

Take Note Online Jazz Workshops – Series 2

Episode 5: Blues Improv Part 1 – Playing the ‘Changes’

5 WALKING THROUGH CHORD TONES - EXAMPLE 1

Example 1 shows a walking line through chord tones for the first four measures of the blues progression. The first staff contains four measures, each with a chord labeled $E\flat 7$. The second staff also contains four measures, each with a chord labeled $E\flat 7$. The third staff contains four measures with chords $Cm 7$, $F 7$, $E\flat 7$, and $Cm 7$. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1, 3, 5, and $b 7$ (flat 7).

6 WALKING THROUGH CHORD TONES - EXAMPLE 2

Example 2 shows a walking line through chord tones for the first four measures of the blues progression. The first staff contains four measures, each with a chord labeled $E\flat 7$. The second staff also contains four measures, each with a chord labeled $E\flat 7$. The third staff contains four measures with chords $Cm 7$, $F 7$, $E\flat 7$, and $Cm 7$. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1, 3, 5, and $b 7$ (flat 7).

Practice ideas

- Try ‘walking’ through the chords each time starting on a different chord tone
- Try it in another key
- Play along to recordings of ‘jazz blues’ with these lines
- Try and write out a blues in F (hint: the ‘1’ chord is an $F 7$)

Check out some Jazz Blues on the Spotify list:

- Freddie Freeloader
- Blue Monk
- Tenor Madness
- Blues for Alice (starts on Fmaj7, rather than Bb7)