



# (Piano) Improvisation Technique

by Musilosophy



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*Improvisation* means **real time** composing.....

## **“I know of knowing nothing” ( Socrates )**

**Music is based on harmony**

*Harmony is based on chords and scales*

**Melody and improvisation are based on chords and scales**

*Accompaniment is based on chords and scales*

**Chords are based on scales**

*Scales are based on physics, mathematical principles and musical traditions*

**Musical traditions are based on human perception, technology, economy, history, religion...**

## *SUMMARY*

### *1. Keys*

- ✓ Key awareness
- ✓ Major
- ✓ Minor
- ✓ Scale harmonization

### *2. Chords*

- ✓ Major 7<sup>th</sup>
- ✓ Minor 7<sup>th</sup>
- ✓ Dominant 7<sup>th</sup>
- ✓ Half diminished 7<sup>th</sup>
- ✓ Diminished 7<sup>th</sup>
- ✓ Inversions
- ✓ Chord degrees

### *3. Other scales*

- ✓ Blues
- ✓ Whole tone
- ✓ Diminished
- ✓ Diminished/whole tone
- ✓ Pentatonic

## *4.Melody*

- ✓ Melody building
- ✓ Chordal notes
- ✓ Turning note
- ✓ Passing note
- ✓ Leaning note
- ✓ Delaying note
- ✓ Anticipated note
- ✓ Chromatic note
- ✓ Double leaning note
- ✓ Mixed note
- ✓ “Wrong” notes

## *5.Phrasing*

- ✓ Beginning of phrase
- ✓ Ending of phrase
- ✓ Imitation

## *6.Rhythm*

- ✓ Emphasizing offbeats and upbeats
- ✓ Syncopation
- ✓ Swing
- ✓ Polyrhythmics

## *7.Practice... Practice... Practice...*

- ✓ Generale practice
- ✓ Progressive drills
- ✓ Fundamental drills
- ✓ Greatest piano improvise

## KEY AWARENESS

- ✓ Scale is a sequence of tones.
- ✓ It is a base to make music.
- ✓ The main scales of western music are major and minor scales.
- ✓ Every scale determines a key, that is an harmonic combination of tones based on that scale.
- ✓ So, F Major key uses the tones of F Major scale. E minor key uses the tones of E minor scale(s).
- ✓ I consider the Blues like a key: for example Bb Blues or Bb minor Blues can be considered two kind of Major and Minor keys
- ✓ You always have to know in which key you are playing in each moment.
- ✓ A change of key is called Modulation.
- ✓ Each scale or key has its own chords.
- ✓ They are build on each degree of the scale with harmonizations by thirds
- ✓ You can recognize key by Clef, chords, melody...

### Transpose and play in all keys!

The chords of every key are:

### Major Key : D Maj Example

The image shows a musical staff in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 4/4 time signature. The staff contains eight measures of music, each with a single chord. The chords are: Dmaj7, Em7, F#m7, Gmaj7, A7, Bm7, C#m7/A5, and Dmaj7. Below the staff, the chords are labeled with Roman numerals: I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, and I.

Dmaj7	Em7	F#m7	Gmaj7	A7	Bm7	C#m7/A5	Dmaj7
I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	I

**Harmonic Minor Key : D minor example**

Dm7    Em7#5    Fmaj7#5    Gm7    A7#9    Bbmaj7    C#dim7    Dm7  
I    II    III    IV    V    VI    VII    I

**Natural Minor Key : D minor example**

Dm7    Em7#5    Fmaj7    Gm7    Am7    Bbmaj7    C7    Dm7  
I    II    III    IV    V    VI    VII    I

**Melodic Minor Key : D minor example**

Dm7    Em7#5    Fmaj7#5    G7    A7    Bm7#5    C#m7#5    Dm7  
I    II    III    IV    V    VI    VII    I

- ✓ **Transpose and play in all keys!**
- ✓ **Practice the analysis and recognition of chords, modulations and keys** in classic music,jazz,pop songs...  
Recognize the chords and then the key they belong to.

**!** *Remember:*

Each chord **has not** an its own scale.

**The scale of each chord depends by the key in which it is!**

This concept is very important but I have realized that not many musicians have understood its importance.

**For example**, they play the D dorian scale also on a Dmin7 that belongs to Bb key!

Ahi,Ahi... in this way they do two terrible mistakes: E instead of Eb and B instead of Bb!

The image displays a musical score for piano, organized into three systems of three staves each (treble, middle, and bass clefs). The music is in 7/8 time and features extensive use of triplets. The first system (measures 17-20) is in C minor key, with chords G7<sup>b9</sup> (V), Cm7 (I), and Abmaj7 (VI). The second system (measures 21-24) transitions to Eb major key, with chords Abmaj7 (VI), Bb7 (V), Ebmaj7 (I), and Cm7 (VI). The third system (measures 25-28) remains in Eb major key, with chords Abmaj7 (IV), Bb7 (V), and Ebmaj7 (I). Measure numbers 17, 21, and 25 are indicated at the start of their respective systems.

When you improvise on this song you have to use basically the C minor scale (when you are in C minor key) and Eb scale when you are in Eb key.

This is the **key concept**. But a melody and so an improvisation is **based above all on chord** besides on key.



### MAJOR KEY CHORDS

#### D MAJOR KEY

1

Dmaj7 Em7 F#m7 Gmaj7 A7 Bm7 C#m7/b5 Dmaj7

#### Db MAJ

5

Dbmaj7 Ebm7 Fm7 Gbmaj7 Ab7 Bbm7 Cm7/b5 Dbmaj7

#### C MAJ

9

Cmaj7 Dm7 Em7 Fmaj7 G7 Am7 Bm7/b5 Cmaj7

#### B MAJ

13

Bmaj7 C#m7 D#m7 Emaj7 F#7 G#m7 A#m7/b5 Bmaj7

#### Bb MAJ

17

Bbmaj7 Cm7 Dm7 F7 Gm7 Am7/b5 Bbmaj7

#### A MAJ

21

Amaj7 Bm7 C#m7 Dmaj7 E7 F#m7 G#m7/b5 Amaj7

#### Ab MAJ

25

Abmaj7 Bbm7 Cm7 Dbmaj7 Eb7 Fm7 Gm7/b5 Abmaj7

#### G MAJ

29

Gmaj7 Am7 Bm7 Cmaj7 D7 Em7 F#m7/b5 Gmaj7

#### F# MAJ

33

F#maj7 G#m7 A#m7 Bmaj7 C#7 D#m7 Fm7/b5 F#maj7

F MAJOR KEY

37

Fmaj7 Gm7 Am7 Bbmaj7 C7 Dm7 Em7/b5 Fmaj7

I II III IV V VI VII I

E MAJ

41

Emaj7 F#m7 G#m7 Amaj7 B7 C#m7 D#m7/b5 Emaj7

I II III IV V VI VII I

Eb MAJ

45

Ebmaj7 Fm7 Gm7 Abmaj7 Bb7 Cm7 Dm7/b5 Ebmaj7

I II III IV V VI VII I

### HARMONIC MINOR KEY CHORDS

#### C# HARMONIC MINOR KEY

Dmj7 Em7/b5 Fmaj7#5 Gm7 A7b9 Bbmaj7 C#dim7 Dmj7

#### C# MIN

C#mj7 D#m7/b5 Emaj7#5 F#m7 G#7b9 Amaj7 Cdim7 C#mj7

#### C MIN

Cm7 Dm7/b5 Ebmaj7#5 Fm7 G7b9 Abmaj7 Bdim7 Cm7

#### B MIN

Bmj7 C#m7/b5 Dmaj7#5 Em7 F#7b9 Gmaj7 A#dim7 Bmj7

#### Bb MIN

Bbm7 Cm7/b5 Dbmaj7#5 Ebm7 F7b9 Gbmaj7 Adim7 Bbm7

#### A MIN

Am7 Bm7/b5 Cmaj7#5 Dm7 E7b9 Fmaj7 G#dim7 Am7

#### G# MIN

G#mj7 A#m7/b5 Bmaj7#5 C#m7 D#7b9 Emaj7 Gdim7 G#mj7

#### G MIN

Gmj7 Am7/b5 Bbmaj7#5 Cm7 D7b9 Ebmaj7 F#dim7 Gmj7

#### F# MIN

F#mj7 G#m7/b5 Amaj7#5 Bm7 C#7b9 Dmaj7 Fdim7 F#mj7

**F HARMONIC MINOR KEY**

Fm7 Gm7/b5 Abmaj7#5 Bbm7 C7b9 Dbmaj7 Edim7 Fm7

**E MIN**

Em7 F#m7/b5 Gmaj7#5 Am7 B7b9 Cmaj7 D#dim7 Em7

**Eb MIN**

Ebm7 Fm7/b5 Gbmaj7#5 Abm7 Ab7b9 Cbmaj7 Ddim7 Ebm7

### NATURAL MINOR KEY CHORDS

#### D NATURAL MINOR

1

Dm7 Em7/b5 Fmaj7 Gm7 Am7 Bbmaj7 C7 Dm7

#### C# NAT MIN

5

C#m7 D#m7/b5 Emaj7 F#m7 G#m7 Amaj7 B7 C#m7

#### C NAT MIN

9

Cm7 Dm7/b5 Ebmaj7 Fm7 Gm7 Abmaj7 Bb7 Cm7

#### B NAT MIN

13

Bm7 C#m7/b5 Dmaj7 Em7 F#m7 Gmaj7 A7 Bm7

#### Bb NAT MIN

17

Bbm7 Cm7/b5 Dbmaj7 Ebm7 Fm7 Gbmaj7 Ab7 Bbm7

#### A NAT MIN

21

Am7 Bm7/b5 Cmaj7 Dm7 Em7 Fmaj7 G7 Am7

#### G# NAT MIN

25

G#m7 A#m7/b5 Bmaj7 C#m7 D#m7 Emaj7 F#7 G#m7

#### G NAT MIN

29

Gm7 Am7/b5 Bbmaj7 Cm7 Dm7 Ebmaj7 F7 Gm7

#### F# NAT MIN

33

F#m7 G#m7/b5 Amaj7 Bm7 C#m7 Dmaj7 E7 F#m7

F NAT MIN

37

Fm7 Gm7/b5 Abmaj7 Bbm7 Cm7 Dbmaj7 C7 Fm7

E NAT MIN

41

Em7 F#m7/b5 Gmaj7 Am7 Bm7 Cmaj7 D7 Em7

Eb NAT MIN

45

Ebm7 Fm7/b5 Gbmaj7 Abm7 Bbm7 Cbmaj7 Db7 Ebm7

I II III IV V VI VII I

### MELODIC MINOR KEY CHORDS

#### D MELODIC MINOR

Dmj7 Em7 Fmaj7#5 G7 A7 Bm7/b5 C#m7/b5 Dmj7  
 C# MEL MIN II III IV V VI VII I

C#mj7 D#m7 Emaj7#5 F#7 G#7 A#m7/b5 Cm7/b5 C#mj7  
 C MEL MIN I II III IV V VI VII I

Cmj7 Dm7 Ebmaj7#5 F7 G7 Am7/b5 Bm7/b5 Cm7  
 G MEL MIN II III IV V VI VII I

Bmj7 C#m7 Dmaj7#5 E7 F#7 G#m7/b5 A#m7/b5 Bmj7  
 Bb MEL MIN II III IV V VI VII I

Bbmj7 Cm7 Dbmaj7#5 Eb7 F7 Gm7/b5 Am7/b5 Bbmj7  
 A MEL MIN I II III IV V VI VII I

Am7 Bm7 Cmaj7#5 D7 E7 F#m7/b5 G#m7/b5 Am7  
 G# MEL MIN II III IV V VI VII I

G#mj7 A#m7 Bmaj7#5 C#7 D#7 Fm7/b5 Gm7/b5 G#mj7  
 G MEL MIN I II III IV V VI VII I

Gmj7 Am7 Bbmaj7#5 C7 D7 Em7/b5 F#m7/b5 Gmj7  
 F# MEL MIN II III IV V VI VII I

F#mj7 G#m7 Amaj7#5 B7 C#7 D#m7/b5 Fm7/b5 F#mj7  
 I II III IV V VI VII I

F MEL MIN

Fm7 Gm7 Abmaj7#5 Bb7 C7 Dm7/b5 Em7/b5 Fm7

E MEL MIN

Emj7 F#m7 Gmaj7#5 A7 B7 C#m7/b5 D#m7/b5 Emj7

Eb MEL MIN

Ebmj7 Fm7 Gbmaj7#5 Ab7 Bb7 Cm7/b5 Dm7/b5 Ebmj7



## Chord families

Every **melody** and **accompaniment** is based on a chord.

Melody generally uses the notes of a chord or notes that return to it.

In order to improvise you need to know and play every chord very well.

- ✓ The fundamental drill is playing every chord and every inversion of each chord.

I suggest to study five families of **chords**:

1. Major 7<sup>th</sup> chord
2. Dominant 7<sup>th</sup>
3. Minor 7<sup>th</sup>
4. Half-diminished
5. Diminished 7<sup>th</sup>

- ✓ Play every chord :12 chords X 5 families = 60 chords X 4 inversions = 240 chords

For example:

1. **Major 7<sup>th</sup> chord** : F Maj 7

- *Maj 3<sup>th</sup> + perfect 5<sup>th</sup> + maj 7<sup>th</sup>*



2. **Dominant 7<sup>th</sup> chord** : B $\flat$  7

- *Maj 3<sup>th</sup> + perfect 5<sup>th</sup> + minor 7<sup>th</sup>*



3. **Minor 7<sup>th</sup> chord** : E m7

- *Minor 3<sup>th</sup> + perfect 5<sup>th</sup> + minor 7<sup>th</sup>*



4. **Minor 7<sup>th</sup> dim 5 (half-diminished) chord** : D m7 $\flat$ 5

- *Minor 3<sup>th</sup> + diminished 5<sup>th</sup> + minor 7<sup>th</sup>*



5. **Diminished 7<sup>th</sup> chord** : C $\sharp$  dim7

- *Minor 3<sup>th</sup> + diminished 5<sup>th</sup> + diminished 7<sup>th</sup>*



## Major 7<sup>th</sup> chord

This chord is on the :

**I** and **IV** (#4) degree of the **Major** key

**III** (#5) degree of the harmonic and melodic **minor** key

**III** and **VI** (#4) degree of the **natural minor** key.

! #4 = This chord has augmented 4<sup>th</sup>

#5 = This chord has augmented 5<sup>th</sup>

*In the next page there are major chords in all keys and in 4 inversions*

***PLAY them many, many times!***

***It is very important.***

- ✓ Play these chords in the whole keyboard (**More than an octave**)
- ✓ Play them with **both hands**
- ✓ **Arpeggiate the chords**

### MAJOR 7th CHORD

( For example I ,IV in Major key )

1

Fmaj7

Musical staff showing the F major 7th chord (F-A-C-E) in 4/4 time, measure 1. The notes are F4, A4, C5, and E5.

5

Emaj7

Musical staff showing the E major 7th chord (E-G-B-D) in 4/4 time, measure 5. The notes are E4, G4, B4, and D5.

9

Ebmaj7

Musical staff showing the E-flat major 7th chord (E-flat-G-B-flat-D) in 4/4 time, measure 9. The notes are E-flat4, G4, B-flat4, and D5.

13

Dmaj7

Musical staff showing the D major 7th chord (D-F-A-C) in 4/4 time, measure 13. The notes are D4, F4, A4, and C5.

17

Dbmaj7

Musical staff showing the D-flat major 7th chord (D-flat-F-A-flat-C) in 4/4 time, measure 17. The notes are D-flat4, F4, A-flat4, and C5.

21

Cmaj7

Musical staff showing the C major 7th chord (C-E-G-B) in 4/4 time, measure 21. The notes are C4, E4, G4, and B4.

25

Bmaj7

Musical staff showing the B major 7th chord (B-D-F-A) in 4/4 time, measure 25. The notes are B3, D4, F4, and A4.

29

Bbmaj7

Musical staff showing the B-flat major 7th chord (B-flat-D-F-A) in 4/4 time, measure 29. The notes are B-flat3, D4, F4, and A4.

33

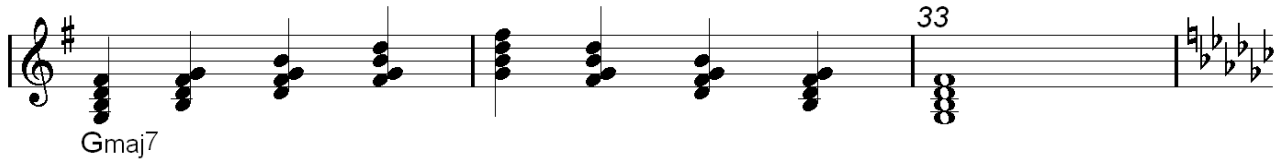
Amaj7

Musical staff showing the A major 7th chord (A-C-E-G) in 4/4 time, measure 33. The notes are A3, C4, E4, and G4.

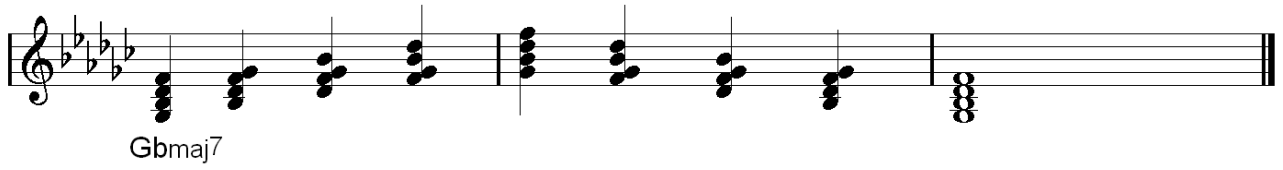
37

Abmaj7

Musical staff showing the A-flat major 7th chord (A-flat-C-E-G) in 4/4 time, measure 37. The notes are A-flat3, C4, E4, and G4.



Musical staff in G major (one sharp). It contains a sequence of chords: Gmaj7, A7, B7, C7, D7, E7, F7, G7, and a final Gmaj7 chord. The number 33 is written above the final Gmaj7 chord. The staff ends with a double bar line.



Musical staff in Gb major (two flats). It contains a sequence of chords: Gbmaj7, Ab7, Bbm7, Cbm7, Dbm7, Eb7, Fbm7, Gbmaj7, and a final Gbmaj7 chord. The staff ends with a double bar line.

## Dominant 7<sup>th</sup> chord

This chord is on the :

**V** and degree of the **Major** and **harmonic/melodic minor** (b9 and b6) key

**VII** degree of the natural **minor** key

**IV** (#4) degree of the **melodic minor** key.

! #4 = This chord has augmented 4<sup>th</sup>

b6 = This chord has minor 6<sup>th</sup>

b9 = This chord has minor 9<sup>th</sup>

*In the next page there are dominant 7<sup>th</sup> chords in all keys and in 4 inversions*

***PLAY them many,many times!***

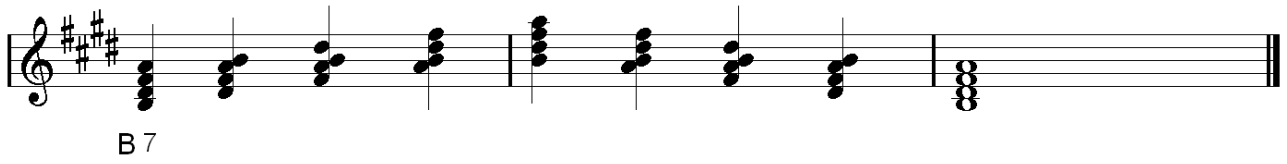
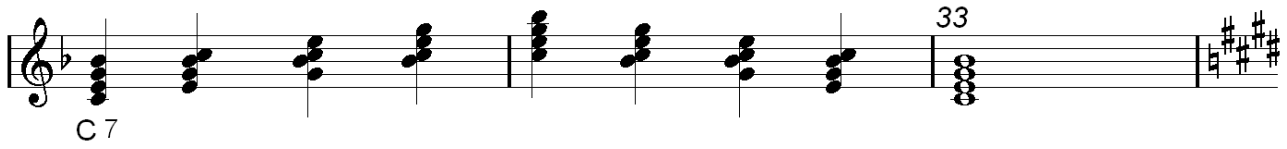
*It is very important.*

- ✓ Play these chords in the whole keyboard (**More than an octave**)
- ✓ Play them with **both hands**
- ✓ **Arpeggiate the chords**

### DOMINANT 7th CHORD

(For example V in Major or Minor key)

The image displays twelve staves of musical notation, each representing a dominant 7th chord in a different key. The chords are: Bb7, A7, Ab7, G7, F#7, F7, E7, Eb7, D7, and Db7. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The notation shows the chord structure across four measures, with a final measure containing a whole note chord. Measure numbers 1, 5, 9, 13, 17, 21, 25, and 29 are indicated above the first measure of each staff. The key signatures are: Bb7 (two flats), A7 (no sharps or flats), Ab7 (three flats), G7 (one flat), F#7 (three sharps), F7 (two flats), E7 (no sharps or flats), Eb7 (three flats), D7 (two sharps), and Db7 (five flats).





## Minor 7<sup>th</sup> chord

This chord is on the :

**II,III, and VI** degree of the **Major** key

**I,IV and V** degree of the **natural minor** key

**II** degree of the **melodic minor** key.

**IV** degree of the **harmonic minor** key

*In the next page there are minor 7<sup>th</sup> chords in all keys and in 4 inversions*

***PLAY them many,many times!***

*It is very important.*

- ✓ Play these chords in the whole keyboard (**More than an octave**)
- ✓ Play them with **both hands**
- ✓ **Arpeggiate the chords**

### MINOR 7th CHORD

(For example II, III, VI in Maj key or I, IV in minor key)

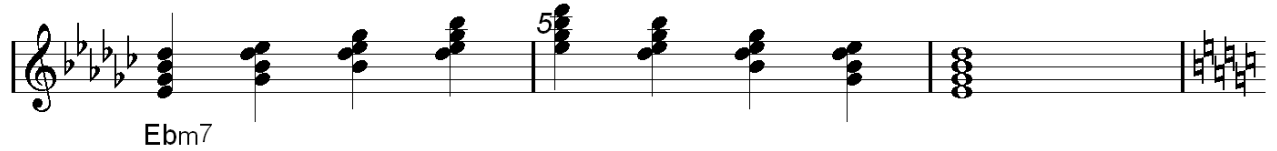
1



Em7

Detailed description: This staff shows the Em7 chord in the key of E major. It starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The chord is played in four positions: first position (E, G, B, D), second position (F#, A, C#, E), third position (G, B, D, F#), and fourth position (A, C#, E, G). The notes are written as whole notes. The chord symbol 'Em7' is written below the staff.

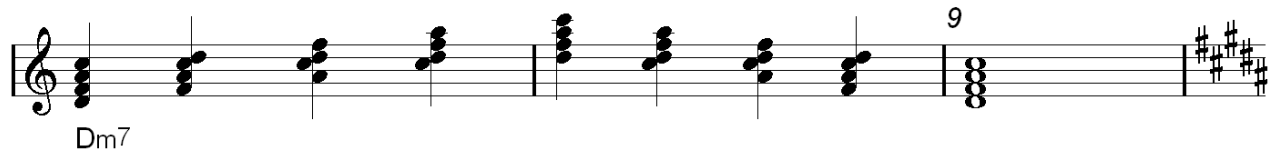
5



Ebm7

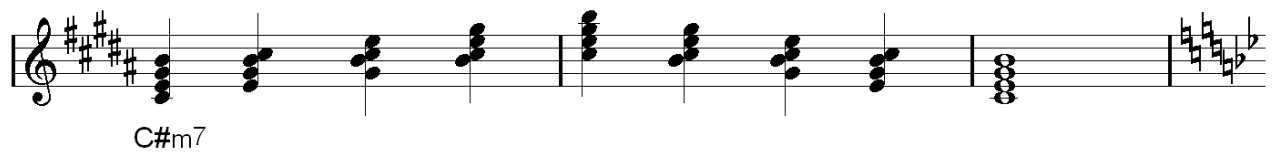
Detailed description: This staff shows the Ebm7 chord in the key of E-flat major. It starts with a treble clef, a key signature of three flats (Bb, Eb, Ab), and a 4/4 time signature. The chord is played in four positions: first position (Eb, Gb, Bb, Db), second position (F, Ab, Cb, Eb), third position (G, Ab, Bb, Db), and fourth position (A, Cb, Eb, G). The notes are written as whole notes. The chord symbol 'Ebm7' is written below the staff.

9



Dm7

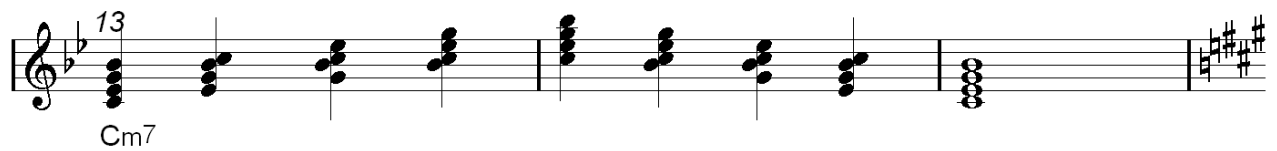
Detailed description: This staff shows the Dm7 chord in the key of D major. It starts with a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F#, C#), and a 4/4 time signature. The chord is played in four positions: first position (D, F, A, C), second position (E, G, B, D), third position (F#, A, C, E), and fourth position (G, B, D, F#). The notes are written as whole notes. The chord symbol 'Dm7' is written below the staff.



C#m7

Detailed description: This staff shows the C#m7 chord in the key of C# major. It starts with a treble clef, a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#), and a 4/4 time signature. The chord is played in four positions: first position (C#, E, G, B), second position (D, F, A, C), third position (E, G, B, D), and fourth position (F#, A, C, E). The notes are written as whole notes. The chord symbol 'C#m7' is written below the staff.

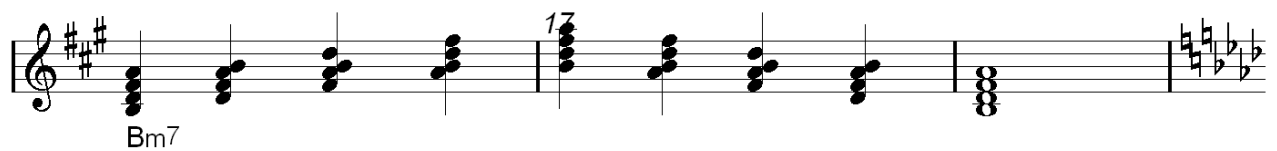
13



Cm7

Detailed description: This staff shows the Cm7 chord in the key of C minor. It starts with a treble clef, a key signature of three flats (F, C, G), and a 4/4 time signature. The chord is played in four positions: first position (C, Eb, G, Bb), second position (D, F, Ab, Cb), third position (E, G, Bb, Db), and fourth position (F, Ab, Cb, Eb). The notes are written as whole notes. The chord symbol 'Cm7' is written below the staff.

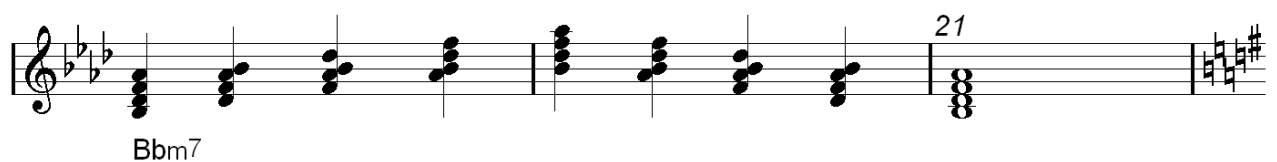
17



Bm7

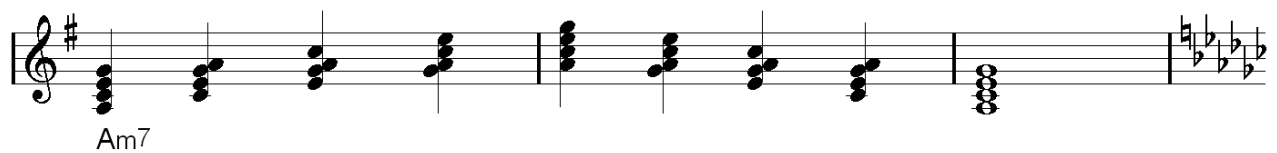
Detailed description: This staff shows the Bm7 chord in the key of B major. It starts with a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F#, C#), and a 4/4 time signature. The chord is played in four positions: first position (B, D, F, A), second position (C, E, G, B), third position (D, F, A, C), and fourth position (E, G, B, D). The notes are written as whole notes. The chord symbol 'Bm7' is written below the staff.

21



Bbm7

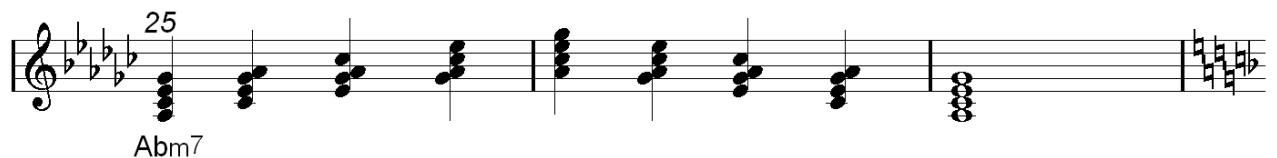
Detailed description: This staff shows the Bbm7 chord in the key of B-flat major. It starts with a treble clef, a key signature of two flats (Bb, Eb), and a 4/4 time signature. The chord is played in four positions: first position (Bb, D, F, Ab), second position (C, Eb, G, Bb), third position (D, F, Ab, Cb), and fourth position (E, G, Bb, Db). The notes are written as whole notes. The chord symbol 'Bbm7' is written below the staff.



Am7

Detailed description: This staff shows the Am7 chord in the key of A major. It starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The chord is played in four positions: first position (A, C, E, G), second position (B, D, F, A), third position (C, E, G, B), and fourth position (D, F, A, C). The notes are written as whole notes. The chord symbol 'Am7' is written below the staff.

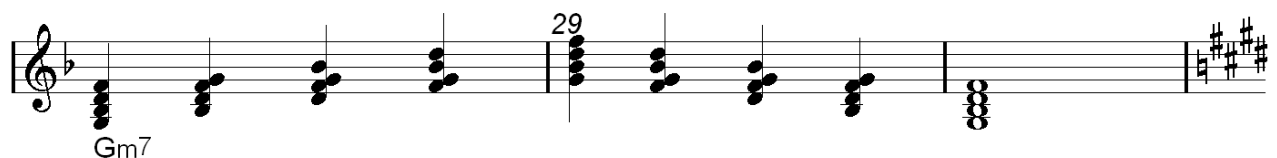
25



Abm7

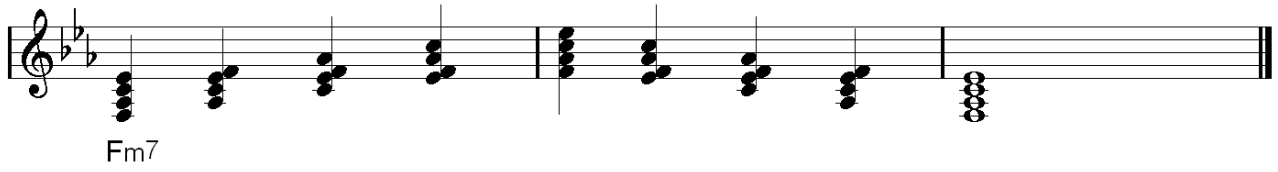
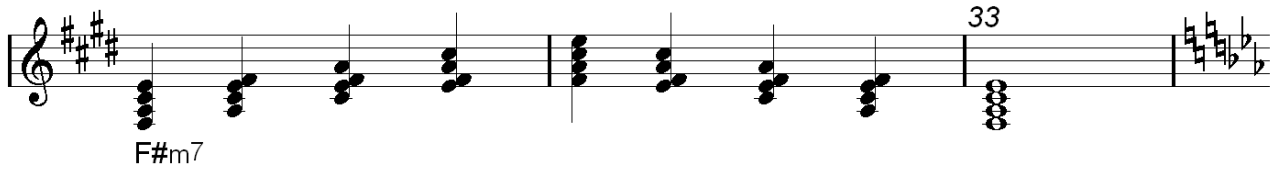
Detailed description: This staff shows the Abm7 chord in the key of A-flat major. It starts with a treble clef, a key signature of three flats (Bb, Eb, Ab), and a 4/4 time signature. The chord is played in four positions: first position (Ab, Cb, Eb, Gb), second position (B, D, F, Ab), third position (C, Eb, G, Bb), and fourth position (D, F, Ab, Cb). The notes are written as whole notes. The chord symbol 'Abm7' is written below the staff.

29



Gm7

Detailed description: This staff shows the Gm7 chord in the key of G minor. It starts with a treble clef, a key signature of two flats (Bb, Eb), and a 4/4 time signature. The chord is played in four positions: first position (G, Bb, D, F), second position (A, C, Eb, G), third position (B, D, F, Ab), and fourth position (C, Eb, G, Bb). The notes are written as whole notes. The chord symbol 'Gm7' is written below the staff.



## Half Diminished chord

! It is also called minor 7<sup>th</sup> diminished 5 (b5) chord  
( C m7/b5 )

This chord is on the :

**VII** degree of the **Major** key

**II** degree of the **natural and harmonic minor** key

**VI** and **VII** degree of the **melodic minor** key.

*In the next page there are half diminished chords in all keys and in 4 inversions*

***PLAY them many,many times!***

*It is very important.*

- ✓ Play these chords in the whole keyboard (**More than an octave**)
- ✓ Play them with **both hands**
- ✓ **Arpeggiate the chords**

## HALF DIMINISHED 7th CHORD

( For example II in harmonic/natural Minor Key )

1

Dm7/b5

Musical staff showing the Dm7/b5 chord progression in D minor (one flat). The progression consists of 10 chords: Dm7/b5, Eb7, Fm7, Gm7, Ab7, Bbm7, Cm7, Dm7, Eb7, and Fm7. The first chord is marked with a '1' above it.

5

C#m7/b5

Musical staff showing the C#m7/b5 chord progression in C# minor (three sharps). The progression consists of 10 chords: C#m7/b5, D7, Eb7, Fm7, Gm7, Ab7, Bbm7, Cm7, Dm7, and Eb7. The fifth chord is marked with a '5' above it.

9

Cm7/b5

Musical staff showing the Cm7/b5 chord progression in C minor (two flats). The progression consists of 10 chords: Cm7/b5, D7, Eb7, Fm7, Gm7, Ab7, Bbm7, Cm7, Dm7, and Eb7. The ninth chord is marked with a '9' above it.

Bm7/b5

Musical staff showing the Bm7/b5 chord progression in B minor (two sharps). The progression consists of 10 chords: Bm7/b5, C7, Dm7, Eb7, Fm7, Gm7, Ab7, Bbm7, Cm7, and Dm7.

13

A#m7/b5

Musical staff showing the A#m7/b5 chord progression in A# minor (four sharps). The progression consists of 10 chords: A#m7/b5, B7, Cm7, Dm7, Eb7, Fm7, Gm7, Ab7, Bbm7, and Cm7. The thirteenth chord is marked with a '13' above it.

17

Am7/b5

Musical staff showing the Am7/b5 chord progression in A minor (no sharps or flats). The progression consists of 10 chords: Am7/b5, B7, Cm7, Dm7, Eb7, Fm7, Gm7, Ab7, Bbm7, and Cm7. The seventeenth chord is marked with a '17' above it.

21

G#m7/b5

Musical staff showing the G#m7/b5 chord progression in G# minor (three sharps). The progression consists of 10 chords: G#m7/b5, A7, Bm7, Cm7, Dm7, Eb7, Fm7, Gm7, Ab7, and Bbm7. The twenty-first chord is marked with a '21' above it.

Gm7/b5

Musical staff showing the Gm7/b5 chord progression in G minor (two flats). The progression consists of 10 chords: Gm7/b5, A7, Bm7, Cm7, Dm7, Eb7, Fm7, Gm7, Ab7, and Bbm7.

25

F#m7/b5

Musical staff showing the F#m7/b5 chord progression in F# minor (six sharps). The progression consists of 10 chords: F#m7/b5, G7, Am7, Bm7, Cm7, Dm7, Eb7, Fm7, Gm7, and Ab7. The twenty-fifth chord is marked with a '25' above it.

29

Fm7/b5

Musical staff showing the Fm7/b5 chord progression in F minor (three flats). The progression consists of 10 chords: Fm7/b5, G7, Am7, Bm7, Cm7, Dm7, Eb7, Fm7, Gm7, and Ab7. The twenty-ninth chord is marked with a '29' above it.

Em7/b5

33

D#m7/b5

---

## **Diminished 7<sup>th</sup> chord**

This chord is on the :

**VII** degree of the **harmonic minor** key

*In the next page there are diminished 7<sup>th</sup> chords in all keys and in 4 inversions*

***PLAY them many,many times!***

*It is very important.*

- ✓ Play these chords in the whole keyboard (**More than an octave**)
- ✓ Play them with **both hands**
- ✓ **Arpeggiate the chords**

### DIMINISHED 7th CHORD

( VII in Harmonic minor Key )

C#dim7

Cdim7

Bdim7

A#dim7

A dim7

G#dim7

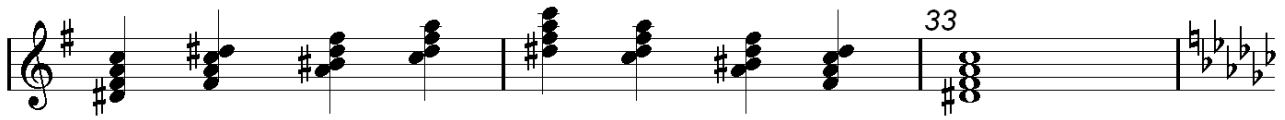
G dim7

F#dim7

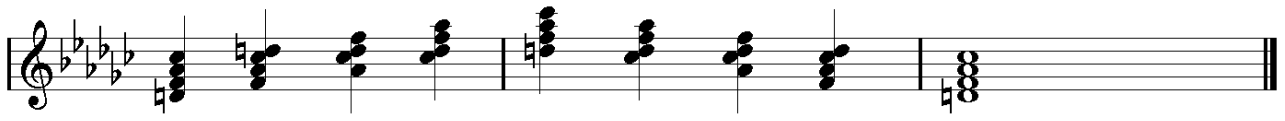
F dim7

E dim7





D#dim7



Ddim7

## Blues, Whole tone, Diminished, Diminished/Whole tone, Pentatonic scales

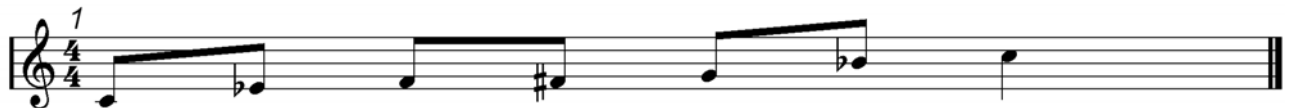
**Ok, do not become confused!**

**These scales do not determine a key !Just the blues scale can be considered a basis for a particular key (Blues).**

### **□ Blues Scale**

In general it can be used on every chord but above all on **min7<sup>th</sup>** and **dominant 7<sup>th</sup>** chord. This scale is much used above all in Blues, Pop, Jazz, Soul, Funk, Rhythm and blues, Rock....

#### **C blues**



✓ **Blues structure**

- It has 12 or , seldom, 16 measures.
- It can be Major or Minor
- There are many chord variations or substitutions in Blues structures. Here I propose two “classic” blues/jazz structures.

**F Major Blues**

1  
F7                      Bb7 (F7)                      F7                      F7

5  
Bb7                      Bb7                      F7                      F7 (D7)

9  
C7 (Gm7)                      C7                      F7 (D7)                      C7 (Gm7)                      C7

**D Minor Blues**

1  
Dm7                      Dm7 (Em7/b5      A7b9 )                      Dm7                      D7b9

5  
Gm7                      A7b9 (Gm7)                      Dm7                      F7 ( Dm7)

9  
Em7/b5                      A7b9                      Dm7 ( F7 )                      A7#9 (Em7/b5      A7#9 )

**! Transpose and play the blues scales and structures in all keys.**

**F Major Blues**

Musical notation for F Major Blues, measures 1-8. The key signature has one flat (Bb) and the time signature is 4/4. The notes are represented by dashes on the staff. Chord changes are indicated below the staff: Measure 1: F7; Measure 2: Bb7 (F7); Measure 3: F7; Measure 4: F7; Measure 5: Bb7; Measure 6: Bb7; Measure 7: F7; Measure 8: F7 (D7).

**E Major Blues**

Musical notation for E Major Blues, measures 9-20. The key signature has no sharps or flats. The notes are represented by dashes on the staff. Chord changes are indicated below the staff: Measure 9: C7 (Gm7); Measure 10: C7; Measure 11: F7 (D7); Measure 12: C7 (Gm7) C7; Measure 13: E7; Measure 14: A7 (E7); Measure 15: E7; Measure 16: E7; Measure 17: A7; Measure 18: A7; Measure 19: E7; Measure 20: E7 (C#7).

**Eb Major Blues**

Musical notation for Eb Major Blues, measures 21-34. The key signature has three flats (Bb, Eb, Ab). The notes are represented by dashes on the staff. Chord changes are indicated below the staff: Measure 21: Cb7 (F#m7); Measure 22: Cb7; Measure 23: E7 (C#7); Measure 24: Cb7 (F#m7) Cb7; Measure 25: Eb7; Measure 26: Ab7 (Eb7); Measure 27: Eb7; Measure 28: Eb7; Measure 29: Ab7; Measure 30: Ab7; Measure 31: Eb7; Measure 32: Eb7 (C7); Measure 33: Bb7 (Fm7); Measure 34: Bb7; Measure 35: Eb7 (C7); Measure 36: Bb7 (Fm7) Bb7.

**D Major Blues**

37  
D7 G7 (D7) D7 D7

41  
G7 G7 D7 D7 (B7)

45  
A7 (Em7) A7 D7 (B7) A7 (Em7) A7

**Db Major Blues**

49  
Db7 Gb7 (Db7) Db7 Db7

53  
Gb7 Gb7 Db7 Db7 (Bb7)

57  
Ab7 (Ebm7) Ab7 Db7 (Bb7) Ab7 (Ebm7) Ab7

**C Major Blues**

61  
C7 F7 (C7) C7 C7

65  
F7 F7 C7 C7

69  
G7 (Dm7) G7 C7 (A7) G7 (Dm7) G7

**B Major Blues**

73  
B7 E7 (B7) B7 B7

77  
E7 E7 B7 B7 (G#7)

81  
Gb7 (C#m7) F#7 B7 (G#7) Gb7 (Dbm7 F#7)

**Bb Major Blues**

85  
Bb7 Eb7 (Bb7) Bb7 Bb7

89  
Eb7 Eb7 Bb7 Bb7

93  
F7 (Cm7) F7 Bb7 (G7) F7 (Cm7 F7)

**A Major Blues**

97  
A7 D7 (A7) A7 A7

101  
D7 D7 A7 A7 (F#7)

105  
E7 (Bm7) E7 A7 (F#7) E7 (Cbm7 E7)

**Ab Major Blues**

109

Ab7 Db7 (Ab7) Ab7 Ab7

Detailed description: A single musical staff in treble clef with a key signature of two flats. It contains four measures, each with a whole rest. Below the staff, the chord progression is: Ab7, Db7 (Ab7), Ab7, Ab7.

113

Db7 Db7 Ab7 Ab7 (F7)

Detailed description: A single musical staff in treble clef with a key signature of two flats. It contains four measures, each with a whole rest. Below the staff, the chord progression is: Db7, Db7, Ab7, Ab7 (F7).

117

Eb7 Eb7 Ab7 (F7) Eb7 (Bbm7) Eb7

Detailed description: A single musical staff in treble clef with a key signature of two flats. It contains four measures, each with a whole rest. Below the staff, the chord progression is: Eb7, Eb7, Ab7 (F7), Eb7 (Bbm7) Eb7.

**G Major Blues**

121

G7 C7 (G7) G7 G7

Detailed description: A single musical staff in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp. It contains four measures, each with a whole rest. Below the staff, the chord progression is: G7, C7 (G7), G7, G7.

125

C7 C7 G7 G7

Detailed description: A single musical staff in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp. It contains four measures, each with a whole rest. Below the staff, the chord progression is: C7, C7, G7, G7.

129

D7 D7 G7 (E7) D7 (Am7) D7

Detailed description: A single musical staff in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps. It contains four measures, each with a whole rest. Below the staff, the chord progression is: D7, D7, G7 (E7), D7 (Am7) D7.

**Gb Major Blues**

133

Gb7 Cb7 (Gb7) Gb7 Gb7

Detailed description: A single musical staff in treble clef with a key signature of three flats. It contains four measures, each with a whole rest. Below the staff, the chord progression is: Gb7, Cb7 (Gb7), Gb7, Gb7.

137

Cb7 Cb7 Gb7 Gb7 (Eb7)

Detailed description: A single musical staff in treble clef with a key signature of three flats. It contains four measures, each with a whole rest. Below the staff, the chord progression is: Cb7, Cb7, Gb7, Gb7 (Eb7).

141

Db7 (Abm7) Db7 Gb7 (Eb7) Db7 (Abm7) Db7

Detailed description: A single musical staff in treble clef with a key signature of two flats. It contains four measures, each with a whole rest. Below the staff, the chord progression is: Db7 (Abm7), Db7, Gb7 (Eb7), Db7 (Abm7) Db7.

C Minor Blues

| G min key



Dm7 Dm7 Dm7 D7b9  
I (Em7/b5 A7b9) I V

| D min key



Gm7 A7b9 (Gm7) Dm7 F7 ( Dm7 )  
I V I VI (b7)



Em7/b5 A7b9 Dm7 ( F7 ) A7#9  
II V I (Em7/b5 A7#9 )  
II V

C# Minor Blues



C#m7 C#m7 C#m7 C#7b9  
( D#m7/b5 G#7b9 )



F#m7 G#7b9 C#m7 E7  
( C#m7 )



( F#m7 )  
D#m7/b5 G#7b9 C#m7 ( E7 ) Ab7#9  
( D#m7/b5 G#7#9 )

C Minor Blues



Cm7 Cm7 Cm7 C7b9  
( Dm7/b5 G7b9 )



Fm7 G7b9 Cm7 Eb7



( Fm7 ) ( Cm7 )  
Dm7/b5 G7b9 Cm7 ( Eb7 ) G7#9  
( Dm7/b5 G7#9 )



**B Minor Blues** -----

37  
Bm7                      Bm7                      Bm7                      B7b9  
( C#m7/b5   F#7b9 )

41  
Em7                      F#7b9                      Bm7                      D7  
( Em7 )                      ( Bm7 )

45  
C#m7/b5                      F#7b9                      Bm7                      ( D7 )                      F#7#9  
( C#m7/b5   F#7#9 )

**Bb Minor Blues** -----

49  
Bbm7                      Bbm7                      Bbm7                      Bb7b9  
( Cm7/b5   F7b9 )

53  
Ebm7                      F7b9                      Bbm7                      Db7  
( Ebm7 )                      ( Bbm7 )

57  
Cm7/b5                      F7b9                      Bbm7                      ( Db7 )                      F7#9  
( Cm7/b5   F7#9 )

**A Minor Blues** -----

61  
Am7                      Am7                      Am7                      A7b9  
( Bm7/b5   E7b9 )

65  
Dm7                      E7b9                      Am7                      C7  
( Dm7 )                      ( Am7 )

69  
Bm7/b5                      E7b9                      Am7                      ( C7 )                      E7#9  
( Bm7/b5   E7#9 )

**Ab Minor Blues** -----

73

Abm7                      Abm7 (Bbm7/b5 Eb7b9)                      Abm7                      Ab7b9

77

Dbm7                      Eb7b9 (Dbm7)                      Abm7                      Cb7 (Abm7)

81

Bbm7/b5                      Eb7b9                      Abm7 (B7)                      Eb7#9 (Bbm7/b5 Eb7#9)

**G Minor Blues** -----

85

Gm7                      Gm7 (Am7/b5 D7b9)                      Gm7                      G7b9

89

Cm7                      D7b9                      Gm7                      Bb7

93

Am7/b5                      D7b9 (Cm7)                      Gm7 (Bb7)                      D7#9 (Gm7)

**Gb Minor Blues** -----

97

Gbm7                      Gbm7 (Abm7/b5 Db7b9)                      Gbm7                      Gb7b9

101

Cbm7                      Db7b9 (Bm7)                      Gbm7                      A7 (Gbm7)

105

Abm7/b5                      Db7b9                      Gbm7 (A7)                      Db7#9 (Abm7/b5 Db7#9)

**F Minor Blues** -----

109

Fm7                      Fm7 (Gm7/b5 C7b9 )                      Fm7                      F7b9

113

Bbm7                      C7b9 (Bbm7 )                      Fm7                      Ab7 ( Fm7 )

117

Gm7/b5                      C7b9                      Fm7 ( Ab7 )                      C7#9

**E Minor Blues** -----

121

Em7                      Em7 (Gbm7/b5 Cb7b9 )                      Em7                      E7b9

125

Am7                      Cb7b9                      Em7                      G7

129

Gbm7/b5 (Am7)                      Cb7b9                      Em7 ( G7 )                      Cb7#9 ( Em7 )

**Eb Minor Blues** -----

133

Ebm7                      Ebm7 (Fm7/b5 Bb7b9 )                      Ebm7                      Eb7b9

137

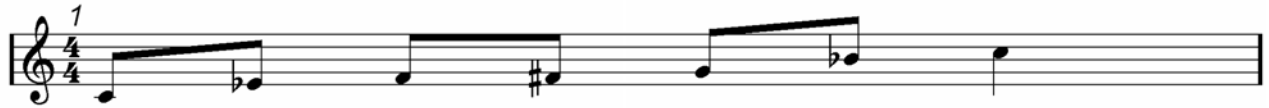
Abm7                      Bb7b9 (Abm7 )                      Ebm7                      Gb7 ( Ebm7 )

141

Fm7/b5                      Bb7b9                      Ebm7 ( Gb7 )                      Bb7#9 ( Fm7/b5 Bb7#9 )

## BLUES SCALES

### C blues



### B blues



### B♭ blues



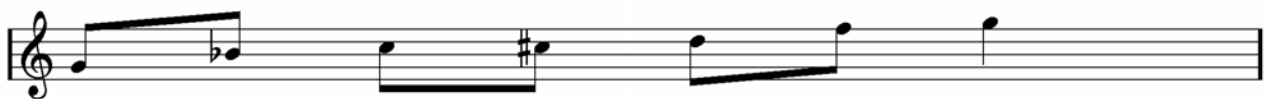
### A blues



### G♯ blues



### G blues



### F♯ blues



### F blues



### E blues



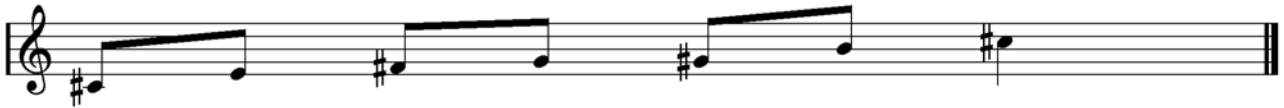
**E $\flat$  blues**



**D blues**



**C# blues**

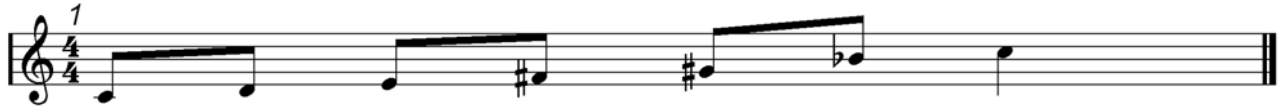


□ **Whole tone** – It is made only by whole tones. I suggest to use it just on the dominant 7<sup>th</sup> chord. Whole tone scale is used above all in **Jazz music**.

*We can simplify and summarize all 12 whole tone scales to just 2 scale types : “A” whole tone scale and “B” whole tone scale.*

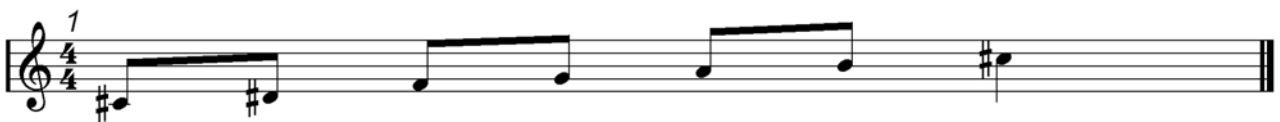
**“A” whole tone scale type**

C, D, E, F#, G#, Bb WHOLE TONE SCALE



**“B” whole tone scale type**

C#, Eb, F, G, A, B WHOLE TONE SCALE



- The other 10 whole tone scales have the same notes of these, but, of course, they begin from different tones. For example, D whole tone scale begins from D and has the same notes of the “A” whole tone scale, while F whole tone scale begins from F and has the same notes of the “B” whole tone scale.

□ **Diminished Scale** – It is made only by a sequence of half step (semitone) and whole step (tone). I suggest to use it just on the dominant 7<sup>th</sup> and diminished 7<sup>th</sup> chord in a **jazz context**. Diminished scale is used above all in **Jazz music**.

- **Each tone has two different Diminished scale:**

**1. Diminished scale beginning with half step**

**2. Diminished scale beginning with whole step**

**For example : C dim scale beginning with half step (“A” type), and C dim scale beginning with whole step (“B” type)**

*Moreover,*

*we can simplify and summarize all 12 diminished scales to just 3 scale types : “A” diminished scale, “B” diminished scale and “C” diminished scale*

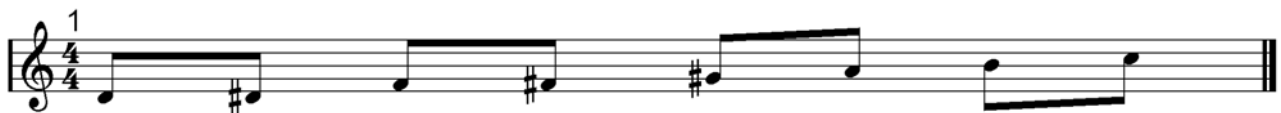
*“A” diminished scale type*

**C, C#, Eb, E, F#, G, A, Bb diminished scale**



*“B” diminished scale type*

**D, D#, F, F#, G#, A, B, C diminished scale**



*“C” diminished scale type*

E, F, G, G#, Bb, B, C#,D diminished scale



- The other 21 diminished scales have the same notes of these, but, of course, they begin from different tones.



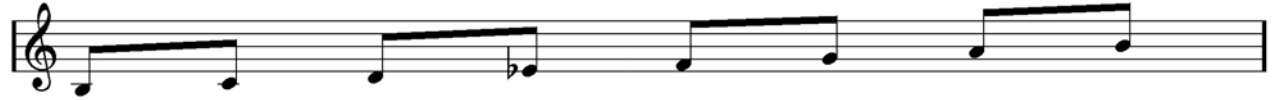
□ **Diminished/whole tone scale** ( also called Super Locrian or Altered Scale) and whole step (tone).I suggest to use it just on the dominant 7<sup>th</sup> and diminished 7<sup>th</sup> chord in a **jazz context**.Diminished scale is used above all in **Jazz music**.

### DIMINISHED WHOLE TONE SCALE (ALTERED SCALE)

C Diminished/whole tone scale



B Dimi/whole tone



Bb Dim/whole tone



A Dim/whole tone



Ab Dim/whole tone



G Dim/whole tone



Gb Dim/whole tone



F Dim/whole tone



E Dim/whole tone



Eb Dim/whole tone



**D Dim/whole tone**



**C# Dim/whole tone**



- **Pentatonic scale** has just five tones. It is like the Major scale but without 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> degrees.
  - ✓ **This a very catchy scale and it sounds good on many chords (Maj 7<sup>th</sup> , min 7<sup>th</sup> , 7<sup>th</sup> )**
  - ✓ **You can use different pentatonic scales on a chord.**

## Melody building

Melody is the most powerful and beautiful item of music. It has symmetric, geometric and harmonic rules:

**! Pay Attention:** I mean 1<sup>th</sup>, 3<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> by “**CHORDAL NOTE**”

When you improvise or compose, you can use to build a melody these notes:

- 1. Notes of the chord - (Chordal note)**  
( = chordal note)

Gm7 II                      C7 V                      F I

F Maj key -----

✓ You can use the notes of a chord *freely*

2. **Turning note** : does not belong to chord but comes from a note of the chord and turn on it. ( T = Turning note)

Musical notation in Eb Major key (4/4 time). The melody consists of three measures. The first measure has a chord of Abmaj7 (IV) and a note G4 with a '1' above it. The second measure has a chord of Bb7 (V) and a note A4 with a 'T' above it. The third measure has a chord of Eb (I) and a note Bb4 with a 'T' above it. The melody continues with notes C5, Bb4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. A dashed line below the staff indicates the Eb Major key signature.

✓ You have to *turn on* the note of the chord

3. **Passing note** : it is between two chordal notes. ( P = Passing note)

Musical notation in F minor key (4/4 time). The melody consists of three measures. The first measure has a chord of Bbm7 (IV) and a note G4 with a 'P' above it. The second measure has a chord of C7b9 (V) and a note A4 with a 'P' above it. The third measure has a chord of Fm7 (I) and a note Bb4 with a 'T' above it. The melody continues with notes C5, Bb4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. A dashed line below the staff indicates the F minor key signature.

4. **Leaning note** (Appoggiatura) : it leans on a chordal note ( L = Leaning note)

The musical notation shows a treble clef with a 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of three measures. Above the notes are labels: 'T' above the first note, 'L' above the second note, 'L' above the third note, 'P' above the fourth note, 'T' above the fifth note, 'L' above the sixth note, 'T' above the seventh note, and 'L' above the eighth note. Below the notes are chord symbols: 'Fmaj7 IV' under the first measure, 'Dm7 II' under the second measure, and 'G7 V' under the third measure. Below the chord symbols is the text 'C Maj key' followed by a dashed line.

✓ After a leaning note you have to play the chordal note close to it

5. **Delaying note** (Ritardo) : it delays a chordal note ( D = Delaying note)

The musical notation shows a treble clef with a 4/4 time signature and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody consists of three measures. Above the notes are labels: 'T' above the first note, 'D' above the second note, 'P' above the third note, 'D' above the fourth note, and 'L' above the fifth note. Below the notes are chord symbols: 'Em7 I' under the first measure, 'A7 IV' under the second measure, and 'Em7 I' under the third measure. Below the chord symbols is the text 'E min key (Melodic/Natural Scale)' followed by a dashed line.

✓ After a delaying note you have to play the straight away below chordal note

- ✓ The difference between leaning and delaying note is that the first can go up or down to a chordal note while the second must go down to the the straight away below chordal note!

6. **Anticipated note** (Anticipo) : it belongs to the a next chord ( A = Anticipated note)

Bbmaj7  
I

Gm7  
VI

F7  
V

Bb Maj key -----

7. **Chromatic note** : it does not belong to the chord and key ( C = Chromatic note)

- ✓ I distinguish these cases:

- 7.1 Chromatic passing note ( **Cp** )
- 7.2 Chromatic turning note ( **Ct** )
- 7.3 Chromatic leaning note ( **Cl** )



Musical notation in 4/4 time, A minor key. The melody consists of four measures. Above the staff are ornaments: Ct, L Cp, 9b Cp, Cl, P. Below the staff are chord symbols: Bm7/b5 (II), E7b9 (V), Am7 (I). A dashed line below the staff indicates the key signature: A min key.

8. **Mixed notes** : they are a mix or a combination of previous cases:

✓ For example:

- Passing note of a passing note (also chromatic ) **Pp**
- Passing note of a turning note (also chromatic ) **Ptu**
- Turning note of a turning note (also chromatic ) **Tt**
- Passing note of a delaying note(also chromatic ) **Pd**
- And so on.....

Musical notation in 4/4 time, split into two key signatures. The first two measures are in D Major (IV, V) and the last two in G Major (I, V). Above the staff are ornaments: T Tt, L PI, P Pp, L PI, D, Pd. Below the staff are chord symbols: Gmaj7 (IV), A7 (V), Dmaj7 (I), D7 (V), Gmaj7 (I). A dashed line below the staff indicates the key signature: D Maj key and Gmaj key.

9. **Double leaning tone**

✓ This is a good melodic ornament

Musical notation in 4/4 time, A minor key. The melody consists of four measures. Above the staff are ornaments: Ld Ld, D, Ld Ld, Ld Ld. Below the staff are chord symbols: Bm7/b5 (II), E7#9 (V), Am7 (I). A dashed line below the staff indicates the key signature: A minor key.

## “Wrong” notes

! Sometimes you can break the rules and play “wrong” notes, if they sound good. But BE CAREFUL with this dangerous sounds.

The concept is very simple :

1. You can play (or compose) **every note** you want if it sounds good
2. Absolute “wrong” notes do not exist. A wrong note is when a **tension (not chordal note) is not resolved!**

A musical score in 4/4 time, divided into two systems. The first system is in G minor (one flat) and the second is in Bb major (two flats). The first system contains measures 1-4 with chords Cm7 (IV), D7b9 (V), Gm7 (I), and F7 (V). The second system contains measures 5-8 with chords Bbmaj7 (I) and Ebmaj7 (IV). Above the notes, 'X' marks indicate notes considered 'wrong' in this context: the 1st note of measure 1, the 3rd note of measure 2, the 2nd note of measure 3, the 4th note of measure 4, the 1st note of measure 5, the 3rd note of measure 6, the 4th note of measure 7, and the 2nd note of measure 8. A '1' above the first note of measure 1 indicates a first ending. Below the staff, dashed lines separate the G minor key and Bb major key sections.

**! IMPORTANT NOTE:** For many musicians the X marked notes are not wrong. For my music general conception they are. I have played classica, jazz, blues, soul, funk, pop, rock, folk, ethnic. For example I do not like some kind of free modern jazz styles, but I respect every form of expression. So excuse me if I may have hurt your artistic sensibility.

# Imitation

Imitation means repetition with variation.

You can repeat a phrase transposing it, varying the rhythm or varying the melody but maintaining the same rhythmic structure. Let us analyze this pleasure and powerful technique

## ✓ Transposing ( Progression )

The musical notation shows a single melodic line in 4/4 time, divided into two key signatures: C Major and A minor. The first three measures are in C Major, and the last three are in A minor. Above the staff, the letters A, A', and A'' are placed over the first, second, and third measures of each key respectively, indicating transposition. Below the staff, Roman numerals and chord symbols are provided for each measure.

Measure	Chord	Roman Numeral	Key
1	Dm7	II	C Major
2	Em7	III	C Major
3	G7	V	C Major
4	Fmaj7	VI	A minor
5	Dm7	IV	A minor
6	Am7	I	A minor

## ✓ Rhythmic variation

The musical notation shows a single melodic line in 4/4 time, divided into two key signatures: D Major and D minor. The first three measures are in D Major, and the last three are in D minor. Above the staff, the letters A, A', and A'' are placed over the first three measures of D Major, and B, B', and B'' are placed over the first three measures of D minor. Below the staff, Roman numerals and chord symbols are provided for each measure. Triplet markings are present over the second and fifth measures.

Measure	Chord	Roman Numeral	Key
1	Gmaj7	IV	D Major
2	F#m7	III	D Major
3	A7	V	D Major
4	Dm7	I	D minor
5	Gm7	IV	D minor
6	A7b9	V	D minor

✓ **Rhythmic repetition**

A musical staff in 4/4 time, Bb Major key. The melody consists of three measures, each with a dotted quarter note followed by an eighth note and a quarter rest. Above the staff, three dashed lines labeled A, A', and A'' indicate the rhythmic pattern. Below the staff, the chords are Gm7 (VI), Cm7 (II), F7 (V), and Bbmaj7 (I). A dashed line below the staff indicates the key signature: Bb Major key.

✓ Sometimes you can create some **non harmonic effects**, that is playing some notes without considering the chord in which you are.

For example :

**1. Repeating the same melodic pattern**

A musical staff in 4/4 time, G minor key. The melody consists of three measures, each with a dotted quarter note followed by an eighth note and a quarter rest. Below the staff, the chords are Am7/b5 (IV), D7#9 (V), and Gm7 (VI). A dashed line below the staff indicates the key signature: G min key.

## 2. Repeating the same rhythmic pattern

1

Cm7      Bb7      Gm7      Cm7      F7      Bbmaj7  
VI      V      III      II      V      I

Eb Major key ----- Bb Major key -----

However, **be careful** when you use these 2 techniques.

## Phrase development

1. Remember to vary the **beginning of a phrase**:

✓ Practise to begin and to end the phrase in **every point of the measure**

B E B' E' B'' E'' B''' E'''

Gmaj7 Cmaj7 Gmaj7

I IV I

G Major key -----

- B = Beginning tone
- E = Ending tone

AVOID this bad habit : (Same beginning and ending points )

B E B E B E

Em7 Am7 B7#5

I IV V

E Minor key -----

## 2. Ending of a phrase:

✓ Practise to end a phrase on **different tones**:

**!** This aspect is very important

<i>Tone</i>	<i>Effect</i>	<i>Style</i>	<i>Action</i>
1	Rest - Close the phrasing	Rock,Pop	You have to begin a new phrasing
9 (2)	Tension and unbalancement	Jazz	You have begin the following phrase from that note
3	Rest and strong determination	Any style	No particular action
4	Tension, unbalancement and suspension	Jazz,Blues	Begin from that note and solve it to the tone below
5	Rest and neutral	Any style	No particular action
6	A bit of tension and coloured tone	Jazz,Pop	I suggest to begin the following phrase from that note
7	Tension and determination	Jazz,Blues,Pop	No particular action

✓ Practise to end the phrase on the different tones of a chord and to make the action I propose.

Ab Major key -----

- Na = no particular action
- T = Tension

- Ba = Begin again
- S = Solving tone

Another example containing a wrong ending tone ( Tension is not solved or begun again).

The image shows a musical staff in B melodic minor key (one sharp, 4/4 time). The melody consists of the following notes: B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C#4 (quarter), B3 (quarter). The notes are grouped as follows: a first group (B, A, G) with a '1' above the first note and a slur over the three; a second group (F#, E, D) with a '3' above the first note and a slur over the three; a third group (C#, B) with a slur over the two. Annotations above the staff indicate tension and resolution: 'Na' above the first group, 'T-----' above the second group, 'Ba' above the third group, 'Error' above the final note (B), and 'Na' above the final note. Chord symbols below the staff are: Bm7 (I) under the first group, Em7 (IV) under the second group, Bm7 (I) under the third group, Em7 (IV) under the final note, and F#7b9 (V) under the final note. A dashed line below the staff is labeled 'B melodic minor key'.



## Rhythm

When you improvise, you have to **emphasize offbeats** (or upbeats).  
There are different kinds of offbeats ( upbeats) :

- 1) Quarter notes = emphasize 2<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> beat
- 2) Eighth notes = emphasize the even notes ( 2,4,6,8 in 4/4) ( 2,4,6 in 3/4)
- 3) Eighth note triplets = emphasize above all the last note of every triplet
- 4) So on....

The image shows a musical staff in 4/4 time. The first measure contains a quarter note on G4 with an accent (>) and a first-beat accent (>1), and a quarter note on A4 with an accent (>). The second measure contains a quarter note on B4 with an accent (>), a quarter note on C5 with an accent (>), a quarter note on B4 with an accent (>), and a quarter note on A4 with an accent (>). The third measure contains an eighth note triplet on G4 with an accent (>), an eighth note triplet on A4 with an accent (>), an eighth note triplet on B4 with an accent (>), and an eighth note triplet on C5 with an accent (>). Below the staff, the chords are labeled: Fmaj7 VI, E7b9 V, and Am7 I. A dashed line below the labels indicates the key signature: A minor key.

**! This is one of the most important concept in improvisation and music in general:**

**emphasizing offbeats (or upbeats)**

### ✓ Exercises:

1. Improvise all quarter notes continuously
2. Improvise all quarter note triplets continuously
3. Improvise all eighth notes continuously
4. Improvise all eighth note triplets continuously
5. Improvise all sixteen notes continuously
6. Improvise all sixteen note triplets continuously
7. ....

**But remember to emphasize offbeats always!**

Often, when you improvise on an eighth note basis, because of the time speed, , emphasize **just one or two** notes:

So practise this important drills:

1. Emphasize the **fourth** eighth-note continuously ( or eighth triplets) every 2 quarters ( **4<sup>th</sup>** and **8<sup>th</sup>** eighth)

Em7  
I  
F#m7/b5  
II  
B7b9  
V  
E Minor key -----

**! I think, this is the most important rhythmic accent pattern.**

2. Emphasize the **second** eighth-note continuously ( or eighth triplets) every 2 quarters ( **2<sup>o</sup>** and **6<sup>o</sup>** eighth)

Em7  
I  
F#m7/b5  
II  
B7b9  
V  
E Minor key -----

3. When the time speed is very fast, emphasize continuously just the **last tone** of every measure

**Fast**

1 3 > > >

Em7 I F#m7/b5 II B7b9 V

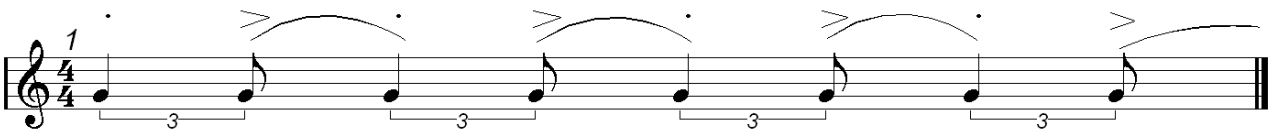
E Minor key -----

• **SWING**

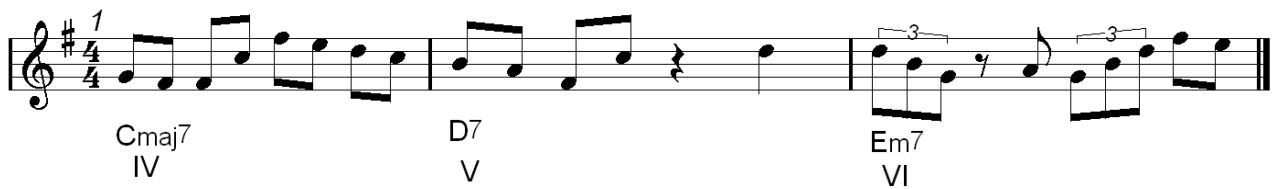
When you play Swing music, that is dixieland,ragtime,Swing,Bebop,Cool Jazz...you have to play these notes...



This basic pattern must be played in this way:



For example this measures :



G Major key -----

.....must be played in this way:

A musical staff in G Major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody consists of eighth notes with accents and eighth-note triplets. The first measure starts with a first ending bracket. Chords are indicated below the staff: Cmaj7 IV, D7 V, and Em7 VI. The piece ends with a double bar line.

G Major key -----

- ✓ In other words Swing has **offbeat (upbeat) accents** and an **eighth-note triplets** rhythmic base.

## • POLYRHYTHMICS

✓ Polyrhythmic means a **contrast between two different rhythmic patterns**.

For example you play three note groups against a background of two or four note groups. In other words you play an odd rhythm against an even ones.

3 : 2 or 3 : 4 or 2 : 3 or 4 : 3 or 5 : 4 and so on.....

3 : 2

5 : 4

1 3

Dm7

D doric mode -----

### ✓ Exercises:

8. Play all 3 : 2 figures - then 6 : 2 continuously
9. Play all 2 : 3 figures - then 4 : 3 continuously
10. Play all 5 : 4 figures - then 10 : 4 continuously
11. So on.....

**! Attention** : These drills are very difficult, so be patient !

However they will give you great advantages. Be patient...and continue your study.

# ! Very important rhythmic drill

- ✓ It is very useful to practise playing polyrhythmics continuously in order to acquire a great independence between left and right hand.
- ✓ Moreover the rhythm becomes fresh, various, unforeseen.

3 : 2                      5 : 4                      3 : 4

1

VI  
Am7                      V  
G7                      III  
Em7

C Major key -----

## General practice

Ok, now you have to play...

I suggest these progressive exercises:

⇒ **Learn all Major, minor and ....blues scales**

- ✓ First play the scales for an octave just with the right hand, then with both hands; play for 2 and 4 octaves with both hands

⇒ **Learn all chords of every key**

- ✓ Play the chords of every key with right hand then with both hands

⇒ **Learn to analyze music**

- ✓ Practice to analyze every kind of music with scores or if you want by ear. Write keys, chord types, degrees of the chords, modulations (key changing) on the scores. Analyze melody and write the harmonic function of every note (Chordal note, turning note, passing note.....).

⇒ **Arpeggiate all chords**

- ✓ Arpeggiate all 7<sup>th</sup> chords with right hand (but not only) in their four inversions.



⇒ **Begin to improvise just using the chordal notes**

- ✓ Improvise only on a chord and using just the four chordal notes ( Also out of time )
- ✓ Improvise just using continuous eighth notes, eighth-triplet notes, sixteenth notes.
- ✓ Improvise on a song using **just** the four chordal notes, moving the melody up and down the whole keyboard and playing the chord with the left hand.(You have to play this chord around C4 and moving the notes less possible when you change the chord )

⇒ **Improvise using a melodic item one at time**

- ✓ Practice a melodic item out of time and just on a chord
- ✓ Improvise on a chord and on a progression out of time and using all melodic possibilities.
- ✓ Improvise just using continuous eighth notes, eighth-triplet notes, sixteenth notes.
- ✓ Improvise at time and on a song or on chord progressions

⇒ **Improvise using the phrasing indications**

- ✓ Practice a phrasing item out of time and just on a chord
- ✓ Improvise on a chord and on a progression out of time and using all phrasing possibilities.
- ✓ Improvise just using continuous eighth notes, eighth-triplet notes, sixteenth notes.
- ✓ Improvise at time and on a song or on chord progressions

### **Some important considerations**

- ✓ Mastering these techniques needs **many,many hours** of playing but it is very amusing and **you can feel** what creating music means.
- ✓ Moreover,these techniques are **the same of composing** songs or any other kind of music.
- ✓ **Composing is easier** than improvising because you can correct your mistakes.
- ✓ However I will suggest you some easy techniques **to “correct”** some melodic “errors”.
- ✓ Sometimes many **new and interesting ideas** come from so called harmonic “errors”.

## **Other fundamental drills**

### ⇒ **Ear training**

- ✓ Use this free tool – Functional ear trainer

### ⇒ **Transcription** – very,very powerful !

- ✓ Select your best songs or solos and transcribe them on paper using your piano or keyboard, then transpose them in all keys.I think this is the MOST IMPORTANT AND POWERFUL drill TO LEARN IMPROVISATION

### ⇒ **Tranposing**

- ✓ Transpose some phrases in all keys

### ⇒ **Sing**

- ✓ Sing the notes you are improvising

### ⇒ **Listening**

- ✓ Every musical genre but good music,that is great artists
- ✓ When you listen to music, analyze it!

⇒ **Piano improvisers**

✓ Listen to this masters of piano improvisation

- **Bill Evans**
- **Keith Jarrett**
- **Herbie Hancock**
- **Chik Corea**
- **Ahmad Jamal**
- Oscar Peterson
- Bud Powell
- Mc Coy Turner
- Many others....

⇒ **Improvisers**

✓ Other instruments

- Miles Davis ( Trumpet )
- Charlie Parker ( Alto Sax)
- John Coltrane ( Tenor Sax )

## **About improvisation**

- ✓ **Intervals**
- ✓ **Improvisation with perfect fourths**
- ✓ **Analysis of solos**
- ✓ **Lydian chromatic concept**
- ✓ **Main chordal progressions**
- ✓ **Main used forms**
- ✓ **Improvisation tips**
- ✓ **Inside, outside**
- ✓ **“Free” improvisation**
- ✓ **What you have to avoid...**
- ✓ **Improvisation goals**

## **About other music subjects**

✓ **COMPOSING**

✓ **EAR TRAINING**

✓ **ARRANGING**

✓ **ANALYSIS**