FastTrack
MUSIC INSTRUCTION

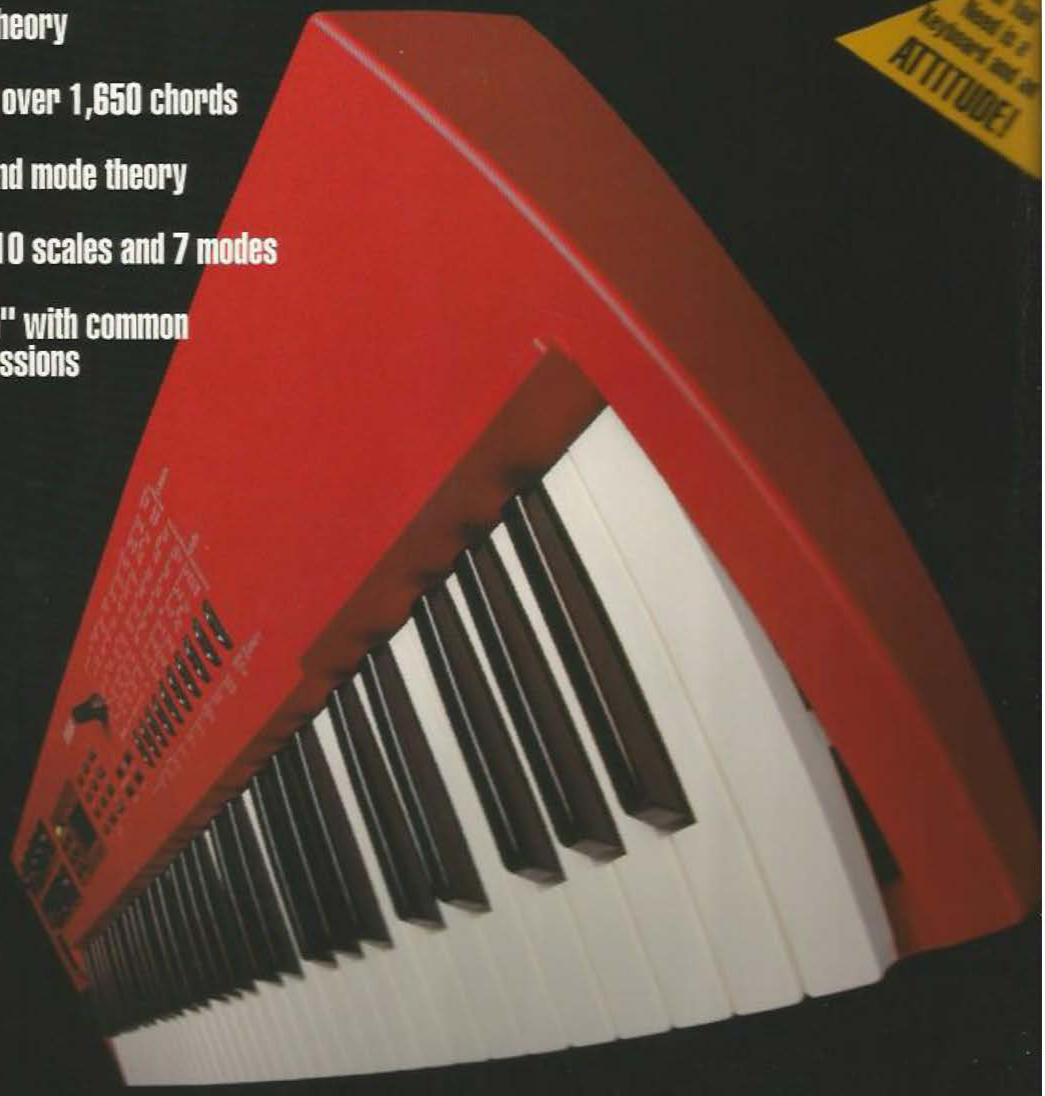
Electronic Keyboard, Synthesizer or Piano

Keyboard Chords & Scales

CD Included

What are you waiting for?
Open the book and find:

- Basic chord theory
- Diagrams for over 1,650 chords
- Basic scale and mode theory
- Patterns for 10 scales and 7 modes
- "Jam session" with common chord progressions



by Blake Neely and Gary Meisner

HAL•LEONARD

FastTrack™
MUSIC INSTRUCTION

Keyboard Chords & Scales

HAL•LEONARD® CORPORATION
7777 W. Bluemound Rd. P.O. Box 13819 Milwaukee, WI 53213

INTRODUCTION

Why you bought this book...

Hello again. We say "again" because we're assuming that you've already been through **FastTrack™ Keyboard 1** and **2**. (At the very least, **Book 1**.) If so—terrific! You've decided to keep learning your instrument and you're ready for this supplemental book.

This book provides five important things:

1. Basic chord theory
2. Easy-find index of over 700 different chord diagrams
3. Basic scale and mode theory
4. Patterns for 5 scales and 7 modes
5. Special "Jam Session" using the chords and scales introduced

IMPORTANT: This book is a reference book (much like a dictionary) and should not take the place of a keyboard instruction book. That being said, please go through ***FastTrack* Keyboard 1** and **2** (or at least act like it, so we'll stop nagging).

Remember, if your hands hurt, take a break. Some of these chords require some stretching, and the scales need nimble fingers. With practice and patience, you can learn them all (and avoid cramping).

So, when you're ready, power "on," crack your knuckles, and let's learn some chords and scales...

ABOUT THE CD

Glad you noticed the added bonus—a CD! Each of the tracks in the special "Jam Session" is included on the CD, so you can hear how it sounds and play along. Take a listen whenever you see this symbol: 1

Each example on the CD is preceded by one measure of "clicks" to indicate the tempo and meter. Pan right to hear the keyboard emphasized. Pan left to hear the accompaniment emphasized. As you become more confident, try playing along with the rest of the band.

WHERE TO FIND THINGS

LET'S DIVE RIGHT IN

What's a chord?

A **chord** is defined as three or more notes played at the same time. Chords provide the **harmony** that supports the melody of a song.

Sometimes chords are indicated by **chord symbols**, written (usually) above the musical staff. A chord symbol is simply an abbreviation for the name of that chord. For example, the symbol for an **F-sharp minor seven** chord would be **F♯m7**.

Let's get organized...

A chord symbol tells us two things about the chord—**root** and **type**:

1. The **root** gives the chord its name. For example, the root of a C major chord is the note C, the root of an F♯m7 chord is F♯ (Simple Simon!):

2. The chord's **type** is indicated by a **suffix** (m, 7, sus, maj9). There are lots of chord types and suffixes, but there's no need to panic—with a little practice, they're easy to recognize. This book groups all the chords by their type, so keep this list handy:

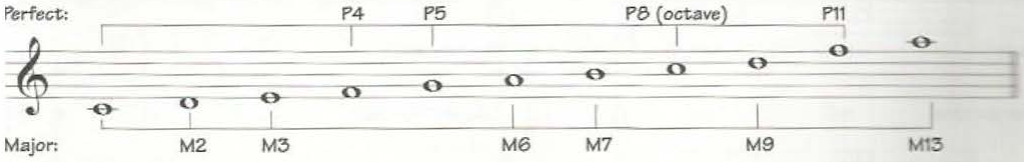
Suffix	Chord Type	Suffix	Chord Type
no suffix	major	m7, min7, -7	minor seventh
m, min, -	minor	7♯5, +7	seventh, sharp fifth
+, aug, (♯5)	augmented	7♭5, 7(-5)	seventh, flat fifth
dim, °	diminished	m7♭5, m7(-5)	minor seventh, flat fifth
sus, sus4	suspended fourth	7♭9, 7(-9)	seventh, flat ninth
♭5, -5	flatted fifth	7♯9	seventh, sharp ninth
6	sixth	9	ninth
m6, -6	minor sixth	m9	minor ninth
6/9	sixth, added ninth	11	eleventh
7, dom7	seventh	m11	minor eleventh
dim7, °7	diminished seventh	13	thirteenth
maj7, M7	major seventh		

Of course, you may run across other types of chords from time to time (or you may create your own), but the ones listed above are the most common.

BUILDING CHORDS

(...and you don't need a hammer!)

Chords are built from simple "building blocks" called **intervals.** An interval is the distance between any two notes. Here's a look at the basic intervals, using C as a root:

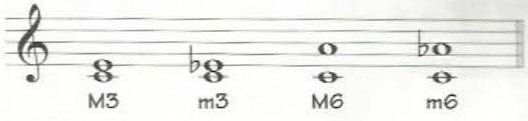


Notice that these intervals are divided into two groups—**major (M)** and **perfect (P).** EASY TO REMEMBER: 4ths, 5ths, octaves and 11ths are perfect; all other intervals are major.

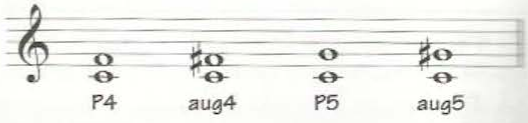
Everything's relative...

An interval can be altered by raising or lowering the number of **steps** between the two notes. How a major or perfect interval is changed determines the resulting interval category: **major, minor, perfect, augmented** and **diminished.** These categories are related in the following ways:

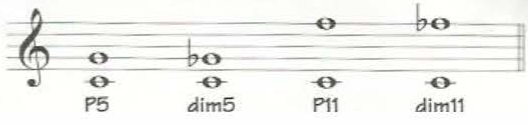
A **major** interval lowered one half step is a **minor** interval. A **minor** interval becomes **diminished** when made smaller.



A **major** or **perfect** interval raised one half step is an **augmented** interval.

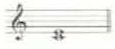
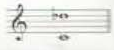
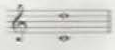
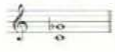
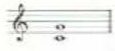
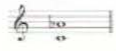


A **perfect** interval lowered one half step is a **diminished** interval.



An interval's **type** is determined by the number of steps between the two notes. Review the following chart and get to know all of the interval types...

HELPFUL REMINDER: On your keyboard (or anyone else's), from one key to the next closest key (whether black or white) equals one **half step**; two keys apart equals one **whole step**.

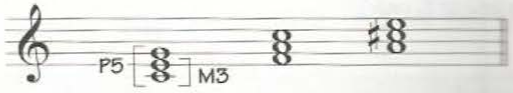
Interval	Abbreviation	Steps	Pitches	Interval	Abbreviation	Steps	Pitches
unison	unis	none		major sixth	M6	4 1/2	
minor second	m2	half		augmented sixth*	aug6	5	
major second	M2	whole		minor seventh*	m7	5	
augmented second*	aug2	1 1/2		major seventh	M7	5 1/2	
minor third *	m3	1 1/2		perfect octave	P8	6	
major third	M3	2		minor ninth	m9	6 1/2	
perfect fourth	P4	2 1/2		major ninth	M9	7	
augmented fourth*	aug4	3		augmented ninth	aug9	7 1/2	
diminished fifth*	dim5	3		perfect eleventh	P11	8 1/2	
perfect fifth	P5	3 1/2		augmented eleventh	aug11	9	
augmented fifth*	aug5	4		minor thirteenth	m13	10 1/2	
minor sixth*	m6	4		major thirteenth	M13	11	

* NOTE: As with sharps and flats, some intervals may sound the same but be written two ways (for example, aug4 and dim5). Notes or intervals that sound the same but are written differently are called **enharmonic equivalents**.

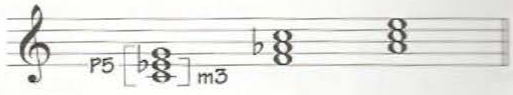
One step further...

Once you understand (and hopefully memorize) interval types, building chords is easy—simply add intervals to the chord's root note. The type of intervals used determines the resulting **chord type**. Let's start by learning some basic three-note chord types, again built on a C root:

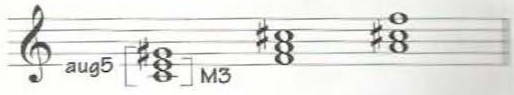
Major chords contain a M3 and a P5 on the root.



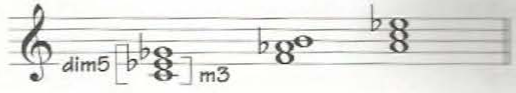
Minor chords contain a m3 and a P5 on the root.



Augmented chords contain a M3 and an aug5.



Diminished chords contain a m3 and a dim5.



Get familiar with these basic chord types, and then build tons of other chords simply by adding, subtracting, augmenting, or diminishing intervals.

Feeling double-sharp?

An important thing to know as you learn to build chords is the idea of the double sharp (𝄪) and double flat (𝄫). These will occur every now and then when a note that is already sharp (or flat) is altered by a half-step. For example, the fifth of a B major chord is F♯. An augmented B chord would raise the F♯ a half step to F𝄪 (which is actually the note G).

BUILDING TO SCALE

The notes of a chord can also be determined by assigning a numeric **formula**, indicating the tones used from the major scale. For example, based on the C major scale, 1-♭3-5 would mean play the root (C), a flatted third (E♭), and the fifth (G)—a C minor chord!

The chart below is a construction summary of the many different chord types (based on the key of C only):

C MAJOR SCALE = C-D-E-F-G-A-B-C

Symbol	Type	Formula	Note names
C	major	1-3-5	C-E-G
Cm	minor	1-♭3-5	C-E♭-G
C+	augmented	1-3-♯5	C-E-G♯
Cdim	diminished	1-♭3-♭5	C-E♭-G♭
Csus2	suspended second	1-2-5	C-D-G
Csus4	suspended fourth	1-4-5	C-F-G
C(add9)	added ninth	1-3-5-9	C-E-G-D
Cm(add9)	minor added ninth	1-♭3-5-9	C-E♭-G-D
C6	sixth	1-3-5-6	C-E-G-A
Cm6	minor sixth	1-♭3-5-6	C-E♭-G-A
C6/9	sixth, added ninth	1-3-5-6-9	C-E-G-A-D
Cm6/9	minor sixth, added ninth	1-♭3-5-6-9	C-E♭-G-A-D
C7	seventh	1-3-5-♭7	C-E-G-B♭
Cdim7	diminished seventh	1-♭3-♭5-♭♭7	C-E♭-G♭-B♭♭
C7sus4	seventh, suspended fourth	1-4-5-♭7	C-F-G-B♭
Cmaj7	major seventh	1-3-5-7	C-E-G-B
Cm7	minor seventh	1-♭3-5-♭7	C-E♭-G-B♭
Cm(maj7)	minor, major seventh	1-♭3-5-7	C-E♭-G-B
Cmaj7♭5	major seventh, flat fifth	1-3-♭5-7	C-E-G♭-B
Cm7♭5	minor seventh, flat fifth	1-♭3-♭5-♭7	C-E♭-G♭-B♭
C7♯5	seventh, sharp fifth	1-3-♯5-♭7	C-E-G♯-B♭
C7♭5	seventh, flat fifth	1-3-♭5-♭7	C-E-G♭-B♭
C7♭9	seventh, flat ninth	1-3-5-♭7-♭9	C-E-G-B♭-D♭
C7♯9	seventh, sharp ninth	1-3-5-♭7-♯9	C-E-G-B♭-D♯
C7♯5(♭9)	seventh, sharp fifth, flat ninth	1-3-♯5-♭7-♭9	C-E-G-B♭-D♯
C9	ninth	1-3-5-♭7-9	C-E-G-B♭-D
Cmaj9	major ninth	1-3-5-7-9	C-E-G-B-D
Cm9	minor ninth	1-♭3-5-♭7-9	C-E♭-G-B♭-D
C11	eleventh	1-5-♭7-9-11	C-E-G-B♭-D-F
Cm11	minor eleventh	1-♭3-5-♭7-9-11	C-E♭-G-B♭-D-F
C13	thirteenth	1-3-5-♭7-9-13	C-E-G-B♭-D-F-A

Alright already!

☞ Don't get too bogged down with all this "theory" stuff. Just look up the chords you need and learn to play them. Heck, make up your own chords—if it sounds good, play it! If you come across a chord type not listed in this book (and you will eventually), either build the chord with the intervals named in the suffix, or reduce it to a more common seventh or ninth chord.

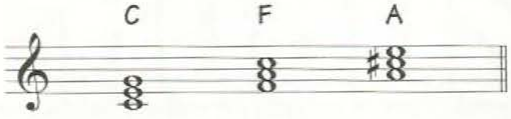
WHAT'S AN INVERSION?

Unlike roots on trees, a chord's root isn't always the bottom note. The notes of a chord can be rearranged but still produce the same chord type. This rearrangement (or repositioning) of notes is called an inversion.

The number of inversions possible depends on the number of notes in the chord. For example, a three-note chord has a root position and two inversions, a four-note chord has three inversions, and so on...

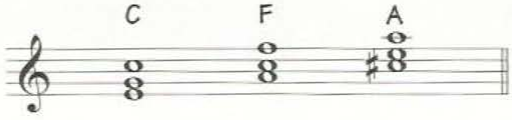
Root Position

Just like it sounds—put the root as the bottom note of the chord:



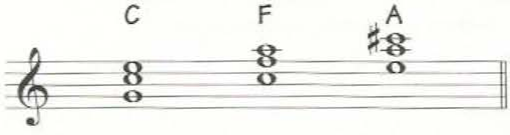
1st Inversion

Simply take the root and put it on top (one octave higher).



2nd Inversion

Take the next lowest note and put it one octave higher (above the root):



Decisions, decisions...

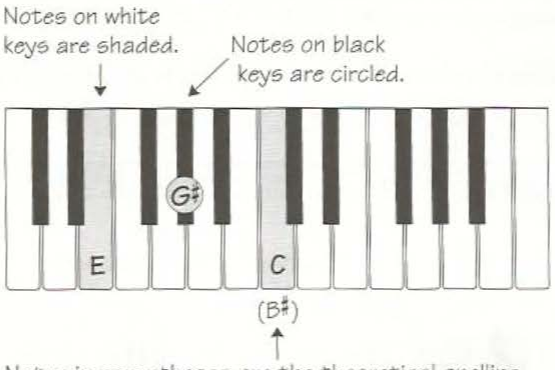
Although in theory you may use any of the inversions in any situation, you should choose an inversion based on two things:

1. **Hand position.** Try to use an inversion that keeps your hand in a close proximity to the notes of the chords played before and after. This will make chord progressions and changes sound smoother.

2. **Leading tone.** Generally speaking, the top-note of the chord will be heard above the rest. If you play C in 1st inversion, you'll hear the C note most dominantly. Generally, the melody note is on top of the chord.

One more thing...

Here's how to read the chord diagrams for all the three- and four-note chords (pages 12 through 41):

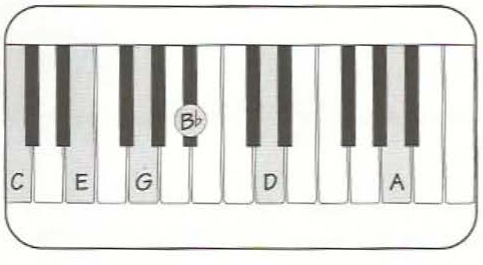


☞ REMINDER: Chords can be played with either the left hand or right hand or both. Try them all sorts of ways in all possible inversions.

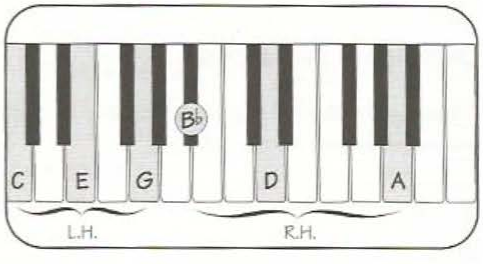
So many notes, so few fingers...

Many chords contain more notes than can easily be played with one hand. For these bigger chords (pages 42 through 48), the diagram shows all the notes of the chord. But don't hurt yourself—try a two-hand approach. For example:

All the notes in a C13 chord



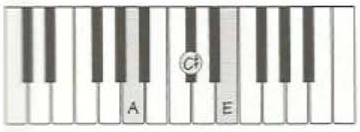
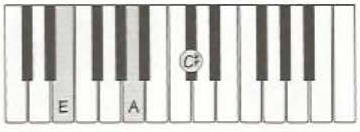
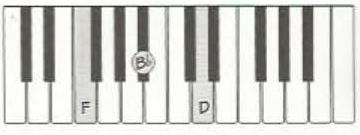
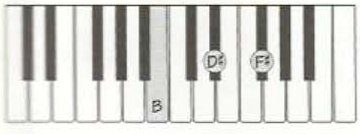
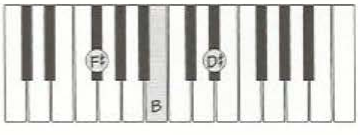
Play it like this...



Have fun!

CHORDS

Major

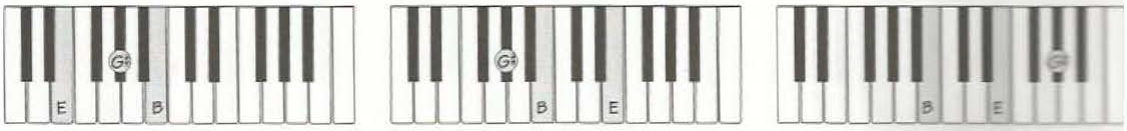
Root	1st Inversion	2nd Inversion
A		
		
B♭		
		
B		
		
C		
		
C♯/D♭		
		
D		
		

Major (cont.)

Root	1st Inversion	2nd Inversion

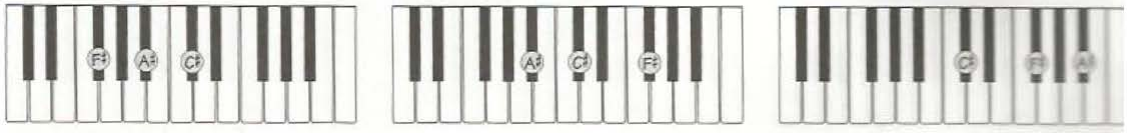
E♭

E



F

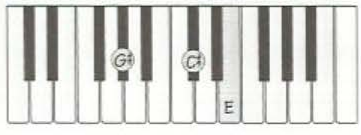
F♯/G♭



G

A♭

Minor

Root	1st Inversion	2nd Inversion
Am		
		
B♭m		
		
Bm		
		
Cm		
		
C♯m/D♭m		
		
Dm		
		

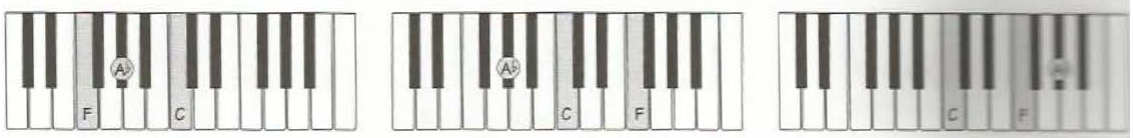
Minor (cont.)

Root	1st Inversion	2nd Inversion

E♭m

Em

Fm

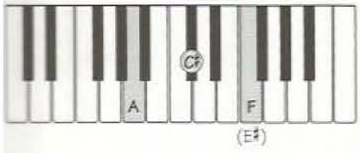
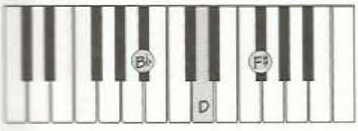
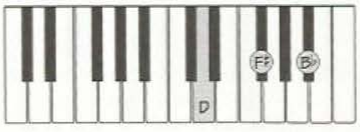
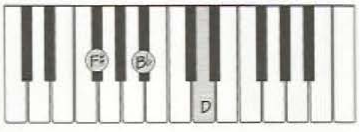
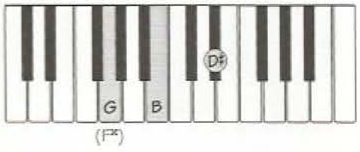
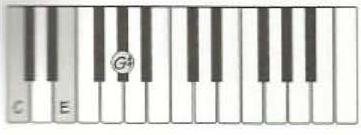
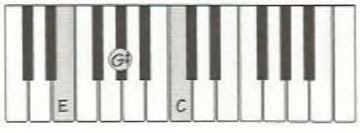
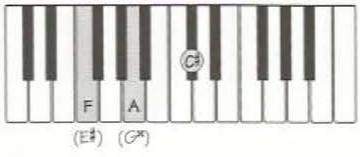
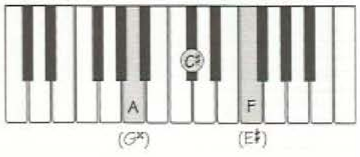
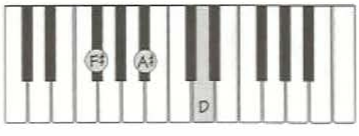
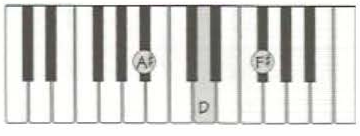


F♯m/G♭m

Gm

A♭m

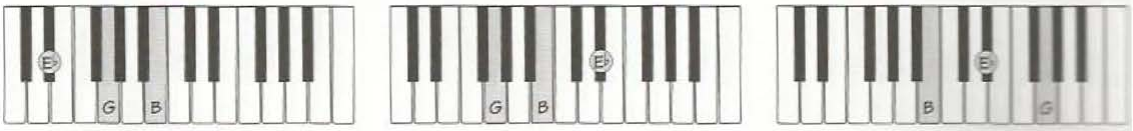
Augmented

Root	1st Inversion	2nd Inversion
A+		
		
B♭+		
		
B+		
		
C+		
		
C♯+/D♭+		
		
D+		
		

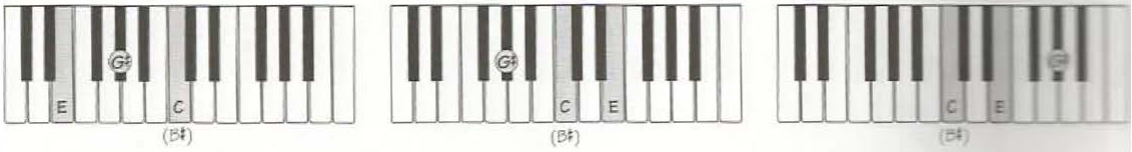
Augmented (cont.)

Root	1st Inversion	2nd Inversion

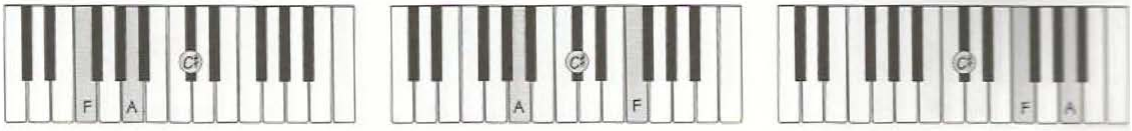
E♭+



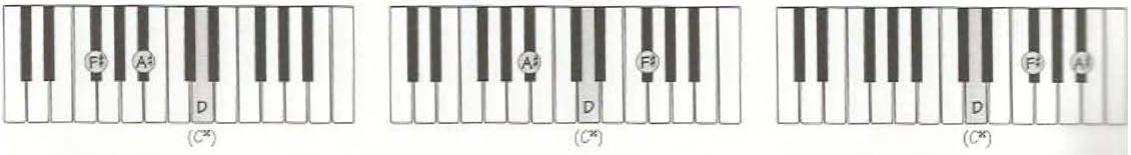
E+



F+



F♯+/G♭+



G+

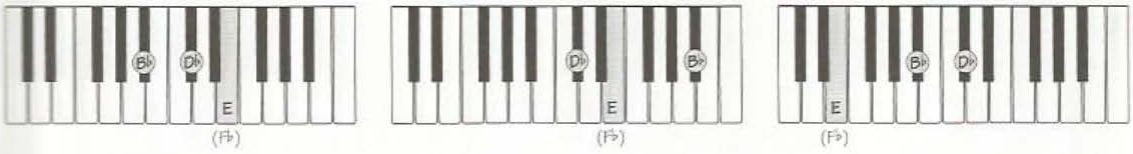
A♭+

Diminished

Root	1st Inversion	2nd Inversion

Adim

B♭dim



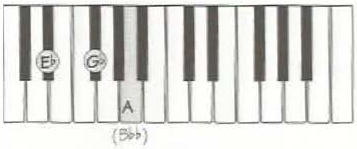
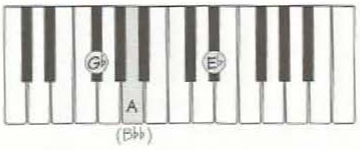
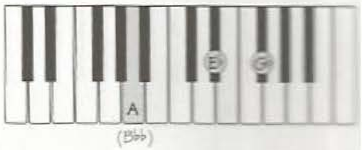
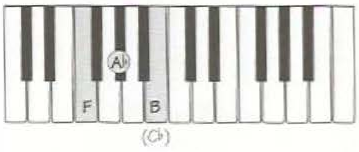
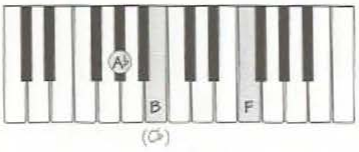
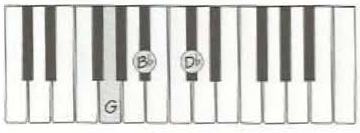
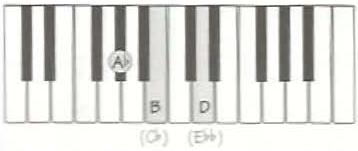
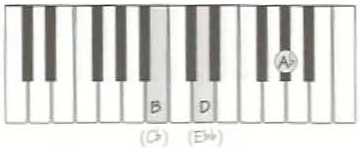
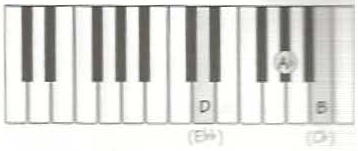
Bdim

Cdim

C♯dim/D♭dim

Ddim

Diminished (cont.)

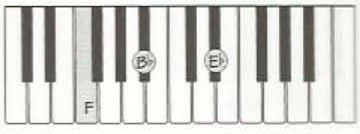
Root	1st Inversion	2nd Inversion
E♭dim		
		
Edim		
		
Fdim		
		
F♯dim/G♭dim		
		
Gdim		
		
A♭dim		
		

Suspended Fourth

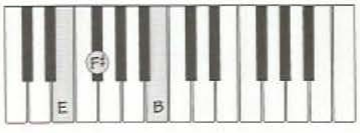
Root	1st Inversion	2nd Inversion

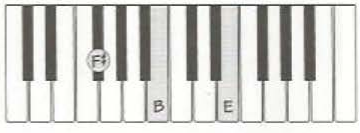
Asus

B♭sus



Bsus





Csus

C♯sus/D♭sus

Dsus

Suspended Fourth (cont.)

Root	1st Inversion	2nd Inversion

E♭sus

Esus

Fsus

F♯sus/G♭sus

Gsus

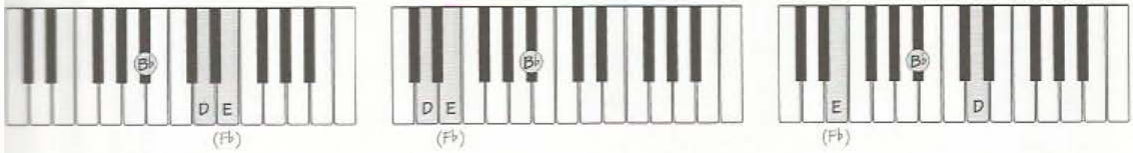
A♭sus

Flatted Fifth

Root	1st Inversion	2nd Inversion

A(♭5)

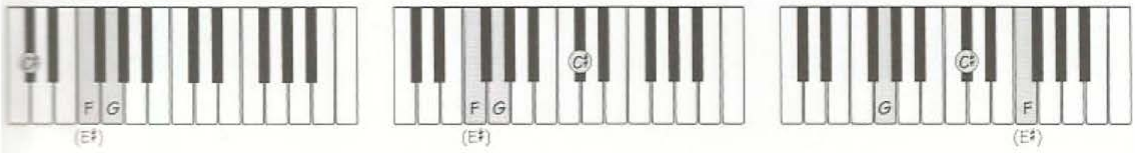
B♭(♭5)



B(♭5)

C(♭5)

C♯(♭5)/D♭(♭5)

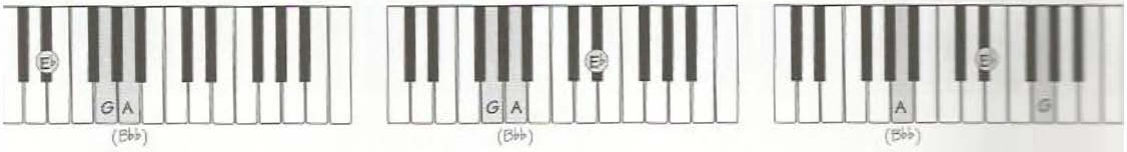


D(♭5)

Flatted Fifth (cont.)

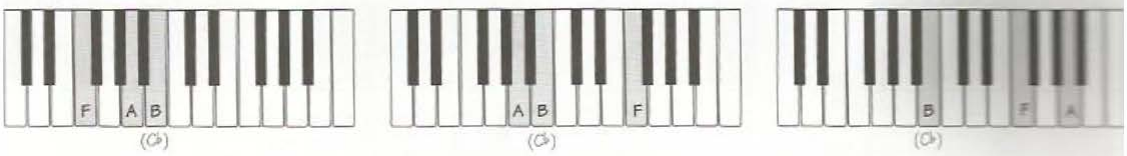
Root	1st Inversion	2nd Inversion

E♭(♭5)



E(♭5)

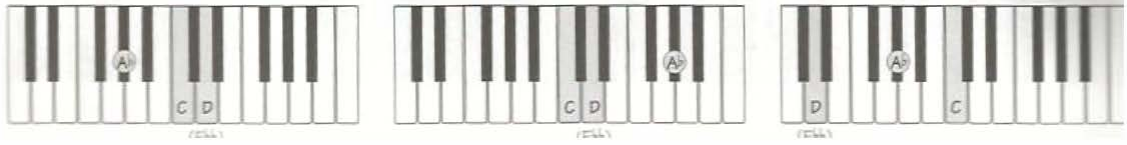
F(♭5)



F♯(♭5)/G♭(♭5)

G(♭5)

A♭(♭5)

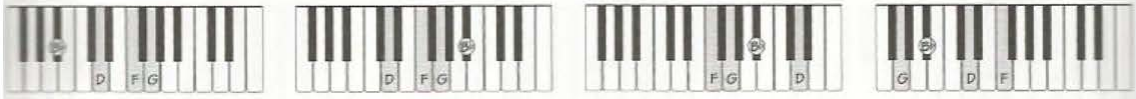


Sixth

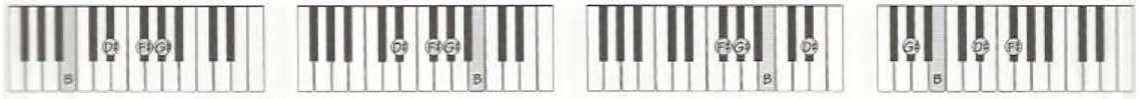
Root	1st Inversion	2nd Inversion	3rd Inversion

A6

B♭6



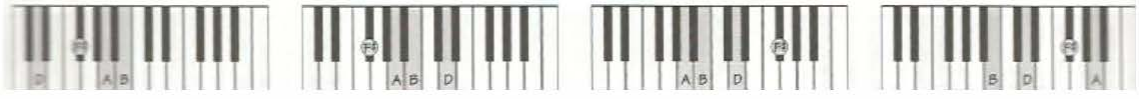
B6



C6

C♯6/D♭6

D6



Sixth (cont.)

Root	1st Inversion	2nd Inversion	3rd Inversion

E♭6

E6

F6

F♯6/G♭6

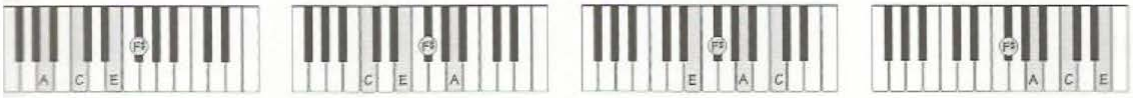
G6

A♭6

Minor Sixth

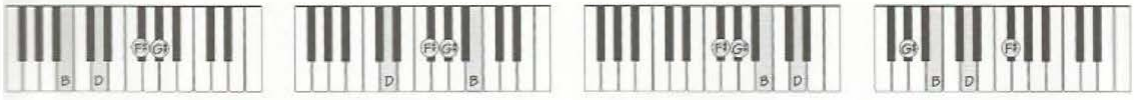
Root	1st Inversion	2nd Inversion	3rd Inversion

Am6



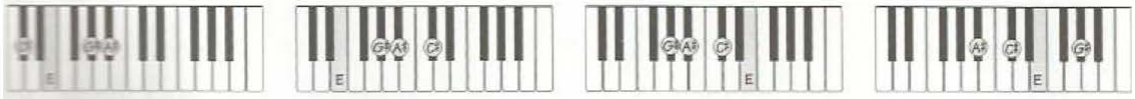
B♭m6

Bm6

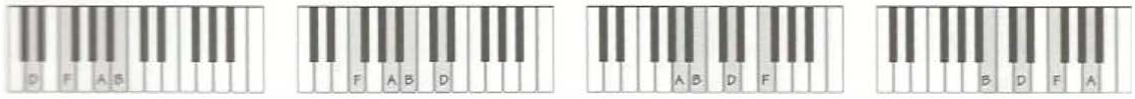


Cm6

C♯m6/D♭m6



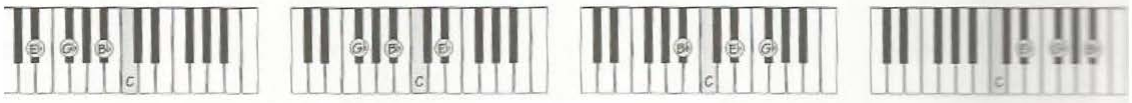
Dm6



Minor Sixth (cont.)

Root	1st Inversion	2nd Inversion	3rd Inversion

E♭m6

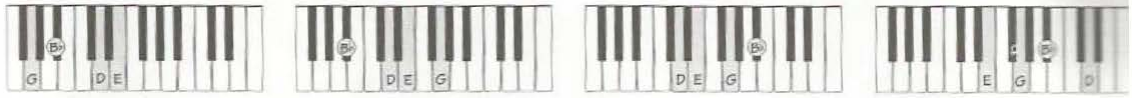


Em6

Fm6

F♯m6/G♭m6

Gm6



A♭m6

Seventh

Root	1st Inversion	2nd Inversion	3rd Inversion

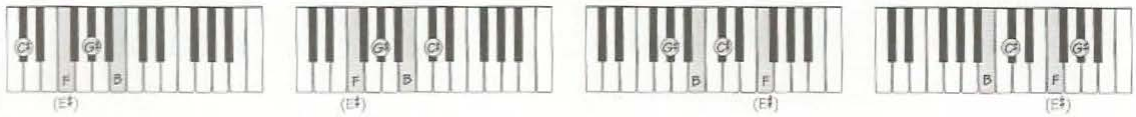
A7

B♭7

B7

C7

C♯7/D♭7



D7

Seventh (cont.)

Root	1st Inversion	2nd Inversion	3rd Inversion

E♭7

E7

F7

F♯7/G♭7

G7

A♭7

Minor Seventh

Root	1st Inversion	2nd Inversion	3rd Inversion

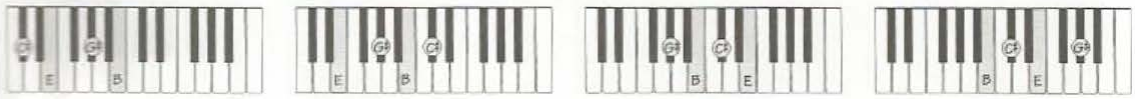
Am7

B♭m7

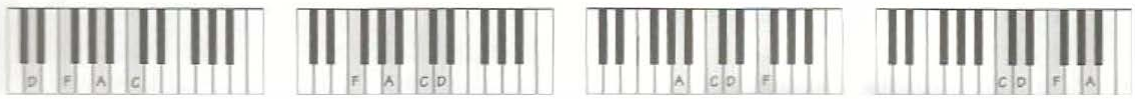
Bm7

Cm7

C♯m7/D♭m7



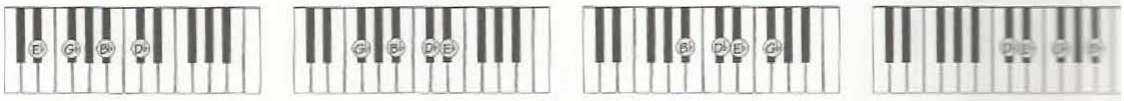
Dm7



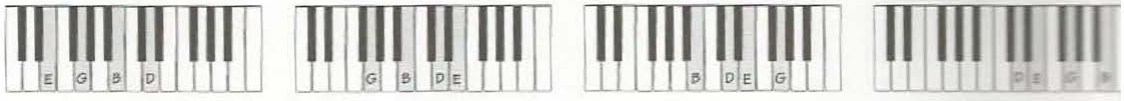
Minor Seventh (cont.)

Root	1st Inversion	2nd Inversion	3rd Inversion

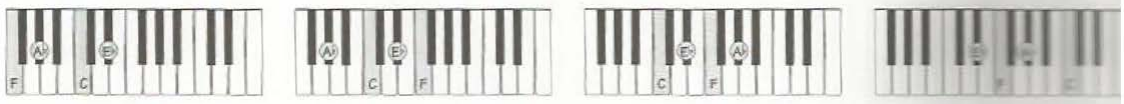
E♭m7



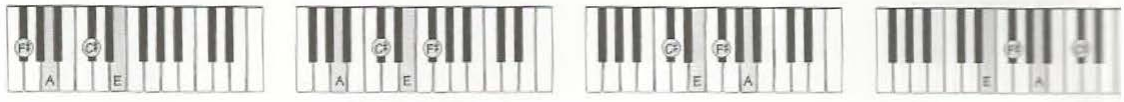
Em7



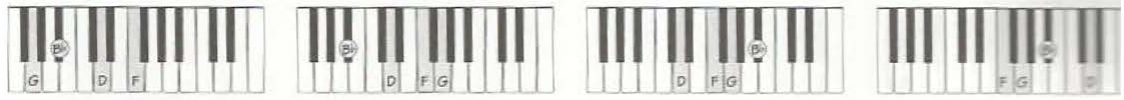
Fm7



F♯m7/G♭m7



Gm7



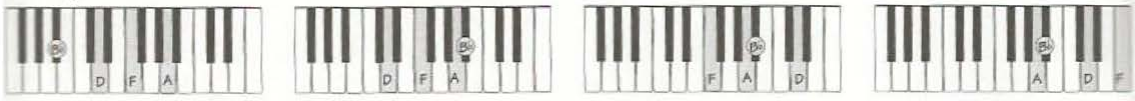
A♭m7

Major Seventh

Root	1st Inversion	2nd Inversion	3rd Inversion

Amaj7

B♭maj7



Bmaj7

Cmaj7

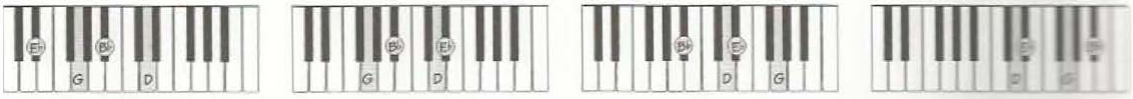
C♯maj7/D♭maj7

Dmaj7

Major Seventh (cont.)

Root	1st Inversion	2nd Inversion	3rd Inversion

E♭maj7



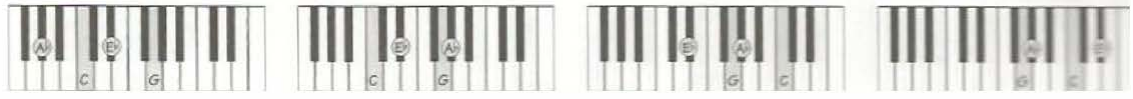
Emaj7

Fmaj7

F♯maj7/G♭maj7

Gmaj7

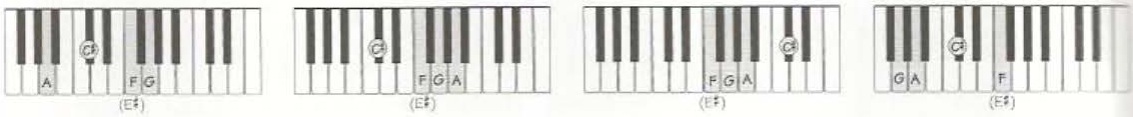
A♭maj7



Seventh, Sharp Fifth

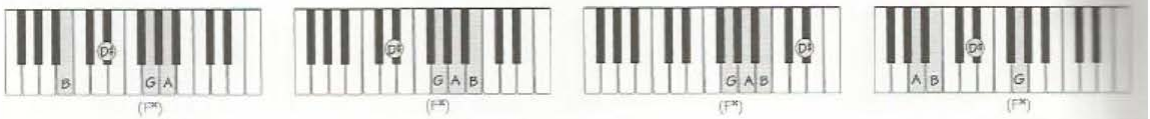
Root	1st Inversion	2nd Inversion	3rd Inversion

A7♯5



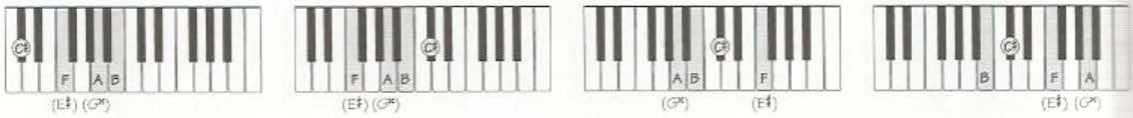
B♭7♯5

B7♯5



C7♯5

C♯7♯5/D♭7♯5



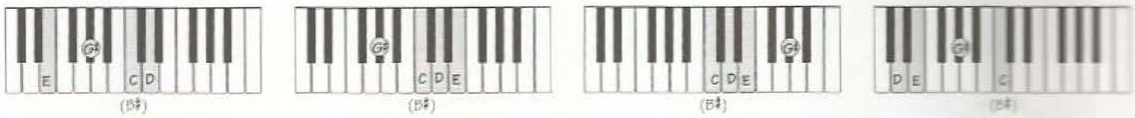
D7♯5

Seventh, Sharp Fifth (cont.)

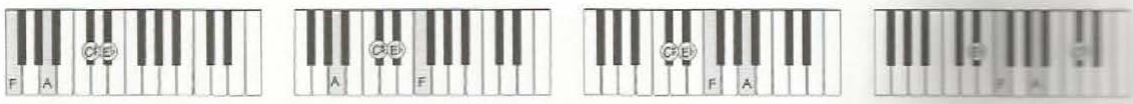
Root	1st Inversion	2nd Inversion	3rd Inversion

E♭7♯5

E7♯5



F7♯5



F♯7♯5/G♭7♯5

G7♯5

A♭7♯5

Diminished Seventh

Root	1st Inversion	2nd Inversion	3rd Inversion

Adim7

B♭dim7

Bdim7

Cdim7

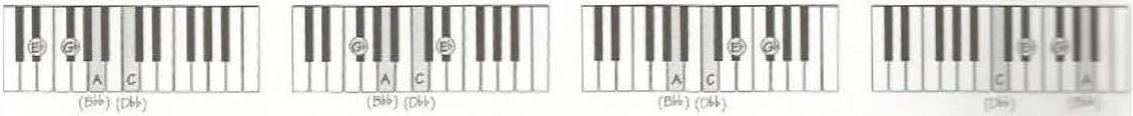
C♯dim7/D♭dim7

Ddim7

Diminished Seventh (cont.)

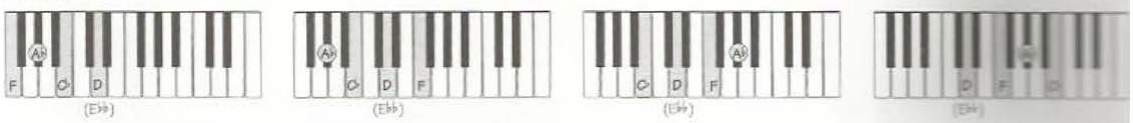
Root	1st Inversion	2nd Inversion	3rd Inversion

E♭dim7

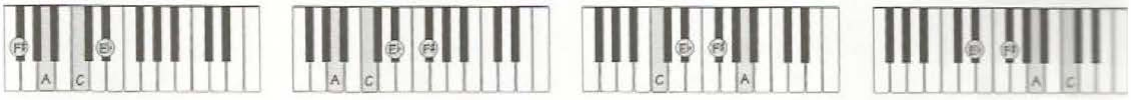


Edim7

Fdim7



F♯dim7/G♭dim7



Gdim7

A♭dim7

Seventh, Flat Fifth

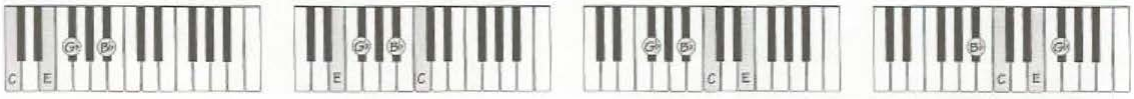
Root	1st Inversion	2nd Inversion	3rd Inversion

A7♭5

B♭7♭5

B7♭5

C7♭5



C♯7♭5/D♭7♭5

D7♭5

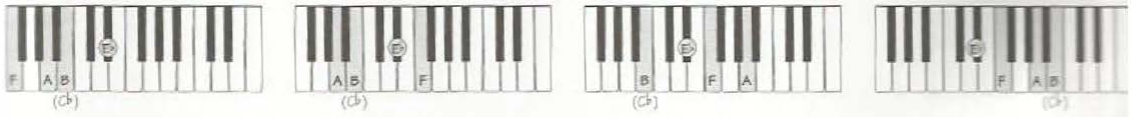
Seventh, Flat Fifth (cont.)

Root	1st Inversion	2nd Inversion	3rd Inversion

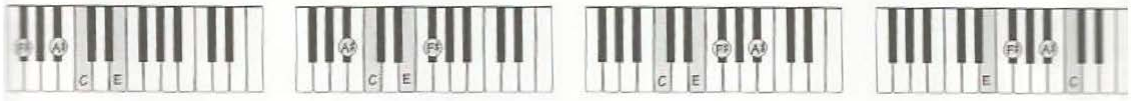
E♭7♭5

E7♭5

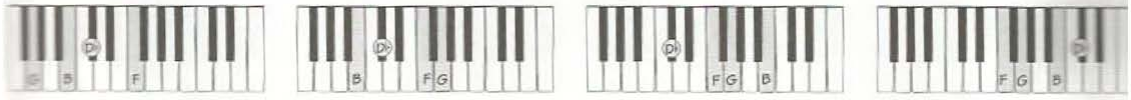
F7♭5



F♯7♭5/G♭7♭5



G7♭5



A♭7♭5

Minor Seventh, Flat Fifth

Root	1st Inversion	2nd Inversion	3rd Inversion

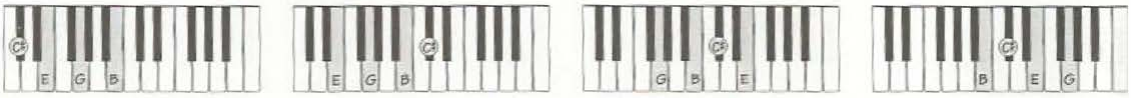
Am7♭5

B♭m7♭5

Bm7♭5

Cm7♭5

C♯m7♭5/D♭m7♭5

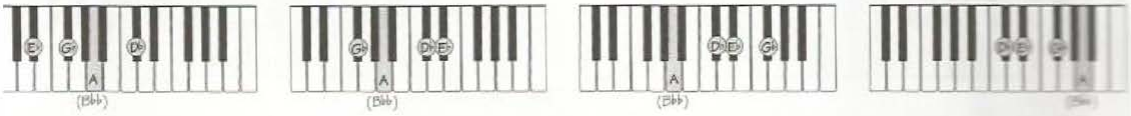


Dm7♭5

Minor Seventh, Flat Fifth (cont.)

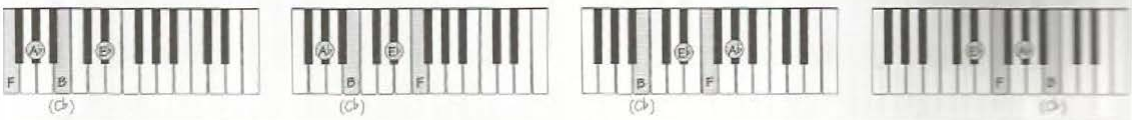
Root	1st Inversion	2nd Inversion	3rd Inversion

E♭m7♭5



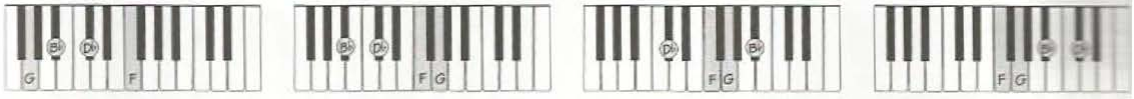
Em7♭5

Fm7♭5



F♯m7♭5/G♭m7♭5

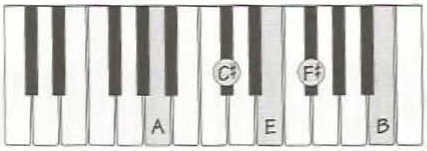
Gm7♭5



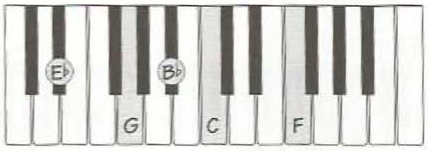
A♭m7♭5

Sixth, Added Ninth

A6/9

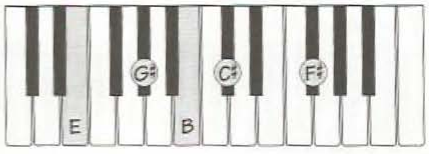


E♭6/9



B♭6/9

E6/9

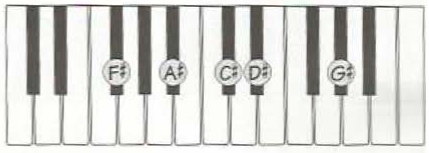


B6/9

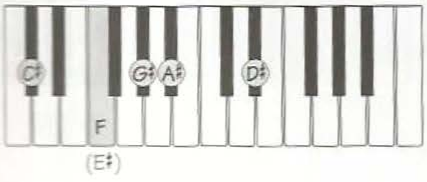
F6/9

C6/9

F♯6/9
G♭6/9

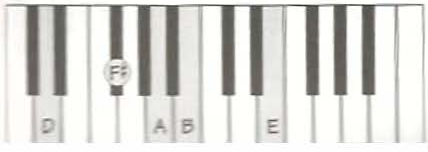


C♯6/9
D♭6/9

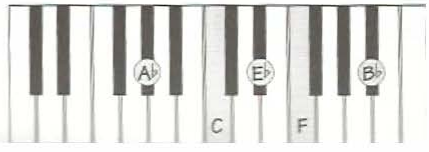


G6/9

D6/9

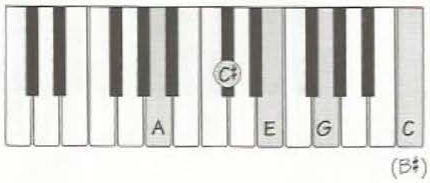


A♭6/9



Seventh, Sharp Ninth

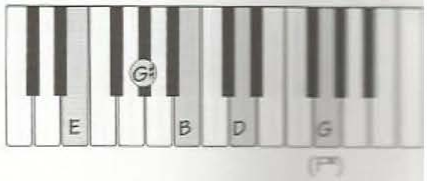
A7♯9



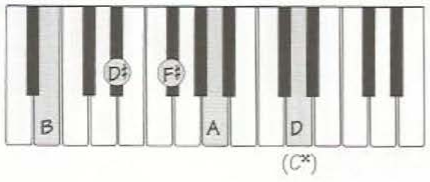
E♭7♯9

B♭7♯9

E7♯9



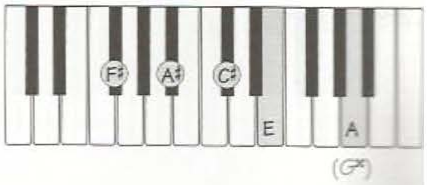
B7♯9



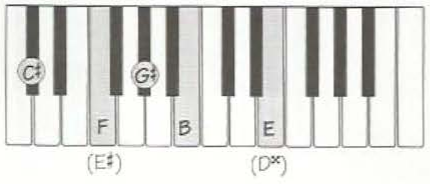
F7♯9

C7♯9

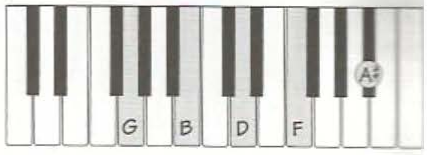
F♯7♯9/
G♭7♯9



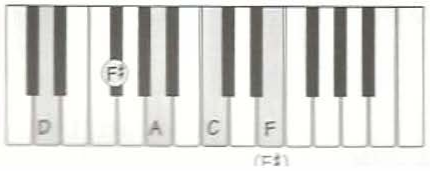
C♯7♯9/
D♭7♯9



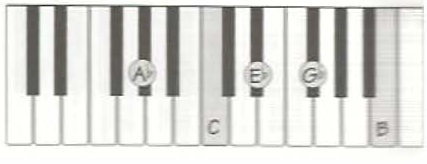
G7♯9



D7♯9



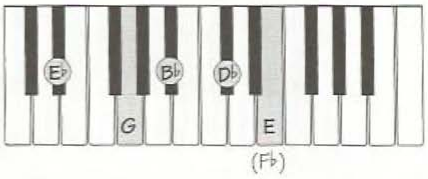
A♭7♯9



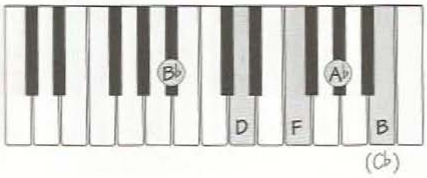
Seventh, Flat Ninth

A7♭9

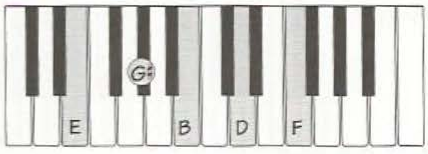
E♭7♭9



B♭7♭9



E7♭9



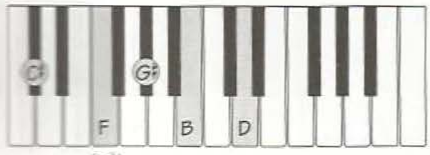
B7♭9

F7♭9

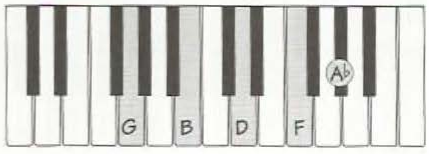
C7♭9

F♯7♭9/
G♭7♭9

C♯7♭9/
D♭7♭9

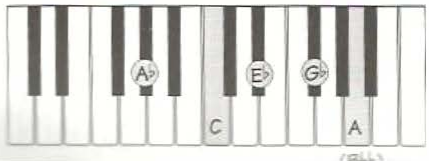


G7♭9



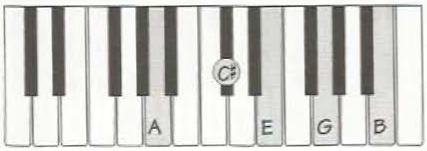
D7♭9

A♭7♭9



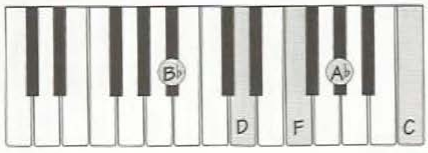
Ninth

A9

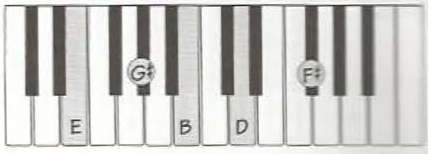


E♭9

B♭9



E9



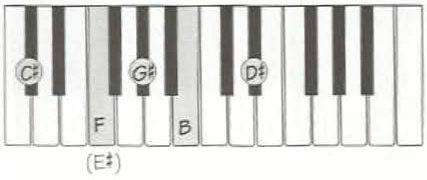
B9

F9

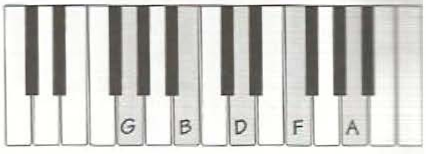
C9

F♯9/
G♭9

C♯9/
D9

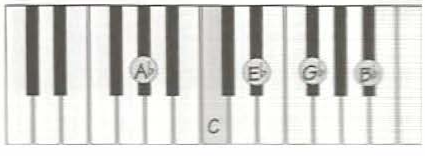


G9



D9

A♭9



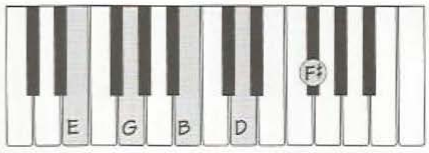
Minor Ninth

Am9

E♭m9

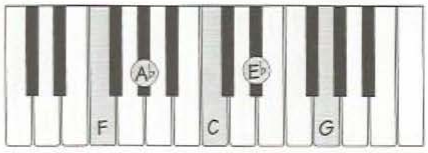
B♭m9

Em9

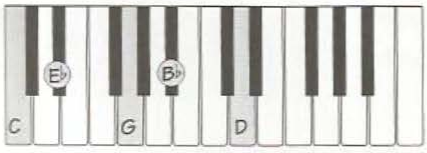


Bm9

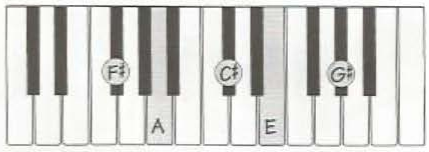
Fm9



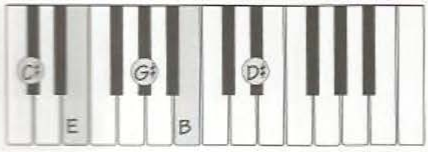
Cm9



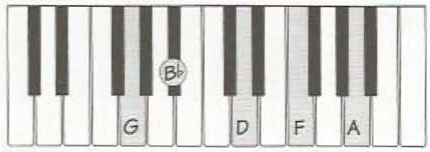
F♯m9/
G♭m9



C♯m9/
D♭m9

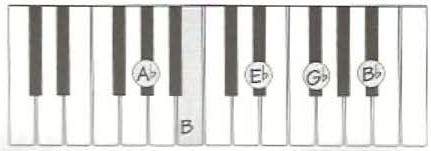


Gm9



Dm9

A♭m9

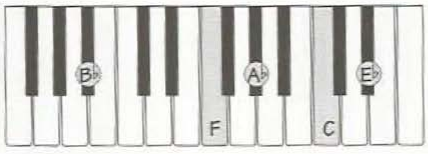


Eleventh

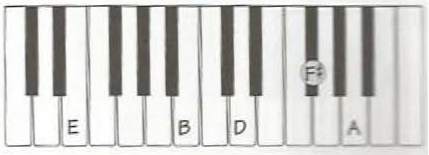
A11

E♭11

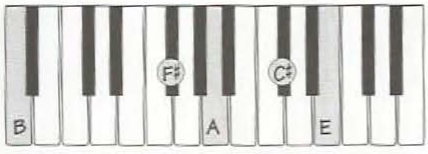
B♭11



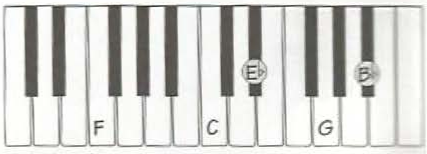
E11



B11

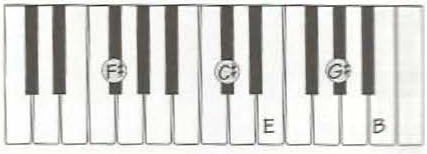


F11

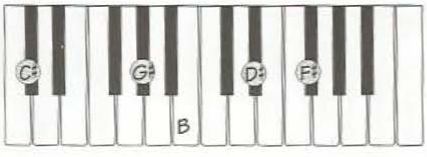


C11

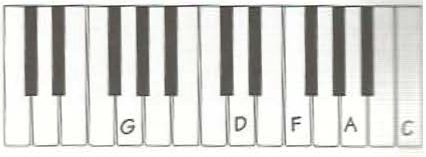
F♯11/
G♭11



C♯11/
D♭11

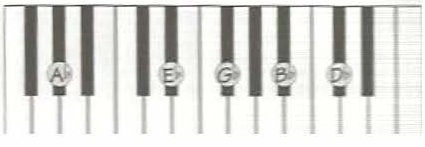


G11



D11

A♭11

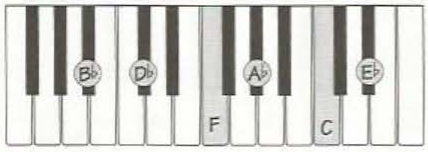


Minor Eleventh

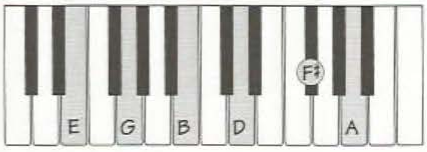
Am11

E♭m11

B♭m11

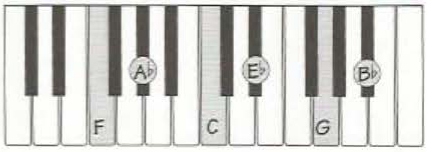


Em11



Bm11

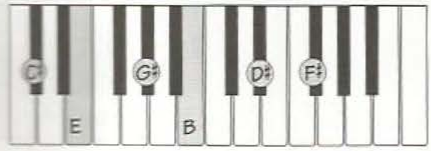
Fm11



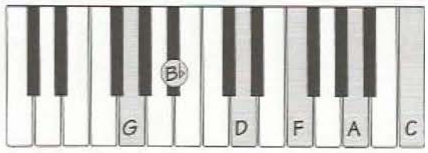
Cm11

F♯m11/
G♭m11

C♯m11/
D♭m11



Gm11



Dm11

A♭m11

Thirteenth

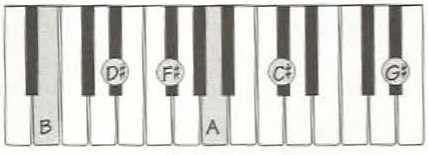
A13

E♭13

B♭13

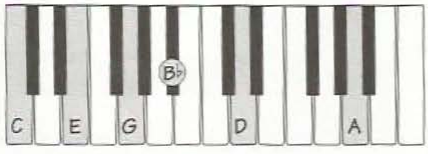
E13

B13

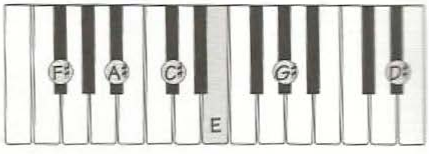


F13

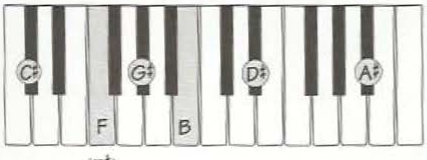
C13



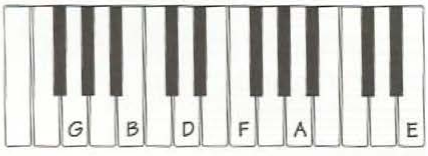
F♯13/
G♭13



C♯13/
D♭13



G13



D13

A♭13

SCALES

BUILDING SCALES

Scale (from L. *scala*, ladder): a progression of notes in a specific order. Also, the "skin" on a fish!

Scales are very important to know, especially when it comes to playing a solo. This section is an easy reference for constructing, locating and playing the essential scales on your keyboard. By the end of this section, you can use scales to improvise over the "Jam Session" on the CD.

One step at a time...

Each scale has a specific pattern of whole steps, half steps, and sometimes one and a half steps. To build a scale, simply choose a root note and apply a pattern. We've given you two ways to build (or "spell") each scale:

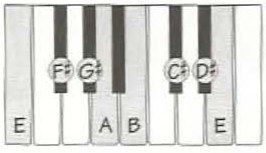
1. Note Names

(ex. A—B—C—D—E—F—G—A)

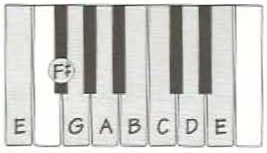
The most common way to spell a scale is by its note names. The note names for each scale are relative to the root note. Of course, the note names of a scale will vary (natural, sharp or flat) depending on the pattern of steps used to create that scale.

Here's a comparison of E major and E minor. Notice how the spelling is different for the third, sixth and seventh tones:

E major



E minor



2. Step Pattern

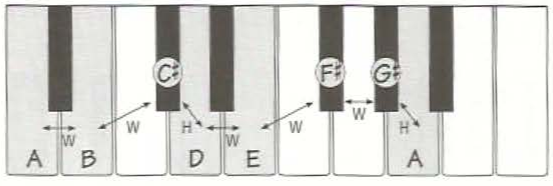
(ex. W—H—W—W—H—W+H—H)

This pattern tells you how many steps to move from one scale tone to the next, using abbreviations for whole step (W), half step (H) and 1 1/2 steps (W+H). Simply start on any root note and move up accordingly.

☞ REMEMBER: Sharps and flats are unavoidable with scales (except for C major and A minor). So, don't be alarmed if a particular step causes you to play one.

Here's an example of building a major scale on the root note A, using a step pattern:

Step pattern = W—W—H—W—W—W—H



Rockin' result = A–B–C♯–D–E–F♯–G♯–A

Pick a hand, any hand...

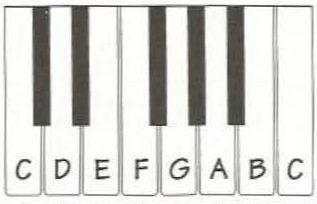
You'll notice that each of the scale patterns in this book are shown in diagrams rather than notation. This is so you can learn to play them with either the right or left hand (or both at the same time!)

Speakin' of fingering...

When playing scales, it's extremely important to use correct fingering. Please make it a habit to learn the correct fingering at the same time you learn each scale pattern.

Notice that the fingering differs according to the direction you are playing the scale—up or down.

C major



RH:	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
LH:	5	4	3	2	1	3	2	1

Correct fingering will enable you to play faster, smoother, and just plain better!

☞ PRACTICE TIP: Make sure you play each scale forward and then backward. And, as always, start out slow and gradually build up speed as you build up confidence.

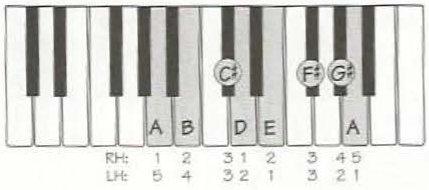
That's about all...good luck and have fun!

MAJOR

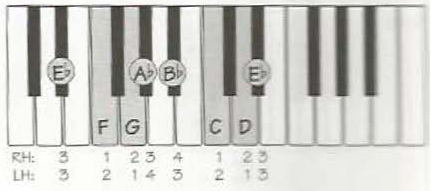
The most common scale used in music is the **major** scale, so learn it well! It consists of eight consecutive notes ascending or descending.

Step pattern: W—W—H—W—W—W—H

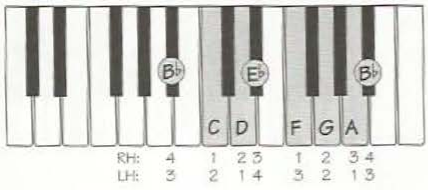
A



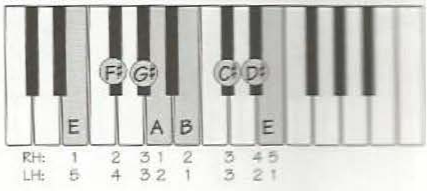
E♭



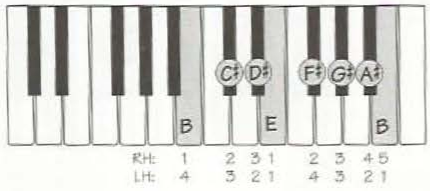
B♭



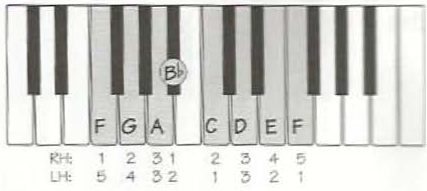
E



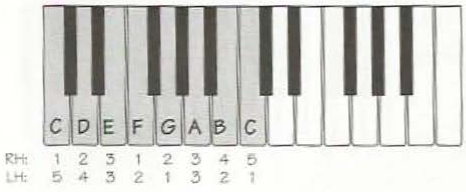
B



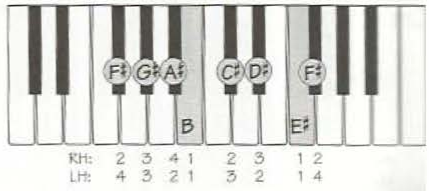
F



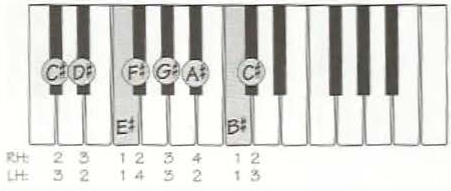
C



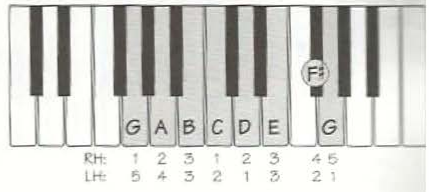
F♯/G♭



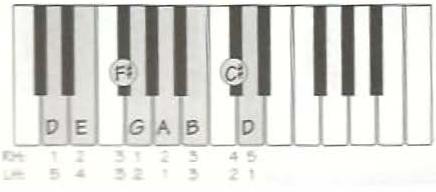
C♯/D♭



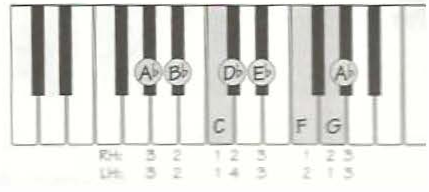
G



D



A♭

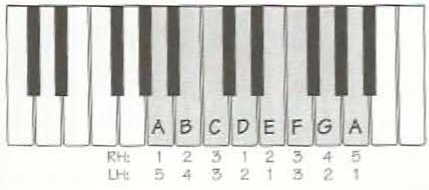


MINOR

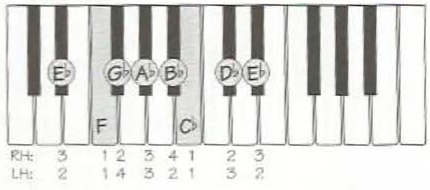
This scale is used in nearly all styles of Western music. It's sometimes referred to as the "pure minor," "relative minor," or "Aeolian mode."

Step pattern: W—H—W—W—H—W—W

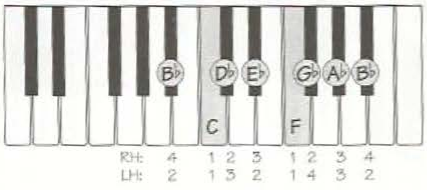
Am



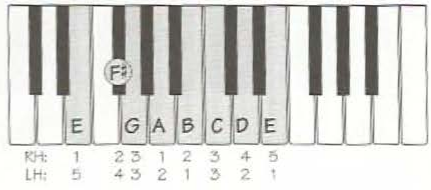
E♭m



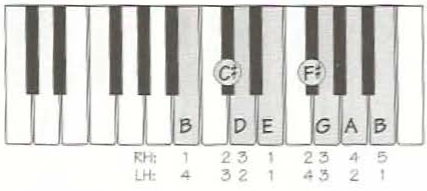
B♭m



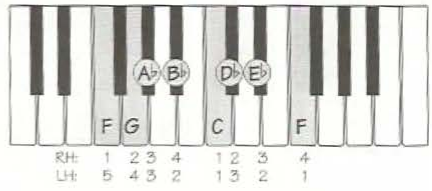
Em



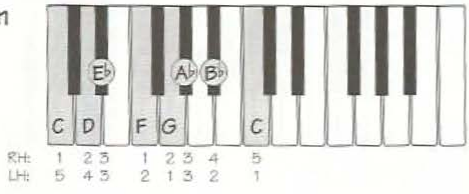
Bm



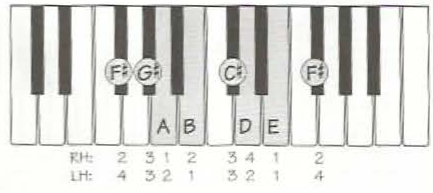
Fm



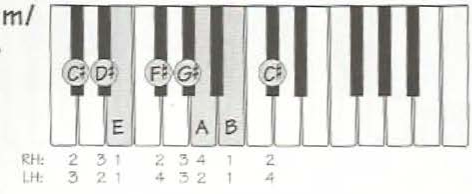
Cm



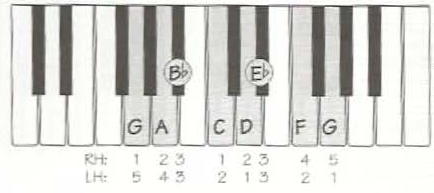
F♯m/G♭m



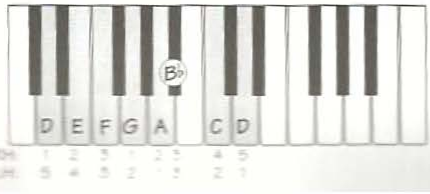
C♯m/D♭



Gm



Dm



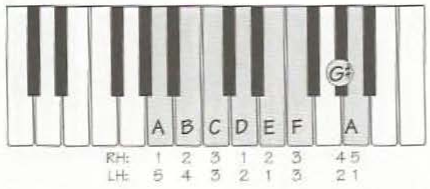
A♭m

HARMONIC MINOR

This scale provides an alternative minor scale type and is very common in classical music.

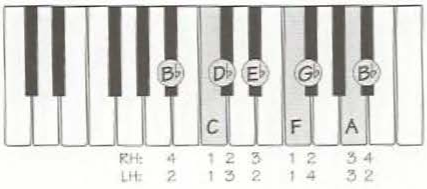
Step pattern: W—H—W—W—H—W+H—H

Am



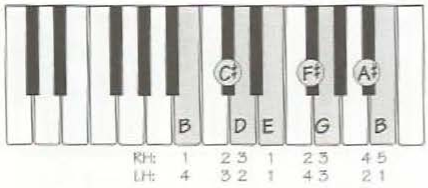
E♭m

B♭m

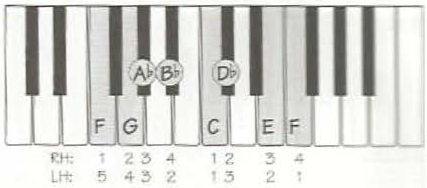


Em

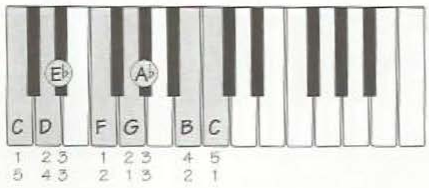
Bm



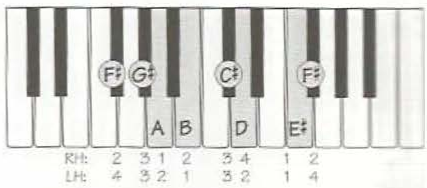
Fm



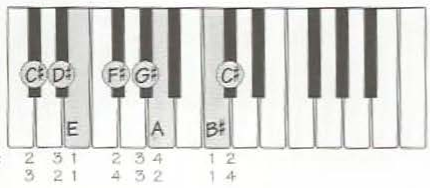
Cm



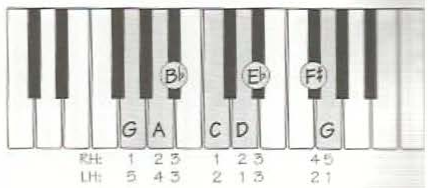
F♯m/
G♭m



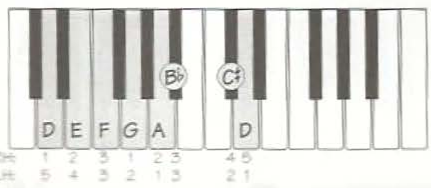
C♯m/
D♭m



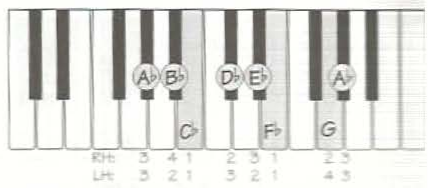
Gm



Dm



A♭m

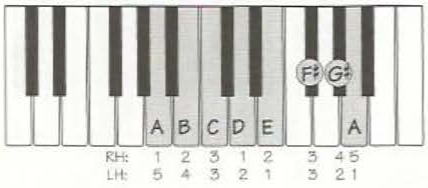


MELODIC MINOR

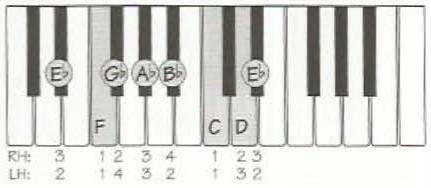
This scale can also be used over minor chords and is commonly referred to as the "jazz minor" scale.

Step pattern: W—H—W—W—W—W—H

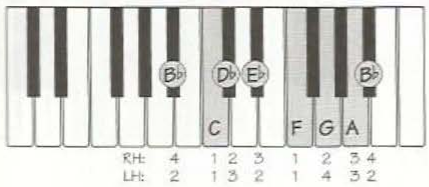
Am



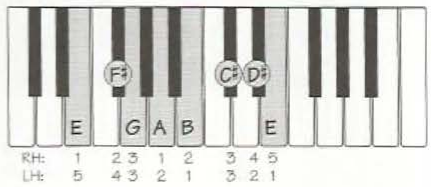
E♭m



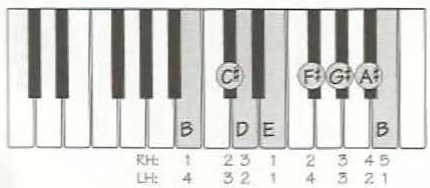
B♭m



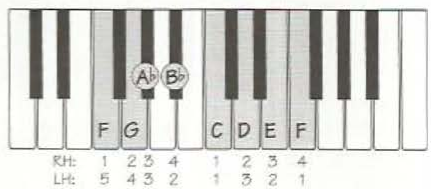
Em



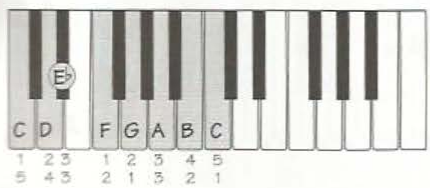
Bm



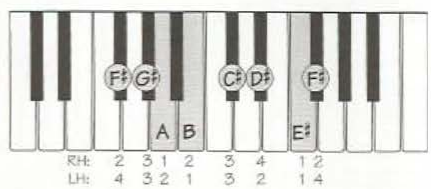
Fm



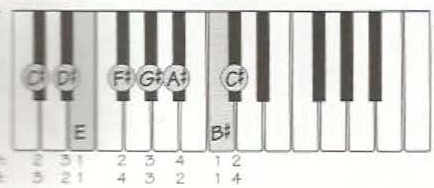
Cm



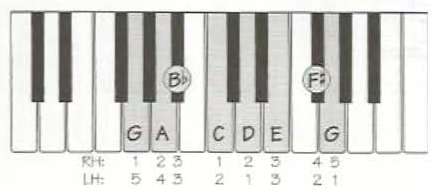
F♯m/
G♭m



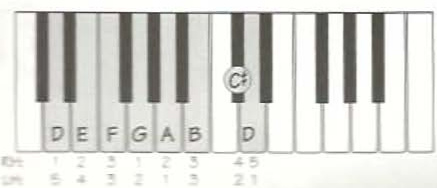
C♯m/
D♭m



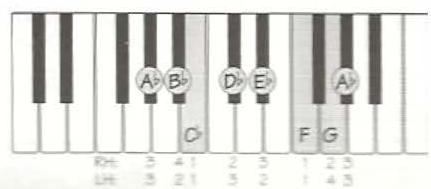
Gm



Dm



A♭m

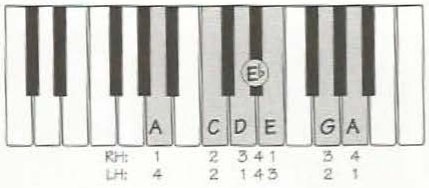


BLUES

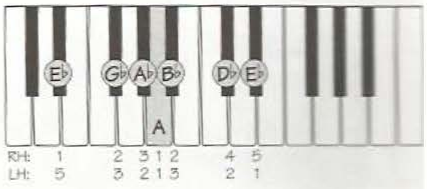
The **blues** scale is common in jazz, rock, and (you guessed it!) blues music. It contains an added **blues note** (♭5) from the minor pentatonic scale but has only seven tones.

Step pattern: W+H—W—H—H—W+H—W

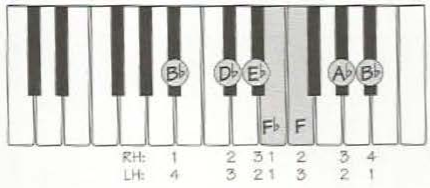
A



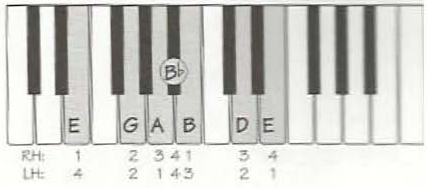
E♭



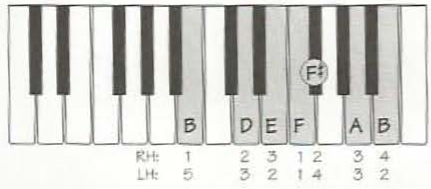
B♭



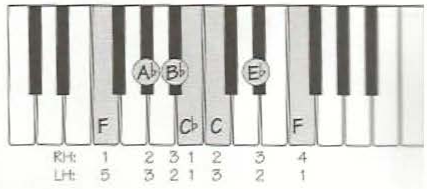
E



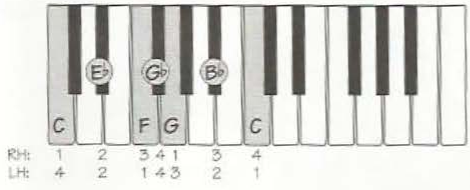
B



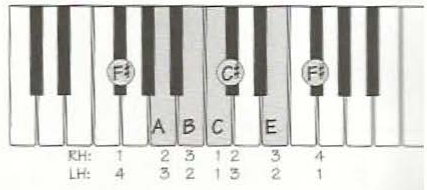
F



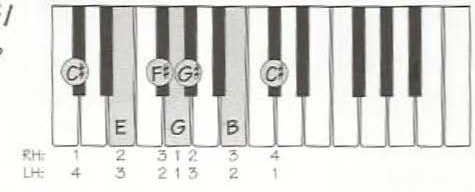
C



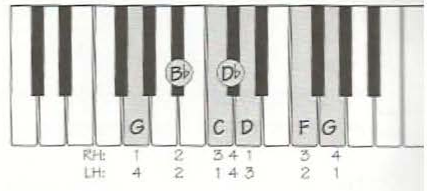
F♯/G♭



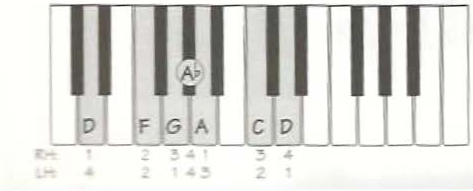
C♯/D♭



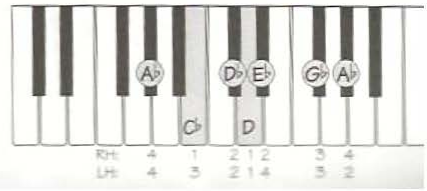
G



D

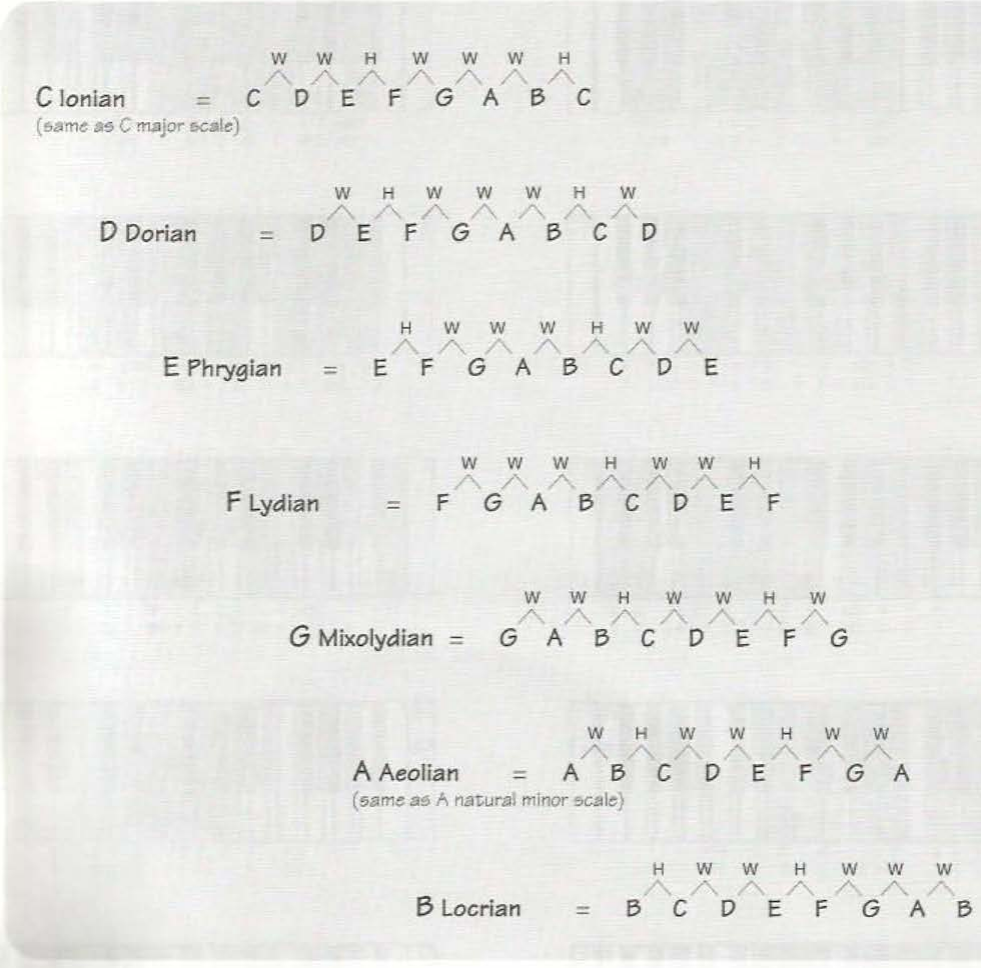


A♭



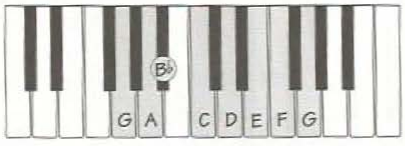
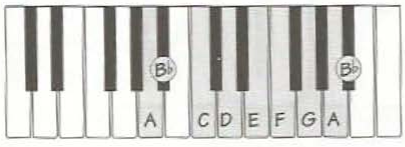
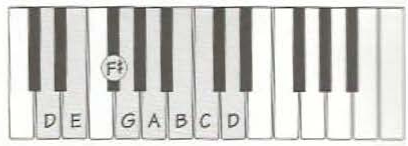
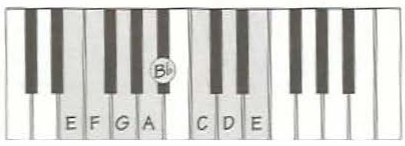
MODES

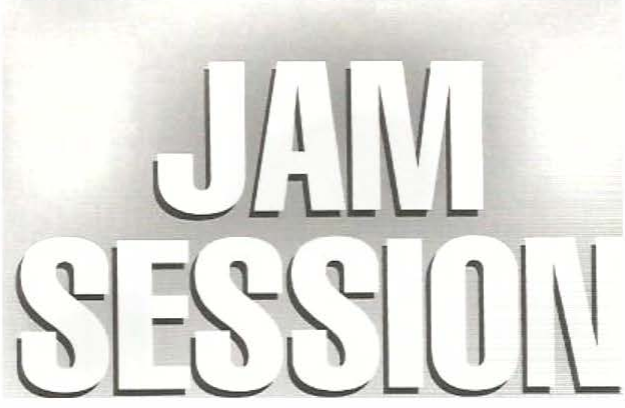
Modes are like scales—each uses a specific pattern of whole steps and half steps. The difference is that a mode is not related to the **key** of its root note. That is, a Dorian mode built on C is not in the key of C. The seven modes in common practice today are derived from the seven notes of the major scale:



As you can see, each mode is actually a variation of the major scale. They differ only in the arrangement of the intervals.

The next page shows each mode on two different root notes. Once you understand it, try applying the patterns to each of the other ten root notes...

	F	G
Ionian		
Dorian		
Phrygian		
Lydian		
Mixolydian		
Aeolian		
Locrian		


JAM
SESSION

JAM SESSION

Time to charge admission...

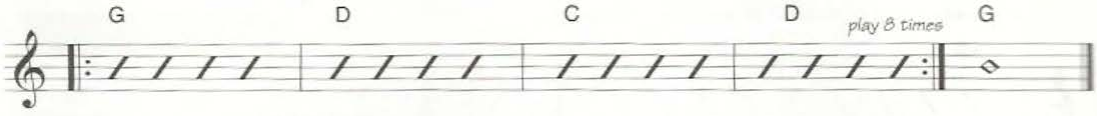
Now it's time to use the chords and scales from this book and make some **actual music!** This section provides twenty chord progressions found in various music styles. Play along with the CD. You can either follow the chord symbols and play along, or use the suggested scales to practice improvising.

Either way, turn it up, and let's jam!

QUICK REMINDER: The audio icons that accompany each example correspond with the track numbers on the CD.

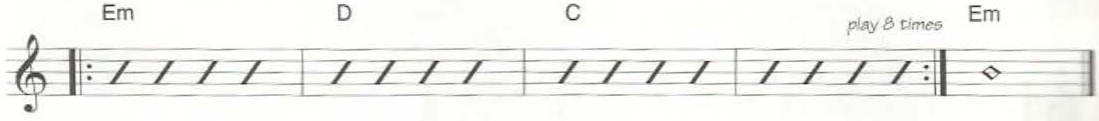
1 Heavenly Ballad

suggested scale: G major



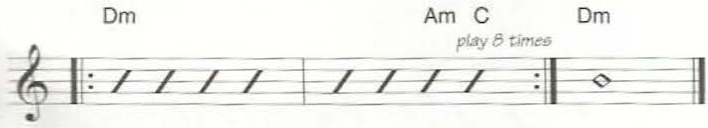
2 Medium Rock

suggested scale: E minor



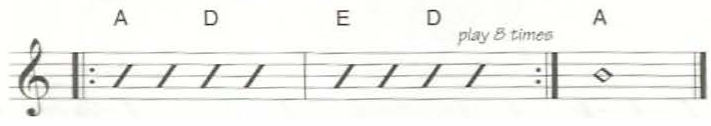
3 Wall of Fame

suggested scales: D minor, D blues



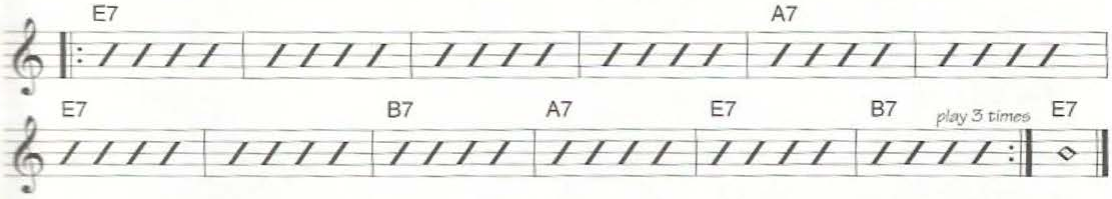
4 Wild and Crazy

suggested scale: A blues



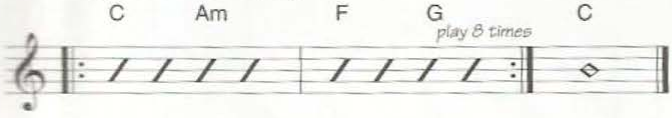
5 Full Deck Shuffle

suggested scales: E blues, E minor pentatonic



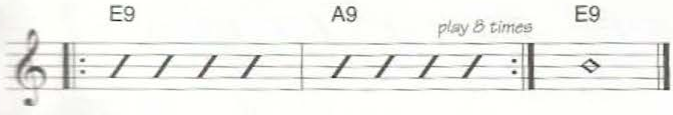
6 Generic Pop

suggested scale: C major



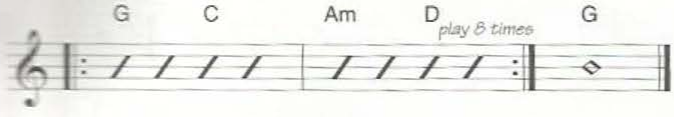
7 Funky Feeling

suggested scale/mode: E blues, E Mixolydian



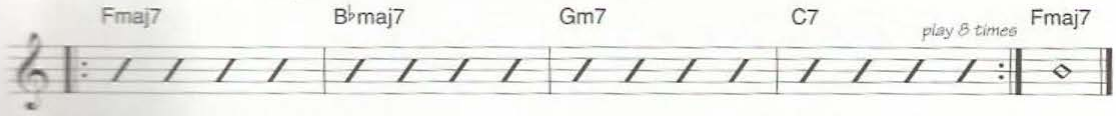
8 Don't Stop

suggested scales: G major, E minor



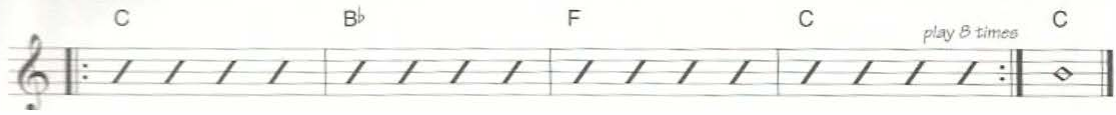
9 Smooth Jazz

suggested scale: F major



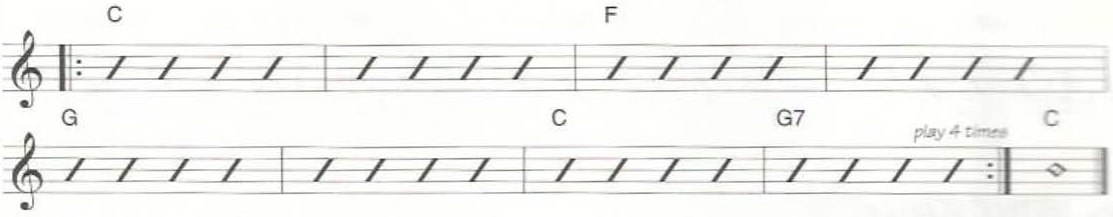
10 Overtime

suggested scales: C blues, C minor



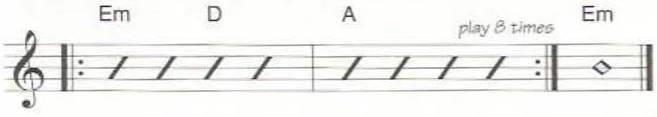
11 Nashville Dreamin'

suggested scale: C major



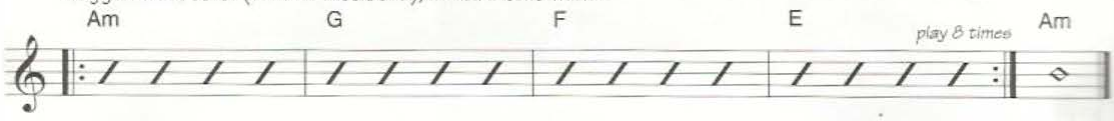
12 Heavy Rock

suggested scale: E Dorian



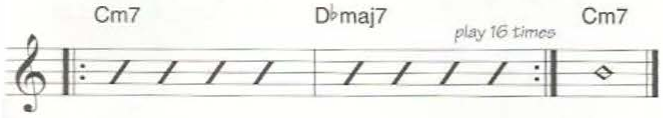
13 Alley Cat

suggested scale: (first three measures), A minor
suggested scale: (fourth measure), A harmonic minor



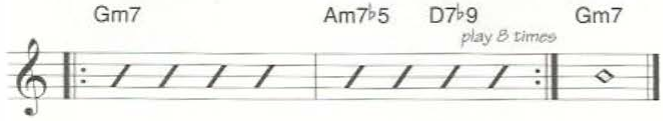
14 Fusion

suggested scale: C Phrygian



15 South of the Border

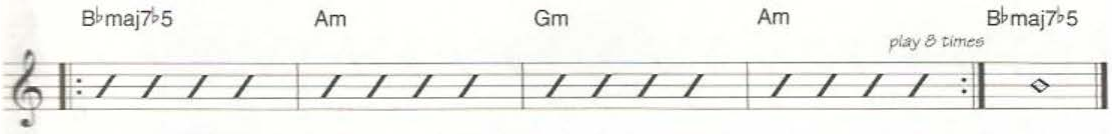
suggested scales: G blues, G minor, G harmonic minor



Don't stop there! Turn the page...

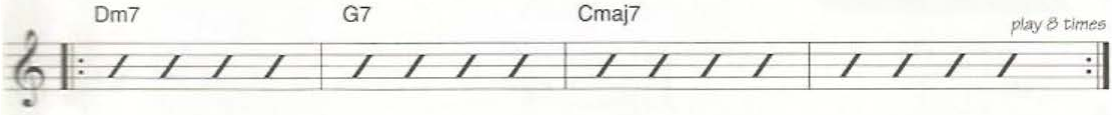
16 Scare Us

suggested scale/mode: A blues, B♭ Lydian



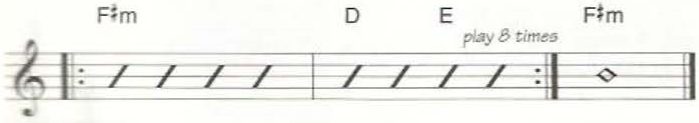
17 Swing It!

suggested mode: C Ionian (C major)



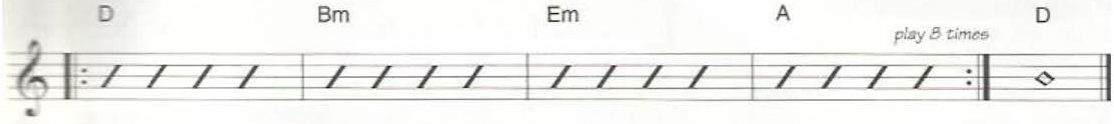
18 Metal Mix

suggested scale: F♯ minor



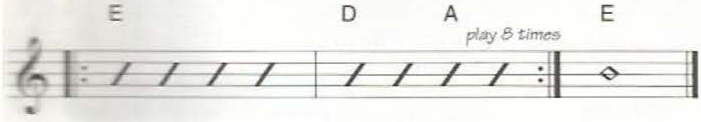
19 Rock 'n' Roll

suggested scale: D major



20 Outta Here

suggested mode: E Mixolydian



Bravo! You're ready for the big leagues...

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