

Steps To Improvisation

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STEPS TO IMPROVISATION

LET'S USE THE FOLLOWING CHORD PROGRESSION. (1,6,2,5)

C INSTRUMENTS

FLUTE, OBOE, TROMBONE, PIANO, VIBES, BASS

Musical staff for C instruments (Flute, Oboe, Trombone, Piano, Vibes, Bass). The staff shows a chord progression: B \flat MA7, G7, CMIN7, F7. The notes are represented by slashes on a treble clef staff.

B \flat INSTRUMENTS

CLARINET, TRUMPET, TENOR

Musical staff for B \flat instruments (Clarinet, Trumpet, Tenor). The staff shows a chord progression: CMA7, A7, DMIN7, G7. The notes are represented by slashes on a treble clef staff.

E \flat INSTRUMENTS

ALTO SAX, BARITONE SAX

Musical staff for E \flat instruments (Alto Sax, Baritone Sax). The staff shows a chord progression: GMA7, D7, A MIN7, D7. The notes are represented by slashes on a treble clef staff.

STEP 1 - GETTING ACQUAINTED

1) PLAY ROOTS - 2) ADD RHYTHMS (CHARLESTON)

Musical staff for C instruments showing roots for the chord progression: B \flat MA7, G7, CMIN7, F7. The notes are represented by whole notes on a treble clef staff.

Musical staff for B \flat instruments showing roots for the chord progression: CMA7, A7, DMIN7, G7. The notes are represented by whole notes on a treble clef staff.

Musical staff for E \flat instruments showing roots for the chord progression: GMA7, E7, A MIN7, D7. The notes are represented by whole notes on a treble clef staff.

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STEP 2 - EQUAL & OPPOSITE
1) DIGITAL PATTERN (1,2,1,2)

C

Musical staff for C major key, digital pattern (1,2,1,2). Chords: B \flat MA7, G7, CMIN7, F7.

B \flat

Musical staff for B \flat major key, digital pattern (1,2,1,2). Chords: CMA7, A7, DMIN7, G7.

E \flat

Musical staff for E \flat major key, digital pattern (1,2,1,2). Chords: GMA7, E7, AMIN7, D7.

2) REVERSE DIGITAL PATTERN (2,1,2,1)

C

Musical staff for C major key, reverse digital pattern (2,1,2,1). Chords: B \flat MA7, G7, CMIN7, F7.

B \flat

Musical staff for B \flat major key, reverse digital pattern (2,1,2,1). Chords: CMA7, A7, DMIN7, G7.

E \flat

Musical staff for E \flat major key, reverse digital pattern (2,1,2,1). Chords: GMA7, E7, AMIN7, D7.

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STEP 3A - SCALES ARE GOOD
DIATONIC - (1-5) - 1,2,3,4,5

C

Musical staff for Step 3A, C major scale. Chords: B \flat MA7, G7, CMIN7, F7.

B \flat

Musical staff for Step 3A, B \flat major scale. Chords: CMA7, A7, DMIN7, G7.

E \flat

Musical staff for Step 3A, E \flat major scale. Chords: GMA7, E7, AMIN7, D7.

STEP 3B - SCALES ARE GOOD - EQUAL & OPPOSITE
DIATONIC - (5-1) - 5,4,3,2,1

C

Musical staff for Step 3B, C major scale. Chords: B \flat MA7, G7, CMIN7, F7.

B \flat

Musical staff for Step 3B, B \flat major scale. Chords: CMA7, A7, DMIN7, G7.

E \flat

Musical staff for Step 3B, E \flat major scale. Chords: GMA7, E7, AMIN7, D7.

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STEP 4A - TRIADS ARE EASY
PLAY TRIADS (ASCENDING)

C

B \flat MA7 G7 CMIN7 F7

B \flat

CMA7 A7 DMIN7 G7

E \flat

GMA7 E7 AMIN7 D7

STEP 4B - TRIADS ARE EASY?
PLAY TRIADS (DESCENDING)

C

B \flat MA7 G7 CMIN7 F7

B \flat

CMA7 A7 DMIN7 G7

E \flat

GMA7 E7 AMIN7 D7

STEPS TO IMPROVISATION

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STEP 5A - CHROMATIC APPROACH

PLAY ROOT ON BEAT 'ONE'. REST FOR TWO BEATS AND PLAY 1/2 STEP APPROACH FROM BELOW TO THE NEXT ROOT ON BEAT 'FOUR'.

C

Bb

Eb

STEP 5B - CHROMATIC APPROACH

PLAY ROOT ON BEAT 'ONE'. REST FOR TWO BEATS AND PLAY 1/2 STEP APPROACH FROM ABOVE TO THE NEXT ROOT ON BEAT 'FOUR'.

C

Bb

Eb

STEPS TO IMPROVISATION

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STEP 6A - SOUNDING MATURE
PLAY TRIAD WITH 1/2 STEP APPROACH FROM BELOW ON BEAT 'FOUR'.

C

B \flat MA7 G7 CMIN7 F7

B \flat

CMA7 A7 DMIN7 G7

E \flat

GMA7 E7 AMIN7 D7

STEP 6B - SOUNDING MATURE
PLAY TRIAD WITH 1/2 STEP APPROACH FROM ABOVE ON BEAT 'FOUR'.

C

B \flat MA7 G7 CMIN7 F7

B \flat

CMA7 A7 DMIN7 G7

E \flat

GMA7 E7 AMIN7 D7

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STEP 7 - RHYTHM WINS!
PLAY ASCENDING TRIADS WITH NEW RHYTHM.

C

B \flat MA7 G7 Cmin7 F7

B \flat

CMA7 A7 Dmin7 G7

E \flat

GMA7 E7 Amin7 D7

STEP 7B - RHYTHM WINS!
PLAY DESCENDING TRIADS WITH NEW RHYTHM.

C

B \flat MA7 G7 Cmin7 F7

B \flat

CMA7 A7 Dmin7 G7

E \flat

GMA7 E7 Amin7 D7

STEPS TO IMPROVISATION

LET'S USE THE FOLLOWING CHORD PROGRESSION. (1,6,2,5)

STEP 7c - WOW, THIS IS KIND OF COOL!
PLAY ASCENDING TRIADS WITH NEW RHYTHM.

C

B \flat Maj7 G7 Cmin7 F7

B \flat

CMaj7 A7 Dmin7 G7

E \flat

GMaj7 E7 Amin7 D7

STEP 7d - WOW, THIS IS STILL KIND OF COOL!
PLAY DESCENDING TRIADS WITH NEW RHYTHM.

C

B \flat Maj7 G7 Cmin7 F7

B \flat

CMaj7 A7 Dmin7 G7

E \flat

GMaj7 E7 Amin7 D7

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STEP 8A - GOAL NOTES

PLAY 5,4,3,2 OF THE GOAL CHORD IN THE PRECEDING MEASURE TO THE GOAL CHORD 'ROOT' (1).

C

BbMA7 G7 CMIN7 F7

Bb

CMA7 A7 DMIN7 G7

Eb

GMA7 E7 AMIN7 D7

STEP 8B - GOAL NOTES

PLAY 7,6,5,4 OF THE GOAL CHORD IN THE PRECEDING MEASURE TO THE GOAL CHORD 'THIRD'.

C

BbMA7 G7 CMIN7 F7

Bb

CMA7 A7 DMIN7 G7

Eb

GMA7 E7 AMIN7 D7

STEPS TO IMPROVISATION

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STEP 10 - SEQUENCE

PLAY A SHORT PHRASE AND TRANSPOSE TO THE NEW CHORD.

C C MIN7 F7 Bb MA7 Bb MA7

Bb D MIN7 G7 C MA7 C MA7

Eb A MIN7 D7 G MA7 G MA7

STEP 10B - SOUNDING LIKE A PRO

2-5 LICK

C C MIN7 F7 Bb MA7 Bb MA7

Bb D MIN7 G7 C MA7 C MA7

Eb A MIN7 D7 G MA7 G MA7

STEPS TO IMPROVISATION

LET'S USE THE FOLLOWING CHORD PROGRESSION. (2,5,1)

STEP 10c - HERE'S THAT RHYTHM THING AGAIN.
2-5 LICK WITH RHYTHMIC VARIATION.

C

C MIN7 F7 Bb MAJ7 Bb MAJ7

Bb

D MIN7 G7 C MAJ7 C MAJ7

Eb

A MIN7 D7 G MAJ7 G MAJ7

HELPFUL HINTS:

> LISTEN TO PROFESSIONALS

IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SOUND LIKE, HOW DO YOU KNOW YOU'RE DOING IT RIGHT?

> KEEP IT SIMPLE

DON'T TRY TO SOUND LIKE YOU KNOW MORE THAN YOU DO.

> LEARN BASIC JAZZ PIANO SKILLS

THIS WILL HELP EVEN IF YOU DON'T PLAY THE PIANO.

> WHEN IN DOUBT, ADD RHYTHMS!

> USE A METRONOME TO HELP DEVELOP GOOD, CONSISTENT TIME.

> TRANSCRIBE SIMPLE LICKS.