

Jazz Lesson 3

Technique

1. Arpeggios

- a. Arpeggios are a great way to work on finger strength, movement, and flexibility of the hand. An arpeggio is a specific way you play a chord or group of notes in a single note pattern going up and down. You played some arpeggios of the major triads in Lesson 1 Practice Exercises. We are going to take this to the next level and add arpeggios as a progressive regiment that we will use for all major triads and other chords in order to improve your technique while assisting you in your harmony and theory knowledge.(See below).

Harmony & Theory

1. Minor Triads

- a. Minor Triads are very similar to major triads except minor triads create a sad or ominous type of sound when played. Just like major triads are built from major scale, minor triads are built using a minor scale. We will get into minor harmony later in the course but for now I would like to show you a similar more effective way to build a minor triad. In order to create a minor triad we take our major triad, let's use C major for example, so we now have the notes C, E, and G, and we simply lower our 3rd, the note E, down a half step, and play the chord again with the new lowered 3rd (see below).

That's it! You now have a Cmin triad. In order to create minor triads from other major chords we simply follow the same process. Let's try to build a F min triad. First, take an F major triad , lower the 3rd by a half step, in this case, move the A, to Ab, and play the chord with the new lowered 3rd. Now we have the notes F, Ab , C, or an F minor triad, (see below).

C MAJOR TRIAD	C MINOR TRIAD	F MAJOR TRIAD	F MINOR TRIAD
1, 3, 5	1, ♭3, 5	1, 3, 5	1, ♭3, 5

- b. Unlike major triads which do not have anything written after the letter, minor symbols can be denoted in a couple of different ways. You will see Cminor triad written with a hyphen after the letter as “C-”. You will sometimes see the first three letters of the word minor used after the letter as “Cmin”. You will also just see a lower case “m” after the letter to symbolize a minor triad such as “Cm”. Anyway you end up seeing it though, just remember, they all mean the same thing, to flat the 3rd in the triad.

2. How Minor Triads Are Written

- a. You will see minor triads a written a few different ways. The most common is with a hyphen after the letter though. This is most common in jazz and pop fake books. Sometimes you might see a lower case “m” which also means minor. Other times they may write out “min” after the letter for you as an abbreviation for minor. (see below)

ALL MEAN MINOR TRIAD

C-	Cm	C min
1, 3, 5	1, ♭3, 5	1, ♭3, 5

Repertoire

1. Learning Tunes Series Part 2–The Formula (Steps 3-4)

1. *Step 3 (RH Melody and bass notes)* - Practicing our melody with our bass motion is a necessity in order to learn the melody so you never forget it. By hearing the melody with our bass motion you'll be able to hear how the melody connects to the progression. People forget melodies because they cannot connect them to the changes, not because they're complicated or too confusing. If you can hear how the melodies are matching up with the root motion and progression, you'll never forget it.
 - i. This step will really allow you to get inside the inner workings of any chart, (see below).

The musical notation consists of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef and has a key signature of one flat. It contains five measures of music. The first measure starts with a note labeled 'F-' above it. The second measure starts with a note labeled 'B^b'. The third measure starts with a note labeled 'E'. The fourth measure starts with a note labeled 'E'. The fifth measure starts with a note labeled 'A'. The bottom staff is in bass clef and has a key signature of two flats. It also contains five measures. The first measure starts with a note labeled 'D'. The second measure starts with a note labeled 'G'. The third measure starts with a note labeled 'G'. The fourth measure starts with a note labeled 'G'. The fifth measure starts with a note labeled 'A'.

2. *Step 4 (LH Chords alone)* –This step we actually begin to fill in the qualities of the chords with our LH. We play through the chords with our LH just as if someone was playing the melody with us. Initially we want to keep this simple by playing the chords on all the down beats of every measure. After we have becoming comfortable with all the chords, then we can begin to add rhythmic figures and spice it up. Most people jump straight to playing intricate two-handed voicings with all sorts of color tones. It's no wonder people fail to memorize tunes. They're barely playing the foundation of the chord. By just playing the chord on the down beats in root position, you are playing the bare

essentials of all the harmonies. After we have learned this we can begin to build up from there. Jumping ahead of this step is a sure way to not reach your full potential on any piece. As we play the chords we now start to hear how the melody fits in, (see below).

