

# The basic language chords and scales

## 4 BASIC JAZZ SCALES

C Major Scale



C Minor 7th Bebop Scale



3 C "1/2 Whole" Scale ( diminished scale )



C blues scale or C minor Pentatonic scale

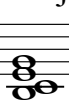


## TEN BASIC JAZZ CHORDS ( The Seventh is always minor unless it is major !)

5 C7 or C dominant 7



C major 7 ( C triangle 7 )



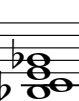
C minor 7th or C -7



8 C minor Major 7th



C half dim or C-7b5



C diminished



11 C sus



C aug or C+



C6



C7 altered (b9 OR #9 OR #5 OR b5)



Alterations to the basic chords are named according to the major scale of the root note

REMEMBER ABOVE 8 SUBTRACT 7 i.e a 9th is a 2nd

Chords with extensions above 8 usually contain a 7th.

The highest extension present is used for the chords name



## SOME EXAMPLES OF CHORDS WITH EXTENSIONS AND ALTERATIONS



# CONNECTING THE CHORDS TO THE SCALES : USING THE MINOR 7TH BEBOP SCALE

2

Remember you have to be carefull with the b7 and maj7 of the bebop scale ,  
sometimes one of them is an avoid note or passing note  
You can use the related scale to improvise with or add notes to chords .  
Often improvisers are more concerned with using the notes of the chords than the scales

1) FOR CHORDS FROM THE MAJOR FAMILY USE THE MAJOR SCALE OF THE ROOT  
OR THE RELATIVE MINOR BEBOP SCALE WHICH STARTS ON THE 6TH

19 C<sup>Δ</sup>7 C<sup>6</sup> C<sup>6</sup>9 C Cmajor scale A minor 7th bebop scale

2) FOR CHORDS FROM THE MINOR FAMILY USE THE MINOR BEBOP SCALE OF THE ROOT NOTE

22 C- C-6 C-9 C-Δ C-9 C-Δ9 C-11 C minor 7th bebop

3) FOR CHORDS FROM THE DOMINANT FAMILY USE THE MINOR BEBOP SCALE  
THAT STARTS ON THE 5TH OF THE CHORD ( in a 2-5 it is the same scale as from the 2 chord )

25 C7 C9 C7#11 C7sus G minor 7 bebop scale

4) Old time jazz musicians referred to a C half diminished chord as an Ebminor 6th chord  
For a minor 7th(b5) chord use the minor seventh bebop scale starting on the b3 of the chord

27

5) FOR ALTERED CHORDS USE THE MINOR 7 BEBOP SCALE A HALF STEP UP  
( FLAT 2 MINOR 7 BS ) OFTEN THE ALTERED SCALE PRECEDES MINOR CHORDS

29 C7#9#5 C7b9#5 C7#9#11 C7b9#9 C#minor 7th bebop scale

6) these other types of chords can also be found in the c minor bebop scale  
I have also explained how to get from one of these types of chords to the closest minor 7 BS

31 C-/G 4 minor 7 BS Eb/D b7minor 7 BS C-/Bb 2 minor 7 BS

# Diminished Chords, Dominant 7th b9 chords, and tritone substitutions

3

34 The C "1/2 whole " scale



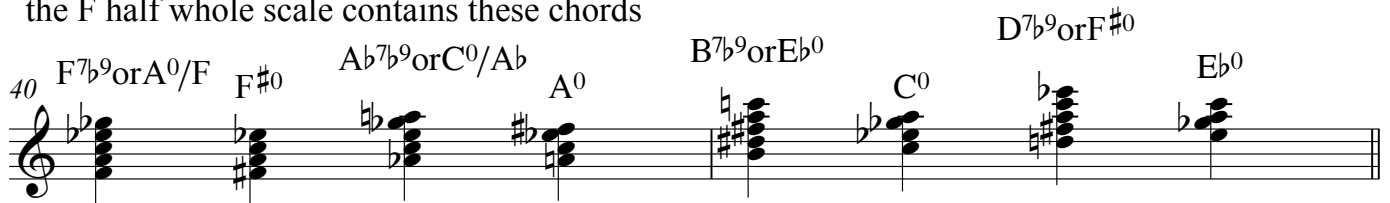
the C half whole scale contains these chords



38 The F "1/2 whole " scale



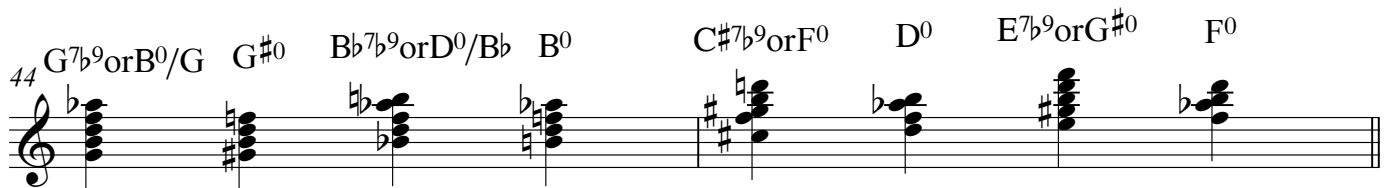
the F half whole scale contains these chords



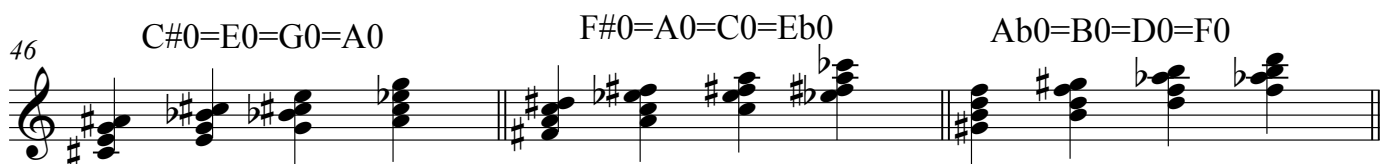
42 The G "1/2 whole " scale



the G half whole scale contains these chords



There are only 3 1/2 whole scales one for each of the 3 different diminished chords



# TRITONE SUBSTITUTIONS:

The 1/2 whole scale is a symmetrical scale and repeats at the tritone.

A dominant chord and the major scale contain only one tritone ( 3 whole tones in an interval )

49  $G^7\flat^9 = D\flat^7/G$  Abmin7 BS  $G^7/D\flat$  G 1/2 Whole

A natural 6th in an altered dominant chord usually makes it from the 1/2 whole scale

53  $C^{13}\sharp^{11}\sharp^9$  USE C HALF WHOLE SCALE

55  $C^7\sharp^5\flat^9$  USE the "ALTERED SCALE " ( b2 minor 7th BS )

The "1/2 whole" scale can be considered the combination of the minor scale from the dominant chord , and the minor scale from its altered chord. This is a C 1/2 whole represented as the 1st 4 notes of ...

57  $C^\sharp-$  and  $G-$

# CONNECTING CHORDS TO SCALES IN A 12 BAR BLUES AND BEGINNING IMPRO

5

The chords in brackets are the closest minor 7th BS or 1/2 whole scale

You could use an fminor blues scale or dminor blues scale or Cminor7th bebop scale for the whole thing and make that work. Try out those the various possibilities.

It might me good to start with only using the chord tones and constant swinging 1/8th notes and trying to make that sound like music . Organising yourself into phrases ( remember to take a breath ) and using lots of repetition will help it sound like "music".

The more you move your hand around on the piano the harder it is to play in time.

Pick a few notes first ....

Always try and "sing what you play and play what you sing ".

Include some chromaticism and remember that any note can work!

If it sounds "bad" then "resolve" to a note a 1/2 step above or below.

Even the world's best are often never "happy" with the results.

The "process" is the most important part. Enjoy the journey of improvement.

Notes that are played in time and make people want to dance can make any notes work.

Rhythm is much more important in Jazz music than the notes.

Free up your mind and your ass will follow ( George Clinton )

The "ireal book" app can will play a blues for you to play with straight from your phone !

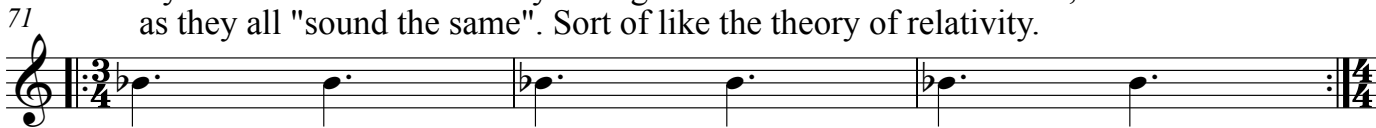
59 F<sup>9</sup> (C-7) B<sup>b</sup>13 (F-7) F<sup>9</sup>sus (C-7) F7<sup>#</sup>9 (F#-)

63 B<sup>b</sup>7 (F-7) B<sup>0</sup> (G1/2whole) F7/C (C-7) A-7(<sup>b</sup>5) (C-7) D7<sup>b</sup>9 (Eb-7)

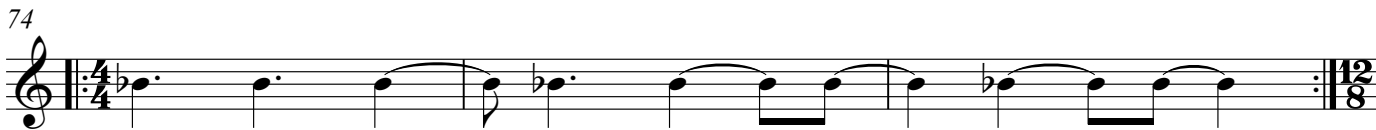
67 G-A<sup>9</sup> (G-7) G-9 (C1/2whole) (A-7) (A-7) (G-7) (G-7orDb-7orC1/2)  
C7<sup>b</sup>9 A-7 D7 G-7 C7

## HOW DO I CREATE RHYTHMS ?

6 The best answer at first is to copy rhythms from musicians you admire.  
Try listening to your favorite jazz CD and turning the rhythms of the solo into a blues scale solo. A lot of Jazz music has "swing" which means the 1/8 notes can be uneven or triplet based . Accents and articulation are often "syncopated" .  
A book could be written about what it means to "groove" or "swing" .  
Perhaps a good definition of it would be something repetitive,  
which is easier to record with a tape machine than write down on paper.  
It is also something which is a shared experience with the other musicians,  
everyone is supposed to play the groove "together". Listening to your comrades is key.  
It is also good to organise your rhythms into "groupings" of say 3 or 4  
The illusion of different time signatures happening at once is essential to african music.  
Getting the feeling that the bar lines don't exist is one way to think of a "groove"  
These 3 simple examples create the feeling of 3 against 2 or 3 against 4  
If you hadn't seen the music you might not know which was which,  
as they all "sound the same". Sort of like the theory of relativity.



accenting every 3rd 1/8th note in different time signatures



79 8th notes grouped in 3 different ways



What do triplets grouped in 4 sound like ? can you write down an example ?  
What do 1/8 notes grouped in 4 sound like in 3/4 time ?



# How do I make melodies from the scales ?

7

These are examples of some cliched jazz "licks" ,  
which means small fragments of melody used for improvising

This is a lick from the C blues scale played different ways. The notes stay the same but the rhythm changes



Three really classic and cliched licks from the C minor 7th bebop scale



2 melodic "pattern" using notes from C-7 B.S.

Look for different intervals and chords "within" your scales to create patterns



2 examples of the same shape or "contour" played on C-7 b.s.

Sometimes it helps just to think of shapes or finger patterns and then use the notes of the scale



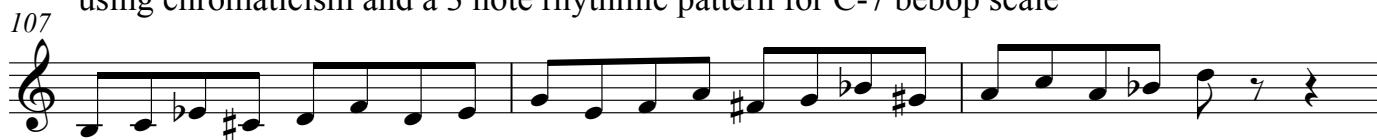
this is a lick form the C1/2 whole scale using 4 different minor triads which it contains.  
Note the repeating contours and that the changing triads create a sense of rhythmic grouping in 3.



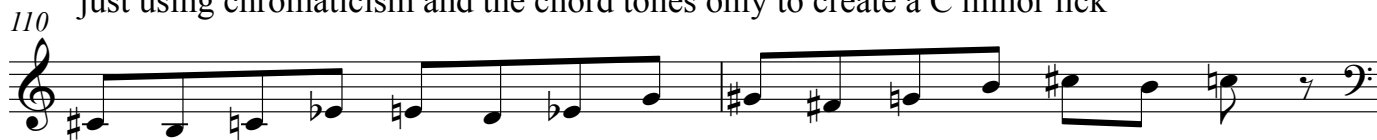
105 This C 1/2 whole lick is so cliched I laugh !



using chromaticism and a 3 note rhythmic pattern for C-7 bebop scale



just using chromaticism and the chord tones only to create a C minor lick



Try and create your own licks or change these to make them your own.  
Try and write down your favorite lick from your favorite jazz solo.  
Practice adding notes on either end of your lick or changing the rhythm and displacing it.  
Remember that improvisation is the essence of jazz music.  
Just playing licks all the time is going to put people to sleep and take the fun out of it.  
It is a group music and a shared experience.  
Listen to the people you are playing with .  
A lot of the best jazz players have memorised or written down  
a large number of their favorite solos.  
There is also an unlimited number of transcribed solos on the internet,  
for you to look at and learn/steal from.  
There is no substitute for playing with good players and along with the recordings  
to get the feeling for jazz especially the rhythm.



# VOICE LEADING

9

112 D-9 G13 CΔ9

114 D7#9 D9 G13 G7#5 CΔ9 CΔ7(#11)

117 B-9(b5) Bb13 A-13

119 D7 G7 C7 F7 Bb7 Eb7 Ab7

Voice leading is a very important aspect of music.

If you and your friends are going to play more than one note at a time its hard to ignore.

The word chord comes from the word "choral".

Harmony originated with people singing in church.

The missionaries and imperialists spread harmony all over the world.

Jazz music is the combination of African rhythm with Western harmony.

There should be the same number of voices in each chord otherwise it sounds like someone died.

Often the voices are in a singable range. ( not too high or low )

The lowest note of the bass clef is where men's voices finish.

The top note of the treble clef is where girls or childrens voices finish.

Each "voice" should be melodic.

In jazz harmony there is usually a 3rd and 7th in each chord which moves smoothly.

The bass can jump but the middle voices need to move in small singable steps.

Good improvisers create "guide tone lines" with their solo creating smooth small step movements on the notes that occur when the chords change.

Piano players pre-prepare different "voicing progressions" for standard jazz chord progressions.

When the root note goes up a 4th the 3rd or the 7th move within a whole step.

There are "rules of harmony" which apply to chord progressions.

google "rules of harmony" ... "voice leading rules" ... "SATB"

Study Bach Chorales. Everything in harmony starts and probably ends with Bach.

Charlie Parker invented the idea of implying harmony in your solo and then displacing the harmony.

## glossary of intervals

121 root min2nd(b9) maj2nd or 9th minor3rd or #9

122 major3rd perfect4th, 11th, sus sharp11, flat5, dim5th tritone perfect 5th

123 minor6th or #5 6 or 13 min7th maj7th

124 octave

any questions [seanwayland@gmail.com](mailto:seanwayland@gmail.com)  
[www.seanwayland.com](http://www.seanwayland.com)