

Berklee**Shares.com**TM

FREE music lessons from
Berklee College of Music

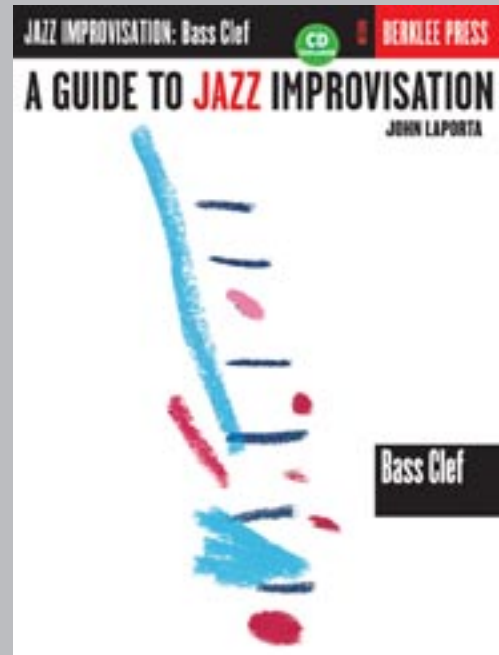
**A Guide to Jazz Improvisation:
Bass Clef**

John LaPorta

Lesson 1

Click CD icons to listen to
CD tracks from book.
Press ESC to cancel sound.

Check out Berkleeshares.com for more lessons
just like this one.



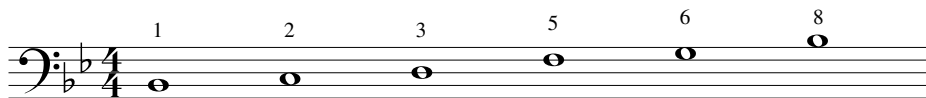
LESSON 1



Tuning note: B \flat Concert

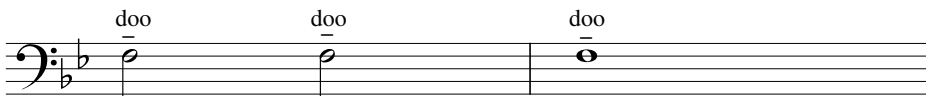
THEORY

B \flat Pentatonic Scale (five-note scale starting on B \flat)



Legato-Staccato (smooth attack)

The note is attacked but not cut off. The attack of the succeeding note cuts off the current note. The articulated vowel sound for this would be “doo-doo.”



Study in Legato-Staccato



Swinging Eighth Notes

Eighth notes are often played as triplets.

Written



Played (swinging)



Workshop 1

Write and play eight- and twelve-measure melodies using the B \flat pentatonic scale, legato-staccato articulation, and swinging eighth notes.

Workshop 2

1. Practice legato-staccato articulations on major scales, chromatic scales, and any other music selections of your choice.
2. Write and play at least two original (eight-measure) melodies. Use the pentatonic scale and refer to the exercises below as guides.

Five Note Scale Exercise 1

Five Note Scale Exercise 2

2 RHYTHM TRAINING

Listen to CD Track 2.

1. **Echo.** Repeat each rhythm pattern you hear exactly as it sounds on the recording.

Recorded rhythm

You play (echo)

2. **Answer.** Answer each rhythm pattern you hear with your own improvised rhythm.

Recorded rhythm

You play (improvised answer)

Note: The figure above is a suggested illustration. You may play any rhythmic idea you wish.

2. **Answer.** Answer each motive you hear with your own improvised motive. Try to use varied rhythms and combinations of notes.

Recorded melody



You play (improvised answer)



Note: The melodic idea written above is a suggested illustration. You may play any melodic idea you wish. Your melodies should be derived from combinations of notes taken from the B \flat pentatonic scale.

For the two-measure melodic motives below:

1. **Memorize.** Practice each motive until you can play it without looking at the music.
2. **Compose.** Write at least four of your own melodic motives. Play and memorize these as well.
3. **Improvise/Transcribe.** Invent at least four of your own motives by ear, memorize them, and then write them down.

Challenge

With another player, try the following:

1. **Reading call-and-response.** Player 1 plays one of the above motives. Player 2 repeats it without looking at the music. Then switch roles.
2. **Improvising call-and-response.** Player 1 improvises a two-measure motive. Player 2 repeats it. Then switch roles.

4 PERFORMANCE

1. Learn the melody as written.
2. Play along with the recording. Try to capture the same manner of phrasing and style of playing.

A Section. Head. Full ensemble.

- Melody for 16 measures (2 choruses)

B Section. You solo.

- 16 measures
- Use combinations of notes derived from the G pentatonic scale to create your solo.

C Section. Recorded solo.

- 8 measures

D Section. You solo.

- 8 measures
- Use the G pentatonic scale.
- At *D.C. al Fine*, return to letter A.

A Section (repeat). Head.

- Melody for 7 measures

Note: When taking a D.C. al fine, a repeated section is only played once unless directed otherwise. *D.C.* (Da Capo) means go back to the beginning. *Fine* indicates the final ending.

ORIGIN

Moderately

A

mf

Fine

B You solo: B^b pentatonic

C Recorded solo
8

D You solo: B^b pentatonic

D.C. al Fine

Slash marks (////) mean “improvise here.” One / lasts for one beat.

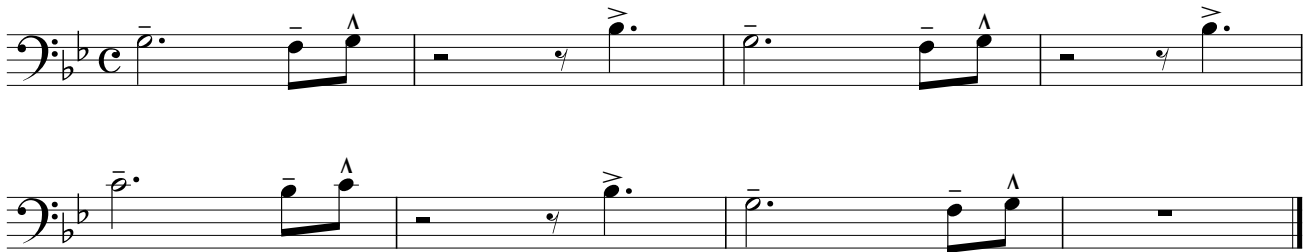
Backgrounds for "Origin"

Backgrounds are musical figures played to support a soloist.

1. Memorize the following riff patterns and use them as a basis for your own improvisations.
2. Alternate background riffs and improvisations. In each pattern, play the first two measures, and then substitute your own two-measure improvisation. Play measures 5–6 as written, then substitute your own improvisation for measures 7–8. Then do the set again, but start with your own improvised solo. Repeat the pattern.
3. Frame your improvisation. In each pattern, play the first part of the riff (measures 1–2), then substitute measures 3–6 with your own improvised solo, then play the last part of the riff (measures 7–8) as written. Repeat the pattern.
4. Improvise your own eight-measure riff patterns using the B \flat pentatonic scale. Transcribe the recorded solos from the CD by writing them down or playing along with the recording.

Use the above procedures for improvising solos with the CD.

Background 1



Background 2

