

# Basic Tools For Improvisation

This document is to help guide you through some of the basic tools needed to start understanding chords and scales related to improvisation. These are things that you should be working on daily.

Ways to practice:

1. Pick one key and move through the variations  
(Ex: Major Scale Modes, 3rds, Triads and 7th chords in one key)
2. Pick one variation and move it through 12 keys  
(7th chords chords in all 12 keys)

These exercises will make more sense as we move through the sheet.

## Scales

Scales are an important aspect of improvisation, but are not the key to improvisation.

Melody is the key, but we need to understand the scale to create melody.

We are going to look at the major scale and the modes of each scale (playing the scale from different scale degrees).

The image displays two rows of musical notation for the C major scale and its modes. Each row contains four measures, each representing a different mode. The first row shows the Ionian, Dorian, Phrygian, and Lydian modes. The second row shows the Mixolydian, Aeolian, and Locrian modes, followed by another Ionian mode. The notation is in 4/4 time and uses a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature remains C major throughout.

Above is the C major scale and the modes built from all the degrees of the scale. Notice how the key signature didn't change.

There are 4 important modes that we must know to start Improvising

- 1. Ionian (root)**
- 2. Dorian (2nd degree)**
- 3. Mixolydian (5th degree)**
- 4. Locrian (7th degree)**

**C**ma<sup>7</sup>

Musical notation for the C major scale (Ionian Mode) in treble and bass clefs. The treble clef shows the scale starting on middle C (C4) and ascending to C5. The bass clef shows the scale starting on C3 and ascending to C4. The notes are: C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C.

For Improvisation on a Major chord, we use the Major Scale

**D**mi<sup>7</sup>

Musical notation for the D minor scale (Dorian Mode) in treble and bass clefs. The treble clef shows the scale starting on D4 and ascending to D5. The bass clef shows the scale starting on D3 and ascending to D4. The notes are: D, E, F, G, A, B, C, D.

For minor chord improvisation, we use the 2nd mode of the major scale (dorian).

Example: If we see a E<sub>mi</sub>7 chord (we should know the E is the 2nd degree of a D Major Scale (2#'s) So an E<sub>mi</sub> Dorian scale had the same key signature as D Major

**G**<sup>7</sup>

Musical notation for the G major scale (Mixolydian Mode) in treble and bass clefs. The treble clef shows the scale starting on G4 and ascending to G5. The bass clef shows the scale starting on G3 and ascending to G4. The notes are: G, A, B, C, D, E, F, G.

For Dominant Chord Improvisation, we use the 5th mode of the major scale (mixolydian)

Example: If we see an C7 chord (we should know that C is the 5th degree of a F Major Scale (1 $\flat$ ) So a C7 Mixolydian scale has the same key signature as F Major

**B**mi<sup>7(b5)</sup>

Musical notation for the B minor scale (Locrian Mode) in treble and bass clefs. The treble clef shows the scale starting on B4 and ascending to B5. The bass clef shows the scale starting on B3 and ascending to B4. The notes are: B, C, D, E, F, G, A, B.

For Minor7 $\flat$ 5 Chord Improvisation, we use the 7th mode of the major scale (Locrian)

Example: If we see an D<sub>mi</sub>7 $\flat$ 5 chord (we should know that D is the 7th degree of an E $\flat$  Major Scale (3 $\flat$ 's) So a D<sub>mi</sub>7 $\flat$ 5 Locrian scale has the same key signature as E $\flat$  Major

The chords related to the modes we talked about will make sense as we move through this handout. Before we start to understand and learn how to build chords, we need to understand a very important interval. That interval is the interval of a 3rd (major and minor). Chords are just intervals of 3rd stacked on top of each other.

The first interval below is a Major 3rd. Why? because it's the 3rd note of a C major scale (see example 1)

We can also figure out the interval using 1/2 intervals (chromatic scale)  
A Major 3rd interval will have 4 1/2 steps (see example 2)

The image shows a musical staff with two systems (treble and bass clef) and three measures. The first measure shows a C major scale starting on middle C. The second measure shows a bracketed interval from C4 to E4 labeled "[example 1]". The third measure shows a chromatic scale from C4 to E4 with a bracketed interval labeled "[example 2]".

The next interval below is a minor 3rd. Why? because it's the 3rd note of a C minor scale (see example 1)

We can also figure out the interval using 1/2 intervals (chromatic scale)  
A minor 3rd interval will have 3 1/2 steps (see example 2)

The image shows a musical staff with two systems (treble and bass clef) and three measures. The first measure shows a C minor scale starting on middle C. The second measure shows a bracketed interval from C4 to Eb4 labeled "[example 1]". The third measure shows a chromatic scale from C4 to Eb4 with a bracketed interval labeled "[example 2]".

Now let's build diatonic 3rd's from every degree of the C Major scale. These will all consist of Major & minor 3rd's

Major 3rd                      minor 3rd                      minor 3rd                      Major 3rd

Major 3rd                      minor 3rd                      minor 3rd

minor 3rd                      Major 3rd                      Major 3rd                      minor 3rd

minor 3rd                      Major 3rd                      minor 3rd

A **Major triad** is the root, 3rd, and 5th of a major scale, but let's look at it through the construction of stacking intervals of 3rd's.

A major triad is a major 3rd (C to E) with a minor 3rd on top (E to G)

Count the 1/2 steps

**Cma**

The diagram illustrates the construction of the C major triad (Cma) on a grand staff. The first staff shows the chord in block form. The second staff shows the construction of the triad by stacking intervals: a major 3rd (C to E) and a minor 3rd (E to G).

A **minor triad** is the root, 3rd, and 5th of a minor scale, but let's look at it through the construction of stacking intervals of 3rd's.

A minor triad is a minor 3rd (C to E $\flat$ ) with a Major 3rd on top (E $\flat$  to G)

Count the 1/2 steps

**Cmi**

The diagram illustrates the construction of the C minor triad (Cmi) on a grand staff. The first staff shows the chord in block form. The second staff shows the construction of the triad by stacking intervals: a minor 3rd (C to E $\flat$ ) and a major 3rd (E $\flat$  to G).

A **diminished triad** is the root, 3rd, and 5th of a diminished scale, but let's look at it through the construction of stacking intervals of 3rd's.

A diminished triad is a minor 3rd (C to E $\flat$ ) with a minor 3rd on top (E $\flat$  to G $\flat$ )

Count the 1/2 steps (could be thought of as a major triad with a  $\flat 3$  &  $\flat 5$ )

**Cdim**

The diagram illustrates the construction of the C diminished triad (Cdim) on a grand staff. The first staff shows the chord in block form. The second staff shows the construction of the triad by stacking intervals: a minor 3rd (C to E $\flat$ ) and another minor 3rd (E $\flat$  to G $\flat$ ).

An **augmented triad** is the root, 3rd, and 5th of a whole tone scale, but let's look at it through the construction of stacking intervals of 3rd's.

An augmented triad is a Major 3rd (C to E) with a Major 3rd on top (E to G#)  
 Count the 1/2 steps (could be thought of as a major triad with a #5)

### Caug

Below are the triads that are built from every degree of the major scale. Learning these diatonic triads are essential foundational material and a key tool for improvisation.

Having established some foundational material, we will now look at building more jazz related chords. For this, we will stack another note on top of the triad creating 7th chords (root, 3rd 5th, 7th)

Let's start with the Major 7th chord. A Major scale is what we will use to create this chord. let's look at it through the construction of stacking intervals of 3rd's.

A **Major 7th chord** is scale degree 1,3,5,7 of the major scale.

The construction of stacked 3rd's are Major 3rd, minor 3rd, Major 3rd

**Cma<sup>7</sup>**

The diagram illustrates the construction of the C major 7th chord (Cma<sup>7</sup>) on a grand staff. The treble clef staff shows the notes C, E, G, and B $\flat$ . The bass clef staff shows the notes C, E, G, and B $\flat$ . Brackets indicate the intervals between the notes: Major 3rd between C and E, minor 3rd between E and G, and Major 3rd between G and B $\flat$ .

Now the **minor 7th chord**. A dorian scale is what we will use to create this chord. let's look at it through the construction of stacking intervals of 3rd's.

A minor 7th chord is scale degree 1,3,5,7 of the dorian scale.

The construction of stacked 3rd's are minor 3rd, Major 3rd, minor 3rd

Remember that dorian is built from the 2nd degree of the major scale so Cmi7 shares the key signature of B $\flat$  Major

**Cmi<sup>7</sup>**

The diagram illustrates the construction of the C minor 7th chord (Cmi<sup>7</sup>) on a grand staff. The treble clef staff shows the notes C, E $\flat$ , G, and B $\flat$ . The bass clef staff shows the notes C, E $\flat$ , G, and B $\flat$ . Brackets indicate the intervals between the notes: minor 3rd between C and E $\flat$ , Major 3rd between E $\flat$  and G, and minor 3rd between G and B $\flat$ .

Now the **dominant 7th chord**. A mixolydian scale is what we will use to create this chord. let's look at it through the construction of stacking intervals of 3rd's.

A dominant 7th chord is scale degree 1,3,5,7 of the mixolydian scale.  
The construction of stacked 3rd's are Major 3rd, minor 3rd, minor 3rd

Remember that mixolydian is built from the 5th degree of the major scale so C7 shares the key signature of F Major

**C<sup>7</sup>**

Major 3rd      minor 3rd      minor 3rd

Now the **half diminished 7th chord (minor 7<sup>b</sup>5)**. A locrain scale is what we will use to create this chord. Let's look at it through the construction of stacking intervals of 3rd's.

A half diminished 7th chord is scale degree 1,3,5,7 of the locrain scale.  
The construction of stacked 3rd's are minor 3rd, minor 3rd, Major 3rd

Remember that locrain is built from the 7th degree of the major scale so Cmi7<sup>b</sup>5 shares the key signature of Db/C# Major

**Cmi<sup>7(b5)</sup>**

minor 3rd      minor 3rd      Major 3rd



Below is all the diatonic 7th chords that are built from every degree of the C Major scale.

**C<sup>ma7</sup> D<sup>mi7</sup> E<sup>mi7</sup> F<sup>ma7</sup> G<sup>7</sup> A<sup>mi7</sup> B<sup>mi7(b5)</sup>**

This musical exercise shows the ascending 7th chords of the C major scale. The notation is written in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The chords are: C<sup>ma7</sup>, D<sup>mi7</sup>, E<sup>mi7</sup>, F<sup>ma7</sup>, G<sup>7</sup>, A<sup>mi7</sup>, and B<sup>mi7(b5)</sup>. The melody in the treble clef consists of eighth notes ascending from the root of each chord, while the bass clef provides a steady accompaniment of eighth notes.

Descending 7th chords (much more difficult to do because you're not starting on the root of every chord)

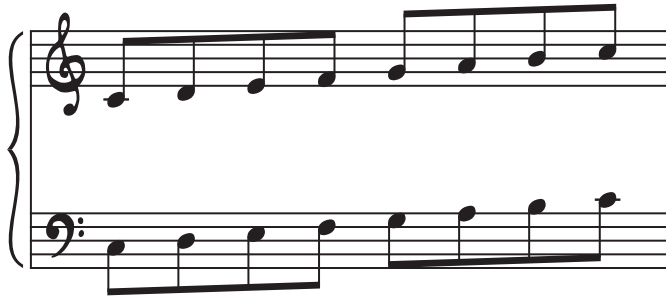
**C<sup>ma7</sup> B<sup>mi7(b5)</sup> A<sup>mi7</sup> G<sup>7</sup> F<sup>ma7</sup> E<sup>mi7</sup> D<sup>mi7</sup>**

This musical exercise shows the descending 7th chords of the C major scale. The notation is written in a grand staff. The chords are: C<sup>ma7</sup>, B<sup>mi7(b5)</sup>, A<sup>mi7</sup>, G<sup>7</sup>, F<sup>ma7</sup>, E<sup>mi7</sup>, and D<sup>mi7</sup>. The melody in the treble clef consists of eighth notes descending from the 3rd degree of each chord, while the bass clef provides a steady accompaniment of eighth notes.

Building scales from the same root.

It's essential to know the modes of the major scale, but it's also important to learn how to create all these scale types off of the same root. This will require a solid foundation of the major scale.

**Cma<sup>7</sup>**



**C Major Scale**

The foundation scale.

**Cmi<sup>7</sup>**



**The C Dorian minor scale:**

Take the C major scale and lower the 3rd & 7th degree by a 1/2 step

**C<sup>7</sup>**



**The C Mixolydian scale:**

Take the C major scale and lower 7th degree by a 1/2 step

**Cmi<sup>7(b5)</sup>**



**The C Locrain minor scale: (The most difficult)**

Take the C major scale and lower the 2nd, 3rd, 5th 6th & 7th degree by a 1/2 step

### Creating triads:

We have looked at creating chords by understanding intervals of 3rd's with the understanding of what scale degree's those chord are built from. Let's quickly look and another way to create triads and 7th chords.

This will all be based on your understanding of the Major triad. Based off the major triad we can convert it to the other 3 triads

\* Major triad uses 1-3-5 of the major scale

\* To create a minor triad the 3rd degree of the major triad is lowered by a 1/2 step

\* To create a diminished triad the 3rd and 5th degree of the major triad is lowered by a 1/2 step

\* To create an augmented triad the 5th degree of the major triad is raised by a 1/2 step

Cma	Cmi	Cdim	Caug

### Creating 7th chords

This will all be based on your understanding of the Major 7th chord. Based off the major 7th chord, we can convert it to the other 3 7th chord types.

\* Major 7th uses 1-3-5-7 of the major scale

\* To create a minor 7 chord the 3rd and 7th degree of the major 7th is lowered by a 1/2 step

\* To create a dominant 7 chord the 7th degree of the major 7th is lowered by a 1/2 step

\* To create a half diminished chord the 3rd, 5th and 7th degree of the major 7th chord is lowered by a 1/2 step

Cma <sup>7</sup>	Cmi <sup>7</sup>	C <sup>7</sup>	Cmi <sup>7(b5)</sup>

Here are some ways to practice your jazz scales

**#1 - Pick a key and play the essential modes of of that scale**

- \* mode 1 Major (example C major)
- \* mode 2 Dorian (example D Dorian)
- \* mode 5 mixolydian (example G mixolydian)
- \* mode 7 Locrian (example B Locrain)

Musical notation for exercise #1, showing four modes of scales. The notation is written in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and consists of four measures, each representing a different mode. Above each measure is a label:  $Cma^7$ ,  $Dmi^7$ ,  $G^7$ , and  $Bmi^7(b5)$ . The first measure shows the C major scale (mode 1) in both hands. The second measure shows the D Dorian scale (mode 2) in both hands. The third measure shows the G Mixolydian scale (mode 5) in both hands. The fourth measure shows the B Locrian scale (mode 7) in both hands. The notation includes a final whole note chord symbol  $e$  in the treble clef and a final whole note chord symbol  $b$  in the bass clef.

**#2 - Pick a root and play all the modes off of that root**

- \* Major mode (example C major)
- \* Mixolydian mode (example C mixolydian)
- \* Dorian mode (example C Dorian)
- \* Locrian mode (example C Locrain)

Musical notation for exercise #2, showing four modes of C. The notation is written in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and consists of four measures, each representing a different mode of C. Above each measure is a label:  $Cma^7$ ,  $C^7$ ,  $Cmi^7$ , and  $Cmi^7(b5)$ . The first measure shows the C major scale (mode 1) in both hands. The second measure shows the C Mixolydian scale (mode 5) in both hands. The third measure shows the C Dorian scale (mode 2) in both hands. The fourth measure shows the C Locrian scale (mode 7) in both hands. The notation includes a final whole note chord symbol  $e$  in the treble clef and a final whole note chord symbol  $b$  in the bass clef.

The same thing we did with scales can now be applied to chords:

### #1 - Pick a key and play the essential chords of that scale

- \* Major (example C major)
- \* Minor (example D Dorian)
- \* Dominant (example G mixolydian)
- \* Minor7<sup>b5</sup> (example B Locrain)

**C<sup>ma7</sup>**
**D<sup>mi7</sup>**
**G<sup>7</sup>**
**B<sup>mi7(b5)</sup>**

The image shows a musical exercise with four measures. Each measure contains a chord and its corresponding scale in a two-measure format. The chords are: C major 7 (Cma7), D minor 7 (Dmi7), G dominant 7 (G7), and B minor 7 flat 5 (Bmi7(b5)). The notation is written in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs).

### #2 - Pick a root and play all the modes off of that root

- \* Major mode (example C major)
- \* Dominant (example C mixolydian)
- \* Minor (example C Dorian)
- \* Minor7<sup>b5</sup> (example C Locrain)

**C<sup>ma7</sup>**
**C<sup>7</sup>**
**C<sup>mi7</sup>**
**C<sup>mi7(b5)</sup>**

The image shows a musical exercise with four measures. Each measure contains a mode of C and its corresponding scale in a two-measure format. The modes are: C major 7 (Cma7), C dominant 7 (C7), C minor 7 (Cmi7), and C minor 7 flat 5 (Cmi7(b5)). The notation is written in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs).

# 3rd's

Turning these basic tools into improvisational material.

Let's start with the diatonic 3rd intervals

Exercise #1 is the basic 3rd interval (the interval is **ascending**), built through the modes of a major scale (every scale degree)

1

Musical notation for Exercise #1, showing ascending 3rd intervals across four measures. The notation is presented in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The exercise consists of four measures. In each measure, the right hand (treble clef) plays a sequence of eighth notes, and the left hand (bass clef) plays a sequence of eighth notes. The intervals between the notes in both hands are ascending thirds. The notes in the right hand are: Measure 1: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5; Measure 2: D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5; Measure 3: E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5; Measure 4: F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5. The notes in the left hand are: Measure 1: C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4; Measure 2: D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4; Measure 3: E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4; Measure 4: F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4.

Exercise #2 is the basic 3rd interval (the interval is **descending**), built through the modes of a major scale (every scale degree)

2

Musical notation for Exercise #2, showing descending 3rd intervals across four measures. The notation is presented in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The exercise consists of four measures. In each measure, the right hand (treble clef) plays a sequence of eighth notes, and the left hand (bass clef) plays a sequence of eighth notes. The intervals between the notes in both hands are descending thirds. The notes in the right hand are: Measure 1: C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4; Measure 2: B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4, B3; Measure 3: A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4, B3, A3; Measure 4: G4, F4, E4, D4, C4, B3, A3, G3. The notes in the left hand are: Measure 1: C4, B3, A3, G3, F3, E3, D3, C3; Measure 2: B3, A3, G3, F3, E3, D3, C3, B2; Measure 3: A3, G3, F3, E3, D3, C3, B2, A2; Measure 4: G3, F3, E3, D3, C3, B2, A2, G2.

Exercise #3 is the basic 3rd interval (the interval is alternating one **ascending** one **descending**), built through the modes of a major scale (every scale degree)

3

Musical notation for Exercise #3, showing alternating ascending and descending 3rd intervals across four measures. The notation is presented in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The exercise consists of four measures. In each measure, the right hand (treble clef) plays a sequence of eighth notes, and the left hand (bass clef) plays a sequence of eighth notes. The intervals between the notes in both hands alternate between ascending and descending thirds. The notes in the right hand are: Measure 1: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5; Measure 2: D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5; Measure 3: E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5; Measure 4: F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5. The notes in the left hand are: Measure 1: C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4; Measure 2: D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4; Measure 3: E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4; Measure 4: F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4.

Exercise #4 is the basic 3rd interval (the interval **ascending with a scale step on top**) built through the modes of a major scale (every scale degree)

4

The exercise is written for piano in a grand staff. It consists of four measures. The right hand (treble clef) plays a sequence of triplets: C4-E4-G4, D4-F4-A4, E4-G4-B4, and F4-A4-C5. The left hand (bass clef) plays a sequence of triplets: C3-E3-G3, D3-F3-A3, E3-G3-B3, and F3-A3-C4. Each triplet is marked with a '3' above or below the notes.

Exercise #5 is the basic 3rd interval with chromatic notes (the pattern starts on the scale note, descends a 1/2 step, returns to starting note, then up a 3rd)

5

The exercise is written for piano in a grand staff. It consists of four measures. The right hand (treble clef) plays a sequence of notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. The left hand (bass clef) plays a sequence of notes: C3, B2, A2, G2, F2, E2, D2, C2. Each measure contains a pair of notes forming a 3rd interval, with the right hand note being a half step above the left hand note. The notes are marked with sharps where necessary.

Exercise #6 is the basic 3rd interval with a 1/2 step approach to each 3rd pattern

6

The exercise is written for piano in a grand staff. It consists of four measures. The right hand (treble clef) plays a sequence of notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. The left hand (bass clef) plays a sequence of notes: C3, B2, A2, G2, F2, E2, D2, C2. Each measure contains a pair of notes forming a 3rd interval, with the right hand note being a half step above the left hand note. The notes are marked with sharps where necessary. Each pair of notes is marked with a '3' above or below.

# Triads

Exercise #7 is the basic triad pattern with one note repeated (1-3-5-3)

7

Exercise #8 is the reverse of exercise #7 (5-3-1-3)

8

Exercise #9 adds chromatic notes. This is the basic triad (1-3-5-) with a 1/2 step approach from below to the start of each triad

9



Exercise #10. This is the basic triad (descending 5-3-1) with a 1/2 step approach from below to the start of each descending triad

10

Musical notation for Exercise #10, showing a descending triad (5-3-1) with a 1/2 step approach from below to the start of each descending triad. The exercise is written in treble and bass clefs, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody in the treble clef consists of descending eighth notes, while the bass clef provides a steady accompaniment of eighth notes.

Exercise #11 is the basic triad in alternating order. One triad ascending (1-3-5) the next triad descending (5-3-1)

11

Musical notation for Exercise #11, showing the basic triad in alternating order: one triad ascending (1-3-5) and the next triad descending (5-3-1). The exercise is written in treble and bass clefs, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody in the treble clef consists of ascending eighth notes, while the bass clef provides a steady accompaniment of eighth notes. Triplet markings are present above and below the notes.

## 7th Chords

Exercise #12 are 7th chords in alternating order. One 7th chord ascending (1-3-5-7) the next 7th chord descending (7-5-3-1)

12

Musical notation for Exercise #12, showing 7th chords in alternating order: one 7th chord ascending (1-3-5-7) and the next 7th chord descending (7-5-3-1). The exercise is written in treble and bass clefs, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody in the treble clef consists of ascending eighth notes, while the bass clef provides a steady accompaniment of eighth notes.

Exercise #13 are 7th chords with the starting note move up a octave. The pattern is still 1-3-5-7, but the octave is displaced. This is a common shape found in the bebop era.

13

Exercise #14 is another common shape found in the bebop era.

This exercise uses the 7th chord arpeggio (1-3-5-7) with a 1/2 step approach from below each chord. Notice the triplet rhythm. bebop phrases use the rhythmic pattern often.

14

## Additional Scale Patterns

Exercise #15 is a scale shape that play's up three notes of the scale and skips down a 3rd to the note we started on. (1-2-3-1)

15

Exercise #16 is a descending version of #15

16

Exercise #16 is a descending scale exercise. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff begins with a G4 quarter note, followed by a descending eighth-note scale: F4, E4, D4, C4, B3, A3, G3, F3, E3, D3, C3, B2, A2, G2, F2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1. The bass staff begins with a G2 quarter note, followed by an ascending eighth-note scale: A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4, B3, A3, G3, F3, E3, D3, C3, B2, A2, G2.

Exercise #17 is a variation of #15. Up a 3rd followed by scale motion. (1-3-2-1)

17

Exercise #17 is a variation of exercise #15. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff begins with a G4 quarter note, followed by an ascending eighth-note scale: A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4, B3, A3, G3, F3, E3, D3, C3, B2, A2, G2, F2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1. The bass staff begins with a G2 quarter note, followed by an ascending eighth-note scale: A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4, B3, A3, G3, F3, E3, D3, C3, B2, A2, G2.

Exercise #18 is a descending version of #17

18

Exercise #18 is a descending version of exercise #17. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff begins with a G4 quarter note, followed by a descending eighth-note scale: F4, E4, D4, C4, B3, A3, G3, F3, E3, D3, C3, B2, A2, G2, F2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1. The bass staff begins with a G2 quarter note, followed by an ascending eighth-note scale: A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4, B3, A3, G3, F3, E3, D3, C3, B2, A2, G2.

Exercise #19 is a four note ascending scale motion shape (1-2-3-4)

19

Exercise #19 is a four-note ascending scale motion shape. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff begins with a G4 quarter note, followed by an ascending eighth-note scale: A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4, B3, A3, G3, F3, E3, D3, C3, B2, A2, G2, F2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1. The bass staff begins with a G2 quarter note, followed by an ascending eighth-note scale: A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4, B3, A3, G3, F3, E3, D3, C3, B2, A2, G2.

Exercise #20 is a four note descending scale motion shape based off of #19

20

Exercise #21 is a four note ascending scale shape. Up 3 scale notes with a skip of a 3rd at the end (1-2-3-5)

21

Exercise #22 is a four note descending scale shape. skip down of a 3rd followed by scale motion (5-3-2-1)

22

Remember these 22 patterns were written over C Major, but these same patterns apply to the other 3 modes we're focusing on (Dmi7, G7, Bmi7b5).

There key to scale pattern application is targeting notes that are linked to the specific chord. Meaning that chords primary chord tones (1-3-5-7) of that chord

CMa7: - C - E - G - B

G7: G - B - D - F

Dmi7: D - F - A - C

Bmi7b5: B - D - F - A

These are the notes we want to target on beats 1 & 3 of the measure. It won't always apply, but the should always be a chord tone on 1 or 3 if not both. So the C major patterns will work over Dmi7 simply by putting the chord tones of Dmi7 of strong beats

Examples of Building Lines

**Cma<sup>7</sup>**

Example 1: A 3-measure exercise for C<sup>major</sup> minor 7. The treble clef contains a descending eighth-note line: C4-D4-E4-F4-G4-A4-B4-A4-G4-F4-E4-D4. The bass clef contains an ascending eighth-note line: C3-D3-E3-F3-G3-A3-B3-A3-G3-F3-E3-D3. The final note of the treble line is a half note C4.

**Cma<sup>7</sup>**

Example 2: A 3-measure exercise for C<sup>major</sup> minor 7. The treble clef contains a descending eighth-note line: C4-D4-E4-F4-G4-A4-B4-A4-G4-F4-E4-D4. The bass clef contains an ascending eighth-note line: C3-D3-E3-F3-G3-A3-B3-A3-G3-F3-E3-D3. The final note of the treble line is a half note C4.

**Dmi<sup>7</sup>**

**G<sup>7</sup>**

**Cma<sup>7</sup>**

Example 3: A 3-measure exercise for C<sup>major</sup> minor 7. The treble clef contains a descending eighth-note line: C4-D4-E4-F4-G4-A4-B4-A4-G4-F4-E4-D4. The bass clef contains an ascending eighth-note line: C3-D3-E3-F3-G3-A3-B3-A3-G3-F3-E3-D3. The final note of the treble line is a half note C4.

**Dmi<sup>7</sup>**

**G<sup>7</sup>**

**Cma<sup>7</sup>**

Example 4: A 3-measure exercise for C<sup>major</sup> minor 7. The treble clef contains a descending eighth-note line: C4-D4-E4-F4-G4-A4-B4-A4-G4-F4-E4-D4. The bass clef contains an ascending eighth-note line: C3-D3-E3-F3-G3-A3-B3-A3-G3-F3-E3-D3. The final note of the treble line is a half note C4.

**D mi<sup>7</sup>**                      **G<sup>7</sup>**                      **C ma<sup>7</sup>**

**D mi<sup>7</sup>**                      **G<sup>7</sup>**                      **C ma<sup>7</sup>**

**D mi<sup>7</sup>**                      **G<sup>7</sup>**                      **C ma<sup>7</sup>**

191

**C ma<sup>7</sup>**

195

3

# Creating ii-7 V7 I lines

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These exercises will deal with the ii-7 V7 I progression. I have come up with building blocks for beats 1 & 2 and beats 3 & 4 of each measure. Each block will connect to a chord tone (1-3-5-7). The quarter note at the end of each block is the connecting note in the next block. (the quarter note represents the starting note of the following block)

Note: all blocks can be moved an octave up or down to fit the line. Every block should connect by step.

**These minor7 (ii-7) improvisational blocks are used for beats 1 & 2 of the bar**

*D*mi<sup>7</sup>

Blocks 1 through 6 of the Dmi<sup>7</sup> progression. Each block consists of a treble and bass staff. Block 1: Treble (D4, E4, F4, G4), Bass (D3, E3, F3, G3). Block 2: Treble (G4, A4, Bb4, A4), Bass (G3, A3, Bb3, A3). Block 3: Treble (A4, B4, C5, B4), Bass (A3, B3, C4, B3). Block 4: Treble (B4, C5, B4, A4), Bass (B3, C4, B3, A3). Block 5: Treble (Bb4, Ab4, Gb4, Ab4), Bass (Bb3, Ab3, Gb3, Ab3). Block 6: Treble (Ab4, Gb4, F#4, Gb4), Bass (Ab3, Gb3, F#3, Gb3).

Blocks 7 through 12 of the Dmi<sup>7</sup> progression. Each block consists of a treble and bass staff. Block 7: Treble (F#4, G4, A4, G4), Bass (F#3, G3, A3, G3). Block 8: Treble (G4, A4, B4, A4), Bass (G3, A3, B3, A3). Block 9: Treble (A4, B4, C5, B4), Bass (A3, B3, C4, B3). Block 10: Treble (B4, C5, B4, A4), Bass (B3, C4, B3, A3). Block 11: Treble (B4, C5, B4, A4), Bass (B3, C4, B3, A3). Block 12: Treble (B4, C5, B4, A4), Bass (B3, C4, B3, A3).

Blocks 13 through 18 of the Dmi<sup>7</sup> progression. Each block consists of a treble and bass staff. Block 13: Treble (B4, C5, B4, A4), Bass (B3, C4, B3, A3). Block 14: Treble (B4, C5, B4, A4), Bass (B3, C4, B3, A3). Block 15: Treble (B4, C5, B4, A4), Bass (B3, C4, B3, A3). Block 16: Treble (B4, C5, B4, A4), Bass (B3, C4, B3, A3). Block 17: Treble (B4, C5, B4, A4), Bass (B3, C4, B3, A3). Block 18: Treble (B4, C5, B4, A4), Bass (B3, C4, B3, A3).

19 20 21 22 23 24

25 26 27 28 29 30

31 32 33 34 35 36

These minor7 (ii-7) improvisational blocks are used for beats 3 & 4 of the bar. *The quarter note at the end of each of these blocks will represent the transition to the V7 (G7) chord.*

$Dm7$   $G7$

37 38 39 40 41 42



Musical notation for measures 43-48. The system consists of a grand staff with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. Measures 43-46 are in a key with one sharp (F#). Measure 47 has a key signature change to one flat (Bb). Measure 48 has a key signature change to two flats (Bb, Eb). The notation includes eighth and sixteenth notes in the treble and eighth notes in the bass.

Musical notation for measures 49-54. The system consists of a grand staff with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. Measures 49-54 are in a key with two flats (Bb, Eb). The notation includes eighth and sixteenth notes in the treble and eighth notes in the bass.

Musical notation for measures 55-60. The system consists of a grand staff with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. Measures 55-60 are in a key with two flats (Bb, Eb). The notation includes eighth and sixteenth notes in the treble and eighth notes in the bass.

Musical notation for measures 61-66. The system consists of a grand staff with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. Measures 61-66 are in a key with two flats (Bb, Eb). The notation includes eighth and sixteenth notes in the treble and eighth notes in the bass.

Musical notation for measures 67-72. The system consists of a grand staff with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. Measures 67-72 are in a key with two flats (Bb, Eb). The notation includes eighth and sixteenth notes in the treble and eighth notes in the bass. The system concludes with a double bar line.



Musical notation for measures 97 and 98. Measure 97 shows a melodic line in the treble clef and a bass line in the bass clef. Measure 98 continues the melodic line and bass line.

These dominant7 (V7) improvisational blocks are used for beats 3 & 4 of the bar. *The quarter note at the end of each of these blocks will represent the transition to the IMaj7 (CMa7) chord.*

Musical notation for measures 99-104. Measure 99 is labeled G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>MA7</sup>. Measures 100-104 show improvisational blocks with a quarter note at the end of each block.

Musical notation for measures 105-110. Measures 105-110 show improvisational blocks with a quarter note at the end of each block.

Musical notation for measures 111-116. Measures 111-116 show improvisational blocks with a quarter note at the end of each block.

117 118 119 120 121 122

123 124

Lines for major chords. the quarter note is the connecting note to the next block. adjust octaves when needed.

$CMA^7$

$CMA^7$  125 126 127 128

129 130 131 132 133 134

Musical notation for measures 135-140. The system consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. Each measure is numbered from 135 to 140. The notation includes various rhythmic values such as eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. The key signature has one flat (Bb) and one sharp (F#).

Musical notation for measures 141-146. The system consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. Each measure is numbered from 141 to 146. The notation includes various rhythmic values such as eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. The key signature has one flat (Bb) and one sharp (F#).

Musical notation for measures 147-152. The system consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. Each measure is numbered from 147 to 152. The notation includes various rhythmic values such as eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. The key signature has one flat (Bb) and one sharp (F#).

Musical notation for measures 153-158. The system consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. Each measure is numbered from 153 to 158. The notation includes various rhythmic values such as eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. The key signature has one flat (Bb) and one sharp (F#).

Musical notation for measures 159-164. The system consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. Each measure is numbered below the treble staff. The notes are primarily eighth and sixteenth notes, with some chords. Measure 161 features a key signature change to one flat (Bb).

Musical notation for measures 165-170. The system consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. Each measure is numbered below the treble staff. The notes are primarily eighth and sixteenth notes, with some chords. Measure 170 features a key signature change to two flats (Bb, Eb).

Musical notation for measures 172-176. The system consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. Each measure is numbered below the treble staff. The notes are primarily eighth and sixteenth notes, with some chords. Measure 172 features a key signature change to one flat (Bb).

Musical notation for measures 177-182. The system consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. Each measure is numbered below the treble staff. The notes are primarily eighth and sixteenth notes, with some chords. Measure 182 features a key signature change to two flats (Bb, Eb).

Musical notation for measures 183 through 188. The notation is in treble and bass clefs, showing a sequence of chords and melodic lines. The measures are numbered 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, and 188.

Musical notation for measures 189 through 192. The notation is in treble and bass clefs, showing a sequence of chords and melodic lines. The measures are numbered 189, 190, 191, and 192.

Sample Lines

Sample Line 1: Musical notation for four measures with chords  $Dm_i^7$ ,  $G^7$ ,  $CMA^7$ , and  $CMA^7$  indicated above the staff.

Sample Line 2: Musical notation for four measures with chords  $Dm_i^7$ ,  $G^7$ ,  $CMA^7$ , and  $CMA^7$  indicated above the staff.

**Dmi<sup>7</sup>**                      **G<sup>7</sup>**                      **CMA<sup>7</sup>**                      **CMA<sup>7</sup>**

**Dmi<sup>7</sup>**                      **G<sup>7</sup>**                      **CMA<sup>7</sup>**                      **CMA<sup>7</sup>**

**Dmi<sup>7</sup>**                      **G<sup>7</sup>**                      **CMA<sup>7</sup>**                      **CMA<sup>7</sup>**



Write your own Lines

**Dmi<sup>7</sup>**

**G<sup>7</sup>**

**CMA<sup>7</sup>**

**CMA<sup>7</sup>**

A musical staff consisting of a grand staff with a treble clef on the top line and a bass clef on the bottom line. The staff is divided into four measures by vertical bar lines. The first measure is labeled with the chord **Dmi<sup>7</sup>**, the second with **G<sup>7</sup>**, the third with **CMA<sup>7</sup>**, and the fourth with **CMA<sup>7</sup>**. The staff is currently empty, intended for the student to write their own lines.

**Dmi<sup>7</sup>**

**G<sup>7</sup>**

**CMA<sup>7</sup>**

**CMA<sup>7</sup>**

A musical staff consisting of a grand staff with a treble clef on the top line and a bass clef on the bottom line. The staff is divided into four measures by vertical bar lines. The first measure is labeled with the chord **Dmi<sup>7</sup>**, the second with **G<sup>7</sup>**, the third with **CMA<sup>7</sup>**, and the fourth with **CMA<sup>7</sup>**. The staff is currently empty, intended for the student to write their own lines.

**Dmi<sup>7</sup>**

**G<sup>7</sup>**

**CMA<sup>7</sup>**

**CMA<sup>7</sup>**

A musical staff consisting of a grand staff with a treble clef on the top line and a bass clef on the bottom line. The staff is divided into four measures by vertical bar lines. The first measure is labeled with the chord **Dmi<sup>7</sup>**, the second with **G<sup>7</sup>**, the third with **CMA<sup>7</sup>**, and the fourth with **CMA<sup>7</sup>**. The staff is currently empty, intended for the student to write their own lines.

**Dmi<sup>7</sup>**

**G<sup>7</sup>**

**CMA<sup>7</sup>**

**CMA<sup>7</sup>**

A musical staff consisting of a grand staff with a treble clef on the top line and a bass clef on the bottom line. The staff is divided into four measures by vertical bar lines. The first measure is labeled with the chord **Dmi<sup>7</sup>**, the second with **G<sup>7</sup>**, the third with **CMA<sup>7</sup>**, and the fourth with **CMA<sup>7</sup>**. The staff is currently empty, intended for the student to write their own lines.