

Overview

In Part One of this method, you saw how it is possible to play through chord changes using only the bare bones of R, 5, and 8. With the addition of approach notes, we were able to create some more interesting lines and add some variety to our note choices. In the second part of this method, we will start to use more specific information from the chords we are playing through.

The *third* tells us if a chord is major or minor. Up to this point, the lines we have played have not reflected the major or minor quality of the chords. Using the third makes the bass line sound more "in" with the chord changes. We are now getting more specific with the bass line.

The diagram shows two measures of bass clef notation. The first measure is for a C7 chord, with notes C (R), E (3), G (5), and Bb (b7). The second measure is for a Cm7 chord, with notes C (R), Eb (b3), G (5), and Bb (b7). Below the notes are labels: 'Major Third' for the C7 measure and 'Minor Third' for the Cm7 measure.

The *seventh* is another note that tells you about the quality of a chord. Some chords have a major seventh, which is the seventh from the major scale (one half step below the octave). Other chords have a minor or flat seventh (one whole step below the octave).

The diagram shows two measures of bass clef notation. The first measure is for a Cmaj7 chord, with notes C (R), E (3), G (5), and B (7). The second measure is for a C7 chord, with notes C (R), E (3), G (5), and Bb (b7). Below the notes are labels: 'Major Seventh' for the Cmaj7 measure and 'Minor Seventh' for the C7 measure.

Of course, along with these new note choices will be all the approach notes that came before, upper and lower chromatic, upper and lower dominant, and upper and lower scale. This means we now have every scale note, and every chromatic note available to us. Looking at building our lines this way would be a little confusing, at this point, so it is better to start seeing our bass lines in the larger terms of *motion* and *shape*. This is where the lines start to develop a flowing feel. We will still be using the approach-target concept, but it will be used as part of a developing bigger picture of the shape the bass line will take.

The types of motion we will look at are *scalewise*, *arpeggiation*, and *chromatic motion*. In addition to these, we will also get into targeting other notes besides the root for the first beat of a bar. This will help to free up our lines and make them more melodic and varied. We will also learn other ways to view the II-V structure to help break away from the root-approach method. As a part of the exploration of chromatic motion, advanced approach techniques such as *indirect resolution* will be shown to broaden your options at the point of chord change. By the end of Part Two, you will have been exposed to enough ideas to develop interesting, functional and musical bass lines over standard chord progressions.