

The Importance of Context

While you do not have to have 100% ability with one note ear training, to do this course it is recommended that you have a good grasp of what all 12 notes sound like in a key center. The most important thing to realize about ear training is you need to practice it in multiple contexts in order to make it useful in the many situations in which you will need it. For example, listening to the exercises in the “Ear Training One Note Complete” course where you hear a I IV V I and then a note is one context and listening to a I V I cadence and then four bass notes in this course is yet another context. Another example would be listening to the direct application CDs where a groove is played and you are tested on recognizing pitches while you are playing your instrument. Working through the singing courses is yet another context. All of these exercises have the same goal, and most of the time we need them all. That’s because we learn in one context at a time and only through working with multiple contexts does the mind put it all together. As you develop as a musician you realize that there are multiple ways in which you will apply your ear training skills; you could think of these multiple ways as different contexts. So you can see that not only do you need to practice the ear training in multiple ways you also need to apply it in multiple ways. This is why any ear training course that only offers you one or two different ways to develop your ear training is not coming even close to giving you what you need to develop great aural skills.

How to Approach the Exercises

As with any course of study you have to approach it in the right way. Here are some things to keep in mind: You do not want to listen for a melody when you hear the four bass notes, you want to listen for how each note is functioning within the key center. You will be given a I V I cadence before you hear the four notes. Do not focus on the root note of the key center, just assume you are sufficiently rooted in the key center. You do not want to develop a habit of thinking about the root of a key center you just want to “be” in the key center. One common mistake students make is to try to sing the root of the key. Unfortunately this will only make your key retention weaker so do not say or even think the key center just assume that the chord progression has put you in this key center and start listening for the four notes that will play. These four notes are played at a tempo that should allow you to stay in one key center, so you just want to try to hear each note and identify it in the same fashion as you did when you listened to the one note ear training. If you make a mistake, just listen to the example again to see if you can hear the notes correctly. I also recommend that if you are having problems with a specific four note example that you use the “MetroDrone” to sing those four notes in various key centers. This will help you immensely to hear the example correctly in subsequent listenings. Once you get an example correct you can eliminate that exercise from your listening list.

Conclusion

There are 11,800 examples in this course. You should find that after a few weeks of work you can start to eliminate many of these from your listening list because they are either diatonic to the key of “C” or they are commonly heard bass lines in contemporary music that you have heard many times and therefore already recognize. You will also find through a few weeks of work that you become much more aware of bass lines in general and are able to pick them out of a whole band sound. Through practical application of your bass line ear training you will truly appreciate the structural importance of a bass line

ine within music.