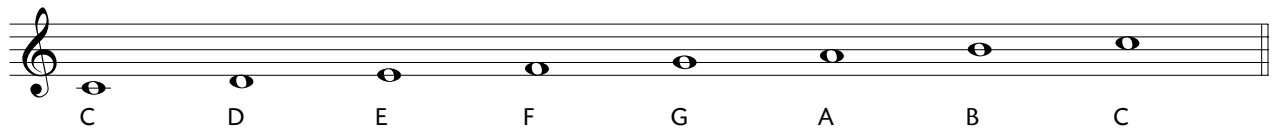


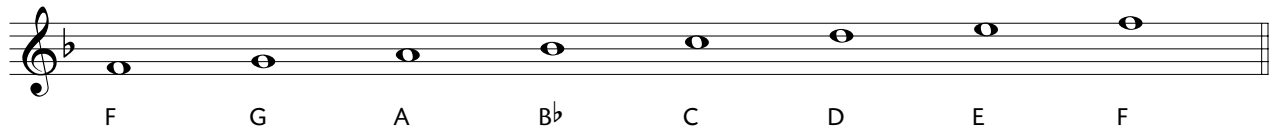
## COMMON KEY SHEET

Musicians are accustomed to playing in certain keys more than others. There are several reasons for this. Some keys have so many sharps or flats that the musicians simply have to think too hard. Also, because composers know that musicians are not used to certain keys, they rarely write in those keys, so the situation perpetuates itself. As a singer, you should put your tune in a key your musicians find comfortable. The most comfortable keys are listed below. If you find that the “perfect” key for your tune is not list, experiment with lowering or raising the key a half-step. For example, if you initially choose B major as your key, try B $\flat$  major or C major. Does this change make a big difference to you? If not, choose the more common key; your musicians will be more comfortable and they’ll do a better job of accompanying you.

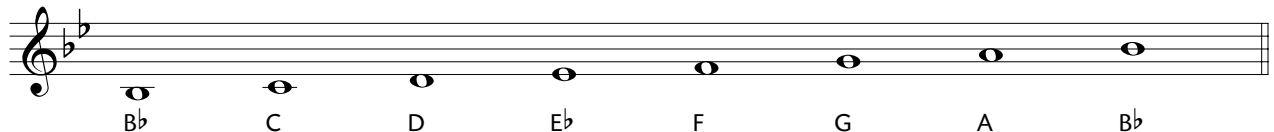
### C major / A minor



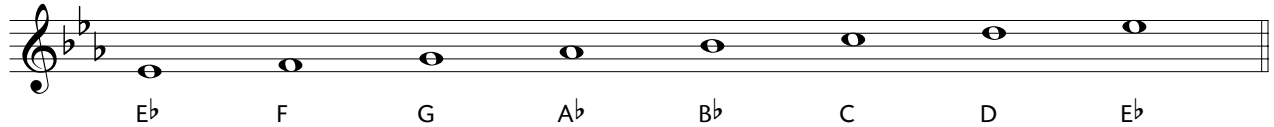
### F major / D minor



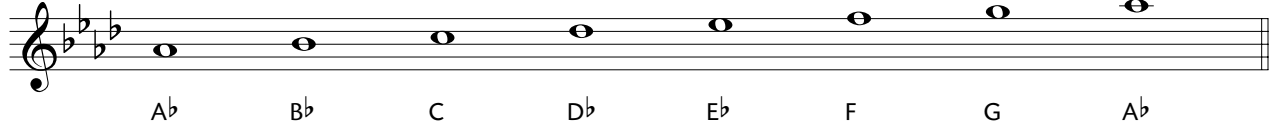
### B flat major / G minor



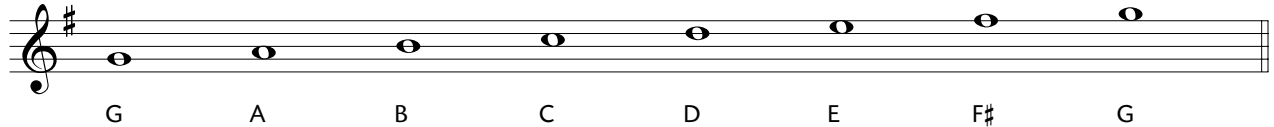
### E flat major / C minor



### A flat major / F minor



### G major / E minor



### D major / B minor



# Step 3

Set up scales for the old key (original key) and the new key (your key) on the Transition “Set Up” Worksheet. (Use the “Common Key Sheet” as a guide).

**Example:** If the original key (old key) is E minor or G major and your key (new key) is C minor or E $\flat$  major, the “set up” should look like this:

## TRANSPOSITION “SET UP” WORKSHEET

SONG: Autumn Leaves

Old key:  
G maj.  
E min.

New key:  
E $\flat$  maj.  
C min.

G A B C D E F $\sharp$  G  
E $\flat$  F G A $\flat$  B $\flat$  C D E $\flat$

SONG: \_\_\_\_\_

Old key:

New key:

SONG: \_\_\_\_\_

Old key:

New key:

**Step 5** Copy the transposed chords onto new manuscript paper (“your chart”). (Use the manuscript paper provided.)

→ Note: If a tune has a verse, it should be written on a separate sheet of manuscript paper, also provided. Remember to use the new key signature.

## *Autumn Leaves*

Johnny Mercer  
Joseph Kosma

Chord progression for *Autumn Leaves* in B-flat major:

Chords: Fm7, Bb7, Ebmaj7, Abmaj7, Dm7(b5), G7, Cm, C7

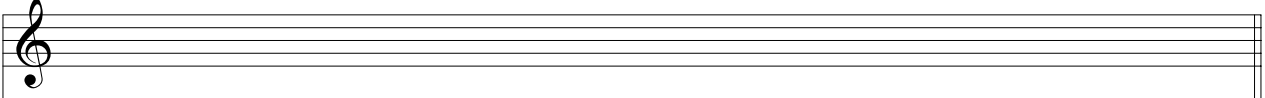
Chord progression for *Autumn Leaves* in B-flat major:

Chords: Fm7, Bb7, Ebmaj7, Abmaj7, Dm7(b5), G7, Cm, C7

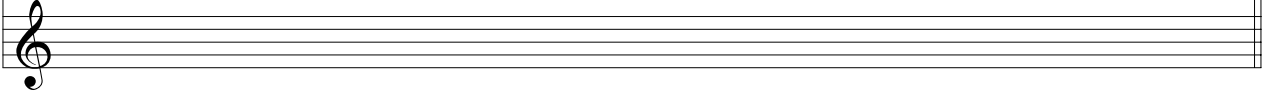
# TRANSPOSITION "SET UP" WORKSHEET

SONG: \_\_\_\_\_

Old key:

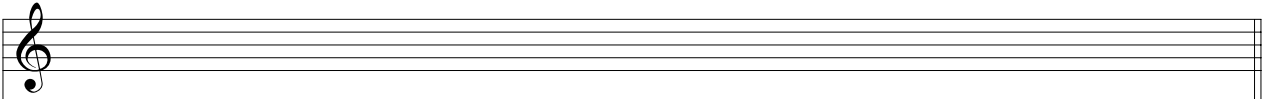


New key:

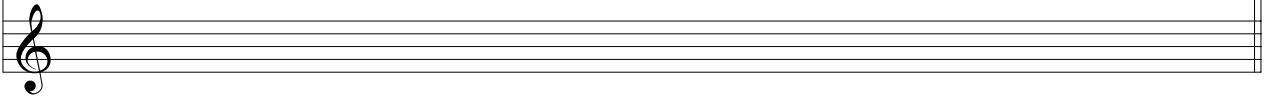


SONG: \_\_\_\_\_

Old key:

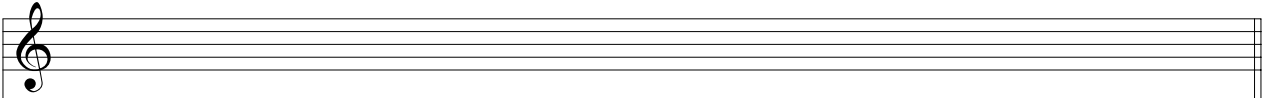


New key:

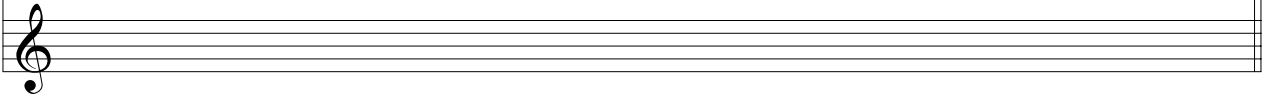


SONG: \_\_\_\_\_

Old key:

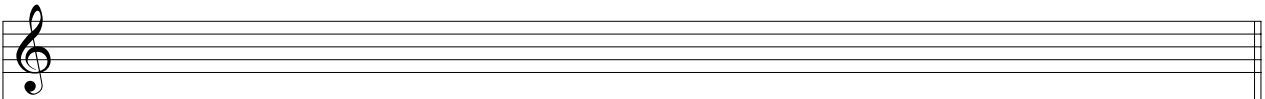


New key:

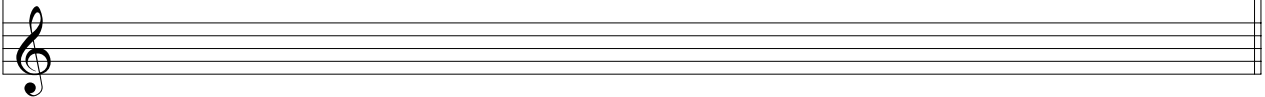


SONG: \_\_\_\_\_

Old key:



New key:



Here are some examples of what to say to the band and what to write on the chart or on a “post-it.” These are what I call “stock arrangements” or common arrangements that always work.

### Swing

What to say: *“I’d like to do Autumn Leaves, in D minor, swing, with an 8-bar intro, piano solo and a tag ending.”*

What to write: Autumn Leaves – D minor  
(Swing)  
8-bar intro  
Piano solo  
Tag ending

### Ballads

What to say: *“I’d like to do Body & Soul as a ballad, in A flat. Please give me a 4-bar intro, then I’d like a piano solo to the bridge and a ritardando ending.”*

What to write: Body & Soul – Ab  
(Ballad)  
4-bar intro  
Piano solo to bridge  
Rit. ending

### Latin Songs

What to say: *“I’d like to do A Night In Tunisia, Latin, in G, vamp intro, piano solo and a vamp ending.”*

What to write: A Night In Tunisia – G  
(Latin)  
vamp intro  
Piano solo  
vamp ending

Instead of writing the arrangement on the chart, I suggest writing it on a “sticky” or “post-it” because you may not want to do the same arrangement each time.

## THE 12-BAR BLUES

One of the most common forms that jazz musicians improvise over is the blues. There are many kinds of blues, but the 12 bar blues is the most common form.

The best way to get acquainted with the blues is to learn as many of the songs written over the 12-bar form as possible. Some suggested blues tunes are *Now's the Time*, *Billie's Bounce*, *Centerpiece*, *Bag's Groove*, *Blue Monk*, *Straight No Chaser*, *Au Privave*, and *Route 66*. Singers who already improvise over blues should ask themselves how many blues "heads" (melodies) they know accurately. If the answer is two or three, they need to learn several more. Most blues heads came out of improvisations. Singing them is a good way to experience the feeling of swing and to assimilate new ideas.

### TRACK 15



An exercise that can also be performed in concert is what I call *Blues Collage*. It's a great way to work on accuracy and independence. One singer starts by singing a blues head *a cappella*. That vocalist continues singing it and another singer is added with another blues head until there are 4-6 going simultaneously. It isn't easy at first, but when you listen to this, you can't help but improvise. It is a great way to absorb bebop ideas and learn how to articulate lines.

This is the chord progression for a very basic blues in F:

F7                      B $\flat$ 7                      F7

B $\flat$ 7                      F7

C7                      B $\flat$ 7                      F7                      (C7)

This is another blues progression in F that is commonly used in jazz:

F7                      B $\flat$ 7                      F7

B $\flat$ 7                      F7                      D7

G7                      C7                      F7                      (D7 G7 C7)

## RHYTHM CHANGES

The second most common chord changes played in jazz (the 12-bar blues being first) are those from Gershwin's *I've Got Rhythm*. The Form is AABA.

### 1st "A" section

**A** B $\flat$ 6 G7( $\flat$ 9) Cm7 F7 B $\flat$ 6 G7( $\flat$ 9) Cm7 F7

B $\flat$ 6 B $\flat$ 7/D E $\flat$ 6 E $\flat$ dim7 Dm7 G7( $\flat$ 9) Cm7 F7

### 2nd "A" section

**B** B $\flat$ 6 G7( $\flat$ 9) Cm7 F7 B $\flat$ 6 G7( $\flat$ 9) Cm7 F7

B $\flat$ 6 B $\flat$ 7/D E $\flat$ 6 E $\flat$ dim7 Dm7 G7( $\flat$ 9) B $\flat$ 6

### "B" section (Bridge)

**C** D7 G7

C7 F7

### 3rd "A" section

**D** B $\flat$ 6 G7( $\flat$ 9) Cm7 F7 B $\flat$ 6 G7( $\flat$ 9) Cm7 F7

B $\flat$ 6 B $\flat$ 7/D E $\flat$ 6 E $\flat$ dim7 Dm7 G7( $\flat$ 9) B $\flat$ 6

In the 30s jazz musicians found these changes great to play over, and many heads or songs have been written based on these changes (Sonny Rollins' *Oleo*, Duke Ellington's *Cottontail*, and Charlie Parker's *Anthropology*, to name a few). Although more instrumental than vocal, these changes provide excellent vehicles for singers to cultivate improvisational skills. Again, as in studying the blues, I suggest that singers learn as many "rhythm changes" heads as possible and use minus-one recordings to practicing soloing.

# IMPROV WARM-UP *Jay Clayton*

TRACK 21



For this exercise assign some singers to read #1 down and some singers to simultaneously read #2. The only rule is that the singers must stay in the “short percussive section” (which is the only section sung in tempo) until everyone in both groups is there. After all singers have been singing in this percussion section for a while they move on either by a cue or at their own discretion.

## #1

15 Short tones

3 Long tones

5 Short tones

• Short percussive section

3 Long tones

Melodic improv section

10 Short tones

2 Long tones

## #2

2 Long tones

10 Short tones

Melodic improv section

3 Long tones

• Short percussive section

5 Short tones

3 Long tones

10 Short tones

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# FORTUNE COOKIE *Jay Clayton*

TRACK 25-26



I originally composed this piece to provide a basis for improvising on a fast walking bass. The first chorus is done rubato. Then the tempo is set up by one person singing the first four bars of the first ending in time. That person is joined by the rest of the band with bass and drums walking and swinging the time. After performing and recording the piece several times with instruments, I started using it in my vocal improvisation workshops and found that it is an excellent vehicle for working on vocal bass lines and improvising over fast tempos.

*first chorus rubato*

The musical score is written in common time (C) and consists of several staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a repeat sign, followed by a long melodic line with a slur. The second staff contains two triplet markings (3) over eighth notes, followed by a long melodic line with a slur. The third staff is a single line of eighth notes. The fourth staff features a long melodic line with a slur, followed by a sequence of eighth notes with a 1/2 note value. The fifth staff continues with eighth notes and a 1/2 note value, including a triplet (3) and another 1/2 note value. The sixth staff is a first ending, marked '1.', consisting of a sequence of eighth notes with a 1/2 note value, ending with a double bar line and repeat sign. Below this is the instruction '(Fast walking bass enters)'. The seventh staff is a second ending, marked '2.', consisting of a few eighth notes and a double bar line. Below this is the instruction 'Last x only'.

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