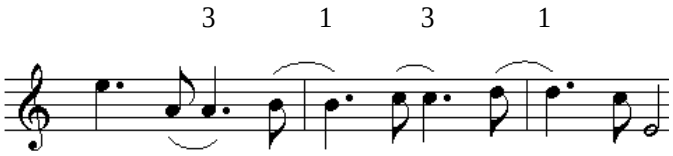
Example 1.26 - Consecutive half-note offbeats

If you shift the half-note values a little (one eighth-note later) the values fall just before beats 3 and 1, written as eighth-notes tied to dotted quarter-notes. These also work well in medium-tempo tunes:



Example 1.26a - Consecutive half-note offbeats (8th-notes tied to dotted quarters)

Or you can start the half-note values on beat 2½:



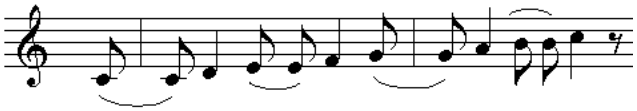
Example 1.26b - Consec. half-note offbeats, starting on 1½ ???????

You can try consecutive offbeat half-note values in flexible scales or chords. For details on shifting rhythmic values, see *Displacing Motifs* in Chapter 3E: *Rhythmic Development*.

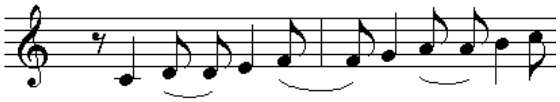
✔ *Exercise 1.26 Consecutive Half-note Offbeats*

1.27 Consecutive Offbeats: Quarter-Notes

It takes practice to play offbeat quarter-note values cleanly, but they provide lots of rhythmic energy. Below are C Major scales with consecutive offbeats:



Example 1.27 - C Major scale, offbeats starting *before* beat one



Example 1.27a - C Major scale, offbeats starting *after* beat one

You can play consecutive offbeat quarter-note values in flexible scales or chords.

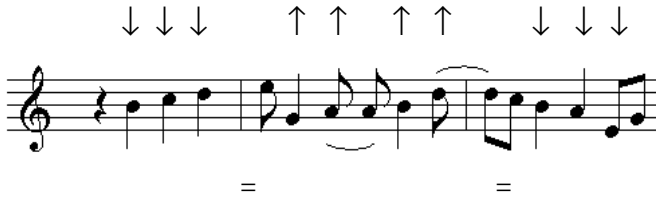
✔ *Exercise 1.27 Consecutive Quarter-note Offbeats*

1.28 Shifting: Downbeats and Offbeats

When you play several consecutive offbeats and then return to downbeats, those downbeats sound more interesting. Switching from consecutive offbeats to consecutive downbeats is a time-honored technique used by many great improvisers.

To shift from consecutive offbeats to a downbeat, add a note that's *half the value* of the consecutive notes. If the offbeats are half-notes, add a quarter-note; if the offbeats are quarter-notes, add an 8th-note.

You can switch back to offbeats in a similar way, by adding a single half-value note. In the example below, the first 8th-note (underlined) shifts the quarter-notes off the beat; the second 8th-note (underlined) shifts quarter-note values back to downbeats.



Example 1.28 – Downbeats switching to offbeats, returning to downbeats

✔ ***Exercise 1.28 Switching Offbeats and Downbeats***

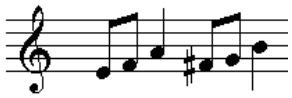
Playing Interesting Rhythms

In flexible scales you can use a variety of rhythms to bring your flexible scales closer to true improvisation. Below are some ideas on how to create interesting rhythms.

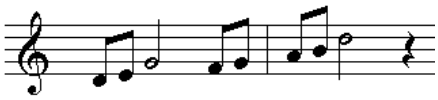
1.29 Shorter and Longer Values

Alternating shorter and longer rhythmic values is a good approach, especially when the longer notes come on the offbeats (between the beats or on beats 2 or 4).

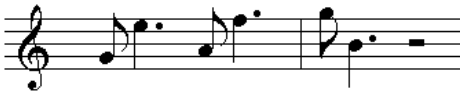
The first example below uses quarter-notes on beats 2 and 4 as the longer rhythmic values. The second example uses half-notes on beat 2 as the longer values. The third example uses dotted-quarters on beats 1 1/2 and 3 1/2 as the longer values.



Example 1.29 - Offbeat quarters (beats 2 and 4)



Example 1.29a - Offbeat half-notes (beat 2)

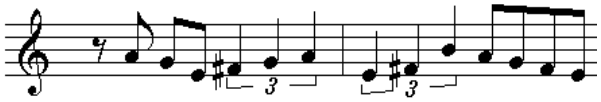


Example 1.29b - Dotted quarter-notes on offbeats

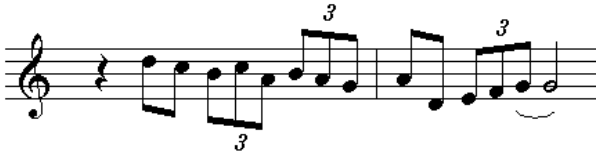
✔ ***Exercise 1.29 Alternating Shorter & Longer Values***

1.30 Using Triplets

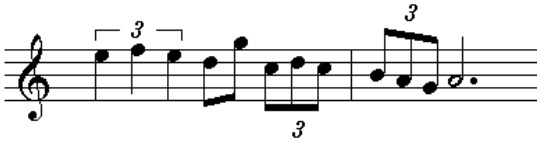
Quarter-note triplets and eighth-note triplets can add welcome variety to your rhythms. Below are some examples of triplets interspersed with eighth-notes.



Example 1.30 - Eighth-notes with quarter-note triplets



Example 1.30a - Eighth-notes with eighth-note triplets



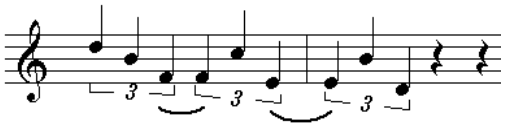
Example 1.30b - Eighth-notes with quarter-note triplets and eighth-note triplets

There are thousands of combinations of triplet rhythms and ties you can play in any key.

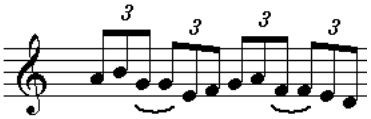
✔ ***Exercise 1.30 Using Triplet Rhythms***

1.31 Using Triplets with Ties and Rests

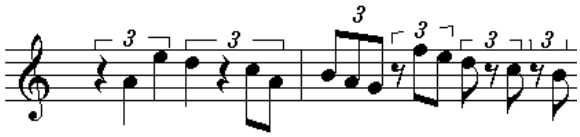
One of the most interesting rhythmic approaches is using tied triplets that emphasize offbeats. These rhythms take practice to play smoothly, but they're well worth it.



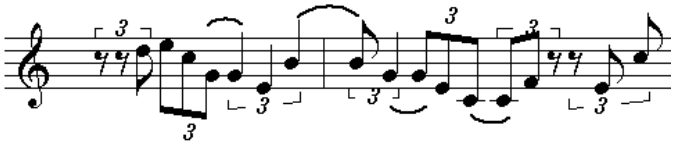
Example 1.31 - Quarter-note triplets with ties



Example 1.31a - Eighth-note triplets with ties



Example 1.31b - Triplets with rests



Example 1.31c - Triplets with ties and rests

✔ ***Exercise 1.31 Using Triplets with Ties and Rests***

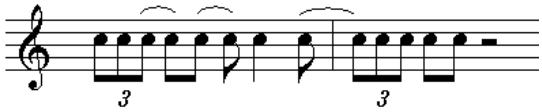
Using Rhythmic Combinations

1.32 You can *combine* the interesting rhythms you have worked with so far. When you combine these rhythms with flexible scales, you can create very interesting melody lines.

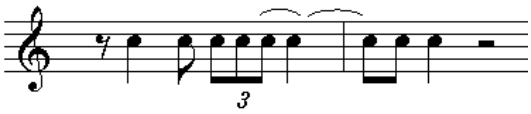
Here are some of the interesting rhythms you've learned in this chapter:

- Offbeat half-notes (beats 2 and 4)
- Offbeat 8ths tied to dotted quarters (before beats 1 and 3)
- Offbeat quarter-notes (between the beats)
- 8th-notes and dotted quarters
- Quarter-note triplets, also with ties and rests
- Eighth-note triplets, also with ties and rests

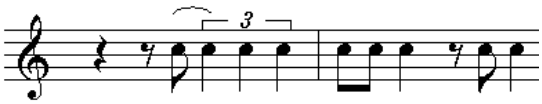
Below are some rhythms with combinations of 8th-note triplets and quarter-note triplets. You can use and adapt them as rhythmic ideas for your solos. There are thousands of possible rhythm examples in the author's *Sightreading Jazz*.



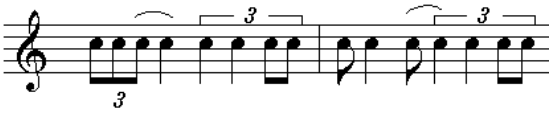
Example A



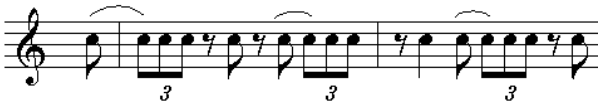
Example B



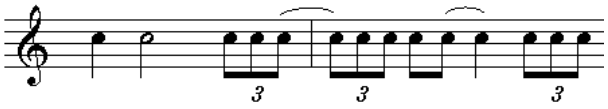
Example C



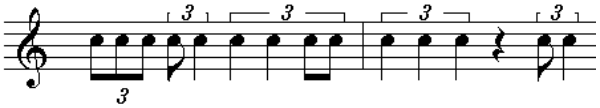
Example D



Example E



Example F



Example G

Exercise 1.32 lets you work out with these rhythm combinations.

✔ *Exercise 1.32 Using Rhythmic Combinations*

Virtual Practice Method for Rhythms

Besides reading printed rhythms, you need to *see* and *practice* rhythms away from your instrument. The Virtual Practice Method for rhythms helps you do this. Here are the steps to follow to get started:

1) In your mind's eye, *see* a one-bar rhythm with offbeats, ties, triplets, etc.
   It's not necessary to see every note and mark, but you should have the basic picture firmly in mind. If you have trouble seeing the rhythm, write it down. See also *Visualizing Rhythms* below.
2) Tap a pulse of constant quarters (foot or finger) at a slow-to-medium tempo.
3) Hear a percussion group (latin) or a rhythm section (swing) in the background. Repeat the same background in your mind for each bar.
4) As you're hearing the background and tapping along, sing or hum the rhythm once perfectly, using one repeated pitch.
5) Repeat the rhythm and the background, gradually speeding up the taps.
6) Add your own pitches to the rhythm; vary the pitches each time you repeat the rhythm.
7) Once you're comfortable with the rhythm, change to a new one or try a 2-bar rhythm.

As you use the Virtual Practice Method to work on rhythms, your rhythmic skills will sharpen, and you'll create and enjoy many more rhythmic ideas. Use Virtual Practice for melody *and* rhythms – it's a great time-saver!

1.33 Visualizing Rhythms

As you visualize rhythms, you can use these suggestions:

1) See the start of each measure as a solid vertical bar line (every 4 beats in 4/4) and know where it fits in your rhythm.

2) See beats 2, 3, and 4 as thin, light vertical lines in each measure.

3) Assign each note in the rhythm its proper role as a downbeat (a thin line through it) or offbeat or internal triplet (between the lines).

   Even though you may not see exactly where beats 2, 3, and 4 are in your rhythm, you must always be able to sense which notes are downbeats and which are offbeats.

4) Long values feel more "inflated" and full; short values have bursts of energy.

Rhythmic Precision: Thinking Like a Drummer

Most jazz soloists need to think more like good jazz drummers in order to be more precise *and* creative with rhythms. I was fortunate to grow up with a brother who incessantly practiced independent coordination exercises for drum set in the next room in our house. I discovered there is a world of rhythmic possibilities, if I could just combine rhythmic imagination and precision. I also discovered that most improvisers give far less attention to rhythmic detail than drummers do, but great improvisers are very solid rhythmically.

So I began to approach improvisation more rhythmically. I found that rhythmic imagination and precision unlocked the door to *rhythmic development* in my solos, where I could take musical ideas and vary them both rhythmically and melodically. (See also Chapter 3E: *Rhythmic Development*.) Once I entered the land of rhythmic development, there was no going back; I found it was far superior to the land of endless eighth-notes and scale-running.

✔ *Exercise 1.33 Using Virtual Practice for Rhythms*

Chapter Review

1) Essential jazz styles are latin, fusion, and swing.
2) To emphasize an offbeat, you can accent it, or rest just before the offbeat you want to emphasize, or tie the offbeat into the next downbeat.
3) To switch between downbeats and offbeats, insert a note half the value of the consecutive notes.
4) Interesting rhythms include short/long note combinations and triplet values.
5) In triplet groups you can use rests and ties.
6) You can use the Virtual Practice Method to strengthen your rhythmic skills and ideas.

Expressions

*Words differently arranged have a different meaning, and meanings differently arranged have a different effect. *Pascal*

*The most important thing in communication is to hear what isn't being said. *Peter F. Drucker*

*No man can do anything well who does not esteem his work to be important. *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

*A little learning is a dangerous thing; Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring. *Alexander Pope*

*Is not life a hundred times too short for us to bore ourselves? *Friedrich Nietzsche*

*The greatest pleasure in life is doing what people say you cannot do. *Walter Bagehot*

1E: Using Expression

In this chapter you'll learn about:

- The Role of Expression
- Playing with Expression
- Using Dynamics
- Varying Accents and Articulations

Expression is the art of *how* you play notes in your solos, using dynamics, accents, articulations, etc. The "E" in SHAPE is "expressively" – the right expression in your melodies can make a big difference in your solos. This chapter deals specifically with dynamics, accents, and articulations. Special effects, another type of expression, are discussed in Chapter 4C: *Special Effects*.

The Role of Expression

Emotion is the subjective fire that triggers expression; *expression* is how you translate the emotion into musical elements. Even though musical expression might seem very subjective, you can treat the *basic elements* of expression objectively. For example, you can identify dynamics, accents, and articulations in solos. Still, there so many different *ways* to use and combine these basic elements that your expression does become more personal. What's important is to recognize and use expression well to enhance your solos.

Most improvisers get so caught up searching for the next pitches that they don't *express* the pitches they're playing. Don't fall into that trap – slow your ideas down enough so you can see them well and express them well.

Sound and Technique

Your personal expression depends on your control over your own *sound* and *technique*. Any weaknesses you have in these areas can limit the kinds of expression you use. With better control of your instrument, the pitches and rhythms come easier so you can focus more on adding expression effectively. For more ideas on sound and technique in solos, see Chapter 1J: *Analyzing Your Solos*.

Playing with Expression

When you use expression, consider these points:

1) *How dramatic or frequent is the expression*? Expression should be subtle, not overdone.
2) *How wide should the variation be*? You can get many degrees of expression without going to extremes, but occasionally extremes are called for.
3) *When does expression work best*? Expression needs to stand out. It's usually more effective when it's unexpected, but it can sometimes be effective when it's expected.

#1: Subtle and Occasional

We can compare expression to spices in meals. With the right spices in the right amounts, the meal can taste much better. In a solo, expression shouldn't be overdone or it will lose its flavor. Slower tunes allow more subtle and more frequent expression, while faster tunes need more dramatic but less frequent expression. Silence helps expression stand out more.

#2: Varied

You need a wide *variety* of dynamics, articulations, and accents. You should:

- Use a wider range of accents and articulations, from gentle to strong.
- Watch the overall dynamics in your band. You can help the others get louder or softer by the solo ideas you play. When you allow softer dynamics you open a wider range of expression; with louder dynamics, the subtler effects are lost.

#3: Well-Timed

When you use expression is almost as important as the kind of expression you use. There are many timing possibilities; your task is to select the right kind of expression at just the right moment. Listening to jazz recordings can give you helpful ideas in this area.

Sometimes you can add expression to a note or two that are isolated before and after by longer rests. This makes the expression you use really stand out. Be sure you have something effective to say, and don't overuse this approach.

Using SHAPE for Expression

As you see, hear, and play notes, you can add expression to some of them. Expression can make the notes prettier, rougher, stronger, fainter, or unusual in some way. In a visual way, adding expression is something like this:

- Prettier = vibrato, trills, (see Chapter 2E: *Embellishments*), color notes held longer
- Rougher = harsher attacks, flatter or sharper pitch
- Stronger or fainter = louder or softer (or half-sounds)
- Unusual = special effects (see Chapter 4C: *Special Effects*)

So you can polish and paint notes, or scratch them up, or hammer or squish them – whatever comes to mind that makes the idea better, as long as it's not overdone.

Using Dynamics

Some players use little or no range in their dynamics – it's all "medium loud." Instead, try frequent but slight dynamic variations in melodies to open a world of dynamic possibilities.

1.34 Dynamic Variety

By habit, we play louder as we go higher, and softer as we go lower. Here are some suggestions for making dynamics more varied and less predictable:

- Reverse the normal dynamics: crescendo going down, decrescendo going up.
- Crescendo or decrescendo as you hold a pitch or repeat a pitch several times.
- Play whisper-soft. Balance with the rhythm section and pause before the soft passage.
- Insert occasional louder, accented notes in the middle of a softer passage.
- Use "terraced" dynamics: play a musical idea softly, then repeat it louder.

✔ ***Exercise 1.34 Using Dynamics***

Varying Accents and Articulations

Accents and articulations are often neglected or poorly handled in expression. If your solos have little variety in accents or articulation, you're probably just searching for "newer and

better" pitches to play. Here are some common problems with accents and articulations, along with solutions:

Problem 1: It's hard enough *choosing* pitches without worrying about accents & articulations.

Solution: Choose fewer pitches and express them better so the listener enjoys them more.

Problem 2: I can't use accents or articulations when pitches and rhythms aren't locking in.

Solution: Practice scales and intervals in *all* keys; practice offbeat rhythms in all styles.

Problem 3: At medium or fast speeds, notes crack when I use articulations or accents.

Solution: Improve your sound production, technique, and articulation ability on your instrument. Also, work on your ear training so you can accurately hear and sing the notes you're trying to play.

1.35 Using Accents

Below are some suggestions for using accents effectively. (See also *Swing Accent Guidelines* in Chapter 2C: *Swing Rhythms*.)

- Practice a wide variety of accents, from ghosted notes to very strong accents.
- Randomly accent a repeated pitch for several bars.
- While repeating a group of notes, accent one or two notes strongly, or vary which notes are accented.

There are many ways to effectively use accents in your melodies; try your own variations.

✔ ***Exercise 1.35 Using Accents***

1.36 Using Articulations

In jazz the basic approach is to play notes legato (full value). To use expression in articulations, try any of the following ideas:

- Play occasional notes staccato. Chapter 2C: *Swing Rhythms* explains more about articulations in the swing style.
- Adjust the length of any staccato note, from very short to almost full value. These variations are subtle but important.
- Vary between slurs (smooth) and attacks.

✔ ***Exercise 1.36 Using Articulations***

Chapter Review

1) Expression is how you translate emotion into musical elements.
2) The basic elements of expression can be described and learned.
3) Your ability to use expression depends on your control of sound and technique.
4) Effective expression is usually subtle and occasional, varied and well-timed.
5) Common tools of expression are dynamics, accents, and articulations.

1F: Developing with Motifs and Phrases

In this chapter you'll learn:

- About Development
- Creating a Motif
- Varying a Motif
- Creating Phrases
- How to End Phrases
- Eliminating Phrase Barriers
- Development Exercises, Level 1

Development is the art of creating and varying *motifs* (short musical ideas) so your solos build logically and emotionally. This chapter helps you create and develop motifs and phrases in solos. Once you experience the joy of development, you won't settle for less.

When you listen to recorded jazz solos, identify the artists that use development well. Finding good development in recorded solos can be very satisfying. This and later chapters help you develop ideas using many of their techniques.

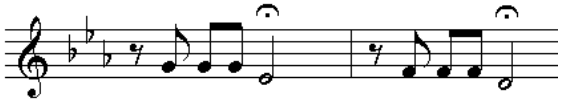
About Development

Developing musical ideas is at the heart of almost every kind of music. Unfortunately, some soloists think that because improvisation offers so much freedom, development is too limiting or doesn't really matter. Nothing could be more wrong. Development is a great, often unexplored territory that can add a world of interest to your solos.

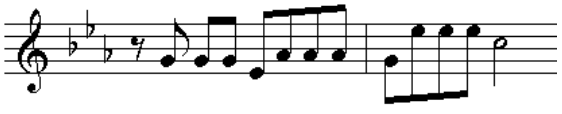
Too many jazz soloists are technique-strong and development-weak. To be a complete jazz soloist, you must know how to effectively develop motifs and phrases in solos.

The Classical Connection

Development in jazz has close parallels to development in classical music. Let's look at an example of development in a classical piece – Beethoven's *Symphony No. 5 in C Minor*. First Beethoven states a motif, then he varies it (down a step diatonically). After that, he develops the motif to build phrases.



motif ------ varied motif



original motif, extended ---------

Example A - Development in Beethoven's 5th symphony

Of course, composers have the advantage of *writing* motifs and developments, revising them until they're just right. As jazz soloists, we create and develop music in *real time*, doing our

best without revisions. A composer might create more logical or perhaps more beautiful phrases than the improviser, but the improviser works in the "moment of time," with its creative possibilities and challenges. Development is an essential skill for both improvisers and composers.

Excuses for Not Developing

Here are some common excuses used for neglecting development in solos:

1) "I need to impress the audience right away; there's no time for development."
2) "I have no idea how to develop ideas."
3) "I want freedom, not structure."

Solution #1: Unless your solo is only a few bars long, there's always time to develop ideas. Think of how you listen to your friend in a conversation: do you enjoy hearing whatever pops into the person's head, or would you rather hear thoughts that make sense and build to a point? As the improviser, you have the "floor" in the conversation, so it's up to you to use the time wisely. With practice, development will help you play *fewer notes* that make *more sense*, a plus for any listener.

Solution #2: This book explains basic tools for developing improvisation ideas. These tools are surprisingly similar between jazz and classical styles. Once you learn the tools, apply them thoughtfully and creatively, but don't overuse them. They should help you develop ideas, not dominate ideas. If you handle the tools properly, they will serve you well.

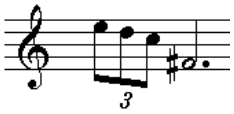
Solution #3: More freedom comes knowing how to *handle* structure than from ignoring structure. This is related to SHAPE – when you accurately see the shape (structure) of a musical idea, it leads to new ideas and variations.

Creating a Motif

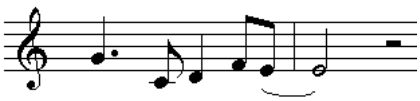
The first step in development is creating *motifs* (short musical ideas). You can vary the motifs in many ways, helping your ideas grow and take shape.

1.37 Motif Examples

Below are some examples of simple motifs.



Example 1.37 - Simple motif



Example 1.37a - Another simple motif

By using flexible scales with alternate rhythms and skips, you've already created motifs. Now it's a process of isolating them and focusing on their development. When you create a motif, remember these points:

1 Accurately hear the first pitch of your motif before you play it; then place the note securely in the rhythmic spot where you want it to be.

2 Select the pitches and rhythm for your motif.

3 Keep your first motifs somewhat simple. Later, you can join motifs together (see *Creating Phrases* below) or play longer and more complex motifs.

4 Emphasize color tones and interesting rhythms.

Motifs from Tune Melodies

A great source for motifs is in the jazz tune melody itself. You can adapt or copy the closing motif of the tune melody and use it as the first motif in your solo. You can also use any interesting motif in the tune melody anywhere in your solo. The motifs you borrow can be varied and developed. For more on development tools, see Chapter 2F: *Melodic Development*.

✔ ***Exercise 1.37 Creating Motifs***

Varying a Motif

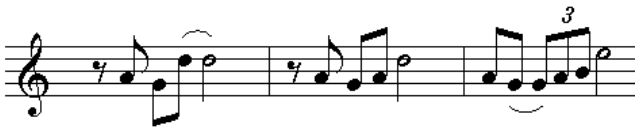
Too much repetition of a motif sounds boring, but playing too many different motifs too soon can confuse the listener. Getting a good balance between repetition and contrast is the key. Many players *avoid* repetition, thinking that more variety is more interest. That's the wrong answer: they throw away good motifs after playing them just once. Instead, try different *degrees* of variation, each with its own advantages.

Degrees of Variation

The basic degrees of variation are described below.

- *Exact repetition (no variation)* is best when the motif has strong interest, such as color tones or offbeat rhythms. One or two repetitions is fine; occasionally you can build long-term energy with many repetitions.
- *Slight variation* is subtle, gradual development. Although slight variation may not seem like an interesting concept, it's actually very powerful when used well. Most improvisers neglect slight variation in favor of more variation.
- *More variation* creates more melodic variety and develops the motif somewhat faster. This technique dominates some players' development; it should be used carefully.
- *Complete variation* (starting a new motif). This gives you a fresh start for a new motif and development. This is like starting a new paragraph of musical thought.

In this example, bar 2 varies slightly; bar 3 varies more:



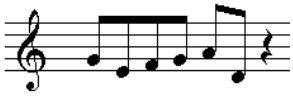
Original motif Slight variation More variation

In your solos, work for a balance between slight, more, and complete variation.

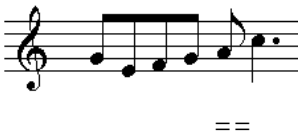
1.38 Varying Motifs

Several ways to vary motifs are:

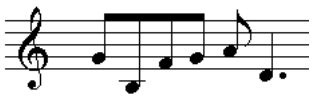
- Change the end of the motif. The end of the motif is usually the easiest the easiest part to remember, because it's followed by silence.
- Change a wider interval (usually surrounded by steps) by expanding it or shrinking it.
- Add an articulation or accent that stands out, such as a single staccato note.

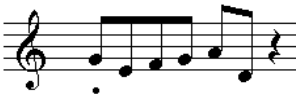


Example 1.38 - Original motif



Example 1.38a - Varying the ending





Example 1.38b - Varying an interval Example 1.38c - Varying articulation

For more ideas on changing motifs, see Chapter 2F: *Melodic Development*.

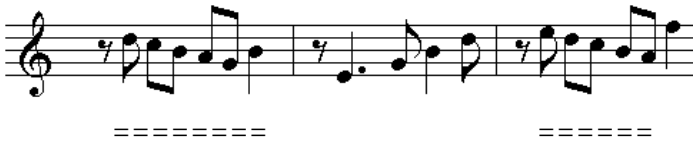
✔ ***Exercise 1.38 Varying Motifs***

1.39 Developing Earlier Motifs

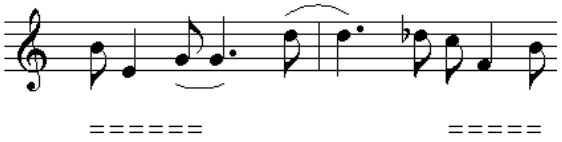
You can also develop all or part of an *earlier* motif, such as one you played several bars before. This technique is very effective, but it's usually neglected because we tend to throw away ideas that are more than one bar old. Too often we *forget* what we just played; this can seriously limit our solo development. I often think that a "little man with a broom" comes along in our brain, trying to erase anything more than one measure old. Don't let him!

You should constantly *visualize* and remember your contours, rhythms, and pitches. Then when you play something interesting, you'll remember and develop it.

The examples below develop earlier motifs (the motif and its development are more than one bar apart):



Example 1.39 – "Earlier motif" Developing the earlier motif



Example 1.39a – Another "earlier" motif Developing the earlier motif

✔ ***Exercise 1.39 Developing Earlier Motifs***

Creating Phrases

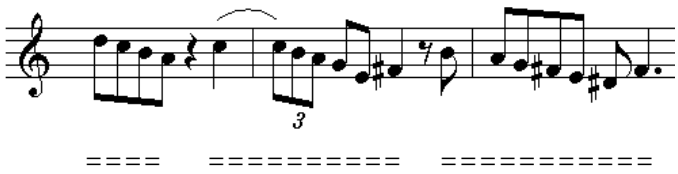
Music phrases are like phrases or sentences in writing. When you construct intelligent phrases in your solo, you tell a musical story; the phrases lend organization. This helps you avoid wandering around musically, and it gives you some guideposts to work with in constructing your solo. It also helps your listeners follow where your solo is going.

1.40 Phrase Types

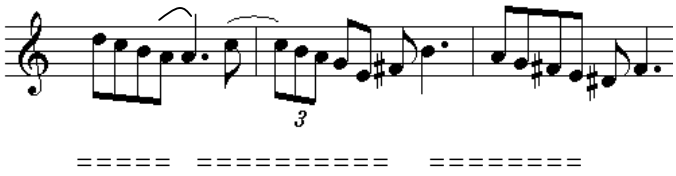
Besides being a single, long motif, a phrase can be:

- *Similar, separate* motifs, with a short rest after each
- A group of *joined* motifs; each end on a longer note

Each motif below has a similar shape. This helps the motifs fit together in the phrase.



Example 1.40 -Phrase of separate motifs

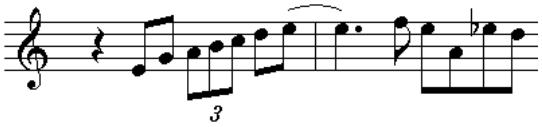


Example 1.40a -Phrase of joined motifs

✔ ***Exercise 1.40 Recognizing Phrases***

1.41 Connecting Motifs

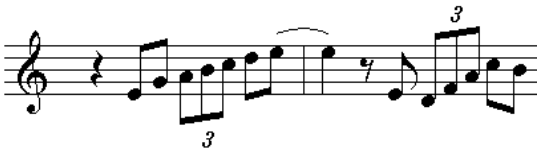
To smoothly connect motifs in a phrase, you can begin the next motif on a note that's on or near the ending note of the first motif. The ending and beginning notes "dovetail" together. The example below shows this, using two connected motifs, a half-step apart.



End, motif 1 ------- Start of motif 2

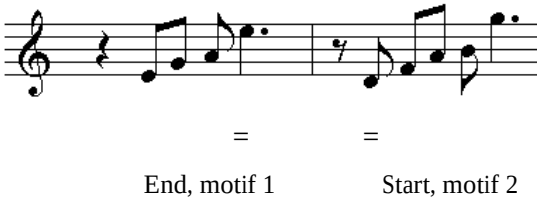
Example 1.41 - Motifs that dovetail

You can also start the 2nd motif an *octave* or *ninth* above or below the end of the first one. An octave sounds a lot like starting on the same note; a ninth sounds a lot like a step:



End, motif 1 ------- Start, motif 2

Example 1.41a - Motifs that dovetail: octave skip



End, motif 1 Start, motif 2

Example 1.41b - Motifs that dovetail: ninth skip

You should vary the amount of rest between any two motifs; don't always start the next motif two beats after the previous one ends, for example.

✔ ***Exercise 1.41 Connecting Motifs***

How to End Phrases

1.42 Your phrases should vary in length, ending in different spots in the bar. Make some phrases shorter than "comfortable" and some longer. Phrases should grow from simple to complex as your solo progresses.

Remember that the end of a phrase or motif creates a lasting impression; the silence after lets the listener reflect on what you just played. Ending a phrase looks easy on paper, but too often we end phrases weakly – the rhythm or pitch of the last note is not secure, or there are too many notes in the phrase. Ending a motif or phrase cleanly is like making a clean landing in gymnastics or finishing a fast break in basketball.

Here are some ideas to help you plan and end phrases:

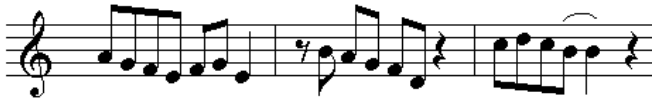
1) Think ahead. Clearly visualize the *end* of your phrase so it comes off cleanly.

2) Try ending with a staccato note, or a longer note with expression (vibrato, etc.), or a well-defined rhythm. Your last note should be as secure in pitch and rhythm as your first note.

3) Try to vary *where* in the bar you end the phrase.

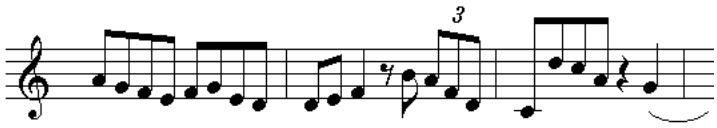
4) End before you're forced to end. Don't end a phrase just because you're out of breath, energy, or ideas; end when the music says it should end.

The worst habit is ending each motif near a barline and starting the next motif right away.



Example 1.42 - Bad habit: Ending every motif near a bar line

Instead, vary where you end your motifs.



Example 1.42a - Good habit: Ending motifs in a variety of places

✔ ***Exercise 1.42 Ending Phrases***

Economizing

When you closely analyze the notes you play in a motif or phrase, you may find extra "baggage" notes – notes that are easy to play but don't really add to the strength of the idea. To eliminate baggage, play shorter and stronger motifs, keeping SHAPE in mind. For examples of note economy, listen to Miles Davis' solos on the *Kind of Blue* CD.

Dealing with Silence

An adequate amount of silence in a solo is important, because it focuses attention on your motifs and phrases. Many improvisers feel like they should fill up every available moment with notes and not waste time by resting. This attitude leads to "urban sprawl" in solos – overcrowded, old and tired ideas, with little room to breathe. Good attention to silence can help you focus on SHAPE and get the most out of your musical ideas. It also gives the rhythms section time to interact with your ideas, creating a musical dialog. Before you work for dense, intense, and packed-to-the-gills solos, work for carefully balanced solos with breathing room and craftsmanship. (See also Chapter 4A: *Soundscapes*.)

Eliminating Phrase Barriers

1.43 Phrase Barriers

Sometimes when you create phrases, you hit a mental barrier, and your ideas seem to crash. Below are some common problems that create phrase barriers, along with solutions.

Problem 1: I keep stopping at new barlines.

Solution: Learn to play *through* barlines. Stop just after beat one or in the middle of a bar, rather than always at the end of a bar.

Problem 2: A chord symbol changes while I'm in the middle of a phrase.

Solution: You'll learn about how to connect between chord symbols in Chapter 3B: *Melodic Connections*. The contours and rhythms of your phrase shouldn't be controlled by the chords; the chords should naturally fit into your phrases.

Problem 3: I can play complex ideas in easy keys, but I have to play simple ideas in the harder keys.

Solution: Spend extra time on scales and arpeggios in the more difficult keys. Also, try developing a simple idea (fewer and slower notes) from an easy chord to a harder chord. Ideas can get prematurely complicated in easy keys.

Problem 4: I run out of breath or make a mistake.

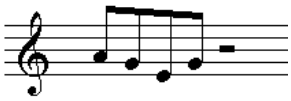
Solution: Shorten some motifs (especially keyboardists and guitarists). Horn players can work on breath control to play longer phrases. If you make a mistake, don't just stop; maybe you can use the "wrong" note as part of your next idea.

✔ ***Exercise 1.43 Working Through Phrase Barriers***

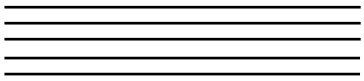
Development Exercises, Level 1

The exercises below help you practice what you've learned about variations and phrase connections. For more practice, you can create and develop your own motifs on separate sheets of music paper.

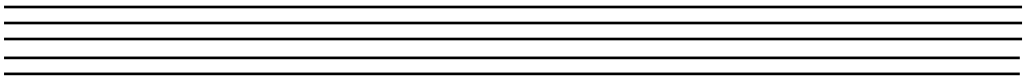
Motif 1



Original motif



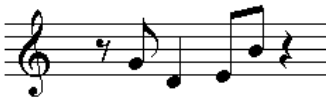
Slight variation



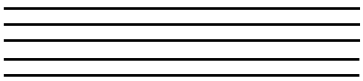
More variation

Connect to a new motif

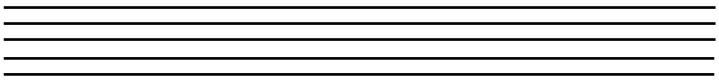
Motif 2



Original motif



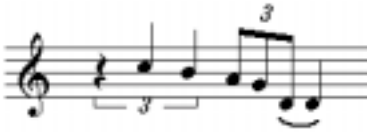
Slight variation



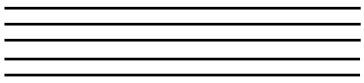
More variation

Connect to a new motif

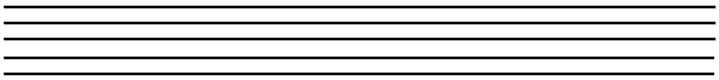
Motif 3



Original motif



Slight variation



More variation

Connect to a new motif

Chapter Review

1) Development is the art of repeating or varying motifs to build ideas in a solo. There are parallels between classical development and development in jazz improvisation.
2) A motif is a group of consecutive notes forming a short musical idea.
3) A motif can be repeated, changed a little, changed more, or completely changed.
4) In a motif, it's easiest to remember the ending, wide intervals, articulations, or accents.
5) A phrase is a group of one or more separate or joined motifs.
6) To smoothly connect motifs, start the next motif on the same pitch, a step above or below, or a ninth above or below the end of the previous phrase.
7) Use a variety of phrase lengths; don't always end phrases in the same spots.
8) Economizing on phrases and eliminating phrase barriers helps you create more interesting melodies.

Expressions

*Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in. *Henry David Thoreau*

*However skillful an artist may be, and however perfect his technique, if he unhappily has nothing to tell us, his work is valueless. *Jacques Maritain*

*The object of art is to crystallize emotion into thought, and then fix it in form. *Delsarte*

*Would that we could at once paint with the eyes! -- In the long way from the eye through the arm to the pencil, how much is lost! *Lessing*

*There are many great truths which we do not deny, and which nevertheless we do not fully believe. *J.W. Alexander*

*Some books are to be tasted; others swallowed; and some few to be chewed and digested. *Bacon*

*Man's mind stretched to a new idea never goes back to its original dimensions. *Oliver Wendell Holmes*

*All experience is an arch, to build upon. *Henry Adams*

*The greatest pleasure in life is doing what people say you cannot do. *Walter Bageho*

1G: Chords, Keys, and Progressions

In this chapter you'll learn about:

- Chords in Major Keys
- Recognizing Keys in Chord Progressions
- The Basic Blues
- Using Blues Scales
- ii-V-I Progressions
- Simplifying Chord Progressions

A chord progression is the harmonic backbone that runs through a tune. A progression can be divided into smaller parts, each of which is a smaller chord progression. As you handle different chord progressions, you can apply what you've learned about melody, rhythm, expression, and development, no matter what the chords are.

To work with chord progressions you need to:

- Understand how Roman numerals work in a key.
- Recognize the chords in a key.
- Know how to simplify chords within a key.

Chords in Major Keys

Each key contains seven diatonic chords, one for each of the seven tones of the scale. We can label these chords with *Roman numerals* to show how the chords relate to each other in the key. For example, the chord built on the first note (root) of a major key is I, the chord built on the second degree is ii, etc., up to vii for the 7th degree. Uppercase Roman numerals (such as I) are used for major or dominant chords, while lowercase Roman numerals (such as ii) are used for minor chords.

1.44 Using Roman Numerals in a Key

The example below shows chords built on each scale tone of C Major, along with the corresponding Roman numerals. The vii chord is *diminished*, which means it is a 1 b3 b5 chord (the º indicates diminished).

CMa7	Dmi7	Emi7	FMa7	G7	Am7	Bº7
I	ii	iii	IV	V	vi	viiº

Example 1.44 - Roman numerals for chords in C Major

The first line of the example below shows a typical chord progression in C Major; the second line shows the same chord progression in the key of E Major; the third line shows the Roman numerals for each.

CMa7	Am7	Dm7	G7	CMa7	||
(EMa7	C#m7	F#m7	B7	EMa7)	||
I	vi	ii	V	I	

Example 1.44a - A chord progression in C Major and E Major

✔ *Try It: Using Roman Numerals*

Write Roman numerals for these progressions: #1 is in G Major; #2 is in E Major.

1. GMa7 | Em7 | Am7 | D7 | Bm7
2. G#m7 | C#m7 | F#m7 | B7 | Ema7

✔ *Exercise 1.44 Using Roman Numerals*

Recognizing Keys in Chord Progressions

When you learn a new chord progression you need to recognize what *key* the progression is in. This helps you simplify the progression and hear chord relationships. Sometimes it's easy to find the key in a progression. With more complicated chord progressions that modulate (change keys), there may be multiple keys.

1.45 Tips for Recognizing Keys

Here are some tips for recognizing the key in a chord progression that doesn't modulate:

- Check the key signature in the tune, if any; it usually indicates the home key.
- Find a major chord and see if it's the I chord. If it's not, it may be the IV chord.
- Look for a minor chord to see if it's a ii chord. If it's not, it may be the vi chord.

✔ *Try It: Recognizing Keys*

Name the likely key for each chord progression below. Answers are in *Chapter Review*.

1) Em7 Am7 | Dm7 G7 | CMa

2) BbMa7 | Gm7 Cm7 | F7

✔ *Exercise 1.45 Recognizing Keys*

The Basic Blues

The 12-bar blues is one of the most common, essential chord progressions in jazz. To be a good improviser, you must master the basic blues and its variations.

1.46 Blues Structure

There are many variations of the 12-bar blues. A common version is shown below in the key of C, with Roman numerals below each measure.

| C7 | F7 | C7 | C7 | (Section 1)
I IV I I

| F7 | F7 | C7 | C7 | (Section 2)
IV IV I I

| G7 | G7 | C7 | C7 || (Section 3)
V V I I

Example 1.46 - Basic 12-bar blues progression

The blues is divided into three sections of four bars each. In the example above, section 1 is mostly the root chord (I). Section 2 begins on the IV chord (F7 in C blues). *The IV chord is an important anchor point in the blues structure*; almost all blues have a IV chord in bar 5. Section 3 begins on the V and resolves to the I chord.

Visualizing and memorizing these three sections of the basic blues helps you stay with the chords and create better solos. The blues form is 12 bars, not 16, so it may take you a while to adjust to the length if you're new to the blues.

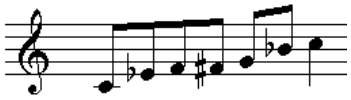
✔ *Exercise 1.46 Blues Progressions in All Keys*

Using Blues Scales

The *blues scale* is useful in blues progressions as well as dominant or minor chords. The same blues scale can be used for an *entire* blues progression; for example, a C blues scale works for all chords in a C blues progression. But don't overuse the blues scale; some improvisers rely on it so much they can do little else. You should use flexible, creative blues scales.

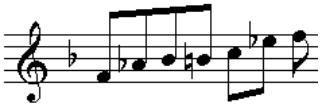
1.47 Spelling the 12 Blues Scales

Compared to major, the blues scale pitches are 1, b3, 4, #4, 5, and b7 (6 different pitches). Two blues scale examples are shown below; Exercise 1.47 spells blues scales in all 12 keys.



1 b3 4 #4 5 b7 8

Example 1.47 - C blues scale



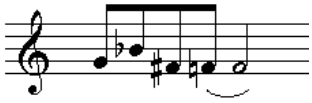
1 b3 4 #4 5 b7 8

Example 1.47a - F blues scale

✔ *Exercise 1.47 Spelling Blues Scales*

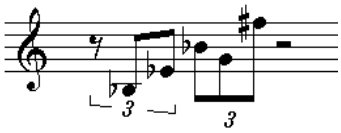
1.48 Practicing Flexible Blues Scales

You can practice flexible blues scales around the circle of 4ths. As do, add your own skips and rhythmic variations; that will greatly increase the variety of what you play in a blues. Some sample blues variations are shown below (key of C):



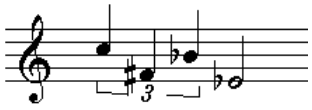
5 b7 #4 4

Example 1.48 - Blues idea #1



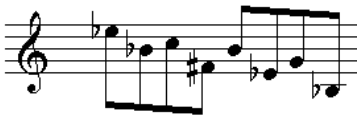
b7 b3 b7 5 #4

Example 1.48a - Blues idea #2



1 #4 b7 b3

Example 1.48b - Blues idea #3



b3 b7 1#4 b7 b3 5 b7

Example 1.45c - Blues idea #4

✔ ***Exercise 1.48 Humming Blues Scales***

Avoiding Common Blues Scale Problems

Here are some tips to avoid blues scales problems:

- Don't overuse the blues scale in dominant chords; use Mixolydian and pentatonic, too.
- Don't hold out the natural 4 too often; resolve it to the b3 or go up to the #4.
- Don't emphasize the following *home key* notes: #4 against the IV or V (F# against F7 or G7); 1 against the V (C against G7); and b7 against the IV (Bb against F7).

ii-V-I Progressions

The ii-V-I progression is one of the most important chord progressions in jazz.

1.49 Building a ii-V-I Progression

The V to I is the basic "dominant to tonic" resolution; it goes up a fourth, which is a strong chord movement. So when you use a ii-V-I progression, the chords move up by a fourth *twice* – from the ii to the V, and from the V to the I (such as Dmi to G7 to CMa7 in the key of C). (Chapter 3F: *Dominant Alterations* discusses ii-V-i's in *minor* keys.)

A ii-V-I progression often occurs in one of these ways:

- One bar per chord, such as: | Dm7 | G7 | CMa7
- The ii and V in one bar : | Dm7 G7 | CMa7

The ii is often a minor 7 chord, so it's really a ii7 (we'll just call it a ii). Sometimes the ii is a II7 (dominant 7); then it works like the ii chord but with more energy.

✔ ***Exercise 1.49 Writing ii-V-I Progressions***

1.50 Prefacing a ii-V-I

You can insert a vi chord before a ii-V-I, making a vi-ii-V-I progression. The vi moves up to the ii by a fourth, so there are three 4th-movements in a row: vi-ii, ii-V, and V-I. To make an even longer chain of 4ths, you can use a iii-vi-ii-v-I (3-6-2-5-1) or vii-iii-ii-V-I (7-3-6-2-5-1). That progression actually sounds better with every other chord as a dominant, such as:

CMa7	B7	| Em7	A7	| Dm7	G7	| CMa7
I	VII7	| iii	VI7	| ii	V	| I

Example 1.50 - ii-V-I with a preface of VII-iii-vi

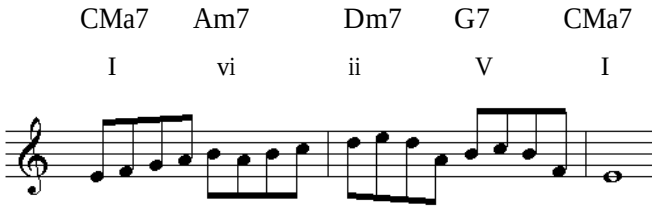
✔ ***Exercise 1.50 Prefacing ii-V-I Progressions***

Simplifying Chord Progressions

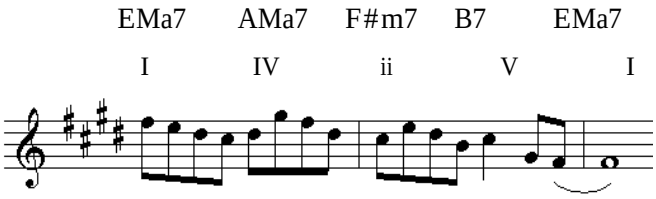
When you see several consecutive chords belonging to the *same key*, you can improvise on all of them with a *single scale*. For example, Dm7 and CMa7 belong to the key of C Major, so they share notes. A C Major scale works for *both* the chords. This means fewer chords to worry about, so you navigate the progression more easily. However, simplifying progressions does have some disadvantages, as explained later.

1.51 Practice for Simplifying Chords

In the first example below, all the chords belong to the key of C, so the notes of a C Major scale can be used for the entire progression. In the second example, all the chords belong to the key of E, so an E Major scale works for the entire progression.



Example 1.51 - Chord progression with C Major flexible scale



Example 1.51a - Chord progression with E Major melody

You can also play a single flexible scale across all three chords in a ii-V-I progression. For example, with a Dmi to G7 to CMa7 progression, you can play just C Major (the I chord scale), or just D Dorian (the ii chord scale), or just G Mixolydian (the V chord scale). The most common choices to use across the ii-V-I are the I scale or the ii scale.

✔ ***Exercise 1.51 Simplifying Chord Progressions***

Disadvantages of Simplifying

Simplifying helps you get through ii-V-I's more easily, but there's a trade-off. When you simplify, you miss some of the more colorful tones, like the raised 7th of the ii chord (C# in D minor), or the #4 of the I chord, or dominant alterations (explained in Chapter 3F).

So, *don't simplify chord progressions too often*; that limits the harmonic strength of your ideas. Simplifying is most useful when you're seeing the progression for the first time, or you're still getting use to it, or you're playing a strong but simple rhythmic idea. After that, you should try to hear and play each chord separately.

Chapter Review

1) You can use Roman numerals to designate how each chord belongs to a key.
2) Three ways to recognize the key of a chord progression are:
   A) Check the key signature of the tune.
   B) Look for a major chord that might be the I chord or IV chord.
   C) Look for a minor chord that might start the ii-V-I of the key.
3) Chords that belong to a single key can be simplified by playing a I scale over them all.
4) Simplifying chords too often loses color tones and limits harmonic strength in solos.

Answers for the Try-It Exercise: 1) C Major; 2) Bb Major

1H: The Jazz Group

In this chapter you'll learn about:

- Group Performance Skills
- Rhythm Section Roles
- The Tune Melody

Note: This chapter discusses basic skills and roles necessary in an improvising jazz group. For more details on skills and techniques, see the *Rhythm Section Techniques* chapter.

Regardless of what instrument you play, you should understand the basic role of each type of instrument in a jazz group. This helps you support each member in the group and solve musical problems that arise.

This chapter assumes a basic group of a horn, a chord instrument (keyboards or guitar), a bass, and drums. Many other combinations are possible; each places different demands on the players. For more on playing in different group sizes, see Chapter 4G: *Group Interaction*.

Group Performance Skills

The musical success of your jazz group depends on how well the players:

- Play solidly in time
- Use balance and dynamics
- Read and interpret chords
- Work with styles and rhythmic ideas
- Interact and use teamwork

Each individual in the group has his own responsibility (see *Rhythm Section Roles* below).

Time

Although most people think it's the drummer's job to keep time in the group, it's really *everyone's* job. From the opening count-off to the end of the tune, the time should remain stable in the group. To improve the overall sense of time in your group, try these exercises:

1) One person counts off a tempo (with or without a silent metronome). Everyone silently counts an agreed-upon number of bars and comes in together on the downbeat, with no visual cues. This helps the group get a common sense of tempo.
2) While you play a tune together, be suddenly silent for a few pre-determined bars, then re-enter together in tempo. Hear your part and the time during the silence.
3) Have a soloist play a 2-bar or 4-bar solo break, with the rhythm section entering in time after the break.

Balance and Dynamics

Problems with group dynamics and balance can be annoying, but they're usually easy to fix.

- Get a good sound check before each rehearsal and performance. A poorly balanced group seldom plays good dynamics in tunes..
- Always be aware of your own volume as you play.

- Vary your dynamics to create expression.
- Don't overplay, and don't fill every available space. Part of the beauty of jazz is changing musical textures.

Chord Reading

Everyone in the group should be comfortable reading and playing the chord symbols in the tune. So far we've discussed major, dominant, and minor chords; in later chapters you'll learn about other chord types such as diminished and altered dominants. Your group should be able to *act* on the chords rather than *reacting* to them. Keyboard and guitar players playing together should coordinate chord playing to avoid conflicts in rhythms and voicings.

Styles and Rhythmic Ideas

Each player should master the basic styles of swing and latin, as well as ballad, rock, and fusion. Listening to recordings of these styles is essential (see Chapter 2C: *Swing Rhythms* and Chapter 3C: *Fusion and Latin Styles*).

Your group should also be alive with rhythmic ideas that feed group interaction and teamwork. For more details on doing this, see Chapter 1D: *Rhythmic Variety*, Chapter 2D: *Three and Four*, and Chapter 3E: *Rhythmic Development*.

Interaction and Teamwork

As your group creates motifs and rhythms, each player should listen carefully to how these ideas influence the music being played. You can copy, change, or just hear any interesting idea played in the group. Don't overdo imitation – keep it subtle and flexible.

With practice, your group can become much more than just a group of people playing the same tune. Teamwork in a jazz group teaches communication, leadership, and a balance of risk and safety. For more on interacting musically, see Chapter 4F: *Group Interaction*.

Rhythm Section Roles

Each individual should understand his or her role very well and the other roles in the group reasonably well. Individual roles in a rhythm section are the chords, the bass, and the drums.

The Chords

Here are some basic issues chord players in a group should consider:

- *Voicings* usually leave out the root (the bass usually plays it).
- *Chord comping* should use interesting rhythms (see Chapter 1D: *Rhythmic Variety*).
- *Fills* should be simple, complementing the soloist's ideas.
- *Sound and silence* should be well-balanced.

The Bass

In the swing style, bass lines use a "walking" pattern of mostly quarter-notes. The root is played on the downbeat of each chord, and the other beats are usually chord arpeggios. The last beat before a new chord can be a whole-step or half-step away from the root of that chord. (For ideas on connecting chords, see Chapter 3B: *Melodic Connections*.)

Swing bass lines can grow to be quite artful, including offbeats, color tones, triplets, wide intervals, 3 against 4, etc. They can also revolve around half-notes (half-time) or eighth-notes (double-time), or even use a wide range of rhythms ("running bass").

In fusion, latin, and ballads, the bass plays rhythmic figures that revolve around the root of the chord. For more ideas, see Chapter 3C: *Fusion and Latin Styles.*

The Drums

Once the group has a solid sense of time, the drummer should be free to play offbeats, triplets, and other rhythmic figures to energize the music. The drummer should also use a range of sound colors, mixing drum and cymbal sounds. When the group trades solos, or after a drum solo, the time and the entrances should be solid.

The Tune Melody

The horn player, if there is one, typically plays the tune melody, but rhythm section players (chords or bass) may join in or occasionally may take over the melody. If you're the melody player, keep these points in mind:

- *Balance*: Make sure your melody can be heard just above the rest of the group.
- *Memorization*: Whenever possible, memorize the melody so you can play it freely; you can still keep a copy of the music handy for reference. Memorizing the tune lets you focus on the group sound, as well as changing a few pitches in your melody for variety.
- *Rhythms*: Your rhythms should be solid and accurate. If the tune has easier rhythms, you can take a few liberties with them (see Chapter 1D: *Rhythmic Variety* for ideas).
- *Expression*: A few well-timed changes in dynamics, articulations, and accents can boost the expression level in the melody, especially in slower tunes.

The tune melody can give you some development ideas for your improvised solo later on. (See also *Handling the Tune Melody* in Chapter 2H: *Preparing Concert Material*.)

Tune Melodies on the BRIDJJ CD

The tune melodies on the BRIDJJ CD "Beat the Rats" were played anywhere from note-for-note to fairly loose, compared to the original sheet music:

- *Note-for-note*: The complex melodies in "Deja Blue" and "Tastes Like Chicken" are played as written.
- *Slight variations*: "Beat the Rats" has a few trills added; "Precious Caboose" has a few grace notes; and "Where's Waldis" has almost three bars of the second-time melody replaced by a long trumpet glissando. "Barney Meets Godzilla" and Three and Me" are mostly note for note, except that both tunes have improv fills embedded in the melody.
- *More variations*: "I Think I'll Keep Her" is a ballad with grace notes, flexible rhythms, and some improvised pitches not on the original lead sheet.

Chapter Review

1) Important skills in a jazz group are time, balance and dynamics, chord reading, styles and rhythmic ideas, and interaction and teamwork.
2) The basic rhythm section roles are chords, bass, and drums.
3) The tune melody player should get a good dynamic balance with the other players and demonstrate imagination in pitches, rhythms, and expression when playing the melody.

1J: Analyzing Solos

In this chapter you'll learn about:

- Evaluating Your Own Solos
- Four Goals for Improving Your Solos
- Analyzing Other Artists' Solos

It's tough to solo in a "vacuum" – you need accurate *feedback* about your solos on a regular basis. It's nice to have a teacher or friend listen to you and offer advice, but usually you're on your own for improvements. This chapter helps you analyze and improve your own solos.

Note: Chapter 2J: *Analyzing Written Solos* offers tips on analyzing written (transcribed) solos. Chapter 4A: *Soundscapes* discusses ways to analyze your solos for intensity, texture, density, etc.

Evaluating Your Own Solos

To effectively analyze your own solos, you need to record them on tape while you practice or perform. Even *thinking* about recording yourself can be uncomfortable at first, but a recorded solo gives you a better picture of how well you're soloing.

Creating, Then Criticizing

There are two separate processes you need to follow: first, you need to freely create as you improvise; then you need to constructively criticize what you hear on the recording. These processes must be *separated* in your mind; don't be critical as you create, and be specific and helpful with the criticisms. Was the problem seeing the shape or playing it? *Why* something was strong or weak? *Four Goals for Improving Your Solos* shows you how to do this.

Four Goals for Improving Your Solos

To improve your solos, set your own objectives in one or more of the areas below, or review the *Exercises for Level 1* section for ideas:

- *Melody*: Choose pitches that fit the current chord or scale and include color tones.
- *Rhythm*: Combine downbeats and offbeats into interesting rhythms. Keep the time secure.
- *Expression*: Combine dynamics, accents, and articulations occasionally and effectively.
- *Development*: Create and vary short motifs.

You can also use any of the concepts you've learned in the text or *Exercises* section of this book. It's best to focus on just a few objectives at a time.

Important: As you retry a solo for improvements, don't memorize and play the same solo again. Instead, see new motifs or phrases, carefully noting problems and your solutions. Then find new ways to use what you learned in your next solo.

1.52 Practicing for Melody

1 Choose a basic chord progression to solo against.

2 Concentrate on melody. Play *one* solo chorus and record it. Choose pitches that fit the chords and scales, use SHAPE, and emphasize color tones from time to time.

3 Listen carefully to the recorded solo and give yourself a score from 1 to 10 in each of these areas:

- Sound quality
- Playing in tune
- Accuracy of attacks on pitches
- Notes that fit the chords
- Use of color tones

✔ ***Exercise 1.52 Practicing for Melody***

Important: As you learn melodic techniques in later chapters (scales, fills, patterns, connections, outside playing, etc.) include them in your melody analysis.

1.53 Practicing for Rhythm

Use the steps in *Practicing for Melody* above, concentrating on *rhythm*. Choose rhythms that:

- Are secure and accurate
- Mix downbeats and offbeats effectively
- Get a balance between longer and shorter values.

Identify any weak rhythmic spots in your recording and play over them again to improve the solo. Remember: the idea isn't to memorize a perfect solution, but to see how to improve *this particular solo*.

As you practice with a recording or live group, always be aware of how well you're staying with the tempo. Avoid slowing down or speeding up in your rhythms.

Also remember what you learned while practicing for melody. When you practice for rhythm, your rhythms will depend on good melodic note choices.

✔ ***Exercise 1.53 Practicing for Rhythm***

Important: As you learn rhythmic techniques in later chapters (swing, 3 against 4, rhythmic development, etc.) include them in your rhythmic analysis.

1.54 Practicing for Expression

To concentrate on *expression*, pay close attention to:

- Dynamic range and changing dynamics
- Accents
- Articulations

- Control of sound and technique

Identify any spots in your recording where the notes or phrases sound somewhat stiff or dull; these might be good spots to add a little expression. Remember: the idea isn't to memorize a perfect solution, but to improve *this solo*. Also, remember and apply what you learned while practicing for rhythm and melody.

About Sound and Technique

An important part of expression is your control over *sound* and *technique*. Here are some areas to consider:

- *Clear tone*. Your tone doesn't have to be classically beautiful, but it should be secure and in tune.
- *Clear attacks*. Each attack should be coordinated with air (for wind players) and fingers/hands. The attacks can range from smooth slurs to hard accents.
- *Flexibility and strength*. You need enough flexibility of air, fingers, etc. to make the music flow easily, and enough strength to support higher, faster, or louder passages.

A good classical foundation in sound and technique can be very helpful. However, remember that jazz uses different vibrato, more exaggerated expression, and a looser rhythmic feel compared to classical music.

Your choice of instrument and equipment (reeds, mouthpiece, strings, amps, etc) can also make a big difference in your overall sound. Find the combination that gives you the best quality and ease of sound.

✔ ***Exercise 1.54 Practicing for Expression***

1.55 Practicing for Development

To practice *development*, follow these steps:

- Control the start, end, and length of each motif.
- Move from slight contrast to more contrast.
- Connect some motifs into phrases.
- Vary where phrases end in the bar.

Identify any weak development spots in your recording and improve them. Also remember what you learned while practicing for melody and rhythm. The developments you use will depend on good melodic and rhythmic note choices.

✔ ***Exercise 1.55 Practicing for Development***

Important: As you learn development techniques in later chapters (phrases, expanding and shrinking intervals, rhythmic development, etc.) include them in your analysis when you practice for development.

Analyzing Other Artists' Solos

You can use the concepts in this chapter to analyze solos of other jazz improvisers, whether live, on audio, or on video. As you listen to their solos, ask yourself:

1) *Why did they play what they did?* Does it make good sense in the context of the solo? Are they developing ideas, or are they just wandering through the music?

2) *What motifs and phrases were particularly interesting and why?* Check out their use of color tones, contours, small or large variations, etc.

3) *Are chords and flexible scales used well?* Does the performer know where he/she is in the progression?

4) *Is the solo rhythmically alive?* Are rhythms secure and interesting? Is there rhythmic action in the group?

5) *How would you play it differently?* Often you can identify a phrase or idea that doesn't come off cleanly or effectively. Try to sing, hum, or visualize the notes that you would use to improve it.

Chapter Review

1) You can improve your solos in melody, rhythm, expression, and development.
2) Record your solos and listen to them to find strengths and weaknesses.
3) Your melodies should fit the chords, using color tones when appropriate.
4) Your rhythms should be secure, should mix downbeats and offbeats, and should use variety.
5) Your expression should use dynamics, accents, and articulations with imagination and taste, with a secure foundation in sound and technique.
6) Your developments should use secure motifs that move from slight contrast to more contrast.
7) When you listen to other artists' solos, analyze their overall use of musical elements.

Expressions

*Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in. *Henry David Thoreau*

*Be not afraid of greatness: some are born great, some achieve greatness and some have greatness thrust upon 'em. *Shakespeare*

*It takes two to speak the truth -- one to speak, and another to hear. *Henry David Thoreau*

*Many can argue; not many converse. *Bronson Alcott*

*It is better to have less thunder in the mouth and more lightning in the hand. *Cheyenne Chief*

*Grasp the subject, the words will follow. *Cato*

*A man that has a taste of music, painting, or architecture, is like one that has another sense, when compared with such as have no relish of those arts. *Joseph Addison*

*It is no great thing to be humble when you are brought low, but to be humble when you are praised is a great attainment. *St. Bernard*

*You would be surprised at the number of years it took me to see clearly what some of the problems were which had to be solved ... looking back, I think it was more difficult to see what the problems were than to solve them. *Charles Darwin*

Rhythm Section Techniques

This chapter is an introduction to the basic techniques needed in the jazz rhythm section for playing tunes and accompanying solos. It covers these topics:

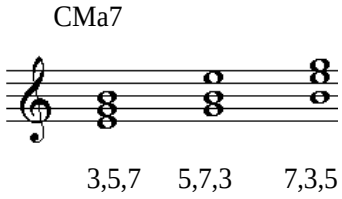
- Chord Techniques
- Bass Techniques
- Drumset Techniques
- Variety and Interaction

For more information on chord, bass, or drumset techniques, refer to published study methods for those instruments, at a local music store or on the Internet.

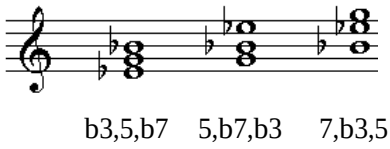
Chord Techniques

Chord Inversions

When you comp (play) chords, you should generally leave out the root note – the bass player usually plays it somewhere in the measure. This means that you should play chord inversions that have the 3, 7, or 5 on the bottom. Examples of a Major 7 chord are shown below (inversions also work the same for minor and dominant chords):



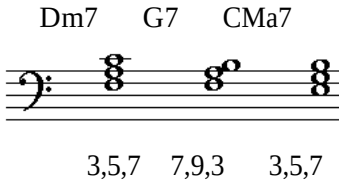
Example A) - Major 7 chord inversions

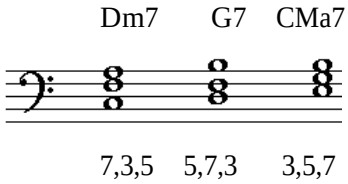


Example A1) - Minor 7 chord inversions

Chord Voicings for Left Hand

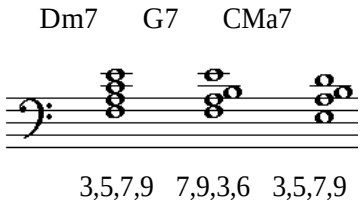
A chord voicing is a chord inversion played in one or both hands. Here are some left-hand voicings for a ii-V-I progression with smooth movement between notes (a 9 is used on the dominant chord) :

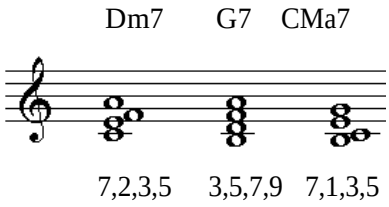




Example B - 3-note voicings, C Major ii-V-I

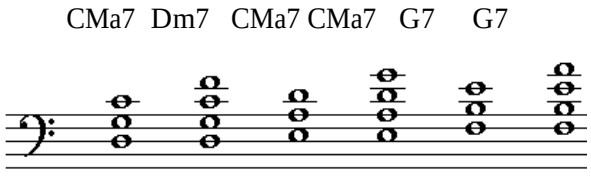
You can also voice chords with four notes:





Example C - 4-note voicings for ii-V-I in C Major

Or, you can voice chords by stacking intervals of *fourths*. This gives a more open but less directional sound.



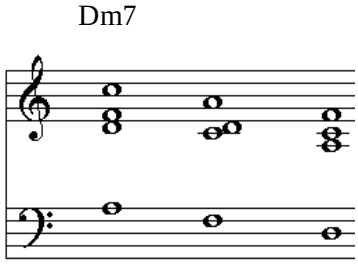
Example D - Voicings in fourths in C Major

By using voicings in just the left hand, your right hand is free to rest, add fill notes, or solo. This is a more flexible and useful approach to chording.

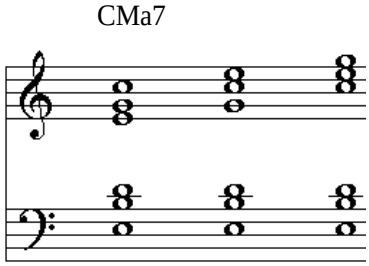
Chord Voicings for Two Hands

When you voice chords in both hands, be sure you don't

just copy the left-hand voicings to the right hand. Instead, work for a full sound of unduplicated notes. You can drop one or more notes in the chord an octave.



Example E - 2-hand voicings in D Minor



Example E1 - 2-hand voicings in C Major

Keyboard and Guitar Styles on the BRIDJJ CD

Here are some of the chord styles played by the piano and guitar on the BRIDJJ CD:

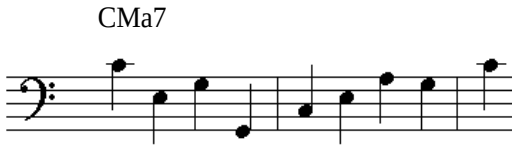
- *Deja Blue*: Overdubbed guitar comping (two guitars with different sound settings). Harmonic "pings" in the melody (along with bass). Rhythm-and-blues note bends in the guitar solo.
- *Beat the Rats*: Synthesizer "bed" (sustained background) behind melodies. Keyboard alternates between melody and background. Guitar solo has a very edgy sound.
- *I Think I'll Keep Her*: Guitar sustain with pedal effects. Guitar and keyboards balance comping.
- *Tastes Like Chicken*: Nylon-string, jazz guitar sounds.
- *Barney Meets Godzilla*: Guitar occassionally shifts comping rhythms. Acoustic piano sound. Rock guitar sound in solo.
- *Three and Me*: Floating 3/4 figures throughout.
- *Precious Caboose*: Keyboard plays wild figure in octaves on the interludes. Keyboard and guitar switch off comping during solos; interesting textures are created.
- *Where's Waldis*: Nylon-string guitar sound throughout; montuno melody in guitar and keyboard behind drum solo.

Note: In a rhythm section w/ 2 chord players, make sure they cooperate, not compete (see *Precious Caboose* above).

Building a Walking Bass Line

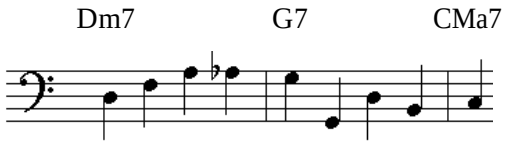
The walking bass line is the backbone for swing rhythms. Here are some basic guidelines for walking bass lines:

1) Use mostly quarter-notes that emphasize the 1, 3, and 5 of the current chord.
2) Play the 1 on the downbeat of most new measures, especially when there's a new chord.
3) Play the 5 or another connecting note on beat 4 of most measures. Connecting tones are up or down a whole-step or half-step.



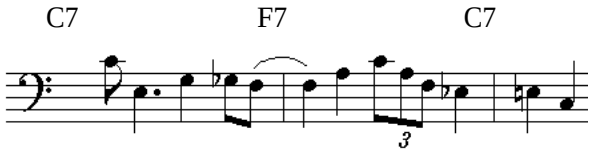
Example F - Walking bass line; 1 (root) on each beat 1, and 5 (dominant) on each beat 4

The example below connects to each new chord from a half-step above or below the new root.



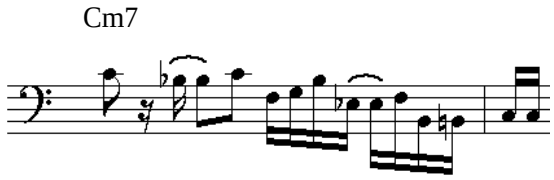
Example G - Walking bass line that connects by half-steps

For variety, you can occasionally use other rhythms in the bass line:



Example H - Walking bass line with other rhythms

Fusion bass lines are much freer with rhythms; they use many combinations of 16th-notes, 8th-notes, and rests. The example below is an active fusion bass line; some fusion bass rhythms are less active but still interesting.



Example I - Fusion bass line

For examples of fusion bass lines, listen to the bass part in the funk solos of *Barney Meets Godzilla* on the BRIDJJ CD.

Bass Styles on the BRIDJJ CD

Here are some of the bass styles on the BRIDJJ CD:

- *Deja Blue*: Ñanigo (12/8 pattern) in the introduction. Staccato punches, walking bass, double-time walking, and harmonic "pings" in the melody (along with guitar). Walking bass behind solos.
- *Beat the Rats*: Written figures behind the melody; "partido alto" figures (see Chapter 3C) behind solos.
- *I Think I'll Keep Her*: Easy ballad playing with some pop/rock figures behind the melody. Inventive fills with triplets and other rhythms behind solos.
- *Tastes Like Chicken*: Country-western bass patterns with some twists.
- *Barney Meets Godzilla*: Dotted-quarter figures in introduction; walking bass, ñanigo, and figures in the melody; walking and funk behind solos.
- *Three and Me*: Floating 3/4 figures (4 against 3) throughout.
- *Precious Caboose*: "Insane" and normal figures in the introduction, after solos, and in the ending; walking bass in the rest of the tune.
- *Where's Waldis*: Samba (latin style), some walking bass in the melody.

Drumset Techniques

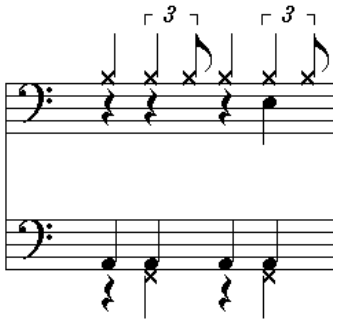
If you're new to jazz drumming, here are some basic points to keep in mind as you play time behind a solo:

1) Your playing should be enough to define rhythms and styles, but light enough to stay flexible and creative.
2) Keep your rhythms and fills oriented to *offbeats*, not downbeats. This is especially important in swing.
3) Emphasize your cymbal work, but go lightly on the snare and especially light on the bass drum. "Feather" the bass drum so it's *felt* more than heard.

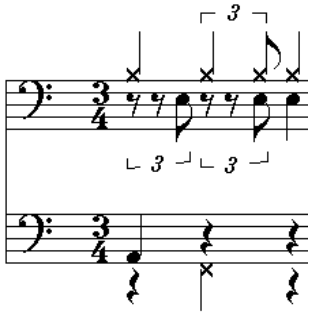
Basic Drum Styles

Here are some basic rhythmic styles and rhythms to use. Line 1=ride cymbal; 2=snare; 3=bass drum; 4=hi-hat.

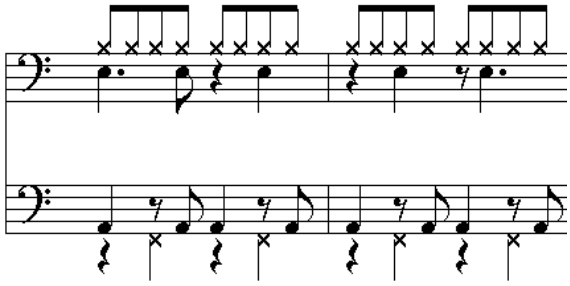
4/4 Swing:



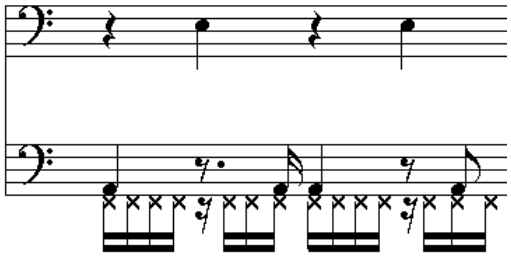
Waltz (3/4 Swing):



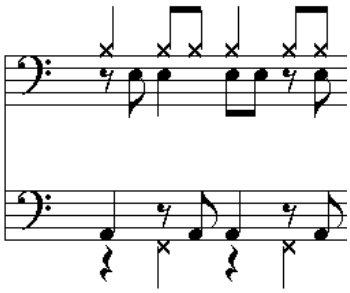
Bossa nova (latin):



Samba (latin):



Jazz-Rock:



Jazz ballad style uses a two-hand brush tremolo on snare (occasional cymbal), with no bass drum, and with the hi-hat closed on beats 2 and 4.

Drum Styles on the BRIDJJ CD

Here are some of the drum styles on the BRIDJJ CD:

- *Deja Blue*: Ñanigo (12/8 pattern) in the introduction; staccato punches, regular & double-time swing in the melody; swing & fills behind solos; cymbal colors and decrescendo after last solo; strong fill into ñanigo.
- *Beat the Rats*: Written figures behind the melody; loud rim shot; wild fills on ending vamp.
- *I Think I'll Keep Her*: Extensive cymbal work.
- *Barney Meets Godzilla*: Free solo in introduction.
- *Three and Me*: Floating 3/4 figures throughout.
- *Precious Caboose*: Insane and normal figures in introduction and ending; mix of floating and driving swing backgrounds.
- *Where's Waldis*: Samba, with solo over montuno (Chapter 3C*: Fusion and Latin Styles*).

Variety and Interaction

Once your group masters the basic jazz styles, the next challenge is to use variety and interaction to create a *conversational* background behind the soloist.

Individual Variety

Each individual player should become an expert at using variety to keep his/her part interesting. Below are some methods to try (see also Chapter 4C: *Special Effects*).

- *Bass*: Repeat a rhythmic figure every bar or two bars; use "pedal" (repeat the same pitch for several bars); play fills at the ends of phrases; try offbeat attacks and ties across barlines; use effects such as slides, twangs, and chords.
- *Chords*: Use any of the bass methods above, with piano effects such as tremolo, block chords, and clusters; use rhythmic variety in chord comping; play single-note motifs; alternate quickly between hands.
- *Drums*: Use cymbal variety; try "long" notes (rolls); use fills and unusual patterns; alternate sticks, brushes, hands; hit different parts of the drum set.

Group Variety

Some effective ways to get variety as a group are:

- *Switching textures (amount of people playing and how heavily they play)*. This is probably the biggest area to explore. Use any combination of all, some, or no players behind solos. Use dynamic contrast well in your group, and switch between lighter and heavier techniques.
- *Using vamps (repeating a short set of chords)*. These are most effective in intros or endings, but they can also be played on modal tunes (few chord changes).
- *Using unified rhythms*. When one player starts an interesting rhythm pattern, the other players can imitate it for a short while (don't overuse this).

Interaction: Rhythm Section and Soloist

Rhythm section players can generate some good ideas behind a soloist, coming from rhythms, pitches, or both. The basic goals are:

1) Exchange ideas within the rhythm section
2) Exchange ideas between the rhythm section and the soloist,
3) Support but not overpower the soloist.

The basic interaction methods are:

- *Copy* a short idea that someone else played.
- *Adapt* (change) the idea.
- *Support* the idea (repeat a different idea that complements the original idea).

The key to this is finding and using the *interesting* parts of the idea you hear. Those parts can be a single note (F#) or a rhythmic placement (the "and" of 4), or a few notes of the idea, or the whole idea. Then you can use melodic and rhythmic development to carry the idea further. As you interact, keep it under control and interesting so the soloist is always motivated.

For more ideas on group variety, see Chapter 4F: *Group Interaction* and Chapter 5D: *Rhythmic Pulses*.

Vocal Improvisation Skills – Part 1

This chapter is an introduction to improvisation for vocalists. It covers these topics:

- An Approach to Vocal Improvisation
- Virtual Practice for Vocalists
- Basic Vowels and Consonants

You don't need a highly trained voice to do vocal improvisation. In fact, a classical mindset sometimes gets in the way of the freedoms you need for jazz styles. Still, a good foundation in voice techniques can give you added range, flexibility, and strength of sound for vocal improv. If you're an instrumentalist who wants to try vocal improv, pay special attention as you use the vocal parts of the Virtual Practice Method.

For more on vocal improvisation skills, see *Vocal Improvisation Skills, Part 2* in Level 4.

An Approach to Vocal Improvisation

Many vocalists use a somewhat limited approach to improvisation. Compared to other instruments, the human voice can create a much wider range of expression. But because it has no buttons or keys, the voice relies completely on the brain's sense of pitch. This leads to these basic problems in vocal improvisation:

- *Problem #1*: Dependence on easy-to-hear intervals and scales
- *Problem #2*: Underdeveloped melodic lines and rhythms
- *Problem #3*: Exaggerated expression

Thinking More Instrumentally

To overcome these problems, most vocalists need to *think more like an instrumentalist* (and instrumentalists need to think more vocally, too). This doesn't mean just imitating an instrument's sound; it means developing a strong control over pitches, rhythms, and development to create more "instrumental" ideas. As you listen to great instrumental solos, think of how you can adapt them in your own vocal improvisations. Many great jazz solos have been transcribed and set to words by vocalists such as Jon Hendricks and Eddie Jefferson, and groups such as Manhattan Transfer and New York Voices.

You can also use a virtual framework based on a musical instrument, to keep your pitches and rhythms strong (see *Virtual Practice for Vocalists* below).

10 Bad Habits and 10 Better Habits:

Below are 10 things that vocalists commonly do that cause weaker solos, along with 10 ideas for improvement. The chapters in *The Art of Improvisation* that deal with the better habits are noted. Notice that most of these habits are also typical for instrumentalists who improvise. As you practice vocal improvisation, keep working to turn these bad habits into better habits.

Bad Habit #1: Emphasizing roots of chords, then the arpeggios.

Solution: Emphasize some color tones; use color skips (1C: *Melodic Color*).

Bad Habit #2:	Emphasizing downbeats of measures.
Solution:	Sing offbeats, consecutive offbeats, and interesting rhythms (1D: *Rhythmic Variety*).
Bad Habit #3:	Relying too much on blues scales.
Solution:	Use Lydian, pentatonic, melodic minor ascending, and others (1B: *Building Chords and Scales*; 2A *More Scales*; 3A: *More Melodic Color*).
Bad Habit #4:	Using too much vibrato and too many vocal effects.
Solution:	Keep expression subtle, with occasional effects that fit the solo well (1E: *Using Expression*; 2E: *Embellishments*; 4C: *Special Effects*).
Bad Habit #5:	Changing ideas without developing them.
Solution:	Use principles of melodic and rhythmic development in solos (1F: *Developing with Motifs and Phrases*; 2F: *Melodic Development*; 3E: *Rhythmic Development*).
Bad Habit #6:	Relying on phrases with predictable, similar lengths (based on a comfortable breath) and similar contours.
Solution:	Vary phrase lengths and melodic contours (Chapters 1F, 2B).
Bad Habit #7:	Using a limited range and no wider intervals.
Solution:	Try wider skips and a variety of filled intervals (Chapter 2B).
Bad Habit #8:	Not interpreting swing rhythms and articulations accurately.
Solution:	Use the guidelines in Chapter 2C.
Bad Habit #9:	Singing ideas that are harmonically limited.
Solution:	Outline ii-V-I's and chord variations (Chapters 1G and 3F).
Bad Habit #10:	Avoiding non-harmonic tones.
Solution:	Sing and resolve non-harmonic tones (Chapter 3A).

The exercises in this book (see the *Exercises* section) are also designed to help you approach vocal improvisation more instrumentally.

Virtual Practice for Vocalists

The voice *can* sing pitches as accurately as an instrument can, but too often it doesn't. If you could sing pitches as accurately as an instrument plays them, but also have the immense flexibility and range of vocal sounds, you'd be in great shape for some fine vocal solos. (Some classically trained vocalists can sing incredibly difficult intervals, especially in 20th-century music.) As a jazz vocalist, you can use the Virtual Practice Method in interesting ways to build your confidence in rhythms and pitches.

Reviewing SHAPE

As you create vocal improv ideas, the SHAPE approach is just as important for you as it is for instrumentalists. For more about visualizing the notes you sing, see Chapter 2B: *Melodic Shapes* in this volume, and Chapter 4A: *Soundscapes*.

Virtual Rhythm Practice

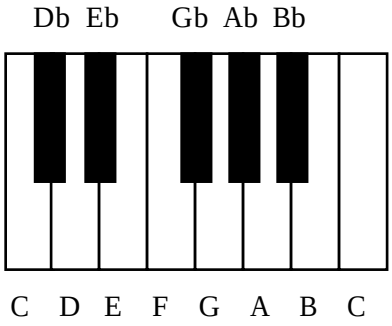
It's important to see the basic shape of your rhythm as you create it. Although it's too complicated in most cases to see all the rhythmic values of the notes you sing, you can still see the following things as you solo:

- Barlines (each measure) and double-bar lines (each section of the tune)
- Rhythmic entrances (where in the bar you start)
- Basic types of rhythms (8ths, quarters, triplets, dotted notes, etc.)

For more about visualizing rhythms, see *Virtual Practice Method for Rhythms* in Chapter 1D: *Rhythmic Variety*.

Virtual Pitch Practice

To visualize pitches and intervals with the Virtual Practice Method, you can use the Virtual Keyboard as you sing. It contains one octave from the keyboard, but you can extend (repeat) it in your mind as far as necessary to the left or right.



The basic goal for using the Virtual Keyboard is this:

**** See and hear your vocal notes on the Virtual Keyboard as if you were playing them with your fingers.***

To use the Virtual Keyboard in your vocal practice, follow the steps below. Each step is an ear-training exercise you can repeat and build upon. If you make mistakes, try to figure out exactly where the problem is.

1 *Matching pitches.* Go to a real keyboard and play any note, then accurately hum that note (you can hum octaves up or down from the pitch you play).

2 *Matching intervals.* Same as step 1, but play and sing any interval (up or down) of an octave or less.

3 *Touch and sing.* Same as step 2, but touch the keys so lightly they don't make a sound. Sing the interval you touched, then test it out by playing it.

4 *See and sing familiar motif.* See the intervals for the first part of a children's or other easy song. Sing each note as you see it on the keyboard, then test by playing.

5 *Try new melodies.* Same as step 4, with ever-increasing levels of difficulty. You can finger along (air fingers) as you sing. In time, you'll see as fast as you sing

Basic Vowels and Consonants

Here are some basic vowel and consonant combinations to use in your vocal improvisation syllables:

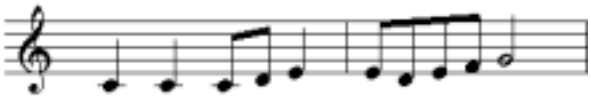
- *Vowels*: "ah," "oo," and "ee." These represent the sustained part of a note. "Ah" is lower in pitch, "oo" is medium in pitch, and "ee" is higher in pitch.
- *Consonants*: "b," "d," "v," and "z" for softer attacks, and "t" for harder attacks. To end a staccato note, use "p" or "t."

By mixing these basic vowels and consonants you can get syllables such as bah, dah, tah, doo, boo, too, dee, bee, and tee. You can use these syllables in many different combinations with eighths, quarters, triplets, offbeats, etc. For more on vowels and consonants, see *More Vocal Improvisation Skills* in Level 4.

Examples

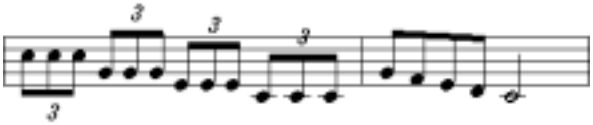
The examples below show a traditional way to add consonants and vowels to "Row, Row, Row Your Boat," and then a more unconventional approach.

Example 1



Doo voo zoo-bah doop,

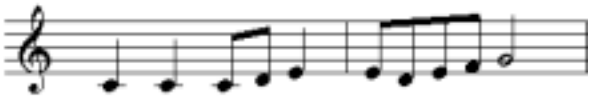
Doo-vah zoo bah doo



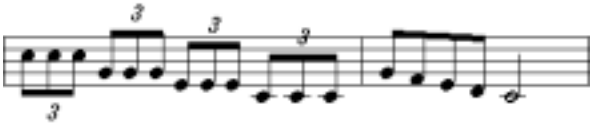
DBD dooboodoo Zee voo dee boh doh

zooboodoo zahbahdah

Example 2



Ah pah gooz-a dey Ya-la say-voo nah



Eel-e-ka zil-i-ka pu-li-ka da-li-ka na-da soo too lay

Priorities

Remember that while consonants and vowels enhance the pitches and rhythms, the pitches and rhythms (SHAPE) are still the most important elements. So,

1) Concentrate on the melody line first.

2) Let vowels and consonants hang on the melody.

The most creative vowels and consonants in the world won't rescue a boring, thoughtless melody line. With an interesting melody line, subtle and inventive vowels and consonants add even more interest. Keep the priorities straight; the music will blossom.

Exercises for Level 1

Melody: Virtual Practice

Exercise 1.1 ✔ *Virtual Practice for the C Major Scale*

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Hum and finger eighth-notes for the C Major scale, at quarter-note = 100. Be sure each attack is accurate in pitch and played in solid rhythm.

❑ ***Medium*: Same as Basic; quarter-note = 144.

❑ ****Challenge*: Same as Basic; quarter-note = 180.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; A) play the scale descending; B) play the scale in 2 octaves; C) both A and B.

Exercise 1.2 ✔ *Humming the Major Scales*

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Around the circle of 4ths, accurately hum and finger eighth-notes for all 12 major scales, up and down, quarter-note = 100. Test the notes against your instrument.

❑ ***Medium*: Same as Basic; quarter-note = 144.

❑ ****Challenge*: Same as Basic; quarter-note = 180.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; A) reverse the contour; B) play 2 octaves; C) both A and B.

❑ ♪ *Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.3 ✔ *Humming Flexible Scales*

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Hum and finger each flexible major scale in the circle of 4ths; quarter-note = 100. Play each note in the scale at least once; pause before each new key.

❑ ***Medium*: Same as Basic; quarter-note = 144.

❑ ****Challenge*: Same as Basic; quarter-note = 180.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ ♪ *Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.4 ✔ *Humming Flexible Scales with Thirds*

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Hum and finger each flexible major scale in the circle of 4ths, using some thirds; quarter-note = 100. Use thirds based on each scale tone.

❑ ***Medium*: Same as Basic; quarter-note = 144.

❑ ****Challenge*: Same as Basic; quarter-note = 180.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ ♪ *Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1 – circle of 4ths – 4 bars per chord

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Melody: Chords and Scales

Exercise 1.5 ✔ Spelling Major Chords (Arpeggios)

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Spell pitches for the C Major 7 arpeggio from bottom to top, then for the other Major 7 arpeggios in the circle of 4ths. Try for a best time under 60 seconds.

❑ ***Medium*: Same as Basic; spell major 9 arpeggios.

❑ ****Challenge*: Quickly choose the number 3, 5, or 7, then choose a major key (such as 3, key of Ab). Then name the pitch correctly fits (the 3 of Ab would be C). Do in all keys.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic or Medium; spell the arpeggios top to bottom.

Exercise 1.6 ✔ Humming Major 7 Arpeggios

Basic __/__/__ ( ) Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( )

More: A __/__/__ ( ) B __/__/__ ( ) C __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Hum and finger 8th-notes for all major 7 arpeggios around the circle of 4ths, at quarter-note = 100.

❑ ***Medium*: Same as Basic; quarter-note = 144.

❑ ****Challenge*: Same as Basic; quarter-note = 180.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; A) use flexible arpeggios; B) connect to the next root and proceed; C) use 2 octaves in each key.

❑ ♪ *Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1 – circle of 4ths – 4 bars per chord

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Exercise 1.7 ✔ Spelling Lydian Scales

Basic __/__/__ ( ) Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Spell the pitches for the C Lydian scale, then for the other Lydian scales around the circle of 4ths; try for 1 minute or less.

❑ ***Medium*: Spell the pitches for all 12 Lydian scales, from *top to bottom*, in 1 minute or less.

❑ ****Challenge*: Quickly pick a major key (such as C#). Then name the sharp-4 pitch (the #4 of C# would be G). Do this in all keys.

Exercise 1.8 ✔ Humming Flexible Lydian Scales

Basic __/__/__ ( ) Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( )

More: A __/__/__ ( ) B __/__/__ ( ) C __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Hum and finger 8th-notes for all 12 Lydian scales, around the circle of 4ths, quarter-note = 100. Use flexible scales.

❑ ***Medium*: Same as Basic; quarter-note = 144.

❑ ****Challenge*: Same as Basic; quarter-note = 180.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ ♪ *Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.9 ✔ Spelling Dominant 7 Arpeggios

Basic __/__/__ ( ) Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Spell the pitches for the C dominant 7 arpeggio, then for the other 11 dominant 7 arpeggios, around the circle of 4ths. Try for a best time under 45 seconds.

❑ ***Medium*: Spell the pitches for all 12 dominant 7 arpeggios, from *top to bottom* of each.

❑ ****Challenge*: Quickly pick a dominant arpeggio key (such as F#). Then name the flat-7 pitch (the b7 of F# is E). Do this in all keys.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; spell the arpeggios top to bottom

Exercise 1.10 ✔ Humming Dominant 7 Chords

Basic __/__/__ ( ) Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( )

More: A __/__/__ ( ) B __/__/__ ( ) C __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Hum and finger 8th-notes for all 12 dominant 7 chords, around the circle of 4ths, at quarter-note = 100.

❑ ***Medium*: Same as Basic; quarter-note = 144.

❑ ****Challenge*: Same as Basic; quarter-note = 180.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ ♪ *Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.11 ✔ Spelling Mixolydian Scales

Basic __/__/__ ( ) Medium __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Spell the pitches for the C Mixolydian scale, then for the other Mixolydian scales around the circle of 4ths. Try for a best time under 60 seconds.

❑ ***Medium*: Quickly pick a number from 1 to b7 and a dominant key (such as 2, key of F#). Then name the pitch that correctly fits (the 2 of F# would be G#).

Exercise 1.12 ✔ Humming Mixolydian Scales

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Hum and finger 8th-notes for all Mixolydian scales, circle of 4ths, at quarter-note = 100. Use flexible scales.

❑ ***Medium*: Same as Basic; quarter-note = 144.

❑ ****Challenge*: Same as Basic; quarter-note = 180.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ ♪ *Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.13 ✔ Spelling Minor 7 Arpeggios

Basic __/__/__ ( ) Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Spell the pitches for the C Minor 7 chord, then for the other minor 7 chords around the circle of 4ths (45 sec. or less).

❑ ***Medium*: Spell the pitches for all 12 minor 7 chords, *top to bottom* (45 sec. or less).

❑ ****Challenge*: Quickly pick a minor arpeggio key (such as F). Then name the flat-3 pitch (the b3 of F would be Ab). Do this in all keys.

Exercise 1.14 ✔ Humming Minor 7 Chords

Basic __/__/__ ( ) Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( )

More: A __/__/__ ( ) B __/__/__ ( ) C __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Hum and finger 8th-notes for all 12 minor 7 chords, around the circle of 4ths, at quarter-note = 100.

❑ ***Medium*: Same as Basic; quarter-note = 144.

❑ ****Challenge*: Same Basic; quarter-note = 180.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ ♪ *Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.15 ✔ Spelling Dorian Scales

Basic __/__/__ ( ) Medium __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Spell the pitches for the C Dorian scale, then for the other 11 Dorian scales around the circle of 4ths; 60 sec. or less.

❑ ***Medium*: Pick a number, 1 to b7 and a minor key (such as 4, key of Bbm). Name the pitch that fits (4 of Bbm is Eb). Do in all keys.

Exercise 1.16 ✔ Humming Dorian Scales

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Hum and finger 8th-notes for all 12 Dorian scales, around the circle of 4ths, quarter-note = 100. Use flexible scales.

❑ ***Medium*: Same as Basic; quarter-note = 144.

❑ ****Challenge*: Same as Basic; quarter-note = 180.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ ♪ *Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.17 ✔ Practicing Flexible Scales with Wide Intervals

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Hum and finger 8th-notes for any major scale, quarter-note = 100 or faster. Use flexible scales with 2nds, 3rds, 4ths, and 5ths.

❑ ***Medium*: Same as Basic, with Lydian or Mixolydian scales; also use 6ths.

❑ ****Challenge*: Same as Basic, with Dorian or other scales; also use 6ths and 7ths.

Exercise 1.18 ✔ Practicing Flexible Scales with Alternate Rhythms

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Same as Basic for 1.17; add other rhythms (quarters, triplets, dotted quarters, etc.).

❑ ***Medium*: Same as Medium for 1.17 with other rhythms.

❑ ****Challenge*: Same as Challenge for 1.17 with other rhythms.

Exercise 1.19 ✔ Practicing Flexible Scales w/ Wide Intervals, Alternate Rhythms

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Hum and finger 8th-notes for all 12 Dorian scales, around the circle of 4ths, quarter-note = 100. Use flexible scales.

❑ ***Medium*: Same as Basic; quarter-note = 144.

Melody: Melodic Color

Exercise 1.20 ✔ Naming Color Tones

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic:* In each major scale in the circle of 4ths, name the color tone pitches (2, 4, 6, 7).

❑ ***Medium*: Same as Basic, for each Mixolydian scale.

❑ ****Challenge*: Same as Basic, for each Dorian scale.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ ♪ *Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.21 ✔ Emphasizing Color Tones

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Play each flexible 8th-note Lydian scale at quarter note = 100, with fermatas on color tones but not on resting tones.

❑ ***Medium*: Same as Basic, quarter note = 144.

❑ ****Challenge*: Same as Basic, quarter note = 180.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ >*Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.22 ✔ Using Color Intervals

Basic __/__/__ ( ) Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Play all the color intervals (upwards skips) in the key of C.

❑ ***Medium*: Same as Basic; reverse the skips.

❑ ****Challenge*: Same as Basic; all keys, circle of 4ths (upwards skips).

❑ >*More*: Same as Challenge; skip downwards

❑ >*Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.23 ✔ Resolving 4ths in Major & Dominant

Basic __/__/__ ( ) Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: In each major scale around the circle of 4ths, name the fourth degree and two different ways to resolve each fourth. For example, in C Major, F is the fourth; it can resolve to E, or first to D then to E.

❑ ***Medium*: Play each flexible major scale, with a fermata on each 3 you resolve from a 4.

❑ ****Challenge*: Same as Medium, but use 4-2-3 and 4-5-3 resolutions.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ >*Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.24 ✔ Color Tones in Transcribed Solos

Basic __/__/__ ( ) Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: In the guitar solo for "Where's Waldis" (Chapter 3J), find all color tones (2, #4, 6, 7) that are emphasized (held notes, starting notes, or ending notes).

❑ ***Medium*: Same as Basic; use the trumpet solo for "Where's Waldis." Also note all 4 to 3 resolutions.

❑ ****Challenge*: Same as Medium; select any other solo in Chapter 2J or Chapter 3J.

❑ >*Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Rhythm: Rhythmic Variety

Exercise 1.25 ✔ Emphasizing Offbeats

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Write or play a two-measure melody with quarter-rests on beat 1 or 3 in each bar. Do again with 8th-rests on 1, 2, 3, or 4.

❑ ***Medium*: Same as Basic; hide beat 1 or 3 using tied quarter-notes from 4 to 1 or from 2 to 3. Repeat the exercise with tied eighth-notes from "4-and" into 1, "1-and" into 2, "2-and" into 3, or "3-and" into 4.

❑ ****Challenge*: Combine quarter-note offbeats after rests with eighth-note offbeat after rests. Repeat with ties to downbeats not rests.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ >*Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.26 ✔ Consecutive Half-note Offbeats

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: On a flexible major scale, at quarter-note = 120, play one quarter-note, then play consecutive half-note values. Repeat in all 12 keys.

❑ ***Medium*: Same as Basic; use flexible Mixolydian scales at quarter-note = 144.

❑ ****Challenge*: On a flexible major scale, quarter-note = 180, play a dotted quarter-note, then play consecutive half-note values (eighths tied to dotted-quarters). Do in all keys.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ >*Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.27 ✔ Consecutive Quarter-note Offbeats

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: On a flexible major scale, at quarter-note = 120, play one downbeat eighth-note, then play consecutive offbeat quarters. Repeat in all 12 keys.

❑ ***Medium*: Same as Basic; use flexible Lydian scales, at quarter-note = 144.

❑ ****Challenge*: Same as Basic; use flexible Mixolydian scales, at quarter-note = 180.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ >*Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.28 ✔ Shifting Offbeats & Downbeats

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: On any flexible major scale, at quarter-note = 120, play a downbeat quarter, then mix offbeats and downbeats.

❑ ***Medium*: Same as Basic, quarter-note = 144.

❑ ****Challenge*: Same as Basic, quarter-note = 180.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ >*Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.29 ✔ Alternating Shorter & Longer Values

Basic __/__/__ ( ) Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Repeat rhythm of two 8ths and a quarter in a flexible scale; quarter-note = 120.

❑ ***Medium*: Repeat rhythm of two 8ths and a half-note, flexible scale; quarter-note = 144.

❑ ****Challenge*: Repeat rhythm of 8th-note / dotted quarter-note in flexible scales, at quarter-note = 180.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ >*Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.30 ✔ Using Triplet Rhythms

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Mix 8th-notes and quarter-note triplets in flexible scales, at quarter-note = 120.

❑ ****Medium**: Mix eighth-notes with 8th-note triplets in flexible scales, at quarter-note = 144.

❑ *****Challenge**: Mix eighth-notes, quarter-note triplets, and eighth-note triplets in flexible scales; quarter-note = 144.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ >*Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.31 ✔ Using Triplets with Ties and Rests

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Same as Basic 1.27; add a few ties to triplets and a few triplet rests.

❑ ****Medium**: Same as Medium 1.27; add a few ties to triplets and a few triplet rests.

❑ *****Challenge**: Same as Challenge 1.27; add a few ties to triplets and a few triplet rests.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ >*Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.32 ✔ Using Rhythmic Combinations

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Write several examples of combining any of these: offbeat half-notes, offbeat quarters, offbeat eighths tied to dotted quarters, mixed eighths and dotted quarters, or triplets. Use one pitch for all rhythms; make each example 4 bars.

❑ ****Medium**: Play the Basic examples you wrote, adding your own pitches from a flexible major scale; quarter-note = 144:

❑ *****Challenge**: Same as Medium, at quarter-note = 180.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ >*Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.33 ✔ Using Virtual Practice for Rhythms

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Use the Virtual Practice Method for Rhythms on several rhythms with quarter-notes, 8th-notes and 8th-rests.

❑ ****Medium**: Same as Basic: add quarter-note triplets.

❑ *****Challenge**: Same as Basic, 8th-note triplets & rests.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ >*Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Expression: Using Expression

Exercise 1.34 ✔ Using Dynamics

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: On a flexible scale, crescendo as you go down and decrescendo as you go up.

❑ ****Medium**: Same as Basic; crescendo or decrescendo as you hold or repeat a pitch in the scale.

❑ *****Challenge**: On a flexible scale, play suddenly softer; or insert a few louder, accented notes in a softer passage.

❑ **>More**: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ **>Play-Along**: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.35 ✔ Using Accents

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ ***Basic**: On a flexible scale, "ghost" some notes.

❑ ****Medium**: Randomly accent notes in a flexible scale.

❑ *****Challenge**: Combine the Basic & Medium exercises.

❑ **>More**: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ **>Play-Along**: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.36 ✔ Using Articulations

Basic __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ ***Basic**: On a flexible scale, see how many ways you can articulate the notes.

❑ **>More**: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ **>Play-Along**: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Development: with Motifs and Phrases

Exercise 1.37 ✔ Creating Motifs

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ ***Basic**: Write down a simple motif and play it. Find a motif in printed music and play it.

❑ ****Medium**: Play a simple motif, then write it down.

❑ *****Challenge**: Hear a motif in a recorded piece, then write it and play it.

❑ **>More**: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ **>Play-Along**: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.38 ✔ Varying Motifs

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ ***Basic**: Play a 1-bar motif, then vary it slightly.

❑ ****Medium**: Same as Basic; vary with more contrast.

❑ *****Challenge**: Play a 2-bar motif and vary it twice, each time differently, with slight contrast.

❑ **>More**: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ >*Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.39 ✔ Developing Earlier Motifs

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Write 2 motifs, then vary the first one.

❑ ***Medium*: Play 2 motifs, then vary the first one.

❑ ****Challenge*: Play 3 motifs, then vary the first one.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ >*Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.40 ✔ Recognizing Phrases

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: In any printed solo in Chapter 2J or Chapter 3J, find these 3 phrase types: long motifs; similar but separate motifs; and a group of joined motifs.

❑ ***Medium*: In any printed solo in Chapter 2J or Chapter 3J, mark the phrase types for the entire solo.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ >*Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.41 ✔ Connecting Motifs

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Write two motifs that connect by half- or whole-step, up or down.

❑ ***Medium*: Same as Basic; connect by an octave.

❑ ****Challenge*: Same as Basic; connect by a ninth.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ >*Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.42 ✔ Ending Phrases

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Choose a beat or offbeat in an upcoming bar; play a motif that ends at that spot.

❑ ***Medium*: Choose a beat or offbeat within the second bar of two measures and play a motif that ends at that spot.

❑ ****Challenge*: Write and play simple motifs, varying where in the bar you end each motif.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ >*Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.43 ✔ Working Through Phrase Barriers

Basic __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Write a solo of 3 phrases using: Fmi7 Bb7 AMa7 C7 BMa7 (two bars per chord). End each phrase in a different spot in the bar.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ ♪ *Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Chord Progressions: Chords and Keys

Exercise 1.44 ✔ Using Roman Numerals

Basic __/__/__ ( ) Medium __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ ***Basic*: Choose any short tune from *200 Standard Tunes*; write Roman numerals for the chords.

❑ ****Medium*: Same as Basic; choose a longer tune.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ ♪ *Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.45 ✔ Recognizing Keys

Basic __/__/__ ( ) Medium __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ ***Basic*: Choose any short tune from *200 Standard Tunes*; name the tune's likely key.

❑ ****Medium*: Same as Basic; choose a longer tune.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ ♪ *Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.46 ✔ Blues Progressions in All Keys

Basic __/__/__ ( ) Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Write chord progressions for blues in each of these keys: Eb, Bb, F, C, and G.

❑ ***Medium*: Same as Basic; in keys of D, A, E, B,

❑ ****Challenge*: Same as Basic; in F#, C#, Ab.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ ♪ *Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.47 ✔ Spelling Blues Scales

Basic __/__/__ ( ) Medium __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Spell the pitches for the C Blues scale, then for the other blues scales around the circle of fourths.

❑ ***Medium*: Spell the pitches for all 12 blues scales, from *top to bottom* of each scale.

❑ *>More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ ♪ *Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.48 ✔ Humming Blues Scales

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Hum and finger eighth-notes for all 12 blues scales, around the circle of 4ths, at quarter-note = 100.

❑ ***Medium*: Same as Basic; quarter-note = 150.

❑ ****Challenge*: Same as Basic; quarter-note = 180.

❑ *>More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ ♪ *Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.49 ✔ Writing ii-V-I Progressions

Basic __/__/__ ( ) Medium __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Going around the circle of 4ths, write a ii-V-I progression for each major key.

❑ ***Medium*: Going up the chromatic scale, write the ii-V-I progression for each major key.

❑ *>More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ ♪ *Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.50 ✔ Prefacing ii-V-I Progressions

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Treating each key in the circle of 4ths as a root key, build a preface of vi-ii-V.

❑ ***Medium*: Same as Basic; preface of iii-vi-ii-V.

❑ ****Challenge*: Same as Basic; preface of vii-iii-vi-ii-V.

❑ *>More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ ♪ *Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Exercise 1.51 ✔ Simplifying Chord Progressions

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Find one scale that fits all these chords: CMa7 Dm7 G7 CMa7

❑ ***Medium*: Same as Basic; use AMa7, Bm7, C#m7, F#m7

❑ ****Challenge*: Choose one of the 30 Standard Tunes; simplify 2 or more of the progressions.

❑ >*More*: Same as Basic; A) don't pause between keys - connect to the next root and proceed; B) play 2 octaves on each key; C) both A and B

❑ ♪ *Play-Along*: Aebersold Vol. 1: side 2, track 3. One quarter-note scale per chord or 2 of 8th-notes.

Analysis: Analyzing Your Own Solos

Exercise 1.52 ✔ Practicing for Melody

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Solo to one of the first few tracks of Aebersold's Vol. 24: Major/Minor; fit the chords and scales and use color tones.

❑ ***Medium*: Same as Basic, but use a harder key.

❑ ****Challenge*: Same as Medium, but use a progression that changes chords.

Exercise 1.53 ✔ Practicing for Rhythm

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Same as 1.52 Basic. Use secure,accurate rhythms; mix downbeats and offbeats; balance longer/shorter note values.

❑ ***Medium*: Same as Basic, but use a harder key.

❑ ****Challenge*: Same as Medium, but use a progression that changes chords.

Exercise 1.54 ✔ Practicing for Expression

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Same as 1.52 Basic. Vary dynamics, accents, and articulations in the solo.

❑ ***Medium*: Same as Basic, but use a harder key.

❑ ****Challenge*: Same as Medium, but use a progression that changes chords.

Exercise 1.55 ✔ Practicing for Development

Basic __/__/__ ( )Medium __/__/__ ( ) Challenge __/__/__ ( ) More __/__/__ ( )

❑ **Basic*: Same as 1.52 Basic. Control the start, end, and length of each motif; move from slight contrast to more contrast; connect some motifs into phrases; and vary where phrases end in the bar.

❑ ***Medium*: Same as Basic, but use a harder key.

❑ ****Challenge*: Same as Medium, but use a progression that changes chords.