

## Skills for the 7 Elements

The seven elements of improvisation (MR ED, CPA) have associated skills. Here is a list of skills you will learn in *The Art of Improvisation*, arranged in approximate order from easy to advanced, by each of the seven elements. Corresponding chapters in *The Art of Improvisation* are listed for each skill. The exercises in the book help you master these skills one by one, and they provide extra variations to deepen your skill mastery.

You can use this as a checklist for your own development or to monitor the progress of your jazz students. When a skill is sufficiently demonstrated, mark it with a check in the blank at the left. The list also acts as a reminder for skills you may be forgetting in your solos, or as a pick-me-up when you get in an improvisation rut.

Melody Skills	AOI Chapter
1. <input type="checkbox"/> Learn to use the virtual practice method.	1A
2. <input type="checkbox"/> Hum/sing the 12 major flexible scales.	1A
3. <input type="checkbox"/> Explain and use SHAPE in your practice.	1A
4. <input type="checkbox"/> Identify & hum all 12 intervals in the chromatic scale.	1A
5. <input type="checkbox"/> Hum/sing the Ma7 & Ma9 arpeggios in all keys.	1B
6. <input type="checkbox"/> Hum/sing the 12 flexible Lydian scales.	1B
7. <input type="checkbox"/> Hum/sing the Dom7 arpeggios in all keys.	1B
8. <input type="checkbox"/> Hum/sing the 12 flexible Mixolydian scales.	1B
9. <input type="checkbox"/> Hum/sing the Min7 arpeggios in all keys.	1B
10. <input type="checkbox"/> Hum/sing the 12 flexible Dorian scales.	1B
11. <input type="checkbox"/> Find & play color tones in all major, dom, minor keys.	1C
12. <input type="checkbox"/> Resolve the 4th degree in major and dominant.	1C
13. <input type="checkbox"/> With flexible scales, hold color notes (level 2).	1E
14. <input type="checkbox"/> With flexible scales, play new rhythms (level 3).	1E
15. <input type="checkbox"/> With flexible scales, play 3rd skips (level 4).	1E
16. <input type="checkbox"/> With flex scales, play 3rd skips, new rhythms (level 5).	1E
17. <input type="checkbox"/> With flexible scales, use wider intervals (level 6).	1E
18. <input type="checkbox"/> With flex scales, use 3rds, rhythms, wide int. (level 7).	1E
19. <input type="checkbox"/> Hum/sing the 12 flexible pentatonic scales.	2A
20. <input type="checkbox"/> Hum/sing the 12 flexible expanded blues scales.	2A
21. <input type="checkbox"/> Hum/sing the 12 flexible Lydian Dominant scales.	2A
22. <input type="checkbox"/> Hum/sing the 12 flexible minor pentatonic scales.	2A
23. <input type="checkbox"/> Hum/sing the 12 flexible melodic minor asc. scales.	2A
24. <input type="checkbox"/> Resolve the 7th in minor effectively.	2A
25. <input type="checkbox"/> Play simple tunes by ear in an easy key.	2B
26. <input type="checkbox"/> Transpose simple tunes into all keys.	2B
27. <input type="checkbox"/> Learn to play in range neighborhoods.	2B
28. <input type="checkbox"/> Switch ranges quickly and effectively.	2B
29. <input type="checkbox"/> Flatten melodic contours effectively.	2B
30. <input type="checkbox"/> Use outer ranges effectively.	2B
31. <input type="checkbox"/> Use 2-note and 4-note offset contours.	2B
32. <input type="checkbox"/> Use partial and complete fills in a phrase.	2B
33. <input type="checkbox"/> Use delayed fills in a phrase	2B
34. <input type="checkbox"/> Use winding fills in a phrase.	2B
35. <input type="checkbox"/> Play and resolve non-harmonic tones in major keys.	3A
36. <input type="checkbox"/> Play/resolve offbeat non-harmonic tones	3A
37. <input type="checkbox"/> Use chromatic scale passages effectively.	3A

38. ___ Play & resolve non-harmonic tones, minor/dominant.	3A
39. ___ Hum/sing the 12 flexible harmonic minor scales.	3A
40. ___ Hum/sing the 12 flexible natural minor scales.	3A
41. ___ Hum/sing the 12 flexible whole-tone scales.	3K
42. ___ Hum/sing the 12 flexible diminished arpeggios.	3K
43. ___ Hum/sing the 12 flexible diminished-1 scales.	3K
44. ___ Hum/sing the 12 flex diminished-whole-tone scales.	3K
45. ___ Balance sound and silence effectively in solos.	4A
46. ___ Build and lower intensity effectively in solos	4A
47. ___ Recognize outside keys in major and minor.	5A
48. ___ Transition in and out of outside keys, major & minor.	5A
49. ___ Use and switch whole-tone scales to play outside.	5A
50. ___ Use consecutive fourths to play outside.	5B
51. ___ Mix consecutive/augmented fourths to play outside.	5B
52. ___ Use augmented seconds to play outside.	5B
53. ___ Use very wide intervals to play outside.	5B
54. ___ Use unusual scales to play outside.	5B
55. ___ Use polytone arpeggios to play outside.	5B
56. ___ Sequence and develop outside ideas.	5B
57. ___ Use scale-wandering to play outside.	5B
58. ___ Build Matrix components for your outside melody.	5H
59. ___ Move Matrix components for your outside melody.	5H

### Rhythm Skills

### AOI Chapter

60. ___ Find and play all downbeat and offbeat 8ths.	1D
61. ___ Play consecutive offbeat quarter-notes.	1D
62. ___ Play consecutive offbeat half-note values.	1D
63. ___ Shift effectively from downbeats to offbeats and back.	1D
64. ___ Play interesting rhythms.	1D
65. ___ Play interesting rhythm combinations.	1D
66. ___ Divide swing quarters & eighth values into 8th triplets.	2C
67. ___ Divide other swing rhythm values into 8th triplets.	2C
68. ___ Use the correct articulations for swing rhythms.	2C
69. ___ Use the correct accents for swing rhythms.	2C
70. ___ Learn to use the variations of standard swing rhythms.	2C
71. ___ Play 3/4 rhythms in 4/4 tunes.	2D
72. ___ Use 3-note and 6-note contours in melodies.	2D
73. ___ Use triplet contours of 2 and 4 in melodies.	2D
74. ___ Play 4/4 rhythms in 3/4 tunes.	2D
75. ___ Play 4-note contours in 3/4 tunes.	2D
76. ___ Play 4-quarter brackets in 3/4 tunes.	2D
77. ___ Identify and play the basic Latin clave rhythms.	3D
78. ___ Use a variety of rhythmic approaches to tune styles.	4A
79. ___ Create solid double-time material for solos.	4B
80. ___ Get in and out of double-time passages smoothly.	4B
81. ___ Use triplets in double-time passages.	4B
82. ___ Play triple-time passages effectively.	4B
83. ___ Play half-time passages effectively.	4B
84. ___ Step through rhythms, slower to faster.	5C
85. ___ Step through rhythms, faster to slower.	5C
86. ___ Play shifted triplets in your melodies.	5C
87. ___ Create and use unusual triplet groups.	5C

- 88. \_\_ Use rubato techniques in your melodies. 5D
- 89. \_\_ Play off-tempo effectively. 5D
- 90. \_\_ Use burning and wiggling techniques in your solos. 5D
- 91. \_\_ Play 5/4 or 5/8 rhythms in a 4/4 tune. 5D
- 92. \_\_ Play contour groups of 5. 5D
- 93. \_\_ Play brackets of 5 quarters in 4/4. 5D
- 94. \_\_ Play 7/4 or 7/8 rhythms in a 4/4 tune. 5D
- 95. \_\_ Play contour groups of 7. 5D
- 96. \_\_ Play brackets of 5 quarters in 4/4. 5D
- 97. \_\_ Use triplet pulses to shift to a new metric feel. 5D
- 98. \_\_ Use non-triplet pulses to shift to a new metric feel. 5D

**Expression Skills**

**AOI Chapter**

- 99. \_\_ Use effective dynamics in short passages. 1F
- 100. \_\_ Use effective accents in short passages. 1F
- 101. \_\_ Use effective articulations in short passages. 1F
- 102. \_\_ Play narrow and wide trills in melodies. 2E
- 103. \_\_ Play grace notes and neighbor tones in melodies. 2E
- 104. \_\_ Play turns in melodies. 2E
- 105. \_\_ Use special effects appropriately for your instrument. 4C

**Development Skills**

**AOI Chapter**

- 106. \_\_ Play a motif and vary it slightly, then more. 1G
- 107. \_\_ Develop an earlier motif in your solo passage. 1G
- 108. \_\_ Connect motifs (step, 7th, octave or 9th) into a phrase. 1G
- 109. \_\_ End phrases in a variety of places in the bar. 1G
- 110. \_\_ Customize tune melodies. 1H
- 111. \_\_ Expand intervals in melodies. 2F
- 112. \_\_ Shrink intervals in melodies. 2F
- 113. \_\_ Develop motifs by adding or omitting notes. 2F
- 114. \_\_ Invert contours in melodies. 2F
- 115. \_\_ Build a pattern using diatonic sequences. 3E
- 116. \_\_ Build a pattern using transposed sequences. 3E
- 117. \_\_ Build a pattern using semi-sequences. 3E
- 118. \_\_ Build a pattern using linked sequences. 3E
- 119. \_\_ Build a pattern with longer sequences & new rhythms. 3E
- 120. \_\_ Build a pulling pattern. 3E
- 121. \_\_ Build a pattern with non-harmonic tones. 3E
- 122. \_\_ Build an offset pattern. 3E
- 123. \_\_ Build a pattern with shorter sequences. 3E
- 124. \_\_ Develop a motif by augmenting its rhythm. 3F
- 125. \_\_ Develop a motif by compressing its rhythm. 3F
- 126. \_\_ Develop a motif by fragmentation. 3F
- 127. \_\_ Develop a motif by displacing it rhythmically. 3F
- 128. \_\_ Use direct and varied quotes in your solos. 4C
- 129. \_\_ Build and play simple riff passages. 4D
- 130. \_\_ Vary riffs as you repeat them. 4D
- 131. \_\_ Use smooth transitions into and out of riffs. 4D
- 132. \_\_ Combine basic development techniques in solos. 4D

**Chord Progression Skills**

**AOI Chapter**

133. __	Write Roman Numerals for chords in C major.	1J
134. __	Recognize the key center in basic written progressions.	1J
135. __	Write basic 12-bar blues progressions in all keys.	1J
136. __	Build ii-V-I progressions in all keys.	1J
137. __	Preface ii-V-I progressions in all keys.	1J
138. __	Use 3-7-3 and 7-3-7 to connect ii-V-I chords.	1J
139. __	Simplify ii-V-I's in tunes.	1J
140. __	Recognize and navigate common tune forms.	2K
141. __	Use melodic resolution in major keys.	3B
142. __	Use melodic resolution in minor and dominant keys.	3B
143. __	Use chord anticipation effectively.	3B
144. __	Use chord delay effectively.	3B
145. __	Find/play the alterations for dominant chords, all keys.	3K
146. __	Write Roman Numerals for chords in C minor.	3K
147. __	Build a bass cheater line for a given standard tune.	3L
148. __	Hum bass cheater lines for standard tunes.	3L
149. __	Add arpeggio tones to bass cheater lines.	3L
150. __	Learn standard tunes and practice them virtually.	3L
151. __	Create and use turnaround chords in blues.	4F
152. __	Insert stepwise chords into a progression.	4F
153. __	Learn and play altered blues progressions.	4F
154. __	Play statically over a given chord.	4F
155. __	Build and play tri-tone substitutions in all keys.	4G
156. __	Resolve V chords to alternate I chords.	4G
157. __	Create ii-V-I chains.	4G
158. __	Create ii-V chains.	4G
159. __	Create V-I chains.	4G

### Performance Skills

### AOI Chapter

160. __	In a group, use different approaches to tune melodies.	2L
161. __	In a group, use different approaches to ending tunes.	2L
162. __	Build effective tune sets for performances.	2L
163. __	Develop a good perspective on relating to audiences.	3M
164. __	Learn & use elements of conservative improvisation.	4A
165. __	In a group, use the basic communication principles.	4J
166. __	In a group, use the basic methods of copying ideas.	4J
167. __	In a group, use effective style and rhythmic transitions.	4J
168. __	Create effective background riffs behind a soloist.	4J
169. __	Solo simultaneously with one or more soloists.	4J
170. __	Trade bars effectively with other soloists.	4J
171. __	Play clean and interesting stop-time solo fills.	4J
172. __	End your solos effectively.	4J
173. __	Transition into your solo after the previous one ends.	4J
174. __	Use principles of effective duet and trio playing.	4J
175. __	Learn to play effective solo introductions & cadenzas.	5D

### Analysis Skills

### AOI Chapter

176. __	Develop your sound and technique to improvise well.	1M
177. __	Find form & development techniques in written tunes.	2M
178. __	When transcribing a solo, outline the form and chords.	4L
179. __	When transcribing a solo, sketch the rhythms.	4L
180. __	When transcribing a solo, add pitches and expression.	4L