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CHAPTER 2

Intro to Harmony

Have you ever played more than one note at a time on the keyboard? If so, you have had hands-on experience with harmony. On the most basic level, harmony is anything that involves two or more notes sounding at the same time. Most of the harmony we'll be using involves *chords*, stacks of three or more notes. Guitarists and keyboardists are fortunate to play instruments that allow us to play chords as well as melodies. Some great pianists, like Bill Evans and George Shearing, are known for using rich chords with many notes, while others, like Count Basie and Thelonious Monk, are known for simple, sparse harmonies, sometimes using only two or three notes in a chord. Either way, an understanding of harmony is a priceless tool for all of us.

TRIADS

Chords are built using the intervals of the major and minor 3rd. *Triads* are three-note chords. Most Western music you have heard is based on triads. Triads are built by stacking 3rds derived from the scale. To build a C Major chord, use the first degree of the C Major scale, C, the third degree of the scale, E, and the 5th, G. Starting from the bottom, the notes of the triad are referred to as the root, the 3rd and the 5th. In a major chord, the intervals above the root are a major 3rd (C to E) followed by a minor 3rd (E to G). The interval from the root to the 5th is a perfect 5th.

The image shows two musical staves. The first staff, titled "C Major scale", displays the notes C, D, E, F, G, A, B, and C on a treble clef staff, with fingerings 1 through 7 indicated below each note. The second staff, titled "C Major chord", shows the notes C, E, and G stacked vertically on a treble clef staff. Labels "5th", "3rd", and "root" are placed to the left of the notes G, E, and C respectively. Fingerings 5, 3, and 1 are indicated below the notes.

To build a *minor triad*, take a major triad and flat (lower) the 3rd by a half step, leaving the root and 5th the same. The order of the intervals in a minor chord is a minor 3rd followed by a major 3rd. The perfect 5th remains the same as in the major chord.

The image shows a musical staff titled "C Minor chord" with a treble clef. It displays the notes C, E-flat, and G stacked vertically. Labels "5th", "3rd", and "root" are placed to the left of the notes G, E-flat, and C respectively. Fingerings 5, b3, and 1 are indicated below the notes.

To build an *augmented triad*, take a major triad and sharp (raise) the 5th by a half step. The order of the intervals is a major 3rd followed by another major 3rd. The perfect 5th has changed to an augmented 5th.

The image shows a musical staff titled "C Augmented chord" with a treble clef. It displays the notes C, E, and G-sharp stacked vertically. Labels "5th", "3rd", and "root" are placed to the left of the notes G-sharp, E, and C respectively. Fingerings #5, 3, and 1 are indicated below the notes.

To build a *diminished triad*, take a minor triad and flat the 5th by a half step. The order of the intervals is a minor 3rd followed by another minor 3rd. The perfect 5th has been changed to a diminished 5th.

The image shows a musical staff titled "C Diminished chord" with a treble clef. It displays the notes C, E-flat, and G-flat stacked vertically. Labels "5th", "3rd", and "root" are placed to the left of the notes G-flat, E-flat, and C respectively. Fingerings b5, b3, and 1 are indicated below the notes.

Sponge on a Stick is in the key of D Major, and the melody uses only the D Major scale. Once you've learned the tune, go back and try the techniques from the opposite page to solo with the D Major scale. Keep the left hand the same and remember to swing the eighth notes!

D Major



SPONGE ON A STICK

Track 11

$\text{♩} = 132$

D G A D Bmin A

D G A Bmin D/A A D

Emin F#min G A

D G A G A D

Blue Drew is in the key of B Minor and the melody uses the B Minor Pentatonic scale and the B Blues scale. The only difference is the F-natural in the B Blues scale. These scales give us a funky, blues-based sound. Use each of these scales when you solo. Then begin to mix them up, adding the $\flat 5$ from the blues scale when the mood strikes. This tune is dedicated to Kenny Drew who was one of the great pianists of modern jazz and an expert at this type of funky playing.

B Minor Pentatonic B Blues

BLUE DREW
Track 39

$\text{♩} = 120$

Bmin7 **Emin7** **Bmin7**

5 5 1 4 3₃ 2 3 3

1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 1 & 2 trip-let 3 & 4 & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &

Emin7 **C#min7 $\flat 5$** **F#7**

5 5 1 2 5 1 1

Bmin7 **GMaj7**

3 5 2 1 1

C#min7 $\flat 5$ **F#7** **Bmin7** **F#7**

5 4 3