

JAZZ PIANO JUMP-START

Adam Maness & Peter Martin

OPEN STUDIO

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MEET THE ARTISTS



ABOUT PETER

Peter Martin is an acclaimed jazz pianist, composer, arranger, and educator. His touring career has taken him to six continents numerous times. In January 2011, Peter performed with a select group of jazz artists at the White House for a State Dinner hosted by President Obama, and he returned to perform for the Governor's Dinner in February 2012 for the first family and other guests.

Peter performed on and arranged Dianne Reeves' Grammy® winning release *A Little Moonlight*. He also appeared in George Clooney's 2005 film *Good Night, and Good Luck* and was the featured pianist and an arranger on the Grammy® winning soundtrack. Peter has performed, toured, and recorded with Wynton Marsalis, Chris Botti, Betty Carter, Christian McBride, and Joshua Redman as well as the Berlin Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and the New York Philharmonic. In 2014, Peter was selected to tour with "Newport Now 60," an all-star ensemble that toured nationwide in celebration of the iconic festival's 60th anniversary.

Peter attended the Juilliard School of Music and is a former member of the faculties of Northwestern University and Southern Illinois University (Edwardsville). He has performed workshops and master classes at institutions worldwide, including Oberlin College, Northwestern University, Duke University, the Carnegie Hall Professional Training Workshops, Steinway Piano Gallery, the Rotterdam Conservatory, and the Royal Scottish Academy of Music in Glasgow.

ABOUT ADAM



Adam Maness is a versatile pianist, arranger, composer, and producer whose performances, original compositions, and arrangements have been featured on numerous recordings and on national and international radio and television broadcasts. He is best known as co-founder and composer for the genre-bending chamber ensemble, The 442s. He is the leader of his own jazz piano trio, featuring Bob DeBoo on bass and Kaleb Kirby on drums. Maness attended the Jazz and Contemporary Music program of the New School University in New York City. While in New York, he began collaborating with internationally renowned vocalist Erin Bode and became her longtime arranger and bandleader. In addition to his own projects and work as a pianist for countless jazz groups, Maness works frequently as an arranger and performer with other ensembles including classical/tango/jazz sextet, Cortango, and the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra. Since 2017, he has been the creative director for Open Studio, an industry-leading jazz education platform created by famed jazz pianist Peter Martin, where he has produced jazz education courses by greats such as Dianne Reeves and Christian McBride.

1a WELCOME TO JAZZ PIANO JUMP-START!

In this seven-week course, you'll build the foundations for a lifetime of jazz piano enjoyment. By the end of this course, you'll have a deeper understanding of:

- Intervals
- Feel
- Groove
- Blues
- Form
- Harmony
- Improvisation
- Albums to listen to and more



FOUR CORE PRINCIPLES

Before we get started, let's go over our four core principles for learning jazz piano.

1. LISTEN

Listening is a fundamental tool for learning any language and is an especially important element in learning jazz. Listening to music that inspires, teaches, or just makes you feel good is a crucial step in your musical development and an essential part of this course.

2. PATIENCE

Jazz wasn't built in a day! Don't fret if you can't play like Herbie Hancock in a week. As with anything great, playing jazz piano takes time, trial and error, and repetition. You're in it for the long haul so realize that practicing, playing well, not playing well, stagnating, growing, failing, and succeeding are all part of the journey. Fall in love with the process, and your progress becomes less of a goal and more of a testament to your hard work.

3. ROUTINE

Creating a regular routine of practice, listening, and rest can help you make significant strides against procrastination and apathy. You can't improve without practice and the best way to make sure you get that important practice time in is to carve out a regular time to do it. Whether that's waking up 30 minutes early to practice or making sure to hit the piano every night before bed, this principle shouldn't be underestimated.

4. FEEDBACK

Getting honest feedback about where you need to improve is crucial for growth. Luckily this can be done by listening honestly to yourself. You can practice against a metronome, record yourself, or ask a musician you trust to give you feedback. Remember, feedback doesn't mean compliments. The goal is to identify our weak areas in order to strengthen them. Try to leave your ego at the door if you want to make solid improvements to your playing.

1b RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT

It's about the carpenter, not about the tools! Any of these recommended keyboard instruments will serve you well in your jazz piano journey. From grand pianos to MIDI controllers, find the right instrument that works for you.

GRAND PIANO

These horizontal pianos are the cream of the crop for sound, feel, and beauty. They come in all different sizes, colors, and price ranges. Here are Peter and Adam's favorite brands:

STEINWAY AND SONS

The industry standard for years, Steinway grands are found in many of the best concert halls and recording studios in the world. A go-to grand for just about every pianist. For a more affordable option, check out Steinway's budget brands: Boston and Essex.



FAZIOLI

This boutique Italian piano maker is making some of the best pianos in the world right now. They're not cheap but you get what you pay for. Has to be played to be believed.

YAMAHA

This Japanese mega-producer makes a solid, relatively affordable grand piano. They're durable, reliable, and usually feel great. Yamaha grands are less expensive than the top two on our list, primarily because of a lack of tone you find in the top shelf makers. But don't overlook them, especially if you want bang for your buck.

UPRIGHT PIANOS

Upright pianos also come in different sizes and prices - some as low as free! Here are some great brands and some ways to score an upright for next to nothing.

YAMAHA

Yamaha uprights can be found in many a music conservatory practice room. They make great starter pianos and are perfect for apartments and small spaces.

KAWAI

A fun, durable, and affordable piano, these make great first instruments for a player starting out.



BALDWIN ACROSONIC

What if you want a real piano but are on a super-tight budget? The Baldwin Acrosonic is probably just what you're looking for. Even though these delightful, fun to play, tanks-as-pianos haven't been produced in decades, Baldwin was so prolific during its peak that you can find a very good Acrosonic for usually next to nothing. Just grab a pickup truck and a couple of friends and you can eBay your way to one for usually under $500 (sometimes much less than that)!

ELECTRIC PIANOS

Analog electric pianos have a warm classic vibe and give you the full experience of a hammer hitting a tine. To get that vibe, check out these great options.

FENDER RHODES

The classic choice for jazz pianists, the Fender Rhodes has been played by the greats for generations: Stevie Wonder, Herbie Hancock, Chick Corea, Bill Evans, Keith Jarrett, Brad Mehldau, and Robert Glasper to name a few. Whew!



WURLITZER EP

The Wurly is a little punchier than a Rhodes with quite a bit less sustain. For those reasons, it's usually used more by pop, soul, and funk pianists than by jazz musicians. However, anything preferred by Ray Charles shouldn't be overlooked!
These punchy little tone machines are a blast to play.

VINTAGE VIBE PIANO

Vintage Vibe started out as a website and repair shop for vintage electric pianos. Eventually, they got so good at repairing and rebuilding classic EP's that they began to make their own, brand new classic instrument. And it's incredible. With a big, beautiful sound and smooth feel, the Vintage Vibe Piano is a wonderful boutique electric piano for the serious aficionado.

DIGITAL KEYBOARDS

Digital Keyboards are a great way to get started playing jazz piano. From 88-key, weighted-key pro models, to 3-octave light-weight starter keyboards, these practical and fun instruments are an easy and affordable way to get set up.

NORD PIANO

The Nord Piano is a pro-level digital piano that sounds and feels great. It has a range of grand piano and upright piano sounds as well as some solid electric piano, clavinet, and basic synth patches.



ROLAND

Roland offer a wide-variety of great sounding and feeling digital keyboards at all price ranges. Known for their excellent feel, Rolands are used be beginners and pros alike.

CONTROLLERS

USB/MIDI controllers are a popular tool for music production and performance. They come in all sizes from one-octave pocket keyboards to full-size, weighted-key pianos. You'll need a laptop and a DAW to produce the sound. Garage Band, Logic, or Protools are all common DAWs used with these convenient tools.

SYNTHESIZERS

Synths are a fun way to make music and have been used in jazz to great effect. They may not be the first choice for your first instrument as they tend to be specific and focused more on getting interesting and varied sounds, rather than the consistent feel and tones that you get from an acoustic piano.

USE REAL SPEAKERS

It's a simple thing, but playing along with this course, or with the masters from recordings is best done using real speakers without headphones or earbuds. You want to feel like you're in the same room as the players you're emulating. Using headphones often cuts off the sound from you to the recording. If you have a good keyboard interface that allows you to mix yourself in with the recording, great. If not, it's best to use a speaker of some kind to get that sound in the room with you. A simple Bluetooth speaker will suffice. Something like this works great.



NOTES

2a THE ATOMS OF JAZZ: MAJOR INTERVALS

INTERVALS

Understanding intervals and their relationships are an important building block in learning all music. Jazz harmony can be as rich and complex as any form of music so it's important to get a handle on these elements early.



Let's start with Middle C and its relationship to the other white keys on the piano:



MUSICAL MNEMONIC DEVICES

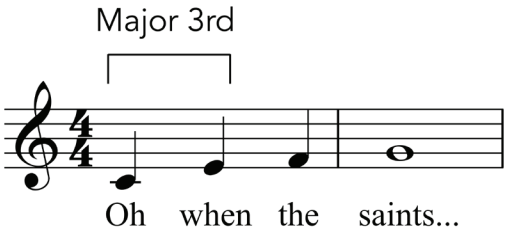
When you're first learning your intervals, using a familiar tune can be an easy way to reference the interval you're trying to hear. Take a look at the following pages for some popular tunes musicians use to reference major intervals.

MUSICAL MNEMONIC DEVICES: MAJOR INTERVALS

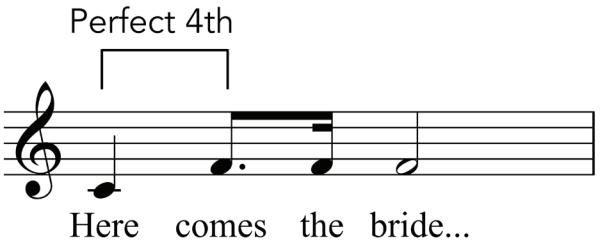
Major 2nd: "Happy Birthday"



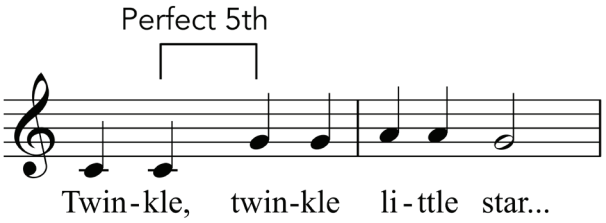
Major 3rd: "When The Saints Go Marching In"



Perfect 4th: "Bridal Chorus"

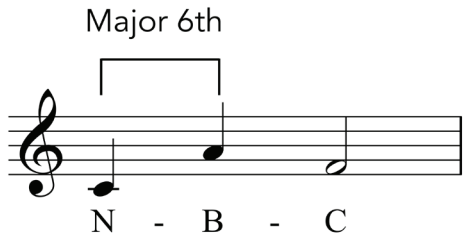


Perfect 5th: "Twinkle, Twinkle"

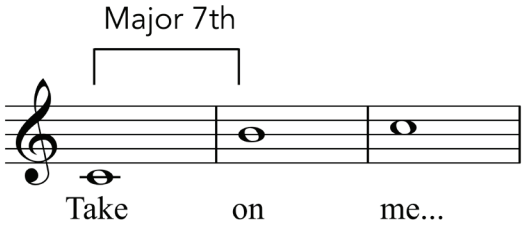


MUSICAL MNEMONIC DEVICES CONTINUED

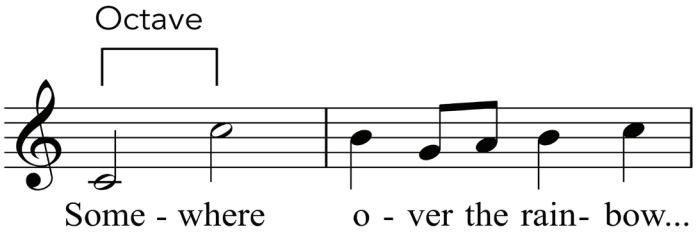
Major 6th: “NBC Theme”



Major 7th: “Take On Me”



Octave: “Somewhere Over the Rainbow”



NOTES

2b THE ATOMS OF JAZZ: MINOR INTERVALS

Let's have a look at the minor intervals (the black keys on the piano relative to C):





MUSICAL MNEMONIC DEVICES: MINOR INTERVALS

Minor 2nd: "Theme From *Jaws*"

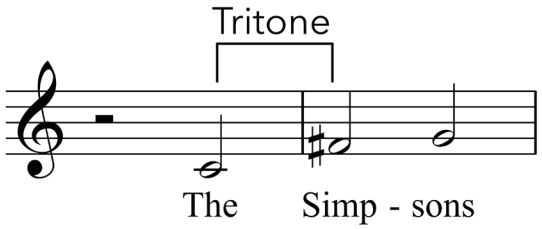


Minor 3rd: "Greensleeves"

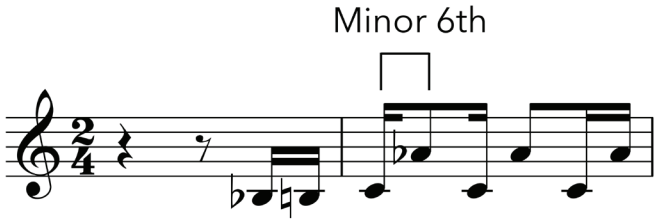


MUSICAL MNEMONIC DEVICES CONTINUED

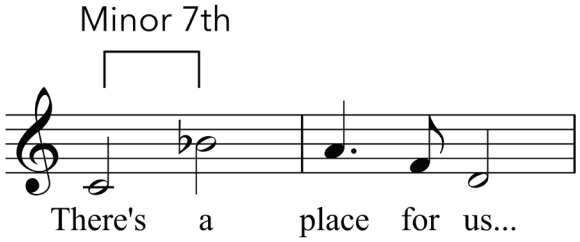
Tritone:
"The Simpsons"



Minor 6th:
"The Entertainer"



Minor 7th:
"Somewhere"





ADDITIONAL EAR TRAINING TOOLS

There are several good ear training tools available online for you to practice hearing these intervals. Here are some popular options:

- TONEDEAR
- TEORIA
- TONESAVVY

No matter what tool you use, the important thing is to practice ear training on a regular basis so you can learn and retain the sounds of these important "atoms" of jazz.

NOTES

PRACTICE ROUTINE:
THE ATOMS OF JAZZ

SESSION 1.

- Chromatic Warm-Up - 60 bpm
- Ear Training - Major Intervals
- Etude - 80 bpm, Right Hand Only
- Free Play

SESSION 2.

- Chromatic Warm-Up - 70 bpm
- Ear Training - Minor Intervals
- Etude - Left Hand
- Free Play

SESSION 3.

- Chromatic Warm-Up - 80 bpm
- Ear Training - Major and Minor Intervals
- Etude - 88 bpm
- Free Play

SESSION 4.

- Chromatic Warm-Up - 88bpm
- Ear Training - Rolling Intervals
- Etude - 96 bpm
- Free Play

NOTES

FROM PETER MARTIN & ADAM MANESS' "JAZZ PIANO JUMP-START"

INTERVAL ETUDE



NOTES

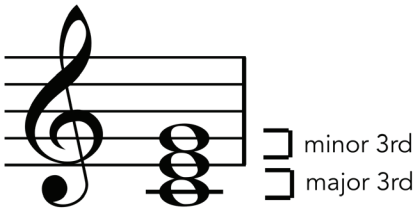
3 BUILDING SOLID HARMONY

TRIADS

Triads are three notes built off of either major or minor 3rds. These seem simple but it's important to know—especially to hear the difference between the four combinations.

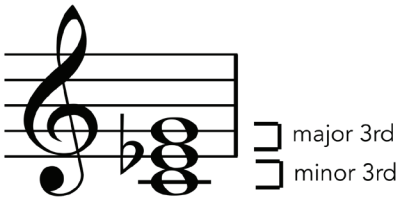
MAJOR TRIAD

The major triad is a major 3rd with a minor 3rd stacked on top. It sounds bright, happy, and majestic. The most common chord symbol is simply the chord letter ("C" in this case) though you may also find it written as Cmajor, Cmaj, or even Ctriad.



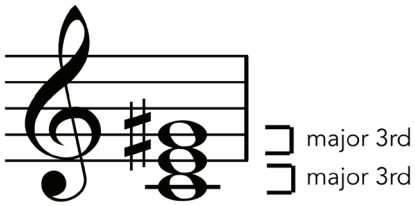
MINOR TRIAD

The minor triad is a minor 3rd with a major 3rd stacked on top. It's often characterized as dark or somber. The most common chord symbols are Cminor, Cmin, Cm, or C-.



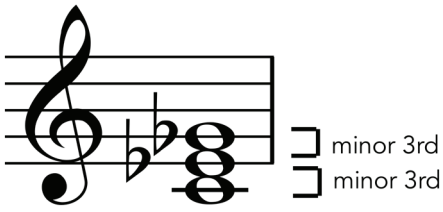
AUGMENTED TRIAD

The augmented triad is two major 3rds stacked on top of each other. It has an open, playful, and sometimes dreamy quality. The most common chord symbol is or Caug or C+.



DIMINISHED TRIAD

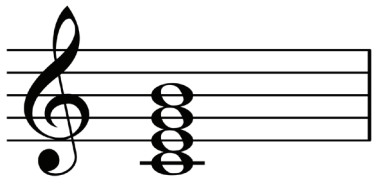
The diminished triad is made up of two minor 3rds stacked on top of each other. It provides a mysterious, uncertain sound. The most common chord symbols are C° or Cdim.





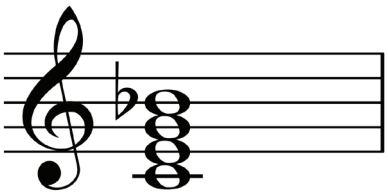
BLOCK CHORDS (7TH CHORDS)

Once we have the basic triads down, we can start adding one more triad on top. We'll start with just three basic 7th chords. These three chords will be the harmonic foundation for the rest of this course so make sure to get the sounds in your ears.



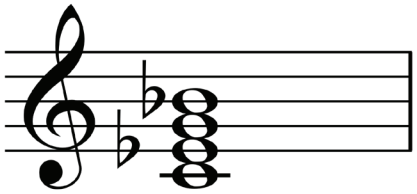
MAJOR 7 CHORD

The major 7 chord is a major triad with a major 3rd stacked on top. It's used often as a 1 chord in a major key. Common chord symbols for a major 7 chord are CΔ7, Cmaj7, or even Cmajor7.



DOMINANT 7 CHORD

Dominant 7 chords are built from a major triad but with a minor 3rd stacked on top. They're often used as leading chords to a major or minor chord a 5th below (C7 → FΔ7) or as the tonic chord of a blues. The only chord symbol for a dominant 7 chord is C7.

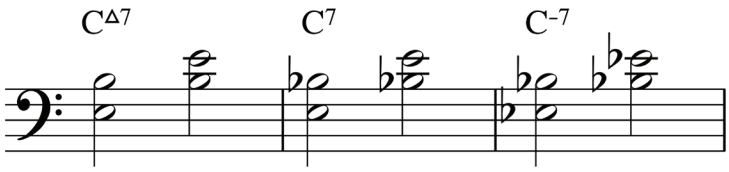


MINOR 7 CHORD

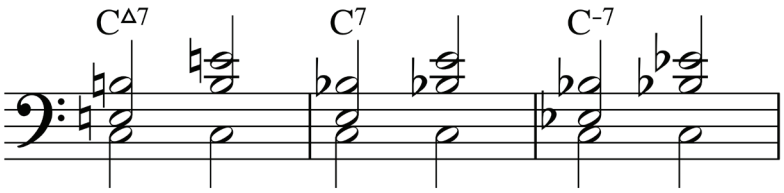
The minor 7 chord is built off a minor triad and has a minor 3rd stacked on top. It can be used as the tonic of a minor key but is most often used either as a 2 in a 2-5-1 (we'll get to that later), or in a modal context (like Miles Davis' "So What"). Common chord symbols for minor 7 chords are Cminor7, Cmin7, Cm7, and C-7.

SHELL & ROOT+SHELL VOICINGS

The shell is made up of only the defining notes in a chord: the 3rd and the 7th. Sometimes we add the root to ground the chord but we can leave the 5th out of the equation all together and still have the essential elements of our three basic 7th chords defined. Here are the three basic shells in their two inversions:



Let's add the root so we can hear the full chord in all its punchy glory:



NOTES

PRACTICE ROUTINE:
BUILDING SOLID HARMONY

SESSION 1.

- Chromatic Warm-Up - 76 bpm
- Ear Training - Triads
- Etude
- Free Play

SESSION 2.

- Chromatic Warm-Up - 92 bpm
- Ear Training - 7th Voicings
- Etude
- Review - Interval Etude
- Free Play

SESSION 3.

- Chromatic Warm-Up - 88-100 bpm
- Ear Training - Intervals
- Etude - Play-Along
- Free Play

SESSION 4.

- Chromatic Warm-Up - 66 bpm
- Ear Training - Root+Shell
- Etude - Minor 7 Play-Along
- Review - Interval Etude
- Free Play

NOTES

FROM PETER MARTIN & ADAM MANESS' "JAZZ PIANO JUMP-START"

ROOT + SHELL ETUDE




C7
CΔ7
C-7
C7

NOTES

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4 MASTERING THE MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENT

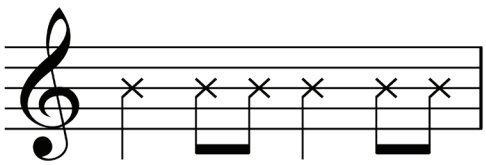
Rhythm, Feel, Time, and Swing are hands down the most important elements of jazz that we can master.



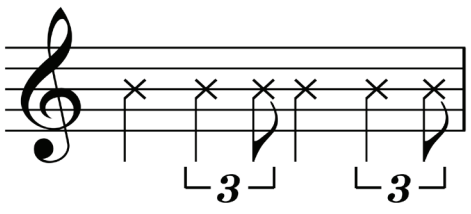
SWING!

Of all of these elements, Swing is most crucial to jazz. The swing feel is based off the 8th note triplet. Its basic rhythm is usually played on the ride cymbal or hi-hat.

It's usually written like this:

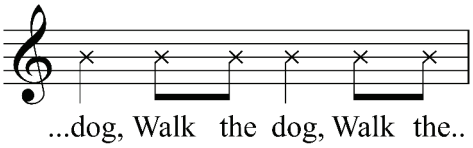


But often it sounds more like this:



Gregory Hutchinson's "Walk the Dog"





Ulysses Owens, Jr.'s "Spang-a-lang"





Our friends Gregory Hutchinson and Ulysses Owens Jr. use some catchy phrases to teach this rhythm.

FIND YOUR FEEL

There is a wide spectrum of swing feels in-between the straight 8th and the triplet. For many players it's a matter of taste or even region. Experiment and find the swing feel that feels best to you. Your feel.

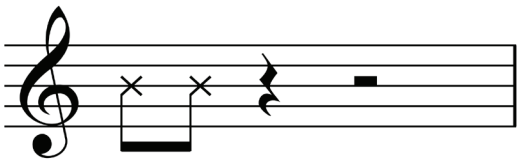
NOTES

SYNCOPATION

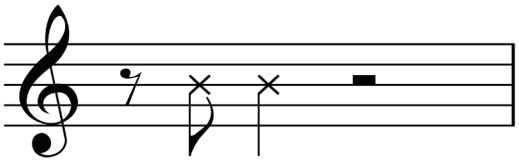
Some people mistakenly think of syncopation as all up-beats. In reality, syncopation is a combination of up-beats and down-beats that creates a feel that is sometimes delayed, sometimes anticipated, and sometimes a little unexpected.

Check out these four fundamental syncopated rhythms that can be combined to make some very complex, very swinging phrases.

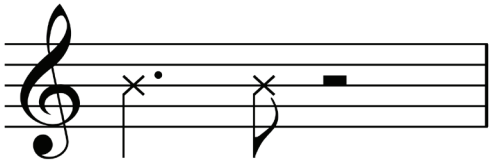
1. 8th note rhythm starting on the down-beat



2. 8th note rhythm starting on the up-beat



3. Charleston rhythm starting on the down-beat



4. Charleston rhythm starting on the up-beat





PRO TIP!

Practice these rhythms in different combinations. Mix in some quarter notes to link them together, try these phrasing ideas over different scales and you'll be swingin' in no time.

PRACTICE ROUTINE: MASTERING THE MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENT

SESSION 1.

- Chromatic Warm-Up - 100 bpm
- Ear Training
- Etude
- Free Play

SESSION 2.

- Chromatic Warm-Up - 104 bpm
- Ear Training - Intervals
- Etude - C Blues
- Review - Root+Shell Etude

SESSION 3.

- Chromatic Warm-Up - 108 bpm
- Ear Training - Syncopation With Montez
- Etude - Minor Chords

SESSION 4.

- Chromatic Warm-Up - 60 bpm
- Ear Training - C Blues - 120 bpm
- Etude - Intervals
- Review - Etude - Dominant 7
- Free Play

NOTES

FROM PETER MARTIN & ADAM MANESS' "JAZZ PIANO JUMP-START"

SYNCOPATION ETUDE





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5a THE ICONIC FORM: "THE BLUES"

HEY... WHAT'S THE FORM!?

The form is the harmonic "blueprint" that musicians follow within a tune. Form dictates the changes (chord changes) and the duration each chord change is played. The first form we are exploring is the iconic American form: the Blues. Blues forms are found in nearly every genre of Western music, but in jazz the blues is often said to be what "roots" the music. This is to say, once we have a good grasp on the feel, sound, and structure of the blues, we will have the tools to participate in numerous styles of jazz from New Orleans, to Swing, to Bebop, and Modern jazz.

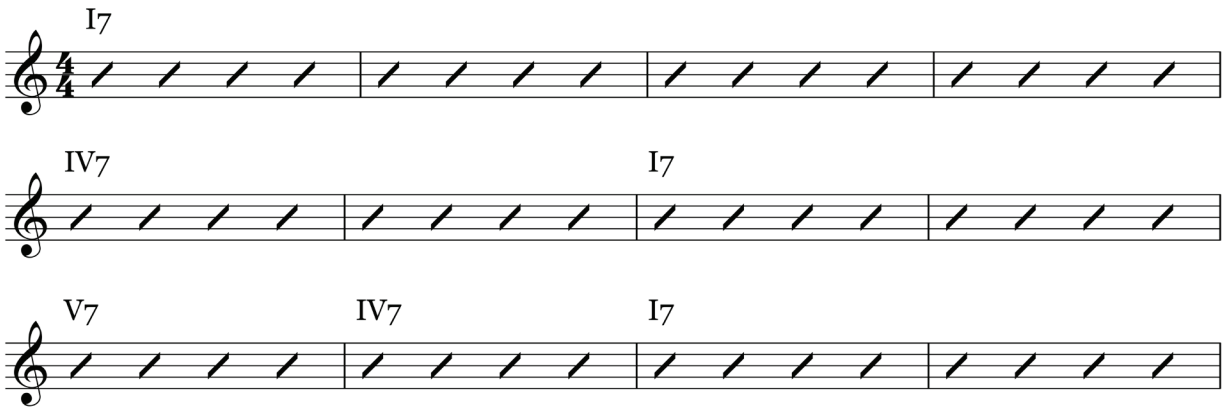


So let's jump into the most common form of the blues: the 12-Bar Blues. The 12-bar blues is twelve measures long and, in its simplest form, contains only three chord changes. When we get to the end of those 12 bars we repeat back to the top, or beginning, of the form for another cycle. Each time through this cycle is known as a chorus. Generally, the 12-bar blues follows a pattern of Melody-Solos-Melody. To start, there are 1-2 choruses that state the melody, then an undetermined number of improvised solo choruses, followed with 1-2 choruses that restate the melody.

ROMAN NUMERALS

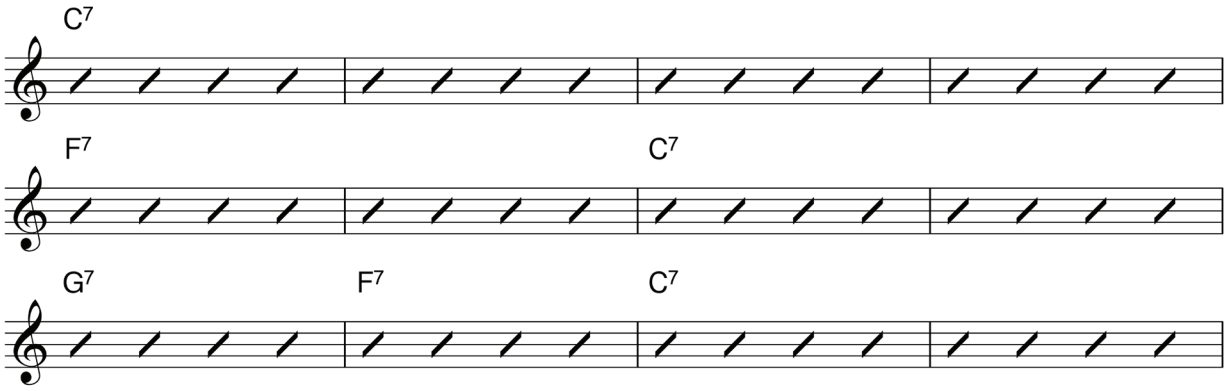
In order to generalize the chord changes of a form or tune, jazz musicians use Roman numerals to represent chords. Each Roman numeral corresponds to a scale degree of the tonic scale or key of the song, as well as the chord built on it. For example, in the key of C, the Roman numeral I refers to C, the first scale degree, and the I-chord is C major. In the blues form we have three chord changes: I7, IV7, and V7. Notice how each Roman numeral is accompanied by a "7." Like the chord change "C7," this "7" denotes that the chord is a dominant 7 chord, containing both a major 3rd and minor 7th interval from the root. The example below shows the Roman numeral notation for our first Iconic Form, the 12-Bar Blues:

"Whatever key we're in, that's the I"



PLAY-ALONG

Let's take this Roman numeral chart and apply it to the key of C:



Remember, how we choose to write this form out is not the most important aspect. In order to truly internalize the form we must LISTEN and PLAY! So, let's take a look at the Play-Along; Peter's holding down the bass line leaving you with the room to play chords above.



LISTEN FIRST

As we listen to the Play-Along try to hear the blues as "3 sections of 4 bars."

- First, note the 4 measures of the I-chord, or C7, that establishes "home."
- Next, listen for the movement away from home to the IV-chord, or F7, for two measures before the return to the I-chord for two measures.
- Listen for the turnaround, the tension of the V-chord (G7) to the IV-chord (F7) resolving right back home to the I-chord (C7).
- Finally, listen for the top of the form and the start of a new chorus.

LET'S PLAY!

Now that we've got the sound of the 12-bar blues in our ears, let's play! Here are some things to focus on:

- Shells: Remember, we don't need to play every note of the C7 chord. With the shell, we can convey the harmony with the "lowest common denominators," the 3rd and 7th of each chord.
- Syncopation: Most importantly, we want to get to the right chord at the right time. If that means playing whole notes on every measure, so be it. But don't be afraid to try out some of the syncopation rhythms we learned last week to practice rhythmic phrasing.
- Internalize the Form: Use the accompanying chord chart if needed, but you should start to feel the form until you don't need to look at the page.

LISTENING EXAMPLE: FREDDIE FREELOADER

Miles Davis's "Freddie Freeloader" is one of the most iconic blues recordings in jazz. Off of one of the most significant jazz records *Kind of Blue* (1959), "Freddie Freeloader" features a notable solo by pianist Wynton Kelly employed specifically for this recording for his blues playing. The song follows the 12-bar blues form in the key of Bb with one exception. In the last two bars the I-chord (Bb7) is subbed with an Ab7, the dominant 7 chord built on the minor 7th of Bb, "Which is super hip!"



WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

- **Form**: Again, listen for that 12-bar blues form. Try to feel the "reset" as each chorus ends and the musicians repeat to the top of the form.
- **Head**: Identify the melody section of "Freddie Freeloader." How many choruses is the melody stated?
- **Solo Section**: Identify the solo section. What do the musicians do differently, if anything, to mark the solo section?

NOTES

5b THE ICONIC FORM: ROLE OF THE INSTRUMENTS

LISTENING DEEPER: FREDDIE FREELOADER

Now that we have a better understanding of the 12-bar blues form and its overarching melody-so-los-melody structure of choruses, let's listen deeper for the role of each instrument. "Freddie Freeload-er" features a sextet of three horns and three rhythm section instruments, a composition prototypical of the jazz combo ensemble. The horns are held down by Miles on trumpet, Cannonball Adderley on alto saxophone, and John Coltrane on tenor saxophone. The rhythm section features a classic arrange-ment of Wynton Kelly's piano, Paul Chambers bass, and Jimmy Cobb's drums. Certainly, there were no slouches! With this ensemble in mind, let's listen again and try to identify what each instrument's role is and how each player fills that role.

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

- **Drums**: Listen for Cobb's ride cymbal pattern. How does he swing his "walk-the-dog" pattern?
- **Bass**: Listen to Chamber's bass line and how he and Cobb establish the time and feel. What kind of bass line is he playing? Is he playing a two-feel or walking on all four?
- **Piano**: Listen to how Kelly is comping, the term jazz musicians use to describe the rhythmic pattern and style of a pianist's accompanying chords. How does he comp behind the melody? How does his comping change when he is accompanying his own solo? How does his comping differ behind other soloists?

NOTES

5C THE ICONIC FORM: LET'S PLAY THE BLUES

With our understanding of the 12-bar blues form and our role within an ensemble, we are almost ready to jump in to playing the blues. We have just one more element to add in, an element that gives the blues its characteristic bluesy sound—the Blues Scale.

THE "SECRET" BLUES SCALE

The blues scale is a fundamental scale not only to the blues, but jazz as a whole. In application, you can improvise with the C blues scale over every chord change in a C blues! Below we have the blues scale in C, with an extra, "secret" note added.



If you are familiar with the blues scale, you may have already identified the extra note we've added, but if you haven't that note is the major 3rd (the E♮). This duality of major and minor tonality is what makes the blues feel so, well, so bluesy.

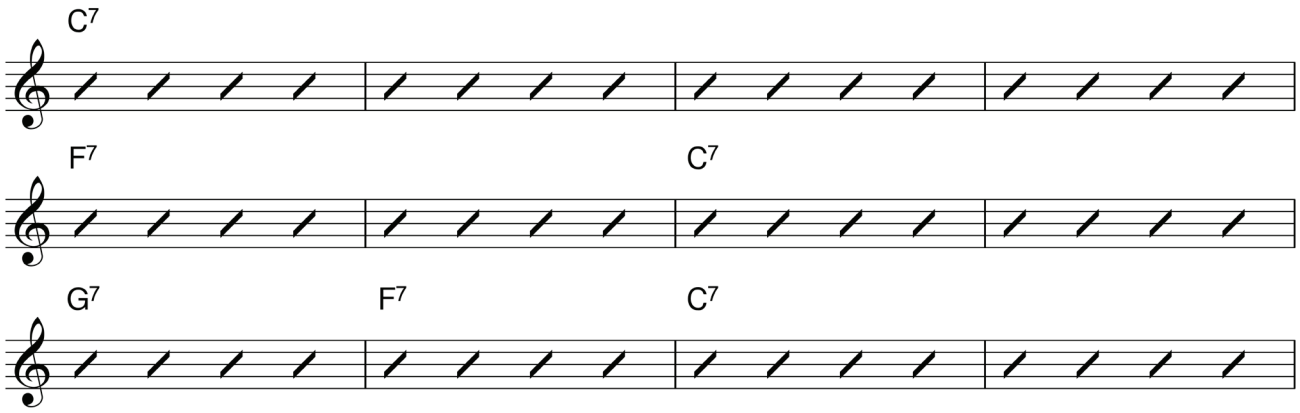
THINKING ABOUT THE BLUES SCALE

- **Intervals:** As you practice the C blues scale, try to internalize each note as an interval from the root. Play C to Eb, then C to E, then C to F, and so on. This will help us get the sound of the blues in our ear and will make it easier when we move the scale to different keys.
- **Linearly:** Try to also think of the C blues scale in a linear fashion. Think about the minor 3rd jump from C to Eb, then the chromatic motion from Eb to G, then another minor 3rd from G to Bb, and the step up to C.

NOTES

PLAY-ALONG

With just your right hand, try trading phrases with Peter using just the C blues scale. Do your best to stay in the groove with good time and good phrasing!



THE BLUES SCALE IN YOUR HANDS

Below are some basic hand positions to help you get comfortable with the C blues scale:

- **Thumb on the Root:** With our right hand thumb on C.
- **Thumb on the IV:** With our right hand thumb on F.
- **Thumb on the V:** With our right hand thumb on G.

These basic positions give our right hand good starting positions and access to the C blues scale as we begin improvising our own phrases.



NOTES

PRACTICE ROUTINE: THE ICONIC FORM

SESSION 1.

- Chromatic Warm-Up - 108 bpm
- Ear Training - Blues Scale
- Etude
- Free Play

SESSION 2.

- Chromatic Warm-Up - 112 bpm
- Ear Training - Blues Scale
- Etude
- Free Play - Voicings

SESSION 3.

- Chromatic Warm-Up - 88 bpm
- Ear Training - 7th Chords
- Etude - C Blues - 100 bpm
- Review - Root+Shell Etude

SESSION 4.

- Chromatic Warm-Up - 112 bpm
- Ear Training - Rolling Intervals
- Etude - C Blues - 120 bpm
- Free Play - C Blues - 120 bpm

NOTES

FROM PETER MARTIN & ADAM MANESS' "JAZZ PIANO JUMP-START"

BLUES ETUDE




C7
F7
C7
G7
F7
C7
C7
F7
C7
G7
F7
C7

NOTES

NOTES

6 THE GREAT AMERICAN FORM

THE AABA FORM

This week we are exploring another common form in jazz: the 32-Bar AABA form. This form is found in many of the standards that make up the "Great American Songbook." In its most basic form, the 32-bar AABA form, describes four sections of eight bars. First, a statement of two A-sections that share similar melodic and harmonic content. Then, a movement to a totally new place: the B-section or Bridge. And finally, a reiteration of the A-section to wrap up the whole AABA pattern. Compared to last week's 12 bar-form, this 32-bar form can feel considerably longer. This is why it's helpful to be able to break it down into its various components: the first A, the second A, the bridge, and the last A.

Like the 12-bar blues, the 32-bar AABA form will repeat back to the top of the form at the start of a new chorus, and the AABA form will follow a Melody-Solos-Melody pattern of choruses.

RHYTHM CHANGES

One of the most common forms within the broader 32-bar AABA category of forms is one based on the famous George Gershwin's show tune, "I Got Rhythm." Throughout the years, jazz musicians have not only covered this song several times, they have also used its form and chord changes as the basis for new melodies and songs. For this reason, Gershwin's "I Got Rhythm" and all songs based on it are known as Rhythm Changes.



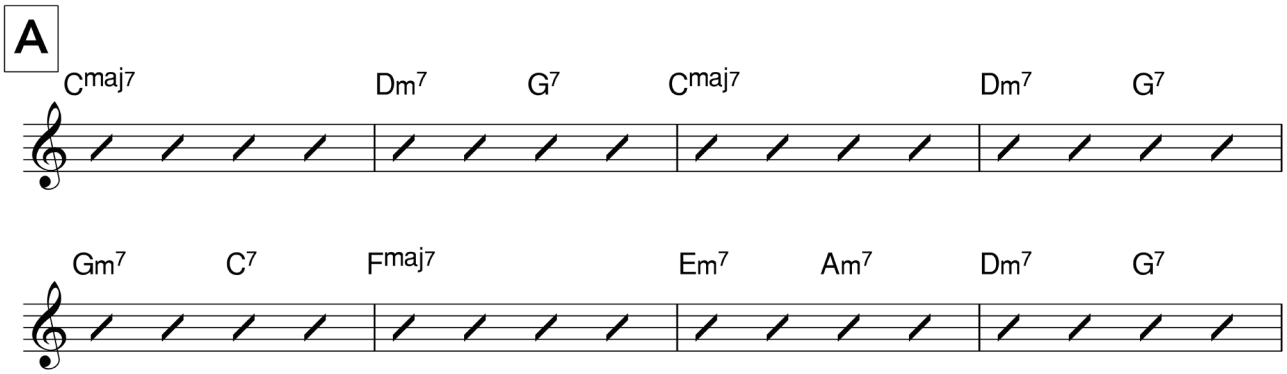
LISTEN FIRST

Let's listen to Peter run a full chorus of Rhythm Changes.

- Adam is calling out the start of each section, but listen for the similarities between the A sections.
- Listen for the movement to a totally new place at the start of the B-section.
- Listen for the return to the last A.
- Notice that each time Peter ends an A, he doesn't always use the same ending. This variance in endings is common and expected in rhythm changes and AABA forms.

BREAKING DOWN THE A'S: THE II-V-I

Below we have the first A section in the key of C:



In the first four bars, we have one measure of CMaj7 and then a ii-V-I progression back to Cmaj7. The ii-V-I progression is extremely common within jazz music. In this case, the ii-chord is the minor 7th chord built off the second scale degree of C Major, or Dm7. The V-chord is the dominant 7th chord built off the fifth scale degree of C Major, or G7. We say that both the Dm7 and the G7 are diatonic to the key of C. This is to say that these chords use only notes found within the home key of C major.

For the next two measures we temporarily leave the key of C as we shift to the key of the IV-chord, Fmaj7. We accomplish this with a ii-V-I progression in the key of F, or Gmin7-C7-FMaj7. This use of the ii-V-I progression is a good example of the way the progression acts as a "bridge to get somewhere."

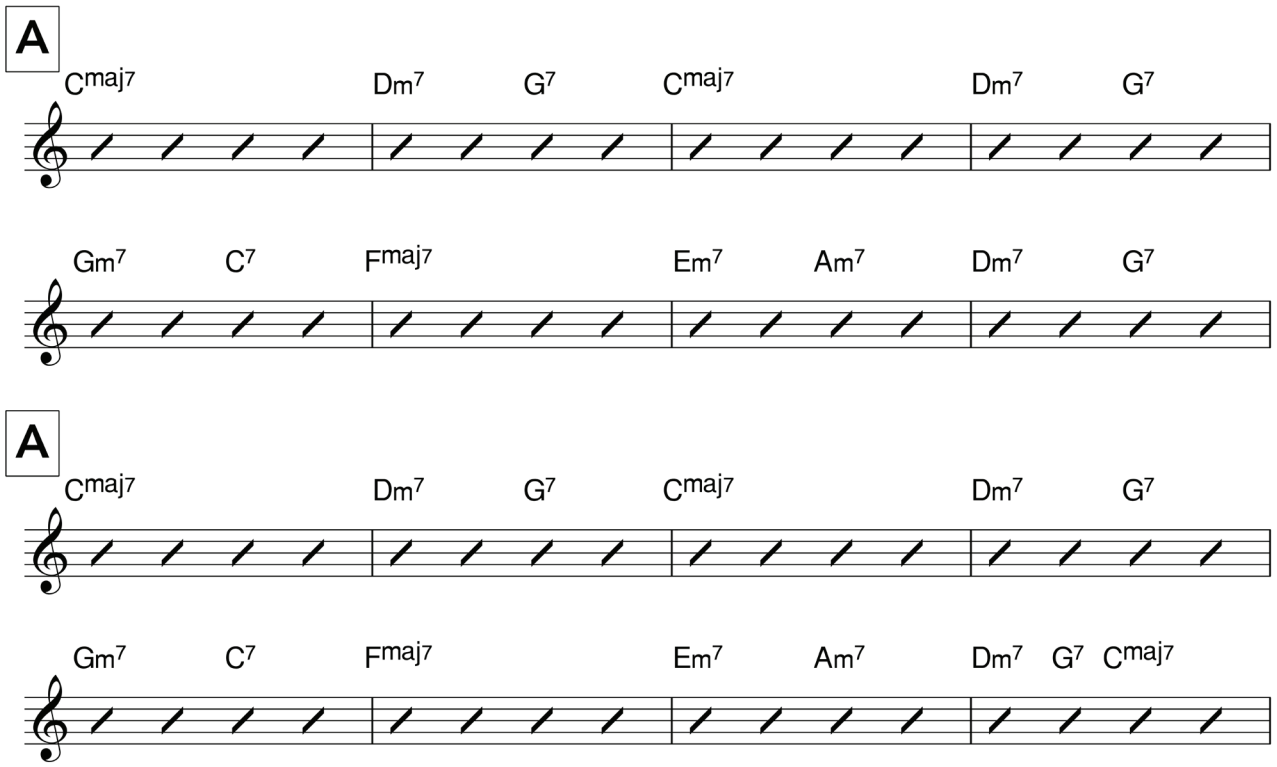
The last two bars feature a iii-vi-ii-V turnaround that leads back to the I-chord for the start of the second A.



NOTES

PLAY-ALONG

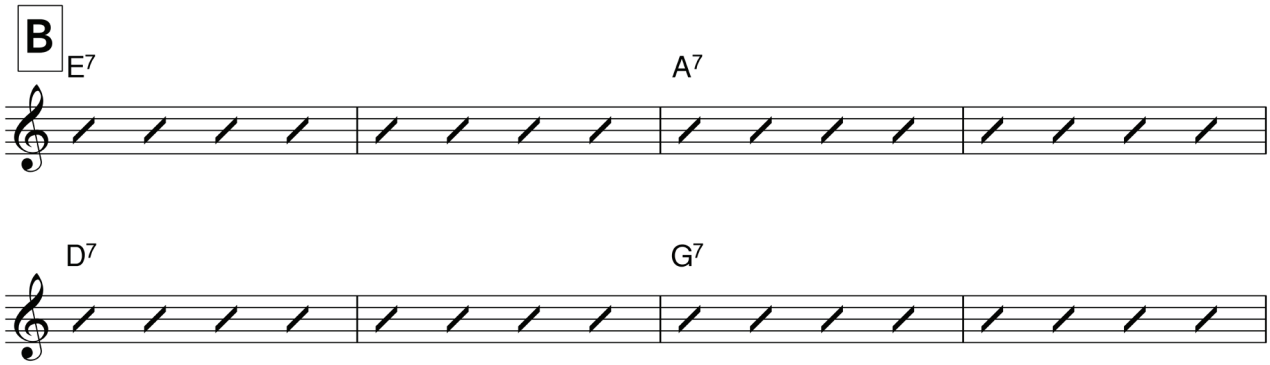
Let's try to play just the first two A's:



This leaves us at the bridge.

BREAKING DOWN THE BRIDGE

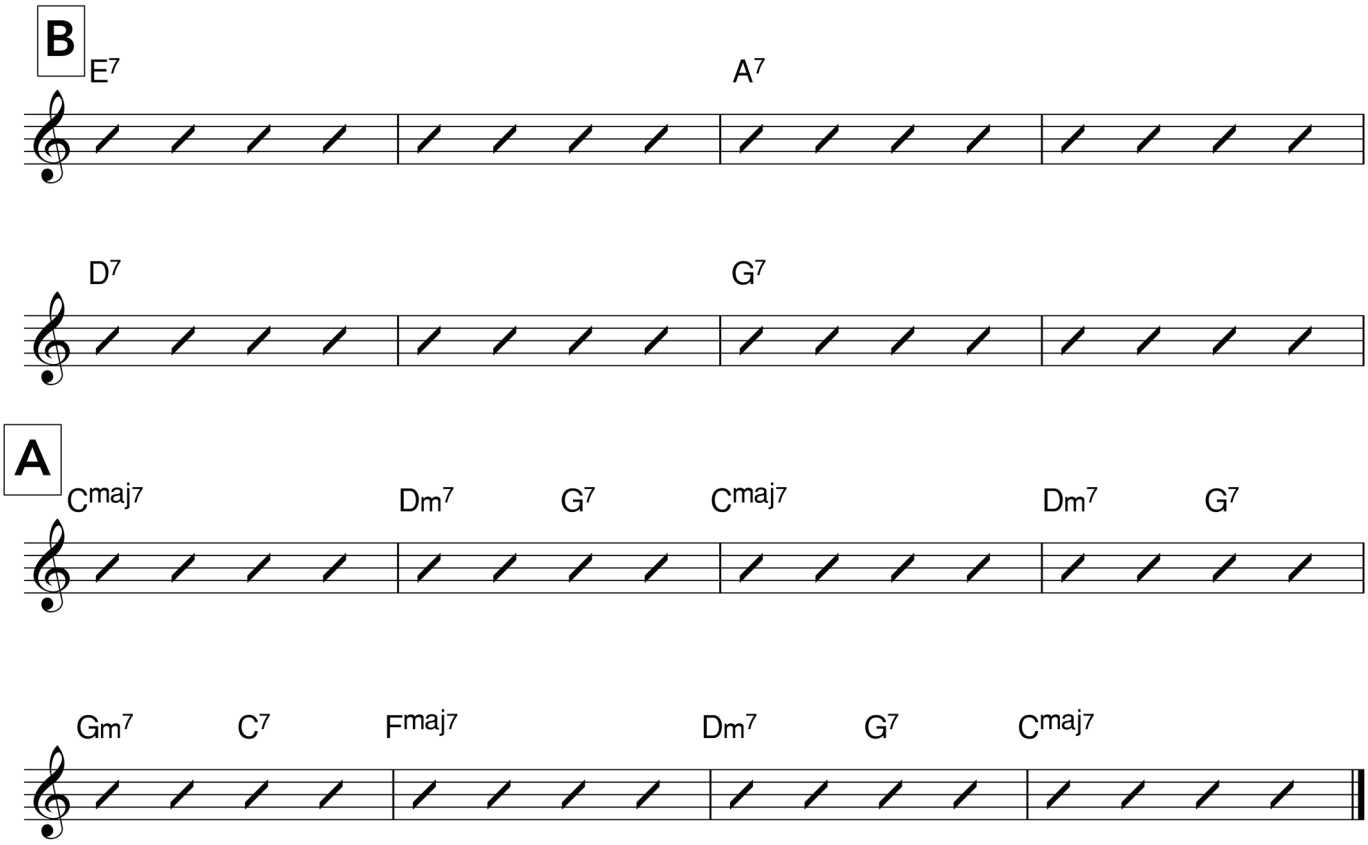
Within a 32-Bar AABA form, the bridge has to be different than the A-sections. In a rhythm changes, the bridge starts out of the key on a dominant III-chord (in this case, E7). This III7-chord moves through a series of resolving dominant chords:



This sounds a lot more difficult to say than it actually is to play! The shells of each dominant chord simply move down by half steps until we get to G7, which leads seamlessly back to Cmaj7 for the last A.

PLAY-ALONG

Let's try to play-along with Peter from the bridge this time:



BACK TO THE CORE

- **Listen:** Check out this week's listening examples and play-alongs to really get the AABA and rhythm changes forms in your ears.
- **Patience**: With such a long form, it can be easy to get lost, especially which A section you happen to be on. Don't worry, we all get lost! Remember: patience.
- **Routine**: Practice your shell voicings with and without the play-along. Get creative by using different syncopations for your comping.
- **Feedback**: Practice with a metronome, record yourself, or ask a friend to listen and give you a critique.

NOTES

PRACTICE ROUTINE: THE GREAT AMERICAN FORM

SESSION 1.

- Chromatic Warm-Up - 116 bpm
- Ear Training - Diatonic 7ths
- Etude - 80 bpm
- Free Play

SESSION 2.

- Chromatic Warm-Up - 96 bpm
- Ear Training - Root+Shell
- Etude - 120 bpm
- Review - Interval Etude

SESSION 3.

- Chromatic Warm-Up - 120 bpm
- Ear Training - Triad Review
- Etude - F - 80 bpm
- Free Play - F - 120 bpm

SESSION 4.

- Chromatic Warm-Up - 104 bpm
- Ear Training - Intervals
- Etude - Blues Etude
- Free Play

NOTES

NOTES

7a FREEING YOUR HANDS: THE CHROMATIC SCALE

This week we are all hands on deck! We are focusing on the freedom of independence between our hands: the ability to play something in one hand without being tripped up by the other. Also, we are talking about how to develop solid technique to be able to get our fingers in the right place as we start improvising.



DEVELOPING SOLID TECHNIQUE

Obviously, piano technique is a broad subject deserving of its own course entirely. However, we are just going to be focusing on a few foundational ideas to get you in the right positions to safely and quickly develop your technique.

POSTURE

Posture is "the grounding and foundation of everything." When getting into the right posture, try to avoid slouching, leaning, or hunching. You should sit on the bench with a straight back and your feet on the floor. Your arms should lay naturally at your sides, and when raised to the piano, your elbows should be positioned slightly in front of your body about two inches above the keyboard. At the end of the day, these guidelines are just that, *guidelines*. Everybody has a different body, so try to think of posture in terms of reducing tension rather than adherence to exact positions.

> We want to have strength without tension—this enables us to bring the strength from our body, through the arms, all the way down through the hands, the fingers, and then to the instrument.



When thinking about the hands and fingers, we also want to focus on reducing tension. We want our hands to be in a natural, relaxed position as we bring them to the piano. Reduce tension by avoiding outstretching or scrunching the fingers. To this end, avoid playing black keys with your thumb. Aim to keep your wrist straight and your forearm and hand flat as you move up and down the piano. Moving your body across the piano bench is preferable to turning or contorting your body and arms to get to the extreme ends of the piano. The end goal is "economy of motion," if you are creating tension through unnecessary movement you are wasting energy.

PUTTING INTO PRACTICE: THE CHROMATIC SCALE

Unfortunately, the best way musicians have found to practice many techniques is to apply them to scales. Practicing scales can get a bad rap, but if you approach a scale with a specific focus on sound or technique, it can break up the seeming monotony of scale practice. So let's get started with our first scale: the Chromatic Scale. The chromatic scale is a versatile scale that is used not only to practice technique, but throughout all of jazz music and improvisation. If you are unfamiliar, the chromatic scale is a scale that is a series of half-steps, thus containing all 12 pitches. Below is the scale with fingering from C to C:



NOTES

7b FREEING YOUR HANDS: THE MAJOR SCALE

THE MAJOR SCALE

For many of you, the major scale is probably familiar. If you've ever had a formal piano lesson, you're likely well versed in the notes and fingering that make up the following C major scale:



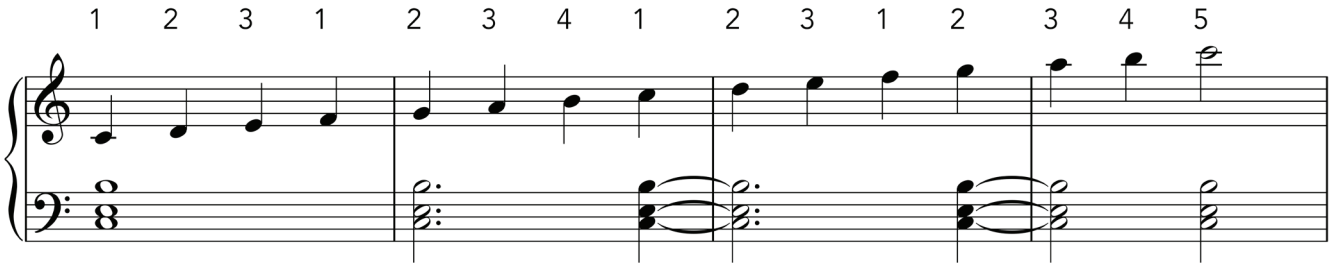
In jazz, though, the major scale is fundamental not only in its traditional application to harmony, but as a blueprint that we use to relate to other scales we play.



LET'S PLAY!

Let's play the C major scale up and down two octaves with our right hand using the fingering above. Keep in mind that when ascending the scale, you want to cross from the 3rd or 4th finger to the 1st finger by tucking your thumb under your palm in preparation.

After you've got this under your fingers, try comping with the the root and shell of a CMaj7 chord in your left hand like so:



This may be tricky at first, but keep in mind that we always want to challenge ourselves when practicing, especially when practicing scales. Get creative and figure out different ways to play and accompany scales. Technique and scale practice are lifelong pursuits and we only get better by challenging ourselves.

PRACTICE ROUTINE: THE ICONIC FORM

SESSION 1.

- Chromatic Warm-Up - 108 bpm
- Ear Training - Blues Scale
- Etude
- Free Play

SESSION 2.

- Chromatic Warm-Up - 112 bpm
- Ear Training - Blues Scale
- Etude
- Free Play - Voicings

SESSION 3.

- Chromatic Warm-Up - 88 bpm
- Ear Training - 7th Chords
- Etude - C Blues - 100 bpm
- Review - Root+Shell Etude

SESSION 4.

- Chromatic Warm-Up - 112 bpm
- Ear Training - Rolling Intervals
- Etude - C Blues - 120 bpm
- Free Play - C Blues - 120 bpm

NOTES

7c FREEING YOUR HANDS: JAZZ ARPEGGIOS

Now that we have a couple step-wise scales underneath our fingers, we're ready to start jumping! And by that I mean: arpeggios. In jazz, we use arpeggios all the time in melodies and improvisation. Unlike classical music, we generally don't run multiple octaves of triadic arpeggios in our lines. Instead, we use smaller segments of arpeggios that we call jazz arpeggios, which allow us to cover more ground in less time.

BUILDING JAZZ ARPEGGIOS

In jazz, we generally use chords that include 7ths, 9th, and other extensions. This is reflected in the way we arpeggiate a chord. For example, instead of playing a C major triad and repeating the triad at C in the next octave, we'll arpeggiate a C major chord to the 7th and then the 9th and other extensions beyond that.

FINGERING

Check out this fingering for a CMaj7 arpeggio that goes first to the 7th, and then to the 9th:



This fingering can also be applied to the dominant 7th chord, C7:



And with one slight alteration, we can apply it to the minor 7th chord, Cm7:



PATIENCE

It's ok if these techniques feels weird and wonky after practicing for the week. Like most things in music, piano technique is a lifelong pursuit. Try recording yourself and zeroing in on the parts that need to be fixed. Then practice slowly, focusing on good time and swing feel, and gradually build from there. You'll be surprised at how quickly these techniques begin to feel like second nature!

"Piano technique is a series of compromises that you make with your body and the piano"

PRACTICE ROUTINE:
FREEING YOUR HANDS

SESSION 1.

- Chromatic Warm-Up - 120 bpm
- Major Scale - 80 bpm
- Jazz Arpeggio - Right Hand - 66 bpm

SESSION 2.

- Chromatic Warm-Up - 126 bpm
- Major Scale - 88 bpm
- Jazz Arpeggio - Left Hand - 66 bpm
- Ear Training - Intervals

SESSION 3.

- Chromatic Warm-Up - 100 bpm
- Major Scale - 92 bpm
- Jazz Arpeggio - Both Hands
- Ear Training - 7th Chords

SESSION 4.

- Chromatic Warm-Up - 100 bpm
- Major Scale - 100 bpm
- Jazz Arpeggio - 76-84 bpm
- Free Play - Play Fast!

NOTES

NOTES

8 LISTENING WITH PURPOSE

This week we are stepping away from the piano to practice a skill vital to the development of every musician: listening. As the first of our 4 core principles, listening has been stressed throughout this course, but today we're going to focus specifically on listening with purpose. Listening with purpose goes beyond listening to your favorite records as a fan. It's about listening for the way a player approaches all of the topics we've covered in this course from intervals, to chords, to form, to the groove and feel. Once we train our ears to listen in this deeper way, we unlock the tools to be able to learn even when we are away from the piano.



LISTENING DEEPER

When listening with purpose, we focus our ear's attention to just one element within a song at a time. To start, we are going to be focusing on these seven elements:

- Form
- Bass Line
- Melody
- Harmony
- Intervals
- Syncopation
- Instrument
- Roles

FORM

Our first listening example is Miles Davis's "Pfrancing" from the album *Someday My Prince Will Come*. Try to identify the form from the forms we have already studied.

If you were thinking "blues," then you're correct. If you weren't able to pick out the correct form, here are some clues to listen for:

- The choruses were each 12 bars long.
- The movement to the IV-chord in the fifth measure.
- The movement to the V-chord at the turnaround.

BASS LINE

Next, let's focus on just the bass line. Aside from the notes themselves, the bass line gives us a wealth of other information. Often times, bass lines dictate the tempo, feel, groove, and even the harmony of a tune. Also if you were unsure of the form, bass lines are a great way to identify markers of different sections of a tune.

In our listening example of "Pfrancing" you may have noticed that Paul Chambers is playing a note every half note. In jazz, we call this feel a two-feel.

MELODY

The melody should jump out as the most apparent element. But when listening deeper, try to think of the how the melody is being played and how it relates to the other elements you have already identified. For example, we know that "Pfrancing," is a blues and we can confirm that with the way the melody is phrased. We have call-and-response phrasing structured within the "3 phrases of 4 bars" architecture common of the blues.

HARMONY

Now that we know we're dealing with a blues form, have some idea of the root movement from the bass line, and have the melody in our ears, let's listen for the chord changes. Since we know the general architecture of a 12-bar blues, let's hone in on the chord qualities (major, minor, or dominant) on this listen.

Within our listening example, you'll notice that all of the chords sound dominant.

INTERVALS

Once we have a solid understanding of the elements above, we can move on to listening for specific intervals—any intervals—whether it be in the bass line, melody, or harmony. Any interval! This will allow us to begin the transcription process away from the piano.

In "Pfrancing," even if you weren't able to pick out any specific intervals, you may have noticed that all of the intervals of the melody fall in a relatively small range. This can be helpful information as you internalize a song through listening.

SYNCOPATION

Now that we've listened for the melodic and harmonic elements of "Pfrancing," it's time to focus on the most important element: rhythm. Listen for the syncopations that we learned a couple of weeks ago, and listen not only to identify them but for *how* they are played. You will notice that Wynton Kelly plays the same syncopation slightly differently than Miles Davis or Hank Mobley. The same way there is difference in the way people talk is the same way there is difference in the way jazz musicians phrase syncopations.

INSTRUMENT ROLES

The last thing we want to focus on right now is the role of the instruments. We know the traditional roles of a small ensemble (like the Miles Davis Quintet) already and how the members of the rhythm section each fill their roles. But try listening deeper, one instrument at a time, to the way each instrument relates to the others. At the end of the day, music is like a language. Each musician has not only the responsibility of their role, but also the opportunity to add their voice and elevate the other voices around them. Listen for how the drummer and bass player "lock-in," how they sync up and respond to each other. Listen specifically to Wynton Kelly and how he comps behind each soloist, what register does he use, what embellishments, etc. As we isolate each instrumentalist, we begin to see their place in the greater scheme.



NOTES

PRACTICE ROUTINE:
LISTENING WITH PURPOSE

SESSION 1.

- "Second Balcony Jump"

SESSION 2.

- "Sister Sadie"

SESSION 3.

- "Sandu"

SESSION 4.

- "On the Sunny Side of the Street"

NOTES

NOTES