

The Art of Improvisation and Ear Training

The Art of Improvisation is an improvisation method, right? You'd be surprised at how much of an ear training method it is as well, because improvisation and ear training really are complementary skills. Flexible scales and virtual practice form a powerful ear-training base for learning to improvise.

But in addition to its focus on ear training, The Art of Improvisation is also a *vision* training method. Once you *see* where you are headed, it's much easier to *hear* where you're headed. Vision and ear training are also complementary skills.

Here are the chapters in The Art of Improvisation that deal specifically with vision training and ear training. Note that ear training includes not only pitch skills but rhythm and harmony skills as well.

Vision Training Chapter

1A: The Virtual Practice Method
1D: Rhythmic Variety
1E: Practice Levels for Flexible Scales
1F: Using Expression
2B: Melodic Shapes
3E: Melodic Patterns
4A: Soundscapes

Skills

SHAPE (See, Hear, and Play Expressively)
Visualizing rhythms and rhythmic combinations
Seeing new directions in flexible scales, leading to improv
Using SHAPE to add a new dimension in expression
Seeing ranges and neighborhoods of pitches in your solos
Using SHAPE to generate interesting melodic patterns
Visualizing solos in a landscape metaphor

Ear Training Chapter

1A: The Virtual Practice Method
1B: Chords and Scales
1D: Rhythmic Variety
1E: Practice Levels for Flexible Scales
2A: More Scales
2B: Melodic Shapes
2C: Swing Rhythms
3B: Melodic Connections
3L: Learning Standard Tunes
4L: Transcribing Solos

Skills

Virtual practice: learning scales, intervals, arpeggios by ear
Learning flexible major and dominant scales and chords
Virtual practice for rhythmic skills
Increased ability to hear and choose notes and directions
Learning new flexible scales and chords
Hearing intervals, playing tunes by ear, transposing tunes
Internalizing the swing rhythm subdivisions
Hear how to connect smoothly from chord to chord
Virtual practice to hear chord progressions in your mind
Melodic and rhythmic dictation practice for transcribing