

IMPROVING YOUR JAZZ COMPING.

This subject comes up quite a lot with my pupils and I always start them off with the same exercise.

I start them off with a basic 12 bar Blues. Firstly, I don't change any of the chords to anything that would scare the average pupil. I start by working on the rhythmical side of things first. Lets start in a key that lends itself to jazz, Bb.

Ex. 1 Bb Bb7 Eb



Bb F7

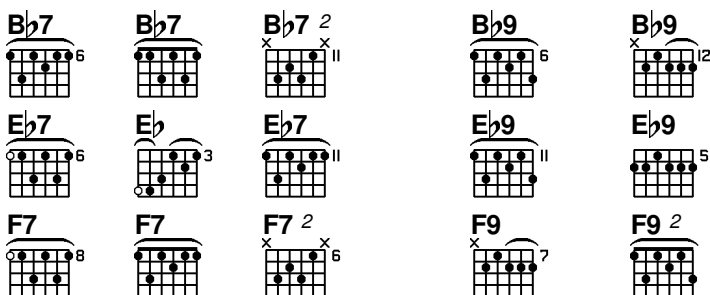


Bb F7



You should all know how this goes and have probably played it a thousand times, maybe not in this key but the format is exactly the same, it's just another key, a different pitch. The first improvement that can be made is to make all of the chords into 7ths, and then try making them all 9ths.

Ex. 2



I hope that your first thoughts here are, "these are all the same chords, just in different positions", good, that's what I want you to think. It will convey to you how simply I approach the guitar. Three chords, three scales. For me there are only three chords on the guitar, not 5000, like your book at home says, you know, the one that cost you \$50. Not for me.

Apart from that, I couldn't remember 5000 chords. I keep it simple.

I refer you of course to my book, 'The Guitar, My Way' which is available from this website.

Now, the secret of playing more jazzy chords in your progressions, or at least SOUNDING like you are, is this; (1) adding the right embellishments to the basic chord, and (2) anticipating the change from one chord to the next and filling the gap with a smooth, linking chord.



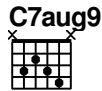
Ex. 6



This 7th+9 chord (Ex. 6) can be used in place of any 7th chord. Again you will be adding more tones to the basic triad.

The other 7th+9 chord that I use looks like this,

Ex. 7



The G7+9 (Ex. 6) is what I refer to as the E SHAPE.
 And Ex. 7 in my mind is based on the C SHAPE.
 Two of the only three shapes that are in my mind.

This is getting quite advanced but sometimes these progressions only look difficult because of the key that they are in. Lets try something similar in the more familiar key of F.

Ex. 8

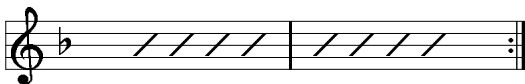
F Bb Bdim F Cm7 F9 Bb



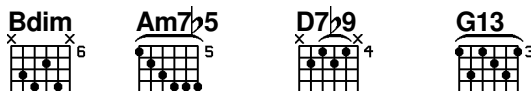
Bdim Am7 Am7-5 D7-9 G13 Gm7 C7



F Db9 C9



Ex. 9



We start to find some interesting moves here, and the secret lies in linking the chords by following the guide lines in the Cycle of Fifths.
 Ref. 'The Guitar, My Way' again. Most of these subjects are covered in detail in my book. Another improvement in your playing will be that the more interesting the chords are that you are playing over, the more you will have to change between scales to play over them. That Gm7-5 through D7-9 needs the scale of Gm harmonic. (You guessed it, 'The Guitar, My Way').

**So your next job is to improve your knowledge of scales, and if there are only three chords on the guitar there are only three scales!
Keep playing.**