

# Introduction

The building blocks of all types of music are short fragments, or motives. These motives may be expanded into phrases that express a complete musical idea. In jazz, we call these motives "licks" or "clichés." Sometimes the word "cliché" has a negative connotation, as in "His playing is cliché-ridden!" And, if jazz improvisation is only a series of clichés, this is definitely not good! But all music has its clichés and they are how we recognize jazz, classical, soul, pop and country. In jazz, all artists have their own clichés that make it possible to recognize them individually.

When building a jazz vocabulary, a musician needs a lot of jazz "words." These are motives that are interesting melodically and clearly describe a particular sound or color, such as major, minor, dominant 7th, half-diminished or diminished. These jazz words may be based on arpeggios of a chord or some type of scale motion through the chord. Though it is useful to know the full six-, seven- or eight-note scale that relates to the chord, it is not necessary to use all of the notes to construct motives.

After many years of listening to and playing jazz, I realized that many clichés we all agree sound good come from five-note scales. When these motives are superimposed in the right place on a chord, they zero in on the important part of the sound. This book shows how motives may be developed using only five-note major, minor and diminished scales and how to apply chromatic embellishment to those scales. The "magic" appears when you discover that any motives created from these scales may be superimposed onto a variety of chords with equally good results! When you create a motive based on a five-note minor scale, it may be used 10 different ways. When you use a five-note major scale to create a motive, it may be used 14 different ways!

The various sections of this book discuss and suggest a variety of motives and how to create them. The expansion of motives beyond their five-note range is also discussed as well as chromatic embellishment. A summary of the applications, or superimpositions, of the motives by chord family and scale type is included.

This book is not the answer to everything concerning jazz improvisation. But, it will help you develop a larger vocabulary of jazz "licks" idiomatic to the music and extremely versatile in their application to chords.

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September 2013

# Magic Motives

## Part 1

### Five-Note Minor Scales

#### 1. Applications

Here is a five-note D minor scale shown with chord symbols indicating all of its applications. Note its structure: whole-step, half-step, whole-step, whole-step.

Two staves of musical notation showing the D minor scale (D, E, F, G, A) with various chord symbols above each note. The first staff contains: D-7, G-9, G9, G sus7, and C#7#9. The second staff contains: C sus7, Bø, Eø, FΔ, and BbΔ+11.

Notice where each five-note scale is located in relation to the chord. It's built on the root or 5th of a minor chord, the 5th of a dominant 7th chord, the b9 of an altered dominant chord, the 5th or 9th of a dominant 7th sus4 chord, the 3rd or 7th of a half-diminished chord, and the 3rd or 6th of a major 7th chord. The next example shows the five-note minor scales transposed to apply to C chords of various types. The chord tone on which the scale is built is shown under the first note.

Two staves of musical notation showing the C minor scale (C, D, E, F, G) transposed to various chord types. The first staff contains: C-7 (root 1), C-9 (5th 5), C9 (5th 5), C sus7 (5th 5), and C7#9 (b9 b9). The second staff contains: C sus7 (9 9), Cø (3 3), Cø (7 7), CΔ (6 6), and CΔ+11 (3 3).

Be sure to play each application of the five-note scales. Play the chord on a keyboard and, if you're not a pianist, hold the sustain pedal down and play the related five-note scale over it on your instrument. I think you will agree that the scale sounds equally good in all locations.

# Magic Motives

## Part 2

### Five-Note Major Scales

#### 1. Applications

Here is a five-note C major scale shown with chord symbols indicating all of its applications. Note its structure: whole-step, whole-step, half-step, whole-step.

The image shows three staves of music, each containing five measures of a five-note C major scale. Above each measure is a chord symbol. The first staff contains: C<sup>Δ</sup>, C<sup>7</sup>, B<sup>b</sup>Δ+11, B<sup>b</sup>13, and A-7. The second staff contains: A<sup>b</sup>Δ+5, G sus<sup>7</sup>, G-13, FΔ<sup>9</sup>, and F-Δ. The third staff contains: E7+9, E<sup>∅</sup>, D-11, and D<sup>∅</sup>9.

Notice where each five-note scale is located in relation to the chord. It is built on the root, or 9th, of a major 7th or dominant 7th chord; the 3rd of a minor 7th chord, or major 7th #5 chord; the 4th of a dominant 7th sus4, or minor 7th chord; the 5th of a major 7th, or minor #7 chord; the #5 of an altered dominant 7th; the 6th of a half-diminished chord; and the 7th of a minor 7th, or half-diminished 7th.

The next example shows the five-note major scales transposed to apply to C chords of various types. The chord tone on which the scale is built is shown under the first note.

The image shows three staves of music, each containing five measures of a five-note major scale transposed to fit different C chords. The first staff contains: C<sup>Δ</sup>, C<sup>7</sup>, CΔ13, C13, and C-7. The second staff contains: CΔ+5, C sus<sup>7</sup>, C-13, CΔ<sup>9</sup>, and C-Δ. The third staff contains: C7+9, C<sup>∅</sup>, C-11, and C<sup>∅</sup>9. Below the first note of each measure is a number indicating the chord tone: 1, 1, 9, 9, 3 for the first staff; 3, 4, 4, 5, 5 for the second staff; and #5, 6, 7, 7 for the third staff.

### Charlie's Party Scales

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Charlie's Party Scales musical notation. It consists of three staves of music in 4/4 time. The first staff is in treble clef and contains six measures with chords: FΔ, EØ, A7-9, D-7, G7, C-7, and F7. The second staff is in bass clef and contains six measures with chords: Bb7, Bb-7, Eb7, A-7, D7, Ab-7, and Db7. The third staff is in treble clef and contains six measures with chords: G-7, C7, F7, D7-9, G-7, and C7. Each measure contains a scale of eighth notes.

### Charlie's Party Solo

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Charlie's Party Solo musical notation. It consists of three staves of music in 4/4 time. The first staff is in treble clef and contains six measures with chords: FΔ, EØ, A7-9, D-7, G7, C-7, and F7. The second staff is in bass clef and contains six measures with chords: Bb7, Bb-7, Eb7, A-7, D7, Ab-7, and Db7. The third staff is in treble clef and contains six measures with chords: G-7, C7, F7, D7-9, G-7, and C7. Each measure contains a scale of eighth notes with fingerings indicated below the notes.





# Bass Clef Instrument Chord Progressions

MAJOR – 1 bar each  
Chromatically up then down (5 times)

## Track 14

C<sup>Δ</sup> D<sup>Δ</sup> E<sup>Δ</sup> F<sup>Δ</sup> G<sup>Δ</sup>  
 A<sup>Δ</sup> B<sup>Δ</sup> C<sup>Δ</sup> B<sup>Δ</sup> A<sup>Δ</sup> G<sup>Δ</sup> F<sup>Δ</sup> E<sup>Δ</sup> D<sup>Δ</sup> C<sup>Δ</sup>

MINOR – 2 bars each  
Chromatically up then down (2 times)

## Track 15

C-7 (2 bars) C<sup>♯</sup>-7 (2 bars) D-7 (2 bars) E<sup>b</sup>-7 (2 bars) E-7 (2 bars) F-7 (2 bars)  
 F<sup>♯</sup>-7 (2 bars) G-7 (2 bars) A<sup>b</sup>-7 (2 bars) A-7 (2 bars) B<sup>b</sup>-7 (2 bars) B-7 (2 bars)  
 C-7 (2 bars) B-7 (2 bars) B<sup>b</sup>-7 (2 bars) A-7 (2 bars) A<sup>b</sup>-7 (2 bars) G-7 (2 bars)  
 F<sup>♯</sup>-7 (2 bars) F-7 (2 bars) E-7 (2 bars) E<sup>b</sup>-7 (2 bars) D-7 (2 bars) C<sup>♯</sup>-7 (2 bars) C-7 (2 bars)