

# 250 Quick Tips for Improvisation

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Here are some tips to help you with improvisation skills. You can find most of these tips in the Chapter Reviews in *The Art of Improvisation* book. The tip categories contain the 7 Elements of Improvisation (Melody, Rhythm, Expression, Development, Chord Progressions, Performance and Analysis) plus others.

## About Improvisation

- 1) Common improvisation myths: You have to be born with it; you need perfect pitch; you can't practice without your instrument; classical music and jazz aren't related.
- 2) Classical and jazz music history have these parallels: Baroque and Dixieland, Classical and Swing, Romantic and Bebop, Impressionist and Cool, and Expressionist and Avant Garde.
- 3) Jazz improvisation is making up music as you perform, choosing notes to fit chords, and communicating through the music you create.
- 4) To improvise, you change the order and range of pitches, use different rhythms and expressions, and repeat or vary groups of notes.
- 5) Weak improvisation can result from playing too high, fast, or loud; or playing too many new ideas too soon; or repeating the same ideas too often.
- 6) Notes = pitches + rhythm + musical expression.
- 7) When you improvise you communicate with yourself, your group, and your audience.
- 8) Jazz improv is like other art forms, such as painting, classical composition, language, standup comedy.

## Creativity and Values

- 9) Improvisation can strengthen the values of discernment, wisdom, integrity, leadership, informed risk-taking, and diversity.
- 10) Improvisation promotes self-expression, creativity, teamwork, and values in life.
- 11) Principles of creativity and improvisation can be understood, learned, and applied.
- 12) Creativity is the art of organizing things or ideas in a useful or unusual way.
- 13) Five steps in the creative process are:
  - A) Visualize what you want to create.
  - B) Plan and design it.
  - C) Understand *what* your building materials and tools are and *how* to use them.
  - D) Solve problems (planning, designing, building).
  - E) Analyze what you create to find improvements.
- 14) Five barriers to creativity include:
  - F) We think there's one way to solve a problem.
  - G) We think our solution must be new and unique, not borrowed or adapted.
  - H) We don't know our materials or tools.
  - I) We build without planning or visualizing.
  - J) Fear and ego interfere in the creative process.
- 15) Improvisation is creating something quickly, with limited planning and materials.

- 16) Improvisation *greatly speeds up* the creative steps so they are executed in seconds or split-seconds, as opposed to minutes or hours.

## Melody

- 17) The Virtual Practice Method helps you practice away from your instrument.
- 18) You can use the circle of 4ths (C F Bb Eb Ab Db F# B E A D G C) to practice scales.
- 19) Flexible scales can start on any scale note and go up and down at will.
- 20) Virtual practice combined with flexible scales provides a powerful practice method.
- 21) Ear training and learning tunes by ear helps you recognize keys and chords quickly, as well as interact better with other musicians.
- 22) You can mix intervals of 3rds and seconds in flexible scales.
- 23) Use SHAPE - "See, Hear, And Play Expressively."
- 24) Don't use PHASE - "Play, Hear, and See Errors."
- 25) Coordinating your musical eyes, your ears, and your fingers helps you properly execute the ideas you imagine.
- 26) "Living in a key" means practicing and playing in that key so much that it feels like home to you.
- 27) You can practice flexible scales with a live rhythm section or with play-along recordings.
- 28) A chord symbol indicates the key and type of the chord, as well as the top note used in the chord.
- 29) Common major chords are the major 7, major 6, and major 9.
- 30) The Lydian scale is like a major scale with a sharp 4th.
- 31) Common dominant chords are the dominant 7 (C7) and dominant 9 (C9).
- 32) The Mixolydian scale, used with a dominant chord, is like a major scale with a flat 7.
- 33) Common minor chords are minor 7 (Cm7), minor 6 (Cm6), and minor 9 (Cm9).
- 34) The Dorian scale, used with minor chords, is like a major scale with a flat 3 and a flat 7.
- 35) Use color tones (2, #4 or 4, 6, and 7) to increase tension and resting tones (1, 3 or b3, and 5) to create relaxation.
- 36) Color tones are the same places (2, 4, 6, and 7) for major, dominant, and minor chords.
- 37) In color intervals, both notes are color notes, and the skip is usually a wide one.
- 38) In major or dominant keys, the 4th degree should usually be resolved to the 3rd, or
- 39) sharpened (#4th). The resolution can also be delayed.
- 40) In minor keys (or in minor arpeggios that occur in major or dominant keys), the 4<sup>th</sup> degree doesn't need to be resolved.
- 41) You can study written music, including transcribed solos, to see how color tones are used and how the 4th degree is handled.
- 42) More scales include pentatonic, blues, Lydian Dominant, minor pentatonic, melodic minor ascending.
- 43) The pentatonic scale has the 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 of major scale.
- 44) The blues scale has the 1, b3, 4, #4, 5, and b7 of a major key.
- 45) The Lydian Dominant scale has the 1, 2, 3, #4, 5, 6, and b7 of a major key.
- 46) The minor pentatonic scale has the 1, b3, 4, 5, and b7 of a major key.
- 47) The melodic minor ascending scale has the 1, 2, b3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 of a major key.

- 48) To handle the natural 7 in minor you can:
  - A) Emphasize it.
  - B) Resolve it to the natural 6th, flat 7th, or root.
  - C) Delay the resolution, such as 7 to 2 to 1.
  - D) Play the natural 7th degree even if the chord symbol shows a flat 7th (such as Cm7).
  - E) Alternate between the natural and flat 7th over a minor 7 chord.
- 49) Accurately naming, hearing, and singing intervals is essential for jazz improvisation.
- 50) You can practice pitches and intervals away from your instrument.
- 51) Wider intervals (4th – 7th) add melodic tension.
- 52) Contours can be ascending, descending, or mixed.
- 53) Visualize ranges and neighborhoods to get effective contours and avoid “sine waves.”
- 54) To flatten a contour, repeat or hold pitches.
- 55) Contours can be extended into high or low ranges.
- 56) A fill can be partial, complete, delayed, or winding.
- 57) Intervals usually fill in the opposite direction from the skip.
- 58) A delayed fill covers one or more notes that were missed in a partial fill.
- 59) A winding has fill notes that alternately descend and ascend, usually in stepwise motion.
- 60) Non-harmonic tones are tones that don't fit in the basic scale (not color tones or resting tones).
- 61) Non-harmonic tones create more tension when played on the beat.
- 62) Non-harmonic tones are effective in a chromatic scale, especially in a narrow range.
- 63) Non-harmonic tones in minor are the b2 (resolves to 2) and natural 3 (resolves to b3 or 4).
- 64) The non-harmonic tone in dominant is the natural 7.
- 65) Natural minor is like a major scale with a b3, b6, and b7.
- 66) Harmonic minor is like a major scale with a b3 and b6.
- 67) In minor, the b6 should usually be resolved to the natural 6.
- 68) Melodic resolution smoothly connects a melody between chords (no-step, 1/2-step, or whole step).
- 69) Melodic resolution avoids stopping just before a new chord or jumping to the root of the new chord.
- 70) Chord anticipation means playing a melody that fits the new chord before the new chord arrives.
- 71) When anticipating the chord, use resting tones (1 3 5) of the new chord; then you can emphasize color tones of the new chord after it arrives.
- 72) Chord delay means repeating a motif from the old chord into the new chord, changing to the new chord somewhat late.
- 73) Pedal is the technique of playing against the old chord and omitting a new chord.
- 74) A soundscape is like a musical landscape that you paint with sound.
- 75) You can get variety in a tune by emphasizing unusual rhythmic styles.
- 76) You can build intensity in a solo through repetition, development, louder dynamics, riffs, high range, held high notes, accelerated rhythms, burning and wiggling, special effects, and outside playing.
- 77) You can lower intensity in a solo through longer rests, less density, lower range, slower rhythms, softer dynamics, and longer notes with expression.
- 78) Conservative improvisation can be valuable in situations that call for light or controlled jazz, such as recording sessions or casuals.

- 79) Outside notes are ones that don't fit in the home key.
- 80) Non-harmonic tones are most outside; active tones are somewhat outside; chord tones are inside.
- 81) In major, the outside keys are across the circle of fourths from the current key; in minor, the outside keys are to the left on the circle of fourths.
- 82) You can use melodic resolution to switch from an inside key to an outside key.
- 83) You can switch between whole-tone scales to play outside (2 flexible scales linked by a half-step).
- 84) Playing consecutive fourths creates an outside sound. The fourths can sometimes be replaced with downward fifths or half-steps, or aug. 4ths.
- 85) Augmented 2nds create an outside, exotic sound.
- 86) Very wide intervals for outside include major 7ths, minor 9ths, aug. 9ths and aug. 11ths.
- 87) An unusual scale has a different structure or unusual intervals (such as aug. 2nds).
- 88) A polytone arpeggio indicates the sound of two unrelated chords, in four or five notes.
- 89) You can sequence and develop outside ideas.
- 90) Scale wandering is the technique of changing keys quickly as you play longer phrases.
- 91) You can use the "middle keys" (those that are only a little outside) during scale wandering.

## Rhythm

- 92) Essential jazz styles are latin, fusion, and swing.
- 93) To emphasize an offbeat, you can accent it, or rest just before the offbeat you want to emphasize, or tie the offbeat into the next downbeat.
- 94) To switch between downbeats and offbeats, insert a note half the value of the consecutive notes.
- 95) Interesting rhythms include short/long note combinations and triplet values.
- 96) Many swing rhythms sound different from how they are written ("optical illusions").
- 97) Quarter-note and quarter-rest values should be subdivided into three eighth-note triplets.
- 98) Swing eighth-notes are uneven. A downbeat eighth-note equals two triplets, while an offbeat eighth-note equals one triplet.
- 99) A swing eighth-note is legato if followed by a note, or staccato if followed by a rest.
- 100) Offbeat swing eighth-notes are usually accented.
- 101) Other guidelines apply to triplets, articulations, and accents for different swing rhythm values.
- 102) Swing eighth-notes are played more evenly at faster tempos or when the "cool" style is played.
- 103) "Laying back" means playing swing rhythms slightly behind the beat.
- 104) Exceptions in swing phrasing include legato quarter-notes, staccato downbeat 8ths, varied triplet articulations, and "backwards" 8ths.
- 105) To play 3 against 4, use
  - A) 3/4 rhythms in 4/4 tunes
  - B) Three-note or six-note contours of eighth-notes.
- 106) To play 4 against 3, use



- C) 4/4 rhythms or four-note contours in 3/4 tunes
  - D) Triplet contours of 2 or 4
  - E) 4-note brackets in 3/4
  - F) Groups of four triplets with two of them tied together.
- 107) In triplet groups you can use rests and ties.
- 108) You can use the Virtual Practice Method to strengthen your rhythmic skills and ideas.
- 109) Jazz fusion is the merging of jazz with other music styles, such as rock, latin, classical, etc.
- 110) Jazz fusion style is characterized by:
- A) Aggressive melodies and rhythms.
  - B) Electric instrumentation, such as synthesizers, amplified horns, and electric bass.
  - C) Odd-meter passages or tunes.
  - D) Be-bop and double-time passages played over rock styles.
  - E) Contrast of modal vamps and advanced harmonies.
  - F) “Outside” improvisation.
- 111) A clave is a short, repeated rhythmic pattern that serves as the rhythmic framework for a tune.
- 112) Other latin rhythms can be played over a clave.
- 113) A montuno is a repeated rhythmic part (vamp) for the rhythm section, usually two, four, or eight bars, played behind a percussion or horn solo.
- 114) When the piano plays a separate rhythmic part in a montuno, that part is called a *guajeo*.
- 115) Double-time feel (or double-time) means playing twice as fast but leaving the chords in their original locations.
- 116) To switch to a double-time feel,
- G) Feel secure quarter-note pulses (orig. tempo).
  - H) Imagine straight 8th-notes (same tempo).
  - I) Think of straight 8th-notes as the quarter-notes of the new double-time tempo.
  - J) In the new tempo, use active rhythms to establish the new double-time.
- 117) To return to single-time, reverse the process.
- 118) Get double-time material from the suggestions in *Using Flexible Scales* in Chapter 1A: *The Virtual Practice Method*. Mix in chromatic notes and slow down the contours. You can also get double-time ideas from recorded solos.
- 119) Multiplying short ideas by two and practicing short fills helps you build double-time skills and ideas.
- 120) Triple-time feel is four times as fast as the original feel (twice as fast as double-time feel).
- 121) To shift to half-time feel,
- A) Think of half-notes in the original tempo.
  - B) Imagine the half-notes as the quarter-notes of the new slower tempo.
  - C) In the new tempo, work for varied rhythms to establish the new half-time feel.
- 122) You can step through rhythm values to make the rhythmic feel appear to speed up or to slow down.
- 123) The basic types of shifted triplets are:
- A) Quarter-note triplets on beat 2 or beat 4.
  - B) Quarter-note triplets shifted by one or two eighth-note triplets
  - C) Half-note triplets shifted by one or two quarter-note triplets (for faster tempos)
  - D) A four-note bracket shifted in 3/4 time

- 124) Unusual triplet groups mix half-note triplets, quarter-note triplets, and 8th-note triplets, usually in groups of 8 or 10 eighth-note triplets.
- 125) Effective ways to use rubato include:
- A) A solo introduction that sets up the tune.
  - B) A cadenza (solo at the start or end of a tune).
  - C) Going off-tempo (rushing or dragging, keeping the off-speed tempo).
  - D) “Burning” (playing controlled notes as fast as you can, regardless of the current tempo).
  - E) “Wiggling” (playing random notes so fast that they are “out of control”).
- 126) You can play 5/4 or 7/4 rhythms against 4/4 time.
- 127) You can use 5- and 7-note groups in contour groups or in brackets.
- 128) To establish a new pulse, repeat the new rhythm pulse enough times until it feels like a new quarter-note pulse. Then subdivide the new pulse into eighth-notes and play off those rhythms.
- 129) Common examples of new pulses are:
- A) Quarter-note triplets in 4/4 (faster)
  - B) Eighth-note triplets in 4/4 (much faster)
  - C) Dotted quarter-notes in 4/4 (slower)
  - D) Dotted half-notes (slower)
  - E) 4-note brackets in 3/4 (faster)
- 130) To return to the original pulse, use a return rhythm that’s the inverse fraction of the new pulse.
- 131) After shifting the pulse you can play rhythms in 3/4, 5/4, or 7/4.
- 132) The most common group shifts are soloist, soloist and one other, or two or three players. The bass player usually stays in the old pulse for reference.

## Expression

- 133) Expression is how you translate emotion into musical elements.
- 134) The basic elements of expression can be described and learned.
- 135) Your ability to use expression depends on your control of sound and technique.
- 136) Effective expression is usually subtle and occasional, varied and well-timed.
- 137) Common tools of expression are dynamics, accents, and articulations.
- 138) Common embellishments include trills, grace notes, turns, and neighbor tones.
- 139) A *trill* occurs when you alternate rapidly between a note and the note above it.
- 140) A wider trill is one that spans a minor third or more, up to an octave.
- 141) A *grace note* is a quicker note played just before one of the notes in a phrase.
- 142) A *turn* is like two stepwise grace notes together.
- 143) A *neighbor tone* is a note that’s a half-step above or below your downbeat target note. It’s played quickly, then you return to the target note.
- 144) Special effects can be used alone or in combinations, but they should not be distracting.
- 145) Wind instrument effects include bends, falls, growls, half-sounds, air and keys, humming, circular breathing, and alternate fingerings.
- 146) Trumpet effects: double- and triple-tonguing, using mutes, pedal tones, and walking bass lines.
- 147) Saxophone effects include overtones and split notes, altissimo playing, and thunks.
- 148) Trombone effects include alternate positions and slides, plus some trumpet effects.
- 149) Keyboard effects: clusters, tremolo, block chords, hammering, strings and pedals, and glissandos.

- 150) Guitar effects: bends and vibrato, tremolo, muted strumming, harmonics, tuning effects, and octaves.
- 151) Bass effects include harmonics, chords, slides, twangs and slaps, wide vibrato, and bowed notes.

## Development

- 152) Development is the art of repeating or varying motifs to build ideas in a solo. There are parallels between classical development and development in jazz improvisation.
- 153) A motif is a group of consecutive notes forming a short musical idea.
- 154) A motif can be repeated, changed a little, changed more, or completely changed.
- 155) In a motif, it's easiest to remember the ending, wide intervals, articulations, or accents.
- 156) A phrase is a group of one or more separate or joined motifs, somewhat like a sentence in writing.
- 157) To smoothly connect motifs, start the next motif on the same pitch, a step above or below, or a ninth above or below the end of the previous phrase.
- 158) Use a variety of phrase lengths; don't always end phrases in the same spots.
- 159) Economizing on phrases and eliminating phrase barriers helps you create more interesting melodies.
- 160) The basic ways to expand an interval are:
  - A) Raise the top note or lower the bottom note.
  - B) Raise the top note *and* lower the bottom note.
  - C) Raise both notes.
  - D) Lower both notes (top note by a step, bottom note by more).
- 161) The basic ways to shrink an interval are:
  - A) Lower the top note.
  - B) Raise the bottom note.
  - C) Lower the top note *and* raise the bottom note.
- 162) You can omit notes from the end of a motif.
- 163) A melodic pattern is a group of sequenced motifs.
- 164) Patterns should be used as a development tool, not as a crutch for lack of ideas.
- 165) A sequence repeats a motif, usually starting on a different pitch.
- 166) Basic types of sequences are diatonic, transposed, and semi-sequences.
- 167) Typical transposing patterns include chromatic, whole-step, thirds, and fourths.
- 168) In a linked pattern, the last note of the motif is a step away from the first note of the sequence.
- 169) In a "pulling" pattern, the pattern moves in the opposite direction from the sequence's contour.
- 170) You can use rhythmic variety in patterns, such as alternate rhythms, varied rhythms between sequences, and offset sequences.
- 171) An offset pattern starts off the beat, such as the "and" of 1 or the "and" of 4.
- 172) A short pattern has two or three beats and may have a varied rhythm, offset contour, etc.
- 173) You can add notes to the end, beginning, or middle of a motif.
- 174) You can invert the contour of a motif, with exact or changed intervals.
- 175) Retrograde is a melody played backwards, with the same rhythm.
- 176) To augment a rhythm, double it or add another amount to it.
- 177) To compress a rhythm, halve it or subtract a different amount from it.

- 178) You can fragment a motif by playing part of it, resting in the middle of it, playing the next part, etc.
- 179) To displace a motif, repeat it 5 beats later, 3 beats later, 4 1/2 beats later, or 3 1/2 beats later.
- 180) A quote is all or part of the melody of a well-known song played in your solo.
- 181) A varied quote changes the melody of a well-known song in your solo.
- 182) A riff is a short, fast, motif (one- or two-part) that is repeated several times.
- 183) You can repeat a riff exactly or change it by altering pitches, sequencing, or inserting notes in repetitions.
- 184) Riff transitions are effective when you enter the riff smoothly, exit smoothly, or hook two riffs together.
- 185) You can combine two different development techniques in a motif or phrase.
- 186) You can use “markers” to help you spot and remember likely material for development .

## Chord Progressions

- 187) You can use Roman numerals to designate how each chord belongs to a key.
- 188) Three ways to recognize the key of a chord progression are:
  - A) Check the key signature of the tune.
  - B) Look for a major chord that might be the I chord or IV chord.
  - C) Look for a minor chord that might start the ii-V-I of the key.
- 189) Chords that belong to a single key can be simplified by playing a I scale over them all.
- 190) Simplifying chords too often loses color tones and limits harmonic strength in solos.
- 191) Almost every jazz tune has the following elements:
  - A) Introduction (usually not the main progression)
  - B) Main melody (A section)
  - C) Contrasting melody or bridge (B section)
  - D) Solos that repeat the A and B sections with improv instead of the original melody
  - E) Ending (return of main melody and sometimes a coda).
- 192) A *lead sheet* contains the melody, chords, and “road signs” for the tune.
- 193) One of the challenges of the AABA form is keeping track of when to play the B section, especially in modal tunes with only one chord per section.
- 194) A common tune form is AABA, which includes the “I Got Rhythm” progression.
- 195) Other common tune forms are AB, ABC, and ABAC.
- 196) Dominant alterations add energy to dominant chords. The most common dominant alterations are the -5, +5, -9, and +9.
- 197) You can add alterations to any dominant chord, but don’t naturalize alterations.
- 198) Scales that work well for altered dominant chords include:
  - A) Whole-tone (C D E F# G# Bb C)
  - B) Diminished-1 (C Db Eb E F# G A Bb C)
  - C) Diminished-whole-tone (C Db Eb E F# G# Bb C).
- 199) The whole-tone scale contains all whole-steps.
- 200) In minor keys, the ii chord is a half-diminished 7, such as Dm7-5. The dominant chord in minor has a flat 9, such as G7-9.
- 201) A minor ii-V-i progression can use a harmonic minor scale for all three chords.
- 202) Diminished chords contain all minor third intervals.



- 203) A diminished 7th chord usually resolves up a half step from the root, but can also resolve up a half-step from any of its chord tones.
- 204) A diminished-1 scale alternates half-steps and whole-steps.
- 205) The diminished-whole-tone scale goes half-step, whole-step, half-step, then all whole-steps.
- 206) You can memorize tune melodies and chord progressions away from your instrument.
- 207) To memorize chord progressions, use these steps:
  - A) Add bass “cheater” notes between each chord.
  - B) Starting on a given pitch, sing or hum the roots and bass cheater notes from start to finish of the tune. End on the same pitch as at first.
  - C) Add arpeggios (1 3 5 3 1) to the root tones, so you hear the chords along with the bass.
  - D) Mix arpeggios (such as 1 5 3 1), then add some color tones or flexible scale notes for variety.
  - E) Looking at the chord progression, sing or hum a simple improvised solo, keeping in mind what you’ve learned in the previous steps.
  - F) Improvise through the tune without looking at the chord progression.
- 208) You can build a virtual rhythm section in your mind to help you improvise away from your instrument or recordings.
- 209) Unaccompanied improv is a musical adventure that depends on hearing a virtual rhythm section in your head, and playing wisely and under control.
- 210) A V chord can resolve to a new I chord by moving down a half-step, or up or down an augmented 4th.
- 211) A V chord can also resolve to a substitute I chord, such as the vi or iii.
- 212) ii-V-I progressions can be chained together to modulate to another key. The interval between each progression can be random or parallel.
- 213) ii-V progressions and V-I progressions can be chained together to modulate to another key.
- 214) V-I progressions usually start in an even-numbered position (halfway through a bar if there are two chord per bar, or on an even-numbered bar if there’s one chord per bar).
- 215) Consecutive major, minor, or dominant chords can be used to modulate quickly.
- 216) A turnaround is a special way to add chords to a progression so that you get back to (“turn around” to) a certain starting place.
- 217) To fill in a turnaround progression, work backward from the final resolution chord.
- 218) Two common ways to add chords to a progression are chromatically and around the circle of 4ths.
- 219) You can create altered blues progressions by substituting ii-V’s, V-I’s, and turnarounds.
- 220) Static playing (avoiding ii-V-I’s) can be helpful to draw attention away from harmony and towards the basic key, style, rhythms, and expression in a solo.

## Performance

- 221) Important skills in a jazz group are time, balance and dynamics, chord reading, styles and rhythmic ideas, and interaction and teamwork.
- 222) The basic rhythm section roles are chords, bass, and drums.

- 223) The tune melody player should get a good dynamic balance with the other players and demonstrate imagination in pitches, rhythms, and expression when playing the melody.
- 224) To build an effective set of tunes for a jazz combo performance, follow these steps:
- A) Decide the best length for each tune set.
  - B) Decide the average length for each tune. This depends on the styles of tunes you'll play or the number of solos in each tune.
  - C) Figure the average time between tunes and add that to the average tune length.
  - D) Figure the number of tunes in the set.
  - E) Select tunes with a balance of different styles.
  - F) Put the tunes in a balanced performance order.
  - G) Mark one or two tunes as lower priority so they can be skipped if the set is taking longer than planned. Have a tune or two ready as backups.
- 225) Use mini-tunes, cadenzas, segues, interludes, and good solo orders in tune sets.
- 226) Use variety in the number of solos per tune, the order of solos, and the length of solos.
- 227) When appropriate, talk with the audience, especially in informal or interactive concerts.
- 228) Relaxed concentration helps you see creative possibilities and execute cleanly.
- 229) Understand different kinds of listeners, then share your music with them.
- 230) Performance tips include:
- A) Develop a good stage presence.
  - B) Hear and see what you need for improvisation.
  - C) Play under control.
  - D) Play rhythms securely.
  - E) Play pitches securely.
  - F) Play solo breaks cleanly.
  - G) Don't be distracted by audience reactions.
- 231) Group interaction depends on everyone accurately hearing the musical ideas.
- 232) Basic ways to communicate in solos are:
- A) Play something against (contrary to) the idea.
  - B) Play under the idea (background).
  - C) Copy the idea.
  - D) Alter part of the idea.
- 233) For variety in solo formats, try half solos, trading bars, background riffs, multiple soloists, solo fills, and effective solo endings and transitions.
- 234) Style shifts by one or more players can increase the variety in the tune.
- 235) Common duet combinations: a) chords and bass, b) horn or vocalist and chords, and c) two chords.
- 236) Common trio combinations: a) chords, bass, and drums, b) horn (or vocalist), chords, and bass, c) two chords and bass, and d) horn, bass, and drums.
- 237) In duets or trios, players can sometimes switch basic roles.
- 238) Accurate time and form are essential in duets and trios, especially with no drums.
- 239) Professionalism and musical sensitivity on a gig increases your demand as a soloist.

## Analysis

- 240) You can improve your solos in melody, rhythm, expression, and development.
- 241) Record your solos and listen to them to find strengths and weaknesses.

- 242) Your melodies should fit the chords, using color tones when appropriate.
- 243) Your rhythms should be secure, should mix downbeats and offbeats, and should use variety.
- 244) Your expression should use dynamics, accents, and articulations with imagination and taste, with a secure foundation in sound and technique.
- 245) Your developments should use secure motifs that move from slight contrast to more contrast.
- 246) When you listen to other artists' solos, analyze their overall use of musical elements.
- 247) You can examine high-level and low-level information in written solos.
- 248) To analyze a written solo:
- A) Select an appropriate written solo.
  - B) Find the overall form to the tune and mark the tune's sections.
  - C) Find and mark the motifs and developments.
  - D) Mark other interesting spots in the tune that use rhythmic tools, expression, etc.
- 249) The basic transcription skills you need are:
- A) Organize the solo into bars and choruses.
  - B) Recognize the chords, if necessary.
  - C) Recognize pitches and intervals.
  - D) Notate rhythms correctly.
- 250) The steps in transcribing a recorded solo are:
- A) Select a recorded solo on CD or cassette.
  - B) Outline the form and chords of the solo.
  - C) Sketch the rhythm figures in the solo.
  - D) Add the pitches and indicate any significant expression or effects in the solo.