

The 4 Elements of Music

Rhythm - a sequence of organised beats

Harmony - the movement of cadences or chord progressions

Melody - a sequence of notes

Orchestration - instrumentation, articulation, dynamics, balance, intonation, texture & form

The first 3 elements are tangible elements that are already present in the music. Orchestration gives *stylistic meaning* to the other 3 elements of music.

Harmony and Melody

Harmony and melody work well when the single sequence of notes match up with the **chord tones** of the harmony.

It is good to think of a scale in 2 ways at the same time. Below is an example of the harmony of the major scale going up vertically and the melody of the major scale across linearly.



Chords

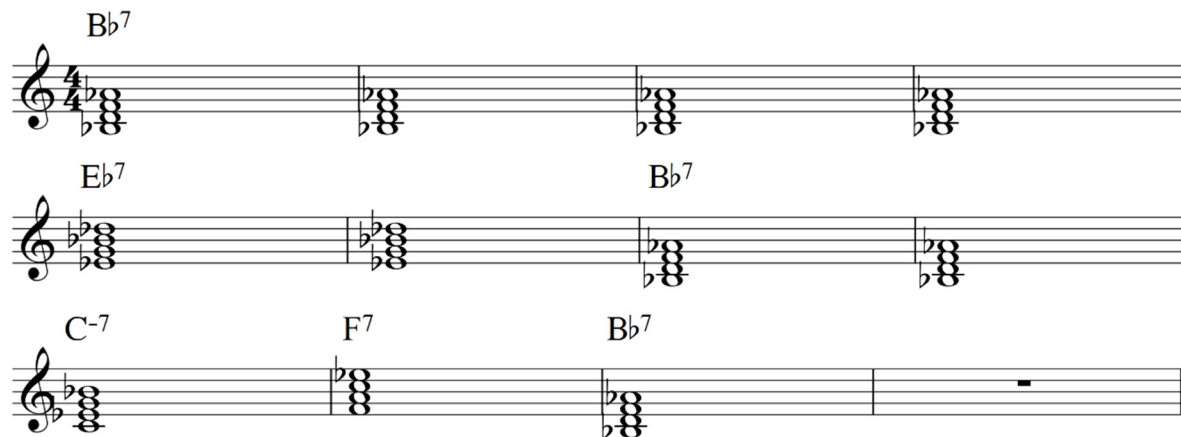
While there are many different chords **there are only 6 chord categories**. All chords will fall into at least one of these 6 chord categories. It is important to know these in all 12 keys as well as in their inversions.



Tip - Regardless of key signature the chord symbol dictates what notes get used for the duration of the chord.

The Blues

The Blues is a great place to start as it teaches us many things. It consists of a Plagal Cadence and a Perfect Cadence. It is important to understand the chord symbol dictates what notes to play for the duration of that chord.



Three staves of music showing chord arpeggios for B^b7, E^b7, C⁻7, F⁷, and B^b7 in 4/4 time. The first staff shows B^b7 arpeggios. The second staff shows E^b7 and B^b7 arpeggios. The third staff shows C⁻7, F⁷, and B^b7 arpeggios.

Tip - Learn the arpeggios to each chord. This approach will expand into all other tunes and forms

Improvising? “We put rhythm to notes...” Dizzy Gillespie.

Here is an example of rhythms being put to the **chord tones (arpeggios)** of the B^b Blues.



Three staves of music showing rhythmic patterns applied to the chord tones of the B^b Blues. The first staff shows a rhythmic pattern over the B^b7 chord. The second staff shows a rhythmic pattern over the E^b7 chord. The third staff shows a rhythmic pattern over the B^b7 chord.

Approach tones

If we think of our scale as a series of arpeggio notes with **diatonic passing tones** into each arpeggio note we can get a clearer understanding of melody and various ways to construct melody.


Below is an example of the chord tones (minimums/half notes) and the **diatonic passing tones** (crotchets/quarter notes)



A single staff of music showing chord tones (minimums/half notes) and diatonic passing tones (crotchets/quarter notes) for the B^b Blues.

Below is a way to practice this concept in a tune. This is good to do as it develops balance with creating melody as you play the chord tones on strong beats. This tune below is the first 8 bars of 'Autumn Leaves'. This is a good tune as it deals with Major harmony and relative Minor Harmony.

***Note that we are leading into different chord tones, not just the root note of each chord.**



Chord progression: D-7, G7, C Δ , F Δ , B-7(b5), E7(b9), A-

The notation shows a melody line and a bass line. The melody line has notes on the 1st, 3rd, and 5th beats of each measure, corresponding to the chord tones of the chords above. The bass line provides harmonic support with notes on the 1st and 3rd beats.

This can also be done chromatically. Below is an example of **chromatic approach tones** into chord tones through the first 8 bars of 'Autumn Leaves'.



Chord progression: D-7, G7, C Δ , F Δ , B-7(b5), E7(b9), A-

The notation shows a melody line and a bass line. The melody line uses chromatic approach tones (half notes) to lead into the chord tones of the chords above. The bass line provides harmonic support with notes on the 1st and 3rd beats.

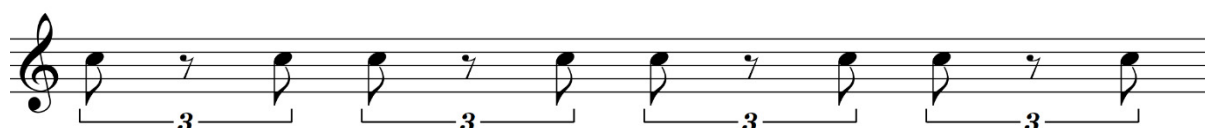
Practicing rhythm

As the 8th note triplet is the underlying sub division within each beat it is important to be able to accurately execute each subdivision.



The notation shows two staves of music. The first staff contains a sequence of eighth notes grouped into triplets. The second staff contains a sequence of eighth notes grouped into triplets, with some notes marked with a 'y' symbol, possibly indicating a specific articulation or phrasing.

To get a good solid swing feel it's important to be able to have the 1st and 3rd grouping. Below is an example of the 1st and 3rd grouping in an 8th note triplet. This way you rhythmically are combining the rhythm nature of European classical music with traditional African music.



The notation shows a single staff of music. It contains a sequence of eighth notes grouped into triplets, with the 1st and 3rd notes of each triplet being emphasized.

Listening to jazz

Listening to jazz is the most important aspect to understanding the music. The written notation of the music doesn't give us the whole picture. An example of this is with small group jazz the written notation might only be 32 bars in length yet the recording could go for a few minutes. Here are some tips on what to listen for.

Instrumentation - Listen for the different instruments and the role/s they play.

Form - Listen for the form of tunes. In early jazz from New Orleans there is a closer relationship of form to Ragtime music. Most forms in modern jazz follow 8 or 16 bar sections ABAC, AABC, AAB. The Blues is a 12 bar progression that uses a plagal cadence and a perfect cadence.

Listen to what happens as a new section develops. Listen to what each of the rhythm section players do when there is a new section or when the form goes back to the top.

Interaction - Listen for the "Call and Response" within the band.

Rhythm - listen for the triplet based subdivision between each quarter note.

Articulation - listen to the articulation of the instruments.

Effects - Listen for various effects of self-expression within the context of a solo. This helps identify different musicians.

Suggested listening:

Louis Armstrong and His All Stars - *Satchmo at Symphony Hall*

Duke Ellington - *Ellington Uptown*

Duke Ellington - *At Newport*

Billie Holiday - *Lady in Satin*

Charlie Parker - *"The Quintet" Jazz at Massey Hall*

Thelonius Monk - *Genius of Modern Music*

Clifford Brown - *Study in Brown*

Count Basie - *April in Paris*

John Coltrane - *Blue Train*

Cannonball Adderley - *Somethin' Else*

Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers - *Moanin'*

Dave Brubeck - *Time Out*

Miles Davis - *Kind of Blue*

Ella Fitzgerald - *Live in Berlin*

Jimmy Smith - *Back at the Chicken Shack*

Wes Montgomery - *The Incredible Jazz Guitar*

Bill Evans - *Waltz for Debby*