Beginner's Guide to Jazz Guitar

www.mattwarnockguitar.com

Welcome to the Beginner's Guide to Jazz Guitar. Great to find you here. If you are just starting to learn how to play jazz guitar, need a refresher on jazz guitar fundamentals, or just want to fill any gaps in your knowledge and playing, then you are in the right place. The Beginner's Guide to Jazz Guitar is designed to introduce you to three fundamental skills that you will need to continue your development as a well-rounded jazz guitarist. These skills are Soloing, Comping and Walking Basslines.

Over the course of 10 chapters, each of these three jazz guitar fundamentals is broken down into easy to understand concepts and quickly, and enjoyably, applied to the fretboard through various musical examples and exercises. By learning this material, and working through the various exercises in each chapter, you will have developed a strong fundamental skill set that you can then build upon as you move forward in your jazz guitar journey.

You do not have to work each chapter in order, from 1 to 10, but they have been written in that order to lead you smoothly from one concept to the next. So, it is advised that you start on chapter one and move forward from there. But, if you want to skip around, I would suggest starting on Chapter 1, Chapter 5 or Chapter 9, as those are the first chapter for Comping, Soloing and Basslines respectively.

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Chapter 1- Beginner Drop 3 Chords

Welcome to Chapter 1 - Beginner Drop 3 Chords for Jazz Guitar of the Beginner's Guide to Jazz Guitar. In the first Chapter of this guide, we'll be looking at one of the most commonly used Chords when learning how to play jazz guitar, the Drop 3 Chord.

By exploring and learning Beginner Drop 3 chords on the guitar, you will be able to navigate common chord progressions and jazz guitar standards in the comping style of jazz guitar legends such as Joe Pass, Kenny Burrell and Wes Montgomery.

So grab your guitar, turn up your amp and let's learn how to play Beginner Drop 3 chords for guitar.

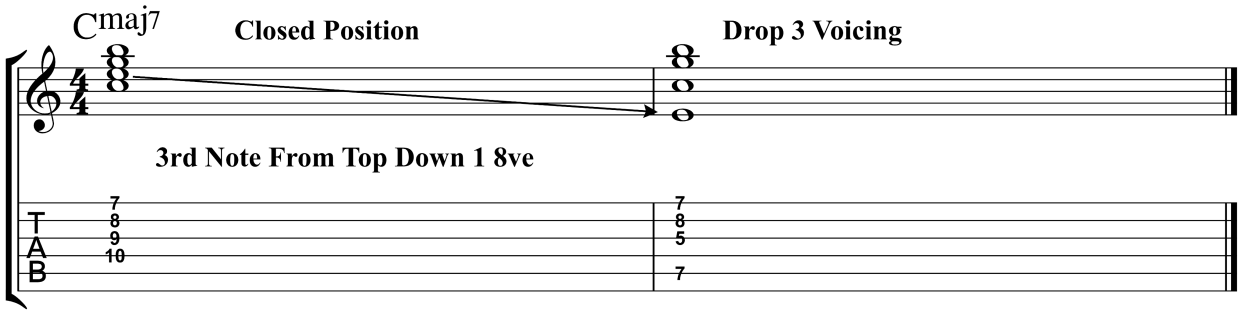
What Are Drop 3 Chords?

While you may have heard the term Drop 3 Chords before, and maybe even learned a few of these shapes on the fretboard, you may not have checked out why these chords are called Drop 3 before.

To help alleviate any confusion as to how you build Drop 3 chords, here is a quick formula for you to memorize in order to get the theory down behind Drop 3 chord shapes.

1. Take a closed-position chord, 1-3-5-7, such as the Cmaj7 below
2. Take the 3rd note from the TOP of that chord and lower (drop) it by one octave
3. You now have a Drop 3 Chord, only it is now in 1st inversion (3rd in the bass) compared to the root position of the closed chord we used to build it.

Here is how that would look on paper.



There are also inversions for Drop 3 Chords, which we won't look at right now in this Beginner's Guide, but which are good to know for further study.

Here is the interval structure for each inversion of any Drop 3 chord, you simply flatten or raise any given note to produce the chord qualities explore in this chapter from here.

Root Position = R-7-3-5
1st Inversion = 3-R-5-7
2nd Inversion = 5-3-7-R
3rd Inversion = 7-5-R-3

Now that you have looked at how to build Drop 3 Chords, and the interval order for each inversion, let's begin to take these chords off the page and onto the fretboard.

Beginner Drop 3 Chords - Maj7

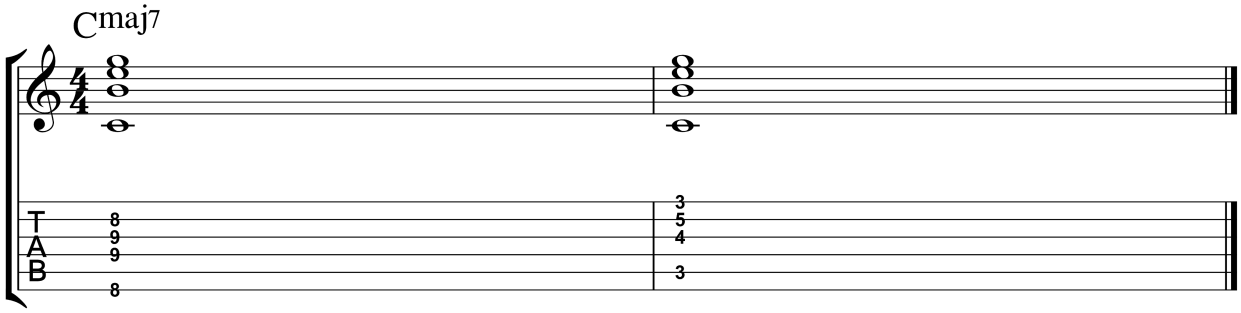
Drop 3 Maj7 Chords are built by taking the Root-3rd-5th-7th of the major scale and stacking these notes on top of each other to form a chord.

In the key of C these notes would be C-E-G-B, as they are the 1st, 3rd, 5th and 7th notes of the C Major Scale, C-D-E-F-G-A-B

As we saw in the first section of this Chapter, to build a root-position Drop 3 Chord on the guitar you need to rearrange those notes until they form the interval pattern, R-7-3-5, or C-B-E-G for a Cmaj7 chord.

To begin your exploration of Drop 3 Chords for Jazz Guitar, here are two different Cmaj7 root-position chords to practice on the fretboard.

Click to hear audio for these Drop 3 Maj7 Chords.



Once you can play these three Drop 3 Chords from memory, practice playing root-position Maj7 Drop 3 shapes in all 12 keys as you explore them further on the fretboard.

Beginner Drop 3 Chords - 7th

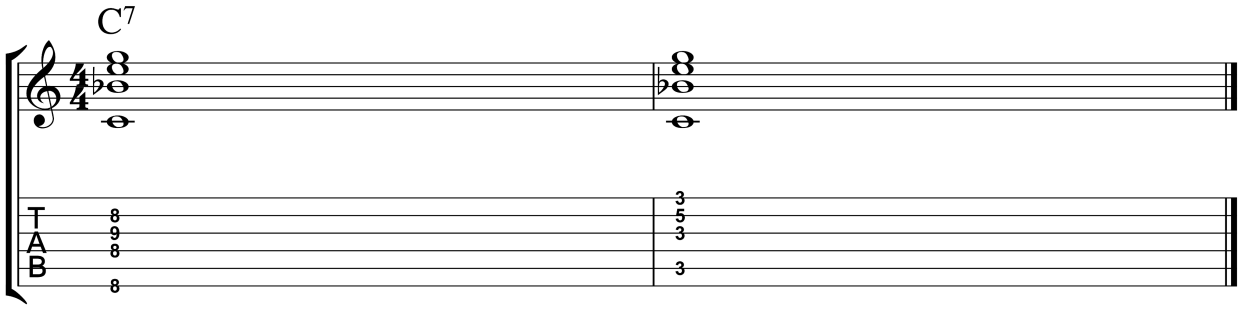
As you start to check out Drop 3 7th Chords on guitar, there are two different ways that you can think about these chord shapes. The first is by using their interval structure, which is R-3-5-b7, or the 1st, 3rd, 5th and 7th notes of the Mixolydian Mode.

For a C7 chord, the notes would be C-E-G-Bb, and the C Mixolydian Mode is spelled C-D-E-F-G-A-Bb. As you may have noticed, this chord is only one note different from the maj7 chord we just learned.

So, the second way to think about Drop 3 7th Chords is to take any maj7 chord shape you know and simply lower the 7th by one fret, creating the b7 interval that is found within the 7th-chord construction.

Here are two different Drop 3 7th Chords, all in root position, for you to learn and practice in this key, as well as the other 11 keys, as you work out these shapes in the woodshed.

Click to hear audio for these Drop 3 7th Chords.



When you have these 7th-chord shapes under your fingers, practice moving between maj7 and 7th chords from the same root, playing Cmaj7-C7 for example, then moving that exercise to all 12 keys around the fretboard.

Beginner Drop 3 Chords - m7

As was the case with Drop 3 7th chords, there are two ways that you can think about and construct Drop 3 m7th Chords for jazz guitar. The first way to look at m7th Drop 3 Chords is to look at the intervals used to build this chord.

The interval construction for any Drop 3 m7th Chord is R-b7-b3-5, or C-Bb-Eb-G for a Cm7 chord. These notes are drawn from the Dorian Mode, as the m7th chord is built by stacking the 1st, 3rd, 5th and 7th notes of the Dorian Mode to form a four-note chord shape on the guitar.

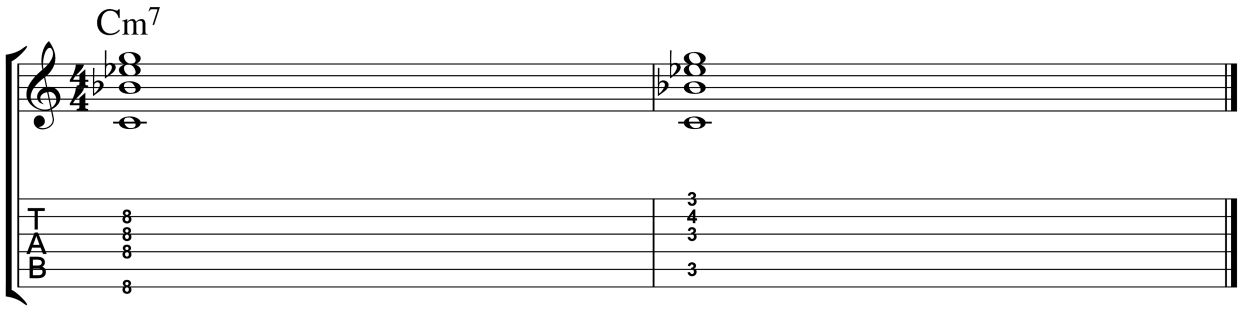
For a Cm7 chord, the Dorian mode contains the notes C-D-Eb-F-G-A-Bb, and that is why the notes of the Cm7 chord are C-Eb-G-Bb.

The second way to think about Drop 3 m7th Chords is to compare them to the 7th chord shapes you just learned. You will notice that the m7th and 7th chords are only one note different, the b3rd interval in the m7th chord is different from the 3rd in the 7th chord shapes.

This means that you can take any Drop 3 7th Chord you know, lower the 3rd by one fret, and you now have a Drop 3 m7th Chord shape on the guitar.

Here are two Cm7 root-position Drop 3 Chords for you to explore in this, and all 12, keys on the fretboard.

Click to hear audio for these Drop 3 m7 Chords.



Once you can play these Drop 3 m7 Chords from memory, try playing the following three Drop 3 Chords, Dm7-G7-Cmaj7. By doing so you have now built your first ii-V-I chord progression, one of the most important chord progressions in jazz, and one that you will explore further in Chapter 3 of this Guide.

Beginner Drop 3 Chords - m7b5

There are also two different ways to think about building and playing Drop 3 m7b5 Chords on the guitar. The first is the interval construction of these chords, which is R-b3-b5-b7, or C-Eb-Gb-Bb for a Cm7b5 Drop 3 Chord.

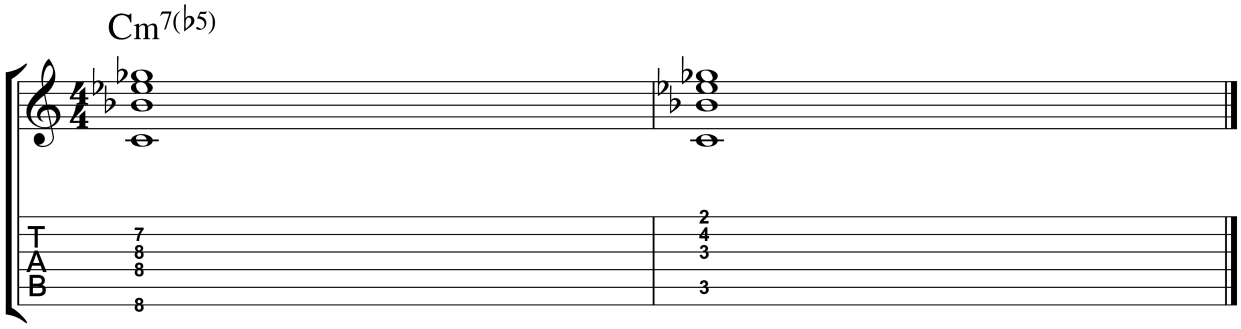
These notes come from the Locrian Mode, the 7th mode of the major scale, which in the key of C would be, C-Db-Eb-F-Gb-Ab-Bb, and you can simply pluck out the 1st, 3rd, 5th and 7th notes of that mode to form a Cm7b5 chord.

Since we are not exploring this mode in the Beginner Guide to Jazz Guitar, you can check it out further by visiting the Locrian Mode for Jazz Guitar Page on my website.

The second way to build Drop 3 m7b5 chords is to take the m7 chord shapes you learned in the last section of this Chapter and simply lower the 5th by one fret to form a Drop 3 m7b5 Chord.

Here are two Cm7b5 Drop 3 root-position chords to get you started with these shapes on the fretboard. Again, start in C and then work your way to the 11 other keys on the fretboard in the woodshed.

Click to hear audio for these Drop 3 m7b5 Chords.



Once you have these Drop 3 m7b5 chords under your fingers, practice moving between Cm7 and Cm7b5 in both positions on the neck from memory. Then, take this exercise into all 12 keys as you begin to explore these two important chords further in the practice room.

Beginner Drop 3 Chords - Dim7

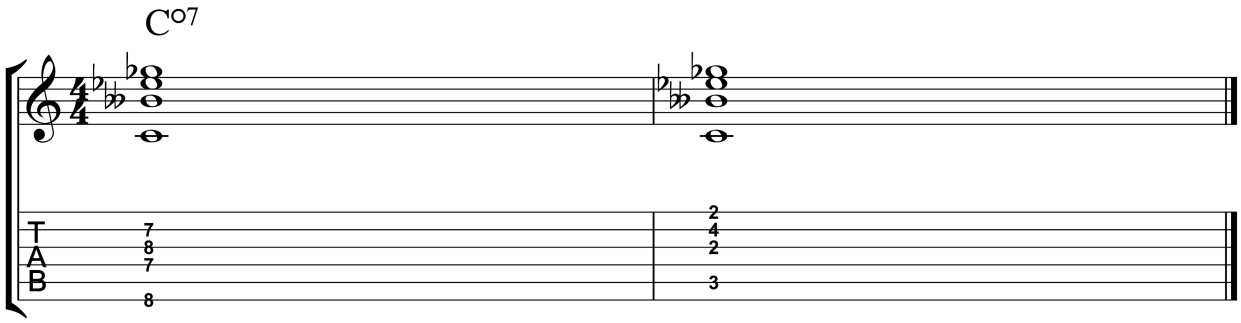
The last Drop 3 Chords that we will explore in this Chapter are Dim7 chords. To keep things simple, we will only look at one way to build and think about these chord shapes on the fretboard.

To build Dim7 Drop 3 Chords, you take the m7b5 chords that you learned in the previous section, lower the b7th by one fret, and you now have Drop 3 Dim7 chord shapes.

The interval structure for Dim7 Drop 3 Chords is R-b3-b5-bb7, where the “double flat” 7 is also referred to as a Diminished 7th interval, hence the name of the chord.

Here are two root-position Drop 3 Dim7 chords to help you get started with these important chord shapes in the practice room.

Click to hear audio for these Drop 3 Dim7 Chords.



As with any chord you learn, make sure to start in one key until you are comfortable playing these three shapes from memory, before exploring them in all 12 keys around the neck of the guitar.

Beginner Drop 3 Chords Exercise 1

To help get you started on working Beginner Drop 3 Chords in the practice room, here is an exercise that I like to do in order to memorize each chord shape in this Chapter, as well as begin to see the close relationships between each Drop 3 Chord we have learned up to this point in the Guide.

The exercise is fairly straight forward. You begin on a maj7 chord, then you move one note at a time until you reach the dim7 chord for that same root note.

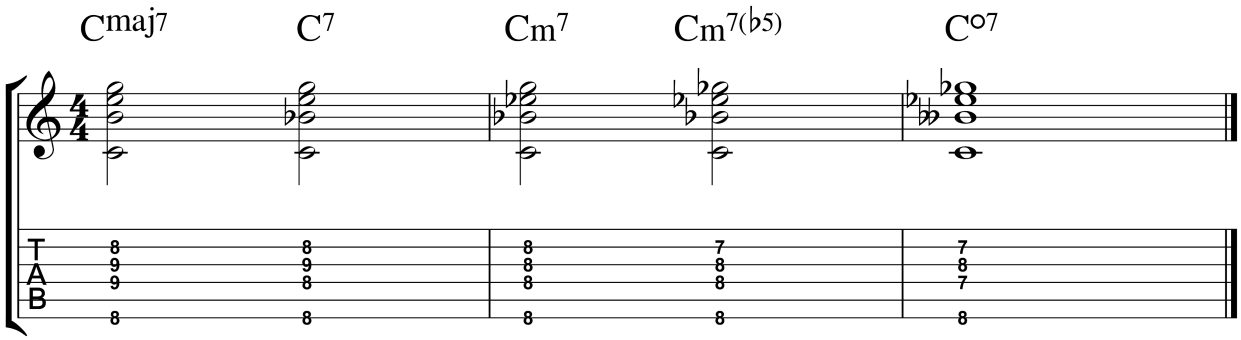
Here is the order of chords when you move through them in this manner.

Maj7-7-m7-m7b5-Dim7

Look familiar? It’s the same order of the Beginner Drop 3 Chords that we learned in this Chapter. Pretty cool right!

Here is an example of this Drop 3 chord exercise written out from a C root on the 6th string.

Click to hear audio for the Drop 3 Chords Exercise 1



Again, as with any exercise in this Guide, you can start by memorizing these chords in one key, C in this case, before moving it around to all 12 keys across the neck.

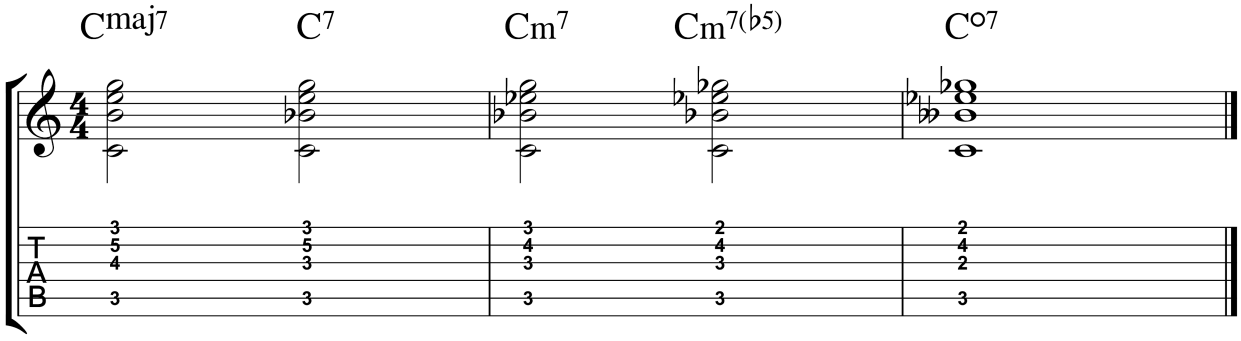
As well, it is a good idea to use a metronome when practicing these chords as it will force you to move in time between each chord, helping you to develop a smooth shift between each chord type as you work them out in the woodshed.

Beginner Drop 3 Chords Exercise 2

Apart from working through all of the Drop 3 Chords in this chapter in order from the 6th-string root, you can also learn and practice these chords together from the 5th-string root.

The concept is the same, you are just using a different set of strings to play these Beginner Drop 3 Chords during this exercise. Here is an example of this exercise, but now applied to Drop 3 Chords with a 5th-string root.

Click to hear audio for the Drop 3 Chords Exercise 2



Once you have this exercise under your fingers, try mixing together both exercises, 6th and 5th-string root shapes, in all 12 keys as you begin to combine different string sets for these Beginner Drop 3 Chords in the woodshed.

Beginner Drop 3 Chords Bonus Exercise

As well as getting these Beginner Drop 3 Chords under your left hand, we can use these chords to develop our right-hand technique as well.

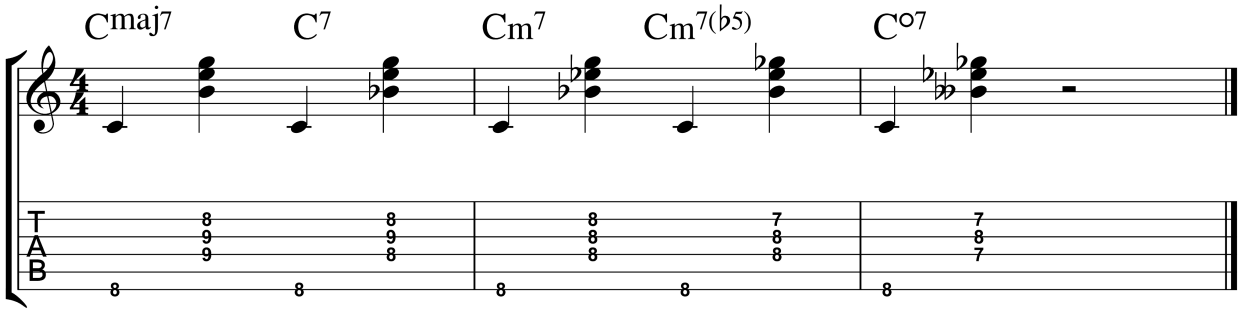
Here is a fun exercise that I like to do in order to begin separating any chord, Drop 3 Chords in this case, into a bass note plus the rest of the chord.

By doing so, you will begin to develop your right-hand technique, which will come in handy later on when learning how to walk bass lines on the guitar, as well as provide some picking variety to your chords at the same time.

You can work this exercise in three ways, all fingers, fingers and a pick, or a pick only, so feel free to use whichever right-hand technique you are most comfortable with.

Here is an example of breaking up Beginner Drop 3 Chords into bass note and the top-three notes of the chord as applied to the Drop 3 Chord Exercise 1 above.

Click to hear audio for the Drop 3 Chords Bonus Exercise



This right-hand exercise is not only good for Drop 3 Chords, but for any chord shapes or chord progression you are learning or working on in the woodshed.

So feel free to bring this bonus exercise into any chord or chord progression exercise you are working on in your jazz guitar practice routine.

Beginner Drop 3 Chords Chapter Checklist

After you have taken a look at the Drop 3 Chord examples and exercises above, you will be ready to dig deeper into these important jazz harmonic devices in the woodshed.

Here is a checklist of exercises you can use to measure your progress when working on Drop 3 Chords in the practice room. You don't have to master all of these items before moving on to the next Chapter in this Guide.

But, being able to play 3-5 of these items from memory with a metronome at a slow to medium tempo is a good litmus test to see when you are ready to move on to the next Chapter.

1. Both Maj7 Drop 3 Chords in all 12 keys from memory.
2. Both 7th Drop 3 Chords in all 12 keys from memory.
3. Both m7th Drop 3 Chords in all 12 keys from memory.
4. Both m7b5 Drop 3 Chords in all 12 keys from memory.
5. Both dim7 Drop 3 Chords in all 12 keys from memory.
6. Drop 3 Chord Exercise 1 in all 12 keys from memory.
7. Drop 3 Chord Exercise 2 in all 12 keys from memory.
8. Drop 3 Chord Exercise 1 in all 12 keys with the Bonus Exercise picking.
9. Drop 3 Chord Exercise 2 in all 12 keys with the Bonus Exercise picking.
10. Recite the intervals for each Drop 3 Chord Inversion.

Beginner Drop 3 Chords Further Reading

To continue your exploration of Beginner Drop 3 Chords for Jazz Guitar, here are several articles that you may want to check out.

How to Play Drop 3 Chord Inversions on Guitar

5 Drop 3 Chord Exercises for Jazz Guitar

Drop 3 Inversions for Jazz Guitar Video Lessons

Voicing Leading Major ii V I Chords Video Lesson

ii V I Jazz Guitar Chords App for Apple and Android

Chapter 2 - Beginner Drop 2 Chords

When learning how to play jazz guitar, one of the most important shapes to get under your fingers and bring into your playing are Beginner Drop 2 Chords.

These root-position shapes will allow you to cover a wider range of the neck as compared to Drop 3 Chords, as there are now three string sets to explore as opposed to the two for Drop 3 grips.

As well, Beginner Drop 2 Chords tend to work very well when used in chord melody and chord soloing situations, so they are essential learning for any jazz guitarist looking to play chords in the style of legendary players such as Wes Montgomery, Jim Hall and Ed Bickert.

In this lesson we will be looking at how build, play, practice and apply Beginner Drop 2 Chords for jazz guitar. Check out these shapes and most importantly have fun with them!

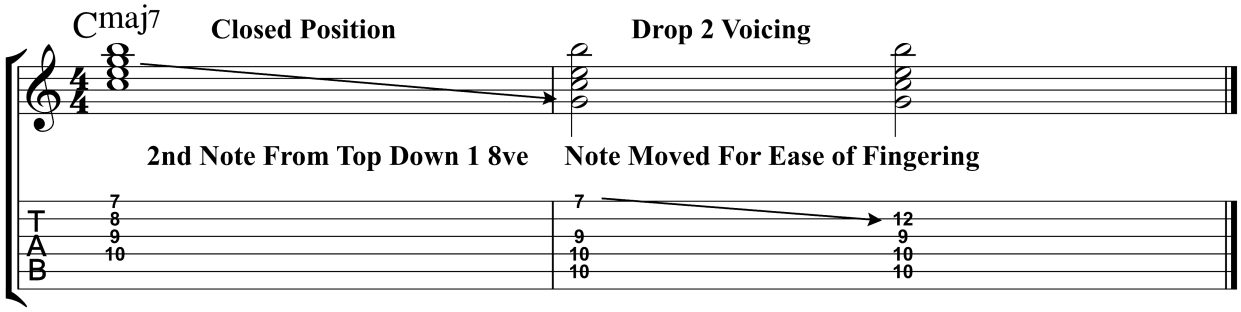
What Are Drop 2 Chords?

While you may have heard the term Drop 2 Chords before, and maybe even checked out a few grips on the neck of the guitar, you may not have learned just why these chords are called Drop 2.

To help you get a firm grasp on the theory behind these chords, and learn the background as to how you build Drop 2 chords, here is a quick formula for you to memorize in order to be able to understand the theory behind Drop 2 chord shapes.

1. Take a closed-position chord, 1-3-5-7, such as the Cmaj7 below
2. Take the 2nd note from the TOP of that chord and lower (drop) it by one octave
3. You now have a Drop 2 Chord, only it is now in 2nd inversion (5th in the bass) compared to the root position of the closed chord we used to build it.
4. To make things easier on the guitar, take the top note of this new shape and lower it by one string so that there are no skips between strings in Drop 2 shapes on the neck.

Here is how that would look on paper.



There are also inversions for Drop 2 Chords, which we won't look at right now in this Beginner's Guide to Jazz Guitar, but which are good to know for further study.

Here is the interval structure for each inversion of any Drop 2 chord, you simply flatten or raise any given note to produce the chord qualities explore in this chapter from here.

Root Position = R-5-7-3
1st Inversion = 3-7-R-5
2nd Inversion = 5-R-3-7
3rd Inversion = 7-3-5-R

Notice how the 3rd and 7th, as well as the Root and 5th, of any Drop 2 Chord inversion are always next to each other.

This has always helped me when building Drop 2 chords, so check it out as it might help keep these notes organized in your playing as well.

Now that you have looked at how to build Drop 2 Chords, and the interval order for each inversion, let's begin to take these chords off the page and onto the fretboard.

Beginner Drop 2 Chords - Maj7

The first set of Beginner Drop 2 Chords that we will look at are maj7 shapes on three string sets of the guitar.

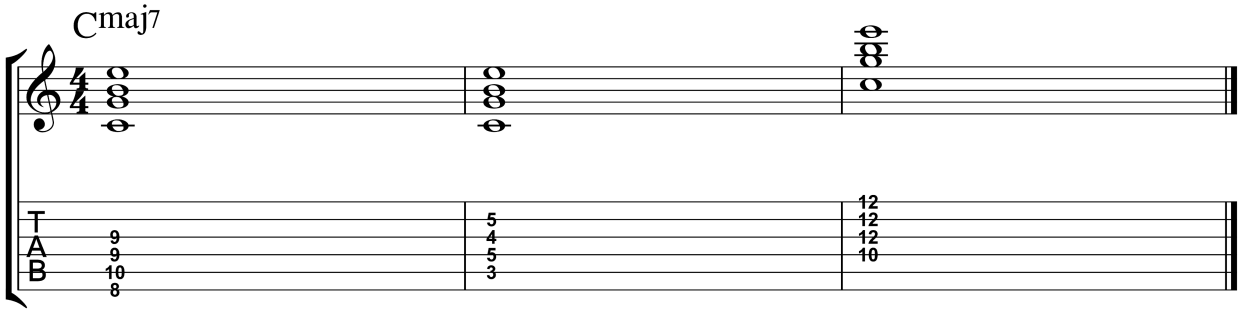
Maj7 chords are built by taking the 1st, 3rd, 5th and 7th notes of the major scale and stacking them to form a chord shape.

For a Cmaj7 chord, the scale would be C-D-E-F-G-A-B, and so a Cmaj7 chord has the notes C-E-G-B in it's make up.

As well, you can think of maj7 chords from an intervallic perspective. In this case, maj7 chords contain the intervals Root-M3-P5-M7, allowing you to build maj7 chords from any root by applying that structure to any root note.

Here are three Drop 2 maj7 chords to try out on the fretboard, memorize, and then take into all 12 keys around the neck as you work them further in the woodshed.

Click to hear audio for these Beginner Drop 2 Maj7 Chords



Once you can play Drop 2 maj7 chords in a few keys, try playing the Cmaj7 Drop 2 followed by the Drop 3 maj7 chord shapes in order to begin to see the relationship between these two common and important chord grips on the guitar.

Beginner Drop 2 Chords - 7th

If you are coming to jazz from a rock or blues background, then you are no doubt familiar with 7th chords, though maybe not from a Drop 2 perspective.

These chords are built by stacking the 1st, 3rd, 5th and 7th notes of the Mixolydian Mode, 5th mode of the major scale, to produce the interval structure R-3-5-b7.

For a C7 chord, the Mixolydian Scale would be C-D-E-F-G-A-Bb, and so a C7 chord would be spelled C-E-G-Bb.

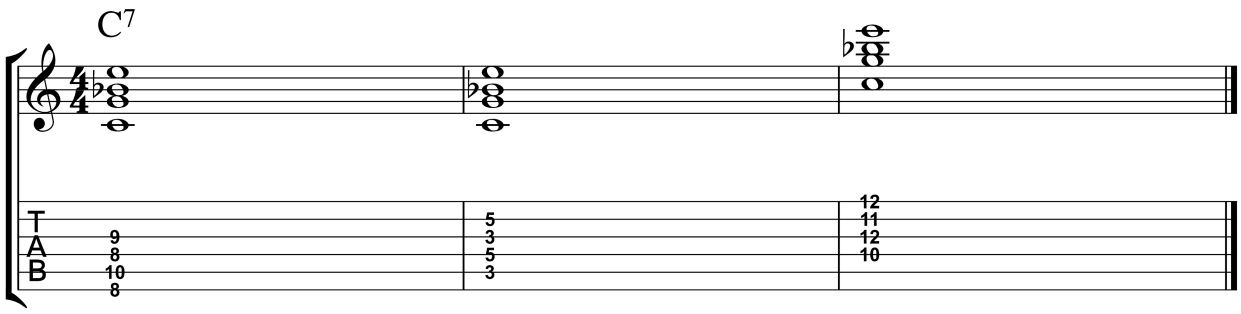
As well, you can think of a Drop 2 7th Chord as being only one note apart from the maj7 chords that you just learned.

Take any Drop 2 maj7 chord you know, lower the 7th by one fret, and you now have a Drop 2 7th chord on the fretboard.

Here are three different Drop 2 7th root position chords to check out on the fretboard.

Start by working them over C7, before taking them to all 12 key across the neck of the guitar.

Click to hear audio for these Beginner Drop 2 7th Chords



If you have a background in rock or blues, try taking any song you know that has 7th chords in it, such as any blues chord progression, and try playing those tunes using Drop 2 chords instead of the open-position and barre chords you may be using now.

Beginner Drop 2 Chords - m7

The next set of Drop 2 Chords that we will look at are the m7 chord shapes, laid out in three root-position grips on the fretboard below.

You can build a m7 chord by taking the 1st, 3rd, 5th and 7th notes of the Dorian Scale, the second mode of the major scale system, and stacking them on top of each other to form a 4-note chord.

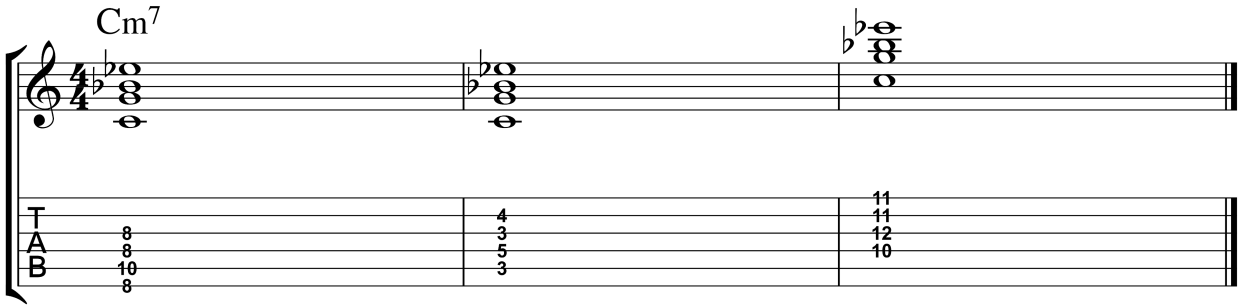
This produces the interval structure, 1-b3-5-b7, or C-Eb-G-Bb for a Cm7 chord as in the example below.

You can also think of m7 chords as being one-note different from the 7th chord shapes you learned in the previous section.

Try taking any Drop 2 7th Chord you know, lower the 3rd by 1 fret, and you will now have a Drop 2 m7 Chord shape on the guitar.

Here are three root-position Drop 2 m7 Chords that you can learn in this key, and all 12 keys, as you begin exploring these shapes in the practice room.

Click to hear audio for these Beginner Drop 2 m7 Chords



With the m7 Drop 2 Chords under your fingers, try playing Dm7-G7-Cmaj7 in a few positions around the neck with these shapes to from a ii-V-I Chord Progression.

This is a nice intro to these chords which we will explore in full detail during subsequent Chapters in the Beginner's Guide to Jazz Guitar.

Beginner Drop 2 Chords - m7b5

There are two different ways that you can build and think about m7b5 chords as you begin to learn these shapes and apply them to the fretboard.

The first is to think of the interval structure of the chord, which is 1-b3-b5-b7.

These intervals are taken from the Locrian Scale, the 7th mode of the Major Scale System.

In the key of C, the Locrian Scale would be C-Db-Eb-F-Gb-Ab-Bb, and so you take out the 1st, 3rd, 5th and 7th notes of that scale to build a Cm7b5 chord, C-Eb-Gb-Bb.

Since we are not exploring this mode in the Beginner Guide to Jazz Guitar, you can check it out further by visiting the Locrian Mode for Jazz Guitar Page on my website.

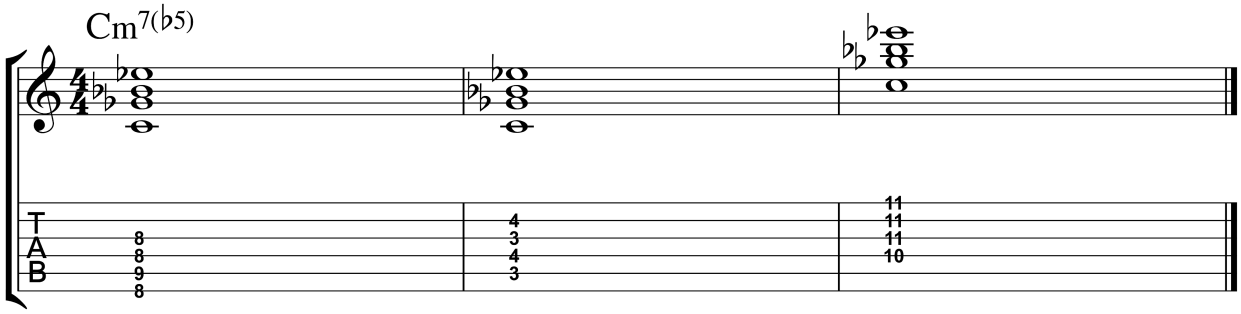
The second way to think about m7b5 chords, is to take any Drop 2 m7 chord that you have learned, and simply lower the 5th to produce a m7b5 Drop 2 Chord Voicing.

Either way of thinking about m7b5 Drop 2 Chords is legit, so try both out and see which one suits you best.

Here is an example of three different Cm7b5 root-position Drop 2 chords on the guitar to check out.

Start in this key and then work on being able to play these chords from memory in all 12 keys around the neck.

Click to hear audio for these Beginner Drop 2 m7b5 Chords



Now that you have the Drop 2 m7b5 chords under your fingers, try playing these three shapes followed by the three Drop 3 m7b5 shapes from the same root around the neck.

Doing so will now give you 6 ways to play m7b5 chords on the fretboard, enough to allow variety when comping and allow you to cover the entire neck with m7b5 chords in any key.

Beginner Drop 2 Chords - Dim7

To finish our exploration of Beginner Drop 2 Chords, here are three shapes for the Dim7 root-position chord across the fretboard for you to check out.

Keeping things simple with this chord, think about the Dim7 chord as being a variation of the m7b5 shapes that you just learned.

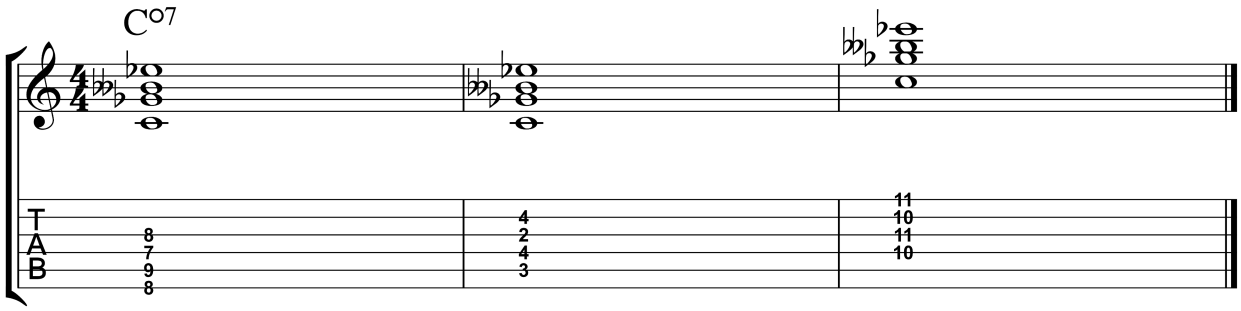
To do this, play any Drop 2 m7b5 chord shape on the guitar, then simply lower the 7th of any of those shapes and you will now have a Drop 2 Dim7 chord on the guitar.

This produces the interval collection, 1-b3-b5-bb7 for a Dim7 chord, where the bb7 (Double Flat 7) is also called the Diminished 7 interval, hence the name of the chord.

Here are three root-position Drop 2 Chords to begin learning in the woodshed.

Start with the root note C, and as always, take it to all 12 keys from there.

Click to hear audio for these Beginner Drop 2 Dim7 Chords



With each of the five basic Drop 2 Chord qualities under your fingers in root position, let's take a look at a few exercises that will help you further solidify these shapes into your playing.

Beginner Drop 2 Chords - Exercise 1

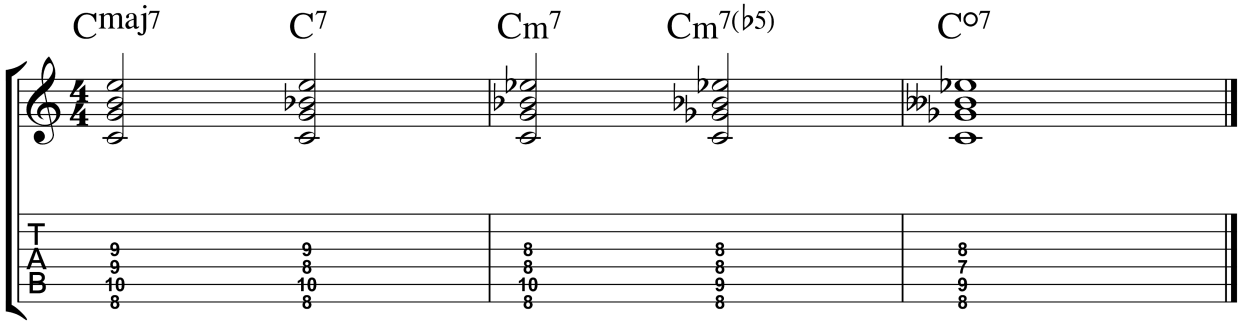
Now that you have worked on each individual Drop 2 root position chord, we can now work on bringing them together in your jazz guitar practice routine. In this exercise, you will begin on the maj7 chord shape on the lowest four strings, moving one note at a time until you finish on the Dim7 chord on that same string set.

By working through Drop 2 chords in this manner, you will wind up with the order maj7-7-m7-m7b5-dim7, which is the same order that we learned these chords during this chapter.

By working Drop 2 Chords in this order, you will not only increase your dexterity and chord knowledge, but you will begin to hear the differences and similarities between these chords on the fretboard.

Here is an example of this exercise written out from the root note C.

Click to hear audio for the Beginner Drop 2 Chords Exercise 1



Once you have learned this exercise from the root note C, be sure to take it around the neck to all 12 keys as you build on this exercise in the practice room.

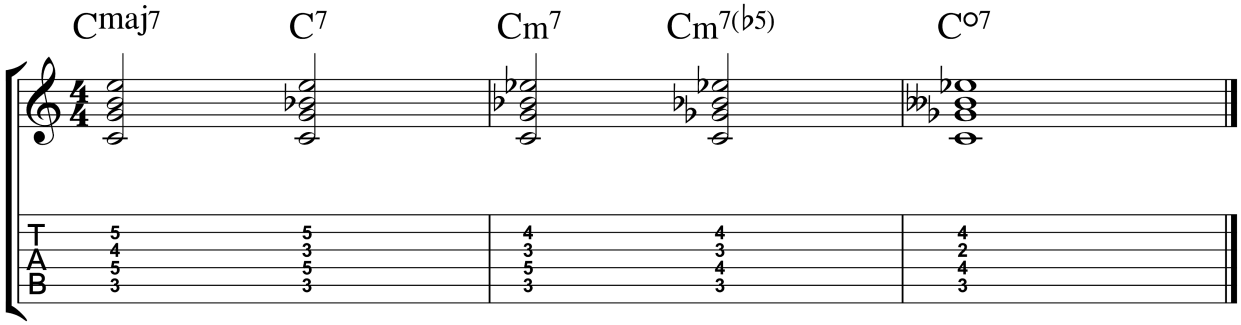
Beginner Drop 2 Chords - Exercise 2

The next exercise uses the same principal as the first, though now you are running through Drop 2 Chords in root position on the middle 4 strings of the guitar.

These chords are great for comping as they have a full sound, but don't get too close to the higher range of the guitar, allowing you to keep out of the sonic real estate of the soloist.

Work these shapes in the key of C to begin, and then move on to working all 12 keys from there once you can play this exercise in one key smoothly from memory.

Click to hear audio for the Beginner Drop 2 Chords Exercise 2



A fun exercise to work on at this stage in the game, is to run the Drop 2 chords through each chord quality with a 5th-string root, followed by all of the Drop 3 chord qualities from that same 5th-string root.

This will allow you to see each of the options you have for both chord shapes from a root position chord grip on the 5th string, and on the 6th string if you take this exercise to that string set as well.

Check this out, fun way to begin moving between Drop 3 and Drop 2 chords in your jazz guitar workout.

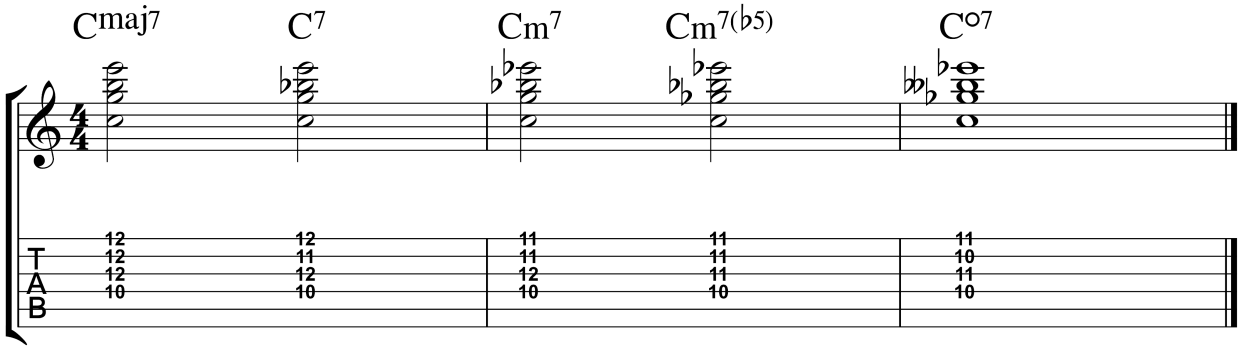
Beginner Drop 2 Chords - Exercise 3

The last exercise in this section focuses on running through each chord quality for Beginner Drop 2 Chords in root position on the top 4 strings only.

Though these are the last of the three string sets that we are exploring in this series of exercises, you will find that these will end up being the Drop 2 Chords that you rely on the most when comping, soloing and arranging chord melodies, so they are worth spending a good amount of time on to get down properly and comfortably in the woodshed.

Here is the exercise written out from the root note C. Again, start on this key and then move on to the other 11 keys from there.

Click to hear audio for the Beginner Drop 2 Chords Exercise 3



Now that you have worked out all three string sets for this exercise, try picking one root note, C for example, and then playing the maj7-7-m7-m7b5-dim7 chords on the 6th-string root, then the 5th-string root and finally the 4th-string root all in a row.

This is a great way to test your knowledge, and work on shifting around the neck quickly and smoothly at the same time.

Beginner Drop 2 Chords - Bonus Exercise

As well as using Beginner Drop 2 Chords to work on left-hand dexterity and chordal knowledge, you can use these shapes to develop your picking hand as well.

One of the roadblocks that many beginner jazz guitarists face is that they always see any chords shape from the bass note first, then the rest of the chord built up from there.

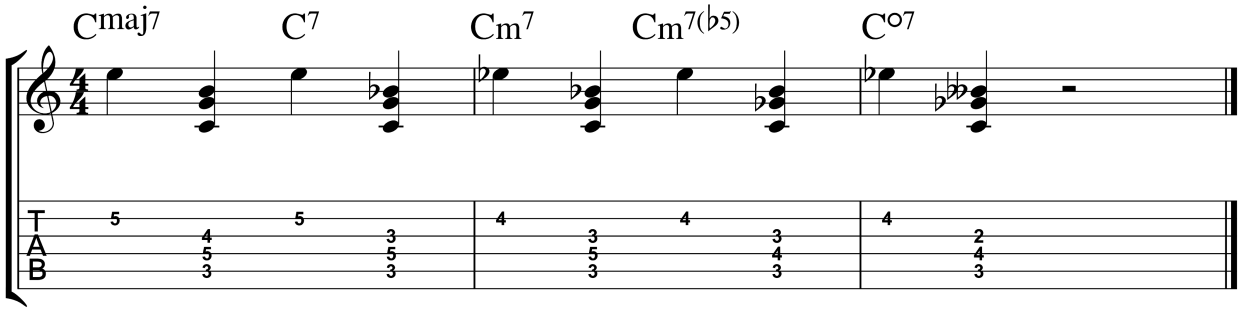
While this may help you see the neck and quickly build a jazz guitar chord on the fretboard, is puts a constant emphasis on the lowest note of each chord shape that you play.

Because the highest note of each chord we play tends to stick out the most sonically, and is the note that most people hear when listening to us play jazz guitar chords, you can do a fun and beneficial exercise to start training yourself to hear and see the top note of each chord as the most important note in that shape.

Here is an example of this exercise as applied to the Beginner Drop 2 Chord Exercise 1.

The crux of the exercise is that you pluck the top note of every chord first, and then play the rest of the notes as a group second.

Click to hear audio for the Beginner Drop 2 Chords Bonus Exercise



After you have worked on this exercise over Drop 2 Chords, try bringing it to your Drop 3 Chord practicing sessions as well.

It's a fun exercise that can be applied to any chord shapes that you know or are working on in the woodshed.

Chapter Checklist

After you have taken a look at the Drop 2 Chord examples and exercises above, you will be ready to dig deeper into these important jazz harmonic devices in the woodshed.

Here is a checklist of exercises you can use to measure your progress when working on Drop 2 Chords in the practice room. You don't have to master all of these items before moving on to the next Chapter in this Guide.

But, being able to play 3-5 of these items from memory with a metronome at a slow to medium tempo is a good litmus test to see when you are ready to move on to the next Chapter.

1. All 3 Maj7 Drop 2 Chords from memory in all keys.
2. All 3 7th Drop 2 Chords from memory in all keys.
3. All 3 m7th Drop 2 Chords from memory in all keys.
4. All 3 m7b5 Drop 2 Chords from memory in all keys.
5. All 3 dim7 Drop 2 Chords from memory in all keys.
6. Drop 2 Chord Exercise 1 from memory in all keys.
7. Drop 2 Chord Exercise 2 from memory in all keys.
8. Drop 2 Chord Exercise 1 in all 12 keys with the Bonus Exercise picking.
9. Drop 2 Chord Exercise 2 in all 12 keys with the Bonus Exercise picking.
10. Recite the intervals for each Drop 2 Chord Inversion from memory.

Further Reading

To continue your study of Beginner Drop 2 Chords for Guitar, here are a few articles I've written or recorded that you may want to check out in the woodshed.

How to Play Drop 2 Chord Inversions on Guitar

5 Beginner Drop 2 Chord Exercises For Guitar

Drop 2 Chord Inversions for Jazz Guitar Video Lessons

Voicing Leading Major ii V I Chords Video Lesson

ii V I Jazz Guitar Chords App for Apple and Android

Chapter 3 - Beginner Drop 3 Turnaround Chords

In Chapter 3 of the Beginner's Guide to Jazz Guitar, we will be taking the knowledge that you learned in Chapter 1, where you explored Drop 3 Chords for guitar, and applying these ideas to one of the most important series of chords in jazz, the Jazz Turnaround Chord Progression.

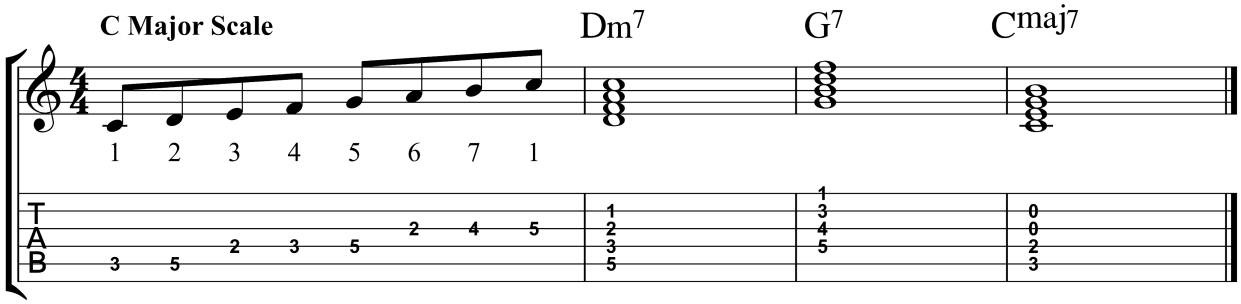
Found in many classic jazz tunes, in one variation or another, the Jazz Turnaround Chord Progression is must-know material for any aspiring jazz guitarist. Having a good theoretical knowledge of these chords, as well as being able to play them on the guitar, will allow you to quickly and easily navigate your favorite jazz standards in the practice room or out on the bandstand.

So let's dive in and take a look at Beginner Drop 3 Turnaround Chords in order to navigate this classic progression on the guitar.

What Is a ii V I Chord Progression?

One of the most common and important chord progressions in jazz, the major key ii-V-I progression can be found in countless jazz standards, and is essential knowledge for anyone learning to play jazz guitar. The chord progression is called a ii-V-I because these three chords are built from the 2nd, 5th and 1st notes of the underlying major scale. If you take the 2nd, 5th and 1st notes of the C major scale for example, you will produce the notes D G and C.

From there, you can build chords on top of those notes by stacking 3rds from the scale on each root, and you end up with Dm7, G7 and Cmaj7, the three chords in a ii-V-I chord progression in the key of C major. Here is how that process would look like on paper. Check it out and get a grasp of this concept from a theoretical level so that it will be easier to apply and understand these chords when you take them to your jazz guitar practice routine later on.



Now that you have an understanding of the first three chords in a Jazz Turnaround Chord Progression, let's look at the trickiest chord in this set, the VI7b9 Chord.

The VI7b9 Chord and Why We Play It

To finish off the Jazz Turnaround Chord Progression, we need to add one more chord to the ii-V-I's we just looked at, the VI7b9 Chord. Now, don't let this chord scare you off, it may sound tricky but it's not that bad to play on the guitar, and I'll show you why below.

First, let's look at why we use this chord during a Jazz Turnaround Chord Progression, as it is not totally in the key of C major. Normally, you would expect to see a vim7 chord in a major key, Am7 in C major for example, as that is the relative minor chord in any major key.

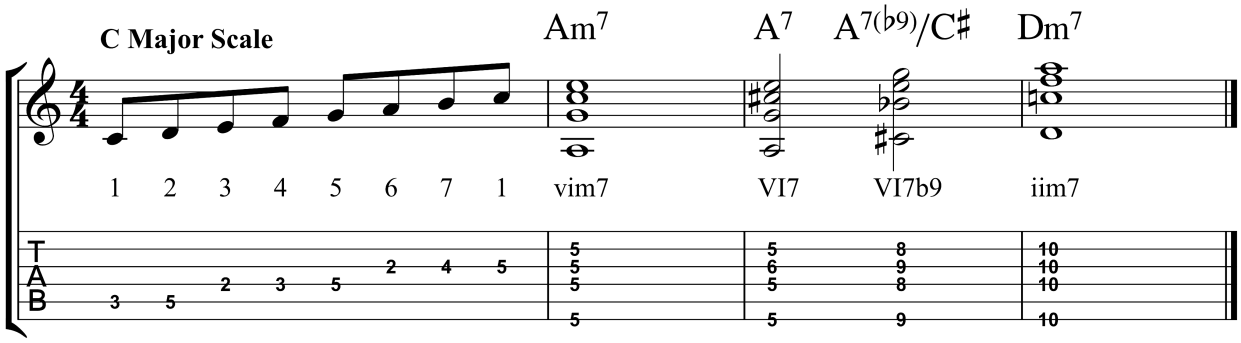
But, in jazz we like to add a bit of tension to our chord progressions, and so we change that chord to become a VI7b9 instead of the more traditional vim7 chord. The reason this chord works, is that it then resolves back to the iim7 chord, Dm7 in the key of C major. When doing so, the VI7b9 acts as a "secondary dominant," a V7th chord that temporarily highlights a non-Imaj7 chord in the progression, in this case it's the iim7.

A7b9 is the V7b9 of Dm7, the iim7 in a ii-V-I in C major. So the A7b9 is helping to "turnaround" the progression back to the iim7 chord, using a V7-im7 movement to help solidify this sound further. That's why we use the VI7b9 chord in jazz most of the time, as opposed to the more traditional usage of the vim7 chord.

To make this chord easier to play on the guitar, and to keep the movement between the Imaj7 and iim7 chords nice and smooth, we can use a small chord substitution when playing the VI7b9 chord on the guitar.

Instead of playing a full VI7b9 chord, we are only going to play 4 out of those 5 note, the 3rd, 5th, b7th and b9th, leaving the root out in this chord shape. When doing so, we produce a #Idim7 chord, or C#dim7 in the key of C major.

Below you can see this chord transition in action, from the VI7b9 to the #Idim7 to the iim7 chord. Notice how the Dim7 chord allows you to use previous knowledge to build this progression, as you learned two shapes for Drop 3 Dim7 chords in Chapter 1 of this Guide, as well as how smoothly the bassline runs when applying this chord to a Jazz Turnaround Chord Progression.

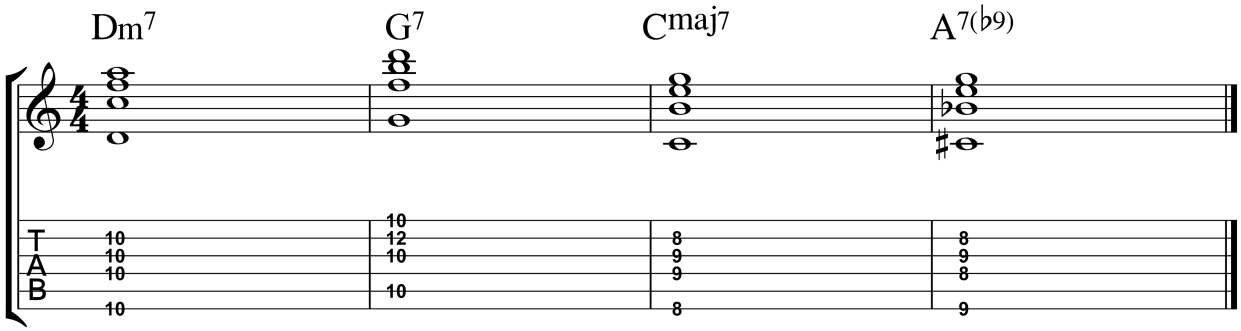


For now, just keep this knowledge at hand as you begin to take the VI7b9 chord, played as #Idim7, onto the fretboard. Once you begin to hear this chord in action, it will make more sense as the smooth movement between chords comes to light on the fretboard.

Beginner Drop 3 Turnaround Chords Exercise 1

To begin, here is an example of a Jazz Turnaround Chord Progression using Drop 3 Chords with the iim7 chord on the 6th-string root. From that first chord, the other chords in the progression stay within a few frets in order to keep the voice leading and chord movement smooth and easy to play. Learn these chords in the key of C major first, as written, and then take them to all 12 keys around the neck as you explore them further in the woodshed.

Click to hear audio for the Beginner Drop 3 Turnaround Chords Exercise 1



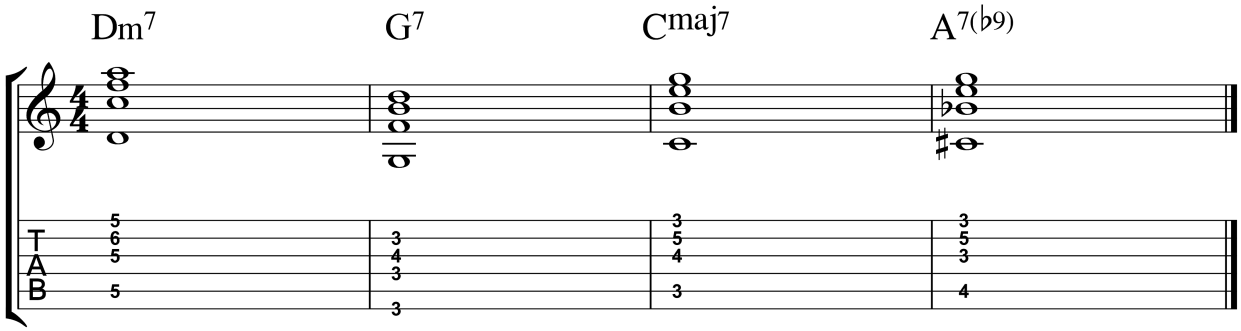
Go slow when you are working with this exercise. The goal is to play quickly between chords, so that your chord changes are smooth and seamless, but the tempo of the exercise can be slow and steady in order to allow you to achieve this goal.

Beginner Drop 3 Turnaround Chords Exercise 2

You can also play through a Jazz Turnaround Chord Progression using Drop 3 Chords that begin with a iim7 chord on the 5th-string bass note. The idea is the same as the previous exercise, only now you are in a second position on the fingerboard.

As is the case with any exercise, learn the following chords as written, and then take them to all 12 keys with a metronome, or jazz guitar backing track if possible.

Click to hear audio for the Beginner Drop 3 Turnaround Chords Exercise 2



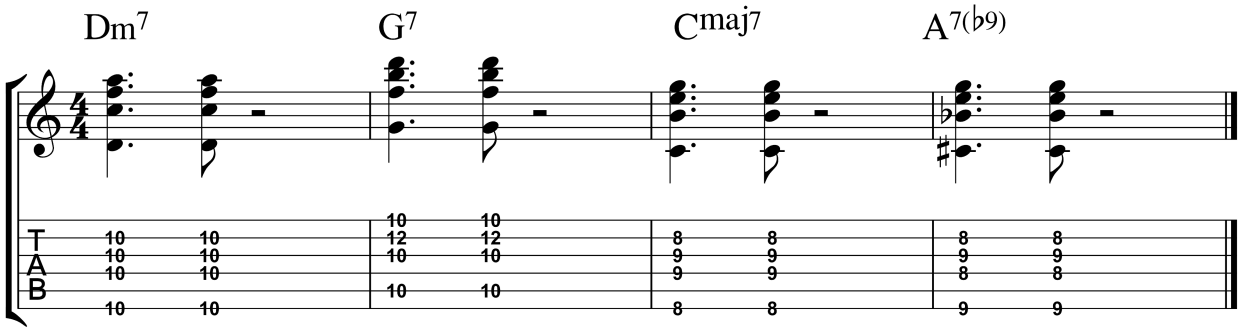
Now that you have worked out both string sets for the Jazz Turnaround Chord Progression using Drop 3 Chords on the guitar, try mixing these two groups of chords together as you jam along to a metronome or backing track in one or more keys.

Beginner Drop 3 Turnaround Chords Bonus Exercise

When learning to play the Jazz Turnaround Chord Progression using Drop 3 Chords, you can break things up and expand your knowledge in the practice room by using various rhythms in these exercises. One of my favorite jazz guitar rhythms to practice and study is the Charleston Rhythm.

This rhythm is built by playing one chord on beat 1 of each bar, followed by another attack on that chord on the & of the 2nd beat of that bar. Here is an example of how this rhythm would look and sound when applied to a Jazz Turnaround Chord Progression in the key of C major.

Click to hear audio for the Charleston Rhythm Example.



Though it's a simple rhythm, it is one that can be found in the comping and soloing of many legendary jazz guitarists over the years, and it's an essential rhythm to have down for any developing jazz guitarist.

If you would like to explore this rhythm further, you can check out my article "How to Practice The Charleston Rhythm For Jazz Guitar."

Chapter Checklist

After you have worked through the above exercises and musical examples, you will have a good grasp of using Drop 3 Chords to play a Jazz Turnaround Chord Progression on the guitar.

Before moving on to the next Chapter in the Beginner's Guide to Jazz Guitar, here are 10 exercises that you can do in order to explore the ideas in this Chapter further.

You don't have to be able to play all 10 of these before moving on to the next Chapter, but being able to play 3 or 4 from memory would be a good litmus test as to when you have a strong handle on these ideas, and when you'll be ready to move forward to the next area of study.

1. Play the Beginner Drop 3 Turnaround Chords Exercise 1 in 12 keys with a metronome or backing track
2. Play the Beginner Drop 3 Turnaround Chords Exercise 2 in 12 keys with a metronome or backing track
3. Put on a backing track and comp through a ii V I VI chord progression in one key mixing the two Drop 3 string sets together as you go, repeat in 12 keys

4. Repeat the first 3 exercises using the Charleston Rhythm for each chord
5. Repeat exercises 1-3 using the Right Hand Bonus Exercise from Chapter 1, Beginner Drop 3 Chords for Jazz Guitar
6. Repeat exercises 1-3 using the Right Hand Bonus Exercise from Chapter 2, Beginner Drop 2 Chords for Jazz Guitar
7. Play any of the above exercises and sing the root, bass note, of each chord along with your guitar
8. Play any of the above exercises and sing the melody, top note, of each chord along with your guitar
9. Write out the ii V I VI chord progression in all 12 keys from memory
10. Sing the bass notes for a ii V I VI chord progression from memory away from your guitar in all 12 keys

Further Reading

To help you explore Beginner Drop 3 Turnaround Chords further in your study, here are a number of related lessons that you can read and practice as you take these ideas further in your jazz guitar practice routine.

Drop 3 Chord Inversions For Jazz Guitar

5 Drop 3 Chord Exercises for Jazz Guitar

How to Play Major ii V Chords Video Lesson

How to Use Triads To Play Major ii V I Chord Progressions

ii V I Chords for Jazz Guitar App for Apple and Android

Chapter 4 - Beginner Drop 2 Turnaround Chords

Welcome to Chapter 4, Beginner Drop 2 Turnaround Chords, as we finish our exploration of chords and chord progression in the Beginner's Guide to Jazz Guitar.

In this chapter you will learn how to apply the Drop 2 Chords that you learned in chapter 2 to the ii-V-I-VI turnaround progression that you explored in the previous chapter with Drop 3 Chords.

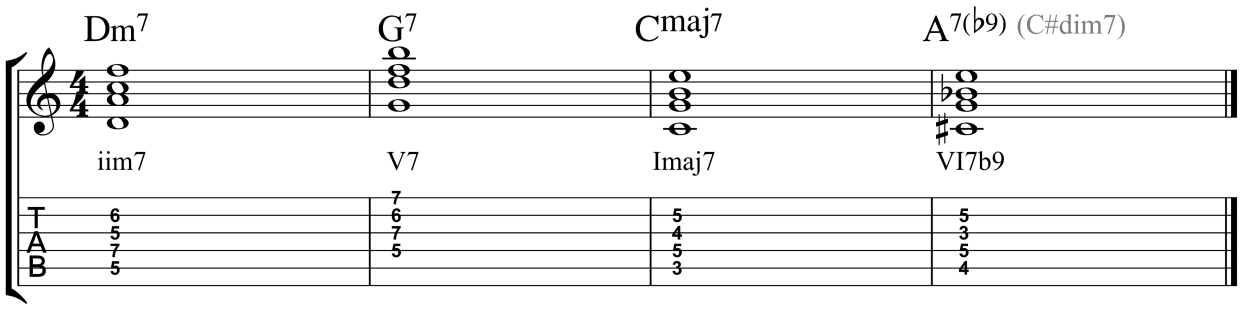
Though the progression is the same, notice the different sounds and timbres that Drop 2 chords produce as applied to Drop 3 Chords, as this will allow you to pick and chose the right moments to apply both of these common chord shapes to this important progression.

What Is a Jazz Turnaround Chord Progression?

Since we took a detailed look at the chords in the jazz turnaround progression in the previous chapter, click Chapter 2 Drop 3 Jazz Turnaround Chords to review this info, we will just take a quick look at these chords as a refresher.

The Jazz Turnaround in a major key contains the chords iim7-V7-Imaj7-VI7b9, where we are going to substitute out the VI7b9 with a #Idim7 chord in order to be able to play this shape with only 4 notes, as well as create smooth voice leading motion in the bass line at the same time.

Here is an example of this chord progression in the key of C major.



Remember that the chords are pulled from the underlying major scale, in this case the C major scale.

To build a jazz turnaround chord progression, you just take the 2nd, 5th, 1st and 6th notes of that scale and add in the chord qualities above to for the progression, in this case it is Dm7-G7-Cmaj7-A7b9.

Beginner Drop 2 Turnaround Chords Exercise 1

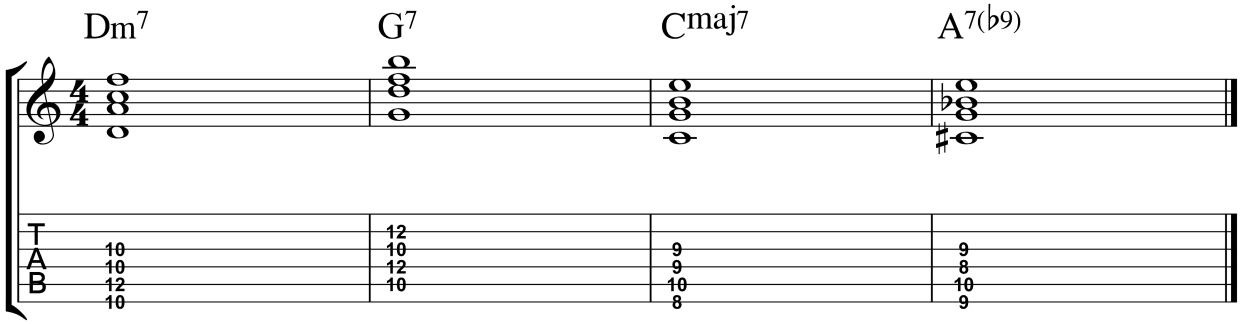
Now that you've reviewed what a Turnaround Chord Progression is, let's take a look at how you can apply these shapes to your practice routine.

This first exercise starts with the iim7 chord on the lowest four strings, then move to the closest V7, Imaj7 and VI7b9 chord shapes from that starting point.

When practicing these chords on the guitar, make sure to get the transitions between chords as smooth as possible so that there is no stoppage or lag between chord shapes.

Go as slow as you need with the overall progression, but focus on making quick, clean shifts between each chord as you practice these shapes in the woodshed.

Click to hear audio for the Beginner Drop 2 Turnaround Chords Exercise 1



Remember to use a backing track if you can with this, and any, chord exercise. Learning how to hear these chords in the context of a band playing harmony is an essential part of the learning process, so whenever possible use a backing track with these exercises.

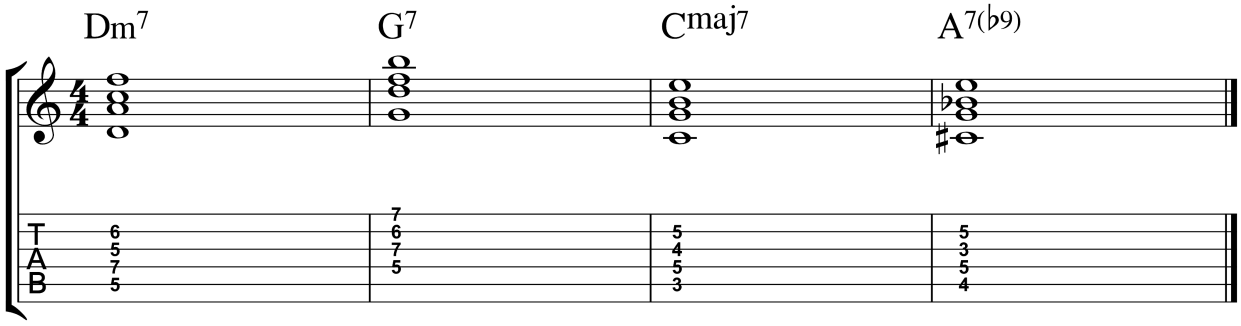
Beginner Drop 2 Turnaround Chords Exercise 2

The second Beginner Drop 2 Turnaround Chords exercise that we'll look at is based on the middle four strings of the guitar.

Starting with the iim7 chord on that string set, the rest of the chords move to their closest fingerings in relation to that chord, with the V7 chord falling on the top-4 strings and the other chords on the middle-4 strings.

Here is how that progression looks in the key of C major, and as always learn these chords in this key before taking them to all 12 keys across the neck.

Click to hear audio for the Beginner Drop 2 Turnaround Chords Exercise 2



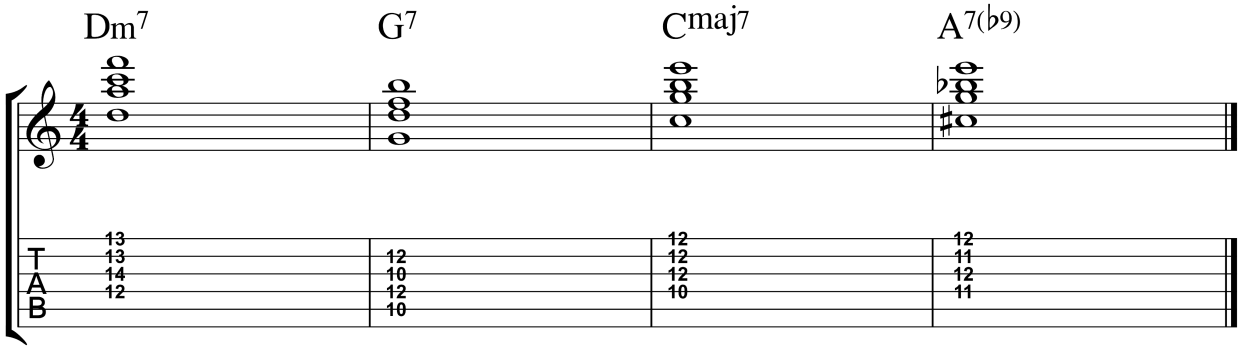
With both Drop 3 and Drop 2 Turnaround Chords under your fingers, on this string set and others, try playing every group of chords you know for this progression in one key across the fretboard.

This will help you to begin seeing the relationship between Drop 3 and Drop 2 chords as you start to combine them on the fretboard with this common chord progression.

Beginner Drop 2 Turnaround Chords Exercise 3

To finish this series of exercises, here are the Beginner Drop 2 Turnaround Chords as applied to the top-four strings of the guitar. Again, work these shapes slowly in one key at first, focusing on making smooth transitions from each chord, before you take it to all 12 keys around the neck at various tempos with a backing track or your metronome.

Click to hear audio for the Beginner Drop 2 Turnaround Chords Exercise 3



Now that you have worked all three string sets for Drop 2 chords through a turnaround progression, try mixing them all together.

Put on a backing track or metronome and comp through each string set in the key of C major to start, back to back, before moving on to the other 11 keys from there.

This will allow you to see and hear these chords across the entire fretboard, allowing you to apply them quickly and easily to any tune you are practicing or jamming on in the woodshed.

Beginner Drop 2 Turnaround Chords Bonus Exercise

After you have worked on the above three exercises, you might be wondering where you can take these ideas next in the woodshed.

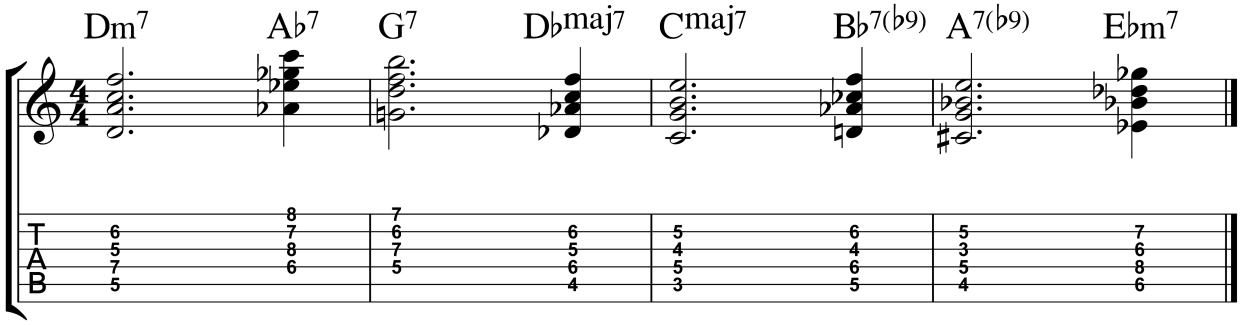
One of my favorite ways to expand on these, or any, chords is to approach each new chord in the progression by the same chord a half-step above.

This will create a tension and resolution sound in your chord lines that will bring to mind the classic chord work of players such as Wes Montgomery, Joe Pass and Kenny Burrell.

The idea is fairly simple, but produces big results, as you are adding one chord on the fourth beat of each bar that is exactly one fret above the chord you are landing on with the downbeat of the next bar.

Here is an example of that technique as applied to Beginner Drop 2 Turnaround Chords in the key of C major.

Click to hear audio for the Beginner Drop 2 Turnaround Chords Bonus Exercise



As you can hear, this approach has a tense sound to it on beat 4, that is then released on beat 1 of the next bar.

Be sure to always resolve that outside chord properly, as it can sound great if you do, but sound like a mistake if you don't.

Chapter Checklist

After you have worked through the above exercises and musical examples, you will have a good grasp of applying Drop 2 Chords to the Jazz Turnaround Chord Progression on the fretboard.

Before moving on to Chapter 5 in the Beginner's Guide to Jazz Guitar, here are 10 exercises that you can do in order to explore these Drop 2 exercises further.

You don't have to master all 10 of these exercises before moving on to Chapter 4, but being able to play 3 or 4 from memory would be a good goal to ensure that you are ready to move to the next concept and have these Drop 2 Chord ideas under your fingers and firmly in your ears.

1. Play the Beginner Drop 2 Jazz Turnaround Chords Exercises 1, 2 and 3 in 12 keys with a metronome or backing track
2. Put on a backing track and comp through a ii V I VI chord progression in one key mixing the three Drop 2 string sets together as you go, repeat in 12 keys
3. Repeat the first 2 exercises using the Charleston Rhythm for each chord

4. Repeat the first two exercises using the half-step approach from the Bonus Exercise in this Chapter
5. Repeat exercises 1-4 using the Right Hand Bonus Exercise from Chapter 1, Beginner Drop 3 Chords for Jazz Guitar
6. Repeat exercises 1-4 using the Right Hand Bonus Exercise from Chapter 2, Beginner Drop 2 Chords for Jazz Guitar
7. Play any of the above exercises and sing the root, bass note, of each chord along with your guitar
8. Play any of the above exercises and sing the melody, top note, of each chord along with your guitar
9. Write out the ii V I VI chord progression in all 12 keys from memory
10. Sing the bass notes for a ii V I VI chord progression from memory away from your guitar in all 12 keys

Further Reading

To help you explore the Beginner Drop 2 Turnaround Chords further in your practice regime, here are some related jazz guitar lessons that you can check out as you take these ideas further in the woodshed.

How to Play Drop 2 Chord Inversions on Guitar

5 Beginner Drop 2 Chord Exercises For Guitar

Drop 2 Chord Inversions for Jazz Guitar Video Lessons

How to Use Triads To Play Major ii V I Chord Progressions

ii V I Chords for Jazz Guitar App for Apple and Android

Chapter 5 - How to Solo Over m7 Chords

Welcome to Chapter 5 of the Beginner's Guide to Jazz Guitar, where you will learn how to solo over m7 chords using both arpeggios and scales, as well as an important Bebop lick, in the practice room. m7 chords are found in many of the Classic Standards that make up the Great American Songbook, as they are one part of the most common chord progression in jazz, the ii-V-I.

Learning how to accurately and musically solo over m7 chords will allow you to blow with confidence over ii-V-I progressions, as well as Modal Jazz tunes such as So What and Milestones.

So grab your guitar and let's get started with learning how to solo over m7 chords!

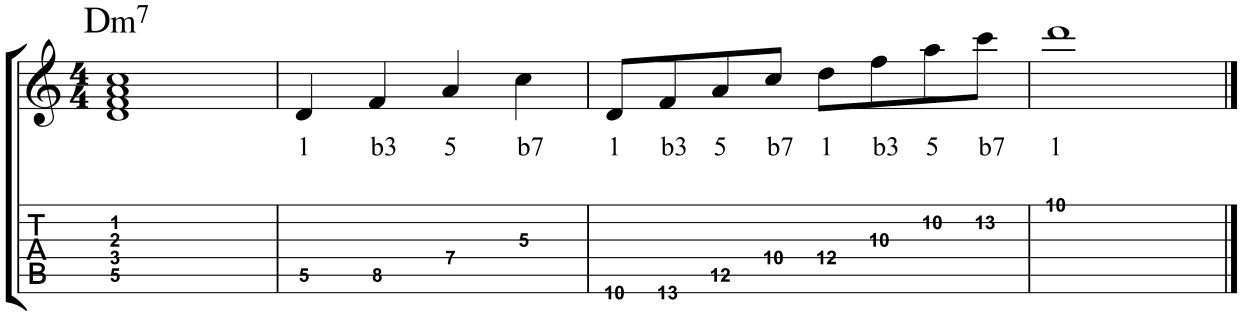
How to Solo Over m7 Chords - m7 Arpeggio

To begin our exploration of how to solo over m7 chords, we will look at the most direct way to outline any m7 chord, the m7 Arpeggio. The m7 Arpeggio has all of the same notes as the m7 chord, R-b3-5-b7, but instead of strumming or plucking all of those notes at the same time, you play them in a single-note fashion, allowing you to use the chord tones to build lines in your guitar solos.

Here you can see and hear the m7 chord and arpeggio in order to get a visual and audio perspective on how the two are related.

Though there are many options when soloing over m7 chords, the m7 arpeggio is always the most direct way to outline that chord, and so it is an important concept to get down when first learning how to play jazz guitar.

Click to hear audio for a Dm7 Arpeggio over a Dm7 chord

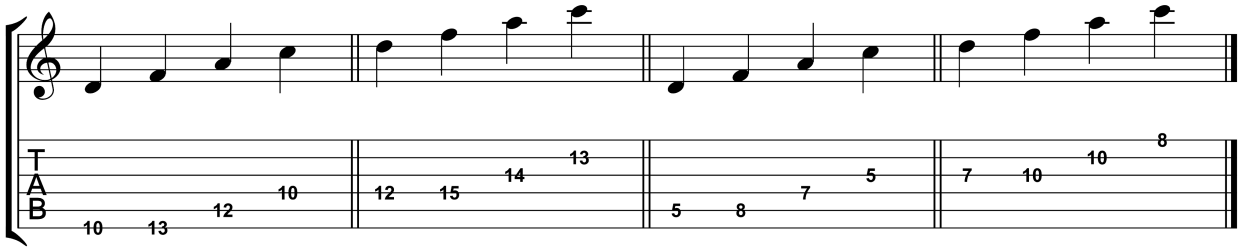


Now that you know how to build a m7 Arpeggio when learning how to solo over m7 chords, here are four different fingerings for that arpeggio on the fingerboard to check out in your practice routine.

Start by learning one shape, from the 6th-string root for example, and working that arpeggio in 12 keys with a metronome.

From there, put on a Dm7 backing track and solo over that chord using only the 6th-string arpeggio shape, and expanding onto all 12 keys from there as well.

Here are those four one-octave m7 shapes written out from the root note D.



How to Solo Over m7 Chords - Dorian Scale

As well as using the m7 arpeggio when learning how to solo over m7 chords, you can also build your lines with the Dorian Scale over m7.

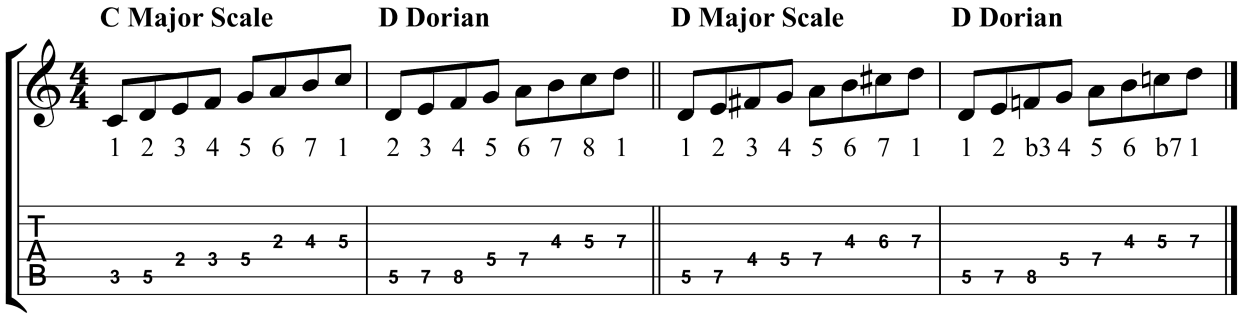
The Dorian Mode can be thought of in two ways when building it on the fretboard. The first is that it is the second mode of the Major Scale, meaning that D Dorian is the same as C Major, except spelled from D to D instead of C to C. You can see this on paper in the example below.

As well, you can think of a D Dorian Scale in relation to the D Major Scale as the two are not that much different with their intervallic construction.

If you take a D Major Scale, 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 intervals, and you lower the 3rd and 7th notes, 1 2 b3 4 5 6 b7, you will produce a D Dorian Scale.

Again, here is an example of how that looks like on paper.

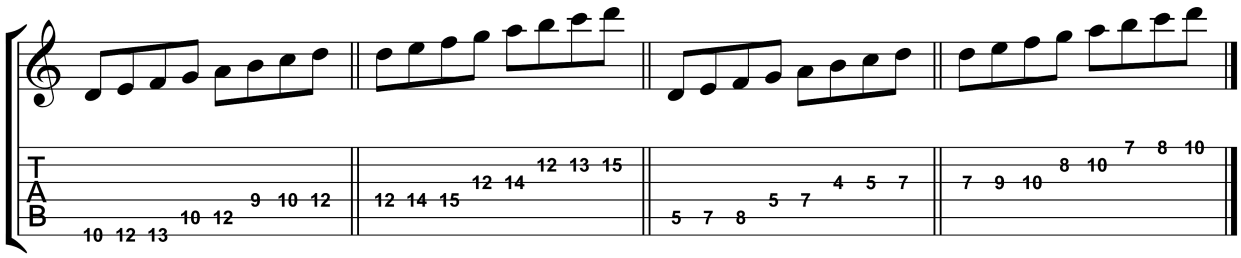
Click to hear audio of a D Dorian Scale over a Dm7 Chord



To help you get started with the Dorian Scale on guitar here are four different one-octave fingerings for this scale starting on the 6th, 5th, 4th and 3rd strings of the neck.

Start by learning one fingering first, in D and then in all 12 keys, from memory. Then, work that fingering in all 12 keys and practice soloing over m7 backing tracks using that one fingering to build your lines.

From there, repeat these same exercises for all of the other one-octave shapes in order to get a full idea of how this scale sounds and fits on the fingerboard.



Once you have worked each one-octave fingering on it's own, you can combine the 6th and 4th-string shapes, as well as the 5th and 3rd-string shapes, in order to build longer, two-octave Dorian Scale shapes on the guitar.

How to Solo Over m7 Chords - Technical Exercises

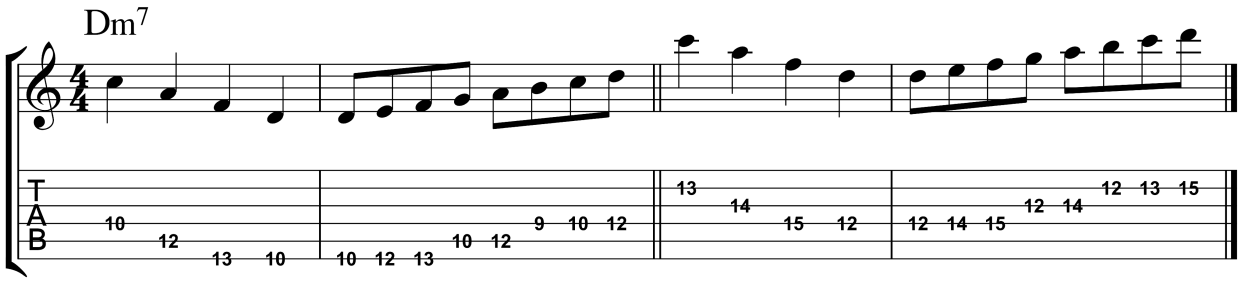
To help get the m7 arpeggios and Dorian Scale under your fingers and into your soloing ideas further, here is a fun exercise that you can work on in the practice room which combines these two important melodic concepts.

The idea behind these exercises is that you play the arpeggio Descending, and then the Dorian Scale in that position Ascending, as you combine the two ideas in your lines. Often times we start our improvised lines on the root of any scale or arpeggio we know, especially when first learning how to solo over m7 chords.

But, by doing exercises such as these, you can learn to see arpeggios and scales from the top down, as well as the bottom up, and break out of that habit of always starting your lines on the root. Here is an example of how to apply this concept to 6th and 4th string sets for both the Dm7 arpeggio and the D Dorian Scale.

Begin by working these two ideas separately over a backing track or with your metronome, then combine both shapes to form a two-octave exercise, before finally taking both exercises to all 12 keys around the neck.

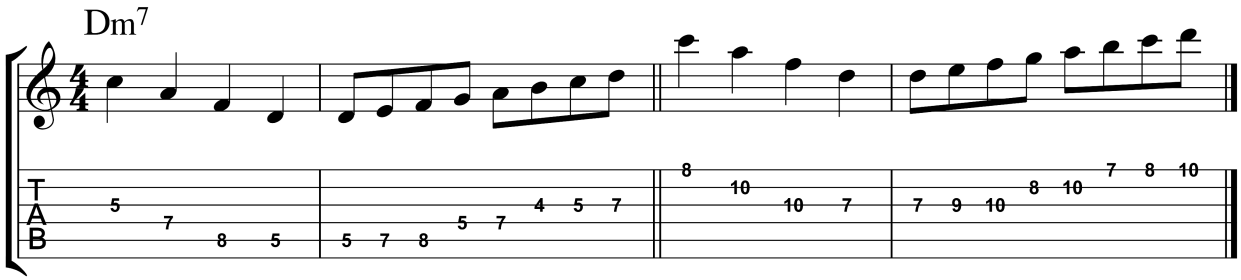
Click to hear audio for the How to Solo Over m7 Chords Exercise 1



As well, you can apply this exercise to the 5th and 3rd string sets for the m7 arpeggios and Dorian scale shapes you learned earlier in this chapter.

Here is how this variation of the exercise would look and sound over a Dm7 chord.

Click to hear audio for the How to Solo Over m7 Chords Exercise 2



After working on the two exercises separately, put on a Dm7 backing track and solo over that chord focusing on playing any and all of these shapes with the arpeggios going down and the scales going up in your improvised lines.

It's a small idea, but mixing arpeggios and scales in this manner can go a long way when learning how to solo over m7 chords using these two important shapes on the guitar.

How To Solo Over m7 Chords - Enclosed 5th

When learning how to solo over m7 chords, one of the first roadblocks many of us face is that we play correct scales and arpeggios in our lines, but it doesn't sound like jazz.

In order to help you get that jazzy sound to your m7 soloing phrases, here is a short motive that you can bring to your jazz guitar lines when improvising over this chord.

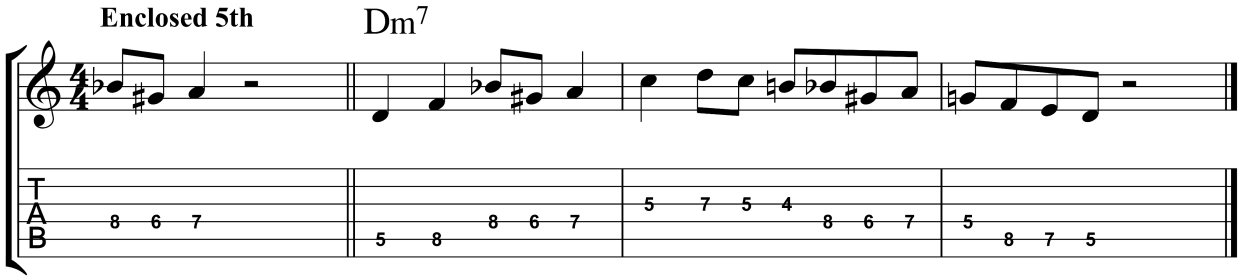
This idea is called an Enclosure, and below you will see an Enclosure applied to the 5th of the D Dorian Scale.

The Enclosure is built by targeting a note in the chord or scale that you are soloing over, such as the 5th in this example, and then playing 1 fret above, and 1 fret below, before landing on your target note.

There are other types of Enclosures that you can explore later on in the woodshed, but for now this is a great place to start with this common and important Bebop technique.

Learn the following Enclosure in D Dorian to begin, then in all 12 keys from that starting point. As well, the key to learning any Bebop soloing technique is to apply it to your improvisations, so make sure to put on a backing track and solo over a Dm7 chord, integrating the Enclosed 5th into your lines as you play.

Click to hear audio for the How to Solo Over m7 Chords Bebop Exercise



It's a simple idea, but the Enclosure can bring a much wanted jazz sound to your improvised lines, creating a sense of tension and release in your licks, and encouraging you to practice more as you begin to sound like your favorite players in the woodshed.

Chapter Checklist

After working out the various examples and exercises in this chapter, you can use any or all of the following items to continue your study of how to solo over m7 chords, as well as solidify these ideas into your ears and fingers on the guitar before moving on to the next Chapter in the Beginner's Guide to Jazz Guitar.

Here are 10 exercises and check points that you can do in order to expand on the ideas in this Chapter, and test your retention of these ideas in the practice room.

You don't have to be able to play all 10 before moving on to the next Chapter, but having a secure understanding of 3-5 of these exercises is a good litmus test as to when you're ready to move on to the next Chapter in the Guide.

1. Solo over a Dm7 backing track using only the m7 arpeggios to build your lines, repeat in 12 keys
2. Solo over a Dm7 backing track and use only the D Dorian Scale to build your lines, repeat in 12 keys
3. Put on a Dm7 backing track and solo using both the Dm7 arpeggios and D Dorian Scale fingerings to build your phrases, repeat in 12 keys
4. Solo over a Dm7 backing track and play single-lines for 2 bars, followed by Dm7 Drop 2 and Drop 3 chords for 2 bars, repeat in 12 keys
5. Improvise over a Dm7 backing track and play Drop 2 and Drop 3 chords for 2 bars, and then play single-note lines for 2 bars, repeat in 12 keys
6. Sing the root note D and play the Dm7 arpeggios above this note, repeat in 12 keys
7. Sing the root note D and play the D Dorian Scale on top of this note, repeat in 12 keys
8. Play a Dm7 chord on the guitar and sing the Dm7 arpeggio over that chord, repeat in 12 keys
9. Strum a Dm7 chord on the guitar and sing the D Dorian Scale over this chord, repeat in 12 keys
10. Put on a Dm7 backing track and scat sing a solo using only the Dm7 arpeggio, then only the D Dorian Scale to build your vocal lines, repeat in 12 keys

Further Reading

Once you have finished working through the ideas in this Chapter, you will want to explore how to solo over m7 chords further in your guitar practice routine.

To help you out, here is a list of articles that you can read and study in order to dig in deeper to m7 chords for jazz guitar in the woodshed.

Dorian Scale Fingerings For Jazz Guitar

Minor Bebop Scale Fingerings and Application

Bebop Scales For Guitar - Definitions and Application

m7 Arpeggio Fingerings For Jazz Guitar

Building Bebop Vocabulary For Guitar - Enclosures

Matt Warnock Guitar Jazz Scales App

Building Bebop Vocabulary Vol 1. - Mastering m7 Chords

Chapter 6 - How to Solo Over 7th Chords

Welcome to Chapter 6 in the Beginner's Guide to Jazz Guitar, how to solo over 7th chords, one of the most commonly used and important chords in the jazz vocabulary. Since it is the middle chord in a ii-V-I chord progression, and this progression is found in countless jazz standards, the 7th chord will come up a lot when soloing over jazz tunes.

As well, the 7th chord is found three times in a jazz blues chord progression, the I7, IV7 and V7 chords, and so it is a chord that you will want to spend time with in the woodshed, and really nail in your practicing, so that you are able to comfortably and musically solo over ii-V-I's and jazz blues tunes when jamming.

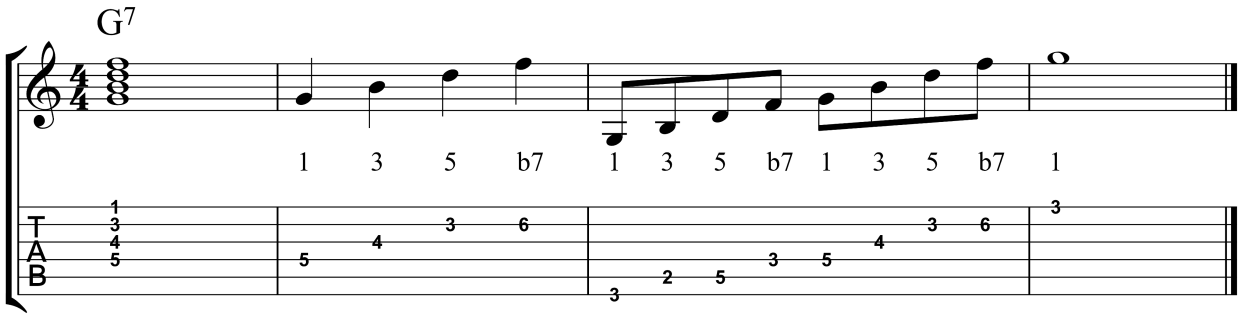
In this Chapter we'll be look at how to solo over 7th chords by exploring arpeggios, scales, bebop vocabulary and exercises designed to get these sounds into your ears and under your fingers on the fretboard.

What is the 7th Arpeggio?

When learning how to solo over 7th chords, the most direct route to outlining those sounds in a jazz guitar solo is to use the related arpeggio. The arpeggio is built from the exact same notes as the chord, you can see this in the example below, but the arpeggio is plucked one note at a time in a single-note fashion, rather than plucked or strummed all at once as you would with a chord. This gives you the option to use only the chord tones of a 7th chord when soloing in a single line, outlining the chord exactly at the same time.

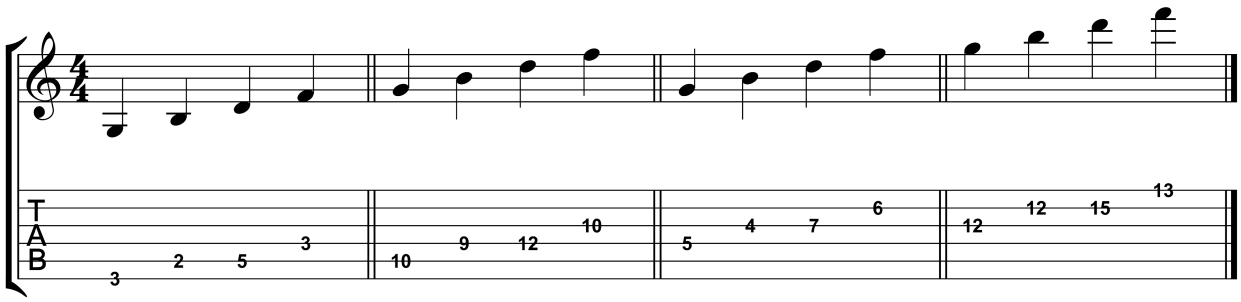
Here is an example of a G7 chord and arpeggio side by side so you can see that relationship in tab and notation.Try strumming a G7 chord that you know, then playing this, or any other, G7 arpeggio to hear how they sound the same, but are just laid out in different contexts.

Click to hear a 7th Arpeggio played over a 7th chord harmony.



To help you set out with your exploration of 7th Arpeggios when learning how to solo over 7th chords, here are four, one-octave 7th arpeggio shapes to learn in the woodshed.

Start by working each shape separately, and then combining the 6th and 4th-string root positions to form a two-octave shape, as well as the 5th and 3rd-string shapes to form a second, two-octave shape on the fretboard.



What is the Mixolydian Scale?

When learning how to solo over 7th chords, one of the most commonly studied concepts is the Mixolydian Scale.

This scale works perfectly when soloing over 7th chords, and can bring out different sounds such as Country, Jazz, Blues and Rock, depending on the context in which it's used.

There are two ways that you can think about the Mixolydian scale when learning how to solo over 7th chords, with the first being as the 5th mode of the major scale.

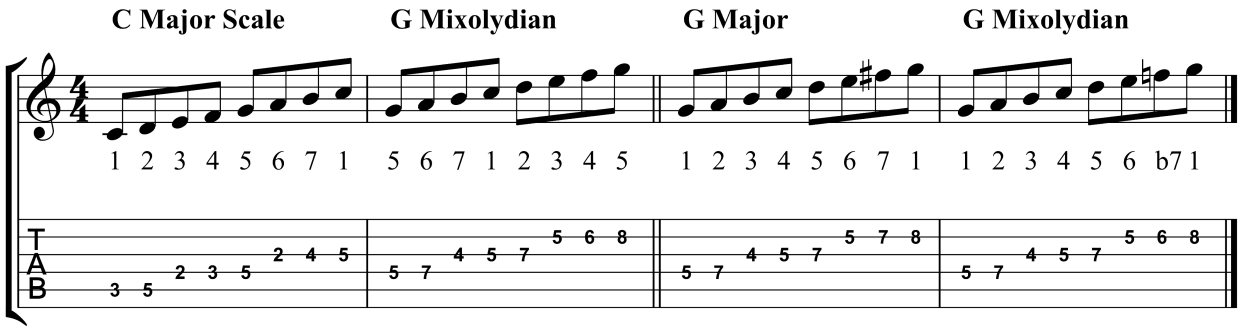
So, if you have a C major scale, and you spell that scale from G to G, the 5th note of C major, you will produce a G Mixolydian scale, which you can see below.

As well, you can compare a Mixolydian scale to the same Major scale, as they are only one note different.

The major scale has the interval structure 1 2 3 4 5 6 7, while the Mixolydian scale has a b7, while the other notes are the same, 1 2 3 4 5 6 b7.

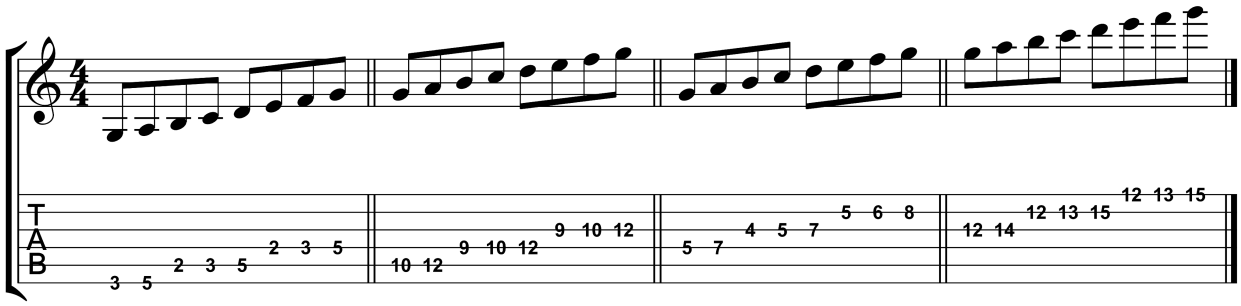
Here are both of those examples in tab and notation so you can see them written down.

Click to hear a Mixolydian scale being played over a 7th chord.



Here are four, one-octave shapes to help you get started with learning the Mixolydian scale on the fretboard.

Start here, and if you want to play larger shapes, simply connect the 6th and 4th-string shapes, as well as the 5th and 3rd-string shapes, to create two-octave scales on the neck of the guitar.



How to Solo Over 7th Chords - Exercises

With the 7th arpeggio and Mixolydian scale under your fingers separately on the neck, here are a few exercises that you can do in order to combine them in your practicing.

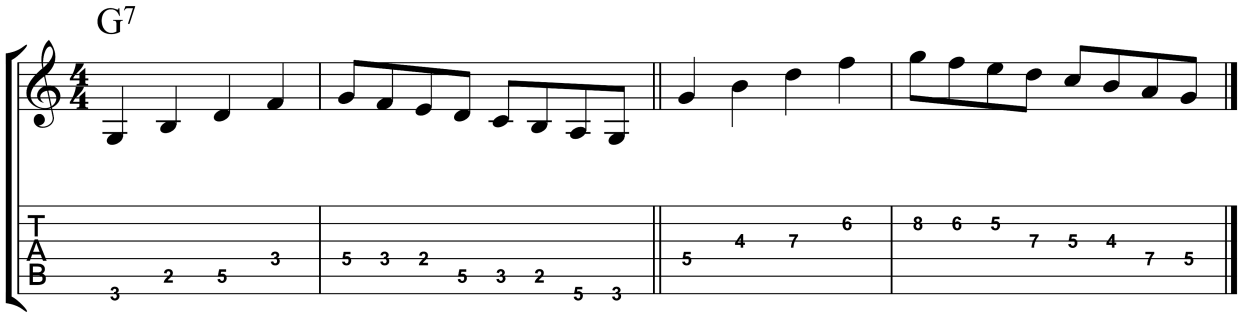
The concept for this exercise is straight forward, you play up an arpeggio and then down the scale in that position, but the application can be harder to do.

So, take your time with this exercise and start with each of the four one-octave combinations first, until you can play them from memory around the fretboard.

From there, begin to combine the 6th and 4th-string roots, then the 5th and 3rd-string roots, to form longer, two-octave shapes.

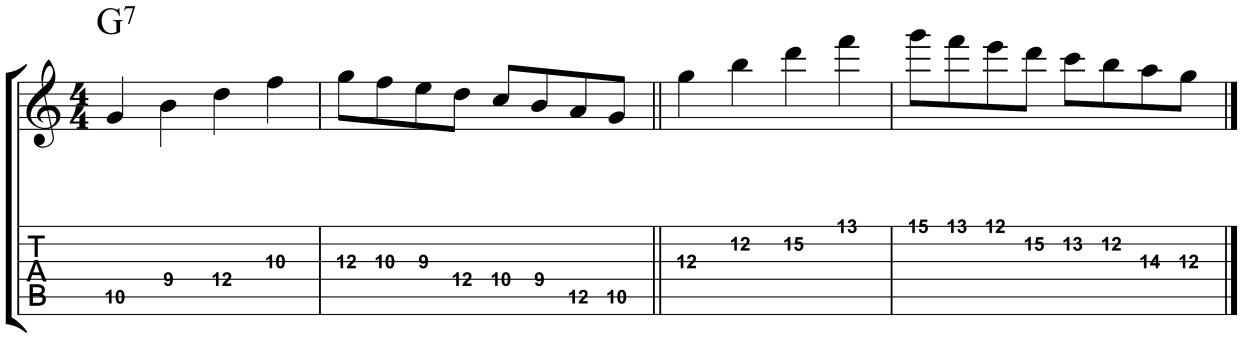
Here is how that exercise looks when applied to the 6th and 4th-string roots for G7 arpeggios and Mixolydian scales.

Click to hear audio for this how to play 7th chords exercise.



And here is that same exercise as applied to 7th arpeggios and Mixolydian Scales starting on the 5th and 3rd string root notes.

Click to hear audio for this how to play 7th chords exercise.



Once you have worked out the above exercises for the G7 chord, put on a G7 backing track and solo over that chord using only the arpeggio going up and the scale going down.

Start with one fingering, one octave, and then expand to two-octave shapes, and eventually the entire fretboard as you explore this approach fully in the practice room.

How to Solo Over 7th Chords - Enclosed Roots

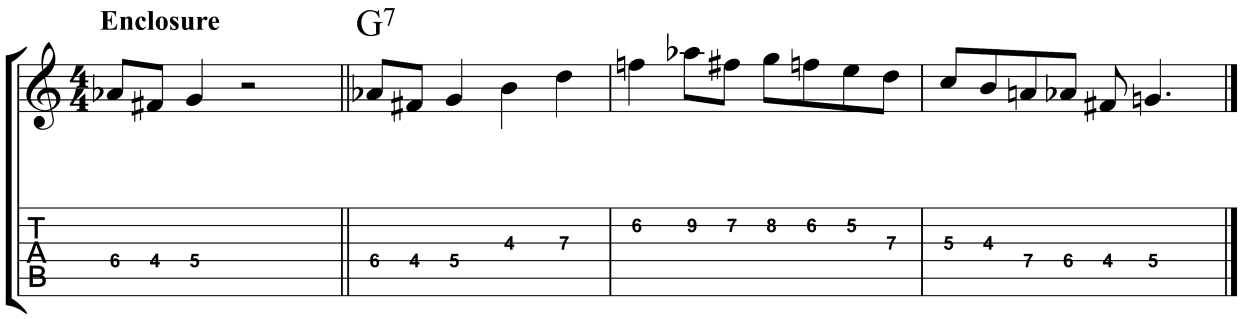
As was the case in the how to solo over m7 chords Chapter, we are going to expand upon the 7th arpeggios and Mixolydian scales we learned earlier by adding in an enclosure, only this time on the root of the underlying 7th chord.

In this case, you will add a half-step above the root, then a half-step below the root, followed by the root itself.

Creating tensions and release in your lines using enclosures can be a big step in getting a jazzy sound into your lines, so take your time and explore this idea fully in the woodshed.

Here is an example of an enclosure applied to the root of a G7 arpeggio and G Mixolydian Scale. Start working this idea in G before expanding to all 12 keys across the fretboard.

Click to hear audio for the how to play 7th chords enclosure example.



With the enclosure under your fingers for the root of the arpeggio and scale, try soloing over a G7 backing track and using the enclosure to build your ideas.

You might have to force it in a bit at first to get the sound of the chromatic notes into your ears, but with time you will become more used to this “jazzy” outside sound, and be able to use enclosures more organically in your solos and jazz lines.

Chapter Checklist

After working out the examples above about how to solo over 7th chords, you can use any of the following exercises to continue your study of how to solo over 7th chords, as well as secure these ideas onto the guitar before moving on to the next Chapter in the Beginner's Guide to Jazz Guitar.

Here are 10 exercises that you can do in order to expand on the ideas about how to solo over 7th chords, and test your retention of these ideas in the woodshed.

You don't have to be able to play all 10 of these items before you move on to the next Chapter, but having 3-5 of these exercises down securely is a good test as to when you're ready to move on to the next material in this Guide.

1. Solo over a G7 backing track using only the 7th arpeggios to build your lines, repeat in 12 keys
2. Solo over a G7 backing track and use only the G Mixolydian Scale to build your lines, repeat in 12 keys
3. Put on a G7 backing track and solo using both the G7 arpeggios and G Mixolydian Scale fingerings to build your phrases, repeat in 12 keys
4. Solo over a G7 backing track and play single-lines for 2 bars, followed by G7 Drop 2 and Drop 3 chords for 2 bars, repeat in 12 keys
5. Improvise over a G7 backing track and play Drop 2 and Drop 3 chords for 2 bars, and then play single-note lines for 2 bars, repeat in 12 keys
6. Sing the root note G and play the G7 arpeggios above this note, repeat in 12 keys
7. Sing the root note G and play the G Mixolydian Scale on top of this note, repeat in 12 keys
8. Play a G7 chord on the guitar and sing the G7 arpeggio over that chord, repeat in 12 keys
9. Strum a G7 chord on the guitar and sing the G Mixolydian Scale over this chord, repeat in 12 keys
10. Put on a G7 backing track and scat sing a solo using only the G7 arpeggio, then only the G Mixolydian Scale to build your vocal lines, repeat in 12 keys

Further Reading

Once you have finished working through the ideas in this Chapter on how to solo over 7th chords, you will want to explore 7th chords further in your practice routine.

To help you out, here is a list of articles that you can read and study in order to dig in deeper to 7th chords for jazz guitar in the woodshed.

Mixolydian Scale Fingerings For Jazz Guitar

Dominant Bebop Scale Fingerings and Application

Bebop Scales For Guitar - Definitions and Application

7th Arpeggios For Jazz Guitar

How to Play a Jazz Blues Chord Progression on Guitar

Matt Warnock Guitar Jazz Scales App

Building Bebop Vocabulary Volume 2 - Dominating Dominant Chords

Chapter 7 - How To Solo Over Maj7 Chords

Welcome to Chapter 7, How to Solo Over Maj7 Chords, of the Beginner's Guide to Jazz Guitar. Great to have you here! When learning how to play jazz guitar, one of the most common chords that you will encounter during your exploration of jazz standards is the Maj7 chord.

As it is the resolution point of the ii-V-I chord progression, as well as the tonic chord for any major key, the Maj7 chord will crop up time and again in your playing, and therefore it is an essential chord to study when beginning to learn jazz guitar.

In this Chapter we will be looking at how to solo over Maj7 chords using arpeggios, scales, Bebop vocabulary and a number of fun and beneficial exercises that you can use in the practice room to solidify these concepts in your jazz guitar skill set.

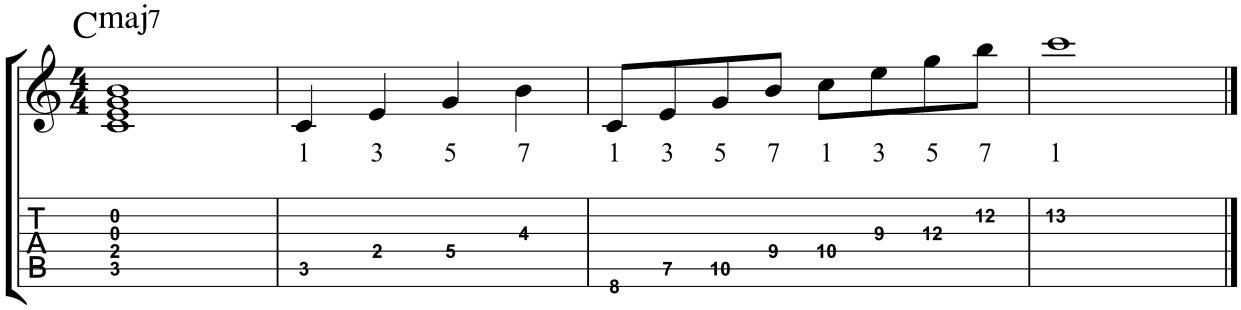
What is the Maj7 Arpeggio?

When working out how to solo over Maj7 chords, the most direct way to outline these chords in your solos is to use the related Maj7 arpeggio. The Maj7 arpeggio contains the exact same notes as the Maj7 chord, though they are plucked as single notes and not strummed, allowing you to use these chord tones in your soloing ideas and phrases.

Maj7 arpeggios are built by stacking the 1st, 3rd, 5th and 7th notes of the Major Scale, producing the intervals pattern R-3-5-7, or C-E-G-B for a Cmaj7 arpeggio, which are the exact same notes and intervals that make up the Cmaj7 chord.

Here is how that process looks like on paper. Try strumming a Cmaj7 chord and then play a Cmaj7 arpeggio right after, which will allow you to begin hearing the relationship between these two melodic and harmonic devices.

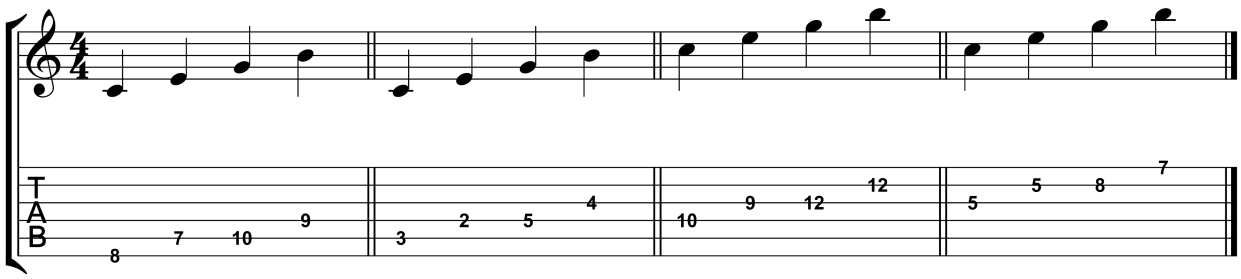
Click to hear audio of a Cmaj7 arpeggio played over a Cmaj7 chord.



To get you started with learning how to play Maj7 arpeggios, here are four, one-octave Maj7 shapes that you can practice in the woodshed.

Start by learning each one separately on the Cmaj7 chord written below, and then take each shape to all of the other 11 keys around the fretboard.

When that is comfortable, you can begin to combine the 6th and 4th-string shapes, as well as the 5th and 3rd-string shapes, in order to build longer, two-octave Maj7 arpeggios on the neck of the guitar.

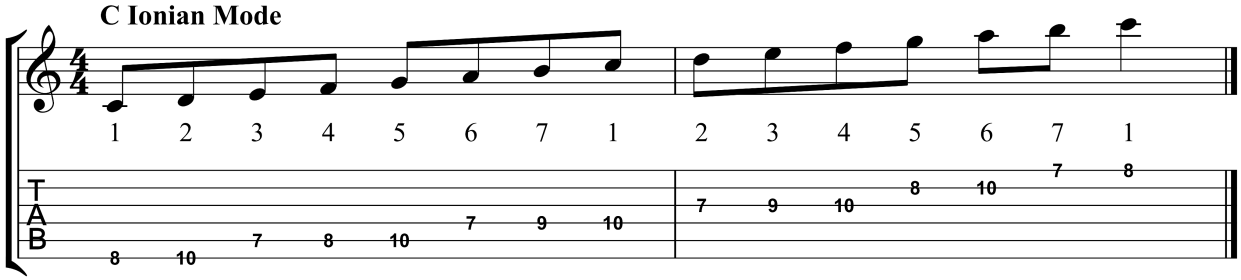


What is the Ionian Mode?

The next device that we will explore as you learn how to solo over Maj7 chords is the Ionian Mode, otherwise known as the Major Scale. Containing all of the notes that make up the Maj7 chord, 1-3-5-7, as well as three color tones, 9-11-13, the Ionian Mode is a great first-choice scale when soloing over Maj7 chords in a jazz guitar context.

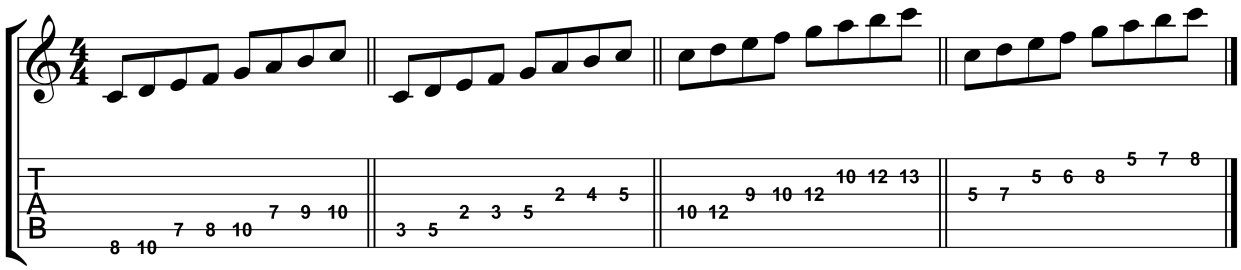
Here is an example of a two-octave C Major Scale that you can check out to start your exploration of this important melodic device. Since the Ionian Mode is the scale that we compare all of our other modes to, we use plain numbers to label each note in the scale, 1-2-3-4-5-6-7.

Click to hear an example of the C Major Scale played over a Cmaj7 Chord.



To take this scale from the page and onto the guitar, here are four examples of one-octave C Major Scale fingerings that you can work on in the practice room.

As was the case with the Maj7 arpeggios, start by working each one-octave shape separately, and then connect the 6th and 4th, as well as the 5th and 3rd-string shapes to form longer, two-octave Major Scales on the fretboard.



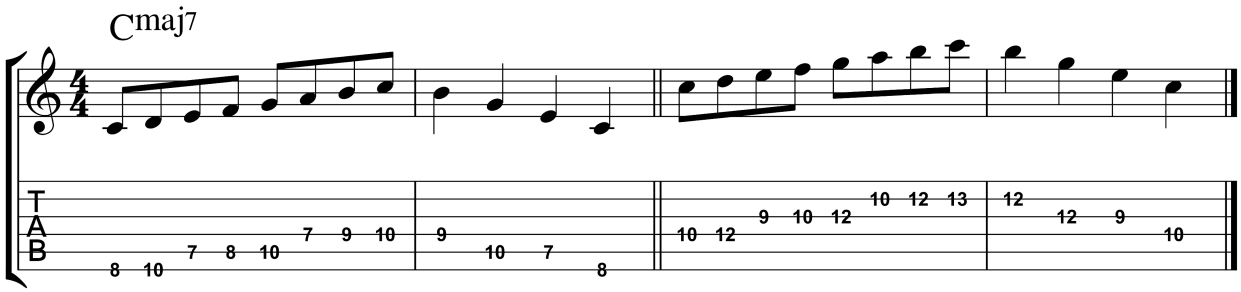
How to Solo Over Maj7 Chords - Exercises

Now that you have checked out both the Maj7 Arpeggio and Major Scale on their own, here are two exercises that you can do in order to combine these two melodic approaches in the woodshed.

In the first exercise, you will play the C Major Scale ascending followed by the Cmaj7 arpeggio descending from the 6th and 4th-string roots. Once you can play these shapes in C, make sure to work them in all 12 keys to get a solid idea of these devices fit across the entire neck.

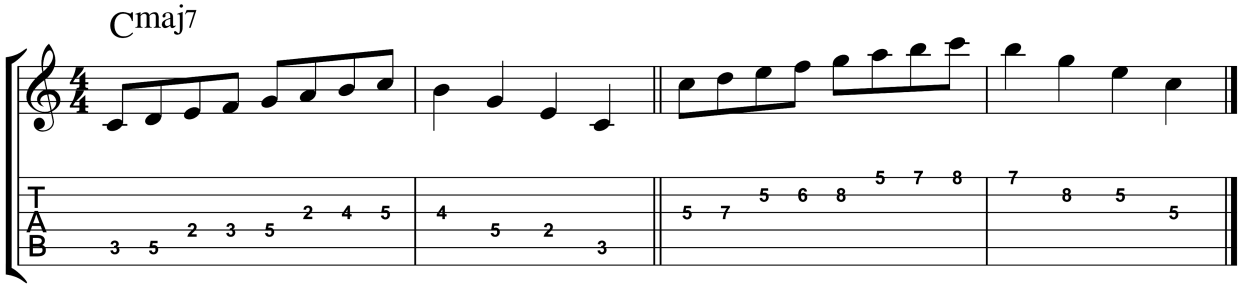
As well, you can connect the 6th and 4th-string shapes to form a two-octave arpeggio-scale exercise on the fretboard.

Click to hear audio for the How to Solo Over Maj7 Chords Exercise 1.



Here is that same exercise as applied to 5th and 3rd-string shapes on the guitar.

Click to hear audio for the How to Solo Over Maj7 Chords Exercise 2.



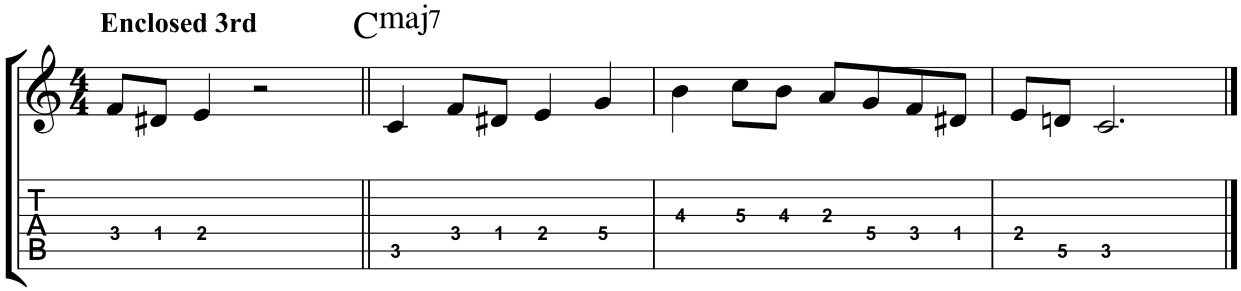
Once you have worked out these two ideas separately, try putting on a Cmaj7 backing track and soloing over this chord using one shape at a time, followed by two shapes in one area such as the 6th and 4th-string shapes, before using all four one-octave shapes to create lines in your jazz guitar solos.

How to Solo Over Maj7 Chords - Enclosed 3rds

In this Chapter's vocabulary section, we'll be adding a Bebop technique, the Enclosure, to the 3rd of the Maj7 Arpeggio and Major Scale. To do this, you play one fret above, then one fret below, before landing on your target note, in this case the third.

For a Cmaj7 chord, this would mean playing F-D# before landing on the 3rd, E, in your lines and phrases. Here is how that technique looks when applied to a Cmaj7 arpeggios and C Major Scale.

Click to hear audio for the How to Solo Over Maj7 Chords - Enclosed 3rd Example.



After you have worked out the above fingering, put on a Cmaj7 backing track and try adding the Enclosed 3rd to your lines and improvised phrases. Repeat this exercise in 12 keys as you begin to digest this technique, allowing it to come out in your playing more naturally over time.

Enclosures can sound a bit too tense or “outside’ for some of us when first applying them to our solos. But, with time and practice they can start to sound more “normal,” allowing you to use them more organically and less forced in your jazz guitar lines.

Chapter Checklist

After working out the examples above about how to solo over Maj7 chords, you can use any of the exercises below in order to continue your study of how to solo over Maj7 chords, before moving on to the next Chapter in the Beginner’s Guide to Jazz Guitar.

Here are 10 exercises that you can do in order to expand on the ideas in this Chapter, and test your retention of these ideas in the woodshed.

You don’t have to be able to play all 10 of these items before you move on to the next Chapter, but having 3-5 of these exercises down securely is a good test as to when you’re ready to move on to the next material in this Guide.

1. Solo over a Cmaj7 backing track using only the Maj7th arpeggios to build your lines, repeat in 12 keys
2. Solo over a Cmaj7 backing track and use only the C Major Scale to build your lines, repeat in 12 keys
3. Put on a Cmaj7 backing track and solo using both the Cmaj7 arpeggios and C Major Scale fingerings to build your phrases, repeat in 12 keys
4. Solo over a Cmaj7 backing track and play single-lines for 2 bars, followed by Cmaj7 Drop 2 and Drop 3 chords for 2 bars, repeat in 12 keys
5. Improvise over a Cmaj7 backing track and play Drop 2 and Drop 3 chords for 2 bars, and then play single-note lines for 2 bars, repeat in 12 keys
6. Sing the root note C and play the Cmaj7 arpeggios above this note, repeat in 12 keys
7. Sing the root note C and play the C Major Scale on top of this note, repeat in 12 keys
8. Play a Cmaj7 chord on the guitar and sing the Cmaj7 arpeggio over that chord, repeat in 12 keys
9. Strum a Cmaj7 chord on the guitar and sing the C Major Scale over this chord, repeat in 12 keys
10. Put on a Cmaj7 backing track and scat sing a solo using only the Cmaj7 arpeggio, then only the C Major Scale to build your vocal lines, repeat in 12 keys

Further Reading

Once you have finished working through these examples and exercises on how to solo over Maj7 chords, you will want to explore Maj7 chords further in your practice routine.

To help you out, here is a list of lessons that you can read and study in order to dig in deeper to Maj7 chords for jazz guitar in the woodshed.

Major Scale Fingerings for Jazz Guitar

Major Bebop Scale Fingerings for Jazz Guitar

Bebop Scales For Guitar - Definitions and Application

Maj7 Arpeggios for Jazz Guitar

Matt Warnock Guitar Jazz Scales App

Chapter 8 - How to Solo Over ii V I Chords Part 1

Welcome to Chapter 8 of the Beginner's Guide to Jazz Guitar, where you will learn how to solo over ii V I chords for jazz guitar, the most common and important chord progression to study in jazz.

With the m7, 7 and maj7 soloing chapters under your belt, you are now ready to bring these sounds together as you learn how to apply Arpeggios, Scales and famous licks to your soloing ideas when playing over a ii V I chord progression.

Though you have already studied these three chords separately, it can be a difficult task to bring them together and have your lines flow smoothly between each chord.

Because of this, you might want to take more time on this chapter than you have previous chapters in the Guide, as it will probably take a bit longer for you to get this material under your fingers and into your ears as you shed it in the practice room.

How to Solo Over ii V I Chords - Arpeggios

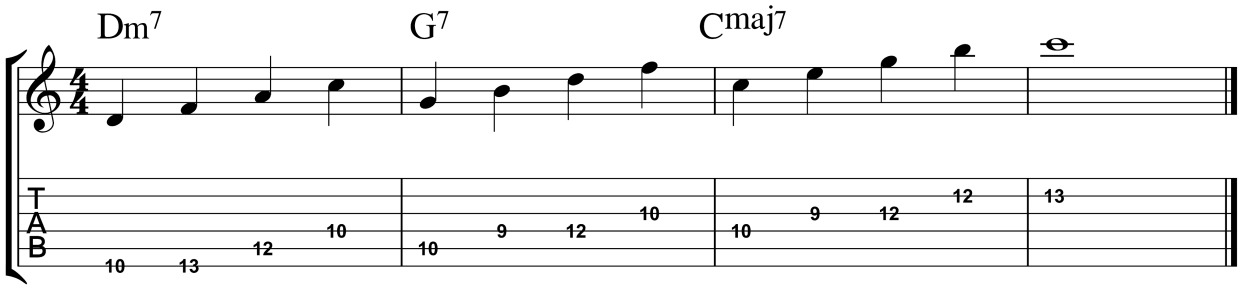
To being learning how to solo over ii V I chords for jazz guitar, let's take the arpeggio shapes that we learned in a previous chapter and begin applying them to these common jazz guitar chord progression.

In this chapter we'll be looking at arpeggios that begin with the iim7 shape on the 6th-string root, and moving to the closest arpeggios for the V7 and Imaj7 chords from that starting point.

In this first exercise, you will play each arpeggio ascending from the root on up as you work them over the ii V I chord progression.

Make sure to use a backing track if possible when running these shapes so that you not only get these arpeggios under your fingers, but learn how to hear them over a ii V I chord progression at the same time.

Click to hear audio for this ii V I arpeggio exercise.

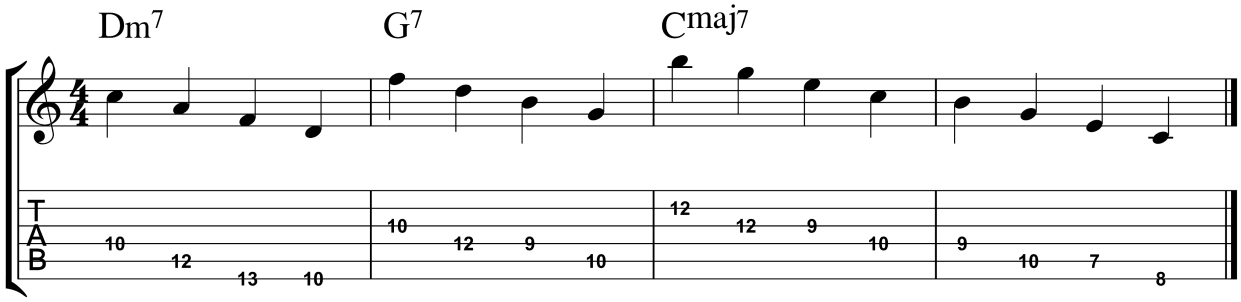


You can now reverse the first exercise as you play each arpeggio from the top down in your ii V I jazz guitar practice routine.

Start slowly with this exercise as it can be difficult at first to begin any arpeggio from the highest, rather than the lowest, note on the guitar.

Practice this exercise without any time or tempo to begin if needed. Then, once you have the fingerings down and can grab the top note right away from memory for each shape, put on a backing track or metronome and continue the exercise from there.

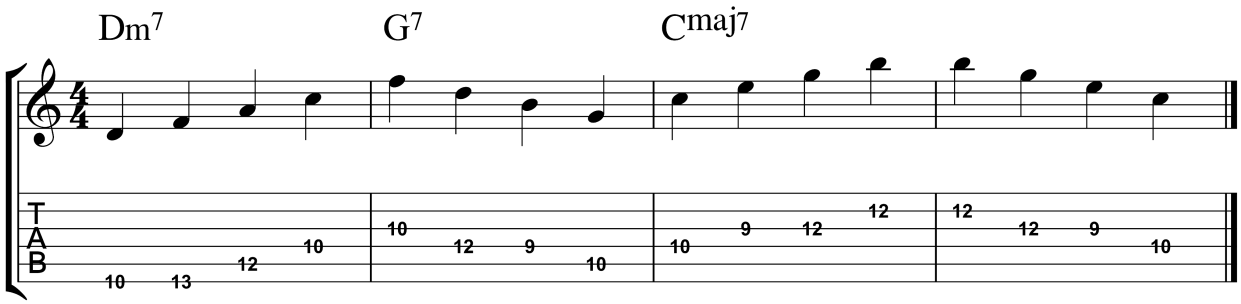
Click to hear audio for this ii V I arpeggio exercise.



You will now look at alternating each arpeggio in your ii V I soloing practice as you play up the first and down the second shape in this next example.

Making the jump from one shape to the next in a ii V I arpeggio exercise is never easy at first, so make sure you focus on those transition points, and work between each shape slowly with a metronome to allow yourself a clear and clean move between each arpeggio in the exercise.

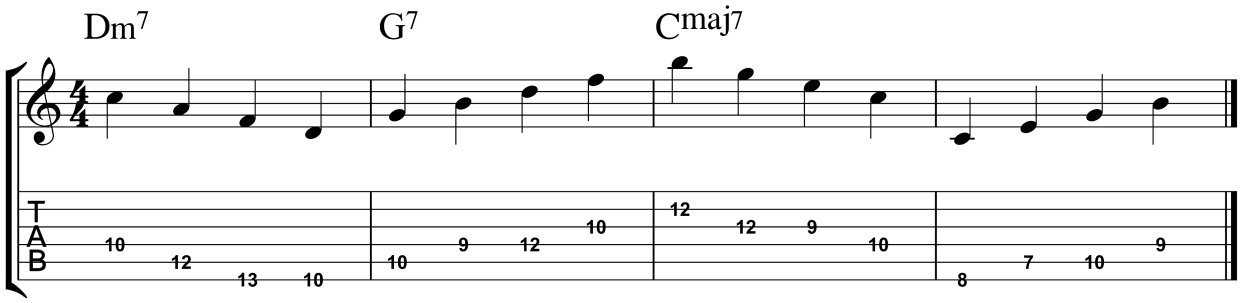
Click to hear audio for this ii V I arpeggio exercise.



The last variation you will explore in this chapter shows the first arpeggio descending and the second arpeggio ascending, continuing this pattern from there.

Again, it's always tricky to start any arpeggio from the top note and work down, so go slow with this exercise and take your time with it before moving on to the next section in this chapter.

Click to hear audio for this ii V I arpeggio exercise.



With all four ii V I arpeggio exercises under your fingers, try putting on a ii V I backing track, at a slow tempo, and improvising over those chords with these arpeggios, using each of the four above exercises to build your lines and phrases on the guitar.

How to Solo Over ii V I Chords - Scales

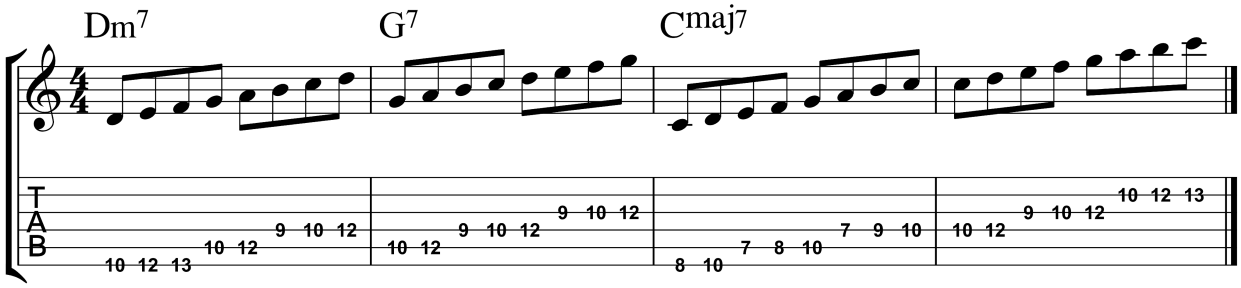
We are now going to take the different scale shapes that you learned in the previous three chapters of the Beginner's Guide to Jazz Guitar and apply them to a ii V I chord progression on the fretboard.

To start off, we'll be looking at the D Dorian scale that begins on the 6th-string root, and then playing the subsequent scales in close proximity to that starting point in each subsequent chord in the progression.

The first exercise has you playing each scale ascending for the ii V I progression, using one-octave shapes for the iim7 and V7 chords, and a two-octave shape for the Imaj7 chord as you have twice as much time to explore that chord in this progression.

Make sure to take this, and any, scale exercise from this chapter to all 12 keys and run them at various tempos with a backing track or metronome in your practice routine.

Click to hear audio for this ii V I scale exercise.

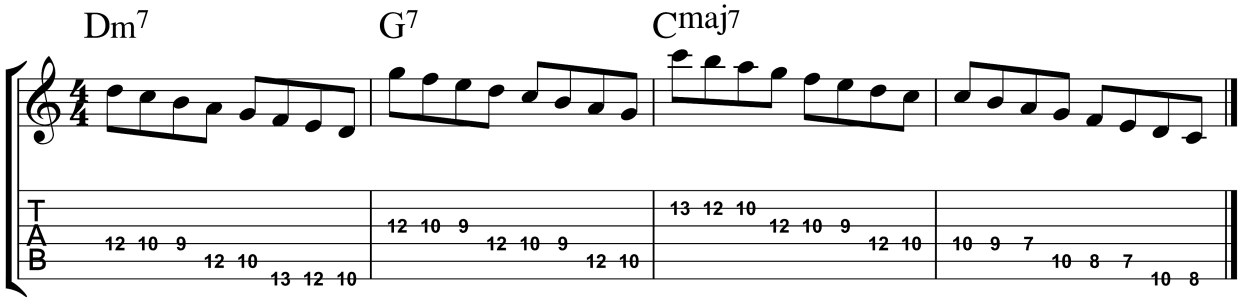


The second exercise is the reverse approach to the first, where you are now descending each scale in the ii V I chord progression.

While you are just playing the first exercise backwards, it can be difficult to begin a scale from the top note, as compared to the usual bottom-note starting position.

So, take your time with these exercise, work with a metronome, and make sure that your transitions between each scale shape are smooth and clean in your playing.

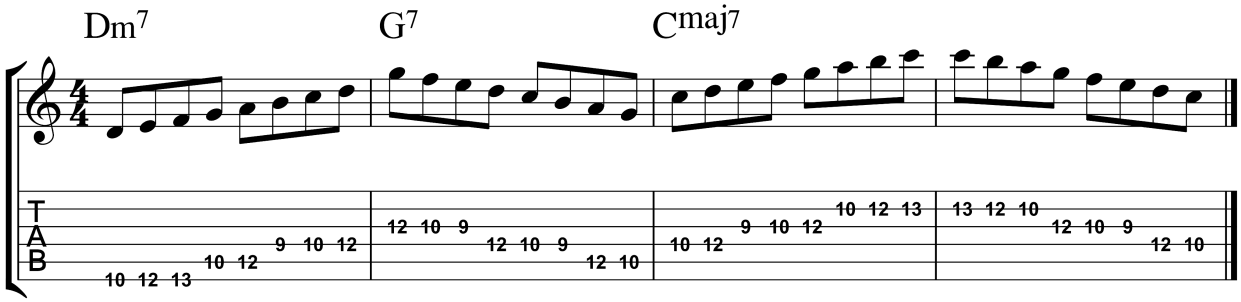
Click to hear audio for this ii V I scale exercise.



With this variation, you will now play the first scale ascending, followed by the next scale descending and continue this pattern through the ii V I chord progression.

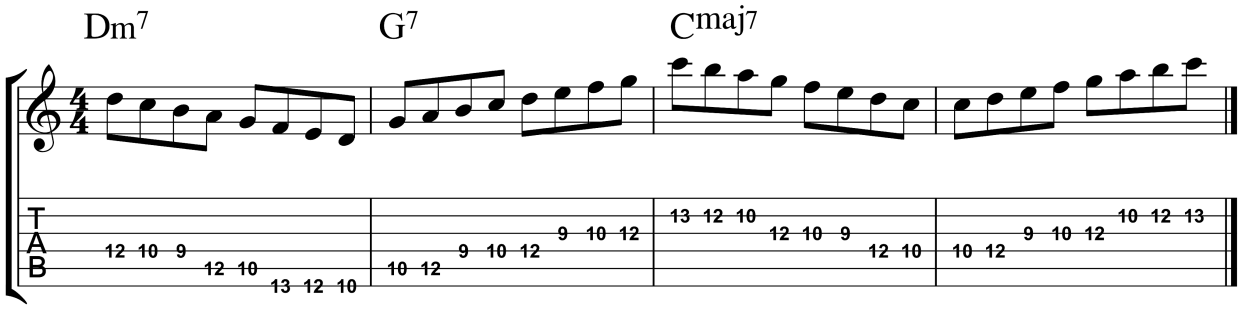
Again, this is a small alteration to the first exercise in this section, but it is a tricky one, so go slow and take your time when working this out in the woodshed.

Click to hear audio for this ii V I scale exercise.



The last ii V I scale exercise we'll look at in this chapter is the reverse of the last approach, where you will now be descending the first scale and ascending the second scale in this exercise.

Click to hear audio for this ii V I scale exercise.



With all four of these exercises under your fingers, try playing them back to back in order to hear how these different approaches to ii V I scales sound different, yet similar, when applying to a ii V I chord progression on the guitar.

How to Solo Over ii V I Chords - Licks

As you learn how to solo over ii V I chords, you will need to build your scale and arpeggio vocabulary, as we did in the first part of this chapter, but you also need to build your jazz lick vocabulary so that you can bring chromatic notes, tension and release and common jazz language into your improvised solos in a meaningful way.

To help you get started with this concept, here are two, ii V I licks for jazz guitar that you can study, learn and apply to your jazz guitar soloing ideas.

While learning these licks will get the ideas under your fingers and into your ears, that is only the first step when learning any new lick, memorization.

To take these licks further, and build a more organic approach to them in your playing, try the following exercises after you have memorized one of these licks in one or more keys on the fretboard.

1. Put on a ii V I backing track and play the lick along to the track, in one key at first and then in all 12 keys after that.
2. Begin to alter the rhythms of that lick by playing some notes shorter, other notes longer and placing the notes in different parts of the bar over each ii V I chord.
3. Start to add in notes from the scales and arpeggios you have learned, as well as Bebop techniques such as enclosures, to begin integrating the lick into your current jazz guitar soloing framework.
4. Take notes out of the lick, adding space here and there, in order to add rhythmic variety to the lick in your soloing phrases and ideas.
5. Repeat any/all of the above exercises but sing the lick and play the chords on the guitar in order to develop a stronger connection between the lick and your ears.

Now that you know how to practice these licks, let's look at the first ii V I lick that you will learn in the practice room.

This first lick uses four important elements that are worth dissecting further in order to understand why the lick sounds good, as well as learn it on the guitar.

The first item is the rhythm for the arpeggio in bar one. An 8th note followed by an 8th-note triplet is a very common jazz arpeggio rhythm, and one that you can bring to any line in your soloing as you develop this idea further.

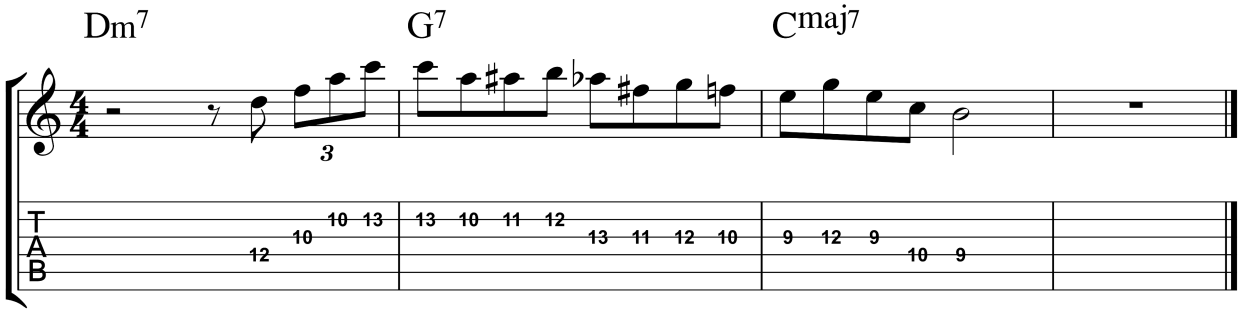
The next two items are the chromatic licks in bar two, where you have the notes C-A-A#-B, which targets the 3rd of the G7 chord, and the enclosure on the root of that same chord, Ab-F#-G.

Both of these items are good examples of how to integrate chromaticism into your jazz guitar lines, so check them out in other contexts and over other chords in your study.

The last item to look at is the resolution from the b7 of G7, F, to the 3rd of Cmaj7, E, on the downbeat of the last bar.

This “guide tone” resolution is something you will find in the playing of many legendary jazz guitarists, and it is an important concept to explore further as you continue to study ii V I soloing concepts in your playing.

Click to hear audio for this ii V I Jazz Guitar Lick.

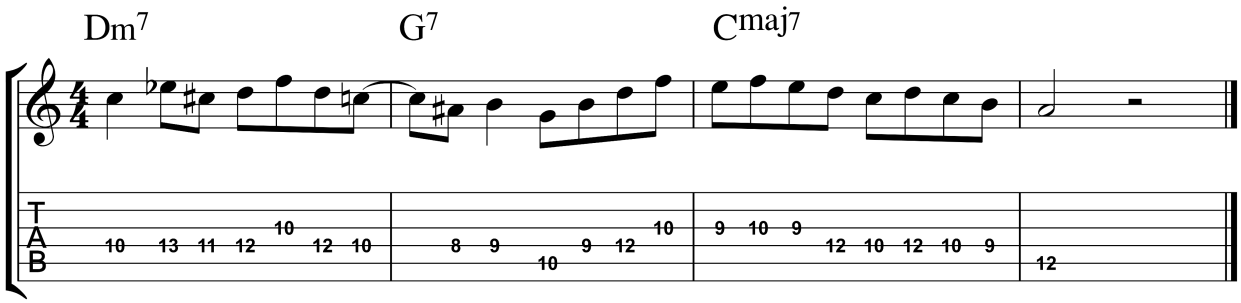


The second lick in this chapter uses two enclosures, on the root of the Dm7 chord and the 3rd of the G7 chord, as well as the same guide-tone resolution between the b7, F, of G7 and the 3rd, E, of the Cmaj7 chord.

Notice that the enclosure over the 3rd of G7 is anticipated by a half beat, it starts on the & of 4 in the first bar and doesn’t resolve until the 2nd beat of the 2nd bar.

This type of rhythmic anticipation is a fun way to create tension in your lines, as long as you then resolve that tension properly as is the case in this lick.

Click to hear audio for this ii V I Jazz Guitar Lick.



Chapter Checklist

After working on the above exercises, and bringing these ideas into your technical and improvisational jazz guitar practice routine, here are 10 exercises that you can do in order to develop your ability to solo over ii V I chords further in the woodshed.

You don't have to be able to master all of these 10 exercises before moving on to the next chapter, but if you have 3 to 4 of these items down, then you should be ready to move on and explore the next material in the Beginner's Guide to Jazz Guitar.

1. Put on a ii V I backing track in C and solo using only the Arpeggios for each chord. Repeat in 12 keys and at various tempos.
2. Using a ii V I backing track in C, solo over these chords using only the related scales. Repeat in 12 keys at different tempos.
3. Solo over a ii V I backing track in C using both the arpeggios and scales to build your lines. Repeat at different tempos and in different keys.
4. Blow over a ii V I backing track in C, using one of the above licks as the basis for your lines. Start by playing the lick exactly and then change the lick by altering the rhythms, adding notes, taking notes away etc. Repeat with the second lick, in various keys and at various tempos on the guitar.
5. Solo over the Miles Davis track "Tune Up," using only the arpeggios for each chord to build your lines.
6. Improvise over "Tune Up," only now use just the scales to create your solo lines.
7. Blow over "Tune Up" using both the arpeggios and scales for each chord in your jazz guitar soloing lines.
8. Using the licks from this chapter, solo over "Tune Up" beginning with the exact licks and then altering them to become less like the written licks and more like your own lines with each new chorus of the tune.
9. Sing the root notes for a ii V I in C and play the arpeggios on the guitar, repeat in 12 keys in the woodshed.
10. Play the ii V I scales on the guitar and sing the roots for each chord on top of those scales in all 12 keys.

Further Reading

To help you dig into soloing over ii V I chords further in your practice routine, here are 6 different articles that you can check out in order to expand your knowledge on this important and fun to solo over progression.

5 Easy ii V I Soloing Exercises For Jazz Guitar

Easy ii V I Soloing Outlines for Jazz Guitar

5 Must Know Bebop Jazz Guitar Licks

5 Grant Green Licks Every Jazz Guitarist Needs to Know

5 Must Know George Benson Licks for Jazz Guitar

101 Jazz Guitar Licks App

Chapter 9 - How To Solo Over ii V I Chords Part 2

Welcome to Chapter 9 of the Beginner's Guide to Jazz Guitar, where we will continue our look into Soloing Over ii V I Chords as you build on the exercises and examples from the previous chapter.

As learning how to solo over ii V I chords, even using just the arpeggios and scales we've explored in this guide, can be a very big topic of discovery, I've broken down the content into two chapters.

In this chapter, you will use the same arpeggio and scale exercises as you learned in Chapter 8, though here you will apply these ideas to the 5th and 3rd-string root shapes, as opposed to the 6th and 4th-string shapes we explored in the last chapter.

When working on larger topics such as soloing over ii V I chords, it is always a good idea to break these concepts down into smaller, more easily digestible chunks of material that you can work on slowly and thoroughly in the woodshed.

Soloing Over ii V I Chords - Arpeggios

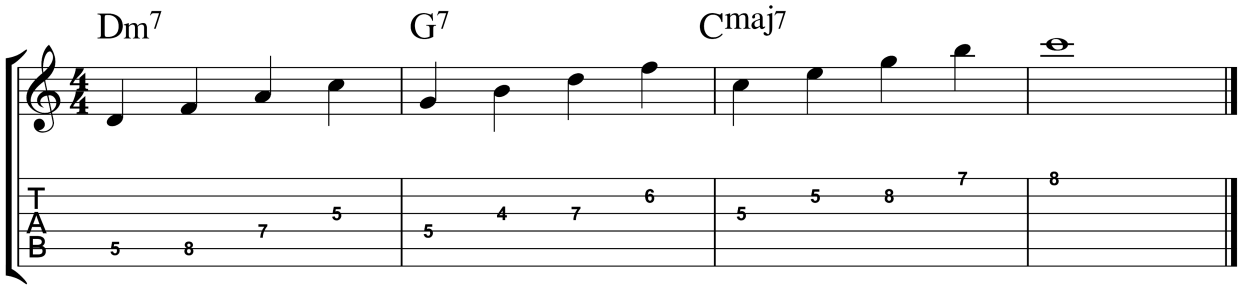
To begin our exploration of soloing over ii V I's with the 5th and 3rd-string root shapes, here is an arpeggio exercise that begins on the Dm7 5th-string arpeggio shape, and continues to each subsequent arpeggio in the progression in close proximity from there.

Written out in C major, start by learning these shapes in this key and then taking them to all 12 keys as you explore them further in the woodshed.

As well, these exercises can be a bit tricky to get down, so use a metronome and go slowly as you work on playing each idea smoothly and accurately on the guitar.

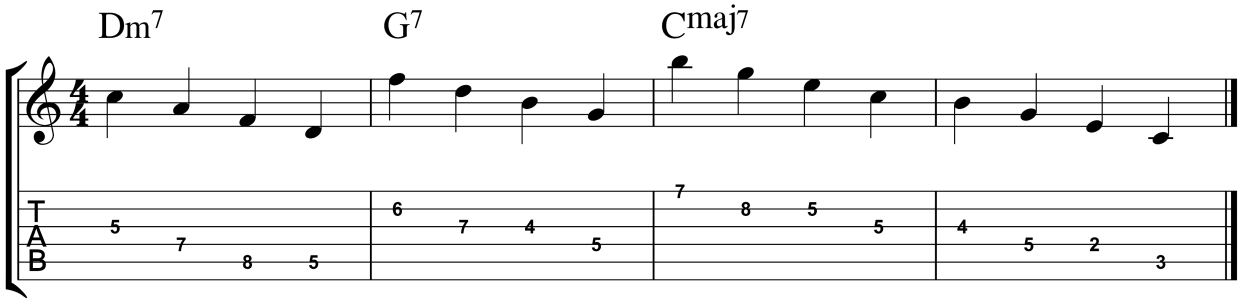
The first exercise presents each arpeggio in the progression ascending from the root note on up as you work these shapes through a ii V I chord progression on the guitar.

Click to hear audio for this ii V I Arpeggio outline.



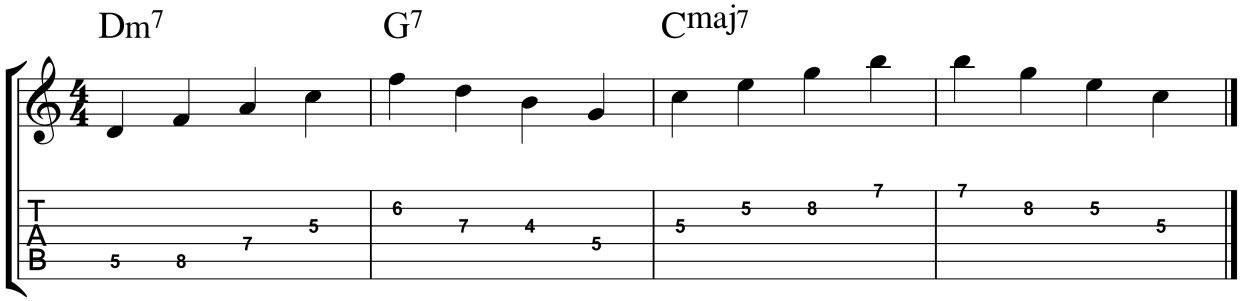
This exercise reverses the previous approach as you are now descending each arpeggio in the ii V I chord progression.

Click to hear audio for this ii V I Arpeggio outline.



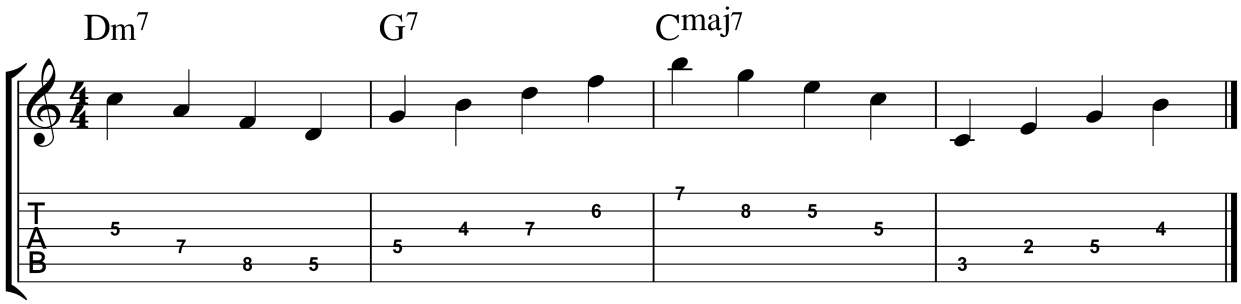
In the next exercise, you will ascend the first arpeggio, followed by a descending arpeggio, and continuing that pattern forward from there.

Click to hear audio for this ii V I Arpeggio outline.



You can also play these exercise with the first arpeggio descending and the second arpeggio ascending as you see in the following example.

Click to hear audio for this ii V I Arpeggio outline.



With all four of these exercises under your fingers from the 5th and 3rd string root notes, try putting on a backing track and soloing over a ii V I chord progression, using both these shapes and the arpeggio shapes you learned in the previous chapter.

This will open up your neck, expanding your fretboard knowledge at the same time as you are expanding your jazz guitar soloing vocabulary in the woodshed.

Soloing Over ii V I Chords - Scales

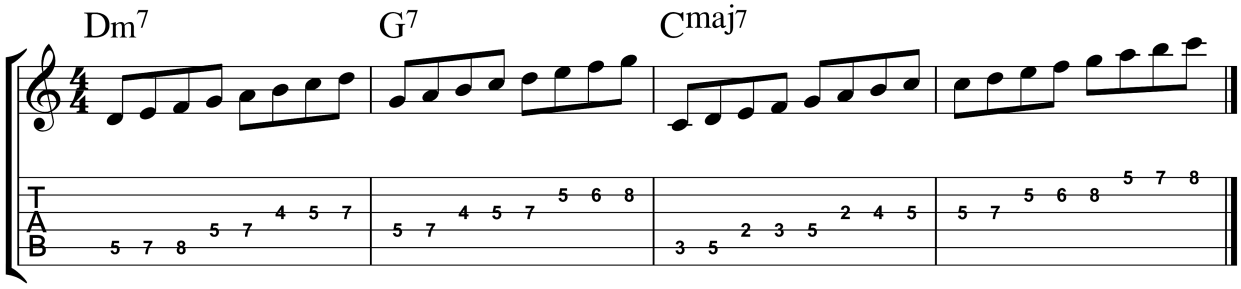
As well as working arpeggios when soloing over ii V I chords in the woodshed, you can also apply the scales that you've learned in previous chapters to your ii V I jazz guitar practice routine.

The exercises that we'll explore in this section uses a 5th-string Dm7 scale shape to begin, with the rest of the scales in this exercise sticking closely to that position from that point.

Though written out in the key of C, make sure to practice these patterns with a metronome, or backing track if possible, in all 12 keys to learn how to apply these scales to any part of the neck in your jazz guitar solos.

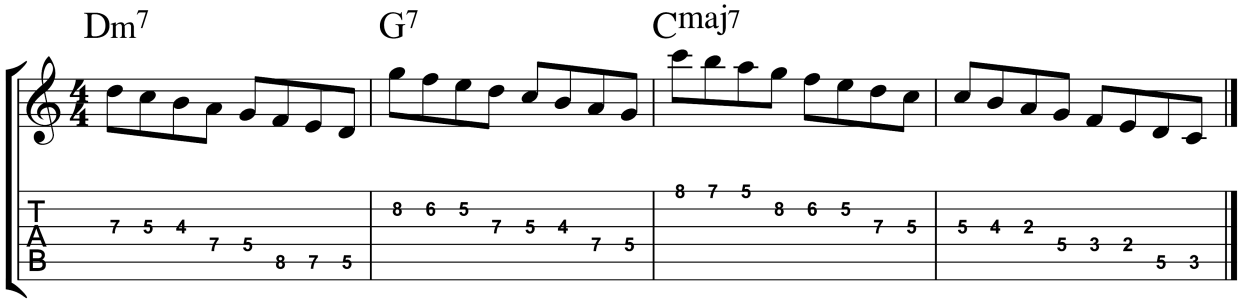
Here is an example of how you can apply those scales to a ii V I chord progression with each scale ascending as you work them through these three chords.

Click to hear audio for this ii V I Scale outline.



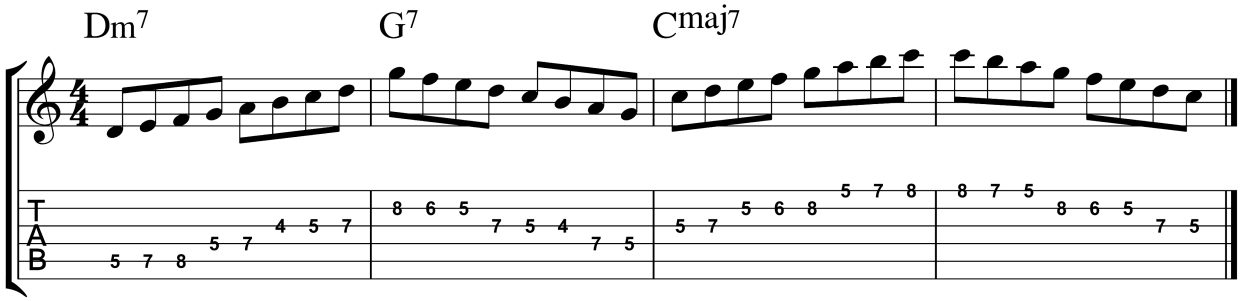
The second exercise uses descending scales to outline each of the three chords in a ii V I progression.

Click to hear audio for this ii V I Scale outline.



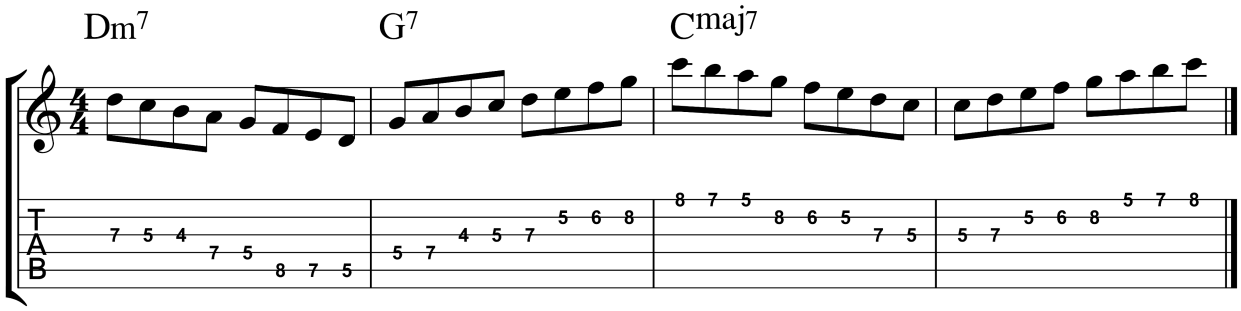
You can also mix these two approaches, as in the following example where you ascend the first scale, descend the second scale, and continue that alteration from there.

Click to hear audio for this ii V I Scale outline.



Here we are reversing the previous exercise, as you are now beginning with a descending scale followed by an ascending scale, and continuing from there.

Click to hear audio for this ii V I Scale outline.



Now that you have learned these ii V I scale outlines from the 5th and 3rd-string roots, try putting on a backing track and soloing using both these shapes, and the 6th and 4th-string root shapes from the previous chapter, to create your lines.

This will allow you to cover a large part of the fretboard when soloing, providing a secure sense of freedom as you will never feel lost when soloing over ii V I chords using scale shapes on the guitar.

Soloing Over ii V I Chords - Licks

To finish off your introduction to soloing over ii V I chords for jazz guitar, here are two different licks that you can learn, analyze and expand upon in your practice routine. As was the case in the previous Chapter, simply learning the lick is just the starting point when absorbing these ideas and integrating them into your soloing chops.

To help you fully digest these licks, and be able to use them in a musical way, here are five exercises that you can use when learning these licks in the woodshed.

1. Put on a ii V I backing track and play one of these licks along to the track, in one key at first followed by all 12 keys.
2. Begin to change the rhythms of any lick by playing notes shorter, extending the length of some notes, and playing notes in different parts of the bar over each chord.
3. Add notes from the related scales and arpeggios, as well as Bebop techniques such as enclosures, to begin integrating the lick into your current guitar soloing framework.
4. Remove notes from the lick, using space to add rhythmic variety to the lick in your soloing phrases and ideas.
5. Repeat any or all of these exercises, singing the lick and playing the chords on guitar to develop a strong connection between the lick and your ears.

Now that you know how to practice these ideas, let's take a look at how these two licks are built so that you can understand why they sound good, as well as how to play them on the fretboard.

The first lick uses a number of interesting ideas that you can take out of this phrase and explore further on the guitar.

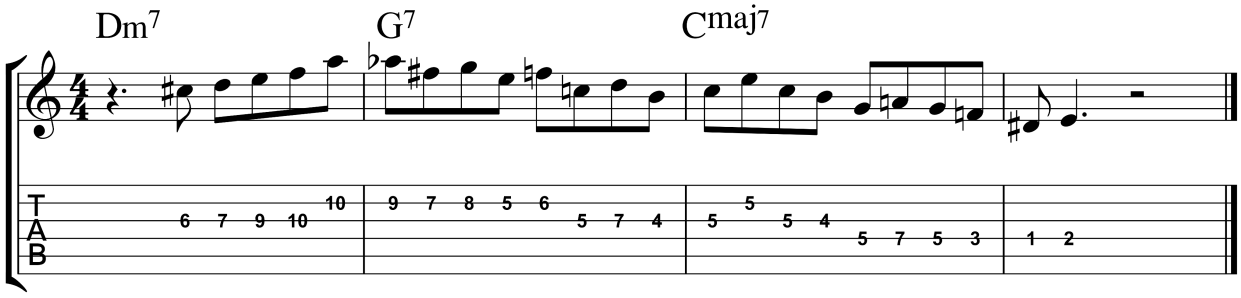
The first is the use of the #7, C#, to approach the root of the Dm7 chord in bar one of the lick.

Starting on the #7, especially from an off beat, the & of a beat, is a common Bebop technique this is a great way to add a bit of tension and release to your arpeggios.

As well, the 1235 pattern in bar one, where you play D-E-F-A, the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 5th notes of that chords, is a classic John Coltrane technique that mixes the triad with the 9th, a color tone, to fully and musically outline the underlying chord.

You can also see and hear enclosures being used over the root in the second bar, Ab-F#-G, and the 3rd in the last measure, F-D#-E. Again, emphasizing how important enclosures are when learning how to solo over ii V I chords with a jazz feel.

Click to hear audio for this ii V I Guitar Lick.

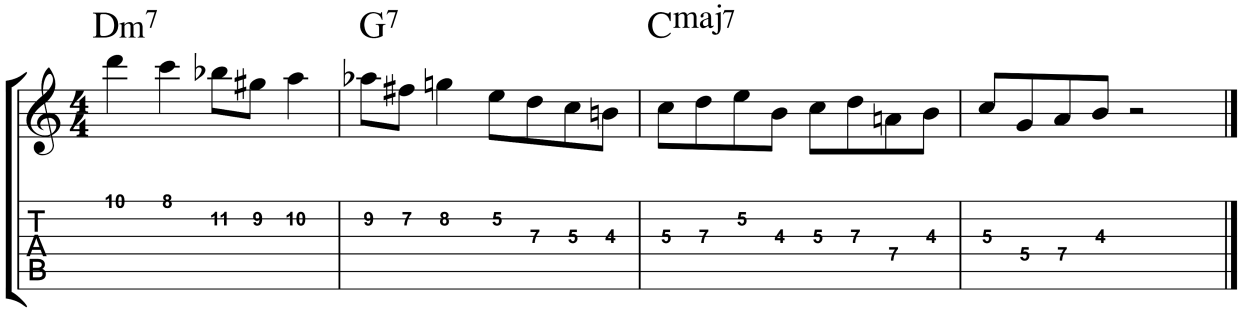


The second lick also features enclosures on the 5th of Dm7, Bb-G#-A, and the root of G7, Ab-F#-G, using a bit of a different rhythmic grouping than we've seen before to add variety to your enclosures in this context.

As well, there is an ascending, three-note scale pattern being used in the last two measures where you play up three notes from the scale, C-D-E, and then go down one note in the scale and repeat that pattern, B-C-D, A-B-C etc.

Though it's a simple melodic pattern, using a three-note grouping with a two-note rhythm, 8th notes, creates a welcomed sense of syncopation to your jazz guitar lines.

Click to hear audio for this ii V I Guitar Lick.



Chapter Checklist

As you can use all of the same exercises from Chapter 8 to test your knowledge, and expand further on the exercises in this Chapter, here are 5 extra ways that you can practice soloing over ii V I chords for jazz guitar.

Since the material in both Chapters 8 and 9 is very similar from a contextual standpoint, you can also take these 5 ideas and apply them to the fingerings, exercises, examples and licks from the previous chapter as well.

You don't have to be able to master all of these 5 exercises before moving on to the next chapter, but if you have 2 to 3 of these items under your fingers and into your ears, then you should be ready to move on and explore the final Chapter in the Beginner's Guide to Jazz Guitar.

1. Play a ii V I chord progression on the guitar in C and sing the arpeggios for each chord on top of the guitar, repeat in 12 keys.
2. Comp a ii V I chord progression on the guitar in C and sing the scales for each chord on top of those chords, repeat in 12 keys.
3. Play a ii V I chord progression in C and scat sing a solo over those chords using both the related scales and arpeggios for each chord in the progression, repeat in 12 keys.
4. Sing the root notes of a ii V I chord progression in C and improvise over those notes using the arpeggios for each chord, repeat in 12 keys.
5. Sing the root notes of a C major ii V I progression and solo over those notes using the scales for each chord in the progression, repeat in 12 keys.

Further Reading

To help you dig into soloing over ii V I chords further in your jazz guitar practice routine, here are six articles that you can explore in order to expand your knowledge on this important and commonly used chord progression.

5 Easy ii V I Soloing Exercises For Jazz Guitar

Easy ii V I Soloing Outlines for Jazz Guitar

5 Must Know Bebop Jazz Guitar Licks

5 Grant Green Licks Every Jazz Guitarist Needs to Know

5 Must Know George Benson Licks for Jazz Guitar

101 Jazz Guitar Licks App

Chapter 10 - Beginner Walking Bass For Jazz Guitar

Welcome to Chapter 10, How to Play Walking Bass Lines on Guitar, the final chapter in the Beginner's Guide to Jazz Guitar.

Learning how to comp through tunes on guitar means exploring Drop 2 and Drop 3 chords, as we did earlier in the Guide, but it also means learning how to add bass lines to these chords so that you can function musically and fully in a solo, and bassless duo, situation.

It this Chapter, you will look at five exercises that will take you from playing one note in each bar, all the way up to walking a full bass line and adding chords beneath that bass line in your jazz guitar comping.

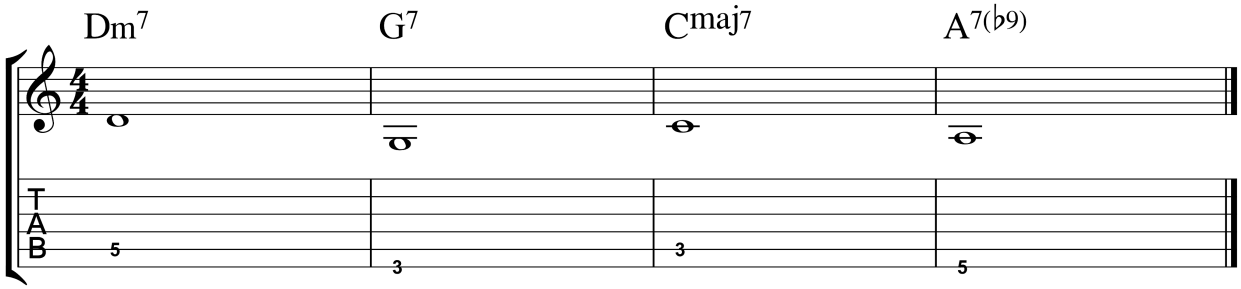
Walking Basslines on Guitar - Exercise 1

To begin, you will be placing the root note of each chord on the first beat of the bar, as you can see in the C major ii V I example written out below.

By adding the root on the first beat, you are solidifying the sound of the chord you are on, as well as telling the listener exactly where you are, and that you have arrived at the downbeat of a new measure.

Though it's a simple exercise, compared to a full walking bass line, this is probably the most important step as it is the building block from which you build up towards a full bass line, so go slow and take your time with this exercise in the woodshed.

Click to hear this walking bass line on guitar audio example.



To help get this approach down further, try playing the chords for a ii V I chord progression, and singing the root notes of each chord along the way.

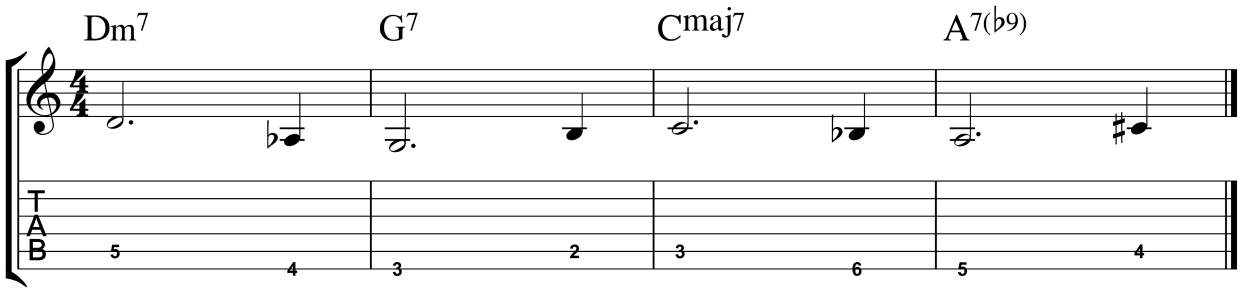
This way you will help get your ears involved with the chord progression and bass line as well as your fingers on the guitar.

Walking Basslines on Guitar - Exercise 2

Once you have the root note secure on the downbeat of each bar, we'll now add a chromatic approach note, either a half step above or below the next root note, in order to create some tension on beat 4 that leads into the root note resolution on the next down beat.

You can choose to approach the next root above or below, either is fine, and so it is a good idea to practice both, and then let your ears decide in the moment which approach is right for that particular musical situation.

Click to hear this walking bass line on guitar audio example.



Once you have this example under your fingers, make sure to take it to all 12 keys in order to get a sense of how these notes fit on different parts of the fingerboard.

Walking Basslines on Guitar - Exercise 3

The next step that we'll take adds a second chromatic approach note on beat 3 of the measure.

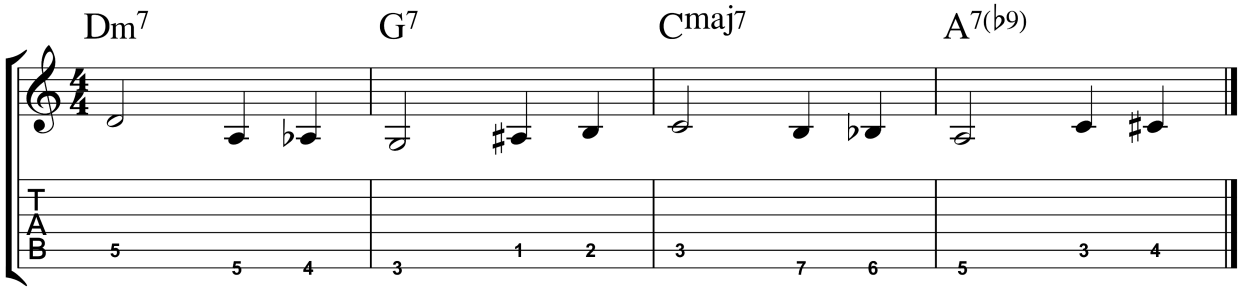
You will have four options at this point in time when practicing walking bass lines on guitar, two notes above, two notes below, one above one below, and one below and one above the root note that you are resolving to in the next bar.

Try a few of these options out when learning how to apply two chromatic notes to your walking bass lines.

Though there are only four possibilities, when you factor in the chords, and the number of bars in any given jazz tune, these four options are enough to get you through any performance without sounding boring or repetitive in the process.

Here is an example of a bass line that uses this approach.

Click to hear this walking bass line on guitar audio example.



You will notice that sometimes your second chromatic note is a diatonic note for the chord you are on, such as the A on the 3rd beat of bar 1 in this example.

Though these second chromatic notes will sometimes be a chord or scale tone for the chord you are on, try to think of them as “leading” toward the next chord in the progression, and so they are chromatic approach notes towards that chord.

One thing that has helped me with walking bass lines on guitar, is to think about beats 1 and 2 of a bar as sounding the chord you are on, while beats 3 and 4 lead the listener towards the next chord change.

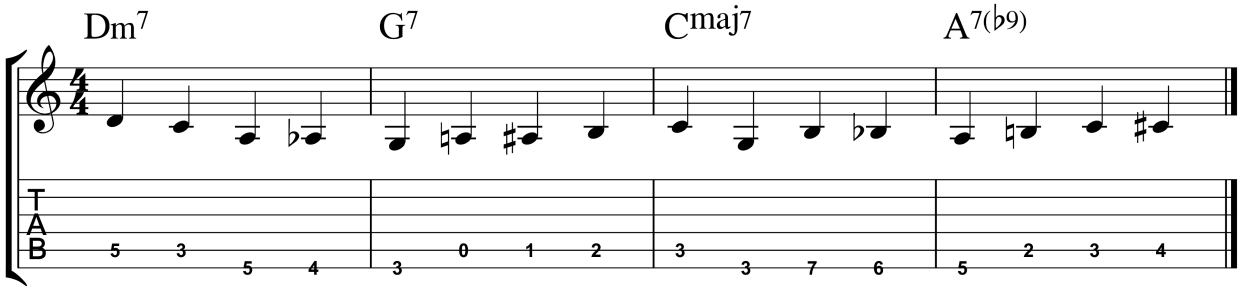
Doing so will help organize your lines, as well as give your walking bass lines a sense of direction that can help with their overall success in a musical situation.

Walking Basslines on Guitar - Exercise 4

To finish up our walking bass line, you will now add a chord or scale tone, diatonic note, to the second beat of each bar.

While chord tones can be a more secure option, as they are directly related to the chord in the underlying harmony at that time, sometimes they aren't always a good option from a fingering perspective, and so a scale note can be used effectively here as well.

Click to hear this walking bass line on guitar audio example.



With a full bass line under your fingers, try taking this line to all 12 keys, with a metronome or backing track, in order to begin seeing these lines around the entire fretboard.

Walking Bass Lines on Guitar - Chords

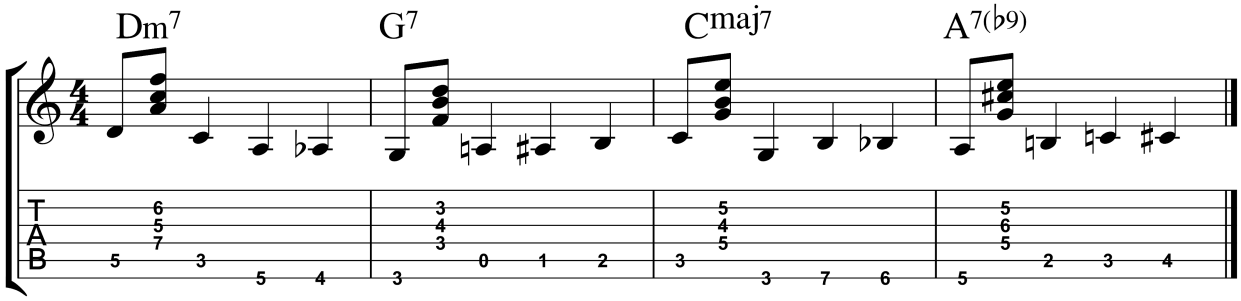
With a full, walking bassline under your fingers, let's begin adding chords to your bass notes in order to finish up our introduction to walking bass lines on the guitar.

There are many places you can put chord shapes on top of bass notes within the bar, but I find that adding them on the & of beat one is a great place to start.

Because you are playing the root note on beat one, you can easily add a root-position chord shape that you know above this note, which is easier than adding in inversions or chromatic chords later in the bar.

Here is an example of a walking bass line in C major, over a ii V I progression, where I've adding chord shapes on the & of 1 in each bar.

Click to hear this walking bass line on guitar audio example.



Once you have worked out this example in the practice room, try moving this exercise around to other keys, other bass note combinations, and with other chords such as 9ths and 13ths, once you've learned those shapes, as you expand upon this idea further in the woodshed.

Chapter Checklist

Once you have worked out the exercises in this Chapter, here are a number of exercises that you can do in order to explore walking bass lines for jazz guitar further in the woodshed.

As this is the final chapter in the Beginner's Guide to Jazz Guitar, you can take your time with these and work on getting each one down securely in the practice room, as there are no more chapters to move on to.

Be sure to work any and all examples here, and previously in this Chapter, with a metronome so that you work on developing a solid time feel when walking bass lines, which can be just as important as what notes you play when bringing these ideas to a performance situation.

1. Work on exercise 1 above in all 12 keys until you can find the root notes from any chord in a ii V I on the spot.

2. Build up to being able to play the root, 1 chromatic approach, 2 chromatic approach notes and finally a full walking bass line on any ii V I across the fretboard. Write these lines out at first if needed, but always be working towards the goal of building walking bass lines in the moment.

3. Begin to apply the walking bass line rules and exercises from this Chapter to a blues progression, starting with I IV V and then working on to a full jazz blues from there.

4. Apply all of the rules and exercises in this chapter to a Jazz Standard that you know or are working on. Begin with an easy tune like “Tune Up” or “Take the A Train” and work forward from there.

5. Play a walking bass line, starting from just the root note and working up from there to a full bass line, over a tune you know, and scat sing a solo on top of that bass line.

Further Reading

To help you dig into learning walking bass lines for jazz guitar further in your practice routine, here are a few articles that you can explore in order to expand your knowledge on this important jazz guitar comping technique.

Walking Bass Lines on Guitar an Introduction

Learn to Walk Bass Lines on Guitar - Half Time Feel

Intro to Walking Bass Lines for Jazz Guitar Video Lesson

2 5 1 Chord App For Apple and Android

Bonus Chapter - 5 Must Know Beginner ii V I Licks

To expand further with ii V I soloing vocabulary, here are five jazz guitar licks that you can learn, practice and apply to your ii V I improvisational ideas.

You can start with any lick in this Chapter, as they each offer different challenges and learning experiences, and continue on from there as you work each of these five lines in the woodshed. As well, there are five tips below these licks that can help you develop these phrases further in your jazz guitar practice routine.

ii V I Lick 1

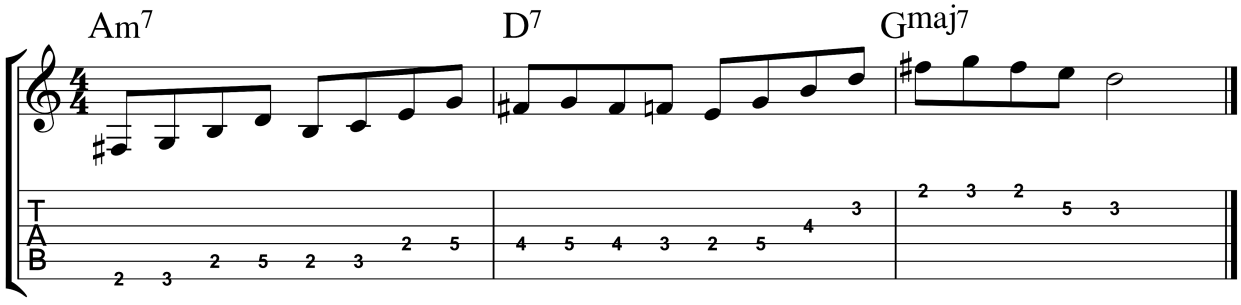
The first lick that we'll look at uses mostly diatonic notes over each chord in a G major ii V I chord progression, but there are a few patterns that are worth taking out of this lick and exploring further in the woodshed.

The first is the diatonic arpeggios in bar one of the lick, where you are playing Gmaj7 and Cmaj7 arpeggios over Am7. Both of these arpeggios come from the key of G major, they are the Imaj7 and IVmaj7 arpeggios, and so they will fit over the Am7 chord, the iim7 chord in G major, in bar one of this lick.

What makes these arpeggios standout, is that you are starting each one from the 7th of the arpeggio rather than the root note, giving these maj7 arpeggios a fresh sound compared to their root-based versions. As well, there is a chromatic note used to connect the F# and the E in the second bar, over D7, in this lick.

Adding passing tones such as these is a great way to bring a sense of tension and release to your lines without stepping too far from the given key center.

Click to hear audio for this ii V I Lick.



ii V I Lick 2

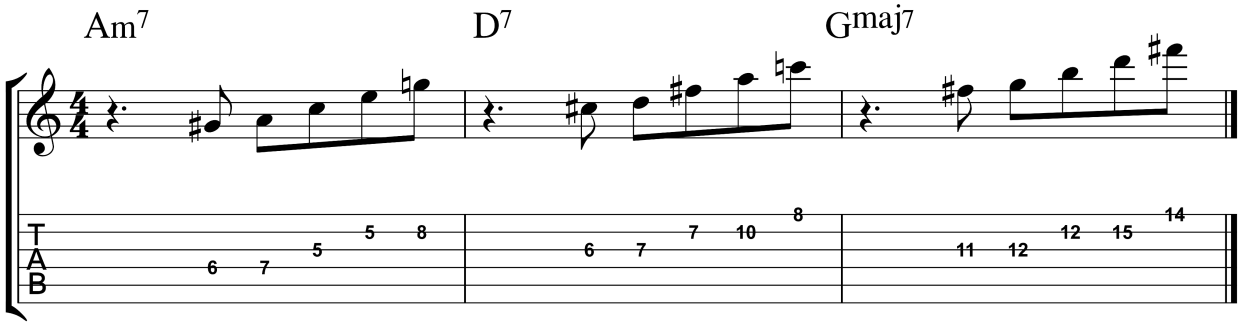
In this lick, you will be expanding on the arpeggio idea from the previous phrase, as you now start each arpeggio in a G major ii V I progression from the 7th, and work your way up each arpeggio from there.

To add a bit of Bebop flavor this this idea, starting arpeggios from the 7th, you can use the raised 7th for the Am7 and D7, iim7 and V7, when applying this concept to your improvised lines.

By doing so, you start each arpeggio with a chromatic approach note, creating tension, before running up the full, underlying arpeggio, releasing that tension.

Try practicing this technique with all of your m7 and 7 arpeggio based lines, starting one fret below the root and moving up the arpeggio from there, and see how this concept can be used to expand your soloing ideas in myriad different musical situations.

Click to hear audio for this ii V I Lick.

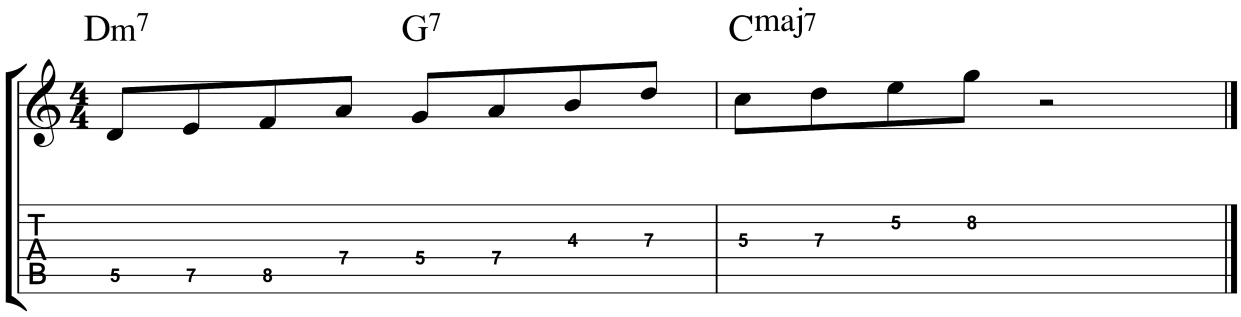


ii V I Lick 3

Here, you are looking at a short ii V I, covering two bars in length, and are using a favorite technique that John Coltrane used in his solos, the 1235 interval group, to build your line. Playing 1235 from each chord in a ii V I is a great way to outline the changes, since you have the 135 in outline, while adding a bit of color at the same time, with the 9th.

This is one of the most commonly used, and important, chord outlines in jazz, and so it would be beneficial to take the 1235 outline and practice it over any tune or chord progression you know or are working on in the woodshed to explore it further.

Click to hear audio for this ii V I Lick.



ii V I Lick 4

In lick number four, you will explore using a b9 interval to create tension over the G7 chord in the second half of bar one in a C major ii V I chord progression.

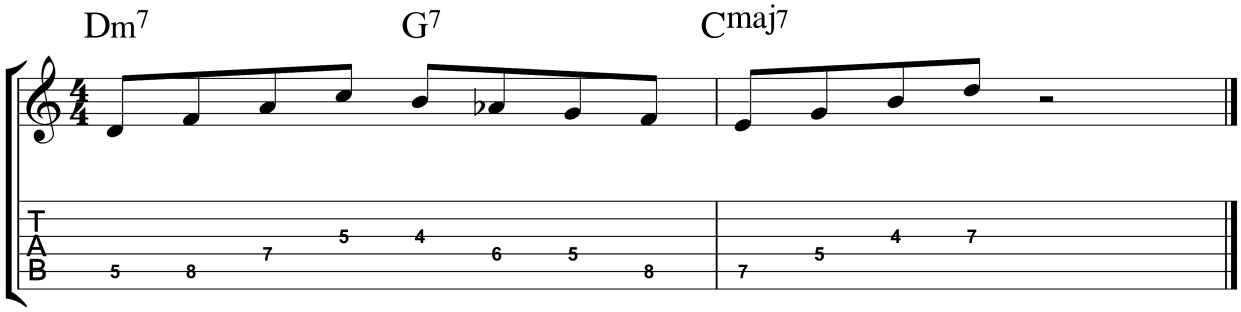
To begin, check out the b7-3 movement between both the Dm7 and G7 chords, as well as the G7 and Cmaj7 chords in this lick.

This voice leading movement is a great way to outline any chord change, as the 1/2 interval between each chord helps emphasize the underlying chord changes, and so it is worth expanding up in your jazz guitar practice routine.

The second item, the b9 over G7, is accomplished by playing down the 3-2-1-b7 notes of the G7 chord, only instead of playing the diatonic 2 note, you lower it by a fret and you now have the 7b9 sound instead.

Try out this technique over other 7th chords in your practice routine, rather than thinking of large modes or arpeggios to produce a b9 sound, just take a lick or phrase you already know, find the 2nd note over that chord and lower it by a fret to produce a b9.

Click to hear audio for this ii V I Lick.



ii V I Lick 5

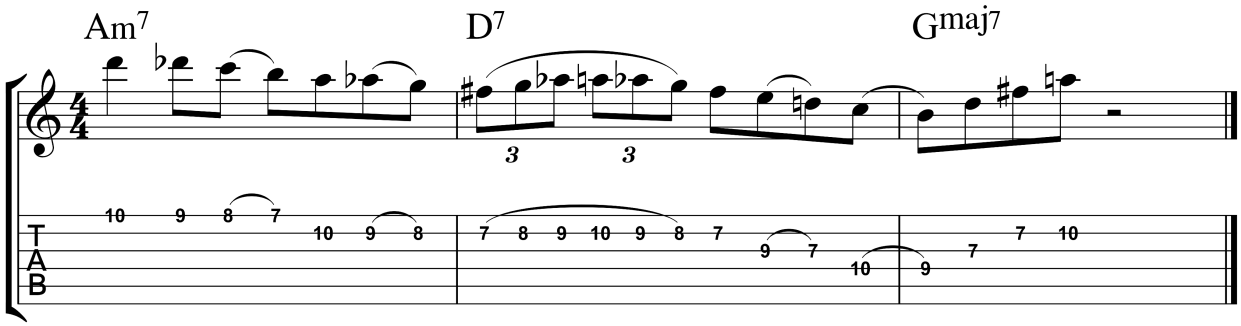
The last lick that we'll explore in this Chapter is one of my all-time favorite ii V I licks.

Here, you find a lot of chromatic notes, slurs, arpeggios and more as you build a lot of tension, then properly resolve that tension, over a ii V I in G major.

Though this lick might be a bit "outside" for you at this point in your development, try it out and see what you think.

It's a fun lick that can really add a jazz flavor to your next improvised guitar solo.

Click to hear audio for this ii V I Lick.



ii V I Lick Practice Tips

1. Using a backing track or metronome, practice these licks in all 12 keys from a slow to medium tempo.

2. Sing the root of each chord in these ii V I progression and play the licks on top of those sung notes.

3. Solo over a ii V I backing track and begin to alter the licks, adding notes, taking notes away, changing the rhythms etc. as you begin to make these ideas your own.

4. Solo over the Miles Davis track “Tune Up,” using one or more of these licks to build your lines over the various ii V I’s in the tune.

5. Bring any or all of these lines to the Jazz Blues and Jazz Standard tunes that you know or are working on in the practice room.

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