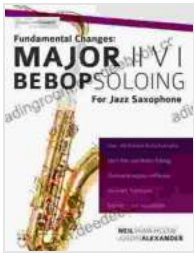


Mastering Major II Soloing for Jazz Saxophone: A Comprehensive Guide

In the realm of jazz improvisation, soloing over Major II chords is a cornerstone technique that opens up a world of melodic possibilities. Major II chords, often referred to as "maj7(#11)" or "maj9(#11)" chords, introduce an altered 11th degree, creating a distinctive and vibrant sound. For saxophone players seeking to expand their improvisational toolkit, mastering Major II soloing is essential.



Fundamental Changes: Major ii V I Soloing for Jazz Saxophone: Master Bebop Soloing for Jazz Saxophone (Learn how to play saxophone and clarinet)

by Joseph Alexander

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Scales and Arpeggios for Major II Chords

The foundation of Major II soloing lies in understanding the scales and arpeggios that complement these chords. The most commonly employed are:

- **Major Bebop Scale:** This scale incorporates the altered 11th degree, providing a melodic framework for navigating Major II chords. It includes the following notes: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, b7, #9, #11.
- **Altered Scale:** Also known as the "Super Locrian" scale, the Altered Scale features a lowered 2nd, sharpened 5th, and altered 11th. It consists of the notes: 1, b2, 3, #5, b6, b7, #9, #11.
- **Maj7(#11) Arpeggio:** This arpeggio outlines the basic triad structure of the Major II chord, including the altered 11th. Its notes are: 1, 3, 5, #11.
- **Maj9(#11) Arpeggio:** Expanding on the Maj7(#11) arpeggio, the Maj9(#11) arpeggio adds the 9th degree. It contains the notes: 1, 3, 5, 7, #9, #11.

Licks and Motifs for Major II Soloing

In addition to scales and arpeggios, incorporating licks and motifs into your solos adds color and melodic interest. Here are some common licks and motifs specifically designed for Major II chords:

- **Triadic Approach:** Starting on the root, emphasize the triad (1, 3, 5) of the Major II chord, resolving to the altered 11th (#11).
- **Scalic Run:** Use the Major Bebop or Altered Scale to create melodic lines that ascend or descend over the chord.
- **Chromatic Approach:** Introduce chromatic notes such as b2 or b7 into your licks, adding tension and release.
- **Enclosures:** Play a note above or below a chord tone, then enclose it by playing the target chord tone.

- **Trill/Bend:** Trill or bend between the #11 and the 1st degree, creating a unique and expressive sound.

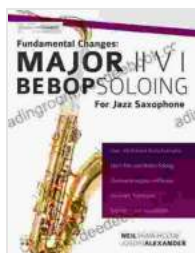
Improvisational Strategies for Major II Chords

Beyond technical proficiency, employing effective improvisational strategies is crucial for creating compelling solos over Major II chords. Consider the following:

- **Target the Altered 11th:** Make the altered 11th a focal point of your solos, emphasizing its unique character.
- **Use Tension and Release:** Incorporate dissonant intervals, such as tritones and diminished intervals, followed by consonant resolutions to create a sense of tension and release.
- **Explore Outside Sounds:** Experiment with notes outside the traditional scales and arpeggios to expand your harmonic vocabulary.
- **Phrasing and Dynamics:** Pay attention to phrasing and dynamics to add shape and emotion to your solos.
- **Listen and Transcribe:** Study the solos of renowned jazz saxophonists who excel in Major II soloing, such as Charlie Parker, Cannonball Adderley, and Michael Brecker.

Mastering Major II soloing for jazz saxophone requires a combination of theoretical knowledge, technical proficiency, and improvisational artistry. By incorporating the scales, arpeggios, licks, and strategies outlined in this comprehensive guide, aspiring saxophonists can unlock the harmonic possibilities of Major II chords and elevate their improvisational skills.

Remember that consistent practice, experimentation, and a deep understanding of the underlying jazz theory are key to developing a fluent and expressive Major II soloing style. Embrace the journey, explore the nuances, and let your saxophone sing with the vibrant colors of this essential jazz idiom.

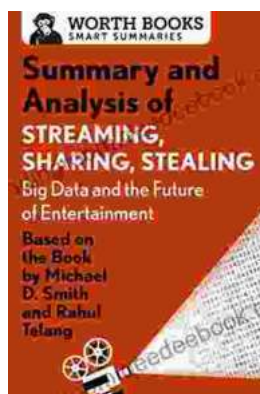


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