

**Progressive**  
***FUNK and R&B***  
**KEYBOARD**

**METHOD**

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# Introduction

*Progressive Funk and R&B Keyboard Method* is specifically designed for students who wish to play Funk keyboards, either in a Rock group or solo. The emphasis is on making music immediately. The exercises sound great as well as teaching the necessary notes and techniques. Although the book starts with the basics, it will be useful to have some knowledge of elementary keyboard playing before tackling the exercises in this book. *Progressive Keyboard Technique* is recommended as a primer to this book.

Starting with major chords and basic rhythms, this book moves through a variety of sounds, rhythms and techniques in a progressive manner. The book also contains important information on creating keyboard parts, using a variety of keyboard voices, playing in major and minor keys and transposing. Anyone who completes this book will be well on the way to being an excellent Funk and R&B keyboard player. To continue your study it is recommended that you move on to *Progressive Funk and R&B Keyboard Technique* on completion of this book.

To improve your skills even further it is recommended that you use a metronome or drum machine with all the examples in the book. It would also be helpful to play along with the recording that accompanies the book. If you are serious about music, a good teacher can often help you progress much quicker than you can on your own.

Keep practicing, keep playing and have fun.

## Using the Compact Disc

It is recommended that you have a copy of the accompanying compact disc that includes all the examples in this book. The book shows you where to put your fingers and what technique to use and the recording lets you hear how each example should sound. Practice the examples slowly at first, gradually increasing tempo. Once you are confident you can play the example evenly without stopping the beat, try playing along with the recording. You will hear a drum beat at the beginning of each example, to lead you into the example and to help you keep time. A small diagram of a compact disc with a number as shown below indicates a recorded example. Some of the tracks on the CD contain more than one example. In these cases, index points are used (12.0, 12.1, 12.3 etc). If your CD player has an index points function, you can select each example individually. If not, each example will automatically follow the previous one.

**4.0**

← CD Track Number

# **SECTION 1**

## **Basic Chords, Rhythms and Sounds**

# LESSON ONE


## The Major Chord

The first thing you will need to know to start playing Funk Keyboards is some chords. There are many different types of chords, the most common being the **major chord**. All major chords contain three notes, taken from the major scale of the same letter name. These three notes are the 1 (first), 3 (third) and 5 (fifth) notes of the major scale, so the **chord formula** for the major chord is:

<i>Chord Symbol</i>	<b>1 3 5</b>	<i>Notes in Chord</i>						
<b>C</b>	<b>The C Major Chord</b>	<table style="border-collapse: collapse; margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;"><b>C</b></td> <td style="padding: 5px;"><b>E</b></td> <td style="padding: 5px;"><b>G</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;"><b>1</b></td> <td style="padding: 5px;"><b>3</b></td> <td style="padding: 5px;"><b>5</b></td> </tr> </table>	<b>C</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>G</b>						
<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>						

The C major chord is constructed from the C major scale. Using the above chord formula on the C major scale below, it can be seen that the C major chord contains the notes C, E and G.

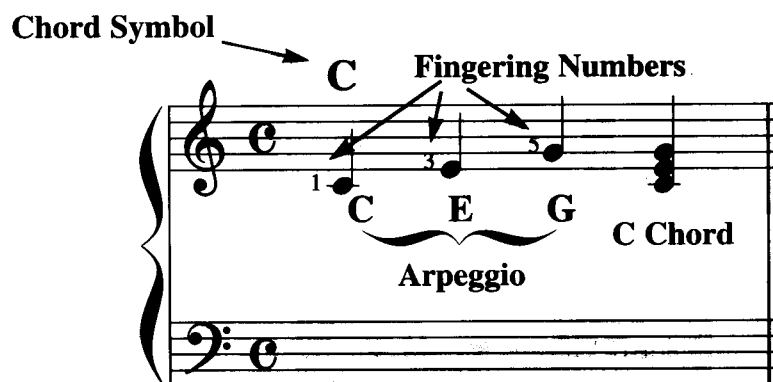
### C Major Scale



Note Name	C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C
Note Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
C Major Chord	C		E		G			

The chord symbol for a major chord is just the letter name of the chord, Eg, the chord symbol for the C major chord is C. It is common practice to refer to a C major chord as the C chord. This abbreviation applies to all major chords.

Play the three notes of the C chord with the **first**, **third** and **fifth** fingers of your right hand, individually, and then together as shown below.



**Chord Symbol** → **C**      **Fingering Numbers**

1      3      5

C      E      G      C Chord

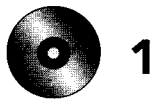
Arpeggio

When playing a chord one note at a time it is referred to as an **arpeggio**.

( For more information on major scales, see *Progressive Keyboard Technique* )

The first note from the major scale (and hence the first note of the major chord) is called the **root** note. When playing chords with the right hand, the left hand often plays the root note, as shown in example 1 below.

In example 1 the C chord is played in arpeggio style in bars 1 and 3.



~~VERBODEN~~

Music Repeat Sign

## Chord Diagrams

Chord shapes can be illustrated by using chord diagrams. In this book, chord diagrams will be used to illustrate each new chord.

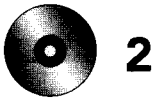
<p><b>C Major</b></p>	<p><b>C major – right hand</b></p> <p><i>Fingering number</i></p> <p><b>C Bass Note – left hand</b></p>
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If you are not familiar with any notes given on the staff or any terms used, please see *Progressive Keyboard Technique*.

# LESSON TWO

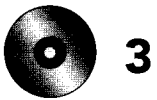
## Rhythms

Rhythm is probably the most important element in Funk. There are many songs which use one chord for extended periods, relying on rhythm to create interest and make the music groove. The following examples demonstrate keyboard parts using only the C major chord and quarter notes. By using a variety of combinations of quarter notes and rests it is possible to create different effects. Listen to the accompanying recording to hear how these parts sound when combined with other instruments.



2

Example 2: A musical score in 4/4 time, C major chord. The treble clef staff shows a constant C major chord (C-E-G) played on every quarter note. The bass clef staff shows a single C note (C4) played on every quarter note.



3

In this example the keyboard plays on the second and fourth beats along with the snare drum. This technique is used in many styles of music, particularly R&B, Reggae and Rock.

Example 3: A musical score in 4/4 time, C major chord. The treble clef staff shows a C major chord (C-E-G) on the second and fourth beats of each measure, with rests on the first and third beats. The bass clef staff shows a quarter note (C4) on the second and fourth beats, with rests on the first and third beats.

The following examples demonstrate quarter notes played on different beats of the bar. Listen to the effect each one produces.



4.0

Example 4.0: A musical score in 4/4 time, C major chord. The treble clef staff shows a C major chord (C-E-G) on the first beat of each measure, with rests on the second, third, and fourth beats. The bass clef staff shows a quarter note (C4) on the first beat, with rests on the second, third, and fourth beats.

 4.1


C


 4.2

C


 4.3

C


 5

Once you are comfortable with playing a chord on any beat of the bar, try creating some two bar patterns as shown in the following example.

C





# LESSON THREE

Chord Symbol

**G**

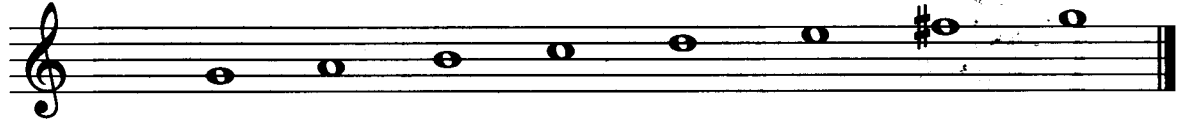
Notes in Chord

<b>G</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>D</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>

## The G Major Chord

The G major chord is constructed from the G major scale. Using the major chord formula on the G major scale below, it can be seen that the G chord contains the notes G, B and D.

### G Major Scale



Note Name	<b>G</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F#</b>	<b>G</b>
Note Number	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
G Major Chord	<b>G</b>		<b>B</b>		<b>D</b>			

### G Major

### G major – right hand

G Bass Note – left hand

Play the three notes of the G chord with the **first**, **third**, and **fifth** fingers of your right hand, individually, and then together as shown in the following example.

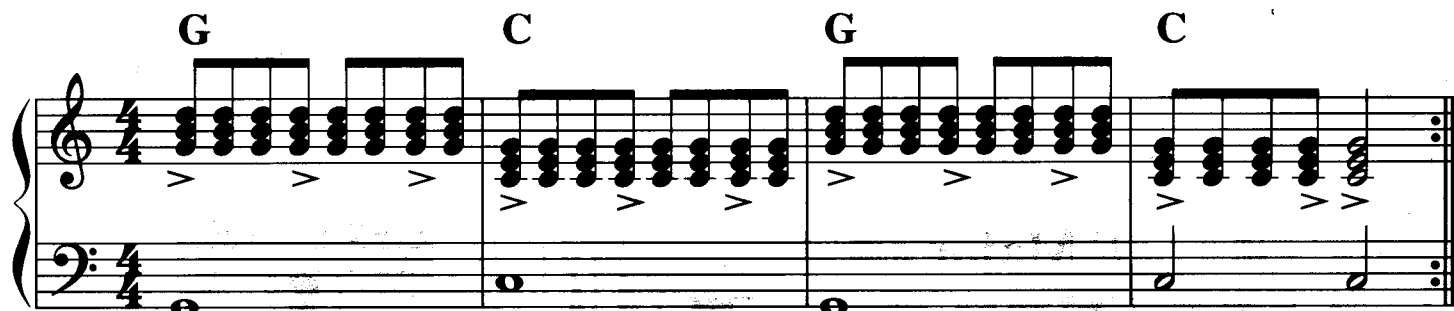


**6**

Once you are confident you know the G chord, practice changing between G and C as shown below.

 7

Another way of creating an interesting keyboard part is to accent (play louder) some of the notes as shown in the following example. The accents do not have to be written in the music, it is often left up to the individual player to decide where to use accents. An accent is indicated by a wedge mark placed above or below the note to be accented. In this example the accents are played along with the bass and bass drum.


 8.0

If you are playing with other musicians, it is important to listen to what they are playing and to play a part which fits with what they are doing. In the next two examples the left hand part coincides with the bass and bass drum and the right hand part coincides with the snare drum. Experiment with other parts which work along with other instruments.


 8.1



Chord Symbol

**F**

# The F Major Chord

Notes in Chord

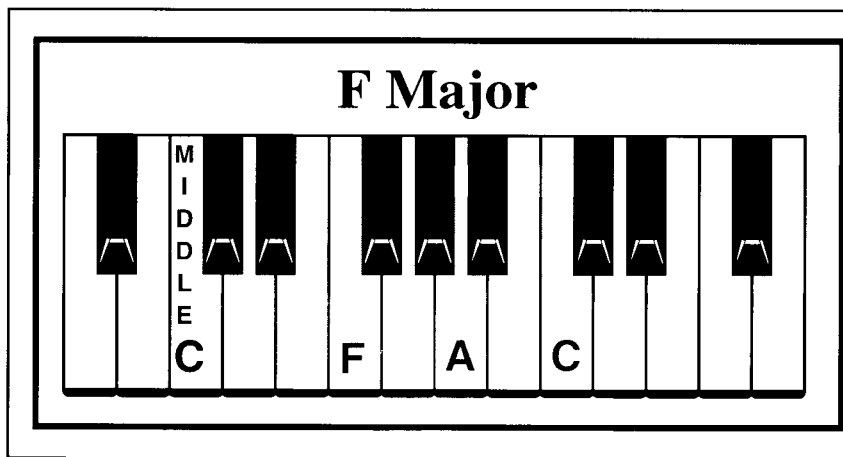
<b>F</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>C</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>

The F major chord is constructed from the F major scale. Using the major chord formula on the F major scale below, it can be seen that the F chord contains the notes F, A and C.

## FMajor Scale



Note Name	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B<math>\flat</math></b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>
Note Number	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
G Major Chord	<b>F</b>		<b>A</b>		<b>C</b>			



**F major – right hand**

**F Bass Note – left hand**

Play the three notes of the F chord with the **first**, **third**, and **fifth** fingers of your right hand, individually, and then together as shown in the example below.



Once you are comfortable with the F chord, try combining it with G and C.

Here are some keyboard parts making use of the chords C, F and G. Once again, listen to the way these parts fit with the other instruments.



10

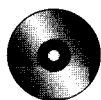
Chord progression: C F G F C F G F



11

Chord progression: C F G F

Chord progression: C F G C



12

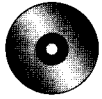
Chord progression: C F G F G F

Chord progression: C F G F C

# LESSON FOUR

## *The 12 Bar Blues*

The **12 bar Blues** is a pattern of chords which repeats every 12 bars. It is the most common progression in Blues music, and is used extensively in Funk, Rock and Jazz as well. In this lesson there are two examples of 12 bar Blues in the key of C. Both progressions make use of the chords C, F and G in the right hand part.



13

**C**

**F**

**C** **G**

**F** **C**

# Riffs

In this example most of the chords are played as arpeggios in the form of a **riff**. A riff is a repeating pattern of notes which can be altered to fit a chord progression. Riffs are very common in Funk, Blues Jazz and Rock.



14

C

F

C G

F C

# LESSON FIVE

## Chord Inversions

So far you have learnt the C, F and G major chords. Because the lowest note in each of these three chords is the root note, the shape given is called the **root position**.

All major chords contain three different notes. These notes can be duplicated and/or played in a different shape. When the third (3) is the lowest note of the chord shape, the chord is said to be the **first inversion**. The diagram below illustrates the first inversion of the C major chord, which contains the notes E (3), G (5), and C (1) in that order.

**C Chord (first inversion)**

**C major – right hand**

**C Bass Note – left hand**

Do not confuse the fingering numbers on the chord diagrams with the interval numbers of the chord.

When the fifth (5) is the lowest note of the chord shape, the chord is said to be the **second inversion**. The diagram below illustrates the second inversion of the C major chord, which contains the notes G (5), C (1), and E (3) in that order.

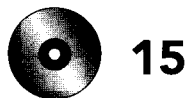
**C Chord (Second Inversion)**

**C major – right hand**

**C Bass Note – left hand**

# C Major Chord Inversions

The example below uses root position, first inversion, second inversion, and an octave of the root position of the C chord in the right hand part. Use the right fingering shown on the diagrams, but be prepared for variations when changing to and from other chords.



**C**

Root Position      First Inversion      Second Inversion      Root Position

# G Major Chord Inversions

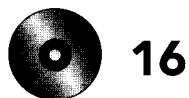
These three diagrams illustrate the root position (1 3 5), first inversion (3 5 1), and second inversion (5 1 3) of the G chord.

**G Major Root Position**

**G Major First Inversion**

**G Major Second Inversion**

The following example uses the root position, first inversion, second inversion, and an octave of the root position of the G chord. Use the fingering shown in the diagrams.



**G**

Root Position      First Inversion      Second Inversion      Root Position



## F Major Chord Inversions

These three diagrams illustrate the root position (1 3 5), first inversion (3 5 1), and second inversion (5 1 3) of the F chord.

**F Major Root Position**

**F Major First Inversion**

**F Major Second Inversion**



17


This example shows the root position, first inversion, second inversion, and an octave of the root position of the F chord.



18

One of the reasons inversions are so useful is that they enable you to find chord shapes which are close together on the keyboard. Here the C chord appears in root position, the F chord is in second inversion and the G chord is in first inversion. The left hand plays the root note of each chord. When you play chord voicings which are close together on the keyboard, the chord changes sound smoother and often contain common tones, e.g. the chords C and F both contain the note C. Always try to find smooth connections between chords.

Here are some examples showing typical uses of these inversions. Notice how much easier the chord changes are. By using inversions which are close together, it leaves you free to concentrate on other important things such as rhythm.


 19



Example 19: Four measures of music in 4/4 time. The chords are C, F, G, and F. The bass line consists of quarter notes: C2, F2, G2, F2.




Example 19: Four measures of music in 4/4 time. The chords are C, F, G, and C. The bass line consists of quarter notes: C2, F2, G2, C2.

 20



Example 20: Four measures of music in 4/4 time. The chords are C, F, G, and C. The bass line consists of eighth notes: C2, F2, G2, C2.

 21



Example 21: Four measures of music in 4/4 time. The chords are C, G, F, G, C, G, F, and G. The bass line consists of eighth notes: C2, G2, F2, G2, C2, G2, F2, G2.



## 22

Here is a 12 bar Blues making use of the same inversions. Notice the emphasis on rhythm in this example, as well as the interplay with the other instruments.

**C**

**F**

**C** **G**

**F** **C**

# LESSON SIX

## More on Inversions

The example below shows another group of chord inversions which are commonly used together. The C chord is a first inversion, the F is root position and the G is second inversion. The first inversion voicing shown here is particularly useful for finishing a song as it has the root note on the top.



23



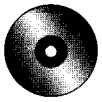
24

Here is a keyboard part making use of these inversions. The left hand part consists of the root note of each chord played in octaves. This is a common keyboard technique which gives a much more powerful sound. Practice each hand separately at first if necessary.



25

Here is an exercise to help you develop the use of octaves in the left hand part.



## 26

This example follows the 12 bar Blues progression and uses the group of chord inversions introduced in this lesson. Listen to how much fuller the chords sound when octaves are used in the left hand part.

Chord: C


Chord: F

Chord: C (measures 1-2), G (measures 3-6)

Chord: F (measures 1-2), C (measures 3-6)

Continuing on with the study of inversions, here are some more inversions which are commonly used together. This time the C chord is a second inversion, the F chord is a first inversion and the G chord is in root position.

 27



Musical notation for exercise 27, showing four measures of chords in 4/4 time. The chords are C (second inversion), F (first inversion), G (root position), and C (second inversion). Fingerings are indicated: 4-2-1 for C, 5-2-1 for F, and 3-2-1 for G. The bass line consists of a single note (C) in each measure.

 28

Here is a 12 bar Blues making use of these inversions. The left hand part contains a B $\flat$  note which is not in any of the chords but comes from the **Blues scale** which will be introduced in section 2. You can play any note against any chord as long as you think it sounds good.



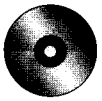
First system of musical notation for exercise 28, showing four measures of chords in 4/4 time. The chords are C (second inversion), F (first inversion), G (root position), and C (second inversion). The right hand part consists of chords in the treble clef. The left hand part consists of a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and quarter notes, including a B $\flat$  note.



Second system of musical notation for exercise 28, showing four measures of chords in 4/4 time. The chords are F (first inversion), C (second inversion), G (root position), and C (second inversion). The right hand part consists of chords in the treble clef. The left hand part consists of a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and quarter notes, including a B $\flat$  note.



Third system of musical notation for exercise 28, showing four measures of chords in 4/4 time. The chords are G (root position), F (first inversion), C (second inversion), and C (second inversion). The right hand part consists of chords in the treble clef. The left hand part consists of a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and quarter notes, including a B $\flat$  note.



## 29

To end this section, here is a 12 bar Blues which contains all of the inversions you have learnt. Once again the left hand part contains notes from outside the chords, this time B $\flat$  and E $\flat$ . This helps to make the whole part more interesting.

System 1: Chord C. Treble clef, 4/4 time. The right hand plays chords in the first, second, and third measures. The left hand plays a bass line with notes C, E, G, B $\flat$ , G, E, C, B $\flat$ , G, E, C, B $\flat$ .

System 2: Chord F. Treble clef, 4/4 time. The right hand plays chords in the first, second, and third measures. The left hand plays a bass line with notes F, A, C, E $\flat$ , C, A, F, E $\flat$ , C, A, F, E $\flat$ .

System 3: Chords C and G. Treble clef, 4/4 time. The right hand plays chords in the first, second, and third measures. The left hand plays a bass line with notes C, E, G, B $\flat$ , G, E, C, B $\flat$ , G, E, C, B $\flat$ .

System 4: Chords F, C, and G. Treble clef, 4/4 time. The right hand plays chords in the first, second, and third measures. The left hand plays a bass line with notes F, A, C, E $\flat$ , C, A, F, E $\flat$ , C, A, F, E $\flat$ .

# **SECTION 2**

## **Blues Notes, Riffs, Eighth Note Rhythms and Minor Chords**



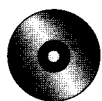
# LESSON SEVEN

## Blue Notes

In many styles of music there are notes used which come from outside the key. The major scale of the key of C contains all of the notes natural to that key. However, by using **accidentals** it is possible to alter the notes of the scale. An accidental is a temporary alteration to the pitch of a note. An accidental may be indicated by a sharp, a flat or a natural sign. (See *Progressive Keyboard Technique*) Here once again are the notes of the C major scale.

<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>

The most common alterations used in Funk are the flattened third ( $\flat 3$ ), the flattened fifth ( $\flat 5$ ) and the flattened seventh ( $\flat 7$ ). These are called **Blue notes**, or Blues notes. The first blue note we will examine is the  $\flat 3$  which is  $E\flat$  in the key of C.



30

Notice how the alternation between the E natural (3) and the  $E\flat$  ( $\flat 3$ ) immediately makes the music sound more 'bluesy'. Notice the use of the same finger on consecutive notes in this example. This type of fingering is important to develop even though it may seem strange at first. This is preparation for sliding a finger off a black key onto a white key, which becomes essential for many bluesy effects. In many cases, the fingering will change depending on the context.

C

The musical notation shows a piano accompaniment exercise in the key of C major, 4/4 time. It consists of two systems of music, each with three measures. The first system shows a sequence of notes in the treble clef: C4 (finger 2), D4 (finger 2), E4 (finger 2), F4 (finger 4), G4 (finger 5), A4 (finger 6), B4 (finger 7), and C5 (finger 8). The bass clef plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The second system introduces blue notes: the first measure has E4 (finger 3) and E4-flat (finger 3), followed by F4 (finger 4), G4 (finger 5), A4 (finger 6), and B4 (finger 7). The second measure has C5 (finger 8), B4-flat (finger 7), A4 (finger 6), and G4 (finger 5). The third measure has F4 (finger 4), E4 (finger 3), D4 (finger 2), and C4 (finger 1). The bass clef continues with the eighth-note accompaniment.



## 31

Here is a full 12 bar Blues making use of the  $\flat 3$  note. Notice once again the use of the second finger on both the E flat and the E natural. The other two Blues notes ( $\flat 5$  and  $\flat 7$ ) occur in the left hand part of this example.

**C**

**F**

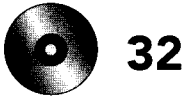
**C** **G**

**F** **C**

# LESSON EIGHT

## The Blues Scale

Continuing on with the study of blue notes, this lesson introduces the **Blues Scale**. This scale contains all three of the blue notes:  $\flat 3$ ,  $\flat 5$  and  $\flat 7$ . The fingering shown here is only one option, the fingering will change depending on the musical context.



It is worth comparing the notes of the Blues scale with those of the major scale. Here are the notes of both scales.

### C Major Scale

C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

### C Blues Scale

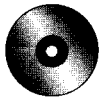
C	E $\flat$	F	G $\flat$	G	B $\flat$	C
1	$\flat 3$	4	$\flat 5$	5	$\flat 7$	8

Notice that the Blues scale contains both the flat 5 and the natural 5. It does not contain the degrees 2 or 6. Altogether the Blues scale contains six different notes, whereas the major scale contains seven different notes. The major scale used by itself does not sound very bluesy. However, in Blues, Funk, Rock and Jazz, melodies often contain notes from both of these scales. Listen to the following example to hear the difference between them.



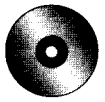
# Enharmonic Notes

You may have noticed an F# note in the Blues scale in exercise 33. F# has exactly the same sound as G $\flat$ , and therefore either spelling of the note may occur in the written music. This is an example of **enharmonic** spelling of the same note. Here are some more examples of enharmonic notes.



34

C



35

This 12 bar Blues contains examples of two blue notes and their enharmonic alternatives:  $\flat 3$  (E $\flat$  = D#) and  $\flat 5$  (G $\flat$  = F#). In this example the left hand plays the root and the 5th of each chord. This is a common accompaniment technique, particularly in Blues and Rock.

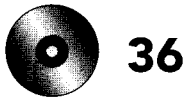
C

F C

G F C

# LESSON NINE

This lesson contains some examples which will help you become more comfortable with the Blues scale. In this first one the scale is played ascending and descending over the three bass notes C, F and G. Notice how changing the bass note alters the sound.



36

**C**

**F**

**C** **G**

**F** **C**

# Blues Scale Riffs

In the following example, the right hand plays a riff created from the Blues scale. The Blues scale is commonly used for creating riffs as well as for improvising.



37

**C**

**F**

**C** **G**

**F** **C**

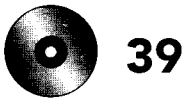
# LESSON TEN

## Two Handed Riffs

The following example shows the Blues scale played by the left hand. Once again, there is more than one possible fingering for the scale. Learn the fingering shown here but be prepared for other fingerings depending on the musical context.



38



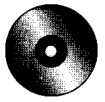
Here is a left hand part created from the Blues scale.

39



Now try this Blues scale riff played in octaves. Notice the space left on beats 3 and 4 of the first two bars. Leaving space for other instruments is an important aspect of keyboard playing in all types of music.

40



## 41

It is important to be able to play the Blues scale with both hands together, as shown below. This will make playing many riffs and keyboard parts easier.

Musical notation for exercise 41, showing the Blues scale in 4/4 time with both hands. The treble clef starts on C4 and the bass clef starts on C3. Fingerings are indicated with numbers 1-3.

Here are two more riffs created from the Blues scale. Experiment with the scale and try inventing some of your own riffs.



## 42

Musical notation for exercise 42, showing a riff in 4/4 time with both hands. The key signature is C major. The riff consists of eighth and quarter notes.



## 43

Musical notation for exercise 43, showing a riff in 4/4 time with both hands. The key signature is C major. The riff consists of eighth and quarter notes. Fingerings are indicated with numbers 1-5.



# LESSON ELEVEN

## Minor Chords

Chord Symbol

**Cm**

1  $\flat$ 3 5

**The C Minor Chord**

Notes in Chord

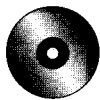
C	E $\flat$	G
1	$\flat$ 3	5

By taking the first, **flattened third** and fifth degrees of a C major scale, a C minor chord can be created.

### C Major Scale

Note Name	C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C
Note Number	1	2	$\flat$ 3	4	5	6	7	8
C Minor Chord	C		E $\flat$		G			

Play the three notes of the C minor chord with the **first**, **third**, and **fifth** fingers of your right hand, individually, and then together as shown in the following example.



44

## C Minor Chord Inversions

These three diagrams illustrate the root position (1  $\flat$ 3 5), first inversion ( $\flat$ 3 5 1), and second inversion (5 1  $\flat$ 3) of the Cm chord.

**Cm Root Position**

The diagram shows a piano keyboard with the C minor chord in root position. The notes are C (root), Eb (minor third), and G (fifth). The fingerings are 1 for C, 3 for Eb, and 5 for G. To the right is a musical staff showing the chord in both treble and bass clefs with the same fingerings.

**Cm First Inversion**

The diagram shows a piano keyboard with the C minor chord in first inversion. The notes are Eb, G, and C. The fingerings are 2 for Eb, 1 for G, and 5 for C. To the right is a musical staff showing the chord in both treble and bass clefs with the same fingerings.

**Cm Second Inversion**

The diagram shows a piano keyboard with the C minor chord in second inversion. The notes are G, C, and Eb. The fingerings are 1 for G, 2 for C, and 4 for Eb. To the right is a musical staff showing the chord in both treble and bass clefs with the same fingerings.

The following example uses the root position, first inversion, second inversion, and an octave of the root position of the Cm chord. Use the fingering shown in the diagrams but be prepared for fingering variations depending on where the music is going.



45

**Cm**

The musical notation for exercise 45 is in 4/4 time. It shows four measures of Cm chords. The first measure is the root position (C, Eb, G) with fingerings 1, 2, 4. The second measure is the first inversion (Eb, G, C) with fingerings 1, 2, 4. The third measure is the second inversion (G, C, Eb) with fingerings 1, 2, 4. The fourth measure is the root position an octave higher (C, Eb, G) with fingerings 1, 2, 4.



46

Here is a keyboard part making use of the first inversion of the C minor chord. Notice the interplay between the two hands in this part.

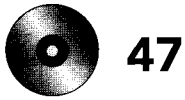
**Cm**

The musical notation for exercise 46 is in 4/4 time. It shows four measures of Cm chords in first inversion (Eb, G, C). The right hand plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, while the left hand plays a simple bass line of quarter notes.

# LESSON TWELVE

## *Eighth Note Rhythms*

The example below shows a popular left hand pattern which originally comes from Boogie piano playing. It uses a rhythm of constant eighth notes.



Once you have control of the pattern, try playing a C minor chord over it with the right hand. Notice how effective it sounds to play chords against only some of the notes of the left hand part rather than playing on every eighth note.



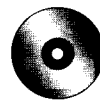

Here is a variation which makes use of ties. (For an introduction to ties, see *Progressive Keyboard Technique*.) Listen to the difference between the first and second bars of this pattern. This is another example of leaving space for the other instruments.

When playing parts based on any type of note, whether it be quarter notes, eighth notes, 16th notes or whatever, it is important to have control of where in the bar you play and where you don't play. The following examples consist of the left hand Boogie pattern with chords played over it in various parts of the bar, each chord coinciding with one of the eighth notes. These examples should help you gain control of where you want to play and where you don't.



50.0

C



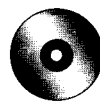
50.1

C



50.2

C



50.3

C



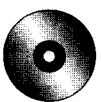
51.0

C



51.1

C



51.2

C



51.3

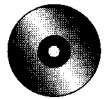
C

Once you are comfortable with the examples on the previous page, try expanding them out to two bars as shown here. Don't forget to experiment with accents and ties to achieve more dynamics and variety in your keyboard parts.



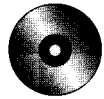
52

**Cm**



53

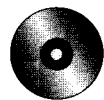
**C**



54

This one uses a Blues scale riff over the left hand pattern.

**C**



55

Many keyboard parts are made up of a combination of riffs and chords as shown here.

**Cm**

# Slash Chords

The following examples make use of another important keyboard technique: i.e. playing a chord with the right hand over a bass note which is different to the notes contained within the chord. In the example below, the symbol **F/C** occurs. This indicates an **F chord** played over a **C bass note**. This is called a **slash chord**. Slash chords can create many different harmonic effects. Each combination has a specific name and often creates an entirely new chord. These will be discussed in detail in *Progressive Funk and R&B Keyboard Technique*. Basically you can play any chord over any bass note as long as it sounds good. Experiment with playing all the chords you have learnt over various bass notes from the C major scale or the C Blues scale.



56



57



58

Slash chords do not always have to be written above the music for you to play them. E.g. the following example has a Cm chord symbol above it, but the right hand plays an F chord on the second half of the first beat. Because the part immediately returns to Cm, it is not necessary to write F/C for half a beat. This is common in keyboard playing.

# LESSON THIRTEEN

## More Minor Chords

In this lesson you will learn two new chords: F minor and G minor. The **F minor** chord contains the notes F, A $\flat$  and C which are the first, flattened third and fifth notes of the F major scale. You could also describe the F minor chord as an F major chord with a flattened third.

Chord Symbol

**Fm**

1  $\flat$ 3 5

Notes in Chord

F	A $\flat$	C
1	$\flat$ 3	5

### The F Minor Chord

### F Minor Chord Inversions

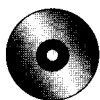
These three diagrams illustrate the root position (1  $\flat$ 3 5), first inversion ( $\flat$ 3 5 1), and second inversion (5 1  $\flat$ 3) of the Fm chord.

**Fm Root Position**

**Fm First Inversion**

**Fm Second Inversion**

The following example uses the root position, first inversion, second inversion, and an octave of the root position of the Fm chord. As mentioned previously, use the fingering shown in the diagrams but be prepared for variations.



59

**Fm**

# The G Minor Chord

The **G minor** chord contains the notes G, B $\flat$ , and D which are the first, flattened third and fifth notes of the G major scale. It could also be described as a G chord with a flattened third.

Chord Symbol

1  $\flat$ 3 5

Notes in Chord

**Gm**

## The G Minor Chord

<b>G</b>	<b>B<math>\flat</math></b>	<b>D</b>
1	$\flat$ 3	5

### G Minor Chord Inversions

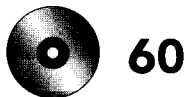
These three diagrams illustrate the root position (1  $\flat$ 3 5), first inversion ( $\flat$ 3 5 1), and second inversion (5 1  $\flat$ 3) of the Gm chord.

**Gm Second Inversion**

**Gm First Inversion**

**Gm Second Inversion**

Example 60 shows the root position, first inversion, second inversion, and an octave of the root position of the Gm chord. Example 61 uses all the inversions of both Fm and Gm.

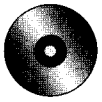


**Gm**



**Fm Gm**





## 62

To finish off this section, here is a 12 bar Blues using all the inversions of the chords Cm, Fm and Gm. This example contains much use of implied slash chords. The left hand part consists of alternating octave notes. Practice each hand separately at first if necessary.

**Cm**

**Fm**

**Cm** **Gm**

**Fm** **Cm**

# **SECTION 3**

## **Seventh Chords, Transposing, Sixteenth Note Rhythms**

# LESSON FOURTEEN

Chord Symbol

7

## Seventh Chords

Chord Formula

1 3 5  $\flat$ 7

One of the most common chord types used in Funk is the **seventh chord**, (sometimes called the dominant seventh chord). Seventh chords consist of four notes taken from the major scale of the same letter name. These notes are the first (1), third (3), fifth (5) and flattened seventh ( $\flat$ 7) notes of the major scale, so the **chord formula** for the seventh chord is:

1 3 5  $\flat$ 7

A flattened seventh ( $\flat$ 7) is created by lowering the seventh note of the major scale by one semitone. This is the same  $\flat$ 7 note that is found in the Blues scale. Notice that the seventh chord is simply a major chord with a flattened seventh note added.

Chord Symbol

G7

## The G Seventh Chord (G7)

Notes in Chord

G	B	D	F
1	3	5	$\flat$ 7

The G7 chord is constructed from the G major scale. Using the seventh chord formula on the G major scale gives the notes G, B, D and F. When the seventh note of the G major scale (F $\sharp$ ) is flattened, it becomes an F note.



Note Name	G	A	B	C	D	E	F $\sharp$	G
Note Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Seventh Chord Formula	1		3		5		$\flat$ 7	
G Seventh Chord	G		B		D		F	

Play the notes of the G7 chord with the **first**, **second**, **fourth** and **fifth** fingers of your right hand, individually and then together as shown below. As always, there will be other fingerings for this chord, depending on the context in which it is used.



63

### G7 Root Position

## G7 Chord Inversions

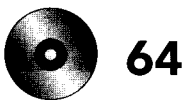
Because the G7 chord contains four notes, there are **three** inversions plus the root position. The following three diagrams illustrate the first inversion (3 5  $\flat$ 7 1), the second inversion (5  $\flat$ 7 1 3), and the third inversion ( $\flat$ 7 1 3 5) of the G7 chord.

### G7 First Inversion

### G7 Second Inversion

### G7 Third Inversion

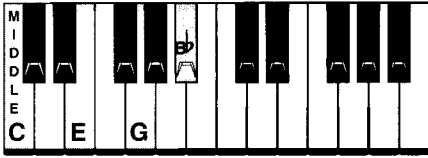

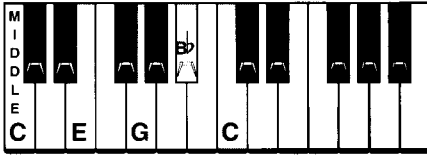

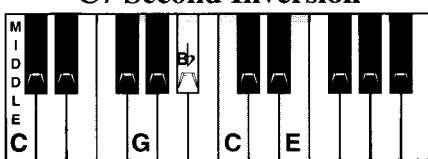

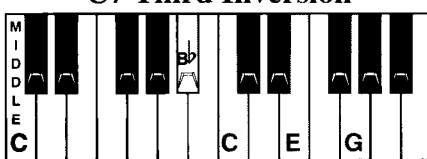

The example below uses all the inversions of the G7 chord. Use the fingerings shown in the diagrams above.



G7

## The C7 Chord

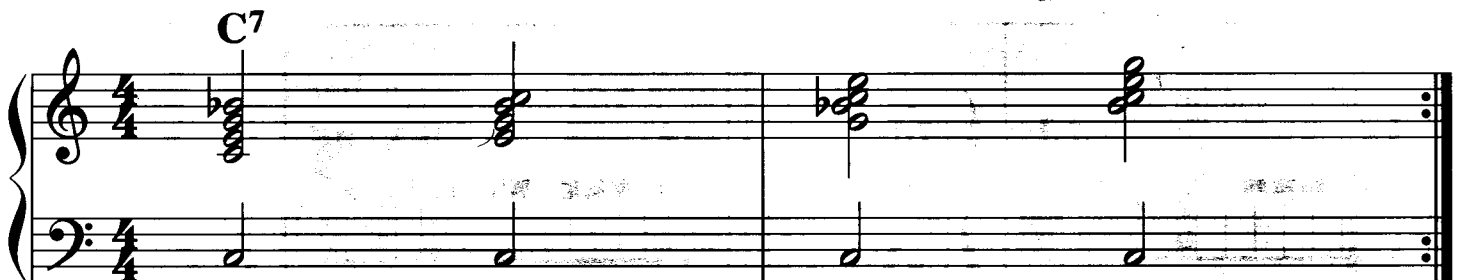
Like G7, the C7 chord contains the degrees 1, 3, 5  $\flat$ 7. Its notes are C, E, G and B $\flat$ . Here are the four basic positions of the C7 chord.

<p><b>C7 Root Position</b></p> 		<p><b>C7 First Inversion</b></p> 	
<p><b>C7 Second Inversion</b></p> 		<p><b>C7 Third Inversion</b></p> 	



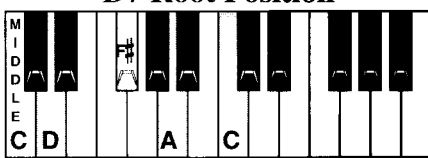

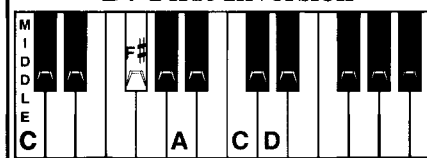

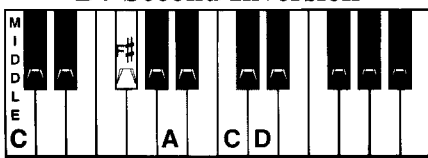
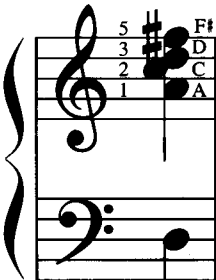
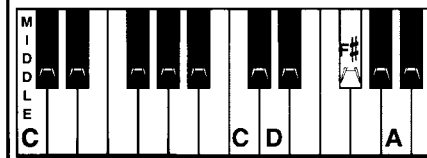

65

**C7**



## The D7 Chord

The notes of a D7 chord are D (1), F $\sharp$  (3), A (5) and C ( $\flat$ 7). Here are the four basic positions for a D7 chord.

<p><b>D7 Root Position</b></p> 		<p><b>D7 First Inversion</b></p> 	
<p><b>D7 Second Inversion</b></p> 		<p><b>D7 Third Inversion</b></p> 	

66

**D7**

## The F7 Chord

So far you have learnt the G7, C7 and D7 chords, which are chords 1, 1V and V in the key of G. For the Blues in the key of C you will use C7 (1), F7 (1V) and G7 (V). Here are the four basic positions for the F7 chord. Its notes are F, A, C and E $\flat$ .

<p><b>F7 Root Position</b></p>		<p><b>F7 First Inversion</b></p>	
<p><b>F7 Second Inversion</b></p>		<p><b>F7 Third Inversion</b></p>	

67

**F7**

# LESSON FIFTEEN

## Using 7th Chords

Because there are four notes in a 7th chord, they are often more difficult to play than major chords. When using 7th chords it is common to leave out one of the notes. The most commonly omitted note is the 5th, although sometimes the 3rd or the root can be omitted. Usually the left hand will be playing the root note anyway. As long as the  $\flat 7$  degree is in the chord you still get the effect of a 7th chord. Here are some examples of partial 7th chords.



68

Chord progression: C7, F7, G7, C



Listen to how good these chords sound when applied to a Blues in C.

69

Chord progression: C7, F7, C7, F7

Musical score for two keyboard parts (treble and bass clefs). The score consists of four measures. The first measure is marked with a **C7** chord. The second measure is marked with a **G7** chord. The third measure is marked with an **F7** chord. The fourth measure is marked with a **C7** chord. The score includes a first ending (1.) and a second ending (2.), both marked with **G7** and **C7** chords respectively.

Here are two more keyboard parts which make use of 7th chords.



70

Musical score for keyboard part 70, consisting of four measures. The first measure is marked with a **C7** chord. The second measure is marked with an **F7** chord. The third measure is marked with a **C7** chord. The fourth measure is marked with an **F7** chord. The score is in 4/4 time and includes repeat signs at the end of each measure.



71

Musical score for keyboard part 71, consisting of four measures. The first measure is marked with a **Cm** chord. The second measure is marked with an **F7** chord. The third measure is marked with a **Cm** chord. The fourth measure is marked with an **F7** chord. The score is in 4/4 time and includes repeat signs at the end of each measure.



# LESSON SIXTEEN

## Transposing

So far, everything you have learnt has been in the keys of C major and C minor. However, there are 12 keys commonly used in music and you will eventually need to be able to play equally well in all keys. An excellent way to learn how to play in new keys is to **transpose** music from a key you know well to a new key you want to learn. The word "transpose" means to change the key. To do this, you will need to be familiar with the degrees of all notes within both keys. E.g. the notes of the Blues scale in the keys of C and G are shown below. The names of the notes change from one key to the next, but the scale formula (scale degrees) remains the same.

### C Blues Scale

C E $\flat$  F G G B $\flat$  C  
1  $\flat$ 3 4  $\flat$ 5 5  $\flat$ 7 8

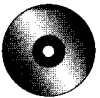
### G Blues Scale

G B $\flat$  C D $\flat$  D F G  
1  $\flat$ 3 4  $\flat$ 5 5  $\flat$ 7 8



72

Here is a common fingering for the G Blues scale.



73.0

This example shows a riff in the key of C, created from the C Blues scale.



## 73.1

Here is the same riff transposed to the key of G, this time using the G Blues scale.

**Gm**

## Chord Numbers

When transposing chords, a similar system can be used. Most of the chords you have been using so far are built on the root notes C, F and G. These correspond with the **first, fourth** and **fifth** notes of the C major scale. These three chords are therefore referred to as chords **I**, **IV** and **V** in the key of C. Chord numbers are almost always shown in roman numerals.

### C Major Scale

<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>
<b>①</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>④</b>	<b>⑤</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>

### Chords

<b>C</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>
<b><u>I</u></b>	<b><u>IV</u></b>	<b><u>V</u></b>

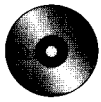
The chord numbers remain the same regardless of the chord type. E.g. The chord **I** shown above could be a C major, C minor or a C7. It will still be described as chord **I** as long as it is built on a C root note. To transpose these chords to the key of G, you would simply find the same chord types built on the first, fourth and fifth notes of the G major scale as shown below.

### G Major Scale

<b>G</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F#</b>	<b>G</b>
<b>①</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>④</b>	<b>⑤</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>

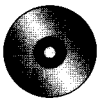
### Chords

<b>G</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
<b><u>I</u></b>	<b><u>IV</u></b>	<b><u>V</u></b>



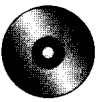
## 74.0

This example shows a chord progression using chords  $\bar{I}$ ,  $\bar{IV}$  and  $\bar{V}$  as 7ths in the key of C.



## 74.1

Here is the same progression transposed to the key of G.

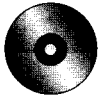


## 75

Here are some more keyboard parts in the key of G. Try transposing them back to C.



## 76



## 77

Here is a 12 bar Blues keyboard part in the key of G. Once you have learnt it, try transposing it to the key of C.

**G<sup>7</sup>**

**C<sup>7</sup>**

**G<sup>7</sup>** **D<sup>7</sup>**

**C<sup>7</sup>** **G<sup>7</sup>**

By now you should be getting familiar with transposing between the keys of C and G. The next step is to try a new key, e.g. F. All you need to know are the scale degrees for the F major scale and you are on your way. Playing in all keys is discussed in detail in the book *Progressive Funk and R&B Keyboard Technique*.

# LESSON SEVENTEEN

## Sixteenth Notes

Most Funk music is based on an underlying rhythm of sixteenth notes. Sixteenth notes are usually counted **1 e + a 2 e + a**, etc as shown in the following example.



Count 1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a



Here is the C Blues scale played in sixteenth notes over two octaves. Take it slowly at first.

## Call and Response

Notice how the right hand part answers the left hand part in the next example. This is often described as a **call and response** style of playing. Call and response is a central element in Funk which originally came from the Blues. Call and response may occur within a keyboard part, or between two instruments, or between a vocalist and an instrumentalist.



Cm

 81

**C7**


 82

**Cm**


 83

This one is a bit more difficult, so take it slowly at first.

**C7**



# LESSON EIGHTEEN

## 16th Note Studies

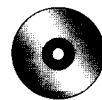
Here are some exercises to help you become more familiar with 16th note groupings. Count out loud as you play each one and tap your foot to help you keep time. It would also be useful to practice them with a metronome or drum machine. If you are serious about music you should be using a metronome for everything you practice. A musician with good control of rhythm and timing is always popular with other musicians.



84.0

**C7**

Count 1 e + 2 e + 3 e + 4 e +



84.1

**C7**

Count 1 e + 2 e + 3 e + 4 e +



84.2

**C7**

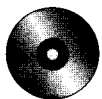
Count 1 + a 2 + a 3 + a 4 + a



84.3

**C7**

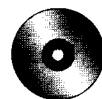
Count 1 e+a 2 e+a 3 e+a 4 e+a



84.4

**C7**

Count 1 e+a 2 e+a 3 e+a 4 e+a



84.5

**C7**

Count 1 e+a 2 e+a 3 e+a 4 e+a

Once you are comfortable with these basic 16th note groupings, it is easy to create great sounding keyboard parts using simple patterns. The following parts use the right hand only and leave space for call and response with other instruments. Listen to the accompanying recording to hear how effective this sounds.

 **85**

**C7**

 **86**

**C7**

 **87**

**C7**

 **88**

**C7**



# LESSON NINETEEN

## Two Handed Rhythms

Another important aspect of Funk keyboard playing is the use of 16th note rhythm parts using both hands. This can take some time to develop, but it sounds great once you get it. A good way to start developing the ability to play these parts is to play 7th chord arpeggios using both hands as shown in the following example.



89

**C7**

Here are some keyboard parts based on this simple arpeggio. It is very easy to change the character of these parts by using either the natural 3rd (major) or the flattened 3rd (minor) as demonstrated in the following example. By using the flattened third, the chord becomes a minor seventh (m7). Minor sevenths will be discussed in detail in *Progressive Funk and R&B Keyboard Technique*.



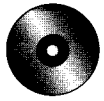
90

**C7** **Cm7**



91

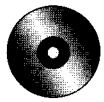
**C7**



92

This one is a variation on the previous example.

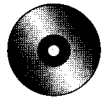
**C<sup>7</sup>**



93

Here is a slightly more complex line based around a C minor arpeggio.

**Cm<sup>7</sup>**



94

In this one the right hand plays full chords but both hands are still working together.

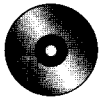
**Cm<sup>7</sup>**      **F<sup>7</sup>**



95

This one takes the same type of idea even further.

**Cm**



## 96

Here is a final 12 bar Blues summarising many of the things you have learnt in the book. If you wish to continue your study of Funk and R&B keyboard playing, *Progressive Funk and R&B Keyboard Technique* continues on from this point, covering subjects such as playing in all keys, improvisation and many other exciting sounds and rhythms.



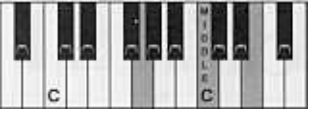


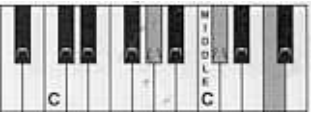
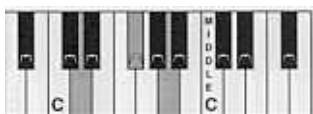
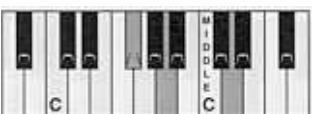
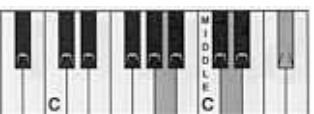

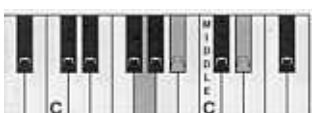







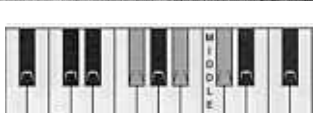

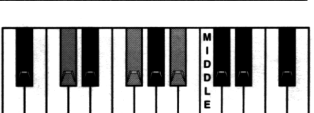














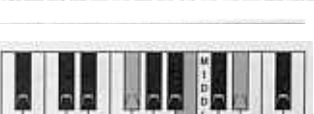
**C7**

**F7**

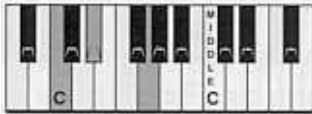
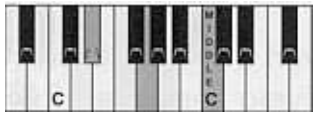

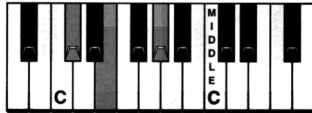


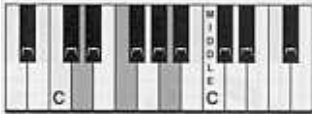


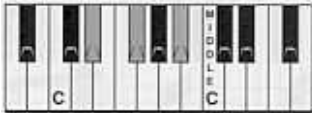


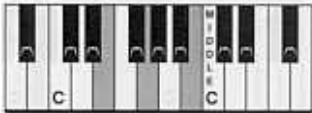





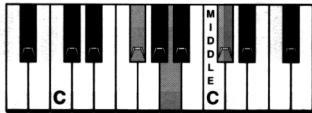

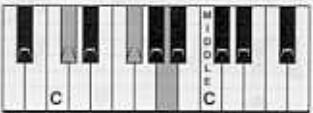


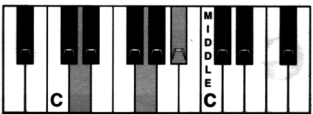
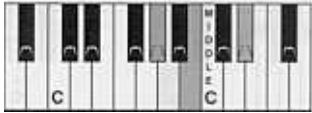


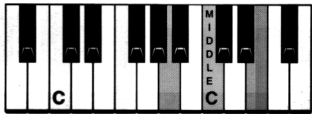
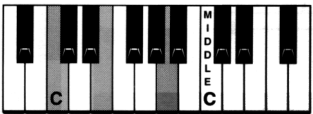





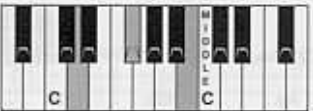

**C7** **G7**

**F7** **C7**

# Major Chord Chart

Chord Name	Notes In Chord	Root Position	First Inversion	Second Inversion
	<b>C E G</b>			
<b>D<math>\flat</math> (C<math>\sharp</math>)</b>	<b>D<math>\flat</math> F A<math>\flat</math></b>			
	<b>D F<math>\sharp</math> A</b>			
	<b>E<math>\flat</math> G B<math>\flat</math></b>			
	<b>E G<math>\sharp</math> B</b>			
	<b>F A C</b>			
<b>F<math>\sharp</math> (G<math>\flat</math>)</b>	<b>F<math>\sharp</math> A<math>\sharp</math> C<math>\sharp</math></b>			
	<b>G B D</b>			
<b>A<math>\flat</math></b>	<b>A<math>\flat</math> C E<math>\flat</math></b>			
	<b>A C<math>\sharp</math> E</b>			
	<b>B<math>\flat</math> D F</b>			
	<b>B D<math>\sharp</math> F<math>\sharp</math></b>			

## Minor Chord Chart

Chord Name	Notes In Chord	Root Position	First Inversion	Second Inversion
<b>Cm</b>	C E $\flat$ G			
<b>C<math>\sharp</math>m</b>	C $\sharp$ E G $\sharp$			
<b>Dm</b>	D F A			
<b>E<math>\flat</math>m</b>	E $\flat$ G $\flat$ B $\flat$			
<b>Em</b>	E G B			
<b>Fm</b>	F A $\flat$ C			
<b>F<math>\sharp</math>m</b>	F $\sharp$ A C $\sharp$			
<b>Gm</b>	G B $\flat$ D			
<b>G<math>\sharp</math>m</b>	G $\sharp$ B D $\sharp$			
<b>Am</b>	A C E			
<b>B<math>\flat</math>m</b>	B $\flat$ D $\flat$ F			
<b>Bm</b>	B D F $\sharp$			

# Seventh Chord Chart

Chord Name	Notes In Chord	Root Position	First Inversion (5th omitted)	Second Inversion (3rd omitted)
<b>D<sub>b</sub>7</b>				
	<b>F#</b>			
<b>E<sub>b</sub>7</b>				
<b>F#7 (Gb)</b>				
<b>A<sub>7</sub></b>				
<b>B<sub>b</sub>7</b>				