

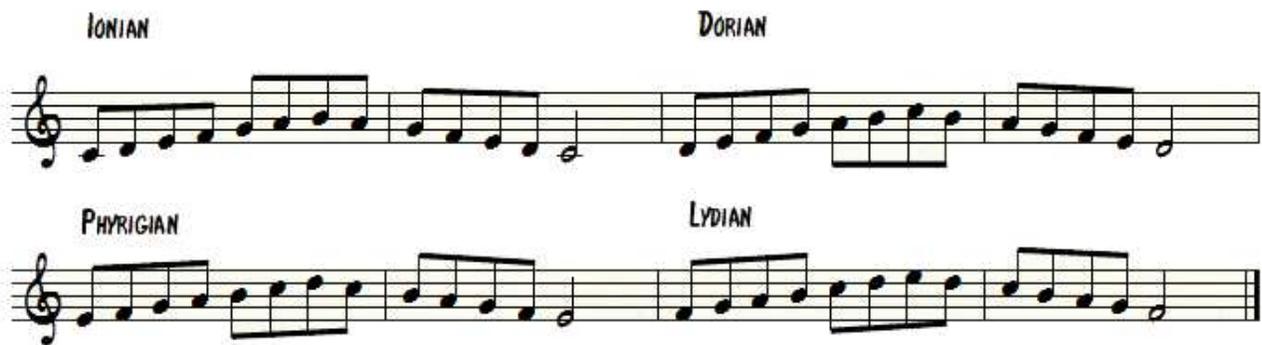
# Jazz Lesson 11

## Technique

### 1. Practicing Diatonic Modes

- a. When playing modes make sure that you are using a swing feel! It is easy to get wrapped up in boring technique exercises and injected the swing feel can help create more enjoyable exercises. When you can successfully play *any* mode up and down from *any* scale degree you can feel confident in weaving the harmonic changes together through improvisation. We will start with the first of the diatonic modes called the Ionian mode. Play this mode up to the 7<sup>th</sup> then down, then move to the next mode (see figure 11.1).

Figure 11.1

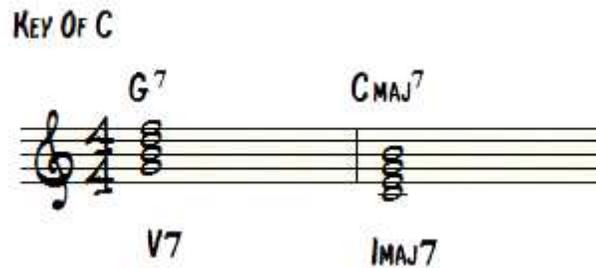


## Harmony & Theory

### 1. Beginner Harmony and Theory Part 3

- a. We recently discussed the 7 diatonic chords that can be constructed from a major scale. We have yet to talk about how the chords can be used. We will first discuss different resolutions that the chords can create. The first resolution we should discuss is the V7-Imaj7 resolution. This can be any V7 chord from any key resolving to the Imaj7 chord from the same key. For instance, in the key of C the V7 chord would be G7 - I figured that out by counting up to the fifth scale degree of C major. Then G7 would resolve to the Imaj7th chord or in this case, a Cmaj7th chord, (see figure 11.2).

Figure 11.2

V7 TO IMAJ7TH RESOLUTIONS

In order to understand this resolution, you need to understand how these chords function. Let's start with the V7 chord. The dominant chord in jazz harmony and theory is considered a very “unstable” chord, meaning it wants to move to another chord. The instability of the chord is caused by the tritone interval that is found between the 3<sup>rd</sup> degree of G7 the note B, and the 7<sup>th</sup> degree of G7, the note F, (see figure 11.3).

Figure 11.3

TRITONE WITHIN DOMINANT 7TH CHORDS

The tritone interval was named the “Devils interval”. This interval is extremely dissonant and instable. What does instability want to do? It creates tension and wants to be resolved. This is why dominant chords typically move to stable chords; in this case the IMAJ7th chord, thus creating the V7-IMAJ7th progression.

The IMAJ7 is the most stable chord in music. This is in part because it has two perfect fifth intervals. The fifths are found between the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 5<sup>th</sup>, being the notes C and G, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> and the 7<sup>th</sup>, being the notes E and B. The IMAJ7th chord creates the perfect stability for a V7 chord to resolve to and ease the tension in all the listeners' ears. When analyzing jazz standards you will notice how most of the time, the V7 chord will

resolve to a Imaj7th chord. The comprehension of this progression and more to come only increases your ability to play pieces, solo, comp, and become a better player overall.

## Repertoire

### 1. *Beginner Improvisation Series Part 3 – Connection of harmonies with chord tones and modes*

- a. We make connections between harmonies by using our modes during the measure and landing on chord tones on beat 1 of each measure. This can get a little overwhelming now that we have more note choices with our modes. We must be thinking ahead in order to target a chord tone on beat 1 of the next chord. By using our modes during the measure and landing on chord tones on beat 1 of each measure we can create seamless sounding solos.

For example, when moving from the D-7 to G7, we want to pick a chord tone from the G7 to land on. Let's pick the note B, the 3<sup>rd</sup>. Now we begin improvising from the D-7 and when we get to beat 1 of the G7 we have to land on B. We could just lift our hand and jump to this note, but this will sound very disconnected. Our goal is to connect our line to a target note seamlessly. The two examples below show a disconnected approach, and a smoother one. (see figure 11.3)

*Figure 11.3*

Disconnected

Smooth



One way we will work on this, is to target all of our chord tones in our 5-1 resolutions in all 12 keys. This is great practice to get accustomed to targeting chord tones and playing them smoothly.

#### b. *Isolate V-I resolutions within “Take The A-Train”*

- i. Practicing the V-I resolutions in “A Train” will help strengthen our improvisation. Because the V-I is such a strong resolution, by making sure you accurately reflect

the change in harmony, your improvisation will improve. There are not too many V-I resolutions in “A-Train”, but it’s good to start preparing for more in other tunes!



c. *Analyze “Take The A Train” and write out the modes*

- i. Analyzing tunes will help us understand progressions at a higher level. This will allow us to understand the harmonies we’re playing in our solos and make us a better player.

d. *Practicing the modes to a piece*

- i. Practicing modes to the tune you are learning is essential in order for your fingers to grasp the particular notes for each chord. Practice playing the modes in this particular order before we begin to use them to improvise. (see technique section for same details)

1. *RH Modes alone swung to the 7<sup>th</sup>*
2. *RH Modes with LH Bass notes*
3. *RH Modes with LH Chords*