Practice Techniques

From *Fundamentals of Jazz Improvisation: What Everybody Thinks You Already Know*

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Patterns

Almost everything in music can be considered a pattern of one type or another. There are melodic patterns, rhythmic patterns, and patterns of both melody and rhythm. Recognition of the principle of patterns is ancient. The medieval composer identified a *talea* (rhythm) and a *tonor* (pitch), which they manipulated in various combinations and fragments. So it is with jazz improvisation. We use scale and arpeggio fragments, patterns standard to the tradition, and those we contrive.

Patterns can be categorized into three types:

1. Circular
2. Digital
3. Melodic

Circular patterns are generally based on some chord(scale type. They can be played up the range of one’s instrument, down and back again. They make a loop of melodic possibility. This type is invaluable for gaining mastery of a harmony and are most often used is fragments when applied to improvisation.

Example (from Jerry Coker’s *Patterns for Jazz*):

Digital patterns are linked directly to a scale. When the degrees of a scale are numbered these numbers are digits. Digital pattern can be analyzed according to these digits.

Example (John Coltrane *Giant Steps*):

Digital patterns are linked directly to a scale. When the degrees of a scale are numbered these numbers are digits. Digital pattern can be analyzed according to these digits.
Melodic patterns don’t fit into either of the above categories. They cannot be played in a circular fashion and their notes will not lend themselves to digital analysis due to a chromatic element not within the confines of a known scale.

Example (Charlie Parker *Confirmation*):

There are many valid reasons to study and memorize patterns.

1. They teach us the jazz language like a vocabulary list. We can learn to speak by mimicking jazz masters as we learned to speak by listening and mimicking our parents.
2. They teach us jazz theory. When analyzed we see the relationships between harmony and melody. We learn what works theoretically and why so that we can adapt this knowledge to other improvisational situations. Practicing patterns helps us to internalize theory and takes it beyond the intellectual to the physical. The combination of mind and body helps the language to enter our soul. It helps us to use what we know.
3. They help us learn jazz style by mimicking the manner in which the notes are played (articulation, subdivision, rhythm, etc.).
4. They serve as an ear-training tool, especially when patterns are transcribed (lifted from a recording, written or not).
5. They help us learn characteristics of specific tunes. Amidst the similarities every tune is unique. We can learn successful ways to improvise on a tune by learning what others have successfully done.
6. They serve as a *springboard* to generate other ideas. One can think of a pattern and play a variation or something quite different. This generates creativity rather than stifling it. The springboard, like a diver being thrust into the air, can give us impetus when we are at a loss during an improvisation.
7. They help to develop facility over our instrument. Whether the pattern is circular, digital, or melodic, mastering patterns improves our ability to make our instruments play what we hear. Without the skill from patterns (scales and arpeggios included) we have no freedom.
8. They help to draw in the listener. Solos where every note is connected to every other note in uniquely original ways are difficult for audiences to relate to. When something familiar is played the listener feels more a part of what’s going on. (Overuse of known patterns is equally as objectionable or worse and will sound trite, unoriginal.)

The following sections include 5 Practice Techniques or ways to work out patterns and use them to enhance jazz improvisation. These include:

Practice Technique #1: Circular Patterns

Practice Technique #2: Same Mode Sequences

Practice Technique #3: Pattern in 12 Keys

Practice Technique #4: Application

Practice Technique #5: Chord Progression

Practice Technique #6: Independence

Practice Technique #7: Improv Solo Composition
Practice Technique #1: Circular Patterns

(Example: C Major, Saxophone)

When preparing to improvise on a tune it is advantageous to work over each chord in the composition. The following examples are in the key of C Major but can be adapted to every key and to almost any chord/scale quality.

Circular patterns allow repetition. Generally, patterns should encompass the range of ones instrument from the lowest note within the key at hand to the highest reasonable note. Patterns can start on the lowest note then proceed to the highest and back or they can start on the root and progress to the top, to the bottom, and back to the root. It is essential that the instrument’s full range be developed with equal proficiency.

All patterns are melodic and, when played with an acceptable jazz style, can be applied to improvisation. Seldom are whole patterns played intact but fragments thereof permeate the literature.

Range

Notes in the key of C Major on the saxophone include:

Practice all patterns with the fundamental jazz articulation. (Wind instruments tongue the upbeat, slur to the downbeat; rhythm instruments play slurred with even emphasis or a slight accent on up beats. Refer to the section on articulation.) Other articulations may be appropriate; one can gain knowledge regarding articulation through concerted listening to masters and through recording and listening to oneself.

5-note Pattern

Start the pattern on each scale degree and repeat until comfortable. Always use a metronome; when medium swing tempos are employed, click on beats two and four. Starting on each degree helps flexibility and avoids the magnetism of root-to-root scale practice. This exercise also helps to strengthen extreme registers (lows and highs) and other areas of technical concern by focusing on small units.
9-note Pattern

This exercise is the same as the 5-note pattern but concentrates on a larger unit.

Full Range Scale

3rds Half Octave

3rds Octave

3rds Full Range
Alternate descending pattern:

4ths Half Octave

4ths Octave

4ths Full Range

One can continue in like manner with 5th, 6th, 7th, and octave intervals.

Pattern 1

Experiment with articulation patterns.

ht = half tongue or ghost
Pattern continues.

Pattern 2

Pattern 3 can be applied to triplet rhythms.

Pattern 4

This melodic concept can be adapted to the interval of a 5th.

Pattern 5
The previous three patterns can be inverted thus:

Patterns that are useful for developing one's proficiency and for application to improvised solos are virtually endless. There are many great sources including many from instrument specific classical technique exercises, methods, etude books, etc. A favorite source to jazz musicians is Jerry Coker's *Patterns for Jazz*. Certainly much can be acquired through active listening and through one's creative imagination given sufficient experience in the idiom.
Practice Technique #2: Same Mode Sequences
(Example: Major, Trumpet)

Jazz improvisation often requires the performer to move quickly from chord to chord. Each chord in a composition can contain its own unique spectrum of sound. The performer may have to “shift gears” so-to-speak and utilize a different aural and physical condition for each harmony.

Practicing movement from key to key within the same chord/scale type helps to make the keys and qualities independent without reference to a crutch. Technique #2 can help the performer internalize the theory of a particular chord/scale and to progress towards the realization of chord progressions. One must think of dominant as dominant not major with a flat 7; one must think of dorian minor as dorian minor and think of the major key signature a whole step below. These and other means to recognize chords/scales are successful as a first step but ultimately need to be supplanted with real knowledge and facility.

The following examples are major but should be applied to any chord/scale that one is incorporating into his or her repository. It is imperative for the student to use this technique, something similar or derived from this technique, in order to realize the initiative described above.

There are three parts to consider. The student is welcome to explore whichever section is most appropriate to develop current levels.

- Part 1: Last notes sustain giving time to think of the next key.
- Part 2: More advanced, skipping immediately to the new key makes the mind and body behave in a manner more similar to realizing a chord progression.
- Part 3: This section explores root progression other than the circle of 5ths (cycle of 4ths).

Determine the reasonable range of your instrument. For this example, the trumpet range of low G to high D is maintained. Certainly, if one is extending one’s range, those notes should be included.

Range

\[ \begin{array}{cc}
\text{G} & \text{A} \\
\end{array} \]
PART 1

Ascending/Descending (Sustain)

*Pairs: Low Register*

Continue through cycle: $A_{b}-D_{b}$, $D_{b}-G_{b}(F_{#})$, $F_{#}-B$, $B-E$, $E-A$, $A-D$, $D-G$, $G-C$

*Pairs: High Register*

Continue through cycle: $A_{b}-D_{b}$, $D_{b}-G_{b}(F_{#})$, $F_{#}-B$, $B-E$, $E-A$, $A-D$, $D-G$, $G-C$

*Fours: Low*

Continue through remaining sets: $A_{b}-D_{b}(C_{#})-G_{b}(F_{#})-B$ and $E-A-D-G$
Descending/Ascending (Sustain)

Pairs: Low

Continue through cycle: A♭-D♭, D♭-G♭(F♯), F♯-B, B-E, E-A, A-D, D-G, G-C

Pairs: High

Continue through cycle: A♭-D♭, D♭-G♭(F♯), F♯-B, B-E, E-A, A-D, D-G, G-C

Fours: Low
Continue through remaining sets: Ab-D♭(C♯)-Gb(F♯)-B and E-A-D-G

Fours: High

Continue through remaining sets: Ab-D♭(C♯)-Gb(F♯)-B and E-A-D-G

Cycle: Low

Cycle: High
PART II

Ascending/Descending (Skip)

Repeat all previous exercises skipping to the next scale instead of holding the root.

Example: *Pairs: Low*

Continue through cycle: A♭-D♭, D♭-G♭(F♯), F♯-B, B-E, E-A, A-D, D-G, G-C

Descending/Ascending (Skip)

Same as above. Begin pattern descending.
Ascending

Pairs: Low

Fours: Low

Fours: High

Cycle: Low
Cycle: High

Descending

Repeat all previous exercises descending.

Example: Pairs: Low

Ascending/Descending Alternation

Pairs: Low

Pairs: High

Continue through remaining sets
Fours: Low

Fours: High

Cycle: Low

Cycle: High

Descending/Ascending Alternation

Repeat all previous alternation exercises descending/ascending.

Example: Pairs: Low
Arpeggios

Practice all previous exercises using arpeggios:
  Ascending/Descending (Sustain)
  Descending/Ascending (Sustain)
  Ascending/Descending (Skip)
  Descending/Ascending (Skip)
  Ascending
  Descending
  Ascending/Descending Alternation
  Descending/Ascending Alternation

Examples:

Pairs: Ascending/Descending, Low (Sustain)

```
\begin{music}
\begin{notation}
\begin{music}
\end{notation}
\end{music}
```

Pairs: Descending/Ascending, Low (Sustain)

```
\begin{music}
\begin{notation}
\begin{music}
\end{notation}
\end{music}
```

Pairs: Ascending (Skip)

```
\begin{music}
\begin{notation}
\begin{music}
\end{notation}
\end{music}
```

Fours: Descending/Ascending Alternation

```
\begin{music}
\begin{notation}
\begin{music}
\end{notation}
\end{music}
```

PART III

Additional Root Progressions

All progressions should ascend and descend.

All progressions should encompass the instrument's full range.

Apply all previous exercises:
  Ascending/Descending (Sustain)
  Descending/Ascending (Sustain)
  Ascending/Descending (Skip)
  Descending/Ascending (Skip)
Ascending
Descending
Ascending/Descending Alternation
Descending/Ascending Alternation

Chromatic: G, A\#, B, C, C\#, D, E\#, E, F, F\#

Example: Ascending

Major Seconds:

Set 1: G, A, B, C\#, E\#, F; Set 2: A\#, B\#, C, D, E, F\#

Example: Descending/Ascending Alternation
Minor Thirds:

Set 1: G, B♭, D♭, E; Set 2: A♭, B, D, F; Set 3: A, C, E♭, F♯

Example: Descending
Major Thirds:

Set 1: G, B, E♭;
Set 2: A♭, C, E;
Set 3: A, C♯, F;
Set 4: B♭, D, F♯

Example: Pairs Ascending
Practice Technique #3: Pattern in 12 Keys

Select a pattern, analyze, memorize in 12 keys.

Analysis Example:

Write in 12 Keys then memorize:
Practice Technique #3: Pattern in 12 Keys

WORKSHEET

Select a pattern, analyze, memorize in 12 keys.

Pattern Analysis:

Write in 12 Keys then memorize:
Practice Technique #4: Application

Start with a major key (examples are in C Major).
Use a play-a-long recording, preferably in a swing style.

Proceed with the following steps:

1. Scale
   a. Ascending (root, 3rd, 5th, 7th, 9th)
   b. Descending
   c. Phrase endings

   IMPROVISE
   Fragments
   Starting notes
   Ascending/descending
   Endings

2. Arpeggio
   a. Ascending (root, 3rd, 5th, 7th)
   b. Descending
   c. 9th Chords
   c. Phrase Endings

   IMPROVISE
   Fragments
   Starting notes
   Ascending/descending
   Endings

3. Practice Technique #1: Circular Patterns

   IMPROVISE
   Fragments
   Starting notes
   Ascending/descending
   Endings
   Mix with scale and arpeggio

4. Building Block rhythms
   a. Vocabulary
   b. Apply Considerations

   IMPROVISE
   Mix with scale, arpeggio, and PT 1

5. Melodic Patterns

   IMPROVISE

Scale

Transpose to instrument key
Change octaves according to instrument range

Ascending

![Ascending Scale Example]
Descending

ht = half-tongue or ghost

Improvise: fragments, starting notes, ascending/descending, endings
Arpeggio

Practice arpeggios 1357 to allow for inversions as below. This is the prime method used when applying arpeggios to chord progressions to facilitate inversions (Practice Technique #5).

Ascending

Descending

9th Chord

Phrase Endings

Improvise: fragments, starting notes, ascending/descending, endings
Add scale concepts.

Circular Scale Patterns

Choose any of the patterns learned from Practice Technique #1.

Example:

Improvise: fragments, starting notes, ascending/descending, endings, scale and arpeggio concepts

Additive Concept: Practice another scale pattern and add it to the previous pattern, scales, and arpeggios; then another, etc.

Rhythm Blocks

Choose a Rhythm Block.

Example: 3C
Improvise the notes but hold true to the rhythm and articulation.

Additive Concept: Practice another rhythm block and add it to the previous block, scales, arpeggios, and patterns; then another, etc.

**Considerations**

1. Combine rhythm blocks by rest
2. Combine rhythm blocks by slur
3. Contour notes
4. Rhythmic displacement
5. Pick-up note
6. Rhythmic substitutions (rests, ties, triplets)

**Consideration 1:** Combine two rhythm blocks by rest.

Improvise Consideration 1 (combine by rest).

Additive Concept: Practice another rhythm block and add it to the previous block, scales, arpeggios, and patterns, then another, etc.

**Consideration 2:** Combine two rhythm blocks by slur.

Improvise Consideration 2 (combine by slur).
Additive Concept: Improvise combined blocks adding scales, arpeggios, and patterns.

Consideration 3: Contour notes.

Consideration 3 using eighth note lines.

Additive Concept: Improvise contour note articulation adding scales, arpeggios, patterns, and rhythm block combinations.

Consideration 4: Displace a rhythm block by moving it across the measure by 1, 2, or 3 beats.

Consideration 4 (rhythmic displacement).

Additive Concept: Apply rhythmic displacement to scales, arpeggios, patterns, and rhythm blocks.

Consideration 5: Pick-up notes.

Improvise

Additive Concept: Apply pick-up notes to scales, arpeggios, patterns, and rhythm blocks.

Consideration 6: Rhythmic substitutions (rests, ties, and triplets).
Improvise Consideration 6 (substitutions) adding a new element one at a time starting with rests, ties, then triplets.

**Melodic Patterns**

**Examples:**

Practice a melodic pattern (with a play-a-long track)

Additive Concept: Add melodic patterns to scales, arpeggios, scale patterns, rhythm blocks, and considerations.
Practice Technique #5: Chord Progression

There are many methods for learning a chord progression. Six are contained herein:

a. Chord Tones
b. Arpeggios
c. Scales
d. Guide Tones
e. Patterns
f. Scale Shifting

All six techniques are completely written out because they are often confusing when simply given an explanation. They are very difficult for young players to initially play from memory. One may play through the exercises from the written pitches at first but eventually the techniques need to be practiced entirely from memory.

It is advantageous to use some type of accompaniment either recorded or live,. This helps the student play in time and acquaints the ear to the chord changes. Playing the exercises at a slower rate then the tune suggests is often necessary and can be done with a metronome alone.

In time one should become independent of any crutch and improvise in time, without a rhythm section, delineating the chord progression in one's melodic content sufficiently for the listener to hear the harmonic flow and know where the performer is in the tune. The following techniques will help achieve this goal.

**Chord Tones**

Playing the chord tones should also serve in an ear-training capacity. One should sing the chord tones as well as playing them on one's instrument. Use a recorded accompaniment or other means to provide a harmonic foundation. Listen to the color of each chord tone. Chord tones represent what is right for a harmony; they are the sound of IN. Chromatic passing notes and pickup notes, blues notes, "side-slipping" or playing “outside” mean nothing unless compared to the sound of IN. If one learns outside pitches such as blues notes first, the ear may not recognize that they are outside the chord and not give them the grind or soul they are intended to provide. Again, one must first learn the sound of IN.

**Arpeggios**

Arpeggios provide the goal note habit that will define to the listener where one is in the progression. Practicing arpeggios locks the soloist into the progression. Most any other notes can be made successful if resolved to a chord tone. Seventh chords are the primary arpeggios because they allow inversions clearly.
Scales

Scales should not be thought of as stale alphabetical listings of theoretical pitches. Rather, one might think of them thus:

1. Scales are chords with extensions. If a scale is represented as 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 within the octave, the extensions are 9 10 11 12 13 14 15. With octave displacement 1=8 2=9 3=10 4=11 5=12 6=13 7=14 8=15. In tertiarian harmony, the most common in Western art music, we sound every other note of a scale to create a chord, stacked thirds. When this process is taken beyond the octave we get 1 3 5 7 9 11 13. Extensions 8 10 12 14 and 15 are redundant and not included.

2. Scales are not learned in order to play them in a stepwise fashion. One might choose to do so but they may be improvised in any order. They represent a spectrum of sound that when played as a group of choices represent or produce a unified color. Not all notes of the scale need be played. When we keep a collection of pitches together, in whatever order, over a period of time however short we create a harmonic effect. This combined with strong melodic organization moves the music with strong forward motion.

3. Scales are not created theoretically first and then applied to performance. Indeed it happens the other way around. Musicians look back to what has been done and label tendencies. If one were to play a harmony then systematically check each of the twelve possible notes of our tonal system against that harmony, one undoubtedly would choose certain notes over others. These notes placed in an alphabetical stepwise order become a scale. It is highly likely that this scale is something recognized by the jazz community as appropriate to the chord and has already been given a name.

This technique requires starting scales on the root, on the 3rd, the 5th, 7th, and 9th. The direction of the scale changes from upward to downward in various combinations. Young player’s improvisation frequently begins each chord on the root, usually followed by upward scale motion. This practice technique helps to break that tendency.

Guide Tones

Guide tones help the improver give melodic direction to a line and delineate the chord progression. The general rule is 3rds go the 7ths and 7ths go the 3rds. This is most successful with cyclical motion such as ii V7 I, chains of ii Vs, iii vi i V, etc. For example D minor to G7 to C major moves the 3rd of D to the 7th of G to the 3rd of C or F to F to E. The 7th of D moves to the 3rd of G to the 7th of C or C to B to B. Sometimes notes change; sometimes they remain the same. The improviser seldom plays guide tones directly but they are the structure around which notes are added.

Patterns

Patterns have been discussed at the onset of the section on Practice Techniques. The application to a chord progression is that of placing the pattern within the progression wherever it is appropriate, changing keys where necessary. As a practice technique one should ensure that the pattern is played every time. One can improvise between appearances of the pattern but the pattern must be played whenever possible. Later, when the live solo is played, the pattern may or may not occur. Having applied this practice technique helps from one to all of the eight points for pattern learning to be explored.
Scale Shifting

Scale shifting can be quite challenging. In this technique one starts the exercise on any scale tone that fits the first chord; a chord tone preferably. One then proceeds upward to the top of one’s instrument, turns around and plays downward to the bottom, and returns. In the course of this circular melodic direction, one changes scales as new harmonies arrive, always staying in time and playing each chord for the duration given in the tune. Move to the closest note of the new scale and keep going.
5a: Chord Tones (the sound of IN)

Roots

3rds

5ths
5b: Arpeggios

root up

\[ \text{\textcopyright image} \]
root down
root up/down
root down/up
3rd up

C-7  G7  C-7  G7  E-7  A7

E-7  A7  A-7  D7  Ab-7  Db7

C7  B7  Bb7  A7

G-7  b7  C7

F-7

C7  A7

G7  A7

C-7  G7  C-7  G7  E-7  A7

E-7  A7  A-7  D7  Ab-7  Db7

C7  B7  Bb7  A7
3rd down

C-7 | G-7 | D-7 | G-7 | E-7 | A-7 |
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
C-7 | A-7 | A-7 | D-7 | Bb-7 | C-7 |

1. C-7 | B-7 | Bb-7 | A-7 |
2. C-7 | B-7 | Bb-7 | A-7 |

C-7 | C-7 | C-7 | A-7 |

D-7 | G-7 | D-7 | G-7 | E-7 | A-7 |

E-7 | A-7 | A-7 | D-7 | Bb-7 | C-7 |

C-7 | B-7 | Bb-7 | A-7 |
3rd up/down
3rd down/up

\[\text{C-7} \quad \text{G7} \quad \text{D-7} \quad \text{G7} \quad \text{E-7} \quad \text{A7} \]

\[\text{E-7} \quad \text{A7} \quad \text{A-7} \quad \text{G7} \quad \text{Ab-7} \quad \text{C\#7} \]

\[\text{Ch7} \quad \text{B7} \quad \text{B\#7} \quad \text{A7} \quad 2 \]

\[\text{C\#7} \quad \text{G-7} \quad \text{C7} \]

\[\text{E-7} \quad \text{A7} \quad \text{A-7} \quad \text{G7} \quad \text{Ab-7} \quad \text{C\#7} \]

\[\text{Ch7} \quad \text{B7} \quad \text{B\#7} \quad \text{A7} \]
5th down

C-7  G7  D-7  G7  E-7  A7

E-7  A7  A-7  D7  A♭-7  C♭7

C67  B7  B♭7  A7  2  C67

G-7  C7  C-7  A-7

C-7  G7  D-7  G7  E-7  A7

E-7  A7  A-7  D7  A♭-7  C♭7

C67  B7  B♭7  A7
5th up/down
5th down/up
7th up

\begin{musicnotation}
\newclef{treble}
\newkey{c}
\newnotenumbering{1}
\newnotenumbering{2}
\newkey{c}
\end{musicnotation}
7th down
7th up/down
7th down/up

\begin{music}
\begin{musicnote}
C\textsuperscript{7} & G\textsuperscript{7} & C\textsuperscript{7} & G\textsuperscript{7} & E\textsuperscript{7} & A\textsuperscript{7}
\end{musicnote}
\begin{musicnote}
E\textsuperscript{7} & A\textsuperscript{7} & A\textsuperscript{7} & D\textsuperscript{7} & A\textsuperscript{7} & D\textsuperscript{7}
\end{musicnote}
\begin{musicnote}
G\textsuperscript{7} & C\textsuperscript{7} & B\textsuperscript{b7} & A\textsuperscript{7} & C\textsuperscript{7}
\end{musicnote}
\begin{musicnote}
G\textsuperscript{7} & C\textsuperscript{7} & A\textsuperscript{7} & D\textsuperscript{7} & A\textsuperscript{7} & D\textsuperscript{7}
\end{musicnote}
\end{music}
9th Chords: root up
9th down/root up
5c: Scales

root up
root
don"
root up/down
root down/up
3rd down
3rd up/down

```
G7   D7   G7   E7
E7
A7
D7
Ab7
C7

C7   B7   Bb7   A7

G7   C7

F7
A7

D7
G7
A7

C7   G7   D7   G7   E7
E7
A7
D7
Ab7
C7

C7   B7   Bb7   A7
```
3rd down/up
5th up
5th down

C7    G7    C7    G7    E7    A7

E7    A7    A7    D7    A7    Db7

C7    B7    Gb7    A7

G7    Ab7    C7

E7    A7

C7    G7

C7    G7    C7    G7    E7    A7

E7    A7    A7    D7    A7    Db7

C7    B7    Gb7    A7
5th up/down
5th down/up
7th up

C\(7\)
\(D7\)
\(G7\)
\(C7\)
\(G7\)
\(E7\)
\(A7\)
\(E7\)
\(A7\)
\(A7\)
\(D7\)
\(Ab7\)
\(Db7\)
\(C7\)
\(B7\)
\(Bb7\)
\(A7\)
\(C7\)
\(G7\)
\(A7\)
\(C7\)
\(G7\)
\(E7\)
\(A7\)
\(E7\)
\(A7\)
\(A7\)
\(D7\)
\(Ab7\)
\(Db7\)
\(C7\)
\(B7\)
\(Bb7\)
\(A7\)
7th down
7th down/up

\( G7 \quad G7 \quad E-7 \quad A7 \)

\( E-7 \quad A7 \quad A-7 \quad D7 \quad A\-7 \quad Db7 \)

\( C7 \quad B7 \quad Bb7 \quad A7 \quad C7 \)

\( F-7 \quad A-7 \quad A7 \quad A7 \quad A-7 \quad D7 \quad A\-7 \quad Db7 \)

\( C7 \quad G7 \quad D-7 \quad G7 \quad E-7 \quad A7 \)

\( E-7 \quad A7 \quad A-7 \quad D7 \quad A\-7 \quad Db7 \)

\( C7 \quad B7 \quad Bb7 \quad A7 \quad C7 \)
9th Chords: root up

\[ \text{Chords: root up} \]

\[ \text{Root} \]

\[ \text{Chords: root up} \]
9th down

\[ O-7 \quad G^7 \quad D-7 \quad G^7 \quad E-7 \quad A^7 \]

\[ E-7 \quad A^7 \quad A-7 \quad D^7 \quad bA^7 \quad C^7 \]

\[ C^7 \quad G^7 \quad B^7 \quad A^7 \quad G^7 \quad A-7 \]

\[ G^7 \quad A^7 \quad A-7 \quad D^7 \quad bA^7 \quad C^7 \]

\[ C^7 \quad G^7 \quad D-7 \quad G^7 \quad E-7 \quad A^7 \]

\[ E-7 \quad A^7 \quad A-7 \quad D^7 \quad bA^7 \quad C^7 \]

\[ C^7 \quad G^7 \quad B^7 \quad A^7 \quad G^7 \quad A-7 \]
root up/9th down
9th down/root up
5d: Guide Tones
5e: Patterns

Pattern 1

\[\text{\(\text{D}\)} - \text{G}\]\n\[\text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{G}\)}\]
\[\text{\(\text{E}\)} - \text{A7}\]
\[\text{\(\text{E}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{G}\)}\]
\[\text{\(\text{D}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{G}\)}\]

\[\text{\(\text{E}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{D}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{G}\)}\]
\[\text{\(\text{E}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{D}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{G}\)}\]

\[\text{\(\text{E}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{D}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{C}\)}\]
\[\text{\(\text{E}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{D}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{C}\)}\]

\[\text{\(\text{E}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{D}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{C}\)}\]
\[\text{\(\text{E}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{D}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{C}\)}\]

\[\text{\(\text{E}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{D}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{C}\)}\]
\[\text{\(\text{E}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{D}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{C}\)}\]

\[\text{\(\text{E}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{D}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{C}\)}\]
\[\text{\(\text{E}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{D}\)} - \text{\(\text{A}\)} - \text{\(\text{C}\)}\]
5f: Scale Shifting
Practice Technique #6: Independence

In time one should become independent of any crutch and improvise in time, without a rhythm section, delineating the chord progression in one's melodic content sufficiently for the listener to hear the harmonic flow and know where the performer is in the tune.

Playing in time without a rhythm section is challenging. However, it is imperative that any soloist be able to lead rather than follow. As stated, it is imperative that the soloist always keeps the form independently. When all players, including the soloist, do this, the tune has strength and achieves professionally competent musicality.

One's ears reach out to confirm but never to follow. Following requires a response to what has been heard. This is great for call and response communication; it is mandatory for integrated melodic lines. But, for keeping one's place in the form and for accuracy and unification of pulse, following is detrimental. It places the follower behind, not Basie laid back but just late. If others do the same, the tune continually slows. Laid back or right on, the performer must be consistent and not dependent.

All previous practice techniques help to prepare for independent improvisation. Practicing patterns and other exercises with a metronome and with proper style (rhythm, subdivision, articulation) is imperative.

No samples can be written for this technique for it is entirely improvised. There can, however, be a systematic approach.

1. Set the metronome to a flat four (1 2 3 4) and improvise one measure. If students can pair up, one should count the beats while the other improvises. Stop on beat one of the second measure. Try to “feel” the duration of the improvised measure. Repeat as many times as necessary.
2. Do the same over the duration of two measures.
3. Again, but over the duration of four measures.
4. Try eight measures. Some feel eight measure durations as two sets of four.
5. Now set the metronome on 2 and 4 and follow the same process.
6. As a more advanced technique, set the metronome on other beats such as only beat 4, or 3, or every other measure, etc.
Practice Technique #7: Improv Solo Composition

There are two significant purposes for this exercise: 1) it provides the instructor the opportunity to learn the student’s level of understanding, and 2) it requires the student to codify or assimilate knowledge learned to this point.

Improv composition will elicit creativity. As difficult as writing out a logical solo might be, it is not a challenging as creating a composition spontaneously. This is an exercise in slow motion improvisation allowing time to incorporate new principles of improvisation.

Several strategies might be useful to those unfamiliar with composition, improvised or otherwise.

1. Write out the head (melody) first then employ various degrees of embellishment.
2. Superimpose patterns from worksheet assignments either on the melody or as a starting point to a blank sheet of staff paper.
3. Randomly assign Rhythm Block rhythms to an eight bar section every half measure then randomly assign pitches appropriate to the chord. Randomly (or semi-randomly) place rests, ties, and triplets to the phrase. Play the creation and make tasteful musical corrections.
4. Mix and match all of the above.
5. Avoid run-on sentences by using space.

Staff paper is provided herein. The correct number of measures is given, which also suggests the number of choruses expected.

Tunes for Part 1 include:

- Impressions
- Satin Doll
- Blues (any 12-bar head)
- Autumn Leaves
- Rhythm Changes (any head)
- Song for My Father

Other tunes may accomplish the same and additional goals as those listed and many strategies may be applied with this technique.
Impressions
Blues
Autumn Leaves
Song for My Father